ANNALS OF
EARLY YĀDĀVĀS
[ POLITICAL HISTORY PART I]
Rise of the Yadava Dynasty: Political Background

The rise of the Yadava family is shrouded into obscurity and is to be traced during the period of Rashtrakuta ascendency in the Deccan (750-975 A.D.). The foundation of this new feudatory dynasty must be placed, for reasons discussed later, by the middle of the 9th century A.D. during the times of Rashtrakuta Amoghavarsha (814-878 A.D.). The long and feeble reign of this ruler actually forms the background on which the Yadavas had their rise.

A number of disruptive forces were active that challenged the very existence of Amoghavarsha and undermined the solidarity of his empire. After coming to the throne he had to face deposition and was restored by his Gujarat cousin, Karaka. But later his relations with the Gujarat Rashtrakutas were spoiled and they resulted into a war. It was not till c.860 A.D. that a peace-treaty could be concluded.

Amoghavarsha was also at war with Eastern Calukyas and lost Vengi to them in c.845-6 A.D. when he was busy fighting with his cousins. The Gangas remained another source of trouble for him during c.816 and 835 A.D. A large part of Gangawadi was acquired by them. By c.860 A.D. he ended his troubles with the Gangas by making friendship. Fortunately for him, his hereditary enemy, Pratiharas under Bhoja did not attempt any serious invasion; otherwise situation would have become still worse for him.
At home also, feudal revolts kept on harassing him. At least three rebellions had broken that challenged his authority and once, even the heir-apparent Krishna was involved in them. If it was not for the trusted general Bankeya, Amoghavarsha would have lost the throne. Bankeya was rewarded with the governorship of Banavase-12000 and adjoining regions.

The history of all the feudal revolts that shook the empire of Amoghavarsha is not known. Yet, it can be said that the chaotic condition caused by the internal revolts and external wars, provided opportunity for some promising soldiers to rise to feudal status. Bankeya was one of them. Even the rise of the Silahara branch of North Konkan belongs to this period. Silahara Pullasakti whose known date is 843-4 A.D., was a feudatory of Amoghavarsha. So the date of his father, Kapardin, the founder of the line, would also fall during Amoghavarsha's reign by the middle of the 9th century or at the most a bit earlier.

The Yadavas of Seunadesa were another such dynasty that had its rise by the middle of the 9th century A.D. It is quite possible that Dridhaprahara the founder must have proved useful to Amoghavarsha during the troubled period and like Bankeya he also must have been rewarded with the feudatory status. Of course, there is no evidence to connect Dridhaprahara with any of the known contemporary events. The Nasik and Khandesh region which is roughly equivalent to Seunadesa entrusted to Dridhaprahara, constituted an administrative unit even earlier. Rashtrakuta Dhruva was for sometime, governor of this territory under Govinda II. It seems that the governorship of this territory was entrusted to Dridhaprahara's family.
Origin of the Yadava Dynasty: Mythology and History

The origin of the Yadava dynasty is a problem. The Yadavas claim themselves to be the descendants of Krishna and lords of Dvaravatipura. The claim is found right from their earliest record of 1000 A.D. (App.Insc.no.1) and in almost all later ones. They have developed their genealogy from the Puranas claiming Yadu the Puranic hero to be their original ancestor. Hemadri who gives the full Puranic genealogy continued by their historical pedigree, states that Mathura was the original home of the Yadavas, and from Krishna onwards they migrated to Dwarka. After the fall of Dwarka, Subahu's son Dridhaprahara, the first historical figure in the genealogy, came and settled in the Deccan. The Jaina tradition also refers to the same belief.

This information raises a question whether the Yadavas were originally immigrants into the Deccan from Dwarka. There is nothing improbable in this. There have been instances of such migrations. A Yadava record shows one Maurya family in Khandesh which had originally come from Valabhi in Saurashtra (App.Insc. no.5). The existence of some Yadavas in Saurashtra is also known. Dr. Altekar has pointed out one Yadava family ruling at Simhapur in Saurashtra in the 7th century A.D. On the other hand, an inscription in the Sorab taluka of Shimoga district records a grant made by one Dronapaladeva settled in the Prabhasakshetra in Saurashtra (App.Insc.no.64). So such a phenomenon of migration is not impossible.

