THE POST-MAURYAN PERIOD
(200 B.C. - 300 A.D.)

SUNGAS

The reign of the Mauryas was one of the glorious chapters of Indian history. However, after their downfall, the political condition of India was marked by destruction of political unity and emergence of petty independent states. This attracted foreign aggressors who intended to take advantage of the political unrest. It was under these circumstances that the Sungas came to power and with their valour and courage, provided stability to the turbulent political atmosphere and ushered in a new era.

The sources for the reconstruction of the history of the Sunga period is corroborated by both literary and archaeological evidences. Among the literary sources, the important ones are Patnjali's Mahabhasya, Prunanas, Kalidas 'Malvikagnimitram', 'Banbhatta'd Harsha Charitra Mrutung's Theravali Divyadana, Tarának th's Buddhist History etc. While among the archaeological sources, the chief are Hathigumpha inscriptions of Kharvela, Dhanadeva's Ayodhaya inscription etc.

Bana's 'Harsha Charita' throws light on the details of overthrow of the Mauryas by Pushyamitra, who laid the foundation of his Sunga dynasty in 185 B. C. which ruled for 112 years. Before going into the detail of this dynasty, a question strikes over mind, as to who were the Sungas?

This question is a controversial one, Mahayan Divyavadana states that though Pushyamitra, the founders of Sunga dynasty, destroyed the Mauryas, he himself was a Mauryan. This does not appear to be very authentic because if he belonged to the Mauryan dynasty then he would not have been called the "destroyer of the (Mauryan) empire".

On the basis of lost syllable "Mitra" of the Sunga kings, some historians suggest that the sugar were "sun worshippers" of Persian origin. This theory also appears to be of less importance. According to K.P. Jaiswal, Pushyamitra was the son of the royal priest of the Mauryas, who had abandoning their religious associations owing to the Dhamma policy of Asoka and had joined the army. It is in this sequence that Pushyamitra emerged as 'Senapati'. Thus Sungas were Brahmanas Jaiswal's stand is substantiated by many other evidences, Panini traces the Sunga's to the Brahmana clan of Bharadvaja. Kalidasa in Malavikagnimitra describes Agnimitra, the son of Pushyamitra as a scion of the Baimbika family of Kasyapa limage. Taranath also thinks the Sungas to be Brahmin king".

By the time Pushyamitra took over political power, the Mauryan empire was substantially reduced. The eastern part was dominated by Kharavela, the Deccan by the Andhras and in the North-west, the Indo-Greeks had established a political domain. According to the available evidences. Pushyamitra had retained the central part with its capital at Pataliputra, the region of Malwa with its capital at Ujjaini and the central western part with its capital at Ayodhya. In the South, their boundary was river Narmada. Dhanadeva informs us that this part of the country was under the suzerainty of Shunga. Thaaveti of Merutunga also informs us that Avanti was also a part of Sunga kingdom. Taranath informs us that Jalandhar and present day Sialkot were also included in the kingdom of Pushyamitra.

Once coming into power, Pushyamitra undertook many measures to ensure his control over the empire. Vidisa in Avanti was made the second capital of the Empire under his son Agnimitra. Probably another Viceroy was appointed in Kosala. Agnimitra's brother-in-law was placed in charge of a fortress on the frontier on the banks of the Narmada. Thus Pushyamitra ruling from Pataliputra, through his representative established some sort of a centralised control.

The first event of political importance during the rule of Pushyamitra was the annexation of small state of Vidarbha located in the Berar region of Maharastra. The Malvikagnimitra informs us that the ruler of this small kingdom was the brother-in-law of the Prime Minister of the last Mauryan ruler. Pushyamitra snatched away power from the Mauryas and imprisoned the prime Minister of the mauryas. The name of the ruler of Vidarbha is given as Yajnasena consequently,

there was a natural emity between Shungas and the ruler of barat, Madhosena, the Cousin of Yajnasena was a close friend of Agnimitra, Pushyamitra's son. Once when he was going to Avanti to meet Agnimitra, he was arrested by Anapalco (governor of the frontier) of Yajasena. Agnimitra, on hearing this ordered Yajnasena to release his friend. But Yajnasena agreed to do so on the condition that his relative, the Mauryan minister be released first. Infuriated, Agnimitra gave order to Virasena to invade Vidarbha which was conquered without much resistance. Eventually the kingdom of Berar divided between Yajnasena and Madhosena after accepting the suzernity of Pushyamitra.

The most important political event of Pushyamitra's regime was the invasion of Indo-Greeks on India. Pushyamitra had to face two invasions led by Greek bactarian chiefs. The first invasion has been mentioned in Patanjali and Gargi-Samhita. Gargi-Samhita informs us that after invading Saket, Panchala and Mathura, the Yavanas, (Greeks) reached as far as Kusumacdhaya (identified as Pataliputra). However the text informs further that owing to some internal dissension they withdrew from the region. This account is substantially corroborated by the presence of Indo-Greek coins and other sources. The classical text informs that the invader was Dematrius who ruled from 190 B.C. to 165 B.C. and the internal struggle, pointed out by Gargi Samhita, was the capture of Bactaria by one of the officials of Dematrius. Pushyamitra took full advantage of the ruled for a period of 112 years from 187 B.C. to 15 B.C.

The Sungas contributed a lot towards ancient Indian history, religion, literature and art. Although, they could not preserve the entire Mauryan empires however, they were able to preserve a large part of it by repulsing the aggressive Indo-Greek or Greeks-Bacterian forces and suppressing some minor politics powers which were trying to assert their separate identity maintaining friendly relations with the Bactrian-Greeks, created the atmosphere for development of art, religion and literature which reached a stage like the Guptan "Golden Age".

The Sunga period experienced the revival of Brahmanism as a religio-theological system which reached its climax under the Guptas. Pushyamitra revived the Yajnas and sacrifices which were banned by Asoka. His performance of two grand horse sacrifices speak of his pro-Hindu approach. The period also saw the growing importance of the Puranic sect of Bhagvatism which counted even the cultured Greeks among it's votaries (as is reflected by a foreign ambassador Heliodores's case).

However this revival of Hinduism does not mean crusade against Buddhism by the Sungas as is reflected by Divyavdana and the History of Taranath. In the Divyavdana we are told that Pushyamitra destroyed many stupas and monastaries. This view of Taranath and Divyavdana has been supported by scholars like Har Prasad Shastri others. However it has been equally reputed by scholars like R.C. Majumdar and R.K. Mukharjee who felt that Buddhist were annoyed with the Sungas because the royal patronage which was so lavishly bestowed on the Buddhist during the Mauryan period was withdrawn. Instead, the Mahavansa informs us that during the Sunga period many stupas existed in different parts of Magadha and adjoining regions. A Barhut inscription informs us that two taranas or Gateways of the Barhut stupa were made during this period.

In the field of art, there was no immediate reaction against the Buddhist era of the Mauryas, nevertheless, there were certain differences. The Sunga art reflects more of the mind, culture, tradition and ideology than what the Mauryan art did. During this period, stone replaced mood in the railings and the gateways of the Buddhist stupas as noticed at Bharhut and Sanchi. Even the stone railing around the Sanchi stupa is in rich relief work. This age definitely witnessed the increasing use of symbols and human figures in architecture. Besides, the Sunga art is a menifestation of popular artistic genius the artistic activity was because of the initiative of individuals corporations or villages. The Besnagar Yakshini which is a remarkable symbol of Indian folk art was sculptured during Sunga period. Many historians point out that Besnagar became a centre of art in central India besides Vidisha. Temple building also began in this period. A Vishnu temple was built near Vidisha.

In the field of literature Sanskrit gradually gained ascendancy and became the language of the court Patanjali wrote a large commentary on Astaohyaji of Panini called Mahabhasva. The famous code of laws, the "Manusmriti" was written and compiled during this period.

Thus the importance of the Sunga Dynasty lies in the restoration of real Politik while abondoning the Asokan approach. In the Cultural field, the beginning as well as accomplishments in sculpture and architecture are of tremendous significance. In the field of religion too they not only revived the earlier tradition but also gave an impetus to new approaches : Combative towards the heterodox sects, the cult of Kartikeya, the god of war; the resurgence of Bhagvata cult; and the supremacy of Vasudeva in the Hindu pantheon.

KUSHANAS

In the post-Mauryan era, Central Asia and North-Western India witnessed hectic and shifting political scenes. The Kushanas were a branch of the Yuchi-chi tribe originally inhibiting the land between the Tun Huang and Tushan ranges in the Chinese Turkistan.

For the reconstruction of early history of the Kushanas we have to mainly depend on the evidence provided by the historical chronicles of early China. Among these can mention the Chien Hen Shu or the History of early han Dynasty finished in 92 A.D. by PanKu, the Shechi of Ssuma-Chien completed by 91 B.C. the Hon Han Shu of Fan Ye completed in the middle of the 3rd A.D. Besides these Chinese Historical works we have also to take help from the evidence provided by some inscriptions like the Panjtar inscription of 64 A.D. and Taxila scrab of 79 A.D. and the copper coins of the first ruler Kujula Kadphises and the second ruler Vima Kadphises' copper and gold coins. For the history of the Kushanas beginning with Kaniskka, we have to depend mainly on archaeological data, inscriptions and coins. However the archaeological sources to some extent can be supplemented by the literary sources including the Rajtarangini of Kalharia, the Hsi Yuchi of Huen Tsang, the Tahkiki Hind of Al Baruni and certain Buddhist texts and traditions from China and Tibet.

The collective evidence of the early Chinese chronicles includes that in 165 B.C. the territory of the Yuch-chi in the Chinese Turkistan situated in the Kangsu province of China was attacked by a neighbouring tribe Huinghu. The Yuchi-chi's were defeated and expelled from their territory. The Yuch-chi's started migration they had to confront another tribe win Sua which inhabited the region to North of the Takal Makan Desert. This tribe was defeated by the Yuchi-chis and at this point a small branch of Yuch-chis advanced Southward and occupied the Tibetan frontier. This branch is known as the little Yuch-chis. However, majority of them went beyond the lake Issigu kal and incourse of time reached the banks of the river Syr Darya. However they could not stay there for long as they were attacked and onsted by son of wer sun chief. Then they migrated further south West and reached the plains of the river oxus. This region has been identified by scholars with bactria. They established their capital at Bukhara. That they were well-established in this region by 128 B C. is well proved by the travelogue of the Chinese envoy Chan Kien who informs us that by this the Yuchi-chi had founded their capital at Kicnshe on the region of Kipin that is present day Kashmu and adjoining areas to the South of their territory.

The Chun Han Shu of Panjku informs us that in course of time the Yuch-chi divided their territory into five principalities. However, the How han Shu of Fanye informs us that after 100 years of the division of the tribe the chief of one of these tribes Kushana led by Kuchiuker defeated other branches and unified them. He defeated the Parthians and snatched away the regions of Kabul, Kipin and Pata (identified with Modern Pakhtunistan). He died at the age of 80 and was succeeded by his son ven Kaotsen, who extended his domain to Indica and appointed a governor to rule over it on his behalf.

Kuchiuku of the early Chinese annals has been identified by scholars with Kujula Kadphises or Kadphises whose copper coins have been discovered to the south Hindukush. his earlier coins have been issued as a junior ally of the Indo-Greek king Hurmious who has been called the king of kings on these coins. Scholars are of the opinion that initially he was a subsidiary ally of the Greek king, but when the later was defeated by the Parthians he took advantage of situation, strengthened his political position, defeated the Parthian rulers in the area and declared himself the sovereign ruler of the entire region. At a later stage of his coins he has been called the king of kings and the Great king on some of his coins lie has been called Dharmastith or Satdharmatitha i.e. 'Stiadfast in the true law'. On the basis of this it has been suggested by scholars that he was a follower of Buddhism.

There is a lot of controversy regarding the period of his rule. On the basis of numernutic evidence particularly the moulding of the royal head on the coins which closely follows the pattern of the Roman kings like Augustus, Tiberius etc. it has been suggested by scholars that he ruled from 15 to 65 A.D.

The Yenko chin, the son and successor of the first Kushana ruler has been identified with Viana Kadphises or Kadphises II. He extened the Kushana rule to northern part of India. According to some scholars only the region of Punjab was included in his kingdom whereas others are of the opinion that his kingdom may have extended as far as Mathura. He ruled for a very short period i.e. from circa 65 to 75 A.D. He issued coins both in copper and gold. On the basis of the abundance of gold coins issued by him it has been suggested by scholars that the trade and commerce between India and Rome had become very extensive during his reign. The reverse of his coin contain an emblem alongwith the titles Mahishvara. On the basis of this historians have suggested that unlike his father, he was a devote of lord Shiva.

The relationship between the first two kings and Kanishka, who succeeded Vima, is uncertain. There is no doubt the he was of central Asian origin since he is depicted as such in one of the portraits of the Kushana kings discovered near Mathura, but he may not have been directly related to the first two kings.

Also, the date of Kanishka is very uncertain and estimates of the year of his accession have varied from 58 B.C. to A.D. 278. At present opinions of most component authorities favour a date between A.D. 78 and 144 A.D. The former date is that of the foundation of one of the most widespread Indian systems of dating, later known as the Saka Era. Kaniska was not, strictly speaking, a Saka, but the term was very lossely applied, and he is known to have founded ar era. Though the date A.D. 78 fits well with other Indian evidence, certain complicated synchronisms, mainly based on non-Indian sources, suggest that he reigned some decades later than this, and the question cannot be finally settled until he evidence appears.

