PART I

POLITICAL CONDITIONS
CHAPTER I
NORTHERN INDIA AT THE DAWN
OF THE 7TH CENTURY A.D.

A. STATES:

It is difficult to obtain a clear picture of the political condition of Northern India at the opening of the 7th century A.D. because the sources, though ample, are so conflicting and contradictory that it is not easy to draw definite conclusions. However, as most of the scholars seem to agree on some fundamental facts, our task is comparatively less difficult.

The statement of Dr. Smith, "that we possess very little knowledge of Northern India during the latter half of the 6th c. A.D."¹, is based on incomplete data and, as such, far from the truth. On the contrary, on the strength of recent researches, we are in a position to prove that some powerful rulers existed during this period. It is true that no ruler succeeded in establishing his supremacy over other kingdoms for a long time till the rise of Hārsha.

In spite of the great efforts of Skandagupta and his successors to drive away the Huṇas from central India, the Gupta rulers were not completely successful in dislodging their enemies. For the first time Bālāditya inflicted a crushing defeat on the Huṇas and forced them to migrate to Kāshmir.
Perhaps it was the Huna chief Mihirakula who was defeated by Bālāditya.2

Bālāditya died somewhere about 528 A.D. Soon after Mihirakula again began to create trouble in Northern India. The Gupta empire was greatly weakened by that time. At this critical juncture, Yasodharman saved the country from the Huna-menace.

In his Mandasor inscription, his court-poet Vāsul informs that Yasodharman established his rule in the regions where even the Gupta kings had not been able to extend their power. His empire extended from Brahmaputra in the east up to Mahendragiri in the west, and from the Himalayas up to the Arabian sea. Of course, there is considerable exaggeration in this poetic description, but one thing is quite clear that he defeated the Huṇas.3

There is a difference of opinion among the scholars as to who Yasodharmar was and where he ruled. According to Dr. Hoemle he was a king of Mālava who ruled between 533 to 583 A.D. and was also related to Prabhakaravardhan whose queen Yasomati was the daughter of Yasodharman. Yasodharman was succeeded by his son Silāditya who ruled between 583 to 593 A.D. and between 604-5 A.D. He ruled Western Mālava and was defeated and driven away for some time from Mālava by Prabhakaravardhana.
his brother-in-law.\textsuperscript{4} Dr. Rādhākumud Mookerji supports the view of Hoemle.\textsuperscript{5} Shri Rayachaudhuri rejects this view and holds that Yasodharman was neither the father of Silāditya of Mālawā nor the father-in-law of Prabhākaravardhana.\textsuperscript{6} Hiuen Tsang states that Silāditya of Mālawā (Western) was a Buddhist king of the Maitraka dynasty of Valabhi\textsuperscript{7} who ruled Mālawā about 580 A.D. Jayaswal has attempted to show that Yasodharman’s family ruled at Thāneśwar and his title ‘Vardhan’ shows that he might be a Vaiśya.\textsuperscript{8} It is very difficult to say anything definite with the help of the available evidence. The most important thing to be noted is that no trace of his empire was found by the end of the 6th c. A.D.

I. THE MAUKHARIS:

The fall of the Gupta empire and the failure of Yasodharman to build another led to the political disintegration of Northern India and the rise of a number of independent powers. The most prominent of these were the Puspabhūtis of Thāneśwar, the Maukharis of Kanauj and the later Guptas of Magadha and Mālawā. In Bengal also powerful independent kingdoms such as Venga\textsuperscript{9} and Gauda\textsuperscript{10} were established in the 6th c. A.D. Before the rise of the kingdom of Thāneśwar under its first independent monarch Prabhākaravardhana at the end of the 6th c. A.D., the Maukharis of Kanauj and the later Guptas of Mālawā were the main powers in Northern India.
N. Ray and C. V. Vaidya think that the Maukharis belonged to the Somavamsa or the Lunar line. It is so said that Maukhara was the first person who brought the family into prominence. Therefore the whole clan was named after him. Bana also supports this view. In the 'Kasikavrtti' of Vaman and Jayaditya (650 A.D.) and in the commentary of Kavyata on the Mahabhasya of Patanjali (12th c. A.D.) the word 'Maukhari' is used as a family name. Cunningham secured from Gaya a clay-seal on which was written in Brâhmi script the Pali legend 'Mokhalinäm'. The time of this seal cannot be placed in a period later than 3rd or 4th c.B.C. Evidence suggests that the Maukhari clan was well known in the time of the Maurayas also. Originally it was a Ksatriya clan.

Epigraphic evidences show that in the 4th and 5th c. A.D. the Maukharis ruled Magadha. They were probably the vassals of the later Gupta kings. Two inscriptions discovered in the caves of Barabar and Nagarjuni hills situated 15 miles away from Gaya, mention the names of three Maukhari kings viz. Yajñav Sardulavarman and Anantavarman. On palaeographic ground the time of these inscriptions can not be placed in a period later than the 1st half of the 6th c. A.D. They are described simply as 'Sâmanitas'. They were probably the predecessors of the Maukharis of Kanauj, and not their successors as Shri Vaidya thinks. The confusion
attending the constant invasions of the Huṇas and the family troubles among the later Gupta rulers, gave an opportunity to adventurous persons to establish independent kingdoms. Probably Harīvarman, the 1st king in the Kanauj line, was one such daring adventurer. He, in the prevailing confusion, migrated westwards and succeeded in carving out a kingdom in the Doāb region, with his capital at Kanauj, in the beginning of the 6th c. A.D.¹⁹

Sanākar Pāṇḍurāg Pāṇḍit was the first to express his doubts about accepting Kanauj as the capital of the Maukharis.² Sankara the capital of the Maukharis: V. Smith supports him.²¹ On the other hand, Hoernle calls Isāvarman the Maukharī chief of Kanauj.²² According to Harsha-carita also Kāñyakubja was the capital of the Maukharī Graharvarman and not of the Mālava king, whom Bāna describes as "the wicked lord of Mālaṇa."²³ Moreover Hiuen Tsang clearly states that Rājyaśri returned to Kanauj after she was rescued by her brother and later on the vacant throne of Kanauj was offered by the nobles to Harṣa.²⁵ The coins of coins of Isāvarman, Sarvavarman and Avantivarman (three powerful Maukharī rulers) and of Harsha, Pratāpaśīla and Īśāditya found in a village named Bhītāvra in the district of Fyzābād in U.P. support this view. The three digit numerical figures on the Varman coins refer to Gupta years, while the figures on the coins of Harṣa, Pratāpaśīla and Īśāditya in the opinion of Burn stand for the regnal
years of these monarchs. Most of the Maukhari inscriptions are also found in U.P. Thus, the epigraphic and numismatic evidences show that the Maukharis ruled at Kanauj until the end of the 6th c. A.D.

