

of ancient India, and proves that Rudradāman was reigning in A.D. 150.<sup>484</sup>

Samudragupta's main effort was in the direction of the West, where the Śakas had ruled for over 200 years and which was enriched by the lucrative western trade. The Śakas at that time controlled Malwa and Kathiawar and were a power to be reckoned with. 'Though the Allahabad Pillar Inscription claims that Samudragupta received homage from "the Śaka lords", it is probable that he did not measure swords with them'.<sup>485</sup> It is clear that the Śaka homage to Samudragupta was not at all sincere and reliable since it was not tendered to his successor,<sup>486</sup> and Candragupta II had to conquer the Śakas once again.

There is indeed a tradition that on the death of Samudragupta the Śakas succeeded in shaking the Gupta Empire, and forced the weak king, Rāmagupta, to conclude a dishonourable peace.<sup>487</sup> Most authorities reject the story, and deny the historicity of Rāmagupta, but the recent discovery of copper coins bearing his name<sup>488</sup> strengthens the suggestion that the tradition has a basis of fact.<sup>489</sup>

It was Candragupta II (C.376-415), the son of Samudragupta and younger brother of the shadowy Rāmagupta, who finally defeated the Śakas, soon after A.D. 388.<sup>490</sup> So he is rightly remembered as 'Śakāri' 'the enemy of the Śakas'.<sup>491</sup>

The trousers were introduced into India by the Śakas and seem to have been in vogue among the ruling classes during the Gupta times, for Gupta kings often appear on their coins as wearing trousers.<sup>492</sup>

The Śakas were notorious drinkers. It is said that Cyrus defeated the Śakas, when they were maddened by wine.<sup>493</sup> It has been suggested by Buddha Prakash that as a result of the influence of the Śakas, the vogue for excessive drinking spread. Strabo<sup>494</sup> speaks of a Bacchanalian festival of the Persian, in which men and women, dressed in Scythian style passed day and night in drinking and wanton play.<sup>495</sup> We know of similar drinking bouts in the Mahābhārata.<sup>496</sup> Probably the Scythians and the Iranians popularised drinking in the Punjab. The people of the Gangetic country, sticking to pristine ideals of moderation did not relish the exotic drink-