



Monarchical States of Upper India from C 1 A.D-C 3 A.D

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ABSTRACT

The almost two centuries examined in the scope of this paper are among the least well-known periods in ancient Indian history. Though many indigenous achievements attributed to the Guptas were the culmination of numerous processes, including artistic, linguistic, religious, socio-economic, cultural, or political ones that started within the time frame we have chosen for our research, the importance and significance of this era cannot be discounted. It is vital to understand these processes in order to understand the history of North India during the first centuries of the Common period. This essay makes an effort to recount the tale of the monarchical nations that existed from around 129 CE from the Kushanas period to the beginning of the Gupta samvat, focusing on discourses on their social, economic, cultural, and religious history.

Keywords- Ancient India, Gupta, Kushana, North India, Monarchical states

Introduction

Ancient India was home to a wide range of societal formations, from the urban civilization of the Indus Valley to the Classical Era of the Gupta period. During this period, we can see a hierarchy of centralised and decentralised governments; some of these states had highly organised political systems, while others were simply undermined by internal strife and power disparities.

The Kushana empire had already developed into a strong territorial force by the second half of the first century CE, with the goal of gaining economic benefits from securing territory and trading routes. The first gold coins minted by Vima Kadphises are the finest indicator of the Kushana realm's booming economy. Kanishka I, probably the strongest and most powerful Kushana king, oversaw the Kushana domain's largest geographical expansion. No one of this monarch's successors was able to maintain the large geographical extent after he vanished from the political scene, and the empire gradually shrank from the rule of Huvishka to that of the last Kushana ruler. Vasudeva II, who is likely to be the same person as Po-t'iao from the Chinese Annals, was the last conceivable ruler of the Imperial Kushanas. It seems improbable that the early Gupta kings Chandragupta I and Samudragupta instantly dominated the political scene that had become empty with the demise of Kushana authority. Instead of another major sovereign state filling the void left by the Kushanas, smaller dynasties took advantage of the unrest and proclaimed their independence.

Ambiguities regarding this period

Reconstructing the history of the Naga people after the collapse of the Imperial Kushanas is very difficult because of the contradictory information provided by the Puranas and the dearth of adequate epigraphic data. The Vishnu Purana is the only source of information we have about the Nagas of Kantipuri. K.P. Jayaswal asserts that Kantipuri served as the Bharasivas' administrative centre. However, it should be emphasised that neither these monarchs' coins nor any other indications of Bharasiva power have been discovered in or even close to Kantit. K.P. Jayaswal fervently maintained that the Bharasivas had succeeded in building an empire after conquering the Kushanas, considering the performance of 10 horse sacrifices as true. Nearly every researcher has disputed this theory as being fantastical, and the Bharasivas are now thought to be a local Naga family rather than an imperial dynasty. Regarding the locations of numerous Naga families, the scope of their control, their chronology, and the history of the Nagas in general, indologists are still in agreement. While many historians have questioned Virasena's Naga ancestry, others have argued that Achyuta was a Naga ruler.

The ancestry and chronology of the Ayodhya monarchs are uncertain in the lack of trustworthy evidence. There is hardly any written or epigraphic evidence for these kings. Their numismatic problems have not yet been properly comprehended in relation to the regional currency that is used locally. The Almora coin series resembles the Class II coins of Ayodhya monarchs Satyamitra, Kumudasena, Ajamitra, Madhavarman, Aryamitra, Sanghamitra, Vijayamitra, and Devamitra, among others. It is unknown how they are related to the older Almora monarchs. Their alleged affiliation with the so-called "Mitra monarchs of the Indo-Gangetic area" is also dubious.

