Chapter – 2

Structure of Guilds
Structure of Guilds

The people following the same trade or industry grouped themselves into associations which amongst its wider social and religion functions regulated the economic life of their members and dealt with the people at large on behalf of its members. These associations, which secured social and legal recognition of their status, rights and activities and possessed a true corporate identity, may conveniently and appropriately be termed guilds. Various terms used for these organizations like Kula, Sreni, Puga, Jati, Vrata, Samgha, Samudaga Samuha, Sanbhya-Samutthana, Parisat, Varga, Satha and Naigma and their different interpretations by various authorizes were discussed. A guild was a coherent body, well-formed and well-defined. Its compactness stood the test of time and won the confidence of the people.

As already seen, most of the industries and trades were organized into guilds because they were reckoned as a successful means to organized labour. They provided protection to individual woman and supplied the best possible environment for them to demonstrate their genius and talent. As a guild, it had a common aim and purpose. Therefore, the main emphasis of the institution was laid upon the common welfare and the individual security of its members. To achieve their ends, the guilds devised a very compact internal organization was maintained intact by some of the factors which governed the internal organization of a guild and save the individual units from splitting away. In order to understand the guild organization better, it is important to examine these factors in the beginning.

These corporate activity seems to be quite a common feature in the economic system of post Vedic India. A clone study of the literature of this period clearly indicates that men following similar means of livelihood usually formed themselves into a corporation with definite rules to guide themselves. Thus we find as stated in the Dharma-sutra of Gautama¹ that the additional occupation of vaisyas are, agriculture, trade, tending, cattle and lending money at interest. This list must be taken to include at least all the important occupations of the people at large, that were within the purview of the writer, and so it becomes significant² that cultivators, traders, herdsmen, money-lenders and artisans chance authority to lay down, for respective class having learned

---
¹ S.B. E II p. 232 X 49
² XI 21.
the (state of) affairs from those who in each case have authority the legal decision. This means that practically all the different branches of occupation mentioned above had some sort of definite organization. This organization must be looked upon as an important one, in as much as its rules were recognized as valid in the eye of the law and its representatives had a right to be consulted by the king in any affair that concerned it.

The particular term used to denote the corporation of tradesmen or merchants is “Sreni”. This is defined as a corporation of people, belonging to the same different caste, but following the same trade and industry. This organization corresponds to that of guilds in medieval Europe, and may be freely rendered by that term. Ancient literature, both Buddhist and Bramanical, as well as ancient inscriptions, contains frequent references to guilds, and this corroborates the inference. We have deduced from the Gautmadharmasutra that nearly all the important branches of industry formed themselves into guild. The number of these guilds must have differed considerably not only in different periods but also in different localities.

The first step in the formation of a new guild was to inspire mutual confidence among the intending members. Mutual confidence having been first established by means of sacred libation, by a stipulation in writing, or by inscribes, they shall then set about their work. Thus the test of a man’s purity was that he should take three mouthfuls of water in which an image of the deity whom he holds sacred has been bathed and worshipped. If he should meet with any calamity within a week or fortnight of this ceremony, he was regarded guilty; otherwise he was pure and hence covered become a member of guild. The second condition was the drawing up of rules and regulations for common guidance and the third condition might have meet the practice of securing guarantees for the faithful conduct of the members.

Guilds were organized on the basis of a common profession with the passage of time each profession started becoming hereditary. Generally, the profession of the father became the fate of the son and then technical skill and accumulated experience descended from generation to generation. Infact, it was considered easy to accept the profession of forefathers at it did not require to prepare the background. In the Kathakas and other literature, families are referred to in terms of their traditional calling often Kula and Putta are affixed to the name of the profession which alludes to the

3 S.B.E. II, P. 237: XI, 20
hereditary nature of the craft. There are, for instance, such expressions as
*Sattahawakelan* (family of caravan drivers)\(^4\) *dhannawanikakelam* (grain merchant’s
family)\(^5\) *Panikabulam* (green grocer’s family)\(^6\), *Kumbhkarakelam* (Potters’ family)\(^7\),
*Atariarakhekakulam* (family of torester)\(^8\), *Kammarautta* (son of Smith)\(^9\),
*Vaddhakubula* (family of a carpenter)\(^10\), *Nesadaputta* (son of a hunter)\(^11\),
*Pasankottasaputta* (son of a stone grinders family)\(^12\) and so.

