7

EASTERN KUSHANS, KIDARITES IN GANDHARA AND KASHMIR, AND LATER HEPHTHALITES*

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Contents

* See Maps 2 and 4.

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Part One

EASTERN KUSHANS AND KIDARITES IN GANDHARA AND KASHMIR

(*A. H. Dani*)

Eastern Kushans

The extensive empire of the Great Kushans lasted until the close of the reign of Vasudeva I in the early part of the third century,[1] but even during his rule there is little evidence of his continued control over the eastern parts of the Gangetic valley in northern India.[2] The campaigns of the Sasanian rulers Ardashir I and Shapur I (see Chapter 2) put an end to the prosperity of the Great Kushans.[3] On the evidence of the Begram excavations, this collapse was dated to 244; but the eminent Austrian and Russian numismatists, Göbl and Zeimal, put it much later. Neither date is generally accepted by Indian scholars,[4] who place the end of the Great Kushans Empire at *c.* 180. This date accords well with the contemporary rise of several tribal states in northern India.[5] These states ousted the Kushans and gradually usurped power right up to eastern Panjab, although in Gandhara and central and western Panjab the Later Kushans maintained their hold. Though weakened and hemmed in by the rise of new powers, the Kushans continued to exercise authority from Bactria to Panjab.

The names of only two Kushan kings of this period are known from coins. Many historians take them to be Kanishka III and Vasudeva II and distinguish them on numismatic grounds from earlier Kushan rulers bearing the same names. Numerous coins of Kanishka III have been found in Panjab, Seistan (modern Sistan) and Afghanistan, and also in

[1] The exact date depends upon fixing the beginning of the Kanishka era (for discussion, see Volume II).
[2] Sastri, 1957, pp. 247–8.
[3] Ghirshman, 1954, p. 291; but see Chattopadhyay, 1979, p. 92, where he maintains that the successors of Vasudeva I ruled in Bactria and Afghanistan.
[4] Altekar and Majumdar, 1946, p. 12.
[5] Ibid., Ch. 2.

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southern Uzbekistan and southern Tajikistan. His coins bear other abbreviated names in Brāhmī which are taken to be those of his satraps, or governors.[6]

Altekar cites evidence from the *Purāna*s (popular Hindu texts in epic form, containing some historical material; see Chapter 8),[7] which speak of 8 Yavana, 14 Tushara and 13 Murunda chiefs who probably ruled in Panjab in about the third and fourth centuries. These chiefs have been identified with names obtained from a series of coins found in Gandhara and Panjab. As all these coins follow the Ardokhsho type of Kanishka III, the names on them are thought to be the successors representing the Eastern Kushans, although not all of them may be ethnically related to the Kushans. In the excavation at Andan Dheri[8] four hoards of copper coins were found, all belonging to this period. On the obverse, they bear the name Saka in Brāhmī. Together with the tribal name, shortened names of the chiefs occur, such as Sayatha, Sita, Sena, Pra, Mi, Shri and Bha. These are understood to be the names of seven Saka rulers who had authority over Gandhara[9] after Vasudeva II or III, and probably ruled for nearly 100 years.

The Russian numismatist Zeimal, however, disagrees with the theory that there were several kings with the name of Vasudeva. He believes that there was only one king with this name who issued gold and bronze coins. Gold and bronze coins with the name of a later 'Kanishka' look like those of Vasudeva (though they are not identical). According to Zeimal, the comparison of gold coins of Kanishka in the Later Kushan series with those of Vasudeva, the last Great Kushan king, allows us to determine their relative chronology. The typological similarity of the earliest coins of the later Kanishka representing the king in armour allows us to classify them as gold coins of Vasudeva which formed the second stage in his minting. The similarity is so obvious that it allows us to regard them as issued at the same mint and probably by the same master, who then stopped making dies for the coins of Vasudeva. Thus the coins of the later Kanishka 'detach themselves' from the typological series of the gold coins of Vasudeva, and begin their own series. Rosenfield notes similar features in the gold coins of Vasudeva and those of the later Kanishka.[10]

Zeimal supposes that they reigned at the same period but in different territories, i.e. somewhere in the first half of Vasudeva's reign the kingdom of the Great Kushans was divided into two parts. A number of suppositions was made concerning the manner of the separation into western and eastern parts or north and south. As a rule, the starting point of the above discussions is a further development of the types of the enthroned Ardokhsho

[6] Banerji, 1908, p. 86; Altekar and Majumdar, 1946, p. 14.
[7] Pargiter, 1913, p. 45.
[8] Dani, 1968–69, pp. 42–6.
[9] Altekar and Majumdar, 1946, pp. 28–9; Chattopadhyay, 1979, pp. 102–3.
[10] Zeimal, 1983, p. 223.

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(= the later Kanishka) and Shiva in front of the bull (= Vasudeva). The Ardokhsho type was further developed in the Gupta and Kidarite coinage, while the Shiva type was used as a prototype for the Kushano-Sasanian coins. The circulation areas of coins of these kings were different, but their distribution is poorly investigated. That is why Zeimal considers that the boundaries of the territories they each controlled should be left open so far.[11]

The Kushan coin type of the standing king on the obverse and the seated Ardokhsho on the reverse is also seen in a series that has been given the tribal name of Shiladas. These coins, which are found in central Panjab, have, on the obverse, the names of Bhodva, Pasan and Baeharna, who appear to be rulers of the Shilada tribe holding sway over this area.

In the next series of coins we find the tribal name of Gadahara, who probably succeeded the Shilada rulers in central Panjab. These coins also show the names of Peraya, Kirada and Samudra. It is the name Kirada that has also been read in the coins of Kidara[12] (see below). Much controversy has been generated by the occurrence of the name Samudra: it is generally assumed that it refers to the great Gupta ruler Samudra (320–375) who, in his Allahabad pillar inscription,[13] claims to have allowed the *daivaputra-shāhi-shāhānushāhi* (obviously referring to the Kushan king) to rule in his kingdom and issue coinage in subordinate relation to him.[14] It attests to the autonomy of the Kushan king's rule over the territory. This statement may be judged against the background of the military successes of Samudragupta, who by this time had uprooted (see Chapter 8) the tribal states of the Yaudheyas and Madras, whose territories extended over eastern and central Panjab. Thus, although Samudragupta had gone to the very border of Gadahara territory, he did not uproot that tribe, but merely brought them under his suzerainty. It is equally possible that, being pressed by the Sasanians in the west, the Gadaharas established diplomatic ties with the Guptas and thus secured themselves a temporary reprieve.

