STATE CONTROL ON INDUSTRY IN POST MAURYA PERIOD.

"There are also mountains of natural salt, such as Oromenus in India where it is dug like blocks of stones from a quarry and even replaces itself bringing greater revenue to the kings than those from gold and pearls."

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Pliny Naturalis Historia-XXXI : 29 :77.
The Sāntiparva discusses king's proper attitude, towards taxes paid by Vaiśyas. The Vaiśyas it is stated, retire to the forest in case of indifferent attitude of the king, and so the king should treat them leniently. The vaiśyas are lauded as the promoter of the realm, agriculture, commerce, and industries and therefore the king is recommended to be on friendly terms with them and to collect lawful and permissible rates of taxes. Economic activities and production of wealth would necessarily be at a standstill in the absence of the Vaiśyas. Thus in the ultimate analysis, it is implied that normal customary fiscal policies would be acceptable to the producing masses and this would ultimately ensure the ruler of a regular inflow of revenues to his treasury.

So far we have noted how the king would earn revenue from different heads like agriculture, cattle rearing and industries etc. Manu moreover declares that "let the king cause skilled workmen (kārukara) and artisans (śilpinaścaiva) and also Śūdras living by their own labour to work for him a single day in each month". It is however not clear from the above passage whether these Kārus and Śilpis would be paid for their work, that they rendered for the king. But since these people seem to have contributed their labour by way of tax to the king, it is difficult to assume
that workers received some payments against their works. In that case the system here may refer to that of visit or forced labour which was one of the recognised sources of revenue in ancient India. The system of forced labour ensures the ruler of some obligatory bodily labour from workers and artisans without any payment made to them, for services rendered. The question that now arises in our mind is where did these craftsmen, silpins and Kārus work? Was it that the king might have utilised this free labour in working out his own mining industries, and other respective manufactories and workshops with which each craftsmen and artisans were associated and which were under the authority of the king or state? Since there is no explicit reference in the texts. Our knowledge is totally based on assumption. Moreover it may be presumed that the king or state engaged in industrial production as parallel entrepreneurs, and since these industries and crafts were worked by forced convict labour the cost of production of wares in royal manufactories must have been much less than the prevailing level. It is however not clear from Manu, as to whether the goods produced in royal manufactories were meant for sale in the open market or for consumption of the government itself.
The later Smrti writers were also more or less unanimous in regard to the above view. Visnu makes the rule apply to the artisans those who live by manual labours. Very similar is the rule of the Agnipurana. While Manu applies it to craftsmen artisans and Sudras living by manual labour, on the other hand Vasistha contemplates the artisans as paying a monthly tax. According to the Mbh. passage the king should impose taxes (kaṭas) upon artisans after a careful consideration of the output, the receipts and the expenses as well as the particular craft concerned.

Thus we see that the method of contribution in personal service, survived down to later times, and that the king exerted some amount of control over the wealth producing class i.e. craftsmen and the artisan group. The system thus yields two fold economic advantages to the king. In fact taxes being one of the principal revenue of royal income, fiscal rules were so framed in a way so as to produce maximum economic benefits (1) the king enriched his treasury through the artisan classes in form of taxes and levies to the state. (2) secondly the system of forced labour was utilised by the king for his own enterprises.

To complete this part of our survey it is necessary to consider the reference regarding the sources of revenue in the Sāstra and Smrti literature, with regard to mines.
Moreover Manu is more eloquent in referring that mines, as a source of revenue for which trusted officials are to be employed by the king. This shows that there were state mines under state supervision. Evidently the reference to half of the output to the king, no doubt reveals that the other half goes to the founder who is a private individual. From this we can infer that mines were contemplated as being worked by private agencies also. The reference to trusted officials when the king according to Visnu and the Mbh. is to be employed in mines, tolls, and ferry duties, salt works and the elephant forests.

The above discussion shows that the later theorists were also similar in their views like the Arthaśāstra. Mines, salt works and elephant forests being worked by state officials since they yield an enormous amount of revenue to the state.