This hardly leaves doubt that normally crafts and trades were organized on a
hereditary basis. It is argued that there hereditary families pursuing a single vocation
for generation, borrowed in course of time, the customs of endogamy and prohibition of
commensality from old tribes and thereby, solidified themselves into isolated units
which later on were termed as caste. The ranking of any caste as high or low depended
upon whether the industry represented by the caste belonged to an advanced or
backward status of culture. Thus, the castes following the most imperimitive
occupations like hunting, fishing and basket making were regarded as the lowest, the
metal-workers, agricultures and traders were estimated as higher in rank while the
highest caste was those of priest and teachers. This theory has found the most logical
and clogmatic champion in Nesfield and has been supported well by modern writers to
some extent.\(^13\) But, any attempt to trace any similarity between there two system
remains fruitless.\(^14\)

Basically guilds are economic in origin, while caste is a social institution caste
is essentially hereditary and man born in a particular caste could not change it at his
own discretion. Although as noted above, a profession was also generally hereditary,
though not essentially. A man customarily followed his father’s profession, but he did

\(^4\) Jat, Vol. I, NO.1, p. 98; No. 2; P.107; No. 29, P. 194; No. 76, P. 312; Vol.II, No. 177, P. 79; Vol,
No. 366, P. 21; Daskumacharitiam, P. 358; Samaraicakaha, P. 151.
\(^5\) Jat; Vol. III, No. 365, P. 198.
\(^6\) Ibid., Vol. I. No. 70, P. 312.
\(^8\) Ibid., Vol. III, No. 265, P. 300.
\(^9\) Ibid., Vol. III, No. 387, P. 281; Majjhima Nikaya, I, 256; Digha Nikaya, II, 127;Suttanipata, V. 83,
P. 15; Mahaparinibbansutta, IV, 14.
\(^11\) Jat, Vol. I, No. 159, P. 36
\(^12\) Ibid., Vol. I, No. 137, P. 477.
\(^13\) Boswe, A.N., Social and Rural Economy of Northern India, P. 232, Lao, B.C., India as described
in Early Texts of Buddism and Jaisim; P. 142; Chakraborty, Haripada, Trade and Commerce in
Ancient India, PP 20-210; Fick, R., The Social organization in North-East India in Buddha’s
Times, P. 285.
not necessarily bound his son to do so. Along side the literary evidences in favour of hereditary nature of trades and crafts there are also references pointing towards the fact that the people of different Varnas flouted their hereditary professions and joined vocations of their own choice. There were no obstacles for a person desirous of shifting from one profession to another. Such liberty, now ever did not exist under the caste system. Besides, the fact, that the law book discriminated between Jati dharma and Srenidharama is a positive proof that Sreni and caste were two different system.

Definitions assigned to term Sreni hint that it was a corporation of people pursuing the same vocation irrespective of their caste. Its members could be of one caste or belong to different castes. Therefore, a Sreni’s membership was open to people of all castes, although the possibility of guild recruiting members from a single caste was always there. In homogeneously populated areas, caste and guild membership often coincided, but in large towns people from all castes were attracted towards a particular industry and, eventually, the guild thus formed based on common interests of the people and included members of various castes. Economic gain being the back bone of subsistence’s. It always attracted people from strata of society.

Thus economically, guilds were the most potent factor in destroying the edifice of the caste system. As question of caste was of little importance so far as the incorporation of a person into a particular guild was concerned, not such light is thrown by the sources on the constituents of any guild. But we can justify our inference from both Pali and Sanskrita literature, and even by some epigraphs, that all the four varnas followed economic pursuits.

