CHAPTER-II

The Ideological and Institutional Background-I, Early Phase of the evolution of Brahmanical Monastic Institutions

The emergence of Brahmanical monasticism and spread of institutions which sustained it were in a large measure related to the dominant position which Brahmanism gradually came to wield from the Gupta period onward. It may therefore be in order to start this discussion with a statement regarding the general characteristics of the Gupta period.

II.1 The Gupta period, general features and the development of Brahmanism.

II.1.1 Pre-Gupta times: the imperial interregnum.

The period just before the rise of Gupta power was marked by a sharp contrast with both imperial periods: the ancient Maurya Empire and the Gupta Empire. The dismemberment of Maurya Empire activated a political and social transformation which happened amidst an interesting economical process: new Indian trade connections with Central and South-east Asia increased the level of richness in the highest social strata everywhere in north India. The absence of a great central power permitted the revival of local republics in Rajasthan and Punjab and elsewhere, and of small monarchical kingdoms in different parts of north India, all these areas specially favoured by the increase of commerce. Another area which had great advantage was the Deccan, where
emerged, on the political scene, the Sātavāhana kingdom, which favoured equally the Buddhists and the brāhmaṇas, setting up a tradition of religious patronage.

The institution of patronage spread to other regions and was one of the bases of Brahmanical monasticism of later period. During this "imperial interregnum" originated the land grants to the brāhmaṇas and the Buddhists. They received grants over revenues which increased the power of the religious beneficiaries creating semi-independent pockets of authority.

At the same time, autonomous cities controlled by powerful guilds, capable to issue coins,¹ arose in north India. Cities like Kauśāmbi, Tripurī, Māhiṣmatī, Vidiśā, Eran, Bhagilā, Vārāṇasī, have left enough material and remains to demonstrate their importance and prosperity. However, the tendency was varied and in certain areas controlled by emerging new kingdoms, like the Sātavāhanas or Kuṣāṇas, the local republics and free cities lost autonomy and were incorporated in a general administrative system. It is interesting to notice that in the Indo-Greek territories of north and north-west India and specially in the kingdom founded by Śakas and Kuṣāṇas, a different administrative pattern was followed. Probably, such political entities copied the 'satrapal system' from the Parthians (which was a creation of the Achaemenid Empire, continued in a feudal manner by the Parthians and renewed in full style by the Sassanians in the third century A.D). It is possible that some aspects of the idea
of sacred kingship — which was very developed since Gupta times onward — was brought to India from Persia by this way. In any case, a clear emphasis on the divinity of kingship started to be claimed and practised by the rulers at the beginning of the Christian era. They used to surrender their kingdoms to the patron-god and received back the blessing from the divinity. Such ideas were a response to a transformation of economic structures: land was appropriated by the state and considered a natural possession of the king. Therefore, land could be distributed, given or bestowed in accordance with the royal policy and the crown’s convenience. In summary, the sacral character of the kingship, the militarization of the civil administration, the much simpler taxation system than the imperial, the imposition of forced labour (viṣṭi) through royal agents were factors behind a new emerging system characterized by small kingdoms.

II.1.2 The Gupta Empire, new times and new styles

During the Gupta times less foreign trade than the period before was registered, but the economic expansion continued as suggested by many grants of land given to enterprising brāhmaṇas in uncultivated areas in Madhyadeśa and Deccan. It seems that the brāhmaṇas received many guaranties and gradually started to participate decisively in the bureaucracy. Nevertheless, brāhmaṇas composed the inscriptions and records where they promoted the image of Gupta royalty and praised their qualities. The brāhmaṇas experienced a gradual transformation and accepted
the new role as enterprising men, pioneers and conquerors of the jungle. In such a new scheme, the sacred books incorporated during this period the right to property by brāhmaṇas and accepted the performance of several kinds of productive works and professions by them. Brāhmaṇas were granted villages for ever and were entitled to all the taxes accruing to the benefactor without any responsibility of paying any portion to the grantor. These land grants were always given for the religious merit of the benefactor, but in practice meant a transfer of power to brāhmaṇas. Those beneficiaries exclusively bore the burden of administration in areas granted to them and exercised a salutary and stabilising influence over the rural communities by teaching them the duties of castes, prescribing penances, and presenting them the divine image of their princely benefactor.

Brāhmaṇas absorbed into their ideological framework asceticism as developed during the last centuries before the Christian era. An irreconcilable differentiation was established between the wandering ascetics (as it was explained in Chapter I) and the accepted institutionalized and promoted asceticism practised under the guidance of brahmacaryas in formal āśramas or other well-settled Brahmanic establishments. This new orientation for renunciatory values and spiritual aspirations was a result of Brahmanical ascendancy thanks to the support given by the Guptas.

It is frequently said that the Gupta Empire had a very
well-established administrative machinery. However, it was not so elaborate and organized as that of the Maurya Empire. During the Gupta Period a progressive process of "feudalism" was set in motion where religious bodies — as well as other institutions and groups — acquired autonomy, authority and power, enough to become legal forms of self-government. In the Gupta Empire coexisted several forms of administration. Some regions as Bengal, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh were under direct royal rule through the state bureaucracy, but the major part of the territory was held by feudatories like the Maitrakas of Valabhi, Vardhanas of Thāneser, Maukharis of Kanauj, various local rulers of eastern and western Malwa, etc. The administration in the countryside was through the village organization, more free and independent, following the tendency already coming from the period before. The urban administration was marked by guilds and civil corporative bodies which enjoyed considerable autonomy and economic power. However, the issue of coins apparently was restricted only to the reigning houses. Guilds and corporations issued seals to enforce their authority, as it is the case with the seals of Vaiśālī. Guilds took important part in the administration of their towns. Ram Sharan Sharma7 opines that a large part of the Gupta Empire was managed through feudal structures which did not necessitate the creation of a very large administrative apparatus. The observation would be valid under the consideration that villages assumed more authority making
easier the task of the centre, at the same time in towns, corporations were playing a leading role.

II.1.3 The Gupta kings and sacred kingship:

The king was the axis of the empire, his power and influence extending over the whole territory and people. Apparently, the Gupta kings adopted the concept of the divinity of kingship. Indian political thought of the time believed in it. Probably, an important factor making such a concept necessary was the pressure of the political conditions of the time, which demanded a strong, consolidated and widespread political dominion. The concept of the divinity of kings, however, does not necessarily imply the existence of an absolutely authoritarian, universal and well-consolidated state. The king's appearance as the incarnation of dharma and Vishnu could be regarded as part of the royal propaganda for consolidating a not yet absolute state. The Gupta kings were paramount sovereigns with enormous power, but nevertheless restrained by the existence of regional autonomys and traditional corporate units which maintained a state of balance. The extent of power enjoyed by the regional kings and the autonomous corporate units depended on their own prestige, fame, wealth, religious piety and proximity to the imperial capital. In such a relationship the religious institutions — specifically the monastic ones — had an important role.
II.1.4 The administrative system of the Guptas and the beginning of decentralized state: The role of religious institutions in such distribution of power.

The administrative apparatus of the Guptas was vertical though not exactly centralized. The head of the state obviously was the king, assisted by his council of ministers. For dealing with specific matters, various other bodies existed at different levels.

The administrative division continued in the pattern of traditional definition of political units and sub-units like deśas, bhuktis and viṣayas. Deśas like Saurashtra, Madhyadeśa and Kāśāla were almost like provinces which, if they were under direct control of the Guptas, were probably governed by members of the royal household. But there are instances, as in Gujarat, where officials were appointed to govern the region or local rulers were appointed with independent charge. For example, the Maitraka dynasty emerged out of the practice of posting Bhatakā as special governor with wide powers and independent charge from the Guptas. 11

Bhuktis were local sub-units governed by uparikas who, in some cases in a later period assumed the title of mahārāja. Viṣayas were smaller political units administered by āyuktaka (or āyukta) officials.
The imperial bureaucracy and the body of representatives ruled the towns and villages in cooperation. This meant partial surrender of the traditional autonomy of the village community to imperial control. The tension thus caused between the old customs and the new imperial orders led to the break-up of the empire, for ultimately the local autonomous elements prevailed over the imperial order.12

The Gupta Empire also witnessed the evolution of land proprietorship. Land, in ancient India, was originally common property. The king had the right to control, to intervene and to regulate its ownership not as the "universal owner" but as the head of the administrative system. That was why the land donated by kings — in property — was normally uncultivated fields and wastelands. Then, as reported by Yuan Chwang,13 the king used to give land to respectable persons and religious institutions like Brahmanical maṭhas. Such institutions often gradually came to possess large patrimonies and entailed a form of feudal relations between different levels of society.14 This combination of spiritual power, religious prestige and dominion over land in these religious institutions slowly acquired the form of a local government at the same time as the central imperial power decreased. That was another sign of transformation to early medieval times in north India.

Land revenues were the principal source of income of the
state in the Gupta Empire. The efficient system of administration ensured that the royal treasury received regular funds.\textsuperscript{10} The availability of enormous funds made possible state largesses for the arts and belles lettres, creating an atmosphere conducive to the "renaissance of the Brahmancial-Sanskrit culture."\textsuperscript{10}

The generous bounty of the Gupta kings was always oriented to the Brahmancial orthodoxy. Their continuous sponsorship of brāhmaṇas was reflected in the brāhmaṇas' geographical expansion and in their re-emergence as social leaders.\textsuperscript{17} The intellectual counsellors of the Guptas — brāhmaṇas in most cases — considered the maintenance of the caturvarṇāsramadharma as the key for a well-adjusted social balance. In such a scheme the brāhmaṇas, being the most important element, could bring about acceptance of and respect for the Brahmancial scheme of social order.\textsuperscript{18}

The Gupta period also witnessed the beginning of urban decay. Fa-hien reported\textsuperscript{19} that the level of prosperity of cities in north India was quite high. Fa-hien's commentaries are about Udyāna, Gandhāra, Takṣasila (Taxila), Puruṣapura (Peshawar), Nagāra, Pohnā, Bhida, Mathurā, Saṅkāśya, Kānyakubja (Kanauj), Sha-che, Kośala, Śrāvasti, Kapilavastu, Vaiśālī, Pāṭaliputra, Rājagṛha, Gayā and Vārāṇasī. Pāṭaliputra, Ayōdhyā, Vaiśālī and many such cities were great centres full of vitality. But though urban prosperity reached its peak during the Gupta period, it also saw the beginning of its decline.\textsuperscript{20}
The Guptas favoured and encouraged industrial works and guilds, consonant with a tendency to return to small compact administrative units. The great city, with its huge market, was a phenomenon of the past. Any big cities existing during the Gupta times were only the traditional ones, and no major new cities were built during this period. The Gupta period was the highest point of a curve. Immediately after them started a progressive change (we shall call it decadence) in which city life lost its importance. In Punjab, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh the number of urban centres declined sharply while in other areas they ceased to exist. The problem was general all over India. In Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Punjab, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Bengal, Orissa and Tamil Nadu, too, 'de-urbanization' was set in motion.

Even so, guilds activities are quite in evidence in the Gupta period and the Guptas gave concessions to guilds. As R.C. Majumdar demonstrated, public life in ancient India was based on these corporate institutions. The guilds prospered under the Guptas because they received respect, support and encouragement. The tremendous progress of these institutions permitted them to organize complex offices and trade links, with their own seals and even coins. Indian guilds (śrenīs, gaṇas, pūgas) consisted of a confederation of persons with common professional interests. They had their own rules and a very strong spirit of unity and solidarity, inner freedom and great mobility. There were cases of
emigrations of guilds looking for better conditions. The Mandasor Inscription speaks about the guild of silk weavers which migrated from Lāṭatā-Dasapura and took to various other activities such as archery, religion, astrology and asceticism without breaking their initial association with the guild. The power and influence of guilds can be appreciated in a document coming from Vidarbha. It is the Nagardhan Inscription, dated in A.D.573 and discovered in the village of Nagardhan, three miles south of Ramtek, Ramtek tahsil, Nagpur district, M.P. The inscription records a request made by the president (sthāvira) in the name of the twelve members of the executive committee (pramukhas) of a local corporation of elephant drivers (mahāmātragaṇa) to the local bhava Nannarāja, ruling from Nandivardhana (modern Nandardhan), who was feudatory of his brother, the bhaṭṭaraka pādānudhyāta Svāmirāja. This gana requested to the local lord for certain donations to a group of brāhmaṇas because corporations did not have authority to make grant of land but enough power to move authorities to do it. The prestige of this guild is demonstrated by the use of their own seal which was affixed to the copper plates. Sreṇīs or guilds on some occasions had their own army (sreṇī-bala) which even kings were not to use for their conquests. Members (sreṣṭhin) of powerful guilds had frequently enough economical power to undertake on their own important works or making endowments.

The circulation of money was widespread in the Gupta
Empire. Apparently the coinage of the Guptas was abundant and Gupta money was used throughout the empire. Their coins well reflect the sovereignty of the Guptas as well as the Sanskrit-Vedic renaissance. The Guptas used gold coinage but several crises adversely affected the state's capacity to maintain the standards. One reason was the less than adequate availability of gold and silver. In spite of the incentives given to mining activities, the production of these metals was insufficient.

The use of money and the extensive administration permitted the Guptas to undertake public works in different parts of the empire. Irrigation works were the most important task, followed by construction of roads and bridges and patronization of religious constructions.

The integration of territories over a considerably long span of time, despite the setbacks caused by Huna invasions at a later stage, was achieved at a very high cost. At all times a big army had to be mobilized, trained and maintained. In spite of the "visiting" system prevalent in ancient India (forcing villages to feed a visiting army) any movement of the army meant high expenditure. A highly battle-worthy army idling in peace, without undertaking important campaigns which would have kept the men battle-trained and given booty for the men and for the state ate into the state coffers.
The overstretched monetary system, the extensive bureaucratic administration and the maintenance of a big army and the various other activities that the state undertook eroded its financial capacity. The weakening state system witnessed:

- the posting of officials as small landlords and the emergence of complex feudal relations;
- the reinforcement of the custom of giving land grants as payment or reward with administrative responsibilities;  
- the growing autonomy of villages and towns led by their local corporations.

Amidst these conditions the brāhmaṇas started to acquire control over almost all sources of revenue (over pasturage, hides, mines, salt production, forced labour and over all hidden treasures and deposits). Brāhmaṇas became powerful administrators and in several cases direct feudatories. Such material power gave a strong base to their unquestionable spiritual authority, resulting in the "Brahmanical renaissance". In such a context were developed new Brahmanical institutions like Brahmanical monasteries.

The clash with the Hūṇas was probably the last episode of a bigger drama. The growth of the power of feudatories, such as that of Yāsōdharmān and others, as well as of hereditary officials resulted in numerous nuclei of minor royalty. Both these phenomena --- the exacting war with the Hūṇa invaders, which
drained the scarce last resources of the state, and the inner
cracks of authority — completed the wreck of the debilitated empire. After Skanda Gupta’s death (A.D. 467) the empire looked
shabby and in these troubled waters hereditary governors (such as
the Maitrakas of Valabhi) arose as independent kings, and the
flow of taxes and resources from the richer provinces ceased. The
extinction of the Gupta Empire was hastened during the reign of
the last two Guptas: Kumāra and Viṣṇu (around A.D. 535 and 570)
who ruled more like local princes unlike their predecessors.37

II.2 The historical transformation: the post-Gupta period:

A powerful monarchy, the Gupta Empire, successfully mounted
an efficient administration. It was not, however, a universal
state as was the Roman Empire.38 The only empire in the real
sense in ancient India was perhaps the Maurya, which was followed
by such large state structures as the Kuśāna and the Sātavāhana
kingdoms. The Gupta administration directly inherited that
tradition of centralization without being able to achieve it
uniformly throughout the empire.

In the social sphere, during the Gupta and post-Gupta
periods, the varṇa system fast expanded horizontally;39 its
prominent place in all the Dharmaśāstra literature40 reveals the
pivotal role of the concept which at least theoretically defined
the social order.

The varṇa system was not a rigid structure. Its
adaptability was so extraordinary that it was like the social skeleton of Indian society, capable of absorbing various shocks or crises that confronted it. In that structure, each varṇa was expected to take charge of its responsibilities, and the structure also defined relations between different varṇas. The brāhmaṇas had the duty of maintaining the purity of the social body. They had to be the kind of model that the Silimpur Stone Inscription of the tenth century, speaks about. The brāhmaṇas exercised spiritual power while the ruling kṣatriyas had the power of action which they exercised through the bureaucracy. Functions and attributes of brāhmaṇas and kṣatriyas were sanctioned by the sacred texts, since the Samhitās onwards. In the first texts kṣatriyas were considered as invested of authority coming from dharma which enable them to rule, but also brāhmaṇas claimed be surrounded by an aura of authority emanating from their expertise in sacred texts and capacity of interpretation of dharma. However, always it was understood that brāhmaṇas and kṣatriyas had equal share in the implementation of dharma. Their responsibility and destiny consisted in staying together. Kṣatriyas were the protectors of people and brāhmaṇas protectors of state. Brāhmaṇas never considered themselves as under or over the king, but in another category, complementary, necessary, they were who bestowed riches, power, fruits, success to king and kingdom.

