PART I

POLITICAL CONDITIONS
CHAPTER I

NORTHERN INDIA AT THE DAWN
OF THE 7TH CENTURY A.D.

A. STATES:

It is difficult to obtain a clear picture of

the political condition of Northern

India at the opening of the 7th century

A.D. because the sources, though ample,
are so conflicting and contradictory that it is not
easy to draw definite conclusions. However, as most
of the scholars seem to agree on some fundamental facts,
our task is comparatively less difficult.

The statement of Dr. Smith, "that we possess
very little knowledge of Northern India during the
latter half of the 6th c. A.D."¹, is based on incomplete
data and, as such, far from the truth. On the contrary,
on the strength of recent researches, we are in a
position to prove that some powerful rulers existed
during this period. It is true that no ruler succeeded
in establishing his supremacy over other kingdoms for
a long time till the rise of Pārśa.

In spite of the great efforts of Skandagupta
and his successors to drive away the

Yagadharman:

Hunās from central India, the Gupta
rulers were not completely successful
in dislodging their enemies. For the
the first time Bālāditya inflicted a crushing defeat on
the Hunās and forced them to migrate to Kāshmir.
Perhaps it was the Huna chief Mihirakula who was defeated by Bālāditya.²

Bālāditya died somewhere about 528 A.D. Soon after Mihirakula again began to create trouble in Northern India. The Gupta empire was greatly weakened by that time. At this critical juncture, Yasōdharman saved the country from the Huna menace. In his Varānasī inscription, his court-poet Vasul informs that Yasōdharman established his rule in the regions where even the Gupta kings had not been able to extend their power. His empire extended from Brahmaputra in the east up to Vahendragiri in the west, and from the Himalayas up to the Arabian sea. Of course, there is considerable exaggeration in this poetic description, but one thing is quite clear that he defeated the Hunas.³

There is a difference of opinion among the scholars as to who Yasōdharman was and where he ruled. According to Dr. Hoernle he was a king of Mālawā who ruled between 533 to 583 A.D. and was also related to Prabhākara-vardh whose queen Yasomati was the daughter of Yasōdharman. Yasōdharman was succeeded by his son Silāditya who ruled between 583 to 593 A.D. and between 604-6 A.D. He ruled Western Mālawā and was defeated and driven away for some time from Mālawā by Prabhākara-vardhana.
his brother-in-law. Dr. Rādhākumud Mookerji supports the view of Hoernle. Shri Raychaudhuri rejects this view and holds that Yasodharman was neither the father of Silādītya of Mālawā nor the father-in-law of Prabhākarāvardhana. Tsang states that Silādītya of Mālawā (Western) was a Buddhist king of the Maitraka dynasty of Valabhī who ruled Mālawā about 580 A.D.

Jayawāl has attempted to show that Yasodharman's family ruled at Thāneswār and his title 'Vardhan' shows that he might be a Vaishya. It is very difficult to say anything definite with the help of the available evidence. The most important thing to be noted is that no trace of his empire was found by the end of the 6th c. A.D.

I. THE MAUKHARIS:

The fall of the Gupta empire and the failure of Yasodharman to build another led to the political disintegration of Northern India and the rise of a number of independent powers. The most prominent of these were the Puspabhūtis of Thāneswār, the Maukharis of Kānauj and the later Guptas of Magadha and Mālawā. In Bengal also powerful independent kingdoms such as Venga and Gauda were established in the 6th c. A.D.

Before the rise of the kingdom of Thāneswār under its first independent monarch Prabhākarāvardhana at the end of the 6th c. A.D., the Maukharis of Kānauj and the later Guptas of Mālawā were the main powers in Northern India.
Ray and C. V. Vaidya think that the Maukharis belonged to the Somavamsa or the Lunar line. It is so said that Maukharis was the first person who brought the family into prominence. Therefore the whole clan was named after him. Bāṇa also supports this view. In the 'Kāśikāvṛtti' of Vāman and Jayāditya (650 A.D.) and in the commentary of Kātyāyana on the Mahābhāṣya of Patanjali (12th c. A.D.) the word 'Maukharī' is used as a family name. Cunningham secured from Gaya a clay-seal on which was written in Brāhmī script the Pāli legend 'Mokhahāra'. The time of this seal cannot be placed in a period later than 3rd or 4th c. B.C. Evidence suggests that the Maukharī clan was well known in the time of the Mauryas also. Originally it was a Kṣatriya clan.

Epigraphic evidences show that in the 4th and 5th c. A.D. the Maukharis ruled Magadha. They were probably the vassals of the later Gupta kings.

Two inscriptions discovered in the caves of Barābār and Nāgārjunā hills situated 15 miles away from Gaya, mention the names of three Maukharī kings viz. Yajñā, Sārdulavarman and Anantavarman. On palaeographic ground the time of these inscriptions can not be placed in a period later than the 1st half of the 6th c. A.D. They are described simply as 'Śāmantas'. They were probably the predecessors of the Maukharis of Kanauj, and not their successors as Shri Vaidya thinks. The confusion
attending the constant invasions of the Hunas and the
greater troubles among the later Gupta rulers, gave an
opportunity to adventurous persons to establish
independent kingdoms. Probably Harivarman, the 1st
king in the Kanauj line, was one such daring adventurer.
He, in the prevailing confusion, migrated westwards and
succeeded in carving out a kingdom in the Doab region,
with his capital at Kanauj, in the beginning of the
6th c. A.D. 19

Sankar Pânduranga Pandit was the first to
express his doubts about accepting

* Kanauj as the capital of the Maukharis.

