Along the northern frontier of the Indian subcontinent the
Himalayas form a broad continuous arc for nearly 1600 miles long
from the river Indus in the north west to the river Brahmaputra in
the east. Whereas in the west, the Hindukush mountain runs from
the Pamirs in the southwesterly direction and is regarded as the
natural boundary of India in the north west, this mountain wall on
the north, north east and north west separates India from the rest
of Asia. North of this mountain system lies Sinkiang and in the
north east the plateau of Tibet which extends northwards to the
Kun Lun range. To the south, the average width of the Himalayas is
between 200 and 250 miles upto the plains. Physically the Himalayas
form three parallel zones: (1) the Great Himalaya, (2) the Inner
Himalaya also known as Middle or Lesser Himalaya, and (3) the Sub-
Himalayan foothills. Each of these lateral divisions exhibit certain
homogeneous characteristics.

The Great Himalaya, the highest zone, consists of a line
of snowy peaks with an average height exceeding 20,000 feet. The
width of this zone is about 15 miles. Spurs from the Great Himalaya
project southwards into the Inner Himalaya in an irregular fashion.
The Nepal and Sikkim portion of the Great Himalaya contain the
largest number of highest peaks. Next in general elevation is the
Kumaun section, followed by the Punjab and Bhutan sections. Great
Himalaya is least high in Assam. The snow line on the southern
slopes of the Great Himalaya varies from 14,700 feet in Nepal and Sikkim to 17,000 feet in Himachal Pradesh. The Himalayas on the whole contain 114 peaks of over 20,000 feet, of which 75 exceed 24,000 feet. The best known peaks are Gauri Shanker or Everest, 29,140 feet, the highest mountain in the world; Kanchanjanga, 28,176 feet; Dhaulagiri 26,825 feet; Naga Parbat 26,600 feet and Nanda Devi 25,661 feet. The entire Great Himalaya is mostly uninhabited.

The Inner Himalaya, about 50 miles wide, borders the Great Himalaya range on the south. It consists principally of high ranges issuing obliquely from the Great Himalayan range at points where the latter changes its direction, and several outer disconnected ranges. These comprise Nag Tibba, given off from Dhaulagiri, the Dhauladhar range from the neighbourhood of Badrinath, the Pir Panjal range, and the north Kashmir range from the Joji La separating the Jhelum and Kishanganga rivers. The three outer parallel ranges are the Mahabharat, stretching through Nepal; the Mussoorie range between the Ganges and the Sutlej; and the Ratanpir in southern Kashmir, separated from Pir Panjal by the Punch river. The Inner Himalaya possesses a remarkable uniformity of height, between 6,000 and 10,000 feet. It is a complex mosaic of forest covered ranges and intervening fertile valleys. While it is not as forbidding as the great Himalaya to the north, it has nonetheless served to isolate the fertile valleys of the Himalayas from the Gangetic plains. Except for major valley centres such as Srinagar, Kangra and Kathmandu, and hill stations such as Simla, Mussoorie and Darjeeling, the region in general is moderately populated.
The outermost and lowest zone, the Sub-Himalaya, including the Siwalik range is contiguous with the plains. Its width gradually narrows from about 30 miles in the west until it nearly disappears in Bhutan and Assam. A characteristic feature of the Sub-Himalaya is the large number of longitudinal, flat-bottomed valleys. (1)

Traditionally known Northern Frontier

This rugged train of the Himalayas and the natural barriers of hills and rivers in it, and elsewhere in the Indian subcontinent largely determined the different political and cultural units into which India was divided. Natural divisions favoured the growth of local and regional spirit and fostered separatist tendencies. Though the consolidation of large kingdoms was very difficult, yet it was never unknown. At times there were small independent kingdoms, and in other periods they were incorporated in large empires of the Mauryan and Gupta kings. But there had always been a fundamental unity of India. The people and the rulers had always regarded themselves as Indians and remained in the Indian fold. This concept of one nation and one people has been known from times

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immemorial. In Bharatpur we read:

उत्तरं मल्लयुद्धम् हिमालयस्य द्रिश्यम्। वध्ये पद्मास्त्यां नाम आस्तिः भजन सूचितः।

Utttram Yat Samudrasya himandres Caiva Dakisinan

Varsam tad (tam) Bhartam nama bharati yatra santatih.