The relation between the kṣatriyas and the brāhmaṇas was,
in general, of mutual dependency. If the majesty, grandeur supremacy of the kings, was considered as flowing from the nature of his (sacred) function of protecting the society it was because the brāhmaṇas were loyal in proclaiming the unquestionable supremacy of kings. The brāhmaṇas had no problem in producing an elaborate doctrine in favour of king’s supreme and all comprehensive power. However, the same brāhmaṇas were cautious in maintaining their autonomy and defining their special sphere of action. Brāhmaṇas acknowledged king’s supreme authority in the mutual understanding of such separation and differences. Nevertheless, in spite of the mutual dependences, the brāhmaṇas and the kṣatriyas experienced many moments of tension, which activated processes of change but never developed as a break. That would have been against the interest of each sector.⁴⁹ The two high castes had, thus, a contractual relation of mutual benefit and preservation of universal order. The absolute universe in which both “twice-born” groups operated was the field of dharma.⁵⁰ If the kṣatriyas (the "military class" of Kosambi)⁵¹ had the right of administering riches, they also had the duty to ensure an equitable distribution. The king symbolized in his person the integral power of the state. The capital was its centre and royal orders its manifestation. The right to collect revenues was an expression of the royal power, bringing wealth to the capital for maintenance of the state. Revenue collection and bestowal of largesse produced mutual legitimization: the king
protected his subjects dispensing grants, donations, exemptions etc., according to merits or depending on the social scale, and the subjects supported the authority according to their capacity. The alliance of the kingly order with the brāhmaṇas was direct, in that they helped to sustain ideologically the whole system. The duty of subaltern kṣatriyas was to send taxes to the capital and of the vaiśya people to pay a fixed sum as taxes or contributions. The responsibility to society of the others, placed at the bottom of the Brahmanical social order, consisted in performing menial tasks. Not for them were ethical or moral disciplines. On account of their activities (butchers, fishermen, collectors of corpses, etc.), their behaviour, their relaxed way of life and their diet they were segregated and considered polluted. They were considered so because they could alter the social order.

Outside of society were the aboriginal tribes living in the hills and forests, who maintained their primitive culture, and the slaves who were considered punished people (the gravest sins against the caturvarṇāsramadharma were punished by degrading the person to the condition of a slave).

Hiuen-Tsang (or Yuan Chwang), commenting on Indian society has praised it as a harmonious unit where everyone did his duty without interfering in the life of the others. The brāhmaṇas and the kṣatriyas led a simple life, zealous for purity and for
accomplishing religious duties. However, Fa-Hien as well as Huen-Tsang when commenting about Indian society, both refer to the existence of outcastes and segregated people. Fa-Hien, at the time of describing the kingdom of Mathurā, mentioned the caṇḍālas, who eat garlic and onion, drink wine and are considered evil people. These caṇḍālas — follows Fa-Hien — dwell apart from others; if they enter a town or market, they sound a piece or wood in order to separate themselves; then men, knowing who they are, avoid coming in contact with them. Caṇḍālas were the only ones who hunt and sell flesh. Huen-Tsang when visiting the court of the king of Takṣaśilā (Taxila) reported how a caṇḍāla servant was ordered to pluck out the eyes of the king's son by the perverse step-mother of that prince. The observation of the Chinese traveller confirms the supposition about repugnant and nasty works being entrusted to the caṇḍālas. Travellers of the time to India have spoken of the high standard and sophistication of life, which is also reflected in the literature of the classical age. Vātsyāyana's Kāmasūtra often refers to the relaxed, joyful, cheerful life of the towns' people. If at all a slow process of urban decadence was taking place as R.S. Sharma has attempted to demonstrate using mostly archaeological proofs — the people of the time apparently did not have an inkling of it. To go by the literary and epigraphical evidence, during the Gupta and post-Gupta periods a large number of towns existed enjoying wealth and prosperity. If so,
the Gupta culture was an elegant and refined urban culture and not a chaotic decadence.

A transformation took place in early medieval times, however, restructuring the entire society. A new equation developed among the varṇas, some of its elements having a feudal character.\(^1\) The brāhmaṇas, having received land grants, went on to have dominion over the land, with the vaiśyas or sūdras labouring on it. The brāhmaṇas possessed culture. They were fully aware of their responsibility as conservators of traditions and customs, and of a higher responsibility: the protection of Brahmanical orthodoxy. Possession of land in addition to these made them masters of society. They related with their proteges more as sponsors rather than as subjects. In the Dharmasūtras, the relation between the brāhmaṇas and the sūdras is laid down carefully. The sūdras appear to have been relegated to a position of abject humiliation. They did not have privileges of any kind and their status was of service and work.\(^2\) Their duty consisted in rendering all types of services to higher varṇas. With this in view, the Manusmṛti \(^3\) praised meekness, submission and simplicity of mind as virtues par excellence in the sūdras. The vaiśyas and sūdras were responsible for producing riches. The sūdras had the responsibility of being fertile and fecund like earth. Usually they were equated to women of all varṇas. Sūdras were considered something like fertility itself.\(^4\) They had to have large families in order to have many working hands, many
cattle and abundant crops. For this, they had to be well-settled in one place and avoid unnecessary wandering which break the continuity and alterate their duty of "fertility".

The cooperation of the peasants in improving agriculture indicates tacit acceptance of the social scheme. If they did not, an economic crisis would have been the result, leading to a possible revolt or discontent. The fact that such a thing did not occur makes the issue of whether or not serfdom existed during the period somewhat hypothetical. Cooperative social service was apparently given in special circumstances, in relation to religious works or community works. The solidarity of personal service to confront common problems was perhaps regulated by the local authority.

In consisting whether the post-Gupta society had elements of feudalism, the question arises as to whether the land donations received by the brāhmaṇas and religious institutions could be understood as parts of an articulated feudal system. Donations/grants were given (a) to officials, and (b) to brāhmaṇas or religious institutions (not necessarily Brahmanical).

Donations to officials had some similarity with European feudalism. Officials received a share of authority and military command. In return, they were committed to giving protection to the subjects and assisting the king with equipped troops whom
they fed and maintained on their own. They could levy taxes in their domain for these necessities, but were duty-bound to send their sovereign's share to the royal treasure. There was a complex hierarchical system among these feudatories, a complicated nomenclature setting out their rank.

Both the sovereign and his feudatories bestowed largesses on brāhmaṇs and religious institutions. The paramount sovereign was supposed to perform magnificent works that would benefit the whole world — in line with the claim of some early medieval kings of being universal sovereign. Under the sovereign, the mahārājas and various categories of rulers and officials also undertook religious works but of lesser grandeur. At different levels of the feudatories, the mahāsāmantas, the sāmantas, the rāṇakas and others endeavoured to carry out pious works in proportion to their capacity. This relation between the level of the title and level of religious works is reflected in the Banda Plates of Rāṇaka Paracakrāśalya, grandson of the mahāmanaḍa-lēśvara mahāmāṇḍalika Rāṇaka Cāmaravigraha, dated in A.D.1130. The higher the status of a feudatory, the bigger were the works he attempted. It was here that a balance was sought to be snuck between power, resources, territorial dominion and the nature and range of the religious benefactions. Such a relationship had its theoretical grounding in the context of what would be called "Brahmanical feudalism". This hypothesis could be substantiated by finding out whether the density of temples and monasteries in
certain important settlements corresponded to the political importance of such settlements. As an example, it can be mentioned that the following settlements were always praised as full of temples and monasteries, where the smell of incense and the recitations of brāhmaṇas performing ceremonies saturated the atmosphere: Kālañjara (Kalingar), Kūläṅca, Kānyakubja (Kanauj), Prayāga (Allahabad), in Uttaradeśa; Māṇḍavyapura (Mandor), Āghāṭapura (Ahara), Bhōjapura (Bhojpur), Citrakūṭa (Chittorgarh), Dhārā (Dhar), Maṇḍapadurgā (Maṇḍū), in Madhyadeśa and Rajasthan; Raipura, Ratnapura (Ratanpur), Tummāna, Sarvatōvadra (Kunker), Pṛṇapura or Nārayanpal, Kuruspal, etc., in the eastern part of Madhyadeśa; Vāṅjulvaka, Vōrttanōka, Bolangir, Śrīpura, Siṃhapura, Ėkāmra (Bhubanesvar), Suvaṇnapura, Śvētaka, in Orissa; Krimilā and Śrāvasti in the eastern part of Uttaradeśa; Daṅka in Assam; etc. (vide, infra, Map section).

Therefore, the donations to religious persons or institutions can be arranged under the following categories:

1. Grants made by a sovereign to an important group of brāhmaṇas.
2. Donation by a sovereign to an individual brāhmaṇa in recognition and reward of his merits.
3. Donation by a sovereign to a group of ascetics.
4. Donation of land by a feudatory to brāhmaṇas, temples, monasteries or other religious institutions.
5. Donation by brāhmaṇas having rights in property to other religious institutions.

6. Donations by independent cooperations having rights in property to religious institutions.

Seeing this categorization a question arises: what was the necessity of delegating power to religious persons and institutions? The application of the principle of divide et impera is much more clear in this regard to political feudatories than to "religious feudatories". The number of donations to brāhmaṇas is so large that it is not clear whether the phenomenon of "religious feudatory" was an unintended result of the rulers, benevolence or was a deliberate administrative tactic of an alliance between the throne and the altar, between the ruling authoritarian power and the spiritual prestige.⁶⁶

These benefactions, which started appearing around the first century A.D., became an established convention and gradually spread throughout the subcontinent. The phenomenon was based on the universal Purānic doctrine — itself the universal religion in early medieval times.⁷⁷ That ideology is centred on the institution of caturvarṇāśrama-dharma. The kings, as controllers of society (Viṣṇu or Siva incarnated), had the responsibility to protect the caturvarṇadharma.⁷⁸ Since the brāhmaṇas had to devote themselves to the study of the Vedas, Śāstras, etc. and to religious duties and ceremonies, their
material sustenance had to be provided by the king. The agrahāra was the material expression of that requirement, the gradual spread of which transformed the brāhmaṇas into "divine landlords".

Ultimately, these developments were related to the rituals which were the preserve of the brāhmaṇas and which were to lead on to the formation of the corpus of sacred knowledge which the brāhmaṇas alone were to transmit.

In the first millennium B.C., as commented by Romila Thapar, this was the framework of the socio-political and economic life. In the Dharmaśāstras this was codified by fixing the ideal life of the brāhmaṇas as teachers of the Vedas (adhyāpana), sacrifices (yajana) and recipients of gifts as payment (pratigraha). The nature of donations to the brāhmaṇas and the express instructions conditional on those donations — to maintain the Vedic tradition, teaching and ceremonies — attest to this statement. The Gupta renaissance also prompted other contemporary dynasties to act likewise. Thus Dharasena II, the Maitraka king ruling from Valabhi over some portions of Gujarat gifted land to two brāhmaṇas with full charge of land and taxes plus other privileges for the performance of the rites of the five great sacrifices: bali, caru, vaisvadēva, agnihotra and atithi. Many years later (A.D.1026), in a nearby region we have a similar example of a donation made by the
Silahara mahamanadelvesvara Chittaraja (i.e. a feudatory king) of a land which he purchased with the precise purpose of gifting it to a brahmana, by name Amadevaiya, in order to maintain the continued performance of "the usual six duties of a brahmana and the rites of bali, caru, vaisvadeva and agnihotra." A century later, there is another similar donation given by King Bhoka II of the same dynasty, to the brahmana Govinda Bhattavardhana described as dharmadhirkin. The duties of that dharmadhirkin specified in the charter are: the performance of ista (religious rites), purta (charitable works), prayaascitta (expiating rites), jyotiqa (practising astrology), puranias, nyayadhisa-karman (adjudication of suits) and rastra-dharma-niriksha (scrutiny of the state religion).

Religious ceremonies became much shorter in the early medieval times than those in the ancient ages. This enabled individual brahmanas to perform the entire ceremony. This explains also small groups of them and the attention they could spare for economic activities. This last phenomenon was fully consonant with the socio-political and religious transformation that took place during the period. Often, these small groups of brahmanas were dispersed through the country-side, managing the affairs of their landed possessions. The number of donations to brahmanas (vide infra, p.91 ff.) suggests that large groups of brahmanas living together were unusual. There are exceptional cases like:
The gift of a village to forty four brāhmaṇas made by Śīlāditya I (alias Dharmāditya), belonging to the royal family founded by Bhatārka, dated in A.D. 605;¹⁰⁵

- the provision made by Tivaradēva of Kōśala, in c.A.D.750, to feed daily thirty brāhmaṇas who lived in the locality;¹⁰⁶

- the grant of a village to three hundred brāhmaṇas, made by Devendravarman, in A.D.1077;¹⁰⁷

- the grant consisting of the right of territorial administration of the pattalā of Kaṭhēhalī given to a body of five hundred brāhmaṇas, by Candradēva of Kānyakubja (Kanauj) in A.D.1093;¹⁰⁸

- the donation of a village to a group of thirty-two brāhmaṇas who divided it in shares (vaṇṭakas), made by Dēvapāla of Malava, in c.A.D.1200;¹⁰⁹

- the donation of 108 nivartanas of land to be shared among sixty-eight brāhmaṇas, some temples and religious institutions, made by a feudatory chief who paid tribute to the Yādava King Śimhana, in c.A.D.1247.¹¹⁰ Certainly, the more common cases were donations to one, or two, or four brāhmaṇas, who received the resources from the areas of land given for ever.

Another reason for the general pattern of the movement of the brāhmaṇas in small groups was that Vedic ceremonies whose clients used to be kings and noblemen were infrequent. The sole
declaration of some kings of the period: "having (them) recuperated the Vedic ceremonies to their old splendour" suggest this. Early medieval kings adopted the new formulas, acclaimed by the Purāṇas as the most effective ways of worshipping the gods in Kali Yuga and for obtaining religious merits, like protection of temples and brāhmaṇas, support of maṭhas and ascetics who performed "inner sacrifices" and undertaking pilgrimages to tīrthas. The early medieval Brahmanism did not require large concentrations of brāhmaṇas to perform long sacrifices. This statement would be reinforced going through the work of Rajendra Nath Sharma who studied the brāhmaṇas in ancient India until the post-Maurya period. The exercise would be interesting and offer a contrast with the stage at early medieval period because as the institutions of the brāhmaṇas did not change essentially whether adapted to new conditions, sometimes dramatically. That was the concrete case of agrahāras and brahmadeyas, two types of brāhmaṇa settlements, which originally obeyed to economic circumstances and political contingencies but which transformed in a new form of livelihood for brāhmaṇas creating a new context for development of the culture.

A new type of Brahmanic ceremony also made its appearance during this period and carved out a niche for itself in the matrix of religion and politics. This was the sacred work performed by the brahmacārins and ascetics living in temples or monasteries. They also had their slot in the "doctrine of
donations" — it is this last point that is the object of study of the next chapters.

Śilāhāra King Chittarājadēva's grant¹¹³ is an excellent example of the "doctrine of donation" of early medieval times. This king, who ruled over the northern Kōṅkan and is called in the charter as Tagarapura Paramēśvara, was well off economically since he controlled the trade routes of Maharashṭra and Broach. In spite of the prosperity of his kingdom, he proclaimed that "all boons such as power, youth, health and riches are ephemeral things. Only pious works are permanent and bring true life. The three worlds (the permanent values) are given by Visnu to whom give gold, lards, cows (to brāhmaṇas); only religious works are worthy of accumulation" (i.e., in spite that he, like kṣatriya, represented the prosperity and lived surrounded by the symbols of the opulence, this king here is advocating for a moderate and austere life: be rich — because that is natural for kings — but spending with largesse in religious works, giving unselfishly to gods and brāhmaṇas). Wherefore, Chittarājadēva continues with his recommendation saying that the land which is possessed by a king might be possessed by other kings in future, but the land that he donated is inalienable. He charged future kings to recognize his grant. By this direct donation the king thus charged his feudatories to accept and recognize the similar status of the donee institution. The group of brāhmaṇas or an agraḥāra or maṭha receiving the king's patronage thus virtually
acquired the status of other feudatories.

