

CHAPTER: II

HISTORY OF WESTERN INDIA

Before the analysis of historical background and examination of historical evolution of Buddhism, it is pertinent to understand the term 'western India'. The ancient dynasties of western India are noted for their rich and pervasive art traditions. In order to understand the total art activity of the western Indian regions, a wider synthesizing perspective is essential taking into consideration both art and the cultural matrix which affected its development and promotion. Hence an attempt has been made in the present study to analyse political, economic and social structure, which gave rise to the splendid traditions of Buddhist rock-cut cave art, sculpture and paintings in the regions of western India from the period of the advent of Buddhism to the decline of Buddhism.

An appraisal of the political conditions of these dynasties give an account of central, provincial and their relations with other regions of India and foreign countries. An inquiry into the economic picture provides insight about the overall economic prosperity of the kingdoms. A chronological framework has been adopted with contextual details. For this research, it is necessary to study the evolution of Buddhist art and iconography in Gujarat and Maharashtra, and the validity of its geo-political concept in order to place the history of ancient *Aanarta*, *Aparanta* and *Dakshinapatha* in its wider perspective. Therefore a brief account of the historicity of the western regions of India have been dealt with tracing the origin of their name, royal lineage and their accomplishments.

The Indian subcontinent can be divided broadly into three basic regions (i) The Deccan peninsula (ii) the Indo-Gangetic plain and (iii) the Himalayan ranges. The eastern and western sides of the Deccan peninsula are covered by the sea. The eastern and western boundaries are marked by the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea, respectively, whereas the southern part is covered by the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea covers the western side.

The states of Gujarat and Maharashtra were formed on May 1, 1960 on bi-lingual principle by carving it out of the erstwhile Bombay state. Both the states constitute

western India's major part. Extending from the Gujarat peninsula down to Konkan, western India is lined with some of India's best specimens of Art. It is the western part of the peninsular plateau, which comprises the Indian mainland. The eastern end of the plateau is marked by hills. The western *ghats* separate the verdant coast from the Vindhya Mountains and the dry Deccan plateau. Apart from the Arabian Sea, northern border is defined exclusively as Pakistan.

Gujarat is the westernmost state of India. It shares an international border with Pakistan. Indian states bordering Gujarat include Rajasthan to the north east, Madhya Pradesh to the east, Maharashtra to the south. The union territories of Diu, Daman, Dadra and Nagar Haveli to the south also share a border with Gujarat. Gujarat extends between the latitudes 20° 6' N to 24° 42' N (north latitude) and 68° 10'E to 74° 28'E (east longitude).

Geographically Gujarat can be divided into three regions:

- 1) The Saurashtra Peninsula, which is a rocky region interspersed with low lying mountains. Major Buddhist rock-cut shelters have been excavated in this region.
- 2) Kutch, located in the north east of Gujarat, is a barren region with rough, rocky terrain. It is where the Rann (desert) lies. The Rann has two parts: the big Rann to the north, and little Rann to the east. Siyot caves have been found there.
- 3) Mainland, which is a fertile plain composed of alluvial soil. The Mainland lies between the Rann of Kutch and the Damanganga river.

Maharashtra is located in the northern centre of peninsular India, surrounded by the Arabian sea in the west, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh on the north, Madhya Pradesh in the east and Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh on the south. Geographically, Maharashtra has the following coordinates: 15.6° North and 22.1° North and longitudes 72.6° East and 80.9° East. Maharashtra occupies the western and central parts of the country and extends over the Sahyadri mountains; a vast stretch of 720 kilometres of the Arabian Sea coast providing it a beautiful backdrop. Much of the Maharashtra state consists of the high Deccan plateau, which is separated from the

straight Konkan coastline by 'Ghats'. The Ghats are a succession of steep hills, periodically bisected by narrow roads, and which are often crowned by several Buddhist caves and medieval forts.

Geographical references of Western India in ancient literary traditions

The historicity of Gujarat and Maharashtra reveals that the region as a geographic, ethnic and political entity played a significant role in shaping history. A survey of its history during this era (5th c. BC to 11th c. CE) is a seemingly unending economic progression, cultural contributions and artistic achievements.

According to the traditional ancient literature, Gujarat comprises three regions, Anartta (Northern Gujarat), Surashtra and Lata (Southern Gujarat). The first reference of Gujarat is the mention of Sharyati Manava¹, the son of Manu, as a region of Gujarat got its name by his son Anarta. Anarta's son Revata founded his capital Kushasthali later which is known as Dwarika. Bhrigu is also associated with Bhrigukachchha present day Bharuch. "Anarat" in Prakrit means "AnaryaVarta", suggesting that non-Aryan tribes must have lived there in antiquity. The southern Gujarat was called "Lata or Lat" region. Panini mentioned in his Ashtadhyayi² the region Kachchha "as the water logged portions in the south and the dry desert area in the north."