Even in the Rigveda, where the organization juncture of the four varnas is fixed, we find artisan’s classes as respectable citizens of the Rigvedic society. In fact no occupation was regarded as degrading for an Aryan freeman, though the position of the priest and rulers conferred upon them the highest status in society. As a place in the Rigveda, we find Brahmans exercising the function of a physician without dishonor. The different occupation did not impart any blemish to Brahma families is indicated

---

17.Vidasupra; Ch.I.
20.Rg., X. 97, 12.
in another Sutra of Rigveda,\textsuperscript{21} where Rsi sings; “I am a poet, my father is a Physician, my mother a grinder of corn with our different views seeking after gain, we run as after cattle.” The Ribhus, who were supposed to have been skilled artisans, were exalted to divine honour.\textsuperscript{22} Some of the descendants of great sage, Bhrgu were expert chariist-makers.\textsuperscript{23} In the pre Buddhist period, represented by the Jatakas, also we have exceptions which show that the barriers dividing one profession from another were not insurmountable. In the Bhimsena Jataka, a weaver changes his handicraft for that of an archer.\textsuperscript{24} epigraph also records a Manikara or jeweler giving his daughter to a black-smith. Possibly he may himself have been a black-smith at the time he gave his daughter in marriage. He might have made his fortune later as jeweler, the profession which might have attracted him.\textsuperscript{25}

Not only the people of lower classes exchanged their professions, horizontally and vertically, but even Brahmanas and Kshtriyas also crossed the boundaries of their spheres and joined these industrial and mercantile units on account of the engrative nature of economic professions. In Jatakas we find frequent references to Brahmans pursuing industrial and mercantile activities. Panini mentions of a celebrated grammarian, Chandravarman, who was Kshatriya by birth.\textsuperscript{26}

The Brahmanas turned towards trade and industry is evident from various references by eager writers too. Gautma, the earliest of legal writers states; “On failures of the occupation of Kshatriya, and on failure of these, he may live by the occupations of Vaisyas and further, if no other cause is possible, a Brahmana may support in any way except by following the occupation of a Sudra.\textsuperscript{27} But Gautama adds further, some permit even this in case his life is in danger. But to mix with that caste and forbidden food must be avoided even in times of distress.\textsuperscript{28} Gautma also allows the use of arm to Brahmana and permits the Ksatriyas to follow the occupation of a Vaisya\textsuperscript{29} Legal writers have classed the members of higher varnas resorting to the profession of lower varnas together with the lower Varnas.
Baudhyana informs us that in the central country (Madhyadesa) Brahmanas did become labourers and artisans.\(^\text{30}\) Manu enjoins that; “Brahansas who live by tending cattle as well as those Brahmans who are traders, artisans professional actors or musicians, money-lenders are in the service of anybody should be treated as Sudras, if summoned to a court as witnesses.\(^\text{31}\) Narada, at one place, declared that a wiseman should always abstain from levying a toll on that property, of a learned Brahmana, which belongs to his household; but not on that which he uses for trading purposes.\(^\text{32}\)

Narada prescribes penances for a Brahmana who had live through in times of distress with the wealth acquired by following the occupation of a Kshatriya.\(^\text{33}\) If a Brahmana takes delight in these occupations, he is declared a Kandaprisishta and must be expelled from society because he has swerved from the path of duty.\(^\text{34}\) Narada has listed the articles which a Brahmana should or should not sell while he is following the occupation of vaisya.\(^\text{35}\) The Mahabharta too refers to those Brahmanas who, on account of neglecting their duties prescribed in the religious text, are likened to the Sudras.\(^\text{36}\) These slackening rules, pertaining to the adoption of a profession under distress and similar other provision contained in legal literature, indicate that the Brahmana and kshatriya followed professions assigned to Vaisya and Sudras.\(^\text{37}\) The Mirichhakatikam refers to a Brahmana Sarthhavaha (dgijasattaha) Charudatta.\(^\text{38}\)

The representative character of the guild is further confirmed by Mandsaur inscription of Kumargupta and Bandhuvarmana\(^\text{39}\) It describes the individual members of a silk weaver guild. This guild had within its fold those “who unassuming in their modesty and devoted to the discourses of the true religion became able to say much that was free from hardness and yet was salutary.