In regard to the various crafts, we find innumerable references in the Rāmāyaṇa. They are mentioned in more than one place and we find lists of crafts people, in the Bālakanda, eg. on the eve of Dasaratha's Yajña. In the Ayodhyā Kānda in connection with Bharatēś expedition to bring Rama back, the craftsmen join him. Moreover, there is reference to craftsmen (Karmāntikān), skilled artisans
(śilpinah, śilpikāras, vardhakis and khaṇakas). Whether these crafts were organised into guilds it is difficult to determine, but their leaders are mentioned prominently in various places of the Rāmāyana showing their importance. On all important occasions the Naigamas are mentioned, as well as the Gana Vallaḥāh. In more than one place we find the mention of the Śrenī Mukhyah, and in the Ayodhyākānda we find the Rājakartawah accompanied by the guilds. Again on the occasion of Rāma's entry into Ayodhyā, he is welcomed by the Śrenī mukhyah. In the Mbh., we find similar reference to the Śrenis and their organised character. In the Adi and Sānti Parva we have innumerable references to Srenis and to paura-sahghatas, and their consolidation through Sreni mukhyas. On the occasion of Vasiṣṭha - Yajña not only we have mention of Śrenis paying tribute on being conquered, but we have references to their leaders attending the ceremonies. In the Āsrama vāsika Parva we have mention of the Śrenis bearing arms, and also troops of srenis.

Such informations no doubt reveal that the organisation of the craftsmen into guilds, with a leader who might have acted like a jetṭhaka of the Buddhist Jātakas. Such organisation can only be possible with the encouragement of the king. Such leaders might have acted as a liaison between the reigning political authority and the craftsmen.
The Śrenis paying tribute on being conquered might suggest that such tributes either in form of cash or kind might have been imposed by the king on these craftsmen being forced to acknowledge his suzerainty or they might have been given to the king to keep him in good humour. Moreover, the guilds were also becoming very important as to possess arms and troops, which signifies their position vis-a-vis the king. They might have supplied the king with arms and troops, or the king might have been dependent on them militarily. This shows that the king might have exerted some amount of control over these crafts group.

The Kamandaki Nitisāra though an important text on policy and state craft but contains, innumerable important evidences. In IV : 52 the author discusses quality of the land, fertility and soil resources which is the root of prosperity of the kingdom, and with the progressive prosperity of the kingdom flourishes the strength of the king himself. Moreover, land resources (bhūsampad or janasampad may be productive of different types of commodities rich with mines and mineral resources. When making new settlements, it should be inhabited by the sudras (agricultural and industrial labour) artisans and craftsmen (engaged in their respective vocations.) Such a land will be developed at all costs (with all possible efforts) as
it becomes the root of all prosperity. The text also refers to the sources of income for the treasury, and which should arise from new products, free labour. It also produces gold valuables, textiles, horses, and elephants.\textsuperscript{16}

Though there is no explicit reference in the treatise but it can be presumed that the ruler was the upholder of mines and mineral resources. The king encouraged the craftsmen and artisans, to increase production, and utilised the free labours to work out his own enterprises as referred earlier. Moreover the king also derived a considerable income from its own manufactures like gold, textiles which might have been the states own enterprises, while horses and elephants might have been kept under state control, for the reasons of its value in military as well as its economic products from the latter. The king's attitude towards mines and mineral products cannot be betrayed, due to its revenue earning potentiality.

D.N. Jha\textsuperscript{17} however opines that the basic policy of the lawgivers, seems to have been to theoretically ensure the safety of the people from financial oppression, which has been condemned by them in clear terms. The theorists realised that predatory fiscal policies were after all uneconomic while normal rates of levies would
be financially much more profitable in the long run.

When concluding we can say that the theorists were more or less unanimous regarding the states prosperity, and the enhancement of kośa. That is why the king was all the time upholder of mines and mineral products, economic forests since they formed a substantial part of the state income. Though we do not find any systematic or planned execution as that which is envisaged in the Arthasastra, but in the ultimate analysis the theoretical prescription regarding revenue matters, sometimes enlightened, is formed, and executed primarily to serve king's economic interests, with fringe benefits for the people.
Section-II.

With the downfall of the Maurya empire the far-flung empire was broken to pieces. The political history of the Indian subcontinent was largely dominated by various foreign invasions, like the Greeks, Scytho-Perthians, the Kusanas etc. The epigraphic and literary sources are replete with references to their economic activities over the areas they ruled. Let us examine if the archaeological evidences and foreign authors can throw any light on our subject.

