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TRIBAL HISTORY : A New Interpretation

H.L. SHUKLA

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PREFACE

Readers of my "Ethno-history" series (in seven volumes) have displayed great interest in the ethnological approach on tribal communities. To meet this I offer "TRIBAL HISTORY". I have discussed here some problems regarding primitive origins, tribal myths and reality, and the evolution of tribal people. This work presents for the first time, a survey of change and socio-cultural process of analysis of the original sources and secondary studies when setting forth my views and interpreting the epigraphic data in this book. I have pulled out all the stops; going all the way with the tribal history, I have told what I have seen in it.

Treating Nāga as an important semi-divine tribe, I have depicted the social life of these mythical people. Penetrating and original, if dizzying in its mixture of Ethnography and History, all the three parts are inter-related. This work has much to offer to the Aborigines and ethno-historians more generally concerned with how Nāgas and Gonds relate to one another.

This book should be considered at three significant levels: an unprecedentedly full ethnohistory of the Chhindaka Nāgas, a work of ethnography tracing tribal history and finally an ethnohistorical approach to ethnicity.

This book then is also a mixture of ethnography and history. This duality is the foundation of ethnomethodological strand in the book. It suggests that ethnography and history should be united into a larger historical semiotics which brings together action and representation, as part of the same process, and constitutes social reality. Its characterisation of the role in

(iv)

Tribal History: A New Interpretation

history it plays in the organization and reality of Aboriginal society may get more study from subsequent ethnographers.

I should like to thank Dr. V.D. Jha for allowing me to include his paper entitled "History revealed Through Stones" in the appendix of the present book. I wish to express my gratitude to Professor R.S. Pathak for his valuable advice. I must indicate my debt to M/s B.R. Publishing Corporation whose interest in Tribal History helped this Volume find its way into print.

H.L. SHUKLA

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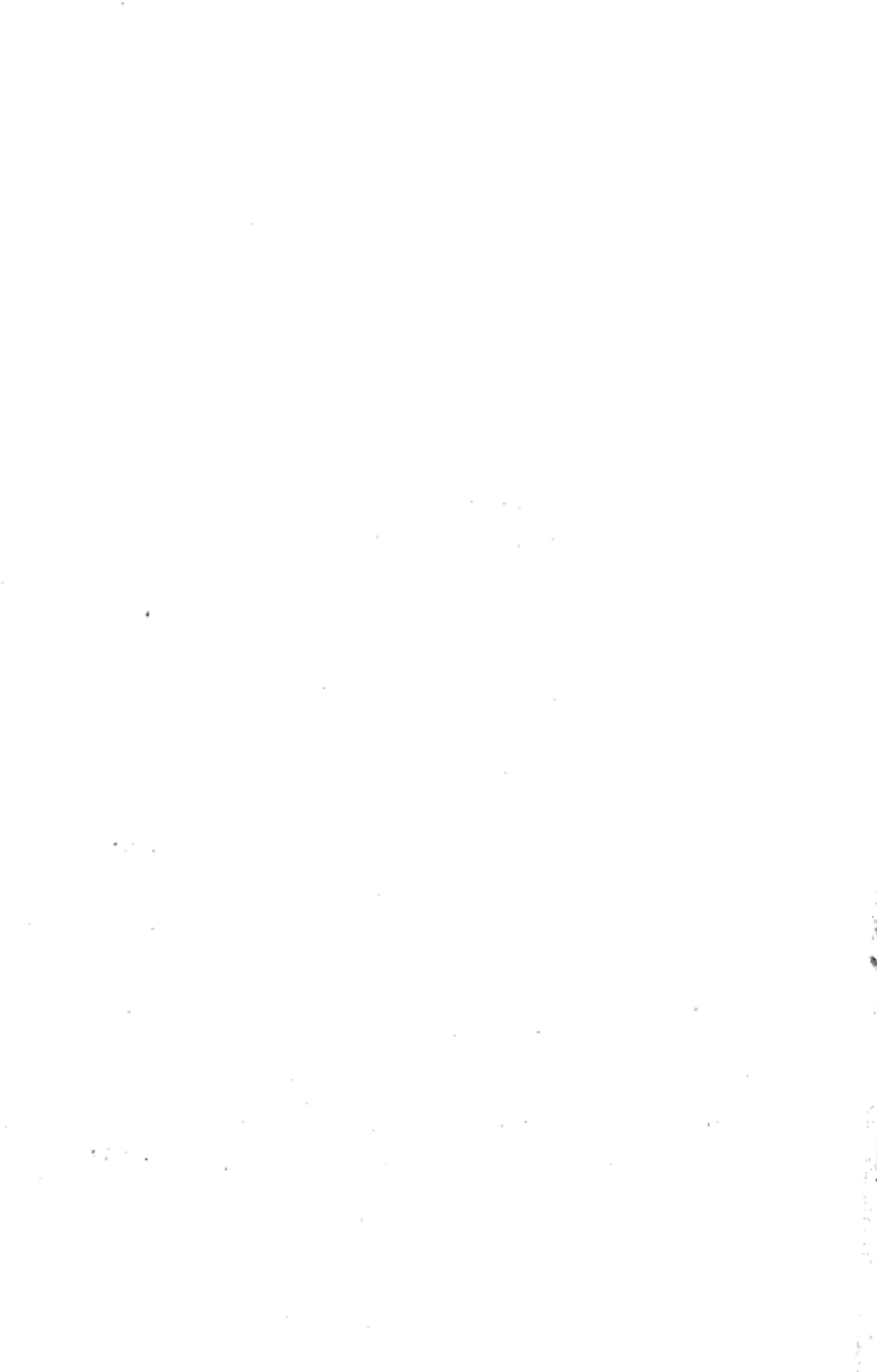
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ABBREVIATIONS

AI	: Ancient India
APAS	: Andhra Pradesh Archaeological Series
ASPP	: Āndhra Sāhitya Parishat Patrikā
ASIR	: Report of the Archaeological Survey of India
ASR	: Archaeological Survey Reports
CII	: Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum
E.C.	: Epigraphia Carnatica
EI	: Epigraphia Indica
HO	: History of Orissa by Banerji
JAHRs	: Journal of Andhra Historical Research Society
JASB	: Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal
JBORS	: Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society
JBRS	: Journal of Bihar Research Society
JKHRS	: Journal of Kalinga Historical Research Society
JNSI	: Journal of Numismatic Society of India
JRAS	: Journal of Royal Asiatic Society
OHRJ	: Orissa Historical Research Journal
PIIP	: The Pre-history and Proto-history of India and Pakistan by H.D. Sankalia
SII	: South Indian Inscriptions



INTRODUCTION

"Tribal History" is the result of research carried out during my stay in Bastar (1964-80). It forms the sequel of my earlier works as follows:

- (i) Social History of Chhattisgarh, Delhi, 1985.
- (ii) Chhattisgarh in the Seventeenth Century, Raipur 1982.
- (iii) Lankā kī Khōja 24000 B.C. — 600 B.C.), Allahabad, 1977.
- (iv) Prāchīna Bastar (600 B.C. — 760 A.D.), Nagpur, 1978.
- (v) Ādivāsī Sāmāntvāda (760 — 1324), Delhi, 1987.
- (vi) Language, Ethnicity and History (1324—1779), Delhi, 1985.
- (vii) Tribal Heritage of Madhya Pradesh (1779—1985), Delhi, 1986.

It is the chronological history of the 'primitive' warriors of Bastar who shaped the destinies of the people in hilly tracts between Mahānadī and Gōdāvarī, and covers over twenty-four centuries from 600 B.C. to 1779 A.D. (for the complete history see my next book entitled 'Tribal Revolutions in Colonial India').

The history of Bastar has remained "a backwater in Indian history" (Grigson 1938: 4) of several anthropologists from Blunt (1795) to Jay (1970) who contributed stray references in various books (Shukla: 1986), it is enough to mention that most of these are unreliable and prejudiced. It may be noted, however, that all these stray references on the subject are not

from the standpoint of history, but from an anthropological angle. Few anthropologists will deny the assertion that due to the Western view on the Indian tribes, no tribal history of India has yet been written. Historians have not yet ventured in the field on the plea of non-availability of written records. From as early as 1610 (Ferista) the 'primitive history of 'Bastar' has been described and projected in the narrowly and negative imperialistic terms, such as savage, wild, primitive, etc. Hence, there was no sincere effort in the British period to reconstruct the history of the so called primitive people.

If any part of India was *terra incognita* to nearly all the Muslims and Britishers, it was the vast tract covered by Bastar. To them it remained "a land of savages seeking then for human victims to sacrifice, to their fetishes skilled in herbs and potent practitioners of magic and witch-craft (Ferista 1610, Blunt 1795, Ferminger, 1812). Their view was little changed when Agnew (1820: 5) presented a "*Report on the Subah or Province of Chhattisgarh*" and recorded for the first time that, "The Hindus inhabiting wild areas in Bastar are Kaonds and their territory is known as Kaondvana. The Kaonds are Hindus and not particularly distinguished from the wild inhabitants of other jungles except by the high character they are reputed to possess for veracity and fidelity. Their word, it is said, may be wholly relied upon. They will never desert those to whom they have promised to adhere or betray those, they have engaged to protect."

This Hindu-image¹ was totally changed when Jenkins (1827) was appointed to write the history of Bastar which was suited to the interest of the Britishers and to prove that these forest-people were not "Hindus" and thus created a confusion by coining the word 'tribe' for those "Hindus" who were living in mountains and forests and were called '*Vanachara*' or '*Girijana*' in Sanskrit literature. Jenkins described the Mārīās of Abujhmār mountains as "naked savages living on roots and springs and hunting for strangers to sacrifice" (1827: 54). He and his

1. Jenkins could not evade this Hindu-image totally. Sherring (1879) in his "Hindu Tribes and Castes" (125-160) enumerated all the aboriginal tribes of Central Provinces as 'Hindu tribes'. It was at the time of Russell and Hiralal (1916) when it was fully established that the tribes of Central Provinces were not Hindus.

followers such as Fenwick (1850), Take (1855), Elliott, C. (1856), Temple (1863), Ball (1880), Smith (1869), Grant (1870), Cunningham (1884), Chapmann (1898), Russell (1906), de Brett (1909), Chatterton (1916), Wills (1919), Grigson (1938), Elwin (1947) and Jay (1970) could not appreciate rich varieties of Hindu culture and thus they invariably tortured the image of the glorious past and benevolent present of these forest-dweller-*"Hindus"* and presented them in such a way that they were animists and were subjugated by the so called *"Hindus"*, while there is no such differentiation in our ancient literature.

Partly, it is also true that the Britishers were ignorant of our land and that they required a negative image of the forest-people in order to be positively reinforced. The Western ethos derived pleasure from and wanted to seek satisfaction in superior/inferior relationship which was translated into justifiable British dominance. The Indian has long been a whipping boy, fulfilling the negative, devalued and inferior part of this dichotomy. Indian tribes were 'heathens' and, therefore, fair game for deliberate proselytization. For 'godlike', white superiors to control them was to save them from the sin of 'ignorance' and 'nakedness'. It also meant bringing 'civilization' to them, and therefore, false 'progress'. This was all that was needed to ideologically support a pattern of behaviour so consistent, so terrifying, and so successful that it destroyed the positive tribal self-image and cut them off from the main current of Indian culture and history.¹

Indians have failed to effectively reconstruct a positive tribal self-image during the British-rāj and even today we seem to have accepted Western concepts infiltrated into the tribal areas or British mythology, and therefore their definition of progress. Quite simply, if civilization represents progress, and civilization is defined by Westerners in terms of their values and self-image, then not only the Indian tribes but all the Indians are savages. Conversely, in Western terms, the opposite of civilization (which they postulate) is the 'primitive' or 'that which we want to move away from'. It is tribe, that which we do not want to

1. The members of tribal groups were subject to disabilities in the form of prejudice, discrimination, segregation, or persecution at the hands of Britishers.

be. Any amount of praise bestowed on Bastar within the conceptual framework stated above, will only succeed in enhancing the Western-European self-image of their misgivings, at the expense of a positive tribal self-image.

To progress, does one have to be Western? Does being civilized mean acting like Britishers? Does being religious mean being Christian? Did the idea of brotherly love originate in the Western tradition? Was it nurtured there-in? If we reject aspects of our forest-life (being tribal), let us be very clear about our reasons for doing so. Do we mean that the forest-life was not a part of our glorious past? How do we define our *Āshrama theory* of *Vānaprastha*?¹ Was it not a fact that our forefathers were the forest-dwellers? These actions should not be based on our internalization of some abstract concepts or mythological structure created by ignorant Britishers who wrote with secondary sources. Our myths must work for us. If we want to progress, let us not be divided by the labels coined by the Britishers as tribes and non-tribes. Let our house be not divided again. Ours is the history of continuum and different compositions. It can not and should not be defined by what Westerners have said. It must be defined in terms of tribal self-determination and positive Indian self-image.

Sadly, all of us, so anxious to imitate a dying Western culture, rush to give up our own (tribal) traditions while Western culturologists are trying to convince that tradition is the best culture. What an irony? Should we wait until the English tell us that the tribal culture has value in order to appreciate it? Are not the tribal cultural zones relics of our ancient heritage? Why should we feel shy to accept all that?

We have been successfully victimized in the past, because we had internalized alien concepts which defined us negatively.

1. The social norms regulating the tribal life of the Gonds are firmly rooted in Hindu mythology. They derive their validity from the rulings of Culture-hero Lingo. Olivier Herrenschmidt (1966) has compared and analysed all the existing variants of the myths reporting to Lingo and has come to the conclusion that the myth of Lingo points to a greater extent of Hinduization of the tribes. Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty (1973) has also argued that many aspects of Lingo are paralleled by characteristics of the Hindu god Shiva, as depicted in Purāṇas.

If tribal image is to be a viable and worthy endeavour, it must be devoted to the task of unravelling history of the ancient and mediaeval periods and demystification of Western ideas.

It is especially discouraging when we note that numerous Indian scholars such as Bose (1890), Danda (1977), R. B. Hiralal (1913, 1916, 1939), Sil (1917), and Vadivelu (1915) and others in almost every field wrote scholarly works and nourished, nurtured and extended their point of view, that is, as if the only audience were a Western, English one. More particular, the theoretical base or beginning point of their research is the Western theoretical foundation, whether it was linear, evolutionary, fragmented, or particularized according to discipline. Thus, we find writers eagerly explaining the abnormality of 'tribes' by 'civilized' norms or the pathology of tribes by standards of 'civilized' health, or the tribal history through the eyes of Europeans. Such a situation has created a whole generation of misled scholars and miseducated students.

Thus, in this book, we have assembled for the first time some of the more valuable data of history of the hill tribes of Bastar to counteract the prevalent and erroneous model that sees the tribal world as 'primitive' and 'uncivilized', and detaches it from the main stream of Indian history.¹ If it is proved that the tribes have their own glorious past, then it is also certain that they are neither 'primitive' nor 'uncivilized', but they are geographically isolated Indians.

Perhaps with the publication of this book we will begin to redress the confusion which has surrounded the social and political dimensions of our life. Our new explorations are meant to be a foundation upon which others will build the edifices

1. Stephen Fuchs (The Aboriginal Tribes of India, II ed., Delhi 1982, pp. 134-35) is of the opinion that "It is difficult to unravel the knotty problem of their origin because no written documents exist about their ancient past. Nor are their own traditions about their original homes and migrations very reliable. Not even the ancient Hindu scriptures, which indeed often refer to the indigenous populations, can be more relied on; often they are too vague in their references or distort their descriptions by mythical interpretations and by their racial and religious prejudices. So far it has been largely impossible to identify the tribes mentioned in the scriptures and to connect them, with any certainty, with present-day primitive tribes".

which will reflect the value, culture, history, and thought of the people of Bastar.

This book is divided in three Chapters. In the first Chapter, I have sketched the geography as well as the life journey of our primitive ancestors through the old stone age and the new stone age. The third part in Chapter I is a replica of the first two parts. As its title denotes, living hill-tribes, inhabiting Bastar region are held up as relics of our prehistoric culture. Their dexterity in hunting, their tenacity in labour, their rhythm in dance, their oneness in making decisions, their youth-dormitories their festivals and games, their songs—all go to show that each tribe has its own history and tradition, striving to preserve its culture at a particular stage of development. The fourth part of Chapter I introduces the reader to the great social revolution of the tribes in which Buddhism gave a tremendous fillip to it. This part covers a period of fourteen centuries. The Nala dominion (350-760) in this Chapter explains how a section of Austro-Asiatic group of the tribes captures power and gives rise and growth to feudalism in this region. This Chapter having four parts is a nutshell of my previous volumes on the history of Bastar (1977, 1978).

The second Chapter, entitled early mediaeval period (760-1324 A. D.) is totally based on the Nāga theory of primitive origin. It is organised in fourteen parts. This Chapter is also an abstract of my Hindi book *Ādivāsī Sāmantavāda* (Delhi 1987).

In the third Chapter of this work, I have attempted a faithful representation of the later mediaeval period (1324-1779 A. D.) and its ideals and a clear portrayal of the life of the period in sixteen parts. It is really very difficult for us to discover the key to the mysterious forces at work in a by-gone age, like that of the Chālukyas, and unravel the motives which impelled the people of that age to act as they did, since we are far removed in time, and outlook. Our ideas and habits are greatly affected by Western culture and thought.

When I took up this subject for study I did not comprehend quite correctly the scope of the work I had embarked upon. The more I studied the subject, the greater it interested me. I was then able to recognize the magnitude and importance of the work, for, it embodies the history of a very long period in the annals of the central Indian tribes—a period of 2400 years.

from ancient period to later mediaeval period, which held the moorings of the modern age. It was the period in which the country after the establishment of tribal supremacy strengthened itself and moulded its life in accordance with the changing conditions and new forces releasing.





ANCIENT PERIOD (24000 B.C.—760 A.D.)

(From Primitive Communism to Feudalism)

GEOGRAPHICAL ISOLATION FOR SELF-PRESERVATION

Bastar with her rolling mountains, undulating meadows roaring rapids, enchanting waterfalls and terraced valleys leading up to vendant hills, feasts the eye as few other districts can. Bastar with her golden autumn and misty mornings of the monsoon months, her painted spring, and slumbering summer and her winter ranging from mild to fierce provides varieties of living in different seasons which is rare elsewhere. Here in spring, nature and man vie each other to make living joyous. Bastar with her people who have been living as they lived many thousand years ago and her accepting new comers of the latest development of homo-sapiens, with her tribes who enjoy the joys of life today as they ever did before, living in their hamlets hidden in picturesque valleys provides education and entertainment for the anthropologist which few other regions provide elsewhere. Indeed Bastar is a museum of old and new in nature and human endeavour.

It is the general opinion that geography and physical

features influence the course of human history.¹ Therefore, it is essential to know the geography of any land before we begin the study of its history. As such let us have a glimpse of the geography of Bastar.

Present Bastar District 17°46' N—20°34' N and 80°15' E—82°1' E represents the two former feudatory states of Bastar and Kanker, covering an area of 39,176 km with a population of 1,840,449 persons (1981). The erstwhile Bastar state lies at the extreme southeast corner of Central India between 17°46' and 20°14' north, and 80°15' and 82°1' East. Its area according to the Rāj family Records was 18,091 square miles.

Before giving a description of the geographical features of Bastar, we are presenting here some pages from the diary of Glasford who visited Abujhmār-region in the year 1868.

"And so the grand expedition to Bastar started. The middle of the month of March saw a little wisp of dust crossing the blazing and parched face of the country, some hundred and eighty miles by rail and dak from our starting point. As it drew nearer, the tinkling of bells and rumbling of wheels indicated a species of travelling caravan, and shortly four ringhis jolted past in dust and glare. In the first there reclined a *sahib*, a man of parts, as the complaining wooden axles plainly testified; next came your humble servant, deriving certain consolations from a cunningly-disposed horsehair mattress and a large *cheroot*; *ringhis* numbers three and four contained various packages and bundles, surmounted respectively by lusty *Karamat Khan* as much as could be seen of him through a voluminous *rumal*—and by a bilious-looking and long suffering individual named *Chinnaswamy*. A "squawk" of protest, half smothered in dust, seemed to suggest that the latter had found a tolerably comfortable seat on the hen-coop.

And so we rumbled on.

"Night succeeded day, and night; but still the word was "forward." Bullocks were changed; carts collapsed, and were mended; mango groves were dimly aware of nightly phantoms.

1. Local group organisation is conditioned by the natural-geographic environment. In Bastar's hilly tracts there is a low population density and the groups themselves lead a deserted village life. In more favourable climatic zones, the population density is higher and the groups lead a settled life.

that paused to masticate a meal by the flicker of a hasty fire; the change of drivers made itself known, even in the slumbrous hours, by the varying peculiarities of their individual "savours." The feathery tamarind tree knew us by the empty "army ration" tin; the broiling stretch of sand and trickle of shrunken stream by the staccato objurgations of the frenzied gāṛiwālā. On the third day dawn found us in the midst of a mighty forest, and hard by a forest post and hut. A short while previously a bull bison had found an unusual kind of grave in a well a few hundred yards away. "What was the water like?" We asked. "Well," replied the custodian, "*perhaps the sahibs might not like it, but it's very sweet!*"

"Some ten miles more the densest jungle and bamboo thickets found us nearing the end of our one hundred miles of journey by *ringhi*, when suddenly the conveyance occupied by the well-nourished man of parts gave way. There was not very far to fall, however, and the entire exle-tree having been detached, a teak pole from the jungle and a few blows of an adze furnished the necessary repairs.

"We found our horses at the appointed village, near which the entire population was occupied in capturing the fish that were suffocating in the turbid puddle which represented what must once have been a large tank; and after a short rest, a ride of fifteen miles took us to our first camp. Hot baths and a good square meal served to dissipate the highly uncomfortable memories of our long forced march, and in the evening we strolled down to the river bank and regarded, on the far shore, the land of promise that we had come so far to enjoy.

"Next morning we continued our marching, and found all the kit and carts delayed at the crossing of the river-splashing slowly through the warm shallow ford, or labouring in the hot deep sand. The crossing was diagonal, and three hours passed ere the last cart was forced with yells and shouts up the far bank and entered the promised land. Riding on, the thin jungle changed to trees of larger size, many green and fresh-looking. In some shallow valleys were the now hard-baked traces of rice cultivation on a rough and ready plan; and in many places we saw the impressions of the feet of the wild buffaloes that in the rainy season wander over this tract. Of course we at once fell into the common error of imagining many-marks meant many

buffs. We had not yet learned that one small herd of these ponderous creatures will cover the whole countryside with marks in a very few days and nights.

"More marching brought us to the river again, having now crossed the big elbow or bend in its course. The country now grew more interesting. The villages were inhabited by *Māriāhs*, the wild tribes that people the uplands of Mardian across the river, and were entirely novel. Well-built thatched cottages, each separated from its fellow, stockaded compounds, and very neat bamboo fencing enclosing each little establishment. On our arrival at our half-way place, by name Vayānar, we were escorted to a little building in the centre of the village, and prayed to seat ourselves, while one well-built young Mariah beat ferociously on a large tom-tom suspended from the rafters.

"This little house, open on all sides, was evidently the Town Hall and Theatre of Varieties combined. Weird-looking carved wood maces and clubs for dancing purposes, so we were told, reposed among the rafters. Besides this, we heard later on that these "Town Halls" are considered by the young Mariahs of both sexes as the "*abode of love*"²—places where Robert Burns—the youthful, modest, loving Mariahs—

"In other's arms breathe out the tender tale,
Beneath the big tom-tom that scents the evening gale."

"The Mariah language is very pleasing to the ear, being very liquid, with curious soft gutturals and clicks of the tongue.

"The men wear very little clothing, a thin strip of cloth, suspended from a string tied round the waist, passing between the legs from front to back, and a kind of 'kamarband' wrapped round and round the waist, with the end hanging down in front. The rich *Māriāh* does not sink his treasure in more clothes than these; but he goes in for a large and varied assortment of beads, and has the lobes and outer edges of his ears perforated to an alarming extent, and hung all round with a perfect bushel of brass rings.

1. It was a rest-house known as थानागुडी (thānāguṛī) while calling them Wild he appreciates the village-settlement.
2. Ghotul is a youth-dormitory.

"A small-sized postage stamp¹ would be a most effective substitute for the clothing of many of these weird people, but rings and beads they must have. A really "rich" Mariah simply coruscates with glass and tinsel ornamentation, especially, as I have said, in the region of the ears; while a village dandy will affect a "gem" or two bound over the forehead. Their physique is good, though most are small, and rarely is a dark-coloured Mariah seen.² Their skins are wonderfully fair, in some cases as light in tint as that of a fair Brahman.³

"The women appear to wear even less, if possible, than the men, and are not loaded with beads, etc. Instead of this they are much tattooed all over. Extraordinary patterns are engraved on their faces, in some cases causing the most ludicrous exaggerations of expression. They are apparently extremely timid,⁴ and the sight of a horse—a mythical creature to them—sends the poor creatures darting off like deer into their great protector—the dense jungle. In the villages, however, they will walk fast quite close without evincing any nervousness.⁵ My Kodak films failed me, and so, to my regret, I have no snapshots of these ladies.

"The Mariahs are distinctly interesting therefore, and we soon discovered that they possessed sterling qualities of honesty and truthfulness, while their willingly given services were a pleasure to receive. Aborigines they may be, but they are very different to the aborigine of whom one forms a mental picture.⁶

"Of the Indian buffalo there are two varieties, which differ slightly enough as to have received at the hands of the naturalist the separable designations *speioroceros* and *macroceros*. Sprung from a common stock, environment has had its usual effect, and, though practically identical, the two varieties

1. It was the traditional dress of the society and it should not be treated as a sign of backwardness.

2. This goes against the theory that they were Astroloids.

3. Compare my book (1982) Page—Introduction.

4. They were not timid. They avoided the clash and possibly it was due to Maratha aggression in this region. But they should not be called timid. The Britishers approached with a large caravan which used to terrify them and so they wanted to avoid.

5. This shows their boldness and self-image.

6. He himself agrees that they belonged to a higher culture.

display slight differences of horn-structure and habit, which are apparent enough to the ordinary observer.

"*Bos Bubalus macroceros* is the long-horned species found throughout the Brahmaputra valley, the Terai and the Sundarbans. He it is who boasts the finer head, and is the subject of so many tales of ferocity and unprovoked attack amid the close and impenetrable mazes of his swampy retreats in the above-named parts of North-Eastern India. Of this creature we find record of a single horn in the British Museum measuring 78½ inches. If we allow one foot for the breadth of skull across the forehead, this gives a total "sportsman's measurement" from tip to tip of 169 inches, or over 14 feet.

"*Spiriferous* meaning curly-horned, is the variety inhabiting the southern and eastern portions of the central provinces and neighbouring wild tracts of country.

"*Macroceros* carries a head usually considerably longer than his congener of more southerly habitat—especially in the case of the cows—and his horns are generally straighter; while that of *spiriferous* has an appearance of greater stoutness of build, and horn is often set on at a rather different angle. That the buffalo is essentially a reed-haunting, jungle-boring old pachyderm it needs but little perspicacity to discern. Those great plough-like diverging horns, sweeping back in easy curve, were plainly intended by Nature to divide the hampering tangle of his jungle grassy home, as well as to assert his authority over a ponderous and placid harem, and guard him from treacherous foes. Is it not therefore the decreasing necessity for such use in the thinner jungles of the Central Provinces, the increasing need for lighter armament on those more open plains, that finds the buffalo of Lower India equipped with horns different to those of his northern relative?

"Then again, the habits of the two varieties are dissimilar. While those of the swamp-haunting *Bubalus* easily suggest themselves, they are in no way an indication of the mode of life pursued by our more compact and active friend of southern habitat. *Speiroceros* is a great wanderer; solitary bulls, or a bull or two in company—usually a big fellow, accompanied by a "fag," so to speak—making very long journeys under cover of darkness, and travelling from one line of river to another, often over considerably elevated intervening country. The herds of cows

and calves, sometimes accompanied by young bulls, are found as a rule in certain fixed localities, according to the season of the year; but they too, are apt to disappear completely and rapidly if alarmed or otherwise set travelling; and, although they prefer an easy line of country devoid of hills, will climb considerable heights to gain their objective beyond. The hunter, therefore, must be prepared for astonishingly lengthy days of tracking; and he should avoid going on any but the freshest of tracks, and those at or near dawn, or he may find himself in for journeys or a duration quite outside ordinary calculation.

"One of the greatest charms of buffalo shikar, in the grass and sal jungles of the part of India now referred to, is the tracking; which is often so easy as to offer no inseparable difficulties to the average sportsman. Although he cannot hope to rival the wonderful perceptions of the wild man, who lives all his life in the closest intimacy with nature, it is astonishing how proficient he may become with a little practice. Of course the climate is against us to start with, and that is no doubt why so many are content to moon along in the wake of their trackers, coming to the front only when the game has been found.

"The best time of year for a trip after the buffalo of these parts is undoubtedly at the "mirrig", or earliest rains, although there are certain grave disadvantages which often preclude one from taking advantage of this time of year, such as, to take but one of them, the difficulty of returning to civilization once the flood-gates of the monsoon are fully opened and rivers brimming full. When the first showers fall, sending the released tiger, bear, deer and other wild animals wandering far and wide without anxiety as to water and shade, the buffalo ceases his peregrinations of the open season, and, sometimes reunited in considerable herds, affects the comfortable life on open grass and glade land. Far from the river he may be. What matter? There are now innumerable pools and marshy depressions in this region that resound to the luxurious squelching of his huge wallowing carcass and the profound blowing and puffing of a monster at ease. This is the season of his loves. Here and there the soft clayey ground will be found ploughed and furrowed in all directions. Perhaps a ponderous strife uprooted those young saplings. In the distance a low deep note brings us to a

sudden halt; the trees are all adrip with the last short shower; and as the early sun touches the jungle it glitters with millions of faceted gems.

"At the end of a long grassy ride a shower of diamonds falls sparkling down, and a tree-top is seen quivering—which can scarcely be the breeze. Wait! Hark! Did you hear that splashing and that "click, Clack"? What is it but the huge hoofs of our Bubalus, sucking at the mire as he slowly paces forward. And then a great grey-blue side! Another, all red and glistening from the mirepuddled soil—and see! the earth soft and noiseless for us the creeping enemy, leafy covert all abroad, a steady settled wind; we shall have no difficulty in approaching almost near enough to pluck a hair from those huge sides, and unless tempted by an extraordinary length of horn, may spare at the last moment.

"Such is the pursuit of speiroceros under the most favourable circumstances; but here again, although he has now abated his nocturnal habits and long expeditions, we must choose his track with care, and, above all, shoot hard and straight. Once crossed and intermingled with the scurrings of a frightened herd, the tracks of the great bull may be lost for-ever; and that is beyond the art of Mariah or Gond.

"But most of us will doubtless pursue our bull in the open season, during the summer heats, when the malarious jungle, filled with feverish exhalations and microbes of unknown venom, has been dried by a rigorous sun into the semblance of salubrity for the European traveller.

"The position of these wilds the writer would not object to give here, were Indian game less on the decrease. They lay there forty years ago.¹ Of which time I possess a diary then describing them—truly a hunter's paradise, to be read of with beating heart and watering mouth. They lie there now Ichabod: to be mourned over; their day gone by, desolate, crossed at intervals by some rare, shy, phenomenally astute descendants of the once great herds now practically extinct by reason of murrain, drought, and deadlier still, incursions of

1. Shikar in this area started since 1828 A.D. by the Britishers and they disturbed the ecology of this region and elimination of wild life was completed during the British-rāj.

gun bearing natives and gun-running merchants from that horrible country lying to the west, across the big river, where, at an even earlier date, most of the ungulata had become but a memory.

"But the country itself has not changed much. In the western portions the ordinary dry Central Indian forest covers its undulating features and clothes its rugged hills; but to the eastward the sal forests begin, their western limit strangely marked, so that a bird's-eye view shows their green line cutting north and south as if their plantation had been arranged by human agency instead of by Nature herself. The reason of this abrupt termination on a north and south line may be known to the expert forester; but my companion and I, although we examined the geological features of the country, were unable to account for it. Hence, for hundreds of miles eastward, the highly gregarious sal spreads its glossy green, almost to the entire exclusion of other timber, except where there are tracts capped by trap or basaltic rock, where of course the characteristic salai and stunted teak of this formation reasserts itself. From east to west of this country passes the river (Indravati), leaving mountain ranges on each hand, through which it has worn an arduous granite-bound course to join the greater river¹ on the west. Its higher waters pass over an upland plain for many miles somewhat sluggishly till they plunge over a fine fall stretching right across its bed in the abrupt manner we see in the falls of the Congo and Zambesi. Hence it seeks a lower level with much greater rapidity, partaking of the nature of a Highland stream. Indeed its rapids and pools irresistibly remind the traveller of a Scottish salmon river. When the writer viewed his companion, salmon-rod in hand, industriously beguiling the wily Mahasir, heard the rush of the waters as they tumultuously entered a broad deep pool, and, above their roar, the musical screaming of the winch, he shut his eyes to the vivid green of the sal forests around him, and to the piercing rays of the declining tropic sun, and, with but a small stretch of the imagination, was back aimed youthful scenes by banks of Nees or tumbling Awe. While encamped by its shores that river was an everpleasant feature

1. Godavari.

of our trip. Those enforced and wary days of waiting, that the big-game hunter knows so well, were to us all too short. Rod in hand, the hours, even under a broiling sun, passed rapidly away. Mahasir, our old friend Barbus tor, inhabited each thundering run and oily depth of that enchanting stream; and bold sometimes, coy usually, strangely full of guile for an inmate of so virgin a river, by turns rewarded and deluded us. The amount of good fresh tackle we left in that rocky eastern stream was astounding. Never, I ween, had the spirit of those waters reaped such a harvest of spoons, traces, swivels, spinning tackle and line-not to speak of a topjoint one disastrous afternoon!

"Long shall we remember those rushing rapids; the granite-sided islets with their drooping boughs and ferns; the great solemn sal forest through which the jungle river ran towards the setting sun; and, when floating silently home to camp, down some placid reach, the indescribable charm of a scene unique, I fancy, in the "plains" of India! The very birds, the riverside vegetation, the shape of the violet-shadowed hills, were strange and unknown before. Numbers of the large black and red "Malabar" squirrel played among the trees; a cuckoo of entirely novel voice sent his four delightful notes echoing along the woody shores; our little boatmen conversed shyly in strange and dulcet speech. Rod, rifle, and gun would be forgotten, laid aside, in that warm sunset glow reflected from water as serene as the sky it pictured; then in the distance, round some rocky bamboo-feathered promontory, we would sight our little encampment overlooking the river-bank, and, gliding nearer, note our modest table and chairs set on some cunningly chosen eminence rising from the smooth yellow sand of a water-lapped shore.

"It had cost us many an arduous march to penetrate to those to Europeans almost virgin jungles; long days in blistering Central Province heat; and struggles across country devoid of any but the wildest tracks, whereas baggage carts had to be drifted over immovable trunks of fallen forest giants, or a way cleared in the thick green under growth. And at last here we were nearly two hundred miles from the nearest railway, in the very midst of the country described in the faded yellow pages

of the diaries¹ kept by him who had explored these solitudes forty years ago.

"To give an idea of the height to which our hopes had risen before we found what havoc a few years of native guns had wrought. I cannot do better than give a few extracts from his records :

"April 13th, 1868—Went to the pond beyond the river, and sat down in the open to await dawn. Four buff. one I think a bull, came up, drank, and walked off. Too dusk to see. When it became light enough I went on their tracks and came on sight buff. Tried to circumvent them, but they took a different route to that I had expected. Got on their tracks again, and unfortunately when in very thick jungle one of the cows spied us, and off they went ! Followed on in the direction they had taken. Saw some gaora, or red deer. Going up the side of a small hill I threw two men on opposite sides of a ravine in case of bears.

"On reaching the top found high grass all about, and was looking about when up sprang a fine bull bison and dashed off. I had a snap shot and fired too high; but as I fired he threw up his head and gave a moan. I followed the tracks and found that he soon stopped running. After going about half a mile I put him up out of a nala, and saw by the slow way he went up the opposite side that he was badly hit. Fired two shots as he went away, both of which took effect. I then tracked him by his blood for a full mile with great difficulty, as his track was barely perceptible. At last in some thin jungle up he got, and went away hard again. Hitting him with a ball from the big rifle (muzzle-loader), he walked into the open and stood looking very sick below a big mhowa tree. At last he sat down, this last run having for him, for although he got up and looked very mischievous, he fortunately had not a charge left in him, or at one time it would have been ugly work. Going up behind him the first ball from the small rifle had no effect, but at one from the bit single barrel he slept with his fathers. A very fine bull indeed, not aged, but with

1. In 1823 A.D. some Englishman travelled Bastar and wrote the diary. He is perhaps Jenkins or his friend.

very fine horns. Cut off his head and tail and walked home.¹

"Went out in the evening after chital, of which there are very large numbers here to the south of the river and falls. At some distance from the village shot two fine spotted bucks and could have got more."

"April 16th—Sent off kit to M—gaon, and went out at 3 a.m. to the pond again. As I approached I heard a herd of buffaloes run off through the mud. At dawn I took up the tracks. After a while we sighted a herd in another direction, and they turned out to be bison. We went round a long way to circumvent them, and came plump on another herd that were walking away to the hills. Unfortunately they saw us, and off they all went; so I let them pass, and went on the tracks of the herd first seen, but failed. After this I returned to the second herd, and at last came on them sitting on the side of a hill. Wounded the bull badly, but he got off after a long day, and towards evening I returned to the river, and my shikaris boiled me a little rice. This and plenty of Indravati water was my repast."

"April 18th—Went out south of M—gaon. After going some distance spied a herd of bison. Had some trouble with them: and to my disgust bagged a cow. All the cows here are big and very dark coloured, and it is difficult to pick out the bull. Came on some red deer and bowled one over, which gave us all a run before it was secured. On the way home saw some buffs, but did not go after them. Marked the spot for to-morrow or next day."

"April 19th—Went out after the buffs, but getting seedy had to return home early in the day."

"April 20th—Went out and had a long day, feeling speedy all the time, but bagged a fine bull-buff."

"April 23rd Went out in the evening, and about sunset came on an immense bull-buff—a solitary fellow. Got up to within eighty yards, but being shaky with fever was nervous, and hit too high up. The bull made off with his head up, and getting into the open, stood looking about him. Crept up and gave him two more shots—but bad ones—being incapacitated by this infernal fever. Being late and far from home I turned back."

1. This tells how the Britishers were disturbing the wild animals.

"April 24th.—Went out for the big bull. Came on him suddenly, after going a long way, but did not get a fair shot. Two miles further on came on him standing in the jungle. Hit him, but he went off slowly. Having been out all day, I returned to camp, six miles, in the evening, getting home very late."

"April 25th.—Got again on the bull's tracks, and near Anantpur came on the place where he had been lying down. Beyond this his tracks led to water, and then back into the same stunted *Shorea robusta* (Sal) jungle. All of a sudden the tracker started back. I went in front and saw the buff lying, as I thought, dead. I stepped back and looked at him from another point of view. 'Oh,' says Boodoo, 'he's dead!' I made a noise. Still no movement. I thought of firing into him as he lay, but unfortunately did not, making a 'cluck' with my tongue instead. Up sprang the buff and darted off at no end of a pace. We followed. I was so astonished that it was some little time before I could fire, and then the ball did not seem to have any effect. I ran some distance, and then getting on my horse kept the bull in sight. He stopped on seeing me, and came at me, but I easily trotted out of his way. The bull then disappeared. Boodoo said he had gone back. We then went round the nasty thick jungle, and we couldn't see well into it. I then thought of going in on horseback and seeing if I could find the bull. I did so. It was very windy and very hot. At last I heard a rustle, and, looking up, saw the brute coming down on us. I was walking towards him, and he was in full rush at me. I wheeled round my horse, he also, being frightened aiding me in doing so, and so hoped to escape; but before my horse got off the bull reached him, and butting, threw him forward on his knees! The good beast did not fall however, but recovered himself, and with one vigorous kick behind dashed forward and brought himself and his master out of the scrimmage safe. At one moment I had thought it was all up with both of us. I lost my hat. The bull was then followed up and finally bagged. In the afternoon a bear came rushing along at a great pace; but I bowled him over, and when my gun and rifle were both empty another came."

"April 28th.—Went towards M—gaon saw two sambar, but

no shot. Farther on came on a herd of ten buffaloes, out of which I bagged a very fine big cow. Coming home had a long shot at a gaonra, or red deer. Saw five more of these fine animals in the sal jungle near camp.

"Went out in the afternoon. The jungle to the east of this village appears a very likely place for sport. First we saw bull buffalo, who however spied us first, before we saw him, and made off. As it was getting dusk we did not follow him. Came on a few bison grazing, but was frustrated in my attempt at near approach by a very wary cow. Took a longish shot, and as I fired they all made off, and close to them a large herd of buffaloes. There were also some red deer or 'Barasingha' in the long grass. Nearer the village shot a 'four-horned deer'...."

"To give more than these few extracts might prove wearisome. The writer of them describes more sport with buffaloes, bison, tigers, bears, and red deer, during the early rains that followed—the mirrig, of which mention has previously been made. His notes show what a splendid head of game that country once supported. As the country itself is now no more cultivated and but little more opened-up than in those old times, this is a particularly clear case of the horrible havoc wrought by the native gunner. Many a tale the writer could unfold concerning the ravages of the poacher and enormities of the horn-merchant in those tracts.

"As regards the danger of hunting the wild buffalo of those parts, sportsmen appear to be somewhat divided in opinion. The writer of the diaries above referred to only once found himself in position of danger, and that in the days of muzzle-loading weapons; and although particular buffaloes are noted to have shown considerable malice in the way of butting trees and making blind attacks on other inanimate objects when wounded, the majority seem to have acted similarly to those of which we ourselves had experienced showing the greatest anxiety to escape their puny antagonists' and remove their enormous frames from his Lilliputian attack. However, some years ago, a sportsman met his death, in those very jungles, from the horns of a bull that he had wounded. The story runs that he had gone out one morning on the tracks of a big bull which, he had hit the previous evening. He was armed with a heavy black-powder rifle—probably an 8-bore—and coming on the bull

lying down in an open glade, he approached perilously near, in order to finish it off; and was charged. The bull is said to have chased him to a tree, round which the unfortunate man dodged, and on each side of which he then seized his pursuer's spreading horns. In such unequal strife the Bubalus and his opponent did not struggle long. The sportsman was tossed easily aside, and then terribly gored, one great horn completely penetrating his body. When the bull left him his retainers rushed up, but their master was beyond all aid. He ejaculated the one word "water 1" and was dead before their eyes.

"Such calamities shock the keen Shikari, and a narrow escape may teach him greater caution; but it is rare that these deter him from again embarking on his engrossing pursuit.

"The jungle again exercises its compelling fascination; the mind's eye pictures its delights; the rifle-old friend emerges from its case, caressed once more of fond hands; Time, healer of scars physical and mental, does his appointed work; and Nature leads the wanderer once more her beloved solitudes. At first the hunter returned may start and handle his weapon sharply at a rustle in the bushes; a sudden clamour or more still, the harsh voice of a wild beast, may momentarily unnayve him; but gradually he will, with a smile, return to the old ways, and his experiences of the past become but additional jungle lore to enrich the memory.

"But this is wandering from our speiroceros yet, after all, what is it that exercises that unfailing attraction that his hobby possesses for the true follower of Nimrod? Not the bare collection of trophies; nor indeed, the mere satisfying of a hunting instinct. It is more than that; some thing that appeals even to a mind insensible to nature's beauties, to her charms when sought in the forest or on the mountain-side. It is the partial return to man's pristine wild life, in a land where the artificialities of civilisation have not yet greatly affected the pursuit of game. It is that broad free feeling; the ability to throw out a wide-sweeping arm and say to oneself, "This is all mine to rove"; and, besides this, the various interests to be found in the country its people, its fauna, and their habits.

"When I and my companion reached by our land of promise, we found ourselves sadly hampered by lack of local knowledge and our total ignorance of the habits of the buffalo

of those regions. The river split, up in many places into gurgling channels that traversed a perfect maze of luxuriant vegetation, smothering innumerable islets in its embrace, and hiding deep dark recesses full of dark fern and moss, led us at once astray. All that we had read on the subject of buffaloes from Assam and the Terai—as well as Forsyth's remarks on the Sambalpur country—led us to believe that if our great game were to be found here, it would be among these almost impenetrable islets. Thus we wasted time. The shy inhabitants—extremely retiring little creatures, true denizens of the forest, and timid as the wild beasts themselves were extraordinarily secretive, and our own men were as much at a loss as ourselves. At this juncture we were delivered from our perplexity by Amir Ali, a Mohammedan shopkeeper, who lived in a considerable village, the capital,¹ as it were, of the surrounding wild country. This individual was brought to our camp by our men one evening, and in the course of a very short conversation we managed to pick up valuable hints as to the habits and present whereabouts of our ponderous quarry.

“During an all too short sojourn of two months in those delightful wilds, we found that, with the exception of a wandering tiger at rare intervals and few small bison, with, say a bear here and there, and a very few sambar and chital, the country was denuded of all game, save a few scattered herds of wild buffaloes. The mournful prognostications indulged in many years previously by our predecessor of the diaries had turned out only too true. Those keen hunters, the little jungle-men, aided by gun-running friends from over the border, had, indeed, done their work; and the “Mardian” country was swept of its game, save the hardy and dangerous Bubalus, attacks on whom were not lightly undertaken by their tiny foes.

“To roam that magnificent natural game preserve was a melancholy occupation. Monkeys and peacocks were almost the only inhabitants of those grand sal jungles. Scarce a barking deer or four-horned antelope leapt the rotting fallen timber. No cry of wandering spotted stag or whistle of herding hind disturbed the deep brooding silence. The quiet of night was unbroken by the harsh cry of questing beasts because there was

1. Indication towards Bastar village.

no prey! Was all the jungle dead, then? Was it that the presence of a few wandering buffaloes had thus crushed all other wild life? Such thoughts would come; but, spite of them all, what a charm in those wilds and that lovely river!

"In one locality we brought a solitary mournful tiger to bag, and each of us got his first buffalo; whiling away the time between by good sport with the mahasir at our very tent doors. By lashing together a couple of dongas, or "dug-outs" we were able to construct a stable boat capable of accommodating ourselves, retainers, gun and rifle, tiffin, rods, tackle, and boatmen. Embarking thus on one of those long, still reaches, away we paddled; short rapids tarried awhile by some alluringly fishy pool or run, consoled by the music of the wind and passing the while a woody hilly panorama full of striking beauty.

"At night alone the buffalo approaches the river bank, Moonlight on a silent and deserted shore discloses some great black rocks, so it would seem, that stand in the shallows with the ripples glistening away from their feet. Hush! Was *northar* a splashing in the warm water? Look at that promontory of yellow sand jutting into the dark waters from darker woods! An enormous shadow, clear-cut in the brilliance of a tropic moon, is creeping across it. There is the sound of profound breathings. Now, gently push the dug-out along the black shadow of this high bank, and wait. Slowly, ponderously, one-two-five-seven enormous creatures emerge from the gloom of the sal trees into the sandy shallows and, one by one, splash their leisurely way across them to a reedy islet. The shining ripples widen and slap tiny wavelets against our side. There is a distant crunching of gravel, and some low trees amid long grass on the island are being crushed through by heavy bodies. The buffaloes are moving slowly up-stream, feeding as they go among the rank herbage of the riverside.

"At length the rustlings die away, and not a sound can be heard but the feeble chirping of crickets, an occasional low moan from an owl in the trees across the water, and the remotely-faint rushing of some distant rapid.

"If we have the patience to haunt the sleeping river until the moon shall have crossed the sky to decline towards those wooded hills, those slow-moving monsters will at length return and seek the shore, and the woods that disgorged them earlier

in the night will again close mysteriously over their huge forms.

"Perhaps the skirt of that distant thunderstorm may extend and give the slumbering forest a slight shower. That would be well indeed, for by early dawn we should rejoice to find the fresh tracks so patent to our eager gaze. Here is the spot where the herd finally left the riverside; and, farther on, the immense indentations left by the feet of the master bull. The tracks of the herd lead a broad path away from the river towards the distant open grassy and sapling-studded country, where these pachyderms love to lie during the hot hours of the day; but the big fellow has made off elsewhere. Twice has he skirted the sandy shore and once entered a secluded backwater, where he rolled in the muddy sand. Here it was that the rain fell during the small hours of the morning, when he climbed the steep bank, and passed round that huge fallen tree, making inland.

"The woods are waking now. A sudden commotion high above our heads, and a little shower of raindrops; red Malabar squirrels on the limb of a forest giant, rousing to their daily play up mighty trunks. Those four melodious cuckoo notes—whistled now, long after, and in a far distant land they instantly bring us back to that enchanted forest-echo through the vistas of tall, straight stems before us. Gradually we pass on. Glade land opens out, long grass receives us, still slowly pacing forward, eyes on ground and a glance far on ahead. Again the tall stemmed forest covers us. That bull is making for some distant ground! The sal forest thins again, and the ground becomes stony. Our little Mariah trackers evince greater caution, taking up the trail from the sahib, whose half-educated eye has lost the-t-them-simple guiding marks. It is a little rising ground before us. Gently up to the top now, and put your head quietly round the trunk of that tree, rifle in hand. What! Not there? This little shallow depression among the knolls is well known to the Mariahs as a favourite lair of this very bull. But to-day we must pass on; he has only tarried here in seeming hesitation.

"In such manner the shikari may encompass many a weary mile, during almost every pace of which all his senses have to be on the stretched. *Bubalus* is capricious. Today he may be making for a distant spot or, suddenly tempted by some, to us, unknown advantage, he may be loitering in the shade of those trees. Nay, at this moment he may be silently contemplating us,

nose in the air, horns sweeping his flanks, and ears and tail suddenly held still from their ordinary fly-flapping movements, ready to thunder suddenly away, and from a heavy gallop settle into that aggravatingly ceaseless pace that may carry him ten miles before we have a chance of finding his suspicions lulled.

"But to-day we are in luck at last. Patience has its reward! Past days of toil are going to be repaid:

"It is very hot in these still forests. The big rifle appears to weigh a hundredfold than what it did when we left the sandy shores this morning; and, in spite of a pull at the water bottle, our feet, lightly shod in an ancient pair of brown tennis-shoes though they be, go not any too sprightly. See! A slight detour the bull made here to avoid a big fluted termites' heap, when suddenly there is old Dabbi the Mariah crouched close to the ground, and the others, well to the rear luckily, all behind safe stems! As for me, a tree trunk is what I most desire to simulate at the moment. Am I detected? Or do the khaki breeches, brownish coat, and green-grey hat in any wise resemble the corrugated stems of *Shorea robusta*? Dabbi however begins to crawl, crab-like in my direction; so very gently, down I go too. Gondi is the only language in which Dabbi and I have common knowledge, my share comprising a few names of animals and a common word or two; but hunter's language of eye and hand is a regular "Volapuk," carrying one all the world over, and there is no difficulty in learning that "he" is lying in a slight hollow in that bit of a clearing ahead of us.

"Delicious moment! Does the hunter not know it well, when the knowledge of having found his game, his presence all unsuspected, mingles with the suppressing of the eager desire to attack! The great beast is there, found at last; for the tips of a truculent pair of wide-curving black horns betray his position, and here are we planning how to get the better of his natural wile.

"And a cunningly-chosen position the old bull has taken up! What wind there is guards the weak spots of his defences. Clear ground to the other spots of the compass gives him a commanding view down-wind, while his post in the sight hollow affords that advantage of forcing an approaching enemy to show himself over the sky-line. If startled now, a few paces would take him among the timber up-wind, and we should not

get in that well-placed shot which alone will prevent a pursuit infinitely more arduous than the whole of this long morning's work, or perhaps, indeed, his eventual escape.

"Here, then, is the advantage of a strong binocular glass wherewith to scrutinise our ground and endeavour to eliminate the element of chance. Old speiroceros lies almost facing us; but his eyes are below the level of our present horizon. No. To creep stealthily in, this time, would not serve our purpose. Time is passing however, and something must be done. What if the bull should make off, warned by that subtle sense the operation of which we must have noted at times, and is apparently set in motion by the concentration of mind bent on the hunted by the hunter! What else but this indefinable transference of brain energy can it have been that on certain occasions has caused the originally unconscious, then uneasy game to rise to its feet with vague forebodings and display a mysterious disquiet unaccountable to the external senses of sight, hearing, or smell!

Well, here goes!

"Dabbi, my little friend, do thou stop here! I, the slayer, will make a detour across the wind, and come in there, nearly behind of the Barreh, and among the sal trees into which he will make his way when roused. And then, good Dabbi, creep nearer, and show but that tiny black cranium of thine to him, who pondering, chews his cud in the hollow yonder!"

"The little Mariah's crowlike eyes blind, He nods reflectively.

"It is with feelings of gratitude that the hunter at length creeps behind the afar-noted trees. The wide horn-tips are still down there, but are seen this time from behind. Fearfully is the breech of the cordite rifle gently set a gape. Two shining cartridges are still there. A perspiring palm is wiped dry on the clothing. The little Mariah should be at work now. A hot, oppressive silence broods in the glade, and the somewhat quick breathing of the sportsman must be checked.

"Slowly, certainly, but with a suspicious tilt, the great sweeping horns turn towards the thin grass that must now cover my cooperator, and so remain motionless, Anon they are gently tossed from side to side in their resumed role of flywhisks. What can Dabbi be at! Some minutes elapse. The great ears are slowly turned forward, then back; then suddenly forward

again with a twitch and there fix stiffly.

"A tiny dark object away beyond the crouched Bubalus raises itself a moment in the yellow grass, then drops swiftly. The bull is on his legs instantaneously. What a monster he looks, even at a distance of two hundred years; those betraying horns now laid back along the huge shoulders, and his stern looming gigantic through the sal saplings a great black rock, immovable as the granite boulders of his native soil!

"In a threatening attitude he takes a pace of two forward away from me, and halts again, nose in air. I feel distinctly sorry for Dobbi, until reminded of his sprightly activity and ape-like powers of climbing.

"After standing a while in this attitude the bull turned and moved suspiciously off, first at a walk, then at a gentle trot, slowing down to a walk again as he entered the fringe of jungle, amid which his enemy eagerly awaited his coming. There was a spot where an ant-hill and the buttend of an enormous fallen tree gave excellent cover, and behind this I had crouched, convinced that the bull would pass within a few yards and afford an easy and deadly shot; but when that enormous bulk came into view, to my dismay he had turned, and was making off across rather open ground some hundred and fifty yards distant.

Anxiously waiting until he had passed behind a heavy clump of bamboos, I made a sudden bolt and darted for a spot about seventy yards farther on, almost cutting his path. There was a very slight depression here, of which, by bending down, it seemed possible to take advantage. On the far side of this grew a few low sal bushes of the kind that often form a very thick undergrowth beneath the parent forest. Creeping forward, rifle held ready, I peered round them.

"Not fifty yards away my huge quarry had just come to a standstill. His great head was turned sideways, nose downward, in comical bubaline fashion. He appeared to regard something in my direction in a quizzical manner out of the corner of his eye. I remember noting his extremely venerable appearance and the enormously powerful short thick legs, dirty white below the knee, while overcome with a sudden realisation of my own puny proportions.

"The safety-bolt had been pressed forward, and the massive

breeched, taper-barrelled 400-bore cordite rifle was half-way to my shoulder. but a huge curving horn covered most of the vital spot, at any rate would probably interrupt the bullet.

"Slowly, very slowly, that venerable muzzle was raised; slowly the great ears hinged forward; the massive neck bent; and the obstructing horn gradually shifted round.

"He is now gazing straight at me. The psychological moment has arrived. Nervously the sight comes to rest about the point of his mighty shoulder, quivers a little, and is forcibly, with bumping heart, held steadily—

Ban!

"These deadly new rifles! There is no smoke. Simultaneously with the sudden sharp recoil, the bull gives a quick flinch and twist of his body, and, turning before the left barrel can be got in, blunders suddenly and heavily away. Reloading as we go on, we are after him, warily enough, however, on the toes of the tennis-shoes eager for a chance turn to expose some vital spot in that crashing, lumbering, grey-blue mass.

"But is he not cantering strangely, bearing off ever to the left and heeling over more and more like some squall-struck vessel! A stumble! The colossus slows into a trot a walk, and standing an instant, sways-poor old fellow!

"Then he rolls ponderously on his side, and over on to his back a sight as incongruously extraordinary as an over-turned locomotive.

"Need one expatiate further, on the gazing, admiring, examining, measuring, and further viewing of the grand old fallen monster-on the clicking of the camera, the well-earned snack of tiffin, the cleaning and fondling of the cherished rifle, and the homeward path with lightsome tread? All that the hunter has toiled for almost all is o'er; and a certain reaction is felt, mingled with that regret which will perforce push in after the downfall of very big game.

"But that mighty head shall be accorded the post of honour on already well-trophied walls, and thereon live once more to recall those halcyon days in beloved jungles!"

From the above description of Glasfurd we can understand that except some parts in the north and south which were lowlands, most of the greater part of the state was a plateau-with an average height of 610m which increased in the east. On the

north, south and west the area was dissected by the rivers of the Deccan Table land. The Indravati river divided the State into two parts—the northern and southern. Between the Indravati and its tributary, the Kotri lies the wild, tumbled country known as Abujhmar hills, the people of which are in fact predominantly tribal, and consist mainly of various groups of Gonds: many of these tribal people were, and are, cultivators by shifting cultivation with a regular ecological balance, except in very remote areas of Abujhmar hills.

Physiographically the district may be divided into following six divisions:

(i) *Northern Lowland*: The Kotri-Mahanadi Plain stretches from the northern boundary of the district for about 25 kms covering most parts of Kanker and Bhanupratappur tahsils and the northern parts of Narayanpur tahsil. Northwards, this plain continues into the Chhattisgrah plain of Raipur and Durg Districts.

(ii) *Keshkal Scarpment*: South of northern lowland the land rises steeply for about 150m to 300m along the paralapote Partappur—Koilibera—Antagarh—Kanker line.

(iii) *Abujhmar Hills*: The land surface along the Paralakote—Keshkal—Kutru is maintained at a height of 600 to 750m throughout the central part of the district except that in western part.

(iv) *Northeastern Plateau*: The north-eastern Plateau lies east of the Abujhmar hills and extends upto the eastern boundary of the district. It is the Bastar highland. It occupies chiefly the Kondagaon and Jagdalpur tahsils and slopes gently from about 750m height near Keshkal.

(v) *Southern Plateau*: A largely lower plateau region of about 300 to 600m elevation extends the southwest of the North eastern plateau, covering Dantewara tahsil and northern parts of Bijapur and Konta tahsils.

(vi) *Southern Lowland*: The Sukma lowland with a surface height of 150 to 300m continues southwest as a wide strip of roughly 25 km along the district boundary to Konta and, thereafter, crossing the moderately high Golapalli hills, there is lowland stretching northwards to Bhopalpatanam.

The drainage system of Bastar divides it into two unequal parts:

(i) The Godavari basin, and (ii) The Mahanadi basin. Telingathi hills from the main watershed between them.

Indrawati, Godavari, Sabri, Tel, Narangi, Gudra, Nei Bharat, Kotri, Dantewara, Dudh are the important rivers which form the Godavari basin. This basin covers about three fourth of the area of the district. The Mahanadi basin is comparatively smaller than the Godavari basin covering only Kanker tahsil. Our main area of research lies in the Godavari basin where we find different dynasties flourishing during the mediaeval period. Grigson (1938: 21-34) has given the following description of this basin which forms the physical and political geography of the erstwhile Bastar state:

"The great river Indrawati, which flows across the centre of the State from east to west with a winding course within the State of about 240 miles, almost bisects the State, and is its main geographical feature. It rises near Rampur, Ghumul in Kalahandi, one of the former Orissa states, whence it flows south-west some thirty miles till, after forming the boundary between Kalahandi and the Orissa province for eight or nine miles, it crosses the south-east corner of the Naurangpur taluq of the latter, and then for a winding course of some sixty miles divides the Naurangpur from the Jeypore taluq of Jeypore Zamindari. till it enters the Jagdalpur Tahsil of Bastar near the confluence of the Bhaskel tributary, thirteen miles above Jagdalpur. At Chitrakot, twenty-four miles by road and thirty-five by river below Jagdalpur, the Indrawati plunges off the edge of the great 2,000 feet plateau of north east Bastar and northern Jeypore in a beautiful horseshoe fall ninety-four feet high, followed by a series of wild rapids down a valley rapidly descending between highcliff ramparts. In its course across Jeypore zamindari and Jagdalpur tahsil it is a deep sluggish river, winding along in great S-bends through field and ever-green sal forest, and always more or less rusty in colour from flowing over deep beds of red laterite or murrum. It received no large tributaries from the south above Chitrakot, as here it flows close to the watershed dividing it from the Kolab-Sabari, the great tributary of the Godavari that rises in the Eastern Ghats above Jeypore and for many miles forms the eastern boundary of Bastar; at one point a tributary of the Kolab is less than a mile from the main current of Indrawati.

But just above Chitrakot falls it is joined by the Narangi, and about ten miles below the falls by the Baordig, which drain most of the north east Bastar (the Kondagaon tahsil).

"For the rest of its course from Chitrakot to its junction with the Godawari near Bhadrakali in Bhopalpatnam Zamindari on the western border it is typical of any great river draining mountainous country. It loses its rusty colour at Chitrakot, and becomes a series of rapids and deep pools, giving way to fresh rapids wherever it passes over sheets of rock or pierces through successive mountain barriers in wild gorges. The pools are often great landlocked lakes, with deeply wooded islands, the haunts of tiger, sambar and wild buffalo. It receives various tributaries, of which the Chief Bastar rivers are the Gudra, the Nei Bharat and the Kotri on the north bank, and on the south bank of Dantewara, the Berudi and the Bhopalpatnam Chintawag.

"The Gudra and the Nei Bharat take most of the drainage of the wild tangle of the Abujhmar hills, save for smaller mountain torrents, such as Goinder that descends from Hijul over the magnificent Handawada falls and the Komra that for much of its length forms the Bastar-Central Provinces (Chanda) boundary. The Gudra drains the Gulagotal, Farsigotal, Farsal, Bardal and Chudala (Chhota) Dongar parganas of the Abujhmar mountains and other adjacent parganas of the Antagarh tahsil; the gorge near Chhota Dongar where it leaves the Abujhmar mountains in a narrow loch between forested peaks, its banks deep in bamboo, *Osmunda regalis* and other ferns, is beautiful. The Nei Bharat rises near Narainpur in the Kurungal Pargana of Antagarh, the north-western tahsil, and flows due west past Sonpur and through the Tapalibhum (Chhotemar) and Behramar (Baremar) Maria parganas of Antagarh, it crosses the south-east corner of the Ahiri zamindari in Chanda district to join the Indrawati and the Kotri or Paralkot river in a tri-junction of unforgettable beauty 'beneath the fortified rock of Bhamragarh, in a wild expanse of hill and forest unbroken by a single clearing. Besides the Maria parganas of Antagarh already mentioned, drains the Hukkagotal and Jatawada and parts of the Bardal and Farsal Maria parganas of Antagarh, and the portion of the Abujhmar mountains that extends beyond Bastar into the south-east corner of Chanda district and is inhabited by the same hill Marias as the Bastar parganas.

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in these mountains. The Kotri is far the largest of the tributaries of the Indrawati. Its main stream rises far north, in the Pannabaras zamindari of Durg district; it is joined at Gudumpara in Kanker State by the Kandra which drains the Sambalpur tahsil of Kanker; below Partappur in the north-west corner of Bastar by the Kotri which rises from two main sources in the Matlaghat and Raoghat mountains and drains all the north of Antagarh tahsil, including the Maria parganas of Padalbhumi (Pataladesh), Tapalibhumi and Behramar; and by another large stream a little west of Paralkot. It then crosses south-east Chanda to the west of the Nei Bharat, to meet the latter and the Indrawati at Bhamragarh.

"As these northern tributaries between them drain the country of the Abujhmar Maria, so the southern tributaries drain the northern land of the Bison-horn or Dandami Maria, the Indrawati and its small tributary near, Barsur, the Mander, being roughly the boundary between them. The chief southern tributary is the Dantewara, made up of the Sankani and the Dankani, which unite just by the famous Dantewara temple. The Sankani rises near the lofty (4,067 feet) Nandiraj peak of the Bailadila mountains and drains the Arampur, Bacheli and Dugeli parganas of Dantewara tahsil, while the Dankani rises from the Tangri Dongri ghats on the south edge of the great north-eastern plateau, from sources near Killepal and Pakanar, and drains the Katakalian and Kuakonda tracts of Dantewara tahsil. The other southern tributaries of the Indrawati do not call for remark here; except the Dantewara, the Berudi and the Bhopalpatnam Chintwag, they are as small as the southern tributaries above the Chitrakot falls, the Indrawati being close to the watersheds that separate it from the Kolab-Sabri and the main Godavari, except in the areas drained by the three tributaries named above."

"Apart from a few streams in the north-east of Bastar which flow off the northern slopes of the Telinghat hills near Keskā into the Mahanadi system, and in the south-west the Talper-Chintawag system draining the western slopes of the Bailadila mountains and the Bijapur tahsil directly into the Godavari, the only other important river system is that of the Kolab-Sabri (the river is known in Jeypore as Kolab, and as the Sabari or Savari in the Kōṇṭa tahsil of Bastar and

the adjacent taluqs of the Jeypore and East Godavari Agencies. Rising on the 3,000 feet Koraput plateau of the Eastern Ghats between Jeypore and Koraput, it cascades down on the Jeypore-Bastar plateau, flows north a few miles to its junction while the Jaura near the Bastar, Irredenta town of Kotapad, and then south to Korokpur. Thence for eighteen miles it divides the Kanker State Forest of Bastar from the Jeypore taluq, but from the confluence of the Kanker river it turns south away from the Bastar border in the Malkangiri taluq of Jeypore and then west past the Bastar Irredenta pargana of Salmigarh for about twenty six miles; it flows west then for another five miles, as the Bastar border, as far as the confluence of the Kumakoleng and Thakawada rivers. For the next thirty five miles, as far as Sukma, it enters the Sukma zamindari of Bastar and from Sukma southwards for ten miles it is the Sukma—Malkangiri boundary, and thence still on the whole southwards far forty-four miles as far as Konta it divides the Konta tahsil of Bastar from Malkangiri. Just below Konta, after its junction with the Sileru, it enters the Bhadrachalam taluq of the East Godavari Agency of Madras, and after another twenty miles of southward course flows into the Godavari at Kunavaram. Konta is a river port accessible to small steamers from the rainy season till January. The trade of south-east Bastar therefore passes through it, and it is a focus of Telugu influence. The Kolab-Sabri is altogether about 202 miles in length, for seventy-seven of which it forms the Bastar boundary, and for thirty-five of which it flows inside the State while in another thirty or thirty-five miles of its course it receives the drainage of parts of Bastar. Where it falls from the 2,000 feet plateau to Salmigarh beneath the heights of Tulsidongri (3,915 feet) it resembles the Indrawati in its wild beauty; the two rivers, indeed, are much alike in their scenery of the levels through which they pass. On its right bank it receives all the drainage of the Parja country in the south east of Jagdalpur tahsil and the north of Sukma zamindari; that the Bison-horn Maria country of the adjacent parts of Jagdalpur a small portion of Dantewara and western Sukma; and all that of the 'Koya' and Bison-horn Maria country in Konta tahsil east of the Godonda-Tikanpalli hills (2,000 to 2,600 ft.) and the Golapalli hills (1,200 to 2,300 ft.).

“With the river systems thus outlined, it is easy to demons-

trate the main physical and administrative divisions of the country. First there is the great north eastern plateau, stretching from the Telinghat hills about 2,500 feet high and a few miles south of the northern border to the Tangri Dongri and Tulsi-dongri ranges that divide Jagdalpur tahsil from Sukma zamindari and Dantewara tahsil. The plateau extends eastward into Jeypore and Kalahandi, while on the west of Matlaghat hills and the hills that run roughly south from Benur on the Kondagaon-Antagarh-Wajnandgaon road to Karikot on the Indrawati below the Chitrakot falls divide the plateau from Antagarh tahsil. The northern half of this north-eastern plateau is Kondagaon tahsil, and the southern Jagdalpur. The height of the plateau varies from 2,500 or 2,400 feet at its northern and southern edges to about 1,800 feet near Jagdalpur. It is a region of overgreen forests, with the beautiful sal (*Shorea robusta*) as its characteristic tree. The temperature seldom exceeds 104° in the summer, and at Jagdalpur descends to 40° in winter, while hoar frosts are not uncommon in the forests. Kondagaon tahsil is underdeveloped and jungly, much of it and Antagarh having been comparatively recently, settled by Gond immigrants from Chattisgarh. Jagdalpur, on the other hand, has miles of excellent rice cultivation and in its extensive open plains is the only heavily populated part of the State, except adjacent parts of Dantewara. On its south-eastern and southern edges, however, it has hilly country heavily forested or inhabited by primitive parjas and Bison-horn Marias.

