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DYNASTIC HISTORY OF BENGAL

(c. 750—1200 A. D.)

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To

My Parents

Dr. Abdul Wadud Chowdhury

and

Shirin Begum

Foreword

Literary sources suggest that Bengal was one of the last areas of the northern part of the Sub-Continent to come under Aryan influence. But recent excavations near Burdwan have shown that three thousand years ago the inhabitants of Bengal were by no means savages. Some of them at least lived in comfortable houses and made efficient metal tools and attractive pottery. However, the early history of Bengal is obscure, for there are few reliable sources which throw much light upon it. From the Gupta period a number of inscriptions have survived, and hence our knowledge is a little more satisfactory. From post-Gupta times we have the names of a few indigenous rulers of Bengal, and a certain amount of information (probably rather prejudiced) about Śaśāṅka, the most powerful of them. But only from the eighth century onwards, with the rise of the Pāla dynasty, is it possible to reconstruct a fairly continuous picture of the political history of Bengal.

With this period Dr. Chowdhury's book begins. He has carefully analysed his sources, both inscriptional and literary, and has critically reviewed the theories of earlier students of the subject. With newly discovered sources, an excellent command of Sanskrit, and an acute critical faculty, he has produced an account of the political history of Bengal from the eighth century to the Muslim invasion more accurate and complete than anything hitherto written on the topic.

It is good that Pakistani scholars should also study the history of their remoter ancestors, for the descendants of the men who built Harappā and Mohenjo Daro, who made Taxila a renowned centre of learning, who bravely resisted Alexander of Macedon, who created wonderful Buddhist sculpture in stone and bronze, who produced one of the world's most subtle logical systems, must be alive today in Pakistan. These are part of the heritage.

So I commend Dr Chowdhury's book not only to Pakistani historians, but to students of the period wherever they may be.

A. L. BASHAM

The Australian National University
Canberra.

Preface

"That world history has to be rewritten from time to time, about that there remains no doubt in our day. This necessity exists, not because much about what has passed has been discovered since, but because new points of view arise, because the contemporary of an advanced age is led into a position from which the past can be surveyed and assessed anew."

Thus wrote Goethe one and a half centuries ago. The wisdom of his words is shown by the changes during the last decade or two in the assessment and fresh appraisal of Indo-Pakistan history. I have undertaken this work as a revised study of the dynastic history of Bengal from the rise of the Pālas down to the coming of the Muslims. The necessity arises for two reasons.

Firstly, the discovery of new materials has rendered necessary changes in accepted conclusions and also has added new data which need to be incorporated in the history of Bengal in the pre-Muslim period. Thus the history of south-eastern Bengal under its Deva and Candra rulers was hitherto little known and was generally confused with the history of the Pāla rulers of north-western Bengal and Magadha.

Secondly, most of the historical writings on Pre-Muslim Bengal were inspired by patriotism. It is true that it is difficult for a historian to keep himself aloof from contemporary feelings and sentiments. But with the passage of time and changes in circumstances the necessity of revising previously written history becomes apparent. Prominent scholars like R.C. Majumdar, R.D. Banerji, H.C. Ray, B.C. Sen, D.C. Sircar, D.C. Ganguly, N.K. Bhattasali and a host of others have done great work in unearthing and writing the ancient history of Bengal, but contemporary developments may demand a fresh interpretation of the data.

The inspiration to write their own history was possibly aroused among the learned Bengalis by the call of Bankim

Chandra Chattopadhyaya, who in his *Baṅga Darśan* (1287 B.S./ 1881 A.D.) urged Bengalis to find out their past. The feeling of Bengali nationalism is well known in the writings of this great novelist and litterateur. "His historical novels in Bengali reminded his readers that their glorious past should inspire them to achieve an equally glorious future, and demonstrated the power of the pen as an instrument for stirring up patriotic emotions in times when overt political action was impossible." (Wm. Theodore de Bary : *Sources of Indian Tradition*, P. 707) Inspired by his appeal, if not indoctrinated by his nationalistic feelings, learned men in Bengal set about the task of discovering and writing Bengal's history. The labour of these writers provided a rough framework which is still being filled in and corrected.

Historians writing against this background of nationalistic feelings found it difficult, naturally perhaps, to alienate themselves from the current atmosphere and hence we find signs of its impact on their writings. A critical reexamination of the sources, added to the new-found facts, shows that many of the established ideas are rather fanciful and unfounded. Imagination is no doubt the magic wand of the historian which transforms faded parchments into a living panorama of the past. But this imagination should always be controlled by the evidence in his possession, and it should play its part within the framework of the information which he gleans from his sources. Once imagination outsteps the jurisdiction of reason it is sure to destroy the historian's judgement And imagination backed up by local patriotism seem to have played rather too large a part in the writing of Bengal's history.

H. C. Ray in his valuable work, *The Dynastic History of Northern India*, included a chapter on Bengal and Bihar. In a work of its kind, covering the whole northern India, it was impossible to do justice to Bengal. Moreover it has become in many respects outdated, having been completed in 1929 and published in 1931. R. D. Banerji's works also suffer from the same shortcoming. Similar is the case with B. C. Sen's work

on the inscriptions of Bengal, published in 1942, though it is still valuable. By far the best work on the subject is that of R. C. Majumdar in the *History of Bengal*, Vol. I, published by the University of Dacca in 1943. In 1949 Nihar Ranjan Ray brought out his scholarly work, *Bāṅgālīr Itihāsa*. As he himself admits in the Preface, he did not attempt to incorporate any new material. He devoted himself to the reinterpretation of the existing knowledge and shed more light on the social and economic side of the picture. B. P. Sinha's work, *The Decline of the Kingdom of Magadha* (completed in 1948 and published in 1954), is a valuable recent contribution. But the central theme and a very long period did not allow him to enter into a full discussion of the history of the Pālas. Moreover, he has covered only up to the reign of Mahīpāla I. Since the writing of these works new materials have come to light, and these alone necessitate a revision of the dynastic history of Bengal. But in the recent volumes of the *History and Culture of the Indian People*, published by the Bhāratīya Vidyā Bhavan, Bombay, no serious attempt has been made to take a fresh look at the existing knowledge nor has any serious revision been made in the light of the newly discovered epigraphs.

The recent excavations in the Maināmatī-Lālmāi ridge in the Comilla district of East Pakistan carried out by the Department of Archaeology, Government of Pakistan, have unearthed fresh materials which enable us to reconstruct the hitherto unknown history of South-Eastern Bengal from the 8th century A.D. onwards. The history of this region from the Khaḍgas to the rise of the Varmans in the 11th century A.D. was in complete darkness except for the names of a few Chandra kings, about whom very little was known. In the absence of any record the history of this region was generally confused with that of the Pāla rulers who had their centre of government in north-western Bengal and Magadha. Moreover, the Deva rulers of this region were also unknown. In all seven copper-plates have recently been discovered in East Pakistan and their full texts have not yet been published. Extracts from them have, however, been published by A. H. Dani and F. A. Khan. I have used these unpublished plates, and have

quoted their relevant portions in the text.

Thus my present work, which earned me the Ph. D. Degree from the University of London, is a detailed study of the dynastic history of Bengal from the rise of the Pālas down to the coming of the Muslims. I have divided it into three parts : the first dealing with the history of the Pālas, the second devoted to the dynasties of south-eastern Bengal and the third to the Senas and the Muslim invasion. In the course of my research I have reexamined the sources and found that many of the conclusions reached by previous writers are rather fanciful and unfounded. In an appendix I have discussed the chronology of the Pāla kings. The newly discovered Valgudar inscription of Madanapāla puts us in a more advantageous position in this respect than previous writers. The chronology of the other dynasties has been included in their respective chapters.

In the main I have had to depend on epigraphic sources, with occasional help from literature, in which historical allusions are scarce. The shortcomings of working only with epigraphic sources are well known. The eulogistic nature of the records makes proper understanding of the historical facts very difficult. I am aware of this and, as far as possible, have tried to guard against the natural tendency of being carried away by the panegyrics of the court poets. I have attempted to formulate my conclusions with caution and in the process I have been compelled to use a large number of irritating words and phrases such as 'probably', 'possibly', 'seems likely' etc. I ask the reader's indulgence for these.

In the preparation of this thesis I owe a deep debt of gratitude to my supervisor, Professor A.L Basham, formerly Head of the Department of South Asian History, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, and now Professor of South Asian History, Australian National University, Canberra, for his unfailing assistance, guidance and encouragement. To him I offer my sincere gratitude, affection and respect.

I would also like to express my gratitude and sincere thanks to my former teacher Dr. A.H. Dani, Chairman, Department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar, Peshawar, West Pakistan,

for his interest in my work, for his guidance and suggestions, and for supplying me the texts of the unpublished Candra plates. In this connection my thanks are also due to Dr. Barrie M. Morrison of the Department of Asian Studies, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada, who very kindly allowed me to check the readings of the Candra plates with his own transcripts.

I am also much indebted to Mr. J.E.B. Grey, Dr. D. L. Snellgrove and Dr. Riazul Islam for their help in translating sources in Sanskrit, Tibetan and Persian respectively. I am also thankful to Dr. Abdul Karim, Head of the Department of History, University of Chittagong, for his help at various stages of my work.

It remains for me to record my thanks to Dr. Atreyi Ray and Dr. Mukhlesur Rahman for their occasional help. To my friends, Muqaddes, Mohsin and Hasan I offer my sincere thanks for their help and kindness and for making my sojourn in London so nice and easy. My thanks are also due to my teacher Mr. S. C. Bhattacharya for reading the proofs, and to Mr. Mahbub Alam, my former student, for his help in the preparation of the Index. I should also thank the Asiatic Society of Pakistan for undertaking the publication of my work.

I owe my parents a deep sense of gratitude for enduring my absence and for keeping up my spirits by constant encouragement.

Last but not the least, my wife deserves my thanks for helping me during the last stage of the work, when it was being printed.

Dacca,
May, 1965.

A. M. Chowdhury.

Abbreviations

ABORI	:	*Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.*
AMMK	:	*Ārya-Mañju-Śrī-Mūlakalpa.*
ASI	:	*Archaeological Survey of India.*
BI	:	*Bāṅgālār Itihāsa.* by R. D. Banerji.
DHNI	:	*The Dynastic History of Northern India* by H. C. Ray.
DKM	:	*The Decline of the Kingdom of Magadha* by B. P. Sinha.
EHB	:	*The Early History of Bengal* by P. L. Paul.
EI	:	*Epigraphia Indica.*
GL	:	*Gauḍalekhamālā* by Aksaya Kumar Maitreya.
GR	:	*Gauḍarājamālā* by R. P. Chanda.
HB-I, HB-II	:	*History of Bengal,* Vols. I and II, published by the University of Dacca.
HCIP	:	*History and Culture of the Indian People,* published by the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay.
IA	:	*Indian Antiquary.*
IB-III	:	*Inscriptions of Bengal,* Vol. III, by N. G. Majumdar.
IC	:	*Indian Culture.*
IHI	:	*Imperial History of India in a Sanskrit Text* by K. P. Jayaswal.
IHQ	:	*Indian Historical Quarterly.*
JAHRS	:	*Journal of the Andhra Historical Research Society.*

JASB	:	*Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.*
JASB (NS)	:	*JASB, New Series.*
JAS,L	:	*Journal of the Asiatic Society, Letters.*
JASP	:	*Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan.*
JBBRAS	:	*Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.*
JBORS	:	*Jourual of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society.*
JBRS	:	*Journal of the Bihar Research Society.*
JIH	:	*Journal of Indian History.*
JL	:	*Journal of the Department of Letters, Calcutta University.*
JRAS	:	*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.*
JRASB	:	*Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal.*
JRASB,L	:	*JRASB, Letters.*
MASB	:	*Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.*
MASI	:	*Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India.*
Mainamati	:	Monograph published by the Department of Archaeology, Government of Pakistan, Karachi, 1963
TN	:	*Ṭabaqat-i-Nasiri.*
VRS	:	Varendra Research Society, Rajshahi, East Pakistan.

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DYNASTIC HISTORY OF BENGAL

(c. 750—1200 A. D.)

PART I

THE PALAS

CHAPTER I

Pala Ascendency–A Reassessment

The people of Bengal are not known to have played any important part in Indian history till after the downfall of the Imperial Guptas. Taking advantage of the inevitable chaos that followed the dismemberment of the Gupta empire Bengal appeared for the first time in its history with some sort of a political consciousness and emerged as an independent entity in the political system of India.

With the downfall of the Imperial Guptas northern India broke up into multitudinous small states. Saurāṣṭra was ruled over by the Maitrakas of Valabhī. Yaśodharman, a military adventurer, attempted to build an ephemeral empire in central India, Rajputana and parts of the Punjab. At Thāneswar the house of Puṣyabhūti raised its head, while the Maukharis held sway in Kanauj. In Magadha and Mālava the degenerate descendants of the Guptas continued to exercise their uncertain influence. Bengal also took advantage of this political chaos and two independent kingdoms were established in the sixth century A.D.[1]

The first, the kingdom of Samataṭa or Vaṅga,[2] comprising roughly the southern and eastern, as also a part of western Bengal, was founded in the first half of the sixth century A.D.

[1] For full discussion see *HB-I*, pp. 51 ff.

[2] There was interconnection between the geography of Samataṭa and that of Vaṅga. The area denoted by Samataṭa was not greatly different from the tract of country called Vaṅga. The three geographical units, Vaṅga, Samataṭa and Harikela, may well be grouped under one unit with the common name of Vaṅga ('Bang' of the early Muslim historians) corresponding roughly to south-eastern Bengal. For details see B. C. Sen : *Some Historical Aspects of the Inscriptions of Bengal*, pp. 36 ff. and 79 ff. ; *HB-I*, pp. 13 ff., 85, Fn. 4.

Six copper-plates have preserved the names of three kings of this line, Gopacandra, Dharmāditya and Samācāradevạ, but very little is known about them.[1]

The second independent kingdom that arose on the ruins of the Gupta empire was the kingdom of Gauḍa.[2] This region probably continued to be under the Later Guptas till the reign of Mahāsenagupta, who flourished towards the close of the sixth century A. D.[3] But by the beginning of the seventh century A.D., if not earlier, Śaśāṅka succeeded in supplanting the Later Guptas and founded an independent kingdom comprising north and west Bengal as well as Magadha, with the seat of the government at Karṇasuvarṇa, identified with Rāṅgāmāṭi in the Murshidabad district.[4] The invasions of the Cālukya king Kīrtivarman (567-597 A. D.) and of the Tibetan king Sroṅ-btsān (581-600 A. D.) might have contributed to the rise of this independent kingdom by breaking up the feeble hold of the Later Guptas.[5] Some scholars take Jayanāga of the Vappaghoṣavāṭa inscription[6] as the first independent king of Gauḍa, and Śaśāṅka is said to have succeeded him,[7] whereas R. C. Majumdar takes Jayanāga as the successor of Śaśāṅka.[8]

There is no doubt that the Gauḍa empire under Śaśāṅka flourished to such an extent that Bengal came to be regarded as an important power in north-eastern India. Though scarcity of material does not allow us to form an accurate estimate of his achievements, there can hardly be any doubt that he not only made Gauḍa an independent state, but also extended its

[1] *HCIP*, vol. III, *The Classical Age*, p. 76.

[2] Gauḍa and Vaṅga came to denote two prominent political divisions of Bengal. Roughly speaking, the former comprised northern and western Bengal.

[3] *HCIP*, vol. III, *The Classical Age*, p. 73 ; *HB-I*, p. 49.

[4] *HB-I*, p. 58.

[5] *HCIP*, vol. III, *The Classical Age*, p. 73 ; *HB-I*, pp. 58-59.

[6] *EI*, vol. xviii, pp. 60-64.

[7] H. C. Ray : *DHNI*, vol. i, p. 273 ; B. P. Sinha : *DKM*, pp. 220 ff.

[8] *HB-I*, pp. 79-80.

authority over the whole of southern Bihar and Orissa. He even made a bold bid for the empire of northern India.[1] It cannot be definitely said whether Śaśāṅka's empire included southern and eastern Bengal. Scholars theorise about the probable existence of a Bhadra royal family in that region.[2]

It is difficult to reconstruct, even in outline, the political history of Bengal after the death of Śaśāṅka.[3] It is obvious from Hsüan Tsang's account that after Śaśāṅka's death his empire broke into pieces.[4] The Nidhanpur plates of Bhāskaravarman, issued from the victorious camp at Karṇasuvarṇa, show that the kingdom was conquered by him.[5] For the period roughly from 650 to 750 A.D., the century following the death of Harṣavardhana, we do not have any definite history of Bengal. Chinese and Tibetan traditions inform us about two invasions of the region : the first by Wang-hiuen-tse (647-48 A.D.) and the second by Sroṅ-btsān-gampo, son and successor of Sroṅ-btsān.[6] But they do not tell us whether Tibet actually held Bengal. Whatever influence Tibet might have had over Bengal seems to have ended by the year 703 A.D.[7]

In the second half of the seventh century A.D. Bengal saw the emergence of two new lines of kings. These were the Later Guptas in Gauḍa and Magadha,[8] and the Khaḍgas in Vaṅga and Samataṭa.[9] The Later Guptas had a last flickering of life under Ādityasena and his three successors.[10] The history of the Khaḍgas is known from two Ashrafpur copper-plates[11] and a short

1 For details cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 59-68 ; 71-76.
2 *IC.*, vol. II, pp. 795-97. See *Infra* Chapter IV.
3 The date of his death is uncertain. It can be said to have occurred between 619 and 637 A. D.
4 *HB-I*, p. 77 ; *DHNI*, vol. I, pp. 273-74.
5 *EI*, vol. XIX, pp. 115 ff. and vol. XII, pp. 65 ff.
6 *HB-I*, pp. 91-93.
7 *DHNI*, vol. I, p. 274.
8 R. G. Basak : *The History of North-Eastern India*, p. 128.
9 *HB-I*, pp. 85-90.
10 *DKM*, pp. 279-322.
11 *MASB*, vol. I, No. 6, pp. 85-91.

inscribed image found at Deulbāḍī,[1] and the period of their rule can be placed in the latter part of the seventh and the beginning of the eighth century A.D.[2] Kumārāmatya Lokanātha of the Tippera grant was possibly a vassal of these Khaḍga kings.[3] The traditions recorded by the Tibetan monk Tāranātha[4] mention the existence of a Candra dynasty in Vaṅga. But in the absence of any corroborative evidence this cannot be taken as certain.

Neither of these dynasties, however, appears to have succeeded in establishing a united and strong rule in Bengal. The extant literary evidence suggests that throughout the first half of the eighth century A.D. Bengal was overwhelmed by repeated foreign invasions. The Ragholi plates of Jayavardhana II indicate the existence of a line of kings of Śailavaṁśa who exerted considerable power and influence in northern India and took possession of Puṇḍra (northern Bengal).[5] Then came the invasion of Yaśovarman of Kanauj (725-752 A.D.) who ravaged the whole country, killed the king of Gauḍa and Magadha, and followed this up with a victory over the king of Vaṅga.[6] R.G. Basak's[7] conjecture that the king of Vaṅga defeated by Yaśovarman was Rājārājabhaṭa of the Khaḍga dynasty meets with the most general acceptance. But over the identification of the *Gauḍa-Magadhanātha* opinions differ. B. P. Sinha[8] identifies him with Jīvitagupta II and places the Śaila kings after the defeat

[1] *EI*, vol. XVII, pp. 357-59.

[2] N. K. Bhattasali : *JASB* (*NS*), vol. X, pp. 84-91.
R. C. Majumdar : *JASB* (*NS*), vol. XIX, pp. 376-79 ; *HB-I*, p. 87.
A. H. Dani : *Indian Palaeography*, p. 134.

[3] This is the opinion held by R.C. Majumdar. Cf. *HB-I*, p. 88. But P. C. Choudhury took him to be connected with Bhāskaravarman of Kāmarūpa. Cf. *The History of Civilisation of The People of Assam*, pp. 194-95.

[4] *IA*, vol. IV, pp. 365-66.

[5] *EI*, vol. IX, pp. 41-47.

[6] R. S. Tripathi : *History of Kanauj*, pp. 197-201.

[7] *The History of North-Eastern India*, p. 208.

[8] *DKM*, pp. 315-16. R. S. Tripathi also gave the same identification. Cf. *History of Kanauj*, p. 198.

of Jivitagupta, whereas H C. Ray[1] takes the defeated king as one belonging to the Śaila dynasty.

The glories of Yaśovarman were soon eclipsed by Lalitāditya of Kashmir. Kalhaṇa's account tends to indicate Lalitāditya's influence over Gauḍa.[2] His grandson Jayāpiḍa has also been credited by Kalhaṇa with an invasion of Bengal. The legend about his victories over the five Gauḍa kings and his visit to Puṇḍranagara may rest on a substratum of truth, but it has yet to be corroborated by other evidence.[3] The reference to five Gauḍa kings indicates a state of political disintegration and it is not unlikely that Gauḍa became a field of struggle for the local chiefs who assumed independence in the absence of any central authority.

The Paśupati inscription of Jayadeva of Nepal[4] refers to one Śrī Harṣa of the Bhagadatta dynasty as the overlord of Gauḍa, Oḍra and Kaliṅga. The exact dominion of this king cannot be ascertained.

These successive foreign invasions destroyed the political equilibrium and hastened the forces of disintegration. The remains of Mahāsthāna bear out the unsettled condition of this period. Excavations in the Bairāgī Bhiṭā mound have revealed successive accumulations of debris between the Pāla and Gupta levels which must have been due to the insecure conditions of life at this place during the period of disturbance.[5]

The above discussion shows very well the state of affairs that prevailed in Bengal during the century following the death of Śaśāṅka. Bengal saw very little of stable government and the whole country was torn by internal strife and disturbed by invasions from outside. The condition of Bengal towards the middle of the eighth century A.D., before the rise of Gopāla,

[1] *DHNI*, vol. I, p. 277.
[2] *Ibid.*; *HB-I*, pp. 81-82.
[3] M. A. Stein : *Chronicles of Kashmir*, vol. I, p. 97.
[4] *IA*, vol. IX, p. 181.
[5] *ASI, Annual Report*, 1928-29, p. 92.

found mention in the Pāla records as a state of *mātsyanyāya*.[1] Tāranātha, the Tibetan monk, further elaborates : "In the five eastern provinces, Bhaṅgala, Oḍiviśa (Orissa) and the rest, every Kshatriya, Grandee, Brāhmaṇa and merchant was a king in his own house (in the neighbourhood) but there was no king ruling over the country."[2]

Gopāla I, the founder of the Pāla dynasty, emerged as the ruler of Bengal out of this chaos and, as mentioned in the Khālimpur copper-plate, put an end to this state of *mātsyanyāya*.[3] Lāmā Tāranātha, who completed his work in 1608 A.D., mentions the rise of Gopāla in his characteristic way :

> "At that time the kingdom of Bhaṅgala had been without a king for many years, and the people were suffering great miseries. The leaders gathered and elected a king in order that the kingdom might be lawfully ruled. The elected king was, however, killed that very night by a strong and ugly Nāga woman who assumed the form

[1] Verse 4 of the Khālimpur plate of Dharmapāla : *EI*, vol. IV, pp. 248 and 251.
The Kauṭilīya defines the term as follows :
Apraṇītastu mātsyanyāyam-udbhāvayati /
Baliyān-abalaṁ hi grasate daṇḍadharābhāve //
(When the law of punishment is kept in abeyance, it gives rise to such disorder as is implied in the proverb of fishes, i. e., the larger fish swallows a small one, for in the absence of a magistrate, the strong will swallow the weak.)
R. P. Kangle (ed.) : *The Kauṭilīya Arthaśāstra*, 1.4.13/14, p. 6.

[2] R. C. Majumdar's English rendering of A. Schiefner's German translation of Tāranātha's account.
HB-I, p. 183 ; *IHQ*, vol. XVI, pp. 220-221. Also see E. Lyall's translation from Vassilief's work, *IA*, vol. IV, p. 366.

[3] Verse 4 : *Mātsyanyāyam-apohituṁ prakṛtibhir-lakṣmyāḥ karaṅgrāhitaḥ /*
Śrī-Gopāla iti kṣitīśa-śirasāṁ cūḍāmaṇis-tat-sutaḥ //
(His son was the crest jewel of the heads of the kings, the glorious Gopāla, whom the people made take the hands of Fortune, to put an end to the practice of fishes.) *EI*, vol. IV, pp. 248 & 251.

of a queen of an earlier king. In this way she killed every elected king.... Some years passed in this way, the citizen being elected in turn as king for the day. At this time a devotee of the goddess Chuṇḍā came to a house, where the family was overwhelmed with grief. On enquiry he learnt that next day the turn of elected king fell on a son of that house. He, however, offered to take the place of the son on receiving some maney.... He obtained the reward and was elected king in the morning. When in midnight the Nāga woman, in the form of a Rākshasī, approached towards him, he struck he with the wooden club, sacred to his tutelary deity, and she died. The people were greatly astonished to see him alive in the morning. He thereupon offered to take the place of others whose turn came next to be elected as kings, and he was elected king seven times in course of seven days. Then, on account of his pre-eminent qualifications, the people elected him as a permanent king and gave him the name of Gopāla."[1]

Most of the scholars have taken the implication of the verse of the Khālimpur plate and Tāranātha's account to mean that Gopāla was elected by the people as their king and R. C Majumdar has gone so far as to say :

"About the middle of the eighth century A.D. a heroic and laudable effort was made to remedy the miserable state of things. The people at last realised that all their troubles were due to the absence of a strong central authority and that this could be set up only by voluntary surrender of powers to one popular leader by the numerous chief exercising sovereignty in different parts of the country. It reflects no small credit upon the political sagacity and spirit of sacrifice of the leading men of Bengal that they rose to the occasion and selected one among themselves to be

[1] A Schiefner : *Tāranātha's Geschichte Des Buddhismus in Indien*, pp. 203-4 ; English Translation : *HB-I*, p. 184.

> the sole ruler of Bengal to whom they all paid willing allegiance. It is not every age, it is not every nation, that can show such a noble example of subordinating private interests to public welfare. The nearest parallel is the great political change that took place in Japan in A.D. 1870. The result was almost equally glorious and the great bloodless revolution ushered in an era of glory and prosperity such as Bengal has never enjoyed before or since"[1]

A critical re-examination of the sources would show that such a grand idea of a sort of a 'social contract' origin of the Pāla rule is rather far-fetched and presupposes a political outlook far in advance of the time. To think of a popular election in eighth century Bengal is definitely an anachronism. "It is a sheer adventurous flight of imagination to assume that the people of Bengal 'suddenly developed a political wisdom and a spirit of self-sacrifice'[2] to establish a national central authority by subordinating their individual interests. Such a democratic and national spirit was as absent in the Indo-Pak sub-continent at that time as it was a thousand years later."[3] In a time of anarchy and disorder caused by rivalry of interest, the question of a popular election is completely out of place.

Moreover the evidence that we have does not warrant such a conclusion. Tāranātha's account seems to be rather a nursery tale than one containing any sober history, and his statements, though interesting and informative, should not be accepted as historical unless corroborated by independent evidence. Historians sought corroboration in this case in verse 4 of the Khālimpur plate and have interpreted its metaphorical information to suit their theory. "While accepting the view that 'to take the hand of fortune' means the obtaining of royal authority and that

[1] R. C. Majumdar : *HCIP*, vol. IV, *The Age of Imperial Kanauj*, p. 44.
[2] R. C. Majumdar : *HB-I*, p. 96.
[3] M. M. Ali : *An Outline of Ancient Indo-Pak History*, p. 347.
Arguments against the theory of election were first propounded by the above scholar, though without any proper analysis of the sources.

mātsyanyāya means a state of lawlessness, R. C. Majumdar dilates upon the meaning of the term *Prakṛti*.[1] He rejects the meaning 'subjects' or people because in a state of lawlessness there could not be any regular election by the general mass of people."[2] He also did not accept the meaning 'principal officer' because in the absence of a central government "when the country was divided into a large number of independent principalities, we can scarcely think of a group of officials (presumably of one of the states) placing somebody on the throne of Bengal."[3] Then he comes to the conclusion : "On the whole, therefore, we are justified in holding the view that Gopāla was called to the throne by the voice of the people though perhaps the selection was originally made by a group of leaders or independent ruling chiefs."[4] Dr. Majumdar's conclusion seems to suffer from inconsistency as it is not possible to determine the electors of Gopāla or rather the true significance of the term *Prakṛti* as it is used in the Khālimpur plate.

The verse in question does not seem to speak of any election or selection by the *Prakṛtis*, in whatever sense the word may be taken. What it says is that the *Prakṛtis* made Gopāla take the hands of Fortune in order to put an end to the state of *mātsyanyāya*. This metaphorical information can be taken to mean simply that Gopāla was assisted by a few *Prakṛtis* to gain power or, in other words, Gopāla with the support of a few *Prakṛtis* (possibly some ruling chiefs or officials who were his camp-followers) succeeded in mastering power and thus put an end to the state of lawlessness. In a state of confusion in the absence of a ruling power it is very natural that an adventurer with a group of supporters should fish in the troubled waters and succeed in suppressing the rivals and capturing power. And this has been expressed by the court poet in the characteristic metaphorical way. The idea of an election and the con-

[1] *HB-I*, pp. 97-98.
[2] M. M. Ali : *op. cit.*, p. 346.
[3] *HB-I*, pp. 98.
[4] *Ibid.*

sequent interpretation of the verse of the Khālimpur plate to mean an election, comes from Tāranātha's account. If we have to believe in Tāranātha literally then we have to think of one election every day, which is absolutely unreasonable. Tāranātha, in describing the event, uses the expression *rtag-tu rgyal-srid-du bskoste*,[1] which can be translated as : (They) permanently charged him with the kingship.[2] In the context of the story related by Tāranātha it is difficult to take *bskos* to mean an election. So, without attaching undue importance to the word *bskos*, the allegorical story embodied in Tāranātha's account can be taken to mean that Gopāla succeeded in suppressing the evil forces of the chaotic condition, represented by the evil spirit of the Nāga woman in his story, and thereby in capturing power.

Having thus explained the evidence of the Khālimpur plate and Tāranātha's account we can reasonably conclude that Gopāla, a military adventurer, succeeded in restoring peace and order by putting an end to the forces of lawlessness. He must have had a host of supporters, as is very natural in such a time. This has been referred to by the eulogistic court poet as that the *Prakṛtis* made Gopāla "take the hand of Fortune to put an end to the state of lawlessness."

So it is clear that a theory of popular election is not at all warranted by the available sources. If there had been any such event, though it is highly improbable at that period of Indian history, it would have been referred to in clear terms and definitely would have found mention in the records of the subsequent Pāla rulers, whose court poets would not have possibly spared this glorious event in their eulogies.

[1] A. Schiefner (ed.) : *Tāraāthae de Doctrinae Buddhicae In India Propagatione*, Petropoli, 1868, p. 156.

[2] *bskos* is the perfect of the verb *sko-ba*, meaning to appoint or to charge with (an office).
Cf. H. A. Jäschké : *Tibetan Dictionary*, p. 23, last item.

On the other hand indirect support for our contention can be found in a verse about Gopāla in the records of the later Pālas[1] :

Jitvā yaḥ kāmakārī prabhavam-abhibhavaṁ śāśvatīṁ prāpa śāntim /
Sa Śrīmān Lokanātho jayati Daśabalo 'nyaś-ca Gopāladevaḥ //

(Who having overcome the power of those who were acting according to their own desires attained everlasting peace.)

The reference here about Gopāla's winning over those who acted according to their own will may be taken to refer to the state of *mātsyanyāya*, suppressing which he founded the empire and brought about peace in Bengal. This supports our explanation of the verse of the Khālimpur plate and strengthens the view that he suppressed all those rival princes who had brought about the state of anarchy in Bengal preceding Gopāla's accession. Here we find a clear reference to Gopāla's fight with these rival forces and to his success in welding the rival principalities into an empire. So there is no point in speaking about a popular election. Bu-ston, the Tibetan historian, seems to lend added support to our contention when he says, "He (Gopāla) obtained the royal power over the whole country by the force of his virtues."[2]

Another scholar[3] tried to justify the theory of election by pointing out that Dharmapāla attached great importance to the good opinion of the people in his Khālimpur plate and held the local leaders in high esteem and regard. "The omission of these as well as non-mention of the part played by the Prakṛitis in the establishment of the Pāla dynasty in the subsequent records does not seem to be without significance. It is not unlikely that the Pālas who owed so much to the people on the onset of their career, consolidated their position so effectively by

[1] Bhāgalpur plate of Nārāyaṇapāla : *IA*, vol. XV, p. 305.
Bāngarh plate of Mahīpāla I : *EI*, vol. XIV, p. 326.
Āmgachi plate of Vigrahapāla III : *Ibid.*, vol. XV, p. 295.
Manahali plate of Madanapāla : *JASB*, vol. LXIX, p. 69.

[2] Bu-ston : *History of Buddhism*, (Eng. Trans.), part II, p. 156.

[3] B. C. Sen : *Some Historical Aspects of the Inscriptions of Bengal*, p. 528.

stamping out the evils of lawlessness and by making conquests abroad that they very soon felt to go the way they liked without having to seek popular approval or consent."[1] This fact of attaching importance to the people in the initial stage and its subsequent omission rather lends support to our contention that Gopāla was a successful upstart in a troubled time than proves the theory of election. At the initial stage, after capturing power, the Pāla rulers out of their political prudence wanted to keep the people contented so that they might not start a reaction. But once their power and position was firmly established they naturally did not feel the necessity of declaring their conviction in the good opinion of the people.

As for the origin of the dynasty nothing definite can be said. The Khālimpur plate does not give any definite information except the names of Gopāla's father Vapyaṭa, "the destroyer of adversaries", and his grandfather Dayitaviṣṇu, "bright with all learning" and "the progenitor of the foremost line of kings."[2] In a colophon of the commentary of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā prajñāpāramitā* by Haribhadra, belonging to the time of Dharmapāla, the latter is described as *rājabhaṭādi-vaṁśa-patita*,[3] and from this H. P. Sastri suggested that Dharmapāla belonged to the family of a military officer of some king.[4] Scholars have given different interpretations to this expression of Haribhadra, some taking Rājabhaṭa as a proper name and connecting him with Rājabhaṭa of Shengchi's account,[5] or with Rājabhaṭa, son of Deva Khaḍga of the Khaḍga dynasty of Vaṅga[6] ; while another writer thinks that the Pālas were connected with them through the female line.[7] Thus it would seem that hardly any definite information can be had about the ancestors of the Pāla

[1] *Ibid.*
[2] Verses 2 & 3 : *EI*, vol. IV, pp. 247-48.
[3] *MASB*, vol. III, pp. 5-6.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 6.
[5] N. N. Vasu : *Vaṅger Jātiya Itihāsa*, Rājanya Kāṇḍa, p. 147.
[6] R. C. Majumdar : *JASB (NS)*, vol. XIX, pp. 378-79.
[7] M. Shahidullah : *IHQ*, vol. VII, p. 533.

kings. Their own records are peculiarly silent and do not show any intention on the part of the court scribes to connect them with any royal line. This silence naturally tempts one to conclude that the Pālas were plebians and the only definite thing we know is that Gopāla's father was a military man and that he was the first king of the dynasty. The fact that Dayitaviṣṇu and Vapyaṭa are not mentioned in any grant of the Pāla rulers except in the Khālimpur plate proves that they were considered insignificant as compared with Gopāla and his successors.

The Pāla inscriptions also do not make any attempt to declare the caste of the rulers. Scholars have propounded different views from references in later records. The Kamauli copperplate of Vaidyadeva speaks of Vigrahapāla III as *vaṁśe mihirasya jātavān*, born in the race of the sun.[1] Sandhyākara Nandi describes Rāmapāla as *samudrakula-dīpa*,[2] and he is said to have come from a Kṣatriya race.[3] Tāranātha informs us that Gopāla was born at Pauṇḍravardhana of a beautiful Kṣatriya woman in liason with a tree god.[4] Ghanarāma in his *Dharmamaṅgala* (written in 1713) narrates that Devapāla was born through Dharmapāla's wife Vallabhi's union with the ocean.[5] Soḍḍhala, a Gujarati poet of the eleventh century A.D. in his *Udaya-Sundarī-Kathā* informs us that Dharmapāla belonged to the family of Mandhātā, i.e., the solar race.[6] Bu-ston refers to the tradition that Gopāla was born of a shepherd's widow and a tree spirit and makes Dharmapāla the offspring of the queen of Gopāla and a Nāga king.[7] The *Ārya-Mañju-Śrī-Mūlakalpa* refers to Gopāla as *dāsa-jīvin*, of menial caste.[8] In the *Vyāsa Purāṇa* embedded in the *Vallālacarita* the Pālas are described as "the

[1] Verse 2 : *EI* vol. II, p. 350 ; *GL*, p. 128.
[2] *Rāmacarita*, Verse I/4, VRS Edition, pp. 3-4,
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.
[4] *IHQ*, Vol. VIII, pp. 530-31.
[5] *Ibid.*, vol. IX, p. 480.
[6] Gaekwad Oriental Series, No. XI, p. 4.
[7] Bu-ston : *History of Buddhism* (English Trans.), pt. II, p. 156.
[8] K. P. Jayaswal : *IHI*, p. 72 ; Sanskrit Text, p. 66.

worst of the Kṣatriyas."[1] One gets the impression from these varying sources that nothing definite was known about the caste of the Pāla kings. B. P. Sinha[2] taking the information of the *Ārya-Mañju-Śrī-Mūlakalpa*, the *Vyāsa Purāṇa*, Tāranātha, Buston and the *Dharmamaṅgala* concluded that the Pālas belonged to a "low caste or impure descent" and tried to confirm his conclusion by interpreting the verse in the later Pāla records[3] to mean that Gopāla "overcoming the scandal attached to his profligate birth attained eternal peace." This interpretation of the verse is far too adventurous. Sinha, citing evidence from the Kamauli grant, the *Rāmacarita* and Soḍḍhala remarks, "The suspicion is further strengthened when we find that in later years, when the Pālas had established themselves as a powerful ruling dynasty, claims were made for their descent from the mythical solar dynasty and *Samudra Kula*."[4] In the present state of our knowledge it is difficult to fix their lineage. It is quite probable that their origin was humble and as time went on they came to be regarded as Kṣatriyas and hence the mention in the *Rāmacarita* and the Kamauli grant. But it must be taken into consideration that the Pāla rulers, being Buddhists, did not attach much importance to declaring their caste.

The problem of determining the original kingdom of the Pālas from where they rose to power is as difficult as the problem of their ancestry and caste. The *Rāmacarita*[5] and the Kamauli grant[6] refer to Varendra (northern Bengal) as the *janakabhū* of the Pālas. In the Bāngarh plate of Mahīpāla I we find that Mahīpāla "obtained his paternal kingdom, which had been snatched away through pride of prowess by people

[1] *MASB*, vol. III, p. 4.
[2] *DKM*, pp. 327-330.
[3] Verse occurring in the Bhāgalpur grant of Nārāyaṇapāla and repeated in three subsequent records. *Jitvā yaḥ kāmakārī*.....Quoted on *supra*, p. 13.
[4] B. P, Sinha : *DKM*, p. 329.
[5] Verses I/38 and I/50, VRS Edition, pp. 29-30 and 37-38.
[6] Verse 4 : *EI*, vol. II, p. 350 ; *GL*, pp. 128-29.

who had no claim to it",[1] and this apparently relates to Mahīpāla's reconquest of northern Bengal from the Kāmbojas who, according to the testimony of the Dinajpur Pillar inscription,[2] are believed to have captured northern Bengal in the later part of the tenth century A. D. All these facts would lead to the supposition that northern Bengal was the original kingdom of the Pālas. But R. C. Majumdar,[3] relying on Tāranātha's information that Gopāla was born at Pauṇḍravardhana and elected king in the kingdom of Bhaṅgala,[4] and the reference to Dharmapāla in the Gwalior inscription[5] as *Vaṅgapati* is inclined to conclude that Gopāla rose to power in Vaṅga (south-eastern Bengal) and gradually consolidated his power over the whole of Bengal. But one fact stands on the way of this conclusion. All the inscriptions of the early Pāla rulers were issued from Bihar and the lands granted by them lay in Bihar or northern and north-western Bengal. Not a single inscription, up to the time of Gopāla II[6] has been found to refer to the Pāla occupation of south-eastern Bengal. On the other hand, the existence of a Deva dynasty in south-eastern Bengal is now known to us from definite epigraphic sources. These Deva rulers ruled in

[1] Verse 12 : *EI*, vol. XIV, p. 330.

[2] *JASB* (*NS*), vol. VII, pp. 615-19 ; see *Infra*, Chapter II.

[3] *IHQ*, vol. XVI, pp. 219 ff. ; *HB-I*, p. 102.

[4] *IHQ*, vol. XVI, pp. 221-22 ; *HB-I*, p. 184.

[5] *EI*, vol. XVIII, p. 108.

[6] Mandhuk Ins. of 1st regnal year of Gopāla II, *VRS Monograph*, No. 8, 1950, pp. 104-96 ; *IHQ*, vol. XXVIII, p. 57.
This inscription, found in south-eastern Bengal, seems to be of external origin, cf. *Infra*, Chapter II.
The Baghaura Image ins. (*EI*, vol. XVII, pp. 353-55), dated in the 3rd year of a king named Mahipāla and the Nārāyaṇpur Image Ins. of the 4th year of a king of the same name (*IC*, vol. IX, pp. 121-25) can be attributed to the second ruler bearing that name (c. 1080-85 A.D.), cf. *IC*, vol. VII, p. 412.
We shall see in a subsequent chapter (Chap. IV), that there was a continuous rule of a Candra dynasty in south-eastern Bengal from the beginning of the 10th century A. D. to the middle of the 11th.

the second half of the 8th century A.D.[1] Except for the uncorroborated evidence of Tāranātha, which cannot be solely relied upon, and the casual reference in the Gwalior inscription of Bhoja. the Pratihāra king, there is nothing to indicate that the Pālas rose to power in south-eastern Bengal. Even in the early years the Pāla rulers were mentioned in the inscriptions of foreign kings sometimes as kings of Gauḍa and sometimes as rulers of Vaṅga.[2] So these references in foreign records do not carry any significance. To conclude that Gopāla rose to power in south-eastern Bengal on the basis of these two feeble points seems to be far-fetched. On the other hand, we have definite information in the records connected with the Pāla dynasty that Varendra (northern Bengal) was the *janakabhū* of the Pāla kings, and there are no strong grounds to disbelieve them. The *Ārya-Mañju-Śrī-Mūlakalpa* refers to the rise of Gopāla in the region of Gauḍa and north-western Bengal where the Later Guptas held sway.[3] In view of these evidences it would not be unreasonable to conclude that Gopala rose to power in the north-western portion of Bengal and that Pāla suzerainty over south-eastern Bengal in their early period cannot be proved beyond doubt.

Unfortunately we do not have any details about Gopāla in the Pāla records or in any later source. The Khālimpur plate of Dharmapāla[4] and the verse in the later Pāla records[5] leave no doubt that he consolidated the position of the dynasty, putting an end to the period of anarchy. Verses 2, 3 and 4 of the Munger plate of Devapāla[6] speak about Gopāla, "the type of well conducted king", as having "conquered the earth as far as the sea" and declare that "when his innumerable

[1] *Infra*, Chapter IV.

[2] Cf., Waṇi plate : *IA*, vol. XI, pp. 156 ff., and Sanjan plates : *EI*, vol. XVIII, pp. 235 ff.

[3] K. P. Jayaswal : *IHI*, p. 42 ; Sanskrit Text, p. 50, Verses 676-686,

[4] *EI*, vol, IV, pp. 248 ff.

[5] *Jitvā yaḥ kāmakārī*.....Quoted on *supra* p. 13.

[6] *EI*, vol. XVIII. pp. 304 ff. ; *IA*, vol. XXI, pp. 253 ff.

forces were marching the sky continually filled with the dust of the earth and the birds of the air could walk upon it." "This, of course", as R. C. Majumdar says, "does not mean much."[1] Tāranātha credits Gopāla with the conquest of Magadha.[2] On account of the fact that the conquest is not emphatically referred to in the Pāla records, which mention Gopāla in general terms, R. C. Majumdar hesitates to accept it, and credits Dharmapāla with this conquest.[3] But even in the case of Dharmapāla it is not emphatically mentioned. B. P. Sinha rightly pointed out that "Gauḍa and Magadha from the 7th century onwards has become politically intertwined and were sometimes not considered separate at all. The 'Gauḍa tantra' referred to in many places in *AMMK* included Magadha."[4] The establishment of order and security in north and north-western Bengal "automatically led to the addition of Magadha."[5] The fact that Gopāla's son and successor "Dharmapāla could emerge as a keen competitor with the Pratīhāras and the Rāṣṭrakūṭas for the paramountcy of Northern India"[6] lends added support to the fact that Gopāla captured the region of north and north-western Bengal, and Magadha, and consolidated their position to usher in for his son a career of ambitious schemes. There is no evidence in support of M. Shahidullah's[7] contention that Gopāla conquered Kāmarūpa, and the first reference to Kāmarūpa is found in the description of Jayapāla's exploits during the time of Devapāla in the Bhāgalpur grant of Nārāyaṇapāla.[8]

The reign period of Gopāla is not known. The *Ārya-Mañju-Śrī-Mūlakalpa*,[9] which ascribes a reign of 27 years, seems

[1] *HB-I*, p. 102.
[2] *IA*, vol. IV, p. 366,
[3] *HB-I*, pp. 103 and 110.
[4] *DKM*, pp. 332-333.
[5] B. P. Sinha : *Ibid.*, p. 333.
[6] *Ibid.*
[7] *IHQ*, vol. VII, pp. 531 ff.
[8] Verse 6, *IA*, vol. XV, p. 305 ; *JASB*, vol. XLVI, pp. 404-05 ; *GL*, p. 58.
[9] Verse 690, Sanskrit Text in *IHI*, p. 51.

to be nearer the mark than Tāranātha, who gives 45 years. If we consider two points, (i) Gopāla must have come to power at a comparatively advanced age, as he previously had to master power and support, and (ii) he must have taken some time to consolidate his power and leave it in such a condition that his son could pursue ambitious schemes in the politics of northern India, a reign of 20 to 25 years would seem quite probable.[1]

Dharmapāla, Gopāla's son through his wife Deddadevī, succeeded to the throne of Bengal.[2] He must have stepped in at a time when the position of his family was firmly established in Bengal and Magadha, because we find him taking part in a bid for an empire in northern India along with the Gurjara-Pratīhāras and the Rāṣṭrakūṭas.

When Bengal saw the rise of the Pālas, the Rāṣṭrakūṭas wrested power from the Cālukyas in the Deccan, and the Gurjara-Pratīhāras consolidated their power in Mālava and Rājasthāna.[3] In northern India there was a vacuum after it was swept over by Yaśovarman and Lalitāditya. So during the subsequent two generations northern India with its traditional central seat at Kanauj felt a rush on the part of these three powers to fill up this vacuum.

In the different Pāla records all the verses[4] employed to glorify the reign of Dharmapāla leave no doubt that the Pāla power, having been secured in Bengal and Magadha, had a chance to demonstrate its vigour in the politics of Northern

[1] The dates of all the Pāla kings will be discussed in an appendix.

[2] Khālimpur plate : *EI*, vol. IV, p. 248.

[3] For the history of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas see A. S. Altekar : *The Rāshṭrakūṭas And Their Times*. For the Pratīhāras see R. C. Majumdar : *The Gurjara-Pratīhāras, Journal of the Dept. of Letters*, Calcutta University, vol. X ; B. N. Puri : *The History of the Gurjara-Pratīhāras* ; R. S. Tripathi : *History of Konauj*, pp. 219 ff.

[4] Verses 6-13. Khālimpur Pl. : *EI*, vol. IV, pp. 248 ff. ; Verses 6-8, Munger Pl. : *EI*, vol. XVIII, pp. 304 ff. ; Verse 3, Bhāgalpur pl. : *IA*, vol. XV, p. 305 ; Verse 2, Bādal Ins. : *EI*, vol. II, p. 161.

India. The amount of success it attained can be gleaned from a comparative study of the various inscriptions of the three rival dynasties, which of course are often conflicting and vague, quite in keeping with the trend of eulogistic court poetry.

"It is difficult to follow the exact course of this struggle in strict chronological order, as the few isolated facts, known to us from the inscriptions of the three dynasties, are capable of different interpretations. We can only trace what seems to be the most probable trend of events in the light of all available materials."[1]

The first phase of this tripartite struggle opened with a clash between Dharmapāla and Vatsarāja, the Pratihāra king, resulting in a defeat of the former, and later on both of them were defeated by a common enemy from the Deccan, Dhruva Dhārāvarṣa, the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king (780-794 A. D.). The 8th verse of the Rādhanpur plates of Govinda III,[2] repeated in the Waṇi grant,[3] informs us of a defeat inflicted upon Vatsarāja by the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king Dhruva in the following manner: "By his matchless armies, having quickly driven into trackless desert Vatsarāja, who boasted of having with ease appropriated the fortune of the royalty of Gauḍa, he in a moment took away from him, not merely the Gauḍa's two umbrellas of state, white like the rays of the autumn moon, but his own fame also that had spread to the confines of the regions." The Sanjan plate of Amoghavarṣa tells us with reference to Dhruva that "he took away the white umbrellas of the king of Gauḍa (who was) destroyed between the Ganges and the Yamuna."[4] This statement that the Gauḍa king met his defeat in the Gaṅgā-Yamunā doab area is confirmed by the Surat[5] and the Baroda[6] grants

[1] R. C. Majumdar: *HB-I*, p. 104.
[2] *EI*. vol. VI, pp. 243 and 248.
[3] *IA*, vol. XI, p. 157.
[4] Verse 14: *Gaṅgāyamunayor-madhye rājño gauḍasya naśyataḥ /*
Lakṣmīlīlāravindāni svetacchatrāṇi yo 'harat //
EI, vol. XVIII, p. 244; Translation, p. 252.
[5] *EI*, vol. XXI, pp. 133 ff.; A. S. Altekar: *op. cit.*, p. 57.
[6] *IA*, vol. XII, p. 159; A. S. Altekar: *op. cit.*, p. 58.

of Karkarāja Suvarṇavarṣa. R. C. Majumdar[1] established three important points from these references :

(i) The kingdom of Gauḍa stretched as far at least as Allahabad.[2]

(ii) Vatsarāja defeated the king of Gauḍa.

(iii) Vatsarāja as well as the king of Gauḍa were defeated by Dhruva.

But Dhruva was not in a position to follow up his victories and the Rāṣṭrakūṭa army "soon retired to the south, enhancing no doubt the military prestige of the empire but adding very little to its area."[3] Dhruva died in 793-94 A.D.[4] and so the first part of the tripartite struggle can be placed round about 790 A.D. The Pālas under Dharmapāla, though they made a bid for the empire in northern India, were utterly unsuccessful, being defeated by both their enemies, and the Pāla records are understandably silent about this.

As the events that followed show, Dharmapāla reaped some benefit even in defeat. The Pratihāras took some time to recoup their power and the Rāṣṭrakūṭas could not hold out owing to various reasons that caused their retreat. Dharmapāla was left alone to spread his influence. He had some success, though temporary, and placed his protegé on the throne of Kanauj.

But before going on to assess the success of Dharmapāla in northern India a note of caution about deducing facts of history from the eulogistic court poetry will not be out of

[1] *The Gurjara-Pratihāras*, p. 35.

[2] Whether the Gauḍa suzerainty advanced as far as Allahabad at that time cannot be ascertained. But it is clear that the encounter between Dharmapāla and Vatsarāja must have taken place in the Doab region where, as R. C. Majumdar himself says, (*ibid.*) Dharmapala might have led his army in his attempt at reaching Kanauj, while Vatsarāja also advanced there with the same intention. Dhruva found both of them there and defeated one after another.

[3] A. S. Altekar : *op. cit.*, p. 58.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 56.

place. As K. A. Nilakanta Sastri[1] has pointed out, the greatest defect of this type of evidence is exaggeration and "most of the good qualities you can think of are attributed to the patron. And his heroism in the field of war often results in almost every known country sending him tribute. And the choice of qualities and countries for mention is governed by requirement of metre and rhythm." The extant Pāla records are no exception and it is too hazardous to take the verses at their face value and it is equally difficult to "distinguish history couched in an ornate literary style from pure poetry."[2] The Khālimpur plate[3] uses eight long verses to describe the prowess and exploits of Dharmapāla, "whose achievements were praised by the good, a master of kings who alone is ruling the entire orb of the earth",[4] when he proceeds to conquer "the earth slides down"[5] and "the fire of his wrath, stirred up when he finds himself opposed, like the submarine fire, blazes up unceasingly, checked (only) by the four oceans" ;[6] he has "humbled the great conceit of all rulers",[7] and his arms "annihilate the whole host of his adversaries",[8] and he himself, hearing the praises sung by cowherds, villagers, children, market officials, and by the parrots in the pleasure houses, "always bashfully turns aside and bows down his face."[9]

These verses are typical of eulogistic court poetry and cannot be said to carry much value as historical facts. One thing that can be deduced from these verses with some amount of certainty is that Dharmapāla had attained some success and that success found mention in such an ornate form through

1 *Historical Methods In Relation To South Indian History*, p. 17.
2 *Ibid.*
3 *E. I.*, vol. IV, pp. 248 ff.
4 Verse 6 : *Ibid.*
5 Verse 7 : *Ibid.*
6 Verse 9 : *Ibid.*
7 Verse 10 : *Ibid.*
8 Verse 11 : *Ibid.*
9 Verse 13 : *Ibid.*

the pen of the court poet. To crown all these verses is the 12th verse which runs as follows : "With a sign of his gracefully moved eyebrows he installed the illustrious king of Kānyakubja, who readily was accepted by the Bhoja, Matsya, Madra, Kuru, Yadu, Yavana, Avanti, Gandhāra and Kīra kings bowing down respectfully with their diadems trembling, and for whom his own golden coronation jar was lifted up by the delighted elders of Pañcāla."[1] The third verse of the Bhāgalpur grant of Nārāyaṇapāla,[2] shorn of much of the colouring, confirms this information so far as the installation of a protegé in Kānyakubja is concerned. The definite fact which can be deduced from these two verses is that Dharmapāla succeeded in supplanting Indrarāja, identified with Indrāyudha,[3] and in placing his own protegé Cakrāyudha on the throne of Kanauj. This is confirmed by the Pratihāra and Rāṣṭrakūṭa records.[4] Scholars[5] taking the verse of the Khālimpur plate too literally

[1] *Bhojair-Matsyaiḥ sa Madraiḥ Kuru-Yadu-Yavan-Āvanti Gandhāra Kīrair-bhūpair-vyālola-mauli-praṇati-pariṇataiḥ sādhu saṅgīryamāṇaḥ /*
Hṛṣyat-Pañcāla-vṛddh-oddhṛta-kanakamaya-svābhiṣekodakumbho
dattaḥ Śrī-Kanyakubjas-sa-lalita-calita-bhrūlatā-lakṣma-yena //
EI, vol. IV, p. 248. Kielhorn's translation. quoted above, carries the meaning of the second part of the verse too far. The reference to the installation of a king at Kānyakubja is not at all clear. However, the third verse of the Bhāgalpur plate helps to its clear understanding.

[2] *Jitvendrarāja-prabhṛtīn-arātīn-upārjjitā yena Mahodaya Śrī /*
Dattā punaḥ sā balinārthayitre Cakrāyudhāyānativāmanāya //
IA, vol. XV, p. 305.
This mighty one (balin) again gave the sovereignty of Mahodaya (Kānyakubja), which he had acquired by defeating Indrarāja and other enemies, to the begging Cakrāyudha who resembled a dwarf in bowing. E. Hultzch's translation, *ibid.*, p. 307.

[3] R. D. Banerji : *BI*, vol. I, pp. 180-81 ; R. S. Tripathi : *History of Kanauj*, pp. 213-14. It has been generally accepted that Indrāyudha was possibly ruling in Kanauj according to a reference in *Jaina Hari Vaṁśa Purāṇa* (*JRAS*, 1909, p. 253). R. C. Majumdar conjectures him to be a brother of Dhruva, the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king, cf. *HB-I*, p. 106, Fn. 1.

[4] See below.

[5] R. C. Majumdar : *HB-I*, pp. 106-10 ; R. D. Banerji : *BI*, vol. I,

have followed suit with the court poet in ascribing credit to Dharmapāla for conquering all those places.[1]

They have tried to find confirmation of this all round conquest in verse 7 of the Munger plate of Devapāla, which runs as follows: "With ease uprooting all the wicked and subduing this world, he (Dharmapāla) at the same time secured for his followers the blessings of the world to come for (on his expedition) they bathed according to precept at Kedāra (and) where the ocean is joined by the Ganges and performed holy rites at Gokarṇa and other sacred shrines."[2] This verse seems to be an echo of the verse of the Khālimpur plate, referred to above, and rather a loud one. If we have to believe entirely in the testimony of these two verses, Dharmapāla must be taken to have conquered the whole of northern India.

But this is rendered improbable by the poor showing of Dharmapāla in the second part of the tripartite struggle when he was defeated by Nāgabhaṭa II, the Pratīhāra king, and submitted voluntarily to Govinda III, the Raṣṭrakūṭa king.[3]

pp. 191-93; P. L. Paul: *EHB*, vol. I, pp. 37-38; B. P. Sinha: *DKM*, pp. 340-44; Nihar Ranjan Ray: *Baṅgālir Itihāsa*, vol. I, pp. 477-78.

[1] Gandhāra: Western Punjab and lower Kabul Valley;
Madra: Central Punjab;
Kīra: Kangra (North-western part of the Punjab);
Kuru: Thaneswar (Eastern Punjab);
Matsya: Alwar state and parts of Jaipur and Bharatpur;
Avanti: Malwa;
Yavana: Muslim power in Sindh;
Yadu: Different parts of Punjab, Simhapur, Mathurā & Kathiawar; and
Bhoja: Berar.

[2] *IA*, vol. XXI, pp. 253 ff.
R. C. Majumdar is inclined to identify Gokarṇa with a place of that name in Nepal and Gaṅgāsameṭambudhi with a place near Kapila Vastu in Nepal, cf. *HB-I*, p. 106, Fn. 2
F. Kielhorn identified Gokarṇa with Gokarṇa in the North Kanara district of Bombay, cf. *IA*, vol. XXI. p. 257. Kedāra is the famous place of pilgrimage in the Himalayas.

[3] See *Infra* pp. 27-29.

If he had mastered such enormous power as the verses of the Khālimpur and the Munger plates tend to indicate, his discomfiture cannot be explained.

Another important fact must be considered. If these places were conquered by Dharmapāla, it is very natural to expect their mention in a more direct way rather than in such couched, concealed and general terms. Soḍḍhala's confirmation cannot be given much importance because, while Soḍḍhala mentions Dharmapāla as *Uttarāpathasvāmī*, at the same time he says that he was besieged in a fort by one Śīlāditya of the Valabhī dynasty and was obliged to capitulate.[1] The Gujarati poet may have mentioned Dharmapāla as the lord of northern India in order to make the victory of the Valabhī king more glorious, and if he is to be believed in entirety, including the defeat of Dharmapāla, the latter's power does not seem to have been very strong. So how far Soḍḍhala was correct cannot be ascertained, and hence his casual reference to Dharmapāla cannot be said to confirm another doubtful statement.

Dharmapāla had some success in his military campaigns and may have pushed his sphere of influence as far as Kanauj, where he successfully placed his own protegé on the throne. And in describing this success of their royal patron the court poets let loose their imagination and put in all the names of western kingdoms they could think of, in conformity to the metre of the verses, as having assembled to accept Dharmapāla as their sovereign. The appearance of the names of Gokarṇa and Kedāra in the Munger plate is very natural, as they were quite famous places for pilgrimage from early times. The verse may even refer to some religious activity of the king and his followers. If at all the kings of different countries had assembled at Kanauj, it shows, as R. S. Tripathi mentions, that they were "the principal kingdoms that had dealings with

[1] *Udayasundarī Kathā*, Gaekwad Oriental Series, p. 4.
Dharmapāla was possibly a contemporary of the last king of the Valabhī dynasty, Śīlāditya VII whose known date is 766 A. D. Cf. *IHQ*, vol. IX p. 486.

Kanauj, and the assumption that they were subject to it seems altogether fantastic and wide the mark",[1] or even it may be that as a diplomatic gesture they came to, or were represented at, the durbar at Kanauj.[2]

So, to sum up Dharmapāla's achievements in his military exploits we may say that he led his army on an aggressive campaign and attained definite success, of which we can be sure, in the affairs of Kanauj, where he placed his own protegé. He may have pushed his campaign in other directions, to Nepal or the places beyond Kanauj, but we cannot be sure how successful he was. The vision of an empire, as vast as the two verses would lead us to believe, right up to the north-western corner of the sub-continent, seems more reasonable as a poetic dream than as a fact. Soon we shall see how deplorably Dharmapāla showed himself in the second part of the tripartite struggle. His poor performance against the Pratīhāras and the Rāṣṭrakūṭas and the vision of an all-embracing empire cannot be satisfactorily reconciled. So, it is not altogether unreasonable to hold that the general and conventional description of universal conquest cannot be accepted at its face value and we shall be hardly justified in regarding Dharmapāla as the sole undisputed monarch of northern India.

Soon Dharmapāla was "at the receiving end". All his offensive campaigns must have taken place approximately between 790 and 800 A. D., i.e., between the retreat of Dhruva and the reappearance of Govinda III.[3] With the rise of the Pratīhāras under Vatsarāja's son and successor Nāgabhaṭa II started the second part of the tripartite struggle which, peculiarly enough, ended in the same way as the first part. The Gwalior inscription[4] and the Baroda plate[5] inform us that before leading his

[1] *History of Kanauj*, p. 217.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 230.
[3] A. S. Altekar : *The Rāshṭrakūṭas And Their Times*, p. 57 ; R. C. Majumdar : *HB-I*, pp. 110 & 178 ; B. P. Sinha : *DKM*, pp. 352-55.
[4] *EI*, vol. XVIII, pp. 91 ff.
[5] *IA*, vol. XII, p. 163.

expedition to northern India Nāgabhaṭa II allied himself with different states.[1] It is very likely that the success of Dharmapāla in the affairs of Kanauj and the memory of his father's success against the Pālas led Nāgabhaṭa II to try his arms first in the north. We are told in the Gwalior *praśasti*[2] that Nāgabhaṭa defeated "Cakrāyudha, whose lowly demeanour was manifest from his dependence on others." There can hardly be any doubt that this Cakrāyudha was the same man whom Dharmapāla had placed on the throne of Kanauj. And the victory over Cakrāyudha was a definite challenge to his overlord, Dharmapāla. The Gwalior *praśasti* describes the victory of Nāgabhaṭa II over Dharmapāla in the following manner : "The lord of Vaṅga who appeared like a mass of dark dense cloud in consequence of the crowd of mighty elephants, horses, and chariots, Nāgabhaṭa, as the sun, alone reveals himself by vanquishing dense and terrible darkness."[3] This description, in contrast to the easy victory of Vatsarāja, shows, as R. C. Majumdar[4] has pointed out, the improvement in the position of the kingdom of Bengal under Dharmapāla during the intervening period. The battle might have taken place in the vicinity of Munger,[5] and the advance of the Pratīhāra army right upto Munger proves that Cakrāyudha must have retreated to his master and Nāgabhaṭa following up his victory over Cakrāyudha pushed into the heart of the Pāla empire. He is said to have

[1] The verse 8 of the Gwalior *Praśasti* gives the names : Sindhu, Andhra, Vidarbha and Kaliṅga. They are said to have succumbed to the power of Nāgabhaṭa as moths do unto fire (*EI*, vol. XVIII, p. 112). This indicates, as R. C. Majumdar (*The Gurjara-Pratīhāras*, pp. 38-89) has pointed out, that they joined of their own accord. The position of these countries confirm the view as they form a central belt right across the country bounded in the north by the empire of the Pālas and in the south by that of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas.

[2] Verse 9 : *EI*, vol. XVIII, p. 112.

[3] Verse 10 : *Ibid.*

[4] *The Gurjara-Pratīhāras*, p. 40.

[5] It is proved by the Jodhpur ins. of the Pratīhāra chief Bauka, *EI*, vol. XVIII, p. 98.

afterwards annexed the kingdoms of Ānarta, Mālava, Kirāta, Turuṣka, Vatsa and Matsya.[1] But he was not destined to enjoy this supreme position in northern India, and his triumphal career was cut short by the hereditary enemy from the south.

Govinda III may have advanced to northern India in alarm at the growing power of the Pratīhāras, or in response to a call for help by Dharmapāla.[2] Except the voluntary submission of Dharmapāla to Govinda III, which might be taken to prove the fact that he invoked help, we do not have any evidence in support of the latter view. Whatever might have been the motive of his advance, he inflicted a crushing defeat on the Pratīhāra king Nāgabhaṭa II, as is evidenced by a host of Rāṣṭrakūṭa records,[3] and the Gurjara king "vanished, nobody knew where." Verse 23 of the Sanjan plate informs us that Dharmapāla and Cakrāyudha offered voluntary submission to Govinda III.[4] N. N. Das Gupta's[5] view that Dharmapāla was defeated in a battle cannot be supported with valid evidence. None of the inscriptions which refer to the defeat of the Gurjara king mention the defeat of Dharmapāla by Govinda III. On the other hand the Sanjan plate of Amoghavarṣa clearly states that Dharmapāla and Cakrāyudha surrendered of themselves.

But Govinda III, like his father, had to return to the Deccan, abandoning his conquests in northern India. Thus

[1] Verse 11 of the Gwalior *Praśasti* : *EI*, vol. XVIII, p. 112.

[2] This has been suggested by R. C. Majumdar, cf. *HB-I*, p. 111 ; *The Gurjara-Pratīhāras*, p. 44.

[3] Rādhanpur plate : *EI*, vol. VI, pp. 239 ff.
Sanjan plate : *Ibid.*, vol. XVIII, p. 253.
Sīsavai plate : *Ibid.*, vol. XXIII, pp. 204 ff.
Nesari plate : *Ibid.*, pp. 216 ff.
Manne plates : *Epigraphia Carnatica*, vol. IX, No. 61.

[4] Verse 23 : *Svayamevopanatau ca yasya mahatastau*
dharmmacakrāyudhau /
EI, vol. XVIII, p. 245 ; Translation, p. 253.

[5] *JBORS*, vol. XII, pp. 361 ff.

ended the second part of the tripartite struggle, but it continued till ultimately the Gurjara-Pratīhāras were successful in establishing their empire, with Kanauj as the seat of government.

Dharmapāla's power was fully exposed during this struggle. His defeats at the hands of Vatsarāja and Nāgabhaṭa II and his surrender to Govinda III do not speak very well of his military power. But he was fortunate on both occasions to survive, though he was the weakest of the three powers.

After the retreat of Govinda III Dharmapāla may have sighed in relief, and we do not know of any other trouble during his reign. The retreat of Govinda III is to be dated round about 801 A. D.,[1] and from then onwards to his death it is not unlikely that Dharmapāla passed his time in peace without being disturbed by any further assault and according to the 12th verse of the Munger plate Devapāla succeeded at a time when there was no disturbance.[2]

Thus having discussed the whole military career of Dharmapāla, it must be said that he launched Bengal on a career of aggrandisement. He definitely succeeded for a time in pushing forward his influence as far as Kanauj. Though he faced reverses at the hands of the Pratīhāras and the Rāṣṭrakūṭas, he was lucky enough to survive, even though he was the weakest of the three. The vision of an all Indian empire as depicted in the Pāla records though it may not be literally true shows that Bengal, for the first time, saw under his leadership prosperity and success, which must have elated the court scribes, who exaggerated in their eagerness to glorify these deeds. In the absence of any definite evidence we cannot determine with certainty the amount of success attained by Dharmapāla beyond Kanauj, and the poor performance put up by him in the struggle with the other two rivals gives every reason to doubt the claims made in the verses of the Pāla records.

[1] B. P. Sinha : *DKM*, pp. 852-55. He has established that the defeat of Nāgabhaṭa and submission of Dharmapāla must have taken place between c. 799 and 801 A. D.

[2] *IA*, vol. XXI, pp. 253 ff.

The Bādal Pillar inscription[1] of the time of Nārāyaṇapāla describing the deeds of the family of Guravamiśra, gives credit to Garga, the adviser of Dharmapāla, for making Dharmapāla the regent of the east, the sovereign over all the regions. The Bhāgalpur grant[2] informs us about a brother of Dharmapāla, Vākpāla by name, who "cleared the quarters of hostile armies and subjected them to one parasol."

Dharmapāla was a Buddhist, and he is the first among the Pāla rulers to assume the full imperial titles of *Parameśvara, Paramabhaṭṭāraka,* and *Mahārājādhirāja,* while his father is mentioned only as *Mahārājādhirāja.* This difference possibly does not mean much. He is credited with the foundation of the Vikramaśilā monastery,[3] which was one of the most important Buddhist seats of learning in India from the 9th to the 12th centuries A. D. Archaeological findings have proved that the Somapura *vihāra* at Pāhārpur in the Rajshahi district was also a creation of Dharmapāla.[4] He was equally enthusiastic in his patronage of the Brahmanical shrines. He granted four villages to the temple of Nunna-Nārāyaṇa.[5] The Bodh-Gayā inscription of his 26th regnal year[6] records the consecration of a 'Caturmukha Mahādeva' and the excavation of a tank at the expense of

[1] *EI,* vol. II, p. 164.

[2] *IA,* vol. XV, p. 307.

[3] N. L. Dey, *JASB* (*NS*), vol. V, pp. 1 ff., has proved that it was situated at Pātharghaṭā, 6 miles to the north of Colgong and 24 miles to the east of Bhāgalpur. Also see M. S. Pandey : *The Historical Geography & Topography of Bihar,* London University Ph.D. Thesis, 1958, pp. 270-72. According to another tradition Devapāla is regarded as its founder. Cf., *HB-I,* p. 115, Fn. 1.

[4] *MASI,* No. 55, p. 3.

[5] The object of the Khālimpur plate was to record the grant of four villages for the said temple, *EI,* vol. IV, pp. 253-54.

[6] *JASB* (*NS*), vol. IV, pp. 101-02. The two missing words, one at the end of the 3rd line and the other at the beginning of the 4th, render it impossible to make out any sense, and hence N. Chakravarti's translation that "The image was consecrated for the spiritual benefit of the Mallas of Mahābodhi" is very doubtful.

3000 drammas (silver coins) by one Keśava at the famous Buddhist site of Mahābodhi. Dharmapāla is said to have been "conversant with the precepts of the *Śāstras*" and he made "the castes conform to their proper tenets."[1] These may be results of his political prudence as also of his open-mindedness.

None of the Pāla records gives any information about his reign period. The Khālimpur plate was issued in the 32nd regnal year.[2] Tāranātha gives him a reign of 64 years, which seems to be rather too long. That he ruled for quite a long time is beyond doubt and a reign of 35 or 40 years seems to be quite probable.