The most outstanding of the foreign powers of this period was the Kusana. The Chinese author Ma-Tuan-lin spoke of merchants of the Yüeh-Chih country i.e. merchants of the territory included or once included within the Kusana empire who had the knowledge of manufacturing glass of rich colour from various minerals found in mountains. This statement probably indicates working of mines in some mountainous zones of the Kusana empire. We have already seen in the preceding section that in ancient India mines and minerals were considered as royal monopolies, and the king occasionally allowed private enterprise in working out a mine against stipulated share of minerals and/or precious articles payable to the king. The present observation of Ma-Tuan-lin is probably suggestive of some mines in mountainous zone of the Kusana empire being worked out by private individuals.
Viewed from this angle, the Kusāna kings seem to have allowed private enterprise in working out mines (at least in some areas of their domain), obviously by collecting a stipulated amount of share, which is comparable with modern licensing fee.

The importance of the inclusions of a region yielding diamonds within the Kusāna dominon may probably be appreciated on the basis of a statement of Lama Taranatha. Taranatha says that "in the west of the land of Tilli and Malava a king Kanika," Young in years was chosen as a sovereign twenty-eight diamond mines having been recently discovered, and he lived in great wealth. The account of Taranatha when studied in the light of contemporary Kusāna epigraph shos that the area of Malwa was conquered and its diamond mines were worked out by Kaniska, thus we see that the ruling authority seems to have been the owner of these diamond mines. That these mines yielded great financial advantages is confirmed by Taranatha's statement.

We may here also study another source material contemporary with the reigns of early Kusāna rulers. The Naturalis Historia of Pliny describes: "There are also mountains of natural salt, such as Oromenus in India where it is out like blocks of stone from a quarry, and ever
replaces itself, bringing greater revenue to the kings than those from gold and pearls." The Oromenus mountain in India, referred to by Pliny may be identified with the Salt Range in modern Pakistan. The area in question is known to have formed a part of the Kusāna empire at least in the last quarter of the 1st century A.D.

The statements of Pliny once again underlines the fact that the king in ancient India was the owner of mines and mineral objects. The king was also in position to lease out the mines to be worked out by private individuals in exchange of a stipulated share of income. The revenue earned by the king from salt therefore seems to have been some sort of a licensing fee paid to the political authority by private persons who worked out such quarries of salt stones. That the system was a profitable one is absolutely clear from the classical author's statement. Since salt was a basic necessity for people of every section of the society, that article would be in constant demand. Therefore salt quarries had to be regularly worked out and consequently the royal treasury would be always enriched from its revenue or licensing fees. On the other hand gold and pearls, though extremely valuable mineral objects, appear to have been within the purchasing power of a much smaller section of the society i.e. the affluent group. The demand
for gold and pearls could have been less regular than that of salt. This may explain why Pliny said that revenues from salt mines were more than those from gold and pearls. The above arguments do emphasize the fact that the wealth producing potentialities of mines and quarries were properly realized by ancient Indian political authority who made definite financial gains by possessing mines and minerals.

The area around eastern Malwa which formed a part of the extensive Kusāna empire is found to have been ruled by Mahākṣatrapa Rudradāman-I in or around the second half of the second century A.D. In his Junagarh Rock Inscription this Sāka Sātrap claims to have been lord of among other countries Purvāparākeravanti i.e. east and west Malwa respectively known as Ākara and Avanti. Now let us take up the term Ākara which literally means a mine. Interestingly enough Claudius Ptolomy C. 150 A.D. refers to an area called Cosa, situated to the east of the Namados, (i.e. Narmada) which yielded diamonds. From the description of Ptolomy, Cosa appears to have been situated in or near or somewhere around Eastern Malwa. All these may show that Cosa and Ākara probably fell within the same region i.e. Eastern Malwa. It may logically be inferred that Eastern
Malwa or a part thereof was given the name Ākara because of the existence of diamond mines there.

The same record states that Rudradāman-I's treasury was over flowing with precious stones and gems lawfully obtained by him through the collection of tribute tolls and shares. Of such mineral products and gems, vajra or diamond is one. (yathāvatsprāptāṁ baliṣulkabhāgai kanaka-rajata vajra-vaidurya ratnopacaye visyandamana kośana)²²

We are at once reminded of the diamond mines worked out by Kaniska-I in Eastern Malwa. Rudradāman-I seems to have acquired large amount of diamonds in the form of stipulated share (bhāga), collected as some sort of a licensing fee from private persons who were allowed to work out such diamond mines.²³ It is evident from this record that king's monopoly over mines and minerals, handsomely contributed to the enrichment of the treasury. For this reason Kuśānas and the western Satrāpas were both interested in controlling the territory known as Ākara famous for its diamond mines situated in Malwa.