"The north-west corner of the State is the Antagarh tahsil. The north of this is a continuation of the Chattisgarh-Kanker plain 800 or 900 feet above sealevel, bounded on the west and north by the Chanda and Durg districts of the Central provinces and by Kanker State. This plain, the second main natural division of Bastar, is reached from Keskal and north Kondagaon through the Amabera pargana, while, though on the 2,000 plateau, is in Antagarh, by a forest road descending the steep Matlaghat by a recently re-aligned and easily graded descent. The main road from Jagdalpur and Kondagaon through Antagarh to Rajnandgaon rail-heads enters the tahsil in the Benur pargana on the 2,000 feet plateau and descends 200 or 300 feet to Narainpur which, with the adjacent parganas of Kurangal, Dugal, Baragaon, Ghat Jhorian villages

of Chhote Dongar pargana, are an intermediate stage between the true 2,000 feet plateau and the plain of North of Antagarh. The inhabitants are mostly what were called by Gasfurd and other early writers Jhorias, in appearance scarcely distinguishable from the Marias of the Abujhmar hills, with similar dancing dress, and customs similar, but considerably modified by sojourn in the lowlands and contact with other tribes. From Narainpur a forest road runs westward along the Nei Bharat Valley to Sonpur, with an extension thence to Paralkot and Moroda, where it meets another forest road that comes westward from Taroki on the Narainpur-Antagarh road across the north Antagarh plain. The Sonpur, Paralkot and Paralkot-Kalpatti parganas are really lowland parganas in the middle of high land Maria paraganas, and the two latter belong properly speaking to the north Antagarh plain. The Sonpur pargana, however, has many hill Maria villages, and a sprinkling of Halbas and Jhorias.

"The road from Narainpur to Antagarh descends the Roaghat near Aturbera village between a spur of the Abujhmar mass of hills 2,938 feet in height and the Matlaghat hills, down the sal-clad valley of a stream that drains into Kotri river. The Antagarh plain has the 'Muria' parganas of Antagarh, Kolar, Surebahi, Bomra, Kirangal, Kalpatum and Bandadesh, besides Paralkot and Paralkot-Kalpatti already mentioned

"The third great natural division of the State is the Abujhmar mountain mass. Roughly speaking, this is composed of all the wild hill country bounded on the south by the Indrawati, on the north by the Antagarh plain, on the east by the Jhoria country described above and the Gudra valley from Chhota Dongar to Mangnar near the Indrawati and Barsur and on the west by the Kotri river from Partabpur to its junction with the Indrawati at Bhamragarh in the Ahiri zamindari of the Chanda district. This tangle of hills is roughly rectangular, but at its north-eastern corner throws two great spurs into the Antagarh plain by Raoghat (already mentioned) and Kolar and at its north-western corner projects a bastion of hill almost to the Kotri valley between Partabpur and Koilibera. The north-eastern spurs are now in the Matla state forest, but the north-western bastion has as its northern face the Padalibhum pargana, with the Taplibhum and Nurbhum parganas to the side and south of

this, all three occupied by Hill Marias. The hill mass is so cracked and seamed with valleys running in all directions, that it is not possible to point out any main hill system; the only clues that help to a conception of its features are the watersheds. The northern slopes drain into the Bastar branch of the Kotri, and the north-western into the main Kotri after the junction of the Durg-Kanker and Bastar branches. Below this, the great trough of the Nai Bharat valley cleaves the mountains from Narainpur on the north-eastern edge westward for thirty-five miles through Sonpur into the Nurbhum pargana, where it turns south-west through the Behramar pargana and the Chanda Hill Maria country to Bhamragarh. The watershed dividing this from the streams that flow into the Gudra runs roughly south-west from the north-western corner of the Hukkagotal pargana just south of the Nai Bharat valley along a line of crests to Kutul village in Bardal pargana. thence south to Dhurbera, the village of the headman of the Farsal pargana, and slightly east of south from there to Adeq in Chhota Dongar Mar pargana. From the hills between Dhurbera and Adeq some smaller streams flow south-west direct into the Indrawati. From the crests running first eastwards from Adeq and then south eastwards towards the Maria villages of Mangnar pargana, streams flow southwards or south-westwards into the Indrawati.

"Though this block of hills is a homogeneous tract, peopled entirely by Hill Marias, it unfortunately is split up administratively. The south-western corner above Bhamragarh and Lahir is British territory, part of the Ahiri Zamindari of Chanda district. All the parganas north of the watershed between the Nei Bharat and Indrawati on the one hand and the Gudra on the other are in Antagarh tahsil. The slopes draining into the Indrawati from the Chanda border eastwards to a line running north from the confluence of the Indrawati and the Dantewara from the Kutru Mar and the Bhairamgarh Mar parganas of Kutru zamindari; the Hikul-Toinar-Handawada group of eight hill villages east of this is part of Dantewara tahsil, and the few hill villages at the south-east corner are part of the outlying Mangnar pargana of the Bhopalpatnam Zamindari.

"The peaks of the Abujmar vary in height from 2,050 feet on the northern fringes to 3,322, the highest point near Tadanar in Mangnar pargana. Fourteen peaks exceed 3,000 feet.

in height. Except the Marias themselves, few persons in Bastar know the tract at all; and before I visited it, all the old tales served up to Glasfurd in the sixties were again cooked up for my benefit; the country was so rugged that I should have to climb on my hands and knees: it was impossible for elephants and quite out of the question for horse; I should be unable to get bearers for my camp kit; fever was rampant; distances were enormous; and so on. Some of the marches are difficult; but then a car can be taken now up to Orcha, the chief village of Chhota Dongar Mar; the people are friendly to an extreme, and if properly treated and reimbursed in salt, beads, mirrors, cloth and pork; and allowed to dance at every camp, they will turn out in numbers to carry all necessary equipment. It is not difficult to arrange damps at distances at once reasonable for the walker and far enough part to make it unnecessary to detail bearers from the previous camp to carry luggage on to the next camp. There are no cart tracks and no carts; and there are many steep ascents and descents on the hill tracks. Good water is everywhere available from clear perennial springs. The hills are far freer from mosquitoes and fever than the plains below; but the traveller who brings a medical assistant and simple medicines with him will find the Marias in great need of elementary medical relief and very grateful for it.

"The scenery varies. On the edges of the hills there are often fine views of the plains below, while on the northern and eastern slopes and in Mangnar and Dantewara Mar villages there are often fine patches of sal and other evergreen trees. On the hill tops and on slopes exhausted by shifting cultivation, high grass and stunted trees make the country monotonous to the eye and tiring through lack of shade. Where the slopes are newly cleared and have once been burnt for shifting penda cultivation, often a small grove of trees is left on the summit, like nothing so much as the top-knot of hair on the crown of a Maria's otherwise roughly-shaved head. But the moment you descend off the rocky plateau you meet green glades and hurrying streams, or may feel the sudden amaze of a prospect such as that of the blue apex of the lofty Bailadila ridge seen beyond the haze of the Indrawati valley down the valley of a stream that far below the ridge between Itulnar and Hikul races due south to the Indrawati.

"There are only between 150 and 160 villages inhabited in all this area of about 1,500 square miles, and there are only 11,500 Hill Marias. This means one village in every ten square miles, and less than eight persons to the square mile. In few places can you lose yourself in such solitudes.

"North Bastar thus consists administratively of the Antagarh, Kondagaon and Jagdalpur tahsils, half of the Jagdalur tahsil being south of the Indrawati and of the portions of the Kutru and Bhopalpatnam zamindaris and the Dantewara tahsil north of the Indrawati.

"In south Bastar there are the Dantewara, Bijapur and Konta tahsils, and the Sukma, Kutru, Bhopalpatnam and Kotapallipamer zamindaries; these four zamindaries alone survive out of the seventeen or eighteen of old times. A great western road runs 134 miles from Jagdalpur through Gidam, Karli, Natarwara, Bijapur and Bhopalpatnam to Timer on the Indrawati opposite Patagudam in Chand district; where there is a forest road to Sironcha; branches south from Gidam and Karli run to Dantewara, with a further extension to Kameli at the foot of the Bailadila hills; north from Gidam to Bursur, and from Matawara to Kutru; and south from Bhopalpatnam to Tarlagudam on the Godavari and thence over the Latpatkandi pass into the Nugur and Albaka taluqs of Madras. A great southern road runs 114 miles from Jagdalpur to Sukma and Konta. A network of forest roads of recent construction links those roads together between Tirathgarh in Jagdalpur tahsil, Katakalian Kuakonda and Dantewara, or southward from Kuakonda to the Kolab-Sabri at Misma on the Konta road, and to Konta via the Aranpur pass, Jaggorgonda and Golapalli, while Bijapur is linked to Cherla and Jaggorgonda to Dummagudam both on the Godavari. With these and other forest roads there are now few places in South Bastar out of reach of a motor-car, in the fair weather.

"Dantewara tahsil is a horseshow plain between the Tangri Dongri ghats at the edge of Jagdalpur tahsil on the east, the Abujhmar mountains on the north, and the great sword-blade north and south ridge of Bailadila on the west. Its general level is about 400 feet below that of the Jagdalpur tahsil, and it is an intermediate step between the north-eastern plateau and the great plains of south Bastar. The main road descends steeply

to it from Kilepal and Bastanar. This Dantewara valley may almost be regarded as the fourth natural division of Bastar, though small portions of the east of Kutru zamindari and the north of Bijapur tahsil are on the same level, there is between them and Dantewara tahsil the great barrier of the Bailadila ridge, except where the narrow Indrawati valley separates the northern end of the ridge from the Abujhmar mountains.

"The rest of Bastar is sometimes described as one great southern plain varying in level from 600 to 800 feet according to the proximity of the Godavari. Actually, however, there is yet another plateau to be crossed on the western road (and on its forest branches that strike off towards the Godavari) before the traveller descends on to the real Godavari plain. Its level varies from 1,100 to 900 feet (leaving out of account, in this as in all the plateau and plains of Bastar, the frequent spurs and isolated hills). On the southern road to Konta, and on the forest roads descending from Dantewara to Konta tahsil and Sukma zamindari by the Arampur, Koriras and Mokpal passes, on the other hand, the traveller gets at once off the northern 2,000 feet plateau, in the case of the southern road, and off the Dantewara valley level in those of the forest road, to the Godavari or southern plain. This intermediate western plateau may be regarded as the fifth natural division, and called the Kutru-Bijapur plateau. On the north and north-west the Indrawati is its boundary, so far as Bastar is concerned, as far as the hills which being north of Desli in Sironcha tahsil and cross the Indrawati into Bastar to form the boundary of the Kutru and Bhopalpatnam zamindaris; the gorge in which the Indrawati boils through these hills, the last barrier to its union with the Godavari, is sinister in its magnificence. The hills run thence south-west along the border of the two zamindaris, cross the western road a little west of Bijapur village and continue south-west to the Isalnar pass on the Nelasner-Cherla forest road, and thence westward till they merge with the foot-hills at the southern end of the Bailadila ridge, a little north of the Arampur pass.

"This Kutru-Bijapur plateau comprises all Kutru zamindari except the two Hill Maria parganas north of the Indrawati already mentioned, the isolated Mirthul pargana of Bhopalpatnam zamindari sandwiched between the Dantewara tahsil

and south-eastern corner of Kutru zamindari along the western slopes of the Bailadila ridge; and the northern and greater portion of Bijapur tahsil.

“The riverain tract spoken of above as the Godavari plain may be treated as the sixth and last natural division. ‘Riverian region’ would be a better name, as it is not all plain or Godavari valley; there are high hill ranges and other important river valleys. It falls into three subdivisions. The first and northern is the area drained by the Bhopalpatnam Chintawag, which joins the Indrawati a little south of Bhopalpatnam, and the Indrawati and Godavari valleys from the Kutru Bhopalpatnam boundary on the north to the tri-junction of Bastar, Hyderabad and Madras near Kothagudam on the Godavari in the south. All of this area, except the upper valleys of the Chintawag is in the main territory of the Bhopalpatnam zamindari; the upper valleys are part of Bijapur tahsil. A lotty range of hills begins from the confluence of the Indrawati and Chintawag and runs south east thence parallel to and at a distance of few miles from the Godavari as far as the Talper valley; the Bastar-Madras boundary runs along the crests of this range. Its highest peaks are more than 3,000 feet above sea-level. This barrier effectively shuts southern Bijapur off from the Godavari.

“The second sub division is the area drained by the Talper and its tributary the Chintalnar Chintawag. The Talper rises in the highest valley of the Bailadila ridge, almost from the 4,000 feet level and within a few hundred yards of the source of the Sankani. Thence it flows slightly west of south to join the Godavari a few miles below Cherla. It drains the south of the Bailadila hills and of the hills at the southern edge of the Kutru Bijapur plateau; the Chintawag takes the drainage of the Arampur pass and the eastern slopes of the Gogonda--Tikanpalli hills (p. 24 *supra*) and of the Golapalli hills. This sub-division comprises the remainder of the southern Bijapur, the outlying Lingiri block of Bhopalpatnam, the whole of the Kotapalli-Pamer zamindari, and of the Konta tahsil, that western portion which was once the Chintalnar Zamindari. Much of this region is extremely sparsely populated, and wide areas are marked in the new maps as ‘dense forest and bamboos’ or ‘high grass’. The Kotapalli—Pamer zamindari has been

almost depopulated by the Malaadministration of its zamindar, and is therefore now under management by the State; as at one point it is barely three miles from the Godavari at Sirur it has natural advantages which would have attracted settlers from Madras if it had been reasonably managed. The few 'Dorla' villages are the most miserable in Bastar.

"The third sub-division is the Kolab—Sabri valley from the southern slopes of the hills at the edge of the 2,000 feet plateau and the Dantewara valley plateau to the border of the Bhadrachalam taluq of Madras on the south. The northern portion of this, the Sukma zamindari, is a punchbowl ringed by the high edges of the Jagdalpur and Dantewara plateau from Tulsidongri in the north-east counter-clockwise to a point in the south-west of the zamindari where the foot-hills of the Gogonda—Tikanpalli hills approach the Kolab Sabri near Chikpalli; the hills are continued across the river and the Bastar border still counter-clockwise towards Malkangiri, and thence back to Tulsidongri. There are two small detached portions of Jagdalpur tahsil in the north of the Zamindari, around Kukanar and the lower waters of the Thakawara and Kumakoleng rivers respectively. South of Sukma zamindari the valley opens out again to form the main block of Konta tahsil, including the former Bhiji zamindari, the level which falls nearly to 250 feet above the sea by Konta at its south-east corner; here the Bastar portion of the valley is very narrow, as nearly all the south of Konta tahsil is occupied by the ranges of the Golapalli mountains which at one point reach a height of more than 2,800 feet.

"In contrast, with north Bastar, with its evergreen moist forests, cool climate abundant water-supply and often thick population, south Sukma, almost all Konta, the Pamer-Kotapalli zamindari and much of south Bijapur are hot dry regions of deciduous forests, deficient water and sparse population. The rivers are short stoney torrents rushing down in the monsoon to the adjacent Godavari, Taker or Kolab-Sabri, and drying up often before January. Teak is the characteristic timber tree.

"Frequent mention was made in this chapter of the smaller 'pargana' unit. The first use that I can find of this word is in appendix IX of Glasfurd's 1862 report, in which of the forty-three non-zamindari sub-divisions of Bastar, seventeen are

called parganas and twenty-six garhs. In Elliot's 1855 report the names are given of forty-eight garhs and nine taluqs into which the non-zamindari part of the State was said once to have been sub-divided, and of the twenty-seven garhs and nine taluqs remaining after some had passed by conquest or other arrangement to Jeypore, Nanker, Bindra-Nawagarh and Nagpur or as Mokasa grants to Bastar zamindars. The two lists do not correspond, though it seems that what Elliot called taluqs and independent village groups, Glasfurd called parganas. There is nothing to show what distinguished a pargana or Taluq from a garh. Reference may again be made to Will's monograph on the territorial system of the Rajput kingdoms of medieval Chattisgarh, in which he summarizes the system of the division of kingdoms into conventional numbers of garhs or chaurasis, themselves sub-divided into taluqs or barhons each containing twelve villages, with the heads of the garhs and taluqs working with the advice of Panchayats or committees of village headmen, as "a system of feudalism superimposed on an earlier tribal organization", the 'feudal element' being largely the conventionalization of the size of the divisions and the formal linking of them together in subordination to the head of the State and of the heads of the intermediate divisions, and its authority being held in constant check by the democratic tendencies of the trioe. The word pargana is familiar in the west of the Central Provinces and in Berar as a unit of the Mussalman organization of the Deccan, and as more and more Indian officials were lent to Bastar from the Central Provinces it probably displaced gradually the less familiar terms garh and taluq. Hill Marias clan-units were and are smaller than the conventional garh and often than the barhon or taluq; yet in the Abujhmar hills tract of the Antagarh tahsil these clan-units of land are now designated parganas. The modern list of parganas is considerably larger than those of Elliot and Glasfurd, who described all the Abujhmar country as one taluq or Pargana named Marian; there are now nine Abujhmar parganas in Antagarh tahsil alone. besides others of obvious tribal origin below the hills, and there are twenty-nine parganas in all in Antagarh tahsil. It was pointed out in the 1911 Central Provinces Census Report part I, p. 239 that the Hill Marias of the Ahiri Zamindari are similarly divided into (probably clan) units called pattis. The parganas of modern

Bastar include some obvious former garhs, some obvious barhons (e.g. Baragaon pargana in Antagarh), and some obvious old tribal clan units, while some have been created in Grigson's time and the word paragana is now used of any subdivision of a tahsil or zamindari in which villages are grouped under a group-headman or 'pargana majhi'.

In Medieval times these geographical factors were playing a remarkable role in the life of the aboriginal people of Bastar. The Godavari and Indrawati rivers were main barriers. These rivers helped the underdevelopment of the region and without any navigation facility Bastar remained a backwater of Indian culture after Chhindaka Nāgas. Due to fear the post-Nāga rulers isolated themselves from the outside world and the geographical features were utilized for self-preservation of the rulers.

The relationship between the community members and their territory—their mutual environment—represented a dynamic system tending towards equilibrium. A supportive factor in this equilibrium was the community's ability to split into economic groups and subsequently into individual families which periodically led economically independent existence in accordance with the rhythm of nature.

PREHISTORIC PERIOD (25000 B.C.—600 B.C.)

For a long time historians and anthropologists were of the opinion that Bastar was not inhabited by man in the earliest times. According to them his migration into Bastar took place very late. But, my researches (Lankā kī Khōj, Allahabad, 1974) have disclosed the fact that there was human habitation in Bastar ever since the human species appeared on earth. According to my investigations a generalised type of ape related to the Chimpanzee, the Gorilla and the Gibbon, resembling man, is traced in Nandagiri mountain regions of Bastar.

Unfortunately the relics of this man could not be obtained in Bastar.¹ It may be due to the fact that he did not live in caves but selected to live in the open plains and on the river banks or

1. The lower Palaeolithic man of Bastar settled along the main river and the lower reaches of tributaries due to availability of raw material near the river.

in the hilly tracts. As this region was exposed to the fury of monsoon winds and tropical rains, they must have taken away the parts of his carcass into the ocean.

The traces of the early man in Bastar, therefore can be made out only from the artefacts left by him. The tools of early man are more reliable as evidence of his presence in a locality than the ambiguous skulls and doubtful teeth and thigh bones which biologists have so far relied on to fix the age or place of human evolution; and, therefore, those who have been engaged in collecting early human artefacts in Bastar are forced to conclude that man first appeared on the edge of the Deccan plateau as pointed by P.T. Srinivasa Ayyangar (*The Stone Age in India*, Govt. of Madras, 1926). This can be confirmed by marking on the map all the find spots of the palaeolithic tools so far discovered in India. As most of the earliest artefacts of man discovered in Bastar are made of stone, this stage of the primitive man has been described as the stone age culture.

Stone Age Culture¹

Before the man learnt the use of stones he appeared to have used the wooden weapons. But, no traces of wooden weapons are available as the Indian termites or white ants must have eaten them away. When he felt the menace of the white ants he must have grasped the idea of making the stone tools. The earliest tools must have been made by hammering a piece of gravel with another stone to improve its shape and adopt it for use. Such roughly hewn pebbles, modules and natural broken stones have been called coliths or early stone tools. So far eolithic forms of tools have not been found in Bastar.

Since lithic tools are considered to be the chief evidence of early man's residence in any locality, that part of India where they are discovered may be said to have been the home of the eolithic man. Early man has displayed great skill in shaping these tools. For a long time he was content to use only rough and crude tools. Then he learnt to grind the surfaces of his tools

1. As for the most ancient epoch of the early paleolithic era, the data provided by archaeology to some extent, are of primary, if not exclusive significance.

till they became very smooth. This long stage of history of the lithic man is divided into two periods. They are Palaeolithic Age or the Old Stone Age and the Neolithic Age or the New Stone Age.

Palaeolithic Age¹

Palaeoliths have been found chiefly on the banks of *Indrāvati* and *Nārangī* rivers and plentiful on *Indravatī*. It was less plentiful in the northern area of *Nārangī* valley and the southern area of *Gōdāvarī*. It was not available in the *Sabari* Valley. From these river valleys various types of fine implements of the old stone age have been discovered (*Shukla*, 1974: 24-27). A single specimen from *Kālīpur* village on the bank of *Indrāvati* furnishes decisive evidence of man's contemporaneity with extinct vertebrate fauna. An old factory of microlithic tools has been discovered in *Gōdāvarī* Valley. This will clearly prove the fact that from the earliest times man lived in *Bastar*.

During the earliest phase of old stone age, each stone tool had many uses. Tools were not yet specialised for particular purpose. The same roughly-chipped large and heavy stone served all purposes—from killing a tiger, scraping the hair from its skin, cutting a tree or digging up roots. Crude hand-axes and cleavers comes under this category. They were made from pebbles, knocking of crude pieces from the parent body by striking one stone against the other. Decades after decades, centuries after centuries rolled on like this. Gradually, as human skill increased, improvements were made in manufacturing of tools. Thus the Middle Stone Age is characterised by a widespread industry set up near the banks of *Indrāvati* in villages like *Kharagaghāt*, *Bhātvērā*, *Deurgāon*, *Garhchandelā* *Ghātlohangā*. These centres produced the implements like axes, scrapers, blades, choppers, knives, borers, etc. Many of these tools indicate extra-ordinary care and workmanship.

1. As primitive man exceeded the bounds of the early paleolithic, we came to possess, apart from the facts of archaeology, the data of ethnography on the peoples of world which lag behind in their development.

Even laymen, on seeing these delicate tools, are reminded of our present steel Chisels used by carpenters. So this stage is a definite advance on the previous one. But still we have to call this man a food-gatherer, however advanced he might be in the production of tools. We can date this Middle Stone Age roughly to 25,000 B.C.

From this advanced stage we find man improving his techniques still further. His tools and weapons are now so small that we call them microliths.¹ This type of microlithic industry was established near Chitrakōṭe fail. Though small, the implements gathered from this place were the predecessors of our modern tools and weapons made of metal. These microliths were used for various purposes, as bows and arrows for hunting the animals, harpoons for fishing and sickle-teeth for very primitive harvesting. This age is called the Late Stone Age. We can date it roughly to 5000 B.C.

Several palaeolithic tools were found from Bhadrāchalam Taluk of erstwhile Bastar-region and they show that there must have been some palaeolithic factory in Rekāpalli.

No traces of palaeolithic settlements² are found in mountainous areas and great forests. So, they must have avoided such zones and preferred places where suitable rocks were available and river streams flowed. It seems that their main food was nuts and roots as well as the flesh of animals. They had to take to hunting, because seasonal changes must have affected the productivity of trees. Many choppers that were found had sharp edges, which were evidently used for cutting the flesh of animals. And the hides of these animals besides fibres of trees were used as dress. Even today, skins of tigers and deer, as well as treefibres are considered holy in some tribal families. Use of fire must have been known to our ancestors. By acquiring mastery over fire they were controlling a mighty force of nature. As years rolled on, they discovered how to initiate the process of burning by bringing about friction

1. Generally speaking, the lack of sufficient ethnographic parallels for this enoch make it an area of most rigorous debates which, in theoretical terms, concern the question of the legitimacy of placing the material within the framework of primitive social formation.
2. Perhaps we have no reliable ethnographic analogues of late palaeolithic communities at all.

between two pieces of wood. Thereafter, they could manipulate an instrument by drilling a small hollow with a stone tool on a block of wood and churning with a pole in the hollow. This instrument is called 'Arañi' in Sanskrit and is still used in Dēvi festivals to kindle the fire (Shukla: Ādivāsī Sangīt, Bhopal, 1986). Thus the primitive man must have felt himself a creator.

The system of the life of this period can be called primitive communism.¹ It corresponded with the primitive nature of the means of production. In such restricted conditions, each clan tended to concentrate on only one type of food, say animal, fish, bird or tuber. It regarded itself as belonging to the same substance as its favoured food. Other groups concentrating on other objects of food were not members in the kinship. Such a special object of food is called the totem. These totemic rites were based on wishful thinking. People felt more assured of the availability of food, certainty of long life and victory in battle. Ceremonials in which the entire clan participated intensified feelings of security and lessened fear of misfortune. Human sacrifices, followed by animal sacrifices later on were intended to secure an increase of food supply. Even today we find these practices prevalent among the tribes of Bastar.

The Neolithic Age

Certainly it is not possible to say when exactly the paleolithic age came to an end and the neolithic age² began in Bastar. In several places paleolithic settlements have gradually given room for the development of neolithic culture. Therefore, it is safer to conclude that neolithic epoch came as a result of

1. Most researcher associate the rise of primitive communism with that of the first man. In the opinion of the present author, this is an error. The first men were not yet full fledged men but men in formation. But the development of man cannot be reduced to the formation of his physical organisation. It was the formation of his essence—the totality of social relations, i.e., society. Anthropogenesis is inseparable from sociogenesis.
2. From this age the availability of ethnographic analogues is certain, and some other characteristics are identical at the stage of classic mesolithic, on the one hand, and among the wandering tribes of shifting villages of the modern tribes on the other.

gradual evolution from the paleolithic age. This neolithic age was a brief one compared to its predecessor! It occupied only a period of 1500 years flourishing from about 2500 B.C. to 900 B.C.

The fortified hill near Baṛē Dōngar must have been extremely useful for neolithic dwellers. On the larger hills they had room enough for their habitation. On the less steep parts of the slopes there were spaces free from rocks, on which they could conveniently build their huts. This natural system of terraces led to the formation of rock-shelters in North Bastar, which afforded great protection against sun and rain.

The size of these settlements largely depended on facilities of water-supply, on the amount of rain that could be collected and stored on the hill itself.

The variety of ground and polished tools produced by the neolithic people is unprecedented. Many of them discovered from Sabrī Valley are beautiful in form and finish. I myself collected 12 types of axe-celts from the banks of Gōdāvarī and Sabrī rivers (Shukla 1977: 26).

In fact, the domestication of animals was the first great step that man took in the conquest of nature. When the neolithic man learnt to settle down in the grass lands he also cultivated vegetation and crop. Thus the food-gatherer became the food-producer.

Agriculture developed in this way. But it was of primitive type, called hoe-cultivation or burn-method. It means clearing of a patch of scrub jungle by means of burning the trees, digging up the soil covered with ash with a hard hoe or stick, sowing it with seeds, and after the rainy season harvesting the crop. This primitive type of agriculture is still in vogue in Ahujmār.

In the neolithic settlements of Gaṛhdhanōrā, Rājpur, Gaṛhchandēlā, and Gaṛhbōdrā huge relics of neolithic pottery have been discovered. Besides being indispensable for storage purposes, pottery was highly essential for ritual purposes, especially in burials.

In the neolithic age,¹ although food producing played a

1. The evaluation of sources, which is the foundation of the history of society, is considerably enlarged by complementing the method of ethnographic analogues with the method of survivals.

decisive role, uncertainty of crops remained a major problem. This was due to the primitive nature of agriculture. Hence, man sought the help of the supernatural for procuring plentiful supplies of foodgrain. This took two forms in Bastar. One was the cult of the phallus or lingo, representing the male reproductive organ. The other was the worship of the 'yōni', the great mother or 'earth-mother'. We have noticed the lingo cult in Bastar and also we know the 'vagina' represented in the myths of the origin of Paralkote Zamindari (vide Chapter 3 of this book). Obviously the lingo represents God Shiva and the 'yōni' represents 'Pārvatī'. It is of great interest as proving that the neolithic people had faith in the doctrine of male energy. This worship of Shiva was perhaps a new cult brought by the ancestors of Māṛiā from Indus valley in 2000 B.C. (vide Chapter 2). In Rīgveda (VIII.18.7) Indra was described as having conquered "Shishnadevas" and their city. These 'Shishnadevas' migrated in Bastar in 2000 B.C. and thus they were the contemporary of our neolithic ancestors living in this area since long.

A careful examination of several burial sites discovered in Dandāmī Māṛiā region reveal that the neolithic men buried the dead.

A close study of the life of the aboriginal tribes of Bastar convinces us that they are the direct descendants of the Neolithic Age.

The Nāgas and their descendents Māṛiās: Immigrants of Indus Valley Civilisation

The area in which the Indus Valley civilisation¹ flourished is very large—slightly less than half a million square miles—though it is restricted to northern India, with its strongest concentration in the Indus valley system. The uplands of Baluchistān were outside the influence of this civilisation, and in the south its boundary was the Thār Desert of Rājasthān. However, along the West Coast the settlements of this culture

1. The supposed wave of Aryan migration put an end to Harappan Civilization in the second millennium B.C. This suggestion was first put forward quite tentatively by Wheeler (Ancient India 3: 58—130).

extended further west almost to the Iranian border and south to the mouths of the Narbadā and Tāptī rivers.

The Indus valley people belonged to the Chalcolithic¹ stage of culture. Experts assume now that this civilisation flourished between 2300 and 1750 B.C. It thus lasted just about 500 years. The reasons for its decline and final disappearance cannot yet be definitely stated. One cause might have been the migration of the people of this region to different places due to destructive flooding, as retold by Nāgas in their inscriptions (vide Part II of this book). Nāgas migrated from Indus valley to Bastar in 1750 B.C. (ibid). This seems to suggest the emergence of a new provincial culture which, in a more primitive stage and underlying the prevailing Harappan culture, had all the time persisted in Bastar area. Free from the control of the Harappan people, this suppressed early local culture now began to flourish no doubt, inspired by the Harappan culture. It was developed either by earlier settlers locally or was imported by new Nāga immigrants. The Kayatha site, east of Ujjain, contemporary to the phase of Harappa, seems to have had closer affinities to Harappan culture. This Harappan culture brought by the Nāgas contacted and even mixed with earlier Neolithic culture of Bastar.

Whether the cultures of the post-Harappan time expanded by diffusion or were carried southwards by the people who invented them, is not yet possible to say. Carbon-14 dating has established that these cultures developed from about 1800 to 1000 B.C. After that a new era begins—that of the iron age.

Since the expansion of the Central Dravidian coincides in time and geography with the dissemination of post-Harappan culture, it is probable that the Nāgas were at least partly responsible for this cultural development in Bastar. Lexicostatistical counts approve this hypothesis.

Māriās: The Megalith-builders

Another important, but as yet unsolved problem is the

1. The term 'Chalcolithic Culture' which excludes the pre-Harappan and Harappan Cultures has been applied to the pre-iron cultures of Madhya Pradesh and South (Vide H.D. Sankalia, PPIP, Poona. 1974, p. 1_q).

identity of the megalith-builders in Bastar. All over Danḍāmī Mārjā region thousands of large megalithic tombs are found. These were the people who brought Dravidian language in Bastar. These people could be traced back to Baluchistan where the Brahuis even-today speak a language which is grouped as Northern Dravidian and where W.A. Fairservis (1961: 22-29) had found at Edith Shahr near Bela, a large site of megaliths with port hole cists of Bastar type.

Krishnaswami (Ancient India, Nos p 41) considers the megaliths of Bastar as the Monuments of the living culture. The possibility that a few of them belong to the late period can not be ruled out. Vat's (Indian Science Congress, Lucknow, 1952) prediction that Bastar would be a meeting ground of the two megalithic traditions, i.e. the south Indian and N.E. Indian traditions, cannot be confirmed without the systematic excavations of the megaliths.

Aryan Immigration

The racial immigration which took place in the last phase of prehistoric times and caused the most profound change in shaping the culture and history of Bastar was that of Aryans,¹ some where in 1000 B.C.

Conclusion

From what has been said in this Chapter, it is clear that the aboriginal tribes in Bastar are in most cases survivals from the later prehistoric population groups. Some tribes may even have degenerated from a higher standard of culture due to adverse circumstances. The Abujhmārjās of Abujhmār are said to be the result of one such retrograde development.

1. The Vedic literature does not throw much light on its history, except the casual references to its people. But the Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābhārata and Purāṇas contain many allusions of historical significance. It appears that during the Rāmāyaṇa period the present Bastar was known as 'Danḍakāranya'. It is said that this forest is named after the Ikṣvāku's son Danḍaka. The story of Danḍaka is preserved in the Padma-Purāṇa (34.5-6 14-59), Arthashastra (1.6) and in the Jātaka and Jain literature also.

LIVING PRÉHISTORY

The Life of Primitive People

The earliest people differed considerably from the people of our time and resembled large apes. Foreheads were low and retreating. The human brain was larger than that in apes but much smaller than that in modern man. People walked leaning strongly forward. Their fingers were clumsy; people could do only the simplest things with their hands: dig the ground, grasp objects and deliver blows. People could utter only a few sounds which expressed anger and fear; they could call for help and warn each other of danger.

Man did not have so strong paws, sharp claws and teeth as large predators had. But the earliest people used stones with sharpened edge. In order to sharpen the edge, people split off little pieces from the stone by hitting it with another stone. A stone with sharpened edge was called a *hand-axe*. The *hand-axe*, *digging-stick* and *club* were man's first implements of labour; with their help people procured food. No animal could make even the simplest instrument of labour. The ability to make implements of labour was the principle difference of the earliest man from animals. It was due to work that man emerged from the animal kingdom more than two million years ago.

People gathered fruit and birds' eggs, dug out edible roots and holes, where little animals lived, by means of sticks and hand-axes. Such activities are called *gathering*; people gathered what nature offered the groups of people armed with clubs, sharpened sticks and hand-axes hunted large animals which had been weakened by illness and had fallen behind their herds.

The earliest people feared fire as wild animals do. They fled from forest fires caused by lightning in great fear. However, people noticed that fire could be useful; it warmed them in cold weather and defended them from wild animals. Obtaining fire from forest fires people kindled camp-fires. Someone watched the camp-fire day and night adding wood all the time. If people moved to a new place they would carry a smouldering log with them. Predators did not dare attack people sitting round a brightly burning camp-fire at night. They would retreat before a man with a burning stick in his hands. Meat and plants

cooked on the fire tasted better than raw meat and plants. Having learned to use fire people began to differ from animals even more.

The life of the earliest man was very difficult and fraught with dangers. He could not always find enough food. More than half of the people failed to live to 20: some were clawed to death by wild animals, others died of disease and hunger.

The earliest man could not live alone, he would be unable to procure food or maintain the fire. People would have died of hunger or would have been annihilated by wild animals. That was why they lived in groups, jointly obtained food and warmed themselves in camp-fire. The group of the earliest people is called the *human herd*. Traces of the earliest man have yet not been discovered from Bastar, but there is the possibility that he lived here.

Not only the implements of labour and activities, but also people themselves changed in course of time. In making tools man had to determine the form of the tool, the material he would use, and the work he had to do. In hunting, people had to decide how the hunters would be situated, where and when the flock would be driven. Work contributed to the development of the human brain, its size grew, man's forehead became more prominent, and coherent speech arose among people. About 25,000 years ago (from the time we get human remains in Bastar) man in this region became similar to the aboriginal people of our time. In science he is called the *homo sapiens* (the intelligent human being).

Joint work and the common struggle against dangers closely knitted people together. About 25,000 years ago *communities* and *clans* were formed. The clan included several dozen or hundred people. They were regarded as *relatives* (*sagā*) claiming descent from a Common ancestor. The relatives lived in one cave or built several large huts for themselves. The men hunted and fished. The women gathered edible plants, took care of children, cleaned the skins of fat and sewed clothes out of them. Women enjoyed respect in the clan. The children began helping adults at three or four. The clan was more stable and better organised than the herd. The transition from the earliest human herd to the clan meant that people had risen to a new, higher stage in their development. Yet there were similar

traits in the human herd and the clan: people in them worked and owned their possessions jointly, were equal among themselves and provided themselves with the barest means of subsistence. These were called the *primitive people*.

The primitive people of Bastar (the Abujhmārjās) did not know the reasons for the natural phenomena and for that, they came to believe in the supernatural forces which allegedly directed nature. They thought that nature was inhabited by spirits similar to but stronger than people. Spirits produced lightning, made the winds blow, helped or hindered the people in hunting, and caused illness among them. The people wanted the spirits to help them or, on the contrary, sought to drive spirits away. In order to drive the disease from a sick person's body, they used smoke, cried loudly and brandished sticks. The hunters tried to enchant animals and secured success in hunting; with this aim they made gestures as if killing animals and acting dramas such as *māy-pāṭā*. Unable to understand such natural phenomena as sleep and death, the primitive man believed that there was an invisible soul living in man's body. During the sleep the soul flew from the body and encountered the souls of other people. Death was supposed to occur when the soul left the body permanently. This faith arose as a result of primitive people's weakness and fear of natural phenomena and a failure to understand their natural causes.

The primitive man was unable to cultivate fields and harvest crops by means of tools on his own. Only a whole clan could clear the ground from shrubbery and forest, hoe the soil and protect the crops and cattle against wild animals. The harvest obtained from the common field and the livestock belonged to the whole clan. These kinsmen who were skilled at making things out of stone, clay and flax provided the whole clan with them. Several clans living in one place made up a *tribe*.

Tribal affairs were run by a council of elders (*bhumkāl*): the council settled quarrels between kinsmen. The elders enjoyed general respect, and the tribe obeyed their orders without fail. The elders called a meeting of the whole tribe to decide important matters. Occasionally, wars flared up between tribes (see Ghotul pata) over land convenient for growing crops or grazing cattle. For the time of war the men elected a *Chief* (*Manjhi*), the leader of the warriors. The appearance of land tillage and live-

stock was tremendously important for the primitive people. Before that time man had only taken what nature gave him: gathered plants, hunted animals and caught fish. Land tillers and livestock breeders grew plants and bred animal themselves.

Some tribes lived in places with large iron deposits. Pieces of iron in the stone hearth melted in the fire. After cooling the pieces assumed different shapes. People noticed this property of iron and began to make things of it. A hole of the needed form was made in clay or a soft stone and the melted iron was poured into it. As it cooled the iron took on the form of a hole. Axes, knives sickles and other objects were cast out of iron. People also learned to make things out of other metals.

The time, when the principal implements of labour were made of stone, was called the *Stone Age*. The Age ended with the appearance of iron implements among people and the *age of metals* began.

Land tillers increased the size of hoe and fastened a handle to it. Several people pulled the hoe along the field while one person walked behind and pressed the hoe down so it would go deeper into the ground. That was how the *plough* was invented by the ancestors of modern Halba tribe—Cows were made to pull the plough. Milching was not yet known. Invention of the plough speeded up and improved soil cultivation. It was difficult for a woman to have to do with the plough and the cows. This became chiefly a man's job.

As before, the land belonged to the whole community. All its members grazed their cattle on the common meadow and hunted in common forest. However, one family could now plough a field and harvest the crops on it. There was no need for the whole community to cultivate the soil jointly. The elders divided the community's fields into *plots* for the families making up the community.

Each family cultivated its plot; it had its own several heads of cattle. The harvest obtained from the plot also belonged to the family. The community as an economic unit was broken up into individual households. The composition of the community also changed. Neighbours who took part in clearing the land were also accepted. The *clan community* was gradually replaced by the *territorial community*. Members of the territorial community are known by different names such as Halbas, Bhatras,

Parjas, Murias, Abujhmarias, Dandami Marias and Dorlas.

With breaking up of the community into family households, equality among community members began to disappear. The elders and chieftains seized the largest and most fertile plots of land. They appropriated most of the booty captured during war. The leaders and chieftains grew rich, while the other members of the community became poor. The leaders established their power over the tribe and thus there sprang up different tribal kingdoms, such as kingdom of the Nalas, kingdom of the Nagas, kingdom of the Halbas, seven kingdoms of the Marias, kingdom of the Jhorias. The breaking up of the clan as an economic unit and the appearance of inequality among the people brought the primitive communal system to its demise.

Thus, people's life changed and so did their religious beliefs. For the land tiller the most important were the spirits of those natural elements on which his life depended: the sun which warmed his crops, the clouds which watered his fields, and the seeds growing in the ground. People believed that those spirits were almighty *gods* according to whose will the spring came, it rained and the harvest ripened. People imagined gods in the shape of animals or human beings. They carved images of gods from wood or stone, which were called *idols*. In order to get into favour with gods people offered gifts—*sacrifices*: killed domestic animals and sometimes even other tribesmen. The lips of the idol were smeared with the blood of the victim.

The Aborigines

A phenomenon peculiar to India is that older and more static cultures gave way to newer and more dynamic ones not through a process of disintegration or obliteration, but by means of seeking refuge in isolated areas, influencing and being influenced by more advanced ones. Here in Bastar also so called civilised and the uncivilised developed through a process of acculturation over thousands of years. The tribal inhabiting in this isolated area represent primitive cultures of varying ages. A close study of their traditions in the interior convinces us that they are the relics of our traditional culture and some of them like Abujhmārijās seem to be the direct descendants of the Neolithic people.

Here in Bastar the 'civilised' and the 'uncivilised' never lived in mutual isolation.¹ A process of peaceful coexistence and mutual acculturation took place which can be seen in the analysis of their customs in the following pages. Bastar shows extra-ordinary continuity of culture.² "The violent breaks, known to have occurred in the political and theological superstructure, have not prevented long survivals of observances that have no sanction in the official Brahmin works, hence can only have originated in the most primitive stages of human society; moreover, the Hindu scriptures and even more the observances sanctioned in practice by Brahminism, show adoption of non-Brahmin local rites. That is, the process of assimilation was mutual, a peculiar characteristics of India" (Kosambi, 1956: 20).

Despite this mutual assimilation, the special characteristics of primitive life persisted in Bastar until 1853 A.D., when the British East India Company began to batter down the multifarious forms of tribal economy. It was by force of arms that the British began to shatter the tribal economy of Bastar, which resulted in ten major tribal rebellions; each attack was met by counter attacks, until the primitive bow and arrow were overpowered by the modern rifle, so that, what we see today, after decades of economic, political and military brigandage, are only the remnants of tribal life.

The native people of Bastar mostly belong to the Gond group of tribes and the immigrants who have settled down in the area appear to have freely intermixed with the indigenous. The Gonds of Bastar are an interesting people. From early times they have come in contact with other racial groups, yet they have more or less maintained their cultural integrity. The record of their achievements forms the theme of their folk-songs which are still sung in Bastar in Gond villages, that are

1. Since both great and little traditions exist within the culture of the aboriginal tribes, study of the culture of Bastar can contribute to understanding of process of universalization and parochialization which are generative operative in Indian Civilization.
2. Communication between tribal and non-tribal traditions may proceed vertically without effecting the community of common culture. A focus upon the forest life thus remains mutually indispensable for whole understanding, whether Hinduism or tribalism.



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known as Dōrlā, Dandāmī Mārīā, Abujhmārīā and Muriā regions. The power and influence they wielded during the medieval period of Bastar history, is the main theme of this book.

The Gonds have been taken by some scholars as the true autochthones of penninsular India. Some have affiliated them with pre-Dravidians of South, while others trace them to a short long and moderately high headed type of aborigines with flat nose and thick lips. In an able survey of migrations of castes and tribes into Central India, C.S. Venkatachar (1931: 60-68) discusses the problem of Gonds. "The later", according to him "may be pre-Dravidians of the south on whom the Dravidians have imposed their language and due to some causes in the regions of north-east Madras, there must have been a large scale displacement of the tribes into the interior of the Central regions." The pre-Dravidians of which Venkatachar speaks in this connection (Ibid., p. 61), are "a dark Negroid race of low culture characterized by a physical type of very short stature, low forehead and flat face and nose." In the second chapter of this book I have pointed out the "Naga theory of Gondid Origin" in support of the thesis that Gonds are pre-Dravidians, but I do not agree with Venkatachar that they are the case of displacement from South India, rather they branched off from the Brahui stock of north India in 2000 B.C. Lexico-statistical data confirms my supposition.

Of the native population of aboriginals, the Hill Marias are the 'Wildest' of the tribes in Bastar who are also enumerated in adjoining district Chanda of Maharashtra. The Hill Mārīās do not seem to have entered the social economy or adopted the culture pattern of Bastar. They are still accustomed to their nomadic life in the hills and jungles and supplement their cleanings in the forests by shifting cultivation called *Dippa* and *Penda* in these parts. The Bison-horn Marias have settled down on the plateau and the plains and have been more influenced by their contacts with the higher castes in the district than their 'wild' brethren the Mārīās of Abujhmār. The Muriās of Kōṇḍāgāon and Nārāyanpur also known as Jhōriās are more advanced than the Mārīās. They have left their forest-life long ago and their occupation of the plains and the plateau has brought them in closer contacts with the

immigrants in the population of Bastar. The Muriās of Kōṇḍāgāon who are scattered on either sides of arterial roads, have developed an extremely efficient social organisation among them and the dormitory institution with its complicated code of rites and rituals; its elaborate system of rules and regulations serve to maintain the tribal solidarity and integrity which would otherwise have been exposed to the disintegrating influences that usually result from such contacts. The two sections of the Muriās, viz. the Kōṇḍāgāon Muriās and the Nārāyanpur Muriās, the latter called Jhooriyās by Glasfurd (1862) and Jhoriā by Grigson (1938), are not different in physical features but in culture, the Nārāyanpur Muriās seem to be more Hinduized and advanced than the Kōṇḍāgāon Muriās. The latter live on the plateau and on the hills and their dormitory institutions are more integrated than those of the Nārāyanpur Muriās.

Besides the Māriās and Muriās, there are also other important cultural groups in Bastar. The Dhurvās, otherwise known as Parjās, claim a higher social status than the tribes already enumerated. They have adopted the dialect of a superior cultural group and also some of the important traits characteristic of the latter. The Bhatrās are a *little higher in social scale* than the Parjās. They have a few subgroups which claim distinct social status as a result of Hinduization. The Hinduized Bhatrās put on sacred threads and consider those who still adhere to tribal prescriptions as inferior and thus have already closed their ranks to other tribes and groups. Today, Bharās who still intermarry with other groups have *distinct lower social status*. Both the Pariās and Bhatrās live by permanent cultivation. The Parjās appear to have come earlier to Bastar than the Bhatrās, as they provide the priests in Bhatrā villages. Perhaps after Gadhbās Parjās are next to enter Bastar, then only came the Gonds.

The Halbās appear to be culturally a dominant group, as the lingua franca of the district is Halbī and the supposed Dōngar kingdom and military antecedents of the Halbās give them an importance which is reflected in their attitude to the other social groups. They have mixed with the tribal groups, and even today, mixed marriages between Halbās and the other Gond tribes have not been tabooed. The Dhākars are certainly

superior to the Halbās and are reputed to be descendants of Kshatriya families who followed the ruling family to Bastar but it appears that they too have not escaped infusion of aboriginal blood as is evident from the practice of Widow remarriage and that of "Ghiṭā Pāñi" or the auction of widows by the erstwhile state authorities to rehabilitate Dhākar families originally meant to provide a *Jus Connubii* for them.

Although the language of the district is Halbi, the inhabitants speak various dialects of Gondi language. The linguistic map of Bastar will show the zones in which the district, may be roughly divided. In the northern border of the district, Chhattisgarhi Hindi is spoken. The greater part of the eastern border has Oriyā as its principal language. In the south-east some islands of Dorlā dialects are found which are very similar to Dandamī Māñiā spoken in the district. Inside the district, Parjās and Bhatrās speak different languages. In the south and south-east the language is Telugu, while along the western border debased form of Marāṭhī is spoken by a number of scattered communities. The interior of the district is inhabited by various aboriginal groups who speak their respective dialects, all affiliated to Gondwana group, more or less influenced by border languages in accordance with their proximity to them, or the intensity of their contacts with people speaking those languages. The only representative of the Mundā speaking people perhaps are Gadabās who are a small occupational group, palanquin bearers by profession, living east of Jagdalpur but who have now lost much of their original cultural traits.

An intensive bibliographical survey of the aborigines of Bastar is contained in a monograph by the present author (1986). Studies by me made it possible to trace the process of disintegration of clan-tribal relations over a period of two centuries. The events connected with the incorporation of the northern peoples in Bastar state, the imposition of forest-taxes on these people and military campaigns against insubordinates led to migrations on a fairly large scale and fragmentation of individual ethnic groups, and to some extent upset the old clan-tribal organisation. The subsequent gradual introduction of elements of state law and order and the ending of bloody armed clashes further weakened clan and tribal relationships rather than strengthening them, because already by the end of the 19th

century the clan-tribal function of protection against plunderers and attacks had been taken over by the British administration. (see Shukla, H.L. *Tribal Revolutions in Colonial India*, Delhi 1987).

ANCIENT PERIOD (600 B.C.—760 A.D.)

The most significant development in Bastar, which can be characterised as the first great social revolution, is the advance of agrarian economy over tribal regions. The great achievement of the Nāgas is the destruction of barriers between innumerable primitive tribes, known as *Sabars* which clung to their archaic tools and beliefs for thousands of years. The Nāgas laid the foundations of new productive relations, a new type of society, by opening up new regions to cultivation, introducing new skills and production techniques. Their achievement goes down in history as the opening of a new chapter.

The Nāgas,¹ when they first entered Bastar round about 2000 B.C. were leading a pastoral-nomadic life. After easily conquering the Bastar people, by about 1750 B.C., their very contact changed the primitive forest tribes (Shabaras) that had been existing in Bastar for a long time. This meant combination of Austro-Asiatic and Dravidians into new tribes, which began to adopt the Aryan mode of life, fighting among themselves for cattle and water. In this neotribal economy land was territory, not primitive property; a group of settlers alone could manage and hence, own it. The Āryans, who advanced to the south of Indrāvati by about 600 B.C., differed considerably from the above mentioned bands. They settled here as merchants in the pre-Buddhist period. The *Sera-Vanija Jātaka* describes the merchants sailing in Tēlavāhā which is identified with the Tēl river in the north-east of Bastar. The *Taitalikā Janapada* referred to in the *Ashṭādhyāyī* (VI, 2, 42) of Pāṇini comprised parts of Bastar centring round present town of Tīṭalāgarh.

1. V.S. Wakankar (*Prāchya Pratibhā*, Vol. IV, No. 2, 1976, p. 17) hold the view that the originators of the Kavatha Culture (2000 B.C. — 1800 B.C.) were the Haihayas who defeated the Karkotaka Nāgas.

In the course of time primitive tribes living mostly by hunting were Aryanised. While some aboriginals adapted themselves to the new mode of life, others of the same tribe sank to the status of a very low caste like the Sundī, who are known as Shoundika in Mahābhārata. While the Nāgas of Bastar were recognised as such by Āryans, their tribesmen continued to be aboriginals. We, thus, see the methods of Āryanisation in which the tribal chiefs were turning themselves as absolute monarchs with Aryan support. Thus, by 600 B.C., a number of tribal states developed into monarchies,¹ fighting for domination. New Brahmin clans grew out of the old tribal priesthood. Thus, the neo-tribal economy assumed the Aryan grab; the distinction between the Aryan and the non-Aryan tribes disappeared. The Brahmin had to change over from a sacrificial priest (gāyā) to a pioneer in penetrating the wilderness and a sanctifier of innumerable local superstitions, with genealogies of tribal dynasties, like purāṇas. The Buddha gave an intellectual achievement of the highest order to the primeval jungle.

Ashoka (261 B.C.) who practised the precepts of the Buddha could not conquer this Āṭavika country. He mentions that the tribes of this country were unconquered: Jaugarh Separate Rock Edict, ed., Hultzsch. CII, I, p. 115).

History begins in Bastar with the advent of the Aryans in Daṇḍakāraṇya region (El. XII, 262). In the inscriptions and literary works of early Christian centuries this territory was known as Mahākāntara² (CII, III, line 19) and Mahāvana (Burgess, Notes on Amravati Stupa Inscription, Nos. 8, 23). The Aryans in the middle of 6th century B.C. began to penetrate into Bastar in small groups. Early Buddhist literature gives us some inkling about the phenomenon. According to *Sutta-nipāṭa*, a Kosalan Brahman Bevari leaves the capital and goes down the southern trade-route to settle down near the head water of the Gōdāvarī river with a few disciples. This

1. They are known as 'Vanyabhūṛt' in Sanskrit literature.

2. Kāntara of Mahābhārata (Sabhāparvan 31.12-13) may be identified with Daṇḍakāraṇya of Rāmāyaṇa and Mahākāntara of the Allahabad Pillar inscription of Samudragupta. The Rājim Stone inscription (G.I.I, Vol. III, No. 1, p. 7) also mentions Kāntara as one of the territories conquered by Jaggal.

was the territory of the *Assakas*. This story shows that there was no plough-agriculture on the Gōdāvarī till the middle of the sixth century B.C. Here pre-Aryan tribal chiefs were recognised as kings having state authority. Nalas were such kings who used the tribal totem of 'breed'.

Buddhism, as the most powerful force in developing agriculture, enjoyed great popularity in Bastar (Their remains are scattered here). Of all the tribes inhabiting Bastar the Nāgas showed special interest in the Buddha and his teachings. They were the most devoted worshippers of the Buddha. The story of Muchilinda who protected the Buddha from a sweeping storm is well known. This event is one of the favourite themes of the Amrāvati sculptures. The Nāgas were one of the many tribes that entered into the texture of Bastar. The sculptures of Amrāvati and Nāgārjunakōṇḍa which depict kings and queens with serpent crowns indicate their Nāga origin. The Shankhapāla Jātaka describes the land of Kannabenna as Nāgaloka. The story of Buddha's tooth-relic that was carried by the prince of Ceylon refers to a Nāga king who ruled over the territory of Bastar. A slab found in the ruins of Amrāvati bears the characters 'Nāgabū' which has been interpreted as "Nāgāmbu." According to a tradition, Guṇaḍhya, who was in the court of the Sūtavāhana and was the author of Bṛhatkathā, belonged to the Nāga tribe of Bastar, his mother being a brahmin, and his father a Nāga king. Naganika, the wife of Siri Sātakarṇi belonged to the Nāga tribe.

Thus, we find that from 600 B.C. to 1324 A.D., there were Nāga kings ruling in Bastar. But prior to 760 A.D. We find no Nāga record from Bastar which may claim their rule before 760 A.D. Prior to 760 A.D., Bastar was ruled by the Nalas, who issued their copper plates and coins.

Nala rule in Bastar (350-760 A.D.)

In the fourth century A.D. the Nalas rose to prominence with their headquarters at Pushkarī (now Poṣāgarh). Nala kings increased rapidly, and by the time of king Varāharāja (400-440) in early fifth century A.D., the political supremacy

of the Nalas extended over Bastar-Kōrāpuṭ-Kālāhaṇḍī territories. The nala king Bhavadatta Verma (400-460), who consolidated his power in Bastar-Kōrāpuṭ region, invaded the Vākāṭaka dominion and penetrated as far as Nandivardhan, which was one of the headquarters of the Vākāṭakas. Narēdra-sēna admitted defeat and was forced to surrender a part of his territory to the victor who is known to have granted a village in Yeotmal in the heart of the Vākāṭaka dominion. After his victory, Bhavadatta Verma is known to have proceeded up to Prayāga where he took his sacred bath at the confluence of the Ganga and Yamuna and granted lands to the Brahmins. Bhavadattaverma was succeeded by his son Arthapati Bhāṭṭāraka (460-475) who continued the struggle with the Vākāṭakas. Other glorious kings of this dynasty were Skanda Verma (475-500), Prithviraja (635-675), Virūparāja (775-700), Vilāsātunga (700-740) and Prithivīvyāghra (740-765) etc. (Shukla 1978: 29-294).

In this period, the form of Government was absolute monarchy. But there is no comparison between the simple direct and personal rule of the earlier period and the ostentatious royalty of this age. The emperor played an active role in determining the state policy in war and peace. His supreme function was to buttress the existing order and preserve peace among different sections of the society. He was the commander-in-chief of armed forces, the supreme head of the executive and the highest court of justice.

Decentralisation of State power, rise of intermediaries between the king and the tax-payer, and the growth of self-contained villages laid the foundations of feudalism in Bastar with the Nala period. The essence of feudalism was a combination of military service with land tenure through a peculiar type of relationship of dependence. The superior undertook to protect the dependant and the dependant pledged his services, allegiance and a share of his revenue to the superior. As the need of the dependant was greater, the scales were weighed against him. This type of relationship created a hierarchical society, consisting two classes, namely the nobility which owned the land, and the toilers, who supplied labour and cultivated the land. The nobles were of two classes, those with

official titles and those without them.¹

Broadly speaking, tribal population, during the period under review, falls into a mess. The ruling tribe becomes an alien to himself and his fellowmen, though protected by territorial unity to some extent. He feeds, clothes and enriches the society, but lives on a sustenance wage. The fruits of his labour are denied to him; the vistas of knowledge are kept away from him. But he toils together with his fellowmen; he thinks about himself and the world; he walks on and on, falling down and getting up, groping in the darkness and seeing through glimmering rays of light.

And, he finds himself on the threshold of feudalism. He is the *Shavara* recorded in the inscription, the ancestor of modern Gadabā tribe. The earliest reference to Shavaras is found in the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* (VIII. 18), which states that the elder sons of Vishvamitra were cursed to become progenitors of such surville races as the Āndhras, Pundras, Shavaras, Pulindas, and Mūtibas (Inscriptions of Orissa, Vol. I, p. 305). The implication of the *Aitareya* passage seems to be that the Shavaras were an Austro-Asiatic people dwelling somewhere in Bastar. The *Rāmāyaṇa* states that they were met by Rāma in Central India. A pious Shavara woman met him near some lake. In the *Shāntiparvan* of the *Māhābhārata* they are mentioned as practicing some wicked customs along with the *Dasyus* (Banerji, *History of Orissa*, Vol. I, p. 20). The *Matsya* and *Vāyu Purāṇas* describe them as (दक्षिणापथवासिनः) *Dakshināpatha-vāsinah* (*Matsya* 144.46-48; *Vāyu* 45.126). They are several times referred to in the *Bhagavatīsūtra*, the oldest sacred literature of the Jainas, which describes their language as one of the *mlechchabhāṣā* (म्लेच्छभाषा) or barbarous tongues (*Cuttack Gazetteer*, p. 18). They have been identified with the *Surai* of Pliny and the *Savarai* of Ptolemy. One of the earliest inscriptions to mention them are *Udayēndiram* plates of 21st year of the reign of the Pallava king Nandivarman Pallavamalla

1. If we now consider Bastar in the fifth century A.D., we find that this time, it was a political relations which functioned from within as relations of production. To grasp this fully it is essential to understand that it was not these forms of division of labour which resulted in political relations functioning both as relations of production and as super structures.

(9th A.D.) who is said to have defeated the Shavara king Udayana (SII, Vol. I, p. 365). The Harshacharita of Bānabhaṭṭa and the Gauḍavahō of Vākpatirāja (Banerji, Ibid.) also speak of the Shavaras.

Literary¹ and epigraphic references suggest that the Nalas sprang from the Shavara tribe as the ruler of this tract. Thus, the Nalas originated from the Shavaras and this is why they have the totemestic clan in the inscriptions and copper-plates. This shows that in ancient period Austro-Asiatics were the rulers of this region, who were subjugated by the Dravidians in the early mediaeval period. These Dravidians were the Nāgas who ruled Bastar from 760 to 1324 A.D.

By the 7th or 8th century A.D. the whole area of Shavara land or an important part of it was called Uḍḍiyana comprising Sambalpur tahsil of erstwhile Kanker state. It was inhabited by another two tribes - Nāgas and Uḍḍas (OHRJ, Vol. VII, No. 1, pp. 12-13). From Sambhala comes the name Śambhalpur which originated from the Austro-Asiatic family.

Kathāsaritsāgara acquaints us with the manner of life led by Shavaras. Shavara men put on tiger skins and decked their bodies with feathers of peacock. Women were also clad in peacock-feathers and wore necklace of strings of the *gunja* fruits. The songs composed by Sharvapāda show that the Shavaras dwelt far away from human habitation; they were dressed in peacock feathers and adorned with *gunja* fruits and ear-rings. Drinking of wine made the Shavara forget his female partner, and therefore the Shavarī had to search her husband and bring him back home. The Shavaras lived on hunting and went to distant places in search of quarry. The Shavarī experienced great difficulties in finding out her husband (Baudha jana O Doha and Charya git Padmavali, Pada No. 28). Some songs throw light on their domestic life. The Bōdhi-sattva dāna Kalpalatā (ed. Ray, p. 707) further informs us that they sacrificed human beings and sometimes even their own children to their goddess Durgā. Ball (1880) could observe

1. In the 'Rāmābhyudayan' of Sāluva Narsimha we have a reference of Shabara-kings: निगृह्यश्वराग्रण्यमग्रहीष्टतदास्पदम्. Rājñātha Dirdama in his Mahakavya 'Sāluvābhyu'ayan' (Canto 6) mentions the Shabara-ruler: नृपतिरवलोकितवाम् छवरं तृणीकृतजगत्त्रयं बलात्.

the same practice while he visited Bastar.

The Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa also throws light on the life of Shavaras. It mentions *Parna-Shavaras*. Parna Shavaras were those who wore leaves. A girdle of leaves was the ordinary clothing of most of the aboriginal tribes. The literary evidence bearing upon the non-Aryan character of the original people of Bastar is supported by linguistic considerations. The Nāṭyashāstra (17:49-50) by Bharata Muni shows that a corrupt form of Māgadhī speech was adopted by the Oḍras as well as by their close neighbours—the Shavaras. It states that when the barbarians including the Oḍras and Shavaras have to be represented on the stage, they should be made to speak *viḥāshā*.

Thus Puranic themes were mixed with themes from tribal legends of history and from the common places of daily life in ancient Bastar. These tribal performances were close to the little traditional pole of cultural performances, but not completely cut off from great traditional influences.

EARLY MEDIAEVAL PERIOD (760—1324 A.D.)

(The Nāga Theory of Primitive History)

INTRODUCTION

I have chosen for my study the region which today is called Bastar and which is well-known for its tribal population. This Chapter consists of the primitive man's Journey from 760 to 1324 A.D. The first Chapter of the present work is based on my books, published in 1976 (Discovery of Lankā) and in 1978 (Ancient Bastar).

The chapters in this book probe into the social, economic and political life of a people who are now called the "aboriginals."

The reader will easily perceive that all the theoretical routes and detours we have taken, closely relate to a challengeable notion of cultural rationality. Here, in Bastar, there was a classless society which had but recently closed the neolithic door behind it and has been left to the care of anthropologists and other "men of science."

We hope that the reader will find a theoretical approach in this chapter which revolves continuously round Anthropology and History, and that we have never accepted anything as truth

which has not first been questioned and proved to be correct.

In the following pages I have summarized the content given in Hindi (Ādivāsī Sāmāntavāda) for the wide circulation of our "*Nāga Theory of Primitive History*."

Gōṇḍ Origins: Nāga Myths and Historical Reality

The subject of Nāgas in historical Anthropology is of observing interest from different points of view. The numerous repeated references to them in literature and epigraphy make one think that the Nāga—problem is related with the problem of the origin of Gōṇḍ¹ in India. An attempt is made here to bring together in chronological order the available references to the Nāga tribe in M.P. and also prove that the Gōṇḍ are the direct descendants of the ancient Nāgas.

The Sanskrit word 'Nāga' is actually derived from the word 'naga' (mountain). Since all the Dravidian tribes trace their origin from mountains, it may probably be presumed that those who lived in such places came to be called 'Nāgas.'

Nāga tribes were not associations of people based on blood relationship. In most cases they were administrative—economic and military—political organisations, formed by the association of different families and not infrequently including groups that had originally spoken another language and had gradually assimilated Nāga. As a rule, the names of the tribes are of later origin and are linked with the personal names of their first chieftains or the names given them by their neighbours. On the contrary, the ethnonym 'Nāga' is of ancient purely Sanskritic origin and in this respect does not differ from the self-appellations of other Dravidian peoples and tribes, with

1. Chakraberti (1948: 128-9) had proposed an absurd hypothesis regarding the origin of the Gond. According to him "Gonds are Mon-Khmer people. They are mixed with the Australoids in Mekong Valley. They brought with them neoliths of shouldered and tanged axes and adzes of Malayanian and Burma areas.....Gandaki river has been named after Gond settlements. Entire Bengal was called Gour desh. Chandela (Gonds) ruled in Central India.....It is very likely that the fire-ordial—*agni parikshā* of Sita in Rāmāyana (6.11) is based on this tribal custom.....It is likely that Kanyā Kumārī temple owes also origin to them."

many of which it is connected etymologically. Thus, this, Nāga ethnonym is identical with the self-appellations of some other Dravidian peoples of the same stock: the Kōya, the Kōṇḍa the Mārīā, the Gōṇḍ, which all mean "mountain-people," "mountaineers" (cf. The Tamil Kō "mountain.") Thus, the Sanskrit word 'Nāga' means the same, as the Tamil word 'Kōya' or Gōṇḍ.'

During the historical migration of the forebears of the Modern Dravidians into India, the separation of the ancestors of Gōṇḍ (Nagas) took place in the 2000 B.C. (Andronov: 1980: 17-8). These Nāgas migrated from the Indus Valley were the totemistic people with the 'serpent' as their totem. Thus, the Nāgas can be considered to be a tribe associated with the serpent, at times tracing their descent from it, offering worship to it, bearing it on their crest and banners etc. This tribe was individualised by the Gōṇḍ' name in later mediaeval period, by a separate Dravidian dialect, by a supreme chief and by the possession of the mythical territory, known as 'pātāl which it occupied and defended as its own (Gōṇḍwānā in mediaeval period) and was subjugated by the Muslim invaders. It also possessed a common religious faith of Shaiva-Shākta-nature and serpent-cult.

When the Nāgas entered the Central India, clans and tribes multiplied and became differentiated through migrations. Constant segmentation and war was a powerful obstacle in the progress of the savage and barbarous tribes like the Nāgas.

Soon after their migration in India, the Nāgas became a powerful and widespread people of more than usual importance, who appear to have been in occupation of different parts of India from 2000 B.C. It is not known by what name they were known before they came to be called 'Nāgas' in Sanskrit. The Dravidian equivalent for the word 'Nāga' is 'Kōyā' or 'Gōṇḍ'. It is possible that the mountainous country 'Gōṇḍwānā' was then stronghold and continued to retain its name 'Gōṇḍ' in modern times also.

It also suggests that there were some Gōṇḍ societies who reached the 'civilised' stage, and instead of calling themselves by their Dravidian name, they called themselves Nāgas, which was more prestigious. But this type of the civilization stage of the Nāgas was at the price of the dissolution and disappearance of

their own clan and tribal organisation. The Nāga civilization in Madhya Pradesh first came in Padmāvati (Gwālior) and then entered into Chhakraḷa (Bastar) state and was based on the control of the territory and the Gōḡ people living on this territory; they were no longer organised solely into kinship groups but into territorial ones. The Nāgas founded (760-1324) a political society or state comprising their own kinsmen and showed the necessity of transforming these former kinship groups into territorial groups.

The paramount king of the Chhakraḷa-tribes was not a king so much as a war-chief provisionally elected. The local situations here caused military democracies. All the members of the Gōḡ Tribe were personally free, and they were bound to defend each other's freedom; they enjoyed equality in privileges and in personal rights, the Mājhī (Parganā-headman) and Sirahā (medicine-man) claiming no superiority. Liberty, equality and fraternity, though never formulated were cardinal principles of the then tribes.

