

**STUDY OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF THE
NORTHERN INDIA DURING THE 7TH CENTURY A.D.**

Thesis Submitted for the Award of the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

**In
History**

**By
Jasmer Singh
Registration Number: 41800266**

**Supervised By
Dr. Tabish Hashmi (27292)
Associate Professor
School of Liberal and Creative Arts (Social Sciences and Languages)
Lovely Professional University, Punjab**



LOVELY PROFESSIONAL UNIVERSITY, PUNJAB

2024

DECLARATION

I hereby declared that the presented work in the thesis entitled “**Study of Socio-Economic Conditions of the Northern India during the 7th Century A.D.**”, in fulfilment of degree of **Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)** is outcome of research work carried out by me under the supervision of **Dr. Tabish Hashmi** working as Associate Professor in the School of Liberal and Creative Arts (Social Sciences and Languages) of Lovely Professional University, Punjab, India. In keeping with general practice of reporting scientific observations due acknowledgements have been made whenever work described here has been based on findings of others investigator. This work has not been submitted in part or full to any other University or Institute for the award of any degree.

(Signature of Scholar)

Name of the Scholar: Jasmer Singh

Registration No.:41800266

Department/school: School of Liberal and Creative Arts (Social Sciences and Languages)

Lovely Professional University,
Punjab, India

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the work reported in the Ph.D. thesis entitled “**Study of Socio-Economic Conditions of the Northern India during the 7th Century A.D.**” submitted in fulfillment of the requirement for the award of degree of **Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)** in the School of Liberal and Creative Arts (Social Sciences and Languages), is a research work carried out by **Jasmer Singh**, Registration No. 41800266, is bonafide record of his original work carried out under my supervision and that no part of thesis has been submitted for any other degree, diploma, or equivalent course.

(Signature of Supervisor)

Name of Supervisor: Dr. Tabish Hashmi

UID: 27292

Designation: Associate Professor

Department/school: School of Liberal and Creative Arts
(Social sciences and Languages)

Lovely Professional University, Punjab, India

ABSTRACT

This research offers an in-depth exploration of the socio-economic conditions of northern India during the 7th century A.D., a period marked by significant transitions and developments following the decline of the Gupta Empire. The study meticulously examines the complex interplay of political, cultural, and economic forces that shaped this era, drawing upon a rich array of sources including ancient literary texts, inscriptions, numismatic evidence, and smriti literature.

The research traces the socio-economic and political landscape following the decline of the Gupta Empire, highlighting the emergence and interactions of dynasties such as the Maukharis, Later Guptas, and Pushyabhutis. It delves into the reigns of notable rulers, focusing on their administrative policies, military conquests, and cultural contributions. The period under Harshavardhana is especially noted for its brief political unification and cultural renaissance. The 7th century in northern India was a time of political fragmentation and dynamic cultural evolution. The decline of the Gupta Empire paved the way for the rise of prominent dynasties such as the Maukharis, Later Guptas, and the Vardhana Dynasty (Pushyabhutis). The ascendancy of Harshavardhana from the Vardhana dynasty marked a brief period of political unification and cultural renaissance. His reign, characterized by military conquests, administrative efficiency, and cultural patronage, especially his support for Buddhism, significantly influenced the socio-political fabric of the region. The chapter also discusses the defeat of Harsha by Pulakeshin II, providing insights into the limitations of his empire.

A significant portion of the study is dedicated to the socio-religious and economic fabric of the time. The caste system, with its complexities and societal impacts, is examined, alongside the diverse religious practices encompassing Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism. The study underscores the coexistence of various sects and the influence of religious beliefs on social customs and daily life. The study delves into the diverse sources that illuminate this era, categorizing them into literary sources, accounts of foreign travellers, and archaeological findings. Significant texts such as "Harshacharita" and "Kadambari" by Banabhatta, along with the accounts of

Chinese travellers like Hiuan-Tsang, form the backbone of this exploration. Archaeological sources, including inscriptions, sculptures, coins, and temple architecture, offer additional perspectives on this multifaceted era.

A critical aspect of this period was the complex caste system and the dynamic religious landscape. The chapter provides a detailed analysis of the roles and societal dynamics of the four main varnas, emphasizing the evolving economic and social roles of these groups. The coexistence of Hindu sects, Buddhism, and Jainism, along with their impact on social customs, is thoroughly examined.

The economic conditions of this era are scrutinized, revealing a system influenced by the Gupta era's policies. The research highlights the importance of agriculture and trade, the role of guilds, and the intricate system of land tenure and taxation. The economic narrative provides insights into the prosperity of the region, despite the challenges of historical interpretation. The prosperity of the region, despite historical challenges, is evident from the intricate economic system in place.

The study also touches upon the administrative systems, legal aspects of land ownership, and the societal roles of different castes, particularly the Brahmins. The complex dynamics of caste interactions, including the emergence of sub-castes and mixed communities, are explored in depth, revealing a society undergoing transformation in its socio-economic structure, religious beliefs, and cultural practices.

The research presents a comprehensive account of 7th century northern India, painting a vivid picture of its socio-economic landscape. The findings underscore the seamless integration of social and religious practices and their profound influence on the societal structure and individual well-beings. The research not only contributes to the understanding of this specific era but also provides a foundation for comparative historical analysis across different periods and regions.

Acknowledgement

Any research needs in depth study of the facts and deep analysis. There are points of time when the researcher finds himself biased and without results and conclusion. In such crucial moments, I need personal touch, moral support, motivation, and inspiration. This is a fact that no person without such support would be able in any manner to complete a standard research work and to reach at a justified conclusion. Studying the socio-economic conditions of Northern India in the 7th century A.D. is significant because it was a transformative period, marked by the transition from ancient to early medieval India. In the same manner, I have been supported in different senses by each person around me. I am fortunate enough in this way.

Foremost, I would like to express my profound gratitude to my Research Supervisor Dr. Tabish Hashmi (Associate Professor), School of Liberal and Creative Arts (Social Sciences and Languages), Lovely Professional University, Punjab, India for his continuous, consistent, gracious, and untiring support, guidance, and cooperation for completion of this research work. He was kind enough in guiding me at every stage and extended all possible help to me.

I would also like to thank The Hon'ble Chancellor of the Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Sh Ashok Kumar Mittal, for his kind blessings. My sincere thanks also go to Prof. Pavitar Parkash Singh, Dean, School of Liberal and Creative Arts (Social Sciences and Languages). He guided me many times during my research work. I would like to thank Dr. Manvinder Singh, Head of the Department, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, for his constant support.

My sincere thanks also go to Dr. Manu Sharma, Former Head of the Department, Dr. Meenu Sharma, Dr Munmun Mondal, Dr. Santosh Yadav and Dr. Tariq Sheikh Assistant Professor, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Panjab for providing the intellectual support.

I express my deepest gratitude to Dr. Jagpal Dahiya for his support without which it was impossible for me to complete this work.

I am grateful to Dr. Surender Vashist, Assistant Professor, Department of AIH, Culture and Archaeology, Kurukshetra University Kurukshetra for his precious suggestions and scholarly help during this research work.

I am also thankful to Prof. Jasbir Soora, Chairperson, Department of Management, Choudhary Ranbir Singh University, Jind, Dr. Neelam Rani, Assistant Professor, CDLU, Sirsa, Dr. Jagpal Mann, Dr. Rakesh Dalal, Assistant Professor, CRSU, Jind and Dr. Manjeet Sheokand, Dr. Pardeep, Dr. Vikram Dahiya for their help and encouragement.

I would like to express my thanks to the libraries and library staff of Lovely Professional University, Panjab, Gurukul Kangri University, Haridwar, Central Library, ASI, New Delhi for their help accessing the books and articles during my research.

I am greatly indebted to my parents for their immense inspirations and blessings.

I am most grateful to my wife AmitKour and sons Rahul and Sahil for their encouragement and understanding through all my ups and downs. Without their motivation, my efforts would have been meaningless.

Lastly, I apologize for any unseen mistake, any slip of pen and pray to Almighty God that thou bless mean forgive me for any mistakes of mine done knowingly or unknowingly

JASMER SINGH

TABLE OF CONTENT

Chapter No.	PARTICULARS	Page No.
1.	INTRODUCTION	1-45
1.1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.2	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	5
1.3	OBJECTIVES OF THE PROPOSED RESEARCH WORK	6
1.4	REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE AND RESEARCH GAP	6
1.5	A BRIEF HISTORY OF NORTHERN INDIA DURING THE 7TH CENTURY A.D.	17
1.6	MAUKHARY DYNASTY	25
1.7	LATER GUPTA DYNASTY	30
1.8	PUSHYABHUTI OR VARDHANA DYNASTY	36
1.9	SUMMARY	40
	REFERENCES	42
2.	SOURCES	46-82
2.1	LITERARY SOURCES	46
2.2	ACCOUNTS OF FOREIGN TRAVELERS	48
2.3	ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOURCES	50
2.4	SEAL - INSCRIPTION	57
2.5	COINS OF SHILADITYA HARSHA	61
2.6	SCULPTURE ART	62
2.7	SUMMARY	77
	REFERENCES	79
3.	SOCIO-RELIGIOUS LIFE	83-121
3.1	VARNA SYSTEM	83

3.2	FOOD AND BEVERAGES (DRINKS)	94
3.3	DRESS AND ACCESSORIES (ORNAMENTS)	98
3.4	MANNERS AND CUSTOMS	101
3.5	BELIEFS AND RELIGION	103
3.6	SUMMARY	115
	REFERENCES	117
4.	ECONOMIC LIFE	122-170
4.1	LAND OWNERSHIP SYSTEM	122
4.2	LAND TYPES	124
4.3	AGRICULTURE SECTER	130
4.4	ANIMAL HUSHBANDRY	140
4.5	GUILDS	142
4.6	INDUSTRIES	150
4.7	TRADE & COMMERCE	152
4.8	TEX SYSTEM	154
4.9	COINS	158
4.10	TRADE ROUTES AND MEANS	163
4.11	SUMMARY	164
	REFERENCES	166
5.	CONCLUSION	171-191
5.1	INTRODUCTION	171
5.2	FINDINGS AS PER OBJECTIVES	171
5.3	CONCLUSION	179
5.4	IMPLICATIONS AS PER OBJECTIVES	189
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	192-203

ABBREVIATIONS

A.S.I	–	Archaeological Survey of India
MANU	–	Manu Samriti
BORI	–	Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute
I.A	–	Indian Antiquary
E.I	–	Epigraphia Indica
J.R.A.S	–	Journal of Royal Asiatic Society
J.R.A.S.G.B.I.–		Journal of Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, London
RAJ. TAR	–	RAJTARANGINI
N.A.	–	National Archives
N.M.	–	National Museum
J.B.R.S	–	Journal of Bihar Research Society
J.B.O.R.S	–	Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society
J.B.H.U	–	Journal of Banaras Hindu University
J.N.S.B	–	Journal of Numismatic Society Bengal

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Before reviewing the subject, it would be worthwhile to cast a glance on the political conditions of northern India during the period under review. After the downfall of the Gupta Empire, northern India was divided into several independent States. Amongst them the Later Guptas of Magadha, The Maitrakas of Valabhi, The Maukharis of Kannouj, The Vardhanas of Thaneshwar, Sasanka of Gauda, and Bhaskarvarman of Assam (Kamrup) are worth mention. In the 7th century the Vardhana dynasty became quite powerful under Harshavardhana. His Empire included now known as Eastern Punjab, U.P., Bihar West Bengal and Orissa. Kashmir, Western Panjab, Sindh, Gujraat, Rajputana, Nepal and Kamrup were independent States in his time. Even then he was a great conqueror and administrator as well.

Harsha is known for his peaceful activities. He started many benevolent institutions to serve the cause of human society. Harsha's death in A.D. 647 was followed by a period of disturbance and anarchy throughout his wide dominions.

Harshvardhana was one of the most important Indian emperors of the 7th Century. The Pushyabhuti dynasty, also known as the Vardhana dynasty, came into prominence after the decline of the Gupta Empire. Harsha was the greatest monarch of his time in India. He is justly accorded a place in the list of the Great Kings who have ruled over the land of Hindustan from Chandra Gupta to Aurangzeb. The main characteristics of his reign are therefore worth a close study to determine his position in Indian history.¹

A. Cunningham, G. Buhler, and B.N. Sharma categorically state that the Pushyabhutis were kshatriyas of lunar line. They come to this conclusion from the comparative statements of Bana in which the Pushyabhutis and the Maukharis are compared with the Sun and the Moon, suggesting that the intention was to convey their being Suryavansi and Chandravansi kshatriy as respectively. In the records of Hiuan- Tsang,

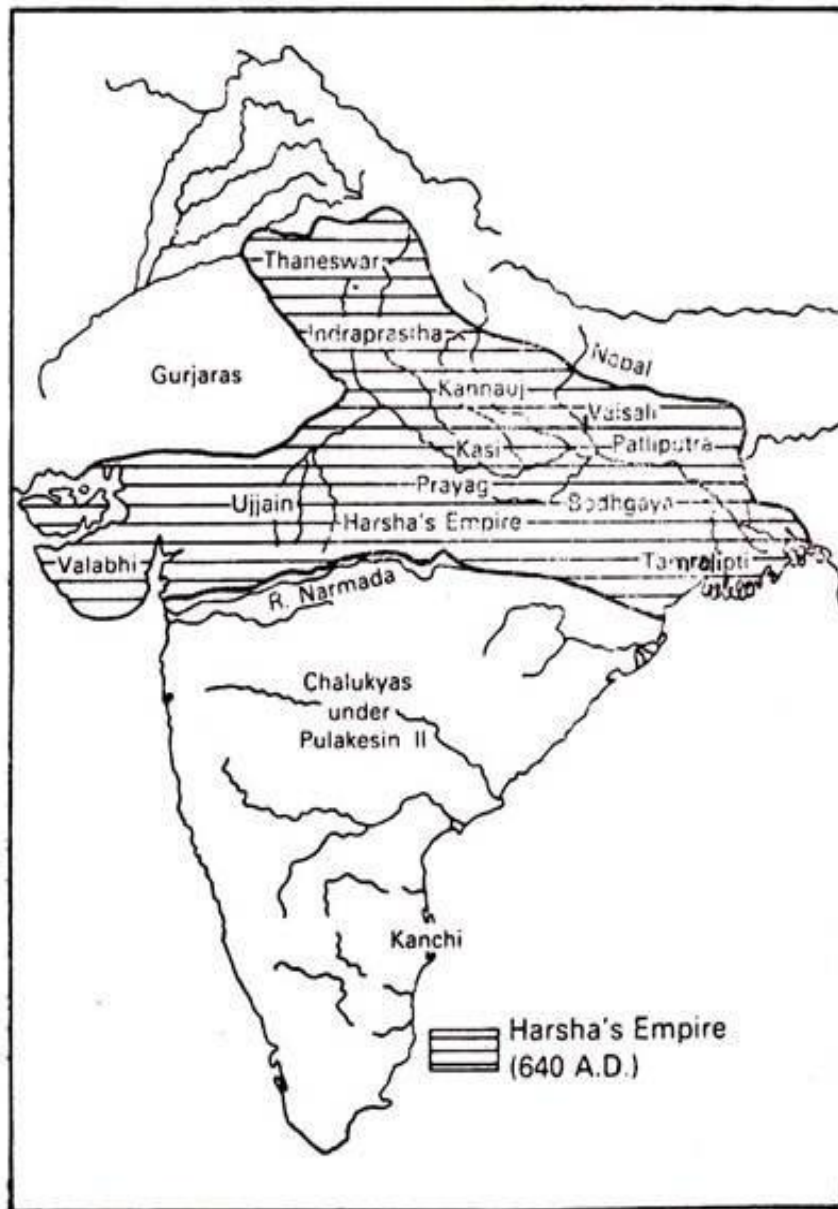
Harsha is mentioned as coming of Fei-she (Vaisya) caste. The 'Aryamanjushrimulakalpa' specially refers to Harsha as belonging to the Vaisya caste.²

Prabhakara Vardhana, the first king of the Pushyabhuti dynasty, was instrumental in consolidating the small republics and monarchical states that had sprung up in North India after the downfall of the Gupta dynasty. When Prabhakara Vardhana passed away in 605 CE, his eldest son Rajya Vardhana became the new ruler. Harshavardhana was Rajya Vardhana's brother and they also had a sister named Rajyashree. Rajyashree went on to marry the Maukhari King Grahavarman. Rajyashree's husband, King Grahavarman, was defeated by the Malwa King Devagupta and Rajyashree was imprisoned. King Devagupta was now ruling over the subjects of King Grahavarman. Rajyashree was ill-treated during her stay in the prison. Unable to tolerate the treatment given to his sister, Rajya Vardhana marshalled his troops into the kingdom of Devagupta and managed to defeat him. Around the same time, a Gauda ruler Shashanka entered Rajya Vardhana's kingdom. Unfortunately, Rajya Vardhana failed to make out the motive behind Shashanka's entry into his kingdom. Shashanka had posed as Rajya Vardhana's friend, and had gained knowledge about his military affairs. But Shashanka was an ally of Rajya Vardhana's arch-rival. Rajya Vardhana never suspected Shashanka's intentions and he eventually paid the price for it as he was murdered by Shashanka. When Harshavardhana came to know about his brother's death, he waged a war against Shashanka and defeated him convincingly. He then ascended the throne and took over the leadership of the Vardhana dynasty at the age of 16. Hiuan-Tsang, a famous Chinese traveller, heaped a lot of praise on Harshavardhana for his generosity and administrative skills.

According to Bana's Harshacharita, Harsha's ancestral kingdom includes the Sthaneshwar or Thaneshwar district and its neighbourhood including the valley of the Saraswati River. It was a modest beginning.

Dr. R.C. Tripathi, a renowned historian has observed that "He (Prabhakar Vardhana) is the first to be styled Maharajadhiraja and Parambhattaraka in the family inscription and according to Yuan Chwang "This country (Sthaneshwara) was above 7000 li or 1200 miles in circuit, and its capital, with the same name apparently, was above 20 li

in circuit. A kingdom with the area of 7000 li or 1200 miles might have considerable influence and resources to be reckoned with. The Bana calls him "a lion to the Huna deer, a burning fever to the king of the Indus, a trouber of the sleep of Gujrat, a bilious plague to that scent-elephant the Lord of Gandhara, a looter to the lawlessness of the Latas, and an axe to the creeper of Malwa's glory."³



Ruling from 606 to 647 CE, Harshavardhana became the most successful emperor of the Pushyabhuti dynasty until he was defeated by a South Indian ruler Pulakeshin II. Pulakeshin, who ruled from the Chalukyan capital of Badami, challenged Harsha's conquests. Researchers from the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (BORI),

which houses South Asia's largest collection of manuscripts and rare texts, claim to have fixed the date of Emperor Harshavardhan's defeat to the Chalukya King Pulakeshin II by decoding a copper plate. "It was believed that the battle occurred sometime between 612 AD and 634 AD. But now, thanks to this new copper plate, it can be ascertained definitively to have taken place in the winter of 618-619 AD."⁴



PHOTO COURTESY: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (BORI)

The inscription at Nalanda and Banskhera and coins of that age also provide us some information regarding Harsha's reign. The most useful information is provided by Harshacharita of Banabhatta and the description of the Chinese travellers Hiuan Tsang.

The revival of Hinduism, which had taken place under the imperial Guptas, was completely accomplished in the 6th and 7th century A.D. Another outstanding feature of the period is that the cult of Hinduism gradually and steadily displaced Buddhism, which could never regain the predominance it enjoyed under Ashoka and Kanishka.

In the field of social life caste system was prevalent. The Four Varnas - society was divided into four fundamental Varnas. Dr. B.N. Sharma observed that "the Varnashram Vyavastha has worked as an indispensable and inseparable corner stone in the magnificent edifice of the Hindu social structure. It is the strongest basis of our social organisation and has played a notable role in the preservation, exposition, continuation and popularisation of our social, cultural, philosophical, moral,

aesthetical, religious and spiritual values of life. Yuan Chwang has also mentioned four orders of hereditary class distinction. Bana Characterised Harsha as one "who carried out all the rules for the Varnas and Ashramas like Manu."⁵

With the successions of Harsha vardhana a new era of peace and order prevailed throughout the empire, after nearly a century of political anarchy. He politically united the whole of Northern-India under his strong and well organised' administration, a remarkable growth and development of Agriculture, trade and commerce flourished Indus.⁶

But Archaeologist and Professor M.K.Dhavalikar remarked that Harsha was not as strong a ruler as he is made out to be, in fact, Hiuan -Tsang, the Chinese Buddhist scholar, has clearly informed about the economic downfall and famines during his region.⁷

Therefore, this is important to study the Harsha vardhana era to determine his position in Indian history and study the socio- economic and political condition of that era.

1.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

During course of my research, I will adopt the Qualitative research methodology. For this I will gather facts and analyses the descriptions, facts and information relevant to my research. In this research an attempt would be made to enquire into the subject from a historical perspective with an analytical study of economy and society of northern India in 7th century AD.

In the proposed research work I will be using historical research methods and interdisciplinary approach to explore my main research inquiries, using qualitative analyses. I would use prevailing theories and models used in history, archaeology, economics, sociology, anthropology, etc. to help me in understand the social and economic dynamics in the context of 7th century Northern India. I seek to systematically collect data from various primary as well as secondary sources and then objectively evaluate it.

The data then will be put for analysis and achieving of the objectives. The primary data for the period and region pertaining to the study is largely literature in the forms of biographies, historical accounts, travelogues, dramas, etc. Apart from that, primary

data in the form of numismatics, epigraphical records, and archaeological reports will also be utilized. Apropos the secondary sources, I intend to use books, Ph.d. Thesis, research papers, archival records, and unpublished manuscripts. After the data collection and analysis, I plan on interpreting it within the framework of my research questions as I go between data and theory.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE PROPOSED RESEARCH WORK

The present study aims to achieve the following objectives: -

- I. The study aims to highlights the main features of society, caste system, marriage system, varna system, customs & religious faiths etc.
2. The aims of the study are to know about the economic conditions of the northern India in proposed period as agricultural, guilds, trade, coins, tax system etc.
3. To study the development of and strengthening of village culture and localism and their impact of society and economy of the proposed period.
4. The aim of the study is to know about the changing in socio economic life of people in that period.

1.4 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

1. Shankar Goyal, History and Historiography of the Age of Harsha, (Kusumanjali Prakashan, Jodhpur, 1992).

In this book a new perspective on the history of Harsha, different from the previous works have been given. The work is analytical and the first chapter is a meticulous critique of the historiographical methods used by academicians on the study of Harsha and his age. Here we find a critical analysis of various types of interpretation and methodological approaches regarding the strength and weaknesses of previous works. In the second chapter, Goyal takes up the narrative of the political rise of the Pushyabhuti dynasty with a detailed presentation of its early history and the brief reign of Rajyavardhana. Most of the text in this section is a close reading of the evidence that Harshavardhana, his brother, was involved in the murder of his brother, Rajyavardhana. Goyal carefully listens to the arguments forwarded by earlier historians like those of Professor R. C. Majumdar and then proceeds to elaborate on

the objections raised by Professors D. Devahuti and S. R. Goyal, after which he puts forth his final verdict. The third part of the book (pages 243-300) deals with the social, administrative and cultural conditions under Harsha. Then Goyal discusses the rise of feudalism and its impact on social and cultural structures, particularly those that have brought about a change in the socio- cultural arenas. The final part (pp. 303-328) reassesses Harsha's achievement and failures. This new assessment examines not only the larger implications of Harsha's reign but also his place in Indian history, instead of only glorifying or criticizing Harsha. In essence, the book of Shankar Goyal really reflects a critical historiographical analysis and peeps deep into the socio-political and cultural metamorphosis in the age of Harsha. This helps us enrich our understanding of Harsha's reign and advances the historiography of early medieval India at length.

2. **B. D. Chattopadhyaya**, *Land System & Rural Society in Early India*, Manohar Publishers, and Distributors, 2004. The volume highlights the growth and changing dynamics of historiography about the agrarian history of early India. The papers deal with aspects of rural settlements, the concept of village community, the problem of ownership of land, agrarian change, the structure of rural sociology and rural unrest.

3. **R.S. Sharma**, *Early Medieval Indian Society: A Study in Feudalisation*, 2003.

This book explores the paradigm shift from ancient to medieval times in various aspects of Indian society, including politics, economy, caste system, and culture. It examines the nature of peasant protests in the period. The author also discusses the mindset of the society fostered by feudalism.

4. **R.S. Sharma**, *Economic History of Early India*, Viva books Pvt Ltd. 2011.

This book comprises eleven chapters, each written for different purposes, and covers various aspects of early Indian economic history. Chapter-1, describes the material background of Vedic warfare using literary references and archaeological discoveries. Chapter-2 examines seven stages of the ancient Indian economy: Harappan, Rigvedic, Later Vedic, the period of c. 500–322 BC, Mauryan, Post-Mauryan (200 BC–AD 200), and Gupta. Chapter-3 discusses different modes of production, while Chapter Four details the economic life in northern India during the Gupta period. Chapter Five

highlights eight economic aspects of the caste system, and Chapter Six presents early medieval land grants with examples from the Rashtrakuta dynasty. Chapter Seven explores issues related to peasant protests in early medieval India, and Chapter Eight deals with usury in early medieval times. Chapter Nine discusses different aspects of urbanism in early historic India, while Chapter Ten explains the growth and decline of urban areas. Finally, Chapter Eleven highlights economic trends and prospects in India up to AD 1200.

5. **Lallanji Gopal**, *The Economic Life of Northern India: C.A.D. 700-1200*. Motilal Banarsidass Publishers. 1989.

This book gives valuable information about economic history. It details the economic life of northern India from AD 700 to 1200, explaining complex terms and ideas from ancient texts. By focusing on this often-overlooked period, it has provided insights into both ancient and medieval Indian history. The book shows how this time fits into the broader span of Indian history and has inspired many other studies.

6. **B.D. Chattopadhyaya**, *Aspects of Rural Settlements and Rural Society in Early Medieval India*, Primus Books, 2017

This book offers a comprehensive look into the rural society of ancient India. In the introduction and the second chapter, the author delves into the rural society of Bengal during the Gupta period. He meticulously describes the social structures, agricultural practices, and community life, providing a vivid picture of how rural communities were organized and functioned in that era. This section is crucial for understanding the foundational aspects of rural life and the socio-economic dynamics that prevailed in ancient Bengal. In the third chapter, the focus shifts to the Marwar region. The author examines the unique conditions of this area, highlighting the geographical and environmental factors that influenced rural settlements. He discusses the adaptations made by the rural society to cope with these conditions and how these adaptations shaped the economic and social life of the people. This chapter offers valuable insights into the diversity of rural life across different regions of early medieval India. The last chapter of the book presents an in-depth analysis of a medieval village in Kalikatti, located in the Karnataka region. Here, the author explores the intricate details of village life, including the layout of the village, the roles and relationships

within the community, and the economic activities that sustained the village. This detailed examination provides a microcosmic view of rural society, highlighting the complexities and richness of rural life in medieval Karnataka. Through this comprehensive analysis, the book sheds light on the broader trends and patterns in rural settlements and society across early medieval India, making it a significant contribution to the field of historical studies.

7. **D.N. Jha**, *Economy and Society in early India*, Munshiram Manoharlal Publisher Pvt. Ltd, 1993.

The book examines the early Indian economy and society, highlighting key trends in the historical writings on this period. It delves into the increasingly oppressive ancient Indian land revenue system, explores the economic significance of early medieval South Indian temples, and assesses the characteristics of Indian feudalism.

8. **R.S. Sharma**, *Indian Feudalism*, Trinity Press, Edition 2023. New Delhi.

The book explores the origin, nature, and growth of feudalism in India, offering a comprehensive analysis of the political structures and economic relationships that developed during the medieval period. It details the rise of a class of landlords with fiscal and administrative powers and provides insights into the condition of the peasantry during the early medieval period.

9. **R.S. Sharma**, *Perspectives in social and economic history of early India*. Munshiram Manoharlal Publisher Pvt. Ltd. Edition 2021, New Delhi.

The book analyzes sources related to social and economic history, addressing issues of caste and gender relations. It examines different stages in the modes of production, as well as topics like usury, urban history, and irrigation. The author questions the Hindu reformist approach to social history and challenges traditional sociological views on the permanence of Indian social and economic institutions.

10. **Anand Kumar**, *"The Age of Harsha: Political and Cultural Dynamics,"* Oxford University Press, 2014.

The study offers a detailed exploration of the political and cultural dimensions of the Harsha period. Kumar delves into King Harshavardhana's reign, moving beyond

simple historical narration. He scrutinizes the various historiographic approaches used by different scholars in writing about Harshavardhana. The first part of the book provides an in-depth critique of these approaches, covering nearly a hundred pages. The second part examines the political backdrop that led to the rise of the Pusyabhuti dynasty, including the brief rule of Rajyavardhana. Kumar presents compelling arguments, such as the assertion that Harshavardhana was involved in his brother Rajyavardhana's murder, addressing doubts raised by earlier scholars and arriving at his own conclusions. The third part describes the societal, administrative, and cultural aspects of the time, analyzing the emergence of feudalism and the transition to the medieval era. The book concludes with a fresh assessment of Harshavardhana's greatness and limitations, making Kumar's work a significant contribution to our understanding of this historical period and offering valuable insights into the politics and culture of the Age of Harsha.

11. **Sunita Sharma**, *Cultural History of Early Medieval India*, Cambridge University Press, 2016.

This study offers a comprehensive exploration of the cultural dynamics in early medieval India. In this meticulously researched book, Sharma guides readers through the rich tapestry of cultural developments that defined this era. The book delves into various facets of cultural history, highlighting the evolution of art, literature, religion, and society. Sharma's insightful analysis showcases the achievements and contributions of different dynasties while examining the interplay of diverse cultural influences. This book is an essential resource for anyone interested in understanding the cultural intricacies and transformations that characterized early medieval India.

12. **Manoj Kumar Singh**, *Dynastic Politics and the Rise of Harsha*, Routledge, 2018.

This study provides a detailed examination of the political landscape that led to the rise of the Harsha dynasty. Singh's work focuses on the dynastic politics of the time, highlighting the power struggles and alliances that shaped Harshavardhana's ascent. Through meticulous research and analysis, Singh offers insights into the complex web of political maneuvering and strategic alliances that characterized this period. The book also explores the broader political and socio-cultural context of early medieval India. It is a valuable resource for anyone interested in the political dynamics of the

Harsha period and the broader historical context in which it unfolded. Singh's scholarship significantly enhances our understanding of the political complexities of this era and the factors that propelled Harshavardhana to prominence.

13. **Neelima Dahiya**, *Feudalism in Ancient India: Debates and Perspectives*, Penguin Books India, 2012.

This study comprehensively explores the concept of feudalism in ancient India. Dahiya examines the scholarly debates about whether the feudalism framework applies to India. Using historical evidence and analysis, the book assesses various perspectives and arguments from scholars. Dahiya offers valuable insights into the economic, social, and political structures of ancient India and the complexities of feudal relationships. Her work significantly contributes to the ongoing discussion on feudalism in the Indian subcontinent and is a vital resource for understanding the socio-economic structures of ancient India.

14. **Rajeev Ranjan**, *Ancient Indian Economy: Contextualizing the Harsha Era*, Harper Collins Publishers India, 2015.

This study provides a nuanced examination of the economic landscape during the Harsha period. Ranjan's work places the economic aspects within the broader historical and cultural context of ancient India. Through meticulous research and analysis, the book explores various facets of the ancient Indian economy, including trade, agriculture, taxation, and economic policies. Ranjan's scholarship offers valuable insights into the economic dynamics of the Harsha era, making it an essential read for anyone interested in the economic history of ancient India.

15. **Aparna Mishra**, *Social Structures in Early Medieval India*, Princeton University Press, 2017.

This study thoroughly explores the social structures that shaped early medieval India. Mishra's work examines the intricate web of social relationships, hierarchies, and institutions of the time. Using historical evidence and scholarly analysis, the book investigates caste systems, gender roles, and social stratification. Mishra also explores how religion and culture influenced social structures. Her book is a valuable resource for anyone seeking a deeper understanding of the complex social dynamics of early

medieval India. Mishra's scholarship offers fresh perspectives and insights into the social fabric of this period, making it a significant contribution to Indian history and sociology.

16. **Ravi Chopra**, *The Golden Age of Indian History: The Reign of Harshavardhana*, "Bloomsbury India, 2019.

This study provides a detailed exploration of the historical period marked by the rule of Harshavardhana. Chopra's work paints a vivid picture of this era, often considered a golden age in Indian history. The book delves into the political, cultural, and socio-economic aspects of Harshavardhana's reign, offering a comprehensive view of this transformative period. Through meticulous research and analysis, Chopra examines the achievements and challenges faced by Harshavardhana, shedding light on the dynamics of his rule. This book is an invaluable resource for those interested in Harshavardhana's reign and the broader historical context in which it unfolded. Chopra's scholarship significantly enhances our understanding of this pivotal era in Indian history.

17. **Meena Talim**, *Religious Movements in the Time of Harsha*, Brill, 2013.

This study explores the religious dynamics during the Harsha period. Talim examines the various religious movements, sects, and philosophical developments of the time. The book highlights the religious diversity and mixing of beliefs, showing how different faiths interacted. Talim's research provides valuable insights into the religious landscape of the Harsha era, making it an essential read for understanding the religious history of early medieval India.

18. **Vipul Singh**, *Trade and Commerce in Early Medieval North India*, Wiley India Pvt. Ltd., 2020.

This study examines trade and commerce in early medieval North India. Singh's work explores the economic aspects of this period, looking at trade routes, markets, commodities, and economic activities. Through careful research and analysis, the book provides insights into the complexities of trade networks, including both regional and international connections. Singh's scholarship is a valuable resource for those interested in understanding the economic dynamics of early medieval North

India. It enhances our knowledge of trade and commerce during this time, highlighting the role of economic activities in shaping the region's history and development.

19. **Anita Mehta**, *The Art and Architecture of Harsha's Period*, "McGraw Hill Education India, 2018.

This study explores the art and architectural achievements of the Harsha era. Mehta's work delves into the rich cultural heritage of this period, highlighting the artistic and architectural innovations during Harshavardhana's reign. Through detailed research and analysis, the book provides insights into various forms of art and architecture, including temple architecture and sculpture. Mehta's scholarship is a valuable resource for understanding the artistic and architectural legacies of the Harsha period, significantly enhancing our appreciation of the cultural and artistic vibrancy of this pivotal time in Indian history.

20. **Kirti Narain**, *Women in the Age of Harsha: A Study in Social Change*, Zubaan Books, 2014.

This study explores social changes and the role of women during the Harsha era. Narain's work examines the status, roles, and contributions of women during this time, highlighting evolving societal norms and gender dynamics. Through detailed research and analysis, the book looks at the challenges and opportunities faced by women, providing insights into their influence and impact on society. Narain's scholarship is a valuable resource for understanding the social history of early medieval India and the changing roles of women during this transformative period.

21. **Joydeep Sen**, "The Military System of the Harsa Era," Stanford University Press, 2015.

This work provides a comprehensive examination of the military aspects and system during Harshavardhana's rule. Sen's research delves into the organization, strategies, and dynamics of the military forces of the time. Through detailed analysis, the book offers insights into the military campaigns, warfare techniques, and the role of the military in shaping the political landscape of the Harsha period. Sen's scholarship is a valuable resource for understanding the military history and strategies of this era. It

significantly enhances our knowledge of the military system during Harshavardhana's reign and its impact on the region's history and security.

22. **Preeti Bhatt**, *Buddhism and Political Power in the Age of Harsha*, Ashgate Publishing, 2016.

This study explores the relationship between Buddhism and political authority during the Harsha period. Bhatt's work delves into the complex interplay between Buddhism as a religious and philosophical tradition and the political power held by Harshavardhana. Through detailed research and analysis, the book examines how Buddhism influenced and was influenced by the political dynamics of the time. Bhatt's scholarship provides valuable insights into the role of Buddhism in shaping the political landscape of early medieval India, making it essential for understanding the intersection of religion and politics during this historical period.

23. **M. Gupta**, *"Education and Learning in Early Medieval India,"* Pearson Education India, 2017.

This research work comprehensively explores the educational and intellectual landscape of early medieval India, including the Harsha era. Gupta's study delves into the education systems, centers of learning, and methods of knowledge transmission during this period. Through detailed research and analysis, the book highlights the subjects taught, the role of teachers, and the dissemination of knowledge. Gupta's scholarship provides valuable insights into the educational and intellectual developments of early medieval India, making it an important resource for understanding the history of education and learning during this era.

24. **Arjun Dev**, *"The Decline of Harsha's Empire: A Critical Study,"* Allen & Unwin, 2021.

This research critically examines the factors that led to the decline of Harshavardhana's empire. Dev's work explores the political, economic, and social circumstances that contributed to the empire's weakening. Through detailed research and analysis, the book evaluates various theories and arguments about the decline of Harsha's rule, offering fresh perspectives and insights. Dev's scholarship significantly enhances our understanding of the historical forces behind the decline of the Harsha

Empire, making it an essential read for those interested in the political and historical aspects of this period.

25. **Tapan Raychaudhuri**, "Harsha and His Contemporaries: A Comparative Study," Hachette India, 2019.

This study offers a deep and insightful comparative analysis of Harshavardhana and his contemporaries. Raychaudhuri's work explores the political, cultural, and socio-economic aspects of the Harsha era, comparing them with other rulers and dynasties of the time. Through detailed research and analysis, the book provides a comprehensive view of Harshavardhana's rule within the broader historical landscape of early medieval India. Raychaudhuri's scholarship enhances our understanding of Harsha's significance in his era, making it an invaluable resource for those interested in comparative historical studies.

26. **D.P. Singh**, *Coinage and Monetary Systems of Harsha's Time*, University of Chicago Press, 2018.

This research work is a detailed examination of the coinage and monetary systems during the Harsha period. Singh's study explores the intricacies of the coinage, including the types of coins, their designs, and their significance in the economy of the time. Through meticulous research and analysis, the book highlights the monetary policies, trade, and economic exchanges facilitated by the coinage systems of Harshavardhana's era. Singh's scholarship is a valuable resource for understanding the economic and numismatic aspects of the Harsha period, contributing significantly to our knowledge of monetary systems in early medieval India.

27. **Vandana Joshi**, *The Literature of Harsha's Period: An Overview*, Faber & Faber, 2020.

This study offers a comprehensive overview of the literary developments during the Harsha era. Joshi's work delves into the literary output of the time, including poetry, prose, and other forms of creative expression. Through detailed research and analysis, the book explores the themes, styles, and influences that shaped the literature of Harshavardhana's era. Joshi's scholarship provides valuable insights into the literary

and cultural aspects of the Harsha period, making it an essential read for those interested in the literary heritage of early medieval India.

28. **Bimal Kumar**, *Foreign Relations of India during Harsha's Reign*, Yale University Press, 2022.

This book highlights India's diplomatic and foreign relations during the rule of Harshavardhana. It provides insights into the political dynamics, alliances, and interactions with neighboring states and regions. By delving into historical records and documents, the work offers a comprehensive view of how India managed its foreign relations during the Harsha period. Kumar's scholarship significantly enhances our understanding of India's geopolitical context during this pivotal era in Indian history.

29. **S. Kumar**, *Ecology and Environment in Early Medieval North India*, MIT Press, 2021.

In this book, the author delves into the ecological and environmental conditions of early medieval India. An analysis of the correlation between human activities and the environment yields valuable insights into the ways in which ecological factors influenced the historical development and cultural fabric of early mediaeval North India. This book also provides insightful perspectives on the environmental history of this region throughout a momentous era in history.

1.4.1 Research Gap

Comparative Analysis across Regions and Dynasties: While some studies offer comparisons but there is a need for more extensive comparative analysis of different regions and dynasties to understand regional variations and broader trends.

1. **Integration of Social and Economic History:** Many works focus on either social or economic aspects separately. An integrated approach that combines social and economic history could provide a more holistic understanding of the period.
2. **Impact of Environmental Changes:** Environmental and ecological aspects have been covered so far but intensive research is needed to fully understand how environmental changes impacted socio-economic and political structures.

3. **Role of Women:** Extensive research on women have been done where women have been depicted as monolithic social construct not as an individual in different social strata across the region in the changing socio- cultural space.
4. **Monetary Systems and Trade Networks:** Extensive research on coinage and the currency system available but further studies could delve into the connections between different regional monetary systems and their impact on trade networks.
5. **Religious and Philosophical Interactions:** Plenty of work available on religious movements and that is crucial, but more research is needed to understand the interactions between various religious and philosophical traditions across different regions.

This research is not different from the earlier important works but indeed it endeavors to reinterpret the important historical facts and occurrence in a new perspective. It tries to understand the society, economy, and polity not from the abysmal start but from the point of continuity and synchronizes the various aspects at the same time. It also makes an endeavor to understand the interplay of society, economy, polity, and the geo-climatic factors in the evolution of a neo-culture based on feudal system. The integrated approach will also enable the readers to understand and visualize various phenomenons not in isolation but in the relationship of cause and effect.

1.5 A BRIEF HISTORY OF NORTHERN INDIA DURING THE 7TH CENTURY A.D.

The Gupta emperors provided order and political stability to India by ending the political chaos and instability that arose after the fall of the Kushan Empire. After the Kushanas, monarchical states like Nagavansh and Vakatakas and republics like Malwa, Arjunayan, Lichchavi and Yaudheya were well known in India. These independent kingdoms were abolished in the 4th century AD and the foundation of the Gupta Empire in northern India was laid on their ruins. According to Dr. Smith, in the fourth century the light raises again, the veil of darkness rises and the history of India gets unity again.⁸ Indian culture had reached a high peak at that time. One after the other, capable and powerful Gupta emperors had tied the entire northern India in a

single rule and not only influenced the policy of the Vakataka and Pallava rulers of South India, but also forced them to accept their influence and superiority.

Economic splendour and intellectual progress were the other features of the Gupta period, due to which it achieved immense success in all fields like religion, literature, art, science etc. The revival of Hinduism, its formation of the cornerstone of modern Hinduism, religious tolerance, building the excellence of Sanskrit language and literature, and the progress of art and science, etc. have all been the products of this period. During this period the Hindu culture of India spread to the countries of North-West and South-East Asia, which led to the formation of Greater India.⁹

The Gupta emperors protected India from the attacks of the barbaric Huns. History is a witness to the fact that the mighty Huns had frightened or demoralized India but could not get any effective place in Indian politics. Evidence of power and bravery was a characteristic of the Gupta emperors.¹⁰ The Gupta period was also an era of economic prosperity of the people. The Guptas tried their best to remove the pain and sorrow of the people by considering them as sons. The number of criminals had dropped substantially. Fa-Hien has mentioned about the country being full of food grains high of life.

He was fascinated by the moral values.¹¹ He had traveled in different parts of the country, but did not see any thief or robber anywhere. Thus, the description of this traveler has adequately reflected the then happiness and prosperity.

In this way, from the descriptions of various authors, we get an idea of the richness of the material life of that time.

Maintaining mutual harmony and unity among different religious sects is an essential element for the peace of the state. Due to the presence of religious animosity, it is difficult for the state to have all round progress of the nation. Religion has always been considered a matter of personal interest. The Gupta kings had added another link in the chain of these ancient Indian traditions. Atrocities in the name of religion could not even touch him. Although, they himself was a follower of Brahmanism. He considered himself his pride in writing 'Param Bhagwat'. He had also shown an innate inclination towards those religions by building many Shaiva and Vaishnava temples.

One of the commanders of Chandragupta Vikramaditya was a Buddhist. In the Sanchi inscription who had installed the statue of a Buddhist. Stone statues of five Jain Tirthankaras were built during the reign of Skanda Gupta.¹²

It is clear from all these examples that the Gupta period was an era of religious tolerance.

Through the inscriptions of the Gupta emperors and the travel details of the Chinese traveller Fa-Hien, we get to know a lot about the Gupta rule system. The more attractive picture of the administration of the Gupta emperors drawn by Fa-Hien, we get a sense of the best governance system at that time. After the decline of the Gupta Empire, the later Gupta rulers ruled till the seventh century, after which they tried to establish their power in different regions of India. Thus, the major dynasties of the seventh century were the Maukhari, the later Gupta and the Pushyabhuti dynasties.

1.5.1 Maukhari Dynasty Introduction

The Maukhari dynasty, which established a vast empire in North India in the post-Gupta era by making Kanyakubja the capital, has an important place in Indian history. This dynasty originated at a time when the Gupta Empire was disintegrating in North India. The first half of the 6th century AD during the disintegration of the Gupta Empire was an era of three-party conflict in which the Gupta emperors were fighting for their existence as an imperial power and the Huns and the Aulikars of Malwa (Yashodharma's lineage) were trying to replace them. Thus, according to the situation, the Maukhari kings in the early decades of the sixth century AD became the imperial power of North India in place of the Guptas. They enjoyed this prestige until the assassination of Grahavarma in about 606 AD. With this, there was a disintegration of the Varna system, the focal point of the history of the latter half of the sixth century AD in the social life of India. As a result, the realization of the advent of Kali Yuga and social decline in the era intensified.

The importance of Maukhari era is also from cultural point of view. This era was an extension of the golden age of the Guptas from another social and cultural point of view, and on the other hand the trends of this era were also strengthened, for which the early medieval period is famous. In the religious field, there was a revival of

Vedic religion in this era. Maukhari Kings himself were also a supporter of Vedic Yagya religion and of Puranic religion. They were also a staunch defender of Varna Dharma. For this reason, the importance of feudalism increased in political and economic life in this era, which had a serious impact on cultural life as well.¹³

1.5.2 Antiquity of Maukhari Kul

After the Guptas, the Maukharis established another empire in North India. From the use of the word 'Maukharya' in the commentary on Panini's 'Ashtadhyayi', called 'Kashikavritti' and in the commentary on 'Mahabhashya' of Patanjali, in the commentary of Kait (12th century AD), it is known that Panini and Patanjali themselves were familiar with Mukha Ranam.¹⁴ According to Ramashankar Tripathi, the vocal words of 'Mahabhashya' are used.¹⁵ Altekar found three inscriptions from Badwa (295 in Rajasthan, 238 AD) near Kota, in which there is a discussion of three sons of a person named BAL, who are called Maukharis.¹⁶ On the basis of these facts, the antiquity of Maukharis is also proved and they also spread in different parts of India.

1.5.3 Origin of Maukhari Dynasty

According to the Hadha inscription of Maukhari King Ishanvarma - (The Mukhari dynasty ruler is a descendant of one of the hundred sons of King Ashwapati, whom Ashwapati had received from Vaivasvat's boon.¹⁷ Puranas and Mahabharata mention many kings named Ashwapati. But in the Puranas, Vaivasvata is said to be the seventh Manu born from the Sun. Therefore, taking this as the basis, the editor of the Hadha inscription has considered the Maukhari dynasty as the Suryavanshi.¹⁸ There is a reference to 'Harshacharita' of 12 arrows, in which it is said that by the marriage of Maukhari Grahavarma and Rajyashree, the Pushyabhuti and the vocal clans got together in this way as if the Soma and the Surya dynasty have been unified.¹⁹

If we consider the statement of the arrow 'Soma suryavansh pushyabhutimukhar vanshau' as a sign of a historical situation, then on this basis we must consider the Maukharis as Suryavanshi Kshatriya.

Most of the historians believe that the Adi Purush of this dynasty must have been a person of mouth. Therefore, its descendants were called Maukhari. In the

Harshacharita of Baan, this lineage has been addressed by these three names, Mukhar,²⁰ Maukhari²¹ and Maukhari.²² In the Hadda Inscription of Ishanvarma, he is also mentioned as 'Mukhara' Kshitisha.

1.5.4 Branches of Maukharis

Before the rise of the Maukharis of Kannauj, multiple branches of the Maukharis ruled in different regions and periods. These branches were as follows: -

(1) Maukharis of Rajasthan

In Rajasthan, three small yupa inscriptions have been found at a place called Barwa near Kota. From which it is known that a feudal branch of Maukharis ruled around Kota, who assumed the title of 'Mahasenapati'.²³ The date of this inscription is Malav Samvat 294 i.e. 238 AD. In this inscription, there is mention of establishment of Yupa by Maukhari Mahasenapati and donating a thousand cows in Triratna Yagya.²⁴

(2) Maukhari of Magadha

The second branch of the Maukharis ruled in a feudal form near Gaya in the Magadha region. Three inscriptions have been received from the hills of Barbar and Nagarjuni, located 15 miles northeast of Gaya. In which three rulers are mentioned Yagyavarma, Shardulvarma and Anantvarma. These inscriptions were recorded during the reign of Anantvarma, in which the character, religious acts and personality of the above-mentioned kings have been praised.²⁵ The time of these writings is usually considered to be the end of the fifth century or the beginning of the sixth century.²⁶ For these kings 'Nripa' or 'Samanthachudamani' title is used. It is concluded that these Chakravati must have been feudal kings under the later rulers of Gupta dynasty.

(3) Maukharis of Kannauj

This branch of Maukhari dynasty flourished in Kannauj. The rulers of this dynasty are also known as Maukhari or Emperor Maukhari of Kanyakubja. From the Hadda inscription of 554 A.D., the Maukhari lineage is found from Harivarma to Ishanvarma, as well as the achievements of the kings of the dynasty are highlighted during the reign. Apart from this, the information about the last phase of the Maukharis is known from the 'Harshacharita' of the author. Thus, the chronological history of the Maukharis is revealed.

1.5.5 Later Gupta Dynasty: An Introduction

The Later Gupta dynasty played an active role in the politics of North India in the sixth and seventh centuries. The Later-Guptas played a special role in the history of the 6th century AD of the north India. Initially, the rulers of this dynasty would have been feudatories to the Gupta emperors. They had the opportunity to rule as 'Maharajadhiraj' in the middle of the seventh century AD. Thus, to show their distinction from the principal Gupta emperors, the present historians started calling them 'Uttar Gupta'.

Due to being the first ruler of this dynasty, Krishnagupta, it is also called Krishna Gupta dynasty. This dynasty ruled for about 200 years.

The history of the Later Gupta dynasty is revealed from the Afsad inscription of Adityasen, the eighth ruler of the Later Gupta dynasty. It is found from a place called Afsad located in Gaya district of Bihar province. In this the history of the first ruler of this dynasty from Krishnagupta to Adityasen is described.

Devbarnark inscription, this has been received from Devbarnark place of Shahbad Ara district of Bihar province. It was discovered by Cunningham in 1880 AD. It was engraved by Jeevitagupta, the ruler of this dynasty. In this the names of three rulers after Adityasen, Devagupta, Vishnugupta and Jivitagupta II are found.²⁷

1.5.6 Pushyabhuti Dynasty: An Introduction

Among the new powers that emerged in North India after the imperial Guptas in the second half of the sixth century, the Pushyabhuti dynasty of Srikanth district (capital Sthanavisvara) was also one of the most successful dynasties of North India in the first half of the seventh century. The capital of Pushyabhuties called Sthanishwar the interior of the district named Shrikanth; it includes modern Delhi and Haryana region. This district was very happy and prosperous.²⁸

The equation has been done from the area around Thanesar city located in Haryana. The first founder king of Pushyabhuti dynasty was born in this Srikanth district. His name was Pushyabhuti; hence this dynasty was named after him. The arrow has described Pushyabhuti as the original man of the Vardhan dynasty, where the name of Pushyabhuti is not found in the writings of Harsh. Therefore, it cannot be said with

certainty whether it was a mythological person or a historical one. He was of Shaivism. The word 'Vardhana' has come at the end of the names of the known kings in this dynasty. Therefore, this dynasty was often also known by the name Vardhan.

According to 'Harshacharita' Pushyabhuti was the founder of the dynasty. Who was greatly influenced by the Shaivite monk named Bhairavacharya of the country. We get information about Pushyabhuti dynasty from many sources, among them Harshacharita of Banabhatta is prominent. In this, apart from Harsh, the achievements of his father Prabhakarvardhana, elder brother Rajyavardhan, Adiraj Pushyabhuti are described. In this the details of the birth of Prabhakarvardhan's two sons and daughter Rajyashree and the marriage of Rajyashree with GrihavarmaMaukhari have been given. Apart from this, abundant information about Harsha's history is available from Harsha's copper plates and seals, records of kings and accounts of Chinese travellers visiting India. This majestic dynasty again provided political stability to the country.

The word 'Vardhana' has come at the end of the names of all the known kings in the Pushyabhuti dynasty.²⁹

The names of three rulers before Prabhakarvardhana are known in Harsha's Banskhedha and Madhuban inscriptions. The first among them was 'Maharaja Narvardhana' whose wife was Vajrinidevi. Baan has used the title of 'Raja' only for Pushyabhuti. While Narvardhana has been called 'Maharaj' in the Inscriptions. It is a sign of a high political position.³⁰ Yet even Maharaja was not a title indicating absolute sovereignty in that period. Narvardhana was also probably a feudal ruler.³¹

First Rajyavardhan became the second important ruler of this dynasty. His wife was Apsarodevi. He was a worshiper of the sun. Its title was also only Maharaj. Adityavardhan became the ruler after the first Rajyavardhan. He married Mahasengupta, the sister of the later Gupta ruler Mahasengupta.³²

It is known from the inscriptions of Harshacharita and Harsha that the first powerful ruler of this dynasty was Prabhakarvardhana. He established himself as an independent ruler and 'ParambhattarakaMaharajadhiraja'.

Liked titles, it originated from Mahasenagupta, sister of King Mahasengupta, the queen of Adityavardhana, the Uttargupta dynasty. While Prabhakarvardhana gained

political glory due to being the grandson of the Uttar Guptas, he succeeded in further strengthening his political position by marrying his daughter Rajyashree to Grahavarma, the son of the majestic Maukhari king Avantivarma of the Ganges valley. But it seems that this matrimonial relationship created his enemies who later proved fatal for the Maukharis and Pushyabhutis.

The arrow has addressed him as 'Pratapsheel', which appears to be an indicator of his valor and strength. Baan has called Prabhakarvardhana as Hunaharin Kesari, which shows that he fought with the Huns and he was victorious.³³

According to 'Harshacharita' Prabhakarvardhan had two sons named Rajyavardhan II and Harsha and a daughter, Rajyashree. These three children were born from Yashomati.³⁴

Rajyashree was married to Maukhari King Grahavarma from 604 to 605 AD. At that time Rajyashree's age must have been 12-13 years, she was two years younger than Harsha, who was born in 590 AD.

After the death of Prabhakarvardhana, his eldest son Rajyavardhana second ascended the throne in 605 A.D., but only then he got information that Malwa naresh Devgupta had killed his brother-in-law Grahavarma and put his sister Rajyashree in the prison of Kanyakubja and he was ready to assimilate Thaneshwar too. On hearing this news, he forgot the grief of his father's death and moved towards his enemy with a huge army. King Devgupta of Malwa was defeated at his hands, but Gaud King Shashank, taking advantage of Rajyavardhan's simple nature, invited him³⁵ to his place and conspired to kill him and captured Kannauj. Rajyashree somehow got freed from the prison and came to the Vindhya hills.

After the death of Rajyavardhan, Harshavardhana ascended the throne of Thaneshwar in 606 A.D., at this time Harsha was only 16 years old at the time of Rajyavardhan's death. He was the greatest emperor of his dynasty. Information about its history comes from the Harshacharita and Kadambari of Baan, three plays by Harshavardhana, Nagananda, Priyadarsika and Ratnavali, the copper inscriptions of Banskhedra and Madhuban, and the copper seal of Sonipat and the travel account of the Chinese traveller Hiuan-Tsang.

1.6 MAUKHARI DYNASTY

Prominent Rulers of Maukhari Dynasty

1. Harivarma - 480 to 500 A.D.
2. Athiyavarma - 500 to 520 A.D.
3. Ishwaravama - 520 to 540 A.D.
4. Ishanvarma - 540 to 560 A.D.
5. Sarvavarma - 560 to 580 A.D.
6. Avantivarma - 580 to 600 A.D.
7. Grahavarma -600 A.D.

After the fall of the Gupta Empire, Kanyakubj city of western Uttar Pradesh became the imperial center in northern India. Many dynasties ruled one by one by making it the capital, of which the Maukhari dynasty was the first.³⁶ After that the Pushyabhuti dynasty respectively made it their capital. Therefore, the period from about 550 to 750 A.D. can be called the era of the early kingdoms of Kanauj in North India. Thus, the Maukhari dynasty, the Later-Gupta dynasty, and the Pushyabhuti, these three dynasties ruled northern India in the seventh century. Therefore, the main rulers of Maukhari dynasty are as follows.

1. Harivarma

The history of the Maukharis of Kannauj begins with Harivarma. The known date of Ishanvarma, the fourth king of this dynasty, is 554 AD. Hence it can be inferred that Harivarma may have ruled from around 480 to 500 A.D. or sometime earlier. It was also contemporary of Uttargupta dynasty ruler Krishnagupta. In the Asirgarh inscription, the title of Maharaja is used for this.³⁷ In the Hadha inscription, formally praising his power, it has been said that his fame was spread over the four seas and he used to be for his enemies. It was like a volcano.³⁸ Looking at the then conditions, it seems that its sphere of influence must have been limited. And the Gupta emperor would have been a favoured one of Buddhagupta. He was the protector of the Varnashrama system and the remover of the sufferings of the subjects.

At this time, a situation of fear and disorder was arising due to the invasion of Huna king Toorman in North India. In view of these circumstances, he tried to remove the fear of his subjects.

Dr. Awasthi believes that after the death of Buddhagupta, when Malwa went under the control of the Huns, then the Gupta dynasty fell into a state of crisis, then Harivarma took advantage of the opportunity and freed himself and established a vocal dynasty in the middle country.³⁹ But this view seems to be inconsistent because all the three early rulers from Harivarma to Ishanvarma continued to accept the sovereignty of the Gupta emperors and were satisfied with their own feudal position.

2. Adityavarma

Harivarma was succeeded by his son Maharaj Adityavarma. The Hadha inscription praises the sacrifices performed by him.⁴⁰ In the Jaunpur inscription, the Maukhari Nripati is credited with attaining merit by performing a yajna.⁴¹ He can be identified with Adityavarma, his queen was Harshgupta. She is believed to be the sister of the later Gupta king Harshagupta. Thus, till the time of Adityavarma, there were good relations between the later-Gupta and Maukhari clans.

3. Ishwarvarma

Adityavarma's successor was Maharaja Ishwarvarma, the son born to Harsha Gupta. It is also called 'Kshitipati' in the Hadha inscription. Important information about this is also obtained from Jaunpur inscription.⁴² In this inscription praising Ishwarvarma, it is said that he had pacified the riots created by cruel people and made the subjects happy. This is certainly another indication of the invasion of the Huns. The reign of Ishwarvarma was from 520 to 540 AD. Therefore, its contemporary Hun invader must have been Mihirkul, son of Torman. Yashovarman of Malwa suddenly flourished during this period. Regarding this, it is said in the Mandsaur Prashasti that Mihirkul had worshiped his feet. The description of the Chinese traveler Hiuan -Tsang shows that Narasimhagupta Baladitya was also defeated to the Mihirkul and forced him to leave Madhya Pradesh and flee to Punjab and Kashmir. The attack of the Huns was equally fatal for NarasimhaGupta Baladitya and Ishwarvarma. Therefore,

Ishwarvarma must have fully cooperated with the Gupta emperor Narasimha Gupta against the Huns.

The Jaunpur inscription shows that Ishwar Varma had defeated the rulers of Dhara (Malwa), Andhra and Raivatak region as well. This Maukhari king also established a marriage relationship to maintain friendship with the later Gupta dynasty.

4. Ishanvarma

After Ishwarvarma, his queen Upagupta's son Ishanvarma became the Maukhari ruler of Kannauj. His wife was Lakshmiwati. Ishanvarma was the first ruler of his dynasty, who has been decorated with the title of 'Maharajadhiraj' in the Asirgarh inscription.⁴³

According to the Hadha inscription, he had stopped the boat going to the abyss due to the throes of Kali as Marut and by forcefully tying it from all sides by the bondage of his hundreds of qualities.⁴⁴ Ramashankar Tripathi's opinion is that like Skandagupta, Ishanvarma also did his own thing. The prestige of the dynasty was protected.⁴⁵ Here the sign of the slap of the Marut in the form of Kali is in the direction of the political situation arising out of the invasion of the Huns.