Before discussing the consequences of this diplomacy, it is necessary to identify the Gadaharas. Cunningham[15] long ago suggested that they may be the same people who are today known as Gakkharas in western Panjab. Although there is a phonetic similarity in the names, the Gakkharas themselves trace their ancestry to the Kayanians in Iran and believe that they arrived in the area at the time of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni (988–1030). On the other hand, the Allahabad inscription gives all the Kushan titles. They are taken to apply to the Gadaharas, who at this time were issuing Kushan types of coins in central Panjab. From this evidence the Gadaharas are taken to be the last of the Eastern Kushans ruling

[11] Zeimal, 1983, p. 225.
[12] Altekar and Majumdar, 1946, p. 105.
[13] Sircar, 1939, p. 258.
[14] Chhabra and Gai, 1981, p. 218.
[15] Cunningham, 1893–94.

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independently in Panjab. On the basis of the Allahabad inscription, they continued to rule well into the first half of the fourth century.

The economy of the kingdom can be judged from a variety of sources. First, the contraction of the empire considerably reduced the economic resources of the state. The international trade routes that had earlier supplied gold and other luxury items passed out of the hands of the Eastern Kushans, a loss that is clearly reflected in the currency of the time. The complete cessation of silver currency by the Eastern Kushans, and the debasement of the gold currency, show the adverse affect on the balance of trade. However, the abundance of copper currency proves the continuation of local demand. The Buddhist monasteries and Gandharan art flourished, there was no diminution in the production of works of art and urban life continued to be prosperous. The construction of the new city of Sirsukh at Taxila and the ruins of Rajar at Charsadda in Gandhara, together with the large number of urban settlements, speak of the prosperity of the people. This development must have been related to improved agricultural technology. Three types of irrigation project have been noted in Gandhara and Panjab. The local governors derived their power from control over this irrigation system. While it led to the strengthening of the local authority, it nevertheless increased the crops. There is evidence to show that iron mining was undertaken in the Kala Chitta range right up to Kalabagh on the Indus, whereas gold was extracted from the 'gold ant-hills' in Baltistan and Ladakh. Trade in precious stones continued with China.

In the land of the Eastern Kushans (i.e. Gandhara and Panjab), no contemporary royal inscriptions have been found but many private donations to Buddhist monasteries have been recorded in Gandhārī Prakrit in Kharoṣṭhī script. However, the use of Indian Brāhmī began to spread from this time. Simultaneously, as recorded in the later accounts of the Chinese pilgrims, the Buddhist monks in the famous Kanishka *vihāra* (monastery) at Peshawar used Sanskrit as their means of expression. The widespread popularity of Shiva and Nandi, and other deities such as Karttikeya and Durga, may point to the importance of the Hindu religion. On the other hand, Buddhism, which was widespread in this land, developed new monastic orders with lavish facilities. The role of the Mahayana, implying the cult of the Bodhisattvas, became increasingly prominent among the people. These developments in Buddhism may also show the impact of new ethnic elements upon the population of the area, although it is impossible to establish the resultant changes in the social system. The *smṛtis* (books of sacred law) present a picture of a society that is more applicable to mid-India, which was outside the territory of the Eastern Kushans, where Buddhist society continued to maintain its hold on the people. The social system is described by the law texts as that of *vrātya* (land holding), in other words, a system that fell outside the recognized rules of the orthodox Hindu system.

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Kidarites in Gandhara and Kashmir

The earlier history of the Kidarites has been given above (see Chapter 5). The gold coins present the Kidarite king standing beside an altar on the obverse and an enthroned goddess on the reverse. Under the king's arm the legend *Kidāra* is written perpendicularly on the obverse while the reverse gives the names *Śrī Shāhi Kidāra*, *Kritavīrya*, *Sarvayaśa*, *Bhavan*, *Śiladitya*, *Prakaśa* and *Kuśala*. As the name *Kidāra* is attached to the term *Kushana* on the coins of Kidara, it is clear that Kidara must have conquered some parts of the Kushan territory and hence used the title *Kidāra Kushana Shāhi*. Other names that appear on the coins of Kidara may have been those of his governors posted in the different parts of his territory or even of those rulers who succeeded him. If this historical sequence is correct, Kidara must have established himself in Gandhara some time in the late fourth century. Altekar[16] assumes that Kidara extended his power eastward after the death of Samudragupta. Kidara was succeeded by his son, and then by Pira at a later date.

On the basis of his analysis of the evidence from Kalhana's *Rājataraṅginī*, Harmatta concludes that Kimnara 'represents the Kidarite Hun king Kidara whose reign in Kashmir must have been presumed already on the basis of historical considerations and numismatic evidence but who could not be identified in the text of the *Rājataraṅginī* hitherto'. He gives the approximate date of 400–410 for the beginning of Kidara's reign in Kashmir (see pages 123–4 above).[17]

It should be noted that the volume of gold coins circulated by the Kidarite rulers was considerably less than that of the Great Kushans, probably owing to the decline of commerce and the Kidarites' loss of control over the international trade routes.

With the coming of the Kidarites, Sasanian cultural penetration intensified, and we can note the influence of the Zoroastrian religion. This has been well documented by the presence of a fire altar on the coins and also by fire worship on the bases of many sculptures found in Gandhara. Persepolitan art motifs, such as the Persepolitan bell capital and winged animals, continued to be used in Gandhara art. Nevertheless, Buddhism was not eclipsed. It was during the rule of the Kidarites that the Chinese pilgrim Fa-hsien (*c.* 400) visited these lands and his account suggests the continuing influence of Buddhism.

Fa-hsien[18] reached the country of To-li (probably the Darel valley in Gilgit region), where he speaks of a society of priests all belonging to the Little Vehicle (the Hinayana school). He also describes a wooden image of Maitreya Buddha, 80 feet (24m) high, to

[16] Altekar and Majumdar, 1946, p. 21.
[17] Harmatta, 1984, pp. 185–9.
[18] Beal, 1969, Vol. 1, Introduction, pp. xxix–xxxvii.

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whom 'the kings of the countries round vie with each other in their religious offerings'. He then proceeded towards Wu-Chang (Swat) via the Indus valley road and writes:

> The country of Wu-Chang commences North India. The language of mid-India is used by all. Mid-India is what they call the middle country. The dress of the people, their food and drink are also the same as in the middle country. The religion of Buddha is very flourishing. The places where the priests stop and lodge they call *saṅghārāma*s. In all there are 500 *saṅghārāma*s; they belong to the Little Vehicle without exception.