The appearance of Chhakraḷa-state demanded a fundamental change; it was the necessary result of the disintegration of the Gōḡ-society based upon bands as a consequence of the advent and development of private ownership of lands and the unequal accumulation of private wealth, along with the consolidation of the *monogamous* family. This means that a section of the tribal people were educated to civilization working on itself.

The Chhindaka Nāgas and their descendants Mājhī Gōḡs in Bastar may be described as a system of social organisation with common territory, a tradition of common descent, common language, common culture and a common equivalent name (with social stratification) all these forming the basis of the joining of smaller groups

It should be kept in mind that real aristocracies and hereditary chiefdoms existed among the primitive tribes of Bastar. It should also be borne in mind that the 'Nāgas' and 'Gōḡs' afterwards became proper states where the ruling class merged with the state and where tribal organisation had not yet disappeared.

These centralised Nāgas or Gōḡs were, in the evolutionary sense, the last stage of the tribalism, i.e. state-stage, which reinforced the centralisation and thus constituted a political

structure and transformed social inequality of rank into class privileges. Under the concept of state-economics, we have the shifting cultivators or burn-farmers of Abūjhmāṛ even today who roam the dry mountain.

A considerable portion of each local community's products was regularly set apart and despatched to the paramount Nāga king, providing him with material sources of his livelihood a prop for his rank and the wherewithal to support his relatives, friends, followers, etc. Thanks to the great mass of accumulated products, controlled by him and his ability, to mobilise a "meryā" (man for sacrifice) among the commoners, the king was the only person who could bring together sufficient people for great communal enterprises of collective interest: Wars, religious ceremonies, public works such as temples, all undertaking beyond the capacity of any one local community of Māṛiā or Halbā.

In the political and ideological scheme the power of the king and high dignitaries was justified by their being direct descendants of the founding ancestor—Chhindaka—of the Chiefdom. As a divine being, the king's person was sacred and had to be protected from numerous prohibitions and taboos. Supreme diety 'Māṇikyadēvi' or 'Vindhyavāsini' or 'Dantēswari' was the object of intense worship; ceremonies mobilised all local communities and integrated them into a single ideological community dominated by the high priest and the king, who alone had access to supernatural powers ensuring material prosperity, victory in war, etc. To punish those who infringed his decisions or offended him, the king devised "Knife-management" (Churikā-Prabandha) by appointing the slayer as an officer (rudhīrōdgārī).

Thus the relationship between the Nāga Kings and their Gōṇḍ Kinsmen were the relations of production, a *relation between a feudal*, who did not work, and who enjoyed a monopoly of political, ideological and religious power, and who had at his disposal the products and material resources from direct producers and the masses or the commonmen were exploited, who lived in local communities. Merely it is important to note and explain that feudals and commoners were distant relatives and treated each other as such. It is equally important that their kinship relations were *partrilineal*.

in form. What was decisive, however, was the fact that the mode of production and the interrelated and ideological structures were of quite different order from those found among lineal societies.

Thus it is evident that the ancestors of the Gōṇḍḍ formed a state-society composed of a multitude of local tribes subject to a ruling Nāga tribe, kings and feudals of whom composed both the state and dominant class. This state existed only through the assistance of the dominated tribe, i.e. the Gōṇḍḍ.

Mythical Charters

An important Nāga dynasty known as the 'Chhindaka Nāgas' of Chakrakōṭa Maṇḍala, which was the old name of ex-Bastar state, became powerful and played a significant role in the history of Mādhyā Pradesh during 760 to 1324 A.D. Thirty-one inscriptions belonging to this ruling family have been discovered in Bastar region. In these records, the Nāga rulers describe themselves as the 'lord of Bhōgavatī', the best of the cities. Bhōgavatī was the mythical capital of the Nāgas in the sub-terranean world (Rasātala). The Chhindaka Nāgas also claimed to be of 'Kāshyapagōtra.' Their royal insignia consisted of a tiger with a cub and their banner was marked by the representation of a cobra.

Thus, the Chhindaka-Nāga State was incarnated in the person of a sovereign belonging to one of the lineages able to justify their supremacy by the mythical charters, legends and the capacity to contact supernatural beings, who looked after the well-being of the nation. In Chhindaka Nāga period a specialised priesthood existed. In later period, this was pretty widespread. The incarnation of the state in the person of a sovereign is also found in the later king Pravīra Chandra; Bhanjadeva who called himself to be "the Ādivāsī God." Thus, in Bastar it was often hardly possible to separate, even in thought, political office from ritual or religious office. Thus, in Nāga inscriptions, the king is said to be the executive head, the legislator, the supreme judge, the commander-in-chief of the army, the chief priest or supreme ritual head and even perhaps the principal capitalist of the whole community (Vide 2.10.1). But it is erroneous to think of him as combining in himself

a number of separate and distinct offices. There was a single office, that of the king, and its various duties and activities, and its rights prerogatives and privileges, made up a single unified whole.

Perhaps this fusion of multiple functions and powers in the person of a single man only appear, to western eyes, as a sign of 'despotic' power which knew no other law than that of the sovereign's arbitrary will.

Chakrakōṭa—state, therefore, on the whole, when embodied in a sovereign noble descent, dominated the peasants, and was organised in tribal communities where kinship relations still played an essential role. The population owed the Chakrakōṭa—state part of its labour and production. Surplus was destined partly for consumption by the ruling class (a consumption which took markedly sumptuary forms) and partly for enterprises of collective interest, real or imaginary, "Meriyā" (human sacrifice) existed but played only secondary role in production (2.12.6).

These few examples are sufficient to reveal the diversity and complexity inherent in the development of inequality within primitive societies of Bastar. These (latter), we repeat, were as diverse as any class society. A variety of economic relations: [the Halbā-cultivated area, the land grants (2.9.1)] existed in those times. To call them all examples of "primitive communism" is to disregard essential differences by giving them the same label.

The Gōṇḍs in Bastar

The Gōṇḍs, the descendants of Nāgas, are a numerous people inhabiting a wide area of Middle India. According to the Census of 1941, there were three and one-fourth Million Gōṇḍs in India. To this should be added 400,000 Gōṇḍs in Bastar who were mentioned as separate tribes (i.e. Dorlā, Daṇḍamī, Mārīā, Abūjhmārīā, Muriā and Rajgōṇḍ) in the Census. The highest concentration (two and one-half million) was in the central provinces, most of which today administratively falls under Madhya Pradesh. Another 300,000 Gōṇḍs should be added to this number, as the old administrative area of Madhya Bhārat is now a part of Madhya Pradesh.

About 300,000 Gonds are also found in Orissā, and fairly significant numbers of Gonds are located in the old Hyderābād State (140,000), now part of Āndhra Pradesh; and in the old United Provinces (125,000) now Uttar Pradesh.

Thus, in round numbers, we can say that there are about six million Gonds in India today, of whom four million live in Madhya Pradesh. Madhya Pradesh roughly corresponds to the ancient Nāga kingdoms (I.12) and the latter kingdom of Gondwānā. At least half of the Gonds speak aboriginal language of their ancestors, which is Dravidian in affiliation and is classified under "Gondwānā group."

The present study of Nāgas and their descendants concerns one of the most isolated segments of the ancient tribe, Chhindaka Nāgas of Bastar. Bastar is the southernmost district of Madhya Pradesh, and the largest district in the country. It is a geographical and political unit isolated from the main lines of communication in Central India.

The district borders on Andhra in the south and Telugu is used as a bazar language in southern Bastar towns even today, but that was an official language in the Chhindaka-Nāga-period. In the north there is a gradual influx of Chhattīsgarhī-Hindī-speakers. Throughout most of the district Halhī is used in bazars and as a lingua-franca between speakers of different mother-tongues. Indrāwatī river still forms a rough boundary between the north and the south, as it used to be in the Nāga-period.

The district is populated by numerous ethnic groups, most of which are enumerated as "tribal." Shukla (1985) gives a good summary of the ethno-linguistic units of Bastar.

Among all the tribes of Bastar the Hill Mārjā or the Abujhmārjā are classified as "primitive tribe" and they still retain the economy of their Nāga-ancestors. The present Hill Mārjā Gond population is 1500 persons. The language, material culture and social organisation all belong to an original ensemble of tribes now known under the name of 'Mārjā' i.e. mountain-dwellers. They are the real Nāgas of our present study. The Gonds were another class of aborigines who inhabited Bastar during the Nāga period (EI.9: 311-16). The Bonai plate (JBORS, pati VI. 239) refers to the Tunga ruler. Vinītātunga as astādasa gondamadhipati (अष्टादश गण्डमाधिपति) i.e. the

lord of the 18 tribes known as Gonds.

Again, the charter of Sulki ruler Kulastambadeva (ibid. 2 : 401) addressed him as "Sakala—Gonḍa Mahādhinātha" i.e. the lord of the Gonds. The terms mentioned in these grants suggest the existence of Gonds as an important element during our period. "Gondwāna, the seat of the Gond tribes, by reason of its dense forests and extended hills, was for many ages an isolated tract in Central India, little affected by the ethical and social changes which, through the instrumentality first of Āryan invaders, and afterwards, in a much later period, of Semitic or Mahomedan conquerors, were spreading over most other parts of India. Although there is ground for the belief that the Gonds were an independent, self-ruling people long before the time when their history commenced, yet not much is known respecting them until the sixteenth century." Sherring 1879, 134). "It was then that Samgrāma Shāh, the forty-eighth Rajah of the Gond line of Garha, Mandla, issuing from the Mandla highlands, extended his dominion over fifty-two *garhs*, or districts comprising the country now known as Bhopal, Saugor, and Damoh on the Vindhyan plateau; Hoshangabad, Narsinghpur and Jabalpur in the Nerbada valley; and Mandla and Seoni in the Satpura highlands." The Gonds date the commencement of their sovereignty over Garh Mandla from the year 358 A.D. to eighteen century A.D. At various periods there have been four Gond Kingdoms in Gondwānā, namely those of Garha—Mandla, Kherla, Deogarh, and Chanda. The district of Nagpur was in Deogarh, when the country was ruled by Bakht Buland.

A Dia Chronic Study of Socio-political Process among the Chhindaka Nāgas of Bastar

I propose to give here a short account of the Chhindaka Nāga dynasty of Bastar, for which a strenuous search was made by me after Paṇḍā Baijnāth and R.B. Hira Lal (1916), extending north to south from almost the sources of Mahānadi to the banks of Godāvari, which at places forms the boundary between it and Andhra Pradesh. It comprises an area of 1400 square miles mostly covered with primeval jungle, described in the Imperial Gazetteer (1931) as one of the most untrodden regions of the country, where in deep recesses of the wild forest is the

home of the Goṇḍ races, one of the Dravidian peoples, the descendants of Chhindaka Nāgas, a people who still erect rude stone monuments and use stone implements ignorantly of the procession of the centuries and the advance of civilization across their borders. Scattered in this forest were discovered more than thirtyone inscriptions in Telugu and Nāgarī characters revealing the existence of Nāga race, who worshipped the Āryan and Aboriginal Gods and were less advanced in points of civilization than other well known dynasties ruling in Central India; rather they were powerful in the period between 760 to 1324 A.D.

They claim that they belonged to the 'Kāshyapa götra' and 'Chhindaka family, (EI IX.181, X.37). 'Chhindaka' is Sanskrit equivalent of the Kannada word 'Sind'. The land of the 'Sindas', called 'Sindawāḍi' in Karnātaka comprised parts of northern Mysore, Bellary, Dharwar, and Bijapur and is mentioned in a record of A.D. 750. The Sinda families ruled from Bēgalkoṭa and Yēlburga in Bījāpur and Hollavūr and Belagutti in Karnātaka. There is no doubt that the family name 'Chhindaka' preferred by the Nāgavanshīs of Bastar, is the same as 'Sinda,' although the Sindas fabricated a mythology to explain their family name as derived from the name of the river 'Sindhu'. The ancient city Padmāvati in Gwālior District (Madhya Pradesh) is situated on the 'Sindhu' river and has been immortalised by Bhavabhūti in his *Mālātīmādhava* (ASR, 1915-16, p. 101). The Purāṇas mention nine Nāga kings ruling at Padmāvati. Some coins bearing the name of Bhavanāga have been discovered at Padam Pawāyā, the ancient Padmāvati near Narwar (JNSI.5: 21). If this Bhavanāga was the maternal grandfather of Rudrasēna I, whose grandson was a contemporary of Chandragupta II (380-414), it may, therefore, be assumed that before the rise of the Guptas to power, Nāgas were ruling in Central India on the bank of Sindhu (now called Kālīsind). After the Gupta had come to power, they migrated from this area to Bastar and Karnātaka and ascribed the name of the river to their family name. This also relates their historicity to the migration of Dravidians from Indus river area in 2000 B.C.

The fabricated genealogy of the Sindas sometimes says that the eponymous progenitor of the dynasty was a 'long-armed' Sinda who was the human son of a snake king name Dharaṇīndra

and that he was born at Ahichhatra near the Sindhu and was reared by a tiger. This is recorded in an inscription from Bāgalakota Tāluka of Bijāpur district. Parenthetically I may note here that the name of 'Dharaṇīndra' is found in the vulgar form of 'Dhāren' with a similar story in the Jabalpur district of Madhya Pradesh in connection with the descent of another royal family tracing its origin from a snake. We find that the Bāgalkoṭa branch of the Nāgavanshīs owned the tiger crest and 'Phaṇikēṭana' or banner of hooded serpents. This proves that next to Padmāvati, the Sindhu dweller Nāgas during their migration to south, stayed for some time in the Jabalpur region.

The same mythical Sinda is also described as the son of the god Shiva from the river goddess Sindhu and as brought up by the snake king with tigress milk. We have no such explanations of the family name in the inscriptions of the Chhindakas; but it is quite significant that like them, the Sindas also claimed the Nāga lineage, the snake-banner, and the hereditary title 'lord of Bhāgāvati, the best of cities'. Thus there can be no doubt that the dynasty was not connected with the Sinda's family of the Karnāṭaka. The 'tiger-crest' was common to all branches of 'Sindakula'; while the Bagadage branch had simply the tiger-crest and 'phaṇikēṭana' or banner of hooded serpents, the Chakrakoṭa branch had a tiger with a calf or child (savatsa). Thus they were depicting probably the story of their origin in a cleaner way. The Bastar Sindas were subdivided into two houses, the minor having the bow and tiger-crest and the banner of lotus flower and plantain-leaf (EI, X.181). One point of striking contrast between the Sindas of Karnāṭaka and those of Bastar is that latter, to judge from their titles "Paramamaheshwara Parama Bhaṭṭāraka Mahārāja" were independent monarchs without recognising the overlordship of any emperor.

A large number of inscriptions of the Nāgavanshī kings have come to light. These inscriptions and other literary sources give us the names of at the least fourteen Nāgavanshī kings, who ruled between 760 and 1324 A.D. It is therefore, clear that the records of the many kings, if they left any, are yet to be discovered. In a period of 565 years we might expect about twentytwo kings. We cannot, at present, arrange them in a genealogical table, as we do not know the relationship which they bore to each other except four cases. We know their dates.

from the inscription from which we can easily judge where the gaps lie.

Sufficient evidence is available to show that there was a Nāga population in Bastar before the successive inscriptional records. The Cūṭus or Nāgas were feudatory under the Sātavāhanas, and they declared their independence on the latter's fall. It is generally believed that the Sātavāhanas were Brāhmaṇs with Nāga blood (Raychauduri: 280). Latter Mahārāja Tiwaradēva of Shripur in Kōsala appears to have defeated a Nāga tribe (Gupta Inscriptions, p. 298). We get other evidences which prove the existence of Nāga rule in this region long before the invasion of Cholas. The Orissa State Museum Plates (OHRJ XII) of Sōmavanshī King Yayāti I reveals that the predecessors of Janamejaya-I deemed it a great pleasure to lend their help and support to the Nāgas. The predecessors of Janamejaya, referred to in this inscription, were very likely the two successors of Shivagupta Bālārjuna who are known to us by their official names of Mahābhavagupta and Mahāshvagupta. In the Mahākosala Society Plates (EI, XXII.135), Mahābhavagupta assumed the title of "Trikingādhpati" for the first time in the history of the Sōmavanshīs which indicates that he conquered the 'Trikinga' country corresponding to the hilly region of modern Kālāhandī and Korāpuṭ districts. 'Trikinga' was adjacent to Chakrakōṭ Maṇḍala. It is likely that Mahābhavagupta and Mahāshvagupta might have helped the Nāgas in carving out a kingdom in Chakrakōṭa. From that time the Nāgas ruled over the Chakrakōṭa as feudals of Sōmavanshīs. In the second half of the ninth Century A.D., the Nāgas were invaded by the Eastern Chālukya king Vijayāditya-III (848-892) who claimed to have burnt the city of Chakrakōṭa and captured the elephants of king of the Kōsala (Ganguly 1965: 135-36) who was apparently the Sōmavanshī king Janamejaya-I (850-885). This indicates that Sōmavanshīs were rendering help to the Nāgas when the latter were threatened by external invasions. Thus it must be recognised that there was a large Nāga element in the population of Bastar since the beginning of the history.

An attempt is made here to bring together in Chronological order the available references to the Nāga rulers of Bastar.

Vallabharāja (925-980): The earliest record of the Chhindaka

Nāgas of Chakrakōṭa is the Upēta—Inscription (unpublished) from Upēta. The name of the king referred to in this inscription is Vallabharāja. The inscription is dated 925 A.D. This inscription seems to refer a tax-farming contract relating Upēta the conditions to be observed by the contractor and his assistants.

Shankhapāla (980-1012): Another important reference of the Nāgas of Chakrakōṭa is found in the historical Kāvya "Navasāhasānkacharita" (Keith 151) written by Padmagupta alias Parimala, the court-poet of Sindhurāja Navasāhasanka of Mālwa, who flourished about A.D. 1000. The Kāvya narrates how a king of the Nāga dynasty sought help from Sindhurāja, the Paramāra king of Mālwa, against a neighbouring demon king named Vajrānkush. Sindhurāja along with the Vidyādhara reached the country of the demons and killed the demon king, in battle. Thereafter, the grateful Nāga king gave his daughter Shashiprabhā in marriage to Sindhurāja. Scholars like Mirashi (CII, IV. Introduction) and Ganguly (ibid. 98-99) believe that the outline of the story narrated in the Kāvya is based on historical facts. It has been suggested that the Nāga king of the Kāvya was a chief of the Nāga dynasty ruling over Chakrakōṭa and the demon king was a Chief of the non-Aryan Māna¹ tribe of Vajra identified with modern Wairāgarh in the Chāndā district of Mahārāshtra. This literary evidence indicates that the Nāgas of Chakrakōṭa by 1000 A.D. had risen to eminence so as to establish alliance with the powerful Paramāra king of Mālwa.

Nṛpatibhūṣaṇa (1012-1050): The Errākōṭa Inscription of this branch of Nāgas which is a fragmentary stone inscription in Telugu probably belongs to him (Hira Lal 1916: 166). It is dated Shaka 945 (1023 A.D.) and refers itself to a Nāgavanshi king, part of whose name is, however, lost. From the remaining portion of his name which read "tibhūṣaṇa" it may be taken that his name was Nṛpatibhūṣaṇa or Kshitibhūṣaṇa from the analogy of the name Rājabhūṣaṇa, the surname of a later

1. Begbie (1909.36) is of the opinion that the Māna Kings of Wairāgarh were also the Nāgavanshi Kings. .

member of the dynasty, Someshwara-I. It was probably during his reign that the Chola emperor, Rājendra, the son and successor of Rājarāja the great, over-ran the country in the course of his 'digvijaya' of the northern quarter in demonstration of his strength and power. The Tamil prashasti of the Tirukkalar plates contains following details about the invasion - "He (Rājendra) seized Shakkarakōṭṭam whose warriors were brave; Madurai-Maṇḍalam destroyed in a trice; the prosperous city of Nāmanai-Konam with its dense groves, Panchapalli whose warriors (bore) cruel blows; Māsunidesha with its green fields (SII, III, Pt. IV, p. 468)". It appears that 'Shakkarkōṭṭam,' 'Madurai-Maṇḍalam' and 'Panchapalli' were difficult places in the Māsunidesha which were conquered one after another before the conquest of the whole area was completed. 'Māsunidesha' literally means "country of snakes", and this points to the fact that the Nāga dynasty was ruling over the area during the time of its conquest by Rājendra Chola. It appears that the Chola invader was helped by a member of another rival branch of the Nāga family in his conquest of the region; as a reward for which he was himself made the ruler of the conquered country. This is borne out by the Rājapur copper plates (1065 A.D.) of a Madhurāntakadeva who claims to belong to the Nāgavamsha and calls himself the ruler of 'Bhramara Maṇḍala, identified with Chakrakōṭa (EI, IX.174-81). The name 'Madhurāntaka' means the conquerer of Madurai—Maṇḍalam, the ruler possibly took that name to commemorate his conquest of Madurai—Maṇḍalam alongwith Rājendra Gangeikōṇḍa in 1022-23 A.D.

Dhārāvarsha Deva (1050-62): The next ruler we come across in the main Nāga line of Chakrakōṭa was Mahārāja Jagadēkabhūshaṇa Dhārāvarsha. Some inscriptions referring to him are available. Two of them are dated Shaka 983 Sharvarin (1060 A.D.) and a third is dated Shaka 984 (1061-62 A.), Hiralal 231, 234, and 243) The Bāsūr Inscription which bears a date in A.D. 1060, refers to the reign of a Chhindaka-Nāga king named Dhārāvarsha alias Jagadēkabhūshaṇa. It is stated that his feudatory Mahāmaṇḍaleshwara Chandrāditya Mahārāja, who belonged to the Telugu—Choḍa family and was the lord of Ammagrāma, excavated a tank called 'Chandrāditya-

samudra' at the capital Bārasūru and constructed a Shiva temple on its bank and called it 'Chandrādityēshwara, both after himself. Chandrāditya is further said to have purchased a village from his overlord and dedicated it in favour of the deity installed in the temple. King Dhārāvarsha Jagadēkabhūshana is stated to have been present when this transaction was made. Now, the above fact appears to indicate that the feudatory Chief Chandrāditya had his quarters at Ammagrāma, which his Chhindaka—Nāga overlord ruled from the city of Bārasūru.

The Telugu—Choḍa feudatory claims descent from the family of Cola Karikāla who held sway over the Kavvāiri (Kāvērī) and was the lord of Oraiyūru (Uraiyūr) the best of cities. The Chieftan had the lion for his crest. It is not clear how Telugu Chola Chieftan who was ruling over the Cuddapah region went so far north as Bārasūru where he made a grant. It is possible as Hira Lal suggest, that when Kullōtunga I in his youth attacked Bastar, Chandrāditya could have followed him in his campaign and settled down in the newly conquered country as a subordinate of Dhārāvarsha. An inscription of Shaka 984 (1061 A.D.) from Dantewārā records that a king purchased a village from a cultivator and presented it to God Bhairava to meet the expenses of offerings to him (Hira Lal 1916: 165). Unfortunately some lines of the record are effaced and the king's name cannot be read. But from the date of the inscription it may be presumed that the ruler referred to in it was Dhārāvarsha himself.

King Dhārāvarsha does not appear to have survived long after A.D. 1062 as the Chhindaka-Nāga throne was occupied by another member of the family, named Madhurāntaka, sometime before fifth of October 1065, the date of the latter's Rājapur Plates.

The names of these two rivals of the same family for the Chhindaka-Nāga kingdom of Bastar may suggest that Somēshwara was supported by the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa, while Madhurāntaka received help from the Choḷa. It is interesting to note in this connection that a Choḷa Inscription of A.D. 1074 refers to certain victories achieved by Kullōlunga-I at an earlier date in Vayirāgrām (Wairāgarh of Chanda) and Shakkar Koṭṭam (Chakrakōṭa).

The Bhanjas of Khinjali comprising parts of modern Ganjam nad Baudh-Khandamals districts were in conflict with Chhindaka Nāgas of Chakrakōṭa. The Bhanja king Yashōbhanja defeated and very likely killed Jagadekabuūshaṇa in 1060 A.D. In his Āntarigām Plates Yashōbhanja assumes the proud title of "Jagadēkamalla Vijayī".

We have an inscription of the widow of Dhārāvarsha, Guṇḍa Mahādevī, who is recorded to have made two grants one of the village Nārāyanapur to the "glorious god" Nārāyaṇa, and the other of some land to the god 'Lokeswara' (EI, IX.316). It should be noted in this connection that Guṇḍa Mahādevī though a Shaiva by faith was not only tolerant of other creeds, but actively helped them to flourish. The epigraph does not afford any information of the reign of Dhārāvarshadeva. It is, however, stated that Guṇḍa Mahādevī was a noble lady of royal birth, which would inevitably suggest Dhārāvarsha was matrimonially connected with a prominent ruling family of the days.

Madhurāntaka Deva (1062-1069): We have said above that there was a Minor 'Sinda House' in the Chakrakōṭa-Manḍala. The only king of that line who is known to us is Madhurāntaka Deva, the contemporary of the famous Chhind monarch Someshwara Deva-I. The earliest date assigned to him is in 1065 A.D. (EI, X.26).

Madhurāntaka Deva seems to be the same person whom Someshwara-I claims to have killed (EI, X.26). It appears that Madhurāntaka, not being satisfied with his own territory, usurped the throne of his relatives, taking the opportunity of Dhārāvarsha Deva's death which must have occurred about 1062 A.D., as already shown above. But Madhurāntaka soon met a powerful rival in Someshwara-I, who having killed the usurper regained his hereditary kingdom. It is perhaps for this reason that Someshwara is described as having "acquired his kingdom by the force of his own arms" (EI, X.37).

The Grant of Madhurāntaka mentions the names of three princes, namely Kumār Kanharadeva, Kumār Nāyaka, and Kumār Tungarāja. It also mentions his queen Nāgala Mahādevī (EI, IX.181). We do not have anything about these princes in later records. It seems that their territories were

absorbed by the increasing kingdom of the major Sinda's Chakrakōṭa under Sōmeshwara-I, who was thus responsible for uniting both the Chinda States under one banner.

The Rājapura Copper Plate Inscription of Madhurāntaka Deva bearing the date A.D. 1065, records the grant of the village of Rājapura (findspot of the record, 22 miles north-west of Jagadapur) in the Bhramarakōṭya (Bhramarakōṭṭa) Maṇḍala, probably as a compensation for supplying victims for human sacrifices. The Bhramarakōṭṭamaṇḍala was identical with Chakrakōṭṭamaṇḍala and this name persisted upto 1-68 A.D., as we find it mentioned in the inscription of the later Ganga ruler Kapiṇendra (1435-68) who at first led an expedition against the ruler of Bhramarakōṭa, and seized it. (G. Rama Das: *Journal of the Bihar Research Society*, Vol. xxxi, p. 174). Madhurāntaka was a Shaiva and had the banner bearing the representation of a lotus and a plantain-leaf on the back of Airāvata instead of the snake-banner used by other members of the family.

Rajapura Copper Plate is a unique record which deserves notice at some length. It records the grant of Rājapura village to one 'Mēḍipōṭa' or a 'Chhurikāra Mēḍipōṭa' and his descendants together with 70 'Gadyanaka' coins. The purpose of the grant is described as follows:—"No body enters the 'Chhuri—prabandha' at the village sacrifice. There is no place for the preceptor of the local 'yoginis'. For this purpose, this village is taken for the benefit of all creatures for showing kindness to them and for performing virtue." This statement appears to be something like an agreement made by the donee, who gives the reasons for accepting the grant for a purpose, which is clothed in an obscure ritual language. I take it to be a compensation for supplying a victim for human sacrifice. In editing this inscription in the *Epigraphia Indica* (IX.181), Hira Lal had shown how he arrived at this conclusion. It must be remembered that in that part of this country human sacrifices were rampant even a hundred years ago; no body, indeed, can say that cases of that nature do not occur even now. A careful perusal of Police reports would show that even in these times belief in the efficacy of human sacrifices has not disappeared. In Bastar there is a shrine of Dantēswarī to whom human sacrifices were offered since she had been.

installed there. The Bhonsalās, when they became the overlords of that State, were constrained to keep a guard at the temple in order to prevent human sacrifices.

When the British took over these wild territories, they had to appoint an Officer to repress that practice. Col. Mac Pherson of the Madras Army, who was appointed to this Office wrote in 1852 as follows: "In the worship of the Earth goddess the rite is human sacrifice. It is celebrated as a public oblation both at social festivals held periodically and when occasions demand extraordinary propitiations; such as the occurrence of a extraordinary number of deaths by disease or by tigers or or so many die in child-birth or should the flocks or herds suffer largely from disease or from wild beasts or should greater crops threaten to fail or the occurrence of any marked calamity to the families of the tribal chiefs." Madhurāntaka's action in giving a grant for the supply of victims appears to have been as much prompted for the general welfare of the people as his own society, because he appears to have been a usurper, as we find him later on ousted by Sōmeshwara Deva, the rightful heir.

Sō neshwara Deva-I (1069-1111): Someshwara-I was the son of Dhārāvarsha and Guṇḍa Mahādevī (EI, 9.316). We do not know the year of his coronation. He, however, seems to have come to throne in about 1065 A.D., for the earliest date we have for him is 1069. He is known from several records.

Sōmeshwara Deva-I had two wives—Shāsanamahādevī and Dhāraṇa Mahādevī (Hira Lal 1916: 25), of whom the latter appears as donor in the inscriptions (ibid. 260, 261). Māsaka Devī was probably his younger sister.

The Nārāyanapāla stone inscription of Guṇḍa Mahādevī states that Dhārāvarsha's son Sōmeshwara possessed of two titles, namely 'Rāyabhūṣaṇa' and 'Pratiganḍabhairava'.

Sōmeshwara was far the greatest monarch of the dynasty. The Kurushapāla lithic record (EI, 10:25) refers to his certain contemporary kings. Most of these kings are mentioned by the names of their countries or capitals, some of them being Uḍra, Lānjī, Ratnapur, Lemnā, Vengī, Bhadrappattana and Vajra. "Owing to the mutilated state of the record" says R.B. Hira Lal, the editor of the inscription, "it is not certain

whether Sōmeshwara claimed to have conquered them, but one implication is plain; viz. that they were his rival" It is, however, stated that having killed the 'powerful king' Madhurāntaka in battle and having but other king's to trouble, he became as it were, a Junior Nārāyaṇa by imitating the latter's action in having killed Madhura and a host of other demons. Madhurāntaka Deva was the king of the Minor Chinda House of Chakrakōṭa. He seems to have occupied the territory of which Sōmeshwara claimed to be the hereditary ruler (El. 9:174).

Sōmeshwara also boasts of having burnt Vengī like the great Arjuna who fired the Khāṇḍava-forest (El. 10: 25). This was at the most a tit for tat, as we find, Chakrakōṭa itself being burnt several times by the kings of the countries on the other side of Godāvārī. It should be noted in this connection that many a southern king raided this some what weak power. The first raid, so far as it is known, appears to have been made by Vijayāditya-III of the Eastern Chālukya line, who ruled between 844 and 888 A.D. He burnt Chakrakōṭa (El. 4: 226). Then the Chola king Rājendra (1011-1033) took Chakrakōṭa which is mentioned as "Shakkara-Koṭṭam", in the record (South Indian Inscriptions (2:108), while one of his successors, namely king Vīra Rājendra-I claims to have crossed the Gōdāvārī, passed through Kalinga, and advanced against Chakrakōṭa (Ibid. 3: 70). Next, the Chola king Kulōttunga, while yet a youth won his first laurels in a battle by storming Chakrakōṭa. This happened prior to 1070 A.D. The fact is mentioned in a Tamil poem 'Kalingaṭṭa Paraṇi and also in same inscriptions (El. 9: 179). Vikramāditya - VI of the Western Chālukya dynasty was the fifth raider, who is said to have conquered Chakrakōṭa as Yuvarāja (Buhler, Vikramāṅkadevacharita 4: 30). This occurred just a few years before 1076 A.D. when Vikrama became king.

Vengī, which Sōmeshwara Chinda burst is the country between Godāvārī and Krishṇā. The inscription mentions the name Vīra Chōḍa (S 11, 1:51), who, as we know from other sources was the viceroy of this country appointed by his father. Like the demon Sambara, Vīrachōḍa was destroyed by him, who (Sōmeshwara) appeared like a Kāma (Pradyumna) of the epics. Vīrachōḍa is known to us as the third son of

Kulōttunga Rajēndra Chola. He (Vīrachōla) was deputed by his father to act as the viceroy of Vengī from 1078-1084 A.D. for the first time and from 1088-1093 for the second time (Shastri, *The Cholas*, 2: 31). Thus, we may confine the activities of Sōmeshwara Deva in Vengī between 1078 and 1093 A.D.

It is not improbable to say that Vīrachōḍa left Vengī after he had been defeated by Sōmeshwara Deva. Then he settled at Kalinga. Some of his inscriptions are traced to this nature. Presumably he was the father-in-law of Anantavarma Chōḍa-gangadēva of the Ganga family. Rajaguru has discussed this aspect in details while editing the Kenduli Copper Plate Inscription of Narsimhadeva-IV in *OHSR*, Vol. v, pp. 49-54.

Sōmeshwara Deva seems to have added another laurel to his fame by burning the forest of the Vajra country (El. 10: 25). Vajra or Vayiragrāma is modern Wairāgarh adjoining Bastar. Bhadrapaṭṭana of the inscription has been identified by scholars with modern Bhaṇḍak in Chāndā district, about seventy-five miles from Wairāgarh. He also claims that he took six lakh and ninety villages of the Kōsala country (El. 10: 15). This Kosala country has been identified with Dakshina Kōsala which extended from the confines of Berar to Orissa and from Amarkaṇṭaka to Chakrakōṭa (El. X.26). But it is impossible that this extensive area should contain as many as six lakh villages. However, there is absolutely nothing to justify the boast that Sōmeshwara ever became king of that territory. It is possible that he might have raided a part of Kōsala and might have held it in his possession until driven out. The inscription of Chindaka Sōmeshwara-I under review also mentions the king of Ratanpura (Capital of the Kalachuris of South Kosala) as one of the antagonists and points to the fact that he came into conflict with the Kalachuris as well. Lemṇā was also a separate kingdom in Kōsala at that time, identified as Lavaṇa in the eastern tract of Raipur district. The Lānjī of the inscription is at present known by the same name in Bālāghaṭ district of Madhya Pradesh.

As to the list of the countries already mentioned above, 'Uḍra' seems to be the old name of Orissa. The king of Uḍra was possibly the Sōmavanshī ruler Udyōtakēsari.

Some of the conquests described above brought so much of fame to Sōmeshwara that he was known as a powerful

monarch even in the distant parts of Southern Karnāṭaka. For we are told that the great Hōyasala King Vishṇuvardhan came in conflict with this Bastar ruler. The epigraph tells us that Vishṇuvardhana "with the sharpness of his sword terrified Sōmēshwara the lord of the mighty celebrated Chakrakōṭa" (Epigraphia Carnatika, VI, Mg. 22). The inscription which refers to this conflict is dated 1129 A.D. The reference here, therefore, is only to a past event, for we know that Sōmeshwara died in about 1111 A.D.

Sōmeshwara-I was as efficient an administrator as he was a great soldier. He ably governed his kingdom till the end of his reign. In this task he was assisted by his ministers and generals, who were men of exceptional ability. One of his records describes him as a "store-house of the statesmanship" (EI, 10:37). That he possessed striking personality is evident from the fact that he is compared with the god of love in point of beauty (EI, 10:37).

Kannaradēva-I (1111-1153): Sōmēshwaradēva was succeeded by his son Kannaradēva in about 1111 A.D. (Epigraphia Indica 9:315). It was in his reign that his grand-mother Guṇḍa Mahādēvī made the grant of the village Nārāyanapur to the glorious god 'Nārāyaṇa' (Ibid). Nārāyanapur which is present Nārāyanapāla seems to have been an important place of pilgrimage in ancient times. We are told that it was full of people that came from the various countries to see the diety which is described as 'a ferry for crossing the ocean of transmigration and a basket full of gems of knowledge who opens the bolt of heaven's door.'

Prthwīdēva II, the Kalachurī King of Ratnapur, on coming to the throne in 1135 A.D., directed his campaign against Chakrakōṭa and devastated the country. Kannardēva fled away and was saved (Bilaigarh Copper Plate of Prithvideva-II).

Kannaradēva-II (1153-1195): An inscription from Bārsūra mentions a king named 'Kanhār' who seems to be a later member of the family and may be styled 'Kanhār-II'. Two other damaged inscriptions which bear no date mention a certain 'Kannara' or 'Kannaradēva' (Hiralal 1916: 230, 233). Probably they refer to this ruler.

Sōmeshwaradēva-I (1195-1218): In 1208 A.D., we come across another Chinda King of Chakrakoṭa named Sōmēshwaradēva second, who is mentioned with all the Nāgavanshī titles (EI, 10:36). This Sōmēshwara-II is the first King of the House to assume the 'biruda' 'Chakravartī' or Emperor. This would lead us to the irresistible conclusion that he was recognised as the overlord by some feudatory chieftains. This surmise is supported by the mention of a 'māṇḍalika' named Sōmarāja who was the subordinate of Sōmēshwaradēva's successor Narsimhadēva (EI, 3:318). It is quite possible that Sōmarāja was a feudatory under Sōmēshwaradēva also. Bhīma, the Telugu-Choḍa King of Erua was a contemporary of Gaṅapatideva Kakatiya (1199-1261) and he joined the expeditions of Gaṅapati for in a verse in the Tall-Prodduturu inscription dated 1212, it is stated that Bhīmā conquered several places situated in Bastar (Yazdani 606).

Naraśīmhadēva (1218-1224): The next member of the dynasty of whom we learn from inscriptions was Jagadēkabhūshaṇa Narasihyadeva Mahārāja (EI, 10: 40) or Mahārāja Narasimhadēva. He was the son and successor of Sōmēshwara-II (EI, 10 : 42). He is referred to as reigning prince in two inscriptions, the first dated 1218 A.D. and the other 1224 .D. (EI, 10: 43). One Mahārāja Jagadēkabhūshaṇa mentioned in the Bhairamagaṛh inscription as the worshipper of the feet of 'Maṇikyadevī' (EI, 10: 46) may be identified with Narasimha. 'Maṇikyadevī' seems to be the family diety of Chhindaka Nāgas of Chakrakoṭa. Their most outstanding King Sōmēshwaradeva is described in his inscription as a worshipper of the heavenly and holy lotus feet of the blessed Māṇikyadevī (EI, 3: 318). In 1218, there was an eclipse of the Sun and the month of Jyestha was intercalary. So a feudatory chief of Narasimha made a grant of land to the Brāhmaṇs and got the record carved on a stone.

Jayasimhadēva (1224-1248): Another member of the dynasty was one Jayasimhadēva mentioned as bearing titles like 'Rajādhirāja Mahārāja' (Hiralal 1916: 49). Jayasimhadēva had two wives: Lōka Mahādevī and the great queen Shashāṇa Mahādevī (EI, 10: 35) His inscription is important in as much as it throws some side-light on the administrative system of the

Bastar kings. The king was attended by five ministers who were called '*Pancha Pradhāna*'. They included the chief minister, the grand-warden, the prince in charge of whisk, and the lord of intelligence department.

Raṇabhūṣhaṇadēva (1248-1273): Out of the total number of coins of Chhinda Nāga rulers discovered so far, we have three Chinda rulers who have issued the coins. One of them is Raṇabhūṣhaṇa¹ along with Dhārāwarsha and Sōmeshwara-I. Up to now we have not met with the name Raṇabhūṣhaṇa from any epigraphic record found in Bastar. I think, Raṇabhūṣhaṇa of Orissa State Museum Coins (Rajaguru: 1956) is also a Chindaka King of that locality, as the emblems employed in his coins are corresponding with those of other Chhindaka Nāga coins of the Korāpuṭ hoard. Anyway, the Orissa Museum hoard contributes this new name to the genealogy of the Nāgavashīs. This surmise is also supported by the historical Kāvya '*Kosalānanda*' (ed. Shukla). In the opening canto of the '*Kosalānanda*' Kāvya poet Gangādhara Mishra gives a graphic account of the conquest of Kōsala by Ganga (Gajapati) King as follows:

"In the year 4200 of the Kali era, there reigned in prosperous country of Kosala a king named Raṇasimha whose valour was praised even by his enemies." (Verse 7).

"The Kingdom of the Kōsala, filled with learned and pious people, was ruled with ability and success by previous kings, but the arrogant and insolent Raṇasimha, being always guided by evil advice, failed to maintain the stability of law and order" (Verse 8).

"He developed bitter enmity with his good friends and took pleasure in creating new enemies. He dismissed the old ministers and appointed new ones" (Verse 14).

"Taking opportunity of the mal-administration of the ruler and the chaotic condition of the country, the Ganga King (Gajēshwara) captured it by force of arms" (Verse 14).

The date of Ganga conquest of Kōsala (Sonpur-Sambalpur region) as furnished by the '*Kosalānanda*' is 4200 Kali era

1. Bhim Ballal Singh, the Gond king of Chanda was the contemporary of Raṇabhūṣhaṇa (Begbie 1909.38).

which is equivalent to A.D. 1100. This is, however, not at all acceptable in the face of epigraphic records which indicate that the Gangas conquered Kosala about 1248 A.D. The identification of Raṇasimha of the Kāvya is now clear. He is the same Raṇabhūshaṇa of the Nāga coins. It is a known fact that Sōmēshwara occupied this territory long back and it is also clear that it was in some or another way a part of Nāga kingdom upto 1248. Due to his 'mal-administration' Raṇabhūshaṇa lost the control over the hereditary territory and it went in the hands of Gangas.

Rājabhūshaṇadeva (1273-1300): Rājabhūshaṇa Mahārāja is known from an undated Dantewārā inscription (EI, 10: 33).

Harishchandra (1300-1324): In the first quarter of fourteenth century, we come across another king named Hariśchandra, who is mentioned as the ruler of Chakrakōṭa-rāshṭra (EI, 10: 40). He is mentioned in Tēmarā Satī inscription of Shaka 1246 (1324 A.D.). He was probably a later member of the Chhindaka-Nāga family of Bastar. His record being brief does not give any clue as to when he came to throne. We know, however, from the same record that he died in A.D. 1324, when his "Chaste wife Māṇikyadēvī entered eternity by entering into fire (Ibid.)". Perhaps he was killed by Ibrahim Kutb Mulk in a fierce battle, who captured alive the enemy Hariśchandra and later on killed him. After him a new dynasty started ruling over Bastar, i.e. from Annamadeva to Pravīrchandra Bhanjādēva from 1324 to 1947 A.D.

It is significant that like Chindaka Nāgas of Bastar, Māṇikyadēvī was also the family deity of the Nāgavanshī rulers of ex-Kālāhaṇḍī state. The Kālāhaṇḍī family was founded about the year 1300. All traditions and records of Kālāhaṇḍī agree that the last Ganga ruler of Kālāhaṇḍī was Jagannāthdēva. He had no sons, but only two daughters, Puspā and Surēkhā. The elder daughter Puspā was married to Rāmachandrādēva of Āṭhagarh, whereas the younger daughter was given to

1. Gangadhar Kavi: Tapati Samvaranam (Telugu poem) quoted in S.K. Ayyangar : Sources of Vijayanagar History, p. 238.

Raghunāthadēva of Chakrakōṭa Nāga prince. Jagannāthadēva desired that one of his sons-in-law should succeed him to throne of Kālāhaṇḍī, Rāmachandrādēva of Āṭhagaṛh was unwilling to leave his state. Subsequently, the offer was accepted by Raghunāthadēva of Bastar (the younger son of Rājabhūṣhaṇa and younger brother of Harischandrādēva), who thus founded the Nāgavanshī Kālāhaṇḍī. This took place probably in the beginning of the fourteenth century. It was about this time that the Nāga rule in Chakrakōṭa came to an end. The proximity of Kālāhaṇḍī to Bastar (Chakrakōṭa), the synchronism of the foundation of Nāga rule in Kālāhaṇḍī with the decline of the Nāga rule in Bastar, the common deity Māṇikyadēvī and religious beliefs of Nāga-rulers of both the states, and also the matrimonial relations lead us to believe that the Nāgas of Kālāhaṇḍī were direct feudal descendants of the Nāgas of Chakrakōṭa.

Conclusion

Thus the Nāgas and their feudatories played a significant role in the history of Madhya Pradesh, particularly Chhattisgarh. A large number of gold coins of the Chhindaka Nāga rulers have been discovered, which indicate their prosperous rule.

Central India during Nāga Rule

Anantaverman Chōḍagandēva conquered Utkal by defeating the last Sōmavanshī king Karṇadēva about the year A.D. 1110 (vide Korni Copperplates grant of Chōḍagandēva dated Shaka year 1034, A.D. 1112). Long before the date, the Sōmavanshīs had lost the territory of Kōsala, the western part of which had been occupied by the Kalachurīs and the eastern part by the Telugu—Chōḍas. There was struggle for supremacy over Kōsala between the Kalachurīs and the Telugu—Chōḍas and it ended in the defeat of the latter sometimes before the year A.D. 1114. The Kalachurī king Jājalladēva-I inflicted a crushing defeat upon the Telugu—Chōḍas and imprisoned their chief Sōmeshwaradēva (Ratanpur Inscription A.D. 1114, *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. I, p. 32). Thus when the Ganga king,

Chōḍagangadēva became supreme Lord of Utkala and Kalinga, the Kalachurī king Jājalladēva-I became the lord of the almost entire Kōsala territory. An ambitious king like Chōḍagangadeva who conquered the entire coastal territory of the Hooghly in the north to Gōḍāwarī in the south (Orissa Historical Research Journal, I (4) 274) would not have failed to recognise the utility of conquering the Kōsala kingdom, which for a long time had formed a part of the empire of Sōmavanshīs. As the successor of the Sōmavanshīs in Utkal by conquest, he took it as his legal duty to recover the kingdom of Kōsala from Kalachurīs. The southernmost part of the Kosala comprising the modern district of Kālāhaṇḍī was probably under the Gangas from the time of Vajrahastadēva-V (A.D. 1038-1070). In the mediaeval period this hilly tract along with the modern district of Korāpuṭ formed the Trikalīṅga country. It is significant that the Ganga kings from Vajrahastadēva-V to Narasimhadēva-II (1279-1306) assumed the title of 'Trikalīṅgādhipati.' From the time of Chōḍagangadeva, the Gangas probably used the district of Kālāhaṇḍī as the base of military operations against the Kalachurīs of Kōsala. Chōḍagangadēva, however, could not achieve any success against the formidable Kalachurīs. It is claimed in the epigraphic records (Kharod Inscription of Ratnadeva-III, Epigraphia XXI.161) of the Kalachurīs that the king Ratnadeva-II and Prithvīdeva-II respectively defeated Chōḍagangadēva and his son and successor Jaṭēshwara alias Madhu-Kumārārṇava. The struggle between the Gangas and Kalachurīs continued for about one hundred years. At last Ananga Bhīmadēva-III succeeded in occupying Sambalpur—Sonepur region from the Kalchurīs sometime before the year A.D. 1220. In the Chaṭēshwara—Inscription (Epigraphia Indica XXIX, 125, 127, 131) dated 1220 A.D., it is described that Vishṇu, a Commander of Anangabhīmadēva-III (1211-1238) defeated in battle the king of Tummāṇa. Tummāṇa was at that time the capital of the Kalachurīs of Ratnapur branch. It appears that after the defeat of the Kālachurī king, Sambalpur—Sonepur region was annexed to the Ganga empire. This view is also supported by the Māṇḍalāpānjī (Prācieḍ, 28-29) where it is stated that Anangabhīmadēva increased the income of his kingdom by increasing the territories upto Sonepur in the west. The occupation of western Orissa by the Gangas is also proved

by Khamēshwarī Temple Inscription (Orissa Historical Research Journal 10 (4) 1-11, *Epigraphia Indica* XXXII. 325) of Sonepur which reveals that a Ganga governor was stationed in that region during the rule of Bhānudēva-I (1264-1278), the grandson of Anangabhīmadēva-III.

The Ananta Vāsudēva Temple Inscription (*Epigraphia Indica* XIII. 150-5) discloses that the fact that Anangabhīmadēva-III married his daughter Chandrādēvī to a Haihaya prince Paramardidēva who died in battle while fighting for Narasimhadēva-I (1238-1264), son of Anangabhīmadēva, and that the widow princess Chandrādēvī who lived in Ganga palace for a long time after the death of her husband, built the Ananta Vāsudēva Temple in Śaka year 1278. H.C. Roy (*Dynastic History of Northern India*, Vol. I, 478) writes that Anangabhīmadēva, after the victory over the ruler of Tummāṇa gave his sister Chandrikādēvī in marriage to the Haihaya King. In her inscription Chandrādēvī has not used herself any royal title which also points to the same conclusion. All these indicate that after victory of Gangas over the Kalachurīs, there was a sort of peace treaty between these two persons, as a result of which Sambalpur-Sonepur region was ceded to the Ganga king Anangabhīmadēva-III, who in turn married his daughter to a Kalachurī prince. With this the hundred years struggle between the Gangas and Kalachurīs came to an end and the Ganga-rule was established in Kōsala.

Political Relations

The period of 600 years from 760 A.D. to 1324 A.D. is marked by bitter struggles for supremacy among the sovereign monarchs, rival princes and subordinate chiefs, each claiming monopoly of suzerainty. Fierce wars, accompanied by pillage, plunder and destruction was the order of the day. The Chhindaka Nāgas of Bastar, who rose into prominence in 760 A.D., spread their power over the whole Kōsala and developed an independent kingdom.

The Nāgas, in their efforts to consolidate their power, introduced new administrative posts such as Pancha-Pradhān, Dwādasha-Pātra etc.

In early mediaeval period, a tribe in Bastar was divided:

into a number of multi-village groups called "pargana" and there were 84 parganas in whole of the district in later mediaeval period. The parganā-headman or the chief of the villages termed as "Grāma-Nāyaka" in Nāga Inscriptions, no longer worked at all. The social hierarchy had three levels. The parganā-headman's families, headed by a supreme chief; the level of administrators, generally distant relatives of the Mājhis or the Rājā or men of high rank in the society; lastly the Commoners who formed the mass of the population and were distant relatives of the Mājhis and their councillors. A considerable number of toboos surrounded the person of supreme chief. A commoner might not touch any object used by the Chief: his shadow might not fall on the clothes of the Rājā, special adornments and perhaps special language distinguished the latter from other men. The King descended directly from the semi-god head (recorded in all the inscriptions) and had special natural functions including the consecration of temples. Official ceremonies celebrated the birth, marriage and death of the aristocracy (Hiralal 1916:166). The supreme chief controlled the use of land. The "Grāma-nāyaka" (Village chief) kept watch over the use of his plot of land. He might be dispossessed if he refused to contribute to collective works or managed his land in an unproductive way. Redistribution was, in fact, redistribution of control in local groups between king's entourage, after the accession to power or following a war. This entourage constituted a kind of 'primitive bureaucracy' of the 'heads of 12 ministries' (Dvādasa-pātra) supervising production.

The King had the means of coercion at his disposal and punished those who infringed his rights, the punishment varying with the status of accused. Sometime he was declared as 'mēḍipōṭa' (Epigraphia Indica 9:174). The King's will, in short, was the supreme law. Assassination, rebellion, emigration limited the tyranny of his, or his servants' powers and made for an alternation in the periods of decentralisation and centralisation of the political history of Bastar. The land and the factors of production were no longer the property of direct producers alone. The latter must produce surplus used partially for enterprises of collective interest which exceeded the possibilities.

of local communities. The mobilised surplus, for certain ceremonial occasions as Kuṭumbajātrā (Epigraphia Indica) assumed considerable proportions. Figures such as buffaloes (EI, X. 40) have been quoted in an inscription. On the basis of the appropriation of excess products in local communities and the unequal control of production factors, a class division had been built up. A central government existed. It had, as one of the essential characteristics of the State, the right to levy tribute on the ceremonies, but the State remained embryonic in so far as a veritable public force did not appear to exist and the territorial organisation of the population was but little developed. Revolts occurred, not in order to abolish the system but to restore it to a bearable limit.

Thus, in Bastar we find a fully developed state structure. The population of state was divided administratively and the central authority was effected through territorial subordinates who were either appointed or hereditary. The State had a public force at its command and the power of levying taxes on commoners was considered one of its essential tributes. Local groups, organised according to kinship relations had, in part, lost control of land. The State decided on land occupancy and usage. In the economic and political spheres the State organised activities on a level unattainable by local groups, but these always assured protection and co-operation among members. Autonomy in local groups was more or less reduced by new obligations to authorities and local communities. A network of new relations was developed mainly outside kinship relations and this constituted the framework for new forms of social promotion and status. The state was responsible for peace within, and defence against attack from outside.

Economic Relations

The Nāgas promoted agriculture to an extent not known before. The people supported their efforts whole-heartedly. The lands were measured and divided into various categories, and on the basis of their fertility taxes were levied and collected. Some tanks named 'Chandrāditya Sarōvara'

(*Epigraphia Indica*) were constructed in Bārsūr and the different parts of the state.

In 1076, Māsakadēvī, to enthuse the peasants and infuse confidence among them, issued the proclamation to the people of Bastar (Hira Lal 1916 ; 166) "bureaucrats levied some unjust taxes on you. The collection of these dues is unjust. Now we have exempted you from the payment of the taxes."

The tradition of granting whole villages to brahmin families who were the residents of the area continued through the ages. To promote agriculture the Nāgas on special occasions granted villages rent free to inhabitants themselves. Right of ownership of land was comprehensive and all embracing. It was also laid down that one should either cultivate the land by himself or give it to another for cultivation. If one failed to do either, tax was collected on the same. With land becoming private property, land disputes became natural. The disputes were settled with the help of five chiefs.

Regarding taxation, we have no information about the preparation of the land and the produce which the state claimed as its share. As pointed out, taxes were levied by the state as well as village organisation. They were collected either in cash or in kind

Nāga mode of production can be classified into two categories :

- (a) 'Mēriyā' mode of production.
- (b) Feudal mode of production.

These two modes of production explain the primitive as well as the feudal emergence of the society.

Village Organisation

The basic political society was the village. Even the most powerful kings mainly exercised their authority over their villages and only secondarily over their 'Maṇḍala' (district). The village community as a whole cultivated the gardens, went to war, performed religious ceremonies, undertook commercial expeditions. Its political and economic autonomy was important. It was directed by the 'Pancha Pradhān' (five chiefs) or five members of the dominant clan. The chief of the village

(grāma-nāyaka) might or might not be a man of rank. When he combined these two titles, his position was much stronger. He then exercised a certain authority over a "Parganā," that is to say a group of villages which adjoined his own, for purposes of war and the great religious ceremonies. All men of rank belonged to a hierarchy, the head of which was the Nāga King. He was the most powerful ritual expert (*Epigraphia Indica* 9: 164), controlling rain and sun. Men of rank wore distinctive adornments, but were mainly differentiated from commoners by the existence of special taboos, the number of which increased as the hierarchy was ascended. People of high rank and kings, possessed no judicial or executive authority over people of inferior rank from villages unconnected with their own.

When a king or the Middle man (Mājhi) asked for help from members of his village, he compensated them. The necessary resources were furnished him through polygamy, the king's or Middle man's privilege, and the gift which each brother-in-law must give to his sister's husband. The numerous kings of Bastar from 760 to 1947 used to marry a girl or sister from each tribal group, such as Dhurvā, Dōrlā, Mārīā, Halbā or Bhatrā etc. and these tribal groups in turn owed their brother-in-laws a significant part of their harvest and valuables. The Kings and 'Mājhi's' of Bastar were, thus seen as "glorified" and glorious brother-in-laws to the whole tribal communities. The use of the word 'māmā' (maternal uncle) for a tribe denotes the same historical and social meaning. His exceptional wealth was used to promote grand ceremonies and, generally, to integrate a number of tribal communities with the 'State economy'. The king or the 'mājhi' was, therefore, the instrument of a much greater economy than that of village and a fortalice of the domestic units of production.

The king had no public force at his disposal to regulate conflicts, these remained the concern of the lineages. The king availed himself of a single weapon, sorcery, and the best sorcerers were at his disposal. Tribal society of Bastar therefore, did not recognise any central government in action. What then was the meaning of 'hierarchy' which reigned there, linking all political and territorial units on the region, i.e. the

local lineages ?

The reality is that the rank of local lineage of the Nāga-time may be considered as the combined result of three factors :

(a) an economic advantage signifying that a village had fertile fields, such as Halbā-paṭṭīs;

(b) The degree to which this village played role of integrating centre with its economic powers;

(c) Its position in the network of external alliances and its role in the famous inter-regional exchange cycle.

I think it was these three factors which combined to determine the relative status of the different villages and the local lineages dominant therein. When two Mārjās or Halbās met who were not related by Kinship or marriage, and one bent his knee to the other, this behaviour had to be understood as a symbolic recognition of the relative standing of their villages in the past. In the same way, the Daṇḍamī Mārjā region was the most fertile area on the district actively participating in Dusserā-festival and controlling the largest network of Dusserā-festivities, while at the opposite end we find Abujh-mārjā who had the worst fields and no participation in Dusserā-festivities.

In tribal society of Bastar we had the example of a hereditary hierarchy (Mājhi, Chālkī etc.) which bound different lineages and local communities without functioning as a unique, integrating political structure. The 'Mājhi's' power lay in supporting economic and religious relations which extended the framework of particular village communities, without, however, integrating them into a single economic or ceremonial network covering the whole region (because it was the role of the king to integrate the whole region). 'Mājhi's' were those who possessed the most potent magical powers and they must use these on behalf of their community. Their privileges were thus, the obverse of their duties and the reward for exceptional services rendered to the community at every level, imaginary or real.

Social Relations

Social life at the time of Nāgas was not as static as we find

at the present time. Restrictions in social contact between the different classes were not deep rooted. It was the age of tribal feudalism, and this was why the social conditions were influenced by the tribal ideologies. Religion was a dynamic force and any one was free to choose any path or creed.

The king occupied a dominant role in tribal economy. He had ultimate control over the land. He was the 'titular owner' of the land and he had the supreme control of the fertility. He was the privileged intermediary between the clan, his ancestors and the gods. In the production processes, he took interest in agricultural activities, ensuring the direction of cooperative exercises, sago cultivation etc. He controlled the correct utilisation of most of the basic natural resources. He made sure of their conservation by imposing taboos which protected them from immediate consumption (to do this he invented many new eating festivals). He received and distributed a large quantity of goods, encouraging their accumulation by organising big ceremonies which integrated the society into something bigger than clan—state society. He had the right to material assistance from members of different clans but could not exercise any material sanction against those who refused this assistance. He settled differences and, in some cases, resorted to forced help by the members of other lineage against serious offenders, as is the case with the Chālukya King Daryāo Deva (1780 A.D.).

The later mediaeval rulers of Bastar enjoyed a two-fold inequality, i.e. social and spiritual. The inequalities were natural and irreducible, while in economic sphere they were chiefly by degree. Within his domestic unit, the king and his family never participated directly in production. In communal undertakings, he played a guiding role. He was not responsible for any losses. He harvests were gathered by the land-labours (bhutiyār). He never cooked his food and appointed cooking experts called "Suar Brāhmanas".

It was on the 'Mēḍipōṭa'—based (Epigraphia Indica, IX, 160) forms of dependence that the majority of primal class societies developed together with Chakrakōṭa-State. The Nāga-empire grew up in between 760-1324 A.D. and this growth was exceeded only by Annamadēva who, when entering Bastar from Wārangal in 1324 A.D. was a warrior, having no

Kin-relations with the tribes. Before the conquest of Annamadēva and Chālukya's integration to a new state, the modes of production of many Dravidian tribes of this part of the country was based on the production of tubers. There was also a form of communal labour, based on mutual help among the villages in the performance of various productive tasks. The 'Parganā Mājhi' was the first beneficiary of the village mutual aid, and the communal land was especially cultivated for maintaining the temples of local divinities.

When the tribes of Bastar fell under the Nāga domination, these communities underwent a profound change. All land, rivers, mountains etc. were declared state property. A section of these lands was definitively expropriated and became state or temple property. The remainder was returned to them through the kindness of the Nāgas, on certain conditions. Relations of production were, therefore, thrown into confusion on those lands returned for subsistence the communities lost their former right of communal ownership, controlling rights of possession and use only. On these lands, production and customary forms of soil and usage still assumed the same communal form as before the Chālukya conquest, nevertheless, a new mode of production was established on a regime of forced labour since 1324 A.D.

Forced labour was not an individual matter; the whole village participated in it and the Chālukya-State provided the food and drink, in the same way, as in the traditional tribal social structure; the beneficiary of communal mutual aid had provided for those who helped him. The state provided the tools and seeds and insisted that the people go to work with music and song. In this way the Nāga-forms of economic reciprocity together with the ideology and ritual linked with them, were now after 1324 A.D., were used for the functioning of economic relations of exploitation and servitude, characteristic of a new form of production. In order to organise its own economic basis on a stable level and to ensure growth, the Chālukya-state checked all lands, peoples, their customs, animals and produce. For this, it needed to create an administrative organisation of Zamīndārs which would cover the population and control it directly or indirectly, it also needed to popularise the cult of Danteswarī and to maintain an Halbā-

army to suppress revolts etc. This body of institutions corresponded to the new mode of production; and it is known that this mode of production was by 1379 A.D. (*Epigraphia Indica*, XII 242) fully developed. To control the local population a new development occurred in which Halbās were given the military status and different military colonies of Halbās were set in the different parts of the state. Thus, Halbās were attached to an aristocratic master and remained in the service of Chālukyas up to 1777 A.D. (*Epigraphia Indica* 9: 166). The descendants of Halbā generally inherited this military position. This form of exploitation (the one tribal group exploiting the other tribal group) certainly existed before Chālukya conquest when the Mārijās held a superior position, but assumed greater social significance with the development of a kind of individual ownership of lands given by Chālukya-state to certain strata of nobility.

By compelling the peasants to come and work on lands of the State and Danteswarī, by providing them with food and drink, the Chālukya-rulers were employing the former mode of production based on reciprocal obligations between members of local communities, where both the form and the obligation were known and understood by all; in this way they shaped new relations of production, founded on oppression and domination, since the producers had now lost part control of their labour and its product. Moreover, the Chalukyas while retaining the cult of local gods, added the cult of Danteswarī, in honour of whom the peasant would offer his labour, as was already demanded by his own traditional and local divinities. The old kinship relations and the former village and tribal-political relations without a change in either form or structure, had now changed their function, since they were required for furthering a new mode of production.

The practical problem confronting the Chālukyas after their conquest, was two fold: to allow the subjugated people to continue to produce their means of subsistence in accordance with traditional practice; and to oblige them to produce for the state in forms of production which they would understand and which, upto a certain extent, would be justified in their eyes. In order to resolve this problem, exceptional efforts of political and social invention were required, both collectively

and individual—as tradition has credited the almost legendary kings.

Among these means, there were: firstly, the fact that production was based on different forms of simple cooperation; secondly, the fact that the land was owned by the community as a whole and that the individual possessed only rights of usufruct to the plots, which were redistributed more or less periodically; thirdly, the fact that—equally in the sphere of the material process of production as in the individual's relation to the basic means of production—the land and the community existed and appeared as a reality superior to the individual and as the practical condition for his survival; fourthly, the fact that the function of representing the community, of controlling the process of its reproduction as such was the responsibility of a particular family, and, in this family, of the individual, who could best fulfil this function. This person was the *Mājhī*, the chief of the tribal community, and also chief of war in early mediaeval Bastar. By this function, the *Mājhī*, and his family, personified the community more than any other person; he in same way incarnated the society in so far as he was in reality superior to others and he personified his superior unit; fifthly, in organising the process of production, their labour force, taken from the members of the local community, the *Mūriā*, was utilised to reproduce their own existence and that of other members of the community in need. Finally, supplementary land and labour were devoted to the cult of ancestors and local divinities, and to the upkeep of temples.

These five elements belonging to the old mode of production did not disappear after the Chālukya conquest. The Nāga-mode of production continued to ensure both the subsistence of local communities and these five elements provided the operational bases and shape of the new mode of production. The victorious community appropriated all lands and natural resources from the conquered communities. All that the victors needed to do was to apply traditional law: so long as the individual was a member of the community, he was entitled to his rights. If he did not belong he was deprived of all rights. The superior community, personified in the Chālukya king, who represented both the community and the State hence,

became the collective landlord, and all conquered territory became the "Crown" property. It meant that the state took the place of the local community as landlord and this constituted for the individual, a new community superior to his traditional one and upon which he depended for survival.

We can now grasp the ideological consequences which arose as a result of the fact that the Nāga-relations of production (village mutual aid, surplus labour etc.) gave their form to the Chālukya-relations of production (forced labour). The fundamental consequence was that the new Chālukya relations could only come about in a form, an appearance, which marked the economic agents, in spontaneous ideological representations, making the new, real content, the exploitation of man by man.

Religious State of Tribal Mind

During the Nāga-period (760-1324) Vīra Shaivism held the hearts of the people and enjoyed royal patronism. Shaivism consisted of three sects—Kāpālikas, Kaulas and Shāktas. While each recognised Shiva as the supreme lord of the Universe and 'bhakti' as the only way of salvation, they differed from one another in their emphasis on one or other of its tenets, in their forms of worship, mode of discipline and practice of rituals. Vīra Shaivism distinguished itself by its militant opposition to atheistic religions like Jainism. It opposed renunciation or 'sanyāsa', condemned castes distinctions and advocated equality of sexes.

Thus, Vīra Shaivism showed an illusory way to the thoughts and actions of the tribal people who were absolutely ignorant of the laws of social development. It prevented rational outlook, spirit of enquiry, and creative thought. It thus contributed to the stagnation and backwardness of the self-sufficient villages. The tribal people tended more and more to escape from reality, seeking refuge in spiritual forces, which were supposed to do man what he could do for himself.

Contemporary literature (see (Bibliography: Original Sources) throws much light on the religious life of the tribal people. The devotees manifested their feelings more through gymnastics and daring feats of heroism than the prayer and

penance. Jātrās or Kaksāras or religious festivals were widely prevalent. Local deities such as Vindhyaṣasini or Danteswarī were commonly worshipped. Human sacrifice was the order of the day. In different types of sacrifices (human sacrifice, animal sacrifice etc.) the series of natural species played the part of intermediary between two polar terms, the sacrifices and the deity, between where there was initially no homology, nor even any sort of relation. For the object of the sacrifice precisely was to establish a relation not of a resembling but of continuity, by means of a series of successive identifications. These could be made in either direction depending on whether the sacrifice was expiatory or represented a rite of communion. Its object was to bring to pass the fulfilment of human prayers by a distant deity. Its claim to achieve this by first bringing together the two domains through a sacralised victim and then eliminating this connecting term. The sacrifice thus created a lack of contiguity and by the purposive nature of prayer, it induced a compensating continuity to arise on the plane where the initial deficiency experienced by the sacrificer traced the path which led to the deity, in advance and as it were, by a dotted line.

Among the tribes, religious practice took the form of a Shākta-cult. It was observed every day and in all their actions. The more exceptional circumstances in the life of individuals or bands—birth, girl's puberty, death,—were occasions for ritual. The most important were the puberty festivals for girls and the great 'ānāl' festivals for the dead. In case of epidemics, a success of poor hunts, serious accidents, the band carried out 'hēlē. In all, every day or more exceptional events in the life of both the individual and the community, the tribes turned to deities and worshipped them, that is to say, they danced and, especially, sang in their honour.

The mystical power lay in the forest. So the forest was 'everything' to the tribes. It was ensemble of all inanimate and animate beings. It was a higher reality which existed as person, a divinity to whom one spoke as to father, mother, friend, even lover. It was Life. Death overtook men and other living things because the forest was asleep and, therefore, it must be awakened to persuade it to carry on providing nourishment, health, goodwill—in short, happiness and social harmony

for the tribes in whatever band they might happen to be.

Tribal religion, therefore, was an ideological instance where the conditions of reproduction of their mode of production and their society were represented; but they were represented upside down, as 'fetished', mythical'.

Tribal religion, then, was not the domain of fantastic shadows projected into the depths of their consciousness of a reality existing in itself—solid and material—a reality which was their social relations in the production of the material sources of the existence. Far from being a ghostly reflection—both passive and derisory—of a reality which might move off elsewhere, these representations and religious observances drew their content.