The practical result of such wide distribution of economic resources made by the kings permitted efficient management of large territories with agricultural activities, forests and wild areas. The wide dispersal of brāhmaṇas into tribal areas also meant the extension of the Brahmanical sphere of influence and Brahmanical ideology. The territorial spread of the brāhmaṇas caused the propagation of technological advances and acculturation of areas which initially lay outside the spheres of Brahmanical culture.

The Brahmanical institutions like monasteries, temples and agrahāras were agents of change and development wherever they went. The introduction of new seeds and methods of food production boosted the economic life of large and isolated areas in eastern, central and central-southern India.

The movement of brāhmaṇas was strong in areas like eastern Bengal where Aryanization started later than in the Ganga basin. An early proof of that trend is the inscription dated A.D.554 of Mahārāja Bhūtāvaraman who belonged to the Varman dynasty, masters of the Brahmaputra Valley. In the plate it is said that Bhūtāvarman’s minister Viṣavamātya Āryaśaṅkhaṇa founded an āśrama for ascetic brāhmaṇas on the Badagaṅgā river near the Mahāmāya temple.
The imperial aspirations of Bhāskaravarman (A.D.560-650) who consolidated Kāmarūpa, Samatā and Ḍavāka kingdoms required spiritual support and sacred sanction. There are proofs of massive emigrations of brahmāṇas from neighbouring areas toward Kāmarūpa where the Brahmanical religion was protected by the Varmanas. Yuan Chüang\textsuperscript{116} describes Bhāskaravarman as a brahmāṇa. There was no Buddhism in his kingdom. "All the neighbouring kingdoms of Kāmarūpa were full of stūpas but in Kāmarūpa the people only worshipped the devas. They have various hundred of deva temples of several systems and myriads of professed adherents. And brahmāṇas from far countries come to study under the protection of this pious king." Bāṇabhaṭṭa’s Harṣacarita also speaks about Bhāskaravarman as "a devotee solely of Śiva".\textsuperscript{116} In his Nidhanpur Copper Plates, however, he praises dharma, one of the three Buddhist jewels.\textsuperscript{117} Bhāskaravarman was probably a tolerant and eclectic king but he definitely supported the immigration of brahmāṇas and made them generous grants. He renewed a grant, originally made by his great-great grandfather to a group of 119 brahmāṇas.\textsuperscript{118} The locality of the grant --- Mayūraśālmalī --- may have been near Karaṇa-Suvarga.

Many inscriptions of the period speak of the migration of brahmāṇas. The Gaonri Copper Plates\textsuperscript{117} (A.D.930-986) refer to the arrival of brahmāṇas from different countries to settle in Malwa, where the Paramāras were great benefactors of Brahmanism. Many brahmāṇas came from Bengal where the study of the Vedas was
flourishing. Others came from elsewhere in Madhyadeśa. The Kadambapadraka Grant of Naravarman (1110 A.D) records the grant made to a brāhmaṇa coming from Śrīṅgāpura (M.P.).¹²⁰ The Khonamukh Plates of Dharmapāla of Prāgjyotiṣa,¹²¹ dated between eleventh and twelveth century A.D., record a grant of land to brāhmaṇa from Madhyadeśa who settled in Assam.

This movement of brāhmaṇas in early medieval times, according to Suvira Jaiswal,¹²² was on account of the non-availability of learned brāhmaṇas in some remote areas or in new kingdoms. Their kings invited brāhmaṇas from centres of Vedic learning like Kānyakubja or Mithilā to elevate the spiritual level of their countries. Around this time, a stratification was also taking place in the brāhmaṇa varṇa according to their scholarship, economic power and political influence. The brāhmaṇa/kṣatriya alliance was more evident among Rajput clans of dubious origins who needed sacred genealogies, or in the eastern countries, where the kings needed to build up a sacred history to legitimate their political power. The brāhmaṇas reciprocated the generosity of their political sponsors in several ways: as an intellectual group, as counsellors, as priests sanctifying their rule and in a very practical way, mixing in marriages with the kṣatriyas.

11.3 Categories of grants to Brāhmaṇas:

Making grants to brāhmaṇas and religious institutions was an integral part of early medieval ideology and the act forged
the relationship between the mundane and the spiritual worlds. Grants were varied and they emanated from different levels of society.123

Since the grants are vital for understanding the complementarity between the secular and the religions in ancient India, the following is offered as samples of grants which were made in different parts of India and which would establish the grants almost as a pan-Indian pattern.

The following examples have been arranged under the six categories already marked out in page . Their arrangement correspond to the category-wise division, but since the samples are chosen from a very large number of grants, they do not always present a continuous chronological or regional order.

1. Direct grants by kings to a group of brāhmaṇas:

1.1 Pravarasena II of the Vākāṭaka dynasty, which was of Brahmanical origin, made a land grant to a group of brāhmaṇas living together in a village.124 The grant was free of all taxes and obligations in perpetuity. This was around A.D.450.

1.2 In south Karnataka, the second oldest inscription of the Gaṅgas, speaks of the direct grant made by King Sāmantavarman to four brāhmaṇa students of Vājasaneyī śākhā in A.D.558.125

1.3 Anantavarman of Kaliṅga in the sixth century A.D. gifted
village Tontāpara as a tax-free agrahāra to a group of eight brāhmaṇas who already were in possession of that village and paid taxes for it.\textsuperscript{126}

1.4 Vikramāditya II in A.D. 741 granted a village to various brāhmaṇas "well-versed in the Vedas and Vedāṅgas"\textsuperscript{127} with half of the government dues exempted.

1.5 The Raṣṭrakūṭa King Amōghavarga Prthvīvallabha made a grant of a village in Śaka 793 to four brāhmaṇas coming from Karahada district. The purpose was to maintain the bali, caru, vaiśvadēvā, agnihotra and atithitarpaṇa sacrifices.\textsuperscript{128}

1.6 Bhōjadēva in A.D. 836 granted an agrahāra in Udumbara viṣaya, Kālānjara maṇḍala, Kānyakubja bhukti to a family of brāhmaṇas descending from a certain Bhaṭṭakācārya Svāmin. The gift consisted in the usufruct for ever of the total of incomes, "exclusive of all that already granted for local temples and other brāhmaṇas".\textsuperscript{129}

1.7 The Śilāhāra Mummuṇirāja made a grant in A.D. 1049 consisting of some villages and lands to fourteen brāhmaṇas who hailed from different places. The grant was provided for the observance by the brāhmaṇas of their religious duties such as sacrificing for themselves and for others, the study and teaching of the sacred texts, the performance of the pāñcamahāyajñas and the maintenance of their families.\textsuperscript{130}
1.8 Devendraavarman, king of Kalinga, in A.D. 1077 made a grant to a group of 300 brahmāṇas in village Kogila (present-day Kodiss, Bobbili taluk, Andhra Pradesh).\textsuperscript{131}

1.9 Candradēva of Kanauj made a grant in A.D. 1093\textsuperscript{132} to a body of 500 brahmāṇas who were associated with some temples. The gift consisted of a group of villages in the Vārāṇasi visaya with full exemption of taxes on land, mines and forest.

1.10 Mahākumāra Haricandra of the Paramāras of Malwa family made a grant in A.D. 1157\textsuperscript{133} consisting of a village (near the present-day Vidisha district, Madhya Pradesh) which was divided into sixteen shares and given to nineteen brahmāṇas.

1.11 Rājarāja III (1198-1221) of the Eastern Gaṅgas made a grant in A.D. 1198-99\textsuperscript{134} to a group of seventy-five brahmāṇas consisting of village Kōrada (in present-day Cuttack, Orissa).

1.12 Another donation in Orissa is that by Anangabhima III (1211-1230), Rājarāja’s successor, and consisting of a number of grants in favour of certain brahmāṇas. The charter dates c.A.D. 1230.\textsuperscript{135}

1.13 The Paramāra King Dēvapāla of Malwa made a grant in A.D. 1225\textsuperscript{136} to thirty-two brahmāṇas. The gift consisted of land over which these brahmāṇas enjoyed "the customary share of the produce and money-rent." The villages granted
were divided into 325 vanṭakas (portions) and distributed among the brāhmaṇas in keeping with their hierarchy.

1.14 The Yādava King Mahādeva in A.D. 1261, on the occasion of his coronation, donated land to fifty-two brāhmaṇas with the right on aṣṭa-bhoga (the enjoyment of eight kinds of taxes). The land was situated in the present day Kalegaon, Maharashtra.¹³⁷

2. Donations by kings to individual brāhmaṇas in recognition of their scholarship, sanctity, purity or personal qualities. The brāhmaṇa thus favoured, sometimes became a kind of spiritual landlord both because of his right to receive taxes and also because of his capacity to teach the Brahmanical knowledge or to influence the villagers. Being generally very learned the ethical principle of these brāhmaṇas must have affected village life in some way. Donations to intellectual brāhmaṇas who assisted the kings and were awarded for their services are also included in this classification.¹³⁸

2.1 The Vākātaka King Pravarasēṇa II,¹³⁹ during the twenty-fifth year of his reign,¹⁴⁰ made a grant of 400 nivarttanas of land in village Velusuka, to a brāhmaṇa versed in two Vedas.

2.2 The Kaṭaccūri King Śaṅkaragaṇa¹⁴¹ in A.D. 595 awarded a brāhmaṇa with 100 nivarttanas of land in village Vallisika. The brāhmaṇa was a resident of Kallāvana, the present-day Kalavana, Nasik district.¹⁴²
2.3 The Cālukya Pulikēsin II Raṇavikrama-Satyaśrāya in A.D. 630 gifted villages Gōviyāṇaka, in present-day Nasik district, to a brāhmaṇa named Dāmadikshita, an expert in the Vedas who came from Girinagara.

2.4 The Cālukya Vikramāditya I, in A.D. 675, granted village Kuddhanapāyū in the present-day north-eastern Tamil Nadu, to a brāhmaṇa by name Kauthiya, an expert in the Vedas.

2.5 The Raṣṭrakūṭa chieftain Karkarāja in c.A.D. 779 donated village Rakkhullagrama, situated in the Nassikka (Nasik) viṣaya, to a brāhmaṇa student of the Kaṭha school, who appears to have been a man of deep erudition for it is commented that he mastered the Vedas, Vēdāngas, Itihasa, Purāṇas, Vyākaraṇa, Mīmāṁsā, Tarka, Nirukta and Yajñavidyā.

2.6 Vigrāhapāladaśa III, of the powerful Pāla dynasty of Bengal, who confesses to be "a devout worshipper of the Buddha" (most Pālas, though Buddhists, were tolerant and supported Brahmanism), in the twelfth year of his reign made a grant to a brāhmaṇa named Khōduladēvaśaśarman, a great scholar in Mīmāṁsā, Vyākaraṇa and Tarkavidyā.

2.7 King Dēvānandadeva, of the Nandabhava or Nanda family of Orissa, awarded village Palāmnā to Kuleśvapaśa Bhaṭṭa, who is depicted as a rāḍhiya brāhmaṇa and very learned person. The same king made another similar donation to another brāhmaṇa by name Trilōka. The grant would be dated in the tenth century.
2.8 Trailokyacandra-deva of the Candra dynasty of Eastern Bengal made a grant to "the illustrious brahmaṇa Sukradēva, who used to speak (with people) with a smile", consisting in a rent-free land measuring eight drōṇas. The grant would be dated in the tenth or eleventh century. This king — who named himself as a 'Saugata' — was a fervant Buddhist but the charter indicates his tremendous respect for Brahmanical orthodoxy and tradition.

2.9 On a similar line is another Pāla grant by Vigrāhapaśa III. The grant was to a brahmaṇa by name Ghāntūkaśarman, belonging to a family from Kōlāṅcha, who was an erudite scholar. The brahmaṇas of Bihar had a considerable respect for the brahmaṇas of Kōlāṅcha, where probably learned brahmaṇas were concentrated. Kōlāṅcha was situated in the ancient Śrāvasti country, around Set-Mahet. The Kōlāṅcha brahmaṇas strongly influenced the social and religious life of Bihar.

2.10 The Gāhaḍavāla King Candrabhāva of Kanauj made a grant in A.D.1090 to the brahmaṇa Varuṇēvaśarman (or Varuṇēva-varaśarman) of a village "with its water and dry land, with its mines of iron and salt, with its fishing places, with its ravines and saline soil, with its groves of madhuka and mango, grass and pasture land, etc."

2.11 The Kalacūri Ratnadēva II granted village Chiṅchāṭolāi to a brahmaṇa named Padmanābha in A.D.1128. This brahmaṇa
descended from a saintly family of learned brāhmaṇas.\textsuperscript{153}

2.12 The Kalacārī Prithvīdēva II in A.D.1138\textsuperscript{154} granted village Vudukuni (M.P.) with all its incomes to one brāhmaṇa named Viṣṇu who is praised as the foremost of the trivedin scholars — "he knows all Śāstras and Āgamas and he is comparable to Viṣṇu". The extolling of this brāhmaṇa as an Āgama expert demonstrates that the Āgamas also were considered scriptures proper and were admitted as such in the Brahmanical orthodoxy.

2.13 The next four grants of the Gādāvāla King Gōvindacandra\textsuperscript{155} of Kanauj are very good examples of donations to brāhmaṇas in appreciation of their religious and intellectual merits. There are more than fifty-five copper plate inscriptions of the Gādāvāla kings, all dating between A.D.1097 and 1187.\textsuperscript{156}

(a) Plate A, A.D.1115, grant of a dwelling place (āvāsa) to a brāhmaṇa of the Bharadvāja gōtra.

(b) Plate B, A.D.1130, grant of a village to the prāṇācārya bhaṭṭa pandita Khōnaśarman, a student of the Rg Veda sākhā.

(c) Plate C, A.D.1134, grant of village Kaṇāuta to the pandita Dāmōradaraśarman, student of the Vājasaneya sākhā and a great scholar. The taxes conceded are the bhağa, pravanikara, turuṣkadaṇḍa, and kumarāgadiānaka.

(d) Plate D, A.D.1146, grant of village Camaravāmi plus another land to the same brāhmaṇa Dāmōdaraśarman.
2.14 D.C. Sircar edited also a series of Gāhaḍavāla grants,\(^{157}\) eight in total. Six of these eight charters recorded different donations to a sole single brāhmaṇa who was a very important person in the central Gāhaḍavāla government, and who on account of his services received numerous grants and awards. Mahāsāndhivigrāhika bhāṇḍāgārika Ravidhara or rāuta Ravidhara, the donee in all these cases, was apparently in charge of foreign affairs and the royal treasury. He was entitled to collect all the regular and irregular taxes.

2.15 Lakṣmaṇasēna\(^{160}\) of the Sēna dynasty of Bengal, in A.D.1183, granted to a brāhmaṇa named Kuvera eighty-nine dronas of land with full benefit of taxes and income over it. The land was in village Kaṅkagrama (the modern Kankjol, in eastern Bihar).

2.16 The Kalacūri Pratāpamallā of Ratanpur in A.D.1218 granted village Sirata to the brāhmaṇa Haridāsa.\(^{167}\)

2.17 The prāṣasti of Inscription B of Maihar, M.P.,\(^{160}\) of the tenth century A.D. is not a donation but only an eulogy of a brāhmaṇa family which produced divine offsprings.

3. Direct donations by kings to a single ascetic or a group of ascetics. Grants of this kind which became widespread later on appear to have had their origin in the western Deccan in early historical times, and in order to understood the evolution of the relationship between royalty and ascetic groups of all orders,
Brahmanical as well as non-Brahmanical, it is necessary to refer back to early historical times.

3.1 Sadakani Gotamiputra, Lord of Benākaṭaka, gave land to the tekirasi ascetics, who were probably groups of monks living in the hills of Nasik. The grant was "not to be entered (by royal officials), not to be touched (by any of them), not be dug for salt, not to be interfered with the by the district police, and (in short was) to enjoy all kinds of immunities".