Fa-hsien also went to Gandhara, where he describes a great stupa, adorned with silver and gold. According to him, the people here also mostly followed the Little Vehicle. Then he came to Chu-Ch'a-Shi-lo (the modern Taxila), where great stupas had been built. He remarks: 'The kings, ministers and people of the neighbouring countries vie with one another in their offerings, scattering flowers and lighting lamps without intermission.'

The most important description that he provides, however, is of Fu-lousha (identified with Peshawar), where he speaks of Kanishka's *vihāra* and the great stupa. The last he calls 'Buddha tower', saying that it is 40 *chang* and more in height and adorned with all the precious substances. Of all the stupas and temples he has seen, none can compare with this for beauty of form and strength. This was the highest tower in Jambudvipa. Fa-hsien also refers to the alms-bowl of the Buddha (which was still in Peshawar at that time) and notes how a king of the Yuëh-chih wished to carry it away but, failing to do so, built a stupa and a *saṅghārāma* on the spot. There were 700 priests to look after the bowl and a daily ceremony was held in connection with it. At the approach of noon it was brought out by the priests and the *upasaka*s (laity) made all kinds of offerings to it before having their midday meal.

Next Fa-hsien went alone to the city of Hi-lo (modern Hadda near Jalalabad in Afghanistan), which contained the *vihāra* of the skull-bone of the Buddha. The ceremony is graphically described:

> The door being opened, using scented water they wash their hands and bring out the skull-bone of the Buddha. They place it outside the *vihāra* on a high throne; taking a circular stand of the seven precious substances, the stand is placed below it and a glass bell as a cover over it. All these are adorned with pearls and gems.... The offerings finished, each one in order puts it on his head (worships it) and departs. Entering by the east door and leaving by the west, the king every morning thus offers and worships, after which he attends to state affairs. Householders and elder-men also first offer worship and then attend to family affairs.[19]

Fa-hsien then travelled south into the Rohi country before crossing over to Bannu and then to Bhira in Panjab. On the way, he 'passed very many temples one after another,

[19] Beal, 1969, Vol. 1, Introduction, p. xxxiv.

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with some myriads of priests in them'. At last he arrived at the city of Mo-tu-li (present-day Mathura), beyond which lay the middle country (*Madhyadesha*). Without naming the ruler or ruling dynasty of this region, Fa-hsien speaks of the social conditions, the laws of punishment, the habits of the people and the position of the *chandāla*s (outcasts of Indian society), who are dubbed 'evil men' and hence 'dwell apart from others'. He provides a very detailed account of Buddhism in this area and relates a number of traditional stories about many cities in this country. From here he went on to Sri Lanka and finally back to China by sea.

Later Hephthalites

Since the early history of the Hephthalites has been given already (see Chapter 6), we shall concentrate here on the later history, with particular reference to Indian sources. In Indian works, the Hephthalites are known as *Śveta Huna*; they are designated by these names in the *Brhatsamhitā* of Varahamihira and in the *Mahābhārata*.[20] On the evidence of the *Avesta*, Bailey has identified *Śveta Huna* with *Spēt Hyōn* (meaning White Huns), and *Hara Huna* with *Karmir Hyōn* (meaning Red Huns).[21] Thus the Huns were split into two groups – Red Huns and White Huns – in the Indian literature. The struggle of the White Huns against the Gupta emperors, and their establishment of an independent empire south of the Hindu Kush, has been discussed earlier (see Chapter 6). Harmatta's view that there was a Khingil dynasty ruling over Kabul must now be modified in the light of a fresh interpretation of the source material from Kalhana's *Rājataraṅginī*, coins and inscriptions.[22] The opinion given below follows the reconstruction made by Biswas,[23] who has listed a number of Huna kings from the *Purāṇa*s and from the *Rājataraṅginī*. The most likely person to have succeeded Mihirakula in Kashmir and Gandhara is Pravarasena II, who is believed to be the son of Toramana. However, there was an interregnum between these two rulers. Pravarasena came to the throne soon after 530 and ruled for about 60 years. He founded a city with his own name, Pravarasenapura (identified with modern Srinagar), and adorned it with markets. Here he also built the great temple of Pravaresha. Within the city he constructed a causeway or bridge. His coins bear, on the obverse, the figure of a standing king and two figures seated below right and left, with his name Pravarasena; and on the reverse, a goddess seated on a lion with the legend *Kidāra*. The significance of this legend is not known. This king was followed by Gokarna, some of whose coins have been discovered.

[20] Biswas, 1973, pp. 26–8, where quotations from the original are given.
[21] Bailey, 1954, pp. 12–16; 1932, p. 945.
[22] Harmatta, 1969, p. 404.
[23] Biswas, 1973, Chs. 5 and 6.

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He established the shrine of Shiva, called *Gokarneśvara*. His son Narendraditya, who bore the second name of Khiṅkhila, also consecrated shrines to Shiva, called *Bhuteśvara*. His son was Yudhishthira, nicknamed Andha-Yudhishthira on account of his small eyes.[24]

Narendraditya Khiṅkhila is identified with a king whose name appears at the base of the stone image of Vinayaka (Ganesha), found in Kabul, but probably from Gardez. The king's name is recorded as *Parama-bhaṭṭāraka Mahārājadhirāja Shrī Shāhi Khiṅgala Odya (tya) na-Shāhi*. He also issued coins with the name either Deva Shahi Khingila or Shri Narendra. Some coins have the legend *Kidāra* under the king's arm. All these kings are identified as one and the same by Biswas, who maintains that Khiṅkhila ruled a domain stretching from Kashmir to Kabul. According to Kalhana, he ruled for some 30–36 years, that is roughly between 597 and 633. According to Biswas, the Chinese Buddhist pilgrim Hsüan-tsang came to Kashmir when Khiṅkhila was ruling here. Regarding the extent of his empire, Biswas concludes:

> The empire of Kashmir included the Kabul valley, the Swat valley and the mountain regions of Kashmir proper and in the south-east extended as far as Śākala on the Chenab river. If the king of Kashmir had a hold over Swat, the Kabul valley and Bannu, it is possible that his empire extended even to Gardez. The Gardez inscription of Khingala was probably thus of the Kashmir king Khiṅkhila, who was also the overlord of Udyāna.[25]

Khiṅkhila was succeeded by his son Yudhishthira who, according to the *Rājataraṅginī*, ruled for 40 years (until *c.* 670), when he was dethroned by Pratapaditya, son of Durlabhavardhana, the ruler of the Karkota dynasty. According to another version Yudhishthira ruled for only 24 years, or until *c.* 657. Although Yudishthira was the last great independent Huna (White Hun) ruler, Kalhana gives a further line of his successors who continued to rule in subordinate positions in Kashmir and other areas.

