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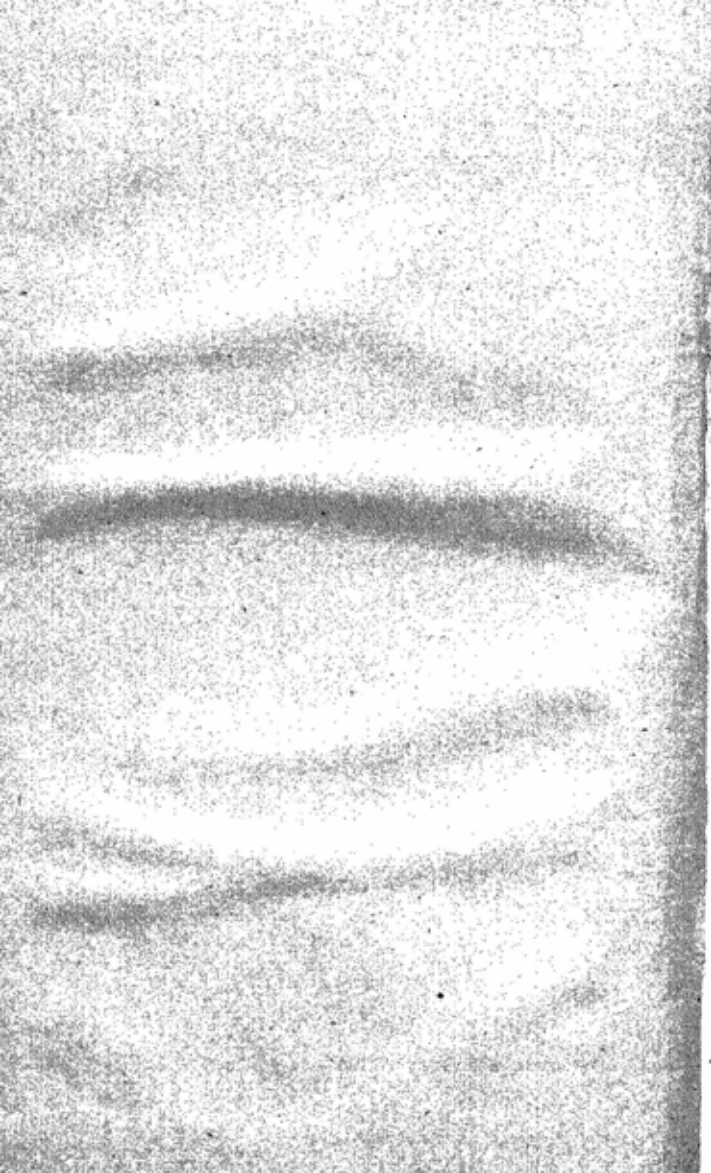
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Evolution of Heroic Tradition in Ancient Panjab

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PREFACE

Heroism is the spirit of dash and advance, gallantry and courage, activity and adventure. A hero is one who rejoices in sacrifice, revels in risks, disregards dangers, disdains death, harbours chivalry and values nobility, He is boisterous and ebullient, has a zest and lust for life, believes in action and endeavour, shuns renunciation and withdrawal, strives for victory and expansion and loves to enjoy their fruits, but, side by side, has a deep sense of values and ideals and directs all his energy and courage towards their pursuit. Thus he is a combination of bravery and chivalry, embodies a synthesis of dynamism and morality and represents the union of strife and endeavour with a sense of cause and purpose. In other words he is animated and motivated in all his fervour and enthusiasm by the urge to achieve some high goals and pursue some noble objectives. He may be rash and desperate, stormy and unsparing, ruthless and sweeping, but since he cherishes and follows some moral standards and ethical norms and makes them the lodestars of his conduct, he cannot be clubbed with dacoits, and marauders, who, though quite brave and dashing and courageous, devote their whole energy to nefarious ends.

Heroism, in the above sense, as a general characteristic of the people of a region, is the product of a number of factors. Geographical situation, climate, soil, horizon, often compel a people to be hardworking and energetic; proximity to frontiers full of raiders and plunderers generally makes them martial and bellicose; frequent contacts with invaders, conflicts with neighbours and encounters with foreigners generate a warlike aptitude and military stamina; communications with outsiders, pammixia with other peoples, mixtures with nomadic, barbaric and uncouth tribes periodically infuse new blood in old veins and strengthen the spirit of fighting and pushing; religions and ideologies also sometimes stimulate heroic activity by expounding an energetic view of life and inculcating the spirit of sacrifice. All these factors, more or less, combine to produce the frame of mind we call 'heroic'.

Scholars take the word 'heroic age' in the sense of particular ages of history when the radiation of a decaying civilization into a primitive society galvanizes it into an expansive undertaking. H.M. Chadwick defines the features of such societies as follows :

"The qualities exhibited by these societies, virtues and defects alike, are clearly those of adolescence..... The characteristic feature is emancipation—social, political and religious—from the hands of tribal law.....The typical man of the 'heroic age' is to be compared rather with a youth. For a true analogy we must turn to the case of a youth who has outgrown both the ideas and the control of his parents—such a case as may be found among the sons of unsophisticated parents who, through outside influence, at school or elsewhere, have acquired knowledge which places them in a position of superiority to their surroundings.....(H.M. Chadwick, *The Heroic Age*, pp. 442-44).

"In social organization the distinguishing feature of the 'heroic age' is in the nature of a revolt or emancipation from those tribal obligations and ideas by which the society of primitive peoples is everywhere governed. The same remark applies in principle to political organization : the princes of the 'heroic age' appear to have freed themselves to a large extent from any public control on the part of the tribe or community. The changes which we have noted in religion have a similar tendency. Tribal ideas give way to universalism both in the cult of higher powers and in the conception of immortality; and in both the Teutonic and Greek heroic ages these changes seem to be associated with a weakening of the force of religion....

"It will be seen that the emancipation of which we are speaking is partly of an intellectual character. This applies both to religion and to those ideas which govern social relations. On the other hand it is also partly in the nature of a freedom from outside control, both in social relations and in government. The force formerly exercised by the kindred is now largely transferred to the *comitatus*, a body of chosen adherents pledged to personal loyalty to their chief. So also, in government, the council of the tribe or community has come to be nothing more than a *comitatus* or court. The result of the change is that the man who possesses a

comitatus becomes largely free from the control of his kindred, while the chief similarly becomes free from control within his community." (*Ibid.*, p. 443).

The sense of release or emancipation of peoples in a 'hercic age' fundamentally means the outburst of elemental energy and force which overwhelms the entire conspectus of life. Professor Arnold Toynbee likens it to the breaking of a 'social barrage'. He holds that so long as a civilization continues to grow, its influence radiates and penetrates among the less advanced peoples living at and beyond its borders with the result that there is a gradual shading off of the civilization into primitivism instead of there being a cut and dry frontier between them. But, when that civilization begins to decline, the radiation of its influence among its neighbours stops and a clear-cut frontier crystallizes between them and, in course of time, take the form of a military front. Toynbee calls this process the transformation of *limen* (cultural threshold) into *limes* (military frontier) and formulates the proposition that an "heroic age is the social and psychological consequence of the crystallization of a *limes*" (*A Study of History*, Book VIII. Vol. VIII. p. 2).

Toynbee's theory is that in the period of growth the unity of a civilization is maintained through the creative minority which runs its affairs by persuasion rather than coercion, by appeal, not by force. But when this period ends and the civilization is set for decline its unity is broken into three elements, dominant minority, internal proletariat and external proletariat each having conflicting interests and rigid attitudes. Of them the external proletariat are those less advanced neighbours and primitive or barbaric societies which hitherto felt the magnetism of the civilization and were attached to it through an inherent liking but later, finding it a house divided into closed apartments, cease to have any penchant for it and rather consider it an object of booty and plunder. To quote Toynbee's graphic language :

"When a growing civilization breaks down through the deterioration of an attractively creative into an odiously dominant minority, one of the effects of this sinister change in the broken-down society's leadership is the estrangement of its former proselytes in the once primitive societies round about, which the

civilization in its growth stage was influencing in divers degrees by the effect of its cultural radiation. The ex-proselytes' attitude changes from an admiration expressing itself in mimesis to a hostility breaking out into warfare." (*Ibid.*, p. 1).

During the period of growth of a civilization, due to the radiation of its influence through its charm and appeal, the less advanced neighbours on the frontiers learn the rudiments of cultural life and develop their capacity for war and trade which they later use to encroach upon the domain of that civilization in its decline phase. When war breaks out between these 'barbaric' and 'civilized' peoples the former are at an advantage, for, to quote Toynbee, "in warfare between antagonists that are not on an equality in their level of civilization, the more highly civilized belligerent is apt to win victories that are pyrrhic because they leave the victor exhausted, while his less highly civilized opponent is apt to suffer defeats that are inconclusive because of the recuperative power that is Nature's compensation for the handicap of backwardness in organization" (*Ibid.*, pp 33-34).

But, though invincible in warfare, the said heroic communities are vulnerable in economy, for their policy of ploughing and reaping with sword and lance has a very limited range of success. As a result a 'heroic age' is followed by a 'dark age', about which Toynbee says that "this later age has no need to be ashamed of a darkness which signifies that the barbarian incendiaries' bonfire has at last burnt itself out ; and, though, after the expiry of that ghastly artificial illumination, a bed of ashes smothers the surface of the flame-seared ground, the 'Dark Age' proves to be as creative as 'Heroic Age' has been destructive." "When the fire is extinct and the clamour hushed," Toynbee adds, "the spirit moves again upon the face of the waters ; and, in the fullness of time, new life duly arises from the abyss to clothe the fertile ash-field with shoots of tender green." (*Ibid.*, p. 79).

According to Toynbee a 'heroic age' is a typical characteristic of the transition from the civilizations of the first generation, like Minoan, Harappan, Shang, etc., to those of the second, like the

Graeco-Roman, Indic, Sinic etc. It acts as a link between the former and the latter and its important contribution is the 'Epic Poetry'. Thus Toynbee views a 'heroic age' as a special phenomenon of a particular stage of historical evolution.

Toynbee's theory of the 'heroic age' shows that he understands by it a particular frame of mind characteristic of the nomadic, barbaric and relatively uncivilized people living on the borders of a 'civilization', secondly, he holds that it makes its appearance when a 'civilization' decays and disintegrates and is on the breaking point inviting the frontiersmen to invade and plunder its realm, he further thinks that it flickers for a moment, producing the glow of 'epic poetry', symbolizing an elemental release of energy, and then blows out as the invaders adopt the fallen civilization. It appears to us that this view of a 'heroic age' is too narrow and restricted and does not correspond to historical realities of all types. For instance, it does not take into account the 'heroism' of sedentary, settled and civilized communities preserving their heroic stamina across the ages in response to the challenges of geography, physical as well as human. We believe that 'heroism' is a frame of mind, a way of life, a set of values, a point of view, a pattern of behaviour, of a people who have to struggle and strive for existence and growth in a particular geographical, social and military situation without rest or respite. As such the settled and civilised communities are quite capable of developing and cultivating it and shaping their history and casting their destiny in its mould.

The people of the Panjab were from the outset exposed to invasions of peoples, immigration of tribes, infiltration of cultural influences, from the north-west, which intensified their spirit of struggle, on the one hand, and broadened their outlook and approach, on the other. As a result they grew as redoubtable fighters, sturdy men of action, having a pragmatic and practical way of life and cultivating a tolerant, resilient and receptive approach which was often interpreted by their more orthodox neighbours in the Gangetic Doab as heresy, sacrilege and impiety. In the present work this historical, social and cultural development is traced from the earliest period, of which we have written records, to the eleventh century on the basis of original sources which are often

quoted within brackets inside the text. Since the history of ancient Panjab has not so far been studied with the fulness, it deserves, a recourse to original sources, painstaking and arduous though it was, became inevitable. However, the collection of shreds and search for threads has enabled me to weave a tapestry rich in design and glowing in colours and thus attractive in appeal. It is hoped that it will add a new dimension to our understanding of the historical evolution of the Indian people.

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HOW GEOGRAPHY GENERATES HEROISM

The Panjab forms the north-western escarpment of the great north Indian plain, nearly 2,000 miles long and 150 to 200 miles broad. This plain is divided into two parts watered by the Indus and Ganges river systems respectively. At present the dry upland *bangar* of Kurukṣetra, leading into the desert of Rajputana, acts as the dividing line between the alluvial plain, *khadar*, of the Sutlej and that of the Yamunā, but, in ancient times, the Sarasvatī and the Dr̥ṣadvatī (Ghagghar or Sarsuti and Chitang) flowed through this territory and rendered it fertile and consequently made it the home of the most celebrated and cultivated of ancient tribes, the Bharatas, who gave their name to the whole county. With their hold on this region, the Bharatas could keep a balance between the tribes of the north-west and those of the south-east as is clear from Sudās's victory over the ten tribes on the Ravi and the three peoples on the Yamunā. The control of this axis-region was the key to the domination over a greater part of the Indian plain and, therefore, all the forces of history and culture of this country converged on it. However, with the desiccation of the Sarasvatī in the post-Mahābhārata period, that is, in the first millennium B.C., which tradition synchronizes with the advent and expansion of the uncouth Ābhiras, modern Ahirs, after whose name this region is now called Hariyana, the centre of historico-cultural gravity shifted eastward to the Gangetic basin from Haradvāra and Hastinapura to Prayāga and Vārāṇasī.

The brown plain of the Panjab consists of the basins of the five rivers as its very name suggests. Now-a-days these rivers from the east to the west are Sutlej, Beas, Ravi, Chenab and Jhelum, but they, especially the first two, have been changing their courses quite often and accordingly gaining or losing in importance. In the Hymn to Rivers, *Nadistuti*, of the *Ṛgveda* (X, 75, 5) Vipās, modern Beas, is omitted and Marudvṛdhā, modern Maruwardwan, a Kashmirian river, which joins the Chenab at Kashtwar, is mentioned between the Chenab and the Jhelum. Besides these rivers, this hymn invokes the Arjikiyā (Upper Indus), Suṣomā (Sohan), Susartu, Rasā and Śvetyā,

the tributaries of the Indus, which must have been prominent in that period. These rivers, with their numerous tributaries and feeders, like the Uddhya (Ujh), Bhidya (Bai) and Devikā (Deg), called *choes*, course through the mountains and hills and descend into the plains with silt and form their alluvial doabs. From east to west these doabs are the Bist doab between the Sutlej and the Beas, the Bari Doab, whose upper part is called Mānjhā, between the Sutlej-Beas and the Ravi, the Rechna doab between the Ravi and the Chenab, the Jech doab between the Chenab and the Jhelum and the Sind-Sagar doab between the Chenab-Jhelum and the Indus. The northern part of this plain has abundant rainfall and is often flooded in the rainy season, but the southern part is arid and depends upon canals and wells for irrigation. During rains it is difficult to march through it, as Alexander learnt to his discomfiture, but from October the rivers subside and the plain begins to ripple with greenery and crops. This is the ideal season for campaigning and, therefore, ancient tradition has fixed the Dashehra festival for setting out on conquest.

The plain of the Panjab projects southwestwards with the stream of the Indus to form the province of Sind and the region of Kachchi Gandāva jutting out wedge-like between the Sulaiman and the Kirthar ranges. This plain of the Punjab and Sind is flanked southwards by the desert of Thar prolonged seaward by the salty and partly tidal march of the Rann of Cutch. This desert, 400 miles long and 150 miles broad, has the chain of the Aravallis in the south to act as a bulwark. Thus the Panjab is protected as well as isolated by the double defence of desert and hill in the south. Though some tribes of the Panjab, like the Mālavas and the Yaudheyas, moved south under pressure of northern powers, and, later, other tribes, coming from the north, like the Gūrjaras and others, called Rajputs, made Rajputana their home, there is no evidence of a large-scale invasion through this region achieving any success like that attending the expeditions on or through Delhi. Though the Muslim rulers of Sind had advanced up to Multan they could not make any headway eastwards.

Northwards the plain of the Panjab changes into the sub-Himalayan and lesser Himalayan ranges known as *upagiri* and *bahirgiri* in ancient times, the former comprising the Siwaliks and the Solasingsi and the latter consisting of the Harmuk and the Pir Pansal in Kāśmīra and the Dhauladhar in Kangra. The Sutlej, Beas and Ravi cut their way through the Dhauladhar mountain and encom-

pass the sub-mountainous country below it which was known as Trigarta in ancient times. The upper part of the Sutlej-Beas doab, called the Bist doab, consists of the parallel ranges of the low hills of the Siwalik and the Solasingi, whose valleys form the district of Hoshiarpur, the state of Bilaspur or Kahlur as well as the region of Nalgarh to the east of the Sutlej. Thus the sub-mountainous region from Nalgarh to Kangra forms a natural part of the Panjab. Higher up, between the Solasingi and the Dhauladhar, the valley of the Beas is called Mandi and that of the Sutlej, Suket. In ancient times they were known as Maṇḍamati and Sukuṭṭa respectively and were associated with the Kuṇindas.

To the north-west of Kangra the mountainous region between the Ravi and the Chenab is called Dugar, ancient Darva, and, that between the Chenab and the Jhelum, is known as Chibbal, Punch, Rajauri and Bhimbhar, which formed Abhisara in ancient times. The territory of Dārvābhisara was intimately connected with the history of the Panjab, as is clear from the dealing of Abhisares and Poros in the fourth century B.C. Higher up, the modern district of Hazara with the lower valley of the Kishanganga, which was known as Uraṣā in ancient times and formed the sarkar of Pakhli in Mughal times, is Landha-speaking and as such a part of western Panjab. Above this region lies the state of Kaṣmīra, which, of course, has been a separate unit, though connected with the Panjab from the historical standpoint. Kaṣmīra is linked with Kashghar and Khotan through passes threading through the Pamirs and Karakoram. The route through Baramulla and Gilgit ascends the Pamirs and opens out at Kashghar, whereas the highway through the Zogi-la or Zoji Pass in Ladakh connects Kaṣmīra with Tibet and China. In ancient times these routes were used by pilgrims, missionaries, pedlars and traders and occasionally diplomatic missions travelled along them and rarely armies also marched by them, but, by and large, they presented no menace before the country.

On the western side of the Indus we have valleys of rivers, full of fruits and flowers, but encased in highlands and mountains. The almost parallel streams of the Swat (Suvāstu), Panjkora (Gauri), Kuṣar, Alingar and Panjshir flow from the north and join the Kabul (Kubhā) which meets the Indus where it divides Hazara from Urdu or Uḍḍiyāna. The doabs of these rivers went by the name of *Dvirāvatika* and *Trirāvatika* in ancient times and the peoples, inhabiting them, were known as *Āprita* (Afridis), *Madhumant* (Mohmands), *Karṣāpaṇa* (Karshbun), *Asani* (Shinwari), *Marut* (Marvat),

Hastināyana, (Astakenoi), *Āśvāyana* (Aspasians) *Āśvakāyana* (Assakenoi) etc., collectively known as *Parvatīya Āyudhajivins* or *Girigah-varavāsinaḥ*, residents of hills and caves, living mostly by loot and plunder and fighting, as in modern times. This region was called *Pāresindhu* in ancient period and considered noteworthy for its fleet-footed mares, *pārebaḍavā*, as well as different in socio-cultural standards from the eastern side.

As said above, the Indus divides what was called Gandhāra in ancient times into two parts with their capitals at Puṣkalāvati and Takṣaṣilā respectively. From Takṣaṣilā (modern Taxila in the Rawalpindi district) the ancient route reached the Indus at two points, Vṛndaṭaka (Attock) and Udbhaṇḍapura (Und). Though the former route is mentioned in connection with the western expedition of Nakula in the *Mahābhārata*, the later was more frequented because it commanded an easier ford. The Und crossing had become the site of a flourishing city which is called Udbhaṇḍa in the *Rājataranṅgī*, Udaḥbhaṇḍa by Hsüan Chwang, Wehand by Al-Biruni, Ohind by the people of Peshawar and Und by the common folk of the neighbouring areas. Its Persian name *Dar-i-hind* shows that it was the veritable gateway of India. Somewhere in the vicinity of this place the armies of Alexander crossed the Indus on boats. There Hsüan Chwang crossed the river by boat at the time of entering into India and on the back of an elephant while going home. It was also there that the horses and camels of Babur waded through the Indus. Hence, rightly, the Sāhts made it their capital and kept a watch on the Indus from there and saved the Panjab from the fury of Turk and Afghan invasions for many centuries. At the time of Akbar a permanent bridge was thrown across the Indus at Attock and the traffic shifted to that route.

From Und the old route reached Swabi in the north and from there, bending in a westerly direction, arrived at Shahbazgarhi where the Fourteen Rock Edicts of Aśoka attest its importance as a traffic centre. From that place a sub-route branched off in the north and, passing through the Shahkot Pass, reached Chakdari on the Swat and, from there, going along the river, led to Mangalawar and thence to the north. The main route moved from Shahbazgarhi through Hotimardan and reached the confluence of the Swat (Landai) and the Kabul. The township of Prang, marking this confluence, is reminiscent of Prayāga, denoting the meeting of the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā at Allahabad. There the great metropolis of western Gandhāra, Puṣkalāvati, was situated. Its site is ma-

arked by the present town of Charsadda and the echo of its name persists in the neighbouring village of Pakholi. A river of that locality was also called Puṣkalavati but it is now lost. Crossing the Swat the main route passed through the Michni Pass and, touching Shah Mansur Khel and Haider Khan, crossed the Kabul and then, winding through a stony plateau and moving along the villages of Isagai and Warsak, reached Dakka. In the first or second century A.D., Kaniṣka founded the city of Puruṣapura (Peshawar) in the lowland at the Khyber Pass obviously because it commanded a better route. Some nine miles west of Peshawar, Jamrud stands at the entrance of the Khyber Pass. At its sarai one meets a variety of faces and features which contrast with each other as much as the two-humped shaggy Bactrian camels do with the smaller one-humped Indian camels. From there the Khyber Pass rises like a saddle in the heights rather than as a gorge of a torrent like the Bolan. Ascending this saddle one reaches the top crowned by the fort of Ali Masjid nearly three thousand feet above the sea. At that place the ruins of an old monastery and near it the stūpa of Sphol refresh the memory of ancient times. Then the descent starts and at Landikotal one reaches the open land and goes to Dakka to join the main route. From there the track tackles the sandy and stony terrain up to Jalalabad where the Kunar meets the Kabul and which was full of stūpas and monasteries in ancient times. From Jalalabad the route traverses the barren and sandy land and, passing by Chahar Bagh and crossing the Surkhrud river, takes a turn to the north and, going across the Kabul river, reaches Mandrawar on the Laghman river whose dunes enshrine the ruins of Alexander's town Nikaia the echo of which rings in the name of the village Nichaigram in Kafiristan. Hsuan Chwang wrote that the green and flowery valley of Laghman (Lamghan), ancient Lampaka, constituted the northern frontier of India. From there the route enters the Dasht-i-Shaitan (the Devil's Jungle) and then, passing through the Badpash Pass, comes out at Naghalu which dominates the confluence of the Panjshir and Kabul rivers. Then the route moves in the north along the Mahipar river and enters the valley of the Tagao where a polygonal linga attests the existence of a śaiva temple and the remains of a Buddhist stūpa lie. After this valley comes the basin of Nijrao abounding in old mounds. From there the route advances towards the confluence of the Panjshir and Ghorband rivers and nears the neighbourhood of ancient Kāpiṣi where a big stūpa stands as a sign-post. The

southern part of the valley of Kāpiṣi is called Kohdaman and the rest Kohistan. It was known for grape-wine called Kāpiṣāyana by Pāṇini and Kauṭilya. Foucher has identified it with the Alasaṇdadipa of the *Milindapaṇḥo* and Cunningham thought that it represents Kalasi, the birthplace of Menander. It is somewhere there that Kalidasa locates the flight of Raghu with the Yavanas whose settlement at that place is attested by archaeological finds. The city of Kabul, dominating it, is the key to this whole area. From Kāpiṣi three routes lead to the north through the valleys of rivers separating the Hindukush from the ranges of Kafiristan in the east and Hazarjat in the west: one goes along the Panjshir in the east, crosses the Khawak Pass & courses along the Andarab, the second moves along the Ghorband through Bamiyan, crosses the Aq-Robat Pass and marches along the Surkhab, and the third proceeds due north from Parvan and, crossing the Salang Pass, opens out at Khinjan on the Andarab. From the north of the Hindu-Kush, these routes lead to Balkh, Tashkurgan and Kunduz and then go towards Iran and the Oxus valley respectively.

Besides the above routes, other paths exist along the Kuram (Krumu) and Gomāl (Gomati) rivers and reach the Indus near Mi-anwali and Dera Ismail Khan respectively. The Tochi also has a track on its flank. Further south another route descends from Herat and Kandahar where the Afghan mountains suddenly come to an end through the Bolan Pass formed by a gorge in the mountain. In ancient times this route went further south over the Mula Pass. This route debouches upon the plain opposite the great Indian desert. Hence it was not very effective as the highway of invasions, though the Śakas took it in the first century B.C. However there is lateral communication between the Khyber and Bolan routes to the west of the Indus through the Kabul-Ghazni-Kandahar route along which many invaders from Alexander to General Roberts have marched across the ages. The control of this route from Kabul or Kandahar was essential for the defence of the Indo-Pakistan Sub-Continent, and the Mauryas, who extended their rule up to the natural frontier of the Hindukush in the fourth century B.C., were quite alive to it as is clear from the discovery of the edicts of Aśoka on the Kandahar road.

Besides the aforesaid northern group of routes, called Five Fingers, spread for about five hundred miles from the Khyber to the Bolan, there is a southern group also which spreads deltawise

towards the Indus plain. The Zhob Valley, ancient Yavyavati, carries a route from the direction of Quetta. Southeastwards from Quetta a route, now almost followed by the railway, enters the plain via Sibi. Westwards from Quetta a camel route leads towards Kirman and southern and western Iran. In fact Quetta, situated about a mile above sea-level in a small plain surrounded by great mountains rising to heights of two miles and more, commands the route of the Khojak Pass, just as Peshawar commands that of the Khyber Pass, and is, thus, like it, a key to the Indo-Pakistan frontier. At the southern end of this series of routes Las Bela, meaning the valley of the Purali, with Bela as its chief town, acts as a true gateway. Likewise the valley of the Hingol is marked by the ancient *tirtha*, Hingulaja, regularly visited by Hindu pilgrims from Sind. In ancient times the Quetta Valley, Loralai, Zhob, Kalat and Las Bela saw a cultural development exemplified in the ruins of a large number of sites discovered by modern archaeologists, the site of Edithshahr in the Las Bela district being particularly interesting. The buff ware found in this region has a close affinity to a similar ware from Amri in Sind. However, in historical times, these routes were seldom used by invaders with success.

For a clear understanding of the geographical set-up of the north-western frontier of the Indo-Pakistan Sub-Continent, it is necessary to have a longer look beyond them. Such a look reveals a single vast plateau, comprising Persia, Afghanistan and Baluchistan, which may be called the Iranian plateau. In the north-west it rises to the greater heights of Armenia and in the north-east it joins the lofty Pamirs. On all other sides it descends abruptly to lowlands or to the sea, southward to the Persian gulf and the Arabian sea, southwestward into the valley of the Tigris and the Euphrates, northward into the broad lowland of Turkestan and eastward into the plain of the Indus. It has a variety of elevations and depressions, characterized by valleys, routes and tracks, interconnecting the whole region. Especially the Hindukush is a single broad ridge, backed by no plateau, and flanked on both sides by low ground rising only a few hundred feet above the sea. It is pitchforked between the ranges of Kafiristan in the east and that of Hazarjat in the west just as Java is sandwiched between Bali and Sumatra. As seen above rivers separate it from them making a girdle of valleys round it through which

routes run between the Kabul valley and the Oxus valley. Thus the Hindukush, though the natural boundary of the Indo-Pakistan Sub-Continent, has never been an effective barrier either in a military or commercial sense. In this way we observe that there is a geographical unity in the Indo-Iranian region which is reflected in linguistic, religious and cultural affinities. As a result the early cultures of Seistan, Quetta and Kandahar afford numerous analogies with the proto-agrarian cultures of the nearby areas of Central Asia and Iran, on the one hand, and are akin to the early phases of civilization in Sind and the Panjab, on the other. In other words the world from Media to Arachosia and the Panjab and from Chorasmia and Sogdiana to Gedrosia and Karmania and Sind reveals a common cultural process which unfolded itself with varied shades in the various regions included in it.

It is clear from the above survey that the Iranian plateau slopes down and lapses into the plain of the Panjab and Sind. Closely interconnected as it is by a well laid out system of communications, all the movements of peoples in it have some sort of repercussion on the people of the Panjab and Sind. In particular the accumulation of forces in the Kabul valley or the Oases of Seistan, following, of course, developments northwards and westwards, in the Oxus valley and the Persian highlands, must produce a commotion in the Indus valley and the Panjab. It was with this realisation that all Indian empires were obliged to have a defence orientation towards this region in the north-west as an essential condition of their survival. The Mauryas had strong outposts at Taxila, Noashera, Charsadda, Shahbazgarhi, Kapiṣṭh and Kandahar; Kaniṣka set up his capital at Peshawar and built stūpas, monasteries, caravansarais and fortifications in Kapiṣṭh and advanced up to Kunduz and Khorezm; the Guptas crossed the seven tributaries of the Indus and pounced on the Bāhlikas on the Oxus as is reflected in the Mehrauli inscription; Harṣa made his voice heard and example followed by the ruler of Kapiṣṭh; the Gūjjara-Pratihāras, Mahendrapāla and Mahipāla, befriended the Śāhīs who had their capital at Udbhaṇḍapura on the Indus; in the medieval period the Muslim rulers had a vital stake in Kabul and Kandahar, Shah Jahan penetrating deep into Central Asia; in the nineteenth century the Sikhs maintained their hold on the Trans-Indus territory by building forts at Harkishangarh, Darband, Haripur, Jahangira, Gandgarh,

Fatehgarh near Jamrud and many other places to contend with the Yusufzais; and the British rulers of the Sub-Continent concentrated their military potential on the belt of territory which is traversed from end to end by the Indus and has its key-points at Peshawar and Quetta, held the qabailis in pay and ensured the neutrality of Afghanistan as well as Iran by maintaining fleets in the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea. Whenever the hold of the rulers over this region weakened, their empires also crumbled and disappeared from the scene. In a way we can explain the rhythmic growth and decline of empires in the Indo-Gangetic plains in terms of the strength and weakness of their control over the Trans-Indus regions.

As the empires of the plain had a tendency to entrench their hold over the north-western regions, so the peoples of those regions had a tendency to swoop on the plain and pounce on its people. Thus there was an incessant struggle between these peoples which shaped their historical trends and social developments. As the plain of the Panjab lay at the feet of the highlands of the north-west, there was a downward course of people towards it which its inhabitants had to encounter and assimilate in a variety of ways. This made the Panjabis alert and strenuous, hard and heroic, enduring and adjustable. From the very beginning they have been bred and brought up under the shadows of swords and developed a quality of braving dangers, enduring hardships and facing trials. Thus they have acted as sentinels of national freedom, guardians of cultural standards and preservers of heroic traditions. c L

A very significant thing to note is that ancient Indian geographical tradition calls the Panjab *Uttarāpatha* or the northern path. Rājasekhara in his *Kāvyamīmāṃsā* defines *Uttarāpatha* as the country to the north of Pṛthudakā or Pehowa or the Panjab and the north-west. The designation of this region as the northern path is quite appropriate because it is veritably a road where people are always on the move and are never static. This characteristic of this land invests the people with a perpetual dynamism and combats the tendency of stagnation and conservatism among them. Just like men on the road, they have to be active and agile as well as assertive and accommodating. They have to rush and push, contend and collide, strive and struggle. Sometimes they have to endure the terrific storms of invasions and sometimes the scorching heat of inner tensions. In any case their life is a

constant conflict and agitation, full of risks and hazards, requiring strength of body and spirit. They can not afford to be dreamers, visionaries and lotus-eaters.

Where does the northern road, *Uttarāpatha*, which is the Panjab, lead? It terminates in the steppes of Turkestan in the north-west and ends in the citadel of Madhyadeśa in the east. The Gangetic plain, ramparted with the Himalayas in the north and the bulwark of hills in the south, is a sort of fastness with the gate in Delhi, Panipat, Kurukṣetra etc. The plain of the Panjab acts as a glacis to this citadel and has to bear the brunt of all onslaughts on it. This citadel is the centre of wealth and riches which have been attracting the attention of northern peoples, nomads and highlanders, and inviting them for invasions. But the first blows of the invaders had to be met by the people inhabiting the glacis of the Panjab.

Thus these two aspects of the geography of the Panjab, its situation as the plain at the feet of northwestern highlands having well-defined routes and its being the glacis of the citadel of the Gangetic plain, instil a spirit of gallantry and heroism among its people making them strong, active and realistic.

II

THE MARTIAL ARDOUR OF THE VEDIC PERIOD

The *Rgveda* is the earliest literary record of the socio-cultural development of the Panjab and affords us the first glimpse of the life of its people. Though the ideas, embodied in it, go back to a hoary antiquity, perhaps, the dawn of humanity in this region, they got their present literary form in an age in which a mature urban culture was breaking down under the blows of the rising rural class. This urban culture, unearthed by modern archaeologists, is the Indus-Valley or Harappan culture which was spread over the whole of the Panjab and even extended upto the Gangetic valley in the east and Rajasthan and Gujarat-Kathiawar in the south, as the finds of Rupar, Alamgirpur, Kalibangan, Lothal and other sites suggest. But, in course of time, about the beginning of the second millennium B. C., it grew into a tyranny whose exaction and exploitation proved unbearable to the rural people constituting the bulk of population. Hence, probably assisted by northern highlanders, they rose against the cities and the dominant minority living there and put an end to them. The image-structure of the *Rgveda* reflects that atmosphere of the conflict of village and city and the triumph of the former over the latter. It is a period of war, gallantry and fighting exhibiting a youthful vigour, virile force and herculean robustness. The gods are conceived in the likeness of earthly heroes driving to battle in lumbering cars and showering darts with untiring zeal. A study of their features and characteristics brings into bold relief the contours of heroic society whose main concern was struggle and adventure, conflict and advance.

The most important god of the Vedic period is Indra. He a born warrior (*Rgveda*, III, 51, 8; V, 30, 5), strong (*tavas*), nimble (*nṛtu*), triumphant (*tura*), heroic (*sūra*), vigorous and irresistible, of gigantic frame, mighty neck and brawny limbs. He has handsome nose, lips and cheeks (*Ibid.*, I, 29, 2; II, 12, 6; III, 36, 10). He has golden complexion and tawny hair and beard (*Ibid.*, I, 7, 2; X,

96, 5—8). He agitates his jaws, puffs out his beautiful lips and shakes off the drops of Soma from his moustache (*Ibid.*, VIII, 65, 10; III, 32, 1; II, 11, 17). He wields the mighty thunderbolt (*vajra*), which is metallic (*āyasa*) and bright, four-angled, hundred-jointed and sharp (*Ibid.*; I, 52, 8; IV, 22, 2; VIII, 6, 6; VII, 18) and hard as a stone or rock (VII, 104, 19). He is also armed with bows and arrows (VIII, 45, 4) and carries a hook (*ankuṣa*). He drives in a chariot drawn by two tawny steeds and is a prominent car-fighter (*ratheṣṣha*). He sometimes drives his car himself and wields a whip for that purpose though he has Vāyu for his charioteer. Before his furious charge the earth shakes and mountains quake. He shatters the citadels, breaks the forts and clips the ridges and mountains. He slays Vṛtra, vanquishes Vala, strikes down the wain (*anas*) of dawn, challenges the sun for a race and slaughters the Dasyus in hundreds of thousands. He is also very fond of drink, an excessive soma-drinker. Intoxicated and exhilarated by strong drink, he charges his adversaries and even kills his father (IV 18, 12). He is also greatly addicted to sensual pleasure and is shown to be using drugs to remove his exhaustion after excessive indulgence (X, 86). He allows himself to be enticed away by an Asura woman and is said to have been enamoured of a Danavi, named Viliṣṭengā, and gone to live among the Asuras on that account. He is also represented as a paramour of Ahalyā, the wife of Gautama. As such he is an expert in female lore (VIII, 33, 7) particularly interested in the children of unmarried girls (II, 15, 7). He is a cattle-lifter, a master of cows and horses (I, 16, 1) and the ocean of riches (I, 51, 1), which he distributes with both hands among those who praise him, as a man with a hook shakes down ripe fruits from a tree (III, 45, 4). He embodies storm and thunder and his very name, (*Indra-Jedru* (impetuous), *giant* and *giant* (enormous being), *innar* (mighty), enshrines the ideas of might, valour, enormity and impetuosity. As Dandekar writes, "Indra must have been primarily a human hero, indeed, essentially, a historical personality, who, in course of time, must have been elevated to the position, first, of a national war-god, and, then, of the supreme god and, that, later on, naturalistic or cosmic elements must have been superimposed on his personality," 'Vṛtrahā Indra,' *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Vol. XXI (1950) p.25). Thus in this concept, to quote V. Gordon Childe, "we see the earthly princes, generous to bards,

hold to smite the park-skinned Dasyus, lovers of strong drink, dicing and horse-racing, in a word, with all the characteristics of a Teutonic hero in the Norse epic" (*The Aryans*, p. 30).

Besides Indra other atmospheric gods have also pronounced warlike and heroic traits. Trita Āptya is a thundering fighter, the killer of the three-headed son of Tvaṣṭr (X, 8, 8) and the presser of Soma (II, 11, 20), Apām Napāt is golden in form and colour (V, 10), clothed in lightning (V, 9) and carried by swift steeds (*vr̥ṣaṇaḥ*). Rudra has firm limbs (II, 33, 11), beautiful lips (II, 33, 5), braided hair (I, 114, 1—5), brown colour and golden brilliance (I, 43, 5). He is decked with golden ornaments, especially a glorious multiform necklace (II 33, 10). He holds the thunderbolt, club and bow and arrows (II, 33 10; *Atharva*, I, 28, 5, *Śatapatha*, IX, 1, 1, 6) and is the foremost archer (*Atharva*, I, 28, 1). He drives in a car (II, 33, 4) and is fierce, destructive, rapid, swift, young, unsurpassed, unassailable and strongest of the strong. He is wise, intelligent, beneficent and bountiful as well as a cheat, robber and slayer (*Vājasneyi*, XVI, 20-1) and is thus both a healer and a killer. Accompanied by mighty howling dogs, he is a terror even for the gods (*Atharva*, X, 1, 30; *Vājasneyi*, XVI, 28, *Śatapatha*, IX, 1, 1, 1—6). His other forms śarva and Bhava also hurl destructive arrows and frightful lightnings. His sons are the heroic Maruts who always form a troop. They are of sun-like brightness and ruddy aspect and wear golden mantles, garlands and ornaments and specially armlets or anklets (*khādi*) (*Rg.* II, 34, 2). They hold lightnings in their hands (*Rg.* VIII, 7, 25), lances (*r̥ṣi*), axes (*Rg.* I, 37, 2; 88, 3) and bow and arrows (*Rg.* V, 53, 4). Their gleaming cars, full of weapons and buckets, drawn by tawny or spotted steeds, are resistless and, roaring like wind, cut through mountains. Thus, with spears on their shoulders, lightnings in their hands, golden ornaments on their breasts, anklets on their feet and golden helmets on their heads (*Rg.* V, 54, 11), they are formidable warriors, fierce, irascible, terrible, vigorous and impetuous. But, besides being fighters, they are also singers and priests (*Rg.* V, 57, 5; X, 78, 1). The god Vāyu is beautiful, swift and roaring (*Rg.* X, 100, 2) and, riding a shining car, drawn by a pair of red horses, shatters everything.

