

tions.²³ Dhāraṇa is clearly the *gotra* of her father, as the *gotra* of her husband is specifically mentioned as 'Viṣṇuvṛddha' in the Chammak copper plate inscription of Pravarasena II.²⁴

This Dhāraṇa *gotra* has been variously interpreted by scholars.

Jayaswal takes it to stand for *Dhanri*, a Jāt clan found in Amritsar, and on the basis of the Kaumudimahotsava he concludes that Candragupta I was a *Kāraskara* or *Kakkar jāṭ*.²⁵ This view has been supported by Gokhale.²⁶

Jayaswal emphasizes the similarity between the name of the *Dhāraṇīya jāṭs* in Gaṅgānagar district of Rajasthan and the Dhāraṇa *gotra* of the Guptas.²⁷ Candragomin's grammatical illustration "*ajayat jarto Hūṇān*" (The *jarta* or Jāt king defeated the Hūṇas) has also been interpreted by Jayaswal to refer to the Gupta ruler Skandagupta's victory over the Hūṇas.²⁸ Thus the jāṭ origin of the Guptas has been a favourite thesis of Jayaswal.

According to Raychaudhuri the Dhāraṇa *gotra* of the Guptas suggests that they were related to Dhāriṇī, the chief queen of Agnimitra Śuṅga.²⁹ This view is untenable. The similarity in the two names is not sufficient to establish the origin of the Dhārṇa *gotra*.

On the basis of the evidence of the Skandapurāna Dashrath Sharma³⁰ says that Dhāraṇa was a *gotra* of the brāhmaṇas of Dharmāranya, a tract in the present Mirzapur district of Eastern Uttar Pradesh. But Sharma is not ready to accept that the Guptas were brāhmaṇas, he considers them to be either kṣatriyas or vaiśyas who adopted the *gotra* of their *gurus*, as sanctioned by the laws of the Smṛtis and the Dharmasūtras.³¹

But Goyal³² considers the Guptas to be brāhmaṇas. He relies on the evidence of their matrimonial alliances :

We find that Prabhāvatīguptā, the daughter of Candragupta II was married to the brāhmaṇa king Rudrasena II.³³ Kadamba king Kāku(ut)sthavarman who was a brāhmaṇa says that he married one of his daughters to a Gupta king.³⁴ Buddhist scholar Paramārtha (A.D. 600) says that Bālāditya, the Gupta king, married his sister to Vasurāta, a brāhmaṇa by caste.³⁵ According to the Mandasor inscription of Yaśodharman