CHAPTER I

ON DEFINING HUNDALKHAND
I- THE ORIGIN AND ANTIQUITY OF THE NAME

(a) a Controversial Question :-

When and wherefrom the word 'Sundelkhand' originated is a question to which many scholars have tried to answer, but the lack of unanimity among them on the matter has left the question as burning as ever. Interesting as well as intriguing it is to find that some place its origin in the 14th century A.D.¹ whereas others trace its root to as early times as that of Pulinda tribe in Pre-historic times.² Again, if some rely on the legend of Vīra Pañcama³ (Hem Kiran of the Garwār clan) for its origin, others hold that it was born from the word 'Vindhya'⁴ and we know that a mountain range with this name characterises the region. It is indeed difficult to present a satisfactory solution when such keen controversy rages round the question. Nevertheless, after making an objective analysis of the evidence and opinions on the matter, we may try to reach one.

(b) Ancient Names of the Region :-

Čedi appears to be the earliest name of the area available to us from the Sanskrit literature. To quote

1. Deva, Shrikrishna: 'The Temples of Khajurano in central India'- Ancient India, No. 15, 1959, P. 43.
2. त्रिपाठी, प्र. : हुंदेलकण्ड की पारंपरिकता, - प. 7-6.
3. Ibid. P. 1.
4. वृत्ति, प्र. : 'हुंदेलकण्ड की पारंपरिकता - एक सर्कैट्रण' - हुंदेलकण्ड विद्यालय संस्थापन, उदयपुर नागर, पारंपरिक समिति, दृष्टिगतिक संग्रह १९७३, प. २२५.
Dr. B.C. Law, \(^1\) "Čedi country lay near the Jumna and was contiguous to the kingdom of Kurus.... It roughly corresponds to the modern Bundelkhand." Dr. D.R. Bhandarkar\(^2\) identifies Četa or Četiya with modern Bundelkhand. Pargiter\(^3\) places Čedi along the south of the Jumna.

When did this name of Bundelkhand vanish into oblivion, we cannot say exactly. But during the Gupta Period, it certainly acquired another appellation. From the Khoh Copper Plate of Maharaja Śambhaṇobha of the year A.D. 528-29, we know that the region was called Ḍabhala or Ḍahala in his time. According to Fleet, "In Ḍabhala or Ḍahala, we have undoubtedly the older form of Ḍałala, Ḍālala, Ḍahala, and Dhalā which seems to represent the modern Bundelkhand and which was in later times a province of the Hainayans or Kalacuris of Tripuri near Jabalpur, whose original capital was Kālaṇjar in Bundelkhand.\(^5\) Prof. V.V. Mirash is of the view that the Kalacuris came to be known as Čayyās or lords of the Čedi country from the time of Vāmarāja (A.D. 675-700). In later times Čedi came to signify the modern provinces of Baghelkhand.\(^6\) As Vāmarāja ruled long after the Gupta period, it appears that the name Čedi continued to be applied to Bundelkhand even after Ḍānala had come into being.

The Čandella period witnessed the birth of yet another name for Bundelkhand, this time specifically given by a Čandella king after his own. Verse 16 of the Mahoba stone

\(^1\) Historical Geography of Ancient India, PP.312-313. 
\(^2\) Ibid. 
\(^3\) Ibid. 
\(^4\) C.I.I., Vol.III, No.25 
\(^5\) Ibid, P.114 
\(^6\) C.I.I.,Vol.IV, Introduction, P. LXX
inscription tells us that there was a king, Jejā by name, after whom Jejā-bhukti was named; just as this earth (Prthivī) after Prthu. Thus Bundelkhand during the Ćandella Period was known as Jejā-bhukti or Jejākabhukti.