Devapāla, son of Dharmapāla, succeeded to the throne of Bengal. In the Khālimpur grant Yuvarāja Tribhuvanapāla, who was the *dūtaka* of the grant, is mentioned as the crown prince.[3] But the Munger plate of Devapāla clearly mentions that Devapāla, who succeeded Dharmapāla, was the son of the latter through his wife Raṇṇādevī.[4] What happened to Tribhuvanapāla we do not know, and it is futile to make any guess.

Devapāla proved himself a worthy successor of his illustrious father and the records of his family resound with the same glory for him as for his father or make him even more glorious. It is certain that he ascended the throne at a time when the country was facing no trouble from any quarter ; the two rival dynasties were not in a position to put forward any challenge : the Rāṣṭrakūṭas were engrossed in their own troubles under the young prince Amoghavarṣa I, who succeeded Govinda III,[5]

[1] Verse 5, Munger plate of Devapāla : *IA*, vol. XV, pp. 253 ff.

[2] *EI*, vol. IV, pp. 248 ff.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] Verse 12 : *EI*, vol. XVIII, pp. 304 ff. ; *IA*, vol. XXI, pp. 253 ff.
An earlier mention of Devapāla may be said to occur in the Khālimpur plate. In line 31, in the description of the village it is said : *Rājaputra Devaṭa kṛt-āliḥ /*
EI, vol. IV, pp. 248 ff. Can we take this Rājaputra Devaṭa as Devapāla, another son of the king ?

[5] A. S. Altekar : *Op. Cit.*, pp. 73-77.

and the Pratīhāras were lacking leadership under the weak successor of Nāgabhaṭa II.[1] Taking the lead from his father's policy Devapāla also led Bengal on a career of aggrandisement, and the records of the dynasty are full of praise for him. His own Munger copper-plate says, "In the course of conquest his elephants, roaming over their own Vindhya forest, met again with their kindred...and after he had crushed the power of other kings his young chargers in Kamboja at last saw their mates,"[2] and "he has ruled the earth, free from rivals, upto the (mountain) celebrated for Gaṅgā's descent, as far as the bridge which proclaims the fame of Rāvaṇa's foe, as far as the ocean which is Varuṇa's home, and as far as (that other ocean which is) Lakṣmī's birthplace."[3] The Bādal pillar inscription of the family of Guravamiśra, while eulogising the deeds of Darbhapāṇi says, "By his policy the illustrious prince Devapāla made tributory the earth as far as Revā's parent (the Vindhya mountains), as far as Gaurī's father (the Himalaya mountains) and as far as the two oceans where the waters are red with the rising and setting sun."[4] While praising Kedāramiśra, the grandson of Darbhapāṇi, the same record says, "Attending to his wise counsel the lord of Gauḍa long ruled the sea-girt earth, having eradicated the race of the Utkalas, humbled the pride of the Hūṇas and scattered the conceit of the rulers of Draviḍa and Gurjara."[5] The Bhāgalpur grant of Nārāyaṇapāla, while describing the deeds of his grandfather, Jayapāla, says, "He poured the enjoyment of universal sovereignty for his elder brother Devapāla",[6] and "when by order of his brother, he started with an army in order to subdue all quarters, the lord of the Utkalas left his capital, driven to despair from afar by the mere

1 R. S. Tripathi : *op. cit.*, pp. 236,
2 Verse 13 : *IA*, vol. XXI, pp. 253 ff.
3 Verse 15 : *Ibid.*
4 Verse 5 : *EI*, vol. II, pp. 160 ff.
5 Verse 13 : *Ibid.*
6 Verse 5 : *IA*, vol. XV, pp. 304 ff.

name (of Jayapāla) ; and the king of Prāgjyotiṣa enjoyed peace at last, surrounded by friends, bearing on his lofty head (i.e., being much obliged for) the command of that (prince), which bade (his foes) cease to plan battles."[1] This is all the information we can get about Devapāla's exploits from the three records, one belonging to his own time and the other two to the time of Nārāyaṇapāla, separated by one generation. From this scanty information we have to assess the achievements of Devapāla. But before trying to do so a few words about the records themselves would not be out of place. Both the later records are more profound in praise than the contemporary one, which was issued in the 33rd regnal year and contains louder praise for Dharmapāla than for Devapāla himself. The Bādal pillar inscription was inscribed to glorify the deeds of members of the family of Guravamiśra, who were ministers of the Pāla emperors for several generations. Verse 7 of this inscription is indicative of the nature and the tone of this *praśasti.*[2] And it is not unnatural to expect some colouring in such a *praśasti.* The third record, a eulogy of the forefathers of Nārāyaṇapāla, was more concerned with the achievements of his ancestors than those of the kings under whom they served possibly as military generals, and hence suffers from the same defect as the Bādal inscription. The very fact that the later records are more profound in their praise than the contemporary one is sufficient proof of the eagerness on the part of the *praśastikāras,* who must have taken the lead from the Munger plate, to glorify the past events. Moreover, the verses give a conventional description of the empire of Devapāla, bounded by the Himalayas on the north, by the Vindhya on the south and by the two oceans

[1] Verse 6 : *Ibid.*

[2] About Darbhapāṇi it says that the king "first offered to him a chair of state with a seat bright as the moon, he (the king) ascended his own throne with trembling."
EI, vol. II, pp. 160 ff. All the verses of this inscription give an impression that all the successes that were attained by the Pālas were due to the counsel of the ministers.

on the east and the west. This is the conventional conception of a north Indian empire prevalent in Indian thought from long before and it would be unwise to put undue importance to these descriptions.

If we place unquestioned reliance on the evidence of these records we have to think of Devapāla as the sole sovereign of the whole of northern India as far as the Kāmboja country in the north-western corner of the sub-continent. But the subsequent history of the Pāla rulers and the rise of the Pratīhāras with their seat of government at Kanauj and their sway over northern India do not support this view. Devapāla's campaign to the north-western corner of the sub-continent cannot be believed in when we consider that the Śāhi rulers were very powerful in the Punjab and North-Western province. So there cannot be any doubt that there are exaggerations in the records and any estimate of Devapāla's achievements based entirely upon them would suffer from the same defect.

Let us now try to reexamine them in order to assess the achievements of Devapāla. The records no doubt indicate a powerful rule and some campaigns of aggrandisement, and there can hardly be any doubt that Bengal continued to enjoy the same vigour and initiative as it enjoyed under Dharmapāla. Devapāla also must have had some success which the *praśasti-kāras* magnified in the records.

The position of Kanauj after the retreat of Govinda III is not clear from the contemporary sources. The question is whether Dharmapāla could re-establish his influence over Kanauj ? Unfortunately it cannot be ascertained. But the submission of Dharmapāla and Cakrāyudha to Govinda III might have given them the chance to re-establish their influence. There is no reliable evidence in support of R. S. Tripathi's[1] view that Nāgabhaṭa II, after having defeated Cakrāyudha, transferred the capital to Kanauj and it continued to be the capital of the Pratī-

[1] *History of Kanauj*, pp, 232-38.

hāra empire.[1] On the other hand we do not have any record to prove the revival of Pāla power over Kanauj. The earliest record of the time of Bhoja, the Pratīhāra king, dated in 836 A.D., was issued from Kanauj.[2] So in between the retreat of Govinda III (800-801 A. D.) and 836 A.D. Kanauj must have passed into the hands of the Pratīhāras, and if we believe in the testimony of the *Prabhāvaka-carita* we can only presume that the capital was changed towards the end of Nāgabhaṭa II's reign, sometime before 833 A.D.[3]

According to the Bādal pillar inscription Devapāla "scattered the conceit of the ruler of Gurjara." As the credit for this is ascribed to his minister Kedāramiśra, the grandson of Darbhapāṇi, it is reasonable to believe that it happened late in his reign and hence his adversary must have been Mihira Bhoja, whom we find to have firmly established the Pratīhāra suzerainty in Madhyadeśa. So a renewal of the hereditary struggle was not unlikely, and this is possibly alluded to in the Bādal pillar inscription, which claims success for the Pāla ruler. On the other hand verse 18 of the Gwalior *praśasti* of Bhoja[4] and the Cātsu inscription of Bāladitya[5] claim success for the Pratīhāra king. A reasonable reconciliation of these rival sources can be made. Bhoja might have had some initial success, which made him arrogant, and Devapāla succeeded in holding his own in the long run. R. C. Majumdar has also pointed to indications of Devapāla's success against Rāmabhadra, successor of Nāgabhaṭa II and predecessor of Bhoja.[6]

Devapāla's raid into Orissa has been referred to in both the Bādal inscription[7] and the Bhāgalpur grant.[8] Tāranātha also

[1] *HB-I*, p. 112, Fn. 3.
[2] Barah Copper-plate : *EI*, vol. XIX, pp. 15 ff. ; vol. XXIII, pp. 242-43.
[3] R. C. Majumdar : *HB-I*, p. 118 ; *HCIP*, vol. IV, *The Age of Imperial Kanauj*, pp. 27-28.
[4] *EI*, vol. XVIII, pp. 109, 113, Fn. 4.
[5] *Ibid.*, Vol., XII, pp. 10 ff.
[6] *The Gurjara-Pratīhāras*, p. 46.
[7] Verse 13 : *EI*, vol. II, pp. 160 ff.
[8] Verse 6 : *IA*, vol. XV, pp. 304 ff.

gives the same information.[1] It would be quite natural for Devapāla to lead an expedition into the neighbouring country of Orissa and, as the records claim, he may have had success. This might have happened during or immediately after the reign of Śivakara.[2] Devapāla might have followed up his victory in Orissa with raids into the Vindhya region and into the southern most part of the peninsula.

The Bhāgalpur grant also informs us that "the king of Prāgjyotiṣa enjoyed peace at last, surrounded by friends, bearing on his lofty head the command of that prince (Jayapāla) which bade him cease to plan battles."[3] R. C. Majumdar has taken this reference to mean that the ruler of Assam (either Harjara or his father Prālambha) accepted the Pāla suzerainty and lived in peace.[4] But other scholars have given different interpretations to this verse. A. K. Maitreya,[5] E. Hultzsch,[6] and N. N. Vasu[7] think of an alliance between the kings of Kāmarūpa and Bengal and a joint invasion of Orissa. P. C. Choudhury, having discussed all these points, says, "It is possible that just at a time when Jayapāla invaded or conquered Orissa, the Kāmarūpa army under Harjjara invaded Bengal, which was either repelled by Jayapāla and peace was concluded, or returned to Kāmarūpa from the frontier of Bengal after hearing of the conquests of Jayapāla."[8] On the whole, it is difficult to come to a definite conclusion from this reference, which itself is couched in a cryptic way. The verse itself gives rather an impression of an abandonment of warlike preparations on the part of the Kāmarūpa king than acceptance of Pāla suzerainty.

1 *Ibid.*, vol. IV, p. 366.
2 *HB-I*, pp. 117-18.
3 Verse 6 : *IA*, vol. XV, pp. 304 ff.
4 *HB-I*, p. 117.
5 *GL*, p. 66.
6 *IA*, vol. XV, p. 308, Fn. 24.
7 *Social History of Kāmarūpa*, vol. I, p. 159.
8 *The History of Civilisation of the People of Assam*, p. 234.

Nothing definite is known about the king of the Draviḍa, whose pride was scattered by Devapāla.[1] R. D. Banerji identified him with the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king Amoghavarṣa I.[2] In two of Amoghavarṣa's inscriptions[3] there are references to his fight with a king of Bengal. Amoghavarṣa, on his accession, had to face internal troubles,[4] and taking advantage of this situation Devapāla may have succeeded in defeating him. But it should be remembered that normally Draviḍa denotes the land of the Tamils in the south, and not the Deccan, which formed the Rāṣṭrakūṭa kingdom. From this point of view it has been suggested that the Draviḍa king defeated by Devapāla was his contemporary Pāṇḍya king Śrī-Māra Śrī-Vallabha.[5] This latter view seems to be more probable, because Devapāla's incursion into the Pāṇḍya kingdom may have been made in the course of following up his victory in Orissa, and this encounter with a southern king has been magnified in the Munger plate as having extended his kingdom up to the Rāmeśvara Setubandha in the south. If the enemies were the Rāṣṭrakūṭas, they were too well known to be mentioned in a general way as the king of Draviḍa. So it seems quite likely that Devapāla, following up his victory in Orissa, came into contact with a southern king, who has been mentioned as the king of the Draviḍa.

R. C. Majumdar, on the basis of an epithet applied to the Candella king Vijayaśakti in one of their inscriptions, made a surmise that he was an ally of Devapāla and undertook this southern expedition for the benefit of the latter.[6] N. S. Bose has shown conclusively that it is very unsafe to reach such a conclusion on the evidence of the casual reference in the Candella inscriptions.[7]

[1] Verse 13, Bādal Pillar Ins. : *EI*, vol. II, pp. 160 ff.
[2] *BI*, vol. I, p. 205.
[3] Nilgund Inscription : *EI*, vol. VI, pp. 98 ff.
Sirur Inscription : *IA*, vol. XII, p. 218.
[4] A. S. Altekar : *op. cit.*, pp. 73-77.
[5] R. C. Majumdar : *HB-I*, pp. 120-21.
[6] *HB-I*, p. 119, Fn. 4.
[7] N. S. Bose : *History of the Candellas*, pp. 19-20.

The Huṇas mentioned in the Bādal inscription cannot be identified. R. C. Majumdar suggested that their principality was situated in *Uttarāpatha* near the Himalayas.[1] Devapāla's march upto the Kāmboja country in the north-western corner of the sub-continent, as mentioned in the Munger plate,[2] cannot be believed in because this would mean his conquest of the whole of northern India. Moreover, the Śāhi rulers were very powerful at that time in the north-western region of the sub-continent. An explanation of the occurrence of the name of Kāmboja in the verse of the Munger plate can be given. We have earlier suggested[3] that the army of Devapāla might have pushed westward towards the Vindhya mountains after the victory in Orissa and hence the occurrence in the first part of the verse of the meeting of the elephants with their mates in that region, and to go together with it the meeting place of the horses with their mates has been mentioned as Kāmboja, which was very famous for its horses. In this period the Kāmbojas are also known to have been in north-east India and very probably the word may mean Tibet.[4] And hence the reference may be taken to mean Devapāla's conflict with Tibet.[5]

Thus, to sum up our discussion, we may say that Devapāla proved to be a worthy successor of Dharmapāla and like him made attempts to increase the influence of the kingdom of Bengal. He was ably assisted by his cousin Jayapāla and the family of Guravamiśra, who served as ministers. He possibly succeeded in defeating a king of Orissa and following on his victory might have had an encounter with a southern king. His campaign in the vicinity of the Vindhya hills may be said to be a westward thrust from Orissa by way of a raid rather than conquest. He held his own against the increasing power of the Pratīhāras.

[1] *HB-I*, p. 118.
[2] Verse 13 : *IA*, vol. XXI, pp. 253 ff.
[3] *Supra*, pp. 36-38.
[4] R. R. Diwakar (ed.) : *Bihar Through The Ages*, p. 312.
[5] *Infra*, p. 40.

The ruler of Prāgjyotiṣa may have abandoned his warlike preparations and established a friendly relationship with the kingdom of Bengal. Devapāla might have had some success in the northern side of the kingdom. But the claims of the Pāla records that his empire was bounded on the north side by the Himalayas, on the south by the Vindhyas (magnified in the Munger plate to have extended up to the Rāmeśvara Setubandha) and by the two seas on the east and the west, must be taken as exaggeration of the court poets.

During this period Bengal seems to have faced some troubles from the Tibetan side, but unfortunately the exact relationship cannot be determined. Tibetan traditions claim victory for their rulers during the time of both Dharmapāla and Devapāla. According to the Chronicles of Ladakh the Tibetan king Khri-srong-lde-btsan (755-95 A. D.) subdued all "the provinces on the four frontiers," and king Ral-pa-can (804-16 or 817-36 A. D.) conquered as far as the *Gaṅgāsāgara*, the mouth of Ganges.[1] Another Tibetan text informs us that king Mu-tig-btsan-po, successor of Khri-srong-lde-btsan, exacted homage from king Dharmapāla.[2] These one-sided claims in the traditional accounts cannot be entirly relied upon. If there is any truth in them it can be said tnat Dharmapāla and Devapāla faced some trouble from the northern quarter and their wars in this region may have been fought against these Tibetan kings.

A glimpse of Bengal under Dharmapāla and Devapāla is reflected in the accounts of the Arab geographers and merchants like Sulaiman (died 851 A.D.), Ibn Khurdadhbeh (died in 912 A.D.), Idrisi (born towards the end of the 11th century A.D.) and Masudi (died in 956 A.D.), who mention that the king of Bengal was engaged in a struggle with the Rāṣṭrakūṭas (Balhara)

[1] Francke : *Antiquities of Tibet*, Part II, pp. 87-90.
L. Petech : "A Study On The Chronicles Of Ladakh," *IHQ*, vol. XV, pp. 65 ff.

[2] F. W. Thomas : *Tibetan Literary Texts And Documents Concerning Chinese Turkestan*, p. 270.

and the Gurjaras (Jurz).[1] *Ḥudūd-ul-'Alam*[2] a Persian work written in 982-83 A D., also mentions about Bengal under Dharmapāla (Dahum) who is said not to regard anybody as greater than himself and to have had an army of 300000.[3]

The Nālandā copper-plate of Devapāla[4] throws an interesting sidelight on his reign. By this grant Devapāla granted five villages to be endowed to the monastery built at Nālandā by Bālaputradeva, the Śailendra king of Jāvā and Sumatrā. This shows the friendship that existed between them. It also shows the position of Nālandā in the Buddhist world even in the 9th century A.D. and also Devapāla's patronage of Buddhism. His interest in the Nālandā monastery and devotion to Buddhism is also referred to in the Ghosrawa inscription,[5] which records the patronage received by Vīradeva, a Buddhist priest, from Devapāla, who appointed him to preside over the monasteries at Nālandā. Vīradeva's father, Indragupta, a Brāhmaṇa, is mentioned as the friend of the king.[6]

Like Dharmapāla Devapāla also seems to have had a long reign. The Nālandā plate is dated in his 35th regnal year.[6] Tāranātha assigns him a reign of 48 years.[7] That he ruled for a long time is also proved by the fact that three generations of the family of Guravamiśra served under him as ministers. So a reign of 40 years is not far off the mark.

[1] Elliot & Dowson : *History of India As Told By Its Own Historians.* vol. I, p. 5.
Hodivala : *Studies in Indo-Muslim History*, p. 4.
A. H. Dani : *Proceedings of the Pakistan History Conference*, First Session, 1951, pp. 184 ff.

[2] A. H. Dani : *Bengal* As Noted In Ḥudūd-ul-'Alam," *Ibid.*, Second Session, 1952, p. 314.

[3] *MASI*, No. 66, pp. 92 ff.

[4] *IA*, vol. XVII, pp. 307-12.

[5] Verse 3 : *Dvijātir-uditodita vaṁśa-janmā nāmn-Endragupta-iti rāja-sakho babhūva* / *Ibid.*, p. 309.

[6] *JRASB, L*, vol. VII, Third Series, 1941, pp. 215-16.
The date was earlier read as 39.

[7] *IA*, vol. IV, p. 366.

The reigns of Dharmapāla and Devapāla formed the period of Pāla ascendency. Gopāla succeeded in putting an end to the period of anarchy which characterised the history of Bengal in the first half of the 8th century A. D., and thereby laid the foundation of Pāla rule in Bengal. Dharmapāla and Devapāla, his two worthy successors, consolidated their position in northern and north-western Bengal and Bihar. Under them Bengal, for the first time in her history, came to be reckoned as a powerful force in northern Indian politics. Under Dharmapāla's vigorous leadership Bengal's influence was felt in the affairs of Kanauj. During the times of both Dharmapāla and Devapāla Bengal could hold its own against its powerful rivals, the Pratīhāras and the Rāṣṭrakūṭas. Both the rulers must have led Bengal on aggressive campaigns in different directions and attained success, though it is very difficult to ascertain the exact extent of it.

The period of the first three rulers, extending over a century, was the most glorious period of the history of this dynasty, but definitely not as glorious as the court poets have depicted. The vision of an empire embracing the whole of northern India, though it may not be true to the word, makes it certain that Dharmapāla and Devapāla attained some successes, which the court poets could magnify in their eulogies.

CHAPTER II

End of the Ascendency – A Period of Stagnation

The Pāla power in Bengal and Bihar reached its apogee under Dharmapāla and Devapāla. With them ended the period of ascendency and a period of stalemate followed which gradually led to its decline and disintegration.

The question of succession to the Pāla throne after the death of Devapāla presents a fairly complicated problem. We have two names of successors from two different sources. The Badal pillar inscription[1] mentions Śūrapāla in between Devapāla and Nārāyaṇapāla, while the Bhāgalpur copper-plate of Nārāyaṇapāla[2] gives the name of Vigrahapāla, son of Jayapāla and grandson of Dharmapāla's brother Vākpāla.[3] The Badal pillar inscription does not give any indication about the relationship either between Śūrapāla and Devapāla, or Śūrapāla and Nārāyaṇapāla, the next king under whom Guravamiśra served and during whose reign the pillar was inscribed ; and for that matter it does not even say anything about the genealogy of the five generations of kings under whom the ministerial family served. The primary object of this inscription was to eulogise the deeds of the family of Guravamiśra and hence the *praśastikāra* is occupied with the genealogy of the family and not that of the kings.

[1] Verse 15 : *EI*, vol. II, p. 163.

[2] Verse 7 : *IA*, vol. XV, p. 305. This verse has been repeated in subsequent Pāla records, cf. verse 5 of the Bāngarh plate of Mahīpāla I (*EI*, vol. XIV, p. 326), the Āmgāchi plate of Vigrahapāla III (*EI*, vol. XV, p. 296), Belwā plate of Mahīpāla I (*EI*, vol. XXIX, p. 1), and the Manahali plate of Madanapāla (*GL*, p. 149).

[3] The relationship can be established with fair amount of certainty, see *Infra*, pp. 47-50.

Almost all scholars[1] have thought Śūrapāla and Vigrahapāla to be one and the same man on the grounds that (i) "it is the only name mentioned between Devapāla and Nārāyaṇapāla"[2] in both the records and that (ii) "in the Manahali grant of Madanapāla we do not find the name of Śūrapāla before or close to the name of Nārāyaṇapāla."[3] But these two reasons are not convincing enough to fix the identity of Vigrahapāla and Śūrapāla. The first one is no reason at all. We find the two names from two different inscriptions—one is an eulogy of the family of ministers who served under the Pāla kings whose names have been mentioned, and the other is an eulogy of the Pāla kings and princes directly connected with the family of Nārāyaṇapāla. The family bias of the Bhāgalpur plate, and all the subsequent plates which have followed the pattern set by it, is evident from the fact that even in describing the deeds of Dharmapāla and Devapāla they try to make the point that all their successes were due to the help of Vākpāla and Jayapāla, the ancestors of Nārāyaṇapāla. And they make it clear that the royal grants are genealogical, not dynastic. The fact that Śūrapāla is not mentioned in the Bhāgalpur plate of Nārāyaṇapāla, does not prove that he was the same person as Vigrahapāla. Moreover, "it cannot be urged that the absence of Vigrahapāla's name in Guravamiśra's inscription must be necessarily explained by his assumed identity with Śūrapāla."[4] The second reason is equally inconvincing on the same grounds. The Manahali grant of Madanapāla[5] follows the set pattern of genealogy first recorded in the Bhāgalpur grant and followed consistently

[1] A. F. R. Hoernle : *IA*, vol. XIV, pp. 162-65; F. Kielhorn : *EI*, vol. II pp. 161 ff.; A. K. Maitreya : *GL*, p. 82, Fn.; R. D. Banerji : *BI*, vol. I, p. 217, *MASB*, vol. V, p. 57; R. C. Majumdar : *HB-I*, p. 127; H. C. Ray : *DHNI*, vol. I, pp. 297 ff.; H. P. Sastri : *MASB*, vol. III, p. 8; P. L. Paul : *EHB*, vol. I, p. 47.

[2] R. D. Banerji : *MASB*, vol. V, p. 57.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] B. C. Sen : *Some Historical Aspects of the Inscriptions of Bengal*, p. 354.

[5] *GL*, pp. 147 ff.

by the subsequent Pāla rulers and hence the absence of the name of Śūrapāla is natural and understandable. So it seems that there is no positive evidence to prove the identity of Śūrapāla and Vigrahapāla and the reasons put forward are inconvincing. However, it must be said that it is not improbable that they are identical, but in view of the lack of any positive evidence the other possibility is worthy of consideration.

Two scholars[1] have raised a doubt on this assumed identity and have tried to show that the possiblity of a disputed succession after Devapāla cannot be altogether ruled out. The doubt is raised by the fact that in the long list of Pāla kings we do not know of any one of them having such distinct secondary names as Śūrapāla and Vigrahapāla and one can hardly be a *biruda* of the other.[2] The name Śūrapāla reappears in the Pāla dynasty, as that of a son of Vigrahapāla III. The appearance of these two distinctly different names in two contemporary inscriptions remains to be satisfactorily explained.

A careful study of the Bādal pillar inscription may give the clue to it. Garga, Darbhapāṇi and Kedāramiśra are profusely praised in it for being responsible for almost all the successes of Dharmapāla, Devapāla and Śūrapāla,[3] and the very tone of these verses makes it clear that they occupied quite important positions under their respective sovereigns. But Guravamiśra is satisfied with the fact that Nārāyaṇapāla "held him in high esteem", and "what need is there for further eulogy."[4] And from this difference in the *praśasti* B. P. Sinha suggests that the verses "covertly allude to an eclipse of the fortune of the ministerial family, and its partial revival under Nārāyaṇa-

1 B. P. Sinha : *op. cit*,, pp. 378 ff. ; *B. C. Sen* : *op. cit.*, pp. 354 ff.

2 There is only one instance of a Pāla king, either Dharmapāla or Devapāla, being known as Vikramaśīla—and this can well be a *biruda*, cf. *HB-I*, p. 115, Fn. 1.

3 Verses 2-15 : *EI*, vol. II, pp. 161 ff.

4 *Kuśalo guṇānvivektuṁ vijigīṣuryanmṛpaśca bahumene|*
Śrī Nārāyaṇapālaḥ praśastiraparāstu kā tasya ||
Verse 19 : *EI*, vol. II, p. 166.

pāla. This temporary fall in the status of the family must have been due to some crisis in the imperial dynasty, and therefore, the fact that Nārāyaṇapāla held Guravamiśra in high esteem was quite gratifying to him."[1] We find a change in the line of the Pāla kings with the coming of Vigrahapāla and his successors, when the line of Dharmapāla and Devapāla descending directly from Dayitaviṣṇu was superseded by the son of Jayapāla and grandson of Vākpāla.[2] Such a clear change from one branch of the family to another could well have been preceded by family trouble and a war of succession. In the Munger copper-plate of Devapāla[3] we have the name of Yuvarāja Rājyapāla, son of the king Devapāla and the heir-apparent. What happened to him we do not know, and we may guess that he predeceased his father. But the Bhāgalpur plate leaves no doubt that the family of Vākpāla held a very important position and it is not unlikely that after Devapāla, when there was no strong claimant from his side, the family of Vākpāla tried to grasp power. Though there is no valid evidence in support of Cunningham's[4] supposition that Śūrapāla was the son and successor of Devapāla and younger brother of Rājyapāla, such a probability cannot be ruled out. Śūrapāla could as well be a son of Rājyapāla. Whatever relationship he might have had with Devapāla, it is very likely that he belonged to the direct line and hence the ministerial family remained with him. Vigrahapāla, being in a strong position, might have taken the opportunity to step into actual power politics and a division of the empire is not at all unlikely. A situation in which both Śūrapāla and Vigrahapāla claimed themselves as sovereigns in different parts of the empire might have arisen after the death of Devapāla. The ministerial family at first remained with Śūrapāla and hence his name occurs in their *praśasti*. But a turn of the situation in

[1] *DKM*, p. 380.
[2] The parentage of Vigrahapāla is discussed later on, *Infra*, pp. 47-50.
[3] Lines 50-52 : *EI*, vol. XVIII, pp. 304 ff.
[4] A. Cunningham : *ASI Reports*, vol. XI, p. 178.

favour of Vigrahapāla's branch might have led them to a reconciliation[1] and during Nārāyaṇapāla's reign the control of the empire seems to rest on his family alone.

B. P. Sinha[2] tried to adduce evidence for this possible division of the empire from the Nilgund and Sirur grants of Amoghavarṣa I,[3] dated 866 A.D., where it is stated that the rulers of Aṅga, Vaṅga and Magadha paid homage to him. This separate mention of the different units of the political system of Bengal and Magadha is indicative of a disintegration of the Pāla empire.

To sum up the above discussion it must be said that the actual course of events that followed the death of Devapāla cannot be definitely determined. The appearance of two names gives rise to the suspicion of a probable division of the empire. There is no positive evidence to prove conclusively that Śūrapāla and Vigrahapāla were one and the same. On the other hand some arguments can be offered in support of their being two different persons representing the two branches of the family. But even then these arguments are not conclusive enough to enable us to reach a decision. Still the latter view rests on a higher degree of probability, because the former cannot be proved, whereas some explanations can be given for the latter, though they are not conclusive. The subsequent events, namely the Pratihāra occupation of parts of Bihar and northern Bengal, lend support to this view and the fact that the Pālas seem to have lost vitality and power in subsequent reigns strongly suggests that dynastic trouble may have occurred.

Closely connected with this is the problem of fixing the parentage of Vigrahapāla, and it has given rise to considerable

[1] By the 17th year of Nārāyaṇapāla's reign Guravamiśra's family was reconciled. This is proved by the fact that the *dūtaka* of the Bhāgalpur grant was one Gurava, identified with Guravamiśra. *EI*, vol. XV, p. 307.

[2] *DKM*, pp. 381-82.

[3] *EI*, vol. VI, pp. 98 ff.; *IA*, vol. XII, p. 218.

differences of opinion. Some scholars[1] consider him as the son of Devapāla and others[2] as the son of Jayapāla, a nephew of Devapāla. A re-examination of the inscriptions leaves no doubt that the latter view is tenable. The confusion is solely due to the obscure way in which the genealogy of the Pāla kings has been described in the inscriptions of Nārāyaṇapāla and his successors. Vigrahapāla's parentage is described in verses 5, 6 and 7 of the Bhāgalpur plate,[3] and verses 4 and 5 of the Bāngarh,[4] Āmgāchi,[5] Belwā[6] and Manahali[7] grants. Verses 5 and 6 of the Bhāgalpur grant describe the exploits of Jayapāla during the time of Devapāla and verse 7 declares that his son was Vigrahapāla.[8] But in all the later inscriptions the laudatory verse for Jayapāla's exploits, which is the 6th verse in the Bhāgalpur plate, has been dropped, and hence arose all the confusion. This confusion was worse confounded by Hoernle,[9] who took the Āmgāchi plate to belong to the time of Vigrahapāla I and thought it to be the specimen of all the subsequent plates, and so he has spoken about the interpolation of a verse in the Bhāgalpur plate. As a matter of fact the Bhāgalpur plate served

[1] A. F. R. Hoernle : *"The Pālas of Bengal,"* *IA*, vol. XIV, pp. 162 ff.
A. K. Maitreya : *GL*, p. 67, Fn.

[2] F. Kielhorn : *EI*, vol. VIII, Appendix I, p. 17, Fn. 6.
R. D. Banerji : *BI*, vol. I, pp. 215-19; *MASB*, vol. V, p. 57.
B. C. Sen : *Some Historical Aspects of the Inscriptions of Bengal*, pp. 355 ff. But he takes Jayapāla as a son of Dharmapāla and younger brother of Devapāla.
R. C. Majumdar : *HB-I*, pp. 188-89.
B. P. Sinha : *DKM*, p. 379, Fn. 1.
Of Nārāyaṇapāla : *IA*, vol. XV, p. 305.
Of Mahīpāla I : *EI*, vol. XIV, p. 326.
Of Vigrahapāla III : *Ibid.*, vol. XV, p. 296.
Of Mahīpāla I : *Ibid.*, vol. XXIX, p. 6.
Of Madanapāla : *GL*, p. 149.

[3] *Śrīmān Vigrahapālas=tat-sūnur=ajātaśatrur=iva jātaḥ| IA*, vol. XV, p. 305. This verse appears as Verse 5, and the 5th verse as verse 4 in the subsequent records. But the 6th verse in which the exploits of Jayapāla are described is omitted in those records.

[9] *Op. cit.*, pp. 162 ff.

as the model for all the subsequent grants and the omission of the laudatory verse for Jayapāla has led to the confusion. Verses 5, 6 and 7 of the Bhāgalpur plate, read together, make it very clear that Vigrahapāla was the son of Jayapāla, who is described in the first two verses. Even in the subsequent records the epithet *tat-sūnuḥ* should be taken to qualify the logical subject of the preceding sentence, not the nearest noun, Devapāla.[1] Similarly Jayapāla also should be taken as a son of Vākpāla, the younger brother of Dharmapāla and second son of Gopāla I. *Tasmāt* in the beginning of verse 5 of the Bhāgalpur plate and verse 4 of the subsequent records must be connected with the *yaḥ* of the preceding verse, which is Vākpāla, the brother of Dharmapāla.

But B. C. Sen[2] raised an objection on the ground that in verses 5 (4 of the subsequent records) and 6 of the Bhāgalpur plate Devapāla is mentioned as *pūrvaja* and *bhrātā* and hence Jayapāla should be taken as a younger brother of Devapāla. "The term *bhrātā* has been used on two occasions : once to signify Vākpāla's connection with Dharmapāla and again to signify the relationship existing between Devapāla and Jayapāla. There is no doubt among scholars that Vākpāla and Dharmapāla were brothers; and it is not improbable that the term bears the same meaning in both cases qualified by the expression 'anuja' (younger) in one instance and 'pūrvaja' to the other."[3] Here we may say that in the case of Dharmapāla and Vākpāla the composer makes the meaning of the word *bhrātā* clear by a simile referring

[1] Verses 4 & 5 in these records are as follows :
Tasmād=upendra-caritair=jjagatiṁ punānaḥ putro va (ba) bhūva vijayī Jayapāla-nāmā/
Dharmma-dviṣāṁ śamayitā yudhi Devapāle yaḥ pūrvvaje bhuvanarājyasukhānyanaiṣīt//
Śrīmān Vigrahapālas=tat-sūnur=ajātaśatrur=iva jātaḥ/
Tat-sūnuḥ is to be connected with *yaḥ* of the preceding verse, hence with Jayapala.

[2] B. C. Sen : *op. cit.*, pp. 355-56.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 356.

to Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa.[1] And the words *bhrātā* and *pūrvaja* may be taken to mean elder cousin in the case of Devapāla and Jayapāla without any serious objection, otherwise Devapāla will appear to be a son of Vākpāla, which is in contradiction to the information of his own inscription[2] where he is clearly mentioned as son of Dharmapāla.

The fact that Vākpāla and Jayapāla are not mentioned in the inscriptions of Dharmapāla and Devapāla, but are invariably mentioned in the records of the successors of Vigrahapāla I also confirms the point we have tried to make that Vigrahapāla I was a descendent of Vākpāla and Jayapāla.

Another interesting problem connected with this period is the episode of Yuvarāja Hāravarṣa, the patron of Abhinanda, the composer of the *Rāmacarita*.[3] Abhinanda describes his patron Yuvarāja Hāravarṣa as *Pālakulacandra*,[4] *Pālakulapradīpa*,[5] *Pālavaṁśapradīpa*,[6] and *Śrī Dharmapālakula-kairava-kānanendū*.[7] From these references it seems clear that Abhinanda's patron belonged to the Pāla dynasty of Bengal and from the last reference it is obvious that he flourished after Dharmapāla. Abhinanda further elaborates the identification of Hāravarṣa by saying that he was *Vikramaśīlanandana*[8] and *Vikramaśīlajanmā*.[9] From these references Ramaswami Sastri Siromani identified Hāravarṣa with Devapāla, son of Dharmapāla, the founder of the Vikramaśīla monastery[10] and has explained the peculiarity of the name Hāravarṣa by saying that "it is probable that king Devapāla during his stay

[1] Verse 4 of the Bhāgalpur plate : *IA*, vol. XV, p. 305.
[2] Munger plate of Devapāla, Verse 11 : *EI*, vol. XVIII, pp. 304 ff.
[3] Text edited by K. S. Ramaswami Sastri Siromani in Gaekwad's Oriental Series, No. XLVI.
[4] Concluding verse of Chapter X, *Ibid.*, p. 91.
[5] Concluding verse of Chapter XI, *Ibid.*, p. 102.
[6] Concluding verse of Chapter XXVI, *Ibid.*, p. 234.
[7] Concluding verse of Chapter XXVIII, *Ibid.*, p. 253.
[8] Concluding verses of Chapters IV and IX, *Ibid*, pp. 39 & 80 ; Introductory verse of Chapter XVIII, *Ibid.*, p. 63.
[9] Concluding verse of Chapter XXIX, *Ibid.*, p. 262.
[10] *Ibid.*, Introduction : pp. XXII-XXIII.

in his maternal uncle's household was known by the name of Hāravarṣa,"[1] because Dharmapāla is known to have married a Rāṣṭrakūṭa princess and this type of name is common with the Rāṣṭrakūṭas. But there is no certainty that *Vikramśīla* was the *biruda* of Dharmapāla, because the Tibetan traditions which speak of the foundation of the monastery also inform us that Devapāla was the founder. So either Dharmapāla or Devapāla can be said to have had the *biruda* of *Vikaramaśīla.*[2] From this point it can be said that Hāravarṣa could as well be a son of Devapāla and if so he might have been another son who secured power after the death of Devapāla.[3]

The date of Abhinanda and Hāravarṣa can be fixed with some amount of certainty. They must have flourished after Dharmapāla. Soḍḍhala in his *Udayasundarī Kathā* furnishes us with the latest limit of their date.[4] Soḍḍhala[5] places Abhinanda before Rājaśekhara[6] in his list of famous poets from Vālmiki to his own time. From this the editor of the *Rāmacarita* is inclined to fix the latest limit of Abhinanda's date at 900 A. D.[7] So Abhinanda and his patron Hāravarṣa seem to have flourished some time after Dharmapāla and before 900 A. D. and hence Hāravarṣa may well be either Devapāla or his son. Unfortunately

[1] *Ibid.*, p. xxiii. R. C. Majumdar (*HB-I*, p. 123, Fn. 5) has pointed out that Abhinanda also uses *Pṛthivīpāla* (Concluding verses of Chapters II, X, XVIII, *Rāmacarita*, pp. 20, 91, 161) to describe his patron. If it is taken as a proper name, then it is to be taken as another name of Hāravarṣa and hence he should be regarded as different.

[2] *HB-I*. p. 115, Fn. 1.

[3] *DKM*, pp. 382-85.

[4] Gaekwad's Oriental Series, No. XI, pp. 2, 3 and 157. From this fact it is clear that Abhinanda and Hāravarṣa must have flourished before Soḍḍhala, whose date is some time between 1026 and 1060 A.D. Cf. *Ibid.*, Introduction, p. 1.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 153-54.

[6] He was contemporary of the Pratīhāra king Mahendrapāla I, cf. R. S. Tripathi : *op. cit.*, pp. 253-54 ; M. L. Nigam : *JRAS*, 1964, pp. 14 ff. He should be placed in the last part of the 9th and early 10th century A. D. Cf. *IA*, vol. XVI, pp. 175-78 ; *EI*, vol. I, p. 171.

[7] *Rāmacarita*, Introduction, Gaekwad's Oriental Series, p. xxi.

this cannot be determined with certainty and Hāravarṣa remains an "interesting episode."[1] in Pāla history.

From the above discussion it becomes obvious that the sequence of events that followed the death of Devapāla cannot be fixed with certainty and only a probable course can be deduced. The identity of Śūrapāla and Vigrahapāla I cannot be proved and there are reasons to believe that they were different. The possibility of a dispute and resulting division of the empire cannot be altogether ruled out. Hāravarṣa, if he were a son of Devapāla, appears as another rival. But things were possibly straightened up very soon and with Nārāyaṇapāla, who had a long reign of about 54 years, stability was secured again.

The reign period of both Vigrahapāla I and Śūrapāla I could not have been long. Vigrahapāla's son and successor, Nārāyaṇapāla, ruled for as long as 54 years. We have two inscriptions of Śūrapāla from Bihar, both dated in his 3rd regnal year.[2] D.C. Sircar noticed another inscription found at Rajauna,[3] a village near Luckeesarai in Bihar, belonging to the 5th regnal year of a king named Śūrapāla and he assigned it to Śūrapāla I. On the basis of this inscription Śūrapāla I can be said to have ruled for at least five years. So both Vigrahapāla and Śūrapāla, who were contemporaries, if they are considered to be different and to have ruled at the same time, can be assigned a reign period of about five years.

All that we know about Śūrapāla from the Bādal pillar inscription is that he was consecrated as the sovereign of the earth and the verse shows his religious bent of mind.[4] The Bhāgalpur plate also does not claim any more about Vigrahapāla I and the 17th verse declares that he abdicated in favour of his son Nārāyaṇapāla.[5] This change in the tone of the

[1] *HB-I*, p. 123.
[2] *JASB(NS)*, vol. IV, p. 107. S. N. Chakravartti corrected the dates to be 3, and not 2. Cf. *JRASB*, Third Series, vol. IV, 1938, p. 390.
[3] *IHQ*, vol. XXVI, p. 141 ; vol. XXIX, p. 301.
[4] Verse 15 : *EI*, vol. II, p. 163.
[5] *IA*, vol. XV, p. 306.

praśasti in both the Bādal pillar inscription and the Bhāgalpur grant, which are prolific in eulogising the achievements of Dharmapāla and Devapāla, is indicative of the change of the fortune of the dynasty due to the unwarlike characters of their successors.

Nārāyaṇapāla on his accession enjoyed the sovereignty of the whole Pāla empire in Bengal and Bihar. This can be proved from the find spots of his inscriptions. The Gayā temple inscription of his 7th year[1] and another inscription in the Indian Museum believed to have been found in Bihar,[2] and the Bhāgalpur grant of his 17th year,[3] which was issued from Mudgagiri (Munger), prove that he was the master of Magadha (Patna and Gayā districts) including Aṅga (Munghyr and Bhāgalpur districts). The Bādal pillar inscription[4] proves his suzerainty over northern Bengal.[5] But after his 17th year till his 54th year we do not find a single inscription issued from either Bihar or northern Bengal and this absence of any Pāla inscription in this region is not without significance. This vacuum has been filled in by a few inscriptions of the Pratīhāra king Mahendrapāla I.

We do not find any definite reference to Nārāyaṇapāla's military activities from either his own Bhāgalpur grant or the Bādal pillar inscription, both of which are eloquent in describing his liberality and religiousness. The Bhāgalpur grant says, "He adorned with his deeds the inherited throne, whose foot-stool of stone was covered by (prostrate) princes with the

[1] *EI*, vol. XXXV, pp. 225-228.
[2] *MASB*, vol. V, p. 62, Plate xxxi.
[3] *IA*, vol. XV, pp. 304 ff.
[4] *EI*, vol. II, pp. 160 ff.
[5] The Bādal inscription can be said to be earlier than the Bhāgalpur grant. B. P. Sinha has established this on the ground that in the Bādal inscription, Guravamiśra is pleased with the fact that Nārāyaṇapāla held him in high esteem, but in the Bhāgalpur plate he is mentioned in the office of the *dūtaka* of the grant. This shows the gradual reconciliation between Gurava and the king. Cf. *DKM*, p. 388.

lustre of their diadems",[1] "when his sword, blue like a lotus, was flashing in the van of battle, it appeared to his enemies, through fear, yellow and red – since it was drinking blood",[2] and "taming men constantly by wisdom and valour, he steadily subjected them to his rule. When beggars approached him, they became satisfied to such an extent that they never thought of begging again."[3] All these are vague and meaningless, and give the impression that the *praśastikāra* had nothing more to add to his credit except his peaceful countenance and unwar-like character.

So we find that the successors of Devapāla were ill-equipped to preserve the inherited empire and to hold on against their hereditary rivals, the Pratīhāras and the Rāṣṭrakūṭas. Amogha-varṣa I's fight against Bengal, as referred to in his Nilgund[4] and Sirur[5] inscriptions, may well be taken to have happened after Devapāla. But a far more serious blow seems to have come from the Pratīhāra side, resulting in the occupation of parts of Magadha and northern Bengal. Pratīhāra occupation of this region can be proved from the find places of the inscriptions of Mahendrapāla I (c. 885-910 A. D.). Six inscriptions,[6] found

[1] Verse 10 : *IA*, vol. XV, p. 308.
[2] Verse 13 : *Ibid.*
[3] Verse 14 : *Ibid.*
[4] *EI*, vol. VI, pp. 98 ff.
[5] *IA*, vol. XII, p. 218.
[6] a. The Rāmagayā Daśāvatāra Ins., yr. 8 : *MASB*, vol. V, pp. 63-64.
b. Gunariyā Ins., yr. 9 : *Ibid.*, p. 64 ; *JASB*, vol. XVI, p. 278 ; *IA*, vol. XLVII, 1918, p. 110.
c. British Museum Ins., yr. 2 : F. Kielhorn : *A List of the Inscriptions of Northern India*, Appendix to *EI*, vol. V, p. 47, Note 5.
d. British Museum Ins., Yr. 9 : *Ibid.* ; *MASB*, vol. V, Pl. xxxi.
e. Bihar Buddha Image Ins., yr. 4 : *ASI, Annual Report*, 1923-24, p. 102 ; *MASI*, No. 66, pp. 105-06.
f. Itkhori Image Ins. : *ASI*, Annual Report, 1920-21, p. 35. Itkhori is in the Hazaribagh district of Bihar.
Inscriptions c & d are mentioned by R. D. Banerji to have been found at Bihar (*BI*, vol. I, p. 227, Fn. 69). But Kielhorn does not mention anything about their find. place. There are some differences

found at various places of Bihar, prove his suzerainty over southern Bihar from quite early in his reign. Mahendrapāla I's hold over northern Bihar is indicated by the Dighwa-Dubauli plate, issued by him in Vikrama year 955 (898-99 A. D.).[1] It concerns a village about 25 miles south-east of Gopālganj in the Saran district of Bihar.

The discovery of an inscription at Pāhārpur in the Rajshahi district dated in the 5th regnal year of Mahendrapāla proves his occupation of Northern Bengal also.[2] Rājaśekhara, the court poet of Mahendrapāla, also refers to Mahendrapāla's success in the eastern countries in his *Karpūramañjari*, where it is said that Mahendrapāla captured Campā (Bhāgalpur district of Bihar) and Rāḍha (western Bengal) ; overpowered Kāmarūpa (Assam) with prowess and dallied with Harikela (eastern Bengal).[3] So from these literary and epigraphic evidence it is established beyond any doubt that Bihar and northern Bengal were under the Pratīhāra control right from the beginning of Mahendrapāla's reign and that this area must have slipped out of Pāla hands after the 17th year of Nārāyaṇapāla. The Pāla empire must have shrunk "to the northern part of the Gangetic delta and Western Bengal."[4] Now one question remains to be answered : when the Pratīhāra power advanced to this region?

We have seen that Bhoja I, the founder of the Pratīhāra empire in the *Madhyadeśa*, tried his hand against Devapāla early in his reign without much success.[5] But from then onwards the

of opinion about the date of Ins. d, which Kielhorn read as 6, but he expresses his doubts with a question mark. But the date seems to be 9. In the plate No. xxxi in *MASB*, vol. V, a comparison of the figure indicating the date in this ins. with that of the Indian Museum ins. of Nārāyaṇapāla makes it clear that the figure is 9.

1 *IA*, vol. XV, pp. 105 ff. ; *JBBRAS*, vol. XXI, pp. 405 ff. ; *EI*, vol. XIX, Appendix, No. 40.

2 *MASI*, No. 55, p. 75 ; *ASI*, *Annual Report*, 1925-26, p. 141.

3 M. L. Nigam : 'Some Literary References to the History of the Gurjara-Pratīhāras Mahendrapāla and Mahīpāla', *JRAS*, 1964, pp. 14 ff.

4 *JBORS*, vol. XIV, p. 508.

5 *Supra* pp. 35-36.

Pratīhāras had grown in power and under Bhoja I their power was established on a solid basis and it is natural that he should try his hand once again against the Pālas. This happened towards the close of his reign, when the Pālas had become considerably weakened due to the weak successors of Devapāla. A reference to Bhoja's victory over the Pālas is found in the Gwalior *praśasti* wherein he is said to "have burnt the Vaṅgas, his formidable enemy, by the fire of his anger."[1] This is supported by the evidence of the Kahla plates of Soḍhadeva,[2] the Bilhari and Benares inscriptions,[3] and the Cātsū inscription.[4] We find inscriptions of as early as the 2nd year of Mahendrapāla in Bihar and so it is very likely that Mahendrapāla inherited these acquisitions from his father, and on his accession may have finished whatever was left over and by his 5th year the Pratīhāra power extended up to northern Bengal.[5] There cannot be any objection to ascribing these acquisitions to the later years of Bhoja I and early years of Mahendrapāla, roughly between 883 and 885-86 A. D.,[6] as it fits in well with the sequence of evidence we have about the state of affairs in Bihar and northern Bengal where we do not have any inscription of Nārāyaṇapāla after his 17th year. The very fact that the inscriptions of Mahendrapāla found in Bihar and northern Bengal are dated very early in his reign proves R. S. Tripathi[7] to be wrong when he ascribes all these successes solely to Mahendrapāla.

[1] *ASI, Annual Report*, 1903-04, pp. 282 & 285. In *EI*, vol. XVIII, pp. 109 ff. *Bṛhadvaṅgān* in verse 21 is read as *Bṛhadvaṅśān*.

[2] *EI*, vol. VII, pp. 85-93. It is said in this inscription that Guṇāmbhodhideva, a chief of Kalacuri family, received land from Bhoja and "took away sovereignty from the Gauḍa king."

[3] *Ibid.*, vol. I, pp. 251 ff. vol. 297 ff. The Kalacuri king Kokalla I is said in these two records to have supported Bhoja in his war against Bengal.

[4] Verse 23 : *Ibid.*, vol. XII, p. 15. The Guhilot king Guhila II, son of Harṣarāja who joined Bhoja in his first campaign is said to have defeated a Gauḍa king and levied tribute from the princes of the East.

[5] R. C. Majumdar : *The Gurjara Pratīhāras*, pp. 51 ff.

[6] See Appendix I.

[7] *Op. cit.*, pp. 248 ff.

The success of the Pratihāra power at last drew the curtain on the long drawn tripartite struggle for the supremacy of northern India, though its echo was heard even in the next generation. The success was mainly due to the weak successors of Devapāla. The probable dispute and division of the empire after Devapāla might have hit at the solidarity of the Pāla kingdom.

The Pratihāras, however, could not hold their acquisitions in Bengal and Bihar for long. We find an inscription of Nārāyaṇapāla dated in his 54th regnal year in Bihar,[1] which is indicative of Pāla reoccupation of this area some time before that date. This was possibly facilitated by the unsettled condition of the Gurjara Pratihāra empire due to the succession problem after the death of Mahendrapāla I (c. 910 A. D.), and the devastatating Rāṣṭrakūṭa invasions of Kṛṣṇa II (c. 880-914 A. D.) and Indra III (c. 915-917. A. D.) which swept the Pratihara empire.[2]

In the Deoli copper-plate success is claimed for Kṛṣṇa II against the Gauḍas, he is mentioned as the preceptor "charging the Gauḍas with the vow of humility," and "his command was obeyed by Aṅga, Kaliṅga, Gaṅga and Magadha."[3] This finds support in the 11th verse of the Piṭhāpuram inscription.[4] It is not unlikely that Nārāyaṇapāla was the man to receive this Rāṣṭrakūṭa assault. But it is difficult to determine the extent of Rāṣṭrakūṭa success. If Kielhorn's[5] identification of Tuṅga, father of Rājyapāla's wife Bhāgyadevī,[6] with Jagattuṅga, the son of Kṛṣṇa II is taken to be correct, then we have to assume

[1] *IA*, vol. XLVII, p. 110.

[2] Cf. R. S. Tripathi : *op. cit.*, pp. 255 ff.
R. C. Majumdar : *The Gurjara Pratihāras*, pp. 66 ff.

[3] *EI*, vol. V, p. 193.

[4] *Ibid.*, vol. IV, p. 40.

[5] *JASB*, vol. LXI, p. 80, Note 9. But there are other views too. R. D. Banerji identified him with Tuṅgadharmāvaloka (*BI*, vol. I, p. 226), whose inscription was discovered at Bodh-Gayā. N. N. Vasu identified him with Kṛṣṇa II himself, who is known to have the epithet Subhatuṅga (*Vaṅger Jātiya Itihāsa*, Rājanya Kāṇḍa, p. 128).

[6] Verse 8 of the Bāngarh plate of Mahīpāla I : *Rāṣṭrakūṭ=ānvay=endos=*

that the hostilities were soon patched up and a friendly relationship was established along with the marriage alliance.

Thus within the life-time of Nārāyaṇapāla the Pāla empire at first suffered a shrinkage, but towards the end of his long reign he succeeded in re-establishing his authority over the lost dominions. This was partly due to the internal weakness of the Pratihāras and partly due to the Rāṣṭrakūṭa invasions—a factor which had saved the Pālas more than once during the preceding century. But it is apparent that there was a lack of positive activity on the part of the Pāla kings, and the vigour and drive, which were so characteristic of the reigns of Dharmapāla and Devapāla, were totally absent. The reign of Nārāyaṇapāla, who can be safely assigned a reign of 54 years, was a period of inaction and stagnation—a natural sequence after the period of ascendency.

Another interesting thing to note about Nārāyaṇapāla was his enthusiasm in patronizing Brahmanical dieties. The Bhāgalpur plate was issued by him to grant a village to the temple of Śiva at Kalaśapota, which he himself had founded, to the attached congregration of *Pāśupata* temples, and in order to provide the requisites of *Pāśupata* teachers.[1] He himself boasts of having built a thousand temples for the lord Śiva. We have seen earlier that Dharmapāla felt the need to declare that he was conversant with the precepts of the *Śāstras* and that he made the castes conform to their proper tenets.[2] And this grant of Nārāyaṇapāla emphasizes the fact that the Pāla rulers, though they were Buddhists, felt the need from time to time to keep the bulk of the population contented, and this attitude speaks of their political prudence.

Though Nārāyaṇapāla succeeded in recapturing the lost dominions towards the close of his reign his successors were not strong enough to retain them. The Pāla kingdom suffered

Tuṅgasy=ottuṅga—mauler=dduhitari tanayo Bhāgyadevyāṁ prasūtaḥ .../ *EI*, vol. XIV, p. 326.

[1] Lines 38-41 : *IA*, vol. XV, p. 306.

[2] See *Supra*, pp. 31-32.

more reverses during the reigns of his three weak successors, Rājyapāla, Gopāla II and Vigrahapāla II, which covered a period of about 75 years.

Rājyapāla, son and successor of Nārāyaṇapālā,[1] is referred to in four inscriptions on bronze images, dated in his 28th, 31st and 32nd years, which have been found in Kurkihara in the Gayā district of Bihar.[2] Another inscription, dated in his 24th year, was found in a Jaina temple at Bargaon (Nālandā) in the Pātnā district.[3] These inscriptions prove that (i) Rājyapāla ruled for at least 32 years and (ii) that Bihar was in his possession.

Recently another inscription of his time has been discovered from a mosque at Bhāturiyā, about 20 miles away from Rajshahi.[4] It was inscribed by Yaśodāsa, who is mentioned as a *Mantrin*,[5] *Saciva*,[6] and *Tantrādhikārin*[7] (all these meaning a minister or counsellor) of the king Rājyapāla, to record the gift of the king of a village in favour of the god *Vṛṣabhadhvaja* (Śiva) installed by Yaśodāsa. The inscription contains a *praśasti* of Yaśodāsa and in that context refers to the king. Verse 6 informs us that Rājyapāla "established his absolute suzerainty over the world (literally : consolidated the earth under one canopy), had his rule unchallenged (literally : of undivided rule), and instituted his sway over the awestruck and trembling kings of all regions extending from the green coastline of the Salt sea to the horizon."[8] Verse 7 mentions that Rājyapāla was aspiring

[1] Verse 7, Bāngarh plate : *EI*, vol. XIV, p. 326 ; the Belwā plate : *Ibid.*, vol. XXIX, p. 7 ; the Āmgāchi plate : *Ibid.*, vol. XV, p. 296 ; the Manahali plate : *GL*, p. 150.

[2] *JBORS*, vol. XXVI, pp. 246 ff., Ins. Nos. 52, 58, 59 & 84.

[3] *IA*, vol. XLVII, p. 111.

[4] First edited in 1955 by S. P. Lahiry : *IHQ*, vol. XXXI, pp. 215 ff. Re-edited by D. C. Sircar : *EI*, vol. XXXIII, pp. 150 ff. Now preserved in the VRS Museum, Rajshahi.

[5] Verse 5 : *EI*, vol. XXXIII, p. 154.

[6] Verse 6 : *Ibid.*

[7] Verse 7 : *Ibid.*

[8] S. P. Lahiry's translation : *IHQ*, vol. XXXI, pp. 229-30.

for the status of the lord of gods, and verse 8 states that when Yaśodāsa was occupying the post of the *Tantrādhikārin*, his master's command was obeyed by the Mlecchas, Aṅgas, Kaliṅgas, Vaṅgas, Oḍras, Pāṇḍyas, Karṇāṭas, Lāṭas, Suhmas, Gurjaras, Kṛitas and Cīnas.[1] Accepting these verses at their face value S. P. Lahiry has tried to establish that the above peoples acknowledged Rājyapāla's suzerainty and that in these verses we have an indication of Rājyapāla's military exploits.[2] But there is no doubt that these three verses put forward a conventional claim which is not reliable from the historian's point of view in regard to most of the peoples mentioned, even if a few of them may have been actually subdued by the Pāla king. In these verses we have an echo of the Khālimpur plate of Dharmapāla and the Munger plate of Devapāla, and they suffer from the same defect.[3] The situation of the countries mentioned in the 8th verse makes apparent the exaggerated nature of the *praśasti*. It is not unlikely that Rājyapāla had some clashes with the bordering kingdoms of Orissa and Vaṅga, and with the Gurjaras. The Mlecchas mentioned in the list appear to have been the Arab Muslims of the lower Indus valley and the Pāla king had very little chance of coming into conflict with them. The appearance of the names of the Kṛitas and Cīnas is interesting, since neither of them generally finds a place in the conventional list of adversaries of the Indian kings. D. C. Sircar suggested that by the Cīnas the Sino-Tibetans may have been indicated; while the Kṛitas may be either a wrong rendering of the well-known Himalayan people, the Kirātas, or certain foreign rulers of the Kashmir region.[4] Moreover, the appearance of the names of the Aṅgas (which lived in the Munghyr—Bhāgalpur region) and the Suhmas (in south-west Bengal), forming parts of the Pāla kingdom in Rājyapāla's time, makes it clear that the names were selected

[1] *EI*, vol. XXXIII, p. 154.
[2] *IHQ*, vol. XXXI, pp. 218-221.
[3] See *Supra*, pp. 23-25.
[4] *EI*, vol. XXXIII, p. 152.

to suit the metre and rhythm of the verse rather than to record a historical fact. Hence much importance cannot be attached to this verse and on its evidence alone Rājyapāla cannot be credited with these conquests.

S. P. Lahiry[1] speculated that Yaśodāsa belonged to the *Cāṣī Kaivarta* class, that during Rājyapāla's time the Kaivartas rendered help to the king, and that as a result one among them, Yaśodāsa, was raised to the position of minister. So with Yaśodāsa started the prosperity and prominence of the Kaivartas which continued up to the time of Mahīpāla II, when Divya, the Kaivarta chief, seized Varendra. Divya, according to Lahiry, belonged to the family of Yaśodāsa. Lahiry based his surmise on the word *bhūmijaiḥ*, occurring in verse 7, which he took in the sense of the *Cāṣī Kaivartas* and on the cognomens of *Dāsa* and *Kuṇḍa* (the family designation of Yaśodāsa's maternal grandfather), which he believed to be typical surnames of the *Cāṣī Kaivarta* community. But D. C. Sircar[2] has shown clearly that the meaning of the word *bhūmijaiḥ*, in the context of the verse of the inscription, has been misunderstood by Lahiry and he has carried the meaning too far. The cognomens of *Dāsa* and *Kuṇḍa* are found to have been used by various non-Brāhmaṇa communities of Bengal including the Kāyasthas and Vaidyas, and the Nidhanpur plates of Bhāskaravarman show that both *Dāsa* and *Kuṇḍa* were also used by the Brahmaṇas. So Lahiry's guess has no ground to stand upon and is far too adventurous.

The importance of the Bhāturiyā inscription lies in the fact that it supplies us the name of the minister of Rājyapāla and it also shows that Rājyapāla, like his forefathers, granted lands for the Brahmanical temples. The military exploits alluded to in this inscription cannot be wholly believed in.

The copper-plate of Rājyapāla's descendent describes him as "a ruler of the middle world, who, by (excavating) tanks, the beds of which were as deep as the bed of ocean, (and) by

[1] *IHQ*, vol. XXXI, pp. 221-225.
[2] *EI*, vol. XXXIII, pp. 151-52.

(erecting) temples whose sides were as high as the ridges of the principal mountains, had become famous."[1] Besides this the Pāla records have nothing to proclaim about Rājyapāla. Possibly he was offered a respite by the quick collapse of the Pratīhāra power after Mahīpāla and so he could devote himself to peaceful pursuits.

But during the reigns of Rājyapāla's two successors, Gopāla II and Vigrahapāla II, the Pālas had to bear the brunt of the invasions of the Candellas and the Kalacuris, who came to prominence in central India after the break up of the Pratīhara empire. Gopāla II's rule over the whole of Bihar is proved by the Nālandā inscription, dated in his 1st year,[2] the Bodh-Gayā inscription[3] and the colophon of the British Museum manuscript of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñā-pāramitā*, which was written in the 15th year of the reign of Gopāla, rightly identified with Gopāla II, in the Vikramaśīladevavihāra.[4] His possession of northern Bengal up to his 6th regnal year is proved by the discovery of the Jājilpārā copper-plate issued to grant lands in the *Puṇḍravardhanabhukti*.[5] Another inscription has been found at the village of Mandhuk under the Chandina Police Station of the Comilla (formerly Tippera) district in East Pakistan, dated in the 1st regnal year of Gopāla, and most probably of Gopāla II.[6] On the evidence of this inscription scholars[7] have tried to establish the existence of Pāla rule in south-eastern Bengal at that time. We have seen earlier that there is no evidence to prove the existence of Pāla rule in south-eastern Bengal in

[1] Verse 7 of the Bāngarh plate of Mahīpāla I : *EI*, vol. XIV, pp. 326.
[2] Nālandā Vāgīśvarī Image Ins. : *JASB(NS)*, vol. IV, p. 106.
[3] *Ibid*, pp. 103 ff.
[4] *JRAS*, 1910, pp. 150-51. British Museum No. Or.6902.
[5] *JASL*, vol. XVII, 1951, pp. 137-144.
[6] *VRS Monograph*, No. 8, 1950, pp. 104-06 ; *IHQ*, vol. XXVIII, p. 57.
[7] R. C. Majumdar : *HCIP*, vol. IV, *The Age of Imperial Kanauj*, p. 55 ; D. C. Sircar : 'Pāla Rule in the Tippera District', *IHQ*, vol. XXVIII, pp. 51 ff.

their early years.[1] In a subsequent chapter[2] we shall see that there was continuous independent rule of the Candra kings in this region from about 900 A.D. and that they often fought with the neighbouring Pāla kings, and their records claim success. The reign of Gopāla II coincided with that of Śrīcandra, the most powerful among the Candra kings. In view of this fact the Mandhuk image inscription is to be considered of external origin. The Gaṇeśa image, which contains the inscription in its pedestal, is made of black basalt found in the Rajmahal hills. So A. H. Dani's suggestion[3] that it was carried to its present site at a later time is not improbable. Even if the Mandhuk inscription is taken to mean Gopāla II's rule over south-eastern Bengal, it must be said that it was definitely a temporary one and possibly the result of a raid.[4]

There is a controversy over the reading of the date in the palm-leaf manuscript of the *Maitreya-Vyākaraṇa*.[5] H. P. Sastri[6] and D. C. Bhattacharya[7] read it as 57, R. G. Bhandarkar[8] as 11, and R. D. Banerji[9] as 17. R. C. Majumdar,[10] after examining the microphotograph, is sure that the first figure is 1, but the second figure is very doubtful. Those who were inclined to read 57 were possibly influenced by a verse[11] in the Bāngarh, Belwā,

[1] See *Supra*, pp. 16-18.
[2] Chapter IV.
[3] A. H. Dani : *'Pūrva Vaṅger Candra Rājavaṁśa ; Bāṅglā Ekādemi Patrikā*, Dacca, vol. IV, Part III, 1367 B. S., pp. 24 ff.
[4] This point will be discussed later. See *Infra*, Chapter IV.
[5] H. P. Sastri : *A Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Government Collection*, vol. I, pp. 14-15.
[6] *Ibid.*
[7] *IHQ*, vol. VI, p. 152.
[8] *JBORS*, vol. XIV, p. 491.
[9] *Ibid.*, pp. 490 ff.
[10] *HB-I*, p. 179, Fn. 4.
[11] Verse 8 : *EI*, vol. XIV, p. 326 ; *Ibid.*, vol. XXIX, p. 7 ; *Ibid.*, vol. XV, p. 296 ; *GL*, p. 150.
Śrīmān Gopāladevas=cirataram=avaner=ekapatnyā ivaiko bharttābhut.../

Āmgachi and Manahali plates applied to Gopāla II, on the basis of which it was urged that he had a long reign of over 50 years.[1] But in view of the fact that the same verse is found in the Jājilpārā plate of Gopāla II,[2] issued in his 6th year, this interpretation no longer holds good, and the verse should be taken as a formal panegyric. So 17 is the latest date we have of Gopāla II and he may be assigned a reign of about 17 years.

A manuscript of the *Pañcarakṣā*, written in the 26th year of the reign of *Parameśvara Paramabhaṭṭāraka Paramasaugata Mahārājādhirāja* Śrīmad Vigrahapāladeva, and now preserved in the British Museum,[3] is generally assigned to the second ruler of this name.[4] Vigrahapāla II can thus be assigned a reign of about 26 years. The three bronze image inscriptions found at Kurkihara in the Gayā district[5] belonging to the third and 19th year of the reign of Vigrahapāladeva should also be assigned to Vigrahapāla II. So also the terracotta inscription[6] of the 8th regnal year of Vigrahapāla, now preserved in the Nālandā Museum. The Naulagarh image inscription,[7] dated in the 24th year of Vigrahapāladeva and tentatively assigned to Vigrahapāla III by D. C. Sircar, can also be assigned to this ruler.

(Gopāla became for a long time the only husband of the earth, who had only one husband.)

[1] *IHQ*, vol. VI, pp. 152 ff.

[2] *JAS,L*, vol. XVII, 1951, p. 141.

[3] Cecil Bendall : *Catalogue of the Buddhist Sanskrit Manuscripts in the British Museum*, pp. 232-33 ; *JRAS*, 1910, p. 151. British Museum. No. Or. 3346.

[4] There are differences of opinion. Cf. R. D. Banerji : *MASB*, vol. V, p. 67, *JBORS*, vol. XIV, p. 489 ; D. C. Bhattacharya : *IHQ*, vol. VI, pp. 153 ff. ; R. C. Majumdar : *JASB(NS)*, vol. XVI, pp. 301 ff. and *HB-I*, pp. 179-80 ; B. P. Sinha : *DKM*, pp. 403-04.

[5] *JBORS*, vol. XXVI, pp. 239-40, Ins. Nos. 1, 4 & 5. It is interesting to note that in the hoard of 95 inscriptions, found at Kurkihara not a single inscription has been found to refer to a period beyond Mahīpāla I, and hence the probability is increased in favour of the assignment of these inscriptions to Vigrahapāla II.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 37.

[7] *JBRS*, vol. XXXVII, 1951, Parts 3-4, pp. 1-4.

We do not have any detail about the reigns of Gopāla II and Vigrahapāla II. It is interesting to note one particular verse[1] which appeared for both Gopāla and Vigrahapāla, and was even repeated in the grants of Mahīpala I and Vigrahapāla III. A. K. Maitreya took this verse to refer to the fall in the fortune of the Pāla empire during the time of Vigrahapāla II and to his efforts to seek shelter in various places.[2] Aparna Banerji, taking *Malaya-upatyakā* of the second line to be *Malay-abhūmi* or *Malebhum* of Nepal, tried to interpret this verse to mean Bengal's relationship with Nepal and concluded that we have "gone a long way in misunderstanding and misrepresenting the history of the Pālas from Rājyapāla to Vigrahapāla II, and we need now retrace our steps", and "as for Gopāla II and Vigrahapāla II, we may infer from the verse under discussion that they were also anything but weaklings, each of them being the hero of at least two expeditions, one in the east and the other in the north."[3] Both A. K. Maitreya and Aparna Banerji represent two extreme views on the interpretation of this verse. Dasaratha Sharma[4] has justly pointed out that the verse neither

[1] *Deśe prāci pracurapayasi svacchaṁ-āpīyato yaṁ*
svairaṁ bhrāntvā tadanumalay-opatyakā candaneṣu /
Kṛtvā sāndrair-maruṣu jaḍatāṁ śīkarair-abhratulyāḥ
prāleyādreḥ-kaṭakam-abhajan yasya senā-gajendrāḥ //
(Whose war elephants, like clouds, having drunk clear water in the eastern country, which abounds with water, after that having roamed to their own will in the Sandal forests of the valley of the Malaya country, (and) having caused a coolness in the *maru* lands by throwing dense sprays (of water emitted from their trunks) enjoyed the slopes of the Himalayas.)
This verse is employed to Gopāla II in his Jājilpārā grant, *JAS,L*, vol. XVII, 1951, p. 142 ; to Vigrahapāla II in the Bāngarh grant, *EI*, vol. XIV, p. 326 ; to Mahīpāla I in the Belwā grant, *JAS,L*, vol. XVII, pp. 127-28, *EI*, vol. XXIX, pp. 1 ff ; and to Vigrahapāla III in his Belwā grant, *JAS,L*, vol. XVII, p. 132 ; Āmgāchi plate, *EI*, vol. XV, p. 297 and in the Bangaon plate, *Ibid.*, vol. XXIX, pp. 48 ff.

[2] *GL*, p. 100.

[3] *IHQ*, vol. XXXII, pp. 52-53.

[4] *Ibid.*, vol. XXXVII, p. 206.

means the wandering of the army of Vigrahapāla II in different quarters for shelter nor does it mean Bengal's expedition in the east and north. The verse is essentially eulogistic in its import and a piece of "verbal bombast". The verse is describing the conventional *digvijaya* over the *Cakravartī-kṣetra*, in the east where water abounds, in the south where were situated the Malaya valleys covered with Sandal wood, in the west where the deserts were cooled by the water drizzling from the trunks of the elephants, and in the north where were the Himalayan hills. No part of India thus remained unconquered. It is this idea of the *digvijaya* which explains why four different Pāla rulers, no matter whether weak or strong, were enamoured of this verse and transferred it to themselves, leaving other conventional verses to their predecessors. So this verse should not be taken to bear any special significance for Vigrahapāla II.