In a number of Sātavāhana grants (assignable to the 2nd century A.D.) recording grants of lands/villages, these occurs a particular fiscal remission, viz., a-lona-khātakam (= alavana khātakam). The expression denotes immunity
This is a special privilege granted in favour of the donee... The normal practice would therefore, be that the existing political power collected a levy on salt making. We have seen, on the basis of Pliny's *Naturalis Historia* that salt was a royal monopoly and taxes were collected by the king on private production of salt. The Śatavāhana kings therefore also maintained their monopoly over manufacture of salt and the salt tax which seems to have considerably enriched the treasury.

A number of Śatavāhana epigraphs record grants of fiscal exemptions to donees. This gives us the chance to examine the different sources wherefrom the Satavahana's derived their revenue. The inscription reads *A-lona-khadaka* (alavanakhataka). According to Sircar it "refers to the freedom of the gift land from being dug out or its trees being pierced for salt." Ghoshal considers this to be the immunity from salt tax, which seems to be more appropriate. Since salt was considered as mineral product, the king had the right to collect as tax a stipulated share from an individual who dug out salt. Senert translates this to be "not to be interfered with by district police". Under normal conditions the Śatavāhana rulers seem to have entrusted the district police to the
duty of assisting the tax collectors. This may be indicative of the fact that the State could employ its coercive force and authority to realize its dues.

The Karle Cave Inscription of Vasisthiputra Pulumavi (Regnal year 7 = 137 A.D.) records a grant of village along with karukara and deya-meyo. (ga minister Valuraka-sengha sa Valuraka lenasa sa-karukara sa deya-meyo.) Karukara has sometimes been equated with Karopakarah/Karotkarah denoting major and minor taxes. The term may also correspond to karukara i.e. taxes payable to government by karus or artisans (cf. karudeya). If explained according to the latter meaning the inscription may point to collection of levies from artisans during the Satavahana period. The term deya-meyo is a composite one. Since meya means one which can be measured (weighed) it may refer to a tax collected on the basis of measuring and/or weighing certain products. Such a tax appears to have been paid in kind. The other part of the composite word is deya literally meaning to be given. In relation to meya however, deya may be interpreted as being the tax to the given in cash. The Satavahana rulers therefore collected taxes both in cash and kind.
The Satavahana empire during its heydays included a number of crafts and commercial centres mostly in western and central Deccan namely Ujjayini, Togara Pratisthana Bharukaccha and Kalyana. Moreover this was the age of Indo-Roman commerce when crafts and trades gained a conspicuous impetus. It is quite likely that the Satavahanas considerably enriched their treasury by collecting taxes on crafts and trades flourishing in and carried through their domain.

Section - III.

The Periplus of Erythraea Thalasses and the Geographike Huphegesis of Claudius Ptolemy gives us interesting informations regarding mines and mining activities in south India.

The Periplus of Erythraea Thalasses, the account of an anonymous Greek sailor, is a text of descriptive geography and mainly focuses on towns, marts, ports and other areas important from the point of view of Indo-Roman commerce. In course of his description of south India
the author of the Periplus gives the following accounts:

"From Comari (=Cape Comorine) towards the South (emendation actually towards the East) this region extends to Colchi where the pearl-fisheries are, and it belongs to the Pandio kingdom (= Pândya country). Beyond Colchi there follows another district called Paralia, the coast country which lies on a bay and has a region inland called Argarus. At this place and nowhere else, are brought pearls gathered at the coast or thereabout. The Periplus further informs us that the pearl fisheries were worked by condemned criminals."

The pearl fisheries were then state enterprise and explicitly mentioned as belonging to the Pândya kingdom. The political authority of the Pândya country obviously enjoys monopoly right over pearl, a kind of mineral/precious gems. Pearls being one of the luxury items of a very high price, the state must have earned a handsome amount of wealth out of pearl fisheries. The employment of condemned criminals in fisheries also seem to have been economically advantageous, because it is unlikely that the state had to pay anything for employing condemned criminals. In working out these fisheries the Pândya king does not, therefore, appear to have paid
prices to one of the major factors of production i.e. labour. This would then considerably lessen the total cost of production and consequently the king would enjoy a relatively higher margin of profit out of these fisheries.

Attention now may be paid to the information concerning Argerus. It says that pearls collected from the coastal region were brought to none but Argerus. This would therefore, imply the imposition of a centralized distribution of pearls from a single place. The Pandyia ruler thus owns and works out and also distributes pearls produced in pearl fisheries. Several stages or processes in the procurement and production of pearls appear to have been thoroughly controlled by the existing political authority, obviously to its own advantage.