Asirgad Seal of Sarvavarman gives the following genealogy of the Maukharis:

d. The Maukhari rulers of Kanauj:

1. Maharaja Harivarma.
2. Maharaja Adityavarma - married to Harsa Guptadevi
3. Maharaja Isvaravarma - married to Upaguptadevi
4. Mahārājādhirāja Iśānavarma (554 A.D.)
5. Parama Mahēśvara Mahārājādhirāja Sarvavarma Maukharī.
6. Susthitavarma
7. Avantivarma
8. Grahavarma (606 A.D.)

As already described, Harivarma seems to have founded the Maukharis rule at Kanauj in the beginning of the 6th c. A.D. However, as the first three rulers are simply called 'Mahārājas' in the seal, they might have ruled over a small region round about Kanauj. Their marital relations show that they were on good terms with the later Gupta kings. The Maukharis became powerful in the days of Iśānavarma who for the first time is called Mahārājādhirāja.

Harimā inscription of the time of Iśānavarma gives the following details.

1) Iśānavarma 554 A.D.: Iśānavarma conquered (i) the land of the Āṇḍh
Sulikas and (iii) forced the Gaudas, living on the sea-shore, to remain in future within their proper limits. The Vīṣṇukundins were the dominant power in the Āndhra region during the 6th c. A.D. Probably either Indravarman or Vikramendravarman was defeated by Isānavarman. Rayachaudhuri thinks that Mādhavavarman II of the Vīṣṇukundin family was humbled by Isānavarman. Whoever he might be, it appears certain, that there were hostile relations between the Āndhras and the Maukharis during this period.

There is a difference of opinion among the scholars with regard to the identification of the Sulikas and the region they belonged to. Dr. Rayachaudhuri identifies them with the Cālukyas. The Mahākūta pillar Inscription informs that Cālukyas (Cālikya) by this time were extending their power on all sides; and one of their kings Kīrtivarman I, conquered several territories. Perhaps Kīrtivarman I in his northern expedition might have come into conflict with Isānavarman and defeated by him.

The Gaudas are mentioned for the first time in the Hārsha inscription of Isānavarman. They are called Samudrārayan (living near the sea-shore). It is claimed in the inscription that Isānavarman ravaged the territories of the Gaudas who were forced to retreat towards the sea. Aphsid inscription of Ādityasena II (650-75 A.D.) also mentions Jīvitagupta I's struggles against 'the haughty foes' who lived on the sea shore.
Considering the details of the two Inscriptions together, we may infer that the Maukharis and the later Gupta kings might have co-operated in checking the advance of the Gaudas towards the North. Dr. Basak thinks that Jayanaga was a contemporary Gupta king of Isanavarman.37

Isanavarman, assumed the title of "Maharajadhiraaja". This enraged the Guptas who could not tolerate such a claim to supremacy on the part of Isanavarman or any further growth of his power. Thus there was an open rupture between the Maukharis and the Guptas for the first time during the reign of Isanavarman. Apsad inscription informs that Isanavarman was defeated by Kumāragupta III.38 It must have been a severe blow though only temporary - to the extension of the Maukhar power. Dr. Mookerji thinks that Kumāragupta was defeated,39 Dr. Fleet disagrees with this view. Like his predecessors Isanavarman was a Brähmanist. He saved the Varnasramadharma by checking the undue intermixture of varnas which result from the Huna invasions.40

He is called 'Maharajadhiraaja' in the Asir Seal.41 He inflicted a defeat upon his contemporary Gupta king Dāmodagupta who was probably killed on the battlefield42 (550-560 A.D.). Thus Gupta rule in Magadha came to an end for some time till it was possibly again revived by Mādhavagupta during or after the period of Hara. Deo Barnak inscription of Jivitagupta II states that Sarvavarman confirmed a grant that was previously made by Bālāditya,43 He also seems to
have inflicted a defeat on the Hunas. It appears that during the reign of Sarvavarman the empire of the Maukharis was extended up to Son river. He was called Parama Mahēśvara Mahaśrījāgādhiraṇja Sarvarvarman Maukharī.

There is a difference of opinion among the scholars about the successor of Sarvavarman. Dr. Fleet, Vaidya and Dr. Rādhākumad Mookerji believe that Susthitavarman ascended the throne of the Maukharis after Sarvavarman. This opinion is based on the wrong interpretation of a passage of the inscription of Aphsad. It is written in the inscription that "the fame of the illustrious Mahēśenagupta is still sung on the bank of (the river) Lohitya (Brahmaputra) by the Siddhas for his victory over renowned Susthitavarman." It is said that Susthitavarman was a Maukharī ruler. Epigraphic or numismatic evidence does not mention his name in the Maukharī genealogy. Moreover the praise of Mahēśenagupta was sung on the bank of Brahmaputra. It might as well refer to some king in Assām. The Maukharis never ruled on the bank of Lohitya. Hence Susthitavarman cannot be a Maukharī ruler.

On the contrary the Nidhānpura plates and the seals at Nālandā mention Susthitavarman as the father of...
Bhaskaravarman a contemporary of Harsa. He is identical with the king called Susthitavarman mentioned in the Harsa-carita. Therefore it is certain that Susthitavarman referred to in the Apsahad Inscription might have been a ruler of Assam. On this basis we may exclude the name of Susthitavarman from the Maukhari genealogy. Sarvavarman seems to have been succeeded by Avantivarman. Very little is known about him. Bana calls him the pride of the Mukhara clan, which stood at the head of all royal houses. Friendly relations were established with the Puspabhūtis of Thaneswar during the reign of Avantivarman as can be seen later.