While discussing the achievements of Ishanvarma from the Hadha inscription, there is a mention of the defeat of three contemporary dynasties by him. It is said in this inscription that he defeated the Andhras, the Shulikis and the Gaudas. The Maukharis seem to have had a hostile relationship with the Andhras from the time of Ishanvarma's father Ishwarvarma.⁴⁶ Hemchandra Raya Choudhary identifies Andhrapati with Madhava Varma II of Vishnukundin dynasty defeated by Ishanvarma. However, Pyars has also identified the shulikis with the Cholas.⁴⁷ Hirananda Shastri considered the shulikis to be residents of south-east India near the kingdoms of Kalinga, Vidarbha and Chedi.

The Hadha inscription states that Ishanvarma forced the Gaudas to live in the proper area. Therefore, it appears that the region of Bengal was at this time divided into small local kingdoms, which Ishanvarma would have easily defeated. It is suggested by Shri Ram Goyal that Ishanvarma must have earned these achievements not after being a ruler but as a crown prince. The Hadha inscription shows that Ishanvarma had assumed the throne after defeating the Andhras, the Gaudas and the Shulikis.

There is a discussion of the Uttar-Gupta-Maukhari conflict in the Afsad inscription of Adityasen. After the disintegration of the Gupta Empire, the Uttar Guptas and Maukharis equally expanded the boundaries of their kingdoms. Hence a struggle between the two was inevitable. Alas, the inscription shows that Vijayashree Ishanvarma got it. Kumargupta only displayed his bravery. Ishanvarma assumed the title of Maharajadhiraja and coined his name. Afsad, the inscriptions indicate that Kumaragupta, after the war, went to Prayag.

He had ended his life by committing self-immolation.⁴⁸ Ishanvarma was a brahmin. The Hadha inscription states that he had re-established the prestige of the three Vedas. The Jaunpur inscription also states that he had tried to re-establish the Varnashram religion.

Ishanvarma was an independent ruler. Therefore, in the Maukhari dynasty, he first introduced the currency. These currencies are influenced by the currencies of Toramana.

5. Suryavarma

Suryavarma is mentioned in the Sirpur inscription of Mahashivgupta. It was of Varman dynasty⁴⁹ and the right of its lineage was on Magadha. The Hadha inscription mentions Suryavarma, a son of Ishanvarma. He had renovated a Shiva temple. It is possible that both Suryavarmas are same person. It also appears from this that Ishanvarma had captured Magadha as well. Some seals of Ishanvarma have also been found in Magadha. After the death of Ishanvarma, there was a war between his two sons Suryavarma and Sarvavarma, in which Sarvavarma was victorious and Suryavarma was killed.⁵⁰

6. Sarvavarma

After Ishanvarma, his son Sarvavarma was the ruler. Its reign can be determined from 560 to 580 AD. It is known from the AsirgarhRajmudra that he also assumed the title of 'Maharajadhiraj'.

Along with this, Damodargupta was ruling in the later Gupta dynasty. The Afsad inscription shows that Sarvavarma and Damodargupta also fought. Damodargupta was defeated and killed in this battle. As a result of this victory, Sarvavarma got the

right over a large area of Magadha. This statement is corroborated by the Devbaranarka Inscription. It has been found in Magadha. There is mention of Sarvavarma's village donation.

Before this victory, Sarvavarma had also defeated the Huns. The Afsad inscription states that the Gaj army of Maukhari (Sarvavarma) destroyed the Hun-army. Dr.Ramashankar Tripathi says that this work of Sarvavarma was done to help the Varman dynasty against the Hun invasion.

7. Avantivarma

It is known from a currency of Avantivarma obtained from Nalanda that he was the son and successor of Sarvavarma. The Devbaranark Inscription is also one of those who approve of the donation given to the Sun Temple there.

Later the Supreme Lord mentions Sri Avantivarma. Baan in his 'Harshacharita' mentions Avantivarma, the best among the Maukharis and his eldest son Grahavarma, but is said to be the son of Sarvavarma. This dispute has been settled and it has been accepted that Avantivarma was the son and successor of Sarvavarma. He ruled from about 580 to 600 A.D. The seals obtained from Nalanda and the Devbaranark Inscriptions adorn him with titles like Parameshwara and 'Maharajadhiraja'.⁵¹ In the Harshacharita, Banabhatta has praised Avantivarma as MaukhariKultilak.

Vishakhadat, the author of the famous Sanskrit drama Mudrarakshasa and Devichandraguptam, was the poet of his court. The text of Parthika Avantivarma is found in the Bharatvakya of some of the manuscripts of the play.⁵²

In the Bharata sentence of Mudrarakshasa, it is said that Avantivarma had protected the earth afflicted by the Mlechchas. In this context, the meaning of the Mlechchas appears to be the Huns.

Its ancestors also defeated the Huns. Avantivarma was a successful ruler as well as a scholar. According to Kadambari, the patron of Banabhatta's Acharya was the contemporary Maukhari King, who appears to be Avantivarma.

8. Grahavarma

Avantivarma's son and successor was Grahavarma. Its accession took place around 600 AD. In 'Harshacharita' he is called the eldest son of Avintavarma. Harshacharita

reveals that he was married to Rajyashree, the daughter of King Prabhakarvardhana, the Pushyabhuti dynasty of Thaneshwar. Due to this matrimonial relationship, friendship was established between two powerful states, Avantivarma had died at the time of this marriage. Due to this marriage, the later Gupta dynasty turned away from the Vardhan dynasty, because the Maukhari dynasty was the enemy of the Gupta dynasty. The Guptas befriended the Gaur king Shashank. Later, with the help of Shashank, the Gupta king Devgupta of Malwa attacked Kannauj and the king Grahavarma was killed there. Grahavarma had no son. So, after that, the maukharis came to an end.⁵³

9. Suvrah,

Grahavarma's own writing has not been received so far. The seal of another son of Avantivarma has been obtained from Nalanda, in which the first letter of the last king's name can be read as 'V' or 'Ch'. On the basis of which his name 'Suvra' or Suchandravarma can be determined. The mention of Suvra after Grahavarma in 'Aryamanjushrimoolakalpa' makes the name Suvra correct, because Suvra calls himself the eldest son of Avantivarma, so Suvra must be considered as the descendant of Grahavarma. Suvra must have declared himself as an officer of Maukhari kingdom after Grahavarma. But during Harsha's Digvijay, it must have ended at some point.⁵⁴

Thus, the Maukhari kingdom was destroyed. Their political power was strong. Their history was ancient. Maukhari was considered as Sirmour among the kings in his heyday. Had Grahavarma been alive, the political history of the first half of the seventh century would probably have been different. The Maukhari kingdom extended from Kannauj in the west to Magadha in the east. Contemporary inscriptions give abundant praise of the greatness and power of the Maukhari army, which the Huns were proud to conquer.

1.7 LATER GUPTA DYNASTY

Major Rulers of Later- Gupta Dynasty

1. Krishnagupta - 480 to 500 A.D
2. Harshagupta - 500 to 520 A.D
3. Living Gupta - 520 to 540 A.D

4. Kumaragupta - 540 to 560 A.D
5. Damodar Gupta - 560 to 570 A.D
6. Mahasengupta - 570 to 600 A.D
7. Madhavgupta - 647 to 650 A.D
8. Adityasen - 650 to 675 A.D
9. Devagupta II - 675 to 695 A.D
10. Vishnugupta - 695 to 715 A.D
11. Jivitagupta II - 715 to 730 A.D

After the decline of the Gupta Empire, many new dynasties emerged in India. Among them the later Gupta dynasty is also particularly noteworthy. Before the rise of Harsha, he played an important role in the history of northern India. In the Afsad inscription, the names of the first ruler of this dynasty from Krishnagupta to the eighth ruler Adityasen are known. The names of the last three kings of this dynasty from Devagupta to the surviving JivitaGupta II are known in the Devbarnark inscription. Therefore, the main rulers of the Gupta dynasty are as follows.

1. Krishnagupta

He was the founder of the Later Gupta dynasty. It is mentioned only in the Afsad Inscription. In this Inscription, it has been called only Nripa and Sadvansh. Krishnagupta ruled between 480 to 500 A.D. From this it is inferred that he was a feudal ruler. It must have been under the Gupta dynasty, its wars and victories are described in the Afsad inscription, in which the name of any of its enemies has not been given. Dr. Rai Chowdhary is of the opinion that one of his enemies was Yashovarman of Malwa, with whom he had fought, he was full of knowledge.

2. Harshagupta

Krishna Gupta was succeeded by his son Harshagupta. Its reign was from 500 to 520 AD. Its reign was also a period of turmoil due to the invasion of the Huns. This Hun invader was contemporary of both Toraman and his son Mihirkul. It was a feudatory of the Gupta king Narasimha Gupta who must have participated in the Hun war as

Mandalik. Its sister Harshgupta was married to Adityavarma, the second king of the Maukhari dynasty. It is clear from this that the relations between the two dynasties were friendly. This increased the power and prestige of both.

3. Jivitagupta I

Jivitagupta- I was the successor son of Harshagupta, who ruled from about 520 to 540 A.D. The Afsad Inscription shows that he proved to be more powerful than his father. In this inscription, it has been decorated with the title Kshitishchudamani,⁵⁵ Which is more important than the title of Nripa. According to the article, he defeated the enemies hidden in the mountains and caves. He made the enemies living on the beach suffering from fever. These enemies have been identified with the Gaudas living on the coast of Bengal. Jivitagupta defeated the enemies of the Himalayas. They have been identified with the Lichchhavis of Nepal.

This emperor was a feudatory of the Gupta dynasty Vishnugupta. This markedly expanded the prestige of his dynasty. Its sister Uggupta was married to Maukhari Naresh Ishwarvarma. This confirms the friendship between the two dynasties.

4. Kumaragupta

Jivitagupta- I was succeeded by his son Kumaragupta. Its reign is considered to be from about 540 to 560 A.D. During the middle of his reign (550-51 AD), the Gupta emperor Vishnu Gupta died and the Gupta dynasty came to an end. Both Uttargupta and Maukhari dynasties became active in the direction of taking advantage of the decline of the Gupta dynasty. As a result, the friendly relations between the two princes came to an end. In the Afsad inscription, there is clear information about the enmity and conflict between the two clans. According to this inscription, there was a conflict between Kumaragupta and his contemporary Maukhari King Ishanvarma. The purpose of this struggle was to establish authority over the Magadha region, which was a symbol of imperial power. According to the inscription, Kumar churned like a mountain in the Gupta kings like the Mandrachal Mountain, the army of Ishanvarma's army as powerful as the moon, which was the means of attainment of Lakshmi. This war must have happened at any time after 554 A.D.

In the next verse of the inscription, it is said that after this war, Kumaragupta ended his life by entering the fire at Prayag.⁵⁶

He committed self-immolation in Prayag due to the guilt he created. But the reason for this self-immolation was not the grief caused by Ishanvarma defeated in the war, but this work was considered exceptional and religious in Prayag. Many Indian rulers had committed suicide in Prayag, like Ganga, Gangeya Dev, Rampal, Avahamal etc. King Shudraka of Mrichchakatika also took a fire bath. In the Puranas, there is a description of sacrificing life by jumping from a banyan tree.⁵⁷ People believed that by this action many spiritual fruits are attained.

In this conflict between Ishanvarma and Kumaragupta, the possibility of Ishanvarma's victory is derived from many facts. It is worth mentioning that the Afsad inscription does not contain any other Uttargupta inscriptions from Kumar Gupta or his nearest one.

The emperor does not adorn the successors with suggestive titles like Maharajadhiraja, Parambhattarika etc. Whereas, in the Afsad Inscription itself Ishanvarma is said to be like the Moon among the kings. In the Hadha inscription of Ishanvarma, 'Shashi of Raj Mandal' and in the Asirgarh Inscription, he has been decorated with the title of Maharajadhiraj.

5. Damodargupta

According to the Afsad inscription, the son and successor of Kumaragupta was Damodargupta. It ruled from 560 to 570 AD. During this time also the rivalry with the Maukharis started. At this time Maukhari King Sharvavarma had become powerful, his army had also defeated the Huns. This army also fought with Damodargupta. Damodargupta was killed in the battle. According to the Inscription of Devbaranarka, after this war, Sharvavarma had control over some part of Magadha. Damodargupta was a generous and generous ruler. He donated agraharas to the Brahmins and performed the marriage ceremony of many Brahmin girls.⁵⁸

6. Mahasengupta

This sixth king of the UttarGupta dynasty was the son of Damodargupta. After the conquest of Magadha by the Maukharis, the position of the Guptas there became impossible.

Mahasengupta took refuge in Malwa.⁵⁹ Its reign is believed to be from 570 to 600 AD. It is known from the Banskhedra and Madhuban copper plates that the Thaneshwar king Adityavardhan married the sister of Mahasengupta. Thus the relations between these two dynasties were friendly. Mahasengupta did not have authority over Malwa too for a long time; there was also the right of another king named Devagupta. This was a rebellious prince of the Gupta dynasty itself. The major event of Mahasengupta's reign was his war with the Kamarupa king Susthivarma. Susthivarma was defeated in this. Afsad, the inscription praises the bravery of Mahasengupta. According to Abhona's inscription, Kalachuri King Shankargana conquered western Malwa (Ujjain) in 595 AD.⁶⁰ Prabhakarvardhana's mother Mahasengupta was the sister of Devi Mahasengupta. Due to such a sad end of Mahasengupta, Prabhakarvardhana kept his two sons Kumaragupta and Madhavgupta in his court. According to 'Harshacharita' he was with Rajyavardhan.⁶¹ Due to the death of his father, Madhavgupta and Kumaragupta fell into a pitiable state.⁶²

7. Madhavgupta

After the death of Mahasengupta, both his sons started living in Thaneshwar, the capital of the Vardhans. Kumaragupta had already died and Madhavgupta was appointed by Harsha as his feudatory ruler in Magadha. After the death of Harsha, Madhavgupta became an independent ruler of Magadha. Harsha's close friend Madhavgupta helped Harsha equal to his Digvijay that is why in the Afsad inscription he has been called the conqueror of many enemies. According to this inscription, Madhavgupta was an idol of gentleness, religious, the abode of Lakshmi and Saraswati and the foremost among the heroes.

8. Adityasen

Madhavgupta's successor son Adityasen became the most majestic king among Magadhaguptas. After the death of Harsha, when there was chaos in the whole of northern India, showing muscle power, he established his powerful kingdom on a vast territory. Its reign is from 650 to 675 AD. According to the Devbaranarka Inscription, he was born from the womb of Mrs. There are three main records indicating the history of its time - the article of Afsad, the article of Shahpur and the Inscription of

Mandar, in the inscription received from the hills of Mandar, it has been called Param BhattarakaMaharajadhiraj Shri Adityasen.

Its queen is also mentioned in the form of Param Bhatirika Queen Mahadevi Kon Devi.⁶³ These titles are indicative of the position of the emperor. An inscription has been received from the Vaidhinath temple of Deodhar, in which the successful king Adityasen has been called the lord of the earth till the sea and the performer of many yagyas like Ashwamedha etc. It is also credited with the construction of a Vishnu temple.

Adityasen was a follower of Brahmanism. It was religiously liberal. Papaharini Lake was excavated in Mandargiri by its queen, Kon Devi. It is reported from Aryamanjushrimulalp that it also built seven or eight Buddhist monasteries. According to the Korean traveler Hui-lun; it built a Buddhist temple was built.⁶⁴

Adityasen, taking advantage of the situation prevailing in Kamrup and Bengal after the death of Bhaskarvarma, had subdued the region of Gaur and Banga.

9. Devagupta II

According to the Devbarnark Inscription, after the death of Aditya Sen, his son Devagupta became the king. In the inscription, it has been decorated with the title of Param BhattarakaMaharajadhiraj Parameshwar.⁶⁵ Its reign is from 675 to 695 AD. Based on Kendur copper plate, some scholars have propounded the opinion that the Chalukya king Vinayaditya defeated Devagupta. This view is confirmed by the Kendur copper plate, in which Vinaditya has been called 'Saklottrapathnath'. The Devbaranarka Inscription refers to Devagupta as 'Maheshwar'.

10. Vishnugupta

Devagupta was followed by his successor son Vishnugupta. An inscription of the seventeenth year of his reign has been found from a place called Mangrao. This is in Shahbad District of Bihar. Its authority extended to the south-western frontiers of the Shahabad district of Bihar. It ruled for about 20 years. Its reign ended in 715 AD.

11. Jivitagupta II

This was the son of Vishnugupta, the famous inscription of Devbaranark was written by this king was engraved. His mother's name was Ijjadevi. Through this inscription

Jivitagupta II re-affirmed the Agrahara donation that Parameshwara Baladitya Deva, Parameshwara Shri Sarvavarma and Parameshwara Shri Avantivarma had done during their reign. He donated a village named Varunika to the Sun Temple. The description of the Devbaranarka Inscription shows that Jeevitagupta II was staying in a fort on the banks of the Gomti to stop the forces of Yashovarma. When and where this war took place is not certain. But it is so sure that the last ruler of the Uttar Gupta dynasty, Jeevitagupta II, was killed at the hands of King Yashovarma of Kannauj, with this the UttarGupta dynasty came to an end. Its reign is from 715 to 730 AD. Devbarnark is a village located in the Arrah district of Bihar. It is inscribed at the entrance of the Vishnu temple. The Gaudavaho Prakrit poetry of Vakpatiraja reveals that Yashovarma attacked Magadhanath (Gaudadhipa). Frightened Magadhanath fled but Magadha and the people of Gaur forced their king Jivitagupta II to face Yashovarma. Jeevitagupta II was defeated in this war and Yashovarma had the right over his kingdom. Thus, came in the end of the Later Gupta dynasty or the Magadha Guptas in the eighth century.

1.8 PUSHYABHUTI OR VARDHANA DYNASTY

Family Tree

1. Pushyabhuti
2. Maharaja Adityavardhan - Mahasenguptdevi
3. Maharaj Adityavardhan -Mahasenguptdevi
4. ParambhattarakaMaharajadhirajPrabhakarvardhanPratapsheel - Yashomati Devi
5. ParamabhatarakaMaharajadhiraja Rajyavardhana (II) 606
6. ParambhattarakaMaharajadhiraja Harshavardhana (606-648)
7. Rajyashree-Grahvarma (Maukhari)

After the fall of the Gupta Empire, once again political instability prevailed in the whole of India to dominate each other. There were constant conflicts in the states. But after this chaos of about 55 years, the supremacy of Pushyabhuti dynasty of northern India was established. This majestic dynasty established its empire and again provided political stability to the country.

Bana in his Harshacharita describes a district named Srikantha. Thaneshwar was an antarbhukti in this Srikanth district.

It is known from Harshavardhan's Banskhedra, Madhuban etc. Copper plate inscriptions⁶⁶ that before the accession of Harsha, five kings ruled, then sequentially as follows: -

1. Maharaj Narvardhan

Maharaj Narvardhana appears to be the first historical king of this dynasty, which happened in the beginning of the sixth century. His wife was Vajrinidevi, a worshiper of Surya, who took advantage of the decline of the Gupta Empire and increased his fame. It is worth mentioning that Bana used the title of 'Keval Raja' for Pushyabhuti while Narvardhana has been called 'Maharaja' in the inscriptions. It is a sign of a high political position.⁶⁷ But during this period 'Maharaj' was also not a title indicating absolute sovereignty and Narvardhana was also probably a feudal ruler.⁶⁸

2. Rajyavardhan-first

The first Rajyavardhana was the second ruler of this dynasty. His wife's name was Apsarodevi. He was a worshiper of Surya (Paramaditya devotee). His title was also only Maharaj.

3. Maharaj Adityavardhan

Adityavardhan became the ruler after the first Rajyavardhan. He is also called a devotee of Paramaditya. He married Mahasengupta, the sister of the Later Gupta ruler Mahasengupta. But it is difficult to tell whether this marriage took place during his father's lifetime or after his death. Majumdar⁶⁹ says that this relationship shows the power and importance of Pushyabhutis.

4. Prabhakarvardhan

Adityavardhana was followed by his son Prabhakarvardhana, born to his queen Mahasengupta. According to the arrow, his other name was Pratapshil. He was the first ruler of his dynasty to assume the title of ParambhattarakaMaharajadhiraja. Harsha's Banskhedra Inscription describes him as a ruler whose fame had reached beyond the four seas and who conquered other rulers by his valor and love.⁷⁰ In his

time, Sthanishwar had become a fully sovereign state. His coronation ceremony was duly completed.⁷¹ For Sindhu Raj, it was burning fever, it was going to disturb the sleep of Gurjars, Gandhara was like Hastijvar for the elephant of the king, Laat was the destroyer of the country's cleverness and Malwa was the axe to cut the creeper like Lakshmi.⁷²

Baan has called Prabhakarvardhana as Hunaharin Kesari, from which it appears that he had a conflict with the Huns and in this he also got victory. Prabhakarvardhana is also said to be the conqueror of Laat, Malwa and Gurjar region, these three small states were ruled by local rulers.

It is said in the Madhuban and Banskhedha copper plates that his fame and the ocean was widespread and many kings used to tremble before his majesty. Thus, it can be said that it was Prabhakarvardhana who established Pushyabbutis as an important political force. Prabhakarvardhana had died due to having a great fire. Along with him his wife Yashomati had become sati with him.

5. Rajyavardhan II

After the death of Prabhakar Vardhana, his eldest son Rajvardhan II ascended the throne in 605 A.D, but only then he got information that the Malwa king Devgupta had killed his brother-in-law Grahavarma and put his sister Rajyashree in the prison of Kanyakubja and he also assimilated Thaneshwar. On hearing this news, Rajyavardhan forgot the grief of his father's death and moved towards his enemy with a huge army. King Devgupta of Malwa was defeated by him in the war, but King Shashank of Gaur, a friend of Malwa king, took advantage of Rajyavardhan's simple nature and invited him to his place and conspired to kill him and captured Kannauj. After the death of Rajyavardhan, Harshavardhana ascended the throne of Thaneshwar in 606 AD.

According to Harshacharita, two sons named Rajyavardhan (second) and Harsha and a daughter named Rajyashree were born from the womb of Prabhakarvardhana's queen Yashomati. Rajyashree was married to Grahavarma (605-606 AD). At that time the age of Rajyashree must have been 12-13 years.

6. Harshshiladitya (Harshavardhan)

After the death of the second Rajyavardhan, his cousin Harshavardhana became the king, who ruled from 606 to 647 A.D. He is considered a great king of ancient India. The history of his rule is known from Baan's 'Harshacharit', the book 'Shi-Yu-ki' of the Chinese traveller Hiuan-Tsang, who traveled to India, during his period, and the biography of Hiuan-Tsang and some of his inscriptions and coins. As soon as he sat on the throne, Harshavardhana declared his desire to take vengeance from Shashank and conquer the whole earth. First, he searched for his sister Rajyashree who had escaped from the prison of Kanyakubja towards Vindhyaachal. After this he captured Kannauj. In the meantime, he had a treaty with Bhaskarvarma, the ruler of Kamrup. His success in defeating Shashank is doubtful because Shashanka (reigning as Maharajadhiraja till 619 AD) had one campaign against the king Balbhi, who was claimed to be saved by Harsha's wrath by the Gurjara king II Dad of Laat. The Laat, Malwas and Gurjars accepted the dominion of Chalukyaraj II Pulakesi of the south; it is said in the Aihole inscription. For this reason, Harsha attacked western India. The travel details of Hiuan-Tsang and the Aihole inscription show that the conflict between Harsha and Pulakesi II lasted for a long time in which Harsha was defeated, Harsha got some success in Sindh and collected taxes in the mountainous region.

Harsha's successes were even more significant in eastern India. In 641 AD he assumed the title of Magadha king. He had conquered Bengal and Orissa in 642 A.D.⁷³ Bhaskarvarma of Kamrup, who was his friend earlier, was now afraid of him. Therefore, it can be said that Harsha made the Pushyabhuti dynasty the most important power of North India. Along with valor, Harsh had also filled Vigha Prem.

Along with the emperor, he was also a literateur himself and his works are a treasure trove of Sanskrit literature. He wrote three high-class plays namely Ratnavali, Priyadarsika and Nagananda. Harsha gave shelter to scholars in his court. The most famous scholar of his assembly was Bana who wrote two texts named Harshacharita and Kadambari. A poet named Mayur was also a gem of his Rajya Sabha, another scholar was Matang Diwakar, who was a Chandal but because of his poetic power, the arrow and began to be counted in the category of peacock. Bana's son Bhushanbhatta was also a good poet of this time. Even as an ideal administrator, Harsha was unique

in generosity and charity. His great donation at Prayag every fifth year is an astonishing event in the history of the world. Harsha is counted along with Ashoka, Menander and Kanishka as the propagator of Buddhism. He gave life to the downtrodden Buddhism for some time. This is such a great king between the Gupta period and the Rajput period, who tried to bind India in the thread of unity. The truth is that he was the last Hindu emperor of India and who ruled the whole of northern India as a United Kingdom.⁷⁴

Thus, it can be said that after the fall of the Gupta Empire, political instability once pervaded the whole of India. At the same time, Kanyakubj city of western Uttar Pradesh became the imperial center in India. Many dynasties ruled one by one by making it the capital. The Maukhari dynasty was the first among them. This was followed by the Uttaragupta dynasty, and the Pushyabhuti or Vardhana dynasty. These majestic dynasties again provided political stability to the country by establishing flarge empires.

1.9 SUMMARY

This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the complex political and cultural landscape of northern India during the 7th century A.D., a period marked by significant transitions following the decline of the Gupta Empire. It delves into the emergence and interactions of various dynasties, such as the Maukharis, Later Guptas, Pushyabhutis (or Vardhana Dynasty), and others, highlighting their contributions to the socio-political and cultural fabric of the region. The chapter also offers detailed insights into the reigns of prominent rulers, their military conquests, administrative policies, and cultural patronage, which played pivotal roles in shaping the era. The chapter begins by setting the stage with the political fragmentation of northern India of Post-Gupta period, where multiple independent states vied for dominance. Among these, the Maukharis of Kannauj, the Later Guptas, and the Vardhanas of Thaneshwar (Pushyabhuti Dynasty) are particularly notable. The narrative then shifts to the ascent of Harshavardhana, a key figure of the Vardhana dynasty, under whom northern India witnessed a brief period of political unification and cultural renaissance. Harsha's reign is portrayed as a time of relative peace and prosperity, marked by his patronage of Buddhism, support for arts and culture, and his notable assemblies at Prayag. His

military campaigns, administrative acumen, and diplomatic engagements are discussed, along with his interactions with contemporary rulers like Pulakeshin II of the Chalukya Dynasty. The chapter also touches upon Harsha's defeat to Pulakeshin II, providing a nuanced view of his empire's extent and power. In addition to political histories, the chapter delves into the socio-economic conditions of the time, including the caste system, agricultural practices, trade, and urban development. It underscores the shift from ancient to early medieval societal structures, highlighting the role of feudalism and its impact on various aspects of life, including the gradual decline of Buddhism and the resurgence of Hinduism. The narrative is enriched with details from various historical sources, such as inscriptions, coins, and accounts by traveller's like Yuan-Chwang, which adds depth and authenticity to the portrayal of this era.

References

- ¹ Panikkar, K.M., (1922). Sri Harsha of Kanauj: A monograph on the history of India in the first half of the 7th century AD., D. B. Taraporevala Sons & Co. Bombay, pp.29.
- ² Pramod, Moirangthem, (2006) North India during the Post Gupta-Period - A Political Study (c.A.D. 500-650) (Phd.Thesis).Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology, Panjab University, Chandigarh, pp.162.
- ³ Chauhan, Major K.P.S.(1997) Military System of Harsha Vardhana: An Analytical Study (Phd. Thesis). Chhatrapati Sahuji Maharaj University, pp. 35.
- ⁴ <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/%E2%80%98Pulakeshin%E2%80%99s-victory-over-Harsha-was-in-618-AD%E2%80%99/article14255348>.
- ⁵ Chauhan, Major K.P.S.,(1997) Military System of Harsha Vardhana: An Analytical Study (Phd. Thesis). Chhatrapati Sahuji Maharaj University, pp. 52.
- ⁶ Ibid, pp. 55-56.
- ⁷ Bapat, Shreenand, in Times News Network.
- ⁸ V. A. Smith,(1999).The Early History of India, Oxford, pp. 295.
- ⁹ Ratibhanu Singh Nahar,(1974) Political and Cultural History of Ancient India, Allahabad,pp. 36.
- ¹⁰ O. P. Sharma, (1974) Ancient India, Allahabad,pp. 176.
- ¹¹ R. C. Mazumdar, (2002). Ancient India, Delhi, pp. 484.
- ¹² Ibid, pp. 484.
- ¹³ Goyal, Sriram, (1988), Maukhari-Pushyabhuti-Chalukya era, Meerut, pp 305.
- ¹⁴ Kauth, A. B, (1924). A History of Sanskrit Literature, Delhi, pp. 429.
- ¹⁵ Tripathi, Ramashankar, (1959), History of Kannauj, Delhi, pp 29.
- ¹⁶ Fleet J. F., (1888). Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, Vol. II, Calcutta, 221-26.
- ¹⁷ Hadha Inscription, Verse 3.

-
- ¹⁸ Epigraphia Indica, Vol. 14, pp. 111.
- ¹⁹ Harshacharita, Fourth chapter, pp. 16.
- ²⁰ Ibid, pp. 16.
- ²¹ Ibid, pp. 41.
- ²² Harshacharita, pp.51, Kadambari, pp.3
- ²³ Barwa Records.
- ²⁴ Epigraphia Indica, Vol. 23, onwards from pp. 42, Vol. 24. 252.
- ²⁵ Fleet J. F., (1888) Corpus Inscriptionum, Indicarum, Vol. II, Calcutta, pp. 221-26.
- ²⁶ Tripathi, Ramashankar, (Op.Cit.) pp. 31-32.
- ²⁷ Fleet, J. F, (1888), Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, Vol. II, Calcutta, (Hindi).
Indian Archives, G. Mishra, Cowell and Thomas, pp. 79, 81.
- ²⁸ Harshacharita, third exhortation, pp. 53-54.
- ²⁹ B.N. Benjamin, (Op. Cit.) pp. 34.
- ³⁰ Sharma, Baijnath,(1970) Harsha and His Times, Varanasi,pp. 96.
- ³¹ Ibid, pp.96.
- ³² Mazumdar, R.C., (1954), The Classical Age, Bhartiya Vidya Bhawan, Bombay, pp.97.
- ³³ Harshcharit, pp. 203.
- ³⁴ Sonipat Seal, (Fleet, et.al) Part-3, No. 52.
- ³⁵ Waters. T., (1904-5), On Hiuan Tsang Travels in India, Vol. I, London,pp. 343.
- ³⁶ Goyal, Sriram, (1988).Maukhari - Pushyabhuti-Chalukya-Era, Meerut, pp. 17-62.
- ³⁷ Asirgarh Inscription, Fleet J.F., (1888), Corpus Inscriptionum, Indicarum, Vol. II, Calcutta, pp. 220.
- ³⁸ Hada Inscriptions, Sarkar, D.C., (1965), The Select Inscriptions, Bearings on Indian History and Civilization, Calcutta.

-
- ³⁹ Awasthi, History of Ancient India, pp. 309.
- ⁴⁰ Sarkar, D.C (Op. Cit.).pp. 396
- ⁴¹ Fleet J.F., (1888). Corpus Inscriptionum, Indicarum, Vol. II, Calcutta, pp. 229.
- ⁴² Ibid, pp. 229-30.
- ⁴³ Maharajadhiraj Ishanvarma - wife Bhattririka Mahadevi - Lakshmivati - Asirgarh, Inscription.
- ⁴⁴ Tripathi, Ramashankar, (Op. Cit.), pp. 39.
- ⁴⁵ Rai Chaudhri, Hemchandra, (1923). Political History of Ancient India, Calcutta, pp. 602.
- ⁴⁶ Ibid.
- ⁴⁷ HiranandShastri, Epigraphia Indica, Vol.14, pp. 110.
- ⁴⁸ Sirpur, Records.
- ⁴⁹ Tripathi, Ramashankar, (Op. Cit.). pp. 44.
- ⁵⁰ Fleet J. F., (1888). Corpus Inscriptionum, Indicarum, Vol. II, Calcutta, pp. 213-18, Epigraphia indica, Vol. 21, pp. 73-74.
- ⁵¹ Indian Antiquary, Volume-43, pp.67, Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1900, pp. 535.
- ⁵² Ojha, Shri Krishna, (2011). Ancient India, Jaipur, pp. 259.
- ⁵³ Epigraphia Indica, Vol. 24, pp. 284, Chakraborty suggested the full name Suchandravarma.
- ⁵⁴ Afsad Records, Verse 4.
- ⁵⁵ Afsad Inscriptions, verses, 25.
- ⁵⁶ Nihar Ranjan Rai, (1928) Calcutta Review, Volume 26, pp. 207.
- ⁵⁷ Karma Purana, 36.14 and Brahma Purana 28.6
- ⁵⁸ Ojha, Shri Krishna, (Op.Cit.), pp. 262.

-
- ⁵⁹ In Harshacharita, Mahasengupta has been called 'Malavraj'.
- ⁶⁰ Epigraphia Indica, Vol. 9 pp. 296.
- ⁶¹ Harshacharita, fourth chapter, pp. 1, Afsad inscription, verse 18
- ⁶² Sinha, B.P., (1954). Decline of Magadha, Patna, pp. 193.
- ⁶³ Fleet J.F., Corpus Inscriptionum, Indicarum, Vol. II, Calcutta, 1888, pp. 211.
- ⁶⁴ Harshacharita, pp. 36.
- ⁶⁵ Fleet, J.F., (1888) Corpus Inscriptionum, Indicarum, Vol. II, Calcutta, pp. 314.
- ⁶⁶ Banskhedra, Copper -Plate (22 Harsh Samvat) Madhuban Copper Plate (25 Harsh Samvat) Sonipat- Rajmudra, Nalanda-Rajmudra.
- ⁶⁷ Sharma, Baijnath, (1970). Harsh and His Times, Varanasi, pp. 83-89.
- ⁶⁸ Sharma, Baijnath, Harsh and His Times, Varanasi, 1970, pp. 96.
- ⁶⁹ Majumdar, R.C. (1954). The Classical Age, Mumbai, pp. 97.
- ⁷⁰ Epigraphia Indica, Vol. 1 pp. 69,
- ⁷¹ Ibid.
- ⁷² Ibid.
- ⁷³ Goyal, Shriram, (Op. Cit.). pp. 28.
- ⁷⁴ Ojha, Shri Krishna, (2011). Ancient India, Jaipur, pp. 301.

CHAPTER-2

SOURCES

To know the history of northern India in the seventh century, we get knowledge from literary sources, descriptions of foreign travellers and archaeology from all these three means. Their description is as follows: -

2.1 LITERARY SOURCES

- (a) Harshcharita
- (b) Kadambari
- (c) AryamanjuShriMoolakalpa
- (d) Priyadarsika, Ratnavali and Nagananda
- (e) Brihat-samhita
- (f) Purana, Vayu Purana, Bhagavata Purana and Markandeya Purana.

(a) Harshacharita

This is an important text composed by Banabhatta. From this book we get information about the main rulers of Vardhan dynasty and their biography. Harshacharita has eight chapters. These are called 'Ucchawas'. In the first three, Baan has written his autobiography. The former has no historical significance. In the second he resided in a village named Vatsyayan Gotri Preetikoot.

He has described the Bhrigu dynasty and his childhood.⁷⁵ In this he gives details of meeting Harsha. In the third sikh, while describing Srikanth Janapada and Sthanishwar, there is a mention of mutual relation between Pushyabhuti and Bhervacharya⁷⁶, where the events like Rajyavardhan, Harshavardhana, Rajyashree's birth, childhood, and Rajyashree's marriage with King Grahavarma of Kannauj have been described.⁷⁷ In the fifth chapter, there is a description of sending Rajyavardhana to suppress the riots of the Huns on the frontier, Prabhakarvardhana's illness and death.⁷⁸ The events of the campaign against Malvraj by taking arms, the defeat of Malvraj, the murder of Rajyavardhan by the Shashank by deceit are described.⁷⁹ Also,

as a result of these incidents, Harsha's vow to take revenge on all the enemies and make the earth Gauda-less is also mentioned.

There is a description of the acceptance of the friendship proposal sent by Ambassador Hiuan- Tsang. In the last i.e. the eighth chapter, the loss and attainment of Rajyashree, meeting with Divakaramitra and returning to the military camp with Rajyashree has been described.

With this the description of Harshacharita ends suddenly. Thus, this book presents a living and contemporary picture of the reign of Harsha. There is also abundant light on the political situation and cultural life of Harsha period India.

(b) Kadambari

This is also the second work of Banabhatta. It can be called the best novel of Sanskrit literature. From its study, knowledge of social and religious life is obtained.⁸⁰ Information about the feudal environment is obtained from this book. 'Kadambari' is a poetic fantasy that brings the divine world to the ground floor. The original story of Kadambari is taken from 'Brihatkatha' which is preserved in Kshemendra's 'Brihatkathamajari' and Somdev's 'Kathasaritsagara'. But Baan has given that story a completely new and original form with his talent.⁸¹

(c) Aryamanjushrimoolakalpa

It is a famous Mahayana Buddhist text. It has a thousand verses, under which the ancient history from the seventh century BC to the eighth century is described. It throws light on some events of Harsha's history. In this, only the word 'H,' has been used for Harsha. According to this text (625 AD to 27), Harshavardhana expanded his empire up to the kingdom of Shashanka. Harsha's opponent, Shashank, has been described as a Buddhist idol-breaker. In this text, Harsha has been described as a Vaishya caste.⁸²

(d) Priyadarsika

Priyadarsika is a drama of four figures. It is said that this was the first of the plays of Harsha. The play describes the love story of Udayana, the king of Vatsa, and Priyadarsika, the daughter of the king of Anga.

(e) Ratnavali

Digvijay is discussed in the play 'Ratnavali'. King Vatsa of Kaushambi had made a vow like Harshavardhana to become the emperor of the whole world.

This play ending in four figures is similar to 'Priyadarsika'. The play deals with the rescue of Ratnavali, the daughter of the King of Sri Lanka, from a sinking ship by a merchant from Kosambi. On this basis, information about India's trade relationship with Sri Lanka is found in the seventh century.

(f) Nagananda

Nagananda is a play written in five figures. Regarding Buddhism, we get information from the last two points of this play. Lord Buddha has been discussed in detail in this play.⁸³

Lord Buddha is praised in this play. This play must have been composed during the later period of Harsha's life. The protagonist of this play is Jimutavahana, the son of the king of Vidhadhars. He falls in love with Malayavati, the daughter of the king of Siddhas.⁸⁴

(Semi-Grand Samhita)

Varahamihira was a writer of Maukhari era, so he composed a book called 'Brihatsamhita', from this book information about Maukhari era culture and administration is available. In his book, he has also described the customs and festivals of Maukhari era which were prevalent at that time.

Purana

Information about social, economic, and religious life in the seventh century is also obtained from Vayu Purana, Bhagavata Purana, and Markandeya Purana etc. Along with this, the chief rulers also get to know about their working system.

2.2 ACCOUNTS OF FOREIGN TRAVELLERS

Hiuan-Tsang and its travel details

During the time of Emperor Harshavardhana of the Vardhana dynasty, the Chinese traveller Hiuan-Tsang, who came to India in 626 A.D, for the peace of knowledge,

visiting and visiting places of pilgrimage related to Buddhism and taking manuscripts of Buddhist literature to China. For the fulfillment of his objectives, he came to India through Turfan, Krucha, Tashkent, Samarkand, Kabul and Peshawar, surreptitiously, enduring many difficulties and calamities. In India, he went to Mathura, Kannauj, Ayodhya, Prayag, Kapilvastu, and Kushinagar and traveled to Banaras, after which he reached the famous education center Nalanda. In 644 AD, joining the Prayag language of Harsha finally returned home.

When he went to his country, he took with him the manuscripts of 657 Buddhist texts and 150 bone relics of Mahatma Buddha. At the behest of the Chinese emperor, he wrote the memoirs of his visit to India in a book Si-Yu-Ki, which is also called the description of the western world.

This book of Hiuan-Tsang is historically important, in which he has described all aspects of the life of this country very well, that is why it gives the work of analysis to understand the India of the seventh century in a better way. For this reason, it is called the authentic dictionary of knowledge.

Its travel details are an authentic document of the political, social, religious and economic conditions of the then India.

Hiuan-Tsang's Biography

It was composed by Hiuan-Tsang's friend Whee-Lee. It has been translated into English by Beal as "The Life of Hiuan-Tsang" (new edition, London 1911). This biography fulfills the knowledge gained by the travel details of Hiuan-Tsang. In this book, this book is mentioned only in the name of 'Jeevani'. Apart from this, many important things related to the history of Harsha are known.

It-sing Travel Details

It-sing's travelogue is also of special importance for the history of this period. A Chinese traveler named It-sing came to India in the seventh century (671-695 AD). He wrote a book in Chinese. This book has been translated into English by a Japanese scholar Takakusu under the title 'A Record of the Buddhist Religion' (Oxford, 1986).⁸⁵

From a commercial point of view, It-sing tells that after landing in Tamralipti, he went straight in the west direction, and then several hundred merchants went with him

to Bodh Gaya. This fact is also supported by an inscription from the 7th century.⁸⁶ It-sing also wrote about the Nalanda-Sangha and the school that higher education was imparted there.

2.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOURCES

The main means of knowing the history of the dynasties of northern India in the seventh century are inscriptions: -

1. Afsad Inscription:



AphsadStone (Gaya, Bihar) of Adityasena, British Museum.

It belongs to the time of Adityasen, the eighth ruler of the Uttargupta dynasty and found from a place called Afsad located in Gaya district of Bihar province.

In this, the history of the time of the first ruler of this dynasty from Krishnagupta to Adityasen is described. It also throws light on the mutual relations between the Uttaragupta and Maukhari rulers. Its language is Sanskrit and the script is the later Brahi of the later class. The entire article is prose and without date. Its period is the latter part of the seventh century, the specialty of this inscription is that this inscription gives an idea of the interest of the Post-Gupta rulers towards socio-economic and religious work; this inscription is related to Vaishnavism and is full of mythology.

2. Deo Baranark Inscription

Right half of pillar with inscription of Jivitiagupta II of Magadha, at Deo Baranark.



(<https://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/apac/photocoll/r/019pho000001003u00458000.html>)

The second important Inscription of the Uttar Gupta dynasty has been received from a place called Devbarnak in Shahabad (Ara) district of Bihar province. It was discovered by Cunningham in 1880. It was engraved by Jeevitagupta II, the ruler of this dynasty. In this the names of the three rulers after Adityasen - Devagupta, Vishnugupta and Jivitgupta II are found.⁸⁷ This inscription is in the Sanskrit language and the later Brahi of the northern class. This inscription is dateless and probably dates back to the first half of the eighth century AD.

The specialty of this inscription is that this inscription gives the introduction of the Uttar Gupta kings. Along with this, this record is also important from the administrative point of view because many such officials have been mentioned in it. Which are rarely mentioned or not found elsewhere?

3. Mandargiri Inscription

It is found from a place called Mandar in Bhagalpur district of Bihar state. Its language is Sanskrit⁸⁸ and the script is the latter Brahi of the northern class. Both the articles are dateless and prose. This is also important because Adityasen has been called "ParabhatarakaMaharajadhiraja" in these. These titles have not been used in his Afsad and Shahpur inscriptions. The purpose of this article is to mention the construction of a pond by Adityasen's queen Konadevi.

4. Mangrao Stone Inscriptions of Vishnugupta

It is found from Mangrao Sthal in Shahbad district of Bihar State. It belongs to the period of the UttarGupta ruler Vishnugupta. Its language is Sanskrit and the script is the latter Brahi of the northern class.

In this, Vishnugupta is mentioned as 'Maharajadhiraj Parameshwara'. It mentions 17 years of his reign.⁸⁹

5. Kauleshwari Inscription of Vishnugupta

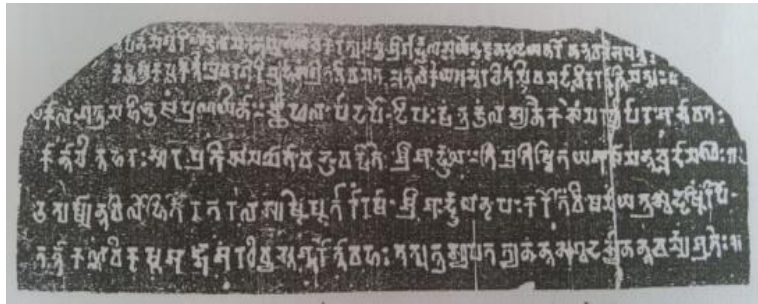
It is the first post-Gupta inscription to be found from Kauleshwari hill in Hazaribagh district of Bihar state and the second inscription by Vishnugupta altogether. From where this inscription has been found, ancient artifacts have also been found. This article has helped determine their date.⁹⁰

6. The Katra Copperplate Inscription of JeevanaGupta

It is found in Muzaffarpur district of Bihar from a place called Katra. Its language is Sanskrit. This inscription shows that after the first Jivanagupta (second Jivitagupta), the persecution of the Later Guptas from Magadha or southern Bihar had ended and some Gaur king might have taken over there. That unknown Gaudraj must have been killed by Yashovarman of Kannauj. But the rule of the Later Guptas did not end, with Magadha being killed; they were now confined to Bihar, where two generations of his kings – Ramgupta and Jeevangupta, who are mentioned in this paper, ruled. But the relation of these kings with Adityasen definitely not certified. We find it more possible that both of them were only local kings of North Bihar.⁹¹ The specialty of this inscription is that it mentions the sources of income of the state along with the then administrative system.

7. Barbara Guha's Inscription by Ananthavarman Maukhari

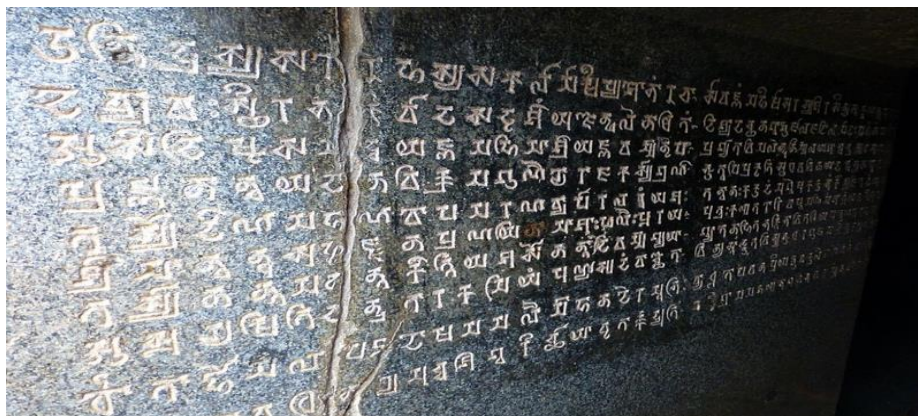
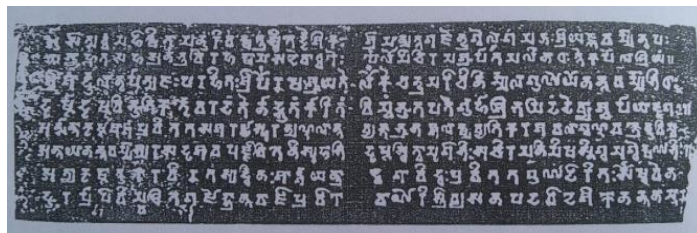
It is inscribed about fourteen miles north-east of Gaya in the State of Bihar and above the entrance of Lomash Rishi Guha in the hill of Barbara. Its script is Brahi of the northern class of fifth-sixth century AD. Its purpose is to establish an idol of Vishnu in the form of Krishna avatar in the Pravaragiri cave by AnanthavarmanMaukhari.⁹²



(Courtesy: ASI)

8. Dateless Northern Nagarjuni Guha Inscription of AnantvarmaMaukhari

It is engraved on the left side of the entrance of Dasharatha-cave built in Nagarjuni hill near the village of Jafra, about 15 miles from Gaya in the state of Bihar. Its purpose is to get the idol of Katyayani (Traparvati) installed in Vindhya's cavity by Anantvarma, son of Shardulvarma, and to donate a village in the name of Bhavani.



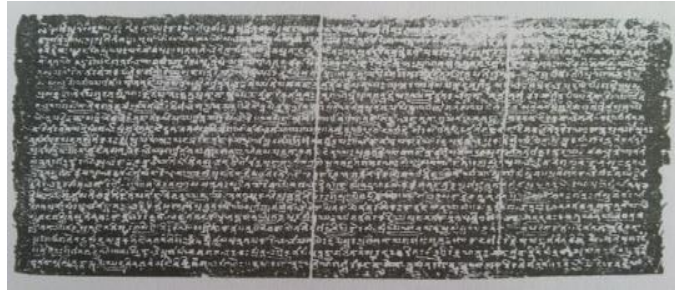
(Courtesy: ASI)

9. Fractured Jaunpur Stone-Pal-Inscription of Ishwarvarma

It is engraved on a stone block of the southern entrance of Jam-e-Masjid from Jaunpur city of Uttar Pradesh. It discusses some incidents from the time of Maukhari King Ishwarvarma and it helps a lot in knowing the history of Ishanvarma, the son of Ishwarvarma.

10. Hadha's Inscription

It has been found in a village called Hadha in Barabanki district of Uttar Pradesh. This inscription was excavated by Suryavarma, son of Maukhari King Ishanvarma. From this we get information about the reign of the first four kings of this dynasty, Harivarma, Adityavarma, Ishwarvarma and Ishanvarma.



(Courtesy: ASI)

11. The (Chamoli) Inscription of Sharva Varma

This rock was found in 1966 AD on the way to the temple of Anusuya Devi in Siroli village of Chamoli tehsil in Uttarakhand. It is known from this inscription that the kingdom of Sarvavarma was extended up to Uttarakhand. This inscription is the oldest inscription from Uttarakhand to mention a king.⁹³

12. Barwa-Yup Inscription

Some inscriptions inscribed on YagyaYup have been found from a place called Barwa in Rajasthan province. From them the name of the Maukhari branch of Rajasthan is derived.

13. Sohnnag's Inscription

This article has been found from a place called Sohnnag of Deoria district (Uttar Pradesh), from them some things related to Maukhari history are known.

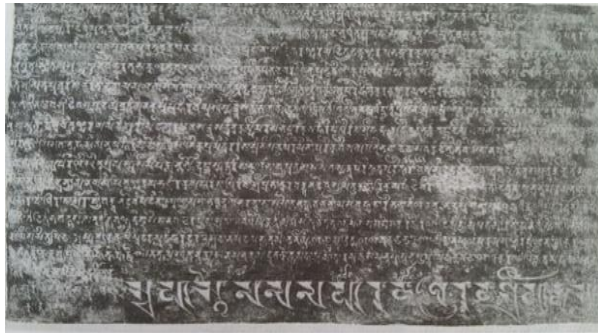
14. Dakshina-Nagarjuni cave-Inscription of AnanthavarmaMaukhari

It is engraved at the entrance of the cave in Nagarjuni hill, in which the inscription of a Mauryan king named Dasharatha has also been found. It mentions the installation of the idols of Bhootpati (Shiva) and Goddess (Parvati) by Anantvarma.⁹⁴

15. Banskheda Inscription of Harshavardhana

It was found in 1844 AD from a place called Banskheda located in Shahjahanpur district of Uttar Pradesh. In which the date of Harsh Samvat 22 i.e. 628 AD is mentioned. This shows that Harsha donated a village named Markatasagar of Ahichhatra Bhukti to two Bharadwaja Gotri Brahmins named Balachandra and Bhattaswamy.

From this the names of many states and officials of Harsh's rule are known. Along with this, information about Rajyavardhan's victory over Devgupta, the ruler of Malwa and finally his murder by Gaur King Shashank, is also available from this article.⁹⁵



Signature of king Harsha on Banskhera copper plates (Courtesy: ASI)

16. Madhuban's Inscription



(Courtesy: ASI)

Madhuban is in Dyoshi Tehsil of Mau (Azamgarh) district of Uttar Pradesh. The article of Harsh Samvat 25 i.e. 631 A.D has been received from here. In this there is a description of Harsha donating Shravasti Bhukti to a village named Somkunda.⁹⁶

17. Inscription of Aihole



(Courtesy: ASI)

It belongs to the Chalukya king Pulakesian II whose date is 633-34 AD. It describes the war between Harsha and Pulakesian. This article was composed by Ravikirti, the court poet of Pulakeshin.

18. Ganjam-Danpatra of Shashank's reign

It is found from a place called Ganjam in Orissa. Its language is Sanskrit and the script is Brahi. This shows that Shashank who was earlier only Mahasamanta (Maharajadhiraja) had become. This article proves Shashank's victory in Orissa and throws light on the history of Orissa.⁹⁷

19. Midnapore-donate year of Shashank's reign

This shows that Maharaja Somdatta, who was a feudatory of Shashanka, had donated the land to Bhatteshwar, a Brahmin of Kashyap gotra.⁹⁸

20. Midnapore-donor of 8 years of Shashanka's reign

It was found in 1937. This shows that the good fortune of Shashank's Mahapratihara has created 20 Dronas located at Kumbharpadrak.

(Tradronvaya) bought common land and Dronvaya architectural land and Bharadwaj

Donated to the Brahmin Dhamyaswami of the gotra.⁹⁹

Sasanka Inscription¹⁰⁰

Panchrol (Egra) Copperplate Inscription of the Time of Śaśāṅka



Reverse, upper left.
(Courtesy: Indian Museum, Kolkata)



Reverse, upper right.
(Courtesy: Indian Museum, Kolkata)

2.4 SEAL - INSCRIPTION

(1) Asirgarh copper seal inscription of ShavarmaMaukhari

This copper seal must have been attached to a copper-made donation paper which is now unrecovered. Its realization place was Asirgarh.

The seal was oval. In its upper part is a Taurus decorated with wreaths. Over which there is an umbrella. Next to Vrishabha is a man holding Parashu in his right hand and the Chakra or Sun-flag in his left hand. Behind the Vrishabha also there is a human figure with Parashu in his left hand, the language of the article is Sanskrit and the script is Brahi of the northern class. It belongs to the reign of Sharvavarma, the fifth ruler of the Maukhari dynasty.

A.—Asirgarh Seal of Sarvavarma.



(Courtesy: ASI)

(2) Nalanda mortuary seal-inscription of Sarvavarma

It has been obtained from Nalanda site in Patna district of Bihar state. Its language is Sanskrit and the script is the language of the North-Indian class.

(3) Avantivarma's Sohnag seal-inscription

Its realization place is Sohnag in Gorakhpur district of Uttar Pradesh. The language is Sanskrit and the script is Brahmi. Its subject has been given in other oral articles, the name of the mother of Adityavarma is given as Jayaswamini and the name of the queen is Harshgupta.¹⁰¹

(4) Avantivarma's Nalanda Mritya seal-inscription

Its receipt point is Nalanda in Patna district of Bihar state. Its language is Sanskrit. The script is the later Brahi of the North Indian class.¹⁰²

(5) Avantivarma's Kannauj mortuary seal-inscription

Its realization place is Kannauj city of Farukhabad district of Uttar Pradesh. This is a seal author's mold in which the letters are engraved in reverse. In this, the names of the Maukhari kings are found only till Ishwarvarma, after that the part has been broken and lost. But from its size, it is possible to estimate the length and from it it seems certain that the last king mentioned in it was Avantivarma.¹⁰³

(6) The seal-inscription of Maharajadhiraj Su. Nalanda

It is found from Nalanda site in Patna district of Bihar state. Its language is Sanskrit and the script is Brahi. This seal article has special significance in the reconstruction of Maukhari history. It is known from 'Harshacharita' that Grahavarma was the eldest son of Avantivarma. But in the seal presented, after Avantivarma, he has another son's name. Only the first letter of his name 'Su' is left. The second letter can be read as 'V' or 'C'. The rest are broken. He must have been the brother of Grahavarma. He can be identified with the Suvra of 'Aryamanjushrimoolakalpa' who according to this text ruled after Grahavarma. N. P. Chakraborty has suggested his full name as Suchandravarma.

(7) Nalanda's seal of Harsha

It is found from Nalanda site in Patna district of Bihar State. Its language is Sanskrit entirely in prose Script, 7th century North Indian Brahmi. This seal is found divided into two parts. The two pieces together make up almost the entire article.

The letters in the first seven lines are a bit big. Fragments of many more seals of Harsha have been found from Nalanda. Taurus is inscribed on the seal. The genealogy given in it is like the genealogy of donation papers.¹⁰⁴



(Courtesy: Bihar state Archaeology)

(8) Sonipat Copper-Seal of Harsha



Oval shaped copper seal

It is obtained from Sonipat district of Haryana state. Its shape is elliptical. It has a raised strip 1/4 wide all around it. Above is the figure of Taurus sitting south-facing, it will be inscribed on a copper sheet. It weighs 3 pounds 6 ounces. The average size of letters is 3/16". The letters are in a much worn-out state and are mostly unreadable. Its language is Sanskrit entirely in prose. The script belongs to the seventh century Brahmi of the northern class. In the first lines of this seal as much as the text of the first 12 can be read.

It is like the text of Nalanda-seal of Harsha. In its 13th line, the second part of Harsh's name (Vardhana) is written in small letters. This fact is interesting that he is often called 'Harsha' or 'Harshdev' on contemporary literature and postures. Not Harshavardhana. His full name 'Harshavardhan' is clearly given in the seal obtained from Sonipat.¹⁰⁵ Apart from this, Hiuan-Tsang has also called Harsha as Ho-li-sha-fa-ta-na (Tra Harshavardhana) in his travel-description to India.¹⁰⁶

(9) Golden Mudra of Harsha

The gold currency of Harsh found in Farrukhabad district is of 113, 50 grains. On its obverse is written 'ParambhattarakaMaharajadhiraj Parameshwara Shri Maharaj 'Harshdev' in Brahmi script and on the reverse, there is a picture of Shiva and Parvati sitting on Nandi. Shiva is wearing a jatajut and a trident.



Harsha's respect and affection for Shaivism is proved even in this posture.¹⁰⁷

Apart from this, Mr. Cunningham has also published a currency on which the marking of the equestrian and throne goddess is found. On which the currency inscription "Harsha Dev" is inscribed. It was published by him in Coins of Middle India 1984.¹⁰⁸ There are 248 coins found from Bhitora Faizabad (U.P.) in which the inscription "Shri Shiladitya" has been received. Byrne sir has taken its meaning from the Harsha head title "Shiladitya".



Sir Richard Byrne discovered many silver coins, including those of the majestic Shiladitya and Harsha. Shiladitya is another name for Harshavardhana. The currency notes of these coins are as follows -

Sri Shiladitya, the conqueror, and lord of the earth, conquers the heavens. Dr. Hornal has found a gold coin, which is believed to be of Harsh. Harshdev is written on it. In the inscriptions and 'Harshacharita' of Baan, it has been called Harshdev.¹⁰⁹

The coins of Maukhari dynasty have been received in small quantities, but 522 silver coins from Bhitara Faizabad (U.P.) are mostly of Ishanvarma, Sharva Varma and Avantivarma. On one part of the mudras there is a picture of a peacock with wings outstretched and a Brahmi inscription all around.

And on the other side there is a portrait of the king and the face is on the left, most of these silver coins are like the silver coins of the Gupta period.



2.5 COINS OF SHILADITYA HARSHA

(1) The obverse - the bust of the king is visible.¹¹⁰

Background - Garuda with outstretched wings, Marking Article: Vijita Vanirpati Shri Shiladitya Div Jayati.



(2) **Front** - the face of the king is shown; in this the figure of the king is clearly visible.¹¹¹

Background - Wings spread, Garuda, Marking Article: Vijita Vanirpati Shri Shiladitya Div Jayati.¹¹²



(1) Coin of Maukhari ruler Ishanvarma

Obverse: This coin belongs to Maukhari ruler Ishanvarma, this coin was issued by him in his reign from 535 AD to 553 AD, the script of this coin is Brahi, in which the head of the king is on the left, wearing a crescent-shaped crown on the head.