The end of the rule of Yudhishthira brought further changes in the Huna kingdom. One major consequence was the foundation of the so-called Türk Shahi dynasty in Kabul and Gandhara, whose history and origins have been reconstructed in great detail by Rahman:[26]

> The history of this Turkish family can be traced back to at least A.D. 666, when a Rutbil is for the first time mentioned in the Arabic chronicles. The date of Barhātigin who, according to Albiruni [al-Biruni], was the founder of the Turk Shāhi dynasty, must therefore fall about A.D. 666. It would seem that Barhātigin and the first Rutbil were brothers. The dynastic change mentioned by Huei Ch'ao [Huei-ch'ao] appears to have taken place long before his visit, but he came to know of it only when he was in Gandhāra in A.D. 726 and at that time he mentioned it in the account of his journey. Thus the date of the beginning of the rule of the Turk Shāhis

[24] Stein, 1900–1, Book 1, verses 346–50.
[25] Biswas, 1973, p. 137.
[26] Rahman, 1979, pp. 37–47 and Ch. 4.

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> may be placed around A.D. 666 or slightly earlier[27] [i.e. immediately after the overthrow of Yudhishthira by the Karkota dynasty in Kashmir].

The Türk Shahis remained in power for nearly 177 years. The end of their rule in Kabul is dated to 843 on the basis of epigraphic evidence. But the western branch of the Türk Shahis (the Rutbils of Arabic sources, and generally known as rulers of Rukhkhaj) continued to rule a little longer until the rise of Ya^{c}qubb. Laith, the amir of Seistan (modern Sistan), who captured Kabul in 870. The last of the Rutbils, a fugitive in Kabul or Zabulistan, was captured in 870 – a date which finally brought to a close the long history of the Turkic-speaking Hephthalites.

Rahman rightly points out that the political history of the Türk Shahis is inextricably linked with the history of the Muslim governors of Seistan. How Barhatakin came to power is wrapped in mystery, although it is probable that his base was in Gandhara. Sheltered behind the rugged hills of the Khyber Pass, he built up his strength slowly and waited for his chance when the kingdom of Kabul and Zabulistan were subject to repeated attacks by the Arab governors of Seistan. In the wake of two attacks by Ibn Samura, Barhatakin gathered his forces and attacked Kabul. We learn from Chinese sources that the ruler of Kapisa (probably Khiṅkhila) was killed and Barhatakin proclaimed himself king of Kabul. He extended his rule to Zabulistan and appointed his brother as Hindu governor with the title of Rutbil, i.e. 'war thruster'. This is sometimes corrected to *hitivira*,[28] but Harmatta takes it for *Zubīl* and connects it with *yabghu*.[29]

From these sources[30] Harmatta builds up the following chronology of the Türk Shahi rulers:

Wu-san T'ê-chin Shai, 720–738 (*Shri Tagino Shaho* on the coins)

Fu-lin-chi-so, 738–745 (*Phromo Kesaro* on the coins)

Po-fu-chun, 745 onwards

Ju-lo-li in Gandhara, 759–764.

From a Tibetan source, Harmatta[31] quotes the name Phrom Ge-sar and identifies him with Fu-lin-chi-so, mentioned above. Further, on the basis of his interpretation of the Tochi valley inscriptions, Harmatta[32] concludes that the Sanskrit inscription there mentions the

[27] Rahman, 1979, p. 47.
[28] Ibid., p. 180.
[29] Harmatta, 1969, p. 406.
[30] Ibid., p. 409.
[31] Ibid., pp. 409–11.
[32] Ibid., p. 367.

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name of (Mihira) Bhoja of the Gurjara Pratihara dynasty who, in 860, extended his rule westward and helped Lalliya, the founder of the Hindu Shahi dynasty, to wrest Gandhara and Kabul from the Türk Shahis and kept him there in opposition to Ya^{c}qub b. Laith. This inference of Harmatta brings the Gurjara dominion right beyond the Indus, for which we have no other evidence. However, the power of the Gurjaras certainly increased in eastern and central Panjab and the Karkota dynasty ruled supreme in Kashmir. As a result of their aggrandizement, Huna power collapsed in the third quarter of the ninth century; those Huna principalities that survived became assimilated to the local order and thereafter played an insignificant role.

Economic and cultural progress

The archaeological evidence from Taxila led Marshall[33] to speak of the great destruction caused by the Huns and the consequent disruption of the economic and cultural progress of the countries where they ruled. This conclusion has been contradicted by Dani,[34] who believes that urban life continued in Taxila and the monasteries were maintained, as attested by Hsüan-tsang during his visit in the seventh century. New evidence from along the Karakorum highway reveals a brisk trade and commercial relations between Gandhara, China and the trans-Pamir region. Although the Silk Route was disrupted because of new imperial alignments, trade was deflected southward.

One major change in this period relates to agricultural production and the administration of revenues. Up to the time of the Kidarites, there is evidence for the survival of the satrapal system of administration in the Kabul valley, Gandhara and Panjab; but during their rule this administrative system appears to have died out. In its place we note a large number of tribal chiefs who assumed the title of *rāja*. For the first time Bana (court poet from 606 to 647) in his *Harśa-Caritaṃ* uses the title of *rājaputra*, from which is derived the modern term Rajput. The growth of the *rāja*s and Rajputs (see Chapter 8) in the socio-economic life of the hilly regions and plains of Panjab is a new phenomenon that dates from the time of the Huns. The changing pattern of land tenure led to a new form of economic system, which has been loosely described as a feudal relation, although feudalism of the European pattern did not develop in this part of the world (see also Chapter 8). The Rajput system perpetuated the claim of the tribal heads to land which they possessed by right of their joint aggrandizement. Thus they became the real owners of the land, and also of the settlers upon it.

[33] Marshall, 1951.
[34] Dani, 1986, pp. 75–8.

