KALINGA:
RECONSTRUCTING A REGIONAL HISTORY FROM THE
SIXTH CENTURY BCE TO THE FIRST CENTURY BCE

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A great person and a

wonderful stepmother
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Chapter 1. Introduction: Reinterpreting the Region in Ancient India

In 1868 the British Government of India issued funds to study the antiquities of its possessions. The Royal Society of the Arts commissioned this endowment to study the Bengal province, and from this grant Rajendralala Mitra produced a two-volume survey titled the *Antiquities of Orissa*, published in 1875 and 1880, respectively.¹ Basing his data from the archeological excavations performed by Andrew Sterling, an early British Indologist, along with the scholarly enterprises of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Mitra produced the first regional history of India written by an Indian. *Antiquities of Orissa* furnished Indian historiography with an indigenous study of its own history, and in so doing revealed the importance of studying regions as constituents to the overall make up of India. This groundbreaking survey of Orissa history proved that western educated Indians could produce works on par with their British counterparts. Exploring Orissa as a distinct region with a separate yet interwoven history that contributed to the Pan-Indic ideal of unity, Mitra laid the groundwork for scholars of other regions to look at the significance of their own history.

Prior to writing this work Orissa remained a segment of the larger province of Bengal, established by the British East India Company in 1803.² As the British became more intimate with their colonial territories they began to comprehend the cultural intricacies of South Asia. The establishment of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784 signifies a shift from mere conquering and controlling, to one of garnering a


comprehensive understanding of the subcontinent through scholarly studies. India, and its history, became a subject to study while simultaneously remained a colonial possession in which to govern and dominate. This bipolar conception of India, on the one hand being academically significant and on the other culturally inferior, stunted early Indian historiography. For example, Andrew Sterling championed the study of archeology in India and encountered the glorious remains of India's past, but still remarked about the Orissa people that, "The European observer will soon discover that not withstanding its Puranic celebrity, the soil is generally poor and unfruitful, all its natural productions of an inferior quality and that its inhabitants rank the lowest in the scale of moral and intellectual excellence of any people on this side of India."\(^3\)

Unfettered from British colonial conceptions towards India, Mitra embarked on his quest to write a history of Orissa. He intended, with this study, to earmark a place for Orissa on the historiographical shelf of Indian antiquity, while also documenting the glorious past of this region as it pertained to world history.

In his work, Mitra applied western theories of the ancient period to Orissan antiquity as a means to understand India's past. Sir Gardner Wilkinson's *Ancient Egyptians* served as the archetype Mitra chose to view archeological remains of Orissa. In an effort to bridge the perceived gap between Indian architectural achievement and those found in the west he categorized Orissa art and architecture with the styles familiar with a western audience: Daedalian, Aeginetan, Etruscan, Egyptian, and Assyrian.\(^4\)

\(^3\) Andrew Sterling, *An Account (Geographical, Statistical, and Historical) of Orissa Proper or Cuttack*, rev. ed (Calcutta: Bengal Secretarial Press, 1904), 4.

\(^4\) Mitra, *Antiquities of Orissa*, 75.
Furthermore, in contrast to the sentiments expressed by Sterling, Mitra praised Orissa’s regional character:

Cut off from the rest of India by ranges of hills and inhospitable wilds on the one side, and hemmed in by the sea on the other it enjoyed perfect immunity for a long time… Commerce it had next to none, and its people lived happily and contented for ages under a national government, with every opportunity to cultivate the arts of peace, and to promote prosperity of their fatherland. The ancient monuments it contains are therefore, more authentic than what are to be met with in most other parts of India, and, as such, have a peculiar interest and significances for the antiquarian.⁵

For Mitra, the monuments of Orissa’s antiquity refuted western perceptions of India as an “unresisting and unchanging society” possessing, “no history, at least no known history.”⁶ This initial regional study, produced by one of the first indigenous scholars versed in western academic techniques, inspired other indigenous scholars to reclaim their history.

Orissa became an independent province in 1936, splitting from Bengal, yet the efforts of focusing on an implicit regional character begun by Mitra in 1868 faded, as scholarly studies emphasized an encompassing Pan-Indic national narrative.⁷ As India moved towards independence politicians revised their past, prior to the British and Muslim invasions, as the apex of Indian culture that unified the present. Nationalists, intent on constructing an inclusive Pan-Indic narrative, overlooked regional differences by advocating that “religious unity and spiritual fellowship among the Hindus all over India was held to be the basis of nationalism which overrode barriers of language and distance: the ideals of an all-India Empire and full or partial realization of it in the past,

⁵ Mitra, Antiquities of Orissa, v.

⁶ Irfan Habib, Essays in Indian History: Towards a Marxist Perception (New Delhi: Tulika, 1995), 16; as found in The New York Daily Tribune, article date-lined 22 July 1853; ‘On Colonialism’, 76.

⁷ Pradhan, History of Orissa, 300.
were stressed in justification of its demands for the present." In this way, ancient India became a concept manifested in the independence movement, a movement that ignored regions in favor of unifying national ideals.

In much the way Mitra intended to examine the antiquities of India by focusing of Orissa, I approach region in ancient India by concentrating on the history of Kalinga. This thesis demonstrates the ways in which the region of Kalinga played a pivotal role in the development of Indian history. The concept of region functions as the historical medium in examining Kalinga, as it existed from the sixth century BCE to the rise of the Chedi Empire in the first century BCE. Three body chapters makeup this study, with the first reviewing the formative period of Kalinga from the rise of Buddhism until the advent of the Maurya Empire. The next section revolves around Asoka and the Kalinga war, 260 BCE, examining his motives for invading this region and the ramifications of this event. The third chapter involves the Chedi dynasty, primarily the rule of Kharavela (49-27 BCE), and how this period represented the apex of Kalinga as a region. By analyzing the ways in which Kalinga experienced the social, cultural, and historical processes transpiring during these five centuries I will subsequently reexamine the macro-development of ancient India. Reevaluating the historical trends of ancient India from a regional perspective generates a more accurate conception of India as an amalgamation of histories and cultures.

The aim of this thesis is to contribute to the understanding of ancient India through the spectrum of a specific locale, and in doing so reevaluate the role of region in this period. Rather than contextualizing Kalinga as a constituent of an overarching Pan-

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Indic narrative, by focusing on the region this thesis attempts to evaluate localized development in the ancient period. Revising the general historical surveys of ancient India, which emphasized cultural unity and political integration during periods of imperial hegemony, this thesis challenges the dominant paradigm of traditional history that “offers a view from above, in the sense that it has always concentrated on the great deeds of men, statesmen, generals, or occasionally churchmen.” Regional history allows for alternating narratives that help explain social and cultural experiences submerged in general surveys. The regional development of Kalinga differed from that of other regions in India, and exploring this specific topic provides new interpretation of the ancient period. The social ramifications of sweeping changes that occurred during these five centuries can be much more succinctly evaluated from a regional perspective by narrowing the variables of experience to a specific locale. Cultural development, disassociated from labels such as Vedic or Dravidian, can also be better understood from a regional perspective. By focusing on Kalinga, this thesis intends to approach ancient India history through the medium of region.

The following five chapters develop and examine the regional history of Kalinga as an alternative to the all encompassing Pan-Indic narrative. The remainder of this chapter elucidates the debate on what constitutes a region. In a manner similar to Prasenjit Duara’s approach to the alternative construction of nation-state linear history, this regional Kalinga narrative bifurcates the history of ancient India. In his Rescuing History from the Nation, Duara emphasizes the need to acknowledge voices of discent within the teleological ‘History’ of the nation wherein, “the nation, even where it is

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manifestly not a recent invention, is hardly the realization of an original essence, but a historical configuration designed to include certain groups and exclude or marginalize others—often violently."\(^{10}\) Duara reacts to the appropriation of history in crafting a limited national narrative, and instead embraces the notion of "an alternative history which emphasizes the dynamic, multiple, and contested nature of historical identities."\(^{11}\)

Similarly, this thesis focuses on the Kalinga region as an alternative dissenting narrative concurrent to general histories of ancient India. Highlighting this regional perspective as a component of history expands the relevant contributions of regional traditions included within the Pan-Indic meta-narrative. In his work, Duara identifies the conjoining of Pan-Indic ideals with the national narrative of India:

> The secularist model of Jawaharlal Nehru and Rabindranath Tagore drew on the idealized conception of the subcontinental empire... the History of India was the most authentic testimony to the capacity (read necessity) of Indians to maintain a "unity among diversity." The high points of Indian history were the reigns of Aśoka, the Guptas, Akbar, and the great Mughals, all of whom attempted to develop a political framework to unite the cultural diversity of the subcontinent.\(^{12}\)

Regional histories exemplify this notion of "unity among diversity" by not limiting cultural identity to participation within these defined moments of political unity.

Viewing region of Kalinga as a distinguishable unit from the Maurya Empire denies meta-history the ability "to fix and privilege a single identity from among the contesting multiplicity of identifications."\(^{13}\) A regional history of Kalinga refutes the assumption of a linear historical progression of ancient India as a succession of empires; instead it

\(^{10}\) Prasenjit Duara, *Rescuing History from the Nation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 15.

\(^{11}\) Ibid, 16.

\(^{12}\) Ibid, 77.

\(^{13}\) Ibid, 81.
reinterprets ancient India as an aggregate of regional powers each constituting a distinct tradition, which, at some moments functioned as an imperial unit while during other periods existed as independent locales.

Upon defining region, and its context for this study, the second chapter examines Kalinga from the rise of Buddhism until the Maurya Empire conquered this region in 260 BCE. This chapter will reconstruct Kalinga, defining the geographical parameters of this region, then shift to demonstrate its importance in the ancient period. With Buddhism came an increase in trade and a rise of urban centers, historical trends that effected the development of this region. This urban commercial economy catalyzed the internal development of individual regions, as political entities emerged to manage the influx of wealth and urban societies. Externally, regions vied for power and access to trade commodities. These centripetal and centrifugal forces redefined regions and cemented their boundaries in ancient India. This chapter will identify these developments as they pertained to Kalinga. This Kalinga regional narrative examines how this dynamic period of Indian history altered this region, and how Kalinga’s rise to prominence led to its ultimate defeat by the Maurya Empire.

The third chapter analyzes the emergence of the Maurya Empire, the effects of centralized administration on this region, and Aśoka’s motivations for invading Kalinga. The Kalinga war, in 260 BCE, functions as the fulcrum of this thesis, as this event defined Kalinga as a region, demarcated by boundaries in which possessed strategic importance to the centralized Maurya system. The Maurya defeat of Kalinga represents the initial formation of a centralized state apparatus enveloping the Indian subcontinent. The methods of imperial control and Aśoka’s conversion to Buddhism dominate the
historiographical traditions concerning the Kalinga war. Due to this scholars of both religion and history consider Aśoka as the penultimate ruler of ancient India, as expressed in the following statement:

No figure in Indian history has been evaluated for his place in history with as much intensity and by as many diverse interest-groups as Emperor Aśoka... This has been done over a period of not less than two thousand years and the conclusion of each evaluation vary, to such an extent as to make him the most enigmatic figure in the history of the Indian Subcontinent, if not the whole world... Aśoka has remained in vivid living memory in the minds of every successive generation of Theravāda Buddhists outside of India... Aśoka has become the cynosure of not only scholarly attention but also popular admiration. 14

The accepted narrative of this event casts Aśoka as the main character and the victory over Kalinga as his defining achievement in building his empire. For this study, Aśoka remains a military general intent on expanding his territory, strengthening his empire, and eviscerating his enemy. This chapter identifies the reasons Aśoka invaded Kalinga and what he sought to gain by integrating this region into the Maurya Empire. Secondly, this chapter will analyze the political philosophies expressed in the Arthasastra. The Maurya period represents the shift from localized political entities to a centralized bureaucratic state, and the Arthasastra functions to codify, "the essential elements of the efficient operation of the political organization." 15 When introduced, the policies of the Maurya Empire altered the internal functioning of Kalinga, and many of these changes can be seen in the resulting regional political organization.


Finally, the rise of Khāravela and Chedi dynasty, dated to the first century BCE, comprises the fourth chapter of this thesis. Though not much is known about the period between the decline of the Maurya Empire and the rise of the Chedi dynasty many points of reference can be ascertained from a single rock carving, The Hāthīgumpha inscription. After the devastating invasion wrought by Aśoka this region rebuilt itself to become one of the most powerful regions of ancient India. This chapter attempts to explain this resurgence from a regional perspective utilizing the historical framework established in preceding chapters. Furthermore, Khāravela’s adherence to Jainism and its role in the social structures of ancient India will also be addressed in this chapter. With the Kalinga region firmly established the last section of this chapter will examine the changing perception of Kalinga, from a marginal group existing beyond the boundaries of Vedic culture to an integrated part of India as expressed in Brahmanical sources. These three chapters together with concluding remarks will round out this thesis.

Discussing Regional Historiography

The movement towards regional historiography occurred in response to two major phases in previous Indian historiographical traditions: colonial and nationalist. Upon establishing the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784 the British East India Company commissioned many prominent British historians to compile histories that served their political aim and colonial aspirations. Colonial historiography worked hand in hand with the expansion of the British Empire in India, and the East India Company quickly realized that:

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Fiscal operations here depended for their success on an intimate knowledge of traditions, continuities and past procedures—a knowledge of history, for short. The use of such knowledge impressed upon the company, negatively, since the beginning of its involvement in the land question even before 1765, when its administration of some of the Ceded Districts ran into difficulties because of the refusal of the indigenous specialists to help its officials with their expertise.17

During the independence movement nationalist historiography reacted to colonial scholarship through a tripartite extrication of their history: reclaiming their past, correcting British historiography, and formulating a national identity. Imbibed with western scholarship and methodology Indian historians reinterpreted their own past, challenging colonial historiography in an effort to create a unifying meta-narrative.

In overcoming the cultural bias found in previous historical research, nationalist historiography aimed to create a national narrative reinforcing sentiments expressed during the independence movement. These historians directly responded to the western perspectives of India’s culture and traditions, especially those that cast India as barbaric or unrefined:

It is important for us at this point to note the complex relation of this new nationalist historiography to the histories of India produced by British writers in the nineteenth century. While James Mill’s History of British India, completed in 1817, may have been ‘the hegemonic textbook of Indian history’ for European Indology, for the first nationalists historians of India it represented precisely what they had to fight against. Mill did not share any of the enthusiasm of Orientalists such as William Jones for the philosophical and literary achievements of ancient India. His condemnation of the despotism and immorality of Indian civilization was total, and even his recognition of ‘the comparative superiority of Islamic civilization’ did not in any significant way affect his judgment that until the arrival of British rule, India had always been ‘condemned to semi-barbarism and the miseries of despotic power’. Nationalist history in India could be born only by challenging such an absolute and comprehensive denial of all claims to historical subjectivity.18


One historian in particular, Radha Kumud Mookerji, wrote extensively on a unity found throughout ancient India, publishing *Fundamental Unity of India* in 1914, in which he "discusses the factors that constitute nationality, opinion of European and Anglo-Indian scholars about the unity of India, and quotes from Sanskrit and Pali texts to show the fundamental unity of India." Mookerji reinterpreted ancient India’s political and cultural history in an effort to express a fundamental characteristic of nationalist dogma, "unity among diversity". Nationalist historiography exorcised Indian history from the "subject race" paradigm propounded by the British rulers to a tangible agent resurrecting a unified consciousness. These meta-narratives reclaimed Indian’s glorious past and galvanized the national spirit, ultimately contributing to the disposal of British colonial rule.

On the other hand, regional histories accounted for the variegated populations of the Indian subcontinent, and gave precedence to the incorporation of plurality within idealized Pan-Indic national identity. The emergence of regional historiography provided the basis for an alternative perspective to defining the nation, rather than one universal nationalist narrative. Nationalism, and the quest to invent a national identity gleaned from cultural traditions, facilitated regionalization as "regional histories thus became a

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20 Edward Said defines the “subject race” as those people Orientalist study in order to gain political, economic and social control over them. He argues that the colonizing powers believed that subject races did not have it in them to know what was good for them. Therefore, from a colonial perspective knowledge of subject races or Orientals is what makes their management easy and profitable; knowledge gives power, more power requires more knowledge, and so on in an increasingly profitable dialectic of information and control...lurking everywhere behind the pacification of the subject race is imperial might, more effective for its refined understanding and infrequent use than for its soldiers, brutal tax collectors, and incontinent force...knowledge about their race, character, culture, history, traditions, society, and possibilities. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), 36-39.
corrective to the earlier tendency to generalize about the subcontinent from the perspective of the Ganga Valley."21 Similarly, Duara implemented bifurcated history as an alternative to the dominant linear enlightenment ‘History’ that appropriated past events of a community to the teleological devices of the modern nation. National narratives inevitably excluded certain peoples or ideologies that stand in contrast to the well-being of the nation, therefore “bifurcation allow us to recover a historicity beyond the appropriation discourse… through this conception, I [Duara] try to salvage historicity even while overcoming or, at least, becoming self-conscious of the repressive teleologies of linear and simple, causal histories.”22 Regional histories bifurcated the national narrative expounded by nationalist historiographical enterprises. In India, the emergence of regional historiography allowed for plurality within the contrived national identity advocating “unity among diversity”, and encouraged the writing of alternative localized histories as they contributed to the overall national narrative.

The issues raised by Duara concerning the inclusion of alternative narratives into the national discourse in many ways mirrored the efforts of the Subaltern school. Whereas regional history bifurcated linear history as appropriated by the nation, Subaltern scholars attacked the core values of the nation itself. Those subscribing to the Subaltern school argued that the elites who crafted national narratives intentionally ignored and neglected voices opposing their goals, that, in fact:

Elite historiography itself, on the right or the left, nationalist or colonialist, is by the analysis of this group, shown to be constituted by cognitive failures. Indeed, if the theory of change as the site of the displacement of a discursive field is their most

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21 Romila Thapar, Cultural Pasts: Essays in Early Indian History (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 2000), 95.

22 Duara, Rescuing History, 5.
pervasive argument, this comes a close second. Here to no distinction is made, quite properly in my [Spivak] estimation, between witting and unwitting lapses. It is correctly suggested that the sophisticated vocabulary of much contemporary historiography successfully shields this cognitive failure and that this success-in-failure, this sanctioned ignorance, is inseparable from colonial domination.\(^\text{23}\)

Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, in her above argument, conjoins both regional history and subaltern studies as they occupy a similar stratum of academic investigation in opposition to mainstream historiography, and from this marginalized position attempted to reconstitute the underlying principles of these value systems. Accordingly, the alternative discourse of the Subaltern and the alternative narrative of regional history both strove to recognize what has been omitted, or shunned, in historical writings and from this produced a corrective narrative that further accentuates our understanding of the past.

Only after India gained its independence could regional historiography begin to carve for itself a niche to express an alternative perspective to the unified nation state. The elite leaders of the Indian National Congress appropriated historiography for their own goals, an independent India built upon an unifying Pan-Indic narrative. These elites silenced regional narratives in order to produce the desired inclusive tactics of nation building. Regional histories, although suppressed, continued to express themselves in the nation building enterprise. Most significantly, the leaders of Maharashtra, Ranade and Tilak, refused to capitulate to pan-Indianism expounded by the elites. Their belief in Maratha nationalism, rather than India, ran counter current to the national process.\(^\text{24}\)

Congress leaders combated this threat to unity, not only in Maharashtra but throughout

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India, and in this process confined regions, and regional issues, to the periphery of the national narrative. Regional history, like the Subaltern school remained, or rather resided, on the periphery as they battled against the elite historiographical limitations. After independence, these regions reasserted themselves into the national dialogue as the Congress leaders achieved the political unity they desired.