Backside: Peacock feathers are spread on its back side.



2.6 SCULPTURE ART

In the temples which were built in the seventh century, many idols were installed with devotion for worship. In these idols, idols of many incarnations of Lord Vishnu, idols of Mother Durga and Sun God have been found; these idols have included beauty along with novelty. On seeing these statues, attention is drawn to the characteristics of

the time, the characteristics of the idols which became prevalent in the Post-Gupta period, they started in the Gupta era, and the description of the idols that have been received during this period is as follows.

2.6.1 Sleeping Statue of Vishnu

The following idols belong to the Dashavatar temple of Deogarh in Lalitpur (ancient Jhansi) district of Uttar Pradesh, which dates to about 600 A.D during the Gupta period. In one of the idols of this temple, Vishnu is shown in a sleeping posture on top of Sheshnag. His right leg is slightly bent upwards on which he is placing the right hand in front. The back right hand is in abhaya mudra. He is raising his head with the left hand in front. Sheshnag is covering the head of Vishnu with eight hoods, which is flourishing in the form of aura. The back left hand is turned to the side of the shoulder, which is on the horoscope of Sheshnag ornaments of Vishnu

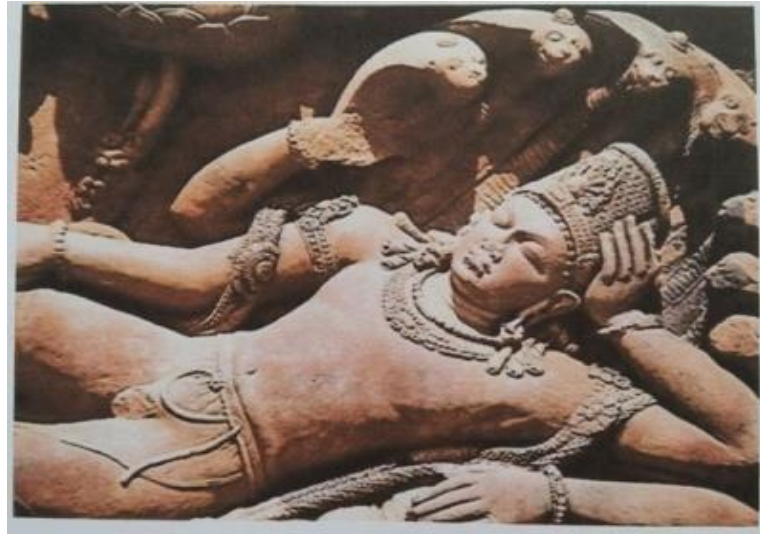
It has kirit, kundal, ekavali, necklace studded with pearls, armbands, bracelets and huge valmala. Vishnu's right leg is slightly raised, shown in the lap of Bhu Devi or Lakshmi. Behind him is a woman performing abhishek for Chanvari in her right hand. To the right of this statue and in human form, Garuda is standing with a snake. Brahma is sitting in a meditative posture on a lotus flower emerging from the water. In this the three faces of Brahma are visible. The fourth face would have been towards the back. In the left hand of Brahma is a kamandal and in the left and Indra is sitting on Airavata, whose right hand is in abhaya mudra. To the left of Indra and on the peacock is a beautiful statue of Kartikeya. Umamaheshwar is seated on the right of Brahma and on the right side of the river is the statue of Vidyadhara. Thus Kartikeya, Indra, Brahma, Umamaheshwar and Vidyadhara have been given proper place on the sleeping idol of Vishnu.¹¹³ This marking corresponds to the mention of 'Matsya Purana' where Indra appeared on the banks of Kshirsagar along with other deities to see Vishnu went on.¹¹⁴ At the feet of the river, there is a feeling of speed. The idol is full of speed and beauty. Armed men have got a place under this statue. Among them are Mahadevi, Chakrapurush, Shankhpushpa and Kharagpurush. Standing statues of Madhu and Kaitabh have been constructed to their left.¹¹⁵



Another idol of Vishnu Seshasayee has been found from this place. Vishnu is sleeping on the horoscope of Sheshnag. It has Vishnu Chaturbhuj. In his left hand is a string of chakra. Here the chakra is in the natural shape which is in his front hand. The back right hand is towards the head. The part below the knees is fractured. There is Brahma on the lotus petals emerging from the water. There is an eagle bird in the lower part. To his left are the river and an inconspicuous human figure.¹¹⁶ Red sandstone has been used in the construction of this statue.

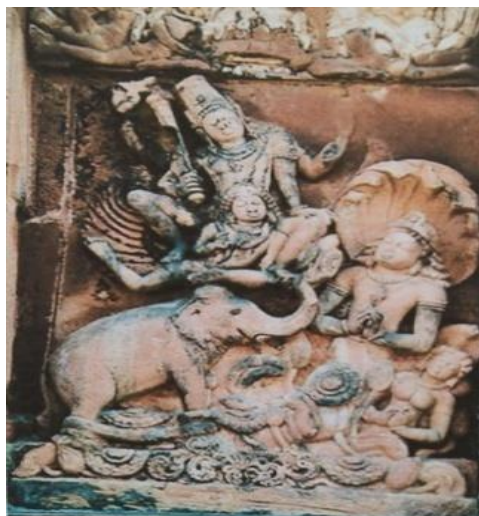


Another fragment of the statue of Seshasayee Vishnu has been found from Devgarh, in which Vishnu is a quadrilateral, but his arms are broken. The head is adorned with Gupta ornaments. The seven hoods of Sheshnag around the head are presented as aura.



Gajendra Moksha

The depiction of Gajendra Moksha is available in the famous temple of Devgarh. This is a unique work of this period from the point of view of art. In this work, Makar has caught Gajendra in the water and he wants to drag Gajendra into the water and take him to the depths of the water. Gajendra is upset. He is trying to pull himself out with all his might. But knowing that he is incapable, he praises Vishnu for getting his help. On praise, Gajendra holds the lotus flower in his trunk by the cord and has placed it vertically in front of Gajendra, the god of the sea, Sheshnag and the serpent are in human form and their head is covered with snakes.¹¹⁷ That Gajendra is shown to be trapped in Capricorn's entanglement and not in the horoscope of the serpent.¹¹⁸



But the depiction of Sheshnag and Nagin has been done because as soon as they call on Vishnu, they come to the aid of Gajendra that is why Gajendra is shown entangled in the snake-curved web. Near the head of the yard, the Arud on Garuda is depicted flying at a rapid pace to help Vishnu. In this, the form of Vishnu is quadrilateral; he has a mace in his front right hand. There is a chakra in the rear right hand. The inclination of Vishnu's head is to the right, indicating his speedy arrival. The figure of Gurd is in human form, holding a snake in his right hand; Vishnu is ornate in which Ekavali, Chandrahar. He has worn Yagyopaveet, armband bracelet, dhoti in his waist, etc.

Quiet and wonderful expressions have been expressed on the face, on which Vidyadhar has been engraved on both sides. The entire statue can be said to be the best from the point of view of artistic expression.

Posture

A two-armed image of Varaha has been received from the Dashavati temple. Varaha is wearing a wide necklace around his neck, bracelets in his hands and a huge forest garland on his chest. The right hand is in Katihasta mudra. He holds a lotus in his left hand on which the earth is standing. In the 'Matsya Purana', there is a mention of Mahavarah holding a mace and a lotus in his hand.¹¹⁹ Varaha's left hand is broken. Varaha is keeping the left leg raised above the head of the snake. The head of the serpent is covered with serpent hoods and is in Ajalimudra.¹²⁰



Narasimha:

A Sthanaka statue of Narasimha is situated on the right side of Vishnu sitting on Adi Shesha in Lalitasana posture on the headboard of the temple of Deogarh (Lalitapur). This idol is quadrangular, with both the hands in front of it in Anjali Mudra or holding an object in both the hands. Pida's right hand is raised above the shoulders in Abhaya Mudra and the back left hand is placed on the thigh of the bent leg. According to Vishnu 'Dharmotpar Purana', his left foot is placed on the hand of the earth in front of Narasimha.¹²¹



Ram Van Gaman

The scene of Ram Van Gaman in the Dashavatar temple Devgarh is built on stone. Three idols are presented at one place. Of which two are male and one female. The heads of male idols are broken. His bow is clear. Next is the statue of Rama holding a bow on his left shoulder and then there is the statue of Lakshmana. His right hand is in Katihasta mudra. He is wearing a dhoti at his waist. The necklace with double strings around the neck is evident at the back is the statue of Sita. Sita is wearing all the ornaments. In which Kundal, necklace, girdle etc. is special. Sita ji is wearing a sari attached to the head. The face has become very beautiful. His idol is shown in Tribhanga posture.¹²²



View of Setu Bandhan on the sea

Other scenes related to Ramayana are also found in Dashavatar temple, Deogarh. In the Deogarh temple, Sugriva is depicted in an inebriated state and Angad and Sugriva's wife are depicted together. In the right hand of Sugriva is a lotus flower. In this temple Hanuman is shown bringing the dead life to Lakshmana who was injured. Hanuman, a monkey-faced human figure, is holding a mountain block with both arms. He is wearing a necklace and a thick garland around his neck. He has also worn bracelets in his hands, a crown on his head.¹²³



Local quadrilateral images

The many Vishnu heads of Deogarh are notable. Among them is an idol of Vishnu, who is a quadrilateral, with all broken arms right only.

A circle is visible in the hand. The head of Vishnu is covered by seven hoods of serpents. Others have special ornaments and hair decorations. Of these, only one piece of gold has been found, in which only an ornate necklace is visible. In the Bharat Kala Bhavan (Banaras), the lower body of Vishnu is found in a molten form, wearing dhoti and vanmala. The mace and the wheel are clear.¹²⁴ The statue is very artistic.



Seated Images

A seated statue of Vishnu is found in the head of the famous temple of Devgarh; here Vishnu is sitting in Lalitasan posture on the curve of Nagraj. At the base of the head is Nagraj with seven hoods. The kirit on the head, the coil in the ears, the necklace around the neck, the armbands, bracelets etc. have been given place in the arms. Vanmala is up to the navel. Vishnu is quadrilateral and holds a conch shell in his back hand. The front right hand is in abhaya mudra. There is a chakra in the back hand. Vishnu is shown meditating in front and in the face. Vishnu's right and Gadadevi and left and Chakra Purusha have been created. Here the Narasimha avatar of Vishnu is also depicted standing to his right and is mentioned separately.¹²⁵



Another four-armed statue of Vishnu has been received from the temple of Devgarh itself. Vishnu is sitting in a window in the Lalitana posture; in the above statue all the left-hand part is protected. The right side is broken along with the arms. Vishnu is with ornaments like Kirit, Ekavali, and Vanmala etc. The front left hand of Vishnu is placed on the thigh. On the left side of this, the chakra is kept, in the back hand is holding the conch shell by the side, possibly the right hand in front would be in abhaya mudra and the mace in the back hand. Happiness and calmness have been expressed on the face, which is clearly visible from the life-like effect.



Balarama and Krishna in the lap of Nanda Yashoda

There is such a stone panel in the temple of Deogarh. Nand is standing in this panel, in whose lap is a child whose face is destroyed. The hair of the head is hanging on the neck. Necklaces and Bhutbandhans are worn around the neck. On the other hand, Yashoda is also standing in one lap with the child in her lap. This is probably Krishna. The lehenga covered the head in Yashoda's clothes, gives an impression of the clothes prevalent in the then society. Necklaces, bajubandh ornaments are expressed around the neck.

Fragmented images of Krishna Leela are found in Deogarh, in which major events of Krishna's life such as the slaughter of Cheer Haran Dhenu, Vasudeva and Nanda feeding Krishna, Krishna Sudama meeting etc. have been engraved on the stone.¹²⁶

Brahma

Padmasana statues of Brahma are also seen in the Deogarh temple. On top of the famous Seshasayee Vishnu statue, Brahma is seated on the headboard. The three faces visible from the front of Brahma have been created in this statue.

The hair of the head is scattered on the shoulders. Its right hand is in Abhayamudra and in the left is holding a water pot. The deer is covered in the northern form. In this, the face of the deer is clearly shown. To the right of Brahma, Indra, Kartikeya is riding on Gaja and Peacock. To the left is the statue of Uma Maheshwar and to its left is a statue of Shivagana.

Another statue of Brahma is seen on the head of Shiva Mahayogi who is also famous as Naranarayana. Here Brahma is sitting in Padmasana. He has three heads including Jatajute. His right arm is in Abhayamudra.

In the left is holding a water vessel. On the left and right of Brahma are wearing Yagyopavati and there are Gandharva idols. It is discussed with the statue of Brahma in the Matsya Purana.

2.6.2 Sculptures found from Mundeshwari (Bhabua) Temple Harihar

A complete statue of Harihar has been received from a place called Mundeshwari (Bhabua) in Bihar, which is now kept in Patna Museum. Shiva is engraved in the right part and Vishnu in the left. Shiva is wearing a jatakoot. On the left, Vishnu is wearing

a kirit and a dhoti. Both are adorned with all ornaments. On the right-hand side of Shiva is Akshamala. The whole statue is very beautiful.¹²⁷ The face is meditative, which has an aura of wonderful and calm spirit.



Another statue from this province is displayed in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, this statue is quadrilateral. In the upper hand on the right side, he has a trident and in the lower hand is held a cranium. This is related to Shiva. The left hand has a conch shell and a chakra on the top of the statue.

Vamana Trivikram

A statue of Vamana is visible in the Mundeshwari temple of Bihar. This statue of Vamana has two arms. He holds a kamandal in his right hand and a chhatri in his left hand. Ekavali and Yagyopaveet are worn on the head; the dhoti is worn in the waist. Vamana is shown in the form of brahmyachari with the expression of the face.¹²⁸



Krishna (Kaishivadh)

Statue of Balarama has been received from Mundeshwari temple. This is preserved in Patna Museum. This statue of Balarama is a quadrilateral. There is a bottle in the front right hand. He holds a pestle in the back and a plow in the back left hand. The front left hand is a cut hand. The head is covered with hawthorns. Ekavali around the neck and dhoti lines in the lotus are depicted wearing long forest garlands.¹²⁹

Surya Statue

Sun is also depicted from Mundeshwari with lotus in both his arms. On the head is wearing a crown, Ekavali, abdominal. He is wearing a shoe on his foot. The retainer rod and pingle are shown on both sides. The feet of both the acolytes are also shown wearing shoes.

The statue is visible in Patna Museum; this statue appears to be of Later Gupta period.¹³⁰



2.6.3 Idols found from the Lakshman Mandir of Sirpur

Krishna (Keshivadhah) is depicted killing the ascetic Laumarshana of Balarama on a panel of the Lakshman temple at Sirpur, who insulted Balarama. The ascetic is sitting on a small pedestal. Balarama is killing the ascetic with both hands with his right hand raised.¹³¹

Vamana Trivikram: This statue is found in the temple of Deogarh. This statue is much damaged. Possibly sacrificial on the throne

Vishnu is sitting on his left side in the form of Trivikram with the left leg raised. It is impossible to picture other parts of the body along with the arms.

(i) Temple

The Gupta period temple art flourished during this period. The specialty of the Hindu temples of the Gupta period was that they were often small and with flat roofs. Later, gradually, instead of the CharasChhatdar temple, Shikhar yukt temples started being built. The Gupta period Dashavatara-temple of Deogarh near Lalitpur, which dates to about 600 A.D, is one of the earliest examples of temples with a spire. The Durga temple of Aihole also dates to this period. The Lakshmana temple made of bricks situated at a place called Sirpur in Raipur district can also be said to belong to the reign of Harsha. The octagonal temple of Mundeshwari, which is located near a place called Bhabua in the district of Shahabad –dates to the period of Harshavardhana.¹³² Hindu, Buddhist and Jain temples and sculptures were built in large numbers during this period. Harsha had built a monastery in Nalanda with a sheet of brass. Some of the works of Ajanta also belong to this period. Many mentions of big cities, buildings, temples, sculptures, and paintings are found in this period in North India, South and Far South.

(ii) Dashavatara Temple of Deogarh

This temple has been found from a place called Deogarh in Lalitpur (ancient Jhansi) district of Uttar Pradesh. Among all the temples, the Dashavatar temple of Devgarh is the most beautiful, which has all the features of the Gupta temples. Its upper part has been destroyed. The temple has been built on a high and wide platform. The entrance of the sanctum sanctorum of the temple is attractive and artistic. It is decorated with idols of gatekeepers, river-gods etc.



Beautiful scenes of Lord Vishnu, Naranarayana, and Gajendramoksha etc. are engraved on the walls of the temples while sleeping on the Sheshashaya. Many beautiful scenes of Ramayana and Mahabharata are also depicted in its Sanctum sanctorum

A pyramid-like high triple peak is found on top of it. Chaityakar, Kirtimukh (Gavaaksha) in all its four directions and above it in the middle a huge amalaka of the shape of a melon was made. Thus a 'prasad' having more than one storey was said to be multi-storey. The topmost storey (bhoomi) was called the foreground, on which the stone amalaka and an urn were installed. Thus, where the roofs of other temples were flat, this temple is the first example of a Shikhar temple. It can also be called a specimen of excellent architecture of the Gupta period. Many of its elements were absorbed in later temples. In the words of Persi Brown, the whole building was full of the highest artistic spirit in terms of the precise planning of its parts, all of which were practically useful.

(2) Durga Temple of Aihole

Aihole is called the city of temples.. A mixture of Nagara and Dravidian styles is found in the temple of Aihole. The temple is built on a high platform; its gable roof is 30 feet high from the ground.

The structure of Aihole Durga Temple is like that of Chaitya temples. Its pillars are very small and heavy.

It has a small spire, which in later UttarGupta temples came to be built with special decorum.¹³³ The temple of Aihole is actually the ancestor of the Gupta temples. The figures are carved on the pillars of the temple, between the pillars there is a lattice of stones. There is a hall in the middle with pillars standing around it. There is a combination of Makarrudh Ganga and Mangalkalash etc. on both the gate pillars, in the middle of the upper lintel there is the idol of the main deity and the idols of other deities are next to it.



(3) Temple of Mundeshwari

The octagon temple of Mundeshwari, which is located near a place called Bhabua inside Shahabad district. The statue of Balarama has been obtained from here.

(4) Sun Temple of Moolsthanpur

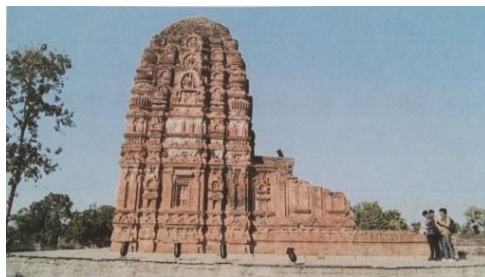
The mention of Suryopasana is also found in some inscriptions. It is written in a Mandsaur inscription that in 436 AD a union of weavers took the Sun.

The temple was built and it was the same Sangh who got it renovated in 472 AD.¹³⁴

The arrow has told the people of Ujjain to be worshipers of the sun. Hiuan-Tsang has mentioned the Sun-temple of Moolsthanpur. About a thousand pilgrims from different countries were always present in this temple for prayer.¹³⁵ The idol was made of gold and was decorated with precious materials. He had supernatural power and his qualities were spread far and wide.

(5) Lakshmana Temple

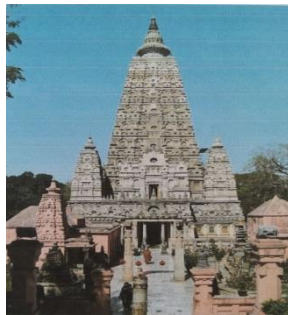
Another temple built by bricks is found from a place called Sirpur in Raipur district of Madhya Pradesh, whose only sanctum remains. It is called 'Lakshman Mandir'. On the side of the entrance, on the stopper and on the door frame, Gupta ornamentation is found engraved.



The Buddhist Vihara in the Maukhari-Pushyabhuti era is also architecturally remarkable. It is as follows -

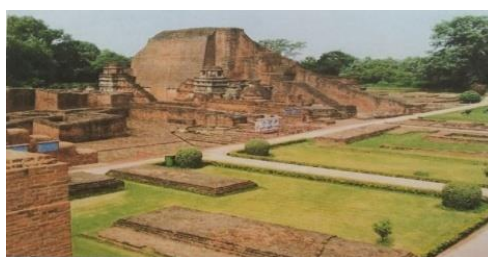
(i) Mahabodhi Temple at Gaya

The Mahabodhi temple of Gaya has a special place in the temple construction of the later Gupta period. It is a fine example of Nagara style. In between it has also been renovated. Its ancient name was 'Brajasan-Granth Kuti Prasad'. It is like a tower of Naukhando. Amalaka has corners in every section. The entire Pradikksha Marga is situated on the platform, on the western end stands the Bodhi tree. It is estimated that there was a Bodhi tree temple there. In its place, this temple was built to honor the statue of Buddha at a time when the sense of idol worship was being awakened among the people.¹³⁶



2.6.4 Nalanda Buddhist Monastery

It existed only from the second half of the fifth century. Its interesting description is found in the Nalanda inscription of Yashovarma. Hui Li, the author of Hiuan-Tsang's 'Biography', has described its beauty. This is surrounded by a brick wall, which has surrounded the whole monastery from outside. A gate opens into the Vidhyapeeth in which eight other 'hals' which are situated between (saghanram) are separated. The ornate minarets and fairy-like domes appear to move together like the pointed peaks of the mountain. Ornate and carved pillars with a pearl-red luster and roofs covered with well-embellished tiles enhance the beauty by reflecting the sun's light in thousands of forms.



(i) Painting

In 'Harshacharit', there are many mentions of the developed stage of Maukhari-Pushyabhuti era painting.

(i) On the occasion of Rajyashree's marriage, we find a team of accomplished painters painting the auspicious scenes.

(ii) Before the birth of Harsha, when Yashomati was sleeping in her room, at that time the women in the walls of the painted walls also used to shake the chamber on her. On Rajyashree's marriage, women were using their painting skills to embellish urns and uncooked pottery.

(iii) Some Jain paintings from a place called Sittanavasana, located in the state of Pudukottah, belong to the seventh century. Many pictures of Ajanta and Bagya also belong to Maukhari-Pushyabhuti era. Hiuan-Tsang has also mentioned the caves of Ajanta; some paintings have been explained in the cave of Ajanta. In this cavity four paintings are found in the four corners of the ceiling.¹³⁷

Figure (c) It mainly depicts a fat foreigner sitting on a mattress with a woman and clutching in her right hand.

Picture (p) in this, an Indian king is seated on the throne and is welcoming a foreign envoy. These foreigners are shown presenting a letter and receiving gifts in rendering.¹³⁸

(ii) Caves

In the art of this time, Ellora located in the Nizam's state and the Elephanta caves near the Bombay port, which is in the island named Dharapur, are very famous. The Ellora cave has Jain and Hindu sculptures. The temple named Kailash is the most famous here. This temple was built by King Krishna of Rashtrakuta in about (760-775 AD). Both the places are related to Shaivism and have panoramic views of Shiva and Parvati. The Kailash temple has a panoramic view of Shiva Tandava in motion.¹³⁹

2.7 SUMMARY

Chapter 2 presents an extensive exploration of the various sources that illuminate the history of Northern India in the 7th century, classifying these sources into three

primary categories: literary sources, accounts of foreign travelers, and archaeological findings. Each category is a treasure trove of documents, inscriptions, and artifacts, together weaving a detailed tapestry of the era's socio-political, cultural, and religious fabric. In the realm of literary sources, this chapter highlights significant texts contemporary to the period or those providing historical accounts. Noteworthy are "Harshacharita" and "Kadambari" by Banabhatta, which offer deep insights into Emperor Harshavardhana's life and reign and the cultural milieu of the time. Other texts like Aryamanjushrimoolakalpa add a Buddhist dimension to the narrative, while Harsha's own works, including "Priyadarsika," "Ratnavali," and "Nagananda," reflect the era's cultural and religious ethos. Further, sources like the "Brihat-Samhita" and various Puranas shed light on the social and religious aspects, such as the Varna system, marriage customs, and religious practices.

The accounts of foreign travellers form a pivotal part of the chapter. It emphasizes the contributions of Hiuan -Tsang, the Chinese pilgrim who documented his observations during Harsha's reign, providing a credible perspective on the political, social, religious, and economic facets of 7th-century India. Complementing his accounts are those of another Chinese traveler, It-sing, along with Hiuan-Tsang's biographies. These narratives are crucial in understanding the Buddhist influence, the state of educational institutions like Nalanda, and the trade dynamics of the period. The chapter then delves into archaeological sources, comprising inscriptions, sculptures, coins, and temple architecture from this era. Inscriptions such as the Afsad, Devbaranark, and Mandargiri offer insights into the political history, administrative systems, and religious leanings of the rulers. The chapter also explores the era's rich sculpture and temple architecture, detailing structures like the Dashavatara Temple at Deogarh, the Durga Temple at Aihole, and the Lakshman Temple at Sirpur. These not only exemplify the architectural style and innovation of the time but also provide a window into the prevalent religious and mythological stories. Additionally, coins from Harsha's reign and the Maukhari dynasty contribute to our understanding of the economic and political landscape of the period.

References

- ⁷⁵ Chatterjee, Gauri S.,(2008), Harsh Vardhan, Allahabad Hindustan Academy, pp. 365
- ⁷⁶ 'Harshacharita, Third Ucchawas, pp. 147.
- ⁷⁷ 'Harshacharita' fourth Ucchawas, pp. 200-207
- ⁷⁸ 'Harshacharita' fourth Ucchawas, pp. 233.
- ⁷⁹ 'Harshacharita' fourth Ucchawas, pp.245.
- ⁸⁰ Cowell and Thomas,(1988). On Hiun Tsang Travel (Preface), Delhi, , pp. 11
- ⁸¹ Kale, M., R., (1928), Kadambari of Baan, Bombay, pp. 48.
- ⁸² Shastri, Ganapati,(1925).Aryamanjusrimulakalpa (Trivandrum Sanskrit Series) Trivandrum, pp. 84.
- ⁸³ Pride, Pacific, (2009). Early Medieval India, Allahabad, pp. 48.
- ⁸⁴ Chatterjee, Gauri Shankar, (Op.Cit.) pp. 241.
- ⁸⁵ Takakusu, (1986), A Record of the Buddhist Religion, Oxford, pp. 22-46.
- ⁸⁶ Epigraphia Indica, Vol-2, pp. 345.
- ⁸⁷ Fleet, J.F., (1888), Corpus InscriptionumIndicarum, Volume-3, Hindi, pp. 265 Calcutta,
- ⁸⁸ Thaplyal, K. K., (1985),Inscriptions of the Moukharis, Letter Guptas, Pushpabhutij and of YashovarmaKannauj, pp. 171, Delhi.
- ⁸⁹ Journal of Bihar Research Society, (1944), Patna, pp. 30.
- ⁹⁰ Epigraphia Indica, pp. 84, Delhi.
- ⁹¹ Sarkar, D.C., (1966). Select Inscriptions Bearing on Indian History and Civilization, Calcutta, pp 35.
- ⁹² Thaplyal, K. K., (Op.Cit.) pp. 137-138.
- ⁹³ Goyal, Shriram, (Op.Cit.), pp. 66.

-
- ⁹⁴ Caulhorn, (1891), *Indian Antiquary*, Bombay, pp. 20.
- ⁹⁵ Thaplyal, K. K., (Op.Cit.), pp. 186.
- ⁹⁶ Srivastava K. C., (2010), *History and Culture of Ancient India*, Allahabad, pp. 470.
- ⁹⁷ Pandey R.B., (1962), *Historical and Literary Inscriptions*, Varanasi, pp. 147.
- ⁹⁸ Mazumdar, R.C. (1944) *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Calcutta, Vol.10, pp. 7-8.
- ⁹⁹ Sarkar, D.C., (Opp.Cit.), pp. 24-25.
- ¹⁰⁰ Furui, Ryosuke. (2011). *Panchrol (Egra) Copperplate Inscription of the Time of Sasanka: A Re- edition*, Patna Samiksha, New series, Vol.2, Centre for Archaeological studies and training, Eastern India, Kolkata, pp. 119-130.
- ¹⁰¹ Ghosh, A, (1924), *Epigraphia Indica*, Delhi, pp. 283
- ¹⁰² Thaplyal, K. K., (Op.Cit.). pp.153.
- ¹⁰³ Ibid, pp. 153.
- ¹⁰⁴ H. Shastri, (1966). *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India*, pp. 68-69.
- ¹⁰⁵ S. Beal, (1906). *Records of the Western World*, Volume 1, pp. 210.
- ¹⁰⁶ Fleet J. F., (1888), *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol. 3, Calcutta, pp. 231-32.
- ¹⁰⁷ *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, (1903), London, pp. 547.
- ¹⁰⁸ Devhuti, D., (1970). *Harsha: A Political Study*, Delhi, pp. 238.
- ¹⁰⁹ Brown, C.G., *Lucknow Museum Catalogue of Gupta and Maukhari coins*, pp. 45.
- ¹¹⁰ Smith, V.A., *A Catalogue of Coins Indian Museum*, Calcutta, Vol. I, pp. 271.
- ¹¹¹ Singh, Aunkarnath, (1997A), *North Indian Currency of the Post-Gupta Period (600 AD 1200 AD)* University Publications, Varanasi, pp. 34.
- ¹¹² Ibid, pp. 35.

-
- ¹¹³ Banerjee, J.N., (1956), Development of Hindu Iconography, Calcutta, pp.7.
- ¹¹⁴ Matsya Purana (1938). Chaukhamba Pub. Varanasi, pp.22.
- ¹¹⁵ This picture has been taken courtesy of Hindu God Statues of Gupta period.
- ¹¹⁶ Shri Bhagwan Singh,(1982), Gupta Period Hindu God Statues, Kashi, pp 52.
- ¹¹⁷ Ibid, pp. 55.
- ¹¹⁸ Epigraphia Indica vol. 6, pp. 14. & this picture was taken courtesy of Gupta period Hindu, God statues.
- ¹¹⁹ Matsyapurana, Chapter 260, Verse 29.
- ¹²⁰ Malviya, Badrinath, (1960). Sculpture in Vishnu Dharma, Prayag, pp. 58.
- ¹²¹ Shri Bhagwan Singh, (Op.Cit.). pp. 69
- ¹²² Ibid, pp.74.
- ¹²³ Sinha, B.P, (2014), Bihar's contribution to Indian art, Patna, pp.10.
- ¹²⁴ Dev Krishna, (1971), Temples of North India, New Delhi, pp.12-23.
- ¹²⁵ Desai Kalpana, (1973). Iconography of Vishnu, New Delhi, pp. 72.
- ¹²⁶ Malviya, Badrinath,(1960), Sculpture in Sri Vishnudharmotar Purana, Prayag, pp. 21.
- ¹²⁷ Desai Kalpana, (Op.Cit.). pp. 53-54.
- ¹²⁸ Kumar Swami, A.K., (1924), History of Indian and Indonesian Art, London, Vol.1, pp. 102.
- ¹²⁹ Shri Bhagwan Singh, (Op.Cit.). pp. 86.
- ¹³⁰ Kumar Swami, A.K., (Op.Cit.). pp. 102.
- ¹³¹ Sinha, B.P. (Op.Cit.), pp.102.
- ¹³² Kumar Swami, A.K., (Op.Cit.). pp. 93.
- ¹³³ Vasudev Sharan Agarwal, (edition2022). Indian Art, Varansi, pp. 100.
- ¹³⁴ Sarkar, D.C., (Op.Cit.), pp. 299.

¹³⁵Warters, T., (1904), On Hiun Tsang Travels in India, London, pp. 254.

¹³⁶ Mishra, Indumati, (1972). Based on iconography (Vaishnav Puranas), Bhopal, pp. 102.

¹³⁷ Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland,(1879), London, pp. 1.

¹³⁸ Ibid, pp. 155.

¹³⁹ Jaikishan, Khandelwal, (1997), Tradition of Indian Culture, Raja Balwant Singh College, Agra,pp.257.

CHAPTER-3

SOCIO-RELIGIOUS LIFE

3.1 VARNA SYSTEM

The topic of class and caste is a subject of significant academic interest and discussion. The concept of class refers to the social stratification of individuals based on their economic position and the socioeconomic framework of rural Indian society during the specified period of 650 AD., is derived from the caste system. A caste refers to a social group comprised of families that are united by certain regulations pertaining to the preservation of ceremonial purity, notably with regards to marriage and dietary practices.¹⁴⁰ The Hindu society is primarily distinguished by the concept of Varna -asrama -dharma. In legal literature, the categorization of human existence is delineated into four distinct stages, known as Asrama, and further classified into seven social groups, referred to as varnas. The conceptualization of this aspect of Arya-dharma was intended to serve as a comprehensive integration within society, rather than a mere fusion of the four castes. The dominance of the Aryan racial superpower has been supplanted by a hierarchical structure known as the Social Corporation, which has experienced significant growth in tandem with societal advancements. The division was predicated upon the varying degrees of societal development attained by each social group.

The Varna concept primarily centered on the notion of societal obligations, but the Jati system placed significant stress on one's birth and hereditary lineage. Heiun Tsang has made note of the identical four hereditary castes of Indian civilization, along with their respective occupations.¹⁴¹

The theoretical framework posits the presence of four distinct social groups that were believed to be present throughout the entire nation. However, it is important to note that these groups were not entirely isolated from one another. The indigenous interpretations introduced novel categorizations into the framework. Consequently, a multitude of sub-castes formed throughout this period.

During the early Vedic period, three primary social classes were acknowledged, namely the Brahman, Kshatriya, and Vaisya. The Brahman class consisted of priests, while the Kshatriya class encompassed kings and warriors. The Vaisya class, on the other hand, represented the commonality. The emergence of the Sudra Varna can be observed throughout the later Vedic period. Based on the prevailing belief, it is posited that the Dasas and Dasyus from the previous era underwent a transformation into sudras, who occupy the lowest position within the hierarchical structure of the four varnas.

According to Alberuni¹⁴², there were a total of sixteen castes throughout the period under consideration. Among these, the first four castes were widely recognized, while five were categorized as semi-untouchables and seven were classified as untouchables. However, it is important to note that the number of castes present during this period exceeded the aforementioned sixteen. According to Kalhana's Rajatarangini, the sacrificial feast arranged by the king successfully united a collective of 64 castes. One of the prominent features observed throughout the period under analysis was the proliferation of castes.

The economic and social well-being of rural inhabitants in early medieval north India primarily relied on agriculture. Agriculture served as the predominant occupation for the general populace, and in adherence to the prevailing norm of occupational exclusivity, various social groups congregated in a particular geographical area. The early medieval period was characterized by a significant increase in the number and distribution of many phenomena. A multitude of additional tribes and castes were assimilated and adapted within the four preexisting varnas, resulting in the proliferation of countless castes.¹⁴³

Brahmana

The Brahmans appear to be the social group in which the process of procreation is most readily apparent. The proliferation of brahmana castes can be attributed to various factors, including the association of their names with certain rituals or branches of Vedic knowledge. However, it is the emergence of strong localism that stands out as the primary catalyst for the significant expansion of these castes. In the context of land charters, brahmanas are identified based on their gotra, which refers to

the lineage of their male ancestors, as well as their affiliation with a certain branch of Vedic knowledge and their native village of origin.

Throughout history, the Brahmana caste has served as a central and influential force in upholding historical cultural traditions, while also embodying the ethical norms for both rulers and the general population. Despite the encroachment of Buddhist, Jain, and other religious groups into their domain, the Brahmas maintained a prominent position in society, commanding considerable reverence. This phenomenon can be attributed to their assertion of social dominance, the conventional reverence associated with their position, as well as their commitment to religious devotion, self-discipline, and intellectual acumen.

The Brahmanas were previously regarded as occupying the most esteemed position among the four varnas. The individuals in question held prominent positions within the social order and demonstrated a strong dedication to both education and self-discipline. The corporation demonstrated its commitment to living a disciplined life dedicated to idealism when it faced a significant challenge, ultimately serving as a pillar of support for the broader social order. The sole sources of power available to the Brahmanas were their ethical principles and rhetorical skills. The individuals were obligated to lead lives of modesty and dedicate their efforts to the practice of the Dharma.

A significant number of individuals adhered to the prescribed behavioral norms outlined in the Dharmasastra. Certain early medieval inscriptions demonstrate a specific and accurate reference to the conventional six-fold duty¹⁴⁴ in select cases. They acquired expertise in the Vedas, Vedanga, and various other domains of knowledge. The individuals known as acaryas, as well as those who possessed a deep understanding of the vedas, were consistently regarded as the most deserving beneficiaries of charitable offerings. Certain authorities have attributed significance to rulers in the context of practigraha; however the conventional perspective continues to regard it as the least significant of the three kinds of revenue. The remaining two obligations, which were deemed essential for an individual belonging to the Brahmana Varna, encompassed the dissemination of knowledge through teaching and the performance of ritualistic sacrifices.

Although the epigraphic material is abundant and of considerable quality, its utility in definitively determining the categorization of Brahmanas throughout the early medieval period is limited. The term "Panch-Gauda" was employed to denote the categorization of Brahmanas into five classes within the context of Northern India. The Panch-Gauda is a classification of Brahmanas, which is one of the ten measure groupings mentioned in the Skanda Purana. The remaining five individuals are comprised of Dravidian people from South India. From a geographical perspective, it is important to note that our study is limited to the region of Panch-Gauda, which is also known by several names such as Sarasvata, Kanyakubja, Utakala, Maithila, and Gauda Brahmanas.

The semantic connotation of the term "Panch-Gauda" within the context of orthodox tradition differs from its reference in the Rjatarangini. The subject of interest pertains to the collective nomenclature of five Brahmanas, rather than the physical delineation of Northern India. A multitude of adjectives have been derived from the appellations of the initial dwellings of Brahmanas beneficiaries.¹⁴⁵ Panch-Gauda, in this context, serves as a classification system that encompasses five unique categories of Brahmanas originating from five geographically separate places, based on shared criteria. The Saryupari is a well recognized classification of the Brahmanas, which complements the Panch-Gauda hypothesis. Based on a comparable concept, one could posit a hypothesis that this area, situated on the opposite side of the Saryu River, is the origin of the appellation "Brahmanas" for the aforementioned group.¹⁴⁶ The aforementioned area constituted a segment of the dominion governed by the Gahada-Vala monarchs, encompassing the western sector of the U.P. The district under consideration is Gorakhpur.

The inscriptions originating from the Gorakhpur region refer to Saruvara or Saryupara. Based on epigraphic evidence, it is discernible that the appellation of the Brahmana caste was influenced by topographical factors. Notably, Brahmanas originating from the vicinity of Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh continue to be identified as Sarupri in contemporary times.¹⁴⁷

It is highly probable that a considerable population of Brahmanas was engaged in performing the tasks associated with priesthood. However, the priestly class exhibited

considerable diversity. As a result of their social standing, the family priests of monarchs and feudatories acquired substantial riches and prestige through the provision of land grants and other bestowed privileges.¹⁴⁸ In spite of the little regard they held within the Brhmana community, temple priests experienced a significant rise in influence due to the growing popularity of temple worship.¹⁴⁹ This shift in status can be attributed to the enormous donations bestowed upon temples by monarchs, vassals, and other affluent individuals, which enabled these religious institutions to assume a role akin to prosperous landlords.

The growing prevalence of purana recitation has led to the Brahmanas who engage in this practice assuming a significant role. Undoubtedly, as educators, the Brahmanas fulfill a vital social role. The demonstration of this can be observed in the *Trisasti-Salakapurusa-Carita* authored by Hemcandra.¹⁵⁰ The exclusive prerogative of transmitting the Vedas was vested only in their possession. The study hubs of ancient times were mostly located in agraharacommunities and temples. Awards were bestowed upon excellent educators by the villages.¹⁵¹ Nevertheless, the overall state of health of the Brahmana teacher was not notably satisfactory. Certain Brahmanas have historically sustained themselves primarily through their teaching endeavors, whereas a significant number have chosen to employ many ways for acquiring riches, as recommended to them.

According to the *Agni Purana*, Brahmanas are granted permission to participate in agricultural trade, cow rearing, and money lending activities. However, the *Purana* explicitly prohibits Brahmanas from engaging in transactions involving milk, molasses, salt, and meat. The *Garuda Purana* provides evidence of the Brahmanas' embrace of agricultural practices. Despite the fact that farming was done by almost every caste, especially the first four, it was considered inappropriate for a Brahmana to utilize or command an overworked bull for agricultural purposes.¹⁵² The presence of religious taboos potentially limited the participation of a significant number of Brahmana individuals in the occupation of agriculture.¹⁵³ According to the older *Dharmashastra*, it is recommended that the Brahmanas engage in agricultural activities, livestock rearing, and, if necessary, employ weaponry.¹⁵⁴ It is evident that agricultural activities were initiated at a period of relative tranquility. The *Brhat*

Parasara Samhita provides support for the notion that a Brahmana should engage in additional practices alongside their sixfold obligations.

The gotra, pravara, and sakha divisions of the Brahmanas, which are commonly cited in inscriptions from antiquity, have a longstanding historical presence. Furthermore, categorizations were established based on occupation, educational attainment, ethical values, religious beliefs, geographical location, and familial ties. Several of these phenomena resulted in the emergence of subcategories within them.

Kshatriya

In the former Varnasrama system, the Kshatriya occupied the second position in terms of merit. However, this arrangement underwent a change commencing in the seventh century A.D. During the era characterized by intense battle for dominance among Hindu States, they emerged as formidable entities and attained a prominent position within Hindu society. Despite the influence of Buddhism, which had a somewhat mitigating effect on the general population's inclination for exploration, the kshatriyas, a warrior class in ancient India, managed to preserve their inherent spirit of adventure. The breakdown of societal structures compelled them to unite under the leadership of their hereditary chieftain in the seventh century.

Following the disintegration of the GurjaraPratihara dynasty, a subsequent period marked by the emergence of the Rajaputa dynasties commenced in northern India. During this era, it is customary for inscriptions to employ the appellation "Rajapta" to denote the ruling Kshatriya lineage. In a Kalachuri text, a single Kshatriya is denoted as the "King of the Twice Born,"¹⁵⁵ while in another epigraph, this individual is described as the "Jewel among the Dvija."¹⁵⁶ These statements highlight the elevated social standing of the kshatriyas and their equitable treatment in terms of reverence, a kin to that shown to the Brahmanas. Based on the testimonies of Sartis and Alberuni¹⁵⁷, it has been ascertained that throughout this period, both the Brahmanas and the Kshatriya had immunity from the death penalty. The absence of vengeance depicted during the period when the kshatriyas had the highest social position in the realm provides an accurate portrayal of the prevailing societal conditions. It can be inferred that in practical implementation, the kshatriyas enjoyed comparable advantages to the brahmanas.

The indigenous population, comprising various strata such as the Kshatriyas, Brahmanas, and some Tribes, seems to have played a significant role in the emergence of the separate Rajput clans. The Huans are one of the 36 Rajput clans¹⁵⁸ that have been documented. In contemporary society, there appears to be a noticeable lack of enthusiasm among the vaisyas and kshatriyas towards agricultural pursuits. Cultivation was among the traditional chores assigned to the vaisyas. Nevertheless, it seems that the vaisyas have experienced a decline in their status as agriculturalists due to the emergence and growth of the Sudra and Brahmana cultivators.

Although the recognition of farming as a Kshatriya duty was absent, there existed no explicit bar against their involvement in agricultural activities. According to the Paras rasmrti, the Kshatriyas are obligated to perform religious rituals and pay homage to both the deities and the brahmanas after their involvement in agricultural activities. This observation suggests a certain level of examination, albeit not as intense as that experienced by the brahmanas. It is plausible that the kshatriyas may have embraced agricultural practices after the brahmanas' adoption of such methods. Nevertheless, there is a conspicuous absence of references to Kshatriya cultivators in the literary, epigraphic, or other sources of our designated period.

VAISHYAS

According to Smrtis, the vaisyas, who belonged to the Divija caste and occupied the third position in the hierarchical structure of Hindu society, primarily engaged in agricultural activities, livestock husbandry, and commercial endeavors. The vaisyas, who were traditionally designated with agriculture as one of their principal jobs, appear to have entirely forsaken it in favor of engaging in trade and commerce. The vaisyas, due to their predominant engagement in commercial activities, were commonly denoted as vanika in the contemporary epigraphical records.¹⁵⁹ Agriculture and livestock husbandry are infrequently documented in records from this particular era. During a preceding era, the vaisyas saw a decline in their standing with the Divija due to Baudhyna's decision to classify them as sudras. In the context of the Gita, both sudras and they were perceived to possess a religious limitation. This assertion is substantiated by Alberuni's account, whereby he classified vaisyas and sudras.

Similarly, it asserts that when those belonging to the Sudra and vaishya castes endeavored to recite the Veda, their tongues were amputated.¹⁶⁰ These statements highlight the fact that while later smrtis do not assert such a claim, vaisyas had experienced a decline in their social status and were indeed regarded equally with sudras.

Early medieval documents contain several references to trade and commerce made by the vaisyas, also known as vaik. The Pratihra inscription portrays the Vanika as individuals engaged in the procurement of commodities from many geographical origins.¹⁶¹ The Paramara record contains comparable information regarding Vanik, who is described as a supplier of essential goods and a merchant. The historical records from the 10th and 11th centuries of the Christian era reveal the presence of guilds associated with the oil industry and gardening. The Siyadoni records encompass the names of individuals engaged in pottery production, betel trade, and stone carving. The archaeological evidence suggests that the ancient society exhibited a significant inclination towards the acquisition of decorative objects. The statues and icons originating from the seventh century A.D., One should contemplate the intricate nature of the representations of the deities. The division of Vaisya was known as Brazier and Goldsmith. During this period, the goldsmiths experienced favourable economic conditions, as evidenced by reports of one goldsmith purchasing a property in the market and thereafter leasing it for duration of 99 years. The rural trade conducted by the vaisyas played a crucial role in enhancing the economic prosperity of the rural population.

SUDRAS

The Sudras, who were traditionally perceived as socially inferior, were situated at the lowest rung of the Varna asrama social structure. According to the authors of the Smrti, it is widely acknowledged that the Sudra's primary responsibility entails dedicating his time towards laboring for the Dvija community, with the purpose of sustaining his own livelihood. The development of several lineages of landed heritage linked to governance, and the changing dynamics of the vaisyas and sudras in terms of their social standing, had a transformative impact on the varna system. In the post-Gupta era, the perception of sudras has evolved, shifting away from their traditional

association with servitude, craftsmanship, and agricultural work. In their role as cultivators, they assume the position traditionally occupied by the vaisyas. Most individuals residing in the low-lying plains of North India were engaged in agricultural pursuits. In contemporary land grants, these entities are commonly known as ksetrakara, and infrequently referred to as karsaka.¹⁶² Furthermore, they were identified by many appellations as krsibala, krsnas, krasaka, krsika, kriska, ksa, and kutumbi.

The abundance of diverse terminologies used to refer to a certain social group throughout a range of literary and epigraphic sources may suggest the group's substantial numerical strength and societal importance. The Sudra caste was commonly associated with individuals engaged in agricultural activities inside the community. Hiuan-Tsang's writings provide clear evidence that the sudras were engaged in agricultural activities.¹⁶³

Kautilya recommends the establishment of villages predominantly inhabited by Sudra cultivators. Based on the restrictions outlined by Manu and Yajnavalkya, sudras can be classified as share croppers, also known as ardhika. As per Alberuni's observations¹⁶⁴, a clear differentiation between Sudras and vaisyas was not evident. They cohabitated and resided in proximity within the confines of a common residential area.

According to the Narasimha Purana, the occupation of agriculture is suggested for individuals belonging to the Sudra Varna. The Skanda Purana portrays the Sudra as an individual who fulfills the role of a grain provider and householder (grhastha). Consequently, despite the explicit provisions in the ancient legal texts mandating that sudras should engage in service to the three higher varnas as their occupation, it is evident that agricultural pursuits undertaken by sudras have already attained a firmly entrenched status in contemporary society. During the Gupta era¹⁶⁵, the sudras had a nascent inclination towards agricultural practices, but it was not until the early medieval century that they fully transitioned into a well-established community of cultivators.

Sudras were connected by inter-caste marriages with the remaining three upper castes. The technique showed increased adaptability following the implementation of Manu.

The practice of inter-caste marriages, namely involving men from higher castes and women from lower castes, was prevalent within Anuloma civilizations until the ninth century A.D. The legitimacy of these entities was acknowledged by both conventional Nibandha and smriti authors. Smriti writers expressed significant criticism against Other Pratilomas, wherein the bride's caste was lower than that of the husband.

The Dharmasastra highlights the significance of anuloma and pratiloma relationships, which denote the intermarriage between individuals belonging to the Sudra caste and those from higher varnas. These unions played a crucial role in the emergence of mixed caste communities, a considerable portion of which were subsequently marginalized as untouchables. There is a lack of other epigraphic evidence available to contribute to our understanding of Sudra's social status. However, it is important to note that he was not seen as exempt from legal obligations. The precise historical moment when sudras came to be regarded as untouchables within Hindu culture cannot be definitively determined due to the separate mentions of Sudra and Chandala in our archival records.

Due to their vital role in agriculture, particularly in the context of farming, cattle, particularly bullocks, were maintained in extensive herds. The one responsible for the taming and rearing of animals valued for their milk, dairy products, and cow dung, which served various purposes such as fuel, fertilizer, ground coating, and sometimes mud wall polishing, was commonly referred to as a herdsman. In each community, a designated pasture was allocated, wherein individuals, predominantly from the Sudra caste¹⁶⁶, were remunerated for their responsibility in tending to the livestock during the day. The individuals who were employed for the purpose of tending to and managing livestock, namely cattle, were commonly known as herders or cowherds. They were sometimes referred to by many names such as Paupla, gopala, and maybe Gopa. Each morning, the cattle proprietors entrusted their livestock to the herdsman, who then returned them to the former in the evening. The animals were recorded in both the inverted and returned positions.

The agricultural labourers of the hamlet were commonly known as pamras. The agricultural labourer promptly heeds the farmer's call to the field, hastening with his chest shielded by his arms and his lips trembling due to the cold, therefore

exemplifying the profound destitution they endure. Upon being requested by a multitude of spectators to present a quantity of rice stalks, the pamaras are portrayed as exhibiting a sense of pride while observing their collection of stalks. These items could have functioned as remuneration for the labor involved in gathering the crops or as the yield obtained from a field that was rented to them in return for compensation.

The wealthier members of the village community commonly employed domestic attendants or maids, known as *prijana*. The origins of slavery remain uncertain. During the historical period under consideration, the institution of slavery was prevalent in society. Both males and females were in attendance. The phrase "*parijanajarati*" is used in the *Harshacarita*, suggesting that individuals denoted by this term dedicated their entire lives to serving their lords.

In a village setting, additional sub-castes that were deemed necessary included potters, barbers, weavers, tailors, carpenters, fishers, washermen, doctors, hunters, dancers, drummers, basket makers, leather workers, meat-sellers (butchers), and *chandalas*. The Meads, Andhras, and Candalas were individuals belonging to the stigmatized caste. They were the least significant individuals within the community. While early *smriti* writers only identify four *varnas*, they do not distinguish between *Sudra* and *Antyajaja* in terms of their *Dharma*. Over the course of time, a differentiation between *Sudra* and *chandala* emerged, leading to the inclusion of more castes within the category of untouchables.

The *Chandala*, as perceived by *smriti* authors, could potentially have served as a euphemistic term encompassing many social strata categorized as untouchables. The presence of lower castes in society was documented in the historical records of the Pala and Chandela periods.¹⁶⁷ The absence of details in *Chandala's* dynastic documents from the early medieval period is a matter of sorrow. Nevertheless, contemporary Jain and Pali literature have furnished the essential data required to comprehend the current state of low castes within Hindu culture.

According to the *vaijayanti*, the *medas* were individuals who engaged in the hunting of wild animals, the removal of night time waste and urine, and lived in an undesirable manner. These folks appear to exhibit the highest degree of moral degradation. They were required to reside a considerable distance away from the indigenous environment

of the village. It could have been predicted that following their transition to rural living, these disheartened jatis may have resorted to a form of Sanskritization to ascend the social hierarchy and assume the role of peasants. According to Vivekanandh Jha, there is evidence to suggest that the population of untouchables saw growth concurrent with the inclusion of additional castes inside this social category. The untouchables faced significant barriers in obtaining land, which resulted in their exclusion from the community. Consequently, they were compelled to undertake menial chores to occupy themselves during periods of scarcity, ensuring their availability for field work when necessary. The peasant, who was unquestionably subjected to exploitation, actively engaged in the severe suppression of the manual laborer. Undoubtedly, this event stands as one of the most devastating calamities in the annals of Indian societal history.

3.2. FOOD AND BEVERAGES (DRINKS)

Based on the references found in the smritis and general literature of the examined historical period, it can be observed that there was an absence of noticeable alterations in the assortment of food and beverages. The Hirnyakeshi Sutra enumerates a selection of permissible food items, including sali (rice), wheat, and barley, with three distinct varieties of pulses. Additionally, the sutra acknowledges the permissibility of clarified butter, oil, and molasses, as well as raw and coarse sugar. The incorporation of ghee¹⁶⁸, together with a selection of aromatic spices, resulted in a delectable enhancement of the dish's overall flavour profile. An account of the combination of rice, curd, and ghee can be found in the historical records of Nalanda. Charaka included Mahabrihi, a widely recognized rice variety, among his comprehensive categorization of primary rice types. The Sali rice variety, which has been produced in the region of Kashmir¹⁶⁹ for a millennium, has garnered acclaim, including recognition in the historical text Rajatarangini. Traditionally, wheat and rice were commonly cooked individually in ghee, serving as the primary constituents of the meal, which were then presented as offerings to the deity.

Based on the provided paperwork, it is stated that the preparation of Navivedya¹⁷⁰ necessitates the utilization of eight kalasa of ghee for every two kilograms of wheat flour. Based on the topographical evidence found in the royal records, it may be

inferred that the cultivation of wheat, rice, and barley took place in the Ganges Valley, Malva, and Central India. Sugar cane is referenced in many inscriptions, alongside other cereals that are widely consumed.¹⁷¹ It is apparent from this observation that sugar constituted a component of the dietary habits at that particular period. The omission of cow's milk and curd¹⁷² from typical food item listings suggests their potential significance in the diets of the upper echelons of society. The offerings for the deities also consisted of rice, milk, and sugar. Ghee, much like other food items, was not commonly consumed by individuals of lower social rank due to similar conditions.

Considering the variations in their digestive mechanisms, Angiran, a renowned scholar, proposed the consumption of milk, curd, and ghee as suitable dietary choices for the upper portion of the population. The examination of the societal aspect of eating has been conducted by scholars such as Apasthamba in Chapter VIII and Vedavyas in Chapter III, among others. The subject matter pertains to the dietary practices of Brahmans and Kshatriyas. In contrast to other castes, there is no food restrictions observed. Sudras and Antyaja were granted the freedom to acquire whatever they desired.

The inscriptions from our era provide more descriptions of the multitude of spices that were utilized in the diet. In the year 10th century, the term "records" pertains to those engaged in the trading of various commodities like as vegetables, salt, pepper, ginger, and other spices, collectively known as Kirana.¹⁷³ Therefore, it is apparent that spices were utilized to augment the taste of the cuisine and were employed in the cooking process of vegetables, fish, and meat, in conjunction with ghee and oil. The examination of the dynastic epigraphs indicates that oil played a significant role as a staple dietary item. The documents regularly relate to the oil pressing industry, specifically mentioning the inclusion of a gift of one palika of oil from the oil mill¹⁷⁴ or two palik on every kumbhaka (leather oil vessel) of oil sold. The references to the oil industries in this article serve as evidence of its significant relevance and popularity within society.

The term in question appears to possess significance, which can be elucidated by the fact that the recipient was granted authorization to utilize the aquatic creatures within

the ponds situated in the region bestowed by the Brahmana. The presence of fisheries in the villages of Agrahara suggests that the Brahmnas, as recipients, may incorporate fish into their diet on a sporadic or periodic basis. According to Smrtis, meat was considered a by-product resulting from the food intake practices of Brahmanas. In one of the Rajaputana epigraphs, it is mentioned that Alahanadeva, the chhamna ruler, established a prohibition on animal killing during specific days. This prohibition indirectly alludes to the act of consuming meat.

Alberuni failed to observe the meat intake practices of the Brhmanas. He asserted that while there was a desire for meat among the populace, the prohibition specifically targeted Brahmanas due to their role as custodians of religious practices. Animals such as sheep, goats, hares, fish, buffalo, and several avian species inhabiting both aquatic and terrestrial environments were included in the permissible list of creatures that might be hunted. Conversely, the hunting of cows, mules, camels, elephants, parrots, and other animal species was explicitly forbidden.¹⁷⁵ The preceding depiction elucidates the prevalence of meat consumption within early medieval culture, excluding the Brahmins. However, it is important to approach Alberuni's argument with caution and avoid interpreting it too literally. The recent Bhoja plate housed in the Indore Museum has references to the slaughter of animals with the intention of providing sustenance to learned Brahmnas. Therefore, it may be inferred that Brahmanas in Rajaputana region occasionally partook in the consumption of meat, while the kshastriya caste shown a fondness for it, particularly after engaging in hunting activities. This conclusion is drawn from the analysis of the epigraphic evidence provided by Chahamanas king Alhanadeva and king Boja of Dhara. The absence of endorsement for such action in Smrti literature, with the sole exception of Vedavyasa, is evident. Subsequently, Alberuni further corroborated the presence of a carnivorous population by furnishing a catalogue of the animals that were to be slain to satisfy their dietary preferences.¹⁷⁶

From the year 650 A.D., throughout history, wine has consistently maintained its status as a widely used and favored beverage. There exist enough references in the inscriptions from this historical period that support this assertion. There were three distinct categories of beverages in ancient times, namely Madhupna, Somarasa, and

Rasarati. In relation to the initial beverage, Brhmana individuals refrained from partaking in the consumption of wine, a widely favored beverage among the remaining castes. The Jodhpur inscription, dating back to the ninth century A.D., provides us with indirect information. The kshatriyas of Rajaputana were accustomed to consuming alcoholic beverages. It is known that the Pratihara ruler Harischandra was married to two women, Bhadra, who belonged to the Kshatriya caste, and a Brahmana girl. The sons of these Kshatriya women have been portrayed as individuals who consume wine.

The claim made by an Arab traveler that Brahamana did not consume wine, but kshatriyas were known to partake in it¹⁷⁷, provides corroborating evidence for this argument. The subsequent inscribed artifact belonging to the same lineage, namely the veracity of the preceding statement is supported by the inscription of Bhoja, the ruler of the GurjaraPratihara dynasty, discovered near Gwalior. The subsequent passage elucidates that the female members of the household partook in wine sampling and enjoyed themselves.¹⁷⁸ Hence, it seems plausible that wine was a favored libation among the Kshatriya nobility, whereas the Brahmanas refrained from its consumption.

A little engraving (inscription),¹⁷⁹ bearing the date 725 A.D., a claim originating from the Ajmer region suggests that Brahmanas partook in the consumption of alcohol known as Somarasa. However, the specific details of the production method of this alcoholic beverage have not been elucidated. As various grants reference the donation of the community with Madhuka trees, some form of alcohol was manufactured from Madhuka flowers.¹⁸⁰ The same information can be derived from Govinda Chandra Deva's record.¹⁸¹ It is improbable that the Madhuka flower juice known as somarasa, which is distilled today and used to produce wine, was ever utilized in Madhuka flower juice. The conclusion derived from the entire discussion is that either the Brahamana donee consumed alcohol, though not wine, or he sold Madhuka for distillation. Jaya Singh's Kalachuri record refers to toddy use by the common folk. In that epigraph, the word "Rasvati" alludes to palm juice, which is still a preferred beverage in lower strata.

The fact that people drank alcohol does not mean that there was no restriction on its consumption or that it was tolerated in society. The Smṛti authors absolutely oppose the Brahmanas' use of alcoholic liquids.