But what is not impossible cannot become an historical fact without positive evidence. After 9th century A.D. it was a common practice among ruling dynasties to claim divine origin for their
family by developing fictitious geneologies. The Yadavas did the same. This practice had a political significance in so far as it facilitated loyalty and obedience from below. But there is no sense in attempting to examine the historical validity of such claims. Documentary evidence and archaeology have not been able to give any positive proof for the migration of the Yadavas from Dwarka to Deccan. So the pretension that the Yadavas were once lords of Dwarka is historically unproved. Moreover, there is also no evidence to prove a Karnatak origin of the family, though some of the Yadava names appear to be Kannada in origin. So it seems quite likely, as thought by Dr. Altekar that 'the Yadava family was an indigenous Maratha sept, which on rising to political eminence, began to profess a descent from Yadu and to claim to have emigrated from Dwarka'.

**Dridhaprahara the Founder**

Dridhaprahara, the founder of the Yadava dynasty, is the first historical figure in the genealogy given by Hemadri, according to whom he was the second son of Subahu and ruled from Srinagar, i.e. modern Sinnar in Nasik District. But Basein record (App.Insc. no.6) states that he brought Candradityapura (modern Chandor in Nasik Dist.) into prominence. So Candradityapura seems to be the earliest headquarters of Yadavas and later with the rise of the kingdom it must have been shifted to Srinagar, either during the reign of Dridhaprahara himself or more probably during that of his successor.

Dridhaprahara figures also in the Jaina tradition, according to which he was a posthumous child of Vajrakumar, the last Yadava king of Dwarka. His pregnant mother was respectfully rescued by
the sage Divyana who burnt Dwarka, and was brought to Nasik where she gave birth to Dridhaprahara. He was later, popularly accepted as a king because of his protecting the people from the robbers. This tradition throws light on two points. It suggests the probable leanings of Dridhaprahara towards Jainism and gives an idea of the situation which brought him into prominence.

**Date of Dridhaprahara: Critical Examination**

The date of the foundation of Yadava dynasty is not known and has to be arrived at by conjecture. Kielhorn's line of reasoning in this case, is convincing and acceptable (EI-2, p. 215). Vaddiga of this line was a junior contemporary of Rashtrakuta Krishna III (939-967 A.D.) and Munja Paramara (972-998 A.D.), as he was married to the daughter of Krishna's younger brother Dhorappa (EI-2, p. 217). So Vaddiga, the 6th king, has to be placed in the 3rd quarter of the 10th century A.D. In that case the first king preceeded by five generations, cannot be placed earlier than c. 850 A.D.

Dr. Altekar is justified in assigning c. 860 A.D. as the probable date of Dridhaprahara (Yazdani, EHD, p. 516) because it is warranted by the political situation at that time, already discussed. By 860 A.D., Amoghavarsha had become free from his external engagements and internal revolts. Peace was made with the Gangas and the Gujarat Rashtrakutas and the king had turned more towards religion. It is quite likely that at this time, Dridhaprahara was rewarded with a fief for the service he might have rendered to his over-lord during the critical days.
Pt.B.Indraji had suggested c.818 A.D. as the date of Dridhaprahara (IA-12,p.126). He took Vaddiga to be contemporary of Jhanjha, the Silahara king of that name and then by assigning 30 years for each generation, arrived at the date of the founder. But this Jhanjha cannot be the Silahara king of that name as would be seen later. Dr.Bhandarkar had suggested c.754 A.D. as Dridhaprahara's date by the method of assigning 19 years for each generation from the date of Bhillama V (Bhandarkar,EHD,p.114). Both the dates are now obviously untenable and cannot be accepted.

**Dridhaprahara's Capital—Candradityapura**

Candradityapura the capital of Dridhaprahara has already been identified with modern Chandor in Nasik district (IA-12,p.124). This identification is worth examining from the geographic and archaeological points of view.

Chandor is centrally situated in the Nasik district on a highway from Berar to Nasik and the coast. It has the historic Chandor Fort, at an height of 3994 ft. on a flat-top hill. It very well commands the Chandor Pass. This pass is the major gate-way between Nasik and Khandesh as it cuts through the Satmala range which is a natural division between the valleys of the Girna in the north and Godavari in the south. Such a strategic station is quite likely to be raised to importance by the chief of Seunadesa.