Inspite of all these controversies regarding the relationship of Kanishka with the earlier rulers of the dynasty and date of his accession to the Kushana throne, the fact remains that he was the greatest ruler among the Kushanas, both in terms of political achievements and cultural contributions. The available archaeological, (epigraphic, numeshtic) and literary sources prove that he ruled over a very large area stritching from Bihar in the East to Khorasan in the west and from Kotan in central Asia to Konakan in Saurashtra in the South. His inscriptions have been found in U.P., Punjab, N.W.F.P. and the Bahawalpur state to the north of Sindh. An inscription preserved in Sanchi museum dated in 22nd rangle year of Kanishka indicated that the region of Eastern Malwa was a part of his empire. The family of Western Satrapas ruling over Sindh, Rajasthan, Westem Malwa and Saurastra was under his suzerinty. The Wardak inscription of Hubishak indirectly indicates that the region of Kabul was also an integral part of his empire. Albaruni states that Afghanistan and the adjoining areas of central Asia were part of his empire. Huen Tsang in his She yu chi states that Gandhara was a part of his empire and some region of central Asia beyond Tsung Ling Mountain were also under his political influence. His hold on Kashmir is attested by the Rajatarangini of Kalhana as well as by the available archaeological sources.

The Chinese evidence suggest that he came into conflict with the Chinese General Pan Chao sometime about 90 A.D. The Chinese emperor hati, he sentan envoy to Pan Chao asking for the hand of the Chinese princess. The proposal was rejected and Kanishka dispatched a large army. But the army was defeated by the Chinese general. Some scholars are of the opinion that in later stage Kanishka avenged his defeat and wrenched a many parts of the Chinese empire in central Asia.

From the epigraphic evidence we come to know that Kanishka ruled over such a large empire from two capitals, the northern capital at Peshawar and the southern capital at Mathura Besides, some parts of the empire were under the Charge of provincial governors called Satraps, Mahasatraps Kharpallan and the Satrap Vanasphara were ruling over Sindh, Rajasthan, western Malwa and Saurashtra as the provincial Governor of the Kushanas. The epigraphic evidence suggests that Kanishka ruled from 78 A.D. to 102 A.D.

Kanishka, in India history is known, no doubt as a great conqueror and an able general but his fame rests not so much on his victories and large empire as on his active interest in enriching Indian culture. That he was a Buddhist is proved both by his coins bearing an urblem of the Lord

Buddha, and the Peshawar casket inscription. However more details regarding his active associated with Buddhism came from the Chinese and Tibetan Buddhist traditions. According to Huen Tsang and Alberuni he constructed a large Stupa and a monastery at Peshawar. The Buddhist tradition informs us that Kanishka convened the forth and the last Buddhist council at Kundalavana vihar. This place, according to some scholars, was situated in Kashmir whereas other place it in Gandhar or Jullendar. The council was called to settle disputes relating to Buddhist faith and practice. The conclusion of this council were engraved on copper sheets and preserved in the Stupa of the capital. There is a controversy among scholars regarding the exact nature of this convention. Some scholars think that the convention was basically a sarvastivadi exercise which was a school of Hinayana Buddhism. Other think that the convention might have advanced the cause of the emerging Mahayana school of Buddhism.

Although Kanishka was personally a devout Buddhist and supported the cause of Buddhism, he was not a religions bigot. His coins prove that he honoured a medley of gods zorastrian, Greek; Mithraic and Indian. By engraving the emblems of these gods, Kanishka was trying to accommodate the religious beliefs of the followers of different religions who inhabited his extensive empire.

Kanishka also patronized two schools of Buddhist art one at Mathura and the other at Gandhara. Majority of the scholars think that the image of the Buddha as a cult object came into being for the first time during the reign of Kanishka. Some prominent contemporary intellectuals and philosophers like Sangharasha, Malhara, Charaka and Ageselsus stayed at his court. Some scholars think that Nagrjuna, the famous Buddhist metaphysician also stayed at his court.

Kanishka was succeeded by Vashiska. So far his inscriptions bearing the dates 102 and 106 A.D. have been discovered. Kalhna informs us that he made many monasteries and Buddhist shrines in Kashmir. On the basis of his wardak inscription near Kabul it can be surmised that he maintained Kushana control beyond the frontiers of India.

Vashiska was succeeded by Huviska who ruled from 106 to 138 A.D. The Ragatrangiri of Kalhana informs us that he ruled conjointly with Vasishka. His coins in gold and copper bearing emblems of various Indian, Persian, Greek, Sumerian and Alamile dicties have been discovered in different parts of India. According to Rajatrangini, he founded a city Huviskpur in Kashmir and constructed many monasteries and Buddhist shrines in Kashmir. One of his inscriptions in Mathura informs us that he also built a large monastery in Mathura. He is also credited with establishing an Art Gallery containing the portraits of his predecessors.

The last ruler of the mainline of the Kushana dynasty was Vasudeva who ruled from 652 A.D. to 176 A.D. His coins have been discovered from Mathura region only. On the basis of this H.C. Raychaudary suggests that during his reign the North Western part of India was lost by the Kushana. However, we do not have any direct archaeological or literary evidence to support the hypothesis forwarded by Chaudhary. His coins bear the figure of Lord Shiva alongwith his bill Nandi. This proves that the religious liberalism which was started during the reign of Kanishka continued down to his last descendent in as much as though his name Vashudeva suggests his affinity to Vaishnavism, whereas he seems to be a follower of Shaivism. In Kavyamimara of Rajashekhar he has been called a patron of poets and a Sabhapati. This again suggests that like other rulers of the dynasty, he not only patronised arts and letters but also participated in them.

The history after this period is extremely vague. Over the ruins of the empire, in central Asia and the West, rose the Sassanian empire of Persia and in India, the Gupta Empire.

The unique geographical position of the Kushanas empire made it a colossus astride on the spine of Asia uniting the Greco-Roman civilization in the west, the Chinese civilization in the east and the Indian civilization in the south-east. The very area covered by the Kushana empire resulted in the spurt of trading and commercial activities. The gold coins issued by the Kushans are the testimony of their prosperity. The coins indicates that the Kushanas were in contact with the Romans the weight of the Kushan coins has certain similarities with the Roman coins. According to the author of the Periplus gold and silver species were imported at Barygaza (Broach).

As regards art, their greatest contribution was the Gandhara ant it was in this period that the stone images of the Buddha and the Bodhisatavas were carved out. The chief quality of this art is the blending to Buddhist subjects with Greek forms. Iages of the Buddha appear in the likeness of Apollo, and the Yakshakubera is posed in the fashion of Zeus. The imprint of this school of art

is still to be found in mathura and Amaravati. The Chaitya built at Peshawar was as high as four storeys. Fa-Hien passing through Gandhara, during the fifth century praised the images of the Buddha, Boddhisatavas and numerous other deities. The early rulers fostered the Hellemistic art of Gandhara and also the indigenous art of Mathura. At Mathura resised the famous sculptor, Bhikshu Bela; and from this place artistic products were sent to Saravasti and Sarnath

Kushanas were also a great builder. The Rajatarangini of Kalhana informs us that Kanisnika built a tower at Peshawar, a new city in Taxila, a town in Kashmir and fine buildings and sculptures at Mathura. The Kushana coins became the prototypes for many varieties of coins of yaudheyas, the emperial Guptas, some kings of Nepal and several kings of Chedi.

The Kushana age is remarkable from the point of view of the developments in the realm of literature, medicine and metaphysics. Among the literary figures of this period, we can nuntion Bhasa, the author of many plays, Asvadhosa, who was equally famous for poetry, dramas and theological works, Charaka, the author of 'Charaka Samhita' the first and most important medical treatise of Ancient India lived at the court of Kanishka. Among the philosophers, metaphysicians and theologians we can mention Nagarjuna, Sangharaksha, Vasumitra and Parshava.

The Kushana period is also significant for the development of religion. The close contacts with Central Asia and China also resulted in the active missionary activities of the Indian Buddhist monks. Many Buddhist monks from India went to different countries of central Asia and spread the message of the Buddha in this region. As a result of this, central Asia became one of the bastions of Buddhism. It was during the time of Kanishka that mahajana Buddhism was sanctified. Like Buddhism, Hinduism too underwent some basic changes during this period. The orthodox vadicism which held the sway before the emergence of Buddhism tried to assert itself for a short time under the Sungas, particularly pushyamitra Sunga. However it was soon replaced by an new type of Brahmanism, which can broadly be called 'Neo-Brahmanism' based on the Puranic concepts and pantheons. Among the newly emerging Purnaic or Neo-Brahmanical sects, we can particularly mention the Krisna cult which later on merged with Vashavism. Another sect was Mihua sect based on the worship of the God Sun, the Shiva cult like the Kartikya cult also became very popular. To all these developments the Kushana rulers contributed directly or indirectly thus in a way the Kushan age constituted the prelude to the Gupta age.

To a certain extent, the prosperous time of peace during the Gupta period was directly due to the Kushanas undertaking the unconscious role of the shield and buckler of Indian civilization and culture. The Kushan state was a buffer between the Aryan civilization and the nomadic hordes in Central Asia, who, from time to time, had overrun the civilized worlds with the sweep of avalanches.

SATAVAHANS

Albiet the Satavahanas occupy an august riche in the history of ancient India, but reconstructing their history is a kograw puzzle with many missing parts, in view of the meagre sources of the period.

The Chronological and genealogical framework in the puranas stated contradictory Gunadhya's "Brihatkatha" said to be contemporary is available only in fragments besides, certain foreign documents like Ptolemy's 'Geography' and 'The periplus of The Erythrean Sea gives us certain incidental insights. Thus literary sources have to be supported by epigraphic evidences and numismatic evidences. Epigraphic evidences of Nasik, Girnar, Hathigumpha etc. are of considerable importance. However, their information is not detailed also the number being limited seven from Eastern Deccan and 19 from Western Deccan. So we have to confront with the diversity of opinion on almost every score of Satvahana history

There seem to be a lot of wrangling over the chronology of the Satvahanas. Historians like Rapson and Vincient Smith place the Satvahanas in the period starting from 230 B.C. Dr. Smith is of the opinion that Satvahanas were tributaries of Asoka who became independent after his death under the leadership of Simka. Other like D.C. Sirkar, R.G. Bhandarkar and R.C. Majumdar place the Satvahnas at 308 B.C. The entire controversy is due to contraditious in the Puranas. According to one, there were 30 Andhra rulers in 271 years, while the other states that there were

19 rulers in 360 years. Sir R.G. Bhandarkar surmises that the smaller number of years and kings as to be the correct chronology. Going into this problem, one tends to accept the shorter chronology of D.C. Sirkar, on palaeographic considerations we find that Simuka, the founder of the satavahna lived around 30 B.C.

The king, represented by the epigraphic records, as belonging to satvahana kula are mentioned in Puranas as Andhras. However certain historians believe that the Satvahanas are wrongly mentioned in Puranas and that the name Andhras came to be applied probably in later times when they lost their northern and Western possession and became purely Andhra power, governing the territory at the mouth of the river Krishana. Dr. V. Suthankar raises three basic issued to question Andhra Satvahana identity - (i) nowhere in the records are the Satavahanas called the Andhras; (ii) all the contemporary records call them Satvahanas; and (iii) all early Satvahana coins and inscriptions are found in western India and not in the Eastern and Southern parts of the deccan. He infers from inscriptions bellary as the original home of the Satvahanas.

It may however be pointed out that Satvahana was the name of the kula or fairley apparently so called after a prince of that name, while another was the name of the jati or tribe. The first king of the Satvahana family is actually described in the Puranas as Andhra race. The Puranic testimony may be reconciled with epigraphic testimony, if it is believed that the members of the Satvahana family i.e. the descendant of a prince named Satvahana, were Andhras by nationality.

Ptolemy mentions Pratishthan, modern Paithan on the western bank on the Godawari in Aurangabad district of Maharashtra as the Satvahana's capital.

The greatest ruler among the Satvahanas was Gautmiputra Satakarni. He was the 23rd ruler according to Puranas. He has been called the 'Lord of the West' who defied Kharavela of Kalinga. He has also been named as the 'Lord of Pratishthana,' Pratishthana being the modern Paithan (in the north western Deccan). His conquest took him north of the Narmada into eastern Malva. Satkarni gained control of the region of Sanchi, and an inscription there refers to him as Rajan Shri Satakarni. He then moved in the southern direction and on conquering the Godavari valley he walled called Lord of the Southern Regions; (Dakshina Pathapati). The Nasik inscription of his mother talks of his being the destroyer of Sakas, Yavanas and Kshaharta he supported the brahmin orthodoxy and performed a horse-sacrifice to establish his claim to an empire he built the city of Benakataka. His period is from A.D. 106-130. It seems that the empire of Gautamiputra Satakarni extened from Malwa in the north to Karnataka in the South. Possibly he also enjoyed authority over Andhra.

The Satvahanas did not hold the Western Deccan for long. After the reign of Satkarni they suffered their biggest defeat, as they were gradually pushed out of the west and had to flee to the east coast. A number of coins struck by the Shaka satrap nahapana have been found in the Nasik area, indicating that by the first century A.D. the Shanas controlled this region. However, soon the Satvahanas regained their western possessions, for the coins of nahapana are often found overstruck by the name Gautamiputra Satkarni.

The successors of Gautamiputra ruled till A.D. 220. The coins and inscripted of his immediate successor Vashishthiputra Pulumayi (A.D. 130-154) are found in Andhra, and show that by the middle of the second century this area had become a part of the Satvahans kingdom Vashishthaputra had the additional name of Sri Pulumavi, which led to his being identified with the siro Polemaios ruling at baithana (Paithan), mentioned by Ptolemy in his geography o India. In an effort to compose the conflict between the Satvahanas and the Shakas a matrimonial alliance was concluded and Sri Pulumaji was married to the daughter of Rudradaman. That this effort was not entirely successful is clear from Rudradaman's statement that he twice defeated the Satavahana king in battle, but refrained from annihilating him because of a close relationship.