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This new property system led to the development of a social order that has survived to the present time. Whether it also led to greater agricultural production is difficult to say. It undoubtedly led to new agricultural management by the officers of the state through the tribal heads who had a direct stake in the land. There are at least three pieces of archaeological evidence: from the Idak-Spinwam region in north Waziristan, from Gilgit proper and from Skardu. In all these places new irrigation channels were opened up. In other areas, natural springs were channelled to irrigate terraced fields. Consequently, there does not appear to have been any loss in agricultural production although the landless labourers undoubtedly suffered and slavery must have been rampant as a consequence. For example, the Türk Shahi ruler of Kabul had to pay an annual tribute of 2,000 slaves to the Arab governor of Khurasan.

On the other hand, the system led to relations of production in which the agricultural magnates enjoyed all the economic, social and even religious privileges whereas ordinary people struggled to survive and were at the mercy of the landlords. As amply demonstrated by the history of the rulers of Gilgit, there were continuous wars of succession between the sons of these chiefs, and a consequent wastage of property and manpower. The feudal Rajput system nevertheless established itself in the existing social milieu. Rather than destroying the caste system, it found its place within it, absorbing the caste groups within its own economic sphere and giving them a new function.

The Huns were fervent worshippers of the sun god and of Shiva and a number of Shiva temples were built in Kashmir. In the Gilgit region, Buddhism flourished and developed a new form. The most important piece of evidence comes from the Buddhist creations at Bamiyan, where tall Buddha figures, cave paintings and monasteries attest the progress of art in this region (see Chapter 6).

Hsüan-tsang has left a detailed description of the Buddhist centres and monastic life in the period of the Huns,[35] waxing lyrical when he visits Bamiyan. From a cultural point of view, his most valuable observation is the following:

> These people are remarkable, among all their neighbours, for a love of religion (*a heart of pure faith*); from the highest form of worship to the three jewels, down to the worship of the hundred (*i.e. different*) spirits, there is not the least absence (*decrease*) of earnestness and the utmost devotion of heart. The merchants, in arranging their prices as they come and go, fall in with the signs afforded by the spirits. If good, they act accordingly; if evil, they seek to propitiate the powers. There are ten convents and about 1000 priests. They belong to the Little Vehicle, and the school of the Lokottaravadins.[36]

The description of Kapisa is no less instructive in its picture of the economy and culture:

[35] Beal, 1969, Vol. 1, p. 50.
[36] Ibid.

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> It produces cereals of all sorts, and many kinds of fruit-trees. The *shen* horses are bred here, and there is also the scent (*scented root*) called *Yu-kin*. Here also are found objects of merchandise from all parts… In commerce they use gold and silver coins, and also little copper coins… The king is a Kshattriya by caste. He is of a shrewd character (*nature*), and being brave and determined, he has brought into subjection the neighbouring countries, some ten of which he rules.[37]

Hsüan-tsang's descriptions of the capital cities of Kapisa, Gandhara and Taxila leave no doubt that these centres continued to maintain their urban nature in this period, although some were no longer royal seats of government. On the other hand, the foundation of new cities in Kashmir by the later Huna kings, as noted by Kalhana, speaks highly of the patronage they exercised. Under their rule Shaivism and the worship of the sun god were encouraged (many images of the sun god have been found in Gandhara). But as far as the old cities such as Taxila and Purushapura are concerned, fresh archaeological evidence has not produced any new data. Only in the case of Taxila do new studies of the earlier finds suggest that the fortifications at the site of Giri belonged to the Huna period. On the other hand, Huei-ch'ao's visit to Purushapura in 726 and his description of the Kanishka *vihāra* there provide ample proof of the continued existence of the Buddhist centre.

Sanskrit references

The references in Sanskrit sources to the dynasty of Mihirakula are of great importance as they throw light on the character of the rulers. The largest number of references is found in Kalhana's *Rājataraṅginī*.[38] In the *Purāṅa*s the Hunas are equated with the Mlecchas and are said to rule over the *vrātya* countries (see above). The Prakrit work, the *Kuvalayamālā*, mentions the land of Uttarapatha through which flows the River Chandrabhaga (Chenab). On its bank lay the city of Pavvaiya, where lived Shri Toramana (the father of Mihirakula), enjoying the sovereignty of the world. In the Kura inscription,[39] which records the construction of a Buddhist monastery, the ruling king is thus recorded: *Rājadhirāja Mahārāja Toramāna Shāhi Jaula*. The Gwalior inscription[40] paints a memorable picture:

> [There was] a ruler of [the earth] of great merit, who was renowned by the name of Śri Toramāna, by whom, through his heroism [that was especially characterized by] truthfulness, the earth was governed with justice. Of him, the fame of whose family has risen high, the son

[37] Beal, 1969, Vol. 1, pp. 54–5.
[38] On the basis of this, Biswas has reconstructed the political history of the Hunas in India; see Biswas, 1973.
[39] Sircar, 1939, p. 56.
[40] Ibid., p. 400.

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> [is] of unequalled power, the lord of the earth, who is renowned under the name of Mihirakula [and] who [himself] unbroken [?] worships Paśupati.

These quotations show the nature of the Huna rulers who conquered this part of the world. Mihirakula was a devotee of Shiva. That he wielded great power is confirmed by the Mandasor inscription of Yashodharman, which says of Mihirakula: 'Through the embraces of whose arm Himālaya carries no longer the pride of the title of being [an inaccessible] fortress.' The Bhitari pillar inscription of Skandagupta describes the eventful scene of the Gupta king's terrible conflict with the Hunas in the following words: 'By whose two arms the earth was shaken, when he, the creator of a terrible whirlpool, joined in conflict with the Hunas.'

Bana, court poet of King Harsha, speaking of Harsha's father in the early seventh century, uses the phrase *Huna-Harina-Kesari* (lion to the Huna deer). In other words, from the great power that the Hunas wielded in their early career and so graphically described in Sanskrit literature, they lost their prestige after their defeat in *c.* 528 by Yashodharman (king of Malwa) and Baladitya (the Gupta king of Magadha), and were remembered as weak as deer before the lion king of Kanauj.

Coinage of the Hunas

The earliest Huna coins imitate those of Shapur II, except that the Pahlavi script is replaced by Bactrian. These coins also bear the Hephthalite symbol on the obverse. They do not bear mint marks, although a few coins show simple Brāhmī letters, such as *Thai*, *Sa*, or *Se*, *Je*, *Bra*, *Tu* or *Dhe*. These Huna coins are divided into three groups: (a) Early Huna coins; (b) Huna coins of Tunjina I, Toramana and Mihirakula; and (c) Later Huna coins of kings who ruled in Kashmir, Gandhara and parts of Panjab.

