

POLITICAL HISTORY OF INDIA

(6TH CENTURY B.C. TO 1526 A.D.)

AMIYA KUMAR PATTANAYAK



POLITICAL HISTORY OF INDIA

(6th Century B.C. to 1526 A.D.)

Prof. A.K. Pattanayak

Professor and Head

P.G. Department of History

Berhampur University

Berhampur - 760 007, Orissa

华东政法大学图书馆



04024933

R. N. BHATTACHARYA

Kolkata

2008



Published by—

R. N. Bhattacharya

Publishers and Booksellers (Exporters)

6, M. M. Feeder Road, P.O. : Ariadaha, Kolkata-700 057

Phone : 2564-7048, Fax : 033-91-2564-7048

e-mail : rnb_bhattacharya@hotmail.com

1st Edition : 2008

© Reserved by the Author

ISBN : 81-87661-95-X

Rs. 700/-

Laser and type setting by

R. N. Bhattacharya

6, M. M. Feeder Road, P.O : Ariadaha

Kolkata-700 057, Phone : 2564-7048

Printed by

MPR PRINTERS

9A, Khetra Dhole Lane

Kolkata-700 005

CONTENTS

CHAPTER - 1	INTRODUCTION	1-26
	The Nomenclature, Splendid isolation, Continuity Geographical Divisions Himalayan Region, Indo-Gangetic Plain, Deccan Plateau, Unity in Diversity	
CHAPTER - 2	POLITICAL CONDITION OF NORTH INDIA DURING SIXTH CENTURY B.C.	27-50
	Sources Brahmanical Sources, Buddhist Sources, Jaina Sources and other literary works, Urban Centres.	
	Sodasa Mahajanapada Kasi, Kosala, Anga, Magadha Chedi, Vatsa, Kuru, Panchala, Matsya, Surasena, Asvaka, Avanti, Gandhara, Kamboja, Vriji, Lichchhavi, Malla	
	Other Republican States Sakya, Koliya, Bhagga, Moriya, Kalama, Buli, The constitution of Republics and Non-Monarchical states, Monarchical form of Government	
CHAPTER - 3	THE SIXTH CENTURY B.C. AND THE PROTESTANT RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS	51-90
	The Preachers - Ajita Kesakambalin - Pakudha Katayana - Purana Kassapa - Sanjaya Belatthiputta - Mukkhali Gosala Jainism Buddhism Similarities and Dissimilarities	
CHAPTER - 4	THE MAURYS (CHANDRAGUPTA MAURYA)	91-114
	Sources Foreign Sources, Indigenous Sources - Arthasastra of Kautilya, Brahmanical Sources, Buddhist and Jaina texts Epigraphy	
	Ancestry	
	Conquests Liberation of northwest, overthrow of the Nandas, war with Seleucus Nikator, Conquest of western India, Conquest of southern India	
	Administration Central Administration Provincial Administration Municipal Administration Military Administration Revenue Administration Administration of Justice & Spy System Social Welfare Activities	

**Last Days
Estimate
Bindusara**

CONTENTS

CHAPTER - 5 ASOKA

115-148

Sources

Rock Edicts, Numismatics, Art Remains and Literary Sources Early
Careers

The Kalinga War

Causes of the war, the war, the effects of the war

Extent of Empire

Religious Policy

Measures for the spread and propagation of Dhamma His Place in
History

DECLINE AND DOWNFALL OF THE MAURYAN EMPIRE

Causes

Natural Decay, Weak Successors, Partition of Empire, Foreign Invasion,
Internal Revolution, Growth of Urbanization, Economic Inequality,
Bureaucratic Failure, Financial Problems, Responsibility of Asoka
and the Brahmanical Reaction

CHAPTER - 6 THE KUSHANAS

149-164

Sources

Literary, Epigraphy, Numismatics, Archaeological Remains
Origin and Original Home

KUJALA KADPHISES OR KADPHISES I

WEIMA KADPHISES OR KADPHISES II

KANISHKA

Relation with Kadphises Group

Date of Accession

Saka Era

Military Achievements - Kashmir, Magadha, Western India, China,

Parthia and Rome

Extent of Empire

Administration

Literary Activities

Art and Architecture

Patronage of Buddhism

CHAPTER - 7 THE GUPTAS

165-228

Sources

Literary, Epigraphy, Numismatics, Monuments, Origin and Original
Home

CHANDRAGUPTA - I

SAMUDRAGUPTA

Sources

Succession

Conquests - First Campaign of North

Conquest of South

Second Northern Campaign

Relation with Frontier Kingdoms
Conquest of Forest Kingdoms
Relation with Foreign Countries

