CHAPTER XI

EATABLES AND DRINKS, CUSTOMS AND COSMETICS.

Literary evidences suggest that vegetable food was common among
(a) Vegetables:
most of the people. Hsuan Tsang refers to various agricultural
products of different countries which he visited. He writes
about several countries producing rice, wheat and cereals
in abundance. Naturally they might constitute the common
items of food. He mentions millet and barley also.
I-Tsing supports Hsuan Tsang by stating that wheat-flour
was abundant in the North-west, rice or barley in the
west and rice in Magadha but millet was scarce. According
to Bana the people of Sthanvisvara region used rice,
wheat, beans of different varieties and sugar-cane as the
main items of food. All sorts of cakes made of corn were
also used as food. Bana in his description of the camp
of Harsha, refers to the eating of all types of grain by
common people. Bhandin gives an interesting description of a
meal consisting of rice mixed with ghee and curds.

Hsuan Tsang mentions different kinds of
fruits growing in various parts of the country. He speaks about mangoes,
bananas, grapes, oranges, pomegranates, the papaya, the coconut, the Madhuka, the berry, the amla,
the Kapittha, the adumbara, the melon, the Yinduka,
the pear, the peach, the plum and the apricot (the last four were grown in Kashmir only). Bana and I-sing also mention some of them. At least some of them might have certainly been used by common people because Hiuen Tsang describes them as most esteemed by the people. Hiuen Tsang names ginger, mustard and pumpkins as edible herbs and plants. Like Fa Hien, Hiuen Tsang also remarks that onions and garlic were eaten by very few persons. Persons who ate them were forced to live outside the city. I-Tsing supports the statements of his predecessors by declaring that Indians did not eat onions.

Hiuen Tsang observes that milk, butter, cream, soft sugar, sugar-candy, the oil of mustard seed etc. were usual articles of food. Salt was in common use. Sugar-cane was a popular article. Bana refers to butter-milk pots protected by wet seals and covered by white cloths in the camp of Varaha. Milk, curds, butter and ghee seem to be quite favourite among all types of people.

There is no doubt that meat formed one of the articles of food. Just like (b) Meat Diet: Kalidasa, Hiuen Tsang refers to it. He notes that fish and flesh of gazella and dear were generally used either fresh or sometimes salted. People were prohibited to eat the flesh of x, ass.
elephant, horse, pig, dog, fox, wolf, lion and monkey. Those who ate them were despised and compelled to live outside the city. Probably they were treated as untouchables. The same authority informs us that Harsha provided choice meats for men of all sorts of religion in his travelling palace. Bana confirms these remarks when he states that bearers of goats attached to things of pigskin and of rabbits were found in Harsha's camp.

Buddin graphically describes how a deer was shot, skinned and roasted before a full veneration meal was prepared. I-Tsing observes that the Buddhist monks in India, unlike those of the islands of the southern sea, abstained from eating even the three pure kinds of meat on the uposatha (weekly Sabbath) day. The remarks mean that otherwise the monks ate the three kinds of meat on other days. Brähmins sometimes sacrificed animals in Yajnas. Meat diet was often prepared to satisfy the fore-fathers. Even orthodox Brähmins ate certain kinds of meat on certain festivals. That meat-eating was common to all classes of people is clear, but it was not a part of the regular diet of all people.

As in the Gupta times so in the age of Harsha too, drinking seems to

B. Drinks:

(a) Common to men and women of all classes:

be a common feature of all the members of classes. Both males and females, types of liquor are also mentioned by contemporary authorities. According to the testimony
of Liuen Tsang Brāhmīns and Buddhist monks drank syrup of grapes and of sugar-cane, but not in the nature of fermented wine. Kṣatriyas used wines prepared from the vines and the sugar-cane. The Vaiṣyas were habituated to strong distilled spirits. The low mixed castes drank any type of liquor. The Brāhmaṇas of the times evidently had no objection to drinking wine because Bāna himself was a brāhmin born in the family of soma-drinking Vatayāṇas. A painting at Ajantā suggests that kings along with queens drank wine from special wine-cups. Along with other presents to Harṣa from Brahmakaravarmen, Hāsāvega brought cups of ullaka, diffusing fragrance of the sweetest wine. Bāna mentions queens accustomed to beverage. He speaks of the wine flushed cheeks of Mālava and Malbāri women. All types of men and women drank wines at certain festivals and celebrations. The birth festival of Harṣa witnessed persons from top to bottom dancing under intoxication.

