

UPPER HARAPPAN PERIOD (3138 BC – 1634 BC)

3.1 KINGS OF THE DYNASTY OF YUDHISTHIRA

The Indus valley civilization flourished during the millennium of uninterrupted peace following the holocaust of Mahabharata war. The most important ruling dynasty of the area during the time was the dynasty of King Yudhisthira. Subsequent to the war the capital was shifted from Hastinapur to Koshambi. Immediately after the war the kings of this dynasty were the suzerain rulers of the whole of India. But in course of time their influence progressively declined till the time of the end of the dynasty, when their influence was limited only to the small area around their capital Koshambi. The kings of the dynasty after the Mahabharata war were as follows:

1. Yudhisthira
2. Parikshita
3. Janmejaya
4. Shatanika
5. Aswamedha Datta
6. Adhisimha Krishna
7. Nickaknu
8. Ushna
9. Chitraradha
10. Suchiradha
01. Vrishnimanta
02. Sushena
03. Suneedha
04. Nrupegakshu
05. Sukhibala
06. Pariplava
07. Sunaya
08. Medhavi
09. Ripunjaya
10. Urva
11. Thigma
12. Brihadradha
13. Kasudana
14. Shataneeka II
15. Udayana
16. Kihinara
17. Dandapani
18. Niramitra
19. Kshemaka

King Kshemaka lost his life in war with Mahapadmananda in the year 1634 BC. With him the dynasty of King Yudhisthira came to an end.

3.2 KINGS OF NEPAL AFTER MAHABHARATA WAR

After Jitedasti, who died in the battle of Kurukshetra fighting on the side of the Pandavas, his son Gali was crowned as the king of Nepal. Including him the following 22 kings of Kirata dynasty ruled Nepal for 818 years till 2320 years BC.

| | Name of the King | Year of coronation |
|-----|-------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. | Gali (son of Jitedasti) | 3138 BC |
| 2. | Pushka | 3101 BC |
| 3. | Suyarma | 3064 BC |
| 4. | Parba | 3027 BC |
| 5. | Thunka | 2990 BC |
| 6. | Svananda | 2953 BC |
| 7. | Stunco | 2915 BC |
| 8. | Gidhri (or Gighri) | 2882 BC |
| 9. | Nane | 2844 BC |
| 10. | Luk | 2809 BC |
| 11. | Thor | 2769 BC |
| 12. | Thoko | 2734 BC |
| 13. | Varma | 2690 BC |
| 14. | Guja | 2653 BC |
| 15. | Pushka (or Puskara) | 2616 BC |
| 16. | Kesu | 2579 BC |
| 17. | Snusa | 2542 BC |
| 18. | Sammu | 2505 BC |
| 19. | Gunana | 2468 BC |
| 20. | Kimbu | 2431 BC |
| 21. | Patunka | 2394 BC |
| 22. | Gasti | 2357 BC |

During the reign of king Patunka, Nepal was attacked by Somavansi Rajputs. The king withdrew to Shankamula Tirtha and built a new fort there. Because of the continued attack of the Rajputs, King Gasti built a new fort at Bhutochha near Godavari, close to Lalitapatna. In the year 2320 BC the rule of the Somavansi dynasty was established in Nepal.

Somavansi dynasty ruled in Nepal for 607 years, i.e. till 1713 years BC. Only the names of five important kings of the dynasty are available. They are as follows:

| Name of the King | Year of coronation |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Nimisha | 2320 BC |
| 2. Manaksha | 2267 BC |
| 3. Kaka Varman | 2214 BC |
| 4. Pashuprekha Deva | 1902 BC |
| 5. Bhaskar Varman | 1758 BC |

King Pasupreksha Deva took a number of people from the other parts of India in the year 1867 BC and settled them in Nepal. King Bhaskara Varma popularized the worship of Pashupati.

3.3 KINGS OF KASHMIR AFTER MAHABHARATA WAR

Kalhana's Rajatarangini does not give the names of the first 35 kings of Kashmir after the battle in which Gonanda II was killed by king Parikshita and Pandava dynasty was established in Kashmir. However, the names of these 35 kings are available in Mulla Ahmed's history of Kashmir written in Persian language. Of the 35 kings, the first 23 kings were of Pandava dynasty. The names of the 35 kings are as follows:

1. Parikshit
2. Hernadeva
3. Ramadeva
4. Vyasadeva
5. Dronadeva
6. Simhadeva
7. Gopaladeva
8. Vijayananda
9. Sukhadeva
10. Ramananda
11. Sandhiman
12. Marahandeva and Kamandeva
13. Chandradeva
14. Anandadeva
15. Drupadadeva
16. Hernamdeva II
17. Sulkandeva
18. Sinaditya
19. Mangaladitya
20. Khimendra
21. Bhimasena
22. Indrasena
23. Sundarasena
24. Galgendra