Other among them were valorous in battle and were to affect by force the destruction of their enemies. Some of the members of the guild belonged to famous and

\(^{30}\) Baudhayana Dharmasutra, 1,5, 10, 24; See also, Vasistha Dharmasutra, 111, 3(S.B.E., Vol. XIV, pp. 16-17).
\(^{31}\) Manu., VIII, 102; See also, III, 181; X, 82-85.
\(^{32}\) Narada., III, 14 (S.B.E Vol. XXXIII, P. 127)
\(^{33}\) Narada, I, 59 (S.B.E., Vol XXXIII, P. 55)
\(^{34}\) Narada, I, 60 (Ibid)
\(^{35}\) Ibid, II, 60 (Ibid., P. 57).
\(^{36}\) Mbh., XII, 76, 4.
\(^{37}\) See also, Gautama, X, 5, Manu., IV, 6; Vaj, III, 42. Bauehhajana Dharmasutra, II, 2,4,19; Visn., LIV, 18-20; Narada; I, 186.
mighty lineage befitting their birth. And so the guild shines gloriously all around through those who are of then sort and through others who overcoming the attachment for worldly object being characterized by piety and possessing most abundant goodness are very gods in an earthly habitation.\(^\text{40}\) Inspite of the fact that the inscription does not specifically give a description of *Varnas* and castes of its members, yet in all probability it refers to the same.\(^\text{41}\) The Brahmana are addressed in the traditional style as ‘god moving upon earth.’ The Ksatriyas are denoted by the expression ‘proud of their noble lineage.’\(^\text{42}\)

The Indore copper plate inscription refers to two Kshatriyas, *Acalavarman* and *Bhrkenthasimha*, by name as merchants.\(^\text{43}\) The *Vaillabhattaswamin* temple inscription at Gwalior refers to via *Kshatriya*, *Memmaka*, the son of Devavarman, as the cultivator of fields.\(^\text{44}\) The Peheva inscription records the names of certain horse-dealers who came together in *desi*. There are in it some *Brahmanical* such as *Vamuka*.\(^\text{45}\) The sale of horses was forbidden for a Brahman.\(^\text{46}\)

Thus it can be seen that the higher *Varanas* often neglected the prohibition imposed and joined industrial and mercantile vocation in order to earn profits and gain prosperity. In fact, they were drawn towards there democratic organization for economic gain only. As these organizations functioned on the principle of equality, they summed all their privileges and preferred to be ranked as *Sudra* or a *Vaisya* or even as out castes. But some inscriptions of Narada and Brahampati, it appears that they generally acquired the headship of the guild. Brahspati enjoins, “Honest persons, acquainted with the Vedas and with duty, able self-controlled, sprung from noble families and skilled in every business shall be appointed as head of an association.”\(^\text{47}\) Narada also declares that a Brahmana who works as *Kulika* is an incompetent witness.\(^\text{48}\) The term *kulika* denotes the head of the artisan guild.

In fact, serial barriers had not been fully established at that time and even members of royal families cherished a benevolent attitude towards trade industry. There

