Chapter I.

Introduction; The Candellas and the Candella territory.

The Candellas, from a humble beginning, reached a feudatory status owing allegiance to the Imperial Pratihāras, and, at a critical moment in the latter's history, earned distinction by rendering effective assistance to Kṣitipaladeva, humiliated by his powerful antagonists. As the hour of the break-up of the Pratihāras drew nearer, the Candellas went on increasing their strength by enlarging their dominion, especially by the capture of the strategic fortresses of Kālañjar and Gwalior, ultimately emerging as an independent power in Central India obviously actuated by the policy of building up an empire under some of their energetic and ambitious rulers. They ruled for a period of over three centuries, from the 10th to the beginning of the 14th century A.D., when after a protracted resistance they were finally overwhelmed by the invasions of the Turks. Thus the Candellas were among the last defenders of Hindu rule against the onslaught of the Muslims.

The region, in which the Candellas were dominant as can be ascertained from epigraphic records, was known as Jejābhukti.  

2. ibid. P. 129, V. 45.  
3. ibid. P. 221, V. 10.
Jejabhuktika or Jejakabhukti, the ancient name of modern Bundelkhand. The name Bundelkhand, which became current later was associated with the Bundel Rājputs, who appeared as a political power in this region in the 14th century. Evidently this name had no connection with the Gandellas. To the Gandellas the region was known as Jejābhukti. This name, as they claim in one of their own inscriptions owed its origin to Prince Jayaśakti of this family, whose name is also given in different forms, like Jejjākā, and Jejā. The Mahobā Inscriptions says, 'as Prthu gave his name to Prthivi, so Jejā gave his name to Jejābhukti'.

The extent of the Gandella kingdom, as mentioned in V. 45 of the Khajurāho Inscription of V. S. 1011, was marked by the town of Bhhavat on the river Mālavā (i.e., Bhilsā on the Betwā) on the west, the Jumna on the north with Gopādri or Gwalior in the north-east. The southern frontier may have been the Kāimur hills on the Narmadā river. This statement of the Khajurāho Inscription (V. S. 1011) regarding the limits of the

4. Ratnapur Stone Inscription of Kalacuri Jājalladeva.
5. Madampur Stone Inscription No. 10., Ll. 2-3;
7. ibid., P. 221., V. 10.
8. ibid.
9. ibid., P. 129.
Candella kingdom is generally supported by the references to the
districts or visayas owned by them which are to be found in
their land-grants and other inscriptions. The area indicated
approximately coincides with the modern Bundelkhand, comprising
in its wider extent all the country to the south of the Jumna
and the Gangâ, from the Betâwa river on the west to the temple
of Vindhyavâsinîdevî (South Mirzâpur) on the east, including
the districts of Chanderi, Saugor and Bilhari, near the sources
of the Narmadâ on the south. The Candella territory, according
to Smith, included the districts of Hamirpur, Bândâ, Lalitpur
(a subdivision of Jhânsi), with parts of Allahâbâd and Mirzâpur
in the United Provinces (Uttar Pradesh), the Saugor and Damoh
districts in the Central Provinces (Madhya Pradesh), and a large
intermediate space, which under British rule was occupied by
a number of small native states.

Once the region was known as Jijhoti, Jajhoti, or Jajâhuti. This name is preserved in the epithet 'Jajhotiya' (Jijhotiya)
applied to Brâhmans and Dâniyas resident in the area, and
distributed in different parts of Bundelkhand. The expression
'Jajhoti' may be equated with the Chinese 'Chih-chî-to' or
'Chi-ki-to' (according to Beal), the name of the country visited
by Hiuen Tsang in 641-42 A.D. According to the pilgrim
Chih-chî-to lay "more than 1000 li to the north-east of Ujjain,

10. Anc. Geog. of India (Cunningham) P. 552.
12. Y.C., II., P. 251.

Smith's note. Y.C., II., P. 342.
and more than 900 li to the south of Mahesvarapura" (Gwalior). The indications given, according to Smith, bring us to the western frontier of Jijhoti on the Betwa river. As regards the capital of the ancient state of Jijhoti, the Chinese pilgrim does not refer to it by name, he only records, "its capital about 15 li in circuit .... The king, who was a Brahmin, was a firm believer in Buddhism, and encouraged men of merit and learned scholars of other lands collected here in numbers".

