

Expansion Policy of the Gupta

Sri Gupta : (A.D. 240 – 280)

Gupta Inscription mention ‘Maharaja Sri Gupta’ as the founder of the dynasty.

Poona Plates of Prabhavatigupta Vakataka called him, *Adiraja*.

I-tsing, 672 A.D, heard of Maharaja Sri Gupta, who built a temple (near Mrigasikhavana) for Chinese pilgrims and endowed with 24 villages.

Ghatotkacha (A.D. 280 – 319) as the successor of Sri Gupta.

We possess very little information regarding the early history of the Gupta family.

Chandra Gupta I (A.D. 319-335)

- ▶ Chandragupta I is described in the inscriptions as *Maharajadhiraja* ‘king of Kings’
- ▶ deliberate, indicating the deference in rank and status
- ▶ Unfortunately, not much is known about his conquests and the exact extent of his territory
- ▶ Matrimonial alliance : Marriage with Lichchhavi (princess) Kumaradevi
- ▶ V.A. Smith stated ‘Kumaradevi brought to her husband as her dowry valuable influence’
- ▶ Marriage with Lichchhavi was highly important from the political rather from the social point of view.
- ▶ Chandragupta I was materially helped by his Lichchhavi alliance of which even his illustrious progeny were so proud they constantly make mention in their inscriptions:
Lichchhavi- dauhitra (daughter’s son of the Lichchhavi)

- ▶ Coins: *‘on the observe the figures and the name of Chandragupta and Kumaradevi and on the reverse a goddess seated on a lion, along with the legend Lichchhavayah (the Lichchhavis)’*
- ▶ *Heroic deeds of Chandragupta – unknown*
- ▶ *Puranas “ the kings born to the Gupta family will rule over the territories (Janapadas) situated along the Ganges such as Prayag (UP), Saketa (Oudh) and Magadha (Bihar)” translated by Pargiter*

*‘Anu-Ganga Prayagam cha Saketam Magadhanis tatha
Etan janapadan sarvan bhoksyante Gupta-vamsajah’*

Samudragupta (335 – 380 A.D.)

- ▶ Primary source: Allahabad Pillar Inscription, poetical composition (kavya) by Harisena
- ▶ *Tattvekshina chakshusha: with an eye to truth, right and justice without being swayed by any other consideration*

Protect ye this earth

Chandragupta I selected Samudragupta for the throne and declared his decision publicly before his council.

Campaigns and Conquests:

The seventh verse of Allahabad Prasasti refers to important military achievements of Samudragupta, classifies conquests with reference to the different treatments.

Mention is first made of his complete victory over two rulers:

Achyuta , ruler of Ahichchhatra (modern Ramnagar in Bareilly district)

Nagasena, was one of the Naga kings, ruling Champavati and Mathura.

- The first category includes twelve states of **Dakshinapatha (Deccan and South India)**
- Mahendra of Kosala (Bilaspur, Raipur, Sambhalpur)
- Vyaghraraja of Mahakantara (Orissa)
- Mantaraja of Kaurala (Sonpur district of MP)
- Svamidatta of Kottura (Vizagapatam district)
- Daman of Erandapalla (Endapalli in Ellore, Vishakhapatnam)
- Vishnugopa of Kanchi (Conjeevarman)
- Nilaraj of Avamukta (vicinity of Kanchi)
- Hastivarman of Vengi (Godavari district)
- Mahendra of Pistapura (Pstapuram in Godavari district)
- Ugrasena of Pallaka (Vellore district)
- Kubera of Devarashtra (Yellamanchili of Vizagapatnam)
- Dhananjay of Kusthalapura (North Arcot district)

▶ Second Campaign in Aryavarta

- ▶ Rudradeva
- ▶ Matila
- ▶ Nagadutta
- ▶ Chandravarman
- ▶ Ganapati Naga
- ▶ Nagasena
- ▶ Achyuta
- ▶ Nandin
- ▶ Balavarman

▶ Conquest of Atvika or Forest Kingdoms

- ▶ Samudragupta reduced to complete subjection '*paricharakikrita*' (made servants of)
- ▶ Eighteen such states are mentioned in the copper plate inscription

▶ *Frontier states*

- ▶ Samatata (modern Kamta, Bengal)
- ▶ Devaka (Assam)
- ▶ Kamarupa (Guwahati district, Assam)
- ▶ Nepal
- ▶ Kartipura (Garhwal, Rohilkhand)

- ▶ Harisena states that the Republican states also accepted his sovereignty
- ▶ Mallavas
- ▶ Arjurayanas (Alwar and Jaipur)
- ▶ Yaudheyas (Bharatpur)
- ▶ Madrakas (Saikot)
- ▶ Abhiras (Jhansi)
- ▶ Prarjunas (Central Provinces)
- ▶ Sanakanikas (Narasimhapur district of M.P)
- ▶ Kakas (Sanchi)
- ▶ Kharaparikas (Damoh district of M.P)

Chandragupta II Vikramaditya (A.D. 375 - 414)

- ▶ Mathura Pillar inscription: *sat-putra* of his father
- ▶ Matrimonial alliance: Kuberanaga and Dhruvadebi
- ▶ Kuberanaga's daughter Prabhavati Gupta, married Vakataka king Rudrasena II
- ▶ Most important event of his reign is his conquest of Western Malwa and Saurashtra
- ▶ Cordial relation between Samudragupta and Sakas
- ▶ Eastern Malwa was made the base of his operation
- ▶ Protracted war of about 20 yrs
- ▶ Saka coins upto 388 A.D.
- ▶ *Banabhatta's Harshacharita*



- ▶ Extent of the Empire

- ▶ *The empire extended upto the Himalayas in the north and river Narbada in the South, in the east it included Eastern Bengal and Kathiawar, Gujarat in the west.*

- ▶ *Shifted his capital towards the east, probably Ujjain*

- ▶ Fa –Hein states: He established a very efficient administrative system

Kumara Gupta (A.D. 413 -455)

Skanda Gupta (A.D. 455 – 467)

- ▶ Invasion of the Huns/ Hunas
- ▶ Hunas made a severe attack on India after crossing river Indus
- ▶ Skanda Gupta was able to inflict a crushing defeat
- ▶ He offered sacrifices to gods, laid a statue of Lord Vishnu in Bhitari village of Ghazipur district
- ▶ engraved inscription on this statue
- ▶ Attacked and occupied the north-west of Punjab at the close of his reign