The Brāhmī legends of the second group of Huna coins establish their identity and also show more varieties. One coin of the earlier design has yielded the name *Thujana* (**Thuṃjina*) and is attributed to the first ruler, Tunjina. Then we find coins inscribed *Shahi Javukha* or *Shahi Javuvla*. The attribution of these coins to Toramana is doubtful. His coins are only in silver and copper: no gold coins of his time have so far been found. Toramana's silver coins are of three varieties: those showing the Sasanian bust and fire altar; those showing a horseman on the obverse; and those copying the Gupta coins from Gujarat. The reverse of the last series depicts a dancing peacock. The coins bear the Brāhmī legend meaning 'Shri Toramana Deva, the invincible, conquers'. His copper coins are of two categories: the first shows the Kushan type of standing king on the obverse with the king's name and a seated goddess on the reverse; the second variety

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has a Sasanian bust on the obverse, and a solar wheel on the reverse with *Tora* in bold letters.

Mihirakula struck coins in many styles. They are also of silver and copper. The silver coins show a bull on the obverse with the legend *Jayatu Mihirakula* or *Jayatu Vṛṣadhvaja*. In examples where the bull is seated, the king has his face turned to the right; on the reverse is the fire altar. Mihirakula's copper coins are more common: they keep the bust type of the silver coins but omit the bull standard. On the reverse, however, the bull is shown in the upper register. Sometimes there is a trident before the bull with the legend *Jayatu Vṛṣa*. The second variety copies the Kushan example of standing king on the obverse with the legend *Shahi Mihirakula*. On the reverse again we find the bull.

The Later Huna coins of Pravarasena II (which are gold) continue the Kushan style of the standing king on the obverse and the seated goddess on the reverse, with the legend *Shri Pravarasena* on the obverse and *Kidāra* on the reverse. The coins of Narendraditya Khiṅkhila are struck with his name, *Deva Shahi Khiṅgila*. These coins have the beardless king's head to the right. Another type shows the standing king on the obverse with the legend *Kidāra*, and the seated goddess with the legend *Shri Narendra* on the reverse. We also find the coins of Lahkhana Udayaditya showing the bust of the king. Thus the coins of the Hunas, which begin by copying the Sasanian type, later show the Kushan type and then gradually become more localized with Brāhmī legends and symbols.[41]

Part Two

THE LATER HEPHTHALITES IN CENTRAL ASIA

(*B. A. Litvinsky and M. H. Zamir Safi*)

Between 560 and 563, the Türks inflicted a crushing blow on the Hephthalites. The fact that Sughd resumed its external political relations in 564, after a long interval, enables us to pinpoint this date more precisely: Sughd could no longer have been controlled by the Hephthalites, and the decisive battle against the Türks at Bukhara probably took place in 563. According to Firdausi's *Shāh-nāme*, troops from Balkh, Shughnan, Amol, Zamm,

[41] For another classification, chronological consequences and an analysis of coins, inscriptions, symbols, etc. of Huna coins, see the very important work of Göbl, 1967, Vols. 1–4.

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Khuttal, Termez and Washgird fought on the side of the Hephthalites in this battle and weapons and essential equipment were also obtained from those places,[42] that is chiefly from the right-bank regions of Tokharistan (ancient Bactria).

After the battle, the remnants of the Hephthalite levies fled to the south, where Faganish, the ruler of Chaganiyan, was chosen as king. Upon learning of these events, the *shahanshah* of Iran, Khusrau I (531–579), moved his troops, obliging Faganish to accept vassal status. The areas to the north of the Amu Darya (Oxus) were subsequently recognized as possessions of the Türk *kaghan*s while the areas to the south were acknowledged as belonging to Sasanian Iran. It is reported that the Türks exacted tribute from the Hephthalites (evidently, the Hephthalites of northern Tokharistan). It is also recorded that Khotan, Persia and the Hephthalites (i.e. the same Hephthalites of Tokharistan) rebelled against the Türks in 581.[43]

Al-Biruni writes in his *al-Qānūn al-Mas^{c}ūdī* that Tokharistan 'in the days of old was the country of the al-Hayatila [Hephthalites]'.[44] According to modern researchers, the Islamic geographic term Haital (Hephthalite) 'was for long synonymous with the regions of Tuxāristān and Badaxšān to the south of the upper Oxus and those of Chāganiān, Qubāḍiyān, Xuttal and Waxš to the north of it'.[45]

Thus Hephthalite buffer principalities with vassal status were formed in the south of Central Asia. One of them, Chaganiyan, lies in the upper and central valley of the Surkhan Darya river. It is certain that a Hephthalite dynasty – which may have been descended from the Faganish mentioned above – ruled in Chaganiyan. The coinage in circulation was mainly that of Khusrau I Anushirvan: at first, this was the genuine currency of the *shahanshah*, but imitations later appeared with the name of the local rulers, '$\sigma\alpha\rho\rho$o $\chi\delta\eta$o, $\xi\alpha\rho\iota\nu$o $\chi\delta\eta$o'. Finally, coins appeared stamped like those of Khusrau I but with the name of the local ruler, ' πo$\iota\nu$oιo $\chi\delta\eta$o', on the reverse, on either side of an altar; while the obverse bears no inscription.[46] The local ruling dynasty, whose representatives bore the title of *Chaghān khudāt*, continued to exist in the pre-Arab period.[47] Several of the rulers are known to us by name: an Afrasiab inscription states that emissaries arrived in Samarkand from the Chaganiyan ruler, Turantash. Later, in the first quarter of the eighth century, the ruler of Chaganiyan was Tish[48] the 'One-Eyed', who also ruled the whole of Tokharistan with the title of *yabghu*. There was also a developed system of administration. The

[42] Mohl, 1868, pp. 308–16.
[43] For further details, see Mandel'shtam, 1964, pp. 42–3.
[44] See al-Biruni, 1973, p. 467.
[45] Bosworth and Clauson, 1965, p. 5.
[46] Rtveladze, 1983, p. 75.
[47] Bosworth, 1981, pp. 1–2.
[48] 'Tish' was the Bactrian name for the star Sirius.

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above-mentioned emissaries from Chaganiyan were led by the *dapirpat*, the chief scribe or head of chancellery.

