COSTUME

Costume is a marked characteristic of a civilized society. In the man's march towards civilization the invention of costume is a unique landmark and hence its importance can never be over-emphasized. In fact costume can aptly be called the barometer of the changing fashions of a society. This is all the more true of the ancient Indian costume for we can trace its gradual development in the plastic representations. In this respect the murals of Ajanta are a veritable mine of information relating to the ancient Indian costume.

The costume that we see at Ajanta is quite in a developed form. This is as if should be; for, the antiquity of Indian dress goes back to the third millennium B.C. when the Harappan women wore a kilt or skirt fastened round the waist. Men donned a simple shawl or chaddar which was drawn over the left shoulder and passed and below the right arm. The most important discovery at Mohenjo-daro that needs a special mention
is that of the find of a few scraps of cotton cloth which were found sticking to a silver vase. It proved beyond doubt the existence of cotton fabrics in the third millennium B.C.

The importance of clothing as a cardinal necessity of civilization was realised by the Vedic Indians as can be inferred from numerous references to clothing in the Vedic literature. In this connection it is interesting to note that the Satapatha Brahmana holds that all civilized persons would have clothing of some sort.

The literature of the historic period is replete with references to various items of clothing, but actual specimens have not at all survived. The plastic representations, however, give us a fairly good idea of the dress, but it is only the paintings at Ajanta which shows us the colourful patterns as well.

Kings

From the painted illustrations it appears that


the kings in the early period wore a short dhoti (Pl. VII, 1), reaching the knees. The front pleats of the dhoti are taken at the back and tucked in rather tightly. A long kamārbandha is also tied round the waist, in a looped knot and one of its ends is left loose dangling between the thighs.

The short dhoti is generally referred to as ardhoraṅguka and occurs frequently in the early Indian art of Amaravati, Nagarjunakonda etc.

In the later period the commonest type of lower garment worn by kings and princes is an ardhoraṅguka. It consists of a long piece of cloth wound round the loins. Its ends are no more gathered and tucked in at the front as was done in the early period. But there might possibly a kachha at the back, or else it would have been necessary for the wearer of such a dhoti to put on some undergarment.

1. A kamārbandha found by A. Stein at Miran measured in width 17' 10½" (See Serindia, pp. 536-37.)
The ardhoruka is wound in rounds (Pl. VII, 2) and is secured on waist by a jewelled mekhala. In many cases it is observed that a long, flowing tuft of the dhoti is left loosely dangling. Sometimes these tufts obstructed the movements of kings as we are told by Māgha that king Śiśupāla, when he became angry in the assembly of the kings and rushed to strike his opponents, the ends of his garment got in the way and the king, in hurried steps, tumbled over.

The upper garment (uttariya) consisted of a piece of cloth and was sometimes worn in the yajñopavīte fashion (Visvāntara Jātaka, XVII). In some cases it has rib-like folds. This variety has rightly been identified by Dr. Agrawala as the bhaṅgura-uttariya. It seems that uttariyas were highly valued as they are listed by Bana among the presents to Hārṣa from Bhāskaravarman, the king of Prāgjyotisa. "They were bright like the rays of autumn moon and were washable... and instead of being folded they were rolled up."

It would thus be clear that kings and princess usually wore two garments - an ardhoruka and an uttariya. The same is amply borne out by literature.

1. Śiśupālavadhā, XV, 57.
as well, as kings like Harsha, Toramisra etc., are often
described as wearing only these two garments.

The foregoing account shows that there was a change
in the manner in which the dhoti was worn. In the
early period it was worn in such a manner as to leave
enough of its one end which was collected in the
front while its lower end was taken back and tucked in.
In short the kachha was in vogue. Besides, it was
secured on the waist by a long scarf, tied in a knot,
and its tufts were left hanging. In the later period
kachha is no more in vogue; the dhoti is wound in
rounds and is secured by an elaborate mekhala instead
of a kamarband.

Another noteworthy feature is that the Ajanta
kings usually wear an angarkha and an uttarakha in
striking contrast with the dress worn by the more or
less contemporary Gupta kings. From their representa-
tions on coins we know that the Gupta kings, more
particularly Samudragupta, wore a long, full-sleeved

2. Ibid, p. 151.
coat and tight-fitting trousers. This difference in dress is probably due to the climate in Northern India which is extremely hot and cold. On the contrary the Deccan enjoys milder winters and summers. It is interesting that this factor was considered by Yuan Chwang who observes, "In north India where the climate is very cold, close-fitting jackets are sometimes worn somewhat like those of Tartars (Hu)."

Secondly, it may also be due to the martial spirit of kings. For instance, Samudragupta who, we know, spent major part of his life in conquering new territories and as such usually wore coat and trousers. The Gupta mint masters probably saw him in this very dress very often and hence depicted him with his army costume on his coins. Moreover, the Gupta kings were the direct successors of the Kushānas, who, being Central Asiatic in origin, always clad themselves in coats and trousers.

But Dr. Moti Chandra has an interesting explanation to offer. According to him the preference

of the Ajanta kings for an uttarīya and an antariya is due to the fact that many of the kings depicted at Ajanta are only the representations of Buddha’s former lives and as such the artists did not think it proper to depict them in foreign clothes. Though this is not unlikely it is difficult to accept that the artists, who may not necessarily be all Buddhists, were conscious, at every stage, of the divine qualities of the character they were portraying. What is plausible is that they have simply depicted the normal dress worn by Indian kings who, as the paintings show, put on coat and trousers when they went out on a hunting expedition.

War Dress

The finest illustration of the dress of kings at War (Pl. VII, 4) is to be found in the Śiśhāla Avadāna (XVII). The prince wears a half-sleeved bodice bearing beaded patterns, probably embroidered on the neck, the sleeves and the lower margin. The bodice appears to be a kūrmāsaka which, as explained by Dr. Agravala, was above the waist. The very name

kūrpaśaka is due to the nature of its sleeves which were above the elbows. The kopāri (Marathi) used by villagers appears to have been derived from kūrpaśaka, which according to Dr. Agrawala, is Central Asiatic in origin.

Some of the kings accompanying Narga on his war expedition are described as putting on kūrpaśaka. This and the illustration at Ajanta show that a kūrpaśaka was worn by kings when at war.

**Hunting Dress**

Hunting was a favourite pastime of the ancient Indian king as it was of the erstwhile state chiefs of India. In literature we very often come across the graphic description of royal hunt such as that of Dāsaratha in the Rāmāyaṇa and of Chandrāpīṇḍu in the Kedāmbarī. Hunting was a favourite pastime of the Gupta kings as can be gathered from their 'hunting' type coins. Fortunately there are excellent illustrations of royal hunts at Ajanta, both in the earlier and the later group of paintings.

1. The king in the Syama Jātaka (I) wears a long, half-sleeved tunic and a kamarband round his waist (Pl. VII, 5). The lower garment is not seen. A similar long but full-sleeved coat is depicted in the Nagarjunakonda reliefs. The tunic may be identified as cīnaracholaka.