Scholars have long cast doubt on the plausibility of the Kushana ruling the Panchala area, and even those who think it's likely they did don't know how long it lasted. It is still unclear if Achyuta is a king's personal name or a dynasty name. Because "Achyuta" and "Nandi" of the Allahabad prasasti of Samudragupta may denote two different kings while the conjunct "Achyutanandin" as the name of one king is also possible, scholars have found it challenging to piece together the history of the Ahichchhatra region prior to the rise of the Imperial Guptas. Coins with the legends "Achyuta" and "Sri-Nandi" that were discovered from the same location add to the difficulty of the situation. It seems unlikely that they were in charge of the same territory at the same time, even if they were two separate monarchs. It is still unclear which of the two ruled over Ramnagar while the other held Ahichchhatra as his capital.

King Silavarman could have been a member of the Yaudheya tribe, according to Ramachandran. We cannot be certain whether he was a Yaudheya chief since his coins lack the tribal name. Another theory put out by certain academics is that he was a member of the Panchala dynasty. It is still unclear what the phrase "Ponashashtha" means in the Jagatgram inscriptions, whether it refers to the patriarch of Silavarman's family, from whom the current monarch was sixth in line, or if he was the sixth Pona of the dynasty, carrying on the name of his five forefathers. The term "yugesvara," which may mean "the ruler of a lustrum" and suggest cleansing via sacrifice or "the monarch of the land of Yuga" and refer to the name of the area he was in charge of, is also problematic. In view of the political climate of the third century AD and Samudragupta's assertion of the Ashvamedha yajna in his Allahabad prasasti, it is still necessary to investigate the importance and truthfulness of his performance of four horse sacrifices.

The relationship between the families of Bala and Hastin and the other Maukhari families—the first one known from a Gaya-area seal from the Maurya period, the second from a Candravalli inscription, the third whose presence in the Gaya region can be noted as early as the 6th century CE, and the Imperial family of Kanauj—is rife with uncertainty. Although the records themselves do not imply any tie existed between houses of Bala and Hastin, Altekar believes that there were likely multiple Maukhari families living in the Badva region around the third century AD and that they were likely scions of one and the same stock. He goes on to say that "some of the descendants of Bala" were the Maukhari that Mayurasarman, the founder of the Kadamba family, claimed in his Candravalli inscription to have conquered. Since the Maukhari feudatories of Central India were in charge of some of the Sakas' armies when Mayurasarman engaged them in battle, the Kadamba monarch claimed victory over them as well.

He stated that the Bala family was a feudatory to the Sakas of Ujjain. But it seems that this viewpoint is very speculative. It is unknown whether these Maukhari families were related to the Yajnavarman line, who ruled Bihar, or to the more famous Maukhari family of Kanauj. DC The claim made by Sircar that the Maukharis moved from Rajasthan to UP and Bihar and brought the Krta, Malava, or Vikrama era's technology to those regions has never been proven. Due to its incomplete nature, the Yupa inscription at Barnala in the Jaipur area is unable to provide any close. Both the king's complete name and his dynastic designation are absent. The importance of the Yupas and the inscriptions on them still need to be fully appreciated, as has the socio-cultural history of this area, which has never been brought to light.

The question of where the Gupta dynasty first lived is one of the oldest and most complicated and contentious arguments in ancient Indian history. It has been hypothesised that West Bengal, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh produced the Gupta dynasty. The Gupta dynasty's first two kings' political careers were not without controversy. Reconstructing the early history of the Gupta dynasty has been made more difficult by the lack of a firm knowledge of the monarchical kingdoms in power in the third century CE. Two areas—Bactria and the area around Mathura—became important political and administrative hubs under the reign of the Imperial Kushanas. The role of Mathura as the administrative centre appears to have diminished during the reign of the Imperial Guptas, and it has since transformed into a centre for religion. There has never been a discussion of the causes of Mathura's decline or the formation of the new area that took its place as the centre of the gubernatorial system.