Another major Hephthalite possession was Khuttal, which lay within the territory of the present-day Kulyab region, that is, the basin of the River Kyzyl-su, and at times also included the Vakhsh valley. The local dynasty here also followed an established order of succession.[49] The local rulers bore the Iranian title of *khuttal-shah* or *sher-i khuttal* while the Arabs referred to them as *mulūk* (pl. of *mālik*, king).[50] There is as yet no evidence that specifically Khuttal coinage was minted, but the practice existed in several neighbouring territories. In particular, the territories of Termez and Kobadian minted their own copper coinage from the end of the fifth to the beginning of the seventh century. Pierced copper coins bearing cursive Hephthalite inscriptions circulated in Kobadian and Vakhsh from the second quarter of the seventh century.[51]

A further important Hephthalite possession was Balkh, the premier town in Tokharistan, which, at that time, had extensive territory. Written reports provide detailed descriptions of Balkh and its buildings, including the renowned Naubahar (Buddhist temple near Balkh) of the late sixth century. Its name derives from the Sanskrit *nōva vihāra* (new monastery). The Buddhist community was headed by the *barmak*, a title derived from the Sanskrit, *parmak* (superior or chief). At Balkh, too, coins were minted.

Important information about all these territories is given in the description of the journey made by the Chinese Buddhist pilgrim, Hsüan-tsang; although he travelled after Tokharistan had been conquered by the Türks, much remained unchanged at the time of his journey in 630. Tokharistan (Tou-ho-lo) comprised 27 territories 'divided by natural boundaries'. Of the local population he says: 'Their language differs somewhat from that of other countries.' His description of the written language corresponds to Bactrian Hephthalite writing, which was based on the Greek alphabet. Hsüan-tsang also mentions the wealth of literary works and remarks that 'most of the people use fine cotton for their dress; some use wool'. He refers to their coinage, which differs from that of other countries.

The territory of Termez (Ta-mi) lay on an east-west axis, as did its capital, which contained some 10 Buddhist *saṅghārāma*s (monasteries) with approximately 1,000 monks, and stupas and images of the Buddha. The territory of Chaganiyan (Shih-han-na) was somewhat smaller than Termez, its capital was only half the size and there were only some 500 *saṅghārāma*s. Similarly, the territory and capital of Kobadian (Kio-ho-yen-na) were half the size of those of Termez and the country contained 10 monasteries with hundreds

[49] Nöldeke, Tabari, 1973, Vol. 2, p. 1618.
[50] Marquart, 1901, p. 30; Belenitskiy, 1950, p. 115.
[51] Davidovich and Zeimal, 1980, pp. 72–4.

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of monks. Although the territory of Vakhsh was slightly smaller than that of Termez, their capitals were almost the same size. The capital of the territory of Khuttal (Kho-to-lo) was the same size as Termez.

The territory of Balkh (Po-ho) was larger than that of Termez and bordered on the River Amu Darya to the north. The capital was the same size as Termez, well fortified but with a small population. Agricultural produce was varied. There were roughly 100 *saṅghārāma*s with 3,000 Hinayana monks. Outside the town was the 'new *saṅghārāma*', 'which was built by a former king of this country'. There follows a description of this *saṅghārāma* and the buildings in the religious complex, including a giant stupa.[52]

The Hephthalites settled over a much wider area within the limits of modern Afghanistan than the area of Balkh, penetrating westwards as far as Herat and Badhghis. In the struggle against the Arabs, the tribes of the Herat Hephthalites helped to resist the troops of [c]Abdallah b. Amir in Kuhistan (see Chapter 19, Part One).[53] The Hephthalites are mentioned in connection with the events of 704,[54] along with 'Tibetans' and ' Türks'. The leader of the Hephthalites of Herat and Badhghis, Tarkhan Nizak (Figs. 1 and 2), played a major role in the struggle against the Arabs. Arab sources provide detailed information about this ruler and his role in the events connected with the fall of the last Sasanian king, Yazdgird III (632–651). According to the early thirteenthcentury geographer Yakut (V, 461), Badhghis was the 'headquarters of the Hayatila [Hephthalites]'. Other sources describe Tarkhan Nizak as 'king of the Hephthalites'. He also played an active part in the struggle against the Arabs in Tokharistan and twice attempted to capture Balkh. Taken

FIG. 1. Coins of Tarkhan Nizak (observe). Photo: © Bibliothèque Nationale de France

[52] Beal, 1969, Vol. 1, pp. 37–46.
[53] Nöldeke, Tabari, 1973, Vol. 1, p. 2886.
[54] Ibid., Vol. 2, p. 1,153.

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FIG. 2. Coin of Tarkhan Nizak (reverse). Photo: © Bibliothèque Nationale de France

together, this evidence indicates that a powerful confederation of Hephthalite tribes existed in north-western Afghanistan.[55]

The Khalaj, the successors of the Hephthalites

The Hephthalites were succeeded by the Khalaj, a people or tribes originally living in western Turkestan and then in Afghanistan during the ninth (eighth?) to the twelfth centuries. Arab geographers of the ninth and tenth centuries place them among the Türk tribes and frequently confuse the Khalaj with the Khallukh (i.e. Karluk) as only diacritical marks distinguish these two ethnonyms in Arabic script. Hence, information relating to the Khallukh is often included in descriptions of the Khalaj. For example, the Arab geographer Ibn Khurradadhbih includes the Khalaj among the Türk tribes and locates their winter quarters in the region of the River Talas adjoining the land of the Khallukh, but also states that they live 'on this side' of the Amu Darya, i.e. to its south and west. According to the tenth-century geographers al-Istakhri and Ibn Hauqal, the Khalaj lived in Zamin-Dawar. They are said to have moved in ancient times to that province situated between Hind and Seistan (modern Sistan) but to have retained 'Turkic appearance, dress and language'. The Persian geography, the *Hudūd al-ᶜālam* [Regions of the World], provides the following information:

> In Ghazni and in the limits of the boroughs which we have enumerated, live the Khalaj Turks who possess many sheep. They wander along climates, grazing grounds and pasture-lands.

[55] Marquart, 1901, pp. 76–8; Markwart, 1938, pp. 39–41; Bivar, 1971, p. 304.