3.3 DRESS AND ACCESSORIES (ORNAMENTS)

Like in the past, Indians dressed in dhotis, which were lengths of cloth tied with a belt and pins and draped over the shoulders and around the torso. The upper garment, which was draped shawl-wise over the shoulders, was referred to as *uttariya*, and the lower one was known as *paridhana*. Women are by nature lovers of beauty; hence they try to dress well and use cosmetics to enhance their physical appearance. Even while the inscriptions are mute on this topic, sculptures, drawings, and paintings from this period talk eloquently about it.

The meticulous investigation of early medieval artwork demonstrates that clothing correlates to people's general dress. The apparel that must be given for the sun deity suggests that males originally wore dhotis and sarongs around their upper parts. According to the Arab traveler Sulaiman, who lived in the ninth century A.D., people used to fasten a fabric around their waists and wear an upper garment. For the god Manjusri, the artist has shown a lower garment that falls below the knee and an upper garment that resembles a scarf and encircles the breast with two flowing ends.

The evidence from the artistic specimens reveals that ladies frequently wore two clothing at this time. The dhoti worn by the deities in the sculpture was apparently shorter than the present standard dhoti, which is 5 yards long. We find a realistic picture of life in Bagh frescoes from the seventh to eighth centuries A.D., where the male figure is represented wearing a short, lungi-like dhoti. The standard appears to be closer to three yards in the early medieval period, and all divinity figures can be seen wearing this short male dhoti. It may have been one or two inches above the ankle in the case of a female. The sculptural evidence is not particularly evident in the case of women's attire, and it sometimes seems to be inconclusive as to whether the upper half of the sari covered the ladies' breasts as we see presently. Typically, the sari merely covers the lower part in most cases. When we carefully study the manner, the women are wearing their saris, this feature becomes clearer. The sari in those days was not

like the sari now (i.e., it did not cover the complete top portion and did not go around the waist like a petticoat), but it seems to have been of a different kind.

The female characters in the Bagh frescoes wear a green top and a striped bottom. The standing form offers the most appealing effects for the fashion, and the sari was not like a petticoat. The sari goes around the legs and enhances their contours rather than covering the front in a flat piece. Like a kachha, both ends are tucked in and secured.

With the sari thus finished at the waist, it is still unknown how the upper body was covered. Women appear to be very barely dressed in sculptures, drawings, and paintings because Cunningham believed that nudity did not communicate a sense of obscenity in India before the entrance of Muslims.¹⁸² Because the sculptures were not accomplished enough to show the same sari covering both the upper and bottom areas of the body, it cannot be argued that the upper portion of women is nude.

Although bodices were not unimaginable in higher society, early medieval female figures rarely wore them. Only women with short sleeves and a white bodice are represented in the Bagh frescoes.¹⁸³ In a nutshell, it can be argued that wearing garments below the navel was customary for both sexes, and occasionally both sexes wore *uttariya*. Sometimes it takes the form of a long, slim piece of clothing that entirely covers the left breast while leaving the right breast just half exposed.¹⁸⁴

Regarding the fabric itself, it might be believed that individuals were familiar with sari colours and outfit patterns.¹⁸⁵ Hiuan-Tsang is recorded as saying that in the seventh century A.D. King and wealthier people wore luxury garments, which was made of silk, linen, and fine wool. The Rajatarangini's reference of the use of fluttering silk in early-medieval Kashmir further supports this argument.¹⁸⁶ People in the Takka region (between the Sind and Beas) wore glossy white clothing made of silk¹⁸⁷, and Kanyakubja people wore glossy silk. Similar apparel that was exported from India to the western Asian countries is also referenced by some other authors. As a result, we discover that clothing during this time was typically made of cotton and silk.

The claim that Hindus were ignorant of the trade of sewing before the introduction of Muslims is inaccurate during the historical period under discussion. Despite prior allusions to the stitching technique in later literature and the Rigveda, we discover that

blouses or jackets were fashionable in the plains of Northern India. According to It-sing, throughout the seventh century A.D., shirts and trousers were common in Kashmir and Punjab. There are a few examples of ladies wearing vivid saris and jackets in the paintings from the Bagh Cave. Therefore, it seems that either sculptor purposely denied the female forms of this element during our period or that the fashion for wearing a blouse was not widespread.

There were numerous and exquisite hairstyle trends. The females of the current age will undergo a paradigm change after closely scrutinizing the artwork of our time, and it will become evident that those fashions are still widespread in society. The original is a better spot to see the concept of the haircut and decorating than a description. The best examples of hairstyles from that era are shown in Orissan sculptures, which are presently on exhibit at the National Museum in New Delhi. In each instance, the hair is tied back in a knot. By including some frills and ornaments, it becomes more graceful and varied. Some women used to style their hair into two creative bundles hanging from either side of their heads or gradually fading tiers. According to Mahendrapala's PehwaPrasasti¹⁸⁸, the feudatory Purnaraja was to blame for the adversaries' wives' curly hair turning straight.¹⁸⁹

The sculpture also enlightens us on how guys style their hair. In addition to having a beard and a moustache, this man had curly hair, which is typically seen falling lower down. Sulaiman saw this man while travelling to India in the ninth century A.D. On the passing of a relative, they were both shaven, but it is unclear if growing a beard and mustache was in style or not. Early medieval women were huge fans of lipstick¹⁹⁰, or the reddening of the lips.

Chinese traveller Hiuan-Tsang noticed that Indian women were using red or black things to colour their teeth.¹⁹¹ In Assam, the practice of reddening and darkening was common and was seen to enhance facial beauty. It has been believed that the betel chewed by women in society was likely what caused the reddening.

The wearing of bangles on the wrist was one of Saubhagya's symbols. The wrist and lower part of the hands are typically covered in bangles and ornaments at the same time, but a medieval sculpture reveals that women enjoyed covering their wrists and hands in an abundance of bangles. The penultimate and least significant step was

applying black Collyrium (kajal) to women's eyes. Due to the lack of resources left for an amorous frolic, the widows of the enemies had given up applying collyrium, which was another indicator of the Saubhagya.¹⁹²

Early medieval women had extremely simple tastes in clothing but highly extravagant tastes in adornment. The females like to wear beautiful and exquisite jewelry, which could be seen as the natural outcome of the rich state of the civilization. The majority of the many forms of ornaments still exist in modern society.

On the fingers, mudra (rings) and kankana (bracelets) were worn, along with bangles. Both sexes commonly wore pierced, hanging-down ear lobes (Kundala), and the patterns were quite feminine. Male and female necklaces, known as "Hara," are intriguing and made of gold and valuable stones, reaching all the way to the chest. The waistbands and bracelets are still widely used in Bengal, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh. The nose ring, which a bride used to get at the time of marriage and is now crucial for females, is conspicuously absent from sculptures and paintings from our time.

3.4 MANNERS AND CUSTOMS

It is impossible to overstate the impact of one outcome of the fragmentation of social life, which is the distinctive feature of Hindu organization. It inhibited the development of a sense of social solidarity by negating the idea of social obedience outside of the constrained context of the joint family and the sub caste.

Therefore, the authority principle that is the foundation of national and social order has never existed before. As a result, Hindu life took on a wild and uncontrolled expansion, and every kind of harmful tradition eventually gained acceptance and approval under the guise of religion.¹⁹³ Early medieval North India was home to many obscene traditions, including the use of human flesh in worship, Sati¹⁹⁴ (Burning Widow)¹⁹⁵, marriage before puberty¹⁹⁶, dedicating women to the temples, and other similarly repulsive practices.

Orthodox Hindu attitude toward such acts was that if people believed that they were authorized by religion, then no one should be required to interfere with them. However, this attitude was limited to select communities and was never broadly common. Conservative thinking regarded the Kapalika worship¹⁹⁷ and the more

flamboyant tantrums as equally orthodox to the practice of Sandhya (daily prayer or temple devotion).

It is possible that customs substituted for religion and assumed the status of divine regulations through the employment of fictitious sacred writings due to governmental and religious authorities' neglect. There was no instance of the state using its authority to forbid anti-social rituals until the East India Company, in response to Ram Mohan Roy's agitation, took up the Sati subject.

Intriguing is the Sati instance. Early medieval epigraphic records offer little insight into the practice of Sati, but Post-Gupta Smiriti regulations compel the widow to burn herself alive on her husband's funeral pyre. Sankha, Angiras, and Harita are among those who have no doubts about this. Contrary to what some European critics like to think, it was not a very common practice. In south India, it was not performed anywhere. Except for a Brahman widow who self-immolated, the practice appears to have been limited to royal and noble families in north India. Nevertheless, the Smiritis of the Gupta era prescribed a life of vows and strict celibacy for widows and allowed them to inherit their husband's property.

Vedavyas suggests an alternative course of action for the Brahmana widow. The Arab tourists refer to Sati as it is practiced in Hindu society. According to the merchant Sulaiman, when the king's corpse is burned, the queens "cast themselves upon the pill and burn themselves."¹⁹⁸ Alberuni made it obvious that the queens had to burn themselves whether they wanted to or not in his pronouncement on the matter, but it was left up to them to decide whether they would or not.¹⁹⁹ Poor economic situations and the need to care for children abandoned by one's husband may have been the factors that forced a widow to leave a life of suffering and discomforts, but we do not receive any references indicating Sati practice in the rural area during the era under examination. Additionally, numerous allusions discovered in the dynasty inscription show that this Sati practice was primarily restricted to royal households. The practice of sati was seen in India in the seventh century. Banabhatta in his composition Harshacharita gives the details of Harshavardhan's mother becoming sati.

3.5 BELIEFS AND RELIGION

According to modern sources, Northern India's religious situation in the seventh century A.D. was far from ideal. There were numerous sects and creeds. Religion's true essence had been tarnished by pointless rituals and irrational faith. Sincere devotion was replaced by empty discussion. Bana provides us with a list of the representatives from different philosophical and theological systems who live at the hermitage of Divakaramitra in the Vindhyan forest. There were various sects of Jains, including the Arhates (Digambara) and Svetapatas (Svetambaras); various classes of Brahminical ascetics, including the Paturabhiksus (naked ascetics), Maskarinas (Parivrajaka), Varnins (Brahmacharins), Bhagavatas and Pancharatrikas (Vaishnava ascetics). However, the coexistence of these various religions in the same location offers abundant evidence of the era's tolerance. Since Buddha's name is Jina, the Buddhists are referred to as Jains in this country. Previously, they were known as Arhatas. The Bhagavata Vaishnava sect was distinguished from the Pancharatres, the Varie or Brahmacharis from the Upanishadas, and the latter group from the Maskaris. It is challenging to determine the precise differences between these several associated sects and schools. We need just acknowledge that there are distinctions.

Arata, Pasupata, Parasara, and other retuses of the Manitora Jain camp were eager to see Harsha. Sumati of the Parasari sect, Viradava of the Jain sect, MaakeriImraculaka of the Virici sect, and Maaveta herself were among Bana's acquaintances. Women ascetics from the Armata, Krishna, Vieravasa, Avalokitesvara, and Virici sects lived in Mahaaveta's hermitage. Sukans, the minister of king Tarapida, was where Saivites, Buddhists, and Kahapanaka (Digibar Jains) dwelt.

Additionally, Hiuan-Tsang lists several ascetic cults from the era that stood out externally. Some people, he says, "wear peacock tails." Some people (perhaps Kapalikas) wear a necklace made of skulls around their necks, while others (Nirgranthas) cover their bodies with grass or boards, pull their hair out, and trim their mustaches. Others mat their hair and tie it up in a top knot with oil, and their clothing is not always the same color.

Some people also adorned themselves with ashes. Additionally, there were followers of Durga, the Kapalika sect, and those who worshiped Shiva and Sakti. The Jutikas or

Chudinkas (ascetics with matted hair) are arranged differently from the Bhūtas, Nirgranthas, Kapalikes, and others. The Sanibayyas and the Vaideaikas represent opposing political factions. The Chudinkas consume foul cuisine and dress in filthy clothing. These quotes from the two foremost authorities of the time attest to the fact that many religious groups, philosophical schools, and classes of ascetics coexisted harmoniously and without conflict in the nation throughout this time.

These statements suggest that Hinduism and Buddhism were divided into several sects, each of which had its own sub-sects and branches. The two most significant sects within Hinduism, which had several branches, were Saivism and Bhagavatism. Saktism, or goddess worship, was also widely practiced. Even inanimate items and a couple of lesser deities were still revered. Buddhism is split into two primary sects, the Hinayana, and the Mahayana, in accordance with the Abhidhamma, while Vinayas divides it into 18 philosophical schools. Jainism only had two branches: Svetambar (ascetics who wore white clothing) and Digambara (ascetics who went without wearing any clothing). Jainism has not yet undergone further division.

It indicates that Saivism was the most common religious movement at the time. Harsha was a Shiva devotee prior to turning into an upasaka of Buddhism²⁰⁰, just like the Maitrakas of Valabhi²⁰¹, Sashanka of Bengal, Bhaskaravarman of Kamroop, and Sailobberas of Orissa. All but two of the Maitraka kings, according to their copper inscriptions, referred to themselves as Parama Mahesvaras. The ox, a symbol of Shiva, was on their imperial seal. On their coins was an image of Triula. The Maitrakas claimed themselves to be the descendants of Nitra, one of the four main students of the Pasupata sect's founder; Goud Lakulisa Sashanka was a devout Saivaite who, according to Hiuan-Tsang, persecuted Buddhists. The bull and Siva are seen on Sashanka's gold seal.²⁰² Bhaskaravarman has made a promise not to worship any other God than Shiva. This is corroborated by his Midhnapura plate.²⁰³ Bana claimed that Harsha's ancestors were adherents of Tantrism and Saivism. Shiva (Rudra) was worshipped in the royal palace among the other gods during the rule of Harsha's father. Before beginning his conquests, Harsha performed great devotional homage to the exquisite Nilalohita (Rudra-Siva). The benedictory passages of the dramas Ratnavali and Priyadaraiika, credited to Harsha, mention the main Brahmanian deities.

Shiva and other deities, including, Sambhu and Hara. On the third day of Prayag's quinquennial assembly, Harsha erected the statue of Shiva. The aforementioned information demonstrates that Harsha maintained his trust in his ancestral religion practically up to the point of his conversion to Buddhism. And once more, it's important to keep in mind that, except from the assertion in Harsha-carita, there isn't any other reliable information about Harsha's conversion to Buddhism. And even if we discover any Buddhas at the period, they would have been counted as Vishnu incarnations.

According to Hiuan-Tsang, the Pashupata sect had numerous adherents in the Sindhi regions of Jalandhara, Ahikshetra, Kapilvashtu, Kanyakubja, Banaras, Malwas, and Maheshwar-pura.²⁰⁴ There were many pashupatas in Sindh, Maheswar-pura, and Malawa. In addition, he notes that Takka was home to hundreds of Deva temples. Naturally, the majority of these temples were devoted to Siva or Vishnu, the two main deities of Brahmanism.

Hiuan-Tsang claimed that these places were home to thousands of Pashupatas, or followers of Brahmanical sects. A large Shiva temple in Benaras caught his attention. There, he saw a metal representation of the God standing 100 feet tall and motivating 10,000 Shiva devotees. The Mahakala Temple in Ujjain was well-known throughout the nation. It appears frequently in Bana's Kadabari. In Thanesar, Shiva was revered in practically every home. Bana performed the Panchtopachara rite before entering Harsha's court. On the Sona River's bank, Shivalinga offered a funeral rite to Savitri.

The aforementioned incidents imply that Shiva was worshipped as an image or linga. He was worshipped as Shiva, Shambhu, Maheswara, Hara, Hadreswar, Retakeshvara, Kaleswara, Pasupati, Rudra, and Kāpālikeswara, among other titles. Shiva was typically worshipped as Kapalikeswar or Mahakaleswara in his awful form; whereas the first six are soon to be the gentle forms and the last four are signs of his terrible aspect. The worshipers of Kapalikeswar, known as Kapalikas, had peculiar beliefs. They engaged in extremely frightful behaviors. They were made of human skull garlands.²⁰⁵ They held a belief in a group of demons who were devotees of Mahakala (Shiva) and who were to be appeased by human sacrifices or by offerings of the flesh of the deceased. Mahakala and his lieutenant Vetals, the leader of the demons, were to

be appeased by a sacrifice in fire lit in the mouth of a corpse on the cemetery. The goal of a Kapalika was to become a Vidyadhara, a supposedly blessed being who served Shiva. The founder of the Vardhana family in Thaneshwar, Pushbhuti, helped Bhairavacharya become a Vidyadhara, and as a result, he rose to prominence as a king, according to Bana. Even if they may not be true, such tales attest to the bizarre superstitions of the Shiva worship that prevailed throughout the nation. This form of Tantric worship most likely originated in the south, specifically in Andhra. In such rites, the Andhras cursed the top priests.

The worship of Sakti, whose sect bore the name Sakti, was closely related to that of Siva. The superstitious rituals associated with Chandika, Durga, or Mahakali worship were not much better than those associated with Kahaan worship, in which Dravidians and Andhras participated. On his way to Ujjain, Chandrapida came across a sample of the goddess Chandika in a forest. An old Dravid was residing at the temple.²⁰⁶ The queen of King Sudraka would occasionally take a nap in the temple of Chandika, from whom she hoped to get a son.

An Andhra was attempting to sacrifice an animal to the goddess Chandika at the time of Prabhakaravardhana's terminal sickness. It appears that this was a typical practice to honor the goddess Durga (Chandika) with alcohol and sacrifices of animals. Also prevalent was human sacrifice to the Goddesses. Hiuan-Tsang was captured by pirates who intended to sacrifice him to the goddess Durga as he was going from Ayodhya to Ayomukha. It was just luck that spared him. As the Trisula of Durga²⁰⁷, a Sabar loader by the name of Natanga always stayed covered in buffalo blood. Use a variety of weapons to cover Durga in blood. Additionally, the Sabaras sacrificed human flesh to the deity. A sword (Khadga) was held in one hand by a Durga deity. According to legend, the blade of Durga was as terrifying as 48 rhinoceros teeth found in the Vindhya Mountains' forest.

The goddess Durga was also revered for her compassion. Vilasvati, the queen, worshiped Durga with Khira, cakes, maize, flowers, chupa, and other items. Durga is regarded as Shiva's consort. She was believed to be able to eliminate ignorance, annihilate sin, and bring about happiness, protection, and the slaying of enemies. As Devi, Shiva, Durga, Parvati, Kali, Ambika, Katyayani, Uma, Himavati, havini,

Bhadrakali, Gouri, Kenna, Chandik, Kalevatri, Arya, Sarvmi, Rutrini, and elsewhere were just a few of her twenty monikers. Some Maitraka rulers' names are revealed on copper plates, such Kottavi (a terrible version of Durga), Pinidurajja (Arya Devi), and Sankarika (the feminine of Sankara). The names suggest that the Saiva and Sakta sects were equally prevalent in Gujarat and Saurashtra.

Vaisnavism came after Saivism. In Harsha's time, the Bhagavata sect was highly established. Vishnupurana wrote his works around the eighth century. And the Bhagavata Purana, which dates to the early seventh century A.D. promoted the veneration of Vishnu. In the Vishnu-Purana, Vishnu is proclaimed to be the highest being, and holy Krishna is told of his wonderful exploits. Twelve books make up the Bhagavata Purana, the tenth of which is the most read and is devoted to Krishna's life.

Bana praises Vishnu and the other Gods while mentioning Bhagavati. He also discusses Krishna's valiant actions as they are described in the Puranas.²⁰⁸ Hiuan - Tsang makes hazy mention of hundreds of Java-temples and thousands of adherents of various Brahmanism sects. He claims that there were hundreds of Deva Temples with thousands of adherents of various sects²⁰⁹ in Takka, Sthaneswars, Srughna, Kanyakubja, Prayaga, Sravasti, Benaras, Bengal, Kamarupa, Malawa, Atali, and Valabhi. It's possible that many of the followers were Vaisnavites and that some of the temples were devoted to the God Vishnu.

The 5th and 6th century A.D. Gupta coins and inscriptions show that the Gupta kings were ardent supporters of Bhagavatism, and several of them took the title of Parama Bhagavata (great devotees of God Vishnu). Their coins also display depictions of Vishnu and Laxmi, as well as their associated symbols like the conch, chakra, and lotus.²¹⁰ Bhagavatism grew in power throughout the Gupta era because of royal support. According to other evidence, it furthered consolidated its position in the seventh century A.D. Even though the majority of the Maitraka kings were Shiva worshippers, Maharaja Dharusena the first (571–72 A.D.), according to his Maliya copper plate, was a Parama Bhagavata. The late sixth century A.D. is credited with the construction of the Dasvatara temple in Deogadh in the Jhansi area. The finely sculpted sculpture of Nara-Narayana at the same temple is likewise worthless. It shows Vishnu lying on the serpent Ananta as other Gods watch. We learn that King

Prakataditya erected a shrine for the God Muradevies vis in the inscription on the Sarnath stone, which is dated to the seventh century A.D. Adityasena, who ruled in 650 A.D, is mentioned in the Athead stone inscription as having constructed a superb temple for Vishnu. Since he is portrayed in this record as having carried a discuss resembling Vishnu in his hand, his father Madhavagupta, a friend of Harsha, was presumably a Vaistinava. These examples show that Saiva and Vaishnava religions were both widely practiced in northern India in the seventh century A.D.²¹¹

Bana cites the Pancharatrikas and Bhagavatas, as well as other religious sects, at the hermitage of Divakaramitra. According to Fuhrer, Pancharatri celebrations included specific yoga rituals. They also built Vishnu temples and statues in accordance with their own norms and held the idea that Vishnu has taken many different forms. While the Pancharatrika sect is almost ever mentioned, bhakti became generally accepted. At the village of Kadwar near Somanatha Fäten (Sauratra), there is a Vishnu-temple attributed to the 7th century A.D., which features some very fine sculptures (ascribed to the 6th and the 7th century A.D.) depicting the Boar (Varah), Man-lion (Narismha), and Dwarf incarnations (Vaman) of Vishnu. Only the Boar incarnation's statue is present today, but the temple's remaining incarnations' reliefs imply that all ten of the incarnations' idols once stood there. The absence of Krishna suggests that during the time of this painting, devotion of Krishna as the main incarnation had already begun.

As early as the sixth or seventh century AD, Bengali vaishnavism appears to have incorporated the Krishna narrative as a central tenet. The sculptures at Paharpura, which depict numerous events from Krishna's life, including his uprooting the twin Arjuna trees and killing the demon, etc., are the most significant archaeological evidence. At the well-known Mora caves, which date back to the eighth century AD. There are sculptures that depict the scenes of Kaliyamardana and Govardhanadharan.

The Harivansapurana, written by Jinasenauri at the end of the 7th century A.D. in Gujarat, recounted various incidents from Krishna's early years. This indicates that the Krishna religion was quite well-liked in the seventh century A.D. Bhagavatism and the Bhagavat Purana placed a strong focus on the loving and devotional elements of Krishna worship. It consequently spread over the nation. The Radha cult may not have

existed at this time. This time period's sources don't mention it. However, the notion that the earth is Valéhnavi or Sakti of Vishnu was already well-known at this time.

This does not demonstrate that there was no Rama worship. Bhatti wrote the poetry *Bhattikavya*, also known as *Ravanavadha*, in the first three years of the seventh century, one of the favoured works during the reign of Harasena III. It tells the tale of Rama and the many heroic deeds he performed as told in the *Ramayana*. However, historical evidence points to Krishna—the foremost incarnation of Vishnu—as the principal deity of vaishnavaita.

The third-place Hindu deity was the Sun. As old as the *Rigved* is its adoration. The epics, the *Vishnu-Purana*, and the *Bhavisya Purana* all make mention of the Sura sect (the group that worships the sun). However, the seventh-century A.D. sun cult, had just a tenuous connection to the Vedic Solar worship. The Scythians most likely delivered India's solar deity at this era. According to Varahamihira in *Brhitashinta*, Magas should set the Sun God idols.²¹² According to the *Bhavisyapurana*, Samb, the son of Krishna, invited God, the Persian Sun worshipers, from Persia. A Bhojaka astrologer attended Prabhakara Vardhana's court on Harsha's birth. Jivita Gupta II's Deo-Baranaka inscription, which dates from the second half of the 7th century A.D., describes how the BhojakaSuryamitra was given permission to keep gifting a village to the sun temple. The aforementioned examples unequivocally demonstrate that the Sun-cult of this age was heavily influenced by Persia.

The veneration of the sun appears to have been widespread throughout this time. The worshipers were referred to as *Adityabhaktas* (Sun devotees). Harsha's sonapat copper seal describes him and his ancestors as fervent Sun worshipers. Harsha was a follower of the Sun in addition to Shiva and Buddha.²¹³ Prabhakaravardhana, according to Bana, was a devout Sun worshipper. He performed the required rituals for worshipping the Sun God. The Vakataya kings were saivites, although they had a strong devotion to the Sun. A grant from Shiladitya (611 A.D.) reveals that land was granted to the Sun temple in the village of bhadranlynkn in Sourashtra. The names of the later Vakataya rulers, such as Siladitya, Sinhaditya, Vinayaditya, Bhenusakti, and Adityasakti, suggest the influence of the Sun-worship upon the royal family. Sun worship was practiced during the times noted by the Malaya copper plate (dating from 571 to 72

A.D.) and the Alinn copper plate of filidity VII (dating from 766 to 67 A.D.), which both mention it.

There was a splendid Sun Temple in Moolsathanapura (Multan). Hiuan-Tsang claims that the figure was made of gold and was adorned with priceless stones. He recounts that at Kanyakubja, there were magnificent temples of the sun and of Maheshvara, and that there were thousands of followers. Here, 1000 pilgrims from different countries were constantly offering prayers.²¹⁴ Bana claimed that the inhabitants of Ujjain were similarly devoted to the Sun. He also refers to female Sun worshipers. Dr. Basham correctly notes that the Moon (Chandra), in comparison to the Sun, had only minor religious significance, serving primarily as a symbol of Shiva. Although there was no separate cult for the Moon, it was revered alongside the other nine planets.²¹⁵

Other deities revered included Brihaspati, Agni (fire), Indra, Kamdeva, Kubera, and Kumara. Kumara (Kartikeya) was a popular divinity. As was previously said, Goddess worship was widespread and included Durga, Katrikadevi, Katyayani, and others. Ganga, as the river goddess was adored by lace of people. Indians believed that the Ganga River's water was extremely holy and capable of cleansing them of all kinds of sins²¹⁶, according to Hiuan-Tsang. It needs to be recalled that Ganapati was not a popular deity of the time. At the beginning of the copper plates from this century, his name is not recited. Along with continuing to worship inanimate objects like peepal and other trees, professional tools were also revered.

Although horse and other bloody sacrifices may have been abandoned due to Harsha's Buddhist tendencies, who forbade any form of killing in his empire, ordinary non-violent Agnihotra appears to have survived. Vedic sacrifices, which were revived by Gupta rulers, continued in this age. Bana commonly alludes to the cloude of smoke rising religious procedures performed by him before traveling on the major journey in his life to the court of Emperor Harsha. Every person, in Bana's opinion, ought to offer Pancha Bhuta, Manuaya, Pitru, Deva, and Brahma sacrifices. All these sorts of sacrifices were practiced throughout the period, according to statements made by Bana. Brahmanas and cows were revered as Gods. Giving Alma to Brahmana was considered an act of great piety.

Buddhism in the 7th century A.D. though on the decrease, was nonetheless represented by as many as eighteen separate sects, besides its basic division into Mahayana and

Hinayana. Hiuan-Tsang remarks that the followers of these schools kept themselves separate and conflicts ran rampant. Each of the 18 schools claimed to have intellectual supremacy.

Hiuan-Tsang's definition of Mahayana is not clear. According to him Samadhi (concentration) and prajna (intelligence) were the essential qualities of Mahayana. It-seing's definition is obvious and easy, yet not scientific. He remarks, those who worship Bodhisatvas and read the text books of Mahayana (Mahayana sutras) are called Mahayaniets, while those who do not do these things, are called Hineyaniata. Hiuan-Tsang enumerates the following

(i) Buddhas and Bodhisatvas, whose number cannot be tallied, are endowed with various virtues. Their idols were established in monasteries and they were worshipped ceremonially.

(ii) Mahayniats did not attempt for Arbata (Nirvana. Salvation, as Hinayonists did. They first tried to attain the position of Bodhisatva through devotion, severice and obligation and finally aimed to reach the position of Buddha by these means. They did not believe in torturing the body. They encouraged married life. Mahayana thus can be compared to Bhagavation. The devotion of the Mahayanists to Buddha was somewhat like that of the Bagavatas to Krishna.

There were two primary schools of Mahayana (I) Dhyamika and (II) Nagarjuna was the prominent scholar of the first school, while Aanga and his younger brother Vasubandhu were renowned priests of Yogacharya (5th century A.D.). Yogacharya is also called Vijnnavada, adhyamikaSūtra written by Nagarjuna was regarded the fundamental work of Mahayanika school and Yogachara authored by Kanga was considered the primary book of Yogacha. At Nalanda Hiuan-Tsang listened to lectures of leamed priests at on this book. Hiuan -Tsang was an ardent devotee of Yogachara.

Besides these two fundamental sects Hiuan-Tsang cites 18 schools known as Astadasa Nikaya, which were essentially founded on the separate sect. The following are important schools.

It was the most and popular of all schools. Its original name was Theravad. It spread largely in the South. According to Hiuan-Tsang there were 20,000 theramonke in Ceylon. Gaya, Sumatra, Kalinga, Bharuch and Saurashtra had some Sthaviras.²¹⁷ It-

sing endorses the statement of Hiuan-Tsang that he believes Ceylon and South India were the main centres of Sthavirna. Moreover Magadha, Sindh has also some Sthavira monks. There were barely any Sthaviras in the extreme North. There were three sub-divisions among Sthaviras.

The next notable school was Sarvāstavada. Its followers were found mostly in the extreme North viz. in Kashmira and Mungera.²¹⁸ It-sing observes that it had a good following in Magadha and mid-India. But Hiuan-Tsang just cites far North as its principal hub. It-sing a remark seems to be exaggerated, he did not travel across all the regions of mid-India. Sarvastavada has four sub-divisions (i) Mula Sarvistavada (original) (ii) Dharma Gupta group (iii) Mahalessaka group and (iv) Kasyapiya group. Its adherents were discovered from Ahikshetra to Karmasuvarna, Malawa and Sindh. The statements of Hiuan-Tsang and of It-seing are both confirmatory on this point. Magadha and South India had also some followers. Rajyashree followed this school. It was also sub-divided into four branches.

One of its branches was known as Lokottara. Hiuan-Tsang saw several followers of Lokottaravad in Beniyans.²¹⁹ It-seing states that its disciples were found in Magadha and in Mid-India. It was divided into seven branches. These schools were known by the text books of Tripitaka which they studied. It-seing remarks that the schools had variations in viewpoints and beliefs on several matters and it was not certain which of these four schools were related with Mahayana and Hinayana. This is not right. It is a generally known fact that Sthavira, Sammitiya and Sarsvatavadin belonged to Hinayana. It seems that around the age of It-sing pupils of different schools followed Hinayana or Mahayana according to their inclination and the former divides might have been forgotten. It ought to be recalled that all the 18 schools stated in the Buddhist literature did not truly exist. All the Chinese works do not mention the number 18.

On the premise of the data given by Hiuan-Tsang, Rhys Davida has created list of the total number of monks staying in monasteries in India including Ceylon. The approximate sum is roughly two lakhs twelve thousand.²²⁰ Even though it differs slightly, Dr. R. K. Mookerji's list is primarily based on Rhys Davids.²²¹ It is plausible to believe that the distribution in both Northern and Southern India is as follows.

Even if Mahayana was starting to gain popularity at this period, the data above suggest that Hinayinists were more prevalent. This Hiuan-Tsang survey doesn't seem to be totally accurate. He was a passionate Buddhist. He most likely based some of his knowledge about the number of monks and monasteries on hearsay, which led to exaggeration. Furthermore, it is nearly evident that he was not fully positive of what he said or what he may have heard given his frequent vagueness regarding the size of the monasteries. However, his account provides us with an exaggerated but typical Buddhist interpretation of how the religion fared in Northern India during the early part of the 7th century AD.

In this age, Buddhism was fading. The once-important Buddhist center of Kapilvastu was now barren. It was also a lonely area in Kushinagar. Both Vaishali and Vriji met with the same fate. There were not many monks in any of these regions. However, there were innumerable Buddhist adherents, numerous Deva temples, and numerous members of varied sects throughout Magadha.

However, the sight was not as grim as it appeared. The monasteries of Nalanda, Valabhi, Mahabodhi, Tilhe (today's Tillars, west of Nalanda), and Sindhi were all still prospering. Sindh was home to approximately 100 monasteries, each housing a congregation of ten thousand priests. Prominent monastic establishments, housing a considerable number of monks, were also discovered in the regions of Kashmir, Kanyakubja, and Malwa. According to Bana, the hermitage of Divakaramitra bears resemblance to a conventional international monastery, as it accommodates students from diverse religious backgrounds.²²² With the exception of a few instances, the vast majority of monasteries received substantial donations. The presence of corruption and degradation was evident. Hiuan-Tsang documents the expulsion of monks with notorious moral conduct by Harsha from his presence and the nation. It-seing highlights the existence of stringent regulations pertaining to the interaction between priests and nuns. Lattaviles, a comedic theatrical production authored by King Mahendravikrama, a contemporary of Harsha, offers insights into the unscrupulous behaviors exhibited by monks and nuns. Buddhism, akin to other contemporary religious organizations, encompassed a number of superstitious concepts. Statues of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas have been constructed in a multitude of monastic

establishments. The individuals in question were held in high regard through the observance of rigorous rites and unwavering faith, akin to the reverence bestowed upon Hindu deities inside temple settings. According to Hiuan-Tsang's critique of heretics and their superstitious beliefs, relics (sariras) were believed to possess extraordinary abilities, emitting luminous illumination during night time. Consequently, this phenomenon contributed to the proliferation of blind faith and societal decline. Furthermore, the Buddhist monks were subjected to furious attacks by Nirmates, resulting in a detrimental impact on the practice of Buddhism. Incorporation of some principles into Hinduism led to a reduction in the prominence of Buddhism.

According to Hiuan-Tsang's observations, it can be noted that monks belonging to both the Svetamber and Digambara sects were present in the vicinity of Taxila. Additionally, Hiuan-Tsang mentions the presence of the Digambara Nirgranth in significant numbers at PundraVardhana and Soumatra. Despite having achieved a significant level of establishment within the nation at that juncture, Jainism encountered limitations in its scope and failed to fully recover from the setback it experienced during the Gupta period, which witnessed a resurgence of Brahminism.

According to the survey findings, Kapiian Buddhism was the dominant religious tradition in the extreme North -West region, while Hinduism was the prevailing faith in the extreme North East region of Assam. In the remaining regions of the country, Hinduism and Buddhism were observed to have comparable numbers of followers, with only a few notable deviations. The provided statement is not entirely accurate. According to the data provided by Hiuan -Tsang, it may be inferred that Hindus held a numerical advantage over Buddhists. Overall, the interactions between the two groups were characterized by a friendly and cooperative atmosphere. Both religions exhibited comparable levels of idolatry, although the spirit of tolerance that prevailed throughout the Gupta era was not sustained. During the assembly of Kannauj, Harsha displayed a certain degree of prejudice and intolerance, which diverged from the overall tone of his policies. This was evident in his strong bias against Hinayana and other theological sects. Harsha made an angry proclamation, stating that anyone who dared to speak against Hiuan-Tsang would face severe consequences, such as having

their tongue severed. Harsha's support for Buddhism appears to have been sporadic and limited in nature. It did not align with his over arching policy. The meeting held at Paryaga, which promptly after the assembly at Kannauj witnessed the king's benevolence being extended to all individuals, irrespective of their social status, caste, religious belief, or community affiliation. The royal invitation was inclusively given to all the śremanas and Brahmins of the five Indies, as well as to the impoverished, the orphaned, and the destitute individuals. According to Hiuan-Tsang, Sagarika was perceived as an embodiment of intolerance. The individual in question engaged in the felling of the Bodhi tree, as well as the persecution of adherents of the Buddhist faith and the deliberate destruction of their monastic establishments. The Jain community faced persecution under the reign of Mahendra Vikrama, a Pallava ruler. However, while Dhruvasena II, adhered to Buddhism and Bhaskaravarman remained a loyal Saivite, both rulers shown a considerable degree of tolerance. It can be inferred that the religious policy of ancient Indian kings was elevated by a prevailing attitude of tolerance.

3.6 SUMMARY

Chapter 3 delves into the socio-religious aspects of 7th century Northern India, focusing on the complexities of the caste system, economic activities, religious practices, and cultural customs of the period. It offers a detailed analysis of the four main varnas (castes) - Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Sudras, along with their respective roles and social dynamics.

The chapter outlines how Brahmins, at the top of the social hierarchy, were deeply involved in religious and educational pursuits. Despite the influence of other religious groups, they retained significant social status and reverence. Their primary roles included teaching, conducting sacrifices, and engaging in religious duties. The economic status of Brahmins varied, with some relying on teaching, while others engaged in agriculture or trade, despite certain restrictions on their economic activities.

The Kshatriyas, traditionally warriors and rulers, gained prominence during this period, with increasing political power and social influence. They were known for their martial spirit and leadership in battles. The Vaishyas primarily associated with

trade, agriculture, and cattle rearing, experienced a shift in their traditional roles, with a growing emphasis on commercial activities over agriculture.

The Sudras, the lowest Varna, were primarily engaged in serving the higher castes and agricultural labor. Over time, their role in agriculture became more pronounced, often taking over responsibilities traditionally held by Vaishyas. The chapter also discusses the complex dynamics of caste interactions, including the emergence of numerous sub-castes and mixed communities.

The religious landscape was diverse, with the coexistence of various Hindu sects, Buddhism, Jainism, and other local religious practices. Saivism and Vaishnavism were prominent among Hindu sects, along with worship of the Sun God and Goddess Durga. Buddhism, though in decline, was still significant, with various sects and monastic institutions. Jainism also maintained a presence, despite being overshadowed by Hinduism and Buddhism.

The chapter touches upon the customs, including dress, ornaments, dietary habits, and other cultural practices. It highlights the use of traditional attire like dhotis and saris, the popularity of various ornaments, and dietary preferences marked by regional variations. The chapter also discusses social customs such as Sati and the status of women in society.

Chapter 3 provides a comprehensive overview of the socio-religious fabric of 7th-century Northern India. It portrays a society characterized by a rigid caste system, evolving economic roles, diverse religious practices, and rich cultural traditions. The chapter underscores the complexities and dynamics of a society undergoing significant transformations in its social structure, religious beliefs, and cultural practices.

References

- ¹⁴⁰ Vincent, Smith. , (1918), Oxford History of India, Oxford, pp.34.
- ¹⁴¹ Watters, T.,(1904-5),On Yuan Chwangs Travels in India, London, Vol. I, pp. 168.
- ¹⁴² Sachau, E., C., (1914).Alberuni's India, London,Vol.I, pp. 100-102.
- ¹⁴³ Pushpa Niyagi, (1967).Brahmanic settlements in different subdivisions of Bengal, Calcutta, pp. 55.
- ¹⁴⁴ Epigraphia Indica. Vol. I XX, pp. 128, Indian Antiquary. Bombay, Vol. XVII, pp. 226.
- ¹⁴⁵ Epigraphia Indica., Vol.VII, pp. 92.
- ¹⁴⁶ Pali Plates of Govindchandradeva,Epigraphia Indica., Vol. 5, pp.114.
- ¹⁴⁷ Kalha Plate of Sadhadeva, Epigraphia Indica, Vol. 9, pp. 91.
- ¹⁴⁸ K.V. R.,Aiyangar(2018), Hindu view of life according to Dharamshastra, pp. 78.
- ¹⁴⁹ Pali Plate of Govindchandradeva; Epigraphia Indica., Vol. V, pp.114.
- ¹⁵⁰ Ibid, pp. 78.
- ¹⁵¹ Epigraphia Indica., Vol. VIII, pp. 155.
- ¹⁵² Garuda purana, 107.6.
- ¹⁵³ Kurma Purana 25.6.
- ¹⁵⁴ Manu, 10.82; Yaj. 3.35.
- ¹⁵⁵ Epigraphia Indica., Vol. I, pp. 41
- ¹⁵⁶ Epigraphia Indica., Vol. I, pp. 234.
- ¹⁵⁷ S.B. Chaudhary, (1955), Ethnic settlements in Ancient India, Calcutta,pp. 198.
- ¹⁵⁸ Robert Shafer, (1954). Ethnography of Ancient India, pp. 160.
- ¹⁵⁹ Epigraphia Indica., Vol. I, pp. 174-179; Vol. XXI, pp. 48; Indian Antiquary, Vol. XV, pp. 162.
- ¹⁶⁰ Sachau, E.,C.,(1914). Alberuni's India, Vol. II, pp. 136.

-
- ¹⁶¹ Epigraphia Indica., Vol. XX pp. 54.
- ¹⁶² Epigraphia Indica., XXII, No. 25.1.22.
- ¹⁶³ Watters, T., (1904-5). On Yuan Chwangs Travels in India, London, (Edit. Rhys Davida and S.W. Bushell.) , Vol. 2, (London,).pp.168.
- ¹⁶⁴ Sachau, E., C., (1914),Alberuni's India, London, Vol. 1, pp. 101.
- ¹⁶⁵ R.S. Sharma, (1980). Sudras in Ancient India, pp. 241.
- ¹⁶⁶ N.L. Dey, (1927).The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Medieval India, pp. 96.
- ¹⁶⁷ Epigraphia Indica., Vol. XX, pp. 136; Epigraphia Indica., Vol. IV, pp. 170.
- ¹⁶⁸ Epigraphia Indica., Vol. XX, pp. 44.
- ¹⁶⁹ Rajtarangini, VIII, Verse-140, pp. 417.
- ¹⁷⁰ Epigraphia Indica., XI, pp. 57.
- ¹⁷¹ Indian Antiquary. Vol. XVI, pp. 209.
- ¹⁷² Epigraphia Indica., Vol. XX, pp. 44.
- ¹⁷³ Epigraphia Indica., Vol. I, pp. 70, Verse 79-80.
- ¹⁷⁴ Epigraphia Indica., Vol. XI, pp. 43.
- ¹⁷⁵ Sachau, E.,C.,(1914). Kitab-ul-Hind, Alberuni's India, Vol. II, pp. 151-152.
- ¹⁷⁶ Ibid, pp. 151-152.
- ¹⁷⁷ Elliot, H.M.,&Downson, J., (1866-67). History of India as told by its own Historian, London and Vol. I, pp. 7.
- ¹⁷⁸ Epigraphia Indica., Vol, XVIII, pp. 108, V. 6.
- ¹⁷⁹ Indian Antiquary, Vol. XIII, pp. 250-251.
- ¹⁸⁰ Epigraphia Indica, Vol. VIII, pp. 154-156; Vol. IV. pp.119, J.B.O.R.S., Vol.II, pp. 442-447.
- ¹⁸¹ Epigraphia Indica., Vol, VIII, pp. 154.

-
- ¹⁸² At Sanchi and Bharhuta ladies are seen wearing an upper garment. I Gupta coins some times the upper garment covers the entire portion the women. (Stupa of Barhuta Pl. XXIII 3: Cat. Of Gupta coins Bay Hoard Pl. XLV)
- ¹⁸³ Bagh Caves, Pl. F.
- ¹⁸⁴ Bagh Caves, Pl. LXIII and LXIV in case of dancing girls the entire portion from neck to ankles is covered with full dress. They are seen covering their breast with bodices or blouses (Bagh Caves E).
- ¹⁸⁵ Bagh Caves all plates.
- ¹⁸⁶ Raj. Tarang II, V-64, pp. 56.
- ¹⁸⁷ Watters, T., (Op. Cit.). pp. 287-340.
- ¹⁸⁸ Epigraphia Indica., Vol. I, pp. 246.
- ¹⁸⁹ Ibid, pp. 246,
- ¹⁹⁰ Epigraphia Indica., Vol. I, pp. 246.
- ¹⁹¹ Watters, T., (Op. Cit.).pp. 151.
- ¹⁹² Epigraphia Indica., XXVI, pp. 254 (V-2).Kalachuri Record (12th Centry A.D.) and Nagar inscription of Dhanika (Bharata Kaumudi Pt. I, pp. 274.
- ¹⁹³ Epigraphia Indica., Vol. XXIII, pp. 152.
- ¹⁹⁴ Kalika Purana, 57, 2-5.
- ¹⁹⁵ Sachau, E., C., (Op. Cit.).pp. 155.
- ¹⁹⁶ Ibid, pp. 154.
- ¹⁹⁷ Indian Antiquary, Vol. XV pp. 804, H. Bhagalpur grant.
- ¹⁹⁸ Elliot, H.M.&Downson, J.,(1866-67). History of India as told by its own Historian, London, , Vol. I, pp. 6.
- ¹⁹⁹ Sachau, E., C., (Op. Cit.) pp. 155.
- ²⁰⁰ Epigraphia Indica., Vol. VI, pp. 211.

-
- ²⁰¹ Indian.Antiquary, Vol. VI, pp.109-110.
- ²⁰² Allan J., (1914). Catalogue of coins of the Gupta Dynasties and Sasanka, King of Gauda, London, pp. 147-148.
- ²⁰³ Epigraphia Indica., Vol. XII, pp. 65.
- ²⁰⁴ S.Beal. (1958) Travels of Hiuen-Tsang Vol. I-IV, Calcutta. pp. 209, 225, 229, 232, 291, 452, 461, 464.
- ²⁰⁵ Watters T., (1904-5). On Yuan Chawang's Travels in India ed. by T.W.R. Davids and S.W. Bushell 2 Vols, London, pp.148.
- ²⁰⁶ V. S. Aggarwal, (1954) Kadamabari, Bana, edit., Patana, pp. 334-351.
- ²⁰⁷ Ibid, pp. 49.
- ²⁰⁸ Aggarwal Kadamabari, Bana, ed. by V. S. Aggarwala, Patana, 1954, pp. 32.
- ²⁰⁹ S.Beal, (Op. Cit.). pp. 201, 205.
- ²¹⁰ Allan J.,(1914)Catalogue of coins of the Gupta Dynasties and of Sasanka, King of Gauda, London, , ppp. 144, 149.
- ²¹¹ Epigraphia Indica., Vol. XV, pp. 301.
- ²¹² H. Kern, (1870-75). Brihat-samhita by VarahamihiraEng. Trans. parts 1 to 5 (Relevant portions). London, ed. with Eng. Trans. and notes by V. Subrahmanya Sastri and M. RemakrishnaBhat,(1947) 2 Vols. Bangalore, , Chapter-60, Verse 19.
- ²¹³ Dharaiya R.K., The Political, Social and Economic Conditions of Northern India during the first half of the seventh century A.D. (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis). S.V. Vidhyapeeth. Vallabhvidyanagar, pp. 315.
- ²¹⁴ Ibid,pp. 316.
- ²¹⁵ Basham A. L., (1954). The wonder that was India, London. pp.313.
- ²¹⁶ Dharaiya R.K., (Op. Cit.).pp. 317.
- ²¹⁷ Ibid,pp. 320.
- ²¹⁸ Watters T., (Op. Cit.).pp.259.

²¹⁹ Watters T, (Op. Cit.).pp. 300.

²²⁰ Journal of Royal Asiatic Society, (J.R.A.S). 1891, pp. 418-420.

²²¹ I bid, pp. 418-420.

²²² Dharaiya R.K., (Op. Cit.). pp. 323,325,326.

CHAPTER - 4

ECONOMIC LIFE

The Gupta system served as the cornerstone of the state structure in the seventh century. For this reason, its economic system was also like that of the Gupta period to a great extent. People lived in wealth and prosperity, and cities served as hubs for both. The cornerstone of the economic life of the society was made up of committees, associations, and unions of artisans and traders. Industrial activity was organized into vast institutions. The economy was extremely strong since there was enough trade. The state used to earn money in a variety of ways, and it would then invest that money in a variety of tools to advance its subjects.

4.1 LAND OWNERSHIP SYSTEM

The zamindari system which had emerged during the Gupta period was now gaining momentum and the merchant class was spending most of its money in buying land, the administrative and military class was also becoming more inclined to this because the soldiers were going to war in whatever way they wanted. They used to do forced labor from the residents of that village and demanded food, clothes, bedding and other things, because of which Brahmins, Vaishyas, Vaniks, merchants were all growing more inclined towards this. King Harshavardhana divided the state expenditure into four divisions.

One part to be worshiped on behalf of the state and government works (ii) To meet the monetary demands of public servants (iii) Third part to award prizes to academics and fourth part to different sects It was designed to acquire merit by giving donations.²²³ In this way, governance, yagyas and rituals, wages to ministers and officers, prizes to deserving persons, grants to religious organizations, etc., were done out of state income. Harsha's economy was quite powerful, but due to Harshavardhana contributing a lot to religious organizations and granting land instead of income to officers in other conditions, the official class started turning into Zamindari class, due to which the economy was in upheaval. Various interpretations have been provided

about the nature of land ownership throughout this period. In this age when Hiuan-Tsang visited India, the forest arable and non-arable land was possessed by the king.

In the older literature too, there is evidence that 1/6 of the output (Shadbhag) was seized as tax by the king on plowing the state property.²²⁴

It was decided taking in mind the fertility of the soil, irrigation etc. At the time of happiness and prosperity, just one part was acquired as revenue, but during the time of the nation's opposition, it was obtained up to 1/3 or 1/4 of the royalty. There are various evidences of granting land to Brahmins, Buddhist monks and Jain sanghas in this era. These grants were made by the monarchs, queen, authorities, and ranks. By the reign of Harsha, the practice of giving of land had become increasingly popular.

Understanding the nature of possession is crucial to comprehend what it means to own land. Vinogradoff correctly noted that the above maxim of Manu implied on the possession as there is no legal title behind it.²²⁵ It also appears that in the days of Manu the demand for land was not at its highest pitch. The notion of ownership was the fact of having cleared away the wood in the case of a field, and the fact of having shot the deer in the case of a deer, according to an earlier low-giver Manu.²²⁶

Although one might be in possession of property, if title to that property was not clearly proved, he could not become the owner of it. It is the responsibility of a buyer to verify the title of the seller before purchase.²²⁷ Whatever the facts regarding possession, in a case where the property has been enjoyed by a person for three Generations that property cannot be trusted.

When a plot of land was donated, it was recorded on a stone slab or copper plate with full details, in the presence of village elders, neighbors, and King servants. It was also recorded that it should be enjoyed by the donor for as long as the sun, the earth endures. When the copper plate or stone slab was split, it was again inscribed. These epigraphic records support the legal title of land and shed light on the validity of possession on land.

After briefly describing the types of possession and legal title, we now turn our attention to the "ownership of land," which is a topic that has generated debate among scholars. Some of them believe in the theory of "State ownership," while others

believe in "Private Ownership," and still others believe in communal ownership of land, which existed in Ancient India. It is not necessary to repeat all the opinions of various scholars in detail on these old controversial problems because we assume that the ownership of land was vested both in the king and the individual.

Before selling or donating the land, the state sanction was necessary. Secondly, it is also stated in some inscriptions that the donee and his successors could enjoy land as long as the earth, the sun, the moon, and the ocean endured provided they were not slayers of Brahmans, thieves, adulterers, and prisoners. Otherwise, the King could confiscate the land thus granted. Thirdly, the King enjoyed one-sixth share of the produce and could increase it in times of emergency. Bhattaswami in his observations on Arthashastra states that the king is the owner of both land and water. He further writes that the people can exercise their right of ownership over all other things except these two. V.A. Smith holds that the King was the only owner of the land, while F. W. Thomas agrees with this opinion conditionally.²²⁸ Kulluka, a Manu commentary author, describes private land ownership by stating that the person who actually tills the soil is the owner of the land; P.V. Kane shares this opinion, believing that the King is also entitled to a share, and further believes that fallow land is the sole property of the King. While examining K.P. Jayaswal's idea, U.N. Ghoshal rejects it on the grounds that any theory that attempts to extricate the King from ownership is illogical. K.P. Jayaswal advocates the theory of ultimate private ownership of property in Ancient India.

4.2 LAND TYPES

Land is categorized economically as follows:

In his commentary on Amarakosa, Krishnaswami cites twelve different types of land, including (i) cultivable land, (ii) waste land, (iii) habitable land, (iv) pasture-land, and (v) gardens and forest lands. (i) Urvara (fertile), (ii) Ushara (barren), (iii) Maru (desert), (iv) Aprahata (fallow), and (vi) Sadvala (grassy land), Pankila (muddy land), Jalavrayananupan (watery or well land), Kachchha (land adjacent to water), Sarkara (land full of pebbles and pieces of limestone), Sakravati (sandy land), Nadimatrika (land irrigated by a river for cultivation), and Devamatrika (land irrigated by rain) are the different types of land.²²⁹

In the contemporary inscriptions²³⁰, the word "Kshetra" is used frequently. According to Basaka²³¹ and Pargiter²³², it refers to a cultivable area of land.

Another type of land is known as khila²³³, which according to Bapak denotes fallow land,²³⁴ Kahi revamp holds the same opinion in his commentary on Amarakoss,²³⁵ Macdonell and Keith also mention khila, which they believe has the same meaning as khilya;²³⁶ Both defines khila as "a waste land" situated between cultivated fields.²³⁷ According to Pischel, khila refers to pastureland.²³⁸ However, Oldenberg says it is suitable for cultivation.²³⁹ According to Marada, a piece of land that is suitable for agriculture will be reduced to half waste (Ardhakhila) if it is left fallow for a year. If this practice is followed for three to five years, the area in question will be deemed waste (Khila). We conclude that the ground that was left over for the livestock to graze was indeed cultivable.

Aprahata is a different kind of land that is referenced in the inscription. The same kind of land is found on the Khila and Aprahata. Each is suitable for growing. The only distinction is that the former was occasionally under cultivation before being removed for unknown reasons, whereas the latter was never kept under cultivation. Apparently, D. C. Sircar recognized such areas as cultivable even if they were never claimed for allocation.

The Damodarpur Copper Plates contain references to another sort of land called as Aparada. According to Basak's understanding, the land that has never been given to anyone for agricultural reasons is known as Aprada. Saletore defines it as the uncultivable terrain.

The Abhidhanaratnamala refers to a different kind of land known as Vastu, which is a plot of ground suitable for human habitation. These lands were often higher than the agricultural land in all respects.²⁴⁰

4.2.1 Various Land Tenure Systems

References to the various land tenure systems can be found in epigraphic sources, which are particularly useful. S.K. Maity²⁴¹ notes that some specific types of land tenancies are occasionally noted in land grants. If we adopt Maity's point of view, we can infer the presence of additional land tenure systems. However, because of the lack

of information, we were unable to identify, all the land tenure systems in use, throughout the period under consideration. However, these systems might be considered as well: (i) Bhumi-chhidra-naya (ii) Nivi-Dharma (iii) Akshayanivi (iv) Aprada-Dharma.

(i) Bhumi Chhidra-Nyaya:

The phrase "Bhumi chhidra-Nyaya" appears in several contemporary inscriptions. The Palitana plate of DharsenaII dated Gupta Samvat 252²⁴², mentions the grant of a plot of land to two Brahmana in accordance with the Bhumi-Chhidra maxim for the performance of sacrifices, to be enjoyed by their sons, grandsons, and further descendants. Like this, this nyaya²⁴³ is mentioned on a copper plate inscription from the reign of Mahendrapala of Kanauj. Like the Khalimpur plate of Dharampala deva²⁴⁴, the Banskhera plate of Harsha, dated 628–629 A.D., mentions the donation under Bhumichhidra-Nyaya, contains a similar reference as well.²⁴⁵

Kautilya has provided an explanation for the phrase "Bhumichhidra-Nyaya" that appears in the inscriptions. Kautilya believes that such types of land were uncultivable regions.²⁴⁶ When explaining the term, Padmanath Bhattacharya says that "Krishya-ayogya" is the compound of "Krishi" and "Ayogya," the literary meaning of which is the land unfit for cultivation. However, according to the "Yadav prakasha Vaijayanti, "Chhidra" was meant land fit for cultivation ('ThumichhidramKrishyayogya').²⁴⁷ He therefore contends that the land granted under this system of tenure is unfit for farming and can instead be used for pasture and elephant forests²⁴⁸, in accordance with Kautilya. However, Fleet believes that this system of land tenure was used to distribute the cultivable lands.²⁴⁹

According to Barnett²⁵⁰, under this system, uncultivable lands were distributed, and the tenants of such lands were completely at the whim of the King, who could take such lands away from them at any time. According to Ghoshal²⁵¹, this approach allowed the tenants to acquire sole ownership of the land because they first prepared it for farming. Bhandarkar²⁵² notes that the tenant had only been granted access to the land's productive capacity under this arrangement; he was not granted access to the plot's uncovered underground mineral resources or spontaneous growth.

The suggests that only cultivable land was granted under this system of land tenure since the law-makers of the time forbade the grant of uncultivable lands to Brahmans and religious institutions.²⁵³ Additionally, we have proof that several villages were also given under this arrangement.²⁵⁴ It seems inconceivable that the entire land of a community, especially in northern India, was unusable for farming. We might conclude by saying that, in accordance with this system, a tenant had the right to perpetual use and occupation of his land. From one generation to the next, he retained ownership.

(ii) Nivi-Dharma

Another system of land tenure that is mentioned in both older²⁵⁵ and more recent²⁵⁶ inscriptions is the Nivi-Dharma. Additionally, it is mentioned in Hemachandra's *Abhidhanachinatamani*²⁵⁷ and Kautilya's *Arthasastra*.²⁵⁸ According to Basak, the term "Nivi" cannot be defined as a dispatch or document. K.P. Jayaswal has interpreted the phrase as "despatch, document, record, or file," and "Akshaya-Nivi" as "permanent document."²⁵⁹ He continues by saying²⁶⁰ that "Jayaswal has proposed such an unsuitable meaning of the word; otherwise, he would never have escaped the notice of Amara and Hemachandra, who would tell suit the passages in the inscriptions and the *Arthasastra*." According to the *Amarkosa*, the contents of Nivi were generally the terms and conditions on which the tenancy existed; in other words, it is the synonym of *Paripana* or *Muldhana*. Hemachandra²⁶¹ also means by the term 'Nivi' the principal among or *Muladhana*. Explaining the same system of land tenure Basak is of the opinion that it is a fixed amount of capital, the interest of which can only be utilized for the maintenance of a specific property, not the principal.²⁶² Certainly in no case the principal is to be spent; only the regular income acquired can be spent by way of maintenance allowance.

According to Jayaswal, *Akshaya Nivi*²⁶³ is a permanent document.²⁶⁴ However, S.K. Maity²⁶⁵ argues that if this interpretation is accepted, it is impossible to understand the following statement of the inscription.²⁶⁶ "The *Mahasamantadhipati* under *Bhata* assigned an endowment, securing the daily payment of a quarter of a *panchi-yakadramma* and of one *yugo* to *sri-Vishnu bhattaraka* under *Akshyaya- Nivi* *Keilhorn*,²⁶⁷ *Buhler* and *Barnett*²⁶⁸ opine that *akshayanivi* is a permanent endowment.