Later records, both indigenous and foreign, refer to Khajurāho as the capital of Jajāhuti. There is no other indication to show that Khajurāho acquired any importance prior to the rise of the Candellas early in the 10th century A.D. Y.A. Smith, on the other hand, suggests that Brakān (or Grakān) on the Bina river, a tributary of the Betwa, 45 miles west-north-west from Saugor, was the capital of Jijhoti in the 7th century A.D., as it agrees with the distance referred to by Hiuen Tsang, which is not impossible.

15. I.A., XXVII., P. 131. Chih-chi-to, according to Watters, is modern Chitor (Y.C., II., P. 251), which is also supported by Dr. H.C. Ray (D.H.N.I., II., P. 670).
17. Abu Rihān refers to Kajurāhah as the capital of Jajhoti or Jajhāoti (Reinaud, Fragment Arabes P. 106); Ibn Bātutā (1335 A.D.) calls it Kajurā or Kajarrā (Ibn Bātutā by Gibb, Pp. 226 & 363); Al Biruni mentions that the capital of Jajāhuti was Kajurāha (Trans. by Sachau, I., P. 202); Kharjuravāhaka is the Sanskritised version of Khajurāho (Khajuraho Insce., Y.S* 1059., E.I., I., P. 147. Ll. 32-33.
From the facts stated above it appears most probable that Jijhoti or Chih-chi-to and Jejakabhukti denoted more or less the same area, now known as Bundelkhand. The Candella claim as to the origin of the name Jejakabhukti cannot be accepted without further investigation. Some are of opinion that 'Jejakabhukti' was shortened into 'Jijhoti' in the same way as 'Tirabhukti' became modern 'Tirhut'. But it must be noted that Jijhoti was the earlier name, if its equation with the name given by Hiuen Tsang is to be accepted. The Candella records trace the name Jejakabhukti back to the time of Jayasakti, who was also called Jejäka and Jeja. He seems to have been the first ruler in the Candella family to have assumed a definite political status, at least that of a feudatory. It is not unlikely that the Candella region was organised into a 'bhukti' and placed under him as a feudatory so that it came to be known after his name, the bhukti of Jeja or Jejak. The similarity between the different forms of the ancient name of Bundelkhand is obviously very striking, viz., Jijhoti, Jajhoti, Jajhāoti, Jajahuti, Jajahoti, Jejahuti, Jejabhukti, Jejakabhukti, Jejabhuktika and the Chinese form Chih-chi-to or Chi-ki-to. This seems to account for the suggestion that Jijhoti is an abbreviation of Jejakabhukti.

Almost the whole of the eastern part of Central India, known as Bundelkhand, is a low-lying tract, marked by the outlying branches of the northern range of the Eastern Vindhya. These hills are not higher than 2000 feet. The Pānna range,

which is a branch of the Vindhyas in Bundelkhand, extends from south-west to north-east, and plays the dominant role in the geological formation of the region. The other Vindhyayan range, known as the Kāiāur range, north of the Son, stands as a boundary between Bundelkhand and Baghelkhand. From these hills a number of rivers flow north or north-east towards the Jumna, of which the most important are the Betwā, the Dhāsan, the Ken and the Tons. Besides, there is a number of minor rivers in the region, viz., the Pāhuj, the Jānni, the Birmā, the Bhagain and the Paisuni.

The rivers and the hill-ranges divide this part of Central India into separate zones with differing physical characteristics, as mentioned below:

(i) Between the Sindh (Sindhu) and the Dhāsan (Daśārnā) lies the first segment of Bundelkhand, which includes the valley of the Betwā or the Vetravati one of the important rivers of northern India. It rises in Bhopal State and flows in a north-easterly direction to meet the Jumna near the town of Hamirpur. The Dhāsan itself is one of its tributaries. The Pāhuj is also in this area, rising near Datiā and meeting the Sindh a few miles before the latter's confluence with the Jumna, and Jānni is a small tributary of the Betwā, meeting the latter near Orchhā. Till recently the two important Bundelā states, Datiā and Orchhā, the Bājpūr state Santhār, and some petty principalities like Dhurwāi, Bijnā and Jigni and the intervening districts of Jhānai and Jalaun comprised the area.

