CHAPTER V. THE MAURYA EMPIRE

THE ERA OF DHAMMAVIJAYA AND DECLINE

SECTION 1. AŚOKA AFTER THE KALIINGA WAR

Chakkavatti ahun rājā Jambusandrassa issaro
muddhābhitisatto khattiyo manussādhīpati ahun
adāṇḍena asatthena vijeyya paṭhavim ime
asāhasena dhammena samena manusāsiyā
dhammena rajjam kāretvā asmīm paṭhavimandale

—Aṅguttara Nikāya.

We have already seen that the Kaliṅga war opened a new epoch in the history of Magadha and of India. During the first thirteen years of his reign Aśoka was a typical Magadhan sovereign—the inheritor of the policy of Bimbisāra, of Mahāpadma and of Chandragupta—conquering peoples, suppressing revolt, annexing territory. After the Kaliṅga war all this is changed. The older political philosophy which tradition associates with the names of Vassakāra and Kauṭilya gave way to a new statecraft inspired by the teaching of the sage of the Śākyas. Before proceeding to give an account of the remarkable change we should say a few words about the religious denominations of India and the condition of society during the reign of the great innovator.

In the days of Aśoka the people of India were divided into many sects of which the following were the most important:—

1. The orthodox Deva-worshippers.¹
2. The Ājīvikas or the followers of Gosāla Maṅkhaliputta.²

¹ Among the Devas worshipped in the Maurya period, Patañjali makes special mention of Śiva, Skanda and Viśākha.

² This teacher was born in Saravāna, probably near Śāvatthī or Śrāvaṇī. Jainā writers represent him as a person of low parentage and of contemptible
3. The Nirgranthas or Jainas, i.e., the followers of Nigantha Nātaputta who is commonly called Mahāvīra of Vardhamāna.

4. The followers of Gautama Buddha Śākyamuni.

5. Other sects alluded to in Pillar Edict VII.

In Edict IV we have the following account of the prevailing state of society: “for a long period past, even for many hundred years, have increased the sacrificial slaughter of living creatures, the killing of animate beings, unseemly behaviour to relatives, unseemly behaviour to Brāhmanas and ascetics (Śramaṇas).” Kings used to go out on so-called Vihāra yātrās in which hunting and other similar amusements used to be practised. The people performed various ceremonies (maṅgala) on occasions of sickness, weddings of sons, the weddings of daughters, the birth of children, and departure on journeys. The womankind performed many, manifold, trivial and worthless ceremonies.

From the references in the Edicts to Brāhmanas, Kaivartas (of Kevaṭa bhoga) and Śramaṇas, Bhikṣu and character. The attitude of Buddhist authors is also not friendly. In reality he was one of the leading sophists of the sixth century B.C., and, for a time, was a close associate of Mahāvīra. According to the Aśvaka belief as expounded in the Sāmañña phala Sutta “the attainment of any given condition, of any character, does not depend on human effort (purisa-kāre). There is no such thing as power or energy, or human strength or human vigour (purisa-parakkama). All beings are bent this way and that by their fate (niyati).” (Dialogues, Pt. I, p. 71; Barua, The Ājīvikas, 1920, p. 9). An Ājīvakaparivrajaka appears as a court astrologer of Budhusa in the Divyavādadāna (pp. 370 ff.). A tax on “Ājīvakas” is referred to in an inscription of the twelfth century A.D. (Hultrsch., III. I. 88) showing that the sect flourished in S. India even in that late age. See also A. L. Basham, The Ājīvikas.

1 Cf. Ajatasatru’s treatment of Bimbisāra, Viḍūḍabha’s massacre of the Śākyas, Udayana’s cruelty towards Pipāḍa, and Nanda’s haughty demeanour towards Chāṇakya.

2 Tours of pleasure, cf. Kauṭilya, p. 932. Mahābhārata, XV. 1. 18:
   Vihārayāttraṇa punah Kururājo Yudhiṣṭhirah
   sarvan kāmān mahātrajāḥ pradāvau-Ambikānte.

3 R. Edict VIII.

4 For “Maṅgala” see also Jātakas No. 87, and No. 163 (Hathhi-maṅgala), and Harsa-charita. II (p. 27 of Parab’s edition, 1918).

5 For Avāha and Vindha see also Mbh., V. 141. 14; Kauṭilya, VII. 15.

6 R, Edict IX.
Bhikṣuṇī-Samghas it may be concluded that Varna (social gradation) and Āśrama (stages of socio-religious discipline) were established institutions. The position of the slaves and labouring poor in general (dāsa, bhataka) was, in some cases at any rate, not enviable. Women had to tolerate the purdah as well as polygamy. Ladies of the harem were under special guards (stry-adhyaksha). As will be seen in the following pages, the policy of Aśoka in regard to social matters was, in the main, one of mitigation, and not, except in respect of certain kinds of Samāja and sundry obnoxious practices, of radical reform.

The Change of Aśoka’s Religion

Aśoka had doubtless inherited the traditional devotion of Hindu kings to the gods (devas) and the Brāhmaṇas and, if the Kāśmīra chronicle of Kalhana is to be believed, his favourite deity was Śiva. He had no scruples about the slaughter of men and animals: “formerly, in the kitchen of His Sacred and Gracious Majesty the King each day many hundred thousands of living creatures were slaughtered to make curries.” The hecatombs of thousands of men and women sent to their doom during the Kaliṅga war have already been mentioned. The sight of the misery and bloodshed in that sanguinary campaign made a deep impression on him and awakened in his breast feelings of anusochana, “remorse, profound sorrow, and regret”. About this time he came under the influence of Buddhist teaching. We read in Rock Edict XIII “after that, now that the Kaliṅgas had been annexed, began His Sacred Majesty’s zealous practice of the Law of Piety (dhramaśilana), his love of that Law (dhramakama), and his inculcation of that Law (dhramanuśasti).”

1 The view held by some well-known writers that the conversion of Aśoka took place before the Kaliṅga war rests on the evidence of the Mahāvaṁśa (Ch. V) and on certain assumptions, viz., that Aśoka’s dhramakama became tiṣṭa (intense) immediately after the Kaliṅga war (there being no interval) and that Aśoka was indifferent during the period of Upāsakata (when he was only a lay disciple) which, therefore, must have preceded the Kaliṅga war,
Although Aśoka became a Buddhist he was not an enemy either of the Devas or of the Brāhmaṇas. Up to the last he took pride in calling himself Devānapīṭha, beloved of the gods. He found fault with unseemly behaviour towards Brāhmaṇas and inculcated liberality to the same class. He was perfectly tolerant. “The king does reverence to men of all sects.” He reprobated ātmapāsamā-pūjā, honour to one’s own sect, when coupled with para-pāsamā-garavā, disparagement of other sects. That he was sincere in his professions is proved immediately after which his devotion became tiṣṇa. But the so-called indifference or want of activity is only relative. On the other hand, the supporters of the new theory have to explain why a recent convert to Buddhism should engage in a sanguinary conflict involving the death of countless Śramanās. Why again do the Minor Rock Edicts refer to contact with the Saṅgha, and not the Kaliṅga war, as the prelude and cause of more intense activity? It is to be noted that activity in the period of Upāsakatva is also described as parākrama, though it was surpassed by the greater energy of the period after contact with the Holy Order. Note also the explicit reference to dhramakamata as the result of the annexation of Kaliṅga sometime after (tato pachhā adhunā) the war. The use of the expressions tato pachhā and adhunā suggests that an interval intervened between the war and the intensity of Aśoka’s dhramakamata. Moreover, we learn from the Minor Edicts and Pillar Edict VI that pious proclamations began to be issued a little more than 2½ years after Aśoka became an Upāsaka and 12 years after his coronation. This would place his conversion a little less than 9½ years after his Abhisheka, i.e., a little less than 1½ years after the Kaliṅga war.

1 Sākya (Rūpānī), Buddha Sākya (Makri), Upāsaka (Sahasrām); see Hultsch, CII, p. xlv. Cf. also Kalāṇa, Rājatarāṇiṇī, i. 102ff. That Aśoka did become a Buddhist admits of no doubt. In the Bhārū Edict he makes an open confession of his faith in the Buddha, the Dharma (Doctrines) and the Saṅgha (Order of Monks). He called the Buddha Bhagavat. He went on pilgrimage to the places of the Blessed One’s nativity and enlightenment and worshipped at the former place. He declared that whatsoever had been spoken by the Buddha, all that was quite well spoken. He also believed in the cult of the “former” Buddhas. He took much interest in the exposition of the Buddhist Doctrine so that it might endure long. As to the Saṅgha he kept in close touch with it since his memorable visit to the Fraternity a year or so after his conversion. He impressed on the clergy the need of a correct exposition of the true doctrine and appointed special officers to busy themselves with the affairs of the Brotherhood. He also laid emphasis on Vinaya-samuthkaraṇa and took steps to maintain the integrity of the Church and prevent schism within its fold.


2 Edict IV.

3 Edict XII.
by the Barābar Cave Dedications to the Ājīvika monks. His hostility was chiefly directed not towards the Devas and the Brāhmaṇas, not even towards Varṇāśrama, but the killing of men in war and Samājas (festive gatherings), ill-treatment of friends and acquaintances, comrades and relatives, slaves and servants, the slaughter of animals in sacrifice, and the performance of vulgar, useless and offensive ceremonies.

The Change of Foreign Policy

The effect of the change of religion was at once felt in foreign policy. The Emperor declared that “of all the people who were slain, done to death, or carried away captive in Kалиnga, if the hundredth part or the thousandth part were now to suffer the same fate, it would be a matter of regret to His Sacred Majesty. Moreover, should any one do him wrong, that too must be borne with by His Sacred Majesty, so far as it can possibly be borne with.” In Kалиnga Edict I, the Emperor expressed his desire that the unsubdued peoples in the frontiers of the imperial dominions (Aṁtā avijitā) “should not be afraid of him, that they should trust him, and should receive from him happiness not sorrow.” The chiefest conquest in the Emperor’s opinion was the conquest by righteousness (Dhamma-vijaya). In Edict IV he exultingly says, “the reverberation of the kettle-drums (Bherighoso) has become the reverberation of the Law of Piety (Dhammadhoso).” Not content with what he himself did he called upon his sons and even his great grandsons to eschew new conquests—putra pāpotra me asu navam vijayam ma vijetaviyam. Here we have a complete renunciation of the old policy of military conquest or Digvijaya and the enunciation of a new policy, viz., that of Dhammavijaya.¹ The full political effects of this change of policy became manifest only after the

¹The Asokan conception of Dhammavijaya was similar to that described in the Chakkavatti Sīhanāda Sutta, “conquest not by the scourge, not by the
death of Asoka, perhaps even after the 27th year of his consecration. From the time of Bimbisāra to the Kaliṅga war the history of India was the story of the expansion of Magadha from a tiny state in South Bihār to a gigantic Empire extending from the foot of the Hindukush to the borders of the Tamil country. After the Kaliṅga war ensued a period of stagnation at the end of which the process is reversed. The empire gradually dwindled down in extent till it sank to the position from which Bimbisāra and his successors had raised it.

True to his principle Asoka made no attempt to annex the frontier (Prachāṅta, añita, sāmanta, sāmīpa), kingdoms, viz., Chola, Pāṇḍya, Satiyaputra, Keralaputra, Tambaparnni (Ceylon) and the realm of Anitiyako Yonarija, who is usually identified with Antiochos II Theos, King of Syria and Western Asia. On the contrary, he maintained friendly relations with them.

The Chola country was drained by the river Kāverī and comprised the districts of Trichinopoly and Tanjore. We learn from a South Indian inscription1 that Hara, i.e., the god Śiva, asked Guṇabhara (Mahendravarman I, Pallava), “How could I, standing in a temple on earth, view the great power of the Cholas or the river Kāverī?” When Pulakesin II Chalukya strove to conquer the Cholas “the Kāverī had her current obstructed by the causeway formed by his elephants.” The Chola capital was Uraiyaṅ

sword, but by righteousness” (Dialogues of the Buddha, Part III, p. 59). It was different from the Hindu conception explained and illustrated by the Mahābhārata (XII. 59, 38-39), the Hārivaṃśa (I. 14.21), the Kautūliya (p. 382), and the Rāghuvaṃśa (IV. 48). Attention may be invited in this connection to a Statement of Arrian that “a sense of justice prevented any Indian king from attempting conquest beyond the limits of India” (Camb. Hist. Ind. I. 921); M’Crindle, Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian, 209. Incidentally it may be pointed out that the discourse entitled the Chakranvati Śrīnāḍā (Lion Roar of the Chakranvati or emperor who ‘conquers by righteousness’) possibly affords a clue to a proper appreciation of the famous Sārnath Capital with its Chakra and crowning lions. Cf, also Ramāyaṇa II. 10.58 Yāpadāvarata chakram tāvati me vasundhara, IC, XV, 1.4, p. 179ff. For the Asoka chakra, see IC XV (1948-49), pp. 179ff.

1 Hustzsch. SII., Vol. 1, p. 54.
(Sanskrit Uragapura) or Old Trichinopoly. The principal port was at Kāviripaṭṭinam or Pugār on the northern bank of the Kāverī.

The Pāṇḍya country corresponded to the Madurā, and Tinnevally districts with perhaps the southern portions of Rāmnad and the Travancore Cochin State. It had its capitals at Kolkai and Madurā (Dakṣiṇa Mathurā). The rivers Tāmraparṇī and Kṛitamālā or Vaigai flowed through it. Kātyāyana derives Pāṇḍya from Pāṇḍu. The Pāṇḍus are mentioned as the ruling race of Indraprastha in the Mahābhārata as well as in several Jātakas. Ptolemy (cir. 150 A.D.) speaks of the country of the Pandoouoi in the Pañjāb. There can be no doubt that Pāṇḍu was the name of a real tribe or clan in northern India. Kātyāyana’s statement regarding the connection of the Pāṇḍyas with the Pāṇḍus receives some support from the fact that the name of the Pāṇḍya capital (Madurā) was identical with the famous city of Mathurā in the Śūrasena country which, according to Epic tradition, was the seat of a family intimately associated by ties of friendship and marriage with the Pāṇḍus of Indraprastha. The connection between the Pāṇḍas, the Śūrasenas and the Pāṇḍyas seems to be alluded to in the confused stories narrated by Megasthenes regarding Herakles and Pandaia.

Satiyaputra is identified by Mr. Venkatesvaraiyar with Satya-vrata-ksetra or Kaṇchīpura. But Dr.

1 Aelian, however, has the following reference to the realm of Soras (Chola?) and its chief city: “There is a city which a man of royal extraction called Soras governed at the time when Eukratides governed the Bactrians, and the name of that city is Perimuda (city of Perumal?). It is inhabited by a race of fish-eaters who go off with nets and catch oysters.” For Uragapura in Cholika Vishaya, see Ep. Ind., X. 109.

2 For the early history of the Chola Kingdom and other Tamil states see CHI. Vol. I, Ch. 24; Smith. FHI, Ch. XVI; Kanakasabhai Pillay, Tamils Eighteen Hundred Years Ago; Krishnaswami Aiyangar, Beginnings of South Indian History and Ancient India; K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, The Pāṇḍyan Kingdom, The Colas, etc.

3 I find it difficult to agree with Dr. Barua, Inscriptions of Asoka, Part II (1943), p. 232, that the “line of Yudhisṭhīra”...that ruled at Indraprastha in the Kuru country “has nothing to do with Pāṇḍu’s eldest son”.

4 Ind. Ant., 1877, p. 249.

5 JRAS, 1918, pp. 541-42.
Aiyangar points out that the term Satya-vrata-kshetra is applied to the town of Kāñchī or a part of it, not to the country dependent upon it. There is besides the point whether vrata could become puta. Dr. Aiyangar supports Bhandarkar’s identification with Satpute. He takes Satiyaputra to be a collective name of the various matriarchal communities like the Tulus and the Nāyers of Malabar.¹ According to Dr. Smith Satiyaputra is represented by the Satyamangalam Tāluk of Coimbatore. Mr. T. N. Subramaniam³ prefers Koṅgunādu ruled by the Kośar people famous for their truthfulness. Mr. K. G. Sesha Aiyar⁴ takes Satiyaputra to be the equivalent of Atiyamān, chief of Kutiraimalai with his headquarters at Takaḍūr, now in Mysore. Mr. P. J. Thoma, however, gives reasons for identifying it with “Satyabhūmi” of the Kēralolpatti, a territory which corresponds roughly to “North Malabar including a portion of Kasergode Tāluk, South Canara.”⁵

**Keralaputra** (Ketlaputo or Chera) is “the country south of Kūpaka (or Satya), extending down to Kanneti in Central Travancore (Karunagapalli Tāluk). South of it lay the political division of Mūshika.”⁶ It was watered by the river Periyar, perhaps identical with the Churnī of the *Arthasāstra* on the banks of which stood its capital Vañji (near Cochin) and at its mouth the seaport of Muziris (Kranganur).

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¹ JRAS, 1919, pp. 581-84.
³ JRAS, 1922, 86.
⁴ *Ceta kings of the Sangam period*, 17-18, cf., now N. Sastri, ANM, 25.
⁵ JRAS, 1923, p. 412. B. A. Salemore is, however, inclined to disparage the authority of the *Keralolpatti (Indian Culture*, I, 668). B. Kiepel points out (*Die Cosmographie Der Inder*, 1920, p. 78) that Satiya (variants Satiratha, Sanṭpa) finds mention in the list of southern Janapadas, along with the Mūshakas, in the *Jambukhana* section of the *Mahābhārata* (Bk. VI). For other views see *Ind. Cuk.*, Vol. II. 54ff.; Aiyangar, *Com.* Vol., 45-47.
⁷ JRAS, 1925, p. 413.
Ceylon was known in ancient times as Pārasamudrā\(^1\) as well as Tāmraparṇī (Greek Taprobane).\(^2\) Tambaparṇī, *i.e.*, Tāmraparṇī is mentioned in Rock Edicts II and XIII of Aśoka. Dr. Smith lately\(^3\) took the word to mean not Ceylon but the river Tāmraparṇī in Tinnevally. He referred to the Girnar text "ā Tāṁbaparṇi" which according to him indicated that the river was meant, not the island. Now, in Edict II the phrase "ā Tāṁbaparṇi" comes after Ketalaṇuṇto and not after Pāḍā. The expression "Ketalaṇuṇto as far as the (river) Tāmraparṇī" is hardly appropriate because the Tāmraparṇī is a Pāṇḍya river.\(^4\) We, therefore, prefer to take Tāmraparṇī to mean Ceylon. Aśoka’s Ceylonese contemporary was Devānampiya Tissa whose accession may be dated about 250 or 247 B.C.