The country laying to the north of the ocean and to the south of Himandri (Himalaya) is called Bharata-Varsha (Land of Bharata) for their live the descendants of Bharata (Bharti Sanmitih). The date of this text is not known. But it indicates that the Greater Himalaya had been the northern limits of Bharatavarsha. (2)

The Himalayan frontier of Bharatavarsha had always been known to Indians throughout the Vedic period. The Rig Veda which was written about 1500 B.C. contains abundant geographical knowledge of this region. (3) Almost every river which had its origin in the Himalayas was known to the author of the Rig Veda. (4) Evidently the land below the Himalayas was proper India. Geographical information contained in Samhitas, Brahmanas, Upanishads and Sutras makes us believe that at no time Indians had considered Kailash Mansarowar region a foreign land, (5) which is still considered as a place of pilgrimage for the Hindus.


(4) Ibid., pp. 231-33.

Northern India during the early Vedic period was inhabited by several tribes. The northern most portion of the Himalayas was inhabited by the Mujavant tribe. They were a distinct people having their name after a mountain Mujavant in the Himalayas. The Bakalikas were another hill tribe inhabiting the adjacent region. Mahavrishas and Gandharis were the immediate neighbours of hill tribes. Sialkot and Central Punjab was inhabited by Uttarakurus and Madras. Kashmir and the foot hill area was the territory of Uttara-Madras and Uttarakurus. (6)

The tribal population of the Aryans gradually came to be organised into a political state. Tradition tells us that one of the earliest rulers of the land was Mamu, who ruled between 3100 B.C. and 2550 B.C. During his times the country was visited by a serious flood and Mamu had to take abode in the Himalayas. Druhyus, one of the later rulers of the age carried the Aryan culture beyond the natural borders of India and established several colonies in that region. The Mamu period of the Vedic age was followed by the Mandhatri period ranging from 2750-2550 B.C. and the Parasuram period from 2550-2350 B.C. During this period several monarchs such as Jamdagini, Sahastra Arjun and Sagara rose to great prominence. The old kingdoms of Pauravas, Kanyakubjas, Druhyus and Anavas disappeared in the Punjab. The Yadwas receded into Deccan. The eastern kingdoms of Vaisali, Videh, Ayodhya, Kasi and Anvas in Bengal continued to exist. These kingdoms played a dominant role in the age of Ramchandra 2350-1950 B.C. Raghu the founder of the dynasty

(6) Ibid., pp. 252-62.
was followed by his grandson Dasharath who led his victorious campaigns throughout the length and the breadth of India. His two grandsons were the rulers in Kasapath-Desa near the Himalayas. Krishna period 1950-1400 B.C. was marked by the great Bharta War. This war was fought sometime in 1400 B.C. Several rulers of the Himalayan region were the participants in this war. The exact location of their territories has not been ascertained. But the geographical knowledge which one derives from the accounts of Mahabharata and Bhagwat Gita, provides sufficient ground for believing that the frontiers of India during that period were formed by the Himalayas. (7)

India in the sixth century B.C.

After the long traditional epic period, we are on a firmer historical ground. At the beginning of the sixth century B.C. India was divided into sixteen great Janpad and several smaller ones. Among them Gandhara, Kamboj, Kuru, Kosal, Mull, Vajji, Panchal, Sakya were either in the southern Himalayan regions or had their territories extended up to the Himalayan ranges. The extent of the country known to the great grammarian Panini is indicated in the Sutras. According to that information the westernmost point of Bharatvarsa was Prakauva, corresponding to modern Ferghana. To south of it was Kamboj the modern Badakshan Pamir. It was known as Gandhara in the contemporary literature and the edicts of Asoka. The extent of Gandhara was roughly around Rajouri including Hazara

(7) Ibid., pp. 271-328.
district in Pakistan, and probably extending as far as Kafiristan. South of Kamboj was Kapisi, the modern Kafiristan south east of Hindukush. Kabul river valley with its outpost at Takshila was known as Gandhara Valley. At times Kashmir was also included in Gandhara. Among the autonomous clans the Sakya state was most important. It was bounded on the north by the Himalayas, on the east by the river Rohini and on the west and south by Rapti. Besides these, Trigorta i.e. Central Kulu, Mandamati i.e. Mandi, Kalakuta i.e. Kumaun were also known. Kalakuta was an extensive region including the lofty mountains, wherein the Beas, the Sutlej, the Yamuna and the Ganga had their sources. (8)

The period of Imperial Unity

Of all the states that were flourishing in the sixth century B.C., the kingdom of the Magadha was the first to make a successful bid for supremacy under Bimbisara which have left behind a rich legacy of Imperial tradition. Its emperors belonging to the Sunaga, Nanda and Maurya dynasties carried their banners up to the inhabited parts of the inner Himalayan regions. (9) Chandragupta Maurya who freed India from the Macedonian yoke and brought about its political unification under one scepter, (10) negotiated an alliance with Parvatka (Himalayan king) before empire building. With the help

(8) V.S. Agrawala, India as Known to Pāṇini (Lucknow, 1953), pp. 37-54; R.C. Majumdar and A.D. Pusalkar, ed., The History and the Culture of the Indian People: The Age of Imperial Unity (Bombay, 1951), vol. II, pp. 1-17.