Regional history bifurcates India’s constructed national narrative. It promotes the existence of diversity within an idealized homogenous nation. “Unity among diversity” became the mantra of Indian nationalist not only because it represented the aggregated nation-state they desired, but it also expressed “two sets of realities, one comprehended under regional identification, the other under the term Brahmanical ideology, which, while articulating itself in religious and cultural symbols, made use of political experience as embodied in imperial institutions that brought a variety of regions under one central authority.” 25 The rise of regional historiography juxtaposed the goals of nationalist historians, who:

Continued to write political and dynastic history in the main… There was an unashamed glorification of the ancient Indian past… The glorious past was also a compensation for the humiliating present… Thus the rise of the Maurya Empire and its extension over almost the entire subcontinent was seen as an expression of an all-India consciousness. 26

Regional histories expanded the reach of nationalist historiography, and its emergence encouraged the development of alternative narratives that broadened the scope of national identity. After independence, these distinct regions could express their grievances and

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assert their voice as significant to the national cause. In this way, regional historiography emphasized the correlation between region and nation, wherein regions demarcated individual communities that in turn constituted the greater unified nation.

As an alternative to a national Pan-Indic meta-narrative, regional historiography allowed individual communities to exist within an aggregated nation-state. Expanding regional historiography to all parts of India established regionalization as unique "in terms of certain properties that not only distinguish it from other regions but also underline the necessity of preserving its integrity and of allowing the sentiments, loyalties, traditions, and attitudes that it represents to freely shape the life of men in the region."27 Without regional histories the exclusionary tendencies of a singular national identity limited the acknowledgment of certain communities. Furthermore, in expostulating his theory of discent Duara distinguished between hard and soft boundaries that isolated or welcomed communities respectively. Regional historiography reiterated the importance of localized traditions and cultures as an integrated part of the nation. 28 On the other hand, Duara warned that hard boundaries of discent eroded unified national identity wherein "communities with rigidified boundaries privilege the differences, they tend to develop an intolerance and suspicion toward the adoption of the other's practices and strive to distinguish, in some way or another, practices they share."29 Regional historiography ensured the maintenance of soft boundaries, and also benefited historical scholarship through "research with a regional or local focus has made possible new


28 Duara, Rescuing History, 65.

29 Ibid, 66.
approaches and introduced a widened spectrum of issues and data.”

Regional historiography both supplemented the Indian nationalist discourse of “unity in diversity” as well as identified unique cultural traditions as integral in compiling a Pan-Indic meta-narrative.

Upon gaining independence in 1947 India struggled to balance its dual identity of an inclusive modern nation-state and a multicultural conglomerate of distinct cultural regions. The rise of regional historiography addressed this divide, attempting to negotiate the consuming national Pan-Indic narrative with the suppressed alternative narrative of region. Removing British imperialism left India to ratify its own solutions to the multicultural quandary it faced, most readily appeased by stressing national integration. To achieve this national integration pundits, politicians, and popular social icons implemented the ideas of a shared past that unified the present, “For them [Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyya, Subrahmania Bharati, Tagore, and Gandhi], the heritage of five thousand years’ history bound the different regions of India to a consciousness of common culture which is manifested in the variegated ways of life of the people.”

The emergence of regional identities in the second half of the twentieth century has remained a constant source of debate both scholastically and politically.

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31 National integration means the act of combining all the various elements into an integral whole, that is, nation. Integration *pre se* or as such may not lead to the desired end. The value of integration depends upon the end or purpose or objective consciously intended. National integration does not stand for mechanical combination; it stands for an integration which has a definite purpose or objective in view. S. C. Daniel, “Philosophy of National Integration in Indian Context: A Holistic Approach” in N. Malla ed., *Nationalism, Regionalism and Philosophy of National Integration* (New Delhi: Regency Publications, 1998), 51-52.

The region-nation dialectic occupies volumes of well articulated rationales and varying perspectives concerning the construction and preservation of modern India. Attempting to apply a national narrative that reverberated throughout the diverse population found within India proved as tumultuous as gaining independence. The 1956 State Reorganization Committee analyzed the claims to statehood based on regional linguistic divisions while maintaining a strong centralized government. Yet, the members of this committee acknowledged the problematic limitations of their decisions:

The problems of reorganization vary from region to region. It has to be kept in mind that the inter-play for centuries of historical, linguistic, geographical, economic and other factors has produced peculiar patterns in different regions. Each case, therefore, has its own background. Besides, the problems of reorganization are so complex that it would be unrealistic to determine any case by a single test alone... We have, accordingly, examined each case on its own merits and in its own context and arrived at conclusions after taking in to consideration the totality of circumstances and on an overall assessment of the solutions proposed.

These issues involving regionalism still exist in India, and those who wield the scalpel of regionalism must choose wisely in regards to what portion of the national narrative they choose to dissect. Promoting region can be either cathartic as seen in the creation of two new states of Chattisgarh and Jharkhand, or catastrophic as in the violent revolts still persisting in the Northeast. Yet in other places, such as Mumbai which experienced riots due to linguistic divisions and competing regional identities, people have learned to embrace these differences as part of culture. Salman Rushdie, in his book *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*, drew attention to the acceptance of cultural differences and termed his

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33 Sharada Rath, "Regionalism and Political Development in India," in G. Palanithurai and R. Thandavan eds., Perspectives on Indian Regionalism (Delhi: Kanishka Publishing House, 1992), 44.

childhood language *hug-me*, a synthesis of Hindi, Urdu, Gujarati, Marathi and English.\(^{35}\) It is clear that in India, region does signify cultural identity, and shapes—positively and negatively—the relationship between national and regional affiliation.

Overall, recognizing regional histories as an alternate narrative to the national Pan-Indic discourse has aided in integrating the cultural masala that is India. During the process of modern state formation, region, as a concept has received numerous definitions.\(^{36}\) It is in defining region, and which variables to choose, that scholars continue to discuss and debate. One such debate took place at Duke University in 1966, headed by Dr. Robert Crane, wherein scholars from various fields could discuss, “regionalism as a factor in a variety of aspects of South Asian studies,” considering that “regionalism had not as yet been subjected to anything like systematic enquiry or analysis,” and, “If the concept were to have validity and were to be of use in furthering South Asia studies, it would have to be rescued from the shadows and polemics surrounding it.”\(^{37}\) Much attention has been given to region and regionalism in modern India, yet reevaluating the concept of region in the ancient period still remains a very mute subject.

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\(^{36}\) Thus, being based on cultural distinction a region stands as a profound sociological phenomenon. It is treated as the nucleus of a social aggregation for multiple purposes. But what precise factors or cultural variables must preexist to identify a tract of land as a region distinct from its neighboring areas are not fully known and cannot be specifically predicted. It can only be said that several variables must simultaneously interplay in varying degrees over a considerable period of time so as to generate some distinctive characteristics which can set apart a particular territory from other areas in such a way that it can be called a ‘region’. Bharati Mukherjee, *Regionalism in India Perspective* (Calcutta: K. P. Bagchi and Company, 1992) 5.

This thesis attempts to apply the theories and concepts surrounding region to the context of ancient India, a period once viewed as uniform, static, and having no correlation to the modern world. As scholars and politicians have begun to encourage the crafting of alternative regional narratives to the national discourse, these same parameters can be instituted in the study of ancient India. Bernard Cohn’s article “Regions Subjective and Objective: Their Relation to the Study of Modern Indian History and Society” delivered at the Duke University Symposium, divided the concept of region into four categories: historical, linguistic, cultural, and structural. Analyzing Cohn’s constituents pertaining to historical regions assists in connecting the modern concept of region to the ancient period. In agreement with Schwartzberg, that regions occupy a given time and space, Cohn expands his thesis to define historical region as “one in which there are sacred myths and symbols, held by significant groups within the area, regarding the relationship of people to their “past” and the geographical entity... it must be made clear at the outset that there is no one single type of historical region.” In order to identify the relationship between a “people” and their shared “past” it would make sense to evaluate regional historical development from the ancient to modern while concomitantly analyzing the creation and cultural propagation of these particular myths and symbols. Kalinga, and its relation to modern Orissa identity, demonstrates this ancient/modern binary of regional construction, in that a historical region forged shared “symbol pools” accessible to modern interpretations.

38 Bernard Cohn, “Regions Subjective and Objective: Their Relation to the Study of Modern History and Society,” in Crane, Regions, 6-9.

39 Ibid, 6, 12.
In demarcating any given region, the parameters established must coincide with cultural markers that differentiate between other regions. Any investigation into region automatically elicits constraints by which the region will be defined and "denoted". For this reason Burton Stein questioned the validity of "historical region" as it circumvented other variables such as culture, linguistics, or spatial geography. Stein attacked the amorphous nature of "historical region" and opted for more coherent tangibles in defining region, but he did offer an alternative definition stating, "historical region is one in which any characteristic or related characteristics undergoes some basic change in distribution pattern or boundary condition". This definition embedded historical region with the element of time, and the way in which either change or continuity altered the region of study became the classifiable variable. Yet, at the heart of this debate, both between Stein and Cohn as well as among other scholars approaching the concept of region is the dialectic between modern borders and ancient boundaries. Region, in the context of modern of India, revolves around the idea of identifiable borders demarcating a political or cultural unit. In the ancient period regions contain no set border but rather

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40 The first prerequisite of regionalism is what may be termed a pool of symbols which may be drawn upon and around which the content of the idea of regionalism can be formed for a particular region. In the Indian case the symbol pool has usually been made up of religious and/or literary and/or political historical symbols. Cohn, in Crane, Region, 22.

41 The "denoted" region is of the kind which are purposefully delimited by scholars and census official and others concerned with particular problems, not administrative in nature, which the creation of regions will help solve... The basic purpose served by devising such regions is expository; the regions presented provide a basis for the organization of data and for a guided, orderly discussion of what might otherwise be incomprehensible chaos... But such regions may serve also the purpose of providing a basis or framework for further study. Joseph E. Schwartzberg, "Prolegomena to the Study of South Asian Regions and Regionalism", in Crane, Regions, 90-91.

42 Burton Stein, "Comments on Bernard S. Cohn, 'Regions Subjective and Objective: Their Relation to the Study of Modern Indian History and Society'," in Crane, Regions, 42-45.

43 Ibid., 44.
geographical boundaries: mountains, rivers, oceans, etc. These porous boundaries allow for diffusion of culture and technologies much easier than the modern rigid political and legal borders. The concept of region has become saturated with modern theories that strengthen their isolative resolve in correlation with the “other”. In the ancient period regional boundaries functioned more as a buffer between the “other”, to be defended in the time of invasion or expanded during military campaigns. Scholars concerned with region rarely distinguish between modern borders and ancient boundaries. For this essay, this distinction is tantamount to understanding how regions develop over time, especially in the context of Kalinga, which experienced an invasion of its regional boundaries at the moment of the Kalinga war.

By generating a regional history of Kalinga I am arguing for the existence of historical regions and their importance in the construction of the ancient period based upon symbols harvested through time. In the modern arena of exploring alternative narratives as supplemental to an overarching national narrative attention can be heralded to the concept of region; similarly, region can aid historians and other social scientists when approaching the Pan-Indic discourse of a unified ancient India. A regional history of Kalinga not only helps to understand the formation of a modern Orissa identity, moreover comparing this region to its antiquary counterparts facilitates the understanding of historical trends in the ancient period, such that, “the description of the generic features in different types of regions in Southern Asia, can lead to possible prospects of formulation models for the understanding of reasons for regional variations.”44 It must be said that regional histories of ancient India are in no way related to modern concept of

44 Baron De, “A Historical Prespective on the Theories of Regionaliation in India,” in Crane, Regions, 53.
identity. In writing a regional history of Kalinga this thesis attempts to catalogue the historical development of this particular area over time, independent of the modern constraints of identity and border implications.

Sources and Methodology

The challenge for any scholar studying ancient India remains the scant amount of reliable, concrete, and available corroborating evidence. This reality can however, not deter, but rather embolden those interested and dedicated to the subject of India’s long standing past. Even the renowned scholar D. D. Kosambi admits:

At the very outset we are faced with what appears to be an insuperable difficulty. India has virtually no historical records worth the name. We cannot reconstruct anything like a complete list of kings. Sometimes whole dynasties have been forgotten. What little is left is so nebulous that virtually no dates can be determined for any India personality till the Muslim period.45

Yet, every year in the field of ancient India scholars contribute to this field in the form of archeological excavations, anthropological studies, and historical extrapolations. Through synthesizing these multidisciplinary endeavors a more accurate picture of ancient India emerges. For Kalinga a sufficient amount of primary sources remains providing a historian with a solidified basis from which to evaluate regional formation.

One set of primary sources that refers directly to Kalinga are the inscriptions and edicts left by Asoka and Khāravela. Throughout his reign Asoka left numerous edicts addressing his mode of governance, function of administrators, and conviction to Dhamma. These edicts, spread over the entire subcontinent, not only represent the oldest account of written script in India; they also offer a snapshot of society during the Maurya

rule.\textsuperscript{46} In direct application to this is the thirteenth rock edict that describes the Kalinga war, and the two separate edicts at Dhauli and Jaugada located at the Maurya administrative centers in Kalinga. Analyzing Asoka’s edicts, the special Kalinga edicts and his numerous other ones, from a political perspective as the head of an empire and military general, clarifies the intended message this emperor attempted to convey to his subjects, rather than solely propagating Buddhism.\textsuperscript{47} For Khāravela, we have one historical source attributed to this figure, the Ḥāṭhīgumphā inscription. The information encapsulated in the Ḥāṭhīgumphā inscription assists in crafting a regional history of Kalinga after the Kalinga war as it:

is the only extant record about a forgotten epoch in Indian history. It is highly personal and that makes it more important for the history of the author. It is unique inasmuch as it gives the dates of earlier events, records the doings of its author in a chronological sequence regnal yearwise, and presents the earliest written exposition of Jain terminology and corroboration of the Jain scriptural traditions.\textsuperscript{48}

These rock inscriptions both speak about Kalinga, one from the perspective of an external invader bent on conquering and controlling this region, and the other as a local king looking to expand his influence and territory as well as to maintain his independence.

Consulting Buddhist, Jaina, and Brahmanic texts concerning Kalinga written during the ancient period will add flesh to these rock inscriptions. For the scope of this thesis, Buddhist records of the past assist in formulating this regional history. One valuable primary source concerning Kalinga is the Buddhist \textit{Jatakas}. The stories of

\textsuperscript{46} A. L. Basham, \textit{The Wonder that was India}, rev. ed. (New York: Grove Press Inc., 1959), 53-55.

\textsuperscript{47} For translations on the Asoka edicts I will consult D. C. Sircar, \textit{Inscriptions of Asoka}, 3\textsuperscript{rd} ed. (New Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Publications Division, 1975, and Romila Thapar, \textit{Asoka and the Decline of the Mauryas}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

Buddha’s previous lives not only mention Kalinga specifically, but also cover pertinent aspects of society and culture, such as merchants, the role of kings, and social relations during the this period of study, between the sixth and the first century BCE. Other Buddhist sources, such as the Danthavamsa and Mahavamsa, supplement the material found in the Jatakas while making reference to the Kalinga region. In correlation to the Buddhist sources are Jain texts that give a broader picture of India in the ancient period, and will become extremely pertinent in the time of Khāravela as he professed his adherence to this religion. Brahmanical sources do vaguely mention Kalinga as a region, but it is in the changing attitude towards this region reflected in these writings that is extremely interesting. For the Maurya period the Arthaśastra serves as the basis of political theories pertaining to empire formation. This text assists in ascertaining why Aśoka initiated the Kalinga war and how he implemented his policies in this region. Analyzing sections of the Mahabharata will demonstrate this shifting attitude towards Kalinga as expressed in the epic. Finally, foreign sources of Hellenistic and Chinese origin also comment on the region of Kalinga. These primary texts aid in constructing a regional history of Kalinga in the ancient period.

The most exciting addition to the primary sources available to the construction of a Kalinga regional history is the advancements in the field of archaeology. In 2000 Kishor K. Basa and Pradeep Mohanty edited a two volume work titled Archaeology of Orissa, which consolidated the recent excavations spanning the prehistoric phase to the Gupta period. This collection endows the historian studying ancient Kalinga with data that can be cross referenced through contemporary source material. Archaeology

identifies when the historical trends exhibited through centripetal and centrifugal changes in this region occurred and to what extent they affected society. Incorporating a multidisciplinary approach to the topic of ancient India is the next logical step in understanding this period, as Romila Thapar pointed out so clearly:

It is now a truism to say that significant new evidence on early periods of history is more likely to come from archaeological data than from literary sources. This makes the close collaboration between the historian and the archaeologist imperative. The collaboration inevitably becomes a two-way process, where the historian has to familiarize himself with archaeological data and methodology and the archaeologist has to be aware of the kind of evidence which the historian is seeking. Whereas the method of data-collection may differ between the two, the final process, that is, the interpretation of the data is similar to both disciplines. At this latter stage the existence of common models would jointly benefit the historian and archaeologist. 50

Implementing archaeological discoveries greatly assists in formulating the historical progression of the Kalinga region, especially in reference to urbanization, maritime trade, and social stratification. This thesis synthesizes previous interpretations of Kalinga gleaned through scholarly studies of the primary sources with the recent archaeological discoveries in an effort to update the historical understanding of this region.

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Chapter 2. Reconstructing Kalinga: Sixth Century BCE to the Kalinga War

This section will examine the social, cultural, and political development in the region of Kalinga from the rise of Buddhism in the sixth century BCE until the Maurya invasion in 260 BCE. During the course of these three centuries India experienced a shift from rural agricultural based societies to urban commercial economies that accelerated regional development. Local regions created internal power structures to manage the influx of wealth brought by increased merchant activity and established measures to administer these emerging urban centers. As regions underwent this process of internal organization, they simultaneously experienced external influences from the expansion of boundaries through war and connections through trade. These concurrent centripetal and centrifugal forces catalyzed the political, economical, social, and cultural development of historical regions during this period, resulting in the formation of the first empire India. The Maurya Empire successfully coupled political power with the urban commercial economy enabling its rulers to dominate the entire subcontinent. Approaching the ascent of the Maurya Empire from a regional perspective allows historical trends, such as the spread of Buddhism, urbanization, and cultural diffusion to be understood on a micro level. For this thesis, the region of Kalinga constitutes the foci from which to interpret the historical development of these three centuries in India.

In crafting a regional history of Kalinga from the rise of Buddhism to the consecration of the Maurya Empire this section will begin with a discussion concerning ancient territorial boundaries. Placing Kalinga geographically will reveal an established

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historical region surrounded by small neighboring powers occupying a resource rich and economically prosperous territory. The basis for connections between regions in the pre-Maurya period can be found in various Buddhist texts. Upon defining the boundaries of Kalinga and its relation to other distinct regions, this chapter will examine the process of urbanization, economic development, and maritime trade associated with this region. The Kalinga war in 260 BCE signifies the importance of this region, as Asoka felt compelled to invade Kalinga and incorporate it into the Maurya Empire. All of these factors contribute to the dynamic nature of Kalinga and make it a fascinating region of study.