Bāna refers to rum-booths just as Kālidāsa has done. Liuen Tsang (b) drinking-booths: says that they were distinguished by sign-boards. Dandin sings in praise of wine. He remarks that wine fortifies the charm of youth. It neutralises all misfortunes. It increases the capacity for enjoyment. It drowns the consciousness of sin. It encourages continual enjoyment of music
Bâna relates that the beauties of his master fanned him with wine-perfumed breath. These praises seem to be curious to the present age. But Dandin is not unconscious of the detrimental effects of drink when he says that the habit of drink often led persons like Srigalika to jail.

The Chinese pilgrim observes that people ate from one vessel, mixing all sorts of condiments together, which they took up with their fingers. They did not use spoons or any sort of chopsticks except in cases of sickness when copper spoons were used. People washed themselves before every meal. The fragments and remains (of former meal) were not served again. The food dishes were not passed on. Utensils of clay must be thrown away after use; while those of gold, silver, copper or iron were rubbed and polished. After the completion of meal they again washed their mouth and hands and cleansed their teeth with a willow stick. Until such ablutions were finished, they did not touch one another, I-Tseng confirms these observations of his predecessor. He also mentions bath, throwing away soiled pots and cleansing of mouths with tooth-picks. Moreover he states that clean water for drinking was kept in earthenware or porcelain jars. While water for cleansing purposes was stored in jars of copper or iron. Bâna also refers to some of these habits of cleanliness such as bath, cleansing the
mouth etc. He mentions the habit of chewing betel leaf after meal. However it was not indulged into on sad occasions. References are also made to the use of camphor with betel and of aloes-wood incense for perfuming drinking water. Naturally these must be the luxurious habits of the rich, the nobles and the royal families.

Berna enumerates several vessels used for cooking purposes probably in his times.

**D. Utensils:**

While describing Harsha's camp he refers to water-pots, cups, fire-trays, ovens, simmering pans, spits, copper saucepans and frying pans. Of course the exact sense of some of the Sanskrit words may be said to be doubtful. The Chinese traveller also mentions that Indians had generally a good supply of household necessaries of various qualities. He remarks that though they had different kinds of cooking implements, they did not know the steaming boiler. (Hsuan Tsang is probably referring to large boilers used in large families in China). The household utensils were mostly earthen ware, a few being of copper. The frescoes at Ajantā also reveal a number of small as well as large vessels evidently used for cooking and drinking purposes. Big pots near an oven, dishes, trays, cups, goblets or jugs are depicted. Some of the jugs have large containers, stomachs, narrow necks and handles.

Literary and numismatic sources and
archaeological remains throw considerable light on the costumes worn by the royalty, the nobility and the common people. Varieties of cloth, as well as of garments are also mentioned by these sources. Hiuen Tsang observes, that the garments of people were made of Kasuya (silk from the wild silk-worm) muslin and of calico (cotton). They also made garments from Kama (a sort of hemp), Han or Kambala (a texture woven from fine goat-hair or sheep-hair) and Ho-la-li (stuff made from the wool of a wild animal). The last one being fine and soft, was easily spun and woven and was prized as a material for clothing. Thus it may be inferred that the principal varieties of cloth were (i) Kasuya, covering types of silk and of cotton, (ii) Kama, linen manufactured from flax, jute or hemp (bhanga), (iii) Kambala woollen cloth or blanket and (iv) fine woollen fabrics made from the wool of a wild animal. Bana also refers to a variety of silk and cotton cloths. He mentions bokula (bark-silk), lalatantuj (spider's silk), metra (snake-silk), musuka (muslin), Kama (linen) and Bedara (cotton). I-Tsang too casually refers to silk cloth worn by monks.

Literary evidences and Ajanta frescoes indicate that men in India from 4th century A.D. to 7th century A.D. were familiar with turbans, caps, coats, shawls,
and loose garments comparable to the dhoti of modern times. But it seems that people usually wore two garments one styled as outer and the other inner. Hiuin Tsang remarks, "The inner clothing and outward attire of the people have no tail ring. They mostly esteem the free white garments and motley is of no account. The men wind a strip of cloth round the waist and up to the armpits and leave the right shoulder bare." These remarks of Hiuin Tsang do not seem to be quite correct. It is already shown by the help of various evidences that the tailoring had possibly existed in the days of Harṣa. References of Bāna indicate that coloured, designed and ornamented garments were also used in those days. The white colour might have been very popular. Hiuin Tsang adds that women put on the robes which fell down to the ground but did not cover their shoulders. The Ajanta paintings (caves No. 16 and 17) and statements of Bāna show that women also wore jackets, skirts, upper garments, a girdle etc.