In the medieval period, south-western part of India was referred to as "Deccan" "Dekkan" or "Dakhan" apparently derived from the word Dakshina, meaning "right hand" or south.³ Peninsular India is first mentioned as 'Dakshinapatha'⁴ in the *Aitreya Brahmana*⁵ dated to the pre-Buddhist era. Dakshinapatha is also mentioned in several Buddhist texts. The sacred literary works like puranas (*Maitreya*, *Vayu*) and other Sanskrit works refer to it as "*Dakshinapada*" or "*Dakshinavadha*" meaning

"The Southern Region." The name Deccan was in usage in ancient times is proved by the fact that the authors of the *Periplus* refers to a portion of peninsular India as '*Dachinabades*'.⁶ This was on account of the fact that "*Dachonos*" was the language of the then natives.⁷ In the beginning of the 5th century CE Fahien, the Chinese traveller, remarked that towards south, there is a country called '*Ta-Thsin*' which corresponds to the Sanskrit word '*Dakshina*'.⁸ An analysis of the historical significance of the Deccan and evolution of the Deccan as a region also reveals that, the Deccan wielded together

the Aryan civilization of the north and the historic Dravidian civilization of the south. This land of Deccan with its abundant natural wealth offered vast potential to be tapped in the form of land resources and maritime trade.

Cultural contacts between northern and southern India are signified in such instances. Dakshinapatha is identified as the region south of the Narmada River. The *Vinaya Pitaka* uses the term Dakshinapatha in a narrow sense and refers to it as a region confined to the remote settlements of the upper Godavari.⁹ The *Suttanipata*, which is considered as one of the oldest texts of the *Khuddaka Nikaya* refers to the Dakshinapatha in the story of Bavari who sent his disciples to Sravasti to meet the Buddha.¹⁰ It also refers to two countries of the Dakshinapatha i.e. Asmaka and Mulaka. Asmaka is also mentioned as one of the sixteen *Mahajanapadas* in the *Anguttar Nikaya*.¹¹ It is also mentioned in the *Chullakalinga Jataka*,¹² the *Digha Nikaya*¹³ as well as in the Brahmanical texts like the *Brihatsamhita* and *Markandeya Purana*.¹⁴ Other regions are also mentioned in the Buddhist texts, which are placed in *Dakshinapatha*. The *Milind Panho*¹⁵ refers to the region Sunaparanta whereas the *Apannaka Jataka*¹⁶ mentions Aparanta.

Chronologically, Asmaka is mentioned in both the texts of the *Suttanipata* and the *Anguttar Nikaya* in the context of events relating to the time of Buddha. In the fourth century BC the account of the second council as given in the *Cullavagga* mentions *Avanti* as a part of the Dakshinapatha.¹⁷ The pre-Mauryan Buddhist texts mention only Asmaka, Avanti, Mulaka as the countries of the Dakshinapatha. The post-Mauryan (i.e. early centuries of the Christian era) literature mentions several other *deshas* of the Dakshinapatha.

References of Western India in Epigraphical records:

Inscriptions, referring to Gujarat have been discussed in following chapter. Inscriptional evidences of the early centuries of the Christian era in western India identify the specific units of Dakshinapatha. Generally the largest division was known as the *Janapadas* which was divided into *desas* and then comes the division known as *Aharas*.¹⁸ Thus, the following discussion is focused on several units of the Dakshinapatha i.e. western India and its history.

The Nasik inscription of the time of Pulumavi refers to Assika, Assaka, Mulaka, Kukur, Aparanta, Anupa, Vidarbha, Benakataka¹⁹ as *deshasof* Dakshinapatha. Another inscription from Sannati mentions Uparigiri, Jayasi, Chakara, Dakhava and Damandesha.²⁰ Aparanta is also mentioned in the inscriptions of Junnar²¹ and Junagadh,²² which are later in date to the Nasik inscription. Assika is also written as Asaka; which is identified with the region in Nagpur district especially the region around Adam. On the basis of a textual references this region is placed in the Khandesh i.e. Jalgaon-Dhule districts of Maharashtra.²³