(9) Majumdar and Pusalkar, ed., n. 8, pp. 18-53.

(10) Ibid., p. 54.
of the several frontier tribes such as the Kiratas, Kambojas, Panasikas and Balkikas, he could built up the great Mauryan Empire. The empire of Asoka extended up to the natural boundaries of India and beyond that in the west. His influence spread far and wide even in the north Himalayan regions. His son Kunal was the governor of Gandhara and another son Jaluka became an independent ruler of Kashmir after his death. (11) After the collapse of the Mauryan power the Kushanans established an extensive empire within and beyond India in the northwest. Emperor Kanishka's hegemony spread over the Kashmir and Central Asian regions of Kashgar, Yarkand and Khotan. In Central Asia he fought against China for a long time to maintain the integrity of his frontiers with China. In the Central sector of modern boundary of India in the north, his hold extended up to the territory of inner Himalaya. In the meantime northern India was divided into a number of small kingdoms and autonomous tribal states. From Kashmir to Kafiristan there was a great Janpada Ki-Pin. In the neighbourhood of Jamuna, Sutlej and Beas, Kuninda tribe was ruling. Kulu was inhabited by Kulutas. Territory to the east of Kangra was occupied by Andumbras. Nagas were the rulers between Ganga and Jamuna valleys in the north. Rohilkhand and the adjoining areas were parts of the kingdom of Ahichchhatra. (13) Under such


(12) The established theory is that they were from Yuezhi tribe of nomads from Central Asia, but Dr. B.N. Puri disputes this theory in regard to the origins of Kushanans. B.N. Puri, *India Under the Kushanans* (Bombay, 1965), p. 7.

divided country Gupta empire grew. Samudragupta's empire comprised within it the territories of Rohilkhand, Kumaun, Garhwal, Nepal and Assam. Its northern boundary was along the high Himalayas. Chandragupta II Vikramaditya (375-414), the son and successor of Samudragupta completed the task begun by his father. His victorious arms penetrated to the far eastern limits of India, and beyond Hindukush in the north west. The Gupta Empire continued to flourish up to A.D. 467. (14) On the disruption of the Gupta Empire Mihirkula, the Huna leader established his sway in Kashmir and the neighbouring areas, but was dislodged within a few years. (15) Yasodharman of Malwa rose and fell like a meteor between A.D. 530 and 540. His suzerainty was acknowledged over the vast area extending up to the Himalayas in the north. (16)

Harsha of Thaneshwar

Early in the seventh century Harsha came to power at Thaneshwar in A.D. 606. During the course of next four decades he had established a most powerful empire in India. All the existing kingdoms of Kapisa, Kashmir, Kuluta, Satadru, Mo-li-pa-lo and Suvarnagoota were incorporated in his empire. Mo-li-pa-lo was the


(16) Ibid., pp. 42-95.
name of Ladakh and Suwarnagotra was situated in the high Himalayas. It was ruled by women and was known as the kingdom of women. The sovereign sway of Harsha was extended from the Himalayas to the Vindayas including Kamrupa. Harsha was probably the second great emperor of India who was having diplomatic relations with China. (17) He died in A.D. 647 and with him the glory of Thaneswar and Kasuuj departed for ever. The country was once again divided into old principalities of the sixth century with addition of Gurjara-Pratiharas, Guhilots and Chapas. On the northern frontier of India several small kingdoms began to take shape.