North India from First century to Third Century A.D

Due to the fall of Bactria and the inevitable decline of the Kushanasna empire, a few non-monarchical groups gained political significance around the middle of the third century. The Yaudheyas in eastern Rajasthan and parts of Haryana and Punjab, the Madras in the area around Sialkot, the Kunindas at the foot of the Siwalik hills between the Yamuna and the Sutlej, as well as in the territory between the upper courses of the Beas and the Sutlej, were among them. The Malavas in south-eastern Rajasthan and the Arjunayanas in the area to the west of Agra and Mathura After the early emperors of Kanishka's house lost their grip on the region, a number of minor political entities began to exert influence there. These included the cities of Kaushambi, Rewa, Bandhogarh, Mathura, Padmavati, Kantipuri, Ahichchhatra, Jagatgram, Ayodhya, Kota, Sarnath, Vidisha, Sanchi, Eran, and Bhitari. The Madhyadesa area of the subcontinent included all of these monarchical realms of northern India.

Our ancestors divided India into five major regions, with Madhyadesa serving as the central division. According to the Dharmasutra of Baudhyana, Madhyadesa is located "to the north of the Paripatra, to the south of the Himalayas, to the east of the area where the river Sarasvati evaporates, to the west of Kalakavana which is associated with a tract somewhere near Prayaga." Because of this, B.C. Law contends that Madhyadesa's eastern border also excluded Bihar in addition to Bengal. "Extending from the Himalayas in the north to the Vindhya in the south, and from the Vinasana in the west to Prayaga in the east," is how Manu describes Madhyadesa. This approach is used by the Puranas as well. Thus, the monarchical states that were present in modern-day Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, and the northern portion of Madhya Pradesh will be the focus of our tale.

The Maghas carved out and governed for many generations over a vast area that stretched from Bandhogarh in the Shahdol district of Madhya Pradesh in the south to the Fatehpur district of Uttar Pradesh in the north before the ashes of the Kushanasna kingdom began to cool. The names of the following Magha monarchs are known to us thanks to inscriptions that date between the years 51 and 139: Vasishthiputra Bhimasena,

Kautsiputra Praushthasri, Kautsikiputra Bhadradeva, Bhadramagha, Gautamiputra Sivamagha, Vaisravana, and Bhimavarman. Coins also contain the names of Vijayamagha, Jayamagha, Satamagha, Puramagha, and Yagamagha in addition to these seven monarchs. Parmamagha's name is revealed on a clay seal from Kaushambi, and based on his name, he unquestionably belonged to the Magha family. There is no reason to dispute that Mahasenapati Rudramagha was a member of the Magha royal dynasty as shown by a clay sealing that was reported from Rajghat.

Some historians also think that the monarchs Nava, Navika, and Dhanadeva belonged to the Magha dynasty since their presence is shown by coins displaying symbols like those seen on the Magha issues. One Magha coin from Kaushambi has been discovered, on which he is given the title of Maharaja, a position believed to have been held by sovereign monarchs at the time. He is believed to have been the dynasty's founder and the source of the name that the dynasty bore. About a third-century AD Bhita seal mentions Maharaja Gautamiputra Vindhyavedhana. According to legend, he obtained his throne from Mahesvara and Mahasena, and the bull served as his flag. Maharaja Samkarasimha, who is identified from a Bhita seal from about the fourth century AD, seems to have been one of his successors. The names of Mahashvapati-Mahadandanayaka Vishnurakshita and Mahadevi Rudramati, who were clearly connected to the rulers of Kaushambi, are also revealed on the Bhita seals. One Sri Rudra, known from a coin discovered at Kaushambi, has been connected to Rudradeva, who is known from his Allahabad inscription as one of the Aryavarta rulers who was violently expelled by Samudragupta.

Monarchical Systems

The clan chief finally gained kingship in the Vedic realm and status comparable to that of a god. Buddhism and Jainism rejected the idea of a deity in favour of the idea that all needs were initially met without difficulty by nature, but that man eventually descended into evil as a result of developing desires that gave rise to concepts of private property and family, which in turn led to immoral behaviour. People decided to choose one of them as the "great elect" among this misunderstanding (mahasammata). He has the authority to preserve law and order because of the people. In ancient India, this is how the monarchy or royalty was established. The state institution thus continued to expand.