Kalinga played a significant role in the history of India, yet a comprehensive study of Orissa and its ancient past was not properly addressed until the middle of the twentieth century. In August 1944 scholars at Utkal University in Bhubaneswar, Orissa formed a “History Compilation Committee” in order to produce a history of Orissa from ancient to modern times. Other scholars had published works on Orissa, notably R.L. Mitra Antiquities of Orissa (1875-1880), B. C. Mazumdar Orissa in the Making (1925), and R. D. Banerji History of Orissa (1930-31), but those suffered from a lack of supporting data and “do not, however, portray a complete picture of the social, religious, economic and cultural conditions of the people of early Kalinga... there is much overplay of regional importance at the cost of authentic historical material.” The historians at Utkal University attempted to improve the scholarship of Orissa history by incorporating

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recent archaeological discoveries and textual analysis. After twenty years of research and with the sponsorship of Harekrishna Mahtab, the one time head of the History department and residing Chief Minster at the time, Utkal University produced a seven volume work covering the entire spectrum of Orissa history. The authors of these volumes greatly contributed to the historiography of Orissa. They traced the evolution of a modern state from its foundation as an ancient region of Kalinga, through the rise of fall of early modern empires, the coming of the Marathas and Mughal, British colonialism, and finally achieving independent statehood in the nation of India.

Establishing Kalinga Boundaries

Kalinga comprises the eastern littoral plains from the mouth of the Godāvari River in the south and extending northward towards to the Ganga delta. To the west, the Eastern Ghats create a natural boundary sectioning this region off from the Deccan Plateau and middle Ganga valley. The great forest, mahā-arannas, surrounding Kalinga further isolated this region from its neighbors. This self contained region possessed fertile soil permitting intensive agriculture and the many rivers flowing to the Bay of Bengal facilitated trade and transportation throughout the area. Due to these natural obstacles the easiest way to access Kalinga region was along the coastal belt of the Bay of Bengal. The map shows the location of Kalinga on the east coast of India, as well as

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4 Sharma, Material Culture, 102

5 The prolonged winter monsoons, due to weather patterns from the Bay of Bengal, found on the eastern coast of India allow this region to cultivate crops almost year round. This elevated rate of precipitation watered the riverine plains and alluvial soils of the Kalinga region, increasing the rice harvest through extensive paddy field construction, in which aman, or winter rice was grown. As found in David Ludden, An Agrarian History of South Asia, The New Cambridge History of India, Vol. IV num. 4 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 24, 26, and 59.
the other numerous regions of the ancient period. These barriers gave rise to regional traditions.

Figure 1. Mahājanapadas in Ancient India. Source: Raychaudhuri, Political History, 85
independent from the predominantly Brahmanic north and Dravidian south, as manifested in modern Orissa by the specialized form of dance, Odissi, and the religious traditions associated with the Cult of Jagannath. The geographical layout of Kalinga, the natural boundaries, and its location at the crossroad between north and south resulted in a region "where cultural winds from the North, South, West, and East have been creatively synthesized to produce many unique art forms and life styles." Culturally, this region benefited from its isolation and, as overland routes proved difficult to navigate, Kalinga developed into a very successful maritime power.

Textual evidence substantiates the geographical location of Kalinga. The *Mahābhārata* mentioned the northern boundary of Kalinga in an episode that transpired when the sage Lomaśa stood on the banks of the Ganges River. From this vantage point he instructed Yudhisthira about the land of Kalinga extend to the south. Corroborating evidence can be found in the Greek sources of Pliny and Ptolemy that located Kalinga on the eastern coast covering the territory from the mouth of the Godāvari River in the south to the Ganges in the north. Further mention of the Nanda king, Mahāpadmananda, dating to the fourth century BCE, was said to have conquered the entire region of Kalinga. His kingdom included his home region of Magadha and extended south to the banks of

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the Godāvari River.\textsuperscript{10} These natural boundaries—rivers to the north and south, mountains to the west, and ocean to the east—demarcate the territory of Kalinga, a region that through time fluctuated in size and influence dependent on political consolidation and internal organization.

Early source materials tend to construe geographical location and cultural identity, wherein “tribal identity was extended to territorial identity, as is reflected in tribal names being given to geographical areas.”\textsuperscript{11} The names given for the other inhabitants found in this region other than Kalinga are, Utkala, Odra, Tosali, and Kośala, yet references to regions in ancient India can be interpreted as both locative and cultural markers. By the Maurya period this entire region was known as Kalinga, and no mention of the other groups can be located in any of the edicts left by Aśoka, suggesting that “Kalinga was by far the most important power which very often overpower the other three territories by her force of arms, and succeeded in building up a far flung empire which could endure long in ancient times.”\textsuperscript{12} Kalinga occupied the heartland of these coastal plains and remained the essential power in the region with Utkala, Odra, and Tosali being located towards the north. Kośala, located to the northwest, was more integrated with the Gangetic valley than the eastern coastal plains with its capital being the ancient city of Ayodhyā of \textit{Ramayana} fame.\textsuperscript{13} Though all independent entities, these groups interacted on a local level and shared a common language, religious practices, and maritime traditions. \textit{Purānaic} literature attested to a cultural connection between these

\textsuperscript{10} Sahu, \textit{History of Orissa}, 77.

\textsuperscript{11} Romila Thapar, \textit{Cultural Pasts}, 318.

\textsuperscript{12} Sahu, \textit{History of Orissa}, 75.

\textsuperscript{13} Sahu, \textit{Historical Geography}, 58.
various groups as they all descended from similar mythical king Balî.\textsuperscript{14} Although the
\textit{Purānas} contain more myth and legends than factual history, referencing this source
elicits how certain groups wanted to be remembered, if at the expense of collaborative
evidence. As in the case of King Balî in Kalinga, this origin myth bound these tribes
together through the connection of a shared ancestor wherein, “myth is in a sense a
prototype of history...Although myths cannot be used as descriptive sources on the past,
their analysis can reveal more emphatic assumptions of a society. Myths record what
people like to think about their past.”\textsuperscript{15} These distinct tribes inhabited the historical
region of Kalinga where they existed cohesively and through their interrelations created a
strong and prosperous collective.

Kalinga, however, represents just one of the many localized regions that began to
crystallize in India during these three centuries. Sources employed the term
\textit{Mahājanapada} to distinguish between regions in the period prior to the Maurya Empire.
The Buddhist \textit{Anguttara Nikāya} and the Jaina \textit{Bhagavatī Sūtra} identified sixteen
principle \textit{Mahājanapadas}, though they contain some variations.\textsuperscript{16} These localized
political regions all possessed certain characteristics based on a foundation of hierarchical
forms of governance which led to, “developing patrician groups over subordinate

\textsuperscript{14} Sahu, \textit{History of Orissa}, 68-71.

\textsuperscript{15} Thapar, \textit{Cultural Pasts}, 754.

\textsuperscript{16} The list of \textit{Mahājanapadas} listed in the Buddhist \textit{Anguttara Nikāya} read as follows: Kāśi
Kosala, Anga, Magadha, Vajji (Vṛijī), Malla, Chetiya (Chedi), Vamsa, Kuru, Panchāla, Machchha
(Matsya), Śūrasena, Assaka (Āśmaka), Avanti, Gandharā, Kamboja. In the Jaina Bhagavatī Sūtra there is a
discrepancy of eight \textit{Mahājanapadas}, recognizing Anga, Magadha, Vatsa, Vajji, Kāśi, Kosala, Malava-
Avanti, and Malā, while adding: Banga (Vanga), Malayā, Achchha, Kochchha, Lāḍha (Lāta or Rāḍha),
Pāḍha (Pāndya or Pauḍra), Avāha, Sambhutāra. As found in Hemchandra Raychaudhuri, \textit{Political
agricultural people (not all of whom were members of the tribe) while the oligarchs were beginning to be further divided among themselves by private property."\(^{17}\) As these regions developed over time some local powers attempted to expand their boundaries in an effort to acquire more territory and resources. The Mahājanapada of Magadha, mentioned in both the Buddhist and Jaina texts, best exemplified this historical trend of regional expansion which led to the founding of Maurya Empire (320 BCE to 180 BCE). The Kalinga war symbolized the clash between two regional powers, Kalinga and Magadha, and with Kalinga’s defeat ushered in a period of centralized political control under one ruler, Aśoka.

The sources available concerning independent regions from the rise of Buddhism to the ascension of the Maurya Empire, though insightful, offer a very limited account of the entire makeup of ancient India. The Buddhist Anguttara Nikāya focused primarily on regions found within the Gangetic plain, with the exception of Assaka located in the northern end of the Deccan Plateau. The Bhagavati Sūtra of Jaina tradition revised the list of original Buddhists list of Mahājanapadas and included eight different regions reflecting “knowledge of the far east and far south of India.”\(^{18}\) Neither source mentioned Kalinga as a principle region. Reasons for this can be attributed to the northern bias of these sources or the geographical isolation of this region. Also, during the compilation of these specific texts Kalinga might well have been annexed by a more powerful region; the Nanda invasion in fourth century BCE mentioned in the Hāthīgumpha inscription of

\(^{17}\) Kosambi, *Culture and Civilization*, 121.

\(^{18}\) Raychaudhuri, *Political History*, 86.
Khāravela might account for Kalinga’s absence from the list of Mahājanapadas. 19 On the other hand, the various other tribes located within its boundaries could have minimized Kalinga’s power and rendered it an insignificant region to the authors of these texts. 20 Although the Anguttara Nikāya and the Bhagavati Sūtra omitted Kalinga from the lists of principle regions of ancient India, a much different picture of Kalinga’s significant role during this period emerges when referencing other Buddhist and Jaina texts.

The most revealing sources available for polishing the mirror of the socio-cultural development in ancient India were the Buddhist Jātakas. These birth stories of the Buddha have been dated to a period shortly after the compilation of the Nikāya texts referenced above, and expounded on a variety of topics pertaining to society in the second and third century BCE. 21 Those moral tales covered a panoramic set of issues associated with Buddha’s teachings, moreover “they reveal a general picture of social and economic conditions of the Buddhist period, which conditions continued as broad trends into the Maurya period.” 22 Two particular Jātakas, the CullaKālinga-Jātaka and the Kālinga-Bodhi-Jātaka, directly referred to Kalinga and revealed information about the early development of this region. Both Jātaka stories described Kalinga as a powerful region possessing an internal monarchial government. Furthermore, these Jātakas

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19 Sahu, History of Orissa, 226.

20 For theories concerning Kalinga’s annexation to a larger region see Dilip Kumar Ganguly, Historical Geography and Dynastic History of Orissa (Calcutta: Punthi Pustak, 1975) 103. Regarding Kalinga’s omission as due to political instability refer to Sahu, History of Orissa, 190.


identified the Kalinga capitol of Dantapur that indicated an urban center administered by a king. These sources suggest that the two key components of the urban commercial economy, localized political organization and urban centers, existed in Kalinga.

In summary, the *CullaKālinga-Jātaka* relates a story of a battle between the king of Kalinga and a neighboring king of Assaka, an original *Mahājanapada* ascribed in the *Anguttara Nikāya*. A further analysis of this tale reveals that the king of Kalinga not only possessed a strong army but marched his troops from the eastern coastal plains to the northern stretches of the Deccan Plateau. This story displayed not only a semblance of political continuity in Kalinga, but also interrelations between regional powers in ancient India. Furthermore, the battle ensued due to the daughters of the Kalinga king being sequestered by the Assaka king, emphasizing the personal aspects of regal relations between independent political entities of ancient India. The sociological inferences of the *CullaKālinga-Jātaka* attest to the fact that both regions possessed strong armies, displayed a local power base ruling from an urban center, and the kings desired to expand the influence of their respective kingdom.23

On the other hand, the *Kālinga-Bodhi-Jātaka* relays a story of political intrigue confined to the Kalinga region, as two princes, Mahā-Kālinga and Culla-Kālinga vied for power. The younger son, Culla-Kālinga, was exiled from the kingdom where he met the princess of the neighboring region of Madda, and she bore him a son. Again, these *Jātaka* tales show the region of Kalinga possessed a well developed political system, and the *Kālinga-Bodhi-Jātaka* referred to a hereditary rule of succession.24 When compiled


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together these Buddhist chronicles illuminated the role of region in the ancient period. Evidence found in *Jātaka* literature indicates that Kalinga had the ability to sustain an urban commercial economy, and that this region was a significant power in pre-Maurya India.

**Structuring the Kalinga Region**

During these three centuries, from the birth of Buddhism to the rise of the Maurya Empire, India entered a period of drastic political, social, and cultural transformations. As mentioned above, distinct regions emerged based upon political entities that competed to expand their boundaries. As political agents established urban centers of administration, social structures begun to calcify: hierarchically between rulers and subjects, culturally between urban elites and rural landowners, and economically between agriculturalists and merchants. Simultaneously, the heterodox religions of Buddhism and Jainism challenged the established Brahmanical order by offering an alternative to the stratified *varna* system prescribed in the Vedas. During this transitional phase India experienced a rise in urban centers, localized state formation, and increased merchant activity that ultimately resulted in the formation of a single Maurya Empire.

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25 The new forces of production released sufficient surplus for the rise of a class-based and state-based society in which the religious and governing wings of the ruling class could collect taxes, tributes, and tithes. This benefited not only the princes and warriors but also priests and monks... The rise of new forces of production in the age of the Buddha led to the need for promoting agriculture on the one hand and for overcoming the difficulties created by social inequalities on the other. The first determined the social outlook of Buddhism, and the second affected the social teachings of both Buddhism and Brahmanism. Sharma, *Material Culture*, 108-109.

Regions adapted to the bipolar strains of centripetal and centrifugal forces as these social, economic, and religious changes swept across India. Internally, regions transitioned to republics that attempted to establish flourishing urban centers in an effort to build a strong kingdom. At the same time, regional powers dealt with centripetal factors of territorial encroachment and competition for resources spurred by merchant activities.27 This new phase relied on interrelationships being forged between those living in urban centers (consumers), and merchants and agriculturalists (providers) in order to create a cohesive and successful regional unit. The discursive formation of the urban commercial economy can be explained “due to the development of iron technology and the rise of urban centers which synchronized with the rise of the republican system on one hand and monarchy on the other.”28 As noted, a series of factors resulted in the transition to the urban commercial economy. The expansion or contraction of a region was determined by the ability to convert society to the urban commercial economy.

The first aspect of structuring Kalinga will focus on describing the internal development in this region. A localized analysis of the urban, economic, social development of Kalinga will demonstrate how this region adapted to the centripetal changes that altered society during these three centuries. Archaeological evidence assists in examining how these centripetal historical trends precipitated throughout Kalinga resulting in the rise of urban centers, political consolidation, and the resources available for trade. Both Indian and foreign sources outlined the introduction of the urban commercial economy into Kalinga as a dynamic internal transformation and externally,

27 Raychaudhuri, Political History, 163-165.

or centrifugally, through merchants whom, "connected [Kalinga] with other parts of India by inland as well as coastal routes so also it maintained its relations with the outside world through sea-routes."²⁹ From the rise of Buddhism to the Maurya period, Kalinga became a hub of trade centered on urban entrepôts that facilitated merchant activities.

Archaeological surveys along the coastal area of modern Orissa have revealed settlements dating to prehistoric times that exhibit elements of internal organization in Kalinga, which then blossomed during the three centuries of this study. Stone tools and small settlements have been found dating as far back as 6000 BCE.³⁰ In a recent two volume publication titled, *Archaeology of Orissa*, the editors Kishor Basa and Pradeep Mohanty compiled the most recent archaeological findings conducted in Orissa. In the first volume the authors fielded articles concerned with the origins of civilization in Orissa from the Neolithic period through the subsequent Chalcolithic, bronze, and iron ages.³¹ In analyzing the archaeological data, proto-historic coastal sites determined characteristics essential to the regional development of Kalinga; an extant indigenous society and culture resided in this region from the proto-historic times; these early settlers inhabited an area with accessible mineral resources and fertile land that encouraged prolonged settlement; and urban sites located on the numerous river valleys and natural bays of this region indicated thriving merchant activity both on land and sea.³² The first


inhabitants of India migrated to this fertile and prosperous region, and in 260 BCE when Asoka initiated the Kalinga war, he encountered their long established and strongly defiant descendants.

The transition from the proto-historic to ancient period of Indian history can be characterized as the transition from rural to urban. India begun the process of urbanization by the sixth century BCE, a date more or less accepted by scholars of ancient India. In his *Urbanization of Ancient India*, Vijay Thakur examined the formation of urban centers and listed sixteen prerequisites required to support this development. Thakur ascribed the use of iron and the development of refined methods of metallurgy as the first phase of this urban shift, as implementing iron technology increased cultivation that yielded a surplus in foodstuffs. Iron tools enabled cultivators to procure more bountiful harvests, and for those who forged these iron tools “the introduction of iron technology went hand in hand with the rapid specialization in arts and crafts.” Archaeologists date the initial use of iron in the Kalinga region at approximately 1000 BCE. Excavations at a major urban center of Kalinga, Śisupālgarh, catalogued iron

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34 The sixteen prerequisites are: an increased food supply, increase in population and/or rural unemployment, craft specialization, marketing and trade, social stratification, religion, secular tourism, education, landlords, retainers, administration, defense, warfare, irrigation, geographical location, individual initiative. Thakur, *Urbanization*, 48.

35 Ibid. 17.

objects dating back to the third century BCE, a date consistent with urbanization in ancient India. The fertile lowlands of this littoral region, coupled with the introduction of iron, yielded enough foodstuffs to support the consumption of non-producing urban residents. In urban centers markets developed for the sale of surplus food as well as products crafted in local industries. The urban commercial economy flourished in Kalinga due to the production of quality goods for trade and the ability to bring these to market.

The historical region of Kalinga benefited from the copious amounts of natural resources available both to meet the needs of the local inhabitants and allow them to prosper economically through trade of the surplus. The Eastern Ghats provided the Kalinga region with mineral deposits such as iron, coal, and precious gems. These resources are mentioned in the Arthaśastra as items of governmental monopolization due to their value and as highly coveted by foreign merchants. From the forest and jungles Kalinga possessed an abundance of timber for both building urban infrastructure and merchant vehicles, such as caravan carts and ships. These forests also housed an abundance of elephants, and trade in Kalinga ivory has been noted by a broad survey of foreign sources: The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea, by Ptolemy in his geographical studies of India, and by the Chinese traveler Xuanzang. Sila Tripati, in his Maritime.

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Archaeology: Historical Descriptions of the Seafarings of the Kalingas, gives an exhaustive list of Kalinga exports including, “rice, wheat, barley, incense, timber, ivory, textiles, conch shells, stone products, iron products, diamonds, and elephants.”⁴² All of these natural resources attracted merchants to this region and eventually enticed Aśoka to invade.

The centripetal force of internal regional development witnessed a societal shift to increased urbanization. As society in urban centers advanced, religion became an essential element as it united the people of a given region and “more important religious establishments are generally situated in urban centers... the situation of larger temples often [are found] in the center of the town.”⁴³ More specifically, the rise of Buddhism catalyzed urban and economic development because “Buddhism was urban based and enjoyed wide patronage from urban dwellers, including kings and merchants.”⁴⁴ For urban dwellers and merchants Buddhism offered social mobility not found in Brahmanical stratified society. Prosperous merchants residing in these rapidly developing urban centers converted to and patronized Buddhism as a way to achieve status unattainable in the Brahmanical structure.⁴⁵ Sources revealed that Buddhism flourished in Kalinga before Aśoka converted to and proselytized this faith. The Buddhavamsa and the Dathadhatuvamsa both relate the story of Buddha’s tooth relic


⁴² Tripati, Kalingas, 78.

⁴³ Thakur, Urbanization, 53.


⁴⁵ A. L. Basham, The Wonder that was India (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1954), 262.
being brought to Kalinga and placed in a stupa at the capitol of Dantapura.\(^{46}\) The prevalence of Buddhist monasteries in the Kalinga region suggest "that these early sacred centers were developed as the focal points for controlling economic exchanges by the mercantile and elite communities through the ceremonial activities.\(^{47}\) The tripartite relationship of Buddhism, urbanization, and trade ushered in the rise of the urban commercial economy and encouraged merchant activities in Kalinga.