25. Baladeva
26. Nalasena
27. Gokarna
28. Prahlada
29. Bambru
30. Pratapaseela
31. Sangramachandra
32. Larik Chandra
33. Biram Chandra
34. Babighana
35. Bhagavanta

These 35 kings reigned for 1331 years from 3083 BC to 1752 BC. After them the following four kings of the dynasty ruled Kashmir till 1634 BC:

01. Lava (coronated in 1752 BC)
02. Kusa or Kusesaya
03. Khagendra
04. Surendra

King Surendra died during the reign of Mahapadmananda of Magadha. With him his dynasty came to an end and king Godhara of another family became the new ruler of Kashmir.

3.4 ANCESTORS OF LORD BUDDHA

Lord Buddha was born in the dynasty of King Kusha, the son of Lord Rama. At the time of the battle of Kurukshetra, Brihadbala was the king in the dynasty of Kusha. He died in the battle and his son Brihatkshana was made the king. Thereafter, including Brihatkshana, there were 30 kings in the dynasty. Lord Buddha was the 24th. The names of the kings are as follows:

1. Brihatkshana
2. Uruyaksha
3. Vatsavyuha
4. Prativyoma
5. Divakara
6. Sahadeva
7. Brihadasva
8. Bhanuratha
9. Pratitasya
10. Supratika
11. Marudeva
12. Sunakshatra

13. Kinnara
14. Anadharaksha
15. Suprana
16. Amitrajit
17. Brihatbhaja
18. Dharmi
19. Kritanjaya
20. Rananjaya
21. Sanjaya
22. Sakya
23. Suddhodana
24. Gautama (Lord Buddha)
25. Rahul
26. Prasenjit
27. Kahudraka
28. Kundaka
29. Suradha
30. Sumitra

These 30 kings ruled for a total of 1504 years till 1634 BC when the kingdom was conquered by Mahapadmananda.

3.5 BARHADRADHA DYNASTY OF MAGADHA

As king Sahadeba was killed in the battle of Kurukshetra in the year 3138 BC, his son Marjari was crowned as the king of Magadha. Thereafter 22 kings of this dynasty ruled for a total period of 1006 years. The names of the kings are as follows:

| Name of the King | Year of coronation |
|--|--------------------|
| 01. Marjari (or Somadhi) | 3138 BC |
| 02. Shrutashrava | 3080 BC |
| 03. Apratipa (or Ayutayu) | 3016 BC |
| 04. Niramitra | 2980 BC |
| 05. Sukshatra (Sukrut) | 2940 BC |
| 06. Brihatkarma | 2882 BC |
| 07. Senajit | 2859 BC |
| 08. Shrutanjaya | 2809 BC |
| 09. Mahabala (or Vibhu) | 2769 BC |
| 10. Shuchi | 2734 BC |
| 11. Kshema | 2676 BC |
| 12. Anubrata (Suvrata or Bhuvata) | 2648 BC |
| 13. Dharmanetra (Dharma, Sunetra or Dharmasutra) | 2584 BC |

| | |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| 14. Nirvriti (or Shama) | 2549 BC |
| 15. Suvrata (or Sushrama) | 2491 BC |
| 16. Dridhasena (or Dyumasena) | 2453 BC |
| 17. Sumati (or Mahanetra) | 2395 BC |
| 18. Subala (or Suchala) | 2362 BC |
| 19. Sunetra (or Suneetha) | 2340 BC |
| 20. Satyajit | 2300 BC |
| 21. Viswajit (or Veerajit) | 2217 BC |
| 22. Ripunjaya | 2182 BC |

King Ripunjaya was killed in the year 2132 B.C. treacherously by his minister Pulaka (Munika or Shunaka) and with him the Barhadradha dynasty came to an end. During the one thousand years along rule of the 22 kings of Barhadradha dynasty, with the steady decline of the Indus valley civilization, Magadha had emerged as the most powerful state. Later it became the seat of the Imperial power.

3.6 PRADYOTA DYNASTY OF MAGADHA

After the death of King Ripunjaya, the last king of Barhadradha dynasty, his minister Munika got his son Balaka married to the only daughter of the late king and installed him on the throne as Pradyota (or Pradyotana). He subjugated Vittihotras of Abanti and all the neighboring states of Magadha. The Puranas state that he was devoid of royal policy ordained by the scriptures and was disliked by most of his contemporaries. In his dynasty five kings ruled for a total period of 138 years. The names of the kings are as follows:

| Name of the King | Year of coronation |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Pradyota (son of Munika) | 2132 BC |
| 2. Palaka (Balaka) | 2109 BC |
| 3. Vishakhayupa | 2085 BC |
| 4. Janaka (Ajaka or Rajaka) | 2035 BC |
| 5. Nandivardhana | 2014 BC |

3.7 SHISHUNAGA DYNASTY

After the death of Nandivardhana, the last king of Pradyota dynasty, Magadha was conquered by Shishunaga, the king of Kashi (modern Benares). Shishunaga placed one of his sons in the throne of Kashi and himself ruled from Giribraja the capital of Magadha. There were ten kings in the dynasty established by him.