In the Geographike Huphegesis of Claudius Ptolemy a passing reference has been made to Pounnata, where beryl was found. The area appears to have been situated in the Kerobotheros country i.e. the Cera kingdom, the royal seat of which, according to Ptolemy, was Kerours. In a treatise essentially on mathematical geography like Ptolemy's text, the name of some products is rather unexpected to figure. In Ptolemy's Geography, however, a number of such commercial items have been mentioned probably as objects of great
demand in the age of Indo-Roman commerce. Beryl seems to have been a product regularly sought for in the Roman world. The beryl mine in Pounnata, now identified with the Coimbatore district in Tamilnadu, seems to have been owned and worked out by then existing political authority, i.e. the Keralaputra or the Ceras. The king's monopoly right over mines and minerals may be said to have yielded definite economic advantages to the political powers.

Moreover Ptolemy refers to another emporium Poduca. The place has been identified with the archaeological site of Ari Kamedu (near Pondicherry). Two sectors (Northern and Southern which were excavated were found to have been occupied in the first and second centuries A.D. The Southern sector has yielded among other things two-walled and drained by a series of brick culverts. According to the excavation reports, the tanks and courtyards were used for production preparation of muslin cloth, which the classical authors highly spoke of as an export item. At the same time two gems carved with intaglic designs, typically Graeco-Roman suggest the existence of western craftsmen.

Here the reference to the walled courtyards which was used for the production and preparation of muslin cloth was one of the export item is very interesting to note.
Here the ruling king must have participated in the production of muslin cloth, which formed one of the primary source of revenue to the king. Moreover, the reference to western craftsmen residing in one of the important trading centres cannot be totally ruled out. This suggests that the graeco Roman craftsmen established their own settlement. Such a settlement of foreign craftsmen in an area outside their homeland is difficult to establish without the direct interest of the ruler in whose territory the colony is established.

The Sila ṭṭādikāram\textsuperscript{35} is a literary work of 4th-5th Cent. A.D. In Canto V of the same text it describes different quarters of the city, localities for makers of muslins, wine sellers, dealers in bronze, manufacturers of copper, carpenters, strong-armed blacksmith, sculptors, potters, goldsmith, jewellers, skilled workers etc. Two things may emerge from this account (1) The craftsmen and artisans were specialised and localised in a particular area suggesting localisation and specialisation of the craft, and (2) secondly such quarters cannot prevail without the approval and existence of strong political authority.
With the rise of the Gupta empire ancient India enters upon a new epoch. The Guptas like the Mauryas maintained a large bureaucracy regularly paid in a graded scale. All the epigraphic records more or less suggest that the emperors laid great emphasis on land. It is only from a few stray references that we come to know that the king in some period controlled few industries. Epicgraphic records assignable to the period under review contains the names of administrative officers entrusted with collection of revenues and fiscal administration. The Gaulmika seems to have been the officer collecting dues from forest which is recognised as one of the traditional heads of royal revenue in theoretical treatises. Here the reference to forest more or less implies produce forests i.e., Dravyavana as suggested by the Arthasastra. Beyond this the inscription does not refer anything more but the reference to the collection of dues by the officers more or less suggest that the products manufactured from forest might have been state control. The Mallasarul copper plate of Gopacandra (regnal year 33) contains names of royal officials among
whom a few were revenue officers. The reference to Aurnasthānīka
(Urna = Wool) is the superintendent over wool market and wool producing centre. Though it is not explicitly stated the Aurnasthānīka may be said to have collected in case or in kind on the production and sale of wool. The above description more or less suggest that the wool industries was in fact a state controlled enterprise. The superintendent or the officer-in-charge is on over all supervision over the wool markets and wool producing centre. With the downfall of the Gupta empire there arose a number of local powers on its ruins who were feudatories of the Gupta kings amongst them is Mahāśamanta/Mahārāja-Sri Viṣṇusena whose date is roughly assigned to A.D. 529. He had issued a charter and the text of the charter contains as many as 72 clauses some of which are important for the present survey and hence may now be taken up for analysis.

If the producers of Bronze utensils cloth and arms in case do not deliver the king's share of these articles by the fullmoon day of Āśadha then the law of mortgage would be applied to these objects. They were subject to the payment of interest at the mortgage rate but no fine; or such objects were confiscated and no fine was levied ... clause no; 46. The ruling authority was entitled to
collect taxes from different artisans either in cash or in kind. The failure to payment amounted to virtual mortgage and or confiscation of objects to the king. The ruler here is in a position to emply coercive authority to extract taxes from artisans.