Events in heartland of Asia

While in India there was a comparative stability, in the far west Hazrat Mohammed was born in A.D. 570. He made his first public appearance in A.D. 613 and started the preachings of Islam. After the death of Mohammed on 7 June 632, Islam became a militant religion. The battle of Siffin between Sunnis and Siyas was fought in A.D. 657, after which the spread of Islam became very rapid. In around A.D. 712 this religion reached to Sinkiang and about the same time Muhammed bin Qasim made an attack on India. In China the weak Han regime was replaced by the T’ang Dynasty. Kao Tsu, the first emperor of the new dynasty began to consolidate China from

(17) R.S. Tripathi, History of Kanuuj (Benaras, 1937); Majumdar and Pusalker, ed., n. 15, pp. 96-123. For the geographical knowledge of the area during the period up to sixth century A.D. known to Chinese one can see, L. Petech, Northern India According to the Shui-Chung-Chu (Rome, 1950).
A.D. 618. In Tibet the monarchy after ages had acquired new dimensions with Song-ten-Gam-Po.

**Tibetan Imperialism**

Tibetan kings traced their ancestry to the son of a noble family of Magadha in Bihar, India, who is said to have been born with long blue eyebrows, full set of teeth, and webbed fingers. (18) According to a legend, king of Kosala, Prasenjit had turned out one of his son who became the ruler of Tibet in the name of Gua-Khris-btsan. Another legend says that the first king of Tibet was the son of Krishna. According to Chinese legend, the ruler of Tibet came from the western country and settled at Si-Tche-Choui, his name was Houi-ty-pou-lso-Kye. (19) Sangtsen Campo was the great king of Tibet. He came to power in A.D. 618, and soon set upon the consolidation of the kingdom. His successor Mang-Song Mang-tsen (20) soon began his Imperial career. He came in conflict with Turks and Chinese power. After subduing them Mang-Song Mang-tsen extended his empire beyond Pamirs, including whole of Eastern Turkistan. During the time of his successor Dzong Mang-po-je, the four garrisons (Kashgar, Khotan, Kucha, Karushsher) were re-conquered by Chinese in A.D. 692. His entire career was spent in

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(20) Mang-Song Mang-tsen the King of Tibet (649-676).
suppressing the rebellions in different parts of the empire. He took the field in person against Nepal, and was killed during the course of Campaign in 705. (21) Tri-de Tsung-ten devoted his attention towards China and consequently the border peoples once again became independent of imperial authority. Being free from China, he once again turned towards west. In the year 790 he recaptured the four garrisons of Sinkiang from where the Tibetans had been driven in 692 by the Chinese forces of the Emperor Wu. The Tibetan army advanced westward to the Pamirs and even reached the Oxus river. A few years later, the Arabian Caliph Harun Al Rashid allied himself with the Chinese in order to keep the Tibetans in check. Attacked by the allied forces of the Chinese and the Arabs, the Tibetans succeeded in holding their own without substantial loss of territory, in spite of considerable defeats. The expansionistic dreams of Tibetans were, however, checked. Soon afterwards Tibetan nobility became rebellious and more powerful during the reign of Tri-de-Songtsen. (22) He, therefore, decided to free monarchy from the power of nobility, and confiscated the lands. He also divided the country of Tibet from the country of Ragy and defined the frontiers. His definition of the frontier was, "All the grass under Tibetan rule grew with points looking towards Tibet." (23) Imperial Tibet once again returned to religious one

(21) Du-Song Mong-po-je (676–704).

(22) Tri-de-Songtsen (A.D. 800–815).

(23) Francke, n. 19, p. 87.
and the supremacy of feudals was established. "The Tibetan monarchy, although it filled two centuries of the history of Asia did not leave any political or ethical traces in Turkistan, it left only scanty and unimportant traces in Tibet itself, which in 842 found itself nearly in the same conditions as it was in the 6th century". (24)

Growth of the Kingdoms on the Frontier

Prior to the sixth century the kingdoms on the frontier were part of the mighty empires of India. But from sixth century they began to grow rapidly. For a brief period of Harsha's rule they once again came into imperial fold. When a strong central authority disappeared the petty principalities on the frontier were once again left to themselves. The petty states were wholly unconnected with one another. This was one of the fundamental reasons that the hill chiefs could not afford any noticeable resistance to Tibetans, when they tried to overran the territory in second half of the seventh century. Withdrawal of Tibetan authority was followed by the systematic growth of Gilgit with its dependencies of Hunza and Nagar, Baltistan, Ladakh, and Spiti. Below the river Sutlej, Bashahr, Garhwal, and Kumaun were also developing as independent units.

Gilgit

Gilgit was known by the name of Sargin in ancient times.

