

**MAKING OF A RELIGIOUS MATRIX: MATTAMAYURAS AND OTHER  
RELIGIOUS CURRENTS IN EARLY MEDIEVAL 'CENTRAL INDIA'**

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## Abbreviations

ASI: Archaeological Survey of India

CII: Corpus Inscription Indicarum

EI: Epigraphia Indica

J.A.H.R.S: Journal of Andhra Historical Research Society

Pr.Ch.Prabodhachandrodaya

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SOCIO-POLITICAL AND CULTURAL  
SETTINGS

'Central India' provides with a dynamic scene in the religious field in period broadly called early-medieval. This period witnessed the development of a number of sects breaking-off or merging into the 'pan-Indian' Brahmanism. While some regional traditions established themselves as the indispensable part of the larger brahmanical tradition in its spatial context<sup>1</sup> others did/could not hold their own. Though "Hinduism is seen as a movement from below, involving religious and social practices which transformed Brahmanism in the post-Gupta and early medieval centuries<sup>2</sup>, it needs no emphasis that the normative texts while accommodating such changes continued to espouse the core values.

The emergence of peculiar religious cultures all over the Indian subcontinent during early medieval period is a reflection of new dynamics of the medieval society. Temple culture and state were shaped by mutual interaction and the

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<sup>1</sup> The important and oft-quoted example is the making of the Jagannath cult in Puri.

<sup>2</sup> Vijay Nath [in "from 'Brahmanism' to 'Hinduism' : Negotiating the Myth of the Great Tradition", Presidential Address, ancient India section, Indian Historical Congress, Calcutta 2001] gives the argument that while Brahmanism connotes a continuity from Vedic period, Hinduism is more of a movement from below mainly during Gupta and post-Gupta period.



contemporary historical forces. The complex layers of cultural politics of medieval period were a result of medieval socio-cultural formation. The temple culture was a part of such a societal process. Different regions of Indian subcontinent have undergone the state formation, caste formation and brahmanisation during the early medieval period. The exact nature of such process might have had its own regional specification. In the pages to follow I undertake analysis of religious dynamics during 8<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> century A.D with eastern Madhya Pradesh as the micro unit. For the region under consideration it becomes imperative to take account of one of the most prolific sect of Saivism in early medieval period known as Mattamayura. They flourished first in central Madhya Pradesh and then expanded to Dakshina Kosala in the south-east and south west of Konkan.

One of the identifiable processes in the time period under scrutiny is that forest regions as well as regions peripheral to settled agriculture were getting transformed on a large scale. Second, within the settled janapadas too space was differentiated in that it could have a variety of habitats. The emergence of the pattern of early medieval society and culture was closely interwoven with the process of geographical space indicated the direction of the transformation of society and culture. These developments are to be understood to comprehend the cultural dynamics in their spatial context.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> This view has been well elaborated by B.D.Chattopadhyaya in "The Making of Early Medieval India", 1993

The transformation of peripheral spaces into local, royal domains was sometimes a result of territorial expansion. The transformation could also have been from within the 'peripheral' society where the state system had evolved previously. In other words, most local kingdoms emerged out of what had been bases of tribal society and not through the breaking up of a given state structure. The second contention stands valid in case of the region under consideration. While Candelas are considered to have Gond background, Kalacuris are too believed to have been forest dwelling tribes. The Vindhya Mountains would seem to have been the home of these tribes; and according to Colonel Todd, a tribe of Haihayas still exists "near the very top of the valley of Sohagpur, in Bhagelkhand, aware of their ancient lineage, and though few in number, still celebrated for their valor." In the context of studies on early India two points may be highlighted – (a) pattern of change in space, (b) regional variations in culture at any given period of time. Regional studies are generally made to correspond to contemporary political boundaries which are considered as undifferentiated geographical and cultural units within which variations are ignored<sup>4</sup>. So while later the focus would be on two dynasties - Kalacuris and to some extent Candelas the idea is to understand the making of the religious matrix in a cultural geographic sense rather than in a political geographical sense, however inscriptional material aids in latter's formulation.

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<sup>4</sup> B.D. Chattopadhyaya in *Survey of Historical Geography of Ancient India* articulates the point clearly.

The recognition of interregional as well as intraregional variations and of relationships between regions is important as it leads on to investigations regarding processes of interactions between geographical areas and to networks of communication. Communication networks corresponded not only to major trade routes but may also have developed through religious and pilgrimage centers, periodic markets, migration of population and so on. In fact, the presence of common elements in the midst of diverse religious practices can be seen in the second major area of the cultural-ideological dimension of the period. This is reflected in the growth of the institution of the preceptor (the acharya or the guru), the central figure in an institution like the matha. Apart from being geographically quite widespread and being close to temporal power, the mathas centers evolved a system of succession of acharyas, who figure in epigraphic records in terms akin to genealogies of royal families.<sup>5</sup> The *matha* functioned as nodes in dissemination and networks of sectarian and philosophical traditions; their growing importance in early medieval society is attested by the fact that in the kingdom of the Kalachuris of Tripuri (near Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh) alone, Saiva temples and Matha controlled by Saivite Mattamayura sect were created at Gurgi, Masaun, Candrehe, Bilhari, Bheraghat and other places. As one would proceed with the discussion on Matha the presupposition is that the

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<sup>5</sup> B.D. Chattopadhyaya, *Historiography, History and Religious Centres : Early Medieval North India, circa AD 700-1200'*, published in Vishakha N. Desai and Darielle Mason, eds, *Gods, Guardians and Temple Sculptures from North India, AD 700-1200*

temple centers do not exist apart from the institutions in society, they existed through a network of linkages which held together the fabric of early medieval society.

Understanding the 'making of religious matrix': it implies not only a recognition of the diversity of elements ('tribal', 'folk', 'classical' or whatever other categories of academic convenience one may invoke), but also an awareness that these elements need to be understood in terms of patterns of interrelatedness between them.<sup>6</sup> This is well elucidated by the information we gather from the area under scrutiny where at one level it gets difficult to identify separate cults in the given frame of religion. Culture is not a given structure, one need to understand the dynamics of change. Even within a framework of integration, cultural elements and symbols exist in states of dynamic interrelationship; there is also the need to understand the relationship of domination and subordination or marginalization within the frame. In other words, 'integration' does not mean complete dissolution of disparateness among various elements; as a historical notion 'integration' therefore requires a probing into how and in what historical contexts certain elements become dominant in relation to others. The process through which 'classical' India changed to early medieval India, resulted in the incorporation of many local cults into what is generally understood as puranic

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<sup>6</sup> B.D. Chattopadhyaya, *'Reappearance' of the Goddess or the Brahmanical Mode Appropriation: Some Early Epigraphic Evidence Bearing on Goddess Cults*, in *Studying Early India*, pg 172

Hinduism. This process may explain how purely local cults and deities came to be regarded as manifestations of deities like Siva, Parvati or Visnu who all symbolized supra-regional Hinduism. This may also tell us why tantric practices, which were essentially esoteric practices, came to permeate the practices of not only Hinduism but also the erstwhile heterodox systems like Buddhism and Jainism. At one level of Hinduism as well as in other systems, there was tremendous opposition to tantricism and to non-conformist sects. The allegorical play *Prabodhacandrodaya* written by Krishna Mishra and staged at the court of a Candella ruler is evidence of the acrimony which certainly existed between followers of different sects in early medieval India. At another level, however, there were elements which came to permeate different sects and their beliefs and rituals.

#### I.a. HISTORIOGRAPHY

The secondary literature on the topic is variegated in the sense that literature ranges from pure dynastic studies to the ones devoted to architectural or inscriptional analysis or purely religious trend, without trying to correlate with other aspects.

H.C.Ray's *Dynastic History of Northern India* forms an important reading as it sorts out the question of dynastic muddle by trying to put evidences coherently. This early work has a chapter devoted to each of the prominent ruling houses in northern India from 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> c. A.D, such as Candelas, Kalacuris, Paramaras, Chalukyas and like. While attending to the political exploits and conflicts with

other contemporary powers such as the Chalukyas. At no point in his study has the author attempted to formulate a connected history of the Kalachuris. The arenas of society and culture do not form an intrinsic part of his study, focusing as he is on the political history of the Kalachuris. In fact, the main point of interest in his work from the point of view of the present study lies in the chronological survey that he has undertaken of the Kalachuri rulers. In doing so he has devoted separate sections to Tripuri and Ratnapur branches. With the exception of one or two fleeting references to administration and religion, the utilization of the sources is made basically to satisfy the questions pertaining to the conquests and conflicts. There is no hint of any other primary source material, numismatics or literary. The work obviously suffers from the lack of source material being written as early as 1935.

V.V. Mirashi's monumental work on the inscriptions of Kalachuri-Chedi Era, contained in *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum* Vol. IV (part I and II), forms a landmark in the study of the Kalachuris, for it draws the attention of later writers with some credible interpretation. Apart from the meticulous arrangement of all the inscriptions of the Kalachuri, Mirashi also provides an exhaustive introduction, wherein he has provided a sketch of the various aspects of Kalachuri life such as polity, society, economy and religion.

His article on *The Saiva Acaryas of the Mattamayura clan*<sup>7</sup> provides us with an insight into the life of the Saiva acaryas, and the conditions of his acceptance in the Kalachuri kingdom. This excites one into the enquiry of the religious tendencies of the time.

Another important piece of work is from R.K.Lal<sup>8</sup>. Writing in early 60s, he elaborated on the historical geography of the area under study. Apart from this, however, a more singular contribution of this article is the attempt made in it to decipher the socio-religious and economic meaning of the place-names. Lal has classified the place-names on the basis of two standpoints- semantic and morphological. While the first classification helps us in establishing some connection between the place-names and various phenomena such as commercial activity, caste affiliations or professions of the local residents, names of local deities, and the like, the second enables us to associate the places- names with the 'nature' of the place i.e. whether it was a village or a 'nagara'.

P.K. Bhattacharya's *Historical Geography of M.P.* is a useful survey, for it takes note of most of the geography reference made in the Kalachuri records and places them in the perspective.

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<sup>7</sup> *Indian Historical Quarterly* 26(1),1950.

<sup>8</sup> *Place-Names in the Kalachuri Records*, *Indian Historical Quarterly* 38, 1962[pp 98-110]

B.D. Chattopadhyaya in *Survey of Historical Geography of Ancient India* provides a bibliography of the notable writings on the historical geography of the region. Both of these works are useful in familiarizing ourselves with the geographical context. Chattopadhyaya's range of work is illuminating on various aspects of early medieval period and has received acceptance on argumentative and conceptual level from many quarters of academicians.<sup>9</sup>

Rahman Ali's is an incisive study on the Kalacuris<sup>10</sup>. He discusses Mirashi at length. Rest of the work catalogues the architecture, sculptural and epigraphical remains.

Apart from N.N. Bhattacharyaya the other works on religion includes two lucid and well researched monographs appearing in the 1970s. One is *Visnuism and Sivaism: A Comparison* by Jan Gonda. The other is *The Indian Theogony* by Sukumari Bhattacharji. Gonda's endeavor was to initiate a comparison between the two main religions, Siavaism and Visnuism and to draw attention to parallel and divergent developments, to the common heritage and inter-relations. He has also brought out what is common to the two movements. Gonda has departed

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<sup>9</sup> The works used in the dissertation includes *Aspects of Rural Settlements and Rural Society in Early Medieval India*, Calcutta 1990, *Studying Early India : Archaeology, Texts, and Historical Issues*, *Survey of Historical Geography of Ancient India*, ICHR 1987, *The Making of Early Medieval India*, Delhi 1994

<sup>10</sup> Rahman Ali, *Art and Architecture of the Kalacuris*, 1980



from the oft repeated suggestion that what is not found in the Rgveda pertaining to Siva but is found in later texts were all foreign to Sivaism and was assimilated from more popular traits. He says the essence of Rudra was in the minds of Rgvedic men and the Rgveda does not show us the whole Rudra.<sup>11</sup> Gonda also delineates the character of Rudra through the so-called epic period, constantly comparing with Visnu which is excellent material for any student to grasp the nature of the dynamics in both the major religions. He explains the part played by the narration of events in the epics in connection with these gods as epithets or traits of their appearance in tales. Though these tales are etymologically and historically wrong, they are a welcome source of information on the beliefs and connections of those who invented and divulged them.<sup>12</sup> In another chapter Gonda quotes, instigates and reinterprets numerous passages from the Vedic texts to establish the existence of the Highest Being.<sup>13</sup> In another place Gonda institutes a summary comparison between the oldest documents of rising Sivaism-the Satarudriya and the famous gospel of Visnuism-the Bhagavadgita. He says that both poems must have been compiled in those circles, which did not find any satisfaction in the Vedic ritualism and therefore looked for bliss and salvation through the help of a personal god.<sup>14</sup> Gonda also states that through centuries old ever continuing process of mutual osmosis, Visnu absorbed

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<sup>11</sup> Jan Gonda, *Visnuism and Sivaism: A Comparison*, p 7.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, p 12.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid*, p 19.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, p 21.

Vindhyavasini, the most prominent among the female deities of the Vindhya mountains and connected her with Visnu by taking her to be an incarnation of Yoganidra or Yogamaya. The question he raises is why the goddesses of the villages, when they make their appearance in the big temples, should in the south and elsewhere be more often regarded as consorts of Siva, rather than be allied with Visnu.<sup>15</sup> He goes on to say that this is because of Siva's special character and his special affinity with popular deities.<sup>16</sup> Gonda has further devoted a chapter on comparison of Saiva and Vaisnava rituals, folklore, myth and literature.

An important work that explores the multi-layered hierarchy of Saiva philosophy and the carved imagery of the Khajuraho temples is that of Devangana Desai<sup>17</sup>. Her study focuses on reading on the structure as a whole rather than scooping out meanings of isolated imageries, she thus chooses to focus on the placement of divinities and their configurations in the architectural scheme of temple. Desai investigates the visual imagery of the temples within the broadest context of cult history, esoteric beliefs and artistic symbolism. She establishes an interesting connection between the allegorical-philosophical drama *Prabodhchandrodaya*, composed at the Chandella court, and the language of

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<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, p 63.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, p 64.

<sup>17</sup> Devangana Desai *The Religious Imagery of Khajuraho*, 1996

images meet, both replete with their puns, double meanings and suggestion. However, on the broader level few questions go unanswered – What kind of approach do these temples reflect? What does then the multiplicity of divinities and cults in the temple complex signify?

## II.b. SOURCES

The strategy to study the topic is in terms of contestation and assimilation that characterized the scene thus, an account of different sources was called for. The primary sources include epigraphs of Kalachuri dynasty and Candella dynasty. For this the Epigraphia Indica volumes especially the first volume which has inscriptions from Khajuraho temples and Corpus Inscription Indicarum Vol.IV part I. The Archaeological Survey of India report of Alexander Cunningham of the year 1873-74 and 1874-75.

*Prabodhcandrodaya* of Kṛṣṇa Miṣra produced at Candella court is interesting in so far it provides insight into the interaction between different religious sects at the time.

Viddhasalabhanjika, a drama ascribed to Rajasekhara is another literary text which dwells with question of patronage at royal court. It is translated by I.H.Gray and appeared in the journal of American Oriental Society back in 1906.

It is suggested by V.V. Mirashi that it was composed at the court of Kalachuri kings.

Another source which could be useful in providing an alternative view to the issue is the account of Gond tribe and importantly their adaptation of the Puranic legends collected by Rev. Stephen Hislop in 1860s.

### I.c. GEOGRAPHICAL DELINEATION

The present state of Madhya Pradesh was reorganized on the first of November, 1956. 'Madhya Pradesh' is a translation of the earlier 'Central Provinces' of the Indo-British administration, although there is a great difference between the areas of the two. The state straddles the Narmada River, which runs east and west between the Vindhya and Satpura ranges; these ranges and the Narmada are the traditional boundary between the north and south of India. The state is bordered on the west by Gujarat, on the northwest by Rajasthan, on the northeast by Uttar Pradesh, on the east by Chhattisgarh, and on the south by Maharashtra.

From ancient literature and other sources it appears that the area of ancient Madhya Pradesh comprised several rajyas some in whole and some in parts. of these Avanti, Dasarna and Chedi seemed to have flourished in the earliest epoch and Jejakbhukti and Dahala in the later period. Madhya Pradesh comprises several linguistically and culturally distinct regions, including: Malwa, a plateau region in

the northwest of the state, north of the Vindhya Range, with its distinct language and culture. In sixth century B.C. Malwa came under the name of Avanti. The other later cities include Ujjayini, Mahismati, Vidisa, and Dasapur. Malwa during our period of study was the scene of power struggle between Pratiharas and Rashtrakutas.

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Bundelkhand, a region of rolling hills and fertile valleys in the northern part of the state, slopes down toward the Indo-Gangetic plain to the north. The area around is still rich in forests. In the early medieval period the Candelas of Jejakabhukti became very prominent with Khajuraho as their citadel. The kingdom of the Candelas was bordered on South by that of the Kalacuris of the Cedi country.

Baghelkhand, a hilly region in the northeast of the state, includes the eastern end of the Vindhya Range. Mahakaushal, the southeastern portion of the state, includes the eastern end of the Narmada river valley and the eastern Satpuras. The historical geography, however, has been generally ignored, and scholars have been content to describe the area simply as 'Central India'. The current political configuration, a legacy of many years of colonialism and princely states, defies the natural, linguistic, and ancient cultural geography of this part of India.

The area that is under scrutiny is difficult to delineate in political terms but broadly it incorporates the area under Kalachuris and Chandelas, covering Mahakaushal and parts of Bundelkhand.

Some places that find references only in later Gupta period are discussed below which would justify the selection of eastern Madhya Pradesh for understanding the religious milieu.

Gopaksetra, Dasarna, Dahala and Jejakadesa played an important role in the history of India, especially from the Gupta period to the time of the arrival of Turks.

An examination of any modern atlas will show that Gopaksetra, Jejakadesa, and Dasarna are now divided between the states of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh by an extremely complex boundary.'

Talking about the architectural manifestation of the settlement except for monuments at Deogarh (ancient Luachagira, later Kirtidurga), and a few other sites near the Betwa River, most monuments in Jejakadesa are later than the tenth century, indicating that until the Chandelas made the area the seat of a royal house, Jejakadesa was a 'peripheral' space. The earliest monument in the Khajuraho complex is that of Chaunsath Yoginis, believed to be folk deities.

Gopaksetra and Jejakadesa were skirted; Gopaksetra because it was difficult to cross the territory near the Chambal, and Jejakadesa because it lay at the side of the major routes, just as it does today. This geographical configuration has fostered regional customs, dialects of language and, as art historians are discovering, local artistic styles.

Dasarna is so named because it is the country in which the Dasarna river rises. However, most of the river lies in Jejakadesa, a region bounded on the west by the Betwa (ancient Vetravati), on the north by the Yamuna, and on the east by the River Ken. Known as Vatsa in the Epics, later inscriptions from the area make common use of the terms Jejakadesa, Jejakabhukti, and Jejakamandala. Roughly speaking, the area known as Bundelkhand, home of the thriving dialect of Bundelkhand, conforms to this ancient region. The most renowned historic place in Jejakadesa is Khajuraho (ancient Khajuravahaka). These temples, for the most part foundations of the Candella kings, belong to the tenth and eleventh centuries.