A form of political organization had to manage these aspects of urbanization, markets, trade, and Buddhism, for the urban commercial economy to function and flourish. Both Jātakas referred to a king of Kalinga, and the Kālinga-Bodhi-Jātaka described this king as possessing a standing army that engaged in a war with Assaka. The ability to harness a standing army indicates that Kalinga prospered in this period and points to the existence of an agricultural surplus that supported the population, a delegation of labor between soldiers and farmers, and the ruler's capability to pay and control a significant contingent of the population that made up the army. In Kalinga these political leaders governed the region and managed trade, requirements for the successful development of urban centers. Archaeologists and historians identified the modern site of Palur as the ancient Kalinga capitol of Dantapura.\(^{48}\) The early Jaina text, Uttarādhyayana, identified another major port in Kalinga named Pithunda, "a famous emporium during the time of Mahavira and merchants from Champa were coming there


\(^{47}\) Jitu Mishra “Radhanagar,” in Basa & Mohanty, Archaeology of Orissa, 542.

\(^{48}\) Amiya Kumar Patnaik, “Ports of Ancient India,” in Basa and Mohanty, Archaeology of Orissa, 605.
by sea for the purpose of trade."49 Although not a major port of Kalinga, in the Maurya period the ancient urban city of Śiśupālgarh became the administrative center of the Kalinga province, and also served as the capitol of the later Chedi dynasty then known as Kalinganagari. In Kalinga, Śiśupālgarh remained an extremely important urban center and administrative hub. Finally, the most important coastal entrepôt in Kalinga was the port of Tamralipti. Although most of the references to this hub of trade come from western sources of the early common era, the establishment of this Kalinga urban center occurred sometime between the rise of Buddhism and the advent of the Maurya Empire.

The development of these ports and urban centers resulted in Kalinga becoming one of the most prosperous regions in ancient India. The port of Palur benefited from its location on the banks of Chilika Lake, the largest coastal lagoon in Asia, which served as a stop over for merchants voyaging south to Ceylon and across the Bay of Bengal to Southeast Asia.50 On the hill tops surrounding Palur, archaeologists have found the remnants of pillars standing sixty to seventy meters in height that they believe were originally ancient lighthouses beaconing wayward travelers. Furthermore, in the same area evidence of "massive breakwater-like stone alignments" has been unearthed resembling quay construction like that of the Indus Valley Civilization. The discovery of a large concentration of turquoise blue glazed ware, highly valued in Southeast Asia, indicated an industry able to produce these wares in the vicinity of Palur.51 The Geography of Ptolemy referred to many ports along the eastern coast of India, but

specifically mentions Palur, near Chilika Lake, as a principal trading station in the second century CE. This source mentioned that this port functioned as “the point of departure (apheterion) for ships bound for Khryse [Southeast Asia] for ‘immediately to the south of a town of the territory on the Gangetic Gulf called Paloura... ships ceased to follow the littoral and entered the high seas.’” Palur prospered because it attracted trade from both the interior of Kalinga and foreign traders traveling throughout the Bay of Bengal departed from this port.

The largest port on the east coast of India, Tamralipti, was situated on the mouth of the Ganges River at the northern extent of Kalinga. Trade from the entire Ganga Valley, extending into the Himalaya foothills, passed through this entrepôt. The Mahābhārata and the Arthaśastra both refer to this port as an important commercial center. References to Tamralipti in foreign sources identify this urban center as a significant trading port of Kalinga. The first century CE ancient mariners manual, The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea, gave a detailed account of important Indian trading entrepôts. On the eastern coast of India the Periplus identifies a port at the mouth of the Ganges River, Tamralipti, as a significant hub of trade:

The Course turns towards the east again, and sailing with the ocean to the right and the shore remaining beyond to the left, Ganges comes in to view, and near it the very last land towards the east, Chryse [Southeast Asia]. There is a river near it called the Ganges, and it rises and falls in the same way as the Nile. On its banks is a market-town which has the same name as the river, Ganges. Through this place are brought malabathrum [leaf for ointments] and Gangetic spikenard [regal ointment] and pearls, and muslins of the finest sort, which are called Gangetic. It is said there are gold mines near these places, and there is a gold coin which is called caltis. And just

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52 Tripati, Maritime Archaeology, 4.


54 Patnaik, “Ports of Ancient Orissa,” in Basa and Mohanty, Archaeology of Orissa, 603.
opposite this river there is an island in the ocean, the last part of the inhabited world towards the east... and it has the best tortoise shell of all places on the Erythaean Sea.  

Locating Tamralipti as the last major trading center before reaching South East Asia, near the end of the known world, suggests that Kalinga represented the final destination for western traders from which they would return to the their homeland. Kalinga merchants, departing from Palur, acquired goods from Chryse to trade with the west. The list of commodities available at Tamralipti illustrated what items were meant for trade and the lucrative nature of the urban commercial economy. Ptolemy's *Geography* and Pliny's *Natural History* substantiated the importance of this port in their references to Tamralipti. It connected Kalinga with the Ganga valley and moreover, put this region in contact with traders from the east and west.

Besides being a central maritime hub between India and the world, and a flourishing market town, Tamralipti also supported a pottery industry. The pottery manufactured here were of the Rouletted Wares variety, dated between 250 BCE and 200 ACE, and exported throughout the Bay of Bengal. Vishwas D. Gogte analyzed the mineral compounds of ancient Rouletted Wares and determined that most of these relics originated around the area of Tamralipti-Chandraketugarh. From this port, “pottery was regularly brought to Arikamedu (located in present day Tamil Nadu)” and a fragment found at the ancient site of Tra Kieu in Vietnam is “mineralogically identical with the

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clays and Roulette Wares from Chandraketugarh."\textsuperscript{57} As these traders departed the eastern coast of India and crossed the Bay of Bengal, they exported commodities such as pottery and other Kalinga resources while they imported highly-valued goods from Southeast Asia.

\textbf{Figure 1:} The Ports on the Coast of Ancient Orissa.

\textbf{Figure 2:} Ports on the Coast of Ancient Orissa.

\textsuperscript{57} Vishwas D. Gogte, "The Chandraketugarh-Tamluk Region of Bengal: Source of the Early Historical Roulette Ware from India and Southeast Asia" (Pune: Deccan College, 1997) p. 79, 78.
Contacting the Kalinga Region

Structuring Kalinga accounted for the internal development, or centripetal forces, that affected this region. This section reverses the polarity of study and considers the centrifugal forces of contact between regions. From the time of the Buddha until the coming of the Maurya Empire, trade became the mode of contact that served to bring the regions into direct contact with one another. Unlike its neighbors residing in the Gangetic plain or Deccan Plateau, Kalinga conducted trade both on land and at sea.\(^5^8\) The commodities that Kalinga traded have been previously mentioned, so this section focuses on the modes of trade and roles of merchants. Increased merchant activity during this period relied on urban markets for distributing their goods, thus accelerating the process of regional urbanization. Regions coalesced through this centrifugal process, which culminated in the rise of the Maurya Empire.

For the fluid transfer of goods from one region to another, trade routes must be established and maintained. Stories in the *Jātakas* depicted the ease of movement for merchants from one region to another. These trade routes connected urban centers and allowed merchants “to journey about trading with five hundred carts, traveling now from east to west and now from west to east.”\(^5^9\) Merchants traveled these routes from region to region, and amassed great fortunes through trade. By the time of the *Jātakas* there seemed to be an established merchant code of conduct, as related in the *Akattunu-Jataka*, wherein the trader who neglects his duties and compromises the success of the entire


caravan loses his wealth. 60 Early accounts of the Rig Veda and the two epics, the
Ramayana and Mahabharata, also mentioned trade and merchant activity. In these
instances the texts refer to the movement of people, delineating established trade routes
throughout India. 61 The epics distinctly mentioned transportation over both land and
water. In regards to water routes the epics mention three varieties: nadipatha (river
route), kulya (canal route), and varipatha (ocean route). The varipatha can be further
classified as both kulapatha (coastal route) and samyanapatha (overseas route).62 By
strengthening the internal structure of a region a king promoted trade by opening trade
routes and developing urban centers.

Although natural boundaries created obstacles between Kalinga and other regions
in India, merchants moved in and out of this region along established trade routes. The
Kālinga-Bodhi-Jātaka mentioned that the king of Kalinga traveled from his region to
Assaka with a large army, demonstrating the existence of roads able to maintain heavy
traffic. The strong urban commercial economy in Kalinga attracted trade from all over
India as merchants looked to buy and sell goods, and the two maritime ports of Palur and
Tamralipti facilitated commercial transactions. Merchants from Utkala, the neighboring
region of Kalinga were mentioned as meeting the Buddha himself and becoming the first

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60 Akatamme-Jataka: ibid, vol. 1.90, 220-221.

61 Ramayana and Mahabharata mentioned travels between ports and the people who lived there.
For the Mahabharata see Moti Chandra, Trade and Trade Routes in Ancient India (New Delhi: Abhinav
Publications, 1977), 130; for Ramayana accounts see Haripada Chakraborti, Trade and Commerce of
Ancient India (Calcutta, 1966) p. 66, 70, and 80, and D. G. E. Hall, A History of South-East Asia, 4th

62 Sila Tripati, Maritime Archaeology: Historical Descriptions of the Seafarings of the Kalingas
(New Delhi, 2000) p. 67.
lay disciples. As merchant and caravan activities increased regions became much more dependent on the role of urban centers. These centers processed trade and brought wealth to the political overseers of the region. Located on the Bay of Bengal, Kalinga not only profited from caravan trade between regions in India, but also undertook maritime voyages and accrued wealth by sea trade.

The Kalinga ports enabled their merchants to engage in overseas trade with other regions inhabiting the Bay of Bengal. This trading network included the trading partners of Ceylon and Southeast Asia but revolved around Kalinga, as the ports of Palur and Tamralipti beckoned foreign traders to this region. Trade in the ancient period prospered due to little or no regulation by governmental officials, “both essential goods and high-valued commodities... [were] primarily handled by individual traders and merchants.” Therefore, the value of foreign commodities was determined by demand, making overseas trade extremely lucrative. Kalinga merchants prospered from the Bay of Bengal trading network and through their commercial success strengthened this region, and established Kalinga’s historical maritime tradition.

The monsoon season dictated trade in the Bay of Bengal network. The monsoon winds shifted twice a year allowing for ships to move from the east coast of India, reach Southeast Asia, and return. During the winter months of November to April the Kalinga merchants left for South East Asia and in the summer, May through October, the traders would return with riches from these lands. Southeast Asia offered many commodities

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63 Sahu, Historical Geography, 102.
65 Pattanaik, “Ports of Ancient India,” in Basa and Mohanty, Archaeology of Orissa, 610-611.
desired in India, and the Kalinga merchants procured these goods through the Bay of Bengal trading network. The *Arthasastra* favorably mentions Southeast Asia using variation of the titles *Suvarnabhumi* (The Land of Gold), *Takkola* (The Land of a Sort of Aromatic Plants), *Karpuradvipa* (The Island of Camphor), *Yavadvipa* (The Island of Barley), and *Suvarnadvipa* (The Island of Gold).  

Specific mention is given to pearls of Ceylon and aloe from Burma. These references demonstrate the allure of this area and prompted “the idea of fabulous wealth available in Southeast Asia haunting the imagination of the Indians as well as Western and Arab merchants.” Correspondingly, using the Sanskrit names for regions in Southeast Asia, Coedès identifies the commodities that Indian traders sought: spices found in *Takkola* (market of cardamom), aromatic wood on *Karpuradvipa* (island of camphor), and of course gold. Kalinga merchants flourished in the Bay of Bengal trading network wherein, “most of the ships on the Bay of Bengal in this period remained Indian.” In the Kalinga War Aśoka used his military superiority to expand his territory to India’s eastern coast and profit from maritime trade.

Buddhism facilitated trade and sea travel in the Kalinga region. Missionaries departing from India to other societies in the Bay of Bengal network signify a highly advanced level of contact via established maritime trade routes. Coedès, in his

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68 Ibid, p. 77.


Indianized States of Southeast Asia, expands on the connection between mercantile activity and Buddhism, stating that this heterodox religion “abolished caste barriers and exaggerated concern for racial purity, it removed, with one stroke, the shackles previously place on their [Brahmans] maritime voyages.”71 Cities prospered through the conjunction of Buddhism with maritime merchant activities due to the “institutionalized form of Buddhism was best suited to forge networks of communication which could then be used for buttressing political loyalties.”72 Buddhism appealed to merchants stymied by the strict social order professed by Brahmanism, and the Kalinga region’s adoption of heterodox religions allowed Buddhism to take hold.

The urban commercial economy transformed Kalinga from a small region situated on the coastal plains in eastern India into one of the great maritime powers of the ancient period. Buddhism, urbanization, and merchant activity together changed the internal organization of a region. Over these three centuries regions experienced an increase in contact resulting from increased trade relations and military expansion of boundaries. Regions negotiated the centripetal and centrifugal strains of transitioning into an interconnected urban commercial economy, and either prospered or assimilated into a stronger region. This process continued until the rise of the Maurya Empire, when the internal political entity of Magadha expanded to conquer most of India. For the historical region of Kalinga, internally, urban centers developed, political consolidation emerged, and externally, trade dramatically increased the wealth and power of this region. These

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aspects of Kalinga persisted up to the Maurya period, and motivated Aśoka to conquer this region.
Figure 3: Maurya Empire.
Source: Kant, Khāravela, i.
Chapter 3. Aśoka and the Defeat of the Kalinga Region

With the advent of the Maurya Empire, India witnessed its first prolonged period of centralized administration that encompassed almost the entire subcontinent, barring the southern most tip of the peninsula. Chandragupta Maurya consolidated his empire in 321 BCE, and when he abdicated his throne in 297 BCE, his territory spanned from Magadha in the east to the confluences of the Indus River to the West, “integrating the country into a single political whole.”¹ The one area not directly under his control was the eastern coast, the region of Kalinga. In order to connect these hinterland resources with the lucrative mercantile activity in Bay of Bengal trading network the Maurya Empire needed access to the sea. In 260 BCE, the Maurya Emperor Aśoka, accomplished this by invading the coastal territory of Kalinga.² After this event the Maurya Empire incorporated the Kalinga ports, and substantially increased its revenue by regulating exchange and implementing a system of taxation on trade. Aśoka’s victory in the Kalinga war succeeded in unifying the entire subcontinent under Maurya control as well as allowed access to eastern ports involved in the Bay of Bengal trading network. For these reasons this last campaign of military expansion is considered a pivotal moment in the formation of a centralized government in ancient India.

Aśoka remains the central figure in histories written about the Maurya period. Studies in religion focused on his conversion to Buddhism after the Kalinga war as a

testament to his benevolent rule and advocacy of Dhamma. Whereas, in historical surveys of ancient India, Aśoka reigns as the most significant Maurya emperor for his methods of administration based on emphasizing ethical politics and his ability to centralize his empire. Historical interpretations of the Maurya period often gloss over the fact that Aśoka continued to rule, and neglect the more practical assumption of his conversion, “that in embracing Buddhism, Ashoka [sic] had determined on a faith capable of cementing the empire he and his grandfather had built.” Constructing a regional history of the Kalinga experience during the Maurya period will reevaluate Aśoka’s actions and policies from the perspective of the defeated region. The Kalinga perspective of the Kalinga war sheds the layers of glorification for Aśoka’s benevolent rule and casts him in this narrative as a conqueror attempting to solidify his control.

For this thesis, Aśoka will be viewed as a king ruling over his empire and as a military general intent on strengthening his power. From this perspective, this chapter examines Aśoka’s motives for invading Kalinga and the ways the Kalinga war benefited his empire. In enforcing his control in this territory Aśoka initiated policies in this region to transform it from an autonomous political unit to a component of a centralized state. The methods Aśoka implemented to achieve his goal of appropriating Kalinga region

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3 Aśoka roots his vision of Dhamma as a synthesis of Buddhist and Brahmanical teachings. Converting to Buddhism himself Aśoka professed the ideas of ahimsa, or the preservation of all living things, as well as attempted to alleviate suffering in the world. Dhamma also expresses the idea of dharma, or duty, to society and the adherence to individual’s roles within society. Administratively, Aśoka followed the structure found in the Arthaśastra to regulate society and best treat his subjects. Aśoka aimed to achieve the Buddhist concept of cakravartin, or universal emperor, that created a cohesive society based on the teachings of Buddha. Further explanation of this concept can be found in Romila Thapara, Aśoka and Decline of the Mauryas, p. 143-152., and V. N. Jha ed., Kautilya’s Arthaśastra and Social Welfare (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1999), and Anuradha Seneviratna ed., King Aśoka and Buddhism: Historical and Literary Studies (Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society, 1994).

4 Charles Durkmeier, Kingship and Community in Early India (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1962), 173.
emerge through an examination of the *Arthasastra* treaties on creating a strong empire. Finally, Aśoka attempted to reconcile with the people of Kalinga by issuing a special set of edicts to profess his benevolence and commitment to just rule. An analysis of his edicts will explore the manner in which he appealed to his wary subjects. Through the medium of the Kalinga war this chapter will reinterpret the Maurya period by focusing directly on the economical, political, and social ramifications experienced by the inhabitants of Kalinga.

Aśoka invaded Kalinga in the ninth year of his rule, in 260 BCE. Adding these nine years to the reign of the two previous rulers, Chandragupta Maurya (321-297 BCE) and Bindusāra (297-272 BCE), a span of approximately 62 years of empire building transpired before the Maurya emperor decided to annex this region.\(^5\) Formulating postulates as to why Aśoka and not his predecessors chose to conquer this territory offers insights to the condition of Kalinga during the formative period of the Maurya Empire.

When Chandragupta Maurya came to power, he first deposed of the powerful Nanda dynasty that controlled most of east India.\(^6\) A play from the Gupta Period, the *Mudrārāksasa*, retold the story of the cunning political usurpation Chandragupta Maurya employed assuming power, all orchestrated by his trusted advisor, Cānakya (also known as Kautiliya the attributed author of the *Arthasastra*).\(^7\) The first order of business for Chandragupta Maurya was to project his authority in Magadha and assert his claim as king.

\(^{5}\) Thapar, *Aśoka*, 15.


\(^{7}\) Drukmeier, *Kingship and Community*, 165.
After consolidating power in his home region, Chandragupta Maurya marched west to conquer much of the Ganga valley. The war with the Greek Sekeukos indicates that Chandragupta’s campaigns extended as far as the Indus. Chandragupta Maurya founded the Maurya Empire and then expanded its territory, while his son, Bindusāra, imposed Maurya authority on these acquired regions. Sources remain relatively silent about the rule of Bindusāra, but his name translates to mean, “slayer of foes.” Chandragupta Maurya had defeated most of northern India, and Aśoka inherited an empire that included the Deccan plateau, therefore Bindusāra was responsible for conquering these central and southern regions. The reign of Bindusāra represents the middle phase of the Maurya Empire, wherein consolidated Maurya control in the regions conquered by his father as well as expanded the boundaries of the empire. From this perspective it appears that Chandragupta Maurya and Bindusāra concentrated on invading northern, central, and southern India, and ignored the eastern coast. This information suggests that, for the first sixty two years of the Maurya Empire, Kalinga posed no political threat to their power or exhibited any strategic advantage prompting these emperors to annex this region.