Among terrestrial deities Agni is the most important. He has tawny hair and beard, sharp burning jaws and shining teeth and

iron grinders (*Rg*, V, 7, 7; I, 58, 5; V, 7, 4; X, 87, 2). He is a first rate archer (*Rg*, I, 70, 11), rides a luminous car, drawn by two or more ruddy horses (*Rg*, III, 14, 1; VII, 42, 1), and is formidable in battle (*Rg*, I, 66, 6). He is a divine monarch, strong as Indra (*Rg*, VII, 6, 1), Vṛtra-slayer, fort-breaker, Dasyu-killer and a conqueror of thousands (*sahasrajit*). But he is also a priest and a seer and a doer of great deeds (*Rg*, IX, 66, 20; VII, 6, 2). Like Agni, Bṛhaspati is golden-coloured and ruddy, bright, pure and clear-voiced, holding a golden hatchet, iron-axes and bow and arrows. Standing on his car, he slays the goblins, bursts the cowstalls (*Rg*, II, 23, 3), lifts the cows (*Rg*, IV, 50, 5), shatters the forts and penetrates the mountain of riches (*Rg*, II, 24, 2). Thus he can command a host to sing his praises (*Rg*, VII, 10, 4) and bestow prosperity and wealth on those who adore him. But he is also the chief of seers and the domestic priest (*Rg*, IV, 50, 1; *Vājasneyi*, XX, 11, *Taittiriya* VI, 4, 10, *Atharva*, VIII, 26, 4). Soma is intimately connected with Indra in his conflict with Vṛtra, but he is also spoken of independently as a great fighter. He is born for battle (*Rg*, I, 91, 21), is the most heroic of heroes, the fiercest of the fierce, ever victorious (*Rg*, IX, 66, 16—7). Being a warrior, he grasps his terrible and sharp weapons, particularly the bow and the thousand-pointed shaft, in his hands (*Rg*, IX, 76, 2). He drives in his car, sometimes in that of Indra, and is an excellent charioteer himself. He acquires and possesses earth, food, cattle, horses etc. and freely bestows them on his people (*Rg*, IX, 45, 3; 49, 4; 52, 1).

Among celestial gods the most prominent is Varuṇa. He wears a golden mantle (*drāpi*) and puts on a shining robe. Though a bald, yellow-eyed, old man, he shines like the sun, rides a car, carries a whip and exercises a strict sway over the universe. Sūrya is yellow-haired, puts on a tawny garment and has a golden car with a golden pole. Pūṣan wears a beard and braided hair (*Rg*, VI, 55, 2), wields a golden spear (I, 42, 6), carries an awl or a goad (VI, 53, 5—8; 53, 9; 58, 2) and is the best charioteer (VI, 56, 2—3). His is vigorous, strong, nimble, powerful and resistless, is a ruler of heroes (I, 106, 4) and an unconquerable protector and defender (I, 89, 5). His assists others in battle (VI, 48, 19), but is also a seer, a friend of the priest and a helper of every suppliant (X, 26, 5—8). He is wise and liberal, wealthy and bountiful, beneficent and kind. Viṣṇu is an associate of Indra (IV, 18, 11), a destroyer of

Sambara's 99 castles (VII, 99, 4) a hard drinker (VI, 69), a big consumer of milk and meat— a cooker of 100 buffaloes— and withal a singer (VIII, 15, 6), liberal, beneficent and bountiful. The Ādityas are kings and warriors (*kṣatriya*), vast, deep and inviolable. The Aśvins are young, bright, lustrous, swift, mighty and strong. They ride in chariots as well as on horses. Once they are said to have won a race in a car drawn by asses (*Rg*, I, 116, *Altareya*, IV, 7—9).

The above account of the anthropomorphic features of the Vedic gods—atmospheric, terrestrial and celestial— shows that they reflect the heroic type of society of the Saptasindhu region including the Panjab to which the seers belonged. This society was dominated by fair-complexioned warriors of gigantic frame and brawny limbs. They wore golden hair, beards and moustaches, put on shining mantles and helmets, bedecked themselves with golden necklaces, anklets and ornaments, drove in brilliant chariots drawn by ruddy horses yoked by pole or thongs, carried bows, arrows, clubs, axes, hooks, spears and a deadly missile called *vajra*, were fond of excessive drinking and eating, consuming lots of liquor, milk, meat and cakes, were given to sensual pleasures, particularly sexual indulgence, took to charioteering, singing, composing hymns, performed their own ceremonials and sacrifices and were generous to bards, suppliants and followers. Capturing of towns, slaying their residents, appropriating their wealth, lifting the cattle and distributing them among their followers and associates were their main avocations. Fierce and terrible, dashing and charging, they were also liberal and beneficent, hospitable and bountiful. What they hated most was the stingy and niggardly outlook; they could not put up with usury and hoarding and were averse to commerce and calculation. They also shunned the philosophy of pessimism and misery and were brimming and bubbling with hope and joy and interest and attachment for all pleasant things of the world. Among them the distinctions of warriors, priests, poets, singers and even charioteers did not obtain, since they performed all these works themselves and there was also some sort of team spirit or cooperative idea.

Let us now consider the historical personalities of the Vedic period in the context of the aforesaid heroic tradition. The Vedic Ārya is hemmed in on all sides by powerful enemies. All his

activities, thoughts and prayers are concentrated on the extermination of his foes (*Rg*, X, 159, 3; IX, 61, 23). The rattle of the chariots and roar of horses din into his ears every moment (*Rg*, X, 103, 11). He implores his gods to join him in the battle and destroy his rivals. He imbibes the fury and vigour of Indra to conquer his opponents (*Atharva*, VII, 93, 1). He solicits the boon of being the enemy-killer and desires to trample his foes under foot (*Rg*, X, 166, 2). This pervasive atmosphere of war, invasion and massacre broods over the whole society and casts its members in a heroic mould. As a result many heroic figures came up and fill the horizon of the seers.

An early hero is Divodāsa Atithigva, a prince of the Tṛtsu family of the Bharata clan. He had to pass through thick and thin on his way to success. In an encounter with Suśravas and Tūrvayāna, he had to eat the humble pie (*Rg*, I, 53, 10) and the poet Barhaspatya Bharadvāja praised Indra for laying him and his associates low (*Rg*, VI, 18, 13), but, against the Pārāvatas and the Bṛṣāyas, he scored a resounding success on the Sarasvatī (*Rg*, VI, 61). He seems to have formed a league with Rjīśvan, Āyu and Kutsa but his adversaries Chumuri, Dhuni, Śambara, Smadibha, Pipru, Śuśṇa, Vetasu, Daśoni and Tugra also formed a confederacy to counteract his moves. These chiefs fought with each other individually as well as collectively. For example, Rjīśvan stormed the hundred towns of Vangīd and destroyed the followers of Pipru and Mṛgaya; Āyu vanquished Veśa; Kutsa defeated Ibiliś and Śuśṇa; Divodāsa himself destroyed Śambara and killed his hosts in thousands after a struggle of forty years (*Rg*, VI, 26, 5; II, 12, 11). In this war tribes and clans of Āryas and Dāsas were indiscriminately arrayed on both sides and implored the aid of gods for their success.

Divodāsa's son Sudās was a famous king. By his career of conquest, he raised powerful enemies against him. It appears as if the whole Panjab rose to oppose him east and west. In the east the Ajas, Sigrus and Yakṣus, led by Bheda, opposed him on the Yamunā and, in the west, the ten tribes of Yadu-Turvaśa, Bhṛgu, Druhyu, Pakhta, Bhalāṇa, Alina, Śiva, Viśāṇin, Puru and Anu rallied under the leadership of Purodās, Purukutsa and Kavaśa on the Ravi to check him. The battle between them and Sudās, called the Battle of Ten Kings, is a famous episode of the Vedic period and is recounted and narrated in an epic style in many hymns of the *Rgveda*. It was

the rainy season and the rivers were in spate. Sudās had advanced up to the Sutlej and the Beas. His confederate enemies quickly tried to overpower him and sought a passage across the Ravi. They dug channels in the Ravi basin to divert its water through them and make the river fordable. But this device proved disastrous, for the swollen current of the river spread all around and inundated their own camp. This turned the difficulty of Sudās into an opportunity. He rushed to demolish all the strong places and wrest the seven castles of his adversaries. The leader of the confederates, Parukutsa, was defeated and reduced to great straits. Perhaps, he was taken captive. After this victory Sudās became the paramount ruler of the Saptasindhu region. Summing up his career from a miserable condition to an imperial status, the poet sang out :

"E'en with the weak he wrought this matchless exploit ;
e'en with goat he did to death a lion.

He pared the pillar's angles with a needle.

Thus, to Sudās, Indra gave all provisions."

(Rg, VII, 18, 17).

Sudās is also noted for his generosity and liberalism. The *Āitareya Brāhmaṇa* (VII, 34, 9) and the *Śaṅkhāyana Śrautasūtra* are all praise for his bountiful gifts. A combination of martial ardour and overflowing generosity, Sudās is a fine example of the heroic type of the Vedic age.

During the disaster of the Pārus, the queen of Parukutsa, named Parukutsāni gave birth to a son Trasadasyu who was rescued and brought up by the Bhṛgu. On coming of age he tried to retrieve the fortune of his family and organized a movement against the Bharatas. With his matchless bravery, irresistible drive and remarkable leadership he dealt severe blows on his enemies. Says the poet Vāmadeva Gautama :

"Whom, as 'twere down a precipice, swift rushing, each
Pāru praises and his heart rejoices, springing forth like
a hero, fain for battle, whirling the car and flying like
the tempest.

Loudly the folk cry after him in battles, as 'twere a thief,
who steals away a garment ; speeding the glory, or a
herd of cattle, even as a hungry falcon swooping down-
ward.

And at his thunder, like the roar of heaven, those, who attack, tremble and are affrighted ; for, when he fights against embattled thousands, dread is he in his striving ; none may stay him." (Rg, IV, 38, 3-5)

With his might and valour Trasadasyu succeeded in rehabilitating the lost glory and prosperity of the Pārus :

"From you two came the gifts in days aforetime which Trasadasyu granted to the Pārus. He gave the winner of our fields and ploughlands, and the strong smiter, who subdued the Dasyus." (Rg, IV, 38, 1).

He shattered and captured the forts and advanced on the Sarasvati trampling under foot the kingdom of Sudās or his successors :

"When, in the fulness of their strength, the Pārus dwell, Beauteous one, on thy two grassy banks, favour us thou, who has the Maruts for thy friends : stir up the bounty of our chiefs." (Rg, VII, 96, 2).

After the conquest of the kingdom of the Bharatas by the Pārus, the two peoples mixed in one people called Pūru-Bharatas and produced eminent kings and conquerors famed in legend and tradition. But, after sometime, new elements came to the forefront in the form of the Pāñcālas and the Kurus representing new agglomerations of Indo-Iranian peoples. They brought with them a great heroic tradition that was enshrined in the culture reflected in the *Mahābhārata*. We shall refer to this heroic culture in the next chapter.

The heroic society of the Vedic period was tribal in character. A number of families constituted a *grāma*, a number of *grāmas* a *viś* (clan) and a number of clans a tribe (*jana*). The leader of the *grāma* was the *grāmaṇi* and the head of the *jana* was the *rājan*. These leaders worked with the help of popular support and, for obtaining it, won the confidence of the associations of the people called *sabhā* and *samiti*. The *janas*, led by the *rājans*, were in a state of constant warfare from which arose larger groupings of peoples under able chiefs and kings. As a result a new political philosophy of conquest and empire grew and traced the origin of the state in the exigencies of war. As the *Āitareya Brāhmaṇa* (I, 14) says : "The Devas and Asuras were fighting. The Asuras defeated the Devas. The Devas said, 'it is on account of our

having no king that the Asuras defeat us. Let us elect a king'. All consented." In this way the state and war went hand in hand, each sustaining and fostering the other.

In course of time, as a result of the above developments, a class, exclusively devoted to the pursuit of arms, developed and was known as *Kṣatriya* or *Rājanya*. But it does not mean that other classes did not take part in war. As Macdonell and Keith have shown, the *Vaiśyas* must have formed the bulk of the force under *Kṣatriya* leaders and kings. In fact the whole community could be marshalled for the field in times of need. In that period we do not hear of the four-fold army; rather we read only of the *pattis* (infantrymen) and *rathins* (car-warriors) and, in some cases, there are also references to horsemanship. Kaegi has pictured the scene of a battle of that period as follows :

"When an enemy approaches the Aryan boundaries, earth works are thrown up, a barricade of timbers created, impassable bulwarks of bronze made and sacrifice offered to the gods to secure their help. Then the army advances with loud battle-songs, with the sound of drums and trumpets, with waving banners against the opposing foe. The warrior stands at the left of the chariot, and, beside him, the chariotcer, and the foot soldiers fight in close lines, village beside village, tribe beside tribe. The warrior is protected by brazen coat of mail and helmet; with the bow he hurls against the enemy feathered arrows with poisoned tips of horn or metal and presses on with spear and axe, lance and sling. And, when the enemy is conquered, loud rejoicing resounds with the beat of drums, like the noise of the rising storm; the sacred fire is kindled to offer to the gods a song and sacrifices of thanksgiving and then to divide the spoil." (*The R̥gveda*, Introduction, p. 19).

An important aide of the king on the battlefield is his *Purohita*. Before the start of the battle he stands to the west of the king's chariot and chants mantras appropriate to the occasion from the *R̥gveda*. He himself arms the king with bow, arrow and armour and even recites mantras over the horses. Then the king commences the battle in the formation invented by *Āditya* or by *Uśanas* (*Āśvalāyana Gṛhyasūtra*, III, 12 ff).

Forts and arsenals were known. Conflicts between the rural and urban people, the latter living in fortified cities, formed the main features of the political situation reflected in the Vedic hymns. Hence we find gods being implored to smite the forts and destroy the cities as well as their inhabitants.

III

THE HEROIC SOCIETY OF THE EPIC AGE

Out of the struggles and conflicts and conquests and movements of the Vedic and Later Vedic age emerged the heroic society the ideals and standards of which are embedded in the epics, notably the *Mahābhārata*. This society laid special stress on the value of action, and, though devoted to religion, could not tolerate the supercilious attitude of the priestly class. Hence we come across repeated references to the conflicts of the Kṣatriyas with the Brāhmaṇas whenever they tried to develop a caste out look in regard to social matters. The quarrel of Vasiṣṭha and Viśvāmitra and the conflict of Janamejaya and the priests or the argument between Śarmiṣṭhā and Devayānī, the Kṣatriya and Brāhmaṇa queens of Yayāti, in which the former refutes the latter's claim to superiority by stating that she is the daughter of one who merely sings the king's praises, may be symbolic of the general tensions in the social system. The priests claimed to be the superior people in view of their spiritual acquisitions, but the warriors actually controlled the power in that age of perpetual fighting. Naturally, therefore, the priests had to adapt their claims to the importance of the warriors and end by becoming the singers of their praises, as the Kṣatriya queen Śarmiṣṭhā pointed out to her Brāhmaṇa co-wife Devayānī.

The ideal of the hero is laid down in the *Mahābhārata* (IX, 5, 29) as follows : "Fame is all that one should acquire here.. That fame can be acquired by battle and by no other means." "Death on the field of battle, while fighting in accordance with the custom of the Kṣatriyas, is welcome. Undergoing such a death a person enjoys eternal happiness in the other world (*Ibid*, IX, 3, 53). Expounding the heroic ideal Karṇa says, "I long for fame even through the sacrifice of my life. Men having renown attain to heaven and those without it are lost. In the next world fame leads men to supreme bliss and in this it prolongs life. Performing.

impossible feats in battle, I shall sacrifice my life and, through conquering my enemies, I shall win fame alone. I shall win great renown in this world and have access to the highest heaven ; and this I have set my mind on that I shall preserve my good name at the cost of my life" (*Ibid.*, III, 299, 31 ff). This point is emphasized again and again, for instance, in XI, 2, 14, where it is categorically said that "he who is slain in battle attains to heaven and who slays his enemy acquires fame." The inevitableness of death, the irresistible course of destiny and the unflinching advance of the hero combine in the philosophy of fatalistic heroism which glorifies war for its own sake and treats it as the *summum bonum* of life. Hence we find stately knights, armoured and accoutred, full of pride and confidence, driving to battle in glittering chariots and performing prodigies of valour and heroism in utter forgetfulness of the distinction of life and death.

The Kṣatriya's business was to fight and to be on the battlefield. He should possess "strength, prowess, heroism and skill in the use of weapons and manliness and display them in battle." As Duryodhana says, "the death of a Kṣatriya on his bed is highly sinful. He is no man who dies miserably, borne down by disease, so I shall now fight a righteous battle and repair to the domains of Indra, obtaining the companionship of those who have attained to the highest bliss" (IX, 5, 30 ff). Similarly, Kṛṣṇa says to Jarāsandha : "The Kṣatriyas start on the sacrifice of war with the prospect of heaven before them and thus conquer the whole world." (II, 22).

From the very childhood a Kṣatriya was trained for war. Brāhmaṇa teachers, like Droṇa, were skilled in the use of arms and imparted instruction in it to the pupils in their forest retreats. Archery, club-fights, sword-contests, horsemanship and charioteering were the main items of this course. Some, like Arjuna, specialized in archery. Others, like Duryodhana and Bhīma, excelled in the use of mace, while persons, like Nakula and Sahadeva, were eminent swordsmen. The Āśramas of teachers and sages in forests were thus military academies humming and throbbing with the activities of young athletes and cadets. They had grown into cells and centres of military potential and even neighbouring kings could not treat them lightly with impunity. When Drupada slighted Droṇa, the latter's pupils pounced on him and brought him a prisoner before their teacher.

These military schools turned out vigorous young men, dashing and throbbing with the spirit of adventure, yearning for war and contests, ambitious of fame, confident of success, proud and boastful, fatalist and persevering. What interests the warrior is not so much the general assault or charge as personal encounter and contest with noted compeers. The scenes of such duels and combats are full of gripping suspense and exhilarating romance. The matches of Arjuna and Bhīṣma, Arjuna and Karṇa, Bhīma and Duryodhana and Yudhiṣṭhira and Śalya and many others of this sort are the focal points in the long descriptions of war in the Great Epic. Individual heroism dominates over planned strategy and personal gallantry eclipses mass tactics.

The heroic warrior revels in his achievement. He is justly proud of his ventures. Bragging and boasting are parts of his craft. Exchanges of blows are preceded by fiery speeches. Seeing Duṣṣāṣana before him, Abhimanyu taunts him for his misdeeds and says: "Today, in the presence of all these warriors, I will chastise you with my arrows. Today I will relieve myself of the weight of anger I bear against you as also from the debt I owe to my parents and uncles who ever desire your death. Today, in battle, I will repay the debt I owe to Bhīma. This day you shall not leave with your life, provided you do not abandon the fight." (VII, 40). Likewise Karṇa vaunts his prowess and skill and is confident of slaying Arjuna (VIII, 40, 5). In a similar vein Śalya triumphantly claims: "When angered I can fight with the whole world consisting of the celestials, Asuras and men. I will defeat the assembled Paṇḍavas and Somakas in battle. Let the world behold me moving about fearlessly on the field. Let the Paṇḍavas etc. witness the strength of my arms and the precious weapons I possess (IX, 7). Likewise Bhīma boasts of his prowess in high-sounding words (V, 163) and others consider themselves invincible. Often the heroes are shown to be fighting with gods on a footing of equality. Arjuna has a deadly encounter with Indra and effectively counteracts his blows of rocks and stones and eventually coaxes boons of weapons from him (I, 122). Similarly he fights with Śiva (III, 39). Nala foils the plans of the guardians of the quarters for winning Damayanti (III, 44) and Sukanyā dishes the Aśvins in their effort to woo her (III, 123) and Savitṛ prevails upon Yama to cancel his warrant of the death of her husband Satyavan. In fact the heroes are described as the sons and incarnations of the

gods. This feeling of pride and confidence and the idea of the divine ancestry of the heroes are born of the youthful and boisterous energy of the heroic age.

Personal prowess and individual valour are as much prized as noble lineage and heroic ancestry. When Karṇa challenges Arjuna to a single combat, the latter's friend Kṛpa questions his lineage and says : "This is the son of Pāṇḍu, the youngest child of Kuntī : he is a Kuru and will engage in a single combat with you. But, O mighty armed hero, you too should tell us of your ancestry, the lineage of your father and mother and the royal family of which you are an ornament. Arjuna will decide whether he will fight with you only after hearing of your family, for the sons of great kings never engage in a duel with men of inferior descent." (I, 138, 31). Obviously family tradition and ancestral nobility were the primary considerations in determining the role of a person in the heroic society.

The heroes not only excel on the battlefield, but also revel in their noble ancestry and achievement through minstrelsy and bardic poetry. Hence the minstrel or the bard is a constant mate of the hero. Yudhiṣṭhira is said to have been praised by a large number of sūtas, māgadhas and bards (vandins) (XV, 23). Sweet-tongued panegyrists and bards attend on the king (XII, 37) and actors, singers and eulogists wax eloquent in his praises (XIV, 70). They not only extol him in the court but also enthuse him on the battlefield (V, 197, 18). The craft of the minstrel is so exalted that kings and princes themselves cultivate it. Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa are spoken of as experts in minstrelsy (I, 122). On being asked what profession he would like to follow at the court of Virāṭa, Arjuna says that he would prefer the craft of a minstrel. In fact, bardic lauds constituted the core of the literature of the heroic age.

Though the heroes were impetuous and boisterous and often ignored the canons and conventions of warfare, for instance, when Arjuna shot at Karṇa when he was mending the wheel of his chariot or when Bhīma struck at the thigh of Duryodhana, by and large, they observed the established morality of fighting. At the commencement of the war Yudhiṣṭhira headed barefooted towards the ranks of the Kauravas and clasped the feet of Bhīṣma to seek his blessings and the latter pronounced his benediction on him. In VI, 108, 58 ff. we read that "the heroic Pāṇḍavas together with the son of Vasudeva went towards the tent of Bhīṣma. They had already put off their armours and dresses; and, entering the tent,

they all touched Bhīṣma's feet with their hands. Then the Pāṇḍavas saluted that foremost of the Bharatas with their bent heads and sought his protection". Again we read in II, 59, 1 ff. "Having entered the assembly hall, the sons of Pṛthā with Yudhiṣṭhira at their head, met all the kings present there. They worshipped all those, who deserved to be worshipped, and saluted others as each deserved according to his age." The society, to which they belonged, was marked by a hierarchy of grades and cadres commanding varying degrees of status and prestige, and, ordinarily, people adhered to it both in war and peace.

The heroic age saw a weakening of the ties of kinship. Hence, we find kinsmen, even brothers, fighting on opposite sides. Whereas Sahadeva, son of Jarāsandha, fought on the side of the Pāṇḍavas, his brother Jayatsena joined the ranks of the Kauravas. (V, 59). Instead of relations, based on kinship, bonds of regional and personal loyalties were gaining in importance. Hence kings and princes gathered round them their followers who constituted a sort of comitatus and stood by their lord through thick and thin. When Arjuna marched through Sind, its nobles and warriors attacked him because he had killed their chief Jayadratha (XIV, 77, 11). Similarly, when he went to Gandhāra, its warriors, burning with the desire to avenge the death of their chief Śakuni, assaulted him (XIV, 84, 2). This growth of regional and personal loyalties synchronized with an increase in social mobility manifest in the frequent changes of professions by members of different classes. If Brāhmaṇas, like Droṇa and Kṛpa, fight like Kṣatriyas, princes, like Devāpi and Sindhuvīpa, rank as Brāhmaṇas. Marriages between Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas are quite common. Not only Brāhmaṇas and Kṣatriyas interchange their professions, but they and the Vaiśyas also often do so. While the Brāhmaṇa Bhalandana becomes a Vaiśya (*Viṣṇupurāṇa*, IV, 1, 15; *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, IX, 2, 23), the Vaiśyas also can become Brāhmaṇas (*Harivamśa Purāṇa*, 11, 658; *Brāhma Purāṇa*, VII, 42). The merchant Tuladhara is described as superior to the rest of the world in piety and wisdom (*Mahābhārata*, XII, 261-2). Even the possibility of a Brāhmaṇa becoming a śūdra was admitted. In *Mahābhārata*, XII, 63, 4 ff., we read that a Brāhmaṇa, who neglects his duties, becomes a śūdra. Again in III, 312, 108 ff. we are told that even the study of the four Vedas does not make a wicked person better than a śūdra.

III, 180, 21 ff. let us know that he alone is a *Brahmaṇa* who is truthful, charitable, benevolent and forgiving, and, if the *śūdra* possesses these qualities, he is to be regarded as a *Brahmaṇa*. This mobile and resilient social structure answered to the requirements of the heroic age when fighting was the main pursuit and proficiency in it entitled a person to social greatness.

In the heroic age family life was all important. Hence we find expressions like the following : "without a wife the house is empty or a dreaded forest;" "there is no medicine equal to a wife, no friend like a wife, no refuge like a wife"; "one's wife is a friend given by God"; "happy are those that have wives, the highest good"; "revered are women, sacred lamps in the house"; "wives are the joy of a house." (V, 33, 88; XII, 144-5 ff; XII, 267, 31; XII, 343, 18; III, 61, 29-30; III, 313, 72; I, 74, 42-8; IV, 2, 17; V, 38, 11). Marriages were by consent or abduction or competition in contests. The institution of *Svayamvara* brings the position of a *Kṣatriya* woman into bold relief. She belongs to one who distinguishes himself by superior might and valour in jousts and tournaments, but if she dislikes a particular suitor for some reason, she has a right to oust him from the contest at the very outset ; for instance, *Draupadī* expressed her disapproval of *Karṇa* and prevented him from taking part in the competition for her. She typifies the ideal heroic woman full of force and vigour. On various occasions she incites her husbands to destroy the people who have insulted her. Her speech in the gambling hall, when *Yudhiṣṭhira* wanted to stake her, shows her strength and assertiveness. But this incident shows that men had all rights over their women and at times treated them as chattels. Yet a daughter began to be considered a heir in the absence of a son and as such could hold property. Polygamy was the rule and a woman had to put up with many co-wives. The desire for numerous sons may have been one of the causes of this practice, for, in the legend of *Jantu* in the *Mahābhārata* (III, 127), it is said that "one son is no son." At any rate though the ideal of woman was high, as is clear from the characters of *Savitri*, *Draupadī* and *Damayanti*, she was regarded as inferior to man obviously because in the heroic age martial virtues were considered the highest attainments.

The king was assisted by his *comitatus* or councillors who were mostly his relatives and generals. Though the texts provided that the priests should figure prominently among his advisers, in

practice, warriors got the upper hand. Collection of taxes, administration of justice and protection of the subjects were the main functions of a good ruler, but winning glory in war, expansion of the realm, getting the daughters of kings and receiving acknowledgements of his paramountcy from them, construction of magnificent capitals and palaces and holding of protracted and expensive sacrifices were his main ambitions.

The warriors believed in a life after death. In IX 5, 30 ff. Duryodhana asserts that through death in a righteous battle on the battle-field one can pass on to the region of Indra and obtain the companionship of those who have already gone there. In XI, 26, 12 Yudhiṣṭhira says: "Those mighty heroes, who have cheerfully faced death in fierce battle, have all attained to regions like those of Indra." The belief in the warriors' paradise is elaborated in XVIII, 1-3, where it is said that princes with more of evil than good in them first pass to the happy regions and, having enjoyed the fruits of that little good, are doomed to hell for ever, and the good heroes, on the other hand, first suffer for their small sins and then enjoy the companionship of the blessed in heaven.

The army of that age consisted of infantry, cavalry, chariots and elephants. The rule of fight was that horsemen should fight against horsemen, elephants against elephants and so on (VI, 45); but it was not always observed. Great warriors never fought on horseback and rarely on elephants; they preferred to fight in chariots and loved to be called *rathin*, *mahāratha* and *atiratha*. Whereas the Greek heroes went to war on chariots, but got down to fight on foot, the Indian heroes both drove and fought in chariots, except, when, on the failure of bows and arrows, they had to use swords or maces or do wrestling. The chariot usually contained two men, the driver and the warrior. The job of the driver was exalted but it implied singular dexterity and bravery. Usually the driver and horses were the objects of shots since their fall unnerved the warrior. Armours and weapons of many kinds were in vogue.

Thus, to sum up, we see that the symbols of the heroic age in the Panjab, as in other parts of the world, were "Mars and the Muses" as Chadwick says. It was an age of youthful energy, robustness and enthusiasm.

IV

THE HEROIC PHILOSOPHY OF THE BHAGAVADGITA

The philosophy of heroism of the epic age in the Panjab is expounded in the *Bhagavadgītā*, a part of the *Mahābhārata*. This work is a synthesis of many doctrines and creeds but its core is essentially the enunciation of the heroic cult. It consists of a dialogue between Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa on the eve of the Great Battle. As the rival armies stood in array and the glittering chariot of Arjuna, drawn by fiery white steeds, lumbered towards the enemy, he was struck with remorse at the prospect of the killing of his relatives and friends for the sake of material gain and thought of retiring from the battle in order to save them. But his friend, philosopher and guide, Kṛṣṇa, who was driving his chariot, egged him on to fight without caring for the consequences, since it was his sacred duty and moral obligation. The dialogue between these two persons, just on the eve of a great battle, when the two armies were ready to pounce on each other in a deadly encounter, is instinct with a dramatic quality, literary charm, logical subtlety and fatalistic determination, that are without parallel.

Arjuna shrinks from the battle in order to save his kinsmen and relatives from the holocaust. His argument is that if the members of his family are killed, the traditions and virtues (*dharma*) of the family will disappear and pammixia and promiscuity (*adharma*) will overtake it with the result that the women will lose their chastity and mate with degenerate people. This mixture and contamination of blood is a sign of decadence and amounts to hell. In such situation the rites for the dead are ignored, the offerings of cakes are not made to them and all the duties and dictates of the family and the community (*kuladharma*, *jātidharma*) are thrown overboard. This is a state of terrible degeneration in a family or tribe, which should be avoided at all costs, even at the expense of one's own rights and claims (I, 40-43). In these words Arjuna expounded the tribal morality in terms of which individual rights are secondary to the integrity of the community.

Kṛṣṇa had a different sociological perspective. He did not think in terms of family, tribe or community, but conceived of a broader society in which occupational classes cut across tribal boundaries and overrode family loyalties. In such society one had to be true to one's calling rather than one's family only and extend one's loyalty to one's class instead of confining it to the tribe. Class and calling, transcending family and tribe, demand a different sort of morality which consists of the performance of one's duty towards them even if they conflict with the interests of the latter. This morality also develops a traditional outlook with its own independent values and virtues of dedication and detachment.

The system of family and tribal relationships presupposes a cult of ancestor worship according to which the manes reside permanently in the other world and require their descendants in this world to propitiate and satisfy them with offerings and oblations in return for which they would enjoy happiness and peace. On the other hand the organisation of classes and callings implies a conception of transmigration of souls according to which they pass from one birth (II, 22) to another in response to their actions and do not need any presents or ceremonies from their offspring. Kṛṣṇa is an upholder of the latter individualist view and accordingly insists upon the meticulous life as the condition of a happy future. But this individualism has a socio-economic context of the dictates of callings and obligations of classes based upon professional integrity and steadfastness. According to it man is bound by the traditional morality of his class rather than the consideration of family or tribe. Arjuna is a kṣatriya or a warrior first and a Pāṇḍava afterwards. His primary obligation is to act as a warrior and acquit himself of his duty to fight on the battlefield, when the occasion for it arrives, rather than to think of his kinsmen, relatives and associates and brood over his duty to save their lives by sacrificing his own interests and retiring to a life of abnegation and asceticism.

In a society, having a professional structure in place of a tribal configuration, vocational morality assumes a traditional character. Social classes are coeval with economic functions and embody the scales of values and ideals associated with them. The *Gītā* insists that the four classes of priests, warriors, farmers and servants are based on quality (*guṇa*) and action (*karma*) so that there is sufficient mobility and resilience in them (IV, 13), but, side by side, the duties and obligations, enjoined by them, are binding

on the individuals, belonging to them, and deserve to be discharged with unquestioning sincerity and absolute dedication. The duties of these classes are prescribed in terms of their natural characteristics (XVIII, 41). The natural duty of a Brahmana is to lead a life of discipline, restraint and penance, to practise forbearance and simplicity, to devote himself to the pursuit of knowledge and science and to profess faith in the reality of being (*āstikya*) (XVIII, 42). The natural qualities of the warrior are valour, prowess, perseverance, skill, steadfastness in war, generosity and sovereignty (XVIII, 43). The work of the *vaiśya* is agriculture, cattle-breeding and trade and that of the *śūdra* is to serve others (XVIII, 44). These duties have to be performed by the members of these classes heart and soul, since one's own duty, though inferior, is better than that of others, though of high character (XVIII, 47). A person, performing his duty, does the righteous thing, though the same may be sinful (XVIII, 48), while one, shirking it, incurs sin, though desirous of merit. Thus a warrior should not shrink from fighting in a battle especially when it is for a righteous cause (II, 31), for it is only by luck that such occasions present themselves to him and open for him the door of heaven (II, 32). Failure to fight such a battle brings not only bad name, but also leads to heinous sin (II, 33). Only that man lives who enjoys good name and fame, while he, who is the object of calumny and disrespect, is no better than dead (II, 34). No anguish is greater than that of being condemned by others and being the target of their taunts and flings (II, 36). Hence, from the worldly point of view also, no less than from the moral angle of vision, the warrior should fight to the finish on the battlefield. In every respect, he is a gainer, if killed, he attains heaven, if successful, he enjoys the earth (II, 37).

By nature man must act. Nature goads everybody to action (III, 5). It is not possible to undertake the journey of life without action (III, 8). The world is a bond of action (III, 9). Even God is perpetual dynamism. If he were to become static the whole world may come to an end (III, 24). Thus it is not feasible for man to shirk action. Those, who avoid bodily action, but concentrate on it mentally, are guilty of hypocrisy (III, 6). A person, who abstains from taking food, avoids it physically but continues to have its mental enjoyment (II, 59). Likewise the psychical abstinence from action does not mean its cessation on the physical plane. Therefore the best course is to do away with the hypocrisy of

renouncing action and act in conformity with the code of conduct pertaining to one's station in life. Only that person fares well in life who discharges his duty and performs his function with utter disregard of result or outcome. This dedication to action with obliviousness of consequence is the highest standard of *yoga*. An outlook of equanimity on success and failure is called *yoga* (II, 48). He, who is not elated by victory nor depressed by defeat, is a true *yogin* or a *sthitaprajña* (II, 56). Such a person is devoid of all emotional attachments to objects of action; he is free from irritation or infatuation, greed, desire or lust; he is utterly forgetful of ends and is concerned only with means; for him effort is the goal, walking is reaching, movement is rest. In his action there is no sense of beginning or end (*anārambha*), it is spontaneous, incessant and fluent just in line with natural processes and universal cycles which go on without any consideration of goal or objective. This approach to action is necessitated by the fact that though man has the freedom to act, he has no control over the consequence of his action, as it depends on a variety of factors besides himself (II, 47). The *Gītā* view of detachment agrees in some respects with the injunctions given in the *Dissertations* (III, 24, 85-8) of Epictetus and *De Clementia* (II, 5, 4-5) of Seneca.

Disinterested action involves a training and discipline of the mind and the taming and control of senses and emotions (III, 7). One has to seek the refuge of reason and subordinate the senses to its rule (II, 68). In particular one has to curb the urges of anger and lust as they are the greatest enemies of man (II, 37) inasmuch as they make him think all the time of the result of action and thereby divert his attention from its proper performance. They surround the mind of man as smoke envelopes the fire or filth blurs a mirror (III, 38). Hence it is necessary to eradicate them by extending the sway of reason over the senses and control their operations through it. Knowledge combined with devotion, reason coupled with faith, are the instruments for promoting the rational approach and subverting the emotional standpoint. Through them comes that mental equipoise that enables one to do one's duty in a detached spirit. Therefore a man of action has also to be a man of knowledge and faith.

To inculcate the ideology of fighting for its own sake or action for the sake of action, the *Gītā* adumbrates a philosophy of determinism bordering on fatalism. According to it the universe

moves by its own momentum, nature, including man, works by its own imperatives and orientations, and there are impersonal forces driving man towards specific fields of action. The whole scheme of being, consisting of the birth and death and appearance and disappearance of multifarious forms, is an inexorable and irrevocable process. It is personified in the macrocosmic form (*virāṭrūpa*) of God which embraces and encompasses the whole expanse of space and span of time. His infinite existence without beginning, middle or end is made of countless arms, legs, mouths, eyes and other bodily limbs (XI, 16). In his cosmic aspect (*viśvarūpa*) the sun and the moon are the eyes (XI, 19). He is birth of those who are to come and death of those who live (X, 34). He is the upholder and protector of the world as also its destroyer and changer (X, 33). He is the ideal of perfection in every category of being, animate or inanimate, abstract or concrete (X, 21-31). All actions are being performed within the expanse of his body. The warriors, assembled on the battlefield, fight and kill each other as parts of his bodily process. The sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, together with the groups of kings, Bhīṣma, Droṇa and Karṇa as well as the heroes on the Paṇḍava side hasten towards his terribly burning jaws and are being crushed to pieces there by an inner irresistible drive (XI, 26-27). As rivers, flowing with the pressure of their waters, hasten towards the sea, or as masses of moths, flying in response to an inner incentive, burn themselves on the flame of lamp, similarly the warriors and soldiers, fighting under the impulsion of history, rush towards his gaping mouth to meet death (XI, 28-29). His flaming tongues seem to be licking with fire the whole world on all sides and his refulgence seems to be burning the entire creation (XI, 30). This terrific form of the cosmic being is Time or death which is out to consume the world (X, 32). The soldiers and warriors, assembled at Kurukṣetra, are predestined to die and are doomed to perish irrespective of the will or wish of individual combatants. Their leaders and commanders are only instruments, operational causes, (*nimittamātra*), to execute the cosmic will (X, 33). Their duty consists only in carrying it out with complete resignation and dedication. The substance of this imagery of the macrocosmic being and the philosophy of universal organicism, implicit in it, is that history unrolls itself as a natural impersonal process and wars are fought in response to unavoidable situations and the duty of a soldier and warrior is to take part in them without questioning or hesitation and considerations of

victory and defeat or success and failure. They have to discharge the duty, they owe to their class and calling, without the least care of consequences and in disregard of the affiliations of family or friendship. Even if the brother, relative, teacher, elder, friend and the near and dear ones are arrayed on the opposite side, they have to be fought with and killed with complete equanimity, detachment and nonchalance. This is the high water-mark of the heroic ideal.

We have seen that the *Gītā* is a stirring testament of war and an inspiring scripture of heroism, but, side by side, it is also a sermon of peace and non-violence. Among the qualities of a good man (*abhiyāta*), it includes non-violence (*ahimsā*), truth (*satya*), affability (*akrodha*), sacrifice (*tyāga*), peace (*śānti*), absence of backbiting (*apaśūna*), compassion (*dayā*), ungreediness (*aloluptva*), softness (*mārdava*), bashfulness (*hrī*), straightforwardness (*acāpala*), dominating spirit (*teja*), pardon (*kṣamā*), firmness (*dhṛti*), purity (*śauca*), friendliness (*adroha*) and modesty (*nātimānitā*) (XVI, 2-3) and states that a man of such qualities heads for salvation (XVI, 5). How then it is possible that a soldier, fighting and killing others on the battle-field, can be a votary of non-violence (*ahimsā*)? The *Gītā* resolves this dilemma in two ways. Firstly it says that all good qualities, including non-violence, are the corollaries of non-attachment. Non-attachment is the greatest virtue and attachment is the greatest vice. One, who is free from attachment, is devoid of all vices, and he, who is attached to things, is the home of all sins. A person, who has no bias or prejudice for or against the issue of any endeavour, is not touched by the taints associated with it. On the other hand he, who is engrossed in the cares and anxieties of fruits and results, partakes of the blemishes pertaining to them. Accordingly the hero or warrior, who fights the battle, thinking that fighting alone is his duty, and is devoid of the feeling of malice or rancour for his adversary and is likewise immune from partiality or favouritism for his collaborator, is not polluted by the sin associated with killing. On the other hand the truant, who desists from the physical acts of injury but harbours rancour and hatred for others and wishes ill to them, is guilty of the heinous offence of violence. The nature of action depends on the motive underlying it; an act is an offence only in proportion to the *mens rea* of the person doing it. Thus non-violence is a mental attribute meaning the absence of malice and hatred rather than the abstinance from bodily injury.