Hiuin Tsang notes that the dress and ornaments of the kings and grandees were excellent. Bāna confirms the general statement of the Chinese pilgrim. He informs us that Harṣa had a white lower garment which shot with silk threads, appeared like a mass of embossed foam, while his upper garment was spangled with worked stars. At another place he states that Harṣa wore two seamed robes dukūla of
of flamingoes. It indicates that this flamingo design noted by Kālidāsa, seems to have survived in the days of Harsha. The dress of Harsha may be taken as a specimen of those worn by contemporary kings.

Bāna gives a glowing description of the attire of the nobles. He relates that the chief who had come to Harsha's camp, wore tunics (Kančuka), Chinese cuirasses thrown over them, coats and dōhlas, bodices (ślakha) speckled with a mixture of various colours and shawls (ćittariyāh) of the shades of parrots' tails. Fine waist bands (śastam) were wound about their flanks and their heads were wrapped in shawls of a soft saffron hue. They had fine turbans (Ksaśamchala) inlaid with bits of crest-gems.

Foot-soldiers were girt with scented jerkins spotted with a powder of black aloe-wood paste. They also put on turbans. They fastened daggers in string knots in their sashes of doubled cloth (patta-pattika). The cavalry riders had almost the same type of dress. Though this description of the dress of the soldiers is associated by Bāna with a goddess like Sarasvati, as evidently had in mind might have contemporary soldiers in his mind. The narration suggests that the dress of soldiers did not
differ from that of the nobles, except of course in the quality of material used.

Their dress seems to be quite simple consisting of two or at the most three garments of ordinary kind without any decorative designs. As Hsuan Tsang observed the ordinary person might have wound a strip of cloth round the waist, and wore either a tunic or merely covered his chest with another loose piece of cloth. This is supported by Bana. The courier Mehalaka and simply a tunic girt up tightly by a mud-strained strip of cloth and the knot hanging loose and fastened by a ragged cloth swinging behind him. Bana's friend Sudrati, a typical Brâhma, wore a pair of pale silken Paundra clothes.

According to Bana the dress of the ascetics was perhaps the simplest. His worldly possessions consisted of a staff, black antelope skin, bark-dress, rosary and girdle. Bhairava-ârya's deputy had a red scarf hanging from his shoulder. His upper robe consisted of a tattered rag knotted above his heart and stained with red calk. His loin cloth was merely a piece of cloth. Hsuan Tsang states that the Sramanas (the Buddhist monks) put on only three types of robes, the cutting of which depended
upon the school of the monk. Both yellow and red colours were used. The Jain Digambara ascetics (Nigrantaas) wore no cloth at all. Bana also refers to a naked Jain sage (Digambara).

Just like Kālidāsa, Bana too, refers briefly to the peculiar dress of the people living in forests.

Perhaps they were scantily dressed.

Sēbara youth Sarabakaiu girl round his board lain's a short black antelope-skin as if it were a woman covering. His dark body was sheltered by a leather-quiver on his back, which was made of a bear's skin and wrapped with a leopard's skin. The Bnails of our time living in forest areas, wear a kind of dress similar to which has points of resemblance with this ancient dress worn by Sarabakaiu. But the Sēbara leader Matangaka was clad in a silk dress red with cochineal and was perfumed with fragrant ichor. From this description of garments worn by foresters and their chiefs, the same distinction between the rich and the poor perhaps stands out that while the chief (upper class) wore comparatively costlier clothes of silk or fine cotton, their subjects put on garments made of coarse cotton cloth or skins.

Different sources inform us that women

(ii) Costume of women
upper garment generally a long loose cloth, and the other was called the lower one known as jpasuka. Probably the counter part of the modern skirt. Ajanta frescoes (caves No. 16 and 17) show women with a loose piece of cloth which is a little longer than that worn by men. Sometimes they are depicted in half armed or full armed jackets. Wealthy ladies were often found to put on larger lower and upper garments the texture of which was so fine that it revealed the figure of the wearer. An article of dress like the modern bodice was not unknown. Siuen Tsang to some extent confirms the evidence of the Ajantâ paintings and of Kalidâsa. He states that women wore long robes. Bana to a greater extent supplements the former as well as contemporary evidence.