Archaeologically, Chandor is an historic site. The antiquity of the town as such, goes to 17th century only. But the Chandor fort is of an early mediaeval period though its date is not known. The fort of Enkai in the same district is of similar style and could safely be treated contemporary with that of Chandor.
The former was in possession of Bhoja Paramara (1000-1055 A.D.) according to the Deolali grant (App.Insc.no.4). This throws light on the antiquity of both the forts. Unclimbable vertical rocks serving as fort walls and secret holes for entry have been the characteristics of the early mediaeval forts in the Chandor-Ajanta range. The Chandor fort has both the characteristics and so it must have existed in the 9th century.

Mid-way between the town and the fort is a Siva temple of Candresvara. Though it has been thoroughly modernised, the foundation of an early mediaeval temple at its base is clearly to be seen. Stylistically it is similar to the 12th-13th century temples at Sinnar and Zodaga. Though there is no evidence to take its antiquity back to the 9th century, it definitely belongs to the 12th or 13th century. May be, that no earlier relics have survived, at this place. In short, the geographic situation and the probable antiquity of the site justify the identification of Candradityapur with modern Chandor.

Seunacandra and his Successors

Dridhaprahara's son was Seunacandra who seems to be the founder of the real greatness of the family. It was he, more probably, who founded the capital Srinagar which became the head-quarters of the dynasty until replaced by Devagiri in 1187 A.D. The very fact that the country derived its name, Seunadesa from the king throws light on his abilities. The Kalas-budruk plates take him to be the first king of the line (App.Insc.no.2)

Seunacandra's successor was his son Dhadiyasa I who was followed by his son Bhillama I and then by Srira or Rajagi. Nothing is known about these kings.
It is the next one, the 6th king Vadugì or Vaddiga about whom reliable information is known from the Sangamner Cp.Pl. (App.Insc.no.1). He is said to be the feudatory of Krishnaraja (कृष्णराजस) who is Rashtrakuta Krishna III (A.D.937-967). Vaddugi was married to Dhorappa's daughter, Voddiyavva. This Dhorappa is Nirupum, the younger brother of Krishna III. So Vaddugi is a junior contemporary of Rashtrakuta Krishna III, must be placed in the 3rd quarter of the 10th century as suggested by Kielhorn (EI-2,p.214). Here we learn with a positive evidence that the Yadavas were feudatories of the Rashtrakutas down the reign of Vaddiga.

Dhadiyasa

The next king was Dhadiyasa according to Hemadri but the name is not found in the copper-plates (See the comparative chart of the genealogies). One important political change in the history of the Deccan occured during his reign. In A.D. 973 the Rashtrakutas who had dominated the Deccan for over two centuries were overthrown by Tailap, the founder of the Later Calukyas. The Calukyas were now destined to hold that mantle for another two hundred years.

Bhillama II, the Victorious

Dhadiyasa was followed by Bhillama II who is well-known by his Sangamner copper-plates of 1000 A.D., the earliest Yadava record so far available. The Silahara records also throw light on him. The Baroda Museum copper plates of Aparajitadeva state that his kingdom extended from Bhillama's country to the Western sea. (Verse 32). This shows that Bhillama's western frontiers touched the Silahara kingdom. So he was an established king by 993 A.D., the date of this record.
This Aparajita was loyal to the Rashtrakutas even after their fall. He had attempted to overthrow the Calukyas but failed in the venture. Now this Aparajita claims to have given protection to Bhillama in another SIlahara record, the Kharepatan copper-plates of Anantadeva (IA-9,p.34). This means Bhillama must have first made a common cause with Aparajita and then conveniently transferred his loyalty to the Calukyas.

Bhillama was a staunch supporter of Tailap Calukya who was also known as Ranarangabhima. He rendered valuable help to his over-lord in destroying Vakpati Munja (974-998 A.D.). This must have been a great achievement for him because Munja had repelled Calukya attacks six times and having made a bid to exterminate Tailap, had undertaken an invasion of Deccan. But Munja was captured and killed. Bhillama holding the fort of Chandor, commanding the route from Berar to Nasik, must quite likely have played an important role in facing this invasion. The Sangamner record glorifies him for destroying Munja and making 'the goddess of fortune observe the vow of a chaste woman in the house of Ranarangabhima'. His title 'Vijayabharana' seems to suggest this victory and the building of the temple of Vijayabharanath was probably meant to commemorate the same. The Yadava dominions must have expanded by this time as now Sangamner in Ahmednagar district is in his kingdom.