Though the charter does not suggest anything beyond this we can form a conclusion that the factories where Bronze utensils were produced the cloth industries as well as the arms and armaments industries were only state control enterprises. (The theoretical texts literature. Arthasastra prescribe the armaments industries as one of the state monopoly industry. But here we see a real departure is being made when the king allows the private enterprises to work under a strict surveillance of the state. The state allowed the private individuals to work out such enterprises after a payment of stipulated share either in form of cash or in kind. This may be similar to bhāga which the state obtained on the issue of licenses to the private entrepreneurs.

A number of clauses deal with breweries and distillaries, which seem to have been an important industry of the region concerned. A person detected to have possessed a silver coins. (Madyabhajansyavalokyasmrtaśrīpūpakāṃ peñca - clause 42.) However, if the above offence is
committed for the first time and without any bad intention, the fine will be half the above amount i.e. $2^{1/2}$ rūpakāh. On the other hand if the man let off for the first offence, was caught with a vessel of wine for the second time the fine will be double the amount prescribed in clause 43. If a person is caught while preparing the liquor, he will be fined 3 silver coins, if no bad motive can be substantiated the fine would 1¾ silver coins, although two caturthas of wine had to be paid as rāj-arghika. Wine distilling and breweries seem to have been permitted by the Government probably against the payment of some kind of licensing fee. Fines were regularly collected from unauthorised distillers and even the king could forcibly take some amount of wine as king's arghas.

The king here seems to have controlled the breweries or distillaries. The private individuals were leased out such distillaries with a payment of some kind of licensing fee. But persons who encroached upon unauthorised manufacture of wine, was fixed and the king had the upper hand of taking forcibly some amount of wine which he termed as rājarghās i.e. presents made for the king.

Taxes were imposed on other vocational groups. The chimpankas (dyer of clothes), the kolika (weaver) and the
padakāra (probably a shoe-maker) had to pay as tax half
the money that would be the price of the things produced
by them according to the rate prevalent in the land. Here
the rate of tax is 50% on the price of goods produced.
This must have been very high.

Apart from the high rate of tax mentioned in the
above paragraph, we are told that the blacksmiths, carpenters,
barbers, potters and others could be recruited for forced
labour under the supervision of the vārikas or officers
( Lohakara-rathakara-nāpita-kumbhakara-prabhrtinam vārikara
vistih karaniyah - clause 72.) The above professions
generally have little social prestige nor yield handsome
earning. It is not impossible to infer that the income of
the above professional groups was not high enough to procure
a handsome amount of levies out of them, that is why the
king probably brings them under forced labour, almost in
a gesture of compensating the lesser amount of money
leviable from them. The ruling authority could also impose
such oppressive measure on these people due to the fact that
their position being so low, any form of protest or uprising
was rather unlikely on their part. This rather lengthy
account of the charter of Vishnuśena may clearly show that
the king obtained a number of taxes from different industrial
enterprises. Even when the charter is issued for
lokasamgrahanugrahartha the ruler is not prepared to
part with his claim over revenues and dues collected from
industrial products as well as industrial enterprises
like the armaments industry bureweres and distillaries.
It may logically be surmised that this taxes had consid­
erable economic importance to the king.

Epigraphic records of the Vākatakas which have
widely been used by scholar to reconstruct their political
history may also shed some light on the revenue measures
of the Vākatakas kings. Their land grants lay down a
number of fiscal exemptions for the donee in more or less
standardised form. The gift village is not to be entered
by soldiers and police men, followed by exempt from the
royal prerogative of purchasing fermenting liquors and
digging salt (Kūnavakar nikhanakah) exempt from the right
to mines and khadira (Akhaṇimedhyah) exempt from the
obligation to supply flowers and milk donated together
with the right to hidden treasures and deposits together
with major and minor taxes. 40 Some of the terms have
already been discussed with the Satavāhana land grants.
Here the king maintains its monopoly right over the
manufacture of salt and mines. The donee here is given
the privilege of manufacturing salt and mines on his own,
The revenue earned by the king from mines and salt therefore seems to have been some sort of a licensing fee paid to the political authority by private person, who worked out mines and salt. Here it is interesting to note that without any major involvement on the part of the state either organisationally or financially the state is in a position to earn a handsome amount of revenues for his treasury.

