CHAPTER VII

RELIGION, SOCIETY AND CULTURE UNDER THE GAHADAVALA DYNASTY

Section I. Religion of the Gahadavala kings - attitude towards other religions - religious activities, Religious condition of the century in general - deities - pious and meritorious work by the public - some 'samskaras', gift rites and auspicious days - tirthas.

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Section I. RELIGION

Most of the archaeological material for the religious history of the period, icons and the like, perished as the result of the Muslim occupation of Northern India. Tāj ul-Ma'āthir, a contemporary work, claims that after the defeat of Jayascandra in c. 1193 A.D., the Muslim army destroyed at Benares alone "nearly one thousand temples and raised mosques on their foundations". This instance of the Muslim achievement at Benares, has doubtless been cited by the author as the most remarkable example of its kind; numerous mosques and early Muslim buildings in India, bear the unmistakable stamp of being reconstructed with Hindu

material. Some of the early Sultans of Delhi were also enthusiastic iconoclasts, and Tabaqa-1-Nâṣîrî mentions two such accomplishments of Iltutmish (1211-36 A.D.); it has been recorded by the author that "in the year 632 H. the Sultan led the hosts of Islam towards Malwah, and took the fortress and town of Mihisan and demolished the idol temple, which took three hundred years in building...... advanced to Ujjainnagari, and destroyed the idol temples of Mahâkâl Diw". Some early Muslim buildings at Badaun and Jamupur were also made with the materials, from the temples and buildings, which according to local tradition, were originally constructed in the Gahâdavâla period.

With the destruction of countless temples, where ever the Muslims appeared, not only some finest specimens of architecture and sculpture of late mediaeval Hindu India perished, but with them it also valuable material for religious history. Consequently, we have to depend a great deal on the meagre information, supplied by the inscriptions of the Gahâdavâla kings; these inscriptions give a picture, though incomplete, of the religious faith and policy of the kings and incidentally glimpses of the general religious condition of the country. Fortunately, the socio-religious ideal set forth in the contemporary Dharmasastra digest, Krtyakalpataru, by Laksmidhara, the Mahâsândhivigrahika (i.e. Minister for Peace and War) of the great Gahâdavâla king Govindaçandrâdeva, to some extent supplements the inadequate data, furnished by the Gahâdavâla inscription. This treatise has considerably influenced not only the Bengal and Mithila schools of Hindu law but all the chief legal writers in North India and the Deccan.

1. cf. "Few things in the history of architecture are more remarkable than the skill with which, from the very outset, the Mohammadans transformed the Hindu and Jaina temples into mosques for the Faithful, or the imagination which they displayed in employing Indian sculptors to adorn their edifices with designs incomparably more exquisite than their own". Haig, CHI, II, p.570.
3. Some 'Kandas' of this work have been published in the G.O.S. vide Kritya,Dena-kanda p.intro.3. Also infra.p.
A) Religion of the Gahadavala Kings

All the inscriptions issued by the kings of this dynasty show that "Parama-Mahesvara", was one of their official titles, from which it may be presumed that, the Gahadavala kings were Saivites; the "Bull and Horsemen" type of coins, issued by Madanapala, in which the bull is generally identified with "Nandi", the "Vahana" of Siva, also tend to support this presumption. These indications, however are not endorsed by the royal seal of the Gahadavala dynasty. The bull-shaped seals of the Gahadavala kings, with circular face, represents in relief a figure of Garuda, having the body of a man and the head of a bird, at the top, together with the name of the king inscribed across the centre and a conch-shell placed at the bottom. Garuda is the mythological "Vahana" of Viṣṇu and the conch-shell may be identified with "Pañcajanya". The implication of the seal is supported by the opening verses of the official inscriptions, in which the goddess Laksāna, the consort of Viṣṇu, (cf.

"Akuṁtha-otkamtha-Vaikumtha-kaṁtha-pītha-luṭhatakaraḥ, saṁrambhahṁ surat-arbhāhe sa ūṛya sṛçyass tu vah") and Lord Dāmodara, an inscription of Viṣṇu (cf. "Tamaṁ sarva-devānām Dāmodaram upāśmahe") are invoked.2 The Candraivati inscription of V.S.1156/1100 A.D. relates that Candraśeva, the first king of the dynasty, set up an image of Lord Ādi-Kesāva at Kesā and adorned it with abundant gold and jewels (cf.

"Kaṭsyam vyabhūṣayat aneka suvarṇa-ratnaḥ/Śrīmad-Ādi-Kesāva-vibhno pratimāṁ nivesya"

etc.) another Candraivati inscription, issued in V.S.1156/1100 A.D., records that after a munificent gift of gold and another valuables, equal to the king's weight and a thousand

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cows to the image of Ādi-Keśava, a village was granted for the maintenance of the shrine of Candra-Mādhava. As the name indicates this shrine appears to have been erected by Candradeva himself, and Mādhavananda (son of Gaṅgādhara), the writer of the above grant, is said to have made the icon of Candra-Mādhava (cf. "Uttkīrṇam Mādhavananda-Śrī-Gaṅgādhara-sunumā Śrī-Candra-Mādhava yena gaṭito" etc.) An earlier Candrāvatī inscription of this king records a grant in front of Sauri-Narmāṇa. Jayaccandra, the last great king of the dynasty was initiated, with the consent of his father into the worship of Lord Ėṛṣṇa ("āṅgā-grahena") by the chief priest Kṛṣṇa Preharājaśarman, who has been styled the "Vaiśṇav-puḻā-vidhi-guru." Thus, the inscriptions of the Gahaṭavāla kings evidence their predilections for Vaiśnavism in particular; it is possible that though they styled themselves "perama-Māheśvara" or devout worshippers of Śiva, who is said to be the presiding deity of the city of Vārāṇasi (cf. "Iśvara uvāca - Vārāṇasī-aha bhuvana-traya-sāra-bhūtā rasyā sadā mama purī Garirījapatri" and "idam guhyatamā kṣetraḥ sada Vārāṇasī mama") the capital of these kings, their personal religion was more in the direction of Vaiśnavism.

Like a true Hindu the Gahaṭavāla kings, however, appear to have followed a liberal religious policy. They offered homage to many other gods of the Hindu pantheon. The foremost among these gods, of course, was Śiva (the Lord of Kaśi). In the Candrāvatī inscription of V.S. 1150/1193 A.D., Candradeva is said to have adorned the combined image of the two principal deities, Viṣṇu and Śiva, "Viṣṇu-Śaṅkara" by name, with gold ornaments set with jewels, by the Amṛyas (cf. "Heimāni yena maniḥbhiḥ khaicitāmya-smārtyair-dattāmi Viṣṇu-

1. Mi, XIV, pp.197 ff. 4. Mēṣyā-parāṇa op. cit.Kṛtyekalpratamam
2. Mi, IX, pp.502 ff. (by Lāṣṭamābha), Tīrtha-vivecena-
Siva was one of the gods, who were generally worshipped, prior to the bestowal of grants by the Gahadavala kings, the other two being Vasudeva and Surya (cf. "Asadhipati-sakala-sahharan samahhyarecya" etc.). He is referred to as 'Krativasa' in the Kamauli inscription of V.S.1231(1235)/1174(1179) A.D., issued by Jayaccandra. Moreover, the undated Sarnath inscription of Kumarakarav mentions both Hari and Hara and states that, the former, being commissioned by the latter to protect Varanasi, was born in the person of Govindacandra (cf. "Hareya ukto Harisama punar-astra vabhava teamad-Govindacandra iti prathit-akhidhanam"). The B.A.S. grant of V.S.1177/1120 A.D. records the transfer of two villages (viz. Kana-da-grana and Kana-da-talla in Antarala pattala), which was originally given by king Vasah-Karpa of the Kalacuri line to the Raja-guru-Salva-Surya-bhat-tarakaka Raudra-Siva; these villages were transferred to Thakkura Vasistha in the presence of Govindacandra. The Gahadavala king defeated the Kalccuri king sometime before 1125 A.D. and occupied a portion of his kingdom, where this transfer of the landed interest took place. The religion of Thakkura Vasistha is not known. No reason for this transfer of property has been stated in the record.

The Candravati inscription of V.S.1150, refers to another important god Brahman; at the beginning of the Rehen grant salutations have been offered to Paramatman and the third verse states that, when the voice of the Veda was almost extinct in the world, Svayambhu himself was born in the person of Candradeva to restore the earth to the path of virtue (cf. "Om Paramatmane namo" and "Utsanna-prayaa Vedadhvani jagat-akhila manyamana Svayambhuh etc."
The Sun, whose worship is generally associated with Vaisnavism, also seems to have been a favourite deity with the Gahadavala kings, and the sun-god, was worshipped under various names. Thus half a village was once donated to the God Lolarka by Jayaccandra, while the other half was granted to a number of Brāhmaṇas. Gosalla-devī, one of the queens of Govindacandra is recorded to have made a grant in front of Lolarka. It is interesting to note that shrine of this god still exists at Benares; it is situated in the southern part of the city and is well known as Lolarka-Kunda. On the 6th day of the bright half of Bhadra the Hindu women visit the place. The Kamauli grant of V.S. 1228/1172 A.D., made in front of Gangādītya (cf. "deva Śri-Gangādītya samādhau") either two deities, Gangā and Āditya, or the Solar god under the epithet of Gangādītya).