It appears that corslets were known to women in the days of Bana. He observes that the goddess Candi wore a corslet (kanaka) fastened in front and opening in front. He also mentions silk skirts and jackets worn by women. The upper garment was often supported by a girdle (bandha) worn above the naval. When on horseback women probably wore petticoats (fulaka) and over them silken gowns, which were fastened by girdles. Kâlati, riding on a horse, had worn a gown (fulakabandha) of bleached white silk, which was hanging down to her toes. It was lighter than even snake's slough.
tint, with variegated spots of different colours. This is evidently a reference to the embroidery designs on clothes. The silk robes worn by ladies of Harsha's court, were adorned sometimes with hundreds of flowers and birds. Even the awnings were likewise designed with figures, Yasovati, during her pregnancy, as she lay all day long on her couch, saw the reflections of figures embroidered on the awning. Such dyed, coloured and embroidered clothes are also mentioned by Bana in the garments which were exhibited at the occasion of the marriage of the princess Vajyasi. The widows certainly put on the white garments which were utterly simple, Bana states, "let the earth (widowed by the death of Prabhakaravardhana) wear white clothes." Men and women of this age continued to adorn their hair in various ways, just like Kalidasa, Bana also mentions several modes of dressing the hair and decorating it with various practices. Sikha was the common feature of males. If it was long, it was tied with top-knots. Terracotta figures indicate that the beard was usually shaved off. The custom of having long hair was usual. Bhandi, the son of Yasovati's brother, and side-locks of curly hair at the age of eight. The nobles, coming to Harsha, had peacock feathers stuck in their top-knots (cudamanikhandakacita). Some of the text is untidy.
from Ashictha indicate the same thing. Top-knots were common among the chiefs at Ujjain. Hindu ascetics had matted locks (Jetā) Vyāghraketa, a forest chief had his hair tied into a crest above his forehead. Nātangaka, the Sābara chief had thick locks curled at the ends and hanging on his shoulders. Some non-believers (Non-Buddhists like Jains) pulled out their hair and cut off their moustaches while others matted their side hair and made a top-knot coil. (This might be the practice with the Hindu hermits) The hair on the crown of the head was made into a coil, all the rest of the hair hanging down. Soldiers and perhaps common people too, had long hair hanging down.

The coiffure practised by women was naturally more vivid and decorative.

(ii) Coiffures practised by women.

The Ajantā paintings confirm the observations of Kālidāsa and of Bāna. Women either parted their hair into plaits (one or more veni) or tied it into a knot on the head. They had also curls of hair falling on both the sides. Over the hair, a little above the forehead, was worn and ornamented band either broad or narrow.

The references of Bāna suggest that flower decorations were greatly liked by the people especially by women in the age
the braids of their hair. They were adorned by brilliant ear-chaplets of sirisa flowers. Dancing girls wore wreaths about their brows. Instances of Sudrati and Bena himself, indicate that males also adorned their hair or ears with flowers. The locks of Harsha are said to have been encircled by a wreath of Jasmine flowers. Mention is also made of flowers like Kadamba, Campaka, Lavali, Nipa, Kutaja, Kalhara, Sephalika and Priyangu. They might have been also used for decorative purposes.

The Gupta practices of cosmetics must have continued to the times of Bana who refers to some of them while describing the marriage preparations of Rajyasri and birth celebrations of Harsha. The consorts of the nobles attending the marriage of Rajyasri, prepared cosmetics made of saffron paste, clotted by Balacana essence, unguents as well as strings of cloves (lavana-mala) mingled with Kakkola-fruits, nut-macs and large bright pieces of camphor. Ladies hastening to Prabakaravarman's palace for celebrating Harsha's birth were followed by servants who carried garlands in wide baskets with bath-powder sprinkled upon the flowers, dished laden with bits of camphor, jewelled caskets of saffron scents, ivory boxes studded with row of sandal-wood areca-nuts and tufted with slim Khadira fibres dripping
man go-oil, vermilion and powder boxes red and pink. The articles in the palace revealed how the cosmetics of the day were prepared and used. In a palace mortars, pestles, stone blocks and other utensils were bedecked with perfumes. Crocodile mouthed conduits, sprouting scented water, filled the pleasure ponds.

Sandal paste seems to be a favourite type of cosmetic. A crea sent to Bama says to perfume the body. The limbs were anointed in the perfuming room with sandal wood, sweetened with the fragrance of saffron, camphor and musk.

Sandal was used by women to perfume the body. The limbs were anointed in the perfuming room with sandal wood, sweetened with the fragrance of saffron, camphor and musk. The lac-dye must also have been a popular cosmetic. It was prepared from lac-juice extracted from fresh lac-branches, for it is noted that a fresh lac-branch became worthless when its sap was taken. It was used mostly, to decorate the soles, while the upper portions of the feet were stained with saffron. The lac-dye was applied to Laksmi's feet. Bana plainly mentions that the feet of Bana were red with the application of the customary lac. The comparison of forest fires to women's lower lips red with melted lac suggests that the lac was also
applied to lips to beautify the face.  