The kingdom of the Candelas was bordered on the south by that of the Kalacuris. It has been called Cedi country in various. It is undoubtedly one of the oldest regions known in Madhya Pradesh. In ancient times we find it formed one of the Solah Mahajanapadas. From the context in which the country is referred to in the *Mahabharat* it seems to have covered a very wide regions lying between the

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Yamuna and the Narmada, covering the plateau Malwa and the hills of Bundelkhand till it became contiguous with the Matsya country.<sup>18</sup>

The geographical position of Madhya Pradesh as an important historical area cannot be under estimated. It acted as a melting pot for new ideas. It can be seen as a matrix of processes of acculturation resulting in diverse religious affiliations and a rich pantheon of deities manifesting the urges and aspiration of a great mass of people because of its location between the north and the south.

#### I.d. SOCIO-CUTURAL CONDITIONS

The social developments are to be seen in the same light as the state formation in 'periphery'. Where the social organisation of monasteries is concerned the sub-kings and feudatories found it politically expedient to promote the monastic organisation because the religious subordination of the masses helped the rulers to perpetuate their political authority.<sup>19</sup> This explains the phenomenal rise in the number of monastic endowments in our period.

Brahmaṇas as an agency of religious puritanism were invariably used across 'India' The Brahmaṇas more than any other single group have been a dominant

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<sup>18</sup> M.G Dikshit, Tripuri, 1952, p.7

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*,p.194.



ally of the traditional elite. The brahamana legal writers constantly theorised on social relationships and behavior patterns which would make their position stronger in a changing social situation. Their primary task now seems to have been to theorise and ritualise their integration to those groups which wielded real power and controlled the collection and distribution of the social wealth and, therefore, they always claimed a ritual position superior to that of their material benefactor.<sup>20</sup> We find now that the temples and the monasteries became in the hands of a powerful priesthood effective means of religious control and publicity. We find the increasing patronage extended by heterogeneous social ranks including the landed gentry, moneyed bureaucrats and traders to these institutions. "This changed them into big employers and encouraged the growth of feudal ties and manorial interests which the priest of a temple or the superior of a monastery tried to preserve and perpetuate on a hereditary basis."<sup>21</sup> But this is a single-dimensional approach and needs to be complicated further to understand the other side as well. Were these feudatories not a part of the masses? I personally argue that the political formation was an endogenous process here and subsequently to gain an acceptance Brahmanas were patronized even the local cults in order to be accepted were given a 'universal' appeal. This process only became 'sophisticated' under Candelas and Kalacuri.

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<sup>20</sup> R.N. Nandi, *Social Roots of Religions in Ancient India*, p.4.

<sup>21</sup> Sharma, R.S. *Early Medieval Indian Society*, 2001

## POLITICAL SETTINGS

Without going into the discussion of the origins of Rajputas which is much debatable and draws polarised views, the attempt is to give an overview of the Chandela and Kalacuri dynasties to delineate religion in terms of political support. One of the crucial institutions of the early medieval India, intimately related to its religious transformation, was kingship, with its sacred character. The divinity of the king of ancient times made way for a more functional role while ascetics moved towards a greater share in administrative functions. The attempt is to bring out the relationship that developed between the ascetic brahmanical organisation and kingship and how they helped and supported each other.

### I. *Candelas*

The Candelas came into prominence in southern Bundelakhand under the leadership of Nannuka, early in the ninth century. It appears from the tradition and epigraphic testimony that the first few princes of the dynasty were feudatories. Therefore starting off with a feudatory, Nannuka ruled over a small principality round about Khujaraho, the 'Kharjjuravahaka' of the inscription. In

the Khujaraho Inscription of Dhanga, a successor of Nannuka is called Nrpa.<sup>22</sup> We are told that the fast emerging Chandela empire was further strengthened by Dhanaga with the annexation of the fort of Gwalior and thereby, extension of their dominion in all direction.

The next chief Vakpati probably succeeded in extending to some degree the limits of his small ancestral principality. But the two main chiefs were Jayashakti and Vijayashakti who are generally described in most records as the first ancestors of the Chandelas. Verse 10 of a fragmentary inscription at Mahoba tells us that Jeja (Jayashakti) gave his name to Jeja-bhukti, just as Prithu did to Prithvi.<sup>23</sup> During the reign of Yashovardhana the Chandelas gained the larger measure of independence and aggrandised themselves at the cost of their neighbours. Paramardi or Paraman of popular tradition was the last prominent Chandela sovereign. Chandelas survived as a powerful independent royal family until the close of the thirteenth century.

The Chandelas were among the dynasties which enlarged their power after the break-up of Partihara empire. One of the thirty six royal clans claiming to be Rajaputas<sup>24</sup>, they claimed to be the descendants from the sage Chandratreya and

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<sup>22</sup> EI, I, 1888-92, pp.132-27, vv.23, 31.

<sup>23</sup> EI, XXXI, 1955-56, p.147, v. 70.

<sup>24</sup> James Todd, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, 1987, p. 98. "List of the thirty six royal races".

therefore, the lunar race. In the genealogical list of Professor Bhandarkar<sup>25</sup> appear twenty two Chandela kings, starting with the historical founder, Nannuka, who probably was a chief in the area around Khujraho and ruled at the beginning of the 8<sup>th</sup> Century A.D. and ending with Hammirevarmana, of who we have an inscription and who ruled circa A.D. 1289. The most notable among the Chandelas was Yashovarmana, who celebrated his military victory with the construction of magnificent religious foundations at Khujarahho where he erected a temple of Visnu.<sup>26</sup> The laudatory verses on this king succinctly express the Puranic principle of royalty that the Chandelas follow: they were "protectors of the land and people, of gods and Brahmanas ". Several inscriptions speak of the Chandelas' protection to the religious institutions. Kings call themselves to be protector of the holy tirthas.<sup>27</sup> They had Brahmanas as their ministers. During the seven centuries of their reign over Bundelkhand, the Chandelas administered their kingdom, where temples were built, Brahmanas honoured and deep religious life was lived. These kings patronised culture and spirituality.

## II *Kalacuris of Tripuri*

The origin of Kalacuris is not clear and their Kshatriya ancestry was indeed in doubt. The Kalacuri royalty, like that of many other kingly dynasty of the era

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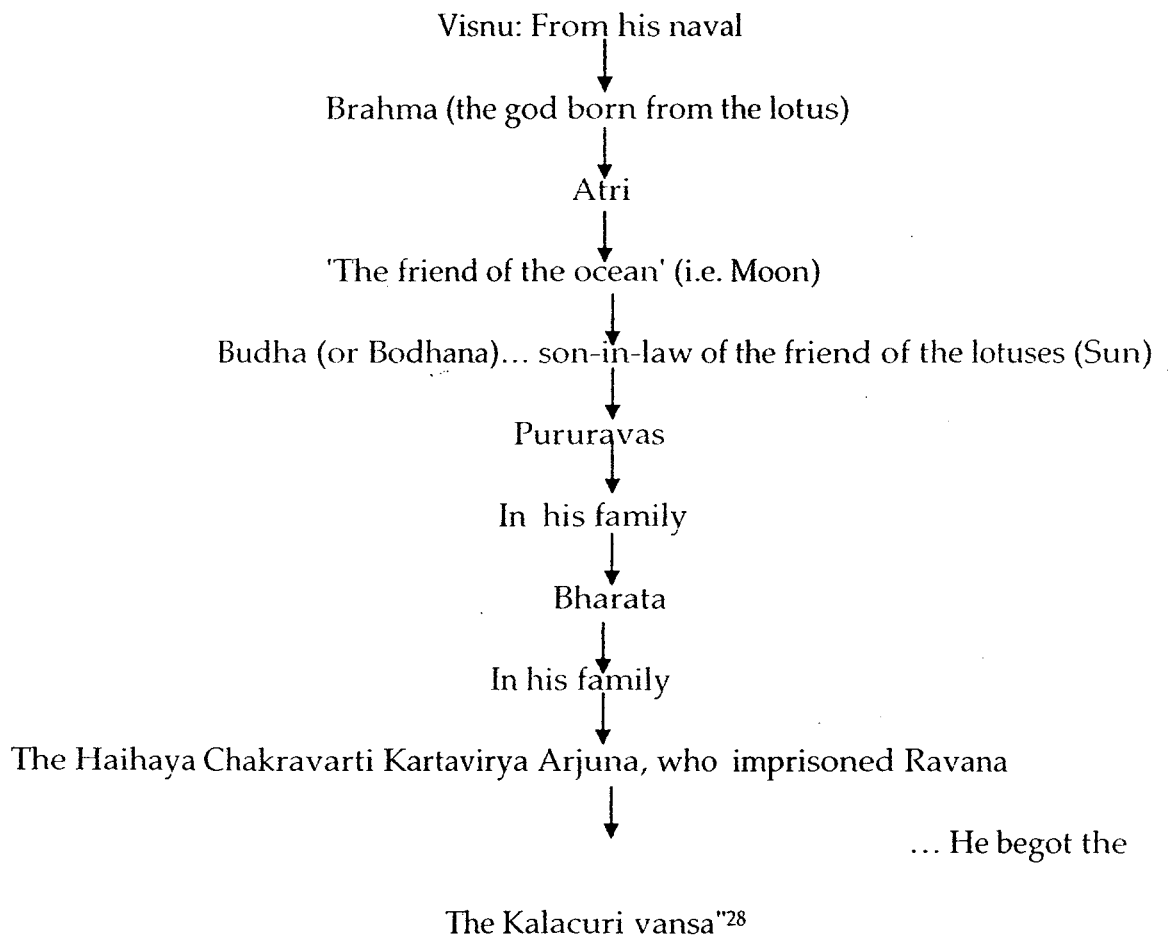
<sup>25</sup> *Appendix to EI, Vol. XIX-XXIII, p.384.*

<sup>26</sup> *EI, Vol. I, No. 19-II, 'Stone Inscription of Yashovarmana', pp. 122-35.*

<sup>27</sup> *EI, Vol. I, No. 19-II, 'Stone Inscription of Yashovarmana', p 125.*

came from the coalescence of military strength and religious works. The other branches of the Kalacuri dynasty did not acquire power equivalent to that of the central line of Tripuri in their own inscriptions. The Kalacuris of Ratnapur and Sarayupara were also all Saivite, but the kind of affiliation the line of Tripuri rulers had was not existing in case of these Kalacuri branches.

"Kalacuris of Dahala in their inscription trace their descent to the god Visnu. The mythical portion of their pedigree may be summarised in tabular form as follows:



<sup>28</sup> H.C. Ray, *The Dynastic History of Northern India*, Vol. 2, p. 752.

After the decline of Gurjara-Pratihara kingdom, the Kalacuris made their power felt in the North Indian history. The account of the various branches of the Kalacuris that ruled in Northern India during the period can be conveniently grouped under at least three heads, viz., (i) Kalacuris of Gorakhpur; (ii) Kalacuri of Dahala<sup>29</sup>; and (iii) Kalacuris of Tummana.<sup>30</sup> There might have been other branches of Kalacuris but the ones from Dahala and Tummana were prominent. The area under consideration calls for an examination of these two branches.<sup>31</sup> The canvas of Kalacuris political and cultural activity is much bigger than what the secondary literature portrays it to be.

The kingdom of Chandelas was bordered on the south by that of the Kalacuris. The Kalacuris are sometimes referred to as King of Dhalamandala. The lexicographers gave Dhala as a synonym of Chedi which is denoted generally as the land between the Ganga and the Narmada. In the Malkkpuram Stone Inscription of Rudradeva<sup>32</sup> we hear of Bhagirathi-Narmadayor-Madhyam Dhalamandalama corresponding to the modern Baghelkhand.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Usually known as Kalchuris of Tripuri.

<sup>30</sup> Popularly known as Kalchuri of Ratanpur. But the dynasty even after the foundation of Ratanpur claims to be the ruler of Tummana.

<sup>31</sup> The historical genealogical table of Kalchuris of Dahala and Kalchuris of Ratanpur are appended as Annex-I.

<sup>32</sup> JHARS, IV, 1930, pts. 3&4, p.156.

<sup>33</sup> CII, IV, pt. I, p.323.

Kalacuris ruled different regions of Madhya Pradesh for at least 300 years. The Kalachuri rose into prominence under Kokkala I who founded a kingdom at Tripuri in Dhala. He flourished in the last decades of the ninth and the early part of the tenth century A.D. His matrimonial alliances and the political activities increased the power of the family considerably.

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We have no records of the Chandela or the Kalacuris from the Chedi or the Dahala country after 1310.

To state the contentions of the dissertation following conjectures have been worked upon:

Conjectures: (a) the religious fabric realized in early Medieval Madhya Pradesh was the one out of political expediency. The acculturation gave way to audacious evocation of spirituality by few to meet political ends. However, this still needs to be seen in a conducive social context.

(b) The uneasy mix of tantric, Saivite, Sakta, Mattamayuras, local goddesses cult and so many unrecorded traditions in a landscape resulted in the multiplicity of temples, sculptures, Maṭha and epigraphical records. The most dominant manifestation remains the much celebrated temples of Khajuraho.

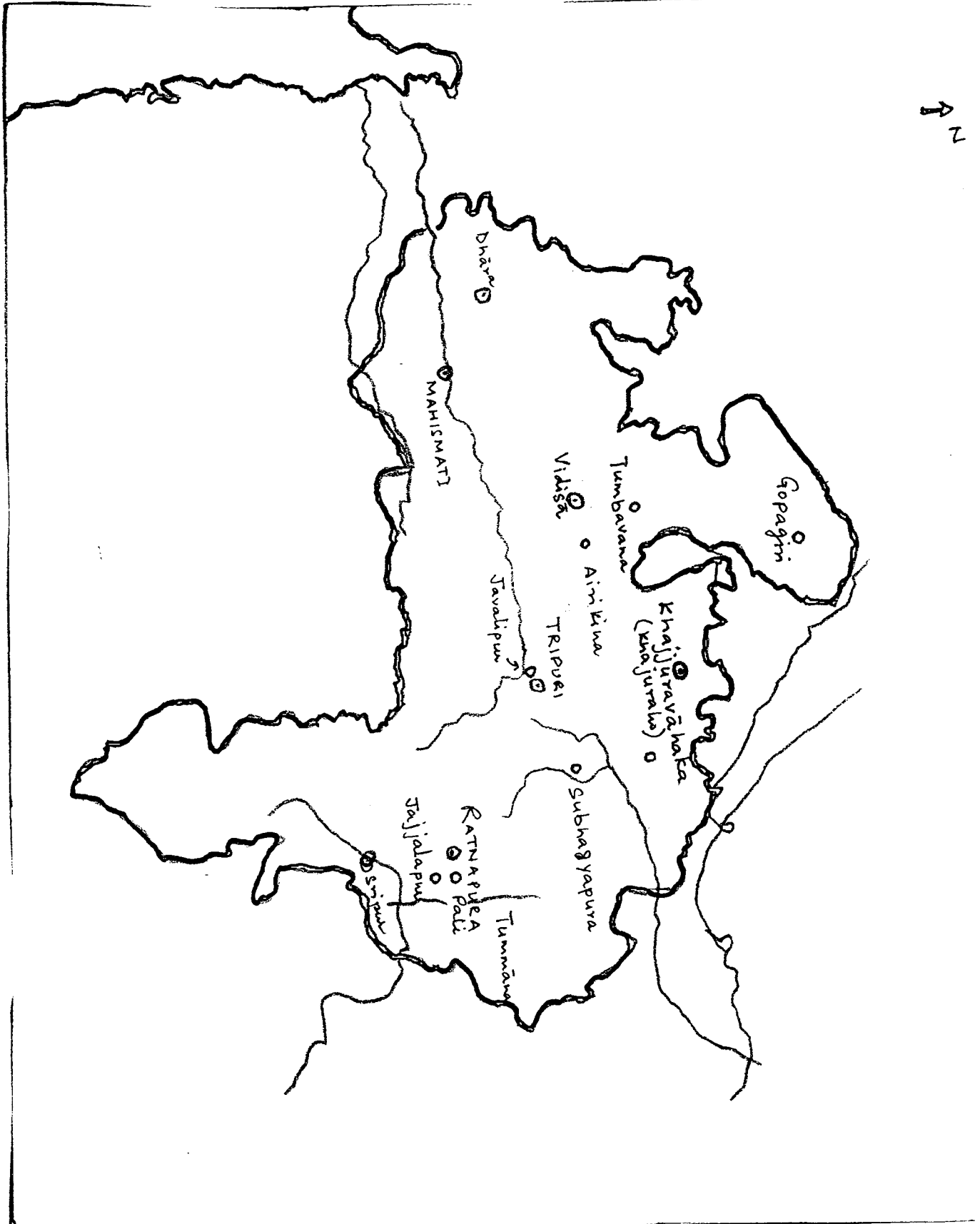
(c) Regarding Mattamayura cult the sources read so far show that initially the cult indigenous to Kadambaguha was limited in its area of operation. It increasingly got integrated into the social, ritual and political structures of their royal patrons, and underwent expansion towards the end of the tenth century. This effectively turned Maṭha into complex centers. Attempt is to explore the ways in which it represents the growing popularity of the sect, its ties to new dynastic patrons, and the broader transformation of the ritual landscape. On a broader level study focuses on the religious institutionalization born through the collaborative efforts of gurus and kings.



(d) Although edifices of monastery exist and sculptures of Yoginis have survived, the Mattamayuras are not heard of after 14<sup>th</sup> c. the temples of Chaunsath Yogini stand abandoned. Does this represent an inability on part of elite culture articulate itself in masses as in the first case or the inability of local deities to thrive in wake of the incorporation of their space in politically active areas or/and deprivation of elite patronage?

