CHAPTER 2

ORIGIN OF THE YADAVAS

The word ‘caste’ is derived from the Spanish – Portuguese word ‘casto’ meaning lineage, race or breed.¹ The caste system in India which is known as ‘Jaathi’, has nothing to do with racial purity. Studies based on archaeology, anthropology, sociology, linguistics, physiognomy and genetics show that castes arose in India, in the form of Varna-Jaathi,² only after the initial mixing of native and immigrant races. It came into existence in a rigid form during the later Vedic age only.

It is based on the myth of creation described in Purusha Sutra, considered to be a later interpolation into the tenth mandala of Rig Veda, the earliest work of the Indo-Aryans.³ The Sutra states that the four major hierarchical social divisions known as Varnas arose from different parts of the sacrificed body of Purusha, the primordial being. Among the four castes, the Bramins occupy the top position in the society because they were born from the mouth or forehead, the Kshatriyas from the arms, the Vaisyas from the thighs and the Sudras from the feet.⁴

One such Caste – Yadavas belonged to ancient Indian race. There are many Opinions of the origin of the Yadavas. Kandhahar was regarded as the “Earth of the Shepherds”.⁵ They were called as Dhankars or Nikkars in Utter Pradesh and Ayars in Maharashtra. One batch of them went through Madya Pradesh to Rajasthan, Delhi and other places to rear the cattle. Another batch moved to Bengal, Orissa and other places. According to Anthropologist, these Ayars were living in India even before the Ariyans came and they belonged to the Dravidian group.⁶

³  G.S.Ghurye, *Caste and Race in India*, p.126.
⁴  V.D.Mahajan, *Ancient India*, p.129.
In south India, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas are not well defined in social categories. So there are only three broad social categories, viz., The Brahmins, the Sudras and the Panchamas. The Brahmins who constitute about three percent of the population enjoy the highest social status and privileges. So they are able to occupy the majority of top positions and jobs that require intellectual and cultural merits.

Rig Vedic literature stresses very significantly the deferences between the Arya and Dasa, not only in color but also in their speech, religious practices and physical features. The three classes Brahmana, Kshatriya and Vaisya are fragmently mentioned in the Rig Veda. The name of the fourth Class “Sudra” occurs rarely in Rig Veda. The Sudra class represented domestic servants equal to the position of slaves.

The Yadavas who come under Backward Castes also were in low social status until the independence. Many of them have contributed to the freedom struggle and after independence their community was also been recognized and their socio-economic conditions became better. Many of them have rendered services for the upliftment of their fellow citizens.

Yadavas belong to the earlier groups of people who lived in India much early to Aryan invasion of India. Yadavas belonged to ancient Indian race. They were living throughout India from Kanyakumari to Himalayas. They were ‘black people’ with high civilization and they were called ‘Krishna people’ and their leader was Lord Krishna. They fought against Aryans when they invaded India. Yadavas were referred to in the Vedas also.

In the famous Epic – Mahabharatha, Lord Krishna the hero of Mahabharatha belonged to Yadava Caste. There were several Yadava Kings who ruled several parts of the country in ancient India. Several Yadava chieftains
served Chera, Chola and Pandya rulers of South India and they developed close contact with the administrators in Tamil Nadu. However their basic traditional occupation was cow herding, they tended sheep and sold milk, curd and ghee to the public. Later many earned their livelihood either from cultivation as landlords.\textsuperscript{11}

According to tradition, Yadavas were the descendents of Yayathi, who belonged to Yadu Dynasty and who ruled Eastern part of Punjab much early to the Aryan invasion.\textsuperscript{12} Yadavas who live in between Vindhyas and Himalayas are called Ahirs, with their caste title as “Abhirs”, “Bhojas”, “Gopars”, “Gosh”, “Mandal” etc., and those who live between Vindhyas and Kanyakumari are called differently as “Gollas”, “Kurumbas”, “Podhuvas”, “Puzhiers”, etc., and later they are known as “Konars”, “Kone”, “Dass”, “Pillais”, “Mandris”, “Naidu’s”, “Rao’s”, “Naickens”, “Reddiyars”, “Gowdas”, “Kondas”, “Udayars”, “Gounders”, “Singh”, “Chowdharies” etc.\textsuperscript{13}

Yadavas in Tamil Nadu are also called as “Idaiyans”. Idaiyan meant those who lived in the lands midway between hills and the arable lands, the jungle plains suited for Pasturage. (‘Idai’ in Tamil means middle and Idaiyans means the person lives in the middle of hills and arable lands).\textsuperscript{14}

The Idaiyans lived in “Mullai”, which is the region between “Kurunchi” and “Marutham”. The “Mullai” region is the forest and the region around the forest.Idaiyans wove Kambli (blanket) and engaged in cattle breeding. Some Idaiyans cultivated lands and some were garlands.\textsuperscript{15} Yadavas were the great devotees of Vishnu while some worshiped Lord Shiva also. Some Yadavas who had better education developed relationship with Colonial regime in Madras Presidency and Pondicherry.\textsuperscript{16}

\textsuperscript{12} C.V.Vaidya, \textit{History of Midual Hindu, India}, (Delhi, 1985) p. 83.
\textsuperscript{13} C.P. Loganathan, \textit{Yadavas in History}, (Tamil), (Madras, 1977), p.7.
\textsuperscript{16} Edgar Thurston, \textit{Castes and Tribes of India}, op. cit., p.354.
The Mahabharatha also refers to these two groups. The Ahirs supported Lord Krishna, who was helping Pandavas against Gowravas, where as the Abhirs supported Gowravas against Pandavas in the Kurukshetra War of Mahabharatha.\textsuperscript{17} According to Bhandarkar and other historians like Kennedy, Keet etc., the Ahirs came from Syria or Asia Minor before the birth of Krishna. There is another view that the Ahirs and Abhirs were the Descendents of Dravidians.\textsuperscript{18} Based on the dress and habits of some Yadavas, it was considered that they might belonged to Aryan race also. However the Puranas, Epics and Vedas helped us, to establish that the “Yadavas were only Dravidians”.\textsuperscript{19}

Aryans who moved from Central Asia started conquest and further drove the aborigines. The Aryans who moved to Eastern seashore joined with Andhrs and other native people. Those Aryans who went towards west, established a kingdom after defeating Bills, Gujars and Yadavas etc.\textsuperscript{20}

Yadavas (Ahirs), who are located in many different parts of India and Nepal, generally follow Vaishnav traditions, and share Dharmic religious beliefs. Traditionally. The Yadavas are classified under the Kshatriya Varna in Hinduism.\textsuperscript{21}

**Yadava Origin**

Chandra or soma is the founder of the Lunar dynasty. His son Budha was married to Ila, a princess of the Solar dynasty. They give birth to Puruvaras – the originator of the AILA dynasty (Supposed to be derived from his mother’s name). From the Ailas sprang various dynasties, the most important of which, is “Yadavas”.\textsuperscript{22}

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\textsuperscript{19} Rangachari, *Vedic India*, p.6.
\textsuperscript{20} Prof. Rathnasamy, *Origin of Dravidians*, pp. 6 – 7.
\end{flushright}
Pururavas is said to have had six sons namely Ayus, Srutayus, Satayus, Raya, Vijaya and Jaya. Ayu had five sons, of whom, the eldest is Nahusa. Emperor Nahusa was succeeded by his son Yayati.

Yayati is said to have married Devayani and Sarmishta and he had two sons “Yadu” and “Turvasas”. The Progeny of Yadu came to be known (Mainly) as “Yadus” (or) “Yadavas”. The progeny of “yadu” multiplied in great number than any other brother’s. Thus the “yadavas” became to be known by different names. They are one of the five main Janas of India and Asia. Though puranas and some Historians assign South India as the abode of yadavas, they were also equally well present in northern and north-western India of hoary past which included the present day Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran etc., At present Yadavas are known mostly by the name of Abhira, Ahir, Gopa, Gwala, Ghosi, Idaiyan, Kone, Konar, Aayar etc.,

**Origin of Ahirs**

The Ahirs, who are also referred to as Abhira or Abhir, are one of the ancient martial tribes of India, who ruled over different parts of India and Nepal since ancient times. The word Abhira means “fearless”. From the times of the Shakyas, the Kushans and the Scythians (600 BC), Ahirs have been warriors. Some of them were agriculturists and farmers. Ahirs comprise a subgroup of the Dhangar caste of India.

