

horses, and were soon to smash the Indian empire of the Guptas into pieces'.¹²⁰

In A.D. 484 the Hūnas killed the Sassanian ruler of Persia. Towards the close of the fifth century A.D. they ruled over a vast empire with their principal capital at Balkh.¹²¹ We know of a *Hūna-deśa* placed to the South of the Kāma-giri and to the North of Maru-deśa, i.e., the desert called the land of heroes. The Harṣacarita places the Hūna country in the Punjab region practically suggesting the same area.¹²²

In the middle of the sixth century A.D., the Sassanian king of Persia made an alliance with Western Turks against the Hūnas and smashed their rule from the Oxus by killing their king sometime between A.D. 563 and 567.¹²³

We know of Toramāṇa from his Eraṇ Boar Inscription¹²⁴ and of Mihirakula from his Gwalior Inscription.¹²⁵ These two are generally taken to have been Hūna chiefs. There is another inscription found at Kura (Salt range in the Punjab) referring to *Rājādhirāja Mahārāja Toramāṇa-Ṣāhi-Jau* (bla), whom some scholars identify with king Toramāṇa mentioned in the Eraṇ Inscription,¹²⁶ but others regard the two as quite different.¹²⁷ Here it must be pointed out, none of these inscriptions describes any of these kings as Hūnas nor contains any reference to the Hūnas.

We find an interesting account of Toramāṇa in the Jain work, *Kuvalayamālā*, composed to 700 Śaka (A.D. 778).¹²⁸ Here Toramāṇa is stated to have lived on the bank of the Candrabhāgā (Chenab river). His guru Hari-gupta, who himself was a scion of the Gupta family, also lived there.¹²⁹

Both Toramāṇa and Mihirakula are referred to in the *Rājataranṅinī*, but there is no mention of their being the Hūnas.

It is doubtful whether Toramāṇa and Mihirakula were Hūnas or Kuṣāṇas. Sir Aurel Stein, Jayaswal¹³⁰ and Fleet¹³¹ held that Toramāṇa was a Kuṣāṇa. But Sten Konow¹³² holds that Toramāṇa was, in all probability, a Hūna, as is generally assumed, and not a Kuṣāṇa. It is not unlikely that the Hūnas and the Kuṣāṇas were ethnically allied and were later merged into a new nation, which came to be known as Hūna in India.¹³³

There are several stray references to the Hūnas in Indian literature. D.C. Sircar¹³⁴ opines that the Indian names *Hūna*,