The Samoli inscription of the time of Silāditya (dated 645 A.D.) coming from Malwa speaks of mining activities. A Mahājana (community) headed by Jentaka who had migrated from Vatanagara, started an āgara i.e. Ākara in Aranyakupagiri which became a source of livelihood of people. (Jayati Vatanagarevinirgamahājanam (ro) Je (nta) ka pramukham(khah) / Yenasya lokajivanam anam(garamupta) (utpa) ditam(ta) maranya kupagirinam. Āgara or Ākara is obviously a mine; but what material did it actually yield has not been specified herein. Nevertheless the economic importance of the discovery of a mine is clearly attested in this document. Working out a mine expands the scope of economic - particularly industrial activities. This in turn is likely to increase
the total productive output of a given country. That is why the discovery of the mine is described as a source of livelihood. Moreover, the royal authority in ancient India is theoretically recognised as the monopoly owner of all mines and minerals. The political authority here seems to have allowed private enterprise to work out a mine. In such a situation the king would be entitled to a stipulated share either of the total yield of the mine or the profit earned by persons actually working out the mine. The discovery of a mine not only enhances the resources of a country but enriches the personal coffer of the king also.

Interestingly enough the celebrated Chinese pilgrim Hsuan Tsang, who remained in various parts of the subcontinent from c. 629 A.D. to 645 A.D. refers to the profession of salt-making in po-lu-ka-che-p's. The region in question has been identified with Broach i.e. Dhragukaccha or Barygaza. The salt is said to have been prepared from sea water. That was easily possible as Broach is situated in a littoral area. The pilgrim makes no explicit mention regarding the organisation and entrepreneurship of the salt industry of Broach. Salt being a royal monopoly in ancient India, one cannot altogether rule out the possibility that the ruling power
of the area in question probably imposed some levies on private salt making enterprises.

A definite attempt at settling a considerably large population may be seen in an epigraphic record from eastern Bengal. The Paschimbhag coper plate of Srichanda dated 925-975 speaks of the creation of a revenue free holding in favour of a large number of inhabitants. The new settlement was named Srichandapur obviously after the reigning king Srichandra. Along with 6000 Brāhamana a fairly large number of diverse occupational and crafts group were settled and assigned with plots of land. They are as follows: i) Mālākara - florist, ii) Tailāṅkika-oilman, iii) Kumbhakara-potter, iv) Sankhavādaka - conchshell blowers, v) Sūtradhara - carpenter, vi) Sthāpati-mason, vii) Karmakāra - blacksmith. The services of this craftsman might have been of great use to the reigning king. The creation of such an explicit settlement for different professional as well as crafts group undoubtedly require conscious planning and execution. Moreover, it could not have been possible without considerable financial and administrative involvement of the state machinery. The royal initiative in creating such a settlement no doubt affirms the king's economic interest behind. Most probably these craftsman might have played
a great role in enhancing the kings treasury either in kind or in cash. Moreover, granting them free plots of lands and making their permanent settlements would obviously check their mobility. Thus being firmly established, they would devote more attention towards their vocations and would thus increase the production in their respective arts or industries. The increase in production would in its turn lead to the enhancement of the treasury.

The Rāmacarita of Sandhyākāranandi credits Rāmapala with economic enterprises launched by him (varttaayotsavam) R. G. Basak interprets the expression as denoting agriculture cattle breeding and trade. Rāmapala is also said to have enjoyed happiness for a long period by the formation or settlement of different country tracts into Visayas (Divyabisayopabhoga Sukham) the passage probably hints at Rāmapala's policy of exploitation of available resources from the soil and land development.

It is from the travels of Marco-polo that we get interesting information again. Marco-polo mentioned that the best quality of diamonds were available from Mufili. He says that the choicest diamonds were
exported to the court of the great khan i.e. Kublaikhan of China and those that are brought to our part of the World are only the refuse as it were of the finer and larger stones. Though Polo's account of Mufili is dated somewhat 30 years later than Ganapati's rent, Ganapati's own record. The Matupalli inscription of 1244-45 A.D. refers to diamonds as one of the dutiable products. This epigraphic evidence coupled with that of polo probably refers to diamond produced in the Kakatiya kingdom during Ganapati's rent. One may probably look towards the famous diamonds mines around Golconda which was included within his empire. It is not unlikely that the Kakatiya ruler participated in the working out of diamond mines or leased them out to private enterprises in exchange of receiving a stipulated share of diamonds produced.