Aśoka maintained friendly relations not only with the Tamil powers of the south, but also with his Hellenistic frontager, Antiochos II Theos, king of Syria and Western Asia (B.C. 261-246); and even with the kings the neighbours of Antiochos, namely, Ptolemy II, Philadelphos,

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\(^1\) Greek Palaśimandu, see Ray Chaudhuri, *Ind. Ant.*, 1919, pp. 195-96. Commentary on the *Kautsiya*, Ch. XI; *Rāmāyaṇa*, VI, 3, 21 (Lankā described as śutu “pāre samudraṣṭā”).

On reading Law’s *Ancient Hindu Polity* (p. 87 n.) I find that the identification was also suggested by Mr. N. L. Dey. The equation Pārasamudra = Palaśimandu is not less plausible than the equations Sātvāḥana = Sālivahana; Katāhā = Kaḍāram = Kīḍāram = Kantolī (pace Dr. Majumdar, *Suvarṇadvispa, 56 79. 168*).

\(^2\) For other names of Ceylon see “*Megasthenes and Arrian*” published by Chuckervert and Chatterjee, 1926, p. 60 n. For a short history of the island see *Camb. Hist. Ind.*, Chap. XXV, and *IHQ*, II. 1. p. 1ff. According to tradition recorded in the *Dīpavāṃsa* and the *Mahāvāṃsa* the first Aryan immigrants were led by Prince Vijaya of Lāḷā, whom the chronicles represent as a grandson of a Princess of Vaṅga. The identification of Lāḷā is, however, open to controversy, some placing it in Gujrāt, others identifying it with Rāḍha or Western Bengal. Barnett may be right in his assumption that the tradition of two different streams of immigration was knit together in the story of Vijaya. See also *IHQ*, 1933, 74ff.

\(^3\) *Aśoka*, 3rd Ed., p. 162.

\(^4\) Even those who prefer to see in the passage a reference to a kingdom in the Valley of the Tāmraparṇī river, have to prove that such a kingdom did exist in the Maurya age apart from “Pāḍā” and Taprobane, and so explain the particular way in which it is mentioned in Edict II.
Kingdoms in the Hellenic West

king of Egypt (B.C. 285-247); Magas, king of Cyrene in North Africa (who probably died not later than B.C. 258); Antigonus Gonatas, king of Macedonia (B.C. 277 or 276-239); and Alexander who ruled over Epirus (B.C. 272-c. 255) according to Norris, Westergaard, Lassen, Senart, Smith and Marshall. Beloch and Hultzsch, however, suggest that Alikusudara of Edict XIII is the comparatively insignificant ruler, Alexander of Corinth, the son of Craterus (B.C. 252—cir. 244) and not Alexander of Epirus (272—cir. 255), the son of Pyrrhus.

Though Aśoka did not covet the territories of his neighbours, there is evidence that he gave them advice on occasions, and established philanthropic institutions in their dominions. In other words, he regarded them as objects of spiritual conquest (Dhamma-vijaya).

"My neighbours, too, should learn this lesson."

"Among his frontagers the Cholas, the Pāṇḍyas, the Satyaputra, the Ketalaputra as far as Tāmraparṇī, Antiochos, the Greek king, and even the kings the neighbours of that Antiochos, everywhere have been made healing arrangements of His Sacred and Gracious Majesty the King."

In Edict XIII Aśoka declares that the "conquest of the Law of Piety,.....has been won by His Sacred Majesty.....among all his neighbours as far as six hundred leagues, where the king of the Greeks named Antiochos dwells, and beyond (the realm) of that Antiochos (where dwell) the four kings (rājāno) severally Ptolemy (Turamāyo), Antigonus (Aṁtekina), Magas (Maga or Maka), and Alexander (Alikusudaro)—(likewise) in the south (mīcha), the Cholas and the Paṇḍyas as far as Tāmbapāmini.....Even where the envoys (dūlā) of His Sacred Majesty do not penetrate, those people, too,
hearing His Sacred Majesty's ordinance based upon the Law of Piety and his instruction in the Law, practise and will practise the Law.' Buddhists doubtless made some progress in Western Asia and influenced later sects like the Manichaean. But Greeks apparently were not much impressed by lessons on non-violence. When the strong arm of Asoka, "who possessed the power to punish in spite of his repentance," was withdrawn, the Yavanas poured once more into the Kābul valley, the Pañjab and the Madhya-deśa and threw all the province into confusion. The southern missions were more successful. Curiously enough, the Ceylonese chronicles do not seem to refer to the envoys sent to the independent Tamil and Hellenistic kingdoms but name the missionaries sent to Ceylon and Suvannabhūmi (Lower Burma and Sumatra). The Ceylonese mission was headed by prince Mahendra who secured the conversion of Devānampiya Tissa and many of his people. No direct reference to Suvannabhūmi occurs in the Edicts hitherto discovered.

The Change in Internal Policy

The effects of Asoka's change of religion after Kalinga war were felt not only in foreign policy but also in internal affairs. The principal objects of his complaint according to Rock Edict IV and the Kalinga Edicts were:

1. The sacrificial slaughter (ārambho) of living creatures.

1 From Buddhism in Western Asia, see Beal, Si-yu-ki, II. 378; and Alberuni. p. 21; JRAS, 1913, 76; M'Grindle, Ancient India as Described in Classical Literature, p. 185; Eliot, Hinduism and Buddhism, Vol. III. p. 3. 350 f; cf. Smith, EHI, 4th ed., 197; Burlingame, trans., Dhammapada Commentary, Introduction.

2 Mention is however made of the Yona country along with Kasmir, Gandhāra and Himālaya (Geiger, 82). This Yona territory is perhaps to be identified with the homonymous land in the Kābul valley associated with Kamboja and Gandhāra in the Asokan Inscriptions. But reference in a vague way to the Levantine world is not completely ruled out. The Deccan lands mentioned in connection with the traditional missionary activity of the Asokan age include Mahishamandala, Vanavāsa (in the Kanarese area), Aparaśātrika (on the west coast), and Mahāraṣṭra (Mahāraṣṭra) in the upper valley of the Godāvari.
2. Violence (vīhiṁsā) to animate beings.
3. Unseemly behaviour to (asaṃpratipati) to kinsmen (jñāti).
4. Unseemly behaviour to Brāhmaṇas and Šramaṇas.
5. Maladministration in the Provinces.

According to Rock Edict I, Asoka saw much offence not only in the sacrificial slaughter of animals, but also in certain Samājas or festive gatherings which, as we learn from the Kauṭiliya,¹ were often witnessed by kings and emperors.² The Samāja, says Smith, was of two kinds. The popular festival kind accompanied by animal fights, heavy drinking and feasting, including much consumption of meat, was necessarily condemned by Asoka, as being inconsistent with his principles. The other kind, the semi-religious theatrical performance, sometimes given in the temples of Sarasvatī, the goddess of learning, was apparently not included among offensive Samājas. Dr. Thomas³ describes the disapproved Samāja as “a celebration of games or contests taking place in an arena or amphitheatre surrounded by platforms (mañcha) for spectators (prekshā).” This kind of (Samāja) is apparently referred to in the following lines of the Virāṭa parva of the Mahābhārata: —

Ye cha kechinniyotsyanti Samājeshu niyodhakāḥ.⁴

“Those combatants who will take part in wrestling in the Samājas."

Tatra Mallāḥ samāpetur digbhya rājan sahasrasyah
Samāje Brahmano rājan tathā Paśupater api
Mahākāyāḥ Mahāvīryāḥ Kālokunjā ivāsūrāḥ.⁵

“O king, there arrived, by thousands, boxers from all quarters, in that festive gathering in honour of Brahman as well as Paśupati (Śiva). They possessed gigantic bodies and immense strength like the Titans styled Kālakaṇja.”

¹ P. 45.
² For the holding of Samājas in Magadha and in neighbouring countries see Vinaya, IV. 267; Mahāvastu, III. 57 and 383.
³ JRAS, 1914, pp. 99ff.
⁴ Virāṭa, 2. 7.
⁵ Virāṭa, 15. 15-16.
The harmless Samāja is well illustrated by the gathering in the temple of the goddess of learning referred to in Vātsyāyana’s Kāmasūtra (Pakshasya māsasya vā prañāle hani Sarasvatī bhavane nityānāṁ nityānī Samājaḥ). According to Hultsch the harmless Samāja refers to edifying shows.¹

Āsoka determined to put a stop to the practices, referred to above, which he did not approve. At the same time he sought to improve the moral and material condition of the people to such an extent as to effect the “association of gods with men.”² He did all this “in order that he might discharge the debt (which he owed) to living beings (that) he might make them happy in this (world) and (that) they might attain heaven in the other (world).” The means employed to achieve this object may be classed under four heads:

1. Administrative reforms.
2. Dissemination of instructions in the Dhamma (Law of Piety or Duty).
3. Benevolent activity; promotion of the welfare of man and beast.

**Administrative Reforms**

In the first place, Āsoka instituted the Quinquennial and Triennial Anusatīyāna or Circuit of the Yutas, Rājūkas Prādeśikas, and Mahāmātras. Jayaswal and Smith³ were

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¹ See also IHQ, 1928, March, 112ff.
² Cf. Minor Rock Edict I. Cf. The description in the Harivamsa of a prosperous realm where (rājye mahodaye) gods and men dwelt together (Bhavishyaparva, Ch. 32.1) “Devalānāṁ manushyānāṁ sahaśvaśo bhavatiśāda.” Hultsch, however, compares (xliv) Deva with Divyāni rūpāṇi of Rock Edict IV.
³ Āsoka, 3rd edition, p. 164: Mr. A. K. Bose (IHQ, 1933, 811) takes anusatīyāna in the sense of ‘a court-house or a citadel.’ But the epic reference to punyatirthānusatīyānam (Mbh. i. 2. 125), ‘going forth to holy places of pilgrimage,’ suggests that the interpretation proposed by Kern and Bührer is the one least open to objection. See also Barua, Āsoka Edicts in New Light, 82ff.
of opinion that the whole administrative staff from the Rājūkas and the Prādeśikas down to the Yutas could not possibly have gone on circuit at once every five years. They interpreted the term as signifying a regular system of transfers from one station to another. But there is nothing in the text to show that all the officers were required to go on circuit at once. The anusamāyāna of the Yutas, Rājūkas and Prādeśikas was quinquennial and was mainly intended for propaganda work. The anusamāyāna of the Mahāmātrās was specially instituted for the purpose of checking miscarriage of justice, arbitrary imprisonment and torture in the outlying provinces (Kaliṅga, and the Ujjayinī and Takshashilā regions).

Secondly, Aśoka created a number of new posts, e.g., Dharma-mahāmātras and possibly Dharma-Yutas. The Dharma-mahāmātras were given a protective mission among people of all sects including the Brāhmaṇas and the Nirgranthas or Jainas, and among the Yavanas, Kambojas, Gandhāras, Riṣṭikas and all the Aparāntas. “Among servants and masters, Brāhmaṇas and the wealthy (ībhyaṁ), among the helpless and the aged, they are employed in freeing from worldly cares their subordinates (in the department) of the Law of Piety. They are also employed on the revision (of sentences of) imprisonment or execution, in the reduction of penalties, or (the grant of) release, on the grounds of motive, having children, instigation, or advanced years. . . At Pāṭaliputra and in all provincial (bāhira) towns, in the family establishments of the king’s brothers and sisters, as well as of other relatives, they are everywhere employed.” The Dharma-mahāmātras were further engaged everywhere in the imperial dominions (vijīta) or indeed in the whole world (Prithivī) as known to the Mauryas, among the Dharma-Yutas with

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1 Dhammayutta may not be an official designation. It may mean simply ‘one devoted to Dhamma’ (morality, righteousness). Cf. Bhandarkar, Aśoka, 2nd ed., pp. 311, 545.

2 We have here a reference probably to the fourfold division of society into Brāhmaṇas, Kshatriyas or nobles (Ībhyaṁ), Vaiśyas (Aryas), and Śudras (Bhaṣja).
regard to “the concerns of the Law, the establishment of the Law, and the business of almsgiving.” The border countries (desa) were placed under the special care of the Avutikas.1

The emperor was naturally anxious to keep himself fully informed without delay about all public affairs, specially about the doings of the Mahamatras on whom the success of his mission mainly depended. He, therefore, gave special directions to the Pativedakas or Reporters that when a matter of urgency committed to the Mahamatras and discussed in the Parishad or Council occasioned a division of opinion or nijhati (adjournment?) he must be informed without delay.

It is apparent from the Kalinga Edicts and Rock Edict VI that Asoka kept a watchful eye on the Mahamatras especially on those who administered justice in cities. But he was more indulgent towards the Rajukas for whose intelligence he apparently entertained great respect. To the Rajukas “set over many hundred thousands of people” the emperor granted independence in the award of honours and penalties in order that those officials might perform their duties confidently and fearlessly. He wanted, however, to maintain some uniformity in penalties as well as in procedure. For this reason he issued the following rule:—

“To condemned men lying in prison under sentence of death a respite of three days is granted.”

Lastly, Asoka issued certain regulations restricting slaughter and mutilation of animals, and up to the twenty-seventh year of his coronation effected twenty-five jail deliveries. This suggests, as has been pointed out by Hultsch, that the emperor used to proclaim an amnesty to criminals at almost every anniversary of his coronation.

1 Cf. Hultsch, Asoka, 100 n 7.
2 For procedure in cases of disputations in an Assembly see also Jaim. Up. Br. III. 7.6. Can Nijhati imply reference to the Upadrashtis hinted at in the Brähmana passage? The help of Upadrashtis was invoked by the Kuru-Pañchálas to arrive at a satisfactory agreement or understanding in case of dispute. (Cf. also Barua, Asoka Edicts in New Light, p. 78).
Measures adopted to disseminate Instructions in the Law of Piety

Though himself convinced of the truth of the Buddha's teaching of the efficacy of worship at Buddhist holy places, of the necessity of making a confession of faith in the Buddhist Trinity, of keeping in close touch with the Buddhist Order of monks and maintaining its discipline and solidarity, Aśoka probably never sought to impose his purely sectarian belief on others. He attempted, however, to put an end to practices and institutions that he considered to be opposed to the fundamental principles of morality which, according to him, constituted the essence of all religions. The prospect that he held before the people at large is not that of sambodhi (or of nirvāṇa) but of svarga (heaven) and of mingling with the devas. Svarga could be attained and the gods could be approached by all people, high or low, if only they showed parākrama, zeal, not in adherence to a sectarian dogma or the performance of barren ritual (maṅgala) but in following the ancient rule (porāṇā pakiti), the common heritage of Indians of all denominations, viz., "obedience must be rendered to parents and elders; firmness (of compassion) must be shown towards living creatures; truth must be spoken; these same moral virtues must be practised. In the same way the teacher must be reverenced by the pupil, and fitting courtesy should be shown to the relatives." In Edict XIII we have the following: "hearkening to superiors, hearkening to father and mother, hearkening to teachers (or elders), and proper treatment of friends, acquaintances, comrades, relatives, slaves and servants, with steadfastness of devotion." Edict VII lays stress on "mastery over the senses, purity of mind, gratitude, and steady devotion". In the Second Pillar Edict it is declared that the Law of

1 For the question of slavery in Maurya India, see Monahan, Early History of Bengal, pp. 164-85. It is to be noted that Aśoka did not abolish slavery, just as he did not do away with caste or purdah. He simply wanted to mitigate the rigours of the existing social polity.
Piety consisted in *Apāsinave, bahukāyāne, dayā, dāne, sache sochaye,* “little impiety, many good deeds, compassion, liberality, truthfulness, purity”.

In the Pillar Edicts again prominence is given to self-examination and spiritual insight. Towards the end of his career Aśoka seems to have been convinced that reflection and meditation were of greater efficacy than moral regulations. But the need for such regulations was keenly felt by him in the early years of his reign.

We learn from Minor Rock Edict I that for more than two-and-a-half years Aśoka was a lay disciple (*Upāsaka*). During the first year he did not exert himself strenuously. Later on he seems to have entered\(^1\) the *Saṅgha* and begun to exert himself strenuously.\(^2\) He issued the famous pro-

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1 *Approached,* according to Hultsch, in whose opinion the two-and-a-half years of *Upāsakatva* include the period which followed his “Visit” (not “entry”) to the *Saṅgha.* The view that Aśoka actually joined the Holy Order is, however, supported by I-tsing who mentions an image of Aśoka dressed in the garb of a Buddhist monk (*Takakusu, I-tsing,* 73). That rulers and statesmen could be monks as well, even in early times, appears probable from Lüders' *Ins.* No. 1144 which refers to a *Śramaṇa mahāmātra* of Nāsik in the days of the early Sātavāhana king Kṛiṣṇa, Cf. Milinda, IV. 6, 49 (ref. to a *Śramaṇa King*); Geiger, trans., *Mahāvamsa,* 240 (*Kuṭakāṇṭha Tissa*).