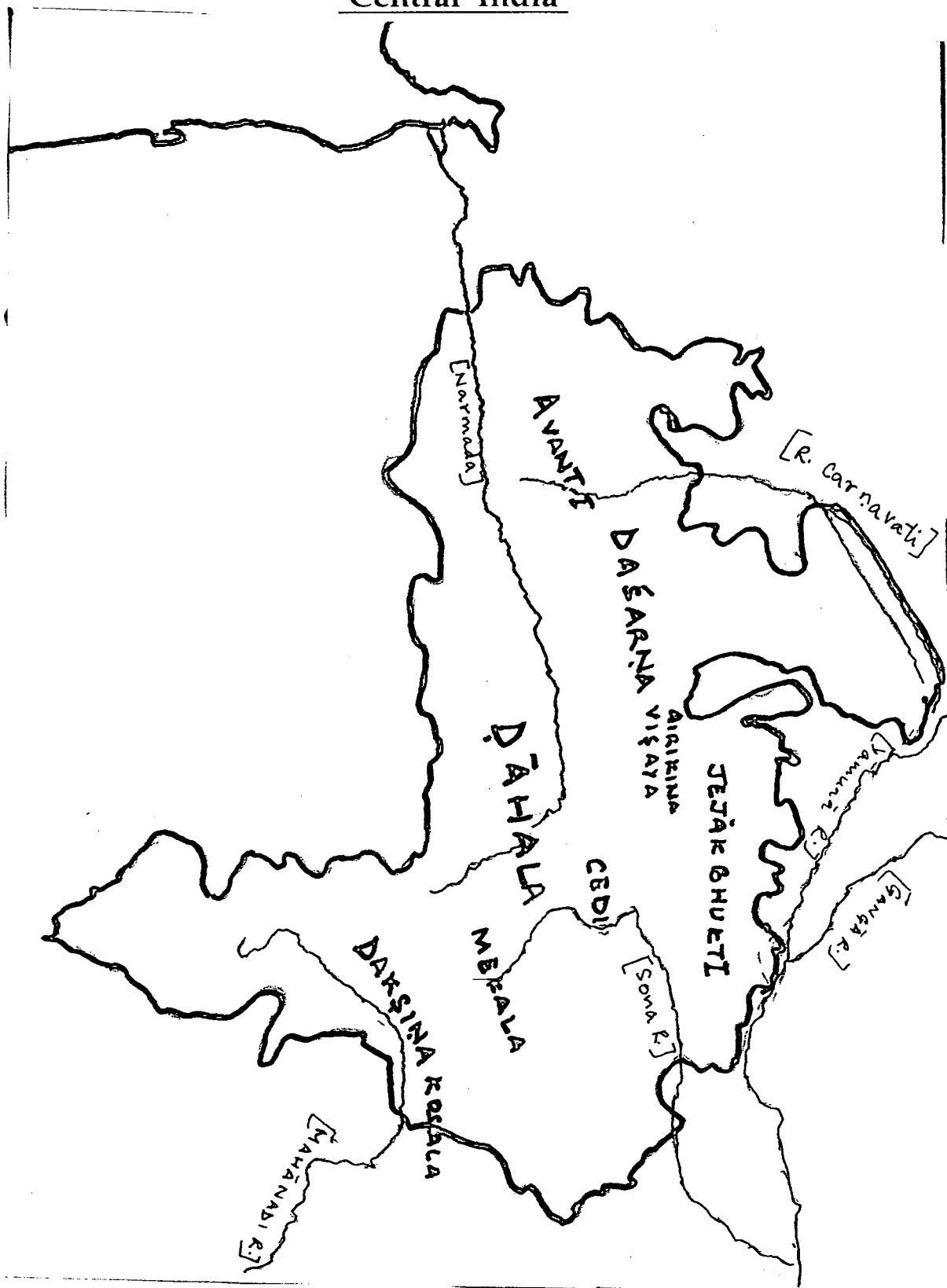
Capitals and Towns : 'Central India' in

Early Medieval Period



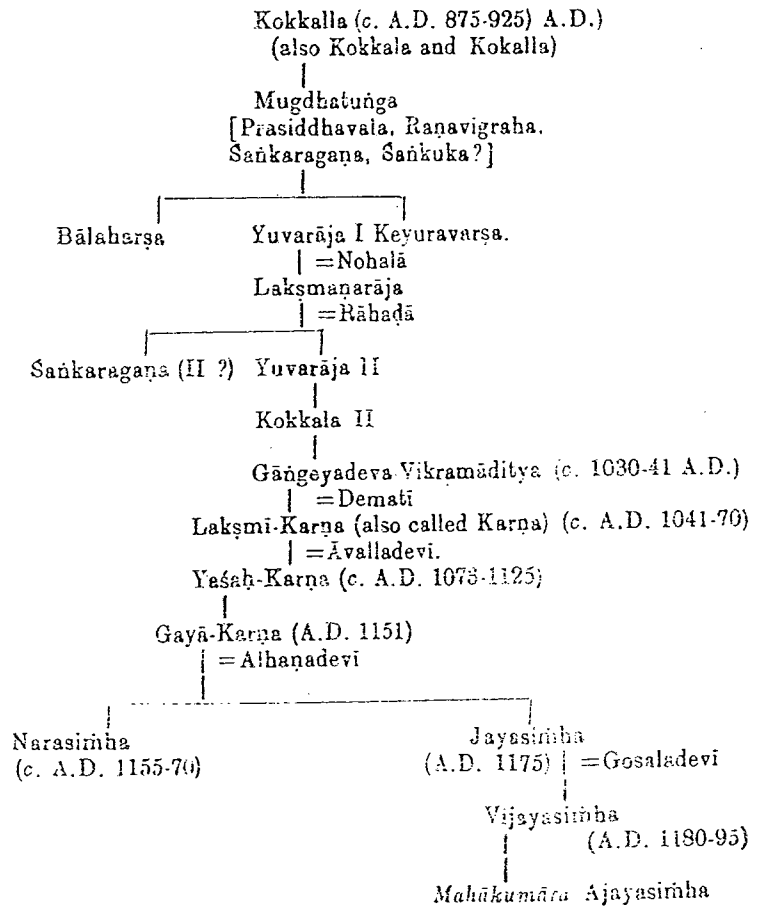
# Administrative Divisions in Ancient and Early Medieval

## 'Central India'



## Genealogy of Kalacuris of Dahala <sup>34</sup>

*Kalacuris of Dāhala* :<sup>1</sup>

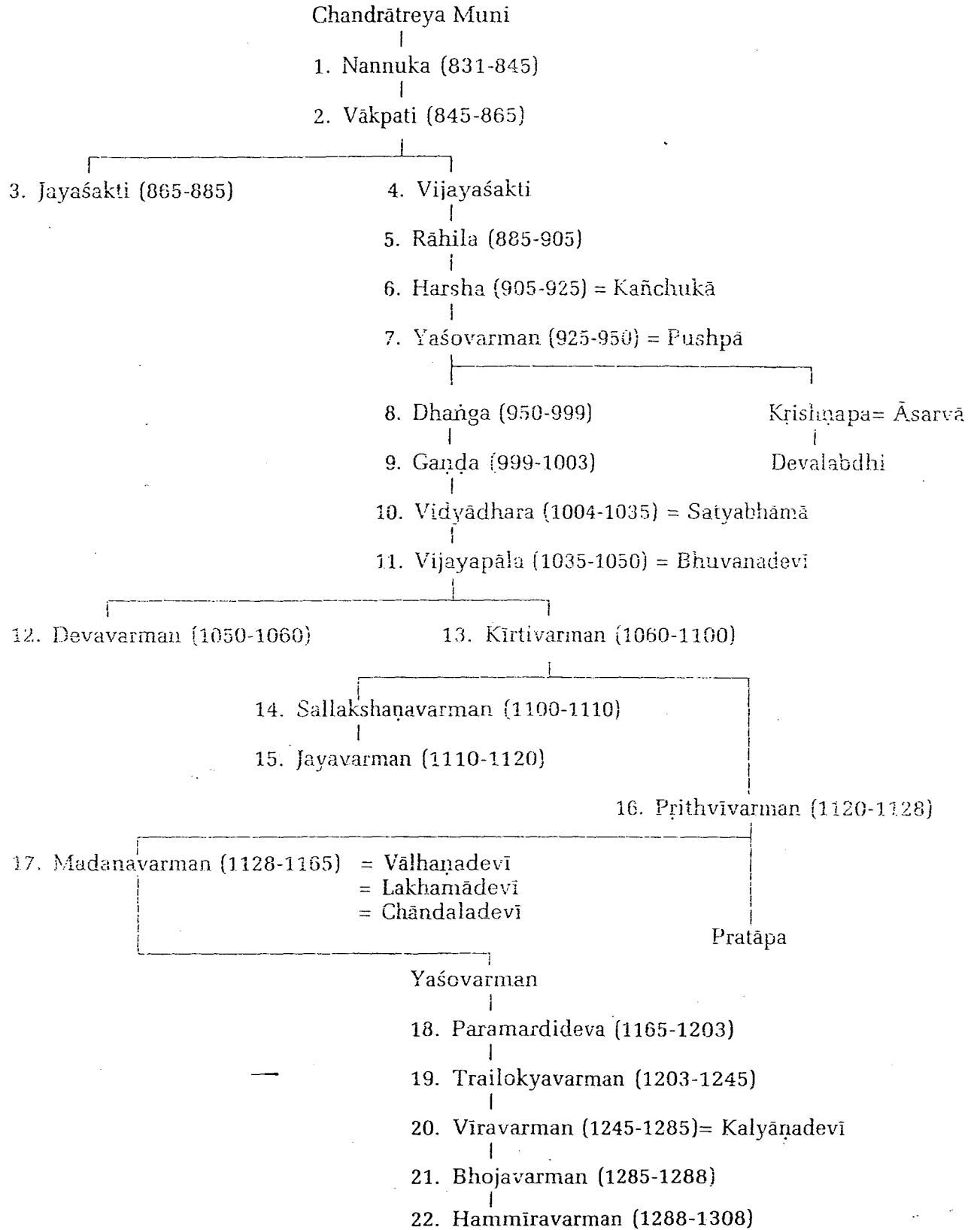


<sup>1</sup> Usually known as Kalacuris of Tripuri.

<sup>34</sup> Usually known as Kalacuris of Tripuri.

\*Source : H.C. Ray – Dynastic History of Northern India Vol. II

# Genealogy of the Chandella Dynasty



## II

The formation of an axis between the state and the Saivite Maṭha s is borne out by inscriptions, particularly of Madhya Pradesh, which show that the head of the monastery is invariably the chief advisor (*rajaguru*) of the administration.<sup>35</sup>

The earlier monasteries were modest houses of the mendicant groups which organised theological and sectarian teachings besides practicing various monastic virtues. But slowly the character of monastic foundations changed and from the close of the tenth century the institutions developed into organisations dominated by certain families of priests on a permanent hereditary basis. These families were not only big owners of landed estates, but also exercised considerable influence over a vast cross section of the subject population, which owed spiritual allegiance to the Saivite pontificate and priesthood. This social control wielded by the religious orders was appreciated by the kings and the royalty.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> R.N. Nandi, *'Origin and Nature of Saivite Monasticism'*, p.195.

<sup>36</sup> R.N. Nandi, *'Origin and Nature of Saivite Monasticism'*, p.194.

## MATTAMAYURAS

The early medieval period in Central India was one that witnessed increasing sectarianism as new religious groups emerged through the patronage of local and regional rulers. Among these were Hindu ascetics who accumulated power through intensive ritual practice and the ability to attain divine status. Previously existing on the fringe of society, such groups quickly entered the mainstream, forming alliances with rulers, transmitting religious knowledge, and contributing to the transformation of the religious climate.

This dissertation traces the institutionalisation of the Mattamayuras, a Saiva group of ascetic practitioners, whose monumental stone monasteries remain some of the earliest and only surviving examples of Hindu monastic architecture in the region. The attempt is to map the development of Mattamayura monastic communities locally and regionally. By correlating the literary evidence with readings of Sanskrit inscriptions, I further lay out the processes through which the sect transformed itself from a localized cult into a major religious institution with branches throughout the Indian subcontinent. Also study takes account of necessary background for understanding the development of Mattamayura monasteries and situates the sect's development within larger political, religious and social context. The chapter addresses the regional expansion of the sect through the patronage of the Kalacuris of Tripuri, under whom the

Mattamayuras took on increasingly important roles within the Kalacuri state, serving as Rajagurus, officiating over royal decrees and acting as administrators. The chapter, thus explore the relationship between political expediency and religious institutionalization, charting the local and regional processes through which the Mattamayuras rose to prominence.

## **II.a. ORIGIN AND IDEOLOGY**

The Mattamayura ascetics were a variety of Saiva sect which flourished in the early medieval period first in central Madhya Pradesh and then expanded to Dakshin Kosala in the south-east and south-west in the Konkan, receiving support from the Silahara kings in the latter direction.

The Mattamayura philosophy did not differ substantially from the general frame of medieval Saivism. It emphasized the practice of yoga methods, austerity, chastity and simplicity of life and the development of supernatural powers. The practices of the sect were a mix of much prevalent tantrism and entrenching Brahmanism. The scope of the Saiva-Sakta religion was wide, from the highly intellectual speculation evolved in Kashmir or in Karnataka to the esoteric tendencies of the Saiva group in the middle country.



In the Ranod inscription<sup>37</sup> King Avantivarman hears about Saiva initiation and immediately travels to visit Purandharasiva at his ascetic retreat. The king shows profound respect to the sage and finally persuades him to travel to his domain. When the sage has been resettled, the king asks to receive Saiva initiation (diksha), the most significant and efficacious ceremony in the agama system of ritual. Purandarasiva performs the rites, and the king subsequently becomes successful in all his endeavours. As a gift for his, the king offers Purandarasiva the "essence" of his kingdom, and Purandarasiva utilizes some of these resources to construct a great monastery in the capital city, Mattamayura. Subsequently he builds a second monastery, identified as a "retreat for ascetics", some distance from the capital at Rannod. I thus argue that to decorate capital with spiritual halo the ascetics (who were in a broader Saiva pantheon) in nexus with the ruler intentionally or unintentionally developed a regionally peculiar sect. On one hand there was a parochialisation of a universal Saiva pantheon on the other universalisation of the ideologies, and appropriation of the resources by elaborate Maṭha construction. Thus, the remains at Mattamayura and Rannod are among the very earliest Saiva monasteries archaeologists have identified. Kadwaha was probably the capital of a minor dynasty of Chalukya rulers in the tenth century, and became the prime seat of the community of Saiva sages who derived their name from the town. In the tenth century and eleventh centuries, this area was controlled by the Kalacuri, based in Tripuri. Kalachuri kings

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<sup>37</sup> *Epigraphia Indica* I 1892 pp 351-61

persuaded eminent teachers of the Mattamayura lineage to resettle in their dominion, where the monks were treated royally.

In the Rannod Inscription of circa tenth century Devdatta, the composer of the inscription, provides a brief origin myth. Once in the pine forest, a famous Himalayan hermitage, the orthodox god Brahma approached Siva with all due devotion at the completion of a sacrifice. Siva was so pleased by this sign of respect that he initiated Brahma. This act of divine favour, claims the poet, engendered the line of Saiva ascetics later to be known as Mattamayuras, as a fruit might contain a seed that grows into a far reaching tree. The inscription goes on to trace a number of teachers of the lineage, culminating with the sage Purandara, who initiated King Avantivarman of Mattamayura. Thus trajectory of the lineage is traced from forest retreat to royal capital, from the mythical interactions of gods to the worldly domain of kings and priests.

The majority of references, however, in the inscription belongs and pertains to the Saiva Siddhanta and sect and that even to the branch of the Mattamayura. The word 'Mattamayuraka' is met for the first time in a passage of the Mahabharata, where it is used as a synonym of the warlike tribe of the Yaudheyas. However, this seems to have no connection with the clan name which perhaps signified the name of a locality in Central India. Mattamayura, the chief seat of this clan, has not yet been identified. It must have been situated

not far from Terahi, Ranod and Malwa, where inscriptions, temples and monasteries of this clan have been found. It may be identical with Kadwha, which possesses remains of a Hindu monastery, and of no less than 14 brahmanical temples belonging to the tenth or eleventh century A.D. <sup>38</sup>

There were four well-known sects of Saivism, viz., Saiva, Pasupata, Karuka (or Karunika) Siddhantin and Kapalika. The Acharyas of the Mattamyura clan belonged to the Saiva, not the Pasupata sect. According to tradition, Siva first initiated Brahma, the Creator, into this faith after a sacrifice in Daruvana. From the latter sprang this line of Saiva Acharyas. In some inscriptions the first Acharya is said to be Durvasas. His spiritual descendants called themselves Saiddhntikas, i.e., followers of the true doctrine. Madhumati in Central India is described as the abode of the Saiddhntikas. The Siddhants were revealed by Mahesvara. According to this sect, there are three principles, viz the lord (pati), the individual soul (pasu) and the fetters (pasa). The whole system has four padas, viz., vidya or right knowledge of the three paddarthas, kriya or ceremonies consisting of diksha (initiation) etc., yoga or meditation and charya or discipline consisting in doing what is prescribed and avoiding what is prohibited. Charya and yoga are regarded as important as vidya. The Acharyas of Madhumati are described as having an excellent discipline. Most of the inscriptions of this clan contain descriptions of the yogic practices of the

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Acharyas. These led to emancipation (siddhi). The Acharyas who attained emancipation were called Siddhas. Kadambaguha, the original home of the Mattamayura School, is called the venerable abode of the line of the Siddhas. The inscriptions of our period talk about these features. The Gurgi Inscription of Kokalladeva of the Kalacuris refers to right knowledge because it is capable of destroying the multitudes of the bonds of worldly existence. The same inscription points out that the sage Chudasiva has attained the perfection of knowledge on the feet of Siva. A study of the Agamas formed one of the essential aspects of gaining right knowledge. The Chandrehe Stone Inscription of Prabodhasiva mentions that Prabodhasiva thought over all the Agamas in order to realise god.<sup>39</sup>

Though the Acharyas of the Mattamayura clan were followers of the Saiva school, they were not bigotted. They studied various orthodox and even heterodox systems. Rudrasiva, the guru of the Kalachuri king Jajalladeva I, is described as conversant not only with the siddhantas of his own but also with those of others' schools; he was, besides, well-read in the authoritative works of Dinnaga and others.<sup>6</sup> In the Gurgi inscription, the Saiva Acharya Prasantasiva is said to have spent his days in the company of meritorious persons who "were adepts in the philosophy of the Pasupatas.

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<sup>39</sup> Gurgi and Chandrehe inscriptions are attached in the end .

## II.b. GOLAKI MATĦA: A MONASTIC COMPLEX IN DAHALA MANDALA AND CONTINUITY OF ITS TRADITION IN COASTAL ANDHRA PRADESH

Golaki Maṭha is reported in two important inscriptions. The Saugor Inscription of Sankarna dated approximately in the 10<sup>th</sup> c. A.D.<sup>40</sup> and the Malkapuram Inscription of A.D. 1261.<sup>41</sup>

Saugor Inscription of Sangakarna which is a very short inscription provides an earlier reference to some of the acharyas of the Golaki Maṭha. This gives some idea regarding the approximate time of the establishment of the monastery. Prof. V.V. Mirashi who published this inscription, made some curious statement when he analyzed it. Mirashi dated the Saugor inscription between the eighth and ninth century and also considered this to be the period of the formulation of the Golaki Maṭha.

Mirashi also argued that it is very strange that although the initial donation received by Saiva acharya Sadbhavasambhu was very important (the Malkapuram Inscription says it was three lakhs of villages), the gift was not

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<sup>40</sup> *Epigraphia Indica* XXXVII, no. 26 pp 163-70

<sup>41</sup> *Journal of the Andhra Research Society* Vol.IV, July and October, 1929, pp 147-62

registered in any other of the many Kalachuri records. Thus, Mirashi thought that not only the Golaki Maṭha was very much older than it is generally considered to be but also that the entire Kalachuri dynasty must be moved back in its dates. Besides, he argues that the Golaki Maṭha probably is represented by the ruins of the great Saiva temple at Bheraghat, Jabalpur in present Madhya Pradesh. In this area there is a large number of ruins of old Saiva constructions built around the 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>c.A.D. This implies that the Golaki Maṭha was located in the Dahala Mandala, near Jabalpur and it existed since the 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> c. A.D. Mirashi supposed that Vamaraja and Samkaragana mentioned in Malkapuram inscription were the predecessors of the Kalacuri of Tripuri. Mirashi further states that this hypothetical king Vamaraja was the same person as Vamadeva, who is mentioned in several Kalachuri records.

D.C. Sircar, in an incisive note criticized the arguments of Mirashi in particular the problem of date and that about considering Vamadeva same as Vamaraja an old Kalachuri ruler around 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> c. Sircar thinks that Vamadeva was most probably an acarya who continued the work of Sadbhavasambhu and lived around the first half of the 11<sup>th</sup> c.A.D.

Following the interpretation offered by Sircar and the second edition of Saugor Inscription we may reconstruct the spiritual lineage of the acaryas of the Golaki Matha in the following manner:

1. Sadbhavasambhu, founder of the Golaki Matha the rajaguru of Kalachuri king, Yuvraja.
2. Somasambhu, mentioned in the Malkapuram Inscription
3. Vamasambhudeva preceptor of the Kalachuri king karma.

Yuvraja the royal sisya of Sadbhavsambhu could be Yuvraja I who reigned c.940 A.D. or Yuvraja II, who reigned c.A.D. 980-1000. Thus, the formulation of Golaki Matha took place between c.940-1000. the inscription is however fragmentary and does not give any information about the management of the Matha.