This argument, however, seems contradictory to the pervious chapter which demonstrated the prosperous heritage of Kalinga and its overall contribution to ancient India. The formidable army Aśoka encountered during the Kalinga war, as described in his edicts, indicates the existence of political continuity in this region. Returning to the

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9 Thapar, *Aśoka*, 17.
10 Ibid, 18-22.
period between demise of the Nanda dynasty and rise of the Maurya could help in clarifying this contradiction. The Hāṭhigumpha inscription states that a Nanda king conquered Kalinga, stole a Jaina image, and later built a canal.\(^{11}\) These events have been ascribed to the Nanda king, Mahāpadmananda (362-333 BCE), who died twelve years before the ascension of Chandragupta Maurya. During these twelve years eight different successors claimed the throne.\(^{12}\) The Nandas ruled Kalinga from 350 until 321 BCE, with the period from 333 to 321 BCE marred by chaos as the Nanda princes vied for power, most likely unconcerned about imposing control over their dynastic holdings. Combined with the reign of Chandragupta Maurya and Bindusāra this leaves 74 years, three quarters of a century, in which Kalinga existed as an independent, politically autonomous region. During this hiatus from external interference, Kalinga converted back to a similar state resembling that of pre-Maurya times. Trade resumed both on land and sea, and urban centers continued to function and flourish. Internally, sources of political power filled the vacuum left by the combined absence of Nanda rule and \textit{laissez faire} attitude exhibited by the Maurya kings. Though no sources exist to corroborate these assumptions, Aśoka’s determination in conquering this region, even when facing fierce resistance signifies that; Kalinga possessed some form of political organization that enabled the rulers to raise an army, and had attained a level of regional prosperity found desirable to the Maurya Empire.

\(^{11}\) He [Kharavela] [worships] in the temple (enshrining the image) of Jina from Kalinga (which had been) taken away (from there) by the Nanda king. Line 12. In the fifth bountiful year (of his reign), [Kharavela] causes the Tanasuliyavatā Canal (which was) opened out by the Nanda king in the year 103, to be brought into the capital [by spending… thousands]. In Kant, \textit{Hāṭhigumpha of Kharavela}, 29, 26.

The thirteenth rock edict of Aśoka contains all the known historical information concerning the Kalinga war, but fails to comment on motives for invasion. This edict mentioned the total devastation of this area, and recorded the deaths of over one hundred thousand inhabitants of Kalinga along with the deportation of another one hundred and fifty thousand.\(^\text{13}\) The Kalinga war decimated the population of this region and destroyed any internal power structures that had been erected. Prior to the Kalinga war, as estimated by Megasthenes, the Kalinga military force during the reign of Chandragupta Maurya consisted of sixty thousand infantry, one thousand cavalry, and seven hundred war elephants.\(^\text{14}\) In order to field such a vast army and staunchly defend their territory, some level of internal organization must have existed in Kalinga. Aśoka engaged a political counterpart on the field of battle, though in his thirteenth rock edict he neglected to identify the ruler of Kalinga. Yet, in 260 BCE Aśoka suddenly desired to appropriate Kalinga into his empire. Examining his motives for initiating the Kalinga war at this particular moment could answer historical questions about the regional development of Kalinga prior to Maurya period.

**Motives for Invasion**

Aśoka believed that the Maurya Empire would benefit from engaging Kalinga on the battlefield and identifying the ways in which Kalinga bolstered the central state reflects the internal structuring of this region. Victory in the Kalinga war equated to the expansion of territory for the Maurya Empire, and allowed Aśoka to impose his authority

\(^{\text{13}}\) Romila Thapar, Aśoka, 35, 62.

\(^{\text{14}}\) Harekrishna Mahtab, The History of Orissa, 2\(^{\text{nd}}\) ed. (Cuttack: Cuttack Student's Store, 1981), 34.
over this region. A direct motivation for invading Kalinga would be for profit, as increasing revenues through collecting duties on agriculture goods and trade commodities would enhance the empire. More importantly, the Maurya Empire had no direct access to the Bay of Bengal, defeating Kalinga resulted in its gaining ports and from which it could regulate and profit from maritime trade. As noted, Kalinga enjoyed independence for the better part of a century, and the tenacious forces Ašoka encountered upon invasion displayed a level of extant political cohesion in this region. Furthermore, by 260 BCE Ašoka might have perceived Kalinga as a direct threat to his empire and through military invasion bolstered his imperial control.

The relationship between the region of Kalinga and the empire ruled by Ašoka becomes evident in extrapolating these motives for invasion. The regional development of Kalinga prompted Ašoka to decide on annexing this territory. Ašoka desired to conquer Kalinga, and the *Arthasastra* provided the political philosophies guiding this decisions. Chandragupta Maurya’s advisor Kautilya supposedly devised the political treatise contained in *Arthasastra*. By the time of Ašoka, these dictums formed the foundation of Maurya imperial control as “the theory of the state in the *Arthasastra* is actually little more than an analysis of the elements essential to the efficient operation of the political organization.”15 The dictums expounded in the *Arthasastra* legitimized Ašoka’s reasons for conducting the Kalinga war, only if this action benefited the state. If designated an enemy of the Maurya Empire, Ašoka’s motives for attacking Kalinga become more evident, as he would be cementing his power and control in India.

15 Drukmeier, *Kingship and Community*, 199.
First and foremost, the acquisition of territory for use by the state compelled Aśoka to invade Kalinga. Besides mere territorial expansion as an impetus for the Kalinga war, Aśoka gained access to the natural resources of this region. The mountains to the west of Kalinga contained rich deposits of iron and precious gems, but in order to mine these resources Kalinga had to be subdued.\textsuperscript{16} The \textit{Arthashastra} advised the creation of state run monopolies in mining natural resources for "the wealth of the state had its source in the mining and [metallurgical] industry; the power of the state comes out of these resources. With [increased] wealth and a [powerful] army more territory can be acquired, thereby increasing the wealth of the state."\textsuperscript{17} For Aśoka, establishing a state mining monopoly in this region recouped the economic expenditures of invading Kalinga. Another resource mentioned in the \textit{Arthashastra} for state monopolization is salt; to attain salt Aśoka would have to rule a coastal area, therefore invading the Kalinga region allowed him gain access to this resource.\textsuperscript{18} Kalinga, as exhibited in the brisk ivory trade, was renowned both in India and abroad as a region rich in elephants. Elephants have always been a highly valued commodity in India, both for their military importance as well as for their labor capacities. With control over this region the Maurya Empire acquired Kalinga elephants, to be used in war against other antagonists or to assist in building infrastructure for the state.\textsuperscript{19} Yet, the most advantageous reason to conquer this


\textsuperscript{18} Ibid, 261.

\textsuperscript{19} The \textit{Arthashastra} contains rules and regulations for capturing and training elephants. This text divides elephants into four categories: under training, war elephant, riding elephant, and untrainable ones.
territory was for the land itself, as land brings revenue to the state in two ways: through agricultural surplus and taxation.

The Maurya Empire represented the first centralized state to hold sway over most of the subcontinent, and effective administration of land and agriculture became the most important aspect of maintaining order and accruing revenue. The Maurya state established a two-tier land system differentiating between crown owned land, sītā, and private landholdings, rāshtra. Government agents classified both categories of land on a scale of productivity to ensure proper taxation, and in this way:

The Arthasastra state differed in one other remarkable particular for any other known to antiquity, whether in India or elsewhere: it engaged in commodity production on a large scale. The main income of the state was from sītā lands, which paid a forth or more of the produce into the state’s warehouse; the rāshtra taxes, though lower, were also mainly gathered in kind.20

Through this process of land reforms and assessment the Maurya Empire transformed India from an aggregate of independent regions into a stratified collective and siphoned surplus from these regions back into the centralized state. The tenant utilizing the land incurred a dual system of taxation, the first being tax in kind paid directly to the state official, while they also paid a sales tax when bringing goods to market. The Arthasastra devised a set of stringent regulations and punishments for the private sales of goods, ensuring that commodities were sold only at state sanctioned markets.21 Forcing the rural population to conduct business in urban centers put Maurya officials in direct contact with the village cultivators. In the recently conquered region of Kalinga, these market

There is a connected section relating elephant forests that serve as protection against neighbors as well as a resource to be maintained for catching and training elephants. Rangarajan, Arthashastra, 622, 813.

20 Kosambi, Culture and Civilization, 152.

21 Rangarajan, Arthashastra, 82.
transactions facilitated the assessment of land and initiated the process of revenue collection through taxation.

After the Kalinga war, the majority of land in this region would be considered sūtā, thus directly controlled by the state. Rāṣṭra land had to be officially recognized by the state, usually in the form of land grants given to high officials or for religious purposes. As a forcibly subjugated region, only a few members of Kalinga society would be entitled to receive rāṣṭra grants, these being religious organizations or wealthy land owners. With the entire rural population considered laborers of sūtā lands, they were obligated to work for the state and pay the required taxes, this however, applied only to those remaining in Kalinga. For the deportation of one hundred thousand people after the Kalinga war, the thirteenth rock edict uses the verb, apavah, translated to mean "resettlement under compulsion." The Maurya government forced these people to settle tracts of crown land in other provinces, or conscripted for labor on large scale municipal development projects. Dictums in the Arthasastra devised this policy of deportation as a means to quell the possibility of rebellion and utilize free labor, both for the direct benefit of the state. The system of centralized administration implemented by Aśoka restructured the internal rural—urban dynamics of the region, making agriculturalists reliant on Maurya controlled urban markets. By annexing the territory of Kalinga, Aśoka

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22 Rangarajan, Arthashastra, 179-180.

23 Kosambi, Culture and Civilization, 149.

24 First of all, the primary pillar of economy is agriculture, or sita (revenue from Crown Agricultural Land), and the laborers on this land should be considered dependents of the state. When the state wishes to expand agriculture in other regions, or undertake a public project, these dependents are obligated to comply. In times of war or the Arthasastra states, "after conquering territory, [the king] is advised to transfer and disperse mlecchas (barbarians) living there." Here, Aśoka's actions are consistent with the precepts devised by Kautilya as he deports the Kalinga people to work in other areas of the empire, seemingly to quell the possibility of an uprising. Rangarajan, Arthashastra, 259, 52.
expanded his empire and assumed control over the resources, land, and people of this region.

Victory in the Kalinga war established Mauryan authority over Kalinga, and from this Aśoka profited from the prosperous merchant activity conducted in this region. With main trade arteries of northern India (uttarāpatha) and through the Deccan (dakshināpatha) firmly under Maurya control, Kalinga became the only region conducting unregulated trade. The success of a state hinged on its ability to promote and protect avenues of wealth, also referred to as artha. The Arthasastra linked economic theory with political science, wherein artha applied to encouragement of, “trade, industry and agriculture, developing national resources, bring fresh land under cultivation, building dams and canals to make agriculture independent of rain, and encouraging extensive and systematic working of mines.” The king was directly responsible for supporting trade within his empire, as “the king shall promote trade and commerce by setting up trade routes by land and by water and market towns/ports. Trade routes shall be kept free of harassment by couriers, state officials, thieves and frontier guards and from being damaged by herds of cattle.” For the Maurya Empire, Kalinga proved an extremely desirable region for promoting artha due to extensive trading networks on land and sea. Moreover, in administrating Kalinga ports the state could levy taxes on foreign commodities brought through maritime transactions. Strengthening the

25 Kosambi, Culture and Civilization, 140, 144.


27 Rangarajan, Arthashastra, 235.
empire through regulating land and sea based trade and accruing profit from land revenue motivated Asoka to invade Kalinga.

The costs of initiating these reforms, paying the administrators, and supporting a standing army, not only in Kalinga but throughout all of India, dictated that the empire must have a constant source of income. A fundamental tenet found in the Arthaśāstra essential for achieving a powerful state was the development and enrichment of a treasury (kosha). The king must protect subjects, and he achieved this goal by maintaining a “balance between the welfare of the people and augmenting the resources of the state.” An impoverished king equated to a weak state, therefore accumulating wealth and stocking the treasury was the goal of a king attempting to construct a powerful state.

Kautilya also applied the term kosha to the military apparatus of the state that created the idea of kosadanda, or “the combined economic power and military might of the state.” Danda can be translated to mean justice or discipline, and when combined with generating state funds for maintaining order indicated an intimate relationship between accruing wealth and maintaining power. Regarding relations among neighboring regions the expression kosadanda became more imperative. A state attained wealth through governing territory and taxing the people, therefore the larger the territory of a state proportionately increased the size of the kosha. From the perspective of expanding the kosha as a motive for instigating the Kalinga war, Asoka greatly enhanced

29 Ibid, 14.
30 Ibid, 123.
the Maurya Empire by subjugating Kalinga, appropriating its resources, and implementing taxes.

In addition to controlling the overland trade routes, the Kalinga war enabled the Maurya Empire to link trade from the Gangetic plain to the coastal Kalinga trading entrepôts. Aśoka wanted to enter the lucrative Bay of Bengal trading network established by the Kalinga mariners and derive revenue from taxing imports and exports. Conquering Kalinga meant the Maurya Empire would succeed in controlling merchant activities on the eastern coast:

It may also be pointed out that the Mauryas by that time [Kalinga war] had not built up a naval power and the Navadhyaksa or Superintendent of Shipping mentioned by Kautilya was in charge of policing the rivers, lakes, and sea-shores, rather than organizing the ships for maritime enterprise. The aversion of Kautilya for trade in the mid ocean (Samyanapatha) and his preference for trade along the coast (Kulapatha) amply suggests that the Mauryas were lagging behind in over-seas trade. Moreover, important trade routes from the Gangetic valley to the Deccan and further south passed through Kalinga and the control of these routes was perhaps considered essential for the interest of Magadha. Thus the growing Magadha empire in spite of its foreign associations and internal resources was confronted with commercial crisis. It was probably rightly apprehended that the continued existence of a flourishing Kalinga with her thriving trade might adversely affect the economy of the Maurya Empire. Under these circumstances war with Kalinga was a pressing necessity for Aśoka. 31

With Kalinga becoming part of the Maurya Empire, Aśoka assumed responsibility for propelling over seas trade as well as sending royal envoys to foreign countries. In fact, Aśoka sent his son Mahinda to Ceylon, departing from Tamralipti, in order to establish diplomatic ties with this foreign land and spread Buddhism. 32 By regulating and taxing trade, Kalinga served as a bastion of revenue for the Maurya Empire, and through its

31 Sahu, History of Orissa, 241.
32 Thapar, Aśoka, 134.
Figure 4: Trade Routes in Ancient India.
Source: Thapar, Aśoka, 345.
ports Aśoka encouraged the spread of Buddhism and commerce throughout the Bay of Bengal.

All aspects of regulating trade can be found in the *Arthasastra*. As much a treatise on political theory, the *Arthasastra* also functioned as an economic guide book synthesizing the consolidation of power with the acquisition of wealth. Kautilya considered trade the third pillar of economic activity, behind agriculture and cattle rearing.\(^3\) The *Arthasastra* delineated between merchant activity on land and sea by appointing a specific superintendent of shipping (naukadhyaksha) in charge of ocean going vessels (samudrasamyana) and a superintendent of the meadows (vivitadhyakska) in charge of caravans.\(^4\) Both superintendents of trade levied taxes on merchant activity (navkataka) and issued passports (mudra), required for merchants traveling from region to region or overseas.\(^5\) In addition to appointing officials to govern trade, the *Arthasastra* standardized weights and measures used in trade to extract the most precise duties.\(^6\) This text designated tariffs on overseas trade according to the value of the commodity: *ratna* (Diamonds, Pearls, Gems, and Coral), *sara* (sandal wood, aloe, and incense), *phalgu* (skins, furs, and woolen articles), and *kupya* (forest products).\(^7\) As goods of all values arrived at the Kalinga ports, the Maurya state benefited economically

\(^3\) Rangarajan, *Arthasastra*, 86.

\(^4\) Ibid, 211.


\(^6\) Rangarajan, *Arthasastra*, 763-772.

\(^7\) Ibid, 775-777, and 803.
from distributing these trade goods throughout the empire by imposing custom duties (sulka) and transaction taxes (vyaji). When Aśoka acquired the affluent region of Kalinga, he regulated trade in this region and prospered off its maritime traditions.

The Kalinga war enhanced the Maurya Empire both territorially and economically, which proved to be a motivating factor for invasion. The third postulate as to why Aśoka invaded Kalinga would be to suppress a rival political power. Considering the account given by Megesthenes, it appeared as if Aśoka faced a stalwart adversary in the Kalinga war. The combination of political organization, a strong army, available resources, and thriving trade distinguished Kalinga as a powerful region. The Arthaśastra instructed a ruler to view a kingdom with a common border as antagonistic, and detrimental to the well-being of the state. By the time of the Kalinga war the Maurya Empire surrounded this region on the north, south, and west. Furthermore, Kalinga possessed the traits of an antagonistic kingdom: localized power, wealth, and due to its strategic location “it could control sea traffic... Kalinga in hostile hands would thus be a perpetual danger.” According to the Arthaśastra, in order to maintain a strong and unified state Aśoka needed to conquer Kalinga, the antagonistic neighbor.

The Kalinga war was the final military campaign to appropriate territory into the Maurya Empire undertaken by Aśoka. For him, the addition of Kalinga solidified his empire, and further armed conflict would thus be avoided. Kalinga became the gem in his imperial crown, the last independent region to capitulate to his authority, and in the

38 Rangarajan, Arthaśastra, 262-263.
39 Ibid, 555.
40 Thapar, Aśoka, 82.
thirteenth edict Aśoka states that, "Verily the slaughter, death, and deportation of men which take place in the course of the conquest of unconquered country are now considered extremely painful and deplorable by the Beloved of the Gods." After the Kalinga war Aśoka defeated the last perceived threat to his empire and in the process acquired an extremely bountiful region. The Arthasastra gives a description of the ideal province of the state, which echoes of Kalinga:

The ideal janapada was one which was easily defended and which had a lot of productive land with cultivable fields, mines, timber forests, elephant forests and pastures. It should be capable of producing a wide variety of commodities, thus supporting the native population as well as outsiders who might immigrate in times of trouble in their own countries. It should be rich enough to support a high level of taxation and a large army. Its people should be predominately agriculturists, artisans and craftsmen, devoted to work, honest, loyal and intelligent.

Reconstructing a regional history of Kalinga has shown that these elements were consistent with what Kautilya envisioned as a perfect janapada. The fertile littoral plains of Kalinga supported both the native inhabitants as well as produced a surplus for the state. Geographically, Kalinga’s isolation created natural boundaries that could be defended, or in the case of the Kalinga war, made invasion difficult. The natural resources of this region could be mined by the state or used as commodities for trade, and Kalinga was renowned for its elephants from time immemorial. The people of Kalinga demonstrated their valor in battle, adventurousness in maritime voyages, and resilience in defeat, which made them ideal members of Kautilya’s society.

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42 Rangarajan, Arthashastra, 77.
Administrating Kalinga

The Kalinga war represented the apex of Maurya domination over the subcontinent, marked by Aśoka's forcible inclusion of the last independent region of Kalinga into the empire. On a personal level, this event altered Aśoka's perception of himself and how he wanted to rule, symbolized by changing his moniker from Chandāśoka, meaning fierce, to Dharmāśoka, or pious. For the remainder of his rule Aśoka concerned himself with administrating the Maurya Empire and spreading his moral code of Dhamma. The message of universalism described in his edicts attempted to assuage religious and cultural differences, and bring peace and stability to his empire.