2 Rock Edict IV has been interpreted by scholars to mean that Aśoka sought to promote the observance of the Buddhist doctrine by exhibiting spectacles of aerial chariots (*Vimānadasana*), of elephants (*Hastidasanā*), masses of fire (*Agiṇhacdhaṇi*) and other representations of a *diyā,* i.e., divine (not terrestrial) nature. Dr. Bhandarkar (*Ind. Ant.,* 1912, p. 26), refers to the Pāli *Vimānavaṇṇathu* which describes the splendour of the various celestial abodes (*Vimānas*) in order to induce listeners and spectators to live good and unblemished lives, and thereby attain to these. Aśoka is said to have made representations of these *Vimānas* and paraded them in various places. *Hasti,* according to Dr. Bhandarkar, is *śveto hasti,* i.e., Buddha himself who is also described as *Cajatama,* i.e., *Gajottama,* the most excellent elephant. As regards *Agiṇhacdhaṇa* (*Agniśkandha*) Dr. Bhandarkar draws our attention to *Jātaka* No. 40 which refers to a blazing fire-pit created by Māra on the surface of which the Bodhisattva strode and gave a bowl to a hungry *Pachcheka Buddha* and extolled alms-giving. Hultsch suggests that *Hasti* may refer to the vehicles of the four *Mahārājas* (*lokapālas* or guardians of quarters). He takes *Agiṇhacdhaṇa* to refer to ‘radiant beings of another world’ while Jarl Charpentier (*IHQ,* 1933, 87) understands it to mean piles of (hell-) fire. The interpretation of Hultsch accords better with the testimony of the commentary on the *Rāmāyaṇa* (II. 68, 16) which explains *diyānam as viśśhajā devatādhishṭhitam.* The celestial elephant figures prominently in the Tāravāloka story of the *Kathā-sarit-sāgara* (Penzer, VIII. 131), and Mountain of fire, *ibid.* 50, 51: III. 6, 17; Cf. also *aggi-khando* in *Jātaka,* VI 330, *Coomaraswamy* in
clamoration, "Let small and great exert themselves," and caused to be engraved the imperishable record of his purpose on the rocks and upon stone pillars wherever there were stone pillars in his dominions.

Asoka at first utilised the existing administrative machinery for religious propaganda. He commanded his Council (Parishad) to inculcate the Dharma on the subordinate officials styled Yutas and ordered the latter as well as the higher officials styled Rājākas, and Pradeśikas to inculcate the same while they set out for tour (anusamāyāna). The Dharma which they were to preach was explained thus: "An excellent thing is the hearkening to father and mother; an excellent thing is liberality to friends, acquaintances, relatives, Brāhmaṇas and ascetics; excellent is abstinence from the slaughter of living creatures; excellent is small expense with small accumulation."

When he had been consecrated thirteen years, Asoka created the new officials called Dharma-mahāmātras who


The passage containing the words Vimānadasanā, Hastidasanā, etc., has been explained differently in A Volume of Indian Studies presented to Professor F. J. Rapson, pp. 546 f. According to the interpretation that finds favour with some writers, the spectacles in question were exhibited not by Asoka but by previous rulers to the accompaniment of the sound of drums. But thanks to Asoka "the sound of the bheri had become the sound of dharma," that is to say instruction in dharma took the place of martial music that used to be heard on the occasion of pompous shows of edifying subjects in bygone times. What former kings could not accomplish by gaudy spectacles, was achieved by Asoka by the simple unostentatious teaching of the true Doctrine. The bheri was now used to announce the king's rescripts on morality, cf. the Yerragudi copy of the Minor Rock Edict—Rājake ānapitaviye bherinā jānapadam ānāpayisati, raṭhikānam cha (Ind. Culture, I. p. 310; IHQ, 1933, 117).

1 According to one view Asoka sent special missionaries styled Vyūtha to expound his teaching. The interpretation of Vyūtha as missionary was suggested by Senart and accepted by Smith (Asoka, Third Ed., p. 158). Dr. Bhandarkar takes Vyūtha or Viyuṭha to mean "officials on tour." Hultzsch thinks that Vyūtha refers to Asoka himself while he was on tour (p. 169, note 8). The word has also the sense of dawn, day-break, day, in other words, it has a chronological significance. Other interpretations are also suggested by scholars. The least plausible is the one offered by Dr. Barua (D. R. Bhandarkar volume, 369) who finds in the expression reference to the copies of the particular proclamation sent forth from the capital.

1 Cf. Sigālovāda Suttanta (Dialogues of the Buddha, III, 1738).
were specially entrusted with the work of “dhanmādhi-
thāna” and “dhanmavadhi”, i.e., the establishment and increase of Piety.

While his officers were busy preaching the new Gospel, the emperor himself did not remain idle. Already in his eleventh regnal year he had “started on the path” leading to Saṁbodhi (ayāya Saṁbodhim) and commenced the tours of Piety (Dhanima-yātā) in the place of the old tours of pleasure (Vihāra-yātā). In the tours of Piety this was the practice—visiting ascetics and Brāhmaṇas, with liberality to them; visiting elders, with largess of gold; visiting the people of the country or perhaps rural areas (Janaṇapada) with instruction in the Law of Piety, and discussion of that law. The memory of a pious tour in Aśoka’s twenty-first regnal year (B.C. 249 according to Smith) is preserved by the Rummindéi and Nigāli Sāgar epigraphs in the Nepalese Tarai. These records prove that Aśoka visited the birthplace of Gautama and paid reverence to the stupa of Konākanama, one of the former Buddhas.

In 242 B.C., according to Dr. Smith, Aśoka issued the Seven Pillar Edicts which contain, among other things, a review of the measures taken during his reign for the “promotion of religion, the teaching of moral duty”.

**Benevolent Activity, Promotion of the Welfare of Man and Beast**

Aśoka abolished the sacrificial slaughter of animals, offensive Samājas and the massacre of living creatures to make curries in the imperial kitchen. Rock Edict VIII refers to the abolition of the vihāra-yātraḥ or tours of

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1 Some scholars take Saṁbodhi to mean ‘supreme knowledge’. But Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar contends that Saṁbodhi is equivalent to the Bodhi Tree or the Mahābodhi Temple at Bodh Gaya. According to the Dīvyāvadāna (p. 993), Aśoka visited Bodhi in the company of the Sthāvira or Elder Upagupta (Hultzsch, CII, xliii).

2 Were these tours decennial?

3 He had enlarged the stupa of Konākanama six years earlier, but the personal presence on that occasion is by no means clear,
pleasure in which hunting and other similar amusements used to be practised. Pillar Edict V contains a code of regulations restricting the slaughter and mutilation of animals. Dr. Smith points out that the prohibitions against animal slaughter in this edict coincide to a considerable extent with those recorded in the *Arthashastra*.

The emperor established healing arrangements in two kinds, namely, healing arrangements for men and healing arrangements for beasts. Medicinal herbs also both for men and for beasts, wheresoever lacking, were imported and planted. Roots also and fruits,\(^1\) wheresoever lacking, were imported and planted. On the roads wells were dug probably at intervals of 8 *kos*, flights of steps built for descending into the water, and banyan trees and mango groves planted for the enjoyment of man and beast.

Pillar Edict VII refers to the employment of superior officers (*Mukhyas*) in the distribution of alms, both the emperor's own and those of the queens and princes. One of the Minor Pillar Edicts refers to the donations of the second Queen Kārvāki,\(^3\) mother of Tivara: "whatever gift has been given here by the second Queen—be it a mango-garden, or pleasure-grove (*āvāma*) or alms-house (*dānagriha*) or aught else—is reckoned as proceeding from that queen."

Mention may also be made of remission of taxes by the emperor himself, *e.g.*, in Lumminigāma, and money-grants (*hirannapatividhāna*) to old men. The people of *janapadas* (districts), doubtless including the *grāmas*\(^4\) (villages), were also sought to be benefited by the grant of autonomy and the establishment of uniformity of punish-

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2. Cf. reference to *kgs.* in Bindusāra's correspondence with Antiöchos.
3. Dr. Barua suggests the identification of this lady with Asandhimitā of the *Mahāvamsa* and the *Sumanagalaśīlindī* (*Indian Culture*, I, 129). The suggestion, though ingenious, is hardly convincing.
4. References to *grāmas* are found in the compounds *Lummīni-gāma* and *āma-kapotā* (Pillar Edict V).

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ment and procedure (daṇḍasamatā and vyāvahārasamatā) as well as diffusion of moral instruction (dhramanusasti).

Religious Toleration and the Prevention of Schism in the Buddhist Church

In Rock Edict XII the emperor declares that he "does reverence (Pūjā) to men of all sects (Pāsaṁdāni) whether ascetics (Pavajitāni) or householders (Gharastāni) by gifts and various forms of reverence". That he was sincere in his professions is proved by the Barābar cave dedications in favour of the Ājīvika ascetics, who were more closely connected with the Jainas than with the Buddhists.

The emperor only cared for the "growth of the essence (Sāra-Vaḍhi) of the matter in sects". He says that "he who does reverence to his own sect while disparaging the sects of others wholly from attachment to his own, with intent to enhance the splendour of his own sect, in reality by such conduct inflicts the severest injury on his own sect." Concord (or concourse, Samavāyo) is praised by him as meritorious (Samavāyo eva sādhuv).

Just as Aśoka tried to secure concord among the various sects, so he wanted to prevent schism within the Buddhist church. Tradition affirms that a Buddhist Council was convened at Pāṭaliputra in the seventeenth year of his reign for the purpose of suppressing heresy and making a compilation of the true Buddhist doctrine (Saddhammasaṅgaha). The Sārnāth Edict and its variants may perhaps be regarded as embodying the resolution of this Council.¹

Aśoka as a Builder

The gift of cave dwellings to the Ājīvika monks affords us a glimpse into another side of Aśoka's activity. As late

as the fifth century A.D., sojourners in Pātaliputra were struck with wonder at the magnificence of the emperor’s architectural achievements. Tradition credits him with the construction of a splendid palace besides numerous relic mounds, monasteries and temples. He is actually known to have enlarged the stūpa of Konākamana, a ‘former Buddha’ and a predecessor of Śākyamuni. He also set up ‘pillars of morality’ Dharma-stambhas. Modern critics are eloquent in their praise of the polished surface of his columns and the fine workmanship of their crowning sculptures.¹

**Character of Aśoka—His Success and Failure**

Aśoka is one of the most interesting personalities in the history of India. He had the energy of a Chandragupta, the versatility of a Samudragupta and the catholicity of an Akbar. He was tireless in his exertion and unflagging in his zeal—all directed to the promotion of the spiritual and material welfare of his people whom he looked upon as his children. His illustrious grandfather was accustomed to dispose of cases even when indulging in the luxury of a massage of the limbs. Similarly, Aśoka used to listen to reports about the affairs of his people even while ‘he was eating, in the harem, in the inner apartment, at the cowpen, in the palanquin and in the parks’. The great soldier who had brought under subjection a huge territory unconquered even by his ever victorious grandfather, could, at the same time, argue points of doctrine and discipline with a fraternity of erudite monks. The statesman who could pilot an empire through the storm and stress of a war that involved the death and deportation of hundreds of thousands of men was, at the same time, capable of organizing religious missions the sphere of whose activities embraced three continents, and transforming a local sect in the Ganges Valley into one of the great reli-

¹ For Aśoka’s achievements in the domain of art, see Smith, *HFAIC*, 13, 57ff; *Aśoka*, pp. 197ff; CHI, 618ff; Havell, *ARI*, 104ff, etc.
gions of the world. The man who penetrated into the jungles of the Nepalese Tarai to pay homage to the birthplace of the Buddhas, bore no ill-will towards the descendants of their Brāhmaṇa and Jaina opponents, and granted cave-dwellings to the adherents of a rival sect. The king who undertook tours with the object of granting largesses of gold to Brāhmaṇas and Śramaṇas, admitted to office Yavanas in whose country there were neither Brāhmaṇas nor Śramaṇas. He preached the virtues of concord and toleration in an age when religious feeling ran high and disruptive influences were at work within the fold of the Jaina and Buddhist churches. He preached non-violence when violence in war, religious ritual, royal pastime and festive gatherings was the order of the day. He eschewed military conquest not after defeat but after victory and pursued a policy of patience and gentleness while still possessed of the resources of a mighty empire. The forbearance of this strong man was only matched by his truthfulness, and he describes in burning words which no Kaliṅga patriot could have improved upon, the terrible misery that he had inflicted on a hapless province. The example of Dharmāśoka, the pious king, exercised an ennobling influence on posterity. In the second century A.D. Queen Gautamī Balaśrī takes pride in the fact that her son was “alien to hurting life even towards an offending enemy” (Kitāparādhe pi satujane apānahisāruchi). Even in the fifth century A.D., the rest-houses and free hospitals of Magadha excited the wonder and admiration of foreigners. The benefactions of Dharmāśoka were a source of inspiration to royal personages as late as the time of Govindachandra of the Gāhaḍavāla dynasty.

We have already seen that the political record of the great Maurya’s early years was brilliant. His reign saw the final triumph of those centripetal forces that had been at work since the days of Bimbisāra. The conquest of Kaliṅga completed the unification of non-Tamil India under the hegemony of Magadha. The dream of a United Jambudvīpa was nearly realised.
THE GREATNESS AND PIETY OF ASOKA

But the policy of Dhamma-vijaya which he formulated after the Kalinga War was not likely to promote the cause for which a long line of able sovereigns from Bimbisāra to Bindusāra had lived and struggled. The statesman who turned civil administrators into religious propagandists, abolished hunting and jousts of arms, entrusted the fierce tribesmen on the North-West Frontier and in the wilds of the Deccan to the tender care of "superintendents of piety" and did not rest till the sound of the kettle-drum was completely hushed and the only sound that was heard was that of moral teaching, certainly pursued a policy at which Chandragupta Maurya would have looked askance. Dark clouds were looming in the north-western horizon. India needed men of the calibre of Puru and Chandragupta to ensure her protection against the Yavana menace. She got a dreamer. Magadha after the Kalinga War frittered away her conquering energy in attempting a religious revolution, as Egypt did under the guidance of Ikhnaton. The result was politically disastrous as will be shown in the next section. Asoka's attempt to end war met with the same fate as the similar endeavour of President Wilson.

According to Dr. Smith's chronology Asoka died in 232 B.C., after a reign of about 40 years. A Tibetan tradition is said to affirm that the great Emperor breathed his last at Taxila.¹

SECTION II. THE LATER MAURYAS AND THE DECLINE OF THEIR POWER

The Magadha Empire under Asoka extended from the foot of the Hindukush to the borders of the Tamil country. But the withdrawal of the strong arm of Piyadasi was perhaps the signal for the disintegration of this mighty monarchy. "His sceptre was the bow of Ulysses which could not be drawn by any weaker hand." The provinces fell off one by one. Foreign barbarians began to pour

¹ The Oxford History of India, p. 116. I cannot vouch for the authenticity of this tradition.
across the north-western gates of the empire, and a time came when the proud monarchs of Pañaliputra and Rājagriha (and Malwa) had to bend their knees before the despised provincials of ‘Andhra’ and Kaliṅga.

Unfortunately, no Megasthenes or Kauṭilya has left any account of the later Mauryas. It is impossible to reconstruct a detailed history of Aśoka’s successors from the scanty data furnished by one or two inscriptions and a few Brāhmanical, Jaina and Buddhist works.

Aśoka had many children. In Pillar Edict VII, he pays attention to the distribution of alms made by all his children, and in particular to those made by the “Princes, sons of the Queens”. It is to this last category that belonged some of the Kumāras who represented the Imperial authority at Takshaśilā, Ujjayinī and Tosali. Tivara¹ the son of queen Kāruvāki, the only prince actually named in the inscriptions, does not appear to have mounted the imperial throne. Three other sons, namely, Mahendra, Kunāla (Dharma-vivardhana, Suyaśas?), and Jalauka are mentioned in literature. It is, however, uncertain whether Mahendra was a son of Aśoka or his brother.

The Vāyu Purāṇa says that after Aśoka’s death his son Kunāla reigned for eight years. Kunāla’s son and successor was Bandhupālita, and Bandhupālita’s dāyāda or heir was Indrapālita. After Indrapālita came Devavarman, Satadhanus and Bṛihadratha.

The Matsya Purāṇa gives the following list of Aśoka’s successor:—Daśaratha, Samprati, Satadhanvan and Bṛihadratha.

The Vishnu Purāṇa furnishes the following names:—Suyaśas, Daśaratha, Saṅgata, Śāliśūka, Somaśarman Satadhanvan and Bṛihadratha.

The Divyāvadāna² has the following list:—Saṁpadī, Vṛihaspati, Vṛihasena, Pushyadharman and Pushyamitra.

¹ For Tivara as a Magadhan name see The Book of Kindred Sayings, II, pp. 128-30.
² P. 453.
Jaina writers refer to a Maurya king of Rājagriha, named Balabhadrā.¹

The Rājatarangini mentions Jalauka as the successor of Aśoka in Kaśmīra, while Tāranātha mentions another successor Virasena who ruled in Gandhāra and was, as Dr. Thomas suggests, probably the predecessor of Subhāgasaṇa of Polybius.²

It is not an easy task to reconcile the divergent versions of the different authorities. The reality of the existence of Kunāla is established by the combined testimony of the Purānic and Buddhist works (which represent him as the father of Sāmpadi) as well as the evidence of Hemchandra and Jinaprabhasuri, the well-known Jaina writers. The names Dharma-vivardhana occurring in the Divyāvadāna and the Records of Fa Hien and Suyasaśas found in the Vishnu and the Bhāgavata Purāṇas were probably birudas or epithets of this prince. Tradition is not unanimous regarding the accession of Kunāla to the imperial throne. He is reputed to have been blind. His position was, therefore, probably like that of Dhṛitarāśtra of the Great Epic and, though nominally regarded as the sovereign, he was physically unfit to carry on the work of government which was presumably entrusted to his favourite son Samprati, who is described by Jaina and Buddhist writers as the immediate successor of Aśoka.