The names of the kings are as follows:

| Name of the King | Year of coronation |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| 01. Shishunaga | 1995 BC |
| 02. Kakavarma | 1955 BC |
| 03. Kshemadharma | 1919 BC |
| 04. Kshetranjasa | 1893 BC |
| 05. Bimbisara (or Vidhisara) | 1853 BC |
| 06. Ajatashatru | 1815 BC |
| 07. Darbhaka | 1788 BC |
| 08. Udayana | 1753 BC |
| 09. Nandivardhana | 1720 BC |
| 10.. Mahanandi | 1678 BC |

King Bimbisara, called Vidhisara in some scriptures, and his son Ajatasatru are well known for their piousness and aggressiveness respectively. They are the central figures of a number of legends and folklore. It is said that around the time of King Bimbisara there was a republic at Vaishali and King Bimbisara had married the daughter of a noble family of Vaishali to gain the friendship of the republic. Ajatasatru had usurped the throne, putting his father Bimbisara in prison. Ajatasatru got his father starved to death in the prison. He is said to have attacked and completely ruined the republic of Vaishali. However later, being influenced by teachings of Lord Buddha, he concentrated his attention on better administration than the expansion of his empire.

King Udayana of Sishunaga dynasty founded the city of Kusumapur which came to be known as Pataliputra (i.e. modern Patna).

3.8 LORD BUDDHA

Lord Buddha was born in the year 1887 BC during the reign of King Kshetraujasa at Giribraja. He was five years older to King Bimbisara. At the age of 28 years he left his home and took to the life of a sage. He attained perfect wisdom at the age of 36 years. King Suddhodana, the father of Lord Buddha (see Section 3.4), died in the year 1848 BC when Lord Buddha was 39 years old.

After the death of King Suddhodana, his grandson Rahul (son of Lord Buddha) succeeded him to the throne. Lord Buddha attained Nirvana at the age of 80 years in the year 1807 BC. It was during the eighth year of the reign of King Ajatasatru of Magadha.

3.9 DECLINE OF HARAPPAN CIVILIZATION

The Upper Harappan civilization is dated on the basis of archeological studies to be of the period between 3000 years BC and 1800 years BC. In this respect it is significant that the king lists of different dynasties of post Mahabharata period which ruled at Hastinapur, Kashmir, Nepal, Kapilavastu, Magadha, etc. are available from the Puranas precisely for this period. See sections 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4 and 3.7. After this period, from the year 1634 BC to be exact, only the king list of Magadha is available. [See Chapter 4].

Thus around the year 1600 B.C. the Indus valley civilization suffered a somewhat abrupt decline and the ruling dynasties came to an end as if by an external invasion.

According to the Puranas this decline was due to the invasion of Mahapadmananda, the successor of Mahanandi at Magadha. Bhagavata Purana states that Mahapadma killed all the Kshatriya kings and ruled like second Parshuram. Mahapadmananda was extremely greedy and used to plunder the vanquished kingdoms of all their wealth. His tyrannical rule continued for a period of 88 years, long enough to reduce any advanced civilization to a state of penury. As a result of the exploitation by Mahapadmananda, the urban civilization of the Indus valley was reduced to a primitive rural state.

3.10 MODERN EXCAVATIONS OF INDUS VALLEY

Identification of Harappa, some time before 1860 AD, as a potential source of historic material from surface inspection of Harappa mound was mentioned in Cunningham's report published in 1875 AD. But Indus valley civilization was not recognized as a distinctly separate, hitherto unsuspected, civilization till 1922 when the remnants in archaeological excavations at Mohenjo-Daro were discovered. Those remains were dated to be atleast 4000 years old, i.e. of a period earlier than 2000 years BC.

In 1935-1936 AD, remnants of three ancient colonies spread over more than six acres of land were discovered at Chanhudaro near Jamalkaryo village in Nawabshah district of Sindh. Afterwards a very important excavation was made at Kalibangan in Ganganagar district of Rajasthan. By 1951 AD, more than twenty remnants of Harappan settlements had been made in the area. Further discoveries were made not only in Sindh and Punjab but also over the whole area from river Tapti in the south to Afghanistan in the north.