The Hathigumpha inscription²⁴ and an inscribed seal found at Adam refers that the army of Kharavela marched till the *Assikanagara* near (the rivers) Kanha (present day Kanhan a tributary of the Wainaganga)²⁵ and Bena (Wainaganga).²⁶ A seal unearthed from the excavation at Adam mentions *asakasa janapadasa*²⁷. Thus it is evident from these inscriptional records that the region mentioned as Assaka and the Assikanagara is the region around Adam.²⁸ Mulaka then would be the area north of Godavari and is likely to have been till the Satpura ranges. Pratishthana i.e. Paithan on the northern bank of Godavari, is an important centre in the Mulaka region. The *Suttanipata* also mentions-*alakasya Pattithana*ie, Paithan of *Alaka*.²⁹ Kukura is the region north of Narmada³⁰ Aparanta is the Konkan region³¹ and more specifically northern part whereas southern part is mentioned as Sunaparanta in the Buddhist texts. Anupa is identified with the region around Mahishmati, which is located on the bank of the Narmada River in Narmad district of Madhya Pradesh.³² The region falls between the ranges of Aravali and Satapura. Benakataka is the region around Pauni.³³ Bena is the river Wainaganga and Pauni is situated on the bank of Wainaganga only. Vidarbha is then likely to be the region excluding the Wainaganga River or Assika and Benakataka. It consists mainly of the upper Wardha valley and Wainaganga valley in the present day Vidarbha region of Maharashtra. Akaravanti is the ancient name of Malava region.³⁴ Uparigiri, Jayasi, Chakora, Dakhava are yet to be identified.³⁵

Damandesa is likely to be the region Daman in the northern part of the Konkan.

The Nasik inscription also mentions Govardhanaahara³⁶ whereas Karle inscription mentions the Mamalaahara.³⁷ The former is an area around Nasik and the latter is area of Maval Taluka in Pune district of Maharashtra. Even during the time of Maratha rule, the region was being called Maval. Geographically it comprises the area of the

upper Bhima valley. Karhataka is referred to as the place name of modern Karad in several inscriptions of Barhut³⁸ and Kuda,³⁹ but it is also mentioned as Karhatakavisaya in 959 CE Karhad copper plate inscription.⁴¹ Therefore, it is likely that Karad being an important centre in the early historical period must have been an area, which comprises the upper Krishna valley. Thus in the ancient times, it is referred to a historical region.

In the subsequent period, the identity of several regions such as Avanti, Apanmta, Ashmaka remained the same. However Nasik region is called 'Trikuta' in later times.⁴² Thus it may be observed that historical regions in western India nearly get overlapped on the river valleys. The distribution of Buddhist cave sites according to historical regions are:

- 1) **Aparanta-** Virar, Kanheri, Kondivite, Ambivali, Kondane, Uran, Chaul, Pali-Sudhagad, Nenavali-Khadsamla, Gomashi, Thanala-Nadsur, Mahad, Kol, Khed, Chiplun, Panhale-Kaji and Lonad.
- 2) **Mulaka-** Ajanta, Aurangabad, Pitalkhora, Ghatotkacha (Gulivada), and Ellora.
- 3) **Govardhana-** Nasik
- 4) **Maval-** Junnar, Karla, Bhaja, Bedsa, Shelarvadi.
- 5) **Karhataka-** Karad, Yerphal, Tamakane, Wai and Pohale, Shirval.

It is evident that Konkan area has the largest number of cave sites whereas other historical regions have fewer cave sites. The rock cut cave activity began simultaneously in all the historical regions but got limited to the Aparanta and the Mulaka region from third century CE onwards. Reasons for this change in later times lie in the prevalent political and economic conditions in the respective regions, which will be discussed in the subsequent analysis.

The history of western India

“Pleistocene” the term given by geologists to the period before the advent of writing is called prehistory to differentiate it from authentic documented history. The pre-

history of western India begins with the first appearance of the early man on the banks of Sabarmati, Mahi, Orsang, Narmada, Bhadar, Vadi, Tapti, Purna etc. during the Pleistocene age, which is also called Old Stone Age. The above mentioned rivers have preserved for us in their deposits, the relics of the man who lived on their banks.

Early human settlement in western India traces back hundreds of thousands of years - to the Stone age - in the valleys of the Sabarmati and Mahi rivers in the eastern part of the present state of Gujarat and in the confluence of the Purna river with the Tapti River near Edlabad, Kukudi in Pune and Jorwe in the Ahmadnagar district of Maharashtra. The emergence of a historical record is linked with the spread of the Indian valley (Harappan) civilization, which flourished in the 3rd and 2nd millennium BC. Centres of this civilization have been found at Lothal, Rangpur, Amri, Lakhabaval, and Rozdi (mostly in the Kathiawad Peninsula) and Daimabad on the left bank of the Pravara river in Ahmadnagar district of Maharashtra.

Spread of Indus-civilization to western India is another phase of Indian culture. In Gujarat the most remarkable discovery is that of Saragwawla – Lothal (Taluka-Dholka) in the Ahmedabad district, the extent of the Harappan Civilization. Typical Indus valley seals of steatite, mud brick platform have been found from there. The period from 2500 BC to 500 BC, it was Harappan culture and Yadavas rule which has dominated the historical account of western India. The Harappan first seems to have entered as traders in the Kacchha region from the Arabian Sea in third millennium BC and settled in Lothal in 2450 BC and later at Prabhas. Excavation at various places of Gujarat proves that Harappan culture was one of the most civilized, developed cultures of its time.