Kunāla’s son was Bandhupālita according to the Vāyū Purāṇa, Sāmpadi (Samprati) according to the Divyāvadāna and the Pātaliputrakalpa of Jinaprabhasuri,³ and Vigatasoka according to Tāranātha.⁴ Either these princes were identical or they were brothers. If the latter view be correct then Bandhupālita may have been identical with Dasaratha whose reality is established by the brief dedicatory inscriptions on the walls of cave-dwellings at the Nāgarjuni Hills which he bestowed upon

¹ Jacobi, Introduction to the Kalpasūtra of Bhadrabāhu, 1879, p. 9.
³ See also Parisiṣṭaparvan, IX, 51-53.
⁴ Ind. Ant., 1875, p. 96a.
the Ājivikas. Daśaratha, who receives the epithet “devānaṁpya” in the inscriptions, was a grandson of Aśoka according to the Matsya and Vishṇu Purāṇas, and the predecessor of Samprati (variant Saṅgata) according to the same authorities.

Indrapālīta must be identified with Samprati or Śāliśūka according as we identify Bandhupālīta with Daśaratha or Samprati. “In the matter of the propagation of the Jaina faith, Jaina records speak as highly of Samprati as Buddhist records do of Aśoka.” The Pāṭaliputra kalpa of Jinaprabhasura ś describes, “in Pāṭaliputra flourished the great king Samprati, son of Kunāla, lord of Bhārata with its three continents (trikhaṇḍaṁ Bharatakshetram Jinaśayanamanditamo), the great Arhanta who established Vihaaras for śravaṇas even in non-Aryan countries.”

Dr. Smith shows good grounds for believing that the dominions of Samprati included Avanti and Western India. In his Aśoka he admits that the hypothesis that Aśoka left two grandsons, of whom one (Daśaratha) succeeded him in his eastern and the other (Samprati) in his western dominions, is little more than a guess. The Jaina writers represent Samprati as ruling over Pāṭaliputra as well as Ujjayinī. His name is mentioned in the Purānic list of Aśoka’s Magadhan successors.

The existence of Śāliśūka is proved not only by the testimony of the Vishṇu Purāṇa but also by that of the Gārgī Samhitā and the ē Vāyu manuscript referred to

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1 Bomb., Gaz., l. i, 6-15. Parsiṣṭhā. XI. 65.
2 Parsiṣṭhāparvan, xi. 23 itaścha Samprati ṇṛpo gāyāy Ujjayinīṃ purīm.
3 Third ed., p. 70
4 Curiously enough, Prof. Dhruva maintains in spite of this and the clear evidence of Jaina literature that “historians say that on the death of Kunāla there was a partition of the Maurya Empire between his two sons Daśaratha and Samprati (JBORS, 1930, 90).” Prof. Dhruva’s emendations of the text of the Yudhāpurāṇa are largely conjectural and of little probative value.
5 Kern’s Brhatsaritā, p. 57. The Gārgī Samhitā says, “There will be Śāliśūka, a wicked quarrelsome king. Unrighteous, although theorising
by Pargiter. He may have been identical with 
Virhas-
pati, son of Samprati, according to the Divyavadana, unless 
Virhaspati represented a different branch of the imperial 
family.

Devavarman and Somaśarman are variant readings of 
the same name. The same is the case with Ṣatadhanus' 
and Ṣatadhanvan. It is not easy to identify 
Virshasena and 
Pushyadharman; they may be merely birudas or secondary 
names of Devavarman and Ṣatadhanvan. But the possi-

bility that they represent a distinct branch of the Maurya 
line is not entirely excluded.

The last of the Imperial Mauryas of Magadha, Briha-

dratha, is mentioned not only in the Purāṇas but also 
in Bāna’s Harsha-charita. He was crushed by his general 
Pushyamittra who is perhaps wrongly described by the 
Divyavadana as of Maurya descent. A Maurya minister 

is said to have been imprisoned by the regicide family.

Petty Maurya kings continued to rule in Western 
India as well as Magadha long after the extinction of 
the Imperial line. King Dhavala of the Maurya dynasty 
is referred to in the Kaṇaswa inscription of A.D. 738.¹ 
Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar identifies him with Dhavalappadeva, 
the overlord of Dhanika, mentioned in the Dabok (Mewar) 
inscription of cir. A.D. 725.² Maurya chiefs of the 
Koṅkan and Khāndesh are referred to in Early Chalukya 
and Yādava epigraphs.³ A Maurya ruler of Magadha 
named Purnavarman is mentioned by Hiuen Tsang.

on righteousness, dharmavādi adhārmikah (sic) he cruelly oppresses his 
country.⁴

¹ For an interesting account of a King named Ṣatadhanu see Vishnu 
Purāṇa, III, 18, 51, Bhāg., 11.8-44. His identity is, however, uncertain.
² Ind. Ant., XIII, 169; Bomb. Gaz., I, Part 2, p. 284. Kaṇaswa is in 
the Kotah State, Rājputāna. It is not unlikely that Dhavala was a descendant 
of some princely Viceroy of Ujjain. See also reference to the Mauryas in the 
Navaśribī grant, Flett, DKD, 375.
³ Ep. Ind., XII, p. 11. But see Ep. XX, 122. The date A.D. 725 is not 
accepted by other scholars who prefer A.D. 819.
⁴ Bomb. Gaz., I, Part 2, pp 283, 284. Bühler suggests (Ep. Ind., III, 
p. 156) that these Maurya chieftains of the Koṅkan were probably descendants 
of the princely Viceroy of the Deccan. He also draws our attention to the 
family name ‘More’ which is met with in the Mahratta country, and is 
apparently a corruption of ‘Maurya’.
There can be no doubt that during the sovereignty of the later Mauryas the Magadha Empire experienced a gradual decay. Aśoka died in or about the year 232 B.C. Within a quarter of a century after his death a Greek army crossed the Hindukush which was the Maurya frontier in the days of Chandrogaṇa and his grandson. The Yuga Purāṇa section of the Gārgi Saṁhitā bears testimony to the decline of the Maurya power in the Madhyadeśa after the reign of Sālīśūka:

\[ Tataḥ Sāketam ākramya \\
Paṃchālān Mathurāṁstathā \\
Yavanā dushtavikrāntāḥ \\
prāpsyanti Kusumadhvajam \\
tataḥ Pushpapure\textsuperscript{1} prāpte \\
kardame prathite hite \\
ākulā vishayāḥ sarve \\
bhavishyanti na saṁśayāḥ\textsuperscript{4}.
\]

"Then the viciously valiant Greeks, after reducing Sāketa (in Oudh), the Paṃchāla country and Mathurā, will reach (or take) Kusumadhvaja. Pushpapura (Pātaliputra) being reached....all provinces will undoubtedly be in disorder."

Where was now the power that had expelled the prefects of Alexander and hurled back the battalions of Seleukos?

According to Mahāmahopādhyāya Haraprasād Śaastri\textsuperscript{3} a reaction promoted by the Brāhmaṇas had sapped the foundations of the Maurya authority and dismembered the empire.

Among the causes of the alienation of the Brāhmaṇas the foremost place is given to Aśoka’s Edict against

\textsuperscript{1} Cf. Strabo, XV. I. 27—"We became acquainted with the eastern parts of India on this side of the Hypanis and whatever parts beside which have been described by those who after Alexander advanced beyond the Hypanis to the Ganges and Palibothra".

\textsuperscript{3} Kern, Brīhat Saṁhitā, p. 57.

\textsuperscript{4} JASB, 1910, pp. 259ff.
animal sacrifices. The Edict, in Paṇḍit Śastri's opinion, was certainly directed against the Brāhmaṇas as a class and was specially offensive because it was promulgated by a Śudra ruler. As to the first point we should remember that prohibition of animal sacrifices did not necessarily imply hostility towards Brāhmaṇas. Long before Aśoka Brāhmaṇa sages whose teachings have found a place in the Holy Śruti, the most sacred literature of the Brāhmaṇas, declared themselves in no uncertain terms against sacrifices, and in favour of Ahimśā (non-violence). In the Muṇḍaka Upanishad¹ we have the following Śloka:—

"

Plavā hyete adṛśidhā yajñarūpā
ashtādaśakotam avarām yeshu karma
etachchhreyo ye'bhinandanti mūḍhā
jarāmṛtyuṁ te punarevāpi yānti.
"

"Frail, in truth are those boats, the sacrifices, the eighteen in which this lower ceremonial has been told. Fools, who praise this as the highest good, are subject again and again to old age and death." In the Chhāndogya Upanishad² Ghora Āṅgirasa lays great stress on Ahimśā.

As to the second statement we should remember that tradition is not unanimous in representing the Mauryas as of Śūdra extraction. Certain Purānic texts assert no doubt, that after Mahāpadma there will be kings of Śūdra origin.³ But this statement cannot be taken to mean that all the post-Mahāpadman kings were Śūdras, as in that case the Śuṅgas and the Kāṇvas also will have to be classed as Śūdras.⁴ The Mudrārākhshaṇa, the evidence

² III. 17. 4
³ Tatāḥ prabhṛtiśāyana bhavishyāḥ Śūdramāyorāḥ. The reading in other texts is, however, Tato nṛṣṭa bhavishyanti Śūdramāyorāṣṭravādhādharmikāḥ (DKA, 25).
⁴ Among real Śūdra (or partially Śūdra) kings may be included the Nandas, a few rulers mentioned in the Garuda Purāṇa (Ch. 145, 4) and the Si-yu-ki of Hiuen Tsang (Watters, I. 322; II. 252), and certain princes of Western India and the Indus Valley mentioned on pp. 54-55 of Parājita's Dynasties of the Kali Age.
of which is cited to prove that Chandragupta was a Śūdra, is a late work, and its evidence is contradicted by earlier authorities. As already pointed out above the Mahāparinibbāṇa sutta represents the Moriyas (Mauryas) as belonging to the Kshatriya caste. The Mahāvaṃsa refers to the Moriyas as a noble (kshatriya) clan and represents Chandragupta as a scion of this clan. In the Divyāvadāna Bindusāra, son of Chandragupta, said to a girl, "Tvam Nāpinī ahāṁ Rāja Kshatriyo Mūrdhābhīshiktah katham mayā sārdham samāgamo bhavishyati?" "Thou art a barber girl, I am a consecrated kshatriya (king). How can I unite myself with thee?" In the same work Aśoka says to one of his queens (Tishyarakshītā), "Devi ahāṁ Kshatriyaḥ katham palāṇḍum paribhakshayāmi?" "Queen, I am a kshatriya, how can I take onion?" In a Mysore inscription Chandragupta is described as "an abode of the usages of eminent kshatriyas". The Kauṭiliya's preference of an "abhiṣāta" king seems also to suggest

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1 In the play Chandragupta is styled 'Nandānuṣaya' and Vṛishala. As to the former appellation we should note that the play describes Nanda as abhijana. Further it calls Chandragupta Mauryaputra, and though commentators try to reconcile the epithets Nandānuṣaya and Mauryaputra, we learn from early Buddhist writers that Maurya is not a metronymic of Chandragupta or of his father, but the designation of an old clan. The Greeks, too, refer to a tribe called Moríes (Weber, IA, ii. (1879), p. 148; Max Müller, Sanc. Lit., 280; Cunn., JASB, XXIII, 680). As to the epithet Vṛishala it should be remembered that a Purānic text applies it even to the founder of the so-called Andhra dynasty (Pargiter, DKA, 38). But we learn from contemporary epigraphs that the dynasty regarded itself as 'Bamhana'. According to Manu (X. 43) the epithet Vṛishala could be applied to degraded Kṣatriyas (Cf. IHQ, 1950, 271ff. Cf. also Mbh. XII. 90, 15ff., "The Blessed Dharma is Vṛisha. He who deals with it in such a way that it ceases to be of any use, i.e., transgresses it, is called a Vṛishala, Vṛishohi Bhagavān Dharma yastasya kurute h yalam). The Mauryas by their Greek connection and Jain and Buddhist leanings certainly deviated from the Dharma as understood by the great Brāhmaṇa law-givers. Attention may be invited in this connection to the epithet Vasalaka (Vṛishala) applied by Brāhmaṇas to the Buddha himself (Mookerji, Hindu Civilisation, 264).

2 P. 267 supra.

3 Geiger's Translation, p. 27.

4 P. 370.

5 P. 409.

6 Rice, Mysore and Coorg from the Inscriptions, p. 10.
that the sovereign of the reputed author was born of a noble family.\footnote{Cf. \textit{Arthaśāstra}, p. 326. See also \textit{supra}, 266 f. (the reign of Chandragupta)}

Having referred to the prohibition of animal sacrifices Pāṇḍit Śāstrī goes on to say: “this was followed by another edict in which Aśoka boasted that those who were regarded as gods on earth have been reduced by him into false gods. If it means anything it means that the Brāhmaṇas who were regarded as Bhūdevas or gods on earth had been shown up by him.”

The original passage referred to above runs thus:—

\begin{quote}
\text{Y (i)-imāya kālāya Jambudipasi amisā devā husu te dāni m (i) s-kaṭā.}
\end{quote}

Pāṇḍit Śāstrī followed the interpretation of Senart. But Sylvian Lévi\footnote{Hultzsch, \textit{Aśoka}, 168.} has shown that the word amisā cannot stand for Sanskrit \textit{amṛishā}, for in the Bhābrū edict we find \textit{Musā} and not \textit{Misā} for Sanskrit \textit{mṛishā} (falsely or false). The recently discovered Māski version reads \textit{misibhūtā} for \textit{misamkaṭā}, showing that the original form was \textit{miśribhūtā}. It will be grammatically incorrect to form \textit{misibhūtā} from Sanskrit \textit{mṛishā}. The word \textit{miśra} means mixed. And \textit{miśribhūtā} means “made to mix” or made to associate. The meaning of the entire passage is “during that time the men in India who had been unassociated with the gods became associated with them.”\footnote{Cf. \textit{Apastamba Dharmasūtra}, II. 7. 16. 1: “Formerly men and gods lived together in this world. Then the gods in reward of their sacrifices went to heaven, but men were left behind. Those men who perform sacrifices in the same manner as the gods did, dwell with the gods and Brahma in heaven.” My attention was first drawn to this passage by Dr. D. R. Bhandarkar. \textit{Cf.} also \textit{Harivānsha} (III. 32. 1): “\textit{Devatānāṁ manushyānāṁ sahavāsobhavatadā;}” and \textit{SBE}, XXXIV, p. 222-3 (Śaṅkara’s Com. on the \textit{Vedāntasūtras}): “The men of ancient times, in consequence of their eminent religious merit, conversed with the gods face to face. \textit{Smṛiti} also declares that ‘from the reading of the \textit{Veda} there results intercourse with the favourite divinity.’”} There is thus no question of “showing up” anybody.\footnote{The true import of the passage was pointed out by Dr. Bhandarkar in \textit{the Indian Antiquary}, 1912, p. 170.}

Pāṇḍit Śāstrī adds that the appointment by Aśoka of \textit{Dharma-mahāmātras}, \textit{i.e.}, of superintendents of morals,
was a direct invasion of the rights and privileges of the Brāhmaṇas. It is hardly correct to represent the Dharmamahāmātrās as mere superintendents of morals when their duties consisted in the establishment of the Law of Piety (which included liberality to Brāhmaṇas), the promotion of the welfare of the Yavanás, Kambojas, Gandhāras, Ristikas, Brāhmaṇas and others, revision of sentences of imprisonment or execution, the supervision of the family establishments of the Emperor’s brothers and other relatives, and the administration of alms-giving. These duties were not essentially those of a mere superintendent of morals, and were not a direct invasion of the rights and privileges of the Brāhmaṇas. Moreover, there is nothing to show that the Dharmamahāmātrās were wholly recruited from non-Brāhmaṇas.

Our attention is next drawn to the passage where Aśoka insists upon his officers strictly observing the principles of Daṇḍa-samatā and Vyayahāra-samatā. Paṇḍit Śastrī takes the expressions to mean ‘equality of punishment’ and ‘equality in lawsuits’ irrespective of caste, colour and creed, and adds that this order was very offensive to the Brāhmaṇas who claimed many privileges including immunity from capital punishment.

The passage containing the expressions Daṇḍa-asamatā and Vyayahāra-samatā should not be divorced from its context and interpreted as if it were an isolated ukase. We quote the passage with the context below:

“To my Rājūkas set over many hundred thousands of people I have granted independence (or discretion) in the award of honours and penalties. But as it is desirable that there should be uniformity in judicial procedure (Vyayahāra-samatā) and uniformity in penalties (Daṇḍa-samatā), from this time forward my rule is this—‘To condemned men lying in prison under sentence of death a respite of three days is granted by me’.”

It is clear from the extract quoted above that the

order regarding Vyavahāra-samatā and Daṇḍa-samatā is to be understood in connection with the general policy of decentralisation which the Emperor introduced. Aśoka allowed discretion to the Rājūkas in the award of penalties, but he did not like that the Daṇḍa and Vyavahāra prevalent within the jurisdiction of one Rājūka should be entirely different from those prevailing within the jurisdiction of others. He wanted to maintain some uniformity (samata) both in Daṇḍa (penalties) as well as in Vyavahāra (legal procedure). As an instance he refers to the rule about the granting of a respite of three days to condemned men. The Samatā which he enforced involved a curtailment of the autonomy of the Rājūkas and did not necessarily infringe on the alleged immunity of the Brāhmaṇas from capital punishment.