Indus valley civilization, as revealed from the study of the archaeological excavations, was basically agricultural confined to the flood plains of the water courses. Mostly winter crops were grown. Excavations have revealed ploughing patterns still followed for Rabi crops in the area.

Many other Indus valley forms and motifs are still surviving in the culture of the local population of Punjab, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Sindh and southern Afghanistan.

Earlier it was believed that the people who inhabited the Harappan cities were non-Aryans who had been driven away by the Aryan invaders. However later research has shown that no such migration of population has taken place in the area. N.K.Bose in “Human Skeletal remains of Harappa” published by Archaeological Survey of India makes the following statement:

“It is interesting that at least so far as the cephalic index is concerned, the population of Mohenjo-Daro is quite similar to the present-day long headed population of Sindh. The same similarity is found between the ancient population of Harappa and the present-day population of Punjab. The skulls from Lothal are on the average round headed (cephalic index 79-68) which is remarkably close to the cephalic index of the present-day inhabitants of Gujarat.”

Detailed examination and evaluation of the remnants of the settlements have revealed that while the cities and towns were very well planned, unlike the large cities of Sumerian civilization with narrow winding lanes, the Harappan civilization never reached the level of West Asia. Very few of the large number of settlements discovered have been classified as towns and only two have been classified as cities.

3.11 GEOGRAPHIC AND CHRONOLOGICAL EXTENT

According to Dr. S.R.Rao, some of whose findings have been reported in Hindi Dharma Yuga of 30th November, 1980 AD, the area over which Harappan remnants have been identified is 1800 km long and 1400 km wide. According to one estimate the maximum population could have reached about 250 million.

Though the earliest remnants are dated to be older than 7000 years BC, the geographical extent from modern Gujarat to Hindukush was mostly between 3000 BC and 1800 BC, while the latest remnants are not older than 1600 years BC. Thus the Upper Harappan civilization (from 3100 BC to 1600 BC) had flourished over a time span of 1500 years, under the rule of the descendants of King Parikshita. It appears that there have been a few devastating floods submerging and burying the earlier settlements, over which new ones were built.

3.12 HARAPPAN SCRIPT

Inscriptions on a large number of seals recovered from the Harappan excavations have revealed that there was a highly developed script in the Indus valley. However, the script has not yet been deciphered fully. Earlier attempts to decipher the script have been based on the assumption that it must be very similar to the Sumerian or Akadian script. However, those attempts met with little success.

Some authors have suggested that the Harappan script must be a predecessor of the Indian scripts like Bramhi and Devnagari. Dr. S.R. Rao, using this approach, has claimed to have succeeded in deciphering the script. He has demonstrated that many forms and their meanings have remained unchanged from the Harappan age to the modern versions of the Vedas. Some of the features of Indus valley script, such as the conjunct forms are peculiar only to the Indian languages.

3.13 CONTEMPORARY MIDDLE EAST

Some scholars believe that the Egyptian and Sumerian civilizations were closely related to the Indus valley civilization. Swami Sakhyanand has expressed the opinion that the name Sumeria is derived from Soma Arya. Cook Taylor in his 'Manual of Ancient History' (p. 11) has stated "There is certainly evidence of small colonies having come from the mouth of the Indus to the shores of Africa and penetrated thence to the Nile (Indus was called Neela or Nile) south of the Egyptian frontiers."

Robert Shaw in 'Origin of Ancient Civilization of Nile's Valley' (p. 85) states, "...the Indians or some tribes of Indians in Asia are the only nation whence the ancient Egyptians and their civilization could have originally descended." There are a number of folk tales and legends suggesting the Indian origin of the Sumerians as well as the Jews. The earliest such migration referred to in the Indian scriptures took place at the time of King Sagara (see Section 1.13).

It is said that around the time of the death of Lord Krishna there was a lot of in-fighting among the people of his Yadu clan settled in Dwarka. The survivors were too weak to resist the attacks of the hostile tribes and many of them left by the sea to settle in the region of Palestine. These clans are said to have been known as the Jews. This migration took place around 3100 BC. The word 'Jew' is believed to have been derived from the word 'Yadu'.

3.14 CONTEMPORARY EUROPE

Little is known about the history of Europe of the period when the Indus valley civilization flourished. However the Pagan religions of Europe, such as Mithraism and Druidism, flourished during the period. These religions had already been well established by the time when the first Greek city states were evolving. Evidently these religions had spread to Europe around the period of Indus valley and contemporary Asian civilizations.

From the examination of the archaeological evidences it has been inferred that the people of the Indus valley were expert navigators. They had traveled as far as the Easter islands. Therefore, it is very likely that there was navigation between the Indus valley and Western Europe.