S. Maity differs from the view of Jayaswal and holds that it is not a permanent document but a permanent endowment.²⁶⁹ Thus a document committed to give perpetuity and legal validity to such endowments is called Akshayanivi. At the time of making such endowment a body of officers was employed to look after the everyday affairs of such institutions for which the endowment was agreed upon.²⁷⁰

Another system known as Aprada-dharma²⁷¹, which described the tenancy of land, was prevalent under this system, the donee may enjoy the property as his own, but he could not donate it himself; instead, he was only permitted to benefit from the income generated by it.²⁷²

4.2.2 Land Dimensions

One Yava (a barley corn) was the smallest unit of land, and the next largest was the "Angulo." According to Sukra, 8 Yavas in length and 5 in width, multiplied, would result in one Angula. Similarly, 24 Angulas covered the area of a "Prajarati Hasta," and he believed this should be the only medium of land measurement. Certainly, this unit appears to have been in practice, as the Gwalior inscription relates that a plot of land which was 270 royal Hastas in length and 187 Hastag in breath was donated to the temple of Durgas for a flower garden.²⁷³

The Narada-Shruti mentions "Dhanu" having its length from 105 to 107 Angulas, and "Danda" was another unit of land measurement with its two categories, namely (i) Laghu and (ii) Dirgha. According to S.K. Maity, the "Danda and Dhany are one and the same in all respects only differing in nomenclature."²⁷⁴

The next greater unit of land measurement, according to Sukra Nivartana, was. 125 Hastas of Manu and 100 of Prajati acknowledged the dimensions of Nivartana. The Kalvan Plate of Yasovarman states that a prince granted the first piece of land, which measured 40 Nivartanas, the second, 25 Nivartanas, the third, 35 Nivartanas, and the fourth, which measured two Nivartanas, to pay for worship.²⁷⁵ This is one of many inscriptions in northern India that support the claim that Nivartana is the accepted medium of measuring land. Another larger unit was the parivartana, which had a surface area of 10,000 hastas and a side measurement of 2,500 Tanda.²⁷⁶

A different unit of measurement known as "Padavartas" was also widely used in the western provinces in addition to these measurements. Thus, 180 Padavartas from the

(Bombay) Vanika District (Sthali), 120 Padavartas, and the nimba pond with 32 Padavartas are recorded on the Palitana plate of Dharsena II, dated Gupta Samvat 252. Dharmika gave two Brahmans 130 and 100 padavartas for the performance of five magnificent sacrifices.²⁷⁷ Similarly, Maharaja Dharsena II granted the Maliya copper plates between 571 and 572 A.D. use the contribution of 100 Padavartan as an example. In 666 A.D., Ilikewise Siladitya III gave the Brahmans a plot of land of 50 Padavartas.²⁷⁸ In the Maliya copper plate grants of Maharaja Darsen II dated 571-72 A.D. It is recorded that five plates of land measuring 100,90,20,15 and 10 padavartas were granted. If the meaning of Padavarta is accepted as a square foot, the area of the plot would be 10 x 10 in length and breadth instead of 100 x 100 respectively. Therefore, Fleet observed that the minimum area granted should not be less than one hundred feet in length and 100 feet in breath. The notion of ten feet in length and breadth is not a suitable grant.

4.2.3 Sale of Land

The sale of land was conducted in front of at least forty people, and the announcement was made as to "who will purchase this at such and such a price." If there was no opposition, the land in question was given to the purchaser; however, if there was, the purchaser would not receive the land. Kautilya holds that "Kinsmen, neighbors, and rich persons shall in succession go for the purchase of land and other holdings."²⁷⁹

A grant during the reign of Gopachandra states, "I (would wish) through your honor's favor to buy at the proper price about so much cultivated land as can be sown with a Kulya of need." Epigraphic sources show that the intending purchaser had to follow a specific procedure. The purchaser had to apply to the local government mentioning full details, with the object to purchase the land in question, and acceptance of the rate prevalent in the locality. The following information must be taken into consideration by the record keeper: - Is the application provided in the correct format? Whether the requested plot would be approved? The property in question might provide money. Could the State receive a sixth as tax? After considering the aforementioned information, the applicant was given the plot of land after paying the payment. The Pustapala (record keeper) examined, marked off, and entered the land in the Register three times prior to the transfer of title.²⁸⁰

In addition to the selling of lands, the Ahar Stone inscriptions²⁸¹ contain seven records of the sale of immovable property. Most of the sales mentioned are on leases lasting a total of 199 years. According to the second document, Bhadraprakash a Vanik bought a store or enclosure with a few drammas on the tenth tithi of Asadha Harsha-samvat 258 that had three rooms as well as the full elevation. The fifth document, dated 280 Harsha-samvata, instructs that the Gosthi purchased a building measuring 27 cubit on each side located on the south eastern portion of the town on the lease of ninety-nine years. The document also lists the object of purchase as such to provide funds for cleaning and plastering, Saffron, flowers, incense, lamps, flags, white washing, and for repairs.²⁸²

4.3 AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

Due to the rural economy in ancient times, the majority of those engaged in agriculture were required to pay taxes. During this time, people mostly lived in villages, and their primary source of income was agriculture.²⁸³ In the state, an officer by the name of Pustpal used to keep an account of the measurement, extent, purchase, and sale, etc. The fields were measured from time to time so that the incoming taxes could be calculated.

The state's land was divided into four sections: Vastu land (habitable), Kshetra land (cultivable), Gochar land (pasture), and Barren land. Because the barren land could not be cultivated, all the subjects had the right to the grazing land where the animals were grazed, and houses were constructed on the habitable land, the land was periodically measured²⁸⁴ with special attention being paid to the income of the state.

- (i) As agricultural output increased, the recipient of the funds became self-sufficient and was no longer dependent on the government for support.
- (ii) It is evident from this that in the seventh century agriculture was done on a large scale and it was the main means of economic life of the people. Water was readily available from rivers for irrigation. Where agriculture was not done through rivers, that is, where water was not readily available for irrigation, the public got a large amount of production. Therefore, the dictatorship of the black market or feudal class in the state used to end.

It is known from the 7th century Afsad-inscription that the wife of the Later-Gupta king Adityasen had built a large reservoir for irrigation.²⁸⁵ The 'Harshacharita' mentions Tulayantra (water pump) as a method of irrigation.

Hiuan Tsang writes that grain and fruits were produced in abundance. According to 'Harshacharit', in addition to rice, wheat, sugarcane, etc., apples, grapes, pomegranates, etc. were also grown in Srikanth district. Rice, wheat, ginger, mustard, melon and gourd are also mentioned by the Chinese traveller among the products of India. Mahashali rice was considered the best in Magadha.

Only rich people and dignitaries used it. This rice was given to Hiuan-Tsang in Nalanda. Wheat was grown in spring in Takk and Paritra.²⁸⁶ In Sindh, early growing wheat was sown. Among the fruits grown in India, the Chinese traveler has mentioned mango, tamarind, mahua, plum, jackfruit, amla, tendu, udumbar, banana, coconut etc. There were mangoes, udumbar and bananas in Punach near Kashmir. Peach and pear were grown in China Bhukti. There were two types of mangoes in Mathura, small and big. There were grapes in the garden and saffron in Kashmir. In Sindh, red, white, black, and white (Lahori) were named four types.²⁸⁷ In the Pandya country, there was a crop of black pepper, cardamom and long etc. Hiuan-Tsang has written about Indian agriculture in his description that after plowing the land, people used to rest after harvesting. The cultivation of onion and garlic was very less. Because very few people used it, they lived twelve of the cities. According to the environment and due to the variation in the type of land, different areas had different crops.

Therefore, it is evident from all available evidence that the country's economic situation was advanced at the time. Agriculture was never harmed, either in peace or war, as doing so was regarded as a great sin. Farmers worked hard to prepare their crops, which is why there was so much grain produced that it appeared as though the earth was spewing grain. All members of the society did not experience any kind of difficulty related to food grains. There was no possibility of famine.²⁸⁸

References to Varta are found in ancient Indian Sources. It includes agriculture, cattle-rearing and trade.²⁸⁹ According to Sukra, Varta comprised of agriculture, commerce and cattle rearing. Kamandaka holds that cultivation, cattle rearing and trade are

sources of livelihood of a Valaya. Further he adds that the occupation of people who earned their livelihood through the above sources is termed "Varta".²⁹⁰ Those who are efficient in Varta should have the assurance of being free from wants Medhatithi and Vijnaneshwara agree with the above lawgivers.²⁹¹ V.S. Agrawala defines it as agriculture, trade, and cattle-breeding, carried on with a view to earn more than what is needed. According to him 'Varta' may relate to the word 'Vritti' or Economic pursuits. Thus, the main source of livelihood in ancient India was agriculture. The occupations of agriculture and cattle-breeding were allotted to Vaishyas but according to the Tharmannatra writes in Brahmans and Kshatriyas were unable to earn their livelihood, they could earn their living by agriculture, animal -husbandry and trade Medhatithi in his commentary on Manu writes that a Brahman could carry on agriculture, cattle-rearing, and trade only in times of distress. In case he could earn his livelihood by teaching and other occupations, meant for him, he was not permitted to earn his living by the above sources. Contemporary inscriptions also support the above facts. Thus, according to the Gwalior Inscription, a plot of land was cultivated by Memaka, the son of a Kshatriya Devavarman.²⁹² In the Rajor inscription, Gurjars are recorded as cultivators.²⁹³ This clearly indicates that agriculture was not the monopoly of the Vaishyas. Brahman, Kshatriyas, and Sudras were also permitted to carry on these occupations in the era, according to Bana and Hiuan-Tsang.

To maintain the soil's fertility, Megasthenes and Eratosthenes believed that rainfall should be plentiful in the winter and summer. In India, heavy rain was brought on by river evaporation.

Varahamihira details the stars in which rains occurred both at the beginning and the end of the year, holding that whichever stars are present at the beginning will typically see rain again in that star if there was no rain at the beginning of the year in question, and that if the Monsoon breaks over an area of ten Ylang, there will be an abundance of rain throughout the entire season.

Regarding the amount of rain, Varahamihira states that if it rains in Hasta, Purvashadha, Mriganeira, Chitra, Revati, and Thanishta, the amount of rainfall will be 16 Dronas; 4 Dronas in Satabhishak, Jyeshtha, and Senti; 14 Dronas in Sravana, Magha, Anuradha, Bharani, and Moola; 1 Drona

4.3.1 Seed

Hiuan-Tsang holds that the officer in-charge of agriculture should collect the seeds of grains, flowers, fruits, vegetables, Kanda, pallikyn, fibre producing plants and cotton.²⁹⁴ Before knowing the seeds of grain they were exposed to mist and heat for seven nights. According to the Brihatsamhita the advanced seeds could be obtained if they were soaked in milk for ten days, then smeared with ghee, rolled in cow dung and fumigated with the flesh of deer and hog. After these processes, sowing operations should be done. Spraying of milk on the plant is another process for good yield. The tamarind seed can be made to sprout if repeatedly fumigated with turmeric powder and sprinkled with the powder of black gram sesame, flower of rice, particles of wheat and stale mint.²⁹⁵ To prepare a wood apple seed, first take the roots of Sarasaparilla, Amalaka, Dhava, Vaailm, the branch and leaves of Vetana, Suryavalli, Syana orcepera and of Atimukta, and boil them in milk. Then soak the seeds in the liquid thus prepared. Then take them out, get them dried in the sun for thirty days and now them. Take wise, to enhance the yield of flowers, fruits, trees, creepers, and shrubs, Varahamihira suggests that they should be sprinkled with a solution of cow dung, wheat particles beef, in water having 128, 1, 100 and 256 ylang each respectively.

4.3.2 Cultivation

The use of wooden ploughs was well known during the prehistoric era.²⁹⁶ According to V.S. Agrawala, occasionally large ploughs called "Hali" or "Jiyn" were used by the cultivators to break the hard soil. Prof. Mudgal compares the aforementioned plough with modern tractors, used for deep plowing.²⁹⁷ Such ploughs appear to have been used by rich cultivators. The poor Vindhya Range cultivators used other materials instead of wooden plough

There are currently black cotton-soil, alluvial land, barren-rocks, and sande in Madhya Pradesh, Indo Gangetic plain, Vindhya-hills, and Rajputana, respectively, according to Banerjee. Various kinds of soils suitable for the different types of crops have been well enumerated in the Abhidhanaratnamala. It relates that some fields produced rice, beans, and oilseeds while other fields produced. Bhatta Kumaraswami in his commentary on Amarkousa describes various parts of a rough viz. (i) Pole (ii) Kin (iii) Yoke (iv) Plough share and (v) Tie of the yoke. In same book he explains that a good

farmer in he who ploughs his field thrice before sowing. After that, seeds were sown and when the crop was ripe, sickles were used to reap it. It was gathered on the threshing floor where it was threshing and winnowed. The husk was separated from the grain using winnowing baskets.

The fertility of land differs from place to place. Banerjee states that at present there are black cotton-soil, alluvial land, barren-rocks and sande in Madhya Pradesh, Indo Gangetic plain, Vindhya-hills and Rajputana respectively. Various kinds of soils suitable for the different types of crops have been well enumerated in the *Abhidhanaratnamala*. It relates that some fields produced rice, beans, oilseeds while other produced hemp, barley, vegetables etc. The accounts of Arab writers inform us that mangoes, coconuts lemon, rice and sugar-cane were produced abundantly in Gujarat. Similarly, Hiuan-Tsang describes that rice, wheat, ginger, mustard, melons, pumpkins and kanda were produced in great quantities in India.

Varnhamihira writes that three crops were produced in a year viz. (i) Summer (ii) Autumnal and (iii) Vernal crops. According to him the summer crops were prosperous if the sun is in Vrischika and Jupiter and the Moon in Kumbha and Simhn. Secondly during the Moon's stay in Swati if the rain falls in the first four hours of the night, the summer crops would give the highest yield. Similarly autumnal and vernal crops flourished if the easterly wind blow on the day of the full moon in Ashadha. The crops were supposed to be affected by the monthly rotation of the Moon. According to astrological statistics in the month of Pausha, the year of Jupiter the grain prices became high. In the month of, Magha the crops would be plenty; in Magha, crops would be plenty in Chaitra pulse would thrive but food grains would become costly. In Vaisakha, all would flourish; in Jyeshtha crops would be in abundance in the month of Ashadha there would be rain in some places and no rain in other places in Sravana the yield would be in large quantities; in Bhadrapada the first crop and creepers would bear fruits, and in the month of Anwaija, in the year of Jupiter, edibles would be abundantly.²⁹⁸ We agree with Maity who points out that crop sown in summer and harvested in Shravan were called summer crops. While crops sown in early parts of autumn were known as autumn crop. Similarly crops sown in autumn and harvested

spring were known as spring crops. The above description also indicates that some crops were also com in early aring and harvested in Chaitra and Vaisakha.²⁹⁹

Since these crops require a lot of water and marshy land, the main rice-growing regions now are west Bengal, Assam, and the coastal regions of Bombay and Madras; harvesting takes place from September to November. Bhattaswami³⁰⁰, who is from the period under consideration, notes in his commentary on Arthasstra that sai, Brihi, odrava, etc. are sown at the start of the rainy season. According to Rajasekhra this crop ripped in saradha season.³⁰¹ He also refers to the transplanting of rice crops, sown in May and June and harvested in December and January.³⁰²

Hiuan-Tsang mentions a type of rice that ripens in 60 days, and further references to several types of rice can be found in modern sources, including sali, vrihi, kalam, red rice, yellowhoge, nivara, kamal, syamaka, and sama.³⁰³

Wheat is currently grown in the Indian states of Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Bhar, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan. In Bhattasvami's commentary on Kautilya Arthasastra, he mentions that Godhuma (wheat) and Yava (barley) are sown right after the rainy season. In Hiuan-Tsang, he mentions the cultivation of wheat alongside other grains.³⁰⁴ In Banabhatta,³⁰⁵ he mentions that wheat was grown in SrikanthaJanpada. Other sources of the period contain ample evidence regarding its cultivation. Thus, wheat has always been an important crop of the Indian agriculture.

4.3.3 Pluses

Halayudha names four different kinds of pulses in his Abhidhanaratnamala: Masura, Kalaya, Ralla, and Adhaka.³⁰⁶ Sukra names three additional types of pulses: Urada, Munga, and Gram.³⁰⁷ Bana and Hiuan-Tsang also describes the farming of pluses in northern India during the period.

4.3.4 Cane sugar

Sugar-cane production in Pundra (north Bengal) was so soft that the juice could be extracted without the aid of the cane crusher. According to Banttaevami, suitable lands for the cultivation of sugar-cane must be marshy and sloppy. He considers it to be the worst crop as it requires much care and expenditure. Bana also refers to the abundant farming of Sugar-cone in Srikanth Janapada.³⁰⁸

4.3.5 Fruits

The accounts of Hiuan-Tsang throw light on the cultivation of varieties of fruits such as amra or mango; amla or tamarind, the madhuka (*Bassia latifolia*) badara or Jujube, Kapittha or wood-apple, amla or myrobalan tindhka or diospyros, adumbara or ficusglomerats, moca or plantain, narikela or coconut and panaca or jack-fruit. It is impossible to give a detailed account of all the fruits only those which were in common use of the inhabitants have been referred to above (Chinese) Jujubes, chestnuts, green and red bersimons, one their origin from China. Likewise, pears, lums, peaches, sprionts and grapes were produced in Kashmir and pomegranates and meet oranges were commonly produced in India. Pomegranates, plumo, peare and peaches were the product of Kuchi (kin-chi).³⁰⁹ According to Arab writers, mangoes, coconuts, lemons were produced in abundance and gripes were cultivated twice in a year especially in Gujrat.³¹⁰ Varieties of fruits are also referred to in the Harahcharita such as vine, pomegranate, orchard, arbour ablaze, coconut, date, and others.³¹¹

Among other agricultural products, betal, betal-nuts, aloe, indigo, lodhra, Renner, cardamom, spikenard, ginger, cloves were grown in large quantities.³¹² Hiuan-Tsang also mentions the following agricultural products: ginger mustard, melone, pump kins and Kanda. According to Rashiduddin, veter, ginger, indigo, were grown in Gujrat.³¹³ Besides, various kinds of oilseeds were also grown, including mustard, tila, castor, black mustard, sesame, and linseed.³¹⁴

4.3.6 Cotton

Aside from silk, cotton, black-silk cotton, flax, and hemp, cotton was a field crop that could be gathered for 10 consecutive years if the soil was suitable, according to Rashiduddin, who also describes the soil's appropriateness.

Bana and Hiuan-Tsang holds that cottan was the main crop of the northen India in that time. It was the main source of the cloth and trade for the people.

4.3.7 Famine

In general, the main causes of hunger include draught, plague, inundation, failure of harvests, diseases, and earthquakes; Varahamihira was aware of these causes. During the famine, people are unable to obtain the essentials of life.

According to Varahamihira, crops may be destroyed by locusts when a solar or lunar eclipse is surrounded by dense clouds. "If the Sun or the Moon rises or sets eclipsed at the time, the crops of sarata season will fail, if such an eclipse be a total one and if the eclipsed discs be expected by malefic as well, there will be famine and pestilence all over the country," says Varahamihira.

The great Sanskrit author Kalhana describes that Kashmir experienced heavy rainfall in the 8th century A.D.³¹⁵ The successors to the throne were devoid of the qualities of their predecessors. Therefore, in the 9th century A.D., the same land was again inundated, resulting in famine in Kashmir. The rates were so high that one Khari rice cost 1,000 Dinara.³¹⁶ References to famine are also found in the Rajatarangani.

In the 8th century A.D., King Lalitaditya of Kashmir tried his best to avert the crises by telling out the excess of water from Mahanadama Lake. This not only brought the situation to normal, but it also resulted in the agricultural development in Kashmir.³¹⁷ Again, King Avanti Varma who ruled from 855 to 883 A.D. constructed dams and channels to let out the excess water from Vitasta River. Ample evidence is there to prove that proper relief measures to flood victims were taken. Financial assistance in shape of money and corn were given to them.³¹⁸ The Maliya copper plate grants also mentions that the King used to face natural calamities bravely.³¹⁹

4.3.8 Irrigation

Sukra includes the process of irrigation in the list of 64 arts, and claims that those artisans who are engaged in building canals, tanks, and wells shall enjoy special privileges. For the maintenance of the teeming millions of India, it was also realized in the period under review that it was necessary to increase agricultural yield for food and fodder, which could only be possible with the aid of irrigation.

Rajatarangani claims that King Avanti Varma built a dam to store rainwater for irrigation purposes, and the same book claims that the flood victims cleared the Vitasta River and with the aid of the state subsidy constructed a dam. All these plans were carried out by the capable minister named Suyya, who also made sure to maximize the benefits from this dam.³²⁰

The Pratapgarh inscription refers to "Kosavaha," which is used to refer to the amount of land that can be irrigated by one Kosa, or leather bucket.³²¹ Other contemporary sources mention wells (Kupa), lakes (Sarovara), tanks, and rivers that were used for the irrigation of fields as well as for drinking water.³²² It suggests that its use was restricted to the upper class of peasants as the same inscription commands that "a field owned by Madhava, the great Governor and charged affairs lying to the north of the river which was irrigated by a persion wheel."

With the aid of Rahat, another irrigation system was created. To provide water to the nearby villagers, Kashmir's King Lalitaditya was able to erect a Rahat at the Vitasta River.³²³ It is known from the 7th century Afsad Inscription that the wife of the Later Gupta king Adityasen had constructed a large reservoir for irrigation. In Harshacharita there is mention of Tulayayanta (water pump) as a means of irrigation. Bana refers to the practice of using Rahat for irrigation.³²⁴

4.3.9 Forests

Even today, several parts of India, including the Tarai region, Assam valley, Sundarbans, Central India Chota Nagpur and Western Ghats, are covered with deep woods. References to forests may be found in modern sources.³²⁵

In his commentary on Arthashastra, Bhatta Swami divides woods into two categories: productive forests and unproductive forests. Productive forests were managed by a forest department. They provided the State with enough revenue in the form of elephants, timber, and other goods. Forests maintained in reserve for kings and the upper class to hunt in or those that were accessible to everyone were thought to be unproductive. The State received little money from these forests.

Bannerji asserts that forests are economically significant because they help to improve rainfall and the fertility of the soil by keeping it from being carried away by torrential downpours. Additionally, they provide wood, food, and other supplies. Additionally, they help reduce the speed of strong winds. As a result, forests are beneficial both in terms of their impact on the climate and rainfall as well as their economic value.

The great Sanskrit writer Bana in his Harshacharita mentions various kinds of trees which were grow in the forests: Karmikara, Champaka, Nameru, Sallaki, Narikela,

Nagakesara, Sarala, Kurbaka, Raktashoka, Bakul, Kenara, Tilaka, Heanga, Supari, Pre-yangu, Muchukunda, Tamila, evadaru, Bagavalli, Jamuna, JambhiriBeebi, Thulin dambe, utaje, Pils, Shareefa, atabala, Shefalika, Tavalilata, Takucha and Jaya hala etc.³²⁶

In his commentary on Arthanastra, Bhattasvamin mentions the following significant forest products.

- (i) Strong woody trees, such as teak and palmyra,
- (ii) Bamboo.
- (iii) Creepers, such as cane and betel.
- (iv) Fibrous, materials, such as hemp.
- (v) Plants that produce writing materials, such as birch trees.
- (vii) Plants that produce blooms and are useful for producing coloring agents
- (viii) Medicinal
- (ix) Toxin.
- (x) Skating of lions, buffalo, alligators, etc.
- (xi) Animal horns, hooves, and bones.
- (xii) Metals.e.g. Steel, Brass, Bronze, Copper, Lead, and other metals.
- (xiii) Cane, bark, and clay objects.
- (xv) Menageries of animals, including cattle and birds.
- (xv) Charcoal.
- (xvi) Food and firewood.

Bana similarly provides a detailed overview of forest products. He writes³²⁷ that there were people moving (in the Vindhyatavi) along with bundles of Sidhu, hued, like an old ruddy goodes neck, countless sacks of recently uprooted Dhataki flowers of the color of red and of cotton plants, plentiful loads of flax and hemp bundles, quantities of honey, peacocks tail feathers, wreath of compressed wax, barklesskhadiraloga frilled with hanging Lamajjaka grass, large bundles of Kustha and Rodhra yellow as a,

fullgrownlion mane. There were heaps of charcoal tied with Valvaja grass, countless heaps of cotton from the seemul tree fruit, stores of Mala rice water lily roots, candid sugar, white lotus seed, bamboos, and threshed rice available, as well as collections of Jamala seeds mats used to pound ashes and disposed upon heaps of Kasmarya, a wealth of withered Rajadana and Madan fruit, an abundance of Madhuka fruit, decoration pots of Sunflower in excellent cupboards, no lac of Rajamasa, cocumber, Karkotika and (Kusmanda) gourd seeds, and collection of living nets, such an wild cats Maludhanasnaes, Ichneumans, Sodijatakas.

4.4 ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

The Atharvaveda urges "make us rich in cows" because good cattle have traditionally been the primary driver of agricultural prosperity in India. Only the Vaishyas³²⁸, according to Medhatithi, were the intended recipients of cattle. According to Ganganath Jha, "in case" cattle tending was the most lucrative form of employment, a man would turn to it; however, if engaged in any other types of work, the vaishyas would naturally depend on cattle breeding.³²⁹ Vijnanesvara says that dwelling place of a king should be in such a country where cattle could get sufficient fodder.³³⁰

According to historical records, cattle power was also used for irrigation.³³¹ Some of them were utilized for milk, flesh, skin, ivory, bones, and manure, among other things, while others were in Bali and the present.³³²

In general, there are three types of livestock: (i) bovine, which includes oxen and buffaloes; (ii) ovine, which includes sheep and goats; and (iii) others, which includes horses, donkeys, pigs, and other animals like lions, tigers, and monkeys; camels, rhinoceroses, jackals; porcupines; and antelopes.

A twice born who consumed mushrooms, village pig, garlic, cock on one, or leeks was punished by being socially excluded, and provisions were made to get rid of the sinning twice born.

Any person found guilty of slaughtering the animals unlawfully was given punishment, i.e., he will have to live in hell for as many days as the number of hairs on the body of that slair. The above rules were applicable to Sudras as well.³³³

Brahmans could slay those beasts and birds which were recommended for consumption, for offerings to gods, and for feeding those whom they were bound to maintain. Hiuan-Tsang, who visited India, during the 7th century A.D., describes³³⁴ the practice of meat eating in the period under review. We agree with Dr. Maity who holds³³⁵ that the slaughter of animals was a sin due to the spread of Buddhism and Jainism and with their mode of non-violence. Deers, Elephants, Wolves, and various others were counted as wild animals. Among bird parrot, cuckoo, goose, duck, pigeon, owl, heron, hawk, crane, and peacock were commonly known.

According to Bhatta Swami, the pasture-lands allotted in dense forests were made free from wild animals with the help of hunters. Medhatithi while commenting on Manu explains that pasture lands could be used for cultivation, if at all used and damaged by cattle, the herds-men could not be punished, because the cattle were left for grazing in declared area.

The utility of tamed animals was well realized for the welfare of humanity that is why provision was made to protect the rights of cowherde. According to Medhatithi, one who kept the cattle known as a herdeman? Further he adds that for any damage caused to the cattle during day time the keeper was held responsible but if anything happened after handing them over to owner the liability rested on owner. If the wages of the herdsman were agreed upon to be paid in terms of milk, he was entitled to milk the cows: if otherwise he was punished for it. In case the animals were killed in the absence of the herd man, the herdsman had to make good the loss incurred due to his negligence, if he had tried his level best to save the cattle from wild animals, no loss was to be made good by him. If the thieves had taken away the cattle by force, the keeper was bound to inform the owner immediately, wherever he might be. If he had not informed the owner or if he informed him after the thieves had run away with the cattle, he (the keeper) was held responsible. In case of a sudden attack by wolves on comesheep and goat killing some of them the herdsman was forward not held responsible for the loss if he had come/in their defence. On the death of the animals the keeper had to give their ears, skins, tails, hairs, bladders, tendons, and concrete file, to the owner.

Bullocks were used in agriculture, while elephants and horses were used in the army. Elephants were used in war as well as for riding, and ivory was also used to make ornaments, while bone was used for other things. Animals were useful in daily life as well as in war, and a significant amount of money was spent by the state to ensure their security.

Most animals lived in the forests, so it was the state's responsibility to protect the forests because in a sense, the forest industry was also a part of the state economic policy.³³⁶ Teak, sandal, sandalwood, and various types of wood were obtained from the forests, and the state also made money from the sale of animal skins and horns.

4.5 GUILDS

This period was not favourable for the progress of class organisations due to changed political, social, and economic conditions. The absence of big states mutual disputes between kings and feudal lords and the anarchy created by the invasion of muslims had a very bad effect on industry and trade. Due to the decline of trade and commerce many cities also reached a state of decline, which had a very direct impact on the class organisations because most of the classes were working in the cities. Secondly, due to lack of centralised government, their activities remained limited to a particular area, due to which there was no expected coordination between different categories of organisations of the country. Thirdly, due to the widespread practice of the feudal system, the feudal and jagirdar classes started collecting arbitrary money from the organisations due to which their economic conditions started deteriorating and they were no longer as prosperous as before. Along with this, the representatives of class organisations in the administrative system were replaced by the feudal lords, due to which they kept moving away from the monarchy and the king was not aware of their problems. People no longer have the same faith in them as before and instead of donating their money, they started depositing it in temples. Although temples and monasteries did not pay any interest on the money deposited with them, they begin to give preference in comparison to religious organisations. This makes it clear that their prestige had declined significantly during this period.

During this period most of the categories lost their form and took the form of caste. In Samriti Chandrika and Mitra Mishra, the meaning of category has been described as

the organisation of 18 lower castes. Bhattopal has also explained the meaning of category as a corporation of people of a caste.

In Vyjayantikosh, the meaning of category has been explained as an organisation of people of 1 caste and 1 profession.

But there are many mentions of categories in the literature of this period. According to Harshcharita, on the occasion of rajyashri's marriage categories of carpenters and others were appointed to make the necessary item. According to Medhatithi, there were different categories of craftsman, money lenders and cart drivers. Alberuni has mentioned different categories of washer man, cobblers, madaries, basket and sealed makers, sailers, fishermen, hunters, and weavers.

We became aware of the categories of trade and business during this period also. We get evidence of this from description of Bana and Hiuan-Tsang that in ancient India the categories of traders and businessmen had a very important place in the economic life. In this way trade and business work was done by the categories. Different professional had different categories so that they could attain expertise in them. Mention is found in Harshacharita that at the time of Rajyashree's marriage, a group of skilled artists were called to decorate the palace.

At well-known locations, markets were held where products were bought and sold.

Office bearers like Shaulkik, Tariq, Hattamati, etc. are mentioned in modern sources.³³⁷ Their duties included the following:

- (i) Shaulkik: In the past, Shalkik accepted tax in the marketplace.
- (ii) Tariq: A person was appointed to collect tax on the ghats of the Tariq rivers.
- (iii) Hattamati: Its job was to gather market-related taxes.

Like before, there were numerous trade associations throughout this time. For instance, a painter, an author, a sculptor, a craftsperson, a merchant, etc. Only categories were used to create the rules of business. Every businessman must abide by these regulations. They used to promptly pay their state taxes and look for newly opened trade routes. Trade allowed for the development of new industries because

learning about new items required traveling to a new location. She once offered instruction pertaining to her business.

The categories served as both banks and places to check the coin purity, but their existence was independent of one another.

She used to work so that merchants might deposit their money with her and make wise investments with it.³³⁸

These groups were regarded as the social authority who commanded the greatest deference and respect. In the Yagyavalkya Smriti, he is mentioned. The class's legislature, not the state courts, ruled on disputes involving the members of the categories. The categories each have their own assets and treasuries. Many categories have sufficient funds to donate the dungeon or fund the construction of the temple. Class structures once paved the way for the nation's social and economic advancement.³³⁹

Let us now examine the corporate activities of the period in the economic field. We have enough references to guild organizations of traders, artisans and other communities in ancient literature and epigraphs. Such organizations existed right from the Vedic period. The Buddhist Jatakas refer to various guild organizations. Similarly, the law writers like Gautam, Yajnavalkya, Manu, Kautilya, Brihaspati, and Narada throw light on the corporate organizations in the period under review we have reference to guilds of oil millers, gardeners, betel-sellers and others. Thus, the Vaillabhata, swamin inscription dated in the year 877 A.D. records that each of the chiefs and other members of the guild of oil miller should give every month one Palika of oil and the whole guild of gardeners should provide for fifty garlands daily. The Kaman stone inscription records that the guild living at Kamyaka should give permanently sixty garlands of which thirty-four were to be given to the Vishnu-temple and the remaining twenty-six to the shrine of Chamunda. Another inscription refers to the guild of horse-dealers. Another guild of horse-dealers is recorded in the Harsha stone inscription. The Siyadoni inscription refers to guilds of betel-sellers, oil millers and stone-cutters, while the Karitalai stone inscription refers to a guild of Vagulika (Hunters). Thus, like the earlier period the organization of guilds continued in our period also.

Before pointing out some significant issues under discussion, it is necessary to clearly understand the meaning of Sresthi, Sarthavaha, and Kulika, which are frequently mentioned in various sources. For the term Nagar-Sreshthi, recorded in the VaillabhataSwamin inscription, sircar translates the term as the president of the guild. Saletore holds that Nagarasresthin possibly stands for the guild president. It is important to note that even today in Gujarati, one hearhe continues by saying that in Southern India, the term was Pattanasvamin, which has come to mean the town's lord mayor. Apparently, K.N. Dikshit, this phrase, refers to the mayor of the city council. The term denoted trader's and merchant's guilds because its literary definition is "the merchant of the town."

Dr. Bloch believed that something akin to a modern chamber of commerce existed at some significant trading cities, and Saletore concurs. Regarding Shresthin, Sarthavaha, and Kulika, he translates them as banker, trader, and merchant, respectively.

R.C. Majumdar defines a guild as "a corporation of people, belonging to the same or different castes but following the same industry" and Panini defines sreni as "an assembly of persons following a common craft or trade and a common duty." Medhatithi comments on Manu and refers to merchants, artisans, bankers, or Brahmans educated in the four Vedas.

Other technical terms we encounter include Hula, Jana, Puga, and Samgha in addition to Sreni. Marada claims that the term Kula refers to a group bound together by kinship. Gopa appears to be a political organization so, says K.V. In contrast to its executive or governing body, Rangnaswami Aiyangar denotes the entire body or its general assembly (ecclesia). Sangha refers to any association for the achievement of similar goals, while pug was an assembly of a village or town that included more than one Sreni.

4.5.1 Guilds Organizations and Democratic Set Up

Let us now take a closer look at the guild structure as described in the low-books and epigraphs that comment on Yajnavalkya. People with noble qualities and excellent character should be nominated to the guild's working committee, according to Vijnaneswara.

In the Vaillabhata Swamin inscription, numerous executive authorities were there. There are recordings of Shresthi, Sarthavaha, Eulika, and others. According to the inscription, each oil mill shall receive one Palika of oil from the four chief oil-millers of Sri-Sarvesvarayura, two chief oil-millers of Shrivatsa and Swamipura, and four chief oil-millers of two distinct locations. In addition, the guild of gardeners, including the seven chiefs, is required to donate fifty garlands. The Pehwa inscription mentions a guild of horse traders with a foreign-born president and members.

R.C. Majumdar correctly noted that the guilds' economic structure included democratic components in their institutions. The guild should have a chief and two, three, or five executive officials to help him, according to Brihaspati. The executive officers, according to Vijnanesvara, should be purely honest, versed in the Vedas, and from a respectable family.

The assembly house is another name for Brihaspati. When it comes to member attendance, Vijnanesvara advises that it should be taken in the guild hall to the beat of a drum. Chandesvara said that membership in a guild required the approval of the general assembly. One might opt out of membership on their own accord if they so desired. If the executive officer did not give the members a chance to speak, he was fined with purvasahasa. If the executive officer broke the law, damaged guild property, or caused a commotion, he may be expelled from the meeting.

4.5.2 Role of the Guild

According to modern inscriptions, some of the guilds served as banks. According to the Kaman stone inscription, the potter's guild agreed to pay a permanent cess in exchange for receiving a specific amount of money in advance from the artisan's guild. "Every potter was to pay one Pana per wheel every month," it says. The same inscription states that in exchange for a sum of money paid in advance, the guild living in the town of Kamyaka agreed to permanently supply sixty garlands to the Shrines of Chamunda and Vishnu. It appears that the expenses were covered out of the interest accumulated on the deposits.

4.5.3 Judicial Authority

The guild had the authority to make decisions in some of the issues that fell under its purview. On occasion, the State meddled in guild affairs. In her comment on Manu, Madhatithi urges the expulsion of any members who violate an agreement after wearing them down. The Kitaksara states that the king should expel a man from his state if he steals the guild's property or violates a contract with it. A person who committed crimes or caused disturbances, in accordance with Virmitrodaya, could be expelled from the town. According to Brihaspati, a man should be penalized anywhere between six Nisk and four suvarnas for failing to do his obligations. We can conclude that guilds had sufficient authority to decide cases within their purview, with State intervention only necessary in specific circumstances, as he further states that "whatever is done by these officials, whether horse or kind towards other people, in accordance with the prescribed regulations, must be approved by the king".

4.5.4 Other Purposes

Charitable and religious deeds were performed on behalf of the corporations, such as gifts to religious institutions, the construction of rest houses, wells, pools for drinking water, and gardens, as well as monetary assistance to the poor for social and religious ceremonies like birth, death, marriage, sacred thread, etc. The guilds also performed a variety of other tasks in addition to banking.

The list includes sub-inscriptions from the individual member's earnings on the business, penalties present, what is earned through the king's favors, and the revenue from the fields, gardens, etc. The sources of income are discovered described in the contemporary literature and inscriptions.

4.5.5 Partnership

Besides the guilds, we find references to Partnership in the earlier and contemporary sources. According to Kautilya those who carry on any cooperative work is called Partnership between two or more merchants. Quoting a verse of Narada – smriti, Chandesvara writes that those who carry on business or any other work jointly is called partnership. Further he adds that if a business was carried on by two or more partners, the consequences of the same were borne by all the partners. Thus, any

transaction done jointly or severally belonged to the firm and not to the individual partners. Apararka in his commentary on Yajnavalkya writes that profit or loss of the partnership firm was distributed among the partners based on their investment or according to the agreement. Thus, the profits earned by the joint or individual partners were to be distributed among its partners according to their share or agreement. Generally, an agreement was committed by all the partners prior to the commencement of the partnership business, because in some cases one partner was given greater share in the profits of the firm on account of his skill in addition to the proportion of his contribution in the capital.

Any act committed by a single partner was considered the act of the firm, and the liability was to be shared by all the partners. According to Brihaspati, regarding the qualifications and liabilities of the partners, partners should come from among the noble and well-off families.

The deceitful and fraudulent acts of a partner done on behalf of the firm were decided by arbitration, which were generally the remaining partners. In this connection, the statement of the acting partner was taken on oath, which formed the basis of the arbitrators' decision. If a partner does any act on behalf of the firm but without the consent of the remaining partners, the partner will have to make good the loss so incurred?

Any act done by a partner causing loss to the firm due to his negligence was to be made good by him; however, the transaction done by an individual partner bringing heavy profits to a firm or saving the interest and property of a firm in any way was rewarded to the ex-partner without profit.

If a partner passed away due to bad care by the surviving partners, they were required to safeguard the late partner's earnings before handing over his property to the king. A partner was entitled to withdraw money from the common fund to the extent of his share.

Even the farming and small-scale cottage industries were carried on partnership basis. In such cases the investment was not only of capital but of skill and techniques of the partners. As the variation being natural the share of profits too was distributed

according to the abilities of the partner. Thus, Brihaspati says "Then gold-smiths or other artisan (i.e. workers in silver, thread, wood, stone or leather) practice their art jointly, they shall share the profits in due proportion corresponding to the nature of their work on the same principle". The heads of all the undertakings were entitled to draw double the amount of their proportionate shares. In case of musicians the chief was entitled to fifty percent more of his share in addition and the remainder was distributed among the singers equally. Similar was the case with thieves. The booty was distributed in the following manner" Four shares shall be awarded to their chief, he who is (especially) valiant shall receive three shares; one (particularly) able shall take two and the remaining associates shall share alike. If a partner was arrested, the cost of his release was to be shared equally by everyone involved. Even priests and other clergymen might use the same idea. Sixteen priests were involved in the sacrifice, and the first group of four, who served as the chief officiators, received roughly half of the proceeds; the second, third, and fourth groups, respectively, received half, one third, and one fourth of that. It is therefore obvious that all human endeavors to make a living were conducted in collaboration.

Corporate Economic Life: Various guild and company types during the studied period; definitions of sresthi, Sarhavaha, Kulika, Sreni, Kula, Gana, Puga, and Samgha; organizations and democratic setup; guild functions.

Woodcrafts: Metal work; Minerals; textile, industry, silk, wool; tailoring, house-building, bricks and stones; pottery, terracotta, figures; wine; ivory; honey; and oil industries; glass, cane bamboo, sugar; soap; gun power and leather industries; artisans; leather workers, weavers, washerman, basketmakers, garland—makers, potters, copper-smiths, black-smiths and gold smiths, and carpenters; apprenticeship in various crafts; laws against dishonest artisans.

The following terms are used to describe internal trade: centers of trade, markets, vaishyas, sresthi; sarthavaha, vanika, emigration of merchants; transportation and means of conveyance; traffic control; trade routes; dangers and difficulties; items of trade; rules and regulations delivery of articles; sale without ownership; laws against adultery; weights and measures; price fixation, State obligations.

4.6 INDUSTRIES

During this time, Indian industries were in extremely good and satisfactory shape. They are described as follows:

(i) Textile Sector

During this time, the textile industry was at a very advanced stage. Clothing consumption in the nation varied with the seasons, which greatly boosted the textile industry. 'Harshacharita' mentions four different categories of clothing. 1. Kshaum, a type of beautiful cloth manufactured from flax fiber, (Cotton) Badar. (Kousheya fabric) Dukul. It flies away even with the breath, is only known by touch, shines like a snake's skin, and is multicolored. Lala Tantuj (Kousheya), a sort of cloth, and Anshuk (a form of muslin), and eye cloth were used in great amounts.³⁴⁰

Mathura produced striped cotton fabric of the highest quality. Along with clothing referred to "Vajralep," demonstrating that individuals in this period were aware of the chemical method for dyeing clothing. The artists extracted different hues from the plants. Which were employed when dyeing clothes? On the clothing, other styles of bellboots were also manufactured. They had their own community of people who worked on clothing in this way. According to Hiuan-Tsang Mathura was the famous centre of cotton textile. Banaras and Bangal were famous for silk and Kashmir were for linen.

(ii) Gems Sector

During this time, numerous ornamental types were utilized. From which it is known that the goldsmith industry was most flourishing. The Brihatsamhita³⁴¹ describes 24 different kinds of ornaments. Gold, silver, pearls, diamonds, and other materials that were popular at the period were utilized to create ornaments, which were

All sexes of men and women were attired, even the god and goddess statues. Along with this, jewelry carving and the art of Manikar also advanced.

India had a great deal of wealth, including gemmukta, gold, etc. According to Baan, the kings formerly wore so many bodies jewelry that they could be freed from a conquered nation. The King of Kamrup must have been the owner of Atul's wealth³⁴²,

as evidenced by the gifts he gave to Harsha. 'Kadambari' claims that many of the people who lived in Ujjayini were Kotyadhis (millionaires). Pearls, coral, and diamonds for sale were used as decorations in its markets.³⁴³

(iii) The industry for utensils

A pottery industry also grew, and utensils were produced using a variety of metals, including gold, silver, brass, iron, and others. Carvers were thought to be adept as well as metal artisans.

(a) The artisan and ivory industries

The artists of this time were excellent in both plain and inlaid ivory and woodworking. The trade in ivory goods was also well developed. Ivory was used to create jewelry, seals, sculptures of all kinds, and furniture. Due to its control over the elephants that lived there, the state used to profit greatly from this activity. That industry was classified as a state industry for this reason. Many of the artifacts that were utilized in Rajyashree's marriage have been described in depth by Baan. Craftsmanship was evident in the gifts that the monarch of Kamrup sent to Harsha.

(iv) Industry in Semi-Forests

Additionally, a lot of items were fashioned using wood that was harvested from woods. Consequently, the wood business expanded greatly. There were made wooden windows, beds, chariots, and doors.

(a) Painting Sector

The painting business has advanced significantly. The affluent class in the palaces used to commission various paintings for their homes on different occasions. The painters painted the palace with many types of depictions for Rajyashree's wedding. It is reported that even the chavairdhari women portrayed on the walls used to shake them while the queen Yashomati was fast asleep.³⁴⁴

This demonstrates the superb and colorful painting of the time.

In addition to this, the majority of the state's subjects worked in every industry that existed even before the Harshavardhana era. These enterprises' and industries' advanced stages are evidence of the nation's robust economy.

During this time, we also learn about the different types of trade and business. The descriptions of both Baan and Hiuan-Tsang provide proof of this. There were various classes of traders and business people in ancient India's economic life so that they may become skilled in them.³⁴⁵ The Harshacharita mentions that guilds of talented artists were enlisted to decorate the palace during Rajyashree's wedding.

4.7 TRADE & COMMERCE

There is no doubt that the study period's domestic and international trade was a major factor in its prosperity. The main driver of Shrikanth district's prosperity, according to Hiuan-Tsang³⁴⁶, was its trade. Most of the locals were traders of various goods. The manufacturing of cotton textiles made Mathura renowned. In the nation of Mathura, a type of very delicate and striped cotton textile was produced.

The inhabitants of Banaras were extremely wealthy.³⁴⁷ Karnasuvarna's inhabitants were exceedingly well off. From an economic perspective, Ujjayini was also highly rich. 'Kadambari' claims that many of the people who lived in Ujjayini were Kotyadhis (millionaires). They adorned pearls, corals, turquoise, and diamonds to sell in their markets. In "Kadambari," there is a very intriguing description of Ujjayini, which attests to the prosperity of this city. Kannauj was well known for its exotic goods, which traders from many different nations purchased. The inhabitants of Ayodhya were innovators in several crafts.

In the nation, gold and silver were in great supply. Tamralipti was a highly prosperous town. Several hundred businessmen traveled to Bodh Gaya with Etsinga when he moved north-west in Tamralipti in AD 673.³⁴⁸

There is also an account (It-sing) of traders traveling to the port of Tamralipti from Ayodhya.³⁴⁹ This highway served as the principal thoroughfare for commercial and army transportation through northern India. There were no barriers. Trade was conducted both within and outside in the nation. Hiuan-Tsang wrote that there were commerce products from every region of India in his description of Kapisha. Through Kashmir, one might go to China and Central Asia.

4.7.1 Foreign Trade

Both land and maritime channels were used for international trade. China might be reached by land or by water. Peshawar, Kabul, Samarkand, Tashkent, Kucha, and

Turfan were all stops along the land route. The different ports in Gujarat, Malabar, Tamraparni (Lanka), Choladesh, Dravidian region, Andhra, Kalinga, and Sumatra were the starting points for the waterways. Bengal's primary port was Tamralipti. Travelers and traders from this area used to use Sumatra Island to reach China during the reign of Harsha. It-sing, a Chinese traveler, took the same route. Before Harsha assumed the throne (in 603 AD), some 5,000 Indians had migrated to Yavadweep (Java).

Trade and commerce also enjoyed great prosperity. Bana has named 15 such islands that were the hubs of trade at the period, including India, Lanka, Nicobar, Andaman, Keda, Sumatra, Java, Buros, Boni, Philippine, Malay, Cambodia, Bali, etc. In these islands, ships used to bring in large sums of money from elsewhere. Merchants used to deliver seven gold ponds shaped like the seven seas to their respective cities. These ponds were constructed from a foot to a quarter of heart-sized gold. This demonstrates the enormous profits the merchants once enjoyed.

Ships were used for international trade. These enormous, powerful ships could readily resist maritime storms due to their strength and size. Colonies like Sumatra, Borneo, Cambodia, etc. were formed for the advancement of commerce, and many commercial settlements were established in China, Arabia, and Iran.³⁵⁰

Markets were established in various locations to offer commercial items. The authorities kept an eye on what was being sold in these marketplaces, and selling improperly perishable items could result in penalties. Shalkik, an official, used to oversee the market and handle tax collection. Because Damodar's copper plate details the purchase of land for the market³⁵¹ and how important it was for there to be constant trade, the market would have been quite large in scale in the seventh century.

A significant port in Bengal was Tamralipti. The western route may have also been employed by Harsha to help his army battle Pulakesian II, but the priority of the Ujjain route was unquestionably present. Because of this, the Vallabhi monarch proceeded to show up for the event all the way up to Prayag.

According to Hiuan-Tsang, there was a city called Charitra on the coast along India's south-eastern border. Foreign traders used to visit and stay here, while traders from

here used to travel to other faraway countries. The city wall was tall and extremely sturdy. All the streams were well-known to the Native Indians.³⁵²

Due to the Vaishya class, which was an essential component of society, trade advanced significantly because of the development of both maritime and land routes. On the one hand, while managing trade and business, this class was pulling foreign nations' currencies into its own through trade. On the other hand, there was a rise in demand for Indian products abroad. As a result, trade, and industry both domestically and internationally continued to grow.³⁵³

4.7.2 Domestic Trade

Several towns were acting as markets for interior trade goods. We have a lot of proof that goods from Northern India were transported to the South and vice versa. Towns like Sindha, Patilputra, Benaras, Ujjain, Bharukaccha, and Tamralipti, among others, were significant commercial hubs.³⁵⁴

4.8 TAX SYSTEM

In the study period, civilization, culture, and economics were comparable to those of the Gupta period. The nation enjoyed prosperity. Trade, commerce, and agriculture were all at an advanced stage. As a result, during this time the state used to get revenue from various taxes.

(i) Land Tax

It resembled a land tax. The term "land tax" originally referred to a set payment that farmers had to pay, but it is now generally understood to refer to the tax paid by farmers who have a permanent place to live.

Additionally, the state collected money via a levy known as Udrang (land duty), the largest source of revenue for the state, but how it was collected. Some information is lost. However, the plan for acquiring Udrang was excellent. Grain was given as payment in some areas, while cash was given as payment in other areas. The land tax itself is connected to the word's original meaning. The state oversaw and measured all the land. Land records were safeguarded.

(ii) The Cess

Additionally, the state collected money via surcharges. Farmers who used to cultivate state-owned land without owning the land were subject to this tax.

(iii) Grainykar

A tax called a grain tax was imposed on specific grains.

(iv) Hiranya tax

Hiranya, a tax that was primarily imposed on minerals and collected in the form of gold. The universal Hiranya (annually provided Hiranya) is mentioned in the inscriptions with Bhaag, Bhog, and Dhanya. Manu included it in regular taxes, although it is unknown at what rate it was acquired throughout the Harsha period. It has been included.

4.8.1 Tulyamev

Additionally, the state provided income in the form of equivalents. 'Tulya' and 'May' both denote the act of being weighed. It is evident from what is measured that in certain cases, this tax was also paid using weight and measurement, and as a result, would have been paid in material rather than cash. Most of the time, the grain markets taxed the items being sold in specified amounts based on their size and weight. The 'Madhuban article'³⁵⁵ referred to this tax as 'Tulyameva'.

The retailers had to pay taxes. As with any other king, this octroi was imposed on travel between states and on the import and export of products.

(i) Wharf and boat tax

Because boats were the primary mode of transportation in ancient times, the state used to receive a significant amount of money from these levies. Although the average person was wealthy, it was not enough to arrange his own boats. The state also organized for the ghats to be cleaned. Ghat tax was imposed as a result. The taxman's name was Shalkik. 'Shweta'³⁵⁶ was the name of it.

(ii) Goods-related taxes

During this time, a variety of items were subject to taxes. On wood, fruit, milk, and other things that were supposedly associated with enjoyment, for instance? This tax

was primarily paid by rural residents. Bhaag is defined as a fixed 1/6th of the field's output, Bhog is defined as consumption, and tax is defined as a specific payment in addition to rent that farmers used to provide to the monarch at a predetermined period.

Those who were unable to pay the tax were undoubtedly forced to perform manual labor in place of payment, but they were also rewarded according to the amount of work performed. This kind of labor must have come from the lower social classes.

(iii) Other Taxes

The subjects were also liable to additional taxes, but it is unknown what kinds of levies they were.

4.8.2 Punishment for the violators

The state also made money from criminal activity, although this income was very limited because most offenses resulted in amputation, jail, the death penalty, or exile.

Only minor offenses were subject to fines.

(i) Court costs

Because the village officer had to set up courts there and because a portion of the revenue from the fine was paid to the state in the form of tax, this tax would have been imposed on the village or district courts.

(ii) By offering

When people used to visit the king, they would also bring presents for the king. The conquered king used to receive gifts from the defeated rulers such as cash, food, livestock, jewels, and other precious stones. The economy was strengthened as a result.

(iii) Highway taxes

People who used these Rajpaths frequently had to pay octroi tax.

The state possessed ownership rights over the mines and export money that were located there. The state also made money from the sale of the minerals and gold found there.

(iv) Forestry-related taxes

Horses and elephants, which could be found in the forests, were the state's primary means of warfare during this time. In addition to this, some forests had a variety of woods, wild animals, trees, medicines, and animal skins. They were the state's main source of revenue because of this.

(v) Revenue from fresh taxes

The king had the authority to impose new taxes during the objection period in order to raise more revenue from the populace. This tax was mainly levied on Vaishyas, wealthy classes and merchants because the rate of this tax was up to 50 percent of the whole wealth.

The money from the registration of families was removed during the Vardhan period. Therefore, families no longer had to register if they lived in the state.

If a merchant died in the state and there was no heir, then the state held the right over that property. Plows were also taxed in central India during the Harsha dynasty. Who was called 'Hali Shankar'?

To placate the storms, storms, floods and ghosts, the tax was collected from the public forcefully under the name 'Baat-Bhoot'.

Part-bhog, Hiranya, Tulyameya, Suvarna etc., in the taxes charged by the state, are gathered from the writings of Harsha's Madhuban and Banskhedha, from which he provides Somkundaka village to Savani-gotra SamavediBhattavatswami and Vishnubuddha Gotra, Rigvedi Bhatta Shivadev Swami as agrahar. He makes donations in the form and instructs the subjects to provide bhaag, bhog, hiranya, equal, maya, gold etc. to these Brahmins.³⁵⁷

From the examination of the taxes charged by the state and comparison with the records of the subsequent time, it is known that the oppressive taxes were not extremely high during the Harsha period. There must have been some taxes which would have been placed on the public unnecessarily but the condition of the state which would stay unstable owing to conflict. For this reason, it would be necessary for the state to impose taxes.³⁵⁸

4.9 COINS

Coins also have their own specific position in the economic prosperity of the country. These are regarded to be the main means of exchange. With the growth of company, there is also an abundance of money. Trade reached its height during the Gupta dynasty. That is why numerous various sorts of coins were issued. Fourteen varieties of gold coins were made by Kumaragupta I. In the early medieval period, a single state could not remain stable in India. Trade with foreign countries also continued, although owing to some reason the use of gold coinage in daily life had nearly disappeared.

Their small numbers suggest that they had minimal publicity. Most of the silver coins continued to be made during the Harsha period.³⁵⁹ These silver coins were modeled on Gupta coins. To further boost his economy, Harsha paid close attention to his subjects' needs. He constructed rest stops and dharamshalas beside roads and close to temples, where travelers could receive free food, medicine, and medical attention. He used to feed 501 Brahmins and 100 Buddhist monks each day. During the Ashwamedha Yagya, he donated a sizable sum of money to various causes. Also used as money were cowries and pearls.³⁶⁰

He needed a lot of money to spend on all these resources; therefore, he used to impose various forms of taxes on the subjects to cover these costs. To encourage trade and business, he also set taxes and octroi levies. He had built an octroi mansion away from the city. As a result, the state's economic policies were effective during the Maukhari–Pushyabhuti era, and the people made timely tax payments. For this, many rules were created.

Thus, it can be argued that under the seventh century, Central Indian-style silver coins from the Gupta era were made, albeit in tiny quantities. Coins made of gold were no longer widely used. Along with the coins of Maukhari kings Ishanvarma, Sharvarma, and Avantivarma, hundreds of coins belonging to Pratapsheel (Prabhakarvardhana) and Shiladitya (Harsha) have also been discovered in Bhitaura (District Faridabad) of the United Provinces.³⁶¹ There were several other locations where Maukhari coins might be found, but overall, this era saw less currency creation.

Thus, it can be concluded that during the study period, the people's economic position was very high.³⁶² The residents of Ujjayini, according to poet Bana, were kotayadhish (millionaires).³⁶³ The Indus nation produced gold and silver.³⁶⁴ The majority of the population worked in agriculture, which was their primary occupation, but trade and business were the primary drivers of success in this nation. The country's valuable items were all traded, and the valuables obtained from the ports were exchanged for goods for sale and purchase.

Most of the people who lived here were traders of various goods. The manufacturing of cotton textiles made Mathura renowned. Economically, Ujjayini and Kannauj were both quite rich. 'Kadambari' claims that many of the people who lived in Ujjayini were rich. In their markets, decorations included pearls, coral, sarkat, and diamonds. Kadambari contains a highly intriguing account of Ujjayini, which is evidence of the prosperity of this city's citizens.

Market:

Various contemporary sources make mention of markets.³⁶⁵ Inscriptions from the time period have words like Hatta-margga and ca turhatta-mahatta-kahatta, which refer to town marketplaces and enormous markets, respectively.³⁶⁶ Vipani and Apana are used as markets by Kalidasa and Sukra. V.S. Agrawala defined Anana as a site of business and Vipani as an urban market.³⁶⁷ There were numerous markets for diverse goods in a commercial center. There is mention of a cattle market in the Kaman inscription.³⁶⁸ In his commentary on Amarkosa, Kshirasvami cites several different types of stores, including those for horses, elephants, carts, and miscellaneous items. Shops were occasionally a part of a merchant's living space.

Sukra advises the king to arrange for the wealthy to be positioned on both sides of a road in relation to the site of a market. Harisena claims that in the sixth century, merchants used to locate their stores in various locations based on their social classes. Sukra also specifies that shops should be in accordance with a merchant's Varna.

Even though the professions of trade, commerce, agriculture, cattle-tending, and money lending were reserved for Vaishyas, it is crucial to note that other classes also worked in the fields. Under the leadership of their sreshthi (modern Seth) heads, they

established their own guilds.³⁶⁹ Sarthavahai.e is yet another word. The contemporary inscriptions also refer to a caravan dealer. Typically, the trader was referred to as a Vanika. When describing the positive traits of a trader, Medhatithi says that the trader should be fully knowledgeable about the characteristics of grains, the prices of commodities in various nations, the profit potential of timely purchases and sales, a working knowledge of several languages, appropriate methods of storing goods, and the techniques for buying and selling.

The contemporary inscriptions mention their migrations from one location to another. The Gwalior inscription states that Nagabhata, a Vanik from Anandapura, migrated to Latamandala.³⁷⁰ The Ahar inscription³⁷¹ mentions two merchants named Bhadra Prakash and Mamanka who came from Bhillamala and settled at Tattanandapura. According to the same document, traders from Karnata, Madhyadesa, Iata, and Jokka used to travel here to sell their wares. The Pehowa inscription specifies a gathering place for horse traders from all over India.³⁷² The mansions of merchants traveling from location to location for business purposes highlight an impressive aspect of inland trade in our nation.

Spices like pepper, ginger, cinnamon, aloes, perfumes, and medicinal herbs were the main commodities in inland trade, along with pigment, pearls, precious stones, animal skins, cotton, silk, muslin, woolen clothing, ivory, bamboo, sandalwood, elephants, horses, and a variety of other animals and metals like gold, copper, iron, and mica. In his commentary on Manu, Medhatithi provides a lengthy list of such goods that Brahman were not allowed to trade in, not even in times of need. The list includes all types of condiments, cooked food, sesame, stones, salt, cattle, slaves, hemp, flex, and wool clothing, dyed clothing, fruits, roots, medicinal herbs, weapons, position, meat, soma, perfumes of all kinds, fresh milk, sour milk, clarified butter, honey, oil sugar, Kush, grass, forests-animals, frogs or tusks, bird liquor, Indigo, lac, etc.

The law makers established several regulations that favored both buyers and sellers. According to Medhatithi, durable goods could be provided to the buyer within ten days of the contract's signing. The penalties were 600 panas if the opposite party disputes accepting the delivery. According to Vijnanesvara, deliveries must be made to recipients unless there are valid reasons to reject the items that have been sold or

purchased. Narada commanded that the delivery period should vary according to how easily the item can be destroyed, with milk animals being delivered after three days, beasts of burden after five days, precious stones and the like after seven days or more, grains being sent after ten days, iron and cloth within a day, but the item should not lose its original attributes. According to Vijnanesvara, a seller is required to supply the product with profit or interest if the delivery was not made promptly after obtaining payment for it. However, if a foreign trader does not receive the goods they have ordered within the allotted period, the seller will be required to pay more than the actual price of the good in addition to the profit the buyer would have made in his own market. If the item sold has not been delivered to the buyer upon demand and has been destroyed by an act of God or the King, the seller is responsible for making up the loss. On the other hand, according to Narada, the vendor will not be responsible for any losses suffered if the buyer refuses delivery.