(ii) The stretch of territory between the Dhāsan and the Ken (Karnavati) rivers formerly comprised states of Pānnā,
Chārkharī, Chātarpur and the estates of Sarilā, Bānkāpāhāri, Ālipūrā, Bijāwār, Gaurihār and Gārrāuli, and the important district of Hamirpur. Immediately after the Ken, rises the Pānnā range, which traverses right across Bundelkhand. Below the Ken, near its confluence with the Jumna, but to the north of the Pānnā range, is located the Bāndā district which should also come in this group. It is watered by the small river named Baghain, which pours itself into the Jumna.

(iii) Between the Pānnā range and the Kaimur there is a low-lying tract, generally sloping towards the Gangetic basin. The eastern portion is watered by the river Tons, rising from the Kaimur hill to the south of Maihār. Further below are the districts of Dāmoh and Saugar of the Central Provinces (Madhya Pradesh) bounded on the south by the hill range known as Bāñner or Bānder. Below the Kaimur is the Son, which issues from the Amarkantaka and flows north and turns right only from the base of the Kaimur.

The boundaries of the Chandella dominion, of course, varied from time to time. But it always included Mahobā, Kālanjar, Khajurāho and Ajayagadh, all of which are situated in the central segment of Bundelkhand. Mahobā, now a small country-town in the Hamirpur district, 54 miles to the south of Hamirpur town and 34 miles to the north of Khajurāho, is associated by tradition very closely with the Chandella dynasty. The bardic account entitled, the Mahobā Khand,²³ is the popular legend of Parmal’s war with Prthviraj Cauhan. Many spots and buildings at and near

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²³ Ed. by Sri S.S. Das under the title, Parmāl Rāso. Prthvirāj Rāso by Cand Bardai also describes it in the chapter, ‘Mahobā Samaya’ Pp. 2507-2615.
Mahoba preserve the memory of Candella kings and princes. Some of the kings are remembered for having excavated lakes or built temples, viz., Râhilya-sâgar and a granite temple on its embankment (named after Râhila), Kirât-sâgar and a Śiva temple, the remains of which are found near the dargâh (Kirtivarman), Madansâgar and the granite temple, Kâkrâ Maraḥ (Madanavarman). The remains of the palace of Paramardi (Paramâl), on the top of a slightly fortified hill known as the Fort are still noticeable, though later turned into a mosque.

Khajurâhô (Khajurâha, Kharjumâhaka) with its group of magnificent temples, was according to Smith, the religious city of the Cândellas. There are more than thirty temples at Khajurâhô and the neighbouring village Jâtkâri, all testifying to the grandeur of Candella rule and its patronage of art, sculpture and architecture. In the opinion of competent scholars they are some of the finest groups of Hindu temples in Northern India. It is believed that the splendour of Khajurâhô reached its peak in the 10th cent. A.D. under Candella rule.

Of the eight forts ascribed to the Candellas by tradition, Kalañjar is the most important and believed to have been the military centre of the kingdom. It has a long antiquity and from the very ancient times the hill had been a favourite resort of Śaiva ascetics. It is included in the list of holy places of Northern India given in the Purânas and the

25. ibid. P. 132.
26. ibid. P. 133.
27. ibid. P. 131.
Mahābhārata. The Candeellas came to occupy it under Yāsavarman early in the 10th century A.D., and the Candeella rulers thenceforward were decorated with the title 'Kālānjārādhipati' until the time of the last known ruler of the family, Ḥeṃmīravarman. It is interesting in this connection to note that all these places (Mahoba, Khajurāho and Kālānjār) which played important parts in the history of the Candeellas were located in the central segment of Bundelkhand.