Later versions kept the notion of a contract between the king and the people. According to Brahmanic sources, when the gods selected the ruler, the people and the monarch entered into a dues arrangement. The philosophy of matsyanyaya, which asserts that the strong prey on the weak in times of chaos and when there is no ruler, was also generally believed. It compares this to how large fish devour little fish during a drought. Therefore, a ruler was seen to be absolutely required. For the state to exist, danda (authority) and dharma were necessary (in social order i.e., the preservation of the caste structure). In the Artha-Sastra of Kautilya, the monarch (Raja), administration (Amatya), territory (Janapada), capital (Durga), treasury (Kosha), forceful power (Danda), and allies are referred to as the seven limbs (saptanga) of the state (Mitra).

Because it was founded on the notion of a strong, centralised monarchy with a strong ruler at its centre, the Mauryan empire fostered the political idea of monarchy. The second reason was that the dharma, or social order, needed far more dedication than the nebulous idea of the state. It was the duty of the monarch to protect dharma and social order in order to prevent anarchy. Loyalty to the social order, which was a fundamental element of Indian culture, is the principal explanation for the exceptional persistence of the key social institutions over many centuries. This, however, also changed the political conception of the state, which may have otherwise allowed for more frequent empires and a greater degree of political awareness. Once the Mauryas were overthrown, it would take decades for an empire to reemerge.

Political Systems

The basic government system governed by tribal chieftains was altered by a variety of regional republics or hereditary monarchy that devised methods to take advantage of income and recruit labour for spreading the settlement and agricultural regions further east and south, beyond the Narmada river. These brand-new states created armies, built cities and highways, and employed tax collectors. By 600 B.C., sixteen of these geographical empires—from what is now Afghanistan to Bangladesh—were dispersed throughout the North Indian plains. Regardless of how it occurred, a monarch's claim to the throne was often justified by intricate sacrifice rituals and genealogies—histories of a dynasty from past to present—written by priests who maintained the king had magical or superhuman origins.

Under monarchies, the king or chieftain presided over the realm. In this manner of life, the brahmanas and Vedic ceremonies were highly valued. The second type consisted of mahajanapadas who were republican or oligarchic. The people known as the rajas were selected to govern as the monarch in this location. There are allusions to sabhas, which are meetings where members would discuss a subject before voting on it. There were 7707 rajas in one such assembly, which represented the class of rajanyas who owned land that was cultivated by labourers, dasas, or karmakaras. The rajas were well known for their skill in combat. Brahmanas were subject to kshatriyas in this group, and Vedic sacrifices were not given much importance.

The post-Mauryan state was inaugurated by the arrival of central Asian conquistadors such the Indo- Greeks, Akas, Parthians, and Kushanasnas. They imposed their power on local kings, which allowed a culture built on the relationship between a master and a servant to flourish. The idea that kingship had a supernatural basis was reinforced by the central Asians. Kings of the Kushanakingdom referred to themselves as Devaputras, sons of God. The central Asians also accepted the Satrap system and the military governance.

According to this viewpoint, the Maitrakas of Valabhi case is much too well-known. They acted as the Guptas' defence till the very end of their rule in Surashtra. Even though they were independent, the Guptas must have profited enormously from having them as allies throughout their wars with the Western Kshatrapas. Another such force was the Western Malava-based Aulikras, who had a huge influence on Indian history at the

period as both Gupt feudatories and an independent state. They were contemporaneous with the Guptas.

Even though scholars studying this period have paid them virtually no attention beyond brief mentions of their existence and grouping them with the Guptas, the Western Malwa region's Aulikrs played a significant role as a buffer between the territory of the Guptas and the Western Kshatrapas until the latter were defeated by ChandraGupt II Vikramaditya. Even after that, according to Jagannath Agrawal, it is quite probable that Hunas entered India during the SkandaGupt era via Surashtra in Western India.

This may have been the cause of the Surashtra government reform SkandaGupt described in the inscription on the Junagadh Rock, which must have contributed to his concern. Before diving further into the political events that took place in this region from the fourth to the sixth century A.D., especially with relation to the history of the Aulikrs, it will be important to quickly analyse the political geography of the area associated to them.