During the reigns of Gopāla II and Vigrahapāla II the Pāla empire, after it had enjoyed a respite due to the weakness and disintegration of the Pratīhāras, had to face fresh troubles from the Candellas and the Kalacuris, the new powers that arose out of the ruins of the Pratīhāra empire.[1] The first Candella attack on Bengal by Yaśovarman, is referred to in a Khājurāho inscription dated V. S. 1011 or 954 A.D., and this must be taken to have taken place some time before that date.[2] Yaśovarman's son and successor Dhaṅga is also mentioned in another inscription dated 1002 A.D. as having led an expedition against west Bengal (Rāḍha), and this must have occurred between 954 and 1002 A.D.[3] Sisir Kumar Mitra suggested that Yaśovarman's expedition might have given a severe blow to the decadent Pāla empire and facilitated the rise of the Kāmboja

[1] For the history of these dynasties see *HCIP*, vol. IV, *The Age of Imperial Kanauj*, pp. 82 ff. N. S. Bose : *History of the Candellas.*

[2] *EI*, vol. I, pp. 122-35. Ins. No. 2. It records that Yaśovarman "was a sword to (cut down) the Gauḍas as if they were pleasure creepers." (Verse 23.)

[3] Khājurāho Ins. No. 4, Verse 46 : *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 145. For details of these invasions see N. S. Bose : *op. cit.*, pp. 35 ff.

rulers in northern and western Bengal.[1] The second Candella attack may have been against the Kāmboja rulers, who, according to the testimony of the Irdā plate,[2] occupied the Gauḍa region, and if this is correct, Dhaṅga's raid would have weakened them considerably and in turn helped Mahīpāla I to recapture the lost territories.[3]

Two Kalacuri rulers, Yuvarāja I and Lakṣmaṇarāja (2nd and 3rd quarters of the 10th century A.D.) are also known to have raided Bengal.[4] Lakṣmaṇarāja's expedition was possibly against the Candra rulers[5] of south-eastern Bengal (Vaṅgāla), and as he is mentioned in the Bilhari inscription[6] to have conquered Orissa, it is very likely that he advanced to the deltaic Bengal from Orissa. We shall find that Rājendra Coḷa also did the same thing a few years later.

It is noteworthy that in the Candella and Kalacuri records the various component parts of the kingdom of Bengal are mentioned separately. as Aṅga, Rāḍha, Gauḍa, and Vaṅgāla. Although often a kingdom is referred to by the name of an important component part, in the present instance we find indications of the existence of different independent principalities within the limits of Bengal. By now the Candras had become a recognisable force in south-eastern Bengal, quite independent of the Pālas. Within the Pāla kingdom itself the Kāmboja rulers carved out for themselves an independent principality in northern and western Bengal, and the Pāla rule, for some time before Mahīpāla I, was confined to Aṅga and Magadha.

[1] *IHQ*, vol. XXVIII, pp. 177 ff.

[2] *EI*, vol. XXII, pp. 150 ff.

[3] Mahīpāla is credited with this reconquest in his Belwā grant of Yr. 5 (*Ibid.*, vol. XXIX, pp. 6 ff.) and Bāngarh grant of yr. 9 (*Ibid.*, vol. XIV, pp. 324 ff.).

[4] Bilhari Ins., Verse 24 : *Ibid.*, vol. I, pp. 256 & 265.
Goharwa Plate, Verse 8 : *Ibid.*, vol. XI, p. 142.

[5] We shall see in a subsequent chapter (Chapter IV) that the Candras had become powerful in this area at that time.

[6] Verse 62 : *EI*, vol. I, pp. 260 and 268.

The Kāmboja occupation of northern and western Bengal is evidenced by two inscriptions. The Dinajpur pillar inscription,[1] which formerly stood in the palace of the Mahārāja of Dinajpur and was recently removed to the Dacca Museum, records the erection of a Śiva temple by a king of Gauḍa belonging to the Kāmboja family. There are diverse opinions among scholars about the meaning of the compound *Kuñjaraghaṭāvarṣeṇa* used in this inscription. R. L. Mitra took it as a chronogram to mean 888 and referring it to Śaka era he fixed the date of this record at 966 A.D.[2] R. G. Bhandarkar took it as an adjunct of the subject *Gauḍapati*, meaning "he who pours forth an array of elephants."[3] The former meaning is very doubtful, and hence it is not safe to fix the date of the inscription from this clue. However, R. P. Chanda, who edited the inscription, has shown clearly from palaeographic considerations that this plate is to be placed between the Bādal pillar inscription and the Deopārā *praśasti* of Vijayasena, and more precisely between the Bādal pillar and Mahīpāla's Bāngarh plate, or in the 10th century A.D.[4]

The Sylhet plate of the Candra king Śrīcandra refers to the Kāmbojas during the reign of Trailokyacandra. The date of Trailokyacandra can be fixed in the first quarter of the 10th century A. D.[5] So it seems that the rise of the Kāmbojas in

[1] *Durvvārāri-varūthiṇī pramathane dāne ca vidyādharaiḥ*
sānandaṁ divi yasya mārggaṇa-guṇa-grāmagraho gīyate /
Kāmvo (mbo) jānvayajena Gauḍapatinā tenendu-mauler-ayaṁ
prāsādoniramāyi kuñjaraghaṭāvarṣeṇa bhūbhūṣaṇaḥ //
JASB(NS), vol. VII, p. 619 ; *GR*, p. 35.

[2] *IA*, vol. I, pp. 127-28, 195.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 127-28, 227. The compound being in the instrumental, it can be generally taken to qualify the subject which is also in the instrumental. But scholars who take it as a chronogram meaning 888 cite rules from Paṇini, cf. *GR*, p. 36. But even then it is doubtful whether *Kuñjaraghaṭāvarṣeṇa* means 888. This compound may also be taken to imply that the *Gauḍapati* is very fortunate and rich, being sprinkled with water from the pots held by Lakṣmī's elephants.

[4] R. P. Chanda : *JASB (NS)*, vol. VII. pp. 615-16 ; *GR*, pp. 36-37.

[5] *Infra*, Chapter IV.

Bengal should also be placed in the first quarter of the 10th century A. D.

In Mahīpāla I's Belwā and Bāngarh plates we learn that Mahīpāla, by slaying all his enemies, obtained his paternal kingdom which had been snatched away through pride of prowess by people who had no claim to it.[1] Here is an allusion to the fact that his paternal kingdom was lost some time before him. *Rājyaṁ pitryam* is generally taken as northern Bengal, which is mentioned in the *Rāmacarita* as the *janakabhū* of the Pālas.[2] The information of these two sources collated together leads us to conclude that northern Bengal was lost some time after the 6th year of Gopāla II, whose Jājilpārā plate was issued in that year to grant land in northern Bengal, and before the reign of Mahīpāla I, who by the 5th year (the Belwā plate is dated in his 5th year) of his reign established Pāla authority in that region. The Kāmboja *Gauḍapatis* were the people who had snatched away this region, and as we have indicated earlier, the Kāmbojas possibly found the opportunity soon after the attack of the Candella Yaśovarman.[3] The Kāmboja rulers mentioned in the Irdā plate,[4] in all probability, belonged to the same Kāmboja family. The Irdā plate was issued by a king named Nayapāla belonging to the family of Rājyapāla, the *Kāmboja-vaṁśa-tilaka*, to grant lands in the Daṇḍabhukti *maṇḍala*[5] within the Vardhamānabhukti. This grant introduces us to three kings of the Kāmboja family, Rājyapāla and

[1] *Hata-sakala-vipakṣaḥ saṅgare bāhu-darppād-anadhikṛta-viluptaṁ rājyam-āsādya pitryam /*
EI, vol. XXIX, p. 7, and vol. XIV, p. 326. N. G. Majumdar (*Ibid.*, vol. XXII, p. 152, Fn. 3) took a different meaning of *anadhikṛta-viluptam*, which he takes as "not taken possession of and lost." In any case the allusion that his paternal kingdom was lost and Mahīpāla recovered it is quite clear.

[2] *Supra*, p 16.

[3] *Supra*, pp. 66-67.

[4] *EI*, vol. XXII, pp. 150-59.

[5] Daṇḍabhukti is rightly identified by R. D. Banerji with the Midnapur and Balasore disiricts, cf. *MASB*, vol. V, pp. 71, 89 : *BI*, vol. I, p. 248.

his two sons, Nārāyaṇapāla and Nayapāla, who became kings one after another, and they evidently ruled over the southern portion of West Bengal. Judging from the characters of the script the Dinajpur pillar inscription and the Irdā plate belong to the same period.[1] So the Kāmbojas can be said to have spread their rule over the whole of northern and western Bengal. Their capital, Priyaṅgu, from where the Irdā plate was issued, has yet to be identified.

A knotty problem has been aroused by some scholars[2] who believe Rājyapāla of the Irdā plate and the Pāla king Rājyapāla to be one and the same man. The grounds on which they have tried to establish the identity are as follows :

(i) Both bear the same name and both had their queen named Bhāgyadevī.

(ii) Palaeographically the Irdā plate and the inscriptions of Rājyapāla are of more or less the same period.

(iii) Both are mentioned as *Paramasaugata* and their imperial titles are the same.

(iv) A mother's tribal name is sometimes applied to the name of her children and *Kāmboja-vaṁśa-tilaka* has been taken to mean that the mother of Pāla Rājyapāla belonged to a Kāmboja family.[3]

(v) With an emendation of the text of the Irdā plate, *Kāmboja-Dhaṅgvatiparaḥ* instead of *Kāmboja-vaṁśa-tilaka*, the difficulty can be surmounted.[4]

Though from the similarity of the names of the kings, their queens and their titles it is tempting to identify the two

[1] *EI*, vol. XXII, pp. 152 ff.

[2] N. G. Majumdar : *Modern Review*, Calcutta, September, 1937, pp. 323-24. (When he edited the Irdā plate in *EI*, vol. XXII, pp. 150 ff., he thought this identity as unlikely, but he changed his opinion.)
J. C. Ghosh : *EI*, vol. XXIV, pp. 43 ff.
D. C. Sircar : *JIH*, vol. XV, p. 270.

[3] D. C. Sircar : *op. cit.*, R. C. Majumdar also seems to be inclined to give credence to this argument, cf. *HB-I*, p. 190.

[4] J. C. Ghosh : *EI*, vol. XXIV, pp. 43 ff.

Rājyapālas as one and the same person, the arguments are not convincing and conclusive enough to force this identification, and they do not stand a critical scrutiny.[1] The first two points taken together establish that the princes who had similar names, titles and wive's names lived about the same period. But there are instances of princes who ruled independently in adjoining territories about the same period having the same names,[2] and there is at least one instance where the name of the wife was also common.[3] Moreover, Bhāgyadevī is always mentioned in the Pāla records as the daughter of Tuṅga, the ornament of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas. The assumption of similar imperial titles cannot in any way prove the identification. The Candra rulers of south-eastern Bengal also took similar titles. The Pāla records frequently refer to the names of the queens and also their lineage and their fathers' dynasties. But we do not have any reference to any matrimonial connection with the Kāmbojas and hence D. C. Sircar's surmise that Rājyapāla was connected with the Kāmbojas through his mother's side cannot be accepted without any positive evidence. The emendation of the text suggested by J. C. Ghosh is unwarranted and has been questioned.[4] In the plate supplied with R. P. Chanda's text[5] the word *vaṁśa* after *Kāmboja* is clear enough not to allow any other guess. And above all there are serious discrepancies in the genealogy which can be gathered from the available records,

1 Scholars have raised objections :
R. C. Majumdar : *Dacca University Studies*, vol. I, No. II, pp. 131 ff.
H. C. Ray : *IHQ*, vol. XV, pp. 507 ff.
B. P. Sinha : *DKM*, pp. 398-99.
B. C. Sen : *op. cit.*, p. 382.

2 The Pratīhāra kings had names ending in Pāla, and the names Mahīpāla, Rājyapāla and Devapāla are common.

3 Samudravarman and Dattādevī were the names of the king and queen of Kāmarūpa almost in the same period in which Samudragupta and Dattādevī flourished, cf. *DHNI*, vol. I, p. 238.

4 *EI*, vol. XXIV, p. 43, Fn. 6.

5 *Ibid.*, vol. XXII, plate facing p. 154.

and it is difficult to explain them on this hypothesis. The genealogy is given below in a tabular form :

Pala		Kamboja	
Nārāyaṇapāla		Rājyapāla = Bhāgyadevī	
⋮			
Rājyapāla = Bhāgyadevī			
⋮ (daughter of Tuṅga)	Nārāyaṇapāla		Nayapāla
Gopāla II			
⋮			
Vigrahapāla II			

So it seems that there is no valid reason to believe that Rājyapāla of the Kāmboja family mentioned in the Irdā plate and the Pāla king of that name were identical, and hence we have to be very cautious in accepting the proposed identification. Unless further proof is forthcoming there is no reason why they should not be considered as two different persons belonging to separate lines. The existence of a Kāmboja king of Gauḍa is definitely evidenced by the Dinajpur pillar inscription and it is very likely that Rājyapāla and his two sons belonged to the same line, and in the stagnant period of Pāla history they could spread their influence in northern and western Bengal, Pāla dominion was possibly limited to Aṅga and Magadha.

Dharmapāla, the ruler of Daṇḍabhukti region, who was expelled from his territories by the conquering army of Rājendra Coḷa[1] may have been of the same Kāmboja line. According to the testimony of the Irdā plate we find Daṇḍabhukti in the possession of the Kāmboja Nayapāla in the last part of the 10th century A. D. and it is not unlikely that Dharmapāla, who was in possession of this area in the early part of the 11th century A. D., also belonged to the same line. So far there is no evidence to connect this Dharmapāla mentioned in the Tirumulai inscription with any Pāla prince and hence it is quite plausible that he was a descendant of the Kāmboja Pālas of the Irdā plate who ruled in this region.

[1] Tirumulai Inscription : *EI*, vol. IX, pp. 232 ff. See below.

One question remains to be explained : who were these Kāmbojas? It is difficult to find an answer to this question and there is no evidence in the inscriptions of the Kāmboja rulers of Bengal which can help us. So scholars have made various conjectures. R. P. Chanda[1] took the Kāmbojas to be inhabitants of Tibet, from Foucher's remark that Nepalese tradition applies the name *Kāmbojadeśa* to Tibet.[2] Others have taken the Kāmbojas to belong to the well-known tribe living in the Hindukush mountains in the North-Western frontier of the subcontinent.[3] The Tibetan chronicle *Pag Sam Jon Zang*[4] informs us of a *Kāmbojadeśa* in the Lushai Hill tracts between Bengal and Burma and it is not unlikely that the Kāmbojas came to Bengal from this region.[5] H. C. Ray suggested that the Kāmbojas might have come to Bengal from the North-Western frontier in the train of the Pratīhāra conquest during the time of Nārāyaṇapāla and some of them gained position and at an opportune moment captured power.[6] It is also not unlikely that some Kāmboja adventurer found his way to Bengal and gradually rose to prominence in the Pāla empire. There is no reference in the sources of an invasion from outside and considering the distance between the North-Western frontier of the sub-continent and Bengal the idea of an invasion does not seem feasible. So R. C. Majumdar[7] suggested that the Kāmbojas, who were perhaps officials in the Pāla empire, had taken advantage of the weakness of Pāla

[1] *GR*, p. 37.

[2] V. A. Smith : *The Early History of India*, 4th Edn., p. 193.

[3] R. C. Majumdar : *Dacca University Studies*, vol. I, No. II, p. 131 ; *HB-I*, p. 191.
H. C. Ray : *DHNI*, vol. I, p. 311, Fn. 1 ; *IHQ*, vol. XV, p. 511.
N. G. Majumdar : *EI*, vol. XXII, p. 153.

[4] S. C. Das (ed.) : *Pag Sam Jon Zang*, Part I, pp. 4, 74 and Index p. 10. But the existence of a *Kāmbojadeśa* in this region in the 9th and 10th centuries A.D. is doubtful.

[5] *DHNI*, vol. I, p. 309, Fn. 2 ; *IHQ*, vol. XV, p. 511.

[6] *Ibid.* But there is no proof that the Kāmbojas formed part of the Pratīhāra army.

[7] *HB-I*, p. 134.

kingdom. This seems quite probable. In any case it is difficult to arrive at a definite conclusion. It is even not unlikely that the rulers who captured power during the decadent period of the Pāla empire called themselves Kāmbojas and such transference of names of the countries is not unusual. The name of modern Cambodia is a good example. The existence of a *Kāmbojadeśa* in north-eastern India also shows this transference of names. It is unlikely that the Kāmboja tribe of the North-Western frontier moved so far from its original place.

Mahīpāla I succeeded his father, Vigrahapāla II to the Pāla empire which was possibly limited to Aṅga and Magadha. He is credited in the Belwā, Bāngarh, Āmgāchi and Manahali plates with having recovered the paternal kingdom (*rājyaṁ pitryam*), which was lost to people who had no claim to it.[1] Mahīpāla I issued his Belwā and Bāngarh plates in his 5th and 9th year respectively to grant lands in the Puṇḍravardhanabhukti and this bears clear proof of his re-occupation of northern Bengal by the 5th year of his reign.[2] The Kāmbojas are not found to have any authority in this area. If our earlier suggestion that Dharmapāla, the ruler of Daṇḍabhukti mentioned in Rājendra Coḷa's Tirumulai inscription, belonged to the Kāmboja line[3] is taken to be correct then it seems that the Kāmbojas were ousted by Mahīpāla I from northern Bengal and Gauḍa, and they continued their feeble existence in the region of south-western Bengal bordering Orissa.

Scholars have tried to prove from the evidence of the

[1] Verse 11, Belwā Plate : *EI*, vol. XXIX, pp. 6 ff.
Verse 11, Bāngarh plate : *Ibid.*, vol. XIV, p. 326.
Verse 11, Āmgāchi plate : *Ibid.*, vol. XV, p. 296.
Verse 10, Manahali plate : *GL*, pp. 150-51.

[2] The Belwā plate was discovered in 1946 and published in 1951 in *JAS,L*, vol. XVII, pp. 117 ff. and in 1951-52 in *EI*, vol. XXIX, pp. 1 ff. The date was first read by Manoranjan Gupta as 22, but D.C. Sircar correctly read it as 5.

[3] *Supra*, pp. 72.

Bāghaurā[1] and Nārāyaṇapur[2] image inscriptions found in Tippera (now Comilla) district of south-eastern Bengal, that Mahīpāla I re-occupied south-eastern Bengal before his 3rd regnal year and the occupation of northern Bengal must have preceded this.[3] This surmise was motivated by the belief that the Pālas rose to power in south-eastern Bengal (Vaṅga) and this portion of Bengal was also lost to the Candras during the period of confusion preceding the accession of Mahīpāla I. But we have suggested earlier that Pāla suzerainty over south-eastern Bengal in their earlier period cannot be proved beyond doubt.[4] Moreover, there is no valid ground to establish that Mahīpāla mentioned in the Bāghaurā and Nārāyaṇapur inscriptions was Mahīpāla I, and there is no inherent improbability in the identification of Mahīpāla of these two inscriptions with Mahīpāla II of the Pāla dynasty who ruled in the last quarter of the 11th century A.D.[5] The continuous rule of the Candra kings as powerful independent sovereigns of south-eastern Bengal[6] makes it quite improbable that Mahīpāla

1 *EI*, vol. XVII, pp. 353-355.

2 *IC*, vol. IX, pp. 121-24.

3 R. C. Majumdar : *HB-I*, pp. 136-37 ;
B. P. Sinha : *DKM*, pp. 404-407.

4 See *Supra*, pp. 16-18.

5 *IC*, vol. VII, p. 412. There are suggestions also to identify this Mahīpāla with the Pratīhāra king of that name (*IHQ*, vol. XVI, pp. 197 ff.). But this is rendered impossible by the fact that south-eastern Bengal was ruled by the independent Candra kings from the beginning of the 10th century A. D. (See Chapter IV) and there is nothing to prove that Pratīhāra power extended beyond northern Bengal. Moreover, the Pratīhāra Mahīpāla, in his early years, had to face troubles due to disputes over the succession and the Rāṣṭrakūṭa invasion of Indra III (cf. R. S. Tripathi : *History of Kanauj*, pp. 255 ff.) and hence it could not have been possible for him to extend his power to south-eastern Bengal. We have seen earlier (*Supra*, pp. 57-58) that Nārāyaṇapāla succeeded in reestablishing Pāla rule in northern Bengal and Bihar before the close of his reign.

6 See Chapter IV. Govindacandra, the contemporary of Mahīpāla I is found mentioned as the king of south-eastern Bengal in Rājendra Coḷa's inscription, which shows that the Candras were a separate entity at that time.

could spread his power in this region soon after his accession. But all the difficulties can be overcome if we take these two inscriptions to belong to the time of Mahīpāla II, and D.C. Sircar has already suggested this identification.[1] The only objection to it is that Mahīpāla II had a short reign. But these two inscriptions are dated in the 3rd and 4th year of the king and a reign of about 4 or 5 years would seem quite probable for Mahīpāla II.[2] The Candra kingdom in south-eastern Bengal collapsed after Govindacandra and, if the Pālas had any power in south-eastern Bengal, that must have spread in that region sometime between the reigns of Mahīpāla I and Mahīpāla II and continued up to the rise of the Varmans, who again founded an independent empire in south-eastern Bengal taking advantage of the Kaivarta rebellion.

So we find that there is no basis to establish Mahīpāla I's occupation of south-eastern Bengal. But there is ample evidence to prove his suzerainty over Magdha[3] throughout his reign. His hold over northern Bihar is controversial. His two Imādpur Image inscriptions are dated in his 48th year.[4] The colophon of a manuscript of the *Kiṣkindhā Kāṇḍa of the Rāmāyaṇa*, dated in Saṁvat 1076 mentions Tīrabhukti (northern Bihar) under one Gāṅgeya.[5] Bendall took the date in Vikrama year (=1019 A.D.)

[1] *IC*, vol. VII, p. 412; vol. IX, p. 124.

[2] See *Infra*, Chapter III.

[3] a. Bodhgayā Buddha Image Ins., Yr. 11, : *MASB*, vol. V, p. 75.
b. Nālandā Stone Ins. : *JASB* (*NS*), vol. IV, p. 106.
c. Colophon of a palm-leaf manuscript of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñā-pāramitā* found in Nepal : *Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1899, pp. 69-70 ; *MASB*, vol. V, p. 75.
d. Kurkihar Bronze Image Ins., Yr. 31 : *JBORS*, vol. XXVI, p. 248, Ins. No. 49.

[4] *IHQ*, vol. XXX, pp. 382-87. The date of these two inscriptions is discussed later on. See below.

[5] The colophon reads : *Saṁvat 1076 Aṣāḍha badi 4, Mahārājādhirāja puṇyāvaloka Somavaṁśodbhava-gauḍa-dhvaja Śrīmad Gāṅgeyadevabhujyamāna Tirabhuktau kalyāṇavijaya-rājye Nepāladeśiya Śrī bhāñcuśālika Śrī Ānanda-dāsya pāṭakāvasthita (kāyastha) paṇḍita Śrī Śrīkurasyātmajā Śrī Gopati-ālekhitam,*

and identified Gāṅgeya with the famous Kalacuri king, and this has been accepted by R. D. Banerji,[1] H. C. Ray,[2] K. P. Jayaswal[3] and A. Ghosh.[4] But others have objected to this identification. R. C. Majumdar took the date 1076 to refer to the Śaka Era (=1154 A.D.) and identified Gāṅgeya with Gāṅgeyadeva, son of Nānyadeva of Mithilā who came to the throne in 1097 A. D.[5] But A. Ghosh[6] pointed out that *Saṁvat* is not usually used alone in connection with the Śaka Era and Kielhorn[7] remarked that out of 400 Śaka dates of inscriptions there are only 5 in which the word *Śaka* is not mentioned, of which three are spurious and two are in verse. Moreover, it is difficult to prove that Gāṅgeyadeva ever assumed the titles of *Mahārājādhirāja* and his father Nānyadeva entitled himself *Mahasāmantādhipati.*[8] Mirashi[9] suggested that Gāṅgeya of the colophon is to be identified with a local prince of Rāṣṭrakūṭa descent, possibly subordinate to the Candellas, and he has also pointed out to a misreading : instead of *Gauḍadhvaja* he read *Garuḍadhvaja.* In any case the identification of Gāṅgeyadeva of the colophon is difficult and in the present state of our knowledge it is hard to arrive at a solution, and it will remain as an open question.[10] However. it seems quite probable that the date in the colophon is in Vikrama *Saṁvat* and that in 1019-20 A. D. one Gāṅgeyadeva was ruling in Mithilā. But the Imādpur (in Muzaffarpur district) inscriptions prove that Mahīpāla I

H. P. Sastri : *A Catalogue of the Palm-leaf and selected paper Manuscripts belonging to the Durbar Library, Nepal,* with a historical introduction by Cecil Bendall, Introduction, pp. 18-19 ; *JASB,* vol. LXXII, Part I, p. 13.

1 *MASB,* vol. V, p. 75 ; *BI,* vol. I, pp. 252-53.

2 *DHNI,* vol. I, p. 317.

3 *JBORS,* vol. IX, pp. 300 ff.

4 *IC,* vol. VII, pp. 3 ff.

5 *IHQ,* vol. VII, pp. 761 ff. (incorrectly printed as 681)

6 *IC,* vol. VII, p. 7.

7 *EI,* vol. IX, p. 128.

8 *JAHRS,* vol. I, p. 56.

9 *ABORI,* vol. XXIII, pp. 291 ff.

10 For full discussion on the problem see B. P. Sinha : *DKM,* pp. 408-412.

before his 48th year succeeded in establishing his authority over northern Bihar.

From the above discussion it follows that Mahīpāla I succeeded, early in his reign, in establishing Pāla authority over northern and western Bengal except a portion in the southern part of western Bengal, where we find Dharmapāla and Raṇa-śūra ruling during Rājendra Coḷa's invasion. Mahīpāla's authority over northern Bihar was established possibly towards the close of his reign. Scholars also ascribe to him conquests beyond Bihar. From the Sārnāth inscription[1] it has been generally assumed that Mahīpāla I succeeded in establishing his authority as far as Benares.[2] The inscription, dated in (Vikrama) *Saṁvat* 1083 (=1026 A. D.), is of a purely religious nature,[3] and records the construction and rebuilding of religious edifices by Sthirapāla

[1] *IA*, vol. XIV, pp. 139-40 ; *ASI, Annual Report*, 1903-1904, pp. 221-23 ; *JASB (NS)*, vol. II, pp. 445-47.

[2] R. C. Majumdar : *HB-I*, p. 140. Almost all scholars have accepted.

[3] The Text runs as follows :
Vāraṇaśīsarasyāṁ gurava-Śrīvāmarāśipādāvjam /
Ārādhya namitabhūpatiśiroruhaiḥ śaivalādhiśam /
Īśānacitraghaṇṭādikīrttiratnaśatāni yau /
Gauḍādhipo Mahīpālaḥ Kāśyāṁ Śrīmānakārayat//
Saphalīkṛtapāṇḍityau bodhavavinivarttinau /
Tau dharmmarājikāṁ sāṅgaṁ dharmmacakraṁ punarnnavam //
Kṛtavantau ca navīnām-aṣṭamahāsthānaśaila-gandhakuṭīm /
Etāṁ Śrī Sthirapālo Vasantapālo 'nujaḥ Śrīmān //
The illustrious Sthirapāla, (and his) younger brother, the illustrious Vasantapāla, whom the lord of Gauḍa, the illustrious Mahīpāla, caused to establish in Kāśī hundreds of precious monuments of his glory, such as Iśānas (liṅgas), paintings and bells .[Vogel translated as the "temples of Iśāna (Śiva) and Citraghaṇṭā (Durgā)", cf. *ASI, Annual Report*, 1903-04, pp. 222-23.] after he had worshipped the foot of Gurava Śrī Vāmarāśī, which is like a lotus in the lake of Vāraṇaśī, surrounded, as it were, by Śaivala plants through the hair of bowing kings - they (Sthirapāla and Vasantapāla) who have made their learning fruitful, and who do not turn back (on their way) to supreme knowledge repaired the Dharmarājikā and the Dharmacakra with all its parts, and constructed this new Gandhakuṭī made of stones (coming form) eight holy places.
E. Hultzsch's translation : *IA*, vol. XIV, p. 140.

and Vasantapāla at the order of the Gauḍa king Mahīpāla. There is no hint in this inscription to Mahīpāla's occupation of Benares. It is too hazardous to conclude from the evidence of this inscription that Mahīpāla extended his territories as far as Benares. R. C. Majumdar was aware of such objections when he wrote, "Benares and Sārnāth being sacred places of almost international reputation, construction of buildings there by Mahīpāla does not necessarily imply any political suzerainty over the region."[1] But he overrules this objection by saying that "in view of the fact that Mahīpāla's dominion certainly included the whole of Bihar, it is in any case, a reasonable inference, so long at least as it is not proved that Benares was under the rule of a different king."[2] B. P. Sinha has also followed suit : "The onus of proving that Sārnāth was not under Mahīpāla lies on those who deny that Sārnāth inscription suggests Mahīpāla's supremacy over the region."[3]

It is definitely very bad logic to suppose that as Bihar was within the kingdom of Mahīpāla and as he is mentioned in an inscription to have constructed and repaired a few religious edifices at Sārnāth, the region must have been under him. It is equally fallacious to assume that Benares was under Mahīpāla as nothing definite is known about its position at that time. The Sārnāth inscription should be taken as recording purely religious acts of Mahīpāla, who, being a devout Buddhist, must have felt the urge to repair and construct edifices at Sārnāth, the famous place of pilgrimage for the Buddhists. The first line of the inscription speaks of his meditation at the feet of one Śrī Vāmarāśi, a gurava (possibly a religious teacher) of Benares. This single inscription cannot in any way prove Mahīpāla's occupation of Benares. If he had political success in this region, the subsequent records of his family would have definitely mentioned it, because this would have given the *praśastikāras* something definite to eulogise instead of using vague and general terms.

[1] *HB-I*, p. 140.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *DKM*, p. 412.

The absence of any such information in the subsequent Pāla records is indicative of the fact that the Sārnāth inscription was of purely religious nature and has nothing to do with the occupation of the region.

Unfortunately the position of Benares at that time cannot be ascertained. The history of the Ganges-Jumnā valley after the defeat and death of Gurjara-Pratihāra king Rājyapāla (c. 1018 A. D.) is somewhat obscure. In 998 A. D. Dhaṅga, the Candella king, issued an inscription from Benares and from his base at Benares he led his successful invasions towards Bihar and Bengal.[1] Dhaṅga was succeeded by his son Gaṇḍa sometime after 1002 A. D. and Gaṇḍa was succeeded by his son Vidyādhara whose successor was Vijayapāla.[2] These rulers were very powerful and it is not unlikely that Benares continued in their possession, though we do not have any proof of it.

If the manuscript of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, referred to earlier,[3] is taken to belong to the Kalacuri king Gāṅgeyadeva, then the Kalacuri empire should be taken to have extended as far as northern Bihar, and Benares would have been in their possession in 1019 A. D. From an inscription of Gāṅgeyadeva found at Mukundapur, dated in A. D. 1019, Mirashi suggested that Gāṅgeyadeva was a subordinate to the Candella kings.[4] And it has been accepted by N. S. Bose,[5] who showed that in 1019 A. D. Gāṅgeyadeva held a subordinate position of the Candella emperor Vidyādhara (c. 1017-1019 A. D.), and the reference in Candella inscription[6] to the Kalacuri *Candra* is to be taken to mean Gāṅgeyadeva. So it is not unlikely that the Kalacuri king Gāṅgeyadeva held Benares as a feudatory of the Candellas in

[1] N. S. Bose : *History of the Candellas*, p. 45 ;
HCIP, vol. IV, *The Age of Imperial Kanauj*, p. 85.
[2] N. S. Bose : *op. cit.*, pp. 50-67 ;
HCIP, vol. V, *The Struggle for Empire*, pp. 58 ff.
[3] *Supra*, pp. 76-77.
[4] *ABORI*, vol. XXIII, p. 296.
[5] N. S. Bose : *op. cit.*, pp. 66-67.
[6] *EI*, vol. I, p. 219.

1019 A. D. and ultimately rose to independence. According to the information of Baihāqī, Benares was in the possession of the Kalacuri king Gāṅgeyadeva when Aḥmad Niyaltigin invaded it in 1034 A. D.,[1] and it is likely that Benares continued in their possession from 1019 A. D. onwards. The Kalacuri records claim that Gāṅgeyadeva defeated the ruler of Aṅga, probably Mahīpāla I.[2] This was possibly towards the close of Mahīpāla's reign when Gāṅgeyadeva was in possession of Benares. In any case, though it is impossible to discover with certainty the possessor of Benares in 1026 A. D., the probability is greater for its possession by the Candellas or the Kalacuris rather than the Pālas. Above all, on the basis of the Sārnāth inscription alone Mahīpāla I cannot be taken to have possessed Benares.

Further light on the condition of Bengal is thrown by the Coḷa inscriptions which record Rājendra Coḷa's (1012-1044 A.D.) invasion of Bengal.[3] The Tirumulai inscription,[4] dated in the 13th regnal year, and other Coḷa inscriptions record Rājendra Coḷa's expedition to northern India. This expedition must have been undertaken sometime before 1024 A.D., and roughly between 1021 and 1024 A.D.[5] Its apparent object, as expressed in the Coḷa records, was to bring the holy water of the Ganges in order to sanctify his own kingdom. The Tirumulai inscription records that after conquering Oḍḍa-viṣaya (Orissa) and Koṣalai-nāḍu (on the banks of the Mahānadī) the Coḷa general siezed "Taṇḍabutti, in whose gardens bees abounded, (and which he acquired) after having destroyed Dharmapāla (in) a hot battle; Takkaṇalāḍam, whose fame reached (all) directions, (and which he acquired) after having forcibly attacked Raṇaśūra; Vaṅgāḷa-

[1] Elliot & Dowson: *History of India as told by its own historians*, vol. II, p. 123; Hodivala: *Studies in Indo-Muslim History*, p. 161.

[2] Verse 17, Goharwa plate: *EI*, vol. IX, p. 143;
Verse 18, Rewah Stone Inscription: *Ibid.*, vol. XXIV, pp. 103-104.

[3] For full discussion on Rājendra Coḷa's invasion see K. A. Nilakanta Sastri: *The Coḷas*, vol. I, pp. 247-254.

[4] *EI*, vol. IX, pp. 232-33.

[5] *DHNI*, vol. I, p. 318.

deśa, where the rain water never stopped, (and from which) Govindacandra fled, having descended (from his) male elephant ; elephants of rare strength, women and treasure, (which he siezed) after having been pleased to frighten the strong Mahipāla on the field of hot battle with the (noise of the) conches (got) from the deep sea ; Uttiralāḍam (on the shore of) the expansive ocean (producing) pearls ; and the Gaṅgā whose waters bearing fragrant flowers dashed against the bathing places."[1]

From this record it seems clear that Rājendra Coḷa's army proceeded from Orissa and Kośala-nāḍu, attacked and overthrew, in order, Dharmapāla of Daṇḍabhukti (the marchland between Orissa and Bengal corresponding to the districts of Midnapore and Balasore), Raṇaśūra of Takkaṇalāḍam (southern Rāḍha) and Govindacandra of Vaṅgāḷa-deśa (south-eastern Bengal) and finally defeated Mahīpāla in Uttira-lāḍam (northern Rāḍha) and reached the Ganges.[2] We find the existence of Govindacandra in south-eastern Bengal from definite epigraphic records.[3] Dharmapāla of Daṇḍabhukti may have been a scion of the family of the Kāmboja Pālas, whose existence in this region towards the close of the 10th century A.D. is evidenced by the Irdā plate. About Raṇaśūra we are not in a position to say anything definitely. From the *Rāmacarita*[4] we learn of the existence of one Lakṣmīśūra, lord of Apara-Mandāra. The Barrackpur plate of Vijayasena informs us that he married Vilāsadevī, a daughter of the Śūra family.[5] The extant *Kulaji-granthas* preserve traditions of one Ādiśūra and other Śūra princes, and it is said that the Śūras were forced to take

[1] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri's translation : *The Coḷas*, vol. I, p. 249 and amended later in *IHQ*, vol. XIII, pp. 151-52. R. C. Majumdar correctly mentions that Hultzsch's translation "Uttiralāḍam, as rich in pearls as the ocean" (*EI*, vol. IX, p. 233) or "close to the sea yielding pearls" (*JRAS*, 1937, p. 89) makes better sense from geographical considerations. cf. *HB-I*, p. 138, Fn. 1.

[2] For identification of the places see *JRAS*, 1935, pp. 73 ff.

[3] See *Infra*, chapter IV.

[4] Sandhyākara Nandī : *Rāmacarita*, Verses II/5, 6, & 8.

[5] *EI*, vol. XV, p. 279.

shelter in Rāḍha after the establishment of the Buddhist Pāla power.[1] But the authenticity of these traditions is very doubtful and cannot be accepted without any concrete corroborative evidence.[2] But the existence of the names of two Śūra princes in the Tirumulai inscription and the *Rāmacarita* would indicate the existence of a Śūra family in southern Rāḍha. The separate mention of the names of Dharmapāla and Raṇaśūra says that the southern portion of western Bengal was not ruled by Mahīpāla and Pāla power under him was revived in northern Bengal and in the northern portion of western Bengal (approximately the portion of the present Burdwan division which lies to the north of the river Ajay). The supposition of K. A. Nilakanta Sastri[3] that Dharmapāla, Raṇaśūra and Govindacandra were feudatories of Mahīpāla and their defeat led to the final struggle in which Mahīpāla was defeated is not supported by any evidence nor it is indicated in the Tamil sources.

The campaign of Rājendra Coḷa, "which lasted less than two years, in which so many kingdoms of the north are stated to have felt the strength of Rājendra's troops, could hardly have been more than a hurried raid across a vast stretch of country."[4] Though the fetching of the water of the Ganges was perhaps one object of the expedition, the motive behind it was undoubtedly an exhibition of the power of the Coḷa empire and a demonstration of its strength to the rulers of northern and eastern India, and this becomes more apparent when we consider this in the context of Rājendra Coḷa's naval expedition to south-east Asian countries.

[1] N. N. Vasu : *Vaṅger Jātīya Itihāsa*, Rājanya Kāṇḍa, pp. 121 ff. P. L Paul : *EHB*, vol. I, pp. 82-83 ; *JASB(NS)*, vol. IV, p. 286

[2] Narottama Kundu in his recent Ph. D. Thesis has clearly shown that the story of Ādiśūra contained in the traditions is a myth and cannot be given any historical credence. cf. N. Kundu : *Caste And Class In Pre-Muslim Bengal*, Ph. D. Thesis, London University, 1963, pp. 40-65.

[3] *The Coḷas* vol. I, pp. 251-52.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 247.

Scholars have connected an interesting episode in Kṣemīśvara's *Caṇḍakauśika*[1] with the invasion of Rājendra Coḷa. *Caṇḍakauśika* contains a verse in its prelude which refers to the play being enacted in the presence of a king, Mahīpāla, who is compared to Candragupta, and who defeated the Karṇāṭas, as Candragupta had defeated the Nandas.[2] H. P. Sastri[3] identified Mahīpāla of the drama with Mahīpāla I of the Pāla dynasty and accepting this identification R. D. Banerji suggested that Rājendra Coḷa could not cross the Ganges because Mahīpāla defeated him and celebrated the victory with the performance of the drama, and the Karṇāṭas mentioned in the *Caṇḍakauśika* should be taken as the Coḷas.[4] J. C. Ghosh accepted the identification of the Mahīpāla of the play with the Pāla ruler Mahīpāla I, but he identified the Karṇāṭas with the Karṇāṭa people, who were in Bengal at the time and later on captured power.[5] Aiyanger[6] suggested that Mahīpāla should be identified with the Pratīhāra king Mahīpāla (c. 914-945 A.D.) and the Karṇāṭas with the Rāṣṭrakūṭas. He has pointed out that Mahīpāla was defeated by the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king Indra III in c. 916-17 A.D. and after Indra's departure Mahīpāla regained his position in Kanauj and made new conquest and in the course of these campaigns he must have defeated the remnant of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas in northern India and this success was apparently celebrated by the performance of *Caṇḍakauśika*. In the absence of any further information it is difficult to decide the question. But the probability for Mahīpāla's identification with the

[1] For details about Kṣemīśvara see *HB-I*, pp. 308-309.

[2] *Yaḥ saṁśritya prakṛti-gahanām-ārya-Cānakya-nītiṁ hatvā Nandān Kusumanagaraṁ Candragupto jigāya /*
Karṇāṭatvam dhrubam-upagatān-adya tān-eva hantuṁ dor-darpāḍhyaḥ sa punar-abhavac-chrī-Mahīpāladevaḥ //
JASB, vol. LXII, pp. 250-51.

[3] *MASB*, vol. III, p. 10 ; *Ibid.*, p. 251.

[4] *MASB*, vol. V, p. 73 ; *BI*, vol. I, pp. 251-52.

[5] *IC*, vol. II, pp. 354-66. B. C. Sen agrees with him, cf. *op. cit.*, pp. 396-401.

[6] *JIH*, vol. II pp. 337 ff.

Pratihāra king of that name is greater than with the Pāla king, because the Coḷas cannot correctly be called the Karṇāṭas. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri has discussed the question in detail and has given some valid reasons for this view.[1] "In any case", as R. C. Majumdar writes, "it is not safe to derive any inference from *Chaṇḍa-kauśika* regarding the victory of the Pāla ruler over the Coḷa army,"[2]

Mahīpāla I seems to have a long reign as his two Imādpur inscriptions are dated in his 48th year. The date of these two inscriptions, now preserved in the British Museum[3] was first read by Hoernle[4] as 48 and this was confirmed by C. C. Das Gupta.[5] R. C. Majumdar[6] read it as 148, which he refers to the Nepal Era of 880 A. D., and hence the date of the inscription is equavalent to 1028 A. D. But D. C. Sircar[7] rightly questions this reading and he has fairly clearly established that the date is 48. We have personally examined these two inscriptions and there cannot be any doubt that the date is 48, and this can be clearly seen in the plate supplied.[8] R. C. Majumdar was led to his surmise by the peculiar character of the letter preceding the two numerical figures, 4 and 8. After *Sa* and *Ma* there is evidently a conjunct in which the *Na* is clear, and there is a loop below which looks like the conjunct *Ta*. Hoernle[9] read the word as *Samatt* and C. C. Das Gupta[10] read it as *Samatta*.

[1] *Journal of Oriental Research*, Madras, vol. VI, pp. 191-198 ; *IC*, vol. II, pp. 797-99.

[2] *HB-I*, p. 144.

[3] British Muscum Nos. 81 / 10-10 / 1 & 2.
IA, vol. XIV, p. 165, Fn. 17.
Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, 10th Session, 1947, pp. 245-48.
JRASB (Third Series), vol. XVI, pp. 247-49.
IHQ, vol. XXX, pp. 382-87.
See plate No. I.

[9] *IA*, vol. XIV, p. 167, Fn. 17.

[10] *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 1947, pp. 247-48.

R. C. Majumdar correctly pointed out that it should be read as *Samanta*.[1] The numericals, 4 and 8, are very clear in both the inscriptions. D. C. Sircar has shown that *Saṁvat* is written in every possible corrupt form in Medieval Indian inscriptions, and *Samanta* should be taken as corrupt variant of *Saṁvat*, a contraction of *Saṁvatsara*.[2] An important fact has been ignored by R. C. Majumdar. 48 has been written in ordinary numerical figures and the hundred digit was also expected to be given as a numerical figure, and not with a symbol for 100. Moreover, there is no appreciable resemblance between the conjunct letter, which R. C. Majumdar took as the symbol for 100, and the symbol for 100 in Buhler's table, referred to by R. C. Majumdar. Buhler shows a variant of the looped *sa* type symbol indicating 100 found in Gupta inscriptions, which is not found in any record beyond the 6th century A. D.[3]

Moreover, the *mātrā* continues over all the three letters, *sa*, *ma*, and *nta*, and breaks before 4 and 8, which, being numerals, are naturally written without *mātrā*. This clearly shows that the letter preceding 48 was not intended to form a part of the figures for the date, but it was a part of the former word. D. C. Sircar has also shown that the numerical 4, which R. C. Majumdar thought to be peculiar to Bengal and common in Nepali manuscripts, was prevalent in Bihar and can be found in the Maithili script of the time.[4] R. C. Majumdar's suggestion of the use of the Nepali Era in Tirhut and of Pāla overlordship over Nepal will await further evidence. The migration of Buddhist scholars to Nepal explains the discovery of so many manuscripts, written in Bengali and Bihari scripts, in Nepal. There was intimate cultural connection between Bihar and Nepal, but that does not mean that Nepal was a vassal of the Pāla kings.

So it can be certainly said that the date of the Imādpur inscriptions is 48. Tāranātha ascribes to Mahipāla a reign of

[1] *JRASB* (Third Series), p. 248, Fn.
[2] *IHQ*, vol. XXX, p. 383.
[3] D. C. Sircar : *Ibid.*, pp. 383-84.
[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 384-85.

52 years.[1] He may not be correct, but he seems to be near the mark. Mahīpāla I can safely be assigned a reign of about 48 years.

The long reign of Mahīpāla seems to have given the Pāla empire a second lease of life. He, on his accession, found the Pāla empire confined to southern Bihar and in his early years he fought successfully with his enemies and recovered northern Rāḍha and northern Bengal from the Kāmbojas. There is no certainty about his suzerainty over south-eastern Bengal where the Candras had independent rule and even in the time of Rājendra Coḷa's invasion (1021-1024 A. D.) Govindacandra was ruling there. The southern portion of western Bengal was in the possession of two other independent princes, Raṇaśūra and Dharmapāla. His Sārnāth inscription should be taken to record his religious activities in the famous Buddhist site and not his annexation of Benares, for which further definite evidence is necessary. Towards the close of his reign he succeeded in spreading Pāla authority in northern Bihar. So he must be given the credit for re-establishing Pāla authority over the original kingdom, except a portion of western Bengal. Except Rājendra Coḷa's invasion, which was more a hurried raid than a planned expedition, he did not have to face any serious trouble from outside.

A comparison of the verses in the Pāla records employed to glorify his reign with those about Dharmapāla and Devapāla shows a marked contrast. He is only credited for recapturing the lost dominions.

Possibly he was better known for his peaceful pursuits. A number of towns and tanks still bear his name. Māhīganj in Rangpur district, Mahīpur in Bogra district, Māhīsantoṣa in Dinajpur district and Mahīpāla in Murshidabad district; Mahīpāladīghi (tank) in Dinajpur and Mahīpāla's Sāgardīghi in Murshidabad—all these still bear testimony to his deeds and the high esteem in which he was held by the people. It is further reflected in the numerous ballads believed to exist in

[1] *IA*, vol. IV, p. 366.

Bengal commemorating his name, but unfortunately they are lost now.[1] "These songs were very popular even six centuries later. Brindaban Das wrote in his Chaitanya Bhagabat (1572A.D.) that the people of Bengal in the early part of the 16th century were very fond of these songs of Mahīpāla."[2]

The popularity of these songs and the name of Mahīpāla is also reflected in the common saying, *Dhān bhānte Mahīpāler gīt* (songs of Mahīpāla while husking rice), which is still prevalent in Bengal.[3] Possibly after early years of war Mahīpāla devoted himself to peaceful pursuits and religious activities, which may explain his popularity. His inscriptions also bear clear testimony to his religious activities. Two inscriptions[4] dated in his 11th year refer to the restoration of the monuments at Nālandā after they were damaged by fire, and building of two temples at Bodhgayā. His Sārnāth inscription[5] also speaks of his building works at another Buddhist site. The verses of the Āmgāchi[6] and Manahali[7] plates refer to the birth of Nayapāla "in consequence of his (Mahīpāla's) religious merits." The excavations at Pāhārpur have also revealed the revival of Pāla power under Mahīpāla I and his religious activities. "About the end of the 10th century A.D. or beginning of the 11th century, the prosperity of the establishment was reflected in the wholesale renovation of the main temple and in the monastic cells...and at the shrine of Tārā in the Satyapir Bhiṭā numerous votive stupas were constructed."[8]

[1] D. C. Sen : *Eastern Bengal Ballads*, vol. IV, Part I, pp. 355 ff.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 357. D. C. Sen could collect only one ballad relating Mahīpāla's love for the daughter of a merchant. (*Ibid.*, pp. 361-62) But the authenticity of such stories is very doubtful, though it may reflect a side light on the character of Mahīpāla.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 355 and 357.

[4] Nālandā Stone Ins. : *JASB* (*NS*), vol. IV, p. 106 ; *GL*, p. 101. Bodhgayā Image Ins. : *MASB*, vol. V, p. 75.

[5] *IA*, vol. XIV, pp. 139-40.

[6] Verse 12 : *EI*, vol. XV, pp. 295 and 300.

[7] Verse 11 : *GL*, p. 151.

[8] K. N. Dikshit : *MASI*, No. 55, p. 6.

Historians have criticised Mahīpāla for not joining the rulers of northern India against the Muslims.[1] They have gone so far as to say that like Aśoka Mahīpāla, after the recovery of northern Bengal, seathed his sword and devoted all his energies to pious and religious works,[2] and that he did not join the common cause because of his envy and religious bigotry.[3] The second point is baseless as we find the Pāla kings including Mahīpāla establishing temples and images of Brahmanical god and goddesses, and granting lands to the Brāhmaṇas. About the first point it must be said that though he had a religious bent of mind, he was more occupied in the recovery of the lost power of the Pālas and consolidating it. The Muslim attack did not touch his frontiers, and Bengal and Bihar seemed to be immune from the Muslim onslaught. Moreover, an idea of Pan-India cannot be conceived at that period of Indian history, which was characterised by small dynastic rules in fragmented parts of the sub-continent. The rulers of northern and western India could possibly unite only because all of them felt the common danger. Mahīpāla's affairs at home were serious enough to keep him busy and so long he did not feel the Muslim danger he cannot be expected to have joined others against the Muslims. Another factor must be considered. On Mahīpāla's accession the position of the Pāla empire was such that the rulers of northern India possibly did not feel the necessity of inviting such an insignificant power on the verge of collapse. Mahīpāla himself rejuvenated the Pāla power in Bengal and Bihar. If historians are inclined to blame Mahīpāla, likewise the Rāṣṭrakūṭas and the Coḷas should also be blamed.

The whole period of more than one hundred years after the death of Devapāla up to the reign of Mahīpāla I, was a period of stagnation in Pāla history. It is a very natural

[1] R. D. Banerji : *BI*, vol. I, p. 256 ; R. P. Chanda : *GR*, p. 41.
[2] R. P. Chanda : *op. cit.*
[3] R. D. Banerji : *op. cit.*

course of history that after a period of ascendency comes a period of stagnation and stalemate. The rulers were weak and due to their inaction the empire of Dharmapāla and Devapāla, for a certain time, shrunk to southern Bihar. Mahīpāla's success in recovering the lost fortune of the dynasty checked the forces of disintegration for the time being, but could not totally remove them.

CHAPTER III

Decline And Disintegration

With the death of Mahīpāla I the Pāla empire in Bengal and Bihar entered its last phase. The history of the next hundred years or so is characterised by gradual decline and disintegration, caused by both external pressure and internal weakness. The Pālas no longer had the power and vitality to withhold the repeated foreign invasions, which were indirectly responsible for giving rise to internal dissensions. Though Rāmapāla attempted a partial rejuvenation, which was the last flickering of its life, the Pāla empire did not last for long after him ; and by the middle of the 12th century the Pālas lost their prominent position in the affairs of Bengal.

Mahīpāla I was succeeded by his son Nayapāla,[1] who seems to have had a reign of about 15 years. The two inscriptions of his time, found in Bihar, are dated in his 15th regnal year.[2] The only other record of his time is the manuscript of the *Pañcarakṣā*, now preserved in the Cambridge University Library, which was written at the instance of the queen Uddākā in his 14th regnal year.[3] The 12th verse of the Āmgāchi plate of his son Vigrahapāla III has some vague praises for him.[4]

Nayapāla's son and successor, Vigrahapāla III, also seems to have had a short reign like his father. His Belwā plate is

[1] Verse 12, Āmgāchi plate : *EI*, vol. XV, p. 296 ; *GL*, p. 125.
Verse 11, Manahali plate : *GL*, p. 151 ; *JASB*, vol. LXIX, p. 70.

[2] Gayā Kṛṣṇa-dvārikā Temple Ins. : *JASB*, vol. LXIX, pp. 190-95.
Gayā Narasiṁha Temple Ins. : *MASB*, vol. V, p. 78.

[3] Cecil Bendall : *Catalogue of Buddhist Sanskrit Manuscripts in the University Library, Cambridge*, p. 175, No. 1688.
EI, vol. XV, pp. 296 and 300.

dated in his 11th regnal year.[1] The Āmgāchi plate[2] and the Bihar stone Image inscription[3] of his time are dated in his 12th regnal year. The Indian Museum stone Image inscription is dated in his 13th regnal year,[4] and the Gayā Akṣaya Vaṭa stone inscription is dated in his 5th regnal year.[5] The newly discovered Bangaon plate of his time is dated in his 17th regnal year.[6] A few coins, marked with the legend *Śrī-Vi* or *Śrī-Vigraha* are also assigned to Vigrahapāla III.[7] The British Museum manuscript of the *Pañcarakṣā* of the 26th year of one Vigrahapāla has been assigned to the second ruler of that name, and so also the Naulāgarh image inscription.[8] A reign period of about 17 years seems to be quite probable for Vigrahapāla III.

That the reign periods of both Nayapāla and Vigrahapāla III were not long is indicated by the fact that the son of the craftsman who engraved the Bāngarh plate of Mahīpāla I's 9th year engraved the Āmgāchi plate of Vigrahapāla III's 12th year.[9]

The most important events of the reigns of Nayapāla and Vigrahapāla III were the repeated invasions of the Kalacuri king Lakṣmīkarṇa (c. 1041-1070 A. D.). Karṇa probably continued the aggressive policy of expansion towards the east started by his father Gāṅgeyadeva.[10] The Kalacuri records refer to Karṇa's

[1] *Ibid.*, vol. XXIX, pp. 9-13.

[2] *Ibid.*, vol. XV, pp. 293 ff.

[3] A. Cunningham : *ASI Report*, vol. III, pp. 121-22, No. 7.

[4] *MASB*, vol. V, p. 112. R. D. Banerji thinks that it is the same inscription from Bihar, noticed by Cunningham, and the date was wrongly read by Cunningham as 12. The inscription noticed by Cunningham was sent to the Indian Museum and could not be traced afterwards.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 81-82, Plate xxvii.

[6] *EI*, vol. XXIX, pp. 48-57. Bangaon is in the Bhāgalpur district of Bihar.

[7] V. A. Smith : *Catalouge of the coins in the Indian Museum, Calcutta*, vol. I, Oxford, 1906, pp. 233 & 239, Pl. XV, 10.

[8] *Supra*, p. 64.

[9] Śrī Mahīdhara of the village Poṣali engraved the Bāngarh plate and his son Śaśideva engraved the Āmgāchi plate. cf. *EI*, vol. XIV, p. 328 and vol. XV, p. 298.

[10] *Supra*, pp. 80-81.

encounter with the kings of Gauḍa and Vaṅga.[1] The Tibetan traditions record in detail Karṇa's fight with Nayapāla.[2] Karṇa is said to have invaded Magadha and advanced up to the capital. At first Nayapāla's army suffered a defeat, but the king of Magadha was victorious in the long run. A reconciliation was brought about between Nayapāla and Karṇa through the mediation of Dīpaṅkara Śrī Jñāna (otherwise known as Atiśa), the Buddhist scholar, who is reported to have migrated to Tibet some time after this event. Scholars are not unanimous in fixing the date of Atiśa's departure for Tibet. S. C. Das fixed it in either 1038[3] or 1039[4] A. D., while others have given 1040,[5] 1041[6] or 1042.[7] The dates and chronology of events recorded in the Tibetan traditions cannot be wholly relied upon, and in view of other evidence their information can be accepted only in broad outlines. It seems that the dates for Atiśa's departure, as deduced by different scholars, is wrong, because the accession of Nayapāla can be fixed with some amount of certainty in 1043 A. D.[8] It is evident that Kalacuri king Karṇa invaded the kingdom of Nayapāla early in his own reign, some time after 1043 A. D., and that the result was possibly indecisive, followed by a treaty.

Karṇa seems to have invaded the Pāla empire again during the reign of Vigrahapāla III. The *Rāmacarita* informs

[1] Bheraghāṭ ins. of the Ceḍi year 907 (=1155 A. D.) mentions that the Vaṅgas trembled with Kaliṅgas, Verse 12 : *EI*, vol. II, p. 11.
Karanbel Ins. of Jayasiṁhadeva mentions that the Gauḍa chief waited upon Karṇa, *IA*, vol. XVIII, p. 215.
Rewah Stone Ins. of Karṇa of the Ceḍi year 800 (=1048-49 A. D.), Verse 23 : *EI*, vol. XXIV, p. 112.

[2] S C. Das : *Indian Pandits In The Land Of Snow*, p. 51 ; 'Indian Pandits in Tibet', *Journal of the Buddhist Text Society of India*, vol. I, 1893, pp. 9-10 ; *JASB*, vol. LX, pp. 50-51.

[3] *Indian Pandits In The Land Of Snow*, pp. 50 & 76.

[4] *JASB*, vol. LX, p. 51.

[5] S. Levi : *Le Nepal*, vol. II, p. 189.

[6] *IHQ*, vol. VI, p. 159.

[7] *JASB*, vol. L, 1881, p. 237.

[8] See Appendix I.

us that Vigrahapāla defeated Karṇa, the king of Ḍāhla, and married Yauvanśrī, a daughter of Karṇa.[1] The Paikore pillar inscription[2] bears testimony to Karṇa's incursion into Bengal. The reference in the Kalacuri records to Karṇa's encounter with Gauḍa should be taken to refer to this second invasion against Vigrahapāla, because, according to the Tibetan traditions, the first encounter was with Nayapāla and took place somewhere in Magadha. While the Kalacuri records claim victory for Karṇa, the *Rāmacarita* informs us that Vigrahapāla, though he defeated Karṇa in battle, protected him by his valour. As the *Rāmacarita* also informs us about the marriage of Karṇa's daughter with Vigrahapāla, it seems that the encounter ended in a marriage alliance. The fragmentary nature of the Paikore pillar does not allow us to determine exactly the extent of Karṇas success It simply records that the image of a goddess was made by a certain sculptor at the order of King Karṇa. He might have set up the pillar after the alliance and to commemorate the marriage of his daughter, or it may as well bear testimony to Karṇa's initial success against Vigrahapāla and his penetration into the heart of the Pāla kingdom. Whatever might have been the result of his invasion, Karṇa had to return, being pressed by other enemies on other frontiers. The Candella king, Kīrtivarman, is said to have defeated Karṇa sometime between 1060 and 1064 A.D.,[3] and he was faced with other enemies—the Cālukyas in the south and the Paramāras

Commentary of verse I/9, *VRS Edition*, pp. 7-8. The commentator elaborates by saying that Vigrahapala III protected Karṇa by concluding a peace with him known as *Kapālasandhi*. The Kauṭilīya explains this type of sandhi as follows : *Kapālaḥ svādityādanābhibhāṣitaḥ* /
(The 'potsherd' treaty, so called because of excessive payments received.)
7. 3. 30.

K. P. Kangle : *The Kauṭilīya Arthaśāstra*, Part I, p. 172 ; Part II, p. 382.

ASI, Annual Report, 1921-22, pp. 78-80 ; H. K. Mukhopadhyaya : *Birbhum-Vivaran*, vol. II, pp. 9-10. Paikore is in the Birbhum district.

N. S. Bose : *History of the Candellas*, pp. 74-79.

in the west.[1] So even if the Paikore pillar is taken to testify to Karṇa's march into the heart of the Pāla empire, it seems that he had to end the hostility with the Pālas and establish a friendly relationship, which was cemented with the marriage of his daughter to Vigrahapāla III.

The Bherāghāṭ inscription of Alhaṇadevī[2] and the Rewah inscription of Karṇa[3] refer to a king of Vaṅga, who was defeated by Karṇa. It is certain that the reference to the king of Gauḍa in the Kalacuri inscriptions is to be taken to mean the Pāla king. But it cannot be established whether the king of Vaṅga also refers to him. The 23rd verse of the Rewah inscription would indicate that the king of south-eastern Bengal was meant.[4] According to Mirashi, the verse, stripped of its metaphor, means that Karṇa achieved a decisive victory over the king of the eastern country, who lost his life in the fierce fight.[5] From the information of this inscription together with the statement that the Vaṅgas trembled with the Kaliṅgas supplied by the Bherāghāṭ inscription of Alhaṇadevī, Karṇa's victory against an eastern king has been taken to refer to a king of Vaṅga. The Candra ruler of south-eastern Bengal might have been the adversary of Karṇa. The last known Candra ruler is Govindacandra, a contemporary of Mahīpāla I, who was defeated by Rājedra Coḷa.[6] He or his successor might

[1] H. C. Ray : *DHNI*, vol. II, p. 780.

[2] *EI*, vol. II, pp. 7 ff.

[3] *Ibid.*, vol. XXIV, pp. 105 ff.

[4] The verse runs as follows :
Darppaikadurvātarayeṇa nunno gajādrikūṭeṣu vidīrṇosandhiḥ /
Antaryadīyasya balāmburāśermajja pūrvāvanirājapotaḥ//
The ship of the king of the eastern country, being driven by the storm of unparalleled arrogance was submerged in the ocean of his (Karṇa's) forces, its joints being rent by (dashing against) the promontories of the mountains of his elephants.
EI, vol., XXIV, p. 112.

[5] *Ibid.*, P. 105.

[6] *Supra*, pp. 81 ff. The history of the Candras will be discussed in the next chapter.

have been the eastern king defeated by Karṇa. We have suggested earlier that the Bāghaurā and the Nārāyaṇapur image inscriptions of a king named Mahīpāla should be referred to the second ruler of that name, and that south-eastern Bengal came under temporary Pāla occupation sometimes between the reigns of Mahīpāla I and Mahīpala II.[1] It is quite possible that Karṇa dealt the last blow to the Candra dynasty and facilitated the extension of Pāla influence in that region. Karṇa's victory over this eastern king must be taken to have been accomplished sometime before 1048-49 A.D., the date of the Rewah inscription. He possibly followed the same route as Rājendra Coḷa and attacked south-eastern Bengal from Orissa, which was conquered by his father Gāṅgeyadeva.[2] The suggestion that the Varmans, who started their independent rule in south-eastern Bengal during the Kaivarta revolt of the time of Mahīpāla II, came in the train of the Kalacuri invasion of this region and carved out an independent position for themselves[3] seems to be quite a feasible one.[4] It seems quite probable that after Karṇa's exploits against Vigrahapāla III, which ended in a cordial relationship, Pāla rule extended to south-eastern Bengal. Jātavarman may have remained there and when a suitable time arose, during the turmoil of Mahīpāla II's reign, he carved out for himself an independent position in south-eastern Bengal and inaugurated the rule of the Varmans.

Before long the Pāla kingdom had to face the serious invasions of another powerful enemy, the Cālukyas of Kalyāṇa.[5] It is stated in the inscriptions of Someśvara I (1042-1058 A. D.), Someśvara II (1068-1076 A. D.) and Vikramāditya VI (1076-1127 A. D.) that the Cālukyas shattered the pride of many countries

Supra, pp. 74-76.

H. C. Ray : *DHNI*, vol II, p. 772.

HB-I, pp. 199-200 ; *EHB*, vol. I, p. 79.

This point will be discussed later. See *Infra*, chapter IV.

For the history of the Cālukyas cf. *HCIP*, vol. V, *The Struggle for Empire*, pp. 161 ff.; *IA*, vol. XLVII, pp. 285-90, and vol. XLVIII pp. 1-7.

including Gauḍa and Vaṅga.[1] Bilhaṇa, the court-poet of the Cālukyas, while describing the career of conquest of Vikramāditya VI during the reign of his father, Śomeśvara I, refers to Vikramāditya's march into Gauḍa and Kāmarūpa.[2] As Bühler has pointed out, Bilhaṇa cares more about a faithful observance of the rules of poetical composition, laid down by the *Kāvyālaṁkāra-śāstra*, than about a faithful and accurate representation of the career of his hero and of the events in which he played a part. His style is so highly ornamented and hyperbolical that it obscures the facts and frequently leaves us in doubt about the importance of the events narrated.[3] As a result Bilhaṇa's rhapsodic treatment of this portion of Vikrama's career makes it impossible to determine both the chronological order of his wars and the extent of his successes. Bilhaṇa's claim of Vikrama's victory over Gauḍa finds corroboration in the Cālukya inscriptions. But the name of Kāmarūpa does not appear in any of these inscriptions and a raid into Kāmarūpa presupposes a march through the dominion of the Pālas, which seems improbable. Moreover, the conquest of Gauḍa cannot be believed in ; it is just possible that Vikramāditya made a cavalry raid into the Pāla dominion. If this was the case the raid must be placed sometime before 1068 A.D., the date of his father's death, before which he returned from his victorious campaigns. As the invasion of Bengal is mentioned in the records of three successive Cālukya kings it is quite probable

[1] *EI*, vol. XV, pp. 86, 97, 104 ; vol. IV, p. 259.
Davanagere Taluq Ins. Nos. 1 & 2 refer to Vikramāditya VI's victory over Gauḍa and Magadha : *Epigraphia Carnatica*, vol. XI, Text, pp. 37-38 and Translation pp. 22-23. Sorab Taluq Ins. No. 325 refers to Vikramāditya VI terrifying the kings of Gauḍa and Vaṅga : *Ibid.*, vol. VIII, Pt. II, Text p 114 and translation p. 56.

[2] Chapter III, Verse 74 :
Gāyanti sma gṛhītagauḍa vijayastamberamasyāhave /
Tasyonmūlita Kāmarūpa nṛpati prājyapratāpaśriyaḥ //
Vikramāṅkadevacarita, George Bühler's edition, Bombay Sanskrit Series, No. XIV, p. 27.

[3] *Ibid.*, Introduction, pp. 3-4.

that during the period between 1042 and 1076 A. D. there were more than one Cālukya invasions. The earliest invasion must be placed sometime before 1053 A. D., the date of the Kelawadi inscription, where Śomeśvara I claims to have conquered Vaṅga.[1]

Orissan inscriptions also indicate invasions from that direction. In the Sonpur grant of Mahāśivagupta Yayāti, the Somavaṁśī ruler of Orissa in the middle of the 11th century A.D.,[2] it is claimed that his body was "cooled by wind in the sky raised by the victorious assault against the noted countries of Gauḍa and Rāḍha", and he was "the full-moon in the pure sky of Vaṅga."[3] But this verse occurs in the context of the description of his conquests on all sides, and hence much reliance cannot be placed on it. Nevertheless, it is not unlikely that, following the example of Rājendra Coḷa, Yayāti pushed into the territory of the Pāla rulers. If the date of Yayāti's reign (c. 1010-1050 A.D.), fixed by H. C. Ray, is correct, his campaign, if there were any, to Bengal must be placed in the first quarter of the 11th century A.D., because his Sonpur inscription is dated in his 3rd year. In that case his contemporary Pāla ruler was Mahīpāla I. Another Orissan king, Udyotakeśarī, is referred to as having invaded Bengal.[4] His date cannot be ascertained, but he may have flourished in the 11th century A.D.[5]

The language of the Bargaon grant of Ratnapāla, king of Kāmarūpa, indicates that the Pālas had also to face an incursion from the north-east towards the middle of the 11th century A.D.[6]

[1] *EI*, vol. IV, p. 262.

[2] H. C. Ray : *DHNI*, vol. I, p. 405.

[3] *Prasiddha Gauḍa-Rāḍhāmbara prakarṣeṇotghāta māruta śītāṅga-Vaṅga-vimalāmbara-pūrṇacandraḥ/ JBORS*, vol. II, pp. 53 and 58.

[4] Bhuvaneśvara Ins. : *JASB*, vol. VII, 1838, pp. 559 and 561.

[5] R. D. Banerji places him in the 10th century A. D. (*EI*, vol. XIII, p. 165) while B. C. Majumdar places him in the 12th century A. D. (*EI*, vol. XII, p. 239). H. C. Ray suggested that he may be placed after Mahābhavagupta II (c. 1050-75 A.D.). Cf. *DHNI*, vol. I, pp. 408-409.

[6] *JASB*, vol. LXVII, pp. 109 & 116. Hoernle, who edited the grant, fixed

So it is evident that during the reigns of Nayapāla and Vigrahapāla III the Pāla kingdom was repeatedly harassed by foreign invasions from different directions. Though the one-sided accounts of these invasions do not allow us to judge the extent of their success, it seems apparent that the Pālas must have had troubled times. The weakness of the Pāla rulers must have been the reason for these foreign invasions. None of the invaders could establish any permanent authority over the Pāla empire, but they definitely shook the foundation of the empire. These repeated invasions were largely instrumental in giving rise to internal disintegration and dissensions by weakening the fabric of the Pāla empire. There are instances in this period of prominent chiefs rising against the central authority and assuming independent or semi-independent positions.

Clear evidence of this tendency is furnished by four inscriptions found at Gayā and connected with the family of one Śūdraka. Two of these inscriptions are dated in the 15th year of king Nayapāla and were respectively issued by Viśvāditya and Viśvarūpa, two sons of Śūdraka, if they are considered as different.[1] Of these two, the Narasiṁha temple inscription mentions that Gayā was protected by the strength of Śūdraka for a long time.[2] The third inscription[3] was issued in the 5th year of Vigrahapāla III by Viśvarūpa, son of Śūdraka, in which Śūdraka is praised in vague terms and Viśvarūpa is said to have destroyed his enemies. The fourth inscription was issued by Yakṣapāla, son of Viśvarūpa. The genealogy begins with Śūdraka, who is praised in the third verse.[4] The first part

Rantnapāla's date to be c. 1010-1050 A.D. Also see *DHNI*, vol. I, pp. 249 ff.

[1] Kṛṣṇadvārika Temple Ins.: *JASB*, vol. LXIX pp. 190-95. Narasiṁha Temple Ins. : *MASB*, vol. V, p. 78.

[2] Line 5 : *Gay-eyaṁ bāhvor-balena suciraṁ paripālitā, Ibid.*, p. 78.

[3] Line 6 : *Vidhvasta-samasta-vairi-nivahaḥ, Ibid.*, p. 81.