A commodity that has already been sold may be resold if the buyer does not accept it within the required time frame. If this results in a loss for the seller, the first buyer must pay up the difference. However, Medhatithi believed that if a man was proven guilty of reselling an item that had previously been sold; he should get the correct punishment.

The rightful owner sold the item in a public setting. According to Medhatithi, commercial products bought in the open market in front of witnesses gave the purchasers full ownership. However, if a buyer purchased an item at an unusual hour, privately, or for less than the scheduled price, he was deemed a thief. The buyer was not penalized if the vendor was unable to produce the price because he had left the country. However, Medhatithi asserts that the purchaser will be held accountable for the seller's bad behavior. He claims that if the buyer points out the seller of the stolen item, the seller should be released. In that situation, the vendor would be held liable for any losses. A fifth of the sale price of the stolen or lost item was punished if the owner failed to demonstrate his ownership of the item. According to Medhatithi, a man was a thief if he sold something to which he was not legally entitled without the owner's permission. He would have to pay a fine of 600 Panns if he had a close relationship with the owner.

Traders occasionally used unethical tactics to increase their earnings, such as adulterating products, hoarding, and controlling the market. For this reason, provisions were developed to punish them. When commenting on Monu, Medhatithi says that anything combined with the other should not be sold at the merit of its original purity, nor should it be a bad thing as good as any items like gems, hide, yarn, cloth, iron, and wood were given such shape and lustre as to nearly be superior to the real one the seller was to since eight times more than the actual prices of the conditions.

The checking of weights and measures after six months is mentioned by Medhatithi in his commentary on Manu. Tradespeople who were found to have used weights and measures that fell below the established norm were also disciplined. The penalties were 200 Panas if the abstraction covered an eighth portion of the product. Similarly, depending on the situation, a higher or smaller proportion would lessen or increase the punishment. If an item was discovered to be lighter, or if the customer had performed the weight measurement and the item was determined to be below one pana, the seller was penalized 50 panas, 100 panas, and so on. However, Medhatithi said that it was prohibited to sell less than the allowed amount. The king was known to seize the tradesman's entire estate if he attempted to export the outlawed goods.

K.T. Shah was correct to note that the usefulness of goods to a man varied depending on the setting and the period. Sukra contends that an item without utility cannot have a value.

The fair price system appears to have been implemented by the State because of the dishonest business practices of the tradespeople about prices and quality. As a result, Medhatithi states in his commentary on Manu that the king should establish the pricing of all marketable items following thorough verification. He continues by saying that the King need to adjust the prices of marketable commodities after a short while, protecting both buyers and sellers from financial loss. The biggest fine was imposed if a trader set his product's price higher or lower than what the State determined. Likewise, the heaviest fines were imposed on merchants who attempted to hinder the sale of goods by buying or selling them at inflated rates.

Merchants have occasionally sold goods without paying state taxes. It is required by Medhatithi that any misleading information provided by merchants about state obligations result in fines that are eight times the amount of the state duties.

4.10 TRADE ROUTES AND MEANS

One of the key elements of trade and industry, transportation can be divided into three categories: land, water, and air. Only land and marine transportation were known throughout the time under investigation. Bullock-carts³⁷³, back-animals such as bullocks, buffaloes, horses, donkeys, zebras, and camels, among others, were employed as modes of transportation, while ships and boats were used for water routes.³⁷⁴ Additionally, human labor was used to transport goods across small distances.³⁷⁵ The cart, in Sukra's opinion, is one of the best modes of transportation because it can be used all year round but not during the wet season. The bullocks should have the physical capacity to carry things. He claims that the camel, which stands 9 minutes tall and can carry a burden for 30 yojans, possesses the best features. Buffalos and camels cost 5.25Rs. to transport, whereas commercial items loaded on a boat cost 12Rs. 2.5 Rs for a bullock, 1.5 Rs for an ass, plus taxes.

To control the traffic Medhatithi in his Commentary on Manu writes" when the nose string is snapped, yoke is broken, the carriage turns sideways or back, the axle or a wheel is broken, the leather thongs, the rope around the neck or the bridle are broken, and when the driver has loudly called out Make way, if a carriage driver following these rules injures the travelers he will not be punished. If the cart turns off on account of unskilled driver causing damages worth 200 Panas, the owner of the carriage shall be punished. The skilled and negligent driver shall also be punished. In case of unskilled drivers causing injuries to passersby the persons sitting in the cart shall be fined one hundred "as each. The cart should naturally be stored if animals or another carriage are temporarily blocking the path. The driver will be penalized if the yoked-in oxen escape his control, killing any cattle in the process.

4.10.1 Land Routes

Foreign travelers' accounts provide sufficient details about the land routes that were in use during the time under consideration. Numerous Janapadas, including Swata,

Taxila, Kashmira, Takka, Jalandhara, Mathura, Thaneshwar, Matiura, Ahichchhatra, Kanauj, Ayodhya, Prayaga, Shravasti, Benaras, Patilaputra, North Bengal, and Tamralipti, were connected by roadways. Kanauj and southern India were connected by a single route, according to Alberuni.³⁷⁶ Another road connected Vari, Ayodhya, Benaras, Gorakhpura, Patna, Mungers, and Bhagalpura with Mathura by way of Aligarh, Rajasthan, Bharukachchha, and Surparaka. This route ended at Ganganagara. Indian trade must have continued along these routes with all regions of India.

Land routes³⁷⁷ were filled with robbers, just like former times. Because of the muddy roads, the travelers occasionally got lost and even slipped.

The reports of Hiuen Tsang demonstrate the existence of a land route connecting India and China, but regrettably, there is no proof that this route was also used for trade.

4.10.2 Routes by Sea

In the seventh century A.D., Sea routes started from various ports which were in Gujarat, Malabar, Tamraparni, Choladesh, Dravidian country, Andhra, Kalinga, and the Sea coast. Tamralipti was the main port in Bengal.

During the time of Harsha, travellers and traders used to reach China via Sumatradweep. Chinese traveller It-sing also followed the same route.

Some time before the Harsha's accession to the throne (603 A.D.), 5000 indians had gone to Yavadweep.

Banabhatta named India, Lanka, Nicobar, Andaman, Keda, Sumatra, Java, Borneo, Philippines, Malaya, Combodia, Bali, etc. as 15 such places which were the centres of trade at that time.

4.11 SUMMARY

In the 7th century AD, Northern India's economy, heavily influenced by the Gupta era, demonstrated remarkable stability and prosperity. The foundation of this economic structure was deeply rooted in the systems established during the Gupta period, characterized by wealth and flourishing trade. Cities were vibrant commercial centers, and the society's economic life revolved around well-organized guilds or associations of artisans and traders, which played a crucial role in industrial activities. The state,

benefiting from a robust economy, derived its revenues through various channels, including trade, land taxes, and investments in public welfare and infrastructure. This period also witnessed a comprehensive system of land ownership and tenure, where the state and individuals shared vested interests. The concept of land ownership underwent significant evolution, with legal possession requiring clear title proof. Property transfers were meticulously documented, often on stone slabs or copper plates, ensuring legal validity. The economy was further strengthened by a well-defined agricultural sector, with systematic categorization of land types and cultivation practices, and an intricate system of land tenure, reflecting a blend of state control and private ownership.

The economic narrative of 7th century Northern India is also marked by detailed accounts of various land types, their categorization, and the prevalent land tenure systems. Land was categorized into cultivable, wasteland, pasture-land, and more, each with specific terms in contemporary inscriptions, reflecting a nuanced understanding of land use. The economic significance of land is further highlighted by discussions on different land tenure systems, revealing a complex interaction of state policies, private ownership, and communal rights. The period was characterized by a keen understanding of agricultural practices, with specific references to irrigation, seed collection, and cultivation techniques. The use of ploughs and the classification of soils tailored for specific crops underline a sophisticated agricultural system.

REFERENCES

-
- ²²³ Waters, T., (1904-05). On Hunsang Travels in India, London, and Vol. I, pp. 176.
- ²²⁴ Beale, S., (1906). Buddhist of the Western World, London, Volume II, pp. 19
- ²²⁵ Vinogradoff's, (1922). Jurisprudence, vol.1, (Oxford), pp. 324-325.
- ²²⁶ Yajnavalkya, pp.228; Mandalika (Hindu Law Mayukh) "Proof of a thing lost or stolen must be produced by the owners by evidence of title or by possession, otherwise on failure of proof he should pay the king a fine equal to a fifth part" and II 27-30; Narada I, 84-85; Brihaspati, VII, 24-25.
- ²²⁷ Medhatithi on Manu VIII, 197, The Mitakshara, II, 28.
- ²²⁸ Rapson, E.J., (Ed.). (1922). Cambridge History of India, Vol.-I, Cambridge, pp.475.
- ²²⁹ Pandey B.P., (1964). The Economic conditions of Northern India (C.550 AD to 950AD) Unpublished PhDThesis, Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture & Archaeology, University of Saugar, pp. 15.
- ²³⁰ Epigraphia Indica, XIV, pp.328
- ²³¹ Epigraphia Indica, XVII, pp.348
- ²³² Indian Antiquary, (1910). Vol. 34, pp. 205.
- ²³³ Epigraphia Indica, Vol.XV, pp.130, 136, 143 & Vol. XXI, pp. 81-82.
- ²³⁴ Indian Antiquary, Vol.VIII, pp.14.
- ²³⁵ Pandey B.P., (Op. Cit.) pp.16.
- ²³⁶ Ibidpp.16.
- ²³⁷ Ibid,
- ²³⁸ Ibid.
- ²³⁹ Ibid.
- ²⁴⁰ Ibid, pp.17.
- ²⁴¹ Maity, S.K., (1957). Economic life of northern India, c.300-550AD., Calcutta, pp. 25.
- ²⁴² Epigraphia Indica, XI, pp. 84.
- ²⁴³ Epigraphia Indica, XI, pp. 5.
- ²⁴⁴ Epigraphia Indica, IV, pp. 252.
- ²⁴⁵ Epigraphia Indica, IV, pp. 221.
- ²⁴⁶ Sastry Shayma, (1956). Arthasastra, II, (Ed.). Mysore, pp. 48-49.
- ²⁴⁷ Epigraphia Indica, XIX, pp. 121.
- ²⁴⁸ Sastry Sharma, (Opp. Cit.). pp. 48-49

-
- ²⁴⁹ Fleet, J.F., (1888). *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Calcutta, Vol. 3, pp. 138.
- ²⁵⁰ J.R.A.S., 1931 pp. 165.
- ²⁵¹ Ghoshal, U. N., (1929). *Hindu revenue system*, Calcutta, pp. 212.
- ²⁵² *Indian Antiquary*, Vol.I. pp. 46, E.I., XI, pp.177.
- ²⁵³ Vijnasvara, Mitakshara. Ch. IX, verse 210 (Translated by Rai Bahadur, Indian Press, 1918) pp.298.
- ²⁵⁴ *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. 34, pp.252.
- ²⁵⁵ *Epigraphia Indica*, XV, pp. 130-131.
- ²⁵⁶ *Epigraphia Indica*, XV, pp.81.
- ²⁵⁷ Hemachandra(1920).*Abhidhana chintamani*, III, Baroda, 533-537.
- ²⁵⁸ Shayma Sastry (Op. Cit.). pp.61.
- ²⁵⁹ *Indian Antiquary*., 1918, pp.51.
- ²⁶⁰ *Epigraphia Indica*, XV, no. 7, pp.131.
- ²⁶¹ Hemchandra, (Op. Cit.). pp. 533-537.
- ²⁶² *Epigraphia Indica*, XV. pp. 131.
- ²⁶³ *Epigraphia Indica*, IX, pp.287.
- ²⁶⁴ *Indian Antiquary*., (1918).pp.51.
- ²⁶⁵ Maity, S.K., (Op. Cit.).pp.28.
- ²⁶⁶ *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. I, pp.178.
- ²⁶⁷ *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol.I, pp.165.
- ²⁶⁸ *Epigraphia Indica*, XVIII, pp.63.
- ²⁶⁹ Maity, S.K., (Op. Cit.). pp. 28.
- ²⁷⁰ *Epigraphia Indica*, XV, pp.143.
- ²⁷¹ *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XV, pp.143.
- ²⁷² Sircar, *Select inscriptions*, Vol.I, pp. 284.
- ²⁷³ Pandey.B.P. (Op. Cit.).pp. 24.
- ²⁷⁴ Maity, S.K., (Op. Cit.).pp. 36.
- ²⁷⁵ *Epigraphia Indica*, XIX, pp. 72; *Epigraphia Indica*, IX, pp. 298.
- ²⁷⁶ Sukraniti, pp. 17 (Hindi Version, Bombay).*Epigraphia Indica*, XV, pp. 103.
- ²⁷⁷ *Epigraphia Indica*, XI, No. 5, pp.83.
- ²⁷⁸ *Epigraphia Indica*, III, no. 8, pp. 74.
- ²⁷⁹ *Kautilya Arthasastra*, B.K. III. Ch. IX, pp. 190-191.
- ²⁸⁰ *Indian Antiquary*, (1910). Vol-XXXIX, pp. 205.
- ²⁸¹ *Epigraphia Indica*, XIX, pp. 58-62.
- ²⁸² *Epigraphia Indica*, XIX, pp. 60.

-
- ²⁸³ Agarwal, Babita, (2009) Economy of Ancient India, Jaipur, pp. 208.
- ²⁸⁴ Epigraphica Indica 21 to 15, pp. 307 (Tierra Tamrapatra)
- ²⁸⁵ Fleet, J.F, (Op. Cit.). p. 24.
- ²⁸⁶ Goyal, Shriram, (1993). Harsha and his Era, Jodhpur, pp. 336.
- ²⁸⁷ Ibid.
- ²⁸⁸ Mishra, Indumati.,(1950), Cultural Tradition of India, Ganeshganj, Lucknow, pp.1
- ²⁸⁹ Ramayana Ayodhya Kanda 100/47 (Translated VachspatiChaturbedi, published, Ram Narayan Jal, Allahabad Samvat 2006).pp. 970.
- ²⁹⁰ Pandey B.P., (Op. Cit.).pp. 68.
- ²⁹¹ KamandakiyaNitisara, 2, Sloka, 20.4 (Translated Jawala Prasad Mishra, Bombay). pp. 19- 22.
- ²⁹² Epigraphia Indica, Vol.-I, pp. 159.
- ²⁹³ Epigraphia Indica, Vol.-I, pp. 263.
- ²⁹⁴ Arthasastra II, (Mysore, 1951).pp. 127.
- ²⁹⁵ Pandey B.P., 9 (Op. Cit.), pp. 71.
- ²⁹⁶ Sukraniti IV, pp. 260-61.
- ²⁹⁷ Maity, S.K., (Op. Cit.).pp. 60.
- ²⁹⁸ Varahamihira: Brihatasamhita, VIII, pp.90-92.
- ²⁹⁹ Maity, S.K., (Op. Cit.).pp.29.
- ³⁰⁰ Pandey B.P., (Op. Cit.).pp. 75.
- ³⁰¹ Ibid.
- ³⁰² Ibid.
- ³⁰³ Ibid.
- ³⁰⁴ Ibid, pp. 76.
- ³⁰⁵ Harshcharita, Ch-III, pp. 79.
- ³⁰⁶ Pandey B.P., (Op. Cit.), pp. 76.
- ³⁰⁷ Sukraniti, (Edit by Mihirachandra).pp. 538.
- ³⁰⁸ Harshacharita, pp. 79.
- ³⁰⁹ Pandey B.P., (Op. Cit.). pp. 77.
- ³¹⁰ Ibid.
- ³¹¹ Bana Harshcharita Ch. III, pp.70.
- ³¹² Yuan Chwang Ch-III, pp. 178; Mtaksarra, Ch-VI, pp.250; Harshacharita VII, pp.233.
- ³¹³ Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society. (1870).pp.341.
- ³¹⁴ Yuan Chwang II. pp.178, Harshacharita ,VII pp.229,Medhatithi on Manu VIII, pp. 328.

-
- ³¹⁵ Kalhan's, Rajatarangni, (Edit by Ramateja Sastri, Kashi 1960) pp.1206-07.
- ³¹⁶ Kalhan's Rajatarangni , pp.131.
- ³¹⁷ Ibid.
- ³¹⁸ Ibid
- ³¹⁹ Fleet, J.F., (Op. Cit.).pp.165.
- ³²⁰ Kalhan's Rajatarangni,(Translated by Ramateja Sastri, Kashi, 1960) pp. 131-132.
- ³²¹ Epigraphia Indica, Vol-XIV, pp.186.
- ³²² Sukraniti, pp. 107.
- ³²³ Kalhan's Rajatarangni IV, (Translated by Ramateja Sastri, Kashi, 1960) pp.89.
- ³²⁴ Agrawala, V.S., (1953), Ed. Harshacharita Ek Sanskritic Adhyayan, Patna, pp.55.
- ³²⁵ Bana, Harshacharita, pp. 228-29.
- ³²⁶ Agrawala, V.S., (Op. Cit.). pp. 382-391.
- ³²⁷ Bana Harshacharita, pp.228-29
- ³²⁸ Medhatithi on Manu IX 328, pp. 235.
- ³²⁹ Manusmriti with Bashya of Medhatiithi IX,pp. 235.
- ³³⁰ Mitaksara I. Ch-XIII, pp. 403.
- ³³¹ Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society (J.B.O.R.S), Vol. XII Part II PP. 137.
- ³³² Medhatithi on Manu IV. pp. 188.
- ³³³ Medhatithi on Manu, V., PP. 22.
- ³³⁴ Watters, Yuan Chwang Part I, pp. 178, part II, pp. 25-28 (Royal Asiatic Society, 1904, London.)
- ³³⁵ Maity, S.K., (Op. Cit.). pp., 20-28.
- ³³⁶ Agarwal, Babita. (2009). Economy of Ancient India, Jaipur, pp. 153.
- ³³⁷ Chatterjee, Gauri Shankar, (1950) Harsh Vardhan, Allahabad, pp. 323.
- ³³⁸ Goyal, Shriram, (1986).Harshshiladitya, KusumajaliPrakashan, Meerut, pp. 23.
- ³³⁹ Mazumdar, R.C.,(1962),Ancient India, Classical Age, Bombay, pp. 238.
- ³⁴⁰ Harshcharit, pp. 245.
- ³⁴¹ Mazumdar, R.C., (Op. Cit.). pp. 588.
- ³⁴² Chatterjee, Gaurishankar, (1950). Harsh Vardhan, Allahabad, pp. 314.
- ³⁴³ Goyal, Shriram, (Op. Cit.).pp. 317.
- ³⁴⁴ Harshcharit, pp. 182.
- ³⁴⁵ Benjamin, B. N., (Op. Cit.).pp. 177.
- ³⁴⁶ Waters, T., (Op. Cit.).pp. 314.
- ³⁴⁷ Ibid,pp. 315.

-
- ³⁴⁸ India's Description of Itsing, translated by Takakusu, pp. 31.
- ³⁴⁹ Epigraphia Indica, Vol. 2, pp. 345.
- ³⁵⁰ Mishra, Indumati.(1950). Cultural Traditions of India, Ganeshganj, Lucknow, pp. 195.
- ³⁵¹ Epigraphica Indica, Vol.15, pp.133.
- ³⁵² Chatterjee, Gaurishankar,(1950) Harsh Vardhan, Allahabad, pp. 325.
- ³⁵³ Babita Agarwal,(2009). Economy of Ancient India, Jaipur,pp. 211.
- ³⁵⁴ Motichandra, (Edition 1996),Sarthavaha, pp. 199, 205, 207, 211.
- ³⁵⁵ Pandey, Vinod Chandra, Post Gupta India, pp. 36.
- ³⁵⁶ Waters, T., (Op. Cit.),pp. 176.
- ³⁵⁷ Ibid.
- ³⁵⁸ Gopal Lalanji, (1989). The Economic Life of Northern India, Delhi,pp. 48.
- ³⁵⁹ Chatterjee, Gaurishankar, (Op. Cit.), pp. 325.
- ³⁶⁰ Ojha, Shri Krishna, (2011). Ancient India, Jaipur,pp. 312.
- ³⁶¹ J. R. A. S., 1906, pp. 843.
- ³⁶² Kadambari, pp. 89.
- ³⁶³ Kadambari, pp. 89.
- ³⁶⁴ Waters, T., (Op. Cit.),pp. 314.
- ³⁶⁵ Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XIX, II, pp.49.
- ³⁶⁶ Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XIX, pp. 50, Epigraphia Indica, XXIV, pp. 298, 303.
- ³⁶⁷ V.S. Agrawala, (1953). India as known to Panini,Allahabad, pp. 239.
- ³⁶⁸ Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XXIV, pp. 332
- ³⁶⁹ Epigraphia Indica, Vol-I, pp. 159.
- ³⁷⁰ Epigraphia Indica, Vol. I, pp. 161.
- ³⁷¹ Epigraphia Indica, Vol. XIX, pp. 58.
- ³⁷² Epigraphia Indica, Vol. I. pp. 187.
- ³⁷³ Sukraniti, IV, pp. 167 (Mihirachandra, Bombay)
- ³⁷⁴ Harshacharita by Bana, pp. 273.
- ³⁷⁵ Hari bhadra Suri, (1908), Samaraicchkaha, pp. 264.
- ³⁷⁶ Royal Asiatic Society, 1904, London,ppp.25-28
- ³⁷⁷ Maity, S.K.,(1957), Economic life of northern India, c.300-550AD., Calcutta, pp., 20-30.

CHAPTER-5

CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The current chapter offers an in-depth summary and analysis of the significant discoveries made in our study, focusing on the 7th century AD. This period is characterized by a rich tapestry of social and religious practices that were deeply embedded in the daily lives of individuals and families, shaping their experiences and interactions. During the 7th century AD, society was not merely a collection of individuals living together; it was a complex network of relationships and practices, deeply influenced by religious beliefs and social customs. These practices were not isolated aspects of life but were intertwined with every facet of daily existence, from birth to death, influencing education, marriage, occupation, and even governance. Religious practices of this era were not confined to the realm of personal belief or ritualistic worship alone. They extended into the social sphere, influencing laws, ethical norms, and community interactions. Temples and religious institutions often served as centres for social gatherings, education, and cultural activities, thereby becoming integral to community life. Similarly, social customs and norms were often underpinned by religious doctrines, guiding behaviour and societal roles. The caste system, a defining feature of this period, was deeply rooted in religious ideologies, dictating occupational roles, social status, and even personal relationships. Family life, too, was heavily influenced by these social and religious practices. Family structures, inheritance laws, and the roles of different family members were all shaped by the prevailing religious and social norms. Rituals and ceremonies marked important life events, reinforcing the bond between the social, familial, and religious spheres.

5.2 FINDINGS AS PER OBJECTIVES

1 The study aims to highlights the main features of society, caste system, marriage system, Varna system, customs & religious faiths etc.

The 7th century in Northern India marks a period of profound socio-religious transformation, characterized by a complex and dynamic interplay of societal structures, religious practices, and cultural norms. The era, deeply rooted in the Varna

system, showcased a society stratified into Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Sudras, each with distinct roles and societal expectations. The Brahmins, positioned at the apex of the hierarchy, were revered for their roles in religious and educational realms. Their influence extended beyond spiritual guidance, encompassing the spheres of ethics and learning. However, their economic status was not uniform, ranging from affluent Brahmins involved in teaching and religious duties to those who engaged in agriculture and trade, often navigating the restrictions placed upon their economic activities by religious edicts.

The Kshatriyas, traditionally warriors and rulers, experienced a surge in their societal role during this period. Their growing political and martial prowess was not merely a reflection of their traditional duties but also an indication of the evolving power dynamics within the Varna system. This era saw the Kshatriyas gaining prominence, challenging the previously unchallenged spiritual dominance of the Brahmins. In contrast, the Vaishyas, primarily associated with trade and agriculture, were undergoing a transition, increasingly focusing on commerce, indicative of the changing economic landscape of the period. This shift highlights the fluidity within the Varna system, where traditional roles were being redefined in response to socio-economic changes. The Sudras, who occupied the lowest tier of the societal structure, were primarily engaged in serving the higher castes. However, this period marked a significant change in their role, with a greater involvement in agriculture, often filling the void left by the Vaishyas' shift towards commerce.

The marriage system of the time was deeply entrenched in the Varna hierarchy, governed by the principles of anuloma and pratiloma. The prevalence of inter-caste marriages, particularly involving higher castes and Sudras, led to the formation of new social groups and mixed communities. This phenomenon not only reflects the social dynamics of the time but also the gradual blurring of rigid caste boundaries, paving the way for a more integrated society.

The customs and practices of this period were a rich tapestry of religious rituals, cultural norms, and daily life activities. Notable among these was the practice of Sati, which, though limited to certain communities, was a significant aspect of the societal customs. The dressing styles, dietary habits, and ornamentation reflected the cultural

richness and diversity of the society. Traditional attire like dhotis and saris, the use of various ornaments, and regional dietary preferences showcased a society deeply rooted in its cultural heritage yet open to embracing new influences.

Religion played a pivotal role in shaping the societal fabric of the time. Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism coexisted, with Hinduism being the predominant faith. Within Hinduism, Saivism and Vaishnavism emerged as major sects, alongside the worship of the Sun God and Goddess Durga. Buddhism, though in decline, was represented by various sects and monastic institutions. Jainism, despite being overshadowed by the more dominant Hinduism and Buddhism, maintained a presence. This religious pluralism was indicative of a society that was tolerant and inclusive, allowing diverse faiths to coexist and influence each other.

In summary, the 7th century in Northern India was a period marked by significant socio-religious changes. The era was characterized by a blend of traditional values and evolving new practices. The caste system, though rigid, was undergoing changes with the emergence of new social groups and the shifting of traditional occupational roles. The coexistence and integration of various religious practices indicated a society in transition, balancing age-old traditions with new influences. This period set the stage for further societal and religious developments in Indian history, reflecting a society that was complex, dynamic, and in a constant state of flux.

2. The aims of the study are to know about the economic conditions of the northern India in proposed period as agricultural, guilds, trades, coins, tax system etc.

The comprehensive study of the 7th-century economic conditions in Northern India, as per the second objective, reveals multifaceted findings that highlight the complexity and sophistication of the economic structures during this period. These findings are categorized into various key areas such as agriculture, guilds, trade, coinage, and taxation systems.

1. **Agricultural Sector:** Agriculture was the backbone of the economy in 7th-century Northern India. The era saw a diverse classification of land, tailored for specific agricultural purposes. These included cultivable lands, pastures, fallow lands, and

specialized fields for specific crops like rice, wheat, and sugar cane. The irrigation practices were advanced, with the construction of reservoirs and utilization of water pumps for irrigation, indicating a high level of agricultural knowledge and technology. The production of various crops was region-specific, influenced by the geographical and climatic conditions. The mention of sophisticated agricultural tools and methods, such as different types of ploughs and seed treatment techniques, reflect a highly developed agrarian system.

2. **Guilds and Economic Organizations:** Guilds (Srenis) played a pivotal role in the economic structure, functioning as centers for artisans and traders. These guilds were not only trade-centric but also played a role in social organization and local governance. They operated with a certain degree of autonomy, having their own administrative systems and judicial authority over internal matters. These guilds regulated quality, price, and fair-trade practices, contributing significantly to the stability and growth of the economy.
3. **Trade and Commerce:** Both domestic and international trade flourished during this period, with Northern India being a hub of commercial activity. Trade routes, both land and maritime, were well-established, connecting various regions within the Indian subcontinent and extending to foreign lands like Central Asia and the Middle East. The thriving trade is evident from the variety of goods exchanged, including spices, textiles, metals, and precious stones. Trade guilds and marketplaces played crucial roles in facilitating these commercial activities.
4. **Coinage and Monetary System:** The period saw a continuation and evolution of coinage from the Gupta era. Silver coins were predominant in daily transactions, while gold coins, though less in circulation, were still valued for larger transactions and as a measure of wealth. The coinage system of this period indicates not only the economic prosperity but also the administrative sophistication in minting and regulating currency.
5. **Taxation System:** The taxation system was well-structured, with various forms of taxes contributing to the state treasury. Land tax (Bhaga) was a major source of revenue, alongside taxes on trade, customs duties, and specific taxes on commodities. The tax system was intricately linked to land tenure and agricultural

output, reflecting a deep understanding of economic management. The state's active role in tax collection and management underlines the centralized nature of governance during this period.

6. **Land Ownership System:** Land ownership was a complex mix of private, communal, and state control. The system of land grants, particularly to religious institutions and high-ranking officials, played a significant role in the socio-economic fabric. The concept of private ownership was also prevalent, with land being a crucial asset for wealth generation and social status.

In conclusion, the economic conditions of Northern India in the 7th century were marked by a combination of continuity from the Gupta era and innovations specific to the period. The economy was characterized by a strong agricultural base, sophisticated guild systems, vibrant trade (both domestic and international), a stable coinage system, and an efficient taxation mechanism. These aspects collectively contributed to the economic stability and prosperity of Northern India during this period.

3. To study the development of and strengthening of village culture and localism and their impact of society and economy of the proposed period.

The study of the development and strengthening of village culture and localism during the 7th century in Northern India, particularly in relation to its impact on society and economy, reveals a complex and multifaceted picture. This period, which followed the Gupta era, saw the emergence of a distinct village-based culture that significantly influenced the social and economic fabrics of the time.

Village culture in Northern India during this period was characterized by a strong sense of community and self-sufficiency. Villages were not just mere settlements; they were self-contained units that managed their own affairs. Each village had its own governance systems, often guided by a council of elders or local leaders, which made decisions on matters ranging from agricultural practices to local disputes. This system of local governance played a crucial role in maintaining social order and addressing the immediate needs of the villagers.

The agrarian economy was the cornerstone of village life. Agriculture was the primary occupation and most of the population was engaged in farming and related activities.

The village economy was predominantly subsistence-based, with a focus on meeting the local needs. Crop diversity was significant, driven by regional climatic conditions and soil types, leading to a variety of agricultural produce. This period also saw advancements in agricultural techniques and irrigation, which boosted agricultural productivity and, by extension, the local economy.

The concept of localism was evident in the strong community bonds within villages. Social structures were closely knit, with families often working together in farming and sharing resources. The village markets (haats) played a crucial role in the local economy, serving as centers for the exchange of goods and services. These markets were not just commercial hubs but also social spaces where information was exchanged and community bonds were reinforced.

The impact of this strong village culture and localism on the broader society and economy was significant. On one hand, it promoted economic self-reliance and sustainability at the local level. Villages were able to produce most of what they needed, reducing dependency on external sources. This self-sufficiency was a stabilizing factor, especially in times of political instability or external invasions, which were not uncommon in this era.

On the other hand, the emphasis on localism had certain limitations. While it fostered strong community ties and a sense of identity, it also had the potential to limit interactions with the broader world. This could lead to a certain degree of isolationism, where villages became inward-looking, potentially hindering wider economic and cultural exchanges.

Furthermore, the strong local governance structures sometimes came into conflict with the central authorities. While villages enjoyed a degree of autonomy, they were still subject to state control, particularly in matters of taxation and law enforcement. This could lead to tensions between local leaders and central authorities, impacting the social and political dynamics of the time.

In summary, the development and strengthening of village culture and localism during the 7th century in Northern India had a profound impact on society and the economy. While it promoted economic self-sufficiency and strong community bonds at the local

level, it also presented challenges in terms of potential isolationism and conflicts with central authorities. The village culture of this period laid the foundations for the rural social and economic structures that would continue to influence Indian society for centuries to come.

4. The aim of the study is to know about the changing in socio economic life of people in that period.

The socio-economic life of people in Northern India during the 7th century AD underwent significant changes, reflecting a dynamic period in the region's history. This era, post-Gupta and during the reign of Harsha among others, was marked by transitions that influenced various aspects of daily life, social structures, economic activities, and cultural practices.

1. Socio-Economic Structure: The social structure during this period was complex and hierarchical, deeply influenced by the Varna system, which divided society into distinct classes. However, there were noticeable shifts in this rigid structure, primarily due to the rise of new economic activities and professions. The traditional dominance of the Brahmins and Kshatriyas continued, but there was a significant rise in the status and economic power of the Vaishyas (traders and merchants) due to the flourishing trade. Similarly, the Shudras, who were primarily involved in service and labor, also found new opportunities, especially in the growing urban centers.

The socio-economic landscape was further diversified with the emergence of guilds and associations, particularly among artisans and traders. These guilds, known as 'Shrenis', not only regulated trade practices but also provided a social network for their members, contributing to a unique blend of social and economic functions.

2. Agricultural Advancements: Agriculture remained the backbone of the economy, with innovations in farming techniques and irrigation contributing to increased productivity. The agrarian economy was supported by a well-developed system of land grants and revenue collection. The concept of private land ownership coexisted with state-owned lands, leading to a diverse array of

cultivation practices. This period also witnessed the cultivation of a variety of crops, tailored to the regional climate and soil types.

- 3 Urbanization and Trade:** There was a significant trend towards urbanization, with cities like Kannauj, Ujjain, and Varanasi emerging as major urban centers. These cities were not only political hubs but also centers of trade and culture. The Silk Route and other trade networks connected Northern India with distant lands, leading to an influx of goods, ideas, and cultural practices. This external connection brought wealth and also led to a cosmopolitan culture in urban areas.
- 4. Cultural and Religious Impact:** The socio-economic life of the period was deeply influenced by religion and culture. Buddhism and Hinduism were the predominant religions, with their teachings impacting daily life, social norms, and even economic activities. The construction of temples and stupas, patronage of monasteries, and religious gatherings were not only spiritual endeavors but also contributed to the economy by generating employment and trade opportunities.
- 5. Condition of Women and Lower Classes:** While the period was marked by economic prosperity and cultural achievements, it was also a time when the condition of women and lower classes saw little improvement. Women's roles were largely confined to domestic spheres, and their participation in public life was limited. The lower classes, despite benefiting from economic opportunities, continued to face social restrictions and limited access to resources.
- 6. Education and Learning:** The period was also notable for its contributions to education and learning. Institutions like Nalanda were centers of higher learning, attracting students from various parts of the world. Education, however, was still a privilege of the upper classes, with limited access for the lower strata of society.

In conclusion, the socio-economic life of people in Northern India during the 7th century AD was marked by significant changes. While it was a period of economic growth, urban development, and cultural exchanges, it also had its complexities, including a rigid social structure and disparities. The era laid the groundwork for future developments in Indian society, influencing its trajectory for centuries to come.

5.3 CONCLUSION

The 7th century AD witnessed a seamless integration of social and religious practices, each reinforcing and shaping the other. This chapter aims to unravel these complex interrelations, providing a holistic understanding of how these practices influenced the well-being of individuals and the societal structure. Through this exploration, we gain valuable insights into the cultural, religious, and social dynamics of this significant historical period.

These practices were not merely ritualistic but were deeply embedded in the daily lives of people, reflecting their beliefs, values, and aspirations. They served to foster community cohesion, ensure social order, and provide spiritual guidance. One notable aspect of these practices was their role in strengthening family bonds. Families were the cornerstone of society, and these rituals and customs played a crucial role in maintaining harmony and stability within the family unit. They were also instrumental in instilling a sense of belonging and identity among family members. Moreover, these practices had a profound impact on individual well-being. They provided a framework for personal and spiritual development, offering guidance on ethical living and moral decision-making. This period saw a harmonious blend of the spiritual and the mundane, where everyday activities were imbued with religious significance, thereby enriching the lives of individuals and the community.

In ancient India, two predominant types of social and religious practices were commonly observed by the people: "Samskarn" and "Vratas." These rituals were deeply intertwined with the worship of various manifestations or forms of Shiva, a practice that was widespread in different regions of the country during this period. The "Samskarn" rituals were often elaborate and involved several rites of passage. These rites were integral to the social fabric, marking significant life events such as birth, initiation, marriage, and death. Each rite was meticulously performed, adhering to ancient Vedic traditions, and was believed to purify and prepare individuals for the next stage of their life.

On the other hand, "Vratas" were more focused on personal devotion and worship. A key aspect of these rituals was the creation and worship of the Shiva-Linga, a symbolic representation of Lord Shiva. Notably, the Shiva-Linga was typically crafted

by the devotee themselves, adding a deeply personal and intimate dimension to the worship. For instance, in the Harsh-charita, it is mentioned that Saraswati would fashion a Linga of Shiva from sand and perform her worship on the banks of the river Sona. Similarly, the Vidyadhara, as described by BanaBhatta in his literary work "Kadambari," followed a comparable practice, worshipping Lord Shiva with offerings of lotus flowers. These practices highlight the diversity and depth of religious expression in ancient India. The personal involvement in creating the Shiva-Linga and the choice of natural elements like sand and lotus in these rituals reflect a profound connection between the devotees, their environment, and their deity. This connection transcends mere ritualistic practice, illustrating a holistic approach to spirituality where nature, human action, and divine worship are intricately interwoven.

In the 7th century AD, the worship of Lord Shiva held paramount importance in North India, as evidenced by the prevalent religious customs of the time. A key ritual in the veneration of Shiva, as detailed in historical texts, involved the ceremonial bathing of the deity's image in milk. This practice was not only symbolic but also deeply rooted in the spiritual traditions of the era. Both the renowned scholar BanaBhatta and King Prabhakar Vardhana are noted for their adherence to this ritual. They would ceremoniously bathe the Shiva Linga, a representation of Lord Shiva, in milk. This act was more than a mere ritualistic practice; it symbolized purification and an offering of reverence and devotion to the deity. The use of milk, a substance considered pure and nourishing in Hindu mythology, further underscored the sanctity of the ritual. The widespread practice of this milk ablution ritual among prominent figures like Banabhatta and King Prabhakar Vardhana is indicative of Lord Shiva's esteemed status during this period. It reflects the deep spiritual connection the people of North India had with Shiva, venerating him not just as a deity but as a pivotal part of their cultural and religious identity.

During this era, Indian society was intricately divided into numerous castes and clans, leading to a rigid social structure. This stratification deeply influenced the socio-religious life of the people. In the realm of Hindu worship, a multitude of deities were revered, with major emphasis on gods like Shiva and Vishnu (in his Vaisnava form). Additionally, a significant portion of society was devoted to the worship of Shakti,

highlighting the diversity in religious beliefs and practices. Apart from Hinduism, religions such as Buddhism and Jainism also played a crucial role in shaping the spiritual landscape. Both Buddhism and Jainism, much like Hinduism, were not monolithic; they too had various sects and sub-traditions within them. These subsets often had distinct philosophical and ritualistic differences, reflecting the rich tapestry of religious thought and practice in ancient India. This period was marked not only by religious diversity but also by the coexistence and interaction of these different faiths. While Hinduism, with its pantheon of gods and goddesses, formed the bedrock of religious life for many, the teachings of Buddhism and Jainism attracted followers with their unique doctrines and practices. This coalescence of diverse religious traditions underlines the pluralistic nature of Indian society during this time.

In ancient Indian society, the status of Brahmins was held in high regard. The Brahmana caste was central to the societal structure, deeply rooted in the customs and traditions of the time. This esteemed position of the Brahmins reflected their roles in religious and educational spheres. They were not only at the forefront of social organization but were also dedicated to scholarly pursuits and adhered to a life of self-discipline and asceticism. Apart from Brahmanism, religions like Buddhism and Jainism also enjoyed significant status in society. The narrative of Hiuen Tsang, a renowned Chinese traveller and scholar, sheds light on the prominence of Buddhism during this period. He documented numerous instances showing the influence of Buddhism, particularly highlighting the existence of many monasteries and educational centres. These institutions were bustling with monks and students engaged in learning and religious practices, indicating that Buddhism was at its zenith.

The status of the Jains was also noteworthy. Like the Brahmins and Buddhists, they contributed significantly to the religious and cultural fabric of society. Jainism's emphasis on non-violence and spiritual purity resonated with many, adding another dimension to the diverse religious landscape of ancient India.

Huian Tsang, the noted Chinese traveller and historian, narrates that during his time, the monasteries of Nalanda, Vallabhi, Mahabodhi, Tilada, and Sindh were flourishing. These centres of learning and religious practice were pivotal in the spread and sustenance of Buddhism across the region. However, this period also witnessed a

decline in the influence of Jainism in Northern India. The Gupta period marked a significant shift in religious dynamics. During this era, Brahmanism (an early form of Hinduism) gained predominant status, overshadowing other religious traditions. This ascendancy of Brahmanism was characterized by the patronage of Brahmin scholars and the construction of Hindu temples, which became central to religious and social life. The Guptas, known for their devotion to Hindu gods, particularly Vishnu, played a crucial role in this resurgence of Brahmanism. This shift in religious prominence had a considerable impact on Jainism. The Jain community, which had previously enjoyed a period of growth and influence, began to see a gradual decline in its prominence, especially in the northern regions of India. This change can be attributed to the increasing patronage of Brahmanism by the ruling elite and the corresponding shift in societal preferences.

It is evident that during this period, Hinduism, with its various subsets, and Buddhism were the predominant religions, both experiencing significant growth and influence. However, it is important to note a distinct characteristic of Hinduism at the time: the adherence to rigid ceremonies and practices. Historical records and accounts highlight that Hindu rituals and societal norms were highly structured and formalized. These practices were not only religious in nature but also played a crucial role in maintaining the social order. The caste system, a fundamental aspect of Hindu society, was closely tied to these rituals, reinforcing the hierarchical structure within the community. In contrast, Buddhism, known for its more flexible //and less ritualistic approach, offered an alternative spiritual path. This difference in practice and philosophy between Hinduism and Buddhism is a key aspect of understanding the religious dynamics of the period. While Hinduism emphasized ritual purity and adherence to traditional practices, Buddhism focused more on ethical living and the pursuit of enlightenment through personal insight and meditation. This contrast in religious practices and philosophies between Hinduism and Buddhism reflects the diverse and complex nature of the spiritual landscape during this historical period.

Despite their primary engagement in religious practices, Brahmins in ancient India were also involved in various other occupations such as cultivation, trade, cattle rearing, and money lending. Ancient texts like the Agni Purana and the Garuda Purana

corroborate these activities, particularly highlighting the Brahmins' involvement in agriculture. These texts provide valuable insights into the multifaceted roles of Brahmins beyond their religious duties. During this period, the influence and status of the Brahmins were notably high. However, it was not just their religious roles that contributed to their esteemed position in society. Their involvement in essential economic activities like agriculture and trade also played a significant part in elevating their status. This diversification into various fields indicates the adaptability and resourcefulness of the Brahmins. Moreover, those Brahmins who were dedicated to reciting the Vedas, Puranas, and other religious texts, as well as teaching these ideological doctrines, were held in particularly high regard. Their contribution to preserving and disseminating religious knowledge was invaluable, and they were respected as custodians of spiritual and cultural heritage.

In regions like the Agroha Valley, the presence and deeds of these learned Brahmins had a profound impact. Their involvement in religious practices and education not only reinforced their respected status but also played a crucial role in the cultural and intellectual development of the area. The Brahmins' commitment to both spiritual and secular education was a cornerstone of societal progress during this era.

During the period in question, Agroha villages and their temples were pivotal centres of education. Various religious texts and historical sources attest to this fact, highlighting the significant role these institutions played in the dissemination of knowledge and learning. Additionally, these sources reveal that the Brahman community, despite being a singular caste, was further divided into numerous clans or 'Gotras'. Beyond these clan divisions, Brahmins were also categorized based on regional affiliations, such as Saryupareeya, Kanyakubja, Vaitikala, Maithila, and Gauda Saraswat, among others. This regional differentiation was significant, as it often influenced the customs, rituals, and dialects within the Brahman community. An important aspect of this era was the exemption of Brahmins from paying taxes. This privilege not only reflects their esteemed position in society but also underscores the respect and reverence accorded to them due to their religious and educational roles. The tax exemption for Brahmins was a testament to their influence and the value placed on their contributions to spiritual and intellectual life.

Many Brahman castes or clans were named after the specific rituals they practiced. In mainland charters, Brahmans were often identified by their 'Gotra' (clan lineage) and the name of a male ancestor. Additionally, their identification included the branch of Vedic learning they specialized in, as well as the original home village from which they hailed. This detailed classification underscores the importance of lineage, scholarly tradition, and regional origin in defining the identity of Brahmans. Typically, Brahmans adhered to the principles and guidelines set forth in the Dharma shastras, ancient legal texts that outlined the duties and responsibilities of each caste. Regarding the lower castes, particularly the Shudras, certain groups like the Pala and Chandala were considered untouchables during the period. The contemporary Pali and Jain literature provide essential insights into the societal status of these lower castes in Hindu society. These texts are invaluable for understanding the social dynamics and hierarchies that existed, as they offer perspectives on the lived experiences and societal positions of these groups. The distinction between the highly structured and ritualistic lifestyle of the Brahmans and the marginalized status of certain lower castes such as the Shudras, Palas, and Chandalas reflects the deeply entrenched caste system of the time. This system played a crucial role in shaping the social and religious fabric of ancient Indian society.

The Medas, recognized as a lower caste in ancient Indian society, are described in various contemporary literatures. They were primarily engaged in menial tasks such as removing waste and urine, often living in challenging and impoverished conditions. This depiction in historical texts highlights the stark social stratification and the hardships faced by certain castes. In contrast, many other castes sought to adapt to a settled agrarian lifestyle. This transition was marked by a shift from nomadic or semi-nomadic existence to more stable agricultural communities. However, this change was not without its challenges. The peasants often exploited and burdened by heavy taxes and societal expectations, found themselves in a continuous struggle. They joined the ranks of those practicing severe self-repression, particularly in the context of mental labour and intellectual pursuits.

This societal structure, characterized by a clear demarcation between the different castes and their respective roles and lifestyles, reflects the complexities of the caste

system and its impact on the lives of individuals in ancient India. The contrast between the dire conditions of the Medas and the struggles of the agrarian communities underscores the diverse yet challenging experiences of various social groups during this period.

In my research, I have presented the economic conditions of the people of Northern India, focusing primarily on the 7th century AD. The foundation of this research is built upon a variety of ancient sources. These include literary texts, inscriptions, numismatic evidence such as coins, and Smriti literature. These resources are available across various books and archives, each offering unique insights into the era. There is no doubt that these sources collectively paint a detailed and nuanced picture of the economic conditions during the 7th century AD. They reveal a society that, despite the challenges of historical interpretation, appears to have been complex, evolving, and dynamic. The literary texts provide a narrative understanding of the period, while inscriptions offer concrete historical data. Coins, as tangible artifacts, give us a glimpse into the economic transactions and monetary systems of the time. Smriti literature, with its focus on law and social conduct, offers perspectives on the economic principles and practices of the society. Together, these diverse sources contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the economic landscape of 7th century Northern India. They indicate a period marked by progress and development, shedding light on the intricate economic fabric of the time.

During the aforementioned period, people in certain regions were affluent and prosperous, with cities emerging as centres of wealth and economic activity. However, the concept of property rights during this time was not as clearly defined as it is today. A notable aspect of property ownership was the practice wherein if a person or a family remained in possession of a property for three generations, they were considered the rightful owners of that property. This practice is illuminated by various epigraphic records from the period. These records, often found in inscriptions, shed light on the prevailing norms and legalities surrounding land possession and ownership. They provide valuable insights into how property rights were established and recognized, reflecting the societal and legal frameworks of the time. The epigraphic evidence suggests that the legitimacy of land ownership was often

determined by the duration of possession rather than by initial acquisition. This approach to property rights indicates a unique perspective on ownership, where long-term stewardship and continuity played a crucial role. These records are instrumental in understanding the economic conditions and societal structures of the period, revealing a complex system of property rights that was integral to the prosperity and stability of communities.

Whenever a plot of land was granted or donated during this period, the transaction was meticulously recorded on stone slabs or copper plates. These records were made in the presence of key figures such as the king's servants, neighbors, and village elders, ensuring the legitimacy and transparency of the transaction. The documentation included comprehensive details, often stating that the land should be enjoyed by the donor "as long as the sun and the earth endure," signifying the permanence of the donation. The king, as part of the administrative system, was entitled to a sixth share of the produce from the land, a form of taxation. This share could be increased during times of emergency, reflecting the flexible nature of the tax system in response to the state's needs. From historical sources, it is evident that there were twelve types of land classifications, such as cultivated land, waste land, habitable land, pasture land, garden land, and forest land, among others. The type of land determined the nature and amount of tax levied on its produce. This system of taxation was intricately linked to the land's utility and productivity, ensuring a structured and fair approach to revenue collection.

These practices highlight the sophisticated administrative and legal systems in place during this era, particularly in the management of land and the imposition of taxes. The detailed recording of land donations and the nuanced system of taxation reflect the complexity and organization of the society at the time.

Epigraphic sources from this era provide valuable insights into the reforms and practices related to the system of land tenure. These records are crucial in understanding the economic foundations of the 7th century, which were largely based on the Gupta system. The economic structure during this period bore significant similarities to that of the Gupta era, particularly in terms of land management and revenue generation. The state's income was derived from various sources, indicating a

diversified economic system. This revenue was then utilized by the state in numerous ways to improve the welfare of its subjects. The expenditure covered a range of public services and infrastructural developments, reflecting a commitment to the betterment of society. The Gupta system, renowned for its efficiency and organization, provided a robust model for economic management. This system included not only the collection of taxes but also the regulation of trade, agriculture, and other key sectors. The epigraphic evidence from the 7th century shows a continuation and adaptation of these practices, demonstrating the enduring influence of the Gupta administrative and economic policies. These epigraphic records are indispensable for historians, as they offer a detailed picture of the economic system, land tenure practices, and state policies of the time. They reveal a sophisticated and well-structured approach to economic management that was pivotal in sustaining the prosperity and stability of the society.

In discussing private ownership of land, Kulluka, commenting on the *Manusmriti*, states that the original tiller of the soil is deemed the owner of the land. This viewpoint is also supported by P.V. Kane, who adds that the king was entitled to a share of the produce. Furthermore, Kane suggests that fallow land was considered the actual property of the king. Epigraphic sources provide detailed insights into the procedures for land transactions during this period. According to these sources, intending purchasers were required to follow a specific protocol. The process began with the submission of an application to local officials, outlining full details of the land in question and acknowledging the prevailing rate in the locality. Once the application was submitted, the officials would review all the details. After consideration and upon payment of the agreed price, the plot of land was transferred to the applicant. Prior to this transfer of ownership, the land was thoroughly inspected, demarcated, and recorded in the registry by an officer (referred to as 'pustapala') in three separate instances. This process underscores the structured and bureaucratic approach to land transactions in ancient India. The meticulous documentation and official procedures reflect a well-organized system of land management, ensuring clarity and legality in ownership and transfer.

During this period, most of people resided in villages, with agriculture being the primary means of livelihood. Recognizing the critical importance of agriculture, the state appointed an officer known as 'Pustapala'. This official was responsible for maintaining detailed records of land measurements, extents, and transactions, including purchases and sales. The land within the state was categorized into four distinct types, each serving a specific purpose:

1. **Vastu Land:** This category comprised inhabitable land, typically designated for residential purposes or for the construction of buildings and other structures.
2. **Kshetra Land:** Referred to as cultivable land, this was the most crucial category for agricultural activities. It was the backbone of the rural economy, providing the primary source of food and livelihood for the population.
3. **Gochar Land:** This was pasture land, allocated for grazing livestock. The availability of such land was essential for supporting animal husbandry, which was an integral part of the agricultural system.
4. **Barrech Land:** A type of land used for specific purposes such as forestry, wasteland, or possibly for special agricultural practices.

The classification of land into these categories reflects the organized approach to land use and management during this period. It highlights the importance of agriculture and animal husbandry in the economy and the sophisticated administrative system in place to oversee these activities.

The Chinese traveller Xuan Zang (Huiyan Tsang) provided detailed descriptions of Indian agriculture in his writings. He noted that after ploughing and sowing the fields, people typically rested following the harvest season. Xuan Zang observed that the cultivation of onions and garlic was relatively limited, as only a few people consumed these crops. According to his accounts, there was a considerable variation in crops, which depended on the land area and local conditions. The people were primarily engaged in agriculture, along with cattle rearing and trade-related activities. They cultivated a variety of crops, including different types of pulses, sugarcane, fruits, and cotton. Xuan Zang's descriptions also highlight the use of animals in agricultural

practices. People employed oxen for ploughing fields, drawing carts, and carrying loads. Additionally, cattle played a significant role in irrigation, an essential aspect of agriculture. Beyond their utility in farming, cattle were valued for their milk, flesh, skin, and manure, which were used for various purposes. These observations by Xuan Zang provide a vivid picture of the agricultural practices and rural life in India during his travels. His accounts are invaluable for understanding the agricultural techniques, crop diversity, and the role of animals in farming during this period.

In the historical period under review, there is ample evidence of guilds organizing traders, artisans, and various communities. These guilds played a significant role in the economic and social life of the time. References to such guilds can be found in epigraphic sources like the Harsha stone inscription, which records a guild of horse dealers. Similarly, the Siya Doni inscription mentions guilds of betel sellers, oil millers, and stone cutters, among others. These guilds were not only involved in their respective trades but also in the broader economic activities of their regions. The nature and framework of trade during this period were somewhat like those observed in the Gupta era, as indicated by various actions and records. However, a slight decline in trade activities was noted during this period under review. Despite this observed decline, it can be concluded that the overall trade economy and socio-religious life during this period were robust and satisfactory. The existence and functioning of these guilds indicate a well-organized and thriving economic system, where different sectors and communities were interconnected.

5.4 IMPLICATIONS AS PER OBJECTIVE

The study of the changing socio-economic life of people in Northern India during the 7th century AD reveals several key implications that reflect the dynamics of this era. These findings provide insights into the intricate interplay between social structures, economic developments, and cultural transformations.

- 1. Evolution of Social Structures:** The period witnessed a gradual evolution in the traditional Varna system. While the caste system remained entrenched, the economic and social dynamics brought about changes in the roles and statuses of various social groups. The rising prominence of the Vaishyas, especially those engaged in trade, indicated a shift in the socio-economic power dynamics. This

period also saw a greater integration of different social groups, leading to a more complex societal structure.

- 2. Agricultural Developments and Land Ownership:** The advancements in agriculture, along with the diverse land ownership models, had a significant impact on rural life. The proliferation of land grants, both to religious institutions and individuals, played a crucial role in shaping the rural economy and social structure. These changes in land ownership and agricultural practices contributed to the stability and prosperity of rural communities, forming the backbone of the economy.
- 3. Urbanization and its Economic Impact:** The growth of urban centers like Kannauj, Ujjain, and Varanasi marked a shift towards urbanization, which had far-reaching implications for trade and commerce. The flourishing of trade routes, both domestic and international, facilitated the exchange of goods, ideas, and cultural practices, enhancing the economic prosperity of these urban centers. This urbanization also led to a cosmopolitan culture, with cities becoming melting pots of different cultures and traditions.
- 4. Religious Influence on Socio-Economic Life:** Religion continued to play a pivotal role in shaping the socio-economic life of this period. The dominance of Hinduism, coexisting with Buddhism and Jainism, influenced various aspects of daily life, from social norms to economic activities. The construction and patronage of religious institutions not only served spiritual needs but also boosted the economy by creating employment opportunities and stimulating trade.
- 5. Women and Lower Classes in Society:** Despite the overall economic growth and cultural richness, the condition of women and lower classes showed limited progress. Women's roles remained primarily confined to domestic spheres, and the participation of lower classes in economic and social life was restricted. This highlights the persistent inequalities and rigid social structures that characterized this period.
- 6. Advancements in Education and Learning:** The era was significant for its contributions to education and learning, with institutions like Nalanda gaining

prominence. However, access to education was largely limited to the upper strata of society, underlining the social disparities of the time.

7. Impact on Future Developments: The socio-economic changes during the 7th century laid the foundation for future developments in Indian society. The evolving social structures, economic growth, and cultural exchanges of this period influenced the trajectory of Indian history, setting the stage for subsequent periods.

In conclusion, the study of the changing socio-economic life of people in 7th century Northern India as per the objective reveals a period marked by significant transformations. These changes, encompassing social structures, economic activities, and cultural practices, were instrumental in shaping the course of Indian history, leaving a lasting impact on the region's socio-economic landscape.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

Literary Sources:

Arya manjuShrimoolkalap	T Ganpati Shastri, Trivandrum, 1925
Kadambari	Baan. S. Ramtej Shastri, 1964 Le Peterson, Bombay, 1990
Naganand	Harsh, Brahameh and Paranjape, Pune, 1893
Priyadarshika	Harsh, S. Jivanand Vidyasagar, Calcutta, 1874
Virhatsanhita	Vara Mihir S. She mender, Bombay, 1901
BhagwatPuran	Geeta Press, Gorakhpur
Markandeye Purana	Pajirtar ka Anu wad, Calcutta, 1904
Ratnawali	Harsh S. K. V. Joshi, G.M. Wate, Belgaum, Basant Bihar, 1953
Rajtarangini	Kalhan, Par Kashan. Ramtej Shastri, Varanasi
Vishnu Purana	Geeta Press, Gorakhpur ka Sankaran
Harsh Charit	Baan, Anu. Thomas & Cowell, Delhi, 1968

Foreign Literature:

Beal, S.	Publication Information Si-Yu-Ki, Buddhist Records of the Western World, Trans. from the Chinese of Huan Tsang, 2 Vols., London, 1906. Life of HuanTsang by Shaman Huw Li, London, 1911
Hilaire, J.B. Saint	Huan Tsang in India, Translated from French by Laura Ensor, Calcutta, 1
Macrindle, J.W.	Ancient India as Described in Classical Literature, Westminster, 1901. Ancient India as Described by Magastheneseand Arrian, Calcutta, 191.
Takakuso, J.A.	Record of the Buddhist Religion as Practised in India and the Malay Archipelago by I-Tsing, Oxford, 1896.
Waters, T.	On Yuan Chang's Travels in India, 2 Vol., London, 1904, 1905.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOURCES:

INSCRIPTIONS:

Agarwal, J., (2001). *Inscription of Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Kashmir and Adjoining Hilly Tracts*, Indian Council of Historical Research. New Delhi.

Agarwal, Jagannath, 1986, *Recent Researches in Indian Epigraphy & Numismatics*, Sundeep parkasan, New Delhi, *Inscriptions of the Imperial Guptas*, (Manuscript).

Agarwal, P., (1983). *Imperial Gupta Epigraphs*, Prithvi Prakashan, Varanasi.

Bhandarkar, D.R, (1981). *Corpus Inscription, Indica rum III*, Ed. Chhabra, B.Ch. & Gai, G.S., *Archaeological Survey of India*, New Delhi. Fleet, J.F, 1963(2nd ed.), *Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings & Their Successors*, *Corpus Inscription Indica rum, III*, Indological Book House, Varanasi.

Herzfeld, Paikuli, 1924, *Monument & Inscription*, 2 Vols. Berlin. Mirashi, V.V, 1981, *Inscriptions of the Vdkatakas*, *Corpus inscription indecorum, V*, Ootacamund. Mirashi, V.V, 1963. *The History and Inscriptions of the Satavahanas and the Western Kshatrapas*, Bombay.

Sircar, D., (1966). *Indian Epigraphical Glossary*, Motilal Banarsi das, New Delhi.

Sircar, D.C, 1942, *Select Inscriptions*, Vol. I, Calcutta University, Calcutta. Sircar, D.C, 1986, *Select Inscriptions*, Vol. II, Calcutta University, Calcutta.

Sircar, D.C, 1965, *Indian Epigraphy*, Motilal Banarsidass, New Delhi.

Thapliyal, K.K, (1972). *Studies in Ancient Seals*, Akhil Bhartiya Sanskrit Parishad, Lucknow.

Thapliyal, K.K., (1985). *Inscription of the Maukhari, Later Guptas, Pushyabhuti and Yashovarman of Kannauj*, Indian Council of Historical Research, New Delhi.

EPIGRAPHY SOURCES

Bhandarkar, D.R., Chhabra, B.C., and Gai, G.S. *Corpus inscription Indicarum, Vol. III (Revised), Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings*, New Delhi, 1981.

Cunningham, A. (ed.) *Archaeological Survey Reports, Vol. I-XXIV*, Delhi, 1969.