According to Harsa-carita Avantivarman was succeeded by his eldest son

iv) Graha varman: 605-6 A.D. (Suñuragrajah) Graha varman. But Nālandā seal (which is broken) mentions Suva as the successor of Avantivarman. The name cannot be read clearly; therefore the positive statement of Bana cannot be doubted. Graha varman married Rājayārī the daughter of Prabhākaraśrdhana and the sister of Harsavaradhana. Thus the relations between the Maukhari and the Puspabhūtis became intimate. Thus the two powerful kingdoms of Kanauj and Thaneswar formed a union which could meet the challenge of any power in Northern India.

Though it is not easy to determine the limits
e. Extent of the Maukhari Empire:

The extent of the Maukhari empire at the zenith of its power, coins and inscriptions of the dynasty help us greatly to have a fair idea of the Maukhari empire. Some of the coins were found in Ahicchatra, a few miles to the North-west of Kanauj. Others were obtained from Ayodhya. Some were discovered at Bhitaurā in the Fyzābad district of the United Provinces. Among the seals found at Nālandā, one issued by Sarvavarman narrates his exploits. Taking the support of the Asirgadh seal, Vaidya, Arvamuthan and Jayaswal believe that the limits of the Maukhari empire in the Deccan extended to Asirgadh. Following Fleet, Dr. Tripathi rightly observes that the mere finding of the seal at Asirgadh does not prove that Asirgadh was the Maukhari outpost in the Deccan. Their territory probably lay some hundreds of miles to the east of Asirgadh.

The Nirman inscription found on the bank of Satlaj in the Kangrā district of the Punjāb, mentions the grant of a certain Mahārāja Sarvavarman. Arvamuthan on the strength of this inscription believes that Sarvavarman was able to extend his empire west of Punjāb during his wars with the Hūnas. But this supposition has no historical basis. The Maukhari Sarvavarman assumed the titles of Mahārājadhirāja and Paramesvara while the Sarvarvarman...
of the Nirmāṇ inscription is called simply a Mahārāja. Moreover the supposition implies that the intervening Vardhana territory passed under the suzerainty of the Maukharis and Prabhākaravardhana had to fight with the Maukharis to achieve his independence. This statement will go against the historical evidence of Bāna who describes in the Harṣa-carita that the two states were friendly with each other and more cordial relations were established between the two by the marriage of Graharman with Rājyasī. Thus excluding the evidence of Asirgad and Nirmāṇ, we may say that the Maukhar empire of Kanauj, during its fullest expansion, extended to Ahichhatra and the boundary of the Thaneswar kingdom on the west; to Nālandā on the east; it may have touched the Tarai district on the North and on the South perhaps it did not go beyond the southern frontier of the modern United Provinces. C.V. Vaidya's statement that the Maukhar dominions extended southwards to the Vindhyas, northwards to Jaunpura and eastwards to the Brahmaputra, is not justified.64

II. LATER GUPTA RULERS:

There are various opinions among the scholars as to who the later Gupta rulers were and where they ruled. After the passing away of Bhānugupta, the imperial dynasty of the Guptas appears to have come to an end.65 Different rule ruled in some parts of Magadha and of Bengal approximately between 530 to 560 A.D.66 We have no exact data to determin
their relations with the main line of the Gupta kings. Aphaad inscription of Adityasena (672 A.D. *) and Deobarnak inscription of Jivitagupta II give the genealogy of the Gupta rulers beginning from Krisnagupta. It is possible that after the break up of the Gupta empire in the first half of the 6th c. A.D., they might have migrated to Magadha. The genealogy is as follows:

1. Krisnagupta
2. Harṣagupta
3. Jivitagupta
4. Kumāragupta III - 550 A.D.
5. Dāmodaragupta.
6. Mahāsenagupta (Perhaps began his rule at Mālava (Eastern))

7. Devagupta.
8. Mādhava Gupta of Magadha (630-50 A.D. ?)
9. Ādityasena (was killed by Rājayavardhana (650-675 A.D. ?) in 606 A.D.)

The first three rulers of Krisnagupta dynasty are known only by their names. The 4th ruler Kumāragupta 3rd fought with his contemporary Maukhari ruler Isānavarman who was defeated by the former. His successor Dāmodaragupta fought with Isāvaravarman, the successor of Isānavarman. Dāmodaragupta was defeated and killed on the battlefield. Isāvaravarman Maukhari annexed Magadha or part of it to his dominions. Thus the Gupta rule in Magadha came to an end for the time being.

Mahāsenagupta, the successor of Dāmodaragupta
migrated to Mālawā (Eastern) and carved out an independent kingdom for himself and his successors. Bena also mentions Mahāsenagupta as the king of Mālawā. As already noted, he defeated Susthitavarman, the king of Kāmarūpa and father of Bhāskaravarman, on the Lauhitya river (Brahmaputra). It is stated in the Sonpat seal of Marsavaradhana that Mahāsenaguptadevi was married to Ādityavardhana, father of Prabhākaravardhana. It is thought that she was the sister of Mahāsenagupta. Thus Mahāsenagupta might have tried to make his position strong against his Maukhari opponents by establishing marital relations with the Vardhas of Thaneswar who were coming into prominence.

It is held by Dr. Ganguli that Mahāsenagupta had a son named Devagupta by one wife and sons named Kumāragupta and Madhavagupta by another wife. Devagupta being the eldest, the latter two had no claim to the Mālawā throne. It is conjectured that there was a feeling of enmity between Devagupta and his half-brothers. Therefore Mahāsenagupta sent them to his nephew Prabhākaravardhana, to seek their fortune. Mahāsenagupta died a little before Prabhākaravardhana. Devagupta ascended the paternal throne. When Prabhākaravardhana died about 605-606 A.D., Devagupta, as usual with his family, saw an opportunity to wreak vengeance upon the Maukhari. He made an alliance with the Gauda king Sāśānka who was also opposed to the Maukhari and had also a design to extend his dominions. Devagupta attacked Grahavarman, defeated and
killed him, and imprisoned his queen Rājyaśrī, the sister of Harsa. Rājyasvārīnā, the elder brother of Harsa, with his trusted general Bhandī, attacked Devagupta and killed him on the battlefield. Thus the Gupta rule at Mālwā (Eastern) came to an end.