Bilingualism and Biculturalism

The language policy of the Nāga rulers of Bastar has already been dealt with in detail. From the point of view of the tribal society of Bastar Telugu was the first official language (160-1224) and the hybrid Sanskrit (1065-1324) was the second official language of the State. Sanskrit was introduced and imposed on the society by Madhurāntaka Dēva's (102-1069) feudal administration (*Epigraphia Indica* 10:26). As the language of the North Indian feudals, the cultural language, it was naturally the language of administering the State from 1065 to 1324 A.D. Sometimes having the independent status and sometimes a bilingual state language, it continued upto the conquest of Bastar by Annama Dēva (1324 A.). The stronger the Aryan influence, the more powerfully the language was forced on the society. Although indirect rule through local chieftains and Zamīndārs was the characteristic administrative procedure, the more potent agents of administration were Judiciary, the civil service and legislature. All these instruments were run in Hybrid Sanskrit and Hybrid Telugu. Thus, although Telugu was widely known with its local Dravidian dialects and Sanskrit was very much restricted, and although Hybrid Sanskrit minority was not evenly spread throughout the state, Sanskrit became the first and only language of Bastar Government in the year 1224 A.D. To know and use the language was prestigious to somebody, indeed; the importance

of knowing it was so great that a person who did not know, it was erroneously considered by the society to be an illiterate, even when he could read and write very well in his Telugu, which developed diglossic bilingualism. It was also usual for the society to regard, whoever could not use Sanskrit, as an 'uncivilised person'.

Largely because feudalism thrived on the doctrine of the superiority of the North Indian culture over the tribal culture: the cultural language was also considered to be superior to the tribal language. It was, therefore not surprising to find that it was really the only means of communication in the State that qualified to be called a language, while all of its indigenous Bastar counterparts were mere tribal dialects. Correspondingly, mastery of the language conferred on the person the status of 'civilised man', and he was not expected to speak the tribal dialects? We can map here the linguistic and social variation of the Naga period on the following lines :

by standard language	1. Diglossic Bilingualism: e.g. Telugu type	2. Selective Bilingualism: e.g. Sanskrit type
by dialect	3. Diglossic Bidialecticism: e.g. Telugu-Dōrlī type	4. Societal multilingualism: e.g. Hybrid Sanskrit-Halbī type

As is to be experienced, the existence of formal education meant the introduction of a new culture which was accepted to be superior to the tribal culture acquired entirely through non-formal education. The greater the influence of the formal education in a local community, the more civilised the community was considered to be. The Maṭha-children were expected to behave in a different way, the North Indian fashion, from the non-Mathagoers. Indeed, as the community progressively became bilingual, it was also expected to become bicultural. The Maṭhas were governed by a different language

and cultural pattern from the tribal society in which it was located. On the one hand the majority of the society was looked down upon by the Maṭha enclaves and on the other formal education was largely irrelevant to the tribal ways of life.

The individual tribal, however, remained tribal as local Dravidian cultures still predominated over the state whereas only very few tribals succeeded in receiving the formal education together with Hybrid Sanskrit and appreciable coating of North Indian culture. Thus the tribal society was seen to be more dominated by elite class speaking the Hybrid Sanskrit. Thus the tribal society was made to appear more bilingual and bicultural. As a result, the Halbī became the lingua-franca of whole of the Bastar due to its Sanskrit origin.

The Ritual Language

Sanskrit also became the ritual language (Epigraphia Indica, 10:26) of the state. After the domination of Sanskrit the task of ritual language was performed by the individual languages.

The ritual language consisted a magical formulae composed from expressions of command or wish with the invocation of the secret name of the being invoked. The essential element in these formulae was obviously the invocation of the secret name of the being invoked. The essential element in these formulae was obviously the invocation of the secret name of the being addressed. Thus, to know the secret names of things was to have access to their invisible essence and to have a hold over them.

However, to be heard and to have the right to pronounce these words and formulae, the individual must have obeyed certain rules of conduct which related to others, as Madhurāntaka did in his inscription. These rules consisted of a series of prohibitions (Epigraphia Indica 10:26). No other men except close kin were allowed to be there (ibid).

What would happen if these prohibitions were neglected? The family of the concerned person would die and would go to hell. The family would suffer want, even starvation. It is recorded in all the inscriptions found in Bastar. Socially the man could no longer be able to fulfil his responsibilities as head

of the family. He would lose face and become a mere dependent to other people.

This conferred a cosmic dimension to the individual's responsibility. A responsibility involving such cosmic dimensions explains the psychological force of the prohibition and the intensity of blame which the individual placed on him and which the group exercised over individuals.

Factors affecting the survival of Dravidian Dialects in Bastar

It can be argued that the theories about the survival of Dravidian ethnolinguistic isolates fall into two broad categories.

(a) *Diffusion theory*: It is assumed that the Dravidians generally occupied a peripheral position within Bastar after 1324 A.D. This peripherality is geographical as well as social. Modernisation started in Jagdālpur, which was the 'centre' or 'core' of society, and spread from there to the society's periphery. Some peripheral linguistic units which adopted the value systems of the core group, eventually assimilated to it, as is the case with Gadabā (Muṇḍā speech) and Rājmurīā.

(b) *Internal feudalism theory*: After 1324 A.D. Dravidian groups occupied a peripheral position in society. There existed a cultural division of labour between ethnic groups which assumed different forms:

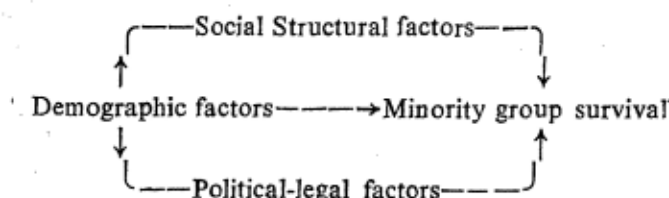
- (i) a hierarchical division of labour in which dominant Aryan group occupied positions in upper end of the occupational hierarchy and Dravidian members tended to cluster at the bottom of the hierarchy.
- (ii) a segmented division of labour in which Dravidians had a disadvantaged economic position.

The available evidence with regards to the fate of ethnolinguistic minorities appears to support both theories. That is, there are clearly linguistic minorities in Bastar which, perhaps in part as a consequence of Palace-culture, have assimilated to the majority, to the point that the minority language has declined as a language of interaction and even disappeared entirely (one can think of Gadabā and Rājmurīā). On the other hand, there are many minorities which have survived the

onslaught of development, the spread of Halbī as a lingua-franca, and the construction of super highways (Dhurvā, Dorlī, Daṇḍāmī Mārīā, Abujhmārīā are such examples).

Both approaches assume that the survival of linguistic minorities of Bastar is due to their concentration in peripheral areas. All those minority dialects which came in communication channel became Aryanized. It is also revealing that all these linguistic minorities occupy socio-economic positions at the lower end of the hierarchy.

The factors which have a bearing on the long-term fate of minority in Bastar can be mapped as follows:



In other words, demographic factors are assumed to be independent variables, social structural and political-legal factors to be intervening, with survival as the dependent variable.

With regard to minority group survival in Bastar, the analysis suggests that there is a positive association with high factor scores on "language use," i.e. with high proportions of the group able to speak the language as is the case with Dravidian dialects, and also in situations in which Halbī had official status, and used in the mass media. Moreover, group maintenance appears to have at least some association with high scores on 'peripherality,' which describes groups with low population density.

Overall Pattern

The early mediaeval formation which took a concrete shape in the course of six hundred years, beginning from 760 A.D., was characterised by the rise and growth of feudalism. It was the feudalism from the tribal group.

Powerful intermediaries wielding political power grew in the countryside as a result of extensive fiefdoms granted to them.

These intermediaries developed into a hierarchy with differences in status, privileges and jurisdiction—a phenomenon characteristic of feudalism. Besides fiefdoms, the lords and nobles acquired marginal lands as private property with rights of sale and purchase. They got them cultivated through labours or tenants and earned additional income on them.

Political decentralisation—a result of wars and civil wars, not only between suzerain states but also between chiefs and their suzerains—was another feature common to the region. In these struggles Bastar state got weakened and paralysed, until a single power like Sōmeswara Dēva came out successful.

The village, assembly, which consisted of all the high-ups of the village, was also owning lands. As an important part of the feudal set-up, the assembly discharged vital functions like maintaining the union between agriculture and industry, acting as a bridge between the state and its subjects in fiscal matters, dispensing justice in minor disputes and balancing the interests of various sections of the people.

Caste system, which in its early phases, had fulfilled in varying degrees, the needs of the society within the framework of self-sufficiency, lost its original rigidity and developed on tribal lines.

The rise of the 'bhakti' cult, expressed in the worship of a personised god, reflected the impact of feudal relations on human mind. It offered the best solace to the frustrated and showed the easiest way of attaining happiness. There arose a plethora of beliefs and practices which sought to achieve man's liberation from the world of woes through sensualism on the one hand and self-torture on the other, both of which manifesting a degenerate mind. Even human sacrifice came to be considered an act of the highest order of 'devotion.'

CONCLUSION

Man during this period was subjected to cruel—exploitation—a result of the growth of feudal relations. He was steeped in ignorance and superstition. The narrow bounds of village self-sufficiency kept him in darkness. He could not make use of science and technology for lightening his toll. The gulf between

manual and mental labour widened as never before. In the absence of any effective panacea he succumbed to dark forces of reaction, seeking liberation in gruesome acts and obnoxious practices—all in the name of religion. More than six centuries had to elapse before the steam engine and powerloom which were introduced by an alien power (1780 A.D.) smashed the self-sufficient village economy to pieces, and thus produced the greatest and, to speak the truth, the only social revolution ever heard in Bastar.

LATER MEDIAEVAL PERIOD (1324—1779 A.D.)

(Struggle for Freedom and the Tribal Revolution)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Source materials for the reconstruction of the history of the Chālukyas of Bastar are not many. But they are fairly enough to draw a relatively satisfactory picture of the Chālukya rulers in Bastar. With the materials now available, an attempt is made in the following pages to present the reader with the history of the Chālukyas who ruled the hilly tract in the fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century of the Christian era. It is reconstructed with the help of evidence drawn mainly from three sources, namely inscriptions, literature and traditional accounts. These available source materials could be classified into the following categories.

- (a) Epigraphic records
- (b) Contemporary literature
- (c) Complementary sources
- (d) Folk-literature.

Inscriptions

In all, five epigraphic records, belonging to the periods of the different Chālukya rulers, have been discovered so far. One of them is copper plate grant issued by Rājapāladeva. The rest are stone inscriptions. A list of these epigraphic records is given below:

1. *Dantewārā Sanskrit and Hindi Inscriptions of Dikpāladeva*, Samvat 1760 (1703 A.D.) *Epigraphia Indica* Vol. XII, p. 242.

The two stealite slabs on which the above inscriptions were engraved, were found in the temple of the goddess Danteswarī, of Dantewārā, junction of Sankinī and Dankinī rivers about 60 miles south west of Jagdalpur. They were first brought to light by Col. Glasfurd (1862), Deputy Commissioner of Upper Godavari district in which Bastar was formerly included. The remaining five lines were not decipherable. The transcripts of both the Sanskrit and Hindi inscriptions are very defective (EI, IX. 164).

The inscriptions are engraved on two loose slabs each about 21" × 15". The Sanskrit record covers a space about 14" square and contains 23 lines. The average size of letters in the first five lines is 9/10" and in the rest 7/10". The Hindi inscription known as "Hemādapanthī" also contains 23 lines covering a space of 14" × 13½", the average size of letters being 3/8". In both of them the characters used are Nāgarī.

The record only purports to be a Hindi version of the first "in view of the fact that in the Kali Age there are very few Sanskrit knowing men.

The object of the inscriptions is to record the occasional ceremony of "Kutumba-yātrā" made by Dikpāladeva to the shrine of the goddess Danteswarī in the Samvat 1760 corresponding to A.D. 1703.

The inscription gives a genealogy of Dikpāladeva for 10 generations beginning from Annama Rāja, the first king who settled in Bastar. He is stated to have been a brother of Kākatīya Pratāparudradēva of a lunar race descended from Pāṇḍava Arjuna. The original home of family was in Hastināpur, whence they migrated to Wārangal where they ruled for a long time until the country was invaded by the Musalamāna.

Being pursued by the later, Annama Rāja fled to Bastar as a king. Of the first seven successors of Annama Rāja no information, beyond their names is given. The Hindi inscription, however, mentions a queen who built temples and gardens. Of the 8th Virasinghadēva, it is stated that he ruled for 67 years and that he married a Chandēla princess Badanakumārī Devī. Their issue was Dikpāladeva who again married in a Chandēla family the princess Ajabakumārī, daughter of Rāoratana Rājā of Vardī. The result of the Union was the heir-apparent Rakshapālādēva, who was born when his father was only 18 years of age. Dikpāladeva is stated to have stormed the fort of Navarangpur and to have established there an Oriya Rājā. With regard to Navarangpur, it was a town in the Vizagapatnam district and gives its name to the northern most tahsil into the Central Provinces and Bengal between the states of Bastar and Kālāhandī. The Rānī of Navarangpur, a relative of Jaypur family, who were at one time relatives of the Gajapati King of Orissa and came over Jaypur about the 15th Century A.D. still resides at Navarangapur.

Copper-plate Inscription of Rājapāladeva (OHRJ, Vol. X, No. 3, pp. 57-60)

The inscription which is edited here, is incised on a broken copper plate was in the possession of Arjun Pārhi of Sukrūpāla in Jagdalpur Tahsil, now deposited in the Mahant Ghasidas Memorial Museum, Raipur, where it was received from the Collector, Bastar district.

The plate is broken in two parts; but the inscription is complete except the court seal, part of which is lost. It is also damaged at its upper right and both the lower corners but that does not damage the text or any of the symbols. The plate measures 30.8 cms. in breadth and 17.7 cms. in height; and its total weight is 395 gms.

On the top right side of the plate are the crescent moon and an outstretched hand in *repousse*. The hand signifies the benediction and the moon may mean the Sōmavanshī dynasty of Rāja-family or it may mean that the grant may last as long as there is the moon. At the bottom centre of the plate, there is a double line square having the word "sahī" meaning signed.

On the top centre of the place, there is the seal of the king, part of which is lost. With the help of a silver seal of Bhairamadēva. (1853-1891) now deposited in the Raipur Museum, the legend of the seal can be restored and read as below:

Outermost circle:

[स्वस्ति श्री वस्त] र महानगरे शुभस्थाने महाराजा प्र [ऊढ-प्रतापचक्रवर्ति]
Swasti shri vastara mahānagare shubhasthānē
mahārājā prarūḍha pratāpachakravarti

Second circle outside the star made of two triangles:

[श्री रा]जपालदेव [महाराज गोंसाई]
Shri Rājapāladeva mahārāja Gonsāi

Within the triangle of the star:

[श्री] मानके[श्वरी]
Shrīmānakeshwari

In the Centre of the seal there was a monograph of a lion part of which is visible.

The plate is inscribed on one side only. There are in all 6 lines of writing in two different languages namely Oriya and Hindi. The letters are well formed and deeply engraved. The characters are Oriya and Nāgarī according to the languages of the text, mentioned above. The whole record is composed in prose.

The object of the inscription records the grant of certain rights to 300 families of Paṇḍā Brāhmaṇa and their agreement not to leave Brahmapurā which appears to have been a separate settlement of brāhmīns residing at Bastar when the capital of this state was there. The traditional story of these Brāhmīns themselves is that when they first came from Papalāhandī (referred to as Papalāvaḍī in Hindi and Papalāḍanḍī in Oriya) they settled at the village Bintā in Karēkoṭa paraganā.

It is interesting to note that this agreement between Rājā Rakshapālādēva and the families of Brāhmīns is divided into two parts into two parts in two different languages, viz. Oriya and Hindi. The Rājā whose own language was Hindi, recorded his promises in Oriya, while the Oriya-speaking Brāhmīns part of agreement was in Hindi. Thus the object of Rājā using the

Oriya language and the Orissan Brāhmins using Hindi seems to be that each party may read and understand the terms of agreement.

In order to induce the Brahmins to settle in his country the Rājā (Rakshapāladeva) promises to grant the Brāhmin the following privileges:

The Rājā's part of inscription after invoking Shrī Jagannātha, his brother Shrī Balabhadra and His sister Subhadrā as witnesses, promises that as long as his family named 'Chālakī' lasts, the three hundred families who migrated from Papalāhaṇḍī (at present in Koraput district of Orissa, erstwhile Jaypur State) to Brahmapurā are exempted from punishment from criminal offences. When they die without issue their property will not revert to state. Those who lay prostrate, no corporate punishment will be inflicted. It further says that whosoever violates these privileges, the imprisonment is that his mother is a pig and father an ass. For this agreement, the moon, the sun, the universe, 8 Lokapālas and Dharmarāja are witnesses. The last sentence cannot be explained.

The Brāhman's part of the agreement enjoins that as long as the Chālukya dynasty is ruling in Bastar, they shall not leave Brahmapurā and if one returns to Papalāhaṇḍī, his mother is a pig and father an ass, and that eight Lokapālas and Dharmarāja are witnesses for this agreement. The last sentence is in Oriya, the meaning of which is not understood, but certainly it would unravel the date on which this copper plate is issued.

Thus data and year of the copper plate is not yet known, but as stated previously the year of the grant will be known when the last sentence in Oriya language is deciphered by a competent authority. Meanwhile, we know from Dantewārā stone inscription that Rājapāladeva's father Dīkpāladeva visited the Danteswarī temple in 1703 A.D. From the above facts it is evident that the copper plate has been used some years after 1703 A.D. At this time, Rājapāladeva was a Yuvarāja and is said to have visited the temple with his father when so many thousands of buffaloes and goats were sacrificed that the water of the Sankinī river became red like *kusum* flowers and remained so for five days. From the above facts it is evident that the present copper plate was issued some

years after Vikram Samvat 1760 or A.D. 1703. According to Kēdāranath Thākur (1908). Rājapāladeva is said to have ascended the Bastar throne on Saturday, the fifteen *tithi* of dark fortnight in Samvat 1706 (1649 A.D.), when he was a young boy of thirteen years only and ruled for 72 years. This hypothesis of Thākur is based on the Rāja family records of Bastar. But his statement (and also all the statements of Rājafamily related with Chronology) is not accurate, since we know from the above mentioned Dantewārā inscription (EI, XII. 242) that Rājapāladeva's father Dikpāladeva was ruling in V.S. 1760 and that the former was a *Yuvaraja* of 18 years in that year.

The copper plate in question is not very important for its antiquity as it is hardly 250 years old, but the mention of Chālukya dynasty instead of Kākatiya dynasty is important. The inscription tells us that Rājapāladeva belonged to Chālukya-vansha. On the other hand, Dantewārā inscription and other Rājafamily records inform us that the name of the ruling family was Kākatiya. This discrepancy is removed in the Ancestry.

According to the legend of the seal, King Rājapāladeva had the title of Mahārāja and 'Praudha Pratāpa-Chakravartī' and was devoted to the worship of goddess 'Māñikeswarī', whose Vāhana, the lion, is incised in the centre of the seal. This goddess is a form of Durgā and may be identified with Dantēswarī.

Among the geographical names mentioned in the record, Bastar whence the plate was issued, has been identified with the village of the same name, some 18 kms. from Jagdalpur (old name Jagatigundā) headquarter of Bastar district. Papalāḍaṇḍī or Papalāvalī is the same as moder Papalahandī in Orissa (old Jeypore Estate). Brahmapurā appears to have been a separate settlement pūrā or mohallā of the Bastar city itself when Brāhmans were living. But the section of Oriya Brāhmans residing in Bastar district who are known as '30 gharia brāhmans' equivalent to 300 families of brāhmans, say that when they moved from Papalāḍaṇḍī they settled at the village called Bintā in Karekōṭa paraganā. The traditional story of these Brāhmans is that owing to the religious persecution, disorder and highhandedness on the part of the ruler of Papalāḍaṇḍī who kept all these Brāhmans under surveillance the Rājā

of Bastar urged war against the former, conquered his country, released the Brāhmīns from surveillance and brought them to Bastar. The condition of settlement in Bastar has already been explained in copper plate of Rājāpāladeva and need not to be repeated here. The leading family among these 300 gharīa Brāhmīns is called as pāṭhī. The origin of the word 'pāṭhī' is 'tripāṭhī'. The word 'tripāṭhī' is reduced to 'pāṭhī' which means one who can repeat prayers. Baṛeguṛī temple in Jagdalpur belongs to 300 'gharīa' brāhmīns and their 'pujārī' is selected from 'pāṭhī' family for the worship of the temple. Certain villages are assigned for the maintenance of Baṛeguṛī temple and they are under the management of the temple court of wards. In 1940 the 'pujārī' was entitled to draw an allowance of rupees 7 per month and he gets either in cash or kind a certain amount for 'bhōga' and 'pūjā'. Another temple adjacent to the above temple is Jagannātha temple named 'Amātyaguḍī' at the same place belongs to the 60 'gharīa' Brāhmīns who are the leading family among them.

Dōngar Inscription of Daryāodeva (1779 A.D.)

(Epigraphia Indica, Vol. IX, p. 166)

Dōngar is 60 miles from Jagdalpur. There are two records of Daryāodeva (1779-1800) dated Samvat 1835 or A.D. 1779. Both of them refer to the Rājās visit in order to quell a local rebellion.

Dōngar Inscription of Bhairamadeva (1871 A.D.)

(Epigraphia Indica, Vol. IX, p. 166).

This is dated Samvat 1928 or A.D. 1871, and records the "paṭṭābhisheka" ceremony of Bhairamadeva (1853-1891), father of Rudrapratāpādēva (1891-1921).

Tirathagarh Inscriptions (Hiralal 1916: 137)

Tirathagarh is 20 miles from Jagdalpur. There are two statues here, under both of which the name of Himmatsimha Dīwan is inscribed.

Thus, out of sixteen kings who ruled in Bastar during this

period, only four kings—Dikāladeva, Rājapāladeva, Daryāodeo and Bhairamadeva—have their inscriptions. The inscriptions of the period under study are written in Hybrid Sanskrit, Hindi and Oriya. There is no definite order which may be seen in these inscriptions. The opening of Dantewārā one inscription is an invocation to Danteswarī. Then follows the genealogy of the family, in which the names of the ancestors are recorded. After this comes an address of the king in which information is provided. The grant opens with 'Swastī Shrī' and next comes a brief description of the donee. Then follows the formula of gift. So far these inscriptions have not been utilized for the study of history. All the historical studies so far done on Bastar are based on the genealogies which were prepared during Maratha rule in Bastar. They all are unreliable and invalid.

Contemporary Literature

To work on any aspect of the history of later medieval Bastar is always a new venture and it is always like groping in the dark. The chequered history of this region had remained neglected until recent times. In 1819 and succeeding years enquiries into the past history of the tenures under the Maratha Government were made by British officers and a report on the subject was drawn up by R. Jenkins and published in 1827 as '*Report on the Territories of the Raja of Nagpur*'. European Scholars like J.T. Blunt (1795), Agnew (1820, 1823), Jenkins (1827), Elliot (1855, 1856, 1861), Temple (1862, 1863), Grant (1870), Ball (1880), Chapman (1898), Russell (1906, 1908), Brett (1909), Wills (1919), Grigson (1938) and few others lifted the curtain and uncovered the hidden treasure, Indian scholars taking a clue from them endeavoured to lay hands on genealogical sources to present the glorious past. Lāl Kālīndra Singh (1908), Kedārñātha Thākur (1908), R.B. Hiralal (1913, 1916, 1919), Vedivelu (1915), Sil (1917) and Bhanjadeva (1956) created unbounded interest amongst large number of scholars of tribal history. My own work on the *Ancien Bastar* (1978) was a continuation of the effort in the same direction.

While collecting material on the subject, I had to face enormous difficulties, partly because of the non-availability of

the source material and mainly because of the absence of any independent and reliable contemporary work on the history of Bastar. During the long span (1324-1702 A.D.) of about four hundred years of their rule, none of the Bastar kings could find a Gangādhara Mishra or Bābū Rewārāma to write a trustworthy account of their achievements and failures. Could there be a greater nemesis than this? So while constructing the history of the kings of Bastar, my predecessors had to rely solely upon genealogies.

Genealogies: The later mediaeval history of Bastar is obscure and traditions handed down in the ruling families have not been yet verified, but such genealogies as available are analysed here, so that the readers may evaluate the previous works on the history of Bastar.

Under '*Bastar-Rāja-Vansāvalī*' (History of Bastar Kings) we have three types of genealogies. The first type of genealogy was finalised in the time of Bhairamadeva (1853-1891). The first genealogy was prepared by the Rājaguru family entitled '*Sanskrit Vanshāvalī*'. Lōkanāth Thākur compiled this genealogy in the year 1853 A.D. The second genealogy was compiled by Lāl Dalganjan Singh in the year 1856 and is known as '*Rājāsāheb Bastar kī Vanshāvalī*' (history of the kings of Bastar).

Panda Baijanāth was interested in the dynastic history of Bastar as a Dīwān of Bastar state in the reign of Rudrapratāpadeva (1891-1921). The "*Record of the Kakatiya Dynasty*" written by Panda Baijanāth was even not traceable in the year 1909 when de Brett was preparing the *Gazetteer of the Feudatory states of Chhattisgarh*. But we have other two manuscripts of the time of Rudrapratāpadeva (1891-1921) as follows:

(i) Lāl Kālīndra Singh: *Bastar-līkhāsa*, prepared on 18th August 1908 (unpublished).

(ii) Mitrānāth Thākur: *Mahārājā Bastar kī Vanshāvalī* (in Hindi) prepared on 4th September 1908 which is still unpublished.

Thus we may summarize the above mentioned Bastar Rāja

Chronicles in the following four main titles:

- (1) Lokanatha Thakur: *Bastar Rāja Sanskrit Vanshāvalī*, 1853, unpublished.
- (2) Lala Dalaganjana Singh: *Rājā Sahib Bastar kī Vanshāvalī*, 1856, unpublished.
- (3) Lala Kalindra Singh: *Bastar kā Itihāsa* (Hindi) 18th August 1908, unpublished.
- (4) Mitranatha Thakur: *Mahārāja Bastar kī Vanshāvalī* (Hindi), 4th September 1908, unpublished.

All these genealogies are available in the Record Room of Bastar Collectorate, Jagdalpur.

The above mentioned chronicles of Rāja family of Bastar called '*Bastar-Rāja-Vanshāvalī*' in general are also not of much help to trace the history of mediaeval Bastar. Of course, since the year 1827 the '*Bastar Rāja Vanshāvalī*' is considered as a reliable source on the political history of Bastar by many scholars. European scholars such as Jenkins (1827), Elliot (1826), Glasfurd (1861, 1862), Temple (1863), Grant (1870), de Brett (1909), Grigson (1938) and others largely drew upon this chronicle for constructing the history of Bastar. The eminent historians like Kedarnath Thakur (1908), J.N. Sil (1917), R.B. Hirallal (1916), could not detect the legendary character of the '*Bastar-Rājavanshāvalī*'. When in the year 1936, Mr Gibson was entrusted to prepare "*an authentic history of Bastar*" (he lost the file and thus the authentic history was never written before), the following files were sent to Mr Gibson:

- (i) The State Gazetteer File.
- (ii) Captain Elliot's Report on his 1856 tour.
- (iii) Captain Glasfurd's Report of 1861.
- (iv) Captain Glasfurd's Report on the Kotpāḍ tract dispute,
- (v) Files relating to Sanads.
- (vi) Andrew Fraser's (Political Agent) Report on his 1891 visit.

While sending the file Hyde made a remark about one of the genealogical histories: "He should also try to obtain a copy of Pandit Kedarnath Thakur's book on Bastar. I

understand from Mr Grigson that this book contains a great deal of information which is either unreliable or impossible to verify and it must be accepted with caution" (Bastar Collectorate, Record Room, File No 40). Thus, it is clear that the reliability of the aforesaid genealogies is very much disputed.

The "*Bastara Rāja Vanshāvalī*" is based on the late tradition (after 1703 A.D.) current amongst the families of Rāja, Dīwān and Rājaguru regarding the history of the Bastar kings. Although the *Vanshāvalī* claims to trace the history of Bastar from Annama Dēva to Rudrapratāpadēva, it makes no true mention of the predecessors of Dikpaladēva except the one which is fabricated and manipulated in Maratha period. The genealogical table of Bastar kings found in the inscription is not identical with the list of successive sovereigns mentioned in the "*vanshāvalī*." There is considerable discrepancy between the dates given in the "*Vanshāvalī*" and those supplied by the inscriptions. We also find discrepancies between the number of the so-called Kākatīya kings furnished by the mediaeval scholars and the writers of the "*Vanshāvalīs*" is not the same. For instance "*Sanskrit Vanshāvalī*" enumerates twenty kings, while in "*Hindi Vanshāvalī*" we find only seventeen kings. Thus it can be summarized that the "*Vanshāvalī*" is nothing more than a farrago of legends from the earlier times and contains too many inaccuracies and distortions to be used by themselves without the testimony of other more trustworthy sources. Hence, the "*Bastara Rāja-Vanshāvalī*" cannot be relied upon much for the study of the political history of Bastar, but perhaps that can be used with caution for the study of the dynastic history of Bastar to which they contain some stray references.

Complementary Sources

There is a large number of external sources which complement and supplement each other in various respects and help us to discover, connect and confirm the missing links in internal sources. These are as follows:

- (i) *The Vilāsa Grant of Prōlaya Nāyaka* (M.S. Sarma: 1943). This inscription registers the grant of the village of Vilāsa

in Kōṇamaṇḍala corresponding to modern Amalāpuram taluka in East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh, by Prolaya Nāyaka of the Mūsanūri family of *Caturthakula*. Though the year is not given the grant may be assigned to the second quarter of the 14th century A.D. 'Kōṇamaṇḍala' referred to in this grant was a *mandala* dependent on Nāga kings of Bastar in the eleventh century A.D. (South Indian Inscriptions, 3: 468). 'Rekāpalli' was the capital of the dynasty on the bank of Godavari. 'Rekāpalli' was a zamindari under Bastar state upto 1780 A.D. Due to mismanagement of the then king Daryāodeva this Zamindari was snatched away from the Rājā of Bastar by the Nizam of Hyderabad and since 1781 it became a part of the Hyderabad state (Brett 1909). This explains that at the time of Annamadeva it was a part and parcel of the Bastar kingdom, and Prolaya Nāyaka was ruling there after the fall of Wārangal.

Prolaya Nāyaka was a contemporary of Annamadēva, the younger brother of Pratāparudradēva of Wārangal. Almost all the valiant generals, Ministers and officers of Pratāparudra known to us from the records had been killed or taken prisoners on the battlefield by the Muslims in the year 1323. Only three of the old generals survived the catastrophe. One of them was Prolaya Nāyaka. From the record of Bastar (EI. IX. 164) who know that his younger brother Annamadēva could also survive and with the assistance of these three generals he settled in Bastar, while his assistants guarded him from the Godavari region which was a constant terror for Annamadēva. With the advice of Annamadēva Prolaya Nāyaka would have been chosen a suitable leader in the circumstances then prevailing. Annamadēva with all the two generals cooperated with Prolaya Nāyaka in every possible way as an adviser and guide. Prolaya Nāyaka was unknown to fame prior to 1323 A.D. He was not heard of before the date in any capacity under Kākati Pratāparunda. So he could not, by himself, have commanded the confidence of the people, had he not been set up by Annamadēva, who as a brother of Pratāparudra, wielded more influence and power than anyone alive in the country at that time.

Thus, the present grant is of paramount importance for the

reconstruction of the history at the reign of Annamadēva of Bastar.

(ii) *The Kaluvaceru Grant of Anitalli*: This grant was discovered in the village of Āryavaṭam in Cocanada taluka of the East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh. It was first published in the *Journal of the Telugu Academy* (ASPP, Vol. IV, pp. 92-112). It registers the grant of the village mentioned above by Anitalli, wife of Vīrabhadra Reddī, king of Rājamahendravaram, in the Saka year 1345 corresponding to 1423 A.D. It seems that the name Vīrabhadra finds some similarity with the son of Annamādēva of Bastar and this indicates that this Reddī king owed his loyalty to Bastar kings. The grant gives a full detailed information of the post-pratāparudra Godavari region.

(iii) *Prōlavaram Grant of Kāpaya Nāyaka*: This grant was published in J.B.O.R. (Vol. XX, 1934, p. 260). It registers the grant of village of Prolavaram on the bank of the river Malagiri for the merit of Prōlaya Nāyaka in Saka 1267 corresponding to 1345 A.D. by Kāpaya Nāyaka, who lived at Wārangal. It reveals the post-Pratāparudra age of Godavari region.

(iv) Mādhava Ūravya's *Vīrabhānūdaya Kāvya* (Sanskrit) is another valuable source which throws a flood of light on the relations of Baghela king Vīrabhānūdeva of Rēwā (Madhya Pradesh) with the Chauhān rulers (?) of Bastar. Though 'Vīrabhānūdaya Kāvya' is an official genealogy of the Baghela kings of Rewa upto 1556 A.D., it is valuable for it provides good source material on the southward expansion of Baghela kingdom and making the Bastar king a tributary. 'Vīrabhānūdaya Kāvya' has been published by Naval Kishore Press, Lucknow, 1938.

(v) *The Mādālā Pāñjī* (ed. A.B. Mohanti, Praci Samiti, Cuttack, 1940). The temple Chronicle of the Jagannātha temple at Puri is also a source for our study. It contains a long chronicle of kings, who ruled over Orissa from the earliest times to the Bhoi dynasty of the 16th century. In this list there is a mention of the kings of Bastar. It is basically a traditional work, but it preserves a substratum of historical truth which will be discussed later.

(vi) Among these later sources *Tarikh-i-Ferista* or *Gulsan-i-Ibrahimi* (Nawal Kishore Press, Lucknow 1884) of Muhammad Qasim Hindu Shah *Ferista* occupies foremost place. He completed his work in 1066 A.D. and presented a copy of it to his master and benefactor. Subsequently, he enlarged it and brought the narrative down to 1610 A.D. Since he had spent the greater part of his life in the Deccan, he possessed a fairly good knowledge of its political affairs, but he devoted only a few pages to the contemporary history of Bastar (John Briggs; *History of the Rise of Muhamedan Power in India*, Calcutta 1966. vol. III).

(vii) Gangadhar Mishra, the author of *Kosalānanda Mahākāvya* (unpublished) wrote a Sanskrit *Mahākāvya* in 1664 A.D. He was a Court poet of Patna State. In 1660 king Baliar Singh commanded him to write the history of Kosala. On his own account he wrote a poetic history of Kosala from 10th century A.D. upto 17th century A.D. Though he has given a detailed history of the Chauhān kings of Kosala, he has not given a separate account of Bastar. It is in connection with the interstate relation that we get casual references about Bastar kings. But even these are quite helpful in collecting the missing links and continuing the thread of the narrative. Since the author had consulted many works on the history of Kosala, We can safely trust to the authenticity of his Sonepur Version.

(viii) *Tarikh-i-Qutb Shahi* (1672 A.D. unpublished, Nizam's Library, Hyderabad). It mentions that during the period from 1610 to 1672 A.D. Bastar was invaded by the different members of Qutb Shahi dynasty and from the year 1612 to 1672 A.D. it was a tributary of Qutb-Shahi.

(ix) Another useful work which makes a casual mention about the kings of Bastar in relation to Harhaya-Vanshī rulers of Chhattisgarh is Bābū Rēwārāma's *Tawārīkh Shri Haihaya-vanshī Rājāon kī* (unpublished, Written in 1858). He compiled this account of Haihaya kings of Chhattisgarh due to scarcity of the historical data.

(x) Jaypura Rāja Vanshāvalī (Sanskrit) of Pandit Ramnatha Nanda Sarma is a genealogical history of the solar dynasty of Jeypore (Orissa). It mentions a few incidents relating to the kingdom of Bastar. It was published from Madras in the year 1938.

(xi) *Bastar-Vijaya-Nāṭaka* (Pāṭṇā 1941): Written by Arjun Hōtā in Oriya. The story of Vatsarāja Dēva (1385-1410) of Pāṭṇā and the Bastar king is dramatised through this work. It is recorded that Vatsarājādēva could conquer Bastar only after propitiating Danteswarī, the tutelary goddess of the state and after victory he caused to worship that deity in several villages of his kingdom. The drama is based on the family records of the Chauhān rulers of Western Orissa.

Based on the facts revealed by the above sources, we have tried to reconstruct the history of Chālukya dynasty of Bastar in the following chapters giving new interpretations to them, wherever necessary, corroborated by oral evidences.

Oral Evidences

Realizing the distinction between the History of Bastar and the History of Bastarihā, here we contemplated to discover the history in the oral literature. By analysis of the folk-literature we have tried to write that aspect of history which is without record. Thus, in folk literature we get the source material for building up a comprehensive history of a people who do not have a written history of their own. And this history cannot be a mere record of events. It will be more of an attempt to analyse their social and political structure in terms of an evolutionary process. There is a long tradition of boards known as 'Muṇḍā' and 'Pardhāna' in Bastar and through their songs we can identify many missing links which have not been recorded.

These oral evidences will be much more authentic and reliable if these are compared with their earlier counterparts and if the process of change is examined with the utmost critical acumen. A good number of the present folkways are represented by their earlier forms in the written records right from the beginning of the fourteenth century A.D. Therefore in

tracing the prevalent folkways back to their original forms, inscriptional evidence is indispensable and almost totally reliable. We may venture to say that the study of folkways of Bastar cannot be complete and authentic unless the epigraphical evidence is thoroughly explored and examined. We have attempted to do that.

Conclusion

Thus inscriptions, contemporary literature, complementary sources and oral evidences give us glimpses of the socio-political conditions of mediaeval Bastar. But these sources do not supply us full information on all aspects of tribal life during the period under survey. Moreover, the relative value of the sources varies.

History of the primitive society of Bastar looms large in the Indian understanding of history. Our Puranic tradition helps to solve a number of problems. The primitive communal system was the first socio-economic formation in the history of mankind and was one which knew neither private property, nor antagonistic classes, nor state power. Hence on the basis of all the facts available today, I have tried to reconstruct the history of the primitive society of Bastar. Here I have proceeded from the conviction that any cultural phenomenon can be understood only if it is studied in the historico-genetic context, and not only from the structural-cum-functional viewpoint. Many elements of culture are rooted in the primeval past and later manifest themselves in a modification.

There is distinctiveness in methodology and sources when we study the history of the primitive society of Bastar. While other sections of historical science are based mainly on written monuments, the history of primitive society, at least prior to the emergence of the first class societies, wholly pertains to the preliterate stage in the development of humanity and is reconstructed on the basis of other sources.

Being part and parcel of total historical science, the history of primitive society is subdivided into history dealing with period ending with the emergence of most ancient civilisations, and the history of a society coexisting with the class society and the outskirts of civilisation.

The present method of survivals is not an easy one, of course, and may open up a possibility of different, and sometimes arbitrary, interpretations. A proper application of the method of survivals for retrospective reconstruction requires a necessary analysis of their firm roots in another stage.

The evaluation of sources, which is foundation of the history of society, is considerably enlarged by complementing the method of ethnographic analogues with the method of survivals. There are other, narrower, methods by which ethnographic analogues enter the historical past. Among them is the study of oral traditions, in particular, views of the historical past of the given peoples, i.e. the oral historiography of the aborigines.

In order to understand tribal systems in general we must broaden the notion of production. In Bastar, as in many farming systems, the notions of production and reproduction are linked. All over Bastar, irrespective of the local ecology, men consider themselves to be concerned in long-term productive enterprise in which they assert control over and bring up their daughters (or their sisters, their sister's daughters or other junior female relatives), negotiate over their marriages and eventually decide when they will marry and who the husbands will be. Men combine with other men in asserting control over the women and in asserting the right to determine their destination in marriage. Men are dependent on their fathers or on their mother's brothers or other senior relatives for help in obtaining wives and await the right in their turn to acquire control over the disposition of their own junior female relatives. I don't think it would be too misleading an analogy, crude though it may appear at first sight, to describe Bastarians as farmers in disguise who are concerned with farming (and farming out) their women. Of course, in any more detailed discussion it would be essential to discuss the part played by the women themselves. Obviously much the greater part of the work of looking after and bringing up daughters falls on their mothers rather than on their fathers. In some tribal societies women have much influence on the destination of their daughters in marriage. And the brides themselves are not to be treated as no more than mere objects to be manipulated in a game played by their senior male (and female) relatives.

Control over women is also used to convert what would

otherwise be only immediate short-term rights in self-acquired and group-acquired foodstuffs and other materials into specific long-term claims. In Bastar, it seems to be generally the case that a wife is obliged to go out and gather food for her husband and that a man is obliged to hunt for senior kin of his wife. My argument, then, is that the tribal system is clearly based on a system of long term return of labour. The important point on which I do insist, is that, whether or not the tribal men can be said in any sense to 'produce' or 'farm' women, they do maintain and transmit long-term rights over their female kin, and traditional tribal social organisation in all its variety is to be, seen as centrally and essentially connected with the maintenance, manipulation and transmission of these long-term rights.

If we take the Abujhmaria society of Bastar; we can see that the social relations between groups and among individuals, which serve as social conditions of access to natural resources and as a framework for the organisation of labour process and distribution of products, are in fact social relations of kinship; these moreover, govern marriages, matrimonial alliances between different groups, and descent—this being the explicit and universal function of kinship relations. The relevance of this example lies in the fact that it shows us the same institutions, namely kinship relations, functioning both as infrastructure and as superstructure. So the distinction is no longer between institutions, but between functions within a given institution.

We can see then that the 'economic factor' does not occupy a constant locus throughout history and that, consequently, it assumes different forms and that its mode of development varies. By mode of development I mean two things: short and long-term conditions of reproduction, and the effects on material and intellectual forces of production, enabling a society to provide its material means of production. From an epistemological point of view, I would stress the importance of not defining infrastructure and superstructure as institutions, but as functions. This is the first condition for breaking out of the spontaneous ethnocentrism characteristic of our perception of relationships between economy and society. The theoretical question, then, if we are to study the history of modes of production scientifically, requires that we seek to discover the

reasons and conditions which have resulted in changes in the locus of relations of production in the course of history, and which have caused these relations of production to change and form and effect in changing their locus. Needless to say, any such history cannot be the fruit of a single, partial discipline, as it mobilises historians, anthropologists, sociologists and economists together.

One would need to explain how the real conditions of life lead man to represent the invisible causes of the visible order of nature and history. If we want to take a global view of the diversity of religious phenomena and of the complex relations existing between economic infrastructure, political power and religious forms, we may say that in primitive societies, tools are such that everyone can make them for himself and that technical knowledge is shared among everyone. But even here, imaginary knowledge regarding the gods, the masters of animals and plants, was unequally appropriated by different groups and individuals. The first monopoly could have been a monopoly of the imaginary, rather than a monopoly of material means of production. In the development of social inequality, with the appearance of early forms of classes and the state, it seems that we observe a qualitative change. The *mārjā*, personifying the state in the mediaeval period, was no longer the representative of mankind dealing with the gods, but the representative of the gods among men. In the modern period, *Pravirchandra* was the son of *Danteshwari*, and on him depended the fertility of women and the fields, the reproduction of society as well as that of cosmos. The development of class relations and that of state would seem to be accompanied by a process of divinisation of a fraction of humanity, and of divinisation of the institutions manifesting that fraction's power. Religion is not merely the fantasmatic reflection of social relations, but functions as one of the components of internal framework of these relations of production, as one of the essential conditions of the relation in which an aristocracy controlling the powers of the state exploits the peasantry. The moment each individual and every community that he or it owed his condition of existence to the supernatural power of the *Raja*, each individual or community recognised an obligation to offer him labour and produce, both in order to celebrate his glory and

his divine reality, and to render to the Raja a portion of what he has done for the reproduction and the prosperity of all. Religion here served as a source of violence-free constraint; in some way it constituted the greatest strength of the state and of the dominant class, since it obliged those dominated to consent to their domination from within.

The mistake here would be to confuse effects and reasons. Religion was not invented in order to force the dominated to consent to their domination, but it existed in such a way that it resulted in this consent. Seen thus, we may restate the problem of the origin of class relations within classless societies and that of appearance of primitive forms of the state.

ORIGINS OF THE CHĀLUKYAS

The facts and circumstances under which the Chālukyas took birth, have not all come to light. The available material is scanty and not well sifted at that. The foundation of this dynasty, we may say, was the result of one of the several attempts made by the statesmen of the mediaeval Godawari country to restore peace and order out of the political turmoil and anarchy which followed the expulsion of Muslims from the lands. It came into existence as the custodian of tribal religion and culture, and to revive the primitive traditions and ritual, which suffered a death blow and became almost extinct under an alien rule. The Temarā Satī Inscription (E1.10.40) dated 1324 is very important one in the history of the tribes in general, and the post-Nāga-rulers in particular. In fact, it marks the beginning of a new epoch in the history of Bastar. The Chālukyas ruled here by the date of that record.

Kakatiya or Chālukya

It is difficult to trace the Origin of the later mediaeval dynasty of Bastar due to insufficient information given in their epigraphic records. However, the word 'Sōmavamsa' occurring in Dantēwārā inscription (E1. XII.242) would itself suggest that the dynasty belonged to the family of 'Sōma' or the Moon. Besides, on the top right hand corner of the copper plate of

Rājapāladeva (OHRJ, X.No.3, pp. 57-60) outstretched hand and moon are embossed. The hand signifies the benedictor and the moon suggests their Sōmavanshī origin. The Bastar-Rāja-family records also claim the family descent from the lunar race of the Pāṇḍavārjuna-Kulā; such as:

- (i) Sōmavansha Pāṇḍavārjunakulē Jātaḥ
सोमवंशपाण्डवार्जुनकुले जातः (E1, XII, 242)
- (ii) Shri Somavansha Pāṇḍavarjunakule Jātaḥ
श्रीसोमवंशपाण्डवार्जुनकुले जातः (Dalaganjana Singh. 1856)
- (iii) Shri Sōmavansha Pāṇḍava Arjuna kē Santāna
श्रीसोमवंश पाण्डव अर्जुन के सन्तान (Mitranatha Thakur, 1908)

Even the local historian of Ratanpur kingdom, Bābū Rēwārāma (1858), referring to the kings of Bastar, records that they belong to 'Sōmavansha'.

The mention of "Sōmavansha" in the aforesaid inscriptions and Genealogies establishes the fact that the dynasty under study belonged to the family of 'Moon'. In ancient India many dynasties traced their origin to the Moon or the Sun (Kākatiyas call themselves belonging to solar race) and claimed to be Ksh triyas by virtue of such origins. The claims of the Sōmavanshīs of Bastar are similar and therefore they may be regarded as Kshatriyas.¹

While tracing the origin of the Somavanshis of Bastar it is not difficult to link them with the Chālukya branch of lunar dynasty. We have the definite proof of this linkage, because in the Copper plate Inscription of Rājapāladeva [OHRJ, X(3) 57-60] of this dynasty, it is revealed that he belonged to Chālukya Vansha: श्रीरक्षपालदेव राजा चालकीवंशराज्यपरियन्त × × × जबा लै श्री चालकीवंश राजा तब लै × × × (Shri Rakshapāladeva Rājā Chālki-vansharājyapariyanta × × × Jaba lai Shri Chālki-vansharājā tab lai.

Actually from the above observation it is definite that the Sōmavanshīs of Bastar belonged to Chālki vansha.

In the statement prepared by Lal Kalindra Singh, about the:

1. Temple in his Report on the Administration of the Central Provinces for the year 1862, page 80 opines "The Bastar Rajas call themselves Rajputs, but they appear to be mixed lineage, Good and bad."

history of Bastar (recorded in Rajafamily papers by R.B. Panda Baijnath), it is told that the following folksong is very much prevalent in Bastar:

चालकीबंस राजा, डिबडिबी बाजा,
पेंग परजा कोसरिया राजत ।
पीता भतरा श्रेंदकुरी महारा,
जाड़ा हलबा तेंदुमुड़ी पनिया लाबा ॥

Chālkīvansharājā, ḍibḍibī bājā,
Peng Parjā Kōsariyā Rāut
Pitā Bhatrā Andakurī Mahrā,
Jārā Halbā, Tendū muṛī Paniyā lāwā.

This song is very popular and known to literate as well as illiterate aborigines in Bastar especially in Dantewārā, Jagdalpur and Konḍāgaon tahsils.

Thus we see that the Somavanshīs of Bastar belonged to Chālukya dynasty and had their origin in the Hastinapur in North India. Though we are not definite about the relationship of each of the three branches of this Lunar Chālukya dynasty with the other, it is clear that due to various circumstances that prevailed upon them and out of necessity, they had to move away from their original homeland, first to Mathurā (Dalganjan Singh, 1856), then to Orissā (Jeypore, Ibid) then to Wārangal, and finally to Bastar where they ruled for about five hundred years.

The Bastar Rāja family claims its descent from the Somavanshī (Dalganjan Singh, 1856; Kalindra Singh, 1908; Mitranath Thakur, 1908) King Virabhadra:

वीरभद्रो महाराजो बाणं त्यक्त्वा सशूलधृक् ।
आगत्य मथुरां श्रेष्ठं पुरीं चिरमपालयत् ॥ 2 ॥
ततः शूलं परित्यज्य सशक्तिर्वीरकेशरी ।
तत्याज मथुरां पुण्यां सोऽयं जयपुरं ययौ ॥ 3 ॥¹

1. Virabhadro mahārājo bāṇaṃ tyaktwā sashūladhṛk āgatyā mathurām Shreṣṭhām purīm ciramapālayat. tataḥ shūlam parityajya sashaktivīrakēśarī tatyāja mathurām puṇyāṃ sōyam Jayapuram yayaū.

"The great king, Vīrabhadra, discarding an arrow resorted to Shūla trident of Shiva came to the best city of Mathurā and ruled it for a long time" (Stanza 2) "Afterwards renouncing trident, King who was the foremost among the warriors possessed a missile presided by Devi At the very time he also left the holy city of Mathurā and went to Jeypore" (Orissa) (Stanza 3).

A perusal of the history of the Kākatiya dynasty in Andhra Pradesh would reveal that Vīrabhadra, the real founder of the Chālukya dynasty, first founded his kingdom at Niravadyaprola in West Godavari district. Niravadyaprōlu, now known as Niḍadavolu in West Godavari district, was a famous strong fort of the Eastern Chālukya times. After the shifting of the capital from the Andhra to the Dravida country by Kullottunga Chōḍa I, each of the later Chālukya princes became the governor of a local fort and held sway over its dependencies. Of such Chālukya forts Niravadyaprolu was one. Its rulers made their political position strong by contracting marriage alliances with the neighbouring feudatory families, like the Haihaya Princes of Koṇamaṇḍala (SII, V, Nos. 124-25). These Chālukya princes were reduced to vassalage by Gaṇapatideva of the Kākatiya family during the eastern campaign. Yet in accordance with the general policy followed in respect of the conquered princes. Gaṇapatideva gave his daughter Rudrāmbādēvī in marriage to prince Virabhadra (Epigraphical Collection, No. 343 of 1921) of the Chālukya family of Niravadyaprola, and secured their friendship and co-operation in his further political endeavours and in the administration of the country. Niravadyaprola remained a Kākatiya stronghold until the subjugation of the Telangana by the Muslims. An inscription on a pillar in the temple of Someshwara Jutting, Tanuk Taluka, West Godavari district informs us that Vīrabhadra of the Chālukyavansha married Kakatiya Gaṇapati's daughter Rudrammā Mahādevī:

श्रीमत्काकतिवल्लभाद् गणपतिक्षोणीशचूडामणेः

जाता राज्यरमेव रुद्रमदेवी स्वरूपान्विता ।

तौ सीमास्यबलाद् उदूह्य बोधिवच्चात्कयवंशाग्रणीः

धर्मीभारधुरं धरो विजयते श्रीवीरभद्रेश्वरः ॥

Gaṇapati (1198-09) had no sons, but only two daughters: Rudrāmbā and Gaṇapāmbā. Of these Rudrāmbā was born to his queen Sōmā and the later was the daughter of Bayyamām-bikā who married the Koṭa Chief Bēta:

कोन्नातनाडी विषयाधिनाथः श्रीकेतराजः × × × तस्यात्मजो रुद्रराज इति श्रुतः ।
तस्मात्.....वेतभूपालसूर्यः । वेतश्मापतिशेखराय गणपक्षोणीश्वरेण दत्ता श्रीगणपाम्बिका ॥

(Yenamandala Inscription of Gaṇapāmbā, Epigraphia Indica. III. 94).

Gaṇapati nominated Rudrāmbā as the ruler of the Kākatiya domain after him. This is further confirmed by a statement in the Pratāparudrīya (ed. K.P. Trivedi, Bombay Sanskrit and Prakrit Series, No. LXV, p. 149) that Gaṇapati seeing that he had no male issue, decided that Rudrāmbā should succeed him and gave her the male name Rudradēva or Rudramadēva Mahārāja:

मंत्रिणः—एवमेतत् । अन्यया कथमीश्वरप्रसादादुते निरंकुशं स्त्रीव्यक्ति-विशेषस्य
लोकाधिपत्यम् । एवं मानुषशम्भुना गणपतिमहाराजेन अभ्यन्तरस्यानुभवमहिम्नः सट्टशमत्र पुत्र
इति व्यवहारः कृतः । तदनुगा च रुद्र इत्याख्या ।

In the Koṭagiri copperplates of the reign of the Kākatiya queen Rudramambā (1273 A.D.), it is stated:

स्वस्ति श्रीकाकतीशो गणपतिनृपतिः तस्य सा रुद्रमाम्बा
पुत्री लोकैकवीराजनि रजनिपतेः निष्कलंका कलेव ।
तस्यां पृथ्वीमुदयैः अरिदमनभयावर्जितैरजंयन्त्यां
लोकोददीप्तैः प्रतापैरकृत सुकृतिनामघ्नीरप्रहारम् ॥

(Hyderabad Archaeological Series, No. 6)

“The Lord of the Kākati was Gaṇapati. To him was born a daughter Rudramāmbā the sole Champion of the World, and, spotless like the crescent of the moon. While she was firmly holding the earth with her fierce and flashing prowess which terrified the enemies with fear to death, the greatest of the virtuous founded an Agrahāram.” The Kaluvacheru Inscription of Anitalli states that after Gaṇapati's death his daughter Rudramadevī protected the earth as well as he did:

पितर्युपरते तद्वदरक्षदखिलां स्थितिम् ।

वीररुद्रमदेवीनि दुहिता महितागुणैः ॥

Pitaryuparatē tadvadarakshadakhilām Sthitim.

Vīrarudramadēvīti duhitā mahitāgunais.

The Malkāpuram stone-pillar inscription of Rudradeva (JAHS, IV (III) and (IV) i.e. Rundrāmbā, dated 1261 A.D. tells us that Rudrāmbā was actually ruling at the time of the grant:

शास्त्रेया चतुरम्बुराशिरशना श्रीरुद्रदेवी भुवम्

Shāstryēṣā Chaturamburāshirashana Shrīrudradēvī
bhuvam.

As already stated above Rudrāmbā was married to the Eastern Chālukya king Virabhadra, the one referred to be the founder of Chālukya dynasty of Bastar; but like her father she had no male issue. She had two daughters; namely Ruyyammā and Mummuḍāmbā. She gave her younger daughter Ruyyammā to Annayadēva ruling over southern Kalinga. Her elder daughter Mummuḍāmbā was married to Eastern Chālukya Prince Mahādēva. Mahādēva with his wife Mummuḍāmbā had two sons, namely Pratāparudra and Annamarāja. Though the younger brother Annamarāja or Annamadēva is not referred to in the inscriptions found in Andhra Pradesh, but Dantewārā Inscription of Dikpālādēva (EI, XI . 242) mentions that Annamarāja, the founder of the Chālukya dynasty of Bastar, was the younger brother of Kākati Pratāparudra:

काकती प्रतापरुद्रनामा ओरंगलदेशे समभवत् × × × तस्य भ्राता धन्मराजा ।¹

Bastar chronicles give us to understand that both Prāvāparudra and Annamadēva were sons of Mummuḍāmmā:

कौसल्यासीत्प्रथम जननी देवकी च द्वितीया

विष्णीर्भ्राता तदनुमहिता मुम्मडम्मा तृतीया ।

यस्त्रेतायां रघुपतिरभूदापरे कौरि रासी-

त्वातुं क्षोणीं किल भुवि कलौ वीररुद्रावतारः ॥

1. Kākati Pratāparudranāmā Aorangalādēshē samabhavat x x x tasya
bhrātā Annamarāja.

प्रतापरुद्रे त्रिदिवंगते तदा, तस्यानुजन्मान्मदेवराजः ।

ओरंगलंशक्तियुतं विहाय, सखदगपाणिर्नृप बस्तरेऽगात् ॥¹

“Bow to the God Gajānana whose face is elephant like. Kaushalyā was the mother of Viṣṇu (In Ramavatāra). Secondly Devakī was the mother of Viṣṇu in Krishna-incarnation. Thirdly after these two Mummaḍamā, one who was revered by all, was the mother of Pratāparudra.”

“After the death of Pratāparudra, his younger brother Annamadevarāja ruled and made his city of Wārangal fortified. But he abandoned the city and went to Bastar with sword in his hand.”

According to the Pratāparudrīya Rudrāmbā had no male issue and so at the express command of her father she adopted her daughter Mummaḍambā's son:

स्वीकृते पुत्रभावेन दोहिले पितुराश्रया ।

अस्मिन् विधेहि धीरेये गूर्वीमूर्वी धुरामिति ॥²

So in the Malkāpuram stone Inscription of Rudrāmbā (JAHS, IV, Pts. III, IV) dated 1261 A.D., the word 'putra' is used to mean an adopted son. The Malkāpur stone-pillar Inscription (JAHS, IV) further mentions that Rudrāmbā had a son (adopted) called Shri Rudradeva:

यस्याः काकतिवंशमौक्तिकमणैः श्रीरुद्रदेवः सुतः ।

तस्याः किं कथयामि वैभवमतः श्रीरुद्रदेव्याः परम् ॥³

In the year of the Mulkāpur inscription both Gaṇapati and Rudrāmbā are mentioned together and so we might infer that

1. Kausalyā sitprathama Jananī Devakī cha dwitiyā
Viṣṇorbhrātā tadanumahitā Mummaḍammā tritīyā
Yastrētāyām Raghupatirabhūddwāp urē shaurirāsi-
tnātum kshōṇīm kila bhuvi kalau Vīnarudrāvataraḥ
Pratāparudrē tridivam gatē 'adā tasyānujanmānnamadeva rājāḥ
Orangalam Shaktiyutam Vihāya Sakhaḍgapāṇirṇp Bastarēsgāt
2. Swikṛtē putrabhāvena dāuhitrē piturairaya
asmin Vidhēhi dhaurēyē gurvīmurvīdhurāmīti
3. Yasyāḥ Kākativamshamauktikamanēḥ Shrirudradēvaḥ Sutaḥ
Tasyāḥ Kiṁ kathayāmī bhaibhavamataḥ Shrirudradēvyāḥ param

in 1261 A.D. Rudrāmbā was probably widowed and in order to guarantee the royal successor after him Gaṇapati made her to adopt her grandson Pratāparudra. The adoption must have taken place sometime before 1261 in order that Pratāparudra might figure as the son of Rudrāmbā in the above inscription. It is obvious that Pratāparudra was a small boy at the time, otherwise the king would most certainly have placed him on the throne instead of installing his own daughter and thereby saving the troubles that follow in the wake of a woman's succession to the throne.

And as a matter of fact there was trouble in the kingdom owing to foreign invasions and internal rebellion; for the Yādavas of Devagiri, the traditional enemies of the Kākatīyas, siezed the occassion and invaded the country. In the introduction to Hemādri's *Vrarakhaṇḍa* we have a 'Rājaprasasti' in which it is said that King Mahādēva, the Yādava king, who succeeded his brother Kṛṣṇa in 1260 A.D. never killed a woman, a child or one who submitted to him; knowing this and being greatly afraid of him, the Andhras placed a woman on the throne:

अयं शिशुस्त्रीशरणागतानां हन्ता महादेवनृपो न जातु ।

इत्थं विनिश्चत्य ततोऽतिभीतैरन्ध्रैः पुरन्ध्रीं निहिता नृपत्वे ॥

It is further mentioned in the 'prasasti' that the Yādava king took in battle the elephants and the five musical instruments of the ruler but spared the life of the ruler Rudrama as he refrained from killing a woman:

यस्तस्यैव रणे जहारा करिणस्तत्पञ्चशब्दादिकान् ।

यस्तस्याज वधूवध्रादुपरतः तद्भूमजं रुद्रमाम् ॥२

Tradition has it that Rudramā lived to a ripe old age of eighty years. It is known definitely that she died in 1296 A.D. Marco Polo says that the country was for forty years under sway of

1. Ayam shishustrisharāṇāgatānāṃ hantā mahādēvanr̥pō najātu
Itthaṃ viniśchitya tatōtibhītairandhrāiḥ purandhrī nihitā n̥ratvē
2. Yastasvaiva ranē jahāra kariṇa statpanchashabḍādikān
yastatyāja vadhūvadhāduparataḥ tadbhūbhujam rudramam.

the queen—a lady of much discretion.

The earliest inscription of Kākati Pratāparudra is dated 1290 A.D. which must be the year when Rudramā retired from active work. During the years 1290-93 Pratāparudra was known by the name Kumāra - Rudradeva—Mahārāja. The appellation “Kumāra” indicates either his young age or his heir-apparentship.

Pratāparudra with his brother Annamadeva received training both in arms and letters and Pratāparudriyam refers in glowing terms to his literary achievements:

गोष्ठीभिः परितोषयन् बुधगणान् षड्दर्शनीसीमभिः
सत्सारस्वतमार्गदर्शनचर्णैः सुकृतैः कवीन् प्रीणयन् ।
संगीतोपनिषद्ब्रह्मस्यपि शूनैरातोद्ययोकर्म-
धिन्वन् संसदि वैणिकान् विहरते श्रीकाकतीन्द्रो नृपः ॥¹

(प्रतापरुद्रीये नायकप्रकरणम् 21)

Pratāparudra II, Mummaḍambā's son, Annamadeva's elder brother and Rudrāmbā's grandson, was the last king of the dynasty. He ruled the kingdom of Wārangal from 1296 to 1323 A.D. In the early years of the 14th century the war-like activities of the Muslims under the Sultan 'Ala-ud-din' Khalji created an alarming situation in the Deccan. Though, in the initial stages, Pratāparudra could successfully foil the evil designs of the Muslim general Malik Kafur, the Andhra Kingdom ultimately fell into the cruel hands of the alien rulers. The fall of Wārangal marked a turning point in the political history of Bastar and his younger brother Chālukya Annamadeva established a new kingdom in Bastar on the ruins of the Nāga dynasty.

It is somewhat curious to note that almost all the scholars working on the ethno-history of Bastar, such as Jenkins (1827), Elliott, (1856: 24-25), Temple (1862), Glasfurd (1862: 250-6), Keilhorn (EI, IX.165), Russell (1908: 20), de Brett (1908), R.B. Hiralal (1913: 242; 1916: 135, 1939: 40, Sil (1922 : 40), Grigson (1938: 3-4), and Elwin (1947) etc., have concluded

1. Goṣṭhībhiḥ paritoṣayan budhagaṇān Ṣaḍdarśanī simabhiḥ
Satsāraswatamārgadarśanacharṇaiḥ sūktaiḥ kavīn prīṇayan
Sangītopaniṣadbrahasyapi śūnairātōdyayogyakramaiḥ
dhinvan samsadi vaiṇikām virahate Śrī Kākatindrā nṛpaḥ.

that Annmadeva and his descendants belonged to Kākatiya dynasty of Bastar. This together with the Pravīra Chandra Banjadeva's (1956) statement that Bastar Rājās belonged to Kākatiya dynasty led to the belief that Annamadeva was the younger brother of Pratāparudra and because Pratāparudra was a Kākatiya ruler of Wārangal, there should be no controversy in holding the view that Annamadeva was also a Kākatiya. Perhaps Dantewārā Inscription of Dikpāladeva (E1, XII.242) was the main cause of this confusion which records:

श्रीसोमवंशपाण्डवार्जुनकुले काकती प्रतापसूत्र नामा राजा श्रीरंगदेशे समभवत्
 "Shri Sōmavamsha Pāṇḍavārjunakule Kākati Pratāparudra Nāma Orangadēshē Samabhavat."

These scholars and one of the descendants of the Rāja family seem to have jumped to the conclusion that because Pratāparudra was a Kākati his brother Annamadeva was also a Kākati. They could not care to give attention that how a dynasty of lunar race (Somavansha) could change into the solar race. We know that Kākatiya belonged to solar race. They could also not scrutinize the copper plate inscription of Rājapāladeva, nor they paid attention to the local traditions of 'Chālkībansarājā.' Hence the confusion. This erroneous view should now be discarded in view of the incontrovertible and overwhelmingly strong testimony of the inscriptions of the Kākatiyas of Wārangal and Chālukyas of Bastar. In spite of the fact, that as early as in the year 1974 (Lankā Kī Khoja), Allahabad). I discarded the theory of the Kākatiya origin of Bastar kings and proved that they belonged to the Chālukya dynasty, scholars have still not changed their views. Not only this, even some of them have dared to contradict my views without giving any solid proof.¹

•Origin of the Chālukya Kings

Munḍā bards and chroniclers of Bastar regard the Chālukyas

1. Tripathi (1977) and Jha (1980: 108-112) hold the view that Annam Deo belonged to Telugu-Chōḍa dynasty and he ruled over Bastar from 1422 A.D. There was another Annamdeo of Telugu-Chōḍa family, but he died in the year 1416 A.D.

as Pāṇḍava-Kula born. To suit their purpose they narrate a story which is so popularly known as "Pāṇḍavārjuna Kula" (E1, XII.242) myth in an inscription also. There in that story, it is stated that the "Rājās of Bastar are the Kshatriyas of the family of the moon, and it is mentioned that after many generations of the family had lived in Delhi, their household deity instructed the Rāja, then on the throne of Mathurā, to proceed to Jeypore (Deccan) for the sake of conquest. The Rājā with all his people numbering many lakhs set out, founded a kingdom, and established his capital at Wārangal." The account given by the Rājās of Bastar regarding the events at Wārangal and subjection of that kingdom by the Muslims are mixed up with much puerilities (Lāla Dalaganjan Singh, 1856; Lokanātha Thākūr, 1853; Mitranātha Thākūr, 1908; Kalīndra Singh, 1908; Kedānāth Thākūr, 1908).

Thus the origin of the Chālukyas of Bastar is lost in obscurity. A legendary account of their origin occurs in Dantewārā Inscription (E1, XIII. 242), which reveals that they were Śomavashīs. The chronicles also claim that the forefathers of the Chālukyas migrated from Delhi¹ to Mathurā, then from Mathurā to Jeypore (Orissa) and lastly settled in Wārangal, wherefrom they came to Bastar.

From the above facts we may infer that like several other ancient royal families, the Chālukyas too wanted to connect their origin with the lunar dynasty, and therefore, included in their records an account of their miraculous birth from the great Epic Hero Arjuna. The present Chālukyas of Bastar, who can be proved to be the descendants of the Chālukyas of Bastar, also claimed to be Chandravanshī Kshastriyas.

A still later tradition sought to trace the origin of the Chālukyas of Bastar from Delhi² and Mathurā. According

1. वरंगा हस्तना ले उतरै महाराजा

मंधोता में डेरा लिहिन बाज

हजूर प्रभु बाना बांधे

(Munda Folksong)

Warangā hastana lē utarain Mahārāja

Mandhotā men dērā līhin āj

hajūr prabhu bānā bāndhē

2. तुस्कान हस्तिनापुर छोड़िके ओरंगलदेश मो प्राये (Dalaganjan Singh 1856)

Turukān Hastināpur Chhōṛikē Orangaladesha mō āyē.

to this story, Yudhiṣṭhira was the founder of the Chālukya dynasty and his descendants ruled there for 1700 years, 11 months and ten days (Kedāranātha Ṭhukur: 1908: 136-137). The anachronism involved in this story is apparent, because the state of Delhi did not exist for such a long period.

Since the Moghul period the ruling families of North India become well known for their courage and bravery. Delhi and Mathurā, therefore, come to be regarded as the abode of the Kshatriyas, and many families in India sought to enhance their pedigrees by connecting their origin with those of the Rājputs. In the story relating to the origin of the Bhunjas we find the same attempt, but it cannot be said to have any historical basis. South Indian Inscriptions (X.360) refer to Vīrabhadra as "Adi-Chālukya" and also reveal that he was ruling at Nirayavadi in West Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh. This seems to be the original place of the Chālukyas of Bastar.