Hiuen Tsang, the chinese traveller, has spoken of a country named Chin-Chi-To or Chi-Ki-To which according to Cunningham should be taken for Jejākabhukti. Dr.N.S.Bose and Dr.H.C.Ray reject this identification on the ground that Hiuen Tsang had come to India much earlier than the time of king Jayaśakti who is credited with having renamed the region of Bundelkhand.

According to Dr.K.L.Agrawal the word 'Chi-Ki-To' which is phonetically equivalent to Ćitrakūṭa tells us that Ćitrakūṭ-apradēśa was the name of Bundelkhand before the rise of the Ćandellas, one of whom renamed it.

The last name of the area, of course, is Bundelkhand which is current even today.

In addition to the names, mentioned above, Bundelkhand had some more appellations. Ancient Geographer Ptolemy's Sandrabatis or Sandabatis has been taken by Cunningham to stand for the province around Khajurāho. Pulinda Deśa has also been understood to be a name for the western part of Bundelkhand.

1. E.I., Vol.I, No.XXVII, V.10 -- जेजाभुक्ति स ज्ञेयो नृपति ष म रूप स तेजाभुक्ति ।
7. Sagar District Gazetteer, P.45.
The Origin of the term 'Bundela':-

First suggestion in this regard is that of Gorelal Tiwari who opines that the name originated from 'Vindhyelakhaṇḍa'. Beyond doubt is the fact that the Vindhyas constitute the sole mountain range of the region. Yet his suggestion is not acceptable, because 'Vindhyelakhaṇḍa' is conspicuously absent in the ancient names of the area found in literature and inscriptions.

Dr. B.P. Tripathi, the noted philologist, has attempted to trace the root of the word 'Bundela' to the ancient tribe of Pulindas who inhabited the region. Such are the laws of Philology, according to him, that Bundelkhand, which was originally named after Pulindas, came to be known as 'Bolind' in course of years and ultimately gave birth to the present word 'Bundela'. He speaks of a script called 'Bolindi' which was current in ancient India. That Pulindas inhabited Bundelkhand in ancient times, can be verified from literary as well as insessional evidence.

Brahmāṇḍa-Purāṇa and Matsya-Purāṇa place the country of Pulindas in the Vindhya region. So also does Kālidāsa, the noted poet and dramatist. Among the ancient names of Bundelkhand, 'Pulindadeśa' is one, of which we have made a mention above. That a country named Pulinda-rāṣṭra existed till as late times as 500 A.D. is authenticated by the Nāvāgrāma grant of the Parivrājaka Mahārāja Hastin. Ajayagadh Rock Inscription of Čandella monarch.

1. बुन्देलक्षण तृतीयोऽधिवोक्तः पु. १.
2. तियारी, प्र. प्र. : वसी, पु. ७५।
3. प्राकृतिक : २.६६. ३ - पुलिन्दा विन्यासभार्या वैद्या दुपिका। सह।
4. महाश्च : १६६.३ - पुलिन्दा विन्यासभार्या वैद्या दुपिका। सह।
5. राजा : १६६.३२ - पुलिन्दा विन्यासभार्या वैद्या दुपिका। सह।
Bhojavarmman testifies to the fact that Pulindas continued to
inhabit Bundelkhand till 14th century A.D. As regards the script
called Bolendi or Polimdi, its existence is attested to by the
Jain-Sûtras—the Pannavâna-Sûtra and the Samavâyaânga-Sûtra—which contain a list of ancient Indian scripts.¹

Thus on the basis of evidence mentioned above and relying on the changes wrought by Philological laws, there is no serious objection to accepting the origin of word 'Bundela' from Pulinda as advocated by Dr. B. P. Tripathi.

Worthy of mention is the fact that the Imperial Gazetteer of India² regards that the word 'Bundelkhand' owes its origin to Bundela Thâkuras, a war-like clan which still inhabits the region. As for the veracity of the popular legend of VīraPâṇârama, to whose blood-drop (bûnda) these thâkuras trace their birth, a line between fact and fiction is difficult to draw.