V. Smith supports him. 21 On the other
hand, Hoernle calls Isanavarna the
Maukharis chief of Kanauj. 22 According to Harsa-carita
also Kanyakubja was the capital of the Maukharis Grah. 23
and not of the Malawa king, whom Bana describes as "the
wicked lord of Malawa." 24 Moreover Huen Tsang clearly
states that Rajyasri returned to Kanauj after she was
rescued by her brother and later on the vacant throne of
Kanauj was offered by the nobles to Harsha. 25 The coins
of coins of Isanavarna, Sarvavarna and Avantivarna
(three powerful Maukharis rulers) and of Harsha, Pratépasil
and Siladitya found in a village named Bhitaura in the
district of Fyzabad in U.P. support this view. The three
digit numerical figures on the Varman coins refer to Gupta
years, while the figures on the coins of Harsha, Pratépasil
and Siladitya in the opinion of Burn stand for the regnal
years of these monarchs. Most of the Maaukharl inscriptions are also found in U.P. Thus, these epigraphic and numismatic evidences show that the Maaukharis ruled at Kanauj unto the end of the 6th c. A.D.

Asirgad Seal of Sarvavarman gives the following genealogy of the Maaukhar kings:

1. Maharaja Harivarman.
2. Maharaja Adityavarma - married to Harsha Guptadevi
3. Maharaja Isvaravarma - married to Upaguptadevi
4. Maharaja Jadhiraja Isanavarma (554 A.D.)
5. Parama Mahesvara Maharaja Jadhiraja Sarvavarma Maaukhar.
6. Sushitavarma?
7. Avantivarman.
8. Grahavarma (606 A.D.)

As already described, Harivarman seems to have founded the Maaukhar rule at Kanauj in the beginning of the 6th c. A.D. However, as the first three rulers are simply called 'Maharajas' in the seal, they might have ruled over a small region round about Kanauj. Their marital relations show that they were on good terms with the later Gupta kings. The Maaukharis became powerful in the days of Isanavarma who for the first time is called Maharaja Jadhiraja.

Harsh inscription of the time of Isanav gives the following details.

1) Isanavarma 554 A.D.: Isanavarma conquered (1) the land of
Sulikas and (iii) forced the Gaudas, living on the sea-shore, to remain in future within their proper limits.\textsuperscript{31}

The Viṣṇukūḍīns were the dominant power in the Āṇdhra region during the 6th c. A.D. Probably either Indravarman or Vikramendravarman was defeated by Iśānavarman. Rayachaudhuri thinks that Mādhavavarman II of the Viṣṇukūḍīn family was humbled by Iśānavarman.\textsuperscript{32} Whoever he might be, it appears certain, that there were hostile relations between the Āṇdhras and the Baudharis during this period.

There is a difference of opinion among the scholars with regards the identification of the Sulikas and the region they belonged to. Dr. Rayachaudhuri identifies them with the Cālukyas.\textsuperscript{33} The Mahākūṭa pillar inscription informs that Cālukyas (Cālikya) by this time were extending their powers on all sides; and one of their kings Kīrtivarman I, conquered several territories.

Perhaps Kīrtivarman I in his northern expedition might have come into conflict with Iśānavarman and defeated by him.

The Gaudas are mentioned for the first time in the Harāśa inscription of Iśāna. They are called Samudrārayan.\textsuperscript{35} (living near the sea-shore). It is claimed in the inscription that Iśānavarman ravaged the territories of the Gaudas who were forced to retreat towards the sea. Aphaśa inscription of Ādityasena II (656-75 A.D.) also mentions Jīvitarupta I's struggles against 'the haughty foes' who lived on the sea shore.\textsuperscript{36}
Considering the details of the two Inscriptions together, we may infer that the Baukhariyas and the later Gupta kings might have co-operated in checking the advance of the Gaudas towards the North. Dr. Basak thinks that Jayanāga was a contemporary Gua king of Isānavarman.39

Isānavarman, assumed the title of "Mahārājadhiraja". This enraged the Guptas who could not tolerate such a claim to supremacy on the part of Isānavarman or any further growth of his power. Thus there was an open rupture between the Baukhariyas and the Guptas for the first time during the reign of Isānavarman. Aphsad inscription informs that Isānavarman was defeated by Kumāragupta III.38 It must have been a severe blow though only temporary - to the extension of the Baukhari power. Dr. Hookerji thinks that Kumāragupta was defeated,3 Dr. Fleet disagrees with this view. Like his predecessors Isānavarman was a Brāhmanist. He saved the Varnāsramaṇḍh by checking the undue intermixture of varnas which result from the Huna invasions.40

He is called 'Mahārājadhirāja' in the Asir Seal.41 He inflicted a defeat upon his contemporary Gupta king Dēmodragupta who was probably killed on the battle field42 (550-560 A.D. Thus Gupta rule in Vagadha came to an end for some time till it was possibly again revived by Vādhavagupta during or after the period of Harṣa. Deo Barak inscription of Jivitagupta II states that Servavaran confirmed a grant that was previously made by Baḷāditya 43 He also seems to
have inflicted a defeat on the Hunaś.\textsuperscript{44} It appears that during the reign of Sarvavarman the empire of the Maukhāris was extended up to Son river.\textsuperscript{45} He was called \textit{Pārama Mahāvāra Mahārājādhirāja Sarvarvarman Maukhari}.

There is a difference of opinion among the scholars about the successor of Sarvavarman. Dr. Fleet, Vaidya and Dr. Rādhākumud Mookerji believe that Susthitavarman ascended the throne of the Maukhāris after Sarvavarman. This opinion is based on the wrong interpretation of a passage of the inscription of Apśad. It is written in the inscription that "the fame of the illustrious Mahāsenasūpta is still sung on the bank of (the river) Lohitya (Brahmaputra) by the Śādhisthas for his victory over renowned Susthitavarman."\textsuperscript{46} It is said that Susthitavarman was a Maukhari ruler. Epigraphic or numismatic evidences do not mention his name in the Maukhari genealogy. Apśad Inscription does not call him a Maukhari king. Moreover the praise of Mahāsenagupta was sung on the bank of Brahmaputra. It might as well refer to some king in Assām. The Maukhāris never ruled on the bank of Lohitya. Hence Susthitavarman cannot be a Maukhari ruler.