Considerable historical interest attaches to this caste, because its members are thought to be identical with the Ābhīras of Sanskrit literature and Prakrit and Pali literature which are mentioned repeatedly in the great epic the Mahābhārata. Some European scholars have attempted to discuss the etymology of the word Abhira or Ahira. According to the Historian ‘Beams’ Yadava is an oral

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24 Ibid., pp.1 – 2.
tradition, dividing the term “Ahira” into Ahi and Hira, the first meaning a “Snake” and the later meaning a “Lover”.27

The people of the Ahir tribe are traditionally cow herds and farmers. Formerly the Ahirs had the exclusive right to milk cows, so even the lowest caste person had to hire an “Ahir” for this purpose. Their role with the sacred cows gave them special status. Ahir caste was widespread in South to North and Western India.28

Some scholars contend that these cattlemen, scattered over southern Rājasthān and Sind (now part of Pakistan), played a role of importance in the early development of the God Krishna as the “cowherd”, which was continued to be a significant aspect of the “Krishna legend”.29 They always claimed descent from Krishna and were a powerful race of nomad cowherds from eastern or central Asia who entered India from the Punjab in large hordes about the same time the Sakas and the Yuechis gradually spread over large parts of Northern, Eastern and Central India in the first or second century B.C.30

The term 'Ahir' was used for cowherds or gopas initially but has been extended to include Yadu Bansi, Nanda Bansi and Gopal Bansi who evidently called after Yadav, Nanda, and Gopal, the Gopas, who were mentioned in the Bhutist, Pali, Jatakas and Hindu Puranas as “a caste of cowherds were found in Madura and its neighborhood and settled down into an orderly community long before the Christian Era.31

Analysis of Hindu scriptural references of the Abhira kingdoms has led some scholars to conclude that it was merely a term used for Holy Yadava Kingdoms. In Bhagavata Purana, the Gupta dynasty has been called Abhir.32

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27 Law Beseen, Tribes in Ancient India, (Pune), p.79.
28 J.N.Singh Yadav, Yadavas of India Today, op. cit., p.2
31 Syed Sirajul Hussain, op. cit., p.1.
32 Anthony Kennedy Warder, Indian Kavya Literature, (2011), pp. 64 – 69)
Other views are that those who came from Syria or Asia Minor about the beginning of the Christian era; were Dravidians; sprang from the Aayars of Tamil Nadu; lived in India long before the Aryan invasion and were descendants of the Yadavas of the Lunar Dynasty of Puruvaras Aila; and that their original habitat was the region between the Sutlej and the Yamuna from where they migrated beyond Mathura in the East and beyond Gujarat and Maharashtra in the South.33

The British Rulers of India classified the Ahir, amongst the "martial races" or ethnic groups. The Ahirs may be seen to have continued their warrior tradition by their extensive participation in the Indian Army and police forces.34

Yadava and Ahir as an ethnic category

According to M.S.A. Rao (an eminent sociologist), Yadava is an ethnic category consisting of several allied castes, which together constitute about one-tenth of the total population of India. These castes are found in different parts of India, Burma, Nepal and Sri Lanka and are known as the "Ahir" in the Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and Rajasthan; the "Goalas" and "Sadagopa" or "Gauda" in Bengal and Orissa; Dhangar in Maharashtra; Yadava and Kurubas in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka and Idayan and Konar in Tamil Nadu.35

There are also several sub-regional names such as Thetwar and Rawat in Madhya Pradesh, and Mahakul (Great Family) in Bihar.36

Two things are common to these cognate castes. First, they claim to be descendants of the Yadu Dynasty (Yadava) to which Lord Krishna belonged. Secondly, many castes in this category have occupations relating to cattle.37

33 Elliot, op. cit., p.3.
37 H.M.Elliots, op.cit., p.50.
In the Ramayana and Mahabharatha the Abhiras in the west are spoken of, and in the Puranic Geography, the country and western coast of India, from the Tapti to Devagiri called Abhira, or the region of cowherds. Ahirs were also Rajas of Nepal at the beginning of our era, and they are perhaps connected with the Pala; or Shepherd dynasty, which ruled Bengal from the ninth to the later part of the Eleventh Century.  

Besides this ancient origin of the Yadavas, historical evidence exists for equating the Ahirs with the Yadavas. It is argued that the term Ahir comes from Abhira who where once found in different parts of India, and who in several places wielded political power. 

Ancient Sanskrit classic, Amarkosa, treats gawli, gopa & ballabh to be the synonyms of Abhira.

A Chudasama prince styled as Grahirpu and ruling at Vanthali near Junagarh described in the Dyashraya Kavya of Hemachandra, has been classified both as an Abhira and Yadav. Further, in their Bardic traditions as well as in popular stories “Chudasmas” are still called “Ahir Ranas”. Again, many remains of Khandesh (historical stronghold of abhiras) are popularly believed to be that of Gawli Raj, which archaeologically belongs to the Yadvas of Devgiri. Hence, it is concluded that Yadvas of Devgiri were actually Abhiras. Moreover, there are sufficient number of clans within Ahirs, who trace their lineage from Yadu and Lord Krishna, some of which are mentioned in Mahabharata as Yadav Clans, like Gaur, Krishnauth etc.

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38 W.Crooke, op.cit., p.50.
43 M.A.Sherring, Landmark in Indian Anthropology, Hindu Tribes and Castes, Vol, 9(i), (New Delhi, 1987), pp.333- 335.
44 Association of Population Geograpers of India, (1st Jan 1988).
Ahir's also ruled beyond the geographical borders of present day India, as king of the hilly terrain of Nepal. Eight kings of the first Ahir dynasty ruled Nepal, the first being Bhuktaman and the last Yaksha Gupta.\textsuperscript{45}

Owing to pastoral disputes, this dynasty was then replaced by another Ahir dynasty. This second Ahir dynasty had a succession of three kings, they were Badasimha, Jaymati Simha and Bhuban Simha and their rule ended when the Kirati invaders defeated Bhuban Simha, the last Ahir king of Nepal.\textsuperscript{46}

M.S.A Rao further states that the Allahabad iron pillar inscription of Samudragupta (fourth century A.D) mentions the Abhiras as one of the tribal people of west and south west. A fourth century (A.D) inscription found in Nashik speaks of an Abhira king, and there is proof that in the middle of the fourth century the Abhiras were settled in eastern Rajputana and Malwa.\textsuperscript{47}

Similarly, when the Kathis arrived in Gujarat in the eighth century, they found the greater part of the country in the possession of the Ahirs. The Mirzapur district of the United Provinces has a tract known as Ahraura, named after the Ahir, and near Jhansi, another piece of country was called Ahirwar.\textsuperscript{48}

The Ahirs were also kings of Nepal at the beginning of the Christian era. Khandesh and the Tapti valley were other regions where they were kings.\textsuperscript{49}

This indicates that the Abhiras, who rose to political prominence in the second century B.C., had a chequered political career until the fourteenth century A.D when their importance was over-shadowed by the Mughals, but even during the Mughal period the Ahir and Golla rajahs were a power to be reckoned with. The Gawlis rose to political power in Deogarh, on the Chhindwara Plateau in the central provinces. The Saugar traditions trace the Gawli supremacy to a much