The name of the most well-known ruling dynasty in northern India during this period, which reigned from the beginning of the fourth century to the middle of the sixth century of the Christian era, is where the word "Gupt Period" originates. The other smaller powers that were in existence at the time and had a considerable influence on the history of the age, however, were not taken into account. Majumdar referred to it as the "Classical Age," ignoring the political terminology in favour of one with larger meaning. The significant and irrefutable contribution made by Gupta to advancement in general cannot be overlooked. It also explains why a substantial amount of writing has been produced over the last 150 years on the history of the Guptas, often at the cost of other less well-known but no less influential current forces.

Their presence there is significant because the Western Malwa functioned as a buffer between the Western Kshatrapas and the Guptas until the latter were vanquished by ChandraGupt II Vikramaditya. Even after that, according to Jagannath Agrawal, it is quite probable that Hunas entered India during the SkandaGupt era via Surashtra in Western India. This may have increased to his concern, since SkandaGupt's account of the reform of the Surashtra administration is described in the inscription on the Junagadh Rock Inscription.

The last potential monarch of the Kushanas was Vasudeva II, who is most likely Po-t'iao from the Chinese Annals. It is unlikely that ChandraGupt I and SamudraGupt immediately took control of the political situation that had opened up with the fall of Kushanarule. Smaller dynasties took advantage of the upheaval and proclaimed their independence rather than another significant sovereign power stepping in to fill the vacuum created by the Kushanas.

The question of chronologies

The chronology and connections of the Magha kings, who are only known through their coins and include Jayamagha, Satamagha, Puramagha, and Yagamagha, are a matter of debate. Even after the scholar's passing, it hasn't been feasible to utilise the 2,942 Magha coins that AM Shastri freed from Kaushambi to properly rewrite Magha history. The inscriptions of the Maghas have not been used to reconstruct the history of the region's merchant class or the architectural contribution of the Magha dynasty. Kaushambi's political succession was the subject of various controversies from the reign of Kanishka through that of ChandraGupt I.

Although Bela Lahiri thinks he arrived before the Maghas, Altekar asserts that Nava, a ruler whose copper coins are exactly the same kind as those of the Maghas, supplanted the Maghas in Kaushambi. It is still unknown if there is a relationship between Sri Rudra and the Maghas, who are known because to a coin found in Kusambhi. Even that is in question, whether or not he was really the ruler of Kusambhi. It has not yet been investigated how the local dynasties who succeeded the Kushanas in the Allahabad and Rewa area affected socioeconomic development and architectural innovation.

The sole source of information we have about the Ngas of Kantipuri is the Vishnu Pura. K.P. Kantipuri, according to Jayaswal, functioned as the Bharasivas' administrative hub. It is interesting to note that no coins nor any other proof of their authority were found in or around Kantit. After defeating the Kushanas, the Bharasivas built their kingdom, according to K.P. Jayaswal, who accepted the 10 horse sacrifices as valid. The Bharasivas were likely a local Naga family rather than a branch of the Imperial dynasty, since almost every researcher has disproved this claim.

Scholars continue to agree on the locations of several Naga families, their sphere of influence, their chronology, and the history of the Ngas as a whole. Some historians believe that Achyuta was a Naga emperor, despite the fact that many have disputed Virasena's Naga heritage. How the Kushanas and the Ngas varied from one another in terms of culture and economics is unknown. Due to a dearth of reliable information, it is unclear how long the Ayodhya kings reigned. The history of these rulers can barely be reconstructed from written or epigraphic sources.

A cursory look at the political environment of the era is sufficient to demonstrate the existence of a number of independent, partially independent, and feudatory entities before to the Guptas' ascent to power, during their rule, and even after it ended. Both as allies and adversaries, these nations were crucial. In this light, it's essential to keep in mind the circumstances surrounding the Maitrakas of Vlabhi, Ngas of Padmvat, Maukharis of Badvais, and many Scythian branches. Even though they were independent, the Guptas must have profited enormously from having them as allies throughout their wars with the Western Kshatrapas, just as the Deccan Vkakas did.