On the contrary the Vidiānpura plates and the seals at Nālandā mention

\textbf{Susthitavarman} The Non-Maukhari Ruler: Susthitavarman as the father of
Bhāskaravarman a contemporary of Harsa. He is identical with the king called Sushītavrāman mentioned in the Harsa-carita. Therefore it is certain that Sushītavrāman referred to in the Apsadād Inscription might have been a ruler of Assām. On this basis we may exclude the name of Sushītavrāman from the Bāukhārī genealogy. Sarvavrāman seems to have been succeeded by Avantivrāman. Very little is known about him. Bāna calls him the pride of the Bāukhārā clan, which stood at the head of all royal houses. Friendly relations were established with the Puspbhūtis of Thānēswar during the reign of Avantivrāman as can be seen later.

According to Harsa-carita Avantivrāman was succeeded by his eldest son

iii) Grahavārman: 605-6 A.D.

(Sūnuragrajāh) Grahavārman. But Nālandā seal (which is broken) mentions Suva as the successor of Avantivrāman. The name cannot be read clearly; therefore the positive statement of Bāna cannot be doubted. Grahavārman married Rājyasrī the daughter of Prabhākāryarvadhana and the sister of Harsawardhana. Thus the relations between the Bāukhāris and the Puspbhūtis became intimate. Thus the two powerful kingdoms of Kanauj and the Thānēswar formed a union which could meet the challenge of any power in Northern India.

Though it is not easy to determine the limits
of the Vaukhari empire at the zenith of its power, coins and inscriptions of the dynasty help us greatly to have a fair idea of the Vaukhari empire. Some of the coins were found in Ahicchatra, a few miles to the North-west of Kanauj. Others were obtained from Ayodhyā. Some were discovered at Bhitaurā in the Fyzābād district of the united provinces. Among the seals found at Nālandā, one issued by Sarvavarman narrates his exploits. Taking the support of the Asirgadh seal, Vaidya, Arvamuthan and Jayaswāl believe that the limits of the Vaukhari empire in the Deccan extended up to Asirgadh. Following Fleet, Dr. Tripā thi rightly observes that the mere finding of the seal at Asirgadh does not prove that Asirgadh was the Vaukhari outpost in the Deccan. Their territory probably lay some hundreds of miles to the east of Asirgadh.

The Nirmāṇd inscription found on the bank of Sutlej in the Kangrā district of the Punjab, mentions the grant of a certain Mahāraja Sarvavarman. Arvamuthan on the strength of this inscription believes that Sarvavarman was able to extend his empire up to the west of Punjab during his wars with the Hūmas. But this supposition has no historical basis. The Vaukhari Sarvavarman assumed the titles of Mahārājādhirāja and Paramesvara while the Sarvarvarman
of the Nirmand inscription is called simply a Mahārāja.

Moreover the supposition implies that the intervening Vardhana territory passed under the suzerainty of the Maukharis and Prabhakaravardhana had to fight with the Maukharis to achieve his independence. This statement will go against the historical evidence of Bena who describes in the Kṛṣṇa-carita that the two states were friendly with each other and more cordial relations were established between the two by the marriage of Granhavarman with Rajyas.

Thus excluding the evidences of Asirgadh and Nirmand, we may say that the Maukhari empire of Kannauj, during its fullest expansion, extended unto Ahicchatra and the boundary of the Thānēwar kingdom on the west; to Nālandā on the east; it may have touched the Tarai district on the North and on the South perhaps it did not go beyond the southern frontier of the modern United Provinces.

C.V. Vaidya's statement that the Maukhari dominions extended southwards unto the Vindhya, northwards unto Jaunpura and eastwards unto the Brahmaputra, is not justified.

II. LATER GUPTA RULERS:

There are various opinions among the scholars to who the later Gupta rulers were and where they ruled. After the passing of Bhānu Gupta, the imperial dynasty of the Guptas appears to have come to an end. Different rulers ruled in some parts of Magadha and of Bengal approximately between 530 to 560 A.D. We have no exact data to determ
their relations with the main line of the Gupta kings.

Aphsad inscription of Ādityasena (672 A.D. ?) and Deo-
Barnak inscription of Jivitagupta II give the genealogy of
the Gupta rulers beginning from Kriṣṇagupta. It is
possible that after the break up of the Gupta empire in
the first half of the 6th c. A.D., they might have migra
to Magadha. The genealogy is as follows:-

1. Kriṣṇagupta
2. Harsagupta
3. Jivitagupta
4. Kumāragupta III = 550 A.D.
5. Dāmodaragupta.

6. Mahāsengupta (Perhaps began his rule at
Mālava (Eastern).

| These five rulers might have ruled Magadha.

7. Devagupta.
8. Mādhava Gupta of Magadha
(630-50 A.D. ?)

9. Ādityasen.
(was killed by Rājyavardhana in 606 A.D.)

The first three rulers of Kriṣṇagupta dynasty
are known only by their names. The 4th
ruler Kumāragupta 3rd fought with his
contemporary Maukhari ruler Iśānavarman who was defeated
by the former. His successor Dāmodaragupta fought with
Iśvaravarman, the successor of Iśānavarman. Dāmodaragupta
was defeated and killed on the battlefield. Iśvaravarman
Maukhari annexed Magadha or part of it to his dominions.
Thus the Gupta rule in Magadha came to an end for the
time being.

Mahāsenagupta, the successor of Dāmodaragupta
migrated to Malawi (Eastern) and carved out an independent kingdom for himself and his successors. Bana also mentions Mahasenagupta as the king of Malawi. As already noted, he defeated Susthitavarman, the king of Kamarupa and father of Bhaskaravarman, on the Leushitya river (Brahmaputra).

It is stated in the Sonpat seal of Haravardhana that Mahasenaguptadevi was married to Adityavardhana, father of Prabhakaravardhana. It is thought that she was the sister of Mahasenagupta. Thus Mahasenagupta might have tried to make his position strong against his Vaukharis opponents by establishing marital relations with the Vardhans of Thaniswar who were coming into prominence.