\(^\text{41}\) U.R.S. & C.A.I. I, P. 279.
\(^\text{44}\) Ep. Ind., Vol. I, No. XX, P. 159
\(^\text{46}\) Manu., X, 89.
\(^\text{48}\) Narada., I, 186-187 (Ibid, P. 89).
are several instances in Jatakas of inter marriage of kings with women of low status and people from every strata sending their sons to the same teachers for learning.\textsuperscript{49} In the Kusa Jataka, there is a reference to a prince who in his infatuation for Prabhavati appears in disguise successively as a royal potter, a basket maker, a florist and work to his father-in-law. He was not subjected to any social humiliation vein his intrigues were disclosed.\textsuperscript{50} In the \textit{Mahavamsa}, king Jetthitissa of Ceylon is described as a skillful carver and painter who himself taught his subjects.\textsuperscript{51} In \textit{Bana’s Harshcharita} also, we find that on the occasion of marriage of princess Rajasiri “even Kings girt-up their low and made themselves busy in carrying out decorative work set as tasks by their sovereign.”\textsuperscript{52} Even \textit{Manu} ordains that a king must learn from his subjects about trades and professions.\textsuperscript{53}

These evidences escene hardly dry doubt about the free mobility of labour, both vertical and horizontal. Members of the four varnas were following economic pursuits and dignity of labour and received royal recognition. Although, legal, \textit{Sanskrita} and \textit{Pali} literature declared certain as hinacrafts. Yet the declaration was made for the guidance of Brahmansas and Buddhist monk only. They were forbidden from following the low craft and any deviation from ideal path could hold them back from participating in the Sraddha ceremony and denied them many other privileges which they enjoyed for example, the occupations of basket makers, potters, weavers, cobblers, barbers, persons explaining signs, moans and auguries, foretellers of events, wrestlers, wheelwrights, sweepers, butchers, animal hinters, salvagers, quacks and tailors etc were declared to be low trades and stigma was attached to them.\textsuperscript{54} Usually the parents freely discussed with their sons the best profession which they might choose, such was
writing (lekham), accountancy (ganam) and money changing (rupam) without reference being made to their father’s trace.\textsuperscript{55}

**Apprenticeship**

In order to cope with the advancement of the industrial knowledge, the ever increasing degree of specialization and the complication of business enterprises, the artisans were required to go through some sort of training before taking up an industry. They were introduced to technicalities and problems, the modes and the implications of the vocation concerned during the period of training which proved useful in the long run and turned them in to prefect earthmen. This system of apprenticeship was mainly responsible for the efficiency of guild organization. It raised the level of industrial latent within a guild which contributed much towards industrial development of ancient India.

A new learner of a craft (Silpavidyarthi) was known as Antevasi. This term occurs for the first time in Panini’s Astadhyayi where it stand for ‘a mere beginner’, a little naughty boy in whom the only means of instilling knowledge was through the rod (danda)\textsuperscript{56} Elsewhere, Panini refers to an Antevasi whose name was derived from that of his teacher.\textsuperscript{57} Perhaps it was common in the time of Panini to give a new name to the antevasi derived from is teacher’s name. Although the Pali literature abounds in references to the system of apprenticeship.

The legal literature deals with the system of apprenticeship in details Brahaspati sheds light on the attributes of an apprentice and his reasons for living with his teacher.\textsuperscript{58} The Smiritichandrika elucidates that working in the gold points to crafts of goldsmith, but the work of mason the mason, the potter and such other artisans are also meant to be included in the list.\textsuperscript{59} Narada further adds that before leaving for his teacher’s house, he must seek the sanction of his relatives and, before he started living with the teacher, the exact duration of his apprenticeship should be duly fixed.\textsuperscript{60}

\textsuperscript{55} Vinaya Text, I,77; IV, 178.
\textsuperscript{56} न दण्डमाण वास्ते वासिष्ठु – Panini., IV, 130
\textsuperscript{57} आचायोऽपरसर्वश्वाभावालावासी –Ibid., VI, 2, 36
\textsuperscript{58} Brh., XVI, 16 (S.B.E., Vol. XXXIII, P. 344)
\textsuperscript{59} Sm. C., Vol. III, Pt I, P. 456.
\textsuperscript{60} स्वासिस्य वसेदन्ते काल कृत्ता सुनिष्ठितम्। - Narada., VI, 15; See also, Kat., V. 333.
Yajnavalkya also emphasizes that the period of training should be fixed.\(^6^1\) The Mitakshra and Viramitrodaya explain the stipulated period (Krtakalam) to be as long as may have been fixed under an agreement.\(^6^2\)