But were the Brāhmaṇas really immune under all circumstances from capital punishment in ancient India? We learn from the Pañchavimśa Brāhmaṇa2 that a Purohita (priest) might be punished with death for treachery to his master. The Kautiliya,3 tells us that a Brāhmaṇa guilty of treason was to be drowned. Readers of the Mahābhārata are familiar with the stories of the punishments inflicted on Māṇḍavya and Likhita.4 The life of a Brāhmaṇa was not so sacrosanct in ancient as in mediaeval and modern India. We learn from the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa that king Hariśchandra of the Ikshvāku family did not scruple to offer a Brāhmaṇa boy as a victim in a sacrifice.

Against the surmises regarding the anti-Brāhmaṇical policy of Aśoka we have the positive evidence of some of his inscriptions which proves the Emperor's solicitude for the well-being of the Brāhmaṇas. Thus in Rock Edict III he inculcates liberality to Brāhmaṇas. In Edict IV he speaks with disapproval of unseemly behaviour towards

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1 I am indebted for this suggestion to Mr. S. N. Majumdar.
3 P. 239.
4 Adi, 107 and Śānti, 29, 96.
the same class. In Edict V he refers to the employment of *Dharma-mahāmātrās* to promote the welfare and happiness of the Brāhmaṇas.

Pancit Śastrī says further that as soon as the strong hand of Aśoka was removed the Brāhmaṇas seemed to have stood against his successors. We have no evidence of any such conflict between the children of Aśoka and the Brāhmaṇas. On the other hand, if the Brāhmaṇa historian of Kaśmira is to be believed, the relations between Jalauka, one of the sons and successors of Aśoka, and the Brāhmaṇical Hindus were entirely friendly.¹

In conclusion Pancit Śastrī refers to the assassination of the last Maurya Emperor of Magadha by Pushyamitra Śuṅga and says, "We clearly see the hands of the Brāhmaṇas in the great revolution." But the Buddhist remains at Bhārhut erected "during the sovereignty of the Śuṅgas" do not bear out the theory which represents them as the leaders of a militant Brāhmaṇism. Are inferences deduced from uncorroborated writings of late authors like the compiler of the *Divyāvadāna* and perhaps Tāranātha, to be preferred to the clear testimony of contemporary monuments? Even admitting that Pushyamitra was a militant Brāhmaṇist we fail to see how the decay and dismemberment of the Maurya empire can be attributed primarily to him or to his Brāhmaṇist followers. The empire was a shrivelled and attenuated carcase long

¹ Note also the employment of Brāhmaṇa officers, e.g., Pushyamitra, by the later Mauryas. Kalhaṇa has nothing but praise for Aśoka. Another Brāhmaṇa writer, Bāṇa, applies the epithet *ānārya* (ignoble) not to the Maurya kings, but to the Brāhmaṇa general who overthrew the last of them. Viśvakadatta compares Chandragupta with the Boar Incarnation of Viṣṇu. Certain epic and Purānic writers, it is true, refer to the Mauryas as *āsuras*, and the *Gārgi-Saṁhitā* draws pointed attention to the oppressive rule of some of the later members of the family. But there is little to suggest that the Brāhmaṇas were special victims of Maurya tyranny. On the contrary, members of the class were freely admitted to high office as evidenced by the case of Pushyamitra. The epithet *āsura* or *sura-duṣṭa* was applied not only to the Mauryas but to all persons 'beguiled by the Buddha.' The testimony of the Purāṇas in this respect is contradicted by that of contemporary epigraphs which refer to Aśoka and the only one among his imperial descendants who has left any epigraphic record as *devānampiṇya*, that is, the beloved (and not the enemy) of the gods.
before Pushyamitra's coup d'état of c. 187 B.C. We learn from the Rājatarāṅgini that immediately after the death of Aśoka one of his own sons, Jalauka, made himself independent in Kaśmīra and conquered the plains including Kanauj. If Tāranātha is to be believed another prince, Vīrasena, apparently wrested Gandhāra from the hands of the feeble successor of the great Maurya at Pāṭaliputra. The virtual secession of Vidarbha or Berar is vouched for by the Mālavikāgnimitram of Kālidāsa. The loss of the northern provinces is confirmed by Greek evidence. We learn from Polybius that about 206 B.C., there ruled over them a king named Sophagasenus, Subhāgasena, probably a successor of Vīrasena. We quote the passage referring to the king below:

"He (Antiochus the Great) crossed the Caucasus (Hindukush) and descended into India; renewed his friendship with Sophagasenus, the king of the Indians; received more elephants, until he had 150 altogether, and having once more provisioned his troops, set out again personally with his army, leaving Androstenes of Cyzicus, the duty of taking home the treasure which this king had agreed to hand over to him."

It will be seen that Subhāgasena was a king and not a petty chief of the Kabul valley as Dr. Smith would have us believe. He is called "king of the Indians," a title which was applied by the classical writers to great kings like Chandragupta and Demetrios. There is nothing in the account of Polybius to show that he was vanquished by the Syrian king in war or was regarded by the latter as a subordinate ruler. On the contrary, the statement that Antiochus "renewed his friendship (or alliance) with Sophagasenus, king of the Indians" proves that the two monarchs met on equal terms and friendly relations were established between them. The renewal of friendship on the part of the Greek king, and the surrender of elephants on the part of his Indian brother, only remind us of the relations subsisting between Chandragupta and Seleukos. "The Antiochos-Sophagasenus alliance may

O.P. 189—21.
also have been directed against the Imperial Mauryas of Pāṭaliputra.” Greek intrigue may have played a part in the disintegration of the empire before the Greek raids. Further the expression “renewal of friendship” seems to suggest that Subhāgasena had had previous dealings with Antiochos. Consequently he must have come to the throne sometime before 206 B.C. The existence of an independent kingdom in the north-west before 206 B.C. shows that the Maurya Empire must have begun to break up nearly a quarter of a century before the usurpation of Pushyamitra.

We have seen that the theory which ascribes the decline and dismemberment of the Maurya Empire to a Brāhmanical revolution led by Pushyamitra does not bear scrutiny. Was the Maurya disruption due primarily to the Greek invasion? The earliest Greek invasion after Aśoka, that of Antiochos the Great, took place about 206 B.C., and we have seen that the combined testimony of Kalhana and Polybius leaves no room for doubt that the dissolution of the empire began long before the raid of the Hellenistic monarch.

What then were the primary causes of the disintegration of the mighty empire? There are good grounds for believing that the government of the outlying provinces by the imperial officials was oppressive. Already in the time of Bindusāra ministerial oppression had goaded the people of Taxila to open rebellion. The Divyāvadāna says

"Atha Rājñō Vindusārasya Takhaśilā nāma nagaram viruddham. Tatra Rājñā Vindusāren Āsoko visarjitah... yāvat Kumāraśchaturaṅgena balakāyena Takhaśilāṁ gatah, śrutiā Takhaśilaś nivāsinah paurāh... pratyudgamya cha kathayanti ‘na vayam Kumārasya viruddhāḥ nāpi Rājñō Vindusārasya api tu dushtāmātyā asmākam paribhavam kurvanti’.”

'Now Taxila, a city of king Bindusāra's, revolted. The king Bindusāra despatched Aśoka there...while the prince

\[1\] P. 371.
was nearing Taxila with the fourfold army, the resident Pauras (citizens of Taxila), on hearing of it...came out to meet him and said:—‘We are not opposed to the prince nor even to king Bindusāra. But these wicked ministers insult us’.”

Taxila again revolted during the reign of Asoka and the cause was again the tyranny of the ministers. Rājñ-ośokasy-ottarāpathe Takḥaśila nagaram viruddhan...’

Prince Kunāla was deputed to the government of the city. When the prince went there the people said “na vayaṁ Kumārasya viruddhā na rājño-śokasy-āpi tu dusṣṭātmāno’ mātyā āgatyāsmākam apamānaṁ kuryanti.”

The Divyāvadāna is no doubt a late work, but the reality of ministerial oppression to which it refers, is affirmed by Asoka himself in the Kaliṅga Edicts. Addressing the High officers (Mahāmātras) in charge of Tosālī he says: “All men are my children; and just as I desire for my children that they may enjoy every kind of prosperity and happiness both in this world and in the next, so also I desire the same for all men. You, however, do not grasp this truth to its full extent. Some individual, perchance, pays heed, but to a part only, not the whole. See then to this, for the principle of government is well-established. Again, “it happens that some individual incurs imprisonment or torture and when the result is his imprisonment without due cause, many other people are deeply grieved... Ill performance of duty can never gain my regard... The restraint or torture of the townsmen may not take place without due cause. And for this purpose, in accordance with the Law of Piety, I shall send forth in rotation every five years such persons as are of mild and temperate disposition, and regardful of the sanctity of life... From Ujjain, however, the Prince for this purpose will send out a similar body of officials, and will not over-pass three years. In the same way—from Taxila.”

From the concluding words of the Edict it appears that official maladministration was not confined to the

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1 Divyāvadāna, 407f.
province of Kaliṅga. The state of affairs at Ujjain and Taxila was similar. It is thus clear that the loyalty of the provincials was being slowly undermined by ministerial oppression long before Pushyamitra’s coup d’etat of c. 187 B.C.¹ and the Greek invasion of c. 206 B.C. Aśoka no doubt did his best to check the evil, but he was ill served by his officers. It is significant that the provincials of the northwest—the very people who complained of the oppression of the dusṭāmātyas as early as the reign of Binduṣāra, were among the first to break away from the Maurya empire.

The Magadhan successors of Aśoka had neither the strength nor perhaps the will to arrest the process of disruption.² The martial ardour of imperial Magadha had vanished with the last cries of agony uttered in the battlefields of Kaliṅga. Aśoka had given up the aggressive militarism of his forefathers and had evolved a policy of Dhamma-vijaya which must have seriously impaired the military efficiency of his empire.³ He had called upon his

¹ The Jaina date 319-108 = 205 B.C. for Pushyamitra’s accession may refer to the assumption of power by Pushyamitra in Avanti, while the date c. 187 B.C. refers to the dynastic revolution in Magadha.

² On the contrary, if the Gārgī Saṁhitā is to be believed, one of his successors, namely Śāliśūka, actually quickened the pace by his tyranny—śarāṣṭra mardate ghoran dharmavedi adhārmikah (sic). Some of Aśoka’s descendants (e.g., Jalauka) set up independed sovereignties, and were thus directly responsible for the dismemberment of the empire.

³ Cf. the events narrated on page 353 f. ante, and “Garga’s”’ attack on the policy of so-called Dhamavijaya, “conquest conformable to Dharma” attributed to Śāliśūka, which, in the opinion of the present writer, is hard to dissociate from Dhamma-Vijaya as promulgated by Aśoka himself and recommended for adoption by his “sons and even great-grandsons.” Attention to the passage in the Gārgī Saṁhitā was also drawn by Jayaswal (JBORS, IV. 261)—śtāpa-yishyati mohātmā vijayaih nāma dhāmikam, “the fool will establish the so-called conquest of Dharma”. The expression mohātmā reminds one of the later meaning of ‘Devānaṁpiya’ (fool, idiot like a brute, beast, Apte, Sanskrit-English Dictionary, 510). An eminent writer takes Vijaya to be a proper name, the appellation of the elder brother of Śāliśūka, whom the latter established on the throne. But it is not clear why the enthronement of a righteous (dhārmika) man should earn for the person responsible for the action the opprobrious epithet mohātmā. Besides, Vijaya does not occur as a royal name in any of the lists of later Mauryas known to tradition. (For reference to divergent views see Cal. Rev., Feb., 1943, p. 125ff; Feb., 1946 p. 79ff, As
sons and even great-grandsons to eschew new conquests, avoid the shedding of blood and take pleasure in patience and forbearance as far as possible. These latter had heard more of Dhamma-ghosha than of Bheri-ghosha. It is, therefore, not at all surprising that the rois faineants who succeeded to the imperial throne of Pāṭaliputra proved unequal to the task of maintaining the integrity of the mighty fabric reared by the genius of Chandragupta and his Chancellor.

The disintegration which set in before 206 B.C. was accelerated by the invasions led by the Yavanas referred to in the Gārgī Sāṁhitā and the Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali. The final coup de grace was given by Pushyamitra the Bimbika.

pointed out by Dr. Sircar, conjectural emendations of the text of the Gārgī Sāṁhitā in support of a particular theory do not carry conviction (Cal. Rev. 1943, April, 39ff).

The royal hunt and jousts of arms in Samājas were abolished. The army seems to have been practically inactive during the last 29 years of Aśoka’s reign as the emperor himself declares with a feeling of exultation that ‘the sound of the bheri had become the sound of the True Law, Dharma.’ The Chinese Hou Hau Shu (quoted by S. Konow, CII, Vol. II, p. lxvii) testifies to the fact that people of India ‘practise the religion of the Buddha; it has become a habit with them not to kill and to fight.’ The ease with which general Pushyamitra overthrew his king, in the very sight of the army, shows that unlike the earlier kings of the dynasty who took the field in person, the last of the Mautyas lost touch with his fighting forces, and ceased to command their affection. The largesses of gold lavished on les religieux must also have crippled the financial resources of the empire. The system of autonomous Rājākulas instituted by Aśoka must have let loose centrifugal forces that his successors were unable to check.
GENEALOGY OF THE MAURYA DYNASTY

Mauryas of Pippalivana
   Chandragupta
      Bindusāra  Amītrāghāṭa

Sushīma (Sumanā) Aśoka
Nīrodha
Piyadāsi = (1) Devī (first wife)
          (2) Saṃdhīmitrā (first queen)
          (3) Kāruvāki (second queen) Vigataoka
          (4) Padmavati (Tissa)
          (5) Tīshyarakshītā

Mahendra?  Kunāla (Suyaśas?)  Jalauka  Tivara, Son of Kāruvāki
(son of Devī) (son of Padmāvatī)  King of Kāśmīrā

Bandhupalāta  Samprati  Vigataoka
(Deśaratha?)  Vīrāsenā of Gaudhāra
descendent

Śaṭiśūka

Somaśarman (Devaśarman?)

Prince of Prince of
Suvarṇagiri Ujjain

Prince of Satadhanva (Saśadharman?)
Bṛhadrath (killed by his Commander-in-Chief
   Pushyāmitra)

Pūrṇavarman (Magadha)

Suketuvarman
(Maurya of Kūkāñ)

Mauryas of Valabhi Dhavala 738-39 A.D.
   and (Rājputāna)
   Khandesh

Govindarāja
   Yadava feudatory, 1069 A.D.
CHAPTER VI. THE BAIBLIKA-SUNGA EMPIRE AND THE BACTRIAN GREEKS

SECTION 1. THE REIGN OF PUSHYAMITRA

Satatam kampayāmāsa Yavanāneka eva yah
balapaurushasampaṇṇān kṛitāstrānmitaujasah
yathāsūrān Kālakeyān devo vajradharastathā.

—Mahābhārata.

Audbhijjo bhavitā kaścit senānīḥ Kāśyapo dvijah
aśvamedhāṃ Kāliyuge punah pratyaharishyati.

—Harivamśa.

The Mauryas had done much for Indian unity by bringing the greater part of the country under “one umbrella”, by defending it against the generals of Alexander and Seleukos, by establishing a uniform system of administration, by using Prākrit for official purposes throughout the length and breadth of the empire and attempting to knit together the different sections of its composite population by the strong tie of a common Dharma. With the fall of the dynasty, Indian history for the time being loses its unity. The command of one single political authority is no longer obeyed from the snowy heights of the Hindukush to the verdant plains of Bengal and the Upper Carnatic. Hordes of outlanders pour through the northwestern gates of the country and establish aggressive monarchies in Gandhāra, Western Mālwa and neighbouring regions. The Pañjāb is seized by foreigners and the Deccan by local dynasts. The political connection of the Madhya-deśa with the valleys of the Indus and the Godāvarī is temporarily snapped, and the splendour of the Magadhan metropolis is dimmed by the rising glory of Śākala, Vidiśa, Prathishtāna and other cities. Brāhmaṇism gains ground in the Ganges valley and the Deccan, while Jainism flour-

1 II. 4. 23.
2 III. 2. 40.
ishes in Orissa. The sects of the Māheśvaras and the Bhāga-
vatas become powers to reckon with. The study of Sanskrit
receives an impetus at the hands of the grammarians of the
Madhyadeśa, while Prākrit literature enjoys the patronage
of the courts of Prathishṭāna and Kuntala in Southern
India.

Bṛihadratha, the last Maurya Emperor of Magadha,
was, according to the Purāṇas and the Harsha-charita,
asassinated by his general, Pushyamitra, who usurped the
throne, and founded a new line of kings.

The origin of the usurping family is wrapped up in
obscurity. According to the Divyāvadāna Pushyamitra was
lineally descended from the Mauryas. The Mālavikāgni-
mitrām, on the other hand, makes Agnimitra, son of
Pushyamitra, a scion of the Baimbika family, while the
Purāṇas, and apparently the Harsha-charita represent
these kings as Śuṅgas. One writer suggests that the Śuṅgas
whose names ended in Mitra were Irānians, worshippers
of Mithra (the Sun). Others, regard them as Indian
Brāhmaṇas. Curiously enough, Pāṇini connects the
Śuṅgas with the well-known Brāhmaṇa family of the
Bhāradvājas. Śauṅgiputra, "son of a female descendant of
Śuṅga", is the name of a teacher in the Bṛihadāranyaka

1 In the Mālavikāgni-mitrām (Act IV. Verse 14; Tawney's translation,
p. 69) Agnimitra claims to belong to the Baimbika-kula. A king named
Bimbaki is mentioned in The Ocean of Story, Penzer I, 112, 119. Mr. H. A.
Shah suggests (Proceedings of the Third Oriental Conference, Madras, p. 379)
that the Baimbikas were connected with the family of Bimbisāra. It is more
probable that the epithet 'Baimbika' (in the passage dākshīnyāḥ nāma
bimbosthi Baimbikānāṁ kulavratam) is connected with bimbikā, a kind of
plant (I.C. 1938, Jan., 365) and also perhaps with the river Bimbikā mentioned
in the Bharhut Inscriptions (Barua and Sinha, p. 8). Cf. Pādma, Bhūmikhaṇḍa
90, 24; Baimbaki in Patañjali, IV, 1, 97. In the Harivamśa (Bhavīshya, II,
.40) the Brāhmaṇa Śravāṇa who is to restore the Asvamedha in the Kali yuga
is represented as an Auvadhīya, 'Plant-born', and a Kāśyapa. Jayaswal
identifies him with Pushyamitra. Curiously enough the Bhāvīshya Srauta

2 It is, however, to be noted that the Harsha-charita never applies
the designation Śuṅga to Pushyamitra himself, but only to one of the latest kings
in the Purānic list. The Purāṇas may have combined the Baimbikas and
Śuṅgas under the common name of Śuṅga.