[4] *Asyāṁ babhūva ripuvṛndamanindya-śauryaḥ kurvanvanapraṇayi patraniketanastham /*
Śrī Śūdrakaḥ svayam-apūjayad-indrakalpo Gauḍeśvaro nṛpati-lakṣaṇapūjayā yam //
IA, vol. XVI, p. 64 ; *MASB*, vol. V, p. 96.

of the verse says that Śūdraka possessed unblemishable bravery and made "the swarm of (his) enemies long for the forest (and) caused it to reside (there) in dwellings of leaves." The rest of the verse contains a significant piece of information, but its meaning is rather obscure. Kielhorn translated this portion as follows : "To him paid homage of his own accord the ruler of Gauḍa, almost equal to Indra, with homage fit for a lord of men."[1] H. C. Ray, accepting this meaning, concluded that this family became practically independent by the time of Yakṣapāla.[2] But R. C. Majumdar took this expression to convey a different meaning : the lord of Gauḍa formally honoured Śūdraka by investing him as king with proper ceremony.[3] Perhaps, taking this meaning, D. C. Ganguly suggested that Śūdraka probably helped Nayapāla in his battle against Karṇa and in recognition of his services Nayapāla conferred on him the charge of the Gayā maṇḍala.[4] In making this suggestion D. C. Ganguly has carried the implication of the verse too far, and there is no evidence to substantiate his suggestion. In fact R. C. Majumdar's interpretation does not agree with the obvious sense of the verse, which implies that the lord of Gauḍa was subordinate to Śūdraka. It is difficult to establish the true implication of this verse. Whatever might be its correct meaning, this inscription of Yakṣapāla provides us a clear picture of the rise of the family in importance in Gayā. Viśvarūpa and Yakṣapāla are mentioned as *Nṛpa* and *Narendra* respectively, and at the end of the inscription, where in other inscriptions the ruling Pāla kings have been mentioned, a wish is expressed that the famous works of

It should be noted that the verse is irregular in breaking the sense in the second half, instead of at the end of the first. It seems essential that we construe *Śrī Śūdraka* as the subject of *babhūva*, otherwise Śūdraka is himself the lord of Gauḍa, which does not make historical sense.

[1] *IA*, vol. XVI, p. 65.

[2] *DHNI*, vol. I, p. 348.

[3] *HB-I*, p. 149 ; *Dacca University Studies*, No. I, Part II, p. 135.

[4] *HCIP*, vol. V, *The Struggle For Empire* p. 27.

Yakṣapāla may endure.[1] A study of these four inscriptions makes it clear that the family of Śūdraka gained prominence in Magadha during the reigns of Nayapāla and Vigrahapāla III and the purport of the inscription of Yakṣapāla seems to indicate that by his time his family had acquired an independent or semi-independent position. Yakṣapāla, being the son of Viśvarūpa, who was contemporary of both Nayapāla and Vigrahapāla III, is likely to have flourished towards the close of Vigrahapāla III's reign or during the reign of his successor, Mahīpāla II. For this reason H. C. Ray's remark that the family of Śūdraka became independent "soon after the death of Rāmapāla",[2] seems to be wide of the mark.

The same sense of defiance is evident in the Rāmganj plate[3] of *Mahāmāṇḍalika* Iśvaraghoṣa, who issued an independent landgrant in which the name of the ruling Pāla king is nowhere mentioned. The grant, issued from Dhekkari,[4] is not dated, and on palaeographic grounds it has been assigned to the 11th century A D.

About this time we come across a line of princes with their names ending in *Māna*, who assumed the title of Lord of Magadha. Two of them, Varṇamāna and Rudramāna, flourished towards the close of the 11th century and the beginning of the 12th century, and the family might have assumed an independent or semi-independent position at that time or a little earlier.[5]

So the reigns of Nayapāla and Vigrahapāla III saw repeated foreign invasions, which shattered the backbone of the Pāla empire, giving rise to internal dissensions. The cases of the families of Śūdraka and Varṇamāna in Magadha and of Iśvaraghoṣa in south-west Bengal are instances indicating the disinte-

[1] Verses 4, 10 & 13 : *IA*, vol. XVI. pp. 64-65 ; *MASB*, vol. V, pp. 96-97. The inscription ends with the following verse : *Sūrya-candramāsau yāvat Kṣaunī sasāgara tāvat Śrī Yakṣapālasya rājantaṁ bhuvi kīrtayaḥ|*

[2] *DHNI*, vol. I, p. 348.

[3] *IB-III*, p. 149.

[4] Probably situated in the Burdwan district, *HB-I*, p. 146, Fn. 7.

[5] *EI*, vol. II, pp. 530 ff.

grating forces already at work at that period. In this sense the reigns of Nayapāla and Vigrahapāla III can be said to mark a prelude to the serious troubles of similar nature that were to befall the Pāla empire during the reigns of their successors.

Vigrahapāla III had three sons, Mahīpāla II, Śūrapāla II and Rāmapāla, and was succeeded by the eldest, Mahīpāla II.[1] Mahīpāla came to the throne when the Pāla empire was possibly limited to parts of Bihar and northern Bengal.

Besides epigraphic records, we are fortunate in having a detailed account of the history of the Pālas during the reigns of the successors of Vigrahapāla III in Sandhyākara Nandī's *Rāmacarita*. This is the only important literary evidence we have for the history of ancient or medieval Bengal, and, being a contemporary work, it is of immense value for the reconstruction of the history of the period covered by it.

But the peculiarity of its composition[2] makes it very difficult to deduce from it the contemporary historical facts. The historical value of the work is further reduced by the fact that Sandhyākara Nandī was a partisan of Rāmapāla, his father being the *Sāndhivigrahika* of Rāmapāla.[3] It is obvious from the text of the *Rāmacarita* that he wrote the history entirely from the standpoint of Rāmapāla, whom he regarded as the hero of the whole episode. Suspicion, therefore, naturally attaches to his statements about the adversaries of Rāmapāla and it is to be hardly expected that he was always impartial and his judgement was not warped by a "deep-rooted faith and belief in the innate honesty and injured innocence of Rāmapāla

[1] Verses 13 ff., Manahali grant : *JASB*, vol. LXIX, pp. 70-71 ; *GL*, pp. 151 ff. *Rāmacarita*, Verses I/10, 11 & 31 : VRS Edition, pp. 8-9 and 25-26.

[2] It is written throughout in *double entendre* giving both the story of the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the contemporary history. As a result the poet had to resort to play of words, which often renders the meaning of the verses obscure. But for the commentary, which covers only up to the 35th verse of the 2nd canto, its meaning with regard to the history of the Pālas would have been difficult to establish.

[3] *Rāmacarita*, Kaviprasasti, Verse 3, *VRS Edition*, p. 154. Also see Introduction, p. vii.

and the villainy of those who were opposed to him and responsible for all his troubles and sufferings."[1] Hence we have to use the text with caution. Moreover, in order to fit in the history of the period along with the story of Rāma of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, Sandhyākara Nandī had to ignore the chronology of the events, and at places, quite naturally in view of the nature of his work, he made certain misrepresentations of fact. Nevertheless, in spite of its shortcomings the *Rāmacarita* is a valuable source for the reconstruction of the history of this period.

The most important event of the reign of Mahīpāla II was the revolt of the *sāmantas* which resulted in his death and the loss of Varendra to the Kaivarta chief Divya. Mahīpāla is said to have imprisoned his two brothers, Śūrapāla and Rāmapāla, because of the foolish notion that Rāmapāla would capture royal power.[2] Verse 1/37 and its commentary of the *Rāmacarita* further elucidate this apprehension of Mahīpāla. The commentator says that Mahīpāla put Rāmapāla in prison without any reason, being instigated by the indication of mischievous men, who raised the slogan that Rāmapāla was acknowledged by all as the competent possessor of the kingdom and that he would snatch the throne by killing Mahīpāla.[3] In all these verses there is a clear indication that Sandhyākara Nandī is inclined to show that there was no scheming on the part of Rāmapāla and that Mahīpāla II imprisoned his brothers out of suspicion which was completely unfounded. Whether he is totally correct we cannot say. But it is natural that he would not report any schemes of Rāmapāla to gain power, if

[1] *Ibid.*, Introduction, p. xiii.

[2] *Rāmacarita*, Verses I/33 and 36 : *VRS Edition*, pp. 25-28.

[3] Māyināṁ khalānāṁ dhvanināṁ ayaṁ Rāmapālaḥ Kṣamo 'dhikārī sarvvasammataḥ tataśca devasya rājyaṁ grahiṣyatīti sucanayā śaṅkitavipadaḥ māmasau haniṣyatīti saṅkitā vipadyena tasya bhuvībhartturmahīpālasya/ Prabhūtāyā bahutarāyā nikṛtiprayuktitaḥ śāṭhyaprayogāt upāyavadhaceṣṭayā tathā tenākāraṇāpanne durggate kaniṣṭhe bhrātari Rāmapāle rakṣitari bhāvyarthe / *Ibid.*, VRS Edition, p. 29.

there were any. On the other hand, during this decadent period of Pāla history the possibility of dynastic trouble arising out of the ambition of a capable younger brother cannot be altogether ruled out. Sandhyākara Nandī, being a partisan of Rāmapāla, is naturally expected to give such a flattering picture of his hero's unsuccessful attempt to gain power. This attitude of Sandhyākara Nandī is further evident in his description of Mahīpāla II's character and conduct. He describes him as a *durnayabhāja* (one who is intent upon imprudent conduct),[1] *anītikārambharata* (intent upon pursuing impolitic methods),[2] *kuṭṭima kaṭhora* (hard as a solid stone), *citrakūṭa* (given to wonderful tricks),[3] *bhūtanayātrāṇayukta* (determined not to protect truth and polity),[4] and *nikṛtiprayukta* (resorting to acts of fraudulence).[5] All these epithets clearly demonstrate that the author was not well disposed towards Mahīpāla II and all his accusations seem to arise from the grievance that Mahīpāla ill-treated Rāmapāla, the hero of his *kāvya*. In verse 1/29 he uses the epithet *rājapravara* (which generally means excellent among kings) for Mahīpāla, and the commentator gives the same meaning.[6] But in the context of the description of Mahīpāla in other places, noted above, this seems to be contradictory to his general tone. The verse speaks about the destruction of the enemy (Rāghava in respect of Rāma and the Kaivarta king in respect of Rāmapāla), who had earlier killed the ruler. And in the first meaning of the verse the word *rājapravara* may carry the meaning of excellent among kings, and by the play of the same word, which is very characteristic of Sandhyākara Nandī, the author might have conceived a different meaning, which the commentator failed to get. *Pravara* has been used

[1] Verse I/22, *Rāmacarita*, VRS Edition, p. 17.
[2] Verse I/31, *Ibid.*, p. 25.
[3] Verse I/32, *Ibid.*, p. 25.
[4] Verse I/36, *Ibid.*, p. 28.
[5] Verse I/37, *Ibid.*, p. 28.
[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.

in the *Mahābhārata* to mean the eldest son,[1] and Nandī might as well have meant *rājapravara* to mean the eldest son of Vigrahapāla III, who was the king.

So, if there is any truth in Sandhyākara Nandī's story of the imprisonment of Rāmapāla, it may well have been the outcome of a fraternal dispute between Rāmapāla and Mahīpāla II and the rebellion which broke out during the reign of the latter may have been the consequence of this.

The rebellion, which resulted in the occupation of Varendra (northern Bengal) by the Kaivarta[2] chief Divya after the death of Mahīpāla II, who lost his life in the fight against the rebels, has been mentioned, besides the *Rāmacarita*, in three epigraphic records.[3] From the references in the *Rāmacarita* it is very difficult to trace the causes and the origin of this rebellion, which succeeded in ousting the Pāla power from northern Bengal.

H. P. Sastri, who first edited the *Rāmacarita*, wrote, "Mahīpāla by his impolitic acts incurred the displeasure of his subjects... The Kaivartas were a very powerful and warlike people in northern Bengal. Dibyoka[4] was their chief. He had a brother named Ruddoka.[4] The Kaivartas were smarting under oppression of the king. Bhīma, the son of Ruddoka,[4] taking advantage of the popular discontent, led his Kaivarta subjects to rebellion."[5]

[1] M. Monier Williams : *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p. 690.

[2] We find the mention of the Kaivartas for the first time in the *Rāmacarita*. They are not mentioned in any earlier record of Bengal. Literally *Kaivarta* means a fisherman. In later days the Kaivartas formed a class of fishermen in Bengal and are still to be found. The mention of Divya as a Kaivarta chief shows the existence of this class in the Pāla period. Divya belonged to this tribe of fishermen, and possibly rose to high position in the royal service. For a discussion on the Kaivartas see Nihar Ranjan Ray : *Bāṅgālīr Itihāsa*, Ādi Parva, pp. 281-82.

[3] Kamauli grant of Vaidyadeva, Verse 4 : *EI*, vol. II, pp. 351 and 355 ; *GL*, p. 129.
Manahali grant of Madanapāla, Verse 15 : *Ibid.*, p. 152. Belāva grant of Bhojavarman, Verse 8 : *IB III*, p. 20.

[4] These irregular spellings are those of H. P. Sastri.

[5] *MASB*, vol. III, No. 1, p. 13.

Another scholar has gone so far as to give some religious colouring to this revolt when he writes, "Buddhism was antagonistic to the practice of the fishing craft which formed the occupation of the Kaivartas, who thus suffered from social disadvantages under the regime of the Buddhist Pālas. It is not improbable that, before the actual rising started, their chief had asked for a redress of their grievances, which was not conceded by the unwise king. Taking advantage of the crisis brought about by the drift of events in the royal family terminating in the incarceration of the two princes, Divvoka (sic.), originally Pāla servant, rose against him and put an end to the life of the unpopular monarch."[1] A critical study of the *Rāmacarita* and its commentary, which is the only source to throw some light on the subject, shows that there is no evidence in support of the generalisations that there was popular discontent and that the Kaivartas, who were very powerful in Varendra, were smarting under the oppression of the Buddhist Pāla king, Mahīpāla II. On the other hand, the extant epigraphic records prove that the Pāla rulers were very liberal in their religious outlook. There are numerous instances of their granting lands for the Brahmanical gods and goddesses. Dharmapāla is said to have "made the castes conform to their proper tenets."[2] and Vigrahapāla III is said to be a shelter of the four castes.[3] Moreover, Buddhism at that time had been so much transformed to incorporate so many elements from Hinduism that there was hardly any antagonism between them. So the idea of a religious background for the revolt does not seem very convincing, and there is no evidence to establish it.

Towards the early thirties of this century an attempt was made by the *Māhiṣyas* of Bengal, who regarded Divya as belonging to their own caste, to propagate the view that he was

[1] B. C. Sen : *Some Historical Aspects of the Inscriptions of Bengal*, pp. 424-425.

[2] See *Supra*, p. 32.

[3] Verse 13, *Āmgāchi plate* : *EI*, vol. XV, p. 296.

elected king by the people of Bengal. They held conferences with this in view in various parts of Bengal.[1] A. K. Maitreya, in a lecture delivered in the Calcutta University, asserted from the reference in verse I/37 of the *Rāmacarita* that Rāmapāla was *sarvasammata* (accepted by all) and Mahīpāla II claimed the throne by the law of primogeniture, and that this was the underlying cause of the rebellion.[2] As we shall soon see, there is no basis for such explanations of the event. Two facts—that the success of the revolt led to Rāmapāla's expulsion from the heart of the kingdom, and that verse I/31 of the *Rāmacarita*[3] states that the rebellion caused great mental pain to Rāmapāla—make it clear that the revolt was not undertaken in favour of Rāmapāla.

Now let us examine the origin of the revolt from the information available in the *Rāmacarita.*

The *Rāmacarita* describes the rebellion as *anīkaṁ dharmmaviplavam.*[4] The commentator explains *anīkam* as *alakṣmīkam* (unholy or unfortunate), but does not offer any meaning of *dharmaviplavam.* R. C. Majumdar and others translated it as civil revolution.[5] *Dharmmaviplava* cannot possibly be correctly translated thus ; it has the sense of violation of *dharma* (duty) or transgression from duty or from the right path. The commentary of verse I/31 explains how Mahīpāla II lost his life.[6] Mahīpāla is said to have sunk, having undertaken a difficult battle, disregarding the advice of his minister, who was endowed with

[1] For a full account of their propaganda see *Bhāratavarṣa* (Bengali Journal), 1342 B. S., Āṣāḍha, pp. 18 ff.

[2] *IHQ*, vol. XIII, pp. 40 ff.

[3] VRS Edition, pp. 24-25.

[4] Verse I/24, VRS Edition, p. 19.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 20.

[6] *Mahīpālaḥ ṣāḍguṇyagaṇyasya mantriṇo guṇitamavaguṇayan upaṣṭambhārabhaṭi mātrādīṣadgrahaṇena militānantasāmantacakra-caturacaturaṅga balabalayita - bahalamadakalakari - turagataraṇi - caraṇacārubhaṭacamūsambhāra saṁrambha-nirbhara-bhayabhīta-riktamuktakuntala-palāyamāna-vikalasakalasainyena svataḥ kṣayātiśayamāseduṣā saha sahasalva baladviparyayakoṭikaṣṭatarasamaramārabhya niramajjata /*
VRS Edition, p. 24.

all the six qualities of polity. His army having suffered heavy losses, fled from the battle-field, being confused (being impaired and men flying away with loose hair) after a slight encounter (which was due to some courageous support), having been frightened by the accumulation of the army of the united *sāmantas* (feudatory chiefs), which included horses, elephants, boats and infantry. From this passage it becomes clear that the rebellion was caused by the *militānantasāmantacakra*, the combined forces of the *sāmantas* or feudatory chiefs.[1] The commentator, however, does not make it clear as to who these *sāmantas* were. But from the passage cited above it is also apparent that the *sāmantas* had mustered enormous strength and the royal army had no chance against them. In verse I/38 the *Rāmacarita* informs us that Rāmapāla's fatherland, Varendra, was occupied by his enemy Divya, who was an officer sharing royal fortune and who rose to high position.[2] In the same verse Divya is mentioned as *dasyu* and *upadhivratin*, and the commentator explains this portion as follows : *dasyunā śatrunā tadbhāvāpannatvāt avaśyakarttavyatayā ārabdhaṁ karmmavrataṁ chadmani vratī*.[3] It is very difficult to get the meaning of *upadhivratin* as given by the commentator. Ordinarily it means one who took to fraudulent practice as a vow. But the commentator seems to indicate something more than that and define the fraudulent behaviour of Divya. Can it be taken to mean that Divya took possession of Varendra on the pretext of a vow that he was doing what was most essential for him to do, or in other words, he professed that in taking possession of Varendra he was motivated by a sense of duty.[4] But the reason for such a pretext is not clear. Possibly Divya, being a royal officer, professed to be on the side of the king, and when Mahīpāla was killed in the battle, he took

[1] For significance of the term *sāmanta* cf. Lallanji Gopal : 'Sāmanta—its varying significance in Ancient India', *JRAS*, 1963, pp. 21-37.

[2] VRS Edition, pp. 29-30.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 29.

[4] In the context it seems hardly likely that *vrata* has here any religious significance.

possession of Varendra, as if he was doing the right thing on behalf of the throne. But ultimately he betrayed the cause, and declared himself independent, and his conspiracy with the rebellious *sāmanta-cakra* became apparent. Nowhere in the *Rāmacarita* is the exact relationship between the rebellious *sāmantacakra* and Divya, the Kaivarta chief, mentioned. It is quite likely that Divya was a partisan of the *sāmanta-cakra* and was instrumental in hatching up this rebellion. But he remained on the royal side right up to the end of Mahīpāla and after his death took possession of Varendra and declared himself independent. This intricate play of power politics naturally appeared to Sandhyākara Nandī as dereliction of duty on the part of the royal officer, and hence he has been mentioned as a fraud and the whole episode is termed a *dharmaviplava.*

It is quite clear that the battle in which Mahīpāla II lost his life was against the combined forces of the *sāmantas.* As the rebellion terminated in the loss of Varendra it is quite possible that the *sāmantas* belonged to that area, northern Bengal. Whether they were being led by Divya, the royal officer, is not clear from the Rāmacarita. But it seem that Divya, fishing in the troubled waters, had a big hand in the rising, and it was he who ultimately captured power.

A revolt of *sāmantas* was nothing unusual. The nature of the relation between the *sāmanta* and the sovereign depended largely on the comparative strength of the two. A *sāmanta* paid allegiance only so long as the suzerain was powerful On the least sign of the weakness of the empire the *sāmantas* would try to shake off the subordination. It was the fear of the might of the paramount ruler that kept them loyal. We have seen earlier that before the accession of Mahīpāla II there were signs of dissension in different parts of the Pāla empire.[1] Towards the early part of his reign, as we have suggested earlier, there was possibly a dispute over the succession.[2] These were fair indications of

[1] *Supra*, pp. 99-102.
[2] *Supra*, pp. 103-105.

the utter weakness of the central authority and an outburst of the natural tendency of few *sāmantas* was quite in accordance with the logic of the circumstances.

So we find that the rebellion was definitely not a revolt of the Kaivartas, but an attempt to overthrow the weak royal power of the Pālas by a few important chiefs of northern Bengal. They succeeded in defeating the ruling king and northern Bengal ceased to be part of the Pāla dominions. Divya's role in this revolt cannot be clearly conceived. But from the fact that he and his family ruled over northern Bengal up to its reconquest by Rāmapāla and from the way in which Sandhyākara Nandī has associated his name with the revolt, it is evident that he was largely connected with it. Moreover the revolt was not a solitary episode but it reflected the tendency of the time. It must be "looked upon not so much as the cause, but the consequence of the collapse of the authority of the Pālas. It is not necessary to introduce extraneous elements, such as the misconduct of Mahīpāla, or his oppression of the Kaivartas, in order to explain the origin of the revolt."[1] It was prompted by ambition and greed of power, and helped by the utter weakness of the monarchy.

The *Rāmacarita* blames Mahīpāla's impolitic methods for his defeat at the hands of the rebels.[2] It is clear from the commentary on the same verse that Mahīpāla disregarded the advice of the minister and hastily went into battle, which was very impolitic of him. He should have taken adequate measures to assess the strength of the rebel forces and to muster support. Verse I/22 seems to indicate the same thing, where Mahīpāla is said to have adopted a wrong policy and Varendra was lost through his *vyasana*.[3] *Vyasana* generally means passion, and this suits well in the first meaning of the verse, where Indra's passion for Ahalyā is mentioned. In respect of Mahīpāla it may carry the meaning of incompetence or inability. The

[1] R. C. Majumdar : 'The Revolt of Divvoka against Mahīpāla II and other Revolts in Bengal', *Dacca University Studies*, vol. I, No. II, p. 136.

[2] Verse I/31 and commentary : VRS Edition, pp. 24-25.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 17.

commentator explains *vyasana* as *yuddhavyasana* (passion for war). If we take the meaning given by the commentator, it appears that Mahīpāla, out of his passion for war, hastily marched to face the rebels, disregarding the advice of the minister. Had he taken adequate preparations, as was possibly suggested by the minister, he would not have been defeated. So, if we believe Sandhyākara Nandī, Mahīpāla himself was responsible for his defeat.

We have assigned the Bāghaurā and Nārāyaṇapur inscriptions, found in south-eastern Bengal, to the reign of Mahīpāla II.[1] These two inscriptions, dated in the 3rd and 4th year of his reign, mark the extension of Pāla power in south-eastern Bengal. This region was, however, lost to the Varmans, who became independent, taking advantage of the chaos during the Kaivarta revolt. Mahīpāla II, who evidently had a short reign, can be assigned a period of about five years.

Mahīpāla II was succeeded by his brother Śūrapāla II.[2] But there is no mention of Śūrapāla as a king in the *Rāmacarita*. From this silence of Śandhyākara Nandī, R.D. Banerji suggested that Rāmapāla might have done away with Śūrapāla to gain power, and hence Nandī, being a partisan of Rāmapāla, naturally did not mention his name.[3] But there is no evidence to establish this suspicion, however feasible it may be. Śūrapāla is mentioned in the Manahali grant of Madanapāla as a *nṛpa* and it seems certain that he ruled for some time.[4] It must be remembered that Sandhyākara Nandī was not writing the dynastic history of the Pālas, and hence did not mention the short and unimportant reign of Śūrapāla, who possibly did not play any part in the recovery of Varendra, which was the central theme of his

[1] *Supra*, pp. 17 (Fn6), 74-76.

[2] Verse 15, Manahali grant; *GL*, p. 151.

[3] *BI*, vol. I, p. 280.

[4] In the *Rāmacarita* (Verse I/23) we find mention of Rājyapāla, a son of Rāmapāla. But, as he did not become a king after Rāmapāla, his name does not appear in the Manahali grant. So it seems that the scribe of the plate has mentioned the names of only those who ruled.

work. Both Rāmapāla and Śūrapāla were in prison when Mahīpāla II lost his life. They somehow or other escaped and ruled one after another. Śūrapāla's possessions were possibly limited to portions of south-eastern Bengal and Bihar. He seems to have had a very short reign and can be assigned a reign of about two years. Except for the mention of his name in the Manahali grant we do not have any record of his time.

Rāmapāla succeeded Śūrapāla II.[1] Varendra (northern Bengal) was in the occupation of the Kaivarta chief, Divya. The Pāla kingdom, to which he succeeded, probably included parts of Bihar and western Bengal. His rule over Magadha is proved by the Tetrawan inscription,[2] dated in his 3rd year, the colophon of a manuscript copied at Nālandā in his 15th regnal year,[3] and the Arma image inscription of his 26th year.[4] Most of the *sāmantas* who joined Rāmapāla in his fight with the Kaivarta chief belonged to the region of western Bengal, which proves Rāmapāla's control over that area. Northern Bihar had possibly passed to the Karṇāṭa dynasty of Mithilā. King Nānyadeva (c. 1097-1150 A. D.) was a contemporary of Rāmapāla, and his forefathers are said to have come to this part of Bihar in the train of the Cālukya invasion of Vikramāditya VI.[5] So it seems that the Pālas lost control of northern Bihar during or soon after the reign of Vigrahapāla III. R. C. Majumdar thought that Vaṅga or a part of it was also included in Rāmapāla's kingdom.[6] His source of information was a reference in the medical treatise called *Śabdapradīpa*, where the author's father is said to have

[1] Verse 15, Manahali grant : *GL*, pp. 152 and 157.

[2] *JASB (NS)*, vol. IV, p. 108. The date was first read as 2 and later on corrected as 3, cf. *JRASB*, vol. IV, p. 390.

[3] *Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscript in the Bodleian Library, Oxford*, 1905, vol. II, p. 250, No. 1428 ; *JASB*, 1900, p. 100.

[4] *Indian Archaeology—A Review*. 1960-61, p. 44. Arma is a village near Kiul Railway station in the Munghyr district of Bihar.

[5] H. C. Ray : *DHNI*, vol. I, pp. 203 ff, 353 and 359.
R. C. Majumdar : *IHQ*, vol. VII, pp. 679 ff.

[6] *HB-I*, p. 155 ; Introduction to the *Rāmacarita*, VRS Edition, pp. xxiii-xxiv.

been the court-physician of Rāmapāla, king of Vaṅga.[1] But by the time of Rāmapāla Vaṅga, if it is taken to denote south-eastern Bengal, was under the Varman kings.[2] Hence from this casual remark in the *Śabdapradīpa* it cannot be concluded that Vaṅga was under Rāmapāla. R. C. Majumdar was aware of this objection and wrote, "Although Ramapāla is called Lord of Vaṅga, it is doubtful if eastern Bengal formed part of his dominion before the reconquest of Varendra, for the Varmans probably were ruling there with Vikramapur as their capital."[3] The term Vaṅga never implied any particular division of Bengal at that period and was often used in a general sense to denote the whole of Bengal including western and southern Bengal. So in view of the presence of the Varmans in south-eastern Bengal it would be safer to conclude that the epithet Lord of Vaṅga, used for Rāmapāla in the *Śabdapradīpa*, was meant in a general sense.

One point must be made clear in this respect. Rāmapāla's hold over western Bengal and southern Bihar was also very feeble. The *sāmantas*, as we shall soon see, gave very scant allegiance to the Pāla king, who literally begged from door to door to enlist their support. So on his accession Rāmapāla found the empire in a very precarious condition. Northern Bengal was in the possession of the Kaivartas and the *sāmantas* no longer owed allegiance to the imperial throne.

The Kaivarta rule was gradually establishing itself in northern Bengal. The *Rāmacarita* does not tell us any thing about the activities of Divya after he captured power. In verse I/39 we are informed that Varendra, becoming frightened (*trasta*), became the object of protection of Bhīma, the son of his (Divya's) younger brother (Rudoka).[4] The commentary of the same verse tells us that Varendra was ruled successively by Divya, Rudoka and Bhīma.

[1] J. Eggeling : *Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts in India Office, London*, part V, pp. 974-975.

[2] See *Infra*, Chapter IV.

[3] *Rāmacarita*, VRS Edition, Introduction, p. xxiv, Fn.

[4] VRS Edition, p. 30.

We have references to Divya in epigraphic records of the time. In the Belāva copper-plate of Bhojavarman, Jātavarman claims "to have disgraced the strength of the arms of Divya."[1] It is not unlikely that the Varman king of south-eastern Bengal led an expedition to northern Bengal by way of trying his hands against another newly founded independent territory. Possibly the same expedition to northern Bengal by a king of Vaṅga is referred to in the Nālandā inscription of Vipulaśrīmitra[2] where it is said that the house of the ascetic Karuṇāśrīmitra at Somapura vihāra (Pāhārpur in Rajshahi district) was set on fire by the approaching army of Vaṅgāla. On palaeographic grounds the inscription is placed in the first half of the 12th century A.D., and as Vipulaśrīmitra was removed by two generations from Karuṇāśrīmitra, it is quite possible that the inscription refers to Jātavarman's invasion of Divya's territory. Verse 15 of the Manahali plate of Madanapāla[3] also refers to Divya's attack on Rāmapāla. Besides the passing reference in the *Rāmacarita* to Rudoka we do not have any other record of his time. The *Rāmacarita* devotes seven verses[4] to praise Bhīma and his army, and it is said that "by getting Bhīma as its king the whole world got prosperity in plenty, and virtuous men obtained unsolicited charities, and the earth also found peace."[5] These verses seem to indicate that Bhīma succeeded in establishing peace and order in Varendra, after the chaos which prevailed during Divya's time. These words of praise from the court poet of Bhīma's enemy are very significant, and show him and his rule in a favourable light. Sandhyākara Nandī's remark, however, that Varendra was oppressed with cruel taxation before Rāmapāla's conquest[6] is quite in keeping with his central theme and tone. The intention of this verse is to say that Rāmapāla, after his

IB-III, p. 22.
Verse 2 : *EI*, vol. XXI, pp. 97 ff.
GL, pp. 152 and 157 ; *JASB*, vol. LXIX, p. 70.
Verses II/21-27 : VRS Edition, pp. 54-57.
Verse II/24 : *Ibid.*, pp. 55-56.
Verse III/27 : *Ibid.*, p. 99.

conquest, brought prosperity to Varendra, by improvement of cultivation and reduction of the heavy taxes under which it had been groaning. Hence this accusation is quite understandable.

While Varendra was being ruled by Bhīma, Rāmapāla was preparing for his attempt to recover the fatherland. The *Rāmacarita* says that Rāmapāla, having been deprived of his beloved land (Varendra), could not think of himself as possessing merely a small kingdom, and was consumed by the fire of his heavy sorrow.[1] But Rāmapāla considered his strength as futile in respect of taking any effective action for the recovery of Varendra.[2] In this and all other verses in which Rāmapāla's preparation for the fight with Bhīma is described, the apalling weakness of the imperial power is evident. Verse I/42 says that at the appearance of danger Rāmapāla, having discussed all pros and cons with his ministers and sons, decided to take immediate action.[3] What this danger was we are not told. Possibly the attack of Divya, as mentioned in the Manahali plate,[4] was the immediate danger which prompted Rāmapāla to action. It might as well refer to the invasion of the Paramāra king Laskṣmadeva, who ruled sometime before 1097 A. D.[5] In the Nagpur stone inscription[6] it is mentioned that when he proceeded to the eastern

[1] Verse I/41 : *Ibid.*, p. 31.
R. C. Majumdar and others do not seem to give a correct rendering of the second line of the verse, which runs as follows : *Avanīpatitāṁ tanumapi na tadā sambhāvayamāsa |*
The commentator explains this portion as follows :
Avanīpatitāṁ Pṛthvīpatitāṁ tanuṁ alpāmapi na sambhāvitavān |
R. G. Basak seems to give a more appropriate meaning which we have followed above, cf. R. G. Basak : *Rāmacarita* (Text and Bengali translation), p. 31. R. C. Majumdar and others translated this portion as follows : Rāmapāla at that time did not possibly care for the lordship of earth as something small.
Rāmacarita, Verse I/40, VRS Edition, pp. 30-31.
Ibid., p. 32.
Verse 15 : *GL*, pp. 152 and 157 ; *JASB*, vol. LXIX, p. 70.
DHNI, vol. II, p. 882.
EI, vol. II, p. 193.

quarter "dread entered the town of the Lord of Gauḍa." From this casual reference it is impossible to determine whether the Paramāra invasion reached Gauḍa or not.

We are told that Rāmapāla succeeded in bringing the *sāmanta-cakra*, which possessed strong cavalry, elephants and infantry, over to his side by presents of land and enormous wealth, after having visited with great difficulty the lands belonging to different *sāmantas* including the forest chiefs.[1] This alliance with the *sāmantas* gave Rāmapāla the strength with which he now dared to strike at Bhīma's stronghold. Those *sāmantas* who answered to Rāmapāla's call for help are described by Sandhyākara Nandī as good people who acted with intelligence,[2] and verse I/30 further emphasizes that their support was bought by placing "his royal fortune at the disposal of the good."[3] All these verses, taken together, would tend to indicate that the king had very little power and begged support from the *sāmantas* with promises of wealth and land. The exact position of the *sāmantas* is not clear, but it seems that they owed very tenuous allegiance to Rāmapāla. "The proud inheritor of the throne of Dharmapāla and Devapāla literally travelled from door to door with a view to enlisting the sympathy and support of the powerful chiefs who were formerly, and many of whom still nominally, his vassal chiefs."[4] This state of the complete break-up of the imperial fabric must have started from the time of Nayapāla and Vigrahapāla III and was the reason why Mahīpāla II failed to cope with the rebels. He did not take a realistic view of things and this is possibly why he was accused by Nandī of being impolitic. Rāmapāla must be given the credit for acting with prudence. He realised the weakness of his power, and only after having won over the support of his vassal chiefs, did he strike against Bhīma. The names of the chiefs who joined

[1] *Rāmacarita*, Verses I/43, 44, 45 and II/2-4, VRS Edition, pp. 32-34 and 40-41.

[2] Verses I/26-27 : *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24.

[4] R. C. Majumdar : *HB-I*, p. 156.

Rāmapāla are given in verses II/5, 6 and 8,[1] and the detailed explanation of the commentator enables us to identify some of them.

Foremost among the allied chiefs was Rāmapāla's maternal uncle Mathanadeva, the Rāṣṭrakūṭa chief of Aṅga, who joined him along with his two sons, Kahnaradeva and Suvarṇadeva, and his brother's son Śivarāja. Mathanadeva had already defeated Devarakṣita, the king of Pīṭhi.[2] R. D. Banerji suggested that Devarakṣita rose against the Pālas during the Kaivarta imbroglio, was subdued by Mathanadeva on behalf of Rāmapāla, and was won over to the Pāla side by the marriage of Mathana's daughter to him.[3] Besides the names of Mathanadeva and his sons and nephew we have the names of the following 14 *sāmantas* :

(i) Bhīmayaśa, the king of Pīṭhi and lord of Magadha, who had defeated an army of the king of Kanauj.[4] We cannot determine the relationship between him and Devarakṣita, who seems to have preceded him on the throne of Pīṭhi. The Kānyakubja king defeated by him was one of the first three Gāhaḍavāla kings.[5]

(ii) Vīraguṇa, ruler of Koṭāṭavī in the south.[6] Koṭaṭavī's identification with the Koṭ-des in Sarkar Kaṭak (in Orissa),[7]

[1] *Rāmacarita*, VRS Edition, pp. 42 ff.

[2] Verse II/8, *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45.
This is confirmed by the Sārnāth ins. of Kumāradevī, the queen of the Gāhaḍavāla king Govindacandra, cf. *EI*, vol. IX, pp. 324-27. The identification of Pīṭhi is difficult. The commentator seems to imply that Pīṭhi and Magadha were synonymous. R. D. Banerji suggested that Pīṭhi is to be identified with the Gayā district of Bihar, cf. *BI*, vol. I, pp. 284 and 286. It is certain that Pīṭhi was in Bihar and probably in southern Bihar, cf. *JBORS*, vol. IV, p. 278.

[3] *BI*, vol. I, p. 226.

[4] The commentary of verse II/5 runs as follows :
Kānyakubjarāja vāhinīgañjanabhujaṅgo Bhīmayaśo 'bhidhāno Magadhādhipatiḥ Pīṭhīpatiḥ /

[5] *DHNI*, vol. I, p. 340, Fn. 8.

[6] Vīraguṇa is described as a *dakṣina-simhāsana-cakravartī* by the commentator-*Rāmacarita*, VRS Edition, p. 42.

[7] N. N. Vasu : *Vaiger Jatiya Itihāsa*, Rājanya Kāṇḍa, p. 191.
R. D. Banerji : *BI*, vol. I, p. 287.

does not seem to be correct, because that would mean that Rāmapāla's dominion embraced parts of Orissa. Its identification with Koṭeśvara, a few miles to the east of Viṣṇupur in the Bankura district[1] seems more probable.

(iii) Jayasiṁha, king of Daṇḍabhukti, who defeated Karṇakeśarī, king of Orissa. Daṇḍabhukti comprised the southern portion of the Midnapur district bordering Orissa.

(iv) Vikramarāja of Bāla-Balabhī, which included the village of Devagrāma. Its identification is difficult. H. P. Sastri identified it with Bāgḍī.[2] N. N. Vasu identified Devagrāma with a village of that name in the Nadiya district.[3] But there are many villages of the same name in Bengal. R. C. Majumdar is inclined to identify it with Pipli at the mouth of the Suvarṇarekhā river in south-western Bengal.[4]

(v) Lakṣmīśūra, lord of Apara-Mandāra, identified with Mandāran in the Hoogly district.[5] We have seen that during the time of Mahīpāla I southern Rāḍha was ruled by one Raṇaśūra.[6] It is not unlikely that he and Lakṣmīśūra belonged to the same family and held the southern portion of western Bengal. The Śūra family in which Vijayasena married[7] may also be the same. Lakṣmīśūra is said to be the chief of the *sāmantas* of forest lands.[8]

(vi) Śūrapāla of Kujavaṭī, which may be identified with the locality of that name about 14 miles north of Nayādumkā in Santal Parganas.[9]

[1] *HB-I*, p. 156, Fn. 5.
MASB, vol. III, p. 14.
[2] *Vaṅger Jātiya Itihāsa*, Rājanya Kāṇḍa, p. 198.
[3] *HB-I*, p. 157, Fn. 1.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 157, Fn. 2.
[5] *Supra*, pp. 81-83.
[6] *EI*, vol. XV, pp. 283 & 285 ; *IB-III*, pp. 62 & 65.
See *Infra*, Chapter V.
[7] *Rāmacarita*, Commentary of verse II/5 : *Samast-āṭavika-sāmanta-cakra-cuḍāmaṇi*. VRS Edition, p. 42.
[8] *HB-I*, p. 157.

(vii) Rudraśikhara, ruler of Tailakampa, identified with Telkup in the Manbhum district, Bihar.[1]

(viii) Bhāskara or Mayagalasiṁha, king (*bhūpāla*) of Ucchāla.[2]

(ix) Pratāpasiṁha, king of Dhekkariya, identified with Dhekkari near Katwā in the Burdwan district.[3] We have seen earlier that Iśvaraghoṣa assumed an almost independent position in Dhekkari, and it is not unlikely that Pratāpasiṁha had some connection with him or his family.[4]

(x) Narasiṁhārjuna, lord (*maṇḍalādhipati*) of Kayaṅgala-maṇḍala, identified with Kajangala, south of Rājmahal.[5]

(xi) Caṇḍārjuna of Saṁkaṭagrāma, which cannot be identified.

(xii) Vijayarāja of Nidrāvalī, which also cannot be definitely identified. But it has been suggested that Vijayarāja was identical with Vijayasena of the Sena family, which originally settled in Rāḍha and ultimately established its power all over Bengal.[6] If this suggestion is accepted Nidrāvalī should be located somewhere in western Bengal, because we learn from the Naihati grant of Vallālasena[7] that his predecessors were first settled in the Rāḍha country. And on this ground the suggestion of its identification with a village called Niḍole in Rāḍha, not far from modern Salar and Katwā and close to the Ganges, carries some weight.[8] R. C. Majumdar and others have put

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 157 ; *MASB*, vol. III, p. 14.

[2] Its identification is doubtful. N. N. Vasu identified it with Pargana Ujhyal in Birbhum, cf. *Vaṅger Jātiya Itihāsa*, Rājanya Kāṇḍa, p. 199. R. D. Banerji rightly pointed out that there are other parganas in Bengal with the same name, cf. *BI*, vol. I, pp. 289-290.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 290 ; *HB-I*, p. 157.

[4] *Supra*, p. 101.

[5] *HB-I*, p. 157.

[6] H. C. Raychaudhuri : *Studies in Indian Antiquities*, p. 158 ; *IHQ*, vol. XIII, p. 358 ; *IA*, 1920, p. 175.
H. C. Ray accepts the suggestion, cf. *DHNI*, vol. I, p. 344.

[7] Verse 3 : *EI*, vol. XIV, pp. 156 ff.

[8] *IHQ*, vol. XXXVII, p. 255. Also see *Infra*, Chapter V.

forward a suggestion that Nidrāvalī was probably situated in northern Bengal,[1] which seems very unlikely because that portion of Bengal was under the control of the Kaivarta family.

(xiii) Dvorapavardhana, ruler of Kauśāmbī, the identification of which is doubtful.[2] The suggestions of its location either in Bogra or Rajshahi district seem to be doubtful because northern Bengal was under the Kaivartas at that time. If either of these suggestions is correct, we have to hold that Rāmapāla succeeded in bringing over to his side some chiefs even from northern Bengal, the stronghold of the Kaivartas.

(xiv) Soma of Paduvanvā. Various suggestions have been advanced for its identification with places in Hoogly, Pabna, and Dinajpur districts.[3] But they are all very doubtful.

Having gained the support of these 14 *sāmantas* and his maternal uncle and cousins, Rāmapāla planned for the battle with Bhīma. He despatched an army, probably an advance party, under his cousin Śivarāja, who crossed the Ganges, devastated Varendra and reported back to Rāmapāla about his success.[4] It seems that Śivarāja succeeded in breaking up the frontier guards of Bhīma and thereby prepared the way for the landing of the main army. As the army is said to have crossed the Ganges to attack Varendra, it seems quite clear that Rāmapāla's stronghold was in south-western Bengal and they attacked from the south. The main army, led by Rāmapāla, crossed the Ganges by a fleet of boats and a fierce battle ensued.[5] In the battle, which resulted in the loss of many lives, Bhīma, seated on an elephant, was captured "by an evil turn of destiny" in a panic-stricken state.[6] Bhīma's army fled in

[1] *Rāmacarita*, VRS Edition, Introduction, p. xxvii.

[2] R. C. Majumdar identified it with Tappe Kusumbi in the Bogra district, cf. *Ibid.*, Introduction, p. xxviii. R. D. Banerji identified it with Kusumba in Rajshahi district, cf. *BI*, vol. I, p. 290 ; *JASB (NS)*, vol. X, p. 125.

[3] *HB-I*, p. 158, Fn. 4.

[4] *Rāmacarita*, Verses I/46-50, VRS Edition, pp. 35-38.

[5] Verses II/9-16, *Ibid.*, pp. 45-50.

[6] Verses II/17 & 20, *Ibid.*, pp. 51 and 53-54.

confusion and the battle was won by Rāmapāla. Bhīma was at first treated well by Rāmapāla and his son, Vittapāla.[1] It is difficult to follow the subsequent events as described in the *Rāmacarita* in the absence of any commentary. It seems that there was another attempt by Hari, a friend of Bhīma, to rally the army of Bhīma and offer further resistance to the Pāla occupation of Varendra. But Rāmapāla's son, whose name is not mentioned, "exhausted the golden pitchers by his war-time gifts",[2] and possibly managed to create discord between Hari and Bhīma's followers, which led to the end of the resistance. It seems clear that Hari was won over to Rāmapāla's side, possibly by bestowal of lavish gifts, and after the battle he was "established in a position of great influence"[3] by Rāmapāla, and cordial relationship prevailed between them.[4] Hari continued to be friendly with the Pālas up to the time of Madanapāla.[5]

After the collapse of all resistance, Rāmapāla took terrible vengeance upon Bhīma, who was at first made to watch the execution of his family members before he himself was executed.[6]

Rāmapāla, after establishing peace and order in Varendra, founded a new city there called Rāmāvatī.[7] Sandhyākara Nandī pays glowing tribute to Varendra and Rāmāvatī in 39 verses.[8] Rāmāvatī has been identified with Rāmauti in Sarkar Lakhnautī of the *A'in-i-Akbari*.[9] Rāmāvatī continued to be the capital of

1 Verses II/26 & 28, *Ibid.*, pp. 58 and 65.
2 Verse II/43 ; *Ibid.*, pp. 71-72.
3 Verse III/32 : *Ibid.*, pp. 102-103.
4 Verses III/39-40 : *Ibid.*, pp. 106-107.
5 Verses IV/37 & 40 : *Ibid.*, pp. 143 ff.
6 Verses II/45-49 : *Ibid.*, pp. 73 ff.
7 Verse III/29 : *Ibid.*, pp. 100-101.
8 Verses III/2-40 : *Ibid.*, pp. 77 ff.
9 R. D. Banerji : *BI.* vol. I, p. 292. R. C. Majumdar : *HB-I*, p. 32. H. C. Ray : *DHNI*, vol. I, p. 345. Jarrett : *A'in-i-Akbari*, vol. II, p. 131. *ASI, Annual Report*, 1923-24, p. 79. H. P. Sastri identified it with Rāmapāla in the Dacca district, cf. *MASB*, vol. III, p. 14. N. N. Vasu identified it with Rāmapura in the Bogra district, cf. *Vaṅger Jātiya Itihāsa*, Rājanya Kāṇḍa, p. 209.

the Pāla empire till the reign of Madanapāla.[1]

The reconquest of northern Bengal from the hands of the rebel Kaivartas was a great achievement of Rāmapāla. The imminent danger of the Pāla empire was overcome. Rāmapāla now felt secure and after consolidating his power in Varendra he attempted to add more glory to his reign.

The *Rāmacarita* informs us that "Rāmapāla was conciliated by the Varman king of the Eastern country for his own safety, by offering his own chariots and also his excellent elephants."[2] This apparently refers to the Varman king of south-eastern Bengal, but hence it cannot be inferred that eastern Bengal was brought under Pāla subjugation.[3] This verse shows that the Varman king sought the friendship of Rāmapāla by presenting chariots and elephants. The Varmans, taking advantage of the revolt of the *sāmantas* during the reign of Mahīpāla II, had established their independent rule in south-eastern Bengal, and they had also made a raid to northern Bengal when Divya was ruling there.[4] After the Candra rulers the Pālas may have succeeded in extending their influence over south-eastern Bengal sometime between the reigns of Mahīpāla I and Mahīpāla II probably during the reign of Vigrahapāla III. So when Rāmapāla became successful in recovering northern Bengal from the Kaivartas, the Varman king may have apprehended an attack on his territory by Rāmapāla, who may well have tried to recover this lost dominion. So he conciliated Rāmapāla by presents of chariots and elephants and an apparent show of submission, and thereby avoided an attack. Pāla suzerainty over the Varmans cannot be proved. The contemporary Varman king was possibly Harivarman.

The *Rāmacarita* further informs us that Rāmapāla honoured

[1] Manahali grant of Madanapāla : *GL*, p. 153.

[2] Verse III/44 :

Svaparitrāṇanimittaṁ patyā yaḥ prāgdiśī yena /
Varavāraṇena ca nijasyandanadānena varnmanāradhi //
Rāmacarita, VRS Edition, pp. 109-110.

[3] *HB-I.* p. 160 ; P.L. Paul : *EHB*, vol. I, p. 65.

[4] *Supra*, pp. 113-114.

the allied king who returned after conquering Kāmarūpa.[1] The Pāla conquest of Kāmarūpa or a part of it is confirmed by the Kamauli plate of Vaidyadeva, a minister of Rāmapāla's successor Kumārapāla, who went to Kāmarūpa to subdue the rebellious vassal, Timgyadeva, and ultimately declared his independence.[2] In verse IV/5 of the *Rāmacarita* it is further said that Kāmarūpa, won by war (*vigraha-nirjjita-Kāmarūpa*), was under the rule of Varendra.[3] So it is almost certain that the *Rāmacarita* is correct in ascribing the spread of Pāla power to Kāmarūpa during Rāmapāla's reign. It is difficult to ascertain either who was the conqueror of Kāmarūpa on behalf of Rāmapāla or who was the ruler of Kāmarūpa. Either Dharmapāla or Jayapāla was the ruler of Kāmarūpa who faced this assault from Bengal, and it is possible that it resulted in the acquisition of the south-western portion of the kingdom of Kāmarūpa, which may have extended up to the Karatoyā.[4] H.P. Sastri's view that Māyana was the name of the conqueror of Kāmarūpa[5] is due to his error in reading the compound word *mahimānam-āpa-na-nṛpo* as *mahimāna-māyana-nṛpo*.[6] Timgyadeva, the vassal chief who held the region during the time of Kumārapāla, as mentioned in the Kamauli grant, may have been the ally of Rāmapāla who captured Kāmarūpa.

Rāmapāla also entered into the politics of Orissa. Orissa, being in a state of disintegration, was "only a pawn in the bigger game"[7] between the Pālas and the Eastern Gaṅgas. Towards

[1] Verse III/47 : VRS Edition, p. 112.

[2] *EI*, vol. II, pp. 347 ff. ; *GL*, pp. 127 ff.

[3] VRS Edition, pp. 117-118.

[4] There are conflicting opinions about the ruler of Kāmarūpa and the area occupied by Rāmapāla's vassal. Cf. P. C. Choudhury : *The History of Civilisation of the People of Assam*, pp. 267 ff. ; K L. Barua : *Early History of Kāmarūpa*. pp. 190 ff. ; P. N. Bhattacharya : *Kāmarūpa-śāsanāvali*, Introduction, pp. 39 ff.

[5] *MASB*, vol. III, p. 15.

[6] R. C. Majumdar : *Rāmacarita*, VRS Edition, Introduction, p. xxxiii.

[7] *HB-I*, p. 163.

the beginning of the 12th century A. D. the Eeastern Gaṅgas were encroaching upon Orissa from the south. And Rāmapāla is also said to have shown favour to the vanquished king of Utkala, who was born in the lineage of the ornament of Bhava or Śiva (*Bhava-bhūṣaṇa-santati*), and to have rescued the world from the terror of Kaliṅga after having extirpated those robbers (*niśācarān*).[1] It is difficult to identify the ruler of Orissa defeated by Rāmapāla, but it seems likely that he belonged to the line of *Somavaṁśī* Keśarī rulers of Orissa. The reference in the *Rāmacarita*[2] to Karṇakeśarī, ruler of Orissa, who was defeated by Rāmapāla's *sāmanta* Jayasiṁha definitely proves the existence of the Keśarī rulers in Orissa at that time. And the verse of *Rāmacarita* referring to Rāmapāla's exploits in Orissa seems to indicate that it involved him in a struggle with the Eastern Gaṅgas of Kaliṅga.[3] In the course of the same struggle he possibly had to face the Coḷa king Kulottuṅga (c. 1070-1118 A. D.).[4] But it is evident that Rāmapāla did not achieve any permanent success in this campaign. He got himself involved in the affairs of Orissa and might have had some success in backing the Keśarī ruler, whom he had earlier defeated, against the Eastern Gaṅgas of Kaliṅga, who were trying to spread their influence over the whole of Orissa. But the Gaṅga ruler, Anantavarman Coḍagaṅga, finally succeeded in annexing Orissa to his kingdom.

Rāmapāla also came into conflict with the Gāhaḍavālas, whose kingdom touched the boundary of the Pālas and a conflict was quite a natural one. By 1090 A. D. the Gāhaḍavālas had established themselves in Benares and Kanauj after the death of the Kalacuri king Lakṣmīkarṇa.[5] The first reference to a conflict between Rāmapāla and the Gāhaḍavālas is found in the Rahan grant,[6] where it is said that Govindacandra, son of the reigning

Rāmacarita, Verse III/45 : VRS Edition, pp. 110-111.
Verse II/6 : *Ibid.*, p. 43.
For details see *HB-I*, pp. 161-164.
Nihar Ranjan Ray : *Bāṅgālīr Itihāsa*, Ādi parva, p. 491.
DHNI, vol. I, pp. 504 ff.
IA, vol. XVIII, pp. 16 ff.

Gāhaḍavāla king Madanapāla (c. 1104-111 A. D.),[1] was "terrific in clearing the frontal globes of arrays of irresistible mighty elephants from Gauḍa." It is not clear who was the aggressor, but this record shows that there was a clash between Govindacandra and Rāmapāla. The verse of the Rahan grant no doubt pays tribute to the strength of the Gauḍa army and it is quite possible that Rāmapāla held his own against the advance of the Gāhaḍavāla power. This is possibly what is alluded to in the *Rāmacarita*, where it is said that the power of Varendra maintained the thinness or slenderness of *madhyadeśa*.[2] The grand-daughter of Mathanadeva, the uncle of Rāmapāla, was married to the Gāhaḍavāla prince Govindacandra,[3] and this marriage may have eased the tension and rivalry between the two dynasties for some time, but could not avert it. The Gāhaḍavāla power engulfed much of the Pāla dominion after the death of Rāmapāla.

The *Rāmacarita* informs us that Rāmapāla, in his old age, entrusted the administration of the country to his son or sons (*sūnusamarppitarājyaḥ*) and lived in peace for a long period.[4] Rāmapāla must have come to the throne at an advanced age, because even in his father's reign he is said to have shown a spark of his valour[5] and he came to occupy the throne after two of his elder brothers. He himself also seems to have had a long reign of about 42 years or so. The Caṇḍimau image inscription is dated in his 42nd regnal year.[6] Incidentally, it may be mentioned that Tāranātha assigned him a reign of 46 years.[7] So he was of an advanced age towards the close of

DHNI, vol. I, pp. 511-13.

Verse III/24, *Dhṛtamadhyadeśa tanimānam* : VRS Edition, p. 96.

Sārnāth Ins. of Kumāradevī : *EI*, vol. IX, pp. 319 ff.

Verse IV/1 : VRS Edition, p. 114.

Verse 15, Manahali plate : *GL*, pp. 152 and 157.

The date was first read as 12 by Cunningham, cf. A. Cunningham : *ASI Report*, vol. XI, p. 169. R. D. Banerji, who edited the inscription, read the date as 42, cf. *MASB*, vol. V, pp. 93-94.

A. Schiefner : *Geschichte des Buddhismus*, p. 251 ; Tibetan Text, p. 190. Also see *IA*, vol. IV, p. 366.

his reign and it is not unlikely that he should entrust the responsibilities of government to a son or sons and enjoy a peaceful life before his death. The references in the *Rāmacarita* show that his sons, Rājyapāla, Vittapāla and others, always shared the responsibilities of state with their father. It is not clear who, among his sons, was given the responsibilities or whether all of them shared. But they acted under his order and advice.[1] Rāmapāla is said to have put an end to his own life by drowning himself in the waters of the Ganges, after being overwhelmed with grief at the death of his uncle Mathanadeva.[2]

Rāmapāla had a successful reign. From the precarious condition of the Pāla kingdom at his accession, he succeeded in recovering the lost dominion and left the empire in a far more stable condition than that in which he had found it. The tendency to dissension, which was evident from the reigns of Nayapāla and Vigrahapāla III, was given a check. He took lesson from the hasty action of Mahīpāla II and showed an accurate realisation of the weakness of the Pāla monarchy. It was his personality and sound judgement which succeeded in winning over the support of the recalcitrant feudatories, which was acutely needed for bringing back his fatherland, Varendra, under his control. The way in which he set upon the task of regaining Varendra, though humiliating, speaks of his political prudence. After consolidating his power in northern Bengal, he further extended the Pāla influence into Kāmarūpa, held his own against the rising power of the Gāhaḍavālas, and felt strong enough to get involved in politics of Orissa against the rising power of the eastern Gaṅgas. He gave the decadent Pāla power a second lease of life. Behind all these achievements of Rāmapāla, was his own personality and initiative, and once he was gone the forces of disintegration and dissension set in, which his successors could hardly cope with. And it is very natural, therefore, that Sandhyākara Nandī, who wrote his *Rāmacarita* during the reign of the last known Pāla

[1] *Rāmacarita*, Verse IV/3 : VRS Edition, pp. 115-116.
[2] Verses IV/8-10 : *Ibid.*, pp. 120-122.

king Madanapāla, should paint the career of Rāmapāla in a way more suited to a drama than a matter-of-fact history. Rāmapāla's achievements appeared to him more glorious in the perspective of contemporary circumstances.

Rāmapāla was succeeded by his son Kumārapāla.[1] We find the mention of two other sons of Rāmapāla, Rājyapāla and Vittapāla, in the *Rāmacarita*,[2] but the author does not tell anything about them after Rāmapāla's death. No records of his time have come down to us. The Kamauli grant of his minister, Vaidyadeva,[3] has on record two incidents of his reign. Vaidyadeva is said to have won a victory in a naval battle in southern Bengal.[4] The enemy against whom he fought is not mentioned and hence several suggestions can be made. If by *Anuttaravaṅga* south-eastern Bengal is meant, then the adversary was possibly the Varman ruler. We have seen earlier[5] that a Varman king propitiated the friendship of Rāmapāla by presents of chariots and elephants. It is not unlikely that after the death of Rāmapāla, the Varmans no longer felt the necessity of remaining inactive and may have started troubles on the Pāla frontier. And Vaidyadeva's naval battle might have been against this Eastern menace.

On the other hand, if *Anuttaravaṅga* is taken to refer to the southern part of western Bengal, Vaidyadeva's battle might have been against the expanding forces of the Eastern Gaṅgas. We have seen earlier that during Rāmapāla's time the Pāla power came into conflict with the Gaṅgas.[6] It is reported in the Śrī Kurman inscription of Anantavarman Coḍagaṅga that he

[1] *Rāmacarita*, Verse IV/11 : VRS Edition, pp. 122-123, Verse 16, Manahali grant : *GL*, pp. 152 and 157.

[2] *Rāmacarita*, Verses II/36, IV/6-7 : VRS Edition, pp. 65, 118-19.

[3] *EI*, vol. II, pp. 347-358 ; *GL*, pp. 127-146.

[4] Verse 11 : *Ibid.*, The verse has *anuttaravaṅga-saṅgara-jaye* which possibly means a battle in southern Bengal. The editor of the plate, A. Venis, suggested that *anuttara* may also mean complete and can be said to qualify the victory, cf. *EI*, vol. II, p. 355, Fn. 81.

[5] *Supra*, p. 122.

[6] *Supra*, pp. 123-124.

returned to his capital in 1135 A. D. after bringing the whole country between the Ganges and the Godāvarī under his control,[1] and the testimony of the inscriptions of his descendants prove that his empire extended to the Godāvarī in the south, to the city of Midhunapura or Midnapur in the north, the Bay of Bengal in the east and the Eastern Ghāṭs in the west.[2] The Kendupatna plates of Narasiṁha II refer to Anantavarman's victory over a king of Mandāra on the Ganges, and his destruction of the fortified town of Ārmya, probably Ārāmbāgh in the Hoogly district.[3] During Rāmapāla's time Lakṣmīśūra was the ruler of Mandāra (in Hoogly district)[4] and it is not unlikely that Coḍagaṅga succeeded in pushing his frontier as far north to the Hoogly area during the last years of Rāmapāla's reign or soon after, having defeated Lakṣmīśūra. So, if there is any truth in the claims of the inscriptions of the Eastern Gaṅgas, Vaidyadeva's naval battle in southern Bengal may have been against this enemy. It is not unlikely that he succeeded in repelling the Gaṅgas from south-western Bengal, which facilitated the rise of the Sena power in that area.[5]

It is quite likely that the Senas asserted an independent position in the southern Rāḍha area by the close of Rāmapāla's reign, and Vaidyadeva's naval battle could as well have been against the Senas.

The other exploit of Vaidyadeva was against Tiṁgyadeva, the vassal king of Kāmarūpa, who had shown disaffection.[6] Kāmarūpa or part of it was brought under Pāla suzerainty during Rāmapāla's time,[7] and Tiṁgyadeva was the vassal ruler. Vaidyadeva was appointed by Kumārapāla to subdue this

[1] *JAHRS*, vol. VII, p. 57.
[2] *Ibid.*, vol. VI, p. 215.
[3] *JASB*, vol. LXV, pp. 239 and 241.
[4] *Supra*, p. 118.
[5] The rise of the Senas will be discussed in chapter V.
[6] Verses 13-15, Kamauli plate : *EI*, vol. II, pp. 351-52 and 355-6.
[7] Verse 13 of the Kamauli plate : *Ibid.*

disaffected chief. After taking possession of Kāmarūpa Vaidyadeva was possibly conferred with the power to rule that area. It appears from the Kamauli plate that Vaidyadeva soon assumed for himself an independent status, as he issued the plate to grant land in the Kāmarūpa *maṇḍala* of the Prāgjyotiṣa *bhukti*. He is mentioned in the plate with full regal titles of *Paramamāheśvara Paramavaiṣṇava Mahārājādhirāja Parameśvara Paramabhaṭṭāraka*. The land grant was issued in the 4th year of his reign, but it is not clear whether Kumārapāla was living at that time. It follows from the references in the Kamauli plate that there was a very cordial relationship between Vaidyadeva and Kumārapāla.[1] And so it is probable that Vaidyadeva assumed independence soon after the death of the latter.

Besides these two exploits of Vaidyadeva, nothing more is known about the reign of Kumārapāla. The *Rāmacarita* devotes to him only one verse, where it is said that Kumārapāla, who cut short the happiness of many hostile kings, went to heaven after having enjoyed his sovereignty.[2] From this scholars believe that he had a short reign. A reign of 4 or 5 years would seem quite probable.

Kumārapāla was succeeded by his son Gopāla III.[3] The length of his reign and the manner in which he met his death have been objects of speculation among scholars. The *Rāmacarita* speaks of his having gone to heaven through his attempts at killing his enemy (*śatrughnopāya*).[4] Sandhyākara Nandī employed only one verse each to deal with the reigns of both Kumārapāla and his son Gopāla III ; from this scholars have speculated that both had very short reigns. But it should be remembered that Nandī's main object was to deal with the story of Rāmapāla's recovery of Varendra and not the dynastic

[1] Vaidyadeva is mentioned as *Kumārapālanṛpateścittānurūpaḥ* in verse 9 and *Prāṇebhyo 'pyatibandhuḥ* in verse 12. *EI*, vol. II, pp. 350-51.

[2] Verse IV/11 : VRS Edition, pp. 122-23.

[3] *Rāmacarita*, Verse IV/12 : *Ibid.*, p. 123 ;
Manahali grant, Verse 18 : *GL*, pp. 152 and 158.

[4] Verse IV/12 : VRS Edition, p. 123.

history of the Pālas. And therefore he passes from the reign of Dharmapāla to that of Vigrahapāla III in a couple of verses in the first canto and, after describing the main object of his work, he dismisses the reigns of the two successors of Rāmapāla in two verses in the 4th canto. From verse IV/13 onwards he devotes the rest of the 4th canto to the praise of his patron, the ruling monarch Madanapāla. This elaborate treatment of Madanapāla's reign is natural, because Sandhyākara Nandī was writing his work when that ruler was on the throne and possibly he enjoyed his patronage. The Manahali grant of Madanapāla describes Gopāla III as having manifested signs of greatness even when a nursling in the care of wet nurses. From these two references scholars have concluded that Gopāla III ascended the throne at a very early age and was soon murdered by his uncle Madanapāla, who succeeded him.[1] There is no evidence to warrant such a conclusion. The meaning of the verse of the *Rāmacarita* cannot be fully grasped, owing to the absence of any contemporary commentary. The verse runs as follows :

Api śatrughnopāyād-Gopālaḥ svarjjagāma tatsūnuḥ /
Hantuḥ Kumbhinasyas-tanayasy-aitasya sāmayikametat //

The meaning of the second line of the verse is not clear in the context of Gopāla. It is quite probable that the line alludes to his death at the hands of a murderer. R. C. Majumdar and others translated it as follows : The death of this ill-disciplined person, who was the killer of the chief of the elephant forces, occurred under the influence of time. They added a foot note saying that "it appears · that king Gopāla met with a premature death while encountering either an elephant or a crocodile."[2]

It is also difficult to extract any meaning from the Nimdighi stone inscription,[3] as it is full of scribal mistakes

[1] R. D. Banerji : *MASB*, vol. V, p. 102.
[2] *Rāmacarita*, VRS Edition, p. 123.
[3] *IHQ*, vol. XVII, pp. 206-216 ; *EI*, vol. XXXV, pp. 228-33.

and poor composition. It follows from this inscription that Gopāla died in a battle against some enemy. But the idea that Gopāla III reigned for only a short period has been removed by the Rajibpur (Dinajpur District) Sadāśiva image inscription, which is dated in his 14th regnal year.[1]

So it is certain that Gopāla ruled for at least 14 years and he may have faced his death in a fight against some enemy, which is possibly alluded to in the verse of the *Rāmacarita*.

We have no source to determine the enemy against whom Gopāla fought the battle. N.K. Bhattasali, from the expression *pūrasenaśatru*,[2] suggested that the Senas were the enemies. But this conclusion is very hazardous. The Sena incursion to northern Bengal, as referred to in the Deopārā inscription of Vijayasena,[3] is generally taken to have occurred during the reign of Madanapāla, which seems quite reasonable, because the Pāla possession of Varendra up to the 8th year of Madanapāla's reign is proved by the Manahali grant.[4]

Gopāla III was succeeded by his uncle Madanapāla, son of Rāmapāla.[5] He is the last Pāla ruler who can be definitely said to have belonged to the Pāla line. The verses of the *Rāmacarita* seem to indicate that there was trouble at his accession.[6] It is

[1] N. G. Majumdar : *ASI, Annual Report*, 1936-37, pp. 130-133 ; N. K. Bhattasali : *IHQ*, vol. XVII, pp. 217-18. On palaeographic grounds the inscription has been assigned by both scholars to Gopāla III. R. C. Majumdar cast some doubt about its assignment (cf. *HB-I*, p. 167, Fn. 4). He, however, accepted the view provisionally (cf. *Ibid.*, p. 181). D. C. Sircar is also in favour of assigning this inscription to Gopāla III (cf. *EI*, vol. XXXV, p. 230.).

[2] Line 5 of the Nimdighi stone inscription (*IHQ*, vol. XVII, pp. 206 ff.) according to N. K. Bhattasali's emendation. The reading of this inscription cannot be said to be beyond doubt. But N. K. Bhattasali has shown reasons for accepting one or the other reading and his interpretation and emendation seem to be reasonable.

[3] *EI*, vol. I, pp. 306 ff. ; *IB-III*, pp. 42 ff.

[4] *GL*, p. 147 ff.

[5] Manahali grant : *Ibid.*; *Rāmacarita*, Verses IV/13-15 : VRS Edition, pp. 124-25.

[6] Verses IV/13-15 : *Ibid.*

quite possible that during the reigns of the two successors of Rāmapāla the Pāla kingdom had to face the assault of the Gāhaḍavālas of Kanauj and also of the Eastern Cālukyas.

The Gāhaḍavāla king, Govindacandra (c. 1114-55 A. D.) issued a grant of a village not far from Patnā in 1124 A. D.[1] He issued another grant from Mudgagiri (Munghyr) in 1146 A. D., which proves that he was staying there at that time.[2] This goes to prove that the Gāhaḍavālas were in possession of the major portion of Bihar. The conflict between the Pālas and the Gāhaḍavālas is also referred to in the *Prākṛta-paiṅgalam*.[3] That parts of Bihar continued in the possession of the Gāhaḍavālas is proved by other inscriptions of Govindacandra.[4]

But there are proofs also of Madanapāla's possessions in Bihar. His Bihar Hill image inscription[5] is dated in his 3rd regnal year. His Jaynagar (in Munghyr district) image inscription is dated in his 14th regnal year.[6] His Valgudar (in Munghyr district) inscription is dated in his 18th regnal year.[7] The Ārmā (in Munghyr district) inscription is dated in his 14th regnal year.[8] Another inscription from Nongarh in Jamui sub-division of the Munghyr district refers to his reign and is dated in Vikrama *saṁvat* 1201 (=1144-45 A. D.).[9] All these inscriptions would show that Madanapāla also held parts of Bihar (Magadha). A reason-

[1] Maner plate : *JASB*, vol. XVIII, p. 81 ; *JBORS*, 1916, pp. 444-47.

[2] The Lār plates : *EI*, vol. VII, pp. 98-99.

[3] *IHQ*, vol. XI, pp. 565-566.

[4] Tārācandi rock ins., dated 1169 A.D., found at Sahasram in Sahabad district of Bihar : *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. VI, pp. 547-49 ; *EI*, vol. V, Appendix, p. 22, No. 153.
Gayā inscription : *ASI Annual Report*, 1903-04, p. 55. Phulwari Ins. (in Sahabad district) : *EI*, vol. V, Appendix, p. 22, No. 152.

[5] A. Cunningham : *ASI Report*, vol. III, p. 124, No. 16.

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 124, plate XLV, No. 17. The date was first read as 19, but now it is correctly read as 14, cf. *IHQ*, vol. XVII, p. 220 ; *JRASB,L*, vol. VII, p. 216.

[7] *EI*, vol. XXVIII, pp. 141 ff.

[8] *Indian Archaeology—A Review*, 1960-61, p. 44.

[9] *Ibid.*

able reconciliation between the Gāhaḍavāla and the Pāla sources would seem to be that during the reigns of the weak successors of Rāmapāla the Gāhaḍavāla king Govindacandra succeeded in pushing his frontiers into Magadha. But Madanapāla possibly succeeded in recapturing parts of Bihar which he held up to the end of his reign. But after him, Vijayacandra (c. 1155-70 A. D.) again pushed forward and occupied almost the whole of western Magadha. The Gāhaḍavālas gradually occupied the whole of Bihar and dealt the final blow to Pāla power in Bihar, if there were any after Madanapāla. Madanapāla received valuable support from his kinsman, Candradeva, the lord of Aṅga, son of Suvarṇadeva and grandson of Mathanadeva, Rāmapāla's uncle.[1]

The Cālukyas also advanced as far as the Pāla empire. The Cālukya king Tribhuvanamalla Permmadideva claims victory over Magadha and Rāḍha in his inscription dated in 1128 A. D.[2] Āca, the feudatory of the Cālukya king Vikramāditya VI, who is known to have flourished in 1122-1123 A. D., claims victory over Vaṅga.[3] Someśvara III (1127-38 A. D.) is also said to have placed his feet on the head of the king of Magadha.[4] Vijjala (c. 1145-1157 A. D.) also claims to have conquered Vaṅga, Kaliṅga and Magadha.[5] If there is any truth in these claims of the Cālukya sources, it appears that the Pāla power was being harassed from all directions, which speaks of the weakness of the Pāla rulers after Rāmapāla.