According to the references of Vedas, Puranas, Buddhist and Jain literature, Lord Krishna had established dynastic rule of Yadavs at Dawarka around 1000 B.C. Yadav rule was instrumental in spreading the Aryan culture in Gujarat. Harappan culture had a system of alphabets or script, which has not been deciphered yet. Sanskrit literature throws light on this phase of history and is treated with the term Proto-history. Gujarat has had a complex history with several regional dynasties, alongside the imperial dynasties. The pre-mauryan history of Gujarat is mostly drawn from the epics and the Puranas with little substantial archaeological evidences.

During third and fourth centuries BC, the region up to Konkan remained under the control of the Mauryans, whose policies led to great advancements in the fields of trade and Buddhist learning in the region. After the disintegration of the Mauryan Empire, the Satvahanas (230 BC -225CE) came to rule this region. Pratishthan or modern Paithan was their capital. This great empire crumbled because of internal feuds in the ranks of vassals. In succession came the great rulers of the Vakataka, Chalukya, and Rashtrakuta empires making Maharashtra a great centre of culture and art. The Chinese traveller Huin-Tsang, who visited this region in 640-641 BC, was quite appreciative of the prosperity of the region in his accounts. Yadavas were the last of these kingdoms that lost their power in the early 12th century and a long period of Muslim rule started in Maharashtra. Hardly any authentic information is available about the events that took place then during vast passage of almost 3000 years.

The earliest reference in the literary sources, the history of Gujarat in western India ranges from the rule of the Yadav clan settled in Dwaraka in c. 1500 BC.-1000 BC⁴⁸Yadavas had to shift their capital from Mathura (central Aryavart) to Dwaraka (on the western coast of Aryavart) on the Sindhu. Yadu was a legendary Hindu king, believed to be an ancestor of the Lord Shri Krishna, who for this reason is also referred to as Yadava.The Mahabharata and the Jatakkatha, tells us that the Vrishnis left Mathura to settle themselves in Dwarka after

According to Vedic literatures, the Yaduvanshis or Yadavs are the descendants of Yadu, the eldest son of King Yayati. From his line was born Madhu, who ruled from Madhuvana, situated on the banks of river Yamuna, which extended up to Saurashtra and Anarta (Gujrat). His daughter Madhumati married Harinasva of Ikshvaku race, from whom Yadu was born again, this time being ancestor of Yadavas. Nanda, the foster father of Krishna, was born in the line of succession of Madhu and ruled from the same side of Yamuna. Jarasandh, Kansa's father-in-law, and king of Magadha attacked Yadavas to avenge Kansa's death.

fighting with Jarasandh, the king of Magadha. Yadavas were the great contributors of spreading Aryan culture over western India regions of India such as Gujarat (Dwarika).In Mahabharata, “AranyakaParva” gives information of Yudhisthira’s pilgrimage through Gujarat.⁴⁹

After Mahabharata age, the verified political history of western India begins with the rule of Mauryan dynasty (c. 315 BC.). Chandra Gupta Maurya flew the flag of his sovereignty from Pataliputra of Magadh. Gujarat and Maharashtra were also the part of his kingdom. The autonomous region under Bindusara and Asoka remained a part of sovereign state of Maurya rule. Emperor Asoka was himself taken to several stone inscriptions depicting events, sermons and religious dictums for the good of the people. One of them is at the foot of Girnar.

The oldest record, an epigraph in Junagadh district, is the rock inscription of Mahakshatrapa Rudradaman containing the valuable information about Surashtra that was administered by Vaisya Pusyagupta the governor of the king Chandragupta Maurya. Further information of Mauryan rule in Gujarat is inscribed in Girnar rock edict. According to the inscription, The *Dipavamsa*⁵⁰, a Pali chronicle of the fourth or fifth century CE tells us that Tissa sent the missionary Yavan Dhammarakkhita to Aparanta. He converted the people of that country by preaching the *Aggikhandhopama-sutta*. This is also indicated a large number of Buddhist caves which were soon excavated for the residence and worship of the Buddhist monks at a number of places along the western coast. The monks often travelled by sea. These caves served as *Dharmashalas* for their residence. Samprati (BC200) was the last Mauryan ruler to rule over Gujarat.

May be there was Greek incursion into Gujarat led by Demetrius, after the breakup of Mauryan Empire. But in more than 50 years, they were driven out by Saka satraps under Satrap Maues who had aligned himself along with weakened Greeks at Bactria with marauding Yuezhi tribes that were led by Royal Kushan stationed at Kapisa. Yuezhi- Kushan and their allies established three ruling regions with their capital cities- Kapisa (Kabul area) that controlled Bactria, Siestan, eastern Persia and Afghanistan and the other one at Mathura and Patliputra that ruled over western and eastern India. Yehzhi - Kushan up on the conquest of India delegated the western India to Sakas-Satraps. Due to their closer proximity with Hindu-Buddhist region of Achemenians Empire, they were well versed with Indian culture and Sanskrit-Prakrit languages. The sakas-satraps who already had footholds in Taxila under Achemenians had the advantage so they dislodged Greeks and moved southwards through Sindh, Kuchha and Saurashtra.