It is held by Dr. Gengoli that Mahasenagupta had a son named Devagupta by one wife and sons named Kumargupta and Madhavagupta by another wife. Devagupta being the eldest, the latter two had no claim to the Malwa throne. It is conjectured that there was a feeling of enmity between Devagupta and his half-brothers. Therefore Mahasenagupta sent them to his nephew Prabhakaravardhana to seek their fortune. Mahasenagupta died a little before Prabhakaravardhana. Devagupta ascended the paternal throne. When Prabhakaravardhana died about 605-606 A.D., Devagupta, as usual with his family, saw an opportunity to wreak vengeance upon the Vaukharis. He made an alliance with the Saiva king Samarka who was also opposed to the Vaukharis and had also a design to extend his dominions. Devagupta attacked Granavarmen, defeated and
killed him, and imprisoned his queen Rājyaśrī, the sister of Harṣa. Rājyavardhana, the elder brother of Harṣa, with his trusted general Bhandi, attacked Devagupta and killed him on the battlefield. Thus the Gupta rule at Mālavā (Eastern) came to an end.

III. Kingdom of Valabhi.

Hsuen Tsang states that the Valabhi was about 6000 Li in circuit. Its capital was Valabhi, modern Vas near Bhāvenagara.

After the break up of the Gupta empire the Maitraka rule at Valabhi was established by Bhatāraka in 485 A.D. He and his successor Dharasena First were feudatories. The third king Dronasimha called himself Mahārāja. The fourth ruler Dharasena Second is styled Mahāśāman. It suggests that he also accepted at least for sometime the suzerainty of some powerful ruler perhaps Isvaravarman Matskhari as indi by Jaunapura inscription.

Dharasena II had two sons (1) Siladitya I, Dharaditya and (ii) Kharagraha. The former may be identified with Siladitya the Buddhist king of Mo-Lo-Po (Western Mālavā) as mentioned by Hsuen Tsang. The Chinese traveller states that Siladitya ruled there sixty years before his visit to Mo-Lo-Po (i.e. 580 A.D.). By this statement of Hsuen Tsang, it is to be supposed that Maitraka rule of Valabhi was divided for the time being into two parts (i) Western Mālavā ruled by Siladitya and (ii) Valabhi ruled by Kharagraha. The Alin inscription of Dharasena II also supports the view that
result Kharagragha became an independent ruler at Valabhi. Kharagragha was succeeded by Dharasena III who was succeeded by Dhruvasena II.

- **Dhruvasena**
  - This Dhruvasena was a contemporary of Harsa. Huen T'ang calls him Dhruvabhata, the nephew of Siladitya of Wo-La-Bo and the son-in-law of Harsavardhana.32
  - This statement is corroborated by the inscriptions of Dhruvasena II (629 A.D. to 641 A.D.), which state that he ascended the throne in 629 A.D.33 It appears that he snatched Malikarjuna (Western) from the successor of Siladitya and once again united the two branches of the Vaitakas into one. As a result Western Malikarjuna possibly formed a part of the kingdom of Valabhi under Dhruvasena II.

**MALAVĀ DIVIDED IN THREE DISTINCT PARTS:**

The above discussion shows that eastern Malavā was ruled first by Mahāsenagupta and then by his son Devagupta at the end of the 6th c. A.D.

- **Eastern Malavā**
  - It formed a part of the empire of Harsa in the beginning of the 7th c. A.D. after the defeat of Devagupta by Rājyavarman. Probably its capital was Vaiśali.

- **Western Malavā**
  - Dhruvasena II of Valabhi in the first half of the 7th c. A.D.

According to the Abhona Plate of Nāsik34 a Kalcuri king named Sankaraguna ruled at Avanti (Ujjain) for sometime at the end of the 6th c. A.D. Dr. Ganguly holds that Sankaraguna defeated Mahāsenagupta who with his sons, was forced to take
refuge at the court of Prabhākaravardhana. Then Sankaragana proclaimed himself the king of the whole of Mālava and later on defeated and killed Grahavarman after the death of Prabhākaravardhana. However, contemporary epigraphic and literary evidences suggest that Devagupta defeated and killed Grahavarman. Moreover Western Mālava was subject to Valabhi when Hiuen Tsang visited Ujjain in 640 A.D. It was ruled by a Brāhmaṇa king who might have been subordinate to Harṣa. Thus Kalcūrī rule at Ujjain was a brief episode in the history of Mālava.

IV. PRINCIPAL KINGDOMS IN THE EASTERN SIDE:

The first independent kingdom that arose in Bengal after the disintegration of the Gupta empire possibly included the Eastern and Southern Bengal only.

It was called Samatata or Vanga, which was about 3000 Li in circuit. Its capital was probably modern Jessore. According to a seal discovered at Nalanda, Vainyagupta seems to be the first independent ruler of Samatata as the title of Mahārajādhīrāja is added to his name. He ruled possibly at the beginning of the 6th c. A.D. as his grant in the Tipperā district suggests.

Nothing can be stated definitely about the successors of Vainyagupta, but five inscriptions found in the district of Feridpura and one in the Burdwan district reveal the existence of three rulers named Copacandra, Dharmāditya and Samacārādeva. The use
of the title of Mahārājaściraja along with their names proves that they were independent kings. The issue of gold coins by Samācāradeva supports this fact. From the available data it appears that the period of the reigns of these rulers might have been between 525 to 575 A.D.92 It is difficult to decide as to how and when this independent kingdom ended. However, the Mahākuta Inscription of the Cālukya king Kīrtivarman states that he conquered Vanga along with other eastern countries.93 Kīrtivarman died by 598 A.D. Therefore he might have defeated Samācāradeva by the end of the 6th c. A.D. The Gauda king Sāsānaka, who rose to power in Northern Bengal during the beginning of the 7th c. A.D., might have given the final blow to the independence of Vanga. Huen Tseng also does not refer to Vanga as an independent state.94

The part comprising most of Western Bengal and the whole of Northern Bengal was

b) The kingdom of Gauda or Kāmasūryavarna:

1) Historical evidences: 'Gauḍa' is used in the grammar of Pāṇini96 (6th c. B.C.), Arthasastra of Kautilya (4th c.B.C.), Kāmasūtra of Vātsyāyana (3rd or 4th c. A.D.)98, in some Purāṇas and in Harṣa-Carita.99 The first reference to the Gaudas as a political power occurs in the Aphaad inscription of Ādityasena, in which it is stated that Jivitagupta first (640 A.D.) was a terror to the people on the "sea shore".100 The Harśā inscription of Iśānvarman Saukhari (554 A.D.)
describes him as confining the sea-faring Gaudas... to their own limits. In the 6th and 7th c. A.D. the capital of the Gaudas was Karnasuvarna\textsuperscript{102}, modern Rangamati near Barahamapura.\textsuperscript{103}

According to Dr. Barnett, a king named Jayanāga was ruling at Karnasuvarna in 6th c. A.D.\textsuperscript{104} Manjuśrī-kūlakalpa also refers to the Gauda king Jayanāga.\textsuperscript{105}

Dr. Basak also holds that Jayanāga and his son ruled at Karnasuvarna before the rise of Sāśāṅka.\textsuperscript{106} They might have been the feudatories of either the Sāukharis or the later Gupta rulers.

It is believed that Sāśāṅka rose to power by the end of the 6th c. A.D. That he, like his predecessors, was a feudatory chief is clear from a seal from Kohtasagadh which calls him 'Karnāsāṃbha Sāśāṅka' (a great feudatory king Sāśāṅka).\textsuperscript{107}

Dr. D. C. Ganguly relying on some lines of the Deo-Barnak inscription, states that Sāśāṅka was a vassal of the Sāukhari king Avantivarman and also possibly of his son and successor Gratavarman for a short time.\textsuperscript{108} But the theory lacks any historical evidence. One MS of Harṣa-Cari calls Sāśāṅka Karendragupta,\textsuperscript{109} otherwise Bāṇa calls him the wicked Gaudarāja\textsuperscript{110} and Huien Tsang calls him the king of Karnasuvarna, who persecuted the Buddhists.\textsuperscript{111} On the strength of the evidence of this MS of Harṣacarita Shri R. D. Banerji and Dr. Buhler believe that Sāśāṅka was
related to the later Gupta rulers. Dr. Banerji further adds that Śaśānka was possibly the son or nephew of Mahāsenagupta and that is why he allied with Devagupta against their common foes the Baukaris.\footnote{112} To support this theory Shri Banerji has also taken the support of two golden seals on which the legend 'Sri Kārendra' is inscribed.\footnote{113} These gold seals are ascribed to Śaśānka. Dr. Rādhākumudhookerji also agrees with this view.\footnote{114} But this supposition lacks factual basis. Even if it were accepted that Śaśānka was known as Kārendragupta, there is no historical proof to show that he was connected with the latter Guptas or that he was related to Mahāsenagupta.

There is no doubt about the fact that he was the sovereign ruler of the whole of Bengal at the opening of the 7th c. A.D. The political situation of Northern India after the death of Prabhākaravardhana might have inspired his imperial designs and as a result he might have joined hands with Devagupta to overthrow the Baukaris of Kanauj and the Vardhans of Thānesāwar to fulfill his ambitions.

C. Kāmarūpa (Assām):

Kāmarūpa or Brāgjoytiya situated in the East of Gauda (Northern Bengal), is mentioned in the epics and the Purāṇas as a state whose ruler had accepted his suzerainty.\footnote{116} It was about 10,000 Li in circuit\footnote{117} and its capital was probably Kāmatisura.\footnote{118} Micānagura inscriptions of king Bhāskaravaran give the
genealogy of his twelve predecessors. His Nalanda seal mentions the names of his eight predecessors along with the queens. Out of these eight names, the last five names are also mentioned by Bana. From this genealogy it can be said that Bhaskaravarman was the son of Susthitavarman by a wife named Syamadevi. He was also called Bhaskaradyut or Kumara. As already noted this Susthitavarman was defeated by Nara as indicated by Aphaad inscription. It will be seen later that Bhaskaravarman made an alliance with Harsha to check the imperial designs of Saشا."nka.

The kingdom was 7,000 Li in circuit and its capital was perhaps Jitpura. Politically it held a very important position in ancient times. It was connected with Northern India as well as southern India on the east as Valabhi was connected on the west. The inscriptions inform that Sailodabava dynasty became powerful in Kaling during the last quarter of the 6th c. A.D. The Ganjam Plate (dated Gupta year 300, 619-20 A.D.) mentions the name of king Sainyabhita or Medhavaraja second who had accepted the suzerainty of Sa조사nka.

After Sança's death Orissa including the province of Ganjam became a part of the empire of Harsha. Medhavaraja First and Ayaśabhita First seem to be the predecessors of Medhavaraja Second. They possibly flourished during the last quarter of the 6th c. A.D. and might have been the feudatories of the rulers of Samatata.
According to Hiuen Tsang the kingdom of Kāśmir was about 7000 Li in circuit. Its capital was bordered by a great river. It was from north to south 12 or 13 Li and from east to west 4 to 5 Li. It was Pravarsenapura (the present Šrīnagar) built by king Pravarasena II about the beginning of the 6th c. A.D.