Yajna Sri Satkarni (A.D. 165 - 194) was one of the later kings of the Satvahana Dynasty. He recovered north. Konkan and Malwa from the Shaka rulers. His coins have been found not only Andhra but also in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat.

However, the extensive domain of the Satvahanas was not to survive long. The next century saw the weakening of the Satavahanas, with a corresponding increase in the power of local governors claiming independent status. After the decline of the Satavahanas, Traikutakas, Ikshvakus. Kadambas and Salankayanas ruled over the Satvahana territory.

The Satavahanas administration was very simple and was according to the principles laid down in Dharmashastras. Unlike the Indo-Gruk kings and the Kushanas who maintained the myth of empire by taking exalted imperial titles borrowed from both Persians and the Chinese such as Maharajastiraja and Daivaputra, the Satvahanas, however, refrained from taking imperial titles, it was perhaps because their control over local chiefs and kings was not of a nature to justify such titles.

This fact was conceded even in their administrative system, where power was distributed throughout the hierarchy of officials and not concentrated at the centre. The Satvahana kept some of the administrative units found in Asokan times. Their district was called Ahara, as it was known in the time of Asoka. Their official were known as amatyas arid Maliamatras, as they were known in Mauryan times.

In the Satavahanas administrative system, we notice certain military and feudal traits. The highest class was that of petty princes bearing the kingly title raja and striking coins in their own names. Next in the rank was the Maharathi and Mahabhoja. Both titles from the beginning were hereditary and restricted to a few families in a few localities.

The Mahabhojas were the feudatories located in western Deccan. They also granted in their own name villages with physical immunities attached to them. Towards the close of the Satvahana period, two more feudatories were created, Mahasunapatti and then Mahatrabvara. Mahasenapatti were permitted to marry into the royal family, presumably in the hope that this would fortify their loyalty to the dynasty. When the Satavahana power collapsed these governor set themselves up as independent rulers.

It is significant that the Senapati was appointed provincial governor since the tribal people in the Deccan were not thoroughly hinduized and reconciled to the new rule, it was necessary to keep them under strong military control. The administration in the rural areas was placed in the hands of gulmika who was the head of the military regiment. The military character of the Satvahana rule is also evident from the common use of such terms as Kataka and Skandhavaras in their inscriptions. These were military camps and settlements which served as administrative centres so long as the king was there. Thus coercion played an important part in the Satavahana administration.

However, administration was left largely in local hands, thought subject to the general control of royal officers. The village remained the administrative unit both in the north and in the Deccan. This was to remain unchanged so long as the village was the chief source of both taxes and soldiers. Changes in political relationships tended to be restricted to the higher level amongst provincial governors and their officers.

It was the emergence of Vakataka power in the Vindhya area somewhere about the middle of the third century that brought about the downfall of the Satavalianas. The Rastrakutas and the Chalukyas in the Godavari valley and the Vallavas in the South, originally the viceroys of the Satavahanas, claimed succession to the empire within their own territorial limits. The Gangas and the nadambas were also the inheritor of the madmabas were also the inheritor of the tradition and as the Vijayanagar emperors claimed in time to be Chalukya chudamanis and as the great kings of Gujarat equally claimed succession from the Chalukyas, the imperial tradition of the Satavahanas may be said to have been carried forward at least to the beginning of the 7th century.

The fact that Gautamiputra Satakarni was customarily named after his mother Gautami Balasri suggests a matrilinear trace in the Satavahana society. This explains the high position of women in society. They held property in their own right, made land grants on their own; performed sacrifices independently and bestowed substantial gifts. The wives of feudatories bore such titles as Mahasenapatti or Manatalawari. In sculpture we see women worshipping Buddhist emblems, taking part in assemblies and entertaining guests alongside their husband. However, the Satavahanas ruling unit was patriarchal because of the succession of the male heir to the throne.

Joint family system was prevalent. Inscriptions found at Amravati mention the various members of the family in order of their place in the family.

During this period the Deccan was undergoing an intense process of Brahmanization. The Satavahana rulers who seem to be aboriginal people of the Deccan, claims to be the unique Brahmins. However, the process of Brahmanization was not limited to the aboriginal people of

the Deccan. Even the foreigners were brought within the fold by allotting them some place in the caste hierarchy. Some of them converted to Buddhism.

An inscription of Gautami Balshri refers to four varnas, however details regarding the caste-structure are lacking. The society was divided into well defined social division. The first consisted the feudatory chiefs likes Maharathis, Mahabhojas, Mahatalwars, etc; second in ranking were sundry officials like Amatyas, Mahamatyas, upper echeloon of merchants called Nigama, Sasthi, Sarthawaha etc. The third group comprised the lower category of officials, traders, professional men etc. The lowest rung in the social order consisted of miscellaneous set of people pursuing such professions as gardener, carpentry, black smith etc. The merchants seem to have enjoyed a very high status in society by forming themselves in guilds.

The Satavahanas vigorously encouraged Hinduism. They spearheaded Aryan influence in the South. Indra, Vashudeva and Siva were worshipped. Vaishnavism and Shaivism grew popular Gautamiputra Satakarni claimed himself to be the protector of Brahmins. The Nasik Prasasthi states that Varnshrama was popular. Ushavadata made several grants to Buddhist monks. Some of these grants were renewed by Gautamiputra Satakarni. Nagarjunakonda and Amaravati in Andhra Pradesh became important seats of Buddhist culture under the Satavahanas and more so under their successors, the Iksvakus. Similarly Buddhism flourished in the Nasik and Junar areas in the western Deccan in Maharashtra, where it seems to have been supported by the traders.

The Satavahanas also encouraged literature and architecture. The official language of the Satavahans was Prakrit. All inscriptions were composed in Prakrit language and written in the Brahmi script, as was the case in Asokan times. One Prakrit text called Gathasapatasati as attributed to a Satvahana king called Hala. He was an authority on Puranas. Leelavati deals with the military campaigns of Hala.

In the Satavahanas phase many Chaityas and monasteries were cut out of the solid rock in the north-western Deccan or Maharashtra with great skill and patience. In fact the process had started about a century earlier in about 200 B.C. The two common religious constructions were the Buddhist temple which was called Chaitya and the monastery which was called- Vihara.

The Chaitya was a large hall with a number of columns. The most famous Chaitya is that of marle in the western Deccan. It is a most impressive specimen of massive rock architecture. The Viharas were excavated near the Chaityas for the residence of monks in the rainy season. At Nasik there are three viharas. Since they carry the inscriptions of Nahapana and Gautamiputra, it seems that they belong to the first-second centuries A.D.

Rock-cut architecture is also found in Andhra in the Krishna Godawari region, but the region is famous for independent Buddhist structures, mostly in the from of stupas. The most famous of them are Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda. The stupa was a large round structure erected over some relic of the Buddha. The Amaravati stupa began in about 200 B.C. but was completed in the second half of the second century A.D. It is full of sculptures which depict the various scenes from the life of the Buddha.

Nagarjunakonda prospered most in the second-third centuries under the patronage of the Ikshavakus, the successors of the Satavahanas. It contains not only Buddhist monuments but also the earliest brahmanical brick temples. Together with its stupas and Mahachaityas it appears to be the richest in structure in the early centuries of the Christian era.

The Satavahana economy had fusion of local elements, and northern ingredients like hoe, sickle, ploughshares, spades etc. were widely used for agriculture. Agriculture was given a stable basis by bringing a large area under plough cultivation. The people enjoyed individual ownership of land, for they could give away pots of land for religious purposes. However, they could not sell and purchase land for secular purposes. In spite of money economy we have no evidence of the purchase of land. But it would be wrong to say that the idea of state ownership had become absolute. That the state effectively exercised its night to ownership of land is revealed from the epigraph of the Satavahana rulers. In India the earliest epigraphic evidence of land grant belongs to the first century B.C. when a village was granted by the Satavahanas. Such grants were free from taxes and from the 2nd century onwards certain administrative rights were also surrendered. The grant of fiscal and administrative rights was, however, neither permanent nor absolute. If the land remained uncultivated the land could be withdrawn. The land was measured in

Nivartanas roughly equal to 1½ acres. The share of the produce was called Deyanuya, Bhaga etc. Revenue seems to have been collected mainly in kind.

Art and crafts witnessed remarkable growth in the Deccan during this period. Most of the professions like weavers, goldsmiths, ivory workers etc. were organised into guilds. A special feature of the guild was the banking facilities provided by them. They received cash deposits and endowments of property and undertook to spend for specific purposes. Unlike the Mauryan period, the state hardly exercised any control over arts and crafts.

Inland and sea-route trade also existed. The great inland market towns in Western Deccan were Paithan, Junnar, Goadhana, Varle, and Nasik etc. In the eastern Deccan the most important market town was Dharayakataka. These inland markets were connected with Barygaza (modern Baroach). Besides Barigaza, the other important port on the western coast were Sopara, Kalyan etc. The ports of the Deccan were principle places from where the Romans obtained most of their jewels and articles of luxury. The exports consisted of ivory, carnation, silk and spices. Pliny observed that Indian commodities were sold in the Roman markets hundred times their original value and hormoned the siphoning of Roman wealth to India. The Roman coins discovered in large number in ports of Deccan proves the close commercial contacts with the Roman empire and this traffic brought emense wealth into the Satavahana dominions.

The Satavahana period also witnessed an active maritime trade with the far east. It has trade relations with Burmas and Sumatra, Arakan and Champa. The most prosperous period of this maritime trade began during the reign of Pulumavi I and seems to have reached its zenith in the time of Yajnashri Satakarni.

Because of the flourishing trade both internal and external, currency was, extensively used. The gold and silver coins might have been used for large transactions and the copper ones for small dealings. The issue of lead or tin coins indicates that in the Deccan and in the coastal area money economy had come to be prevalent. This would suggest that money economy had deeply penetrated into the life of common people of the towns and suburbs. The economic development taking place in the Deccan, particularly in trade and commerce, explain logically such a long drawn conflict between the Sakas and the Satavahanas.

Thus the socio-economic structure of the Satavahans had reached a highly evolved stage. There were the courses of Aryanisation in the Deccan which is manifested in their socio-economic edifices. Overseas trade as well as inland trade thrived very well. Then we see the germs of the beginning of feudal relations in their land grants. On the basis of sound socio-economic structure, the Satavahanas came up as a pre-eminent power of its times.

SAKA-SATAVAHANA CONFLICT

There is a lot of controversy about the name 'Saka'. Some hold the view that they were probably Parthians. One branch of them was known as Kshahartas. Some say that Nahapana was a Pahlava and Ghasmotika, the father of Chastana, was a Saythian. It was from the Gupta period that the name 'Saka' came to be applied to this family of people.

The coming of the Kushanas had pushed the Shakas south into the religion of Cutch, Kathiawar and Malwa in Western India. To begin with they established themselves in Western Rajputana, Gujarat and Kathiawad. Then they took Malwa and even northern Maharashtra from the Satavahanas. At one time they even got Southern Maharashtra as far as Vijayanti from the Satavahanas.

The earliest know king of the Kshaharatas, a branch of the Shaka, was Bhumaka he ruled over Gujarat, Kathiawad arid north Konakan coins belonging to him have been found in these areas.

Bhumaka was succeeded by Nahapana. He bore the title of Raja. Numerous coins belonging to his reign have been discovered, He started expanding his territory at the expense of Satavahanas. This advance began five years before the end of Nahapana's rule. He annexed the western possession of the Satavahanas. A number of coins struck by the Shaka satrap Nahapana have been found in the Nasika area, indicating that by the first century A.D. the Shakas controlled this region. A Jain work mentions Broach as the capital of Nahapana.

Nahapana was succeeded by Ushavadata, his general and son-in-law. He took western Deccan including Malwa. It is not known whether Paithan, the capital of Satavahanas, was lost or not. The defeated Satavahana rulers were Sundara Satakarni, Chakora Satakarni and Siva Sati.

It was under the leadership of Gautmiputra Satakarni that the satavahanas gained their lost glory he defeated the successor of Nahapana. Vshavadata was villed. Some historians say that he infact defeated Nahapana. Also a Jain work speaks of Nahapana's defeated and death at the hands of Satavahanas. The coins of Nahapana have been found overstruck by the name Gautamiputra Satakarni. Some land grants also confirm this victory.

The conflict was again reopened during the days of Pulamrji II, the king after Gautamiputra Satakarni, as well as Sri Pulumaji.

After Ushavadata, Ghamotika appeared on the stage who ruled over Kathiawad. His successor, Ghashtana also inflicted defeats on the Satavahanas. By this time, the Deccan became the connecting link between the North and the South, not only in terms of politics, but more significantly in trade and in the exchange of ideas.

Rudradamana, grandson of Chashtana came to power. In order to compose the constict between the Satavahanas and the Shakas a matrimonial alliance was concluded and the daughter of Rudradaman was married to the Satavahana king Sri Pulumaji. But this effort was not successful is clear from Rudraman's statement that he twice defeated the Satavahana king in battle, but refrained from annihilating him because of a close relationship. This has been confirmed by Junagarh inscription of Rudradaman dated 150 A.D. After the death of Rudradaman, the Satavahanas were more successful in their attacks on Shaka territory. With his death, the Shakas lapsed into political quietude until the closing years of the fourth century A.D.