According to Bassein record (App.Insc.no.6) Bhillama was married to one Lastiyavva, daughter of some Jhanjha of Rashtrakuta line. The Kalas-budruk plates state that his wife was Laxmi who illuminated the Yadava and Rashtrakuta families (1-9). So Laxmi and Lastiyavva are identical.
Yesuei

Bhillama's successor was his son Vesugi. He is described as the jewel of the Samantas. He was married to Sri Nayilladevi, daughter of Goggiraja, the ruler of Lata. This Goggiraja was the son of Barappa who was Tailapa's general in Lata. These rulers of Lata were at war with the Solankis of Anhilwad. Barappa had lost Lata to Mularaja Solanki (942-998 A.D.) and Goggiraja recovered it from Mularaja's successor Camundaraja (998-1010 A.D.). We do not know whether Vesugi helped Goggiraja in his struggles against Anhilwad, because of this matrimonial alliance.

Bhillama III

The next king was Bhillama III. Two of his copper-plates are known. The Kalas-budruk grant of 1026 A.D. (App.Insc.no.2) and the Deolali grant of 1052 A.D. (App.Insc.no.4). The recent discovery of the second record has given new information about this king.

He was married to Hamma or Avalladevi, the daughter of his over-lord Calukya Jayasimha II (1015-1043 A.D.). His political relations with his father-in-law are not known. One Calukya feudatory Bijjarasa is said to have defeated Bhillama. This throws light on the domestic condition of the Calukya kingdom, which was threatened by internal revolts for sometime during the reign of Jayasimha.

Bhillama continued also under Jayasimha's successor Somesvara I (1043-1068 A.D.) who had invaded Malwa and defeated Bhoja Paramara (1000-1055 A.D.). Bhillama seems to have played some part in the defeat of Bhoja because we learn from the Deolali grant that he had obtained the fort of Enkai in Nasik district, from Bhoja. The commander of this fort, one Sridharadandanayaka appointed by Bhoja
continued his services under Bhillama. The Yadava patrimony had expanded by this time and Bhillama had samantas under him, like Mankha and Sripat. His mahapradhana was one brahmin Manamvanayaka or Manambuva (App.Insc.no.2).

Bhillama III was succeeded by Yadugi who was then followed by Bhillama IV. But nothing is known about these rulers. It is learnt from the Calukya records that Nagadeva, a general of Somesvara I subdued a revolt of the Yadavas shortly before 1060 A.D. The Yadava kingdom seems to have declined during this period.

Seunacandra II

Then came to the throne Seunacandra II who proved again an illustrious ruler of the line. Two grants of his reign are available. The Bassein copper-plates dated 1069 A.D. (App.Insc.no.6) issued by himself and the Vaghali inscription by his sub-feudatory Govindaraja also in the same year (App.Insc.no.3).

After the death of Bhillama IV, he is said to have uplifted the kingdom which must have suffered reverses during earlier period. He was a staunch supporter of his Galukya over-lord Vikramaditya VI who was known as Paramardideva (1076-1126 A.D.). Vikramaditya was at war with his brother Somesvara II (1068-1076 A.D.) and acquired the throne of Kalyani after defeating him. Seunacandra must have championed the cause of Vikramaditya against his brother.

Seunacandra's title was Mahamandalanath and he had feudatories under him, one of whom was the Maurya prince Govindaraja in Khandesh whose ancestors are said to have come from Valabhi in Saurashtra. Seunacandra had a ministry of seven members as known from Vaghali inscription. His reign will have to reasonably placed sometime between c.1060 A.D. and 1090 A.D.
Erammadeva and his Successors

Seunacandra II was succeeded by his son Erammadeva who is also known as Parammadeva from Hemadri. He has issued the Asvi copper-plates of 1098 A.D. (App.Insc.no.7) according to which his wife was Yogilla. This record has attributed the enthronement of Vikramaditya to him but as learnt from Hemadri, it was the work of Seunacandra. May be, that Erammadeva had played some part in the war led by his father.