Aswamedha Sacrifice

Extent of Empire

His Accomplishments

RAMAGUPTA

CHANDRAGUPTA II

Sources

Date

Conquests

The war with Sakas, Other Conquests

Extent of Empire

Coins

Accounts of Fa-Hien

Accomplishments

KUMARAGUPTA I MAHENDRAGUPTA

SKANDAGUPTA - The Successors of Skandagupta

GUPTA ADMINISTRATION

Central Administration - The King, Ministers and Officials, Guilds

Provincial Administration

Village Administration

Municipal Administration

Judicial Administration

Military Administration

Revenue Administration

Religion

Golden Age : Cultural Attainments

CHAPTER - 8 HARSHAVARDHANA

229-260

Sources

Literary, Epigraphy, Numismatics, Monuments, Ancestry

Conquests

War against Sasanka, Five years' War, War against Valabhi, Harsha-

Pulakesin War, War with Sindh, Kashmir and Nepal, Conquest of

Orissa

Extent of Empire

Administration

The King, Mantriparishad, Administrative Divisions, Army, Revenue

Administration, Judicial Administration, Official Records

Works of Public Utility

Urban Centres

Religion of Harsha - The Assembly at Kanau

The Prayag Assembly

Patronage of Learning

Nalanda University

Sri Harsha Era

Hsien Tsang (Yuan Chwang)

Harsha's Relation with China

His Accomplishments

CHAPTER - 9 THE ARAB INVASION OF SINDH

261-274

Political Condition of North India

Causes of Invasion

Economic, Rise of Islam, Cultural and the Immediate Cause

The Invasion

Causes for the defeat of Sindh - Divided Society, Unpopular Ruler,

Economic Condition, Weak Rulers, Faulty Strategy

Death of Muhammad bin Qasim

Aftermath

Arab Administration in Sindh

Effects

Promising Beginning, Religious Co-existence, Social Effects, Influence

on Arabs, Storehouse of Knowledge, Indian Medicine, Astronomy,

Mathematics, Music and Painting, Administration

Was it Jihad ?

CHAPTER -10 INVASION OF MAHMUD OF GHAZNI

275-300

Origin

Political Condition of India on the eve of the invasions

- Religion, Society, Weapons,

National Pride, Wealth

MAHMUD GHAZNI

- Succession, Personality

Causes of Indian Invasions

Nature and Effects - A Plunderer rather than an Empire Builder, Breathing

Space, Strategy, Alberuni's description of India

CHAPTER -11 INVASIONS OF MUHAMMAD OF GHUR

301-318

Causes

Control over Punjab, Propagation of Islam, Military Zeal, An Empire

Builder, Lack of Unity among Indians, Social Condition.

Conquest of Multan, Sindh and Punjab

Conquest of Delhi

- First Battle of Tarain

Second Battle of Tarain

Other Conquests - Conquest of Kanauj, Revolt among Rajputs, Conquest

of Gwalior, Rising in Ajmer, Coquest of Bundelkhand, Bihar, Bengal

Last days

Causes of Indian defeat

- Lack of Unity

- Ill-organised Army

- Lack of Strategy

- Lack of Planning

- Defensive rather than offensive

- No Religious Tinge

- Social Problems

- Lack of Foresight

- Lack of Nationalism

Nature and Effects

- Empire Builder

- Selection of Successors

- Socio-Cultural Effects

CHAPTER-12 THE SLAVE DYNASTY

319-336

Origin

- Qutb-ud-din Aibak
- Iltutmish
- Succession
- Early revolts : Defeat of Yilduz,
- Defeat of Qubacha
- The Mongol Menace
- Other Conquest :

: Recovery of Bengal
: Conflicts with Rajputs
: Conquest of Doab

Investiture from Khalifa

His Accomplishments

Successors of Iltutmish -

- Rukn-ud-din Firoze
- Raziya Begum
- Muiz-ud-din Bahram Shah Ala-ud-din
- Masud Shah
- Nasir-ud-din Muhammad Shah

CHAPTER-13 GHIYAS-UD-DIN BALBAN

337-354

- Early difficulties
- Theory of Kingship
- Re-organisation of Army
- Destruction of 'the Forty'
- Spy system
- Suppression of Revolts
- The Mongol Invasions
- Revolt in Bengal
- Administration of Justice
- Patronage of Learning
- Estimate
- Successors of Balban