Last great king of Satavahana was Yajna Sri Satakarni. He regained many of the lost province of his empire. His coins and inscriptions found in Kathiawar, Gujarat, Baroda, Malwa, Maharashtra and Andhra.

After the death of Jajna Sri Satakarni his successor Vijay Sri Pulumavi and Sri Pulumavi made unsuccessful bids to check Satavahana decline. Last Satavahana was Pulumavi III ruling over West Andhra and parts of Vedarbha. After this Satavahana empire sinks into oblivion.

POST-MAURYAN ECONOMY AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

The state controlled, state directed, state planned and in some cases the state owned economy which was a characteristic feature of the Mauryan economy came to an end during Post Mauryan period. However, during this period also the state asserted its ownership of the means of production by declaring mining as state monopoly, by giving away land in gift to brahmins and Buddhist monks and by preserving the right to levy taxes on land, industries, trade and commerce.

In theory although the state claimed the ownership of land, in practice however, the major part of available land belonged to the cultivators. In Avadanashataka, we come across a rich farmer possessing a large landed state. In the inscriptions of the Satavahanas plots of two, three, four, eight, nine, twenty and twenty-six nivartanas have been mentioned. That the farming land was owned individually is proved by the Satavahana inscriptions referring to the practice of transferring land to religions dons. However, there is no reference to purchase and sale of land for secular purposes.

The initiative of extending the cultivable area also shifted from the state to the individual. Both in the Milindapanho and the Manusmriti we are told that land belongs to him who made it cultivable. R.S. Sharma is of the opinion that the injunction in the Gautam and Manu to the effect that besthers should have separate households should be associated with the individual initiative in the extension of arable land.

In the Deccan the Satavahana rulers gave away untilled as well as cultivated land and in some case entire village to the brahmanical priests and the Buddhists. Initially such villages were merely declared tax-free, however at a later stage starting from the beginning of the 2nd century A.D. the villages so granted were declared not only beyond the administrative sphere of the rulers but also the right of monopoly to salt by state was surrendered in favour of the beneficiaries. The

first reference to the Akshayanivi land tenure involving the perpetual grant of land revenue is available in the Kushana records. The Manusmriti informs us that in some cases land was assigned to revenue officials.

We have at least two references in the Post-Kauryan period to the provision of irrigation by the state one such reference is available in the Hathigumpha inscription of Kharavela and the other in the Jungagarh rock inscription of Rudradaman. In general, in the northern and north-western parts of India farmers irrigated their fields from wells and tanks. On the basis of references in the Junagarh rock inscription of Rudradaman it has been inferred by scholars that during the post-Mauryan period the state imposed some urgency taxes and forced labour on the peasantry, on the basis of the Manusmriti it has been suggested that the state inacted and implemented certain laws for protecting the peasants and their produce and in the turn reserved the right to levy taxes on them. In the Milindapanha, there is a reference to the lord of a village calling the heads of different households with a view to impose taxes on them on behalf of the king.

In the Deccan and the far South the period witnessed the introduction of paddy transplantation and a tremendous growth in the production of cotton. Andhra was famous for cotton production, this might have been possible because of the introduction of iron-technology which came here alongwith the political supremacy of the Mauryan empire.

This period is equally remarkable from the view point of the growth and development of different arts and crafts. In the Mahavasta we are told that the city of Rajagriha was inhabited by 36 types of craftsmen and artisans engaged in different types of productive activities. In the Milindapanha, 76 types of occupations have been mentioned among them 60 are directly associated with art and crafts. Generally arts and crafts are associated with the urban setting deut during this period the arts and crafts have penetrated even in the countryside as is proved by the findings in the Karimnagar district in Andhra Pradesh. Here archaeologists have discovered the remains of different residential areas for artisans and craftsmen like the potters, iron-smiths, carpenters, goldsmiths etc. The craft of mining and metallurgy suns to be quite developed. Among the 60 productive activities mentioned by Milindapanha, eight belonged to different metals and the precious and semi-precious stones besides, many varieties, brass, sinc, antimony and red arsenic have been mentioned.

The most developed metal technology during this period seems to be iron-technology. Almost all the Kushana and Satvahana sites iron implements, tools and weapons of good make have been discovered. In Karimnagar and Nalgonda districts of A.P., agricultural tools made of excellent quality of iron alongwith weapons, carpenter's tools and the implements of day to day use have been discovered. In planty from the 'Periplus' we come to know that Indians produced very good quality of iron-cutlery which was exported to Absinia.

Another important industry was spinning and weaving of cloth both cotton and silk. In some cases the quality of the cotton cloth were very fine. Mathura was one of the important centres of cotton manufacturing and a special type of cloth called shataka was produced here. This period also witnessed the growth of cotton textile industry in different parts of the Deccan and the far South. An associated industry was that of dyeing. Large dyeing vats made of bricks have been discovered in Arikmadu and Uraiyur in South India. Dye materials was usually produced indigenously, however, some special dyes like purple dye were imported from outside.

In the contemporary inscription we have references to jewellery making, ivory-workers, bead makers, perfumes etc. Among the crafts which are specifically associated with the luxury items le can particularly mention bead making and cutting, manufacturing of glass and articles made of ivory. From the Periplus' and Pliny we come to know that a part of ivory being used by ivory workers was being imported from Euthopia. Indian ivories have been found in Afghanistan and Rome. In the beginning glass objects were imported from the West as is proved by the glass articles found at Taxila which were made in Rome. However, it was about the beginning of the Christian era that the knowledge of glass blowing reached India and attained its peak the craft of lead cutting was already known to Indian craftsmen in the pre-Mauryan period and by this time it had become well advanced.

The craftsmen and artisans during this period donated caves, pillars, gateways etc. to the Buddhist and the brahmanical establishments indicating that economically they were quite well-off. The economic and social positions of the craftsmen and artisans were insured by the forma-

tion of guilds and workers cooperatives. These organization fixed the hours of work, the prices of different articles and the qualities of the products. They were registered with the local political authority and the customary loss associated with them were binding on their members. The inscriptions from Mathura and the Deccan prove that they acted not only as financiers and bankers but also as trustees. These inscriptions further indicate that the rulers have had financial interests in them.

This period is specifically noteworth for the growth of internal as well external trade and commerce. This can be attributed to both developments in agriculture and industries and the political changes during the Mauryan and post-Mauryan period. The Mauryas had opened up the entire sub-continent by building roads and by attempting uniform administration. In the post Mauryan period India developed an active and intensive relation with Afghanistan, Central Asia, China, Iran, West Asia and the mediterranean because of the migration of central Asiatic tribes to the North-Western parts of India. The Partians and the Kushanas brought India into close contact of the Western World. As a result of this political and economic confrontation both internal as well external trade developed. The red-polished ware which was being manufactured in the worthern parts of India and the deccan has been unearthed as far South as Kurnoor, There were very active trade relations between Mathura and Gandhara. The Shakas and the Kushanas used two routes from the North-Western frontier to the Western sea coast. Both these routes converged at Taxila, and were connected with the Silk route passing through central Asia. The first toute directly ran from the north to the South connecting Taxila with the lower Indus basin from where it passed on to Broach. The second route called the Uttarpatha was in more prequent use. From Taxila it passed through modern Punjab up to the western coast of the Yamuna. Following the course of the Yamuna it went southward to Mathura. From Mathura it passed on to Ujjain in Malwa and again from Ujjain to broach on the western coast. Ujjain was the meeting point of another route which started from Kaushambi near Allahabad.

By this time money economy was well-developed and coins were issued in gold silver, copper, bronze, lead and potins. Gold for making coins was being procured from both internal and external sources. In the trans-Vindhyan region archaeologists have so far discovered 129 hoards of Roman gold coins. Scholars are of the opinion that these coins were being used as bullion. However it seems that some of these coins may have been used as media of exchange. Gold was also being imported from Ethiopia. Besides, the mines of Bihar and Karnataka may have provided the metal to the state. In the contemporary literature we have references to coins of different denominations. This to a large extent is also corroborated by the epigraphic and archaeological evidence. Even the smaller and epublican states like the nagar, the Ivshavakus etc. issued coins in copper. The prevalence of coins in base metals like copper, bronze, lead and potin indicates that during this period money economy had pentlate among the masses.

The period witnessed extraordinary growth in external trade and commerce. Initially a very large part of this trade was carried out by land routes passing through north-western parts of India, Afghanistan, and Central Asia. The famous silk-route which started from China and passed through Central Asia, Afghanistan, Northern Iran and West Asia was controlled by the Kushanas. Some scholars have in fact suggested that the Roman gold initially started pouring in India because of this factor. However, in course of time when the Parthians controlling northern Iran and western Asia broke this communication Channel, the trade shifted to the Western coast of India Silk from China with its destination in Rome was first brought to the Western coast either via Taxila or via Eastern coast. In such transit trade we can also include some other articles of luxury like pearls and jewellery. However such transit trade was merely a fraction of the total trade. The major part of which was terminal trade i.e. the articles produced in India were being exported and Indian traders did not act as middlemen in such trade.

The direct trade between India and the Western world received a further impetus because of the discovery of monsoon winds in about 46 A.D. As a result of this the maritime trade between the opposite shores of the Arabian Sea became swifter and more convenient. On the western Coast of the Indian subcontinent many new ports like Pataia, Barbaricum, Baroach, Sopara, Tejndis and Nejlgonda came into existence besides the existing one. Among these ports, the most important was Broach which received commodities for export not only from the Deccan but also from the North-West. The traders plying their trade from the Western coast had not only active trade relations with the western world but also imported required raw materials and finished goods from the other parts of Asia and the Mediterranean.

During this period, Roman demand for luxury articles like spices, muslin, jems and jewellery, steel cutlery was increasing. For procuring spices Indian maritime traders established trade relations with South-East Asia and in the process established their colonies in the region. Although the major part of the maritime trade was in the articles of luxury, in some cases essential articles of luxury, in some cases essential articles like metals, wheat, rice etc. were also being exported.

From Rome the Indian traders imported some special type of pottery called Arretime, lead, pearls, topaz etc. however, the major part of import from Rome consisted of gold coins which according to scholars may have been used as bullion. The trade relations between the Western world and India during this period had become so close that the Romans established their trade centres both in the Deccan and the Far South.

The traders the Eastern Coast mainly carried out foreign trade with Burma and Ceylon Although the traders coming from the Southern part of the Eastern coast also part of the Easier coast also participated in the spice trade with South-East Asia. The most important ports of the Eastern coast were Dhanyakalaka, Kaveripattum, Mialiavalipuram, Tamralipati and Arikamedu. G.L. Adya after a thorough study of the evidence provided by the Greek and Roman writers comes to the conclusion that the maritime trade carried out by the Indian traders was mainly passive in nature. However this contention is refuted by the evidence of the Avadana literature. In Avadana there are inumrable references to sea Voyages undertaken by Indian traders. The Sangam literature not only refers to such voyages but also describes in details such installations like harbours, cutom houses light houses etc. which are associated with maritime trade.

The availability of ample surplus in food grains, the existence of a flourishing and well organised arts and crafts and the unprecedented growth of trade and commerce not only enlarged the earlier urban centres but also gave rise to many new cities and towns like Juilendher. Govardhana, Dhanyakatak etc. Excavation show that several sites in Bihar, such as Chirand, Sonpur and Budxor and others in eastern U.P. such as Khaurarh and Mason witnessed prosperous Kershana phases. Similarly in U.P., Sohgaura, Bihita, Kaushambi and Shringaverapur near Allahabad, Alanjikhira and several sites in the districts of Meerut and Muzaffarnagar were in a thriving condition in Kushana times, in the Shaka kingdom also, towns flourished in Malwa and Western India. The most important town was Ujjain. In the Satavahana kingdom too, towns thrived. Tagar, Paithan, Dhanyakataka, Amravati, Nagajunakonda, Broach Sopara, Arikamedu, Kaveripattanam were prosperous towns in the Satavahana period in western and South India. Several Satavahana settlements, some of which may be identical with the thirty walled towns of Andhras mentioned by Pliny, have been excavated in Telangana.

The most important development in social structure during this period was absorption and assimilation of the foreign tribes as well as indigenous tribes by the institutional device of various subcastes, the upper strata or the ruling class both the invading tribes and the indigenous tribes were given the status of the Brahmanas or the Kshatriyas. For instance the Shaka and the Kushana rulers were given the status of the Brahmins. The general masses of these tribes were reduced to the status of the Shudras belonging to different sub-castes.

Another important development during this period was the rigid stand taken by the theoreticians of the upper castes i.e. the authors of the Samitis regarding the Shudras. In some cases the rules and regulations prescribed against them are so Harsh and inhumane that it has been suggested by some scholars that because of their elevated (comparatively), economic status, the Shudras may have rescuted Brahmanical hegemony and as a result of this the upper caste reached by Taking a more orthodox and reactionary position, the Shudras, these scholars think, may have been encouraged to rebel against brahmanical ideological repression because of the changed political situation i.e. the shifting of political showers from the indigenous warrior aristocracy i.e. the Kshtriyas to the foreign invaders like Shakas, Parthians etc. In such a situation, the Vaishiyas who also felt oppressed might have refused to give taxes and the Shudras refused to give free labour. As a result of this there was a social crisis which is reflected in contemporary literature particularly the Smriti works and the Nasik inscriptions of Gautamiputra Satakarni which refer to social crisis caused by the breakdown of Varnashrama dharma as traditional social order. These scholars think, may have given rise to the idea of Kalyuga i.e. a period in which established social norms, values and traditions would breakdown and the lower strata would revolt against the upper sections.