- Epigraphic Carnatic, Bangalore, 1889-1955.
- Epigraphic India, Delhi/Calcutta, Archaeological Survey of India.
- Fleet, J.F. Corpus inscription Indicarum, Vol. III, Inscriptions of the Early Gupta Kings and Their Successors, London, 1889.
- Second Revised ed., Varanasi, 1963.
- Gnoli, R. Nepalese Inscription in Gupta Character, Pt. II text, Rome, 1956.
- India Antiquary, Bombay, 1872-1923.
- Maity, S.K., and (eds.) Corpus of Bengal Inscriptions, Calcutta, 1967.
- Mukherjee, R.R. -
- MaitreyA.K Gaudalekhamala (Inscriptions from Bengal), I, Varendra Research Society, Rajshahi, 1912.
- Majumdar, N.G. Inscriptions of Bengal, Vol. III, Rajshahi, 1929.
- Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, Vol.V, Ootacamund, 1963.
- Upadhyaya, Vasudev A Study of Ancient Indian Inscriptions, Delhi, 1961

Ahmad, Nisar. A new study of Harsha-Pulakeⁱⁿ war, IHQ, XXXVII-4, 1964-246-252.

Bajjnath, Sharma, Harsha's conquest of Kashmir, PIHC, 1969, p.25.

Burgess, Jass, HiwanThsang's account of Harsha-Vardhana, IA, Vol. 7, 1873, 196-202.

Chattopadhyaya, S., Kanauj after Harsha's Death, IHQ, XXX-2, 1954, 160-166.

Jharkhandi, S.N., The Coronation of Harsha, IHQ, XII-1, 1936, 142-144.

Kielhorn, F., Madhuban Plates of Harsha, the Year 25, El, VII, 155-Keilharn, F., Three dates of the Harsha Era, IA, Vol. 36. 1897, 29-32.

Kirste, J., The verse 18 of the Haracarita, JRAS, London, 1904, p.366.

Murthy, H.V.S., Harsha's religion, PIHC, 24th session, Delhi, 1961, 58-59.

Ray, Nihar Ranjan, Harsha Sitaditya, A Revised Study, IHQ, III-4, 1927. 769-793.

Sastri, S.M., The Harshacharita of Banabhata, IA, Vol. 48, 1819, 196.

Sharma, Baijanath, Harsh's Conquest of Kashmir, PIHC, 30th session, 1969, Patna, 55.

Vaidya, C.V., Harsha and his times, JRAS, Bombay, Vol. 23, No. 64, 1909, pp. 236–276.

Vaidya, C.V., Harsha and His Times, JRAS, Bombay. Vol. 24, 1917, pp. 286–276.

LIST OF THE INSCRIPTIONS OF THE PUSHYABHUTIS:

A New Copper-Plate Grant of Harshvardhan from Punjab, Year 8, BSOAS, No. 66. pt. 2, pp 221-228.

The Banskhera Copper-Plate Inscription of Harsha, EI, IV, 208-11, Bhandarkar's list no. 1385.

The Madhu Ban Copper-Plate Inscription of Harsha, 1981 (ed.), Bhandarkar's list no. 1386.

The Nalanda Clay Seal of Harsha, EI, XXI, 75f. The Sonpat Copper Seal of Harsha, CII, 231-32.

NUMISMATIC SOURCES (COINS):

Allan, J. Catalogue of the Coins of Ancient India in the British Museum, London,

Bajpai, K.D. Indian Numismatic Studies, New Delhi, 1976

Brown, C.J. The Coins of India, Calcutta – London, 1922.

Chakraborty, S.K. A Study of Ancient Indian Numismatics, Calcutta, 1931

Cunningham, A. Coins of India from the Earliest Century down to the Seventh Century A.D, London, 1891

Dhavalikar, M.K. "Coinage and Cultural Life" in Journal of the Numismatic Society of India, XXXV, 1973, PP. 184-95

Gopal, L. Early Medieval Coin- Types of Northern India, Varanasi, 1966

Gupta, P.L. Coins, New Delhi, 1969

Parmeshwari Lal Gupta	Coins (India the Land and People), Delhi, 1969
Rapson, E.J.	Indian Coins, Strasburg, 1897
Shahani, Birbal	The Technique of Casting Coins in Ancient India, Bombay, 1945
Sarkar, D.C.	Studies in Indian Coins, Delhi, 1968
Smith, V.A.	Catalogue of Coins in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, Vol. I, Oxford, 1906
Thakur, U.	Mints and Minting in India, Banaras, 1972

Allan, J., (1967), Catalogue of Coins of Ancient India, the British Museum, London.

Brown, C.J., (1922), *Coins of India*, Calcutta Association Press, Calcutta. Saran, P., 1972,

Cunningham, A. (1971), *Coins of Ancient India*, Indological Book House, Varanasi.

Smith, V.A., (1906), Catalogue of the Coins in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, Vol. I, Clarendon, Oxford.

Tribal Coins-A Study, Delhi. Shastri, A.M., 1979, Kaushambi Hoard of Magdha Coins, Nagpur University, Nagpur.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Agarwal, V. S.	Harsh, ek Sanskrit Adhyayan, Patna, 1964 Kadambari ek Sanskrit Adhyayan, Varanasi, 1958 Studies in Indian Art, Varanasi, 1965 The Deeds of Harsh, Varanasi, 1969
Aravamuthan, T.G.	The Kaveri the Mokhrij& the Sangam age, Madras, 1925
Awasthi	Prachin Bharat ka Itihash
AchcheLal	Prachin Bharat Mein Krishi, Varanasi, 1980
Ojha, Shri Krishan	Prachin Bharat, Jaipur, 2011 The Deeds of Harsh, Varanasi, 1969
Altekar, A.S.	Catalogue of the Gupta Gold Coins in the Bayana, Hord, Bombay, 1954

- Position of Women in Hindu Civilization,
Varanasi, 1938
- Gupta Kalin Mudrayen, Patna, 1954
- Education in Ancient India, Varansi, 1975
- State and Government in Ancient India, Delhi, 1958
- Ojha, Gori Shankar Madhya Kalin Bhartiya Sanskritic
- Antinghosan, M.L. Harshvardhan, Emperor a poet, London, 1906
- H. Shastri Memoria's of archaeological Survey of India, 1966
- Alen J. Catalogue of the Coins of the Gupta Dynasty & of
Shashank King of God (in the British Museum) London,
1914
- Cowel & Thomes Parstavana, Delhi, 1988
- Cunningham, A. Coins of ancient India from the earliest times to the 7 th
Century, A.D. London, 1891
- Kale, M.R. Kadambari of Baan, Bombay, 1928
- Keith, A.B. History of Sanskrit Literature (Hindi) Delhi, 1924
- Kumar Swami History of Indian and Indonesian Art, London, 1924
- PART 2
- Kill Horn Indian, AntiqueQuery, Bombay, 1891
- Gupta, Parmeshwar Lal Prachin Bharat Ke Pramukh Abhilekh Vishwavidyalaya
Parkashan, Varanasi, 1995
- Goyal, Shri Ram Prachin Bharat Abhilekh-Sangrah, Jaipur 1982
- Mokhari-Pushyebhuti-Chalukya Yuga, Meerut, 1988
- GuptkalinAbhilekh, Meerut, 1984
- Mokhari-Pushyebhuti-Chalukya Yogin, Abhilekh,
Meerut, 1987
- Harsh & Buddhism, Meerut, 1986
- Harsh Sheladitya, Meerut, 1987
- Harsh or uska Yuga, Jodhpur, 1993
- Gopal, Lalanji The Economic life of northern India, Varanasi, 1965
- Goyal Shankar History & Historiography of Harsh, Jodhpur, 1992
- Harsh, A Multidisciplinary Political Study, Jodhpur

- Gaurav Prashant Puro Madhya Kalin Bharat, Allahabad, 2009
- Ghosh, A. Epigraphic Indica, Delhi, 1924
- Chatterjee, Gori Shankar Harshvardhan, Allahabad, 1950
- Chaudhary, G.C. Political History of North India, from Jain Sources, Amritsar, 1954
- Chakraborty. H. Trade & Commerce in Ancient India, Calcutta.
- Chattopadhyay, S. Early History of North India, Calcutta, 1958
- Jaiswal, K.P. The Imperial History of India, Lahore, 1936
- Jaikishan, Khandelwal Indian Sanskriti ki Parampara, Agra
- Takakusu J.S. (Anu.) A record of the Buddhists religion, oxford, 1986
- Thapliyal, K.K. Inspirations of the Mokhari, later Guptas, Pusyabhuti&Yashoverman of Kannauj, Delhi, 1985
- Dwivedi R.K. History of the Guptas, Allahabad, 1985
- Dev, Krishan Uttar Pradesh Ke Mandir, New Delhi, 1971
- Desai Kalpana Ecology of Vishnu, New Delhi, 1973
- Devhuti, D.S. Harsh A Political Study, Delhi, 1970
- Nahar, Rati Bhanu Singh Prachin Bharat ka Rajnetik and Sanskritic Itihash, Allahabad, 1987
- Pandey, Rajbali Historical & Literary Inscription Varanasi, 1962
Prachin Bharat, Varanasi, 2006
- Pathak, Vishwananda Panchvi Se Satvi Shatabdi ka Bharat, Allahabad, 1998
- Pandey, Vinod Chander Uttar Kalin Bharat, Bhartiya Puralipi, Allahabad, 1978
- Panthari, V.P. RajvanshMokhari and Pushyabhuti, Patna
- Panikkar, K.S. Shri Harsh of Kannoj, Bombay, 1922
- Payers, E.J. The Mokhrij, Madras, 1934
- Purohit, S.K. Uttar Bharat ka Prachin Rajnitik Itihash, Jodhpur, 1980
- Flit, J.F. Coppers Inscrupsenum Indecorum, Part-2 Calcutta 1888,
Anu, (Hindi) Bhartiya Abhilekh Sangrah
- Brown, C. G. Catalogue of Gupta &Mokhari Coins, Lucknow, 1920
- Babita Aggarwal Prachin Bharat ki Arthvavastha, Jaipur-2000
- Basak, R. Go History of North Eastern India, Calcutta, 1934
- Banerji, J.N. Development of Hindu Iconography, Varanasi, 1980

- Barua, B.S. History of Kamroop, 1 She long, 1933
- Benjamin, B.N. Mokhrikalini Uttar Bharat, Jodhpur, 1993
- Mette & Mukherji Coppers of Bengal Inscriptions, Calcutta, 1967
- Bhandarkar, R.G. Vaishnav, Shiv other Dharmic Mat
- Mazumdar, R.C. The Classical age, Bombay, 1962 A Comprehensive History of India, 3 Part, 1951
Prachin Bharat, Delhi, 1968
- Malviya Badrinath Vishnu Dharam Mein Murti Kala, Paryag, 1960
- Mukerji, R.K. Harsh, London, 1926
- Mishra, Indumati Bharat ki Sanskrit Parampara, Lucknow, 1950
- Mirashi, V.V. Coppers Inscription Indica rum, Part-4
- Roy Uday Narayan Studies in Ancient Indian History & Culture, Allahabad, 1969
- Rapson, E.J. Catalogue of the coins in the British Museum London, 1908
- Rai Chaudhary, G.C. Political History of Northern India, Form Jain Series.
- Roy, Uday Narayan Studies in ancient Indian History & Culture, Allahabad, 1969
- Lage J.H. Records of the Buddhist Kingdoms, Oxford, 1886
The Life of Huan-Tsang London, 1911
- Waters T On Huan-Tsang Travels in India, Delhi, 1904-5
- Sharma, O.P. Prachin Bharat, Allahabad, 1980
- Sharma, Baijnath Harsh and his times, Varanasi, 1970
- Shastri, A. Mi. India is seen in the Virahatsanhita of Vara Mihir.
- Singh, Onkar Nath Guptotarkalin Uttar Bhartiya Mudrayen, 600 A.D to 1200 A.D, Vishwavidyalaya Parkasan, Varanasi, 1997
- Sampurnanand Samrat Harshvardhan, Bombay, 1977
- Sinha, B.P. The Decline of the Kingdom of Magadha, 1954
Dynastic History of Magadha, New Delhi, 1979
- Shrivastava, B.N. Harsha and His Times, 1976
- Tripathi, R.S. History of Kannauj, Delhi, 1959

- Sharma, R.S. Early Medieval Indian Society, Calcutta, 2001
 Indian Feudalism, Delhi, 1980
 Light on Early Indian Society and Economy, 1966
 Material Culture and Social Formations in Ancient India, Bombay, 1983
 Social Change in Early Medieval India, Delhi, 1969
- Kapadia, K.M. Marriage and Family in India, Calcutta, 1966
- Pandey, G.C. Bodh Dharam ke Vikash ka Itihas, Lucknow, 1963
- Pandey, V.C. Bharat Varash ka SamajikItihas
- Alayangar, K.V.R
- Bahadur, K.P. Aspect of Ancient Indian Economic Thought, Banaras, 1934
- Bandopadhyaya, N.C.
- Banerjee, N.N. Caste, Tribe and Culture of Ancient India, 1978
- Barth, A Economic Life and Progress in Ancient India, Calcutta, 1945
- Basham, A.L. Development of Hindu iconography, Calcutta 1941
- Bhandarkar, D.R. Religion of India, New Delhi, 1969
- Blunt, E.A.H The wonder that was India, London, 1951
- Bose A.N. Cultural History of India, 1975
- Kalkadhar, H.C. Vaishnavism, Shaivism, and Minor Religious System, 1930
- Daftrari, K.L.
- Das, S.K. Caste System of Northern India, 1931
- Dube, S.C. Social and Rural Economy of Northern India, 1945
- Dutta, B.N. Social Life in Ancient India, Calcutta, 1929
- Dutta, N.K. The Social Institution in Ancient India, Nagpur, 1947
- Gangopadhyaya, R Economic History of Ancient India, 1925
- Ghoshal, U.N. Indian village, 1950
 Hindu Law of Inheritance, Calcutta, 1957
- Gopal, L. Origin and Growth of Caste in India, Calcutta, 1931
 Agriculture and Agriculturists in Ancient India, 1932
- Hill, S.C. The Agrarian System in Ancient India, Calcutta, 1930
- Jayaswal, K.P. Studies in Indian History and Culture, 1970

- Loomis, Charles The Economic Life of Northern India, Varansi, 1965
 Aspects of History of Agriculture in Ancient India, 1980
- Majumdar, B.P. Origin of Caste System in India, Bombay, 1930
- Majumdar, R.C. Hindu Polity, Calcutta, 1928
- Majumdar and Pushalkar, Socio-Economic Change and the Religious Factor in
 A.D. India, New York, 1929
- Mitra, R.C. Socio-Economic History of Northern India, Calcutta,
 Mookarji, R.K. 1960
 Corporate Life in Ancient India, Calcutta, 1922
- Nath, praan Age of Imperial Kannauj, Bombay, 1953
 The Struggle for Empire, 1966
- Niyogi, P. The Decline of Buddhism in India, Vishwabharti, 1954
 Ancient Indian Education, London, 1951
- Pandey, L.P. Local Self Government in Ancient India, Delhi, 1985
- Rai, Jaimal A Study in the Economic Condition of Ancient India,
 London, 1924
- Sharma, R.S.
- Sharma, B.N. Contribution to the Economic History of Northern India,
 Shrivastava, K.L. Calcutta, 1962
 Son Worship in Ancient India, 1971
- Thapar, Romila The Rural-Urban Economy and Social Changes in
 Ancient India, Varansi, 1974
- Upadhyaya, V. Shudras in Ancient India, Varansi, 1958
- Buch, M.A. Social and Cultural History of Northern India, 1932
- Das, S. Economic and Political Conditions in Ancient India,
 Jain, Beena Mysore, 1911
 Ancient Indian Social History, Delhi, 1978
- Mukharjee, B.N. The Past and Prejudice, 1972
- Nigam, ShyamSundar The Socio-Religious Conditions of North India (700-1200
 Sharma, R.S. A.D.) Varansi, 1964
 Economic Life in Ancient India, Allahabad, 1979

Sharma, BrijendraNath	Socio-Economic Life of Northern India (500-600 A.D.)
Sirkar, D.C.	Delhi, 1980
Subba Rao, N.S.	Guild Organisation in Ancient India, Delhi, 1990
Thaplyal, K.K.	
	Art in Gupta and Post Gupta a Coinage, Lucknow, 1985
Sharma, R.S.	Economic Organization in Ancient India, Delhi, 1975
	Aspect of Political Ideas and Instituion in Ancient India, Banaras, 1966
Jha, D.N.	Social and Cultural History of NorthernIndia, Delhi,1970
Chatopadhyaya	Land System and Feudalism in Ancient India, Calcutta,1966
Ghosal, U.N.	Economic and Political Conditions in Ancient India, Mysore, 1911
Chatopadhyaya, B.D.	Nigam and Sreni Seals, JNSI, 1930
	Guild in Ancient India, Delhi, 1986
	Perspectives in Social and Economic History of Early India, 1983
Jha, D.N.	Ancient India, 1980
	Revenue System in Post Maurya and Gupta Times, 1967
	Trade and Urban Centres in Early Medievel India, The Indian Historical Review, vol. 1, 1974
	Guild and Other Corporate Bodies, Cultural Heritage of India
	Land System & Rural Society in Early India, 2004
	Social History of Early India, 2009
	Aspects of Rural Settlements and Rural Society in Early Medieval India, 2017
	Economy and Society in Early India, 1993
	Journal of the Bombay, Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, Bombay 24
Journals	Journal of Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal
	Journal of the Numismatic Society of India, Varanasi

Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain & Ireland, London

Journal of Bihar research Society, Patna, 1944

Journal of Numismatic Society Bengal

Journal of Uttar Pradesh Historical society Asiatic research, Calcutta.

Indian Antiquary

Memoairs of the Archaeological survey of India

Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art

Progress Report of the Archaeological Survey of India, Western Zone

Journal of the Ganganath Jha Research Institute, Allahabad

Journal of Banaras Hindu University

Journal of Andhra Historical Research Society.



A Study of The Paradigm Shift in The Land Ownership and The Provision of Land Grants in Ancient India

Jasmer Singh^{1*}, Tabish Hashmi²

^{1,2}Department of History, LPU, Punjabi, India

*Corresponding author's: Jasmer Singh

Article History	Abstract
Received: 06 June 2023 Revised: 05 Sept 2023 Accepted: 15 Nov 2023	<p>The present research paper deals with the concept and the dynamics of land ownership and the provisions of land grants in Ancient India. The theoretical concept of the ownership of the land and the land grant underwent tremendous changes and transformation in this period. The private ownership of land with rights of alienation in Ancient India secured through land grants was mainly religious in nature and were enjoyed by the priestly class. In course of time the private ownership of the land became an important constituent of the social structure. However, this was not applicable for all the landholding classes. The other sort of assignees was under the strict control of the rulers. Their land was liable to be confiscated and transferred. In the later Gupta age land and the proprietary rights in the land grew in importance and was at the helm of all social, cultural, religious, economic and political activities till the establishment of Delhi Sultanate. The land grants were given to officers and religious groups and establishments in exchange of services rendered to the state which are indicatives of economic crisis in the period on the one hand and on the other denotes that land in this period was a medium of social mobilization and social position. The society became more stratified and complicated. The primary and the secondary sources used in this paper are immense and varied in volume and content. Epigraphs, inscriptions, coins, cowries, texts all have been used to prepare a monograph to shed light on this important aspect which in many ways shaped the social, political, religious and economic history of the country.</p>
CC License CC-BY-NC-SA 4.0	Keywords: Landownership, Land Grants, Private Ownership, Stratified Society, Social Mobilization, Epigraphy

1. Introduction

Chronic In almost all societies irrespective of time and space ownership of land has been of great value and its possession has been considered a great status. Further the land when received as gift by the ruler has been a matter of pride and privilege. The concept of the rights over the land either of a community or of an individual or even of a ruler in the region has been characterized by imperceptible changes which crisscrossed through commune control to private ownership. Till the early Vedic age, the significance of the land as wealth and property was not established.¹ A mild beginning of the importance of land as an item of wealth emerged in the post Vedic age. However, in the late 800 BCE with the dominance of agricultural activity, land's importance grew to a significant level. The practice of land grants which became quite vogue after the 5th century was thus unknown and despised in the early Vedic age. In the Vedic literature even, we find the prohibition on gifting the land to anyone. The communal control on the land denotes the tribal nature of the society in the Vedic period. Land grants were thus strictly forbidden in the Vedic texts, the *Shatapatha Brahmana* testifies this statement.² In *Mahabharata* we find that lands cannot be given away even to the sacrificial priest on the sacrificial plea. Obviously, this information is in direct contrast with practice of sale, purchase and giving land to the Brahmins in the later times.

In Post Vedic age, there were changes in approach towards the land now the lands were no longer held in common. Occasional references of grants of land also were now heard. The sale and purchase of land also has been noticed. Although in many Brahmanical text we find the criticism of such practices but an important change had already been taken place. Another important phenomenal change was identification of the labor in association with land was also noticed. In

Manusmirti which is a later text linked labor with land which is responsible for making it cultivable. A very important change in the very concept of rights over the land in Ancient India has been observed and that is in the position of king with respect to land. In the Rigveda, the chief god *Indra* was beseeched for the king's lot *Bhaga* however in the later Vedic age, the king himself became collector.³

In the Smirti period, Manu, the Law giver affirms that "the realm is of him who clears it first and a *hiraṇ* who hunts it first" and thus laid the foundation of private property. The statement is also suggestive of an important economic doctrine of the period. At a time when their vast stretch of land was available linking labor to the title of the property right of the seems quite practical and feasible. The prominent ancient thinkers and lawgivers like Medhatithi and Vigneswaran in continuation with Manu stand by their conviction that "an occupation with statutory title is the evidence of the proprietorship of the land.⁴ In accordance with these assumptions, it may be assumed that the ownership of some landed possessions existed unto the time when the evidences of the ownership has not been clearly established. Here the obligation to inquire the into real ownership of the tract was on the purchaser and not on the seller. The Ancient lawgivers and thinkers thus made it clear that possession of a land cannot be taken away or confiscated by the king if the property is under use for at least three consecutive extended families. Another important contemporary thinker and lawgiver in Ancient India, Sukra holds the view that in the condition where for more than or at least for twenty years a tract is enjoyed by a person and if a hereditary claimant doesn't claim then the land in this condition does not belong to the hereditary owner. Accordingly, on the other hand if a tract of farm is being used by the person or his *kula*, then if the original or the legal owner comes back even after 100 years then the king should instead of rewarding declared him as offender and should be punished in that way.⁵ This statement is again suggestive of a changing economic situation where labor was linked with land and it was the most vital factor which was detrimental for the proprietary right over the tract. This seems that in Ancient times there was general consensus that land belonged to the entire *vis* or the tribe but there came a paradigm shift in the very concept of rights in landed property and it was also the beginning of gift of land to sacrificial Brahmanas. *Aitrya Brahmana* which is a post Vedic text mentions the protest of *Prithivi*, when after the completion of the *Yagna*, Vishwakarma Bhuvan made a donation of land to the sacrificial *Brahmanas*.⁶ These narrative are the manifestation that the donations of tract without the approval of the village or the *grama* in the post Vedic Period. It may be assumed in the light of the historical information gathered from the texts that the land was still under communal control and private control was not yet established. In the *Dharmashastras* Gautama laid down the principle that any type of property is invisible, if it supports the lives in which land is also a part. In *Mimamsasutra*, we find the references in which the communal control over the land has been explained. Very explicit reference is there which prohibits the king from giving away the land as gift or donation. Both, land ownership and the phenomenon of gifting the land underwent a considerable change from the 4th and 5th centuries afterwards. Besides the Smritis, several inscriptions are also testimonials to transformations that were taking place in the mentioned historical phase. Communal ownership in land was gradually losing its significance and the reference of different varieties of land. The classification of lands was done for varied reason and to ensure the ownership of the king on all types of lands. The Satvahna period, however is known for the beginning of land grants to Buddhist and Brahmanical monks, *purohitas* and *sharamanas*.⁷ The accentuation of land grants in 5th and 6th centuries, however changed fundamental concepts regarding the ownership in the land. Surrendering more and more royal

rights have affected the socio-cultural, political milieu of the time. It has ushered a new era of closed agrarian economy and in this period, we find the presence of a hierarchy of rural elites like *mahasamantas*, *samantas*, *rajas*, *ranauts* with a subdued peasantry in which forced labor, *visti* was also making its presence.

Significance of land as Module of wealth of in the Vedic Age-

The Early Vedic society was predominantly pastoral and, in this period, cattle constituted the most important wealth. The significance of pastoralism in the early Vedic economy is evident from the direct references and prayers for *Pashu*, a term which was used for all types cattle. The wealthy man in the Vedic age were referred as *Gomat*, which literally meant those who possessed cattle. We also come across terms like *gavishti*, *gavesan* etc.⁸ These terms were used for raids and search for cattle. All these descriptions imply that in the early Vedic age, cattle constituted the chief object of wealth and lands had no significance in the material wealth. Pasture lands were

held in common and the evidences for the significance of land are very scarce or even non-existent. Agricultural activities reference is very few in the early Vedic age. Archaeological evidences corroborated with textual references about agricultural activities, agricultural produce and the land started appearing only in later Vedic and the post Vedic age. The only reference of *yav* is found in the Rigveda probably it was a common term used for barley and wheat.⁹ Around 1000 B.C.E and later when agricultural activities increased with the help of Iron tools, when the fertility of the Indo- Gangetic plain was exploited the importance of land increased. With growing importance of agriculture, the importance of land also increased. During this period, we don't come across any evidence to suggest the proprietary rights in land. Instead, the communal control was well established.

Land ownership and the practice of land gift in the Post Vedic age and in the age of Buddha-

During the 6th century B.C, there appeared new approach to material life. In this period big monarchical states and *nagara* were coming into existence in Gangetic valley. The ensuing age is as referred as age of second urbanization where cities witnessed brisk commercial activities. The Buddhist texts refers the presence of certain landlords living in cities but their holdings were in the rural areas.¹⁰ The presence of these landlords were beneficial for the States as they contributed in the economic prosperity of the monarchical states. References of *Anathpindika* and *Kosiyagotta* who were not only the big merchants but also the landlords who had considerable influences on the kings. The Jaina sources like the *Uttradhyaana sutra* mentions *Khetta*, a terminology used for farming land an important item of wealth.¹¹ The other source *Barhatkalpa bhasya*, however mentions agricultural land as ten kinds of wealth. These all are indicative of the private possession of the land. The rise and the existence of the Monarchical states in the Gangetic basin has now introduced new orientation in the land and the proprietary rights in the land. The monarchical states like Magadha and Koshala were fast expanding states. The tribal oligarchies were gradually incorporated into the fold of these states. The monarchical states were required of revenues for maintaining the army and vast apparatus of administration. The Monarchical states received the maximum share of revenue from agriculture and in this condition the lands were quite important to the state and thus subletting the rights over land was in rare practice. In *Arthashastra*, Kautilya mentions a word *Swayam* which he uses to denote the proprietary right in reference to sale and purchase of a territory. In the Mauryan period lands on the basis of ownerships were divided and were clearly demarcated.¹² Any attempt to encroach was highly despised and was a punishable offence. Kautilya seems to be in favor of the state control over all cropping tract. However, on the other hand it did not subscribe to the notion that the all types of lands should be controlled by the king. In *Arthashastra*, numerous types of land holdings have been discussed in details. The two types of landholdings are worth to be mentioned here, viz. the *Rashtra* and the *Sita* types of landholdings.¹³ The *Rashtra* types of lands were the descendant of the former tribal oligarchies and these tribal entities or the republics have been won over much before the Mauryan. These territories were beyond the direct control of the state. The only obligation was probably to pay taxes to the Mauryan empire. We come across the other variety of land holdings and that was the *Sita* territory. The other type of land holding was the *Sita* holdings. *Sita* lands were those territory which had been made cultivable by eliminating the forests with the support of forest dwellers. From here, we can trace the position and functioning besides the contributions of such in the economy of the Mauryan. *Sita* land was under the strict state control and such land neither could be sold or transferred. But on the other hand, such land could be given on lease but without the right of alienation. Thus, in the Mauryan period, there were various types of lands and their existed varieties of land rights. *Kulavagga Jataka* explicitly states that for the first time Manu, the law giver has mentioned that the King has the foremost right and the proprietary rights in soil. ¹⁴ However, such notion again doesn't subscribe the idea in which the king was the considered the sovereign authority who has the control in all types of the soil. He made a distinction where he said that the kings owes because he is the protector of people and the territory. This assumption was vogue for a longer period in ancient India and even continued to a later period of history.

Land ownership in Post Mauryan, Gupta and the Post Gupta Age—

Land ownership concept in Post Mauryan, Gupta and in the Post Gupta Age further evolved and got accentuated. In the immediate Post Mauryan era, the absolute proprietary rights in land were rarely found. Both Manu and Gautama have recommended individual proprietary rights which suggests the individual rights in land on the basis of religious merit. The Buddhist text *Divyavadana* gives a detail account of farmers in Magadha, Sravasti, Kosala etc. who were not tied to any bound but were independent and had the right of sale, purchase and alienation.¹⁵

Milinda Panho also narrates about the independent farmer in the Gangetic basin who cleared the dense forests in the vicinity and made the area cultivable. *Milinda Panho* also confirms that the cultivatable land was not given in grants or gifts but on the other hand it describes the *Nagara* which were under the

possessions of kings probably because of the strategic reasons. Besides the *Nagara*, minerals were fully under the control of the King. **16** The vitality and the significance of these was thus primarily responsible for a different nature of control. In Deccan, the Satvahnas probably had a different kind of proprietary rights in the land. In the Satvahana kingdom we find the evidences of lands where the individuals had a right. Land during this period was given to Buddhist monks and Brahmans but the evidences which could suggest that lands were given in grant for secular purposes are rare if not scarce. The earliest epigraphic reference which denotes the grant of a village to the sacrificial priests comes from 1st century, in Maharashtra on the occasion of *Ashvamedha* sacrifice. In the period of Shakas and the Kushans we find a continuation of land ownership. *Rudraman's Girnar***17** Inscription is in corroboration of the conviction that the State had the all the power in land but on occasions some rights are surrendered during the land grants.

Land ownership or the occupancy rights in the Gupta period

By and large the State had exclusive rights in land in this period. During this period, the occasional land grants to the officiating priests has now emerged quite regular. The *Pahrapur copper plate* inscription, 478 CE of the period Buddhagupta states that in order to acquire spiritual merit the King donated the land.**18** This statement suggests that the state enjoyed untold power and authority in soil. The conviction further validated through the statement that there were elaborate official procedures to get the land grants, which confirms the fact the ownership of the King. Contemporary inscriptions confirms that while the king donated the he retained exclusive rights in the tract. Here it is suggested that although the territory in villages or countryside purposes were belonging to the gentry, however but the theoretical ownership in these tracts were of the state. During the post Gupta period there were various types of land tenures of which the evidences come from the inscriptions. Some of these land tenures were like this *nivi dhrmas, nivi dharma akshyana*

, *aprada dharma, bhumichchhidranayaya etc.***19** In northern and central part the foremost types of tenures were prevalent and the rest tenures were practiced in the whole of the country. These *land* tenures depict nature of the endowments for example, the perpetual endowment, a perpetual endowment but without the right alienation, land endowment without the administrative rights and those endowment in which the ownership was acquired by making the unused and the barren land, cultivable. The numerous copper plate inscriptions also indicate the prevalence of grants or endowment which were given. There were also certain grants which were given to specific groups of people or to a specific community for some specific causes. The examples of *agrahara grants, devagrahara grants* and secular grants can be sited in the context.**20** Interestingly, in Bengal and eastern region the Land grants were not accompanied with the right to alienate. On the other hand, in Central India, the inscription of Skandgupta suggests that the beneficiary of the grants was authorized to get their land cultivated through the process of sub-infeudation.

Land ownership or the occupancy rights in the Post Gupta period -

Post Gupta Period has witnessed the emergence of an agriculture economy and that is ascribed to the increased land grant practice. It was also the beginning of sub-infeudation. By the end of the Gupta period, the practice was deeply integrated with the governance. However, later in the period, the ownership of the king was evolved in conception. Katyana has clearly indicated that as the king is the theoretical as well as the practical owner, he deserves to get *bhaga* **which** is one fourth of the produce of the land. But at the same he acknowledges the right of a person who lives there for a longer period. **21** *Narad Smirti* echoes the statement made in the *Katyana smriti, Narsingh Purana*, however confirms that real owner of the territory none other than the king. *and* conveys that because of his position, the ruler had the power to either grant or gifting. Supposedly, the religious merit and spiritual gain were the cause behind the land donation, however it is denoting towards a deep social crisis of the period. During this period land grants were given to the priests and the officers of the state in lieu of their salaries and other obligations. The land grants proved to be advantageous as it put the burden of tax collection on the recipients or the beneficiaries of such grants. Such grants were also accompanied with other obligations.**22** Often, usual practice for giving the land grants was that it was given in the outlying areas and the basic objective was to expand the area land under cultivation in hitherto uncultivated or partially

cultivated land. Since it was increasingly difficult for the neo rural elites because of their limitation towards self-cultivation and revenue collection so they delegated this exercise to others. The new lands were now cultivated with the help of sharecroppers. These sharecroppers though cultivated the land and were attached to the land but were not the legal owner of these fields. Another very significant development was that the hitherto mobile cultivators were now turned into the immobile lot. The new developments in the fold of rural economy restricted the mobility of rural folk and the farming community. Against this backdrop we find the emergence of a new axis of power structure with its centre in the countryside. The new agrarian economy had certain characteristics like now grants were made not only in the of barren but also in the areas where agriculture was done since the very beginning. In these areas transfer of tract also accompanied with rights in land. They could also impose *visti* on the subjects and also could restrict peasants' movements. Delegation of the power related to administration of the area along with criminal justice and judicial power made them powerful.²³ The Period was marked by the increase of the rights of the grantees, increase in the volume and the burden of taxes. These all lead to the increase of complex revenue system with regional un-uniformity. In this period thus one of the most important developments and that is feudalism has been noticed. The canvass where Brahmins who were the only beneficiary now got expanded and it went on increasing. All these lead to the emergence of a class of lords to whom historians call, Feudal lords. This practice emerged in fifth and sixth century in Maharashtra and then spread to all parts of India with regional variations. Feudalism and sub-infeudation lead to the adverse effect on the peasants and sharecropper. Forced labor, multiple taxation, exorbitant rate of taxation brought the peasantry or the rural population under acute crisis. Migration of peasants or the rural population has been reported from several areas and a closed economy became dominant.²⁴ It is worth to be mentioned here that besides the textual references in the, there are various epigraphic testimonials that explains the sanctity of the land occupational rights. The donation of the tract had been carefully inscribed in stone and the copper plates with minute information. Usually, the records were prepared in the presence of village officials.

The debates in Indian History over the proprietary rights in land and the land grants holds a great significance as the land from the later Vedic Age gradually emerged the most vital factor around which the society economy and polity revolved. The land ownership and the land grants obviously in course of its evolution changed and acquired new dynamics in various phases of history with regional variations and difference but without the change of the undercurrent idea of the ownership of the land underneath the old scriptures of law.²⁵ The basic idea, thus continued with the formation of Muslim rule in India as they hardly changed the fundamentals of rural economic and polity. For a long period, the prominent historians and scholars wrote and depicted the period not taking into account a singular factor but innumerable factors affecting the whole society, polity and economy. The fundamental question that emerges out from the study of the fast-changing situation is that either this period witnessed the Agri- extension, strong rural base or the decimation of state power. Other important question that revolves around the process of urbanization, the rise of rural setups and feudalism. The earliest evidences of the royal land grants come from the inscriptions issued during the Satavahana rule from Deccan. However, the trend of land grants virtually increased in volume by the end of the century. In the last quarter of the 6th century, feudalism was a practice and a force to be reckoned with in the dynamics of the time. It was a period of sub-infeudation.²⁶ This new factor was having its own features and was the indication of change and transformation. The grants which got institutionalized in India during Post-Gupta period and had transformed the society, polity and economy of the time and to the time to come. Indeed, the effect was more on the rural economy, society and polity. Historians claim on the basis of various historical facts and evidences in which the copper plate inscriptions and textual references are the prominent one that the period prior to the later Gupta age, esp. the Mauryan, Post Mauryan and the early Gupta age was a period of long-distance trade, monetary economy, communal ownership of the land, less fragmented society. However, with the onset of middle Gupta age the situation started getting changed and from the later Gupta age, the dynamics of society, economy and polity started taking a paradigm shift.²⁷ The period in study however was marked by closed economy, agrarian economy, agriculture expansion, emergence of rural elites, forced labor, unpaid labor, slavery, decay of the urban centers, private property or the proprietary rights etc. Another important characteristic of the period was the evolution and the consolidation of feudal system which not only continued as an integrated system but also christened society, polity and economy of the country. Many scholars are of the opinion that the institution feudalism originated in India and this articulation is based on the assessment and

evaluation of the largescale donation of the tract to the religious establishment, the religious leaders and then further delegation of civil, judicial and then the other types of the rights which were the sole prerogatives of the rulers.²⁸ The land grants were overwhelmingly religious in nature but the land grants secular in nature were also not unknown.

4. Conclusion

A study of the literary and epigraphic evidences of the land grants suggests that the land grants which were responsible for the evolution and emergence of feudalism were of different nature. There are various types of lands mentioned in the texts and the epigraphic records which were given in grants. The classification of land was based on the utilitarian aspect of the land or the soil. The first was the *urvara* land, it was a fertile land which was usually riverplain like Indo-Gangetic plain, the Cauvery, Godavri and Narmada, Sutlej, Beas.²⁹ Such lands had great utilitarian aspect and was used for agriculture, habitation. The other type of lands was in outlying areas either in the foothills or in deserts where the rainfall was not quite low or even dismal. Amarsimha in his *Amarakosa* gives a description of twelve types of land.³⁰ The description of varied land types in *Amarkosa* is indicative of the classification on the basis of which the lands were usually granted in the period. By the end of 6th- 7th century feudalism was thus an institution in India and the feudal lords were now important constituents of the new social set-up. Worth mentioning that the records of the grants records were containing the information's mentioning the rights, obligations and the un-interfered privileges. In case of non-acknowledgement to the obligations mentioned in the records there were certain warnings also found their presence in *Tmrapatra*.³¹ It has also been stated in these inscriptions that the first generation of beneficiaries will be extended to the children and the grandchildren. The historians and the scholars of the Feudal School of historiography while highlighting the rights, duties, privileges as mentioned in the records suggest that these were the indicatives of gradual power fragmentation and a decline in the strength of the kingship. Now the communal ownership over the various things like pasture ground, water sources etc. have been passed out to the new rural entities in a gradual momentum. In the changed scenario the most adverse effect was on the peasantry and that led to more exploitation and increased subjugation of the cultivators at the hand of these rural elites.³² Further, the sub-infeudation has also created a hierarchy among the rural elites that has weakened the centralized rule. The period of Harsha and Post-Harsha has witnessed more and more rights to the elites or the beneficiaries of the land grants. With the foundation of Delhi sultanate, the rural set up of the earlier period hardly underwent any fundamental change except one and that was the dissolution of rural elites. The new rulers made a serious effort to establish a direct relation with the peasantry because these rulers considered the elites as elements of disturbance and factors of rebellion in the newly founded state. The contemporary writings of Minhaj us Siraj, Barni, Isami and Amir Khusru are the testimonials of ruling class attitude towards these rural elites.

References:

1. Sharma, R. S. (1976). "*Forms of Property in the Early Portions of the Rig Veda*". Essays in Honor of Professor S.C. Sarkar, New Delhi.
2. Saraswati, S. P. (1988). "*The Critical and Cultural Study of the Shatapatha Brahmanas*" Delhi, pp.43-48
3. Morris, D. and Burton Stein. (1963). "*The Economic History of India*" A Bibliographic Essay", Journal of Economic History, xxi
4. Jha, Ganganath. (1987) "*Manu smriti with the Mahabhasya of Medhatithi*". 2nd edition. New Age International Publishers: Delhi.
5. Ganguli, B. N. (1963). "*Readings in Indian Economic History*", 5th edition. Ranjeet Printers and Publishers: Delhi
6. Buhle, G. (1953). "*Sacred Book of the East*", Vol. X, pp 312-325
7. Hopkins, E. W. (1901) "*India Old and New*". New York, pp. 206-229.
8. Griffith, T.R. H. (1896). tr. Rigveda, . Vols VII. 49.2, X.33.6, III 31.15.
9. Sharma, R. S. (1968). "*Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India*". 2nd Edition. Motilal Banarsidas: Delhi.
10. Chakravarti, R. (2016). "*Exploring early India*" Primus Books, New Delhi.
11. Aiyengar, K. V. R (1935). "*Some aspects of Ancient Indian Polity*" 2nd edition. University of Madras: Madras
12. Mishra, S. C (1996). "*An inscriptional approach to the study of Arthashastra of Kautilya*" Ph.D. Thesis, Delhi University, Delhi. p.223.
13. Ghoshal, U. N. (2021). "*A history of Indian political ideas*" 6th edition. Life Span Publisher, Delhi.
14. Altekar, A. S (2001). "*State and Govt in Ancient India*". 2nd edition. Motilal Banarsidas, Delhi.
15. Jones, Ken. (1981) "*Buddhism and social action*" Buddhist Publication Society, Colombo, Srilanka.
16. Milinda Panho. Trans. T.W. Rhys David. *Sacred Book East*. XXXV. XXXVI. p.213, 147
17. Habib Irfan, and Vivekanand Jha. (2013) "*Mauryan India*". Tulika Book Publisher: New Delhi.

18. Salomon, R. (1998) "*Indian Epigraphy.*" Oxford: London.
19. Kalelkar, N. G. (1933). "Distribution of Wealth in Ancient India", Proceedings of the All-India Oriental Conference, 7th Session, Allahabad.
20. Thapar, R. (1978) '*Social mobility in ancient India with special reference to elite groups*', in *idem*, *Ancient Indian Social History: Some Interpretations*", Sage. p. 133.
21. Sharma, R. S. (1980). *Indian Feudalism*. Motilal Banarsidass: Delhi
22. Chattopadhyaya, B. D. (1990). "*Aspects of Rural Settlements and Rural Society in Early Medieval India* . K.P. Bagchi & Co : Calcutta
23. Sahu, B. P. (1997). "*Introduction. In Land System and Rural Society in Early India*". Delhi : Manohar
24. Sharma, R. S. (1958). "*The origin of feudalism in India*" Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient, Vol. 1, No. 3, pp.297-328
25. Majumdar, R. C. and A.D Pusalkar (1951). "*History and culture of the Indian People*" Oxford: Bombay
26. Sharma, R. S. (1989). "*Rethinking India's Past*, 206-236, Oxford University Press: Delhi
27. Kulke, Hermann. (1982). *Fragmentation and Segmentation versus Integration? Reflections on the Concept of Indian Feudalism and the Segmentary State in Indian History. Studies in History*" 4(2) JSTOR: pp.237-263
28. Nandi, R. N. (2002). "*Agrarian Growth and Social Conflicts in Early India*". Pustak Mahal, Delhi
29. Majumdar, R. C and A.S, Altekar. (1954). "*Vakataka and Gupta Age*" Motilal Banarsidas: Delhi
30. Nandi, R. N. (2003). "*The Feudal Order: State, Society and Ideology in Early Medieval India*" Manohar: Delhi
31. Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum.. Ed. J. F. Fleet, 1888, Vol. III: Calcutta
32. Thakur, V. K. (2003). "*Urbanization in Ancient India*" Abhinav Publication: Delhi.
33. Kulke, Hermann. 1982. *Fragmentation and Segmentation versus Integration?: Reflections on the Concept of Indian Feudalism and the Segmentary State in Indian History. Studies in History*, 4(2): 237-263
34. Chattopadhyaya, B. D. 1990. *Aspects of Rural Settlements and Rural Society in Early Medieval India*. Calcutta:
35. K.P. Bagchi & Co.
36. Nandi, R. N. 2002. *Agrarian Growth and Social Conflicts in Early India*, in *The Feudal Order: State, Society and Ideology in Early Medieval India*, ed. D.N. Jha, 303-344. New Delhi: Manohar
37. Sharma, R. S. 1980. *Indian Feudalism*. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass
38. Sahu, B. P. ed. 1997. *Introduction. In Land System and Rural Society in Early India*. New Delhi: Manohar
39. Sharma, R. S. 2009. *How Feudal was Indian Feudalism?*, in R. S. Sharma. *Rethinking India's Past*, 206-236, Delhi: Oxford University Press
40. Yadava, B. N. S. 2002. *The Problem of the Emergence of Feudal Relations in Early India*, in *The Feudal Order: State, Society and Ideology in Early Medieval India*, ed. D.N. Jha, 249-301. New Delhi: Manohar
41. Yadava, B. N. S. 2002. *The Problem of the Emergence of Feudal Relations in Early India*, in *The Feudal Order: State, Society and Ideology in Early Medieval India*, ed. D. N. Jha. New Delhi: Manohar, 268.
42. Krishnan, K. G. 2002. *Uttankita Sanskrit Vidya Aranya Epigraphs*, Vol.III. Mysore: Uttankita Vidya Aranya Trust, 414-416
43. Chattopadhyaya, B. D. 1990. *Aspects of Rural Settlements and Rural Society in Early Medieval India*. Calcutta:
44. K.P. Bagchi & Co. Chattopadhyaya, B. D. 1994. *The Making of Early Medieval India*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
45. Dayal, Suchi. 2005. *Brahmana Settlements in a Famine Zone: A Case-study of the Shorapur Doab in the Early Medieval Period*. *Man and Environment*, XXX(2): 83-89.
46. Kulke, Hermann. 1982. *Fragmentation and Segmentation versus Integration?: Reflections on the Concept of Indian Feudalism and the Segmentary State in Indian History. Studies in History*, 4(2): 237-263
47. H. Wilberforce-Bell, *History of Kathiawad: From the Earliest Times*, New Delhi, 1980, p. 29; M.R. Majumdar, ed., *Historical and Cultural Chronology of Gujarat from the Earliest Times to the End of the Rāshtrakuta-Pratihāra Period*, Baroda, 1960, pp. 30-126
48. Majumdar, *Historical and Cultural Chronology*, p. 131
49. Romila Thapar, '*Social mobility in ancient India with special reference to elite groups*', in *idem*, *Ancient Indian Social History: Some Interpretations*, New Delhi, 1978, p. 133
50. Arthashastra. of Kautilya. 1997, reprints. Tr. R.P. Kangle. 3 vols., III.8.17.9.II.35
51. Manusmriti with the Mahabhasya of Medhatithi. 1999. Reprint, ed. Ganganatha Jha, IX. 44-45, 49-53
52. Gautama Dharmasutra, 1986. Tr. G. Buhler, Sacred Book East. XIV. XII. 37-39; Vasishtha Dharmasutra, 1991. Tr.
53. G. Buhler, Sacred Book East. XIV. XVII. 16-18.
54. Milinda Panho. 1993. reprints. tr. T.W. Rhys David. Sacred Book East. XXXV. XXXVI. p.213, 147
55. Mahavastu. ed. F.M. Muller, tr. J. Legge, S. Beal. Sacred Book East. XVI. XVIII. XIX. I. 271-282.

- 1- Gautama Dharmasutra, 1986. Tr. G. Buhler, Sacred Book East. XIV. XII. 37-39; VasishthaDharmasutra, 1991. Tr. G. Buhler, Sacred Book East. XIV. XVII. 16-18. 58 Gautama Dharmasutra, 1986. Tr. G. Buhler. Sacred Book East.
54. XXVIII. 4-17; Baudhayana Dharmasutra, 1991. Tr. G. Buhler, Sacred Book East. XIVII. 2.32; VasishthaDharmasutra, 1991. Tr. G. Buhler, Sacred Book East. XIVXVIII. 42. 59 Arthashastra. of Kautilya. 1997, reprints. Tr. R.P. Kangle. 3 vols., III.8.17.9.II.35 60 Ibid. II.24, 35. 61 Ibid. III. 1,5,6,8,9,10,15,16,17. 62 Manusmriti with the Mahabhasya of Medhatithi.1999. Reprint, ed. Ganganatha Jha, IX. 44-45, 49-5
55. R. S. Vaidyanath Ayyar studied the agrarian and commercial problems on the basis of Manu (Manu's Land and Trade Laws, Madras, 1927). In 1926 Balkrishna wrote his article: "Interest and Usury", Sir Asutosh Memorial, Patna
56. R. S. Sharma, Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India (Second Edn., Delhi, 1968), ch. I; Romila Thapar, "Interpretations of Ancient Indian History", History and Theory, vii, no. 3 (1968)
57. R. S. Sharma, Aspects of Political Ideas and Institutions in Ancient India (Second Edn., Delhi, 1968), ch. I; Romila Thapar, "Interpretations of Ancient Indian History", History and Theory, vii, no. 3 (1968), 32
58. en in K. M. Saran's Labour in Ancient India (Bombay, 1
59. H. N. Pathak, "Some Economic Concepts in Kautilya's Arthashastra", Proceedings of the All-India Oriental Conference, 7th Session, (1953), 401-08



The Land Ownership and concept of Land Grants in the Ancient India: A Reappraisal

JASMER SINGH
Research scholar, &
Dr. TABISH HASHMI
(Associate Professor)

Department of History, LPU, Punjab.

According to Medhatithi and Vijnanesvara possession with a legal title was the proof of ownership. One might be in possession of property but as long as title to that property was not clearly proved, he could not become the owner of it. It is the duty of a purchaser to verify the title of the seller before purchase.¹ Whatever may be the facts about possession, in a case in which the property has been enjoyed by a person for three Generations that property cannot be confiscated by the king. In other words, the person in possession for three Generations of a property is treated to be the absolute owner of that property. Sukra holds that if a man enjoys the land for a period of 20 years and the owner in fit to file the suit in a law-court, still he does not do so, the previous owner cannot claim the land. In case a man is in possession of a plot of land for many hundred years and the real owner is found out, the king should punish him like a thief.

In support of the legal title of land we have numerous epigraphic records which throw light on the validity of possession on land. When a plot of land was donated it was recorded on a stone slab or copper plate with full details, in the presence of village elders, neighbours and King servants. It was also recorded that it should be enjoyed by the donor as long as sun, the earth endure. When the copper plate or stone slab was split it was again engraved.

Economic classification of land:

(i) Cultivable land (ii) Waste land (iii) Habitable land (iv) Pasture- land, and (v) Gardens and forest lands. Krishnaswami in his commentary on Amarakosa mentions twelve types of land namely:-(i) Urvara (fertile) (ii) Ushara (barren) (iii) Maru (desert), (iv) Aprahata (fallow), (v) Sadvala (grassy land), (vi) Pankila (muddy land) (vii) Jalavrayananupan (watery or wel land), (viii) Kachchha (land contiguous to water), (ix) Sarkara (land full of pebbles and pieces of limestone), (x) Sakravati (Sandy), (xi) Nadimatrika (land watered from a river for cultivation, (xii) Devamatrika (land watered by rain).²

Concept of Land Grants:- The idea of donation of land as a form of gift to Brahmanas was envisaged by the *Dharmasastra's*, *Smriti's*, and *Puranas*. There are *danastuties* in the *Rig-Veda*

and later Vedic literature in which the gifts made by the king and *dana*, in general, are eulogized. In the *Anusasana Parva*³ of the *Mahabharata*, a full chapter entitled *bhumidana prasamsa* discussed the importance of *bhumidana*. The gift of land is said to have been the best of all kinds of gifts as the earth is immovable and indestructible. Amongst all the creatures, the giver of earth grows in prosperity forever and ever, and by giving the land as a gift, one rescues ten generations of one's paternal and maternal families. The *Matsya Purana*⁴ and *smritis*⁵ such as Vishnu, Brihaspati, Yajnavalkya enumerate precepts regarding the *bhumidana* as a gift to the Brahmanas and to the institutions of religion and learning, and glorification of the donor not only in this world but also in the heaven. The importance and merit thus associated with the donation of land as gifts to Brahmanas must have encouraged the kings, merchants, and common people to make a gift of land and villages for a good cause of which we have ample evidence.⁶

It is also clear from epigraphical sources that *bhumidana* (donation of land) has been considered the most sacred of *dana* and earned the greatest of spiritual merit in this world and the next world. We have a large number of inscriptions and copper plates from various parts of ancient India giving us the details of the *bhumidana*, its purpose and names of donor and donees and also listed the motive and nature of the gift of land. Thus, the *bhumidana* charters are the important source materials for the studies of *bhumidana* and its various purposes.⁷ The list of donees includes the educational and religious institutions, learned Brahmanas, charitable organizations, Buddhist monasteries, and Viharas. The tradition of *dana* (making gifts and endowments) is considered not only the main characteristics features of the household in Kaliyuga but the principal aspects of the religious life of a householder in every practicing religion of the world.

The question that needs to be addressed here is that when so much religiosity and sacredness was involved in the *bhumidana* then what kind of land could have been donated by the king and people and who is entitled to donate the land. The question of ownership of land is one of the most debatable and vexed issues in human history over the centuries. The concept of ownership of land has been vividly described in the context of kingship, agriculture, taxes and revenues, and geographical extension of the boundaries of states and empires throughout the world. In the epigraphical sources donated land or village is very often specified by the boundary marks like the wells, tanks, hills, forest, and certain other physical landmarks may indicate whether it lies in a virgin, semi-virgin, or settled area. The physical landmarks used to demarcate the boundaries in many instances further enlighten us about the geographical and ecological background of gifted land or village. The tradition of *bhumidana* includes what could have been given in the *dana*, and what types of land legitimately belong to the donor. It is therefore important to discuss the question of the ownership of land in the Indian context. Here a critical and comparative analysis of the land ownership system that was prevalent in ancient India is discussed. The purpose of this article is to discuss the two aspects of Indian culture and tradition that is the right of land ownership through which a person is entitled to give the *bhumidana* and the second question is for what purpose *bhumidana* was given.

As per tradition and customs, property rights included all movable and immovable things, and land has always been a very central and important constituent of property to the human possessions right from the beginning. It has been considered as not only the life-giver but also the one which sustains all forms of life. *Sukraniti*⁸ says that "land is a source of all the wealth. For

this earth, kings can lay down their lives.... What has else the man who has wealth and life but not cherish land?" The possession of land, house, and tanks were so highly cherished that people did not hesitate to forge the documents to show that a particular piece of land or the house was in their possession. Not only a large number of literary sources mention such forgeries but also, we have a number of inscriptions/copper plates that were discovered to be forged.

In view of this great importance is attached to the land and the right of ownership over the land. There are large numbers of copper plates and epigraphical evidence mentioning the donation of land (*bhumidana*) in this context. It becomes very important to see as to whether the land itself was given to the donees or the revenue accruing from that land was given to the donees. From the survey of literature and facts available therein, scholars have concluded that there were three kinds of landownership prevalent in ancient India. The various types of sources are discussed here in the context of various types of ownership of land. These were:, State/Royal ownership, Communal ownership, , Individual ownership.

The scholars like Maine (1913), Basak(1934), and Majumdar (1918) feels that by and large the major portion of land was held in communal ownership, while Biden-Powell (1896), Keith and Macdonell (1912), Jayaswal (1924), and Altekar (1927) are of the view that land was held under the individual ownership. Smith (1904), Ghosal (1929), Maity (1957), Sharma (1965) feel that land was under Royal/ State ownership. The efforts will be made to survey the references to the land ownership scattered in a large number of literary sources, and try to see as to where the ownership of major part of the land lay. The land system that is prevalent in India from the Rigvedic period onwards can be divided into four classes namely: homestead land, arable land, pasture land and forest land.

Royal Ownership of Land:- In the *RigVeda*, the king was regarded as the owner of the land or the owner of the state. However, in later Vedic period literature, we find the references that land was divided into four classes viz. pasture land, homestead land, arable land, and the forest.

The *Mahabharata*⁹ says that the protection of land, and not the ownership, was one of the important duties of the king. The *Mahabharata* further lay down rules for the land-tax which should never be so heavy as to induce the agriculturist to migrate to other areas. The king was required to reclaim land for cultivation, to excavate tanks and lakes in order to make agriculture independent of the caprices of the rains. He was also required to distribute seed grains to the cultivators in times of need. *The Jatakas*, *Panini's Asthadhyayi*, and early *Dharmasutras* like *Gautama Dharmasutra*, *Baudhayana Dharmasutra*, *Apastmaba Dharmasutra*, and *VasisthaDharmasutra* mention that the king was the head of the state but not the owner of the entire property in the state.¹⁰

Kautilya's *Arthashastra*¹¹ says that the arable lands were divided into private land and the crown land (*sita*). The crown land was under the direct supervision of the officer-in-charge of agriculture known as *assitadhyaksha*. The forest which was regarded as no man's land earlier came to be regarded as the property of the state during the Mauryan period. Kautilya's *Arthashastra*¹²

includes forest as a separate item in the classification of sources of revenue. He classified forest into four groups—namely forest of wild animals (*pasu-vana*), economic forest (*dravya-vana*) and elephant's forest (*hasti-vana*), a forest of domesticated animals (*mriga-vana*). *Arthashastra*¹³ further says that the state should clear some parts of the forest and develop them either into cultivable land or homestead land as per the needs and welfare of the people.

*Brihaspatismriti*¹⁴ declares that the king is the lord of all. It further says that if Kshatriya, Vaisya, and Sudra, die without a male issue, or a wife or brother, their property should be taken by the state. *Naradasmriti*¹⁵ says that one-sixth of the produce of the soil forms customary of royal revenue, in return for the protection of the King's subjects. It further says that the king has the monopoly over the treasure-trove and it is one of the important sources of revenue for the state. *Naradasmriti*¹⁶ makes the distinction between different types of land for the purpose of remission of revenue or for fixation of taxes.

Kalidas¹⁷ says that by protecting ascetics from obstacles, and wealth from robbers, the king was made the enjoyers of one-sixth of earnings by people in their respective *Ashramas* and different castes, according to their respective capacities. Like *Brihaspatismriti*,¹⁸ he further suggests that the king could only appropriate the wealth and property of a dead subject who had no heir. *Jaiminisutra*¹⁹ in the context of *visvajit sacrifice*, says that when the performer of sacrifice has to donate everything that belongs to him, even the greatest king cannot make a gift of the whole earth of which he may be the ruler since the earth is common to all.

Sabara²⁰ in his *Bhasya* says that men enjoy lordship with regard to fields, but not with regard to the whole earth and hence there is no difference between a paramount ruler and an individual with regard to the objects received as fees for providing protection to the crops. *Medhatithi* on *Manusmriti* also considers the king only as a recipient of share for the protection he affords.²¹ Madhava,²² commenting upon Jaimini's *Mimamsa*, expressly says that the king cannot give the state territory (*mahabhumi*) because it is not his own (*sva*), but his *rajya* (state).

The above discussion shows that the king was not the lord of land in his individual capacity, but in the capacity as the head of the state. It was the state which was the lord of entire water and land, but it was an abstract power. It got itself personified in the king, the minister, and other officials. Among the seven limbs (*saptanga*) of the sovereignty, the king has been assigned the first place, and they are the minister and other functionaries. That is why the king is the paramount ruler, exercised this prerogative of being called the lord of the earth, and he acted in a manner he liked with regard to the movable and the immovable properties of the state; but he did so not in his individual capacity. This may explain why the fear always lurked that the lands given in grants might be confiscated by the future monarchs, for which they were exhorted in the imprecatory verses not to interfere with the right of the donees. *Brihaspatismriti*²³ says that the king's decision was not to be disgraced.

The *Smritikaras*²⁴ and the commentators advise that the *bhumidanaga* given by officials and inhabitants of the villages should also be included in the land transaction records. Inscriptions

often enumerate a large number of officials and village residents some of them being quite in keeping with the injunctions of the legal texts. Most of these officials appear to be associated with one or other form of the properties mentions in connection with the *dana* of the village. Where there was no owner, state, as absolute power called the owner of the land. But it was the duty of the king to protect the people and the property in his territory. *Sukranitisara*²⁵ enumerate this in the following terms, “God has made the King, though master in form, the servant of the people, getting his wages (sustenance) in taxes for the purpose of continuous protection and growth”.