III. Kingdom of Valabhi.

Hiuen Tsang states that the Valabhi was about 6000 Li in circuit. Its capital was Valabhi, modern Valā near Bhāvanagāra.

a. Early rulers: Valabhi, modern Valā near Bhāvanagāra.

After the break up of the Gupta empire the Maitraka rule at Valabhi was established by Bhataraka in 485 A.D. He and his successor Dharasena First were feudatories. The third king Droṇasimha called himself Mahārāja. The fourth ruler Dharasena Second is styled Mahāśamitā. It suggests that he also accepted at least for sometime the suzerainty of some powerful ruler perhaps Iśvaravarman Maukhari as indicate by Jaunapura inscription.

Dharasena II had two sons (i) Silāditya I, Dharmāditya and (ii) Kharagraha. The former may be identified with Silāditya the Buddhist king of Mo-Lo-Po (Western Mālwā) as mentioned by Hiuen Tsang. The Chinese traveller states that Silāditya ruled there sixty years before his visit to Mo-La-Po (i.e. 550 A.D.). By this statement of Hiuen Tsang, it is to be supposed that Maitraka rule of Valabhi was divided for the time being into two parts (i) Western Mālwā ruled by Silāditya and (ii) Valabhi ruled by Kharagraha. The Alin inscription of Dharasena II also supports the view that there was some conflict between the two brothers.
result Kharagraha became an independent ruler at Valabhi.

Kharagraha was succeeded by Dharasena III
who was succeeded by Dhruvasena II.

**c. Dhruvasena Second:** This Dhruvasena was a contemporary of Harṣa. Huien Tsang calls him Dhruvabhaṭa, the nephew of Śilāditya of Mo-La-Po and the son-in-law of Harṣavardhana. This statement is corroborated by the inscriptions of Dhruvasena II (629 A.D. to 641 A.D.), which state that he ascended the throne in 629 A.D. It appears that he snatched Mālawā (Western) from the successor of Śilāditya and once again united the two branches of the Maitrakas into one. As a result Western Mālawā possibly formed a part of the kingdom of Valabhi under Dhruvasena II.

**MĀLAWĀ DIVIDED IN THREE DISTINCT PARTS:**

The above discussion shows that Eastern Mālawā was ruled first by Mahāsenagupta and then by his son Devagupta at the end of the 6th c. A.D. It formed a part of the empire of Harṣa in the beginning of the 7th c. A.D. after the defeat of Devagupta by Rājyavarman. Probably its capital was Vidiṣā. It was formerly ruled by Śilāditya at the end of the 6th c. A.D. and then by his nephew Dhruvasena II of Valabhi in the first half of the 7th c. A.D.

According to the Abhona Plate of Nāṣik a Kalur king named Saṅkaragaṇa ruled at Avanti (Ujjain) for sometime at the end of the 6th c. A.D. Dr. Ganguly holds that Saṅkaragaṇa defeated Mahāsenagupta who with his sons, was forced to take
refuge at the court of Prabhakaravardhana. Then Śankaragana proclaimed himself the king of the whole of Mālawā and later on defeated and killed Grahavarman after the death of Prabhakaravardhana. However, contemporary epigraphic and literary evidences suggest that Devagupta defeated and killed Grahavarman. Moreover Western Mālawā was subject to Valabhi when Huien Tsang visited Ujjain in 640 A.D. It was ruled by a Brahmā, a king who might have been subordinate to Harsa. Thus Kalcuri rule at Ujjain was a brief episode in the history of Mālawā.

IV. PRINCIPAL KINGDOMS ON THE EASTERN SIDE:

The first independent kingdom that arose in Bengal after the disintegration of the Gupta empire possibly included the Eastern and Southern Bengal only. It was called Samatata or Vanga, which was about 3000 Li in circuit. Its capital was probably modern Jessore. According to a seal discovered at Nalanda, Vainyagupta seems to be the first independent ruler of Samatata as the title of Mahārājādhīraja is added to his name. He ruled possibly at the beginning of the 6th c. A.D. as his grant in the Tipperā district suggests.

Nothing can be stated definitely about the successors of Vainyagupta, but five inscriptions found in the district of Faridpura and one in the Burdwān district reveal the existence of three rulers named Gopacandra, Dharmaditya and Samacaradeva. The use
of the title of Maharajadhiraja along with their names proves that they were independent kings. The issue of gold coins by Samacaradeva supports this fact. From the available data it appears that the period of the reigns of these rulers might have been between 525 to 575 A.D.\textsuperscript{92} It is difficult to decide exactly how and when this independent kingdom ended. However, the Mahakuta Inscription of the Calukya king Kirtivarman states that he conquered Vanga along with other eastern countries.\textsuperscript{93} Kirtivarman died by 598 A.D. Therefore he might have defeated Samacaradeva by the end of the 6th c. A.D. The Gauḍa king Saśānka, who rose to power in Northern Bengal during the beginning of the 7th c. A.D., might have given the final blow to the independence of Vanga. Hiuen Tsang also does not refer to Vanga as an independent state.\textsuperscript{94}

The part comprising most of Western Bengal and the whole of Northern Bengal was generally known as 'Gauḍa' in the 6th and 7th c. A.D.\textsuperscript{95} Even though the word 'Gauḍa' is used in the grammar of Pāṇini\textsuperscript{96} (6th c. B.C.), Arthasastra of Kaṭhalya (4th c.B.C.), Kāmasūtra of Vātsyāyana (3rd or 4th c. A.D.)\textsuperscript{98}, in some Purāṇas and in Harṣa-Carita\textsuperscript{99} The first reference to the Gauḍas as a political power occurs in the Aphsad inscription of Ādityasena, in which it is stated that Jīvittagupta first (640 A.D.) was a terror to the people on the "sea shore".\textsuperscript{100} The Harṣā inscription of Iśānavarman Maukhari (554 A.D.)
describes him as confining the sea-faring Gaudas to their own limits. In the 6th and 7th c. A.D., the capital of the Gaudas was Karnaśuvarṇa, modern Rangamati near Barahamapura.