Smritichandrika observes that as the apprentice in not to be made to do any other work, the only way in which he can serve the master is through handing over to him the product of his craft apprenticeship.\(^6^3\)

“When the apprentice has mastered the art of his craft within the stipulated period, he should make gifts to his teacher according to his means and then take leave of him.\(^6^4\) Asahaya however, says that, after completing his training he should seek the permission of master and should circumambulate the anaster and then lake leave of him.\(^6^5\)

Katyayana gives us additional information that “Property of those students of veda and of the craft which was enjoyed by their friends and relatives while they were absent is not lost by the lapse of time.\(^6^6\)

These rules clearly indicate that industrial apprenticeship was a type of contract based on two main stipulations. Firstly, it fixed the time limit during which the master and the pupil were found to each other. Secondly, it also defined obligations of both the teacher and the taught during the period of apprenticeship.

Thus the rules regarding apprenticeship were complete in all respects and mart and the pupil had well defined spheres of their activity and obligations. The system provided the best possible environment to the beginner to learn the craft of his own choice. The master also could not be partial to the pupil in importing him his knowledge as the pupil throughout lived and worked with him. By devising a special mode living, the pupil throughout lived in an environment which that particular craft

---

\(^{61}\) Yaj., II, 184.


\(^{64}\) Dh.K., Vol. I, Pt. 11, P. 828

\(^{65}\) Kat., V. 337.
demanded. Although a learner, he was left free to absorb that craft and of assimilate within himself all its aspects and peculiarities by experience and observation. All this must have resulted in making him a perfect craftsman ready to impart his own knowledge to other beginners and to carry ahead the craft by his own contribution.67

Thus, it can be seen that each guild served like a technical school for new aspirants. In each workshop, which was usually the residence of the chief craftsman, there were always a few apprentices, some of them beginners, some having completed the terms of training, while still others specializing in the craft, all contributing towards achieving specialization and excellence in the craft concerned.

Localization of crafts:

The localization of craft was also an important factor which governed the guild organization. The concentration of craft at one place favourable for its growth and business transactions, helped the guild considerably to acquire social recognition and in dependence. It strengthened the guild organization and facilitated specialization in craft. Common interests, availability of raw material and prospects of industrial growth were other factors which necessitated the growth of separate industrial settlements.68 The tendency was further accelerated by the policy of segregation adopted by the higher varnas and the kings to keep aloof from the people following hinasippas.

The Buddhist literature refers to localization of trades industries in abundance. The localization of craft can be mainly classified into three divisions – inside the towns, outside but in the suburban areas of the towns and in the remote and isolated parts of the country within the towns.69

The Mahamagga Jataka describes Mithila as composed, in parts, of four suburb extending beyond each of its gates (Naigama), the workshops in the streets of which were open to view, which proves that there was localization of Industries in separate streets of towns and cities.70

67 Cf. L.G.A.I., PP. 56-57.
70 Jat., Vol. VI, No. 546, P. 330
Other examples are, the ivory worker’s street (dantakaravithim), tantavitathanamvithi (weavers’ street), Vaddhakivithi (street of carpenters), rajakivithi (washermen street), uppalavithim (the lotus street), Vessanamvithiya (the street of vessas), Pesakarvavithi (the street of Pesakaras), Surapana (place of liquor shops), Malakarvavithim (florists shop), gandhikapana (Perfumer’s bazaar), Cooks quarters (Suvakarvavithi), etc. The Milinda panho also refers to a fruit Bazar, an antidote bazaar and a bazaar of all kinds of merchandise. The localization of industries and trades in different streets of a city or town was necessary to suit the convenience of general public to facilitate state regulation and also fulfill the demand of trades and industries. This led to the segregation of trade and industries from each other.