2. In another panel of the later period (Mṛga Jātaka, XVII) the king is shown wearing a long full-sleeved coat with pointed ones. He also wears tight-fitting trousers and high boots. In other hunting scenes also the kings are shown wearing a similar dress (Sutasoma Jātaka, XVII, etc.) and the same can be noticed in the paintings in the Bagh Caves.

The full-sleeved tight-fitting coat worn by the king is very similar to that worn by Gupta kings. It may probably be the vārabāna, which was introduced in India by the Sassanians. A similar coat is noticed in a terracotta figurine from Ahichhatra. It has been identified by Dr. Agrawala as varpanā.

3. Marshall and others, Bagh Caves, Pl. F.
5. Terracotta Figurines from Ahichhatra', AJ, No.4, p.173, Fig.305.
Värbāṇa, as its very name indicates, was worn at the time of war. Kings accompanying Harṣa on his expedition are also described as wearing vārbāṇa. It is not unlikely that they donned it even when they went on hunting expeditions.

As described above, the king also wears tight-fitting trousers which are probably of the svasthāna type. The origin of such trousers is ultimately to be traced in Central Asia. "By reason of their domestication of horses and adoption of horse back riding" states McGovern, "the inhabitants of Central Asia were forced to discard the loose skirt costume. For centuries, wearing of trousers was confined exclusively to the inhabitants of Central Asia and this custom spread to all parts of the globe." This would explain the preference of Indian kings for trousers when they went on hunting.

The trousers referred to as somstamni in the Niya documents, were probably introduced in India by the Sakas, a Central Asian tribe.

1. Agraval, op.cit., p.150.
There is more variety in the apparel of the female members of royalty than those of kings and princes.

**Lower Garment**

In the early period they wore something like a modern janghia as lower garment (Pl. VII, 7). A long piece of cloth is tied around the waist and its tufts are left dangling loose between the legs. The lower garment is referred to as ardhajanghika. In the Vākāśaka-Gupta period the commonest lower garment is an archoruka, usually striped (Pl. VII, 8). It is tied in rounds and sometimes the tufts are left hanging loose. This, however, would have necessitated some sort of under-garment. But it appears that they wore kachha at the back (Pl. VII, 9).

Kalhana attributes the mode of wearing lower garment in the kachha fashion to Lalitāditya, the king of Kashmir. The great chronicler states that Lalitāditya, after his conquests in the second half of the 8th Cent. A.D., forced the people of the Deccan

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to wear the lower garment in such a manner that the ends dangled at the back and the feet, which, as the poet describes was "the tail which sweeps the ground to mark that they were beasts." This is of course a witty remark and not a historical fact and may be due to the mode of lower garment which excites the amusement and wonder of the people as the *sakachha sari* of a Maharashtrian lady does even today.

The *kachha*, however, appears at an early period and very clear representation of the same is seen in the Sanchi reliefs.

Another variety of lower garment is a skirt, either short (Pl.VII,10) or long, reaching the ankles (Pl.VII,11). It is probably the *chandātaka* of the literature and its early representations are found in the Kushana art.

A princess (Toilet, XVII) wears a short *chandātaka* (Pl.VII,12) of extremely transparent material (māgnāmsūka). Over it she has tied another piece of cloth of a darker colour which is ornamented with rows of pearls. The garment is secured on the waist by an

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1. Śākyatarangini, IV, 140.
2. See Moti Chandra, *Sāhātīva Vēsabhūsā*, p.41, Fig.91.
3. Agraval, *Harmacharita*, p.61, Pl.3, Fig.12.
elaborate makhala.

Queen Māyā (Birth of Buddha, II) is shown wearing an antariya which looks like short drawers (Pl.VII,13). It is studded with big gem slabs and pearls. Dr. Agrawala rightly identifies this variety as the satulā which is referred to in the Harsacharita. However, it should be noted that there are only a very few representations of queens at Ajanta wearing satulā.

Long, tight-fitting trousers are also worn by queens, though rarely. (Pl.VII,14). This, according to Bana, was known as svasthāṅa. The very name suggests that it was tight-fitting on legs, i.e. 'at its proper place'. Bana further informs us that it was made of the netramāṇḍali variety of silk which was decorated with floral scrolls (uchchitra).

Upper Garment

The female members of the royalty usually wore an uttarīya which sometimes is inordinately long (Pl.VII,12). A shorter variety is also seen (Pl.VII,15). It is worn by the queen mother in the Mahājanaka.

References:
2. Ibid, p.320.
3. Ibid.
Jātaka (I), and might possibly have been tied at the back. It appears to be stanaṃsukā or the stanaottariya, that is frequently mentioned in the literature, which adhered closely to the breasts. The Ajanta Specimen is extremely transparent and is adorned with pearls. It can, therefore, be said to be made of the stavareska type of cloth which was imported from Persia. Kalidasa too mentions such an upper garment which was studded or interwoven with pearls with a view to provide cooling touch. It was used particularly in summer and was so light and thin that it could be displaced or removed with breath.

An extremely interesting upper garment is worn by the princess Yasodhara (Mother and Child, XVI). It looks like an apron (Pl. VII, 16) and is probably made of the stavareska type of cloth as it is interwoven with pearls.

1. Dasaku, p. 212.
2. Raghu, XVI, 17.
4. Raghu, XVI, 43.
The upper garment referred to above is interesting on account of the fact that it covers not only the breasts, but the abdomen as well. It has a curved neck, probably embroidered, and appears to have been tied at the back. A strikingly similar garment is referred to by Hemachandra who, while describing the ladies of the capital of the Mūru country, proceeding hastily in their eagerness to see the king Durlabharāja of the Gurjarāstrā as he arrived there to attend the marriage of the sister of the king of that country, mentions that some of them did not care to adjust their upper garment so as to cover their bosom and abdomen. It is noteworthy that the term for this upper garment used by Hemachandra is uḍarāṃśuka which is paraphrased by his commentator as uḍarastanāpichāyakam vastram i.e., the garment covering the abdomen and the breasts. It shows that it was perhaps considered proper to wear the upper garment in such a manner that it not only covered the breasts but the abdomen as well. In all probability, therefore, the upper garment worn by Yasodharā is probably the same as that referred to by Hemachandra. Incidentally it should also be noted

1. See Ghurye, op. cit., p.131.
2. Ibid.
that she is wearing it as she is coming out of the palace to receive the Buddha just as the ladies of the Maru country wore when they went to see the king, Gurjaradesa.

A very similar upper garment but with half sleeves is worn by the Lamanis ladies even today. It is adorned with mirrors and is tied with laces at the back. It is called kāpaḍī in Gujarati, thus denoting that it is simply a piece of cloth. It should also be borne in mind that all the Lamanis in India claim their origin in Rajasthan. This would point to the origin of this type of garment in Rajasthan to which region also the ladies of the Maru country (modern Marwad in Rajasthan) referred by Vemchandra belonged.

Ministers

The ministers are usually shown wearing long, loose, full-sleeved tunics reaching the knee. The tunic has a round neck which is embroidered and a kamarband is tied on the waist. (Pl. VIII, l). The minister in the Maṁsa Jātaka (XVII) also wears probably full trousers (svaṣṭhāna) and top boots.