Later the name of Gilit was given to it, and this was changed into

Gilgit after the Sikh Dogra conquest of the place. In ancient
Sanskrit literature the place was probably known by Gahalata and
the area was ruled by Hindu Rajas with a title of Ra. Unfortunately
the names of Hindu Ras have been lost, with the sole exception of
the last of their number, Shri Buddutt. The principalities of Hunza,
Nagar, Darel, Chilas, Astor, Haramosh, Gurais, Yassin and Chitral
were under the control of Shri Buddutt. (25) The rule of Buddutt
was most oppressive. The people out of their sufferings were
induced by an adventurer of the name of Azor, and Buddutt was killed.
Azor married the daughter of Buddutt and established himself as a
ruler of Gilgit. Dynasty thus founded by Azor was called Trakhane,
after Tarkhan the ninth ruler of the line. The fortunes of the Shin
kingdom of Buddutt began to decline with the introduction of Islam
by Azor. (26) The kingdom was broken up into a number of small
independent states, which commenced to make periodical wars with
one another. The petty quarrels were continued up to 1841 when
Karim Khan sought the help of Sikhs and lost the territory to
them. (27)

(25) Major J. Biddulph, The Tribes of Hindoo Koosh (Calcutta,

(26) It seems that Islam was introduced in the late tenth or early
eleventh century in the Gilgit region.

(27) Biddulph, n. 25, pp. 134-43; Frederic Drew, The Jumboo and
Hunza and Nagar

Hunza and Nagar after the assassination of Baddutt was one kingdom. It was ruled by a branch of the ruling family of Gilgit. The seat of the government was Nagar. The first Mohammedan Thum (King) Mayroo Khan was married to a daughter of Trakhan, the King of Gilgit, who bore him twin sons named Moghlot and Girkis. The twins were hostile to each other from the beginning. Mayroo Khan, unable to settle the question of succession, divided his state between them. Girkis was given the territories north of the river known as Hunza and Moghlot received Nagar. Since then these states were hostile to each other. Only in the face of external enemy they used to combine, otherwise they did not see eye to eye with each other. For centuries they were independent. Only after the establishment of Mughal power in India they came under its fold. (28)

Baltistan

Baltistan was for many years bound up with Ladakh. During the times of Great Tibetan empire Baltistan appears to have formed part of it. It was the introduction of Islam in particular which alienated the Baltis from their Ladakhi neighbours. At the same time when Azor established himself in Gilgit, a Mohammedan adventurer Ibrahim Shah had usurped the sovereignty of Baltistan. Ibrahim Shah originally came from Egypt, and became the founder of Makpouns dynasty. It appears from the genealogy that the five successors of Ibrahim Shah were under the influence of the then

(28) Biddulph, n. 25, p. 31.
prevailing religion of the area. At one period the royal race was nearly extinct. The king had only one daughter who was given to a fakir in marriage and the offshoots from them became the rulers of Baltistan. Ali Sher Khan, the thirteenth ruler from Ibrahim Shah was most powerful. He extended the territories of Baltistan at the cost of Gilgit and Ladakh. Except local wars with Gilgit and Ladakh, nothing significant had happened. After the death of Ahmed Khan, his sons began to fight each other and sought the help of Mughals. Help was promptly dispatched and the state was made a tributary. Soon after the collapse of Mughal authority Baltistan became free. (29)

**Ladakh**

Kings of Ladakh traced their origin in the Sakya family of Suddhodana. Some of the rulers of the line were known by the names of Ikshvaku, Karnika, Dharmaraja and Rastrananda etc. Prior to the ninth century it is difficult to construct any rational history of Ladakh. Up to the period of Harsha, the Chronicles of Ladakh only mention names of persons, places and gods of worship etc. known to Indians. From the middle of seventh century Ladakh was colonised by Tibetans. Faced with combined forces of Arabs and Chinese in Turkistan, Tibetans had to withdraw in early ninth century. In the words of Luciano Petech,

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Ladakh did not constitute an integral part of the Tibetan State, but must have been considered as a dependency or even as a kind of Colony, since, like the whole of Western Tibet, it remained outside the territorial organisation of the Tibetan army as described in the Pāma-Nyingpo; part V, Chapter 4. This Colonial or Semi-Colonial status is quite natural, because Ladakh's population was not as yet or was only beginning to become Tibetan, - a process that must have required a long time ... when Skyid-Lde Ni-ma-mgon early in the 10th century founded the Western Tibetan Kingdom, he found no trace of Tibetan rule in Ladakh. The lower part of the valley was divided into a large number of very small states, while Upper Ladakh constituted a single state a little more important; its dynasty boasted, as did the Gru-gu dynasty, of descending from Kesar. Probably this situation had existed from very ancient times, notwithstanding the invasions the country had suffered. (30)