Sometimes, the congregation of people with the same industrial pursuit formed their own exclusive villages in proximity of the towns or cities. These localized settlements reveal a much more developed organization compared to the streets that were inhabited by single craftsman. The Kumbhakara Jataka mentions suburban village in vicinity of Banaras inhabited by the potters. A carpenter’s village with 500 or 1000 families existed in the frontier of the state of Kasi. There were weavers villages, Smith’s villagers, foresters villages, hunters villages, forter’s villages, washermen’s village, robber’s village and fishermen’s villages also in vicinity of

73 Ibid., Vol. III, No. 315, P. 43.
74 Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 454, P. 81.
76 Ibid., Vol. VI, NO. 547, P. 485.
77 Dhammapada, I, 424.
79 Ibid, Vol. IV, No. 454, P. 82; Milindpanha, V-5, P. 212.
80 Jat., Vol. N., No. 454, P. 82.
81 Ibid., Vol. III, No. 315, P. 49.
82 Milindpanha, V. 5, P. 212.
85 Dhammala’s Commentary on Therigatha, P. 157 ff; Jat., Vol. I, No. 80, P. 356.
89 Ibid., Vol.V, No. 333, P. 333.
90 Ibid., Vol. IV, No. 454, P. 80.
towns or cities. These villages of craftsmen derived benefits from a nearby market which provided outlet for their products and also supplied them with the ordinary needs of daily life, such as, clothes food stuffs, implements and other articles. However these villages also came to be considered as markets for the surrounding areas. Large towns were surrounded by clusters of villages of which the inhabitant were blacksmiths, carpenters, weavers, dyers, potters, ivory workers and so on. In fact, the settlement of a village belonging to a single craft provided the possibility of another village with a subsidiary trade. Supplying the previous one with implements and material. These villages sprang up very naturally on account of the practical need and the gregarious instinct of craftsmen.93

Kautilya also borrowed the idea of the establishment of guild in the different words of a city. According to the Arthasastra, while colonizing new land, specific parts were allotted for the residence and workshop of artisans and craftsmen belonging to different industries Kautilya has devoted a full chapter about the town-planning in which every care was taken to allot quarters and streets to different craftsmen.94 Kautilya mentions that merchants trading in scents, garland grains and liquids and flesh and prostitutes in the southern quarters; artisans manufacturing worsted threads, cotton threads, bamboo mats, skins, amours weapons and gloves and the Sudras in western quarters; smiths, workers in precious stones and Brahmans in Northern quarters. Kautilya observes” artisans and other handicraftsmen may on their own responsibility allow others handicraftsmen to reside where they carry on their work.”95

The Agnipurana also supplies relevant information regarding the localization of industries and trades. The goldsmiths were to live in south-west corner of the town, the professional dancers and musicians and harlots in southern; the stage managers, the carriage men and fishermen in the south-west, religious people in the northern, the fruit venders in the north-east. All these were in outer circle. The military men, the civilians and alike men of the town constituted the outer circle.96 In the Shilpashastra work called Manasara, there is the description of a village plan called Nandyavarta.
According to this plan, the houses of all types of workmen or labourers should be on the high way; towards the South of the village should be the rows of houses for vaisyas and Sudras; between the east and southeast should be rows of houses of milkmen; between the south and west the weavers should be lodged and beyond these are to be the houses of tailors and shoe-makers between the west and the north-west are to be the settlement of fish mongers and butchers, and on the outskirts should be the houses of those who deal in the bark of trees and of the oilmen. Svayambhu also refers to separate localities of betel-sellers and garland makers. We also find references to Putikapana (sweet market), Madyapana (wine market) and dosihatta (textile market) in Kathakosaparakrana. Even in a camp the various trades had their own separate rows of shops. In the Dasakumrcharitam also there is a reference to a village of Merchants (Vanigagranama).