Genealogy

Records and accounts, legends and traditions unanimously give the credit of the foundation of the Chālukya rule in Bastar to Annamarāja or Annamadēva, who was a scion of Pāṇḍava Arjuna. In Bastar folksongs Annamadēva, the first Chālukya to reign in Bastar, is spoken as Chālkībansarājā' which may be corruption of 'Chālukya Vansha'. But there is a lot of controversy regarding the time of this remarkable man. The Bastar rāja family manuscript of 'Bastarrāja Vanshāvalī' (*Dalaganjana Singha*, 1856), the earliest available chronology on the Chālukya rulers of Bastar, makes our confusion more confounded when it states that he occupied the throne on Samvat 1370, Vaisakha Sudi 8, on Wednesday i.e., in 1313 A.D. while the later scholar *Sil* (1922 : 40) says that after reigning for forty-five years he enjoyed the company of gods in 1415 A.D. If we accept the former date, Annamadēva becomes contemporary ruler to Pratāparudra, which is obviously unacceptable. Pratāparudra's brother Annamadēva left Wārangal and established his kingdom at Bastar. The fall of Wārangal in 1323 A.D. and the death of Nāga king of Bastar in 1324 A.D. (EI, X.40) are the incidents which are self explanatory. The proximity of Bastar to Wārangal, the synchronism

of the decline of Nāga rule in Bastar and the foundation of Chālukya rule there, lead us to believe that Annamadēva was installed as a Chālukya king of Bastar in the year 1324 A.D. We can not accept the view proposed by Edward Jay (1970: 215) and others Annamadēva established himself as the first Mahārājā of Bastar in the year 1450 A.D. Like Jay other scholars such as Elliott (1856), Glasfurd (1862) and Grigson (1938) are ignorant of the happenings and incidents of Wārangal. Jay has only imitated them.¹

No records of Annamadēva in Bastar are available until we come to the reign of Dikpālādēva towards the beginning of the eighteenth century. Political history of the time of the King Dikpālādēva and his predecessors is supplied by only an inscription, viz. Dantewārā Inscription of Dikpālādēva (EI, IX.165; XII.242) of 1703 A.D. combining the facts stated in this inscription, the following genealogy may be reconstructed :

1. Annamarāja, brother of Kākati Pratāparudra.
2. Hamīradēva.
3. Bhairava (Bhairāja) dēva.
4. Purushōttamadēva.
5. Jayasimhadēva.
6. Narasimhadēva (his queen Lachhamī dei dug many tanks and planted gardens),
7. Jagadīsharāyadēva.
8. Viranārāyanadēva.
9. Vīrasimhadēva (married Vadanakumārī, a Chandēla Princess).
10. Dikpālādēva (married Ajabakumārī of the Chandēlas, visited the Danteswarī temple in Samvat 1760, A.D. 1703).
11. Rakshapālādēva Kumāra (mentioned in one copper-plate also).

The above mentioned inscription does not supply us with

1. Dabey (1983: 98) has mixed the descriptions of the Kākatiya and Telugu-Chōḍa dynasties and has established without any proof that Kākatiya Pratāparudra Dēva lost his life in a battle with Ahmad Shah Bahmani in 1424 A.D. and Annam Deo established the kingdom of Bastar in 1424-25 A.D. This shows his utter ignorance of the South Indian history.

any historical information about the political events of Dikpāladēva's predecessors.

Only three records of the successors of Dikpāladēva are available. Thus no records of the successors of Rakshapāladēva or Rājapāladēva are available in a chronological order. Local traditions and records kept in Bastar collectorate, however, mention two successors and Chālukya rulers of Bastar after Rājapāladēva:

12. Dalapatidēva

13. Daryāodēva (mentioned in one Inscription).

The country was ultimately conquered by the Bhōnsala in 1780 A.D. Thus, ended the Chālukya rule in Bastar.

THE FALL OF WĀRANGAL

The great kingdom of the Western Chālukyas which flourished over 150 years declined about the middle of the twelfth century, and one of their feudatories, the Kākatiyas, taking advantage of their master's weakness, asserted their independence.

The founder of the Kākatiya royal house was a certain Durjaya of the "caturthakula" of the solar race. The earliest known king of this line was Beta I (1000-30 A.D.) who ruled the Koravi country included at least a part of modern Nalgonda district of Andhra Pradesh. He was succeeded by his son Prola I (1030-1075), in recognition of whole military services his overlord western Chālukya Sōmeshwara I granted him the country of Anmakōṇḍa Vishaya. The former was succeeded by his son Beta II (1075-10), who was a subordinate to Western Chālukya Vikramāditya VI. Beta II was succeeded by his son Prola II (1110-58). He took advantage of the political situation following the death of his overlord Western Chālukya Vikramāditya VI and declared independence and started on a military campaign. Rudra I (1158-1196), son and successor of Prola II, avenged his father's death by defeating the Velanāṭi chiefs who had to surrender the Karnālu region to the victorious Kākatiya ruler. Rudra I was succeeded by his younger brother Mahādēva (1196-99) who was killed in a battle by Jaitugi, the Yādava ruler. Kākatiya Ganapati, son of Mahādēva, came to throne in 1199

A.D. He was the greatest ruler of the dynasty. He made Wārangal his capital, which he developed as the most beautiful city. Gaṇapatideva was succeeded by his daughter Rudrāmbā (1209-96), whom he brought up as a son. She was married to Vīrabhadra of Chālukya dynasty, ruling at Niravadyaprole or Nidadavole in West Godawari district.

Pratāparudra II of Chālukya family was the grandson of Rudrāmbā and was adopted by her as the heir apparent because she had no male child. Pratāparudra was the last king of the dynasty. He ruled the kingdom from A.D. 1296 to 1323.

The year 1323 A.D. sealed the fate of Wārangal. After the final subjugation of the Marāthā kingdom the whole of the weight of Muslim invasion to the South fell on the kingdom of the Kākatiyas of Wārangal, who resisted with all their might the fury of the invading forces; but the oft-repeated invasions, no doubt, broke the morale of the Hindus and paved the way for the success of the Muslims. The kingdom of Wārangal was finally conquered in 1323 A.D., and brought under subjection by Ulukh Khān. The sun of independence set over the land of Andhras. Pratāparudradēva, the last Kākatiya monarch who led his myriad armies on successful military expeditions to far off countries in the south and won many a stubborn battle, was taken captive.

The 'Bastarrājavanśhāvalī' (1853) recalls his valour in the following lines:

नवलक्षनुर्धराधिनाये पृथ्वीं शासति काकतीयसूत्रे ।
 अभवत्परमायुहारपीडाकुचकुम्भेषु कुरंगलोचनानाम् ॥
 प्रतापरुद्रदेवस्य पुरकाञ्चनवर्णम् ।
 यामार्घमहर्त्तकालं पुरा वै यजहेतवे ॥
 प्रतापरुद्रनुपतिस्साक्षाद्द्रोणसम्भवः ।
 शिवार्चनपरो भक्तो माणिकीशक्तिसेवकः ॥

"While Rudra belonging to Kākatiya dynasty was ruling the earth and had under his control nine lakhs of archers became the foremost destroyer of the suffering of women whose eyes were like dear. He played the part of knights in the mediaeval age.

There was the showering of the gold in the city of Rudrā-pratāpadēva and he spent half his night time in performing sacrifices."

'King Rudrapratāpa was himself the second incarnation of Rudra. He devoted himself to the worship of Shiva and was also devoted servant of Mānikyēshwarī.

Bastar-accounts on Pratāparudradēva seem to be based on Muslim chronicles and they lack in evidence. They record that Pratāparudra was taken captive and sent to Delhi along with his treasurers, and relations. According to the Vilāsa Grant of Prōlaya Nāyaka (Sarma 1945: 100-09):

Sultān Ahmad, the lord of Turuskas made great enmity with Pratāparudra. Those who were left of the slain by Jāmadagni Rāma, were completely destroyed by the Sultān, who was a 'Iaya-Kāla' to kings. The powerful Virarudra who had excellent brave warriors conquered seven times the Sultān who had nine lakhs horses. But, he, though proficient in political science, though possessed of great strength, and though aided by other kings, came under the control of the lord of the Turuṣkas by the diminution of the fortune of the circle of mankind. While he was being led with special effort by the lord of the yavanas to his city Delhi, he, ordained by fate, reached the habitation of the gods on the bank of the river, Sōmōdbhavā, (i.e. Narmada.)

अथैवं शासता तेन तुरुष्काणामघीश्वरः ।
अहंमदसुरलाणी महद्वैरं समाचरत् ॥
भूपाललयकालेन येन निः शेषतां गताः ।
जामदग्न्येन रामेण हतशेषा महीभूतः ॥
वीरोद्भटस्तोपि वीररुद्रः प्रतापवान् ।
अजयस्सप्तकुत्वस्तं नवलक्षाश्वसाधनम् ॥
नीतिप्रणस्तोऽपि बलाधिकोऽपि सहाययुक्तोऽपि च वीरभद्रः ।
भाग्यक्षतेर्मानुषमण्डलस्य तुरुष्कभर्तृवंशतामयासीत् ॥
स नीयमानो नगरीं स्वकीयां दिल्लीं प्रयत्नाद्यवनेश्वरेण ।
सोमोद्भवायाः सरितः प्रतीरे देवादसीस्त्रिदशाधिवासम् ॥

We learn from this account that he did not reach the imperial capital Delhi, but committed suicide on the banks of the river Narmadā, on the way to Delhi, having been probably overpowered with grief and humiliation. This appears to be the real import of the statement in Bastarrājavanshāvalī (1853) that Pratāparudradēva departed to the world of gods:

प्रतापरुद्रे त्रिदिवं गते तदा तस्यानुजन्मानमदेवराजः ।
ओरगलशक्तियुतं विहाय सखदगपाणिर्नृप बस्तरेऽगात् ॥

and his younger brother Annamadēva abandoned his city of Wārāngal and went to Bastar with sword in his hand. The above fact is corroborated by Kaluvaceru grant of Anittalli (ibid) and Tārikh-i Firuz Shāhī (ed, III, p. 367) that says when Sultān Muhammed sent the Rai of Telingānā to Delhi the died on the road.

Ulugh Khān stayed in Telingānā to consolidate his conquests and organise the administration of the country.

The Muslim rule in Godāwarī region was very oppressive and tyrannical. What it was like can be better understood from the contemporary account furnished by the Vilāsa grant of Prōlaya Nāyaka (Sarma, 1945) of the Musunūri family which thus describes the piteous condition of the people in the subjugated country:

केचिदनाद्याः परिवाध्यमाना घनाय पापैर्विविधैरुपायैः ।
केचिन्निरीक्ष्यैव च पारशीकान् पर्यैत्यजन् प्राणनभस्वतोन्ये ॥ 23
द्विजातयस्त्याजितकर्मबंधा भग्नाश्च देवप्रतिमास्तमस्ताः ।
विद्वद्वरिष्ठैश्चिरकालभुक्तास्त्वैष्यपाहारिषताग्रहाराः ॥ 24
भ्राते कर्षणलाभे पापैर्यवनैर्बलात्कारात् ।
दीनादीनकुटुम्बाः कृषीबलाः नाशमापन्ताः ॥ 25
घनदारादिके नृणां कस्मिंश्चिदपि वस्तुनि ।
स्वायत्ततामतिर्नाभूद्भुवि तस्यां महापदि ॥ 26
पेया सुरा गोपिशितं च भोज्यं लीलाविहारो द्विजघातनं च ।
अश्रान्तमासीद्यवनाधमानां कथं नृ जीवेद्भुवि जीवलोकाः ॥ 27
इत्थं तैर्यवनभटैः प्रवाध्यमानं तैलिंगं धरणितलं सुरारिकल्पैः ।
जातारं कमपि हृदाप्यविन्दमानं संतेपे वनमिव दाववह्निज्जुष्टम् ॥ 28

"In a hundred sinful ways" says the grant "the rich were tortured for the sake of money. Merely on beholding the Pārasīkas (Musalmāns) some abandoned their lives. Brāhmaṇs were disallowed to perform their religious rites and rituals. Temples were destroyed and idols were desecrated and broken. All the agrahāras, which had long been in the enjoyment of the most learned, were taken away. Forcibly deprived of the fruits of their cultivation the husband-both the rich and the poor, got ruined. In that great calamity people could not regard their money, wives, and other earthly belongings as their own. The wretched

Yavanas (Musalmāns) revelled always in drinking wine, eating, cow's flesh, sporting in armour and killing the Brāhmans. When such is the case how could the world of living being exist? Situated as the country was without possibility of a saviour being conceived even in imagination of the land. Tilinga, tormented in this way by those Yavana warriors who were exactly like Rākshasas, was in flames like a forest surround by wild animals."

The above account must be taken as presenting a true picture of the state of the country after the fall of Wārangal as it appeared to the people of Gōdāvarī region of the age. A dispassionate study of the relevant facts shows clearly that this is neither exaggerated nor untrue. No doubts need be entertained about the oppressive character of the Muslim rule; the religious fervour and iconoclastic zeal of the Muslim conquerors who were at their height in those days, necessarily involved the adoption of an intolerant policy towards the Hindus. As a proof of their destruction of temples no evidence other than the temples of Bārsuru and Bhairamagaṛh (of Bastar) is needed. It is likely that many of the temples of Nala and Nāga periods in Bastar shared the same fate as the above. The statements regarding ryots and agriculture in the Vilāsa grant stand favourable comparison with those made by the contemporary writer Zia-ud dīn Barnī. He writes as follows:

"The first project which the Sultān formed, and which operated to the ruin of the country and the decay of the people, was that he thought he ought to get ten or five per cent more tribute from the lands in the Doab. To accomplish this he invented some oppressive abwabs (Cesses), and made stoppages from the land-revenues until the backs of the *Raiya's*, were broken. The cesses were collected so rigorously that the raiyats were impoverished and reduced to beggary. Those who were rich and had property became rebels; the lands were ruined, and cultivation was entirely arrested." (H.M. Elliot: History of India, III, 238).

The above passage refers to the condition of raiyats in the Doab country. Yet, it shows that it is not a whit different from what prevailed then in Gōdāvarī region.

Discontent and distress prevailed everywhere in Gōdāvarī region. People were no longer able to bear the oppressive and

tyrannical regime of the Muslim amirs, and other officers. No member of any of the ancient royal families dared to take up the cause of the Hindus and their religion and lead them to success. The mighty kingdom of Kākatiyas crumbled down and the only member of the royal family, Annamadēva, could escape to accept this new challenge of the Muslim invasions to the forests of Daṇḍakāraṇya.

The First Rebellion in Bastar: 1324 A D.

A study of the political condition of Bastar and surrounding regions of the time of the foundation of the Bastar kingdom will give us the proper background to trace the history of the Chālukyās and their relations with neighbouring powers.

After the fall of Wārangal in 1323 A.D. the whole of the Gōḍāvarī region passed under the sway of the Tughlaq emperors of Delhi. They appointed 'amīrs', 'maliks' and other officers of State to carry on the administration of this newly-acquired province. Armies were stationed at all important centres in the country, and the nature of the administration was military. Many unjust taxes were imposed on agriculturists and collected with an iron hand. Money was squeezed from the rich without any consideration. Brāhmans and cows were killed; agrahāras bestowed upon Brāhmin scholars by kings of yore, were confiscated, and all Brāhminical sacrifices and rituals were compulsorily stopped. Temples were desecrated and idols were broken. Drinking of wine, eating of beef, libertine indulgence, and Brāhman-slaying became the creed of the Musalmāns. Great was the approbrium and horror attached to the Muslim rule. The Muslim officers appear to have made a total war against the Hindus and their religion. The copper plate grant (Bharati, Vol. XIX. 1942, March) of Vilāsa is a very remarkable, though solitary, document of his reign which gives a graphic account of the Gōḍāvarī region under the Muslim domination. Their cruel and inhuman acts naturally evoked a keen yearning in the minds of the tribal sufferers to protect, even at the cost of their lives, the cow and the Brahman, the two visible symbols of their *dharma*, one, of spiritual and the other, of material prosperity. The well-being of the tribal society rested chiefly on agriculture which was dependent on the cow, by the regular performance

of Brāhminical sacrifices. The unwise policy adopted by the Muslim administrators, inflamed the Tribal intensely and a profound discontent prevailed all over the country. It knit them together for their emancipation from this oppressive political bondage.

The down-trodden tribes did not remain long under the heel of the Muslims. A movement to throw off the foreign yoke and protect their *dharma* and culture was set on foot in the Gōdāvarī region of Bastar. All the tribal leaders living therein joined together into a confederacy with a common purpose of freeing the country from foreign domination, and to re-establish tribal supremacy. Some old generals like Kolani Pratāpa Rudradēva and Annamantrī who had survived Pratāparudra, the last of the Kākatiya monarchs, came forward to guide the movement and its destinies. Annamadēva, the brother of Pratāparudra, of Chālukya family, was chosen leader of the confederates. Since the tribal record of Bastar region reappears from 1324 A.D., it seems reasonable, therefore, to suppose that in the same year Annamadēva and his confederates rose in rebellion against the Muslim authorities and freed their region from foreign domination.

Annamadēva became the acknowledged leader of the Gōdāvarī region and probably all the nobles in that region loyally obeyed his commands. He made Māndhotā in Bastar his capital and reestablished the tribal religion. Annamadēva established law and order in the country and set everything that was undone by the Musalmāns during their period of rule.

Annamadēva, son of Mahādeva and the brother of Pratāparudradeva, was the real founder of the Chālukya kingdom. He was the virtual '*Agastya*' to the ocean of the *Mlecchhas* (म्लेच्छाभ्युदिकुम्भाद्भवः).¹ It is clear from this that he had taken an active and almost the chief part in ejecting the Musalmāns. An ardent supporter of tribal religion, Annamadēva placed all his resources in men and material at the disposal of Prōlaya Nāyaka in the struggle for the liberation of his country and strove hard with the help of his brother and his relations to free it from the Muslim yoke. He knew the strength of the tribes lay in their union and so co-operated willingly with the other tribal nobles.

1. Mlēcchhāmbudhikumbhōdbhavaḥ.

Their combined efforts bore fruit and their object was achieved. Tribal supremacy was firmly established in the Gōdāvarī region.

THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT

Almost all the valiant generals, ministers, and officers of Pratāparudra known to us from his records had been either killed or taken prisoners on the battlefield. Only three of the old generals with his younger brother Annamadēva survived the catastrophe. They were Annamantri, Kōlani Rudradēva or Pratāparudra and Rēcērlā Singama Nāyaka or Singamaneḍu.

The first was Annaya, the gaja-Sāhini or the commander of the elephant forces of Kākati Pratāparudradēva. He is described (Sarma: 1945: Appendix) as the veritable fire in annihilating the *Yavanas*, and as the establisher of the throne of the *Adhyaksha* of the Telingana. He is also said to have received from Kolani Pratāparudra the village of Areḍu as an *agrahāra* at the time of a solar eclipse (Shrinatha: Bhīmēshwarapurāṇam, Telugu, Canto I, v, 49). The second was Kolani Pratāparudra. His inscriptions prior to 1323 A.D. have not yet been discovered. Yet, there is an evidence to show that he was a powerful commander until Kākati Pratāparudradēva. The *Sivaśāstānam*, a religious work in Telugu written by Kolani Gaṇapatidēva, a great-grandson of Immaḍi Rudradēva, brother of Kolani Rudradeva, furnishes interesting details about his ancestors describing his lineage. The author's family was originally known as the *Indulūri family*. It came into prominence during the reign of Gaṇapatidēva when the latter led successful expeditions against Veṇanāḍu and Kalinga. Sōmamantri was the minister of Kākati Gaṇapatidēva. He is said to have ruled the country to the east of Wārangal and conquered southern Kalinga. Kolani Rudradeva was the grandson of Sōmamantri and a junior contemporary of Annayadēva, son of Peda Gannāya, brother of Sōmamantri.

Kolani Rudradēva was the superintendent of the seventy two *durgas* (forts) in the Kingdom of Pratāparudra of Wārangal. The statement that he protected the stone fort of Wārangal so as to be commended by the Kākātēsha, and slew the *Yavana* lords, clearly proves that he had taken an active part in the

wars against the Muslims. That he survived the disaster that had overtaken Wārangal is proved by his Santamāgūlār inscription (Annual Report on South Indian Epigraphy, 1916, para 53), dated in the cyclic year, Kṣhaya, corresponding to 1326 A.D. which registers his gift for the merit of Kākati Pratāparudra.

The third was Singhaya Nāyaka of the *Rēcēra* family. He was a contemporary of Chālukya Annamadēva. The prince of this Rēcēra family became a great general in the Kākatiya army, won distinction in many a battle, wielded considerable political power and influence in the state.

Only these three generals of Kākati Pratāparudradēva are known to have survived him to see the sad plight of the country with the younger brother of Pratāparudradēva, i.e., Annamadēva. A new generation of leaders was yet in the making. The situation was so alarming that the Hindu religion had to discover its champion in the surviving Annamadēva and his three generals, and to move for the liberation of the country from the Muslim rule. The people were groping in darkness, as it were, not knowing what to do in those times of horror and harassment. They were in search of a powerful leader who could gather around him all the discontented forces in the region and raise the standard of revolt.

Chālukya Annamadēva grappled with the situation and gauged the depth of discontent prevailing in the land. Things reached at last such a state that only a bold stand and an intelligent lead was all that was required. He found that the country was ready to throw off the foreign yoke. Annamadēva with his old colleagues Rudradeva and Annamantri, therefore, gathered together the descendants of old feudataries, among whom particular mention may be made of Prōlaya Nāyaka of the Musnūri family, Prōlaya Nāyaka of the Koppula family, Vēmā of the Redḍi family, Singama Nāyaka of the Rēcēra family and Gaṇapati Nāyaka of Māncikōṇḍa family. It was more or less a confederacy of nobles recognising the gravity of the situation, came together for the common purpose of rescuing the country from the Muslim domination and of protecting and upholding the *Dharma* (The Kakatiya grant of Anitalli, dated 1423 A.D.).

The language of the Vilāsa, the Prōlavaram, and the

Kaluvaceru grants clearly suggests that Prōlaya Nāyaka of the Musunūri family was elected as a leader afterwards. It was apparent that Kolani Rudradeva and Annamantrī, being old, did not aspire for leadership. Their only anxiety was to see the country rescued from the grip of Muslims, and the Hindu *dharm* re-established. They probably found in Prōlaya Nāyaka a suitable leader in the circumstances then prevailing. When once choice had been made they co-operated with him in every possible way as commanders, advisers, and guides. The records of Vilāsa, and Prolavaram, no doubt, do not refer to Annamadēva; but having due regard to the position (younger brother of Kākati Pratāparudra) he occupied in the country at that time, it cannot be denied that he had a large share in choosing the new leader. Prōlaya Nāyaka was unknown to fame prior to 1323 A.D. He was not heard of before that date in any capacity either as a commander, or a Minister of state under Kākati Pratāparudra. So he could not, by himself, have commanded the confidence of the people, had he not been set up by Annamadēva, who as a real brother of Pratāparudradēva wielded more influence and power than any one alive in the country at that time.

It is, however, inexplicable why the choice had fallen on Prolaya Nāyaka in preference to Pratāparudra's younger brother, Annamadēva. (EI, IX.163). Probably it was due to the flight of Annamadēva to Bastar that Prōlaya Nāyaka had to be chosen as leader. Annamadēva would have suggested to Prōlaya Nāyaka to work to free Telingana from foreign domination and re-establish the Hindu supremacy. He would have received constant help from Annamadēva in this matter. When the whole country from Delhi to the south of Vindhya was in the grip of Muslims, and had no hope of escape from bondage, it was in Bastar that movement for independence was at first started, and brought to a successful termination.

ANNAMADĒVA (1324-1559) : THE FOUNDER OF CHĀLUKYA RULE

The various attempts made, and schemes planned and executed to overthrow the Muslim government in Wārangal, are not

known. Annamadēva must have made a mountain fastness of his rendezvous in the forest regions in the neighbourhood of the Godāvarī and the Indrāvati so as to be cut off reach of the Muslim officers and yet be able to harass them incessantly with his predatory raids into the country both above and below the Ghats. People in general must have fully co-operated with him and afforded him, though secretly all the help they could. It was indeed a momentous period in the history of the Bastar region. Being led and guided by the king of the lunar dynasty Annamadēva himself made the people a bold fight to save their religion and *dharma* and to re-establish the Hindu supremacy at Wārangal. At last the king's attempts were rewarded with success which infused in his mind as well as in the minds of the common people a new spirit and fresh hope and inspired them with indomitable courage to face the enemy in all their subsequent battles. The Vilāsa and Prōlavaram grants bear ample testimony to the new spirit that animated the Bastar people. The former states that Prōlaya Nāyaka, a feudatory Chief of Annamadēva, helped to free the country of Tilinga from the domination:

तस्यापि तस्यां भुवि राजधानी महीभूतो माल्यवतस्समीपे ।

गोदावरीप्रान्तभुविप्रशस्तां यां रेकपल्लीति वदन्ति देश्याः ॥

दानभोगोपयोगाभित्सर्वाभिर्वसुभूरिभिः ।

यातिचक्राम नगरमलकां चामरावतीम् ॥

मुक्ताफलैः विद्रुमभंगजालकैर्मणिम्रजैरुन्नतहेमराशिभिः ।

ऋद्धापणा या सततं विराजते धनेश्वरस्येव च भाण्डमोहभूः ॥

मतामघिष्ठाय पुरीं समृद्धां प्रोलक्षितां पुरुषतैजाः ।

भयास्तवैरिक्षितिपाललोकं प्रशास्ति पृथ्वी मिश्रशासनाकांम् ॥

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स प्रोलभुपो मसुनूरिवंश्यस्तथाविधं यावनमाधिपत्यम् ।

विश्वोपजीव्येन विश्वंखलेन व्यनीनशब्दाद्बलेन वीरः ॥

नाभास्य तेषां यवनाघमानां मंत्रः किमुल्चाटनकर्मकारी ।

दीना यदुच्चारणमात्रतस्ते दुर्गाणि संत्यज्य कुतोप्यभूवन् ॥

याः प्रजास्तमबाध्यन्त यवनेस्तामनूपमम् ।

प्रभवन्तं लभेवावु निन्दाघाता इव हवम् ॥

ये पीडितास्तुरुष्करनारतं मामुघा घोरम् ।

ते तानेव निजघ्नुवन्माध्यज महुत् क्यातम् ॥

इत्थं परास्य प्रबलं प्रपञ्चं यावनं बली ।

नष्टमापदि कष्टायान् धर्मं पुनरधीवृत्तम् ॥

"That king Prōla of the Musunūri family destroyed the oppressive supremacy of the Yavanas by the unrestrained strength of his arm which supported the 'Visva' or the world. Did his name become a 'mantra' to exercise vile Yavanas (उच्चाटन कर्षकास्ते) Because by hearing it merely repeated those despicable Yavanas abandoned the forts and disappeared from every quarter. Just as the people afflicted by summer heat resort to the cool waters of a lake, those that were harassed by the Yavanas took refuge under that powerful king, Prōla. The very people who were subjugated formerly to constant harassment by the Turuṣkas, put them to death; verily, the strength accruing from 'āshraya'—protection or shelter—is of great consequence. In this way having overthrown the mighty Yavanas world he, Prōlaya Nāyaka, revived the 'dharma' which was lost during the severe calamity"

∴ We have now to find out if Annamadēva freed the whole of the Telangana from the Muslim yoke:

प्रतापरुद्रे त्रिदिवं गते तदा तस्यानुजन्मान्मन्मदेवराजः ।

ओरंलशक्तियुतं बिहाय सखड्गपाणिर्नृप बस्तरेज्यात् ॥¹

"After the death of Pratāparudra his brother Annamadeva ruled and made his city Wārangal free. But he abandoned the city (for his feudatories), and went to Baṣtar with sword in his hand (Lokanath Thakur: 1853: 1).

The precise date of Annamadēva's conquest of Bastar is not known to us. It is certain that it must have been accomplished later than the 10th September 1324 A.D., the date of the Rājamahendrarvarman mosque inscription of Ghiās-ud-din Tughlaq and death of Nāga King Harishchandradēva (EI, 10: 40).

Annamadēva was biding his time for a favourable opportunity to emerge from his mountain fastnesses and pounce upon the Muslim armies, such an opportunity presented itself when Ghiās-ud-din Tughlaq died "in the month of Rabiul-awwal, 725 A.D." (February March 1325 A.D.; Farista, Vol. I, pp. 426-27), after his return from his expedition to Bengal. The crown prince, Ulugh Khān was busy in attending to the

1. Pratāparudrē tridivam gatē ta'ā tasyānujanmānnamadevarājah
Orangalashaktiyutam Vihāya Sakhaḍgapāṇirṇpa Bastarēgāt.

affairs nearer home and could not therefore have turned his attention to the south. Annamadēva did not lose this opportunity. Emboldened by the news of the death of the Sultān he sallied forth suddenly on the Muslim armies stationed at important centres, inflicted a series of defeats on them, reconquered the coastal region, and re-established the Hindu *dharma* and supremacy.

The very first inscription that testifies to these conquests is the Mallavarain stone record (Inscriptions of Nellore District, published by Butterworth and Venugopala Chetty, Vol. III, No. 3 of Vema Redḍi, son of Prolaya Redḍi. It was recorded in the year 1325 A.D. The next inscription in the time of Annamadēva is Santa Māgūlār inscription of Kolani Rudradeva, dated 1326 A.D. (Ibid). It is seen that he wanted to inspire confidence in the people by appealing to their sentiments in the name of Pratāparudra and reminding them of the happy days they had spent in his glorious reign. It might be that Pratāparudra's name was a magic touch to revive in the minds of the people loyalty and devotion to the cause taken up, and religious fervour required to fight out the Muslim aggressors. Any how, the references to Kākatiya Pratāparudra of Wārangal in the Vilāsa and the Kaluvaceru grants and Dōngar Inscription enable us to know how much his name was cherished, and with what endearment he was remembered by the people.

Annamadēva rebellion was the first of a series of revolts that broke out in the reign of Sultān Māhammad bin Tughlaq. He was the first acknowledged ruler of the Bastar country after Harischandradēva. That the region between the rivers Gōdāvarī and the Mahānadī was under his direct control is known to us from the Bastar Rājavanshāvalī (1856). In the same way his feudatory Prolaya Nāyaka was ruling the tract between Gōdāvarī and Krishnā (Vilāsa grant). He made his capital at Rēkāpallī (which became a part of Bastar after his death and remained up to 1780 A.D.) in the vicinity of Gōdāvarī in the neighbourhood of the mountain Malyavanta. Rēkāpallī is identical with the village of the same name in the Bhadrāchalam tāluk of Andhra Pradesh adjacent to modern Bastar district. It may not be far wrong to suppose that this region must have been the base of operations of Annamadēva before and during his fight with the Muslims. Vilāsa grant was recorded before

1340 A.D., because Prōlay Nāyaka died sometime about 1340 A.D. Annamadēva would have concentrated on Bastar due to the sad demise of his Lieutenant.

The above account is based on the inscriptions discovered from the South Gōdāvarī regions. Historians of Bastar have a different story to tell. According to them Annamadēva succeeded his brother Pratāparudradēva after his death (Lokanātha Thākur, 1853. Sloka 9), but was attacked by the Muslim army, before he had been on the throne many years. On the advice of his tutelary goddess he fled Wārangal when he was being pursued by Muslim invaders. He was accompanied by an enormous army; so numerous were they, that the archers alone amounted to nine lakhs.

The Muslims pursued them as far as the banks of the Gōdāvarī and came up soon after the whole of Annamarāja's army had crossed. It is said that the kings of Wārangal possessed the philosopher's stone which turned everything it touched into gold, and that this was the reason of the pertinacity with which the Muslims pursued him. Annamarāja, fearing the consequence of longer pursuit, determined to dispossess himself of the source of all the evil that had befallen him. Advancing, therefore, to the front of the Muslim army, he took the philosopher's stone (pāras), and in presence of all threw it into the river. He then pursued his flight into the interior. As he expected, the Muslims ceased the pursuit, they made many attempts to secure the philosopher's stone, but all in vain; once only did the drags touch the stone when they immediately became gold.

Annamarāja prayed his tutelary goddess to assist him. She directed him to advance and that she would follow, that, as long as he heard the tinkling of her anklets behind him, he was to proceed, and that he was certain of overcoming all who stood against him, but that, if he looked behind him once, fortune would desert his arms. He then with more confidence proceeded forward, but he took at the same time the precaution to secure his rear from attack. Perceiving that the chief of his palangin bearers was a man of good sense a great bravery, he gave to him the tract of the country known as the Bhōpāl-paṭanam Zamīndārī, to his shephard he gave to *Phulkāl zamīndārī*; and to his officers he gave Chintalnār, Bhījī and Sukmā.

Annamadēva founded the rule of Chālukya dynasty in Bastar

about 1324 A.D., after defeating the then Nāgavanshī ruler Harischandra Dēva (1300-24) Harischandra Dēva was the ruler of Chakrakōṭa-rāṣṭra (EI, 10.40). He is mentioned in the Temarā Satī Inscription of Saka 1246 (1324 A.D.). We know from the same inscription that his "chaste wife Mānikyadēvī entered eternity by entering into fire." This proves that he was killed by Annamadēva in a fierce battle (Kalindra Singh 1908). There is also another version of the story about Chiefships comprising the Sukmā Zamīndārī and the former Zamīndārīs of Chintalnār and Bhījī, now in the Kōṇṭā tehsil; the late Zamīndar of Sukmā always claimed that Chintalnār and Bhījī had been given to cadet branches of his family by his ancestors and that this family, though dependent on Wārangal, was established in Bastar at Sukmā before Annamadēva left Wārangal. There are traditions of Karṇa king in northern Bastar and of a Karnāṭaka king at Jagdalpur; and the legend still speaks of rājās of Kuākonda and Katekalyāṇa in Dantewārā tahsil, of the tailed rājās of Tīrathagaṛh in Jagdalpur tahsil, and of Annamadēva fighting to subdue the chief of Paralkōṭa, Bhairamgaṛh and Bārsūr. The so-called Kōyas (Dōrlās) of southern Bastar still have traditions of visiting king Pratāparudra's court at Wārangal. Till 250 years ago or less, Bastar retained several Zamindaris south of the Gōdāvarī and in the present Bhadrāchalam tāluk of Andhra Pradesh, which list the survival of the numerous petty gaṛhs tāluks, each loosely administered for the chief of Bastar by Dīwāns, or alienated to the various Zamindars or sub-chiefs, of whom only Bhōpālpaṭanam, Sukmā, Kuṭrū and Kōṭāpallī - Pāmēr survived during the British regime. In Kuṭrū there remained three or four sub-Zamindar's holding under the Zamindar. All these facts indicate that before Annama Dēva's arrival there was a nominal suzerainty of Wārangal over most of Bastar, the real authority resting with local chiefs or in the hands of the old tribal organisation that was so marked a feature of the mediaeval kingdoms of eastern central provinces and some of the Chhotanagpur and the Orissa states. This organisation has been duly outlined by C.V. Wills (JASB (NS) XV. 1919 : 197-262).

It seems that there must have been a strong Telugu infiltration in Bastar from the Nāga period (760 A.D.) lasting till the Muslim conquest of Wārangal (1323) and Annamadēva's

flight into Bastar (1324) after which the curtain fell upon the country till 1853, when it came into direct political relations with the British on the escheat of the Bhonsla-Maratha kingdom to which it had become nominally tributary. Of the infiltration the strongest remaining signs are the groups of Telāngānā villages that still survive like islands in the hearts of Bisonhorn Māriā and Kōyā tracts, chiefly in and around the administrative or religious centres of the old Telugu kingdoms such as Dantewārā, Bārsūr, Bhairamgarh, Bījāpur and Jagarguṇḍā. They were cut off from Telangānā when the south of the state was abandoned to Māriā and Kōyā tribes as a barrier against the Muslims. They have forgotten Telugu, and speak Gōṇḍī or Halbī, they observe most of the Māriā customs and festivals. In fact, there is little to distinguish them from their Māriā and Kōyā neighbours, and they are rightly known as Jhārī (i.e. Jungly) Telangāncaste, under which name they are described by Hiralal and Russell (*Tribes and castes of the Central Provinces*, Vol. III, pp. 238-42). But they still provide the priests and servitors of the tutelary deities of the old dynasties such as "Māṇikeshwarī at Bārsūr and even 'Danteswarī' and Pedammā at Dantewārā, and keep up old ritual in a degraded form. The Māriās of the Abujhmār hills seem to the most primitive and isolated "aboriginal" race of Madhya Pradesh; yet only a few miles of mountain and forest separate their habitat from those old centres of Telugu civilization.

Danteshwarī and Dantewārā

The above story has been repeated by Lāl Kālindra Singh (1908) with some alternations, here and there. There are different versions of this story. According to one version which was gathered by Glasfurd (1862) from the Place of Bastar, "Annama-dēva then marched against Dantewārā, another large town. He had arrived closed before the place, when in crossing the Dankinī river, the goddesses feet sank deep in the sand; not hearing the tinkling of the anklet Annamarāja turned round; upon this the goddess became angry and reproached him with his want of faith. Atleast, relenting, she replied that he might go and Conquer all the country within five day's journey, but that she could not further accompany him, and would remain when she wished.

Annamarāja went forward, and the goddess, who from the time was called 'Danteswarī' took the form of a poor beggar girl and went to the house of Bhaṇḍārī Nāyaka, and begged to be allowed to work for him. Believing that she was an orphan and destitute, the Nāyaka granted her request. One day while out gathering firewood for the family, a seller of glass bangles passed by. Danteshwarī asked him to fit a pair of her wrists, and assured him that she would pay him. The man then attempted to fit on some bangles, but they all broke, till at last his stock was exhausted. This day a small mound of earth is shown in the neighbourhood, which is called the heap of broken bangles. Seeing him much distressed, Danteswarī directed him to go to the Nāyaka and told him to ask for money out of an earthenware vessel in her room. The man did so. The Nāyaka much surprised, went to the place, and putting in his hand, grasped a handful of gold-mohurs. On Danteshwarī returning home the Nāyaka began to question her as to who she really was. She replied, that it would be no use to tell him, but he insisted on her doing so, or turning her out of the house as one possessed of evil arts. Then Danteshwarī resumed her proper shape, and the Nāyaka seeing her dreadful, visage fell down and worshipped her. Danteshwarī was, however, very grateful for the kindness she had received from Bhaṇḍārī Nāyaka, and appointed him to an important office about her own person. To this day the descendants of the Nāyaka hold some office about the temple at Dantewārā (Glasfurd 1862).

The same story has been retold by Kēdāranāth Thākur in his 'Bastarabhūshaṇa' (1908). According to him the founder of the family was Annamadēva who belonged to the royal family of Wārangal. On the advice of his tutelary goddess he fled Wārangal to escape the pursuit of the Muslim invaders. After traversing a long trek through the inaccessible areas followed by a mysterious jingle of bangles supposed to be the direction of the goddess who had instructed him through a dream not to stop unless the jingle disappeared and not to look backward so long as the sound was audible, suddenly stopped on the other side of the Pairī river. The jingle of the bangles was silenced on account of the noise caused by the wading of his followers through the water-bed of the river and Annamadēva looked backward in surprise. The sound had not finally disappeared.

and the river formed the boundary between Kānker and Bastar states. The hereditary high priest of the temple accompanied him so did also some representative Rājput families and their camp followers. With them was brought also the sword of Danteshwarī which in the new shrine dedicated to her in Bastar provides the symbol of the goddess and even today the sword is worshipped in the Danteshwari temple in Jagdalpur (Vide Kalindrasingh 1908). Lokanath Thakur (1853) has mentioned that the power of Annamadēva was centralised in this sword:

दिल्लीश्वरी श्री भुवनेश्वरी च
माणिक्यदेवी क्षुभदन्तिकेश्वरी ।
बाणं त्रिशूलं त्वय शक्तिखड्गे
क्रमेण देव्यः प्रददुर्नृपाय ॥

(Bastar-rāja-vanshāvalī, Sloka 10)

Annamadēva, having in the meanwhile conquered the whole country made his capital at Māndhotā, a place to the Westward of Jagdalpur. This is also verified from the Munda-folksong in honour of the founder of the Chālukya rule in Bastar in following verses:

बरंगा हस्तना ले उतरै महाराज
मंधोता में डेरा लिहिन आज
हुजूर प्रभु बाना बाँधे ॥
आधागढ़ मंधोता टीकागढ़ डोंगर
छलेगढ़ कोटपाड़ गुरुधर माभीपाल
किलाधर बस्तर तुम्हार
हुजूर प्रभु बाना बाँधे ॥
गुड़ी दरवारा एवे बैठे महाराज
रंगीन के माहुला लागै आज
होरे दरवार लागै आज, हुजूर प्रभु बाना बाँधे ॥
नेगी असा बैठे, जोगी असा बैठे
बैठे सैदार बैदार वहाँ बैठे, नेगी कपड़दार
हुजूर प्रभु बाना बाँधे ॥

This song is sung by the traditional bards at the time of Dusserā festival.

After dethroning Nāga king Harishchandrādēva and assuming power Annamadēva followed a liberal policy to conciliate the people. But those proved insubordinate had to be suppressed

by force. By adopting this double-edged policy, he not only consolidated his position but also extended his territory. It seems that while doing so, he had to face Bhānudevā III, the Gang-ruler of Orissa. Perhaps they were daggers drawn.

The extent of the Bastar Kingdom under Annamadēva is not definitely known. Lāl Dalganjan Singh (1856) states that it was bounded on the west by Mahadēva mountains, on the north by Pairi river (Magaraloḍa), on the south by the Godavari (Ḍamarūghāt), and on the east by Nāgulamāra. The total area of the state was 120 *Kōsa*.

Under the administrative system of the time of Annamadēva we find that in his time there were in total twelve Zamindaris, (Māniya), forty-eight Gaṛhs, twelve Mukāsīs, twelve Paraganā chiefs. The total number of paraganas were 84, in which 12 Mārjān, 12 Tagarān, and 12 Jhōrjān were very important (ibid).

Annamadēva established himself as the first Mahārājā of Bastar and ruled there for 45 years, from 1324 A.D. to 1369 A.D. Afterwards his alleged descendants have ruled Bastar right down to the Independence day. From 1324 until 1853, the state managed to remain independent though under constant political and military pressures from the Gangas, Kalachuris and Muslims at first and later from the Marathas. (Grigson 1938: 5-6, Glasfurd 1862: 256-9, 272-3; Elliott 1856: 32; Hiralal Shukla 1987).

Annamadēva, the founder of the kingdom of Bastar, as it appears from his military exploits, was vigorous besides being ambitious and adventurous. He was a man of lofty ambitions and with the power of his own sword and by his foresight and tact, he carved out an independent principality for himself. Though arrayed against the heavy odds, he emerged out successful and attained the dream of his life.

STRUGGLE WITH GANGAS FOR SUPREMACY (1369-1534)

The genealogy of the Chālukyas of Bastar after Annamadēva gives rise to some confusions. The 'Sanskrit rājavanshāvalī (1853) compiled by Lokanātha Thākur presents different

genealogy in comparison to the rest of the later genealogies compiled by Lāl, Dalaganjana Singh (1856), Lāl Kālīndra Singh (1908), Mitranātha Thakur (1908) and Kēdārānāth Thakur (1908).

From the Dōngar Inscription (E1, XII. 242) of Dikpālādēva we come to know that Hamīradēva was the son of Annamadēva. So the statement of "Sanskritarājavanshāvalī" that Virabhadra-dēva succeeded Annamadēva:

ततो महाबली वीरभद्रो भवन्नुपः

(Sloka 11)

is not corroborated by this epigraphical record. If we accept this fact that Annamadēva ruled here up to 1369 A.D. and the latest ruler Purushōttamadēva was killed in the battle field in the year 1534 A.D. by the Raipur Kalchuri ruler Mākhansingh, then we will have to assign 165 years for the three kings (according to the inscription Hamīradēva, Bhairamadēva and Purushōttamadēva), each of them ruling for 55 years, after Annamadēva. If we accept this on the evidence of the Inscriptional record, then we will have to declare the name of Virabhadra-dēva occurring in "Sanskrit-Vanshāvalī" as an interpolation.

Hamīradeva (1369-1410)

When Annamadēva died, his son Hamīradēva assumed the reigns of government in 1369 A.D. and ruled the kingdom in his own right independently. Thus, Annamadēva was succeeded by his son Hamīradēva or Hambīra or Hammīrarājādēva:

Hamvīra was a great warrior. He followed the aggressive policy and waged a number of wars to extend his Kingdom. "He while marching slowly in the course of conquest became a terror to his enemies and used his sword ruthlessly. He knew no forgiveness:

मुंचति मुंचति कोशं भजति भजति च प्रकम्पमरिवर्गान् ।
हंवरिवीरखड्गे त्यजति त्यजति क्षमामाश्रु ॥¹

(Sanskrit-Vanshāvalī, 12)

1. Munchati Munchati Kōsham bhajati bhajati prakampamarivargān
Hamvarivīrakhadgē tyajati tyajati kshamāmāśru.

The earlier part of Hamvīra's reign seems to have kept him busy in subjugating the petty princes ruling on the borders of his kingdom and annexing their territories. Meanwhile he also conquered the Pāṭṇā kingdom of Chauhān (Western Orissa) and married his son Bhairavadēva with the daughter of Vatsarājadēva of Pāṭṇā. The name of the princess was 'Padmā' (Arjuna Hōtā; Bastar Vijaya Nāṭaka 1941). He transferred his capital from Māi-hotā to Dantewārā (Hota, 1941).

Vatsarājadēva (1385-1410) was the third ruler of Pāṭṇā who succeeded Mahālingadēva. Enthused by the inviting nature of the political situation in the Godāvarī region, Vatsarājadeva of Pāṭṇā thought it to be a favourable opportunity to extend his authority towards Bastar. Accordingly he led an expedition to Bastar, and crossing the Indrāvati, advanced against Dantewārā, the capital of Bastar. His literary document 'Kosalānanda' bears evidence to his victorious campaign. This is the first class that history records between the Chālukya kings and Chauhāns kings (under Ganga monarchs) of Pāṭṇā. The literary evidence alluded to above incident records the death of Hammīr in the battle of Dantewārā in the year 1410 A.D. (Arjun Hōtā, 1941)

Hamvīra's son Bharavadēva acknowledged his supremacy Kosalānanda (XII.16-18). It is said that Vatsarāja could conquer Bastar only after propitiating Danteshwarī, the tutelary goddess of Bastar, and after that. Victory, he caused to worship that deity in several villages of his kingdom (Mullick, Short history of K. sala. pp. 99-103; S.P Das: Extent of Patna state and Sambalpur Raj, Journal of Kalinga Historical Research Society, Jan. 1950, p. 240).

Vatsarājadeva, the Chauhān ruler of Pāṭṇā, then contacted a matrimonial alliance with Bastar and gave his daughter Padmāvatī to Bhairavadēva, the son of the deceased king Hamvīra. This pushed Bastar under the Ganga supremacy, because Ganga kings of Orissa were the overlords of the Chauhān rulers of Pāṭṇā.

Thus Chauhān—Ganga supremacy was established on Bastar in the year 1410 A.D. This pushed the limit of Pāṭṇā state further southward up to the river Indrāvati, a tributary of Godāvarī. It linked the Pāṭṇā kingdom with the Bahmani

Kingdom of the erstwhile Hyderabad State. (S.P. Das: JKHRS, Jan. 1950: 239)

All the historians while writing the history of the Chauhān dynasty of Pāṭṇā have stated that in the year 1410 Bastar was annexed to Patna Sambalpur—Rāja and it remained as a gaṛh up to 1841 A.D. (S.P. Das: JKHRS, Jan. 1950: 241). Even the 'Bengal and Agra Annual Guide and Gazetteer, Vol. II' (1841) accents this while recording the following fact "By 1841, the political power of the Sambalpur Darbār had greatly waned and some Rājās had got out the pale of the Sambalpur. These were Bastar, Pallahara, Rāigarh and Surgujā. We find the same account in 'Kosalānanda' (XII. 16-18). Arjun Hōtā. (1941) also seems to prove this. Even in the records of Rēwā state of the time of Purushōttamadēva (Vīrabhānūdaya Kāvya, Lucknow, 1938, Canto 2: 63-63) we find the statement that in 1540 A.D. a scion of Chauhān Vansha was ruling over Bastar. But from Bastar side we do not find such records of Chauhān supremacy in Bastar.

Bhairavadeva or Bhairājadeva (1410-1468)

After Hammīradēva, his son Bhairavadēva (1410-1470) became the ruler of Bastar.¹ Throughout his long reign, he was struggling with the neighbouring states and was always involved in battles. For his courage and valour, he was well known "He averted the danger of his subjects and won over the favour of *Shiva*. He was the repository of the qualities like bravery and generosity:

भैराजदेववृत्तिप्रैजाभयनिवारिकाम् ।

शौर्योदार्यगुणगारा शिवभक्ति वशीकरोत् ॥

Bhairājadevanīpatirprajābhayanivārikām

Shauryōdāryaguṇāgārō Shivabhaktim Vashī Karōt.

(Sanskrit Vanshāvalī, Sloka 13).

Bhairavadēva was the son-in-law of the Chauhān-ruler Vatsarāja dēva of Pāṭṇā. We get from 'Kosalānanda Kāvya' that

1. Khandika Ballal Shah (1437-62) of Chanda (founder of Chanda) was his contemporary (Begbie 1909.38).

Bhairavadēva had cordial relations with the then Pāṭṇa ruler Bairājaladēva (1410-30) and Bastar was still a vassal to Pāṭṇa state (Das: 1950, Ibid.). This is also supported by the Kōsalānanda':

बैजलो नृपशार्दूलः

बौद्धाधीनो खिमिण्डीशो तथा वस्तरभूपतिः ।

Baijalo nṛpaśārdulāḥ

Bauddhādhiśho khimiṇḍiśho tathā Vastarabhūpatiḥ

It seems that Bhairājadēva had three wives. The first wife was "Padmā" the princess of the Chauhān family of Pāṭṇa. Secondly, he married the daughter of Sukmā Zamīndār. The name of this Sukmā-rānī was Jānakī Kunwar Dhanī (Kālindra Singh, 1908).

The third wife was Meghāvatī, the daughter of Korakoṇḍa king, whom he married in the 'Swamvara-vidhi (Self-chosen marriage) as the Sanskrit Vanshāvalī (1.53) records:

मेघावती महारानी भैराजस्य मनोरमा ।

सुशीला सुन्दरी सूक्ष्मा माणिकीशक्तिसाधिनी ॥ 4 ॥

भैरवं देवमन्याश्च प्रार्थयित्वा स्वयंवरे ।

कोर्कण्डनूपतेः कन्या धर्मपत्न्याभवत्यधोः ॥¹

"Meghāvatī, the wife of Bhairāja, was talented and loved Bhairāja. She was well-behaved, beautiful, tender and worshipper of Māṇikyadēvī.

The daughter of the Korkaṇḍa king, became wife of Bhairavadēva. She having chosen him in the self choice marriage not thinking of anybody else."

According to the legendary history provided by Kālindra Singh Meghā or Mēghāvatī was skilled in hunting. She possessed a huge gun which is today preserved and is called 'Kālbān'. People say that the 'Meghīsārī' in Dantewārā temple was presented to the Goddess by Meghā queen. It seems that

1. Mēghāvatī mahārānī Bhairājasya manōramā
Susnīla Sundarī Sūkshmā Māṇikīśaktisādhinī
Bhairavaṃ devamanyāścha Prarthayitvā swayamvarē
Korkaṇḍanūpateḥ Kanyā dharmāpatnyābhavanprabhōḥ.

she was a Nāga princess of Bhairamgaṛh. She is still worshipped in this region.

The Korkoṇḍa or Korukoṇḍa is a ancient region in the vicinity of Gōdāvarī in Andhra Pradesh. It was the capital of Mummaḍi Nāyak in 1357 A.D. (Epigraphical Collection, No. 44 of 1912) near Rājamahendravaram. It seems that Korukoṇḍa chiefs rose to power only after the downfall of the Kākatīyas of Wārangal. The Korukoṇḍa record (E1, XIV.88) refers to Kōsamī Nāyaka's victory over the Pandays. During the fourteenth century Korukoṇḍa region was converted into a strong and formidable fortress on the north bank of the Gōdāvarī. Meghāvatī seems to be a princess of this Nāyaka-family. It is thus, evident that the Kingdom of Bhairavadēva was contiguous, in the south, with the dominion of the Nayakas.

The Gajapati king Kapilēndra (1435-68) ruled at this time in Orissa. It seems that Kapilendra could not tolerate Bhairājadēva exercising power in the fertile valleys of Indrāvatī and Godāvarī, because Bhairāja threatened Kapilendra's authority again and again by armed incursions. So Kapilēndra led an expedition against the ruler of Bramarakūṭa and with the help of his trusted Minister Gopīnātha Mahāpātra he seized the Bhramarakūṭa. Bhairavadēva was killed in this battle (R. Subrahmanyam: The Suryavanshi Gajapatis of Orissa, Waltair, 1957, p. 32).

Bhairavadēva was ruling from Datewārā and the Chauhān rulers (Hota 1941) and Gajapati rulers seized this capital many times. From the above description it is apparent that uptill 1468 A.D. Bastar was known by its traditional name "Bhramarakūṭa" as found in the inscriptions of the Nāga kings of Bastar (760-1324 A.D.)

Reddī Campaign Over Bastar

In the course of this invasion, Kāṭaya Vēma, Allāḍa and his sons conquered the Chālukya Kings of Bastar also. A sloka in the Vemavaram plates of Allāḍa son Vēma Redḍī describes (E1, XIII, 252-53) his conquests as follows:

मल्लाडकितिपालवेमनृपतेस्फीलप्रतापानलैः

चूर्णः पूर्णशिता रटन्ति कटयः सापल्लवा पल्लवाः ।

लीनं मीनकुलं जले स्थितविला भोगश्च नागानुहा
यावो यान्ति त्रिणानना निविशते सन्धी गजानां पतिः ॥

The verse describes the devastating effect of Vēma's valour of forest-fire, on the ruling princes of Bastar. In this verse the terms denoting rocks, hogs, tender-sprouts, the fish-tribe, snakes, Cobras, Cattle and elephants are symbolically ruling chiefs of the different tribal groups in Bastar. We very well know about the *Sindavansha* of Bastar in the early mediaeval age.

Sapta Māḍias subjugated

The Vēmavaram plates (E1, XIII.242) of Allaya Vēma dated in Śaka 1356 (A.D. 1413), state that he over an Kalinga, conquered the kings of Saptamāḍiyas and set-up pillars of victory Simhācalam and Purushottama (Cuttack).

जित्वा यः षट्सप्तमाह्वयनृपान् कान्त्वा कलिगक्षितिम् ।

सिंहाद्रे पुरुषोत्तमे षट्जयस्तम्भान् संजुम्भयधात् ॥

Two contemporaneous Telugu works, name 'Bhīmeśvara Purāṇam' and 'Kāshikhandaṁ' (1.69) written by Srināth, while mentioning in detail the countries subjugated by Allaya Vēma Reḍḍī, state further that he defeated the Gajapati, the king of Oḍḍe land (ओड्डेधहातुनाथ oḍḍedhātṛnātha) or Orissa.

According to 'Bhīmeshwarapurāṇam' Ariyeti Lingam, the minister of Allāḍa Reḍḍī conquered the lords of Sapta Māḍe, Bārahdonti and Jantarunāḍu and offered protection to the Pulinda Kings of the Nāga family of Rambhā.

Both Allāḍa Reḍḍī and his son, Vēma Reḍḍī are credited to have conquered the kings of the Māṇne Sapta Māḍiyas:

जित्वा यः षट् सप्तमाह्वयनृपान्

and Bārahdonti. What were these Māṇne Sapta-Māḍiyas and Bārahdonti and where were they situated? Sapta Māḍiyas or Sapta-Māḍis mean seven Māḍiyas, एडु माह्वयन् or एडु माह्वयन् in Telugu. The term Māḍiya, same as Māliya or Mālya is derived from 'mala', a mountain. The highlands of Bastar formed by the irregular chains of Bailāḍilā and Abujhmār are called Māliyas. They are the habitat of the forest tribes,

namely the Māṛiyās. From the very ancient times the whole of this tract appears to have been divided into seven divisions. Even today it forms one of the seven Māṛiyas into which the highlands of the Ba-tar district are divided, and bears the name 'Māṛiyān.' With the help of this identification it becomes easy to emend Kālavendipuram or Kālahanḍipuram of the inscription on the eastern border of Māḍiyas.

Jhāḍeshavana

Jhāḍeshavana which is identical with Jhāḍe of the Kāshikhāṇḍam, is said to have been subdued by Allāḍa's son Vēma. It means a great forest. Even at the present day the tribes of northern Bastar are known as 'Jhōṛiās' and the area is called 'Jhāṛiān' or Jhōṛiyān'. 'Jhāḍeshavana' or 'Jhāḍkhaṇḍa' is identical with the ancient Mahākāntāra ruled by Vyāghrāja who is referred to in the Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudragupta (Fleet: Gupta Inscriptions, 7.1. 9). The Jhāḍe comprises the modern north Bastar region, and atleast a great portion, if not the whole in the middle of the Daṇḍaka forest, and maintaining friendly terms with the Yavana caused his master Allāḍa Redḍi to rule Telangānā. Linganamantri effected these conquests on behalf of his master Allāḍa Redḍi hence, they are virtually the conquests of Allāḍa Redḍi himself. The subjugation of Jhāḍe, Jantarunāḍu, Sapta Māḍe, Bārahonti and Oḍḍadi are also ascribed to Allāḍa Vēma in 'Kāshikhāṇḍam' and 'śivalilāvilāsam'. The latter work informs us that Allāḍa Vēma brought into subjection, the countries of Sapta Māḍe and Oḍḍadi and defeated the Pallava kings and the knigs of Nandapura and Rāmpā. The conquest of Sapta Māḍe is mentioned in 'Bhīmēshwarapurāṇam' Shivalilāvilāsam, Kāshikhāṇḍam, Bhīmakhāṇḍam of north Bastar. The capital of the 'Jhāḍeshvana at that time was Ḍongar and belonged to Halbās. It was the Halbā king of Jhāḍeshvana or Ḍongar who was defeated by Allāḍa Redḍi and his son, Vēma Redḍi. Allāḍa Redḍi issued his coins in 1425 A.D. This conquest must have been effected prior to that date.

Purushōttamadeva (1468-1534)

Bhāiravadēva died in 1468 after anointing Purushōttama as the king. It is astonishing to note that a Purushōttam of the

same name was a ruling Gajapati chief of Orissa in the same period. Gajapati Purushōttama of Orissa ruled the kingdom for about thirty years (1468-97) and reconquered the whole of his lost country during the last years of his rule. After Purushōttama his son Pratāparudra (1497-1538) succeeded the throne of the Gajapatis of Orissa.

"These were the '*Narapatis*' established at Satāra, the *Gajapatis* at Cuttack, the *Rathapatis* at Bastar, and *Ashwapatis* at Ratanpur for the conveyances which it was the privilege of each family to use (P. Vans Agnew: A Report on the Subah or Province of Chhattisgarh, Written in 1820, p. 2). They formed together a strong hold to fight against Muslims.

The title of "*Rathapati*" was awarded to Chālukya Purushōttama by the Gajapati Purushōttama in Puri-festival in the year 1490 A.D. Being recognised by the Gajapati king, the Chālukya king became his friend and thus Bastar became free from the Gajapati-Yoke. With this trinity of friends, Purushōttama conquered all the quarters and won over 'Hari' by constant meditation. He also performed penance near saline ocean:

पुरुषोत्तमदेवस्तु कृत्वा दिग्विजयं तदा ।
ध्यात्वा लवणसिन्धौ वै तपसा तोषयद्गरिम् ॥

(Sanskrit Vanshāvali 16)

God Vishnu being pleased, favoured him with Saubhadra and endowed him with twelve auspicious *chakras* i.e. Circular marks and he caused a best Chariot to be prepared at the town of Bastar and got the title of "*Rathapati*":

सौमद्रं दत्तवान् विष्णुश्चक्रदादशसंयुतम् ।
वस्तरे नगरे राजा साधितं स्वन्दनोत्तमम् ॥

(Ibid., Sloka 17)

He prepared chariots of both kinds—light and heavy—by virtue of *Vishnu* powers. He and his wife ascended on it at the festival of Durgā:

विष्णुशक्त्या तया तं वै कृत्वा लघुगुरुन् द्विधा ।
साधुदुर्गोत्सवे तस्य चारोहणमकारितः ॥

(Ibid. 18)

Thus, Purushōttamadēva is the pioneer of 'Rathayātrā—Mahotsava' in Bastar and amalgamated it with 'devijātrā.' Kēdārnāth Thākur (1908: 138) has recorded the local story prevalent in the tribes of Bastar, according to which Purushottamadēva visited the shrine of Jagannātha Purī moving by his belly from Bastar to Puri and offered valuable presents to the god. This festival, today in Bastar, is known as 'gōnchā' festival.

At page 172 of the Durga District Gazetteer (Nelson, Nagpur 1910) it is stated that the original Zamīndār of Guṇḍaradēhī was granted the estate together with the title of "Rāya" by the ruler of Ratanpur named Vāhar (1480-1525) for his help in repelling an invasion by the Rājā of Bastar in A.D. 1525. This means that Purushōttamadēva had invaded the Kalachuri Kingdom of Vāhara in which Vāhara was killed, as we find that Vāhara ruled there upto 1525 A.D. only. After defeating the senior branch of Haihayas, he moved to the Junior branch of Raipur. It seems that Purushōttamadēva used to bear the title of Divyadēva. He invaded the territory of Raipur. Mākhana Singha repulsed the invasion and was award 42 villages of Guṇḍaradēhī Zamindar as Jagir in 1534 A.D. by the ruler Raipur (Durga district Gazetteer, Nagpur, 1910).

The northern campaign of Purushōttamadēva was more than a success. The Ratanpur Records throws light on this campaign. But it does not describe in detail.

Thus Purushōttamadēva ruled for 66 years. He died in 1534 after his defeat in Raipur. He was succeeded by his son Jayasinghadēva, who paved the way for the infiltration of Kalachuris and Baghel in Bastar.

STRUGGLE WITH THE KALACHURIS FOR SUPREMACY (1534-1602)

In mediaeval period Chhattisgarh had been ruled by the Rājput kings of only one dynasty which is popularly known as the *Haihaya Vanshu* or the *Kalachuri* dynasty. The kings of this dynasty ruled Chhattisgarh from the early part of the eleventh century to the middle of the eighteenth century, probably one of the longest periods of the reign by a single dynasty during the mediaeval period of Central India.

The *Hathaya* kings were popularly known as '*Ashwapatis*' while the Bastar kings were known as *Ruthapatis* (Agnew: 1820: 2). The later mediaeval period under study is the culmination of the fall of the *Haihayas* or Kalachuris of Chhattisgarh. Political history of the time of Vāhara (whom Purushottamadēva defeated in a battle) is supplied by three inscriptions, viz., the Kosagain Stone Inscription of Vāhara (C11, IV, No. 103), Raipur Stone Inscription of Brahmadēva (ibid, No. 107) and Khalārī Stone Inscription of Haribrahmadēva dated 1413 A.D. (ibid. No. 108).

From the above inscriptions, it is clear that towards the last quarter of the 14th century A.D., Ratanpur family of the Kalachuris split up into two branches. The mainbranch contained to rule at Ratanpur while the younger branch established itself at Raipur (Wills, 1919: 198). The main capital of the younger branch was at Raipur while a second capital seems to have been established at Khalvāṭikā (modern Khallārī).

The above mentioned three inscriptions do not supply us with any historical information about the political events of Vāhara's (1480-1525) predecessors. The Kosagain stone Inscription of his reign indicates that Vāhara had shifted his capital from Ratanpur to Kosanga and from there, he used to raid the Pathāna outposts. His Minister Mādhava, as stated in the inscription, had obtained victory over Pathāns. No facts are available about the Afghans, who are evidently Pathāns referred to in the inscription. No records of the successors of Vāhara are available. Local traditions, however, mention twelve successors of Bāhara Sahāi who is evidently identical with king Vāhara. According to Rēwārāma (1858) they are as follows: Kalyāna Sāi (1525-83), Lakshmīśāi (1583-91), Sankarasāi (1591-1606), Kumud/Mukunda Sāi (1606-17), Tribhuwana Sāi (1617-32), Jagamōhana Sāi (1632-1645), Ādila Sāi (1645-1659), Rāmājīt Sāi (1659-85), Takhatsingh (1685-89), Rājasingha (1689-1720), Sardārsingh (1720-31) and Raghunāthsingh (1732-45). The country round Ratanpur was ultimately conquered by Bhāskara Pant (the Brāhmaṇa general of Raghūji Bhōnslā of Nagpur in 1740) from Raghunāth Singh, the Hathaya Chief.

Of the Raipur branch of the Kalachuris, two inscriptions are available (C11, IV. Nos. 107, 108). The inscriptions record

that Rāmachandra (1375-1400), the father of Brahmadēva (1402-25) inflicted on Bhojīgadēva of the Nāga dynasty of Kawardhā. In the absence of subsequent records, no information about the successors of Brahmadēva is available. The branch was annexed by the Marathās towards the middle of the 18th century. Thus ended the rule of the Kalachuris in Chhattisgarh.

There is some indication that at one time (1536 A.D.) in the sixteenth century A.D., Kalachuris in the leadership of Kalyāna Sāy (1525-83) reduced Bastar to the position of a tributary. Hewitt has categorically shown that in the year 1536 A.D., the tribute for the Rājās of Bastar, Sambalpur and Kālāhaṇḍī was fixed at Rupees 5015 (Wills: 1919: 238-39). Chisholm (Report, Para 56) also admits that Bastar was under the rule of the Rājās of Ratanpur.

King Kalyān Sāy the son of Vāhar Sāy of Ratanpur, was a powerful ruler. There were many tributaries under him. Among them mention may be made of Bastar, Lānjī, Ambāgarh, Kānker, Khariār, Phuljhar Sāranggarh, Kharōṇḍe Sambalpur Chāndrapur, Saktī, Kauriā Surgujā etc. He had also visited Delhi and Agra, in the court of Emperor Jahāngīr about which mention had been made in 'Jahangir Nama.' Through these sources it also appears that during the reigning period of Kalyān Sāy, the kingdom of Ratanpur had an annual income of Rs. 6.5 lakh. Again, the King Kalyān Sāy had an army of 14 thousand men at his command (2000 Swordsmen, 5000 Knivesmen, 3600 Riflemen, 2600 Bowmen, 1000 Horsemen, 116 Elephantmen). Besides an army of more than fourteen thousands, he had the reserved army at every garh under the supervision of Dewān, who could be summoned at any moment, and could be assigned any task.

From the above description, it appears that the kingdom of Ratanpur was dominating the political scene of central India, and had interactions and alliances with many big and small kingdoms of the region.

Jayasinghadeva (1534-1558)

After the death of his father Purushottamadēva in a battle with Kalachuri, the Chālukyas of Bastar accepted the

sovereignty of Kalyāna sāy. Purushottamadēva was succeeded by his son Jayasinghadēva (1534-58):

जयसिंहो जयो युद्धे नृसिंहो भूमिपालकः

(Sanskrit Vanshāvalī, Sloka 19)

He was an incompetent king. During his reign the Baghel ruler of Rēwā (M.P.), Vīrabhānu (1500-40), captured Bastar, and scored easy success in the year 1540 (Vīrabhānūdaya Kāvya Canto 2. Sloka 63-67). He levied tax on the King Chandaḥāra (Jayasinghadēva). The Kāvya mentions that at that time Bastar was annexed to Pātṇā state. Jayasingha's position was even now precarious and insecure. He was between two powerful foes, the king of Ratanpur and the King of Rēwā. When he came to know of the strength of Kalāyansāy, in order to strengthen his position he made an alliance with Pātṇā kingdom.

Narasimhadēva (1558-1602)

After Jayasinghadēva's death, the king who was the successor and son is herein referred to as Narasimhadēva. He was in great trouble as he had to face the invasions of the Kalacuris, and the Chauhāns and the Baghēls in successive periods.¹

Kalyān Sāi (1525-83) was an absolute monarch of Chhattisgarh exercising unlimited power. Kalyān Sāi died in 1583. Before dying he nominated Lakshmī Sāi (1583-91) as his successor. Lakshmī Sāi gave himself over to vice and tyranny and his reign was signalised by the loss of overlordship on Bastar. When his son Shankar Sāi (1591-1606) came to throne, he set on to crush the revolts of Bastar king Jayasinghadēva. He invaded Bastar and seized the fort (Rewarama 1588). The success of the Kalachuri forces was, however, short-lived. A wave of revolts spread throughout Chattisgarh. The Chauhān rulers of Pātṇā were having a coveted eye on Bastar and they could not tolerate this action of the Kalachuri king.