CHAPTER-14 THE KHILJIS

355-392

JALAL-UD-DIN FIROZE KHILJI

Origin

Nature

Revolt of Malik Chhajju

Invasions - Ranthambhor, Against Mongols, Bhilsa, Devagiri, Murdered by Ala-ud-din

ALA-UD-DIN KHILJI

Childhood, Family Life

Theory of Kingship

Administration

Justice, Spy System, Postal System, Revenue Administration

Market Control Regulations

- Its Adverse effects

Military Reforms

Conquests

(a) North India

Gujrat, Ranthambhor, Chittor, Malwa, Siwana, Jalor, Bengal Expedition, Nature of North Indian Conquests

(b) Deccan Expedition

Telengana, Dwasamudra, Mabar, Third Expedition of Devagiri, Nature of South Indian Campaign

Mongol Invasions

His Accomplishments

CHAPTER -15 THE TUGHLAQ

393-422

GHIYAS-UD-DIN TUGHLUQ SHAH

Domestic Policy - Agriculture, Other Activities, Army, Religion

Expansion of Empire - Conquest of Bengal

Death

Estimate

MUHAMMAD BIN TUGHLAQ

Early Revolts

Domestic Policy :

- Revenue Reforms
- Creation of Department of Agriculture
- Taxation in Doab
- Transfer of Capital
- Introduction of Token Currency

Religion

Mongol Invasion

Foreign Policy :

- Conquest of Nagarkot
- Qarajal expedition
- Relation with China

Later Rebellions

Estimate

CHAPTER -16 FIROZE SHAH TUGHLAQ

423-440

Domestic Policy :

- Finance
- Irrigation and Culture
- Public Works
- Philanthropic Works
- Currency
- Education
- Justice
- Slaves and Army

Religious Policy

Military Campaigns

Estimate

DISINTEGRATION OF THE DELHI SULTANATE

INDEX

441-456

the great scimitar like Himalayas. It extends from Kashmir in the north to Kanyakumari in the extreme south for about 3,200 kms. between 8° 4' to 37° 6' latitude of north parallels and in breadth, west to east of about 3,000 kms. between 68° 7' to 97° 25' of east meridian of longitude. The total area is about 32,80,483 sq. kms.

Chapter - 1

INTRODUCTION

History has been defined as "the study of man's dealings with other men and the adjustment of working relations between human groups." Hence, the history of India goes back to that remote past when man first settled here, immaterial whether migrated from outside or emerged here by a process of evolution. He grew up essentially as a product of the environment that surrounded him, the climate, the geography, the flora and fauna. Indian history presents striking parallel to that of other countries, which can boast of a culture and civilization dating back to antiquity. Human civilization began here in the same way if not the same time as in other parts of the world.

India is a sharply demarcated land bound on the north by the world's largest mountain range, the chain of Himalayas, which extends from the northwest to northeast and separates India from rest of Asia and the world. In the far south, southwest and southeast, the broad seas; the Indian Ocean, the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal respectively separate India from the other parts of the globe. The vast country, rightly called as a sub-continent looks like an 'Inverted Spire' hanging from

the great scimitar like Himalayas. It extends from Kashmir in the north to Kanyakumari in the extreme south for about 3,200 kms. between $8^{\circ} 4'$ to $37^{\circ} 6'$ latitude of north parallels and in breadth, west to east of about 3,000 kms. between $68^{\circ} 7'$ to $97^{\circ} 25'$ of east meridian of longitude. The total area is about 32,80,483 Sq. kms.

The Nomenclature

The name India has been derived from the name of the great river Sindhu, in the northwest, which was the lifeline of the earliest civilization of India. The Persians who entered into India through that route found difficulty in pronouncing the 'S' for which they called it as Hindu- 'H' in place of 'S'. The Greeks who came to India after the Persians called it as Indu or Indus. During the later period from Hindu the land came to be known as Hindustan and the people as Hindus. Similarly the name India came from Indus. However, the ancient Indians called their land as *Jambudwipa* (The island of the Jambu tree) or *Bharatavarsha* (The land of the legendary emperor Bharata, son of Dushyanta and Sakuntala). Some others believe that the name Bharat has been taken from the name of an ancient tribe called the Bharatas.