Barring Garha and Maihār, which are near Jabalpur (Madhya Pradesh), other Candeella forts are also situated in the central sector, between the Hāsan and the Ken, as specified in the list of natural sub-divisions of Bundelkhand mentioned above (No. ii). Of them the fortress of Ajaygadh (Jayadurga) played a no less significant role in the Candeella history. Though the main portion of the state of Ajaiygarh is in the southern part of Bundelkhand the fortress of the name was on the fringe of the Pāmā hills, just below the Ken to the southeast of Mahoba and south-west of Kālānjār. Trailokyavarman, who succeeded Pāramarī early in the 13th century A.D., had his headquaters at this fort. A tank in the fort is ascribed to Pārmāl (Pāramarī), and there are inscriptions of his

28. Matsya Purāṇa XIII. 32; Matsya & Padma Purāṇas quoted by Hemādri in his 'Caturvarga-cintāmaṇi' (Śrāddha Kanda) P. 30; Mbh. (Vana Parva), Bengal Recension, Chap. 85, V. 56-57. It is also mentioned in the Kāsikā. IV, 2, 125 "Vṛdchājjanapadavadheh - Kālānjāraḥ ... Kālānjjaraḥakah/".
successors, Trailokyavarman, Viravarman, Bhojavarman and Hammiravarman. Smith believes that after the capture of Kālañjar by Kutubuddin in 1203 A.D., the Candella chiefs resided ordinarily at Ajaygadh, which was about 20 miles from Kālañjar.

Bārīgarh, Maniyāgarh, Marphā and Maudhā are other forts ascribed to the Candellas by tradition. Bārīgarh is in Charkhāri, about 10 miles from Mahobā. Maniyāgarh is a large ruined fort on the left bank of the Ken river on a hill overlooking the town of Raigarh in the former Chātāpur State. It is believed by some scholars to have been the original seat of the Gandella clan. Marphā is in the Bānda district, 12 miles to the north-east of Kālañjar, and Maudhā in the north-eastern corner of the Hamirpur district.

Epigraphic records refer to some of the viśayās or districts of the Gandella dominion. Karigāva viśaya, roundabout modern Kargāwa, 9 miles north-east of Pachār (Jhānsi district), was in the northern sector. The royal encampment at Vilāsapura, from where a number of land-grants were issued, is to be identified with Pachār, which was known by the name Vilāsapura even some 10 or 15 generations ago. Dudāhi viśaya, the modern place of the same name (Dudhāi), and Vaḍavārī viśaya, modern

33. ibid. P. 18.
34. Pachār Plate (V.S. 1233) E.I. X., Pp. 44-49.
36. ibid.
Berwārā, were both in the Lalitpur sub-division of the same district. Kirtigiri37 (Deogadh), on the left bank of the Betwā, was also in the Lalitpur sub-division. Vikaura viṣaya38, identified with modern Beekore, 4-5 miles south-west of Madanpur, in the northern part of the Saugor district, was to the north of the Hāsan.

Though located further south in Mālwā, Bhāsvat or Bhailasavāmin (modern Bhilsā) on the bank of the Betwā near Sānchi, may also be included in this group. Sudāli viṣaya, mentioned in the Nānyaura Plate '0' (V.S. 1190)39, was possibly located near Bhilsā, as the grant was issued while Madanavarman was in residence there.

On the north-western side of Bundelkhand we find mention of the town of Padmaṭatī40 (identified with Narwar, also known as Malapura) on the bank of the Sindh. Beyond the river the Candella territory for sometime extended upto the hill-fortress of Gopādri (Gwālior).41

The central sector of Bundelkhand, the hub of the Candella dominions also comprised a number of viṣayas. Beginning from the north-east we find references to (i) the Sracha viṣaya, modern Brich on the Betwā, 66 miles from Mahoba in the Hamirpur district,

42. ibid. P. 129, V. 45.
(ii) the Nandāvana viśaya, which included the village Nandīni or Nandanddeo or Mundodeo, some 10 miles south-west of Icchāwār in the Bāndā district, (iii) the Navarāṣṭramandala-viśaya stated to have been situated on the bank of the Jumna, either in the Bāndā or in the Allāhābād district. All these districts belong to the Candellas, according to their own inscriptions. A land grant was issued by Candella Dhaṅga from Kaṅkā (Benares). It is also known from the Khajurāho record of V.S. 1059 that Dhaṅga died voluntarily sacrificing his body at the sacred confluence of the Ganges and the Jumna, Prayāga.