Besides these literary evidences, some epigraphic records which provide information about the localization of various professions into villages. For instance, in the Museum copper plate grant of Balvarmadeva dated 10th cen. A.D., there is reference to a village of merchants. In the Betkavasudeva image inscription of 23rd year of the Govidachandra of Chandra dynasty of Bengal, there is a reference to a village exclusively inhabited by betel-leaf cultivators who had carried on their traditional trade since time immemorial. The localization of various industrial labourers is also mentioned in the Kahla plate of Kalachuri Sohadeva. The Vishnusena charter laid down that all guilds were not to work in one and the same market. The Kaman stone inscription refers to Kambalihatta or cattle market.

The localization of industries was mainly aimed at achieving efficiency and higher production which helped much in the transmission of skill from generation to generation. As the industry was localized at one place, everyone living there, especially the young ones came to learn the crafts almost unconsciously. Although the localization

98 Svayambhu, Vo. III, Ch. 45, V. 6, 10, Jain, P.C., Socio-economic exploration of Medieval India, P. 311.
99 Kathakosaparakrana, P. 87.
100 Dasakumachari, P. 371.
102 Ep. Ind., Vol. XXVII, No. 7, PP. 26 ff
103 C.I.I., Vol. IV, No. 74, P. 394
105 Ibid., Vol. XXIV, No 45, P. 329.
of trades and crafts tended to create an isolation from the rest of the society, its advantages were several. Localization helped greatly in the consolidation of the caste system on the basis of profession.\textsuperscript{106}

Besides these literary evidences we have epigraphic evidences also which attest to mobile nature of the guilds. The Mandsaur inscription of Kumargmpta and Bandhuvarman records the migration of silk weaver’s guild from the Lata visaya to the city of Daspura being attracted by the virtues of the king of that country.\textsuperscript{107} Another inscription mentions about the migration of Mahajara community from Vatanagar to Aranyaupaguri.\textsuperscript{108} The Sonepur plate of Mahabhavagupta refers to the shifting of the merchant’s association from Khadirapadra to Suvarnapura.\textsuperscript{109} The Indore copper plate inscription also hints at displacement of the guild at it specially binds the guild to fulfill its engagement even if it gets displaced from original place of settlement.\textsuperscript{110} Thus it can not be doubted that, inspite of the highly localized character of trade and industry the industrial guilds were mobile in nature These displacements were generally motivated by better economic pursuits and craving for more peaceful atmosphere.

Thus the guild organization, which was able to win the confidence of people and enjoyed the reputation of a well established social institution, was largely the result of factors mentioned above. The representative character of guilds was certainly responsible for the growth in the volume of trade and industry which alternatively supplied adequate labour. The organization necessarily had democratic setup, did not grant any privilege to any member on the basis of his caste. Everyone worked together, shared together and enjoyed the privileges of membership together. Therefore, it helped, to a large extent, in equalizing the unbalanced social stratification sectioned by Srutis and Smritis.

Every one enjoyed the liberty of joining any guild and pursuing a vocation of his own choice with the prior permission of his fellow men or kingsmen. But new aspirants had to undergo a training, under a very favourable atmosphere, to imbibe technical knowledge and to gain an insight into problems of the trade. At the same,
with view to attract beginners from corners and to have the reputation of long standing technical school, it was necessary for the craftsmen in all respect such as easy availability of raw-material, proximity of a market to meet their daily requirements as well as for disposal of their finished goods, attracted large number of craftsmen to settle down in one place. This resulted in the formation of workers’ villages and workers streets. The localized nature of the crafts at different laces went side by side with the mobile nature of guild. Although the guild shifted from one place to another, they did not lose their bonds of union. The Mandasaur inscription goes to the extent of recording that after shifting from Lata to Dasapura many of craftsmen left their original profession of silk weaving and took to other vocations. But whenever the question of fulfilling their part agreement came up, they still acted as one body.\(^\text{111}\) This indicates that the instinct of co-operation and communion was so strong and insurmountable that any change of place hardly affected their organization.

It is thus an undoubted fact that there were some building forces which served to bring together several units of a particular guild in to one unbreakable unit and infused into them a sense of realizing the benefits of guild life.