GUILDS

The political events between 200 B.C.-A.D. 300 had been bewildering, yet beneath this apparent confusion there was one factor which gave continuity and consistency to this period and that was true. Through all the political vicissitudes of the Shungas, Satavahanias, Indo-Greeks, Shakas, Kushanas, Chiras, and Cholas, the merchant continued to grow from strength to strength. The Mauryan empire had opened up the sub-continent by building roads and attempting to develop a uniform system of administration the occupation of north-western India by non-Indian peoples was advantageous to the merchants, since it led to trade with regions which had as yet been untapped. The Indo-Greeks encouraged contact with western Asia and the Mediterranean world. The Shakas, Parthians, and Kushanas brought Central Asia into the orbit of the Indian merchant and this in turn led to trade with China the Roman demand for spices and luxuries took Indian traders to south-east Asia and brought Roman traders to Southern and Western India. Through all India the merchant community prospered, as is evident from inscriptions and from the literature of the time.

In this connexion, the guilds, a form of industrial and mercantile organization which played as big a part in the economy of ancient India as it did in that of most other ancient of medieval civilizations. There are faint and uncertain references to some sort of guild organization even in Vedic literature, and by the time of the composition of the Buddhist scriptures guilds certainly existed in every important Indian town, and embraced almost all trades and industries. Not only that it also played important part both in organizing production and in shaping public opinion.

In the post-Mauryan period, the literary sources like Digha Nikaya mentions nearly two dozen occupations. The Milinda-Panho enumerates as many as 75 occupations. On the basis of different texts we can say that artisans of this period were organized into at least two dozen guilds.

The vast majority of the artisans joined the guilds. It united both the craftmen's cooperatives and the individual workmen of a given trade into a single corporate body. Since it was difficult for the artisans to compete as individuals against the guilds, which in addition offered social status and a degree of general security, it was beneficial for them to join it.

With the increasing demand for particular commodities and the consequent necessity to raise their output, some guilds began to employ hired labour and slaves. The guild were registered in the locality where they functioned and had to obtain permission from the local authorities to change their location. Leading guilds were those of the potters, metal worker and carpenters. Their size can be gauged from the fact that even at an earlier period one wealthy patter named saddalaputta had owned five hundred potter's workshops.

The guild fixed rules of work and the quality of the finished product and its price to safeguard both the artisan the customer. The guild also controlled the prices of manufactured articles, and these either depended on the quality of the work or were calculated according to a fixed scale and its regulations had the force of law and were upheld by the king and government. Over its own members the guild had judicial rights, which were recognized by the state. A guild court could, like a caste council, expel a refractory member, a penalty which would virtually preclude him from practising his ancestral trade and reduce him to beggary. We read in Buddhist literature of guild courts settling quarrels between member and their wives.

That the guild also intervened in the private life of its members is clear from the regulation that, if a married woman wished to join the Buddhist order as a nun, she had to obtain not only permission from her husband but also from the guild to which die belonged. Thus the guild had power not only over the economic, but also over the social life of its members. It acted as guardian of their widows and orphans and as their insurance against sickness. It powers and functions in this respect were very similar to those of caste councils in more recent times. According to A.L. Basham the guilds played an important part in the evolution of trade castes.

The guild was kept well supplied in numbers by its association with caste the children of a particular caste or sub-caste followed the same trade, and, since their father's trade was often the only one open to them, the guild could always depend on a regular number through the generations. The threat to the guild came in periods of transition when the occupation followed by a sub-caste underwent a change.

The cave inscription at Nasik reflects on the political importance of guilds. Although guild leaders were powerful figures in urban life, there is little sign of a desire to obtain political importance influence, politics being regarded as the presogrative of the king. A possible explanation for this is that the king appears to have had financial interests in the guilds. Royalty invested its money in commercial activities and therefore had an interest in ensuring the well-being of the guild. Any type of political ambition of seizing power by a guild was prevented by caste rules such as that forbidding eating together.

From the Nasik cave inscriptions as well as from the legal literature is appears that guilds also acted as a banker, financier, and trustee as well. Generally, however, these functions were carried out by a different category of merchants, known as the Srepthins, the decendants of whom are the present day seths of north India and the Chettis or Cheitiyars of South India. They would often act as trustees of religious endowments.

The guild was heard by a chief, usually called the "Elder" (Jycothaka) who was assisted by a small council of senior members. The office of elder was usually hereditary and held by one of the richest members of the guild. In the Pali scripture the Elder is invariably described as a very wealthy man, often with much influence at the palace, and councelling the king himself.

The guilds had a corporate life, symbolized, as in medieval Europe by the possession of banners, and also a chauris, the ceremonial yak's tail fly whisks which were insignia of nobility. Excavations have led to the discovery of a number of seals stamped with the emblems of guilds and corporations. These and other emblems were sometimes granted by royal character and were carried in local religious processions by the guildsmen. Some guilds, again like those of medieval Europe, had their own militia which served as auxiliaries of the kings armies in time of need.

Inscriptions recording the donations of guilds to religious causes of all kinds have been found all over India. A guild of corn dealers donated a flautifully sculptured cave to the Buddhists, the ivory-workers' guild at Vidisa carved the stone sculpture on the gateways and railings surrounding the stupa at Sanchi and one of the cave inscriptions at Nasik, inscribed at the order of a Shaka ruler, records the endowment to a temple for which a large sun of money was invested with a guild of weavers, the interest from which sun provided the endowment. These funds came from the regular subscriptions made by their numbers and also from the fines levied on those who transgressed ihe guild law.

Apart from their role in the economy, the guilds provided education as well, though not formal education, which remained in the hands of the Brahmans and the monks. The guilds, by restricting membership to artisans of a particular craft, were centres for technical education knowledge of mining, metallurgy, weaving, dyeing, carpentry etc. was maintained and improved upon by the relevant guild.

Although the guilds were organized on their specific interests, there is more than one record of riots and affrays between different guilds and trade groups, this was specially the case in the medieval Deccan, where guild and caste often overlapped in function or were virtually synonymous, and the strange division of right and left hand castes led to much friction. The fact that more than one guild of the same craft is occasionally recorded in the same place suggests that guilds sometimes broke up.

SANSKRIT

It has been universally accepted that Sanskrit is a remote cousin of all the languages of Europe, with the exception of Finnish, Estonian, Hungarian, Turkish and Basque. The other European tongues look back to a common ancestor in a group of dialects spoken by tribesmen in the steppelands of South Russia sirowd 2000 years B.C. The relationship of Sanskrit to the languages of the west in indicates by several obvious resemblances, such a pitr, "father" and matr, "mother" etc.

After the composition of the Rig Veda Sanskrit developed considerably. In the early centuries of the 1st millennium B.C. old influxions disappeared, and the grammar was somewhat simplified, though still remaining very complex. New words, mostly borrowed from on Aryan sources, were introduced, while old words were forgotten or lost their original meanings.

With Panini's great grammar, the Astadhyayi, composed probably towards the end of the 4th century B.C., the Sanskrit language reached its classical form, and it developed little thenceforward, expect in its vocabulary. The grammar of Panini which effectively stabilized the Sanskrit language, presupposes the work of many earlier grammarians, though the fame of Ashtadhyayi is much restricted by its specialized nature, there is no doubt that Panini's grammar is one of the greatest intellectual achievements of any ancient civilization, and the most detailed and sciptisic grammar composed before the 19th century in any part of the world. The later Indian grammar are mostly commentaries on Panini, the chief being the "Mahabhasya" of Patanjali (Second century B.C.) and the Kasika virtti of Jayaditya and Vamna (7th century A.D.).

It was from the time of Panini onwards that the language began to be called Sankrta, "perfected" or "efined" as opposed to Prakrtas or "natural", the popular dialects which had grown over time. In all probability, Panini based his work on the language as it was spoken in the north-west. Beginning as the lingua franca of the priestly class, it gradually became that of the governing class also. The first important dynasty to use Sanskrit was that of the Sakas of Ujjain and the inscriptions of Rudradaman at Girnar. Otherwise, the Mauryas and the other important dynasty till the Guptas used Prakrit for their official pronouncements.

As long as it is spoken and written a language tends to develop, and its development is generally in the direction of simplicity owing to the authority of Panini, Sanskrit could not develop freely in this way.

The language of Rig Veda was already archaic when the hyme were composed and the ordinary Aryan spoke a simpler tongue, more closely akin to classical Sanskrit. By the time of the Buddha the masses were speaking languages which were much simpler than Sanskrit. These were the Prakrits. Most inscriptions of pre-Guptan time are in Prakrit.

Classical Sanskrit increasingly became the language of brahmin and the learned few. Its use was restricted to certain occasions such as issuing of proclamations and during the performance of Vedic ceremonies. In the towns and villages a popular form of Sanskrit, known as Prakrit, came into existence. There was a great number of local variations. The chief western variety was called Shauraseni and the eastern variety, Magadhi. Pali was another popular language based on Sanskrit.

Speaking of literature, the four Vedas and the Brahmanas and Upanishads have some literary qualities. Some hymns of the Rig Veda and some parts of the early Upanishads have some merit; otherwise, they are mostly monotonous.

The earliest surviving Sanskrits poetry is that of the Buddhist writer Ashvaghosa, who probably dived in the 1st century AD. He composed the Buddha Charitra, Sutralamear and the Vapasuchi. The Sariputraprataraa, a play dealing with the role of Sarputra in the Buddhist order is written in chaste Sanskrit. Among the philosophical works belonging to this period which are written in Sanskrit we can mention Madhyamikavika of Nagarjuna and Chatustakha of another Buddhist philosopher. The Sanskrit works dealing with secular theme like drama were also written the Natashstra of Bharata was written sometimes between 3rd century B.C. and 3rd century A.D.

The earliest surviving prose stories are a few narrative episodes in the Brahmanas followed by the Pali Jatakas. It was in the Gupta period that ornate Sanskrit prose was developed.

However, classical Sanskrit was probably never spoken by the masses but on the otherhand it was never wholly a dead language. As official tongue of church and state it was read and spoken by the upper classes and was understood to some extent by many of the lower orders. It served as a lingua franca for the whole of India.

PRAKRIT

The word 'Prakrit' stands for all the middle Indo-Aryan speeches which belong to an era between Sanskrit on the one hand and Aryan languages on the other.

From the earliest times down to the first century A.D. inscriptions were composed exclusively in Prakrit. About 30 inscriptions of Ashoka was written in Pali. Even in literature, Prakrit came to

be used, particularly in plays. And Prakrit itself consists of different dialects. By the time of the Guptas, the Prakrits were standardized and had lost their local character. The vernaculars had already developed beyond them.

The plays which are exclusively composed in Prakrit are technically called saltakas. The Karpuramanjari Labour 900 AD. Rajasekhara depicting love between man and woman is the most important work of this type.

Among the secular literature written in Prakrit, the most remarkable amongst such text is the Gath Saptasali of Hala one of the Satavahana rulers (1st century A.D.). The forms are notable for their conciseness and for their great economy of words and for their great economy of words and masterly use of suggestion. More important is the fact that narrative literature and epic are fairly extensive in prakrit. The most noteworthy among them are the Brihatakatha of Gunadhya composed in paisachi dialect and setubandha of pravarasena

Apart from secular literature, Prakrit was used for religious literature as well like the Jain canonical works it was during the 5th century A.D. that most of the Jain cannons were written down. In Prakrit literature the Jain writings have very little literary value. Like Jainism itself they lend to be arid (scriptures) but the poetry of the Jains is better than prose. Its poetry is written in lively vernacular style.

Chronologically, Pali is the first Sanskrit language and various Prakrits appeared lalter. In the course of time of word 'Pali' underwent changes. In the final stages the word "Pale" menat language of the texts of Theravada Buddhism. The Tripitaka are books which consist of the concerns of the Thervada sect.

Besides the canonical literature, there was also non canonical literature in Pali. In Pali literature the earliest works relate to the Jataka stories. The book Milinda Panha is the most important one its subject matter is the dialogue between Milinda and the monk nagasena over some problems of the Buddhist faith. This particular type of canonical literature in Pali was practised in Ceylon also. The classical work Deepavansa and Mahavamsa, the two great chronicles of Ceylon were written in Pali. At times scholars exclude Pali from Sanskrit because it has sectarian value.

Furthermore, it is to be stated here that scholars treated Apabhramas as a kind of Prakrit. It boasts of extensive literature particularly narrative stories. The first writer to make use of it was Asvaghosa. The others who followed the example were Bhasa (3rd century A.D.) and later Visakhadatta and Kalidasa. Among the Jains the voluminous texts on the life and activities of Jaina heroes were written in Apabhransa it may be noted here in the end that Apabhransa Sanskrit and Prakrit had a great influence both on Gujarati and Hindi as late as the 16th century.

Furthermore, Prakrit is of linguistic importance since it is illustrative of the linguistic evolution from Prakrit to Apbhransa and finally to a new regional languages. Infact Apabhransa was a corrupt form of Prakrit dialect. It is believed to have originated in the north-west and travelled from that region along with the migrant people who scattered and settled in central and western India after the Huna invasions.

Tamil was the oldest spoken literary language of south India, that is, South of Nilgiris. Evidence shows that there was a body of literature in Tamil, which has had broken development over 20 centuries. The first period of that literature is associated with the Sangam era. Tamil tradition refers to three literary Academics (Sangam), which met at Madurai. The first was attended by Gods and legendary sages but all its works have perished. Of the second only one survives days Tikappiyam, the earliest surviving Tamil grammar. Today's earliest surviving Tamil grammar. To extant body of Sangam literature is but a fraction of a vast literature.