1. The Lamanis in Maharashtra call it 'choli' (in Marathi), an appellation which is meaningless. This is obviously due to their naturalization in Maharashtra where the commonest upper garment for the ladies is 'choli'.
The uttariya from under the right arm is taken over the left shoulder.

The long loose coat appears to be the chinacholaka type of garment referred to in the Harṣa-charita. The very name is indicative of its Chinese origin. According to Dr. Agrawala, the Sakas from Central Asia introduced it into India where it became common during the Guptas' and the Harsa's times. It was probably a formal dress to be worn on occasions. Even today it is worn in marriages in north-western India and is known as 'chola'.

It seems that chinacholaka was quite common in the early period as the Kushana chiefs are usually shown wearing it. The one worn by Kaniska opens in the middle. Such a coat is found in Central Asia.

2. Ibid.
3. Vogel, La Sculpture de Mathura, Pls. I, II B, and III.
4. Ibid.
Kāṇchukī

The kāṇchukī (Hāmaśa Jātaka and Sīhala Avadāna, XVII) is usually shown wearing a loose, long, full-sleeved robe and a shawl-like cloth passing transversely across the chest. (Pl. VIII,2).

The long robe, reaching the ankles is referred to as pulphāvalōki kāṇchukā. From the literary descriptions too, it appears that the kāṇchuka worn by a kāṇchukī was an extremely loose and long garment. Hāraṇa tells us that it was so long that once a dwarf entered a kāṇchukī of a kāṇchukī, being afraid of a monkey that had got loose. Kāṇchuka thus signifies a long, loose robe.

Door-Keepers (Pratīhārī)

There is an excellent representation of a pratīhārī in the Visvāntara Jātaka (XVII). He wears a tight-fitting, half-sleeved kūrpēsaka with its lower margin embroidered (Pl. VIII,3). The antariya is a

short dhoti held in position by an elaborate mekhala. The lower end of the front-tied dhoti hangs below. He also wears a bejewelled head-dress and lavish jewellery on his person. He holds a dagger in his left hand.

The dvarapala reminds one of Puriyatra, the chief of Harsha's door-keepers, who wears a golden belt studded with flashing rubies very lightly compressing his waist and has a white turban on his head.

Another representation of a dvarapala occurs in Cave VI, but it is almost damaged. But for a small portion of his ardhoruka, secured by a waist-band, nothing is visible. From the painted fragment it can be said that he wears lavish jewellery.

The chief royal door-keeper, who sometimes served as the chief body-guard as well, was a very important person in the employ of the king. Sometimes the conquered kings were humiliated to serve as pratiharas. The great Rastakuta emperor Dantidurga (733-758 A.D.) vanquished the Pratihara king Nagghata I and forced him to serve as a pratihara when the conquerer performed the hiranyakarsha sacrifice at

1. See Ghurye, op.cit., p. 149.
Royal Bodyguard

The royal bodyguard (Chāmpoya Jātaka, I) wears a long, full sleeved coat (china-cholaka) and a fur-brimmed domical cap crowned by a crescent. He also probably wears some sort of body armour. A long robe worn on the back is tied at the front near the neck (Pl. VII, 4). Dr. Agrawala thinks him to be of Sassanian origin and identified the robe worn by him as the ḍuchḍadanskā referred to by Bana. 2

Men

In the early period men wore an archoruka (Pl. VIII, 5) as the lower garment while, as upper garment, they sometimes wore a loose, half sleeved tunic (Fig. VIII, 6) reaching the knees. It has a 'V' shaped neck. It appears to have an opening at the front. It resembles the chinacholaka of the Sakas, in all respects except sleeves, as the latter is a full-sleeved garment.

1. Majumdar, R.C. and Pusalkar, A.D., Age of Imperial Kanauj, p. 20.
The tunic is usually tied at the waist by a kumbhānd.

In the later period the commonest lower garment is an arduhūka, wound in rounds and the raging fashion of the day is to leave long, flowing tufts through the lower ends are not tucked in at the front, it appears from some illustrations that a kachcha was tucked in at the back (Pl. VIII, 7 and 8). Even though the lower garment is an arduhūka, wound in rounds and the raging fashion of the day is to leave long, flowing tufts through the lower ends are not tucked in at the front, it appears from some illustrations that a kachcha was tucked in at the back (Pl. VIII, 9).

The stitched lower garments are a chandātaka (Pl. VIII, 10), reaching the knees (Sāṅkhaṭa Jātaka I), and short drawers (satula) the finest variety of which is worn by an attendant of the Buddhas in Cave XVII (Pl. VIII, 11).

The upper garment that is frequently represented in the later period is an uttarīya, a long, narrow piece of cloth. It is now generally donned in the upāvīta fashion, i.e. it is passed transversely across the chest from below the right arm (Pl. VIII, 7).

Another interesting feature of the uttarīyas of the later period is that they now have transverse folds (Pl. VIII, 12 and 13). These rib-like folds, especially noteworthy are a peculiar characteristic of the Gupta times. Such uttarīyas frequently occur in
the plastic representations of that period. Bana refers to them as the bhangura uttarayya which were being prepared at the time of Rājyasrī's marriage. It appears that it was called bhangura on account of its gadrooned folds.

The uttarīya was sometimes tied in a looped knot (Pl.VIII,14).

Thus an antariya and an uttarīya constituted the dress of a common man. Vātsyāyana prescribes it for the nāgaśka who, according to the writer, should wear two garments, a vāstra or a yōssa i.e. a lower garment and an uttarīya which was sometimes scented with rich perfumes of flowers.

Stitched upper garments are also being used more and more. In the Palace Scene (I) a man is shown wearing a tight fitting, full-sleeved kūrpāsaka (Pl.VIII,15) which is decorated with linear patterns and circlets set in horizontal bands.

1. Agrawala, 'Terracottas of Ahichchatra', AI, No.4, p.169, Fig.302.
A votary (II) is clad in a chinacholaka and a kamarband tied on the waist (Pl. VIII, 16). The round neck, sleeves and arms of the chinacholaka are profusely embroidered with beaded patterns.

Yet another person (Palace Scene, I) has donned a long and extremely loose robe similar to that of a Chinese Mandarin (Pl. VIII, 17). The robe can be the same as the śringadīna kañchuka. The kañchuka is full-sleeved and bears horizontal bands containing beaded ornamentation and rows of geese, bulls etc.

Equally interesting is the robe (Pl. VIII, 18) worn by a monk in the panel showing the king distributing alms (XVII). It is a long, ankle-reaching kalapālika kañchuka without sleeves. It has a round neck and an opening probably at the front. The monk wears a conical cap in which is fixed a skull. This shows that he belongs to the kāpālika sect. If the dress is any criterion, it can be said that he is a foreigner who got himself converted to the kāpālika sect of the Saivites.

There is an interesting variety of the costume of women at Ajanta. The few fragments of paintings of the early period that have survived do not depict any variety in the costume of ladies. The only lower garment that is worn is short drawers like the modern jangha (ardhajanghika) secured by a waist band the long tufts of which are left hanging between the thighs.