3.2 Uṣavadāta, son-in-law of King Nahapāna, the Kṣaharāta Kṣatrapa, made gifts of money and tīrthas on the river Bārṇasā, sixteen villages to feed 1,00,000 brāhmaṇas at the religious tīrtha of Prabhāsa. He built quadrangular rest houses at Bharukacca, Daśapura, Govardhana, Sopparaga. Among many others works, he gave 32,000 stems of coconut trees at village Nanaṅgola to the congregation of Carakas at Pīṇḍītakāvada, Govardhana, Suvargamukha and the Rāma-tīrtha at Sopparaga. And in the Trirāṣmi hills (the hill of Nasik) at Govardhana he caused to be made a cave and some cisterns and ordered the provision of food "for all monks without distinction" from the land given to the brāhmaṇa Asvibhuti. The Carakas were a special category of Brahmanical ascetics. Apparently, the donor bought a field in order to secure food for the monks.
3.3 The same Uṣavadāta bestowed a cave plus a perpetual endowment of 3,000 kāhāpanas to members of the saṅgha "of any sect and any origin dwelling in this cave". The money could be used for clothing and external necessities. The money was invested in guilds of Govardhana (2,000 kāhāpanas invested in a weavers' guild which would produce interest of one per cent monthly; and 1,000 in another guild producing interest @ of three-fourths of a pādika monthly). The principal was not to be returned but the interest was to go for the maintenance of the saṅgha. Besides, "to every one of the twenty monks who keep the vassa in my cave" he gave twelve kāhāpanas for clothing, etc. 164

3.4 This inscription is probably a repetition of the gift cited in 3.3: Uṣavadāta made an endowment to feed 1,00,000 brāhmaṇas the whole year and gifted 1,00,000 cows to holy brāhmaṇas, plus sixteen villages to gods and brāhmaṇas. 165

3.5 Princess Śakānī, mother of the gaṇapaka Visavārma and wife of the gaṇapaka Rebhila, made a perpetual endowment, which was transferred to the guilds of Gōvardhana (to whom the money gifted was given) with the purpose of "providing medicines to the saṅgha of monks of whatever sect and origin dwelling in this monastery on Mount Trirāṣmi (Nasik)." 166

The Nasik Inscriptions, covering the period between the first century B.C. and the second century A.D. give us an
indication of the intense commercial activity in the territory of
the Satavahana Empire, and the relation between guilds and
monasteries under the sponsorship of the kings. The endowment
by a powerful feudatory with a local guild of funds for the
sustenance of ascetics, "not been important what sect they
belong", the guilds administering these funds to secure a
regular income for the basic necessities of the monastic
community, set the trend for a relation that was to be a
characteristic of early medieval times. A regular cash flow is
indicated in this "trade belt", the endowments operating as a
real insurance system. Cash endowments were the pattern in
Western Deccan till the second or third century A.D. Then the
monasteries began to receive grants consisting in rights on land,
perhaps on account of shortage of money and other widespread
economic changes.

In north India Brahmanical monasteries and temple complexes
had a centripetal role which affected the entire economic life in
the vicinity. Regardless of the availability of money, a fruitful
relationship between monasteries and guilds emerged. This was in
consonance with the social scheme of having ties between the
three levels of society — the ruling power, the spiritual or
intellectual power, and the economic or productive capability.
Religious institutions represented the points at which the other
two forces converged.
3.6 Contemporary with some of the Nasik grants\textsuperscript{171} is the Mathurā Brahmi Inscription of the year 28 (c.A.D. 130) of Dēvaputra Śāhi Huviṣka\textsuperscript{172}. This is another example of pious act by a king protecting religious men and institutions. But, it is of great significance here because Huviṣka was a Kuśāṇa king and the inscription reflects the situation prevalent in one of the major centres of the Kuśāṇa Empire.

The Mathurā Inscription is about the endowment made by Huviṣka, consisting of a puṇyaśālā (a hall for acquiring merits through distribution of alms) plus another permanent endowment (ākṣaya-nīvi). On behalf of the royal donor, two śreṇīs (guilds) were entrusted with the management of 550 purāṇas each. The monthly expenses were to be covered for serving hundred brāhmaṇas in the hall and for daily keeping some provisions available for the benefit of hungry, thirsty and generally indigent people, and distributing them each day three āḍhakas of groats, one prasthā of salt, one prasthā of saktu, three ghāṭaka and five mallakas of harita-kalāpaka (five bundles of fresh vegetables).

3.7 Several centuries later was registered in Śrīpura (modern Sirpur), the grant of Tivaradēva, King of Kōśala, who ruled c.A.D. 750. He also extended liberality to needy brāhmaṇas, travellers and other categories of people. This sovereign gifted village Menkiddaka in the Sundarikāmārga district towards the maintenance of the rest-houses (sattra) which...
had been established at Bilvapadraka, to feed daily 300 brāhmaṇas and any other men who arrived there. The village was given with "treasures, deposits and the usual immunities of not being entered by regular troops, plus all the taxes" by the local authority.173

3.8 A classic case of donation to a Brahmanical monastery in order to secure divine support for the kingdom is the grant of Bhōja II, in A.D.1182, in which this king of the Silahāra dynasty gifted, "for the augmentation of his own kingdom":174

(a) A house to serve as the granary for the maṭha of Umā-Mahēśvara, constructed by the sahaṇā brāhmaṇa Lokana Nayaka.

(b) Four white houses given to four brāhmaṇas (two were sahaṇā brāhmaṇas by names Prabhākara Ghaīsa and Vāsiyana Ghaīsa). These four resided in the maṭha, hence the houses may have been meant for giving rent to these brāhmaṇas.

(c) A flower garden for the worship of the god (the deity of the maṭha).

(d) A field in village Seleyavāda in Panaturage-golla (the present-day Panutre, fourteen miles south-west of Kolhapur) and a house in village Paṇḍarama for providing food to the brāhmaṇas.
(e) A field measuring 225 vaprakas by the road of Eṣenāda plus a house, and another field plus another house, all free from any taxes for the five-fold worship of the god and for keeping the maṭha in good repair. The latter field was purchased by the brāhmaṇa Lokana Nayaka for this express purpose.

A few points may be noted about this endowment: (a) the endowment was entirely philanthropic and was not meant to introduce a new level of authority or for transfer of rights. The exemption of taxes constituted a deduction after considering the activities of the maṭha as a non-profitable body. Each item of the grant was clearly distinguished — those who must receive certain type of salary (the four brāhmaṇas in charge of the maṭha who received rent), the contributions for the food of the ascetics coming from a different source, etc. (b) The situation of the maṭha and its land in the vicinity of Kōlhapur, the capital, established its close spiritual relation with the king, who believed that supporting this ascetic centre gave a kind of "spiritual assurance" to his administration. King Bhōja supplied the maṭha with enough material support, taking care not to be profligate in order not to corrupt the brāhmaṇas.

3.9 Another grant of Bhōja II with similar wishes is the one of year 1191, "made at the request and for the prosperity of the Prince Gāndaraditya", consisting of village Kaśeli situated in the territorial division of Attavira in Kōṅkana
(Rajapur taluka, Ratnagiri district) for providing daily food to twelve brāhmaṇas. The activities of these brāhmaṇas are not mentioned. Probably, they were attached to a local temple. Prince Gaṇḍaraditya, who belonged to the royal family of the Śilāhāras of Kolhapur, probably wanted to inaugurate his administrative activities with a pious donation that would secure spiritual support to his rule.

4. In a separate category we include donations of land by feudatory chiefs to an individual brāhmaṇa, to a group of brāhmaṇas, or to a temple or a monastery. The feudatory, having full authority over his own territory, generally made a permanent donation. The act of donation was an inherently triumphal act and was therefore always associated with special astronomical dates and occasions. The act of donation was proof of the magnanimity, power and piety of the donor. Often the most generous donations came from kings or local chiefs of doubtful ancestry and holiness (in the sense of original ancestry).

4.1 Mahārāja Svāmīdāsa, who apparently was a feudatory of the imperial Guptas and used the title of parama bhaṭṭāraka, confirmed the grant of a brahmadeya to a brāhmaṇa named Munda in perpetuity. Brahmadeya was a special type of grant which gave privileges and immunities to brāhmaṇas. The date of the grant was probably A.D. 314.
4.2 Mahārāja Canda-varman, king of Kaliṅga, gifted village Tiritthana to a group of brāhmaṇas in A.D.450. The village was made a permanent freehold agrahāra all the incomes derived from it going solely for the maintenance of the brāhmaṇas settled there. The grant obliged everyone living in the village to make over everything that come out of the soil in the shape of crops or valuable minerals to the donees.

4.3 Mahārāja Sarvanātha, who ruled from Uchchakalpa over east and south-east Bundelkhand, made in A.D.511 the grant of a village "as an agrahāra for the maintenance of the temple of Kārtikeya" to two brāhmaṇas.

4.4 Mahārāja Dharmarāja, who ruled at Patna Khōli as a sub-feudatory of Pṛthvīvīgraha Bhaṭṭāraka, king of Kaliṅga, who in turn was the feudatory of the imperial Guptas, in A.D.569 donated an agrahāra to a group of brāhmaṇas led by the Upādhyāya Natūsvamin. The agrahāra was conceded as a free-of-tax benefice with full revenues and free from all encumbrances.

4.5 In the sixty-fourth year of the Ganga dynasty, the Ganga Sāmantavarman gifted the village Pratiṣṭhāpura to four brāhmaṇa students of the Vaijiṣṭhī Śākhā.

4.6 The Sāndraka prince Jayasakti, a feudatory of the Cālukyas of Bādami, in A.D.681 gave village Sēṇānakalāśā (Kundalgaon, Gujarāt) to a brāhmaṇa named Bappasvāmin.
4.7 Khamba II, the ruler of Śrīvalaya (Shirval, Bhor district, Maharashtra), who was a feudatory of the Cālukyas of Kalyāṇī, in A.D.1079 donated village Viṅga, renewing the grant made 300 years earlier to the ancestors of the same community of brāhmaṇas — "Viṅga has been given to brāhmaṇas as early as the time of Rāma". That village was a mahāsthāna (a very holy place) and now, in a magnificent gesture this chief gave it again as brahmadēya to the head brāhmaṇa of that brotherhood.\(^{183}\) Reiterating a fact sanctioned by Rāma, Khamba thus took the place of Rāma.

4.8 Sādhnikā Anayasiṁhadēva, with the permission of his overlord, the Paramāra king Jayavarman, the Lord of Dhārā, in A.D.1247\(^{184}\) gifted four villages to a group of fifteen brāhmaṇas residing at Māndhātri. Curiously, Sādhanikā included himself as a sixteenth member of the group and also received a share in the division. The explanation may be that this local chief received that land for himself but in order to purify and increase his own merit he shared it with the brāhmaṇas.

4.9 Malliérēśthin, son-in-law of Bīcirāya, feudatory of the Yādava king Siṁhana in A.D.1247 gifted 180 nivartanas to be distributed among sixty-eight brāhmaṇas and for the maintenance of a temple and attached institutions.\(^{185}\) The land donated is in the present-day Dharwar district, Karnataka.
Often, the feudatories donated land and rights to brāhmaṇas brahmanical institutions (such as monasteries), resulting in growth of control by the donee or the donees over the area was granted. However, the law continued to be stered by the state and the brāhmaṇas themselves were it to the law. But traditional organizations with an existence and practice in the locality used their customary of making laws or exercising their right to administer law.

Another class of grants was by brāhmaṇas having rights in ty, who made donations to other religious institutions. A could decide to share his property or give away part of it getting due authorization from his superior who was the e possessor of the land.

Lōkanātha, a local chief in Bengal during the anarchy between Harśa’s and Pālas’ times (seventh century A.D.), made a grant to his own brāhmaṇa mahāsāmanta Pradōṣaśārman, who had risen to the level of mahāsāmanta "by the strength of his own arm". Pradōṣaśārman requested Lōkanātha for a piece of land in a forest region where he could erect a temple to the god Ananta-Nārāyana and sustain an attached maṭha for the dwelling of ascetic brāhmaṇas versed in the four Vedas.

A group of brāhmaṇas and a kṣatriya constructed a stepped well in village Bhundipadra (Bhandud) in the present-day
Bali tehsil, Pali district, Rajasthan, in A.D.1045. These brāhmaṇas had received the village from a certain chief Rāmacandra of the Raghu family under the supreme paramount King Purnapāla of the Paramāra lineage. This is an illustration of pious work undertaken by the brāhmaṇas in their own granted area, and also of three levels of dependency.

6. Autonomous corporations existed in India from very early times and there were significant variations in their forms and functions. Their permanence, strength and flexibility made them the bedrock of Indian society. Kula, gaṇa, jāti, pūja, vrata, śreṇī, saṅgha, naigama, samūha, sambhūyasamutthana, pariṣat, çarana were institutions sanctioned by the Dharmasastras themselves. Saṅgha was virtually a synonym for a corporate union of individuals pursuing similar goals and interests. Gaṇa was a comprehensive term meaning association, fraternity, union of workers of different professions, brāhmaṇas, soldiers etc. Gaṇa enjoyed legal autonomy. So did śreṇī. Pūja and kula were assemblies of equals (or persons with similar qualifications). Vrata brought together people without distinctions of caste or profession.

The guilds, with power to float their own coins and seals, gave boost to trade and economic prosperity and consolidation. The relations between the monarch and the guilds were correct and mutually supportive until either party
encroached into the political or judicial space of the other. The Guptas were the most shrewd in getting the best returns from the different corporations. The kings were respectful of the corporations; it was their duty to know the constitutions of the latter and protect them. As local authorities the corporations also helped the central rule. They looked to the general welfare of the community, constructed or maintained public halls, temples, maṭhas, tanks, rest-house, wells and irrigation works, supported a local police system, helped the weak and those in distress.

The Brahmanical community of ascetics living in a maṭha or an āśrama, whether or not attached to a temple, were in a legal and customary sense another gaṇa with the same rights, immunities and privileges as other corporations of the locality. The relation between a maṭha and other corporations was that between two legal bodies. In the case of interaction between a guild or bankers with a monastery, the former kept the money and multiplied it, the latter gave spiritual safety and prestige to its commercial partner.

Some instances where autonomous corporations made grants to religious institutions are given below.

6.1 In A.D.440, the Gupta administration acceded to the request of a group of leaders representing different professions for granting some unoccupied lands to a group of brāhmaṇas.
The land, in present-day north Bangladesh, was first purchased and then granted in perpetuity.

6.2 The Kothuraka grant of Pravarasena II, records donation of land to a brāhmaṇa who is called gaṇayājin, i.e., priest of a gaṇa. This brāhmaṇa performed a gaṇayājña which is a special sacrifice performed for a gaṇa.

6.3 Svāmīrāja, the bhaṭṭāraka (feudatory) of the Kalacūris who ruled from Nāndīvardhana (Nagardhan, Nagpur, M.P.) granted village Aṅkōlikā (Aroli, eight miles from Nagardhan) to a certain brāhmaṇa in c.A.D.573. He also gave him village Čiṅchapāṭṭika at the request of the president (sthāvira) and members of the executive committee (pramukhas) of the assembly (samūha) of the corporation (gaṇa) of elephant riders (mahāmātras), i.e., the mahāmātragāṇa. This gaṇa did not have the power to make grants, so it made the grant on behalf of the prince, affixing its own seal containing the emblem of a god. The land was given to these brāhmaṇas exempted from all taxes, free from all obligations "of gifting, giving forced labour and providing meals" (to touring officials).

6.4 An inscription of the time of the Rastrakūta King Śrīvallabha (or Dhruva) of Malkhed, c.A.D.793, records that the headman of the guild of weavers of Mūrumbēri, Purigere, donated to a temple a portion of the goods produced by this guild. This contribution underlines the cooperation
existing between guilds and religious institutions.¹⁷⁸

6.5 The relations between the autonomous bodies and the ascetics were not always harmonious. A dispute arose between the descendants of a merchants' guild of Bhillumāla (Bhinmal, Jodhpur, Rajasthan) who claimed possession over a place of worship of the god Madhusūdana (Viṣṇu) and the brāhmaṇas of a maṭhika (monastery) built by certain religious personages named Annaiya, Kautuka and Rēvaṇa. It may be mentioned that the temple of Bhillumāladeva was located at Sanjan on the Kōṅkan coast (vide, infra, pp.552-53). The monastery had built a compound wall which enclosed also the temple. The monks asserted their title to whatever the wall enclosed. Royal intervention was requested. The royal solution was curious: it was arbitrated that the decision must come from the deity himself (vyavasthā), something like an oracle or divine order. Then the scholars of the monastery (svādhyānyikas) plus the monastical priests (varikas) solved the problem by proposing to the local authority that the guild should pay to the maṭha a rent (śrotaka) for maintaining its rights on the disputed land. The king closed the case after ordering the settlement to be engraved. Kṛṣṇarāja III (A.D.939-67) of the Rastrakuta dynasty was the king.¹⁷⁹

6.6 The general body of the Trading Corporation of the vīra-baniṇjas belonging to various localities around
Sedambal (Belgaum district, north-west Karnataka), in which were represented all the local gaṇas, decided c.A.D.1144 to donate certain dues on commodities such as arecanuts, oil and ghee sold in the market of Sedambal to the temple of Mādhavēśvara which was constructed by the Lord (prabhu) of Sedambal. Individually also the richest merchants donated in cash or kind to this temple. Virtually all other guilds of the town gave gifts for the festival of Caitra and Dīpāvalī and for the usual activities of the temple. Two officers of the Śilāhāra King Vijayāditya, who were in charge of the district of Mirījje (modern Miraj), donated with the previous sanction of the king and for the purpose of providing food for the ascetics living in the maṭha attached to the temple, certain taxes levied on the shops of oilmen, grain merchants and arecanut sellers of the market of Sedambal. The toll collectors were also required to contribute a portion of their collection. This ascetic complex apparently belonged to the Pāsūpatas.201

In c.A.D.1153, two goldsmiths, apparently both very prominent men in the community, by name Nāgojā and Revagāvunḍa, imposed certain taxes ad valorem on the local assemblies of guilds. These cesses were to be distributed equally between the basadi (assembly of ascetics) and the Basavanna temple (at Shedbal, Belgaon).
6.8 In A.D.1198 in Jhalodi, Sirohi, Rajasthan, the members of the Assembly (gōsthikas) made a donation for the repairs of a Jain temple and the Queen Śrīṅgaradēvī donated a piece of land to the same temple for use as garden. The important thing here is how the generous initiative of a local body obliged the royal level to join the donation which anyway must have been taken note of in the official accounts.