The book Agathiyain presumed to be written by St. Agattiyar is present in small shreds of Sutras here and there as quoted by medieval commentators.

The second well known work was Tolkppiyam. It was written by Tolkappiyar, who was supposed to be a discriple of Agattiyar, along with other eleven other scholars. It is a work on Tamil grammar, literature, tradition and sociology all later changes and innovations occurred only under the sanction of permissive clauses incorporated in due places in that work.

The poets of the third Sangam wrote Ettutogai (eight anthologies). The other major collection of the Sangam works is the Pattuppathe or Ten Idyls. They are long poems.

After the period of the eight Anthologies, Tamil literature reveals the influence of Sanskrit. It also reveals Jain influence. The classical work revealing these features is Tiru Kurral sometimes called the Bible of Tamil land it consists of series of metrical proverbs and many aspects of life and religion.

By the 6th century A.D. Aryan influence had penetrated the whole of Tamil land. Tamil poets took to writing long poems which they called by the Sanskrit name Kavya. the earliest and greatest of these is Silappadikaram. A little later appeared Manimekalai, attributed to the poet Sattanar of Madurai this book reveals Buddhist influence. Both these books belong to the early centuries of the Christian era.

It is also held by scholars that in the age prior to the imperial Pallavas, many Tamil works were written like Kural written by Thirulluvar.

The end of the Sangam era may be said to have heralded the birth of a new Tamil literature. This new age witnessed devotional poetry on Shiva and Vishnu.

GANDHARA ART

The sculpture of Gandhara school have been found all along the north-western provinces of the Indian aule-continent and parts of Afghanistan it falls outside the line of the natural and consistent growth of the Indian movement and it represents a fundamentally different art. The area incompassed by this art was vulnerable to foreign contacts and influences from times immemorial, the Persian, the Greeks, the Sakas, the Pallavas and the Kusans came and settled these and the result was the birth of a hybrid culture that frund expression in an eclectic school of art-prolific in output and contemporary with the indigenous art movement of mathura.

The Gandhara movement is usually described as Graeco-Buddhist, despite the fact that it gains prominence only when Greek domination of this part of India had become a part of the history. Ibs principal patrons were the Sakas and the Kusahas who came from central Asia. Its technique is unquestionably Helxistic though modified by Iranian and Scythian contacts. The themes depicted by it are decisively Indian and almost exclusively Buddhist.

Already in the centuries preceding the christian era different people who liad made the north-west and Punjab their home had come under the influence of the Indian religions. This fact is attested to by inscriptions recording religious benefaction and by symbols and deities associated with the Indian cult, depicted on the coins of the foreign rulers. It is through the influence of such religions as Buddhism and Bhagvatism that the foreigners were gradually Indianized and assimilated into the Indian population. The Gandhara school of art represents a stage of this Indianization an has to be viewed in terms of cultural absorption one can say that the Gandhara school represents a "composite" cultural sequence which is manifested in the features of its art forms.

The important remains of the prolific production line of this school comes from Jalalabad, Hadda and Bamujan in Afghanistan the Swat Valley, Taxila etc. in Pakistan etc. The material employed is usually a dark grey state in the early period, while stucco and terracotta became the favourite mediums later. The days of it expansion coincides with the reign of the great Kusana kings, particularly Kaniska. The school confined to produce abundantly till the third and the fourth centuries A.D. Though derived eclectically and stylistically from an extraneous eclectic plastic standard the themes are of Indian origin and according to some scholars the importance of the School consists in the revolutionary procedure of representing for the first time the image of Buddha anthropomorphic shape. Independent images either seated or standing occur very frequently and in the numerous representation scenes from the life of the master, which from the principal repertoire of the Gandhara artist, he is depicted with very few exceptions in human shape. This new orientation in Indian religion and art is held to be a revolutionary depictum and a contribution of this eclectic school.

Though bearing all the iconographic marks and traits of the Indian tradition, the Gandhara Buddha is rendered in the manner of the divine figures of the Graco-Roman pantheon. The manner of drapery and the representations on the relief symbolizing scenes from the life of the master, are distinctly Hellenic in orientation. The Gandhara Buddha though a resourceful adaptation of Indian notions is foreign in concept and outlook.

In conclusion, one may say that Gandhara Art arises during the period of Saka domination. The art of the Greek princes, of which specimen are yet wanting except an coins was a strongly coloured Mellenusm and this under the Saka and Kusanas assumed a local character while serving the needs of the Indian religion, particularly Buddhism. In the fabric of Indian art as a whole the Gandhara art is nothing more than a passing feature. It makes only a negligible contribution except for a few motifs which again are quickly Indianized. Even for the depiction of Buddha in life form the contemporary Mathura school also depicted the master in life like anthropomorphic form and some scholars have raised doubts about the authenticity of calling it their original contribution. In terms of aesthetic importance and significance the product of the school can hardly be compared with the spontaneous productions at Bharhut and Sanchi or the works of the later schools of the Gupta or the Pallava period with all their emotional and spiritual content.

From an eclectic view point it is an eastward expansion of the Hellenic art form transformed by Iranian and Scythian view points. From an Indian view point it is a westward expassion of Indian culture in a foreign eclectic garb.

MATHURA SCHOOL

The old Indian art, despite the invasion of the foreign forces of the Scythians, Paithians, and Kusanas from the north-west continued to enjoy unbroken continuity. With the exception of certain minor details of ornament and presentation, the Indian plastic art developed along the lines predetermined in the early classical phase. Mathura in the period between 200 B.C. and A.D. 300 became the centre of an indigenous school of art where sculptures can be studies in an unbroken sequence from early times to the medieval period. This continuity emerged from the fact that Mathura was a prosperous city, with almost all the ancient trade routes converging on it. The sculptures of Mathura style have been found in widely separated region.

The Mathura school gained prominence around the beginning of the Christian era and its preponderance synchronized with the rule of the Kusanas who made Mahura their Capital and whose rule extended over a substantial part of the Gangetic plains, incorporating the Ganga-Yamuna doab. In the Mathura school we find prolific use of images representing various duties; in fact that first image of a Hindu God discovered is of Sanikarsana Balarama belonging to this school. The creation and introduction of cult-images gave a new direction to Indian art. Controversy also persists regarding the question as to which school, Gandhara or Mathura, made the first anthroposophic images of Buddha, with some scholars vouching on Mathura school.

In the popular of the early Indians a strong anthropomorphic character was imminent, though it was subdued by the preponderance of the Vedic Aryans in the early days of Aryanization. This tendency received a short in the arm with the rise and development of theistic devotional cults of Chagvatism, Visnuism and Sivaism. It may be recognized as the emergence of populist non-Aryan and pre-Aryan fashions and practices now absorbed, recognized and systematized in (relation) concordance to Aryan philosophies. In Mathura this innate anthropomorphism and iconism was asserted with vigour and found expression in the images of cult divinities.

In new iconography thus occasioned, the figure of Buddha plays a prominent role and conveys the contemporary notions underlying the divine image. With the idea of the divine image expressed in human forms the artists conception of the human figure in relation to its surrounding necessities changed. The chief interest in this iconography centres upon the human figure boldly carved and set against the plain surface on the ground.

The statues of Buddha and Bodhisattvas were constructed and there are several examples of Bodhisattvas abounding from regions as far separated as Kausambi, Sarnath and Sravasti, one statue each from these places have been placed in Kanishka's reign. Their common feature is the use of Mottled red sandstone of Sikri and hence apparently of Mathura origin. Another notable feature is their mundane character, devoid of other worldliness and not of any transcendental concept or idea.

The Mathura school was contemporaneous to the Gandhara school, although it did outlive its neighbour. Nevertheless, the artists of Mathura show an awareness of the distinct an form of their

neighbours and certain Buddha figures and reliefs hint at this awareness. More definite evidence of a contact between them is provided by certain motifs such as woman and acanthus, the vine with fruits etc. It is possible that the popularity of the Gandhara school influenced the Mathura school on simple grounds of competition, this influence however was very slight and nothing pertaining to technique or style was of external origin; in fact all influences were promptly assimilated and drawn into the Indian plastic tradition.

In a distinct class and style were the life size portrait statues of Kaniska, Wima Kadphises and Chastana. Notwithstanding that they are Central Asian in aspiration and inspiration, they represent a transient phase in the history of Mathura Art.

A particular kind of Mathura sculpture is represented by votive slabs or ayazapata which were erected in Jain shrines for the adoration of the archants. To this class belongs the "Holi" reliefs. Thos slabs are Indian in conception and treatment and the figures and other features follow the indigenous art movement in all details.

The Indian art of this period was found inadvertently addicted to everything terrestrial and the entire plastic sense is stooped in the physical. The vast repertoire of the Mathura school was the natural and consistent growth of early Indian art, resting on the indegenous foundations, trends and traditions prevailing in the closing centuries of the pre-Christian era. Extraneous influence naturally affected Mathura in her artistic pursuits as various foreign tribes settled in the country and were Hinduised; but no foreign influence could change the idiom of Indianness as it basic character. Mathura bequeathed a rich legacy to the development of Indian art in the subsequent centuries.

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MAHAYANA BUDDHISM

Alternatively known as Agrayana and Uttamayana it deals with a sect, a church and a school of philosophy all rolled into one. It deals with the developments in Buddhism in the early centuries of the Christian era on the basis of pretty extensive literary corpus.

Not an overnight development, it was latent in the developments occurring during Mauryan times. Asoka himself contributed in a big way in its development. From 3rd century B.C. onwards the attitude of Asoka vis a vis the Sangha is well known and well documented. Mahayanism is a movement which anscends the geography of the findian subcontinent. Its edict is found elsewhere too-Buddhism in Central Asia, Afghanistan. East Asia and Japan were basically movements of Mahayana.

For the history of Mahayana, its knowledge is based substantially on the Paramita literature. They represent a set of virtues which went on rising beginning from 8 Dasasalasrika Paramita and Astasahasiika Paramita and went on increasing which a follower was supposed to inculcate. Many instances of our knowledge about Mahayana are based on the Chinese translations of original Sanskrit works of which many belonged to a very early phase of Mahayanaian Ratnakuta is available in Chinese from c. 140 A.D. itself. This indicates the time which can be ascribed to Mahayana. The beginning therefore occurred in the closing period of the pre-Christian era and early Christian era.

The Avadana texts hold the same place as Jataka holds in terms of Hinayana. Asokavadana and Divyavadara are important among the vast corpus of Avadanas. Majority of these work are ascribed to the early centuries of Christian era.

Mahavastu is a detailed work in hagiology of Buddhism it is also placed around 2nd and 3rd century A.D.

Like the rise of early Buddhism which rose due to the defects which crept into the Brahmanical order which evoked response for the new religion in the Gangetic Valley, the Mahayana school grew out of the defects that had crept into the Buddhist religion. In one respect Mahyana development was inherent in the malpractices of the Buddhist fold. The response of Buddhism to the development in brahmanical fold from the post-Mauryan period was also responsible. It also unfolded in the context of change which occurred in material tendencies particularly, the development of Indian feudalism-the socio, economic developments shaped its rise.

After the death of Buddha subtle developments started taking place in the Sangha. The Vinayapitaka which is a history of Buddhist monasticism, (the rules, codes and regulation of nuns and monks and expect actions from liaty), a vast corpus which indicates the vital issues going on within the church. The schism edict of Asoka at Sarnath implies that there was a clear sign of tension within the Buddhist order. This is also reflected in the growth of Mahasanghikas, Sarvastivadins and Theravadins. Hinayanists who typified the main current of original Buddhism were getting far away from the Buddhism of Buddha and prepared a futile ground for the development of Malasanghikas and Sarvastivadins.

Considerable amount of and a high degree of scholasticism resulted in the emergence of malpractices within the Sangha. Vibhajjavada-master tool of analysis, Buddha went about it in a meticulous wav maintaining a pragmatic view always realising the true feature of the world as it exists. Theravadin deviated from here. What had been associated by Buddha with the Dhamma, the Hinyanists tried to take the Dhamma as the ultimate Reality. It was earlier just a tool of analysis for Buddha.

The elements of formality were also responsible for the creeping of malpractices. New rules were developed where just a formal touch on luxurious things were avoided which were otherwise accepted. Such was the perversion which had crept in. The emphasis on individualism-the idea of arhant, became a point of major departure between the Mahyanists and Hinayanists.

The works of H.C. Raychaudhary holds that Mahayana was a response to the developments which has taken place in Brahmanical cult in the post Mauryan centuries it had divided into the theistic cults of Visnuism and Saivism. The challenge of these transformations which made the worship of Siva and Visnu easy for masses, compelled the Buddhist to make changes within their own system.

Early Buddhists were concerned with symbolic forms of worship, but latter Buddha emerges in a human form-who is there to look after humanity. The earliest authropomorphic images are associated with the core of Mahayana. The images which emerged invariably are to be dated within the early centuries of Christian era. It could be therefore in response to the theistic cult developments and developments of shrines of Siva and Visnu.

We can get an insight into the development of the Mahayana as an organised sect with the help of various references in the texts of Mahayanists like the Avadan literature, Paramita and Mahavastu. In Angutta Nikaya it is said that he is neither a Gandharva, nor a Yaksha, nor a God, nor a man; he is Buddha. Digha Nikaya teils us that Buddha tells Ananda that after his (Buddha) death, the Dharma and Vinaya shall be their teacher. The references to Buddha to Him and the Dhamma form the basis of the later Mahayana speculations and they became major points of reference for the later Buddhist cosmology. Lalitvistara mentions the life of Buddha in all his previous births and even in the future. Therefore we can see the development of Mahayanism as an organized sect of which the groundwork was done by the Mahasanghikas and Sarvastivadins, typified by their works like Mahavastu and Lalitvistara which belong to the last phase of the pre-Christian era.