\textsuperscript{46} Syed Sirajul Hussain, \textit{op. cit.}, p.2.
\textsuperscript{47} \textit{Ibid.}, p2.
\textsuperscript{48} W.Crooke, \textit{The Tribes and castes of the North Western India}, (Delhi 1987), p.50
\textsuperscript{49} W.Crooke, \textit{op.cit.}, p.51.
later date, as the tracts of Etawa and Khurai are said to have been governed by chieftains till the close of the seventeenth century.\textsuperscript{50}

**Yadava dynasty**

“Yaduvanshi” is one of the sub-divisions of “Chandravanshi”. In Vedic books of ancient times there is no mention of Rajputs. The first Rajput kingdom is attributed to the 6th century B.C. The fact that Lord Krishna was born to Vasudeva and Devaki and for fear of being killed by Kamsa of Mathura, Vasudeva had taken him to his friend Nanda Gopa and his wife Yasoda who belonged to Ahir caste. They became his followers and used to revere the Lord Krishna.\textsuperscript{51}

The Ahirs believe that their ancestors walked together with Lord Krishna. “Ahirs” synonyms are “Yadav” and ‘Rao Sahab”. Rao Sahab is only used in Ahirwal region consisting of territories of few villages of Delhi, Southern Haryana & Behrod area of Alwar district (Rajasthan).\textsuperscript{52}

Historically, Ahir laid the foundation of Ahir Batak town which was later called Ahrora and Ahirwar in Jhansi district in 108 B.C. Rudramurti Ahir became the chief of the Army and later on, the king. Madhuriputa, Ishwarsen and Shivdatta were well known kings from the lineage who mingled with Yadav Rajputs.\textsuperscript{53}

Ahirs were exclusively found in northern Alwar and Jaipur. They worship Dahmi Mata and go to her shrine at the time of jadula (head shaving ceremony of the child) and gathjoda (after marriage, to get the blessings of the deity). Likewise, Biladi Mata, Shyamji, Shivaji, Ram and other gods and goddesses of Hindu religion are worshipped by the Ahirs with great reverence and devotion.\textsuperscript{54}

\textsuperscript{50} Robert Vane Russel, \textit{op.cit.}, (1916),p.20.

\textsuperscript{51} J.N.Singh Yadav, \textit{Yadavas of India Today}, p.50

\textsuperscript{52} Suresh., K.Sharma \textit{Haryana past and present}, (Mital Publication, 2006), p.40


Sainis are now found by their original name only in Punjab and in the neighbouring states of Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh. They claim descent from Yaduvanshi Rajputs of the Yadubanshi.  

Surasena lineage, originated from Yadav King Shoorsen, who was the grandfather of both Krishna and the legendary Pandava warriors. Sainis relocated to Punjab from Mathura and surrounding areas over different periods of time. 

Nandabansi or Ahirs were found largely in many parts of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. Yadubanssi were mainly present in Upper Doab and districts adjoining Yamuna. Goalbansi were present in Lower Doab and districts adjoining Varanasi. 

**Dialects**

Although the Abhiras constitute a distinct ethnic group, they spoke diverse regional dialects. The language of the Ahirs was known as Ahirani in Khandesh, resembling Marathi. While the Ahirs of Kathiawad and Kachh have a dialect which resembles Gujarathi. Abhira *bhasha* is in fact considered to be *Apabhransha*. In the ninth century B.C., it had become the language of the people, and was spoken from Saurashtra, and Shastri proves that poetry was composed in the language around the sixth century B.C. 

Suryavansi mentions the following two dialects in addition to the ones above—Gaddi, which is currently the dialect spoken in Gadderan, on the outskirts of the Chamba and Kangra hills, and Gandi, spoken in some parts of Madhya Pradesh.

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56 Crooke, op.cit., p.53.  
57 *Bombay Gazetters*, p.79.  
58 Elliot, op.cit., p.4  
Abhiri as a dialect has been recorded by Sanskrit poets such as Bharata and Dandin. Yadav notes that the dialect the people of Ahirwal in Haryana speak, has a resemblance to Rajasthani and Grierson considers Ahirwati a branch of eastern Rajasthani and Western Hindi.

Legends of the cowherd Krishna and his dances with cowherdesses are mentioned in the Sangam classics. The term Ayarpaadi (cowherd settlement) is found in Silappatikaram. 63

It is argued that the term Ayar has been used for the Abhiras in ancient Tamil literature, and V. Kanakasabha Pillai derives Abhira from the Tamil word Ayir which also means cow.64

He equates the Ayars with Abhiras, and Suryavanshi treats this as evidence of migration of the Abhiras to the south in the first century A.D.65

Thus, linguistic evidence is used to support the argument that the Abhiras spread to different parts of India, and that they retained different but related cultural traditions. The most common denominator, as was pointed out earlier, was a descent from the Yadu dynasty and their association with cattle.

**Religious Seats of Yadavas**

Besides chiefdoms and jagirs, the Yadavas had peedams (seats) granted to them by virtue of their religious powers. For instance, there were fourteen seats (peedams) among the Yadavas of Warangal according to a sanad granted in 1425 (Shaka Samvat), by Sree Pratapa Rudra, Maharaja of Warangal, to Sree Kondiah Guru, as the head of the fourteen seats.66 Subsequently when Bhagyanagar was founded by Sultan Abdulla of Kutub Shahi in 1560 A.D, the rights of the Yadavas

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64 V. Kanakasabai Pillai, *Tamil 1800 years ago*, p.57.
were acknowledged and recognized, and the name Golkonda was substituted for Manugal.67

According to the charter awarded by the Sultan Abdullah of Qutb Shahi dynasty in 1071 Hijri, Kondiah built the fort for the Sultan by using his charisma in resolving the mystery of the site, and also discovered for him gold coins buried underground.68 In return, the Sultan gave him the Charter conferring upon Kondiah the rights and privileges due to the head of the fourteen seats, and of twelve classes of Gollas and two classes of shepherds (Kuruba Gollas). Kondiah, although a follower of Basaveshwara (Lingayat), was the head of the Yadava Peedams. Perhaps the Gollas at this time were under the influence of Veerashaivism, although they were incorporated into the Yadava category. 69

ANCIENT YADAV EMPIRES AND RULERS

Hoysalas.

The Hilly place where the River “Vedhavathi” starts was inhabited by aborigines. They might have been Dravidians who belonged to the earlier group of the inhabitants. They moved towards plains. The kings of the origin have termed themselves as belonging to Chandravamsa of King Yadu and his descendents. These people were called Hoysalas. The Fore father of the Hoysalas is considered to be “Sala” who was a brave king belonging to the “Yadava vamsa”.70

K.V. Subramani Aiyer suggested that “Sala” could be identified as Irrungovel….. Irrungovel is said to be the ruler of Thurvai which maybe identified with Dwaraka the original place of the Yadavas. According to Professor William Coelho from his “Hoysala vamsa” the author says that “in one Inscription we read

67 Ibid., p.181.
68 Ibid., p.181.
69 M.S.A. Rao, Social Movements and Social Transformation a Study of Two Backward class movement in India, Macmillan, 1979, pp. 128-129.
that the Sala became Hoysalas, just as Yadavas were called as Hoysalas and the name Yadava was caused to be forgotten. 71

Some early inscriptions, dated 1078 and 1090, have implied that the Hoysalas of Mysore were also the descendants of the original Yadava clan, by referring to the Yadava vamsa (clan) as Hoysala vamsa.

The Hoysalas ruled illustriously for over three centuries and have left in the country imperishable monuments of art and culture. They were family of kings who ruled over practically the whole of the Kannada country at the height of their power. They are scheduled as the hill tribes known as Malepas in the Western Ghats and they assumed the title 'Maleparoleganda'. (Sasakapura of Sanskrit writers). When 'Sala,' an ornament of the Yaduvamsa' (Yaduvamsojvala tilakan) was worshiping the goddess Vasantika at Sosevur, a tiger came from the forest. The Holy man Sudatta, who was there, gave him a call saying 'Poysala' (Strike, Sala). Sala killed the tiger. From that time the name of Poysala became the designation of the Yadava kings. Almost the same account, though differing in certain details, is found in many of their inscriptions.