Jaina annals record the arrival of Greeks and *sakas* near Ghumli-Barda region west of the present city of Jamnagar in Saurashtra. On land they first crossed the Bolan Pass, crossed the Sindh and then probably took the sea route through Kuchha crossing the gulf and arrived in Saurashtra around 2nd century BC Saurashtra. The *saka* - *satraps* must have sailed down south from Gulf of Kuchha to Saurashtra. The oldest inscription found at Girnar (Girinagar) belongs to Saka king Rudradaman who also rebuilt *Sudarshan* Lake that was in need of repair.

Junagadh Rock Inscription of Rudradaman (150 CE) is very important for the political and social information, in the epigraphs he was introduced as the ruler of Anupa, Surashtra, Nivrt, East and West Akara, Avanti, Svabhra, Aparanta, Maru, Kutch, Sindh, Sauvira, Nisada, Kukura etc. The Andhau inscription in Kutch dated 89 CE is the earliest evidence for the rule of Western Kshatrapas in Gujarat. One of the most important Buddhist monuments of Gujarat, Devnimori, was constructed at the time of this dynasty. Anarta - Surashtra were the main lands of Gujarat and a joint administrative unit during this period. The silver – copper coins of Kshatrapas show that they were the worshippers of sun and fire. The inscription written on the coins - *RajnoMahakshatrapasa ----- Sri SarvaBhattarakasa* throws light on SarvaBhattaraka the successor of Western Kshatrapas. He acquired the territories of Gujarat in 400 CE. from Western Kshatrapas and lost them to Kumargupta 1 in about 415 CE. Probably he was the predecessor of the Maitrakas of Valabhi. We will discuss later in this chapter about Gupta dynasty and Maitraka dynasty of Valabhi.

For nearly 400 years from the start of the first century, Saka rulers played a prominent part in Gujarat's history weather beaten rock at Junagadh gives a glimpse of the ruler Rudradaman (100 CE) of Saks Satrapas known as Kshatrapas. The Kshatrapa dynasty was replaced by Gupta reign with the conquest of Gujarat by Chandragupta Vikramaditya. Anarta and Saurashtra regions were both part of the Gupta empire. Vikramaditya's successor Skandargupta has left an inscription (450 CE) on rock at Junagadh.

Epigraphic records and the hoard of gold and silver coins are informative for the Gupta's political status in the Western India especially in Gujarat and Madhyadesh. Kumargupta acquired the territories of Gujarat from Bhattaraka

.Skandagupta , the son of Kumargupta also had control over Gujarat as he carved an inscription on rock in Junagadh that is dated 456 - 58 CE. Girinagara was the headquarter of the province. Through the inscription on the coinage of Gupta's, they are assumed as the follower of Bhagvata sect. After Skandagupta (450 -68 CE) Guptas lost their control over territories of Gujarat.

Other contemporary dynasty during the Gupta period has been traced ruling in the South Gujarat to Konkan region. The source of this information is Pardi copperplates and silver coins found in south Gujarat and Maharashtra. The dynasty is called Traikutakas. The Traikutakas might have risen to power after the fall of the Satavahanas. Kalidasha's famous work *Raghuvansha* referred to the Trikuta that they were conquered by Raghu. In this Traikutakas were supposed to belong to western region of India, specially in Aparanta. There are several assumptions regarding the place of Trikuta. But if we study the epigraphical evidences and secular literature, Trikuta must be in Aparanta and a part of the Sahyadri specially in Nasik region.

According to the three copper plates viz., Surat plates of Vyaghrasena and Matvan plates of Madhyamasena and Vikramasena the dynasty ruled in the region of south Gujarat probably present day Surat with the capital Aniruddhapura in (415 - 492 CE). The Kanheri copper - plate dated (494 - 495 CE) records of a Buddhist chaitya attributed to the king of Traikutaka dynasty. Probably Vakataka king Harisena (475-500 CE) won the Traikutakas region. Traikutakas were the followers of Bhagvata Dharma as inscribed in their coins.

Towards middle of the 5th century CE the Gupta Empire started to decline. Kanaksen's 15th generation, Vijaysena was the Bhattaraka (commander) of the Emperor Skanda Gupta. As the title of Bhattaraka suggest, he was the regional commander of Gupta overseeing Gujarat, Saurashtra, Malwa and Kuchha. Colonel Tod believed that Kanaksen was given the responsibility for Northern Gujarat (Anarat) province and Malwa (Avanti) region. Senapathi Bhattarka took advantage of situation and in 470 CE. he set up what came to be as the Maitrak Kingdom. Maitrakas 'of Vallabhi become very powerful and their writ prevailed over large parts of Gujarat and it was during the rule of Dhruvsena Maitraka that Chinese philosopher traveller Huien - Tsang visited Vallabhi in 640 CE.