Kalhana informs that Bālāditya the last king of the Gonardiya dynasty had probably no male issue. He married his only daughter to his officer named Durlabhavardhana who ascended the throne in 602 A.D. after the death of Bālāditya. His dynasty was called the Karkotaka dynasty because it was said to have been protected by the mythical serpent Karkotaka mentioned in the Mahābhārata. Perhaps the court poets of Durlabhavardhana created this myth of his descent or probably he was born in a Nāga or aboriginal family. Hiuen Tsang also notices that the kings of Kāśmir asserted their superiority over other kings because they were protected by a dragon. The Rājataraṅgini calls Durlabhavardhana a Kāyastha but his name ending 'Vardhana' suggests that he might have been a Vaiṣya and not a Kāyastha. He founded the Karkotaka dynasty in Kāśmir in 3677 of the Lāukiā era i.e. in 602 A.D. He ruled for 36 years which makes him more or less an
Hiuen Tsang observes that Sindh was about 7000 Li in circuit and its capital was Pi-Shan-Po-Pu-Lo which was about 30 Li round.131 It might be only another name for Alor which was the capital of Sindh at the time of Hiuen Tsang.132

In the 7th c. A.D. Sindh was divided into four principalities (i) upper Sindh (ii) Middle Sindh (iii) Lower Sindh, and (iv) Kaccha. It is corroborated by Hiuen Tsang also.133 The whole formed one kingdom under the ruler of Upper Sindh who at the time of Hiuen Tsang's visit in A.D. 641, was a Sudra.134

According to 'Chācha-nāma' the king of Sindh in the first half of 7th c. A.D. was Chācha who had usurped the throne of Sindh. He was a Brahman by caste. The same source states that Chācha ascended the throne somewhere about 597 A.D. and ruled for 40 years. His brother and successor Candra ruled for 7 years i.e. upto 644 A.D.

Thus according to Chācha-nāma Chācha and Candra were contemporaries of Harṣa and were Brahmāṇa by caste.135 But Hiuen Tsang calls them Sudra,136 and we have no dependable evidence to disbelieve his testimony. He had visited the country in 641 A.D. and as such gives an eye-witness account.

According to V.A. Smith the Sudra king of Sindh, mentioned by Hiuen Tsang, should be Simharasarāya, the son of Divaji.137
and Sahasi were contemporaries of Harsa by whom either of them might have been defeated, while Dvājī was probably defeated by Prabhākaravardhana.\textsuperscript{138} After the death of Sahasi his Brāhmiṇ minister Chācha probably seized the throne of Sindh somewhere about 646 A.D. He ruled for 40 years. Then his brother Candra ruled for 7 years i.e. about 653 A.D. Thus Chācha and Candra were evidently the successors of the Śūdra kings and not their predecessors.\textsuperscript{1}

It is also well known fact that Dāhir, the successor of Candra, and nephew of Chācha, was defeated and killed by Muhammad-bin-Kāsim in 712 A.D.

C. Gurjara kingdom of Balmer (Rajputana):

Possibly the earliest Gurjara kingdom was founded by Haricandra in modern Jodhpura region in Rājaṇutāna about the middle of the 6th c. A.D.\textsuperscript{140} By his Kṣatriya queen Bhadrā Haricandra he had four sons viz. Bhogabhata, Kakka, Rājjīla and Dadda (First). Nothing is known about the first two. But Rājjīla and his successors ruled in Rājaṇutana, while Dadda First founded a Gurjara kingdom at Bhrguksaccha (Broach).\textsuperscript{141} Hsiuen Tsang refers to these two kingdoms. The Gurjara kingdom of Rājaṇutāna was 5000 Li in circuit.\textsuperscript{142} It must, therefore, have comprised the greater part of the present regions of Bikaner, Jesalme and Jodhpur.\textsuperscript{143} The capital was called Pi-Lo-No-Lo which was about 30 Li round. As Hsiuen Tsang notes it lay 300 miles away to the north of Valabhi, it should be identified with the present Balmer and not with Bhilamāla (Bhinmal).
Hiuen Tsang observes that the king, Kṣatriya by caste and a young man celebrated
for his wisdom and courage, was a staunch Buddhist. He was probably
the son of king Vyāgramukha in whose reign the famous
astronomer Brahmagupta composed his Brahmasiddhānta, a
treatise on astronomy, in 628 A.D. As Hiuen Tsang visited
the country in 640 A.D. Vyāgramukha's successor must have
been a young man. The testimony of Bāja that Prabhākara
ārvadhana defeated the Gurjara king refers to Vyāgramukha's
successor.

d. Gurjara Kingdom of Bārapuṣkha:
As noted, it was founded by Dadda First,
the youngest son of Harisandra in the middle of the 6th
c. A.D. as an offshoot of the Gurjara kingdom of
Rājasūrīnā. It was 2400 to 2500 Li in circuit. Its
capital, which was 20 Li round and stood on the bank of
the river Nai-mo-tho i.e. Harmada, close to the sea, may be identified with Broach as done by Buhlar and
Cunningham and not with Nāndiguri (Nándod) as done
by Bhagavānīlal Indrajī and some other scholars. Hiuen
Tsang does not mention the name of the ruling king, but
he must be Dadda II, the grand son of Dadda I as his
grants between 629 and 641 A.D. suggest. He was also
called Braśāntarāṇa.

e. Gālukya Kingdom of Mahrāstra:
Hiuen Tsang describes it as being about 5000 Li
circuit. The capital which bordered on the
west on a great river was about 30 Li
It has been identified with Faithana by Fergusson and with Devagiri by M. V. Martin, but Kalyani seems to be the best Badami choice as its position agrees better with the description of Hiuen Tsang. It was also the ancient capital of the Calukya dynasty.

Kirtivarman I ruled the country in the latter half of the 6th c. A.D. He defeated several rulers, but was probably defeated by Isanavarman Maulhari, as already noted. He died in 597-98 A.D. possibly leaving some minor children, and therefore the throne passed to his younger brother Mangalesa who ruled up to 610-11 A.D. He defeated the Kalcuri king Buddharaja, the son of Sankaraganga before 602 A.D., thus ending the brief rule of the Kalcuri at Ujjain. His nephew Pulakesin II, the son of Kirtivarman later on claimed the throne for himself. As a result in the civil war Mangalesa lost his life and Pulakesin, with the title Satyasraya, ascended the throne somewhere about 611 A.D. Hiuen Tsang praises him as a brave, benevolent Kshatriya ruler. He was a contemporary of Harsha. He made himself the master of almost the whole of the Deccan by his extensive conquests.