Kalidasa alludes to betel chewing indirectly, but Bana definitely remarks that the betel leaf was consumed in order to redden the lips. He relates that 

Kalāti’s joined lips were darkened by a deep, black stain of betel. Harsha’s lip was smeared with betel and vermilion. A special servant called the barber of the betel-casket (Pataladhara) carried the betel leaves and other ingredients. Owing to the practice of betel leaf chewing, the teeth must have been discoloured. It is perhaps to this that Hsuan Tsang alludes, when he remarks that people stained their teeth red or black.

Literary evidences are supported by epigraphic and archaeological evidences. The Badagasor stone inscription (473-74 A.D.) refers to dyeing of lips and toilet pastes prepared from different flowers and plants. The Alina copper plate of Siläditya VII (766-87) mentions the use of dark-blue coloured cakes of ointment made of pounded aloe-bark. At Ajantā, in cave No.17, a painting represents a lady of status with her maidens performing her toilet. Unguents, dye, a small lidded vessel on a tray and a mirror in her left hand are clearly visible. Probably she is about to put on the tilaka-mark on her forehead. Bana also mentions tilaka or the vermilion
spot made either of black agallochum or bright aloes. 127

The people of the age though comparatively simple
in their costumes, seem to be very

C. Ornaments:
(a) Materials and Types:

Several types of ornaments worn on different parts of
the body from top to toe, are mentioned

by contemporary sources. Ornaments were made from
precious stones like diamonds, rubies, sapphires and
emeralds. 128 Jewels and pearls were used by the rich
for making necklaces of various types. 129 Golden
ornaments seem to have been utilised by almost all
classes of people. 130 Even the use of ornaments made
of beads and bones was not uncommon. 131

Hiuen Tsang remarks that garlands and tiaras
with precious stones were the head

(b) Names of different ornaments: 132 Harsha’s top-knot was
adorned with a jewel inlaid with
pearls and by white jasmine flowers. 133

Malati’s hair was also crowned with a jewel. 134 Several
designs and shapes of this jewel can be observed at
the Ajantā paintings. 135 Above his forehead
Harsha had put on Arunachulamāni, made of padmarāga. 136
Sudraka’s head was also adorned by this ornament. 137

It is evident that these crowns were usually made of
rare precious stones. Wild tribes like the sabaras used
snake’s hood as an ornament. 138

Hiuen Tsang remarks that people bore their
There were pendant ear-ornaments (balika). Bhandi, at the age of eight, had put on ear-rings (kundala) of sapphire and pearl. The feudal lords, who came to visit Harsha wore ear-ornaments (karnapuraka) and ear-rings (karnotpala), banding with gold-filigree work. Harsha presented to Harsovega an ear ornament called Tarangaka inset with a precious ruby. Foresters like Vyaghreshatru had ear-rings of glass. (manikarnika) fastened in his ears. Tempas these names suggested different varieties of ear-ornaments.

Necklaces and other ornaments of various types worn by women as well as men can be marked in the paintings at Ajanta (caves Nos. 16, 17). Bena also refers to them. Malati wore a necklace with jewelled pendants (Malika). Harsha and Yasomati had necklaces studded with most valuable gems. Malati wore a collar of pearls (Hara), about her neck.

Huen Tsang states that the bodies of the kings and grandees were adorned with rings, bracelets and necklaces. Wealthy merchants wore only bracelets. Bhandi had diamond bracelets (valaya) round his fore-arms. Some chiefs at Ujjaini wore bracelets. On each of the
forearms of Malati was a golden bracelet having an a
emerald. Crocodile shaped,signet. 151 Vyaghra katu wore
a tin armlet (valaya) decorated with white godanta
beads. 152

Yasovati wore a girdle called tribal as
it evidently had three strings. 153

Girdles and
anklets:

Harsha presented to Harshes a waist-
band named Karivesa inlaid with pearls. 154

Malati had a girdle (mekhala) round
her waist and tinkling anklets (nupura) round her
ankles. 155 Even the chieftains coming to Harsha, wore
anklets (padabandhah) inset with precious stones. 156
The Ajanta paintings also present anklets of various
shapes and designs. 157

Shoes are rarely mentioned by contemporary

Foot-wear:

sources. Possibly common people did
not make use of it. Hiuen Tsang
observes, "Most of the people go
bare-foot and shoes are rare." 158 But this does not
seem to be quite correct. Kalidas and Bana mention
wooden padukas. 159 These padukas might have been used
by kings or ascetics. Common people generally went
without any foot wear. The Ajanta frescoes also do not
show any foot-wear. 160 It is indeed very curious that
people having variety of costumes, cosmetics and
ornaments did not know the use of shoes.
HEAD-DRESS

AN EAR-RING

COSTUMES.