For this we must turn to the Malkapuram inscription, which gives a detailed description of the measures adopted by Visvesvarasambhu for the maintenance and management of the institutions he founded in agrahara village these were, a temple, a monastery, a college, a choultry for the distribution of food, a maternity home and a hospital. Elaborate rules were laid down for the appointment of an Acharya as the head of the Matha; Here high qualifications and the fee to be paid to him for his services were set forth in detail. The whole Saiva community of the village was given the right to appoint a new Acharya, if the existing one was found negligent in his duty or was guilty of misbehaviour.<sup>1</sup> As

Visvesvarasambhu was previously the head of the Golaki Maṭha, it would not be wrong to infer that similar rules were in force for the management of the Maṭha s in the Chedi country.

The date of the Malkapuram stone-pillar inscription of the Kakatiya ruler Rudramaba is believed to be A.D. 1261. The main object of the inscription is to record that the Kakatiya king Ganapatideva gave away the village of Mandaram and his daughter Rudramba who ruled after her father the village of Velangpundi to the great Saiva acarya Visvesvarasambhu. Both the villages received as agrahara is combinedly called Visvesavara Golaki and a Maṭha is established in the place which is called Sri Visvesvara Golaki Maṭha.

The inscription gives an interesting account of the Saiva institution called the Golaki Maṭha in the Dahala country, lying between the Ganges and the Nannada. The founder of this monastery was one Sadbhava Sambhu who obtained a gift of three lacks of villages (or was it a village fetching an income of *Nishkas* (coins)?) from the Kalachuri king Yuvarajadeva and gave away those villages to the Maṭha as an endowment. In the line of the Kalachuri kings there were two Yuvarajadevas, viz., KeyuVavarsha-Yuvarajadevu 1. and his grandson Yuvarajadcva II. The former seems to have ruled at about A.D.930 and the latter till about A.D.1000. We do not know which of these was the donor of the three lacks of villages to the Golaki maha. In either case the monastery was



founded in the middle or the close of the tenth century A. D. The successor of Sadbhava Sambhu was Soma Sambhu, the author of the Smaimbhu-paddhati, a work on Saiuagama. Soma Sambhu was succeeded by Vama Sambhu, "whose feet were embellished by the row of the crowns of kings, and are now even meditated upon by the Kalachuri kings". (11 66—67) In the Benares Copper-Plate Inscription of Kalachuri king Karnadeva (about 1042 A. D.) the king is described as ' meditating on the feet of Parama bhataraka Maharajaadhiraja Paramesvara Sri Vamadeva". Professor Kielhorn who edited the inscription says that this description is applied to no less than five kings of the Kalachuri family in different inscriptions and that he is unable to explain its significance. From the kingly titles applied to V a m a d e v a, Professor Kielhorn thinks that he must have been one of the early kings of the family, but could not trace that name in any published list. From the description of Vamasambhu given in the present inscription, according to J.R.Bahadur, Vamadeva was identical with Vamasambhu,

J.R. Bahadur further points out that "... after Vama Sambhu came Kirti Sambhu, who was succeeded by Vimalasambhu of the Kerala country. Vimalasambhu was succeeded by Dharma Siva, and he; was followed by Visvesvara Siva," who came from the village in the Gauda Radha country. "Visvesvara Siva was the

spiritual guru of Ganapatideva and seems to have wielded considerable influence over him.”<sup>42</sup>

Dahal had its capital at T r i p u r i (modern Jabalpur), and it is said that in the Malkapuram Inscription that in this city there used to be a Maṭha called the Golaki Maṭha, from the name on which it was situated.

Finally the inscription gives an insight into the rural economy of the Andhra country in the 13th century A. D. We are told that Visvesvara Siva amalgamated the two villages granted to him and established an agrahara called Visvesvara Golaki, in which he founded a temple to god Visvesvara, a Saiva- Maṭha, a choultry for feeding all classes of persons, from the brahman down to the chandala, (*arabhya viprananivartanam chandalala paryantam = upagatanam*), a General Hospital (*Arogya-sala*) a maternity home (*Prasuti sala*) and a College for the teaching of the several branches of Sanskrit learning. The village was peopled by sixty brahmin families imported from Tamil (Dravida) Country. And it is said that they had to be brought down as brahmins of this sect were not then available in the Telugu country. In addition to these there were brahmins well versed in the three Vedas, in grammar, in logic, and in general literature and five others skilled in philosophy. Evidently these constituted the professorial staff of the College.

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<sup>42</sup> J.A.H.R.S Vol.IV. pt 3&4, pp 152-153

The village had also a physician and an accountant (*kayastha*), six brahmin servants were provided for the choultry and the inutlto. two for cooking and four performing other miscellaneous duties. Ten persons bearing the appellation *Virrabhadras* were appointed as guardians of the village (*gramasya rakshakah*), and they were to perform certain duties such as cutting of testicles, heads and stomachs (*bijachchedada S'irachcheda kukshi chchedi karmabhih*). These perhaps were punishments prescribed by law in those days for certain hienous offences and that a particular class of persons were appointed to carry out those punishments.

In addition to the Virabhadras there was a staff of twenty *Virmushtis* as peon or bhatah. The village was also provided with a set of ten artisans, consisting of a goldsmith, a copper-smith, a blacksmith, a carpenter a stone-mason, a maker of stone images (*silpi*) a basket-maker , a potter a barber all headed by a master artisan *sthapati*

The temple establishment consisted of ten dancing-girls, eight persons to play on musical instruments of various sorts, fourteen singers , six persons for beating drums etc., and a *kashmirian*<sup>43</sup> whose duties are not stated. A number (not

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<sup>43</sup> One is not sure what it would mean. In the translation of the inscription it is believed to be instructor in instrumental music

specified) of brahmins from Visvesvara Siva's native village, were employed to keep accounts of the income and expenditure of the village and the temple.

All the above-named persons were assigned lands for their emoluments and they were allowed to enjoy those lands from generation to generation with all rights of ownership. Women could inherit the land and get their duties performed by deputies. To supervise the administration of the charity a superintendent acharya was appointed with an allowance *acarya bhogam* of one hundred nishkas (a year presumably). Visvusvara Siva retained for himself the power of supreme control over the whole of this establishment and over the temple and the village generally,

Those that performed their respective duties honestly were to enjoy the fruit of bathing in all the sacred waters, of performing japa and tapas of various kinds and of worshipping all the gods. Those who on the contrary neglected their duties and otherwise obstructed the proper administration of this charity were to become foodless during the rest of their lives, and be consigned to the eighteen kinds of Hell after death. The inscription ends with "So declared Visvesvara Siva after bathing in the river Krishna on the occasion of a solar eclipse."

The concluding portion of the inscription gives a long list of charities established by Visvesvara Siva in other parts of the Telugu country.

The land given to the donees is expressed in terms of a putti or puttika as measured by the standard measuring rod of Penumbaka. In its primary-sense putti means a specific quantity of grain which varies from district to district, A putti of land is the extent required for sowing a putti of seed. The word is not now used in the Guntur district in this sense. It is used in the Godavari district as equivalent to eight acres.

#### II.c. MATTAMAYURA MATHA IN THE REGION- ORGANIZATION AND PRECEPTORS: SPREAD OF THE CULT AND MIGRATION OF THE ACHARAYAS

The inscription discovered within the limits of Chedi country supply us with rather detailed accounts of the Saiva acharayas of the Mattamayura lineage. They seemed to have collected a vast amount of importance and goodwill among the royalty. Kalachuri inscriptions give us glimpses into the lives of these Acharyas. The Jabalpur inscription dated K. 926 describes the lineage, learning and mode of life of the great Saiva Acharya Vimalasiva, the Rajaguru of the Kalachuri king Jayasimha. He was born in a family of great Vedic scholars renowned as much for charitable and religious works as for learning. Vimalasiva studied the Vedas, observed religious vows and visited holy places in different parts of India such as Prabhasa, Gokarna and Gaya. He then received initiation from Kirtisiva of the

Golaki Maṭha, the Rajaguru of Narasimha. He was employed by the king Jayasimha in various affairs of the State, but never neglected his *nitya and naimittika* religious duties. He was renowned for his charities and erected temples, maṭhas, charitable feeding houses (satras), dwellings for the Brahmanas as well as gardens. He built a large temple of Siva under the name of Kirtisvara in honour of his guru Kirtisiva. For the maintenance of the temple, the Kalachuri king Jayasimha donated some villages on the occasion of a solar eclipse in K. 926 (1174 A.C.).

Similar glowing accounts of the religious and charitable activities of other Saiva Acharyas are given by several Kalachuri inscriptions. These Acharyas received honour and patronage at the hands of the ruling kings. The Rajagurus as mentioned among royal officers to whom grants of land and villages, recorded in copper-plate charters, are communicated. The Malkapuram pillar inscription records the tradition that Sadbhava-sambhu of the Golaki Maṭha received a gift of three lakhs of villages from the Kalachuri king Yuvarajadeva (I). If correct, this would indicate that the king assigned to him one third of the total revenue of his home province of Dahala, which, according to tradition, comprised nine lakhs of villages. Though this princely gift has not been recorded in any Chedi inscriptions, there is no doubt that the Kalacuri liberally patronised the maṭhas. Both the Bilhari and Gurgi inscriptions record the donations of several villages for the maintenance of temples and monasteries, made by successive Kalachuri

kings. The former inscription mentions, besides, several taxes and rates levied on oil mills, and on elephants horses, vegetables, betel leaves and other articles sold in the local markets, which were assigned for the maintenance of these religious and charitable institutions.

Many of these Acharyas were engaged in austerities and, therefore, preferred to stay in solitary retreats far from the crowd. For them monasteries were built on the banks of holy rivers where they could practise meditation in peaceful surroundings. A graphic description of the quiet life led by these Acharyas is given in the Chandrehe inscription.

The Acharyas utilised the wealth of the Mathas and the income of the agrahara villages for the welfare of the people. Kalachuri inscriptions mention vyakhyana(lecture halls), sattras (charitable feeding houses) and gardens with which the mathas were provided.

We hear of Yuvarajadeva I, under the influence of his queen Nohala, inviting several acharayas of the Mattaamyura clan to the Chedi country and building magnificent temples of Siva and monasteries for them at Gurgi, Masaun, Chandrehe, Bilhari, Bheraghat and other places. There is a difference of opinion among scholars on the issue of the identification of Mattamayura, the chief seat of the clan. Mattamayur ascetics appeared to have wielded great power not only

in Central India but also in some other parts of the country from the ninth to the thirteenth century A.D. Many of them served as *rajagurus*, most of their names ended invariably either in sambhu or in Siva which clearly indicates their affiliation to the moderate Saiva school

— During the early medieval period kings, members of the royal courts and other wealthy elites patronized worthy religious specialists by giving them land, gold and livestock, and by setting up religious institutions like temples and monasteries for them. Mattamayura sect was built up on the concept of acaryas very strongly. Although it is difficult to discern the Mattamayura sages described in these inscriptions as distinct individuals, one can see in the laudatory poems a collective portrait of the Mattamayuras as a distinctive community of religious specialists, differing from other religious figures who receive royal favour. The Mattamayuras glaringly occupied a position almost equal position as the ruler. Inscriptions give a picture of a guru-ruler nexus operative in the landscape.

The earliest inscription of the Mattamayura clan, which was discovered at Ranod in the former Gwalior State, was edited by Dr. Kielhorn.<sup>44</sup> It gives the following earliest genealogy of the line. It is to be remembered that the genealogy is spiritual, i.e., not from father to son, but from guru to disciple.

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<sup>44</sup> EI, Vol. I, pp. 3 51 ff.



Kadambaguhadhivasin-(the Inhabitant of Kadambaguha)

Sankhamathikadhipati-(the Lord of Sankhamathika)

Terambipala-(the Protector of Terambi)

Amardakatirthanatha-(the Lord of Amardaka)

Purandara

Kavachas"iva

SadaSiva

HridayaSiva

Vyomasiva

We learn from the inscription that when the king, the illustrious Avantivarman, who desired to be initiated in the Saiva faith, heard of the great holiness of the sage Purandara, he attempted to bring him to his own country. He himself went to Upendrapura where the sage was practising penance, and with a great difficulty persuaded him to accede to his request. The sage founded a matha at Mattamayura, the capital of the king whom he initiated in the Saiva faith, and established another matha at Ranipadra (modern Ranod). The last Acharya mentioned in the genealogy, viz., Vyomasiva, enlarged and repaired the matha, erected temples and excavated a magnificent tank at the same place.

The Chalukyan king Avantivarman may have reigned in some moment between the last quarter of the ninth and the beginning of the tenth century. He was son

of Sadhava and grandson of Simhavarman corresponding to an unknown branch of Chalukyas who reigned over some areas of the Avanti or Malava country. He was a great Mattamayura patron and probably the first ruler to wholeheartedly support the sect. Queen Nohala, the great benefactor of the Saiva Golaki Matha<sup>45</sup> in Dahala mandala was his daughter. Avantivarman's capital Mattamayura (or Kadvaha)<sup>46</sup> became the centre of gravity of the sect. The Bilhari Chedi Inscription mentions Kadambaguha where there was an old monastery that gave rise to "an uninterrupted line of saints". "From this line of Kadambaguha acharyas descended Rudrasambhu, who had as disciple Mattamayurnatha, who received from king Avantivarman the city" of Mattamayura and transformed it into the headquarters of the sect.<sup>47</sup> The inscription is interesting in the sense that it reflects an unusual relation between guru and Kings which is constant theme in the inscriptions alluding to both Mattamayuras and the royalty. The fact that capital city is 'given' to develop into a cultic headquarter points to the fact that the ascetics cult already had an acceptance and it was royalty that was trying to associate itself with it.

The same inscription gives the following line of acaryas

*Rudrasambhu [at kadambaguha]*

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<sup>45</sup> The case study of Golaki matha which has an early dating has been elaborately taken later.

<sup>46</sup> In the area there are a large number of old buildings, temples and monastaries. These architectural and other inscriptional evidences have led Mirashi to defend the thesis of an original place of the Mattamayura sect in this area i.e. Western Bundelkhand.

<sup>47</sup> *Epigraphia Indica* I No. 31 pg.269

*Mattamayurnatha [moved to Mattamayura]*

*Dharmasambhu*

*Sadasiva*

*Cudasiva*

*Hridyasiva*

The last four were the head of the sect at Kadvaha or Mattamayura. This Hridyasiva was invited to the Chedi country by king Lakshmana who put him at the head of Vaidyanatha matha. Lakshmanaraja was the Kalachuri king of Tripuri, son of Yuvraja I and queen Nohala. It is further stated Hrdyasiva accepted the position and ceded his hardship of Nohalesvara matha to his favourite disciple Aghorasiva.

Although most inscriptions portray relations between sages and royalty in an equally ideal light, the interaction was sometimes a sensitive one. The fragmented inscription from Kadwaha<sup>48</sup> narrates that a king named Hariraja visits the monastery to receive an audience (*darsana*) with the pontiff, probably Sadasiva, second in disciple succession after Purandarasiva. However, Sadasiva first makes diplomatic enquiries into his identity: "Who is this king, who seems so full of life?" only after an officer in the retinue has assured the sage of the King's pure descent within the Pratihara clan – the Pratiharas being the most

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<sup>48</sup> Epigraphia Indica vol. 37 (1968), pp 117-24.

powerful dynasty of northern India in the tenth century- does the sage agree to confer Saiva initiation upon Hariraja. The king then tries to give Sadasiva some of the royal elephants, apparently, as a perceptor's gift. Sadasiva considers this inappropriate, and forces the king to make repeated offers before he finally acknowledges that "villages would satisfy me."

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More intriguing, the Kadwaha inscription also seems to describe a magical vendetta carried out by Dharmasiva, Purandarasiva's successor, against an intrusive local ruler. King Gobhata comes to Dharmasiva's hermitage and apparently causes the death of one of the monks. Giving way to rage, Dharmasiva arms himself with magical weapons and emulates the god Siva in his destructive capacity. The inscription is too dilapidated for us to reconstruct this event fully, but we are left with a fascinating fragmentary glimpse of a seemingly weaponless ascetic gaining revenge on a king who had failed to observe proper decorum toward religious seekers.

Regarding the social background of the Mattamayura sages, we do not hear of their caste, clan, or parents, as we do in inscriptions praising orthodox Vedic Brahmanas. They trace their genealogy from guru to disciple i.e. their spiritual genealogy. The sages were renouncers who had left their homes and families. As renouncers, they practice sexual continence, and the poets of the inscriptions

often remind us that the sages had extinguished all sexual desires through austerities.

However, they were not rigorous in their asceticism as Pasupata ascetics like Bhavabrahamana, who appears in another Kalachuri inscription. Whereas Mattamayuras sleep in their monastic retreats and receive regular stipends from their land holdings, Bhavabrahamana wears only a loincloth makes his bed on a heap of ashes, eats only scanty alms, and is "addicted" to his practice of yoga. Bhavabrahamana's Pasupata austerity would have placed him farther from the hand of royal favour than the Mattamayura sages, for when he builds a Siva temple near the Kalachuri capital, he does not rely on gifts from the king, but rather obtains the necessary resources by begging.

These monasteries must have been important social institutions. We hear of various public works that they were involved in, such as irrigation canals, drinking wells, tanks and building of places of worship.<sup>49</sup> According to Chandrehe Inscription Prabodhasiva, "by the process of excavating, breaking and ramming heaps of large stones, has constructed a wonderful way through the mountains and across rivers and streams and also through forest and thickets as Raghava did across the ocean." The same inscription also refers to the building of

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<sup>49</sup> R.N. Nandi, *Religious Institutions and Cults in the Deccan*, p.13.

a temple by Prashantasiva and the construction of a monastery, excavation of a lake, digging of a well and the re-building of a dilapidated well by Prabodhasiva.

The Gurgi Stone Inscription lists a number of constructions by Saiva ascetics. This includes a temple, a monastery and a number of other constructions. This points towards (a) authority invested in ascetics to undertake such constructions; and (b) resources and command over labour which was required for such undertakings. In this capacity ascetics appear to be an important cog in the administrative machinery of the state.

### Migration of Brahmanas

The records from the Ratnapur branch of Kalacuri contain information about migrating brahmana families. In most of these cases the places of emmigration and re-settlement are well mentioned. A few records belonging to the early Kalacuri era and the Tripuri branch also present cases of migration of Brahmanas. The references show that the Brahmanas came from far off places such as Sonabhadra or Shravanbhadra identified in Uttar Pardesh. The places which became the new residences of the Brahmanas were either situated in, or were in close proximity to, the Kalacuri capital. R.N. Nandi suggests that the

purpose for the migrating brahmana family could be obtaining patronage of the royal court or as he puts it "clientele support".<sup>50</sup> To cite an example, the brahmana Padmanabha emigrated from Shravanabhadrā, won admiration at the court of Kalacuri capital Ratnapur by his skill in astronomical calculations. He is said to have been a beneficiary of a grant, viz., village Cicola as reward.<sup>51</sup> In several instances Brahmanas are specially invited by the Kalacuri kings and granted large villages and land. This speaks of the influence of the brahmanas in the Kalacuri kingdom, be it either in their priestly capacity or in the realm of economy and administration. In fact, our records reveal that many of the Kalacuri kings adopted the regular policy of setting brahmanas in their kingdom; patronage given to the latter by the former attracted many brahmanas from distant places to the Kalacuri country. The Kalacuri king Karna is said to have established a new village called Karnavati exclusively for brahmana residence. Migration, does appear to have taken place due to a combination of two factors which were, complementary to each other: the need for the brahmanas to obtain royal patronage, and the policy of the Kalacuri kings to establish brahmana settlements by inviting them from far off places.