6.9 During the time of Dēvapāla of the Paramāra family, Kēśava, who belonged to the mercantile community and was resident of Undapura, in A.D.1218 ordered the construction of a temple of Śambhu (Śiva), and excavation of a tank near the temple and put up images of Hanumat, Kṣētrapāla, Gāṇeśa, Kṛṣṇa, Nakulīśa and Ambikā. The temple was at Harsaudā (modern Harsud, Nimar district, Madhya Pradesh). If Nakulīśa is identical with Lakulīśa, then this area also was influenced by the Pāśupata sect.

11.4 The Institution of the Matha; a brief sketch of linguistic and organizational evolution:

The general survey of grants made to brāhmaṇas and to religious institutions in general — which we undertook above — indicates, apart from establishing how relationship between temporal power and spiritual authority was forged in the Indian context, changing nature of the grants in keeping with broader societal changes. These changes are reflected in the changing
composition of the recipients of grants as well as the nature of grants which varied from region to region and locality to locality.

The decline of early historical urban centres resulted in a corresponding decline of a number of Buddhist centres where bhikṣu-saṅghas from different directions were located. The large vihāras of early medieval times — which were confined to only a few regions — were in complexity, size and in terms of the nature of patronage in many ways similar to Brahmanical establishments of the period.

Although endowments were occasionally made in the form of cash levies, the general pattern of grants indicates that landed property was what sustained religious establishments of early medieval times. And at the same time, depending on the size and distribution of landed property, there was the tendency toward the development of hierarchy among religious establishments. The grants linked religious establishments with society around them at one level; the other, and equally important link, was the way the centre symbolized and articulated the spiritual urge of the contemporary society. With the broad frame in mind, we conclude this chapter by briefly introducing the specific institution of maṭha, the meaning associated with the term and the significance it came to acquire in early medieval society.

Sir Monier Monier-Williams\textsuperscript{200} thinks that the root maṭh
probably was invented for the words maṭha ("to dwell", "to be intoxicated", in Dhātupātha ix, 47; "to grind" in Vopadeva) and maṭhaya ("to build", "to erect", in Hemādri's Caturvarga cintāmaṇi).

Maṭha, in general, means "a hut", "a cottage" and specifically contains the idea of a secluded dwelling or cell of an ascetic or a student.

In the Mahābhārata, this word is used to mean "a cloister", "a college for brahmacārins", "a temple", and the same meaning is given to the term maṭha in two literary compositions. The Lilāvati (or Lilavai), written in the eighth century A.D. by Kutūhala using Marāṭhā dialect (or Mahārāṣṭrī), contains an interesting mention of a Pāśupata maṭha. In the narrative Vijayānaṃda is a Minister of the Sātavāhana king, who had sent him on a diplomatic mission to the king of Śrī Laṅkā, Silameha, the father of the princess Lilāvati. On his way, Vijayānaṃda was at Sattagoyāvaribhīma (Andhra Coast) where, in a temple "he saw a naked Pāśupata ascetic, his matted hair white with age. They talked and the ascetic produced some fruit for Vijayānaṃda to eat, but warned him that he must not stay there at night since a demon (rayaṇiyara, i.e., a rakṣasa) named Bhīsaṇānana harassed the shrine and would not permit anyone but the ascetic to stay there. The ascetic, therefore, took Vijayānaṃda to a nearby ascetic grove for the night, where two girls were staying and
both were living as ascetics. In the beautiful garden of the
grove they saw a splendid bejewelled temple of Śiva and Bhavānī.
On its south side stood a maṭha (college) building, like the
forehead ornament of the Golā (presumably on the shore of the
Golā lake).  

In the Tilakamaṇjari, one of the few full length narrative
story in Sanskrit well-preserved, which was written in the tenth
century A.D., is also mentioned a maṭha or "college for
brahmaçaṅśins". The novel is about the stories of Harivāhana and
Samaraketu. In a passage it is said:

"In a verse being recited, Samaraketu thought he heard the
name of Harivāhana. He left the window and took a hundred
steps into the temple to see who was singing. He saw a new
college (maṭha), its doorway opening to the north
(presumably from the opposite side of the temple) and
entered it."  

In the Paṅcatantra  is used the expression maṭha-pratīṣ-
ṭhāttatva, which appears to refer to the theory of the
establishment/construction of a maṭha. Also the term maṭhaṣṭhiti
is used to mean "staying or residing in a college of priest",
"being a recluse"; and maṭhāyatana for expressing the idea of "a
college", "a monastery".

In Kalhana's Rājatarāṅgiṇī are used the words maṭhacintā
(feminine gender [g.]) which is "the charge of a convent"; maṭhādhyakṣa (masculine [g.]) for meaning "the superintendent of a maṭha", "the principal of a college" (just like maṭhādhipati is used in several inscriptions); and maṭhikā to mean "a cell", "a hut". Maṭhikā (feminine [g.]), having the same meaning, is used in the Plate of Subhikṣarājadeva\textsuperscript{211} (discovered at Pāṇḍukēśvar, Garhwal district, U.P.), which is dated about ninth century A.D. and relates to some institutions where ascetics were sheltered in the area of Kārttikēyapura (Baijnath or Vaidyanatha, Almora district, U.P.).

Maṭhikā was used in other inscriptions also of ninth to tenth century A.D., but coming from a very distant place, Maharashtra. A group of four inscriptions of Raṣṭrakuta kings\textsuperscript{212} used the term maṭhikā. However, it is interesting to notice how the concept evolved from meaning "a temple (perhaps with some small monastery attached)" to a monastical complex, well organised and sheltering large number of people. Maṭha and maṭhikā were originally used to refer to small groups of ascetics living in a cluster just consisting of a number of huts, or perhaps cells. It is very probable that initially, Brahmanical monks copied the organizational schemes of the Buddhists (the problem will be analyzed infra Ch.VIII, pp.580 ff.). There are also probabilities that in the beginning, Brahmanical monks used similar terms as Buddhists to mean their dwellings perhaps consisting in a congregation of huts, or cells if they lived in
caves as in Nasik caves. This may be evidenced by the use of the term *lena* in the Nasik caves by Buddhists as well as by Brahmanical monks. But with the development of an individual and defined form of Brahmanical monasticism, an appropriate terminology in relation to such a new phenomenon was evolved.

The case of the Kautuka-*maṭhikā* is an excellent example of the development of the term *maṭhikā*. The Kautuka-*maṭhikā* was founded in A.D.926 and the institution existed at least for a century without interruption. However, the name always was Kautuka-*maṭhikā* though the institution clearly grew enormously. The word *maṭhikā* adapted to such change and came to mean "monastical complex" like it was around the year A.D.1048 when the last reference to the Kautuka-*maṭhikā* was registered. Thus, the five inscriptions in which the term *maṭhikā* occurs in relation to the same complex which continued to grow over a period of time.

(a) The grant of the time of Raṣṭrakūṭa Indra III\(^2\)\(^{14}\) (A.D.915-28), dated in A.D.926, recored the construction of a *maṭhikā* (a temple with a monastery) at Saṃyāna (the modern Sanjan, Thana district, Maharashtra) by the brāhmaṇa Annaiya or Annammaiya, who was a friend of a minister of Indra III.

(b) The undated grant of the time of Kṛṣṇa III\(^2\)\(^{15}\) (A.D.939-67) speaks about the god Viṣṇu under the name of Bhilloḷadēva installed by the descendants of the merchants of Bhilloḷama
(Bhinmal, Jodhpur, Rajasthan), i.e., immigrants who built a 
maṭhikā to enshrine the god. This maṭhikā was near the 
other, i.e., the Kautuka-maṭhikā, built by Kautuka or 
Annaiya, where was enshrined the goddess Bhagavatī Daśamī.

(c) The grant of Cāmunaḍarāja,210 subordinate chief of the 
Śilāhāra Chinturāja, dated in A.D.1034, mentions the gift 
of an oil-mill (ghāṇaka) to the Kautuka-maṭhikā at Saṁyāna. 
This maṭhikā is the same as built by Annaiya in A.D.926, 
also mentioned in the charter of the time of Kṛṣṇa III, 
which continued functioning after a century. The maṭhikā 
was having at this level a board of scholars who were 
organized in a mahāpariṣad.

(d) The Kautuka-maṭhikā is mentioned also in two grants of 
Vījjala (or Vija, Vīja, Vijja), one dated in A.D.1048217 
and another dated in A.D.1053.218 In the second inscription 
is mentioned Kēnasā-grāma, a village in the possession of 
this maṭhikā. The village was granted to the householders 
and scholars attached to the maṭhikā in the form of a 
permanent endowment, as well as to feed twenty-five 
brāhmaṇas daily (in the sattra of the establishment). We 
could thus infer that:

- the maṭhikā had an increase in number of people attached, 
brāhmaṇas, teachers, officers;

- the maṭhikā had several communities of personnel associated 
with it;
the maṭhikā had, around A.D. 1050, important economic assets consisting of properties, rights on taxes and other incomes.

The Kautuka-maṭhikā originated as a small building attached to a temple. But, following all the data given in the charters, after one hundred twenty years the Kautuka-maṭhikā achieved a high level of development and sheltered several communities. However, although it became a great monastical complex, the word maṭhikā continued being used to designate the monastical complex of Saṅyāna.

On the other hand, the word maṭha and other words derived from it were not only used for Brahmanical monastic institutions but also by the Jainas. The Bhijoli Rock Inscription of Cāhamāna Somaśvara found at Bījholi, a town one mile north-east of Udaipur, Rajasthan, and dated around A.D. 1070, is a Digambara Jaina record whose main object is to record the erection of a temple to Pārśvanātha (the twenty-third Tīrthaṅkara). The inscription makes mention of a Jaina monastery (maṭhasthāna) which was situated in the south part of the new temple. The information is of great value because this area is regarded by the Digambara Jainas to be holy exclusively to their religion, but in verse 71 it is said that it had become as such only after the manifestation of Pārśvanātha at the spot in the beginning of the second half of the twelfth century A.D. Previously, this
place was a Brahmanic tirtha. The adoption by the Jains of the term maṭha, maṭhasthāna, etc., after the Brahmanical use of such a concept had been well-established would indicate the late adoption of such a concept by them.

The evolution of the term maṭha in the epigraphical records may be traced to the following stages: 1st) a hermitage; 2nd) a temple with a small monastery attached; 3rd) a temple with a religious college attached; 4th) a religious complex where temples, monasteries, colleges and other religious and educational institutions existed together; 5th) finally, a great religious complex (like the previous stage) but also acknowledged as a place of pilgrimage, where many people, mendicants (tapasvins), renouncers (sādhus), yogīs, were welcome, fed and sheltered. This would correspond to the latest level which was reached in some of the monastical institutions or maṭhas. A chronological scheme of such development would be prepared comparing several inscriptions where the term maṭha was used to trace different levels of development of the Brahmanical monastical institutions.

(a) The Dhauli Cave Inscription of Śāntikara, coming from Orissa, records the construction of a maṭha (which here means a temple) of Āghyakāvarāti by one Bhaṭṭā Lōyāmaka. The inscription is of A.D.865 and was discovered in a small cave. The temple was on the top of a hill where also were other religious constructions and probably ascetics were living at caves or in
small dwellings.
(b) In the ninth century the term *maṭha* was already used in southern India to indicate "monastery". From Nammiyēndal (Polur taluk, Tamil Nadu) came an inscription recording an order of Gaṅgaraiyan Ālappirandāṇ, who claimed be scion of the Gaṅga family and bore titles of Lord of Kuvalāla, to the Uṇavar of Ammai-ēndal assigning a village with all its taxes as *maḍappuram* to the *maṭha* of Aghoraśiva Mudaliyār which was situated in Tiruvannāmalai, to be enjoyed by him and his disciples in succession.²²²
(c) From Andhra Pradesh comes another inscription in which *maṭha* was used to mean a Brahmanical monastical institution. However, in this record, *maṭha* as an institution appears better organized and spacious than the previous ones. The Tandikonda Grant of the Eastern Cālukya King Ammarāja II²²³ (A.D.945-70) was issued in A.D.959. It gives the spiritual lineage of the Andhra branch of the Kālāmukha sect of Śaiva ascetics.²²⁴ In the inscription it is claimed that they belonged to the Śiṁha Pariṣad and were descending from Lakulīśa. The inscription informs that the Kālāmukhacārya and rājaguru Prabhūtarāśi, inspired by his guru, Vidyēśvara(rāśi), built a dēvakula and a *maṭha* consisting of an ample three-storey building. It also says that he beautified the place with coloured paintings for whose total expenditure and maintenance the ācārya obtained from the king Ammarāja three villages and a thousand she-goats.
Monasteries of the Kālāmukha order were spread as far as the Pāṇḍyan country. An inscription from the shrine of Kālanāthasvāmin at Paḷḷimaḍam, hamlet of Tiruchchuli, Rāmnād district, refers to the maṭha of the mahāvratins (the mahāvratins, according to R.G. Bhandarkar, were the followers of the great vrata) who could be a group of Kālāmukhas or Kāpālikas.228

(d) It seems that about the tenth century A.D., in southern India, the use of the term maṭha for referring to several types of Brahmanical monastical institutions was common. From Karnataka and dated A.D. 1004 is the Tumbagi Inscription of the reign of Satyasraya.226 The inscription is on a wall of Polayya's maṭha at Tumbagi village, Bijapur district, Karnataka. In lines 23–29 of the inscription is recorded the grant of a field of 100 mattar to the monastery (maṭha) which was attached to the temple of Brahmeśvara. The maṭha was part of a big religious complex where also lived musicians, workers, and dancing-girls. From these references it appears that from about the tenth century a maṭha, both in north and south India functioned as a component of a big religious complex. Maṭha itself was the monastical part of the complex. Nevertheless, the head of the maṭha often was a prestigious ācārya or guru who was also the authority for the whole complex. However, at this level, maṭha still did not designate the entire complex but only the monastery part of it.
Also from Karnataka is the Momigatti Inscription of the forty-ninth year of Vikramādiya VI, corresponding to A.D. 1124. Momigatti is a village in Dhārmār district in Karnataka. The inscription mentions five maṭhas or monasteries which existed around Kundūr, the modern Narāndra, where seems to have been a centre of great religious activity. The affiliation of these maṭhas is not given.

In Orissa, in A.D. 1294, were issued the Alalpur Plates of Narasimha II (Alalpur is four miles east of Bhubaneswar). The Plates mention the grant of about one hundred seventy vāṭikās of land, divided in five plots scattered in different villages, to the brāhmaṇa Halāyudha, the treasurer of the king. In the context of the land granted, are mentioned certain maṭhas (colleges) and maṇḍapas which apparently formed part of a complex which was not included (with its land) in the donation made to Halāyudha. "An area of thirty-three vāṭikās, five mānas, and one gunḍha, which was covered by the land such as that around maṭhas and maṇḍapas under the enjoyment of gods and brāhmaṇas of the locality called Haṭṭapura-karmī-daṇḍā ... etc." 229

Therefore, in this context dated to the close of the thirteenth century A.D. the word maṭha stands for an educational-monastical institution functioning in the precincts of a religious complex.

Finally, the Bhubaneswar Inscription of Gaṅga Narasimha, 230
which will be analyzed in detail later on (infra, pp.561-63), mentions several maṭhas which together constituted an important tīrtha or a holy city functioning around an originally ascetic organization. Such maṭhas were, around the date of the inscription (A.D.1396), great Brahmanical monastical institutions distributed in Cōḍādeśa, Pāṇḍyadeśa and Kāṇcīdeśa. These maṭhas were under the charge of prestigious ācāryas who used big titles, like the Saṅkarācāryas of Kāṇcī or Conjeeveram or their northern equivalent: the Saṅkarācāryas of Jyotirmāṭh), and were big authorities not only over the large number of brāhmaṇas and brahmacārins living in the complex but over the population of the town growing around the great maṭha.