According to another version, when Sala was hunting along the slopes of the Sahya mountains (or the Western Ghats), he was astonished to see a hare (SKt. Sasa) pursuing a tiger, while he was walking alone saying to himself, 'this is heroic soil', a holy saint near by, being afraid of the tiger, called out 'Poy-Sala' and before it could proceed the length of a span, Sala slew it with his sword. It is after this incident that the place came to be known as Sasakapura. 72

Dynastic background of Great King Porus

Ancient Greek traveler and ambassador to India, Megasthenes, also came across this clan in its glorious days as the ruling tribe with its capital in Mathura. There is also an academic opinion that the ancient king Porus, the celebrated

72 J.Duncan, H.Dereet, _The Hoysalas, A Medieval Indian Royal Family_, (1957), p.15.
opponent of Alexander the Great, belonged to this once most dominant Yadav sect known as the Purus.\textsuperscript{73}

There were no known Hindu textual sources regarding Porus indicating the tribe or ethnic group belonged to. Several ethnic groups in the Indian subcontinent have tried to claim him as their own ancestor. However, an academic opinion seems to be that he was a Yadava or Yaduvanshi king. Col. Tod was the proponent of this view which was also held by Ishwari Prashad, another renowned Historian.\textsuperscript{74}

Col. Tod went on further to specifically point out Shoorsainis as the Puru tribe whose king was called Porus, the legendary Indian adversary of Alexander the Great.

Puru became the patronymic of this branch of the lunar race. Of this Alexander's historians made Porus, the Suraseni of Methoras (descendants of the Soor Sen of Mathura) were all Purus, the Prasioi of Megasthenes.\textsuperscript{75}

**Variations in Caste status**

Yadavas all over the country were quick to respond to the forces of change unleashed by the British rule. At the opening of the century itself their regional associations concerned themselves with establishing educational institutions and seeking modern employment opportunities for their caste men. In Punjab, western UP, and Madhya Pradesh, Yadavs turned mainly to the army for employment. In Punjab they even petitioned the government in the 1880’s for recruitment of Ahirs into the army.

The Tamil Literature refers to the Yadavas as Idaiyars and Aayars. Aye, The King who ruled Thondai, Chola and Chera kingdoms. Aayars spread from those kingdoms only.\textsuperscript{76}

\textsuperscript{73} A.Samynathan, Article, *Y.C.A. Madras, Fifteenth Anniversary Souvenir*, (1988)
The word Ayer also means ‘Aaa’ which refers to cow. Therefore they are called Ayers because they owned cows.\textsuperscript{77}

They reformed the forest and made them Cultivable lands upto Indus and Ganges. Such people were Tamilians and are called Yadus, Anus etc., Probably the Harappa and Mohenjodaro civilization referred them to have been belonging to the Dravidian civilization and that those people were Tamilians belonging to the Yadava sect.\textsuperscript{78}

In Karnataka, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh there were kings with the name of Ayes. The Ayes have ruled in Tamilnadu, Karnataka Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh.\textsuperscript{79} This is a place which is now named as Ayachandra in Uttarpradesh adjoining the Ram Nagar. This place was a great fortress in those days.\textsuperscript{80}

These Ayars and other aborigines have fought with the Aryans when they entered into India. Chamban, Beepry and Krishna are considered as the earliest kings who fought with the Aryans. Among them, Chamban is stated to be a Yadava who is referred as the one who ruled over the hillside. He is also referred to as the king of Asuras. “Yadus”had fought with them. There is a traditional story that Krishna had killed Sambarasura. Those who belonged to the route of Chamban are called as Sambhar Idaiyars.\textsuperscript{81} The Chamban and his followers were stated to be the devotees of Lord Shiva in olden days. Even Krishna was also a devotee of Shiva.\textsuperscript{82}

Those Chamban Idaiyars are seen both in South India and in North India. The Tamil word Ayar and Hindi word Ahir have come again to south from the north. During these days they are called as Yadavas. History says that the Kushans who are Yadavas invaded India and drove the AHIRs to the Eastern

\textsuperscript{77} V. Kanagasbai Pillai, \textit{Tamil 1800 years ago}, p.57.
\textsuperscript{78} S.S. Sashey, \textit{The Shepherd of India}, (Tamil) 1990, p.11.
\textsuperscript{79} Ray Chaudri, Traces are there orgins from Dravidians, p.9-10.
\textsuperscript{80} Ibid., pp. 10 – 11.
\textsuperscript{81} B.S. Baliga, \textit{Madras District Gezeeters}, (Coimbatore) 1996, p.201.
portions of Indus, Madya Pradesh and Eastern Rajasthan. Eastern Rajasthanis are called as Ahir Buda. The mountain in this region is also known as Aravalli Mountain. These people moved towards south and established their kingdom in Maharashtra. The Great Eswara Sena ruled the entire West Deccan. The followers of Aye of the south have moved to north through Western Ghats and Western sea coast. Krishna’s sister Yaduri was married to a Tamil king and thus entered Madurai, the Pandya kingdom.83

Yadus have established settlements near the river Sindhu. The mingling and mixing of Ayars and Yadavas must have been restricted to Kashmir, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh. In the remaining part, the Yadavas remained as a separate entity. But in the course of time some Yadava class had been formed. Inspite of the differences relating to the language they were considered to be one unit. But in some regions the Yadavas were considered as tribes, and these tribes were spread throughout India.84

Yayathi by being born through Nagushan is referred to be belonging to the Naga vamsa. Yayathi’s followers were also called as Nagas. Some historians are of the view that Krishna and Balarama were also Nagas. In Epics and Puranas these Nagas were referred to have been living in Islands. Buddhist Jataka tales say that one of the daughters of the Nagas lived in Manipallava and she got married to Killivalavan, the prince of Chola dynasty.85

Once when Balarama was doing Yoga, a white snake came out of his mouth. It had thousand heads and appeared like a mountain. Then it went into the sea, which it was known as Samudra Raja. “Sagara” the Naga deity and the holy river welcomed the snake. To prove that Nagas are Yadavas, some excavations are found near Vadamadurai. There the sculptures of Balaraman were seen.

The Buddist Jataka tales refer Krishna as belonging to Naga vamsa. “The Puruvas and the Yadavas were brought from south seas by Lord Indira. They are

83. Ibid., pp. 10 – 11.
black people, says the Rig Veda. Therefore, we can connect Nagas and Yadavas as belonging to one group. Quoting Mahalingam, the author says that, "it is believed that Thondainadu lying to the North of Chola country was the land of the Kurumbar, a shepherd community."

The worshipping of snakes is seen in Tamil Nadu. There are temples for snakes in some places. People named their children as ‘Nagan’, ‘Nagammai’, ‘Nagendran’ etc. These names are frequent even now. From this we can infer that Nagas were living in India even before Aryans came to India. It is not known whether these Nagas are Yadavas but we can say that there was a link between Nagas and Yadavas. Nagas might have been a branch of Yadavas. Some of the interesting discoveries are the remains of dyeing vats excavated both at Arikkamedu and Uraiyur which establishing beyond doubt the importance of textile manufacture, although Kanchi and Madurai, the two major textile producing centres, have not come up with such evidences.

Much more significance is the distribution of Roman coin records and Panch marked distribution of coin hoards, making major lines of transport and communication from the western coast, from Cochin area through the Palghat via Coimbatore, the region of the Cheras. The Coimbatore region was known for its beryl mines, which had a concentration of coin hoards, while many of the Punch marked coins were issued by merchant guilds. The use of the fish symbol on the Bodynaikkkanur hoard showed that they were issued after the sanction of the ruling family.