The religious life of Jayaccandra, the penultimate king of the dynasty is interesting. The Kamauli inscription of V.S. 1224/1168 A.D. to which reference has already been made, records a grant celebrating the initiation of Yuvariga Jayacandra-deva by a worshipper of Kṛṣṇa by Praharajasarma, who has been styled the "Vaiṣṇava-pūjāvīdhi-guru". Jayaccandra, however, not only continued to use the usual epithet 'parama-Māheśvara', but also granted a village in the presence of the god "Kṛttivāsa". The Bodh-Gaya inscription of V.S. 124X on the other hand refers to monk Śrīmitra, as the dikṣā-guru of Kāśī (Lord of Kāśi) Jayacandra-deva and relates that out of reverence king Jayacandra himself became his disciple (cf. "svayam-api kim-ap-ichan-accha-dhīṣṭaya śiyah... Śri-Jayacandradevaḥ" - verse 11). It thus appears that this

1. EI, IV, pp.128-29. 5. EI, IV, p.122.
king was also initiated into the Buddhist form of worship. As the relevant evidence is not available, it is not known whether he continued to call himself a "Parama-Uheavara" and worship the Hindu gods, even after he came under Śrīmitra's influence. In this connection it may be noted here that Kāmil ut-Tawārīkh refers to a white elephant, which Jayaccandra owned; it states that after the defeat of the Gahadavāla king by Sihâb ud-Dīn Ghūrī, a number of Indian elephants were captured and among the elephants captured, there was a white one. A person who saw it told Ibn Āthîr, the author, that "when the elephants were brought before Sihâb ud-Dīn and were ordered to salute, they all saluted except the white one." The white elephant is a rare animal and a sacred one according to the Buddhist scriptures; it is associated with the birth of Buddha and also with his previous births. The statement of the Muslim historian thus seems to support the evidence of the inscription, mentioned above. The white elephant did not salute Sihâb ud-Dīn because being a sacred animal, it was not taught to salute.

B) Attitude of the Gahadavāla Kings towards Other Religions

Though all the Gahadavāla kings, except Jayaccandra were devout worshippers of the Hindu gods and generally practised Hinduism, their attitude towards other religions was one of catholicity and toleration. Kumārādevī, one of the queens of Govindacandra was a Buddhist, and the Sārnath inscription shows that she was allowed to follow her own faith; this undated inscription records the restoration by the queen of the 'Dharmachakra-Jīna' (originally set up by Dharmaśoka), at the request of Jambukf; further

1. Elliot, Hist. of India, II, p.
a new Vihara also was built and the 'Jina' was placed in it. Govindacandra seems to have married another Buddhist queen Vasantadevi, who is mentioned in the colophon of a Nepal manuscript of Astasahasrika, which runs as follows: "Sri-Sri Kanyakubjādhīpatī-advapati- Gajapati-Narasapati-rajatrey-āhipati-Srīmad-Govindacandra-devasya pratāpavastataḥ Rājī-Sri-pravara-Mahāyāna-yājñyāḥ paramopasiṇā rājā Vasantadevā devadarme'yan", according to some scholars, however, those two queens were identical. Thus the Buddhist queens of Govindacandra, the third Gahadavala king, were allowed to follow their own religion and extend their patronage to it. Govindacandra himself is recorded to have made a gift in favour of some Buddhist monks; in V.b.1186/1129 A.D. the king, after worshipping Vādeva and other Hindu gods, granted 6 villages in Caturāsīti patāla to the "sākya-bhikṣu-samgha" at Jetavana-vihāra at the request of Saugata-pravrājaka mahāprajñāta Śākyaratita of Utpaladesa and Saugata-parivrājaka mahaprajñāta Vaj externally of Coḍadesa. It may be of some significance that, of the two Gahadavala Buddhist queens, neither is described as a 'paṭṭa-mahādevī' or 'samsatarāja-prakṛiy-opeta' (endowed with all the royal prerogatives), while each of the two Hindu queens receives these honours. Govindacandra's marriage with Kumāradevī was doubtless important politically, for she was the daughter of Mathanadeva Rāṣṭrakūta and niece of the Pāla king, Rāṣṭradēva. Still she is not found to have enjoyed the rank given to the Hindu queens. This may be due to the fact that in spite of his catholic outlook, as noted above, Govindacandra, who zealously

1. EI, IX, pp.319-28.
2. EI, IX, A,321
patronised Hinduism and followed the Dharmaśāstra injunctions, was a devout Hindu and could not agree to confer the rank of "pāṭa-mahadevi" or chief queen on a wife, who did not share his religion. It may be noted in this connection that the Chief Minister of Govindaśandra, was the author of the Kṛtyakalpataru, a standard work on Hindu law and rituals.

The religious career of Jayascandra, the penultimate king of the dynasty, who was first initiated into Vaishnavism and later on became a disciple of the Buddhist monk Śrīmitra, has already been noted.

The Gahāḍavāla tax "taruska-danda" was explained by Sten Konow, as a tax imposed on the 'Turuska' or the Turks;¹ this explanation, if accepted, will show that the catholicity of the Gahāḍavāla kings did not extend to the Muslim religion. But it may be noted that according to Kāmil al-Tawārīkh the "Mussulmans" in and around Vārānasi "continued faithful to the laws of Islam and constant in prayer and good work"²; this information, if supplied by a Muslim historian, makes the inference highly probable that in the Gahāḍavāla kingdom, the Muslims were not penalized for their religion, but permitted to carry on their religious duties, without any obstructions from the Hindu rulers.³

C) Religious Activities of the Gahāḍavāla Kings

The Gahāḍavāla kings from the very beginning stood as champions of Hinduism. The Basahi inscription of Mahaśeṣaputra Govindaśandra states that, after the demise of Bhoja and Karna, when the earth was distressed, Candradeva became the lord of the earth.⁴ Another inscription of the

¹. III, IX, p.321.
². Elliot II, p.251.
⁴. IA, XIV, pp.101-04 (verse 3).
same prince, Rahan grant of V.S.1166/1109 A.D., describes one aspect of the world's distress, saying that after the fall of the dynasties of the Sun and the Moon the voice of Veda was almost extinct on the earth; the Creator, to save the world from this crisis, and to restore the earth to the path of virtue, was born in the person of Candradeva (cf. "Utsanna-prāya Veda-dhvanī jagad-akhilam manyamānaḥ Svayambhūḥ, kṛtvā-deha-prahrā pravarṇam-īha maṇaḥ śuddhā- 
buddhi dharitryāḥ-uddhartum, dharma-mārgam prathitam-īha... etc."). The establishment of the Gahadavala dynasty, which restored political stability in the region, formerly under the Pratihara occupation, saw the revival of the normal religious activities with increased enthusiasm, and the Gahadavala king themselves took active part in following the precepts of Hindu religion. The revivalist spirit of the age is embodied in the Kṛtyakalpa-rūpa, the contemporary Dharma-ūstava nibandha, compiled at the command of Govindacandra, the greatest of the Gahadavala kings.

In view of the periodical Muslim invasions, one of the most important religious tasks was the protection of the 'tirthas' or the sacred places. Four important tirthas were under the Gahadavala protection, namely, Kāñci, the seat of Śaiva worship in Northern India, Kuśika, the legendary capital of the son of Gāḍhi, who afterwards attained Brāhmaṇhood and became famous as sage Visvāmitra, Indrasthānīya, associated with epic traditions and lastly Uttara-Kosāla or Ayodhīya, where was situated the sacred capital of Śrī-Rāmacandra. Some of these had already been sacked by the Muslims and there was constant danger of fresh Islamic invasions. Candradeva, the first ruler of this

1. IA, XVIII, pp.14-19 (Verse 3).
dynasty, is credited with having protected all these tirthas. Both Govindacandra and Vijayacandra fought with the Muslims and the former is specially praised in the Sarnath inscription as the incarnation of Hari, commissioned by Hara, to protect the sacred city of Vārāṇasī, the favourite seat of the latter god.

According to Lāleamīdhara, the performance of certain religious ceremonies for the prosperity of the realm was considered to be one of the most important duties of a king (i.e. "abhisiktā-krtyāh"). The "Deva-vātā" or the festival in honour of the deities, appears to be the most important of these ceremonies; the important deities, mentioned in this connection are, Brahma, Vāgdevi, Gāhā, Vīnu, Śukunda, the Sun, Indra, Indra Durga and the Mothers, Viṣṇu, Kōma and the Moon-god. Other ceremonies to be performed by the king were Kaumudi-mahotsava, in honour of Siva, Indra-dhvajottaya in honour of Indra, (Mahā-śava), Durgā-puja in honour of Durgā, Cihna-puja in honour of emblems, Gavotsarga and Vasordhara. Bestowal of gifts on gods and Brahman as was a pious act according to the Sstras. Numerous grants prove the munificence of the Gahadavala kings in these directions. Three kinds of 'mahādana' have been specified in their inscriptions, namely, "tulā-puruṣa", "go-sahasra" and "pañca-laṅgala". While praising Candradeva for his bounty, most of his inscriptions state that "the earth was discoloured hundreds of times by scales, when he constantly gave away gold of his own weight to the Brahmans (cf."Hem-śau-tulyan-aniṣita-adyatā yan-amukita vasumati stātas-tulābhīh"); one of the Candravati inscriptions actually records an occasion, when some villages were granted after the performance of the two mahādana tula-puruṣa and go-sahasra, in

2. IA, IX, pp.319-28 (verse 3).
front of an image of Ādi-Kesiya (cf. "Deva-Sṛimad-Ādi-Kesiya-dakṣina-mūrtau tūla-puruṣa-go-sahasra-mahādāna-samanantarasya") \(^1\) the Kamanli grant of V.S. 1231/35 mentions another occasion, when Jayaccandra performed tūla-puruṣa mahādāna in front of Lord Kṛttivāsa. In V.S. 1181/1124 A.D., Govindacandra and his mother Rāhūnadevi bestowed a village as a "ya(y)a-ca-laṅgala-mahādāna" on a Brāhmaṇa. \(^2\) Various Purāṇas refer to pañca-laṅgala as one of the sixteen mahādānas. \(^3\) Many a prominent Hindu king is said to have performed the tūla-puruṣa mahādāna, such as the Rāṣṭrakūta kings Indrarāja III and Govinda IV. \(^4\) It is said that, one who performs this rite stays for innumerable years in the world of Viṣṇu. The pañcalāṅgala vrata was performed by Devarāja II of Vijayanagara in S.S. 1350. \(^5\) According to the Matsya-purāṇa five plough-shares of wood and five of gold, ten fine oxen, decked with gold on their horns and with pearls on their tails, silver on their hoofs and land according to one's means should be made. \(^6\) Besides these mahādānas, the Gahadavāla kings on various auspicious days, after performing the necessary religious rites, used to grant tax-free villages to Brāhmaṇas and for the maintenance of temples. The inscriptions of the dynasty refer to two instances of "deva-dānas" or gifts to gods; the Candravati inscription of V.S. 1156 records the grant of the village Majauclas, in Vamkānālī tala for the maintenance of the shrine of Candra-līlābhava, and the Kamanli grant of Jayaccandra refers to the gift of the half of a

2. Benares grant; JASS, LI, pt. I, pp. 113-18. (The editor read the name of the 'mahādāna' as 'para-laṅgala'. There is, however, a great deal of similarity between 'ra' and 'ca' of this period, and on examining the plate, I have noticed that it may as well be read as 'pe.ca-langala' or 'pa(m)ca-laṅgala'.
5. JBBRAS, XIII, p. 4.
village to the sun god Lolarka. However, most of the grants of this dynasty record "Brahma-dānas" or gift of tax free lands to the Brāhmaṇas; only in a few cases small holdings in villages were given away, but in most of the cases whole village and on some occasions more than one village were granted to a single donor; Candradeva, the first Gahadavala king once gave away a whole pattala, with the exception of the previously granted "deva-dvija-vikara-artha" to five hundred Brāhmaṇas and a village in another pattala for the residence of those Brāhmaṇas (Brahma-puri)?