In the later period the ladies commonly put on an archoruka, just as the men did. It is simply wound in rounds. (Pl. IX,1). It is sometimes worn tight, probably with a view to accentuate the graceful curves, or loose and is usually secured on the waist by an elaborate mekhala. Many ladies now prefer to wear it in such a fashion as to leave long flowing tufts which is sometimes held in left hand (Pl. IX,2) just as men do today in some parts of the country. The comparatively less number of representations showing the lower ends at the front gathered and tucked in (Pl. IX,3) indicate that this particular mode of wearing the antariya is fast being outdated.

As against short dhotis, long ones reaching
the ankle (सुल्फुवालम्बी) are also worn and their schematic folds are indeed charming. Even then there is a marked preference for long tufts (Pl. IX, 4). It is noteworthy that long dhotis fit tightly on the thighs and the legs. This obviously is due to the kachcha at the back (Pl. IX, 5). Some part of the kachcha too is left dangling.

This particular fashion of wearing the lower garment with long, flowing tuft is very well reflected in the contemporary literature. Urvāśī probably clad herself in this particular manner and hence Vikrama, in a very excited and imaginative mood during his search of Urvāśī, describes a foaming river as if it were Urvāśī herself, dragging her white garment.

Another type of lower garment, is a skirt, which is not very common. Two varieties of skirt (चाँदातक) are noticed. One is a short skirt reaching the knees (Pl. IX, 6 and 10). It is worn by a maid in the Mahājanaka Jātaka (I). It has vertical stripes and the central band on the front contains a dainty floral scroll, probably embroidered.

Again in the Mahājanaka Jātaka (I) a maid is shown wearing a long skirt reaching the ankle (Pl. IX, 7).

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1. Vikrama, , IV, 29.
The skirt (chodāṭaka) does not appear in the early Indian art in the Deccan. Its earliest representations occur in the Kushana and the early Gupta art. Even today it is worn in the region around Mathura, Rajasthan, Gujrat and Malwa, where it is known as ghāra.

Another variety of sewn garment, archajaṅghikā, \(1\) which is common in the early period, is very rare in the Gupta-Vākṣṭaka period. However, short drawers (satulā) are now coming into vogue. A female door-keeper (XVII) wears such a satulā \(2\).

So far as uttarīya is concerned, it needs be mentioned that it is conspicuous by its absence in the early period, at least at Ajanta. But the sophisticated ladies of the Gupta-Vākṣṭaka society have a variety of upper garments to choose from. There is a longer variety (Pl.IX, 4 and 5) as also a shorter one. The latter is a simple breast-band (stanāṃśuka or stanaottariya) which was probably tied at the back and covered only the breasts (Pl.IX, 10).

1. Moti Chandra, Bharatiya Veśabhūga, p.125, Fig.213.
2. Shah, U.P., 'Terracottas from Former Bikaner State', Lalit Kala, No.3, 1960, Pl.XXI, Fig.2.
Again there are certain types of bodices. A maid (Gāmpeya Jātaka I) wears a blue, sleeveless bodice (kūr̥pāsaka) which covers the breasts (Pl. IX, 11). It does not have an opening at the front and was therefore probably tied at the back.

Dr. Fabri noticed a representation of similar sleeveless bodice even in the earlier group of paintings at Ajanta. The bodice, according to him, is stitched with bead-necklaces on the round neck. However, the sleeveless bodice is strikingly similar to the one that is very much in vogue in the higher strata of Indian society today.

Some ladies are shown wearing a bodice (kūr̥pāsaka) with mega-sleeves (Pl. IX, 12) which is probably dotted with pearls or beads (Palace Scene, I). Moreover three pearl or bead necklaces are also seen stitched around the neck. Another interesting variety is a half-sleeved bodice (Pl. IX, 13) worn by a maid (Sutasoma Jātaka, XVII). It is rather long, covers the abdomen and rests over the hips. It has a round neck. In appearance it resembles the pull-over of our own time. However we do not know whether it was tied

1. Fabri, C.l., History of Indian Dress, Pl. I.
at the back, as no opening is seen at the front. But it is rather impossible to tie such a longish garment at the back. Probably it was meant to be worn like a pull-over. In this connection it is interesting to note that Vākpatirāja in his Āgūḍavahpa refers to a bodice which was meant to be worn like a pull-over. The poet describes the ladies as having their nostrils puffed out owing to their hard breathing which was caused by their tight bodices pressing heavily on their necks as their lovers in haste were pulling their bodices over their heads. From this Dr. Ghurye rightly infers that this variety of bodice was closed and had no fastening arrangement, which was not necessary, as when slipped over the head and passed over the breasts like the modern pull-over it would sit snugly over the body. The Ajanta specimen described may probably be similar to that referred to by Vākpatirāja.

A full-sleeved variety (Pl. IX, 16) of the above bodice occurs in the Māhājana Jātaka (I). It is made of two pieces of cloth, red and green and bears dotted pattern.

Some women are shown wearing a plastron (udārāṃsūka) which is either sleeveless (Pl. IX, 14) or half-sleeved (Pl. IX, 15). A votary (I) is wearing an udārāṃsūka without sleeves and an ardhoruka. Sujāta (Sujāta offering Food to Buddha, XVI) is also clad in a similar attire. A very similar dress is worn by Yaśodā sculptured in the Gupta temple at Deogarh.

A votary (II) wears a half-sleeved udārāṃsūka.

A maid (Mahājanaka Jātaka, I) wears a long, full-sleeved kañcchukā which probably reached the ankles (gulphāvalambī). It has a round neck and is decorated all over with rows of geese. It recalls to the mind the one donned by the chāṇḍāla girl who is described by Bana as wearing a blue kañcchukā reaching down below the knees. Again in the Harsa-charita Bana refers to a similar but white kañcchukā worn by Sarasvatī's friend, Mālatī.

Most of the women, wearing the bodices described above, appear from their facial features, to be Indian. This bespeaks of the spread of wearing bodices of different varieties in the Gupta-Vākātsaka period. In the light of the evidence furnished by the painted illustrations at Ajanta, Fabri's contention that "the earliest examples of bodices are to be seen only in the Jain miniature paintings of the 10th Cent. A.D." is no longer tenable. The references to a variety of bodices in the ancient literature also point to the same.

Last but not the least important is a garment worn by a palace maid (Pl.I,1) in the Mahājanaka Jātaka (I). She wears a long and broad piece of cloth with vertical stripes, wound round & the body in such a way that from breast to knee the body is covered in one sweep. Another lady (Sākhapāla Jātaka, I) wearing a similar garment is seen from the back (Pl.I,2). The garment bears striking resemblance to that worn by women in Coorg and Kerala. It is called mulākacha in Malayalam meaning 'breast cloth'. It is also akin to the 'sarong' which is worn by the people in the Malayan Archipelago. Very probably the Malayan word 'sarong'.

1. op.cit., p.67.
is derived from the Indian word sari, and is given the typical Malayan ending 'ong'.