In A.D. 842 the first Ladakhi dynasty was founded by Skyid-Lde. He was also known by the name Ni-ma-mgon. He was followed by his son Lde-dpal-mKor-btsan. The period from 842 to 900 was known for vigorous religious activities. Skyid-Lde-mi-ma-mgon, (31) the third in the dynasty was a great king. He consolidated the kingdom of Ladakh and his possessions were far and wide. The kingdom of Ladakh in the time of Skyid-Lde-mi-ma-mgon was extending from northern mountain ranges up to Roduk, including Demchog, Guge (south east of Roduk and west of Mansarowar) and the modern districts of Lahul and Spiti. He had three sons. Before his death he had divided the vast kingdom of Ladakh amongst his sons: to the eldest Dpal-gyi-mgon, he gave Ladakh proper, to the second Purang and Guge

(30) Petech, n. 24, pp. 102-3.
was assigned, and the third LDe-Gtsug-mgon was made the ruler of Zanskar and Spiti. Dpal-gyi-mgon, the owner of Ladakh, was made suzerain over his brothers. (32) After the partition Ladakh enjoyed complete peace and prosperity, up to the fourteenth century, except for a minor attack by Kublai Khan in 1207. Utpala (33) had subjugated Kulu, Purang, Guge and several localities of Baltistan in the eleventh century. Rgyal-Bu-rin-Chen (34) in the fourteenth century was a great king of Ladakh. He invaded Kashmir and overthrew the ruler Sahadeva. (35)

Ladakh, Baltistan and other hill principalities were paying tribute to Kashmir only when its ruler happened to be powerful. After the attack by the Ladakhi King, a Muslim dynasty in Kashmir was founded by Shah Mir in A.D. 1339. The successors of Shah Mir turned their attention towards the tributary principalities. In A.D. 1359 Shabudin attacked Ladakh and added Baltistan, Kashgar and Kabul to the Kingdom of Kashmir. (36) Shabudin's conquests were shortlived, and the principalities became independent once again.


(33) Utpala A.D. 1080-1110.

(34) Rgyal-Bu-rin-Chen (1320-50).


(36) Ibid., p. 376.
In A.D. 1423 Zain-ul-Abdin reduced all tributary states of Kashmir. He carried his victorious arms to Guge, Bhotta Desh, Sheh north of Lah. The entire region was situated on the banks of the river Indus, came into the Sultan's possessions. One of the brothers of the King of Guge was taken as hostage to Kashmir, and was then converted to Islam. Ladakh once again became independent. Between 1440-70 Ahmad Khan, the ruler of Kashmir, invaded Ladakh and with the help of Khri-dpon of Purang went up to Guge. Thereafter the successive Muslim rulers of Kashmir were engaged in attacking Ladakh. In 1553 and 1562, Ladakh was conquered by Haider Chak and sons of Ghazi Shah. (37) In the meantime the Mughal power was taking roots in the country. Akbar who came to power centered his attention towards Kashmir. Mughal attacks on Kashmir were resisted by Kashmiris. Though Kashmir was annexed by Akbar in 1587, Ladakh remained independent. In the sixteenth century Ladakh was attacked by several adventurers like Mir Vali, Mirza Haider and Sultan Said Khan, from north and north west. (38)

Sen-ge-rnam-rgyal came to power in Ladakh in 1590. During the fortyfive years of his rule he restored the shattered Kingdom of Ladakh to its glory. In the east he subdued Guge, Rudok including Kailash up to Central Tibet. Si-ri and Kyar-Kyar, the places in western Tibet, were made tributaries. Zanskar and Spiti were regained. But when he turned westward, he was met with an army of

(37) Ibid., p. 381; Petech, n. 28, pp. 114-20; Charles Ellison Bates (comp.), Gazetteer of Kashmir and adjacent countries (Calcutta, 1878).