Secondly there is difference between righteous war

(*dharma-yuddha*) and egregious war (*asura-yuddha*). A war for the vindication of right and eradication of wrong, fought in accordance with the established canons, without the feeling of malice and hatred, when all other alternatives have failed, is righteous and brings merit and beatitude. It is resorted to as the last recourse and its motive is beneficent. It is in the nature of a social surgery having a noble purpose. When the surgeon cuts the limb of a patient, he does so with a gentle intention, though the operation may cause pain to the latter and may even prove fatal. Similarly, when the judge passes a death sentence on a criminal, he has the well-being of society at heart and is not dubbed as an abettor of the offence of murder. Likewise, when the righteous warrior offers and takes blood in battle with the idea of removing evil from the body social, his motive is pure and he performs an act of merit, though it may cause loss of limb and life to a large number of persons, some of them being quite faultless. From this point of view the warrior acts merely as a social surgeon and performs a useful operation with a good purpose. Though fighting and killing, he maintains his non-violent disposition and does not incur the sin of violence or himsa. In this way war (*yuddha*) and non-violence (*ahimsa*) are not antithetical but complementary.

It is clear from the aforesaid discussion that the *Bhagavad-gītā* expounds a comprehensive philosophy of heroism current in ancient Punjab. It seeks to provide a philosophical foundation to the profession of arms and invests the warrior with a respectful position and a noble status. Side by side it canonizes his professional integrity and injects an intensity of purpose into it. It enjoins on the warrior to stake his all in fighting and not to flinch or falter even in the face of tremendous odds. The hero, idolized by it, is identical with the martyr whom Toynbee describes as "a soldier who takes it upon himself to bear witness to the supreme value and the absolute obligation of military virtues in a situation in which his only means of giving his testimony is to sacrifice his life on a forlorn hope" (*A Study of History*, Vol. V, page 378. By inculcating detachment and dedication of the highest degree and preaching a determinism and organicism of a subtle type, it couples war with fatalism and thereby makes it deadly and enhances its destructiveness. But, by joining the idea of righteousness and goodness to it, it assuages its malevolence and makes it an instrument of social justice and welfare.

That this philosophy was professed by the warriors of the Panjab is manifest from the fact that the army of Poros carried with it a portrait of Herakles or Kṛṣṇa and followed his message contained in the *Gītā* as J. N. Banerjea has shown (*Purāṇika and Tāntrika Religion*, p. 25). Not only this army but countless generations of soldiers must have derived their strength and inspiration from it.

HEROIC SCENES FROM THE MAHABHARATA

We have seen in the last chapter how the gospel of the *Bhagavadgitā* galvanised the people of the Panjab into the heroic frame of mind. In fact these people exhibited great heroism and gallantry in many memorable scenes of the great battle which live for ever in the glowing descriptions of the Great Epic. As is well-known, most of the peoples of the Panjab, the Gāndhāras, Kāmbojas, Traigartas, Madras, Mālavas, Pauravas, Bālīkas, Yaudheyas etc. are said to have fought on the side of the Kauravas. Hence the exploits of these people can be read in the accounts of the charges of the Kauravas against the Pāṇḍavas. Here we propose to recapture some of the scenes of those heroic encounters.

On the first day the battle started with deafening noise and bustle. The twangs of the bows, neighing of horses, trumpeting of elephants, tinkling of bells, tied to their howdas, and rattling of arms made the hair stand on end (VI, 45, 4-6). In that roar and fury, the Pāṇḍava chief Yudhiṣṭhira attacked the Madra King Śalya on the Kaurava side but the latter cut his bow in twain (VI, 45, 28). But Yudhiṣṭhira got hold of another bow and covered Śalya with volleys of pointed arrows thundering all the time 'stop', 'stop' (VI, 45, 30). At the same time Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna from the Pāṇḍava side engaged the Bālīka King on the Kaurava side in a deadly encounter (VI, 45, 38) and the Pāṇḍala King Drupada clashed with Jayadratha, lord of the Sindhu country (VI, 45, 55), who injured him with three sharp darts (VI, 45, 56). From the Kaurava side the Gāndhāra King Śakuni marched against Prativindhya like a mad elephant (VI, 45, 63) and the Kāmboja chief Sudakṣiṇa charged Śrutakarma with irresistible vehemence causing him numerous injuries (VI, 45, 68). Thus the battle raged with terrible fury, the warriors forgetting and failing to recognize their relatives and making short shrift of each other (VI, 47, 47).

The second day of the battle opened with intense suspense and careful planning. Unnerved by the reverses of the previous day, the Pāṇḍavas arrayed their forces in the Krauñcavyūha. To meet it the Kauravas also took adequate precautions. The armies of Trigarta, Madras and Yavanas, with other contingents, protected the generalissimo Bhīṣma (VI, 51, 7). By their side were arrayed the Gāndhāras, Saindhavas, Sauvīras, Śibis and Vasatis (VI, 51, 13—14). Śakuni, the chief of Gandhāra, gave coverage to Droṇa and Duryodhana, at the dead of the Daradas, Śakas, Kṣudrakas and Mālavas, took care of Śakuni in turn (VI, 51, 16). The right wing consisted of another section of the northern people led by the Traigarta King Suśarman and the Kāmboja chief Sudakṣiṇa (VI, 51, 18). The day was marked by memorable encounters like that between Bhīṣma and Arjuna (VI, 52), Dhṛṣṭadyumna and Droṇa (VI, 53), Bhīma and the Kālingas and Niṣādas (VI, 54) and the prodigies of Abhimanyu and Arjuna (VI, 55).

On the third day Bhīṣma deployed his forces in the Garuḍa array, himself taking the beak position in the front. Aśvatthāman and Kṛpā, at the head of the Traigartas, Kaikayas and Vāṭadhānas, occupied the eye points. Śalya and Jayadratha, leading the warriors of the Madras, Sindhu, Sauvīra and Pañcanada, were at the neck. Duryodhana constituted the back and the Kāmbojas and Śakas, the tail. On the Pāṇḍava side the Pauravas and Prabhadrakas (people of Hariyana later called Bhadrakas) took positions in the centre (VI, 56). In the beginning the Pāṇḍavas took the offensive and pushed their opponents back, but, in a trice, Bhīṣma rallied and charged with irresistible fury, compelling even Kṛṣṇa to take up arms against his vow. However Arjuna mustered up courage, dissuaded Kṛṣṇa from his design to fight and himself plunged into the fray with grim resolve. The talk of the night was that he had killed seven hundred elephants and ten thousand warriors including the contingents of the Sauvīras, Kṣudrakas, Mālavas and the Kṣātragaṇas (VI, 59, 135).

The first important event of the fourth day was the encounter between Bhīṣma and Arjuna (VI, 60). Arjuna's son Abhimanyu also displayed prodigies of valour. But they were overwhelmed by the enemy. Thereupon Dhṛṣṭadyumna advanced with thousands of horses, elephants and chariots and fell on the Madras guarding the key-points, killing ten of them in a moment. This led to a furious clash between him and the Madra chief Śalya (VI, 62) resulting in numerous casualties. At the end Bhīma and Ghaṭotkaca dominated

the scene and cornered the Kauravas (VI, 64).

The fifth day dawned with the formation of ingenious arrays, the Kauravas making the Makaravyūha and the Pāṇḍavas the Syenavyūha (VI, 69). The first encounter was between Bhīṣma and Bhīma. Then Arjuna took the offensive and threw the enemy in disorder. At that juncture the Panjabi contingents distinguished themselves. The Kāmboja cavaliers, accompanied by thousands of Gopas, advanced under the command of their chief Sudakṣiṇa; the Madra, Sauvira, Gandhara and Traigarta warriors rallied round the king of Kalinga; the Sind troops under Jayadratha followed Duḥśāśana and fourteen thousand troops took the field under Śakuni (VI, 71, 13-15). A murderous fight followed, the highlights of which were the duels between Virāṭa and Bhīṣma, Aśvatthāman and Arjuna, Duryodhana and Bhīma and Abhimanyu and Lakṣmaṇa (VI, 73). In course of it, from the Kaurava side, Bhūriśravas advanced and killed the ten sons of Satyaki which infuriated the Pāṇḍavas and led Arjuna to display the feats of his arms (VI, 74).

On the sixth day the Kauravas made the Krauñcavyūha and the Pāṇḍavas the Makaravyūha. As usual the Panjabi contingents occupied the key positions in the Kaurava array. Throughout the day the fighting continued with varying intensity. Towards the end Duryodhana led a dashing charge against Bhīma, but he squarely countered it, inflicting serious injury on his rival which made him unconscious for the time (VI, 79). At last, bathed in blood, the warriors returned to their respective camps for the night rest.

The seventh day witnessed the Maṇḍalavyūha of the Kauravas and the Vajravayūha of the Pāṇḍavas. But, at the very outset, the fear of Arjuna descended on the Kaurava side. But Duryodhana harangued them into fury and initiative. Then came several encounters such as between Droṇa and Virāṭa, Aśvatthāman and Śikhaṇḍin, Alambuṣa and Satyaki, Dhṛṣṭadyumna and Duryodhana and Kṛtavarman and Bhīma (VI, 82). Whereas Bhagadatta worsted Ghaṭotkaca, Nakula and Sahadeva routed the Madra chief Śalya (VI, 83). At last Arjuna dashed forward and spread terrible slaughter. On that the Traigarta King Suśarma charged Arjuna, the Sindhu King Jayadratha also joined the contest and Bhīṣma himself rolled forward like a cloud. In that heat the sun set and sent the soldiers to their rest.

The eighth day was one of unparalleled fury. The Kaurava array resembled an ocean (VI, 87, 13). To counter it the Pāṇḍavas devised the Śṛṅgāṭakavyūha. In the terrific fight, that ensued, Bhīṣma showed remarkable pluck, but Bhīma also dashed on and killed eight brothers of Duryodhana. Thereupon Duryodhana scolded Bhīṣma for soft-peddalling the Pāṇḍavas (VI, 88, 38). Egged on by the reprimand, the Kaurava commander, along with other heroes, staked their all in an all-out offensive. Important among the encounters was the lock-up between Ghaṭotkaca and Duryodhana, Droṇa and other warriors. For a while the former was irresistible. Then, at the instance of Duryodhana, Bhagadatta foiled his magical strategy and gave some respite to the embattled Kauravas. But the death of Irāvān by Alambuṣa pained Arjuna whereas the death of Duryodhana's brothers unnerved the Kauravas. At the end of the day the field wore a ghastly look.

At night Duryodhana was furious at Bhīṣma. Being under the impression that Bhīṣma was wilfully avoiding killing the Pāṇḍavas on account of some softness, he proposed to entrust the command to Karṇa. But Karṇa was not agreeable to assume the command so long as Bhīṣma was at the helm of affairs (VI, 97, 8). Therefore Duryodhana approached Bhīṣma with the request to lay down arms. Picqued by his words, Bhīṣma undertook to launch a grim assault next day (VI, 98, 20). Accordingly early next morning Bhīṣma arrayed his army in the form of the Sarvatobhadra Vyūha and placed the Panjabi warriors, Śakuni of Gandhāra, Jayadratha of Sindhudeśa and Sudakṣiṇa of the Kāmbojas at the head of it and the warriors of Trigarta (Kangra region) in the middle part (VI, 99, 2-6). The Pāṇḍavas also made adequate preparations. In the earlier part of the day they remained dominant. The sons of Draupadī and Abhimanyu made a dashing charge and repulsed the enemy particularly Alambuṣa. Arjuna also engaged Bhīṣma and Sātyaki was locked with Droṇa and Kṛpā. In that affray the encounter of the warriors of Kangra, led by their chief Suśarman, with Arjuna was memorable. He wounded Arjuna and even Kṛṣṇa with fierce arrows. But Arjuna parried his blows and dealt severe blows at his followers (VI, 104, 8). At the same time the Gandhāra cavalry of Śakuni and the Madra soldiers of Salya fought with Yudhiṣṭhira, Nakula and Sahadeva and suffered a setback (VI, 105). This enflamed Bhīṣma into making a mighty onslaught which broke the ranks of the Pāṇḍavas. Unable to bear it, Kṛṣṇa again renounced his resolve not to fight and, throwing the

reins of the horses, advanced towards Bhīṣma with a disc. But Arjuna, ashamed of the prospect of the violation of Kṛṣṇa's vow, ran after him and dragged him back pledging himself to fight with full dedication.

That night the Pāṇḍavas confabulated on how to vanquish the formidable Bhīṣma. Unable to find a way out, they went to consult Bhīṣma himself about the means of his fall. Those were days of chivalry when elders stuck to the rules of the game of war. Hence the elderly general had a frank talk with his opponents and suggested that he would not fight with a woman, a person bearing the name of a woman, a soldier who had fallen or thrown down his arms or sought refuge or was the only son of his mother or belonged to a lower social category (VI, 107, 77-8). Taking the hint, the wily counsellors of the Pāṇḍavas decided to place the effeminate Śikhaṇḍin before Bhīṣma and, finding him unwilling to assault him, ply him with darts and missiles from behind.

As the tenth day dawned, Bhīṣma mounted his destructive assault, killing and wounding myriads of warriors. But then the Pāṇḍavas employed the stratagem devised last night. They brought Śikhaṇḍin before Bhīṣma whereupon he refused to fight. In the meantime other heroes engaged each other. Jayahrata injured Arjuna and Bhīma with sharp arrows and the latter also worsted many of his foes. In course of fighting the Pāṇḍava heroes rallied behind Śikhaṇḍin. At the head of the Pañcalas and the Śṛṇjayas, Arjuna shot showers of arrows on the Kaurava commander. Ultimately, being wounded and pierced like a sieve, Bhīṣma fell unconscious. A wave of lamentation ran among the Kauravas, but the Pāṇḍavas were jubilant, for they had scored a great success, though with means not above reproach.

On the fall of Bhīṣma the Kauravas appointed Droṇa as their commander-in-chief. The strategy of the new general was to divert Arjuna away from the battlefield and then to capture Yudhiṣṭhira alive. For this purpose, on the eleventh day, he launched a fierce offensive on all fronts. The Madras under Śalya engaged Bhīma and the warriors of Trigarta (Kullu-Kangra) approached Arjuna and, retreating in an orderly manner, brought him also out of the battlefield. These warriors are called Samsāptaka. The sense of this term is that they took a vow either to kill Arjuna and his army or to fall fighting on the battle-field (VII, 17, 16). Besides the Traigartas, the Mālavas, Madras, Mavellakas and many other tribal peoples also took this vow and joined their forces. First they

separately sacrificed to the fire and then put on their clothes and armours, smeared their bodies with ghee and tied the girdles of grass as in a religious ceremony (VII, 17, 22-23). Then they fed the Brahmanas, dispensed gifts and largesse of gold, cows and clothes, acknowledged the blessings of the priests, tasted water and lit the fire and before it took the vow of 'do or die' in the following words :

"Should we return from the battlefield without killing Arjuna or leave it for fear of his arrows, let us go to the abode of Yama like those, who betray their vows, kill Brahmanas, violate the endowments of kings, are treacherous towards the refugee or cruel to the beggar, conceal their caste, fight with women or effeminate persons, trample the crops under foot or urinate before the sun." (VII, 17, 29-35)

Taking this vow, in the aforesaid manner, which throws light on the martial spirit and ideas of those times in the Panjab, those communities (*vrātas*), oligarchies (*gaṇas*), companies and contingents of the so-called Samśaptakas accosted Arjuna for fight. Arjuna could not ignore the call and advanced to meet them. The Samśaptakas had devised a crescent-like array, called Candrakāravayūha, to envelope Arjuna. In particular the formations of their cavalry were ingenious and formidable. In that context we find an elaborate description of the horses of many breeds and colours in chapter 23. Arjuna also gave the best account of himself that day. Filling the space with showers of his arrows, he muffled the enemies who also roared and cried and struck and dashed. The rain of darts and missiles was so thick that it was difficult to identify any particular person or even to see Arjuna or Kṛṣṇa, some even thinking that they had been killed (VII, 29, 19). Even Kṛṣṇa cried to ask Arjuna about his whereabouts (VII, 29, 21). But Arjuna was busy fighting with full valour and foiled the designs of all his enemies through what is called the wind-releasing missile (*vāyavyāstra*) which dissipated the weapons hurled by them. However the thrill and suspense was great and the slaughter naturally heavy, but the issue remained undecided.

Next day, the twelfth, the Samśaptakas again engaged Arjuna. The fight was as grim as on the previous day. Meanwhile Droṇa arrayed his troops in the form of the Garuḍavyūha and launched a fierce attack on the Pāṇḍava army, killing many warriors like Satyajit, Śatānka, Dṛḥasena, Kṣema, Vasudāna etc. The

Pāṇḍavas dispersed pell-mell. By that time, after warding off the attack of the Samsāptakas, Arjuna turned towards another theatre of war where the elephant corps of Bhagadatta was spreading great havoc. But the Traigarta King Suśarman challenged him for a contest and engaged him before he could go to the rescue of the embattled Pāṇḍavas. First Arjuna injured Suśarman with a volley of seven arrows and cut away his bow and banner (VII, 28, 7). Then he despatched his brother along with his horses and charioteer with another volley of six arrows (VII, 28, 8). Suśarman also hurled a serpent shaped iron missile at Arjuna and assaulted Kṛṣṇa with a mace but Arjuna foiled these blows with three arrows each. Then Arjuna charged the army of Suśarman like a wild fire and came near the redoubtable Bhagadatta (VII, 29, 2) who was raining death from the back of his elephant. In that deadly encounter people thought that Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa had entered into the veritable jaws of death. Bhagadatta darted his barbed arrows, maces and missiles both at Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa causing them substantial injury. At last he let loose his powerful goad, which would have proved fatal for Arjuna, but for the intercession of Kṛṣṇa, who parried it on his breast. On the failure of this move, Arjuna killed his elephant with a lance and a bit later pierced his breast with an arrow. The fall of Bhagadatta was a major loss to the Kaurava side. Then Arjuna measured arms with the Gāndhara princes Vṛṣaka and Acala and killed them with five hundred troops (VII, 30, 6). Then the Gāndhara chief Sakuni took resort to his war-magic. It appeared as if all the quarters were pouring fire and arms on Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa and varied animals were advancing to swallow them (VII, 30, 16-20). But Arjuna foiled the spell and, raising loud noise, trampled forward in the thick of battle. After a grim tussle, the armies retired, exhausted and unhinged, from the battle-field.

Next day, the thirteenth of the battle, Droṇa planned the famous disc-array (Cakravyūha) to entrap some notable Pāṇḍava hero. In the meantime the Samsāptaka warriors engaged Arjuna and, fighting with him, drove him aside from the main theatre. On the Pāṇḍava side, there was nobody to undertake the campaign against the Cakravyūha. Only the young prince Abhimanyu had the know-how of it. With undaunted courage he charged the array and made a terrible slaughter of the enemy. His attack on the northern cavalry of the Kāmbojas and Balhikas was particularly devastating (VII, 36, 37-39). Even Duḥśāsana and Karṇa could not check him, even the Madra King Śalya fell unconscious and his

brother was killed. The brother of Karna too succumbed to the injuries. So, charging and killing, Abhimanyu penetrated into the array but his followers were detained at the entrance by Jayadratha. Inside the array the heroic prince startled and stupefied even the veterans by his martial feats. Many illustrious warriors were slashed and pierced by him. Even Satyaśravas, Rukmaratha, Lakṣmaṇa and Krathaputra lost their lives. The duel between Abhimanyu and Karna was blood-curdling. Ultimately six warriors surrounded the young hero from all sides and, when he was bereft of his chariot and arms, pounced upon him with infinite treachery. The fall of this gallant hero, the darling of the Pāṇḍava camp, sent a wave of distress and despair in it. Yudhiṣṭhira burst into pathetic lamentation and all heroes gasped and fainted. Even Arjuna, on returning from the contest with the Saindhava King Jayadratha next day by the evening or consign himself to the flames (VII, 73, 47).

The fourteenth day was naturally one of intense suspense and brisk preparations, for Arjuna was bent on killing Jayadratha and the Kauravas had determined to protect him till the evening in all ways and, for that purpose, devised the Cakraṣakaṭavyūha. Arjuna joined the battle in high spirits, repulsed the elephant corps of Durmarṣaṇa, routed the contingent of Duḥśāsana and, contending hard with Droṇa and Kṛpa, dashed into the array. Just on entering it, he had to bear the onslaught of Śrutāyudha who fell upon him with a mighty mace (VII, 92, 43) and even injured Kṛṣṇa with it (VII, 92, 52). But the mace recoiled on Śrutāyudha himself and he fell like a spacious tree uprooted by the storm (VII, 92, 59). Then the Kāmboja chief Sudakṣiṇa briskly approached near Arjuna and injured him with five arrows and Kṛṣṇa with three. But Arjuna pierced him with two sharp darts. Then Sudakṣiṇa roared and launched an iron missile which emitted sparks of fire and hit Arjuna making him unconscious. However he mustered up his stamina and shot fourteen arrows at his adversary and with a pointed dart pierced his breast (VII, 93, 39-40). His fall created a stir. Many warriors advanced in full fury. The fighting became pell-mell. Contingents of many tribes and countries huddled together to resist Arjuna. The Yavaṇas, Pāradas, Śakas and Bālīhikas and other northern peoples, collectively called Mlecchas, were using their occult stratagems and contrivances (VII, 93, 42). Among them there were fully shaven, half-shaven, full-haired and

bearded people (VII, 93, 47). This description reminds one of the remark of the *Harivamśa* (XIII, 763-64) that the Śakas shaved half of their crown, the Yavanas and the Kāmbojas the whole of it, the Pāradas grew full hair and hang them dishevelled and the Pallavas (Pahlavas) had full beards. Arjuna's encounter with these people, particularly Śrutayu and Ambaṣṭha, was terrible.

Seeing Arjuna advance with steady and rapid step, Duryodhana again scolded Droṇa who invested him with an unbreakable armour and directed him to charge the Pāṇḍava hero. Glittering with that golden armour, the Kaurava chief dashed on Arjuna, while Droṇa had engaged Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna. The fighting rolled like a lumbering cloud in which arms jingled like the eastern gale and maces clashed and sparked like lightning and arrows poured like rain (VII, 95, 9-10). Arjuna's horses were also exhausted and Kṛṣṇa had to unyoke them for a rest. Meanwhile Arjuna held his ground against formidable adversaries. When the horses had taken water and the chariot was ready, he again jumped into it and resumed his advance. Duryodhana proved a hard nut to crack on account of his impenetrable armour. But Arjuna struck him in the nails with consummate marksmanship and routed him. In the meantime Satyaki also fought his way through the Kaurava array and reached to help Arjuna while Ghaṭotkaca in a deadly encounter smashed the demoniac Alambuṣa. The other warriors also displayed prodigies of valour and skill, the elephant corps of Trigarta (Kullu-Kangra) being particularly vigorous and the contingents of the Śakas, Kāmbojas, Yavanas, Śabaras, Kirātas and Barbaras being very destructive, some of them hurling and pelting stones and brickbats. At last Bhīma also pierced the Kaurava array, baffling and stifling Droṇa and Karṇa in terrific encounters. In this grim battle the sun began to sink in the west enhancing the suspense of the fighters lest Jayadratha might survive the sunset and Arjuna commit suicide in accordance with his vow. But a pall of cloud suddenly enveloped the sun giving the impression of sunset. The Kauravas raised a deafening roar. Out of curiosity Jayadratha also raised his head aloft to see the sunset. But just then Kṛṣṇa hinted to Arjuna to shoot at him. Instantly an arrow flew from the string of Arjuna and slashed the head of Jayadratha and then an unending trail of them despatched it to the lap of his meditating father. Soon the cloud passed off leaving the streaks of the setting sun cast their prismatic glow on the ghastly battle-field. Everybody saw that Jayadratha was killed in daylight and Arjuna was saved.

from his deadly vow. The mourning of the Kauravas and rejoicing of the Pāṇḍavas were tremendous.

The pitch of fighting and intensity of feeling was so high that day that fighting went on even during the night. Yudhiṣṭhira was locked with Duryodhana and Droṇa pounced on the Pāṇḍava forces with murderous fury. Heroes vied with each other scolding and challenging their compeers to advance, the irritating dialogue of Aśvatthāman and Karṇa being pointedly bitter and provocative. Fighting proceeded in the glow of lights held aloft on the field. The repulse of Yudhiṣṭhira by Kṛtavarman, the defeat of Sahadeva by Karṇa, the routing of Virāṭa by Śalya and the overthrow of the Pāṇḍava forces by Kaurava heroes sent a shudder in the battlefield. Finding themselves unnerved, Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna instigated Ghaṭotkaca to attack the Kauravas with his diabolic strategy. That demon chief showered stones and rocks from the air and through his magic tactics discomfited the adversaries. Unable to cope with his devastating onslaught, Karṇa had no option but to launch his special missile, which he had kept in reserve for Arjuna, at him. The missile went through his body making him fall with thunderous noise. The Pāṇḍavas were sorry, but Kṛṣṇa was happy that the weapon, that could kill Arjuna, had been spent off. Thereafter both sides retired for rest.

Next day, the fifteenth, there was no fighting, for the armies were asleep or relaxing, but, with the advent of night, they again took up arms and resumed the battle, which lasted throughout the next day. Picqued by the rebukes of Duryodhana, Droṇa was very fierce, almost irresistible. At his hands many heroes like Drupada and Virāṭa fell. His clash with Arjuna was dogged and bitter. His charges and sallies wrought havoc on the Pāṇḍava side. Myriads of men and animals perished like moths in the scorching heat of his attacks. Even the astute Kṛṣṇa had to admit that so long as Droṇa would be wielding the bow in his hand even all the gods, headed by Indra, would not be able to vanquish him (VII, 190, 10). Unnerved and unhinged, they threw proprieties to the winds and began to deliberate on the devices to disarm him. Kṛṣṇa counselled that he had so much attachment for his son, Aśvatthāman, that, on hearing of his death, he would renounce arms in despair and then it would be possible to overpower him. But to kill Aśvatthāman was no joke and Droṇa would not heed rumours unless corroborated by a man of proved veracity like Yudhiṣṭhira. Hence the warriors, led by Kṛṣṇa, persuaded

Yudhiṣṭhira to state that Aśvatthāman had been killed and, to provide some justification for his statement, in order to protect his truthfulness, Bhīma killed an elephant of his side whose name was also Aśvatthāman. For a moment Yudhiṣṭhira quailed and trembled at the prospect of faltering from the path of truth, but the machiavellian Kṛṣṇa was there to overcome his tribulation by exhorting "save us from Droṇa, falsehood is better than truth, to tell a lie to save life does not bring any sin" (VII, 191, 47). At last, Yudhiṣṭhira succumbed to the entreaties, exhortations and promptings of everybody in his camp and, approaching Droṇa, cried aloud that Aśvatthāman had been killed, but uttering slowly that he was an elephant. This convinced Droṇa of the death of his son and, throwing off arms, he gave himself up to mourning and assumed a yogic posture to renounce his life. Instantly Dhṛṣṭadyumna leaped on him and severed his head with his sword. The whole battlefield rang with loud lamentation and even the wily Pāṇḍavas pined and whined at the dastardly act. A foul and heinous offence had been committed, but it was demonstrated that, in a battle, the only ism is survivalism and the only policy is expediency.

However the news of the murder of Droṇa spread like wild fire and wrenched his son Aśvatthāman, who was fighting in another quarter, with burning fury. Quaking with anger, he advanced towards the Pāṇḍavas with indomitable drive. The earth shook, sea surged, rivers lost their course, mountains crumbled down, sky darkened, men and animals were paralysed with fear (VII, 196, 3-4). His special missile, the Nārāyaṇāstra, began to sear the rows of army like hay. At the suggestion of Kṛṣṇa, the soldiers, that lived, threw aside their weapons and began to pray. Kṛṣṇa even dragged the obstinate Bhīma from his chariot and stripped him of his weapons. This was done because the missile was not expected to harm any defenceless person. Ultimately the missile proved infructuous, but, in the fighting that followed, Aśvatthāman had killed Mālava, Paurava and the Cedi prince and routed the Pāṇḍava troops. His firearm, Āgneyāstra, was particularly destructive for them.

On the fall of Droṇa the Kauravas anointed Karṇa as their Commander. On the seventeenth day of the battle he arranged his army in the 'crocodile array' (*Makaravyūha*) and to counteract it the Pāṇḍavas formed the crescent array (*Ardhacandravyūha*). The fighting assumed a refreshed severity under the new commander of

Kaurava forces. The rain of maces and missiles and the noise and roar of men and animals presented the spectacle of a terrible storm. In the mace fight Bhīma crushed the redoubtable Kṣemadhūrti. He and Aśvatthāman also clashed with such vehemence that both became unconscious (VIII, 15). Then the famous Samśaptaka warriors of the Panjab fell upon Arjuna like mighty bulls eager for the cow in heat (VIII, 16, 10) and had a deadly encounter with him. Aśvatthāman also assaulted Arjuna, but had to retreat, though killing the Pāṇḍya King. Meanwhile a mighty corps of elephants attacked the Pāṇḍavas and spread dreadful rampage and carnage. Karṇa also engaged Nakula and, flinging his bow round his neck, dragged him from his chariot (VIII, 24, 46) but let him off alive. Śakuni of Gandhāra was also on a lethal offensive. Duryodhana himself assaulted Yudhiṣṭhira but had to fall back. Towards the day-fall Arjuna was vigorously aggressive and pushed the enemy far back. Thus ended the frightful day.

Next day, the eighteenth, Karṇa had determined to do or die. The formidable Madra Chief Śalya agreed to drive his chariot at the instance of Duryodhana. As the day dawned and the warriors donned their armours and weapons, Karṇa ceremoniously went round his chariot and worshipped it, then offered obeisance to the sun-god and charged the Madra chief to mount it (VIII, 36, 8-9). In the way Karṇa began to boast of his prowess and complacently advanced towards Arjuna. Śalya tried to cut him to size and asked him to shed his buoyancy and array his army properly and fight with its help. This dialogue took a heated turn bringing to the fore the latent regional jealousy of the two warriors. From scolding and rebuking each other, they burst into abusing and maligning their respective regions and peoples and castigating and denigrating their manners and customs. Śalya railed against the reprehensible people of Aṅga (Bhagalpur region) in eastern India, who betrayed the refugees and sold even wives and sons out of greed (VIII, 45, 40) and Karṇa denounced the licentious people of the Panjab, the Madras and the Vāhīkes, who knew no morals or graces and were gross sensualists and scoundrels. This sullen dialogue brings to light some interesting features of the heroic society of the Panjab which we shall describe in the next chapter. When both the warriors had exhausted their eloquence, the two leaders arrayed their forces and led the charge. The fighting was virulent. Many warriors perished and Karṇa dashed on Yudhiṣṭhira. Overwhelmed by Yudhiṣṭhira's charge, Karṇa was stupefied for a moment and

fell back in his chariot, but presently he collected himself and enveloped his opponent with a deluge of darts and missiles. Yudhiṣṭhira retired from the encounter, but, hurrying his chariot near his, Karṇa caught hold of him by the shoulder (VIII, 49, 50-51) scoffed at his cowardice and incompetence and enjoined on him to repose in his tent quietly without daring to accost the warriors. However he spared his life at the suggestion of Śalya keeping in view his inherent goodness and truthful nature (VIII, 49, 53). The flight of Yudhiṣṭhira, followed by other warriors, threw the Pāṇḍava ranks into disarray giving an opportunity to Karṇa to kill them in hordes. However Bhīma retrieved the situation by checking Karṇa whereas Arjuna massacred the Samsaptakas in a deadly encounter in which he received serious injury and fell back in the rear of the chariot giving the impression that he had been killed. Aśvatthāman also fairly distinguished himself charging Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna who was saved only by the timely assistance of Arjuna. A large section of the Kaurava army under Karṇa led a dashing charge against the Pāṇḍava forces commanded by Yudhiṣṭhira, Nakula and Sahadeva and routed them with great slaughter towards their camp. Hearing of the disaster, Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna left the charge of the battle to Bhīma and repaired to the camp to attend on Yudhiṣṭhira who lay writhing and bleeding in agony. Yudhiṣṭhira scolded Arjuna for leaving Bhīma alone in the battlefield and in fact charged him with fleeing for fear of Karṇa (VIII, 68, 2). This was more than Arjuna could endure. Burning with fury, he advanced to kill Yudhiṣṭhira, but Kṛṣṇa intervened and prevented him from the tragedy of fratricide. Soon the rage subsided, Arjuna begged pardon of Yudhiṣṭhira, the latter blessed him for success against Karṇa and bade him march against him. Instantly the mighty chariot of Arjuna began to lumber towards Karṇa and the cutting remarks of Kṛṣṇa began to enthuse him for the coming encounter. Soon Arjuna was in high spirits and hastily checked the boisterous blows of Karṇa. Meanwhile Bhīma severed the arm of the mischievous Duḥśāśana and, tearing his breast, drank a handful of his blood. Now Arjuna and Karṇa faced each other. It was a gripping scene. Bows twanged, arrows swirled, missiles splashed, blows were aimed and parried. Ultimately Karṇa launched a serpentine dart which could cut all barriers as a knife a buttercake. Kṛṣṇa guessed the severity of the blow and cleverly pressed the horses down making them squat and lower the chariot in the earth (VIII, 90, 31). As a result the missile glanced off the head of Arjuna breaking his

golden crown only (VIII, 90, 32). Then a suggestion came to aim at Arjuna with that missile once again, but Karṇa considered it below his dignity to shoot a discharged arrow again. Arjuna soon recovered himself and plied Karṇa with numerous darts as a result of which he lost his feet for a while, but Karṇa collected himself and showered volleys of sharp arrows at his opponent. In that high pitch a wheel of the chariot of Karṇa sank in the plashy earth and he jumped down to raise it up. But Arjuna was raining his darts without break. Hence he requested him to wait a bit and observe the rule of the game by not shooting from the chariot at an adversary who was on the earth. Arjuna might have acceded to the importunity, but the diplomatic Kṛṣṇa warned him against the laxity and egged him to make short shrift of the foe. Presently Arjuna aimed a sharp arrow at him which cut off his head in a trice. A great hero had fallen, but the rules of civilized warfare were also violated (VIII, 91, 51).

The Kauravas were plunged in grief while the Pāṇḍavas were dancing with joy. Even Duryodhana could not stop the rout of his troops. The venerable Kṛpa counselled him to sue for peace, but he had lost all interest in life. His simple reply was that after the destruction of his familymen and friends it would not behove him to save his life at the cost of his honour. So he hastily anointed Śalya as the commander of his army and charged the remnants of his forces to advance and fight under him. The Madra chief, shining and resplendant, determined to vanquish even the gods, enthused and inspired his army to heroic endeavour. Again savage fighting broke out. Though Śalya was at his best, Bhīma and Yudhiṣṭhira were buoyant with victory and overpowered him. Yet Śalya countered both of them and killed the horses of Yudhiṣṭhira making him immobile. But the Pāṇḍava chief launched a barbed missile which pierced the breast of Śalya (IX, 17, 53). Then followed a furious carnage and Duryodhana and Śakuni were worsted. In a moment the Kaurava army melted into thin air. Duryodhadā repaired to a pond. The Pāṇḍava chiefs searched him out and accosted him for the final stroke, charging him even with cowardice, but the reply of the Kaurava chief was firm and clear. He had not resorted to the pond out of fear to save his life, but to take a bit of rest which he badly needed (IX, 31, 39). He asked the Pāṇḍavas to wait a little and rest for a while so that he may be rid of his fatigue and be ready for the fight. But the Pāṇḍavas would not let him have any respite and insisted on his

emerging from the pond and meeting his end in that very state. However they gave him the choice to fight with any one of them. Thus a duel was settled between him and Bhīma. Both the heroes entered into a deadly mace-combat. The clash of the huge metal maces emitted fire. Its loud roar frightened the warriors. The leaps and jumps and revolutions of the combatants startled the onlookers. A blow of Duryodhana in the breast of Bhīma threw him, but he rose with redoubled fury. Then another blow on his head released a torrent of blood. Yet, undaunted by the wound, he dealt a scathing blow on Duryodhana and dazed him. Thus the combat went on for sometime, Bhīma excelling in prowess and Duryodhana in sleight-of-hand. But, at the suggestion of Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna gave the signal to Bhīma to strike at the left hip of Duryodhana, though it was against the rules of war to hit below the navel. That blow proved fatal for the Kaurava chief and he collapsed like a gigantic tree uprooted by storm. This foul act enflamed even Kṛṣṇa's brother Balarāma, who ran to kill Bhīma, but Kṛṣṇa firmly clasped him and dissuaded him from his design. However, in utter disdain, he cursed Bhīma and went his way.

On the fall of darkness Aśvatthāman approached the aching Duryodhana who commissioned him to avenge his death on the Pāṇḍavas. Accordingly, being anointed by him, he along with Kṛpa and Kṛtavarma, trespassed into the camp of the Pāṇḍavas and, stealing his way into the royal tent, slaughtered all sleeping warriors including Dhṛṣṭadyumna, the Pañcālas and the sons of Draupadi. Those, who sought to escape, were done to death by Kṛpa and Kṛtavarma at the exit. This nocturnal assault reduced the Pāṇḍava victory to a mirage and spread a wave of mourning on their side. Just then the tidings of the event gave some solace to the dying Duryodhana. Next morning Arjuna and Aśvatthāman were locked in another fatal combat and their weapons began to spread destruction till the divine sages Vedavyāsa and Nārada intervened to pacify them. Ultimately Aśvatthāman surrendered the jewel of his forehead to the Pāṇḍavas and retired forever from the scene.

Thus ended the eighteen-day war of Kurukṣetra between the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas exhibiting innumerable scenes of gripping gallantry and thrilling chivalry as well as repelling treachery

and gnawing trickery. On the whole the attitude of the warriors, atleast some of them, was machiavellian, opportunist and expedient. A careful scrutiny of the heroic tradition in the *Mahābhārata* reveals a conflict of two ideologies, one of principles and the other of expediency. At last the latter triumphed and established that ends justify the means and to win the war the warrior can do no wrong.

VI

SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF WARRIOR COMMUNITIES

As we have seen above, the *Mahābhārata* represents the transition from the tribal to the professional structure of society and the corresponding change from the ethics of family loyalties to the morality of vocational interests. In this turnover the consideration of opportunity and expediency overshadowed the insistence on rigid ideals and fixed principles and, instead of the means governing the ends, the ends justified the means. Hence the norms of conduct tended towards nonconformism and the structure of society, based on them, exhibited a looseness which had often the appearance of licentiousness. The society of the Panjab passed through this process of change revealing many outlandish and even repulsive features the hints of which are found in the famous dialogue between Karna and Salya referred to in the preceding chapter. As said above this debate quickly turned into a diatribe of regional recrimination and provincial rancour in which the speakers maligned and cursed the people and countries of each other, bitterly attacking and denouncing their morals and manners. The stinging comments of Karna brought to light some salient features of the social structure of the warrior communities of the Panjab which, in the context of other evidence, enable us to have a clear view of their working.

From the socio-cultural point of view the Sutlej is said to be the dividing line between the Panjab and Kurukṣetra (VIII, 44, 6—7). The land, watered by the Sutlej (*Satadru*), Beas (*Vipāśā*) Ravi (*Irāvartī*), Chenab (*Candrabhāgā*), Jhelum (*Vitastā*) and Indus (*Sindhu*), is called *Vāhi* ka (VIII, 44, 7, 31-2). This term is derived from the word *bāhika* which stands for the Bactrian element that had become prominent in the Panjab. But, in popular estimation, it was associated with the names of two demons, *Bahi* and

Hika, living in the *Vipāśā* (Beas) whose offspring the Panjabis were believed to be (VIII, 44, 41-2). This fanciful etymology was invented simply to denounce and denigrate the people.

The modern caste of the *Wahis* reminds us of the name *Vāhika* applied to the people of the Panjab as a whole in that age.

Another name given to the people of the Panjab in that period is *Āraṭṭa*. Its modern survival is *Aroḍā*, a widespread Khatri caste in the Panjab. This name is derived from the word *Arāṣṭraka* or 'stateless'. It signifies the oligarchic constitution of some of the clans and also conveys the idea that they refused to obey any centralized organization and led a libertine life. The *Mahābhārata* (VIII, 44, 20-1) states that they wandered on their donkeys, camels and mules through jungle tracks, lived on rolls and balls of fried grain flour mixed with whey and robbed and beat the wayfarers whenever they came across them. In the *Arthaśāstra* they are called *Coragaṇa* and Justin refers to them as 'thieves'. It is on account of the highway robbery and wayward nature of these people that they came to be called *Āraṭṭas* in ancient time.