Erection of temples was another pious work which some of the Gahadavala kings performed. It has already been noticed that Candradeva granted a village for the maintenance of the shrine of Candra-Mādhaṇa; the name of the shrine indicates that, it may have been a shrine dedicated to Mādhava or Viṣṇu by the king himself. A Śvetāmbara Jaina temple in Candrauti is still known to the local inhabitants as Candra-Mādhaṇa.3 The Candrauti inscription, which records that, a Viṣṇu-Hari-mūrti or a conjoint image of Śiva and Viṣṇu, was decorated by this king, also refers to the consecration of an image of Lord Ādi-Śrīśva by the king at Kāśi, this image also was lavishly adorned by the king with gold and precious stones.4

Madenapāla and Govindaśandra may have been too busy with defence, conquest and consolidation to pay serious attention to any temple building project; at any rate, inscriptions and traditions are silent about any such activity. The local traditions of Jamīpur and Zafrabad, however, connect the names of the next two kings, Viṣṇuśandra and Jayacandra with the construction of a number of

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2. ibid, XIV, pp.193-96.  
3. Ibid, up.197-200.  
temples in the locality. The Ataladevi Masjid on the town of Jaunpur, according to local traditions, was originally a temple of Ataladevi erected by Vijayacandra, after the Muslim conquest of Northern India, it was converted into a mosque some time before 1407 A.D. Two other temples are said to have been erected by Vijayacandra and Jayaccandra respectively on the sites, where the Khalis Muhkelis and the Jhanjira Masjid are now situated; the tradition says that the old temples were demolished under the governorship of Ibrāhīm and new Islamic structures were set up on their sites. The Lal-Darwaja Masjid is essentially of Hindu design and contains an inscribed stone slab, mentioning the name of Vijayacandra with a date. Another mosque, the Mosque Sheik Baren, also, seems to be of Hindu design and according to some, may have originally formed the part of a temple, built by Vijayacandra or Jayaccandra. A big mound, called Vijaya Sandil is, according to the locally current traditions, the site of a temple erected by Vijayacandra.

At present it is not possible to determine the veracity of the above traditions connected with the names of the Gahadavalas kings. But it is well known that many of mosques were built at the sites of old Hindu temples in various parts of India, and often with material derived therefrom. Sometimes inscribed or wrought bricks and stone slabs were cut and sculptured afresh or laid inside out in the Islamic structures, to conceal their Hindu origin. The buildings mentioned in the previous paragraph also present some of these features. Local traditions relating to those temples and buildings, therefore, may be regarded as based at least on a kernel of truth.

The undated Sarnath inscription records a notable
work of restoration undertaken by Kumaradevi the Buddhist queen of Govindacandra, namely the restoration of the 'Dharmacakra-Jina' which was known in the days of Dharmasoka; the same inscription also records the erection of a vihara for the Buddhist monks by the queen.  

D) Religious Conditions of the Country in General

1) Deities: The inscriptions of the Gahadavala kings prove that the first king Candradeva ushered in an era of revived Brahmanical religion. Religious activities may have declined in the Madhyadesa region during the anarchical period which followed the downfall of the Pratihāra dynasty as the result of repeated Muslim invasions. The kings of the Gahadavala dynasty not only established peace and order in the country and protected the sacred places from defilement, but also, as we have seen, actively patronized the Brahmanical religion in various ways, not confining their devotion to any one god of the pantheon only. The kings, though mostly devout worshippers of Viṣṇu, seem to have cultivated an eclectic attitude, and their capital being the chosen city of Śiva, the shrines of both the gods appear to have flourished side by side. In the inscriptions there is not a single reference to any struggle or misunderstanding between the followers of the two gods; on the other hand, two references in the Gahadavala inscriptions - one to the image of Viṣṇu-Hari or Hari-Hara, which was adorned by Candradeva, and another to Hari, being commissioned by Harī, to protest Vārānasi, indicate that they lived in mutual respect and unity.

Among the temples and images at Vārānasi, inscriptional

1. EI, IX, pp. 319-ff.
2. IHQ, March 1949, pp. 37 ff.
3. EI, IX, pp. 319-20.
references to Sauri-Hārāyaṇa, Candra-Maṇḍava, Adi-Kesiṇa, Hara-Maṇḍava and Kṛttivāsa are to be found; besides these the Śrāvajit temple grant while describing the location of the houses granted, mentions in this connection four other shrines, namely, those of Aghoreśvara, Pālāvaśūra, Indra-Maṇḍava and Bāndesvara. In other parts of Northern India, also these two popular gods Viṣṇu and Śiva were worshipped under various names, such as Hāmakṛṣṇa, Indumauli, Vaiḍyanātha, Padmanābha, Vīmakaśa, Samrāti, Bhavāṃkara, Ghantaśvara, Śrī-Vairūga, Laksāmipati, and "that form of the husbands of Uma and Lakṣmi", that is, Hari-Hara.

Śrīvaiśnavī, Peremsātvā or Brahmān is mentioned in some Gahadavāla inscription; but scanty reference to this god in these and other contemporary records indicate that the worship of Brahmān in the Gahadavāla region had declined. The cult of Trimūrti or the conjoint worship of Brahmān, the Creator, Viṣṇu, the Preserver and Śiva, the lord of Destruction was known in different parts of India. Though there is no mention of this cult in the inscriptions of the Gahadavālas, three colossal seated images of Brahmān, Viṣṇu and Śiva, erected in Searajpur near Allahabad district in the tenth century, have escaped the Muslim havoc and show that the cult was well known about a century earlier in the Nāḷīkavāc region.5 At Parmara inscription of V.S.1161 also refers separately not only to the conjoint form of Viṣṇu and Śiva, but also to Brahmān, Śiva and Viṣṇu.

Existence of two temples at Vārānasī dedicated to the Sun gods Gāngaditya and Lolārka and the grant of half a village to the shrine of the latter, show that the sun-cult was also popular. As shown in the Gahadavāla inscriptions, the necessary religious rites to be performed

before making a gift, include invocation of the Sun-god. One of the favourite donees of Govindacandra, Damodaravarma, who figures in three landgrants, was a "Saura" or worshipper of Sun.

Among other gods Indra is mentioned in one of the Gahadavala grants; K Lekamishvara, the contemporary nibandha-writer also, gives a prominent place to Indra, among the deities who must be propitiated for prosperity by the king. A small figure of Ganesa forms the capital of a pillar, which contains the Belkhera inscription of V.S.1253/1197 A.D. This god was worshipped in other parts of India under various names; a Kalacuri inscription refers to him as Helamba or Heramba while some other inscriptions as Gajana or Ganesa. Among the goddesses Srī or Lakṣmī is mentioned almost all the Gahadavala inscriptions. The gold coins of the dynasty issued by Govindacandra, are of the 'seated goddess' or Lakṣmī type. Some of the Candrataya and Kalacuri inscriptions also mention the goddess Lekṣmī or Gaja-Lakṣmī. Bhāratī or the goddess of learning has been invoked in the Set Ushet inscription of V.S.1176/1119 A.D. Some of the Parmara and Kalacuri inscriptions also mention Śrīravītya Viśdevī and Mārga.

The Buddhist inscriptions of the dynasty refer to Vīṣṇu, Śrī-Lākṣyasadha, Bodhisatva, Arya Vasudhara, Tārā, the Lākṣyulas and the eight 'Maras'. It is, however, clear from these inscriptions that the glorious days of Buddhism were over in the Lākṣyadesa. After the death of Īrāva, the popularity of the religion declined steadily, more so because the Pratihāras, who founded the next great empire, were followers of Brahminical Hinduism. One of the Gahadavala kings, however, extended his bounty to the Buddhist monastries at Set-Ushet and it is possible

That he was influenced by his Buddhist queen Kumārādevī. This queen, herself, restored the Dharmacakra-Jīna, known in the days of Dharmāśoka and built a Vihāra at Sārnath. The Set-Kahet inscription of V.S.1176 records that, Vidyādhara, the minister of Īdanaṭhā, the son of Gāthipurāṇācapati Gopāla, built another Vihāra at Set-Kahet for the Buddhist monks. The Bodh-Gayā inscription of Jayaccendra of V.S.124X, indicates that, this Gahaḍavāla king probably went even further and embraced Buddhism. It is, however, evident that the religion had by this time lost a good deal of the popular support once enjoyed by it and was clearly on the decline. The Dharmacakra Jīna, an ancient institution, known in the days of Dharmāśoka, had to be restored or rebuilt by Kumārādevī, while the inscription, which regrants (cf."puncr-api śāsanākṛtyā") certain villages to the Buddhist Samgha at Set-Kahet, indicates that in view of the obvious weakness of the declining Buddhist institutions, the right of this Samgha over those villages came to be questioned. In the Bodh-Gayā inscription of V.S.124X, in which the monk Sūmitra is said to have "restored the discipline and recovered many lost scriptures and others of the same kind, belonging to the illustrious site of "Mahābodhi" (cf."Sūtman-Mahābodhi-padasya śastrarāṇī-śādiṣṭam magnam-ācēṣam-eva, Kāśyapā-dikṣā-gurur-uddadhāra ya śāmanā śāsana-karnā-dhāraḥ"): throws further light on the decaying condition of Buddhism. It may be inferred from this that he restored the influence and authority of the Buddhist scriptures at the Mahābodhi. In Eastern India, however, under the royal patronage the religion of Lord Buddha flourished for some time.