Soldiers

It appears from the paintings that some sort of uniform was prescribed to the army personnel. However it is somewhat difficult to distinguish between the ranks of the soldiers. The costume of the soldiers is described below:

In the earlier group of murals the soldiers, were wearing only a short dhoti (ardhoruka) or a skirt (chāngātaka) appear to be ordinary foot soldiers (Pl. I, 3). Those wearing a half-sleeved kūrpāsaka are probably higher officials (Pl. I, 4). They also sometimes wear a scarf round the neck.

It is probably in the later period that some sort of uniform is introduced. In many panels we find ordinary soldiers wearing a half-sleeved kūrpāsaka with its sleeves, round neck and the lower margin embroidered. As an antariya they usually

1. Bana describes the soldiers accompanying Dadhīcha as wearing bodices (kañchuka). See Agrawala, op. cit., p. 33.
put on an ardhoruka (Pl. I, 5). Those in the cavalry also wear a similar kūrpāsaka but wear a skirt (chandātaka) as the lower garment (Pl. I, 6). This, of course, is due to the fact that an ardhoruka would be inconvenient for a horseman.

The higher officers wore long-full sleeved, coats (vārabāna) and tight-fitting trousers (svasthāna). Besides they also wear robes either short (Pl. I, 7) or long ones (Pl. I, 8). The robe worn by an army officer in the Mahājanaka Jātaka (I) is rather short and resembles the modern cape. It is tied at the neck by means of a round clasp (Pl. I, 7). Another army general in the Vidura Pandita Jātaka (II) wears a long robe, reaching the ankle. Bana makes a mention of the robes (āchchādānaka) donned by the kings accompanying Harsa on his expedition. That such robes were in vogue is evident from their presentation in the Bēgharh reliefs and in the Mathura art.

2. Vats, op. cit., MASI, No.70, Pl.XXXI, 10.
3. Mathura Museum, Fig. nos. D-1 and 513; See Agrawala, Harschārītī, p.153.
Fortunately there is a very good illustration of a chief of the army (Śimhala Avasāna, XVII). He is riding an elephant and is not seen completely. He probably wears a short chandātaka bearing chequered pattern and a tight-fitting, half-sleeved kūrpāsaka (Pl. IX, 9). He also wears ornamental cross bands over his chest which are probably indicating his highest rank in the army. Surprisingly enough a lady also wears such cross bands. (Palace Scene, II). They can, therefore, as well be protective, for, as already seen even the kings wore them when at war (Pl. XXIV, 4). These cross bands are very common in the early period, as they occur frequently in the early Indian art.

The foregoing description of the costume of the army personnel shows that there was definitely some kind of uniform for the army. However, we cannot precisely know the particular rank of the soldier from the costume that is represented in the plastic representations. It seems that the army uniform existed even in the earlier period as testified by Strabo.

1. Majumdar, op. cit., p. 281.
Children

There is not much variety in the costume of the children as their representations are quite few.

The children of the royal family wear a half-sleeved bodice, probably open at the front. It is fringed by pearls. The 'V' shaped neck bears some indeterminate embroidered pattern (Pl. X,10). The young prince Sidhārtha (School Scene, XVI) wears a long, full-sleeved coat, probably of the chīna-cholakā variety and tight-fitting trousers (svaasthās) (Pl.X,11).

The children of the common people wear an ardhoruka with the front pleats gathered and tucked in (Pl.X,12) or short drawers satulā (Pl.X,13).

Musicians

There is a good number of representations of musicians, male and female as well. Men are shown wearing an ardhoruka and sometimes an uttariya (Śīṃhala Avadāna, XVII). Two dwarfs (I) are seen wearing full-sleeved tunics, but their garments are different. The one playing cymbals wears an ardhoruka,
while the other playing violin wears tight-fitting trousers (svaasthāna).

The female musicians (Mahājanaka Jātaka, I) usually wear short dhotis (archoruka). A drummer in the same panel wears a broad breast-band (stanamāsūka) and shorts (satulā).

Dancers

A dancing girl (Palace Scene, II) wears an archoruka secured by a jewelled mekhalā. The dancing girl (Mahājanaka Jātaka, I) is shown wearing an archoruka and a long, full-sleeved plastron (udaramāsūka), the sleeves of which are of reddish colour and bear dotted pattern. The full-sleeved plastron leads Fabri to surmise that the dancer is of a foreign origin and the plastron too. He further states that he is prepared to agree that this was an Indian fashion if there is any other example of this dress at Ajanta. As already described (supra, p. 85) there are at least a dozen illustrations of this particular type of dress at Ajanta including the sleeveless and the half-sleeved varieties (XI, VII, 16 and IX, 14, 15). In the light of evidence

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1. Fabri, op.cit., p.5.
at Ajanta and elsewhere there should be little doubt about the indigenous origin of this type of dress.

**Bhiksu**

Many bhiksu are shown wearing either an ardhoruka or a chandikaka, secured by a katisutra. Many of them wear an uttariva in the vajrapavita fashion. Huien Tsang refers to the lower garment worn by the Buddhists as 'ni-fo-si-na'. Likewise I-Tseng too, while referring to the clothes required by a Buddhist priest in the 7th Century, mentions the nivasana as the lower garment and uttarāśāṅga as the upper garment.

Some bhikṣu wear long robes reaching the feet. The robe completely covers the left shoulder and leaves the right shoulder bare and the right hand free. A bhikṣu in the Mahājanaka Jātaka (I) wears a robe which has slits through which hands can be taken out (Pl. X,15). This is probably the saṁghāṭi robe worn in the fashion in which the Romans donned their toga. This type of robe appears to be very common among the Buddhist monks.

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2. Takakusu, J.(Tr.by), A Record of the Buddhist Religion as practised in India and the Malay Archipelago (A.D.671-695) by I-Tseng, p.55.
3. Ibid.
states that "the inner clothing and the outer attire of the people have no tailoring .... The men wind a strip of cloth round the waist and up to the armpits and leave the right shoulder bare". This, however, is his generalization of the Indian dress. But this appears to be true only in the case of the Buddhist monks and cannot, therefore, be taken as a general observation. In all probability he came into contact more with his Buddhist brethren whose dress he describes. Thus the dress described by Fa-Hien can possibly be of the type described above.

A few bhikṣus (Visvantara Jātaka, XVII) wear a chaddar, reaching the knees (Pl.X,16). Its lower ends are tied in a knot and the bhikṣu is shown taking out his hands off the garment. Even today the Indian beggars wear chaddars in this very manner.

In some panels the Buddha as a bhikṣu is shown wearing a long, loose, full-sleeved kaṭṭhuka, sometimes tied with a waist-ban (Pl.X,17).

A monk attending the sermon of the Buddha (VI) wears a half-sleeved tunic with round, open neck (Pl.XI,1).

It is made of rags as is obvious from the pieces of cloth of different colours. The garment can be identified as the kantha which was used by the Buddhist monks. It resembles, as Rhys Davids remarks, quoting from a passage from Vinaya Pitaka 'a field cut up by roads and boundaries that served also as water channels'. The robes costing many gold pieces, were distributed to the Buddhist members of the Order. A similar kantha is worn by a monk in the Amaravati carving.