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There are a couple of instances to show that besides the royal house, the more prosperous individuals were also involved in temple building activity. The

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<sup>50</sup> R.N.Nandi, *'Client, Ritual and Conflict in Early Brahmanical Order'*, 1979-80, *IHR*, VI, p.89.

<sup>51</sup> V.V. Mirashi, *CII, IV, pt. II, No. 83.*

Makundpur record of Gangeyadeva of Kalacuri era 772, i.e. eleventh century tells us that the Sresthain Damaodra constructed Jalashyana i.e. Visnu.<sup>52</sup> Another inscription records the building of a temple for the god by a shoemaker. This inscription itself is found within the Visnu temple.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> CII, IV, pt. II, No. 47.

<sup>53</sup> CII, IV, pt. II, No. 108, vv. 9-10.



## Candrehe Stone Inscription of Prabodhasiva

Ôm ! Adoration to Siva !

(Verse 1) Glorious is that Sarva (Siva), -in whose coiled matted hair, which is like a cloud, being dark with the hissing of serpents (*on his body*), and which resounds with the water of the heavenly river (Ganga) (*as a cloud resounds with thunder*),there flashes the fire of (*his third*) eye like lightning (*flashing in a cloud*); and whose reath of human skulls resembles a garland of *champaka* flowers,<sup>12</sup> even as the shower of the accumulated lustre of the moon on his head !

(V. 2) May the mass of lustre of the laugh of Sankara clad in an elephant skin,- which, white like the goose, is spread round his face and which, being slightly darkened by the effulgence of his (*blue*) neck, at once assumes the clear splendour of the moon emerging from a cloud,-grant you prosperity 1

(V. 3) May the Tandava dance of (Siva), the husband of Chandî, give you delight! (*the dance*) which makes the hoods of the lord of serpents bend under (*the weight of*) the bowl-like earth which revolves on account of the movements of his feet, skilled in the *chart* step; which puts to flight the elephants of the quarters; which causes a sudden movement of a part of the universe by the revolutions of his staff-like arms<sup>1</sup> and which is accompanied by the deep sound of the *damaru*!

(V. 4) May this continuous succession of (*the Saiva ascetics of*) the Mattamayûfa (*clan*) purify the three worlds, like the Ganga!-in which was born Purandara, who performed austerities, and who was the spiritual preceptor of kings. His disciple (*was*) Sikhasiva, (*who was*) like fire and who, (*refulgent*) with the lustre of his austerities, stood like a lamp on the path of final beatitude, having dispelled the pitchy darkness (*of ignorance*).

(V. 5) From him (*i.e.* Sikhàsiva), who was the lord of **Madhumati**, was (*spiritually*) descended **Prabhavasiva**, who accumulated great austerities, was the crest-jewel of all Saivas, and was revered by many kings. He, who was the foremost among ascetics, was made by Yuvarajadēva (I) to sanctify, by his feet, the wanton woman that was the earth.<sup>2</sup>

(V. 6) After him there was his disciple, the moon-like **Prasantasiva**, who was pure<sup>3</sup> (*even as the moon is bright*); whose real nature was manifested in his attempt to destroy ignorance (*as the moon's form is seen dispelling darkness*), who brightened the faces of all quarters by his bright fame (*as the moon does with her lustre*) and who bestowed prosperity on the meritorious Saivas (*as the moon bestows splendour on the fibrous night-lotuses*).

(V. 7) He, the virtuous one, the companion of sages, who lived on fruits, lotus-stalks and roots, (*and*) who sanctified the surface of the earth by the rows of his foot-prints, built an incomparable and quiet hermitage, well-known to the

people, at the foot of the **Bhramara** hill covered with the forest of *priyala* (trees) (and situated) at the confluence of the river **Sôna**.

(V. 8) His fame is continuously sung with delight and in a high tone in every (month of) Magha by the Gandharvas and Vidyàdharas, in the assembly of Indra held in the celestial garden, by Nandin who, to please Siva, pays less attention to instrumental music, -(and) by the charioteer of the sun, who gracefully waving his head from side to side in joy, allows the reins (of his horses) to slip from his hands.

(V. 9) There was the foremost of his disciples named Prabôdhasiva, as Parasurama was of (Siva) the enemy of Madana, -who, conquering all his enemies, adorned the faces of the quarters with his fame, and bestowing wealth on the meritorious, placed the earth under obligation.

(V. 10) He<sup>2</sup> was like Kumara (Le., Karttikëya), whose one hand was skilled in making offerings at the proper time to the high flames of fire (as Kumar as hand is in feeding his mighty peacock) ; who (like Kumara) always avoided the company of women ; who showed the effect of his power on mighty kings (as Kumara exhibited that of his dart on the Krauncha mountain), who was devoted to (Siva) the enemy of the mind-born (as Kumara also was dear to him) ; and who performed (all) his duties towards the gods (as Kumara accomplished the work of the gods, viz., the destruction of the demon Taraka).<sup>3</sup>

(V. 11) He, having thought over all the scriptures, realized God by the performance of religious austerities and meditation, and living on the fruits of *priyala*, *amalaka*,<sup>4</sup>greens and *salûka*<sup>5</sup>, caused the wonder of the world by practising austerities even in his boyhood on the bank (*lit.*, the surface of the land) washed by the river (Sôna), imitating his spiritual preceptor.

(V. 12) He, having attained power, has acted like the rising sun,-whose feet are rendered more resplendent by the (*jemelled*) crests of kings (*who bowed to him, even as the sun's rays are when they fall on the peaks of mountains*) ; who has done the work of destroying ignorance (*as the sun dispels darkness*); who is revered by all people at the time of making peace (*as the sun is at the beginning of twilights*); (*and*)—what more (*need be said:*)-who, having attained greatness has pervaded the three worlds by his power (*as the sun docs by its heat*).

(V. 13) He, by the process of excavating, breaking and ramming<sup>6</sup> heaps of large stones, has constructed a wonderful way through mountains (*and*) across rivers and streams, and also through forests and thickets, as Raghava (*did*) across the ocean. A great deed of the mighty proclaims wonder in the world!

(V. 14) At night this hermitage,-(*which is wafted*) with breezes, extremely cool with the sprays of the water of the Sôna, which makes the sky reverberate with loud roars of lions, and which has bee-like clouds hovering round mountain peaks,-causes people to suspect lightning on account of the phosphorescence of great medicinal plants (*growing near it*).

(V. 15) In this place herds of monkeys kiss the cubs of lions, (*and*) the young one of a deer sucks at the breast of the lioness. Other hostile animals forget their (*natural*) antipathy (*to one another*); for the minds of all become tranquil in penance-groves.

(V. 16) Near the temple built by his preceptor, the tranquil Prabôdhasiva caused to be erected this lofty and spacious monastery, which is, as it were, his own fame resembling white clouds. Thereafter he caused to be excavated a sea-like lake,<sup>7</sup> by the side of the mountain, and (*also*) a well having copious water.

(V. 17) On account of devotion to his preceptor he caused to be rebuilt with a wonderful masonry of large stones and then re-excavated (*very*) deep the well, which had been dug by the illustrious Prasantasiva at this place, (*but*) which had become dilapidated and full of wood fallen into it, in course of time.

(V. 18) There was a *Dikshita* named Mëhuka, whose fame was known on the earth. He, who was foremost among good men, begot a son named Jëika. To him was born, from the womb of Amarika<sup>1</sup>, the poet Dhamsata. He composed this *prasasti* couched in beautiful arrangement of letters.

(V. 19) May this eulogy endure unchanged on this earth as long as the divine river (*Gariga*), meandering through the coiled matted hair of Pasupati (*i.e.*, Siva), with its waters shattering on the surface of the rocks on the Himalayas, flows to (the sea), the lord of rivers, along the path (*shown*) by Bhagiratha, sanctifying the earth with its bounding waves.

(V. 19) The wise and renowned Damôdara, the son of Lakshmîdhara and the younger brother of Vasudêva, wrote this *prasasti* in excellent letters!

(*This prasasti*) has been inscribed by Nilakantha by the order of the Sûtradhara Sûraka. The year 724, (*the month*) Phalguna, the bright (*fortnight*), the (*lunar*) day 5.

## Gurgi Stone Inscription of Kokkalladeva II

Success! Adoration to [the holy Soma] natha!

(Verse 1) May the self-willed moon-crested (god Siva) living on the mountain (Kailasa),-who made the world,-which had its multitudes of quarters covered by the best of aerial beings<sup>10</sup> terrified by the clash of the rows of peaks of the excellent crystal mountain (Kailasa) (*when it was*) shaken by the movements of the mighty arms of the lord of Lanka, -dreadful with the echoes of their cries at the thought that it was the end of the world, -increase your joy !

(V. 2) 'Nandin, who is this (*lady*) that has entered the abode of Pasupati? <sup>11</sup>. 'I think that she is none but your ladyship'. 'This is false. I am not she. She is someone else. O Isa! Who is seated in your matted hair?' 'You simple-minded, he is the enemy of gods who has assumed your form. See I have thrown him down before me!' 'By what missile?'-May Siva who was thus silenced, being vanquished by the goddess (Parvatī) with harsh words, protect you!

(V. 3) There is in this world Madhumatī, the abode of those who are versed in the Saiva Siddhantas,—which contains excellent Ācharyas of noble conduct; in which the peacocks dance and shriek with joy at the untimely appearance of clouds caused by the uninterrupted mass of dark smoke of the ever-kindled (*sacrificial*) fires; (*and*) which laughs at the heavenly world with the

mass of lustre of the large and resplendent jewels set on the rows of its high mansions;-

(V. 4) Where appeared the first best ascetics, whose minds were restrained by vows, (*and*) who taught the great and flawless doctrine of Siva to their disciples;-whose well-known fame, having the bright lustre of nectar, even now whitens the universe, delighting the prosperous and learned men even as moonlight does the assemblage of night-lotuses.

(V. 5) In this very great succession of Saivas there was the illustrious Chûdas'iva, who was venerable to sages; who, with his shining lustre, was to sins what the forest fire is to dry fuel; (*and*) whose extremely white fame, which had arisen from the attainment of the perfection of knowledge through meditation on the feet of Siva, roamed about inside the mansion of the three worlds.

(V. 6) His disciple was the wise sage called the illustrious Prabhavasiva, whose foot-stool was honoured by the mass of lustre of the crest-jewels on the heads of all kings bending (*in salutation*), and who deserved glorification in the three worlds.

(V. 7) Having brought him out of a natural desire, Yuvarajadêva (I), the son of the illustrious Mugdhatunga, who was versed in policy, made him accept a monastery, which was constructed at an enoimous expense, with the object of gaining excellent fame arising out of the benefit to creatures.



(V. 8) His disciple was the sage, the illustrious Praéantaéíva, the sole abode of the exceedingly attractive qualities, who became famous in the whole world by his faultless austerities and increasing learning.

(V. 9) Attracted by his long-accumulated austerities, the goddess of fortune, (*though*) eager for the bodily contact of him who was always averse to enjoyment on account of his-desire to attain final-emancipation, remained steadfast like an exceedingly virtuous wife, in the houses of good persons who were dear to him, when she received his order to benefit others.

(V. 10) Having obtained the support of the post of (*his*) charity, having received the sprinkling of the water of (*his*) shining learning, and being protected all round by the force of (*his*) extending austerities, the wish-fulfilling tree of his fame grew up in course of time, which has completely filled the cavity of the vase-like universe.

(V. 11) To the north of the temple, <sup>2</sup> resembling the shining peak of the Kailasa mountain, which was caused to be built by the illustrious Yuvarajadēva (I), he erected a temple of Isvara, well-known on the earth, which vies with the summit of the Sumêru (mountain) (*in altitude*), which causes wonder to all the three worlds, (*and*) which serves as a flight of steps to his fame rising to heaven.

(V. 12) The learned one, whose great fame was well-known, installed Uma, Siva united with Uma, and the six-faced (Karttikēya) in the shrines attached to the temple and also Ganapati and Sarasvatī at the gate.

(V. 13) He, who had satisfied the desire for wealth of hosts of suppliants with gifts of gold which had emerged (*purified*) by burning, caused to be built another abode for the *siddhas* on the bank of the Sôna; having entered which, the tranquil Yôgins, who have destroyed the impediments of mental anxieties by (*the performance of*) vows and who have clear minds, having attained success in meditation, reach the goal of final emancipation. —

(V. 14) For the absolute rest of those who are intent on living in a holy place, he, the sage, caused to be built the (*well-known*) abode for performing austerities on the bank of the heavenly river (Ganga); having resorted to which, those who live in Varaanasî (Banaras), devoted to the worship of Mahësvara, consider the ocean of worldly existence, though extensive, to be as small in size as a puddle made by a cow's foot.

(V. 15) Seated in a solitary place he,-who had mastered (*all*) the *dsanas*, who felt the inner joy with his steady mind absorbed in the meditation of Siva seated in the midst of the lotus of the heart, and who was fond of making gifts,- passed his days in the company of meritorious persons who were adept in the philosophy of the Pancharthika<sup>1</sup> system and were capable of examining (*other systems*). —

(V. 16) Extremely resplendent by their own majesty like the multitudes of the rays of the sun, his disciples,-who day by day arouse those who are steeped in ignorance (*as the rays awaken those enveloped by darkness*); whose fame is due to

the benefit they confer on the people by their gift of knowledge (*as that of the rays is due to the light they give*); whose commands are borne by kings on their heads (*as the splendour of the rays is borne by mountains on their peaks*), -move about (*among people*) being honoured by the best of sages.

(V. 17) His disciple was the illustrious ĩéanasambhu, even as Parasurama was of Siva,-(*he*) whose fame was sung by all great poets, (and) whose lotus-like feet were reddened by the rays of jewels on the rows of heads of all kings.

(V. 18) Having conquered ..... he, who removed the misery of poverty, made the goddess of fortune become an object of enjoyment to all suppliants, and [devoted himself to] right knowledge, because it is capable of destroying the multitude of the bonds of worldly existence.

(V. 19) Of him, who was a lion in the act of destroying the rutting elephant that is the Kali age; who is the fore-head mark of the illustrious Mattamayūra lineage,

and the store of all learning .....; (*who is*) the source of all excellences in this world.....the assembly of learned persons .... - [what has not been observed?].

(V. 20) Having made over his office (*as the head of the monastery*) to his younger brother, the illustrious Prabôdhasiva, he . . . . . [attained the world of Siva] which he had won by his devotion.

(V. 21) By him who was the store-house of charity, austerities, and meditation ..... [was built a *matha* near the temple] erected by his teacher . . . which [the celestial beings] do not cross for fear of obstruction in the attainment of the desired *siddhis*.

(V. 22) And a well [was dug by him].....The host of suppliant also having obtained abundant wealth which they had not (*even*) longed for before

(V. 23) ..... caused to be built by his good work.....

(V. 24) Thereafter, the high-souled one..... in his place.....

(V. 25) .....His (*fame*) ..... on high on the Mahendra (*and*)

Arbuda (*mountains*)... was able.....

(V. 26) Samantapataka .....

(V. 27) In the lineage of the moon..... having snatched the well-known

sword by force .....

(V. 28) Having vanquished the lord of Gûrjaras .....

(V. 29) ..... the protection of the family.....

(V. 30) .....he, the dust of whose feet was reddened by the jewels on the heads of feudatories the herds of elephants.

(V. 31) .....was born the valiant one ..... seeing whose beauty even as drawn in a picture..the vow of heroes.

(V. 32) ..... [From him was born].....the king who was the store-house of valour, the terrible fighter .....who was to the poets what a cloud is to the kadamba trees .....

(V. 33) From him was born the king Kôkalladêva (11) of matchless prowess, whose (*beautiful*) form was praised by the god of love, (*who was*) the lord of the best....

(V. 34) The Gûrjara lord enters the Himalaya, being deprived of power, the king of Gauda lies in the watery fort of the sea, the lord of Kuntala lives in the forest..... this I consider to be the ornament (*of his prowess*).

(V. 35) The king Keyûravarsha himself offered by an inscribed [charter] the famous abode to the ascetic possessed of religious merit whom he himself worshipped.....

(V. 36-7) The villages Pakka-..... and also Sarasadôllaka Vakkadôllaka and Rajyauddha .... Nasapundika.... -pura, Khatôllika, -nakala, abhirapallî ... (*and*) Sarasvatî.

(V. 38-40) The twelfth part of these and the Kavachakshêtra, and also Samantapataka [*and*] Vata- . . . . Tallapatî, Bhaddhachiura, [Kusumba] and Kukkudiya, together with Rajôgrama, [the king] gave as a grant to the great [ascetic] who had completely mastered the (*Saiva*) *Siddhantas*.

(V. 41). The king gave through devotion the whole city crowded with citizens..... as a grant.

(V. 42) (Hi?) gave to the Siva (*called*) Sômanatha (*the villages*) Karôdhaka, Brahma-purî, Susiddharthaka, Pôndika (*and*) the Nannësvarakshetra.

(V. 43) May this provision for the maintenance of Saiva ascetics, made by the illustrious Yuvarajadêva (I) and preserved by the succeeding rulers, endure till the end of the *kalpa* !

(V. 44) The praiseworthy Madu, the son of the illustrious Trayivardhana of the Bharadvaja family, composed this *prasasti* in sweet words.

(V. 45) The intelligent scribe Sivanaga, the son of Awôka, wrote it on the stone in clear letters.

(V. 46) It has been inscribed by the *Sutradhara*, the skilled artist Madhava, the

son of Mahësvara.....

Success!