In the fourteenth year of his reign Aśoka issued an edict introducing the creation of dhamma-mahāmattas, whose job entailed spreading the ideals of Dhamma and looking after the general welfare of the people. As his corps of dhamma-mahāmattas stressed the universal values and assessed the wellbeing of the populous, Aśoka focused on cementing his authority as the head of state. The best example of Maurya consolidation

43 Sircar, 18.

44 Drekmeier, Kingship and Community, 175-176.

45 The fifth major rock edict: In the past there were no officers of Dhamma. It was I who first appointed them, when I had been consecrated for thirteen years. They are busy in all sects, establishing Dhamma, increasing the interest in Dhamma, and attending to the welfare and happiness of those who are devoted to Dhamma, among the Greeks, Kambojas, the Gandhāras, the Risthikas, the Pitinikas, and the other people of the west. Among servants and nobles, brāhmans and wealthy householders, among the poor and aged, they [the officers of Dhamma], are working for the welfare and happiness of those devoted to Dhamma and for the removal of their troubles. They are busy in promoting the welfare of prisoners should the have behaved irresponsibly, or releasing those that have children, are afflicted, or are aged. They are busy everywhere, here [at Pātaliputra] and in all the women's residences, whether my own, those of my brothers and sisters, or those of other relatives. Everywhere throughout my empire the officers of Dhamma are busy in everything relating to Dhamma, in the establishment of Dhamma and in the administration of charities among those devoted to Dhamma. For this purpose has this inscription of Dhamma been engraved. May it endure long and may my descendents conform to it. Thapar, Aśoka, 252.
was displayed in the way Aśoka implemented his rule in the newly acquired region of Kalinga.

The methods Aśoka used to reorganize Kalinga provide an intimate glimpse of Maurya administration on a regional level. Aśoka’s relation to Kalinga, a conquered region that needed to be assimilated into the state, in many ways represents on a micro level the struggle of his predecessors when expanding their empire to encompass the Ganges valley and Deccan plateau. First, Aśoka sent bureaucrats and administrators to Kalinga in order survey the land, regulate trade, and effectively rule these defeated people, a process which:

Increased centralization under the Mauryas, more particularly during the reign of Aśoka, meant an increased control of the state over the economy. The administrative system was improved and developed and was made capable of examining and controlling even the minutiae of the economic structure. The king in turn, both controlling and coordinating this system, assumed a corresponding increase in power. The cultivator came into direct contact with the administration, which to him signified the state. The King became an even more remote symbol than before, and the immediate world of the cultivator was concerned with officials, a condition which was to remain current for many centuries.⁴⁶

To incorporate Kalinga into the Maurya economic structure the state apparatus had to be imposed quickly and effectively, so as to prevent rebellion and begin to collect revenue for the empire. Directly after achieving victory in the Kalinga war, Aśoka instituted this process of centralization, and extended his bureaucratic arms to embrace the defeated population.

In order to project his authority in Kalinga, Aśoka established an administrative center at the town of Tosalī. With the acquisition of Kalinga, Aśoka added a fifth province to the Maurya Empire that already consisted of Prachya (Magadha),

⁴⁶Thapar, Aśoka, 68.
Dakshinapatha (Deccan), Avantirattha (Central Ganges valley), and Uttarapatha (Northwest).\textsuperscript{47} Tosali became the provincial capitol of Kalinga, and from this urban administrative center the Maurya state begun to restructure the region. Administrating Kalinga presented a special set of circumstances for Aśoka, mainly that the people of this region resented his rule after experiencing such a crushing defeat and might not adhere to his policies. In other provinces the high ranking provincial rulers, \textit{kumāra} or members of the royal family, were relatively free to govern in accordance with the Maurya policies. In Kalinga however, Aśoka took special precautions by creating a council of ministers, \textit{mahāmattas}, who relayed the political and economic progress of this region directly back to the emperor. This unique chain of command dictated that Aśoka would ultimately make the final administrative decisions, thereby putting him in complete control of this province. To assist with governing Kalinga, Aśoka commissioned a second administrative center at Samāpa, located in the southern portion of the province.\textsuperscript{48} With Aśoka overseeing the reconstruction of Kalinga, and his officials bringing order and instituting policies, this region returned to its previous level of affluence.

The connection between the peripheral provincial officers and the emperor at the center, located at Pātaliputra, constituted the foundation of the centralized Maurya government. The Maurya Empire achieved full control over its territory by implementing the precepts of the \textit{Arthaśastra} that propounded a hierarchical form of government. Directly below the king and ruling princes, the \textit{kumāra}, were the primary officials—\textit{mahāmattas}, \textit{prādeśika}, \textit{rājīka}, and \textit{yukta}—responsible for administrating the

\textsuperscript{47} Raychaudhuri, \textit{Political History}, 255-256.

\textsuperscript{48} Prafulla Kumar Mohanty, \textit{State Formation in Ancient Orissa} (Kolkata: Punthi Pustak, 2002), 42-43.
provinces. Below these high-ranking provincial officials existed a large segment of bureaucratic intermediaries that funneled Maurya administrative policies to the village level, controlled by an elected village head, the *āyuksa*. The provincial officers in turn, were headed by influential ministers who assisted the king in running the central administrative body. Occupying the highest level of the bureaucracy, besides the king and royal family, resided the *purohita*, a king’s religious advisor, and the *senapati*, chief of arms, who communicated with the king on a daily basis. Second, only to the royal ministers, were economic advisors, the most important being the commander of the *kosha*, the *samnidhatr* (treasurer). The high standing of economic officers that regulated trade, such as the superintendent of shipping (*naukadhyaksha*) and the superintendent of the meadows (*vivitadhyaksha*), signifies the role an efficient and well maintained revenue system played in the Maurya Empire. Communication between the central advisors and their provincial counterparts, who in turn related with their subordinates, was essential in achieving order within the empire. After the Kalinga war, Aśoka introduced this process of centralized governmental control into this region, and thus efficiently ruled Kalinga.

In addition to instituting a precise hierarchical form of centralized bureaucracy to maintain order throughout this empire, Aśoka employed the use of erecting edicts to broadcast his authority directly to his subjects. The edicts issued by Aśoka chiseled his message into the minds of the people, and as royal edicts were consistent with “law as promulgated,” these inscriptions represented a frame of reference for any audience, from

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51 Rangarajan, *Arthashastra*, 210-212.
Maurya officials to rural farmers, in which to consult the instituted imperial policies. In an effort to reach the maximum amount of people, Ashoka located his edicts “in prominent places, either towns, or on important trade and travel routes, or in the proximity of religious centers and places of religious importance. Their purpose was naturally to make public the edicts to as large a group of people as possible.” In Kalinga, Ashoka followed this same system of buttressing his imperial authority with proclamations addressed to people. At the administrative centers of Tosali and Samapa, Ashoka erected special rock edicts meant to assuage any residual contempt or hostility in the hearts and minds of the Kalinga people associated with their defeat.

The edicts located at his administrative centers, Tosali now present day Dhauli and Samapa, now known as Jaugada, are found nowhere else in India and were issued solely for the people of Kalinga. The famous first line of these edicts reads, “All men are my children. Just as, in regards to my own children, I desire that they may be provided by me with all kinds of welfare and happiness in this world and in the next, the same I desire in respect to all men.” In these lines Ashoka’s attempted to reconcile with the survivors of the Kalinga war, not on the level as a ruler and subject, but as a paternal figure who cares about the personal welfare of his extended family. In the form of a directive, Ashoka claimed his authority over Kalinga but appealed to the inhabitants to accept his benevolent rule rather than resist. Not surprisingly, Ashoka neglected to erect the thirteenth edict, proclaiming his magnanimous victory in the Kalinga war, as “the

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52 Rangarajan, Arthashastra, 380.
54 Sircar, Ashoka, 54.
reference to the suffering... was too close to the feeling of the people of Kalinga to make it pleasant or instructive.”

Though Aśoka expressed sentiments of compassion in these edicts he also included a line concerning the unconquered tribes of the Eastern Ghats, the Atavikas, residing on the border of Kalinga. As a caveat to those that might wish to rebel in Kalinga, Aśoka proclaimed that, though the Atavikas would remain autonomous, “they should understand that the king will forgive them as far as they can be forgiven.”

The phrase, “as far as they can be forgiven,” implied that Aśoka would still impose his authority over his empire, and that open rebellion would not be tolerated. Yet, the conciliatory attitude expressed in these edicts suggested that Aśoka desired peace in Kalinga, and that through his new found devotion to Buddhism he would protect the wellbeing of his subjects.

Aśoka not only implored the people of Kalinga to accept him as their king, but he advised his officials to rule with compassion and justice. Acknowledging that the Maurya officials were the representatives of the empire, in these edicts he instructed them to, “strive to practice impartiality. But it cannot be practiced by one possessing any of these faults—jealousy, shortness of temper, harshness, rashness, obstinacy, idleness, or slackness. You should wish to avoid such faults. He who is slack will not act, and in you official functions you must strive, act, and work.”

These proclamations indicated that Aśoka entrusted his officials to reconstruct Kalinga, but they needed to practice diligence and justice in their duty. Aśoka relied on his officials to conduct themselves in a manner

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55 Thapar, Aśoka, 169.

56 Ibid, 258.

57 Ibid, 257.
conducive to strengthening imperial ruler, appeasing to the populace, and ultimately establishing control in the region. As a reassurance to his subjects Aśoka granted them the right to consult his inscriptions stating "you may listen to it even on any other occasion as it presents itself." For the Kalinga people this right ensured their ability to interpret Aśoka's policies, and thus held the mahāmattas accountable for their actions as officials of the state.

In the events leading up to the Kalinga War Aśoka acted the role of a military general in subduing a strategic region that benefited his empire. Upon achieving victory he instituted policies consistent with dictums expressed in the Arthaśastra. In order to control this newly acquired territory and prosper from Kalinga maritime trade he sent mahāmattas to administer the subjugated people. The separate edicts alluded to Aśoka's attempts to pacify the inhabitants of this region and encourage economic growth. Aśoka consciously decided to invade this region in an effort to increase the Maurya kosha, and strengthen the state kosadanda. With the defeat of Kalinga, the Maurya Empire extended from India's east coast to west coast, unifying the entire northern Gangetic plain. This regional history attempted to portray the Kalinga experience of the Kalinga war and evaluate the precipitating effects of this event.

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58 Sircar, Aśoka, 55.
Figure 4: Expansion of Khāravela.
Source: Kant, Khāravela, ii.
Chapter 4. Khāravela and the Recreating of Kalinga

The death of Aśoka in 232 BCE signified the decline of the Maurya Empire. Although the Maurya dynasty continued to function for another fifty two years, no proceeding emperor administrated the empire with the vigor of Aśoka, nor matched his charismatic zeal for connecting with their subjects. Finally, in 180 BCE Maurya military general Pusyamittra instigated a dramatic coup, disposed the last Maurya emperor, Brhadratha, and established the Śunga dynasty signaling the end of the Maurya Empire.¹ Many factors contributed to the decline of the Maurya Empire, yet all these discursive causes for the Maurya demise suggested that Aśoka possessed a personal grandeur that enabled him to expand his empire and project his authority over his empire. The Aśokan edicts serve as a testament to this emperor’s ability to balance the running of a centralized state with generating a popular consensus among the regions of his empire.

The successors of Aśoka failed to exhibit the level of leadership required to successfully preserve the empire. The later Mauryas’ royal wars of succession fractured their control over the empire as attested to, “from the considerable variation of names in the Maurya king lists in the sources, it would seem that there was general tendency for male relatives and members of the royal family either to claim the throne or else to proclaim themselves independent rulers in the provinces... In fact the short reigns within the fifty years suggest that that some of the kings were deposed.”² The centralized imperial system instituted by Chandragupta Maurya, Bindusāra, and Aśoka unified most of the subcontinent, but their combined efforts quickly eroded during these fifty years of

¹ Thapar, Aśoka, 182-184, and 196.
² Ibid, 198.
political infighting. With the breakdown of a strong state apparatus, various regions of India restored their local autonomy and released themselves from the yolk of Maurya taxation.\textsuperscript{3} This receding source of income exacerbated the political tensions at the center, resulting in the disintegration of the empire. When Pusyamitra finally usurped power from the Mauryas and founded the Šunga dynasty, his kingdom included only the original territory of Magadha.

With the demise of this unified imperial system in India, regions reemerged as individual locales attempting to expand their boundaries and exert their influence. Post-Maurya India resembled a loose confederation of regions struggling to establish internal political control while combating threats from antagonistic external power bases.\textsuperscript{4}

Kalinga, after the decline of the Maurya Empire, entered another phase of independence similar to the period between Nanda occupation and the Kalinga war. In the seventy four years prior to the Kalinga war, Kalinga rose to prominence in such a manner that motivated Aśoka to invade. For the thirty years of Maurya control, from the victory in the Kalinga war until his death, Aśoka rebuilt and restructured Kalinga so as to collect revenue from this province. In Kalinga, the combination of economic policies implemented during the Maurya period followed by political control relinquished to regional powers resulted in the rise of the Chedi dynasty.

Upon reviewing the historical background of the Chedi dynasty and the rise of Khāravela, this chapter will focus on the methods this regional Kalinga power employed to create a strong political entity. As with the period between the Nandas occupation and

\textsuperscript{3} Thapar, \textit{Aśoka}, 207-209.

\textsuperscript{4} Basham, \textit{Wonder that was India}, 57-58.
the Kalinga war, no historical records exist which describe Kalinga from Aśoka’s thirteenth edict to Khāravela’s Ṣathīgumpha inscription. Examining the Maurya legacy of centralized administration in Kalinga as it pertained to regional development and state formation, assists in identifying certain historical trends that clarify Kalinga regional history during this dark period. The second section of this chapter analyzes the Ṣathīgumpha inscription in order to identify the ways the Chedi dynasty reflected the Maurya Empire. At the height of his power Khāravela controlled the entire eastern coast of India and extended his boundaries into the Ganges valley, reestablishing Kalinga as a prominent region in India. This encroachment forced the culturally different Vedic north to acknowledge the Kalinga people as members of an inclusive cultural tradition. During the ancient period Brahmanical sources referred to the Kalinga people as mlecchas, or impure foreigners, yet by the early centuries of the common era Kalinga had been accepted into the cultural fold. Tracing this transition found in sources, such as the Mahābhārata and the Laws of Manu, indicated an elevation of Kalinga status due to the prominence of this region achieved during the Chedi period.

The Chedi dynasty capitalized on the Maurya restructuring of Kalinga, and from this Khāravela transformed Kalinga into an extremely successful and powerful region in India. It is still unclear, however, as to when the royal family of the Chedi dynasty settled in Kalinga. References to the Chedi dynasty date far back into Indian antiquity, where a Rig Vedic hymn represented the Chedi king as a “powerful and generous monarch who made a munificent gift to Brahmatithi which consisted of ten thousand cows, one hundred camels, as well as, ten rajas to be his servants.”5 The Mahābhārata

5 N. K. Sahu, Khāravela (Bhubaneswar: Orissa State Museum, 1984), 18.
mentioned the Chedi kingdom as being vanquished by Vasu, and located this kingdom near ancient Kausāmbi and Matsya, much further west and north of Kalinga’s traditional boundaries on the east coast.\(^6\) Correspondingly, the *Vessantara Jātaka* and the *Harivamśa Purāṇa* located this kingdom to the west of the Vindhya Mountains, situated between the Yamuna River to the north and the Narmada River to the south.\(^7\) These sources suggest that the royal Chedi family existed in India from time immemorial, and had been a strong regional power in the ancient period. The Chedi dynasty became associated with Kalinga during the reign of Khāravela, as he stated he was the third generation of Chedi rulers in this region.\(^8\) Determining the date of Khāravela will reveal the coronation of the first Chedi ruler, and establish a point of reference as to when this royal family settled in Kalinga.

The date of Khāravela has been a much debated point in the ancient history of Kalinga. Early academic inquiries to the date of Khāravela placed him anywhere from the fourth century to the first century BCE, but early scholars, such as R. L. Mitra, John Prinsep, and K. P. Jayaswal, based these conjectures on inaccurate translations of the Hāṭhīgumpha inscription and insufficient historical and archaeological data.\(^9\) Later revisions of the Hāṭhīgumpha inscription have elicited names of contemporary kings that Khāravela engaged in war, and thereby provided reference points from which to narrow

\(^6\) According to the *Mahābhārata*, Vasu, the Paurava king pleased Indra by his asceticism and got from him a crystal chariot. On the advice of Indra he conquered ‘the beautiful and excellent’ kingdom of the Chedis. Sahu, *Khāravela*, 19.

\(^7\) Sahu, *History of Orissa*, 330-331.

\(^8\) Then on completing the twenty-fourth year, to make the remainder of his youth prosperous by conquests, being third in descent in the Royal house of Kalinga, (he) gets anointed as Great King. Line 3. In line one Khāravela refers to himself as the Increaser of Ceti [Chedi] Royal house. Kant, *Hāṭhīgumpha*, 24, 23.

the scope of his reign.\textsuperscript{10} Furthermore, scholars recently created a paleographic chronology of the Brāhmī script in which the age of ancient documents and inscriptions can be determined in relation to the written characters. This chronology aided in placing the Ḫāṭhīgumphā inscription later than the edicts of Aśoka, but prior to the inscriptions of Kaniska.\textsuperscript{11} Finally, the discovery of Śiśupālgarh in 1948 by B. B. Lal of the Archaeological Survey of India facilitated historians with material evidence corroborating the existence of an urban site in ancient times; more importantly, this excavation helped identify Śiśupālgarh as the ancient Chedi capitol of Kalinganagari.\textsuperscript{12}

In consolidating the above information the accepted dates for Khāravela follows that he became a crown prince in 49 BCE, at the age fifteen, and at the completion of his twenty fourth year, assumed control of the Chedi dynasty in 40 BCE.\textsuperscript{13} According to these dates, Khāravela was born in 64 BCE, and as the Ḫāṭhīgumphā inscription described the first thirteen years of his reign ending in 27 BCE, historians have ascertained thirty seven years of information pertaining to this figure and Kalinga regional history.

With the date of Khāravela fixed (64 to 27 BCE) the rise of the Chedi dynasty in Kalinga can now be examined. The Ḫāṭhīgumphā inscription supplied the names of Khāravela’s father, Chetarāja, and his grandfather, Mahāmeghavāhana, the founder of the

\begin{itemize}
  \item Sahu, \textit{Khāravela}, 35-52.
  \item Ibid, 262-279.
  \item Mahtab, \textit{History of Orissa}, 93
  \item Sahu, \textit{Khāravela}, 52; The Ḫāṭhīgumphā inscription states that Khāravela studied the arts of kingship as prescribed in the \textit{Arthaśāstra} and consistent with the traditions found in \textit{The Laws of Manu}, learning: writing (\textit{lekha}), coinage (\textit{rupa}), arithmetic (\textit{ganana}), law (\textit{vyavahara}), and administration (\textit{vidhi}). Ibid, 57; For theories on the ancient \textit{brahmacārin} tradition refer to Wendy Doniger, trans., \textit{The Laws of Manu} (New York: Penguin Books, 1991), 186.
\end{itemize}
Chedi dynasty in Kalinga.\textsuperscript{14} It is believed that his father’s premature death resulted in Khāravela assuming responsibility for the dynasty at the age of fourteen.

Mahāmeghavāhana’s initiation of the Chedi dynastic control in Kalinga corresponded with the rise of the contemporary Sātavāhana kingdom, dated at 72 BCE.\textsuperscript{15} According to this dynastic chronology twenty three years elapsed (72 to 49 BCE) between the inauguration of the Chedi dynasty in Kalinga and the coronation of Khāravela. For these dates to align, Mahāmeghavāhana would have abdicated his throne to his son soon after consolidating power. This suggests that when Mahāmeghavāhana assumed control of Kalinga when he was relatively old, pushing his birth to the turn of the first century BCE.

The eclipse of the Maurya Empire occurred in 180 BCE, thus allowing eighty years for the Chedi rulers to migrate to Kalinga and establish control over this region. However, as mentioned above, in the post-Maurya period regional powers benefited from the absence of imperial authority, and rapidly reasserted their rule.