Jainism, has not been mentioned in any of the Gahadavala inscriptions; the followers of this religion generally lived in western and south-western India.

ii) Pious and meritorious works by the public: The religious enthusiasm of the Gahadavala kings must have inspired their feudatories and subjects in performing many pious and meritorious works. Two of the feudatory chiefs Rāhuka Devarājusāha and Śiṅgara Vatsāraja made land-grants to the Brāhmaṇas. The catholicity of the ruling dynasty was followed by Vidyādhara, the minister of Madampāla, another feudatory chief; this person though he was a devotee of Maheśvara, erected a Buddhist vihara at Set-Mahesh.

Pratistha (consecration) and utsarga (donation) are highly eulogized in the Purāṇas and the Dharmasūtras; according to the Viṣṇu-dharmaśūtra," one who digs a well (for the public) has half his sins destroyed, when water has begun to flow forth; one who dedicates a pond, is for ever happy (free from thirst) and attains the world of Varuna". The Kālikā-purāṇa says that the reward of sacrifices is only heaven, but by "yūrtas" (consecration of temples, tanks and gardens) one secures release from the "saṁsāra". The inscriptions of the time of the Gahadavālas show that wealthy and influential men sometimes carried out many such pious projects on these lines for the welfare of the public. The Mathia-dah pillar inscription of V.S.1207/1151 A.D. records that Thakkura Belhana, the bhandagarika of queen Gosalladevi, together with a number of other thakkuras excavated a tank. The Deochad stone inscription testifies to the building of a temple to Siddhātvara ("Siddhātvarasya prasādam") by a scion of Śrī-Vāstava family in V.S.1245/1189 A.D. The Belkharā pillar inscription records the

2. Vide Supra, pp.82
5. JRAS, 1927, pp.695-96.
erection of the pillar with a Ganesa capital by Rāuta Śrī-Śakārūka in V.S.1253/1197 A.D. Among the ruins at Gadhwa near Allahabad, Cunningham noticed "no less than eight large statues of Viṣṇu and two of "VARĀHA-AVATĀRA". According to him, some of these must have belonged to the temple at Gadhwa. Further description of this temple shows that, it consisted of a number of inscribed columns, and three of the inscriptions, containing names of different personages, were dated in V.S.1199/1143 A.D.; it also contains a statue of Vāstuvya-Kāanyakū Śakkēra-Śrī-Ṛṣapāla (in a soldier's outfit) who appears to have built the temple in V.S.1199. Like the panels in the railings of the Senchē stupe, these columns also may have been the gifts of different devotees, whose names are inscribed therein (cf. the inscription No.3, ".............. Śrī-Mahēdharakāya nitya-praṇāmyeti samvat 1199" and the inscription No.9" ...... Śakkēra-Śrī-Gāṅgukena nitya-praṇāmyeti samvat 1199"). The temple appears to have been built in the Gahaḍavāla period in honour of Viṣṇu.

iii) Some "samyaskāras", gift-rites and sacred days: Three samyaskāras are mentioned in the Gahaḍavāla inscriptions, namely, "śrāddha", "jātakarma" and "nāmakaṇaṇa". Three grants were issued on the occasion of the "śaṅvatsarika" or 'annual śrāddha ceremony' of the parents of Govindacandra; according to these, his father, Vādmanapāla's death anniversary fall on Kṛṣṇa sudi 15 of the year 1178 (1122 A.D.) and that of his mother falls on Bhāgavana vadi 14. A fourth land-grant records the occasion of "pitr-pinda-dāgha-tarpaṇa" on Śrāvaṇa sudi 15 of the year 1178 (1122 A.D.). Some villages were granted to commemorate

1. JASB, 1911, pp.763-65.
2. ASR (Cunningham), Vol.III, pp.57 ff.
3. EI, IV, pp.104-06.
4. ibid, pp.113-4.
5. ibid, pp.109-11.
the occasions of the jātakarma and nāmakarana ceremonies of Nājaputra Hariścandra, the son of Jayaccandra. The first ceremony was observed on Bhādra vedi 8 (V.S.1232) and the second was observed twenty days later on Bhādra ṣudi 13.¹

The procedure of making gift of land is more or less uniform in all the inscription. Generally the donor, after bathing in the sacred water, "satisfying, according to the scriptural injunctions, Mantras, gods, sages, men, ghost and the menes', greeting the Sun, worshipping Śiva and Vāsudeva, offering oblations, rich in preparations of milk to the fire, and having offered pinda to the ancestors after (pouring from) the palm (of the donor) water sanctified by contact with a cow's ear and Kusa, granted land to the donee (cf. "Vividha-mantra-deva-muni-mana-śūka- piṭṭāve śāmpayitvā timirapataśa-paṭṭa-paṭu-mahāṭam-uśgar- ocisam-uṣṭāṣṭhā-saśaśekham samēsha-yacīya tribhuvana-trāturan Vāsudevasya pūjāṃ viḍīya pracārasya havīṣā havṁhūṣam hūtvā "gokarna-kustelē- pūte-karatal-odaka-pārveṃ")² A slight difference in religious procedure is noticed in the Rahan grant of Ilcifaraj aputra Govindacandra, where the donor Lavarapravsa worships his consecrated god Mahēśvara with five-fold offerings (cf. "abhisikta-devatā-Hrēśēvaram pāntacchīr- upacośākṣaṃmaśēhyacīya" etc.). According to the Dharmaśāstra 'upacośa' or items and stages of "puja" are generally sixteen, namely, "arṣhaana", "śaśana", "pāḍya", "arśhya", "bhāmaṃya", "śrīṇā", "vastra", "yajña-opavita", "xmulegana, "yuspa", "dūpa", "naivedya", "nomaskāra" "praṇāya", "visērīana"; ten and five "upacośās" are also allowed, and the latter group signifies xmulegana, yuspa, dūpa, dīpa, and naivedya.

¹. XI, IV, pp.126-8; & IA, XVIII, pp.129-34.  
². JUKIS, XIV,pp.75-6.
Host of the Gahadavala grants were made on the sacred days, enumerated in the sastras as auspicious tithis for making gifts. "Ayana" day, equinoctial day "vratPrata", the suppression of a tithi, on the eclipses of the sun and the moon, new moon day, 12th day, sakranti, and the full moon day are some of the tithis highly recommended for a bath 'japa', 'homa', fast and gift. Among the grants of this family, four were made on the occasion of a solar eclipse and three on a lunar eclipse; three on "uttarayana-sakranti" and one on the "kanyā-sakranti" tithi; about a dozen grants were made after the "purnimā-tithi-snāna". Besides these, three other sacred occasions have been mentioned, namely, "akṣaya-trītya", "manvantaraṃ" and "yugādīn"; seven Gahadavala grants were issued on akṣaya-trītya tithi" and one on the "Treṣṇyugādī-tithi"; of the fifteen grants issued on the "manvantara tithis", nine were recorded on the full moon day of Kārtika and it is to be noted that another "manvantara tithi", "mṛgya "māgha-sudi \(^{5}\)" is also mentioned as "maha-saptami" or "ratha-saptami\(^{4}\)."
of the Gange and such others; besides these, all mountains, all rivers and the sea are considered holy. Most of the land-grants of the Gahadavala were made on the bank of the Ganges at Vārāṇasī, while many of the others, either on the banks of rivers or at sacred places like Kāncyakubja and Ayodhyā, situated in the Gahadavāla territory.

The inclusion of many sacred places in the Gahadavāla dominion may have inspired Lakṣmiḍhara to devote a whole "Kānda" to "Tīrtha-vivecana" (consideration of sacred places) and to assign an important place to pilgrimage among the duties of human beings ("Kṛtya"). The first Gahadavāla king Candradēva claims to have protected the sacred places of Kasi, Kuśika, Uttara-Kośala and Indraśthēmāya; all of these places have been mentioned in Lakṣmiḍhara's work. However, it is to be regretted that this author, who lived in the twelfth century, relied exclusively on Purānic literature for his account of 'tīrthas' and seldom added a critical note on or made any attempt to locate any important shrine. Thus the realistic touch of a contemporary account is lacking in the "tīrtha-vivecana-kānda", though it is valuable for the reviverist ideal, set forth in it by the eminent writer.

In Lakṣmiḍhara's treatise Vārāṇasī, the abode of Śiva, and the capital of the Gahadavāla, is selected as the 'tīrtha par excellence, and about 340 shrines, situated therein, have been enumerated. A long passage from the Līṅga-purāṇa (quoted by Lakṣmiḍhara) relates how different deities, nāgas, asuras and sages vied with one another, in installing 'liṅgas', in honour of Śiva within the sacred bounds of Vārāṇasī. 1 It is quite possible that some of the old shrines, mentioned in earlier Purāṇa texts (quoted in

the Kṛtya) had disappeared by the twelfth century; on the other hand, some of the new shrines, including the one erected by the first Gahadavāla king, have not been recognized in the "Tīrtha vivecanā-kānda". A few of the sacred places of Vāraṇasi, however, appear to have been mentioned in both Lākṣmīdhara's work and the Gahadavāla inscriptions. The Avimukta-kṣetra mentioned in many Gahadavāla grants (e.g. Kamauli plate of Govindacandra and Vatsaraja of V.S.1191 and Kamauli plate of Govindacandra of V.S. 1198) is described in the Tīrtha-kanda as the perpetual abode of Śiva (cf. "Ruciram śūhunam-āsādya Avimuktaṁ tu me gṛham, na kadācin-maye-muktam jījāṁ sūrīm").

The Keśamocana-gaṭṭa, from where the Kamauli plate of V.S.1178 was made by Govindacandra is mentioned as an important sacred place "mehā-tīrtha" in Lākṣmīdhara's quotation. The shrine of Vedeśvara is also mentioned in a Gahadavāla inscription and the Tīrtha-kānda. The shrine of Adi-Kesava (ancient Kesava) installed by Candradeva may have been erected over the old shrine of Kesava, which is said to have been situated to the north of 'Vedeśvara'. The shrine of Lolārka, mentioned in two Gahadavāla inscriptions, and described as being situated to the south of the 'Kalān-jara' (cf. "tasyaiva daksina-bhage lolara nanam vai Ravi"), still exists as Lolārka-kūṇḍa. Of the four temples mentioned in connection with the gift of a house-grant recorded in the Benares grant of V.S.1171, at least one, Agoreśvara, may be identified with the shrine of the great sage Aghora who is said to have attained "Rudratva".