This is a general overview of the institutional development of the Brahmanical maṭhas. In the subsequent chapters we shall be taking up the more specific problems relating to evolution, regional distribution and sectarian affiliations of Brahmanical monasteries, in relation to the growth of religious complexes in general, in early medieval north India.
NOTES


2. Cerfau, L. et Tondriau, J., *Le Culte des Souverains*, Desclée, Belgique, 1956; Ghirshmann, Roman, *L’Iran, Des Origines a L’Islam*, Payot, Paris, 1951; Rocher, Ludo et Rosane, "La Sacralité du Pouvoir dans l’Inde Ancienne d’après les textes de Dharma" in *Le Pouvoir et Le Sacré*, Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgique, 1962; also vide Mukherjee, B.N., "Cult of the Emperor and Empire in the Kūṣāṇa Dominions", in Mukherjee, S.N., *Essays in honour of A.L.Bashan*, *India : History and Thought*, Subarnarekha, Calcutta, 1982, pp.127-38. At the time when ideas on sacred kingships were a fashion from west to east of India, Kūṣāṇas contributed some elements brought from Persia and Central Asia. They received the Persian tradition (Achaemenid, plus Roman influences, plus the Arsacid developments) and the influence from China (Han dynasty). They, probably, influenced on Gupta kings with ideas about "heavenly principles" about the empire. Kūṣāṇas also used a very specifical terminology for defining the sacred character of the kingship.


existing in an agrarian economy of subsistence after the dramatic reduction of foreign trade, decay of cities and monetary system. Sharma looks for rebuilding a feudal model ensembling in his scheme different elements not always compatible with each other. The thesis is explained in full detail in his work Indian Feudalism, University of Calcutta, Calcutta, 1965; also Sharma, R.S., "Stages in Ancient Indian Economy", in his Light on Early Indian Society and Economy, Manaktalas, Bombay, 1966, pp.52-89.


8. Dandekar, R.N., The Age of the Guptas and Other Essays, Ajanta Publications, Delhi, 1982, pp.10-11; Wink, André, "Sovereignty and Universal Dominion in South Asia", in Indian Economic and Social History Review, Vol.XXI, No.3, pp.266-72; Gonda, Jan., "The Sacred Character of Ancient Indian Kingship"; in History of Ancient Indian Religion, E.J.Brill, Leiden, 1975, Vol.IV, pp.475-82; and in La Regalità Sacra/The Sacral Kingship (contributions to the Central Theme of the VIIIth International Congress for the History of Religions), E.J.Brill, Leiden, 1959, pp.172-80. The thesis of Gonda is that the ancient Indian king was considered a deva, and as having special celestial powers. He was a synthesis of the most powerful gods and exercised the functions of those gods on earth; he was a universal ruler, lord of nature, and mediator between earth and heaven; Kane, P.V., History of Dharmaśāstra, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, 1946, vol.III, "Rājadharma (government and statecraft)," pp.1-241. Kane covers all the most important features of early medieval kingship. In special vide "Duties and responsibilities of the ruler," pp.56-66.


10. For the theoretical problem of group relations, social structure and institutional forms, state, society and individuals, vide Saletore, Bhasker Anand, Ancient Indian Political Thought and Institutions, Asia, Bombay, 1968, pp.64-147.

11. EP.IND., XVI, no.4, "Bhamodra Mahota Plate of Dronaśīma", p.18. Dronaśīma was the second son of Bhatraka, the founder of Maitraka dynasty of Valabhi.


17. Upadhyaya, Gobind Prasad, *Brāhmaṇas in Ancient India, A Study in the Role of the Brāhmaṇa Class from 200 B.C.-500 A.D.*, Murshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, 1979. In the last part of the book the author studied the political role of the brāhmaṇas from the post-Maurya period onwards giving them maximum importance in the formation of the local governments and in the establishment of a network of relations which was one of the bases of the Gupta empire.


20. Sharma, R.S., *Urban Decay in India, 400-1000 A.D.*, Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, 1987, has studied the
different phases in the urbanization phenomenon in India. For. north India he concluded that "towns reached the peak of prosperity in the centuries between 200 B.C.-300 A.D.", p.178.

27. Nagardhan Plates of Svāmirāja, CORP. INSC. INDIC., IV-II, no.120, pp.611-18; EP.IND., XXVIII, no.1, pp. 1 ff.
28. The head of a gaṇa was also called gaṇamukhya and gaṇasreṇṭha vide CORP. INSC. INDIC., III, p.24.
30. Vide, use of term śreṇṭhin as "a banker", "a merchant", "an important member of a guild" in the following charters published by V.V.Mirashi :
   [line 29]..."(This charter is) made over the whole town, of which Ela śreṇṭhin and Karapuṭa śreṇṭhin are the chief representatives."
   - Makundpur Stone Inscription of Gaṇgeyadēva, of the year A.D.1019, CORP. INSC. INDIC., IV-I, pp.234-35. This short inscription is to record that "the śreṇṭhin Dāmōdara, the ornament of the family of Graha-pati, caused a temple of Jalasayana (Viṣṇu reposing on water) to be constructed.
"... the illustrious śrēṣṭhin Canda (with other illustrious citizens mentioned are present on duty), (and) while the affairs in the court of justice of the Pañcakula are being managed by all merchants according to custom, etc."; Cf. Sircar, D.C., *Indian Epigraphy*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1965, Ch. VII, section 3, where śrēṣṭhin has been translated as "members of a (powerful) guild".


Gupta coins have been found in different parts of north India. Cf. Sircar, D.C., *Early Indian Numismatic and Epigraphical Studies*, Indian Museum, Calcutta, 1977, pp. 10-16.


33. That is the thesis of Alexander Cunningham, which explains some crises of the Indian kingdoms and empires which supported their economies by gold and silver. During their formative periods these kingdoms or empires were capable of driving themselves with their own production but a disproportionate growth creates an economic imbalance and makes import of gold mandatory and leads to dependency on foreign sources. The last phase was always a reduction of the economy and decrease in foreign grade and return to an inner and reduced trade game. That deflation resulted in a return to a non-monetary system. Vide, Cunningham, A., *Coins of Ancient India, from the earliest times down to the seventh century A.D.*, Indological Book House, Varanasi, 1963; ibidem, *Coins of medieval India, from the seventh century down to the Muhammedan conquests*, Indological Book House, Varanasi, 1967.

34. The Gupta period is the enlightened moment for the arts after a long evolution. The Gupta period is aptly named as the period of Indian Classicism in the arts for their perfection and serene maturity. The arts of this period were closely related to the general process of the whole society during the first five centuries of this era. Vide


38. Imperium = Empire contains a central soteriological element and a proselytist mechanism, which both are absent in the Gupta empire but were present in that of Aśoka; Cf. Chattopadhyaya, B.D., *Political Process and Structure of Polity in Early Medieval India*, op.cit.


40. Vide supra, Ch. I.


42. Silimpur Stone Slab Inscription of the times of Jayapāladēva, Rajshahi, Bangladesh, EP.IND., XIII, no.26, pp.283-97. The inscription is on brāhmaṇas who lived just as the Śāstras ordered - they carry on pious lives and are devoted to religious duties. The genealogies and families of those brāhmaṇas are given. They often refused to accept cash gifts and devoted themselves to mastering the Śāstras and Tantras.


46. See the Betma Plates of Bhūjadeva, EP.IND., XVIII, no.35, pp.320-24 of A.D.1020. The king proclaimed in the praśasti that the only important task on earth is the conservation of dharma. Cf. with the explanation of F.V.Kane, History of Dharmasastrā, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, 1958, about the intrinsic interdependence of dharma and Arthaśāstras, Vol.I, First Part, is ample in details on this.


48. See, "The Five Damodarpur Copper Plates Inscriptions of the Gupta Period", EP.IND., XV, no.7, p.113. The inscription is about a purchase of land with a view to donating it to temples and brāhmaṇas. The time is the fifth century. It explains the mechanism and transactions in that relation. The ideology of donation to brāhmaṇas and elevating them to the highest place in society is proclaimed in all the Purānic records, as is explained by Hazra, R.C., Studies in Purānic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs, Motilal Banarsidas, Delhi, 1975 (1940), Ch.IV, pp.243-64.

49. Vide Kane, F.V., History of Dharmasastrā, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, 1946, Vol.II, part I, Ch.II : "varṇa", pp.19 ff.; specifically "varṇa and jāti", pp.54-6; "Varṇa and the enumeration of subcastes" pp.57-60. Kane opines that varṇa as idea and institution (the caturvarṇadharma) was a long development originally derived from concepts of race, culture, character and profession. It took account mainly of the moral ad intellectual worth of man and it was a system of classes which appears more or less natural. The idea of varṇa even in the Smṛtis lays far more emphasis on duties on a high standard of effort for the community or society rather than on rights and privileges of birth. However, jāti (castes) which took a connotation on birth and hereditary had a tendency to create a mentality of privilege. Jāti was lately sanctioned in Dharmasastrās. At the same time the Brahmanical society was growing and absorbed other groups.
which took position at the bottom end of the social Brahmanical scale. However, after a new expansion other people were incorporated to the Brahmanical order and the former groups ascended slightly in the social ranking. In the beginning of early medieval period the social structure is like it was legislated in the Dharmaśāstras written during the period, like the Viṣṇudharmaśāstra. Vide, Grünendahl, Reinhold (ed.), Viṣṇudharmah, Precepts for the worship of Viṣṇu, Otto Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden, 1983.

50. Kane, P.V., History of Dharmaśāstra, op.cit., Vol. II-I, "Varṣa and various castes in Smṛtis", pp.69-104. As example, the antyajas, mentioned in Manusmṛti, IV, 61; the antāvasāyins, mentioned also by Manusmṛti, IV, 79; the udvandhakas, mentioned by Uśanas, 15; etc. All these groups were considered as low as cāndālas and also were engaged ir menial works.


54. Matters, op.cit., I, p.171.


58. Ghoshal, op.cit., 577-78.

59. Some cases of prosperous cities are:

a) Padmapura, the capital of the Vākātaka kings, which was inaugurated to become the center of the world. From such elegant and great city the Vākātakas ruled using titles as samrāj (emperor) and performing aśvamedhas. Vide An
b) Valabhi, the great city of the Maitraka kings, it is mentioned, praised and described in several inscriptions, like:

- Falitana Plates of Dharasena II, EP.IND., XI, no.5, pp.80 ff.

c) The ancient city of Śrāvastī is mentioned in the Buddhist literature and also in the Purāṇas. It seems it was a very important center during Maurya and post-Maurya times. It was in the Gauda area (Gonda), in Uttar Kāśāla. But the precise location of Śrāvastī still is an unsolved problem. It has been identified with the archaeological site at Sahāṭh-Mahāṭh (on the borders of the Gonda and Bahraich districts). [Map section]. Vide the discussion on this topic by Pandit Daya Ram Sahni in his introduction to the Sahāṭh-Mahāṭh Plate of Govindachandra, EP.IND., XI, no.3, pp.20-1. Śrāvastī still was existing at the beginning of the early medieval period, as it was visited by Fa-Hien and Yuan-Chwang. [The Si-Yu-Ki, Buddhist Records of the western World, op.cit., Fa-Hien: the Fo-Kwo-Ki, Ch.XX, p.xliv; Yuan-Chwang: the Shi-lo-fu-shi-ti (Śrāvasti), part II, pp.1-12]. However, may the city was in a sharp decadence and could be reduced severely about the eighth century A.D. Cf.Cunningham, Alexander, The Ancient Geography of India, (reprint) Law Price Publications, Delhi, 1989, pp.343-48.

dl) Vōrttanāka, capital of the kings of southern Tōsalī in Orissa, also considered a focus of urban civilization. Vide Patīkella grant of Mahārāja, EP.IND., IX, no.40, pp. 283 ff.

e) Vārāganī, the holy city, described as a great urbe, always visited by myriads of pilgrims, with hundred of temples, shrines, monasteries, etc. and all the activity that meant. Vide, Benares Inscription of Pantha, EP.IND., IX, no.8, pp.59.

f) Vīdiśa, the capital of Ākara or Dāreśana Janapada, on the Vētravāṭī (Betwa), also known as Vaidīśa, Bhīlā, Bhēlā, in the year 609 A.D. Buddharaja encamped at the city and was impressed by its size and elegance. Vide Vadner Plates of Buddharaja, EP.IND., XII, no.7, pp.30-6.
Vide, in general, the inscriptions presented in the Vol. III of Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum edited and commented by Dr. Fleet.

On literary sources, among others, a fundamental author is Kālidāsa. The poet mentions a number of states in north India, all separate and independent, but surrounded by other powerful states of foreign. Kālidāsa refers to the kingdoms of pre-Gupta period. The cities mentioned by Kālidāsa, like Valabhi or the kingdom of Vidarbhā, do not showed any sign of decadence (first and second century AD). Vide The Raghuvamsa of Kālidāsa by Nandargikar, Gopal Raghunath (ed. and Introduction), Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1982 (1897). Also, vide The Ratnavali of Śrī Harṣa-dēva, by Kale, M.R. (ed.), Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1984 (1921), the several descriptions of the capital of king Udayana, Kauśambi, great and principal city.


61. Yadava, B.N.S., "Immobility and Subjection of Indian Peasantry in Early Medieval Complex", Indian Historical Review, I, 1, 1974, pp. 18-27. The author saw in the brāhmaṇas' claims for land a new scheme of relation between religious feudatories and the peasants (śūdras), which resulted in usage not sanctioned by any law. A lot of literature was produced in this period (e.g., the Purāṇas) to justify this interaction of the brāhmaṇas with the vaiśyas and the śūdras.


63. The Ordinances of Manu, Tr. by Burnell, Arthur Cope, Oriental Books Reprint, New Delhi, 1971 (1884), "The duties of Śūdras", I, 91; "The Śūdra should be obedient to the upper castes", VIII, 410; Cf. Motwani, Kewal, Manu Dharma-Sāstra, Ganesh and Company, Madras, 1958, pp. 52-3; pp. 100-07.

64. Kane, P.V., History of Dharmaśāstra, II-I, op. cit., pp. 594-96. Kane quotes the Viṣṇudharmaśāstra 54.33 and Apastambadharmasāstra I,4.14-18 where this matter is discussed.

65. Sharma, Ram Sharan, Indian Feudalism, op. cit., pp. 54-63, says that forced labour (viṣṭi) was a common practice in
the peripheral areas and was adopted in central and north India as a way to replace slavery.

66. The Harshacarita of Bāṇabhaṭṭa, Kane, P. V. (ed.), Motilal Banarsidas, Delhi, 1986 (1918). The army of Harṣa was constituted of columns of the chief feudatories and their respective troops.

67. In the Gupta times the usual titles were mahārāja, rāja, rājatīla, uparika, kumāramatya, cātās, bhaṭas, in a very complex system of hierarchies. In Harṣavardhana’s times the titles of sāmanta and mahāsāmanta are more frequent.

68. EP.IND., XIX, no. 24, pp. 135 ff.

69. Pacher Plate of Paramardidēva, EP.IND., X, no. 11, pp. 44 ff.

70. Bangaac Plate of Vigrahapāla, EP.IND., XXIX, no. 7, pp. 48 ff.

71. Machhlishar Copper Plate of Hariśchandradēva of Kanauj, EP.IND., X, no. 21, pp. 93 ff.

72. The Bhadavana grant of Gōvinda Chandradēva, EP.IND., XIX, no. 52, pp. 291 ff.

73. Jodhpur Inscription of Pratihāra Bāuka, EP.IND., XVII, no. 12, pp. 87.

74. EP.IND., XII, no. 4, pp. 10-13.

75. IND.ANTIQ., XVII, pp. 350 ff.


77. Dhara Praśasti of Arjunavarman, EP.IND., VIII, no. 9, pp. 96.

78. Mandata Flates of Devapāla and Jayavarman EP.IND., IX, no. 13, pp. 117.

79. Sihaw Stone Inscription of Karnārāja, EP.IND., IX, no. 24, pp. 182.

80. CDRP. INSC. INDIC., IV-II, no. 103.

81. Kharod Inscription of Ratnadēva III, EP.IND., XXI, no. 26, pp. 159.
82. EP.IND., IX, no.14, pp.124. The villages around Sarvatëvadra are described also in the Mänasåra [vide infra, Ch.::II, n.239j.