In fact during his period, there were three powerful dynasties which were ruling different parts of Gujarat, the Guptas had their sway over the north, the Chalukyas ruled the south and the Maitrakas were saddled in Saurashtra. The vacuum created by the fall of the Maitraka dynasty was filled by Pratihars from north. Pratihars dynasty had established Guptar rule at Mandol and wrested Broach from Maitrakas.

“All Maitraka rulers use the epithet of Siladitya, they were fire and sun worshipper. SarvaBhattaraka the founder of the Maitraka dynasty of the Kingdom of Valabhi established his sway in Gujarat after the death of Skandagupta. Copperplate inscriptions and Chinese travelers Huein-Tsang and I-Tsing's accounts are the main sources of their history. Huein-Tsang mentions that the Maitraka king Siladitya I built a Buddhist temple which was extremely artistic in structure and ornamental. The reign of Maitraka dynasty is dated c. 470 -788 CE. Two grant edicts were given to the Buddhist Viharas at Valabhi (now known as Valeh near Bhavnagar) in c. 640 CE. by Dhruvasena II the most famous Maitraka king of Valabhi. In this period Huein -Tsang noted gradual decline of Buddhism in Gujarat.

Many other contemporary kingdoms of Maitrakas were also ruling in Saurashtra. As the Palitana plates were also discovered along with those of the Maitrakas, these plates belong to the Garulaka kings. Ghumli copper - plates the plates of Jaika II dated 915 CE. inform us about Saindhav dynasty. Thus Gujarat was divided in several kingdoms.

As vassals of the Valabhis, Chavadas held their sway over parts of Gujarat, they assumed independent control after the fall of Vallabhi and founded the Chavada dynasty, which lasted a shade under a century. Mulraj, who was the adopted son of the last Chavda ruler, Samant Singh overthrew him in 942 CE and set up what came to be known as the Solanki Dynasty. He started expanding his frontiers and established his complete and total hold over Saurashtra and Kutch. Mulraj Solanki reign marked the start of the most glorious period in history of Gujarat during which Gujarati culture flowered as manifested in art, architecture, language and script. It is described as the golden period in Gujarat's chequered history. From the rule of Solanki Dynasty the name 'Gujarat' finally came into existence.

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In Maharashtra on the ruins of the Mauryan empire, the kingdom of the Satavahanas established in the first century BC, with its centre at Pratishthana (modern Paithan in Maharashtra). According to Puranas⁵¹ the Andhras(Andhra-bhrityah) or the Satavahanas according to the epigraphic records of Satavahanaiscriptions, was an important dynasty of western India established their rule in the west during the political confusion on the breaking up of the Mauryan empire.

The founder of the Satavahana dynasty was Simuka. He and his successors established their authority from the mouth of the Krishna to the entire Deccan plateau. According to the Puranas, the Satavahana king killed the last Kanva ruler of Magadha and presumably took possession of his kingdom.⁵² Satakarni I gained control of the region of Sanchi, and an inscription there refers to him as Rajan Shri Satakarni. He moved towards south direction and on conquering the Godavari valley he entitled himself as Lord of the Southern Regions' (*Dakshina – pathapati*). The description of Satakarni I as ('Dakshina -pathapati) in the Nanaghat inscription of Nayanika proves that the Satavahana dominion was not confined to western Deccan alone, but included other areas of the Deccan and therefore Satakarni I performed two *Asvamedha* sacrifices and one *Rajasuya* sacrifice.

After the reign of Satakarni I, the Satavahanas were driven out of the western Deccan by the Shakas of the Kshaharata clan. Coins and inscriptions of the Shaka Chief Nahapana have been found around Nasik, indicating the Shaka dominance in the area towards the close of the first century CE. or the beginning of the second century. But soon the Satavahanas regained their western possessions, for the coins of Nahapana are often found over-struck by the name GautamiputraSatakarni, the king who was responsible for re-establishing Satavahana power in this region by driving out the Shakas. GautamiputraSatakarni(106 -130 CE.) destroyed the power of the Shakas

and the pride of the Khastriyas, promoted the interests of the twice-born and stopped the mixing of the four *varnas*. His achievements are recorded in glowing terms in the Nasik *prasastib*y his mother GautamiBalasri. There were about 19 Satavahana rulers⁵³ of whom the most important were Simuka, who conquered Magadha and Krishna, who occupied Nasik. Little is known about their successors for about a century except Hala the 17th ruler of this dynasty. Shri GautamiputraSatakarni conquered Malwa, Kathiawar, Gujarat and part of the Rajputana. Shri Pulumavi had perpetual conflict with Rudradaman. The last king was Yagya Sri Satakarni who was a strong ruler. He waged wars to recover the territories conquered previously by the Saka rulers.