**CHOLAS**

Cholas are one of the rulers in Tamil Nadu. They descended from Cholan who is a Yadava king. The words Chalan and Cholan have changed into Cholas. When Karikal Chola was young, his father Elanchet Chenni died. By this time

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86. C.P. Loganathan, *op. cit.*, pp. 24-25.
87. T.V. Mahalingam, *Early Tamil Literature*.
confusion arose in the Royal family. A war arose between Karikal Chola and his uncles. The person who led the army was Erungovel, the uncle of Karikal Chola, who was a Yadava and had relationship with King Krishna of Dwaraka. The founder of Hoysala vamsa was Chalan, who was a yadava. Therefore the descendents of Chalan are called Cholas.\(^89\) Karikala Chola also subdued some of the Naga tribes and the Kurumbans, another indigenous line of shepherd kings.\(^90\)

**AYI ANDIRAN**

Ayi Andiran was one of the Vel chieftains who ruled over several parts of the Tamil country. Legends are many about the ancestry of the Vel chieftains. To mention one, they are said to have come from a “Homakundam” domain of Ayi Andiran,\(^91\) the area around a Pothiyil hill which is the southern most section of the Western Ghats.

Exclusive as they are, the information in the sangam works do not help in calculating definitely about the Ayies and their rule. “Purananuru” speaks of one Ayi Andiran who is also known as Vel Ayi and Naval Ayi. Ayi Andiran was powerful king among the Ayans (shepherd tribe).\(^92\)

He patronized the Tamil poets like Mudamosiyar, Kuttuvan Keeranar and Odakizhar, who had sung in prais of him. Another poet Karaikkannanaar of the same period also refered to him in ‘Natrinai’. Mudamosiyar who had also sang about the Chola king Mudittalai Ko Perunkilli and Chera king Anthiran Cheral, serves as a link to establish the contemporancity of Ayi Andiran with the Chola and Chera kings of the same period. This led to conclude that Andiran also ruled more or less during the same period i.e., 100 A.D. to 120 A.D. But the etymological data cannot lead so far (especially when neither in Ahananuru nor anywhere) was the reference to show that Andiran was a ruler of Pothiyil hills or that he belonged to

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\(^{89}\) C.P. Loganathan, op. cit., pp. 24 – 25.


\(^{92}\) N. Gopala Krishnan, Gassetters of India, Tamil Nadu State, Kanya Kumari District, (Madras, 1995). pp. 54-55.
the Ayi dynasty. 93 Ayi kings of the 8th century were in turn connected with Ayi Andiran. 94 The country he ruled laid around the Podiyil hill in the Western Ghats, and the Greek Geographer Ptolemy says that Ayi ruled the country which included Cape Comerin and Mount Bettigo. 95

The Pandyas who belong to Tamil Nadu are stated to be Yadavas according to the Puranas and literature. Krishna’s sister Yathirai was married to a Yadava and was given the Pandya kingdom as Seedhana. This is stated in the Epics. So, the descendents of Yathirai are called as Pandyas. Due to the sea upsurge a part of Tamil Nadu was destroyed and the people of this Kumari continent had migrated to the North. There they were called as Yadus and the descendents of the Yadus are Krishna and others. Due to the invasion of the Aryans, they were once again pushed back to the south. In Kalithogai also it is quoted that Ayars of Mullai land are related to Pandyas. 96

The Ayars are great warriors. The families of both the Ayars and the Pandyas belonged to the same group. Mullai Kali, the Tamil poem says that the warriors of the Pandya king were Ayars. For the growth of Pandya dynasty, the warriors were responsible. Prof. William Coelho quoted the saying that the Athiyanadu Devan was a yadava, who created the Pandya dynasty. 97

The Pandyas built their pedigree much later for an inscriptions of first of its kind. It traces their origin to Adhi Yadavan of the Yadava branch from where sprang the Pandyas. Prof William Coelho says that the Pandyas were Yadavas. There is also an historical evidence which said that when the Kalabras were waging war in the South Kadungon, Pandyan was able to resist the army of Kalabras. The Kalabras are stated to have belonged to Karnataka. 98

93. Ibid., p.56.
95. Ibid., pp. 120 -121.
98. Ibid., p.27.
Most of the historians agreed with the point that roughly between 4th and 6th centuries, a new race of Kalabras took hold of the south throwing all the erstwhile rulers of the region into darkness and disputes. The Velvikkudi grant of the later days of Pandyas referred to Kadunkone as overthrown by the Yadava king named Purushothaman.

PALLAVAS

The Modern representatives of the ancient Kurumbars or Pallavas were so powerful throughout South India.99

The Kurumbars are one of the earliest aboriginal tribes of South India.100

They decended from Karnataka and overpowered other rulers, but dissensions among themselves led them to choose a chief known as Komandu Kurmba Prabhu, the first king of Pallava dynasty.101

It has been suggested that kurumbars may be the remanant of wide spread race. It shall be noted that Kurumbars of the plains have erected dolmens which speak even today about the Pallava who ruled from vizhakapattinam to Cape Comirin with a splendor and vigour not eclipsed by any other empire in India. So it maybe presumed that the kurumbars are the descendats of the pallavas.102

VELIRS

At the time when ancient kingdoms like Chera, Chola, Pandya and the Pallavas existed there were several other Kings who were ruling either by being obedient to or opposing the big kingdoms. One such tribe was ‘Velirs’. Velirs were

holding big posts like Chief Generals, Chief Officers etc., under these big kingdoms of Chera, Chola, Pandya and the Pallavas.\textsuperscript{103}

Ayi, Aai are the branches of these Velirs. They are therefore called Aavier.\textsuperscript{104} One Velir king named Irungovel is mentioned in Sangam literature.\textsuperscript{105} Kabilar, a Tamil poet says that Velirs are not those who came from Dwaraka i.e. the North but they are aborigines of Tamil Nadu.\textsuperscript{106} A portion of Velirs are called Iruku Velirs, and the stone edicts of Velirs shows that they are the descendents of Krishna.\textsuperscript{107} From the above historical references, it is made certain that the Velirs are Yadavas or Idaiyars.\textsuperscript{108}

Prof. Arokiasamy in his book “The Kongu Country” says that the territory of Aye Andiran extended from Coimbatore to Cape Comorin in the South. Kodumbalur which lies between Trichy and Madurai was also ruled by Kodumbalur Velirs who were Idaiyars by caste. R. Rangasamy, the former Director of Tamil Nadu Archaeology Department said that the edicts of Kodumbalur Velirs mentioned that these Velirs were Yadavas.

**POOZHY YADAVAS**

Among the Idaiyars, there is a group known as ‘Poo Nattu Idayars’. The stone edicts of Velirs had mentioned that the Velirs were Yadavas and they were the descendents of Krishna.\textsuperscript{109} From the above historical references, it is made certain that the Velirs are Yadavas or Idayars. The Poozhy Yadavas were called as Poo Nattu Idayars. They lived in Chera kingdom. The best known kings under Poozhier were Irumporai, Perumcheral Irumporai, Mandari, Irungo and Sengor Porayan.\textsuperscript{110}

\textsuperscript{103} Mu. Ragava Iyengar, op.cit., p.3.
\textsuperscript{105} *Purunanuru*: 2013.
\textsuperscript{106} A.Muthusamy, *op.cit.*, pp.32-33.
\textsuperscript{108} Mu. Ragava Iyyengar, *op.cit.*, (Chennai, 1913), p.11.
\textsuperscript{109} *Kurunthogai*: 163: 1-2.
YADAVA CHIEFTAINS UNDER CHOLAS

During the war between Rajendra Chola and the Chalukyas, several Yadava chieftains played important roles for the victory of the Chola king. Raja Raja Bramha Maharaja who was a Yadava prince was sent as chieftain to help him. Two Yadava Generals by name Uthama Chola Kone and Uthama Chola Milandayar were sent. 111

THE KONGU CHOLAS

The final break down of the Kurumba sovereignty was effected by the Chola King Adondai around the 8th Century A.D. 112 The Kurumbars were known to have inhabited Thondai Mandalam (Kanchipuram) which was also known as Aruvanadu the land of Aruvalars. 113 The Tamil Scholar Nachinaakkineyer describes the kurumbars as Kurunila Mannar. 114