As the person wearing the kantha has a skull in his coiffure, he can be identified as a kāpālika.

**Brahmins**

There are very few representations of Brahmins. They usually wear an archonuka and an uttariya (Fig. XI, 2, 3). The uttariya is generally worn in the upavita fashion.

**Jain monks**

Some ascetics with shaven heads and without any garments (Miracle of Srāvasti, XVII) appear to be

Digambara Jainas.

Hunters and Trappers

The hunters and trappers (Saṅkhapāla Jātaka, I) are shown wearing short dhotis (ardhoruka) and sometimes an uttariya. (Saṃbara Chakra, XVII).

Aboriginals

A tribal person in Cave I wears only a small strip of cloth tied in a knot at the front and one of its ends is left hanging. He does not appear to be wearing any loin-cloth. But possibly he is wearing a lampot, a small strip of cloth, tucked in at the front and back.

A tribal woman (XVII) wears a skirt made of green leaves being suspended in front and behind from the three-stranded girdle made of beads (pl. X1, 4).

The skirt made of twigs or leaves and grass has a hoary antiquity in human history. It appears that this type of dress, in the later ages, assumed only a certain significance. Thus, though cotton clothing was known in the Vedic period, the wife of a
sacrificer is described as putting on a garment of kusa grass. The Buddhist texts, too, refer to the garments made of grass bark, and leaves (phalaka).

In the great epic, Rāmāyana, Rāma, Sītā and Laksmana are described as wearing vakkalas, i.e. the bark dress during their exile which indicates that it was a jungle dress. The ancient Tamil literature too records that the women of the hill tribes wore such green leaf skirts made by tying the leaves round the waist with a string. What is interesting is that exactly similar dress is worn even today by some tribal women in Orissa. A notable instance of this is offered by Col. Dalton. Regarding the Jhanges of Keonjhar he states, "The females of the group had not amongst them a particle of clothing; their sole garment for the purposes of decency consisted of a girdle, composed of several strings of beads from which depended before and behind small curtains of leaves."

1. Das, A.C., *Ṛgvedic Culture*, p.211.
2. SBE, XVII; Mahāvagga, VIII,2,6, 2.
Foreigners

Some persons of foreign origin are also represented. Their very dress and facial features bespeak of their different nationality which, however, is difficult to fix.

The foreigners in the ‘Embassy’ (I) wear long, full-sleeved coats, tight-fitting trousers and tall conical caps (Pl. XI, 5). Their identification has created considerable controversy. As the scene was taken to represent the embassy of the Persian king, Khusru, to the court of the Chalukyan monarch Pulakesin II in 625-26 A.D. The persons were taken to be Iranians. Yazdani thinks them to be Turkish. Dr. Moti Chandra compares them with the figures in a 1st Cent. A.D. fresco from Dura Europos (Syria) and identifies them as Syrian or Mesopotamian merchants which appears to be plausible.

Another panel on the ceiling of cave 1 (A Bacchanalian Scene) depicts a foreign chief (Pl. XI, 6) with his consort, sitting on a diwan. Two maids are serving them wine and two male

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attendants are sitting at their feet. The chief wears a long, full-sleeved coat of pale blue cloth. Its collar, armbands and the cuffs are of lighter colour and are embroidered. He also wears a fur-brimmed domical cap.

The lady (Pl.XI, 7) wears a long, full-sleeved gown which is embroidered. The maids wear a similar gown and a long, flowing skirt. The dress of the male attendants is similar to that of their master.

The chief, his consort and the maids from their facial features and dress appear to be Iranians. The snubbed nose and thick lips of the servants point to their Negroid origin. In all probability they are slaves.

Again in the panel showing "the Buddha preaching" (XVII) a number of foreigners have assembled. They all wear long, full-sleeved coats with collars, cuffs and armbands beautifully embroidered (Pl.48, 9, 10). According to Yazdani, they belong to the countries on the north-western

1. R.L. Mittra's contention that they are Central Asians is doubtful. See his article 'On Representation of Foreigners in the Ajanta Frescoes', JASS, Vol. XLVII, 1872, p.68.
border of India while Dr. Moti Chandra takes them to be of Iranian origin. It is however difficult to say anything definitely regarding their nationality.

A foreigner (Pleasantry, II) is shown wearing a domical cap (kulaha) with streamers fluttering behind. The coat and the trousers are tight-fitting and he also wears toffos decorated with blue stripes. Around the neck, he appears to be wearing a scarf the ends of which are fluttering at the back (Pl. XI, 11). From his dress he is probably an Iranian.

A palace maid, serving wine to the royal couple (Palace Scene, XVII), wears a full-sleeved bodice, rather long and resting on hips. It is decorated with star-pattern and probably has a front opening. She also wears a domical cap with a tassel at the top (Pl. XI, 12).

The female attendant of Padmapani (I) wears a blue, full-sleeved gown (kūṇchuka) and a gem-studded conical head-dress. (Pl. XII, 13).

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2. *Bharatiya Vaśabhūsā*, p. 211.
The presence of foreigners in the murals can easily be understood when we take into consideration the fact that Buddhism had penetrated into the regions to the north-west of India and its votaries in those distant lands began to visit the sacred sites of India as pilgrims, as is done even today by many persons from south, south-east and east Asia. Moreover, the establishment of Saka satrapies in Saurashtra and Malwa in the early centuries of the Christian era and the domination of the Huns in the 5th Century A.D. brought the people of the Deccan into close contact with these foreigners. They had also further infiltrated into many towns and cities, as merchants and had mixed with the local population. We know of one such Iranian colony on the western coast of India. Their predecessors, the Graeco-Romans too, in the early period had established their colonies on the eastern and western coast. It is, therefore, but natural that the master artists of Ajanta portrayed them in the paintings as they saw them very often.

2. This is evident from their (yavana) grants to the Buddhist monasteries in Western India which are recorded in epigraphs. See Luder's List, Nos.1093, 1154, 1156 etc.
The foregoing account of the costume depicted in the murals makes it amply clear that it is in a way unique and is extremely helpful in reconstructing the history of Indian dress from about 2nd Cent. B.C. to 6th Cent. A.D. The study shows that there was a marked change in the tastes of the people so far as dress is concerned.

From the very few painted fragments it is gathered that the people of the Sātavāhana period wore a short dhoti (ardhoruka) with a kachcha. Men sometimes wore a half-sleeved kūrpāsaka. The dhoti can be said to be typically Indian as it occurs commonly in early Indian art. But the kūrpāsaka is said to be of Central Asian origin. It was probably introduced by the Sakas before the beginning of the Christian era. Its use, however, appears to have been confined to soldiers only in the early period.

When we come to the Vākāska-Gupta age we find that there is a notable change in the dress. Dhoti, of course, remained the commonest lower garment for men and women, but the mode of wearing it undergoes a change. They do not now gather the front pleats and tuck, but they probably wore a kachcha.

at the back of which there are a few illustrations. The archoruka is now simply wound around the loins, and there is a growing tendency to leave one of its ends loosely hanging. This particular fashion of wearing an archoruka appears to have started about the beginning of the Christian era as is suggested by its representations in the Sanchi and the Gandhara reliefs. But it becomes very common in the Gupta-Vākāṭaka period.