Several towns sprang up in Maharashtra during this period. Paithan, Nasik and Junar were big markets and centres of trade. In the south-east Vijaypur and Narsela were well-known trade centres. There were guilds of traders as well and they carried trade in groups. To encourage trade, the Satavahana kings struck numerous coins of gold, silver, copper and bronze.

During the Satavahana period, both Hinduism and Buddhism spread rapidly. The Satavahana rulers were the followers of Brahmanism. They performed AswamedhaYajnas and gave donations to Brahmanas. Indra, Surya (The Sun God), Chandra, (the Moon God), Vasudeva, Krishna, Pasupati and Gauri etc. were various Gods and Goddesses worshipped by the people. Beautiful temples were built.

The Satavahana kings were Brahmanas but they showed tolerance towards other faiths such as to Buddhism as well. They gave similar donations to Buddhism as they did for the Hinduism. Consequently, Buddhism too spread in this period. At many places, the Buddhist caves, *chaityas* and stupas were built. Almost all the caves in Maharashtra belonged to the Buddhists. Sometimes, grants of land were made for the maintenance of these *chaityas*, *viharas* and *stupas* as well as for the monks or *bhikshus*. In this period, there were several sects of Buddhism in the south and various classes of monks were always busy to preach the Buddhist doctrines.

One significant development of this period was the admission of the foreign races of the Sakas, Greeks, Kushans and Abhiras to the folds of Hinduism or Buddhism. They became an integral part of the Indian society. They were quite tolerant and exchanged gifts on religious festivals and other occasions.

Marked progress was made in the field of architecture and sculpture as well. The Satavahana rulers took interest in building caves, *viharas* or monasteries, *chaityas* or large halls with a number of columns and *stupas*. Most of the rock caves in the Deccan were cut during this period. These caves were big and beautiful. The caves, monasteries, *chaityas* and stupas of Nasik, Karle are fine specimen of contemporary architecture and decoration. Several images were carved during Satavahana period. Most of the images depict scenes from the life of the Buddha. The scene depicting Buddha's feet being worshipped is particularly a unique sculpture at the Amravati Stupa while at Nagarjunakonda the sculpture, depicting the Buddha giving a sermon, cast a spell of serenity and calm.

The builder of the splendours of rock-cut cave art of Ajanta, Vakatakas, an Indian dynasty, ruled parts of today's Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh from the third century to fifth century CE.⁵⁴ Vakataka dynasty is the most important follow-up dynasty of the Satavahanas, contemporary with the Guptas. Vindhyasakti founded the dynasty and his name is mentioned in the Puranas.⁵⁵ Vindhyashakti was succeeded by his son Pravarasena I, who was the real founder of the Vakataka empire. He extended his influence further to the north as far as the Narmada. He performed all the seven soma sacrifices, including vajapeya, and also celebrated four ashvamedhas. He assumed the unique imperial title samrat.

Towards the end of his reign the Vakataka territory was invaded by the NalakiBhavadatta Varman. Evidence shows that considerable portion of the Vakataka territory was annexed by the Nalas, including Nandhivardha for some years.

Prithivisena II, who succeeded Narendrase in 465 CE, was forced to move to the east and set up his capital at Padmapura. After consolidating his position he devastated the enemy's capital PushkariPrithivisena II soon retrieved his position in the north too and even some territories of Bundelakhanda region. Prithivisena II, aparambhagavata, is the last known member of this senior branch of the Vakataka dynasty. Perhaps Harisena of the Vatsagulma branch, who made extensive conquests in all directions, incorporated Northern Vidarbha in his kingdom after the death of Prithivisena II.

The Chalukyas were dominant power in the Deccan during 6th to 8th century CE. And again during 10th century CE, they regained their power and ruled till 12th century.

The Chalukyas who ruled from Badami were the Western Chalukyas. The one who ruled from Kalyani are referred as Later Western Chalukyas and the Chalukyas of Vengi are the Eastern Chalukyas. They claimed descent from Pulakesin I (reigned 543-566), who established himself at Badami⁵⁶ (in Bijapur) asserted their independence at the decline of the Satavahana empire and rapidly rose to prominence during the reign of Pulakesin II (reigned 609-642).

Beginning under Jayasimha and his son Ranaraga⁵⁷ Chalukyas ruled from about 535 to 566 CE. But the real dynasty is known to be founded by the Maharaja Pulakesin-I. Pulakesin - I was succeeded by his son Kritivirman - I. He constructed several temples and buildings in the town of Vatapi. The political influence of Chalukyas spread over a wider region embracing southern part of Maharashtra, Mysore and Tamilnadu. Mangalesa, the brother of Kritivirman-I ascended the throne in 598 CE. The Kalachuris were conquered by Mangalesa and the whole of central and northern Maratha country was brought into the territory.