YADAVAS OF DEVAGIRI

Bhillama, who was a yadava feudatory of Somesvara IV of the Chalukya kingdom, taking advantage of the weakness of his king invaded the country and conquered the Northern districts before 1189 A.D. Billama spent some years in the south organizing his new conquests. His pressure compelled Soesvara and his General Brahma to shift their capital to Banavasi. Therefore Kalyani passed into the hands of the Yadavas. 115

Billama V, the first independent Yadava king of Devagiri fought several battles with Ballala. When Ballala advanced in the Northern Frontier of his empire

111 . C.P. Loganathan. op.cit., pp.68-69
114 Ancient Lexiographer of Tamil Language.
to Krishna river the Yadavas retained most of the territory that laid further north. Billama founded the city of Devagiri and made it his capital in 1196 A.D. 116

**Rajarajas Region (1220 A.D.)**

Yadavas were more important than the Hoysalas politically. They appeared first as the rulers of the district of seven desa, stretching from Nasik to Devagiri. The Billama took advantage of the disorders prevailed in the Chalukya kingdom and conquered it.117

Then they moved towards North and the Yadava king Jaitugi was succeeded by his son Singhana (1200- 47) A.D. under whom the Yadava Empire extended. Then it passed on to Krishna, the grandson of Jaitugi (1247-1260 A.D.). 118

Krishna was succeeded by his brother Mahadeva (1260-71 A.D.). He fought a successful war against Kakatiya queen Rurdamba, and captured her elephants and some of her insignia but spared her as she was a woman. He then invaded Northern Konkan, and defeated the king, Someswara. The king of Silahana was also met in a noval battle and his territory was annexed to the Yadava Empire.119

The hostilities with the Kakatiyas continued even after the reign of Rudramba and the young prince Prataparudradeva, the grandson of Rudramba, won the battle against the Yadavas. He was made Yuvaraja in 1280 A.D., and eight years later, Ambadeva rebelled and got support from Hoysalas and Yadavas, but he was successfully subdued by the Yuvaraja in 1291 A.D. 120

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116 Ibid., p.199.
119 Ibid., p.220
120 Ibid., pp.220-221.
ALAUIDIN’S SECOND INVASION OF DEVAGIRI

The affairs at Devagiri again called the attention of Ala-ud-din. Ramadeva, the ruler of Devagiri rebelled against Ala-ud-din. He at once sent an army to Devagiri to put the rebellion raised by Ramadeva. The last king of Devagiri was Ramachandra who ascended the throne in 1271 A.D. and ruled it till 1310 A.D. During later part of the reign Ala-ud-din conducted his famous invasion of the Deccan. He marched 700 miles and entered into Berar and forced the Yadava king Ramachandra to surrender in 1296 A.D.

The next invasion was by Malik Kafur, the general of Ala-ud-din in 1307 A.D. In this war, Ramachandra was defeated Delhi Sultanate had taken control of Devagari. In 1309 A.D. Sankaradevan became the king of Devagiri. In 1313 A.D. Sankaradevan died in the war against Ala-ud-din and was succeeded by his son Haribaladevan. He was killed by Mubarak, the son of Ala-ud-din. After him Rangadevan fought against Delhi Sultans. Yadavas of Devagiri offered stubborn resistance to the aggressive designs of Ala-ud-din Khilji and fell in the line of martyrs of the kingdom.

VIJAYANAGAR DYNASTY

G.S.Hoza opinned that during the 12th century the Yadavas and Ahirs migrated to the South India due to the frequent invasions of the Delhi Sultanates. In South India, there was a Yadava kindom which existed till 13th century A.D. The rulers of Mauryas, Sathavahanas, Chalukyas, Rashtrakutas, Yadavas of Devagiri, Yadavas of Jabalpur, Yadavas of Kalasuri, Yadavas of Sathiskar were all belonged to the Yadava clan. Those dynasties fell in the 14th century. However,

121 Elliot and Deuson, History of India, (London, 1866), Part I, p.200.
122 Krishnaswamy Aiyangar, South India and her Muhammadan Invaders, 1921, p.68.
124 Karuppaiah, Mayor Radha Krishna Pillai’s Life and Services, (Chennai, 1976), pp.11-12.
Harihara and Bukka established Vijayanagar dynasty, which also belonged to the Yadava clan.\textsuperscript{126}

Komma Raju Venkata Ramanaiya in his book Delhi Darbar mentions that Vijayanagar dynasty was established in 1336 A.D. by Hari Hara and Bukka on the river Thungabadra and Chandragiri which was the stronghold of the Yadavas. The Senas of Devagiri, the Yadavarayas of Chandragiri and the Pandeyas of Ujjaini claimed descendancy from Yadu.\textsuperscript{127}

\section*{THE CONQUEST AND RULE OF THE TAMIL COUNTRY BY THE KINGS OF VIJAYANAGAR, (1342 A.D.)}

Iban-Batuta describes the struggle between Ballala III and Sultan of Madura as follows:

Adjoining the state of Ghiyas-ud-din was that often infidal Sovereign named Ballaladev, who which one of the Principal Hindu Kings.\textsuperscript{128}

The city Mangalur was ruled by a Yadava chief by name Sangaraya. He had five sons who were known by the names Hariharaya, Kamparaya, Bukkaraya, Madapparaya and Muddapparaya. Of this five, Harihara and Bukka displayed considerable valour from the early years of their rule and Sayana and Mayana assisted them as Ministers in the administration of their estates. Harihara and Bukka went to the city named Warrangal where they entered in the service of its king Prataparudra.\textsuperscript{129}

\begin{flushright}
127 Prof. Venkataramaiya, \textit{Vijayanaga Nagar Origin of the City Empire}, p.10.
128 A Krisnasamy Reader in History, \textit{the Tamil Country under Vijayanagar}, (Annamalai University, 1964), pp. 27-28.)
\end{flushright}
THE CONQUEST OF THE TAMIL COUNTRY BY VIJAYANAGAR KINGS.

Ramaraya fought seriously with the five Muhammadan kings of Bahmini kingdom in the Talaikkotta war in 1565 A.D. and died in the battle field. Even after the Talaikkotta war his successors ruled Chandragiri, Tirupathi, Vellore, Chennai, etc., and fought against Muslim domination. Taking advantage of the frequent invasions of the Bahmini kings on the Vijayanagar rulers, Ballala III inflicted terrible defeat upon the Telugus and their allies called the Ariyas at Mudugar and drove them up to the Krishna River. It is in this state of his campaign that he is described as a tiger to the antelope. The reference of the Ariyas here seems to be the Yadavas of Devagiri.

In the course of the 13th century when the Chola power decayed and their domination were overrun by the Pandyas from the South and the Hoysala Ballalas from Mysore, the various feudatory chieftains of Thodaimandalam entered into offensive and defensive alliances among themselves and in this period of anarchy and reconstruction, Gingee might have risen as an independent kingdom. An unbroken and more or less authentic narrative of the place and its fortunes might be formed about 1200 A.D. Gingee became fortified place only in 1200 A.D. Ananda Kone, a shepherd caste man accidently found a treasure in one of the cavities of the western hill while grazing his sheep. Making himself the head of a small band of warriors, he defeated the petty rulers of the neighbouring villages like Devanar, Jaymagondan and Malacheri and built a small fortress on Kamalagiri which he renamed as Anandagiri. Then he raised his caste men to high places and bestowed on them the distinction of Sammanamanar (the honourable).

He fortified Perumukkal near Thindivanam. He reigned for fifty years and was succeeded by Krishna Kone in 1240 A.D. The chief was succeeded by his two sons namely Koneri Kone and Govinda Kone who built the Gopalaaswamy temple at the top of Krishnagiri. Then they were succeeded by Puliya Kone in 1300 A.D.