According to Dr. Barnett, a king named Jayanāga was ruling at Karnaśuvarṇa in 6th c. A.D. Manjuśri-Mūlakalpa also refers to the Gauda king Jayanāga.

Dr. Basak also holds that Jayanāga and his son ruled at Karnaśuvarṇa before the rise of Šasānka. They might have been the feudatories of either the Maukharis or the later Gupta rulers.

It is believed that Šasānka rose to power by the end of the 6th c. A.D. That he, like his predecessors, was a feudatory chief is clear from a seal from Rohtasgad which calls him 'Mahaśamanta Šasānka' (a great feudatory king Šasānka).

Dr. D. C. Ganguly relying on some lines of the Deo-Bamak inscription, states that Šasānka was a vassal of the Maukhari king Avantivarman and also possibly of his son and successor Grahavarman for a short time. But the theory lacks any historical evidence. One MS of Haraś-cari calls Šasānka Narendragupta, otherwise Bāṇa calls him the wicked Gaudarāja and Huen Tsang calls him the king of Karnaśuvarṇa, who persecuted the Buddhists. On the strength of the evidence of this MS of Haraścarīta Shri R. D. Banerji and Dr. Buhlär believe that Šasānka was
related to the later Gupta rulers. Dr. Banerji further adds that Sasāṅka was possibly the son or nephew of Mahāsenagupta and that is why he allied with Devagupta against their common foes the Maukharis. To support this theory Shri Banerji has also taken the support of two golden seals on which the legend 'Sri Narendra' is inscribed. These gold seals are ascribed to Sasāṅka. Dr. Rādhākumud Mookerji also agrees with this view. But this supposition lacks factual basis. Even if it were accepted that Sasāṅka was known as Narendra-gupta, there is no historical proof to show that he was connected with the latter Guptas or that he was related to Mahāsenagupta. There is no doubt about the fact that he was the sovereign ruler of the whole of Bengal at the opening of the 7th c. A.D. The political situation of Northern India after the death of Prabhākaravardhana might have inspired his imperial designs and as a result he might have joined hands with Devagupta to overthrow the Maukharis of Kanauj and the Vardhans of Thāṇeswar to fulfill his ambitions.

C. KĀMARŪPA (ĀSSĀM):

Kāmarūpa or Prāgyotīsa situated in the East of Gauda (Northern Bengal), is Predecessors of Bhāskaravarman: mentioned in the epics and the Purāṇas. The Allahābād Pillar inscription of Samudragupta mentions it as a state whose ruler had accepte his suzerainty. It was about 10,000 Li in circuit and its capital was probably Kāmatipura. Midhānapura inscriptions of king Bhāskaravarman give the
genealogy of his twelve predecessors. His Nalanda seal mentions the names of his eight predecessors along with their Queens. Out of these eight names, the last five names are also mentioned by Bana. From this genealogy it can be said that Bhaskaravarman was the son of Sushitavarman by a wife named Syamadevi. He was also called Bhaskaradyut or Kumara. As already noted this Sushitavarman was defeated by Mahasengupta as indicated by Apasad inscription. It will be seen later that Bhaskaravarman made an alliance with Harsa to check the imperial designs of Sasanka.

The kingdom was 7,000 Li in circuit and its capital was perhaps Jitpura. Politically it held a very important position in ancient times. It was connected with Northern India as well as southern India on the east as Valabhi was connected on the west. The inscriptions inform that Sailodbhava dynasty became powerful in Kaling during the last quarter of the 6th c. A.D. The Ganjam Plate (dated Gupta year 300, 619-20 A.D.) mentions the name of king Sainyabhita or Madhavaraja second who had accepted the suzerainty of Sasanka. After Sasanka's death Orissa including the province of Ganjam became a part of the empire of Harsa. Madhavaraja First and Ayasobhita First seem to be the predecessors of Madhavaraja Second. They possibly flourished during the last quarter of the 6th c. A.D. and might have been the feudatories of the rulers of Samatata.
V. OTHER IMPORTANT STATES:

According to Hiuens Tsang the kingdom of Kashmir was about 7000 Li in circuit. Its capital was bordered by a great river. It was from north to south 12 or 13 Li and from east to west 4 to 5 Li. 

It was Pravarsenapura (the present Srinaga) built by king Pravarasena II about the beginning of the 6th c. A.D.

Kalhana informs that Baladitya, the last king of the Gonardiya dynasty had probably no male issue. He married his only daughter to his officer named Durlabhavardhana who ascended the throne in 602 A.D. after the death of Baladitya. His dynasty was called the Karkotaka dynasty because it was said to have been protected by the mythical serpent Karkotaka mentioned in the Mahabharata. Perhaps the court poets of Durlabhavardhana created this myth of his decent or probably he was born in a Naga or aboriginal family.

Hiuen Tsang also notices that the kings of Kashmir asserted their superiority over other kings because they were protected by a dragon. The Rajatarangini calls Durlabhavardhana a Kayastha but his name ending -'Vardhana' suggests that he might have been a Vaisya and not a Kayastha. He founded the Karkotaka dynasty in Kashmir in 3677 of the Laukiya era i.e. in 602 A.D. He ruled for 36 years, which makes him more or less an exact contemporary of Harsa.
Hiuen Tsang observes that Sindh was about 7000 Li in circuit and its capital was Pi-Shen-
b. Sindh: Po-Pu-Lo which was about 30 Li round. It might be only another name for Alor which was the capital of Sindh at the time of Hiuen Tsang. In the 7th c. A.D. Sindh was divided into four principalities (i) upper Sindh (ii) Middle Sindh (iii) Lower Sindh, and (iv) Kaccha. It is corroborated by Hiuen Tsang. The whole formed one kingdom under the ruler of Upper Sindh who at the time of Hiuen Tsang's visit in A.D. 641, was a Sudra.