Their numismatic issues in respect to the locally accepted regional currency have not yet been fully understood. The Class II coins of the Ayodhya kings Satyamitra, Kumudasena, Ajamitra, Madhavarman, Aryamitra, Sanghamitra, Vijayamitra, and Devamitra, among others, resemble the Almora coin series. They have no known ties to the more senior Almora rulers. It is also questionable if they really belong to the claimed "Mitra rulers of the Indo-Gangetic region." The themes on the coins of the Ayodhya monarchs were not used to research the region's religious and sociocultural history after the fall of the Kushanas.

The Kushanas' rule over the Panchala area has long been questioned by academics, and even those who believe it to be plausible are unsure of how long it lasted. Achyuta's status as a dynastic or personal name is still unknown. It has proven difficult for scholars to reconstruct the history

of the Ahichchhatra region before the rise of the Guptas due to the possibility that the names "Achyuta" and "Nandi" of SamudraGupt's Allahabad prasasti refers to two different kings, while the conjunct "Achyutanandin" as the name of one king is also possible.

The difficulty is further increased by the discovery of coins from the same region with the legends "Achyuta" and "Sri-Nandi." Even if they were two different rulers, it seems implausible that they were in command of the same region at the same time. It is still unknown who of the two kept Ahichchhatra as his capital while the other reigned over Ramnagar. The coins inform us about the traditionally underappreciated socioeconomic and cultural traits of this region.

According to Ramachandran, King Silavarman could have been a member of the Yaudheya tribe. Due to the absence of a tribal name on his coinage, it is unclear whether he was a Yaudheya chief. Additionally, it has been conjectured that he belongs to the Panchla dynasty. It is unclear if the title "Ponashashtha" in the Jagatgram inscriptions refers to Silavarman's family patriarch, from whom the present king was sixth in genealogy, or whether he was the sixth Pona of the dynasty, sharing the same name as his five predecessors. The phrase "yugesvara," which may mean either "the king of the realm of Yuga" or "the ruler of a lustrum" and implies purification via sacrifice, is likewise problematic. It is still vital to look into the veracity of Samudra Gupta's accomplishment of the four horse sacrifices given the political atmosphere of the third century AD and his declaration of the Ashvamedha yajna in his Allahabad prasasti.

Uncertainty surrounds the relationship between the families of Bala and Hastin and the other Maukhari families, the first of which is known from a Gaya region seal from the Maurya period, the second from a Candravalli inscription, the third of which is known to have lived in the Gaya region as early as the 6th century CE, and the royal family of Kanauj.

Altekar argues that there were probably many Maukhari families residing in the Badva area during the third century AD, and that they were of the same stock, even if the records themselves do not suggest whether there was any connection between families of Bala and Hastin. He continues by claiming that "some of the descendants of Bala" were the Maukhari that Mayurasarman, the family's progenitor, claimed to have subdued in his Candravalli inscription. The Kadamba king also declared victory against the Maukhari feudatories of Central India, who were in charge of part of the akas' forces at the time Mayurasarman faced them in combat. He said that the Bala family was in a conflict with the Ujjain akas.

However, this viewpoint seems speculative. It is uncertain whether these Maukhari families were linked to either the more well-known Maukhari dynasty of Kanauj or the Yajnavarman line, who controlled Bihar. There is no evidence to support DC Sircar's assertion that the Maukharis who migrated from Rajasthan to UP and Bihar carried those nations' technological advancements from the Krita, Malava, or Vikrama eras. The Yupa inscription at Barnala near Jaipur cannot provide an answer due to its incompleteness. The whole name and dynastic designation of the monarch are missing. The socio-cultural history of this region, which has never been made public, as well as the significance of the Yupas and the writings about them still need to be thoroughly understood.