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131 S.Krishna Swami Aiyangar, South India and Her Muhammadan Invaders, op.cit., p.49.
The Yadava Kingdom of Vijayaraya with its capital Devagiri was ruled by the last great Yadava, Ramachandra who ascended the throne in 1271 A.D. and ruled till 1309 - 1310 A.D.¹³³

**THE UDAYARS OF MYSORE**

The founder of the Udayars dynasty, Vijaya, also claimed descent from the Yadu and took on the name Yadu-Raya.¹³⁴

In 1399 A.D Yadu Raya and Krishna Raja, sons of Raja Deva passed through Vijayanagar territory to visit the sacred shrines of Yadavagiri on Malkote. They crossed the river Kauvery and paid tribute to their deities in the outskirts of the modern township of Mysore. There they had to fight with the Marappa Naicken and they were successful in their fight. Hence, in praise of their brave action, the king of Mysore gave his daughter in marriage to Yadu Raja who ruled Mysore for nearly twenty years.

His younger brother Krishna Raja was made the general of the army of Mysore. Yadu Raja took suffix to his name Vodayar in the honour of the Lingayat priest who helped him against Marappa Nayaka. Since then the Vijayanagar kings were styled as Udayars. The second of that line being Bukkaraya Odayar and the third was Hariappa Udayar.¹³⁵

Odayar, meaning the petty king, the title inherited from Lord Vishnu. Gradually the word Odayar was derived from Yadavas because Yadavas ruled Mysore. Yadu Raja died in 1453 A.D and after him his son Thimmaraja Odayar ruled upto 1478 A.D. He was followed by Somaraja Odayar II and Somaraja Odayar III and they ruled upto 1553 A.D.

Then the throne passed onto Samaraja Odayar and he was in power till 1572 A.D. After him, his son Bethada Udayar ruled Mysore followed by his

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¹³³ S.C. Raychoudhary, Social, Cultural and Economic History of India, (Delhi, 1984), p.49
younger brother Raja Udayar. Raja Udayar ruled Mysore for forty years. He transferred his capital from Mysore to Sri Rangapattinam. For the first time he introduced the 'Navarathri Festival' in 1610 A.D. He administered the territory well and served as a model of piety and devotion to God, which was sincerely followed by his successors also. He proved himself as a great warrior and commander. He died in 1627 A.D. After him his grandson Samaraja Udayar I captured power.136

Samaraja Udayar proved both worthy and brilliant successor of Raja Udayar and a descendent of the Yadava dynasty. So, the Yadava kings were honoured even by the British and after independence they worked as administrators. One among them was Jaya Samaraja Udayar who worked as a Governor of Tamil Nadu after independence.137

**Anandarangam Pillai**

Anandarangam Pillai who was a Yadava was born at Perambur in 13\textsuperscript{th} March 1709 AD. He was doing business in Clothing Materials and the French Trading Organization has worked with him to improve their business. He was trading Overseas through ships. He Therefore became familiar with Kings, Business men, Land Lords and great Tamil People. He was well versed in Tamil, Telugu, French, English, Persian and Portuguese Languages.138

Pillai and his father were merchants when they arrived in Pondicherry, it was Lenoir who appointed the diarist pillai as the native chief of the Company's cloth warehouse at Parangipettai. He grew to be one of the leading merchants of Pondicherry and also helped the private trade of the Governors and other leading Frenchmen. At Parangippettai he baled and dispatched cloths of the Company as well as those of him and Frenchmen. Then the office of chief dubash gave him much wealth, prestige and influence, emoluments of the kind, lease of villages, great credit in the matter of borrowing and lending in all business transactions.

Ranga Pillai took orders from Dumas, placed order for piece-goods with weavers at Parangipettai, Chennamanayakanpalayam, etc. He received advances for them from the Governor and paid advances to the weavers. Dumas then asked him to cancel the order owing to the slackness of business at Mocha, which caused a lot of difficulty to all Pillai who invested his funds in trade and in commercial enterprises beyond sea and in the manufacture of goods. He earned lakhs of pagodas by foreign trade and also lost much in bad debts to big men like subedar and merchants, both native and foreign.\textsuperscript{139}

Ranga Pillai was a painstaking, earnest person, and a careful trader with meticulous habits like regularly keeping business accounts and copies of vouchers, receipts, letters and documents, both official and private. He kept in his desk French copies of important letters, like the one in Persian from the Muslim commanders, court writers and from princes like Mahfuz Khan. He retained copies of account before submitting them to the Governor. These qualities must have impressed Lenoir and Dumas.

It was Lenoir who appointed him to the cloth-warehouse of the Company at Parangipettai as its native chief, which responsibility he was ably discharging when he started writing the Diary. Dupleix too was as much impressed; so, he asked Pillai to draft or translate letters to the Nizam, killedars etc. even before he had become Dubash.

Pillai often got news of European developments from the gazetteers sent to the Governor from Home. One copy of the Gazette was sent to Pondicheery from France by mail from Mahe. It Contained news of the wars and Political development in Europe. On 10\textsuperscript{th} March 1747 Pillai learnt that “The Present King of Spain, Philip V, is the grand son of Louis XIV, the second son of the Dauphin, and the uncle of Louis XV, the reigning King of France. As the Dubins son, he was styled, at birth, Duke of Anjou. When on his death-bed, the later King, who had

\textsuperscript{139} R. Aalal Sundaram, \textit{The Colonial world of Anandha Rangam Pillai 1736 - 1761}. (Puducherry, 1998) p.235
appointed him to the throne of Spain etc., Then the King of France has conquered the town and province of Saarburg and so on.

Sitarama Josier of Vaippur read out from palm leaves, and made calculations with cow rice. To him Pillai gave out particulars of the Number of Children in the French King’s household and the number of death every year, the marriages celebrated each year, the amounts spent in the town with respect to cattle, Poultry, Wheat, Bread, etc., the number of houses and churches and particulars of other members of the royal families etc.\textsuperscript{140}

Srivasakavi a poet in his AnandaRanga Vijayam Sadasiva Desigar in his “Ananda Ranga Kovai” has honoured Ananda Ranga Pillai. Also Ananda Ranga had the habit of writing the “Diary”. This has brought in several useful informations about its deeds and mirrored the political, religious and economic condition prevailing then. This Diary is regarded as a famous document. His palace situated at Anandarangapillai Street in Puducherry remains a great monument. He died on 12\textsuperscript{th} January 1761.\textsuperscript{141}

FREEDOM FIGHTERS FROM THE YADAVA COMMUNITY

Veeran Alagumuthukone

Veeran Alagu Muthu Kone was the first Tamilian to raise the banner of revolt against British imperialism.\textsuperscript{142} Alagumuthu is known as Alagumuthu Servai, the Tamil word Servai means a Commander in Chief, efficient in gathering warriors for the army and capable of leading the army successfully in the field. Azhagappan Servai, an ancestor of Alagumuthu, was a great hero in Madurai. He defended the city from the Kallars. The title was given by a Nayak ruler to Azhagappan as chieftain of Tirunelveli. Azhagappan arrived with his army and relatives at

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{141} C.P.Loganathan, \textit{Yadavas in History}, op.cit., pp111-112
  \item \textsuperscript{142} S.Thillaivanan, Puducherry Manila Varalaru, (Puducherry 1988) p.61
\end{itemize}
Ettayapuram in 1663 and met the Poligar there. In 1691, Katchilaman Servai the cousin of Azhagappan was sent with a force to quell disturbances at Surangudi fort, attached to Ramanathapuram. Alagumuthukone was appointed as Commander in chief of the Ettayapuram army and his heirs have adopted Alagumuthu Servai as their family name.143