Madanapāla lost possession of northern Bengal sometime after his 8th regnal year. That northern Bengal continued in his possession up to that year is proved by his Manahali plate, by which land was granted in the Puṇḍravardhana *bhukti.*

[1] The *Rāmacarita* refers to Madanapāla's alliance with Candradeva, cf. Verses IV/16-21 : VRS Edition, pp. 12 ff. This Candradeva has correctly been identified with Candradeva of Aṅga, cf. *IHQ*, vol. V, pp. 35 ff.

[2] Devanagere Taluk Ins. No. 90, *Epigraphia Carnatica*, vol. XI, Text p. 120, Trans. p. 68.

[3] *Bombay Gazetteer*, vol. I, p. 452.

[4] *JBBRAS*, vol. XI, p. 268.

[5] Ablur Ins. : *EI*, vol. V, p. 257.

But Sena records indicate that they got possession of northern Bengal, ousting a Gauḍa king. So this region must have passed into the hands of the Senas some time after the 8th year of Madanapāla. The Senas rose to power in western Bengal, supplanted the Varmans in south-eastern Bengal, and also succeeded in putting an end to the Pāla rule.[1]

The *Rāmacarita* mentions that Madanapāla had driven back to the Kālindī the vanguard of the army that had destroyed a large number of his forces.[2] This may be taken as one of the attacks of Vijayasena, before he succeeded in ousting the Pālas. The *Rāmacarita* also refers to Madanapāla's victory over Govardhana,[3] who cannot be identified. Possibly he was a feudatory chief, who tried to defy his overlord. Besides these two references the *Rāmacarita* claims nothing else in the way of victories for Madanapāla. The major portion of the 4th canto is devoted to his praise. He is portrayed as a liberal and non-violent man, fond of the learned. There is no reference to any definite success. It shows that the poet had nothing definite for which to eulogise his patron and hence goes on repeating the same qualities verse after verse. As the loss of Varendra does not find mention in the *Rāmacarita,* it appears that Sandhyākara Nandī finished his work in the early part of Madanapāla's reign.

The Valgudar inscription gives the latest limit of Madanapāla's reign.[4] It is dated in his 18th year and Śaka Era 1083, corresponding to 1161 A.D. This inscription is one of the very few Pāla inscriptions which is dated simultaneously in the regnal year of the king and in a known era, and therefore serves as a cornerstone of Pāla chronology. On the evidence of this inscription it can be said with certainty that Madanapāla ruled at least for 18 years and his reign ended sometime around 1161 A.D.

[1] The history of the Senas will be discussed in Chapter V.
[2] Verse IV/27 : VRS Edition, pp. 133-34.
[3] Verse IV/47 : *Ibid.*, pp. 150-51.
[4] *EI*, vol. XXVIII, pp. 141 ff.

Madanapāla is the last known king of the Pāla dynasty. His Manahali plate establishes with certainty the line of the Pāla kings from Gopāla I down to his reign. No inscription of any Pāla ruler has been found in Bengal after the 8th year of Madanapāla and the find places of the other inscriptions of his later years prove that Pāla rule was confined to parts of eastern and southern Bihar ; western Bihar was possibly under the Gāhaḍavālas.[1]

Seven manuscripts[2] and two stone inscriptions[3] preserve the name of one Govindapāla, who ruled in the Gayā district. The dates in all his records, except in one manuscript of his 4th year, are given in a peculiar way which has given rise to controversies among scholars, which will be discussed later on.[4] The Jaynagar image inscription, now preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, gives the name of another king, Palapāla. We have examined this inscription and it seems that it is written in very corrupt Sanskrit and is full of scribal mistakes.[5] D. C. Sircar's emendation seems to be the nearest approach to a correct rendering of this difficult and obscure

[1] The Bodhgayā ins. of Jayacandra (dated in sometime between 1183 and 1193 A.D.) seems to suggest that the Gāhaḍavālas overthrew the Pālas from southern Bihar also. Cf. Bhandarkar List, No. 401, *EI*, vol. XX, Appendix, p. 59.

[2] *MASB*, vol. V, pp. 110-112. The dates are given as follows :
(i) *Govindapālasya vijayarājya-saṁvatsare 4*,
(ii) *Govindapālasyātīta-saṁvatsa 18*,
(iii) *Govindapāliya saṁvat 24*,
(iv) *Govindapāladevānāṁ saṁ 37*,
(v) *Govindapāladevānāṁ vinaṣṭa rājye aṣṭatṛṁśat-saṁvatsare*,
(vi) The 38th year of Govindapāla,
(vii) *Govindapāladevānāṁ 39*,

[3] *MASB*, vol. V, p. 109. The date in one is given as follows : *Saṁvat 1232 Vikārī saṁvatsare Śrī Govindapāladeva-gatarājye caturdaśa saṁvatsare*. The other ins. has never been edited. Cunningham mentioned that it is dated in 1178 A.D., cf. A. Cunningham : *ASI Report*, vol. XV, p. 155.

[4] *Infra*, Chapter V.

[5] *JBRS*, vol. XLI, 1955, pp. 143 ff. See Plate II.

inscription. It follows from the inscription that in the 35th year of Palapāla, who is mentioned as *Gauḍeśvara*, an image of *Bhaṭṭārikā Pūrṇeśvarī* (the image of the goddess is of a peculiar character, and the name Pūrṇeśvarī is also very uncommon) was established at Champā (possibly in the Bhāgalpur district of Bihar) by one Ūtakva. But the nature of the inscription does not allow the name of Palapāla and his title, *Gauḍeśvara*, to be beyond any doubt.[1]

Besides the fact that the name of both these kings end in *Pāla* there is nothing to prove that they belonged to the Pāla line. It is not unlikely that Govindapāla and Palapāla belonged to this line and kept up the pretence of being the successors of the imperial Pālas in small principalities of Bihar. But their connection with the Pālas, if there were any, cannot be proved. There were many small chieftains with names ending in Pāla.[2]

After the fall of the Pālas, some rulers of small principalities of Bihar, with names ending in Pāla, may have professed to be *Gauḍeśvara*, which possibly did not mean much during the period of confusion. So for the present it would be safer to conclude that Madanapāla was the last known Pāla king. Govindapāla and Palapāla, whose connection with the Pālas cannot be proved, ruled in parts of Bihar, with the pretension to royal dignities, which possibly did not mean much.

[1] See Plate II.

[2] The name of Yakṣapāla of Gayā is a contemporary example.

PART II

DYNASTIES OF SOUTH-EASTERN BENGAL

CHAPTER IV

Introduction

South-eastern Bengal[1] seems to have preserved an independent entity in its political affairs. From the break-up of the Gupta empire down to the coming of the Senas this deltaic part of Bengal was never assimilated by north and western Bengal, though from time to time there were attempts to do so. The history of this portion of Bengal has hitherto not been viewed in the right perspective. The archaeological finds at Mainamati have led to gross alterations of the existing ideas and have thrown fresh light on the history of this region. In the following pages we attempt a reconstruction of the history of this region in view of these new materials.

As early as the first half of the sixth century A. D. south-eastern Bengal formed an independent kingdom, and the names of Gopacandra, Dharmāditya and Samācāradeva are preserved in six copper-plates.[2] It cannot be ascertained whether Śaśāṅka's empire embraced south-eastern Bengal. Scholars theorise about the probable existence of a Bhadra dynasty in this region.

There are references in different sources to some kings of Samataṭa whose names end in *Bhadra*. Hsüan Tsang informs us that Śīlabhadra, the famous Buddhist teacher at Nālandā,

[1] The whole of the modern province of East Pakistan, minus the portion known as north Bengal (the area lying between the Padmā and the Yamunā) is denoted by the term south-eastern Bengal. This area was known at different times as Vaṅga or Samataṭa or Harikela. Though the exact location of these ancient geographical names is a difficult problem, it is fairly certain that all of them may well be grouped under one common name Vaṅga ('Bang' of the Muslim historians). For a discussion of the extent and position of Vaṅga see H. C. Raychaudhuri : *Studies in Indian Antiquities*, 2nd Edition, pp. 264-270.

[2] See *Supra*, pp. 3 ff.

(who flourished in the first half of the 7th century A. D.) was a scion of the Brahmanical royal family of Samataṭa.[1] In verse 868 of the Sanskrit text of *Mañju-Śrī-Mūlakalpa* it is stated that there will be a king whose initial is *Svāda*, but in the Tibetan text the name of the king is given as Rājabhadra.[2] This king has been placed before Gopāla I, the founder of the Pāla dynasty. In the Khālimpur plate of Dharmapāla Deddadevī, the mother of Dharmapāla, is described as *Sarvāṇīva Śivasya Guhyakapate Bhadreva bhadrātmajā*.[3] Kielhorn took *bhadrātmajā* of this passage to mean that Deddadevī was the daughter of a Bhadra king.[4] A. K. Maitreya differed from this explanation and saw in this passage references to Puranic mythology.[5] But in that case the expression *bhadrātmajā* becomes redundant, because to compare Deddadevī with Bhadrā, wife of Kuvera, the expression *Guhyakapate bhadreva* is sufficient. So Kielhorn's explanation that Deddadevī was the daughter of a Bhadra king seems to be right. We also have reference to a vassal chief named Jyeṣṭhabhadra in the Nidhanpur copper-plate of Bhāskaravarman.[6] All these references to a Bhadra king or a Bhadra chief have led scholars to postulate the existence of a line of kings with their names ending in Bhadra.[7] Some scholars have even attempted to show the identity of the Bhadras with the Khaḍga kings of Bengal.[8] P. L. Paul has even suggested that the Bhadras and the Khaḍgas ruled in eastern Bengal at the same time. In view of the casual references in the different

[1] T. Watters : *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, vol. II, p. 109.
[2] K. P. Jayaswal : *IHI*, Text edited by Rāhula Saṅkṛtyāyana, p. 68.
[3] Verse 5 : *EI*, vol. IV, pp. 248 & 251 ; *GL*, p. 12.
[4] *EI*, vol. IV, pp. 245 and 251.
[5] *GL*, p. 20, Fn. 1.
[6] *EI*, vol. XII, pp. 65 ff.; vol. XIX, pp. 115 ff.
[7] P. L. Paul : 'Was There A Bhadra Dynasty In Eastern Bengal ?' *IC*, vol. II, pp. 795-797.
R. C. Majumdar : *HB-I*, pp. 85-86.
[8] P. L. Paul : *op. cit.*, pp. 796-797.
N. K. Bhattasali : *EI*, vol. XVII, p. 357.

sources the existence of a Bhadra dynasty is not unlikely, but we know nothing definite about them.

In the second half of the 7th century A.D., when the Later Guptas captured power in Gauḍa and Magadha, south-eastern Bengal saw the emergence of the Khaḍga kings. The history of the Khaḍgas is known from two copper-plates found at Ashrafpur[1] (30 miles north-east of Dacca) and an inscribed image of Sarvāṇī found at Deulbāḍi (14 miles south of Comilla).[2] Nothing more than the names of three generations of rulers (Khaḍgodyama, Jātakhaḍga and Devakhaḍga) and the names of the queen (Prabhāvatī) and the son (Rājaraja or Rājarājabhaṭa) of the last named king is known from these sources. Both plates were issued from the royal camp of Karmānta-vāsaka, which has been identified with modern Bādkāmtā, a police station in the Comilla district of East Pakistan.[3] The date of these kings has been a matter of dispute among scholars. But from palaeographic considerations, supported by Chinese accounts, they can be placed in the latter part of the 7th century A. D.[4]

The Tippera copper-plate of Lokanātha[5] introduces us to a line of feudatory chiefs who ruled in the Tippera region.[6] The plate is dated in words and the portion containing the figure for hundred is illegible. According to R. G. Basak, who dated the plate in 663-64 A. D., the Khaḍgas were the overlords of this family. But there is nothing in the plate which can lead us to a definite conclusion in this respect.

1 *MASB*, vol. I, No. 6, pp. 85-91 : *JASB* (*NS*), vol. XIX, pp. 375 ff. For a discussion of the date of these plates see *EI*, vol. XXVI, pp. 125-26.

2 *Ibid.*, vol. XVII, pp. 357-59.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 351 ; *JASB* (*NS*), vol. X, p. 87.

4 *JASB* (*NS*), vol. XIX, pp. 376-79 ; vol. X, pp. 84-91 ; *Dacca University Studies*, vol. I, No. I, p. 64.
R. C. Majumdar : *HB-I*, p. 87 ; A. H. Dani : *Indian Palaeography*, p. 134 ; R. G. Basak : *History of North-Eastern India*, p. 202.

5 *EI*, vol. XV, pp. 301-315.

6 R. G. Basak : *op. cit.*, pp. 195 ff.

The Kailan copper-plate of king Śrīdhāraṇa Rāta of Samataṭa[1] introduces us to another line of semi-independent chiefs who ruled in the Tippera-Noakhali region of south-eastern Bengal. Both the Tippera grant of Lokanātha and this Kailan grant of Śrīdhāraṇa show that they were feudatory rulers who had risen to an almost independent status and that they were eager to demonstrate their absolute authority over particular regions in defiance of the overlord.[2] On palaeographic considerations D. C. Sircar has placed the Kailan plate in the second half of the 7th century A. D. and a few years after the Tippera grant of Lokanātha.[3] He has identified Jīvadhāraṇa Rāta, father of Śrīdhāraṇa Rāta, with Nṛpa Jīvadhāraṇa of the Tippera grant of Lokanāth.[4] Śrīdhāraṇa does not assume any royal title. He is mentioned as *Samataṭeśvara* and *Prāpta-pañca-mahāśubda*,[5] which prove that he was a feudatory ruling chief.

The names of the overlords of these Rātas as well as of Lokanātha are not mentioned. It is quite probable that they were feudatories of the Khaḍga rulers, who had their centre of administration in the Dacca-Faridpur-Barisal region, and gradually assumed an almost independent position.

The Tibetan monk Lāmā Tāranātha speaks of a Candra dynasty in Vaṅga from about 6th to the 8th century A. D.[6] But this has yet to be corroborated by any other reliable evidence.

[1] *IHQ*. vol. XXIII, pp. 221-241. Kailan is a village in the Candimau police station in the Comilla district.

[2] *Ibid*., p. 223.

[3] *Ibid*., p. 224. A. H. Dani has placed both the plates of Lokanātha and Śrīdhāraṇa in the first half of the 7th century A.D., cf. *Indian Palaeography*, p. 133.

[4] *IHQ*, vol. XXIII, p. 224.

[5] The title has been interpreted by some as indicating the enjoyment of a combination of five official titles beginning with the word *mahat* (*Mahāpratīhāra, Mahāsāndhivigrahika, Mahāśvaśālādhikṛta, Mahābhāṇḍāgārika* and *Mahāsādhanika*), and by others as pointing to the right granted by the overlord to enjoy the sounds of five kinds of musical instruments. In whatever way it is interpreted, it indicates a subordinate position. Cf. *Ibid*., p. 226.

[6] *IA*, vol. IV, pp. 365-366.

During the last quarter of the 7th and the first half of the 8th century A. D. Bengal witnessed repeated foreign invasions.[1] Possibly the Khaḍga rulers also had to bear the brunt of these invasions along with the rulers Gauḍa and Magadha. It seems that north and western Bengal was worst affected, and suffered from unsettled conditions resulting in the state of *mātsyanyāyam*. South-eastern Bengal, being the remotest part of the region and well guarded by its rivers, was less exposed to these invasions of northern Indian powers, and a more or less settled condition seems to have prevailed in this area.

The recent excavations in the Maināmatī-Lālmāī ridge in the Comilla district of East Pakistan carried by the Department of Archaeology, Government of Pakistan, have unearthed fresh materials which enable us to reconstruct the hitherto unknown history of south-eastern Bengal from the 8th century A. D. onwards.[2] The history of this region from the Khaḍgas to the rise of the Varmans in the 11th century A. D. was in complete darkness except for the names of a few Candra kings, about whom very little was known. In the absence of any record the history of this region was generally confused with the history of the Pāla rulers who had their centre of government in north-western Bengal and Magadha. We have seen earlier[3] that there is no evidence in support of the assumption that the Pālas rose to power in south-eastern Bengal and the existence of Pāla rule in this region till the time of Mahīpāla II (third quarter of the 11th century A.D.) cannot be proved beyond doubt. The discovery of a few copper-plates and coins from Maināmatī confirms our belief that Pāla rule could

[1] *Supra*, pp. 6-7.

[2] For the account of these finds see
F.A. Khan : *Mainamati, A Preliminary Report on the Recent Archaeological Excavation in East Pakistan*, Published by the Department of Archaeology, Government of Pakistan, Karachi, 1963.
Mainamati, Published by Pakistan Publication, Karachi, 1956.
'Mainamati Excavations, An Interpretation', *Pakistan Quarterly*, vol. VII, No. 3, Autumn, 1957, pp. 36 ff.

[3] *Supra*, pp. 16-18, 74-76.

not have embraced this portion of Bengal, where independent dynasties, of whom we knew very little or nothing, exercised their authority.

The DEVAS

Three copper-plates and a number of coins introduce us to a new ruling dynasty of south-eastern Bengal—the Devas, formerly quite unknown to history.

Two of the three plates and the coins were found at the Śālvana Vihāra in the Lālmāi-Maināmatī ridge near Comilla.[1] The third plate, now preserved in the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, was published by D. C. Sircar in 1951.[2] One of the Maināmatī plates is in bad condition and could not be deciphered completely. But its script and its seal with the Dharmacakra and the seated deer symbol are identical with those of the other plate. The other Maināmatī plate contains a grant by king Śrī Ānandadeva on the obverse and its endorsement by his son and successor king Śrī Bhavadeva on the reverse. The

[1] Dr. F.A. Khan has published extracts from these two plates and sketches of the coins in the monograph, *Mainamati*, Karachi, 1963, pp. 19 ff. Unfortunately detailed reading or transcripts could not be procured.

[2] *JAS,L*, vol. XVII, 1951, pp. 83-94. The find place of the plate is unknown.

third plate contains a land grant by Bhavadeva. From the plates we get the names of four generations of rulers :

Śrī Śāntideva
:
Śrī Vīradeva
:
Śrī Ānandadeva
:
Śrī Bhavadeva

All these rulers bear the imperial titles of *Paramasaugata, Paramabhaṭṭāraka, Parameśvara* and *Mahārājādhirāja,* which are indicative of their independent position. The legend just below the Dhármacakra seal in the two Mainámatī plates has been read by F. A. Khan as *Śrī Bhaṅgala Mṛgāṅkasya,* the title adopted by the Khaḍga kings.[1] But the legend in the same place of the other plate reads *Śrī Abhinava-mṛgāṅka,* which appears to to be a *biruda* of king Bhavadeva, who was responsible for the issue of the charter.[2]

The Asiatic Society plate of Bhavadeva was issued from *Devaparvat-āvasthita-Śrīmaj-jayaskandhavāra.*[3] Devaparvata also occurs in the Kailan plate of Śrīdhāraṇa Rāta[4] and the Sylhet copper-plate of Śrīcandra.[5] It is mentioned in Bhavadeva's plate that the city of Devaparvata stood on the bank of the holy river Kṣīrodā.[6] In the Sylhet plate of Śrīcandra Devaparvata is mentioned as *Kṣīrodāmaṇi* (jewel of the river Kṣīrodā). A more detailed description of Devaparvata occurs in the Kailan plate, where it is said that Devaparvata was encircled by the river Kṣīrodā as if by a moat and elephants played in the waters of the river, both banks of which were adorned by clusters of

[1] *Mainamati,* 1963, p. 19.
JAS,L, vol. XVII, p. 87.
Line 42 : *Ibid.,* p. 93.
IHQ, vol. XXIII, pp. 221 ff.
See below.
Line 41 : *JAS,L,* vol. XVII, p. 93.

boats.[1] The river Kṣīrodā has been correctly identified with the modern Khīra or Khīrnai, a dried up river course still traceable as branching off from the Gomatī, just west of the town of Comilla. This river surrounds the southern end of the Maināmatī hills and runs south-west to fall into the Dākātiya river.[2] In view of this identification the city of Devaparvata seems to have been situated somewhere in the Maināmatī hills. The discovery of the two copper-plates of the Devas and also of the three copper-plates of the Candras in this area confirms this identification.

It may also be mentioned that the huge monastic establishment with a very large tank near the Kotila Mura site (in the Maināmatī hills) is locally called Ānanda Rāja's Palace. Apparently the place bears the name of the third ruler of the Deva dynasty.[3]

So it seems that the Deva rulers had their head quarters in the Comilla region. It is not possible to ascertain the extent of their empire. But the fragmentary information supplied by the three plates seem to indicate that they held sway over Samataṭa (Noakhali-Tippera region). The Asiatic Society plate of Bhavadeva grants land in the Peraṇāṭana-viṣaya,[4] which is also mentioned in the Ashrafpur plates of the Khaḍga kings.[5] A similar name of a viṣaya, Guptināṭana in Samataṭa, is found in the Kailan plate of Śrīdhāraṇa Rāta.[6] It is probable that Peraṇāṭana was somewhere in the Noakhali-Tippera region, but its exact location is uncertain.

[1] *Atha matta-mātaṅgaśata-sukha-vigāhyamāna-vividha-tīrthayānaubhir-aparimitābhirūparacita-kulayā parikṛtād-abhimata-nimna-gāminyā Kṣīrodayā sarvvato bhadrakād-Devaparvvatāt /*
IHQ, vol. XXIII, pp. 237 and 225.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 226 ; *JAS,L*, vol. XVII, p. 87.

[3] F. A. Khan : *Mainamati*, 1963, p. 19.

[4] Line 56, *JAS,L*, vol. XVII, p. 94.

[5] Line 6, Plate A ; Lines 12-13, Plate B : *MASB*, vol. I, p. 90.

[6] *IHQ*, vol. XXIII, pp. 221 ff.

The plates of Bhavadeva are not dated in any known era and hence we have to rely entirely on palaeographic considerations for fixing the date of the Deva rulers. F. A. Khan placed them not long after the Khaḍgas, and on the basis of the scripts, which bear close resemblance to the Later Gupta scripts, the Devas are assigned to a period between the last part of the 7th and the middle of the 8th centuries A. D.[1] One gold coin, found along with a coin of Candragupta II and an imitation Gupta coin, bears the same legend, *Bhaṅgala Mṛgāṅkasya*, as that found on the seals of the Maināmatī plates of the Deva kings. Two other hoards contain 224 silver coins, and on palaeographic grounds they are assigned to the 7th-8th centuries A. D.[2] But A. H. Dani, in his recent study on Indian Palaeography, has bracketed the two Maināmatī plates of Bhavadeva with the Khālimpur plate of Dharmapāla.[3] D. C. Sircar also assigned the Asiatic Society plate of Bhavadeva to the 8th or the 9th century A.D. on palaeographic grounds. He is not decided as to whether the king should be definitely assigned to the period before Dharmapāla or after Devapāla. But on the basis of a few palaeographic characteristics he is inclined to support the first alternative.[4] So it would be safer to assign the plates of Bhavadeva to the second half of the 8th century A. D.[5]

In the second half of the 7th century A. D. the Khaḍgas held sway over south-eastern Bengal, with their seat of government in the Dacca-Faridpur region.[6] In the Tippera-Noakhali region the families of Lokanātha and Śrīdhāraṇa Rāta held control as semi-independent feudatories. In the last quarter of the 7th century A. D. the Khaḍgas seem to have spread their influence

[1] *Mainamati*, 1963, p. 19.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 25-26.

[3] A. H. Dani : *Indian Palaeography*, Oxford, 1963, p. 135.

[4] *JAS,L*, vol. XVII, pp. 84-86.

[5] Unfortunately we have no access to the original plates or to photographs or estampages of them, and hence we are compelled to rely on the authority of other scholars.

[6] *Supra*, pp. 142-142

in the Samataṭa area, where Lokanātha and Śrīdhāraṇa ruled.[1] The Devas may have succeeded the Khaḍgas in this area sometime in the first half of the 8th century A.D. In the present state of our knowledge it is not possible to determine the exact period of their rule. But it seems that they were contemporaries of the early Pālas, who held sway over north and north-western Bengal and Magadha, since the scripts of the plates of the two dynasties are very similar.

One of the Maināmatī plates of Bhavadeva is dated in his 12th regnal year.[2] At present we have no means to ascertain the length of the reigns of the four Deva rulers. A period of about 50/60 years can roughly be assigned to them, and the Devas may have ruled in south-eastern Bengal sometime between 750 and 800 A. D. This assignment, however, is in no way final. But it seems certain that the Devas came to power after the Khaḍgas (second half of the 7th and early 8th century A. D.) and before the Harikela rulers of the 9th century A. D.[3]

It has been generally held that the Pālas rose to power in south-eastern Bengal, and on this assumption D. C. Sircar remarked that "not long after the rule of Bhavadeva....the rule of the dynasty to which he belonged came to an end and the Samataṭa country passed to the Pālas."[4] We have already examined this assumption and have come to the conclusion that the Pālas rose to power in the north and north-western Bengal, and that Pāla suzerainty over south-eastern Bengal in their early period cannot be proved beyond doubt.[5] The existence of the Devas in Samataṭa in the 8th century A. D. adds further strength to our contention.

[1] This is proved by a Chinese account. The Chinese priest Cheng-chi found Rājabhaṭa ruling over Samataṭa and this ruler has been identified by most scholars with Rājarājabbaṭa of the Khaḍga dynasty. Cf. *HB-I*, p. 87.

[2] F. A. Khan : *Mainamati*, 1963, p. 19.

[3] *Infra*, pp. 150 ff.

[4] *JAS,L*, vol. XVII, p. 89.

[5] *Supra*, pp. 16-18.

As an alternative to this suggestion for the date of the Devas D. C. Sircar suggested that they may be placed in the second half of the 9th century A. D., after the reign of Devapāla. This assumption, no doubt, emanated from his belief that south-eastern Bengal formed a part of the Pāla empire and hence the Devas could be conveniently placed after the reign of Devapāla when the Pāla empire faced a temporary collapse. But he was rather inclined to place the Devas in the 8th century A. D.[1]

In the present state of our knowledge we know very little about the four Deva rulers. Nothing definite is known about Śrī Śāntideva, whose name appears at the top of the genealogy contained in the two Maināmatī plates.[2] But the first verse of the Asiatic Society plate seems to indicate that the first ruler of the dynasty was Śrī Vīradeva.[3] The first two verses further indicate the might of Vīradeva in subduing his enemies : it is said that he "extirpated his enemies as the Sun dissolves darkness" and in this respect he resembled *Acyuta* (Viṣṇu).[4] His son Ānandadeva is also portrayed as a great warrior in verses 3, 4 and 5. But many of the passages in the stanzas describing Ānandadeva and Bhavadeva could not be deciphered. The general tone of the eulogy, however, indicates that these two Deva rulers held quite powerful positions.

[1] After discussing both the alternatives D. C. Sircar writes, "The first alternative, however, seems to be supported by the palaeography of the epigraph under discussion." *JAS,L*, vol. XVII, p. 91.

[2] The details of the Maināmatī plates are not available to us. F. A. Khan has only mentioned the genealogy derived from the plates. Cf. *Mainamati*, p. 19.

[3] *Dān-ādy-abhyāsa-sātmībhavana-bhara-bhavad-bhūri-pūrṇṇa-pravāha-prāpi-prājya-prajā-prasphuṭa-ghaṭa-ghaṭan-āvāpta-bhūmīśvaratvaḥ* /
JAS,L, vol. XVII, p. 91.

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 86, 91-92.

The Kings of HARIKELA

The Chittagong plate of Kāntideva[1] introduces us to another line of kings, who ruled in south-eastern Bengal in the 9th century A. D. On palaeographic grounds R. C. Majumdar placed the plate in the 9th century A. D.[2] The plate, which is incomplete and contains only the formal portion of an intended land grant, refers to three generations of a Buddhist family : Bhadradatta, his son Dhanadatta and the latters's son Kāntideva. Only Kāntideva is given full royal titles, while his father and grandfather are merely praised for their prowess and religious devotion. Kāntideva's mother was Vinduratī, "daughter of a great king."[3] From this information R. C. Majumdar concluded that "neither the father nor the grandfather of Kāntideva was a king, and he must either have inherited his throne from his maternal grandfather or carved out an independent kingdom for himself."[4] D.C. Sircar has gone further to suggest the identification of Kāntideva's maternal grandfather with Bhavadeva of the Deva dynasty or with one of his successors, from whom Kāntideva, who was originally a petty ruler, inherited the kingdom of Samataṭa.[5] This suggestion is purely conjectural and without any foundation. But it seems certain that the family of Kāntideva spread its influence in south-eastern Bengal after the Deva rulers.

From the references in Kāntideva's plate it appears that his kingdom was situated in south-eastern Bengal. The charter was issued from the city of Vardhamānapura[6] and addressed to

[1] First edited by D.C. Bhattacharya and J. N. Sikdar in *Modern Review*, Calcutta, November, 1922, pp. 612-14. Re-edited by R.C. Majumdar : *EI*, vol. XXVI, pp. 313-318.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 313 ff. D. C. Bhattacharya and J. N. Sikdar placed it to a period between 750 and 850 A.D.

[3] Vinduratī is said to be *mahābhūbhṛt-sutā*. Verse 4 : *Ibid.*, p. 317.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 315.

[5] *JAS,L*, vol. XVII, p 90.

[6] Lines 13-14 : *EI*, vol. XXVI, p. 317.

the future rulers of Harikela *maṇḍala*.[1] According to I-tsing Harikela was the eastern limit of Eastern India.[2] Hemacandra, the celebrated Jaina lexicographer of the 11th century A. D., explains Harikela as a synonym of Vaṅga.[3] But in the *Mañju-Śrī-Mūlakalpa* Vaṅga, Samataṭa and Harikela are mentioned as distinct localities.[4] According to a Chinese map[5] Harikela comprises the coastal region between Samataṭa and Orissa. Rājaśekhara, in his *Karpūramañjarī* includes Harikela among the eastern countries invaded by his hero Caṇḍapāla, apparently a thinly disguised pseudonym for Mahendrapāla Pratīhāra.[6] According to two manuscripts preserved in the Dacca University Library Harikola, apparently a variant of Harikela, is synonymous with Sylhet.[7] According to Keśava's *Kalpadrukośa* Harikeli was the name of Śrīhaṭṭa, modern Sylhet.[8] From all these references it is clear that like many ancient geographical terms Harikela was used in a broader sense, as a synonym of Vaṅga, and in a narrower sense to denote a part of it, possibly Sylhet or the area lying to the east of

[1] Line 16 :
Harikelā-maṇḍale-bhāvi-bhūpatiṁs-tad-ātma-hitam-idam bodhayati viditamastu..... / Ibid., p. 317.

[2] I-tsing sailed from Ceylon to the north-east and "came to Harikela, which is the eastern limit of Eastern India and is a part of Jambudvīpa." J. Takakusu (tr.) : *A Record of the Buddhist Religion* by I-tsing, Oxford, 1896, p. xlvi.

[3] *Vaṅgāstu Harikeliyāḥ* :
Abhidhānacintāmaṇi, Verse 957 (Bhūmi-kāṇḍa). Monier-Williams explains Harikelīya as the country of Bengal. Cf. *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p. 1166.

[4] T. Ganapati Sastri's edition, pp. 232-33.

[5] *Map of Central Asia and India published in Japan in 1710 on the basis of the accounts of Fa-Hien and Hiuen-Tsang.* At the end of vol. II of the French translation of Hiuen-Tsang's Records by S. Julien.

[6] *Karpūramañjarī*, Act. I, pp. 15.
Konow and Lanman (ed. and tr.), Harvard Oriental Series, pp. 226-27, M. L. Nigam : 'Some Literary References To The History Of The Gurjara-Pratīhāras Mahendrapāla and Mahīpāla ; *JRAS*, 1964, pp. 14 ff.

[7] *Rūpacintāmaṇikośa*, No. 1451 ; *Rudrākṣamāhātmya*, No. 21415.

[8] *Śrihaṭṭo Harikeliḥ syāc-chrihaṭo 'pi kvacid bhavet*, Line I. 26.

the Brahmaputra. D. C. Sircar's[1] suggestion that Harikela originally denoted Sylhet and with the expansion of the power of the kings of Harikela it came to denote the whole of Vaṅga may be given some credence. So we find that the kingdom of Kāntideva must have been in south-eastern Bengal, thoughits exact position is difficult to determine.

Vardhamānapura cannnot be satisfactorily identified. R.C. Majumdar[2] identified it with modern Burdwan in western Bengal and in that case Kāntideva's kingdom must have embraced a part of western Bengal as well. This is not altogether impossible because during the reigns of the immediate successors of Devapāla (in the second half of the 9th century A.D.) the Pāla empire suffered shrinkage at the hands of the Pratīhāras,[3] and Kāntideva may have taken the opportunity to extend his dominion into western Bengal. But this is a tenuous hypothesis because the identification of Vardhamānapura is in no way certain. There are other suggestions for its identification. N.K. Bhattasali[4] identified it with Vikramapura in the Dacca district, but there is no evidence to support this. D.C. Sircar[5] is of the opinion that Vardhamānapura was in south-eastern Bengal and possibly in the Sylhet area.

Taking all these theories into consideration it would only be safe to say that the Chittagong plate of Kāntideva represents a line of kings who ruled in south-eastern Bengal in the 9th century A.D. They seem to have succeeded the Deva rulers. The existence of a kingdom of Harikela towards the end of the 9th century A.D. is proved by a reference in Rājaśekhara's *Karpūramañjarī*, where the hero Caṇḍapāla (identified with Mahendrapāla) is said to have dallied with Harikeli, apparently

[1] *JAS,L*, vol. XVII, p. 90.
[2] *EI*, vol. XXVI, p. 315.
[3] *Supra*, pp. 54-57.
[4] *Bhāratavarṣa* (Bengali journal), Āṣāḍha, 1332 B. S.; Reproduced in English: *IHQ*, vol. II, pp. 321-325.
[5] *JAS,L*, vol. XVII, p. 90.

a variant of Harikela, in the course of his eastern campaign.[1] It is quite possible that Mahendrapāla came as far as south-eastern Bengal and met a king of Harikela. We have definite epigraphic records to prove that he held northern Bengal for some time,[2] and it is not unlikely that he advanced further east into south-eastern Bengal, which was known to the contemporary writer as Harikela. We shall see later[3] that the Candras, who captured power in this region at the beginning of the 10th century A.D., are said in their records to have held a subordinate position to a Harikela king before gaining full independent position.

So these three factors – the information of Kāntideva's plate, the reference in the *Karpūramañjarī* and the reference in the Candra records to the effect that they captured power from the Harikela kings—seem to prove the existence of a line of kings of Harikela, which ruled in south-eastern Bengal in the 9th century A.D. and which, in the present state of our knowledge, is represented by Kāntideva of the Chittagong plate. We have no details about them. They were succeeded in the paramountcy of south-eastern Bengal by the Candras at the beginning of the 10th century A.D.

[1] Rājaśekhara : *Karpūramañjarī*, Act I :
Jaa Jaa puvvadisaṁga ṇābhuaṁga
Campā campa-akaṇṇaura, Rāḍhāṇi
Jjidarāḍhacaṁgattaṇa, vikkamakkaṁta
Kāmarūva, Harikeli keliāra ...
O king, paramour of the lady of the East, the Campaka (flower) like the ear ornament of (the city of) Campā, playfully conquering the country of Rāḍha, overpowering with prowess Kāmarūpa, dallying with Harikeli.
Text and Trans. by M. L. Nigam : *JRAS*, 1964, p. 15.

[2] *Supra*, pp. 54 ff.

[3] *Infra*, pp. 158 ff.

The CANDRAS

The history of the Candras of south-eastern Bengal could not be fully elucidated in the past owing to the scarcity of materials. The recent discovery of three copper-plates from Mainamatī (two of Laḍahacandra and one of Govindacandra), one copper-plate of Kalyāṇacandra, a king of the Candra dynasty so far unknown, from Dacca, and one copper-plate of Śrīcandra from Sylhet[1] has clearly established the continuous rule of this dynasty for five generations spreading over a period of about a century and a quarter. In the following pages we attempt to reconstruct the history of the Candras in the light of these newly available materials.

On the evidence of all the copper-plates and inscriptions so far discovered the genealogy and the known reign period of the Candra rulers can now be fixed as follows :

Kings		Known Reign Period
Pūrṇacandra		
Suvarṇacandra		
1. Trailokyacandra	...	Unknown.[2]
2. Śrīcandra	...	44 years.[3]
3. Kalyāṇacandra	...	24 years.[4]

[1] We are thankful to Prof. A.H. Dani, Chairman, Department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar, West Pakistan, for very kindly supplying us with the transcripts of the three Mainamatī plates, the Dacca plate and the Sylhet plate, all of which have not yet been published. Also we are thankful to Dr. Barrie M. Morrison, Dept. of Asian Studies, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada, who had himself examined and transcribed the plates found at Mainamatī, for kindly allowing us the opportunity of checking our transcripts supplied by Prof. Dani with his.

[2] We shall see later that Trailokyacandra was the first king of the dynasty. *Infra*, pp. 159-160.

[3] Madanpur Copper-plate : *EI*, vol. XXVIII, pp. 51 ff.

[4] Dacca plate discovered by A.H. Dani. Full text has not yet been published. Abstracts published in the *Bāṅglā Ekādemī Patrikā*, Dacca, vol. IV, No. 3, 1367 B. S., pp. 24-34.

Kings		Known Reign Period
4. Laḍahacandra	...	18 years.[1]
5. Govindacandra	...	23 years.[2]

Taking round figures, 45 years for Śrīcandra, 25 for Kalyāṇacandra, 20 for Laḍahacandra and 25 for Govindacandra, the total reign period of the four kings from Śrīcandra to Govindacandra covers 115 years. There is hardly any doubt that Govindacandra of Vaṅgāladeśa of the Tirumalai inscription of Rājendra Coḷa[3] is the Candra king of that name. The evidence of this inscription establishes the fact that Govindacandra was ruling in the period between 1021 and 1024 A. D., contemporaneously with the Pāla king Mahīpāla I, who was also attacked by Rājendra Coḷa. But one thing remains to be settled : whether the years 1021-1024 A. D. were at the beginning of Govindacandra's reign or at the end ? A reference in the *Śabdapradīpa*, a medical treatise, can help us in this respect. The author's father and great-grandfather are said to have been the court physicians of king Rāmapāla and Govindacandra respectively.[4] Rāmapāla, who is mentioned as the *Vaṅgeśvara*, is in all probability the Pāla king of that name who ruled in the last quarter of the 11th and the first quarter of the 12th century A. D.[5] If Govindacandra, under whom

[1] Bhārellā Narteśvara Image Ins. : *EI*, vol. XVII, pp. 349-52. N. K. Bhattasali, who edited the inscription, read the name of the king as Layahacandra. The letter *ḍa* appeared to him to be a *ya* owing to a crack in the middle of the letter. Dr. Bhattasali himself realised this mistake and corrected it himself in the Dacca Museum copy of the *EI* (Dr. Bhattasali was the Curator of the Dacca Museum). The name, however, can be clearly read as Laḍahacandra in the newly discovered Maināmatī plates. Cf. A. H. Dani : *op. cit.*, p. 26. The date of the two Maināmatī plates can be read as 20, see below ( ).

[2] Paikpārā or Betkā Vāsudeva Image ins. : *IC*, vol. VII, pp. 405 ff.; *EI*, vol. XXVII, pp. 26-27.

[3] *Ibid.*, vol. IX, pp. 232-33. For Rājendra Coḷa's invasion see *Supra*, pp. 81-83.

[4] J. Eggeling : *Catalogue of the Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Library of the India Office, London*, vol. I, Part V, pp. 974-975.

[5] *Supra*, pp. 112-113.

the great-grandfather of the *Śabdapradīpa*'s author worked, is taken to be same as the Candra king of that name, it follows that Rāmapāla was removed from Govindacandra by only one generation. If this equation is taken as correct it seems that the years 1021-1024 should be placed at the beginning of Govindacandra's reign and accordingly it can be placed between c. 1020 and 1050 A. D. Counting backwards from this date we can fix the reign periods of the other Candra kings as follows :

Laḍahacandra	..	c. 1000-1020 A. D.
Kalyāṇacandra	..	c. 975-1000 A. D.
Śrīcandra	..	c. 930- 975 A. D.

This scheme of dating is supported by a verse of the Dacca plate of Kalyāṇacandra where it is said that king Śrīcandra helped Gopāla, apparently the Pāla king Gopāla II, in reestablishing his power.[1] Gopāla II's reign period is also placed in the middle of the 10th century A.D. (c. 952-969 A. D.).[2] None of the Candra inscriptions informs us about the reign period of Trailokyacandra. But he, being the first king of the dynasty, must have taken some time to consolidate the position of his family after raising himslf from the position of a feudatory to that of an independent king. So a reign period of about 25 years can be assigned to him and he can be placed between 900 and 930 A. D.

The above scheme of dates has been adopted on the basis of our conclusion that the years 1021-1024 A. D., when Rājendra Coḷa's army met Govindacandra during their eastern expedition, were at the beginning of the reign of Govindacandra. But it must be admitted that this conclusion is by no means certain,

[1] Lines 16-17 :
Pṛthvīpāla-bhaya-pramārjana-vidhāvārdraḥ kaṭhorakramo
Govardhanonmathane mahotsava-guru-Gopāla-saṁropane //
(Śrīcandra) was moist (full of feeling) in the act of giving freedom from fear to Pṛthvīpāla (kings ?), firm in raising aloft Govardhana and in re-instating Gopāla the master of the festival. (Dacca plate of Kalyāṇacandra.)

[2] See Appendix 1.

though it is quite probable. If we do not accept this conclusion, and place the years 1021-1024 at the end of Govindacandra's reign, we have to antedate the Candra kings by about 25 years. In that case Trailokyacandra is to be placed in the last quarter of the 9th century A. D.

The above scheme of dating is also supported by the palaeography of the Candra inscriptions, all of which have been placed by scholars in the 10th and 11th centuries A. D. After a detailed study of the palaeography of the Rāmpāl plate of Śrīcandra,[1] and after comparing its letters with those of the Bhāgalpur grant of Nārāyaṇapāla[2] (second half of the 9th century A. D.), the Bāngarh grant of Mahīpāla I[3] (towards the end of the 10th and early 11th century A. D.), the Belāva plate of Bhojavarman[4] (last decade of the 11th and early 12th century A.D.) and the Tarpandīghi grant of Lakṣmaṇasena[5] (last quarter of the 12th century A. D.), R. D. Banerji[6] rightly came to the conclusion : (i) that the Belāva grant of Bhojavarman is slightly earlier and the the Rāmpāl grant of Śrīcandra very much earlier than the Tarpandīghi grant of Lakṣmaṇasena, (ii) that the Rāmpāl grant of Śrīcandra is earlier than the Belāva grant of Bhojavarman and the Bāngarh grant of Mahīpāia I, and (iii) that the Rāmpāla grant of Śrīcandra is either contemporary or slightly later than the Bhāgalpur grant of Nārāyaṇapāla.

So we find that from the beginning of the 10th century A.D. down to the middle of the 11th century A. D. south-eastern Bengal formed an independent entity under five generations of Candra kings. The Candra records give us some indication as to the origin of the dynasty. Verse 2 of the Rāmpāl, the Dhullā and the Madanpur plates of Śrīcandra introduces us to a ruler

[1] *EI*, vol. XII, pp. 136-42 ; *IB-III*, pp. 1 ff.
[2] *IA*, vol. XV, pp. 304 ff.
[3] *EI*, vol. XIV, pp. 324 ff.
[4] *IB-III*, pp. 15-24.
[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 99-105.
[6] R. D. Banerji : 'The Date of Śrīcandra', *Sir Asutosh Mookerjee Silver Jubilee Volumes*, vol. III, Part III, pp. 210-222.

of vast fortune, named Pūrṇacandra, who ruled over *Rohitāgiri*.[1] The next two verses of all the three plates praise Suvarṇacandra, son of Pūrṇacandra, in vague terms. The 5th verse introduces us to Suvarṇacandra's son Trailokyacandra and in the second portion of the verse his position is described as follows :

Ādhāro Harikela-rāja-kakuda-chatra-smitānāṁ śriyāṁ
Yaś-Candr-opapade va (ba) bhūva nṛpatir-dvīpe Dilīpopamaḥ ||

R. G. Basak translates this as follows : (Trailokyacandra), the support (or mainstay) of the royal majesty smiling in the royal umbrella of the king of Harikela, who became king of the island which had the word Candra prefixed to it (Candradvīpa), comparable to Dilīpa.[2] On the other hand, N. G. Majumdar translates this verse as "the support of the Fortune Goddess (of other kings) smiling at (i. e. joyful on account of) the umbrella which was the royal insignia of the king of Harikela."[3] According to this interpretation Trailokyacandra was both de facto and de jure king of Harikela, with a number of other rulers subordinate to him.[4] But the interpretation of R. G. Basak and D. C. Sircar leads to the fact that Trailokyacandra was the de facto, if not de jure, ruler of Harikela. In other words, he was the main

[1] Rāmpāl plate : *EI*, vol. XII, p. 138 ; *IB-III*, p. 4.
Dhullā plate : *EI*, vol. XXXIII, pp. 138-39.
Madanpur plate : *Ibid.*, vol. XXVIII, pp. 51-56.
Candrāṇām-iha Rohitāgiri-bhujām-vaṁśe viśāla-śriyāṁ-vikhyāto bhuvi Pūrṇa-candra-śadṛśaḥ Śrī-Pūrṇacandro 'bhavat |
For the identification of Rohitāgiri see *Infra*, pp. 161 ff.

[2] *EI*, vol. XII, p. 141. D. C. Sircar, in editing the Dhullā plate, accepted this meaning and writes, "Trailokyacandra, who. is compared to Dilīpa and is stated not only to have become the mainstay of the royal fortune of the king of Harikela country but also to have made himself the lord of Candradvīpa." Cf. *EI*, vol. XXXIII, p. 135. R. G. Basak, while editing the Madanpur plate, gives the same meaning and writes, "Bereft of the rhetorical figurativeness, the epithet leads one to believe that Trailokyacandra acquired the royal fortunes of Harikela kingdom." Cf. *Ibid.*, vol. XXVIII, p. 54.

[3] *IB-III*, p. 7.

[4] *HB-I*, p. 195.

support of the king of Harikela or he was a feudatory of the king of Harikela, who largely depended on his support. From that position Trailokyacandra became the king of Candradvīpa, comprising roughly the district of Barisal and the area around it.[1] In view of the fact that Trailokyacandra's father and grandfather are mentioned as only chieftains (*bhūbhuja*), and not as kings, of Rohitāgiri, this interpretation of the verse seems to be more acceptable than that of N. G. Majumdar, which has been supported by R. C. Majumdar.[2] We shall see later[3] that there are good reasons for the identification of Rohitāgiri with the Lālmāi Hills of Comilla in East Pakistan rather than with Rohtāsgarh in Bihar. So the ancestors of Trailokyacandra were landowners of Rohitāgiri under the kings of Harikela. We have seen earlier[4] the existence of a line of kings of Harikela in the 9th century A. D., represented by Kāntideva of the Chittagong plate, and it is quite likely that the kingdom of Harikela comprised the modern districts of Barisal, Noakhali, Comilla, Faridpur and Dacca. Trailokyacandra inherited his feudatory position from his father and it was he who mustered power and became the mainstay of the Harikela King. From that position he expanded his realm of influence over the Candradvīpa area and ultimately supplanted the Harikela king. It was the case of a strong feudatory overpowering his weak overlord.

This brings us to the question who was the first independent king of the Candra dynasty.—Trailokyacandra or his son Śrīcandra ? D. C. Sircar took Trailokyacandra as a feudatory ruler because in the copper-plates of his son he is given only the title of *Mahārājādhirāja*, while Śrīcandra is mentioned as *Parameśvara*, *Paramabhaṭṭāraka* and *Mahārājādhirāja*.[5] But if we examine the copper-plates of the Candra kings it appears that in all of them

1 *Ibid.*, p. 18 and 134-35 ; W. W. Hunter : *A Statistical Account of Bengal*, vol. V, p. 224.
2 *HB-I*, pp. 195.
3 *Infra*, pp. 161 ff.
4 *Supra*, pp. 150 ff.
5 *EI*, vol. XXXIII, pp. 135-36.

the ruling king is given the full regal titles and his father is mentioned only as a *Mahārājādhirāja*.[1] So it is evident that the absence of full regal titles does not mean anything. Trailokyacandra is mentioned as a king of Vaṅga in the plates of his great grand-son Laḍahacandra and he is praised there in very high sounding terms.[2] But his father and grandfather are not said to be kings. Moreover, in the verse of the three plates of Śrīcandra which refers to him as the mainstay of the Harikela king, he is said to have become the king of Candradvīpa.[3] So it would be quite reasonable to conclude that Trailokyacandra, who inherited the position of a feudatory, gradually increased his power and, due to his pre-eminent position, was the mainstay of the weak Harikela king. From that position he captured Candradvīpa, which in all probability was included within the kingdom of Harikela. The capture of Candradvīpa was the signal for the independence of his family and the beginning of its rise to the paramount position in south-eastern Bengal. It was he who spread the influence of his family over the whole of Vaṅga. As he is mentioned in the plates of his son as a *Mahārājādhirāja* and as a king of Vaṅga in the plates of Laḍahacandra it seems very likely that he was the first independent king of the dynasty.

In three copper-plates of Śrīcandra, the Candras are said

[1] In the Dacca plate of Kalyāṇacandra Śrīcandra is given the title of *Mahārājādhirāja*, while Kalyāṇacandra is given full regal titles. In the Maināmatī plates of Laḍahacandra, his father Kalyāṇacandra is simply mentioned as *Mahārājādhirāja*. Similar is the case in the Maināmatī plate of Govindacandra.

[2] In the Mainamatī copper-plates of Ladahacandra, Trailokyacandra is mentioned as follows :

Tasy-ābhy-unnatiśalinaḥ pracayilo Vaṅgasya muktā-maṇiḥ
Khyātaḥ Kṣmāvalayaikanāyakatayā Trailokyacandro nṛpaḥ /

The king, the rising jewel of Vaṅga, which was in a flourishing condition, is known as Trailokyacandra, because he had spread his influence over the entire world. A. H. Dani : *Bāṅglā Ekādemi Patrikā*, vol. IV, No. III, 1367 B. S., p. 30. Also see *Infra*, pp. 166 ff.

[3] *Supra*, p. 158.

to have originally been the rulers of Rohitāgiri.[1] R. D. Banerji[2] and N. G. Majumdar[3] identified Rohitāgiri with Rohtāsgarh in the Shahabad district of Bihar and were inclined to believe that the Candras were of external origin. B. C. Sen[4] and D. C. Sircar[5] supported this identification and the latter went so far as to suggest that the Candras were originally feudatories of the Pāla kings, and came to Bengal in the service of their Pāla masters. Other than the similarity of sound and sense there is no evidence to connect Rohitāgiri of the Candra plates with Rohtāsgarh in Bihar. Moreover there is no evidence to prove the existence of Pāla rule in south-eastern Bengal in the 8th and 9th centuries A.D, and hence the idea that the Candras came from Bihar under the Pāla masters does not hold good. At the same time this theory is contrary to the statements of the inscriptions of the Candras that they were originally feudatories of the Harikela kings.[6] So Rohitāgiri, where Trailokyacandra's father and grandfather ruled as feudatories, must be looked for near about Candradvīpa and Harikela, and therefore must be located somewhere in south-eastern Bengal. With this fact in view N. K. Bhattasali[7] located Rohitāgiri in the Lālmāi hills in the Comilla district, while Haridas Mitra identified it with Rāṅgāmāṭi in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.[8] The recent archaeological excavations at Mainamatī in the Lālmāi hills, in the course of which three Candra plates were found, prove the

[1] Verse 2 : Rāmpāl plate : *EI*, vol. XII, p. 138 ; *IB-III*, p. 4.
Dhullā plate : *EI*, vol. XXXIII, p. 138.
Madanpur plate : *Ibid.*, vol. XXVIII, p. 56.
When the Dhullā and Madanpur plates were not discovered scholars expressed doubts about the reading of *Rohitāgiri*. But the word is clear in these two plates and leaves no room for any doubt.

[2] *BI*, vol. I, p. 233.

[3] *BI-III*, p. 3 ; *IHQ*, vol. II, pp. 655-56.

[4] *Some Historical Aspects Of The Inscriptions Of Bengal*, p. 370.

[5] *EI*, vol. XXXIII, p. 135.

[6] *Supra*, pp. 158-159.

[7] *Bhāratavarṣa*, Jyaiṣṭha, 1348 B. S., p. 768 ; *IHQ*, vol. II, p. 525.

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 526-527.

antiquity of the place and add grounds for its identification with Rohitāgiri.[1]

It is not unlikely that the Candras of south-eastern Bengal were connected with the Candra rulers of Arakan. The existence of a Candra dynasty in Arakan with their seat at Wethali from 788 to 957 A.D. is evidenced by Arakanese traditions and epigraphic records.[2] The discovery of coins similar to those of Arakan and terracotta plaques with representations of Arakanese and Burmese men and women at Mainamatī strongly suggest a close connection between Arakan and Tippera.

Traditions also refer to an Arakanese incursion into Chittagong in the 9th and 10th centuries A.D. and to connections between Arakan and Tippera in the 11th and 12th centuries A.D.[3] The Mainamatī copper-plate of Raṇavaṅkamalla Harikāladeva, dated 1141 Śaka Era (=1219-20 A.D.), also bears testimony to Burmese influence in that area.[4] All these references seem to indicate a close connection between Arakan and south-eastern Bengal, especially with Chittagong and Comilla region.

[1] F.A. Khan : *Mainamati*, p. 5 ;
T. N. Ramachandran : 'Recent Archaeological Discoveries Along The Mainamati and Lalmai Ranges, Tippera District, East Bengal', *B. C. Law Volume*, part II, 1946, p. 218.

[2] A. P. Phayre : *History of Burma*, pp. 45 and 298-99 ;
E. H. Johnston : *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol. XI, pp. 358-85 ;
D.G.E. Hall : *A History of South-East Asia*, 2nd Edn., pp. 134 and 367 ;
D.C. Sircar : *EI*, vol. XXXII, 104-111.
On epigraphic evidence the beginning of the dynasty is placed in the middle of the 4th century A. D.

[3] *Chittagong Gazetteer*, p. 20 ;
M. Enamul Haque and Abdul Karim : *Ārākān Rājsabhāy Bāṅgālā Sāhitya*, 1935, p. 4 ; G. E. Harvey : *History of Burma*, p. 42 ; Bisveswar Bhattacharya : 'Bengali Influence In Arakan', *Bengal Past and Present*, vol. XXXIII, 1927, pp. 139-44 ; T.N. Ramachandran : *op. cit.*, p. 216 ; S. Murtaza Ali : 'Chandra Kings of Paṭṭikera and Arakan', *JASP*, vol. VI, pp. 267 ff.

[4] *IHQ*, vol. IX, pp. 282 ff.

D. W. MacDowall[1] published eight coins found at Sylhet, similar to the coins of the Candra rulers of Arakan[2] with the bull and the trident, and, following A. P. Phayre, he tentatively read the legend of the coins as *Yarikriya*. But it seems that he was not sure about the reading. He has also shown that these coins from Sylhet differ in many respects from the coins of Yarikriya, previously published, and he concluded that "these differences suggest that the coins were struck in a distinct petty kingdom a century or so after the fall of the original Candra kingdom (600 A.D.)", and "by these new coins of *Yarikriya* from Sylhet we can see that the coins struck in the name of *Yarikriya* are copied from."[3] Besides these 8 coins from Sylhet about 200 coins of similar type were discovered in Mainamati in a level which clearly belongs to the time of the Candra rulers of south-eastern Bengal, and also a few similar coins were found in Paharpur in Rajshahi district.[4] The discovery of these coins in huge numbers scattered over different parts of south-eastern Bengal raises doubt about the assignment of these coins to Arakanese rulers. Moreover on some of the Mainamati coins the name *Paṭṭikera*[5] is clearly written and is evidently the name of the mint wherefrom the coins were issued. A. H. Dani has rightly assigned these coins to the Candra rulers of eastern Bengal.[6] Dani has also pointed out

[1] *The Numismatic Chronicle And The Journal Of The Royal Numismatic Society*, London, 6th Series, vol. XX, 1960, pp. 229-233, Plate xvi.

[2] A. P. Phayre : *Coins of Arakan, of Pegu and of Burma, The International Numismata Orientalia*, London, 1882, p. 30 ; G. E. Fryer : *JASB*, vol. XLI, 1872, pp. 201-203.

[3] D. W. Macdowall : *op. cit.*, pp. 232-233.

[4] A.H. Dani : 'Coins of the Candra Kings of East Bengal', *Journal of the Numismatic Society of India*, vol. XXIV, Parts I & II, 1962, p. 141.

[5] Paṭṭikera is still a *parganā* in the Comilla district. The copper-plate of Raṇavaṅkamalla (*IHQ*, vol. IX, pp. 282 ff.) clearly establishes that Paṭṭikera was the head quarters of Samataṭa. In one of the plates of Laḍahacandra found at Mainamati lands were granted in Paṭṭikera in the Samataṭa maṇḍala. Devaparvata was also situated in this area.

[6] A. H. Dani : *op. cit.*, p. 141.

that the legend in the eight coins described by MacDowall is not uniform and "it seems to be variants of *Parikeṭa*", which he took to be a mistake for *Paṭikera*, in which the letters *ra* and *ṭa* have been misplaced.[1] A close examination of the legend in the plate supplied by MacDowall bears out A. H. Dani's remark.

In the coin No. 8 of the plate the first letter of the legend can be read as *pa*, and the last letter in No. 2 could well be a *ṭa*. In No. 8, as pointed out by MacDowall himself, the second and the third letters of its legend are transposed, giving the reading *pake* (*kre*) *riṭa*.[2] The first letter of No. 1 also looks like a *pa* and the reading is distinctly *parikeṭa*. Moreover, a comparison of the legends in the Sylhet coins with that of a coin found at Sandoway in 1878 and described by A. P. Phayre[3] shows that MacDowall is not correct in saying that the legend is basically the same.[4] The first two letters of the Sandoway coin are too damaged to yield a proper reading. The last two letters are clear-*Kṛya*. A comparison between the existing portion of the first letter and the last letter, which is clearly *ya*, shows that the first letter can hardly be a *ya*. So it is quite hazardous to ascribe the same reading, *Yarikriya*, to the Sylhet coins. On the other hand A. H. Dani's suggestion that the legend on the Sylhet coins is a variant of *Paṭikera* and that all the coins found in eastern Bengal bearing the legend *Paṭikera* should be ascribed to the Candra rulers of Bengal seems to be tenable. "This attribution will explain the distribution of this coinage throughout East Pakistan....This may also throw some light on the vexed problem of the origin of these Chandra rulers. Atleast the coins connect the Chandra rulers of the two dynasties."[5]

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] D. W. MacDowall : *op. cit.*, p. 232.

[3] A. P. Phayre : *Coins of Arakan, of Pegu, And of Burma, The International Numismata Orientalia*, London, 1882, p. 30, Plate ii, No. 12.

[4] D. W. MacDowall : *op. cit.*, p. 229.

[5] A. H. Dani : *Journal of the Numismatic Society of India*, vol. XXIV, Parts I & II, 1962, 142.

From the foregoing discussion it is possible to suggest that the Candra rulers of south-eastern Bengal were connected with the Candra rulers of Arakan. Though there is no definite evidence, except the coins which were very likely issued by the Candra rulers of Bengal copying the similar type of coins of Arakanese Candra kings, to prove this connection, the possibility cannot be altogether ruled out. If this suggestion is accepted then the identification of Rohitāgiri is settled beyond any doubt. It is quite likely that an off-shoot of the Candra kings of Arakan came to the Comilla region and made themselves masters of Rohitāgiri in the Lālmāi range. In that family was born Pūrṇacandra. Under his grandson, Trailokyacandra, the position of the family rose so high as to be considered the mainstay of the Harikela king, and it was he who laid the foundation of their rule in south-eastern Bengal. Geographical considerations strongly support this reconstruction of the rise of the Candras in eastern Bengal.

We are not informed in detail about the first two rulers of the dynasty, who were possibly feudatory chiefs. But it appears that the family had vast fortune and Pūrṇacandra, the first member of the dynasty, seems to have been a man of considerable importance, whose name "was cited in the pedestals of images, . on pillars of victory and on copper-plates bearing novel panegyrics."[1] His son, Suvarṇacandra, who was endowed with high qualities,[2] is referred to as a *Bauddhaḥ* in the third

[1] Verse 2 : Rāmpāl plate : *EI*, vol. XII, p. 138 ; *IB-III*, pp. 4 & 6. Dhullā plate : *EI*, vol. XXXIII, p. 138. Madanpur plate : *Ibid.*, vol. XXVIII, pp. 56 & 58.

[2] Verse 3 : Kedārpur plate of Śrīcandra : *IB-III*, pp. 11-12 ; *EI*, vol. XVII, p. 191. Idilpur plate of Śrīcandra : *Ibid.*, p. 190. Sylhet plate of Śrīcandra : *N. K. Bhattasali Commemoration Volume*, Dacca, 1966, pp. 171 & 182.
The verse runs as follows :
Nāgnau viśuddho na tulādhirūḍhaḥ kintu prakṛtyaiva yuto garimṇā /
Tathāpi kalyāna-suvarṇakalpaḥ Suvarṇacandras-sukṛti tato 'bhut //
While editing the Kedārpur plate N. K. Bhattasali took this verse to refer to Pūrṇacandra.

verse of the Rāmpāl, Dhullā and Madanpur plates of Śrīcandra.[1] Possibly he was the first member of the family who embraced Buddhism and this explains the epithet *Bauddhaḥ*.[2] Suvarṇacandra's son, Trailokyacandra, was the first king of the dynasty and the copper-plates of his descendants resound in his praise.

We have already discussed his role in raising his family from feudatory to independent status.[3] He is said to be "desirous of conquering the whole earth bounded by the four seas," and he "extinguished in battles the fire of the enemies by the water of his creeper-like sword."[4] A verse in Laḍahacandra's Maināmatī plates records that under him Vaṅga was rising in prosperity.[5] In the Dacca plate of Kalyāṇacandra he is said to be very fortunate and endowed with all the good qualities.[6] Though this type of general eulogy does not show any definite achievement of Trailokyacandra, it reflects the

[1] *Candrasya tasya kula-jāta it-īva Bauddhaḥ putraḥ śruto jagati tasya Suvarṇacandraḥ /*
EI, vol. XII, p. 138 ; vol. XXXIII, pp. 138-39 ; vol. XXVIII, p. 56 ; *IB-III*, p. 4.

[2] N. G. Majumdar : *IB-III*, p. 7.
D. C. Sircar : *EI*, vol. XXXIII, p. 135.

[3] *Supra*, pp. 158 ff.

[4] Verse 5 of the Kedārpur and Idilpur plates of Śrīcandra : *EI*, vol. XVII, pp. 190-92. Verse 6 of the Sylhet plate of Śrīcandra : *N.K. Bhattasali Commemoration Volume*, Dacca, 1966, pp. 172-183.
The Verse runs as follows :
Catuḥ payorāśisamāpta-pṛthvī-jayābhilāṣo viṣayeṣvalubdhaḥ /
Yuddheṣu nistriṁśalatājalena yo vairi-vahniṁ śamayāñcakāra //

[5] Quoted on *Supra.*, p. 160, Fn. 2.

[6] Verse 6 of the Dacca plate of Kalyāṇacandra (Unpublished) runs as follows :
Trailokya-bhūṣaṇa-guṇa-jvalit-oru-kīrttis-Trailokyacandra
iti tasya suto babhūva /
Śrīr-āruroha puruṣottama ity-upetya Trailokyanātham-iva yaṁ sukṛtopajñātā //
He (Suvarṇacandra) had a son, named Trailokyacandra, whose far reaching fame was enflamed (made brilliant) by the qualities, which were ornaments of the three worlds. (He was fortunate) Śrī, having recognised his good qualities and having got to know him as Puruṣottama, adorned him. Like the Lord of the three worlds he had untaught knowledge of meritorious acts.

vigour and prowess of his rule and shows how esteemed he was in the eyes of his descendants. The Sylhet plate of Śrīcandra and the Dacca plate of Kalyāṇacandra throw some light on his achievements. In verse 7 of the Dacca plate it is said that if, in the clasped hands of the Gauḍas, jewels were not seen by him (Trailokyacandra), they were imprisoned with heavy fetters round their feet and if they did not bow to the ground (before him), in order to show respect to him, they were slain with raised swords.[1] Is it not possible to determine who were these Gauḍas? Verse 7 of the recently discovered Sylhet plate of Śrīcandra informs us that the Kāmbojas had come to Lālambī forest (possibly the forest around the Lālmāi range) and were defeated by the army of Trailokyacandra.[2]

[1] The verse in the Dacca plate of Kalyāṇacandra (Unpublished) runs as follows :

Gauḍānām-upacūḍam-añjalimayo hasteṣu dṛṣṭo na ced
Bandhas-tarhi kaṭhora-śṛṅkhalamayaḥ pādeṣu saṁropitaḥ /
Aṅgais-sārddham-agāt-praṇāma-rabhasān murddhnā dharitrīn na ced
Yen-ābhyunnata-karkaśena-sahasā-khaḍgena nītas-tadā //

We have given above the text and translation of A. H. Dani, who himself discovered and read the plate. Cf., *Pūrva-vaṅger Candra-rājavaṁśa, Bāṅglā Ekādemī Patrikā*, Dacca, vol. IV, No. III, 1367 B. S., p. 30. It appears that A. H. Dani has given rather a free translation of the verse, the proper meaning of which is difficult to understand. In the first part of the verse he has translated *upacūḍam* as jewels, which is very doubtful. It may be used here adverbially, implying that the captives performing homage should lower heads so that their hands were raised above the crests of their turbans. The meaning of the second portion of the verse is not at all clear. But taking a broader sense of the verse it appears that Trailokyacandra had a successful encounter with the Gauḍas, if, of course, the reading of the word *Gauḍānām* is correct.

[2] A. H. Dani : 'Sylhet Copper-plate Inscription of Śrīcandra, 5th Regnal Year', Paper read in the *Asian Archaeology Conference*, Delhi, 1961, p. 2. The verse runs as follows (accordig to Dani's reading) :

Kṣīrodāmaṇi Devaparvata iti Śrīmat-tad-etat-puraṁ
Yatr-āgantu-janasya vismayarasaḥ Kamboja-vārttā-dbhutaiḥ /
Lālambī-vanam-atra nāvika-śatair-anviṣya siddhauṣadhi
Vyāhārā iti ha-śrutās-samataṭan-nirjjitya yatsainikaiḥ //

The Kāmbojas spread their rule in northern and western Bengal sometime in the 10th century A.D.[1] According to the information of this verse it appears that, after capturing power in Gauḍa, they measured their strength against the Candras of south-eastern Bengal also, when they were defeated by Trailokyacandra. The Kāmbojas may have been mentioned as the Gauḍas in the Candra plate. But this interpretation of the verse, as given by A. H. Dani, is very doubtful. The verse is obscure but it does not seem to contain any reference to the defeat of the Kāmbojas. The second portion of the verse is rather ambiguous and in the translation given by A. H. Dani the meaning seems to have been carried too far. The proper meaning of the phrase *Samataṭannirjjitya* should be having won Samataṭa and this taken together with the rest of the verse, gives the meaning of having won Samataṭa with the soldiers of that place (Devaparvata). Taking this meaning the second portion of the verse can be translated as follows : Having searched with hundreds of sailors the perfect medicine in the Lālambī forest and having won Samataṭa with the soldiers (of Devaparvata) the utterences (about the wonderful news of the Kāmbojas) was heard. Kamala Kanta Gupta Chowdhury, who recently edited the Sylhet plate, gave a different reading of the verse, and as a result the meaning is slightly different.[2] It is however, not possible

This is that glorious city of Devaparvata, the jewel of the Kṣīroda (river), where, by the wonderful news of the Kambojas, the feeling of astonishment of the incoming people (was aroused) : it was heard saying at Samataṭa that having desired to get here at the Lālambī forest the perfect medicine by the help of the ḥundred sailors, (the Kambojas) were defeated by his army.
For the identification of Devaparvata and the river Kṣīroda see *Supra*, pp. 145-146.

1 See *Supra*, pp. 68-74.

2 *N. K. Bhattasali Commemoration Volume*, Dacca, 1966, pp. 169, 172 and 183. Kamalakanta Gupta Chowdhury reads and translates the verse as follows :
Kṣīrodāmvu-devaparvvata iti Śrīmattadetat puraṁ
Yatrāgantujanasya-vismayarasaḥ Kambojavārttādbhūtaiḥ /

to arrive at a definite reading of the verse from the photograph of the plate supplied by K. G. Chaudhury. Any way if we accept either of the meaning it follows that Trailokyacandra's stronghold was in the Devaparvata area and he captured power in the whole of the Samataṭa area and at that time the news of the Kāmbojas capturing power in northern and western Bengal was heard. This interpretation of the verse would further strengthen the identification of Rohitāgiri with the Lālmāi hills, as Devaparvata has also been placed in that area.

The victory of Trailokyacandra, referred to in the above verse, no doubt speaks of the strength he succeeded in mustering. It is not unlikely that this success greatly augmented the position of his family and enhanced their power. And this feeling led the composer of the Sylhet plate to add another verse of hyperbolic praise. In the 8th verse it is related that "the conqueror, having eaten the curds of Vaṅga in the villages of Kṛṣṇaśikhari out of curiosity, and having also drunk (the water of) the Sugaṅgā river, which makes a girdle round the Vindhya forest, humbled by the help of (his) army the unmovable peak of the Himalaya, which fell down (in the form of rushing water) and make a terrible noise, mixed with loud shouts, in the stream of the Kāvairi."[1] It is difficult to realise

Lālambivanamatravāṭikaśatair-anviṣyasiddhauṣadhi
Vyāhārā iti ha śrutās Samataṭannirjjitya yat sainikaiḥ //
In consequence of the strange news of Kamboja, the new comers to this illustrious capital, like the venerable mountain (*i. e.* the Mandara Mountain) in the waters of Kṣīroda (sea) were struck with feelings of wonder, whose soldiers conquered Samataṭa where was situated the forest of Lālamvī traditionally said to have been filled with sure medicinal herbs sought for by hundreds of persons suffering from the morbid affection of the nervous system.

A. H. Dani : 'Sylhet Copper-plate Inscription of Śrīcandra, 5th Regnal Year', Paper read in the *Asian Archaeology Conference*, Delhi, December, 1961, p. 4.