(38) Petech, n. 24, pp. 126-36.
the Baltis in alliance with Mughals. He was defeated and fled to the fort of Kharbu. Sen-ge-rnam-rgyal then sent a messenger to Husain Beg and opened negotiations with him. He promised to send suitable tribute to Mughal Court. But this promise was never fulfilled and Ladakh remained independent. Bde-Idan-rnam-rgyal, the son and successor of Sen-ge-rnam-rgyal had to face the Mughal ambassador Mohammed Shafi in 1664 and had to send him back with tribute of 1,000 Asarfis and 2,000 rupees with many gifts. He maintained the Kingdom of Ladakh which included Guge, Purang, Rudok, including Mansarowar and Kailash region. (39)

Ladakh-Tibet War and treaty of 1684

During the reign of Deleg Namgyal (1675-1705) a dispute arose between Bhutan and Tibet. Ladakh on behalf of Bhutan took arms against Tibet and a battle was fought. In this war Ladakh had to take the assistance of Kashmir. Ibrahim Khan the Mughal governor of Kashmir sent a huge army under his son Fida Khan in favour of his vassal state of Ladakh. The Mongol-Tibetans were routed at Basgo. They were charged up to Tashigong in Guge territory near the present border. At this stage Lhasa government approached Ladakh for peace negotiations. On the intervention of the Tibetan Lama Hbrug-pa-pham-dbam-po, a peace treaty was concluded in 1684. This treaty provided:

(39) Petech, n. 24, pp. 150-56. For History of Ladakh see, Alexander Cunningham, Ladakh: Physical, Statistical and Historical; with notices of surrounding countries (London, 1854); Francke, n. 19; Petech, n. 24; Zahiruddin Ahmad, n. 32.
"As in the beginning King Skyid-Lde-mi-mgon gave a separate Kingdom to each of his sons, the same delimitation to hold good. The Ladakhis were not to allow an army from India to proceed to attack upon Tibet through Ladakh; mNy-a-ri'-Skot-gsum was 'set apart (from Ladakh) to meet the expenses of sacred lamps and prayers' (offered at Lhasa); but at Mensar (near mount Kailash) the King (of Ladakh) shall be his own master, so that the Kings of Ladakh may have wherewithal to pay for lamps and other sacrifices at the Gang Tso; it shall be his private domain. With this exception, the boundary shall be fixed at the Lhari stream at Demchog." (40)

By this treaty except a small village of Mensar, Ladakh lost her possessions in western Tibet. Kailash Mansarowar region was also ceded to Tibet. However its old boundary with Tibet was retained. Soon after this treaty Aurangzeb's control over Ladakh became weak and after his death in 1707 it once again became independent. Prior to the Dogra conquest in 1834 the Kingdom of Ladakh was bounded in the north by Shahidulla and in the east by Polong Darndra. "The people who dwelt between the Zoji pass, Landar, Shedulla, and Plong Darndra" were the subjects of the Ladakhi King. (41)


Spiti

Spiti in early times was ruled by Sen Kings. One of the earliest known ruler was Samudra Sen. He presented to the temple of Parasram at Nirmad a Copper plate grant and founded that institution. In course of time in the reign of Rajendra Sen Kulu became tributary to Spiti for a short period. The fortunes of Spiti declined during the reign of Chet Sen and in the seventh century it was annexed by Ladakh. A small Jagir of three villages was given to the son of Chet Sen who settled there peacefully. Later in the tenth century Spiti was given to one of the three sons of Skyid-Lde-mi-ma-Mgon, the King of Ladakh. Subsequent to this the fate of Spiti was determined along with Ladakh. (42)

Bashahr

In about the sixth century Bashahr state was ruled by a Rajput family. One of the earliest rulers was Praduman. He was succeeded by several unimportant Kings. During the Mughal rule in India, the state was ruled by Raja Kehri Singh. He was the most powerful amongst hill Chiefs. One of the Mughal emperors summoned Kehri Singh to Delhi. It was said that he was always guarded by a portion of cloud on his head. Emperor was very much pleased with the hill Chief and he honoured the King with a title of Chatrapati.

The successors of Kehri Singh were ruling the state even after the collapse of the Mughal power. Prior to advent of the British the state was temporarily occupied by the Gorkhas of Nepal. (43)

Garhwal

From times immemorial the region was known by the name of Kedar-Khanda. This has been the most holy and esteemed land for Hindus all over India. Ancient Sanskrit classics such as Vishnu Purana and Mahabharata etc. tell us that a number of tribes were dwelling on the borders of Bharat. Amongst them the Sallas, the Nagas, the Khasas, the Hunas and the Kiratas were the most important. The area between Sutlej and Yamuna was divided into 'Bavoni' States i.e. in fifty two small feudatories. All the rulers of the later period had claimed their descent from the famous Salivahana. (44) Kedar-Khanda was known by the Kingdom of Brahma pura, when Huen Tsang, a Chinese traveller visited India in A.D. 629 the area was ruled by a Katyuria dynasty. The last of the Katyuris was Birdeo. He was most tyrannical King. After his death the principality was divided in small feudal lords. Amongst them one Som Pal was succeeded in establishing the Kingdom of Garhwal. His sovereign sway was