Pulakesi II ascended the throne in 610 CE and ruled till 642 CE. The internal rebellion and the frequent invasion by Appayika and Govinda were eventually subdued. The Gangas of south Mysore, Mauryas of Konkan were defeated too. These conquests brought him into contact with Harsha and in 637 CE. Harsha was defeated when Harsha had invaded Kathiawad. He defeated Pallava king Mahendra Varman -I, and crossed the Kavery river and made friends with the Cholas, Keralas and Pandyas. Because Pallavas were not totally crushed, they took revenge and attacked Pulakesi-II. Pulakesi-II appears to have been killed in the battle, and the Chalukya empire began to decline.

Vikramaditya-I managed to ascend the throne in 655 CE. He recovered Badami and brought the whole kingdom under his control. The next successor Vinayaditya ruled from 681 to 696 CE and carried on campaigns. By defeating the Lord of the entire Uttarapatha, he acquired the banner Palidhvaja. His successor was Vijayaditya. (696 CE - 733 CE). His son Vikramaditya-II He ruled from 734 CE - 745 CE. He destroyed the power of the Chola, Kerala, Pandya.

The son of Vikramaditya-II, Kritivarman - II succeeded to reign for the next eleven years. He was the last and glorious ruler of Chalukyas. For the next fifty years, the

Chalukya power was totally eclipsed by the Rashtrakutas. Dantidurga defeated Kritivarman-II to gain the control of Chalukyas once for all. The Rashtrakutas remained the supreme power for the next two centuries until the same was destroyed by the later Western Chalukyas of Kalyani.

The founder of the later Western Chalukyas was Taila or Tailapa-II. He consolidated his realm with the help of earlier Chalukya family and with the help of Kadambas and recovered much of the lost territories of earlier Chalukyas. They ruled Goa and Karnataka region.

The founder of the Rashtrakuta dynasty was Dantivarman or Dantidurga. The Rashtrakuta King Dantivarman was contemporary of Chalukya King Pulakesin II. Dantidurga occupied all territories between the Reva (Narmada) and Mahi in c. 754 CE. Dantidurga is said to have conquered Kalinga, Kosala, Kanchi, Srisail, Malava, Lata etc. He annexed Maharashtra to his kingdom by defeating Chalukya King Kirtivarma. Dantidurga was succeeded by his uncle Krishna I. He conquered the territories that were still under the Chalukyas and thereby completed conquest of the Chalukya territories. He also occupied Konkan.

The Rashtrakuta empire of Manyakheta controlled most of Deccan and Central India for over two centuries. In 973, seeing confusion in the Rashtrakuta empire after a successful invasion of their capital by the ruler of the Parmara dynasty of Malwa, Tailapa II, a feudatory of the Rashtrakuta Dynasty ruling from Bijapur region defeated his overlords and made Manyakheta his capital. The dynasty quickly rose to power and grew into an empire under Somesvara I who moved the capital to Kalyani.

Kautilya's *Arthshastra* gives information about the trade in western India during pre-Mauryan period and Mauryan period c. 300 BC. He writes that the guilds of warriors (kshatriyashreni) of Kamboja and Saurashtra depend upon agriculture, trade and wielding weapons for their livelihood.⁵⁸ Kautilya further informs us that cotton of Aparanta and some other parts of India is of the best quality.⁵⁹ He tells about elephants of Aparanta are of middle quality.⁶⁰ Agriculture and trade were prosperous. Encouragement was given to trade and industry. The traders and those engaged in other professions had their own guilds or '*shreni*'. Coin dealers, potters, oil pressers

and metal workers had their own guilds. These guilds looked after the collective interests of their trade and worked for their common uplift. These guilds were recognized by the Government and worked as bankers also. The external or foreign trade was carried through the famous ports of Supara, Broach and Kalyan. India had trade relations with countries like Arabia, Egypt and Rome. In the far eastern countries, Indian traders established their own settlements and preach Indian culture. India exported cotton, textiles, spices etc. India imported wine, glass and items of luxury. The inland trade was also prosperous. Travel between the north and south of India were much easy as the roads and transport were better.

Thus, several dynasties ruled western India from 300 BC.to the advent of Muslim rulers in the region. These dynasties contributed in the development of different art activities in the region. The prolific and elaborate architectural monuments and archaeological findings available from Junagadh, Vadnagar, Devni Mori, Bhavnagar, Kanheri, Karle, Junnar, and Nasik etc. are the evidences of their patronages and grants. They helped western India to become the treasure of wonderful rock-cut cave art and sculpture.

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