Another important characteristic of the later period is that a variety of stitched garments come into vogue. Of these, skirt (chandātaka) is an important item. The early representations of skirt are to be seen in the Mathura art of the Kushāṇa period. The skirt was an important item of clothing and beautiful female statues are usually shown wearing long flowing skirts. The Hellenistic Greeks probably introduced it in the Gandhara region over which they held sway and some excellent representations of this garment are noticed in the Gandhara art. But it should be noted that these long, flowing skirts become shorter
and tighter in the later period as the Ajanta specimens would show. This was presumably done with a view to exhibit the graceful curves of the female figure.

Another characteristic of the later period is the increased use of stitched garments which are of rare occurrence in the early period when as already seen, they were generally worn by the people of foreign nationalities. With the solitary exception of the kūrpaśaka, worn usually by soldiers, the Indians did not show any preference for stitched garments. In utter contrast with this we find that people are using them on an unprecedented scale and a variety of new items is in vogue. Even the kings and princes are shown using coats and trousers and bodices when on hunting or a military expedition. So do the soldiers and the army officers who have to wear prescribed uniforms. The ladies, including those of the royal family, are also seen wearing a variety of bodices. Most of these, as already discussed, are of foreign origin, but the people of the 'Golden Age' are slowly getting accustomed to using it.

However it should be mentioned again that the commonest dress consisted only of an arūharaśka and an uttarīya which was, and is even today, undoubtedly
best suited to the climatic conditions of the land. Col. Meadows Taylor in appreciation of Indian dress writes, "a form of dress (Indian) than which anything more convenient to walk, to sit or to lie in, it would be impossible to invent."

TEXTILES

India was famous for its textiles, more especially for cotton fabrics in the ancient past, not only at home but beyond its frontiers as well. But our knowledge regarding ancient textiles is far from satisfactory. This is due, in the main, to the fact that no actual specimens have survived because of the climatic conditions. We have, therefore, solely to depend on the literary evidence, which however, is of little help. Ancient literature alludes to a variety of fabrics which are not accompanied by adequate descriptions. Moreover many names of ancient fabrics have now lost their original meaning and denote entirely different things. The sculptural representations sometimes show the decorative patterns of clothing but they do not give any idea of the colours of the fabric. We should, therefore, consider ourselves
to be singularly fortunate in possessing an endless variety of ancient Indian textiles in the Ajanta paintings and it would not be too much to say, that they constitute perhaps the only source left for us to assess the textile wealth of ancient India.

The earliest evidence of Indian textiles goes back to the middle of the third millennium B.C. when cotton cloth was used by the Harappans. This has been proved by an important discovery of a few scraps of cotton cloth found sticking to a silver vase at Hohenjo-daro. On expert examination it has been found to resemble the present day coarse Indian cotton with its typical convoluted structure. This supports the contention that the fabric called sindhu in Babylonian and sindon in Greek, was made of cotton. All this points to India as the original home of cotton.

In the later period the Vedas present us a well-dressed man while the literature of the historic period is replete with references to a variety of textiles. The accounts of the foreigners make a special mention of them. These fine fabrics were called "ventus textilis" or "nebula". Arrian records that Indian cottons were whiter and brighter.

2. Ibid.
than those of any other region and Lucian certifies
that they were lighter and softer than the Greek.
In fact cotton in its manufactured form was new to
the Greeks who accompanied Alexander the Great to
India.

About the beginning of the Christian era
India had flourishing trade with the Roman world
and Indian textiles were exported in considerable
quantities to West. Periplus, while enumerating
the articles imported from the Ariae country
(i.e. the region around the Gulf of Cambay) includes
"Indian cotton cloth of great width, cotton for
stuffing, sashes or girdles (probably kamarbands),
dress of skin with the hair or fur, webs of cloth
mallow-tinted and fine muslins." It should be
noted that all this brisk trade was carried on in
spite of the fact that the Gulf of Cambay was
difficult to navigate, but such was the renown
of the Indian muslin, that the Occident imported
it and there was a good demand for it in the
Island of Socotra and ports of the Red Sea.

1. Warmingdon, E.W., The Commerce between the Roman
Empire and India, P. 212.
4. See Moti Chandr, Jain, Miniature Paintings from
Western India, p.115.
The trade in Indian textiles, however, dwindled in the later period, but even today they are admired in distant lands in spite of the tough competition in the international market.

The Ajanta paintings represent a bewildering variety of textile patterns. It should, however, be noted that the main difficulty that is encountered is the problem of identification of different types of fabrics such as cotton, silk etc. It would not be wrong to presume that royal families and those from the higher strata of the society used mostly silks and fine, white muslins while the lower classes had to be contented with coarser varieties of cotton goods. The following are the varieties of textiles.

A majority of the people are shown wearing garments of white cloth preference for which was obviously conditioned by the climatic conditions. Even today many Indians wear white garments. Ancient literature, too, very frequently make mention of white clothes. This is also supported by the testimony of foreign travellers. Arrian found Indian cotton to be of a brighter white colour than any cotton found elsewhere. But he further observes that it is the
darkness of the Indians that makes their apparel look so much whiter. Strabo notes that "in general, the Indians wear white clothing, white linen or cotton garments, contrary to the accounts of those who say that they were highly coloured garments."

Plain-coloured clothes are to be found more in the paintings in Cave XVI than in any other cave of the later group. As Cave XVI is the earliest in point of time among the later group of caves the only inference that can be drawn is that the striped variety became common sometime about the end of the 5th Cent. A.D. and hence its frequent occurrence in the paintings of the later group wherein a majority of the people are shown wearing striped garments.

The stripes are either horizontal (Pl.IX, 2) or vertical (Pl.IX, 6). This type of cloth is used by rich and poor and the members of the royal families as well. The multi-coloured stripes gave it an appearance of rainbow and it can therefore be identified as the Indrayudha-jala-vermaśākka of the Harsacharita which was probably the same as the Indrayudhambaras which is referred to in the Kādambarī.

2. Ibid, p.281.
3. Agrawala, 'References to Textiles in Bana's Harsacharita,' Journal of Indian Textile History, No.4, 1949, p. 64.
In the striped variety itself there are different patterns. They consist of beaded bands (Pl. VIII, 15), ladder pattern (Pl. VII, 8), sometimes in combination with checkers (Votaries, II). This checker pattern is seen in many panels. (Pl. VII, 2). Other patterns, not very common, comprise crosses (Pl. II, 15) with a foliage scroll border-pallava (Pl. IX, 7), dots (Pl. IX, 16 and X, 14) or lozenges in horizontal bands (Pl. X, 14). The lozenges are sometimes solid. (Embassy Scene, I).

White cloth is sometimes provided with fine border. In one case it has a broad border adorned by pearl strings (Pl. VII, 13). Sometimes the border has beaded ornamentation while the upper margin is embellished by pearl tassels. (A Rāṇī, II).