Ashvini Agrawal claims that Balavarman was the successor of Rajan Maha Kshatrpa Sridharavarman, contrary to Mirashi's belief that he belonged to the Magha dynasty. Furthermore, it is still unknown how this Scythian family ended up becoming so Indian. Scholars dispute on whether the period should be assigned to the aka era or be understood as his governing years since the era in which the epigraph is dated is not indicated in the year 40 inscription of Ashvaghosha. The importance of this king's political position has gone entirely unnoticed by scholars. The history of northern India in the first few centuries of the Common Era would be significantly impacted by his position as either an independent king or a Kushana subject.

The reasons for Mathura's collapse or the creation of the new region that replaced it as the epicentre of the gubernatorial system have never been discussed. Multiple indigenous achievements claimed to the Guptas were the result of numerous processes, including those that began within the historical period we have selected for our study in terms of art, linguistics, religion, socio-economics, culture, or politics. Understanding these processes is crucial in order to understand the history of north India during the early centuries of the Common era. The monarchical states' histories from around 129 CE to approximately 319 CE are not totally understood because to the uncertainties that have plagued Kushana history.

There is no convincing chronological narrative of the collapse of the Kushanas, and experts continue to disagree on the exact date of Kanishka's accession to the throne. The period between the end of the Kushana dynasty and the founding of the Gupta empire was known as the "Dark Age" in the early twentieth century due to a lack of documentation. Since then, further information has come to light, but oddly, even after a century of study, even the most fundamental assumptions are only hazily related to the data, which is also open to a wide variety of interpretations.

Under the leadership of Kanishka, the greatest Kushana emperor whose reign began the time period covered by this research project, the Kushana empire reached its pinnacle. Beginning with 127 A, Kanishka was in charge. D. and continued till 150 AD for 23 years. The Kushana kingdom, which was ruled by him, almost included all of modern-day North Western India, including the present-day states of Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Rajasthan, the Delhi area, and Western Uttar Pradesh.

By the second part of the first century CE, the Kushana empire had already grown into a powerful territorial force with the intention of earning economic advantages by protecting territory and trade routes. The Kushana realm's burgeoning economy is best represented by the first gold coins struck by Vima Kadphises. The Kushana kingdom had its greatest territorial expansion during the rule of Kanishka I, who was likely the Kushana ruler with the highest might and authority. After he left the political scene, none of this monarch's successors were able to continue the huge geographical breadth, and the empire steadily fell from Huvishka's authority to that of the last Kushana emperor.

Conclusion

Despite the lack of a strong empire comparable to the Mauryas', the five centuries that followed their rule were important historically. Contacts with China, Central and West Asia, South-East Asia, and, to a lesser extent, South Asia pushed India to engage in active interaction with the

outside world, which led to the absorption of elements that gave Indian culture new dimensions and improved it in a number of ways. During this period, a number of political entities started to emerge in different parts of the country; in some of them, notably the Deccan and the southern tip of the Indian peninsula, it's possible that states formed for the first time.

These regimes tended to consolidate via royal sacrifices, lavish gifts given to brahmanas who claimed fictitious ancestry, and bardic paeans that enhanced royal repute. The capital cities of these kings came to prominence and evolved as key hubs of trade and artistic development as a consequence of the patronage offered to the artists by the growing class of rich merchants. The finest illustration of this phenomenon is the city of Mathura. These material and economic cycles were maintained by the rulers by Vedic sacrifices, various charitable endeavours, the planning of countless religious festivals, and the conquest campaigns that are documented in the inscriptions.

The complex histories of these developing nations show that no one force could maintain dominance for very long or consistently. These may have been the first fatalities of the ensuing conflict over Gupta imperial control. R. C. Majumdar made the intriguing remark that the pre-Gupta Empires fell because the Maukharis and the Guptas of Magadha rose on their ruins while discussing the causes of their demise. Majumdar said that after the pre-Gupta empires crumbled, the Guptas were able to create a strong kingdom for themselves in Rajaputana. This was due to the favourable climate that northern India offered for military endeavours.

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