A. H. Dani read the verse as follows :
Bhuktvā Vaṅgadahini Kṛṣṇaśikharigrāmeṣu kautuhalāt
Vindhyasyāpyadhi-mekhalā vanatalaṁ pītvā Sugaṅgā nadīḥ /

the import of the verse. Possibly the poet let loose his imagination and gave the conventional form of all round victory referring to the Himalaya and the Vindhya on the one hand and the Kṛṣṇaśikhari and the Kāverī on the other.

None of Trailokyacandra's plate has yet come to light and we cannot be sure about his reign period. But, as the above discussion reflects, he must have had quite a long reign to establish firmly the rule of his family. He can roughly be said to have flourished some time between 900 and 930 A.D.[1]

Trailokyacandra was succeeded by his son Śrīcandra, born of his wife Śrī Kāñcanā,[2] and as many as six copper-plates of his reign have so far been discovered.[3] His own plates as well

Jetur-yasya-valair-nyagā-himalayaḥ śṛṅg-āṭala-praskhalat
Kāvairī jalaveni jarjjara rava vyāmiśra kolāhalaiḥ //
Kamalakanta Gupta Chaudhury gives slightly different reading and translation of the verse. But the purport of the verse does not differ. Chaudhury's text & translation :
Bhuktvā Caṅgadadhnni-Kṛṣṇaśikhari-grāmeṣu kautūhalāt
Vindhyasyāpyadhimekhalā-vanatalaṁ pītvā Śuruṅgānadīḥ /
Jetur-yasya-balair-vyagā-hi-Malayaḥ śṛṇgopala-praskhalat
Kāvairī-jala-veni-jarjjara-rava-vyāmiśra-kolāhalaiḥ //
Drinking nice coagulated milk out of curiosity in villages ensconced amidst black hills & drinking (waters of) the rivers tunnelling through the forest on the plateaus girdling the Vindhya Hills, the army of this victor entered Malaya amidst the noise produced by their own tumult and the rumbling sound with which stones from the peak of the mountains were thrown down by the roaring currents of the Kāverī. *N. K. Bhattasali Commemoration Volume*, Dacca, 1966, pp. 178 & 183.

[1] *Supra*, p. 155.

[2] The name of Trailokyacandra's wife is given as Śrī Kāñcikā in the Sylhet plate of Śrīcandra. Cf. *N. K. Bhattasali Commemoration Volume*, p. 178 and Plate XXXVI, line 14.

[3] (i) Rāmpāl plate : *IB-III*, pp. 1 ff.; *EI*, vol. XII, pp. 136 ff.
(ii) Madanpur plate : *Ibid.*, vol. XXVIII, pp. 51 ff.
(iii) Dhullā plate : *Ibid.*, vol. XXXIII, pp. 134 ff.
(iv) Kedārpur plate : *Ibid.*, vol. XVII, pp. 188 ff ; *IB-III*, pp. 10 ff.
(v) Idilpur plate : *EI*, vol. XVII, pp. 189-90.
(vi) Sylhet plate : Extracts published by A. H. Dani : *Asian Archaeology Conference*, Delhi, December, 1961. Recently Kamalakanta Gupta

as the plates of his successors portray him as a great king and show that under his rule the power of the Candras reached its highest point.

He is said to have been born in the *Rājayoga* constellation with all the royal marks.[1] He brought the whole earth under his umbrella and put his enemies into prison, and his fame spread in all directions.[2] These are eulogistic verses giving no definite information, but their tone is indicative of the spread of Candra power under Śrīcandra. More definite information is not wanting. Verse 12 of the Sylhet plate informs us that he conquered Kāmarūpa.[3] The description of the land of Kāma-

Chaudhury edited the plate under the name of Paścimbhāg Copperplate. Cf. *N. K. Bhattasali Commemoration Volume*, Dacca, 1966, pp. 166 ff.

The eight verses giving the genealogy of the Candra kings are the same in the plates No. i and ii. No. iii contains nine verses, the first eight of which are same as in Nos. i and ii. The 9th verse is same as the 7th verse of plate No. iv. Plates Nos. iv and v are also similar except for one additional verse in No. v. No. vi contains 15 verses, among which verses 1-4, 6, 10 and 11 are found in the other plates.

1 Verse 7 of the Rāmpāl, Madanpur and Dhullā plates, and verse 10 of the Sylhet plate. *Rājayoga* is a constellation indicating that the person born under it will become king.

2 The verse runs as follows :
Ekātapatr-ābharaṇaṁ bhuvaṁ yo vidhāya vaidheya jan-āvidhe yaḥ /
Cakāra kārāṣu niveśit-ārir-yaśaḥ sugandhīni diśāṁ mukhāni //
Verse 8 of the Rāmpāl, Madanpur and Dhullā plates and verse 11 of the Sylhet plate.

3 The verse runs as follows :
Yat-sainyaiḥ kila-Kāmarūpa-vijaye rohat-kapotīghanā
Nirviṣṭāḥ dalapāka-piṅga-kadalīkuñja-bhramad vānarāḥ /
Romandhāla sabaddha-nidra-camarī-saṁsevita-prāntarā
Lohityasya vanasthalī parisarāḥ kālāguru-śyāmalāḥ //
At the time of the conquest of Kāmarūpa his army enjoyed the ascending flocks (in the form of the clouds) of pigeons, the wandering monkeys in the grove of the ripe and reddish-brown plantains, the sleepy mountain deer occupied with rumination resting in the fields, (and) the black aloe-wood on the verge of the forest land of the Lohitya.
In the second line of the verse Kamalakanta Gupta Chaudhury read

rūpa with its pigeons, monkeys, plantain trees, deers and black aloe-woods, as given in the verse, shows that the composer was familiar with the country. The next verse indicates that his victorious army went beyond the Lohitya (Brahmaputra) river to the north of Gauhati, where flows the Puṣpabhadrā river and proceeded through *Uttarāpatha* to the mountainous region.[1] These two verses show that Śrīcandra led a victorious army into Kāmarūpa and went beyond the Puṣpabhadrā to the mountainous region of Assam. As the description indicates, he traversed the same region as did the first Muslim conqueror of Bengal, Muḥammad Bakhtyār Khaljī, during his fatal expedition towards Tibet through Kāmarūpa.[2]

Śrīcandra's victorious march into Kāmarūpa is also referred to in a verse of the two Maināmatī plates of Laḍahacandra.[3] The land granted by the Sylhet plate of Śrīcandra was in the

bhalapāka insted of *dalapāka*, and translated this portion as follows : monkeys, roaming in *Bhalapas* (i. e. marking nut trees), *Kapiñga* and plantain groves. Cf. *N. K. Bhattasali Commemoration Volume*, pp. 178-184.

[1] *Saiṣā citraśilā-manorama-śilā-puṣpa-yutā-nācitā*
Tāli-sacchada-marmmaraiḥ parisaraiḥ yā Puṣpabhadrā nadī /
Ity-utkaṇṭha-sthalam-uttarapathajaye yat-sainika-śrotriyair
Adhyāye paṭhitās-ciraṁ himagirau dṛṣṭāsthalidevataḥ //
This is that Puṣpabhadrā river that is full of variegated and beautiful stones and flowers uncollected, and is lined with palm-trees rustling freely (in the wind) ; thus invigorated by curiosity in the conquest of *Uttarāpatha* the priests of his army saw the local divinities on the Himalayas, who were long read of in the books.
Text and translation by A. H. Dani : 'Sylhet Copper-plate Inscription of Śrīcandra', *op. cit.*, p. 6. Kamalakanta Gupta Chaudhury's text & translation differ slightly but do not affect the purport of the verse. Cf. *op. cit.*, pp. 178-184.

[2] N. K. Bhattasali : 'Muhammad Bakhtyar's Expedition to Tibet', *IHQ*, vol. IX, pp. 49-62.

[3] *Prāgjyotiṣeśvara-vadhujana-locanānāṁ*
Vāṣpa-vyāya-vratam-akhaṇḍitam-ātatāna /
(Śrīcandra) made complete the vows, in the form of the shedding of tears by the ladies of the Lord of Prāgjyotiṣa.
A. H. Dani : *Bāṅglā Ekādmī Patrikā*, vol. IV, 1367 B. S., p. 31 ;
F. A. Khan : *Mainamati*, 1963, p. 22.

Śrīhaṭṭa-maṇḍala, the modern Sylhet region, which proves that Śrīcandra was the master of that area. The discovery of this copper-plate in Sylhet confirms this fact. And hence an aggressive march into the bordering Kāmarūpa territory would accord with the logic of the circumstances. The Sylhet grant is dated in Śrīcandra's 5th regnal year, which shows that he dared to measure his arms against a neighbouring power even at that early period of his reign. This further strengthens our contention that the work of the foundation of the Candra empire was completed by his father Trailokyacandra and he succeeded to an empire made firmly secure.

Possibly the situation in the kingdom of Kāmarūpa afforded a favourable opportunity to Śrīcandra. The period between 910 and 990 A.D. (between the reign of Balavarman III of the line of Śālastambha and the accession of Brahmapāla, who founded the line of the Pāla kings of Assam) in the history of Kāmarūpa is obscure.[1] Śrīcandra's campaign in Kāmarūpa must be placed before his 5th regnal year because in the Sylhet plate issued in that year this expedition is mentioned. Following our chronological scheme this expedition is to be placed between 930 and 935 A. D., and it is not unlikely that, taking advantage of the weakness of the rulers of Kāmarūpa, Śrīcandra led an expedition into that country and met with success. It is not possible to determine the name of his adversary and the amount of his success. Whether a part of Kāmarūpa was brought under the direct control of the Candras is difficult to say. But with the coming of Brahmapāla in 990 A. D. the kingdom of Kāmarūpa reasserted itself. So Śrīcandra's march into Kāmarūpa at an opportune moment was definitely prompted by imperialistic designs and may have met with some temporary success, as his successors also led their armies in that direction.

The same verse in the two Maināmatī plates of Laḍaha-

[1] P. C. Choudhury : *The History Of Civilisation Of The People Of Assam*, pp. 243 ff.

candra which refers to Śrīcandra's expedition to Kāmarūpa, also refers to his fight with Gauḍa.[1] Gauḍa may here mean the Pāla empire. The 9th verse of the Dacca plate of Kalyāṇacandra also refers to Śricandra's relations with the Pāla king. It is said there that Śrīcandra reinstated Gopāla, evidently Gopāla II, and returned the imprisoned Pāla queen, and his arms are said to be the universal support of the virtuous.[2] The information of these two verses collated together shows that Śrīcandra possibly had a clash with Gopāla II of the Pāla dynasty, but they came to friendly terms and the imprisoned Pāla queen was returned. The reference to Gopāla's reinstatement may indicate Śrīcandra's help to Gopāla II against some adversary, possibly the Kāmbojas, who may have endangered his

Gauḍāvarodha-vanitādharapallavāni
Cakre ca yo vigalita-smita-kuḍmalāni (or kuṭmalani)//
He (Śrīcandra) made the blossom-like lips of the ladies of the harem of the Gauḍa king devoid of smiles in the shape of lotus stalks [like buds].
A. H. Dani: *Bāṅglā Ekādemi Patrikā*, Vol. IV, 1367 BS, P. 31;
F. A. Khan: *Mainamati*, 1963, p. 22.
Pṛthvīpāla-bhaya-pramārjana-vidhāv-ārdraḥ kaṭhorakramo
Govardhan-onmathane mahotsava-guru Gopāla-saṁropaṇe /
Līlā-nirjita-ruddha-pāla-mahiṣi pratyarpaṇe satrapo
Yasyāneka-rasāspadaṁ sukṛtino viśvāvalambo bhujaḥ //
He (Śrīcandra), who was moist in the act of giving freedom from fear to Pṛthvīpāla (but) in re-instating Gopāla was the teacher [master] of the festival and firm in raising aloft Govardhana, kept his vow in returning the imprisoned Pāla queen after easy victory—he, who is the receptacle of various sentiments and whose arm is the universal support of the virtuous.
A. H. Dani: *Bāṅglā Ekādemi Patrikā*, Vol. IV, 1367 *BS*, p. 31;
: Sylhet Copper-plate Inscription of Śrīcandra, *op. cit.*, p. 3.
In the third line of the verse the word *satrapaḥ* is rather peculiar and A. H. Dani's translation as 'kept his vow' is very doubtful. But even if we leave *satrapaḥ* as doubtful, the general meaning is that the Pāla queen was returned. *Līlānirjita-ruddha-pāla-mahiṣi* should rather be translated as 'the Pāla queen who was imprisoned after easy victory'. *Pṛthvīpāla* in the first line can be taken in the general sense of kings and the first portion of the verse may be translated as 'he was moist (full of feeling) in the act of giving freedom from fear to kings.'

throne. We have seen that the Kāmbojas greatly circumscribed the Pāla power during the time of Gopāla II and Vigrahapāla II.[1] The existence of an image inscription of Gopāla II's time in south-eastern Bengal has been taken by some scholars to testify to his suzerainty over that area.[2] This image inscription is dated in the first regnal year of Gopāla.[3] In view of Gopāla's own trouble with the Kāmbojas and the flourishing condition of Śrīcandra's rule in south-eastern Bengal, this image inscription should rightly be considered as of external origin, brought to the site where it was discovered at a later date. But even if it is taken to testify to Gopāla's suzerainty over eastern Bengal, his temporary conquest must have been the result of his fight against Śrīcandra, in which he may have met with some success in the earlier stages but ultimately, when he was pressed by the Kāmbojas, he had to establish friendly relations with Śrīcandra, whose help was necessary for keeping his own position.

The 14th verse of the Sylhet plate of Śrīcandra refers to his exploits in other directions also. He is said to have pleased the war-gods "by an exhibition of his own strength, effaced the decoration of fingers from the border of the bosom of the *yamana* (possibly a mistake for *yavana*) ladies, made the cheeks of the Hūṇa ladies tormented by sorrow, and being uprooted by him, the eyes of the Utkala ladies reeling with the intoxication of toddy (became now staggered)."[4] Here we

[1] *Supra*, pp. 68-74.

[2] *Supra*, pp. 62-63.

[3] *VRS Monograph*, No. 8, 1950, pp. 104-06 ; *IHQ*, Vol. XXVIII, p. 57.

[4] *Santoṣaṁ raṇadevatāṅgamayatāṁ vīryāvadānair-nnijair*
Unmṛṣṭaṁ yamanī-payo-dhara-taṭo yatrāṅgulī-maṇḍanaṁ /
Śoka-pracchanna-jarjjaraṁ viracitaṁ Hūṇī-kapolodaraṁ
Yenonmūlitam-Utkalī-nayanayos-tālisurā-ghūrṇṇitaṁ //
A. H. Dani : 'Sylhet Copper-plate of Śrīcandra,' *op. cit.*, pp. 5-6 ; Kamalakanta Gupta Chaudhury : *N. K. Bhattasali Commemoration Volume*, Dacca. 1966, pp. 173 and 184.

have references to three peoples : the Utkalas, the Hūṇas and the Yavanas. It is difficult to ascertain how far Śrīcandra actually exerted his influence over them. In this verse we have an echo of the verse in praise of Devapāla's conquests in the Bādal pillar inscription.[1]

This is all we know about Śrīcandra's military exploits.[2] If the information about the Candras is fully believed the reign of Śrīcandra can be said to have witnessed the apogee of their success. He asserted himself against the Pālas and had considerable success against the ruler of Kāmarūpa. In both the cases he was afforded an opportunity by the internal troubles of his adversaries. It is not unlikely that he tried to exhibit the power of the Candra empire in other directions too. Though Trailokyacandra laid the foundation of the Candra empire it was Śrīcandra who increased its power and made it felt in the neighbouring countries. His role in the history of the Candras was similar to that of Dharmapāla in that of the Pālas.

The six copper-plates of his time bear testimony to his flourishing rule over the whole of south-eastern Bengal. All the plates were issued from the victorious camp situated at Vikramapura, evidently the Vikrampur area of the Dacca district. Lands granted in the Dhullā and Madanpur plates lay in the *Yolā-maṇḍala*, which has been identified in the Manikganj subdivision of the Dacca district.[3] By the Idilpur plate land was granted in the *sataṭa-Padmā-vāṭi viṣaya*, which literally means 'with-bank-Padmā-house' and was most probably the name of a district on the banks of the river Padmā in the Dacca-Faridpur region.[4] Except for the Sylhet plate, all the plates of Śrīcandra have been found in the Dacca-Faridpur region. So the find place of these plates and the internal evidence of the plate

[1] Verse 13 : *EI*, vol. II, pp. 160 ff. See *Supra*, pp. 33.

[2] The 15th verse of the Sylhet plate is rather hyperbolic, cf. *N. K. Bhattasali Commemoration Volume*, pp. 173 and 184.

[3] *EI*, vol. XXXIII, p. 137.

[4] *Ibid.*, vol. XVII, p. 189.

themselves show that the Vaṅga area was under the control of the Candras. The supremacy of the Candras over the Comilla-Noakhali region (Samataṭa) is also clearly indicated by the verse relating the rise of Trailokyacandra, who had also captured the Barisal area.[1] The most recently discovered copper-plate of Śrīcandra was found in the village of Paścimabhāg, Moulvibazar sub-division, in the district of Sylhet and lands granted by it lay in the *Śrīhaṭṭa maṇḍala*. This copper- plate proves the sway of the Candra ruler as far east as the Sylhet region. In that case the district of Mymensingh should also have formed a part of the Candra empire. So there is no doubt that the empire of Śrīcandra embraced the whole of south-eastern Bengal.

The lands granted by Śrīcandra's Rāmpāl, Madanpur, Dhullā and Sylhet plates are said to lie in the *Pauṇḍra* or *Puṇḍra bhukti*. From this scholars concluded that northern Bengal formed an integral part of the territory ruled by Śrīcandra.[2] That would mean that the Candras ousted the Pālas from their stronghold in northern Bengal. On the other hand the mention of *Yolā-maṇḍala* (identified with Dacca area) and *Śrīhaṭṭa-maṇḍala* (Sylhet area) within *Pauṇḍrabhukti* raises doubt about this generalisation. *Pauṇḍravardhanabhukti* of the Pāla plates no doubt indicated the territorial division of northern Bengal with its headquarters in the city of *Pauṇḍravardhana*, identified with Mahāsthān in the Bogra district. But it appears that the *bhukti* of that name in the Candra plates had a different connotation. Even in the Sena period in the 12th and early 13th centuries A.D. the *Pauṇḍrabhukti* seems to have included parts of the Vikramapura area in the Dacca district.[3] So it is difficult to determine the exact connotation of *Pauṇḍrabhukti* as applied in the Candra and Sena records.

[1] Quoted on *Supra*, p. 158. Also see pp. 158 ff.

[2] B. C. Sen : *Some Historical Aspects of the Inscriptions of Bengal*, p. 372.

[3] Lands granted by the Edilpur plate of Keśavasena and by the Madanapārā plate of Viśvarūpasena lay in the Vikramapura section of Vaṅga within the *Pauṇḍravardhana-bhukti*. Cf. *IB-III*, pp. 130 and 138.

Hence from the appearance of the name *Puṇḍrabhukti* in the records of Śrīcandra it cannot be said that his empire included parts of northern Bengal. On the other hand the evidence of the Candra and the Sena records, cited above, indicates that *Puṇḍrabhukti* had different connotation in different times, and seems to have included parts of south-eastern Bengal also.[1] It may also be suggested that the Candras named their territorial division after the old and well-known division of Bengal and the *Puṇḍrabhukti* of their records is to be located in south-eastern Bengal. This is probably a case of change or duplication of place names, which was not uncommon. This name, given by the Candras to their territorial division, was continued in the time of the Senas also, who, to differentiate it from northern Bengal, which also formed a part of their empire, specified its location by mentioning that it was within Vaṅga.

Śrīcandra had a long reign of about 45 years. His Madanpur plate is dated in his 44th regnal year.[2] We have assigned him to the period between 930 and 975 A.D.[3]

Śrīcandra's son and successor was Kalyāṇacandra, born of his wife Vasumatī.[4] The only copper-plate of his time so far discovered does not give any details of his achievements, but the copper-plates of his son and grandson yield valuable information about him. He, like his father, made his power felt in Kāmarūpa and Gauḍa. It is said in the 8th verse of the two Maināmatī plates of his son Laḍahacandra that he "caused shedding of big tears (profuse tears) in the eyes of the *Mleccha* ladies" and made the waning moons (i.e. the faces) of the Gauḍa ladies devoid of moonbeams in the form of smiles, and he "spread his spotless fame in eight directions of the globe which became resplendant like the rays of the moon after the

[1] *HB-I*, p. 195.
[2] *EI*, vol. XXVIII, p. 52.
[3] *Supra*, pp. 154-156.
[4] Verses 10-13 of the Dacca plate of Kalyāṇacandra. (Unpublished.)

dispersal of the clouds."[1] The details given in the Maināmatī plate of Govindacandra not only support but also elucidate this statement. Its 7th verse refers to Kalyāṇacandra's fight against the *Mlecchas* and it is said that he made the river Lohitya (Brahmaputra) redoubled by the tears dropping from the eyes of the *Mlecchas* ladies, who were agitated owing to the killing of their husbands. In the same verse Kalyāṇacandra is also said to be victorious in a battle against the king of Gauḍa.[2] This verse in Govindacandra's plate helps us to understand the significance of the reference to the *Mlecchas*,[3] because here they are associated with the river Lohitya (Brahmaputra). This clearly indicates that the inhabitants of Kāmarūpa (possibly some of the non-brahmanised hill people) were meant.

Both the verses in praise of Kalyāṇacandra cited above refer clearly to his victory over a king of Gauḍa. We have seen that his father Śrīcandra also came into conflict with the Pāla king of Gauḍa. Kalyāṇacandra was a contemporary of

[1] *Mlecchīnāṁ nayaneṣu yena janitaḥ sthūlāśrukośavvayo*
Gauḍīnāṁ smitacandrikā-virahiṇaḥ sṛṣṭāśca vakrendavaḥ /
Ātastāra nijair-yaśobhir-amalair-aṣṭāv-anaṣṭodair
Yaścaitāḥ śaśa-bhṛtkarair-iva ghanatyāga-prakāśair-ddiśaḥ //
F. A. Khan : *Mainamati*, 1963, p. 23.
A. H. Dani : *Bāṅglā Ekādemī Patrikā*, vol. IV, 1367 BS, p. 32.

[2] *Yenāsau dviguṇīkṛtaḥ pativadhūd-udvejitānāṁ ghanair*
Mlecchīnān-nayanāmbubhir-vigalitaiḥ Lohitya-nāmā-nadaḥ /
Yenājau gaja-vājipatti-bahulāṁ senāṁ gṛhītvā valād
Gauḍānām-adhipaḥ kṛtaśca (su) ciraṁ lajjāvanamrānanaḥ //
Who (Kalyāṇacandra) made the river Lohitya redoubled by the tears (which were) densely dropping from the eyes of the *Mlecchas* ladies, who were agitated owing to the killing of their husbands; and who, having by force snatched away the multitude of the army consisting of elephants, horses and footsoldiers in the battlefield, made the face of the king of Gauḍa bent down under the weight of shame for a long while.
F. A. Khan : *Mainamati*, 1963, p. 23.
A. H. Dani : *Bāṅglā Ekādemī Patrikā*, vol. IV, 1367 BS, p. 32.

[3] The word *Mlecchas* usually indicates a foreigner and carries a sense of impurity and contempt.

the Pāla kings Vigrahapāla III and Mahīpāla I. During the reigns of Vigrahapāla II and his immediate predecessor Gopāla II the Pāla empire had to face the assaults of the Kāmbojas, who occupied a part of the Pāla empire, and also of the Candellas and the Kalacuris.[1] The Pāla empire was greatly reduced before Mahīpāla I could retrieve its position. It is quite likely that in that opportune moment the ruler of the neighbouring territory should also try to advance his dominion in that direction.

But there is another possiblity. By the time of Kalyāṇacandra (975 A. D. onwards) the *Kāmboja Gauḍapatis* are likely to have held sway over western Bengal.[2] So the king of Gauḍa defeated by Kalyāṇacandra could also have been the Kāmboja ruler of Gauḍa. However, in the absence of any name of the king of Gauḍa in the Candra records, it is not possible to reach a decision. If the adversary was a ruler of the Kāmboja family, either Nayapāla or Nārāyaṇapāla, it can be said that Kalyāṇacandra's victory facilitated the task of Mahīpāla I. It is also not unlikely that, like his father, he came to the aid of the Pālas and by defeating the Kāmbojas helped Mahīpāla I in recapturing the lost dominions. If this is true, the Candras can be said to have helped the Pālas in the struggle for their existence. Political exigencies may have prompted the Candra rulers to keep friendship with their neighbours. Moreover, both families, being Buddhist, religious considerations may have also prompted this friendship.

The Candra inscriptions do not throw any more light on the achievements of Kalyāṇacandra. He is said to be "the repository of all arts" and is compared with Bali for his sacrifice or charity, with Yudhiṣṭhira for his truthfulness and with Arjuna for his heroism.[3] From what we know about him it is clear that the Candra kingdom continued to enjoy the prosperity

[1] *Supra*, pp. 66 ff.

[2] *Supra*, pp. 68-74.

[3] Verse 6 of the Mainamatī plate of Govindacandra (Unpublished).

given to it by Śrīcandra. We have only one record of his time, which is dated in his 24th regnal year.[1] So he can be safely assigned a reign of about 25 years and placed between 975 and 1000 A.D.[2]

He was succeeded by his son Laḍahacandra, born of his wife Kalyāṇadevī.[3] Before the discovery of the two plates of Laḍahacandra and one plate of Govindacandra at Maināmatī the sequence of succession to the Candra throne after Śrīcandra could not be correctly established. The name of Laḍahacandra was known to us from the Bhārellā Narteśvara image inscription.[4] From palaeographic considerations the inscription was placed in the latter half of the 10th century A.D.,[5] and on that basis R. C. Majumdar took Laḍahacandra to have preceded Śrīcandra as an independent ruler of eastern Bengal.[6] B.C. Sen took him to be a successor of Śrīcandra.[7] But now the new

[1] The Dacca plate is dated in his 24th regnal year. The last two lines of the plate run as follow :
Śrīmat-Kalyāṇacandradeva-pādīya saṁvat 24 Kārttika dine 9 mahāsandhi ni anu mahākṣa ni /

[2] *Supra*, p. 156.

[3] Verse 9 of the Maināmatī plates of Laḍahacandra. Verse 8 of the Maināmatī plate of Govindacandra also gives the same sequence of succession.

[4] *EI*, vol. XVII, pp. 349-355.
N. K. Bhattasali, who edited the inscription, read the name as Layahacandra and commented that the name appears out-landish. But he realised his mistake afterwards and himself corrected it in the copy of the *EI* in the Dacca Museum, of which he was the Curator. A. H. Dani, who was a successor of Bhattasali in that post, noticed this correction made by Bhattasali. cf. *Bāṅglā Ekādemī Patrikā*, vol. IV, 1367 BS, p. 26. The discovery of the two Maināmatī plates of Laḍahacandra and one of his son Govindacandra has done away with all doubts about the name and his position in the genealogy of the Candra kings. A. H Dani also remarked that the name Laḍaha indicates Vaiṣṇava influence. Cf. *op. cit.*, p. 33. The word Laḍaha usually means handsome, pleasing or beautiful and the name Laḍahacandra was not at all uncommon. cf. Monier Monier-Williams : *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p. 895.

[5] *EI*, vol. XVII, pp. 349-50.

[6] *HB-I*, p. 193.

[7] B. C. Sen : *Some Historical Aspects of the Inscriptions of Bengal*, pp. 374 ff.

Mainamatī plates leave little doubt about the name, Laḍahacandra, and his position in the Candra genealogy.[1]

All the verses employed in his copper-plates,[2] as well as in that of his son, tell of his religious deeds and do not indicate any military achievement.[3] This shows that the Candra empire was firmly rooted and that the king devoted himself entirely to peaceful religious acts. The period of ascendency, covering the reigns of the first three monarchs, had given place to one of stagnation.

Laḍahacandra is praised for being learned, and the general prosperity and secure condition of his empire is attested to by the 15th verse of his Mainamatī plates.[4] The 16th verse refers to his visit to Vārāṇasī for religious purposes. The 9th verse of Govindacandra's Mainamatī plate also refers to the same visit to Benares and adds that he "spread his spotless fame in all directions by his erudition and poetical genius."[5] It seems

[1] F. A. Khan : *Mainamati*, 1963, pp. 21 ff.;
A. H. Dani : *Bāṅglā Ekādemī Patrikā*, vol. IV, 1367 BS, pp. 25 ff.

[2] Lines 1 to 35 containing 19 verses are similar in both the Mainamatī plates of Laḍahacandra. As many as 10 verses (10-19) are employed to eulogise him.

[3] A. H. Dani : *op. cit.*, pp. 33-34; F. A. Khan : *op. cit.*, p. 23.

[4] *Yo hantarmagnaśca pāraṁ paramupagataścāśu vidyānadīnāṁ*
Doṣṇā yaḥ khyātavīryo jagad-avana-mahānāṭikā-nāyakena /
Kṣoṇibhṛn-maulimālā-parimala-surabhī-bhūta-pādābjareṇur.
Yaścānanyātapatrām akṛtavasumatīm-atra yāsād-ahobhiḥ //
(Laḍahacandra) with deep devotion, crossed the river of learning within a short time. He was famous for his prowess which he showed by the power of his arm in his role as the hero in the world-drama. His foot-dust was full of fragrance of the garlands of the head of different kings. Within a short time, he brought under his feet the whole earth easily. Text and translation by A. H. Dani : *op. cit.*, p. 33.
Dani's translation is rather free. *Ananyātapatrām* means not 'under his feet,' but 'under his parasol.' *Atra yāsād* is obscure.

[5] Verse 16 of Laḍahacandra's Mainamatī plates :
Vārāṇasyām-avāsīt saha girisutayā śambhunā-dhyāsitāyāṁ
Asnāsīt tatra gāṅge payasi gatamalaḥ svānatārppīt pitṛṁśca /
Pāṇau pāṇau dvijānamaya kanakam-adāt tasya kovettisaṁkhyāṁ
Saṁkhyāvāneka eva tribhuvana-tilakaḥ kṣmāpatir-dhik tadanyān //

certain that Laḍahacandra visited Benares, apparently for pilgrimage. Had there been any political significance in this visit the court poet would have definitely mentioned it. It is interesting to note that the contemporary Pāla king, Mahīpāla I, is also mentioned in an inscription as having repaired and constructed religious buildings at Benares.[1]

It is also interesting that Laḍahacandra, though he was a Buddhist,[2] attached great importance to his bath in the river Ganges at Benares. He also granted lands by the two copper-plates in the name of Vāsudeva (Viṣṇu),[3] which reflects his inclination to other religions.

The Bhārellā Narteśvara image furnishes us with an example of the worship of dancing Śiva. The discovery of this

He lived in Vārāṇasī, the dwelling place of Siva and the daughter of the mountain, Pārvatī. He took a bath in the waters of the Ganges and became pure (devoid of sin) and offered offerings for his forefathers. Who knows the number of the Brahmins who were given gold coins by him ? He was of great intellect, lord of the earth, and the mark on the forehead of the three worlds ; before him (his fame) others were insignificant.

Text and translation by A. H. Dani : *op. cit.*, p. 33.

Verse 9 of Govindacandra's Mainamatī plate :

Yayau vārāṇasyāṁ surasariti sasnau ca bahuśaḥ
Śataṁ vārān...kanaka-vṛṣṭiṁca vidadhe /
Kavitvāt-pāṇḍityād-diśi-diśirayaḥ kīrttimanaghāṁ
Vitene śatrustrī-nidhuvanakalocchedacaturaḥ //

Who (Laḍahacandra) went to Vāraṇāsi and bathed many times in the divine river, showered the rains of gold and... hundred times, spread spotless fame in all directions by his erudition and poetical genius, and was expert in demolishing the sports of the enemies' wives. Text and translation by A. H. Dani : *op. cit.*, p. 33.

1 *Supra*, pp. 78-81.

2 He is given the title of *Paramasaugata* both in his own as well as his son's plates.

3 Line 51 of the Mainamatī plates runs as follow :
Bhagavantaṁ Vāsudeva-bhaṭṭārakam-uddiśya mātā-pitror-ātmanaśca puṇya-yaśo 'bhivṛddhaye...

as well as many other image of *Nartteśvara Śiva* in different parts of south-eastern Bengal prove that this part of Bengal also shared this worship of dancing Śiva with the Deccan, and there can hardly be any doubt that it was of southern origin. The Sena rulers of Bengal, who held power in the 12th century A.D. and were of southern origin, are believed to have been responsible for the introduction and popularisation of this type of worship in south-eastern Bengal.[1] But the Bhārellā image is to be dated earlier than the Senas by about a century.[2] This shows the influence of the people of the Deccan as early as the beginning of the 11th century A.D. and it is quite likely that the ancestors of Vijayasena, the founder of the Sena power, settled in Bengal long before their rise to power.

The Bhārellā image was consecrated by Bhavadeva whose father Kusumadeva is mentioned as the *Karmāntapāla.* N. K. Bhattasali took this title to mean the lord or Karmānta,[3] identified with Bādkāmtā in the Comilla district, about three miles south-west of the find place of the image.[4] Kusumadeva appears to have been the ruler of the Comilla region on behalf of Laḍahacandra.

We have assigned a reign of about 20 years to Laḍahacandra and placed him between 1000 and 1020 A.D.[5] The date in the two Maināmatī plates can be read as 20.[6]

Laḍahacandra was succeeded by his son Govindacandra, born of his wife Saubhāgyadevī.[7] The name of Govindacandra,

[1] N. K. Bhattasali : *EI*, vol. XVII, pp. 349-350.

[2] The inscription on the image records its consecration by Bhavadeva in the 18th regnal year of Laḍahacandra (c. 1000-1020).

[3] *EI*, vol. XVII p. 351. R. G. Basak took *kurmānta* to mean a store of grain, and took Kusumadeva as an officer in charge of it.

[4] *JASB* (NS), vol. X, pp. 85 ff.

[5] *Supra*, pp. 155-156.

[6] In the eye-copy of the plates supplied to us by Dr. Barrie M. Morrison the date appears to us to be 20.

[7] Verses 10 & 11 of the Maināmatī plate of Govindacandra. Cf. A. H. Dani : *Bāṅglā Ekādemi Patrikā*, vol. IV, 1367 BS, p. 34 ; F. A. Khan : *Mainamati*, 1963, p. 23.

king of *Vaṅgāladeśa*, was long known from the Tirumulai inscription of Rājendra Coḷa.[1] He is also referred to in the medical treatise called *Śabdapradīpa*.[2] Two inscribed images of his 12th and 23rd regnal years were discovered in 1941, and this confirmed the existence of a king of south-eastern Bengal named Govindacandra.[3] His connection with the Candra dynasty is clearly established by his newly discovered copper-plate from Maināmatī, in which his genealogy is traced from Śrīcandra.[4] So now there cannot be any doubt that Govindacandra of the Tirumulai inscription was a king of the Candra dynasty of south-eastern Bengal.

In his copper-plate reference is made to his vast learning and virtuousness, and hope is expressed that Brahmā may bestow welfare, Viṣṇu sustain his body and Indra kill his enemies. This may indicate that the plate was issued early in his reign, when there was nothing to eulogise about him.[5]

Soon after his accession he had to face the invasion of the Coḷa king Rājendra Coḷa, in which he was defeated.[6] This defeat must have given a serious blow to the Candra empire.

[1] *EI*, vol. IX, pp. 229 ff.

[2] J. Eggeling : *Catalogue Of The Sanskrit Manuscripts In The Library Of The India Office*, London, vol. I, Part V, No. 2739, pp. 974-975.
Also see *Supra*, pp. 155-156.

[3] The two images were found at Kulkuḍi and Betkā respectively. Kulkuḍi is in the Faridpur district and Betkā is in the Dacca district.
EI, vol. XXVII, pp. 24-27.
D. C. Sircar called the Betkā image inscription as the Paikpārā inscription and edited it in *IC*, vol. VII, pp. 404-416.

[4] F. A. Khan : *Mainamati*, 1963, p. 13;
A. H. Dani : *Bāṅglā Ekādemī Patrikā*, vol. IV, 1367 BS, pp. 25 ff.

[5] A. H. Dani : *Ibid.*, p. 34.

[6] See *Supra*, pp. 81 ff. We have placed his accession in 1020 A. D. See *Supra*, pp. 154 ff. The Coḷa invasion took place some time between 1021 and 1024 A. D.

Besides this invasion of Rājendra Coḷa we do not have any details about his reign. That he ruled for atleast 23 years is proved by the Betkā inscription.[1] We have assigned him a reign of about 25 years (c. 1020-1045 A.D).[2] Kalacuri records refer to Karṇa's victory over a king of Vaṅga and this encounter must be placed some time before 1048-49 A.D.[3] So Govindacandra or his immediate successor had to bear the brunt of this Kalacuri attack, which possibly dealt the last blow to the Candra power. We have suggested earlier that the Bāghaurā and the Nārāyaṇapura images may conveniently be assigned to Mahīpāla II and the extension of Pāla power into south-eastern Bengal must be dated sometime between the reigns of Mahīpāla I and Mahīpāla II.[4] The establishment of friendly relations between Karṇa and Vigrahapāla III after the former's victory strongly suggests that the power of the Pālas spread to south-eastern Bengal after Karṇa had crushed the power of the Candras. We have also suggested that the Varmans, who founded thaeir empire in south-eastern Bengal in the last quarter of the 11th century A. D., came in the train of Karṇas' expedition.[5] So after a short Pāla interregnum in the third quarter of the 11th century A.D. south-eastern Bengal again became independent under the Varmans.

Govindacandra, like his father, had a leaning towards Brahmanical religion, though he himself is mentioned as a *Paramasaugata* in his copper-plate. The Betkā Vāsudeva image bears testimony to the prevalence of the worship of Viṣṇu, and his own copper-plate bears testimony to that of *Nartteśvara Śiva*, in whose favour Govindacandra granted land.[6] In fact

[1] *EI*, vol. XXVII, pp. 26-27. The only copper-plate of his time does not contain any date.

[2] *Supra, pp.* 154 ff.

[3] For details of Karṇa's campaign see *Supra*, pp. 93-95.

[4] *Supra*, pp. 74-76.

[5] *Supra*, p. 96. Also see below.

[6] Lines 46-47 : *Naṭṭeśvara bhaṭṭārakāya puṇye 'hni vidhivadudaka-pūrvvakaṁ kṛtvā bhagavantaṁ Śiva bhaṭṭārakam-uddiśya mātā-pitror-ātmanaśca puṇya-yaśo 'bhivṛddhaye...*

all the Candra rulers, though they were devout Buddhists, were well disposed towards other forms of worship. This is proved by the fact that most of the land grants were made in favour of Brahmins. The two copper-plates of Laḍahacandra grant land for *Laḍaha Mādhava Vāsudeva*. This no doubt speaks of the open-mindedness of the Candra rulers, and also shows that at that period Buddhism and Brahmanism had settled down more or less in union, each taking something of the other.

Scholars[1] have tried to identify the Gopicandra or Govicandra of popular ballads, current in Bengal and other parts of India,[2] with Govindacandra of the Candra dynasty. It is difficult to fix the date of these ballads and it is certain that they were compiled at a fairly late period, possibly in the 17th and the 18th centuries A. D. So it is difficult to say how much truth is contained in these popular traditions. All the versions of the ballad, in general, relate the same story of a king of Bengal, named Govicānd or Gopicānd, who accepted the life of an ascetic giving up his kingship. This story was made popular by the *Nātha Sannyāsīs*, which explains its currency and popularity even outside Bengal. The genealogy of Govicand as given in the different versions of the ballad, is however, not similar.[3] The majority of them give Mānikcandra as the name of the father of Govindacandra and Maināmatī as that of his mother. Maināmatī was the daughter of Tilakcandra, ruler of Meharkul, which, according to some versions of the

[1] N. K. Bhattasali : *EI*, vol. XVII, pp. 249 ff. ; *IHQ*, vol. XVI, pp. 149 ff.

[2] The songs are known by different names : *Govicānder Gān*, *Mānikcandrer Gān* or *Maināmatīr Gān etc.*
See : Grierson : *JASB*, vol. XLVII, pp. 135 ff. ;
Bisvesvara Bhattacharya : *JASB (NS)*, vol. VI, pp. 131 ff ;
D. C. Sen and Vasantaranjan Ray : *Gopicandrer Gāna*, vols. I & II, Calcutta University Publication, Calcutta, 1922-24.
The same story of a king named Gopicānd or Govicānd who took to ascetic life is found current in Orissa, Mahārāṣṭra, and the Punjab. Cf. Tamonasa Candra Dasagupta : *Prācina Bāṅgālā Sāhityer Itihāsa*, Calcutta, 1951, pp. 64 ff.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 72 ff.

ballad, is to be located in the district of Rangpur, while others place it in Meharkul in the Comilla district. The presence of the name of Maināmatī in Comilla strongly suggests that the kingdoms of Tilakacandra and Govindacandra are to be located in that district. But the genealogy of Govindacandra of the ballad is quite different from what we know about the Candra king of that name. Except the similarity of name, which does not mean anything, there is nothing which can suggest the identity of the two Govindacandras. Unless any other point of similarity is found between them, it is futile to attempt to identify them. Moreover, if the antiquity of the ballad is not proved beyond any reasonable doubt, the question of identification does not arise at all.[1]

So we find that from c. 900 to c. 1050 A. D. south-eastern Bengal witnessed the rule of a Buddhist dynasty—the Candras. The extant evidence at our disposal show that five generations of kings ruled in this part of Bengal with vigour and full independence. Under Śrīcandra their power reached its highest mark, and the same vigour seems to have followed in the reign of his son and successor Kalyāṇacandra. Under these two rulers the strength of the Candras found expression in their struggle with Gauḍa and Kāmarūpa. It seems that both Śrīcandra and Kalyāṇacandra maintained friendly relations with their powerful neighbours, the Pālas. The two foreign invasions, of the Coḷa king Rājendra Coḷa and the Kalacuri king Karṇa, seriously impaired their strength, and either with Govindacandra or his immediate successor, if there were any, the rule of the Candras in south-eastern Bengal ended. Karṇa's victory over Vaṅga and his subsequent friendship with Vigrahapāla III possibly facilitated the extension of Pāla power into south-eastern Bengal, and the Bāghaurā and Nārāyaṇapura images of the

[1] Muhammad Shahidullah placed Gopichandra between 675 and 700 A. D. and took him to belong to the line of Candra kings who are mentioned by Tāranātha to have ruled in Bengal before the rise of the Pālas. Cf. *N. K. Bhattasali Commemoration Volume*, pp. 1 ff.

time of Mahīpāla II may be said to bear testimony to their rule. But the Pāla interregnum was shortlived and in the last quarter of the 11th century A.D. the Varmans, taking advantage of the Kaivarta revolt, established their independent rule in south-eastern Bengal.

The VARMANS

The history of the Varmans is known from the Belāva copper-plate of Bhojavarman,[1] the Bhuvaneśvara inscription of Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva,[2] the Vajrayoginī plate of Sāmalavarman[3] and the Sāmantasāra plate of Harivarman.[4] The Varman kings of Bengal claim their descent from the Yādava dynasty ruling over Siṁhapura.[5] Scholars differ in their opinion about the identification of Siṁhapura, and their choice lies among three cities bearing that name : one to the north of the Salt Ranges in the Punjab ;[6] a second in Kaliṅga, perhaps identical with the modern Siṅgapuram between Chicacole and Narasannapeṭa ;[7] and the third in Rāḍha, generally identified with Siṅgur in the

[1] *EI*, vol. XII, pp. 37-43; *JASB* (*NS*), vol. X, pp. 121-129; *IB-III*, pp. 15-24.

[2] *EI*, vol. VI, pp. 203-207; *JASB*, vol. IV, 1837, pp. 88-97; *IB-III*, pp. 25-41.

[3] *EI*, vol. XXX, pp. 259-263; *Bhāratavarṣa* (Bengali Journal) Kārttika, 1340 BS, pp. 674-81.

[4] *EI*, vol. XXX, pp. 255-259; *Bhāratavarṣa*, Māgha, 1344 BS, p. 169; P. L. Paul : *EHB*, vol. I, pp. 79-80.

[5] The Belāva plate begins with the Puranic genealogy of Yadu from Brahmā through Atri, Candra, Budha, Purūravas, Āyu, Nahuṣa and Yayāti. The kinsmen of Hari (Kṛṣṇa) were the Varmans who occupied Siṁhapura. Verses 1-5 : *IB-III*, pp. 19 ff.

[6] R. D. Banerji : *BI*, vol. I, pp. 275-76; *JASB* (*NS*), vol. X, pp. 123-24.

[7] *EI*, vol. IV, pp. 142 ff.; vol. XII, pp. 4 ff.; *JRAS*, 1913, pp. 518 and 520, Note 1.

Hoogly district.[1] The first is too far away and there is no evidence of its existence after the 7th century A.D.[2] The third is only known from the legendary account of Vijayasiṁha contained in the *Mahāvaṁśa*, which can hardly be accepted as sober history.[3] The kingdom of Siṁhapura in Kaliṅga is known to have existed as early as the 5th century A.D. and as late as the 12th century A.D.[4] So the probability is in favour of the kingdom of Siṁhapura in Kaliṅga, where rulers bearing the title of Varman were known to have existed in the 5th century A.D. This identification gains further ground from the fact that the Varmans most probably came to Bengal in the train of Kalacuri Karṇa's invasion of Vaṅga. Karṇa's father Gāṅgeyadeva conquered Orissa, and Karṇa seems to have attacked south-eastern Bengal from that region, probably following the same route as Rājendra Coḷa.[5] It is quite likely that the Varmans accompanied Karṇa, stayed in Bengal, and at an opportune moment carved out an independent kingdom for themselves. D.C. Ganguly, however, maintains that Siṁhapura may be located somewhere in eastern Bengal on the ground that there is nothing in Verse 5 of the Belāva plate to warrant the assertion that it lay outside Bengal.[6]

The Belāva grant of Bhojavarman, which is the only complete record of the family, others being damaged and not

[1] *JASB*, 1910, p. 604; *EI*, vol. XII, p. 37.

[2] *HB-I*, p. 197. Its mention is found in the Lakkhamandala inscription (7th century A. D.). Cf. *EI*, vol. I, pp. 10 ff.

[3] *HB-I*, pp. 197-98. The *Mahāvaṁśa* mentions a place called Sīhapura, situated in Lāḷaraṭṭha (Rāḍha?).

[4] Two kings of Kaliṅga, Caṇḍavarman and Umāvarman ruling between 350 and 550 A.D., are known from the Komarti and Bṛhatprośṭha plates. Cf. *EI*, vol. IV, pp. 142 ff. and vol. XII, pp. 4 ff.; *Dacca University Studies*, vol. II, No. II, pp. 2,3,9-10.
References in the Ceylonese inscriptions and the *Mahāvaṁśa* prove the existence of a ruling family of Siṁhapura in Kaliṅga in the 12th century A.D. Cf. *JRAS*, 1913, pp. 518 and 520, Note 1; *EI*, vol. XII, p. 4.

[5] *Supra*, pp. 81 ff. and 96.

[6] *IHQ*, vol. XII, pp. 608-609.

completely decipherable, does not give us any clue about the coming of the Varmans to Bengal and their capture of power. But some light can be thrown on this point from the indirect references in their records and from other known facts. The account of Jātavarman's military conquests, as given in the Belāva plate,[1] leaves little doubt that he was responsible for the foundation of the rule of his family. It is said in this verse that Jātavarman "spread his paramount sovereignty by eclipsing (even) the glory of Pṛthu, son of Veṇa, marrying Vīraśrī, daughter of Karṇa, by extending his domination over the Aṅgas, by humiliating the dignity of Kāmarūpa, by bringing to disgrace the strength of the arms of Divya, by damaging the fortune of Govardhana and by vesting wealth in Brahmans versed in the Vedas."[2] The fact that Jātavarman is said to have spread his paramount sovereignty (*vitatavān svāṁ sārva-bhauma-śriyaṁ*) by eclipsing the glory of Pṛthu, son of Veṇa (*Gṛhnan-vaiṇya-Pṛthu-śriyaṁ*) may indicate that he was the first independent king of the dynasty. The reference to Pṛthu, as N.G. Majumdar has suggested, indicates that just as Pṛthu was made the first king, so also Jātavarman was the first king of the dynasty.[3] Vajravarman, father of Jātavarman, is only eulogised as a brave warrior, a poet among poets and a scholar among scholars.[4] There is nothing to show that Vajravarman was the first king of the dynasty, as maintained by R.D. Banerji[5] and D. C. Ganguly.[6]

[1] Verse 8 : *IB-III*, pp. 20 ff.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 22.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 22, Fn. 4.

[4] Verse 6 : *Ibid.*, pp. 19 ff.

[5] *BI*, vol. I, p. 276.

[6] *IHQ*, vol. V, p. 225 ; *HCIP*, vol. V, *The Struggle for the Empire*, pp. 33-34. D. C. Ganguly took the 6th verse of the Belāva plate to refer to Vajravarman's conquest of eastern Bengal. In this verse Vajravarman is praised as "the welfare (itself) of the victorious war expedition of the Yadava armies and the god of death (Śamana) to his enemies". There is nothing in this verse which can be taken to refer to his conquest of eastern Bengal.

The references in the 8th verse of the Belāva plate to Karṇa (identified with Kalacuri Karṇa), whose daughter Vīraśrī was married to Jātavarman, and to Divya (identified with the Kaivarta chief of that name who captured power in northern Bengal in the reign of Mahīpāla II) enable us to fix the time of Jātavarman with fair amount of certainty. It is evident that he was contemporary of the Kalacuri king Karṇa (1041-1070 A.D) and also of Vigrahapāla III (c. 1058-1075 A. D.), who married another daughter of Karṇa.[1] He was also a contemporary of the Kaivarta Chief Divya, and hence of Mahīpāla II, (c. 1075-1080 A. D.). So the rise of Jātavarman to power must be dated sometime between c. 1050 and 1075 A. D. If he or his father came to Bengal along with Karṇa's army, which is very likely, the Varmans must have settled in Bengal sometime before 1048-49 A.D.[2] And if the Baghaurā and Nārāyaṇapura image inscriptions of Mahīpāla II are taken to bear testimony to the existence of Pāla rule in south-eastern Bengal, the rise of the Varmans to the paramountcy of this region must be dated some time during the revolt of the *Sāmantas*, towards the close of the reign of Mahīpāla II (c. 1080 A.D.), and Jātavarman's attack on Divya must have happened when Divya was ruling in northern Bengal in the early years of Rāmapāla.

"It is difficult to believe," as R. C. Majumdar has remarked, "that Jātavarman, a petty chief coming from outside, could have undertaken all these military expeditions on his own account."[3] Hence it has been suggested that the Varmans came in the train of the Kalacuri invasion.[4] The marriage of Karṇa's daughter with Jātavarman strongly suggests such a possibility. Moreover, in the 8th verse of the Belāva plate, cited above, great stress has been laid on Jatavarman's marriage with Vīraśrī and it seems that this had something to do with his military conquests.

[1] *Supra*, p. 94.
[2] *Supra*, p. 96.
[3] *HB-I*, p. 199.
[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 199-200.

Again, from the way in which the words *Kalacuri* and *Mātṛvaṁśa* occur in the broken Vajrayoginī plate of Sāmalavarman, "it can be surmised that this marriage was perhaps a great factor in determining the political fortunes of the Varman family."[1] P. L. Paul went further to propose the identification of Jātavarman with the 'illustrious Jāta,' who is said in the Rewah inscription of Malayasiṁha to have helped Karṇa in vanquishing his foes.[2] Though the proposal stands on very feeble grounds, the marriage of Karṇa's daughter with Jātavarman, and the facts that Karṇa's attack dealt the last blow to the Candra empire[3] and the Varmans soon after captured power in south-eastern Bengal, lend some support to the suggestion that the Varmans came to Bengal in the train of the Kalacuri attack. If this suggestion is accepted it appears that either Vajravarman or Jātavarman or both accompanied Karṇa and remained in Bengal. It is very likely that they occupied some important position during the rule of the Pālas, and when the opportune moment came, possibly during the Kaivarta revolt, Jātavarman won an independent position for himself. He must have risen to independence simultaneously or just before Divya, against whom he is mentioned to have waged wars.

Except the 8th verse of the Belāva plate[4] we do not have any other reference to Jātavarman's achievements. Of the defeated enemies mentioned in that verse, Divya was undoubtedly the Kaivarta chief of northern Bengal.[5] Jātavarman possibly undertook this expedition by way of trying his arms against another newly founded power. Jātavarman's assault on Aṅga must have involved him in a struggle with the Pāla ruler Rāmapāla. The unsettled condition of the Pāla empire during the early years of Rāmapāla may have tempted Jātavarman to measure swords with the Pālas also. The success of Divya

[1] P. L. Paul : *EHB*, vol. I, p. 79.
[2] *IHQ*, vol. XII, p. 473.
[3] *Supra*, p. 186.
[4] *IB-III*, pp. 20 ff.
[5] See *Supra*, pp. 113 ff.

may have given him the incentive for such an attempt. The king of Kāmarūpa and Govardhana, mentioned in the verse, cannot be correctly identified.[1]

We do not know anything about the length of his reign. It is also a problem to determine his successor. In the Belāva plate the name of his son Sāmalavarman appears just after his name,[2] which indicates that Sāmalavarman was his successor. But the Vajrayoginī plate of Sāmalavarman and the Sāmantasāra plate of Harivarman[3] raise our doubts, and make it probable that Harivarman, another son of Jātavarman, succeeded him on the throne. In the broken Vajrayoginī plate the achievements of Harivarman and his unnamed son are described before those of Sāmalavarman. Unfortunately the portion of the plate indicating their relationship is missing.[4] But as the plate was issued in the reign of Sāmalavarman, and as the achievements of Harivarman are mentioned before those of Sāmalavarman, it can be safely presumed that Harivarman

R. D. Banerji identified Govardhana with Dvorapavardhana of the *Rāmacarita*, ruler of Kauśāmbī, and guessed that Dvorapavardhana was written in place of Govardhana through copyist's mistake. Cf. *BI*, vol. I, p. 277.

R. G. Basak, while editing the Belāva plate, remarked, "May he be the father of Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva of the Bhuvaneśvara inscription, the Brāhmaṇa Govardhana, distinguished as a warrior and scholar, whose father was the *mahāmantrī* and *Sāndhivigrahika* of a king of Vaṅga ?" Cf. *EI*, vol. XII, p. 38. This identification has been endorsed by H. C. Ray. Cf. *DHNI*, vol. I, p. 335.

Verse 9, Belava plate : *IB-III*, pp. 20 ff.

The Vajrayoginī plate was recovered in a broken condition, only one fourth part of the plate (the right lower half) containing the last part of the 15 lines in the obverse and the first part of the 15 lines on the reverse are available.

The Sāmantasāra plate of Harivarman was first edited by Nagendra Natha Vasu in *Vaṅger Jātīya Itihāsa*, vol. II, pp. 215-218. The plate was lost for a long time and recovered afterwards from Sāmantasara in the Faridpur district in a burnt and almost illegible condition. Both the plates have now been edited in *EI*, vol. XXX, pp. 255-263. *Bhāratavarṣa*, Kārttika, 1340 BS, pp. 676-681 ; *EI*, vol. XXX, pp. 259-63.

flourished before Sāmalavarman. The burnt and illegible condition of the Sāmantasāra plate of Harivarman does not allow us to confirm this finding, but whatever could be deciphered from this plate seems also to indicate that Harivarman should be placed before Sāmalavarman. According to N. N. Vasu, who first read and edited the plate, it was issued from Vikramapura and belonged to the reign of *Paramavaiṣṇava, Parameśvara, Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja* Harivarman, and his father's name was tentatively read as *Mahārājādhirāja* Jyotivarman.[1] But when the Belāva plate was published N. N. Vasu changed his reading of the name to Jātavarman.[2] N. K. Bhattasali also read the name of Harivarman's father as Jātavarman.[3] P. L. Paul, who also examined the plate, writes, "Its defaced condition prevents us from being definitely certain, as the letters in question are very indistinct, but it seems that the name is to be read as Jātavarman."[4] If this reading is correct, Harivarman and Sāmalavarman appear to be brothers and according to the Vajrayoginī plate Harivarman succeeded Jātavarman and Sāmalavarman is to be placed after him.

In that case the absence of the name of Harivarman in the Belāva plate is conspicuous and cannot be explained. But R. D. Banerji[5] found a veiled allusion to Harivarman in verse 3 of the Belāva plate, which says that Hari was born several times in the Yādava dynasty.[6] N. G. Majumdar, who first disregarded this explanation of Banerji,[7] afterwards thought that Banerji's assumption might be right.[8] Even if this assumption is correct, it cannot be understood why the scribe of the Belāva plate should take recourse to such a veiled reference

[1] *Vaṅger Jātīya Itihāsa*, Brāhmaṇa Kāṇḍa, vol. II, p. 215.
[2] *Ibid.*, Rājanya Kāṇḍa, p. 281.
[3] *EI*, vol. XXX, p. 257 ; *Bhāratavarṣa*, Māgha, 1344 BS, pp. 169-71.
[4] *EHB*, vol. I, pp. 79-80.
[5] *BI*, vol. I, pp. 303-304 ; *JASB(NS)*, vol. X, p. 126.
[6] *IB-III*, p. 19.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 22, Fn. 2.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 29, Fn. 1.

to Harivarman. Is it due to some bad relationship that may have developed between Harivarman and Sāmalavarman which embittered the latter's son, so that he omitted any direct reference to Harivarman?

Harivarman's name is also preserved in other records. Harivarmadeva, under whom Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva of the Bhuvaneśvara *praśasti*[1] served as the minister of war and peace, was possibly the same as Harivarman of the Varman dynasty. Two Buddhist manuscripts, copied respectively in his 19th[2] and the 39th[3] regnal years, preserve the name of Harivarman. After the date in the colophon of the manuscript copied in the 39th year there are three verses, written in a different hand, which inform us that when 46 years of Harivarman's reign had elapsed the manuscript was five times recited in seven years. This would show that Harivarman ruled for at least 46 years, and this conforms to the information of the Bhuvaneśvara Inscription, where it is said that he ruled for a long time.[4]

R. C. Majumdar's[5] suggestion that Hari, mentioned in the *Rāmacarita*,[6] who first allied himself with the Kaivarta chief Bhīma and ultimately was won over to the side of Rāmapāla should be identified with the Varman king of that name has no basis and is purely conjectural.

But the reference in the *Rāmacarita*[7] to a Varman ruler of the eastern country who is said to have propitiated Rāmapāla

1 *IB-III*, pp. 25-32.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 28 ; *MASB*, vol. V, p. 97, Plate xxxvi. Harivarman is mentioned in the colophon as a *Mahārājādhirāja Parameśvara Paramabhaṭṭāraka.*

3 H. P. Sastri : *Descriptive Catalogue Of Sanskrit Manuscripts In The Government Collection Under The Care Of The (Royal) Asiatic Society Of Bengal*, Calcutta, 1917, p. 79.
The date in the colophon is given as follows :
Mahārājādhirāja Śrīmat Harivarmadeva pādīya saṁvat 39.
N. K. Bhattasali read the date as 32, cf. *EI*, vol. XXX, p. 257.

4 Verse 16 : *IB-III*, pp. 34 ff.

5 *HB-I*, p. 202.

6 *Rāmacarita*, Verses II/43, III/32, 39-40 : VRS Edition, pp. 71-72, 102-103 and 106-107. Also see *Supra*, pp. 120-121.

7 Verse/III/44 : *VRS, Edition*, pp. 109-110.

may be taken to refer to Harivarman. But, as we have seen earlier,[1] this information of the *Rāmacarita* is not sufficient to warrant the conclusion that Rāmapāla subjugated the Varman ruler and brought eastern Bengal under Pāla control. Possibly Harivarman, having seen Rāmapāla's success in recovering northern Bengal, made this gesture in order to avoid a Pāla attack on his territory.

From verse 15 of the Bhuvaneśvara *praśasti* N.G. Majumdar concluded that Harivarman or his son made himself master of Orissa by overthrowing a ruler of the *Nāgavaṁśa*, which ruled over Baster in Madhya Pradesha in the 11th century A. D., and Rāmapāla met Harivarman or his son during his exploits in Orissa.[2] This conclusion is based on two false assumptions : (i) Orissa was ruled by the *Nāgavaṁśī* rulers of Madhya Pradesha, and (ii) it was included within the kingdom of Harivarman, who had defeated the *Nāgavaṁśī* ruler. Orissa proper was never ruled by the *Nāgavaṁśī* rulers,[3] and Rāmapāla met a *Somavaṁśī* Keśarī ruler of Orissa.[4] Orissa cannot be said to have formed a part of Harivarman's kingdom. This misconception arose from the general belief that the inscription containing Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva's *praśasti* was originally fixed on the temple of Ananta Vāsudeva at Bhuvaneśvara. P. Acharya has proved that there is no reason to believe that the stone slab containing the inscription was ever fixed in any temple there.[5] Hence there are no grounds for the assumption that Rāmapāla defeated Harivarman in Orissa. But even if we accept N.G. Majumdar's interpretation of verse 15 of the Belāva plate and take it to refer to the defeat of the Nāgas by Harivarman's minister Bhavadeva, we should look for their territory near eastern Bengal, and it is more reasonable to identify them with the Nāgas of the Assam hills.[6]

Supra, p. 122.
IB-III, pp. 29-30.
HB-I, p. 161, Fn. 1.
Supra, pp. 123-124.
Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, Third Session, pp. 287 ff.
R. C. Majumdar : *HB-I*, p. 202, Fn. 1.

Besides the name of Harivarman, the Bhuvaneśvara inscription does not contain any details about his reign. The whole inscription is a eulogy of the family of Bhaṭṭa Bhavadeva, who was a great scholar, statesman and warrior.[1] In verse 10 of the inscription Bhavadeva's grandfather, Ādideva is said to have been a minister of a king of Vaṅga.[2] If Vaṅga is taken to refer to south-eastern Bengal, it is possible that Ādideva was a minister of one of the last Candra kings. After the Varmans had occupied that region ministerial family changed its allegiance to the new rulers.

There is reference to a son of Harivarman both in the Bhuvaneśvara inscription[3] and the Vajrayoginī plate,[4] but hardly anything is known about him. It cannot even be ascertained whether he occupied the throne.

The next king of the dynasty was Sāmalavarman, another son of Jātavarman. His name figures prominently in the genealogical accounts of the *Vaidik* Brāhmaṇas, who are said to have migrated to Bengal from *Madhyadeśa* during his reign. The date of this migration in the majority of the genealogical books is given as Śaka 1001 (=1079 A. D.).[5] This date is correct within half a century, as Sāmalavarman can reasonably be placed in the first half of the 12th century A. D. The migration of Brāhmaṇas to Bengal from *Madhyadeśa* is also evidenced by the Belāva plate : the great grandfather of the donee is described as *Madhyadeśanirgata*.[6]

Verse 10 and 11 of the Belāva plate are liable to different interpretations.[7] According to H. P. Sastri and R. D. Banerji

[1] For details of Bhavadeva's scholarship, see *HB-I*, pp. 320 ff ; *IB-III*, pp. 30-31.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 33 ff.

[3] Verse 16 : *Ibid.*, pp. 34 ff. The word *nandana* used in this verse may have carried the meaning of a son or a garden.

[4] *EI*, vol. XXX, pp. 259 ff.; *Bhāratavarṣa*, Kārttika, 1340 BS, pp. 674 ff.

[5] N. N. Vasu : *Vaṅger Jātiya Itihāsa*, Brāhmaṇa Kāṇḍa, vol. II, pp. 215 ff.; *HB-I*, p. 202.

[6] Line 43, Belāva Plate : *IB-III*, p. 21.

[7] Verse 10 :
Tasyodayī sūnurabhūt prabhūta-durvvāra-vīreṣvapi saṅgareṣu /
Yaścandrahāsa-prativimbitaṁ svamekaṃ mukhaṁ sammukhamīkṣate sma //

Mālavyadevī, wife of Sāmalavarman, was the daughter of Jagadvijayamalla, son of Udayin.[1] According to R. G. Basak Mālavyadevī was the daughter of Udayin.[2] But, as N. G. Majumdar[3] has pointed out, in that case she was the grand-daughter of Sāmalavarman, which is impossible because in verse 12 it is said that this lady, obviously the lady whose name is mentioned in the previous verse, became the chief queen of Sāmalavarman.[4] According to N. G. Majumdar and D. R. Bhandarkar Mālavyadevī was the daughter of Jagadvijayamalla and Udayī was the son of Sāmalavarman by another queen.[5] In all the interpretations the expression *Trailokya-sundarī* in verse 11 has been taken as an adjective to Mālavyadevī, meaning the most beautiful in the three worlds. It is, however, possible to interpret the verse so as to make *Trailokyasundarī* the name of the daughter of Sāmalavarman and Mālavyadevī. In fact this was the interpretation originally given by N. G. Majumdar,[6] which he afterwards changed on D. R. Bhandarkar's suggestion. Accepting this interpretation R. C. Majumdar[7] and P. L. Paul[8] suggested that *Tilokasundarī*, wife of the Ceylonese king Vijayabāhu I, mentioned in the *Mahāvaṁśa*, should be identified with Trailokyasundarī, daughter of Sāmalavarman, and this would explain the queer reference to the calamity befalling the king of Laṅkā and a prayer for his welfare in verse 14 of the Belāva plate. The

Verse 11 :
Tasya mālavyadevyāsīt kanyā Trailokya-sundarī-jagadvijayamallasya vaijayantī manobhuvaḥ //

[1] *JASB (NS)*, vol. X, p. 125. They took *tasya* as a mistake for *tathā*, and *Udayi* and *sūnuḥ* as members of a *tatpuruṣa* compound.
[2] *EI*, vol. XII, pp. 37 ff.
[3] *IB-III*, p. 18.
[4] *Pūrṇepy-aśeṣa-bhūpāla-putriṇām-avarodhane /*
Tasyāsid-agramahiṣī saiva Sāmalavarmaṇaḥ //
Ibid., p. 20.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 191.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 23.
[7] *HB-I*, pp. 203-204, Fn.
[8] 'The Varmans of Eastern Bengal', *IC*, vol. VI, pp. 58-59.

reference to the king of Laṅkā in this verse makes it probable that there was some connection between the two kingdoms, but there is nothing definite to help us to arrive at a decision. Moreover, the meaning of the verse 14 of the Belāva plate cannot be correctly grasped.[1] Similarly there is probability in R. D. Banerji and H. P. Sastri's interpretation that Mālavyadevī was the daughter of Jagadvijayamalla, son of Udayin, who are identified with the Paramāra kings Jagaddeva and his father Udayāditya respectively.[2] This identification has been endorsed by D. C. Ganguly.[3] R. C. Majumdar has rightly pointed out that "as Udayāditya ruled during the last quarter of the 11th century A. D. there is no chronological difficulty in the proposed identication, but the difference between the names Jagaddeva and Jagadvijayamalla cannot be ignored."[4] Moreover, this interpretation of Banerji and Sastri involves the replacement of *tasya* with *tathā* in verse 10 and *Udayi* has to be taken into a compound with *sūnuḥ*, which is rather irregular because of the long *ī* in the word *Udayī*, which is required by the metre of the verse.[5]

After this long discussion about the two verses of the Belāva plate we may conclude that either of N. G. Majumdar's interpretations seems to be more reasonable than that of Banerji and Sastri or that of R. G. Basak. If there were any matrimonial connection between the Varmans and the Ceylonese king Vijayabāhu I, Trailokyasundarī of the verse may be taken as a daughter of Sāmalavarman.

Sāmalavarman was succeeded by Bhojavarman, his son by his wife Mālavyadevī, and the Belāva plate was issued in the 5th year of his reign from the *jayaskandhavāra* situated at Vikramapura. The Belāva plate does not mention any achievement of Bhojavarman. The naval victory of Vaidyadeva, referred

1 *EI*, vol. XII, p. 42, Fn. 3.
2 *JASB* (*NS*), vol. X, pp. 125 ff.
3 D. C. Ganguly : *History of the Paramāras*, p. 141.
4 *HB-I*, p. 203, Fn.
5 N. G. Majumdar : *IB-III*, p. 18.

to in the Kamauli grant,[1] may have been against the Varman king of south-eastern Bengal.[2] Either Sāmalavarman or Bhojavarman was the adversary of Vaidyadeva.

The Varman rulers were Vaiṣṇavas, as is shown by the seal of the Belāva plate and the title *Paramavaiṣṇava* applied to Bhojavarman in the plate. But they also seem to have patronised Buddhism. Sāmalavarman's Vajrayoginī plate was issued to grant land either to a temple of the Buddhist Goddess Prajñāpāramitā or to a Buddhist devotee named Bhīmadeva as a reward for his reading the *Prajñāpāramitā*.[3]

By the Belāva plate land was granted in the village of Upyalikā belonging to the Kauśāmbī Aṣṭagaccha *khaṇḍala* in the Adhaḥpattana *maṇḍala* in the *Puṇḍrabhukti*. The appearance of the name of *Puṇḍrabhukti* does not mean that northern Bengal was included within the dominion of the Varmans.[4] Kauśāmbī cannot be identified, but it may be mentioned that the same name appears in the list of Rāmapāla's *sāmantas* given in the *Rāmacarita*.[5]

Thus we know of four Varman kings of south-eastern Bengal who ruled from about the last quarter of the 11th century A. D. to the middle of the 12th century A. D., and were ousted by the Senas during or shortly after the reign of Bhojavarman, the last known king of the dynasty. In the present state of our knowledge their genealogy can be drawn as follows :

Vajravarman
|
(1) Jātavarman

(2) Harivarman (3) Sāmalavarman

? | | (4) Bhojavarman
Udayin Trailokyasundarī (?)

[1] Verse 11, Kamauli grant : *EI*, vol. II, pp. 347 and 355.
[2] See *Supra*, pp. 127-128.
[3] *EI*, vol. XXX, pp. 259 ff. ; *Bhāratavarṣa*, Kārttika, 1340 BS, pp. 674 ff.
[4] See *Supra*, pp. 177-178.
[5] *Supra*, p. 120.

PART III

THE SENAS

CHAPTER V

The Senas And The Coming Of The Muslims

Towards the close of the 11th century A.D. Bengal saw the emergence of another dynasty—the Senas, who possibly found the opportunity of gaining a position for themselves in western Bengal when the Pāla empire was shaken by the revolt of the *Sāmantacakra* during the reign of Mahīpāla II.[1] But it was not till the reign of Madanapāla that they could assume an independent position, and thereafter they gradually supplanted the Varmans in south-eastern Bengal and pushed out the Pālas from northern and western Bengal to southern Bihar, where they maintained a tottering existence till their end in the second half of the 12th century A.D. It was the Senas who could claim the paramountcy of the whole of Bengal for the first time in its history.