But the *Vāhikas* or *Āraṭṭas* were divided into many tribes or clans. Kaṇva mentions the Prasthala, Madra, Gandhāra, Khasa, Vasati, Saindhava and Sauvira, among the *Āraṭṭas* or *Vāhikas* of the Panjab (VIII, 44, 47). But this list is illustrative rather than exhaustive. There were numerous other tribes and clans, including many Indo-Iranian and trans-frontier peoples, whose names have come down to us in other contexts. Among them the more pronouncedly Iranian elements, like the Kāmbojas, Pahlavas and Gandhāras with the Persianised Ionians or Yavanas and the nomadic Scythians or Śakas, rubbed shoulders with the more profoundly Indianized peoples like the Pauravas, Traigartas, Prabhadrakas, Mālavas etc. But the leading people among all of them were the Madras whose capital at Śākala, modern Sialkot, was virtually the capital of the entire region. Originally an Iranian people, an offshoot of the Madā or the Medes, they had acclimatized themselves to their Indian environment and come to occupy an important position among the tribes of the Panjab. Their cousins, the Sālvās, Mālavas and Kṣudrakas, also won a high position for themselves in the province and ranked as heroic warriors and fighters.

According to the *Mahābhārata*, the communities of the Panjabis followed six types of organisation, *grāma*, *pūga*, *vṛāta*,

kula, *gana* and *śreṇi*. The *grāmas* were villages inhabited by single clans. Among them leadership was hereditary and vested in the descendants of the tribal ancestors who gave their names to the clans. Such people were concentrated along the banks of the river Indus and lived in mountainous retreats (II, 32, 9). They were called *grāmaṇeyas*. Besides the *grāmas*, there were *pūgas* or tribal organisations under the leadership of hereditary chieftains (*grāmaṇi*). The difference between the *grāma* and the *pūga* seems to be that in the former the emphasis was on territorial unity and local affinity, whereas in the latter the accent was on tribal-cum-professional community. But both followed the leadership of hereditary chiefs. They can be equated with the modern *qabailis*.

Another type of organisation was the *vṛāta* or a band of mercenary soldiers and freebooters. Its members were known as *vṛātyas*. The *Lāṭyāyana srautasūtra* (VIII, 67) states that they had predatory habits. They were distinguished by the colours of their robes like red-robed *vṛātyas* or black-robed *vṛātyas* corresponding to Red Kafirs and Black Kafirs of the Hindukush region in modern times. According to the *Pañcaviṃśa Brāhmaṇa* (XVII, 4, 1, 92) they roamed about in bands in open chariots of war, carried catapults and lances, donned turbans and garments, with a red border and having fluttering ends, wore silver necklaces, shoes and sheepskins, folded double, and possessed cattle. This text (XVII, 1-2, 3-2) further states that, among them, there were only two classes, the *Araṇtas* or ascetics and the *Yaudhyas* or warriors, the former practising *brahmacarya* and the latter living by the profession of arms. They did not pursue agriculture or trade. They were ruled and led by their *gṛhapatis* who dressed themselves in black garments and two skins (*ajina*), one black and one white, wore their turbans (*uṣṇiṣa*) with a slant towards one side of the head, carried stringless bows or catapults (*jyāhroḍa*) and whips (*pratoda*) in their hands and drove in rough wagons (*vipatha*) covered with planks and drawn by horses. They are said to be debauchees, always accompanied by harlots (*pumschali*), and drunkards, fond of wines (*surā*), some of them being addicts to poison (*garagira*) also. Their priestly or ascetic class either practised acute abnegation or gave themselves up to sensual orgies, the symbol of the former being the nude god with the penis hanging down (*nicameḍhra*), and that of the latter the god with penis

upraised (*ūrdhvameḍhra*), the first called 'high' (*jyeṣṭha*) and the second 'low' (*hina*). They led to the growth of the ascetic orders practising strict control of the senses, on the one hand, and the cults of sensual revelry culminating in prurient sects, on the other. At the time of Alexander's invasion sectaries of both these types were found in the Panjab. Later they developed into the ascetic orders of various types and the Śaiva and Śakta cults of many sorts. The *Atharvaveda* (book XV) gives us a glimpse of the god of these vrātyas who was known as *Ekavrātya*. He is said to be wearing a yellow turban, earings and jewels, holding a big bow, attended on by a sort of *devadāsi* as well as a panegyrist (*māgadha*), and moving in a vehicle (*vipatha*) drawn by two steeds driven by a charioteer with a whip. His attendants are said to be Bhava, Sarva, Paśupati, Ugra, Rudra, Mahādeva and Iśāna in ascending order. This picture recalls that of a typical vrātya chief. Subsequently some of these features merged in a concept of Śiva.

A number of vrātas formed a *kula*. We learn from the *Mahābhārata* that 18,000 vrātas formed one *kula* to which Kṛṣṇa belonged (*aṣṭādaśa sahasrāṇi vrātāṇāṃ santi naḥ kule*) (II, 13, 55). A *kula* was governed by the elders called *rājanyavṛddhas*. A number of *kulas* formed one *saṅgha*. For instance eighteen *kulas* constituted the Andhaka-Vṛṣṇi Saṅgha (*mantroyam mantrito rājan kulairāṣṭā daśāvaraiḥ* (*Sabhāparvan*, 13, 34); *aṣṭādaśavarairnaddham kṣatriyaiṛyuddhadurmadaḥ*) (*sabhāparvan*, 13, 54). In such a confederation, or Saṅgha, the *rājanyavṛddhas* of the various *kulas* grouped themselves in various parties, classes and coalitions called *dvandva*, *varga*, *pakṣa*, *gṛhya* and *vyāśraya*. They were designated after the names of their leaders. For example the members of the party of Kṛṣṇa were called *Kṛṣṇavargya* and those of the party of Akṛūra, *Akrūravargya*. The leader of the party was known as *vargapāla*. Another sort of grouping of the *kulas* was called *gaṇa*. In it sovereignty vested in the *kula* units and was exercised through the *rājanyavṛddhas* of each *kula* who were entitled *rājans*. In their internal affairs the *rājans* of each *kula* were autonomous, but, in their mutual dealings, they acted in concert. Out of themselves they elected their chief, called *Śreṣṭha*, who was the head of the *gaṇa*. The *Śreṣṭha*, being elective, changed from time to time (*Mahābhārata* II, 14, 6). This type of *gaṇa* followed a policy of mutual adjustment and cooperation (*śama*) grounded on the concept of human dignity (*parānubhāva*) and directed towards the goal of

common weal. The term for this ideology of common and popular sovereignty was *pārameṣṭhya*. It was different from *sāmrajya* according to which sovereignty vested in the ruler alone who exercised it through his own officers by means of force and coercion. In course of time the *sanghas* and *gaṇas* proliferated but their shaky and fickle character remained a source of weakness and their fumbling and fluctuating structures always faced troubles.

For all practical purposes *sangha* and *gaṇa* were synonymous. Pāṇini (V, 3, 117) has called the Yaudheya a *sangha*, but, on their coins, they call themselves *ṇana*. The elders and chiefs of the *kulas*, *sanghas* or *gaṇas* were formally anointed through a ceremony and were called *mūrdhābhiṣikta*. Besides the *sangha* and *gaṇa*, there was another grouping called *śreṇi* or guild. This term signified the association of traders as well as a corporation of soldiers who lent their services for payment. The *Arthaśāstra* (IX, 2; XI, 1) refers to the mercenary forces of *śreṇis* (*śreṇibala*) as a constituent of the king's army. Pāṇini (V, 3, 114) mentions them as *āyudhājivins*. The *Mahābhārata* (VIII, 5, 40) alludes to many thousands of these *śreṇis* (*śreṇyo bahusāhasrāḥ*) fighting on the side of the Kauravas. One of the foremost of these *śreṇis* was known as *Agrasreṇi*, Agalassians of Greek writers and Agravālas of modern times. They are located below the confluence of the Jhelum and the Chenab by the historians of Alexander, but their stronghold was at Agrodaka, modern Agroha in Hariyana. This shows that they were a widespread community, as the tradition that they consisted of eighteen *kulas* with lakhs of members, current among the Agravālas, indicates. People formed such associations on the basis of common interest every now and then, as Pāṇini's rule (II, 1, 59) *śreṇyādayaḥ kṛtādibhiḥ* proves. All these groups, associations and corporations had their emblems and insignia, *aṅka* and *lakṣaṇa*.

The aforesaid soldier communities of the Panjab had a mobile and resilient social system and did not adhere to the rigid structure of castes. The *Mahābhārata* states that among them a person is a brāhmaṇa at one time and kṣatriya at another; from a kṣatriya he becomes a vaiśya and a śūdra and then a barber; from a barber he at once jumps to be a brāhmaṇa and from brāhmaṇahood he soon lapses into slavery (VIII, 45, 6-7). It goes on to add that among them, in one and the same family, some members are brāhmaṇas and others of other mixed castes (VIII, 45, 8) and that promiscuity and promiscuity has gone to such length that one can refer

with certainty to one's mother only and is generally ignorant of the father. Hence inheritance generally passed on to sister's sons rather than one's own sons (VIII, 45, 13). The Pali text *Assalāyana sutta* (*Majjhima Nikāya*, II, 5, 3) reports a remark of the Buddha that among the Yavanas, Kāmbojas and other frontier peoples there are only two social classes, free men and slaves, and one can change from the one to the other quite conveniently (*ayyo hutvā dāso hoti, dāso hutvā ayyo hoti*). This remark corroborates the aforesaid statement of the *Mahābhārata* regarding the social mobility of the communities of the Panjab. In fact the grouping of the people in them was along tribal or clan lines rather than professional or vocational functions congealing into hereditary divisions. Every tribe or clan had a primary military orientation which shaped the outlook of all its members with the result that everybody was first a soldier and then anyone else. Constant migrations and minglings of tribes and incessant irruptions and infiltrations of peoples put a premium on the profession of arms, on the one hand, and injected a resilience in the body social, on the other. For bare survival in such a whirlwind of movements it was obligatory for everyone to be a sturdy and skilled soldier without distinction of status or pursuit. When one is once accustomed to wield and use arms, it becomes difficult for him to relish other professions involving manual diligence or laborious routines. If there is no invader to fight and repel, one becomes an invader oneself in respect of others. In this way the military profession is a two-edged sword cutting both the outside aggressor and the native countryman. This explains the political instability and social fluidity in the Panjab in that age.

The *Mahābhārata* further relates that there was no well-defined brāhmaṇa class among the soldier communities of the Panjab with the result that the rulers and other people performed their religious ceremonies and sacrifices themselves. The Epic calls them *rājayājaka* and Pāṇini has the term *kṣatriyayājaka* for them. Accordingly it is said that the offerings made to gods by them go in vain (VIII, 45, 26) and that they knew no Vedas, Vedis or Yajñas (VIII, 44, 46). They rather believed in yakṣas and tree-deities and offered oblations to them (VIII, 44, 8). Hence in the eyes of the orthodox people they were impure, immoral and irreligious and contact with them was considered a heinous offence and an inextinguishable sacrilege.

Resilient in social approach, the warrior communities of the Panjab were latitudinarian in matters of sex. Among them women

shunned seclusion and segregation and met, mixed and made merry with men on a footing of equality. Drawing a caricature of this feature, the *Mahābhārata* stated that among them women formed contacts with all sorts of known and unknown men and, chewing beef and quaffing wine, wept, laughed, sang and made incoherent speeches to them (VIII, 40, 27). They are said to be so fond of fermented liquor as to be ready to sacrifice their husbands and sons rather than part with it (VIII, 40, 38-9). Tall, fair, gluttonous, clad in blankets, they knew no reserve or restraint of passion (VIII, 40, 40) and, throwing off their garments under the spell of drink, gave themselves up to unstinted sexual contacts (VIII, 40, 36). Wearing big shell bangles in hands, painting their eyes with collyrium and making themselves up with cosmetics, they played on drums, conches and cymbals and danced to the tune of them (VIII, 44, 18-9) and even threw off their garments. Their songs resembled the braying of asses and the babbling of camels (VIII, 44, 13). They even pissed standing like those animals (VIII, 40, 37). On festive occasions their lewdness knew no bounds and they wandered in lustful postures along the ramparts and lanes of cities (VIII, 44, 12). This exaggerated account underlines the laxity and freedom of women among these people.

The family relations of these people were marked by familiarity and informality. In their houses father, mother, in-laws, maternal uncle, daughter, son-in-law, brother, grandson and other relatives, friends, guests, servants and slaves all met and mixed with each other with ease and pleasure (VIII, 40, 25). No wall of propriety stood between them to prevent their association.

Vahika warriors liked physical exercises, outdoor sports, wrestling jousts and boxing tournaments. Among them boxers (*mauṣṭika*) and gladiators (*śaṇḍa*) were notorious for their libertine and licentious habits (VIII, 45, 25). Their elders, women and children indulged in games of various sorts.

The Vāhikas were quite unorthodox in diet and drink. They ate rolls and slices of pork, beef, mutton, chicken and even asses and camels (VIII, 44, 28) with loaves and balls of parched grain flour and consumed lots of onion, garlic and chive with them (VIII, 44, 11). They were also fond of the milk of sheep, camels and asses and made numerous products of it (VIII, 44, 31). Their addiction to beer, rum and liquor, distilled from jaggery, reached the point of infatuation. They ate and drank in wooden bowls and

earthen pots, without cleaning them, and did not mind their being licked even by dogs (VIII, 44, 35-6). Their dinner parties, comprising men and women, lasted late in nights and were followed by music and revelry.

Riding on asses, camels and mules, some of the Vāhtka highwaymen infested roads and robbed the passers-by (VIII, 44, 20). They are denounced as treacherous and obnoxious like scorpions in whom no trust could be reposed and who were true to no friend (VIII, 40, 30, 34).

That this picture of the loose morals, licentious habits, outlandish manners and antinomian outlook of the Vāhtka soldiery is overdrawn is manifest from the rejoinder of the Madra chief Salya to the diatribe of Karṇa that "in every country there are brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras and women of high ideals and noble conduct ; side by side in every region men hurt each other by cruel jokes and have unstinted intercourse with women; the truth is that all people are experts in pointing out the defects of others forgetting entirely their own drawbacks or deliberately throwing the veil on them" (VIII, 45, 42-44). The fact that the people of the Panjab, inspite of being formidable warriors, cherished high moral ideals is established by the history of the Mālavi princess Sāvitrī. On the death of her husband Satyavān, she pursued the god of death, Yama, entreating him to release his life. In course of the dialogue with him she expounded the salient features of the eternal religion as love and charity and absence of ill-will in word, deed and thought for all living beings. (*Mahābhārata*, III, 297, 35). She said that the essence of goodness is the conquest of the senses and the control of the self (III, 297, 24) and that its outward manifestation is amity and goodwill for all producing an atmosphere of faith and trust (III, 297, 43). Her conjugal devotion is proved by her determination that she did not desire any glory without her husband nor wished to live in his absence (III, 297, 53). The discourse and endeavour of this Mālavi princess scintillates with sublimity and idealism and demonstrates the heights of moral fervour to which the people of the Panjab could soar inspite of their martial ardour and fighting propensity.

As a matter of fact the Panjab in that age was passing through an intense social transformation in which numerous exotic elements, bringing their own outlandish customs and manners, were

jostling and mingling with the native people and introducing an attitude of heterodoxy and protestantism among them. As a result the shackles of tradition were crumbling, the old norms of conduct were breaking down and a new zest for life, interest in its pleasures and attraction for its appeals, an eagerness to plunge into its vast reservoir of happiness and drink it to the dregs and a boundless upsurge of gaiety and joy were siezing the people. They were throbbing with new energy which made them throw overboard old ideas of morality and demeanour and rush towards new experiments and adventures in life. Some of them were in tribal stage and acted no better than freebooters, others were growing as mercenary guilds of freelancers, but many were advancing towards higher forms of social organization based on popular sovereignty and common welfare. Almost all were in a melting-pot, a process of transition and change, a state of fluidity and looseness, which often gave the impression of lawless and licentious confusion. But, out of this instability and disorder, new patterns of thought and conduct and new forms of organization were going to emerge.

VII

THE RESPONSE TO THE ACHAEMENIAN CHALLENGE

While the Indo-Iranian peoples of the Panjab were in the throes of social change, consequent on the transition from the tribal to the territorial organisation, based on political stabilisation and economic consolidation, significant developments in western Asia, particularly the imperial expansion of the Assyrians and the Chaldeans, were releasing new forces of unity and integration which exercised a stimulus on the events here. After the fall of the Kurus and the destruction and dispersion of the tribal communities, fighting with them or their opponents, the Panjab was a welter of amorphous masses of people out of which the new pattern of organisation was to emerge. Under the stimulus of developments in western Asia the frontier state of Gandhāra rose to a creative endeavour which promised unity and stability to the people of the Panjab through a centralised organisation. Its domination expanded eastward up to the Ravi and southward up to Multan and included Kaśmīra and almost the whole of the Indus Valley. In the sixth century B. C. its great king Pakkusāti entered into diplomatic contacts with King Bimbisāra of Magadha and even made bold to declare war on King Pradyota of Avanti, on the one hand, and sent embassies to Media and Chaldea, as we learn from Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* (III, 2, 29, Walter Miller's translation, Vol. I, p. 265), on the other. It is said that the Chaldeans made many trips to his kingdom and some of them were also in his employ as mercenaries. Political consolidation and diplomatic relationships also brought commercial prosperity and economic affluence resulting in the accumulation of vast wealth. Xenophon informs us that, on the eve of his war with Croesus of Lydia, the Achaemenian monarch Cyrus the Great (559-530 B. C.) thought of borrowing money from an Indian king and for that purpose sent an envoy to him with the following message :

"King of India, Cyrus has sent me to you ; he says that he needs more funds. If, therefore, you will send him as much as you conveniently can, he says that, if God will give him good success, he will try to make you think that you were well-advised in doing him this favour."

The Indian king, Xenophon states, responded favourably to the request of Cyrus and sent an embassy to his court with the sum of money he had asked. The members of the embassy not only delivered the money to the Persian monarch and assured him of further help from the Indian king, if need be, but also served him in a delicate matter of espionage by finding out the preparation of his adversaries under the command of Croesus. (*Cyropaedia*, VI, 2, 1-11, Miller's translation, Vol, II, pp. 149-155).

The Indian king, referred to by Xenophon, can be no other than Pukkusati, who had organized Gandhara and western Panjab into a prosperous state with great economic potential, as I have shown in a recent study contributed to the publication of the Central Council of the Celebrations of the 25th Century of the Foundation of the Iranian Empire and the Declaration of Human Rights by Cyrus the Great to be held in Iran in October-November 1967. The king of Gandhara had launched the same plan of unification in the North-West which Bimbisara had started in Magadha in the East. The fact that he made friends with such a great king as Cyrus the Great and entered into financial dealings with him shows how rapidly he had risen in the political and economic world of that time.

But the diplomatic and financial advances of Pukkusati to Cyrus were paralleled by a firm resolve to maintain and strengthen his political authority and imperial prestige. Hence, when he found that his friend Cyrus might pose a threat to him, he did not hesitate to hurl his military power against him and give him a sharp rebuff.

After the conquest of Lydia and Asia Minor, for which, perhaps, he borrowed money from Pukkusati, Cyrus turned his attention towards the East. He appointed Vistaspas the satrap of Hyrcania and Parthia and annexed Drangiana, Margiana and Bactriana one by one. Then he crossed the Oxus and encamped on the Jaxartes and set up fortifications to hold the turbulent nomads in check. These movements must have made Pukkusati apprehensive of his expansionist plans leading to a rupture between

them. It appears that, when Cyrus was busy in the West settling the affairs of Babylonia and planning an invasion of Egypt, Pukkusāti launched some move against him which compelled him to leave the charge of the Egyptian campaign to his son Cambyses and himself march to the East. According to ancient writers he thought of conquering the Indus Valley and, for that purpose, divided his army in two parts, sending one through Gedrosia and leading the other himself through the Paropanisadai and Arachosia. But the Indians gave him a warlike reception and inflicted severe reverses on him. They annihilated the army passing through Gedrosia of which only seven persons could escape alive, as Nearchus writes. However the second wing of the army, commanded by Cyrus himself, succeeded in storming the city of Kāpiśī (Begram) at the confluence of the Panjshir and Ghorband rivers, as Pliny informs us (*Natural History*, VI, 23, 25), and overawing the Astakenoi (*Hāstināyana*) and Assakenoi (*Āśvakāyana*) to pay him tribute, as Arrian reports (J. W. M'Crimble, *Megasthenes and Arrian*, p. 183). This success led Xenophon to remark that Cyrus ruled over Bactria and India (*Cyropaedia*, I, 1, 4, Miller's translation, Vol. I, p. 7). But Pukkusāti, undaunted by the initial success of Cyrus, made the strategic move of setting the Massagetae (*Maśaka*) and the Derbikes (*Dārva*) against him and assisting them with his elephant corps. Cyrus led a vast army of 12,000 cavalry, 6,00,000 infantry and numerous catapults against the Massagetae, but their queen Tomyris repulsed it with heavy losses (Hadi Hidayati, *Kurush Kabir* (in Persian), ch. 12, p. 241). In the heat of the encounter, when the fighting was in full swing, a soldier of the Indian elephant corps inflicted a fatal blow on the thigh of Cyrus and thus put an end to his life, as Ctesias writes (*Persica*, ed. Gilmore, pp. 133-5). Thus Cyrus's design to invade and conquer India came to nought before he could do anything about it. Megasthenes rightly remarked that the Persians could not lead any expedition against India but merely approached it during Cyrus's march against the Messagetae (M'Crimble, *Megasthenes and Arrian*, p. 110). Following him, Arrian also observed that, although Cyrus marched against the Scythians and showed himself the most enterprising of Asian monarchs, he did not invade India (*Ibid.*, p. 209). Pukkusāti was successful in holding his own and meeting the menace of his powerful rival.

The war against Cyrus left some imprints on Indian legends which were widely current in the North-West. The episode of the

disaster of Cyrus and the escape of only seven men of his army is reminiscent of the survival of seven persons in the Pāṇḍava camp after the nocturnal attack of Aṅvatthāman following the holocaust of the great war of Kurukṣetra. Similarly the death of Cyrus, as a result of a smashing blow on his thigh, is like the end of the Kaurava chief Duryodhana by the fracture of the thigh caused by the blow of Bhīma. It is well-known that the *Mahābhārata* underwent its redactions at Takṣaśilā in Gandhāra where Vaiṣampāyana is said to have recited it to Janamejaya. Hence it is likely that some of its episodes were identified with the memorable events of the war with Cyrus which must have passed into the realm of legends in the North-West. Popular imagination does not care much about historical sequences while giving local colouring to legendary lore according to current anecdotes.

The success of Pukkuṣāti against such a mighty king as Cyrus demonstrated the strength of the heroic tradition reinforced by order, discipline and organization. But we have no knowledge of the successors of Pukkuṣāti. It is also not unlikely that one of them sided with the *Yautiā* insurgent Vahyazdata against Darius the Great. Vahyazdata tried to capture Kāpiṣkanis and drive a wedge between the satraps of Harahvatis (Helmund Valley) and Bākhtris (Bactriana) who were siding with Darius. But the satrap of Bākhtris, Vivāna, intercepted him and foiled his scheme by crushing him at Kāpiṣi and Gandutava. In those moves Gandhāra also fell to the Achaemenians and the house of Pukkuṣāti ceased to exist some time between 518 and 515 B. C. Darius conquered the Indus Valley also as the Persepolis inscription indicates. These regions were organized in taxation units 7 and 20 of the gazetteer of Herodotus, the former called Gādara, including the Dadikai (*Darada*), Aparytai (*Aprita*) etc., and the latter known as Hīndus, encompassing the lower Indus Valley, where the Indoi (*Saindhava-Sauvira*) lived. It is contended that Darius also conquered the Panjab up to the Beas where Alexander's army halted having reached the limit of the Achaemenian empire whose heir they claimed to be (*Cambridge History of India*, I, p. 306). Not certain of this fact, Smith observed that this empire "perhaps included a considerable part of the Panjab east of the Indus" (*Early History of India*, 3rd, ed. p. 37). This view is based on the identification of *Thataguṣ* (Sattagyda of Herodotus), included in the seventh taxation unit, with the Panjab. Herzfeld holds that this word *Thataguṣ* may represent a compound, in some Iranian or Sanskrit

dialect, of the Indo-European word for 'seven' with some word meaning 'stream'. He conjectures that the word *that* or *satta* stands for *hapta* or *sapta*, but about *guš* he is not certain. R. G. Kent rejects this view and shows that *that* in *Thataguš* (Elamite *sa-ad-da-ku-iš*, Akkadian *sa-at-ta-gu-u*) is the same as Avestan *sata* or Sanskrit *śata* or Indo-European *kmtō* and *guš* stands for *gav*, meaning 'cattle', so that *thataguš* does not signify 'seven rivers' but 'hundred cattle' (*Old Persian, Grammar, Texts, Lexicon*, p. 18). G. G. Cameron also observes: "I find it very difficult to reconcile *Thataguš* with the Panjab. Must it not rather be on the slopes of the Hindukush" (A. J. Toynbee, *A Study of History* Vol. VII, p. 649). A. V. Williams Jackson equates *Thataguš* with "either the Ghilzai territory to the south-west of Ghazni or the Hazara country further to the west and north-west" (*Cambridge History of India*, Vol. I, p. 302). It appears that *Thataguš* represents the region of *Gomati*, modern *Gomal*, both these names signifying a land having an abundance of cattle.

An objection to the identification of *Thataguš* with the Panjab is financial as pointed out by Toynbee. As he writes, "the Panjab must always have been a rich country in virtue of its agricultural and pastoral products, and, therefore, if the Herodotean Taxation District No. 7 did include even only a part of the Panjab, it is surprising that it should have been assessed at a lower figure than any other district. Moreover *Thataguš*, whether a rich country or a poor one, had been in rebellion in 522-21 B. C. and Darius was not the man to let off resubjugated rebels lightly in their tax assessments, as he showed by the enormous figure at which he assessed the poverty-stricken south-eastern Asagartiya, Yautiya and Maciya." Hence he concludes that "the lowness of the assessment on the Herodotean District No. 7. could perhaps be reconciled with a location of one of its constituent cantons in the wealthy Panjab on the supposition that, if *Thataguš* did lie in the Panjab, it included no more than a fraction of it, e. g., the north-western corner, to the north-west of the Salt Range" (*A Study of History*, Vol. VII, p. 648). In fact it is strange that, if Panjab formed part of the Achaemenian empire, it was not made a separate taxation unit or satrapy, being one of the richest units of the empire.

The substance of the above discussion is that Darius failed

to conquer the Panjab, except for Gandhāra, inspite of his tremendous resources, obviously, because the resistance of the people was too strong for him. He had to be content with Gandhāra sprawling to the west of the Indus with Puṣkalavati as the main seat of power as also the lower Indus Valley comprising Sind. Though facts are not available, it seems fairly certain that the people resolutely opposed the Persian forces and kept them at bay despite tremendous odds.

Darius introduced a centralised bureaucratic administration in all his satrapies including Gandhāra and Sind. It was headed by a satrap, a general and collector, all equal in rank and status, being appointed directly from the centre and responsible to the emperor. Their jurisdictions were separately specified, yet they kept watch on the activities of each other and briefed the centre about them. The satrap was doubled by a secretary who acted as a link between him and the emperor and reported his activities to him. Besides him, the inspectors, called the 'emperor's eyes'; travelled with their own armed forces throughout the empire and paid unexpected visits to the satrapies to check their affairs. Each year special *missi dominici* toured through the country to control the local administration. A ubiquitous network of spies closely examined every aspect of government and readily reported the affairs of the imperial secretariat. Payments of salaries were mostly made in cash. Taxation was fixed & regular, works and wages were controlled and weights and measures were standardized. Common codes of laws, based on royal decrees and replacing old customs, were administered by an efficient judiciary. A salaried army, called *spāda*, organized on the decimal system, replaced earlier tribal levies.

Besides the aforesaid administrative system, based on the principle of centralized control and organisation, the Achaemenians settled many Greeks in the North-West who brought their own peculiar institutions and customs. These Greeks formed their cantons and colonies at Kāpiṣi (Begram) and Nysa (*Naiṣa Janapada*) near Mount Elum where a cluster of old towns, bearing Greek names, derived from Bacchos, Lusa (Nysa), Lyocah (Lyaeus), Elye, Awan, Bimeeter (Bimeter), Bokra (Boukera) and Kerauna (Keraunos), are found. These people traced their descent from Dionysos and developed a legend that he founded the settlement after the name of his nurse Nysa when he

conquered the Indians. Their system of government consisted of an oligarchy of 300 persons having a president. At the time of Alexander's invasion their President was Akouphis who, accompanied by thirty members of the oligarchy, approached him with the request to spare the city. But so jealous they were of their institutions that they turned down the request of Alexander to part with 100 of their best men and instead offered to send twice that number of their worst men. Another settlement of the Greeks existed between the Indus and the Chenab, somewhere near or on the Jhelum, probably in the present district of Gundulbar, probably at old Bhera, and included the Salt Range. Their custom of examining children at the age of two months and exposing them in the event of their not conforming to the prescribed standard of physical fitness and beauty is the same as obtained in Sparta. Likewise their practice of contracting marriages on eugenic and aesthetic considerations rather than the lure of handsome dowry is essentially Spartan. Thus it looks likely that these Greeks were either an offshoot of the Spartans or were intimately allied to them so as to share their basic institutions. They must have brought with them some other customs and laws of social control and regimentation also. Their chief, Sophytes, issued silver drachmas bearing legend in Greek and showing the king in Greek dress (D. R. Bhandarkar, *Ancient Indian Numismatics*, pp. 30-31). Indian tradition remembers him and his people as *Subhūta* or *Saubha* (*Mahābhārata*, III, 14, 2; 16, 6). He and his people seem to have been posted on the easternmost frontier of the empire in view of their strong martial quality reinforced by a strictly regimented social system. But, during the period of decadence of Achaemenian rule, the resurgence of powerful native forces compelled them to migrate eastwards and settle in the vicinity of the Kathaians between the Ravi and the Beas in eastern Panjab.

The impact of Persian administrative system and Greek institutions led to the growth of a new authoritarian theory of state which found expression in the schools of *Arthaśāstra* that replaced the conservative thought implicit in the customary outlook of the *Dharmaśāstra*. This new theory centred on the idea that material resources are the basis of both spiritual and sensual happiness (*artha eva pradhāna iti Kauṣilyaḥ. Arthamūlau hi dharmakāmāvitī*) *Arthaśāstra*, I, 7, 6-7). Hence the Auśanasas

held that the science of polity and administration (*daṇḍanīti*) alone was the key-science, the Bārhaspatyas thought that, besides *daṇḍanīti*, economics (*vārttā*) is also important, the Mānavas believed that *trayi* (Vedic lore) should also be given a due place and Kauṭilya insisted on the cultivation of logic and philosophy (*ānvikṣikī*) as well. Bhāradvāja and his followers considered religion and morality a shibboleth, put a premium on anger and indulgence and counselled a clever minister to overthrow the old dying king and usurp his throne. All these thinkers and teachers held that a strongly organized state, ruled by an able king with the assistance of a council of competent ministers according to a strict and well-defined code of laws, was the sine qua non of a stable and prosperous society. By and large they were against the inchoate and unstable oligarchies of tribal units wedded to effete customs and stagnant conventions. These ideas flourished in the schools and seminars of Takṣaśilā under the shadow of new administrative institutions and found their clear expression in the thought of many theorists, mentioned in the *Śāntiparvan* of the *Mahābhārata*, and crystallized in the doctrines of Viṣṇugupta Cāṇakya or Kauṭilya, the most gifted teacher of Takṣaśilā, whose *Arthaśāstra* embodies the most advanced political, economic and social philosophy of those times. e l

Kauṭilya envisaged a monolithic socio-political system with the king as its hub. The king, assisted by a large council of ministers and a secretariat of thirty-one departments, each having its president or *adhyakṣa*, controlled the entire administrative mechanism. Below the king the *samāhartṛ* was the head of a unit of 3200 villages, then the *sthānīya* was incharge of a circle of 800 villages, next to him the *droṇamukha* administered a division of 400 villages, under him the *khārvaṇika* controlled a district of 200 villages, then the *sangrahaṇa* was responsible for a pocket of 10 villages and lastly the *gopa* managed the affairs of five villages (*Arthaśāstra*, II, 35, Shamashastri's edition, pp. 141-2). Land was divided into three categories : (1) that which was directly worked by the *Śītādhyakṣa*, (2) that which was settled with colonists under a highly regimented system, (3) and that which belonged to the peasant-proprietors subject to varied items of revenue. Industry, trade, banking, guild life etc. were highly controlled. Every aspect of social or personal life was under the strict surveillance of the government. In fact the entire community was

directed to be a committee of public safety, a vigilance board and an information bureau. The various *srenis*, *coraganas* (*vrātas* and *pūgas*), *ājavikas* (foresters) and *mlecchas* (foreign contingents) etc. were welded into a unified and heirarchical military organisation (*Arthaśāstra*, VII, 14, p. 307). Thus there was no scope for oligarchical autonomy or fluidity. This whole system breathes the spirit of Achaemenian and Spartan way of thought.

The new trends of thought and organisation fostered new political developments. In place of oligarchical warrior-communities, mostly of tribal and rural character, new monarchical states, having centralised and bureaucratic structures, began to grow. The foremost among such states were those of Poros (*Paurava*), between the Jhelum and the Chenab, Āmbhi, between the Indus and the Jhelum or eastern Gandhāra, and Hastin, Kubheśa and Aśvajit beyond the Indus in western Gandhāra. Naturally their interests clashed and their relations were strained. The growing might of Poros made them uneasy and even ready to seek foreign help to hold their own. Poros dashed up to the Ravi and stationed his nephew to the east of the Chenab and also swooped in the south to measure arms with the Mālavas and the Kṣudrakas, living from the confluence of the Chenab and the Ravi to that of their joint stream with the Indus, driving them into a military alliance. In the north he had diplomatic relations with the king of Abhisāra, ruling over Poonch, Rajori, Chibhal and Naoshera, and exercised grim pressure on Gandhāra and even hobnobbed with the Achaemenids of Iran. The secret of his might was the highly centralised and efficient civil and military organisation of his state an inkling of which is afforded by his army of 50,000 foot, about 3,000 horses, about 1,000 chariots and 130 elephants which fought with commendable discipline and cohesion under unified command with Alexander in the battle of the Jhelum. This army was obviously different from the heterogeneous levies working on tribal and territorial basis under the command of their chiefs. It can be presumed that its organization more or less followed the pattern, laid down by Kauṭilya, according to which 200 foot, 10 chariots, 50 horses and 10 elephants formed a squadron under the command of a *padika*, such ten units or 2,000 foot, 100 chariots, 500 horses and 100 elephants formed a brigade under a *senāpati* and ten such units or 20,000 foot, 1,000 chariots, 5,000 horses and 1,000 elephants constituted a regiment under a *nāyaka*. This view is supported

by the remarks of B. Breloer in his *Alexander's Kampf gegen Poros, Ein Beitrag zur Indischen Geschichte* (Stuttgart, 1933) that the strategy of Poros in the battle of the Jhelum followed the rules of the *Arthashastra*. The maintenance of such a big and disciplined army presupposed an efficient civil administration backed by adequate financial resources which only the developed economy of an advanced state could afford.

Some historians hold that the Achaemenians continued to maintain their hold over their Indian possessions till their defeat at the hands of Alexander in 331 B. C. This view is based on the presence of contingents of Indian soldiers in the Achaemenian army from the time of Xerxes to that of Darius III. Arrian states that, at the battle of Arbela, the Indian forces were grouped with the Bactrians and the Sogdians under the command of the satrap of Bactria, whereas those, who were called 'mountainous Indians', followed the satrap of Arachosia. These frontier troops were supplemented by a small force of elephants "belonging to the Indians who lived this side of the Indus". But we should not overlook the fact that, according to Persian writers, Darius solicited the help of Poros on that occasion and he responded by sending his elephant corps which, however, reached too late to be of any use to him (Buddha Prakash, *History of Poros*, pp. 28-34). This shows that Darius treated Poros as an independent king. Besides this, at that time, Gandhara was under independent rulers and the mountainous people were autonomous. When Alexander campaigned in those regions, he did not find any trace of Achaemenian rule, as the accounts of his historians show. The fact is that north-western India had shaken the yoke of the Achaemenians sometime during the reign of weak rulers from Artaxerxes to Darius III. The heroic people could bear it only so long as they were compelled to do so. But the Achaemenian interlude, though brief, was significant inasmuch as it gave a new orientation to the socio-political background of the heroic tradition in ancient Panjab.

CHAPTER VIII

THE RESISTANCE TO THE MACEDONIAN INVASION

We have seen how a populous and urbanized society was emerging in the Panjab out of the remnants of tribal-cum-territorial groups as a result of the progress of trade, industry, and money-economy and the growth of contacts and intercourse among peoples of various parts of the world under Achaemenian rule. Strabo relates that, between the Jhelum and the Beas, there were as many as 500 cities. Arrian gives their number as 2,000, but they may have included many small towns and even villages. He states that in the kingdom of the Glaukanikoi, between the upper courses of the Jhelum, the Chenab and the Ravi, the smallest of the cities contained no less than 5,000 inhabitants while many contained upwards of 10,000. From this one can conjecture that the population of the region was over half a million. Demographic growth was accompanied by economic development, as one can gather from the figure of the offerings, the king of eastern Gandhāra, Āmbhi, made to Alexander, when he arrived on the Indus. According to Arrian he presented 3,000 oxen, 10,000 sheep, 30 elephants, 700 horsemen and 200 talents of silver or 15 talents of gold equivalent to 45,00 darics or 2,25,00 dollars or 16,87,50 rupees (after devaluation) to the Macedonian invader. If eastern Gandhāra alone was so rich as to afford such costly presents and the realm of Poros was so affluent as to enable him to maintain the vast army, mentioned above, one can easily have an idea of the economic potential of the rest of the Panjab at that time. The secret of this development was the growth of commerce which presupposes peaceful conditions. The mention of *Gāndhārī Vāṇija* (traders of Gandhāra) *Kāśmīra-Vāṇija* (traders of Kāśmīra), *Madra-Vāṇija* (traders of Madra) as illustrations of Pāṇini's rule *Gantavya paṇyam vāṇije* (VI, 2, 13) shows that these people had attained proficiency in trade despite their martial nature. The *Taṇḍulanāli Jātaka* (No. 23 of Fausbøll) refers to

the visits of the horse-dealers of the north in the markets of Benaras and Buddhist authors mention that saffron merchants of Arachosia used to go to eastern India to sell their goods (S. Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, Vol. II, pp. 126-27). This advance in economic activity gave new turns to the history of the Panjab.