**The Maurya Legacy in Kalinga**

The years of direct Maurya administration catalyzed the process of state formation in Kalinga. The Maurya practice of assessing land for the purpose of taxation brought to Kalinga reforms which increased crop yields and expanded the availability of cultivatable land. Trade regulations facilitated the process of merchant transactions, and the protection of trade routes, both on land and sea, increased overall volume and profit in Kalinga as well as between interconnected regions. The Maurya Empire transformed towns into administrative centers, and with the creation of markets connected rural

\textsuperscript{14} Kant, \textit{Hāgīgumphā}, 23.

\textsuperscript{15} Sahu, \textit{Khāravela}, 52, 54.
production with the urban commercial economy. Moreover, the Maurya efforts to centralize the bureaucratic system created a class of officers whose job was to ensure the efficiency of the state. The legacy of the Maurya Empire forever altered the political organization of Kalinga, and for that matter, all of India. The subsequent regional kingdoms and expansive empires in India copied the Maurya model of a centralized administrative system, the best example being the Gupta Empire that ruled from circa 320 to 550 ACE. In asserting regional control, the Chedi rulers implemented the Maurya imperial archetype in order to strengthen their kingdom in Kalinga.

The Maurya Empire stressed agriculture as the most profitable aspect of the state, and their attention to land productivity fostered policies conducive to increasing cultivation. The designation of Kalinga as crown owned lands, sīla, by the Mauryas benefited the rise of the Chedi dynasty in two ways. In the Maurya administration the Superintendent of Crown Lands encouraged cultivation by obligating agriculturalist to farm their land, and even levying punishments against anyone neglecting their duty. Furthermore, in order to attain the maximum value from crown owned lands, the Arthasastra listed the most profitable crops for cultivation, and identified rice and grains (sīla) as producing the greatest returns to the state. The geographical features of Kalinga make this an extremely fertile region as it possesses at least ten different river valleys, suitable soil, and a climate conducive for growing rice and grain. Under the


17 Rangarajan, Arthashastra, 80.

18 Ibid, 230.
Maurya system markets were created in order to tax these agricultural products, thus connecting the rural cultivator with the urban administrative centers.

For the Chedi dynasty, this Maurya legacy equated to an established systematic organization of the rural agriculturalists which could be employed and taxed by a regional power. Likewise, this system of land assessment also provided the rulers with surplus to be gleaned from the land and a source of income in which to fund the governing body. The Chedi rulers adopted the Maurya system of accruing revenue from the land as mentioned in the Hāthīgumphā inscription that, as a display of the affluence, Khāravela remitted taxes on the villagers. Successful administration of agriculture increased the treasury, and during the Maurya period the administrators implemented policies that expanded cultivation by clearing forests for the purpose of increasing revenue.

The Maurya Empire expanded the land available for cultivation by utilizing advances in iron technology for land reclamation. The region of Magadha possessed some of the richest iron deposits in India. The monopolization of these minerals by the state combined with more efficient smelting techniques allowed the Maurya Empire to incorporate iron based tools throughout the subcontinent. Applying iron technology to agricultural practices enlarged the amount of cultivatable land, and thus increased the taxable yields:

The widespread use of iron helped the clearance of thickly forested area of the middle Ganga basin, and the use of iron ploughshare led to the production of considerable

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19 Ganguly, Historical Geography, 91-95.

20 And, having been anointed [for six years], to display (his) royal opulence (he) bestows all taxes, grants, and many (other) favours (worth) hundreds of thousands upon the townsmen and villagers.—Line 6 in Kant, Hāthīgumphā, 26.
surplus... The new agricultural techniques coupled with the use of force enabled some people to acquire large stretches of land which needed a vast number of dependent laborers... In the Maurya period they worked on large state farms. Probably 150,000 people captured in Kalinga by Aśoka were drafted for work on farms and mines.\textsuperscript{21}

Introducing iron tools assisted in every aspect of agricultural labor: axes could be used to chop down forests, shovels helped to dig irrigation ditches, and ploughshares leveled the land for the farmer to seed. From the distribution of iron tools during the Maurya Empire coupled with a desire to reclaim unused land, the Kalinga countryside under Aśoka’s administration became much more lucrative for the state.

With iron technology firmly implanted during the Chedi rule, Kalinga prospered agriculturally, which in turn provided a source of revenue for the political leaders. Though a detailed study of expanding cultivatable lands is unavailable, and most likely impossible to substantiate, iron artifacts have been located in Kalinga. At Śiśupālgarh, that capitol of the Chedi dynasty, iron implements of “peace and war” have been unearthed.\textsuperscript{22} Further archaeological excavations have located iron tools in port cities along the sea coast; this evidence suggests that in combination of the finds at Śiśupālgarh, iron was prevalent in many urban sites in ancient Kalinga.\textsuperscript{23} As property of the state, iron objects would have been sold at urban markets for popular consumption, indicating connection between iron and the development of urban centers. The \textit{Arthaśastra} mentions the profession of blacksmith, \textit{karmara}, and with a great amount of iron-ore deposits found in the mountains to the east of Kalinga, “the early smelters of Orissa with

\textsuperscript{21} Sharma, \textit{Material Culture}, 162-163.

\textsuperscript{22} Mohanty, \textit{State Formation in Ancient Orissa}, 65.

\textsuperscript{23} Basa and Behera, “Martime Archaeology of Orissa”, in Basa and Mohanty, \textit{Archeology of Orissa}, vol. II, 575
these deposits alone could have been an ample source of iron."²⁴ With the existence of iron in their territory, and specified labor to make tools, the Chedi rulers continued to expand the cultivatable lands in Kalinga and accrued income through taxation, thus maintaining and sustaining a prosperous regional power.

The legacy of the Maurya Empire in rural areas revealed a concentration on expanding land under cultivation, and through stringent administration, connecting the agriculturalists to the state. Maurya centralization also influenced urban centers through regulating trade and taxing the merchant economy. By establishing and protecting trade routes as well as devising a system of weights and measures the Maurya Empire promoted merchant enterprise. Yet, for encouraging trade, the most dramatic aspect of the Maurya period was the introduction of a standardized coin based economy into India. In the same way that the state mining monopoly enabled the Maurya rulers to diffuse iron technology throughout the empire, the monopoly on silver allowed them to control the minting and distribution of punch-marked coins. All state transactions during the Maurya period involved the exchange of punch-marked coins, and "it follows that the Magadhan state functioned on a powerful cash economy. The Arthaśastra pana was of silver, as seen from the directions given in the book itself, and from numerous archaeological finds."²⁵ This cash economy, based on punch-marked coins, covered all aspects of the Maurya Empire: merchants conducted business with cash, the state paid officers' salaries in panas, fines, custom duties, and taxes were also collected in the form of coins, the purchase of commodities required state approved currency, and the expenditures for war

²⁴ Chakrabarti, Iron in India, 31; for mention of blacksmiths see Rangarajan, Arthashastra, 789.
²⁵ Kosambi, Culture and Civilization, 154.
were covered by the money in the treasury.\textsuperscript{26} Establishing a cash based economy allowed the Maurya Empire to regulate merchant activity as well as accurately extract taxes from their subjects.

In the post-Maurya period the regions of India continued to use coins as the basis for exchange. The fluidity of a cash based economic system eased commercial transactions, and enabled merchants to conduct trade throughout India according to a set standard. The evidence for the use of coins in the Chedi dynasty comes from Khāravela’s reconstruction of the capitol after damage from a storm, the improvements of which were paid in cash.\textsuperscript{27} Paying for these repairs in coins indicates that Khāravela possessed some sort of treasury from which to draw funds, much like the concept of \textit{kosha} found in the \textit{Arthasastra}. Secondly, the fact that the laborers accepted cash as payment for their work suggests that strong cash based economy existed in Kalinga. Archaeological discoveries of punch-marked coins found throughout Orissa substantiate the existence of a cash based economy in Kalinga during Chedi rule. Numismatic dating of coin hoards found in Orissa, and in Śiśupālgarh itself, demonstrates the prevalence of punch-marked coins in this region both during and after the Maurya period.\textsuperscript{28} Using the cash based economy established by the Maurya Empire, the Chedi dynasty could thus transpose their own system of taxation and customs duties in Kalinga and generate revenue.

\textsuperscript{26} For wages scales of Maurya officials see Rangarajan, \textit{Arthashastra} 289-282; for tariffs, 803; and for fines see 279-280.

\textsuperscript{27} And, having been anointed, in the first year (of his reign), (he) causes in the capital of Kalinga, (verily) the Abode of the Brave, the gates, ramparts and buildings which had been damaged by storm, to be repaired, and the embankments of the cool reservoir to be strengthened, and all the parks to be renovated, by (spending) thirty-five hundred thousand; and (he) makes (his) subjects happy. Kant, \textit{Hāthigumpha}, 24-25.

\textsuperscript{28} Shishir Kumar Panda, “Early Trade and Trade Routes in Orissa”, in Basa and Mohanty, \textit{Archaeology of Orissa}, 551-556.
The final legacy of the centralized Maurya system which facilitated the development of regional powers was the reliance on government officials to implement policies and maintain order. Maurya officials kept the emperor informed about the condition of the empire as well as functioning as the intermediaries between the king and his subjects. Inscriptions found on the royal cave complexes of Khandagiri and Udayagiri bear the names of Chedi officials, indicating that the Khāravela employed a Maurya form of centralized government.

Khāravela commissioned the excavation of the Khandagiri and Udayagiri cave complexes, located ten kilometers west of Śiśupālgarh, as a sanctuary for Jaina aesthetics (Arhats), as he himself advocated Jainism. In constructing this Jaina monastery Khāravela dedicated certain caves to members of his cabinet, the names engraved on the caves provide a list of government officials. The Jambeśvara cave contains the name of Nākiya, identified as the Mahāmada. This title is synonymous with the Maurya official, mahāmattta, and in both governments these officers looked after general affairs of the state and acted as special envoys between the rulers and the regional heads. Another officer that finds mention in both the Chedi government and Maurya administration was the city magistrate, nagara akhadamsa and nagala viyohālaka respectively. Aśoka placed these city magistrates in Tosali and Samapa to maintain order and fairly administer justice in the conquered region, and this governmental post

29 Mahtab, History of Orissa, 95-96.
30 Sahu, Khāravela, 90.
31 For function of mahāmada in the Chedi dynasty see Sahu, Khāravela, 96; for Maurya mahāmattas see Thapar, Aśoka, 101-103.
32 Sahu, Khāravela, 96, 90-91.
established by Aśoka could have remained until the rise of the Chedi dynasty. The similarities between the titles of these two officers signified a link between the administrative systems established by the Mauryas, on an imperial level, and the Chedi kings in controlling Kalinga.

Besides those two direct correlations between officials in the Chedi government reflecting the legacy of Maurya centralization, other names found in the Khandagiri and Udayagiri complex suggest further connections. The Tatowāgumphā cave was dedicated to the pādamūlika, which translates as “one who serves at the feet (of the king)” and who appeared to function as a high ranking royal attendant in the Chedi dynasty.33 Though no sources mentioned the existence of a similar position in the Maurya Empire, the Arthasastra identified a royal minister, the dauvarika, who served as the king’s chamberlain, in charge of palace affairs.34 Finally, inscribed in two separate caves were the officers of kamma and chula kamma. In the Chedi government the kamma functioned as the Minister of Works responsible for the general maintenance of the cities and implementation of any public projects issued by the king.35 During his reign, Khāravela ordered the repair of the capitol, Kalinganagari, in the first year of his rule and in his sixth year reopened the canal built by the Nandas, both public works to be administered by the kamma. The chula kamma, or junior kamma, appears to have assisted the kamma in performing his duty, which indicates a hierarchical order among officials. Organizing the government in such a way, with high ranking ministers and subordinate officials,

33 Sahu, Khāravela, 90.
34 Rangarajan, Arthashastra, 794.
35 Sahu, Khāravela, 91.
again reflects the system of wages scales expounded in the *Arthashastra*.\(^{36}\) Wages scales distinguished between the different levels of governmental officials and reflected the highly structured hierarchical system of administration found in the Maurya Empire. The relationship between the *kamma* and the *chula kamma* suggests that the Chedi dynasty also implemented this hierarchical structure in the government, possibly emulating the Maurya model.

**Kharavela’s Legacy in Kalinga**

From the demise of the Maurya Empire (180 BCE) to the coronation of Kharavela (40 BCE), Kalinga transitioned from a defeated region subservient to the imperial powers of Magadha, to becoming one of the most powerful kingdom in ancient India. In implementing the Maurya model of centralized administration and building on the legacy of Aśoka’s restructuring of Kalinga, the Chedi dynasty transformed Kalinga into a regional powerhouse, due, in part to the leadership of Kharavela. Encapsulated in the Hāthīgumpha inscription were thirteen years of his rule and a glimpse of ancient Kalinga history. This information revealed that:

The reign of Kharavela constituted a golden epoch in the history of Orissa. Under him the empire attained the zenith of its power and territorial expansion. He happens to be the greatest of all the monarchs who ruled over Orissa. Besides his splendid achievements in wars and conquests, he performed many beneficent deeds for his subjects. Orissan art and architecture entered into a new phase of development during his reign. The culture of the people, their manners and customs [sic] are revealed in the sculptures of the caves of Udayagiri and Khandagiri and speak of an age both materially prosperous and culturally advanced.\(^{37}\)

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This section of the chapter will chart the progress of Chedi expansion throughout India as found in the Hāthīgumpha inscription. In addition to the military achievements of Khāravela, this inscription testified to the livelihood and culture of this region. Finally, the rise of Kalinga during the Chedi dynasty forced the regions of north India to recognize the significance of this region. For this reason Brahmanical writers revised their perception towards the people inhabiting this region, from foreign mlecchas to members of the Vedic cultural fold.

As documented in the Hāthīgumpha inscription Khāravela led the Kalinga army into battle for six of the thirteen year of his reign, marching his forces west, north, and south achieving victory in each campaign. The success of Khāravela resulted from a well organized political structure and a strong regional economic system to fund these military expeditions. The prosperous condition of Kalinga allowed Khāravela to accomplish his amazing feats of military prowess:

Thus within a short span of ten years (from his 2nd to 12th regnal years) Khāravela could achieve a series of brilliant victories extending his suzerainty from the North-Western part of India to the farthest extent in the South. No Indian monarch in history is known to have accomplished such astonishingly successful conquests embracing the length and breadth of India. It may be mentioned here that the military campaigns of Khāravela did not aim at building a political empire for Kalinga by engulfing the conquered territories. His ambition was to play the role of a Dharma Vijayī monarch and to heighten the prestige of Kalinga by defeating the rising power of his time... The political and military performances of Khāravela have, in fact, no parallel in history and this great monarch fully justifies the epithet “Chakravartī” given him in the inscription of his Chief Queen.38

Through the legacy of Khāravela, Kalinga was thrust into the annals of Indian history as a significant regional power. Yet, the success of the Chedi dynasty hinged on the ability of

38 Sahu, Khāravela, 81.
Kalinga to provide the resources and martial spirit of the Kalinga people to make these achievements possible.

In the second year of his reign (38 BCE) Khāravela initiated his first military campaign marching west into the Deccan plateau. The first region to succumb to Chedi power was Assaka, most likely the same region mentioned in the *Culla Kālinga-Jātaka*. The Ḥāṭhīgumpha inscription revealed that Khāravela departed Kalinga with, “a multitudinous army (consisting of) cavalry, elephants, infantry, and chariots,” and upon reaching the Assaka region, “strikes terror into the capitol.” All of the elements that constituted this traditional four winged army could be found in Kalinga, from excellent elephants to valiant soldiers. As the first campaign proved indecisive and two years later, in the fourth regal year, Khāravela again marched west. During this campaign he invaded the Vidyādhara region and subdued the Rathikas and the Bhojakas. Vidyādhara was considered the ancestral home of the Chedi dynasty so the beginning of this campaign served to reestablish Chedi dominance over their ancestral region. However, for the Rathikas and Bhojakas this invasion resulted in their defeat as their “crown and caparisoned horse have been dashed to pieces, umbrella and golden pitcher have been removed and jewels and fortune have been seized.” It was in the fourth year of his

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39 Sahu, *Khāravela*, 76.


42 Sahu, *Khāravela*, 77.

reign, 36 BCE that Khāravela achieved his first military triumph, and after sacking thisegion he brought the spoils of war back to Kalinga.

For the next three years Khāravela remained in Kalinga and did not engage in any
military activities. These years he spent consolidating his empire. First he excavated the
canal dug by the Nandases, possibly for the purpose of irrigation or to stimulate trade by
improving a water route to the capitol. In the second year of his military hiatus
Khāravela cancelled all taxes and bestowed favors on his subjects. From this act of
benevolence, it appeared that the booty seized from the Rathikas and Bhijakas
sufficiently stocked the treasury. The Hāthīgumpha inscription also mentioned that
Khāravela had a son by the Chief Queen during this period. However, in 32 BCE
Khāravela set off again to conquer territory, this time north to invade Magadha, the once
powerful region and home of the Mauryas.

In this northern campaign, and again two years later, Khāravela seemed intent on
defeating Magadha, possibly inspired by the theft of the sacred Jaina relic. In his first
march northwards Khāravela planned to capture the fort of Goradhiagiri, which defended
the southern boundary of Magadha. However, at this time a Yavana (Bactrian Greek)
king invaded Mathurā on the Yamuna River, and with this region being a stronghold of
Jainism, Khāravela intervened and repelled the foreign invaders, ignoring his original
plans of capturing Magadha.44 This act of piety displayed by Khāravela demonstrates his
adherence to Jainism, and after, “having liberated (the city of Mathura). [And he moves
with satellite kings] (Here), with a wish-fulfilling tree burdened with foliage, (he) goes
[to worship the stupa] reverenced by all householders and having performed the Sarva-

44 Sahu, Khāravela, 79.
grahana (ceremony), gives the community of Brahmins gifts and [worships] the Arahamta.45 This line of the inscription implies that Khāravela, accompanied by the liberated kings of Mathurā, returned to Kalinga with a kalpa tree (wish-fulfilling tree) that he dedicated to Jaina Arahamta.46 After residing in Kalinga for a year, in 30 BCE Khāravela again campaigned to the north.47 This military jaunt could not have lasted long or covered much distance, because the following year he waged war against his southern enemies.

Khāravela’s expedition to the south represents a very interesting and historically perplexing episode of his reign. First of all, he intended to conquer Magadha on his first northward campaign but repelled the Yavana invasion instead. Two years later he resumed his mission of marching north, but promptly turned back to combat his southern neighbors. The Hāthīgumpha inscription is silent as to the success of the second northern invasion, so it appears that extenuating circumstances drew him to engage his enemies to the south. Furthermore, Kalinga and the southern confederated states of Tamil had historically vied for control over maritime trade in the Bay of Bengal. Neither the Nanda kings nor Aśoka attempted to invade this region, as they were considered too powerful to be conquered.48 Regarding the southern campaign the Hāthīgumpha inscription states that, “for the wellbeing of (his) realm, [he] breaks the confederacy of Tamila countries

45 Kant, Hāthīgumpha, 27-28.

46 The Kalpa tree is associated with the first Tirthankara Rsabhanatha who is known as Adijina. Sahu, Khāravela, 86.


48 Sahu, Khāravela, 79-80.
(which had been formed) in the year 113.\textsuperscript{49} This evidence suggests that the southern states in some manner antagonized Khāravela, perhaps through a military incursion into Kalinga, and that Khāravela responded by thwarting this threat to his power.