The Senas were of external origin—they belonged to Karṇāṭa in south India, the Kanarese-speaking region in modern Mysore and Andhra Pradesh of India. The extant Sena records and literary evidence leave no doubt about this point. The Deopārā *praśasti* of the time of Vijayasena traces the genealogy of the Sena rulers of Bengal from the lunar race in which was born Vīrasena, the Southern ruler (*Dākṣiṇātya-kṣoṇīndra*), and in that Sena family (*senānvaye*) was born Sāmantasena, whose descendants ruled in Bengal.[2] The Madhainagar and the Bhowal plates of Lakṣmaṇasena claim that Sāmantasena, who was born in the family of Vīrasena, was the head-garland of the *Karṇāṭa-kṣatriyas.*[3] Sāmantasena

[1] See *Supra*, pp. 103 ff.

[2] Verses 3-5 : *IB-III*, pp. 46 and 50-51 ; *EI*, vol. I, pp. 307 ff.

[3] Verses 3-4 : *IB-III*, pp. 110 & 113 ; *EI*, vol. XXVI, pp. 5 & 10.

is also said to have slaughtered the wicked despoilers of the Lakṣmī of Karṇāṭa and we are told that his war ballads were sung along the borders of the Rāmeśvara-Setubandha.[1] The *Vallālacarita*, composed by Ānanda Bhaṭṭa in the early part of the 16th century A.D., mentions that Sāmantasena was born in the family of Vīrasena, the great-grandson of the Puranic hero Karṇa, and that he ruled the earth from the Vindhya to Setubandha.[2] The genealogy of the Sena rulers is contained in the extracts of the *Vyāsa Purāṇa* included in the *Vallālacarita*. This reference to the legendary Puranic family of Vīrasena is confirmed by the 4th verse of the Madhainagar and Bhowal plates of Lakṣmaṇasena, where it is claimed that Sāmantasena was born in the family of Vīrasena, "which has become illustrious through the legends recorded in the Purāṇas."[3]

It is also mentioned in the Sena records that they were *Brahma-kṣatriyas*.[4] This term was satisfactorily explained by D. R. Bhandarkar as denoting "those who were Brāhmaṇas first and became Kṣatriyas afterwards—those who exchanged their priestly for martial pursuits."[5] It was not at all unusual in Ancient India that a Brāhmaṇa took up the task of ruling. In early times the Suṅga and Kāṇva royal families were Brāhmaṇas. "When a Brahman succeeded in founding a dynasty,

[1] Verse 5, Deopārā *Praśasti* : *IB-III*, pp. 46 & 51 ; *EI*, vol. I, pp. 307 and 312.

[2] *Vallālacarita*, H. P. Sastri's edition, Calcutta, 1904, pp. 60-61 ; H. P. Sastri's English translation, pp. 47-48.

[3] *IB-III*, pp. 110 & 113 ; *EI*, vol. XXVI, pp. 5 & 10.

[4] In verse 5 of the Deopārā *Praśasti* Sāmantasena is described as *Brahma-kṣatriyāṇāṁ kula-śirodāma*. (cf. *IB-III*, p. 46). In the records of Lakṣmaṇasena he is described as a *Karnāṭa-kṣatriya*. (cf. Verse 4, Madhainagar and Bhowal plates : *Ibid.*, p. 110 ; *EI*, vol. XXVI, p. 5). In the Barrackpur plate of Vijayasena he is simply mentioned as a *Kṣatriya* (cf. Verse 4 : *IB-III*, p. 62). In the *Vallālacarita* the ancestors of Vallālasena as well as himself are designated as *Brahma-Kṣatriyas*. (cf. Text, pp. 19, 60, 61 & 110 ; Trans., pp, 17, 47, 48 & 92).

[5] *IA*, 1911, p. 35. Also see *JASB* (*NS*), vol. V, pp. 167 ff.

and so definitely taking up Kshatriya work, his descendants were recognised as Kshatriyas and allowed to intermarry freely with established Kshatriya families....while a Brahman family was passing into the Kshatriya group of castes, it was often known by the composite designation of Brahma-Kshatri. Several cases of the application of that term to royal families are recorded, the most prominent being those of the Sisodias of Mewar and the Senas of Bengal."[1] The Pratihāras, Sātavāhanas, Kādambas and the Cāhamanas are other examples of the change from the priestly to the ruling class.

So it is clear that the Senas of Bengal originally belonged to the Karṇāṭa country and the *Brahma-Kṣatriya* caste, indicating their change from the priestly to the martial profession. In this connection R. C. Majumdar mentioned a line of seven Jaina teachers with names ending in Sena in the Dharwar district (Bombay) and suggested that the Senas of Bengal may have had some connection with them, as their dates range from 850 to 1054 A.D. and change of religion was not unfamiliar in Indian society.[2] H. C. Ray[3] and G. C. Choudhury[4] subscribe to this view and add that the religious revolution in Karṇāṭak in the 11th and 12th centuries, which ultimately led to the foundation of the Vira-Śaiva or Liṅgāyata sect, may have changed the creed of the Jaina family into Śaivism. The conversion of the Cālukya prince Jayasiṁha II (c. 1018-1042 A.D.) from Jainism to Śaivism is an interesting example on the point. G.C.Choudhury has shown the existense of a Sena family of Jaina teachers in the Karṇāṭa country during the period ranging from the 9th to the 11th century A.D. and both he and H. C. Ray are of the opinion that the facts that Sāmantasena is called *Brahmavādī* in the Deopārā and that he is said to have retired in his old

[1] V. A. Smith : *The Oxford History of India*, Third Edition, pp. 191-192.

[2] *Proceedings And Transactions of the Oriental Conference* (India), vol. II, Calcutta, 1922, pp. 343 ff.

[3] *DHNI*, vol. I, pp. 355-356.

[4] Gulab Chandra Choudhary : *Political History of Northern India From Jaina Sources*, Amritsar, 1963, pp. 58-61.

age to a hermitage on the bank of the Ganges "where even the parrots knew by rote the text of the Vedas,"[1] support the conclusion that he sprang up from a line of teachers and afterwards became a *Kṣatriya*. But one point seems to have been ignored by these scholars. The explanation of the term *Brahma-Kṣatriya* indicates that the Senas before becoming kings were Brāhmaṇas and hence it is difficult to connect them with a line of Jaina teachers. In any case, this should be considered nothing more than a probable suggestion and, as R.C. Majumdar himself puts it, "in the absence of any positve evidence, it cannot be regarded as anything more than a mere hypothesis."[2] The Senas, however, seems to have become oblivious of their priestly origin. Sāmantasena is designated by the term *Brahma-Kṣatriya* only in the Deopārā inscription, which is the earliest of their records. In the Barrackpur plate of Vijayasena, and the Madhainagar and Bhowal plate of Lakṣmaṇasena he is mentioned simply as a *Kṣatriya*.

D. C. Sircar suggested that the popularity of the name Ballāla among the Senas appears to associate them with the Hoysala rulers bearing the same name.[3] There are more than one Ballāla in the Hoysala family. They also claimed descent from the moon, and Hoysala Ballāla I was a feudatory of the Cālukya king Vikramāditya VI. But, like R. C. Majumdar's suggestion, this also does not have any firm grounds to stand upon.

In the Barrackpur grant of Vijayasena[4] and the Naihāṭi grant of Vallālasena[5] the ancestors of Sāmantasena are mentioned as *rājaputras*. And from this R. D. Banerji thinks that it indicates that the Senas claimed to be Rajputs.[6] In the same place in the records of Lakṣmaṇasena appears the word *narendrāḥ*

[1] Verses 5 & 6 : *IB-III*, pp. 46-47 ; *EI*, vol. I, pp. 307-308.
[2] *HB-I*, p. 207.
[3] *IHQ*, vol. XXX, p. 205, Fn. 1.
[4] Verse 3 : *EI*, vol. XV, p. 282 ; *IB-III*, p. 62.
[5] Verse 3 : *EI*, vol. XIV, p. 159 ; *IB-III*, p. 72.
[6] *EI*, vol. XV, p. 279.

instead of *rājaputrāḥ*. It is certain that *rājaputrāḥ* cannot be taken to indicate Rajput origin. Before capturing power in Bengal the ancestors of Sāmantasena may have been connected with some line of kings or chiefs and hence in the records of the first two kings of the dynasty appears the word *rājaputrāḥ*, simply meaning princes. Any one of some importance, other than the king, could be designated as a prince. *Rājaputra* also denoted an official title and carried the meaning of a nobleman.[1] So the appearance of the term indicates that the ancstors of the Senas were noblemen in the Deccan. The replacement of the term *rājaputrāḥ* by *narendrāḥ* can easily be explained. After continued enjoyment of kingship for three generations it is very natural for the *praśastikāras* to forget the early position of the family, and hence appears the word *narendrāḥ*.

It is difficult to determine when the Senas came to Bengal. The Deopārā *praśasti* refers to Sāmantasena's military exploits in southern India against the despoilers of the *Lakṣmī* (wealth) of Karṇāṭa,[2] and further adds that his war ballads were sung along the borders of the Rāmeśvara-Setubandha.[3] These references indicate that Sāmantasena held some power in the Karṇāṭa country. The despoilers of *Karṇāṭa-Lakṣmī* against whom Sāmantasena fought may have been the forces of the Coḷa king, Rājendra Deva, who is referred to in the Cālukya inscriptions as having penetrated into the Dharwar district (Bombay) shortly before 1060 A. D.[4] It is not unlikely that Sāmantasena distinguished himself by warding off the foreign attack and this was the turning point in the fortunes of his family.

After the description of the military exploits of Sāmantasena, the Deopārā *praśasti* mentions that "in his last days he frequented the sacred hermitage situated in forests on the bank of the Ganges... where multitude of parrots were familiar with the

[1] *IB-III*, p. 187.
[2] Verse 8 : *IB-III*, pp. 47 & 51 ; *EI*, vol. I, pp. 308 & 312.
[3] Verse 5 : *IB-III*, pp. 47 & 51 ; *EI*, vol. I, pp. 307 & 312.
[4] G. C. Choudhary : *Political History of Northern India From Jaina Sources*, p. 60.

entire text of the Vedas."[1] From these references in the Deopārā *praśasti*, added to the fact that Sāmantasena's descendants ruled in Bengal, it can be concluded that Sāmantasena spent his early life in Karṇāṭa and in his old age he came to Bengal and lived somewhere near the Ganges. But verses 3 and 4 of the Naihāṭi plate of Vallālasena[2] seem to indicate that the Sena family had settled in Bengal before Sāmantasena, and this apparently contradicts the information of the Deopārā inscription. But this contradiction can be reconciled by supposing that the family, though settled in Rāḍha (western Bengal), kept touch with their home country and one of its members spent his early life in Karṇāṭa and distinguished himself there, and in his old age came to Bengal, where his descendants rose to power afterwards.[3]

One further question remains to be answered : How did the family of the Senas come to Bengal ? The Sena records do not throw any light on this point, and as a result it is not possible to give a definite answer to the question. We may, however, mention the various suggestions and evaluate their probability in the light of the contemporary circumstances.

It has been suggested by many scholars[4] that the Senas came to Bengal from Karṇāṭa and took service under the Pāla kings of Bengal. The phrase *Gauḍa-Mālava-Khaśa-Hūṇa-Kulika-Karṇāṭa-Lāṭa-Cāṭa-Bhāṭa* occurs regularly in the Pāla records from the time of Devapāla to that of Madanapāla. It is not unlikely that a royal official of Karṇāṭa origin should gradually amass enough power to set aside his masters when they had become very weak. Such an explanation of the coming of the

[1] Verse 9 : *IB-III*, pp. 47 & 51 ; *EI*, vol. I, pp. 308 & 312.

[2] Sāmantasena is said to have been born in the family of the lunar race who were ornaments of Rāḍha.
EI, vol. XIV, pp. 159 & 162 ; *IB-III*, pp. 72 & 76.

[3] R. C. Majumdar : *HB-I*, p. 206 ; H. C. Ray : *DHNI*, vol. I, p. 357.

[4] R. C. Majumdar : *HB-I*, p. 208.
D. C. Ganguly : *HCIP*, vol. V, *The Struggle For Empire*, p. 34.
Nihar Ranjan Ray : *Bāṅgālīr Itihāsa*, Ādi Parva, p. 501.

Senas seems to be quite reasonable. The rise of the Kāmbojas has also been similarly explained.[1] This is further supported by the fact that, as we shall see soon,[2] in all probability Vijayasena and his father Hemantasena rose to power from the position of feudatories. Moreover, the statement of the Naihāṭi plate that the ancestors of Sāmantasena adorned the Rāḍha country gives added strength to this explanation.

There are other possibilities too. The Senas might also have come in the wake of foreign invasions. We have seen earlier[3] that during the period 1042-1076 A. D. there were more than one invasions of Bengal by Cālukya prince Vikramāditya VI. "It was probably these raids of the Karṇāṭa prince which brought into various parts of north-eastern India bodies of his countrymen who soon afterwards succeeded in carving out separate principalities for themselves. The rise of the *Karṇāṭakas* of Tirhut and Nepal, as also of the *Karṇāṭa-kṣatriyas* of Rāḍha (i. e. the Senas), in the 11th century, naturally leads to the suspicion that their origin may have been connected with these Cālukya invasions."[4] This suggestion can be substantiated from the contemporary circumstances. Cālukya king Someśvara I (c. 1042-1068 A. D.), by humbling the Paramāra king Bhoja and the Kalacuri king Karṇa, paved the way for Karṇāṭa influence in northern India The rise of the family of Nānyadeva in northern Bihar and Nepal,[5] and the Senas in Bengal, both of Karṇāṭa origin, in the second half of the 11th century A. D. seems to have been the result of the Cālukya supremacy in the

[1] *Supra*, pp. 73-74.

[2] See below.

[3] *Supra*, pp. 96-98.

[4] H. C. Ray : *DHNI*, vol. I, p. 331.
R. C. Majumdar holds the same view, cf. *HB-I*, pp. 208-209.
Also see P. L. Paul : *EHB*, vol. I, pp. 87-88.

[5] Nānyadeva of Mithilā came to the throne in 1097 A.D. See *IHQ*, vol. VII, pp. 761 ff.; *JBORS*, vol. IX, pp. 300-310 ; *IA*, vol. IX, p. 188 and vol. XIII, p. 418 ; *JASB*, 1915, pp, 409-411 ; *ABORI*, vol. XXXV, pp. 91 ff.

middle of the same century. It is also probable that the Gāhaḍavālas, who founded about the same time a powerful kingdom were of Karṇāṭic origin.[1] The marriage of Vallālasena with the Cālukya princess Rāmadevī,[2] points to a connection between the establishment of Sena power in Bengal and the exploits of the Karṇāṭa Cālukyas.

There have been other suggestions. R. D. Banerji connects them with the invasion of Rājendra Coḷa,[3] and K. P. Jayaswal with that of the Kalacuri king Karṇa.[4] Both views are less probable because neither of these kings were rulers of Karṇāṭa and it is doubtful whether Karṇāṭas formed a part of their armies.

From the above discussion two possibilities emerge : either the Senas came to Bengal and took service under the Pālas or they came in the train of the Cālukya invasions. But in the absence of any definite information in the Sena records we cannot arrive at a decision.

Sāmantasena is the first historical figure of the dynasty. As we have seen earlier, it was he or his immediate predecessor who came to Bengal. The Sena records present him as a man of prowess who had proved his ability in the battlefield.[5] Verse 9 of the Deopārā inscription[6] states that in his old age he took to a life of an ascetic and settled in Rāḍha on the banks of the Ganges, possibly in *Uttara* Rāḍha.

His son was Hemantasena. No record of his time has yet been discovered and it is difficult to ascertain the exact position held by him in Rāḍha and the extent of his influence. In the 5th verse of the Barrackpur plate of Vijayasena he is

[1] *IHQ*, vol. VII, pp. 761 ff.

[2] Verse 9, Madhainagar and Bhowal plates : *IB-III*, pp. 110 & 114 ; *EI*, vol. XXVI, pp. 6 & 11.

[3] *BI* vol. I, p. 251 ; *MASB*, vol. V, p. 99.

[4] *JBORS*, vol. IX, p. 306.

[5] Verses 5-8, Deopārā *Praśasti* : *IB-III*, pp. 46 ff., *EI*, vol. I, pp. 307 ff. Verse 4, Barrackpur plate : *IB-III*, pp. 62 & 65 ; *EI*, vol. XV, pp. 282 & 285.

[6] *IB-III*, pp. 47 & 51 ; *EI*, vol. I, pp. 308 & 312.

described as *rājarakṣāsudakṣaḥ* (skilful in the protection of kings).[1] This may be taken to imply that he held the position of a feudatory in the Pāla empire and gave support for the protection of his overlord. It appears that in his time the Karṇāṭa Sena family had succeeded in gaining some footing in the Rāḍha region, which paved the way for the rise of his son Vijayasena.

The title of *Mahārājādhirāja*, attributed to him in the Barrackpur plate of Vijayasena,[2] and the prefix *Mahārājñī* applied to the name of his queen Yaśodevī in the Deopārā inscription,[3] lead one to believe that the Sena family had already acquired an independent position. We cannot be certain about this, but it seems very unlikely. We shall see later that it was his son, Vijayasena, who laid the foundation of the independent rule of his family. The title *Mahārājādhirāja* is applied to him in the passage of the inscription where the ruling king is described, and the author, following the conventional formula, may have included the title with the name of Hemantasena, the father of the reigning king.

Before following the history of the Senas further let us try to fix their chronology. Scholars have attempted this mainly from two points of view. One is based on the assumption that the era known as the *Lakṣmaṇa Saṁvat* (*La Sam* in its abbreviated form), current in north Bihar and believed to have started from 1119-20 A. D.,[4] commemorates the accession of the Sena king Lakṣmaṇasena.[5] The other is based on the evidence of literary and epigraphic records of the Sena period.

[1] *IB-III*, pp. 62.; *EI*, vol. XV, p. 282.

[2] Line 23 : *IB-III*, p. 62 ; *EI*, vol. XV, p. 283.

[3] Verse 14 : *IB-III*, p. 48 ; *EI*, vol. I, p. 309.

[4] *IA*, vol. XIX, pp. 1 ff. F. Kielhorn's calculation.

[5] R. D. Banerji is the greatest exponent of this theory and he has devoted a good deal of his writing in different journals to uphold it at all costs. Cf. *JASB*, vol. IX, pp. 271 ff ; *BI*, vol. I, pp. 284 ff. It was also taken up by K. P. Jayaswal. Cf. *JBORS*, vol. IV, pp. 367 ff.

The *Lakṣmaṇa Saṁvat* Era is still an unsolved problem of Indian history[1] and scholars have failed to give any reasonable explanation about its association with the Senas of Bengal. On the other hand it seems quite certain that the era had nothing to do with the Senas. There are serious objections against the association of this era with Lakṣmaṇasena's accession. There is not a single authentic document discovered within the limits of the Sena kingdom which is dated unmistakably in this era. All the official Sena records so for discovered are dated in the regnal years of the respective kings, including those of Lakṣmaṇasena himself and also those of his sons. The contention that the Dacca Caṇḍi image inscription dated *Śrīmal-Lakṣmaṇasenadevasya Sam* 3,[2] was dated in the Lakṣmaṇasena Era cannot be proved. The fact that the Edilpur grant of Késavasena, son of Lakṣmaṇasena, is dated in the year 3,[3] while the Madanapārā grant of another son, Viśvarūpasena, who was the successor of Lakṣmaṇasena and the immediate predecessor of Keśavasena, is dated in the year 14,[4] is sufficient to prove that the dates are in the regnal years of the kings and do not refer to any era. The exponents of the theory have never explained why the era which they are inclined to associate with the name of Lakṣmaṇasena took such a firm root not in his own country, but in north Bihar.

On these grounds H. C. Ray has rightly remarked, "Applying the dictum of Fleet that 'any era may be introduced in a country in which it was not founded, but no era can have been founded in a country in which it was never used' to this particular case, we must refrain from introducing the 'era of Lakṣmaṇasena' into Sena chronology."[5]

[1] R. C. Majumdar has shown that there is no certainty about its origin or its beginning. cf. *HB-I*, pp. 233-238.
[2] *EI*, vol. XVII pp. 359 ff.; *IB-III*, pp. 116-117.
[3] *IB-III*, pp. 118 ff.
[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 132 ff.
[5] *DHNI*, vol. I, pp. 352-353.

Further, there is no evidence of the use of this era in its early years and the earliest date we have in this era is the year 51, in a Bodh-Gayā inscription of Aśokachalla.[1] Even the phraseology[2] used in the early inscriptions dated in this era cannot be properly explained.

R. C. Majumdar has also shown that there are discrepancies in the various dates in this era and its beginning cannot be unquestionably placed in 1119-20 A. D.[3] The date of Aśokachalla can be determined by other means and he must have flourished in the seventies of the 13th century A. D., and two of his records bear the dates of 51 and 74 of the *La Sam* era. Thus the beginning of the era is to be placed in the beginning of the 13th century A. D.[4] On this ground R. C. Majumdar has suggested that the era was reckoned by the people of Bihar from the destruction of the kingdom of Lakṣmaṇasena in the beginning of the 13th century A. D.[5]

H. C. Raychaudhuri[6] has clearly shown that the era cannot be connected with the Sena king Lakṣmaṇasena and he suggested that Lakṣmaṇasena, who founded this era, "must have been the founder of the Sena dynasty of Pīṭhī." This suggestion is, no doubt, a valuable one, but there is no evidence that the Sena dynasty of Pīṭhī existed as early as 1119-20 A.D.[7]

On the testimony of a verse in the *Laghu-Bhārata*[8] it has

[1] *EI*, vol. XII, p. 29. For other instances of the use of this era see *JASB* (*NS*), vol. XXII, p. 385 ; *JBORS*, vol. XX, p. 21.

[2] The word *Sam* in the inscriptions is always prefixed with *atīta-rājye*. Kielhorn and R. D. Banerji explained it as denoting the year counted from the commencement of the era, but the reign of Lakṣmaṇasena was a thing of the past. But R. C. Majumdar and others have argued that the era was counted from the destruction of his kingdom. Cf. *IA*, vol. XIX, p. 2 ; *JASB* (*NS*), vol. XVII, pp. 7 ff. ; *HB-I*, pp. 233 ff.

[3] *H. B.-I*, pp. 236-237.

[4] *JASB* (*NS*), vol. XVII, p. 13.

[5] *Ibid.*; *HB-I*, pp. 234 ff.

[6] *Sir Asutosh Mookerjee Silver Jubilee Volume*, vol. III, part II, pp. 1-5.

[7] *IC*, vol. II, p. 579.

[8] N. N. Vasu : *Vaṅger Jātiya Itihāsa*, Rājanya Kāṇḍa, pp. 351-52.

been suggested by P. C. Barat that the era was founded by Vallālasena to commemorate the birth of his son Lakṣmaṇasena when he was in Mithilā on an expedition.[1] This is also, like other suggestions, possible, but lacks support from any authentic evidence. Even if the era was established to commemorate the birth of Lakṣmaṇasena, we would naturally expect its currency in Bengal.

So from the above discussion it is clear that the origin of the *Lakṣmaṇasena Saṁvat* era is still an unsolved problem and does not admit of any reasonable explanation. There is hardly any valid reason for associating this era with the Sena kings of Bengal and hence it cannot be taken into consideration in the discussion of Sena chronology. The association of the era with the Senas of Bengal has landed historians in a ridiculous position, which necessitated the appearance of a second Lakṣmaṇasena, or atleast a Lakṣmaṇiya to reconcile their dates with other known facts.[1] The acceptance of the *La Sam* in the Sena chronology would also mean that Vijayasena flourished in the period between 1046 and 1108 A.D.,[2] which in turn would mean that he captured northern Bengal[3] long before the Kaivartas. These hypotheses go against the known facts of the Pāla and Sena history and land us in confusion. So attempts must be made to fix the Sena chronology on the basis of other literary and epigraphic evidence.

Vallālasena was the author of two books, the *Dānasāgara* and the *Adbhutasāgara*, and on the testimony of various passages in them we can form an idea of his date.

[1] *JRAS*, 1930, p. 8.

[2] V. A. Smith : *The Early History of India*, Fourth Edition, Revised by S. M. Edwards, pp. 432 and 437.
K. P. Jayaswal : *JBORS*, vol. IV, pp. 206-272.
H. Panday : *Ibid.*, pp. 273-280.

[3] Vijayasena's Barrackpur plate is unquestionably dated in his 62nd regnal year and the Naihāṭi plate of Vallālasena is dated in the 11th regnal year.

[4] The Deopārā *Praśasti* records the construction of a temple of Pradyumneśvara at Deopārā in the Rajshahi district of northern Bengal. Cf. *IB-III*, pp. 42 ff. ; *EI*, vol. I, pp. 305 ff.

Manuscripts of the *Dānasāgara* contain the date of its completion by Vallālasena in a chronogram, which is as follows :

Nikhila-bhūpa (*bhūpa* is omitted in certain mss.) *cakratilaka-Śrīmad-Vallālasenadevena* (in some mss. *senena*) *pūrve* (in some *pūrṇe*) *śaśinava-daśamita* (in some mss. *mite*) 1091 (some mss. do not contain the date in figures) *Śakavarṣe Dānasāgaro racitaḥ* /[1]

It is clear from the above passage that Vallālasena was living and completed the *Dānasāgara* in the Śaka year 1091 (=1169 A.D.). This is confirmed by a number of passages in the other book, *the Adbhutasāgara.*

From two introductory verses in the *Adbhutasāgara* it is learnt that Vallālasena started writing the book in Śaka Era (=1168 A.D.) and before his death he raised his son, Lakṣmaṇasena, to the throne and asked him to complete the book which was left unfinished.[2] It must be made clear that in this passage the date Śaka Era is given as the date of the beginning of the *Adbhutasāgara* by Vallālasena and not of his abdication or death and the raising of Lakṣmaṇasena to the throne. There is no

[1] J. Eggeling : *Catalogue of the Sanskrit Manuscripts In The Library of the India Office*, London, Part III, p. 545.
H. P. Sastri : *Notices of Sanskrit Manuscripts*, Second Series, Calcutta, 1898, vol. I, Part II, pp. 169-72.
N. N. Vasu : *JASB*, 1896, p. 23.
R. P. Chanda : *GR*, p. 61, Fn.
See Plate No. III for the copy of the page containing the date in the manuscript of the *Dānasāgara* preserved in the India Office Library, London.

[2] Pandit Murali Dhara Jha (ed.) : *The Adhutasāgara*, Benares, 1905, p. 4. In this text Jha puts the date as 1089 S. E. But in the Bombay ms. of the work the date appears to be *Śāke Kha-nava-khendvabde* (S. E. 1090=1168 A. D.). Cf. R. G. Bhandarkar : *Report of the Search of Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Bombay Presidency*, 1897, p. 85. The date S. E. 1090 seems to be the correct date as is proved by scattered references in the text of the *Adbhutasāgara.*

indication as to the exact date when Lakṣmaṇasena was made the king.

R. D. Banerji's[1] objection that the dates found in the literary works of Vallālasena are spurious later interpolations because they are not found in some manuscripts of the texts no longer holds good. For the date 1090 S. E. for the beginning of the *Adbhutasāgara* is found in at least four other places in the text and this would at once dispel any idea of interpolation. Various astronomical calculations are referred to the Śaka Era 1090, which is mentioned as the year of the beginning of the *Adbhutasāgara*.[2] These passages were known to later writers such as Todar Mall[3] and the Smṛti writer Śrīnātha Ācārya Cuḍāmaṇi.[4]

All these references in the *Adbhutasāgara* and the *Dānasāgara* make it clear that Vallālasena was reigning in 1168-69 A. D. The initial year of his reign is provided by another passage in the *Adbhutasāgra* : [5]

Bhuja-vasu-daśa 1082 mita-Śāke Śrīmad-Vallālasena-rājyādau /
Varṣaikaṣaṣṭi 61 bhogo munibhirvihito viśākhāyām //
(In the Śaka year 1082 (1160 A. D.) in the beginning of the reign of Vallālasena, the *munis* had remained 61 years in the asterism of Viśakhā.)

The interpretation of this passage involves one difficulty. Whether the expression *rājyādau* should be taken literally to mean the

[1] *JASB*, vol. IX. pp. 271 ff.

[2] M. D. Jha (ed.) : *Adbhutasāgara*, pp. 59, 125, 235 and 236. Also see *JRAS*, 1930, pp. 3-4 ; *IHQ*. vol. V, p. 134 ; *IA*, vol. II, pp. 145-48, 153-58.

[3] P. V. Kane : *History of Dharmaśāstra*, vol. I, p. 300.

[4] *JASB* (*NS*), vol. XI, p. 347.

[5] M. D. Jha (ed.) : *Adbhutasāgara*, p. 203. In one manuscript Manmohan Chakravarti found the date in words to be the same but the date in figures to be 1081, cf. *JASB* (*NS*), vol. II, p. 17, Fn. 1. It is evident that either of these must be wrong. It has been suggested that the expression *bhuja* (=2) is a mistake for *bhū* (=1). Cf. *IC*, vol. IV, pp. 228-29. In any case we have a difference of only one year. We may, therefore, take the wording as correct, 1082 Śaka Era.

first year of the reign, or in a general way to denote the earlier part of the reign? If we take the latter meaning we have to place the accession of Vallālasena one or two years earlier. For convenience's sake we may accept the year 1082 Śaka Era (1160 A. D.) as the initial years of Vallālasena's reign.

We know that Vijayasena reigned for at least 62 years. Thus counting backwards from 1160 we may place the accession of Vijayasena in 1097 A. D.[1] and his father Hemantasena is to be placed some time before that date. This date, 1097-1160 A. D., for the reign of Vijayasena is confirmed, as we shall see later, by the internal evidence of the epigraphs of his time.[2]

The epigraphs of the time of Vallālasena are dated in his 9th and 11th regnal years.[3] He is known to have reigned longer. The date of the accession of Lakṣmaṇasena, the son and successor of Vallālasena, can be fixed in 1178 A. D. This date is supplied by the colophon of the *Saduktikarṇāmṛta* of Śrīdharadāsa, a contemporary of Lakṣmaṇasena, being the son of Vaṭudāsa, a *mahāsāmanta-cuḍāmaṇi* and a friend of the king. The colophon reads as follows :[4]

Śāke sapta-viṁśaty-adhika-śat-opeta-daśaśate śaradām /
Śrīmal-Lakṣmaṇasena-kṣitipasya rasaika-viṁśe 'bde //
Savitur-gatyā Phālguna-Viṁśeṣu parārtha hetave kutukāt /
Śrīdharadāsenedaṁ Saduktikarṇāmṛtaṁ cakre //

(In Śaka 1127 (=1205 A. D.), in the year 27 of king Lakṣmaṇasena, on the 20th of Phālguna, calculated in terms of

[1] Vijayasena's Barrackpur plate is dated in his 62nd regnal year. See below.

[2] *Infra*, pp. 221 ff.

[3] Sanokhar Inscription : *EI*, vol. XXX, pp. 78 ff. Naihāti plate : *Ibid.*, vol. XIV, pp. 156 ff.; *IB-III*, pp. 68 ff.

[4] Chintaharan Chakravarti : 'Date of Accession of Lakṣmaṇasena', *IHQ*, vol. III, p. 188.
The author arrived at this reading of the colophon by collating four mss. of the work. Also see Ramavatara Sarma (ed,) : *Saduktikarṇāmṛta* p. 328, and English Introduction by Hara Dutt Sharma, pp. 32-35. R. L. Mitra : *Notices of Sanskrit Manuscripts*, vol. III, Calcutta, 1876, p. 141.

the movement of the Sun, was composed this *Saduktikarṇāmṛta* by *Śrīdharadāsa* for the benefit of others.)[1]

On the basis of this evidence the accession of Lakṣmaṇasena can safely be placed in 1178 A. D.

Girindra Mohan Sarkar emended the expression *rasaika*, which appeared unusual, to *rājyaika* and took it to mean the 21st year of Lakṣmaṇasena's reign.[2] This emendation seems to be unnecessary and the testimony of the *Tabaqāti-Nāṣirī* leads us to prefer the first interpretation.

Minhāj mentions that when Muḥammad Bakhtyār Khaljī invaded Nadiya Rai Lakhmaniyā was ruling for 80 years.[3] It follows from Minhāj's account that he actually meant that Rai Lakhmaniyā was 80 years of age, because after stating that Rai Lakhmaniyā was ruling for 80 years he goes on to relate an anecdote about his birth where he says that Lakhmaniyā was placed on the throne just after his birth. The date of Bakhtyār's conquest of Nadiya can now be fixed in 1204 A. D. with fair amount of certainty.[4]

So according to Minhāj's account Lakṣmaṇasena was 81 years old in 1205 A. D., which, if we accept the interpretation of *rasaikaviṁse* as 27, was the 27th year of his reign. *Rasa*, according to the Hindu system of chronogram is equal to six. We know from an inscription that Lakṣmaṇasena reigned for at least 27 years.[5] If, accepting the second interpretation, we take

[1] The year 27 must be taken to refer to the regnal year of the king. It cannot be referred to the *La Sam* Era because in that case the 27th year comes to 1146-47 A. D. or 1061-69 Saka Era, which does not agree with the Śaka date given in the passage. cf. *IHQ*, vol. III, pp. 188-89. *Rasa* means six.

[2] *JL*, vol. XVI, pp. 18-19. Also see *IC*, vol. IV, p. 231. This has been accepted by H. C. Ray : *DHNI*, vol. I, p. 353.

[3] *TN*, Text edited by W. Nassau Lees, Calcutta, 1864, pp. 148-49. English Translation by H. G. Raverty, pp. 554-555. Hindi Trans. by S. A. A. Rizvi : *Ādi Turk Kālin Bhārat*, Aligarh, 1956, pp. 12-13.

[4] See below.

[5] Lakṣmaṇasena's Bhowal plate is dated in his 27th year. *EI*, vol. XXVI, pp. 1 ff.

the year 1205 A. D. as the 21st year of his reign, then Lakṣmaṇasena must have been still alive and reigning in 1211 A.D. at the age of 87, which is very unlikely. Minhāj mentions that Lakṣmaṇasena died soon after his retreat from Nadiya to *Bang.*[1] Hence it is safer to place his death in c. 1206 A. D., two years after his defeat at the hands of the Turks.

From the above discussion the chronology of the Sena kings of Bengal can be deduced as follows :

Vijayasena	...	c. 1097-1160 A. D.
Vallālasena	...	c. 1160-1178 A. D.
Lakṣmaṇasena	...	c. 1178-1206 A. D.
Viśvarūpasena	...	c. 1206-1220 A. D.[2]
Keśavasena	...	c. 1220-1223 A. D.[3]

Sāmantasena and Hemantasena can be placed in the second half of the 11th century A. D. The internal evidence of the Sena records and the contemporary circumstances will be found to bear out this scheme of dating.

Now let us turn back our attention to the history of the Senas. According to our chronology the rise of the Senas seems to have coincided with the Kaivarta rebellion, which shook the foundations of the Pāla empire in the last quarter of the 11th century A. D. We have also seen earlier that the rise of the Varmans in south-eastern Bengal is to be ascribed to the same period.[4] The Senas, by a slow and gradual process, taking advantage of the weakness of the Pāla rulers, came to occupy the whole of Bengal by the middle of the 12th century A.D.

[1] *TN*, Text, p. 151 ; Eng. Tr., p. 558 ; Hindi Tr., p. 14. Raverty's translation of the passage does not seem to be correct. The text reads as follows : *Wa muddat 'umr ū dar ān nazdikī anqerāḍ pujiraft*, and means that shortly afterwards his life came to an end. In place of life Raverty has 'reign'.

[2] His known reign period is 14, the date of the Madanapārā plate : *IB-III*, pp. 132 ff.

[3] His known period is 3 years, the date of his Edilpur plate : *Ibid.*, pp. 118 ff.

[4] *Supra*, pp. 192 ff.

The real founder of the independent rule of the family was Vijayasena, the son and successor of Hemantasena. It is quite likely that Vijayasena inherited the position of a feudatory ruler under the Pālas in the Rāḍha area. There are indications in his records to this effect.

The suggestion[1] that Vijayasena is to be identified with Vijayarāja of Nidrāvalī mentioned in the *Rāmacarita*[2] seems to be quite probable. The Paikore pillar inscription,[3] as explained below, bears testimony to Vijayasena's connection with the Rāḍha area and suggests the location of their original territory. The poet Umāpatidhara, who composed the Deopārā Praśasti, was an adept in playing with words and it seems that in the 19th verse of the *Praśasti* he referred, in a veiled but clever manner, to the part played by Vijayasena in helping Rāmapāla to recover Varendra.

Verse 19 of the Deopārā inscription has been translated as follows : "By him (Vijayasena), who gave away land in Heaven (*divyabhuvaḥ*) to his rival princes and accepted (from them) the earth in return, the sword-blade marked with writing blood of heroes was made to serve the purpose of a document as it were in anticipation, otherwise how could Earth come to be enjoyed by him when there arose disputes regarding her, and on presenting his drawn sword (from its death) the host of his opponents would admit defeat."[4] *Divyabhuvaḥ* of the passage can also be taken to refer to Varendra when this territory was in the occupation of the Kaivarta chief Divya. And if the term *pratikṣitibhṛtām* (rival princes or kings) is taken to mean the Pālas who subsequently became his rivals, the above verse can well be interpreted as indicating that Vijaysena helped the Pala king (Rāmapāla, who secured the

[1] H. C. Raychaudhuri : *Studies In Indian Antiquities*, p. 158 ; *I. A.*, 1920, p. 175 ; *JL*, vol. XVI, Appendix D, pp. 80-82 ; *IHQ*, vol. XXXVII, pp. 254-55 ; *DHNI*, vol. I, p. 344.

[2] *Supra*, pp. 119-120.

[3] *IB-III*, p. 168 : *ASI Annual Report*, 1921-22, pp. 78-80.

[4] N. G. Majumdar : *IB-III*, p. 53.

help of 14 *sāmantas* before his fight against Divya) in regaining Varendra, and in return won for himself his territory or his independent station. There was no question of rivalry with the Pālas at that time, but after some time, when Vijaya was aspiring for the Gauḍa kingdom, the Pāla king was definitely his rival. There is no doubt that there arose a dispute for the throne of Gauḍa in which the sword of Vijayasena decided the issue.

From this interpretation of the verse it follows that Vijayasena helped Rāmapāla in his fight against Divya, in return for which he obtained an independent position in Rāḍha ; and afterwards he defeated the Pālas to gain the throne of Gauḍa. And, in fact, his victory over the lord of Gauḍa is referred to in the next verse of the Deoparā *praśasti*.

Thus we find added strength for the identification of Vijayasena of Nidrāvalī, a feudatory chief under Rāmapāla. There is some uncertainty in the identification of Nidrāvalī. The suggestion that it was situated in northern Bengal[1] does not seem to be correct, because that portion of Bengal was under the control of the Kaivartas. If the identification of Vijayasena with Vijayarāja is accepted, Nidrāvalī has to be sought for in Rāḍha, the area where the Senas had settled before their rise to power. On this ground the suggestion of N. N. Das Gupta[2] for its identification with Niḍole, a village near Sālār and Katwā and close to the Ganges, seems to be acceptable. Its nearness to the find places of the Sena records—Paikore, Naihāti, Śaktipur, Ānulia and Barrackpur—adds further grounds for its being an early seat of their power.

Moreover, there is no chronological difficulty in accepting Vijayasena's identification with Vijayaraja of Nidrāvalī. Rāmapāla reigned between 1082 and 1124 A. D.,[3] while we have placed Vijayasena's reign in 1097-1160 A. D. Varendra came to be occupied

[1] *Rāmacarita.*, VRS Edition, Introduction, p. xxxvii.
[2] *IHQ*, vol. XXXVII, p. 255.
[3] See Appendix I.

by Divya in or after 1080 A. D., the last date of Mahīpāla II. We have seen that, Rāmapāla made adequate preparations for his fight against Divya and it must have taken him some time to secure the support of the *Sāmantacakra*.[1] So the capture of Varendra from the hands of the Kaivartas and the independence of Vijayasena may be dated shortly before 1097 A. D.

Vijayasena must have marked time until the opportune moment came for his endeavour to capture more power and gradually grasp the paramountcy of Bengal. The actual sequence of events in Vijayasena's progress in power is not found in the Sena records. It is quite likely that his marriage with Vilāsadevī of the Śūra family[2] greatly enhanced his position and based his power on a more firm footing. We have noticed the existence of a Śūra family in southern Rāḍha in the first quarter of the 11th century A. D.[3] one Lakṣmīśūra is also mentioned in the list of the *sāmantas* of Rāmapāla in the *Rāmacarita*, as the lord of Apāra-Mandāra, identified with Mandāran in the Hoogly district.[4] Vilāsadevī may have belonged to this Śūra family of southern Rāḍha and Vijayasena's marriage with her may have given him a foothold in both northern and southern Rāḍha. It is also likely that Vijayasena profited by his friendship with the Orissan king Anantavarman Coḍagaṅga. In the *Vallālacarita* Vijayasena is mentioned as *Coḍagaṅga-sakha*.[5] This infortion of the *Vallālacarita* may be accepted, because Coḍagaṅga (c. 1075-1150 A. D.) and Vijayasena were contemporaries.

The Deopārā *praśasti* makes specific mention of Vijayasena's victories over Nānya, Vīra, Rāghava, Vardhana and the kings of Gauḍa, Kāmarūpa and Kaliṅga ; it also speaks of a naval expedition against a western king (*pāścātya-cakra*) along the course of the Ganges.[6]

[1] *Supra*, pp. 117 ff.

[2] Verse 7, Barrackpur plate : *EI*, vol. XV, pp. 283 & 285 ; *IB-III*, pp. 62 & 65.

[3] *Supra*, pp. 81-83.

[4] *Supra*, p. 118.

[5] *Vallālacarita*, Text, p. 61 ; Trans., p. 48.

[6] Verse 20-22 : *IB-III*, pp. 48 & 53-54 ; *EI*, vol. I, pp. 309 & 314.

Of these rivals of Vijayasena Nānya can be identified with Nānyadeva (c. 1097-1147 A. D.) of Mithila,[1] another Karṇāṭa chief who established his authority over northern Bihar. Vīra can be identified with Vīraguṇa, ruler of Koṭāṭavī, a member of Rāmapāla's *Sāmantacakra*.[2] Vardhana may be identified either with Dvorapavardhana, ruler of Kauśāmbī,[3] or with Govardhana, against whom Madanapāla won a victory.[4] Vijayasena's fights against Vīra and Vardhana, therefore, were meant to subdue two other *sāmantas* who also may have shown some signs of aspiration for power.

Rāghava and the king of Kaliṅga, mentioned in two separate verses, were possibly identical and can he identified with Rāghava, son of Coḍagaṅga, who ruled in Orissa from c. 1157 to 1170 A. D.

There is no chronological difficulty in this identification if this war of Vijayasena is taken to have happened towards the end of his reign, sometime between 1157 and 1159 A. D. It is apparent from the way in which Umāpatidhara describes these events in the Deopārā *praśasti* that he did not follow a chronological order. We have earlier suggested that Vijayasena and Coḍagaṅga were on friendly terms. In the Kendupatna plates of Narasiṁha II, it is said that Coḍagaṅga levied tribute from the lands bordering on the Ganges and defeated a ruler of Mandāra.[5] The ruler of Mandāra was possibly Lakṣmīśūra or one of his family, and it was in this family Vijayasena had married. It is not unlikely that a friendly relationship was established between the Śūras and Coḍagaṅga after the latter's attack, and that is possibly why Vijayasena is called a friend of Coḍagaṅga in the *Vallālacarita*. This friendly relationship was

[1] Upendra Thakur : *History of Mithilā*, pp. 227 ff. R. C. Majumdar : 'King Nānyadeva of Mithilā', *IHQ*, vol. VII, pp. 759 ff.
R. K. Choudhury : 'The Karṇāṭakas of Mithilā', *ABORI*, vol. XXXV, pp. 91 ff.

[2] *Rāmacarita*, Verses II/5-6 : VRS Edition, pp. 42 ff. Also see *Supra*, pp. 177-118.

[3] *Rāmacarita, op. cit.*; *Supra*, p. 120.

[4] *Rāmacarita*. Verse IV/47 : VRS Edition, pp. 150-51 ; *Supra*, p. 134.

[5] *JASB*, vol. LXV, pp. 239-41.

apparently broken when Rāghava came to the throne. Vijayasena may have had to wage war against Rāghava in order to thwart the latter's aggressive designs.

The king of Kāmarūpa defeated by Vijayasena may have been Vaidyadeva, the minister of Kumārapāla who declared independence,[1] or one of his successors.[2] H. C. Ray identified him with Rāyārideva or Udayakarṇa (c. 1145-1175 A. D.) of the Assam plates of Vallabhadeva,[3] where it is claimed that Rāyārideva defeated a king of Vaṅga.[4] It is possible that Rāyārideva was placed as a feudatory of Vaidyadeva in the region about Tezpur in the east, and during Vijayasena's invasion the former helped Vaidyadeva.[5] It is also possible that Vaidyadeva invaded the newly founded Sena kingdom and Vijayasena defeated him.[6]

The lord of Gauḍa who was made to flee by Vijayasena was Madanapāla. Rāmapāla succeeded in bringing back Varendra from the Kaivartas and placing the Pāla empire on a firm footing in northern and western Bengal. Though Vijayasena may have succeeded in establishing his authority over parts of western and south-western Bengal it is unlikely that he succeeded in ousting the Pāla rule from northern and north-western Bengal during the lifetime of Rāmapāla. If Varendra was lost by the Pālas before the early years of Madanapāla, when Sandhyākara Nandī completed the *Rāmacarita*, Nandī would have definitely mentioned it.

It was possibly during the reigns of the two weak successors of Rāmapāla that Vijayasena gathered power and succeeded in striking the final blow during the reign of Madanapāla, the

[1] *Supra*, pp. 128-129.
[2] R. C. Majumdar : *HB-I*, pp. 213-214.
P. C. Choudhury : *The History of Civilisation of the People of Assam*, pp. 271-275.
[3] *DHNI*, vol. I, p. 360.
[4] *EI*, vol. V, pp. 181-188.
[5] P. C. Choudhury : *op. cit.*, p. 275.
[6] *HB-I*, p. 214.

last known Pāla king. Pāla suzerainty over northern Bengal up to the 8th year of Madanapāla's reign is proved by his Manahali grant, issued from Rāmāvatī, near Gauḍa, granting land in the Dinajpur area in northern Bengal.[1] The 8th year of Madanapāla's reign falls in 1152-53 A.D. according to the testimony of the Valgudar inscription.[2] The Deopārā inscription records the construction of a temple of Pradyumneśvara by Vijayasena at the find-place of the inscription, about 7 miles to the west of Rajshahi.[3] This bears clear testimony to Vijayasena's occupation of northern Bengal, which must be dated some time between 1151-52 and 1159 A.D. The absence of any Pāla record after the 8th year of Madanapāla's reign in Bengal or indicating their possessions in Bengal confirms this finding. The *Rāmacarita* mentions that Madanapāla had driven back to the river Kālindī the vanguard of the army that had destroyed a large number of his forces.[4] This may be taken to refer to Vijayasena's attack on the Pāla stronghold and it is possible that after initial success Madanapāla had to give in.

It is quite likely that after ousting the Pālas from Bengal Vijayasena felt himself powerful enough to try his hand against some western power against whom he sent a naval expedition along the course of the Ganges. The Gāhaḍavālas, who by this time had expanded their dominions into parts of Bihar,[5] were probably his target, but it seems that he had little success. The *praśastikāra* simply mentions the sending of a naval expedition, but does not speak of its outcome.

The Barrackpur plate[6] furnishes us with information about Vijayasena's success in another direction. The plate was issued from Vikramapura, which had been the stronghold of the Candras

[1] *GL*, pp. 147 ff.

[2] *EI*, vol. XXVIII, pp. 141 ff. The inscription is dated in his 18th regnal year and also in Śaka Era 1083 (=1161 A. D.) See *Supra*. p. 197.

[3] *IB-III*, pp. 42 ff.

[4] Verse IV/27 : VRS Edition, pp. 133-134.

[5] *Supra*, pp. 132-133.

[6] *IB-III*, pp. 57 ff.; *EI*, vol. XV, pp. 278 ff.

and, following them, of the Varmans. The lands granted by the plate lay in the Khāḍī *maṇḍala*, about the present Sundarban area, and were measured according to the length of the measuring rod prevalent in Samataṭa. These facts appear to point to Vijayasena's hold over south-eastern Bengal also. But it is not possible to determine when this portion of Bengal came under his control. The Varmans are found to have ruled in this area from the last quarter of the 11th century to the middle of the 12th century A.D.[1] So it seems certain that Vijayasena supplanted the Varmans in south-eastern Bengal sometime in the middle of the 12th century A.D.

D. C. Sircar suggested that it is not impossible to think that Vīra (Vīravarman) was a successor of the Varman king Bhojavarman, and Vīra of the Deopārā inscription is to be identified with him.[2] But until we come to know the names of the successors of Bhojavarman, if there were any, from any definite source this suggestion is absolutely superficial.

Thus we find that by the end of his career Vijayasena had succeeded in establishing the Sena power over the whole of Bengal and the Deopārā *praśasti* proudly states that he "gained the fruit of universal sovereignty over the kingdom of the earth girt by the seven seas ;"[3] it is said in the *Vallālacarita* that he "conquered the entire earth surrounded by the four seas,'[4] and he is designated as *akhila-pārthiva-cakravartī* (overlord of all other kings) in the Naihati plate of his son.[5]

In the Naihati plate Vijayasena is qualified by the phrase *nirvyāja-vikrama-tiraskṛta-Sāhasāṅka*, which indicates in a rhetorical manner the idea that Vijayasena wielded great power which eclipsed even that of Vikramāditya. Here possibly is an allusion

[1] *Supra*, pp. 189-201.
[2] *IHQ*, vol. XXX, p. 209.
[3] Verse 17 : *IB-III*, p. 53.
[4] Text, p. 61 ; Eng. Trans., p. 48. In the next verse Vijayasena is called a *sārva-bhauma-mahīkṣit*.
[5] Verse 7 : *IB-III*, p. 72 ; *EI*, vol. XIV, p. 160.

to the mythical hero of that name and not to any of Vijayasena's contemporaries.[1]

The claim in the inscriptions that Vijayasena imprisoned many kings is probably an exaggeration of actual facts by the *praśastikāra*, but the find-spots and the internal evidence of his records show that there is a substantial amount of truth in it.

We are not in a position to determine the correct sequence of events in Vijayasena's career of empire-building. The poet Umāpatidhara seems to have hardly followed a chronological order in the Deopārā *praśasti*. We may attempt to make some suggestions in this respect, taking into account the contemporary circumstances. It seems that the independent rule of Vijayasena started in some parts of northern Rāḍha, possibly in the area bordering the Ganges, with his headquarters at Niḍole, in or about the time when Rāmapāla marched against the Kaivartas (c. 1997 A. D.). But the success of Rāmapālā must have kept him marking time waiting for the opportune moment. It is quite likely that he did not attempt any major onslaught till the end of Rāmapāla's reign (c. 1124 A. D.). But in the meantime his marriage into the Śūra family gave him a footing in southern Rāḍha. It was possibly during this time that Coḍagaṅga invaded southern Rāḍha, which may have ended in friendship between him and Vijayasena. During the reigns of Kumārapāla and Gopāla III (c. 1124-1143 A. D.), the two weak succeessors of Rāmapāla, Vijayasena found the opportunity of amassing power by bringing other independent or semi-independent *sāmantas* under his control. His fights with Vira and Vardhana may be taken to represent this phase of his career.

Vijayasena's fight with Nānyadeva of Mithilā must have taken place sometime before 1147 A. D., the last known date of the latter. It is quite possible that Nānyadeva, after establishing his power in Mithilā in c. 1097 A. D., showed signs of ambition towards Bengal and Vijayasena had to stop this danger from a fellow countryman.

[1] *IB-III*, p. 70.

Thus from his stronghold in Rāḍha Vijayasena gradually amassed power and by the middle of the 12th century he was strong enough to supplant the Varmans in south-eastern Bengal. Of course, we do not have any evidence as to show whether he captured the Pāla stronghold first or that of the Varmans. His plans were no doubt determined by the relative strength of the Pālas and the Varmans in the middle of the 12th century A. D.

In any case, by the middle of the 12th century Vijayasena had succeeded in supplanting the Varmans and ousting the Pālas, and had established the rule of the Senas over the whole of Bengal.

His wars against Kaliṅga and Kāmarūpa can be placed between 1152 and 1160 A. D. His naval expedition against the western power, possibly the Gāhaḍavālas, should also be placed in this period. It is clear that these campaigns were rather the expressions of the strength of the Senas than wars for gaining increased power.

Vijayasena had a very long reign of about 62 years (c. 1097-1160). R. D. Banerji read the date of his Barrackpur plate as 32.[1] The date seems to be clearly 62, as read by N. G. Majumdar.[2] A close scrutiny of the plate supplied by R. D. Banerji shows that the first letter of the numeral is 6 rather than 3. This figure is similar to the 6 in the figure for the day of the month in the Naihāṭi plate of Vallālasena.[3]

It was a great achievement on Vijayasena's part that he succeeded in putting an end to the rule of the Pālas, who had governed much of Bengal and Bihar for about four centuries. The establishment of the Sena rule by Vijayasena marked another important landmark in Bengal's history, so long overlooked by historians. For the first time the whole of Bengal came

[1] *EI*, vol. XV, pp. 278 ff.

[2] *IB-III*, pp. 57 ff. D. C. Sircar supported this reading. Cf. *IHQ*, vol. XXX, p. 207, Fn. 2 ; *EI*, vol. XXX, p. 80, Fn. 1.

[3] Compare with the plate in *IB-III*, plate facing p. 76, and also with the plate in *EI*, vol. XIV, facing p. 161.

under one parasol, the importance of which cannot be underestimated. It has been suggested on good grounds that the *Gauḍ-Orviśa-kula-praśasti* (eulogy of the royal family of Gauḍa) and the *Vijaya-praśasti* (eulogy of Vijaya) of the famous poet Śri-Harṣa were inspired by the career of Vijayasena.[1]

Besides his military achievements Vijayasena is praised in the Deopārā inscription for his liberality towards the *Śrotriyas* (Brahmanas versed in the Vedas) and the poor. It is said that "through his favour the *Śrotriyas* enjoy so much wealth that their wives had to be taught by the wives of the townspeople the use of pearls, emeralds etc."[2] Vijayasena was a Śaiva; hence assumed the title of *Paramamāheśvara* and had the *biruda* of *Arivṛṣabhaśaṅkara*.[3] The Deopārā inscription records the erection of a lofty temple of Pradyumneśvara Śiva and the excavation of a lake in front of it by Vijayasena.[4] It is likely that the city of Vijayapura mentioned as the capital of Lakṣmaṇasena in the *Pavanadūtā* of Dhoyī[5] was built during his time and named after him. Vijayapura was possibly situated in the Triveni area in the Hoogly district.[6]

Vijayasena was succeeded by his son Vallālasena in 1160 A.D. We can reconstruct the history of his reign from the two inscriptions of his time[7] so far discovered and the *Vallālacarita* of Ānanda Bhaṭṭa, which was composed in 1510 A. D. Like all traditions, the authenticity of this work is doubtful,[8] but it would be wrong totally to discard it as fictitious or spurious.

[1] *IC*, vol. II, p. 578. For Śrī-Harṣa see *HB-I*, pp. 306,307.

[2] Verse 23 : *IB-III*, p. 54 ; *EI*, vol. I, p. 310.

[3] Lines 23-24 and 48-49, Barrackpur plate : *Ibid.*, vol. XV, pp. 283-284 ; *IB-III*, pp. 63-64.

[4] Verses 25-30 : *IB-III*, pp. 54-55 ; *EI*, vol. I, p. 310.

[5] Verse 36 : Chintaharan Chakravarti (ed.), Sanskrit Sāhitya Parishat Series, Calcutta, 1926.
Manmohan Chakravarti (ed.) : *JASB (NS)*, vol. I, pp. 53 ff.

[6] *JL*, vol. XVI, pp. 15, 21-24.

[7] The Naihati Copper-plate and the Sanokhar Inscription.

[8] *JASB*, 1896, pp. 36 ff.

R. C. Majumdar[1] and Nihar Ranjan Ray[2] have shown that there are elements of truth in the story contained in the *Vallālacarita* and the information supplied by it, as far as it is corroborated by other evidence and found to be reasonable in view of the contemporary circumstances, may be accepted. Nihar Ranjan Ray is also of the opinion that the story contained in it is not of a partisan nature and he goes so far as to say that though it may not be true to the word, there is no reason to disbelieve the fact that in it is hidden an historical truth for the social history of Bengal.[3] H. P. Sastri pointed out that there are reasons to believe that Ānandabhaṭṭa compiled his work from the traditions current in his time and from other works by authors who were contemporaries or near contemporaries of Vallālasena.[4] But there is no doubt that Ānandabhaṭṭa was affected by the contemporary circumstances of the social and religious convulsion that was going on in Bengal after Caitanya.[5] So the information supplied by the *Vallālacarita* should be used with caution.

The Naihati plate does not contain any record of Vallālasena's achievements. But the newly discovered Sanokhar inscription[6] throws some light on his occupation of eastern Magadha. N. N. Vasu, on the strength of a *kulapañjikā*, wrote that one Vaṭeśvaramitra was placed as the lord of Magadha by Vallālasena and he built a Śiva temple, known as Vaṭeśvaranātha, at Colgong.[7] But this has not been corroborated by any authentic

[1] *HB-I*, pp. 239-241.

[2] *Bāṅgālīr Itihāsa*, Ādi Parva, pp. 261-262.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 262.

[4] H. P. Sastri's Introduction to the English Translation of the *Vallālacarita*, pp. viii—xi.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. vii-viii.

[6] The inscription, dated in the 9th year of Valalasena (apparently of Vallalasena), was discovered at Sanokhar, a village on the way from Colgong to Belnigarh, about 10 miles from Colgong, in the Bhagalpur district, Bihar.
EI, vol. XXX, pp. 78-82.

[7] *Vaṅger Jatiya Itihāsa*, Rājanya Kāṇḍa, 1321 BS, pp. 324-25.

evidence. On the contrary, epigraphic evidence proves that the worship of Vaṭeśvara existed in that area several centuries before Vallālasena.[1] However, the find-place of the Sanokhar inscription seems to furnish us proof of Vallālasena's occupation of eastern Bihar (the Bhāgalpur area).

Madanapāla held Magadha till the end of his reign, though the Gāhaḍavālas were pressing from the western side. With the end of Madanapāla's reign in c. 1161 A. D. the Gāhaḍavālas succeeded in occupying western Magadha, while in the eastern part Govindapāla and Palapāla, the so-called Pāla kings, may have held sway.[2] Possibly Vallālasena succeeded in annexing some parts of eastern Magadha by defeating either of them. The success of Vallālasena must be dated some time before his 9th year, c. 1169 A. D. It is likely that this success of Vallālasena has been referred to in the *Adbhutasāgara*, where it is said that his arms were pillars for chaining the elephants of the lord of Gauḍa.[3] It may be mentioned here that both Govindapāla and Palapāla are found to have kept up the pretence of calling themselves *Gauḍeśvara* in their records.

Traditions refer to Vallālasena's hold over Mithilā (northern Bihar). The Vallālacarita records a tradition that he accompanied his father in a war in Mithilā.[4] Vijayasena is found to have waged war against Nānyadeva of Mithilā[5] and Vallāla-

[1] *JBRS*, vol. XXXVII, pp. 4-7.

[2] *Supra*, pp. 193 ff.

[3] *Gauḍendra-kuñjarālana-stambha-bahūr-mahīpatiḥ* / .
M. D. Jha (ed.) : *Adbhutasāgara*, p. 4.

[4] Verse 5 ff. Text., p. 121 ; Trans., p. 101.
The 5th verse runs as follows :
Śrūyate 'tra pravacanaṁ paramparyakramāgatam /
Vallālo 'nuyayau yuddhe pitaraṁ śauryaśālinam //
H. P. Sastri translated the verse as : A tradition is handed down from generation to generation that Vallāla followed in the footsteps of his powerful father in war. But *anuyayau* can mean that Vallāla accompanied his father in war.

[5] *Supra*, pp. 224.

may have accompanied his father in this campaign.[1] It is however difficult to determine the amount of success achieved by this campaign and in view of the fact that the successors of Nānyadeva ruled in Mithilā for a long time it is probable that the Senas did not succeed in advancing their power over northern Bihar. R. C. Majumdar's[2] argument that the comparative obscurity of Nānyadeva's successors and the popularity of the *La Sam* Era in Mithilā may point to Vijayasena's success does not appear to be conclusive. The first point no longer holds good, while the origin of the *La Sam* Era is far from being certain and it is hazardous to base any conclusion on it.

A tradition recorded in the *Laghubhārata*[3] contains references to Vallālasena's expedition to Mithilā ; while Mithilā is mentioned as one of the five provinces of Vallālasena's kingdom in the *Vallālacarita*.[4] These traditions, recorded centuries after the event, cannot be accepted unless corroborated by other evidence. It is quite likely that later writers confused the tradition about Vallālasena's march into Mithilā during the reign of his father, and took it to have happened during his own reign. The *Laghubhārata* mentions that Vallālasena heard the news of the birth of Lakṣmaṇasena during his Mithilā campaign. According to our chronological scheme the birth of Lakṣmaṇasena can be placed in c. 1123-24 A. D., which falls within the reign period of Vijayasena.

1 Vallālasena's name is mentioned in the Barrackpur plate of his father, which shows that he was quite grown up and was associated in the administration.

2 *HB-I*, p. 216.

3 *JRAS*, 1930, pp. 8-9 ; *JASB*, vol. LVI, p. 26.

4 Verse 8, Chapter I, Part II : Text, p. 16 ; Trans., p. 14. The other four provinces are Vāgḍī, Varendra, Rāḍha and Vaṅga. Except Vāgḍī all are well-known divisions of ancient Bengal. Vāgḍī has been identified with Bagree of Rennell's atlas (Pl. VII), between the Rūpanārāyaṇa and Cossai rivers forming the borderland between southern Rāḍha and Orissa. Cf. *HB-I*, p. 217.

The story contained in the *Vallālacarita*[1] may be said to contain some hints about Vallālasena's reign. The main theme of the story is that the *Suvarṇavaniks* were degraded by Vallālasena for various reasons. Vallabhānanda, the chief of the merchants, once refused to lend Vallālasena one and a half crore of golden coins. The king had earlier borrowed a crore of *niṣkas* from him for his war against the king of Udantapura (Magadha), and his failure in the first attempt led him to ask for another loan. The merchant ultimately agreed, but demanded the revenue of Harikela. This infuriated the king.

On another occasion the *Vaniks* did not partake of a dinner on the occasion of the performance of the *Pitṛpiṇḍa*, ceremony for having a son through his new queen Śilādevī. These incidents made the king furious ; he degraded them socially, and the *Vaniks* were compelled to migrate from Bengal. It is related in this connection that Vallabhānanda was siding with the Pālas and the king of Magadha was his son-in-law.

The story may not be totally correct, but it seems that the author had the knowledge of the contemporary circumstances and in the background of those circumstances he set up his story. The war against Magadha, which drained away the resources of the emperor, can be said to refer to Vallālasena's fight with either Govindapāla or Palapāla for the occupation of some parts of eastern Magadha. The apparent bankruptcy of the emperor may not be altogether untrue. Vijayasena had to lean heavily on the treasury during his empire building In the decadent period of the Pālas, when Vijayasena grasped power, the position of the empire must have been very weak. Furthermore, Rāmapāla must have drained away whatever wealth the treasury had during his fight to recapture Varendra.

Again, the story of Vallabhānanda's siding with the Pālas may be given some credence. He may not have been related to the ruler of Magadha, apparently either Govindapāla or Pala-

[1] Chapters II, and XXII, Part II : Text, pp. 17 ff. & 105 ff.; Translation, pp. 15 ff. and 88 ff.

pāla, but it is quite possible that the story "contains the distorted echo of an internal disruption caused by the partisans of the Pāla dynasty",[1] who had been driven out recently from Bengal by Vijayasena. This is further substantiated by the fact that Vallāla is said to have raised the status of the Kaivartas in society.[2] It is clear that when Ānandabhaṭṭa composed his work he knew certain details of the historical facts.

The other facts about Vallālasena related in the *Vallālacarita*, such as his fascination for a low caste girl, may have been the result of the influence of the contemporary social reactions on the mind of Ānandabhaṭṭa. In this connection mention may be made of the attempts that were made in the 16th–17th centuries to show that the Senas were either Kāyasthas or Vaidyas.[3]

J. C. Ghosh[4] has identified Simhagiri, the author of the *Vyāsa Purāṇa* embedded in the *Vallālacarita*, with Jñānottama Miśra, the author of the *Candrikā*, a commentary of Śurésvara's *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi*. Jñānottama can be placed in the middle of the 12th century A. D. and he is mentioned as *Gauḍeśvarācārya*. Ānandabhaṭṭa also mentioned that Simhagiri was the spiritual guide of Vallālasena (*Mahārājagurumuniḥ*). If the identification is accepted Simhagiri also is proved to be an historical person and this adds ground to the theory that the composer of the *Vallālacarita* based his narratives on contemporary or near contemporary accounts.

Traditions contained in the extant *Kulajigranthas* associate the name of Vallālasena with the introduction of social reforms, especially the system of Kulinism. In a recent study on this subject Narottama Kundu[5] has clearly shown that there is no

1 R. C. Majumdar : *HB-I*, p. 241.

2 *Vallālacarita*, Verses 16 ff., Chapter XXII, Part II : Text, pp. 108 ff.; Translation, pp. 91 ff.

3 N. Kundu : '*Caste And Class In Pre-Muslim Bengal*', London University Ph. D. Thesis, 1963, p. 141.

4 *IHQ*, vol. XIII, pp. 581-88.

5 *Op. cit.*, pp 167-190.

ground to ascribe the introduction of Kulinism to Vallālasena. It is believed that Vallālasena, in order to bring about a thorough reorganisation of the social system, introduced the system known as *Kaulinya*, by which those who possessed and showed some of the best qualities of brain and mind were raised in status to form a sort of nobility and known as *Kulina*. Most of our knowledge of the theoretical basis and the early history of Kulinism is obtained from texts known as *Kulagranthas* or *Kulaji Śāstras*, all of which were written five or six centuries after Vallālasena's reign with the intention of classifying the Bengalis as *Kulina* or non-*Kulina*. These texts are full of irregularities and contain many conflicting ideas. It is evident that Kulinism was the strongest force among the Bengal Brahmins in the 18th and 19th centuries A. D., and it is quite possible that the advocates of the system tried to give a historical basis to it and hence claimed its origin from the time of the Hindu kings of Bengal.

One would have expected that the rise of Kulinism would have been reflected in the contemporary literature and inscriptions of the Senas. But there is no hint of it at all, not to speak of its explicit mention, in the records of the Sena period. It is curious that famous Pandits like Bhavadeva Bhaṭṭa, Halāyudha Miśra and Aniruddha as well as several less known Brahmins of the period, wrote of many other things but not of Kulinism. All the Sena plates grant lands to Brahmins, but in none of them do we find the mention of Kulinism.

In view of these facts it is clear that there is no evidence of the establishment of Kulinism by Vallālasena and that it was probably the creation of the Brahmins long after the Muslim conquest of Bengal. N. Kundu further concluded that "it is the formal elaboration by the Brahmins, who are always ready to come forward for the regulation of the social and also sometimes the political structure of India, of deep-seated tendencies already long in existence in the upper classes of Bengal society."[1]

[1] N. Kundu : *Op. cit.*, p. 190.

Vallālasena was noted for his learning. In the Barrackpur plate of his father he is mentioned as "the cherished lover of the intellect of the preceptor of gods (Bṛhaspati)."[1] We learn from the *Dānasāgara* that he learnt the Purāṇas and the *Smṛti* works from his preceptor Aniruddha.[2] In Lakṣmaṇasena's Madhainagar and Bhowal plates Vallālasena is praised as one who was not only unique among all kings but among all the scholars as well.[3] He was the author of the *Dānasāgara*, a work on various kinds of religious gifts and connected ceremonies, and the *Adbhutasāgāra*, an astrological work dealing with omens and portents. He completed the former in 1169 A.D., while he commenced writing the latter in 1168 A. D. ; but could not finish and it was completed by his son Lakṣmaṇasena. It is interesting to note that the author of the *Vallālacarita* knew about the composition of the *Dānasāgara* by Vallālasena under the instruction of Aniruddha.[4]

Like his father, Vallālasena was also a devout worshipper of Śiva and is praised for his benevolence.[5] He also had a *biruda*, *Arirāja-Niḥśaṅko-Śaṅkara*. The *Vallālacarita* refers to his consecration of a *Maṭha* near the Paradyumneśvara temple built by his father.[6] Vallālasena's wife Rāmadevī belonged to the Cālukya family,[7] which shows that the Senas had risen considerably in prestige and could marry in a prominent *Kṣatriya* family of the times. Moreover, it strengthens the suggestion about the earlier connection of the Senas with the Cālukyas.

Vallālasena's death is referred to in a passage in the *Adbhutasāgara*.[8] It is said there that Vallālasena commenced the writing

[1] Verse 8 : *IB-III*, p. 66.
[2] J. Eggeling : *Catalogue of the Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Library of the India Office*, Part III, p. 543.
[3] Verse 8 : *IB-III*, p. 110 ; *EI*, vol. XXVI, p. 6.
[4] Verse 11, Chapter I, Part II : Text, p. 16 : Trans., p. 4.
[5] Verse 14, Naihati plate : *EI*, vol. XIV, pp. 160 ff.; *IB-III*, pp. 73. ff.
[6] Verse 7, Chapter XXIV, Part II : Text, p. 112 ; Trans., p. 94.
[7] Verse 9, Madhainagar and Bhowal plates : *IB-III*, p. 110 ; *EI*, vol. XXVI, p. 6.
[8] M. D. Jha (ed.) : *Adbhutasāgara*, p. 4.

of the work in Śaka 1090 or 1089 and before it was completed he entrusted the tasks of completing the work and governing the empire to his son, Lakṣmaṇasena, and went to *Nirjarapura* at the confluence of the Ganges and the Yamunā. *Nirjarapura* can be interpreted either as the city of gods (heaven) or simply as the name of a locality in the Triveṇī area. According to the first meaning it seems that the king and the queen voluntarily ended their life, as was done by Rāmapāla.[1] But if the second meaning is accepted it seems probable that Vallālasena abdicated in favour of his son and passed the remaining days in a place called Nirjarapura, somewhere at the confluence of the Ganges and the Yamunā, near the modern Allahabad.

Vallālasena, according to our calculations, had a reign of about 18 years (c. 1160-1178 A.D.) and was succeeded by his son Lakṣmaṇasena. In all, eight inscriptions of Lakṣmaṇasena's time have come down to us.[2]

Lakṣmaṇasena's Madhainagar and Bhowal plates refer to his achievements in high sounding words. But unfortunately the verses cannot be deciphered fully, though the general meaning is quite clear. It is related that his "sport in youth" (*Kaumāra-kelih*) was the art of taking away by violence the fortune of the proud king of Gauḍa and when he was a young man the

[1] *Supra*, p. 126.