It has been pointed out in the previous Chapter that Balarāmadēva secured from his brother Narasimhadēva the

1. Bābaji Ballāl Shāh, the Gond ruler of Chanda, was his contemporary (Begbie 1909.38).

territory of Sambalpur where he built a kingdom independent of Pātṇā. Balarāmadēva was a great warrior and had a reputation for his military activities long before his coming to Sambalpur. He was sent by his father Hāthīdharadēva to help Gajapati Mukundadēva when Orissa was invaded by Bayazid of Bengal in 1568 A.D. He was the then commander of an army consisting of 32000 foot, 30 elephants and 700 horses (Kosalānanda, Pātṇā MS XXII, 49-50). He rendered valuable military service to his brother Narasinghadēva when the latter succeeded to 'guddee' of Pātṇā about 1573 A.D.

Narasinghadēva of Bastar took the advantage of the change of Government in Orissa and declared himself independent. The ruler of Bastar emulating the Chauhāns attempted to assert his authority over western Orissa and occupied many parts of Pātṇā region. Narasinghadēva of Bastar took active steps to restore the power and prestige of the bygone days. He preceded the usurpation. And at one time he became the overlord of the Chauhān king Narasinghadēva.

Later on Chauhān king Narasinghadēva assisted by his brother invaded Bastar. At last the Rājā of Bastar yielded the power to Narasinghadēva of Pātṇā and again accepted the paramountcy of the Pātṇā Kingdom (Kosalānanda, Sonepur Version XX.1-5). Narasinghadēva was the last Chauhān Rājā of Pātṇā and after his death the power of his house steadily declined. During his rule, he partitioned his kingdom between him and Balarāmadēva and allowed the latter to carve out the semi-independent kingdom of Sambalpur beyond the river in order to check aggression from Rājās of Bastar.

In the course of time (1590 A.D.) when the Pātṇā rulers became weak, Narasinghadēva again declared himself as an independent king. Taking the advantage of the chaotic condition of South Kosala Vikramāditya (1597-1624) the Baghel king of Rewa invaded Bastar and compelled the Rājā of Bastar to be a tributary chief of Rewa state. It remained a tributary of Rēwā till the aggression of the Qutb Shāhi dynasty (Gururāmapyāre Agnihōtrī, Rēwā Rājya kā Itihāsa, Bhopal, 1972, p. 57).

From the evidence of the Dōnger Inscription (EI, XII. 242) we know that the name of the queen of Narasimhadēva was Lachchamī dēi who saw that many tanks were dug and gardens planted (Hira Lal 1916: 155). This tells about the prosperous

state of Narasinghadēva.

Narasinghadēva's rule may be said to have ended in 1602 A.D. Narasinghadēva was a great warrior, a profound scholar and an considerable architect. From the moment he ascended the throne he strove hard to safeguard the interests of the Bastar kingdom, and to maintain its integrity and independence. Though he was not able to extend his authority far beyond the frontiers of his kingdom which he inherited at the time of his succession, he succeeded till almost to the end of his rule in preserving in intact in spite of the repeated incursions of the Chauhāns, the Kalachuris, and the Baghels. He also committed the same folly as his predecessor in further retaining the division of country between himself and Halbā king of Dōngar. This retention weakened the kingdom further and made it easy to be preyed upon by the two powerful neighbours, the *Gujaratis* of Kalinga and the *Ashwapatis* of Ratanpur, who had ever been casting a covetous eye on it. From his alliance with the Gajapati Narasimhadēva came to be hated still more bitterly by the Qutb Shāhi ruler, who regarded this alliance as an unholy act and made it a pretext to occupy the kingdom.

STRUGGLE WITH THE QUTB SHAHI FOR SUPREMACY (1602-1680)

Pratāparājdeva (1602-1625)

In Dantewārā inscription (EI, XII, 242) the genealogical list does not mention the name of Pratāparājādēva. But from Rāja-family accounts we find that Pratāparāja was a ruling chief. It is also proved by the description of Ferishta and Qutb-Shāhi. It is conjectured that Pratāparāja was a Halba chief and this is why his name has not found place. The Ferishta should be accurate when he says that he is Gōṇḍrājā. We have no other sources to prove whether he was a Gōṇḍ or a Chālukya.

Narasimhadēva was succeeded by his son Pratāparājādēva, who is invariable called by the Muslim historians as Pratāp Shāh (Ferista) or Pratāp Rāo or Pratāp (Qutb Shahi). Ferishta (Vol. III, 481) calls him a Gōṇḍ king.

Pratāparājadēva was a very powerful and intelligent king:

प्रतापराजस्तु महान्प्रतापी बुद्धिमान्नुपः

(Skt. Vanshāvali 19)

In 1602 A.D. Pratāparājadēva came to the throne. He conquered 18 Halba-forts round Dōngar and assigned them to his younger brother as an appanage (Sil: History of Central Provinces and Berar, 1917, p. 115; Brett, 1909). It seems that within three generations of this event the Bastar branch of the family became extinct and there after both Dōngar and Bastar came under Rājapāladēva (1709-21) of Junior branch.

Pratāparājadēva gradually rose to power and set up his independent rule when the Kalachuri-Chauhān power was on the wane. At the time when he was building up his power and acquiring considerable influence on the politics of the land, the country was politically under several tribal chiefs, each ruling his dominion as a sovereign prince. The northern Bastar was under the rule of Halbas, who rose to power in the 12th century A.D. at the time of the Nāgas. During the period of the rule prior to Pratāparājadēva, the Chālukyas nominally exercised their authority over these feudatory chiefs and left them more or less to themselves, as they were busy with their own affairs in the hilly regions, and so were unable, to control their vassals from such a remote place as Dantewārā or Bastar, as their capital. These tribal dynasties, often at war with one another, did not lose any opportunity to extend their dominion at the expense of their weak neighbours. Pratāparājadēva carried his arms as far as Kānker and Dōngar in the north and Godāvarī river in the south, reducing all the kings who were ruling within these limits into submission in order to bring the entire Bastar country under a single umbrella. It is not unlikely that he was actuated by this idea as a result of his having foreseen that Bastar would, sooner or later, be confronted with the danger Muslim invasions.

This happened in the south when he saw the Qutb Shāhi dynasty was fast emerging and may any day jump on the soil of Bastar. With this foresight he invaded the Qutb-Shāhi country many times. In consequence Bastar was invaded by the

Qutb-Shāhis in the year 1610, for the first time and Pratāparājadēva faced them bravely and repulsed them. But when they invaded in 1612 with great preparation he could not face them and for the first time, after Pratāparudradēva, the Chālukyas came under Muslim rulers.

This has been elaborated in the following pages on the basis of Qutb-Shāhi (Mss. Hyderabad).

Sultān Qulī Qutbul Mulk (1512-43), the founder of the royal family of Hamdan and a survivor of the Qara Quyunlu tribe (Black Sheep) of Turkestan. He came to seek his fortune in the Deccan.

When Ibrāhīm Qutb Shāh (1550-80) died he had six sons. Ibrāhīm nominated Maḥammad-Qulī as his successor. According to a tradition Muḥammad Qulī was born of a Hindu lady; Bhagirathi. During the reign of Moḥammad Qulī (1580-1612) the conflict with Bastar continued. The main army planned the capture of Bastar, whose citadel was defended by Pratāparājadēva (1602-25), the son of Narasimhadēva (1558-1602). Finding it impossible to subdue it, the Golkonda-Ahmadnagar forces withdrew. Says H. K. Sherwani (History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty, New Delhi, pp. 294-95, 1974): "Mohammad Qulī's royal troops marched to overpower the kingdoms north of Godāvarī. They captured Ahmednagar. The success of the royal troops was not so pronounced in another field. In 1610 A.D., the ruler of Bastar named Pratāpa Shāh revolted against central authority. It shows the spirit underlying the Qutb Shāhi state that the task of facing Pratāp was entrusted to Aswa Rāo who was appointed commander-in-Chief of the forces with Syed Haider, Amjadul-Mulk and other officers under him. In the battle which ensued it was Aswa Rāo who opposed Pratāp Rāo in person and forced him to fly from the battlefield taking refuge in his fort of Bastar (which was the capital of the state). Aswa Rāo now wrote to the Sultān for further help as it was necessary to dislodge Pratāp from his eerie. Muhammad Qulī now ordered Mirjumlā to go to Bastar with a large army. But in spite of his march to Bastar, which was wholly unopposed, he could not dislodge Pratāp from the fortress as a sudden fall of rain damped both his gunpowder and his spirits, and he could not get further help from the central in time. He was, therefore,

forced to retreat, and as the Godāwarī was in spate it was with some difficulty that he could reach the capital."

This incidence is but once alluded in Ferishta. In A.D. 1610, we read that Pratāp Shāh, Rājā of Bastar, a Gōṇḍ Chief, having ravaged the territory of the Mohammadans, a force was sent against him. Upon this Pratāp Shāh retreated into impenetrable jungles, and the leader of the Mohammadan troops, not being able to proceed further without reinforcements, wrote for assistance. This was sent under one Mir Mohammad Amīn, and the Mohammadans marched to the capital of Bastar. Want of supplies, sickness, the loss of his powder, and the knowledge of his distance from assistance, caused the Mohammadans to relinquish the siege of the place, after they had been put for a short time encamped before it (Ferishta, Vol. III, p. 481).

Mohammad Qulī died in 1612 and his dream of conquering Bastar was incomplete. He was succeeded by his brother's son Sultān Mohammad Qutb Shāh (1612-26). He was a man of exemplary character, leading a pious life and fasts and praying regularly. When Muhammad came to throne the kingdom was passing through a crisis. "In fact the only campaign which he ordered to be undertaken or rather continued, was against Bastar. This campaign was of short duration. In July 1612 Kamālud din Māzandrānī was sent against *Pratāp Shāh*, ruler of Bastar, because the Hyderabad army under Aswa Rāo had been tripped there by the river Godāwarī which was in spate. Kamāluddīn was accompanied by Seyd Haider, Izzat Khān, Chitā Khān and a large army. When his army reached the Bastar border *Pratāp Shāh* wisely decided to lay down his arms and sent an envoy to Kamāluddīn with expressions of homage and costly presents to the king. The king was immediately informed of this turn of events. He forgave the rebel ruler of his shortcomings and gave back to him his whole estate with practically no conditions, attached except that he should recognise Sultān Muhammad as his *Suzerain*. (Qutb Shāhi 316-7, Also Sherwani, *ibid.*, p. 386).

This was the only campaign which the Sultān undertook during his reign of fifteen years. He had come to the throne in the seventh year of Jahāgīr's reign.

Bastar became Qutb Shāhi protectorate in the last reign of

Sultān Muhammad Qutab Shāh (1612-26) and remained dependent up to 1672 A.D. till the reign of Abdul-lāh-Qutb Shāh (1626-72) according to Qutb-Shāhi (317-18).

According to "the Cambridge History of India" (Vol. IV, Delhi, 1963, p. 267) we have some more information regarding the Qutb Shāhi's indirect interference in Bastar. Pratāpa died in the beginning of 1625 A.D. By his prowess and statesmanship he did not allow his Qutb-Shāhi enemy to gain the upper hand, and the flag of independence of the kingdom of Bastar to be lowered. He fought with his foes valiantly to the end, and succeeded in bequeathing the kingdom intact.¹

Jagadīsharāyadeva (1625-1639)

In Dōngar Inscription (E1. XII, 242) Jagadīsharāyadēva is said to be the son of Narasimhadēvarāja, while in Rājafamily records we find the Jagadīshanārāyanadēva is the son of Pratāpasinha. According to "Sanskrit-Vanshāvalī", "there was king Jagadisha who was equal in power to Jaggannātha. His lawful wife was Lakshmī, who was just like Lakshmī in all respects, having auspicious marks like Lakshmī :

भूपालो जगदीशस्तु जगदीशसमोऽभवत् ।
लक्ष्मीदेवी तस्य परनी साक्षात्लक्ष्मीव लक्षणा ॥

(Sloka 20)

Hindi-genealogies differ and according to them Govindakunwārī Baghelin was the wife of Jagadisha. But from historical evidence it is clear that up to this time Bastar kings were not in matrimonial relations with the Baghels or Chandels of Rēwā state.

Jagadīsha succeeded his throne in the year 1625 A.D. He is the king who laid the foundation of Jagadālpur city, now the capital of Bastar district (Bhanjadeva 1961: 28)

Immediately after his accession to the throne Jagadīsha had to pledge a war against the Rājā of Kānker as they captured Dōngar which was once annexed by his father into

1. The Gond legends speak of the struggle of the tribe with Muslim rulers and the migration of tribes in search of virgin soil. (Padgi 1952: 25).

Bastar state. Jagadīsha again recaptured 18 Gaṛhs or Paraganās around Baṛē Ḍongar in the present Kōṇḍāgāon Tahsil; and then extended his territory to Sihāwā and borders of Chhattisgarh. This expansion was probably due to substitution of Hindi or Halbi influences on Telugu. The Gaṛhs around Baṛēḍongar are strong holds of the Halba tribe whose Kuṭum Nāyaka or headman and chief of Log-god Kachchuā Dēva was living at Chingnur, near Baṛē Ḍongar. The tribe had special privileges in the adjacent Kānker state, while a Halbā invests each new chief with the royal robes and affixes the ṭikā or sign of office on his forehead. Probably on the conquest of the Baṛē Ḍongar country many of them entered the Bastar Rājā's service, and supplied most of his troops of militia. The chief Halba villages of the North, such as Baṛē Dongar, Choṭā Ḍongar, Kōlar, Sōnpur, Antāgaṛh, Paṭāppur, and Nārāyanapur are the head-quarters of the old Gaṛhs or modern Paraganās, and are islanded in the surrounding area of 'Muri' and 'Māṛjā' tribes like the 'Jhāḍī', Telanga villages of the south; the Halba villagers seem to be the descendants of the old garrisons of 'paik' militia. To this day, the Halbas admit outsiders into their country, while the modern Hindu immigrants commonly take women of the country. The Halbas are thus a mixture, probably, of foreign and aboriginal blood. Their language is the lingua franca, that is at all events an Aryan dialect, and a principal agent in the modification of aboriginal habits and thought.

Jagadīshanārāyanadēva had a soaring ambition to gain dominance over the entire Chhattisgarh. He set out from his capital in the middle or rainy season of 1632 A.D. Meanwhile Jagamōhana Sāy (1632-45) was also moving to Bastar to suppress his ambition. Jagadīsha retreated to his capital and Jagamōhana Sāy invaded the fort of Bastar. Consequently, Jagadīsh desired to check his further advance. He represented through some of the reliable imperial officers that he wished to give the hand of his daughter in marriage to Jagamōhana Sāy. The latter accepted the proposal and issued the orders. Thereafter Jagadīshanārāyanadēva gave his daughter 'Jyōtikunwara' to the Kalachuri prince and thus concluded a matrimonial alliance with the Chālukyas of Bastar (Rēwārāma, 1858, Manuscript).

Vīranārāyaṇadeva Mahārāja (1639-1654)

Vīranārāyaṇadeva bore the title 'Mahārāja' (EI, XII, 252). This goes to prove that he made himself an independent king without caring about the Qutb Shāhis of Golkonda, with whom his ancestor made a treaty of their overlordship over Bastar.

Vīranārāyaṇadeva of the inscription is referred to by various names in the genealogies. Lōkanātha Thākur (1853) calls him as 'Vīrashāha' while Dalaganjana Singha (1856) designates him 'Vīranārāyaṇarājadeva' and in external documents he is known as 'Vīrasingh.'

Vīranārāyaṇa was the elder son of Jagadīshadēva. He succeeded to the throne in 1639 A.D. According to Lōkanātha Thākur, the compiler of 'Bastar-Rāja-Vanshāvalī'; "Vīrashāha was the foremost among the warriors and even thoughtful, but his mind was perturbed or disturbed on account of the danger or sin arising from the murder of a Brāhmaṇa, who was predestined by fate:

वीरशाहस्तु वीरस्स्याद्वीरसिंहो विवेकवान् ।
ब्रह्महत्याभवात्तस्ते विघ्नेर्लब्धवानुसारतः ॥

(Sloka 27)

The success attained by Kalachuri king Jagamōhana Sāy of Ratanpur appears to have encouraged revolts in Bastar. Vīranārāyaṇadeva refused to acknowledge the authority of the Kalachuris and to send him tribute. He made all preparations to meet any contingency that might arise. He won over to his side many nobles of Ratanpur, and after strengthening his forces he attacked the Kalachuri Rājā of Raipur branch. Both the armies met on the 'Būphā' tank of Rāipur and the Rājā of Bastar was defeated. He was to be murdered by the Chandela-Thākur Bhōja, the commander-in-chief of Raipur army, when Vīranārāyaṇadeva gave his identification. Bhōja saved his life and hereafter he was worshipped in Bastar by the name of "Kāchindeva", because Bhōja gave his 'Kāchā' to save the life of the Bastar King, this "Kāchā" began to be worshipped as 'Kāchhinadeva' (Lāla Kālindra Singh, 1908).

When Bastar was in such a tense situation, a fresh rebellion broke out in the north-west. While Vīranārāyaṇa was busy in

his kingdom taking measures to relieve the distress of the people from famine, the Rājā of Chāndā invaded Bastar and Vīranārāyaṇadeva was killed in a fierce battle in the year 1654 A.D.

Vīrasinghadeva Mahārāja (1654-1680)

After the death of Vīranārāyaṇadeva, there was an internal war between the two brothers for the succession. 'Sanskrit-Vanshāvalī' shows that Raṇadhīra and Shasyapratāpa both became the kings of Bastar.

- (a) सज्जन्य बस्तरपुरे रणधीरवीरो
विद्वत्सरोजतरणिः शुचि सोमवंश्यः ।

"There was the king named 'Raṇadhīra Vīradeva' who lived in the city of Bastar that was full of wealth and virtuous men. He came of sōma dynasty and was pure, sinless and bright as the collection of lotuses."

- (b) शस्यप्रतापनूपवन्दितादपद्मो
विद्वत्कुलैरभिहितः खलु धर्ममूर्तिः ॥

"When there was the king named 'Shasyapratāpa' whose lotus like feet honoured by other kings and was considered to be incarnation of religion of learned."

But from epigraphical source (EI. III, 242) and Rājā family records we know that it was Vīrasinghadeva who succeeded to the throne of Bastar after the death of his father.

It seems that 'Shasyapratāpa' was the second name of Vīrasingh and Raṇadhīra was his younger brother. This is also corroborated with the fact that Vira Singh was issueless and he adopted the son of his younger brother.

Vīrasinghadēva was married with the daughter of Sukmā Zamīndār (Kālīndrasingh 1908). His first wife was Vadana Kunwar Chandēlin, the daughter of the Rājā of Vardī of Sīdhī (Rewa State). Dōngar Inscription (EI, XII. 242) has presented interesting details about Vīrasingha:

समस्तप्रशस्तिरहित सुतसमपालित चातुर्वर्ण्ये संतान चन्द्रवंशजामहाराजो वदन-

कुमारदेवीसहित संचितकीर्तिवितान । श्री विरसिंहदेव देवो महाराजः । सप्तषष्टि वर्षावधि महीं परिपाल्य वैकुण्ठं जगाम ।

Vīrasingh is regarded as one of the important rulers of the Bastar kingdom. Bhagavāna Mishra, the author of *Ḍongar Inscription* (E.I. XII, 242), describes him as an illustrious king. He ruled over Bastar up to A.D. 1680. It is highly improbable that the Inscription records that he ruled for 67 years. It is very likely that he came to the throne about A.D. 1654 and died in 1680.

It appears that Vīrasingh entrusted the administration of *Ḍongar* region to his brother Raṇadhir owing to military necessity. The Southern portion of the Chālukya Kingdom was then in danger of invasion by the Qutb Shāhi dynasty because Bhījī zamīndārī established friendship with Qutb Shāhi against the Rājā of Bastar. Soon after this, there was a conflict between Bhījī and Bastar and Vīrasingh marched against the latter. The zamīndār of Bhījī supported by Qutb Shāhi at first defeated the army of the Rājā of Bastar which was being commanded by the Military general 'Chūṛāmaṇi'. The next time Vīrasingh guided the force and repulsed the Bhījī Zamīndār. With this as a deciding war, Bastar ceased to be a tributary of Qutb Shāhi in the year 1672 A.D.

After making his home front secure, Vīrasingh next planned to take revenge on the ruler of Chāndā, Ballāl Shāh, who killed his father due to treachery of Chainsingh. Ballāl Shāh was defeated and became a tributary of Bastar. Again, after gaining strength Ballāl Shāh attacked Bastar Rājā. Due to a close friend of the Bastar Rājā, Vīrasingh was made unconscious and Ballāl Shāh killed him in the year 1660 A.D.¹ (Bhanjadeva; 1963 : 31-32).

Vīrasingh had no issue and thus Dikpāldeva, the son of his younger brother Raṇadhīra came to the throne.

After the Qutb Shāhi dynasty, Bastar once again became a part of Chauhān dynasty of Pāṭṇā in the year 1675 A.D. Baliār Singh (1660-1690) was the sovereign lord of a vast territory which comprised 18 Gaṛhs including Bastar (Kosalānanda, Patna MS, Canto XXII, Verse 43-54; O'Malley: Sambalpur district Gazetteer, p. 22).

1. Ballāl Shāh was the son of Bābāji Ballāl Shah (1572-97) as recorded, by Begbie (1909.3s).

THE MOON SHINES AGAIN (1680-1774)

The year 1672 A.D. marks the virtual extinction of the Qutb Shāhi (Golconda) rule. There was confusion in and around Golconda and the Qutb Shāhi was in a state of turmoil and politics in a melting pot. The glory of Qutb Shāhi had disappeared and so the prestige of the Sultanate.

It was in the midst of such a gruelling atmosphere that the 'Moon' *Vansha* of Bastar gradually rose to power and attained eminence. It has earlier been related that Vīrasingha had no issue and thus his younger brother's son became the heir of the Chālukya throne. A little before his death Vīrasingh nominated Dikpāladeva his successor. Consequently after his death Dikpāladeva ascended the throne. But shortly after his accession he found himself struggling in a pool of difficulties. He embarked upon a brilliant and ambitious, as well as an adventurous plan. In 1680 A.D. he attacked the fort of Navarangpur (Orissa) and seized it through a stratagem from the Gajapati ruler. He is the first ruler of Bastar who made matrimonial alliance with the Rēwā state and according to this alliance all the Chief queens (Paṭrānī) of the succeeding rājās of Bastar were either Chandelin princess of Vardī (Sidhi) or the Baghelin princess of Shōāgpur (Shahdol) of the erstwhile Rēwā state. This marked a culminative turn in the cultural assimilation of trends of Rēwā and Bastar and the palace-culture in a way preserved the culture of the Rēwā state. The Rāj-family records preserved in the Jagdalpur collectorate are written in Baghukhaṇḍī Hindi. "Bastari" became the language of the palace which was a form of Baghelkhaṇḍī. Even the Dantewārā Inscription (EI, XII, 242) issued by Dikpāladeva is not without the impact of the Baghelkhaṇḍī.

Dikpāladeva (1680-1709)

After a long gap of 420 years since the foundation of the Chālukya dynasty in Bastar, we find for the first time an inscription engraved by Dikpāladeva¹ in the year 1703, which is known

1. Rām Shāh, the Gōnd Rājā of Chanda (1672-1735) was the contemporary of Dikpāladeva (Begbie 1909, 38).

as 'Dantewārā Inscription' (EI, XII, 242). Since 1703 A.D. we get the history of Bastar in a chronological order. The history of Bastar from 1324 A.D. to 1702 A.D. had been a history without records, which has been presented in the preceding chapters. Dikpāladeva was the son of the Raṇadhīr and he succeeded Vīrasingh in the year 1680 A.D. Vīrasingh having no issue, adopted Dikpāladeva as a son. In Dantewārā Inscription (EI, XII, 242) Dikpāladeva has been mentioned as a son of Vīraśinghadeva. Dikpāladeva was married to Ajabakumārīdevī (EI, XII, 242) and according to the genealogists she was the daughter of Rāvaratana rājā of Bradī, a Chandel Zamindar of Sīdhī (Devasara tahsil) under the Rājā of Rēwā.

Dikpāladeva combined ambition with perspicacity to a greater degree than any other Chālukya ruler of the preceding centuries. Being conscious of the declining of the Gajapati power he was anxious to confirm himself and his heirs in hereditary possession of Bastar. He was content to recognize the nominal suzerainty of the Chauhāns provided that he enjoyed autonomy in practical matters. But the impact of the Chauhān wars had taught him that, if he was to attain and maintain such a position, he must have an army equipped and trained on the Chauhān lines. He started an expedition on Gajapati first by conquering the fort of Navarangpur, a strong hold of the Gajapatis of Orissa. He seems to have advanced in person. According to the Ḍongar Inscription (EI, XII, 242) a fierce battle was fought and he captured 'the Navarangpur-Durga' very easily हेलयागुहीतनवरंगपुरदुर्ग. It is not stated how the agreement was signed, but it seems that he conquered the fort, capturing many as prisoners, including a queen of the Gajapati king (Hiralal 1913: 242).

Lōkanātha Thākur, the compiler of Sanskrit-Vanshāvalī (1853) has recorded this incidence poetically:

शत्रुन्विमय्य चिरभा वितवांश्च धीर-
स्तरसिताश्रितवरान् शरणांरिवर्गान् ।
दन्तेश्वरीचरणनकुलमादधानो
दिग्पालदेव इति विद्युतिमाजगाम ॥

(Śloka 23)

"Having destroyed enemies, that wise king ruled for a long

time and gave protection to the enemies that submitted to him and to those best men who sought his protection. Taking the dust from the lotus-like feet of Danteshwarī he became famous by the name Dikpāladeva."

Nandapur was the capital of the chiefs of Shilāvansha in the western agency tracts of the Vizagapatam district. Nandapura in the Pottangi taluk was the capital of Shilāvanshīs. It is said that the present state of Jeypore was but a portion of the kingdom of the chiefs of Shilāvansha. The existence of this dynasty is known only by six or seven records which register gifts of these chiefs in two holy places, Simhāchalam in the Vizagapatam district and Śrīkūrmam in the Ganjam district. The names furnished by these records are:

1. Vishwanātharāja, son of Gangarāja, 1333 A.D.
2. Bhairavarāja, son of Akkamadevī, 1370 A.D.
3. Bhachchaladēvī, daughter of Bhayyarāja, 1396 A.D.
4. Gangarāja, son of Bhairava, 1427 A.D.
5. Vishwanātharāja, 1427 A.D.
6. Gangarāja, 1435 A.D.

Rājā Dikpāladeva visited Danteshwarī at Dantewārā and encarved two inscriptions at Dantewārā to make his visit public. One of these is in Sanskrit and the other in Bastarī rendering (E1. XII, 242) of the same text with some additions. This was written by Maṇṭhila Pandita Bhagavāna Mīshra, who was the Rājaguru. His descendants were the Royal priests of the kings of Bastar.

The object of the inscription was to record the occasional ceremony of 'Kuṭumba-yātrā' made by Dikpāladeva to the Shrine of the goddess Danteshwarī in the Samvat 1760 corresponding to A.D. 1703. Dantewārā was notoriously known for human sacrifice. It is, however, angular that our inscription mentions the unusual ceremony of Kuṭumba-yātrā, by killing thousands of buffaloes and goats to please the goddess:

तेन चैकदाश्वपुरवासिजनेन सह दंतावली समागत्य कुटुम्बजात्रा कृतः । तत्र
बहुसहस्र महिषछागन्नरीरसंघातनदी गोहितो दान करोत (E1, XII. 242)

The inscription mentions that Dikpāladeva was an extra-

ordinary king:

दिक्पालदेव समः सहस्रो भूपो न भविता कलौ

(Ibid.)

It also records that at the time of the pilgrimage his son Rakshapāladeva also accompanied him and on 1703, he was at the age of 18 years:

पुत्रराजावतार घण्टादशवर्षे वयंप्राप्त रक्षपालदेव कुमार

(E1, Ibid.)

It means that he was born about 1685 A.D. After five years he came on the throne of Bastar.

Dikpāladeva enjoyed many royal 'Virudas':

तस्य पुत्रो विविधविहदावली विराजमान मानोन्नत । समरसादसीकमल । तरवारि
विदारित प्रतिमही गल । प्रचंडदोर्दण्डाकुल कोदंडप्रखण्डित, रातिग्वरं

(Ibid.)

Dikpālādēva assumed the royal titles after the death of his uncle Vīrasingh and began to rule the mountainous region of Bastar. He set up his capital at Bastar town in Bastar state surrounded by the thick forests and rapid streams. Bastar was an ideal centre for guerilla warfare. It was from here that tribal chieftains led guerilla battles against the Qutb Shāhis during the seventeenth century. This region must have been the base of operations before and during their fight against the Muslims. Dikpālādēva restored law and order in the territory and did everything to undue the wrong done by the conqueror. Dikpālādēva retired from public life after appointing his son Rakshapālādēva or Rājapālādēva as the ruler of Bastar.

Rakshapāladeva or Rājapālādēva

Rājapālādēva born in the year 1685. A.D. was a minor king when he visited Dantewārā with his father in the year 1703 A.D. (E1, XII, 242).

After his victory over the Rājā of Papalāhandī (Copper-plate of Rājapālādēva); Rājapālā made a triumphant entry into Orissa. He assumed titles of "Gōsāi" and "Shrīmāna Kēsari"

(copper plate) and ruled Bastar and the Jaypore region as well, with Bastar as his capital. After assuming the reins of the kingdom, Rājapāla strengthened his position by conferring chiefships and other offices upon his relatives and members of Brāhmaṇa families, who had stood by him loyally and cooperated with him whole heartedly during the war of independence.

Rājapālādēva appointed his cousin as the governor of Dōngar. About this time political events in the Deccan were taking unexpected turn.¹ The Muslim army invaded Bastar while Rājapālādēva was busy with his defensive arrangements. When Muslims invaded the country the Rājā's wife who was in a delicate condition took refuge with some other relations in the house of one Chālukya Brāhmaṇa. There Dalapatidēva was born. Out of gratitude, Dalapatidēva appointed the Brāhmaṇa as his spiritual instructor. Due to this attack he shifted his capital from Bastar to Rājapur for a short while (Bhanjadeva, 1963: 35)

Rājapālādēva issued a copper plate from Bastar town (वस्तर महानगरे) which registers the grant of certain rights to 100 families of Paṇḍā Brāhmaṇas and their agreement not to leave Brahmapurā, which appears to have been a separate settlement of Brāhmaṇas residing at Bastar when the capital of this state was there (OHRJ, X(3) 57-60). We have already examined this copper plate in detail under the chapter "Sources of information." The text of the copperplate runs as follows:

स्वस्ति श्रीवस्तरमहानगरे शुभस्थाने श्रीरक्षपालगोसाई श्रीमानकेसरी

(Oriya) : श्रीजगन्नाथ श्रीबलभद्र श्रीसुभद्रासहित एहि किति निमित्त को हो साक्षी ॥ श्रीरक्षपालदेव राजा बालकीवंशराज्यपरियन्त पलाढण्डि ब्रह्मपुरा घर तीनि साए जीवन्त दण्ड नाही मरण मुसाली नाही शरण मार नाही ए बोलते न पालई । ताहार सुभ्रर माघ गद्या बाप ए बोलन्कथ चन्द्रसूर्यजय-लोकपाल-धर्मराजसाक्षी बारि घरे मेलिया बचि ॥

(Hindi) : जब लै श्रीबालकीवंश राजा तब लै ब्रह्मपुरा छाड़नो नाहि ए बोल छाड़ि कै पपलावडि भा जाइ तो सुभ्रर माइ बाप गावह घण्ट लोकपाल धर्मराजसाक्षी ।

(Oriya) : बसाल सूर्य वन कूप घौ मच्छ ते जहीकार एहि रेडा ।

(Hindi) : सही ।

1. In 1718 A.D. we find the Rājā of Satārā attempting to obtain from the Delhi Emperor the cession of Bastar, and about the same year the former sent Kanhoji Bhonsla to invade Gōndwana. Kanhoji met with no military success in Bastar region (Begbie 1909.50).

Sanskrit-Vanshāvalī projects Rājapālādēva as a 'mighty' king:

दिग्पालदेवजनिर्तो रजपालदेवः ।
सूर्यप्रतापतुलितः प्रथितः पृथिव्याम् ॥

(Śloka 24)

Rājapālādēva had two queens: a Baghelin named Rudrakunwara who was the daughter of Shivarājasingh of Sohāgpur (Rewa State) and the other was a Chandelin from Vardī (Rewa state). By the first queen he had two sons named Dalapatideva and Pratāpasingh and by the second Dakkina Singh. The Chandelin queen was very jealous of her co-rānī and her son, and when Rājapālādēva died, she managed to place her brother on the throne, thereby ousting the legitimate claimant Dalapatidēva (Brett. 1909).

Chandela Māmā on the Throne (1721-1731)

Rājapālādēva had two wives: Baghelin and Chandelin. Dalapatadeva and Pratāpasingh were born from Bhaghelin rānī, while Dakhinsingh was the son of Chandelin rānī named Rāmakunwari (family records).

Chandelin rānī was jealous of Baghelin rānī and she wanted that her son should succeed the Rājā. Rājapālādēva paid special attention to Chandelin rānī due to her young age and she always dominated him. Finding it difficult to take the assent of Rājapālādēva in favour of her son, she resorted to a plan to do them away from the capital and the king.

According to her preplanned device Dalapatadeva was appointed as the Governor of Kōṭpād and Pratāpasingh was made the chief of the Antāgaṛh Mukāsā. In this way both the sons of the elder Paṭarānī were appointed far away from the capital in the two corners of the state.

During this period Rājapālādēva used to reside in Rājnagar which was made the second capital of the state by him. In the absence of Rājapālādēva Chandelin rānī was ruling in Bastar with the help of her brother.

Meanwhile her son Dakhinsingh became seriously ill and Rājapālādēva lost all hopes of his recovery. In the last resort he went to the shrine of Danteshwarī, the tutelary goddess of

the state. To save his son from the mouth of death the Raja fastened his son with the idol of Danteshwarī. But who can check the destiny? The string was broken and Dakhinsingh was lying dead. Thus Dakkina Singh died in the year 1720 at Dantēwārū. Rājapāladeva died in the year 1721 A.D. due to agony of the death of his beloved son.

Chandelin rānī did not inform Dalapatideva and Pratāpa-singh about the death of the king. She resorted to a trick and made her younger brother the Rājā of Bastar in the year 1721 A.D. Thus on the death of Rājapāladeva the Chandelin Rānī managed to place her brother on the throne:

A little later news was received by Dalpatideva and Pratāpa-singh that the king is no more surviving. Meanwhile the two brothers were no more the chiefs of Kōtpād and Antāgarh. They were removed from the authority by the maternal uncle—the Chandel māmā. Ultimately Pratāpasingh went to Rewa and from there he reached the palace of her mother's brother at Sōhāgpur (Shahdol district) (Bhanjadeva 1963: 44). Dalapati-deva was also compelled to leave Bastar and he took shelter in Jeypore kingdom. At that time Vishwambharadeva (1713-52) was ruling at Jaypore (Brett. 1909; S 1 1922).

Thus in the history of Bastar it was the first instance where a maternal uncle as an usurper occupied the throne of Bastar. He ruled there for ten years.

Thereafter, Dalapatideva embarked upon a brilliant and ambitious, as well as an adventurous plan. In 1725 A.D. he attacked the fort of Kōtpād and with the help of the Rājā of Jaypore he seized it. It is related by de Brett (1909) that after Dalapatideva had reoccupied the Kōtpād paraganā, he managed to win over the Bastar court people to his side, and with their help killed the usurper on the throne on a 'Rakshābandhana' day pretending to pay allegiance to him. Thus Dalapatideva could become the king of the state after ten years of forced exile.

Dalapatideva (1731-1774)

Dalapatideva has been confused by other names such as Bhuvanēshwaradēva (Rēwārām 1858) and Valipati:

तस्मादभूदलिपतिर्नराजराज-
स्सद्भिविवेककुलशंसितसत्प्रतापः ।

"Balipati was the son of Rājapāladeva who was the overlord of all the kings and whose glory about his thoughtfulness and noble birth was sung by learned."

He had seven queens. The senior Rānī was the princess of the king of Kānker named Harapālasingh. He gave Sihāwā paragana in dowry (Brett, 1909: 72). By this senior Rānī he had the son named Ajmer Singh. His next queen was Rāmākunwar, the daughter of Rājapālasingh of the Chandel Zamindari of Vardī (Rewa State). His third wife was the princess of Sukmā zamindar and she got Kukānār parganā in dowry. She gave birth to two sons: Gajarāja Singh and Umarāo Singh (Dalaganjan Singh 1856). His fourth wife was a Baghel princess of Sohagpur (Rewa state) who gave birth to two sons, namely Daryāodeva and Lāla Baxt Singh (Bhanjadeva 1963: 56). Dalapatideva married his daughter Padumkunwāri with the Chief of Ratanpur state named Raghunāth Singh; who ruled from 1732 to 1745 A.D. (Rewarama 1858).

In the time of Dalapatideva his younger brother conspired against him, and entered into a league with the Bhonsalās to pay them tribute if they attacked his brother and put him instead on the throne. The conspiracy was unknown to Dalapatideva, and the Bhonslā army had approached within a short distance of Bastar before he was informed of it in the year 1750 A.D.¹ Being totally unprepared, he sought safety in flight, and the Bhōnslās, who were commanded by Nīlū Paṇḍit (Brahmana General of Raghūji Bhonsla of Nagpur), took possession of Bastar. Dalapatideva, however collected all his forces and suddenly fell upon the Bhōnslās, who despising their enemies, were wrapped up in fancied security. He destroyed nearly the whole force, and Nīlū Paṇḍit only could escape with the assistance of a friendly Banjārā, who sewed him up in a

1. Nilkantha Shah was the ruling Chief of Chanda at that time. He was an evil and cruel prince. In 1749 A.D. Marathas were at his gates, and the city fell, not by the award of battle, but by the treachery of an estranged court (Begbie 1909:50). In 1751 A.D. Shāh was imprisoned and he died in confinement. Thus ended the Gond dynasty in Chanda.

sack and carried him out of the country on the back of his bullock. It seems that Nīlū Pandit fled to Jeypore state. Afterwards Nīlū Pandit again attacked Bastar and took away as a prisoner by the princess of Kānker who subsequently died in Puri (Brett: 1909: 37).

Dalapatideva, having found to his cost the insecurity of Bastar, determined to build his capital on the south side of Indrāvati, so that he might have the river between him and the Bhonslās, of whom he had a great dread. Previously Bastar was chosen as a capital due to Muslim invasion from the south. He accordingly built Jagdalpur fort as his capital-centre in the year 1770 A.D. (R.K.M. Battye: *A Halbi Grammar*, 1945:). Since then Jagdalpur has become the headquarter town of the state (three years later he died). Just as the fort was completed a Muslim army, dispatched in revenge for lawless excursions into their country made by the dependent Zamindars of Bastar, appeared and invested the fort. The spot where they erected a battery is still shown, and called the "Mound of Moghuls". They failed to capture the palace, however, and being decimated by sickness and reduced to extremity for want of supplies, they raised the siege and retreated (Glasford: 1862; Chisolm Report, para 63, Brett 1909: 36-38; Grigson 1938: 6).

Finding that Dalapatideva grew more and more powerful, often playing a decisive role in their internecine wars, the ruler of Vijayanagar took steps to forge a united front against Bastar. The Rājā of Vijayanagar sent an ambassador to Dalapatideva demanding the surrender of Jaypore king, whom he had given shelter in his state. This afforded ample opportunity for violating the former treaties of friendship with Bastar. The two sovereigns met on the plains of Jaypore with their armies. After the defeat, Bastar soldiers were slaughtered in masse. But again there was a treaty between the two kings and the Jeypore Raja was handed over to Vijayanagar. According to V. Ball (*Jungle life in India*, London 1880, p. 607):

"About 1652 A.D. the Vizianagaram Raj was established and grew so rapidly that in 1773-74, Sitaram Raj, brother and Diwan of Vizianagaram chief, aided by two battalions of troops of sepoy drove out the Raja of Jaipur, who took refuge in Bastar; but finding the country to be unmanageable he afterwards reinstated him, fixing the revenue to be paid to Vizianagaram

at 40,000 rupees. This state of things continued till 1794, when in reward for his not joining in disturbances which took place on the death of the Vizianagaram chief, Lord Hobart granted a sanad to Ramachandradeva, the then Raja of Jaipur."

Dalapatideva was an able ruler and the kingdom of Bastar founded by Annamadeva after many vicissitudes and set backs, reached its meridian of power and glory in the reigns of the illustrious Dalapatideva. When the Chhattisgarh region was under the sway of Bhonslās and ultimately was conquered by Bhāskar Pant of Nagpur in 1740, Dalapatideva faced bravely the Bhonslās conquests and defeated the Bhonslā army. He had the courage to fight with the Mughals as well as the Rajas of Vizianagaram successfully. While fighting with these three big powers of his time, he saved his country from the overlordship of any other dynasty. This was a great achievement indeed. Such days of prosperity and affluence were not for it for long. His sons Ajmer Singh and Daryāodeva quarrelled for the throne of Bastar and the successive wars gave Bastar a downward thrust and his unworthy son Daryāodeva saw it sink. A glorious and long period of Chālukya rule of 450 years was the life of this great Chālukya dynasty.

Conclusion

We may note here that there was non-congruence between political organisation and 'social organism' in the later mediaeval period. There was no transformations in the technology of agriculture, nor of craft or commodity production which accounted for the rise and fall of Chālukya dynasty. Non-congruence between ethnicity and polity seems hardly disputable for the feudal age, with its shadow larger units and its fragmented political macro-units.

THE HALBA REVOLUTION AND THE COLLAPSE OF CHĀLUKYA RULE (1774-1779)

Dongar has played a key role upon several occasions in crucial tribal historical developments. Most recently, in 1910, it was the base area for the tribal freedom movement. Its part in

the downfall of the Chālukyas two centuries earlier was much significant,—Dongar being the region where the Halbā movement began and gained the momentum which the Chālukya authorities never succeeded in halting completely and when they could do this, they lost their freedom and became vassals of the Marathas.¹

The Halba uprising originated in Dongar for a variety of reasons. Perhaps most immediately basic of all were the limitations of geography: uncertain rainfall, difficult communications, and a limited amount of arable land, resulting socio-economic conditions meant that the area was 'backwater', touched only indirectly if at all, by the significant developments taking place in more favoured sections of Bastar. It experienced nothing of the prosperity of the Indrāvati Valley where there was a growth of agricultural techniques, increasingly sophisticated handicraft production, and the expansion of a money economy. The Dongar area did not possess an economic advantage in having one of the several salt-markets which the Central government consented to open as part of the peace settlement made with Bhaskar Pant in 1770. Livelihood in the region approached the bare subsistence level and it lacked the surplus stores of grain which the wealthy areas hoarded during years of plentiful harvests and used when less favourable times occurred. As a consequence, it was particularly vulnerable to natural calamities and the resulting famines. This famine situation of the Dongar region has been depicted in a Muria-folksong as follows :

निमारे बेके दातोन खनानि, डोरि बूमि दातोन दादा ले ।
 बूमि दुकार दुकार रोय दादा ले, बूमि ले दुकार भरित रोय दादा ले ॥ 1 ॥
 हिकाल हुरो भइसो रोय दादा ले, सरपरने भइसो भरित रोय दादा ले ।
 पोदोर पुंगार रोय दादा ले, सरपने दोयो भरतु रोय दादा ले ॥ 2 ॥
 पुहले देलात खनात रोय दादा ले, वेतले मराते कवराल रोय दादा ले ।
 कवर वोकर इन्त रोय दादा ले, रइयक रेवोन कवराल रोय दादा ले ॥ 3 ॥

"Vulture, whither away, Vulture ?
 I am going towards the West, brother

1. For 'The Tribal Revolutions of Bastar', readers are suggested to consult the second volume of this book entitled 'The Tribal Revolutions in Colonial India', Delhi, in press.

for the day of want has dawned
 the famine is over all the world. || 1 ||
 Black Black are the buffaloes
 And all of them have died, brother
 white as cotton flowers are the cows
 And all of them have fallen in summer. || 2 ||
 On the broken cloud the vulture
 On the withered tree the crow,
 The crow is cawing, brother
 It is ready to fly down.

Political and military conditions exaggerated political troubles inherent in the geographical milieu and economic situation. There is virtual unanimity in the sources attesting that Dōngar was an independent kingdom of the Halbas, which was annexed to the Bastar kingdom later on. There were 18 garhs (forts) under this Halba kingdom and it served the Bastar kingdom in different ways. It was known as the Junior capital of Bastar. Bastar Rajas used to appoint their junior sons as governors in this junior kingdom, rather they wanted to eliminate them, so that they may not challenge the actual heir. When Dalpatideva (1731-1774) grew old he wanted to appoint his younger son Daryāodeva as the ruler of Bastar, and appointed Ajmer Singh, the actual claimant to the throne as governor of Dōngar. The Halbas did not like this step of Dalpatideva and they were annoyed that justice had not been done.

Ajmer Singh's mother was the daughter of the Kānker king and the Halbas owed a great reverence to Kānker king.

There in Jagdalpur Daryāodeva was a notorious strongman. He had been extremely lax about maintaining an effective administration and proper state of preparedness in armed forces, being far more interested in flattering the Bhonslās and the Jeypore king.

When Daryāodeva occupied the throne in the year 1774 for a short while he neglected the Dōngar area and made it financially starved and imposed pressing threats on Ajmer Singh, the governor of Dōngar. Unfortunately this neglect exceeded the margin of safety.

In 1774 the event occurred which served to galvanize the

diverse possibilities for serious trouble in Dōngar into actuality. A severe drought, beginning in the spring, settled upon most of the region and by early winter the resulting famine had reached such proportions that it triggered widespread popular disorders. Maratha records (Nagpur 1779 A. .) begin by citing specific horrors : wives sold by husbands; abandoned children; people forced to eat such items as grass, bark, and earth; mass burials of famine victims; outbreaks of lawlessness; and instances of cannibalism. One might be justified in suspecting the Maratha records, however there is no reason to disbelieve that the disaster was unprecedented. On the contrary, some of the sources contain comments which go to considerable lengths to point out that the famine would have been relatively unimportant had Daryāodeva not invaded the country in this miserable condition. Thus, the famine can be branded a catalyst and the invasion a dominant causative factor in its own right.

The uprisings evoked by the famine and invasion were launched by two major groups: the Halbas of Bastar and the soldiers of Jagdalpur who had deserted or mutinied. Some of these deserters and mutineers had escaped to Dōngar from as far away as Jagdalpur where Halba forces had been suffering disasters for a decade. The Halbas were largely reacting automatically to starvation, though they also might have been hard to some extent by insulting his overlord Ajmer Singh of Dōngar. The Halba soldiers had somewhat more complicated motives: demoralization, specific grievances against their governor, and resentment against not having received their rations and pay.

In addition to two major components forming rebel groups, other elements were of decidedly secondary importance : days back friendship of the Halbas with the kingdom of Kānker, relationship of the Governor of Dōngar with the Kānker raja Dalpatdeva allowing the Maratha general Nīlū Pandit to capture his senior Rani and subsequently, her death at Puri, and who was the sister of Kānker Raja and mother of Ajmer Singh, the governor of Dōngar, a trick played against Ajmer Singh to dethrone him by sending him to Dōngar as governor by Dalpatdeva, old established Marath bandid groups and Jaypore soldiers beyond the border. The Kānker king played

a very fleeting role in the uprisings. He was known to have aided Halba rebel groups for very limited periods in attacking Bastar towns inside the border (Kanker Raj family records). Such incidents were largely confined to the late 1770s and the total Kanker role in the late Chalukya rebellion was insignificant.

The Halbas and military groups of Bastar intermingled to some extent, though there was also a definite tendency for them to maintain a degree of separateness. The soldiers were the dominant elements in the uprisings in the south while the peasants predominated in the north. Of the two groups, the soldiers were more powerful and dangerous, possessing the obvious advantages of greater practical military experience and martial attitudes. Throughout the entire literature dealing with the late Chālukya rebellion runs testimonials to the hardness and warlike qualities of the Halba troops.

In geographical spread, the main area covered by the beginning of uprisings was roughly the northern half of Dōngar. There were sporadic incidents in the Indrāvātī valley and even further south, spilling over a few cases into northern Dantewārā, but these incidents were relatively isolated and unimportant.

As for the military potential of both groups of rebels, in absolute terms it was certainly not formidable. None of the bands was very large, numbering no more than a few thousand at the most, and the Halbas were generally armed with nothing but simple stones. The author of one of the sources (Maratha Records) states that the rebels would flee at the approach of an official of only a hundred men. However, despite all the rebel deficiencies in the absolute, they had considerable potential for trouble-making in the specific Dōngar context where the authorities took a decidedly lackadaisical attitude towards the task of suppressing them. Daryāodeva as well known for his dislike of even hearing of uprisings and local officials some times suppressed such unwelcome news.

When one comes to analyzing details of the uprising precisely what rebel groups were operating, their movements and their leadership—considerable confusion must be faced in the sources. Obviously the situation was so chaotic that the bureaucrats charged with keeping the records, could not

present a picture of great clarity. It does seem possible to say, though that Ajmer Singh was especially important. Definitely it is known that Ajmer Singh was an elder step-brother of Daryāodeva and was the nephew (maternal) of the Raja of Kānker. Ajmer Singh seems to have been the main character behind this rebellion. He is described as a real claimant to the throne of Bastar.

The central government could not help but react to help a kingdom slipping into disorder even though it had such other pressing problems as the Bhōnslā threats and internal political stresses accompanying the coming to the throne of Daryāodeva. A decision was reached in Jagdalpur relatively quickly and in the early spring of 1774 Daryāodeva was authorised to suppress the rebellion.

Daryāodeva was a newly made king and he had relatively no military career and he was too weak to suppress the uprisings. Daryāodeva made his mind to attack the Ḍongar and seize the fort. Accordingly he invaded Ḍongar with his large army of Mārijās. By this time the Kānker army came to the assistance of Ḍongar and a fierce battle ensued. Daryāodeva was defeated and could any how escape to Jagdalpur with his Mārijā men (Brett, 1909).

Now these rebels were inflamed and charted out a policy to capture the whole of the country in their hands. They recamped their strength and marched to Jagdalpur, the capital of Bastar. Now they did not confine themselves to the area along the river, but went further afield, pushing to the southern region of the state. For the most part, however, it is evident that Daryāodeva at Jagdalpur had been caught unprepared and his army surrendered to the rebel group. Daryāodeva saved his life by crossing Bastar boundary and taking refuge in Jeypore state, which was a sworn enemy of Bastar state. Thus the leader of the rebel group, Ajmer Singh, was made the king of Bastar in the year 1774 A.D. Most of the mutineers and rebels celebrated their victory as their leader occupied the throne of Bastar.

By summer 1776 there were definite signs that Ajmer Singh was not behaving properly with the rebels and soldiers and even he dared to insult his maternal uncle, the Rājā of Kānker, who all the way helped him in succeeding the throne. The

Kānker king was becoming dissatisfied with the performance of his nephew. So with his army he left Jagdalpur and returned back to Kānker.

By this time Daryāodeva was developing friendship with Vikramadēva (1758-81), the Raja of Jeypore, and was persuading him to help him to re-capture the throne of Bastar. He was also developing his military strength there.

The initial period of rebellion witnessed the beginnings of the rebel activities of Ajmer Singh. Because of his subsequent importance, his background and the commencement of his career deserve discussion here.

Information connecting the early life of Ajmer Singh is inadequate and conflicting. This man had little, if any, direct contact with Dōngar region, but developed a cordial relation with the Halbā tribe when he was forced to act as a governor by his father Dalpatdēva who wanted to coronate Daryāodēva as the king of Bastar. He was born at Bastar. The year of birth was probably 1731. Growing up, Ajmer Singh is said to have exhibited unusual strength and to have had such physical characteristics as tall, thin bodily frame; long, slanting eyebrows; heavy jaws, a pock-marked face; a distinctly white complexion; and excessive hairiness. All these traits seem quite plausible and apparently do not represent a historian's stereotype of what a rebel should look like.

Ajmer Singh's family background is known only to this extent that he was the elder son of Dalpatdēva, born of the sister of Harpālasingh, the Rājā of Kānker, who belonged to Sōmavanshī dynasty. One source recounts an elaborate story about how he exhibited a violent temperament when his mother was caught by the Bhōnslā in 1760 A.D. and died in Puri as a captive of the Bhōnslās. He was so furious at that time that he developed hatred against his father, who could not dare to save the life of her mother and loved Baghelin Rānī, the mother of Daryāodeva as if nothing had happened. Probably the most reliable information concerning Ajmer's family is that he was appointed as the governor of Dōngar by his father and it seems certain that he was being overlooked. Sources tell that he fought bravely in the frontier and became quite wealthy from tributes obtained from the tribal chiefdoms. Subsequently, Daryāodeva angered him, falsely accused him

of having the desire to capture the throne of Bastar. As a result of these unjust accusations, he was finally forced into rebellion himself.

The date for the launching of Ajmer Singh's rebellion was probably the summer of 1774, apparently only a short time after his narrow escape from Daryāodeva's army. He collected around him several hundred men and began raiding villages in the Bastar region. He followed the general rebel custom of adopting a nickname 'Ajagara' (the dragon king) in the rebel movement (Ramanatha Nanda Sharma, 1938, Sloka 284).

Ajmer Singh's early stature in the rebel movement was a modest one. Undoubtedly he did not have the vaguest thought of any such grandiose plan as overthrowing the Chālukya dynasty. However, unlike many of his step-brothers, he was fortunate enough to survive to play a role of increasing importance throughout the following pages.

Shift of the Rebellions to Jagdalpur

Several reasons lay behind the shift of rebellions from Dōngar to Jagdalpur. In the first place, the move represented a follow up programme against Daryāodeva who attacked the rebellious group at Dōngar and being defeated escaped to Jagdalpur. In addition, the rebel leaders were now attracted to the greater possibilities for plunder in fresh regions and occupy the throne of the Central Government. Also, they undoubtedly realized that it would take some time for military operations against them. By the end of 1774 the southward shift of the rebellions was complete. Two of the most significant rebel successes in this new area were their seizure of the towns of Bastar and Jagdalpur. The capture of Jagdalpur was especially important because it was the capital of the state where Daryāodeva was ruling. To take it, the rebels had maintained a siege of eight days during which no relief force had come to the capital's aid. The Central Government could hardly have been unaware of the significant fact that the rebels had pushed forth from Dōngar into an area which was much more vital. Indeed, they were within striking distance to the capital. Advice on what should be done poured in. Some advised Daryāodeva to leave the capital and take refuge in Jeypore which was at

the time under the rule of the Bhōnslās and who had a coveted eye on Bastar since 1740. Daryāodeva left for Jeypore and Ajmer Singh was chosen as the Rājā of Bastar by the rebels.

The Rebels Return to Disunity

The downfall of Daryāodeva was the movement of great rejoice. Looked at from the rebel side, the rebellions during 1775 and 1776 present a picture of utter confusion. Though Ajmer Singh was the newly elected Rājā of Bastar, his maternal uncle Harpālasingh was operating quite independently. No degree of planning could be discerned in his movement and he reacted automatically and continued more lucrative plundering. Most of the Halba militants returned to Dōngar in fear of any external aggression. The troops serving under Ajmer Singh tended to be recruited from Mārjā region which was hostile to Dōngar. These military commanders were not faithful to this new overlord. Their loyalty was relatively firm with Daryāodeva who was busy in playing tricks in Jeypore state. A dangerous bifurcation was developing between the Halbā and the Mārjā militants. The breakdown in discipline among the official troops, paved the way of Daryāodeva to attack Jagdalpur with more vigour and strength. Harpālsingh, being annoyed by this recruitment-policy of Ajmer Singh left Jagdalpur and returned back to Kānker.

The Collapse of the Rebellions (1777-79)

After making the patently false statement, he (Daryāodeva) was departing from Bastar for ever, Daryāodeva abandoned the city in the early morning hours of June 4, 1774. He entered the Jeypore territory. There he organised a para-military troop and requested the Rājā of Jeypore named Vikramāditya to strengthen his position. There he signed a treaty with the Rājā of Jeypore. Even today there is an ancient stone-carving at the entrance of the garden of Nandapur in Jeypore state, which depict two closed hands, which commemorate the treaty between Vikramadeva (Rājā of Jeypore) and Daryāodeva in 1777 A.D. (Koraput district Gazetteer, p. 242). According to this treaty Daryāodeva had to part with five garhs (Kotpār,

Churuchunḍa Pōṛāgarh, Omarkoṭ and Rāygarhā) of Bastar in lieu of the military assistance to be given to him against Ajmer Singh (A. Vadively, *The Ruling Chiefs Nobles and Zamindars of India*, Vol. I, Madras, 1915, p. 460). This has also been cited in Jeypore-Rājavanshāvalī (Sloka 285) :

तदन्तरे तं दरियारसंज्ञकं नृपासनेऽस्मिन्नभिलेचयन् तदा ।
सकोटपायादिकदुर्गपंचकं सुलेखपूर्वं समवापदक्षिणम् ॥

He also signed a treaty before Trambaka Avīr Rāo in favour of Bimbāji Bhōnslā (1758-87) that if he regains the throne, Bastar would become a vassal of the Marāṭhā kingdom. Thus on the sacrifice of the independence of Bastar Daryāodeva sought the military help from these two monarchs. According to "Jeypore Rājavanshāvalī" the Jeypore army in charge of Vikramadeva advancing on Bastar included 15 elephant-men, 170 horse-men, 50 generals, 12,000 armed men and 12 canons. The Bhōnslā army headed by Tryambaka was also a large army. The total soldiers in the army attacking Bastar was about 20 000 (Jeypore Rajavanshavalī, p. 140). Daryāodeva had a separate command of 10,000 soldiers. Having obtained the assistance of the Marāṭhās and Jeypore kingdom, Daryāodeva advanced against the capital of Bastar. By the fall of 1777, Daryāodeva's strength and prestige was sufficiently strong to launch a major offensive. Ajmer Singh was defeated in the battle and he was captured by Daryāodeva by applying a trick of friendship. *Jeypore-Rājavanshāvalī* records this fact :

निजानुयातस्य विराजसम्पदो
विदधैराजस्य च याचको भवन् ।
प्रकल्पयामास रणाखरे पशुं
द्विषन्तमस्याजगरं जघण्यजम् ॥

(Sloka 284)

The defeats of the rebels at Jagdalpur delivered the final blows which made recovery impossible.

Control of Dōngar

Following the rebel defeats at Jagdalpur, the surviving

Ajmer Singh and his lieutenants collected their decimated forces for a brief sojourn in Dōngar where the rebel troops were invited to gather. Here again he established a rebel regime in the year 1777 A.D. following the capture of Jagdalpur. Daryāodeva with the armies of the Bhōnslās and Sūryavanshīs of Jeypore again followed him and after a fierce battle Ajmer Singh was killed (El, IX, 166; Hiralal, 1916: 168). This incidence also finds place in one of the Muria-folk-songs :

मुलिर मुलिर इन्तोनी कारी गुटीं, अगा. बगा दा मुलिर कारी गुटीं ॥ 1 ॥
रइनीगड़ दा मुलिर दादा, हुरिंग मुलिर दादा ॥ 2 ॥
डोंडेरा कयङ्ग तरवार दादा, टोरमेण्ड टोरमेण्ड पूजा रोय कारी गुटीं ॥ 3 ॥
मिण्डाक टोरा रेयन्दु रोय कारी गुटीं, लुवुर मीनू कुबनाह रोय कारी गुटीं ॥ 4 ॥
नारि मीनू तगंनाह रोय कारी गुटीं, मुलिर मुलिर इन्तोनी कारी गुटीं ॥ 5 ॥

“You are crying army army, O blackbird ?
Where has the army come from, blackbird ॥ 1 ॥
The army has come from Rainigarh, brother
The army comes like a line of black ants, brother. ॥ 2 ॥
The sword is long as the Dōndera fruit, brother
The are killing people furiously, blackbird. ॥ 3 ॥
Luvur-fish are swimming in it, blackbird ॥ 4 ॥
Nari-fish are swimming against the stream, blackbird. ॥ 5 ॥

Following Ajmer Singh's death in 1779, his army comprising of the Halbās was brutally murdered. All the Halbās were treacherously killed, only one Halbā could save his life. Thus Ajmer Singh's death may be considered to mark the conclusion of the Chālukya rule in Bastar. With this Bastar became dependent to the Bhōnslās and the rule of Chālukya dynasty in Bastar came to an end.

Conclusion

The Halbā rebellions began on a small scale in Dōngar in 1774. They arose as a result of the conjunction of several developments and conditions. Political stability in the area had been undermined by the Bhōnslā aggression since 1740. Economically and socially, the area suffered from isolation and limitations imposed by geography. An economic backwater,

the region was unaffected by the progress in agriculture enjoyed by more favoured area of Jagdalpur.

Natural calamities and military conditions exacerbated the political instability and unfortunate socio-economic condition. The military dangers stemmed primarily from the mutinous mood prevailing among numerous groups of Halbā soldiers in the area whose dissatisfaction had been aroused by the dethroning of their governor. This disposition to mutiny was increased by the presence of the Bhōnslā troops in the area. The result was the Halbā revolution.

The Halbā rebellions can be divided into two main phrases: disorganized raiding and dynastic ambitions. Their chief goals were confined to plundering and survival and even the most ambitious Ajmer Singh had no more than a vague conception overthrowing Daryāodeva and establishing his own supremacy.

In geographical spread, the rebellions, during the first part of the disorganized raiding phase, were confined to Dōngar. By two months they spilled over into Bastar, and during the next three years, encroached upon Jagdalpur. By 1777 the rebellions had been forced north of the Indrāvati river, and during the next two years, rebel bands rapidly centred around Dōngar again.

On the basis of military power Ajmer Singh could succeed to the throne by 1774, and he consolidated his position of leadership within the rebel movement and made manifest his determination to found a dynasty of his own. Ajmer Singh's consolidation of his leadership position reached a climax in the same year by which time he had destroyed the army of Daryāodeva and had forced him to leave Bastar. He assumed a princely title and later on imperial position.

The dynastic ambitions phase of the rebellions continued until Ajmer's death in the summer of 1779. Ajmer Singh was destroyed quite soon after he had been confronted with Daryāodeva's combined power. One might ask why, he, and with him the entire Halbā movement, met with such a rapid and inglorious end. Viewed entirely as a phenomenon of tribal unrest, the greatest weakness of Halbā rebellions was the lack of any spirit-building and Charisma-providing factors, such as a belief with roots in a folk religion. Viewed more generally, the most fundamental reasons for the defeat of the rebellions

were their failure to attract the support of other tribal groups and, closely related, to this was their neglect to develop secure strength in Dōngar area before attempting to seize central power. The failure to attract the support of tribal groups was mainly due to the limited backgrounds of the rebel leader. Had there been more than one rebel leaders and this rebel leadership more diverse, it would have been more possible for other aboriginal factions to have exerted influence. Also, if Ajmer Singh had been able to maintain his position in Dōngar for a longer period, that, of course, he did, he would have had more success in building up a total tribal following.

Lacking a solid political structure and possessing no secure base area, the Halbā rebels were destroyed swiftly and overwhelmingly by the trio-militaria (Bhōnslās, Jeyporians and followers of Daryāodeva). The rebel military power of Ajmer Singh was impressive only in the context of their competition with the forces of Daryāodeva alone. Equally important, Daryāodeva, benefiting from the assistance of Bhōnslās and the forces of Jeypore, had created an impressive army and could present himself as the most powerful commander later on. Even then, this revolution changed the destiny of Bastar following the collapse of Chālukya rule and giving way to Bhōnslā occupation of Bastar. Thus ended the Chālukya rule in Bastar.

THE ROLE OF FEUDATORIES

The wild and mountainous nature of a greater portion of the country of Bastar afforded ample opportunity for the origin and rise of many petty local dynasties of valiant chiefs, who wielded much power and influence locally during the middle ages under review. The extent of the dominion of each one of these families was small and rulers were petty chieftains; yet they were very hardy and brave and their strength chiefly lay in the situation of their strongholds, inaccessible and impregnable which generally come under the category of either the *giri-durgas*, or the *vana-durgas*. The conquest of even a single one of these Maḍiya chiefs, as they were generally called, who were experts in archery and mountain warfare,

was hailed as a great achievement. The victor assumed the high sounding titles and the insignia of those vanquished chiefs. These Māḍiya chiefs generally used to give incessant trouble on the frontier regions to their neighbouring kings, when there was any civil war in their dominions, or when they proved to be weak rulers.

Having recognised the difficult nature of the country, Annamadēva introduced certain administrative reforms and re-organised the administrative machinery. For the welfare of the kingdom he appointed 20 tribal chiefs in different parts. He used to govern his kingdom with their advice.

Each one of the local chiefs of Bastar appears to have been ruling his domain independently as is evident from their local records. They do not acknowledge or make mention of their sovereign rulers in their records. We are not informed anywhere about the nature of the political relations that subsisted between these chiefs and the Chālukya sovereigns. Yet, it is probable that 12 *pātra* (EI, XII, 242) or twelve ministers of state were appointed or selected out of these local chiefs. Tradition records that they rendered military service to their Chālukya overlords in times of need, and that they were practically independent in their internal administration of their own dominion.

These local chieftains of Bastar, as noted below, appear to have played an important part in the history of the period under review.

Rekāpalli Zamindari

Most of the generals who had served Kākatiya Pratāparudra either perished in battle or escaped destruction by fleeing. Only three old generals survived the catastrophe. One of them was Kōlani Rudradēva. Prōlaya Nāyaka assumed the royal title after the death of Kōlani Rudradēva and began to rule Coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh. He set up his capital at Rekāpalli in Bhadrāchalam taluk of the Khamman district, as attested by Vilāsa grant. Situated in the mountainous eastern ghats and surrounded by thick forests and rapid streams, Rekāpalli was an ideal centre for guerilla warfare. It was from here that the

tribal chieftains led guerilla battles against the British during the second half of the last century.

Prōlaya Nāyaka of the Musunūri family was a young and daring chieftain borne in the *Caturthkula* or the fourth caste. He was the grandson of Pōta and the son of Pōca Nāyaka. He must have been a contemporary of Annamadēva. The Musunūri chiefs were great warriors and their rule in Rekāpalli ended in 1367 A.D., two years before the death of Annamadēva. After that Rekāpalli was included in Bastar territory by Annamadēva and remained a part of Bastar up to the reign of Ajmer Singh, i.e. 1779 A.D. At the time of Daryāodeva the Zamindar of Rekāpalli declared himself independent.

Cherlā Zamindari

Singamanāyaka, the founder of the Cherlā Zamindari was the contemporary of Annamadēva and Military general of Pratāparudra. A powerful general belonging to the Recharla family, Dāmanayūḍu by name is described as the founder of the Kakatiya Kingdom ककतिराज्यप्रतिष्ठापनाचार्य. This Dāman rājā finds place in Muria folksongs, particularly in Ghotul-songs. They are known as the Recharla Reddis or simply the Reddis. They ruled on the southern bank of Godāvarī up to 1448 A.D. After that their kingdom became a part of Bastar state and it was reduced to a Zamindari in the reign of Bhairavadeva, who was a great warrior-ruler of Chālukya dynasty and remained under Bastar up to 1779 A.D.

Madiyā Zamindari

The Recerla princes were also busy in extending their territory. Anavota Nāyaka II of the Rechela family made military raid in Bastar in 1369 A.D. and conquered Saptamāḍiyās and Bārahdonti kingdoms of this region. Saptamāḍiyās mean seven Māḍiyās. Māḍiya or Māḍa is derived from *mala* a mountain and it denotes the tracts of the highlands of Bastar. Māḍiyās are still inhabitants of this hilly region. This indicates that up to the time of Annamadeva Māḍiyās of seven clans were rulers of a tract of Bastar. These seven Maria kings are mentioned in folksongs :

सातु जाइ राजालोर वूबा, राजान लाइ ने केरक वूबा

"I have seven Kings, father. For love of them,
I will wear it, father.

Bārahadonti Zamindari

'Bārah' is twelve, and the term "the kings of Bārahadonti", seems to refer to the rulers of the twelve serial states of kingdoms of Bastar, which were subjugated by Annamadēva (family records). The term 'donti' signifying a serial suggests that the twelve states lie adjacent to one another. As Allya Vema carried his arms as far as Kalahandī the twelve states suggested by the term "Bārahadonti" appear to refer to the feudatory and tributary states of Bastar. The Redḍī princes of Rājama-hendravaram offered protection to the kings of 'Bārahadonti' and Saptā-Māḍiyas :

बलवद् बारहदोन्ति मान्ने धरणीपालावरोधांगना-विलसन-मंगलसूच-
रक्षणकलाविकपातकारुण्य ———

after subduing them. In the Family Records of Annamadeva, there is a reference to 'twelve Mānyās' which refer to this inscriptional fact (SII, Vol. VI, No. 798).