Simharaja, the next ruler was a feudatory of Vikramaditya and is known to have helped his master to complete his Karpuravrata. Then, one Mahasamanta Seunacandra, is known to be ruling over Nasik region in 1142 A.D. He is not noted by Hemadri and is known only from his Anjaneri inscription (App.Insc.no.8). He is likely to be a sub-feudatory of the Yadavas as suggested by Dr. Bhandarkar.

Mallugi

The next king Mallugi was a feudatory of Tailap III (1151-56 A.D.), who was over-thrown by Kalacuri Bijjala in 1156 A.D. The Kalacuri usurpation of the Calukya kingdom for nearly a quarter of a century (1156-1181 A.D.) constitutes one of the major political changes in the history of the Deccan. Mallugi stood firmly against this enemy of the Calukyas. As known from Hemadri he extended his own kingdom in Berar by capturing Parnakheta (identified with Parnakheda in Akola district). From there he also invaded Orissa which was ruled by the Eastern Gangas. This invasion must have been undertaken after the death of Vajrahasta Anantavarman (c.1150 A.D.) when the Ganga power had declined. Hemadri states that Mallugi captured Orissan elephants, which is quite likely because he had a general specialised in elephant warfare.
We learn from the Suktimuktavali of Jalhana (1257 A.D.) that the commander of the elephant corps under Mallugi was one Dada. He smashed Bijjana's army. Dada had four sons, Mahidhara, Jalha, Samba and Gangadhara. They were responsible for the prosperity of Mallugi's kingdom. Mahidhara the eldest of them, also had defeated Bijjala. But in spite of these defeats Bijjala ultimately became victorious. Mallugi's struggle with Bijjala seems more for acquiring the imperial status for himself rather than for saving the Calukya empire.

**Successors of Mallugi**

Mallugi was followed by his son **Amaragangeya**. But about these later successors of the Yadava line we do not get reliable information. According to Hemadri Amaragangeya was succeeded by **Amaramallugi**, Govindaraja and Kaliyaballala one after another. According to the Gadag inscription (App.Insc.no.14) issued by Bhillama V, Mallugi had two sons **Amaragangeya** and **Karna**. The former was followed by his son **Amaramallugi** who was soon overpowered by Kaliyaballala. This led to an anarchy in the Yadava kingdom which was ended by Karna's son Bhillama V. This account may be treated reliable as suggested by Dr. Altekar, because it comes from Bhillama himself who can be presumed to have given correct information about his father. Mallugi's successors were incompetent rulers and could not take advantage of the weakness of Kalacuri kingdom after Bijjala. But soon Bhillama V was to make new history for the Yadava dynasty.
References

6. Altekar, Rashtrakutas, p.50.
7. Rajaprasasti-I

10. Calukyas claim their origin from Candra, the Kalacuris from Kartavirya-juna and the Silaharas from Jimutavahana. The Hoyasalas also, like Yadavas, call themselves lords of Dwarka and belonging to the race of Yadu.

11. Archaeology cannot throw any light on this problem unless some material culture could be associated with the Yadavas as such. Moreover, the Yadava dynasty must also be linked up with the Yadava tribe with the help of some evidence. This does not seem to be possible. It may be noted that the excavations at Dwarka (carried out in 1963 by the Deccan College, Poona and the Govt. of Gujarat) have not yielded any material which could be associated with the Yadavas.

13. Rajaprasasti-I
14. Rajaprasasti-I

Bhandarkar, EHD, p.154.


16. This tradition recorded in the Prakrit-work Nasaka-kalpa of Jinaprabhasuri (13th century A.D.) is quoted by Bhagawanlal Indraji (IA-12,p.124). It is not understood how Dr.Altekar writes that Dridhprahara's mother was saved by Jinaprabhasuri himself (Yazdani,EHD,p.516).

17. Chandor was personally explored by the author on 7-11-1961 with the help and co-operation of the local municipal officials. The fort could not be claimed at that time for want of some bhil who alone could guide the routes.


20. The Kharepatan copper-plates describe Aparajitadeva as:

This can be read as: because there is no distinction between and in the record.