Landgrants became common since Satvahana period and in the beginning Mahayana was linked with those territories which were in the Satvahana territory. Nagarjuna was a contemporary of the Satvahanas who resided in the Nagarjunasagar monastery in Andhara territory and is considered as the founder of Mahayana texts.

Feudal tendencies are marked by hierarchisation and an ample evidence of it is provided by the concept of Dasabhumis in the Dasabhumiksutras. It refers to the various stages that a Bodhisattva needs to pass through before he achieves Buddhahood. In Ranakuta the detailed description of land in which Buddha prospers is given: land of plenty is called Sukhavati, territory associated with Buddha is called Buddhaksitra. The concept of Bodhisattva itself reflects the lord-subject relationship. A Bodhisattva strives for the salvation of the humanity and a particular Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara by name is mentioned not only as an Isvara but also as a supreme being who looks down on the earth in compassion. He imbibes a feeling of subjects towards the people on the earth. The Avalokitesvara patronizes everything. The analogy to the lords on the earth can be well mentioned here. The feudal lords who have an overview of the subjects and the lords subject concept is inherent in both the feudal makeup and the Buddhist kernel of this time. Thus feudal makeup runs as an undercurrent in the development of Mahayana.

Thus we can find the development of Mahayanism as an organized sect for which the ground work was done by Mahasanghikas & Sarvastivadins and is typified by the works like Mahavastu & Lalitavistara which belong to the early phase of Chistrian era & last years of the Pre Christian era.

THEISTIC CULTS

The period between 2nd century B.C. to 3rd century A.D. also witnessed changes in Brahmanism. Some of the Vedic gods had quietly passed into oblivion and some were being reborn as new gods with additional attributes. Infact this was the time when the Brahmanicai religion assumed features which today are recognized as Hinduism. To call it Hinduism at this stage is perhaps an anachronism, since the term was given currency by the Arabs in the eighth century A.D. when referring to those who followed the prevailing religion of India the worship of Shiva & Vishnu. Hinduism was not founded by a historical personage or a result of a revelation. It is not a revealed religion but grew and evolved from a variety of cults and beliefs. of which some had their foundations in Vedic religion, and other were popular cults which became associated with the more sophisticated religion, a concession which the priests had to make to popular worship.

The successful attack of the 'heretical sects' on Vedic sacrifices and gods strengthened the trend of monotheistic thinking in Brahmanical teaching, which trend had originated in the philosophy of the Upanishads with its concepts of the Absolute or the Universal Soul. This concept also resulted in the idea of the trinity of gods at this time, with brahma as the creator, Vishnu as the preserver; and Shiva as the god who eventually destroys the Universe. Of these three gods, Vishnu and Shiva gained a vast following and through ensuing centuries the Vaishnavas and the Shaivas remained the two main sects of Hindu belief, Brahma receded into the background.

The notion of a personal God with whom most intimate relations could be established by ile devotees is the focus of theistic religious consciousness. It stressed the merits of worship rather than those of sacrifice. In the middle Ages their doctrines were given a philosophy.

The influence of Buddhism on the new form of piety can not be rejected, for the concept of the Bodhisattva, looking down in love and pity and helping all creation was probably earlier than any comparable idea of Hinduism. However the sect of the Bhagavats worshippers of Vasudeva, was active at least a century before Christ.

The emergence of clear cut theism of Hinduism is to be found in the two epics the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Both Ram and Krishna are treated as the incarnations of Vishnu the benignant and merciful god.

In the religious philosophy of the Mahabharata, we observe the gradual relaxation of the idea of the non-duality. Daulism is inevitable for the generation of Bhakti by the loving devotion to God. Yoga which originally meant physico-pshychological discipline leading to the stillness of mental activities, now becomes a method of sitting oneself in rapport with the divine who is the inner Ruler Immortal, both in the soul of man and in the universe outside of him. Thus Yoga becomes a way of life, a method of communion with God, but is not however, a great repression of desires or the forcible expulsion of disturbing thoughts.

Shaivism, too, developed a theology adapted to devotion and literature. Tamil shaivism teaches the reality of the three categories-God, Souls and Maiter. In salvation the soul is united but not identified with the deity. Tamil Shaivism thus goes further in the direction of dualism than the qualified monisin of Ramanuja.

The Theist concept of Vishnu and Shiva have the common content of Bhakti element. Both are more dvaitic than advaitic. The Gita shows wonderful confluence of currents of philosophic and religious thoughts. The Gita clearly shows that there is compelling need for a personal God.

BHAGVATISM AND VAISHNAVISM

Bhagvatism can be understood in the context of Bhagvata and Bhakta. They are derived from the root Bhaj which means to worship, to dedicate oneself and therefore reflects an idea of dedication and devotion to the supreme one. The original affiliation of Bahgavata is linked with Narayana. The people who belong to him are Bhaktas, because it is these people to whom the wealth is distributed collectively. Later the term undergoes a sea of changes. It becomes associated with all deities which claim the devotion of their followers. Therefore Sankarsana. Vasudeva etc. are all called Bhagvata. Later on still it became associated with all followers of Vaisnavism.

Chronologically, beginning before the Christian era Bhagavatism laid the basis for the later day Vaishnavism. The elements of continuity in Bhagvatism and Vaishnavism are Vasudeva later identified as Vishnu In Vishnu we have strains of other deities such as Naravana, Sankarasana, Balaram, Vasudeva Krishana-an amalgamation of Aryan and non-Aryan traits. Sri and Lakshmi are absorbed as wives of Vishnu. These deities are examples of the non Brahmanical strains. Some have rationale in terms of a Savagery while others have it in terms of fertility deities.

Apart from the incorporation of brahmanical heritage in Vasudeva Krishna cult (a non-Vedic cult), the development of the doctrine of incarnation gave further impetus to Bhagavatism or Vaishnavism. The enormous popularity of this doctrine can be explained to a large extent by the truly unique capacity of Vaishnavism to assimilate various local beliefs and ceremonies of worship. This was possible due to the well-elaborated systems of Vyuhas (manifestations) of Vishnu and avtaras. The essence of the notion vyuha is that the all-powerful God Narayana-Vishnu consistently reveals himself in four different forms. This led to an incorporation of several popular local Gods within the concept of Vishnu.

The doctrine of Avataras was first systematically though briefly, expounded in the Bhagwat Gita. The worship of some of the avataras is mentioned in inscriptions between 4th and 8th centuries A.D. and in literature. The number of incarnations varies and so also their nature. The number rose ultimately to 24, which includes even the Buddha as one avatar by about the 10th century A.D.

This development was a product of a very long adjustment process. Literary evidence account for him in a different context. Mahabharata calls him a venerated sage of great antiquity. Rig Veda also mentions him. Therefore Narayan is as old as Vishnu. But Vishnu is associated with some natural phenomena particularly the fire cult. The solar affiliation of Visnu is not contended. Naryana seems to be a different temperament. He is mentioned in the Purusa Sukta. Human sacrifice is also associated with him the sacrifice of Purusa the primeval man an act responsible for the creation of the Universe and the Varna system. Kausambi has shown the non-Aryan links of Narayana and had linked it with some Sumerian Gods. In Mahabharata, Narayana is shown to be a shelter or nara or narah which is the plural form of nara or purusa. This implies that an element of collectivity is imbued in his personality

The precise time when Naryana becomes absorbed in Vishnu is undeterminable. But the Maitriya Upnishad mentions some detail about the merger. Maitriya Upanishad-a post Buddhist text can be placed around 3rd century B.C. The Ghosundi inscription talks of the Narayana Vatika, which can be ascribed to the early centuries of the christian era. The amalgamation therefore seems to be occuring in the post Buddha period around 3rd century B.C. The occurrence of Vishnu's name before Narayana shows the supremacy of Vishnu vis a vis Narayana.

It is not known exactly the social strata which propagated its cult. But a society with a tribal base with economic roots in hunting cannot be ruled out.

Their deities present a different interest Samkarsana Balaram is associated with agricultural class. He is also known as Haladhar or the wielder of plough; or the wielder of pestle. It is argued that he shares some such traits which can be linked with Siva. Therefore his association with serpants is very relevant. It may be therefore said that Samkarsana is associated with Shiva and when Vishnu absorbs him in his fold as his elder brother amounts to his growing popularity

Vasudeva Krishna appears in various forms and has multiferous personality: He appears as love God, child god and as deity of pastoralists. The antiquity can be traced back to Rig vedic day's. Vishnu is shown to be a friend of Indra. Krishna too is mentioned there but as an enemy of Indra. But the gap between the Rig Veda and subsequent literature do not help us in any way. Vasudeva Krishna had become an important deity when the literary sources talk about him. He is an amalgation of various cults-childgod, lifting the Govardhana, association with Tulsi, hero of Abhira tribe etc. Bhandarkar talks about the sects take Vaishnavism, Saivism and minor religious sects and Krishna's association with them. He argues that with the coming of the Abhiras into western India in the early christian era begins the process of Gopala Krishna. This implies that Vrisnis are already associated with him. Abhiras have to be antedated. Patanjali in Mahabhasya has explained some sutras of Panini-ascribed to 2nd century B.C. has talked about Abhiras in the reference to Sudras. Therefore a difference of 300 years in Bhandarkar's hypothesis exists. The Abhiras did represent some cultural strains like those of certain looseness in the society-certain laxity and permissiveness in relations between the two sexes.

Enriched thus as the time passed by, this Vasudeva Krishna cult developing as Vaishnavism spread far and wide. The spread of Bhagavatism in the far South at a much earlier date is indicated by the relation of Pandvas with the Pandavas and Sursenas, alluded to in the confused stories narrated by Megasthenese about Herakles ard his daughter pandala and in the grammatical work of Katyayana.

The worship of Krishna and Baladeva in the Tamil country about the time of the Guptas is evident from the literature of this region.

Vaishnavism and the mythology associated with Vishnu found an echo in the sculpture of that period. Iconic representations of the god Vishnu Vasudeva cannot be traced much earlier than the beginning of the christian era. A four armed figure of the deity, with Chakra in the upper left hand is found on the coins of the Panchala king Vishnumitra.

A similar representation of the four-armed Vishnu with Sankha, Chakra, Gada and a ring- like object, instead of the lotus in the hands, appears in a Kushana seal matrix attributed by Cunningham to Huvishka. The Bhagavata cult had thus came to enjoy high recognition all over India by the end of the third century A.D.

Vaishnavism also crossed the high seas and became popular in the countries of South-East Asia. Puranavarman of Java, probably belonging to the fifth century A.D. is compared to Vishnu in the Ciaruton rock inscription. The well known My Son inscription from Champa (Annam) 5th century A.D. refers to the worship of Vishnu along with Mahesvara, Uma, Brahma and other deities.

By the time of Guptas, the Vaishnava pantheon has come into being. Later changes were modifications of the processes already in vogue expect for the changes brought about by the Tantricism and Bhakti. The number of incarnation keeps on increasing besides the Dasavatara. This helps in broadening his base and bringing various other cults into the folds of Pantheon.

SAIVISM

The growth of theistic cults can be properly seen only in the light of their manifestations in popular mythology because there are no artifacts which can show the entire sequence of development. The temples with their icons emerges quite late and we find that some aspects of these cults are mentioned as early as the Rig Veda and even found in the context of the artifacts of Harappans. In order to find out a generic relationship between the later Hindu deities and early Vedic deities besides various cultural strains of India whose amalgamation in the Brahmana fold is earmarked by the inclusion of their deities or totems in the Brahmanic religion, it becomes imperative that we analyse the myths as mentioned in various Puranas.

To begin with, Myth should not be understood as false. It is in many ways a Sort of communication system according to Claude Levi Strauss. It contains the truth about the life style of the people and often reiterates the underlying truth in various different ways. It promotes and generates the world view of society and brings coherence to it. Often it is a means of educating people and they drive home several important events, occurrences, taboos and do's and don'ts of society in a simplified manner.

Indian mythology is not without dynamism although it did fail to keep pace with the social changes. Most of the Indian deities with the exception of Siva can be linked to the Vedic period. The development and rise of various deities covers a time span of 1500 B.C. to 500 A.D. i.e. 2000 years. In this period several deities rise and fall and ultimately we find the pantheon of Siva and Visnu having overwhelmed all others. They emerged as the foremost deities and amalgamate other deities either as subsidiary deities or as their retainers or family members, while several other gods and goddesses merge into their personalities. It is possible to infer these things from a structuralist overview of Indian mythology.

In the Indian context the longevity of a deity depend on it adaptability to the changing environment and most of the deities which faded out like Pusana, Bhaga, Amsa. Dyaus etc. because they lacked the potentiality to develop further. However the vacum left by them was filled by more dynamic Gods of which the most important were Siva and Vishnu. Both are mentioned in the Rig Veda but as subservient deities. They had the potentiality to develop as great deities later on. One common aspect of both of them are their complex character and ambivalent nature. They absorbed a large number of discordant deities and emerge with great complexity. Thus Siva includes Ganapati, Parvati, Skanda, Saraswati, Ganga but all in his family which perhaps reflects the importance of kingship bond which must have added to its popularity in the tribal and backward areas.

These discordant deities are reflective of the various cultural strains which came to be associated with the brahmanical mainstream. These pantheons were crytailised by the 5th century A.D. and have continued to exist as they were besides the changes which were brought about by Bhakti later on.

The geographical jurisprudence of these cults involves the whole of the subcontinent and even some areas beyond it where the forces of Indianisation were at work.