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> These Khalaj Turks [are] also numerous in the provinces of Balkh, Tukharistan, Bust and Guzganan.[56]

A later author (beginning of the thirteenth century), Muhammad b. Najib Bakran, writes in his *Jahān-nāme* that:

> the Khalaj are a tribe of Turks who from the Khallukh limits emigrated to Zābulistān. Among the districts of Ghazni there is a steppe where they reside. Then on account of the heat of [the] air their complexion has changed and tended towards blackness; the language, too, has undergone alterations and become a different dialect. A tribe of this group went to the limits of Bāvard and founded some settlements.[57]

The author notes acutely that the appearance and language of the Khalaj differ significantly from those of the Türks. Another source, the *Tārikh-e Sistān* [The History of Sistan], distinguishes the Khalaj from the Türks when describing the peoples conquered by Ya^{c}qub b. Laith.[58] They are also said to differ in Firdausi's *Shāh-nāme*.[59] The account by al-Khwarazmi in his *Mafātīh al-^{c}ulūm* (composed shortly after 977) is conclusive with regard to the origin of the Khalaj. He writes that the Hayatila (Hephthalites) 'are a tribal group who were formerly powerful and ruled over Tukhāristān; the Khaladj and Kandjīna. Turks are remnants of them.'[60] According to Minorsky, 'the early history of the Khalaj tribe is obscure'.[61]

Marquart[62] considers that the Khalaj belonged to the Hephthalite people or Hephthalite confederation and that they were a Turkic people.[63] He arrives at the conclusion that they belonged to the Hephthalites on the basis of al-Khwarazmi's *Mafātīh al-^{c}ulūm* and by analysing 'two names found in pre-Islamic sources'. The first name, *Xwls* (or *Khwls*) (Marquart suggests the reading: **Kholas*), occurs in a Syriac history known as the *Zaharias Rhetor* (554–5), which lists the names of the Northern Barbarians. The second name, Kholiatai or Choliatai, occurs three times in the account by Zemarkhos, the Byzantine envoy to the Turkic court in 568. For Minorsky, it is clear that the Kholiatai: '(1) lived to the east of the Jaxartes, (2) probably to the west of Talas, (3) that they had towns, and (4) that their ruler was an important vassal of Dizabul [king of the Türks]'.[64]

[56] *Hudūd al-^{c}ulūm*, 1970, p. 111.
[57] Ibid., p. 348.
[58] *Tārikh-e Sistān*, 1976, p. 170.
[59] Mohl, 1868, p. 682.
[60] Bosworth and Clauson, 1965, p. 6.
[61] Minorsky, 1940, p. 426.
[62] Marquart, 1901, pp. 251–4.
[63] Elsewhere he is inclined to believe that their language was Mongolic: see Marquart, 1914, p. 73; Markwart, 1938, p. 93.
[64] Minorsky, 1940, p. 427.

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In his list of the 'lands of the Turks', Ibn Khurradadhbih mentions the Karluk and the Khalaj together 'and these [latter] are on this side of the River [Oxus]', that is, to the south and west of the Amu Darya. In another passage, he reports that the winter quarters of the Karluk were near Kasra-bash to the south of the Talas, 'and near them are the winter quarters of the Khalaj'. But the distance between the Amu Darya and the Talas is such that it would have been impossible for the tribes living beyond the Amu Darya to use the Talas pastures as winter quarters. The logical conclusion is: 'Either the text is mutilated or there were still (?) some Khalaj living near the Khallukh.'[65] Minorsky adds, 'The tempting point in Marquart's theory is that both Zemarkhos and Ibn Khurradadhbih have in view the region near Talas. However, the identity of the names *Xwls* χολιατ*αι* and Khalaj is still to be proved.'[66]

In spite of this and other objections, Marquart's view has become the prevailing one in the field. It may be taken as established that the Khalaj were the descendants of the Hephthalites who moved to the south of Afghanistan, although some of them remained in the north. Subsequently, they are frequently referred to in historical accounts as participating in various wars. Some of them moved to western Iran (Khalajistan) and even to Anatolia; they now speak a very archaic Turkic language. After a number of ethnic transformations, the Afghan Khalaj became 'the Pashto-speaking Ghalzay or Ghilzay tribe of Afghans'.[67] This Pashto-speaking tribe is first referred to in connection with Babur's campaign against Ghalji near Ghazni, which means that this process was completed by the beginning of the sixteenth century.[68]

Urban life and art in Tokharistan

The sixth century was characterized by a degree of progress in urban life in Tokharistan. Old towns and settlements, including such major ones as Balkh, Dilberjin and Termez, continued to exist. There are over 100 early medieval monuments on the territory of the Surkhan Darya region of Uzbekistan alone, of which roughly 60 per cent date from the fifth to the eighth century. The network of urban settlements was reorganized, perhaps fundamentally, with the development of new social and economic conditions and the beginnings of feudal relationships. Many new settlements sprang up, including some which were medium-sized or large. As far as we can judge from the incomplete data, the internal structure of urban settlements underwent modification. Despite the far-reaching changes in all

[65] Ibid., p. 428.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Minorsky, 1940; Bosworth and Doerfer, 1978; Rahman, 1979.
[68] Frye, 1965, p. 1001.

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areas of urban life, material culture and art, however, links may be observed with the previous period.

Among the urban centres which finally took shape in the sixth century was Kafyr-kala, capital of the Vakhsh valley. The town and citadel formed a regular square with sides of 360 m. They were surrounded on all sides by a large ditch (50–60 m wide and 5 m deep) and by defensive walls reinforced with strong towers. The citadel (of 70 ×70 m) in the north-east corner of the town had exceptionally strong fortifications. It was surrounded by two walls. The inner, main wall had strong angle towers and projecting semi-circular towers. Between the towers were stepped arched niches containing false arrowshaped loopholes. The fortifications were exceptionally strong. Passages running along the fortified walls were used for defensive purposes. The palace complex in the citadel was built around a rectangular hall with an area of 200 sq. m, surrounded by smaller halls and domestic offices. The southern part of the palace contained the Buddhist *vihāra* and a courtyard. The *vihāra* had a central sanctuary and ambulatory. The walls of the sanctuary were decorated with polychrome murals depicting the Buddha and other Buddhist figures.

There were also castles, one example being Kuëv-kurgan. This was a twostorey structure (18×20 m) erected on a 3-m platform of *pakhsa* (sun-baked brick). The rooms on the lower floor were built around a small, almost square hall. There were also several rectangular and passage-like rooms, some of which were very elongated. The layout of the upper floor is uncertain, although a richly decorated ceremonial room was apparently located on the upper floor above the hall. This room contained a frieze of some ten or twelve painted statues and the walls were covered by murals.[69]

Balalyk-tepe with its remarkable cycle of paintings, the later areas of Dilberjin with the corresponding paintings, Bamiyan and a number of other monuments in Afghanistan apparently belong to the sixth century, when architecture, painting and decorative metalwork achieved a high level of development. A detailed description of the surviving examples of the art of the period is provided in Chapter 6.

[69] Litvinsky and Solov'ev, 1985.

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