4 In Śūtra IV, 1, 117. Also Kramadīśvara, 763.
**THE DOMINIONS OF PUSHYAMITRA**

*Upanishad.*¹ Šauṅgāyani, "descendant of Šauṅga" is the name of a teacher in the *Varāśa Brāhmaṇa.* Macdonell and Keith point out that the Šuṅgas are known as teachers in the Āśvalāyana Śrauta Šūtra.² In view of the conflicting statements in the *Mālavikāgnimitram,* the *Purāṇas,* etc., it is difficult to say whether Pushyamitra and his known descendants (down to Vasumitra) were Šuṅgas of the Bhāradvāja Gotra or Baimbikas of Kaśyapa lineage. The historic "Šuṅgas" of the time of Dhanabhūti are assigned by competent scholars to the period B.C. 100-75. This accords with the testimony of the *Harsha-charita* which, while denying this dynastic epithet to Pushyamitra, applies it to the latest kings of the Purāṇic list, the immediate predecessors of Vasudeva Kāṇva.

It is not known for certain when and why the family of Pushyamitra, like the Kadambas of a later date, exchanged the quill for the sword. There is no reason to think that Aśoka tyrannised over the Brāhmaṇas and that his oppression forced them to engage in non-priestly pursuits. Brāhmaṇa Senāpati were by no means rare in ancient India.³ The fact that officers of this class found employment under the Later Mauryas proves conclusively that the latter could not have pursued an anti-Brāhmaṇic policy.

The **Dominions of Pushyamitra** extended to the river Narmadā, and included the cities of Pātaliputra, Ayodhyā, Vidiśā, and, if the author of the *Divyāvadāna* and Tāranātha are to be believed, Jālandhara and Śākala.⁴ It appears from the *Divyāvadāna,* that the Emperor himself

¹VI. 4. 31.
²XII. 13. 5, etc. The *Varāśa Brāhmaṇa* seems to associate the Šuṅgas with the Madra country. *Ved. Index,* II, p. 123. For Tāranātha’s reference to Pushyamitra, see *JBO*S, IV, pt. 3, 258. For Bhāradvājas as champions of autocracy and of ministerial usurpation, see Kauṭiliya, 31. 316.
³Cf. the cases of Droṇa, Kriṣṇa and Aśvaṁṭhāman in the *Mahābhārata* in ancient times, of Raviśeṣa in the *Indian Antiquary,* VIII. 20, of Kholesvara, the commander of Yādava kings, and of Someśvara, the Brāhmaṇa general of the Pāla kings.
⁴Jain writers, e.g., Merutuṅga, include Avanti within the dominions of Pushyamitra. This province was lost to the Śatavāhanas, and Śākala to the Greeks.
⁵P. 434.
continued to reside in Pātaliputra. The Mālavikāgni-
imtram tells us that Vidiśā (Besnagar in Eastern Mālwa) was governed by Prince Agnimitra, probably as his father’s viceroy (Goptṛi). Another viceroy, also a relation of the emperor, may have governed Kosala\(^2\). Agnimitra’s queen had a brother of inferior caste, named Vīrasena. He was placed in command of a frontier fortress on the banks of the Narmadā (Atthi devi vaṇṇāvaro bhādā Vīraseno nāma, so bhaṭṭiṇā antav (p) āladugge Nammadātiṇe\(^3\) ṭhāvida).

**Affairs in the Deccan**

It appears from the Mālavikāgnimitram that the foundation of the dynasty of Pushyamitra almost synchronised with the establishment of a new kingdom in the Deccan, viz., Vidarbha or Berar. Agnimitra’s Amātya (Minister) refers to the kingdom as “achirādhishṭhita”

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2 The possible existence of this viceroyalty is disclosed by an inscription discovered at the door of a temple at Ayodhya, which records the erection of a “ketana” (abode) by a Kosālaṛaṇapā who was the sixth (brother or descendant?) of Senāpati Pushyamitra, the performer of two horse-sacrifices (Nāgarī Prachāriṇī Pātriḥa, Vaisākhha, Sam. 1981; JBORS, X (1924) 203; XIII (1927) facing 247. Mod. Review, 1924, October, p. 431; IHQ, 1939, 602; Ep. Ind. XX. 54ff). It is interesting to note that the title, ‘Senāpati’ clung to the deva (king) Pushyamitra even after the performance of the Aśvamedha. Cf. the epithet Vāhinīpāti applied to king Vrāta in the Mahābhārata and the title Yavuga applied to Kushān emperors besides other epithets. Cf. also the style Mahārāja Mahāsenāpati in CII., Vol 3, p. 252, and the title Mahāmanḍalesvara applied to Bijaḷa and others even after the assumption of the full royal style (Bomb. Gaz., II. ii. 474ff).

3 Act I. Some manuscripts mention Mandākini as the name of the river (cf. IHQ, 1925, 214). A stream called Mandākini lies 5 miles south of the Tāpti (Ind. Ant., 1902, 254). Another Mandākini flowed near Chitragupta (Rām. 92. 10-11). Lüders’ Inscriptions, Nos. 687-688, seem to suggest that Bharhut (in Baghelkhand) was governed by a śūṅga feudatory. If Pushamitra was a śūṅga Baghelkhand must have formed part of the empire of his family. In the Monuments of Sāṅchi, I, iv. 271, the author does not agree with Bühl in assigning the ins. to the middle of the second century B.C. A Śūṅgarāja (Agarāja?) is known from certain coins found at Kauśambi (JNSI, IV, i. 14). His identity is, however, uncertain. He prefers B.C. 100-75. Palaeographically the epigraphs are classed with the ins. of Indrāgnimitra, Brahman-
imitra and Vīshqumitra.
(established not long ago) and compares its king to a tree which is newly planted and, therefore, not firm (navasamropana-sīthilastaruḥ). The king of Vidarbha is represented as a relation (sister’s husband) of the Maurya minister (Sachiva) and a natural enemy (Prakṛityamitra) of the family of Pushyamitra. It appears that during the reign of Bṛihadratha Maurya there were two parties or factions in the Magadha Empire, one headed by the king’s Sachwa or minister, the other headed by his Senāpati or general. The minister’s partisan Yajñasena got the rulership of Vidarbha, while the general’s son Agnimitra obtained the viceroyalty of Vidiśā. When the general organised his coup d’etat, killed the king, and imprisoned the minister, Yajñasena apparently declared his independence and commenced hostilities against the usurping family. This is why he is called achirādhishṭhitarājya and prakṛity-amitra by Agnimitra and his Amātya.

The Mālavikāgnimitram says that when Kumāra Mādhavasena, a cousin of Yajñasena and a partisan of Agnimitra, was secretly on his way to Vidiśā, he was captured by an Antapāla (Warden of the Marches) of Yajñasena and kept in custody. Agnimitra demanded his surrender. The Vidarbha king promised to give him up on condition that his brother-in-law, the Maurya minister, should be released. This enraged the ruler of Vidiśā who ordered Vīrasena to march against Vidarbha. Yajñasena was defeated. Mādhavasena was released and the kingdom of Vidarbha was divided between the two cousins, the river Varadā (Wardha) forming the boundary between the two states. Both the rulers seem to have accepted the suzerainty of the House of Pushyamitra.

In the opinion of several scholars an enemy more formidable than Yajñasena threatened Pushyamitra’s dominions from Kaliṅga (Orissa). In his Oxford History of India¹ Dr. Smith accepts the view that Khāravela, king

of Kaliṅga, defeated Pushyamitra who is identified with Bahapatimitra or Bahasatimitra, a prince supposed to be mentioned in the Hāṭhigumpha Inscription of the Kaliṅga monarch. Prof. Dubreuil also seems to endorse the view that Khāravela was an antagonist of Pushyamitra, and that the Hāṭhigumpha Inscription is dated the 165th year of Rāja-Muriya-kāla (era of king Maurya) which corresponds to the 13th year of the reign of Khāravela.

Dr. R. C. Majumdar, however, points out that of the six letters of the Hāṭhigumpha Inscription which have been read as Bahasati-mitar, the second letter seems to have a clear u sign attached to it, and the third and fourth letters look like pa and sa. Even if the reading Bahasati-mitar, or Bahapatimitar, be accepted as correct, the identification of Bahasati (Bṛhaspati-mitra) with Pushyamitra merely on the ground that Bṛhaspati (Jīva) is the regent, nakshatrāddhā, of the nakshatra or zodiacal asterism Pushya, also named Tishya, in the constellation Cancer or the Crab, cannot be regarded as final in the absence of more convincing evidence. In this connection we should note that the Duṣyāvadāna distinguishes between a king named "Bṛhaspati" and king Pushyamitra, and represents Pāṭaliputra as the residence of the latter whereas the Magadhān antagonist of Khāravela is possibly called "Rājagahanapa" and apparently resided in the city of Rājagriha.

The date "165th year of the Muriya-kāla" was deduced from a passage of the Hāṭhigumpha Inscription which was

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3 Pp. 433–34.
4 It is not suggested that Bṛhaspati of the Duṣyāvadāna is necessarily to be identified with any king named Bṛhaspatimitra mentioned in inscriptions, though the possibility is not entirely excluded. What we mean to point out is that the name "Bṛhaspati" is not to be equated with Pushyamitra, simply because Bṛhaspati is the "regent" of the asterism Pushya, because in literature "Bṛhaspati," "Pushyadhanam" and "Pushyamitra" occur as names of distinct individuals. Regarding the proposed identification of Pushyamitra with Bṛhaspatimitra, see also IHQ, 1930, p. 23.
5 Cf. Luders' reading, Ep. Ind., X. App. No. 1345. With Jayaswal, S. Konow (Asia Orientalis, I, 24) reads "Rājagahanam upapīḍāpayati," though he admits that "Rājagahanapa (m) pīḍāpayati" is also possible.
read as follows:—"Pāṇāṁtariya-saṭhi-vasa-sate Rāja-
Muriya-kāle vochchhine...". There is another passage in
the same inscription which runs thus:—Panăchame cha (or
che) dānī vase Nanda-ṛāja ti-vasa-sata (m ?)—oghāṭitair
Tanasuliya-vāṭā-pañādhīn nagaram pavesayati. If Pāṇāṁ-
tariya-saṭhi-vasa-sate be taken to mean "in the 165th year",
ti-vasa-sata should be taken to mean 103 years, and we
shall have to conclude that Khāravela flourished some 165
years after a Maurya king, and only 103 years after
Nandarāja, which is impossible as the Nandas preceded
the Mauryas. If, on the other hand, ti-vasa-sata be taken
to mean 300 years, pāṇāṁtariya-saṭhi-vasa-sate should be
taken to mean not 165 but 6,500 years. In other words
Khāravela will have to be placed 6,500 years after a
Maurya which is also impossible. Jayaswal himself sub-
sequently gave up the reading... Pāṇāṁtariya-saṭhi-vasa-
sate Rāja-Muriya-kāle vochchhine cha chhe-yathī Argasi ti
kaṁtariyāṁ upādiyati" in line 16, and proposed to read
"Paṭāliko chatare cha vedāryabhe theṇubhe paṭiṭhā-
payati pāṇattariyā sata-sahasehi. Muriya kālāṁ vochhim-
nāṁ cha chhoṣṭhi agasakāntariyāṁ upādāyati." He
translated the passage thus:—"on the lower-roofed terrace
(i.e., in the verandah) he establishes columns inlaid with
beryl at the cost of 75,00,000 (Panās), he (the king)
completes the Muriya time (era), counted and being of an
interval of 64 with a century."1 With regard to this new
reading and translation Mr. R. P. Chanda observed 2 "the
rendering of vochhine as 'counted' is even more far-

1 Cf. Bhagwanal Indraji, Actes du sixième congrès international des
2 Ibid, p. 455. For the interpretation of the passage, see p. 229 supra.
S. Konow translates it differently:—"And now in the fifth year he has the
aqueduct which was shut (or opened) in the year 103 (during the reign of) the
Nanda king, conducted into the town from Tanasuliya Vāṭa."
3 JBOs, Vol. IV, Part iv, p. 394f. For Dr. Barua's suggestions, see IHQ,
1938, 269.
4 MASI, No. 1, p. 10. Cf. also S. Konow in Acta Orientalia, I.
14-21. Like Fleet S. Konow finds no date in the passage but regards the
reading Rāja Muriya kāla as certain. According to him Khāravela restored
some texts missing in the time of the Maurya king Chandragupta. Dr. Barua
does not regard the reading Muriya as certain,
fetched than ‘expired’. The particle cha after vochhine makes it difficult to read it as vochhunum qualifying the substantive Muriya-kālam. Even if we overlook vochhine, the passage appears to be a very unusual way of stating a date. Still more unusual is the statement of a date as an independent achievement in a praśasti.” According to Fleet the use of the term “vochchhina” which is applied to sacred texts which have been ‘cut off’, ‘interrupted’—quite prohibits the existence of a date. It may be added that there is no reliable evidence of the existence of a Rāja-Muriya-kāla in the sense of an era founded by the first Maurya. The use of regnal years by Aśoka points to the same conclusion.1 Jayaswal himself admits in the Epigraphia Indica,2 that “there is no date in a Maurya era in the 16th line,” of the Hāthīgumpha inscription.3

Dr. Jayaswal at one time took ti-vasa-sata to mean 300 years and placed Khāravela and Pushyamitra three centuries after Nandarāja whom he identified with Nandavardhana. But we have already seen that Nandavardhana or Nandivarshana was a Śaiśūnāga king and that the Śaiśūnāgas do not appear to have had anything to do with Kaliṅga. “It

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1 An era of Samprati, grandson of Aśoka, is, however, mentioned in an ancient Jāin MS. (EHJ, 4, p. 202n). If we refer the year 164 to this era, the date of Khāravela must be brought down to (cir. 224—164) 60 B.C. In “A note on the Hāthīgumpha Inscription of Khāravela” Barnett suggests the following rendering of the passage which is supposed to contain the words Muriya-kāla: “And when the Mauryan (?) time-reckoning . . . . . . which consisted of lustres (antara) of five (years) each, had broken down, he found (a new time-reckoning) consisting of lustres of 7 years each (saptakāntariyam) and mounting up to the 64th year (chatuh shashtyagram).” To reform the calendar Khāravela introduced a new cycle of 64 years consisting of 9 Yugas of 7 years each. According to Dr. F. W. Thomas (JRAI, 1922, 84) antara = antargriha = cell. The passage means that cells which had been left unfinished during the time of the Maurya kings were constructed by Khāravela.

2 XX. 74.

3 His latest reading of the inscriptive passage is as follows:—

“Paṭalakā chaturā ka vēdāriya-gabhe thāmbhe patiṁāpayati, pāṭattariya satasahase(ḥi); Muriya-kāla-vochhinaṁ cha choyāḥ(i) Aṁga satika(ṁ) turiyāṁ upādayati.”

“Paṭalaka (?) . . . . (he) sets up four columns inlaid with beryl at the cost of seventy-five hundred thousands; . . . . (he) causes to be compiled expeditiously the (text) of the sevenfold Aṁgas of the sixty-four (letters).” Ep. Ind., XX, pp. 80, 89.
is not Nandivardhana but Mahāpadma Nanda who is said to have brought 'all under his sole sway' and 'uprooted all Kshatriyas' or the old reigning families. So we should identify ‘Namdarāja’ of the Hāthīgumpha inscription, who held possession of Kaliṅga either with the all-conquering Mahāpadma Nanda or one of his sons.” Professor Barua objects to the identification of “Namdarāja,” the conqueror of Kaliṅga, with a king of the pre-Aśokan Nanda line on the ground that in the Aśokan inscriptions it is claimed that Kaliṅga was not conquered (avijita) before Aśoka. But such claims are on a par with the Gupta boast that Samudra Gupta was ajita-rājajetā, conqueror of unconquered kings, and that the Aśvamedhā sacrifice had been revived, after a long period of abeyance, by him. We know that as a matter of fact the claims, if taken too literally, had very little substance in them. The suggestion in the Cambridge History of Ancient India that Nandarāja may have been a local ruler of Kaliṅga is negated by the internal evidence of the Hāthīgumpha Inscription. A post-Aśokan “neo-Nanda” line of Magadha is also unknown to sober history.

As Mahāpadma Nanda and his sons ruled in the fourth century B.C., Khāravela is to be assigned either to the third century B.C., (taking ti-vasa-sata to mean 103) or to the first century B.C. (taking ti-vasa-sata to mean

1 MASI, No. I, p. 12.
2 Allan, Gupta Coins, p. ex. Cf. Jahāṅgit’s boast that “not one of the mighty emperors has conquered” Kangra (ASI, AR, 1905-6, p. 11). Avijita may simply refer to the fact that Kaliṅga was not included within the limits of Aśoka’s Vijita (empire) or Rāja-vishya (Royal Dominions).
3 Cf. the passage—“Namdarāja nītānī cha Kaliṅga jinasattīvītesam” which proves clearly that Nanda was an outsider.
4 A late Nanda or Nandodbhava line is known to epigraphy. But it ruled in Orissa. See R. D. Banerji. Orissa, I, 202; Kumar Bidyādhar Singh Deo, Nandapur, I, 46; Ep. Ind. xxi, App. Ins. No. 2043.
5 Konow (Acta Orientalia, Vol. I, pp. 22-26) accepts the date 103, but refers it (along with another date, 113, which he, with Fleet, finds in line 11) to a Jaina era. This era he is inclined to identify with that of Mahāvira’s Nirṛti. Apparently he is not aware of the existence of another Jaina reckoning, viz., the era of Samprati. Dr. K. P. Jayaswal (Ep. Ind., XX. 75) now assigns the date 103 to a Nanda era and says that the date refers to the time when the Tanausuliya Canal, which Khāravela extended to the capital in the 5th year of his reign, was originally excavated.
300). In neither case could he be regarded as a contemporary of Pushyamitra who ruled from about 187 to 151 B.C.