Several contradictory traits such as ascetic but deep feeling of indulgence; indifferent to worldly ties but has a family; places associated with him: a medicant but a giver of gifts; saviour as well as destroyer etc. are noticeable with the cult of Shiva which infuses in him immense potentialities to develop later on.

These contradictory attributes anabled the chief deity to absorb the cults of all other nuances: Uma, Saraswati, Durga, Kuber, Skanda, Gapatti etc. The Tamil Civan and Compu can be linked to Siva and Sambha. Campur conveys a message of red-analogous to the Vedic form Rudra which also refers to sadness which symbolizes wrath, fierceness.

Siva's posterity can be traced to the Harappan delientation of the Proto-Siva but one can only speculate whether it was a form of Rudra the Vedic deity. The Phallic worship is undeniable found in association with Yoni. The Rig Veda refers to Sisnadava worshippers although its mention is made in a derogatory way its allusion to the pre-Vedic cult cannot be overlooked. Therefore the posterity can be traced to the Pre-Vedic times even if the depiction of proto-Siva on the seals is disputed.

The Rig Vedic allusions of three deities: Indra, Agni and Rudra can be associated with Siva later on. Indra has been depicted as Pastoral lord and deity who revels in good things of life. Agni mentioned in the Rig Veda and with him Siva acquires the trait of Fire. The concept of Siva as destroyer par excellence can be traced to Rudra and thus justify his position in the holy trinity.

Rudra depicted as a dark deity of malevolent as well as benevolent attributes association of Siva can be linked. The complexity of Rudra can be found in consonance with the complexity of later Shiva. Both are the upholder of the good and punisher of all evildoers.

In the Satarudriya hymn in Taitteriya and Vajasaneyi Samhita Rudra is explicitly associated with various classes of people like the soldiers, hunter, foresters, thieves, brigands etc. shows his popular base.

Panini records several names of Rudra such as Bhava. Sarva, Rudra and Mrida in one of his sutras. Though Siva in not included, one other sutra refers indirectly to his followers or worshippers. Patanjali refers to Shiva as well as Rudra several times in his commentary. It is first unambiguous mention of a Siva sect.

The literature of the Sangam period in the South also refers to Siva as the greatest of Gods. The twin classics Silappadikaram and Manimekhalai generally assigned to the first centuries of the christian era, have ample reference to Saivism in the Tamil country.

The earliest figure of Siva is the famous Gudimallam linga, near Renigunta close to Madras.

The coins of the Indo-Seythian, Indo-Parthian and Kushana rulers also depict the god but in human form and reclining on his sacred bull, the Nandi.

ART-GANDHARA, MATHURA AND OTHER SCHOOL

Architecture in association with sculpture enjoyed the liberal patronage of Kanishka. The style of this age is known as the Gandhara. The forms of Greek art were applied to Buddhist subject with reasonable amount of success. Images of the Buddha appeared in the likeness of Apollo and Yaksha Kubera in the fashion of zens of the Greek figures. The drapery follows the hellenistic models. This particular style was later transmitted to the far East through Chinese Turkistan. The figures of the Buddha in China and Japan reveal distinct traces of the Hellenistic modes in vogue at the court of Kanishka.

The Gandhara sculpture have been found in the ruins of Taxila and in various ancient sites in Afghanistan and in West Pakistan. They consist mostly of the images of the Buddha and relief sculptures presenting scenes from Buddhist texts. A number of Bodhisattva figures were carved out. A figure at Gandhara shows the first sermon in the deer park and the death of the Buddha. In all these figures there is a realistic treatment of the body although it is drapped. In these sculptures there is a tendency to mould the human body in a realistic manner paying great attention to accuracy and physical details, particularly in the presentation of muscles, moustaches etc. Thus the Gandhara sculptures offer a striking contrast to what has been discovered elsewhere in India.

The Gandhara art primarily depict the Buddhist themes. The mother of the Buddha resembles an Athenian matron. Apollo-like face went into the making of a Buddhist scene. Perhaps one of the Loveliest Gandhara sculptures reflecting a western subject is the figure of Athena of Rome at Lahore. This sculpture is made out of blue-gray schist which is found only in Gandhara. Although the technique of Gandhara was essentially borrowed from Greece this particular art is essentially Indian in spirit.

There are large Gandhara stupas and monasteries survived as ruins at Guldara in Afghanistan. Later a votive stupa from Loriyan Tangai in Gandhara has been found. If this is treated as the model of stupa in Gandhara, the stupa has undergone great changes from great Stupa at Sanchi with its dome structure. In Gandhara the dome grew taller while the square railing at its summit was enlarged and elaborated.

The greatest of all Gandhara stupas was the one erected by Kanishka outside the gates of modern Peshawar. This particular kind of Gandhara style continued at last till the 8th century.

The paintings in the Bamiyan Valley reveal the motives adapted from Sassanian fabric designs. The most spectacular creation carved from the cliffe at Bamiyan are two colossal standing figures of the Buddha, the largest of them being as high as 175 ft. in its stone niche. It was finished with lime plaster. The image reflects the Gupta style of early fifth century.

Stucco was a popular techniques in Gandhara art. A large number of monasteries of Afghanistan are decorated with stucco images. Also terracotta was used particularly among those who could not afford stone sculpture. Terracotta figures were also used as decorations in homes and as toys.

Another revealing features is the presence of the images of Mother Goddess as the worship of this goddess remained an essential religious expression of the ordinary people. Buddhism, too came to be associated with fertility cult and other popular religious cults. This association is evident from the symbolic importance of the Stupa and the brackets with female figures as to be seen at Sanchi.

Apart from Gandhara, sculpture appeared at Sarnath near Banaras, Mathura on the Yamuna and Amravati in Andhra Pradesh. The most well-known are the elaborate base reliefs from Amravati. Over many years this form was pursued. Most of it was probably executed in Hivishka's reign.

The school of Gandhara was evidently influenced by the art of the Roman empire, and some of its craftsmen may have been westerners. Though often called Greeco-Buddhist, the Greek kingdoms of Bacteria and North-Western India had vanished when this school emerged. It is not to the Greeco-Bactrian heirs of Alexander, but to the trade with the West, encouraged by the rising prosperity of Rome and the eastward march of her legions, that we must attribute this syncretistic school. It was Kanishka and his successors and their wealthy subjects who gave to the school of Gandhara the encouragement and support through which it flourished.

If an Indian context the style of Gandhara has a rather insipid flavour, but it is not without originality. The Buddhas of Gandhara, though perhaps lacking in the spirituality of those of the Gupta period, are gentle, graceful and compassionate while some of the plaques are vivid & energetic. The school continued after the great Kushanas, though with less prosperous times it produced few works in stone, but many in plaster or stucco.

The school of Mathura probably began at the end of the 1st century B.C. Most of the scholars believe that the Buddha image originated at Mathura working for centuries in the white spotted red sandstone of the locality, it produced works which were carried far and wide, and had much influence on later sculpture.

Some of the Mathura school's inspiration was Jaina, and at an early period the Mathura craftsmen were making votive plaques depicting the cross-legged naked figure of a Tirthankara in meditation, which may have inspired the Buddhists to depict their own teacher.

Perhaps the most striking remains of the Mathura school are the Yakisis from the railings of the stupa, which was probably Jaina. These richly jewelled ladies, their figures exaggeratedly broad hip and slender of waist, stand in pert attitudes reminiscent of the Indus dancing girl.

Rather outside the main range of Mathura art are the Kushana royal statues most of which were found at the nearby village of Mat. The figures have nearly all been broken by succeeding rulers, and that of the great Kaniska, the most striking of the statues, unfortunately lacks its head, this statue may be criticized technically as showing no sense of depth being virtually in two dimensions. The sculptor was evidently working on a theme to which he was not used, but he succeeded in producing a work of much power, suggesting the hieratic royal statues of Egypt.

Apart from creating the Buddha figures in the form of Bodhisatava, the Mathura school did produce the masterpiece of Buddha in the mid 2nd century. It is carved from the local sand-stone and it is a sitting figure. Unlike the majority of static Buddhas of Gandhara wrapped in the toga-

like sanghatis, this Buddha of a warmer clime is dressed as a true Indian wearing transparent muslin garments. Such like transparent textile being shown is a distinctive Mathura feature.

Some hold the view that the Buddha image was evolved independently both at Mathura and Gandhara since there is a striking difference between the two. The Gandhra school laid stress on accuracy of anatomical details and physical beauty while that of Mathura Sirove to impart sublime and spiritual impression to the figures. The first was realistic and the other was idealistic.

Among the other schools of art Amravati school is the foremost. Its sculptures show a mastery of stone sculpture. The monuments at Jaggayyapeta. Nagarjuma-konda and Amaravati are a class by themselves. The Andhara sculpture is generally known as Amaravati school. The stupas at Amaravati were made out of a distinctive white green marble. Probably it was begun about the time of Christ, and received its final carved faces and railings from about 150 A.D. to 200 A.D.

The mature art of Amaravati region is one of India's major and distinct styles. A great number of graceful and longated figures on the reliefs imbue a sense of life and action that is unique in Indian art.

One of the great stupa railings (probably of the 3rd century A.D.) show the Buddha in human form subduing a maddened elephant which had been sent by his jealous cousin. Devadatta, to attack him.

All the railings of the Amaravati Stupa are made out of marble while the dome itself is covered with slabs of the same material. The sculptures of the Stupa are quite different in style from those of northern India. The figures of Amravati have slim blithe features and they are represented in most difficult poses and curves. However, as the scenes are mostly over-crowded, the general effect is not very pleasing. The technical excellence of sculptures in carving, plants and flowers, particularly the lotuses at Amaravati, are most admirably represented in this school.

Although the period under review is not known for architecture, there came into existence beautiful temples and monasteries. The famous Power of Kanishka of Peshawar was one of the wonders of Asia. Unfortunately, no trace has been left behind.

There is only one class of buildings which merit some attention and they are the caves made out of solid rocks. The caves of the Asokan period were plain chambers. But the caves of this period are adorned with pillars and sculptures. Some were used as Chaityas or halls of worship. There are many such Chaitya caves at Nasik, Bhoja, Bedsa and Karle. The Chaitya of Karle is the most impressive specimen of massive rock architecture. Monasteries or Viharas were excavated near the Chaityas we have three Viharas of this kind at Nasik.

This period of time is really famous for independent Buddhist structure. The most important of these monuments are the stupas distributed over an area of 125 kilometers all around Ellora. The most famous of them are at Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda.

CONTACTS WITH CENTRAL ASIA

The expansion of Indian culture and influence both in Central Asia and in the South-East towards the countries and islands of the Pacific is one of the momentous developments in the period immediately preceding the christian era. Although Asoka's missionaries travelled far to the West but the result of their work in Antioch and Alexandria and other distant countries, remain a matter of speculation.

It is however the Kushan empire of Kanishka, Huviska and Vasudeva which became the carriers of Indian thought into central Asia. Kanishka was the patron of Mahayana Buddhism, and his empire outside Indian became a scene of Indian missionary activity. The great Kasyapa Matnga and Dharmaranta were actually employed in missionary work in Indo-Scythian countries when the Chinese ambassadors met them. From 68 A.D. there was a continuous and uninterrupted flow of scholars, monks and missionaries to China of whom the most famous was Kumarajiva. The Indianisation of Khatan, Kucha and other areas in Central Asia is still evidenced by the great mass of Buddhist literature that has been discovered there.

With the archaeological discoveries of Sir Aurel Stein our knowledge of India's contact with Central Asia became more clear. Manuscripts belonging to 2nd century A.D. were found at Khotan

which was written in Prakrit. Another script, quotations from Charaka and Susruta was found at Kucha belonging to the 4th century A.D.

The remains in Chinese Turkistan and the finds at different sites explored by archaeologists have established beyond doubt that a large number of Indian had migrated from the Punjab and Kashmir and settled in the Tarim basin where they built numerous cities.

It is alleged that there was an Indian kingdom in Khotan founded by a son of emperor Asoka. Buddhism was introduced in that kingdom more than a century after its establishment. Later many Buddhist monasteries were set up in the region, two famous ones, Gosruga and Gomati viharas, were great centres of learning. Both Prakrit and Sanskrit were studied in Khotan.

The whole of Central Asia was a meeting place of different cultures since it contained the famous silk trade route between China and Rome. The northern route touched Kucha (Kuchi), Qara Shahr (ancient Agnidesa) and Turfan, while the Southern route passed through Kashgar, Yarkand, Khotan, Niya, Miran and other important centres. The two routes finally converged at Tung-huang on the western border of China, a strong Buddhist centre noted for its famous grottos. Buddhism flourished in all these regions however, traces of Brahmanical religion are also found in Khotan & other places.

Besides religion, Indian influence can also be traced in art and architecture probably some Indian artists from Khotan had migrated to China. Various remnants of frescos leave no doubt that not only the whole iconography but the technique of drawing, conventions and mannerism were derived from the Buddhist paintings in India. Stucco figures were modelled on the existing ones an Gandhara. The Indian influence is even more distinctly confirmed by the find from Khotan, Tumshuq & Schorshuq.

Tibet was brought under the orbit of Buddhism in the 7th century A.D. Later Tibetans borrowed the Kashmiri script which was later transformed into the Tibetan script of today. Later the Tibetan Buddhists came in large numbers to India during the Pala period and there was a lively exchange between Tibet and Pala kingdom.

Political and cultural ties between India and Central Asia continued till about the 8th century A.D. The gradual advance of Islam and the suspension of the silk trade on account of insecure conditions resulted in the breaking of political and cultural ties between India and the Central Asia.

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