According to 'Chacha-nama' the king of Sindh in the first half of 7th c. A.D. was Chacha who had usurped the throne of Sindh. He was a Brahman by caste. The same source states that Chacha ascended the throne somewhere about 597 A.D. and ruled for 40 years. His brother and successor Candra ruled for 7 years i.e. up to 644 A.D. Thus according to Chacha-nama Chacha and Candra were contemporaries of Harsa and were Brahman by caste. But Hiuen Tsang calls them Sudra, and we have no dependable evidence to disbelieve his testimony. He had visited the country in 641 A.D. and as such gives an eye-witness account.

According to V.A. Smith the Sudra king of Sindh, mentioned by Hiuen Tsang, should be Simharasara, the son of Divaji. Sahasi succeeded Simharasara. Thus Simharasara...
and Sahasi were contemporaries of Hārṣa by whom either of them might have been defeated, while Divaji was probably defeated by Prabhākaravardhana. After the death of Sahasi his Brāhmiṃ minister Chācha probably seized the throne of Sindh somewhere about 646 A.D. He ruled for 40 years. Then his brother Candra ruled for 7 years i.e. until about 693 A.D. Thus Chācha and Candra were evidently the successors of the Śūdra kings and not their predecessors. It is also wellknown fact that Dahir, the successor of Candra, and nephew of Chācha, was defeated and killed by Muhmad-bin-Kāsim in 712 A.D.

C. Gurjara kingdom of Balmer (Rājputānā):

Possibly the earliest Gurjara kingdom was founded by Haricandra in modern Jodhpura

1) First Gurjara Kingdom: Possibly the earliest Gurjara kingdom was founded by Haricandra in modern Jodhpura region in Rājputānā about the middle of the 6th c. A.D. By his Kṣatriya queen Bhadrā Haricandra he had four sons viz. Bhogabhata, Kakka, Rājjila and Dadda (First). Nothing is known about the first two. But Rājjila and his successors ruled in Rājputānā, while Dadda First founded a Gurjara kingdom at Bhṛguakaccha (Broach). Hiuen Tsang refers to these two kingdoms. The Gurjara kingdom of Rājputānā was 5000 Li in circuit. It must, therefore, have comprised the greater part of the present regions of Bikāner, Jesalmer and Jodhpur. The capital was called Pi-Lo-Mo-Lo which was about 30 Li round. As Hiuen Tsang notes, it lay 300 miles away to the north of Valabhī, it should be identified with the present Balmer and not with Bhillamāla (Bhinmal).
Hiuen Tsang observes that the king, Ksatrya by caste and a young man celebrated

ii) Vyaghramukha and his Successor: for his wisdom and courage, was a staunch Buddhist.\(^{145}\) He was probably the son of king Vyagramukha in whose reign the famous astronomer Brahmagupta composed his Brahmasiddhanta, a treatise on astronomy, in 628 A.D. As Hiuen Tsang visited the country in 640 A.D. Vyagramukha's successor must have been a young man. The testimony of Bana that Prabhakaravardhana defeated the Gurjara king\(^{146}\) refers to Vyagramukha's predecessor.

d. Gurjara Kingdom of Bhuyagukaccha:

As noted, it was founded by Dadda First, the youngest son of Haricandra in the middle of the 6th c. A.D. as an offshoot of the Gurjara kingdom of Rajarata.\(^{147}\) It was 2400 to 2500 Li in circuit. Its capital, which was 20 Li round and stood on the bank of the river Nai-mo-tho i.e. Narmada, close to the sea,\(^{148}\) may be identified with Broach as done by Bahr and Cunningham\(^{149}\) and not with Nandipuri (Nandod) as done by Bhagav nalal Indraji and some other scholars.\(^{150}\) Hiuen Tsang does not mention the name of the ruling king, but he must be Dadda II, the grand son of Dadda I as his grants between 629 and 641 A.D. suggest. He was also called Praasantaraga.\(^{151}\)

e. Calkeya Kingdom of Maharastra:

Hiuen Tsang describes it as being about 5000 Li circuit. The capital which bordered on the west on a great river was about 30 Li
around. It has been identified with Paithana by Fergusson and with Devagiri by M. V. Martin, but Kalyani seems to be the best Badami choice as its position agrees better with the description of Hiuen Tsang. It was also the ancient capital of the Calukya dynasty.

Kirtivarman I ruled the country in the latter half of the 6th c. A.D. He defeated several rulers, but was probably defeated by Isanavarman Maukharī, as already noted. He died in 597-98 A.D., possibly leaving some minor children, and therefore the throne passed to his younger brother Mangalesa who ruled up to 610-11 A.D. He defeated the Kalcuri king Buddhara, the son of Śankarāgāraṇa before 602 A.D., thus ending the brief rule of the Kalcuri at Ujjain. His nephew Pulakesin II, the son of Kirtivarman later on claimed the throne for himself. As a result in the civil war Mangalesa lost his life and Pulakesin, with the title Satyasraya, ascended the throne somewhere about 611 A.D. Hiuen Tsang praises him as a brave, benevolent Kṣatriya ruler. He was a contemporary of Harṣa. He made himself the master of almost the whole of the Deccan by his extensive conquests.