Even in the medieval period sources do not speak of the king as an owner of the land. Irfan Habib,²⁶ on the question of land ownership during the medieval period, writes, “No such pretensions (the king being an owner of the land) were put forward on behalf of the Mughal rulers in any official documents. When Abul Fazl sets himself the task of justifying the imposition of taxes on ‘the peasant and merchants’, he does not argue that the tax on the land flows from the sovereign’s right of ownership, he appeals, on the contrary, to a social contract by which the sovereign obtains his ‘remuneration’ through taxation in return for providing protection and justice to his subject”.²⁷

Irfan Habib²⁸ very rightly points out that, “It is only in the eighteenth century that we have an assertion of the king’s right to ownership” basically because of lack of understanding of the system by the European travelers who wrote an extensive treatise on India and this doctrine was passed on the British officials who maintained that the East India Company had inherited a universal right of ownership over the land from its predecessors.

Communal Ownership of Land: - In the *Rig-Veda*²⁹ the pasture (*gavya* or *gavyuti*) land was held in communal ownership. One of the hymns of the *Rig-Veda*,³⁰ however, mentions that the cattle herds of the village were entrusted to a common herdsman which indicates, that the pasture land was enjoyed in common. The land system that was prevalent in the *Rig-Vedic* times, continued in the later Vedic period as well. *Mahabharata’s Vanaparva* and *Ramayana’s Ayodhyakanda*³¹ also mention that the communal ownership over the pasture land was continued over the period.

In the Buddhist literature,³² pasture land was under communal ownership, which was indicated by the fact that all the cattle and goats of the village were allowed to graze in such fields. The *gopalkas* or *gopas* and *ajapalas* led the herds to the pasture lands, grazed them during the day, and returned them to the owners in the evening. The *Kunala Jataka*³³ mentions that the republican clan of Sakyas and the Koliyas cultivated their land, which was held in common. The forest (*vanapacara*) has been regarded as no man’s land in the Buddhist literature³⁴ also, but its economic value increased as it began to supply raw material for various kinds of industries. It also served the purpose of natural pastures and habitations of certain classes of people. *Gautama Dharmasutra* and *Vasistha Dharmasutra* also lay down rules for communal ownership of land. *Gautama Dharmasutra*³⁵ says that un-enclosed pasture lands should be used for grazing cattle and firewood. Generally, such lands should be regarded as communal property.

From the Kautilya's *Arthashastra*³⁶ we came to know about two types of pasture lands: those owned by the state and those in private or communal ownership. It speaks of *godhyaksha* and the *asvadhyaksha*, who were an officer incharge of the herds of cattle and pasture lands belonging to the king. These officers had to put a special mark on the royal cattle so that they may not get mixed up with the cattle of others. It seems that everyone had the right to use the common pasture land. *Manusmriti*³⁷ has also recommended various measures for the pasture land. It says that roundabout every village there should be a strip of land measuring one hundred bows or even three times of staff in width, but around a city, it should be three times the width of the pasture land in the village. The epigraphical evidence also mentions the term *svasimatrinarayutigocharparyanta* for defining the boundaries of land, which was given as *bhumidana*.

Individual Ownership:- On the topic of the individual ownership of the land, we have evidence from the *Rigveda* downwards. The *Rigveda*³⁸ refers to the measurement of fields with the help of a rod. The individual owner of the homestead land was called *vastaspati*. Further, we find the terms like *kshetrapati*, *kshetrasa*, *urvarapati*, and *urvaras*, meaning lords or owners of the field. *Rigveda* mentions the right over private property or private land. It also refers to separate plots of private land with boundaries demarcation. The land system that was prevalent in the *Rigvedic*³⁹ period continued in the later Vedic period also. In *Chhandogya Upanishads*⁴⁰ fields and the houses together are mentioned as private wealth. *Atharvaveda*⁴¹ points to the existence of the joint ownership of land. There are references to terms like *sajata*, *samana*, meaning clansmen or men of the same family. The prevalence of the joint ownership of land is also noticed in the *Krishna Yajurveda*.⁴² The *Aitareya Brahmana*⁴³ mentions that even during the lifetime of the father, sons were regarded as having a share in the property from which they could not be excluded at will. The *Taittiriya Samhita*⁴⁴ describes a father acquiring common property with his son. As a matter of fact, there are reference not only to the joint ownership of land but also to the gift and transfer of land by the king in the joint ownership in the later Vedic Period.⁴⁵

In the *Atharvaveda*,⁴⁶ we find prayers for a grant of share in the villages to the king which indicates that he was not regarded as the sole owner of the villages but that the people gave him some part of produce for the maintenance of his authority and dignity. The *Atharvaveda*⁴⁷ also makes several references to the king's revenue. It included a share in the village, cows, horses, tributes paid by the enemies, etc. *Atharvaveda* also refers to the fixed shares of the product being paid to the king as a tribute and the sixteenth part of the produce as land tax.

In *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*⁴⁸ there are several references to private houses and fields. The agriculturist had to pay one-sixth of the produce to the king as land tax. It also prescribes that the land taxes should never be so heavy as to induce the agriculturists to migrate to other areas. *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* both clearly lay down that the king was not the real owner of the land but he was simply a custodian and for which he was paid a share of the produce. *Jatakas*⁴⁹ mention that the arable or agricultural land (*khetta*) was divided into small individual farm holdings each in the possession of an individual landowner. It is important to note that in this

period the stone pillars (*thambhe*) were erected as demarcation lines between the plots of land possessed by different owners. *Jatakas* contain numerous stories of individual donations and the transfer of land to the Buddhist order. Jivaka (a Royal physician) donated pleasure gardens to Buddhist monks at Rajagriha. Amrapali (a courtesan) at Vaisali and Anthapindaka (a merchant) at Sravasti also donated various gardens and grooves to Buddha and other monks, after purchasing them from prince Jeta. A Brahmana of Magadha gave a portion of his arable land to another person.⁵⁰

According to Panini⁵¹ land was surveyed and measured by *kshetrakaras*. This means that the lands were in the individual ownership but the state was involved in terms of dispute settlements etc. The *Dharmasutras* not only throw light on the ownership of land but also on the role of the state in the management of different kinds of land. The king was the head of the state but not the owner of the entire property in the state. *Gautama Dharmasutra*⁵² says that the cultivators should lay down rules for themselves. He further says that the king should charge one-sixth, one-eighth, or one-tenth of the produce as land tax, but the standard rate was generally one-sixth of the produce. *Baudhayana Dharmasutra* has also prescribed one-sixth of the produce of the land as the dues of the state.⁵³

The early writers of *Dharmasutras* agree that the *Vastu* or homestead land and the arable land should be regarded as private or individual property. *Gautam Dharmasutra*⁵⁴ says that animals, land, and females are not lost by the possession of another. On the topic of the acquisition of private property, *Vasishta Dharmasutra*, and *Gautama Dharmasutra*⁵⁵ say that a man becomes owner by inheritance, purchase, partition, or finding. Further, acceptance is an additional mode of acquisition for a *Brahmana*, conquest for a *Kshatriya*, and gain by labour for *Vaisya* and *Sudra*.

According to *Vasishta Dharmasutra*⁵⁶ legal immovable property, documents, witnesses and possession should be admitted as proof of title, but if there was some confusion in the documents of ownership and conflict, the statement made by elders, guilds, and corporation should be relied upon. *Gautama Dharmasutra* and *Vasishta Dharmasutra*⁵⁷ say that immovable property should always be acquired by usage or customs. They also say that the following things if used by a person other than the owner for ten years continuously, become the property of the person who possesses them, ancestral property, a purchased property, a pledged property given to the wife by her husband's family, a gift received for performing a sacrifice, the property of reunified co-presenters, and wages. *Gautama Dharmasutra*, *Baudhayana Dharmasutra*, and *Vasishta Dharmasutra*⁵⁸ have also laid down rules for the partition of the estate and inheritance of movable and immovable property. These rules and regulations prescribed by the early *Dharmasutra* writers are conclusive evidence of individual or private ownership of land, but the necessity of producing witness and document against proof of property as well as levying of land tax suggest state's involvement in the acquisition and management of land by an individual or private person. Therefore, it can be safely concluded that the king was not the owner, rather he was merely a custodian or protector of land in lieu of which he was paid tax or a part in the produce.

According to the *Arthashastra*, there were different types of land namely—the homestead land, the arable land, the pasture land, and the forest. In the earlier period, we see that the homesteads and, the arable lands belonged to individual/private and pasture land was under community ownership and the forest was regarded as no man's land or the state property. But in the Mauryan period, some changes in ownership were noticed. The forest land, over which nobody had the claim, comes under state control.

The homestead land generally consisted of the villages and the towns where people constructed buildings for residential purposes, markets, and offices. According to Kautilya's *Arthashastra*,⁵⁹ the homestead land (*Vastu*) is comprised of tenements (*griha*), fields (*kshetra*), gardens (*arama*), embanked reservoirs (*setubandha*), and tanks (*tataka*). He recommends various measures to safeguard the possession of such lands and lays down a definite procedure for the sale of homestead land. He recommends that elaborate inventories and statistical lists of tenements and families belonging to them should be prepared under the supervision of the *gopa*, the officer in charge of five or ten villages. This register should contain in serial order the list of tenements (*griha*), of arable lands of several varieties (cultivated and fallow plots, as well as lowlands and upland plots), gardens of two kinds namely flower garden and fruit garden, pasture and woodlands, embanked reservoirs cremation ground and pathways, the places of charity for the distribution of food and drinking water, and shrines of deities, and sacred trees. Forcible occupation of homestead land should be treated as theft of property.

The above evidence of the *Arthashastra* clearly suggests that the homestead lands which included agricultural land, pasture, and ponds, etc. were held in private ownership and the state maintained a register for the proper record. Kautilya⁶⁰ says that the arable lands were divided into two classes namely the private lands (revenue paying cultivators) and the crown land. He refers also to *kshetrinah*, the owner of the field, like the father or the son, sale and purchase of the land (*kshetra*), park, embankment, tank, and reservoir.⁶¹ It also refers to the disputes of the land which were settled by village elders. But in case it was not settled by elders, the king should decide the dispute. It also refers to the demarcation of boundaries of the field as well as the grant of compensation to the owner of the field whose seeds and fields were damaged by the reservoir, or channels to a field of another. The private ownership over houses, fields, embankments, and so forth is also proved by the provisions of penal clauses for robbery or theft in respect of fields, tenements, etc. The act of grazing cattle on the field of another without permission of the owner was a crime amounting to theft. Kautilya even distinguishes between a landlord (*ksethika*) and his tenant (*upavasa*) and says that their mutual relationship was regulated by law.

Kautilya further says that cultivators who pay tax should be given a right to sell, purchase or mortgage the land but they should enter into such transactions only with those who also pay taxes. Besides these, forcible seizure of agricultural land of the owner should be regarded as a serious crime and the culprits should be punished with a fine of 200 to 500 *panas*. Kautilya clearly mentions that in the case of the sale of an agricultural holding, the kinsmen should be given preference over neighbours, and neighbours over creditors and outsiders should be considered at the last.

Manusmriti lays down that a field belongs to him who first removed the weed and the deer belongs to him who first wounded it,⁶² further, he also recommends various measures to protect and safeguard the individual or private ownership of land. He has compared the soil (*kshetra*) with the wife and while laying down the rules for the ownership of the land he mentions that neither by sale nor by reputation is a wife released from the husband. He also says that in this connection those who, not owning the land but possessing the seed sow it in the land of another man, never at any time receive the fruit from the crop thus produced. But if by a special contract a field is made over to another for sowing, then the owner of the seed and the owner of the soil both should be considered in this world as sharers of the crops.

*Manusmriti*⁶³ enjoins that all the villages should mark their boundary properly so that there may not be any dispute in this regard. He also points out methods as well for marking the boundary of the land. But even then, if a dispute arises between two villages (with regard to a boundary), the king should determine the boundary in the month of *Jyestha* by reference to the boundary mark and if there is a doubt, the matter should be decided by evidence. In the list of various categories of witnesses, he mentions the neighbour, old men of the village, hunters, bird-catchers, cowherds, fishermen, root-diggers, snake-catchers, and other men who wander in the woods (forest). If they determine the boundary truthfully it should be regarded as valid and effective in the eyes of law but if they determine is contrary to the truth, they should be fined two hundred *panas*. He lays down that the boundary mark should not be damaged, otherwise it may lead to dispute, and one who destroys the boundary should receive corporal punishment. *Manusmriti*⁶⁴ further lays down that in, “whatever dispute false testimony has been given the king should consider the affairs and even what has been done is to be regarded as not done.” Besides this, such a person should be punished. If a delivery or sale has been made by one who is not the real owner, it should be regarded as not made at all. Further, if a person has clear possession of the property, but his acquisition is not clear, in such a case the proof is acquisition and not possession. He also says that one who pleads possession, without being able to produce any title should be considered a thief. Further, if a person is in possession of a plot of land without a title even for a hundred years he should also be punished like a thief. He further says that possession of land quite unopposed and uninterrupted for a period of thirty years, cannot be deprived of such property. In this connection, he further says that when possession has been successively held even unlawfully by the three ancestors of the father of the present possessor, the property cannot be taken away from him. He, like Gautama, has also laid down rules for acquiring wealth and says that there are seven modes of acquiring wealth namely—inheritance, receiving, purchase, conquering, earning by lending money or by labor, and also by receiving gifts. These rules were also applicable in the case of land. *Manusmriti*⁶⁵ further says that if a man by frightening the owner takes possession of a house, pond, garden, or field, he should be fined five hundred *panas*. But if he has taken possession through ignorance, the fined should be two hundred *panas* only.

*Milinda Panho*⁶⁶ also records, like Manu, that a person who clears the forest and takes other steps for the development of land, ultimately makes it suitable for the purpose of cultivation, should be regarded as the owner of the land. In the *Divyavadana*⁶⁷ the king is advised by his minister thus: “the kingdom being protected yield taxes and revenues”, and refers to individual

farmers in large numbers, working hard and engaged in cultivation. *Mahavastu*⁶⁸ says that the king should protect his own kingdom of both towns and countryside and make his realm prosperous, developed, and populous by arranging rightly for the protection of his people through righteousness.

The above-mentioned system of ownership of land was even continued during the Gupta time. In the Gupta period such works as *Brihaspatismriti*, *Yajnavalkyasmriti*, *Naradasmriti*, *Katyayanasmti*, epigraphical evidence, and accounts of foreign travellers like Fa-Hien and Hiuen-Tsang and works of Kalidas and other throw light on the land system prevalent in the country.

The epigraphical records of the Post Mauryan period show that lands for agricultural usage were in private or individual ownership. In the Hathigumpha inscription⁶⁹ of king Kharavela of Kalinga, the king speaks of exempting the masons engaged by him from paying land revenue.⁶⁷ This means that masons engaged by the king had land and they were paying land revenue to the king. The Kanheri cave inscriptions of the Satavahana period refer that the subject of Satavahana rulers enjoyed individual ownership of land for the merchants and other lay worshippers could freely dispose of their land to the Buddhist monks and to Brahmanas.⁷⁰ Nasik cave inscriptions record the *dana* of the field by one Mugudasa. Another inscription mentions that Usavadata purchased the land from a Brahmana by paying 4,000 *karsapanas* and then donated it to Buddhist monks.⁷¹ The Inscription No. 20 records the gift of the village of Dhambhika by the Nasik people. Junar inscriptions refer to the *dana* of 15 *nivarttanas* of land and of the gift of small units of agricultural land owned by private individuals.⁷²

Out of 827 inscriptions of the Stupas 1, 2, and 3, temple 40, and other monuments at Sanchi, dated to about the first century B.C., over 200 of them record donations for the construction of stupas. The donors called themselves 'bankers' or chief merchants (*setthi*) merchants (*vanija*), householders (*grahapati*), clock-maker (*pavarika*) 'weaver', (*satika*) 'foremen of artisans' (*Avesani*), and mason (*vadhaki*).⁷¹ The land transactions that took place between the king and the private individuals (in their individual or private capacity) becomes clear from the legal texts. In these works, the written deeds are classified as the royal writs and the private person's deeds. The above rules of Dharamasastras and Dharmasutras, in connection with the land system have been greatly substantiated by the king to maintain his authority over the land on the one hand and to safeguard the rights of the private cultivators on the other hand. The inscriptions of the Gupta and post Gupta period also refer to the purchase or donation of a small piece of land by ordinary citizen. Even during the Mughal period, the land was mostly owned by private individuals and cultivators.

From the above discussion about the ownership of the land it became clear that in India from the time of *Rig-Veda* till the modern time, the land was held into three types of ownership: a. land owned by the community as a whole; b. king as a head of state or in the personification of state was the lord of the land but not the owner, he did not have any proprietary ship over the land. However, the state did own some land, forests, etc.; and c. the land was owned by individuals with

full rights over the land he owned, he was free to dispose of it according to his wish and state did not interfere in this right but protected the ownership of individual according to the laws prescribed by lawmakers and according to social custom and punished those who violated the rules.

REFERENCES:

- ¹ Medhatithi on Manu VIII, 197; The Mitakshara, II, 28.
- ² Pandey B.P., *The Economic conditions of Northern India* (C.550 AD to 950AD) Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, Depart of Ancient Indian Hisoty, Culture & Archaeology, University of Saugar, 1964, p. 15.
- ³ *Mahabharata's Anusasana Parva*.1991. tr. K.M. Ganguli. Pt I.ch 62. pp. 67ff.
- ⁴ *Matsya Purana*. 1972. tr. S.C. Vasu et.al. CCLXXXIII,1-19.
- ⁵ *Yajnavalkyasmriti*. 1930. ed. N.S. Ksiste. IX. 210; *Brihaspatismriti*. 1994. Tr. Jolly Julius. *Sacred Book of East*. XXXIII. VIII. 12,13-16; *Vishnumriti*. 1986. tr. Jolly Julius. *Sacred Book East*. VII. XXII. 3-4.
- ⁶ Yadav, Sima. 2005. *The Myth of Indian Feudalism*. B.R. Publication. New Delhi.
- ⁷ Yadav, Sima. 2005. *The Myth of Indian Feudalism*. B.R. Publication. New Delhi.
- ⁸ *Sukranitisara*. 1914. tr. B.K. Sarkar. I. 357-60.
- ⁹ *Santiparva of Mahabharata*.From *Mahabharata Text as Constituted in its Critical Edition*. eds. Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute. Poona. LXXVIII. 8-9; LXXV.19, LIX.17-21, LXV.2.
- ¹⁰ *Gautama Dharmasutra*. 1986. tr. G. Buhler. *Sacred Book East*. II,X.43; *Apastmaba Dharmasutra*, 1986. tr. G. Buhler. *Sacred Book of East*. II, II.11,28,1.
- ¹¹ *Arthasastra of Kautilya*. 1997, reprints. tr. R.P. Kangle. 3 vols.,II.II.24.
- ¹² *Ibid*. II. 6-17
- ¹³ *Ibid*. II. 1.3.4
- ¹⁴ *Brihaspatismriti*. 1994. tr. Jolly Julius. *Sacred Book East*.XXVI.119.
- ¹⁵ *Naradasmriti*.1994. reprints.tr. Jolly Julius. *Sacred Book East*. VII. 6-7, XVII.84.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid*. XI.22-26
- ¹⁷ *Raghuvamsa*of Kalidas. 1897. ed. S.P. Pandit and B.S. Misra, V.8 XVII, p. 65; *Abhijnanashakuntalam* of Kalidas. 1884. ed. N.B. Godbole, p.850, V.p.911, VI. p. 962-63.
- ¹⁸ *Brihaspatismriti*. 1994. Tr. Jolly Julius. *Sacred Book East*. XXVI.119.
- ¹⁹ *JaiminiMimamsadarshanawith Sabra Commentary*,1863-67. ed.B.I.Mahesachandra, VI.7.2.
- ²⁰ P.V. Kane: 1974. *History of Dharmasastra*, Vol. II. pp. 865-66.
- ²¹ *Manusmriti with the Mahabhasya of Medhatithi*.1999. reprints, ed. Ganganatha Jha. VIII. 99.
- ²² Madhava, *Nyayamalavistara*: p.358
- ²³ *Brihaspatismriti*, 1994. Tr. Jolly Julius. *Sacred Book East*.XXVI. XI. 22.
- ²⁴ *Smriti Chandrika* by Devannabhata.1914. ed. L. Srinivasacharya, III, *VyavaharaMayukha of Nilakantha*1926. ed. P.V. Kane. *Kanda. I. Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*. Poona.
- ²⁵ *Sukranitisara*. 1914. tr. B.K. Sarkar. I.88.
- ²⁶ Irfan, Habib. 1999, *The Agrarian System of Mughal India*. second revised edition. New Delhi: Oxford. pp. 123-127.
- ²⁷ *Ibid*. p. 123.
- ²⁸ *Ibid*. pp. 123-31.
- ²⁹ *Rigveda*. 1896-97. tr. T. R. H. Griffiths. 2 Vols. I. 25.16; III 62.16; V. 66.3

- ³⁰ *Rigveda*. 1896-97. tr. T. R. H. Griffiths. 2 Vols. I. 25.16; III 62.16; V. 66.3.
- ³¹ *Ayodhyakanda from Ramayana Of Valmiki*. ed. Shastri Shrinivas KattiMudholkar. 7 Vols. Gita Press; *Mahabharata's Vanaparva*. 1927-1966. from, *Mahabharata Text as Constituted in its Critical Edition*. ed. Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute. Poona.
- ³² *Jatakas*. 1913. ed. E.B. Cowell, I. p.194, 240, 388; III. p. 149; IV. p. 250. 326.
- ³³ *Kunala Jataka*.1913. ed. E.B. Cowell. V. p. 412.
- ³⁴ *Jatakas*. 1913. ed. E.B. Cowell. IV. pp. 359, 217, 349.
- ³⁵ *Gautama Dharmasutra* .1986. reprints.tr. G. Buhler. *Sacred Book East*. II. XII.19-21. 28.
- ³⁶ *Arthasastra of Kautilya* .1997,reprints. tr. R.P. Kangle. 3 vols.II. 29-30.31, III.10, II.34.
- ³⁷ *Manusmriti with the Mahabhasya of Medhatithi*.1999. reprints. ed. GanganathaJha.VIII. 237-41.
- ³⁸ *Rigveda*, 1896-97. tr. T.R.H. Griffiths.2 Vols, I. 110.5, VIII. 54-55.
- ³⁹ *Rigveda*, 1896-97. tr. T. R. H. Griffiths.2 Vols VII. 49.2, X.33.6, III 31.15.
- ⁴⁰ *Chhandogya Upanishada*.1993. reprints. ed. F.M. Muller. *Sacred Book East*. Vo. I VII. 24.2.
- ⁴¹ *Atharvaveda*, 1968. tr. R.T.H. Griffith. 2 vols.IV. III. 30
- ⁴² *Krishna Yajurveda*,1914. tr. A.B. Keith. II. 6.1.111.1.9.
- ⁴³ *Aitareya Brahmana*, 1879. ed. T Weber tr. Martin Haug. V.14.
- ⁴⁴ *TaittiriyaSamhita* .1995. reprints. ed. F.M. Muller. *Sacred Book East*. 11.6.1
- ⁴⁵ *Satpatha Brahmana*. 1993. reprints. ed A. Weber. *Sacred Book East*. XIII. 6.2.8, XIII. 7.113.15; *Chhandogya Upanishads*. 1993. reprints. tr. F.M. Muller. *Sacred Book East*. VII. 24.2.
- ⁴⁶ *Atharvaveda*. 1968. tr. R.T.H. Griffith. 2 volsIV. IV. 22.2.
- ⁴⁷ *Atharvaveda*. 1968. tr. R.T.H. Griffith. 2 volsIV. 22.2 III. 29.1.
- ⁴⁸ *Ayodhyakanda from Ramayana Of Valmiki*. ed. Shastri Shrinivas KattiMudholkar. 7 Vols. Gita Press; *Sabhaparva I.III. IV, Vanaparva XXXII. Of Mahabharata*,From, *Mahabharata Text as Constituted in its Critical Edition*. eds. Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute. Poona.
Santiparva of Mahabharata.LXIX. 25; LXXI. 14-16; LXXXVII, 14-15, 18-21; 23,35-40; 10-12; LXXXIX 24; CXIX. 17; CXX. 43-44. From *Mahabharata Text as Constituted in its Critical Edition*. eds. Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute. Poona:
- ⁴⁹ *Jataka*, 1913. ed. E.B. Cowell, III. p. 358; IV. p. 359, 217; IV. p. 281
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid*. IV. p. 281.
- ⁵¹ Agrawal, V.S.1969. *PaninikalinBharatavarsha*. III, 2.21, IV 2.23.
- ⁵² *GautamaDharmasutra*, 1986. tr. G. Buhler. *Sacred Book East*. II. XI. 7.21.24.
- ⁵³ *BaudhayanaDharmasutra*, 1991. tr. G. Buhler, *Sacred Book East*. XIV. I.10.19.7-16.
- ⁵⁴ *Gautam Dharmasutra*, 1986. tr. G. Buhler. *Sacred Book East*. XII. 39.
- ⁵⁵ *VasishtaDharmasutra*, 1991. tr. G. Buhler. *Sacred Book East*. XIV. XVI. 16; *Gautama Dharmasutra*, 1986. tr. G. Buhler. *Sacred Book East*. X. 39-42.
- ⁵⁶ *Ibid*, XVI. 15.19.
- ⁵⁷ *Gautama Dharmasutra*, 1986. Tr. G. Buhler, *Sacred Book East*. XIV. XII. 37-39; *VasishtaDharmasutra*, 1991. Tr. G. Buhler, *Sacred Book East*. XIV. XVII. 16-18.
- ⁵⁸ *Gautama Dharmasutra*, 1986. Tr. G. Buhler. *Sacred Book East*. XXVIII. 4-17; *Baudhayana Dharmasutra*, 1991. Tr. G. Buhler, *Sacred Book East*. XIVII. 2.32; *VasishtaDharmasutra*, 1991. Tr. G. Buhler, *Sacred Book East*. XIVXVIII. 42.
- ⁵⁹ *Arthasastra. of Kautilya*. 1997,reprints. Tr. R.P. Kangle. 3 vols., III.8.17.9.II.35
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid*. II.24, 35.
- ⁶¹ *Ibid*. III. 1,5,6,8,9,10,15,16,17.
- ⁶² *Manusmriti with the Mahabhasya of Medhatithi*.1999. Reprint, ed. Ganganatha Jha,IX. 44-45, 49-53.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, VIII. 245-49; 253-60; IX. 29.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* VIII. 117-120, XI 14-15.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.* VIII. 239-41.

⁶⁶ *Milinda Panho.* 1993. reprints. tr. T.W. Rhys David. *Sacred Book East.* XXXV. XXXVI. p.213, 147.

⁶⁷ *Divyavadana.*1886. ed. E.B. Cowell and R.A.Neil.pp.562-63, 463

⁶⁸ *Mahavastu.* ed. F.M. Muller, tr. J. Legge, S.Beal. *Sacred Book East.* .XVI. XVIII. XIX. I. 271-282.

⁶⁹ *Epigraphia Indica*, XX. pp. 88-92

⁷⁰ H. Luder. *Bharut Inscription.* vol. II. part II.New Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India,nos. 1000, 1024, 1130.

⁷¹ *Epigraphia Indica*, VIII. Nos. 8.10. 20. p. 59-96.

⁷² H. Luder, *Bharut Inscription.* vol. II. part II. New Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India, nos. 1163, 2167.

SOCIO- RELIGIOUS LIFE IN 7TH CENTUARY A.D.: A REAPPRAISAL

Jasmer Singh¹, Dr Tabish Hashmi²

¹Research Scholar, LPU, Punjab

²Associate Professor, LPU, Punjab

According to historical accounts from the time period, the religious climate in Northern India was far from ideal in the seventh century. Different religions and beliefs existed. Religion has lost its lustre due to empty rituals and unquestioning trust. Sincere dedication was replaced by empty chatter. Bana provides an inventory of the several religious and philosophical groups represented in the hermitage of Divakar Mitra in the Vindhyan forest. There were atheists like the Lokayatikas (Charvakas), philosophers like the Kapilas, Kanadas, and Svetambaras, and various sects of Jains like the Arhates (Digambar) and the Senapati's (Svetambara's); various classes of Brahminical ascetics like the Paturabhiksus (naked ascetics), the Markarian (Privrata), the Var (Buddhists). However, the fact that so many different religious groups can coexist in one location is a strong indicator of the era's prevailing ethos of acceptance. Jina is a name of Buddha, hence the local Buddhists are called Jains. However, the original term for those who are now known as Jains was Arhatas. Vaishnava Bhagavatas were a separate sect from Pancharatres, who were distinct from Varie or Brahmacharis, who were distinct from upanishadas, who were distinct from Maskaris. There are several seemingly related sects and schools, yet it is hard to determine their precise differences. Perhaps all we can do is acknowledge that there are distinctions.

Arata, Pasupata, Parasara, and the other retuses of the Manitora Jain camp were eager to see Harsha. Bana counted the Parasari ascetic Sumati, the Jain ascetic Viradava, and the Maakeri immaculate Sumati Imraculaka as companions. The hermitage of Mahaaveta housed female ascetics from the Armata, Krishna, Vieravasa, Avalokitesvara, and Virici sects. Sukans, the minister of King Tarapida, hosted members of the Saivites, Buddhists, and Kahapanaka (Digibar Jains). There were several ascetic sects throughout history, and Hiuen Tseng details many of them. Some of them are sporting peacock tails, he quips. Some wear a necklace made of human skulls (possibly Kapalikas); others go completely nude (Nirgranthas); still others wrap themselves in grass or boards; still others shave their heads or trim their moustaches; still others mat their aide hair and create a top-knot oil; their clothing is not uniform and comes in a wide range of colours. The ashes were used by some as a cosmetic. The Kapalika sect and the followers of Durga were also there, as were siva and sakti worshipers. Different groups, such as the Bhūtas, Nirgranthas, Kapalikes, and Jutikas or Chudinkas (ascetics with matted hair), have distinct configurations. There is a clear divide between the Sanibayas and the Vaideaikas. The Chudinkas dress in dirt and consume rotten food. The fact that people of different faiths, intellectual inclinations, and orders of ascetics coexisted without any major conflicts during this time period is attested to by the statements of these two historical figures.

These comments point to the fact that both Hinduism and Buddhism have several sects and sub-branches. Saivism and Bhagavatism were the two most influential schools within Hinduism. The cult of the goddess, known as Saktism, was also widely practised. Several secondary deities and even inanimate things were still honoured. Abhidhamma classifies Buddhism into its two primary

schools, Hinayana and Mahayana, whereas Vinayas classifies it into its eighteen philosophical schools. There were only two subgroups within Jainism: the Svetambar (who wore all white) and the Digambara (ascetics going without any garments). There were no now known subsets of Jainism.

It seems that Saivism was the dominant religion at the time. The Maitrakas of Valabhi,ⁱ Sadanka of Bengal, Bhaskaravarman of Kimaruba and Sailobberas of Orissaware all Saivites, Harsha was a devotee of Siva before he became an upasaka of Buddhism.ⁱⁱ All but two of the Waitraka monarchs identified themselves as Parama Haheśvaras on their copper plates. The royal seal included an ox, one of Siva's vehicles. Their coins all bore the name Triula. The Maitrakas believed themselves to be descended from Nitra, one of the four main disciples of the Pasupata sect's founding deity, Lakulisa. Hiuen Tsang tells us that Sasanka, a devout Saivaite, persecuted Buddhists. The gold seal of Sasanka depicts Siva riding a bull.ⁱⁱⁱ Bhaskaravarman had vowed that he would not bow his head to any god except Siva. His Midhnapura plate supports this fact.^{iv} Bana claims that Harsha's forefathers practised Saivism and Tantrism. Siva (Rudra) was honoured among the other gods in the royal palace during Harsha's grandfather's reign. Prior to beginning his conquests, Harsha prayed earnestly to the lovable Nilalohita (Rudra-Siva). Harsha's plays Ratnavali and Priyadaraika both have benedictory passages in which the principal deities of Brahmanism—including Siva (also known as Sambhu and Hāra—and other gods—are acknowledged. On day three of the Prayag quaternary assembly, Harsha set up an image of Siva. The above details demonstrate that Harsha maintained his faith in his ancestral religion practically until the conclusion of his reign, when he was converted to Buddhism. The statement in Harsha-carita is the only reliable source we have about Harsha's conversion to Buddhism, so keep that in mind. Even if we do locate a Buddha, he would have been classified by then as a manifestation of Vishnu.

According to Hiuen Tsang, many people in the provinces of Sindh, including Jalandhara, Ahikshetra, Kapithe, Kin, akubja, naras, laws, and Nahedwar-pura, were Pupata sect members.^v Plenty of asupatas may be found in Valawa, Maheswarapura, and Sindh. He also says that Takka was home to hundreds of Deva-temples. Valabhi, Prayaga, Baneras, and Kamrupa As Siva and Vishnu are the two most important deities in Brahmanism, it stands to reason that the majority of these temples were devoted to them. Hiuen Tsang claims that these towns were home to tens of thousands of Pasupatas, or followers of Brahmanical sects. At Benaras, he came to a massive temple dedicated to Siva, where the God was enshrined in a metal statue that towered over 100 feet into the air and inspired awe in its 10,000 devotees. The city of Ujjain was especially well-known for its Mahakala Temple. Bana discusses it often in his Kadabari. Nearly all residents of Thanewar worshipped Siva. Bana performed the Panchtopachara rite in front of an image of Siva before he left for Harsha's palace. On the banks of the Sona River, Savitri was wed to Sivalinga.

All of these examples point to the worship of a linga or image of Siva. Various peoples prayed to him under different names, including Siva, Sambhu, Maheswara, Hāra, hadreswar, retakeshvara, Kaleswara, Pasupati, Rudra, and Kāpālikeshwara. Siva was most often venerated as Kapalikeswar or Mahakaleswara, names that refer to either his terrifying or his gentle forms. The followers of Kapalikeswar, or Kapalikas, had several unusual beliefs. They engaged in some quite terrifying rituals. Skull garlands, to be precise.^{vi} They believed in a group of demons who worshipped Mahakala (Siva) and needed to be appeased with human sacrifices or oblations of the flesh of the dead; Mahakala and his lieutenant Vetals, the chief of demons, needed to be appeased with a sacrifice in fire kindled in the mouth of a corpse on the burial ground. For a Kapalika, the pinnacle

of success was to achieve the status of a Vidyadhara, a claimed blessed creature who serves Siva. In Bana's telling, Pushbhuti, the progenitor of the Thanesar-based Vardhana line, helped Hairavacharya become a Vidyadhara, which catapulted him to the throne. Although such tales may not be true, they are a testament to the bizarre superstitions of the Siva cult, which was widespread throughout the nation. This kind of Tantric practise originated in the south, most likely in the Indian state of Andhra. The Andhras were angry with the ceremonies' top priests.

The Sakti sect was closely related to the Siva religion and shared many of its practises. Worship of the related deities Chandika, Durga, or Mahakali was also practised by the Dravidians and the Andhras, and its superstitious rituals were not much better than those of Kahaan. While travelling through the woods to reach Ujjain, Candrapida came upon a temple of the goddess Chandika. The temple was home to an elderly Dravid.^{vii} At times, the queen of King Sudraka would spend the night at the temple of Chandika, from whom she hoped to be bestowed with a son. As Prabhakaravardhana lay dying, an Andhra was offering sacrifices to the goddess Chandika. The offering of alcoholic beverages and animal sacrifices in honour of the goddess Durga (Candika) seems to have been customary. Human sacrifice was a typical practise for the gooddens. Hiuen Tsang was captured by pirates on his way from Ayodhya to Ayomukha; they planned to sacrifice him as an offering to the goddess Durga. It was pure chance that kept him alive. Natanga, a Sabar loader, served as the Trisula of Durga, whose robes were perpetually dripping with buffalo blood.^{viii} He utilised a variety of weapons to splatter Durga with her own blood. The Sabaras also sacrificed humans to appease their deity. Durga statues often depict her with a sword (Khadga). It is reported that Durga's sword was as terrifying as the 48 fangs of a rhino in the Vindhya jungle.

As a goddess of compassion, Durga was highly revered. When Queen Vilasvati worshipped Durga, she offered Khira, cakes, maize, flowers, chupa, etc. Durga is revered as Siva's spouse. She was revered for her purifying and enlightening powers and for the destruction of sin, happiness, protection, murder of enemies, and ignorance she was believed to bring. Devi, Siva, Durg, Parvati, kali, Ambika, Katyayani, Uma, Himavati, havini, Bhadrakali, Geuri, Kenna, Candik, Kalevatri, Arya, Sarvmi, Rutrini, and Owhere were just a few of her many names. The names Kottavi (a horrible version of Durga), Pinidurajja (Arya Devi), and Sankarika appear on copper plates from the time of the Maitraka monarchs (feminine of Sankara). The names suggest that sakta and Saiva religions were both commonly practised in Saurashtra and Gujarat.

Vaisnavism followed after Saivism. In Harsha's day, the Bhagavata religion had already become very popular. The Vishnupurana, written about the eighth century AD, and the Bhagavata Purana, which dates back to the first half of the seventh century AD, are both credited with spreading devotion to Vishnu. In the Vishnu-Purana, Viaknu is proclaimed supreme, and holy Krishna and his marvellous exploits are recounted. There are a total of twelve volumes in the Bhagavata purana, but the tenth, which is dedicated to Krishna's storey, is the most popular.

Bana cites Bhagavati and includes Vishnu in his pantheon of Gods' laudatory remarks. In addition, he details Krishna's heroic exploits as recorded in the Puranas.^{ix} Hiuen Tsang makes hazy references to hundreds of Java-temples and thousands of devotees of diverse factions of Brahmanism. He claims there were thousands of devotees from various Deva sects spread throughout hundreds of Deva Temples in Tekka, Sthanesvars, Srughna, Kanyakubja, Prayaga, Sravasti, Benaras, Bengal, Kenarupa, Malawa, Atali, and Valabbi.^x It's possible that many of the worshippers were Vaisnavites and that some of the temples were devoted to the deity Vishnu.

Evidence from 5th and 6th century A.D. Gupta inscriptions and coinage shows that several Gupta emperors proclaimed themselves to be Parama Bhagavata and were staunch advocates of Bhagavatism (great devotees of God Vishnu). Vishnu, Laxmi, and their associated conch, chakra, and lotus emblems are all shown on their coins.^{xi} Bhagavatism grew in influence throughout the Gupta period thanks to the support of the royal family. Evidence suggests it gained even more power in the seventh century A.D. According to the inscription on his Maliya copper plate (571-72 A.D.), Maharaja Dharasena I was a Parama Bhagavata, although the majority of his fellow Maitraka kings worshipped the deity Siva. Vishnu is shown dozing off on the snake Ananta as other deities look on at the Dasvatara temple in Deogadh, Jhansi district, perhaps in the second half of the sixth century A.D. The same may be said for the similarly skillfully carved sculpture of Nara-Narayana that can be seen in the same temple. According to a stele inscription found in Sarnath, which dates back to the 7th century A.D. and mentions King Prakataditya, the deity Muradvies vis was honoured by the construction of a temple dedicated to him. The Athead stone inscription of Adityasena (650 A.D.) mentions the king's construction of a magnificent Visnu temple. Harsha's friend and likely Vaistinava father Madhavagupta is said to have held a discus in his hand like Vishnu. These examples show that Vaishnava and Saiva religions were both widely practised in Northern India about the year 700 A.D.^{xii}

Bana describes the presence of the Pancharatrikas and the Bhagavatas at Divakaramitra's hermitage, among other religious groups. According to Fuhrer Pancharatri, the as had unique yoga rituals, crafted Vishnu statues and built temples in accordance with their own standards, and held firm to the concept of Vishnu's reincarnation. While the Pancharatrika sect has all but vanished, Bhagavatism has become the norm. The rock cut temples in udayagiri (Bhopal area), Badami, and harpura (anetern Bengal) have some extremely excellent sculptures depicting the Boar (Varah), Man-lion (Narismha), and Dwarf incarnations (Vaman), all of which are dated to the 6th and 7th centuries A.D. A Vishnu-temple built somewhere in the 7th century A.D. may be found in the little town of Kadwar, not far from Somanatha Fäten (Sauratra). Boar's idol is the only one left from the original 10, although reliefs of the other incarnations can be seen in the temple, so it's likely that there were previously more. The absence of any depictions of Krishina there may suggest that at this time Krishna was being seen as the primary incarnation of the god.

As early as the sixth or seventh century AD, the Krishna mythology seems to have been a crucial part of vaishnavism in Bengal. The sculptures at Paharpura depicting different events from Krishna's life, such as his uprooting the twin Arjuna trees and slaying the demon, are the most significant archaeological evidence. Images of Govardhanadharana and Kaliyamardana may be seen on reliefs in the famed caves of Mora, which have been dated to the eighth century AD. Several stories from Krishna's youth were recounted in Harivasapurana, written by Jinasenasuri during the time of the Maitraka monarchs in Gujarat (around the end of the 7th century A.D.). This indicates that the Krishna religion was widely practised about the year 700 A.D. The devout and loving nature of Krishna worship was emphasised by Bhagavat Purana and Bhagavatism. Consequently, it quickly swept over the nation. There may not have been a Radha cult at this time. There is no mention of it in any era source. However, the belief that Earth is Vishnu's consort, Sakti, or Valéhnavi, was widely held by that time.

This in no way disproves the existence of Rama worship. One of the most read texts was Bhattikavya or Rvanavadha, a poem written by Bhatti in the first quarter of the 7th century A.D.,

during the reign of Harasena III. It recounts the adventures of Rama, as described in the Ramayana. However, historical evidence points to Krishna, the supreme manifestation of Vishnu, as the principal deity of Vaishnavaita.

The sun was considered the third most important deity in Hinduism. Adoration of it predates even the Rigveda. In the epics Vishnu-Purana and Bhavishya Purana, the Sura sect (the sun-worshipping group) is referenced. Sun worship in the seventh century A.D., however, had nothing in common with solar worship in Vedic times. The Scythians most likely introduced the age's sun god to India. Sun god statues, as recommended by Varahamihira in *Brhatashita*, should be erected during the reign of Magas.^{xiii} Samb, Krishna's son and the narrator of the *Bhavishyapurana*, is credited for inviting the Persian sun worshipers to India. A Bhojaka astrologer was called to the palace of Prabhakara Vardhana to witness the birth of Harsha. The Bhojaka Suryamitra was allowed to continue the giving of a village to the sun temple, as shown by the Deo-Baranaka inscription of Jivita Gupta II (second part of the seventh century A.D.). The aforementioned examples demonstrate that Persian culture had a significant impact on the Sun-cult of the time.

In this era, sun worship seems to have been widespread. Adityabhaktas were the name of the followers who worshipped the deity (devotees of the Sun). Harsha and his ancestors were shown as fervent Sun worshipers on his copper seal from Sonapat. Harsha worshipped the Sun with Siva and Buddha.^{xiv} It is reported by Bana that Prabhakaravardhana was a devout follower of the Sun god. With due rites, he honoured the Sun god. Despite being Saivites, the Vacataka kings held the sun in the highest regard. Sun-worship seems to have influenced the subsequent Vacataka dynasty, as shown by names like Siladitya, Sinhaditya, Vinayaditya, Bhenusakti, and Adityasakti. Land in the Snuragatra hamlet of Bhadranykn was donated to the Sun temple by Siladitya Harmaditya (611 A.D.). The Alinn copper plate of filidity VII, dated 766–67 A.D., and the Malaya copper plate, dated 571–72 A.D., both make reference to Sun worship, demonstrating its widespread use at this time.

The Sun Temple of Mulaathanapura (Multan) was an architectural marvel. Hiuen Teang claims that the miraculously powerful figure is made of gold and decorated with valuable stones. A thousand religious visitors from all around the world prayed here nonstop.^{xv} He writes that at the city of Kanyakubja, devotees numbering in the thousands visited the magnificent temples dedicated to the sun and Mahesvara. Bana claims that Ujjainis are also Sun worshippers. He also talks about female Sun worshippers. Dr. Basham is correct in his assessment that the Moon (Chandra) was only a symbol of Siva compared to the Sun. The Moon was revered as one of the nine planets rather than by its own cult.^{xvi}

Many deities, including Kumara, Kubera, Kandeve, Indra, Agni (fire), and Brihaspati, were honoured. The Hindu god Kumara (sometimes spelled Kartikeya) had widespread worship. As has previously been mentioned, it was standard practise to honour several deities, including Durg, Katrikadevi, Katyayani, etc. Many people revered Ganga as a river deity. According to Hiuen Tsang, the Indians thought that the Ganga's water could wash away any and all sins because of the river's sanctity.^{xvii} It should be emphasised that Ganapati was not a widely worshipped divinity in his period. The copper plates from this century don't even mention his name. Peepal and other trees were still worshipped, and so were many types of implements used in the workplace.

The Gupta emperors had resumed Vedic sacrifices, and they were practised throughout this period. Horse and other gory sacrifices may have been abandoned since Harsha's Buddhist leanings made it illegal to slaughter inside his dominion, but regular non-violent Agnihotra seems to have

persisted. Before Bana began his life-changing trip to the court of Emperor Harsha, he participated in a series of religious rites, from which a cloud of smoke rose. Bana thinks everyone should offer sacrifices to the Pancha Bhuta, Manuaya, Pitru, Deva, and Brahma. According to Bana's sources, all of these kinds of sacrifices were common throughout that time period. Similarly to how we may worship a deity, Brahmanas and cows were regarded as deities. It was an act of tremendous devotion to provide alma for a Brahmana.

Although Buddhism was in decline by the seventh century A.D., it was still split into the more prominent Mahayana and Hinayana schools, with as many as eighteen sub-schools. Hiuen Tsang notes that adherents to these schools kept to themselves and that tensions ran high as a result. The 18 institutions all said they were the best in the country academically.

Hiuen Teeng's concept of Mahayana is hazy at best. He argued that Mahayana's essential tenets were samadhi (concentration) and prajna (intelligence). It's easy to understand and follow I-definition, Teing's but it's not based on any scientific evidence. He makes the observation that Mahayaniets are those who worship Bodisatvas and study the Mahayana scriptures (Mahayana sutras), whereas Hineyaniata are those who do not. The following items are listed by Hiuen Taeng:

- I. Infinite Buddhas and Bodhisattvas are endowed with countless qualities. They built shrines to their gods in monasteries, where they performed ritualised acts of devotion.
- II. When compared to inayonists, mahhnyiats did not seek Arbata (Nirvana, Salvation). Using the same methods of dedication, severity, and responsibility that had led them to Bodhisatva status, they hoped to one day achieve Buddhahood. They rejected the use of physical violence. They advocated for tying the knot. As a result, Mahayana is analogous to the Bhagavad-gita. Mahayanists' devotion to Buddha resembled that of the Bagavatas to Krishna to some extent.

Nagarjuna, the great scholar of the dhyamika school, and Aanga and his younger brother Vasubandhu, the great priests of the Yogacara school, were the two primary figures in the history of Mahayana (5th century A.D.). For example, Nagarjuna's Adhyamika Sūtra is regarded the foundational work of hyamika sahoor, whereas Kanga's Yogacara-himisstre is the authoritative text on Yogacha. Hiuen Tsang attended classes taught by learned monks at Nalanda on this subject. In the Yogacara tradition, Hiuen Tsang was a devoted adherent.

In addition to these two major schools, Hiuen Teang describes another 18 schools, the Astadasa Nikaya, each of which was primarily based on a separate school of Buddhism. This list contains some of the most notable academic institutions.

It was by far the largest and most attended institution of its kind. Theravada was its ancient name. Southern states were hit the worst. There were supposedly 20,000 thevira monks living in Ceylon, as reported by Huen Tsang. Thank you for your honesty, Sematáta. Sthaviras were found in Kalinga, Broach, and Saurashtra.^{xviii} In this case, I-Tsang agrees with what Hiuen Tseng has said. Both Ceylon and southern India, he says, were important Sthavirna hubs. Some Sthavira monks lived in Sindh in addition to Magadha. The far North has almost no Sthaviras. For Sthaviras, there were three distinct groups.

Sarvāstāvada was the second major institution after Veda. The far northern regions of Kashmira and Mungera, to name a few, were where its adherents were concentrated.^{xix} A large

number of people in Magadha and central India, as I-Tsing notes, were fans of it. However, Hiuen Tsang only cites the far north as its major centre; such an exaggerated claim from I-Teing suggests that he did not visit all of the territories in central India. The four branches of Sarvastavada were I the original Mula Sarvistavada, (ii) the Dharma Gupta school, (iii) the Mahlessaka school, and (iv) the Kasyapiya school. There were adherents of it in Ahikshetra, Karmasuvarna, Malava, and Sindh. Hiuen Tsang and I-Tsang are on the same page on this, thus we may take their words as gospel. There were also adherents in Magadha and Southern India. The Rajyasri monarchy was influenced by this educational system. The division into four sub-branches was another notable feature.

Its Lolottaray offshoot was a popular destination. Hiuen Tsang saw numerous Lokottaraved devotees at Beniyans.^{xx} According to I-Teing, its adherents could be found all across India, even in Magadha and the centre of the country. There were seven different forks to take. The Tripitaka volumes used in these classrooms made them easily distinguishable. I-Teing notes that there were disagreements amongst the schools on a variety of issues and that it was unclear which of the four schools was associated with the Mahayana and which with the Hinayana. The opposite is true. It is well known that the Hinayana school of thought was affiliated with Sthavira, Sammitiya, and Sarvastavadin. It seems that under the reign of I-Tsing, traditional differences may have been lost and followers of various schools followed either Hinayana or Mahayana depending on personal preference. The 18 schools listed in Buddhist literature did not genuinely exist. Number eighteen is never mentioned in any Chinese literature.

Rhys Davida has compiled a list of the total number of monks living in monasteries in India and Ceylon using data provided by Hiuen Tsang. About two lakhs and twelve thousand is the approximate sum.^{xxi} The list given by Dr. R. K. Mookerji is mainly based on that of Rhys Davids, though it is slightly different.^{xxii} In general, the following may be said about the distribution in Northern India and Southern India.

The aforementioned numbers suggest that Hinayinists were bigger in number, even if Mahayana was gaining popularity at the period.

There's something off with this Hiuen Tsang survey. He had strong Buddhist beliefs. It's likely that he exaggerated the number of monks and monasteries he encountered due to relying on secondhand accounts. In addition, he was never specific about the number of monasteries, leading one to conclude that he was not certain in what he said or heard. His storey provides us an exaggerated but yet typical Buddhist vision of the state of the religion as it was practised in Northern India in the second part of the seventh century.

Overall, Buddhism was declining throughout this time period. Once a bustling Buddhist hub, Kapilvastu now lies in ruins. Similarly forlorn was the land of Kushinagar. And the same thing happened to Vainali and vriiji. Few monks could be found in any of these locations. However, Magadha was home to several Buddhists, in addition to numerous Deva-temples and people of many other faiths.

The situation, however, was not quite as bleak as it seemed at first glance. The Nalanda monasteries. There was further success in the Valabhi, Mahabodhi, Tilhe (present-day Tillars, west of Nalanda), and Sindhi languages. Roughly a hundred monasteries and ten thousand priests may be found in Sindh. Famous monasteries with hundreds of monks might also be found in Kashmir, Kinyakubja, and Malawa. Bana claims that the Divakaramitra hermitage is a prototypical international monastic community with members from a wide variety of religious traditions.^{xxiii}

Most of the monasteries had substantial endowments, but there were exceptions. Both corruption and debasement occurred. King Mahendravikrama, a contemporary of Harsha, wrote the comedic play *Lattaviles*, which shows some of the immoral behaviour of monks and nuns. In Hiuen Tang, we learn that Harsha expelled from his presence and the land any monks whose moral behaviour was infamous. Visiting between priests and nuns is forbidden by law, according to I-Teing. Buddhism, like every other religion of its day, was rife with superstitions. The monasteries all had statues of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas put up. The Hindu gods were revered in the temples with the same unwavering devotion and strict rituals. While condemning the belief of heretics, Hiuen Tsang writes that relics (sariras) possess great abilities and they throw brilliant light at night. For this reason, both blind faith and debasement grew. Moreover, the Ninjas launched a vicious assault on the Buddhist monk. It was damaging to Buddhist beliefs. Some Buddhist ideas were incorporated into Hinduism. Subsequently, the Buddhist religion suffered.

Despite the fact that Jainism had been practised in the nation for some time by this point, it was still confined to a very narrow niche. Despite suffering a severe blow during the Gupta era (when Brahminism saw a renaissance), it remained as popular as ever among the upper and middle classes. In the area around Taxila, Hiuen Tsang encountered monks from the Vetambra and Digambara sects. The Digambara Nirgranth could be discovered in both Fundra Vardhana and Samatata, but in smaller quantities.^{xxiv}

According to the results of the poll, Hinduism was the only major religion in the far northeastern state of Assam, while Buddhism was the only major religion in the far northern region of Kapiian. Except for a small minority, Hinduism and Buddhism both claimed almost similar numbers of followers throughout the remainder of the nation. There is something off about this. According to the numbers cited by Hiuen Tsang, the Hindu population was larger than the Buddhist one. In general, interactions between the two parties were positive. The tolerance of the Gupta period was not preserved, despite the fact that both faiths were equally idolatrous. In contrast to the overall tone of his policy and his widespread prejudice against Hinayana and other religious groups, Harsha displayed some bigotry and intolerance in the assembly of Kanauj by angrily proclaiming that anybody would speak against Hiuen Tsang would have his tongue cut off. Harsha's support for Buddhism seems to have been sporadic, and it appears that he did not give it his whole attention. His broad stance did not include this. In the Frayoga meeting, which followed the Kanauj assembly, the king's generosity was extended to all people without regard to their social status, religious affiliation, or ethnic background. All the impoverished, orphans, and destitute, as well as all the remanas and Brahmins of the five Indies, were invited by the king. Sagarika was an embodiment of intolerance in Hiuen Tsang's world. He was responsible for the destruction of several Buddhist temples as well as the cutting down of the sacred Bodhi tree. Jains were persecuted by the Pallava ruler Mahendra Vikrama. In contrast, both Dhruvasena the Second, a Buddhist, and bhaskaravarman, a devout Saivite, were open-minded and tolerant.^{xxv} We might draw the conclusion that the religious policy of ancient Indian monarchs was elevated by a spirit of tolerance.

ⁱ Indian.Antiquary, Vol. VI, pp.109-110.

ⁱⁱ Epi.Indica., Vol. VI, p. 211.

- ⁱⁱⁱ Allan J., Catalogue of coins of the Gupta Dynasties and of Sasanka, King of Gauda, London, 1914, pp. 147-148.
- ^{iv} Epi.Indica., Vol. XII, p. 65
- ^v Beal Samuel. Travels of Hiouen – Thasang Vol. I-IV, Calcutta 1958. pp. 209, 225, 229, 232, 291, 452, 461, 464.
- ^{vi} Watters T., On Yuan Chawang's Travels in India ed. by T.W.R. Davids and S.W. Bushell 2 Vols, London, 1904, 1905. p.148.
- ^{vii} Aggarwal Kadamabari, Bana, ed. by V. S. Aggarwala, Patana, 1954, pp.334-351
- ^{viii} Aggarwal Kadamabari, Bana, ed. by V. S. Aggarwala, Patana, 1954, p. 49
- ^{ix} Aggarwal Kadamabari, Bana, ed. by V. S. Aggarwala, Patana, 1954, p. 32.
- ^x Beal Samuel. Travels of Hiouen – Thasang Vol. I-IV, Calcutta 1958. pp. 201, 205, 217, 232, 251, 259, 291.
- ^{xi} Allan J., Catalogue of coins of the Gupta Dynasties and of Sasanka, King of Gauda, London, 1914, pp. 144, 149.
- ^{xii} Epi. Indica, Vol. XV, p. 301.
- ^{xiii} Brihat-samhita by Varahamihira Eng. Trans. by H. Kern parts 1 to 5 (Relevant portions), London, 1870-75 ed. with Eng. Trans. and notes by V. Subrahmanya Sastri and M. Remakrishna Bhat, 2 Vols. Bangalore, 1947, Chapter-60, Verse 19.
- ^{xiv} Dharaiya R.K., The Political, Social and Economic Conditions of northern india during the first half of the seventh century A.D. (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis), S.V. Vidhyapeeth. Vallabhvidyanagar, p. 315.
- ^{xv} Dharaiya R.K., The Political, Social and Economic Conditions of northern india during the first half of the seventh century A.D. (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis), S.V. Vidhyapeeth. Vallabhvidyanagar, p. 316.
- ^{xvi} Basham A. L., The wonder that was India, London. 1954, p.313.
- ^{xvii} Dharaiya R.K., The Political, Social and Economic Conditions of northern india during the first half of the seventh century A.D. (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis), S.V. Vidhyapeeth. Vallabhvidyanagar, p. 317.
- ^{xviii} Dharaiya R.K., The Political, Social and Economic Conditions of northern india during the first half of the seventh century A.D. (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis), S.V. Vidhyapeeth. Vallabhvidyanagar, p. 320.
- ^{xix} Watters T., On Yuan Chawang's Travels in India ed. by T.W.R. Davids and S.W. Bushell 2 Vols, London, 1904, 1905. p.259.
- ^{xx} Watters T., On Yuan Chawang's Travels in India ed. by T.W.R. Davids and S.W. Bushell 2 Vols, London, 1904, 1905. p.300.
- ^{xxi} J.R.A.S, 1891, pp.418-420.
- ^{xxii} J.R.A.S., 1891, pp. 418-420.

^{xxiii} Dharaiya R.K., The Political, Social and Economic Conditions of northern india during the first half of the seventh century A.D. (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis), S.V. Vidhyapeeth. Vallabhvidyanagar, p. 323.

^{xxiv} Dharaiya R.K., The Political, Social and Economic Conditions of northern india during the first half of the seventh century A.D. (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis), S.V. Vidhyapeeth. Vallabhvidyanagar, p. 325.

^{xxv} Dharaiya R.K., The Political, Social and Economic Conditions of northern india during the first half of the seventh century A.D. (Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis), S.V. Vidhyapeeth. Vallabhvidyanagar, p. 326.



THE BHOPAL SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Promoted by the Catholic Archdiocese of Bhopal, NAAC Re-accredited Autonomous College under the UGC Scheme with 'A' Grade (CGPA 3.27)



CERTIFICATE

This is to Certify that

Mr. Jasmer Lohan

of

C.R.S. University, Jind,(India)

has Presented a Paper Titled : **Analysing the Socio-Religious Conditions of Northern India in 7th Century AD**

in the Two Day "INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MULTIDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES (ICMRP 2023)" held on 16-17 FEB 2023 hosted in Hybrid Mode organized by Research Cell and Publication Cell, at The Bhopal School of Social Sciences, Bhopal (India).

Dr. Fr. JOHN PJ
Principal, BSSS

Dr. LILA SIMON
Convener

Dr. SHEENA THOMAS
Co-Convener

Mr. ZEESHAN AHMAD
Publication Head, BSSS



Supporting Partner



Certificate ID : BSSS2023/ICMRP/HIS/025



**NATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON
"SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY FOR ALL (NCSTA)"**

March 19, 2023

Organized by

The Indian Science Congress Association: Haridwar Chapter

Hosted by

Department of Chemistry

Department of Physics

Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture & Archaeology

Gurukula Kangri (Deemed to be University), Haridwar 249 404, Uttarakhand

Certificate

This is to certify that Prof. /Dr. /Mr./Ms. Jasmer Singh of CRS
University Jind

has Participated/ Presented a Paper (Oral/ Poster)/ Invited lecture/ Key-Note Address/ Plenāry
Lecture/ Chaired Technical Session entitled Socio-Economic Conditions
of Northern India in the 7th Century AD.

in the National Conference on
"Science & Technology for all (NCSTA)" held at Department of Chemistry, Department of Physics
and Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture & Archaeology, Gurukula Kangri (Deemed to
be University), Haridwar on March 19, 2023.

(Prof. Prabhat Kumar)
Convener, NCSTA

(Mr. Sanjeev Lambha)
Convener
ISCA: Haridwar Chapter

(Dr. Jaspal Singh)
Treasurer
ISCA: Haridwar Chapter

(Dr. Richa Saini)
Organizing Secretary, NCSTA