Splendid Isolation

India is effectively and indisputably isolated from the rest of the world by natural and geographical barriers. The mighty Himalaya acts as an admirable defensive rampart of India against invasion by land. The high seas guard the frontiers of India on three sides. The Bay of Bengal, the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean guard the east, west and southern boundaries of India respectively. This has lent an element of individuality to

India. Besides the geographical barriers, which play a vital role in isolating India, the Indian history has also helped in maintaining its isolationist existence. The few invaders who have come to India have either temporarily come into contact with India or have permanently settled here joining the ranks of others and helping to evolve a distinctive Indian culture. The Aryans, the Sakas, the Kushanas, the Mongols etc. who have come to India have gradually settled and lost their separate identity. They have got themselves absorbed into the fold of Indianness to such an extent that differences from their original stock developed in more ways than one. Similarly, the Indians have very rarely gone out on expeditions outside India. Hence, Indian culture has grown on its own without being influenced by outside world. Politically India used to be considered as a very powerful kingdom from the very beginning. Even the invasion of Alexander, the great was restricted to its vestibule.

However, it is another thing that the same seas and mountains which otherwise were considered effective and impenetrable barriers acted as excellent mediums of interaction. Nature sets limits; man transgresses them with his tools and his vision. Man progressively creates specific environment and makes history. A number of passes in the Himalayas provided openings for invasion and racial immigration. Thus, came the Aryans, the Persians, the Greeks, the Scythians, the Sakas and the Kushanas during ancient period, and the Mongols during medieval period. Similarly, the seas fostered India's commercial interaction with Egypt, Babylonia, Greece, Rome and the South-east Asia. The Greater India or the establishment of Indian colonies in the Southeast Asia was achieved through the seas. The vast coastline, dotted with a number of natural ports made India a great

maritime power. Nevertheless, the Europeans followed the sea route to conquer India.

Continuity of Civilization

India takes her place side by side with Egypt and Mesopotamia as a country where we can trace the dawn of human civilization and the beginning of the thoughts, ideas and activities, which have shaped the destinies of mankind all over the civilized world. The history of India, thus, possesses an aspect of universality, which so strikingly distinguishes the history of Egypt, Babylonia and Assyria during the early period and Persia, Greece and Rome later.

Continuity, however, has been the keynote of Indian culture. The ancient civilization of India differs from those of Egypt, Mesopotamia and Greece in the way that its traditions have been preserved without any break down to the present day. The ancient cultures of Egypt, Mesopotamia and even Greece have long ceased to exist. But in case of India the present is fully conscious of the past. Over a period of more than five thousand years not much has changed. The same *mantra* that a Brahmin used to chant before taking his bath in praise of the seven rivers of India, more than four thousand years before continues unchanged even today. The society as described in the ancient epics has changed very little even today. An average Indian still preserves veneration for ideals and concepts which his ancestors cherished thousands of years ago. But the present day Egyptians had no knowledge of their past until its discovery by the archaeologists. Even the glory of Periclean Athens is vague for the present Greece. They are now mere past memories only for academic interest.

The Indian history and culture form an unbroken chain by which the past is indissolubly linked up with the present. People of India are sentimentally attached to their past and always clamour for its complete restoration. The old customs and practices are so deeply ingrained in the minds of the people that it can hardly be delinked. The ancient India bequeathed to us a vast treasury of texts, which represent the intellectual, religious and literary activities for a period over four thousand years. The earliest literary work, the *Samhita* of the *Rigveda* and many other contemporary works on geography, astronomy, science and economics continue to remain alive even in the present which is not possible in case of Egypt, Greece and Rome. Some Indian writers even seek to find in ancient India a replica of the most advanced political institutions of the modern times.

Geographical divisions

The configuration of India is primarily divided into three distinct regions with sharply differentiated features – the Himalayan region, the Indo-Gangetic plain and the Deccan plateau.

The Himalayan region

The crescent shaped Himalayan range running from Afghanistan in the north to Assam in the east has a length of nearly 2,560 kms. with an average breadth of 240 to 320 kms. The Himalayas contain altogether about 114 peaks of over 20,000 feet, of which 75 exceed 24,000 feet. The best known are Everest or Gourishankar (29,140 feet), the highest mountain peak in the world, Kanchanjanga (28,176 feet), Dhaulagiri (26,826 feet), Naga Parvat (26,620 feet) and Nandadevi (25,661 feet).

The three lifelines of India, river Indus in the west, the holiest of holy, river Ganga in the centre and Brahmaputra in the east flow from the Himalayas. The perennial snows of the Himalayas are as important to the hydrography of India as the two monsoon winds.