The Koti-tīrtha at Vāraṇasi, mentioned in the Benares grant of V.S.1207 is perhaps the same as the shrine of "Kotisvara". The god Kṛttivāsa to whom Jayacandra paid his homage is mentioned in the Tīrtha-kānda.¹

¹ Vide Tīrtha-vivecana-kānda, pp.41, 55, 44, 56, 118, 60, 54, 40, 77.
Strangely enough neither 'Gandra-madhava', whose image was installed by Candradeva, nor 'Vism-EarS', whose image was adorned by the same king is mentioned in the Laksamdhara's work.

Kusik or Kanyakubja is mentioned in the Tirtha-Kapola as Mahadaya and Kaastambha. Utrara-kosala is identified in the Candrawati grant of V.S.1150 with Ayodhya which is mentioned as tirtha by Laksamdhara. Prayaga and Kausambi are two other sacred places, mentioned by the Gedadvola grants and Laksamdhara's works. 1

Section II. SOCIETY

A) The Brahmans

According to the Dharmasastras, teaching Vedas, officiating at sacrifices and receiving gifts are the privileges of the Brahmanas; the large number of land-grants made mostly to the Brahmans proves that the Gahadavala kings upheld the privilege of the Brahmans as donees par excellence. The most remarkable occasion recorded in these grants was the gift of practically a whole patta to five hundred Brahmanas and the gift of a separate village as a "Brahma-puri" for the residence of those Brahmanas. Jayaccandra the penultimate king of the dynasty provided a 'Jayantapuri' (un-explained) for a number of Brahmanas. 2 In the case of each of these land-grants the king or the donor ceded all his rights and dues to the donee and the land granted virtually became a tax-free one. The grant of tax-free land to the king's officers,

1. ibid. pp. 237, 246 de.
however, is enjoined by many ancient authors and six
land - grants to Rāuta Kāṣṭhīya Rājyaśāhārvanvarman are
probably grants of this king.

The Rahan grant, which regrets the decay of
Vedic studies before the advent of the Gahaṅgūla
dynasty indicates that the kings of this dynasty encour­
egaged the study of the Vedas. Indeed the inscriptions
show that, some of the donees were well-versed in all the
four Vedas (cf. "catur-vedī" or "catur-veda-vidyā-vijita"),
some in two or three Vedas, while some others were student
of different Vedic "śākhas" and 'pārās' (cf."Chāndoga-
śākha", "tripātha" etc.) According to the Kauśika-purāṇa,
the observance of the tulā-purwa-mahādāna requires the
presence of priests knowing the four Vedas, who were to be
placed on the four sides1; Candradeva is said to have
performed this ceremony many times and the inscription,
which records one such occasion, actually refers to
Drāhmapāta, who were "catur-vedin", besides those, who were
" /></td>
</tr>

The land-grants refer to a number of "gotras" and
"pāravas" of the Drāhmapāta who received gifts. According
the Śaṅkhya-ārānta-sūtra, "Viśvēmitra, Jamadagni,
Bhrādvaja, Gautama Arīta, Vasiṣṭha and Kaśyapa are the
seven sages and Āgastya is the eighth; the progeny of these
eight sages is declared to be gotra"; these primary gotras
have been divided and subdivided to constitute other
gotras and the above work states that there are numerous
gotras but only forty-nine pāravas.2

According to Hutton, gotra is in fact a clan, theoretically
descended from a single ancestor and prārava is perhaps
the names contained in a passage, in the Vedic formula
used in the worship of his ancestors by a follower of
any particular Vedic school; vide J.H.Hutton - Caste in
India, pp.48 ff.
The Candravati inscription which mentions 500 Brahmanas, enumerates more than forty gotras in this connection; these are as follows:

Agasti, Ātreya, Bhūrindrāja, Bhūrgava, Candratreya, Dakṣa, Derbha, Dhaumya, Gālava, Garga, Gṛyaka, Gṛtvama, Gṛvya, Harita, Jāska, Jēṣukarma, Jīvantāyana, Kṛhma, Kapisthala, Kṛtyāyana, Kṛtyāyenekila, Kṛśeyya, Kṛṣṇāyana, Kṛṣṇāka, Kṛṣṇatreya, Kutsa, Mauldalya, Pṛṇas, 

Kṛṣṇya, Pārāśara, Pippalāda, Śāmkṛtya, Śandilya, Sārkara, Sārkaraśa, Saṃpaka, Sārdeva, Sāvarna, Vasiṣṭhapada, Vaśiṣṭha, Vatsa and Upamanyu.

Other inscriptions mention pravaras of some of the above gotras; such as the group of five pravaras Bhūrgava, Ārya Cyevena, Aurva, Jēmedagani and Apnavan for Vatsa, Vatsa-Bhūrgava and Sārkaraśa gotras; Vasiṣṭha for Vasiṣṭha gotra; Gautama, Aūgirėsa and Aūtathya, these three pravaras for Gautama gotra; Bhūrindrāja, Aūgirėsa and Bhraspatya (or Kṛṣṇapa) for Bhūrindrāja gotra; Vaisēthusya Gādhēya and Bhūrgava for Hānuṣya gotra; Kṛṣṇapa, Āvatsēra, Kṛndhuva for Kṛṣṇapa gotras; Śāndilya, Āsita, Deivala for Śāndilya gotra; Kṛṣṇāyana, Kṛṣṇika, Bhaumya for Pāravasa; Vasiṣṭha, Sakti, Pārāśara for Pārāśara gotra; Mauldalya, Aūgirėsa, Bhūrgava (Vādhryasva?) for Mauldalya; Govila, Aūgirėsa, Amvortsa for Govila gotra; Vaiṇḍhula, Aghāmarṣa and Viśvamitra for Vaiṇḍhula gotra.

Among the honorifics and appellations of the period the most common were 'ārya' and 'ṭakhkura', and these were applied not only to the Brahmanas but also to the other castes; the father and the grand-father of Rājyaśaharvarman Kṣatriya, were Ṭakhkura Vidyādhara and Ṭakhkura Jagadhara. Another appellation 'rāuta', also was not restricted to a single caste (e.g. Rāuta Rājyaśaharvarman Kṣatriya and

Rauta Jāṭesarman Brahmana. Honorifics applied specifically to the Brāhmaṇas were "bhaṭṭa" and "mīśra". Besides, these following appellations were used mostly by the Brāhmaṇas, 'pāṇḍita' and 'mahā-pāṇḍita', 'avasti', 'dīkṣit or 'mahā-dīkṣita' (according to Kṛelhorn, a person who or whose ancestors have performed a great sacrificial ceremony, such as 'jyotiṣṭoma')”, 'dviveda' or 'dvivedin' and 'caturvedin' (students of two or four Vedas), 'tripāṭhi' (one who is familiar with three pāthaś of Veda), 'śārīra' (one who performs the upanayana of the student and imports the whole Veda to him), 'pr规避 śārīra' (explained in the lexicon as king's physician).

An interesting feature of the social life is the extensive use of abbreviated forms of nomenclature in official documents. In most of the cases it is difficult to ascertain the real names from the abbreviated forms used in the inscriptions. The principle of abbreviation, followed in the cases of the different members of the royal priest-family may be understood, because their full names, as well as their abbreviated forms are found repeated in many inscriptions. Thus real name of Puravāṣa or Purāṇa, grant-father of Jāgusarman was Purusottama, and that of his father Vīlhakaye was either Viśquśarman or Vedaśarman; Jāgusarman or Jāguka, the popular name of the mahā-purohit of Govindacandra, was the abbreviated form of Yajnavalkyaśarman; his son was variously mentioned as Prharājaśarman or Prharājaśarman, but his real name probably was Prahlādaśarman. Some other interesting abbreviations are Aheka, Tulāśeasaran, Chocha, Vāchateeśeasaran, Jāṭesarman, Hāle, Rehiṭeiyaka, and Madana.

According to the Dharmasāstras, six duties are generally imposed on the Brāhmaṇas, namely study and teaching, performing sacrifice and helping others to perform sacrifice.

making gifts and acceptance of gifts. Of these the second, fourth and sixth (i.e. yajana, adhyapana and pratigraha) are really their means of livelihood under ordinary circumstances. In times of distress however, the Brähmana, who maintains his parents and others are allowed to follow the occupation of inferior 'varnas' (cf. "yajan-adhyapana-pratigraha sarvesām. Purvah purvo guruḥ, tad-alābhe kṣatra-vṛttiḥ, tad-alābhe vaisya-vṛtti")¹ There is a great deal of controversy among the Dharmaśāstra writers, as to whether a Brähmana in distress may follow Kṣatriya occupation. Lakṣmīdhara in his digest quotes the contradictory views of Baudhāyana and Gautama; while the former plainly lays down that a Brähmana who has failed to maintain his family by the three rightful occupations, should live by Kṣatriya occupation of (cf."yajan-adhyapana-pratigraha-ekavṛttau Baudhāyana, tad-ekṛte Kṣatra-dharmaṇa jīvet), the latter strictly enjoins that even in fun a Brähmana must not take up arms (cf."hāsyartham-api brähmana syudhān na’'adṛtta")² It appears, that according to Lakṣmīdhara’s view, a twice born in distress must not ordiinerily skip over the occupation of an intervening 'varna', but a Brähmana may follow the occupation of a Vaisya in preference to taking up the profession of arms.³ The period of distress being over the Brähmana, who has degraded himself by following the occupation of a lower 'varna', must purify himself and revert to his usual occupations and duties(cf."nistīryērthe samatarjiya pārū"'tānem bhavet-pathi")⁴.