(43) Andrew D'Cruz, The Political Relations existing between the British Government and Native States and Chiefs subject to the Government of N.W. Provinces (Calcutta, 1862), p. 313 ff.; Punjab State Gazetteer (Lahore, 1911), vol. VIII, pp. 5-7.

extended all over Garhwal and the pilgrim route to Gangotri was in his control. In the fourteenth century the seat of government was at Dewalgarh. In around A.D. 1483 Bahadur Khan Lodi the King of Delhi granted the title of Shah to Balbhadra Shah of Garhwal. This title is still used by the descendants of rulers of Garhwal. Balbhadra Shah was followed by Man Shah, Dularam Shah, Mahipati Shah and Medini Shah. Fateh Shah the successor of Medini Shah ruled Garhwal from 1684 to 1716. He was the most powerful ruler, and had once attacked Tibet without any success. Garhwal was always having an open hostility with Kumaun, and a regular war was fought under all the rulers. So long the Central power was not affected, none of the Mughals ever interfered in this hill state. Mughals were content with the nominal subordination of Garhwal. With the fall of the Mughal rule Garhwal became independent and was occupied by Gorkhas of Nepal in 1803, and remained up to the rise of the British power. (45)

Kumaun

Kumaun was also ruled by Katyuris for several centuries. It appears that the Kingdom of Kumaun and Garhwal were one under Birdeo the ruler of Katyuria dynasty. After the fall of Katyurias the Kingdom was divided into small feudal principalities. A Rajput adventurer who came from Jhansi in Uttar Pradesh was destined to be the first Chand ruler of Kumaun. Atma Chand (46) and his successors had ruled the state till Gorkha occupation. It was only when a

(45) Ibid., pp. 443-606.
strong power in Central came, Rudra Chand was invited to Delhi. He immediately accepted the overlordship of Mughal authority in the reign of Akbar. Among the successors of Rudra Chand, Baz Bahadur was most powerful King of Kumaun. He extended his sovereign sway to a greater territory, and added Bhotia Mahals of Kumaun in his direct control. Not satisfied with territorial possession, he attacked Tibet. Heavy snow and unfavourable terrain compelled Baz Bahadur to retreat. His successors could not maintain the kingdom well. At a time when Mughal authority became weak, the decline in the fortune of Kumaun also set in with the accession of Devi Chand in A.D. 1720. Before the rise of the British Government Kumaun was in possession of Gorkha rulers of Nepal. (47)

Hill Chiefs in relation to paramount power

So long as the strong power of the Mauryas, Kushanas, Guptas and Harsh was ruling in India, the hill areas were a part of their empires. But from the time of the Pratiharas (48) till the rise of Mughals, the Central authority in India was practically non-existent. Several rulers came and went but the extent of their possessions was very limited. For most of the time they fought amongst the rulers in the plains. This led to the rise of powerful hill principalities. With the expansion of Islam, India was successively


(48) Pritiharas ruled from A.D. 725 to 1027.
attacked by muslim adventurers. The rulers in India remained busy in the resistance to muslims and the adventurers remained busy in the loot of the rich and fertile planes of India. None except one Bakhtyar, ever tried to cross the natural frontiers of India in Assam. His attempt proved a complete failure, and his army was destroyed in the high hills. (49) Mohammed Bin Tugluk once tried without success to subdue the hill Chiefs of Himanchal. (50) Consequently the hill Chiefs remained outside the arms of muslim invaders for a long time. It was only after the establishment of Mughal authority in India, Akbar looked towards the hill Chiefs. Kashmir was annexed in A.D. 1587 to Mughal empire. From Akbar to Aurangzeb all the hill Chiefs had accepted the Mughal overlordship. Emperors themselves remained content with the nominal allegiance and tributes. They never tried to impose the administrative control in the hills. Paramount and dependent both were happy. The fall of the Mughal empire once again let loose the constituent of the empire, and the hill Chiefs became free. The British empire which came to establish in India, moved gradually from Calcutta to Kashmir. After occupation of every state, the territorial limit was ascertained, accepted and modified as per needs of the empire.

(49) R.C. Majumdar and A.D. Pusalkar, ed., The History and the Culture of Indian People: Struggle for Empire (Bombay, 1957), p. 123.
(50) Majumdar and Pusalkar, ed., n. 35, p. 73.