The Yavana Invasion

The only undoubted historical events of Pushyamitra’s time, besides the coup d’etat of c. 187 B.C., and the Vidarbha war, are the Greek invasion from the North-West referred to by Patañjali or a predecessor and Kālidāsa, and the celebration of two horse-sacrifices.

Patañjali is usually regarded as a contemporary of Pushyamitra. Sir R. G. Bhandarkar draws our attention to the passage in the Mahābhāshya—iha Pushyamitraṁ vājayānah: “here we perform the sacrifices for Pushyamitra”—which is cited as an illustration of the Vārttika teaching the use of the present tense to denote an action which has been begun but not finished. The instances given by Patañjali of the use of the imperfect to indicate an action well-known to people, but not witnessed by the speaker, and still possible to have been seen by him, are, “arunad Yavanaḥ Sāketaṁ: arunad Yavano Madhyamikāṁ.” This, says Sir R. G. Bhandarkar, shows that a certain Yavana or Greek chief had besieged Sāketa or Ayodhya and another place called Madhyamikā when Patañjali wrote this. It is, however, possible that the instances cited by the great grammarian are stock illustrations (mūrdhābhishikta udāharanā) which are simply quoted by him from earlier authorities. But a war with Greeks in the days of Pushyamitra is vouched for by Kālidāsa. In his Mālavikāgnimitram the poet refers to a conflict between prince Vasumitra, grandson and general of Pushyamitra, and a Yavana on the southern (or right) bank of the Sindhu. Unfortunately the name of the

1 Ind. Ant., 1872, p. 300.
2 Nāgari near Chitor; cf. Mbh., II. 32.8; Ind. Ant., VII, 267.
3 The Indus or possibly a stream of the same name in Central India (Cf. IHQ, 1925, 215).
leader of the invaders is not given either in the Mahābhāṣya or in the Mālavikāgnimitram. There is considerable divergence of opinion with regard to his identity. But all agree that he was a Bactrian Greek.

The Bactrian Greeks were originally subjects of the Seleukidan Empire of Syria (and Western Asia). We learn from Strabo, Trogus and Justin that "about the middle of the third century B.C. when the Seleukid rulers were pre-occupied in the west" Diodotos, "Governor of the thousand cities of Bactria" (Balkh region to the south of the Oxus), revolted and assumed the title of king. He was succeeded, according to Justin, by his son Diodotos II who entered into an alliance with Arsakes who about this time (c. 247 B.C.) tore Parthia in Northern Irān from the Seleukidan Empire.

The successor of Diodotos II was Euthydemos. We learn from Strabo¹ that Euthydemos and his party occasioned the revolt of all the country near the province of Bactriana. We are told by Polybius that Antiochos III (223-187 B.C.) of Syria made an attempt to recover the lost provinces but afterwards made peace with Euthydemos. The historian says, "Antiochos the Great received the young prince (Demetrios, son of Euthydemos) and judging from his appearance, conversation and the dignity of his manners that he was worthy of royal honour he first promised to give him one of his daughters,"² and secondly conceded the royal title to his father. And having on the other points caused a written treaty to be drawn up and the terms of the treaty to be confirmed on oath, he marched away, after liberally provisioning his troops, and accepting the elephants belonging to Euthydemos. He crossed Caucasus (Hindukush) and descended into India; renewed his friendship with Sophagasenos, the king of the

² Tarn's scepticism (Greens in Bactria and India, 82, 201) about the marriage is not warranted by cogent evidence. His arguments are in part of a negative character. He seems to prefer his own interpretation of certain coins of Agathokles to the clear testimony of Polybius.
Indians; received more elephants, until he had 150 altogether, having once more provisioned his troops set out again personally with his army, leaving Androstenes of Cyzicus, the duty of taking home the treasure which this king had agreed to hand over to him."

Not long after the expedition of Antiochus the Great, the Bactrian Greeks themselves formed the design of extending their kingdom by the conquest of the territories lying to the south of the Hindukush. Strabo says, "the Greeks who occasioned its (Bactria's) revolt became so powerful that they became masters of Ariana and India, according to Apollodorus of Artemita. Their chiefs, particularly Menander (if he really crossed the Hypanis to the east and reached the Isamus) conquered more nations than Alexander. These conquests were achieved partly by Menander, partly by Demetrios, son of Euthydemos, king of the Bactrians. They got possession not only of Patalene (the Indus Delta), but of the kingdoms of Saraostos (Surāśṭra or Kāṭhiāwār), and Sigerdis (probably Sāgaradvipa) which constitute the remainder of the coast. Apollodorus in short says that Bactriana is the ornament of all Ariana. They extended their empire even as far as the Seres and Phryni."  

Strabo gives the credit for spreading the Greek dominion furthest to the east into India partly to Menander and partly to Demetrios, son of Euthydemos and son-in-law of Antiochus the Great.

**Menander** has been identified with the king Milinda who is mentioned in the *Milinda-pañho* as a contemporary of the Buddhist *Thera* (Elder) Nāgasena, and also in the

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1. Apollodorus lay to the east of the Tigris. The books of Apollodorus are assigned to a date between c. 130 B.C. and 87 B.C. (Tarn, Greeks, 44ff).
2. *I.e.* the Hyphasis or Vipāśā (the Beas).
3. The Tris̄ānā? In the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (V. 19. 17) a river of this name is mentioned in conjunction with the Kauśikī, Mandākini, Yamunā, etc. Sircar prefers the Ikshumati.
Avadāna-kalpalatā of Kshemendra. This monarch was born at Kalsigrāma in the “Island” of Alasanda or Alexandria and had his capital at Sāgala or Śakala, modern Śialkot, in the Pañjāb, and not at Kābul as Dr. Smith seemed to think. The extent of his conquests is indicated by the great variety and wide diffusion of his coins which have been found over a very wide extent of country as far west as Bagram near Kābul and as far east as Mathurā. The author of the Periplus states that small silver coins, inscribed with Greek characters and bearing the name of Menander were still current in his time (c. 60-80 A.D.) at the port of Barygaza (Broach). Plutarch tells us that Menander was noted for justice, and enjoyed such popularity with his subjects that upon his death, which took place in camp, diverse cities contended for the possession of his ashes. The statement of Plutarch is important as showing that Menander’s dominions included many cities. The recently discovered Bajaur Relic Casket Inscription confirms the numismatic evidence regarding the westward extension of his empire.

Demetrios has been identified by some with king Dattāmitra mentioned in the Mahābhārata, the “great Emetreus, the king of Inde” of Chaucer’s Knightes Tale and Timitra of a Besnagar seal. The wide extent of his conquests is proved by the existence of several cities named after him or his father in Afghanistān as well as

1 Stūpa avadāna (No. 57); Smith, Catalogue of Coins, Indian Museum, p. 3; SBE, 36, xvii.
2 Treneker, Mulindapāñho, p. 89.
3 Ibid., p. 82 (CHI, 550). The identity of this “Alexandria” is uncertain. Tarn (p. 141) seems to prefer Alexandria in the Kābul Valley. The Milinda. VI. 21, seems to suggest location on the sea unless a different Alexandria is meant.
4 Milinda, pp. 3, 14.
5 EHI, 1914, p. 225.
7 For Coins of Apollodotos and Menander in Gujrat, see Bomb. Gaz., I. 1. pp. 16-17; Num. Chr. JRNS (1900), 207.
8 Ep. Ind. XXIV, 7ff. XXVI, 318f, XXVII, ii. 52ff. The King’s name is given as Mina-edra.
9 I. 199, 29. Krimisa, the Yaksha (AIU, p. 107) with whom he is identified by Dr. Bagchi belongs to the domain of folklore.
10 EHI, 1914, p. 265n.
India. Thus in the work of Isidore of Charax\textsuperscript{1} we have a reference to a city named Demetriaspolis in Arachosia. The *Vyākaraṇa* (grammar) of Kramadīśvara mentions a city in Sauvīra called Dāttāmitrī.\textsuperscript{3} Ptolemy the Geographer mentions the city of Euthymedia (\textit{? Euthydemia}) which was identical with Sākala,\textsuperscript{4} and was, according to the *Milinda-pañho*, the capital of an Indo-Greek kingdom in the time of Menander.

It is permissible to conjecture that one of the two conquering kings, \textit{viz.}, Menander and Demetrios, was identical with the Yavana leader who penetrated to Sāketa in Oudh, Madhyamikā near Chitor, and the river Sindhu possibly in Central India, in the time of Pushyamitra. Goldstücker, Smith and many other scholars identified the invader with Menander who crossed the Hypanis (Beas) and penetrated as far as the Isamus (Trisāmā\textsuperscript{2}?). On the other hand, Dr. Bhandarkar suggested, in his *Foreign Elements in the Hindu Population*, the identification of the invader with Demetrios. We learn from Polybius that Demetrios was a young man at the time of Antiochos III's invasion (between 211 and 206 B.C.) Justin says that Demetrios was

\textsuperscript{1} \textit{JRAS}, 1915, p. 839. \textit{Parthian Stations}, 19.

\textsuperscript{2} \textit{Ind. Ant.}, 1911. *Foreign Elements in the Hindu Population; Bomb. Gaz.*, I. ii. 11, 176. Kramadīśvara, p. 796. The reference is probably to a Demetrias in the lower Indus Valley. Johnston differs from the view (\textit{JRAS}, April, 1930; \textit{IHQ}, 1939). We should, however, not ignore the evidence of \textit{Mbh.} I. 139, verses 21-23, which clearly refer to a *Yavanādhipa* and Dāttāmitra in connection with Sauvīra. If Dāttāmitra is not Demetrios and Dāttāmitrī not a city founded by him, it will be interesting to know with whom Dāttāmitra and the *Yavanādhipa* of the epic are proposed to be identified. A Nāsik (Deccan) Inscription (No. 1140 Lüders' List) makes mention of a Yonaka from the north (*Otarāha*), a native of Dāttāmitrī. Thus epic and epigraphic evidence together with that of Sanskrit grammarians clearly establishes the connection between the Yonas or Yavanas (Greeks), Dāttāmitrī and Sauvīra.

\textsuperscript{3} We are hardly justified in rejecting the reading 'Euthyde' (Tarn, p. 486) simply on the grounds urged by Tarn (p. 427) which do not appear to be convincing, and accept a reading which is "meaningless and wrongly accented". See also Keith in \textit{D. R. Bhandarkar Volume}, 211f.

\textsuperscript{4} \textit{Ind. Ant.}, 1884, pp. 449-50.

\textsuperscript{5} As already stated, Trisāmā is a river mentioned in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. Note the absence of any reference to the Ganges in Strabo's account of Menander's conquests.
"king of the Indians" when Eukratides was the king of the Bactrians and Mithradates was the king of the Parthians. "Almost at the same time that Mithradates ascended the throne among the Parthians, Eukratides began to reign among the Bactrians; both of them being great men... Eukratides carried on several wars with great spirit, and though much reduced by his losses in them, yet, when he was besieged by Demetrios, king of the Indians, with a garrison of only 300 soldiers, he repulsed, by continual sallies, a force of 60,000 enemies." Dr. Smith assigns Mithradates to the period from 171 to 136 B.C. (to 138/37 B.C. according to Debevoise). Eukratides and Demetrios must also be assigned to that period, that is the middle of the second century B.C.¹

We have seen that Demetrios was a young man and a prince in or about 206 B.C. We now find that he ruled as king of the Indians about the middle of the second century B.C. He was, therefore, the Indo-Greek contemporary of Pushyamitra who ruled from c. 187 to 151 B.C. Menander, on the other hand, must have ruled over the Indo-Greek kingdom much later, as will be apparent from the facts noted below. Justin tells us that Demetrios was deprived of his Indian possessions by Eukratides.² Eukratides was killed by his son with whom he had shared his throne.³ The identity of the parricide is uncertain but no one says that he was Menander.⁴

¹ The activity of Mithradates I began after the death of Antiochos IV in 163 B.C. See Tarn, pp. 197ff. According to Debevoise, A Political History of Parthia, p. 207ff. Antiochos IV, Epiphanes, crossed the Euphrates in 165 B.C. Mithradates I died in 138/37 B.C., the first Parthian date fixed by numismatic and cuneiform evidence. Eukratides assumed the title "Great" before 162 B.C. (date of Timarchus) (The Cambridge Shorter History of India, p. 64). His coins are copied by Plato (165 B.C.) as well as Timarchus.

² Watson’s tr., p. 277.

³ Ibid., p. 277.

⁴ According to Cunningham and Smith the parricide was Apollodotos. But Rapson shows good reasons for believing that Apollodotos did not belong to the family of Eukratides, but was, on the other hand, a ruler of Kāpisa who was ousted by Eukratides (JRAS, 1905, pp. 784-85). Rawlinson points out (Intercourse between India and the Western World, p. 73) that Apollodotos uses the epithet Philopator, and the title would be somewhat incon-
Justin furnishes the important information that the prince who murdered Eukratides was a colleague of his father. We know that Greek rulers who reigned conjointly sometimes issued joint coins. Thus we have joint coins of Lysias and Antalkidas, Agathokleia and Strato, of Strato I and Strato II, and of Hermaios and Kalliope. The only Greeks whose names and portraits appear on a coin or medallion together with those of Eukratides are Heliokles and his wife Laodike. Cunningham and Gardner suggested that Heliokles and Laodike were the father and mother of Eukratides. But Von Sallet proposed an entirely different interpretation of the coins in question. He thought that they were issued by Eukratides, not in honour of his parents, but on the occasion of the marriage of his son Heliokles with a Laodike whom Von Sallet conjectured to have been daughter of Demetrios by the daughter of Antiochus III. If Von Sallet’s conjecture be accepted then it is permissible to think that Heliokles was the colleague of Eukratides referred to by Justin, and the murderer of his father.

It is clear from what has been stated above that Demetrios was succeeded by Eukratides, who, in his turn, was probably followed by Heliokles. Menander could not in that case have reigned earlier than Heliokles. It may, however, be argued that after Demetrios the Indo-Greek kingdom split up into two parts: one part which included the Trans-Jhelum territories was ruled by Eukratides and his son, the other part which included “Euthymedia” (Euthydemia?) or Sākala was ruled by Menander who thus might have been a younger contemporary of Eukratides (c. 171-165 B.C.) and consequently of Pusyamitra (c. 187-151 B.C.).

Now, the disruption of the Indo-Greek kingdom after...
Demetrios may be accepted as an historical fact. The existence of two rival Greek kingdoms in India and their mutual dissensions are proved by literary and numismatic evidence. The Purāṇas say:

_Bhavishyantīha Yavanā dharmataḥ kāmato'rthataḥ naiva Mūrdhābhishiktās te bhavishyanti narādhipāḥ yuga-dosha-durāchārā bhavishyanti nrīsās tu te strīnām bāla-vadhenaiva hatvā chaiva paramparaṃ._

"There will be Yavanas here by reason of religious feeling or ambition or plunder; they will not be kings solemnly anointed but will follow evil customs by reason of the corruptions of the age. Massacre women and children and _killing one another_, kings will enjoy the earth at the end of the Kali age."²

The Gārgī Samhitā informs us:

_Madhyadeśe na sthāsyanti Yavanā yuddha durmadāḥ teshām anyonya sambhāvaḥ (?) bhavishyanti na sanśayaḥ ātma-chakrotthinam ghoram yuddham paramā-dāruṇam._

"The fiercely fighting Greeks will not stay in the Madhyadeśa (Mid-India); there will be a cruel, dreadful war in their own kingdom, caused between themselves."³

Coins bear testimony to struggles between kings of the _house of Eukratides_ and rulers of the _family of Euthydemos_. But the evidence which we possess clearly indicates that the contemporaries and rivals of Eukratides and Heliokles were _Apollodotos, Agathokleia_ and _Strato I_, and not Menander. A square copper⁴ coin of Eukratides has on the obverse a bust of the king and the legend "_Basileus Megalou Eukratidou_." On the reverse there is the figure of Zeus and the legend "_Kavisiye nagaradevata_." They are often coins (?) of Apollodotos restruck.⁵ From

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¹ Cf. Cunn. _AGI_, Revised Ed. 274; Camb. _Hist. Ind._, I. 376. "The Macedonians . . . gave away to a fury of blood-lust, sparing neither woman nor child."

² Pargiter, _Dynasties of the Kali Age_, pp. 56, 74.

³ Kern, _Bṛhat Samhitā_, p. 88.

⁴ _CHI_, 555, 690; Whitehead, _Indo-Greek Coins_, 26.

⁵ Rapson, _JRAS_, 1905, p. 785. According to some 'overstriking in itself is no evidence of conquest' but simply of commercial relationship (_JAOS_, 1950, p. 310).
this it is probable that Apollodotos was a rival of Eukratides, and was superseded in the rule of Kāpiśa, which lay in the district identified with Kāśīrītan and the valleys of Ghorband and Panjšīr, by the latter. Rapson further points out\(^1\) that Heliokles restruck the coins of Agathokleia and Strato I ruling conjointly and also of Strato I reigning alone. Further, the restricking is always by Heliokles, never by Agathokleia and Strato I. From this it is clear that Agathokleia and Strato I ruled over an Indo-Greek principality either before, or in the time of Heliokles, but probably not after him.