The above survey shows that the political condition of Northern India from the time of the fall of the Guptas up to the rise of Harsha was not a happy one. It was divided into a number of independent states. The
main powers who were fighting between themselves to gain the political supremacy of Northern India. The Maukharis of Kanauj succeeded for the time being. Bengal was united by Śrīśaṅkha who rose to power in the beginning of the 7th c. A.D. The Cālukyas of Badami were becoming the principal power in the Deccan under their great ruler Pulakesin the Second. Valabhi on the west and Kāmarūpa on the east held important positions politically as well as geographically. Kāshmir became a prominent state when the Karkoṭa dyads began its rule there at the dawn of the 7th c. A.D. on the North-western side Kapisa (Afghanistan) and Tekka (North Punjab) were important states with several dependencies, while Nepal in the Himalayan regions was also a prominent state under its young Lichhavi ruler Aṃśuvarman. The unity, which prevailed over Northern India under the Imperial Guptas, was lost and some paramount ruler was needed to revive it.
Contemporary epigraphic and literary evidences suggest that society continued to recognise the four traditional varṇas. Hiuen Tsang mentions them. He noted that the first order was that of the Brāhmāṇas who led a pure life. The second was that of the Ksatriyas - who had held sovereignty for many generations. The third order was that of the Vaiśyas or the class of traders who bartered commodities and carried their business at home and abroad. The fourth class was that of the Śudras or the agriculturists who toiled at cultivating the soil. The Bāndasor stone inscription of Yasodharman dated 533-34 A.D. refers to the advantages of those who belonged to the four recognised varṇas. Prabhākaravardhana, the father of Harsavardhana was credited with regulating them. Fa-Hien in the 5th c. A.D. and Alberuni in the 10th A.D. took note of them. Bāna also praises the Varṇāsrama Dharmas. But this does not mean that the doctrine of the four varṇas was strictly followed by the society. The same sources inform us that there were some notable departures from this system. As a result a number of castes arose.

Hiuen Tsang noted that there were also mixed castes. The intermarriages among the first three varṇas were not uncommon. The Smritikāras usually allowed such marriages.
possibly did not lose the original varna-status of their fathers. Such Anulomā marriages (union of a male of a higher caste with a female of a lower caste) often took place, but marriages with Śūra females were mostly disfavored. Issues of such unions possibly lost the original varna-status of their father. 166 Bāṇa had two arnasava brothers (step-brothers from a Śūdra mother). 169 Moreover Pratilomā marriages (union of a male of a lower caste with a female of a higher caste) were condemned by the Brāhmanas. The issue of such unions were degraded as out-castes or Cāndāla. 170 From Second century onwards the foreigners like Sakas, Kūnas and others were gradually incorporated into Hindu society. These racial mixtures might have been objected to by orthodox circles and as a result some new elements were probably added to the system of varṇas. The Harāhā inscription of Īśanavarm records that he checked the undue social mixture resulting from the Hūṇa invasions. 171

The Gupta and the post-Gupta ages witnessed the development of various occupations. As a result people became more conscious of their occupational groups rather than traditional ones. In the 7th c. A.D. some classes of people were better known as traders, agriculturists, artisans, butchers, hunters, Cāndāla, etc. rather than as Vaiśyās or Śūdras. 172 Bāṇa had a number of intimate associates from different classes such as bards, a snake doctor, a goldsmith, a scribe, a painter, a music-master, a dicer, a potter and a Jupiter. 173 These facts suggest that there were several
occupational groups besides the four recognised traditions of Varnas. Some of them might have been termed as Vaisāyas or Śūdras, while others formed sub-castes by raising themselves to the position of Vaisāyas or Śūdras in the wider sense.

The Brāhmīns were not much affected by these racial and occupational changes. They mostly maintained the original purity of their varna with a few exceptions, but the other three orders were greatly affected. Several new clans, such as Sautkharis, Gurjaras, etc., became prominent as Kṣatriyas during this period. Traders by this time became an important community of the Vaisāyas; while some of the Vaisāyas who were agriculturists sunk to the position of Śūdras on account of their occupation. Thus two fundamental changes can be marked in this age. (i) Some groups of the Vṛṣa fold of the preceding centuries were classed as Śūdras during this period and (ii) hereditary professions were greatly emphasised.

Brahmins formed one caste without any subdivision. The modern distinctions based on territorial divisions had not yet arisen. They were simply divided into different Śākhas or caranas, i.e. schools of Vedic ritual or recitation based upon the Vedas they studied. They mentioned their gotra. Bana does not tell us whether he was a kanojiya or Varadha Brahmin, but simply states that he was of VāsyaYana gotra. The second point to be noted about the Brahmins of the 7th c. A.D., is that their names generally ended in particular suffixes.
It seems that in those days particular suffixes were added to the names of individuals to indicate their caste. Ṣarmā seems to be the principal suffix among the Brāhmans. Other suffixes indicating the Brāhmīṃ caste, were Bhaṭṭa, Deva and Svāmī. Sometimes they took up the suffixes such as 'Varmā' to indicate that they belonged to the ruling class. Hsiuen Tseng calls Bhāskaravarmāṇ, the king of Kāmarūpa, a Brāhmīṃ ruler. Bana confirms this.

Mostly Brāhmīṇs followed the hereditary professions of learning and teaching and Hsiuen Tseng praises them for it. But some Brāhmīṇs adopted non-Brāhmanical professions also. The rulers of Kāmarūpa, Ujjain, Chichito and Mahesvarapura were Brāhmīṇs. Some of the Brāhmīṇs were government servants, others were traders and architects, while a few of them were agriculturists. Dandin mentions even a colony of Brāhmīṇ-robbers living by the occupation of Kirātas in the Vindhyā forests.