The Kirayidā viśaya, being identifiable with Kiraḍi, 5 miles from Mahobā, may have been situated near the capital of the Candella territory. In the south-western portion of the central segment may be located the Pāṇiuli viśaya (the former state of Pāṇa) and the Dahi viśaya (the former Bijāwar state). The Gārṛa plates of V.S. 1261 refer to a village, Lohasihani (identified with modern Lohani in Bijāwar) as included in the viśaya of Vikrauni. Vikrauni of this record and Vikaura of the Saurā Plates are taken to be identical.

44. Icchāwār Plates (V.S. 1228) I.A. XXV., Pp. 205-08.
47. B.I. I., Pp. 139, 146. V. 55.
52. ibid. P. 274.
There is a reference to a visaya, named Vedesaitha, in the Chārkharī Plate, which, however, is not identifiable. But this record was issued from Vilāsapura, believed to be identical with the modern village of Pachār, as has already been mentioned. If this identification is accepted it will appear that the Vedesaitha visaya was also somewhere in the central sector of Bundelkhand.

In the south-eastern part of Bundelkhand, on the borders of Baghelkhand, between the Pāmā range and the Kāimur range, was the feudatory state of Kakarejikā, modern Kakrēti, on the table-land at the head of the principal pass, the Mamani Ghat, leading to the west towards Bandā, Kālānjīr and Mahobā. A series of copper plates of the Mahārājanas of Kakarejikā reveals that they owed allegiance to the Cedis, but later became feudatories of the Candellas, when Tānilokyavarman wrested control of the region from the Cedis sometime before 1239 A.D.

The geological formation of southern Bundelkhand, marked by the branching ranges of the Vindhyas, already referred to, has greatly influenced the character of the plain country lying between the hills and the Jumna, which is alluvial due to the course of the rivers, rising from the different parts of the Vindhyān ranges, which flow across the north-eastern and western parts of Bundelkhand. It is estimated that about 8000 sq. miles, to the west of the Pāmā range, is level country, and the remainder falls in the rugged tract formed by that branch of the Vindhyas.

54. I.A. XVII., P. 224.
Compared to Malwā or the western part of Central India, the soil of Bundelkhand is poor, being sandy and often strewn with boulders. Even comparatively fertile portions of the land require artificial irrigation. In spite of this physical handicap the people of the country were predominantly agricultural, and their prosperity depended on favourable agricultural conditions. Epigraphic records show that the people of Bundelkhand were anxious to raise the fertility of the soil by excavating tanks, wells and canals, and by constructing embankments.

Varieties of soil that are still found in the different parts of Bundelkhand, are locally known as 'the Mar, the Kabar and the Rākar'. The Mar type of soil is of black or dark colour and is specially suitable for growing wheat, cotton, &c. The Kabar soil is a variety of light black colour with differing qualities. The Mar and the Kabar are found in most of the Bundelkhand districts, specially in the plains. But from Jhansi to Lalitpur the prevailing colour of the soil is largely red or yellow. This is locally known as 'rākar' or 'rânkār'. A red or yellow loam, called 'Parwā', resembling the ordinary loam soil of the Doab, occurs in many parts of the Banda districts.

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59. I.G.I. IX., P. 68.
60. ibid. VI., P. 351.
In this connection it may be interesting to note that the Ajaygadh inscription of the time of Bhosavarman mentions "Pitaśaila-viṣayesu-adhipatimā" (Lords of the Yellow-mountain districts), as an epithet of the Candella rulers, which has not so far been properly explained, as the viṣay of that name could not be identified. The term, as it appears to me, was used in a figurative sense to indicate the 'rākar'-soil districts of Bundelkhand, which constituted the centre of the Candella kingdom.