A Brähmana in distress may also follow agriculture, cattle rearing and tādāde. According to the Dharmashastras, Brähmana engaged in agriculture or cattle rearing must

¹. Kṛtya,Garhasthya-kāṇḍa, pp.186 & 185.
². ibid. p. tx.187
³. ibid. p.intro.72.
⁴. Yajñavalkya op.cit.ibid.p.tx.188.
treat humanely the cattle used for the purpose. A Brahmana following trade is strictly prohibited to sell cooked food, poison, arms, lac, indigo, silk and woolen goods, salt, meat, liquor, hides, honey, beewax, soma cow, learning and men; some of these however may be bartered by a Brahmana, for others of the same species (cf. "tila-tāṇḍula-pεita-viđita-vyānāsya-viḥita perivarttaka")². Most of the Dharmashāstra writers consider moneylending as a degrading occupation for the Brāhmaṇas and the Kṣatriyas; but Bhṛṣṇapati, who has not only enumerated it as one of the means of livelihood for the higher varṇas in distress but had also praised it as the best (cf. "Vācavo vartan-opīya ṛṣibhiḥ puriṭtite, Sravasya-sāpa c-aṭagaṃ Kuḍādem-cṛhikṣaṃ viduh 11"), is cited by Lacūmdhara as an extenuation of its adoption as an ūpaad-vṛtti."³

Generally a Brāhmaṇa is forbidden to follow the occupation of a Śudra, even when he is in distress. If however the is in danger of life - 'prāṇa-saṃśaya' - he may adopt 'śaūdra-vṛtti' (cf. "svetathā bṛttir-aśaṅkta-bṛttreṇa. Tadāpy e ke prāṇa-saṃśaye."); this dictum from Gautama is quoted approvingly by Lacūmdhara, who explains that the term 'prāṇa-saṃśaya' refer to one's own self and also to those whom he maintains.⁴ It is interesting to note that Gautama who strictly forbids a Brāhmaṇa to touch arms, allows him to do so when there is danger of life (cf. "prāṇa-saṃśaye Brāhmaṇo 'pi bṛttreṇa-bṛttreṇa."")⁵ A Brāhmaṇa (and also a Vaiśya, who is generally forbidden to follow the occupation of a higher caste) is allowed to take up arms in order to protect Brāhmaṇas and cows and to prevent intermixture of castes.⁶

1. ibid. p.tx.192.
3. ibid. pp.intro.76 & tx.221.
5. ibid. p.tx.188.
The writer of this Dharmasāstra digest, who lived in the 12th century A.D., thus though a sincere advocate of the Purānic ideal of Brāhmaṇahood, appears to have realized the change, which had taken place in the social and economic position of the Brāhmaṇa. Though he recommends the Brāhmaṇas to follow their own prescribed occupations, yet quoting from various writers, he ultimately upholds the view, that a Brāhmaṇa in extreme necessity, is allowed to follow any honest profession of any other caste. This attitude of Lakṣṇadhara may be indicative of the fact that the realities of the social and economic life in his age were different from those conditions, where the extreme Śastric injunctions could be rigidly followed.

B) Other Castes

Next in importance to the Brāhmaṇas in society, were of course, the Kṣatriyas or the fighting and ruling class. The Cenadavālas themselves claim to have belonged to the Kṣaṭra lineage. It is possible that some of their feudal families also were Kṣatriyas. According to the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa a Kṣatriya may use the pravara of his purohita; some late works state that both the gotra and the pravara of the purohita may be used by the Kṣatriyas at the time of marriage. Inscriptions, however, indicate that the Kṣatriyas sometimes used their own gotras. Hāuta Rājayadhavarwarman Kṣatriya, who has been mentioned before, is described as belonging to the Vatsa gotra, whose five pravaras are Bhārgava Cyavana, Ānapavā, Āvarā, Jāmadagnya. The feudal chief of the Śīgarā dynasty belonged to the Śāndilya gotra, whose pravaras have not been mentioned. Among the honorifics 'ṭhakkura' and 'rāuta' have been mentioned and these were used by both the Brāhmaṇas and

the Kṣatriyas. In Jayaccandra's reign a Kṣatriya Rājyadharavarman received six land-grants all of which were granted with usual rights and concessions; these were probably made in lieu of service and not for his social and religious status the official designation of Rājyadharavarman has not been stated, but his father and grand-father are styled "mahā-mahattaka". These gifts therefore, do not indicate that, the Kṣatriya enjoyed a status similar to that of the Brāhmaṇas. Besides Kṣatriya 'rāts', we come across Brāhmaṇa 'rāutas' like Jaṭesārman of Govila gotra and Paharajāsvarman, the son of the Gahadavāla mahā-purushita Jāgusārman.

According to the Dharmaśāstras (quoted by Lakṣmīdhara in the Kṛtyakalpataru) the chief occupation of a Kṣatriya belonging to the ruling class, is to protect cows Brāhmaṇas and others; a Kṣatriya, who was not a king, should worship gods and serve Brāhmaṇas. According to Gautama, an ordinary Kṣatriya should live by serving the king as a soldier. In the time of distress he may follow the 'vṛtti' of a vaisya. The Vaiśyas generally live by agriculture, trade and money-lending but even a Vaiśya is barred from trading in certain articles, including salt, wine, curd, clarified butter, milk, lac, hide, flesh, indigo, poison, arms, and idols (devān). It may be inferred from these injunctions of the Dharmaśāstras quoted by Lakṣmīdhara that only the lowest order of the society the Sudras can trade in the above mentioned articles. It has been specially pointed out that even in times of distress the lower varṇas should not take up the occupation of the upper varṇas (cf. natv-eva jyāyasām vṛttim-abhimanyeta karhicit).

The term 'Kayastha' is mentioned more than once in

4. ibid. pp. 258.
5. ibid. p. 257.
the official portions of the Gahadavāla inscriptions. Usnas and Vedavyasa-smṛti refer to the Kāyasthas as a sub-caste and in the latter they are placed among the Śudras. The Rājataraṅgini on the other hand indicates that even in the reign of Jayasimha (c.1128-49 A.D.) a contemporary of the Gahadavāla king Govindaśāundra, the Kāyasthas were officers and did not belong to any particular caste. It is possible that in some parts of the country, the Kāyasthas, were already tending to form a caste in this period. Lekṣemūdhara, however, does not recognize the Kāyasthas as forming a separate caste, and agreeing with the evidence of Rājataraṅgini refers to them as a class of King's officials who were oppressive and from whom the subjects were to be protected (cf."pāyastabhā prajārakṣaś Kāyasthebhya viśeṣatāh") In the Gahadavāla inscriptions it is not clear whether the term has been used to indicate a sub-caste or an official designation only; some of the writers of the Gahadavāla inscriptions have been designated Kāyasthas (e.g. Kāyastha Thakkura Jālhana of Kamauli grant of V.S.1172 and Kāyastha Purandara of V.S.124X), while others have been termed 'Karanika' (e.g. Karanika Thakkura Sehadeva of Don Buzurg inscription of V.S.1176 and Karanika Thakkura Śrīdhara of Chattarpur grant of V.S.1177); still others have been mentioned simply with their honorific 'thakkura' (e.g. Thakkura Viśvarūpe of Inner grant of V.S.1185 and Thakkura Kusumapala of Kamauli inscription of V.S.1224). Two of the Kāyastha writers, Jālhana (mentioned above) and Kīṭhana (Kamauli grant of V.S.1182) belonged to Vāstavya family. The Sethe inscription of V.S.1176 reveals the existence of an illustrious Vāstavya family (of Śripurva-Vāstavya-Kula-pradīpikā) at Jāpyḍa or Ajāpyḍa; a scion of this dynasty, 1. cf.Rājataraṅgini, VIII,236S—"About that time there died by strangulation that rogue of an official (Kāyastha) the Brahmana Śivaratha, who had been a great intriguer. (Flichter, II, p.134). 2. Hist. of Dharmasāstras, II, pp.75-77. 3. Yajñavalkya, op.cit.Kṛtya Rājadharma-Kaṇḍa, p.83.
Vidyadhara, who issued this inscription was a minister of Kadenapala, the son of Gadhipuradhipati Gopala. In the inscription, however, the family is not stated to have belonged to the Kasyastha lineage. The Keohada inscription of V.S. 1245 records the erection of a Siddhesvara temple by a thakhura (name lost), who belonged to the Sri-vastavya family at Keohad (cf. Veahavādrāma-vastikā-Sri-Vastavya-tha......etc.). Two of the dated inscriptions of Gadhwa, near Allahabad also refer to two 'Kasyasthas'; one of them was certain Vastvaya Kasyastha. Panayala of Veavgraśa and the latter Keshdhara was a Kasyastha of "Lokasena-jāti" (cf."Śri-Lokasena-jāti
Kasyastha Śri-Lordroputre... Sri-Johādherya" etc.).

A Sūtradhāra (Don Buzurg of V.S.1176) and a Lokārta (Kamuli grant of V.S.1131) also have been mentioned in the inscriptions of this dynasty. The B.A.S. Land-transfer grant of Govindacandra of V.S.1157 refers to another caste, Kaivarta. According to Atri the Kaivarta is one of the seven "antyeja" castes, while Ramu uses the term to denote the offspring of a Visāda and a Ayogava woman, who lives by plying boats.1

C) Ferriage

Ferriage, one of the most important of the 'Hindu sāṃskāras' has been treated in detail by Lakṣmīdhara. He explains Ramā's view, that a twice-born should marry a girl of his own caste for the first or sacramental union, as applicable only when a bride of the same caste is available; if not, he may marry from one of the lower castes, a partner of each lower caste is eligible, only

1. List. of Dharmarasastra (Kane) Vol.II,pt.I,p.69-100. (The list prepared by Kane from the Dharmaśāstra works contains the names of many other occupational castes).
when one from a higher caste is not available (cf. "Tad- 
alabhe akṣaresya kramena imah kṣatra-viṣṭūdra-kenyaka 
vivahyāḥ. Tatropi nṛvañcūröśvare uttar-ottara viṣṭūryāḥ" 
and "Dvijatīrṇa sajatiya-kṣarasya alabhe uttar-ottara viṣṭūryāh 
IMA kramena vivahyāḥ"). Generally the marriage of a twice 
born with a Śudra wife is strongly condemned by most of 
the Dharmasūtra writers and such a marriage is looked upon 
as one for pleasure only. Lakṣmīdhara explains that 
marriage with a Śudra woman is strongly condemned but not 
absolutely prohibited; it only fails to confer on the 
Śudra wife the status of a 'sacramental wife' (cf. 
"saccharmacārīmā tu trāṇi sa na bhūvat-īti").