## SAIVITE RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS MENTIONED IN

### EPIGRAPHY

Sr. No.	DATE AVAILABLE	TEMPLE, COMPLEX, MAT	SECTARIAN AFFILIATION	PLACE	REF.
1.	No date	Siva temple (remains)	Saiva	Barsur, Madhya Pradesh	EI, Vol. IX, No. 19, pp.160, ff.
2.	A.D. 865	Saiva Matha of Dhauli	Saiva	Dhauri, Madhya Pradesha	Dhauri Cave Inscription of Shantikaradeva, EP. IND., XIX, No. 45, pp. 263- 264.
3.	A.D. 1000	Vaidyanatha temple	Saiva	Khujarahi, Madhya Pradesh	Khujarahi Inscriptions, the inscription of Kokkalla, EP. IND., I, No. 19-5, pp. 148-50.
4.	11 <sup>th</sup> Century A.D.	Neelkantheshwara or Udayesvara complex	Saiva	Udaypura, Vidhisha, Madhya Pradesh	Udaypura Stone Inscription, CII, VII-II, No. 19, pp. 65-66.
5.	A.D. 1046	Saiva temples at Maheshwara, the	Saiva	Maheshwara, Madhya	Tilawara Copper Plate Inscription

Sr. No.	DATE AVAILABLE	TEMPLE, COMPLEX, MAT	SECTARIAN AFFILIATION	PLACE	REF.
		Ghanteshwaradeva or Dakshinamurti Maneshwara temple		Pradesh	of Bhojadeva, CII, Vol. VII-II, No. 15, pp. 50, ff.
6.	A.D. 1056	Amareshwara complex at Mandhata	Saiva	Mandhata, Madhya Pradesh	Mandhata grant of Jayasinghadeva, CII, VII-II, No. 18, pp. 61, ff.
7.	A.D. 1063	Someshwaradeva Matha,	Pasupata	Dhara, Madhya Pradesh	A note on Halayudha Stotra, EI, XXV, No. 17, pp. 173-85.
8.	A.D. 1069	Kameshewara temple	Saiva	Krishnapura, Madhya Pradesh	Kuruspal Inscription of Dharama Mahadevi, EI X, No. 5, pp.31-32.
9.	A.D. 1096	Neelkhantha complex	Pasupata	Kalanjara, Madhya Pradesh	Kalanjara Inscription, EI, XXXI, No. 22, pp.163, ff.
10.	A.D. 1111	Lokeshwara Temple	Saiva	Bheramgarha,	Narayanapala



Sr. No.	DATE AVAILABLE	TEMPLE, COMPLEX, MAT	SECTARIAN AFFILIATION	PLACE	REF.
				Jagdalpur, Bastar	Inscription of Gundamma Mahadevi, EI, IX, No. 19-1, pp. 161-62.
11.	A.D. 1147	Saiva temple at Kotgadh	Saiva	Kotgadh, Bilaspur	CII, IV-II, No. 85, pp. 438-41.
12.	A.D. 1163	Saiva temple at Dhangaon: the Dhujati complex	Saiva	Bilaspur	Ratanpur Stone Inscription of Prithvideva II, CII, VI, No. 29, p. 153.
13.	A.D. 1167	Chandrachudeshwara temple	Saiva	Bilaspur	Sheonarayana stone Inscription of Jajalladeva II, CII IV-II, No. 98, pp.519, ff.
14.	A.D. 1167	Kedareshwara temple	Saiva	Bilaspur	CII, IV-II, No. 97, pp.512, ff.
15.	A.D. 1187	Siva temple + Matha complex	Saiva	Ratanpura, Madhya Pradesh	Kharo Inscription of Ratandeva III, EI, XXI, No. 26,

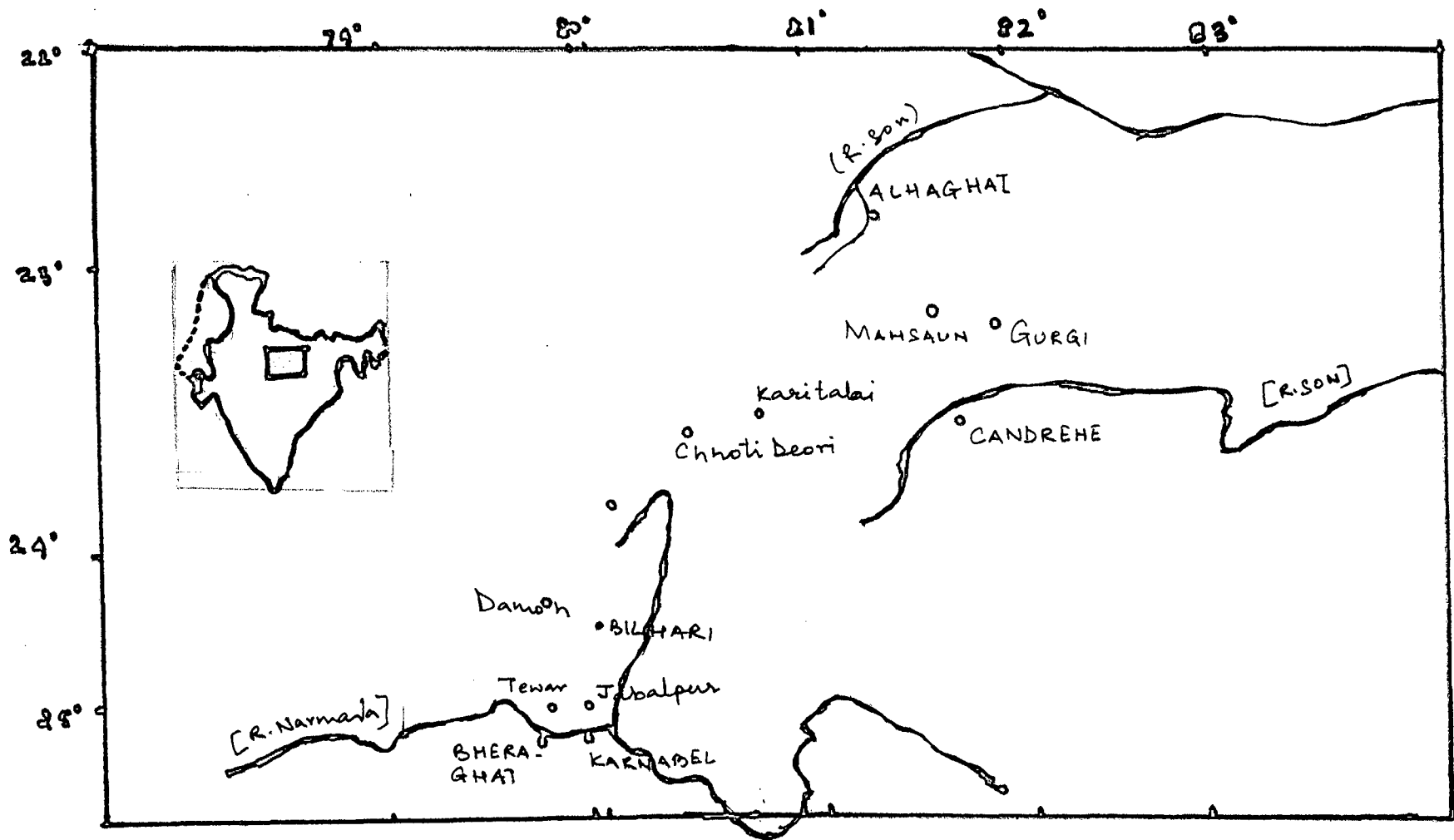
Sr. No.	DATE AVAILABLE	TEMPLE, COMPLEX, MAT	SECTARIAN AFFILIATION	PLACE	REF.
					pp.159-65.
16.	A.D. 1189	Bilvapani temple	Saiva	Ratanpur, Madhya Pradesh	Ratanpur Sone Inscription of - Prithvideva III, EI, I, No.7, pp. 45, ff.
17.	A.D. 1191- 1213	Temples of Siva at Sihava	Saiva	Raipur, Madhya Pradesh	Sihava Stone Inscription of Kamaraja, EI, IX, No. 24, pp.185-186.
18.	A.D. 1200	Siddheshwara	Saiva	Mandhata, Madhya Pradesh	EI, IX, No.13, pp. 103-17.
19.	A.D. 1218	Temple of Shambhu	Pasupata	Harsauda, Madhya Pradesh	Harsuada Stone Inscription of Devapala, CII, VII-II, No. 50, pp. 171, ff.

## Migration of Brahmanas

REF.	DATE	NO. OF EMIGRANT(S) NAME/GOTRA	PLACE OF ORIGIN	MIGRATED TO AREA(S)
CII, Vol. iv, No. 26	7 <sup>th</sup> Century	Bhapaswamina of Bhardwaja clan	Vijaya Annirudhapura, identified with Treyanna near Baroda	Village Balisa in the Treyanna Ahara
CII, Vol. iv, No. 48	11 <sup>th</sup> Century	Vishwaroopa of Kaushika gotra	Vaishali	Kasi
CII, Vol. iv, No. 51	11 <sup>th</sup> Century	Fourteen brahmana families	From eleven places	Periphery of Kalacuri kingdom
CII, Vol. iv, No. 83	Beginning of 12 <sup>th</sup> Century	Mahasona of Vatsa gotra	Kannauj	Into Kalacuri kingdom ( in Cincatala)
CII, Vol. iv, No. 83	12 <sup>th</sup> Century	Padmanabha	Kannauj	Ratnapur, Kalacuri capital (by invitation).
CII, Vol. iv, No. 91	-	Devasharmana of Chadratraya	Tikari (identified in Uttar Pradesh)	Avala in Madhya Mandala (by invitation).

An analysis of the above information shows:

- (i) A gradual shift from the periphery of Kalacuri kingdom to the settlement inside the Kalacuri domain and then invitation by the royalty, thus pointing towards not just acceptance but also an increase in the status of the brahmanas;
- (ii) Juxtaposing this information with the settings of Prabodhacandrodaya of Krishna Mishra gives an interesting picture. In the drama King Viveka is shown to be settled in Kalacuri kingdom and his enemy King Mahamoha in Varanasi, area in present Uttar Pradesh. The migrating pattern shows displacement from places like Kannauj and Banaras into the area of Kalacuris.



\* Archaeological Remains of Temples & Monasteries of the Kalachuri Period.

### III

#### Other Religious Currents

In the fragmentary Karitalai stone inscription which is the earliest official record of the Kalacuri of Tripuri, all the three members of the Hindu trinity, Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra, are revered and praised, a fact which indicates the eclectic spirit of the age. Temples dedicated to Brahma are, however, very rare and none have yet been discovered in any part of the Kalachuri dominion; but that the cult of Vishnu was widely prevalent and had influential followers in the Chedi country is shown by several inscriptions of the sixth and later centuries. At Bandhogarh and the adjoining village of Gopalpur, Gollaka alias Gauda, the Amatya of Yuvarajadeva I, caused to be carved out of the rocks huge images of several incarnations of Vishnu such as the Fish, the Tortoise, the Boar, Parasurama and Haladhara (i.e., Balarama), besides one of Seshasayin (Vishnu reclining on the serpent Sesha).<sup>3</sup> It is noteworthy that as in some early panels, Balarama, not Krishna, is included among the incarnations of Vishnu. Somesvara, the Brahmana minister of Lakshmanaraja II, who performed several Vedic sacrifices, erected a lofty and magnificent temple dedicated to the Boar incarnation of Vishnu under the name of Soma-svamin at Karitalai in the Jabalpur District. The remains of this temple are still extant at the place. The contemporary Kalachuri king Lakshmanaraja II was himself a devotee of Siva;

but he granted a village for the maintenance of the eight Brahmanas whom he settled there for the worship of the god. His queen Rahada and son Sarikaragana III also made grants in favour of the god. This prince is described as paramavaishnava. Contrary to the general tendency of the Kalacuri, he was a devotee of Vishnu and erected a temple dedicated to that god under the name of Sarikaranarayana at Bargaon in the Jabalpur District. At Makundpur in the Rewa District of Vindhya Pradesh, there was another temple dedicated to Vishnu under the name of Jalasayana (the god who reposes on water) by a private individual, viz., the Sresathin Damodara.

Though the cult of Vishnu was thus prevalent in the Chedi country and received a considerable patronage from the royal family, it was far outshone by that of Siva, the tutelary deity of the Kalacuris. Vamaraja, the founder of the Later Kalachuri Dynasty, was a devout worshipper of Siva. No inscription of his reign has been discovered so far, but in some records of his successors he receives the epithet paramamabesvara indicative of his devotion to Siva. He first established himself at Kalanjara, the impregnable fort in the Banda District, which from very early times has been sacred to Siva. Later, the family divided itself into two branches, one establishing itself in the country of Sarayupara and the other in that of Chedi. Both of them were devoted to Siva. The Kalacuris of Sarayupara had Nandin, the vahana of Siva, as their emblem on the seals of their copper-plate charters. Though the Kalacuris of Tripuri adopted the Gaja-Lakshmi as

their distinctive emblem, they did not omit Nandin from the seals of their charters.

Beside Mattamayura other sects of Saivism were popular. There were several Pasupata Acharyas living in the Kalachuri kingdom. One of them, viz. Rudrarasi who came from Lata, was placed in charge of the temple of Siva under the name of Vaidyanatha, and of the matha and the hall of teaching with gardens etc. attached to them, which the Kalachuri dowager queen Alhanadevi had erected at Bhera-Ghat. Another inscription again from Bhera-Ghat is inscribed on a slab outside Gauri-Shankara temple<sup>54</sup>. It records the obeisance of the *Maharajni* Gosaladevi (and her son) of the Kalacuri dynasty to the enshrined god who appears to be named *Bhagnakhidra*.<sup>55</sup>

Khajuraho, the religious capital under candelas, is a living example of religion in motion. The structures ranging from 900 A.D. to circa a.d.1130 show varied affiliation yet sharing same space; this is reflective of broader toleration. "At Khajuraho the temples belonged to the Hindu and Jaina faiths. They were dedicated to Siva; to Vishnu in his esoteric form of Vaikunth; to Varaha- the boar

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<sup>54</sup>CII Vol I pg 364.

<sup>55</sup>Bhagnakhidra may be a name of Siva who is so called because he drive away diseases. Siva is also called Vaidyanatha in many inscriptions. It has also been noticed that the deitie associated with relief form a part of non Sanskritic pantheon in many parts like Sitala devi with small-pox.



incarnation; to Vamana-the dwarf incarnation; to Surya; to the sixty-four Yoginis collectively; to the Jaina Digambara sect."<sup>56</sup> Twenty-five temples survive out of the legendary eighty-five temples have survived here.<sup>57</sup>

The dating of the temples shows that building of temples commenced at Khajuraho with the Chandelas coming to the power and went on for a couple of centuries largely under royal patronage. From the Khajuraho records we learn that all the Jaina shrines and a few brahmanical ones owe their existence to the munificence of non-princely patrons. Kokkalla figuring in inscription No. V, the maker of Vaidyanatha temple does not come from a royal family.<sup>58</sup> Not only temple, he is said to have built town with "big archways of great value, with dwellings high like mountain-peak, and with highly decorated lofty shining great gates,... Here he settled a faultless very learned crowd of twice-borns who knew Vedas". Another fact emerging from the survey is that an atmosphere that characterized the life of Khajuraho is that the orthodox and heterodox sects flourished side by side. Khajuraho held in equally high esteem all the three major religions of the time.

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<sup>56</sup> Devangana Desai, *Religious Imagery of Khajuraho*, 1996, p3

<sup>57</sup> The chronological construction of these temples has been appended as Annex II.

<sup>58</sup> EI, Vol. I, No. 19, v.19.

Another inscription from the same region adds on an interesting dimension. It is issued in the year 1117 A.D. and records the erection of a Siva temple by Dhanga.<sup>59</sup> This temple had two lingas, one of emerald and the other of stone the reason for this has not been specified. One can speculate that either the precious stone linga was preserved while stone was used for daily propitiation. The placement however is not given to probe their functional character.

The living together and coming closer contributed to another significant development in the history of Brahmanism. The idea of worshipping all the five principal deities together gained ground, shaping out in the form of Smarta cult in which the chief principle was to offer simultaneous worship to Visnu, Siva, Surya, Shakti and Ganesa. Culmination of the cult can be seen in the pancayatana shrines that contained four subsidiary temples in corners of their jagati intended for four principal deities other than the one to whom the main shrine was dedicated. However, Cunnigham found that such shrines attached to the Lakshman temple were all dedicated to Visnu<sup>60</sup>, who was the chief god of the chief temple as well. Possibly the maker wanted to glorify Visnu to the exclusion of others adopting the idiom of Samarta ideologues.

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<sup>59</sup> EI Vol.I pp137-139

<sup>60</sup> A.S.R, II, p.426.

The stone inscription of Yashovarman<sup>61</sup>(datable to 953-954 A.D.) that comes from Lakshman temple in Khajuraho records the erection of a temple of Visnu, under the name of Vaikunth. Attention may be drawn to the verse 43 of the inscription. According to it, Yashovarman received the image of Vaikunth, which he set up in the temple, was given to him by Devapala, the son of Herambapala. Herambapala in turn had obtained it from Sahi, the King of Kira, who had received it from one Bhota. The genesis of the image is eventually traced from Kailash. There has been problem in identifying some of these places but what is more perplexing is the seeking of legitimacy for enshrinment of Visnu temple by connecting it with Kailash, i.e. abode of Siva.

Syncreticism in brahmanic iconography is much older than monuments of Khajuraho. Here it found further elaboration and diversification. Voluminous coverage from a variety of angles has already been given to ancient art and iconography of Khajuraho, which contain a rich representation of brahmanical myths associated with Krisna, Visnu and Siva.

Jainism had a constant presence in this area and they too represent a picture of cultural flux while we have dedication to jaina temples in that are built during the candela rulers in the Khajuraho complex, Prabodhcandrodaya, a text produced under the patronage of the Candelas ridicules them, especially the

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<sup>61</sup>EI Vol I pp130-135.

digambar sect. As the dramatist aimed at playing down all other sects save his own, the picture of Jainism emerging is a hideous one. Such was the dirtiness of the Jaina monks, we are told, that some people mistook them for creatures of hell (naraki) while others thought them to be rakshas and pisacas. Neither did they clean themselves nor donned any dresses. They carried peacock's tail and got their hair uprooted. Ksapanaka, the Jaina monk, drinks wine on persuasion though he himself admits prohibition for his order. He is shown telling the laity to welcome monks by serving delicious food and allowing entertainment by their ladies. The sweet embrace of Kapaliki is enough for him to give up his faith and switch over to Saivism. He becomes interested not in Nirvana but Siddhis which would enable him to kidnap women. Moral laxity might have creped in Jainism but there seems to be an exaggeration in the author's claim that Jainism lost its hold over people is difficult to believe given the architectural remains of many Jaina temples large number of sculptures that have been found. One such instance is the inscription that records a number of gifts made by one Pahilla to the Jaina temple.<sup>62</sup> It is not clear who Pahilla was but it is mentioned that he was held in honor by King Dhang.

Kapalikas were one of the sects that find mention in texts that belong to this period. In Krsnamisra Pr. c a Kapalika puts forward exaggerated claims of miraculous powers. Kapalikas profess that one could attain the highest place by

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<sup>62</sup> EI Vol.I pp 135-36

concentrating ones mind on self. Their practices were associated with women. They were generally a class of saints with long hair, covered their skin with ashes, hang on their persons the bones of dead people etc. "We hear from Yamunacharya's agamapramanya, a work of the later half of the eleventh century A.D. that the characteristics of the Kapalikas were the sacred threads, smearing of the body with ashes, a crest jewel, various ornaments for ears and the neck, a human skull and a club."<sup>63</sup>

Though the Sanskritic deities were getting important the primitive substratum had a strong existence. The manifestation of this primitive substratum was Tantrism- practical mundane but easy for the 'simple' folk to follow. Breaking all established schemes, it showed a tendency towards a mundane asceticism, utilizing sensualism & eroticism in the quest to understand the divine union or final stage. It sought out extreme experiences. It chose secretism and initiatory principles. Tantrism had its religious organizational aspect in the Sakta religion. Saktism was multifaceted, with strong connetion with Saivism and popular. The Saiva and Sakta movements emerged at several places like Kahmir, Uttaradesa, Madhyadesa, and southern Rajasthan and thence quickly took roots in other areas because of quiescent Buddhism. The new Saiva-Sakta religious system was more attractive because it appealed to the masses and their scope was wide from

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<sup>63</sup> V. B. Mishra, "Religious Beliefs and Practices of North India During the Early Medieval Period", 1973, pg. 50.

the highly intellectual speculation evolved in Kashmir to the esoteric practices tendencies of the Saiva groups in our area of survey.

Closely related to this was the worship of what are characterized as tribal goddesses *Maniya Devi* was the tutelary deity of the Candelas. Her shrine has been found at three places in their dominion. A shrine of the Goddess is at Mahoba, another is at Barel and third one is inside the fort at Maniyagarh (named after the deity). The deity was worshipped and patronized by even subsequent dynasties.

The Pujaripali stone inscription of Gopaladeva<sup>64</sup> of 1150 A.D. records the charitable deeds and the construction of temple. This inscription in course gives a theological explanation about the Mother Goddess. It describes them as follows:

*Vaisnavi*: the spouse of Visnu, the one with conch and Discus and Eagle as her *Vahana*

*Trayi*: form of Durga, wearing bracelets of serpent, and bull as her *Vahana*

*Varahi*: female portrayal of varaha incarnation of the lord Visnu,

*Narsimhi*: female portrayal of man-lion incarnation of the lord Visnu, she is also seen as the one who made constellation of stars.

*Andri*: one with thousand eyes and thunderbolt in her hand.