So three names are given out of which Bhillama is our Bhillama II. Amma may be identified with the king Ammana occurring in line 33 of the Baroda Museum copper-plates of Aparajita. The third name remains a problem. One Manambuva or Manamvanayaka occurs as a mahapradhana of Bhillama III in his kalas-budruk grant of 1025 A.D. This Manambuva could quite likely have lived also under Bhillama II. But it cannot be said that the same man is referred to, alongwith the kings, in the said line.

I am thankful to Dr.M.G.Dixit for drawing my attention to the references in the Silahara records and asking me to investigate the above point. I am obliged to B.L.Shanbhogue for helping me to interpret the Sanskrit texts.


22. EI-2. These lines 41-42 quoted below seem to refer to Vaddiga in the plates. But the mistake in the record is pointed out by Kielhorn. They undoubtedly refer to Bhillama but seem to be confused by the scribe.
23. Dr. Altekar adds that Bhillama eventually shifted his capital to Sinnar. But it is not understood how he says so. Sinnar was already the capital and Dr. Altekar has noted the fact in the same article (Yazdani, EHD, p.516-7).

24. This Jhanjha cannot be the Silahara king whose date is c.910-30 A.D. Dr. Altekar has presumed him to be a Rashtrakuta king. (Yazdani, EHD, p.517). This is quite likely because his daughter is called Rashtrakutanvadya, but no Rashtrakuta king of that name is known. He might be some unknown distant member of that family.

Bassein copper-plates, in verse 5 state: 

25. IA-17, Kalasbudruk grant, 1-10.

26. IA-12, Bassein grant, verse 6: 

27. Chaulukya of Gujarat, p.29,35.

28. Dr. Altekar has mistaken this record to be that of Seunacandra II and has accordingly placed his accession in c.1050 A.D. (Yazdani, EHD, p.518). The misunderstanding is due to the fact that the same record contains another undated grant by Seunacandra, in continuation of the first.

29. IA-12, Bassein grant, verse 9: 

30. Struggle for Empire, p.167.


32. Struggle for Empire, p.172.

33. IA-12, Bassein grant, line 10: 

RAJAH YEN SAMHUTSAMIKHET RAMAGMATHE SHIYAM 
DAUJAMITAMAJJAPRASADDAY BOKEVALY VARSHAM 11 10 11.
34. Rajaprasasti-I
समुद्रातो चेत महामुकोष
दिर्यं विदम्बचितरं दिवं।
आरुप्यायं च बालकन्यकुन्तलाः
कल्याणं राजस्यं स च चेत। || 29 ||
Bhandarkar, EHD, p. 155.

35. Rajaprasasti-I
वेदार्थी पुरातनमानसरी कन्यारत्नमेलं गणम्।
सं कपिलिन्दे युगिकरसरासरितं। || 34 ||
Bhandarkar, EHD, p. 156.


37. Rajaprasasti-I
आसाथं सवं स निचालहतोऽ
अर्थिर्विदितेः नरां रितुबमाः।
अहारि चेतनबुद्धमिथ्यापि
सुमुगमयं कथं हृदेन्। || 34 ||
Bhandarkar, EHD, p. 156.

38. Suktimuktavali, verse 5.
सत्यसनसंगृहीतक्रिणनाथो राजा सत्यसनसंगृहीतक्रिणनाथो
सम्प्रदायक्रिणनाथप्रवृत्तं देवभयं जयं संग्रामं विक्रमेऽ
पत्त्वरस्यी संज्ञातास्य न पत्त्वरस्यी।
शुभं इन हो: सम्प्रदायक्रिणनाथमार्गशिराः। || 5 ||

भुविक्रिणनाथरूपम् निगमां इत्ये कष्टम्।
स्यालोर महीन्योऽजह सम्भवपुराणाः। || 6-7 ||
उपायेऽर्थे काले अजुमिहेषु सुप्रेमोऽर्थे।
मृत्तिकास्तोत्सवस्थ राज्यं विनाशे सहस्त्राङ्गे। || 7 ||
40. Suktimuktavali, verse 8:

"विज्ञापनवन्दनदात्रां विमल अनुजस्वेश यो कृतवाद्।
वीरस्य अद्वैतं स न कफ्यं महिद्रा। सुध्यः।"

41. Yazdani, EHD, p. 519.