Jhādesha Zamindari

The Jhādesha-Zamindari mentioned in the sixth chapter of this book, refers to the 'Jhoriyān' tract of Bastar (SII, Vol. VI, No. 798) and indicates that the fourteenth century Jhōrjās were the rulers of this tract, Mārjās were ruling in the hilly tract of South Bastar, while Jhoṛjās were ruling in the hilly tract of north Bastar. Even today we find reference to this in folksongs, such as:

मुटका हिलाय बायतौना, नना भोरिया लयोर ।

नाके हुसै वरिन्तु, नना भोरिया लयोर ।

पिचाल डंगिया कंजतौना, नना भोरिया लयोर ।

करिया कोट करतुना, नना भोरिया लयोर ।

मण्डा हेइ बाइतौना, नना भोरिया लयोर ।

"I come to beat him, I am the Jhoria boy.
 Seeing me he is afraid, I am Jhoria boy.
 I am wearing a black coat, I am Jhoria boy.

Bhōpālpaṭanam Zamindari

The ancient history of Bhōpālpaṭanam appears to be very obscure. In this connection I have not been able to discover any document or paper. It can be a trace to a traditional legend which says that the ancestors of the zamindari of Bhōpālpaṭanam were Pālki-bearers of Annamadēva when he with his numerous followers and allies came to Bastar from Wārāngal to make himself king over the aborigines. It is said that when Annamadēva (while en route to Bastar) was beyond Gōdāvarī a very strong and fearful whirl-wind attacked the party. In the whirl-wind, the story goes, there appeared a dreadful dragon (a monstrous serpent) which began to trouble the party and none had the courage to knock the monster on the head. One of the Pālki-bearers summed up his courage and encountering the animal killed it on the spot with a spear. The party then proceeded. Annamadēva was very much pleased with the Pālki-bearer and on his founding Bastar-kingdom bestowed the Zamindari of Bhōpālpaṭanam on him as a reward for his extra ordinary feat, of saving the lives of those who made up the party. Thus, a Pālki-bearer became a zamindar and he, if the story were true, rightly assumed the title गलि-वीर-प म-भोई which might be taken to mean the "palki bearer who bravely killed the monster serpent of whirl-wind". The words गलि (wind), वीर (brave), पम (serpent), and भोई (palki-bearer) are Telugu words. Afterwards they changed the title into कृष्णपामभोई. This indicates the Gond-origin of the Zamindars of Bhōpālpaṭanam.

Pāma Bhoi was related by marriage to the zamindars of Kutrū and Ahīrī (Chanda). It was a notorious Zamindari for plunder and dacoity.

This was one of the important Bastar Zamindaris and was split in four distinct blocks: Bhōpālpaṭanam paragana, Lingapur paragana, Maddeṛa paragana and Chandoor paragana (Maharashtra).

Phutakela Zamindari

The historicity of Phulkēl Zamindari is related with the Bhōpālpaṭnam Zamindari. Both were servants of Annamadēva. Bhōpālpaṭnam being his pālki-bearers and Photkēla his cowherds. These two zamindars, therefore, derive their title from gift. The ancestors of the other zamindars were in possession of this tract before the founder of the Bastar Rājā came to this country. It comprised an area of about 375 square miles, and contained 30 villages, and was held by Nāgul Dora, a Telinga and by caste a shepherd in 1862 A.D. (Glasfurd 1862). This zamindari was exposed to raids from Nizam's country and its neighbours of Bastar.

Bijāpur Zamindari

The Bijāpur Zamindari, which was situated east from Bhōpālpaṭanam, had an area of 1700 square miles. It was held by a Telanga. It was very much connected by trade routes to Hyderabad.

Kōtapalli

This was the smallest Zamindari lying towards the south-west corner of the state. It was surrounded on the north by the villages of Bijapur and Lingagiri pargana of Bhōpālpaṭanam zamindari; on the west by the Madras Presidency; and on the south east by Konṭā. There were two parganas—Pamēr parganā and Kōtapalli pargana—containing 28 villages. A Telanga zamindar was ruling here.

Bhijī Zamindari

It contained 100 villages and comprised of 855 square miles. The Zamindar had matrimonial relations with the Zamindars of Chintalnār.

Sukmā Zamindari

This was decidedly a very fine zamindari situated towards

the south-east border of the State. The founder of the Zamindari was one Rangarāja. It was matrimonially related to the Rājās of Bastar. There were four parganas in this zamindari:—Chīndagaṛh, Hamīragaṛh, Korrāmankā and Kerlāpāla. The ancient line of Sukmā became extinct in 1870 A.D.

Chintalnār Zamindari

This Zamindari occupied by a Rājput was notorious for highway robbery. It was matrimonially related to the zamindari of Bhilji. It comprised of an area of 486 square miles. Chintalnār and Jagarguṇḍā were two famous villages of this zamindari. For want of male heir in the family, the zamindari lapsed to the state in 1912 A.D.

Kutru Zamindari

This zamindari was the largest in the State held by the Mārjā Gonds related to the Zamindars of Bhōpālpaṭnam and Ahīrī. The family originally had possession of Sūrajgaṛh district in Ahīrī zamindari (Maharashtra), but was driven out by the Marāṭhās. The area was of 1072 square miles and contained about 150 villages.

It was situated in the middle of the Western portion of the state and extended towards the east up to the range of Bailādīlā Hills.

Inside the traditional zamindari boundary there were 4 sub-zamindaris in Kuṭrū zamindari in 1919, held by so called Sikmī Zamindars. There were eight parganas in this zamindari: Mingācal, Alwar, Dūrepalli, Kuṭrū, Bhairamgaṛh, Mārīyan, Lankā, Pharasgaṛh and Pēsēwārā. The Pharasgaṛh sub-zamindar was the actual brother of Kuṭrū zamindar who had his home at Pēsēwārā before he was adopted for Kuṭrū in 1905 A.D. The sub-zamindars of Tōyanār, Gudmā and Pharasgaṛh were in ancient days full zamindars.

Bhairamgaṛh Zamindari

It was a Halbā Zamindari and in the year 1908, it came under the sub-zamindari of Kuṭrū. The leading Halbā-family

at the time of Brett (1909) was that of Hanumān Prasād Samarth of Bhairamgaṛh who held over 40 villages in Kuṭrū zamindari.

Paralkōṭa Zamindari

This wild tract was situated on the north-western edge of the state. It was bounded on the north by Partāpur pargana of Antāgaṛh Mukāsā, on the east by Antāgaṛh Mār, on the south by the Ahīrī Zamindari and on the west by the smaller Zamindaris of Chāndā state. The approximate area of the estate had been, roughly calculated to be nearly 640 square miles, and there were 107 villages. The Zamindari was drained by the Kōtrī river which coming from Pūnābaras zamindari (Chanda) enters the estates towards the north-west which passing through that portion goes outside the estate after escaping the wild hilly Abūjhmār with the open portion of the Zamindari. Another river of importance was the Nibrā which comes in from Nārāinpur side. Leaving the open portion of the north-west the Mārjās predominated covering two third of total population. The ancient line of Paralkōṭ Zamindar was extinct in 1873. The Paralkōṭ men were Mārjās.

Bārsur Zamindari

It is now an old village in Bastar, formerly the capital of the Nāga rulers. It was under the Nāga zamindars in Chālukya period. These Nāga rulers became Halbās due to matrimonial relations. Brett (1909) comments: "Another old family is that of Husenḍī Nēgī of Barsur. They claim to have been Nāgavan-shī but have intermarried with the Halbās and are now considered to belong the latter caste."

Kuttagaṛam Zamindari

It was the Maria Zamindari up to the time of Vīranārāyaṇa-deva (1639-1654) of Chālukya dynasty.

Bhadrachalam Zamindari

Up to the year 1779, it was under the Chālukya rulers of Bastar.

Bangaru Zamindari

It was a zamindari lying in the south of Godavari. It declared its independence at the time of Daryāodeva (1779 A.D.).

Pamer Zamindari

The Zamindars were from Māṣiā stock and they were the torch-bearers at the time of Annamadēva. They came from Wāraṅgal to Bastar (Brett, 1909).

Toyanār Zamindari

Before 1908 A.D., it was an independent Māṣiā Zamindari, but later on it was submerged with Kuṭrū zamindari.

Gudmā Zamindari

It was also a Māṣiā zamindari and was attached to Kuṭrū zamindari in the year 1908.

Pasewara Zamindari

This was a Māṣiā zamindari and in 1908 became a part of Kuṭrū zamindari.

From the above description now we may conclude that as recorded earlier there were seven Māṣiā kingdoms, twelve adjacent kingdoms, and one Jhōṣiān kingdom in Bastar when Annamadēva conquered this region. Annamadēva appointed all the Rājās of these kingdoms as the governors who saved the boundaries of Bastar in the later period.

These downtrodden tribes did not remain long under the heel of the Muslims. A movement to throw off the foreign yoke and protect their *Dharma* and culture was set on foot in Bastar under the leadership of Annamadēva. All the tribal leaders living therein joined together into a confederacy with common purpose of freeing the country from foreign domination, and to re-establish tribal supremacy. Annamadēva came forward to guide the movement and its destinies. Prolaya Nāyaka of Rekāpalli was the great leader in 1325 A.D. He

along Annamadeva rose in rebellion against the Muslim authorities and freed their region from foreign domination. The names of these zamindaris indicate the extent of the region over which Annamadēva operated during this rebellion.

The liberation of Bastar from foreign domination naturally brought about a change in the attitude and outlook of the Hindu nobles in different parts of the country. The sentiment that had fired their imagination and united them for a common purpose, failed to animate them further to work together soon after the attainment of independence. The first flush of enthusiasm, consequent on their gaining a signal victory over the imperial forces of Delhi, evoked in their hearts a note of self-confidence and self-reliance, fostering in them an independent spirit. The victory they had won, begot in them a false and pernicious sense of prestige and power which naturally tended to discord and cleavage. The ideal for which they united and fought was lost sight of in no time, and each one of the chiefs began to assert his power and extend his authority at the expense of the other. As a consequence, these principalities developed soon into independent states with an aggressively autonomous attitude, which if did nothing else, served to make unity among them well nigh impossible. This attitude of the tribal nobles tended to deprive Annamadēva of his consolidation of power in Bastar, and this is the reason why his generations had to pass struggling with different powers.

In the later mediaeval period the tribal community reflected the age-old history of arrogant interferences in the aboriginals' agrarian relationships both by the Central Government and the local authorities. It drove the tribals, as into a ghetto, into petty mediaeval associations of a fiscal, tax-levying nature, into associations for the ownership of allotment land, i.e. into the village communities. Under feudalism the tribal community reflected the social-estate and economic organisation of the peasantry, which was strictly closed within itself and which disunited the peasants themselves whose social productive activity was confined to members of individual communities—a factor that held back the development of both the productive forces and social relations and prolonged the backwardness, downtroddenness and barbarism of people in the region. The social-estate solidarity of the serfdom-dominated countryside

as a whole vis-a-vis the landlord, while at the same time the social-estate isolation of the tribal community weakened the aboriginals' social protest, affecting their centuries-old thinking.

ADMINISTRATION

There are few details of the government, both central and feudatory, their mutual relations, the working of the administrative machinery, the duties and privileges of the respective officers of the state and so on. Records of the period, either copper-plate or stones, do not enlighten us on the subject. The information, if there is any, furnished by them, is very meagre and undefined, for instance one of the Mundā-songs sung at the Dusserā festival purporting to present the Durbār-system of Annamadēva, begins with the following lines:

वरंगा हस्तना ले उतरे महाराजा

मंधोता में डेरा लिहिन आज

हुजूर प्रभु बाना बाँधे ॥ 1 ॥

आघागड़ मंधोता टीकागड़ डोंगर

छलेगड़ कोटपाड़ गुरुघर भाभीपाल

हुजूर प्रभु बाना बाँधे ॥ 2 ॥

गुडी दरबारा एबे बैठे महाराजा

रंगीन के माहला लागी आज

हुजूर प्रभु बाना बाँधे ॥ 3 ॥

नेगी असा बैठे, जोगी असा बैठे

बैठे सैदार बैदार, बहौ बैठे; नेगी कपड़दार

हुजूर प्रभु बाना बाँधे ॥ 4 ॥

Verses like these do not help in giving us any clear idea about the state, or the duties of officers of the state, they provide us only with the official hierarchy in the state.

From the contemporary literature we may infer that the Chālukya system of administration was based on feudal organization. At the apex was the ruler wielding absolute power, both civil and judicial. He was also the supreme commander and was personally leading the army to the battle. To

the Chālukya system of administration, the Rājā was the fountain head of all power in the state. He used the supreme civil, military and judicial authority. He is described as a divine personality by poets, and chroniclers. Dikpālādēva (EI, XII, 242) records his inscription with these lines : श्री दत्तात्रेया देवी जयति and Rājapālādēva also mentions the grace of Dantēswarī (OHRJ. X 3.57-60) Pratāparudradēva is said to be the incarnation of Shiva—पातु क्षीणीं किल भुवि कलौ वीररुद्रावतारः (Sanskrit Vānsāvalī, Sloka 1). Thus the theory of Divine Right was deep-rooted here as it was in other princely territories in India.

The Kōsalānāda (Pātṇā Mss Canto XXV, 8-9) enumerates the qualities of a King "A king is one who is having majestic outlook, a commanding personality, skillful in arms and well-versed in Shāstrās, generous, courageous, truthful, respecting the Brāhmins and anxious to lend protection to his subjects." The king used to appoint the following officials in his place in hierarchy: Dafedār, Sipāhī, Kapaṛadār Bahīdār, Māldār, Khabāsa, Mardaniā, Suarā, Masālaci, Mohareyā, and Pujārī.

Council of Ministers

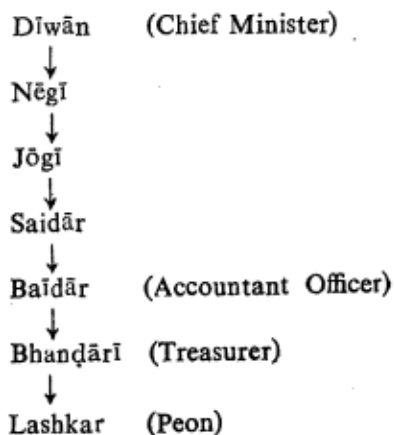
Though the Chālukya king had unlimited power and authority in his hand, he was following the law and principle of Dharmashāstra and was acting only with the approval and co-operation of the council of ministers. The Kōsalānāda (XV.11) describes the ministers as the two arms and two legs of the king. They were permanent residents (चिरस्थायिनः) of the state, belonged preferably to the warrior class (Gonds and Halbas), and were wise. The number of ministers under the Chālukya kingship is not known from any source. Probably, it varied from time to time. The chief minister, was known as Dīwān, enjoyed great authority and exercised the powers and prerogatives of the Rājā, with some restrictions. He was in charge of the general administration, was the head of the finance department, and also controlled the militia. Every branch of public administration came under his purview. Every man from the monarch to menials had to deal with him directly. For his multifarious works, he was sumptuously paid by assignment of the revenues of large estate. Tirathgarh Inscriptions (Hira Lal

1916: 157) show that Himmatsimha Dīwān was very powerful in those days. We find two statues in Tirathgarh, under both of which the name "Himmatsimha Dīwān" is inscribed.

Among other ministers mention may be made of Paymaster-General known as "Bakshī" and the lord High Steward who was in charge of the imperial household. The "Bakshī" besides being the Paymaster-General, of all the officials of the State was also authorised to get recruits for the army. In the power of influence, the latter was only next to Dīwān.

Officials of the Central Government

According to Chūrāmaṇi-song quoted above, the indigenous administrative system in Bastar consisted of an elaborate hierarchy of petty officials responsible to the Mahārājā in the following manner :



The state was divided into 48 (or 84) parganās, of which the larger five were ruled by special administrators known as Dīwāns. Another class of revenue officers called *Thānādārs* collected taxes in the wilder and more distant parganās. Under them were officials called *Nēgīs* and *Hikmīs* who employed a class of servants known as *Pāika* to actually enter the village and obtain payments (Chapman 1898: 51-52). In the Abujhmar the present day word for 'outsider' is *Pāika*, which term may have its historical roots in the previous administrative institution

of 'Pāika'. Glasfurd (1862: 278-9) described the system somewhat differently: "over every few garhs there is a Kāmdar or manager, a person able to read and write and keep the accounts, and who is held responsible to the Dēwān for all matters connected with his charge. He generally resides within the limits of his jurisdiction. His salary is uncertain, but as he is allowed certain perquisites in grain, it seldom amount to more than ten rupees. Under him is the "Nēgi" a subordinate officer, who has jurisdiction over a group of villages. He is responsible to Kāmdar for the collection of revenues, etc. The Nēgis, where his charge is heavy, has generally a "Hikmī" under his orders, and below these again are the heads of villages (Paṭels), who collect and pay to their superiors the demands on their villages."

Administrative Divisions

For properly carrying on the administration of the country, the kingdom was divided into a number of administrative divisions called Rājā, Gaṛh, Parganā and Grāmas. Of these Gaṛh and Parganā were new divisions, the territorial division of 'nāḍu' was in existence before 1324 A.D. The Nāga-rulers made use of this 'nāḍu', originally as a socio-geographical unit, as a political division. During the rule of Chālukyas these 'nāḍus' were called 'Gaṛhs', the fort which was placed under the charge of military feudal officer of the state, and each 'Gaṛh' was subdivided into a number of Paraganās or Chālkās. Each Parganā or Chālkā in turn comprised a number of villages. Each village formed an administrative unit. From the local records we come to know that during the rule of Anpamadēva in Bastar, there were 48 Gaṛhs and 84 Parganās in total. The head of Gaṛh was called Gaṛhathiyā, the pargana-head was Mājhi and the Chālkā head was known as Chālkī. Thus these Chālukya kings introduced a new political division in the country which was previously not known. The political condition of the country probably necessitated this type of division. It gradually became popular with the progress of time, as is attested by the later records that in the year 1909 A.D. There were 105 parganas in Bastar headed by Mājhis and Chālkis in the following manner :

<i>Areas</i>	<i>Majhi Pargana</i>	<i>Chalki Pargana</i>
Narainpur	21	4
Kondagaon	12	5
Jagdapur	12	9
Dantewara	6	1
Bijapur-Kutru	14	2
Bhopalpatanam	8	1
Sukma	4	1
Konta	4	1
105 Parganas	82 Majhis	23 Chalkis

The kings of the Chālukya dynasty divided the kingdom into a number of Gaṛhs. Each Gaṛh was supervised by the Gaṛhatīyā. Later on instead of Gaṛh, Parganā became the main political division. This has been discussed in detail by the author (Shukla 1985: 63-115).

From the material available to us, it seems possible to classify roughly the officers of the state who controlled the provincial and local administration into three distinct groups, namely (i) feudal chiefs or zamindars, (ii) Tributaries or Mukāsādārs, and (iii) Other officers. Feudal chiefs were governors appointed over a territory of limited extent on a military tenure. The nature of the tenure and other particulars will be discussed in connection with the military organisation. Tributaries or Mukāsādārs were those rented or administered one or more villages on condition of paying a stipulated annual tribute to the king. The others were officers of the state who did not come under first two categories. The material at our disposal does not furnish any information regarding these officials.

Village Organisation

The village officials formed a separate class of their own. The link between them and the Central Government was not strong. Generally, a village was a tract of land comprising a number of homesteads. It was like a joint family, managed by elders. Every village consisted of a number of servants who were remunerated for their services to the village commune.

They were commonly called *grāmahatā* or *gauntīā* or *paṭēls*. *Paṭēl* was the head of the village. In early times he was appointed by the ruler of the country. In the mediaeval period, when a group of agricultural families cleared the forest and founded a village to settle in, the procedure was different. One who had sufficient influence among the elders of the families, approached the king with presents, and obtained the sanction and assent of the king for the management of the village. He was the king's representative in the village, and made himself responsible for the revenue tax, payable by the village community as a whole to the king, either in kind or in specie. He collected the revenue in kind, mostly paddy. He preserved and protected the former in royal-granary (राजगारे) in the village which was under his charge, probably to defray the local expenses of the government, both civil and military, and to sell the remaining paddy for a proper price when it sold dear. There were royal granaries for each and every village which was an administrative unit.

Karana was the accountant of the village. He maintained accounts relating to the extent of the arable and waste lands, cultivated and fallow land, the wet and dry cultivation, taxable and rent-free land, an estimate of the crops grown, the assessment on the dry and wet crops under the previous and the present governments, the total extent of the *brahmadāya* and *dāvadāya* lands, the village services and every item concerning the administration of the village including public works. *Karāṇas* and *Paṭēls* were chief officers of the village. Both of them worked hand in hand in assigning the lands to the ryots and collecting the king's share. Any business transacted on behalf of the whole village without their approval was not valid and legal.

The *pujārī* or *gāyṭā* was an important member of the village community. Each and every member of the tribal society was accustomed, from time immemorial, to do a thing at an auspicious moment after consulting the *pāṇjiyār* (astrologer). For tilling the soil afresh in the new year, for sowing the seeds, for going on a journey, for performing any kind of business, whether public or private, whether auspicious or inauspicious the *guniyā*

was consulted¹. He informed the villagers of good and bad omens, the auspicious moments or time to begin a work or business and predicted at times the future of individuals according to *mērhā-gantiā*. He was an important person in the village. A real *pujārī*.

In every early times the police duty was vested in the hands of the head-man of the village; but with the growth of the village and its population, its administration grew unwieldy, and the *kōtwar* or *talari* was appointed for the police-watch. His activities were supervised by the village head-man under whom he had to work. *Talari* was the policeman of the village.

Aṭhapaharivā was another police-servant of the village. Every village in ancient times had a boundary wall (*prahari*) around it, with gates and watch-towers. The country in ancient times was full of wood and jungles, the resort of wild beasts. To protect the village from wild beasts as well as the enemy from outside, a boundary wall with gates and watch-towers was constructed in times of yore around the village. The *Aṭhapaharī* was assigned the duty of going on rounds day and night and of guarding the village from wild beasts and the enemy. He was generally stationed in the watch-tower and in the event of the approach of hostile raiders, he proclaimed it to the villagers by beat of drum. Surrounding the boundary wall of the village, there were the arable and waste lands and pastures. It was the duty of the *Aṭhapaharivā* to guard the fields also from wild beast and thieves.

The other village servants were the blacksmith, the potter, the washerman and the barber.² According to the requirements of each village, there were, in some villages, other servants also. In this way the village was an economically independent unit. It supplied its residents all the necessities of life without making them dependent for them on other villages. The village community was a compact one. The villagers themselves managed the affairs of the village.

1. Many ethnographers report that due to fear of sorcery many outsiders refrained settling in Bastar.
2. The tribal society of Bastar did not accumulate property but consumed it gave it away, gambled it away or threw it away. Most of them had knowledge of techniques for storing food but used them only occasionally.

Under this simple form of municipal government the residents of the village lived in peace and plenty. The attachment of the villagers to their place of residence was so great that even if the village was desolated by famine or war, they seldom left uninhabited, except for Abujhmārjā village.

The rulers of the land did not interfere with the affairs of the village so long as their tribute, and king's share due to him from the village, were paid regularly. The exercise of authority by the king's officials over the affairs of the village was only nominal, and every village was practically independent. Probably after every change of sovereignty, the head-man of the village, as he was the king's representative, was required to visit the capital with presents, and to get himself re-confirmed in his office. It is likely that king's officers occasionally visited the village to supervise the village accounts, to settle the boundary disputes between villages, to estimate the crop before it was cut, and so on.

This system of village government turned the villages more or less into small republics. It, however, became rigid in the course of time, and prevented the growth of several elements that composed the village community, by investing the age-long social custom with a halo of sanctity, and imparting too much power to tradition and usage, with no deviation whatsoever from the past. Occupations and professions crystallised into castes and communities which became either exagamous or endogamous. Occupations became hereditary with the progress of time. Any public work undertaken in the interests of the village was done on the basis of mutual co-operation and by free or forced labour.

The economic plenty of the village made its isolation more marked, and the residents of the village generally never felt the need to break out of this situation by laying out good roads from village to village and otherwise improving the means of communication and travel. Patriotism narrowed down and no one was generally able to see beyond the limits of one's own village. For want of proper communication, travel was difficult and contact with distant places and people was seldom made. The social advance of the community as a whole was held up. The village in ancient times was the bulwork of religion, tradition, and custom.

Administration of Justice

As regards the administration of justice, there was no written code of laws under the Chālukyas. The king was the fountain of all justice and final court of appeal. In his work, he was assisted by the Dīwān and some judges. In village, administration of justice was felt with zamindars, gaṛhatiyās and paṭels who could decide any case in their respective jurisdiction by the help of the village-panchāyata.¹

Panchāyat-system played a useful role in all stages of our civilization, and their importance under the Chālukyas cannot be over estimated.

The different caste-guilds and tribal groups also had their different caste-panchāyats to decide all matters of caste disputes. The inter-caste disputes were however referred to the ruler who as the head of all caste-tribe-guilds could finalize and authorize verdict.

Military Organisation

The Chālukyas rulers laid much importance on the military organisation of the state. The *Kōsalānanda* gives an interesting comparison when it states that: "As one's complexion does not look charming without manly bears, so also a state has no beauty without an organized army" (*Kōsalānanda Pāṭṇā MSS. XV.38*). Castles at that time had formed a nucleus of the military organisation and a large number of them were built throughout the Chālukya kingdom in places of strategic importance. The headquarters of the 18 states were each an impregnable stronghold. There were 48 forts built at the time of Annamadeva such as Tīrathgarh, Koṭgarh, Titalgarh, Wārkoṭ, Vaḍilgarh, Antāgarh, Bēṛmākoṭ, Bhairamgarh, Dantewārā, Bastar Dōngar, etc.

1. Under the rule of landlords the position of tribal community was determined by the norms of private feudal law, which they themselves established. The landlords adopted different approaches to the organisation of the exploitation of the tribes and the strengthening of their forest authority. This explains the absence of uniformity in the position of tribal community under different owners in late feudal Bastar.

Though the king was the supreme commander of the army, he had under him Sēnāpati to help him in the time of war as well as in putting down internal disturbances. The Chālukya army consisted of four divisions, viz. the infantry, cavalry, elephants, and naval. A large number of Kuṛukh, a native caste of the district, were recruited in naval force and their officers were given the title of "Daṇḍasēnā". The military officers who accompanied Daryāodeva while invading Ajmer Singh were Pāik, pāgāsawār (horsemen) Sardār, Jamādār (petty officers) and murtāb (a person of honour). Pāgā was a regular cavalry and Siledār (a soldier, who finds his own horse and arms) was important. The strength of the 'pāgā' was superior to that of Siledār. The Siledārs were placed under the jurisdiction of 'pāgā'.

The better class of arms were only in the possession of the rājā's attendants. In proportion to the population there were but few armed men. Of bows and arrows, ṭangiās, and phur-sās or battle-axes, there was no lack.

Conclusion

In conclusion it may be noted that though the Chālukyas's administration was a political organisation, it was also rooted in the social life of the people. Though a feudal system it bore the marks of tribal organisation. In fact, it represented a compromise between the tribal life and monarchy by conquest. This was possible because all authorities from the Rājā downwards were satisfied with a very limited sphere of direct control and thereby they gave each grade of society below them ample scope to progress and prosper. It depended on the degree of the community's participation in the system of management of the ancestral estate and its role in discharging obligations to the state and the landlords, on its role in the economic life of the peasantry and the maintenance of the whole system of traditional social and everyday intra-community relations.

Under this tribal system, the landlords did not interfere in internal tribal life, being interested only in fiscal returns, or handed over all functions of management of their estates and villages to elected community representatives. Under this system, which was the most favourable for the tribal community,

the diversity of its functions—economic, administrative, Judicial, everyday—manifested itself with the greatest clarity.

ECONOMY

Land System

The whole territory of Bastar was divided amongst the various ruling houses, which granted lands to feudal vassals, officials and temples, which led the fragmentation of land in Bastar.

There was extensive fallow land in every village. We come to know from the Muslim histories, inscriptions, and the Local Records, that great stretches of land were covered with jungle, and the extent of arable land was less than what it is today. The clearing of the forest to the central region and the building of villages there about is attributed by the following Muria-folksong:

हारे नारु उसिमा केसे मरयूम, परचाबोली नारु केसे मरयूम ।
 महुमसुमारी नारु रोय मरयूम, कोसुर कोयतोर वायनूर मरयूम ॥
 'काटिय लाबो' इंदानूर केसे मरयूम, काटिय इंदा पुन्वी केसे ।
 'चावल लाबो' इन्दानूर केसे, चावल इंदा पुन्वी केसे ॥
 नुकांग इंदा पुतोन केसे ॥
 'दाल लाबो' इन्दानूर केसे, दाल इंदा पुन्वी केसे
 दारिग इंदा पुतोन केसे ॥
 'नमक लाबो' इंदानूर केसे, नमक इंदा पुन्वी केसे ।
 हबोर इन्दा पुतोन केसे ॥
 'हल्दी लाबो' इंदानूर केसे, हल्दी इंदा पुन्वी केसे ।
 कमका इंदा पुतोन केसे ॥
 'घी लाबो' इंदानूर केसे, घी इंदा पुन्वी केसे ।
 नेयी इन्दा पुतोन केसे ॥
 'प्याज लाबो' इंदानूर केसे, प्याज इंदा पुन्वी केसे ।
 गोंदरी इन्दा पुतोन केसे ॥

Don't build you house near the road, Cousin!
 There will be nothing but receipt-book, and census-
 forms, cousin.
 There the peons and their porters will come.

They will say 'bring us a bed'.
 We do not know what a bed is.
 They will say 'bring us rice'.
 We do not know what rice is.
 We only know paddy.
 They will say 'bring us lentils'.
 We do not know what lentils are¹.
 We only know pulse.
 They will say 'bring us ground-salt'.
 We do not know what salt is.
 We only know rock-salt.
 They will say 'bring us turmeric'.
 We do not know what turmeric is.
 We only know kamkā.
 They will say 'bring us ghee'.
 We do not know what ghee is.
 We know only oil.
 They will say 'bring us onions'.
 We do not know what onions are.
 We know only garlic.
 Hence don't built house,
 near the road cousin.

Each and every zamindar² brought great patches of land under cultivation and increased the extent of arable land. Even during the period under review, there were great forests, both in the plain and the mountainous regions. The tract around Jagdalpur was a great jungle. Agriculture was therefore limited in extent and confined to the regions devoid of forests.

Cultivation of chief crops in different localities in Bastar was determined chiefly by the soil besides rainfall and other climatic

1. There were no individual and permanent property rights in land, and any of Rājās subjects was free to take under cultivation vacant land within the Rājā's domain. Immigrants from other regions, however, had to obtain the Rājā's permission before occupying any land.
2. To understand the new data, I think we must make a distinction between two types of economic system—those in which the return of labour was delayed and those in which it was, in general, immediate. In vast majority of tribal societies, the return on labour of most people, most of time, was delayed.

conditions. Rice and millet were the staple crops: "The rice-embankments hindered the little drainage there might be, and the soil being principally clay, got thoroughly saturated by the water standing on it for two or three months and retained moisture for a considerable period" (Glasfurd: para 59). The chief crops during the period under study were rice, kulthī, urīd, mūng, tuar, castor, turmeric, Dhūp kamelā, tikhur and wax, etc. Rice was the simple commodity of the Bastar state. Southern zamindaris used to grow cotton. Sugarcane was extensively cultivated around Jagdalpur. Cultivated fruits were very scarce. Orange of an inferior quality was produced in Sukmā and a better quality was cultivated at Dantewārā. Mangoes were abundant to the eastward and the centre of the state and plantains of a coarse kind could be had here and there (Glasfurd: Para 137).

Cultivation¹

Besides the usual dry crops, rice and garden cultivation, there was the *Ḍāhī* or *Pṇḍā*, which was of two kinds, that in the plains and that on the slopes of hills. In October the trees and brushweed were cut down, allowed to dry and burnt in May, after which, on the first fall of rain, the seed was sown. In the plain the larger trees were girdled and thus left to decay standing. In these patches of *Dahia* rice with *madia* and the mountain *Jowari* were cultivated for two years consecutively, when the land became poor and deserted for another patch.

Owing to this practice many of the fine *sal* jungles had been much injured. The *Dahia* on the hill sides, where the jungle was often not so large as in the plains, was carried on in the same spot for two or three years according to the richness of the soil. When another patch was taken up, the jungle was cut and burnt, and commoner grains such as *kosrā*, etc. were cultivated. Tanks were few and dams were none (Glasfurd: para 138.)

1. Land use by tribals was not as different from land use by farmers as might at first appear. Both tribes and farmers involved modification of environment, partly deliberate, partly inadvertent. Tribes always lived at very low population densities and their effect on environment was accordingly less obvious.

Penda-Cultivation¹

The Telugu work 'Bhōja-rājiyam' written by Anantāmātya of this period (14th century) mentions the term 'pōḍu-cēnu', in a particular context. A Brāhman who lost his way while going to a town called Hēmavaṭapura, meets a *vanacara* (tribe), a forester in a forest, and asks him to show the way, when the latter takes the former to his pāḍu-cenu (pōḍu-field) (VI, verse 242). This Telugu work, by using the special term *podu* in connection with the field of a member of the forest tribe, enables us to know another method of cultivating lands in the hilly jungle tracts which was then in vogue. This method is still used in the Abujhmār region in Bastar known as *penda*-cultivation. The reference to it in the above work shows that the tribals have been following this method in the hilly forest tracts in Bastar for the past six centuries.

Cattle

Allied to agriculture there was cattle raising. Towards the eastern borders of the state cows were used for the plough. Horses were exceedingly scarce, and were not domesticated. Horses were found only at Jagdalpur and that too, in possession of Zamindars. Pack-bullocks, except those of Banjaras, were unknown.

Industry and Trade

Since the needs of people of those times were very limited, and the community was predominantly agricultural, there was little scope for the development of industries on large-scale. The agricultural operation occupied a few busy months. As

1. The formation of rural community in Bastar dates back to the 14th century—the initial state of its settlement by the Halbas. This makes it possible to trace its sequence of formation. From the outset of Bastar's economic development the Halba settlers had set up their rural economy based on a shifting cultivation, under which substantial areas were successively drawn into economic circulation. The necessity of joint efforts to bring the lands into an arable state led to collective labour.

there was much leisure, every handicraft became a cottage industry and every craftsman an artist. The industrial workshop was a simple affair with simple apparatus.

The weavers manufactured a coarse type of cloth, and the Maharās or Pariahs used to weave pieces of an inferior cloth, which was used for loin-cloth by the Muṛiās, Māṛiās and other tribes. The Ghasiās from the remnants of old brass pots constructed new ones. There were Lōhārs who used to dig the iron-ore and made different implements. There is reason to believe that iron-smelting was done in a crude fashion to some extent and agricultural implements were made locally to meet local requirements. Iron was found in many parts of the Mār-region.

The general state of trade was exceedingly depressed and in active. Internal communication was also difficult owing to the presence of many local mountain streams and to the absence of good roads and bridges across the river: the Indrāvati, the Sabrī and the Godāvarī. The dry season was usually the busiest period for trade when almost all mountain streams were generally dry during the summer.

There was not a single made-up road in the state, although the configuration of the country and the nature of the soil were rather favourable than otherwise to the construction of fair weather cart-roads. There was only one route, the great Banjarā route starting from the southern portion of Raipur district, passing through the state and linking with Hyderabad and Chanda. By this important route wheat was exported annually in great quantities. Qutb-Shahi also took this route and came as far as Bastar from Hyderabad.

There was very little communication on inland waters, though great rivers like Indrāvati, Godāvarī and Sabrī were crossed by means of a kind of circular basket boat, called *puffi*. Inland transport was done by means of pack animals and carts.

Except within a circumference of 15 or 20 miles around Jagdalpur, were no *bazars*. In the few there were only the common necessities of life were to be obtained. There were *Jāirās* or festivals in the north-west of Jagdalpur and at the Shrine of 'Nārāyana-Krishna-Gōṭu' near Bhōpalpaṭanam, at which places some little trade was transacted and the produce of the

country exchanged for cloth, beads, etc. owing to the want of a copper currency and the difficulty of obtaining cowries, most of the trade, if that could be called so, was carried on by barter and rice was the invariable medium of exchange in small dealings.

There were different types of weights and measurements current in those days. The weights used for salt, tobacco and turmeric, etc. were seer, pāsī, maund, bōjhā (8 mounds). The weights used by goldsmiths were māshā and tolā. Sōlī, pāylī, kattā, khaṇḍī and puṭkī were measures for dry goods. Liquids were measured in kuṇā, pāylī and khaṇḍī.

The above weights and measures have remained even now without any change.

The chief exports were lakh, ral, wax, galls, horns, kamla-dye, tīkhūr, guṛ, teak wood, and cocoons.

The imports were considerable greater than the exports. They consisted of salt (introduced in 1770 A.D.), cloth, utensils, coconuts, pepper, spices opium, etc. from the coastal region. Wheat and pepper were exported from Raipur. The imports from the coast came from Jeypore, Sukmā and Kullair. In the western portions cloth, tobacco and opium were imported from Hyderabad.

Thus Chālukya rulers encouraged the professional class. In each village, people of different professions were living. They were conducting business either in cooperative ways or under market regulation, sanctioned by the authority. Arts and crafts had free scope of development and various cottage industries flourished in order to cater to the needs of the locality.

Agriculture was the principal industry under the period under review. The people of all castes had practically some connections with agriculture either as cultivators or as field-labours (bhutiyār).

Both internal and external trade was briskly carried on in the Chālukya dominions. Weekly market or hāt in every important village and the annual fairs were chief centres of internal trade. The Banjaras had been transporting merchandise from place to place from the year 1770 A.D.

Revenue Administration

Revenue administration under the Chālukyas was based on ancient Indian tradition. The village was placed under a *patel* or *gaonṭiā* who was responsible for the general administration and revenue collection of the village.

Some villages were also assigned for the maintenance of temples being known as *devōttar* or *Mukāsā*. There was a *Devōttar*-department which looked after the temples under the direct management of the state. There were also *kumārī*-grants, where villages were held rent-free by a number of *Rājā* families as assignment. They were known as *Muafīs* in the reports.

Besides, there were *Sindurāk* or villages bestowed upon the *Rānīs* at the time of marriages as well as *Jāgirdārs*, held by illegitimate scions or distant relatives of the king.

Higher in status and rank than the *Gaonṭiā*, were the *Garhatiyā* and *Zamindars* who enjoyed the proprietorship of estate under the kin of ill-defined military tenure in perpetuity, at least by prescription and consent, though not by express stipulation (*Settlement Report of Bastar*, 1876, p. 44). They paid the *Rājās* a comparatively light revenue known as '*ṭakolī*'. Some of these belonged to the family of rulers and some obtained the grants for the service, rendered to the royal family. Besides, the *Mārīās*, *Halbās* and other chieftains, in the outlying parts of the states, were left undisturbed in their estates which they had possessed prior to the coming of Chālukyas. The villages or clusters of villages under the police jurisdiction of *Garhatiyā* consisted mostly of the *Halbā* paiks. The pay of these officers and that of the *Paikmen* under them was met by service-land out of one or more of the village or villages in which their headquarters were located. At one time there were 96 *garhatiyās* and 24 *zamindars* in Bastar.

The principal source of revenue of the *Rājā* was his *bhāg* or share of the produce which varied from time to time.¹ He also derived income from forests, excise, etc. and tribute from different chiefs. The collection of revenue seems to have been the chief

1. According to a widespread tradition, the land tax due to the *Rājā* was characterized by the formula, *marṣung chawul heter dawul*, that is, "four annas per axe and two annas per sickle."

administrative function of the official hierarchy. Another was the establishment of communications between the king and his subjects. The mähārājā had certain powers over the people of the state, and some method of informing his subjects of developments was needed. The Mähārājā also required certain information from the villages.

For these purposes administrative hierarchy was essential. The hierarchy afforded the Mähārājā a way of reaching down to numerous communities that comprised the State. For instance, if a marriage were to take place in the palace, the Mähārājā would inform the Dīwan, who would in turn inform the Kāmdars and so on down the line. It was the responsibility of each official to inform his subordinates of these developments and to tell them what was required from the villagers. A contribution from each village was undoubtedly required, as well as the attendance of Parganā headman at the ceremony.

Other powers of the Mahārājā (Chapman 1895: 55-8) included:

- (i) the authority to bestow or remove the privilege of wearing the sacred thread;
- (ii) the power to arrange for the re-marriage of widows, as they were treated as state-properties;
- (iii) the right to demand the services of certain castes for the benefit of the Mahārājā's household, which was called beṭhī or bēgārī, a type of free-forced labour;
- (iv) The authority to appoint pargana headman to rule over all villages of the state under them;
- (v) the power to sanction an outcast individual's return to caste.

Taxes appear to have been numerous during the Chālukya rule. O. Ball (*Jungle Life in India*, London, 1880) mentions the following inhuman acts during the age:

- (1) In one large tāluk female infanticide was also a source of income. When parents wished to destroy a child they had to procure a license from an official (the Amīn) in charge of the tāluk. This official, on the other hand, had to pay the Rājā for permission to collect these fees (page 608).

- (2) 'Moreover, when any person wished to marry the widow of one of the Goṇḍ, Sunḍī, Dome or Bhatrā castes, he had to pay a fee to the Rājā, as these women were called the widowed daughters of the Rājā' (Page 608).
- (3) 'Meriāh sacrifice, there is no doubt, used to be practised in Bastar, and in all probability was a source of income. The boys and girls who were purchased by the wealthier classes, and reared up for this purpose, were called Tūrās and Tūrīs respectively. There is reason to believe that the present Rājā (1876 A.D.), when he installed himself at his fathers demise in 1861, sacrificed a yong girl of thirteen years of age at the Shrine of goddess, Danteshwarī, in the town of Dantē-wārā' (page 608).
- (4) 'Thus we see evidence that a custom similar to those for the kingdom of Dahomey has become so notorious, existed in India in a part of country nominally under British supervision only a few years ago (up to 1870). The rājā was, moreover, it is believed, practically the patron of the robbers and thieves through his officials, became the recipient of a share of the stolen property' (page 608).

Elliott (1856: 22, 33) mentions a bazar tax, and a land tax of An. 8 to Re. 1 per plough. A 'plow' of land was considered to be 10 or 12 acres (Chapman 1898: 52-3). Chapman (1898: 55-9) also reports the payment of a house-tax called "thoṭā" by villagers practising only shifting cultivation. A head-tax (pānī-piyā) literally "water-drink", i.e. everyone who drinks water was levied, but Chapman does not say whether this applied to everyone in the state. He also noted the custom of *tumāsārī* by which an elephant-mounted collector rode round the countryside collecting contributions for a certain monastery which was patronized by the Mahārājā. The *tūmā* or hollow gourd, was blown announcing the arrival of this official in the community. Another tax was *ha'dīsārī* (turmeric tax) by which funds were obtained to help finance a wedding in the Mahārājā's household. Similarly, when the king wished to purchase a new royal elephant, all the villagers were expected

to contribute. Numerous priests as well as king's own legitimate and illegitimate sons had muafis or lordships, over certain portions of the land and presumably levied their own taxes. Such lordships were granted by the Mahārājā to those of his subjects who, he felt, deserved special rewards for services rendered. The holder of each lordship was acquired to pay a token fee of one rupee and one goat to the Mahārājā each year at the big Dussehrā festival in Jagdalpur. The king's personal pālki-bearers, barbers, grooms, betel-servers, and other servants relied on smaller land grants for their support. In addition, certain service castes were expected to provide the king's household with oil, fish, pots, etc. In return they were given grants of land.

Conclusion

During the Chālukya-rule the life of the common man was very miserable due to different taxes. Among tribes the system of production involved, *intrinsic* delay. There was always a period of weeks, months, or even years, between planting and harvesting in which people applied their labour before a yield became available as a reward for their labour. The existence of delay imposed basic organisational requirements for a set of ordered, differentiated, jurally defined relationships which crucial goods and services would be transmitted in a specific and regulated manner. Members of tribal societies avoided long-term commitments in using their labour and they were not concerned to develop stores of food or other possessions; even their tools and weapons and other technical items used in obtaining food and other requirements were, in general, of types which did not involve substantial investment of time. What I want to stress is that both economic systems based on delayed return and system based on immediate return were common among tribal societies, but only delayed-return system occurred among farmers.

SOCIETY

The Chālukya monarchs found their territories mostly inhabit

by the aboriginal tribes. They tried to improve the social life of these people by introducing the Brāhmin and other higher caste-immigrants. No doubt a few Brāhmin settlements were already there patronized by Nalas and Nāgas ruling in the past. But vigorous attempts seem to have been made by the Chālukyas to attract people of higher social status from north India and Orissa to come and settle permanently in their territories by offering them land and other privileges. They also showed paternal care and patronage for the local aborigines to develop a healthy social life and traditions. Consequently, the tribal elements persisted with greater vigour throughout their rule and at the same time they were brought under the influence of the Aryan settlers¹.

Aborigines

Though at present Bastar contains a very large and varied tribal population, only the Savaras, Gonds, Mārīās, Jhoṛiās and Halbās figure in the epigraphic and Local Records of our period. They may be linguistically classified under the following three groups:

1. Munda group
2. Dravidian group
3. Aryan group

(1) The Munda Group

The earliest reference to the Shavaras is to be found in Aitareya Brāhmaṇa (VIII. 18), which states that the elder sons of Vishwāmitra were cursed to become progenitors of such servile races as the Savaras. The implication of the Aitareya passage seems to be that the Savaras were a non-Aryan people dwelling somewhere in the *Dakṣiṇāparha*. The Rāmāyaṇa states that they were met by Rāma in central India. A pious Savara woman met him near some lake in Bastar (Shukla 1974). Some of the earliest inscriptions, to mention them, are Udayendiram plates of the 21st year of the reign of the

1. The tribal community existed in the Middle Ages, adapting itself to, and gradually entering, the feudal social system in the form of social estate unit.

Pallava king Nandivarman Pallavamalla (9th A.D.), who is said to have defeated Savara king Udayana and Nishada Chief Prithivyāghra (SHI, I, 365). The Savaras also referred to in the Sanskrit and Kanarese Prasasti of the western Ganga Chief Mara-Simha II, who was a vassal of the Rāshtrakūṭa king Krishna III. This eulogy mentions that Mārasimha II (A.D. 963-74) defeated a Savara Chief named Naraga (EI, V 176). The Harshacharita of Bāṇabhaṭṭa and Gauḍavaho of Vākpati-rāja (Banerji. HO, I, pp. 20-21) also speak of the Savaras. Thus there are numerous references to the Savaras in early mediaeval source.

Literary and epigraphic references suggest that the Savaras lived in Central India and the Deccan. Naturally, we may expect them in some numbers in the adjoining tracts of Bastar. Gadbā tribe of Bastar seems to be a sub-class of the ancient Savaras. Due to carrying the loads of the royal house (गारवाहक) these Savaras were known afterwards as Gadbās. The Gadbās had totemistic exogamous septs, usually named after animals. A Gadbā could not ride on a horse under penalty of being but out of caste. The Charyāpadas and Kathāsaritsāgar acquaint us with manner of life led by the aboriginal tribes such as Savaras and Bhils.

(2) *The Dravidian Group*

Among the aborigines of Dravidian groups of our period, Gonds Mārjās, Jhōriyās, Tagaras and Khonds need special mention.

The Gonds were a class of Dravidian people who were mentioned in the records of early mediaeval period and had a dynasty of their own famous by the name of Nāga Dynasty. The Bōnāi plate (JBORS, VI, 239) refers to the Tunga ruler Vinitatunga as गण्डादशगोण्डमहाधिपति, i.e. the lord of the 18 tribes known as the Gonds. Again the character of the Sulkī ruler Kulastambhadēva (Ibid. II. 401) addresses him as सकल गोण्डमहाधिपति, i.e. the lord of all the Gonds. The two terms mentioned in these grants suggest the existence of Gonds as an important element during our period.

In the fourteenth century A.D. we find two main branches of the Gonds in Bastar. One branch is referred to in the inscriptions as Mārjā and the another branch is known as Jhāriā (vide

Chapter VI). Mārīā had seven sub-branches which ruled in Bastar independently. At the time of Annamadēva there were 12 Mārīā Chiefs ruling in Bastar. Glasfurd (1862: 87-90) has presented a vivid description of these Mārīās: "The Marias are most numerous caste in Bastar. They inhabit the Chintalnar, Bhopalpatanam, and Kuṭru taluks, with the greater part of Bijapur, and extend on the last as far as Kurikote, Nagatoka, Ambabher and Kuakonda. Towards Dantewara they are known as Marias, but further towards the west they are called Gotiwars, and from all I have been able to gather these classes are identical. They inhabit the densest jungles and are very shy race, avoiding all contact with strangers and flying to the hills on the least alarm. In appearance they are more uncivilized than the Murias, Bhattras, Halbas, Parjas and Tagaras; about the same height, but far surpassing them in strength and ability. Their dress depends a good deal on their distance from civilization and upon the accessibility of the localities they inhabit. Near Bhopalpatanam and Bijapur they are better clad, but in the wilder and more unfrequent parts, such as among the valleys of the Bailadilas and towards the Indrawati and Kutru taluks, their clothing is of the very scant description. Their weapons are bows and arrows and spears."

Speaking about the Mārīs (Abujhmārīā) he again says: "Maris inhabit the country 'Mārīyān'. They are said to dress in aprons of teak-leaves; if so much, never to approach those under whose immediate rule they lived, and whom they pay their revenue in grain, holding no communication with those who come to collect it, but leaving it on the banks of Indravati to be taken away."

From the inscriptional records (Chapter VI) we find that a line of seven chiefdoms of Mārīā (सप्त मारिया) was ruling in Bastar when Annamadēva came to this land and these Mārīās gave him protection and fought against Muslims to regain the Hindu *Dharma*. Annamadēva never disturbed them and his descendants allowed them to rule here as Zamindars up to 1947 A.D.

The next aboriginal tribe may be inferred by the name: "Jhāḍeshavana" in the inscription, which corresponds to 'Jhōriyān' of Bastar. These Jhōriās were also the rulers of north Bastar during the invasion by Annamadēva. (Chapter VI) "The

Jhōrias are found principally in the north-Western parts about Narainpur and Partappur, and extend towards Kanker. They are a numerous class, and subsist partly by cultivation and partly by hunting, and on the fruits of the forest. Their dress resembles with that of Mārjā" (Glasfurd, para 86).

Another tribe mentioned in the Records of Annamadēva is called 'Tagara', which was holding 12 parganas in those days. Glasfurd (1862: para 82) writes "Both these castes--Tagaras and Parjas—are found in small tract of country south from Jagdalpur, extending from Chitapur to Sukma: they are a poor race and subsist partly by cultivation, and partly by hunting; they are not so well clothed as the Murias, Bhatras, or Halbas. They eat anything, even snakes and other reptiles; they also on occasions of festivals, dance like Gadba."

Captain J.T. Blunt (*Asiatic Researches*, VIII, 153; the *Hindus*, Vol. II, London, 1835, pp. 135-59) while visiting the surrounding areas of Bastar in April 1795, has given a different picture of the Gonds and Khonds under study. "The villages of the Gonds are likewise situated on the summits of mountains or in the depth of almost inaccessible forests. More unsocial than the Kanwar, they desert their villages on the approach of strangers and though in some instances hovering near and appearing at intervals between the rocks and trees, can seldom even by the most unequivocal demonstrations of peaceful intentions, be tempted to return to their habitations. Sometimes the traveller succeeds by force or persuasion in procuring a guide but the savage quickly becomes weary of any regular track, and escapes or suddenly refuses to act."

Thus an English officer, crossing the desolate regions in 1795 with a considerable escort, was frequently harassed by their untraceable character. "Our guides who had now accompanied us two days journey, being impatient for their discharge, were under the necessity of pressing a man into the village to see what remained of his pillaged habitation. The whole Country had recently been plundered by the Marathas). He was naked having not about him but his bow and arrows, and appeared at first a good deal terrified; but on being fed, and treated kindly, he soon became pacified. As the evening approached, we heard a hallowing in the woods, and after listening with attention, we found it was the mountaineers inquiring for their

lost companion, whom they were seeking with much anxiety. We made him answer them that his person was safe, and that he was well treated, upon which they retired, apparently satisfied" (Blunt: Asiatic Researches, Vol. VII, p. 87).

"Occasionally, when collected together in large numbers, these stout hardly barbarious exhibit less reluctance to be approached by strangers and readily acting as guides, through their native wilderness. They live in the most ignorance. Even silver and gold are unknown to the Gonds; but their place is supplied by cowries, these small sea-shells which are the money of savages in so large a portion of Asia. The tigers, which in these wilds increase and multiply prodigiously, sometimes invade and lay waste whole villages, slaughtering the inhabitants and carrying off their cattle, so that the remnant which remains, sets fire to the luckless huts and retires elsewhere. Apprehensive of the number of their enemies, the mountaineers do not venture to retaliate, as they are persuaded that, should they destroy a single tiger, the rest in return, would undoubtedly be revenged both on them and their cattle, and depopulate the whole country. They, therefore, trust entirely to Bhavani in this matter. The Gonds themselves inflict similar misfortunes upon their neighbours, plundering, murdering, and firing villages. To effect their purposes with greater facility, they roam about in large bodies, diffusing, whenever they move, consternation and dismay. When plundering becomes impracticable, on insufficient, to supply their wants, they clear small spots in forests, cutting down the trees to within about, three feet of ground, and interweaving the branches, so as to form round their enclosures to fence against wild beasts. Having removed the intervening grass and creepers, they cultivate in these spots a little maize or Indian maize."

"Like the Khōli, they hang increasing on the rear of travellers or armies moving through their country, to cut off stragglers and seize upon such booty as may be less restrictly guarded; and their feasts, though on a small scale, remind us of those. According to a Gosain who was long their prisoner, they sometimes sacrifice human victims to their gods, selected generally from among their captives. Even *Phakirs*, who are respected by most of other savages, have been murdered, in attempt to penetrate through country of Gonds. The only individual who

venture with impunity into these inhospitable regions are Banjaras who frequently go into the hills, with sugar and salt, to barter with the natives for the produce of their jungles. As we penetrate farther into the interior, the shades of barbarism become darker at every step. Clothes, the first sign of civilisation disappear; those who wear them are even regarded with apprehension; and their natives, wild and ferocious as the tigers with whom they dispute the possession of the forests, appear in complete nakedness, both men and women. Their food appeared to be the most simple imaginable, consisting chiefly of the roots and produce of their woods. They go for the most part naked; and when pinched by cold, they alleviate it by making fires, for which their forests supply them with abundance of fuel, and when the heat of the sun becomes oppressive they seek shelter and recline under the shade of large trees" (Ibid. p. 153).

(3) *The Aryan Group*

There were different tribes of the Aryan group, but among those the Halbās were the most prominent. The Halbās came into power in the 12th century A.D. and they were the rulers of Dōngar up to the 16th Century A.D. Previously, the Halbās belonged to Kānker state. but they wielded power in Bastar state also (Vide I Part of this book). The Halbās trace their origin back to Jagannāth Puri (Orissa). The legend about their migration in Kānker explains that they first settled in Sihāwā jungles. Due to the military help of the Halbās, the founder of the Sōmavanshī Kingdom of Kānker become the overlord. The Halbās were the household servants of the Kānker family, and when a fresh chief succeeded, one of them, who had the title of Kapaṇadār, took a Halba to the temple and invested him with the *Durbār kī Pōshāka* or royal robes, affixing also the *ṭikā* or badge of office on his forehead with turmeric, rice and sandalwood, and rubbing his body over with Ottar of roses. Until lately Kapaṇadār's family had a considerable grant of rent free land. A Halbā was always the priest of temple of Sihāwā, which is said to have been built by the first Rājā over the spring where he was healed of his leprosy. The Halbās¹

1. All young Halba girls underwent, before puberty, a marriage

were also connected with the Rājās of Bastar, and a suggestion had been made that they originally belonged to the Telugu country and came with Annamādeva from Wārangal to Bastar with other tribes, but in the following saying relating to the coming of Annamādeva, which is often repeated, the Halbā's name does not occur :

चालकीवंस राजा, ढिबढिबी बाजा,
कोसरिया रावत, पीता भतरा ।
पेंग परजा, राजा मुरिया
तेंदू खुटी, पनिया लाबा ॥

which may be rendered "The Rājā was of the Chālki race. The drum was called dībdabi. Kōsariā Rāwat, Pita Bhattrā, Pong Parjā and Rāj Muriā, these four castes came with the Rājā. The tribute paid to the Raja was a comb of tendu wood and a quail". This rhyme is believed to recall the circumstances of the immigration of Annamādeva. So the Halbās did not come with the Rājā, because here in Bastar we have an inscriptional record (Vide I Part) which mentions 'Halbā-territory' in the year 1213 A.D.

The Halbās became the guards of the Kings of Bastar, after their kingdom had been subdued by the Chālukyas. In the Dussehrā Ceremony a Halbā carried the royal "Chatra" or Umbrella, and the Rājā walked under the protection of another Halbās having naked sword. A Halbā's Widow was not sold and his inter-state property was not taken over by the Rājā.

Thus the Halbās occupied a comparatively honourable position in Bastar. They were the highest local caste with the exception of the Brāhmins. The reason for this, no doubt, was

ceremony to a flower (phūl bihā), which was believed, symbolized a deity. Just as marriage is according to Brāhminical law is of a sacramental nature, so far all Halbā girls marriage to flower constituted an eternal and sacred bond. Thus whether or not a girl ever took a mortal husband, once she had marriage the flower she had the ritual status of a married woman. Thus a Halbā woman was never a true widow, for she might lose her mortal husband but never her divine one. Moreover, Halbā women divorced and remarried because all mortal marriages were secondary marriages. This tells about the *antique customs* prevailed among the Halbās of Bastar in those days.

that they had been the overlords of north Bastar in the beginning. Documents still recall a Halbā-revolt in Bastar (Chapter X). It is said that during Rājā Daryāodeva's reign (1777-1800), the Halbās rebelled and many were thrown down a waterfall, ninety feet high, only one of these escaping with life. The eyes of some were also put out as a punishment for the oppression they had exercised. Two stone inscriptions at Dōnger, dated 1779 A.D. (EI, IX. 166; Hiralal 1916 : 168) record the oath of loyalty taken by the Halbās before the image of Danteshwarī, after their insurrection was put down in Samvat 1836 corresponding to A.D. 1779.

The Halbās were thus a caste of considerable influence since they could attempt to subvert the ruling dynasty.

The Halbās were great soldiers and they were appointed in different positions in the army of Bastar. So they are called the backbone of the state in a saying :

हलबा घाकड़ पाठ पिछोरी

Thus the aborigines representing the great mass of people formed into several endogamous groups or communities. Almost all the members of a tribal group distinguished themselves by their bravery and skill in art of warfare, and became reputed generals and officers of state. Almost all the states that had come into existence before and during this period were set up by members of the aborigines. Even Chālukya kings were matrimonially related to the tribal groups, such as Gadbā Dorlā, etc. They bore the brunt of the struggle in the war of independence in this period, and held the reigns of government after its re-establishment.

This period witnessed a change of attitude in the enforcement of the Civil law, particularly with regard to the aborigines. They were placed in the higher positions and became kings, commanders in chief or primeministers. These facts attest the changing spirit of the times.

Another important factor that made the common people realise their power and strength, and infused in them self-confidence, is the glorious victory, that they won in the war of independence. Virtually, all these factors lifted up the mentality of the aborigines from their stupor and brought about a revolution in the society.

Marriage

Widow-marriage, divorce and polygamy were allowed in the society. A widow was often induced to marry the younger brother of her deceased husband. But she was not compelled to accept the choice. The Brāhmins, however, did not recognize the widow marriage in their fold. Polygamy was common. A zamindar generally married a new wife on the day he got power over the Zamindari to commemorate the occasion, although by that time he might have a dozen of wives. At the time of marriage in Rāj-family, the bride used to bring with her a number of young maidens who served her husband as concubines.

Early marriage was not uncommon in the society. The aborigines like Halbā performed the marriage before the girl attained puberty, failing which she was first married to a bow or arrow and only after that the actual marriage was celebrated. But among other aborigines, the girl was married after puberty and she was allowed to choose her mate or her consent was sought for the marriage settled by her parents.

Among the Gonds, marriage by capture was formerly the rule. But the magistracy during the British rule treated this social custom as an offence against the Penal Code, and inflicted punishment upon the so called wrong-doers. This alarmed the simple forest-people, who had to invent a device for following their time-honoured custom, without offending a code of laws foreign to their ideas. This device was to make the capture merely a formal ceremony, after settling the marriage between the boy and the girl (R.B. Hiralal: *Census of India*, Vol. I, Pt. III, Simla, 1935, p. 71).

Food and Drink

The hill tribes and wilder aboriginals had no hesitation about killing and eating cattle, and, in fact, there was very little meat that they would not eat, whether animal had died a natural death or had been killed several days ago. Around Jagdalpur, Muriās and Bhadrās had largely given up beef-eating, and actually outcaste persons took beef. In one case, a witch caught walking naked in a cremation ground at night was forced to eat

beef as a preliminary to being outcaste. Even the Daṇḍāmī Mārā in Jagdalpur region and Mārās of Abujhmār hills on Dantē-wārā side were affected by the Hindu ideas about beef-eating. The latter used to take beef when the animal had been sacrificed to their clan-god, or was sacrificed and eaten at the ceremony of erecting a monolith in honour of the dead. Most of the Hindus in the state were to some extent meat-eaters on occasions, goat and chicken were the usual meat. The buffaloes sacrificed at Dussehrā were eaten by Halbās and Mahrās and other low castes. But in general it may be said that as the population became Hinduized, it ate less meat.

The food of the inhabitants varied according to necessity and their means and the nature of tracts where they resided. Generally speaking, the food of the bulk of population was rice, mūng, etc. The flowers of the Mahuā tree formed an important article of food. 'Pej' was a sort of porridge which was taken by the middle and poorer classes.

Four kinds of spirituous liquors were made and largely consumed by all classes of the people.

Games and Amusements

The favourite games and amusements in community indicate fairly the standard of culture which they had reached in their tastes and fancies. The games and amusements of the tribes in the Chālukya period make an interesting and useful study. Many of these have taken such a deep root in the tradition of the people that even today they hold their ground and fill the countryside with innocent merriment. Age and social changes, have no doubt, resulted in the disappearance of some, but several still linger in remote parts of the country. The decay of feudalism, the growth of towns, railways and cinemas, and the impact of Western culture, have all been responsible for the disappearance of many of these indigenous pastimes.

The holiday season of the village generally commenced with the annual wedding festival of the village god, or with the jātra or the annual feast of the village goddess. Generally this festive season was the period when the professional players and actors who had annuities from the village, visited it, and gave performances. The chief items of entertainment in those days were music and dance.

Hunting was a favourite pastime of kings and nobles. Animal fights were also popular pastime in the early mediaeval period. Cock-fighting offered a metasocial commentary upon status relations within the tribal community.

Such were the games and amusements which were in the vogue in the Chalukya period. There might have been many more means of recreation; but here are described only those which are referred to in the literature of the period.

Conclusion

To sum up, anthropogenesis is inseparable from sociogenesis. Accordingly, society, in the Neolithic period was proto-society. Protosociety, being society in making, was this inevitably primitive society in making, was thus inevitably primitive society in the making. At the earlier stage of the primitive community's evolution, marriage bore a dual-clan, uneconomic and non local character. Because of this primitive community coincided with the clan, which was inevitably matriarchal. Such community can be called Monoclan community. With the rise of individual marriage and its evolution into unilocal marriage, the community began to incorporate members of several clans instead of one clan. Consequently, the clan members now belonged to several communities rather than to one community. However, while not coinciding in all respects, the clan and community coincided in their basic features.

The social organisation of Bastar aborigines had the above features in making. These aborigines had a deep feeling of attachment to their land—the communal territory. This was largely due to the fact that their sacred totemic centres were located there. Thus, there was a religious tinge to their feeling of attachment to their homeland. This mystical relationship with the land was not only a group character, as, for instance the relationship between the clan and its totemic centre, but also a personal character as, for instance, the relationship with the birth place.

The tribal community of Bastar as a basic socio-economic institution of the typical agricultural society might be regarded as society's response to the challenge of the natural environment, as a tool with which to overcome the latter and with

which society ensured its survival, as an evidence of the triumph of man over nature at one of the earliest stages of material evolution. These tribes were not any abstract beings creating some forms of social organisation in a vacuum, but the people who needed means of subsistence and lived in real historical and geographical conditions, in accordance with which they shaped and, when necessary reshaped their social structure. Herein lies the source of the continued development of society.

The study of the social system of Bastar is of major importance to solving the fundamental problems of the history of primitive societies.

LANGUAGE AND ART

Grigson (1938: 4) has described Bastar state as "an almost unknown backwater of Indian History," and by presenting it in five volumes¹, I feel pleasure to unravel the 'unknown backwater' into a confluence of streams. The ancestors of the present Chālukya family have been described by all the previous scholars as descended from Kākatiya, but I have established that they are the Chālukyas of Wārangal and when the last, adopted Chālukya prince Pratāparudra (who became Kākatiya) was killed in a battle, his younger brother Annamadēva fled across the Gōdāwari in 1323 A.D. into Bastar, and established Chālukya dynasty there. From this time until 1795 A.D. the region has been practically without inscriptional records and almost without contact with the outside world. Before the fourteenth century it is evident from the inscriptions that a Chhindaka line of Nāgavanshi kings ruled since 760 A.D. in Bārsūr which lies in the north-west corner of the Daṇḍāmī Māṇjī country, and whose ruined temples indicate that there was an advanced tribal civilization in that area and the forefathers of Daṇḍāmī Māṇjīs were actually the rulers of that country (Vide I Part). Grigson (ibid) has shown that up to the

1. Volume I. *Lankā ki Khōj*, Allahabad 1977.

Volume II. *Prachina Bastar*, Nagpur 1978.

Volume III. *Ādivāsi Sāmāntavāda*, Delhi, 1987.

Volume IV. The present one.

Volume V. *Tribal Revolutions in Colonial India*, in press.

time of Muslim conquest of the Deccan (1323 A.D.), there must have been much Telugu infiltration, of which many signs still remain, but since that time the country has been largely disturbed. There can never have been much Telugu or Hindu influence on Hill Mārjās or Muriās; and the eight centuries which have elapsed since then can have been any strong Telugu influence on the Danḍāmī Mārjā who have given ample time for independent development of the dialect free from the outside influences which Gondi has been exposed elsewhere. To this day Bastar region continues to be a very isolated area. On the north and north-east borders there is a certain amount of traffic with the adjoining districts of Raipur and Koraput. But even this does not affect the Danḍāmī Mārjās, whose contact with other people on the east is confined to the least developed portions of Koraput. On the west and south of the state there was still not much intercourse across the Gōdāvarī river with the Chanda district, the Nizam's dominions, and the Madras Presidency, in all of which areas the people were, in any case, similar to their Bastar neighbours and acted as a buffer between them and more developed people. Although communities had been greatly improved in the British Period, more than 11,000 square miles of the State's total area of 13,750 square miles were under forest, so that the communication even between one tribe and another was still a matter of some difficulty. That this must have been very much more so in the Chālukya period is obvious from the description of J.T. Blunt (1795 A.D.). The Mārjās and Muriās still lead a laborious life, mainly dependent for their existence on shifting cultivation of various types and, except in certain areas where Danḍāmī and Abūjh Mārjās have exterminated all game, on hunting.

All these factors must have been combined to produce physical changes and development in their language. One such condition is illustrated by a well substantiated theory advanced by me (1985). I found that in Bastar at least 3 different families were frequently separated from the main tribe, in a vast and largely uninhabited country, language had been much influenced by children, who were either left much to themselves owing to their parent's preoccupation with agriculture or hunting, or were actually left alone as results of disease or the casualties of hunter's life, or again, where the men either died or were killed,

the women left behind had little time for domestic life, and the children were neglected not only in respect of their physical welfare but also in respect of the correctness of their speech. From these circumstances there arose fundamental changes of language, whereby actual new languages came into existence among ethnologically cognate people, such as Rāj Muriā. I again suggest that such extreme circumstances were present in Bastar, particularly in Daṇḍāmī Mārijā region and to a greater extent among the small and isolated communities of the Mārijās of the Abujhmār-Hills. The institution of Ghōṭul, still surviving among the Muriās, where children of both sexes live together from an early age until marriage, separate from their parents for much of the day and the whole of the night, may also have led to great changes in the language. How important the influence of Ghōṭul has been, is not easy to judge, as the institution no longer exists in Daṇḍāmī Mārijā region, if it ever did exist, among the Daṇḍāmī and Abujh-mārijās in the form in which it is now found among the Muriās. But among the latter it is a fact, as Elvin (1947) has discovered, that the children of the tribe have developed their own songs and stories and, to a very large extent, their own habits of conversation.