From the texts selected by Lakṣmīdhara in the 
Iṣṭyakalpatru it appears that he was against 'sa-gotra' 
'sepinda' and cross cousin marriages and his injunctions 
come applicable to all the 'varnas'; then a sa-gotra marri- 
age too closed through ignorance, Lakṣmīdhara, following 
Maṁśhyana, states that the wife should not be altogether 
abandoned but should be maintained like a mother (cf. 
"matyaṇa-enāṃ vibhidyā-īti Maṁśhyana-vacanat").

Lakṣmīdhara's quotations in the digest further 
indicate that he was against the practice of polygamy. 
He advocates supercession of wife only when she is barren 
diseased or evil. The dictum of Yājñavalkya, that a 
superseded wife must receive from her husband a compen- 
sation, equal to the expenses of the marriage, is quoted 
supportively by Lakṣmīdhara, according to whose inter- 
pretation the sum given to the superseded wife must be as 
much as the new wife receives as her wedding gifts.

1. Kṛtya- Gṛhaṇasthaya-kanda, pp. 35, 44.
2. ibid. pp. 40.
3. ibid. pp. 44-46.
5. ibid. p. tx. 105.
In the case of second marriage also the twice-born may secure a bride from lower 'Varṇas' (cf. "tathā adhived-en-pirītte satī, purva-bhārya-marana satī, savarṇāya alābbe satī, uttar-ottara vīhāryā").

2) Position of Women

The Gahadavāla inscriptions do not furnish us with any data on the position of women of different ranks during the period, except that the queens had to be informed about the land grants to be issued and were sometimes vested with all the royal prerogatives; once during the reign of Lalasnapala, a grant was made, after the express consent of the queen and some high officials. It can be inferred that the ladies of the royal household were educated to some extent, took some part in administration and generally enjoyed some privileges. The case of Jambukī being made the foremost of all 'pattalikās' by Kumārādevī, the queen of Govindaścandra, is unique in the Gahadavāla records and reveals two significant facts; firstly there must have been more than one pattalikā and secondly the queen had the authority to appoint and promote the pattalikās. The administrative status of the pattalikās, however, cannot be ascertained for want of further information.

There are no sufficient data, with the help of which, a clear idea about the position of the women in general can be formed. In spite of the disapproval of the Dharmāstātras, which is echoed by Lākṣmīdhara, polygamy was widely practised and women were regarded as absolutely

1. ibid. p. tx. 44.
2. Karmoli Grant, V.S. 1162 (EL, II, pp. 358-61).
dependent on men and inferior to them. Various injunctions of the Dharmashastras indicate that their legal and religious position was rather low; they could not recite the Vedic mantras and serve as witnesses in legal cases and were not allowed to be a party in transactions, particularly relating to gifts, sales or mortgages of houses or land. Verses of some women poets are found included in the contemporary anthologies like Subhashitavali and Saduktikarpamta; some of the south Indian women poets like Rambhadramba and Tirumalamba are mentioned as successful composers of poems though of usual conventional type.1 Women's right over "stridhana" was recognised and in succession to it, daughters were preferred to sons. According to Yajnavalkya, Vignu and Katyayana the widow was considered the first heir of sonless men. Numerous epigraphic and literary references indicate that sometimes 'sati' or self immolation was practised by widows. Those who refrained from this practice, spent the rest of their life very austorly, like a 'yati' and sometimes she would even cut off her hair.

Section III Culture.

A) Education and Literature

The first Gahaḍavāla king began his reign with the intention of reviving the Vedic studies and according to the Candravati inscription of V.S.1150, he, himself was a very learned man who had mastered all the 'darsanas' and

encouraged all 'vidyās' and 'kalās' (cf. samadhigṛta-
sākula-dārśena, sarva-vidyānām-ārāya, kalānām-ādhara etc.). No doubt Candrādeva encouraged the study of the Vedas in his kingdom; in fact the statement that he performed many "tula-puruṣa-mahāmānas", which require the presence of Brāhmaṇas well-versed in all the four Vedas, indicates that, these were studied in his reign. While, some of the Brāhmaṇas studied all the Vedas, others mastered only one Veda or even specialized in one section of a Veda. Thus the inscriptions of Candrādeva mention 'Rgvedacaraṇecatur-Vedīn Jātē' of Kaśyapa-gotra, 'Yajur-
-Veda-caraṇecatur Vedīn' Vīlha of Vaśīṭhagotra, 'Athravacaraṇedrivedīn' Chihile of Bharadvājagotra 'Chand-
ogacaraṇetripīṭhin' Vedīg of Vatsagotra and Vāmanasvāmi of Kaśi-ka-gotra, who was Chandogyāśākhī.¹

Inscriptions of the subsequent kings prove that the study of the Vedas continued to flourish; among the learned Brāhmaṇas, who figure as donees were 'Saṁkhyāyānasaśākhī' Gupacandra (Rahan Grant of V.S.1166), 'Chandogyāśākhī' Tulṭicaraṇacarman (Don Buzurg Grant of V.S.1176), 'Pṛṇāśīrya-
bhajīto' Paṇḍita Khoṇacarman of 'Saṁkhyāyānasaśākhā' (Benares Grant of V.S.1187), Damaḍacarman, student of 'Vājas-
neyasāśākhā' (Benares Grant of V.S.1190), Aṇḍacarman, student of 'Chandogyāśākhā' (Vanagarmu Grant of V.S.1208), Ilaḥpurohitā Jēgū'ś father 'Vājasanayaśākhī' Vyāsa and son 'Yajur-vedāśākhī' Vaiṣṇava-Pūjā-vidhi-guru- Prasara-
acarman (Kamaḷi Grant of V.S.1178) and 'caturvedavidya-
vijīta' Śrīdhara (Lar Grant of 1202).

Not only the Vedas but also other branches of Āstras and knowledge were encouraged. It is interesting to note that the Set-Hahet inscription of V.S.1186 mentions

a Kṣyastha Śruti-dhārini, who was 'sarva-sāstra-vicitra or well versed in all the śātras. Damodarādasa-sārman, who, as we have seen before, was a student of 'Vaśyamānasaśāstra', was also well-versed in the five 'śiddhāntas' of Jyotisāstra (cf. Jyotisāstra-śiddhānta-vāraha-kōvida) and Śākhāyanaśākhi. Gūḍācandra had the rare accomplishment of 'śruti-dhāreṇa'.

Govindacandra was the first king to assume the epithet 'sarvavidyā-viśeṣa-vācaśpati', and there is reason to believe that he deserved it; the Kṛtya-kalpaśīrṣa an important work of the period, was written as the colophon of the end of the Vyavahāra-kōṇḍa states, at his command by his minister for Peace and War (Mahiṣa-sādhavigrahaka) Lākṣmīdāhara (cf. "Umrājāhirāja Govindacandradevaśīrṣaśīrṣa Mahiṣa-sādhavigrahaka Bhāttaya-Kṛṣṇadharāmañca-Sri-Lakṣmīdāharaṇa Vīcitaśīrṣa" etc.) This work is divided into fourteen kōṇḍas, which entitled respectively Brahmaśīrṣa, Viṣyāstaka, Śraddha, Dāna, Pratistha-Puja, Tīrtha, Vṛata, Śuddhi, Naiṣadha, Vyavahāra, Śanti, and Ṛkṣa. A Śloka at the beginning of Naiṣadha-kōṇḍa states that the success of Govindacandra in the political field was due to the wonderful counsel of 'writer, Lākṣmīdāhara (cf."Kṛṣṇadānirāpani yaj-pāram vyavahāra-Govindacandra nṛyā sa t-tārvaṇ hihi yasyā mantra-mahīṃ savaryam sa Laktiṣṭhāharrya etc")'. Though little known to-day, the Kṛtya-kalpaśīrṣa, however, seems to have been a well known work in medieval India and its influence on the succeeding generations of writers was very great. Aniruddha (c.1160 A.D.) an eminent legal writer of Bengal, quoted it as an authority and Ballālaśīra, who come about a generation after Laktiṣṭhāharya,

was greatly influenced by him. Later on legal writers of Bengal, like Śrīhara (c.1400 A.D.), Śrīmāṅkha (c.1500 A.D.) and Raghunād (c.1490-1510 A.D.) also extensively used this digest, written in the Gaṅgājñāla period, in their own works. In North India, its influence was even greater and 'Vivāda-retnakāra' of Candeghara, and 'Aranyākuraṇa' of Āravinda contain copious quotations from the Kṛtyakalpataru. Other writers from North India andirthila, Vṛṣamati Miśra (c.1450 A.D.) Viśvēcara Bhāṭṭa, Teṅgāndāla (c.1360-1390 A.D.) and also some of the Boccon writers like Ketumā (c.1260 A.D.) and Prataparudra (c.1497-1539 A.D.) were also deeply influenced by the Kṛtyakalpataru, and some of them have reproduced wholesale, long passages from it, in their own works the most remarkable of these in the case of Prataparudra, who also refers to the author of the Kṛtyakalpataru as Daṅgavān Lekṣṇādhara.1

Govindacandra’s grandson Jeyaccandra is famous in the literary world as the patron of Śrīhara, the author of Kṛṣṇadha-caritam. The concluding verses of this work claim that poet Śrīhara was honoured by the king of Kṛṣṇakubja with a pair of betel-leaves and a seat; this claim is supported by a tradition in the "Prabandha-kosa" which states that Śrīhara was a great poet in the court of Jeyaccandra, the king of Kṛṣṇakubja.2 This poet was the son of Śrī-Kṛṣṇapāṇḍita and Śrī-Kṛṣṇamallādevī and possibly he was introduced in the Gahaḍāvāla court in the reign of Vijayacandra, in whose honour he may have composed the Śrī-Vijaya-prāśasti. Kṛṣṇadha-caritam is the most important work of Śrī-hara. According to Daṅgupta and De 2