83. Two Kuruspal Inscriptions of Dharana Mahâdevi of the times of Sômeśvaradêva, EP.IND., X, no.5, pp.31-5.


85. Orissa Plates of Vidyadharabhañja, EP.IND., IX, no.37, pp.271.

86. Patiakella Grant of Mahârâja, EP.IND., IX, no.40, pp.285.

87. Sonepur Inscription of Bhanudêva, EP.IND., XXXII, no.39, pp.325.

88. The Sirpur Stone Inscription of the time of Mahâšivagupta, EP.IND., XI, no.19, pp.184 ff; also Lodhia Plates of Mahâšivagupta, EP.IND., XXVII, no.50, pp.319 ff.

89. Brihatproshtha Grant of Umavarman, EP.IND., XII, no.2, pp.4 ff.

90. Bhubaneswar Inscription in the Royal Asiatic, EP.IND., XIII, no.11, pp.150 ff.

91. Suvarnapura or Sônpur, in i) Sônpur Plates of Kumara Sômeśvaradêva, EP.IND., XII, no.29, pp.237 ff.
   ii) Mahada Plates of Yogëśvaradêva, EP.IND., XII, no.25, pp.218 ff.
   iii) Patna Museum Plates of Sômeśvaradêva II, EP.IND., XIX, no.16, pp.97.


94. EP.IND., XIII, no.26, pp.286 ff.

95. Badaganga Rock Inscription of Bhutivarman, EP.IND., XXVII, no.5, pp.18 ff.

96. Brâhmaqas as intermediary power is part of the effort of Sharma, F.S., Indian Feudalism, op.cit., pp.35-44 to build up a theoretical framework to study the Indian process of
transformation as an approximation to classical feudalism. In that last one bishops occupied a place of intermediary power.

97. Various authors have said that Purānic ideology was a creation to justify the new distribution of power and to consecrate the evolving feudal forms. But Purānic ideology appeared in the early Purāṇas, very much before the time of land concessions. Vide Purānic chronologies in, Singh, M.R., A Critical Study of the Geographical Data in the Early Purāṇas, Calcutta, 1972, pp. 1-19.

Vide the analysis of social transformation as it was registered in Purāṇas in Nandi, R.N., "Client, Ritual, and Conflict in Early Brahmanical Order", Indian Historical Review, Delhi, 1980, pp. 71-74.

98. Hazra, op. cit., pp. 234-42. The author comments on the records:

Visṇu Purāṇa, I, 13;
Varāha Purāṇa, 62, 103-26;
Bhāgavata Purāṇa, IV, 14;

in which it is said that the corruption of varṇa-śramadharma brings decadence. But when that institution is completely rejected the Kali Age comes with all its calamity and suffering. Vide pp. 234-35; for description of Kali Age, vide, Yadava, B.N.S., "The Accounts of the Kali Age and the Social Transition from Antiquity to the Middle Ages", in Indian Historical Review, July 1978/January 1979; also in Jha, D.N. (ed.), Feudal Social Formation in Early India, Delhi, 1987, pp. 45-64. The present author thinks that the Purānic concept is a creation of the period explain the social transformation. Many writings from the period revealed the popular horror for Kali age. Kings proclaimed themselves curators of the time and behaved with that authority. The alterations of the fifth-sixth centuries are related with Kali Age; alteration in the social structure, wars, invasion of the North by the Mlecchas (Hūṇas) and decadence of both powerful religions — Buddhism and Jainism.


100. Kane, P.V., History of Dharmaśāstra, op. cit., Vol. I.

102. Palitana Plates of Dharasena II, EP.IND., XI, no.5, pp.80-1. Dharasena II, fervent worshipper of Mahēśvarā commanded all his officials (the full list of officials given of the Maitraka administration is, by itself, an object of interest) that in order to increase the spiritual merits of his parents they take notice of the donation he has made to two brāhmaṇas called Rēgha and Syēna of the land described. It is a considerable quantity of land which was "in precarium" possession of other persons. The king assigned the brāhmaṇas in a feudatory status.

103. Bhandup Plates of Chhittarāja, CORP., INSC.INDIC. VI, no.9, pp.54-5. The brāhmaṇa Amadevaiya belonged to the Candoga śākhā (Sāmaveda school).

104. Kutapur grant of Bhēja II, Saka year 1113, CORP. INSC. INDIC., VI, no.64, pp.282-83.


107. Grant of Rajaraja I Dēvēndravarmā, EP.IND., XXXI, no.24-2, pp.191 ff.


110. Dharwar Plates of the time of Siṁhana, EP.IND., XXXIII, no.7, pp.32 ff.

111. Vide the Lohaner Plates of Chalukya Pulakesin II (dated in A.D.630), EP.IND., XXVII, no.9, pp.37, here it is praised the Čālukya dynasty of kings, "who had performed sacrifices such as bahusuvaprāṇaka, āsvamēdha, paṇḍarika, and vājapēya."

112. Sharma, Rajendra Nath, Brāhmiṇs through the ages, op.cit., specially pp.179-224: “Brāhmiṇs in the post-Mauryan period”.

113. Bhandup Plates of Chittarājadēva, CORP. INSC. INDIC., VI, op.cit.

115. Watters, op.cit., II, pp.185-86.

116. The Harshacarita of Bana\bhatta, op.cit., Ch.VII, "K\stratalabdhi", (\ldots) Kum\ara, alias Bh\askaravarman, king of Pragyotisa, Assam, who entered in alliance with Har\sa, p.121, line 17 ff.

117. Nidhampur Copper Plate of Bh\askaravarman, EP.IND., XII, no.13, pp.65-71.

118. Two lost plates of the Nidhanpur Copper Plates of Bh\askaravarman, EP.IND. XIX, no.19, pp.115-25. Most of the br\\math{}\hbox{\ddot{a}}ma\math{}nas settled in Sylhet came from Mithila. Perhaps so big was the number of the br\\math{}\hbox{\ddot{a}}ma\math{}nas so emigrating, that, in course of time, it became something like a tradition for the br\\math{}\hbox{\ddot{a}}ma\math{}nas of Mithila to emigrate to Sylhet.

119. Three Copper Plate Inscriptions from Gaonri, EP.IND., XXIII, no.17, pp.101-5. The charts are very complete information regarding the original places of the br\\math{}\hbox{\ddot{a}}ma\math{}nas. Their purpose is to note the donation of villages, land and a sat\math{}ra to the br\\math{}\hbox{\ddot{a}}ma\math{}nas.

120. EP.IND., XX, no.11, pp.105-08.

121. EP.IND., XXX, no.35, pp.203-07.


123. About gifts of various kinds and praising them as very convenient to obtain religious merits, vide Kane, P.V., History of Dharma\math{}\hbox{\ddot{s}}\math{}\hbox{\ddot{a}}stras, in our Appendix A, infra, pp.153-59.

124. The Ilichpur Grant of Pravaras\math{}\hbox{\ddot{e}}\math{}\hbox{\ddot{n}}a II of Vakataka, IND. ANTIQ., XII, pp.239-46.

125. Ponnaturu Plates of Gas\\math{}\hbox{\ddot{a}}\math{}\hbox{\ddot{a}} Ga\math{}\hbox{\ddot{s}}\math{}\hbox{\ddot{a}}mantavarman, EP. IND., XXVII, no.41, p.216.

126. Siripuram Plates of Anantavarman, Lord of Kali\hbox{\ddot{n}}a. EP.IND. XXIV, no.9, p.47.

127. Narwan Plates of Vikram\hbox{\ddot{a}}ditya II, EP.IND., XXVII, no.23, p.125.


130. Thana Plates of Mummuṇirāja, CORP., INSC. IND., VI, no.14, p.82.

131. Grant of Rājarāja I Devendravarman, EP.IND., XXXI, no.24-2.

132. Chandravati Plates of Chandra-Dēva, EP.IND., XIV, no.15, pp.192-96. These Gāhaḍavalāsas were Vaiṣṇavas, as the invocation to the goddess Śrī in the head of the chart shows. The grant defines the incomes that those brāhmaṇas should share as the bhōga, kāra, turuṣkadāṇḍa, pratyādāya, vishayadāna, etc.

133. Bhopal Copper Plates Insc. of Mahakumāra Hariśchandra CORP. INSC. INDIC., VII, no.44, p.146.

134. Dasgoba Plates of Rājarāja III, EP.IND. XXXI, no.34, p.249.

135. Nagari Plates of Anangabhima, EP.IND., XXVIII, no.40, p.235. This charter contains the genealogy of the Imperial Gaṅga family. They are said to have descended from the moon and to be of Brahmanical caste, and they were zealous protectors of the Brahmanical orthodoxy.


137. Kālegaon Plates of Yādava Mahādēva, EP.IND., XXXII, no.3, pp.31-6. The privileges conceded are the eight kinds of enjoyment:

(i) - nīdhi (treasure trove),
(ii) - nīkṣepa (deposits on the soil),
(iii) - jala (water reservoirs),
(iv) - pāṇā (actual privileges),
(v) - siddha (Siddhaya, what is already brought under cultivation),
(vi) - akṣini (actual privileges),
(vii) - sadhya (waste lands factible to be used),
(viii) - āgāmi (future profits)

Cf. Altekar, The Rashtrakutas and their Times, op.cit., p.228, for bhōgas and enjoyments.


140. Wadgaon Plates of Vakataka Pravarasena II, EP.IND., XXVII, no.16, p.74.

141. This Samkaragaqa belonged to the Kataccuri family, which seems to be a sanskritized form of Kalacuri, vide Bhandarkar, D.R., APP. to EP.IND., Vol.XIX-XXIII, p.393.

142. Abhona Plates of Samkaragaqa, EP.IND., IX, no.45, p.296.

143. Lohaner Plates of Chalukya Pulikisin II, EP.IND., XXVII, no.9, p.37.

144. Savnur Plates of Chalukya Vikramaditya I, EP.IND., XXVII, no.20, p.115.


146. The Amagachhi Grant of Vigraha Pala III, EP.IND., XV, no.18, p.193.

147. Two Plates of Devanandadeva, EP.IND., XXVII, no.51, pp.325-32.


150. Vide, infra, Map Section, Vol.II.


152. Chandravati Plate of Chandradaeva, EP.IND., IX, no.47, pp.302-03.


154. Daikon Plate of Prithvideva, EP.IND., XXVIII, no.27, p.146.

155. Five Copper Plate Inscriptions of Govindachandra of Kanauj, EP.IND., VIII, no.14, pp.149-55.


158. Saktipur Copper Plate of Lakshamaṇaśeṇa, EP.IND., XXI, no. 37, p. 11.


160. Inscriptions from Maihar, EP.IND., XXXV, no. 22, p. 171.

161. The Inscriptions in the Caves at Nasik, EP.IND., VIII, no. 8, p. 71. The Inscription of cave No. 4, — Plate ii, Kshatrapa (Ksh.) 13 — Undated.

162. These inscriptions of Nasik fix the seat of the local administrative unit at Gōvardhana (actual Govardhana, Gangapur, on the right bank of the Godavari). This town apparently was a focus of guilds and vigorous commercial activities. The Nasik caves are sixteen kilometers from Govardhana. In the same inscriptions there are references to several villages in the vicinity.

163. Inscriptions in the Caves at Nasik, EP.IND., VIII, no. 8, Ins. in the Cave no. 10, (plate iv, Ksh. 5).

164. Ibidem, cave no. 12, plate v (Ksh. 9).

165. Ibidem, cave no. 14, repeating the same self-eulogy of cave no. 4.

166. Nasik Cave Inscriptions, EP.IND., VIII no. 8, cave 15, p. 88.

167. Regarding the vigorous commercial activity in Western Deccan, coinciding with the rise of the Sātavāhana power, vide the thesis of Ray, Himanshu, Monastery and Guild, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1986. The suggestive title is for the exhaustive study of Sātavāhana sites, most of them commercial towns where guilds maintained interesting relations with the numerous monasteries of the region.

168. Nasik Cave Inscriptions, EP.IND., VIII, pp. 82, 88.

169. Ibidem, p. 71, the precise case of the caves at Nasik, commented there.
170. Sharma, R.S., Indian Feudalism, op. cit., pp. 112-34, Urban Decay in India, op. cit., pp. 122 ff. commenting about scarcity of coins and other urban elements in most of the monastic archaeological sites, levels corresponding to A.D. 600-1000.

171. The complete text of these inscriptions is in EP. IND. VIII, pp. 59-96. Additional bibliography is recommended, ibidem.

172. EP. IND., XXI, no. 10, pp. 55-61.


175. Kaseli Grant of Bhōja II, CORP. INSC. INDIC., VI, no. 60, p. 267.

176. There was a difference between this type of philanthropic cum spiritual goal and the cession of rights to brāhmaṇas which transformed them into landlords. Cf. the grant of an estate to three brother brāhmaṇas made by Gōvindachandra of Kanauj in A.D. 1143. "Gangaha Plates of Gōvindachandra of Kanauj", EP. IND., XIII, no. 20, p. 216.

177. Two Copper Plate grants from Indore, EP. IND., XV, no. 16, p. 286, Plate 1.

178. Bobbili Plates of Chandavarman, EP. IND., XXVII, no. 8, pp. 33-6. "This village has been conferred by us for the purpose of increasing (our) own religious merit, life and frame ... "

179. The Sohawal Copper Plate Inscription of Maharāja Sarvanatha, EP. IND., XIX, no. 21, p. 127.

180. Sumandala Plates of the time of Prithvīvigraha Bhaṭṭāraka, EP. IND., XXVIII, no. 16, p. 79.


183. The Bhor State Museum Plates of Khambha II, EP. IND., XXII, no. 28, p. 186.
184. Fragmentary Grant of Paramāras of Abu, EP.IND., XXXII, no.16, pp.135-40.

185. Dharwar Plates of the time of Śiśhāna, EP.IND., XXXIII, no.7, p.32.

186. Since most ancient times there were several grades of rulers and, consequently, different levels of sovereignty of power. Supreme sovereigns had many mahārājas who "meditated to his feet". Each of these mahārājas at once had his own maṇḍala of mahāsāmantas, sāmantas or rāṇakas, and also it could happened that each of these sāmantas had his own feudatory bhavas who paid homage (and tribute to him). When one of this small feudal lords donated land, he entrusted another smaller subject (or institution) to a sub-level of dominion but under his power. Vide Kane, P.V., History of Dharmaśāstra, Vol.III, op.cit., "Grades of Sovereignty", pp.63-71; also Gopal, K.K., "The Assembly of the Sāmantas in Early Medieval India", in Journal of Indian History, no.42, Trivandrum, 1964, pp.241-50; Sircar, I.C., Land System and Feudalism in Ancient India, University of Calcutta, Calcutta, 1966.

187. Vide in Aiyangar, K.V., Rangaswami, Introduction to Vyavahārālāṅga of Kṛtyakalpataru of Lakṣmīdhara, Oriental Institute, Baroda, 1958, the problem of participation of brāhmaṇas in courts but been themselves subjects of law, pp.5-8.

188. Sharma, R.S., Indian Feudalism, op.cit., 73-74, who is bent on discovering parallels and affinities between European and Indian feudalism admits that the differences are of various kinds, and one is that, in India it is an economic phenomenon.

189. Tipperah Copper Plate Grant, EP.IND. XV, no.19, pp.301-11.


191. Mookerji, R., Local Government in Ancient India, op.cit., pp.1-29. The Hindu world is a society of small corporations, of local administration, of small and strong unities; their permanence and halt have given continuity to India.

192. For the political aspect of these institutions, vide, Saletore, Ancient Indian Political Thought and Institutions, op.cit., pariṣad : pp.406-09; senā : pp.409-12 (also pūga); viśāh : pp.412-17.

194. Mookerji, *Local Government* ..., op.cit., p.111; also vide Sharan, Mahesh Kumar, *Tribal Coins, a Study*, Abhinav Publications, New Delhi, 1972, pp.25-6, for Taxila area coins circulated by local corporations of traders; p.50, for coins issued by gaṇas, in the third century, after the disappearance of Kuṣāna power; pp.183-86, for coins circulated by the Mālava-gaṇa-viśaya.

195. Sultanpur Copper Plate Inscription, EP.IND., XXXI, no.9, p.57. This chart contains valuable information about the Gupta administration, officials and their duties.