The river Indus (about 2880 Kms. of total length) rises from the Kailas Mountain and flows through Punjab and Sindh, which prevents the region from turning in to a desert. It receives water from five tributaries, Sutlej (Vedic Satadru), Chenab (Vedic Asikini or Chandrabhaga), Ravi (Vedic Parusni or Iravati), Beas (Vedic Vipasa) and Jhelum (Vedic Vitasta). The Indus is navigable for about 1280 Kms. that is upto Dera Ismail Khan. The river Ganga (a total length of 2480 Kms.) rises in the central Himalayas in a glacial ice-cave known as Go-mukh (cow's mouth) and flows for 288 Kms. till it reached Haradwar. There after its Himalayan tributaries join it, the Jamuna (which joins at Allahabad), the Gogra, the Gandaka and the Kosi and other tributaries like Chambal and Son. After reaching the ancient Gauda kingdom the Ganga divides itself into two branches namely the Bhagirathi (Hoogly) and Padma. Brahmaputra (about 2880 Kms. of total length) originates at the eastern base of Kailas Mountain and flows through Tibet under the name Tsan-Po. It enters India near Sadiya in Assam under the name Dihang. Then Dibang and Lohit join it and the united stream is known as Brahmaputra. After passing through Assam it joins Padma. It is navigable upto Dibrugarh in Assam for a distance of about 1200 Kms.

The mountain is famous as the abode of Gods, Goddesses and sages. It houses the famous lake Manosarovar, one of the holiest of places for the Hindus. Goddess Parvati was the daughter of Himalayas. Kailash,

the abode of Lord Shiva is a part of the Himalayas. Kalidasa has described it as king of mountains or *nagadhiraja* and ensouling divinity or *devatatma*. It contains many important and popular hill-stations like Darjeeling, Simla, Kulu and Manali.

Its outer ranges, which touch the northern plain, are called the 'Sivaliks'. The west of the Himalayas is the Hindukush mountains parts of which are now included in Afghanistan. Further south there are Safed Koh, Sulaiman and Khirthar mountains as the northwestern boundary of India. In the east there are Patkoi Hills, Naga Hills, Khasi Hills, Garo Hills, Jaintia Hills, Lushai Hills and Chin Hills. The Himalayas also contain some high plateaus and valleys like the Kashmir valley. The green valley at an elevation of 6000 feet is about 132 Kms. long and 40 Kms. broad. It has been justly regarded as "the earthly paradise". The protective cover of the Himalayas has given to India its civilization and social structure from the earliest times to present day. The thick Tarai forest borders the central Himalayas.

The mountains form an impenetrable defensive rampart of India against any invasion. These are so steep and so densely forest-covered that the crossing becomes almost impossible. However, the Khyber, Gomal, Kuram, Tochi and Bolan passes in the Himalayas have often served as the highways of active interaction with the outside world by way of foreign invasion and racial immigration. The Aryans, the Persians, the Greeks, the Scythians, the Perthians and the Kushanas during ancient period and the Mongols during medieval and the Chinese during recent times have entered through these routes. Almost all the foreign invaders to India except the Europeans have entered through these

passes. In the northwest, the Khyber Pass (about 32 Kms. long) with the city of Peshawar (ancient Parushapura) at its mouth opened the road to Kabul. Kabul as such was well connected by land route to a number of places of Central Asia and Asia Minor. Similarly, through Bolan Pass the road reached Kandhar, another great meeting place of ancient routes to Persia. Lying between Afghanistan and Dera Ismail Khan, the Gomal route was shorter and safer. Another line of communication, which passed through the inhospitable Makran region along the coast of Beluchistan, connected Perisa (Iran). This was the route followed by Alexander on his return journey. Through these routes from time immemorial, migrating tribes, peaceful traders and conquering armies have entered into India.

By protecting India from the dry cold winds from Tibet and serving as a great screen for the monsoon winds it has increased the fertility and prosperity of Gangetic plain. The numerous rivers fed by the glaciers of the Himalayas act as an inexhaustible and perennial source of water. The rivers too, are powerful determinants in the life of a country.

Indo-Gangetic plain

Next to the Himalayas is the Indo-Gangetic plain which figures prominently in the pages of history for being seats of many principal empires. The plain is about 4,80,000 square kilometers, covering the most thickly populated area and the most fertile part of India. The region derives its strength from the rivers like Indus, Ganga and Brahmaputra and their tributaries. These rivers bring enormous loads of silt from the mountains and deposit them on the beds. The snow covered