II- GEOGRAPHICAL DEFINITION OF BUNDELKHAND

(A) Popular Conception:—

The popular imagination and opinion on the subject of defining the geographical area of Bundelkhand is largely influenced by the well-known verses³ of Bundeli bards

2. Vol. IX, P. 68.
3. किंवाौ, मा, पौ, : वर्ष, पू, २३ व ३४ :-
   (क) हत जपना उत नकता, हत चप्पुः उत टॉस !
   झकारल भी तरह की, रवि न बाहु छोड़ ॥

   (क) मैं बंध किर है जगरे, पहा धरोहरापाद ।
   लगवेया है सागरे, चंपिया रेखा पार ॥
which have wide currency in the public, educated as well as illiterate. Interesting and beautiful as are these couplets, no reliance can be placed in them as they seem to be "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" rather than meaningful outcome of honest research on the subject. They deserve to be disregarded.

(B) Historical Survey of the Subject:

As early as 6th century B.C. the area of Bundelkhand was known as Čedi Janapada. According to Pargiter,\(^1\) Čedi was the name of the country along the south bank of Yamunā, from the Čambala on the north-west to the Karvi (which flows north-east to Čitrakūṭa) on the south-east. Its limits southwards were plateau of Malwa and the hills of Bundelkhand.

With more or less similar frontiers the country was placed under a separate regent during the Gupta period. Eranchore stone pillar inscription of Ādhagupta tells us clearly that Suraśmīśandra, enjoying the glory of being a Mahārāja, was governing the country that lies between the rivers Kālīndi and Narmadā with the qualities of a regent.\(^2\)

During the time of Harsha an independent Brāhmaṇa king is known to have been ruling in Bundelkhand\(^3\) though the exact limits of his kingdom are difficult to ascertain.

The Čandella kingdom comprised the entire area of Bundelkhand except the present districts of Sagar and Damoh in Madhya Pradesh which were included in the Kalāḍūri dominions. Of immense importance in this regard, is an inscription of Čandella kings Yaśovarman and Dhaṅga found on a stone slab at Khajurāho. Describing the boundaries of the Čandella kingdom, it says, "(Dhaṅga) who rules the earth playfully acquired by the action of his long and strong arms, as far as Kālaṅjara and as far as Bhāsvat situated on the banks of the river Mālava; from here to the banks of the river Kālindī; and from here also to the frontiers of the Čedi country and even as far as that mountain called Copa (Gopādri) which is the unique abode of marvel."¹

Discussing the extent of Čandella king Madanavarman's dominions, Dr. N.S. Bose says, "Madanavarman's kingdom extended upto Jamunā in the north, the Betwā in the southwest, Rewa in the east and the Narbada in the south."²

The survey, done above, is largely based on epigraphic evidence and convinces us that Bundelkhand has consistently and continuously remained a distinct political unit right from the Vedic times with the Yamunā and the Narbada as its natural limits in the north and the south.

(C) Linguistic Aspect:

Thanks to the scholars of linguistics, a larger area has been mapped out for Bundelkhand than it ever possessed. An admirable attempt in this direction is that of Dr. B. D. Mishra who has drawn a map of the area containing Bundeli-speaking people. As Bundeli happens to be the common and conversational language of the people inhabiting Bundelkhand, it can, no doubt, be a basis for drawing the boundaries of Bundelkhand. Subjecting all the previous surveys and theories on the topic to critical examination, Dr. Mishra has redrawn the map of Bundelkhand assigning to it 19 districts of M.P. (Some of them partly included) and 4 districts of U.P. Praiseworthy though his labour is, a student of history can not accept his map for his work. Besides linguistic aspect, historical, political, and geographical considerations are also important for him.