The foregoing arguments would explain the marked grammatical difference between the Daṇḍāmī Mārijā and the Mārijās of Bhopalpatanam Zamindari and Chanda district, as recorded by Lind (1909). It would also explain the relative rarity of Hindi words in Mārijā, while the earlier history of the race would explain in more numerous Sanskrit survivals and signs of Telugu influence (as these two were the court languages of the Chindaka Nāgas). It would also explain the differences of pronunciation which make it almost impossible for tribes who are fairly close neighbours to understand one another. For example, the speech of the Hill Mārijās is compared by Daṇḍāmī Mārijās to that of crows, owing to numerous gutturals and velar fricatives.

The Daṇḍāmī Mārijās themselves speak in a guttural manner, and another feature of their pronunciation is extremely staccato nature. They almost invariably fail to pronounce glottal fricative and there is a tendency to interchange the cerebral and rolled sounds.

The Daṇḍāmī Mārijā in Bastar has a history of wider

distribution as it was the language of the ruling class in the Nāga period.

With the introduction of Chālukya rule in Bastar, the languages of Bastar were very much influenced by Telugu up to the time of Annamadēva (1324-1369). But after Annamadēva it developed on the lines of Aryan languages, as we find that in different periods of the history, there was Ganga (1369-1534), Kalachuri (1534-1602), Qutb-Shāhi (1602-1680), and Marāṭhā supramacy (1779-1853) in Bastar. This type of contact of Telugu, Oriyā, Chhattīsgarhī and Marāṭhī paved the way for pidginization of the languages and then gave birth to a creolized language Halbī, which became the *lingua franca* of Bastar in Modern times.

Bilingual Policy of the State

During the Chālukya rule in Bastar, the kings followed the same policy of bilingualism as that of the Nāga rulers, but due to immigrant languages of the north, Telugu lost its relevance and instead of Telugu, Hindi became the first language of the State since 1703 A.D. (EI, XII, 242). The rulers of this period realized that there were few persons knowing Sanskrit in the tribal area, so they switched over to Oriya from Sanskrit in the time of Rājapālādēva (1709-1721) as attested by one copper-plate (OHRJ, X.3.57-60) issued by the king. Thus Hindi and Oriya were the state languages of the period under study while hundreds of tribal languages were also prospering side by side.

Greetings and Salutations in Chālukya Period

An analysis of the salutations of the aborigines of Bastar shows that the majority of the tribes are sensitive to use 'Johār' and 'Rām-Rām' while meeting a person. These terms are historically interesting and we may trace the history of their introduction in Bastar.

The word 'Johār', indicating a form of obeisance, has attained a degree of importance in the history of Shivāji, the founder of the Marāṭhā kingdom, by creating a little problem regarding the influence exercised upon the king by the contemporary saint, Rāmādās. Tradition affirms that Rāmādās

persuaded Shivāji to abandon the usage of saying 'Johār' and to adopt in its place the practice of 'Rām-Rām'. Various accounts of this supposed change are given in Bakhara's, according to one of which a meeting is said to have taken place between the king and the saint in the Shaka year 1573 (i.e. A.D. 1651-52). The saint asked the king to introduce the said change, particularly in a Hindu kingdom and said that it was against Hindu religion to observe the custom of 'Johār' as the Musalmāns do. The Hindu should really say 'Rāma-Rāma' and use the same expression in their writings. Henceforth no Hindu excepting a member of the depressed class should use the word 'Johār'. It is said that the king accepted the suggestion and issued orders to the effect that all the caste Hindus should use the expression 'Rāma-Rāma', but the Shudras were to stick to 'Johār'.

'Johār' is quite an ancient word in Bastar, whereas 'Rāma-Rāma' came to be freely used since the last quarter of the 18th century. 'Johār' is a purely indigenous word unconnected with any custom of Musalmāns, but Rāmadāsa could not co-relate this fact.

In 'Gāthā Saptashatī' (ed. Weber) a work of about 300 A.D., we have न ह्योति देवाज जोषकारा i.e. salutations are not offered to gods. The V.L. quoted by Weber are जोषकारा नमस्कारा जोहारा इति वा. In Silānka commentary on 'Āvashyaka' we read a story दिठो जोहारिजइ जं जं सोषणइ तं च कायरवं i.e. a man who is seen, is greeted with the word 'Johār' and should do whatever he tells. As Silānka lived in 870 A.D., the word must have been current in the 9th century. In "Basavapurāṇa" of Bhīmakavi, a Kannad work of the 14th century, the word 'Johār' and its variant 'Jōhār' are frequently used. Thus, we have घातन कंदु जोहारेंदु पोड मडेलु (pp. 45-46) saying him the ascetic said Jōhār and lay prostrate at his feet; जनपनेंदनु केडनकी येन्न जोहरव i.e. the prince said why is he not attending to my word 'Johār'.

On the basis of the above descriptions, it may be concluded that 'Johār' is a Sanskrit word, widely used by the aborigines of Bastar since the beginning of the history. Thus it is purely an indigenous term derived from Prakrit and possibly from a Sanskrit word. As already mentioned, Weber gives a quotation which treats जोषकार नमस्कार and जोहार as synonyms. He also refers to a manuscript which derives the word जोषकार from जयकार. I am

of the opinion that the word 'Johār' can with propriety be derived from the Sanskrit word जोषकार. This tells the Sanskrit influence on the tribes of Bastar.

Art

In the sphere of Art and Architecture, the Chālukya period in Bastar reached a deplorable condition. The Chālukyas were always involved in struggling with the neighbouring rulers and thus saving their dependency. Hence they could not find time to prosper the creative faculties in the State.

Owing to ravages of time, relics of paintings of the early Chālukya period are not found at present. But paintings, developed during the period, continue till today. The folk-painting found its expression both in religious and secular field. On ceremonial occasions like Dussehrā, Jātrā, and Kāksār, the artists were exhibiting their skill in painting images of different deities and their vehicles (Vāhanas) required for the occasions. During the Shītalā Shashthī festival, the painted image of Bhairava, an aspect of Shiva, the images of bull and the lion on which were seated bronze Shiva and Pārvatī respectively in their bridal dress, were attracting the attention of the spectators mostly because of their vigour and life imparted to them by painters. The worship of earthen images of Danteshwarī during Dussehrā was a traditional pomp and show. So also during 'Rāma-Navamī,' and 'Rathayātrā' images of Rāma, Lakshmaṇa, Sītā, Hanumāna and those of Jagannātha, Balabhadra and Subhadra were respectively being painted by the local artists in traditional manner.

Among secular paintings mention may be made of the mural decorations in the houses of the Rājās and feudal chiefs as well as of the wealthy people of the territory. The Chālukya royal palace of Jagdalpur contains some beautiful paintings of arabesque designs on its walls. The Gond Zamindars had their houses painted with the figures of Wild animals like lions, tigers, and elephants as well as those of warriors with swords and shields.

The painters in Bastar like those in the coastal tract were a caste by themselves and they were influenced by the traditional school of paintings as found in Orissa, although they had some

specialities of their own, particularly in giving life and form through linear rhythm. Almost the same technique of painting developed both in Chhattisgarh and Orissa, and the artists in the Bastar region cannot claim to have established a distinct school.

RELIGION

The religious history of the Chālukya period is more or less a continuation of that of the age of the Nāgas. The dominating cult was the Tāntricism, and the pervading deity was Danteshwarī. It profoundly influenced the life and activity of the people of this period as not other cult then flourishing did. In fact, it was the religion of royal family. The Chālukya kings were Danteswarites and most of their vassals and dependents also professed that religion,

Hindus of the higher caste were scarce and the Brāhmins, who mostly hailed from Orissa, were by no means orthodox in religious matters. Practically, both Hindus and Gonds, to a very great extent, worshipped the spirits of forests, hills, trees, soil, etc. and both worshipped Danteshwarī. Next to her Jagannātha commanded most respect. He owed this to the proximity of Orissa and the reverence paid to him by Purushōttamadēva (1468-1534), one of the chiefs of the Chālukya dynasty.

The prevalence of the Tāntric cult in Bastar during this period is suggested by the terms used in inscriptional records (EI, XII, 242, OHRJ Ibid.). The Tantras enunciate the worship of Shakti, the female energy of Shiva, chiefly devoted to Danteshwarī or Durgā. This worship, being centred chiefly in mystic circles, is known as *Chakrapūjā* or *Bhairavatantra*, in which there was free use of liquor (*madya*), eating of meat (*mānsa*), and fish (*matsya*), communion with women (*maithuna*) and eating a kind of food (*mudrā*). Followers of this form of worship were called "*Kaūlas*" and the custom they practised was known as *kulāchāra*. The *kulāchāra* section of the Tantras is said to have been brought down to earth by the Siddha Mīna Nātha (JASB, New Series, Vol. XXIX, 1923, p. 75).

The influence of the *gurus* or *āchāryas* of these cults on the

people of those times was very great. Members of the Rājguru family of Bastar were the renowned tantricists immigrated from Mithilā. They were the gurus of Chālukya families of Bastar. Maithila Pandit Bhagvāna Mishra is known to us through an inscription (EI, XII, 242). They were known by the term "Dādāguru" by the members of Rāj family. (Kalindrasingh, 1918).

Besides this Rāj guru-family there was Jiyā family in Dantēwārā, who was the hereditary pujārī, of Danteshwarī of Dantēwārā. From the family-records of Jiyā's we can trace out a genealogy as follows:

Ligā Jiyā (1324-1369)
 Sivanātha Jiyā (1369-1410)
 Devanātha Jiyā (1410-1468)
 Bhōlānātha Jiā (1468-1534)
 Nārāyaṇa Jiā (1534-1558)
 Dhanasingh Jiā (1558-1602)
 Rāmasingh Jiā (1602-1625)
 Sītārāma Jiā (1625-1639)
 Vanshīdhara Jiā (1639-1654)
 Kisunachanda Jiā (1639-1654)
 Nīlābha Jiā (1654-1680)
 Girdharjiā (1680-1709)
 Rāmachandra Jiā (1709-1731)
 Kesā Jiā (1731-1774)
 Bhākan (1774-1779)

Besides these there were other *gurus* also who toured Bastar and propagated their religion.

The worship of heroes, and hero stones also became part and parcel of popular religion. There are references in contemporary literature to the worship of heroes with flowers and other offerings. Every year festivals were held in honour of local heroes in different localities, commemorating their deeds of heroism songs were sung to the accompaniment of music and dance. The singing of some of these ballads which roused the enthusiasm of common people and infused and nurtured heroic spirit in them was made into regular profession and some communities lived by them. In this way, some communities were

exclusively entrusted with the task of perpetuating these ballads; for instance, the heroic ballad called 'Ghōṭul-pāṭā' in Muriā. The Chālukya king entrusted the charge to the Munḍā people who used to sing only that ballad which explains the immigration of Annamadēva from Wārangal. The Kuṭrū Zamindars had also appointed their traditional bards. The professional ballad singers such as the Munḍās used to attend the annual festival of Goddess Danteswarī, the tutelary deity of the Chālukyās. Thus the annual festival of the heroes was a solemn and grand festive occasion, which not only served to perpetuate the memory of the departed heroes but also to sustain and cultivate heroic spirit among people.

Social Customs

The tribe is not free to perform any ceremony, purely domestic or public, according to his own will at any time. His whole life, from birth to death and from morn to eve, is regulated by strict discipline.

There was a new orientation in religion during this period, which saved the tribal society from disruption, following the rude and severe shock it received from the Muslim invasions. They developed fraternity with other caste Hindus, who greatly contributed to the consolidation of the tribal society. The members of the tribal community were made to feel that the Hindu religion was as much theirs as it was of the higher castes, and almost all the ceremonies to be performed, became common to all the members of the society. The feasts, the festivals, the religious observances, the *dānās*, *vratas*, and auspicious occasions, all became the common legacy of the tribal folk in general.

The *Pānjī* or *Panchānga* played a important role in the daily routine of the people of all communities. Their domestic and social activities were guided by a consideration of the auspicious moments for commencing them. For this the services of *Pānjīyār* were utilized.

Peculiar Customs and Rites¹

The Tāntric cult which found its way into Bastar during the mediaeval period, was greatly responsible for popularising different rites and firmly implanting them into the land. The most important of these rites was, of course, self immolation by offering one's own head either to a god or goddess. In order to propitiate a deity, whose wrath was believed to have been manifested either in the form of a pestilence or calamity, or in order to fulfil a vow taken by him to get his cherished desire or earthly object it seems to have been an ancient custom in Bastar for a devotee to offer his head and immolate himself.

This self-immolation by a devotee in his excessive devotion to his tutelary deity was the best offering he could make on earth. This spirit was cultivated greatly about the period of Muslim invasions and served as a powerful antidote to the religious fanaticism of the Muslims in their aim to destroy the fabric of Hindu-tribal religion and culture. It arrested Islamic aggression and held it at bay during the 14th and 15th centuries, making it possible for the Hindus to recognise and resuscitate their religion and culture. It may be probably regarded as an answer given by the Hindus to the challenge thrown against them by the aggressive Muslims.

It was the belief of the people of those times that the goddess Danteshwarī granted the desires of all those who worshipped the Bhairavas of the eight quarters (अष्टभैरव) with the blood of their eight limbs of the body (अष्टांग) and made an offering of head soaked in blood.

Another way of self-immolation was by throwing oneself under the wheel of a car carrying an idol in procession in reputed holy places and get crushed to death. This seems to have been in vogue in Bastar during the period.

It was a common custom to sacrifice animals, like buffaloes or goat, in order to satisfy both gods and demons, when visiting any shrine (EI, XII, 242).

4. Certain characteristics of religious beliefs and rites are a reliable indication of former ethnic contacts; therefore the data on religious beliefs and rituals are extensively used in ethnographic studies for reconstructing the process of formation of an ethnos.

Conclusion

In the field of religion, the Chālukyas followed a policy of toleration and extended their patronage to all forms of Hinduism and tribalism.

Seen through its customs and rites, the tribal religion of the age may be conceived as resulting from to continuous processes of communication between a little tribal tradition and greater traditions which had their places partly inside the community.

CONCLUSION

The foregoing study goes to show that during the modern period the traditional system of village community with its self-sufficient economy, the unity between agriculture and industry and absence of production for market, was rapidly disintegrating. This was due to the deepening property inequality and growing gulf between communal and private property in land. This stratification of village population was accelerated by the growing exploitation of the peasants by feudal hierarchy, which was expressed in the rapacious system of revenue-farming with all its attendant evils.

The disintegration of the village community led first and foremost to the transformation of the bulk of the tribal population into feudality dependent tenants. They had the right to the use of land as long as they paid rent in time. Later, most of them became tenants without any rights, as a result of their intensified exploitation by the feudal class. Wars and civil wars played a crucial role in the expropriation and ruination of the tribal folk.

On the other side, the less numerous rich tribes grabbed the largest and the most fertile plots with the active connivance of village officials. The economic inequality was often combined with the traditional inequality of tribes and with the relations of serfdom, often bordering on slavery.

Under these circumstances, the tribal organisation of village in Bastar was increasingly losing its autonomy and becoming

an administrative unit of the feudal structure for the exploitation of the tribes.

In the industrial sector, two productive systems were existing side by side for a long time in many villages. One was the traditional domestic industry in the tribal households represented by spinning and weaving; it was a necessary adjunct of the subsistence or natural economy, where the necessities of life were fully or mainly produced in the household itself. The other was the professional handicrafts serving the needs of the whole village. Those who were engaged in these were Garhawās or Ghasiās, potters etc. owing to their own instruments of labour, these professional enjoyed hereditary rights over small plots of land which were tax-free. The combination of these two systems provided certain self-sufficiency to the village, which helped to preserve them.

Feudal exploitation made the life of the community highly burdensome. This took several forms. First, the palace artisans were given nothing except food and shelter; secondly heavy taxes, fees and perquisites made the life of artisans intolerable; thirdly the feudal monopoly in production or purchase of certain goods like salt, gur, etc. enabled the state officials and tax-farmers to oppress the artisans in many ways buying from them goods below their market price, foisting false charges against them, punishing them severely, etc. Sometimes tribes used their organisations in the struggle for their rights. But often these struggles did not improve their conditions. Readers are requested to consult my forthcoming volume, in the tribal *Revolutions of Bastar* (Delhi).

The tribal community of Bastar, which assumed different forms among different bands, the largely facilitated the centuries—old day-to-day co-existence of two antagonists the feudal lords on the one hand, and their dependent aborigines on the other. There is no question that the tribal community of Bastar had long-standing traditions behind it and had existed in all parts of the region in the late feudal period. Its regional functional uniformity is evidence of its social stability. Increasingly subordinated to feudal authority, the community as an institution of feudal society did not set itself any new social tasks. Exhibiting endurance in its fight against feudal oppression,

it reflected the interests of closed groups of the tribal population; this in turn, in the absence among the tribal population of large-scale pauperism and with retarded tribal stratification, tended to perpetuate the prevailing economic and social relations in the country side.

APPENDIX

Revelation of History by Stones¹

The vast district of Bastar (M.P.), comprising an area of 39,170 square Kms. has always been a centre of great interest owing to its tribes who retain their primitive culture. The history of this region, which was included within the Dakṣiṇadika during the later Vedic period, and styled as Daṇḍakāraṇya and Kāntāra in the Rāmāyaṇa and Mahabhārata age respectively, is an interesting chapter of ancient Indian annals.

The Āryans could not extend their sway in this part of the country prior to the later Vedic period. The Ṛgvedic hymn "Kasmai Dēvāya Havidhā Vidhayama", enchanted by the almost naked wild hill Marias at the time of disposing the dead, apparantly exhibits their link with the Āryans. The place names, the folk lores coupled with the literary and archaeological evidences suggest that the present region of Bastar witnessed the rise and fall of different ruling dynasties right from the epic age down to the mediaeval times.

The prehistory and early history of Bastar, based primarily on stone antifacts and relics, is very interesting. The evidence of prehistoric cave man in Bastar has been met with in the form of stone implements and rock paintings. The following four stone Ages have been recognised in Bastar² :

1. Written by V.D. Jha.
2. In want of blade and burin of the upper palaeolithic age the present classification has been followed.

- (1) Early Stone Age
- (2) Middle Stone Age
- (3) Late Stone Age, and
- (4) New Stone Age

Early Stone Age

The culture belonging to the tradition of bifacial tools has been represented by hand axe, scraper, cleaver, flakes, chopper and chopping tools. Two places of chronological development has been noticed. In the absence of metal, stone tools were used in digging the edible roots, scraping the barks and skin, killing the animal, chopping, cleaving; and perforating. The large and crude artifacts, fashioned on inferior stones indicate the underdeveloped mental status of primitive man. He had no knowledge of better, fine grained raw material. His life was extremely hard and he was practically alone against the nature (Fig. 1).

Middle Stone Age

After several thousand years the man succeeded in designing better; smaller, well shaped, sharp edged implements in medium grained raw material. These tools form a distinct cultural tradition, altogether different from the preceding one. The multipurpose artifacts such as scraper-cum-borer, arrow-head, point, blade and saw, having the effective working edge, and the advance tool technique as well exhibit the relatively developed mental condition and change in climate. A few tools with tang to anticipate hating and the sawing implements suggest that the tool maker employed both brain and vigour to get best results out of the implements.¹ (Fig. 2)

Late Stone Age

Engaged constantly in search of better means of livelihood, the man advanced a step forward by manufacturing still better, smaller and multipurpose tools by employing pressure and

1. See No. 3 and 9 for tanged tools and No. 31 for tenon saw in Fig. 2.

blade techniques. The chips obtained from the core by a person were further converted into effective implements by another man with the help of soft cylinder hammer. This shows that the policy of division of labour was at work. The accurate chipping and secondary retouching became easier in fine grained raw material such as chalcedony, opal, quartzite, chest, jasper and gunflint. The technique of hafting the implements was introduced in this age. Stone sickles and small blades were designed for harvesting the forest produce which included barley also. (Fig. 3)

Another evidence depicting the fauna of this period in Bastar comes in the form of rock paintings noticed at Nambi and Nadapalli in Bijapur Tahsil. It has been exhibited by the hand palm prints at Matanara near Chitrakuta that prehistoric man worshipped super natural powers.

New Stone Age

By stepping out of cave and settling on flat hill topes the man engineered great revolution. The shifting cultivation on nearby hill slopes, and cattle rearing coincided with advance tool technique brought a remarkable change in the sphere of economy and religion. The regular shaped heavy ground and polished tools such as celts, chisels and adzes were designed for felling the trees and chiseling the wooden implements. Such tools have been collected from Garhchandella, Dornapala, Garh Dhanora, Usoor and Chhote Donger, in Bastar. The neolithic settlements on hill topes were encircled by unhewn stone wall against the invading enemies and the carnivoras. Such settlements have been discovered by the author near Gargchandella, Garh Dhanora and Vedre in Bastar district. It may be mentioned that the economy of the hill Marias is primarily based on shifting cultivation, hunting and forest produce. They are still in neolithic state in many respects (Figs 4, 5).

PROTO-HISTORY

So far no stone relic of the succeeding copper age has been

noticed in Bastar. With the advent of iron age the graves of huge orthostatic stones were erected by the authors of Megalithic culture in Bastar round about the first millanum B.C. In addition to these, menhirs i.e. the memorial stone pillars were also erected. The megalithic graves and menhirs have been noticed at Nelakankera, Sankanapalli, Karkeli, I pa, Handaguda, Gongapala, Bacheli and Rāge in Bastar (See Fig. 6). The Maria Gonds of Bastar still erect the memorial pillar and the dolmens as well in memory of the departed soul. They erect stone or carved wooden pillars. In fact, they retain the traits of megalithic culture (Figs. 6, 7).

The evidence of fertility cult has been encountered in Bastar. The purposely carved headless naked figure of a female, noticed at Garh Bodhara is the earliest evidence of it. Carved during the 11th century A.D., the icon depicts YONI prominently, such figure can be seen carved in wooden memorial pillars. The Marias of Bastar regard Bhumi i.e. the earth as their mother (Figs 8, 9).

HISTORY

The relics of Buddha and Post Buddha period have not been noticed in Bastar. But, it has been compensated by the rock paintings and inscriptions in Śāṅkha Script of second half of first millenium B.C. at Alora near Badedonger. Rock paintings of this period have been noticed at Edka near Narayanapur also (Fig 10).

The earliest icon belonging to 3rd centry A.D. comes from village Bastar. This sparsely ornamented icon representing two armed Viṣṇu is shown in *Samibhanga* pose; adorned with *Kiritaṃkuta*, heavy *Kuṇḍalus* sacred thread, long garland and anklets; right hand held in *Varada* pose padma, left hand placed on the head of *chakra puruṣa* (Fig. 11).

The Gupta supremacy in this region has been attested to by the Carved in round image of Nṛasimha at Pālā, the four armed icons of Viṣṇu at Gubarahina and Deo Dhanora and the Sati stone pillar at Chhote Donger. It has been exhibited by the Sati stone that Sati system was prevalent in this part of the country as early as 5th century A.D. The *Avatāraṇḍa* was

also popular (Figs. 12-13). On the basis of these sculptures and the Podagarh inscription of Skandavarmana it may be inferred that the Vaiṣṇavism gained impetus in early centuries of the Christian era. The Śaivism became popular during the Naga regime. That the Buddhism prevailed during the 5th-6th century A.D. has been attested to by the brick stupas and chaitya noticed at Gubarahina, Bhongapala, Jaitagiri (ancient Chaityagiri) and the icon of Buddha at Bhongapala (See Figs. 14, 15).

The paramountcy of the Rāṣtrakūtas over Bastar has been stated in Bemulavāḍa inscription (J. of Andhra Historical Society, vi. pp. 169-92) and the Vikramārjuna Vijaya of Pampa (ch. ix, p. 520 ff). According to the latter, Baddega I Soladagunda, the feudatory chief of Krasṇa II, had his hold over Bastar. The natural fort of Chitrakuta liquidated by Yuddamala I, under the Vassalage of Rāṣtrakūta Dantidurga, related in Bemulavada epigraph is no other than the Bodhra fort, located near Chitrakuta in Bastar. The Bodhra fort is protected from three sides by river Indrawati and Narangi.

The region of Bastar, conquered by Chalukya Kirtivarmana by ousting the Nalas from their NILAYA¹ i.e. the Puṣkari (Podagarh in Koraput district) was again siezed by Vijayaditya III and later by Someśvara I and Vikramaditya VI. The subjugation of the rulers of Chakrakuta (Bastar) by the Chalukya monarchs has been related in Nander epigraph² and Vikramāṅkadevacharita respectively.³ The Chalukya dominance has been corroborated by the mediaeval temple and folk lore in village Bastar. The shrine at Bastar village, designed during the 11th century A.D., bears the impact of Chalukyan art. According to the folk lore, the temple was constructed by Vikramaditya VI. Certainly, it was Chalukya prince Vikramaditya VI, who caused the erection of this temple (see Fig. 16):

That the Cholas extended their sway in Bastar has been attested to by their epigraphs⁴ and the sculptures noticed in Bastar. The icons representing the Chola art have been

1. See Aihole inscription, Epi. Indica. Vol. VI, p. 4.

2. See Yazdani, G. (ed.), Early History of Deccan, Part I, pp. 330-332.

3. Vikramāṅkadevacharita, 4-20, 31.

4. See Epi. Indica, Vol. IX, p. 233; *Ibid*, Vol. XXI, p. 226; South Indian Inscriptions, III, p. 70.

noticed at Amravati, Barasura and Bade Donger in Bastar (See Figs. 17 and 18). Barring a few brick temples the remnants of which have been noticed at Pala, Gubarhin, Khamaragaon and Dantewara, and the stone temple at village Bastar almost every shrine was designed during the Nāga rule. A good number of shrines and sculptures of the Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva, Śākta, Saura, Brāhmā and Jaina pantheons, fashioned under the patronage of the Nāga rulers are the testimony of their liberal religious attitude. The Śakti cult gained impetus. It reached Bastar from the adjoining region of Jeypore in Orissa, which was an old seat of Tantric worship. Icons of Śivadūti, Chamunda, Dantura, Pārvati, Mahiṣmardini, Lakṣmi, Brāhmī, Saraswati and Saptamātrikās have been noticed in Bastar. The shrine, constructed at village Bastar by Vikramaditya VI, was dedicated to Lakṣmi. The worship of synergetic deity, attested to by the synergetic icons at Bhairamgarh, Barasura and Gudama, represent the spirit of reconciliation and rapprochement prevalent between the divergent sects. The eight armed icon of Hari-Hara-Hiraṇyagarbha-Pitāmaha at Bhairamgarh representing Sun as central deity is its best example. Apart from these, a shrine at Barasura (known as 12 pillared temple), dedicated to Hari-Hara also corroborate it. The figure of Hari-Hara has been depicted in the centre of the door lintel of the sanetum. Excepting the Hari-Hara temple at Barasura and the Devi temple at village Bastar, almost every mediaeval temple bear the figure of Gaṇapati on the door-lintel. Gaṇapati was treated as auspicious deity.

The prevalence of Jaina religion in mediaeval Bastar has been indicated by the occurrence of Jaina sculptures at Garh Bodhara, Barasura, Jagdalpur, Retawanda and Kesarapala. Remains of a Jaina shrine have been noticed at Kesarapala.

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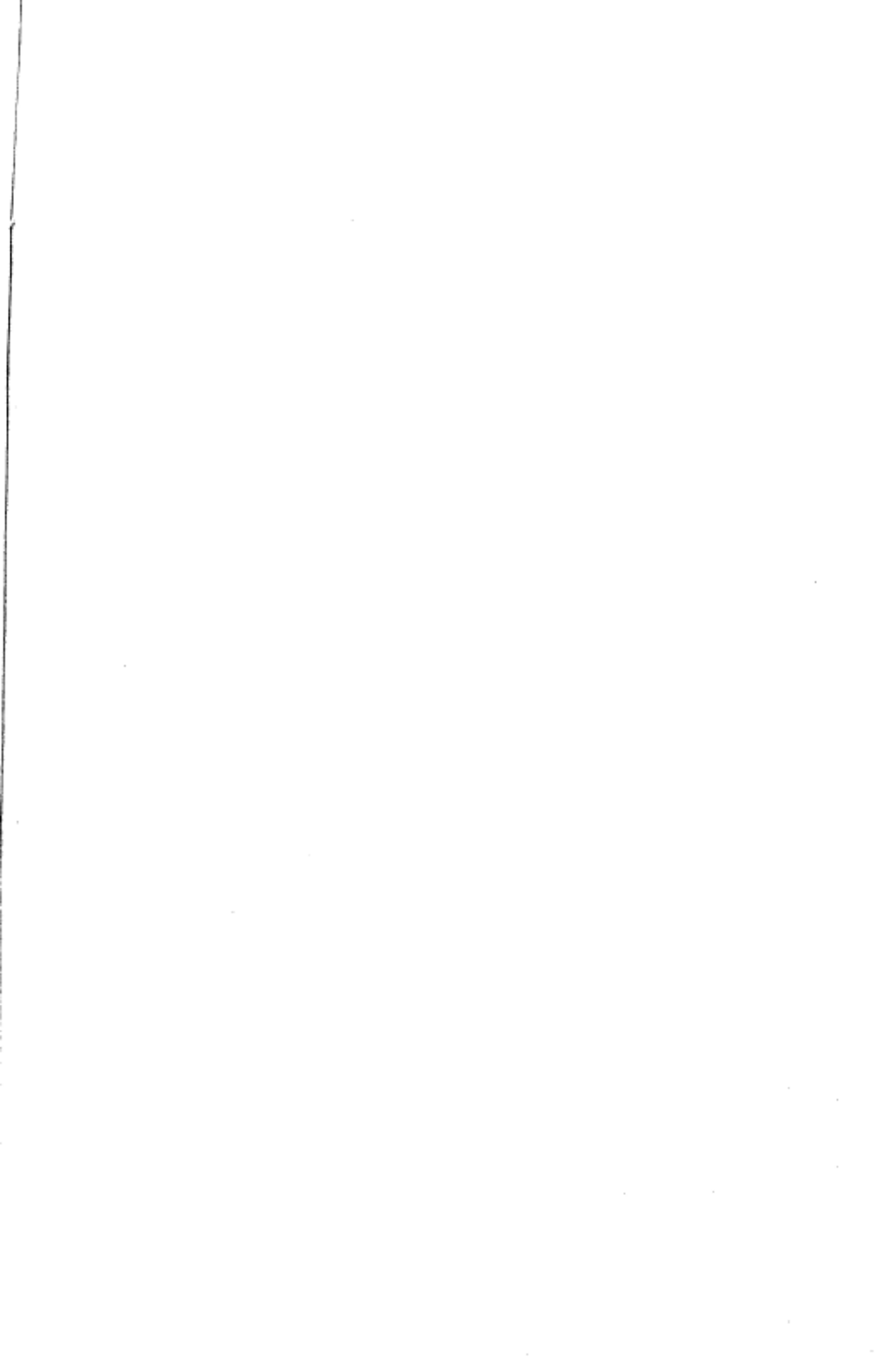
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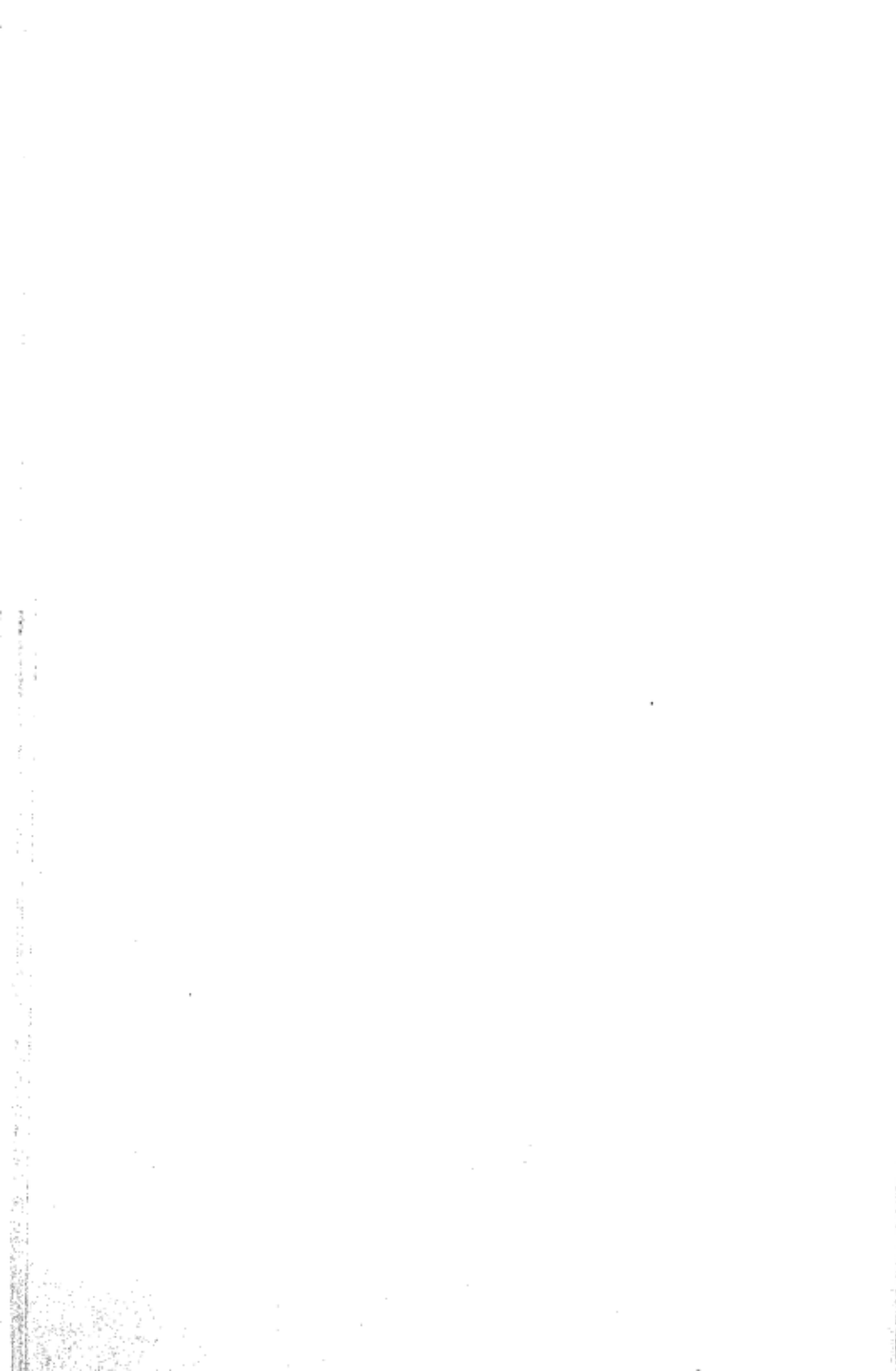
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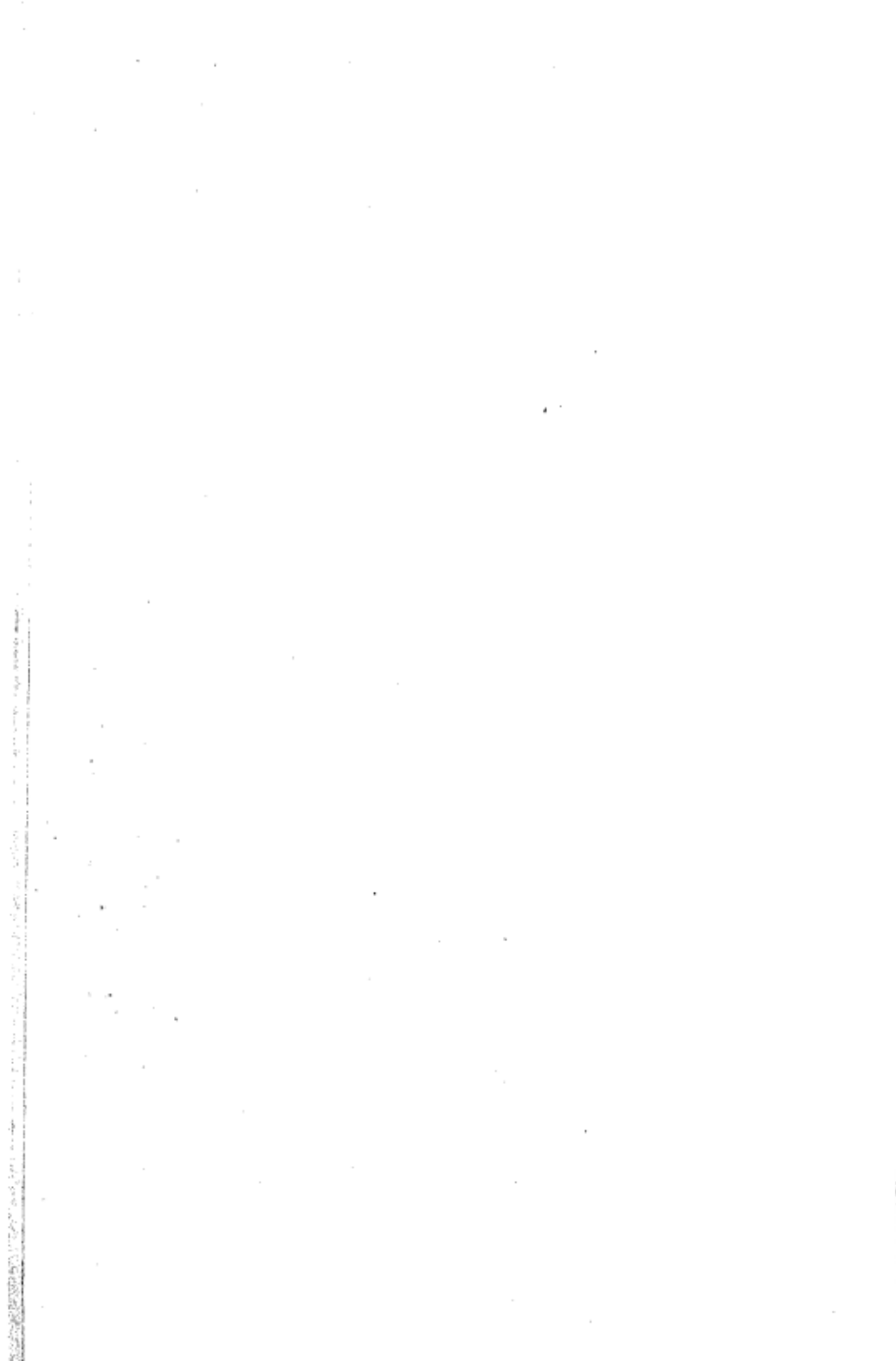


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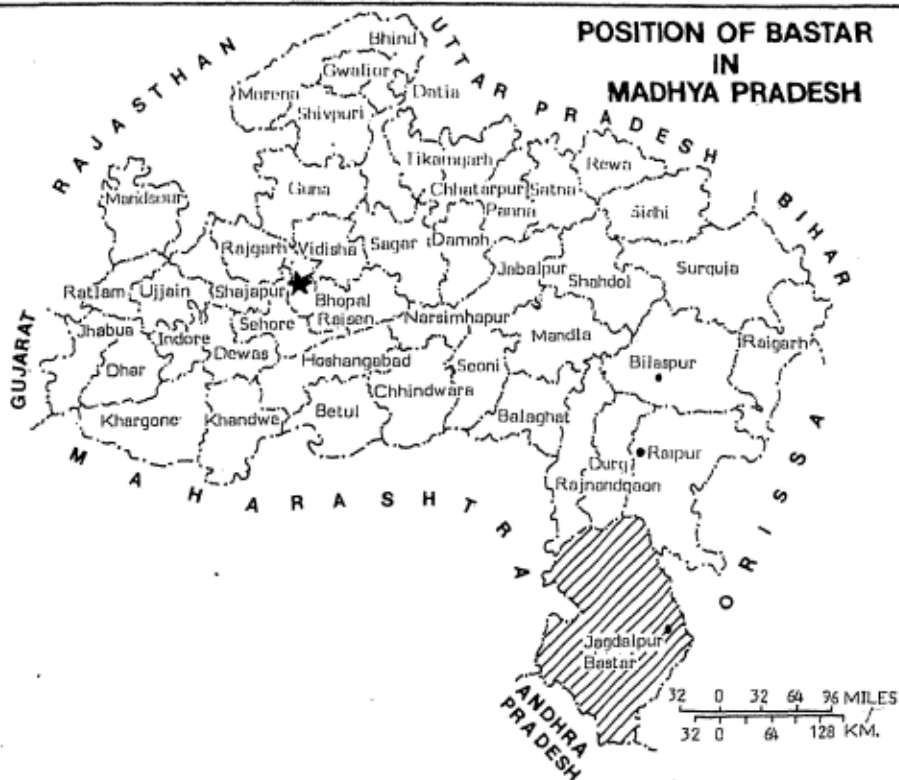


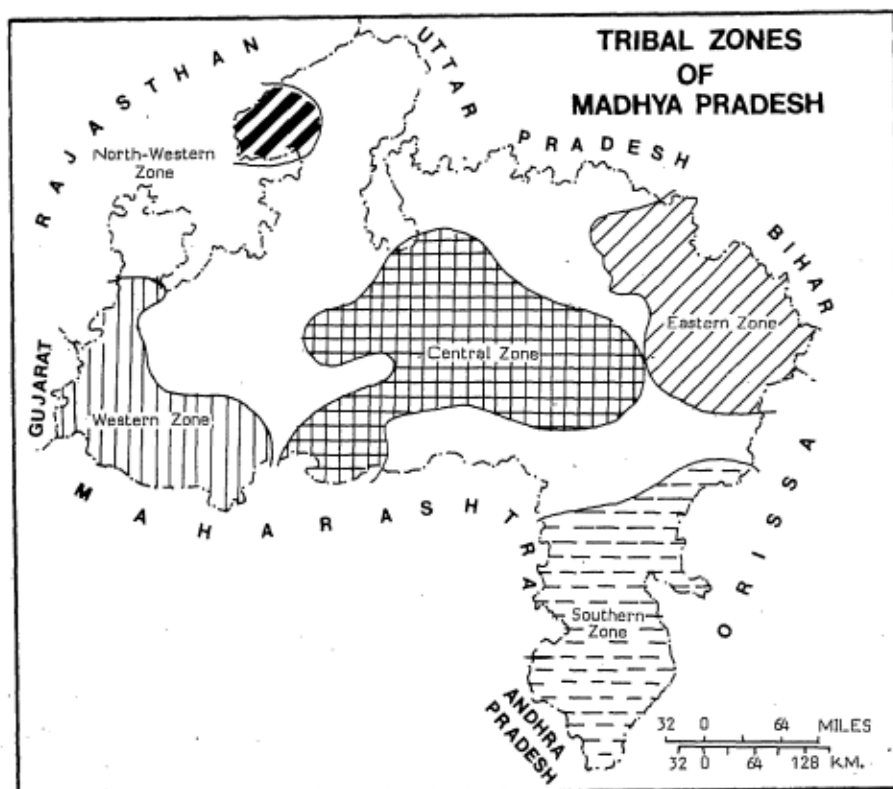


Maps & Plates



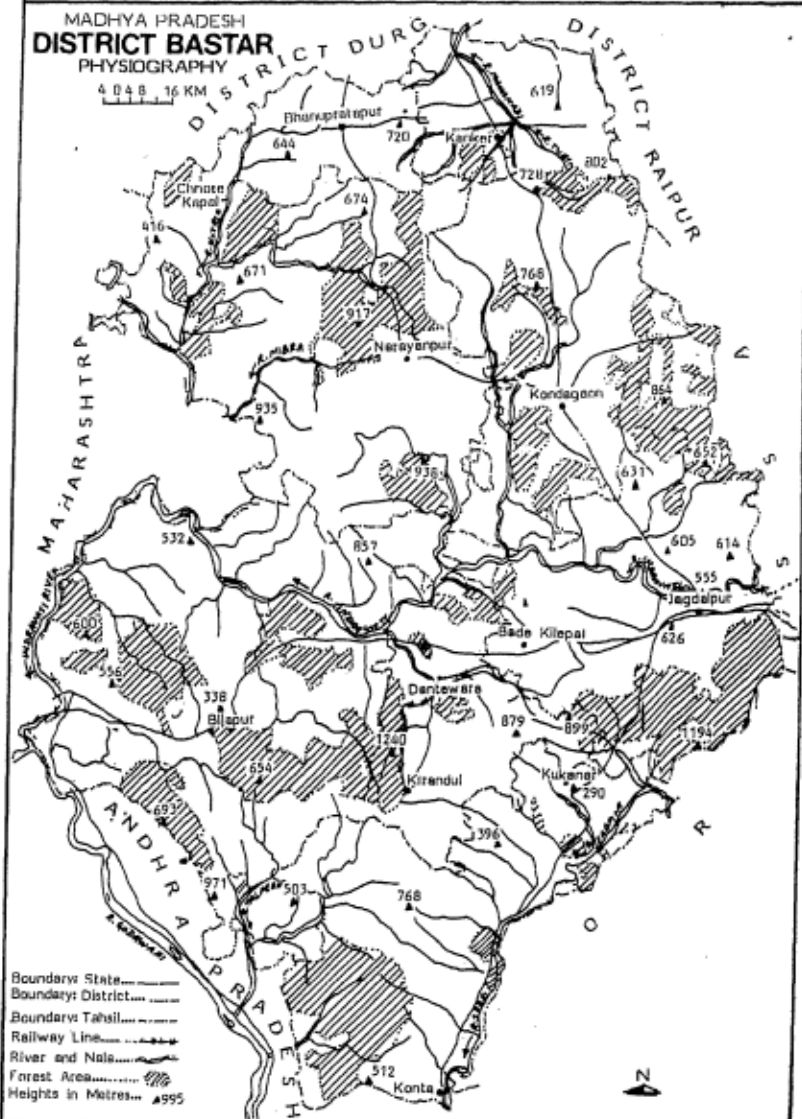
POSITION OF BASTAR IN MADHYA PRADESH



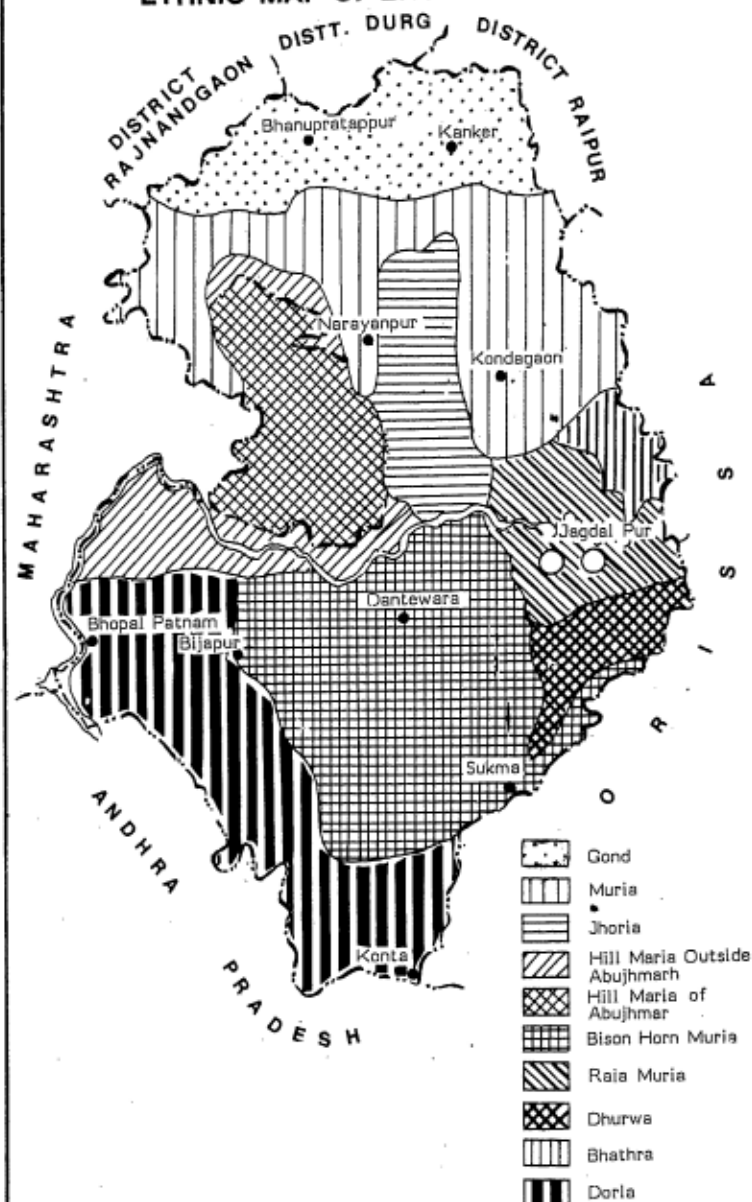


MADHYA PRADESH
DISTRICT BASTAR
PHYSIOGRAPHY

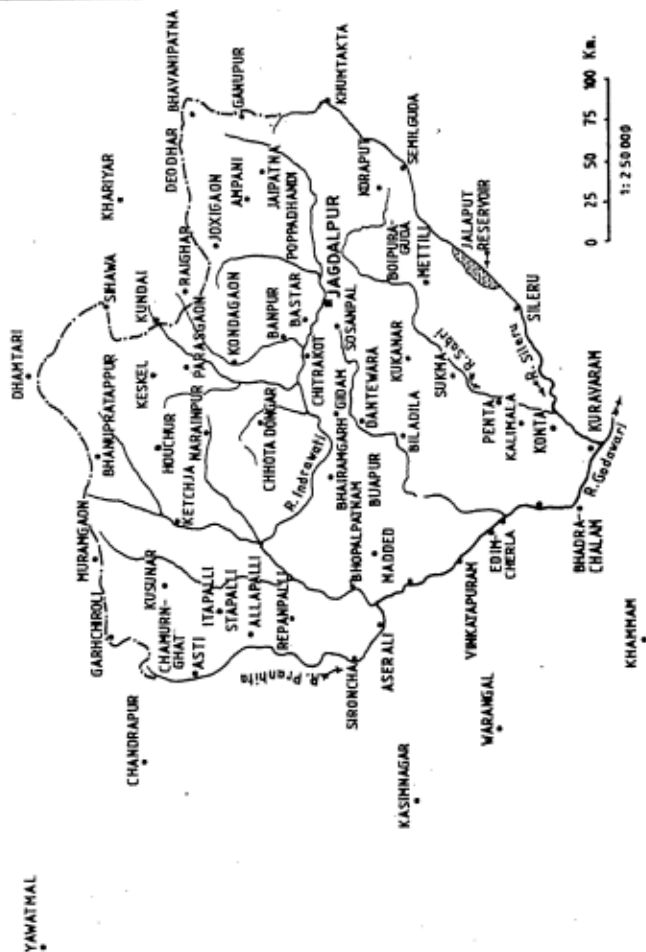
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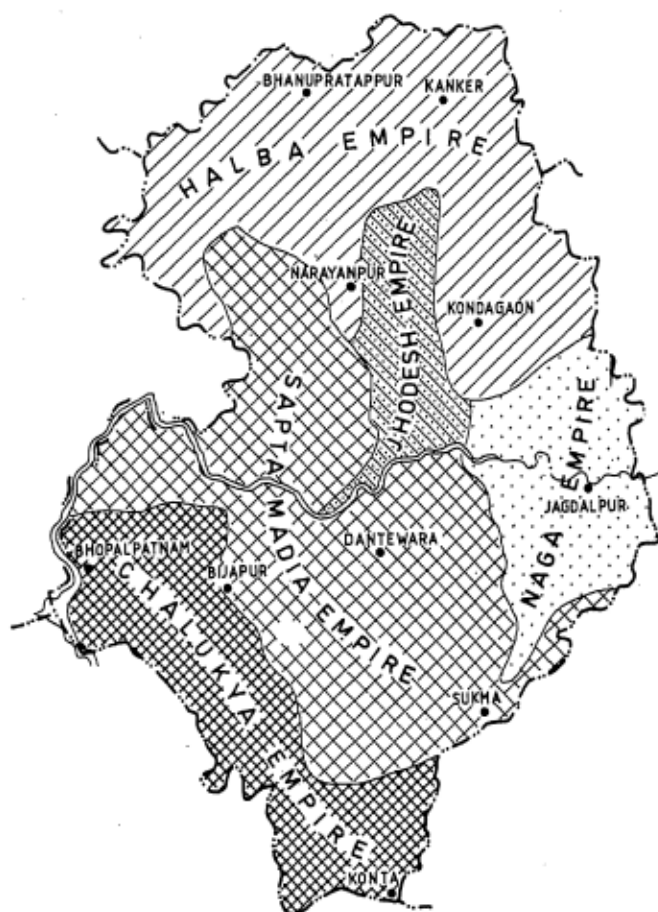
ETHNIC MAP OF BASTAR DISTRICT



BRAND



TRIBAL EMPIRES IN LATER MEDIAVAL BASTAR



BASTAR STATE IN 1777 A D **(SHOWING FIRST TRIBAL REVOLUTION)**

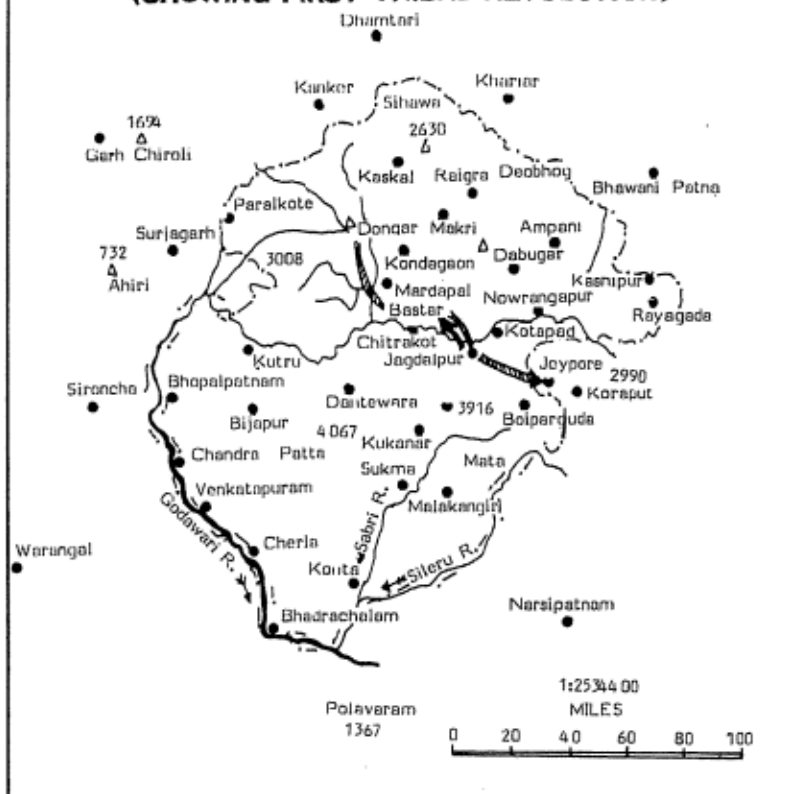




Fig.1: Early Stone Age Tools, Bastar



Fig.2: Middle Stone Age Tools, Bastar

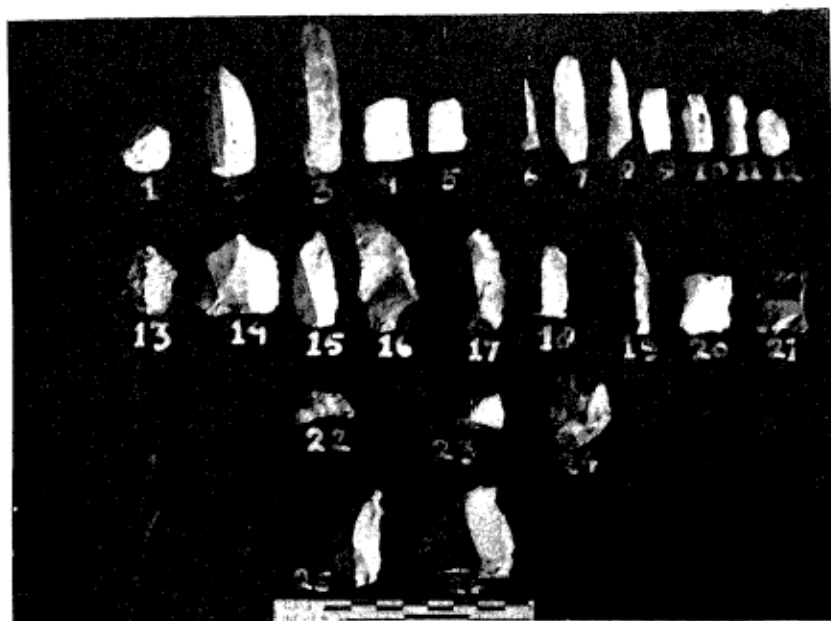


Fig.3: Late Stone Age Tools, Bastar



Fig.4: New Stone Age Tools, Bastar



Fig.5: Living Prehistory: Māriās of Bastar



Fig 5(a): Abujhmāriā Youth



Fig.6: Megalithic Grave



Fig.7: Memorial Pillars and Graves of Māriās



Fig.8: Goddess of Fertility: Garh-Bodra, Bastar



Fig.9: Goddess of Fertility: Carved on
Wooden Memorial Pillar, Bastar

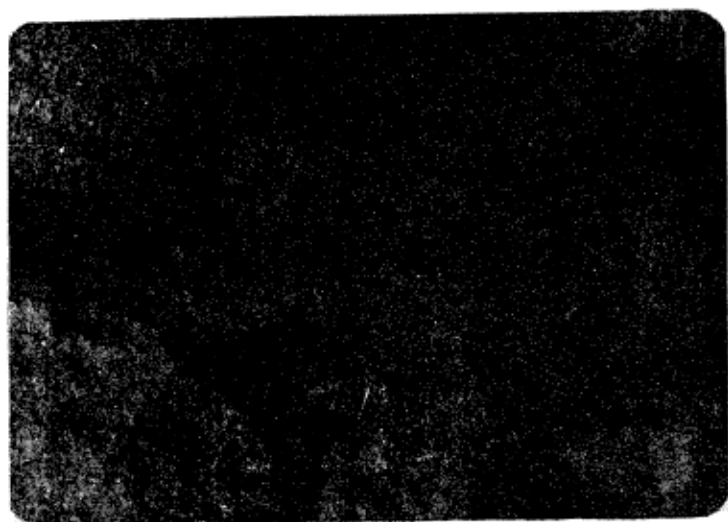


Fig.10: Shankha Script: 3rd Century A.D., Alor, Bastar



Fig.11: Two Armed Viṣṇu:
3rd Century A.D.,
Village Bastar



Fig.12: Viṣṇu: 5th Century A.D.
Gubarahin (Bastar)



Fig.13: Nṛasimha: 5th Century A.D.,
Pālā, Bastar



Fig.14: Stūpa: 5th Century A.D., Gubarahin (Bastar)



Fig.15: Buddha: 6th Century A.D., Bnongapata

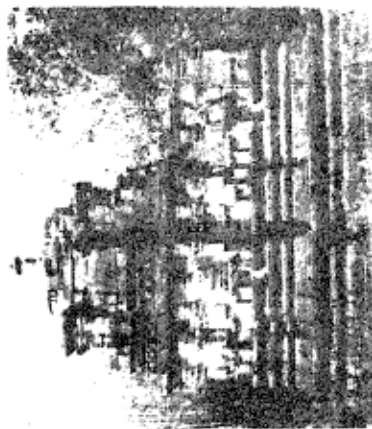


Fig.16: Devi Temple: 11th Century
A.D.. Bastar Village



Fig. 17: Sun Gods:
Representing the
Chola Art: 11th
Century A.D., Bārsūr,
Bastar



Fig.18: Vishnu Representing the
South Indian Art: 11th
Century A.D., Bāre
Dongar



Fig.19: Sun God
Representing
the Chola
Art: 11th
Century A.D.
Bārsūr

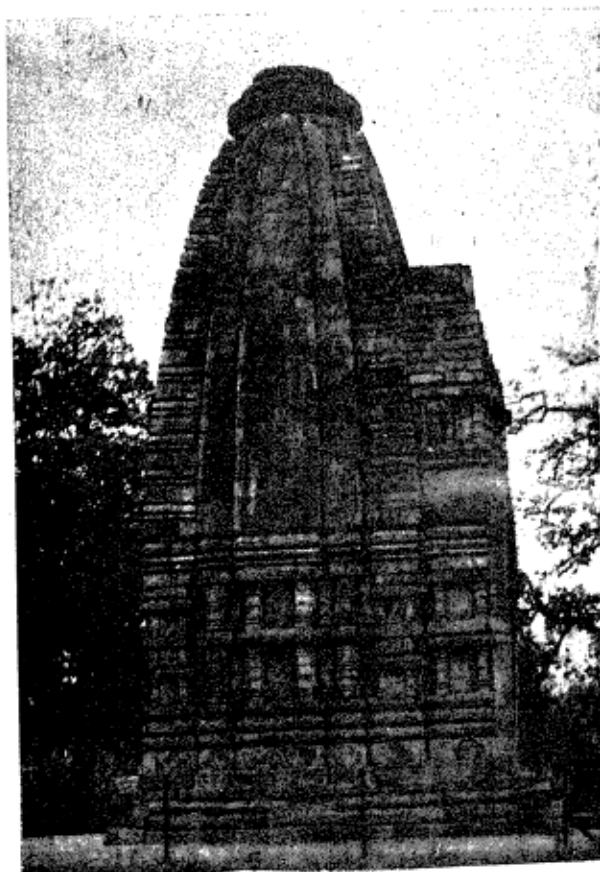


Fig.19 A: Māmā Bhānjā Temple: Bārsūr (11th Century A.D.)



Fig.20: Bārsūr Temple with Twin Sanctums (11th Century A.D.)

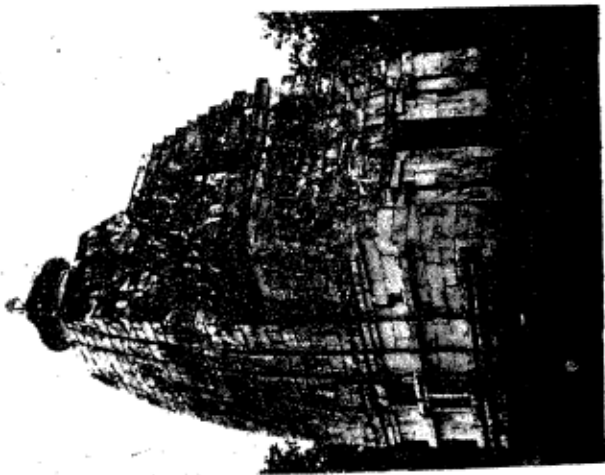


Fig.21: Śiva Temple: Samalura
(12th Century A.D.)

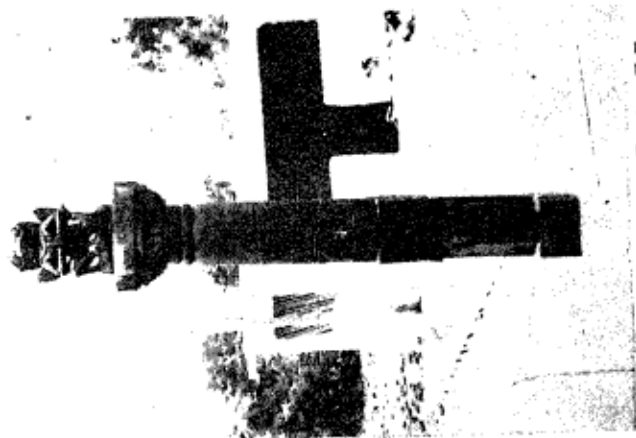


Fig.22: Garuḍa Pillar: Dantewārā

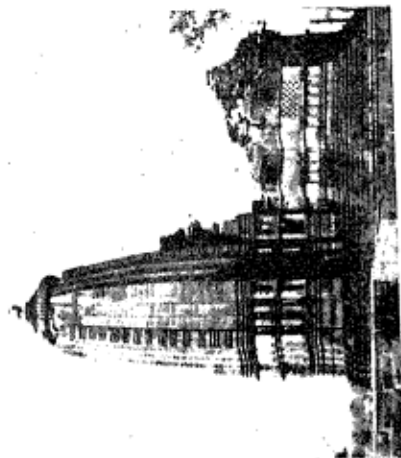


Fig.23: Temple of Nārāyaṇa:
Nārāyaṇapāla
(11th Century A.D.)



Fig.24: Śiva Dikṣit: Gudma
(12th Century A.D.)

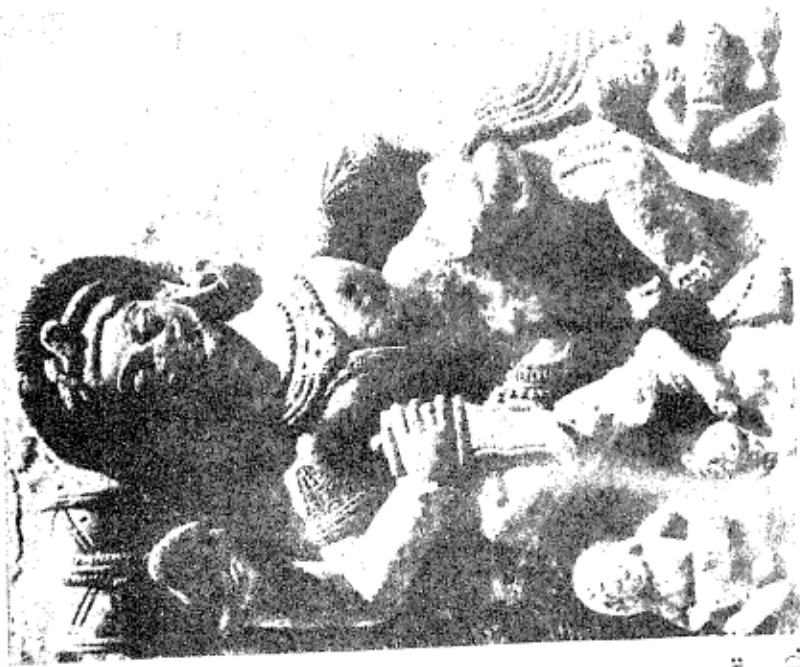


Fig.25: Dancing Bhairava:
Tirathgarh
11th Century A.D.



Fig.26: Caruṣa Kāṅker (11th Century A.D.)



Fig.27: Hari-Hara: Bhairamgarh
(13th Century A.D.)



Fig.28: Nāga Couple: Jagdalper
(12th Century A.D.)



Fig.29: Three Eyed Śiva: Bhairamgarh (12th Century A.D.)



Fig.30: Umā-Maheśvara: Kuruspāl (11th Century A.D.)



Fig.31: The Māriā King's Crest (The Nāga Hāgaraja suppressed by the Māriā Tribe)

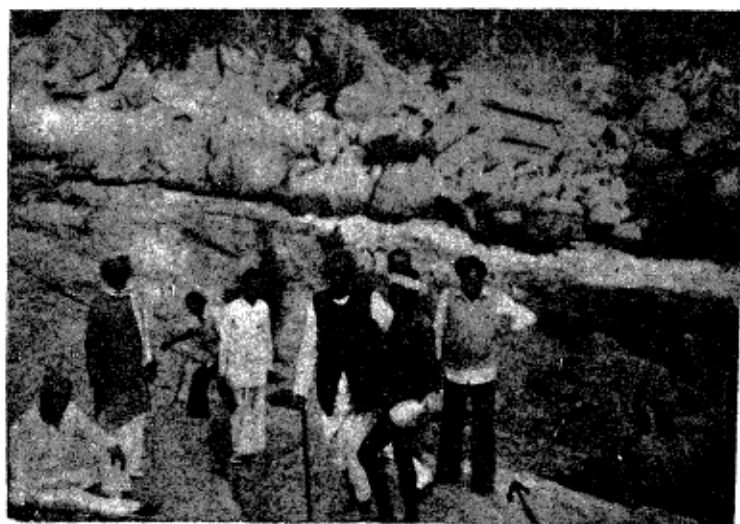


Fig.32: The Author in an Expedition to Rāmagiri (1986)

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