The above survey shows that the political conclusion: condition of Northern India from the time of the fall of the Guptas up to the rise of Harṣa was not a happy one. It was divided into a number of independent states. The Maukharis of Kanauj and the later Guptas of Malawā were
main powers who were fighting between themselves to gain the political supremacy of Northern India. The Maukharis of Kanauj succeeded for the time being. Bengal was united by Sasanka who rose to power in the beginning of the 7th c. A.D. The Calkyvas of Badami were becoming the principal power in the Deccan under their great ruler Pulakesin the Second. Valabhi on the west and Kamarupa on the east held important positions politically as well as geographically. Kāshmir became a prominent state when the Karkotaka dynasty began its rule there at the dawn of the 7th c. A.D. On the North-western side Kapisa (Afghanistan) and Tekka (North Punjab) were important states with several dependencies, while Nepal in the Himalayan regions was also a prominent state under its young Lichhavi ruler Amśuvarman. The unity, which prevailed over Northern India under the Imperial Guptas, was lost and some paramount ruler was needed to revive it.
B. PEOPLE:

Contemporary epigraphic and literary evidence suggest that society continued to

a. Continuance of traditional varṇas:

Hiuen Tsang mentions them. He noted that the first order was that of the Brāhmans who led a pure life. The second was that of the Kṣatriyas-who had held sovereignty for many generations. The third order was that of the Vaiśyas or the class of traders who bartered commodities and carried their business at home and abroad. The fourth class was that of the Śūdras or the agriculturist who toiled at cultivating the soil. The Mandasor stone inscription of Yasodharman dated 533-34 A.D. refers to the advantages of those who belonged to the four recognised varṇas. Prabhākaraśaradhana, the father of Haraśvaradhana was credited with regulating them. Fa-Hien in the 5th c. A.D. and Alberuni in the 10th A.D. took note of them. Bana also praises the Varnāśrama Dharma. But this does not mean that the doctrine of the four varṇas was strictly followed by society. The same sources inform us that there were notable departures from this system. As a result a number of castes arose.

Hiuen Tsang noted that there were also mixed castes. The intermarriages among the first three varṇas were not uncommon. The Srautaśtras usually allowed such marriages. The issues of such unions
possibly did not lose the original varṇa-status of their fathers. Such Anuloma marriages (Union of a male of a higher caste with a female of a lower caste) often took place, but marriages with Śūdra females were mostly disfavoured. Issues of such unions possibly lost the original varṇa-status of their father.\textsuperscript{168} Bāna had two parasava brothers (step-brothers from a Śūdra mother).\textsuperscript{169} Moreover Pratiloma marriages (union of a male of a lower caste with a female of a higher caste) were condemned by the Smṛti-kārasis. The issues of such unions were degraded as out-castes or Cāndālar.\textsuperscript{170} From the Second century onwards the foreigners like Śakas, Hunas and others were gradually incorporated into Hindu society. These racial mixtures might have been objected to by orthodox circles and as a result new elements were probably added to the system of varṇas. The Harāhā inscription of Iśānavarm records that he checked the undue social mixture resulting from the Hūna invasions.\textsuperscript{171}

The Gupta and the post-Gupta ages witnessed the development of various occupations. As a result people became more conscious of their occupational groups rather than traditional ones. In the 7th c. A.D. some classes of people were better known as traders, agriculturists, artisans, butchers, hunters, Cāndālar, etc. rather than as Vaiṣヤyas or Śūdram.\textsuperscript{172} Bāna had a number of intimate associates from different classes such as bards, a snake doctor, a goldsmith, a scribe, a painter, a music-master, a dicer, a potter and a juggler.\textsuperscript{173} These facts suggest that there were several
occupational groups besides the four recognised traditional Varnas. Some of them might have been termed Vaisyas or Sudras, while others formed sub-castes by raising themselves to the position of Vaisyas or Sudras in the wider sense. The Brāhmīns were not much affected by these racial and occupational changes. They mostly maintained the original purity of their varna with a few exceptions, but the other three orders were greatly affected. Several new clans, such as Maukharis, Gurjaras, etc., became prominent as Ksatriyas during this period. Traders by this time became an important community of the Vaisyas; while some of the Vaisyas who were agriculturists sank to the position of Sudras on account of their occupation. Thus two fundamental changes can be marked in this age. (i) Some groups of the Dvija fold of the preceding centuries were classed as Sudras during this period and (ii) hereditary professions were greatly emphasised.

Brāhmīns formed one caste without any subdivision. The modern distinctions based on territorial divisions had not yet arisen. They were simply divided into different Sākhās or caranas i.e. schools of yedic ritual or recitation based upon the yedas they studied. They mentioned their gotra. Sāna does not tell us whether he was a Kanojiā or Magadha Brāhmīn, but simply states that he was of Vātsyāyana gotra. The second point to be noted about the Brāhmīns of the 7th c. A.D., is that their names generally ended in particular suffixes.
It seems that in those days particular suffixes were added to the names of individuals to indicate their caste. Sārmā seems to be the principal suffix among the Brāhmans. Other suffixes indicating the Brāhmin caste, were Bhatta, Deva and Swāmi. Sometimes they took the suffix Varma to indicate that they belonged to the ruling class. Huien Tsang calls Bhāskaravarman, the king of Kāmarūpa, a Brāhmin ruler. Bana confirms this.

Mostly Brāhmans followed the hereditary professions of learning and teaching and Huien Tsang praises them for it. But some Brāhmans adopted non-Brāhmanical professions also. The rulers of Kāmarūpa, Ujjain, Chichito and Mahēśvarapura were Brāhmans. Some of the Brāhmans were government servants, others were traders and architects, while a few of them were agriculturists. Dāchin mentions even a colony of Brāhmin-robbers living by the occupation of Kirātas in the Vindhya forests.

The most noteworthy fact about the Kṣatriyas of this period is that some new clans became prominent among them. Formerly the Kṣatriyas like the Brāhmans formed one class only. Even though the Rājputs of the medieval age had not yet come into existence, the Maukharis, Gurjaras, Maitrakas etc. occupied an important position. The Solar and the Lunar theories of the origin of
the Kṣātriyas were not more given any importance. And again, during the 6th c. A.D. the Hāṇas upset the social order of Northern India to a large extent. As a result there was probably a reorientation of castes which accommodated the new Kṣatriya families, born out of the mixture of several foreign races. Regulations were not rigid. The Kṣātriyas freely married Vaiśya wives belonging to great families, like the Guptas and the Vardhanas, who had raised themselves to kingly positions. The illustration of the Waukhari Grahavarman marrying Harsa's sister187 and that of the Maitraka Dhruvabhatta marrying Harsa's daughter188 testify to this fact. The forefathers of Grahavarman taking Gupta queens also confirms this.189 It appears that such Anuloma marriages (lower by only one degree) did not disturb the caste-status of the parties in any way. That is why Dharasena IV, the son of Dhruvasena II (Dhruvabhaṭa) could be styled a Kṣatriya in two grants.190 Yet the fact remains that the Kṣātriyas of the 7th c. A.D. differed from those of the pre-Gupta times on the one hand and from those of the post-Harsa era on the other hand when a number of new clans called the Rājputs came into existence.