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<sup>64</sup>CII Vol .IV-II No.114, pg.588

*Camunda*: dark, rides a spirit, and terrifies enemies in a battle.

*Tvarita*: bright like light and is similar in complexion to the indragopaka insets and vermilion

*Tripura or Tripur Sundari*; though wholly void of the part is proficient in three arts

*Vindhya~~v~~asini*: goddess of the Vindhya mountains.

*Carcika and Totala* : punishes the faults of the brahamana.

The aforesaid pantheon of Goddesses combined the female versions of Siva, Visnu and also non- Sanskritic deities. This points to the preeminence of the goddesses over sectarian differences.

The cult of *Yoginis* at around this time seems to have been popular in large part of present Madhya Pradesh.<sup>65</sup> The Yoginis are sometimes represented as forms of Mother Goddess. According to some there are only eight principal Yoginis, according to others sixty four<sup>66</sup>. The cult of Yoginis was current in the tenth century A.D.<sup>67</sup> At the Yogini temple at Bheraghat most of the images in the

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<sup>65</sup> As it was in Orissa and Rajasthan.

<sup>66</sup> Katherine Anne Harper believes that within the Devi cult, Saptamatrika images eventually integrated or expanded into an extensive pantheon as sixty four Yoginis. Devangana Desai unproblematically includes them in the Great Goddess cult. Mirānda Shaw seize them as female tantrics. N.N. Bhattacharyya points out that the Yogisnis were originally human beings, women or priestesses who were possessed by goddesses and in course of time they were elevated to the position of deities. The most exhaustive work on Yoginis is that of Vidaya Dehejia who sees Yogini as the patron goddess of those who followed *Kulamarg*.

<sup>67</sup> Devangana Desai places the construction of Yogini temple at circa A.D. 900. The circular temple of sixty four Yoginis at Bheraghat near Jabalpur has also been assigned to the tenth century A.D.

temple are seated with the names of the deities inscribed on the pedestals such as Sri-Thakini, Sri-Virendri, Sri-Phanendri, Sri-Ksatradharmini, Sri-Bhisani, sri-Ghantali, Sri-Jaha, Sri-Dakini, Sri-Sarvotomukhi and so on. Under the lotus of on which Sri-Sarvotomukhi is seated is another full blown lotus, the calyx of which bears the tantric emblem of crossed triangles with the mystic formula '*Hrim*' in the centre. All the known temples of Yoginis are circular except the one at Khajuraho which is oblong.

There is a stark difference between the representation of these goddesses in Sanskrit texts where they are marginalized or included unproblematically in the brahmanical tradition. The sculptural evidences that support the existence of these cults are large in number. There are over three thousand images of Yoginis for instance that are found across present Madhya Pradesh, whereas these Yoginis are just referred as attendants of Siva in Puranas.



## Chronology of the Temples at Khajuraho

1. Chausaṭh Yogini (Sixty-four goddesses)	.. .. .	<i>circa</i> A.D. 900
2. Lalguan Mahādeva (Śiva)	.. .. .	<i>circa</i> A.D. 900-925
3. Hanumān	.. .. .	Inscribed in the year equivalent to A.D. 922
4. Brahmā (originally dedicated to Viṣṇu)	.. .. .	<i>circa</i> A.D. 925
5. Excavated brick temple complex .. (Viṣṇu)	.. .. .	<i>circa</i> 10th century A.D.
6. Varāha (Boar incarnation of Viṣṇu)	.. .. .	<i>circa</i> A.D. 950, possibly commissioned by King Yaśovarman
7. Lakshmaṇa (Vaikuṅṭha Viṣṇu)	.. .. .	Built by King Yaśovarman, <i>circa</i> A.D. 950. Consecrated by his son Dhaṅga in A.D. 954, as per inscription
8. Pārśvanātha (Jaina)	.. .. .	<i>circa</i> A.D. 950-970
9. Ghantai (Jaina)	.. .. .	<i>circa</i> 10th century A.D.
10. Khākra Maṭha (Viṣṇu)	.. .. .	<i>circa</i> 10th century A.D.
11. Viśvanātha (Śiva)	.. .. .	Inscribed V.S. 1056, equivalent to A.D. 999. Built by King Dhaṅga
12. Mātāṅgeśvara (Śiva)	.. .. .	<i>circa</i> A.D. 1000
13. Devī ṣaḡadambā (originally dedicated to Viṣṇu)	.. .. .	<i>circa</i> A.D. 1000-1025
14. Chitragupta (Sun temple)	.. .. .	<i>circa</i> A.D. 1000-1025
15. Śāntinātha (Jaina)	.. .. .	<i>circa</i> A.D. 1027 or earlier in parts
16. Kandariyā Mahādeva (Śiva)	.. .. .	<i>circa</i> A.D. 1030, possibly built by King Vidyādhara
17. Vāmana (Dwarf incarnation of Viṣṇu)	.. .. .	<i>circa</i> A.D. 1050-1075
18. Ādinātha (Jaina)	.. .. .	<i>circa</i> A.D. 1075
19. Javari (Viṣṇu)	.. .. .	<i>circa</i> A.D. 1075-1100
20. Chaturbhuja (Viṣṇu Nārāyaṇa)	.. .. .	<i>circa</i> A.D. 1110 in King Jayavarman's time
21. Dulādeva (Śiva)	.. .. .	<i>circa</i> A.D. 1130, possibly built by King Madanavarman

SOURCE: 'RELIGIOUS IMAGERY OF Khajuraho',  
Devangana Desai

## IV

In this chapter I have tried to focus on two different genres of tradition. Prabodhcandrodaya is a product of elite educated class and other the collection of Gond mythology. Both these record their views on dissemination of a tradition. Pr.C is ascribable to a certain time period while the mythologies are oral tradition which neither has a specific author nor a specific time frame. But if the information from these are used in a fluid context they help us in moving beyond multi dimensional view in reconstruction of religion.

Parbodhachandrodaya (moon rise of true knowledge), written by rāja MiṣṇKrs, is a philosophical allegory in six acts combining the Advaita doctrine and Visnu bhakti.<sup>68</sup> In the play the forces of orthodox religion based on Vedic order unite to re-establish the ancient order against those non-Vedic heretical forces which had earlier gained ascendancy. This theme has been presented in the play in the form of a contest between the royal forces of King Viveka (Discrimination) and King Mahamoha (Great Delusion). The battle ground is the town of Varanasi where King Mahamoha has spread his influence through his allies, viz. th Kapalika, the materialist Charvaka, the Jain Kshapanaka, the Buddhist bhikshu of the Vajrayanna sect and through personified mental tendencies such as Dambha

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<sup>68</sup> The following translation has been taken from A.K. Warder, "Indian Kavya Literature", Vol. VI and English translation of the play by R. Taylor, 1862.

(Deceit), Ahamkara (Egoism), Mithya Drishti (Heresy) etc. King Viveka's allies are Matti (Reason), Shanti (Peace), Sarswati (Goddess of Learning), Vishnu bhakti etc. The allies seek to bring about the union of Viveka and his estranged wife Upnishada- a union which leads to the birth of Prabodha (Awakening) and Vidya (Knowledge). Vidya, conceived of as a yogani dissolves the forces of Mahamoha. Purusha who was deluded by the powers of Mahamoha and had forgotten its identity with Parmeshwara (Supreme Being) becomes aware of its true self with the birth of Prabodha.

In the Prologue the Producer says he has been directed by the chief vassal Gopala to perform Krsnamisra's play before King Kirtivarman, his friend, because he desires to be diverted with the calmed experience after the King's conquest of the directions *digvijaya*, which had interrupted the experience of the ultimate brhmana. Later he mentions the uprooting of the King of Cedi and the stabilising of the sovereignty of the line of the Lunar Kings i.e., as we discover, of the Candratreyas, Karna (the King of Cedi) is named (verse 9). In this verse Kirtivarman is compared with the hero Discrimination and Karna with the villain Delusion. Though Discrimination and Delusion belong to two different families, they are related because both sprang from Mind, from his two wives Stop and Start. In the same way, we may notice the Candratreyas and the Kalacuris of Cedi (Haihayas and earlier Yadavas) both claimed to be Lunar families, through different consorts of the God, respectively the Princess

Hemavati of Varanasi and Ha daughter of Manu. An inscription at Mahotsava, the first capital of the Candratreyas, records this victory of Kirtivarman and Gopala, his general, over the Cedi King Karna, the date of which should be a little before +1070. The main action of the play, though the characters are allegorical, takes place in Varanasi, which was claimed as part of the Candratreya kingdom of Jejakabhukti and had been the capital of the preceding dynasty which had ruled the country (. The victorious march of Discrimination into Varanasi, occupied by Delusion (had Karna occupied it during his wars with the Candratreyas and the Palas?), may therefore have been a pleasant reminder of a march by Kirtivarman to uphold his claim at the beginning of his conquest of the directions.

This allegorical play thus represents a victory of King Discrimination (Viveka) over his enemy King Delusion (Moha or Mahamoha). The Jainas, as well as the Buddhists and Lokayatikas, are on the side of Delusion, whilst Discrimination belongs to the Vedic and specifically Vaisnava-Vednta tradition. Here all the good principles of Buddhism, such as Calming, Compassion, Benevolence, Toleration and Dispassion, are annexed to the Vedic side. On the side of Delusion we also find Pleasure and his consort Love, along with the other passions such as Anger and Greed with their wives Violence and Desire. The other Vedic schools, Samkhya and Nyaya, are largely rejected, especially as non-Vaisnava, except to the extent that they can be used against Buddhist logic. The

Mimamsa is conditionally accepted if it will admit the supremacy of the brahamaṇa and of the way of meditation and inaction and concede the futility of ritual. Thus the Esoteric Revelation, the Goddess Upanisad, is the supreme authority here and no argument is allowed.

In *Act III* Calming enters with her companion Compassion, lamenting the disappearance of her mother into the hands of the sectarians and saying she cannot live without her. Compassion urges her to search the hermitages on the banks of the Ganga. They proceed to the abodes of the sectarians and Compassion is terrified at seeing what she thinks is a demon, filthy, horrific, his hair plucked, naked and with a peacock's tail in his hand. Calming first thought he was an impotent, then recognised him as the Proved Conclusion (Siddhanta) of the Digambaras. The Digambara expounded the Jaina teaching of the difference between the soul and the body, and of the soul's release, to some pupils off stage, then called to Confidence, who appeared naked and filthy like himself, to the consternation of Calming, who fainted, and of Compassion. Proved Conclusion of the Digambaras told Confidence to stay close to his pupils and she exited. Compassion tried to reassure Calming that this was a different 'Confidence', daughter of Darkness (Tamas), among the sectarians. They went on to an abode of the Buddhists and saw a supposed Monk, book in hand (apparently the Buddhists were known for their innumerable books and

great libraries). But his lecture to lay disciples offstage, though it started with momentariness and non-soul, drew the anti-Buddhist conclusion that there was no such thing as cause and effect, mixed with Vijñānavāda idealism. The Buddhist doctrine is then supposed to be the same as the Lokyata, namely that one should find happiness on a soft bed "with confident young women as well as with adulterous wives of merchants. He then reads from his book, evidently a Lokyata work, which urges the lay disciples and monks not to be jealous when other monks take their wives, because jealousy is only thought and there is no continuing soul. He too summons his Confidence and orders her to embrace the disciples and monks. As she goes to do this Calming and Compassion agree that she too is a daughter of Darkness?

Then the Digambara abstainer *ksapanaka* started to argue with the Monk, angrily and incoherently. Calming and Compassion left them to it and found a skull-bearer, Proved Conclusion of the Moon (where the Moon stands for Saiva and this sectarian is a Saiva of the same Skull-Bearer school as Mahendravikrama's Satyasoma. But the Digambara heard him reciting a verse and came up challenging his religion of worshipping Siva with offerings of human flesh. The Monk listened in horror. The Skull-Bearer drew his sword on the Digambara, but the Monk intervened and stopped him, saying this was only a verbal argument and they should not come to blows. As they argued, the Skull-Bearer called up

his own Confidence to persuade them -and she appeared as a female skull-bearer. Compassion thought this Confidence must be a daughter of Passion (Rajas), because she was very beautiful. On the Skull-Bearer's order, this Confidence seized the Monk and embraced him, to his delight. Thus he became a Saiva. Then it was the Digambara's turn to be embraced, whereupon he found himself very potent and used his peacock's tail to cover his embarrassment. So he too became a Saiva, after which they all had a drink produced by the Skull-Bearer. Then they danced. The Digambara reminded them that they were all servants of King Delusion, who had ordered them to bring Confidence, the daughter of Virtue. He reckons she is with Devotion to Visnu, which Compassion and Calming are delighted to hear. The Digambara also reckons that Virtue himself, having deserted Pleasure, is with Devotion to Visnu in the hearts of great men. This is very bad for Delusion and the Skull-Bearer declares they must send the Mahbhairavī Science to bring Virtue and Confidence to the King.

Thus, The Vedic canon *gama* and its Non-Duality (Advaita) Vedanta interpretation are simply asserted, as Taylor noticed in his Appendix: no reasoning is offered, indeed that is a suspect art and the dogmas are merely accepted from sacred texts. Disbelief in this scripture is dismissed as mere ignorance and passion, though passion is used as a weapon to defeat opponents. The nearest approach to an argument is when Confidence (Sraddh), or Belief,

who ought to reside exclusively in the Vedic religion, appears mirrored by Confidence in Jainism, in Buddhism, or in the Saiva Skull-Bearing sect, in Act III. The first two of these are presented as unworthy because their doctrines, in allegorical form, are seduced by the third. Then the Saiva Skull-Bearer admits that Confidence has joined Devotion to Visnu in the hearts of 'great men'. This Act is intended to demonstrate that all Confidences other than the Vedic-Vaisnava are false, but it does so only by ridiculing the others as not upholding their own principles. *Itihasa Purana* and *Dharmasastra* are accepted alongside the *Veda*, and Devotion to Visnu reflects the Vedic-Vaisnava syncretism of most medieval Brahmanism. Even Saivism and Sun worship are partly included on the basis of the *Purnas*, despite the rejection of certain sects such as the Skull-Bearers. The criterion is that anything rooted in the *Veda* is accepted and any non-Vedic doctrine rejected, with *Itihasa, Purana* and (Brahmanical) *Dharmashastra* regarded as deriving from the Vedic revelation. Gita (Bhagavadgita) does not appear on the stage but is mentioned as a daughter of Upanisad, thus indicating the relationship of *Itihasa* to *Veda*. The Rise of Awakening of the title, Prabodhodaya, also called Moon of Awakening Prabodhacandra, appears, or rather is born to Esoteric Revelation (Upanisad), along with his sister Science (Vidya), at the conclusion. The last act, which according to the commentator Nandillagopa is entirely taken up by the conclusion conjunction, sorts out the various Vedicist deviations from the accepted Advaita Vedanta metaphysics. Man himself is the Supreme Being.



"The play can be viewed at least on three levels: (1) the struggle between the forces of Discrimination (Viveka) and Delusion (Moha) in the Mind of Man (Purusha) and the defeat of Delusion with the rise of Awakening and Knowledge; (2) the fight between the heretical non-Vedic sects and the orthodox, established religion based on Vedic order; and (3) the combat between the forces of Chedi ruler, King Karna who is likened to Delusion and Gopala who fought him is called Discrimination.

The play is interesting as every character and setting makes one question the religious reality of the time. The kind of mockery made of other sects is also notable. One has to, however, look beyond the depiction of the dramatist who champions the cause of Vishnu bhakti. The setting is in Varanasi which was the hub of brahmanical resurrection under the Guptas. This has been juxtaposed with Central India under the rule of King Viveka. There is definitely an attempt to show different religious settings in the two places.

The missionary-cum-administrator Rev. Hislop collected following mythology from Gonds of the then Central Province in 1860s.<sup>69</sup> The interaction between Brahmanism and tribal comes out very clearly.

According to this Parvati got pregnant after eating vegetables that had sprung up from Mahadeo's urine. She thus gave birth to eighteen deva-kulas of Brahamana gods and twelve deva-kulas of Gond gods. All the Gond gods were scattered over the jungle. They behaved like Gonds and not like cultured Hindus<sup>70</sup>, with results that have been described by Hislop, as follows:

Hither and thither all the Gonds were scattered in the jungle. Places, hills and valleys were filled with these Gonds. Even trees had their Gonds. How did the Gonds conduct themselves? Whatever came across them they must needs kill and eat it; they made no distinction. If they saw a jackal they killed and ate it; no distinction was observed; they respected not antelope, sambhar and the like. They made no distinction in eating a sow, a quail, a pigeon, A crow, a kite, an adjutant, a vulture, A lizard, a frog, a beetle, a cow, a calf, a he- and she-buffalo, Rats, bandicoots, squirrels - all these they killed and ate. So began the Gonds to do. They devoured raw and ripe things; They did not bathe for six months together; They did not wash their faces properly, even on dunghills they would fall down and remain. Such were the Gonds born in the beginning. A smell was spread over the

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<sup>69</sup> This is one of the most important account of the Ginda tribe which is contained in Hislop's *Papers on the aboriginal tribes of the Central Provinces*, published after his death by Sir R. Temple. Hislop had recorded the legend of Lingo.

<sup>70</sup> The term 'hindus' is throughout used for those who followed Brahamanical ways to distinguish them from Gonds. The inability to grapple with multi-layered notion of 'Hinduism' on the part of administrator-cum- missionary is clearly reflected.

jungle When the Gonds were thus disorderly behaved; they became disagreeable to Mahadeva, Who said : " The caste of the Gonds is very bad ; I will not preserve them; they will ruin my hill Dhawalgiri."

Mahadeo then determined to get rid of the Gonds. With this view he invited them all to a meeting. When they sat down Mahadeo made a squirrel from the rubbings of his body and let it loose in the middle of the Gonds. All the Gonds at once got up and began to chase it, hoping for a meal. They seized sticks and stones and clods of earth, and their unkempt hair flew in the wind. The squirrel dodged about and ran away, and finally, directed by Mahadeo, ran into a large cave with all the Gonds after it. Mahadeo then rolled a large stone to the mouth of the cave and shut up all the Gonds in it. Only four remained outside, and they fled away to Kachikopa Lohagarh, or the Iron Cave in the Red Hill, and lived there. Meanwhile Parvati perceived that the smell of the Gonds, which had pleased her, had vanished from Dhawalgiri She desired it to be restored and commenced a devotion. For six months she fasted and practised austerities. Bhagwan (God) was swinging in a swing. He was disturbed by Parvati's devotion. He sent Narayan (the sun) to see who was fasting. Narayan came and found Parvati and asked her what she wanted. She said that she missed her Gonds and wanted them back. Narayan told Bhagwan, who promised that they should be given back.