(D) British View:

The Imperial Gazetteer of India describes the word 'Bundelkhand' (British) as "A tract of country in the United Provinces, which includes the districts of Jalaun, Jhansi, Hamirpur and Banda with those parts of Allahabad which lie south of the Jumna and the Ganges." Defining the term 'Bundelkhand Agency' it says, "A collection of native states in central India agency under a Political Agent lying between 23.49° and 26.18° N. and 78.11° and 81.3° E. with an area of 9852 square miles.... It is bounded on the north by the Jalaun, Hamirpur, and

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1. ग्रंथ, पृ. 135: "उन्नेश्वर तिल्लिस्तान" - मध्य-नगरसिक (खिल्ला 13-16, पृ. 124-164 )
3. Ibid., P. 75.
Banda districts of the United Provinces; on the south by the Saugor and Damoh districts of the central provinces; on the east by the Bundelkhand Agency and on the west by the Jhansi district of the United Provinces and by parts of Gwalior state. Cunningham tried to delimit the area of Bundelkhand by identifying it with the kingdom of the Candellas which, according to him, comprised, in its wider extent, all the country to the south of the Jamunā and the Ganga from the Betwā river in the west to the temple of Vindhyāvasinī (South Mirzapur) in the east including the district of Sagar, Damoh, and Jabalpur.\(^1\) Identical opinion on the subject was expressed by Shri Gorrelal Tiwari\(^2\) who was the first man to write a book on the history of Bundelkhand.

III - CONCLUSION

Far more reasonable and acceptable appears to be the view of Dr. K. L. Agrawal\(^3\) who includes in Bundelkhand four districts of U.P. (now increased to five by the creation of Lalitpur district) and 6 districts of M.P. Their names are listed below:

(1) Banda  (2) Hamirpur  (3) Jalaun
(4) Jhansi  (5) Lalitpur (of Uttar Pradesh) and
(6) Datia  (7) Tikamgarh  (8) Panna
(9) Chhatarpur  (10) Sagar, and  (11) Damoh (of M.P.)

These districts constitute the distinct geographical unit which is south of the Yamunā and north of the Narbadā, and which must have been known as Ćedi Janapada in ancient times. Later on it remained a distinct administrative unit.

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2. Ibid. P.1.
3. अग्रावल, के. ल., विशेषज्ञात्त का ऐतिहासिक वृद्धि (साँच प्रबंध), सांगर विश्वविद्यालय, १८७२, प., ७४.
under the Gupta Emperors as we know from the Eran stone pillar inscription of Budhagupta. Still later, we see that the frontiers of the Čandella kingdom encompassed this very area. Doubtless, the districts of Damoh and Sagar may be excluded on grounds of inscriptive evidence, but we know that state boundaries in those days altered according to the personality of the monarch. The fact that Gwalior and Bhilsa were also incorporated in the Čandella kingdom for some time proves that we should be slightly flexible in our approach.

From the linguistic angle, we have seen that these districts have a distinct language of their own. Geographically, they are a compact unit. It stands to reason, therefore, that the area covered by the eleven districts, mentioned above, may be taken to be constituting Bundelkhand. And so we get a well-defined area for the purposes of present thesis possessing a long historical basis and bounds. But it should not necessarily mean that areas outside it, but touching its boundaries or in the immediate vicinity, will be left out of our view altogether. That will be a grave mistake. The area mapped out above is just for the sake of convenience to study the archaeological material and inscriptive evidence available in it. Bundelkhand, being in the heart of Indian sub-continent, ever remained exposed to influences from all sides, and so, particularly in the domain of religion we can not isolate it strictly to the boundaries drawn above. The Mahāstūpas of Sāñchī and Bharhut are not far from the boundaries of Bundelkhand and yet we possess no Buddhist remains in our area assignable to their times. That does not mean that Buddhism was non-existent in Bundelkhand, at that time.
Consequently inscriptions and archaeological remains found at sites close by the frontiers of our region have also been properly studied and examined for the purposes of present work, and have not been excluded from reference and description, if directly bearing on the subject of this thesis.