The aforesaid development came in the wake of the transition from the tribal oligarchies to the monarchical organisations that started in the Panjab about the foundation of the Achaemenian empire. That transition led to the growth of such unified and centralised states as those of Pukkusati and Poros, but it had not quite completed itself by the fourth century. Hence we find Poros struggling with the oligarchical tribes of the east, on the one hand, and contending with the balkanised principalities of Gandhāra, on the other. The growing might of Poros inclined the states of Gandhāra to form an alliance with other big powers and drove the tribal units, like the Kṣudrakas and Mālavas, to pool their resources and come closer to each other. Thus the political picture of the Panjab in the latter part of the fourth century B. C. showed an inclination towards unification. In western Gandhāra rulers, like Kubheṣa (in the Kabul Valley), Āsvajit (chief of the *Āśvāyanas*, modern Pachai, or Asip or Yusufzai in the upper regions of the Kabul Valley) and Hastin (chief of the *Hastikāyanas* with their seat at Puṣkalavati, modern Charsadda, in the Peshawar district), and, to their north, *Assakanos* (chief of the *Āśvakāyanas*, modern Aspin of Chitral and Yashkun of Gilgit) with his capital at Mazaga (Maṣakavati of Pāṇini, Mashanagar of Babur, modern Maskhine, twenty-four miles from Bajore) were ruling independently of each other, incapable of uniting against any invader. To the east of the Indus, in eastern Gandhāra, the Āmbhiyas, who had developed a school of political thought also, as we learn from the *Arthaśāstra*, had created a flourishing state. T. Ganapati Sastrin, the famous editor of the *Arthaśāstra*, suggests that Āmbhi, 'the son of Ambhas or water i. e., the Ganges, can be understood as the name of Bhīṣma, the celebrated hero and teacher of the *Mahābhārata*. (*Sanskrit Introduction* to Vol. III of the Trivandrum edition of the *Arthaśāstra*, p. 2). Should this suggestion be correct, we would see in the Āmbhiyas a school of political thought which derives its doctrine from the famous teacher Bhīṣma, whose views are found in some sections of the *Śāntiparvan* and also elsewhere in the

Mahābhārata. They must have had their centre at Takṣaśilā, modern Taxila in the Rawalpindi district, which had grown as a reputed seat of learning. Basing their policy on a sound doctrine, they developed a prosperous state between the Indus and the Jhelum, as can be gathered from the presents made by their scion Āmbhi to Alexander, mentioned above. But they were bent on preserving their independence at all costs against the expansionist ambitions of formidable neighbours and, for that purpose, did not scruple to knuckle down to a foreign invader to seek his help against them. To the east of the Jhelum the Pauravas had established a strong kingdom ruled over by their chief Pauruṣa or Paurava whom the Greeks called Poros. Whereas the territory between the Jhelum and the Chenab was under his direct rule, that between the Chenab and the Ravi was placed under his nephew. The strength and power of this state can be measured by the vast army which Poros had organized and the discipline and solidarity with which it conducted itself on the field of battle. To the north of Poros lay the realm of the king of Abhisāra, comprising the Poonch, Rajori, Chibhal and Naoshera regions and encompassing almost the whole of Kāśmīra, as M'Crimble suggests. Its energetic king was quick in his diplomatic moves and had relations both with the Āśvakāyana king of Maśakāvati as well as the redoubtable Poros. Near him, in the Bhimber and Bajaur districts, to the south of Kāśmīra, was the flourishing kingdom of the Glausai or Glaukanikoi (Glaucukāyana) with 37 big cities, the smallest containing not fewer than 5,000 inhabitants while many containing upwards of 10,000, and numerous big villages not less populous than the towns. These people maintained their independence in the face of the rising power of Poros. To the east of the Ravi up to the Beas were the Kathaians or Kathaioi. The name of the village Kathania near Jandiala in the Amritsar district, abounding in old mounds, seems to represent their settlement. Lassen equates their name with that of Kattia, a nomadic race scattered throughout the plains. The name of the Kathiars of eastern U. P. and those, from whom Kathiawar got its name, may also be connected with them. It seems plausible to see in them a reference to the Kaṭhas who derived their name from a school of Vedic studies founded by the pupils of Vaiśampāyana. One of their branches, the Kapiṣṭhalas, may be identified with the Kambistholi, mentioned by Arrian, near the Ravi (M'Crimble, *Megasthenes and*

Arrian, p. 196). Their capital Sangala, situated somewhere at or near Kathania in the Amritsar district, must have been a strong centre. Quite near them were the Greeks of Sophytes (*Saubhūta* or *Saubha*) turned out from their northern seat, between the Indus and the Chenab, by the Āmbhiyas or the Pauravas. There they held on to their Spartan customs and contributed some of them to their neighbours, the Kaṭhas, also. On the Beas, possibly between it and the Sutlej, as F. W. Thomas holds, lay the kingdom of Phegelas, (Sanskrit *Bhagala*), whose name seems to survive in Phagwara. The country to the east of the Beas was exceedingly fertile, the inhabitants being good agriculturists, brave in war, and living under an excellent system of Government run by the aristocracy with justice and moderation. Their elephant corps was stronger than that of other peoples (M'Crindle, *The Invasion of India by Alexander the Great*, p. 121). One very important thing about the political condition of northern Panjab in the latter part of the fourth century is that old tribal oligarchies, like the Madras, Salvas, Bāhikas, had disappeared, their names now surviving in the Khatri caste names of Madan, Saluja, Bahl and Wahi respectively, giving place to monarchical states of cohesive organisation. Under their pressure some of these oligarchies had migrated to southern Panjab and carved out their territories there. The Šibis (Siboi) lived between the Indus and the Jhelum, their capital, Šivapura, lying just above the confluence of the Jhelum with the Chenab in the Jhang district. They had also spread upto Sind, where Sehwan indicates their settlement, and passed on to Baluchistan where the station of Sibi, between Sukkar and Quetta, reminds us of their habitation. This triangular tract of land with Sibi in Baluchistan, Sehwan in Sind and Šivapura in Jhang came to be occupied and populated by them. According to Curtius they dressed themselves with the skins of wild beasts and had clubs for their weapons (M'Crindle, *Op. cit.*, p. 232) which shows that they had not crossed the primitive tribal stage. They seem to have gone there from their habitat in eastern Panjab. Their modern descendants seem to be the Chibs. To the south-east of the Sibis, in the region below the confluence of the Jhelum and the Chenab, were the Agalassians or the Āgreyas. They were formidable warriors and could muster an army of 40,000 foot and 3,000 horse against Alexander. They had also gone there from East Panjab and Hariyana where their seat is still known as Agroha. Their modern descendants are the Agravālas. To their south, from the southern

part of the doab between the joint stream of the Jhelum and the Chenab and the Ravi to the region of the confluence of the Chenab and the Indus, were the Mālavas. They were a considerable people with many citadels and strongholds like Kot-Kamalia, a small but ancient town on the bank of the Ravi, Tulamba on the other side of the Ravi on the high road to Multan, Multan itself at a distance of 54 miles from there via Atari, where a colony of Brāhmaṇa warriors lived, and many other cities round about. These Mālavas appear to have been pushed downwards from the north and the east by other peoples. Cognate to the Mālavas were the Kṣudrakas between the Ravi and the Sutlej in the region of Bahawalpur extending as far as the junction of the Sutlej with the Indus and the vicinity of Uchh. Among them only the members of the tribal oligarchy were called Mālavya and Kṣaudrakya, the slaves and free labourers being debarred from the use of these names, as we learn from Patan̄jali's comments on Pāṇini's sūtra IV, 1, 168. As pointed out by me elsewhere, the Kṣudrakamālavas were one people, a branch of the Madras. Being an off-shoot, they became known as Kṣudrakamālavas (Small Mālavas) in contradistinction to the main branch of the Madras-Mallas-Mālavas. Later on they broke into two parts calling themselves Kṣudrakas and Mālavas respectively. In the sūtras of Pāṇini these Kṣudrakas and Mālavas are distinctly mentioned. Patan̄jali refers to wars singly fought by the Kṣudrakas without the collaboration of the Mālavas (*ekākibhiḥ Kṣudrakairjitam*). Arrian states that they were very jealous of their freedom and Curtius writes that they were often at war with the Mālavas (Buddha Prakash, *Glimpses of Ancient Parjab*, p. 37). But the menace of Poros and then the invasion of Alexander drew them together leading them to cement their alliance by intermarriage, each people taking or giving in exchange 10,000 of their young women for wives (M'Crindle, *Op. cit.*, p. 287). This shows the process of coalition or amalgamation that was uniting the tribal oligarchies into larger groupings. In the midst of these people also lived at Atari a colony of Brāhmaṇa-warriors, living by the profession of arms, which reminds us of the fighting Vāṣṭadhāna Brāhmaṇas, perhaps, modern Bhattis. Along the Chenab, below its confluence with the Ravi, were the Abastanoi of Arrian or Sambastai of Diodoros who can be identified with the Ambaṣṭhas of the *Mahābhārata*

(II, 52, 15), the *Bhāgavata* (X, 83, 23), *Brahmāṇḍa* (III, 74, 22), *Matsya* (48, 21), *Vāyu* (99, 22) and *Viṣṇu* (II, 3, 18) *Purāṇas* and Pāṇini's sūtra (VIII, 30, 97). Curtius writes that they were a warlike people whose army consisted of 60,000 foot, 6,000 horse and 500 chariots. That they represented a confederacy of autonomous oligarchical units is manifest from the remark of Diodoros that "they dwelt in cities in which the democratic form of government prevailed" (M'Crindle, *Op. cit.*, p. 292). The fact that they lived earlier in eastern Panjab and migrated from there to the south can be gathered from their association with the Śibis and the Yaudheyas in old tradition (Pargiter, *Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*, pp. 109, 264). They went further south and settled near the Mekala Hill at the source of the Narmada. At the confluence of the Chenab and the Indus lived the Xathroi, the Kṣatragana of the Mudrārakṣasa and the Kṣatriyas and Rājanyas of Pāṇini's sūtras VI, 2, 34 and IV, 1, 168. They had specialized in riparian activity. It appears that they were also pushed down from the north. In the same region were the Ossadioi or Vasātis whose descendants are probably the modern Sobtis. In Indian texts they are coupled with the Mauleyas who were spread upto the confluence of the Sutlej and the Indus and farther into Sind as well. In Sind again, which had been under Achaemenian rule, there were monarchical states ruled over by kings like Mousikanos, Oxykanos, Sambos and Moeres. Thus it is clear that, in the latter half of the fourth century, the Panjab was broadly divided into two socio-political zones, the northern dominated by monarchical states and the southern consisting of tribal oligarchical communities which were pushed down by pressures from the former and driven to form larger federations with a tendency towards cohesion and merger. It was this Panjab which Alexander invaded in 327 B. C.

In the spring of 327 B. C. the Macedonian conqueror Alexander crossed the Hindukush and was on the road to the Indus. At Nikaia, near modern Jalalabad, he divided his army into two parts, one under Hephaistion and Perdikkas was ordered to proceed through the Kabul Valley towards Gandhāra and the other under him was to advance in the hilly country north of the Kabul river. Ascending the valley of the Kunar, he reduced the clans of the highlanders. The people offered him stubborn resistance. In one of the encounters he was wounded in the

right shoulder and his officers, Ptolemy and Leonnatos, were also injured. The operation against the Aspasiens (Āśvāyana) was quite stiff. They set fire to their city, probably Gorys, and fled in the mountains and thence harassed the invader. Another clan of them also burnt their town of Arigaion, modern Naoghi, and fled to the hills. To comb the area, Alexander divided his army into three parts, but the Indian mountaineers, who "were the stoutest warriors in the neighbourhood", as Arrian remarked, fought for every hillock. Then he advanced towards the Assakenoi (Āśvakāyana) who had mustered 20,000 cavalry and more than 30,000 infantry, besides 30 elephants, at their capital Maṣakāvati, modern Maskhine or Massangar, twenty-four miles from Bajaur. As he approached the walls, a group of 7,000 sallied out to pounce on him. Alexander retreated to a hillock to take position. The Āśvakāyana force charged helter-skelter. Alexander suddenly wheeled round and charged back killing 200 and driving the rest into the citadel. Then he brought the phalanx against the fortifications. From the battlements a rain of arrows poured, one injuring Alexander's ankle. Next day he pounded the wall with his engines and his soldiers tried to rush in through a breach, but the defenders repelled and rolled them back. On the morrow the Macedonians returned to the assault and shot from the engines as well as a wooden tower inside the citadel, but were unable to force their entry into it. On the following day a bridge was thrown from an engine to a section of the battered wall, but it collapsed under the weight of the men who were crossing over it. In that crisis the defenders also showered volleys of arrows and missiles. The invaders had to withdraw with losses. Next day another bridge was made to effect a passage into the fort. In the meantime the chief of the clan fell from a blow of a missile. His people also suffered a lot. Ultimately they decided to submit. According to the armistice they left the citadel and encamped on a hill thinking of fleeing to their homes at night. But Alexander fell on them and cut them to pieces and also stormed the empty citadel capturing the mother and daughter of the dead chief. Thereafter he captured Bazira and Ora, turned west and reduced the cities of West Gandhāra. Local chiefs, like Kubheṣa and Aśvajit, surrendered and Hastin of Puṣkalāvati also gave way. Then Alexander returned to invest the fortress of Aornos (Varaṇa) and took it after heavy fighting. Meanwhile Hastin also revolted and resisted from his citadel. Hephaistion laid siege to it and captured it in thirty

days. Hastin ultimately fell, perhaps, due to the defection of some kinsman or general named Sanjaya. The Macedonians took the opportunity of befriending him at the instance of the king of Takṣaṣilā and enthroned him in place of Hastin.

The Macedonians were now massed on the Indus. A bridge was made over it at Und. Galleys and boats were ready. The king of Takṣaṣilā waited with rich presents. If it came to surrender, he preferred the foreigner Alexander to the native Poros. The Greeks poured and paraded in Takṣaṣilā. Envoys of the king of Abhisira and one Doxares, perhaps ruler of Dārva, waited on him. Ultimatum was issued to Poros to the east of the Jhelum. But the Paurava chief was of different cast. He longed for the supreme moment of his life when he would smash the power of local princelings supported by the foreigners. Accordingly he took the gauntlet and prepared for the encounter. Alexander and the king of Takṣaṣilā and other allies advanced on the Jhelum. He had 5,000 cavalry and infantry men of the Agema (Companions), 5,300 horsemen led by Koinos, 14,500 light horse-archers, 15,000 infantry, 86 elephants and numerous balists and catapults, and the king of Takṣaṣilā led 5,000 troops. The army, which Poros mustered on the opposite side, is variously assessed, Plutarch giving its strength as 20,000 foot and 2,000 horse and Arrian raising the figures to 30,000 infantry, 4,000 cavalry, 300 chariots and 200 elephants, and Diodoros increasing the number of foot to 50,000 and chariots to 1,000, keeping in mind perhaps his total military establishment. Both sides remained in a state of suspense for quite a long period of time, one desirous of stealing a passage across the river and the other determined to oppose and pounce on it. The rush and push of soldiers, parading and endeavouring to swim over to the other side, must have invested the scene with bristling expectancy; and the crowding and colliding of horses and elephants, neighing and trumpeting with restless fury, must have aroused the spirits of even the worst truants. For about a month the din and bustle and rattle and rumble continued to respond to the tempestuous torrents of the heavens and the roaring eddies of the Jhelum. At last, towards the end of June or the beginning of July, Alexander managed to move seventeen miles away from his camp and in a dark stormy night effected the crossing of the forbidding river. Just as he and his army were straightening themselves, a reconnaissance party, led by a son of Poros, struck at them. The conflict was sharp. Alexander's horse was wounded and killed

and he fell head-long on the ground to be saved by his attendants. But the earth was so muddy that the Indian chariots stuck in it, some even plunging into the river, for there was little to distinguish it from the bank, and the soldiers could not set their long bows on the earth and press them by the foot properly with the result that their shots were desultory and ineffective. So mud and water assisted the Macedonians to crush and rout that party in the initial encounter. The son of Poros fell and his men were destroyed or dispersed, but this event created a stir all around and set Poros arraying his troops for the battle. On the spur of the moment he sent his brother Aja (Hages) with 100 chariots and some cavalry to obstruct the enemy and himself arrayed his army in battle order posting the elephants in front of his line at intervals of 33½ to 50 yards and drawing the infantry behind them in compact lines and placing the cavalry at the ends with the chariots in front of them. Alexander ordered the Scythians and the Dahae to attack Aja (Hages) and then launched Perdikkas to hit his right wing and deployed his cavalry, formed into two units under himself and Koinos respectively, to the right and placed the hypaspists after it and the phalanx and light troopers on either flank. While the fight of Aja (Hages) and Perdikkas raged with breathtaking vigour, Poros indulged in the formality of asking the Macedonians to surrender their king, but, without heeding it, Alexander ordered the charge and an advance squadron of one thousand mounted archers made a piercing attack on his left wing and he himself rapidly marched forward and fell upon it. This cavalry charge broke the chariots down whose unwieldiness—each chariot was 7.5 feet high and 9 feet wide drawn by four horses and carrying six men, two drivers, two shield-bearers and two archers—added to the immobility on account of plashy ground. Seeing this the cavalry of Poros assembled from both the sides to repel the onslaught. But Koinos swung to the right and attacked it on the rear. Caught between the two attacks, it hastily broke into two sections to face the assaults from the two sides. But as the horsemen were changing positions, Alexander and Koinos drove home the charge from the front and the rear throwing them into utter disorder and forcing them to fly along their own front to take refuge in the spaces between the elephants.

In that critical moment Poros ordered the elephants to dash forward. Each elephant carried there archers, besides the mahout, and bore a vast load of darts and missiles to be hurled at the

enemy. Poros, himself an exceptionally tall figure, was mounted in the covered howdah of a gigantic elephant, striking terror by his supernatural stature and majesty as well as the bolting blows of his torrents of darts. Under his command the elephants trumpeted and trampled and the warriors on them rained arrows and javelins. The infantry also closely followed dealing vigorous blows and the cavalry wheeled round from the rear charging the opposite lines. This charge was frightening and smashing. As Curtius writes the elephants terrified not only the horses but also the men and disordered the ranks so that those, who just before were victorious, began to look round them for a place of safety and flight. The most dismal of all sights was when the elephants would by their trunks grasp the men, arms and all, and, hoisting them above their heads, deliver them over into the hands of their drivers or dash them on the ground. Most of them they crushed and gashed and gored to pieces with their tusks. The terror and carnage must have been heavy.

To ward off the attack the macedonians began to hack the feet of the elephants with axes and hurl chopper-like curved swords at their trunks irritating them so much as to make them out of the control of even their drivers. As a result they trampled helter-skelter sparing neither friend nor foe and throwing their own ranks in confusion. But Poros maintained his balance and poise and, rallying round him forty elephants that were in discipline, personally mounted a murderous charge on the Macedonians. Diodoros states that he spread great terror and slaughter with his own hand flinging a shower of javelins like shots of a catapult. His elephant also displayed remarkable sagacity defending him against his assailants and extracting the darts from his body with his trunk and side by side butting against them and pushing them back. Fighting so prominently, Poros became the target of all marksmen and received nine wounds including one on the right shoulder where he had no armour. Yet he went on darting his bolts with cool and heroic courage till he felt exhausted and his mahout turned his elephant gently back. Alexander rode to pounce on him, but his horse writhed with blows and sank under him lowering him on the ground. Meanwhile the battle raged with grim intensity. Arrian writes that the Macedonian cavalry had gathered into one battalion, being thrown together in course of the struggle, and attacked the elephants and horsemen of Poros in massive charges. Operating from a wide and open field, they inflicted a severe loss on the army

of Poros that was cooped up within a narrow space. Frequently they advanced and, when the elephants charged, retreated and again dashed forward striking and irritating the beasts. In this course of advancing and retreating and striking and shooting, the elephants lost their feet and merely trumpeted and stampeded backward with their faces towards the Macedonians. In that moment of exhaustion Alexander surrounded the whole enemy line with his cavalry and signalled the infantry to link their shields and compactly move in phalanx. Meanwhile the Macedonian contingents crossed over from the other side of the river and reinforced the embattled army. Hence the cavalry of Poros was decimated and his infantry was exasperated, but the losses of the Greeks were no less severe. As the Ethiopic texts state, many of Alexander's horses were slain and, by reason of this, there was such great sorrow among them that they wept and howled like dogs and wished to throw down their arms and forsake Alexander and go over to the enemy. When Alexander saw this, he drew nigh into their midst and wished to stop the fight. Joseph Ben Gorion in his *History of the Jews* recaptures the scene as follows :

"Now the war between the Macedonians and the Indians was prolonged until a great number of Alexander's soldiers were destroyed and those (that remained) took counsel together to lay hold of Alexander and deliver him over to the King of India".

Obviously both sides suffered heavy losses. But how the curtain dropped on the scene is obscured by the inconsistent, often contradictory, statements of historians. Arrian says that, when the mahout of Poros wheeled his elephant round, Alexander sent to him first the king of Takṣaṣilā, and, on his being rebuffed, messenger after messenger, and lastly his friend Meroes who persuaded him to meet the Macedonian King. In consideration of his friendship for Meroes and softened by his persuasive advocacy, Poros approached Alexander, unbroken and unabased in spirit, and met him on a footing of equality "as a brave man" would meet another brave man and, on being accosted by him, did not cringe like a vassal or crawl like a prisoner or grovel in the dust like a defeated person, but insisted on being treated as a *king* showing his jealous regard for his sovereignty and royal status. Alexander not only let him govern his kingdom, but "added another territory of still greater extent to it" which clearly suggests that he ceded it to him.

Curtius gives an altogether different version of the end of this battle. He says that, when Poros retired from the battlefield, Alexander himself pursued him and, when he could not advance due to the fainting of his horse, sent the brother of the king of Taxila whom he killed by a javelin. Thereupon the Greeks intensified their onslaught and wrought great slaughter. Poros also fell and then he was placed on a wagon. When he gained his senses, Alexander reprimanded him for his madness, whereupon he acknowledged the superior valour of him, but admonished him to be moderate in his demeanour. Alexander ordered his wounds to be attended to and presented him with a larger kingdom than that which he had.

Diodoros gives a third entirely different version. He reports that, when Poros fainted on his elephant, the rumour of his death spread resulting in the flight of the remnants of his army. A large number of men were slain and 9,000 were captured including, perhaps, Poros who was still alive. But he was given to the Indians for treatment by order of Alexander and later reinstated in his kingdom.

Plutarch has a fourth tale to tell by jumbling fragments from Diodoros and Arrian. Like Diodoros, he says that Poros was taken prisoner and, like Arrian, he adds that he insisted on being treated as a king. How a prisoner can claim to be treated as a king does not bother him.

Justin invents a fifth story. He states that, when Poros was imprisoned, he offered a hunger-strike and did not take any food or medicine which produced such an impression on the mind of Alexander that he restored him to his sovereignty. Where arms could not succeed hunger-strike delivered the goods !

Thus the five western historians are not consistent on any fundamental aspect of the end of the battle and contradict each other on many vital points. All that emerges from them, even if we ignore Oriental and Ethiopic traditions, is that, as the eighth hour of the battle was in progress and, to quote Plutarch, "the battle depressed the spirits of the Macedonians", Alexander clamoured for peace and, for that purpose, sent numerous envoys and messengers to Poros. Poros was adamant on shunning contact with his adversary and reluctant to meet him for any talk in spite of the severe losses he had sustained. Ultimately, through the persuasion one of his friends, Meroes, he consented to meet

Alexander and make peace with him. But, while doing so, he maintained his dignity as a king and asserted it in his conversation. Alexander also acknowledged his royal status, respected his sovereignty and added more territory to his kingdom. All this clearly shows that the battle ended in a treaty of peace between Poros and Alexander the essence of which was the preservation of the royal dignity of Poros, the cession of the territory conquered by Alexander to him and the joint endeavour of the two in reducing the independent tribes of the Panjab and also to advance on Magadha, if possible. This peace was made, when fighting was still continuing, despite severe losses on both the sides.

The motive behind the peace must have been the decision of Poros to make Alexander an instrument of reducing the recalcitrant tribes and states of the Panjab and create out of them a unified empire. Accordingly further Macedonian advance beyond the Jhelum was the joint venture of Poros and Alexander.

Soon after the treaty of Alexander and Poros the latter's nephew, reigning between the Chenab and the Ravi, fled to the east to Magadha, since he had tried to become independent of his uncle, when the menace of the invasion hanged over him, and was mortally afraid of the redoubled might of him after the battle of the Jhelum. The king of Abhisara, who was playing a double game from the outset, now ended his hesitation and joined the allies. The Glaucukāyanas also easily gave way. Thus many problems of political consolidation in western Panjab were instantly solved.

Then Alexander and Poros crossed the Ravi. There the Kathaians (Kaṭhas) resisted them. The village of Kathania near Jundiala in Amritsar district represents their settlement. They enjoyed the highest reputation for courage and skill in the art of war and shared the warlike spirit of the Kṣudrakas and the Mālavas, as Arrian states. Among them the practice of widow-burning prevailed. First Alexander marched against the Adrestai (Āraṭṭas), reduced some of their cities, which offered resistance, and persuaded others to surrender. Then he moved against the stronghold of the Kathaians, called Sangala, where they, along with a group of other neighbouring tribes, had gathered to resist him, and encamped at the site of the villages, Kholali and Chokawana, ten miles to the west of Amritsar, as traditions current in that area show. On a low hill before the citadel the Kathaians formed their battle-array encircling it with a triple row of wagons, a sort of *Sakaṣavyūha*. That strategy alarmed the Macedonians and they had to make

careful arrangements to meet it. On their right wing were placed the horseguards and the cavalry regiment of Kleitos, then the hypaspists, then the Agrianians and then the cavalry and infantry under the command of Perdikkas. On both the wings the bodies of archers were posted. The infantry and cavalry, that arrived from other places in the rear, was also divided in two parts and sent to the two wings. When the disposition was complete, Alexander ordered the cavalry on the right wing to advance against the left side of the wagons. But the Kathaians, instead of sallying out from behind the wagons to attack the advancing cavalry, mounted upon them and began to shoot from their tops. Leaping nimbly from wagon to wagon, they plied the enemy with pikes and axes also. Thus fighting, they foiled and repulsed the Greek cavalry with considerable losses. Seeing the cavalry fail, Alexander dismounted and led the infantry on foot. The compact lines of the phalanx, charging with their twenty-four feet long spears, drove the Kathaians from the first row of the wagons. But, in front of the second row they formed a strong and compact line and vigorously attacked the assailants. Quietly drawing back the wagons of the first row, they sallied through the gaps at the enemy. The Greeks were pushed back again. But they recovered and made a dashing charge, driving the Kathaians from the second to the third row and then pushing them back into the citadel. The circumference of the citadel was so big that the Macedonian army could not surround it in its entirety. However Alexander posted the whole of the cavalry by the side of a lake near a gap in his siege through which a flight from the citadel could be effected. At night the Kathaians began to drop from the wall on that spot but were killed by the cavalry. Finding the passage impossible, they hustled back into the citadel leaving many dead. Thereupon Alexander was even more cautious and posted Ptolemy at that place. About the fourth watch of the night the men inside opened the gate facing the lake and rushed out in full speed. But Ptolemy fell upon them goading them again inside the citadel. Five hundred of them perished in the retreat. Next day was a crucial one, but Poros suddenly came with his elephants and a force of 5,000 Indians and gave a new turn to the operation. The Macedonians undermined the walls and, planting ladders round it, quickly jumped inside and spread slaughter. According to Arrian 17,000 Kathaians were killed and 70,000 captured. Two other cities were up in arms, but the fall of Singala cowed them down and

Alexander extended to them lenient treatment in case they stopped resistance. However he was not true to his word and attacked them during the flight killing about 500. Then he razed the city of Sangala to the ground and, sending Poros to introduce garrisons in the cities that had submitted, himself advanced eastwards. In course of this march he fell on another city where the neighbouring people had taken refuge. But a dissension arose among those people, some preferring to fight to the finish and others deciding on surrender. During the discussion some opened the gates and admitted the Macedonians. But, says Curtius, Alexander was so lenient as to pardon the defenders and take hostages from them whom he utilized to bring other towns to submission. Thus one town fell after another till he reached the Beas. The Greeks of Sophytes and a king, Bhagala, offered their submission, but the reports about the military strength of the people, living to the east of the Beas, were so alarming that the Macedonians refused to move despite the entreaties of Alexander and the assurance of many others like Poros. Baffled and stifled by the mutiny, Alexander had to retreat and, reaching the Jhelum, appointed Poros king of all the Indian territories already subjugated, seven nations in all, containing more than 2,000 cities, towns and villages.

From the capital of Poros Alexander decided to go back through South Panjab and Sind either because the route through the North-West was barred by rebellious mountaineers or because Poros thought it prudent to advise him to invade the tribal oligarchies of the south with a view to weakening them. Already a resistance movement seems to have been gaining momentum there. Hence Alexander rapidly passed through the turbulent confluence of the Jhelum and the Chenab and made a sudden inroad into the territory of the Sibi and other people to prevent them from joining the Mālavas. Then marching to the bank of the river Ayek, somewhere between Jhang and Shorkot, he ordered his army a short repose so that they could fill whatever vessel they had with water. After ensuring water supply he plunged into the desert tract, called Sindarbar, and, covering it in one day and night, reached the Mālava stronghold of Kot Kamalia. The people could not expect Alexander's march through that perilous route and were working in their fields unarmed. Alexander fell upon them killing some and driving the rest inside the city which he eventually took by storm. From there he advanced on

and in the way intercepted the fugitives when they were crossing the Ravi. The brigade of Peithon stormed that city whereas Alexander himself invested the citadel of the Brāhmaṇas at Atari where many Mālavas had taken refuge. Finding their position difficult, the defenders of this citadel left the walls and retired inside. A few Macedonians also rushed in, but were thwarted and pushed out. On this the besiegers scaled the walls by ladders and undermined a tower and crowded in through the gap. The defenders fought bravely and, finding resistance difficult, set fire to their houses and plunged in the vortex of slaughter. About 5,000 were killed but only a few were taken prisoners.

From Atari, Alexander moved towards the Mālava capital, Multan, only next day. The Mālavas, now keenly conscious of the danger, organized a defence in association with the Kṣudrakas. The report of their preparation sent a shudder through the Macedonians. Some said they were 50,000, others assessed their strength at 80,000 foot, 10,000 cavalry and 700 chariots and many estimated their figures at 50,000 foot, 10,000 horse and 900 chariots. They began to quail and grumble and upbraid Alexander for taking the course of retreat through such ferocious and numerous warriors. However the instability of tribal oligarchies came to their rescue. A difference arose among the Mālavas and Kṣudrakas on the score of leadership. In the evening a Kṣudraka warrior was chosen as the head of the confederate army. This experienced general had encamped at the foot of a hill and ordered fires to be lighted over a wide circuit to make his army appear so much the more numerous. But, in the night, they quarrelled and reproached and annoyed each other and by daybreak were a rabble of discordant elements straggling to and fro with no unity of strategy or purpose. Most of them seceded from the array and drew off into their adjoining towns. The whole line melted into thin air leaving the field free for Alexander. Next day the Macedonians laid siege to Multan and burst into the city through a small gate. But the scaling of the citadel inside was a tough job and the soldiers, carrying the ladders, were loitering too much. To end that vacillation Alexander himself snatched a ladder from a man and, setting it against the wall, quickly ascended the parapet. His shield-bearer Peukestas and bodyguard Leonnatos also followed him. Seeing their chief alone on the parapet, the hypaspists also rushed on up the ladder in undue haste. But the ladder broke

down under the extraordinary weight of so many men and they tumbled down in a mass barring the way for others also. At that moment shots from all directions were hitting Alexander, but not losing heart, he leaped down into the citadel and, taking the support of the wall and the trunk of a tree, showed remarkable valour in defending himself. The governor of the place, perhaps, the chief of that unit of the tribe, assailed him alone but fell at his hands. But the crowd plied him with darts and flings from all sides. Just then Abreas and Peukestas and, following them, Leonnatos jumped into the citadel and were with Alexander. But a rain of arrows pierced the forehead of Abreas and bored the buckler of Alexander and a shower of stones shattered his helmet and a blow of club fell on his neck. Unable to hold his own he sank on his knees and kept protecting himself in a crouching position. Just then a Mglava marksman shot an arrow, two cubits long with an iron barb three fingers' breadths in width and four in length, which pierced through Alexander's cuirass into his ribs above the pap. A gush of blood with gurgling air sallied from his chest and he collapsed in a swoon. A deafening cry of his fall rang on all sides. The Macedonians were mad with rage and desperately plunged into the citadel, some swinging along pegs driven in the wall, others mounting upon one another and many through a breach in a gate. A savage fight ensued in the citadel in which nobody cared for men, women or children. At last Alexander was carried to his camp where his surgeon Critobulus and the general Perdikkas performed the operation and extracted the barb from his chest. For sometime he hovered between life and death, but in the end survived the shock and, after a week or so, was again up on his feet. This miraculous survival confirmed the belief of the people in the divine ancestry of Alexander and the remaining Mglavas and, after them, the Ksudrakas offered their submission. Soon the Ksatiriyas and the Vasgtis also gave way and the region up to the confluence of the Chenab and the Indus was at the feet of the Macedonians.

The Mglavas and their kinsmen, the Ksudrakas, were brave, warlike, freedom-loving and of uncommon height and dignified bearing. Riding glittering chariots and wearing robes of linen, embroidered with inwrought gold and purple, they looked like personifications of gallantry and heroism. But they

were isolationist, self-contained and narrow-minded and lacked in the spirit of unity and cooperation with their colleagues. Thus it was easy for an effective force with good intelligence service and sound coordination system to make short shrift of them. After Alexander Poros stepped into his shoes as the conqueror of these peoples as well as those of Sind, as the fact that he ousted the Macedonian satrap Peithon from Sind indicates.

The above account of the heroic resistance, offered by the people of the Panjab to the invasion of the Macedonians, led by Alexander, brings into bold relief the salient features of the socio-political transformation through which the region was passing. Northern Panjab had switched over to centralized monarchical rule and southern Panjab was clinging to the tribal oligarchical system. Whereas the former had gathered enough strength to resist a foreign invader, the latter was rent by dissensions and bickerings which made effective resistance impossible. Alexander's three years of campaigning from May 327 B.C., when he crossed the Hindukush, to May 324 B.C. when he reached Sisa, particularly the period of nineteen months, from March 326 B.C., when he crossed the Indus at Ohind, until September or October 325 B.C., when he entered the territory of the Arabioi, that he spent in the Panjab, gave the struggle between these two systems the final and finishing touches. In this work he proved to be an instrument of the policy of Poros.

CHAPTER IX

THE CONTRIBUTION TO THE MAURYA AND SUNGA EMPIRES

As the Achaemenian challenge led to the transformation of the tribal oligarchical system into the territorial monarchical structure so the Macedonian invasion resulted in its transfiguration into the national imperial mechanism. On the departure of Alexander the frontiers of isolation and separatism were broken and the boundaries of localism and tribalism lay derelict. All those peoples, who shunned the hegemony of Poros, were at his feet and all those powers, that contested his supremacy, were by his side. Besides the breakdown of the tribal-cum-regional state system, the anti-Macedonian sentiment, fostered by fiery Brahmana nationalists, brought the people on the platform of unity. Plutarch observes that "the philosophers (Brahmanas) gave him (Alexander) no less trouble than the mercenaries, because they reviled the princes, who declared for him, and encouraged the free states to revolt from his authority" (M'Crindle, *Invasion of India by Alexander the Great*, p. 306). Foremost among these philosopher-Brahmanas was the great teacher and thinker of Takṣaśīlā, Viṣṇugupta Kauṭilya, who denounced foreign domination and envisaged a national empire stretching from the Himālayas to the southern seas (*Arthasāstra*, X, 1, p. 340). He galvanized the people and rulers of the Panjab, particularly the energetic Poros and the dynamic Candragupta, who had come to the Panjab with him, into a new national and imperial endeavour with the acquisition and expansion of the Magadhan empire as its objective. Under the able leadership of these two great princes, directed by the master mind of Kauṭilya, the foreign contingents of Śakas (Scythians), Yavanas (Greeks), Kirātas (mountaineers), Kambojas (Afghans), Parasikas (Persians) and Balhikas (Bactrians) and the native warriors of Kulūta, (Kullu Valley), Mālava (Malloi), Kaśmīra, Sindhu, Kṣātragaṇa (Xathroi) etc. were

welded into a powerful disciplined army which conquered Magadha and set up the first unified empire of India at Pataliputra. For studying this development it is necessary to cast a glance at the happenings in the Panjab on the retreat of Alexander.

While Poros was laying the foundations of a strong unified state in western Panjab, Viṣṇugupta Kauṭilya was envisaging the organisation of a national empire in the schools and seminars of Takṣaśīla. In order to have a look at the working of the imperial institutions of Magadha he paid a visit to Pataliputra and offended the Nanda emperor by his uncouth demeanour and ugly bearing and also got an insight into the intrigues and dissensions rampant there. Leaving the capital in disgust, he brought with him the young and energetic Maurya prince Candragupta to the Panjab and made him lead the political movement in collaboration with Poros. Plutarch states that Candragupta paid a visit to Alexander and Persian and Arabic traditions record that he made a pact with him with the obvious object of enlisting his aid for the conquest of Magadha about the meanness and unpopularity of whose king he was firmly convinced. It also appears that he made friends with Poros also and in the battle of the Jhelum persuaded him to come to terms with Alexander and make him an instrument of his expansionist plans. After the retreat of Alexander he changed his strategy and, along with Poros, became the spearhead of opposition to Greek rule and canalized all his resources towards its eradication from the Panjab. At that time an anti-Greek sentiment had seized the people and on all sides they were rising against Greek officers. The people of Gandhara had rebelled against Alexander's nominee Samexus or Damaraxus and the Agvaks had risen up and murdered his satrap Nicanor. When Alexander was still in Karmania, the people assassinated Philip whom he had appointed satrap of the lower Kabul Valley and South Panjab. Likewise Poros occupied Sind and compelled his satrap Peithon to retire to the west of the Indus in the Parapanisadae. At that time Poros was undoubtedly the greatest personality in the Panjab and in his court lived the Greek envoy Megasthenes, as Arrian states, and functioned the Greek general Eudamus, as Diodoros observes (*M'Crindle, Megasthenes and Arrian*, p. 200 ; *Invasion of India by Alexander the Great*, p. 384). But, though Poros was greater than Candragupta, as Arrian remarks, the latter acted as a magnet and target for the people through his dynamism and fascination. As Justin writes, "India, after Alexander's death, as if the yoke of servitude had

been shaken off from its neck, had put his prefects to death. Sandrocottos (Candragupta) had been the leader who achieved their freedom. When he lay down overcome with fatigue and had fallen into a deep sleep, a lion of enormous size, approaching the slumberer, licked with his tongue the sweat, which oozed profusely from his body, and, when he awoke, quietly took his departure. It was this prodigy which first inspired him with the hope of winning the throne and so, having collected a band of robbers, he instigated the Indians to overthrow the existing government. When he was thereafter preparing to attack Alexander's prefects, a wild elephant of monstrous size approached him and, kneeling submissively like a tame elephant, received him on to its back and fought vigorously in front of the army. Sandrocottos (Candragupta), having thus won the throne, was reigning over India." (M'Crindle, *Invasion of India by Alexander the Great*, pp. 327-28). According to K. P. Jayaswal these legends are represented in the motifs of a lion before a crescented three-arched hill and an elephant below it found at Takṣaśilā (*Journal of the Numismatic Society of India*, Vol. XIX, (1957), p. 179). These legends became afloat as a result of the meteoric and miraculous rise of Candragupta in the Panjab.

We have seen above that Poros and Candragupta assumed the leadership of the freedom movement in the Panjab and canalized it towards the conquest of the empire of Magadha on the understanding that they would divide it equally between them. But, after the occupation of Pāṭaliputra and the eradication of Nanda rule, Kauṣilya encompassed the murder of Poros through the Greek general Eudamus who is probably Dingarāta of the *Mudrārākṣasa* who, as this drama suggests, did it through a poison-girl. On the death of Poros, Candragupta was the undisputed master of the empire of northern India. Poros' son Malayaketu broke away from Candragupta and joined the minister of the former Nanda king, but Kauṣilya won over that minister leaving him in the lurch. Eventually Malayaketu was captured and presented before Candragupta, but, through the intercession of Kauṣilya, his ancestral kingdom in the Panjab was restored to him and he returned there with his associates. He also patched up his affairs with Eudamus and, at his instance, went to Iran to assist Eumenes against Antigonus in the battle of Gabiene in 316 B. C. But in that battle he died and his kingdom was annexed to the Maurya empire (Buddha Prakash, *Studies in Indian History and Civilization*, pp. 138-141).

It is clear from the above account that the Maurya empire was the creation of the Panjabis. It was they who laid its foundations in the Panjab under the leadership of Poros, Candragupta and Kauṣilya and then spread it up to Magadha. After that they took a prominent part in its conservation and proved its ardent defenders. This was demonstrated on the occasion of the invasion of Seleucos in 305 B. C.