The yellow flowers of the tree Pahindi were growing on Dhawalgiri. Bhagwan sent thunder and lightning, the flowers were conceived. First fell from it a heap

of turmeric Lingo. In the morning the sun came out, the flower burst open, and Lingo was born. Lingo was a perfect child. He had a diamond on his navel and a sandalwood mark on his forehead. He fell from the flower into the heap of turmeric. He played in the turmeric and slept in a swing. He became nine years old. He said there was no one there like him, and he would go where he could find his fellows. He climbed a needle-like hill, and from afar off he saw Kachikopa Lohagarh and the four Gonds. He came to them. They saw he was like them, and asked him to be their brother. They ate only animals. Lingo asked them to find for him an animal without a liver, and they searched all through the forest and could not. Then Lingo told them to cut down trees and make a field. They tried to cut down the *anjan* trees, but their hands were blistered and they could not go on. Lingo had been asleep. He woke up and saw they had only cut down one or two trees. He took the axe and cut down many trees, and fenced a field and made a gate to it. Black soil appeared. It began to rain, and rained without ceasing for three days. All the rivers and streams were filled. The field became green with rice, and it grew up. There were sixteen score of *nilgai* or blue-bull. They had two leaders, an old bull and his nephew. The young bull saw the rice of Lingo's field and wished to eat it. The uncle told him not to eat of the field of Lingo or all the *nilgai* would be killed. But the young bull did not heed, and took off all the *nilgai* to eat the rice. When they got to the field they could find no entrance, so they jumped the fence, which was five cubits high. They ate all the rice from off the field and ran away. The young bull told them as they ran

to put their feet on leaves and stones and boughs and grass, and not on the ground, so that they might not be tracked. Lingo woke up and\* went to see his field, and found all the rice eaten. He knew the *nilgai* had done it, and showed the brothers how to track them by the few marks which they had by accident made on the ground. They did so, and surrounded the *nilgai* and killed them all with their bows and arrows except the old uncle, from whom Lingo's arrow rebounded harmlessly on account of his innocence, and one young doe. From these two the *nilgai* race was preserved. Then Lingo told the Gonds to make fire and roast the deer as follow:

He said, I will show you something; see if anywhere in your waistbands there is a flint; if so, take it out and make fire. But the matches did not ignite. As they were doing this, a watch of the night passed. They threw down the matches, and said to Lingo, Thou art a Saint; Show us where our fire is, and why it does not come out. Lingo said: Three koss (six miles) hence is Rikad Gawadi the giant. There is fire in his field; where smoke shall appear, go there, Come not back without bringing fire. Thus said Lingo. They said, We have never seen the place, where shall we go? Ye have never seen where this fire is? Lingo said; I will— discharge an arrow thither. Go in the direction of the arrow; there you will get fire. He applied the arrow, and having pulled the bow, he discharged one: It crashed on, breaking twigs and making its' passage clear. Having cut through the

high grass, it made its way and reached the old man's place (above mentioned). The arrow dropped close to the fire of the old man, who had daughters. The arrow was near the door. As soon as they saw it, the daughters came and took it up, and kept it. They asked their father: When will you give us in marriage? Thus said the seven sisters, the daughters of the old man. I will marry you as I think best for you; Remain as you are. So said the old man, the Rikad Gawadi. Lingo said, Hear, O brethren! I shot an arrow, it made its way. Go there, and you will see fire; bring thence the fire. Each said to the other, I will not go; but (at last) the youngest went. He descried the fire, and went to it; then beheld he an old man looking like the trunk of a tree. He saw from afar the old man's field, around which a hedge was made. The old man kept only one way to it, and fastened a screen to the entrance, and had a fire in the centre of the field. He placed logs of the Mahua and Anjun and Saj trees on the fire, Teak faggots he gathered, and enkindled flame. The fire blazed up, and warmed by the heat of it, in deep sleep lay the Rikad Gawadi. Thus the old man like a giant did appear. When the young Gond beheld him, he shivered; His heart leaped ; and he was much afraid in his mind, and said: If the old man were to rise he will see me, and I shall be eaten up; I will steal away the fire and carry it off, then my life will be safe. He went near the fire secretly, and took a brand of *tendu* wood tree. When he was lifting it up a spark flew and fell on the hip of the old man. That spark was as large as a pot; the giant was blistered; he awoke alarmed. And said: I am

hungry, and I cannot get food to eat anywhere; I feel a desire for flesh; Like a tender cucumber hast thou come to me.

So said the old man to the Gond, who began to fly. The old man followed him. The Gond then threw away the brand which he had stolen. He ran onward, and was not caught. Then the old man, being tired, turned back. Thence he returned to his field, and came near the fire and sat, and said, What nonsense is this? A tender prey had come within my reach; I said I will cut it up as soon as I can, but it escaped from my hand! Let it go; it will come again, then I will catch it. It has gone now. Then the Gond returned and came to his brethren.

And said to them: Hear, O brethren, I went for fire, as you sent me, to that field; I beheld an old man like a giant. With hands stretched out and feet lifted up. I ran. I thus survived with difficulty. The brethren said to Lingo, We will not go. Lingo said, Sit ye here. O brethren, what sort of a person is this giant? I will go and see him. So saying, Lingo went away and reached a river. He thence arose and went onward. As he looked, he saw in front three gourds. Then he saw a bamboo stick, which he took up. When the river was flooded it washed away a gourd tree, and its seed fell, and each stem produced bottle-gourds. He inserted a bamboo stick in the hollow of the gourd and made a guitar. He plucked two hairs from his head and strung it. He held a bow and fixed eleven keys to that one stick, and played on it.

Lingo was much pleased in his mind. Holding it in his hand, he walked in the direction of the old man's field. He approached the fire where Rikad Gawadi was sleeping.

The giant seemed like a log lying close to the fire; his teeth were hideously visible; his mouth was gaping. Lingo looked at the old man while sleeping. His eyes were shut. Lingo said this is not a good time to carry off the old man while he is asleep. In front he looked, and turned round and saw a tree of the pīpal sort standing erect; he beheld its branches with wonder, and looked for a fit place to mount upon. It appeared a very good tree; so he climbed it, and ascended to the top of it to sit. As he sat the cock croaked. Lingo said, it is daybreak and the old man must be rising.

Therefore Lingo took a stringed instrument in his hand, and held it; he gave a stroke, and it sounded well; from it he drew one hundred tunes. It sounded well, as if he was singing with his voice. Thus (as it were) a song was heard. Trees and hills were silent at its sound.

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Then Lingo disclosed himself to the giant and became friendly with him. The giant apologised for having tried to eat his brother, and called Lingo his nephew. Lingo invited him to come and feast on the flesh of the sixteen scores of *nilgai*. The giant called his seven daughters and offered them all to Lingo in marriage.



The daughters produced the arrow which they had treasured up as portending a husband. Lingo said he was not marrying himself, but he would take them home as wives for his brothers. So they all went back to the cave and Lingo assigned two of the daughters each to the three elder brothers and one to the youngest. Then the brothers, to show their gratitude, said that they would go and hunt in the forest and bring meat and fruit and Lingo should lie in a swing and be rocked by their seven wives. But while the wives were swinging Lingo and his eyes were shut, they wished to sport with him as their husbands' younger brother. So saying they pulled his hands and feet till he woke up. Then he reproached them and called them his mothers and sisters, but they cared nothing and began to embrace him. Then Lingo was filled with wrath and leapt up, and seeing a rice-pestle near he seized it and beat them all with it soundly. Then the women went to their houses and wept and resolved to be revenged on Lingo. So when the brothers came home they told their husbands that while they were swinging Lingo he had tried to seduce them all from their virtue, and they were resolved to go home and stay no longer in Kachikopa with such a man about the place. Then the brothers were exceedingly angry with Lingo, who they thought had deceived them with a pretence of virtue in refusing a wife, and they resolved to kill him. So they enticed him into the forest with a story of a great animal which had put them to flight and asked him to kill it, and there they shot him to death with their arrows and gouged out his eyes and played ball with them.

But the god Bhagwan became aware that Lingo was not praying to him as usual, and sent the crow Kageshwar to look for him. The crow came and reported that Lingo was dead, and the god sent him back with nectar to sprinkle it over the body and bring it to life again, which was done.

Lingo then thought he had had enough of the four brothers, so he determined to go and find the other sixteen score Gonds who were imprisoned somewhere as the brothers had told him. The manner of his doing this may be told shut up in Captain Forsyth's version:

And Lingo wandered on across the mountains, Wandered sadly through the forest Till the darkening of the evening, Wandered on until the night fell. Screamed the panther in the forest, Growled the bear upon the mountain, And our Lingo then bethought him Of their cannibal propensities. Saw at hand the tree Niruda, Clambered up into its branches. Darkness fell upon the forest, the jackal Kolyal, the King of Jackals, sounded loud their dreadful voices and the Jungle-Cock Gugotee, Mull the Peacock, Kurs the Wild Deer, Terror-stricken, screeched and shuddered. But the moon arose at midnight, poured her flood of silver radiance, lighted all the forest arches, through their gloomy branches slanting; fell on Lingo, pondering deeply on his sixteen scores of Koitûrs. Then thought Lingo, I will ask her for my sixteen scores of Koitûrs. 'Tell me, O Moon !' said Lingo, 'Tell, O Brightener of the darkness! Where my sixteen scores are hidden.' But the Moon sailed onwards, upwards, And her cold and glancing moonbeams said, ' Your Gonds, I have not seen them.' And the Stars came forth

and twinkled Twinkling eyes above the forest. Lingo said, "O Stars that twinkle  
 Eyes that look into the darkness, Tell me where my sixteen scores are." But the  
 cold Stars twinkling ever, Said, ' Your Gonds, we have not seen them.' Broke the  
 morning, the sky reddened, Faded out the star of morning, Rose the Sun above  
 the forest, Brilliant Sun, the Lord of morning, And our Lingo quick descended,  
 Quickly ran he to the eastward, Fell before the Lord of Morning, Gave the Great  
 Sun salutation -'Tell, O Sun ! ' he said, ' Discover where my sixteen scores of  
 Gonds are.'But the Lord of Day reply made -" Hear, O Lingo, I a Pilgrim Wander  
 onwards, through four watches Serving God, I have seen nothing Of your sixteen  
 scores of Koitûrs." Then our Lingo wandered onwards Through the arches of the  
 forest ; Wandered on until before him Saw the grotto of a hermit, Old and sage,  
 the Black Kumait, He the very wise and knowing, He the greatest of Magicians,  
 Born in days that are forgotten, In the unremembered ages, Salutation gave and  
 asked him--'Tell, O Hermit! Great Kumait! Where my sixteen scores of Gonds  
 are. Then replied the Black Magician, Spake disdainfully in this wise—" Lingo,  
 hear, your Gonds are asses Eating cats, and mice, and bandicoots, Eating pigs,  
 and cows, and buffaloes ;Filthy wretches wherefore ask me ?

If you wish it I will tell you. Our great Mahadeva caught them, and has shut  
 them up securely in a cave within the bowels of his mountain Dewalgi, with a  
 stone of, and his bulldog fierce Basmasur ; serve them right, too, I consider,  
 Filthy, casteless, stinking wretches ! "And the Hermit returned back to his grotto,  
 and deeply pondered on the days that are forgotten, on the unremembered ages.

But our Lingo wandered onwards, fasting, praying, doing penance; Laid him on  
 a bed of prickles, Thorns long and sharp and piercing. Fasting lay he devotee-  
 like, Hand not lifting, foot not lifting, Eye not opening, nothing seeing. Twelve  
 months long thus lay and fasted, till his flesh was dry and withered, And the

bones began to show through. Then the great god Mahadeva felt his seat begin to tremble,

Felt his golden stool, all shaking from the penance of our Lingo. Felt, and wondered who on earth this devotee was that was fasting till his golden stool was shaking. Stepped he down from Dewalgi, Came and saw that bed of prickles Where our Lingo lay unmoving. Asked him what his little game was, why his golden stool was shaking. Answered Lingo, "Mighty Ruler! Nothing less will stop that shaking than my sixteen scores of Koitûrs Rendered up all safe and hurtles from your cave in Dewalgi." Then the Great God, much disgusted, Offered all he had to Lingo, Offered kingdom, name, and riches, Offered anything he wished for, ' Only leave your stinking Koitûrs Well shut up in Dewalgi.'

But Lingo all refusing would have nothing but his Koitûrs; gave a turn to run the thorns a little deeper in his midriff. Winced the Great God: "Very well, then, take your Gonds --but first a favour. By the shore of the Black Water lives a bird they call Black Bindo, Much I wish to see his young ones, Little Bindos from the sea-shore; For an offering bring these Bindos, Then your Gonds take from my mountain." Then our Lingo rose and wandered, Wandered onwards through the forest, Till he reached the sounding sea-shore, Reached the brink of the Black Water, Found the Bingo birds were absent From their nest upon the sea-shore, Absent hunting in the forest, Hunting elephants prodigious, Which they killed and took their brains out, Cracked their skulls, and brought their brains to Feed their callow little Bindos, Wailing sadly by the sea-shore. Seven times a fearful serpent, Bhawarnag the horrid serpent, born in ocean's caverns, Coming forth

from the Black Water, Had devoured the little Bindos --Broods of callow little Bindos Wailing sadly by the sea-shore--In the absence of their parents. Eighth this brood was. Stood our Lingo, Stood he pondering beside them --" If I take these little wretches in the absence of their parents they will call me thief and robber. No I'll wait till they come back here." Then he laid him down and slumbered by the little wailing Bindos. As he slept the dreadful serpent, came from the black Water, came to eat the callow Bindos, In the absence of their parents came he trunk-like from the waters, came with fearful jaws distended, Huge and horrid, like a basket For the winnowing of corn. Rose a hood of vast dimensions over his fierce and dreadful visage. Shrieked the Bindos young and callow, gave a cry of lamentation ; Lingo rose he saw the monster and drew an arrow from his quiver and shot it swift into his stomach, Sharp and cutting in the stomach, Then another and another ; Cleft him into seven pieces, wriggled all the seven pieces, Wriggled backward to the water. But Lingo, swift advancing, Seized the headpiece in his arms, knocked the brains out on a boulder ; Laid it down beside the wailing little Bindos. On it laid him, like a pillow, and began again to slumber.

Soon returned the parent Bindos From their hunting in the forest; Bringing brains and eyes of camels And of elephants prodigious, For their little callow Bindos. Wailing sadly by the sea-shore. But the Bindos young and callow Brains of camels would not swallow; Said—"A pretty set of parents You are truly! thus to leave us Sadly wailing by the sea-shore To be eaten by the serpent— Bhawarnag the dreadful serpent came up from the Black Water, Came to eat us little Bindos, When this very valiant Lingo Shot an arrow in his stomach, Cut

him into seven pieces-Give to Lingo brains of camels, Eyes of elephants prodigious."

Then the fond paternal Bindo Saw the head-piece "of the serpent Under Lingo's head a pillow, And he said, ' O valiant Lingo, Ask whatever you may wish for.'

Then he asked the little Bindos For an offering to the Great God, And the fond paternal Bindo, Much disgusted first refusing, Soon consented; said he'd go too With the fond maternal Bindo— Take them all upon his shoulders, And fly straight to Dewalgiri. Then he spread his mighty pinions, Took his Bindos up on one side and Lingo on the other. Thus they soared away together From the shores of the Black Water, And the fond maternal Bindo, O'er them hovering, spread an awning With her broad and mighty pinions O'er her offspring and our Lingo.

By the forests and the mountains Six months' journey was it thither To the mountain Dewalgiri. Half the day was scarcely over Ere this convoy from the sea-shore Lighted safe on Dewalgiri; touched the knocker to the gateway Of the Great God, Mahideva. And the messenger Narayan Answering, went and told his master "Lord, this very valiant Lingo! Here he is with all the Bindos, The black Bindos from the sea-shore." Then the Great God, much disgusted, Driven quite into a corner, Took our lingo to the cavern, Sent Basmasur to his kennel, Held his nose, and moved away the Mighty stone of sixteen cubits ; Called those sixteen scores of Gonds out Made them over to their Lingo. And they said, "O Father Lingo ! What a bad time we've had of it, Not a thing to fill our bellies In this horrid gloomy dungeon." But our Lingo gave them dinner, Gave them rice

and flour of millet, And they went off to the river, Had a drink, and cooked and ate it.

The next episode is taken from a slightly different local version:

And while they were cooking their food at the river a great flood came up, but all the Gonds crossed safely except the four gods, Tekam, Markam, Pusam and Teiengam. These were delayed because they had cooked their food with *\ghi* which they had looted from the Hindu deities. Then they stood on the bank and cried out, O God of the crossing, O Boundary God! Should you be here, Come take us across. Hearing this, the tortoise and crocodile came up to them, and offered to take them across the river. So Markam and Tekam sat on the back of the crocodile and Pusam and Teiengam on the back of the tortoise, and before starting the gods made the crocodile and tortoise swear that they would not eat or drown them in the sea. But when they got to the middle of the river the tortoise and crocodile began to sink, with the idea that they would drown the Gonds and feed their young with them. Then the Gonds cried out, and the Raigidhni or vulture heard them. This bird appears to be the same as the Bindo, as it fed its young with elephants. The Raigidhni flew to the Gonds and took them up on its back and flew ashore with them. And in its anger it picked out the tongue of the crocodile and crushed the neck of the tortoise. And this is why the crocodile is still tongueless and the tortoise has a broken neck, which is sometimes inside and sometimes outside its shell. Both animals also have the marks of string on their backs where the Gond gods tied their necks together when they were ferried across.

Thus all the Gonds were happily reunited and Lingo took them into the forest, and they founded a town there, which grew and prospered. And Lingo divided all the Gonds into clans and made the oldest man a Pardhan or priest and founded the rule of exogamy. He also made the Gond gods, subsequently described, and worshipped them with offerings of a calf and liquor, and danced before them. He also prescribed the ceremonies of marriage which are still observed, and after all this was done Lingo went to the gods.

The lore very convincingly brings out the process of spread of brahmanical norms. The central character Lingo is itself a direct derivation from 'linga' of Siva. Parvati is shown as the goddess who loved these Gonds and it is said that Mother Goddesses is seen as the patron Goddess in tribal societies.

Also, Lingo is a brahamana character who knows agriculture and tries to spread his knowledge of it. Gonds are said to be living on whatever they could hunt. This is an evidence of the existence of different scale of survival means.

The depiction of Gonds is the one not conforming to the Brahmanical norms of purity. There is an attempt on the part of lingo, the brahamana, tries to 'civilise' them and they in turn acknowledge his 'virtues'. Stealing



'ghi' from temples show that the indigenous people did have a way of livelihood that was different. This and the fact that God himself shut them in cave and even the construct of certain events bring in the kind of resistance or difficulty in assimilation.

What one is suggesting is not the overnight acceptance of Brahmanical practices, but an interaction between the traditions. Lingo recognises Gonds as his brethren and they incorporate ritual of marriages etc. this community till date follows many of its own practices but see themselves as 'Hindus' and worship the Sanskritic deities on the same pedestal and sometimes on the higher as their local deities.

### Contestation and Assimilation

The change in the character of peripheral areas, in the sense that the appearance of state society in the hitherto unexplored spaces, set into pace interaction between different traditions. In fact, from the Gupta period onwards epigraphs speak of new royal lineages emanating from peripheral areas. Invariably linked to this was an attempt legitimising the state formation at many historic points involved grants of land to brahmanas, temples, mathas and viharas. Early medieval period witnessed an escalation in number of records replete of such grants. The change in the status of 'peripherals' and the need to legitimise the process led to the incorporation of tribal cults. The brahmanas and brahmanical institutions were the main agency. If ruling lineages represented one category of elites, there emerged other groups too who can be seen to represent the same historical processes operating in different contexts. The cultural and ideological milieu must have been complex to sustain a composite society.

Early medieval period was a crucial phase in the expansion of the Brahmanical ideology. The advance of Brahmanism over the tribal areas of Madhya Desa, Kosala, Kalinga, Bengal, and Andhra Desa or towards the Himalayan regions produced new frontiers of cultural exchange. In areas where Brahmanism could not take strong roots, still thrived primitive cults and beliefs in which the

worship of the Mother Goddess occupied the central position. It is possible that in the effort to promote Brahmanical culture, a chain of causes and effects was activated. The primitive cults instead of declining grew stronger and penetrated Brahmanism.

Thus, religion is not a given structure if we talk in the concerned spatial context. It is the matrix in which different traditions were suspended.

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