2. Vide, "Tumbulavayam-Pranam ca labhate yah Kṛṣṇakubjasvarūt" etc. in Kṛṣṇadha-caritam (XXII) and Prabandha-kosa Jincvijaya Śuni) pp. 56 ff.
'it is undoubtedly the last masterpiece of industry and ingenuity that the lēkākāvyā can show, but to class it with the masterpieces of Kālidāsa, Bhāravī and even Națēgh is to betray an ignorance of difference between poetry and its counterfeit. He, however, possessed considerable metrical skill and altogether used about twenty different metres in this work, mostly of short lyrical measures; his descriptive power is astonishing in its profusion and cleverness. Among his chief defects are mentioned his laboured language, over-worked diction and straining of words and ideas. According to a tradition Śrīharṣa on receiving the gift of knowledge and wisdom from goddess Durga, became too wise and quite unintelligible to others; consequently the goddess later on advised his in to take curd at night to become phlegmatic and dull and so be intelligible to others. In spite of many defects, however, Naṣaṣa-caritam is regarded as one of the five Mahākāvyas of Sanskrit literature. It cannot be denied that Śrīharṣa is a master of language and metrics, an artist in the invention of elaborate plays of words and that he has many good ideas in his description of Nature'. He was not only a poet but also philosopher, well-versed in the Vedānta, Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Buddhist systems and the Čārvaka. He was the author of 'Khandaṇa-khanda-khādyā', a dialectical work on the vedānta. The concluding verse of each canto of Naṣaṣa-caritam mentions the name of one of the works of this poet, no IS of any of which, however, has yet been discovered the works referred to in this fashion are Arṇava-vivaraṇa, Śiva-saktisiddhi, Paurāṇikāsūra-carita-Campa, Īśvar-Abhisandhi Sthānirvācāra-prakṛtī, Śrī-Vijaya-prāṣasti, Gaud-orvisa-prāṣasti and Cindaprasasti.
In the Gahadavala inscriptions two of the writers are called 'kavi'. Taranahra of the Bodh-Gaya inscription of V.S.124X and Sri-Munda of the undated Sarnath inscription of Kumadevi. The latter has been described as the trusted friend of the Vanga king. No work by any of them has been discovered and the contemporary authologies are silent about them.

B) Architecture

As quite a number of pre-Islam architectural specimens in Northern India have ceased to exist, it is not possible to form a correct estimate of the building activities of the Gahadavala period. Among the one thousand temples destroyed at Varanasi after the defeat of Jayaccandra, probably there were many, erected during this period. According to the information supplied in the inscriptions, Candradeva appears to have erected temples to Candra-Kghava and Adi-Kshiva at Varanasi. Traditions which connect the names of Vijayacandra and Jayacandra with the erection of a number of temples in Jaunpur region, specially near Jaunpur and Zafarabad, have already been noticed; most of these temples were converted into mosques, and some of these still exist in ruins, as specimens of the early Indo-Islam architecture, which were fashioned out of Hindu materials by Hindu masons, to suit Islamic taste. The local traditions at Zafarabad indicate that the later Gahadjavela kings probably built a palace and a fort in this region. Asni, another stronghold of the Gahadavala, where according to the Muslim historians Jayacandra hid his treasures in a fort, is some times located in this area, but according to another theory it was situated 10 miles to the north of Fatehpur in U.P. 1

That there was no lack of private enterprise in the field of building activity is manifested by an inscribed stone slab, in the Kramagra mosque at Benares, dated in A.D. 1190, recording the erection of a number of temples and by the ruins of a temple at Gadhwa near Allahabad, erected probably in V.S. 1199/1115 A.D.

C) Some Important Places in the Gahadavala Dominion and Cultural Contact

The Gahaḍavala kingdom included a number of sacred places and important towns, which had traditionally been great centres of religious and cultural activity. The close association of these kings of this dynasty with these places and the energy, which they concentrated on the protection and development of them, imparts a cultural importance to their reign and marks it out as an era of revitalization of ancient learning. Almost all the inscriptions of this dynasty claim that Candradeva, the first Gahaḍavala ruler protected the four important tirthas of northern India, namely, Kāśī, Nandīka, Uttarākṣaṇa and Indrasthānyaka. Besides these the Gahaḍavala inscriptions incidentally refer to a number of sacred places of lesser importance and shrines, which have been noticed before.

Vārānasi, which according to the Purāṇas was one of the foremost sacred places of India, was also a centre of education and culture even before the rise of the Gahaḍavālas and al-Bīrūnî as early as the tenth century noticed that "Hindu sciences have retired far away from those parts of the country conquered by us, and have fled to the places, which our hands have not yet reached, to Kāśī, Benares and other places." The rise of the Gahaḍavālas by the end

of the eleventh century added political importance to
the cultural and religious fame of Varanasi. It has
already been noticed that though the Gahadavala kings
are referred to in Indian literature both as the 'Lord
of Kanyakubja and the Lord of Varanasi', to the Muslim
historians Jayascandra the penultimate king was generally
known as the "king of Banaras", and the inscriptional
evidence proves that it was the administrative centre of the
Gahadavala dominion. No doubt the city flourished in
pomp and splendour. The contemporary scholars-statesmen
Lakshmishara refers to about 350 religious shrines of
Puranic fame, to which the Gahadavala kings appears to
have made some addition. When, after the fall of the
Gahadavala, the Muslims occupied the city, they are
said to have destroyed more than a thousand temples at
Varanasi alone and according to Kamil ut-Tawarih, a
contemporary account carried away 1400 camel loads of
treasure.¹

Kusika or Kanyakubja, variously known as
Kusasthala, Gadhinagara, Nahodaya and Kanauj was another
sacred place of Epic and Puranic fame. Under Harsha
Śrīśrīṇīya the city became the capital of a North Indian
dominion. After his death, Kanyakubja became the bone of
contention among the great kings of northern and southern
India for about two centuries, till the final conquest of
the city by the Pratiharas. By the beginning of the eleventh
century Mahmūd of Ghazni twice sacked the city and
practically destroyed the Pratihara imperialism. Al-
-Biruni (c.1030 A.D.) described the city as a very large
one, most of which was in ruins and desolate, since the
capital was then transformed to Bārī. Possession of

¹. Elliot II, pp.250 ff. This account, however, omit the
name of Aṣni, where the Gahadavala treasure was kept and
which was looted by the Muslims before the capture of
Varanasi. Vide Taj ul-Ma'āthir, ibid, pp.216 ff.
Mahodaya, however, continued to be a great honour for which, once more, two generations of kings fought, till 1089 A.D., when Candradeva proclaimed himself as the lord of Kanyakubja. One of the Gahadavala inscriptions indicates that the city for some time became the capital of the dynasty (cf. "Kanyakubja Karadrēja rājadhānimindītam")

The city continued to be under the dynasty till the days of Jayacandra, who is well-known in Indian tradition and literature as the king of Kanyakubja. It is to be noted that Kanauj is not mentioned among the conquests of 1195-7 A.D. by the contemporary Muslim accounts.1

Besides these, other sacred places and centres of cultural activities, situated in the Gahadavala dominion and mentioned in the Gahadavala inscription, like, Prayaga (Kamauli grant of Jayacandra V.S.1228/1172 A.D.) Kousambi (B.A.S. Grant of Jayacandra V.S.1233/1177 A.D. of Ieochad inscription of V.S. 1245/1189 A.D.), Uttarakośala or Ayodhyā, Indrasthanīyaka, Śravasti (Set-Manet inscription of V.S.1186/1329 A.D.) and Gaya (Bodh-Gaya inscription of V.S.124X) have already been noted. Some other places mentioned in the inscriptions appear to have been well known towns of the period, but unfortunately, none of them can be definitely identified. These are Śrīmadapratihāra (Kamauli inscription V.S.1282), Viṣṇupura (Kamauli grant V.S.1162), Ajāyā-(or Jāyṛṣa-) nagara (Set Inhet insc. V.S.1176), Śrībārpratisthāna (B.A.S. grant V.S.1182) and Kṛṣyapālapura (Benares grant of V.S.1203). Local traditions and ruins indicate that during the later part of the Gahadavala period, Jeunjur and Zafarabad region formed an important administrative unit of the dominion. All these sacred places and important towns must

have attracted people from different parts of India and formed centres for exchange of thought and culture.

Evidence of some external contact, apparently of cultural import, is furnished by some literary works of Kāmtra and an inscription from South India. According to Kṛjaratragini Jayasimha of Kāmtra (c. 1129-49 A.D.) "made the ruler of Kṣenakujja and elsewhere, who were powerful owing to the possession of excellent territories, proud by his friendship"; Śrīkāṇṭhacarita of Lāṅka or Nāṅkāka, Jayasimha's Minister of Peace and War, indicates that this friendship was something more than a political one.¹ The 25th canto of this poem describes the assembly of scholars, which was convoked at the house of Lāṅkha's brother, Aḷāṅkāra (also a Minister of Jayasimha), where this work was read out; altogether thirty scholars, poets and officials are mentioned in this connection, and Govindacandra, the king of Kṣenakujja is said to have deputed one Suhela to attend this Kāśmirian assembly (cf."Anyeṣa Suhela-tena tato vandyata paṇḍītya, dūto Govindacandra-sya Kṣenakujja bhūbhujah"2).

A damaged Gehadevala inscription, with usual verses upto Candraśevara's reign, forms the part of another inscription of 41st regnal year (1110-11 A.D.) of Rulottunga at Gaṅgā-Koṇḍa-Colerapa, the ancient Cola capital;³ this find indicates that "some sort of relationship or connection existed between the Gehadevalas of Kṣenakujja and the Colas of Tūnjore". In the absence of definite evidence the exact nature of this contact is difficult to determine; but as there is no claim of political influence on any side, Tripāti's notion of "a friendly visit by a

¹ Śrīkāṇṭhacarita, canto 25, verse 102.
³ Desqupta L De, Hist. of Sans. Lit., pp.323 & 627-8.
Gahadavāla prince to the distant south seems probable.¹ This friendship probably continued in Govindacandra's reign period and the Set Ubha grant of V.S.1160 records his grant at the request of saugata-paribrājaka Vēṅakaśītaka of Cola country, saugata-paribrājaka Bhīṣmaśītaka of Utkala-ḍesa; both the persons at that time resided at the Ketavanta-prabhaśvara, where they doubtless came on a religious mission. This inscription is another proof of Gahadavāla orthodoxy which certainly fostered cultural contact of the Gahadavāla in dominion with other kingdoms.

¹. HI, p.313 Also of. "The increased emphasis on sun-worship in the Cola country in Lalottunga's reign may be due to the close association with the Gahadavālas, who were great worshippers of the Sun". (Miltiades L. Stili, Colae II, p.40).