On Alexander's death in Babylonia in June 323 B.C. his generals fought for the spoils of his conquests. Among them Antigonos and Seleucos contended for his domains in Asia. Fortune at first favoured Antigonos, but in 312 B.C. Seleucos occupied Babylon and in 306 B.C. assumed the regal title and next year planned to repeat the feat of Alexander by crossing over the Indus into the Panjab. But this time a different Panjab greeted him. Appian states that, on crossing the Indus, he met Androkottos (Candragupta) "the king of the Indians who dwelt about that river" (*Syrlake*, c. 55). This shows that throughout that period, Candragupta spent the greater part of his time in the Panjab, probably at its capital Takṣaṣilā, keeping a watchful eye on the political developments in western Asia and particularly the designs and moves of Seleucos. Therefore, as soon as Seleucos crossed the Indus, he received him with a vast army. The exact strength of this army is not known, but its size can be guessed from the numbers of the various arms of his whole army, that is to say, 6,00,000 infantry, 20,000 cavalry, 9,000 elephants implying a force of 36,000 men and 8,000 chariots requiring 32,000 horses and 48,000 men. His infantrymen carried the broadswords as their principal weapons and as additional arms either javelins or bows and arrows, whereas a horseman carried two lances, resembling the kind called *saunia* by the Greeks, and a buckler. This vast army was administered by a war office, consisting of six boards of five members each, looking after the navy, transport and commissariat, infantry, cavalry, chariotry and elephantry respectively. As a keen military genius, Candragupta admired Alexander, as can be imagined from the anecdote that he paid honour to his altars on the Beas. Hence it is not unlikely that he adopted and assimilated many Greek features in his military organisation.

Seleucos was quickly shocked and worsted by the great

army of Candragupta and compelled to conclude a humiliating peace almost exactly at the same spot where Alexander was accorded a hearty reception by Āmbhi. He had to cede a large part of Ariana, consisting of Paropanisadai, Aria, Arachosia and Gedrosia with their capitals at Kabul, Herat, Kandahar and Makaran, to Candragupta. Thus the Maurya emperor reached the 'scientific frontier' of the Hindukush which the Mughal emperors never held in its entirety and the British rulers sighed for in vain (V.A. Smith, *Early History of India*, p. 118). This was naturally the most splendid achievement of the Mauryas and a tribute to their sense of geopolitical realism.

After receiving such large territories from Seleucos, Candragupta did not mind giving him a force of 500 elephants which tilted the scales of victory in his favour at the battle of Ipsos in Phrygia with Antigonos in 301 B.C. It was in keeping with the old policy of sending military contingents, particularly elephant corps, to western Asia for the assistance of their friends pursued by Pukkusāti and Poros. Its object was obviously to keep in touch with Asian developments and exercise some influence on them from the standpoint of Indian interests. Candragupta could have naturally thought that, after bringing Seleucos to his knees, it was desirable to prop him against his rival Antigonos whose rise to power might become a menace for him.

The defeat of Seleucos had such a powerful impact on popular mind as to become a legend overnight. Hence the rumour began to circulate that Seleucos entered into a matrimonial relation with Candragupta leading some to think that he married his daughter to him. But Seleucos had only two wives Apama and Stratonice and only one daughter Phila who was married to Antigonos Gonatas. Thus there could be no question of his having any matrimonial connection, much less marrying his daughter, to Candragupta. It was mainly a fancy of popular imagination stirred by the momentous triumph of the Maurya monarch over his Greek rival.

After the decisive victory of Candragupta over Seleucos, invading hordes and armies did not disturb the peace of the Panjab for about a century and regional rivalry or animosity did not trouble its people for even a longer period, but the supercilious behaviour and crushing exactions of the officers of

the centralized Maurya bureaucracy occasionally irked and stung them to revolts. The *Divyāvadāna* (ed. Cowell, p. 372) informs us that, during the reign of Bindusāra, the son and successor of Candragupta, the people of the Panjab were in rebellion and its headquarters, Takṣaśilā, was the seat of sedition and unrest. Hence the king sent his son Aśoka to suppress the insurgence. On his arrival, at the head of a huge army, the citizens of Takṣaśilā moved out of the city with pitchers full of water as a sign of submission and informed the prince that they had risen not against the king's authority but against the wicked officials who insulted them, and, according to him a warm welcome, brought him to the city with great pomp and festivity. Aśoka must have taken the guilty officers to task to pacify the discontent of the people whose spirit of self-respect was very much alive.

Aśoka's grandfather had carried his empire to the natural frontier of the Hindukush, and he thought of reducing the Khasa tribes in the south and west of Kaśmīra. It appears that he brought to subjection the ancestors of the modern Khakha tribe of the Vitastā Valley below Kaśmīra and the neighbouring hills. In this campaign also the soldiers of the Panjab must have distinguished themselves.

Towards the end of the reign of Bindusāra the people of the Panjab were again seized by discontent and revolt on account of the tyranny of Maurya officials. On that occasion prince Susīma was sent to quell the insurrection. But this time it was so deep that he failed to allay it. Hence Aśoka was again thought of. But, in the meantime, the emperor died and Aśoka was embroiled in the affairs at Pāṭaliputra.

On coming to the throne, Aśoka had to face the problem of the upheaval in the Panjab. He himself set out to pacify the people. But his ministers asked him to send prince Kuṇāla instead. On the arrival of the prince at Takṣaśilā the citizens again came out to receive him and complained only of the rough conduct of the officers. Kuṇāla followed another policy to solve the problem of chronic revolt. He, besides advising the centre to issue a strict warning to the officers, which Aśoka did in his separate Rock Edict I, canalized the energy of the people towards the conquest and colonisation of Khotan. Hsuan Chwang states that under Kuṇāla there was an exodus of people from Takṣaśilā result-

ing in the colonisation of Khotan (S. Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, Vol. I, pp. 139-141) and Tibetan traditions show that a branch of the Maurya dynasty ruled there which assumed independence after Kuṣṭha (Aurel Stein, *Ancient Khotan*, Vol. I, p. 366).

Aśoka ruled securely over the Panjab and the North-West up to the Hindukush mountains including the Kabul Valley, Baluchistan and Sind, thoroughly controlled the Valleys of Swat and Bajaur and those of Kaśmīra and Nepal and probably Khotan and the neighbouring region also. In this region people, using the Aramaic, Greek, Kharoṣṭhī scripts, lived and freely mixed with each other. Aśoka respected their own traditions and addressed to them his edicts in their own scripts and languages. As Benveniste has shown his twelfth and thirteenth edicts had special relevance for north-western regions. A Greek version of the last part of the twelfth and the initial part of the thirteenth Rock Edicts has been found in a twenty-two line inscription engraved on a stone piece found in the ruins of old Kandahar in 1963. From the same place another bilingual inscription of him in Greek and Aramaic was discovered in 1958. Chronologically it is his earliest record showing that he got the inspiration to issue edicts in the form of stone inscriptions from those regions (E. Benveniste, 'Edits d' Aśoka en traduction grécque', *Journal Asiatique* (1964) pp. 137-57; D. Schlumberger and others, 'Une bilingue Gréco-Araméenne d' Aśoka', *Journal Asiatique* (1958) pp. 1-48). Among his northern frontagers Aśoka mentions the Yonas, Kāmbojas, Gandhāras, Nābhakas (people of Nabha) and Nabhapanktis (people of Patiala) and shows special solicitude for them.

On the death of Aśoka in 236 B.C. the process of disintegration started in the Maurya Empire. The étatist and centralized régime, established by them, proved an unbearable burden on the people. According to Kalhaṇa his successor in Kaśmīra, Jālauka, conquered the territory up to Kanauj, while, according to Tārānātha, one Virasena, who may be presumed to be a predecessor of Subhāgasena (Sōphagsenus), the contemporary of Antiochus III in the North-West, came to power after him. At that time the Greeks, called Yavanas, were hovering on the north-western frontiers in enormous numbers and making inroads up to Kaśmīra. Hence these rulers of those regions had to be very watchful about their movements. About Subhāgasena we are

told by Polybius that he held his own up to the Hindukush and had friendly relations with Antiochus III. In particular he assisted him against the Bactrian Greeks rising under Enthydemus I. These Greeks had entrenched themselves in Bactria and were proving a menace for north-western India. Hence, when Antiochus III marched against Enthydemus and besieged him in his capital Zariaspa for two years, Subhāgasena rendered him sufficient assistance. As a result Enthydemus surrendered and acknowledged Seleucid suzerainty and Antiochus, while retiring, crossed the Hindukush, renewed his friendship with his Indian ally, got more elephants from him, till he had 150 altogether, and also borrowed some money from him and went through Arachosia, Drangiana and Karmania to the shore of the Persian Gulf. This diplomatic move of Subhāgasena to set and assist the Seleucids against the Bactrians, matched, of course, by his military strength and ability to thwart external threats, guaranteed the safety of the Panjab for well over a quarter of a century.

In 184 B. C. the last Maurya emperor Bṛhadratha was assassinated by his general Puṣyamitra who himself ascended the throne and initiated the Sunga dynasty. Soon after assuming office he addressed himself to the task of restoring the unity of the empire and checking the inroads of the Bactrians. So he advanced towards the Panjab conquering up to Jullundur and Sialkot and the Indus and undoing the division of the Maurya empire resulting from the campaigns of Jālauka up to Kanauj. One of his grandsons, Vasumitra, stood guard on the Indus along with hundred other princes. To celebrate his triumph, the emperor decided to perform the horse sacrifice and, for that purpose, let loose a horse to wander unchecked for one year. But the Greeks in a swoop across the Indus apprehended that horse and thereby challenged the power of Puṣyamitra. Vasumitra and his hundred associates faced them in a grim encounter and inflicted on them a crushing defeat and thus vindicated the paramountcy of the Sunga emperor (Kālidāsa's, *Mālavikāgnimitra*, Act V, Niranaya Sagara Press Edition, p. 91 ; for comments see R. C. Majumdar, 'Some Observations on Puṣyamitra and his Empire', *Indian Historical Quarterly*, (1925) pp. 91 ff). After this victory Puṣyamitra performed his horse sacrifice. Towards the end of his reign the Yavana menace also seems to have assumed alarming dimensions. Hence Puṣyamitra himself advanced against them and, crossing the Indus, penetrated into the region called Koṣṭhaka, modern Birkot and Udeygram in the

Manglawar area, but was killed by the fall of a rock (P. C. Bagchi, 'Krimīśa and Demetrius', *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol. XXII (1946) pp. 81 ff.). After him his empire broke up into several fragments ruled over by warring scions of his family. In particular Agnimitra ruled over the east and Balamitra or Bhānumitra in the west and there was no love lost between them. The heroic Vasumitra or Sumitra seems also to have been assassinated in a dramatic show as Bāṇa wrote. In this state of turmoil and instability the Bactrians, led by Demetrius, poured into the Panjab and dashed up to Mathurā and Pāṭaliputra. Though they had to retire from the middle country, they got a foothold in western Panjab, since there was no organized power to resist or repel them there. Heroism without organization proves in vain.

CHAPTER X

THE STRUGGLE WITH THE YAVANAS, SAKAS AND KUSANAS

In the latter half of the second century B. C. the Bactrian Greeks plunged into the Panjab and occupied a considerable part of it up to the Ravi region. One of their leaders, Demetrius, probably Demetrius II Aniketos, even overran Madhyamika or the upper part of the Bari Doab, called Manjha, advanced towards Mathura and Saketa and encamped outside the walls of Pataliputra. However a revolt in his own realm, led by one Eucratides, forced him to retreat and retire to the North-West to be entrapped and killed by his opponents. During these disturbances Pantaleon and Agathocles carved out their kingdoms in the Panjab, but, about 145 B. C., they were annexed by Menander who extended his sway up to the Ravi and raided even across it. His empire was a congeries of semi-independent principalities under Antimachus II, Polyxenus, Epander and others. Hence, after his death in course of some northern campaign in 129-28 B. C., a scramble overtook his kingdom out of which Antialkides emerged triumphant in West Panjab and Apollodatus rose to power in the Ravi region. In this chaos of kings and their struggles the Śaka chief Maues (Cir. 48-33 B. C.) occupied the Swat Valley and the Hazara country, took possession of Takṣaśilā and the Panjab and swept up to Mathura in the Gangetic Valley. He appointed his satraps in various parts of this region, but soon they became virtually independent styling themselves *mahākṣatrapas*, a title which replaced *rājātirāja* assumed by Maues. In this chaos the Parthians, or Pahlavas, particularly Gondophares, conquered the Panjab and, in alliance with the Kuṣāṇa chief Kujula Kadphises, liquidated the Greeks who tried to raise their heads under Hermacus. Soon afterwards this Kuṣāṇa ruler occupied the region to the south of the Hindukush including Gandhāra and parts of Kaśmīra, called Kipin, and his successor Wima Kadphises consolidated his hold over the Panjab supplanting the Pahlava prince Pakores. The

next ruler Kaniṣka, whose date of accession was between 78 A. D. and 144 A. D., was a great conqueror exercising sway over a vast region extending from Khwarazm and the Tarim basin to the Deccan in the south and Magadha in the east. His successors Vaṣiṣka, Huviṣka and Vāsudeva I maintained their hold over the Panjab, but the Sassanids threatened them in the West and the native people uprooted them in the eastern region. The later Kuṣāṇa Kings, Vāsudeva II, Kaniṣka II and Vāsudeva III and their feudatories, the Śakas, Śīladas and Gaḍaharas, had shrunk to insignificant position as a result of these pressures from these peoples.

This period of foreign domination from the end of the second century B. C. to the end of the third century A. D. was marked by significant changes in the social and cultural life of the Panjab. The rise of world trade, consequent on the growth of the empires of China and Rome, led to the progress of a bourgeois class professing a syncretic religion and leading an affluent life. It also stimulated the development of agriculture, industry and technology and promoted the growth of private property. But it also changed the life of the common man as is clear from the view that that age was one of decadence and degradation. Let us study some features of this historical process.

As a result of the acquisitive attitude of the Parthians, trade between China and the West began to pass through the Panjab adding to its richness and prosperity. Besides transit trade, terminal trade gave a fillip to local industry and technology. Indian steel found such a market in Rome that the emperor Marcus Aurelius had to impose an import tax on it. Takṣaśīla made quality steel through the process called cementation or combining wrought iron with the requisite quantity of carbon (John Marshall, *Taxila*, Vol. II p. 535). Besides iron, copper, zinc, bronze and brass and goods made of them were exported from India overseas. Finds from Takṣaśīla indicate that the techniques of hammering, rivetting, soldering, casting in the *cire perdue* process and repousse work were employed in working these metals. The art of jewellery also reached a high standard of workmanship synthesizing European, West Asian and Indian elements. Textiles of various sorts, like *monaché*, *moločiné* and *sagmatogené* of western India, had a good market abroad. The list of artisans and their guilds in the *Milindapañho* and the *Mahāvastu* show a rapid proliferation of

crafts and industries of varied types. Important cities, like Sialkot, having separate markets for these goods, reflected the manysided industrial activity of those times.

Industrial advance went hand in hand with agricultural and horticultural development. The law that land belongs to him who clears it gave an incentive to large scale reclamation. The insistence on title besides possession strengthened the system of private property in land. That the lands on the banks of rivers were widely brought under the plough is manifest from the description of *Yugakṣaya* in the *Vanaparvan* of the *Mahābhārata*, which reflects the conditions of that age (*Sarittīreṣu kuddālayirvāpaiṣyanti cauṣadhiḥ* (*Mahābhārata*, III, 190, 23). Even lowlands, pastures and ponds were cultivated and milch cows and young calves were yoked (*Nīnne kṛṣim kariṣyanti yokṣyanti dhuri dhenukāḥ. Ekahāyanavat-sāṁśca yojayiṣanti mānavāḥ*) (*Ibid.*, III, 190, 27). Barley and wheat were the staple crops (*Ibid.*, III, 190, 44) though new plants, fruits and vegetables, like pistachio (*akṣota*), walnut (*pārasī*), pomegranate (*dāḍima*), coriander (*kustumburu*), shallot (*melecchakanda*), garlic (*laṣuna*), onion (*taṇḍula*), asafoetida (*hiṅgu*), oakgalls (*mājuphala*), cummin (*jirā*), almond (*vātāma*), watermelon (*tarambuja*), carrot (*yavana*), peach (*cināni*), apricot (*cinarājaputra*), were also introduced from Iran and China. The commercialisation of agriculture is indicated by the remark of the *Mahābhārata* (III, 190, 52) that all regions would trade in foodstuffs (*aṣṭaśūlā janapadāḥ*). The expansion of agriculture can be gathered from the interest in irrigation an idea of which can be had from the numerous tanks and reservoirs built by pious men and referred to in inscriptions.

The above developments brought in a money economy of an international character symbolized by a gold currency. The Greeks were the first to introduce die-struck coins with portraits in India. Menander's coins suggest a flourishing economy. Lamotte thinks that he received the support of an urban bourgeoisie that was more interested in trade than in politics (E. Lamotte, *Historie du Bouddhisme Indien*, p. 462). But after him internecine troubles presaged economic decline as is clear from the cessation of good coins. The coming of the Kuṣāṇas signified the return to gold currency which was based on Roman patterns and standards. The Kuṣāṇa gold *dināra* of 123.3 grains corresponded to the Roman aurei of the pre-reform period. Its ratio to silver coins 1:12 was the same as between these two precious metals in the Roman world (C. H. V.

Sutherland, *Gold*, p. 99). Robert Göbl thinks that the Parthian war of Trajan synchronized with the Kuṣāṇa conquest of the Panjab and that subsequently the liaison between the Roman and Kuṣāṇa empires was quite close (R. Göbl, 'Roman Patterns for Kuṣāṇa coins', *A. S. Altekar Commemoration Volume*, Journal of the Numismatic Society of India, Vol. XXII (1960), p. 90). Recently a hoard of Kuṣāṇa coins has been discovered in a very old monastery in northern Ethiopia which suggests that the Kuṣāṇas entered into some commercial arrangement with the Axumites probably as a measure against the policies of Rome (D. Mathews, 'The Monastery of Debra Damo', *Archaeologia*, Vol. XCVII (1959) p. 53). All these data indicate that the people of the Kuṣāṇa empire, including those of the Panjab, cultivated an international outlook as a result of commercial and industrial progress.

The hall-mark of the aforesaid developments was a syncretic approach to religion implicit in the tenets of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Consequently Zeus Ombrios or Jupiter Pluvius was identified with Indra, the concept of Artemis mixed with that of Anāhita or Nanaia and the cult of Mithra became one with that of Helios or Apollo or Sūrya and the eight Magas of Iran emerged as the eight Buddhas in the art of Bamiyan. The worship of Graeco-Roman goddesses like Pallas (*Apalā*), Irene (*Airāṇi*), Artemis (*Missakesi*) and Selene (*Śālimālini*) became popular under Indian names (*Āṅgavijjā* ed. Muni Puṇyavijaya, p. 69); the cities of Nikaja and Boukephala were renamed as Ādirājya and Bhadrāśva and brought into relation with the legendary biography of Mahāsammata (*Gilgit Manuscripts*, III, 1, p. 3) and the corporeal relics of Buddha became more than commemorative pieces and began to be regarded as living breathing beings (*prāṇasameta*) in the presence of which offerings of food and drink were made (Shinkot Reliquary Inscription, *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XXIV (1937) pp. 1-7). The cult of *Pūjā* with the object of lengthening of life and increase of strength and promotion of prosperity and protection of children from epidemics became the dominant feature of religion (*Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol. II, pp. 28, 145, 77, 114, 137, 141, 127). The change in religious belief is manifest from the remark of the *Malāb'ārata* (III, 190. 67) that the earth would be full of *eḍukas* or *jālūkas* or graves or burials of saints and bodhisattvas, which the people will worship, in place of the temples of gods. The anti-nomian, luxurious and sensualist leaning of the people is implicit

in the remark that they would be debauchees and drunkards (III, 190, 68). The art of this period, especially that of the Gandhāra school, is an index to the mentality of the people.

In the said environment the heroic tradition took a new turn and assumed a religious form. Those, who distinguished themselves in the field of sacrifice and service of others, ranked as heroes and numerous traditions were woven round them. At Puṣkalavati (Charsadda) Sibi was believed to have donated his eyes to a beggar. At Varṣapura (Shahbazgarhi) Viśvantara was known to have given his kingdom, white elephant, wife and children to a greedy Brahmana. At Mangalapura (Manglor) Kṣāntivādin was stated to have suffered the blows of King Kali without making sound by way of complaint. At Hi-lo or Hidda (Ilam on the border of Swat and Buner) a young Brāhmaṇa was said to have jumped from the top of a tree to hear a verse of the law. At Mahāvana (Sunigram) the king Sarvada was reputed to have sold himself and given away the price he fetched to the beggars when he had disposed of everything he had by way of charity. At Masūra-saṅghārāma (Gumbatai near Toursak in the Buner) one Dharmarāta was held to have transcribed the sacred text on his skin with the pen of his bone and ink of his blood. In the monastery of Sarpauṣadhi in the Valley of Sīnirāja (Adinzai) Indra was known to have taken the form of a serpent to save the people from famine and pestilence whereas another serpent brought water from a rock. At Takṣaṣila (Taxila) the king Candrakumāra was said to have cut his head to give to a Brāhmaṇa Raudrakṣa and, on the upper Indus, a prince Mahāsattva offered his body to a hungry tigress. At Rohitaka (Rohtak) the king Mitrabala was trusted to have nourished five Yakṣas with his own blood. These and many other similar legends, spread over and associated with numerous localities in the Panjab and the North-West, demonstrate how the heroic tradition had struck root in the domain of philanthropy, sacrifice and virtue under the spell of Buddhist religion. Militarism and pacifism both were equally germane to it.

But though the people of the Panjab developed a cosmopolitan outlook and an ethics of philanthropy and sacrifice and also experienced the heyday of economic growth and material prosperity, the literature of that time depicts this age as one of grave degeneration and misery. Buddhism is said to have flourished in it, but an old tradition points to its decline 500 years after the

Buddha. The *Mahāsannipātasūtra* and the *Mahāmāyāsūtra* state that the *saddharma* would last for 500 years and the *pratirūpaka* for 1000 years. A coalition of foreign kings would carry fire and sword in the country, massacring the monks, destroying the monasteries and burning the sacred texts, till a king of Kauśāmbī would drive them off and relieve the people. But by that time so much laxity would have siezed the monks that they would neglect the discipline and ignore the law. The *Vibhāṣā* calls these foreign kings dasyu mleccha (*Ta-siu Mi-li-tchō*) and says that they would come from the West, pillaging throughout their march, and reach the East. At last a king of the East would repel and kill them. He would then convene an assembly of monks at Kauśāmbī but a decadence would come over them. The *Kātyāyanaparipṛcchā* states that the invasion, resulting in the decline of the true law (*saddharma*), would be led by three kings of *Ta-ts'in* (Roman World), *Po-lo* (Pahlava) and *Ngan-si* (Pārthava). The *Aśokāvadāna* names these three kings as *She-kiu* (Śaka), *Yen-wou-na* (Yavana) and *Po-lo-jao* (Pahlava). The *Saṃyuktāgama* raises their number to four, that is to say, *She-kia* (Śaka), *Ye-p'an-na* (Yavana), *Po-lo-p'o* (Pahlava) and *Teou-sha-lo* (Tuṣāra or Tukhāra). The *Candragarbhasūtra* combines the Śaka with the Hūṇa under the name *Śakuna* (*Shan-yi She-kia*). These references show that the Buddhists regarded the period from the irruption of the Bactrian Greeks to the inroads of the Hūṇas as one of decline and decadence of their religion. It is wrong to say that they hailed the domination of the Bactrian Greeks, Śakas, Pahlavas and Kuṣāṇas as the harbinger of prosperity and progress. In their eyes its character was just the reverse of this view.

If the Buddhists denounced this age as one of decline and decadence, the Brāhmaṇas also condemned it as that of utter degeneration and decrepitude. This is clear from the description of *yugakṣaya* (the decadence of the age) in the *Vanaparvan* of the *Mahābhārata*. There it is stated that the world will be dominated by the mlecchas (*mlecchabhūtam jagat sarvam*) (III, 190, 29, 38) or foreigners, social distinctions will be blurred, vocational discipline would disappear and mankind would be an amorphous mass of dissentient elements (*Brāhmaṇāḥ kṣatriyā vaiśya na śiṣyanti janādhipa. Ekavarṇastadā loko bhaviṣyati yugakṣaye*) (III, 190, 42). There was a furious dash and grab (*hasto hastam parimuṣet*), father

and son will forget their respective duties, teacher and pupil will ignore their code of conduct, husband and wife will be licentious, and the whole structure of values will totter and tumble down (III, 190, 38, 43, 45, 47, 50, 53). Aping the foreigners (*mlecchas*), the people will give up the inhibitions of food and drink and will eat from one plate in common (*ekāhāryam yugam sarvam*) (III, 190, 41). This pammixia and promiscuity, masquerading as cosmopolitanism and egalitarianism and bolstering rationalism and ratiocination (*hetuvāda*), will, indeed, be an anarchy of values encasing disorder and disturbance (III, 190, 74). Thus picture of social disequilibrium unmistakably depicts the conditions under foreign rule lasting from the first century B. C. to the third century A. D.

The significant fact that both Buddhists and Brahmanas joined to denounce this period shows that they regarded it as an unmitigated evil inasmuch as the people were unhappy and scared in it. The reason was that tyranny, greed and grab reached their high watermark. The bourgeois class, traders and merchants, deceived, fleeced and exploited the people through commercial transactions (*Krayavikrayakāle ca sarvaḥ sarvasya vañcanam. Yugānte bharataśreṣṭha vittalobhāt kariṣyati*) (III, 190, 54). Out of pugnacious acquisitiveness these men misappropriated, squeezed and coaxed money from all sections of the people, not sparing even the wealth of the widows, disabled and destitutes (III, 190, 30), reducing all of them to acute misery and anguish (III, 190, 58). The burden of taxes and corvée, levied by the rulers, crushed the people compelling them to leave their home and hearth (*Nirviṣeṣā janapadāstatha viṣṭīkarārditāḥ. Āśramānupalapsyanti phalamūlopaḥjivinaḥ*) (III, 190, 73). That the weight of these imposts was ordinarily unbearable for the people is manifest from the boastful declaration of Mahakṣatrapa Rudradāman that he avoided saddling his subjects with *kara*, *viṣṭi* and *praṇaya* while executing such works of public utility as the embankment of the Sudarśana lake. The people reacted to this tyranny, cruelty and oppression by rising en masse and overthrowing the regime of the Śaka-Kuṣāṇas. The tribes of Hariyana and East Panjab took the lead of this widespread movement giving the heroic tradition a martial and nationalist turn.

Foremost among the tribes, who took up the struggle against the Śaka-Kuṣāṇas, were the Yaudheyas. They were akin to the Iranian tribe Yautiya, who figured in the *völkerwanderung*

of peoples which brought the Medes and Persians into Iran about the 9th-8th century B. C. Driven forward by the Medes, these people bifurcated into two wings, the right one pushing north-westwards up to Transcaspians and the left one wheeling towards the south-east and penetrating into the Panjab. In the sixth century B. C. their chief Vahyazdāta posed a challenge before the Achaemenian emperor Darius by capturing the Kabul Valley, but was defeated by the governor of Harahvatis, Vivāna. Along with the Yautiā the warrior clans of the Hindukush region, called 'the ten maṇḍalas of Lohita' in the *Mahābhārata* (II, 27, 17) and *Rohitagiriya* in the *Kāśikā* (IV, 3, 91), who gave their name *Roh* to medieval Afghanistan, also seem to have moved east. The name of the township of *Rohitaka* or *Rohtak* in Hariyana appears to enshrine a reminiscence of their settlement. The name of a Jat gotra Rohila also suggests that these people are connected with the ancient Rohitas or Rohs who had come to East Panjab. Subsequently they moved into Rājasthāna where we come across the name *Rohilladdhi* in the Jodhpur inscription of Bāuka. In medieval times they settled in the Transgangetic region of Uttara Pradeśa which came to be known as *Rohilkhand* after them. That the Rohitas (Ruhilas of medieval times) moved with the Yautiā becomes clear from the existence of the settlements of both of them in the same region of Hariyana.

The Yaudheyas are mentioned with the *Parśus* or Persians by Paṇini (V, 3, 117). The *Mahābhārata* (II, 48, 14-15) brackets them with the Śibis and Traigarttas and, at another place (VII, 159, 5), with the Adrijas, Madrakas and Mālavas, and the *Purāṇas* connect them with the Uśīnaras of East Panjab (F. E. Pargiter, *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, p. 380). Varāhamihira refers to them along with the Ārjunāyanas, Rājanyas, Mālavas etc. (*Bṛhatsaṃhitā*, XIV, 28). On the basis of their extensive coinage their history in East Panjab can be tentatively reconstructed as follows.

The earliest coins of the Yaudheyas belong to the late second and first centuries B.C. One group of them, the earliest, consists of small potin coins without their name. On the obverse of some of them a tree in railing is shown, on others the same tree is coupled to the Ujjain symbol and on the third and fourth varieties the symbol of a banner and sun are added below which is the legend *mahārājasa*. The second group is of coins of metal varying from potin to

copper. On the reverse of them there is an elephant to right with a *nandipada* above it and a flowing pennon behind it. The obverse has a bull before a sort of post or standard in a railing and a legend *yaudheyānāmbahudhānyake*. The third class consists of a single small copper coin with the legend *yaudheyānām* above a bull. These coins show that, when the Bactrian Greeks launched their raids to the east of the Ravi, some local chief in eastern Panjab organized the people and assumed the title of *mahārāja*. He may have successfully withstood the onslaughts of Menander and entrenched his hold after his death. It appears that many tribes and peoples marched under his banner for which reason he did not mention any one of them. But soon the Yaudheyas of Bahudhanyaka (Hariyana) were in the ascendant among them, excelling both in military exploits and in agronomic progress, as the elephant and bull on the reverse and obverse of the coins of the second class show. These coins pointedly refer to their eminent position as a leading tribe among the peoples of eastern Panjab. As will be shown later, they collaborated with the Ārjunāyanas.

The coming of the Śakas and Pahlavas posed another challenge before the Yaudheyas, but they faced it squarely and bravely. The Junagarh inscription of the Śaka chief Rudradāman states that they were not prone to submit being proud of their title of heroes among the Kṣatriyas (*sarvaḥṣatrāviṣṭāvirāṣabdhajātotsekavidheyānām Yaudheyānām*) (*Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. VIII, p. 36). Though thwarted, they continued their struggle with renewed vigour as their coins of that period indicate. The first class of these coins, consisting of one silver and many copper pieces, have the figure of the six headed generalissimo of the gods, Kārttikeya, and the legend *yaudheya-bhāgavata-svāmīno-brahmaṇyasya* (of Brahmaṇya or Kārttikeya the divine lord of the Yaudheyas) on the obverse and that of Lakṣmī standing on lotus between the symbols of mountain and tree with a river below on the reverse. On some varieties of these coins Kārttikeya is replaced by Śiva with a trident and, on others, Lakṣmī is substituted by a deer. The second class of coins has an incomplete legend *bhanuva*, standing perhaps for *bhānuvarmasa*, between a mountain and svastika above and a snake below on the obverse and a trident and a standard each in a railing on the reverse. These coins

show that, faced with the menace of the Śakas, the Yaudheyas strengthened their military orientation as is clear from the adoption of the war-god Kārttikeya or Śiva with trident as their tutelary deity, and also perhaps their supreme ruler (J. N. Banerjea, *Development of Hindu Iconography*, p. 143). Inspired by him, they marched against the enemy, as he himself led the army of gods against the demons, and claimed victory over mountain, river and earth, as the figure of Lakṣmi, accompanied by these symbols for them, on the reverse of the coins suggests. It may be that one Bhānuvarman was one of their leaders in their heroic struggle against the Śakas.

The advent of the Kuṣāṇas gave a rebuff to the Yaudheyas, but they did not lose heart and were on a lookout for the opportune moment to strike at them. On the death of Huiṣka they began their offensive by capturing some of their strongholds like Naurangabad near Bamla in Hariyana. This is clear from the fact that there only the coin-moulds of Kaniṣka and Huiṣka have been found besides numerous coin-moulds of the Yaudheyas. It appears that this mint centre was wrested by the Yaudheyas soon after the death of Huiṣka for no coin-mould of Vāsudeva has been found there. In other parts of the region the Yaudheyas struggled with the Kuṣāṇa monarch Vāsudeva and supplanted his rule. At village Malhana, near Sonapat, a big hoard of coins has been found in which there are some coins of Vāsudeva but about one maund and thirty-seven seers of Yaudheya coins. At Sidipur Lova, Kisrenhati, Karauntha, Bhiwani etc. also coins of Vāsudeva have been discovered with those of the Yaudheyas. At Sanet, near Ludhiana, also coin-moulds of Vāsudeva are found with those of the Yaudheyas. Thus it appears that the Yaudheyas were chiefly instrumental in uprooting the rule of Vāsudeva from Hariyana and eastern Panjab. On the North-West the Sassanids exercised pressure on him as is clear from the absence of his coins at places like Surkh Kotal. As a result of these troubles he was compelled to seek succour from the Chinese and, for that purpose, offered tribute to the Wei emperor (P. Pelliot, 'Tokharien et Koutcheen' *Journ. Asiatique* (1934) p. 40).

In token of their splendid victories over the Kuṣāṇas the Yaudheyas struck a new type of coins the obverse of which bears the figure of the war-god Kārttikeya, standing

facing holding spear in right hand and placing the left one on the hip, accompanied by his peacock, and the reverse has a goddess to left with right hand raised who may probably be identified with Caṇḍamāri whom Jaina *Kathas* associate with them. The legend on the obverse is *yaudheyagaṇasya jaya* (Victory to the Yaudheya people). There are three varieties of these coins. On variety A the goddess on the reverse is alone, on variety B she has a *kalāṣa* to the left and an inverted *triśūla* to the right, and on variety C, the *kalāṣa* is replaced by a *śankha* and the inverted *triśūla* by two snakes separated by a vertical stroke like SIS. On the obverse of variety B the legend *yaudheyagaṇasya jaya* is followed by *dvi* and on that of variety C it ends in *tri* which obviously stand for *dvitiya* (second) and *tṛtiya* (third) respectively. It appears that, at that time, the Yaudheya tribe consisted of three sections which maintained their identities and struck coins with their distinctive marks. The second section added the *kalāṣa* and the inverted *triśūla* to the design on the reverse and the word *dvi* to the legend on the obverse, and the third section inserted the *śankha* and the snakes separated by the stroke in the plan of the reverse and the word *tri* in the legend on the obverse to distinguish themselves from the first section. But, on fundamental issues, they displayed a large measure of agreement as the common figures of Kārttikeya and Caṇḍamāri and the common legend indicate. It also seems that, to emphasize their solidarity as a people, they agreed to omit references to their chiefs, the Mahārāja-senāpatis, and mentioned instead their tribe. Thus it is clear that they devised a unique framework of integration within which they could reconcile their individualities to their unity.

The aforesaid coins show that the Yaudheyas had geared their war-machine to a high pitch of efficiency. The figure of the war-god, holding the spear in one hand and placing the other on the hip, suggests the posture of advance and offensive whereas the figure of the goddess with right arm upraised indicates the goddess of war and victory, probably Caṇḍamāri, blessing the conqueror with success. The conch gives the call to war and the *kalāṣa* bespeaks complete safety and triumph. The influence of Kuṣāṇa types on the said designs proves that the Kuṣāṇa mint masters were employed to cast them for circulation in the areas which were under Kuṣāṇa rule before the rise of the Yaudheyas. These

coins have been found from Delhi, Sonapat, Panipat, Hansi, Sirsa, Abhor, Bhatner, Saharanpur etc. to Depalpur, Satgarha, Ajudhan, Kahrur and Multan westwards and the Kangra Valley in the north. From Khokhrakot to Ludhiana, they must have been in wide circulation. This vast extent of this currency proves that the Yaudheyas had liberated this region from the Kuṣāṇas.

The Yaudheyas marched from victory to victory in their struggle with the Kuṣāṇas, knowing no failure or rebuff. Hence in popular estimation, they were believed to be knowing the mysterious charm of victory which ensured their success at every step. The legend *yaudheyānām jayamantradhārāpām* on a large clay seal, found at Sunet, gives expression to this popular belief.

The modern descendants of the Yaudheyas are the *Dahiya* and *Dheya* Jats of Hariyana and the *Juhiyas* spread up to Bahawalpur and Jaisalmer, called *Juhiyabar* after their name. The Dahiyas carved out separate kingdoms for themselves at Maroth and Parbatsar in Rājasthāna. Cunningham identified the Janjuhas or Januhas, living in the district of Potawar, between the Indus and the Jhelum, with the Yaudheyas which shows that they had spread up to West Panjab also (A. Cunningham, *Later Indo-Scythians*, p. 98). Thus it is clear that the Yaudheyas were the dominant power in parts of western U. P., Delhi, Hariyana, East Panjab and parts of Rājasthāna and even dashed up to West Panjab. Under them a revival of militant Hinduism and Sanskrit language was coupled to agricultural advance and economic development.

As we have seen, the Yaudheya coins of the late second and first centuries B.C. resemble those of the Ārjunāyanas which not only shows their contemporaneity but also suggests their collaboration in the task of fighting the Yavanas. The coins of the Ārjunāyanas are of several varieties. In variety A the obverse shows a bull to left, apparently standing on a hill, and the reverse has a standing goddess, probably Lakṣmī, between a linga symbol and a tree and the legend *ajñāyanana*. On the obverse of variety B the bull, which looks more like an elephant with uplifted trunk, is to right before a tree in railing and, on the reverse, another bull faces a linga symbol and the legend is

ajunayananaajaya. The third variety has a bull in the obverse and a svastika with taurine symbols at the end of arms and a branch or palm leaf and the legend *janayana* on the reverse recalling some Yaudheya coins. These coins show that these people were devotees of Śiva and adopted his symbols of *linga* and *nandī* on their coins. They are mentioned in the *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya as *prājjūṇaka* together with Gandhāras and are referred to as *Prājjuna* and *Ārjunāyana* in the Allahabad inscription of Samudragupta. Varāhamihira counts them among northern peoples. From the findspots of coins, it can be gathered that they occupied the tract between the triangle Delhi-Jaipur-Agra, but they must have lived in Haryana and East Panjab also as the gotra name *jūna* (joon) among the Jats of this region, which is obviously reminiscent of these people, suggests. Their very name shows that they connected themselves with the Pāṇḍava hero Arjuna. About the same time the Āgreya or Agravālas of Agroḍaka, modern Agroha in Haryana, also issued their coins the obverse of which shows a tree in railing and the reverse a bull or a lion. The legend on them reads as *agodakā agāca janapadasa* which refers to the Āgreya community of Agroha. It is noteworthy that up to the sixteenth century the Āgreyas or Agravālas were counted among the martial classes as a reference in the *Padmāvat* of Jayasī (42, 503, 3-4 ed. V.S. Agrawala) shows. (*Khatri o pañcabān baghele. Agarwal cauhan candelee. Gaharwar parihar so kuri. Milan hansa thakurai juri*)

Another people, who challenged the Yavanas in the upper part of eastern Punjab, were the Audumbaras. On the basis of the finds of their coins they may be located in the Valley of the Beas or perhaps the wider region between the upper Sutlej and the Ravi in the Gurdaspur, Hoshiarpur and eastern part of Kangra districts. They are mentioned as a constituent of the Salva confederacy, the other members being *Tilakhala* to the south of the Beas near Hoshiarpur, *Yugandhara* on the Yumunā, who gave their name to modern Jagādhari, *Bhūllinga*, living to the north-west of the Aravallis, *Śaradaṇḍa*, occupying the Yamunā basin areas like Patehar and Kunjpura, and *Madrakāra* a branch of the Madras in the Rechna Doab. The Sīlvas settled in Rājasthāna also and the town of Alwar bears their name even now. They

played an important part in opposing the Śakas and seem to have collaborated with the Mālavas and others for that purpose.

The role of the Audumbaras in struggling with the Yavanas is manifest from their coins which fall into two or three classes. The first class consists of square copper pieces the obverse of which shows the forepart of an elephant to left and a tall tree in an enclosure and an inscription in Kharoṣṭhī characters giving the name of the king and the reverse has the figure of a two storied domed and pillared stūpa and a trident with an axe-head on the shaft with a legend in Brāhmī script suggesting the reading audumbara or the king's name. These coins reveal the names of four kings Śivadāsa, Rudradāsa, Mahādeva and Dharaghoṣa. They also show that their regal title was *mahādeva*. These coins reveal a unique syncretism between the Buddhist and Śaiva religions as the stūpa and trident on the reverse indicate. It appears that the Audumbara kings, who issued them, though professedly Śaivas, as their very names indicate, also carried the Buddhists with them. The use of both Kharoṣṭhī and Brāhmī scripts also suggests the spirit of synthesis which animated them. The second class of Audumbara coins are of silver the obverse of which bears the figure of a bearded male with right hand raised and left arm covered with deer skin, which is described in the Kharoṣṭhī legend as that of Viśvāmitra, and the reverse has the trident with axe on right and tree in enclosure on left and the Brāhmī legend reading *mahadevasa raṇa dharaghoṣasa* and below it *odubarisa*. These interesting coins show that Dharaghoṣa was a staunch Śaiva and treated the choleric Vedic ṛṣi Viśvāmitra as his guide and the symbol of his state. In the *Rgveda* (III, 53, 11), Viśvāmitra is shown to be guiding the conquests of king Sudāsa in all directions. Later on he is said to have deserted him and gone over to the confederacy of his opponents headed by Purukutsa. By depicting him on his coins, Dharaghoṣa proclaimed the resurgence of aggressive and militant Brahmanism. Some other silver coins of one Bhāgavata Mahādeva, who was most probably an Audumbara king, give his title *rajaraṇa* or 'king of kings' showing that he expanded his realm over a wide region and assumed an imperial status. Obviously he repelled and supplanted Yavana rule to a considerable extent.