We have seen that according to the evidence of Justin and the Kāpiśa coins Eukratides probably fought against two rivals, namely, Demetrios and Apollodotos; his son Heliokles also fought against two rivals, namely, Agathokleia and Strato I. Seltman (*Greek Coins* 235) refers to a large gold coin which Eukratides struck to mark his triumph over Demetrios. Some distinguish between a Bactrian and an Indo-Bactrian Heliokles (*JRNS*, 1950, 211-12). The duplication of the *Indian Heliokles* requires cogent proof. As Demetrios and Apollodotos were both antagonists of Eukratides and used similar coin-types, the inevitable inference is that they were very near in time as well as in relationship to one another, in fact that one immediately followed the other. Now Demetrios was beyond doubt the son and successor of Euthydemos, consequently Apollodotos must have been his successor.

As Heliokles was in all probability a son of Eukratides, the rival of Apollodotos, he must have been a younger contemporary of Apollodotos. Consequently, Heliokles’ antagonists, Agathokleia and Strato I, whose coins he restruck, were very near in time to Apollodotos. Strato I later on ruled conjointly with his grandson Strato II. There is no room for the long and prosperous reign of Menander in the period which elapsed from Demetrios to Strato II. According to the Buddhist tradition recorded in the

\(^1\) *JRAS*, 1905, pp. 165ff. *CHI*, p. 553.
Milinda-pañho, Milinda or Menander flourished "500 years," i.e., not earlier than the fifth century\(^1\) after the Parinirvāṇa, parinibbānato pañchavassa sate atikkante ete upajjissanti.\(^2\) This tradition points to a date not earlier than the period 144-44 B.C. according to Ceylonese reckoning, or 86 B.C.-14 A.D. according to Cantonese tradition, for Menander. Thus both according to numismatic evidence and literary tradition Menander could not have been the Indo-Greek contemporary of Pushyamitra.\(^3\) It is Demetrios who should, therefore, be identified with the Yavana invader referred to by Patañjali and Kālidāsa, one of whose armies was defeated by Prince Vasumitra\(^4\).

The Aśvamedha Sacrifices

After the victorious wars with Vidarbha (Berar) and the Yavanas Pushyamitra completed the performance of two horse-sacrifices. These sacrifices are regarded by some scholars as marking an early stage in the Brāhmaṇical reaction which was fully developed five centuries later in the time of Samudra Gupta and his successors. Buddhist writers are alleged to represent Pushyamitra as a cruel persecutor of the religion of Śākyamuni. But the proba-

\(^1\) Cf. the interpretation of somewhat similar chronological data by Franke and Fleet (JRAS, 1914, pp. 400-1); and Smith EIII, 3rd Edition, p. 528.

\(^2\) Trencher, the Milinda-pañho, p. 3. Tarn is not quite right in saying (1917) that Apollodorus makes Menander contemporary with Demetrios, Trogus with Apollodotos, and some coin indications (CHI, p. 551) with Eukratides. Strabo following Apollodorus and possibly other authorities simply says that extensive Bactrian conquests in the Indian interior were achieved partly by Menander and partly by Demetrios. It is nowhere clearly stated that the two conquerors were contemporaries. The book of Trogus on which another conclusion is based, is lost. Coin indications are not clear enough. E.g., the imitation of certain coins of Demetrios by Maues does not prove chronological proximity.

\(^3\) Cf. 445n infra.

\(^4\) S. Konow (Acta Orientalia, 1, 35) points out that there is no evidence that Menander transgressed the river Yamunā, and that Demetrios was the ruler who besieged Sākea and Madhyamikā. In IHQ, 1929, p. 493, Mr. R. P. Chanda regards Strabo's attribution of the Indian conquests to Demetrios as doubtful. But the cities in the Pañjāb and the Lower Indus Valley, named after Demetrios and possibly his father, leave no room for doubt that Strabo is right.
tive value of the Divyāvadāna, on which some modern writers place their chief reliance in regard to the matter, is seriously impaired by the representation of the "persecuting" monarch as a Maurya, a descendant of Aśoka himself. Moreover, the prime motive which is said to have inclined the king to a vicious policy is, according to this Buddhist work, personal glory and not religious fanaticism. Pushyamitra did not dispense with the services of pro-Buddhist ministers, and the court of his son was graced by Pañḍita-Kauśiki. The Mahāvamsa3 admits the presence, in Bihar, Oudh, Mālwa and adjacent provinces, of numerous monasteries with thousands of monks in the age of Duṭṭhagāmaṇi of Ceylon (c. 101-77 B.C.) which is partly synchronous with the Baimbika-Suṅga period. The Buddhist monuments at Bhārhut erected "during the sovereignty of the Suṅgas" do not also bear out the theory that the Suṅgas, among whom Pushyamitra is included by the Purāṇas, were the leaders of a militant Brāhmaṇism. Though staunch adherents of orthodox Hinduism, kings of the line of Pushyamitra do not appear to have been as intolerant as some writers represent them to be.

The Mantri-parishad in the days of Pushyamitra

Patañjali refers to the Sabhā of Pushyamitra. But it is uncertain as to whether the term refers to a Royal Durbar, a tribunal of justice, or a Council of Magnates. The existence of Councils or Assemblies of Ministers (Mantri-parishad) is, however, vouched for by Kālidāsa. If the poet is to be believed the Council continued to be an important element of the governmental machinery. He gives us the valuable information that even viceregal princes were assisted by Parishads.4 The Mālavikāgnimit-

1 IHQ, Vol. V, p. 397; Divyāvadāna, 433-34.
2 Mālavikāgnimitram, Act I.
3 Geiger, trans., p. 198.
4 Bühler (Ep. Ind. III, 137) points out that Aśoka's Kumāras were also each assisted by a body of Mahāmātras. These may have corresponded to the Kumārāmātyas of the Gupta period.
ram refers in clear terms to the dealings of Prince Agnimitra, the Viceroy of Vidiśā (in Eastern Mālwa), with his Parishad:

"Deva evam Amātya-parishado vijnāpayāmi"

"Mantri-parishado pṛetad-eva darśanam ādivāḥ vibhaktāṁ śriyam-udvahantau dhurāṁ rathāśvāviva sangrabhitau
tau sthāyatas-te nṛipater nideśa paraspar-āvagraha-nirvikārau?"

Rājā: tena hi Mantri-parishadāṁ bhṛuḥ senānye Viṣarṇāya likhyatāṁ evāṁ kriyatāṁ iti."

It seems that the Amātya-parishad or Mantri-parishad was duly consulted whenever an important matter of foreign policy had to be decided upon.

**Section II. Agnimitra and his Successors**

Pushyamitra died in or about 151 B.C., probably after a reign of 36 years,¹ and was succeeded by his son Agnimitra.² The name of a prince named Agnimitra has been found on several copper coins discovered in Rohil-

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¹ "King! I will announce this decision to the Council of Ministers."

² "This is also the view of the (Council of Ministers). Those two kings, upbearing the fortune of their superior lord divided between them, as the horses upbear the yoke of the charioteer, will remain firm in their allegiance to thee, not being distracted by mutual attacks." Act V, verse 14.

³ "King: Tell the Council then to send to the General Viṣarṇa written instructions to this effect." (Tawney, Mālavikāḡnimitra, pp. 89-90)

⁴ Only thirty years according to a Jaina tradition—"āṭhasayāṁ Murīvāyaṁ chchāla Pāsamittasa" (IA, 1914, 118 f. Merutūṅga).

⁵ The commentary on the _Amarakośa_ seems to suggest that Agnimitra is the original of king Śūdraka of tradition (Oka, p. 122; _Ann. Bhand. Or. Rev. Inst._, 1931, 906). On the other hand Keith refers to a tradition recorded in the _Viṣṇa charita_ and by the younger Rājaśekhara which represents Śūdraka as a minister of a Śātavāhana king. We are further told by another writer that Śūdraka defeated prince Śvāti and ruled for a long time. A tale alluded to in the _Harshcharita_ represents him as an enemy of Chandraketu, lord of Chakora, apparently in South India (Keith, _The Sanskrit Drama_, p. 129; _Sanskrit Literature_, p. 292; Ghosh, _History of Central and Western India_, pp. 141 f.). The story of Śūdraka is essentially legendary and it is difficult to extract any historical truth out of it. The abeyance of Śātavāhana power in the Upper Deccan for a long period is a fact. But it is due to the irruption of foreign tribes from the north. Disloyal ministers may have helped to bring in the invader.
khand. Cunningham¹ was of opinion that this prince was probably not to be identified with the son of Pushyamitra, but belonged to a local dynasty of North Pañchāla (Rohilkhand). He gave two reasons for this conclusion:

1. Agnimitra's is the only coin-name found in the Purānic lists. The names of the other "Mitra" kings occurring on coins of the so-called "Pañchāla series," do not agree with those found in the Purānas.

2. The coins are very rarely found beyond the limits of North Pañchāla.

As to the first point Rivett-Carnac² and Jayaswal³ have shown that several coin-names besides that of Agnimitra can be identified with those found in the Purānic lists of Śuṅga and Kāṇva kings; for example, Bhadra-ghosha may be identified with Ghosha, the seventh king of the Purānic list of Śuṅga kings. Bhūmimitra may be identified with the Kāṇva king of that name. Jethamitra, who is identified with the successor of Agnimitra, viz., Vasu-Jyeshṭha or Su-Jyestha, who is called simply Jyestha in the k Vishṇu manuscript,⁴ no doubt left coins that belong to a different series. But even he is closely connected with an Agnimitra. Several names indeed cannot be identified, but they may have been names of those Śuṅgas who survived the usurpation of Vasudeva Kāṇva and the remnant of whose power was destroyed by the so-called Andhras and Śiśunandi.⁵

As to the second point we should remember that "Mitra" coins, even those which undoubtedly belong to the so-called Pañchāla series, have been found in Oudh, the Basti district, and even Pātaliputra, as well as in Pañchāla. Names of two "Mitra" kings, Brahmamitra and Indramitra, of whom the latter undoubtedly belonged to the Pañchāla group, are found engraved on two rail pillars

² JASB, 1880, 21ff.; 87ff.; Ind. Ant., 1880, 311.
⁴ Dynasties of the Kali Age, p. 31, n. 12. Pace Allan, CICA, p. xcvi.
⁵ Dynasties of the Kali Age, p. 49.
at Bodh Gayā as well as on coins discovered at Mathurā, Pañchāla and Kumrahar.\(^1\) In the face of these facts it is difficult to say that the "Mitras" in question were a local dynasty of North Pañchāla. The matter, however, must be regarded as sub judice.

Agnimitra's successor, as we have already seen, was Jyesṭha (of the k Vishn̄u manuscript), who is very probably identical with Jēṣṭhamitra of the coins.\(^2\)

The next king Vasumitra was a son of Agnimitra. During the life-time of his grandfather he had led the imperial army against the Yavanas and defeated them on the Sindhu (possibly in Central India) which probably formed the boundary between the empire of Pushyamitra and the Indo-Greek territories in Malwa.

Vasumitra's successor is called Bhadraka in the Bhāgavata Purāṇa, Ādṛaka and Odruka in the Vishn̄u, Āndhraka in the Vāyu, and Antaka in the Matsya Purāṇa. Jayaswal identified him with Udāka, a name occurring in a Pabhosā inscription. The epigraph has been translated thus: “By Āśāḍhasena, the son of Gopālī Vaihīdāri and maternal uncle of king Bahasatimitra, son of Gopālī, a cave was caused to be made in the tenth year of Udāka for the use of the Kassapiya Arhats.” We learn from another Pabhosā inscription that Āśāḍhasena belonged to the royal family of Adhichhatrā (Ahichhatrā), the capital of North Paṅ-
chāla. Jayaswal maintained that Odraka (identified with Udāka) was the paramount Śungra sovereign, while the family of Āsādhasena was either gubernatorial or feudatory to the Magadha throne. Marshall, on the other hand, identified the fifth “Śungra” with king Kāsīputra Bhāgarbhadrā mentioned in a Garuḍa Pillar Inscription found in the old city of Vidiśā, now Besnagar. Jayaswal identified Bhāgarbhadrā with Bhāga Śungra, i.e., Bhāgavata of the Purāṇas. This theory has to be given up in view of the discovery of another Besnagar Garuḍa Pillar Inscription (of the twelfth year after the installation of Mahārāja Bhāgavata) which proves that there was at Vidiśā a king named Bhāgavata apart from king Kāsīputra Bhāgarbhadrā. In the absence of clear evidence connecting “Udāka” with Vidiśā it cannot be confidently asserted that he belonged to the house of Agnimitra and Bhāgavata. The view of Marshall seems to be more probable.

It appears that the successors of Agnimitra at Vidiśā cultivated friendly relations with the Greek sovereigns of the Western Pañjāb. The policy of the Bactrian Greeks in this respect resembled that of their Seleukidan predecessors. Seleukos, we know, first tried to conquer the Magadha Empire, but, frustrated in his attempts, thought it prudent to make friends with the Mauryas. The Bactrians, too, after the reverses they sustained at the hands of Pushyamitra’s general, and weakened moreover by internal dissensions, apparently gave up, for a time at least, their hostile attitude towards the imperial power in the Ganges valley. We learn from the Besnagar Inscription of the reign of Bhāgarbhadrā that Heliodora (Heliodoros), the son of Diya (Dion), a native of Taxila, came as an ambassador from Mahārāja Antalikita (Antialkidas) to Rājaṇ Kāsīputra Bhāgarbhadrā the Saviour (Trāṭāra) who was pros-

1 A Guide to Sāñchī, p. 11 n.
2 Sircar suggests Kautsīputra.
3 Dr. Barua points out (IHQ, 1930, 28) that “in the absence of the word rājnā preceding Udākasa, it is difficult to say at once whether Udāka is the personal name of a king or the local name of the place where the cage was excavated.”
pering in the fourteenth year of his reign. The ambas-
sador, though a Greek, professed the Bhāgavata religion
and set up a Garuḍadhvaja in honour of Vāsudeva
(Kṛiṣṇa), the god of gods. He was apparently well-versed
in the Mahābhārata1 which he might have heard recited in
his native city of Taxila.

Nothing in particular is known regarding the three
immediate successors of Bhadraka. The ninth king
Bhāgavata had a long reign which extended over 32 years.
Dr. Bhandarkar identifies him with the Mahārāja Bhāga-
vata mentioned in one of the Besnagar Inscriptions
referred to above. Bhāgavata's successor Devabhūti or
Devabhūmi was a young and dissolute prince. The
Purāṇas state that he was overthrown after a reign of
10 years by his Āmātya or minister Vasudeva. Bāna in
his Harshacharita says that the over-libidinous Śuṅga was
bereft of his life by his Āmātya Vasudeva with the help of
a daughter of Devabhūti's slave woman (Dāsī), disguised
as his queen. Bāna's statement does not necessarily imply
that Devabhūti was identical with the murdered Śuṅga.
His statement may be construed to mean that Vasudeva
entered into a conspiracy with the emissaries of Devabhūti
to bring about the downfall of the reigning Śuṅga,
(Bhāgavata), and to raise Devabhūti to the throne. But
in view of the unanimous testimony of the Purāṇas this
interpretation of the statement of Bāna cannot be upheld.

The Śuṅga power was not altogether extinguished
after the tragic end of Devabhūti. It probably survived
in Central India2 till the rise of the so-called Andhras,
Andhrabhṛityas or Sātavāhanas who "swept away the
remains of the Śuṅga power" and probably appointed

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1 The three immortal precepts, lit. steps to immortality, dama, chāga and
apramāṇada, self-control, self-denial and watchfulness, mentioned in the second
part of Heliodora's inscription, occur in the Mahābhārata (V. 43. 22; XI. 7. 23;
Damas-tvāgō' pramādāscha te trayo Brahmaṇo hayāh. Cf. also Gīthā, XVI,
1.2). See JASB, 1922, No. 19, pp. 269-271. ASI, 1908-1909, p. 126; JRAS,
1909, 1953, 1087f, 1093f; 1910, 815; 1914, 1031f; IHQ, 1932, 610; Annals of
the Bhandarkar Institute, 1918-19, p. 59.

2 Cf. Dynasties of the Kali Age, p. 49.
Śisunandi to govern the Vidiśā region. Śisunandi’s younger brother had a grandson (daunītra) named Śisuka who became the ruler of Purikā.

SECTION III. IMPORTANCE OF THE BAIBMKA-ŚUNGA PERIOD OF INDIAN HISTORY

The rule of the emperors of the “house” of Pushyamitra marks an important epoch in the history of India in general and of Central India in particular. The renewed incursions of the Yavanas, which once threatened to submerge the whole of the Madhyadesa, received a check, and the Greek dynasts of the borderland reverted to the prudent policy of their Seleukidan precursors. There was an outburst of activity in the domains of religion, literature and art, comparable to that of the glorious epoch of the Guptas. In the history of these activities the names of three Central Indian localities stand pre-eminent: Vidiśā (Besnagar), Gonarda and Bhārhut. As Foucher points out “it was the ivory-workers of Vidiśā who carved, in the immediate vicinity of their town, one of the monumental gates of Śāñchī.” Inscriptions at or near Vidiśā (and Ghosunḍī) testify to the growing importance and wide prevalence of the Bhāgavata religion. Though no Asoka arose to champion this faith, the missionary propaganda of its votaries must have been effective even in the realms of Yavana princes, and a Yavana dūta or ambassador was one of its most notable converts. Gonarda was the traditional birth-place of the celebrated Patañjali, the greatest literary genius of the period, Bhārhut saw the construction of the famous railing which has made the sovereignty of the Śuṅgas (Suganam raja) immortal.

1 Ibid., 49.
2 For the location of Purikā see JRAS, 1910, 446; Cf. Ep. Ind., xxvi, 151.