The point of mining projects may further be examined on the basis of Chola king Kulottunga first (1070-1120) was probably the last of the Chola monarchs. He is said to have been pleased "to seize the pearls fisheries". Pearls fisheries in south India as early as the time of the Periplus were owned and worked out by the king himself. Kulottunga's conquest over some pearl fisheries though not specified in the records was
presumably followed by the actual working out of the fisheries. The interest of the Chola monarch in capturing pearls fisheries is strongly cleared and largely economic.

The decline of the Cola empire also paved the way for rise of the Pandya's in the region around Madura. Marco-Polo, the celebrated Italian travellers, mentions the Pandya king Sonder Bandi (i.e. Sunda Pandya) as the ruler of Maabar. The area of Maabar prominently figures in Polo's account among other things for pearl fisheries. We are immediately reminded of the pearl fisheries of the same region mentioned by the author of the Periplus. Polo says "In his kingdom they find very fine and great pearls..... Of all the produce they have first to pay to the king, as his royalty the tenth part... And I can tell you the king of that state hath a very great receipt and treasures from his dues upon pearls." The king's right to own mines and levy private enterprises of working out mines is firmly asserted in Polo's account. Since dues from pearls are expressly stated to have enriched the treasury, its importance as a regular source of financial gain seems to have been appreciated by the Pandya king.

Polo also adds that "moreover, nobody is permitted to take out of the kingdom a pearl weighing more than half
sagdic, unless he manages to do it secretly. This order is given because the king desires to reserve all such to himself and so in fact the quantity he has is something incredible. Moreover, several times every year he sends his proclamation through the realm that any one who possesses a pearl or stone of great value will bring it to him, he will pay for it twice as much as it cost”.

The fairly exhaustive account underlines the extent of control of the king over the procurement and distribution of pearls. It is also highlighted that the policy of imposing state control on the procurement of pearls is rooted to the king's strong personal urge for amassing wealth.

The available information regarding fiscal and administrative measures gleaned from theoretical treatises epigraphic and literary sources would lead us to conclude that such measures were primarily prompted to safeguard the treasury and the king's own economic motive is unveiled, with peoples' benefit only a side factor.
Notes:-

1. Edited by Raja Rajendra Lata Mitra, revised with English Translation by Mr. Sisir Kumar Mitra: *The Nitisāra by Kāmandaki*: The text is surely a Post Maurya treatise and is dependant on the *Arthasastra* of Kautilya which cannot be placed before the Mauryan age. K.P. Jayaswal attributed the Nitisāra to the Gupta Age (JBORS, Vol. XVIII, page 37) while R.N. Saletore Ancient Indian Political Thought and Institutions, page 9 assigned the date to C.A.D. 700.

2. cf. page


5. *Viṣṇu* - III : 32


15. Edited by Raja Rajendran Lala Mitra : *Nitisāra_ by Kāmandaki,* page 84.


Also see - B.N. Mukherjee - *Revenue Trade & Society in the Kusāna Empire* to be published.


The discussion on Akara and its economic importance is principally based on this book.


24. *S.I.*, page 197-200


27. I.E.G., page 149-50
29. W.W. Schoff - The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea
30. The Periplus, Section 59.
31. Ibid, Section 59.
32. E.L. Stevenson - The Geography of Claudius Ptolemy,
    page 154.
33. E.L. Stevenson - page 150.
34. R.E.M. Wheeler, A. Ghosh & Krishna Deva :
    Arikamedu an Indo Roman Trading Station on the
    East coast of India, Ancient India, No. 2 : 1946
35. V.R. Ramchandra Dikshitar - The Silappādikāram (1939)
    The dating of this epic is a controversial
    problem. According to some scholars it belonged
    to 6th, 47th Cen. A.D. while in others is 4th,
    45th Cent. A.D. It preserves information
    referring to the conditions prevailing in the
    early centuries of the Christian era.
37. E.I. - XXIII, page 152 ff. and S.I., page 373
    note. 2.

D. D. Kosambi in his article "Indian Feudal Trade Charters- JESHO, II, page 281-93, has also used the materials of the same record. But his renderings and interpretations widely differ from those of Sircar. We have here mostly followed the rendering of Sircar.


40. This is mainly based on the famous Poona c.p. of Prabhāvatigupta, Ibid, page 9. Other Vakataka records also enumerate more or less similar revenue terms.


43. EDEP - page 19-40 & page 63-69.


47. H. Yule - Travels of Marco Polo, Vol. II, page 331-337 (1903)