Afterwards the Audumbara kingdom became part of the

Yaudheya realm as the discovery of Yaudheya coins in Kangra region shows. Hence, in the fourth century, the Allahabad praśasti of Samudragupta made no reference to them.

Another people, who rose with the Audumbaras and hurled themselves against the Greeks in the first century B.C., were the Kuṇindas or Kulindas. The findspots of their coins show that they carved out their state at the foot of the Siwalik hills between the Yamunā and the Sutlej and the territory between the upper courses of the Sutlej and the Beas. Some of the regions now included in Saharanpur, Karnal, Ambala, Jwalāmukhi, Hāmīrpur and Ludhiana districts formed part of their kingdom. The leader, under whom they rose, was Amoghabhūti. His silver and copper coins, of the standard of the hemidrachms of latter Greek kings, show Lakṣmī standing facing on a lotus and holding a lotus in her upraised right hand, a deer between the horns of which is the cotra symbol and above it the standard or post in railing, on the obverse, and a number of symbols of mountain and river, svastika, nāga and nandipada on the reverse. The legend on the obverse is in Brāhmī and that on the reverse in Kharoṣṭhī. It reads as *rājhaḥ kuṇindasya amoghabhūtisya mahārājasya* (of the great king Amoghabhūti king of the Kuṇindas) In the Kharoṣṭhī version *mahārāja* is written independently on the exergue while the idea is to give emphasis to the status of the king as *mahārāja*. Thus it is clear that Amoghabhūti struck against Greek rule and issued his silver coinage to compete with Indo-Greek currency in the market. His name meaning 'of unfailing prosperity' is of a piece with the figure of the goddess of riches Lakṣmī on the obverse. All this shows that Amoghabhūti ruled over a prosperous kingdom as a powerful independent king.

The Śaka and Kuṣāṇa conquests overwhelmed the Kuṇinda kingdom, but, at the end of the second century, they hurled themselves against them also. This is clear from the copper coins issued by them on Kuṣāṇa models. The obverse of them bears the figure of Śiva holding a trident and the legend *bhāgavata catreśvara-mahātmanah* and the reverse has the old Kuṇinda symbols of deer, tree, river etc. It appears that Chatreśvara was the chief under whom the Kuṇindas overthrew Kuṣāṇa rule at the end of the second or the third century A. D. and issued the said coins. That they held fast to an oligarchic tradition is clear from

the absence of any kingly title with the name of their chief Chatregvara. But they adhered to militant Śaivism the symbol of which was Śiva with trident whom they depicted on their coins. But soon they were lost in the rising power of the Yaudheyas as the absence of any reference to them in the Allahabad inscription suggests.

While the Audumbaras and Kuṇindas were rising against the Yavanas, one Virayaśas organized the people of the Kulu Valley, the Kulūtas, and established an independent state with its own coins. The obverse of these coins has a wheel surrounded by a circle of dots and the Brāhmi legend *vīrayaśasya rājā kulūtasya* and the reverse bears the symbols of mountain, river, svastika, nāga and *nandipada*, like the Kuṇinda coins, and a Kharoṣṭhi legend *raja*. It appears that the Kaulūta king Virayaśas collaborated with the Kuṇinda king Amoghabhūti in striking at the later Indo-Greeks.

In the Jullundur region the Traigarttas of epic fame also established their independent kingdom and issued the coins with a four-tiered stūpa and traces of Kharoṣṭhi legend on the obverse and the Brāhmi legend *trakatajanapadasa* on the reverse. In the Hoshiarpur region the Rājanyas also asserted themselves by issuing the coins with Lakṣmī facing holding lotus in right hand on the obverse and bull to left in rayed circle on the reverse. These coins are of two types one, having Kharoṣṭhi legend *rajaṇa janapadasa* and the other Brāhmi legend reading the same on the obverse. These coins of the Traigarttas and Rājanyas are of the second or first century B. C. showing that these peoples successfully challenged the Indo-Greeks. Later the Śakas and Kuṣāṇas overwhelmed them and, when they began to decline, the Yaudheyas were the dominant power.

While Hariyana and East Punjab were up in arms against the Indo-Greeks, some native powers also challenged them in West Panjab at the heart of their kingdom. From Takṣaśilā have come the coins of a people called Vaṣṭāvaka showing a female figure to left with raised arm in front of a mountain and a pile of balls below on the obverse. Bühler thinks that *Vaṣṭāvaka* means the Aśvakas of the Vaṭa division but we are not aware of any such region. It may be suggested that this term signifies a unison of the Vaṭadhāna Brāhmaṇas and the Aśvakayanas of the North-West who may have jointly struck at the Greek kingdom and got some success for some time. Another people to rise in northern

Panjab were the *Vṛṣṇi* (modern Bishnoi). The obverse of their coins shows a pillar surmounted by an animal, half-lion and half-elephant, and their reverse has an elaborate wheel. The legend in Brahmi on the obverse and Kharoṣṭhi on the reverse reads *vṛṣṇir (ā) jajña (raṇṇo) gaṇasya tratarasa* showing that the oligarchy of these people had attained independence.

It is clear from the above discussion that about the end of the second or the beginning of the first century B. C. the stimulus of the Indo-Greeks filled up the growth of a large number of peoples all over the Panjab, particularly Hariyana and East Panjab, who proclaimed their independence through their coins and conveyed their heroic spirit and military valour through the motifs on them. The Yaudheyas, Arjunāyanas, Āgreyas, Audumbaras, Kuṇindas, Kaulūtas, Traigarttas, Rājanyas Vāṭadhānas, Āśvakāyanas, Vṛṣṇis and others displayed remarkable heroism in withstanding, repulsing and overthrowing the Yavanas or Indo-Greeks. But the Śakas and Pahlavas inflicted severe blows on them and included them in their empire. However, the Yaudheyas hurled them back in the second century A.D. Then the Kuṣāṇas overwhelmed them, but soon they, along with the Kuṇindas, rose against them and overthrew their rule. In this process the Yaudheyas overshadowed all their compeers and contemporaries and emerged as the paramount and dominant power characterized by singular heroism and gallantry and resourcefulness all over Delhi, Hariyana, western U. P., eastern Panjab, western Rājasthāna and even parts of western Panjab. In the fourth century A. D., they were credited with the legendary quality of being conversant with the magic of victory.

Along with the Yaudheyas some other peoples of the Panjab, who had migrated to Rājasthāna, distinguished themselves in the struggle with the Kuṣāṇas. Among them, the Śibis, settled at Madhyamika near Chitor, and the Malavas, occupying Vagarchal in the Jaipur division and extending over Ajmer-Tonk-Mewar region, are noteworthy. The coins of the Malavas fall into two groups, one with the names of individual chiefs and the other with the legend *malavahṇa jaya* in Prakrit. It is well known how they started the Kṛta era, latter called Vikrama era, by defeating the Śakas in 57 B. C. But the rise of the Western Kṣatrapas eclipsed their power for a while. However, at the beginning of the third century A.D., they rose under a chief Śri Soma, who celebrated the

Ekaśaṣṭi sacrifice in 225 A.D. in token of some victory against the Śakas probably Rudrasena I (220-222 A.D.) or his younger brother Samghadāman or Dāmasena. In the early fourth century A.D. they were a powerful people in Rājasthāna as the Allahabad inscription of Samudragupta shows.

The above account of the struggle of the peoples of the Panjab against the Yavanas, Śakas and Kuṣāṇas, mainly reconstructed from numismatic evidence, in the absence of other records, constitutes a glorious chapter of the heroic and patriotic history of this region.

CHAPTER XI

THE ERA OF CONSOLIDATION AND EXPANSION

We have observed that, by the end of the third century A.D. or the beginning of the fourth, the peoples of the Panjab, particularly the Yaudheyas, had uprooted and overthrown Kuṣāṇa rule from eastern Panjab. By the middle of the fourth century the Guptas had consolidated their hold over Magadha and the Gange-tic Valley and undertaken the creation of a unified empire in North India. With that purpose in view, the Gupta monarch Samudragupta launched his expeditions in the West and the North also conquering up to Kaśmīra as the *Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa* (ed. K.P. Jayaswal, p. 52) states. As a result of these moves, the Yaudheyas Madrakas, Mālavas, Ārjunāyanas, Prāṛjunas and Ābhīras, ruling over eastern Panjab, Rechna Doab, Rājasthāna and Saurāṣṭra, submitted to him, and, as the Allahabad *Prāsaṣti* states, "carried out his furious command by paying all tributes, obeying his orders and offering salutation" (*sarvakaradānājñākaraṇapra-ṇāmāgamanaparitoṣitapracanḍasāsanasya*). Not only these peoples, but also the Kuṣāṇa emperor holding the grandiloquent title of *daivaputraśāhīśāhānuśāhī*, along with his subordinate Scythian chiefs, the *Śakamuruṇḍas*, surrendered to him, offering the hand of his daughter and soliciting his charter marked with the Garuḍa seal for the governance of his kingdom (*ātmanivedanakanyopā-yanadānagarudmadānkasaviṣayabhuktīśāsanayācanādyupāyasevākṛ-ṭabāhuvīryaprasaradharaṇibandhasya*). This shows that the Kuṣāṇa emperor became his vassal and governed his kingdom on his sufferance. It is likely that the coins of Kuṣāṇa type with the name *Samudra* were struck by that ruler for circulation in his kingdom.

But the Kuṣāṇa power was not completely crushed. Faustus of Byzantium states that in 367-68, when the Sassanids were engaged in a war with Armenia, they again raised their heads. On

the death of Shahpuhr II in Iran and Samudragupta in India they resuscitated their power and adopted an aggressive policy. Their king Basana issued gold coins resembling the standard-bearer type of Samudragupta and launched an invasion in the Panjab. The Gupta king Ramagupta wanted to fop him off by surrendering his beautiful queen Dhruvadevi or Dhruvasvamini, but his gallant brother Candragupta did not swallow this insult and decided to outmanoeuvre him. He dressed himself like Dhruvadevi and reached the Kuṣāṇa camp in a palanquin followed by choice warriors in a train of other palanquins. As soon as the Kuṣāṇa king advanced to meet him in his tent, thinking him to be the Gupta queen, he stabbed him to death and gave the signal whereupon the warriors doffed the female garbs, jumped from the palanquins and massacred the Kuṣāṇa army with tremendous vigour. This sensational victory, either at Padmapura to the west of Jalalabad or Aliwal in the Jullundur district, quashed the dream of the Kuṣāṇas of restoring their lost empire in the Panjab and confirmed their death-warrant in a final way. Thereafter Candragupta, deposing the weak Ramagupta, came to the throne and planned to solve the problem of the Panjab and the North-West in an original manner.

Candragupta thought that, to safeguard the empire, it was necessary to push the frontier along the Hindukush. Hence he launched an expedition in that direction and, crossing the seven tributaries of the Indus, penetrated into Bactria and conquered the Bāhlikas (*tīrtvā sapta mukhāni yena samare sindhorjitā bāhlikāḥ*) (Mehrauli Inscription, J.F. Fleet, *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol. III, no. 32). Indian warriors regaled profusely on the delicious wine of Kāpiśi and Indian horses removed their exhaustion by rolling freely in the saffron fields of Bactria while the national flag of the Guptas, the Garuḍadhvaja, fluttered triumphantly on the Oxus. At no time before or since the frontier of the Indian empire marched with the Oxus and Indian horses of victory drank its water. This tremendous achievement solved the problem of the Kuṣāṇas, Persians and Hephthalites in one stroke and carried the name and fame of India to the pinnacle of glory and glamour. Naturally it became the most sensational and fascinating motif of contemporary literature catching the fancy of poets and artists. The poet Kalidāsa made use of it in his account of the north-western expedition of Raghu against the Persians (Pārasikas) which is shown to have culminated

in a stirring victory over the Hūṇas on the bank of the Oxus (*Raghuvamśa*, IV, 67-68). The poet Śyāmilaka lionised the hero of this conquest in the character of Mahāpratihāra Bhadrāyudha, the master of the northern countries, the Bālīkas, as well as Kārūṣa (Shahabad district of Bihar) and Malada (Malda district of Bengal) (*etaṅgamatīrthamudīcyānām bālīkānām kārūṣamāladānām ceśvaro mahāpratihāro bhadrayudha eṣaḥ*) (*Pādataḍḍitakam*, in Caturbhāṣī ed. V.S. Agrawala and Moticandra, p. 193). After making these magnificent achievements he reduced the kings of Aparānta (Konkṣa), Śakas (of Saurāṣṭra) and Mālavas (western Malva) and spread the sway of the empire of the Gangetic Valley over those regions. His fame was sung by women while playing with creepers on seashore, and a popular saying about him was that he, who would think of rivalling him in humanity and valour, would be eating the flesh of pig (*Ibid.*, p. 196). The story of the conquests of king Pramati in the *Matsyapurāṇa* and that of the expedition of Arjuna into the land of the Rṣikas and Paramarṣikas in the *Sabhāparvan* of the *Mahābhārata* also seem to be based on the motif of *Bālīkavijaya* current in early Gupta age. The coins of Kuṣāṇa type with the name *Candra* is also a pointer to the same fact, and the growth of the Indo-Afghan school of art, found in Fendoukistan, Maranjan and Bamiyan, is also an index to it.

The conquest of western Panjab, Kabul Valley and Bactria ensured peace in that region for about half a century. But, in 437 A.D., a branch of the Kuṣāṇas, called Kidarites, spread their sway in Gāndhāra. Under their chief, Kungkas, son of Kidāra, they consolidated their power. At that time another branch of Iranic or Scythic people, called the Hephthalites or Hūṇas, pressed into Bactria. Menaced by them the Sassanids and the Kidarites came close to each other. By 455 they and the Hephthalites or Hūṇas, following and some even accompanying them, invaded the Panjab. In that crisis the Gupta emperor entrusted the command of the army to his gallant son Skandagupta. Like Kārttikeya, the General of the Gods, the young prince advanced with irresistible drive and speed and inflicted a crushing defeat on the invaders. The Buddhist text *Candragarbhapariṣecchāsūtra* describes this heroic struggle as follow:

“Mahendra's (Kumāragupta's) kingdom was invaded upon by three foreign powers in concert, Yavanas, Palīkas (Pahlāvas)

and Śakunas who first fought among themselves. They took possession of Gandhāra and the countries to the north of the Ganges. The young son of Mahendrasena, of weighty hands and other congenital military marks distinguishing his person, asked for permission to lead his father's army. The enemy army numbered three hundred thousand men under the commands of the foreign kings, the chief of whom was the Yavana. The son of Mahendra put his army of two hundred thousand men divided under five hundred commanders, sons of ministers and other orthodox Hindus. With extraordinary quickness and a terrible drive he charged the enemy. In fury his veins on the forehead appeared like a visible mark and his body became steeled. The prince broke the enemy army and won the battle". (K.P. Jayaswal, *An Imperial History of India*, p. 36).

The Bhitari inscription (J.F. Fleet, *Corpus*, Vol. III. No. 13) gives lucid details of this memorable battle. It states that the enemy had a vast army backed by adequate financial resources (*samuditabalokoṣān*) and that he had shaken the Gupta empire to its foundations (*vicalitakulalakṣmī*). But Skandagupta fought valiantly and shook the earth by his arms (*dorbhīyāṃ dharā kampitā*). The volleys of arrows, flung by him, created a terrible vortex in the ranks of the Hūṇas (*bhīmāvarittakarasya śatruṣu*). The fighting raged the whole day and did not stop even at night so that he had to rest on the bare ground of the battlefield that night (*kṣittilalaśayaniye yena nitā triyāmā*). But, next day, he shattered the enemy and completely smashed and routed them so that his fame travelled even in the lands of the Mlecchas (*Junagadh Inscription*, verse 4) and people in all quarters began to sing his glorious achievements. Even the Chinese emperor conferred on him the title of the "General who solidly established his authority". The *Kathāsaritsāgara* mentions the Persian king Nirmāka as one of his vassals. He is surely one of the greatest heroic figures of Indian history. Since his father had died in the meantime, he reported his victory to his mother and then ascended the throne.

That the people of the Panjab, particularly the Jats, played a notable part in winning this victory is manifest from a remark of the grammarian Candragomin that the Jartta (Jat) had conquered the Hūṇas, *ajayajjarto hūṇān*.

This stirring victory, won by the heroic Skandagupta somewhere in Haryana or the Panjab, immured North India from the attack of the Hūṇas and other tribes for about half a century. But since, on account of internal problems, he could not pay adequate attention to the regions beyond the Indus, the Hephthalite ruler Hephthal III entrenched his rule of Balkh and extended it to Persia, the Tarim Basin and Gandhāra. In 477 one of the Hephthalite clans, the Jaulas, conquered Gandhāra and, in the beginning of the sixth century, started their inroads in the Panjab. Their chief Toramāṇa set himself up on the Chenab and raided East Panjab destroying such sites as Sanghol (Sanghapura) in the Ludhiana district where his coins have been found. From there he invaded the Gangetic Valley occupying Kauśāmbī, where his seal has been discovered, and thence took the road to East Malwa and defeated a Gupta army at Eraṇ killing its commander Goparāja in 510-11 A.D. After this decisive victory he also advanced into the Gauḍa country and also launched incursions in Rājasthāna as can be gathered from the Bhimchaunri inscription of the Kota region which refers to one chief Dhruvasvāmin who fell fighting with the Hūṇa army (M.L. Sharma, *History of Kota*, p. 35).

But Hūṇa rule in India could not last long. The gallant Mālavas threw up a hero in Yaśodharman Viṣṇuvardhana to expel the Hūṇas. They were a branch of the famous Madras, who had their home in eastern Panjab, then settled in southern Panjab, from there migrated to eastern Rājasthāna and thence went over to western Avanti, on the one hand, and the Mahi Valley in Gujarat, on the other. Their role in fighting with the Śakas was tremendous. In the sixth century they girded up their loins to expel the despicable Hūṇas and, under the leadership of Yaśodharman Viṣṇuvardhana, drove them out from the whole of northern India. Marching under the banner of Śiva, bearing the figure of the bull Nandi with the palm impression of Pārvatī, they conquered the vast territory from the river Lauhitya (Brahmaputra) and the mountain Mahendra (in Orissa) to the Himālayas, embraced by the Ganges, and the western seas (*Mandasore Inscription*, verse 5, Fleet, *Corpus*, Vol. III, no. 33). Their writ ran in those regions which were neither conquered by the Guptas nor by the Hūṇas (*Ibid.*, verse 4). Even the indomitable and relentless Mihirakula adored the feet of their chief with the offerings of the flowers of the chaplet on his head (*Ibid.*, verse 6). Having conquered many kings of the east and the north, by

conciliation or coercion, he ranked as the paramount emperor (*rājādhirājaparamēśvara*) (Fleet, *Op. cit.*, no. 35, verse 7). His governor Abhayadatta administered the regions from the Vindhya to the Indus (*Ibid.*, verse 21). Thus the Panjab was completely under his sway. Over it, as in other parts of his empire, the Vedic religion was fostered, and, as the epigraph says, the smoke, arising from the sacrificial altars, enveloped the sun (*Ibid.*, verse 8). Hence it is no wonder that, by his meteoric rise and superhuman performance, Yaśodharman Viṣṇuvardhana made such a tremendous impression on the minds of the common people that they considered him the Kalki Avatāra of Viṣṇu who was destined to appear at the end of the Kali age to destroy sin and restore virtue. In the *Mahābhārata* (III, 190, 93), the name of Kalki is given as Viṣṇuyaśas (*Kalki viṣṇuyaśā nāma dvijaḥ kālīpracoditah*) which is exactly an abbreviation of Viṣṇuvardhana and Yaśodharman the parts of the name of the Mālava conqueror. He is said to be the harbinger of the *Kṛta* yuga or the age of truth or virtue (*bhaviṣyati kṛte prāpte kriyāvāṇśca janastathā* (III, 191, 7) just as the reign of Yaśodharman is said to mark the advent of *Kṛta* era in the Mandasore inscription, verse 22 (*kṛta eva kṛtametadyena rājyam nirādhi*). It surely must have been a very thrilling and gripping period of history.

In the latter half of the sixth century the Sassanids and the Turks combined to wreck the Hūṇa empire in the north. The chief of the Western Turks, Istami (552-575 A.D.), conquered Tukharistan and Gandhara, that is Afghanistan to the north and south of the Hindukush, and issued his coins with legends in Tukharian and Brāhmī for circulation in that region. His successor, probably Tardu, Ta-t'con of Chinese texts, had an extensive kingdom, as his coins with Tukharian, Brāhmī and Pehlavi legends, found from Kabul and Manykiala to Sind and Kacch, indicate. Under the pressure of the Turks the Hūṇas were confined to the Gazni-Kandahar region called Zabulistan after them.

While these new forces were hovering over the North-West and menacing the people of the Panjab, a new power was rising in eastern Panjab to cope with them. It was the Puṣpabhūti of Thanesar, who established themselves during the campaigns of the Vardhanas of Malwa; probably they were a branch of them, as their name-ending *vardhana* and profession of the Śaiva religion suggest. Their first two rulers Naravardhana and Rājyavardhana were ordinary feudatories, but the third ruler, Ādityavardhana,

enhanced his power by marrying Mahāsenagupta, probably the sister of Mahāsenagupta of the later Gupta Dynasty, which had carved out its kingdom in eastern Malwa. Ādityavardhana's son, Prabhākaravardhana, greatly expanded his realm and became the paramount ruler of the Panjab and the North-West and was known among the people as Pratāpaśīla. At that time the Maukharis were emerging as the dominant power in the Gangetic Valley. But they were the enemies of the Later Guptas of eastern Malwa. Nevertheless Prabhākaravardhana adopted the bold policy of befriending them and, to that end, married his daughter Rājyasri to the Maukhari prince Grahavarman, though it must have chagrined his Gupta relatives and even led to a showdown between them. This step may have been dictated by the growing incursions of the Hūṇas who were trying to spread out from their realm in Zabulistan. Prabhākaravardhana rightly thought that the Maukharis could be of more use to him in repelling the Hūṇas than the Later Guptas. This was demonstrated when the elephant corps of the Maukharis "threw aloft in battle the infuriated troops of the Hūṇas" as the Aphsā inscription relates (*Fleet, Corpus, Vol. III, p. 200*), and Prabhākaravardhana proved a lion to the Hūṇa deer (*hūṇaharipakesari*), as Bāṇa states in his *Harṣacarita* (ed. Jivānāda, p. 342). The victory over the Hūṇas enabled Prabhākaravardhana to follow a bold policy on the frontier and be a "burning fever to the king of the Sindhu region" (*sindhurājajvaraḥ*), "a troubler of the sleep of the Gūrjaras" (*gūrjaraprajāgarḥ*) and "a bilious plague to the scent-elephant that was the lord of Gandhāra" (*gandhārādhipagandhadvipakūṭapākalaḥ*) (*Harṣacarita*, p. 342). Thus the Puṣpabhūti monarch reduced the king of the Sindhu region, the Hūṇas of Zabul, the Turks of Gandhāra and the Gūrjaras hovering over the North-West. Towards the closing years of his reign the Hūṇas made another determined move to invade the Panjab, but Prabhākaravardhana, alive to the occasion, sent a strong force under his elder son Rājyavardhana to scare them away. The fight with the Hūṇas was terrible and the Puṣpabhūti prince received numerous wounds in it. But he broke their back and drove them off though he could not completely decimate them, because the news of the sudden illness of his father forced him to hurry home with his body covered with long white bandages over the wounds of arrows (*hūṇanirjayasamarāśaravṇabaddhapaṭṭakairdirghadhavalaiḥ*). However the blow on the Hūṇas was so severe that they were cowed

down for a long time to come and were no longer a menace on the frontier.

Prabhākaravardhana soon died, but just then news came of the attack of the Mālava king on Kanauj and the death of the Maukhari king Grahavarman and the imprisonment of Rajyasri. It turned the anguish of Rajyavardhana into a rage and, with ten thousand cavalry, under Bhaṇḍi, he galloped off to chastise and destroy the Mālava miscreant. By quick marches he reached Kanauj, like lightning, and defeated the Mālava forces in a trice. Even the ally of the Mālava king, Śaśanka of Gauḍa, made a show of submissive friendliness, offered him the hand of his daughter and invited him for festivity and entertainment, but treacherously assassinated him when he was alone and unarmed and off his guard. This stunning news shook Harṣa and steeled him in his resolve to punish the Gauḍa king and also to conquer the whole earth. With a vast army, he marched on Kanauj, occupied it, the armies of Gauḍa having fled, but, instead of pursuing Śaśanka, penetrated into the Vindhya forest to trace and rescue his embittered sister Rajyasri who had repaired there from Kanauj out of excruciating discomfiture. Happily he reached her when she was just going to consign herself to the flames and persuaded her to return with him. Then, on the suggestion of the ministers, he agreed to take charge of the government of Kanauj, and, after consolidating himself, set out to punish the Gauḍa king and conquer the whole of northern India.

Harṣa was one of the wisest and bravest kings of India. He was keenly conscious of the frontier. Therefore, while conquering the states in the interior of India, he did not neglect the Panjab and the North-West. On this subject we get some interesting information from the itinerary of the Chinese pilgrim Hsüan Chwang. He says that, to the south of the Hindukush, the king of Bamiyan held the quinquennial assembly at which he gave away all his possessions from the queen down to the monks and later his ministers redeemed them. Adjoining his kingdom was that of Kapiś ruled over by a king of Kṣatriya caste. The pilgrim describes him as intelligent and courageous as well as benevolent and philanthropic and says that his power extended over more than ten of neighbouring lands. Foucher thinks

that his kingdom adjoined the independent country called Ghur in the west, marched along the chains of the Koh-i-Baba and Hindukush and reached up to Kafiristan in the north and met the kingdoms of Kaśmīra and Takka in the east. Thus the entire valley of the Kabul from the Hindukush to the Indus and the region along the right bank of the latter up to the frontier of Sind formed part of his kingdom. Hsüan Chwang says that every year he made a silver image of Buddha, 18 feet high, and, at the mokṣapariṣad, gave liberally to the needy and widowers (Thomas Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, p. 123). When, in course of his homeward journey, he crossed the Indus at Und, that ruler accorded him a welcome and entertained him for forty days at a monastery. Then he went with him to Lamghan, Lampāka, and, crossing the Safed Koh and the Kurram Valley, reached Varṇu (Pa-na) or modern Waziristan where he held a *dārbar*. Then the pilgrim moved into Vrijisthana, now called Ujaristan, and thence entered into Hazereh whose local king belonged to the race of the Tou-k'iue but probably acknowledged the suzerainty of the king of Kāpiṣi (Foucher, *La vieille route de l'Inde de Bactres à Taxila*, p. 232).

This account of the trans-Indus region, given by Hsüan Chwang, clearly shows that, to the south of the Hindukush, Tou-K'iue or Turkish rule had been eradicated and two rulers were installed at Bamiyan and Kāpiṣi who followed in the footsteps of Harṣa in their philanthropic programmes very faithfully. Obviously they were under the profound influence of Harṣa and had some sort of connection with him. Though they were independent rulers, they owed their rise to the atmosphere of pressure to which the Puṣpabhūti monarch Prabhakaravardhana had subjected the Turkish ruler of the Kabul Valley and the Huṇa chief of the Zabul region. They profitably fished in the troubled waters of the struggle of the Puṣpabhūtis and Turks and succeeded in carving out independent kingdoms for themselves. It is also not unlikely that they worked hand-in-glove with the Puṣpabhūtis and probably got some assistance from them in overthrowing and eradicating the Turks. When Harṣa came to the throne, they strengthened their links with him and emulated his charitable activities. What happened in Bamiyan every fifth year was a reenactment of the charity camp at Prayāga. Likewise there were close links between Kāpiṣi and Kanauj. All

this shows that Hārṣa was keen to have his friends on the frontier with a view to safeguarding his empire.

Hsüan Chwang's keen observations on Indian society in the first half of the seventh century enable us to form some idea of how the people lived and thought in the Panjab at that time. He wrote that the Kṣatriyas and Brāhmaṇas were clean-handed and unostentatious, pure and simple in life and very frugal (T. Watters, *Op. cit.*, p. 151). The Kṣatriyas had held sovereignty for many generations and their aims were benevolence and mercy (*Ibid.*, p. 168). The army consisted of elephants, chariots, horses and foot-soldiers. The war-elephant was covered with coat-of-mail and his tusks were provided with sharp barbs. The commander-in-chief rode on such an elephant with a soldier on each side to manage the animal. The chariot, in which an officer sat, was drawn by four horses, while the infantry guarded it on both sides. The infantry were choice men of valour; they bore large shields and long spears; some were armed with swords and sabres and dashed to the front of the advancing line of battle. The soldiers were perfect experts with all the implements of war such as spear, shield, bow and arrow, sword, sabre etc. having been drilled in them for generations. Of the army a special section was the National Guard consisting of heroes of choice valour. In peace they guarded the sovereign's residence and in war they became the intrepid vanguard. As the military profession was hereditary, they became adepts in military tactics (*Ibid.*, p. 171). At the back of this well-trained and organized army was a sound and honest administration and the high moral calibre of the people. The pilgrim noted that the people would not take anything wrongfully and yielded more than fairness required. They did not practise deceit and kept their sworn obligations. Among them the criminal class was small and they feared the retribution for sins in other lives (*Ibid.*, p. 171).

Hsüan Chwang has given us interesting sidelights on the peoples of the Panjab. He says that the country between the Indus and the Beas was called Cheh-ka (Takka). Its soil was fertile, climate was hot and the people were rude, mostly devoted to theistic religions and speaking a low vernacular. However, there were dharmaśālās, where the needy and the distressed received relief and food, and medicines were distributed free of cost and the travellers could stay comfortably. The capital town of this

region was Śakala which had witnessed the ferocity and vandalism of the dreadful Hūṇa ruler Mihirakula. Near to it a new city, probably Asarur, was founded. In a forest near it a band of fifty robbers entrapped him and his party, stripped them of their possessions and drove them into the bed of a dried-up pond and began to truss them up with ropes. But the pilgrim escaped through a gap in the thick growth of creepers and ran a mile towards a village. A Brāhmaṇa, who was tilling his field, heard the episode, rushed to the village and blew his conch on which eighty villagers took up arms and rushed towards the robbers. On their approach the robbers made off and the villagers untrussed the companions of the pilgrim and provided them food and clothing and other necessities. Next day the pilgrim and his party reached the āśrama of a Brāhmaṇa who had a good knowledge of Vedic and Mādhyamika texts and was reputed to be seven hundred years old. On the coming of the visitors he approached a neighbouring town from where three hundred prominent people came with provisions to entertain them. This incident shows that, though in the neighbourhood of Sialkot in the Takka country bands of brigands infested the highways, the villagers were ready to encounter and overpower them on getting slightest hints of their whereabouts and that they as well as the neighbouring townsmen were very courteous and hospitable to outside visitors and ministered to their comforts with offerings of provisions and clothing. Another point which this incident bears out is that the Brāhmaṇas tilled and sowed land just as they excelled in study and learning, in other words, professional mobility was not hedged by birth by and large.

Attached to the Takka country was the Multan region in South Panjab. It had a good soil and mild climate. Its people were upright, loved learning and led moral lives, though few of them were Buddhists. Of the ten monasteries most were in ruins and only a few had some monks, but the temples of gods were many and the foremost among them was the temple of sun all round which were tanks and flowery gardens making a delightful resort. About 140 miles north-east of it was another dependency of the Takka country, called Po-fa-to or Parvata, encompassing the Salt Range. It was productive and well-peopled having ten monasteries and one thousand monks belonging to both the vehicles and four Aśoka stūpas.

From the Takka district, Hsüan Chwang reached Chi-na-p'uh-ti (modern Chine). There the people had settled occupation and their income was abundant. Among them both Buddhism and Brahmanism coexisted. A special attraction was the prince Vinataprabha, who had become a monk, ranked as an authority on logic and wrote commentaries on Mahāyāna works like the idealist treatise *Trīṃśikā*.

From Chine the pilgrim reached a Buddhist centre called Tāmasavana where a Aśokan stūpa dominated hundreds and thousands of topes nearby and 300 monks of the Sarvāstivāda sect led strictly pure lives. Then the party reached Jullundur, a region abounding in grains, fruits and flowers, having fifty monasteries with two thousand monks and three temples with five hundred sectaries of the Pāṣupata school. A former king of that state embraced Buddhism and travelled all over the country, erecting stūpas and monasteries, and ranked as the patron and protector of Buddhism all over the country. At the time of Hsüan Chwang, a monk Candravarman of the Nagaradhiana vihāra was a leading authority on the *Vibhāṣā* with whom he stayed and studied for four months. Jullundur was the administrative centre of North India and its governor was one Udiṭa who treated the pilgrim very courteously.

From Jullundur Hsüan Chwang went to the Kullu Valley, rich in grains and greenery, having twenty monasteries with one thousand monks, mostly mahāyānists, and fifteen temples of gods with many followers of them living pell-mell. The region was studded with the retreats of arhats and ṛṣis who repaired to the hills for penance. The stūpa of Aśoka was a prominent feature of the region.

From Kullu the pilgrim and his party came to the Sulej region (She-to-t'u-lu) which was mainly agricultural and fruit-producing. Its inhabitants were affluent and led moral lives observing social decorum and devoutly adhering to Buddhism. In and about the capital there were ten monasteries but they had become desolate. However, the two hundred feet high Aśokan stūpa dominated the scene. From there the pilgrim went south and reached the Aravalli region, called Pāriyatra, and thence went to Mathurā and then returned to Hariyana or Sthāpaviśvara. He says that its soil was

fertile and the crops were rich; the people were affluent and vied with each other in extravagance. They were mostly traders, devoted to magical arts and prizing outlandish accomplishments. The Buddhist monasteries were three with seven hundred monks, though the temples of gods were upwards of one hundred and their followers quite numerous. An Aśokan stūpa of bright orange bricks, however, dominated the scene and, at about twenty miles, was the Govinda Vihāra with high chambers in detached terraces where the monks led pure life.

About eighty miles north-east of Thanesar was Sruḡhna (modern Sugh). Its soil and climate were like those of Thanesar. The people, though mostly non-Buddhist, were honest, and respected learning and esteemed religious wisdom. Buddhist monasteries were five with one thousand monks, experts in the exposition of their doctrines, though the number of temples of gods was one hundred. On the western side of the Yamunā outside the eastern gate of a large monastery was an Aśokan stupa.

It is clear from the above account of the Panjab, given by Hsüan Chwang, that it was a fertile and affluent land and its people were upright, tolerant, benevolent, hospitable and lovers of learning. The dreadful days of fighting with the Hūpas were over and the palmy years of the reign of Harṣa had brought peace and amity the fruit of which was a sedate and settled life. Heroes in war, warriors in combat, gallant against the enemy, the Panjabis were also productive in peace, philanthropic in prosperity and generous and humane in restful periods.

CHAPTER XII

THE GUARD ON THE NORTH-WESTERN FRONTIER

The death of Harṣa about the middle of the seventh century almost coincided with the destruction of the Sassanid Empire at the hands of the Muslim Arabs. These changes threw the north-western frontiers of the Panjab into confusion. In 664 the Muslim Arabs crossed the Hindukush and levied tribute on Kāpiṣṭ; in 682 they made another incursion into that state and, soon afterwards, launched two more expeditions into it. The menace of the Arabs drove the Turkish rulers of that region, who had replaced the Kṣatriya king of the time of Harṣa or his successors, into the lap of the Chinese, with the result that the Chinese Annals began to claim that the sixteen states between the Oxus and the Indus acknowledged the suzerainty of the T'ang. In Tukharistan, or the region to the north of the Hindukush, the Chinese set up a stele as a mark of their overlordship over its Yabghu who, according to a report of 718, had extended his sway from the Iron Gates to Zabulistan and from the Murghab to the Indus. But the Arabs constantly raided his territory and harassed his people. Sometime before 727 they imprisoned his father and saddled his people with enormous requisitions, as a letter from his son to the Chinese emperor, written in that year, shows. Besides the Arabs, the Tibetans also pestered the Turks of Tukharistan compelling their Yabghu Śrīmangala to seek the help of the Chinese empire. The menace of the Tibetans also stared Kaśmīra in the face and inclined her towards China. Thus an entente among the Turks, Kaśmīra and the Chinese was formed.

The Turks of Tukharistan and the Kabul Valley were, however, devout and pious Buddhists. The Chinese pilgrim Wu-k'ong, who stayed in Gandhāra for well over forty years in the latter half of the eighth century, reported that the Turki ruler, his queen, his eldest son and other members of his family and,

following them, his generals and administrative officers undertook to repair the shrines and sanctuaries destroyed by the Hephthalites and launched a programme of founding new endowments and establishments and extended their constructive activity to Kaśmīra also (E. Chavannes et S. Lévi, 'L' Itinéraire de Wouk'ong' *Journal Asiatique* (1895) p. 356). That they were Indianized is manifest from the remarks of many authors. To their house probably belonged Śrī Spalapati Deva whose coins, bearing legends in Brāhmī and Tukharian, have been found up to the village Jatarski Tolkish in the Tartar Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic and in Niederlandin in the Angermünde district (DDR).

While these changes were overtaking the north-western frontier, the Panjab also became independent under a ruling house with its capital at Jullundur. In the first quarter of the eighth century, the Korean pilgrim Hui Ch'ao toured through this country and noted that its king had 300 war-elephants and lived at a city which he built on hill side. His account shows that this king of Jullundur was an important power in North India, but the kings of Kaśmīra and Middle India frequently invaded and annexed his territory forcing him to retire to the hill retreat. One drawback of this kingdom, according to him, was the dearth and scarcity of horses, the king having only 100 and the chiefs three to five. This may be due to the fact that the sources of horse supply were cut in the north by the Turki Śāhīs and in the west by the Muslim invaders of Sind as well as by the king of Middle India Yaśovarman, who had conquered and controlled Rajasthan and Hariyana, as Vakpati states in his *Gauḍavaho*.

The Korean pilgrim states that the kings of Kaśmīra and Middle India frequently invaded and annexed the territory of the kingdom of Jullundur. The king of Kaśmīra at that time was Candrāpīḍa (713-722) of the Nāga or Kārkoṭa dynasty, who also possessed a force of 300 elephants according to that pilgrim, and the king of Middle India, having his capital at Ke-na-chi-tzu (Kanauj), was Yaśovarman, about whom he writes as follows ;—

"The territory of this Central Indian king is very broad, the inhabitants here are populous. The king possesses 900 elephants, the rest of great chiefs, each possesses two to three hundred elephants. The king himself often led troops

in battles, frequently fought with other rulers and the Central Indian king is always victorious" (Fujita Toyohachi, *Hui-Ch'ao wong wu-t'ien-chu-kuo chuan chien-shih*, p. 10) translated by Jan Yun-hua, 'Some Fresh Reflections on Yaśovarman of Kanauj and Muktapīḍa of Kaśmīra, *Journal of Indian History*, Vol. XLV (April 1967.)

This king, called Yi-sha-fu-mo, is reported to have sent one Bhadanta, named Po-ta-hsin (Bhaṭṭasena?) to the court of the T'ang in China between November 4 and December 3, 731 A.D. with presents of local products. The *Gauḍavaho* represents him as a conqueror of the whole of India.