Hiuen Tsang observes that the Kṣātriyas held sovereignty for many generations.191 Their descriptive endings like Varmā (brave) and Trātā (defender) also indicate that they followed the profession of arms.192 The Maitraka rulers of Valsāhi usually took suffixes like 'Sena' and 'Bhaṭa' (warrior). Though we find the
name 'Drona Simha' among the Maitraka kings, the suffix (Simha), the most common suffix among Ksatriyas of the post-Harsa age, is usually not discovered in the accounts of 7th c. A.D. The Kṣatriyas were not the only ruling class during this period, out of 68 states mentioned by Hiuen Tsang, only Kapisa, Nepal, Kosala, Maharastra and Valabhi had Kṣatriya rulers. Even though the names of the kings of some of the states are not mentioned, he has mentioned many states which had Vaiśya, Śūdra or Brāhmaṇa monarchs. Epigraphic evidences of the Gupta period suggest that some Kṣatriyas followed commercial pursuits also.

Just like the Brāhmaṇas and the Kṣatriyas, the Vaiśyas did not form a homogenous group. They included persons of various creeds and professions. They were merchants, bankers, money lenders, oil-mongers, and so on. They were more conscious of their own sub-groups than of being members of the traditional vaiśya varṇa. Along with the first two classes, Vaiśyas were generally marked as Dvijas, but some of them sank to the position of Śūdras during this age. Hiuen Tsang placed the merchants only among the Vaiśyas and classified the agriculturists as Śūdras. Perhaps this was true of the artisans like weavers and garland-makers also. However, the merchant-class became very influential by using their wealth for charitable purposes such as the establishment of hospitals, alms-houses and rest houses. Dandin also refers to the merchant guilds and their
'Sārthavāha' and 'Prathamakulika' suggest the different titles which were conferred by the state on the heads of the Vaiśya community. Their help was sought by the district officers in running the administration. They also held positions of respect and responsibility on the town councils. They were probably competing for a social position next to the Brāhmans and above the Ksatriyas. It is to be noted that the modern subcastes of the Vaiśyas had not yet come into being. Contemporary sources do not refer to them.

Some of the Vaiśya families raised themselves to the throne by following the profession of arms. According to the Smrtis the suffixes like 'Gupta' and 'Bhūti' indicated their Vaiśya origin. Probably the terms 'Vardhana' also suggested the same. Thus the Gupta monarchs were possibly Vaiśyas. So also Yasodharman Vīruvardhan. Hiuen Tsang calls Harsavardhan a Vaiśya ruler. It appears that many of the prominent rulers of Northern India from the fourth century to the seventh century A.D. were Vaiśyas.

According to the testimony of Hiuen Tsang, the agriculturists and the cattle-breeders had sunk to the position of the Sudras by this time. Perhaps the spread of the Buddhist sentiment of nonviolence against animal killing, was
responsible for this change. The ploughing of land involved the killing of worms and insects. This action was considered sinful in these days and consequently was prohibited to the Dvijas. Thus Vaiṣyas withdrew from agriculture and left it to the Śūdras. This, however, did not prevent adventurous persons among the śūdras to raise themselves to the position of kings. The rulers of Matipura and Sindh were śūdras.

Besides these four traditional Varnas, contemporary sources mention mixed castes and aboriginal tribes. Hiuen Tsang remarks that there were numerous classes which defied description. In other words they must have been in great number. Dandin and Bena mention aboriginal tribes like Pulindas, Śabaras, Kirātas, and so forth, who lived in the hills and forests of the Vindhyas and the other mountain ranges. These tribes might have been products of Anuloma (not one degree but more than one degree lower) or Pratiloma marriages or some compelling eco-geographical factors. Bena states that the Śabaras of the Vindhyas forests in the 7th century were used to such reprehensible and obnoxious practices as the offering of human flesh to their deities. They lived by hunting, partook of meat and wine, and kidnapped women for the purpose of marriage.
Among all the castes Cañḍālas were considered the lowest whose touch was enough to pollute the other classes. The Cañḍālas ranked as lowest: Gupta and the Post-Gupta sources indicate that some new classes like fishermen and butchers we added to the list of untouchables. Mostly they did the meanest work of carrying unclaimed corpses and executing criminals. Fa Hien notes that they acted as fishermen, hunters and butchers. Hiuen Tsang also observes that butchers, fishermen, public performers, executioners, and scavengers had their habitations marked by a distinguishing sign. They were forced to live outside the city and they sneaked along on the left when going about in the hamlets. Fa Hien says that the cañḍālas had to strike a piece of wood as a warning to others to avoid their touch. Fa Hien says that the cañḍālas had to strike a piece of wood as a warning to others to avoid their touch. Fa Hien says that the cañḍālas had to strike a piece of wood as a warning to others to avoid their touch. Fa Hien says that the cañḍālas had to strike a piece of wood as a warning to others to avoid their touch. Fa Hien says that the cañḍālas had to strike a piece of wood as a warning to others to avoid their touch. Bāṇa also states that the cañḍāla girl coming to the court of king Śūdraka, had to strike a stick on the pavement just to warn people to avoid her. Bāṇa, describing a cañḍāla colony, calls it an actual image of all hells. Alberuni though belonging to the 10th century, corroborates these facts. According to him the people called Hadi, Domba, Cañḍāla, and Badhatu were reckoned as untouchables. They were engaged in dirty works. They might have been marked as Cañḍālas on account of their indecent occupations. These illustrations show that their lot was miserable, and they were treated with contempt.