The impetus for Khāravela’s march on the south can be better explained when placed in the context of the twelfth year of his reign, 28 BCE. In his last military excursion Khāravela returned to the north, and again invaded Magadha. This time Khāravela succeeded in conquering this region, and after “having seized the family-jewels [from the treasury], carries away the riches of Anga and Magadha,” returned to Kalinga with the Jaina image stolen by the Nandas.\textsuperscript{50} Although this event was celebrated in the Kalinga with pomp and circumstance, two years prior, instead of conquering Magadha Khāravela abruptly shifted his focused to his southern boundary.\textsuperscript{51} This indicates that a political crisis emerged between Kalinga and the southern Tamil states, and that Khāravela was forced to direct his attention away from Magadha and on to quelling this insurrection in the south. This episode between Kalinga and its Tamil neighbors reflected the interregional relations of this time, and also the importance of maritime trade to a regional power. To secure his control over Kalinga trade interests, and project his authority onto his neighbors in the south, Khāravela interrupted his northern campaign and confronted the powerful Tamil confederacy.

The end of Khāravela’s military career witnessed victories over both the threatening neighbors to the south and the total defeat of his traditional enemies in

\textsuperscript{49} Kant, Ḫāṭhīgumphā, 29.

\textsuperscript{50} Ibid, 29.

\textsuperscript{51} [On returning home], (he) causes banners to be fixed on all the firm pinnacles of the gates (of the capitol) by spending two thousand. Ibid, 30.
Magadha. Yet, for all his military accomplishments that heightened the prestige of this region, Khāravela’s legacy extends to what he achieved in Kalinga itself. Khāravela revitalized Kalinga and her people after a period of turmoil following the devastating defeat in the Kalinga war and submission to Maurya rule. Although Asoka attempted to reconcile with the inhabitants of Kalinga by erecting the special rock edicts at Dhauli and Jaugunda:

Asoka being a conqueror had to follow the policy of appeasement by issuing conciliatory proclamations and making administrative reforms... Khāravela on the other hand, was a ruler of his land and his people, and as such, his policy was not to appease but to please the people. His problem was not consolidation of his rule but the glorification of it by successful achievement at home and victory outside.\textsuperscript{52}

The reign of Khāravela instilled a sense of pride in the population and he provided for them a glorious urban center. Khāravela promoted dancing and the arts, both of which enabled the people of Kalinga to embrace their cultural traditions. Finally, the military achievements of Khāravela brought prosperity to this region, but moreover invigorated the martial spirit of the people previously crushed by Asoka.

As the Hāthīgumpha inscription listed the six years of conquests undertaken by Khāravela, it also mentioned seven years of public service that this ruler performed in Kalinga. In 40 BCE, prior to any military campaigns, this king invested thirty five hundred thousand coins to repair and update the capitol. Khāravela allotted this money not only on fortification and upgrading defensive capabilities, but he also invested in “the embankments of the cool reservoir to be strengthened, and all the parks to be renovated.”\textsuperscript{53} These civic improvements suggest that Khāravela wanted to please his

\textsuperscript{52} Sahu, \textit{Khāravela}, 98.

\textsuperscript{53} Kant, \textit{Hāthīgumpha}, 25.
subjects and create a harmonious relationship between the government and those they ruled. He also created a cosmopolitan city in an attempt to strengthen the regional character of Kalinga and provide his administration a well developed urban center from which to govern. In the ninth year of his reign, 31 BCE, as a monument to his victory over the Yavanas and the liberation of Mathurā from foreign rule, Khāravela constructed, “the royal abode named Mahāvijayapārasāda on both the banks of the (river) Prachi by (spending) thirty-eight hundred thousands.” The Great Victory Palace commemorated this event and “vindicated his [Khāravela’s] imperial dignity,” but for the inhabitants of Kalinga its construction symbolized their renewed prosperity. The capitol of Kalinganagari stood as a testament to the glory of the Chedi dynasty and greatness of Kalinga.

Khāravela’s legacy of sponsoring public works extended beyond the capitol city, to include other areas of his kingdom. During his southern campaign to combat the Tamil confederacy he stopped to restored the ancient port of Pithundu. Pithundu is mentioned in the Jaina text, the Uttarādhyaṇayana, as a flourishing coastal port of Kalinga, yet during the time of Khāravela this city had been abandoned. The Hāṭhīgumpha inscription stated that Khāravela, “causes Pithundu, the abode of the Ava kings, to be ploughed by ploughs of asses,” suggesting that he reestablished this site as a town, but also brought the land under cultivation. Rejuvenating Pithunda would have provided Khāravela with a settlement for observing the menacing southern Tamil confederacy,

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54 Kant, Hāṭhīgumpha, 28.
55 Sahu, Khāravela, 86.
56 Sahu, Historical Geography, 41.
increased cultivation thus accruing revenue for the state, and stimulated maritime activity by adding another urban center to his kingdom from which to regulate and promote trade.

As Khāravela instilled a sense of pride in Kalinga through his various public works, he also allowed the people to celebrate their culture. Throughout his reign Khāravela promoted arts and dancing for the enjoyment of his subjects. In the third year of his reign after returning from the western campaign Khāravela “the Master of the Science of Music makes (the citizens of) the capitol enjoy themselves by causing the performances of folk dances, (classical) dances, songs and instrumental music, and the celebration of festivals and fairs.”57 In the recently renovated capitol Khāravela organized a jubilee to garner support from his subjects and revel in his successes. The significance of this cultural celebration is magnified when considering that Aśoka, in his first major edict outlawed all forms of festival throughout the empire.58 By conducting an open air festival Khāravela revived Kalinga culture, greatly restricted under the rule of Aśoka. Furthermore, base reliefs at Khandagiri and Udayagiri depict scenes of dancing and merriment indicative of Khāravela’s reign.59 Under Khāravela, the people of Kalinga were free from foreign occupation, and his policies encouraged cultural expression.

The period of the Chedi dynasty represented the apex of Kalinga power. Internally, the Chedi kings revitalized this region and through effective administration, borrowed from the Mauryas, created a strong and prosperous Kalinga. The public services engineered by Khāravela brought joy and peace to the inhabitants of this region.

57 Kant, Ḥāthīgumpha, 25.
58 Thapar, Aśoka, 250.
59 Sahu, Khāravela, 64.
Through his military feats other regions in India acknowledged the power and glory of Kalinga. Prior to the Chedi dynasty Kalinga existed on the periphery of India, isolated by natural boundaries and subjugated by stronger regions. Heterodox religious, Buddhism and Jainism, spread into this region as demonstrated in the tooth relic of the Buddha being sent to Kalinga. The early Jaina text, the *Uttarādhyayana Sūtra*, recalled that two prominent sages, Pārśvanātha and Mahāvīra, personally visited Kalinga, and referred to the ancient Jaina king of Kalinga, Karakandu, as a “bull among kings” who adopted the Jaina faith.\(^6\) Khāravela ardently supported Jainism as evident in his construction of the Jaina monastery at Udayagiri and Khandagiri. Orthodox Brahmanism was not an established faith in Kalinga until the second century ACE.\(^6\) For these reasons Brahmanical sources referred to Kalinga as *mlecchas*.

Vedic cultural traditions, predominant in northern India, segregated society into those that adhered to their custom and foreigners, or *mlecchas*. Brahmanical texts considered Vedic culture as pure, and representative of an advanced and sophisticated way of life, while *mlecchas* were despised and possessed no culture. The *Baudhāyana Dharmasūtra* stated that those that travel into Kalinga territory “had to perform the Sarvaprṣṭi sacrifice in order to purify himself for visiting non-Aryan countries... the Kalingas were *mleccha* people and were out of the Aryan civilization.”\(^6\) This social division polarized ancient India between the highly cultured followers of Vedic traditions

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\(^6\) Sahu, *Historical Geography*, 21.
and the subservient mlecchas. The Laws of Manu, the preeminent Brahmanical text differentiates between twice-born Aryans of pure descent and tribal people, or barbarians deemed mlecchas, “all of those castes who are excluded from the mouth, arms, thighs, and feet (of the primordial man) are traditionally regarded as aliens, whether or not they speak mleccha languages or Aryan languages.”63 Characterizing the Kalinga people as mleccha confined them to an existence outside of the northern Vedic culture sphere. Yet, labeling Kalinga people as mleccha also acknowledged them as a constituent in the societal framework of ancient India, “mleccha as a term of exclusion also carried within it a possibility of assimilation, the process by which the norms of the sub-culture find their way in varying degrees into the cultural mainstream.”64 During the Chedi period, Kalinga emerged as a powerful region and this process of cultural assimilation began to develop.

The Mahabharata, compiled between 200 BCE and 200 CE, corresponds to the post-Maurya period when fringe territories once considered impure became recognized as part of the Aryan fold. Sections of the Mahabharata specifically refer to the Kalinga assimilation from alien mlecchas to integrated members of the ancient Indian cultural landscape. Three examples from the Mahabharata support this integration of mleccha people into the Vedic social order. During the concluding battle of this epic, between the Pandavas and the Kauravas, the Kalinga troops join the Kauravas, and though still grouped with mleccha tribes, are praised as excellent elephant warriors.65 In this war,

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Manu 10:45.

64 Thapar, Ancient India, 175.
representing the ultimate struggle for humanity, peoples from every region met on one battlefield, and this occurrence symbolized a unity among the diverse cultural backgrounds that constituted ancient India. In another episode Arjuna makes a pilgrimage throughout India and enters Kalinga (kalingarāstradvāresu; Mbh 1.207.10) where his Brahman companions allow him to proceed, but they themselves refuse to follow. Here the Brahmans still consider the Kalinga region impure, but gave consent to Arjuna, the hero of this epic and compatriot to Krishna, to enter this land without the stigma of impurity. Lastly, the most conclusive evidence of the Brahmanical community embracing the Kalinga people comes at the coronation of Yudhisthira, the new Pandava king and ruler of all humanity. As the episode unfolds ten mleccha tribes attended the ceremony but only two were allowed to enter, one being the Kalinga ambassadors. The guard, representing the barrier between the Vedic north and mleccha tribes, welcomed the Kalinga representatives proclaiming, “As your dues are pleasant and your tributes are good, you will gain entrance.” By the final composition of this epic the Kalinga people ascended the cultural hierarchy of ancient India and shed their impure stigmas.

The legacy of the Chedi dynasty elevated the status of Kalinga as this region became a prominent and politically powerful area outside of the northern Ganga valley. This period witnessed the coalescence of regional development in Kalinga. Prosperous urban centers promoted trade in this region that resulted in rejuvenating society. The

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66 Ibid, 197.

67 Ibid., 201. Mbh 2.48.18
Chedi kings adopted administrative techniques from the Maurya Empire to organize Kalinga and made this region flourish. The might of the Kalinga military was felt throughout India, and the spoils of war added to the overall wealth of this region. The people were free from external domination and could rejoice in their shared cultural heritage. The regional development of Kalinga, from the sixth century BCE to the first, witnessed the shaping of this historical region.
Chapter 5. Conclusion: Realizing the Importance of Region

These five centuries of development, from the prevalence of Buddhism to the ascension of the Chedi dynasty, has shown Kalinga to be an extremely vital and prosperous region in India. Each of these three chapters demonstrated the ways in which Kalinga developed as a region, and during this period incurred the historical changes transpiring in ancient India. Prior to the Kalinga war, this region rose in prominence as it underwent the centripetal forces involved in fostering the urban commercial economy. The prosperous port towns of Kalinga, integrated into the Bay of Bengal trading network, proved desirable to the Maurya Empire, and in 260 BCE Aśoka invaded this region. This event, although it momentarily stunted regional development due to the massive loss of life from battle and deportation, soon proved advantageous to this region. By introducing the centralized administrative Maurya policies, Aśoka indirectly allowed for Khāravela to reconstruct this region. In the first century BCE under Chedi leadership Kalinga blossomed into the most politically prominent and economically successful region of the ancient period, even eclipsing the regional power of Magadha. This regional narrative focused on Kalinga in order to better understand the historical development of the period between the rise of Buddhism and the beginning of the common era.

The dynamic changes of these five centuries witnessed the rise of regions in the form of Mahājanapadas, the consolidation of the subcontinent from an amalgamation of regional powers to Maurya domination, and from its collapse the resurgence of localized regional powers. Regional history assists in tracing these developments as well as in explaining how specific locales negotiated internal political and social consolidation with external contacts, both economically and combatively. This thesis attempted to explore
the concept of region as a distinction between ancient boundaries and modern borders, yet for both "region and nation are not static geographical, social or political categories. These concepts manifest dynamic qualities derived from the historical legacies of the subcontinent and are propelled by the diverse human elements which respond to and refashion existing identities."¹ As modern nations, even today, struggle with establishing and strengthening borders, ancient regions also dealt with consolidating boundaries internally and projecting power externally. Correspondingly, the people of Kalinga experienced episodes of defeat, in the Kalinga war, and revitalization during the Chedi dynasty. As seen in this thesis, Kalinga underwent the dynamic processes of change that occurred during the period between the sixth century BCE and first century BCE, and successfully negotiated the pulls of centrifugal and centripetal forces in becoming a strong and powerful region.

In the quest for independence from the British, Indian nationalists suppressed regional histories in favor of an inclusive Pan-Indic narrative. By portraying ancient India as a glorious epoch of political harmony, social continuity, and religious liberality, national builders presented the public with "a period of which Indian people could justifiably be proud."² For this paradigm to succeed in unifying the masses, individual, regional, and cultural traditions could not be embellished. During this period regional histories fractured the national narrative by insinuating cultural differences that would detract from the efforts to harmonize the people against a common enemy, the British. For this reason post-independent India experienced a resurgence of regionalism, and in

² Thapar, Ancient Indian Social History, 15.
some cases (Tamil, Sikh, and Maratha) open rebellion against the nation. In the modern era, acknowledging regional histories bifurcates the stringent Pan-Indic ideal, allowing for the inclusion and acceptance of alternative narratives to coexist with the discourse of nation. Likewise, this thesis superimposes alternative narratives on the ancient period of India by crafting a regional history of Kalinga.

This thesis has demonstrated both the high points and the low points that transpired in Kalinga during these five centuries. The natural boundaries of Kalinga, which shielded it from other regions, experienced invasion during the Kalinga war and expansion during the reign of Khāravela. Throughout these oscillating phases of victory and defeat Kalinga remained a strong and prosperous region, built upon a foundation of rich natural resources and thriving trade. As the Chedi dynasty faded into history, other political entities consolidated power and continued to harness the regional assets of Kalinga. The Matharas (350-498 ACE) of the Gupta period repelled the advances of the conqueror Samurdragupta, and under the Imperial Gangas (1077-1435 ACE) Kalinga reached its cultural zenith with the construction of the temple of Jagannath in Puri and the Sun Temple in Konark. In the seventh century ACE a Chinese monk named, Xuanzang, arrived at the Kalinga port of Tamralipti in search of Buddhist manuscripts, and documented his voyage in The Great Tang Dynasty Record of the Western Region. As he sailed north up India’s east coast he passed through the land he calls Kieling-Kai (Kalinga) noting that, “In olden times Kalinga was a rich and prosperous county with such a dense population that pedestrians jostled in the paths and carts collided on the

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3 For Mathara dynasty see Pradhan, History of Orissa, 37-39; and for Imperial Gangas see, Ibid, 84-103.
This Chinese account points to the significance of the Kalinga region both as a maritime destination and a prosperous region. From the height of the Chedi dynasty in the first century BCE to the inauguration of the state of Orissa in 1936, Kalinga continued to be an extremely vibrant and prosperous region. In these proceeding two thousand years, this historical region developed a unique culture, language, and identity that today is referred to as Oriya. Yet, the “symbol pool” shared in this modern Oriya identity was cultivated in the ancient region of Kalinga. As a testament to the maritime traditions of Kalinga, every year the people of Orissa celebrate the *Boita bandana* festival that involves placing paper ships in the numerous rivers and lakes throughout the coastal region. This annual observance falls in the Hindu month of Kartik (Oct-Nov), and correlates to the shifting of the monsoon winds these ancient mariners plied in trading expeditions. These strong sentiments for the regional history of Kalinga are also echoed in the folksong, known throughout Orissa, *Ame Oriya*, translated as, We are Oriya:

We are Oriya, We are Oriya
Old history for us, old history of ours is so beautiful, we are Oriya
Dharama is our Oriya boy, remained memorable for his work
Fisher-folk of our country, jump into the middle sea
Many boats of our country, set out for trade by Sadhabas
Passing seven seas and lakes, returned back after trade and commerce
The tradition of leaving boats made up of banana tree’s bark
Is seen in the river, canal, puddles, and ponds
We are Oriya

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6 Dharama is the builder of the Sun Temple at Konark. Sabhabas are the maritime trading community of Orissa. Orissa Dance Academy, *Ame Oriya*, translated by Satyajit Jena, 20 January 2005.
Appendix: Ame Oriya

Stanza – 1: Oriya

Ame Oriyare Ame Oriya
Amaku puruna amari puruna itihas kede badhia, ame odia
Dharama amari Oriya pilla
Karam bhumire nama rakhila
Amari deshara nolia chhua
Daria majhiku maranti dian
Meli deithile sadhab suta
Sata samaadara daria para
Jai pheruthile banija kari
Aka maa bai pratha achi rah
Nai nala jori gadia
Ame odia

Stanza – 1: English

We are Oriya, We are Oriya
Old history for us, old history of ours is so beautiful, we are Oriya
Dharama is our Oriya boy
Remained memorable for his work
Fisher-folk of our country
Jump into the middle sea
Many boats of our country
Set out for trade by Sadhabas
Passing seven seas and lakes
Returned back after trade and commerce
The tradition of leaving boats made up of banana tree’s bark
Is seen in the river, canal, puddles, and ponds
We are Oriya

Stanza – 2: Oriya

Konarka kala silpa chaturi
Dekhile ka matha najiba ghuri
Bhubaneswara Shiba mandira
Kedar Gouri Bindu sagara
Prakruti raneera sobha sampada
Chilika ansupa sarapa hrada
Puri Jagannath jatira teka
Desa saara aji tekanti mukha
Koti janamara mukati biswass
Stanza – 2: English

Artistic skills expressed in Konark
Who will not go mad after seeing it
Lord Shiva’s temple in Bhubaneswar
The mythical pond of Bindu shared by Kedar and Gouri
(Kedar and Gouri are characters in a traditional love story from Orissa)
Our beautiful natural resources found here
Lake Chilika, Lake Ansupa, Lake Sarapa
Oriya boasts for Lord Jagannath
Today, we stand with pride for our the country
For centuries we believe in renunciation
The mud pot of Kaibalya (Dried rice of the temple) stands for example
We are Oriya

Stanza – 3: Oriya

Jyotisa bidyare aji amara
Pathani Samatha Chandra Sekhara
Thile Gopabandu Madhusudan
Desa pain deithile jiban
Thile kede kede pratapi raja
Uduchi tankara kirati dhwaja
Samrata kulare thile kesari
Ananga bhima jajati keshari
Karpur jaichi Kana padi achhi
Durga barabati padiare
Ame Oriya

Stanza – 3: English

Memorable today for astrology science
Is Samatha Chandra Sekhara
Gopabandu (Freedom Fighter known for social work) and
Madhusudan (Freedom Fighter known for knowledge in Law)
Who contributed their lives for the nation
There were great kings
Still time remembers them
There was Keshari among the kings
Who performed a sacrifice for Bhima’s love
The scent has left the clothes
On the grounds of the Barabati fort
Stanza – 4: Oriya

Purba tharu sata gunare desa
Garbare oriya tekichhi mukha
Hirakuda au Roukela
Oriyara jasa pherai dela
Judhha jahaja koraputa re
Nirimana hue kede antare
Chaina kilatha chamakai kela
Pakistan biri badiare
Ame Oriya

Stanza – 4: English

For hundreds of years
Oriya has stood with pride
Hirakuda (large dam) and Roukela (town renown for the steel industry)
These contribute to our pride and prosperity
Fighter planes at Koraput
Built with strength
It helped defeat China
Pakistan cowered after seeing our power
We are Oriya

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