196. Kothuraka Grant of Pravaraśena II, EP.IND., XXVI, no.21, p.155.

197. Nagardhan Plates of Svāmīrāja, CORP. INSC. INDIC., IV-II, no.120, pp.611-17; also EP.IND., XXVIII, no.1, p.1.


199. Grant of the Time of Krishna III, EP.IND., XXXII, no.4-2, pp.55-8.

200. Miraj Stone Insc. of Vijayāditya, CORP. INSC. INDIC., VI, no.52, pp.241-42.

201. For the Pāṇḍava sect, Vide, infra, Ch.V.


203. Jhalodi Stone Inscription of the time of Dhārāvarsha, CORP. INSC. INDIC., VII, no.73, p.254.

204. Harsauda Stone Inscription of the Time of Dēvapāla, CORP. INSC. INDIC., VII, no.50, p.171.


206. Ibidem; the *Mahābhārata* contains different strata. However, the terms used in it correspond to the linguistic developments of the beginnings of the Christian era.
In the Mahābhārata (M.B.) maṭha is used as "temple", "college" and "cloister" in certain passages which may have been written late, although the term āvāsa for meaning a dwelling for ascetics continued to be used. In the MB, Āśramavāsikaparvan ("The section relating to the dwelling in the hermitage") [vide, the Āśramavāsikaparvan, being the fifteenth book of the Mahābhārata, by Belvalkar, Shripad krishna, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, 1959] we have the use of the term āśrama + āvāsa (root āvas, Rg Veda: to abide, to dwell, to spend time). From it: āvasathya and āvasathiya: a night lodging, dwelling for pupils and ascetics; āvāsa, in the MB = abode, residence, dwelling for ascetics, a proper place for practising tapas (penances). Vide, Sorensen, S. (ed.), Index to the Names in the Mahābhārata and a Concordance, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1963, pp.5-7. Cf., the terms associated with Āśramavāsikaparva, like āśramanivāsaparva; or āśramasthāna and āśramavāsa, both equivalent.

However, the term āśramavāsa is understood in the above mentioned passage of the MB as "life in the forest", "ascetic life", represented here by Dhṛtarāṣṭra's decision to lead a life of asceticism in the forest (15.1-14, pp.3-14; 15.1-23, pp.14-17; 25.1-18, pp.74-6). The description of the abode of Dhṛtarāṣṭra read like the classical representations of similar abodes, as Kanva's āśrama or that of the great Vyasa (vide, infra Ch.VII) in the works of Kālidāsa. Therefore, it could be presumed that in the MB the use of the term āśramavāsa corresponded to early passages of the Epic, which reflect early the Brahmanical ascetic ideals but not the monastical phenomenon which started in the beginnings of the early medieval period.

On the other hand, in the MB, Tīrthayātrāparvan ("The episode relating to the pilgrimage to the Tirthas"), [vide, The Āraṇyakaparvan, The Third Book of the Mahābhārata, Sukthankar, Vishnu (ed.), Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, 1942, Parts I and II; Part I.80, pp.258 ff.: The Tīrthayātrāparvan], also, vide, Kane, P.V., History of Dharmaśāstra, op.cit., V.IV, sections IV and ff., pp.552-833, are mentioned the maṭhas which were present at several famous tīrthas depicted in these passages: Puṣkara [82. 20-39], Kurukṣetra [9.1-3], Āgastyopākyāna [96.1-3], etc. These passages have many similarities or are identical with equivalent descriptions of the same tīrthas in the Padma Purāṇa and Matsya Purāṇa. Besides, in [86.18-20] there is a description of the Sudarśana lake which coincides totally with that of the Junāgaḍa Rock Inscription of the time of Skandagupta. Junāgaḍa is in Kathiawar, Gujarat, and it is dated in A.D.
455 (CORP. INSC. INDIC., II, pp.58 ff.). That lake was constructed by the provincial governor (rāṣṭriya) of Candragupta Maurya, nevertheless its dam was repaired by Suvīśākha in A.D.150 (CORP. INSC. INDIC., III, Introduction, p.83). The similarity between the Purāṇas and other evidence with the Gupta inscription may be indicating that the new terms introduced in the Tīrthayātārāparva for conveying new religious phenomena, like the maṭhas, would suggest a date between third and fifth century A.D.


211. EP.IND., XXXII, no.38-III, pp.293-97, line 31 ... "Maṭhikā samanvītā ētā bhūmayo Viṣṇugāṇa – sammēdyē bhagavatō (te) śrī-Nārāyaṇa bhāṭṭarākāya Tathā." 

212. Rashṭrakūṭa Charters from Chinchani; and Three Grants from Chinchani, EP.IND., XXXII, no.4 and 5, pp.45-76.

213. The Inscriptions in the Cave at Nasik, EP.IND., VIII, no.8, pp.59 ff.

214. EP.IND., XXXII, no.4-I, p.52, verse 22.


218. Ibidem, no.5-III, pp.73-6.

219. EP.IND., XXVI, no.9, pp.102-12, verses 86-7.
220. It is the opinion of the editor of the inscription, Pandit Akshaya Kaerty Vyās, p.102.

221. EP.IND., (IX, no.45, p.262.


223. EP.IND., (XIII, no.25, pp.166-70.

224. The Kālāmukha genealogy of the Andhra branch of ascetics belonging to the Simha Pariṣad is (Ibidem, p.164)

Lakaśipu-Pāśupati (I)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prabhuṭarāśi Paṇḍita (I)</th>
<th>Bhuvanarāśi-Muni</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Vidyēśvara (I) Vamēśvara Pāśupati (II) Prabhuṭarāśi (II)

| surnamed Kālāmukhendra |

Vidyēśvara (II) Prabhuṭarāśi (III)

225. Madras Epigraphical Collection, no.423 of 1914, quoted by Krishnarao, Bhavaraj, EP.IND., XXIII, p.165.

226. EP.IND., XVII, no.2, pp.8-9.

227. EP.IND., XVII, no.9, pp.118-19.

228. EP.IND., XXXI, no.3, pp.21-4.


231. Vide the Kudiyanḍaṇḍal Grant of Vira-Nṛsiṁha, dated in AD.1506, EP.IND., XIV, no.17, pp.236-40, in which several important Brahmakulaka monastic centres of south India — as Śrīraṅgam or Conjeeveram — are mentioned. The inscription records the donation of the village Kudiyanḍaṇḍa, in the Chingleput district, to Mahādēva Sarasvatī, disciple of Sādādeva Sarasvatī, both gurus of the Śaṅkaracīrya-māṭha of Conjeeveram. In the charter, a portion of the spiritual genealogy of that monastery is
given: Śrī Śankarayogin, who was the head in C.A.D. 1291; Saddāśiva, Mahādēva and Candracūḍa, who lived approximately between A.D. 1506-1527.

The editors of this inscription, V. Venkateswara and V. Viswanath, quote (pp.233-34) Sivendra’s work entitled Guru-rāja-ratna-mala-stava. Sivendra was also a guru at the Śaṅkarācārya monastery. In his work he provides the spiritual genealogy of the gurus of this famous maṭha of south India. Such a list consists in fifty five gurus, which names coincide with the old list of gurus preserved in the same maṭha.

Therefore, the list of gurus, from Śaṅkarācārya until Śivendra, is like follows:

1. Śaṅkara
2. Surēśvara
3. Sarvajña
4. Satyabōdha
5. Jñānāranda
6. Śuddhānanda
7. Ānandajñāna Yōgin
8. Kaivalyā Yōgin
9. Kripāśaṅkara
10. Mahēśvara
11. Ādigaṇa
12. Candracūḍa
13. Saccidghana
14. Vidyāghana
15. Gaṅgāchāra
16. Saddāśiva
17. Surēnāra
18. Vidyāghana
19. Śaṅkarēndra
20. Candracūḍa
21. Paripūrṇabōdha
22. Saccīśukha
23. Āśukha
24. Saccīdaghana
25. Prajñāghana
26. Āśvīṣa
27. Mahādēva
28. Bōdha
29. Saccidānandaghana
30. Candrāśēkhara
31. Āśukha
32. Vidyāghana
33. Śrī Śaṅkara
34. Saccidvilāsa
35. Mahādēva
36. Gaṅgāghara
37. Prīpabōdha
38. Brahmānandaghana
39. Ānandaghana
40. Paraśīva
41. Bōdha
42. Candracūḍa
43. Āśvīṣa
44. Mahādēva
45. Candrāśēkhara
46. Vidyātīrhth
47. Śiva Yōgin
48. Śaṅkarēnanda
49. Saddāśiva
50. Mahādēva
51. Candracūḍa
52. Saddāśiva
53. Paraśīva
54. Ātmaśībōdha
55. Śivendra
For dāna (the ancient gift system) as it is explained, defined, systematized in the Dharmaśāstra tradition, vide Kane, P.V. History of Dharmaśāstra, op.cit., Vol.II, Ch.XXV, pp.837-88; also Vol.IV, Ch.II, pp.41-56; Cf., Thapar, Romila, Ancient Indian Social History, Orient Longman, Delhi, 1987; Nath, Vijay, Dāna : Gift System in Ancient India, c.600 B.C. - c.A.D.300, Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, 1987.

Kane's synthesis on dāna (gifts or charity) goes through all major Brahmanical Sanskrit texts where the subject is referred. The survey starts with the Rg Veda, where gifts of various kinds and donors are praised (I.125,126; VI.47. 22-25; VII.18.22-25; VIII.5.37-39,6.46-48, 46.21-24,68.14-19; X.62.8-11), followed by the Brāhmaṇas (B), like the Taittiriya B. (II.25; II.2.6.3) or other old sources like Jaimini (III.4.28-31). In the context of the economic conditions of the Vedic phase, gifts of cows and horses were considered the best. Other texts where also gifts of cows and horses are praised are the Taittiriya Saṃhitā II.3, 12.1 and the Kāthaka Saṃhitā XII.6. Gifts of villages also had come to be made very early, as such gifts are mentioned in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad IV.2.4-5. In the Mahābhārata, Anuśāsanaparva, many aspects about dāna are also explained with great detail. Also some Purāṇas (P.) give special attention to dāra, like the Agni P. (Ch.208-215, 217), the Matsya P. (Ch.82-91 and 274-289), Varāha P. (Ch.99-111). Some digests
were specially devoted to the topic of dāna, as Hemadri's Dānakhaṇḍa (of the Caturvargacintāmaṇī), Gōvindānanda's Dānakriyā-kaumudī, Nilakantha's Dānamayukha, Vidyapati's Dānavākyāvali, Ballalasena's Dānasāgara, Mitramīra's Dānaprakāśa.

One of the main discussion in the Śāstras is about what constitutes dāna. Kane's definition (based on the study of Śāstras) is that dāna consists in the cessation of one's ownership over a thing bestowing the ownership over such a thing on another person(s). That acceptance may be mental, vocal or physical (principal sources on it are the Śabara on Jaimini IV.2.28 and Yājñavalkya II.27).

There are six constituent elements (aṅgas) of dāna (as it is stated by Devala): the donor, the donee, śraddha (charitable attitude), the subject of gift which must have been acquired by the donor in a proper way, a proper time to make the gift, and a proper place where to do the gift (and also where the gift — if it is land — should be indicated).

Kane quotes a number of passages from several sources where also this subject is mentioned, as various Samhitās, the Mahābhārata, Manu, etc. In continuation, an important paragraph is devoted by Kane to iṣṭa and pūrta as the appropriate context in which gifts must have been done. Iṣṭa and pūrta are treated in the Mahābhārata and in Manu (IV.226-227).
About the donor, the Śāstras make differences and classifications of dānas depending on the varṇa to which the donor belonged. However, anyone, including women and śūdras could make gifts. Nevertheless, it is important to appreciate that donors from different varṇas were required to possess certain qualities. This was harder for the twice-born because he had to be free from incurable or disgusting diseases, be religious, charitably inclined, free from vices, pure and following a blameless profession for livelihood (Devala, quoted by Kane, II, p.645).

About the donee (pātra : a person fit to be a donee), Dakṣa, III.17-18, says that gifts should be done preferably to one’s parents, guru, friends; to a well-conducted man, to the poor, the helpless; to those who are endowed with special excellence. Maru, 4.193-200, on the other hand, gives a long list of the type of persons to whom gifts should not be made. Brhad Yāma III, 34-38, does the same but with brāhmaṇas who are unfit to be donees [Cf., Brhat Parāśara, VIII, pp.241-42; Vṛddha Gautama, Ch.III, pp.508-09].

Deya is the object of gift. Deya should be anything which has been acquired by the donor without causing pain or loss to another or without worry or trouble to himself, whether it be small or valuable. It is not the extent of the gift that causes the merit (puṇya), but the mental attitude, the capacity of the donor and the manner how the good to be donated (and the wealth
of the donor) has (have) been acquired (in Devala, p. 288, quoted by Kane, II, p. 817).

The best gifts (deyas) are very well classified in several Sūtras. They are, in order of importance:

1st: Food, curds, honey, protection, cows, land, gold, horses and elephants.

2nd: Learning, housing, domestic utensils.

3rd: Shoes, swings, carts, umbrellas, vessels, seats, lamps, wood, fruits, etc.

Yājñavalkya, I.210-211, put in first place land, followed by lamp, wood, garment, sesame, ghee; however, in I.212, he says that the gift of vidyā (knowledge) is the best. Mahābhārata, Anuśasamaparva 52.2 and the Viṣṇudarmottara say same, that the gift of land surpasses all other gifts. But also the Viṣṇudarmottara says that the gift of protection of danger (abhyadāna) is the highest dāna.

The types of dāna are divided, according to frequency, into
a) nitya, or daily gifts (like food);

b) naimittika, or gifts given at certain specific times (like eclipses);

c) kāmya, or gifts given through the desire of victory, progeny, etc.

And depending on quality, dānas (gifts) would be:

a) dhruvadāna, like dedication of a garden, well, grove, etc.
b) vimaladāna, or gifts given to those who know Brahman.

About forbidden gifts, in general the authors of Śāstras agreed that brāhmaṇas should not accept weapons, liquor, poisonous substances, precious stones, etc.

The rules about the special occasions to make gifts (the best sources for this are the many epigraphical evidences) as well as the places where gifts are to be made are also specified in the Smṛtis, Purāṇas, and digests. In this matter, gifts made in tīrthas are of very high value and if the tīrtha is a place of worship of a liṅga, as a result, the value is even higher.

Hemadri (Dāna, p.83) says that whatever is donated in tīrthas (as Vārāṇasī, Kurukṣetra, Puṣkara, Prayāga, etc.) or in mountains, on rivers seashore, habitations of cows, siddhas, sages, etc. yields infinite reward.

Gifts must be done following certain procedures which include the recitations of very specific mantras.

Gifts to brāhmaṇas of cows, milk, houses land should be done every day (Yājñavalkya I.133); spending money for the marriage of brāhmaṇas and settling them as householders gives merits without precedent (Dakṣa III.32-33; Inscription of the Śilāhāra prince Gaṇḍarāditya, J.B.B.R.A.S. Vol XIII, p.1 ff., dated in A.D.1:10). However, gifts of land have been eulogized as the most meritorious of all gifts from ancient times. Vasiṣṭha's
Dharmasūtra 29.16; Brhaspati 7; Viṣṇudharmottara; Matsya Purāṇa; Mahābhārata, Anuśāsana 62.19, Vanaparva 93.78-79, coincide in that the best manner to be purified from whatever sin is to give land. And because gifts of land were so valued, they were subjected to many rules about; Yājñavalkya I.318-320; Aparaśka (pp.579-580) quoted by Brhaspati, and Vyāsa. These directions were followed in most of the inscriptions since fifth century A.D. onwards.

Finally, special reference is made to the mahādānas or special gifts, usually considered being sixteen by the Purāṇas. Such mahādānas, in general, had to be done to brāhmaṇa-teachers and gurus.

The mahādānas are (Kane, II, pp.869-80)

1. Tulāpuruṣa (weighting a person against gold or silver which were distributed among brāhmaṇas).
2. Hiranyagarbha (distribution of gold among the guru and his followers).
3. Gosahsra (a gift of thousand cows given after fasting).
4. Kāmadhenu (a gift of a figure of a cow made of gold to the guru).
5. Hiranyāśva (a gift of a figure of a horse of gold).
6. Hiranyāśvaratā (a gift of a figure of a chariot of gold, plus an umbrella, silks, etc.).
7. Hemahastiratā (a gift of a figure of a chariot of gold, having figures of eight lokapālas, Brahma, Śiva, Surya,
etc.).

8. Pañcalāṅgalaka (gift of five ploughshares of wood, five of gold and of a piece of land).

9. Dharādāna or Haimadharādāna (gift of a golden representation of the earth).

10. Viśvacakra (gift of a cakra of gold).


12. Mahākalpalatā (ten kalpalatās with figures of various flowers and fruits, made in solid gold ... ).

13. Saptasāgaraka (gift of seven vessels...).

14. Ratnadhenu (gift of the figure of a cow made with precious stones).

15. Mahābhūtaghata (gift of a golden jar set with precious stones ...).