Yaśovarman followed a vigorous policy in regard to the Panjab also. The *Gauḍavaho* (verse 484) refers to his conquest of Rajasthan (*Marudeśa*), and Hariyana (*Śrīkaṣṭha-Kurukṣetra*). Hui Ch'ao mentions his frequent invasions of the kingdom of Jullundur and annexations of its territory and the Nalanda Inscription (*Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XX, pp.37-46) suggests his conquest of Western Panjab after which he appointed a governor with the title of *Udicipati* (lord of the north) and *mārgapati* (warden of the marches) there. This *Udicipati-mārgapati* is called *pratīta-tikina* (one who has rivalled or excelled the *tikina*) showing that he took arms against the Turki *śāhi* rulers of the North-West. The discovery of Yaśovarman's coin in the Manikyala stūpa also indicates his influence over that region. In spite of a clash of interests over the Panjab, particularly the kingdom of Jullundur, Yaśovarman maintained workably good relations with the kings of Kaśmīra, obviously to stem and stave off the menace of the Tibetans who were pressing on Baltistan. This is clear from the account of an embassy under Bhadanta Wu-li-to sent by Lalitāditya Muktapīḍa, who came to the throne of Kaśmīra after his brother Tarapīḍa in 726, to the court of the T'ang emperor Hsien-Tsung on May 10, 733. The *Hsin T'ang-shu* (New History of the T'ang Dynasty) states that the envoy of Kaśmīra presented a memorial to the Chinese emperor conveying the following message of Lalitāditya: "I, an humble subject of Your Majesty, along with the king of Central India, control the five principal routes of communication of Tibet having fought against the Tibetans with constant victories. If Your Majesty, the Heavenly Khan, will despatch the Imperial armies to Po-lu (Baltistan), I

would be able to supply food to two hundred thousand soldiers. Moreover, there is a dragon pool in the country named Mo-ho-po-to-mo (*Mahāpadma*). I wish to build a memorial building for Your Majesty, the Heavenly Khan. I, therefore, pray for an Imperial appointment by proclamation". This communication shows that, up to 733, the relations between Kanauj and Kaśmīra were good and they even collaborated in checking the Tibetans.

But Lalitāditya Muktapīḍa was cast in a different mould. He was pushing and aggressive and intolerant of rivals. Besides this, some of the Turki Śāhī princes, menaced by Yaśovarman in the North-West, took refuge in Kaśmīra and rose to high positions there. One of them Caṅkuṇa (*Tsiang-kiun* or *Tegin*), seems to have instigated Lalitāditya to march against Yaśovarman and put an end to his supremacy in the Panjab and the North-West. On his advice Lalitāditya led an expedition against Yaśovarman. Kalhaṇa says that Caṅkuṇa played a leading part in this campaign. Starting in the rainy season, he somehow negotiated the flooded rivers of the Panjab and reached the doab of the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā (*Rājatarāṅgiṇī*, IV, p.132). After prolonged hostilities parleys of peace started but broke down on the ticklish question of the precedence of names in the preamble to the treaty. Hence fighting flared up, Yaśovarman was defeated and "the land of Kanauj from the bank of the Yamunā to that of the Kalikā (Kali Nadi) was so much in the power of Lalitāditya as the courtyard of his palace" (*Rājatarāṅgiṇī*, IV, p.145) The result of the victory was that Panjab, Jullundur and Kangra were wrested by Lalitāditya and given over to his attendants, probably the Turki Śāhī princes. So the outcome of the conflict between Kaśmīra and Kanauj was the establishment of the Turki Śāhīs over the Panjab.

Lalitāditya was for the time being the paramount sovereign of India. But the pressure of the Tibetans mounted and they conquered Baltistan in 744. The Tibetan prince LJan-tsa-lha-bdon, who is probably Śālyā of the *Rājatarāṅgiṇī*, led an army of 8,00,000 against Kaśmīra whereupon Lalitāditya committed suicide in discomfiture. (K.K.Datta Shastri, 'A Note on *Rājatarāṅgiṇī*,' *Vishveshvaranand Indological Journal*, Vol.III (Sept. 1965) p. 243). After him came a succession of weak kings. Hence the Turki Śāhīs became dominant in the Panjab.

The Turki-Śāhī kings of the Kabul Valley and the Hūga Kings of Zabul, called Zambil by Muslim writers, often fought

among themselves. This is clear from the fact that sometimes these writers refer to Zambil as the king of Kabul which implies the conquest by him of the Turki Shahi realm. Naturally the resistance from their side must have also been quite stubborn. But the story of their heroic struggle with the Muslims eclipses the episodes of conflict and tension among them. On some occasions we also hear of some collaboration among them.

Few events in history are more stirring than the grim resistance offered by the people of Zabul and Kabul to Muslim invaders over a long period of time. In 650, when the Arab general Abdullah-ibn-Amir set out for Khurasan, he despatched Al-Rabi-ibn-Ziyad to Sijistan or Seistan, the lowlands lying round and to the east of the Zarah Lake. Al-Rabi reached the Helmund and appeared before Zaranj, the capital of the country. The people of the city opposed him fiercely and wounded a number of Muslims, but had to retire into the city. Balgdhari states that the satrap of the city was so terrified as to allow the Arab general to enter the city. But, from the fact that two and a half years later Abdur-Rahman-ibn-Samurah compelled the satrap to pay 2,000,000 dirhams, it appears that that region was not annexed to the Muslim kingdom. On receiving the tribute from him, Abdur-Rahman marched on Az-zur where he plundered the temple cutting off the hand and taking out the two rubies from the eyes of the golden idol to shake the faith of the people. Then he is said to have obtained control of Bust and Zabul. But there is something fishy about the account for it is said that he made no prisoners in view of some agreement entered into by the Caliph Uthman. However the people expelled his successor Umar-ibn-Ahmar from Seistan and closed the town Zaranj. During the reign of Muawiyah, Abur-Rahman was sent again as governor of that region, but he was faced with a formidable task, for it is said that the people of Seistan had apostatized and those of Zabul broken their treaties. Yet he controlled the situation defeating the people of Zabul and reducing those of Kabul taking with him slaves captured there. Before his death in 670 A.D. Al-Rabi-ibn-Ziyad was appointed governor. During his term Kabul and Zabul again revolted. The king of Kabul assembled a force to oppose the Muslims and drove out those, who were in Kabul, while the king of Zabul recovered his kingdom up to Bust. Al-Rabi had to lead an expedition against the king of Zabul and throw him back even from Al-Dawar. The next governor Ubaidullah-ibn-

Abi-Bakrah continued the war and reached Razan. However, negotiations were opened, Ubaidullah demanded 12,00,000 dirhams for letting Zabul and Kabul live in peace, but they offered less, at last the bargain was struck at 10,00,000 and the treaty was confirmed by the governor of Basrah. But, in 680, the people of Kabul again rose and imprisoned Abu-Ubaidah-ibn-Ziyad. The governor of Seistan proceeded against the insurgents, but he and many of his followers were killed and the rest put to flight. Even leaders like Zayd-ibn-Abdullah and Silah-ibn-Ashtam-Abussabha perished. The Arabs had to ransom Abu-Ubaidah for 5,00,000 dirhams. As a result the cities of Seistan became free from the Caliph's control. In 683 Abdul-Aziz-ibn-Abdullah-ibn-Amir arrived as the governor of Seistan, but had to stop at Zaranj owing to the war with the king of Zabul. But soon Abu-Afra-Umar-al-Mazini killed the king of Zabul. Yet the war did not end with the death of that prince. In 692 the new governor Abdullah had to continue the war. Talks for peace were opened. The king of Zabul was ready to pay 10,00,000 dirhams. But Abdullah wanted that his tent be filled with gold. Hence hostilities were resumed. The Arab army penetrated deep into the country. The Zabulites retreated and entrapped the invaders. At last Abdullah was compelled to be content with the payment of 3,00,000 dirhams only. On this he was dismissed by the Caliph Abdul Malik. During the viceroyalty of Al-Hajjaj (694-713) Ubaidullah-ibn-Abi-Bakrah was appointed the governor of Seistan. Immediately on joining he advanced on Kabul. The king of Kabul blocked a mountain path. The king of Zabul also joined him. The Arab army was in a crisis. Ubaidullah had to make peace and agreed not to disturb them against a payment of 5,00,000 dirhams. In token of the treaty, he sent his three sons, Nahar, Al-Hajjaj and Abu Bakrah, as hostages to Kabul. This humiliating peace sent a shudder in the Arab camp. Some generals did not reconcile themselves to it. One Shuraih rejected the treaty and led a charge against Kabul. But he was killed and his army perished. Ubaidullah died of grief. Al-Hajjaj sent another army to avenge the defeat. It defeated the king of Zabul, but its movements were slowed by his retreat. Al-Hajjaj recalled its general Abdur-Rahman. But he rebelled and joined the king of Zabul. On this Al-Hajjaj had to make peace with the king of Zabul agreeing not to make war on him for seven years and remained friendly with him till his death in 714. In 710 the governor of Khurasan, Qutyba, undertook a cam-

paign against Zabul, but it proved abortive. In the reign of the Caliph Sulaiman (715-17) the king of Zabul ceased to pay the contribution. For well over forty years Zabul enjoyed a spell of peace. In the reign of the Caliph, Al-Mansur (754-75), steps were again taken against it. Man-ibn-Zaidah took over as governor of Seistan and demanded tribute from Zabul. Its king replied by sending some camels, Turkish tents and slaves reckoning each at double its value. This enraged the Arab governor to resume war. When he marched on ar-Rukhaj, the king withdrew to Zabul. Ar-Rukhaj fell to the invader and 30,000 slaves came to his lot, but his success was pyrrhic. During the Caliphate of Al-Mahdi (775-85) and Al-Rashid (786-808) also Seistan was not completely subjugated, as Balādhūri states, and their officers continued to collect tribute as well as they could. In 792-3 an army under Ibrahim-ibn-Jibul crossed the Hindukush and stormed Kāpīst forcing its king to retire to Kabul. When the next caliph, Al-Māmūn (808-818), was in Khurāsān, the king of Kabul is said to have professed Islam and offered allegiance. But the gains were not lasting. The Zambīl (king of Zabul) was in Kabul giving shelter to Nasr and Sālih, the sons of Darhim, in 867 on the conquest of Seistan by Yāqūb-bin-Layth. Yāqūb turned against Zabul and conquered Kabul in 870 but his dynasty was replaced by that of the Samanids who did not make any serious effort to extend their authority in the Kabul Valley.

With the conquest of Kāpīst by the Arabs in 792-3, its Turki Śāst ruler moved to Kabul. This event seems to underly the tradition of the entering of Barhatikin in a cave at Kabul recorded by Al-Biruni (E.C. Sachau, *Al-Biruni's India*, Vol. II p. 10). However, on account of the confused account, transmitted to him, Al-Biruni observed that sixty generations of rulers had intervened between Barhatikin and his own time. As said above, in the ninth century the Arabs exercised relentless pressure on Kabul. From the east the Pratīhāra rulers of Kanauj struck at them. Nāgabhāṣa II (795-833) wrested some territory in the Panjab from them and Mihira Bhoja (836-90) sent an expedition under Harṣarāja Guhila against them (Catsu Inscription, *Epigraphia Indica*, XII, p.13). As a result of these moves, East Panjab was annexed to the Pratīhāra empire and West Panjab was placed under the viceroyalty of Alakhana with his capital at or near Gujarat. Almost at the same time the people revolted against the tyranny of the Turki ruler

Laghturman who, according to Al-Biruni, had 'bad manners and a worse behaviour'. (E. C. Sachau, *Al-Beruni's India*, Vol. II p. 13). Under these blows and pressures, external as well as internal, the Turki Śāhi kingdom of Kabul fell and the Brāhmaṇa minister of the king, Laghturman, whom Kalhaṇa calls Lalliya and Al-Biruni, Kallar, staged a *coup d'état* and shifted his capital to Ohind or Udbhaṇḍapura on the Indus. His kingdom included the lower Kabul Valley from Laghman (Lampāka) to Gandhāra and also parts of western Panjab. He was a powerful ruler, "whose mighty glory outshone the kings of the north just as the sun-disc outshines the stars in heaven", as Kalhaṇa states (*Rājatarāṅgiṇī* V, 154). "In his capital of Udbhaṇḍapura other kings found safety, just as the mountains in the ocean, when threatened by the danger of having their wings cut by Indra" (*Ibid.*, V, 153). That he was friendly to the Pratiharas is clear from the fact that he gave shelter to the Pratihāra chief Alakhana when he was defeated by the king of Kaśmīra, Śankaravarman, and compelled to surrender the Takka country to him. It appears that the Turki Śāhi rulers, displaced by Lalliya, took refuge with the king of Kaśmīra while he made friends with the Pratiharas. Thus the entente of the Brāhmaṇa Śāhis and the Pratiharas was confronted with the alliance of the Turkī Śāhis and the king of Kaśmīra. But there seems to have been no encounter between them on account of their respective problems. However H. C. Ray suggests that the violent death of the king of Kaśmīra, Śankaravarman, in the hills of Hazara, may be due to the complicity of the Śāhīs (*Dynastic History of Northern India*, Vol. I, p. 75).

After Lalliya, Śimantadeva ascended the Śāhi throne at Ohind. His coins, they are elephant and lion type but mostly of the bull and horseman type, have been found at Sultanpur, Sunet, Joner and Kapalmochan in East Panjab, on the one hand, and near Rostow in the Yaroslavl province, Gniezdovo in the Smolensk province, Tatarski Tolkish in the Kazan province, now in the Tatar Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, Denisyy in the Poltava province, Vaabina in the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic, Obrzicho in Poland and Chivaz near Taskent, in the U.S.S.R. and eastern Europe, on the other. The discovery of his coins over such a wide stretch of territory from East Punjab to Poland shows that

under him his kingdom had acquired considerable importance. Yaqūbī states that, from the ninth century, Kabul was visited by tradesmen for the so-called mirobalan which was very much valued by the medical practitioners of medieval times. Trade in this as well as other commodities seems to have carried the coins of Sāmāntadeva far abroad (A.A.Bykov, 'Finds of Indian Medieval Coins in East Europe', *Journal of the Numismatic Society of India*, Vol. XXVII (1965) part II, pp. 146-156).

Thus it is clear that Sāmāntadeva consolidated the Śāhī kingdom on the frontier so firmly as to make it a centre of economic progress and commercial prosperity. But soon internal troubles queered the pitch for him. A son of Lalliya, Toramāṇa, advanced his claim to the throne and sought the help of Kaśmīra in support of it. Kaśmīra was keen to resuscitate her influence over the frontier state of the Śāhīs which was shaken when Lalliya overthrew Laghtur man and befriended the Pratihāras of Kanauj who had acquired hegemony over the Panjab. Hence she took the occasion by the forelock and her minister, Prabhakaradeva, led an army against Ohind, overthrew Sāmāntadeva and installed Toramāṇa under the name Kamaluka or Kamalavarman (*Rājatarāṅgiṇī*, V, 232-3). The new ruler issued the copper coins with peacock with outspread wings to left on the obverse and lion to right and the legend *Śrī Kamara* on the obverse. It may also be that he issued the bull and horseman type of silver coins with the Iranian legend *Śrī Khudavayakaḥ*, corresponding to Xvātāvaya, for circulation in the Iranian world. This revolution changed the balance of power on the frontier and brought the Śāhīs and Kaśmīra together against the Pratihāras. Kamaluka's successor Bhīma further strengthened his ties with Kaśmīra by marrying his daughter to the ruler of Lohara, Siṃharāja, whose daughter Diddā became the queen of the king of Kaśmīra, Kṣemagupta (cir. 950-58). At that time the Śāhīs had considerable influence over Kaśmīra an evidence of which is afforded by the richly endowed temple of Viṣṇu, called Bhīmakeśava, the remains of which have been identified by Stein with the Ziarat of Bamzu near Mārtanḍa, built by Bhīma. The coins of Bhīma with the legend *Śrī Bhīmadeva*, those of silver having a recumbent humped bull on obverse and horseman with lance on the reverse and those of copper having elephant to right on the obverse and lion to right on the reverse, have been found in Kabulistan and his inscription, showing that he adopted the title of *Mahārājādhirāja Paramēśvara*, has been

discovered at Dewai in the Gadun country. That Bhīma was the paramount monarch of the North-West with a dominant influence over Kaśmīra admits of no doubt. Under him the Śāhi kingdom must have reached a high point of progress.

During the aforesaid period some significant changes were taking place to the west of the Indus. A Turkish slave of the Samanid, Amir Mansur, named Alptigin, captured Gazni by expelling the Wali of Zabulistan, Abu Bakr-i-Lawik, and founded an independent kingdom there. This heralded the offensive policy of the Muslims in regard to the Śāhi kingdom. From the east, the Pratīharas made an effort to resuscitate their lost influence over the Śāhīs and counter the importance of Kaśmīra. The Pratīhara King Mahīpāla invaded the North-West marching at the head of a vast army of horses and elephants and acquired an image of Vaikunṭha from the Śāhi king obviously after defeating him. Again the pendulum of the Śāhīs swung from Kaśmīra towards Kanauj.

Outwitted by Kanauj, Kaśmīra again tried to resuscitate its influence over the Śāhīs. Queen Didda, acting as the guardian of King Abhimanyu (958-72), sent the commander-in-chief Yaśodhara to invade the Śāhīs. Yaśodhara defeated and captured the ruling Śāhī King Thakkana and exacted tribute from him. But the success of Kaśmīra proved short-lived for Kanauj was again on the offensive.

When Thakkana was worsted by Kaśmīra, Kanauj intervened and replaced him by a new branch installing Jayapāla, son of Iṣṭapāla, on the throne of the Śāhīs. The tenth century Persian geography *Hudūd-ai-Ālam* (ed. Minorsky, p. 239) expressly says that he was "under the orders of Qinnauj". As an ally of the Pratīharas Jayapāla even overpowered Kaśmīra. This is clear from the remark of Firishta that his kingdom extended in length from Sirhind to Lamghan and in breadth from Kaśmīra to Multan (*Tārīkh-i-Firishta*, tr. Briggs, vol. I, p. 15) and the observation of the *Hudūd-al-Ālam* that "Vayhind (Udbhaṇḍapura) and Kaśmīra were the dependencies of the Rai of Qinnauj".

The latter part of the tenth century saw the weakening of the Pratīhara empire of Kanauj. In the Panjab up to Sirhind Jayapāla was the paramount ruler with Bhatinda as his second capital, to the east of it the Tomaras ruled over Hariyana and Delhi

and in South Panjab the Ghalibids governed Multan and the territory up to Lahore and Rāmiyan. But, at Lahore, a native ruler, named Bharata, became independent and made sallies into the realm of the Śāhīs raiding the salt mines of Nandana in the Jhelum district and the region of Takeshar. Jayapāla deputed his son Ānandapāla to quell the raids of that troublesome chief. He advanced on Lahore, defeated Bharata and allowed him to rule as a feudatory in return for a large sum of money. Subsequently, the son of Bharata, Handrat, dethroned him whereupon Ānandapāla marched with an army to punish him and annexed Lahore to the Śāhī kingdom in 999. For a time Jayapāla ranked as the most powerful king of India as Minhajuddin says (*Tabqāt-i-Nāṣiri*, Vol. I, p. 82).

Though paramount in the Panjab Jayapāla was faced with the onslaughts of the Turks. We have seen above how Alptigin had captured Ghazni from its ruler Lawik or Anuk who was not necessarily a Muslim (C. E. Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids*, p. 38).

On his death the Lawik, probably with the assistance of the Śāhīs, reoccupied Ghazni. In 966 the Turkish troops of Ghazni chose a ghulam of Alptigin, named Bilkätigin, as their leader who again took Ghazni. On the death of Bilkätigin another ghulam of Alptigin, Būritigin, held power for two years, but his tyranny and cruelty drove the people into inviting the Lawik again. In that hurly-burly another slave Sebūktigin came up and made short shrift of the Lawik. Soon afterwards he reformed the military administration by providing for the payment of the army through the central diwan and making all the fiefs *mustaghall* or revenue assignments.

Faced with the challenge of the Turks, Jayapāla formed an alliance with the Muslim rulers of Multan and even advanced to sieze Ghazni as Minhaj says (*Tabqāt-i-Nāṣiri*, Raverty, Vol. I, p. 73). Hence the first task before Sebūktigin was to break this alliance and detach Shaikh Hamid Lodi from Jayapāla. Having succeeded in this diplomatic move, he "girded up his loins for a war of religion" and "endeavoured to desolate the territories of Rājā Jayapāla", capturing many castles and strongholds (*Tārikh-i-Firishṭā*, Briggs, Vol. I, pp. 9-10). To this Jayapāla responded by a massive attack. The Turks also advanced from the other side. The battle was joined on the frontier. Al-Utbi writes "each army

mutually attacked the other, fought and resisted in every way, until the face of the earth was stained red with the blood of the slain, and the warriors of both armies and nations were worn out and reduced to despair. Then prince Mahmud remarked that all skill and intelligence was unequal to the subjugation of this fort and that all human power fell short against it. (*Kitāb-i-Yāminī*, J. Reynolds, pp. 33-36). When Jayapāla was within an ace of success, a hailstorm suddenly changed the scene to one of extreme cold and grey mist. The Indian army, mostly from the plain, could not cope with that atmosphere and Jayapāla had to send the following message to Sebūktigin :

"You have heard and know the nobleness of the Indians, how that, in seasons of extremity, they fear not death or destruction. They run the edge of the sword over those who wrong them, when there is no means of escaping the blade. In affairs of honour and renown we would place ourselves upon the fire like roast meat and upon the dagger like the sunrays" (*Kitāb-i-Yāminī*, p. 37)

This message shows the indomitable will of the Indian warriors led by Jayapāla.

Sebūktigin was ready to make peace. To bide time, Jayapāla agreed to pay "1000 packets of 1000 dinārs and five stables full of elephants" and cede some cities and fortresses and send some hostages as earnest for the treaty. But, in his heart of hearts, he was averse to any concession. When he reached Lahore, his Brāhmaṇa ministers were firmly against paying anything to the enemy (*Tārīkh-i-Firishṭā*, Vol. I, p. 17). Hence he repudiated all terms of treaty and even imprisoned the agents of the Turks who had come to take charge of the territories to be ceded by him. On it Sebūktigin invaded the Śāhī kingdom. "Wheresoever he came he sacked and plundered, dug up and burnt down all the buildings and killed the people carrying away their children and cattle as booty. He made the territory of Lamghan, which had been the most populous and flourishing of all that country, entirely stripped and bare. He mastered several other territories, and destroying their temples, their sacred buildings and their churches, built mosques in their stead" (*Tabqāt-i-Akbarī* of Nizamuddin, B. Dey, p. 3). On this Jayapāla also made adequate preparations, "despatched letters to the various provinces of India imploring aid"

and collected a vast army of 1,00,000 horse, many elephants and numerous foot to fight the enemy. With that vast army, he marched on Ghazni and met the Turks near Lamghan. Faced with that army, "boundless like the ocean and in numbers like the ants and locusts of the wilderness", Sebuktigin relinquished direct encounter and sent squadrons of 500 men each to attack particular points successively till they showed signs of breaking. Wearing the Indian army with these guerilla tactics, Sebuktigin struck at the opportune moment and carried the day with singular dash and drive. The Indians fell back on the Indus, but the Turks drove hard on them dealing deadly blows. Again it was made clear that the men of the plains could not operate in hills and dales without effective training.

After this victory the Turks were masters of the region beyond the Indus. Lamghan and Peshawar were Muslim cities. The Indus flowed uneasily between the Turks and the Šāhīs. At that fateful time the throne of the Ghaznavis was held by the energetic and ambitious son of Sebuktigin, Mahmud. He was not a man to relent or relax and so took the offensive against the Šāhīs. In 1000 A.D. he raided many Šāhī forts and posts and, next year, swooped upon Peshawar with a cavalry force of 10,000. But Jayapāla was alive to the situation and equal to the occasion. Let us hear from Utbi what he did in that circumstance.

".....He advanced in opposition to the standards of the Sultan with 8,000 cavalry, 30,000 infantry and 300 elephants. The earth groaned under the pain of their boots. And when the distances between the two armies was but small he began to delay the commencement of the battle and the onset in order that the rear of the troops and those men of the army, who were coming up behind the others, should arrive. The Sultan perceived this strategem and hastened forward and wrested the power of choice from his hand" (*Tārīkh-i-Yāmīnī*, p. 281).

This account shows that when Jayapāla was preparing for the encounter, Mahmud intercepted him making a surprise attack. Jayapāla, however, mustered up. According to Nizamuddin, "the two armies fought with each other and showed much "gallantry" (*Tabqāt-i-Akbarī*, p. 5) and Firishṭa says that the contest was obstinate. About mid-day the Indian ranks broke up and, in the affray, Jayapāla and his family fell into the hands of the enemy.

Mahmud followed up this victory by a dash on the second Śāhī capital, Bhatinda, and reduced it after a siege. But the people, stung to fury by the capture of their chief, must have offered a grim resistance forcing Mahmud to "make friendship with Jayapāla" and release him on payment of ransom, as Utbi states. But Jayapāla was deeply chagrined by the disaster and disgrace and committed suicide by consigning himself to the flames. Thus ended the eventful life of this heroic person.

About 1002 Jayapāla's son Ānandapāla came to the throne. He was independent and headstrong and cocked the snook at the Turks. His first act was to repudiate the tribute claimed by Mahmud. He even refused passage to him, when he wanted to pass through the Śāhī kingdom to invade the Ismaili ruler of Multan, Abdul Fath Daud. Rather he used Mahmud as a cat's paw to chastise the refractory ruler of Bhera, Bijaya Rai, on the western bank of the Jhelum who tried to fish in the troubled waters of Śāhī affairs. The attitude of Ānandapāla naturally provoked Mahmud to start hostilities and extend "the hand of plunder, levelling, destruction and burning into villages and cities". In an engagement near Peshawar Ānandapāla was defeated and his son Sukhapāla was captured by the Turks and converted to Islam under the name of Newasa Khan. About that time the Turk chief Ilak Khan invaded the northern parts of the Ghaznavid kingdom. In that crisis Mahmud thought it prudent to make friends with Ānandapāla and entered into a pact of neutrality with him so as to be safe on the eastern frontier. This is clear from the fact that Ānandapāla not only did not utilise the absence of Mahmud for invading the heart of his empire, but offered to send 5,000 horsemen, 10,000 infantry and 100 elephants and even his son with double that number of troops for his assistance (E. C. Sachau, *Al-Beruni's India*, II, p. 13). Modern historians have criticised Ānandapāla for the policy of docility and inaction at such an opportune moment. But they forget that a man in his circumstances could think that, if peace could be had in any way with a rival like Mahmud, it was worth while to try for it. Many times his father and he had suffered at the hands of the Turks on the north-western frontier. This is an area in which even the British government had to follow a policy of suborning and soft-peddalling the qabailies. Hence, when Mahmud offered to make a treaty with him, he accepted it and abided by its letter thinking that the other side would also adhere to it. He may have

miscalculated the nature of Mahmud or failed to visualise that, in the event of his success, he would repay his sincerity with treachery, but he urgently needed peace to recoup himself and was justified in welcoming an opportunity to have it even at the cost of some risk. It is wrong to think that his conduct was imbecile or pusillanimous. His policy was understandable though his calculation proved wrong and his assessment defective.

At soon as Mahmud was free from the menace of Ilak Khan and had quelled the revolt of Sukhapāla or Navaṣa Khan, he took up arms against Ānandapāla again in violation of his treaty and betrayal of his trust. Ānandapāla must have been irked by the ignominious behaviour of his friend and made preparations to face his challenge. Firishta writes that he "sent ambassadors on all sides inviting the assistance of other princes of Hindustan who now considered the expulsion of the Mohammadans from India as a sacred duty". He adds that "the rājās of Ujjain, Gwalior, Kalinjar, Kanauj, Delhi, Ajmer entered into a confederacy and, collecting their forces, advanced towards Panjab with the greatest army that had yet taken the field." How far he is correct in giving this information is difficult to say, for Utbi and Nizamuddin do not support it and the trends of Indian affairs at that time preclude its possibility, but it seems to be a fact that the common people were siezed by a patriotic sentiment whereby "the Hindu women sold their jewels and melted down their golden ornaments to furnish resources for the war and the Gakkhars and other warlike tribes joined the army and surrounded the Mohammadans" (*Tārīkh-i-Firishtā*, Vol. I, p. 46).

This memorable battle took place in 1008 on the bank of the Ohind according to Utbi and in the plains of Peshawar according to Firishtā. Let us hear its story from the latter :

"The two armies remained encamped for forty days without coming into action.....and the troops of the idolators daily increased in number. Mahmud ordered 6,000 archers in the front to endeavour to provoke the enemy to attack his entrenchments. The archers were opposed by the Gakkhars who, inspite of the king's efforts and presence, repulsed his light troops and followed them so closely that no less than 30,000 Gakkhars, with their heads and feet bare, and armed with various weapons, penetrated into the Muslim lines, where a dreadful carnage ensued, and in a few minutes

5,000 Mohammadans were slain. The enemy was at length checked, and being cut off as fast as they advanced, the attacks became fainter and fainter, till on a sudden, the elephant, upon which the prince, who commanded the Hindus, rode, becoming unruly from the effects of the naphtha balls and the flights of arrows, turned and fled. This circumstance produced a panic amongst the Hindus, who, seeing themselves deserted by their general, gave way and fled also" (*Tārīkh-i-Firishṭā*, I, pp. 46-47).

Utbi gives the following version of the battle :

"And from the time that the falcon of morning took his flight from the nest of the horizon, until the crow of darkness closed her wing, the fire of battle burnt, and the pieces of men's bodies, hacked by the sword, coloured the earth as if by anemones. And it had nearly happened that the army of the Sultan were wounded (worsted) and that the infidels had obtained the high hand. However, the Sultan with his own guards made a charge under which the feet of the infidels were unable to stand" (*Kitāb-i-Yāminī*, p. 340).

These accounts show that for a considerable time the two armies confronted each other, at last Mahmud broke the stalemate to prevent the arrival of more reinforcements on the other side and launched the attack, the Śāhi response was effective, the Gakkhars repelled the advance and themselves penetrated into the enemy ranks making terrible slaughter, behind them other regiments of the Śāhi army sallied on the enemy and fought with terrible fury and vigour, grim slaughter and destruction stalked the field till nightfall, the Turk army was nearly worsted and the Śāhis got the upper hand, but in that critical moment the elephant of Ānandapāla ran amuck and backed out of the contest, this created panic and chaos turning the verdict of the battle into a defeat, yet the gains of Mahmud were insignificant, only thirty elephants, according to Firishṭa and Nizamuddin, sixty, according to Utbi.

In the hurly-burly of the event Mahmud raided Nagarkot and plundered its temple, then, in 1009, invaded Narayanpur in the Alwar state and looted the temples and next year subjugated Multan, deposed its ruler and suppressed the Ismailis.

Inspite of all this it cannot be said that Mahmud was fully successful against the Śāhis. This is clear from the fact that

Mahmud made a treaty with Ānandapāla undertaking not to lead any more invasions against the Śāhis and resting content with the annual tribute of fifty elephants laden with valuables and accompanied by 2000 men.

But Mahmud was not a man to abide by his promises or undertakings. In 1011-12 he raided Thanesar and desecrated its temples notwithstanding the protests of Ānandapāla. Yet his mind was not quite free from the fear of Ānandapāla for Firishtā says that he did not penetrate further east from Thanesar "from his apprehension". In fact the danger from the Śāhis was so acute that the advisors of Mahmud opined and urged that it was impossible to take possession of the Ganga-Yamunā Valley unless the Śāhis were completely destroyed (*Tārikh-i-Firishtā*, p. 52).

About 1112 Ānandapāla died leaving the throne to his son Trilocanapāla. Soon afterwards Mahmud prepared to attack the Śāhi kingdom and launched a sudden onslaught on the fort of Nandana. Taken aback, Trilocanapāla entrusted the command of his army to his son Bhīmapāla and himself went about mobilising other forces. Bhīma posted himself at the head of a narrow mountain pass barring it with his elephants. Mahmud tried his best to break through it. The battle raged for several days. In that critical situation Trilocanapāla appealed for help to the Kaśmīrī King Sangramarāja (1003-1028 A.D.). On this appeal the king sent his Prime Minister Tuṅga, who had already married a Śāhi princess Bimbā to his son, with a large army to the help of the Śāhi monarch. Tuṅga was bubbling with enthusiastic eagerness to pounce on the Turks and "gave no thought to night watches, the posting of scouts, the military exercises and other preparations proper for attack". Trilocanapāla, who was acquainted with the strategy of warfare with the Turks, counselled him restraint and advised him to keep posted on the scarf of a hill at the entrance of the Tosmaidan Pass. But he paid scant heed to it and "crossed with rather a small force to the other bank of the Tausi (modern Tohi of Prunty) and defeated a corps which Hammīra (the Turkish Sultan) had sent on reconnaissance". This inflated his pride on account of which he spurned the repeated advice of the Śāhi ruler. Next morning Mahmud unexpectedly led his full army catching Tuṅga unawares. His army dispersed in disorder. But Trilocanapāla rallied whatever force he could and gave battle. The Ḍāmara chiefs,

Srivardhana, Vibhramarka and Jayasinha, showed prodigies of valour. "These three men, fighting on the terrible field of battle, which resounded with the tramps of horses, preserved the honour of their country from being lost". The performance of Trilocanapāla was wonderful. "Causing floods of blood to pour forth in battle, he resembled Śiva (Trilocana) when sending forth the fire which burns the world at the end of the Kalpa". His singlehanded fighting led the historian Kalhaṇa to exclaim, "who would describe the greatness of Trilocanapāla whom numberless enemies even could not defeat in battle" (A. Stein, *Rājatarāṅgī*, Vol. I, p. 272-73).

After this victory Mahmud invaded Kaśmīra through the Tosmaidan Pass and "carried away much booty in the shape of prisoners of war and gold and, after converting many infidels to Islam and laying the foundations of Islam, went back to Ghazni". (*Tabqāt-i-Akbarī*, p. 8). But Trilocanapāla even then did not lose heart and cease to make heroic efforts to retrieve his defeat. Kalhaṇa says that "the Hammīra (Mahmud) did not breathe freely thinking of the superhuman powers of the illustrious Trilocanapāla" (*Rājatarāṅgī*, VII, p. 64-5). He continued to struggle with the Turks and, with grim resolution, organized an army in his retreat at Sirhind, but the ruler of Sarsava on the Yamunā, Chand Rai, engaged him in wanton warfare. He tried to end this fruitless conflict by contracting the marriage of his son with the daughter of Chand Rai, but the latter treacherously imprisoned the bridegroom. In this state of tension and turmoil no organized resistance was possible. On the other hand Mahmud also prepared for a major offensive in the quiet of some years and then in 1018 attacked East Panjab. Sandwiched between two forces of Mahmud and Chand Rai, Trilocanapāla realised the futility of defence at Sirhind and repaired to the Court of the Paramāra King Bhoja of Malwa, who was among the leading powers of that time, obviously to seek his help. But Bhoja was more a man of culture and literature than war and aggression. Hence from there he went over to the Candellas, when their king, Vidyādhara, overthrew Mahmud's ally Rajyapāla of Kanauj. In 1020-1 Mahmud advanced against Vidyādhara, but Trilocanapāla barred his passage probably on the Yamunā. In the battle, that followed, his army was defeated and he made off to join Vidyādhara, but was captured and killed by

some Hindus in the way in 1021. In this way his grand policy to mobilise the resources of the leading powers of Central India against the Turks came to an end. His son Bhīmapāla kept the Turks at bay in the hilly districts south of Lohara, but was killed in a battle in 1026. Thereafter the remnants of the Śāhis retired to Kaśmīra and played an important part in her history, exhibiting rare bravery and heroism. But Panjab was at the feet of the Turks and the region upto Lahore formed part of the Ghaznavi kingdom.

The Śāhis shed lustre on the heroic tradition of the Panjab. All historians, Muslim and Hindu, joined in paying them handsome tribute. Al-Biruni wrote : "We must say that in all their grandeur they never slackened in the ardent desire of doing that which is good and right and that they were men of noble sentiment and noble bearing" (Sachau, *Al-Beruni's India*, Vol. II, p. 13). Kalhaga remarked : "To this day the appellation Śāhi throws its lustre on a numberless host of Kṣatriyas abroad who trace their origin to that family" (*Rājatarangīni*, VIII 3230). This rare combination of nobility and gallantry invests their history with a remarkable glory and grandeur.

Behind the patriotic heroism of the Śāhis was the fine martial quality of the people of the Panjab which even the Muslim Turks acknowledged by recruiting an Indian contingent of troops. These Indian soldiers had their own commander, the *Sipāhsālār-i Hindūyān*, and their separate quarters in Ghazni. They formed a counterweight to the Turks and were considered in many ways more reliable than them. About 1030, when the palace ghulāms and the Turkish troops revolted, it was the Indians alone who, under their commander, Savendhray, remained loyal to them. In view of their military calibre the consideration of religion was ignored in their recruitment and they were sent to fight with the Muslims. A historian of Seistan bitterly complains of the slaughter and violence done to the Muslims and Christians of Zarang by Mahmud's pagan Indian troops in 1003 (C. E. Bosworth, *The Ghaznavids*, p. 110).

Thus there is no ground for holding that the fall of the Śāhis was due to the martial inferiority of the people. In fact it was their heroism and bravery which enabled the Śāhis to keep their hold

on Udbhāṇḍapura at least up to 1008, on the Salt Range at least up to 1012 and on the Sirhind frontier at least upto 1018 against overwhelming odds. The reason for their inability to hurl the Turks back for good was the peculiar socio-political condition prevailing in North India at that time. The *Sāmānta* system made unified administration impossible over long period. The regional complexes and caste biases also told on the mobility of the people. The training of Indian soldiers to operate on the plains in specific formations under centralized command made it difficult for them to fight with the tribals of the hilly areas on the frontier. The capture of the routes of Afghanistan by the Turks made contacts with the trans-Hindukush region difficult and precluded the possibility of diplomatic and commercial relations with Persia or Central Asia. The snapping of these ties also cut the sources of the supply of good horses and tribal recruits. The Islamic religion injected the promise of the damsels of heaven into the prospect of plundering the people which had been prompting the tribals into marauding raids and razzias. Religious bigotry steeled social solidarity and canonized the craze for war and conquest and lionized raiders and plunderers as heroes and martyrs. Giving a pious slogan to nefarious lust and providing a gaudy ideology to brutality and treachery, it created a fighting apparatus of relentless potency which was more than a match for the pacific refinement and tranquil morality of the Indian cultural tradition. By and large the Hindus did not realize the gravity of this situation and remained "haughty, foolishly vain, self-contained and stolid", believing that "there was no country like theirs", as Al-Biruni remarked (Sachau, *Al-Beruni's India*, Vol. I, p. 22). Hence while the Śāhīs were fiercely struggling with the Turks on the frontiers, the ruling powers in the interior did not create any second line of defence to check the invaders. The redoubtable Rajput powers kept cocking the snook at each other without caring to consider the menace with which the Śāhīs were coping with all their might almost singlehanded,

History is a balance among different sorts of forces. Moral force or cultural prestige alone sometimes do not suffice to counter brute strength and striking power. Organisation and discipline are sometimes stronger among uncouth and barbaric peoples, united by the lure of plunder and pleasure, than among the cultured and refined peoples snivelled by theoretical niceties and doctrinal sub-

tleties. Constant and all-sided vigilance and creativeness are the price of freedom and success in every circumstance.

The aforesaid survey of the evolution of heroic tradition in ancient Panjab from the earliest time up to the beginning of the eleventh century A. D. brings out the salient features of the history of this region revealing the interplay of socio-economic development and politico-military orientation. In course of it we have observed how the people of the Panjab have given varying turns to their heroic tradition in the context of changing social conditions across the ages. The transitions from the tribal outlook to the territorial and vocational viewpoint and from that to the national and cultural weltanschauung and thence to the cosmopolitan, commercial and bourgeois orientation and then back to the regional, parochial and exclusivist trend of thought shaped the traditions of heroism, gallantry and dynamism into different forms and ways of life. A study of them has shown that heroism or militarism presupposes social contexts and organizational settings. A hero, despite his personal bravery, acts within a framework of ideas and values which are the products of social and cultural perspectives. Hence it is worthwhile to remember that the heroism of a people has to be matched by effective organization in order to act as a potent instrument of defence and advance. It is hoped that the above study, based on original materials and sources, would serve to underline this basic imperative of the heroic history of the Panjab.



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