Another interesting pattern is the rows of geese. It appears to be a favourite pattern in the Gupta period as it is mentioned by Kalidasa who refers to a scarf with geese pattern - Hamsa-chihna dukula or kala-hamsa dukula. Bana also records that

Harsa's robes were ornamented with large stars and rows of flamingoes. He further relates how the silken garments worn by ladies of Harsa's court were adorned sometimes with hundreds of diverse flowers and birds. It seems that this beautiful pattern continued for many centuries afterwards. It appears on Indian textiles of about 10th Cent. A.D. discovered at Postat in Egypt which were taken from India by Arab traders. They were probably manufactured in Gujrat. Again a fine, early mediæval painting from Nepal depicts Siva wearing a silken cloth decorated with Hamma pattern. That the pattern continued till the mediæval period is confirmed by the find of a sari bearing this pattern.

Very rarely we come across animal and bird patterns together (Pl.VIII,17).

Ladies of the royal family are sometimes shown wearing very thin, transparent garments probably of fine muslin or silk (Mahājanaka Jātaka, I, Toilet Scene, XVII etc.) similar to the robes of the

1. Agraval, Marsacherita, p.74.
2. See Agraval, 'Art Evidence in Kalidasa', JUPAS, XXII, 1949, p.90.
3. See Sivaramamurthi, Mirrors of Indian Culture, p.55.
Gupta period. It is probably of the magnāṃsūka
which is referred to by Bana. India was famous for
this fine fabric since very early period for even the
Greeks admired it so much that they used to compare
it with "sloughs of serpents", or "vapour from milk"
and described it as those fine textures the thread of
which would not be followed even by the eye". Such
cloth was exported in large quantities to the Roman
empire. A few epithets in the Harsacherita point
to the use of such fine fabrics. Some are said to be
"Slough of Snakes" (nirmoka-nibha), a comparison
often invoked in the contemporary literature. Others
are said to be "as soft as the delicate touch of a
pith of a plantain, or wafted by the breath, or im-
perceptible except to the touch".

The uttarīya of the queen mother (Mahājanaka
Jātaka, I) appears to be ornamented with pearls
stitched to it. According to Dr. Agrawala it is
the stavarsaka cloth which was imported from Persia.

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   No.4, p.67.
It is the same as the Persian istabrāk. The udarām-
sukā worn by Yasodhara (XVII) (Pl. VII, 16) and the coat
downed by Prince Siddhārtha (School Scene, XVI) (Pl. XI, 11)
also appears to be made of the stavarsaka cloth.

FOOTWEAR

Fortunately a few representations of footwear
have still survived. They can be grouped into three
varieties: (1) chappals (2) sandals and (3) boats.

(1) Chappals

A king and a hunter in an early painting (1)
are shown wearing similar chappals (Pl. XI, 1). The
chappal is strikingly similar to what are called
Hawaiian chappals of our own times. Very similar
chappals are worn by a man in the Sanchi reliefs
which, according to Dr. Moti Chandra is a copy of
the Graeco-Roman sandal. It should, however, be noted
that the specimen in question has no ankle-straps,
which was a characteristic feature of the Graeco-Roman
sandals. Hence the western origin of this type of
footwear is doubtful.

1. 'A Note of Stavarsaka Cloth', AI, No. 4, pp. 178-79.
2. Fergusson, Tree and Serpent Worship, Pl. XXVIII.
(2) **Sandals**

A hunter (Shaddanta Jātaka, XVII) wears sandals which are similar to No. 1 but have ankle-stra‌ps for fastening. Another variety of this type has straps crossing each other and also has ankle-stra‌ps (Saṃsāra Chakra, XVII) (Pl. xi, 16).

These sandals resemble the Graeco-Roman examples.

(3) **Boots**

A soldier (Mahāmaggā Jātaka, XVI) wears shoes resembling the modern slippers (Pl. XI, 17).

Some persons are shown wearing top-boots decorated with horizontal stripes (Pl. XI, 11). These boots are exactly similar, in shape to those worn by Kaniska and some Scythian chieftains sculptured in the Mathura art and would thus point to their Central Asian origin. The earliest representation of these types of boots occurs on a 5th Cent. B.C. "Black-painted" Greek vase on which too Scythians are depicted wearing them. We should, therefore, attribute the credit of the invention of

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1. Vogel, op. cit., Pl. I, II a
2. McGovern, op. cit., Pl. II.
these shoes to tribes in Central Asia, who are also the inventors of the tight-fitting trousers. This will only be understood when we take into consideration that such boots, along with the trousers, were an utter necessity for the horse-riders of Central Asia.

We do not know whether the Sakas or the Iranians introduced this type of boots in India.

The Br̥hat-kalpa-Sūtra refers to a variety of shoes called kaphphuas which is probably a corrupt form of the Iranian kaphs. This suggests that Iranians were responsible for introducing these boots in India. It may just as well be that the Central Asians introduced these boots in Iran long before they did so in India. The Iranian appellation can be explained by the fact that India and Iran had much closer contacts.

Another interesting factor is that the Amarakosa describes a kind of shoes that covered the whole foot. It was known as mupalīnā, which the commentator explains as socks (muṭāh). Rajendra Lal Mitra has very convincingly shown that even the

Persian mujud denoted a kind of shoe or buskin, i.e. an outer covering for the foot. He, therefore, explains the word anusadina as anupadah vyapadat anupadin.

The shoe might, therefore, be skin to the specimen under reference. This is to equate kaphahusa with anupadin.

This can be conceded as far as the shape of the shoe is concerned. But the problem of the origin of the shoe is complicated by a reference to it by Pāṇini, who notices a variety of boots that covered the whole foot and was tied at the ankle. This type of boot is worn by a king in the Krīga Jātsaka in Cave XVI (Pl.IX,14). In the light of Pāṇini’s reference to it, the foreign origin of this type of boot is doubtful.

The representations of shoes at Ajanta make two things clear. Firstly it should be noted that women did not wear shoes at all. Secondly, the shoes were worn by very few people. However, shoes appear to have a high antiquity in India as the story of Bharata’s worship of Rāma’s sandals during the latter’s exile would show. A story of the introduction

of shoes is to be found in the epic. How shoes made of (animal) skin were first presented to the sage Jamadagni along with the umbrella by the Sun god in the guise of an old brahmī as protective devices against the burning rays of the sun is glibly told in the Mahābhārata. This story may probably contain a substratum of truth. It should be noted in this connection that, of all the Hindu deities, only Sūrya is depicted with full-sleeved coat, tight-fitting trousers and top-boots. These iconographical peculiarities of the Sūrya images have led scholars to trace the origin of the cult to Iran. In view of this theory the boots worn by Sūrya, which are similar to the Ajanta specimens can also be Iranian in origin.

From the painted representations it is not possible to say anything regarding the materials used in the making of shoes. Literary evidence shows that they were made of wood (pādukā) or even grass and leather. Those of leather appear to have been commonly used, as Arrian says, "They (the Indians)
wear shoes, made of white leather and these are elaborately trimmed, while the soles are variegated and made of great thickness, to make the wearer seem much taller.

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