The most noteworthy fact about the Kṣatriyas of this period is that some new clans became prominent among them. Formerly the Kṣatriyas like the Brāhmīṇs formed one class only. Even though the Rājputs of the medieval age had not yet come into existence, the Nukharis, Gurjaras, Kāitrakas etc. occupied an important position. The solar and the Lunar theories of the origin of
the Ksatriyas were not given any importance. And again, during the 6th c. A.D. the Hburnas upset the social order of Northern India to a large extent. As a result there was probably a reorientation of castes which accompanied the new Ksatriya families, born out of the mixture of several foreign races. Regulations were not rigid. The Ksatriyas freely married Vaiśya wives belonging to great families, like the Gautas and the Vardhanas, who had raised themselves to kingly positions. The illustration of the Vaishahari Grahavarman marrying Harṣa's sister\textsuperscript{187} and that of the Maithra Dharvarbhata marrying Harṣa's daughter\textsuperscript{188} testify to this fact. The forefathers of Grahavarman taking Gupta queens also confirms this.\textsuperscript{189}

It appears that such Anuloma marriages (lower by only one degree) did not disturb the caste-status of the parties in any way. That is why Dharasena IV, the son of Dhrusenas II (Dharvarbhata) could be styled a Kṣatriya in two grants.\textsuperscript{190} Yet the fact remains that the Kṣatriyas of the 7th c. A.D. differed from those of the pre-Gupta times on the one hand and from those of the post-Harṣa era on the other hand when a number of new clans called the Rajputs came into existence.

Hsiian Tsang observes that the Kṣatriyas held sovereignty for many generations.\textsuperscript{191} 

\textbf{Kṣatriyas not the only ruling class:} Their descriptive endings like Varma (brave) and Trāta (defender) also indicate that they followed the profession of arms.\textsuperscript{192} 

The Maithra rulers of Valabhi usually took up suffixes like 'Sena' and 'Bhata' (warrior). Though we find the
name 'Drona Simha' among the Maitraka kings,  the suffix (Simha), the most common suffix among Ksatriyas of the post-Harsa age, is usually not discovered in the accounts of 7th c. A.D. The Ksatriyas were not the only ruling class during this period. Out of 68 states mentioned by Huen Tsang, only Kasi, Nepal, Kosala, Mahärāstra and Valabhi had Ksatriya rulers. Even though the names of the kings of some of the states are not mentioned, he has mentioned many states which had Vaiśya, Śūdra or Brahmīn monarchs. Epigraphic evidences of the Gupta period suggest that some Ksatriyas followed commercial pursuits also.

Just like the Brahmīns and the Ksatriyas, the Vaiśyas did not form a homogeneous group. They included persons of various creeds and professions. They were merchants, bankers, money lenders, oil-mongers, and so on. They were more conscious of their own sub-groups rather than of their being members of the traditional vaiśya varna. Along with the first two classes, Vaiśyas were generally marked as dvijas, but some of them sunk to the position of śūdras during this age. Huen Tsang placed the merchants only as among the Vaiśyas and classified the agriculturists as Śūdras. Perhaps this was true of the artisans like weavers and garland-makers also. However, the merchant-class became very influential by using their wealth for charitable purposes such as the establishment of hospitals, alms-houses and rest houses. Dandin also refers to the merchant guilds and their
'Sārthavāha' and 'Prathamakulika' suggest the different titles which were conferred by the state on the heads of the Vaiśya community. Their help was sought by the district officers in running the administration. They also held positions of respect and responsibility on the town councils. They were probably competing for a social position next to the Brāhmīns and above the kṣatriyas. It is to be noted that the modern sub-castes of the Vaiśya had not yet come into being. Contemporary sources do not refer to them.

Some of the Vaiśya families raised themselves to the throne by following the profession of arms. According to the Curtiss the suffixes like 'Gupta' and 'Bhūti' indicated their Vaiśya origin. Probably the terms 'Vardhana' also suggested the same. Thus the Gupta monarchs were possibly Vaiśyas. So also Yasodharman Vaiśnavardhan. Huien Tsang calls Haraśvarcdhana a Vaiśya ruler. It appears that many of the prominent rulers of Northern India from the fourth century to the seventh century A.D. were Vaiśyas.

According to the testimony of Huien Tsang the agriculturists and the cattle-breeders had sunk to the position of the Sudras by this time. Perhaps the spread of the Buddhist's sentiment of nonviolence against animal killing, was
responsible for this change. The ploughing of land involved the killing of worms and insects. This action was considered sinful in these days and consequently it was prohibited to the Dvijas. Thus Vaiśyas withdrew from agriculture and left it to the Śūdras. This, however, did not prevent the adventurous persons among the Śūdras to raise themselves to the position of kings. The rulers of Matipura and of Sindh were Śūdras. Besides these four traditional Varnas, contemporary sources mention some mixed castes and aboriginal tribes: mixed castes and aboriginal tribes also. Huen Tseng remarks that there were numerous classes which defied description. In other words they must have been in great number. Dandin and Bāna mention aboriginal tribes like Pulindas, Sabaras, Kirtas, and so forth, who lived in the hills and forests of the Vindyas and the other mountain ranges. These tribes might have been products of Anuloma (not one degree but more than one degree lower) or fratiloma marriages or some compelling eco-geographical factors. Bāna states that the Sabaras of the Vindhya forests in the 7th century were used to such reprehensible and obnoxious practices as the offering of human flesh to their deities. They lived by hunting, partook meat and wine, and kidnapped women for the purposes of marriage.
Among all the castes Cândalas were considered as the lowest whose touch was enough to pollute the other classes. The Gupta and the post-Gupta sources indicate that some new classes like fishermen and butchers were added to the list of untouchables. Mostly they did the meanest work of carrying unclaimed corpses and executing the criminals. Fa-hien notes that they acted as fishermen, hunters and butchers. Hsien Tsang also observes that butchers, fishermen, public performers, executioners, and scavengers had their habitations marked by a distinguishing sign. They were forced to live outside the city and they sneaked along on the left when going about in the hamlets. Fa-hien says that the candala had to strike a piece of wood as a warning to others to avoid their touch. Bana also states that the candala girl coming to the court of king Sudraka, had to strike a stick on the pavement just to warn people to avoid her touch. Bana, describing a candala colony, calls it an actual image of all hells. Alberuni though belonging to the 10th century, corroborates these facts. According to him the people called Hadi, Domba, Cândala, and Badhatau were reckoned as untouchables. They were engaged in dirty works. They might have been marked as Cândalas on account of their indecent occupations. These illustrations show that their lot was miserable, and they were treated with contempt.