The Illasai Kingdom with capital at Ettayapuram was ruled by king Ettayappar under the control of Nawab of Arcot in 1730. Veeran Azhakumuthu Kone was appointed as the captain of his army. In all the tests that king Ettapar gave him to test his courage and ability in the art of warfare, Veeran Azhakumuthu Kone could prove that no one was equal to him in martial arts. He stood fearless as a brave warrior. King Ettayappar was very much impressed by his singular performance. Veeran Azhagumuthu was “valour’s Mansion “and “Bellon’s bridegroom”. Hence, King Ettayappar showered grace on him and honoured him by straight away appointing him as the “Senathipathi” (Captain) of his army. Alagumuthu Yadav was also given a title of honour “Servaikara”.144

Veeran Alagumuthu was known for his loyalty and patriotism. Right from the day he took over the reins of Ettayapuram army he proved his military supremacy. He defeated and brought the enemy kings under his control. Thus he brought name and fame and the Ettayapuram kingdom enjoyed perfect peace and prosperity. When Veeran Alagumuthu Yadav was thus at the height of fame, there came the greatest ever trial of his life. King Ettayappar was duty bound to give tax to Khan Saheb who was an agent in the collection of taxes to the British Company. VeeranAlagumuthu Yadav roared like a lion and told the king that it would be shameful to mortgage the motherland to the foreigners. When Ramanathan Pillai the minister expressed doubts as to whether they could fight the powerful British Army, Veeran Alagumuthu boldly declared that the intense patriotic feeling would infuse the necessary courage and strength to them to fight the imperialistic

143. *Indian Express*, 20 May 1996.
144. *Ibid.*, 
An intelligent military strategy was planned and they were all set to win the battle. Yet the treacherous “Boothalapuram Ettayya” a neighbor king betrayed them and handed over to Khansaheb and thus their attempt was spoiled. In the subsequent battle of Penthanayakkanur, Veeran Alagumuthu Yadav fought a heroic battle against the imperialistic forces. In spite of his brave fight, he was defeated and imprisoned. Khan Sahib was much thrilled to witness Alagumthu's valiant show of strength.

Hence he offered to make him the “Senathipathi” again, if he accepted the British supremacy. But Alagumthu Yadav spitefully equipped that he would rather happily embrace an honourable death than be a party to subject his motherland to the foreign yoke. When he was shot dead, he declared that he was happy to lay down his life for the cause of independence.

He was optimistic that his death would sow the seeds of nationalism in the hearts of thousands of Indian youth who followed him. His optimism proved prophetic. Soon, Kattabomman, Pulithevan and a host of other such brave sons of the Bharatha Madha carried aloft banner of revolt raised by Veeran Alagumuthu Yadav and thus paved the way for the Indian Independence two centuries later.¹⁴⁶

Veeran Alagumuthu Kone was killed by Kan Sahib during 1739-1769. Evidence was not clear about the death of Alagumuthu Kone. “Vamsamani Deepigai” a time honoured historic document and the palm-leave manuscript is found in Kattalangulam near Kalugumalai, the second capital of the Illasi kingdom, speaks values for the historic first war of independence waged by Veeran Alagumuthu Kone against the British imperialism in Pethanayakanur.

Veeran Alagumuthu was a brave warrior, a prophetic captain and an ardent patriot. He is one of the key opponents of the British Imperialists who tried to bring the Indian kingdoms under their yoke. He made supreme sacrifice in

¹⁴⁶ Nagaimughan, *op.cit.*, pp.16-17.
defending his motherland as the cause of independence was more near to him than anything else. He was the embodiment of courage and the very incarnation of patriotic favor. The Indian express, Madurai edition has published a column about Alagumuthu Kone. In the concluding lines of the said column it is stated as follows:

“The blood shed by Alagumuthu at his army men became fuel to the fire of freedom which kindled the feeling among the poligars like Veerapandiya katta bomman in a later period.”

Kesava Mandiri Pillai

In 1806 AD the British have imposed certain practice which made the Indian Sepoys at Vellore to revolt against the Government. This was however defeated by the forces brought from Chennai. Quoting says that one Kesava Mandiri (Pillai), a rich man from Wallajapet has lovely raised voice against British, by supporting the sepoys. He was ably assisted by his cousin Krishna Mandiri. Krishna Mandiri died in the war while serving in the army whereas his brother Kesava Mandiri has escaped. But his fabulous wealth was confiscated by the company government as a punishment for his participation in the revolt.

WAR OF INDEPENDENCE -1857

Rao Tula Ram 1825- 1863

In 1857 Sepoys, the swadeshi rulers and the people of North India rose against the British ruler. This war of independence is called as Sepoy mutiny by the Britishers. Those who participated in this war of independence are Jansi Rani Lakshmi Bai, Nana Parnavis, Tantia Top, Bagadhur Shah, Kumar singh. But

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148. Indian Express Madurai 20th May 1996.
149. C.P. Loganathan, *Yadavas in History*, pp.114-115
150. Ibid., p.115.
there were some others who joined in the said war of independence and lost their wealth, welfare and even life. But they were not honored.

One such person is Rao Thula Ram (9th December 1825-September 23rd 1863) a hero from yadava community. The historical references and the utterance of the British commandants speak of this great warrior.151

By the time Sepoys and swadeshi rulers have made Bhadur Shah of Mugalaya Vamsa, as the Chakkaravarthi of India, Rao Thula Ram has raised voice against British. He collected the Sepoys and captured Tahsildar office at Rewari. He also captured Rewari (Rampura) Shajahanpur districts using his own forces.152 When the revolted positions of north India was under the clutches of British, the positions captured by Rao Thula Ram was silent by his excellent and experienced Police and Army officials and he was able to maintain peace in his area. He was appreciated by the British officers.

Quoting from the letter of Ford, Deputy Commissioner of Gurgon the Author says that: “I would respectfully bring to the notice of government, the great benefit which the town of Rewari and its neighborhood derived from the attitude assumed by Rao Thula Ram. Since the blundering of Mewateer was thus kept at a distance and the life and property were preserved on the Jaipur Border.”153

Quoting from Kirpal Chandra Yadav who says: “Ford recommended Thula Ram to be saved from the public ordeal if he surrendered to British; Despite his being a leader and the prime instigator of the rebellion in this part of the country, simply for the reason that, Society received many benefits from him even when the rebels were up in arms against the government.”154

The British, after capturing Delhi, have made arrangements to fight and subdue Rao Thula Ram. In October 1857 an Army marched towards Rewary. Hearing this Thula Ram collected about 8000 men and attacked Britishers.

152 . W.S.R.Hodson, Twelve years of a soldier’s Life in India, 3 rd edition John W Parker p.330
153 . Surendra Nadesan with forward by Abul Kalam Asath., (Eighteen Fifty Seven, India 1958)
Quoting Hudson the author says that his warfare and technique were different. He attacked British after coming from hide out. The Britishers were in wonders. He reversed back and went in different strategic direction.  

Quoting the Historian Kay, the author says that it was a gallant conflict. “Finally the Britishers were able to drive away the rebels. The Rebels were defeated. Rao Thula Ram escaped”. Even after defeat, he met the Raja of Bikaner, Jaisalma etc., who were his friends. But they did not help.........He went to the aid of Tantya Tope at Kalpi. He was regarded by Tantya Tope as a best aid to deal with critical problem, Rao Thula Ram escaped when Tantya Tope was arrested and executed.  

Rao Thula Ram who escaped from the clutches of British went to Iran and met the ruler of Iran and sought for his help to fight British. He went to Russia and sought the help of Tzar the ruler of Russia. He went to Afghanistan to prepare for a fight. But unfortunately he got severe fever and died. His body was buried with all due respect of the Afghan government. He was about 38 years of age when he died.  

Thus we are able to understand that the Yadavas are scattered all over India and have contributed excessively not only towards the development of their Community but also towards the building of the nation through various aspects like participation in the war of Independence of India, contributions towards a smooth passage with the ruling British, generating revenues for the nation etc., It is interesting to note that the Yadava Community is believed to have descended from Lord Krishna, which attaches a greater significance to the origin of Yadavas. A majority of Yadavas excel in various professions today and they are firm that this position is due to their great association with the Religion and to their worship of Bhagawan Krishna.

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