[2] (i) Govindapur plate : *IB-III*, pp. 92-98.
(ii) Ānuliā plate : *Ibid.*, pp. 81-91.
(iii) Tarpandīghi plate : *Ibid.*, pp. 99-105 ; *EI*, vol. XII, pp. 6-10.
(iv) Śaktipur plate : *EI*, vol. XXI, pp. 211-219.
(v) Sundarban plate : *IB-III*, pp. 169-172.
(vi) Madhainagar plate : *Ibid.*, pp. 106-115.
(vii) Bhowal plate : *EI*, vol. XXVI, pp. 1-13.
(viii) Dacca Caṇḍi Image Ins. : *Ibid.*, vol. XVII, pp. 359-362 ; *IB-III*, pp. 116-117.
Among these plates the introductory verses in Nos. i to v are more or less similar. The first seven verses are similar in all of these five plates ; No. i contains 3 additional verses, and Nos. ii & iii contain one similar additional verse. Plates Nos. vi and vii are also similar in the introductory portion.

king of Kaliṅga presented various gifts to him and he defeated the kings of Kāśī and Kāmarūpa.[1] In the Madhainagar plate is given high-sounding epithets such as *Vīracakravartī-sārvabhauma, vijayī* and he is also said to have crippled Kaliṅga and subdued Kāmarupa.[2] The copper-plates of his sons go further and record that he planted pillars of victory at Purī, Benares and Allahabad.[3] If we have to accept these statements of the Sena records it appears that Lakṣmaṇasena followed in the footsteps of his grandfather and defeated the kings of Gauḍa, Kaliṅga, Kāmarūpa and Kāśī. But the phrase occurring in the Madhainagar and Bhowal plates seems to be significant in this respect. In both the records the victories are described as Lakṣmaṇasena's *kaumāra-keli* (sport in youth). It is quite likely that these victories were achieved by Lakṣmaṇasena in his youth and possibly during the reign of his grandfather Vijayasena, who, as we have seen earlier, had led his arms against the kings of Gauḍa, Kaliṅga, Kāmarūpa and also, in all probability, against the king of Kāśī of the Gāhaḍavāla dynasty. Lakṣmaṇasena as a young man may have accompanied Vijayasena in these campaigns and this came to be recorded by his sons in high-sounding words as belonging to his own time.

There is no chronological difficulty in such an assumption. According to Minhāj's account Lakṣmaṇasena was 80 years old when Bakhtyār Khaljī invaded Nadiya and according to our calculations his birth falls in the year 1124 A. D., and he came to the throne at the age of 54.[4] We have seen earlier that Vijayasena's campaigns against Madanapāla, the lord of Gauḍa ; Rāghava, the king of Kaliṅga ; the king of Kāmarūpa and the

[1] Verse 11 : *IB-III*, p. 111 ; *EI*, vol. XXVI, pp. 6 ff. The verse in the Madhainagar plate could not be fully restored, but the Bhowal plate helps in the proper understanding.

[2] Lines 25-33 : *IB-III*, p. 111.

[3] Verse 13 of the Edilpur plate of Keśavasena and the Madanapārā plate of Viśvarūpasena, and verse 14 of the Sāhitya Parishat plate of Viśvarūpasena : *IB-III*, pp. 122-23, 135 and 144.

[4] *Supra*, pp. 218-220.

Gāhaḍavālas must be placed in the later part of his reign, probably in the period between 1152 and 1159 A.D.[1] And in this period Lakṣmaṇasena was in his late twenties and early thirties —a period which could easily be ascribed as the period of *kaumāra* for a king who was about 80 years when these exploits came to be recorded.

Verse 12 of the Bhowal plate seems to emphasize this fact by saying that "how has he, who has from his very boyhood been victorious in battles rendering the earth empty of warriors, spared the guardians of the regions ? (Because) these eight have entered his body consisting of eight principal parts, each according to his share, and the sword of a *kṣatriya* does not act when (an enemy has) already fallen (or has sought refuge)."[2] Verses 12 and 13 of the Madhainagar plate could not be read due to its damaged condition. The Bhowal plate, which was definitely similar to the Madhainagar plate, and in which these two verses can be read, makes clear the real purport of the term *kaumāra*.

This conclusion is evident from other considerations also. The Bhowal plate was issued towards the close of Lakṣmaṇasena's reign, in his 27th regnal year, and thus according to our chronological findings, after the capture of northern and western Bengal by the Muslims. The Madhainagar plate, the date of which could not be read, may also have been issued near about that time, possibly two or three years earlier, because in line 50 of the plate appear the word *Aindrī mahāśānti*, and the proper meaning of the term cannot be grasped as the line could not be read fully. But its position in the plate indicates that the grant was possibly made after the performance of the ceremony of *Aindri mahāśānti*, a *yajña* performed to avert an impending danger. Minhāj's account[3] shows that there was commotion in Bengal due to fear of the Muslim invasion, and it

[1] *Supra*, pp. 224 ff.

[2] *EI*, vol. XXVI, pp. 6-7, 11.

[3] *TN*, Text, p. 150 ; Eng. Trans., pp. 556-57 ; Hindi Trans., p. 13.

is likely that the old king performed a *yajña* to avert this danger. On this ground both the Madhainagar and the Bhowal plates can be placed towards the close of Lakṣmaṇasena's reign, at a time when the Sena empire was about to receive or had received a shock. And naturally the necessity was felt to pronounce clearly the greatness once achieved by the rulers, and in order to do so the composer seems to have mentioned the victories of Vijayasena's reign and associated the ruling king in the achievement of those successes.

Five other land grants of Lakṣmaṇasena's reign have been found and all of them were issued before the 6th year of his reign. All these plates followed a stereotyped composition giving vague praises, and had nothing to claim in the form of any definite military campaigns. It becomes clear that Lakṣmaṇasena did not achieve any of the above mentioned victories by the 6th year of his reign. And it is unlikely that a man would attempt such colossal military expeditions after he was 60 years.

The appearance of high-sounding praise in the record of his sons, where he is said to have planted pillars of victory at Purī, Benares and Allahabad, can easily be understood. At a time when the empire of the Senas was circumscribed in south-eastern Bengal and the Muslims had occupied northern and western Bengal, they had nothing but the great deeds of their ancestors to proclaim and the achievements, which in Lakṣmaṇasena's own records are said to have been deeds of his youth, were mentioned in exaggerated terms as having happened in his own time.

Moreover, the Gāhaḍavālas had consolidated their position in Banares and there are proofs of their hold even over northern and western Magadha.[1] Lakṣmaṇasena's contemporary on the Gāhaḍavāla throne was Jayacandra (c. 1170-1193 A. D.), and

[1] The Sihvar plate, dated 1175 A. D., refers to a grant of lands by Jayacandra, probably in the Patna district. (*IA*, vol. XVIII, p. 129 ; *DHNI*, vol. I, pp. 537-38) Another record of the same king was found in Bodh-Gaya, incised some time between 1183 and 1192 A.D. (*IHQ*, vol. V, p. 14).

he was the master of Benares and Allahabad. It would be utterly wide of the mark to suppose that Lakṣmaṇasena wrested them from such a powerful king. So the alleged erection of pillars of victory at Benares and Allahabad is but an empty vaunt and has no basis in fact.

The above discussion makes it clear that the achievements of Lakṣmaṇasena, as described in the Madhainagar and Bhowal plates and resounded with exaggerations in the records of his sons, were actually his deeds in his youth in the reign of his grandfather, Vijayasena.

Lakṣmaṇasena is given very high-sounding titles in his Madhainagar and Bhowal plates, which include the title of *Gauḍeśvara* (lord of Gauḍa).[1] Neither Vijayasena nor Vallālasena is found to have used this title in their records, nor does it appear in the five plates of Lakṣmaṇasena which were issued during the first six years of his reign. In the plates of Lakṣmaṇasena's sons, however, this title is prefixed to the names of all the rulers of the family from Vijayasena to Lakṣmaṇasena and it is also used by Keśavasena and Viśvarūpasena, the two sons of Lakṣmaṇasena.[2] From the absence of the title *Gauḍeśvara* in the plates of Vijayasena and Vallālasena, and its first appearance in the plates of Lakṣmaṇasena it has been argued that the final conquest of Gauḍa was not achieved till the time of Lakṣmaṇasena and it was he who subdued Gauḍa and assumed for himself the title.[3] But there is no valid reason for this suggestion. What we know about the Pālas does not suggest that they had any hold over any part of Bengal after the reign of Madanapāla, whose empire was limited to parts of Magadha in the closing years of his reign. We have seen earlier that there can be hardly any doubt that Vijayasena established Sena authority over the whole of Bengal, and there

[1] Madhainagar plate, lines 26 ff. : *IB-III*, p. 111. Bhowal plate, lines 26 ff. : *EI*, vol. XXVI, p. 7.

[2] *IB-III*, pp. 124, 136 and 145.

[3] *HB-I*, p. 313.

was nothing in the intervening period to necessitate the reconquest of Gauḍa by Lakṣmaṇasena. The Pāla power had become too weak and the Gāhaḍavālas are not known to have advanced as far as western Bengal. Lakṣmaṇasena himself granted land in the Rāḍha area by his Govindapur plate,[1] which refers to a donation on the occasion of his coronation, and by the Śaktipura plate,[2] issued in the 2nd and 6th years of his reign respectively. This proves that Lakṣmaṇasena had control over western Bengal right from the beginning of his reign. The occupation of northern Bengal by the Senas during the reigns of Vijayasena and Vallālasena has been proved and it is also evident from the Tarpandighi plate, which grants land in Varendra,[3] that this portion of Bengal was inherited by Lakṣmaṇasena. So the question of his final conquest of Gauḍa does not arise at all, and until any unimpeachable record of the Pālas, dated after 1152 A. D., is discovered from northern or western Bengal, we should not harbour any doubt about the abiding and integral character of Vijayasena's conquest of Gauḍa. So there is no justification for the assertion that Vallālasena and Lakṣmaṇasena had to continue in their reigns the struggle with the Pālas over the possession of Gauḍa.

The absence of the title of *Gauḍeśvara* in the records of Vijayasena and Vallālasena is probably of no significance. And the indiscriminate use of the title for all the kings in the plates of the sons of Lakṣmaṇasena diminishes its significance in those records. We know for certain that the Gauḍa area was captured by the Muslims before the death of Lakṣmaṇasena, who is reported to have taken shelter in south-eastern Bengal ; and his sons held control only over that region. Yet they are assigned the proud title of *Gauḍeśvara* in their records.

Towards the close of Lakṣmaṇasena's reign, when the Sena empire was faced with the impending danger of the Muslim

[1] *IB-III*, pp. 92 ff.
[2] *EI*, vol. XXI, pp. 211 ff.
[3] The plate is dated in Lakṣmaṇasena's 2nd regnal year. *IB-III*, pp. 99 ff.

invasion, it was possibly felt necessary to pronounce with renewed vigour and enthusiasm the greatness of the king, and so we find all his most glorious titles in the Madhainagar and Bhowal plates, the latter of which was issued after the capture of Gauḍa by the Muslims. These titles are conspicuous by their absence in his earlier records. The high-sounding titles assumed by the two sons of Lakṣmaṇasena, all of which were issued after the Muslim invasion, render even the titles of Vijayasena and Vallālasena in their own records insignificant. This clearly shows that with the decline of their power the Sena kings felt the necessity of proclaiming their greatness with renewed vigour and the only way open to them to do so was to assume high-sounding titles. Hence very little significance can be attached to these titles. Insignificant rulers, such as Govindapāla or Palapāla, who hardly had any hold over Gauḍa, used the title of *Gauḍeśvara* in their records.[1]

We cannot be sure whether Lakṣmaṇasena had any military success in his own reign. It is not unlikely that he succeeded in checking the eastward expansion of the Gāhaḍavālas under Jayacandra. In Jaina sources there are references to Jayacandra's attack on Lakṣmaṇasena's capital, which Lakṣmaṇasena was able to ward off, thanks to the skill of his minister Kumāradeva.[2]

It is also likely that he had some success in his raids into Kāmarūpa and Orissa, if, of course, we consider that the inscriptions refer to separate invasions by Lakṣmaṇasena in his own reign. The victories mentioned by Umāpatidhara include one against the Ceḍi king. Vallabharāja, a feudatory of the Kalacuri king of Ratnapura, claims to have defeated the king of Gauḍa in the Akaltara inscription.[3] This epigraphic record might be

[1] See *Supra*, pp. 135-136

[2] Rājaśekharasūrī : *Prabandhakośa*, Singhī Jain Granthamālā, No. VI, pp. 88-90.
Jina-vijaya-muni : *Purātana-Prabandha-Saṅgraha*, Singhī Jain Granthamālā, No. II, p. 88.
Both the works are dated in the 14th century A.D.

[3] Hiralal : *Descriptive List of Inss. in Central Provinces and Berar*, pp. 109-110.

taken to confirm Umāpatidhara's statement and the struggle cannot be said to have been decisive.

The unnamed hero, whose military exploits are praised in scattered verses of Umāpatidhara[1] and Śaraṇa[2] may have been Lakṣmaṇasena. Both of these poets graced the court of Lakṣmaṇasena and hence it is not unnatural to expect laudatory verses in praise of their patron. Śaraṇa refers, among other things, to a victory over a *Mleccha* king. Nihar Ranjan Ray took this to refer to the Turks and he surmised that either before or after Bakhtyār's conquest of Nadiya Lakṣmaṇasena had some success against the Muslims.[3] J.M. Ray, on the basis of traditions, took the *Mlecchas* to be the Maghs of Arakan, who may have advanced into Bengal.[4] Dhoyī,[5] the author of the *Pavanadūta*, informs us that Lakṣmaṇasena came as far as the Sandal forests in the valleys of the Malay hills in the course of his world conquest. Dhoyī's love of exaggeration is evident throughout his work and "it served," as remarked by Chintaharan Chakravarti, "the double purpose of eulogising his patron and finding a most suitable abode for the heroine of his poem."[6]

Lakṣmaṇasena must have come to the throne at a fairly old age and it seems that he devoted much of his time in peaceful pursuits. He himself composed verses and some of them are preserved in the *Saduktikarṇāmṛta*. He also completed the *Adbhutasāgara*, which was left unfinished by his father. His court was graced by a number of famous poets such as Jayadeva, the author of *Gītagovinda* ; Śaraṇa ; Dhoyī, the author of the *Pavanadūta* ; and probably also Govardhana.[7] Śrīdharadāsa, son of

1 Two stanzas refer to the victories over Prāgjyotiṣa and Kāśī. *JASB (NS)*, vol. II, p. 161.

2 One verse refers to victories over Gauḍa, Kaliṅga, Kāmarūpa, Kāśī, Magadha, a king of Ceḍi and a *Mleccha* king. *Ibid.*, p. 174.

3 *Baṅgālīr Itihāsa*, Ādi Parva, pp. 506-507.

4 *Ḍhākār Itihāsa*, vol. II, p. 366.

5 *JASB (NS)*, vol. I, pp. 41 ff.

6 *Pavanadūta*, Calcutta, 1926, Introduction, p. 8.

7 Manmohan Chakravarti : 'Sanskrit Literature in Bengal during the Sena rule', *JASB (NS)*, vol. II, pp. 157-176 ;
HB-I, pp. 353-373.

Vaṭudāsa, who was the *mahā-sāmanta-cuḍāmaṇi* and a friend of the king, completed his *Saduktikarṇāmṛta*, an anthology of Sanskrit verses, during his reign. Śrīdhara himself was a *mahā-māṇḍalika*. Halāyudha Miśra, the author of the *Brāhmaṇasarvasva*, was the Chief Minister and Chief Judge of Lakṣmaṇasena.

Umāpatidhara, the composer of the Deopārā *praśasti* of the time of Vijaysena, seems to have lived long enough to grace the reign of Lakṣmaṇasena also. Merutuṅga in his *Prabandhacintāmaṇi* refers to Umāpatidhara as the minister of Lakṣmaṇasena.[1] Jayadeva refers to Umāpatidhara as one of the several court poets of Lakṣmaṇasena.[2] The authorship of the Madhainagar copper-plate of Lakṣmaṇasena has also been credited to him by some scholars.[3]

Lakṣmaṇasena himself was a devout Vaiṣṇava, while his father and grandfather are mentioned as Śaivas in their records. In all his records Lakṣmaṇasena assumes the title of *Paramavaiṣṇava* or *Paramanārasiṁha*. But the representation of Sadāśiva, however, was continued in the royal emblem. It is also curious to note that in the Govindapur[4] and the Bhowal[5] plates of Lakṣmaṇasena, his father Vallālasena is also mentioned as a *Paramavaiṣṇava*. It is difficult to explain Lakṣmaṇasena's change of faith. Was it due to any reaction in his mind against his father's Śaivite orthodoxy, if the tradition about this is correct ? Lakṣmaṇasena is also given the *biruda* of *Arirāja-madana-śaṅkara*.

Towards the close of Lakṣmaṇasena's reign, when he himself was too old to look after the affairs of the empire, there

[1] Merutuṅga : *Prabandhacintāmaṇi*, Singhī Jain Granthamālā, No. I, pp. 112-113.
English Trans. by C. H. Tawney : *Wishing Stone of Narrative*, Preface. p. xviii.
The work was written in 1306 A. D.

[2] Verse 4 : *Gītagovinda*, Sanskrit Text and Hindi Trans. by Amritalala Bhattacharya, Bombay, 1948.
Bengali Trans. by Harekrishna Mukhopadhyaya, Calcutta, 1955.

[3] *JASB*, vol. V, p. 469 ; *IB-III*, p. 107.

[4] Lines 22-23 : *IB-III*, p. 95.

[5] Lines 25 : *EI*, vol. XXVI, p. 7.

were signs of disintegration within the Sena kingdom itself. The Sundarban plate of Ḍommaṇapāla,[1] dated in Śaka Era 1118 (=1196 A. D.), shows the existence of an independent chief, who assumed the title of *Mahārājādhirāja*, in the eastern part of Khāḍī *maṇḍala* (the Sundarban area). This inscription also refers to the predecessor of Ḍommaṇapāla, whose name cannot be read, as a *Mahāmāṇḍalika*. Khāḍī *maṇḍala* was an integral part of the Sena kingdom from the time of Vijayasena down to that of Lakṣmaṇasena.[2] The whole tenor of Ḍommaṇapāla's plate leaves little doubt that he was for all practical purposes independent.

The Maināmatī plate of Raṇavaṅkamalla Harikāladeva, dated in the Śaka Era 1142 (=1220 A.D.) and in the 16th regnal year,[3] proves the existence of a small independent kingdom in the Comilla region from 1204 A. D. onwards.

On the eastern bank of the Meghnā, there arose another family of independent rulers—the Devas. The history of this family is known from three copper-plates of Dāmodaradeva,[4] which were issued in the Śaka Era 1156, 1158 and 1165, which were the 4th, 6th and 13th regnal years of the king respectively. Dāmodaradeva ruled in parts of Comilla, Noakhali and Chittagong from 1230 to at least 1243 A. D. The first member of the family, Puruṣottama, is mentioned as a *grāmaṇī* (village chief), but his son and grandson, Madhumathanadeva and Vāsudeva, are mentioned as kings. The next king of the line was Dāmodaradeva. It appears from these plates that these Deva rulers had set up their independent rule some time to-

1 *EI*, vol. XXVII, pp. 119 ff.; vol. XXX, pp. 42-46.

2 Lands were granted in this area by Vijayasena by his Barrackpur plate (*IB-III*, pp. 60-61) and by Lakṣmaṇasena by his Sundarban plate (*Ibid.*, pp. 169 ff.).

3 *IHQ*, vol. IX, pp. 282 ff.

4 Mehar plate, S. E. 1156, Regnal Yr. 4 : *JASB*, vol. XXVII, pp. 182 ff *EI*, vol. XXVII, pp. 182-191 ; vol. XXX, pp. 51-58.
Śobharampur plate : S.E. 1158, Regnal Yr. 6 : *EI*, vol. XXX, pp. 184 ff.
Chittagong plate, S. E. 1165, Regnal Yr. 13 : *JASB*, vol. XLIII, pp. 318 ff. : *IB-III*, pp. 158-63

wards the close of the 12th century or in the beginning of the 13th. It is not unlikely that Keśavadeva and Īśānadeva of the Bhāṭerā (near Sylhet) plates,[1] were offshoots of this Deva line and were ruling in the Sylhet area. It is also likely that Daśarathadeva of the Ādavāḍi plate[2] was also a member of the same family who succeeded in spreading its rule in the Vikramapura region when the Senas had ceased to rule in that area.

Vīradharadeva of the recently discovered Charapatra Mura (Mainamatī) plate[3] may have belonged to the Deva family of Dāmodaradeva and may have been one of his successors. The plate grants land in Samataṭa, and on palaeographic grounds it can be assigned to the 13th century A. D.

All these instances are no doubt indicative of the disruption of the Sena empire towards the close of the reign of Lakṣmaṇasena. The rise of these independent chiefs in different parts of the kingdom broke the solidarity of the empire and hastened the process of decline. But the death-blow to the Sena empire was struck by the Turkish invader Muḥammad Bakhtyār Khaljī, who gradually established his hold in Bihar, invaded Nadiya, and drove the old king to take refuge in eastern Bengal. He captured western and northern Bengal and laid the foundation of Muslim rule in the region.

At this point let us turn aside from our main discussion and focus our attention to two problems connected with the coming of the Muslims into Bengal :

(i) the nature of early Muslim contact with Bengal and

(ii) the exact date of Bakhtyār's conquest of Nadiya.

Both of these problems have given rise to considerable discourse among scholars.

A recent study on the first subject[4] leaves little doubt that the Muslims had contact with Bengal from as early as the 8th

[1] *Proceedings of ASB*, 1880, pp. 141 ff. ; *EI*, vol. XIX, pp. 277 ff.

[2] *IB-III*, pp. 181-182.

[3] F. A. Khan : *Mainamati*, Karachi, 1965, pp. 23-24, Plate on p. 24.

[4] Abdul Karim : 'Bāṅglā Deśe Musalmān Āgamaner Prāthamik Yug',

century A.D. ; but this was purely a trade relationship, and it is not possible to establish the existence of any Muslim settlement in Bengal before the coming of the Turks under Bakhtyār Khaljī. Archaeological finds, the writings of the Arab geographers and local traditions, all tend to show this early connection. In the excavation at Pāhārpur[1] in the Rajshahi district and at Maināmatī[2] in the Comilla district two silver coins of the 'Abbasid Caliphs have been found. The coin found at Pāhārpur is dated 788 A.D. and bears the name of the 'Abbasid Caliph Hārun-ar-Rashīd. From the evidence of this coin Enamul Haque tried to argue that some attempts were made as early as the 8th century A.D. to propagate Islam in northern Bengal.[3] The discovery of this coin in an upper level of the Pāhārpur excavations proves that it came to this place at a later period. Its presence in Bengal can easily be explained by the existence of a trade relationship between the Arabs and the coastal regions of Bengal.

The accounts of the Arab geographers help us to establish the existence of this trade relationship. Sulaiman's *Silsilāt-ut-Tawārikh* (completed in 851 A.D.), Ibn Khurdadbeh's *Kitāb-al Masālik-wal-Mumālik* (died 912 A.D.) and the accounts of Idrīsī (born towards the end of the 11th century A.D.) and Māsūdī (died in 956 A.D.) refer to the trade routes in the course of their description of the eastern trade of the Arabs.[4] From their accounts of the countries and the ports they called at and from their description of the different products of these countries it can be established with certainty that the Arabs had trade connections with Bengal and that they called at the ports situated in

Sāhitya Patrikā, (Bengali Journal published by Bengali Deptt., University of Dacca), vol. VII, pp. 81-102.

1 *MASI*, No. 55, p. 87.

2 *Mainamati*, p. 27. The coin could not be deciphered owing to its damaged condition.

3 *Pūrva Pākistāne Islām*, p. 12.

4 Elliot & Dowson : *History of India as told by Its own Historians*, vol. I, pp. 2, 12, 19, 74 and 86.

the Bay of Bengal.[1] It is also evident that they had knowledge of Bengal under Dharmapāla.[2] Among the ports of Bengal *Samandar* figures prominently in their accounts[3] and this has been correctly identified with modern Chittagong.[4]

In the traditional accounts of the kings of Arakan, *Radza-weng*, it is related that in the year 953 A.D. the Arakanese king Tsu-la-taing Tsan-da-ya went on an expedition to Bengal (called *Thu-ra-tan*), established a pillar of victory there and called the place *Tset-ta-going*, which means that it was improper to make war.[5] From this scholars believe that the name of Chittagong originated from this Arakanese name and taking the word *Thu-ra-tan* as an Arakanese corruption of *Sulṭān*, they believe that there was a Muslim kingdom in Chittagong at that time.[6] But this conclusion is based on very feeble grounds and seems to be conjectural. We do not have any evidence of any political activity of the Muslims in Bengal before Bakhtyār's invasion.

In the Tarpandighi plate of Lakṣmaṇasena we find the name of a village Mollāṇakhāḍī.[7] From this R. D. Banerji remarks, "It seems to me that the first part of the name contains the Arabic word *Mullah*. Were there any Mohammedan settlements in Bengal previous to the conquest of the country by the Afghan raiders ? Traditions of local Mohammedan saints in Eastern Bengal and Chittagong affirm that several holy men settled in this country

[1] Abdul Karim : *op. cit.*, pp. 84-91 ;
A.H. Dani : 'Early Muslim Contact With Bengal', *Proceedings of the Pakistan History Conference*, First Session, 1951, pp. 184-199 ;
Hodivala : *Studies in Indo-Muslim History*, pp. 4 ff.

[2] *Supra*, pp. 40-41.

[3] Elliot & Dowson : *op. cit.*, pp. 16, 90 91.
Syed Sulaiman Nadvi : *Arab o Hind ké Tā'lluqāt*, (in Urdu), p. 58. Hindi Trans. by Ramacandra Varma, p. 49.

[4] *JASP*, vol. VIII, No. 2, pp. 13-14.

[5] *JASB*, vol. LXIII, 1844, pp. 36 ff.

[6] Enamul Haque & Abdul Karim : *Ārākān Rājshabhāy Bāṅgālā Sāhitya* pp. 3-4.

[7] Line 35 : *IB-III*, p. 105.

about a century before the Mohammedan conquest."[1] There is no evidence whatsoever for an affirmative answer to R.D. Banerji's query. No doubt there are numerous traditions in Bengal about Muslim saints who are believed to have settled in different parts of Bengal before Bakhtyār's conquest, and relying on them scholars have tried to prove the existence of early Muslim settlements in Bengal.[2] But on scrutiny none of the saints can be said to have flourished before the Muslim invasion.[3] Of the saints who are believed to have come before the Muslim conquest five are prominent : Bābā Ādam Shahīd, Shāh Sulṭān Rumī, Shāh Sulṭān Māhisawār and Makhdūm Shāh Daulāh Shahīd, who lie buried in Rāmpāl (Dacca district), Madanpur (Mymensingh district), Mahāsthān (Bogra district) and in Shahjadpur (Pabna district) respectively.

The *Vallālacarita* connects the tradition of Bābā Ādam Shahīd with king Vallālasena.[4] It is fanciful to believe that Vāyādumba (possibly a corrupt form of Bābā Ādam), the lord of the *Mlecchas*, at the request of Dharmagiri, the banished priest of North Bengal, surrounded Vikramapura with his army of five thousand and in the battle the *Mlecchas* were defeated. This story is in the appendix (*Khila*) of the *Vallālacarita* and it is not unlikely that it was put in at a later time or that the traditions were confused. It is also possible that this incident refers to another Vallālasena, who, according to another tradition, flourished in the 14th century as a prominent *zamindar* in the Vikramapura area.[5] The story may contain an echo

[1] *EI*, vol. XII, p. 8, Fn. 2.

[2] *JASB*, vol. XLII, pp. 259 ff.
Enamul Haque : *Muslim Bāṅglā Sāhitya*, pp. 3-4 ;
: *Vaṅge Sūfī Prabhāva*, pp. 138 ff.

[3] These traditions have been critically examined by Abdul Karim and he has come to the above conclusion.
Abdul Karim : *Social History of the Muslims of Bengal*, pp. 86-91.

[4] Chapters XXVI-XXVII : Text, pp. 118-120 ; Trans., pp. 98-100.

[5] *JASB*, 1896, pp. 36-37.

of the final conquest of the Sena territory in eastern Bengal by the Muslims during the time of one Vallālasena II.[1]

Similarly the dates of the other saints can be fixed on good grounds in the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries.[2] So we find that there is no authentic evidence for establishing Muslim settlements in Bengal before Bakhtyār's conquest. But that the Muslims had trade relations with the coastal regions of Bengal from the 9th century onwards can be established with fair certainty from the accounts of the Arab geographers. In the course of this trade it is quite likely that a few Arabs settled in the coastal regions and married local girls. The predominance of Arabic words in the dialect of the people of Chittagong may be a result of their connection with the Arabs. But this type of settlement could hardly have any serious impact on the history of the period.

The date of Bakhtyār's conquest of Nadiya has also given rise to controversies among scholars. As early as 1813 Charles Stewart fixed the date of the invasion in 1203-04 A.D.[3] In 1871 Edward Thomas gave the date as 599 A.H./1202-03 A.D.,[4] but in 1873 he changed it to 600 A.H./1203-04 A.D.[5] Raverty pushed back the date to 589 A.H./1192-93 A.D. on the grounds that Bakhtyār ruled for 12 years in Lakhnawtī before his death in 602 A.H.[6] It is not clear where Raverty got the information that Bakhtyār ruled in Lakhnawtī for 12 years. In Minhāj's account there is no statement to this effect. Moreover Raverty's date cannot be accepted because in the year 1193 A.D. Delhi was captured by Qutbuddīn Aibak[7] and it is related by Minhāj

HB-I, pp. 249-250.

A. Karim : *Social History of the Muslims of Bengal*, pp. 86 ff.

History of Bengal, 2nd. Edition, p. 61.

Chronicles of the Pathan Kings of Delhi, p. 110.

JRAS, 1873, p. 340.

TN, English Translation. pp. 524 (Fn.), 558 (Fn. 7), 559 (Fn. 1) and Appendix D, pp. xxiii-xxvi.

[7] *TN*, Text, p. 139 ; Eng. Trans., p. 469 ; Hindi Trans., p. 7. The defeat of Jayacandra, the Gāhaḍavāla king, is dated in 590 A.H./1194 A.D. Cf. *Ibid.*, Text, p. 140, Eng. Tr., p. 470.

that when Bakhtyār first came to Hindustan he presented himself before Qutbuddin's Muster-Master at Delhi, and it follows that several years passed before he captured Bihar and Nadiya.[1]

H. Blochmann fixed the date of Bakhtyār's conquest of Nadiya in 594 or 95 A.H./1198 or 99 A.D.[2] But he arrived at this conclusion purely by conjecture, having allotted a certain period of time for the different events of Bakhtyār's life. There is no certainty about this type of calculation.

Further attempts were made by Manmohan Chakravarti to fix the date on the basis of Hindu sources,[3] but none of his arguments is conclusive.[4] Among many points, he has tried to fix the date on the basis of the Lakṣmaṇa Saṁvat Era. This was taken up by R. D. Banerji, who also fixed the date at 1199—1200 A.D.[5] We have seen earlier[6] that the origin of the *La Sam* Era is obscure and its connection with the Sena king of that name cannot be proved. So one problem cannot solve the other.

Scholars[7] have tried to find confirmation of the date 1200 A. D. for Bakhtyār's conquest in the manuscripts of the time of Govindapāla, one of which records the year 38 of the destruction of his reign. The explanation of the expression *atīta-rājya* or *vinaṣṭa-rājya*, used in the manuscripts of Govindapāla, is in no way certain, and we shall soon see that the date possibly came to be counted from the year of his accession. N. K. Bhattasali tried to fix the date on the basis of the *Pargaṇati* Era, which, according to him, was started in 1202

[1] *TN*, Text, pp. 146-47 ; Eng. Tr., pp. 549 ff.; Hindi Tr., pp. 11 ff.
[2] *JASB*, vol. XLIV, 1875, p. 276.
[3] *JASB (NS)*, vol. IV, 1908, pp. 151 ff.
[4] *IHQ*, vol. XXX, pp. 134-139.
[5] *BI*, vol. II, pp. 15-18.
[6] *Supra*, pp. 213-215.
[7] R. D. Banerji : *BI*, vol. II, pp. 15 ff.; K. R. Qanungo : *HB-II*, pp. 32 ff. R. G. Basak : *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, 1939, pp. 531 ff.

A. D., from which date the Hindus of Bengal started reckoning a new Era in remembrance of the termination of the reign of Lakṣmaṇasena.[1] This assumption is based on records, the earliest of which is dated in the year 461 (1663 A. D.). There is no instance of its use in the first three centuries. Its later use is a clear testimony to the fact that its origin was back-dated and that the people who used it were not sure of its origin. The date of the beginning of this Era is also not certain, and there are discrepancies in different records in this Era, as noted by Bhattasali himself.

Bhattasali[2] tried to add grounds to his arguments on the evidence of the Madhainagar plate. He read the date of the plate as the 25th regnal year, corresponding to 1203 A.D., and suggested that it was issued to grant lands on the occasion of the performance of *Aindrīmahāśānti* and he holds that the ceremony must have been held after Bakhtyār's conquest. He also comments that the performance of this ceremony shows that the kingdom had recently suffered from the disastrous invasion of the Muslims. This theory of Bhattasali has many weak points. The date of the Madhainagar plate cannot be properly read.[3] Likewise the passage in which the word *Aindrī-mahāśānti* occurs cannot be fully read and hence its meaning is far from certain. But it seems that Bhattasali may be right regarding the date, because a prototype of the plate was issued in the 27th regnal year of the king,[4] and we have earlier argued that there are reasons to believe that these two plates were issued in the closing part of Lakṣmaṇasena's reign.[5] The land granted by the Madhainagar plate lay in Varendra, the area which was captured by Bakhtyār soon after his conquest of Nadiya, and was included in the fief of 'Alī Mardān.[6] It is

[1] *IA*, vol. LII, 1923, pp. 314-320.
[2] *JASB*, vol. VIII, 1942, pp. 20 ff.
[3] *IB-III*, pp. 106 ff.
[4] The Bhowal plate : *EI*, vol. XXVI, pp. 1 ff.
[5] *Supra*, pp. 240 ff.
[6] *HB-II*, pp. 35-36.

not possible to think that lands in that area could have been given away after Bakhtyār's raid. On the other hand, we do not find any difficulty if we ascribe the issue of the Madhainagar plate to a year before Bakhtyār's attack on Nadiya, and, if Bhattasali's reading is correct, we may say that in 1203 Lakṣmaṇasena performed the *Aindrīmahāśānti* ceremony in order to ward off the impending danger from an enemy.[1] Minhāj mentions that there prevailed a fear among the people of Bengal about the impending invasion of Bakhtyār,[2] and, if this is true, it is quite likely that the aged king took recourse to a *yajña* in order to ward off the danger and to keep up the morals of the people.

The date of Bakhtyār's conquest of Nadiya can be fixed with reasonable certainty from the Muslim sources. From Minhāj's account we learn that Bakhtyār visited Qutbuddīn only once after his conquest of Bihar.[3] This information is also given by other Muslim historians,[4] including another contemporary historian, Hāsān Nizāmī.[5] This meeting between Bakhtyār and Qutbuddīn took place at Badayun, where Qutbuddīn had gone after his conquest of Kalinjar.[6] A. H. Dani, collating five

[1] The *Adbhutasāgara* explains *Aindrīmahāśānti* as follows :
Bhaviṣyatyabhiṣeke ca para cakra bhayeṣu ca /
Svarāṣṭrabhede 'rivadhe Aindrī Śāntistatheṣyate //
M. D. Jha's edition, p. 734.

[2] *TN*, Text, p. 150 ; Eng. Tr., pp. 556-57 ; Hindi Tr., p. 13.

[3] *Ibid.*, Text, p. 148 ; Eng. Tr., p. 552 ; Hindi Tr., p. 12.

[4] Nizamuddīn Bakhshī : *Ṭabaqāt-i-Akbarī*, English Translation by B. Dey, vol. I, p. 50.
Firishtā : Briggs : *History of the Rise of the Mahomedan Power*, vol. I, pp. 197-98.
Badayuni : *Muntākhab-ut-Tawārikh*, English Translation by Ranking, vol. I, pp. 81-82.
Tazkirāt-ul-Mulūk, Quoted by Raverty, *T. N.*, Eng. Tr., Appendix D. P. xxvi.

[5] Hāsān Nizāmī started his work in 1206. The relevant portions are quoted in *IHQ*, vol. XXX, p. 145.

[6] *Ibid.*

manuscripts of the *Tajul Ma'thir* in the British Museum and two in the India Office Library, arrived at a reading from which this fact can be clearly understood.[1] The date of the conquest of Kalinjar by Qutbuddīn is given as 599 A.H./1203 A. D. in the *Tājul Ma'thir*. Raverty doubted the reading of the date.[2] But Andalib Shadani, collating different manuscripts of the work, read the date as 599 A.H.[3] This date of the conquest of Kalinjar is given by all the later Muslim historians and also occurs in another contemporary work, *Tārīkh-i-Fakhruddīn Mubarak Shāh* (*Nisbat Nāmāh*),[4] written in 1206 A. D. This work is a very trustworthy authority for the reign of Qutbuddīn and contains a complete chronology of the events of 15 years of Qutbuddīn's career from his appointment to the governorship of Kuhram and Samana in 588 A. H. to his accession on the throne of Delhi in 602 A. H.[5]

Nadiya was conquered by Bakhtyār in the following year (*duam sāl-i-ān*) after this meeting,[6] and hence the date for the conquest of Nadiya can be fixed at 600 A.H./1204 A.D.

All known facts of contemporary history can easily be reconciled with this date. The date of the Madhainagar plate of Lakṣmaṇasena may be 25, as read by Bhattasali, and the *Aindrīmahāśānti* ceremony seems to have been performed immediately before Bakhtyār's raid on Nadiya in order to ward off the danger about which the people were perturbed.

The absence of the name of Govindapāla in records after 1201-02 A.D. happily coincides with our date. The discovery of the Valgudar inscription of Madanapāla proved that he ruled at least upto 1161-62 A.D. and hence the accession of Govindapāla

1 *Ibid.*, pp. 146-147.
2 *TN*, English Translation, Appendix D, p. xxiii.
3 Andalib Shadani : *The Muslim Historians of India*, London University Ph. D. Thesis, 1934, pp. 13 & 17.
4 Text Edited by Sir E. Denison Ross, London, 1827, p. 24 ; English rendering by Andalib Shadani, *Op. cit.*, p. 51.
5 Andalib Shadani : *op. cit.*, p. 48.
6 *TN*, Text, p. 150; Eng. Tr., p. 557 ; Hindi Tr., p. 14.

must be placed in that year.[1] Of all the records of Govindapāla only one is dated in the 4th year of his *vijaya-rājya*, while all others are recorded either in *gata-rājya*, or simply the year is recorded.[2] One of his records is dated in the Vikrama year 1232 (1175-76 A.D.) as well as in the 14th year of the *gata-rājya*,[3] which possibly means that on that date the sovereignty of Govindapāla was a thing of the past. Deducting 14 years from 1175-76 A.D. we come to the year 1161-62 A.D., which, according to the evidence of the Valgudar inscription, must be regarded as the date of accession of Govindapāla. So it seems certain that the counting of *gata-rājya* or *atīta-rājya* in Govindapāla's records was made from the date of the beginning of his reign and not of his destruction, as has been held by most writers on the subject.[4] The latest date we have in Govindapāla's records is 39, where only the date occurs without any prefix. We have another record, dated in the 38th year of the *atīta-rājya*.[5] So we find that this form of dating in the *atīta-rājya* of Govindapāla was prevalent in Bihar up to 1201-02 A.D., and with Bakhtyār's conquest of this area this type of reckoning came to an end.

The Bhowal plate of Lakṣmaṇasena and the colophon of the *Saduktikarṇāmṛta* refer to the year 1205 A.D., the 27th year of Lakṣmaṇasena's reign. This date can easily be taken as falling after Bakhtyār's conquest, and the death of Lakṣmaṇasena can be placed in 1206 A.D., because Minhāj records that Lakṣmaṇasena died soon after the conquest, and his sons are said to have been ruling in *Bang*, when he wrote his account some time before 1260 A.D., possibly during his sojourn in Bengal during the years 1243-45 A.D.

[1] *EI*, vol. XXVIII, pp. 141 ff.
[2] *Supra*, p. 135.
[3] *MASB*, vol. V, p. 109.
[4] *HB-I*, p. 171, Fn.
[5] *MASB*, vol. V, pp. 110-112.

Minhāj gives the date of Bakhtyār's death as 1st Sh'abān, 602 A.H./13th March, 1206 A.D.[1] This finds confirmation in the Kānāi Vāḍāśi inscription.[2] Bakhtyār died about a month after his return from the ill-fated expedition to Tibet. The whole Tibet expedition took him 62 days,[3] which means that he set out on this expedition in the first week of January, 1205 A.D. So it seems that Bakhtyār had about two years after his conquest of Nadiya, in which to occupy parts of northern and north-western Bengal and prepare for the Tibet expedition. We do not hear of any prolonged war being waged for the occupation of northern Bengal.

From the foregoing discussion we may conclude that Bakhtyār invaded Nadiya in 1204 A.D., and with him the Muslims came for the first time in Bengal.

Now let us turn back to the history of the reign of Lakṣmaṇasena, who had to bear the brunt of Bakhtyar's attack at a time when he was very old. Muḥammad Bakhtyār Khalji, from his *jagir* in Bhiuli and Bhagawat (Mirzapur district, eastern part of modern U.P.), ravaged the adjoining territory of Bihar and brought it under his control in 1202-03 A.D.[4] After the defeat of Jayacandra, the Gāhaḍavāla king, who had control over the western part of Magadha, Bihar was, so to say, a no-man's land. When the whole of northern India was gradually conquered by the Muslims it was natural that they should push eastward, and this was done by Bakhtyār Khalji. Tāranātha also gives an account of the sack of Udantapura and Vikramaśila by the *Mleccha Tājiks* (Muslims).[5] He mentions that in the area between the Ganges and the Yamunā appeared the *Turuṣkas*. He also speaks of small Muslim settlements in the Bihar area. It is quite possible that between the

[1] *TN*, Text, pp. 156-57; Eng. Tr., p. 573; Hindi Tr., p. 17.
[2] P. N. Bhattacharya: *Kāmarūpa-Śāsanāvali*, Introduction, p. 44.
[3] N. K. Bhattasali: *IHQ*, vol. IX, pp. 49-50.
[4] *TN*, Text, pp. 148 ff.; Eng. Tr., pp. 550 ff.; Hindi Tr., pp. 12 ff.
[5] A. Schiefner: *Geshichte Des Buddhismus In Indien*, pp. 254-255.

defeat of the Gāhaḍavālas and Bakhtyār's conquest of Bihar Muslims had spread in the western parts of Bihar.

After the capture of Bihar Bakhtyār led his army further east and attacked Nadiya, which may have been one of the capitals of the Senas. Minhāj's account[1] is the only source for the history of the Muslim conquest of Bengal. Though it may contain some exaggerated details about this event, we may deduce, in outline, the history of this conquest. It appears from Minhāj's account that Bakhtyār appeared at the gate of Nadiya with 18 horsemen. He had covered the distance from Bihar to Nadiya so fast that only 18 horsemen could keep pace with him ; but the main army soon followed. It is likely that the band of horsemen was taken as traders and when actually the main army came, Bakhtyār captured the city. Lakṣmaṇasena fled to *Bang* (eastern Bengal) and *Sankanāt* (Samataṭa),[2] where his sons were still ruling when Minhaj wrote his account.

The story, in broad outline, does not seem to be incredible. Minhāj makes no mention of any opposition offered to Bakhtyār. In his account of Bakhtyār's expedition to Tibet Minhāj gives every detail of his fight and it is to be expected that had there been any opposition it would have found mention. The Sena empire, no doubt, apprehended this danger and when Bihar was taken their apprehension must have increased, as mentioned by Minhāj. It is likely that the old king could hardly arrange any serious opposition. Minhāj's information that the people deserted the city of Nadiya may not be altogether untrue. It has been shown earlier that at the beginning of the 13th century there were signs of weakness in the Sena empire.[3] At a time when everything depended on the initiative of the king in mobilising the forces, Lakṣmaṇasena was too old and too weak to do anything. Moreover, Bakhtyār, just one

[1] *TN*, Text, pp. 148 ff.; Eng. Trans., pp. 550 ff.; Hindi Tr., pp. 12 ff.

[2] In different manuscripts the name appears as *Saknāt*, *Sankāt*, or *Sankanāt*. Its identification with Samataṭa is more probable than any other suggestions. See *JAS,L*, vol. XIX, 1953, pp. 33-36.

[3] *Supra*, pp. 246-248.

year after his success in Bihar, may have taken the Sena king by surprise.

We do not know whether Lakṣmaṇasena had taken any measures to guard the frontiers. The Teliagarh Pass was the main route of access from Bihar into Bengal. And even if this Pass was guarded, Bakhtyār seems to have taken the difficult route through the Jharkhand forest in the Birbhum district.

When Bakhtyār captured Nadiya Lakṣmaṇasena withdrew to south-eastern Bengal, where his sons continued the rule of the Senas for some time. Following up his success in Nadiya Bakhtyār soon took possession of Lakṣmaṇāvatī (Lakhnawtī as it came to be known under the Muslim rulers), and established his seat of government there. He also took possession of parts of northern Bengal, as one of his outposts was established at Devkot in the Dinajpur district, where he died after his return from Tibet expedition.[1]

Lakṣmaṇasena's presence in south-eastern Bengal is proved by the Bhowal plate,[2] issued in his 27th year to grant land in the Dacca district. Possibly the significance of the invasion of Nadiya and the occupation of northern Bengal by the Muslims was not realised by the Senas at that time. The history of the whole of India at that particular period was marked by the success of the Muslim arms in every direction. Bakhtyār's invasion also must be seen in the background of these events.

South-eastern Bengal does not seem to have come under the Muslims until the end of the 13th century A. D.[3] The numerous rivers of this region presented a natural check to the advance of the Turkish cavalry for a century or so, but it is

1 For reconstruction of Bakhtyār's capture of power in Bengal see *HB-II*, pp. 1-9.

2 *EI*, vol. XXVI, pp. 1 ff.

3 The evidence of the occupation of this part is provided by the coins and inscriptions of Shāmsud-Din Fīrūz Shāh (1301-1322 A. D.). See *HB-II*, pp. 77-82, and also A. Karim : *Corpus of the Muslim Coins of Bengal*, pp. 26-29 ; A.H. Dani : *Bibliography of the Muslim Inss. of Bengal*, p. 7.

likely that in this period attempts were made by the Muslims to annex this part of Bengal.

Lakṣmaṇasena's reign saw both the height and the decline of Sena power in Bengal. At his accession the Senas had the paramountcy over the whole of Bengal, and their greatness found expression in the numerous literary works that were produced in his reign. The patronage of the king, who himself was the author of prose and poetry, must have given an impetus to the learned men in his court. His magnanimity and benevolence even attracted the notice of the Muslim historian, Minhāj, who designated him as a "great Rae", compared him with the beneficent Sulṭān Qutbuddīn and even prayed for the mitigation of his punishments in the after life.[1]

We do not possess any details about the successors of Lakṣmaṇasena. Three copper-plates[2] preserve the names of two of his sons, Viśvarūpasena and Keśavasena, who ruled one after the other. D. C. Sircar,[3] on examination of the Madanapārā plate, found that the name of Viśvarūpasena has been put in after erasing another name, containing two *akṣaras*, on the second of which there was a superscript *ra*. As four letters had to be inserted in the space for two, the script of the name of Viśvarūpa in the Madanapārā plate is very compressed He suspects that in Edilpur plate also there was this kind of erasure, and that in fact the name of Viśvarūpa has been wrongly read as Keśava. He thinks that all three plates belong to Viśvarūpasena, and the two-lettered name with a superscript *ra* on the second, which has been erased and replaced by the name of Viśvarūpasena, was actually the name of a son of Viśvarūpasena, possibly Sūryasena, whose name is mentioned as the crown prince (*Kumāra*) in the Sahitya Pariṣat plate of Viśvarūpasena.[4] D. C. Sircar

[1] *TN*, Text, p 48-49 ; Eng. Tr., pp. 354-56 ; Hindi Tr., pp. 12-13.

[2] Sāhitya Pariṣat plate of Viśvarūpasena : *IB-III*, pp. 140 ff. Madanapārā plate of Viśvarūpasena : *Ibid.*, pp. 132 ff. Edilpur plate of Keśavasena : *Ibid.*, pp. 118 ff.

[3] *JAS,L*, vol. XX, 1954, pp. 207-217.

[4] Line 54 : *IB-III*, p. 147.

further conjectured that Sūryasena ruled for some time in the reign of Viśvarūpasena, when the latter was possibly temporarily incapacitated, and he was the original issuer of the Madanapārā as well as the Edilpur plates. But when the father recovered and took over the administration Sūryasena's name was replaced by that of the ruling king, Viśvarūpasena.

The above theory of D. C. Sircar is primarily based on the hypothesis that in the Edilpur plate the name of the issuer of the grant is Viśvarūpa and not Keśava and erasures, similar to those he found in the Madanpārā plate, are also to be found there. It is true that Prinsep,[1] who first edited the plate, and following him N. G. Majumdar[2] have read the name Keśava and indicated their doubts by putting it within square brackets. The plate is now lost and thus D. C. Sircar's suspicion cannot be confirmed from an examination of it. So it would be unwise to accept his theory as final. The name of Keśava appears twice in lines 24 and 43, and in the facsimile supplied by Prinsep they are too indistinct to allow any decision about their reading. But one thing vitiates Sircar's theory. The *biruda* of Keśavasena has been read as *Arirājāsahya-Śaṅkara* in the Edilpur plate,[3] whereas in both the plates of Viśvarupasena, his *biruda* appears to be *Arirājavṛṣabhāṅkaśaṅkara*.[4] No erasures could be traced in the portion containing the *biruda* in the Edilpur plate and it is likely that when the name was changed the *biruda* should also have been changed.

All the plates of Viśvarūpasena and Keśavasena granted lands in the Vikramapura and Vaṅga area, which proves the continuation of the rule of the Senas in south-eastern Bengal at least up to 1223 A.D., 17 years after the death of Lakṣmaṇasena.[5]

[1] *JASB*, vol. VII, pp. 43 ff.
[2] *IB-III*, p. 123.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 124.
[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 136 and 145.
[5] The Madanapārā plate of Viśvarūpasena is dated in his 14th year and the Edilpur plate of Keśavasena is dated in his 3rd year.

Minhaj[1] may be right when he writes that Lakṣmaṇasena's sons were ruling in Vaṅga and *Saṅkanāt* (Samataṭa) when he wrote his account, possibly in 1243-45 A.D., the period of his sojourn in Bengal.

The plates of Viśvarūpasena and Keśavasena do not give us any details about their achievements. A verse contains a reference to the *Yavanas*[2] and it is not unlikely that they succeeded in resisting the attempts of the Muslim rulers of Bengal who tried to extend their dominion over south-eastern Bengal also.

Viśvarūpasena and Keśavasena assumed full imperial titles and both of them were *Parama-sauryas*, worshippers of the Sun god. In the Sena family the first two rulers were *Śaivas*, the third was a *Vaiṣṇava* and the two last known rulers were *Sauryas*.

We do not know anything about their successors. The Sāhitya Pariṣat plate of Viśvarūpasena[3] records the names of two princes, Sūryasena and Puruṣottamasena, but there is no record of their rule. The name of one Madhusena is preserved in a manuscript of the *Pañcarakṣā*,[4] where he is given the title of *Gauḍeśvara* and is said to have ruled in Saka 1211 (=1289 A. D.). We cannot be certain about the territory over which he ruled, but, as R. C. Majumdar remarked, "he is the last known ruler of Bengal with the name-ending Sena who might have inherited the pretensions, if not the power, of the Senas."[5]

In the third quarter of the 13th century A. D. the Senas were dispossessed of their hold over Vikramapura by the Devas.[6] The Ādāvāḍi plate of Daśarathadeva,[7] probably a descendant of Dāmodaradeva, was issued from Vikramapurā, the heart of the power of the later Senas, Daśarathadeva is given full regal

1 *TN*, Text, p. 151 : Eng. Tr., p. 558 : Hindi Tr., p. 14.
2 Verse 12, Edilpur plate and Verse 17 of the Madanapārā plate : *IB-III*, pp. 123-24 and 135.
3 Lines, 54, 57-58 : *Ibid.*, p. 147.
4 *HB-I*, p. 228, Fn 2.
5 *Ibid.*, p. 228.
6 See *Supra*, pp. 247-248.
7 *IB-III*, pp. 181-82.

titles such as *Parameśvara, Paramabhaṭṭāraka, Mahārājādhirāja Arirāja-Danuja-Mādhava.* The other titles used by him show that he copied the imperial titles used by Viśvarūpasena and Keśavasena in their own records. The palaeography of the plate and the similarity of the titles show that he was not far removed in time from the Sena rulers of Vaṅga and in all probability followed them on the throne of Vikramapura.

He was possibly the same as Danuj Rai, the Rājā of Sunārgāon (Dacca district), of Ḍiyā' al-Dīn Baranī, with whom Sulṭān Ghiyāṯh al-Dīn Balban came to an agreement to guard the waters of *Baṅg*, the river passages to the sea and to check the flight of the rebellious chief, Mughīth al-Dīn Tughral, during his Bengal campaign of 1280—1282 A.D.[1]

Daśarathadeva was the last known Hindu king of south-eastern Bengal and by the end of the 13th century this area passed under the Muslims.[2] That by 1282 A.D., when Balban returned from his Bengal campaign, south-eastern Bengal was not yet brought under Muslim control is proved by Barani's statement that Balban urged his son Bughrā Khān, who was placed at Lakhnawtī as the governor, to push forward the Muslim arms into *'Arṣah-i-Bangālāh.*[3] But there were several attempts at this by different rulers, such as Ghiyāṯh al-Dīn Iwāḍ Khaljī and Tāj-al-Dīn Arsālan Khān.[4]

So we find that the successors of Lakṣmaṇasena ruled over south-eastern Bengal up to the third quarter of the 13th century A.D., when the Devas under Daśarathadeva supplanted them. But by the end of the century the whole of Bengal came under the control of the Muslims.

[1] *Tārikh-i-Fīrūzshāhi*, Bibl. Ind., Calcutta, 1862, pp. 92 ff. J. N. Sarkar (ed.): *HB-II*, pp. 62-66.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 74 ff.
[3] Barani: *op. cit.*, pp. 92 ff.; *HB-II*, p. 67.
[4] *HB-II*, pp. 22 ff. and 57.

Conclusion

In the middle of the 8th century A.D. Bengal, after a period of confusion since the downfall of the Imperial Guptas, emerged as an important power in the politics of northern India. The Pālas established their rule in northern and north-western Bengal and Bihar. This ended the period of lawlessness that prevailed in Bengal in the first half of the 8th century A.D., during which the repeated foreign invasions had destroyed the political equilibrium. South-eastern Bengal, being the remotest part of the region and well guarded by its rivers, was less exposed to these invasions of north-Indian powers and a more or less settled condition seems to have prevailed in this area. At the time when the Pālas rose to power south-eastern Bengal saw the rise of the Deva rulers, who seem to have succeeded the Khaḍgas.

There is no evidence of Pāla rule in south-eastern Bengal in their early years. On the other hand, from the middle of the 8th century to the middle of the 11th century A.D. we find the existence of independent dynasties in this region. The Devas were succeeded by the Harikela rulers, represented by Kāntideva of the Chittagong plate. The Candras, who in all probability were originally the feudatories of the Harikela kings, succeeded in capturing power in the last quarter of the 9th century A.D. and held sway in south-eastern Bengal up to the middle of the 11th century A.D.

If the Bāghaurā and Nārāyaṇapur image inscriptions, which we have assigned to Mahīpāla II, are taken to testify to the existence of Pāla rule in south-eastern Bengal, it seems certain that Pāla power spread in this region some time between the reigns of Mahīpāla I and Mahīpāla II, (between 1043 and 1075 A.D.). The two foreign invasions of Rājendra Coḷa and Lakṣmīkarṇa seriously impaired the strength of the Candra rulers. Karṇa's victory over Vaṅga and his subsequent friendship with Vigrahapāla III possibly facilitated the extension of Pāla power into south-eastern Bengal.

But the Pāla interregnum was shortlived and in the last quarter of the 11th century A.D. the Varmans, taking advantage

of the weakness of the Pāla empire, which manifested itself in the revolt and initial success of the Kaivarta leader in northern Bengal, established their power in south-eastern Bengal.

The Varmans continued their rule in this region up to the middle of the 12th century A.D. when they were supplanted by the Sena king, Vijayasena.

The Pālas continued their rule with various vicissitudes to the middle of the 12th century A.D., when they were ousted from Bengal by Vijayasena. By the end of Vijayasena's career, c. 1160 A.D., he had succeeded in establishing the rule of his dynasty over the whole of Bengal. So with the rise of the Senas, Bengal, for the first time in its history, came under one parasol.

The Senas continued their rule over the whole of Bengal till the end of the 12th century A.D. The invasion of Muḥammad Bakhtyār Khāljī in 1204 A.D. brought the north-western and northern Bengal under the Muslims. The Senas receded to south-eastern Bengal where they continued their existence for another half a century. In the third quarter of the 13th century they were dispossessed of their hold in that region by the Devas, the family of Daśarathadeva. The rivers of south-eastern Bengal offered a natural check to the Turkish horsemen. But by the close of the 13th century A.D. the Muslims succeeded in bringing the whole of Bengal under their control. Thus Bengal entered into another phase of its history.

The Pālas held sway over parts of Bengal and Bihar for about four centuries, in which 17 generations of kings ruled. Gopāla I succeeded in establishing the rule of the Pālas and the reigns of his son and grandson, Dharmapāla and Devapāla, formed the period of their ascendency. In this period the Pālas were powerful enough to challenge the mastery of northern India, and in their bid for this mastery they had some success. This was the most glorious period of the dynasty, but definitely not as glorious as the court poets have depicted.

The period of ascendency gave way to a period of stagnation covering the reigns of five kings from Vigrahapāla I to

Vigrahapāla II. In this period the energy and vigour, which were so manifest during the reigns of Dharmapāla and Devapāla were totally absent. The Pāla kings were happy with what they possessed, and did not make any attempt at expansion. On the other hand, they were not powerful enough to check incursions from outside or uprisings from inside their borders. Thus the Pratīhāras captured parts of Bihar and northern Bengal and the Kāmbojas rose to an almost independent position.

The reign of Mahīpāla I brought back some vitality and gave a second lease of life to the Pāla empire. He succeeded in bringing back the lost dominions and restored the position of his dynasty to a firmer footing. But the idea of Mahīpāla's empire extending as far as Benares does not seem to be founded on sure grounds. The invasion of Rājendra Coḷa seems to have undone some of his good work.

But during the reigns of his successors, up to that of Rāmapāla, the fortune of the dynasty seems to have fallen to its lowest ebb. The invasions of the Kalacuris, Candellas and Cālukyas showed the apparent weakness of the Pāla kings. The revolt of the *sāmantas* resulting in the success of the Kaivarta chief, Divya, who brought northern Bengal under his control, marks the climax of this period. When the central authority becomes weak it is natural that the forces of disintegration should play their part. The success of Divya is the most prominent example of this tendency.

The position of the Pāla empire at the accession of Rāmapāla is clearly shown by the way in which he had to solicit the support of his *sāmantas*. The vigour and energy of Rāmapāla was the last significant flicker in the life of the Pāla dynasty. His role was very similar to that of Mahīpāla I, a strong ruler able to restore something of his line's former glory, but not sufficiently powerful to make that restoration last for long.

Rāmapāla's successors were too weak to check the gradual decline. During their rule Vijayasena found the opportunity to gather strength, and by the middle of the 12th century A. D. the Pālas were ousted from their possessions in Bengal. Madanapāla,

the last known Pāla emperor, passed the remaining days in parts of Magadha. Govindapāla and Palapāla, whose connection with the Imperial Pālas cannot be proved, may have continued to rule in that region, with the pretence of being *Gauḍeśvaras*, till the end of the 12th century when this portion of Bihar was overrun by the invading Muslims.

One question may arise in our mind. How could the Pāla empire, which was generally rather weak from the death of Devapāla onwards, survive for such a long time ? When we view the history of the period in the broad-based context of the history of northern India in the 10th and 11th centuries the answer becomes apparent. This period was characterised by the rule of various dynasties in different parts of northern India. As a result we have a series of struggles among them. But none of them was powerful enough to bring to fruition a plan of establishing a united north-Indian empire, the vision of which, however, always haunted them. The relative equality of strength of the various dynasties afforded each of them a safeguard against the other. The Pālas were fortunate in not having a powerful state in the neighbourhood. The Candellas, who touched the border of the Pāla empire in the middle of the 11th century, could not press on with their aggressive designs against the Pālas, because they were hard pressed on other frontiers of their kingdom by the Cālukyas and the Paramāras, who ultimately engulfed the Candella empire. The power of the Kalacuris was also on the decline after Laksmīkarṇa. The kingdoms of the Coḷas and the Cālukyas were too far away to pose any serious danger.

Moreover, the invasions of Māhmūd of Ghazni in the early 11th century considerably weakened the power of the Indian kingdoms. Towards the close of the following century the Gahaḍavālas, when they had become powerful, could only advance into parts of western Magadha, and had to turn their attention to the invading Muslim army.

So the Pāla empire, though it was weak, did not have to face any serious danger from outside. With the downfall of the Pratihāras and the Rāṣṭrakūṭas, against whom the powerful Pāla

emperors like Dharmapāla and Devapāla matched their strength, there was no serious external danger. But internal dangers were there and from time to time we find signs of their uprising. The Kāmbojas succeeded for some time in carving out for themselves an independent kingdom in northern and western Bengal. Again the Kaivarta leader Divya occupied northern Bengal. But on both occasions the Pala dynasty produced vigorous rulers, Mahīpāla I and Rāmapāla respectively, who succeeded in putting down those insurgents, and in thus giving new lease of life to their empire. Hence the Pālas could hold their position for four long centuries, but ultimately had to succumb to an internal enemy - the Senas. In any case their long rule gave to Bengal the blessings of a stable government, which bore rich fruits in the arts of peace.

In the present stage of our knowledge we know very little about the four Deva rulers of south-eastern Bengal. But the history of the Candra rulers is now more vivid and detailed. Trailokyacandra laid the foundation upon which Śrīcandra built up the edifice. The period of these two rulers is comparable to that of the first three rulers of the Pāla dynasty. The reign of Kalyāṇacandra also saw some advancement in the prestige of the dynasty, if not in power. In the reigns of both Śrīcandra and Kalyāṇacandra we find expessions of their vigour in different directions. The reign of Laḍahacandra formed a period of stalemate, while the decline set in the reign of Govindacandra, the last known Candra king. The invasions of the Coḷas and the Kalacuris dealt serious blows to the Candras, from which they could hardly recover.

The rule of the Varmans and the Senas, both of Brāhmanical faith, as opposed to the Buddhist dynasties that preceded them, may have brought about some changes in the social and cultural life of the people of Bengal.

The overall success of the Muslim arms in northern India towards the close of the 12th century A. D. made it inevitable that Bengal should also come under their sway. In this respect the Sena rulers did not seem to have been in any way different from other north-Indian powers and had to succumb to this external enemy.

Appendices

Appendix—I

The Chronology of the Pala Kings

The chronology of the Pāla kings of Bengal has been a matter of discourse among scholars and a good deal has been written on this subject.[1] The recently discovered Valgudar inscription of Madanapāla has thrown fresh light on this subject and places us in a far more advantageous position than previous writers. In the following pages we attempt to take a fresh look at the subject in the light of the newly discovered facts of the history of Bengal. It is needless to enter into detailed discussion of the various theories raised by earlier scholars, controversy about which has now somewhat simmered down to the generally accepted chronology as it is given in the *History of Bengal, vol. I.*[2]

Earlier in the course of our discussion, we have tried to fix the reign periods of the various Pāla kings from the known sources and taking lead from those calculations we shall try to fix their dates.

It is unfortunate that of all the Pāla inscriptions only two are dated in any known era : (i) the Sārnāth inscription

[1] R. C. Majumdar : 'The Chronology of the Pāla Kings', *JASB(NS)*, vol. XVII, pp. 1-6.
: 'Pāla Chronology', *JBORS*, vol. XV, 643-50.
R. D. Banerji : 'Pāla Chronology', *Ibid.*, vol. XIV, pp. 489-538.
D. C. Bhattacharya : 'A Chronology of the Pāla Dynasty of Bengal', *IA*, vol. XLIX, pp. 189-193.
: 'Pāla Chronology—A Reply to Prof. Banerji', *IHQ*, vol. VI, pp. 153-168.
J. C. Ghosh : 'Caste and Chronology of the Pāla Kings of Bengal', *IHQ*, vol. IX, pp. 479-490.

[2] Edited by R. C. Majumdar ; Dacca University Publication, pp. 176-181.

of Mahīpāla I is dated in Vikrama Year 1083 (=1026 A. D.),[1] and (ii) the Valgudar inscription of Madanapāla is dated in Śaka Era 1083 (1161-62 A.D.) as well as in the 18th regnal year of the king.[2] The discovery of the latter helps us considerably by giving the date both in the regnal year of the king and in the Śaka Era. Taking this date as the corner-stone we are able to fix the chronology of the Pāla kings with greater certainty.

It must be made clear that the date V. S. 1083 (A.D. 1026) of the Sārnāth inscription is only a date in the reign of Mahīpāla I, and not the date of the termination of the reign of that ruler, as was supposed by some scholar.[3] Also there is nothing in the inscription to indicate that Mahīpāla was dead in 1026 A D., as supposed by R. D. Banerji[4]

From the Valgudar plate we obtain 1143 A.D. as the first year of Madanapāla's reign. Taking this date as the starting point and counting backwards we can fix the dates of the Pāla kings as shown in the following table :

King	*Reign Period as allotted in our earlier discussion*	*Date*
Gopāla III	... 14 years[5] ...	1129-1143 A.D.
Kumārapāla	... 5 years[6] ...	1124-1129 A.D.
Rāmapāla	... 42 years[7] ...	1082-1124 A.D
Śūrapāla II	... 2 years[8] ...	1080-1182 A.D.
Mahīpāla II	... 5 years[9] ...	1075-1080 A.D.

[1] *IA*, vol. XIV, pp. 139-40.
[2] *EI*, vol. XXVIII, pp. 141-145.
[3] R. C. Majumdar : *JASB (NS)*, vol. XVII, p. 3. But he revised his opinion in the *HB-I.*
H. C. Ray : *DHNI* vol. I, p. 279.
[4] *JBORS*, vol. XIV, p. 489 ff.
[5] *Supra*, p. 131.
[6] *Supra*, p. 129.
[7] *Supra*, p. 125.
[8] *Supra*, p. 112.
[9] *Supra*, p. 111.

Vigrahapāla III	...	17 years[1]	...	1058-1075 A.D
Nayapāla	...	15 years[2]	...	1043-1058 A.D
Mahīpāla I	...	48 years[3]	...	995-1043 A.D
Vigrahapāla II	...	26 years[4]	...	969-995 A.D
Gopāla II	...	17 years[5]	...	952-969 A.D
Rajyapāla	...	32 years[6]	...	920-952 A.D
Nārāyaṇapāla	...	54 years[7]	...	866-920 A.D
Vigrahapāla I and Śūrapāla I	...	5 years[8]	...	861-866 A.D
Devapāla	...	40 years[9]	...	821-861 A.D
Dharmapāla	...	40 years[10]	...	781-821 A.D
Gopāla I	...	25 years[11]	...	756-781 A.D

The above chronology of the Pāla kings seems to be reconcilable with all known facts. The only way to test the validity of the dates is by way of synchronism. But before doing that we may point out certain weak points, which, in the absence of any definite data, are unavoidable. The period of 25 years for the reign of Gopāla I is not based on any evidence, as none of his own records has come down to us. Similarly the reign periods of Śūrapāla I and Kumārapāla are also uncertain. The Rajibpur image inscription, dated in the 14th year of one Gopāla,[12] has been generally assigned to the third ruler of that name on palaeographic grounds. Similarly the

1 *Supra*, pp. 91-92.
2 *Supra*, p. 91.
3 *Supra*, pp. 86-87.
4 *Supra*, p. 64.
5 *Supra*, pp. 63-64.
6 *Supra*, p. 59.
7 *Supra*, p. 58.
8 *Supra*, p. 52
9 *Supra*, p. 41.
10 *Supra*, p. 32.
11 *Supra*, pp. 19-20.
12 *IHQ*, vol. XVII, p. 217.

manuscript of the *Pañcarakṣā* dated in the 26th year of one Vigrahapāla, Kurkihar inscriptions of the 3rd and 19th years, and the Naulāgarh inscription dated in the 24th year of a king of that name have been assigned to Vigrahapāla II.[1] R. D. Banerji assigned the manuscript to him on palaeographic grounds.[2] It must be admitted that these assignments are in no way certain. We have, however, accepted them for the purpose of our chronology.

Making allowance for these shortcomings the chronology suggested above is found to stand the test of synchronism and agree with the known facts of history. The Sanjan plates of Amoghavarṣa[3] definitely make Dharmapāla, Nāgabhaṭa II and Govinda III contemporaries. Govinda III is known to have reigned from 793-94 to 814 A.D.[4] The earliest known definite date of Nāgabhaṭa II is 815 A.D., supplied by the Buchkala inscription,[5] and B. N. Puri is of the opinion that he may have ruled from c. 800 to 833 A.D.[6] So the dates c. 781-821 A.D. for Dharmapāla easily fit this synchronism. As we have seen earlier, Dharmapāla's adversaries in the first phase of the tripartite struggle were Dhruva (c. 780-794 A.D.) and Vatśarāja (c. 783-800 A D.).[7] All the known facts of Dharmapāla's career fit in well the dates proposed for him.

According to our calculations Nārāyaṇapāla's 17th year falls in 883 A.D. We have suggested earlier that the occupation of parts of Bihar and northern Bengal by the Pratihāras took place after the 17th year of Nārayaṇapāla and the Pratihāras achieved these successes towards the close of Bhoja's reign and

[1] *Supra*, p. 64.
[2] *MASB*, vol. V, p. 67 ; *JBORS*, vol. XIV, pp. 489 ff.
[3] *EI*, vol. XVIII, pp. 235 ff.
[4] A. S. Altekar : *The Rāshṭrakūṭas And Their Times*, pp. 58-59, 71.
[5] *EI*, vol. IX, p. 198.
[6] B. N. Puri : *The History of The Gurjara-Pratihāras*, pp. 42-49. R. S. Tripathi places his reign in c. 805-833 A. D. cf. *History of Kanauj*, pp. 230 ff.
[7] See *Supra*, pp. 21 ff.

early in that of Mahendrapāla.[1] The end of Bhoja's reign and the beginning of the reign of Mahendrapāla must be placed between 884 A.D., the last known date of Bhoja, and 893 A.D., the earliest known date of Mahendrapāla.[2] So the dates assigned to Nārāyaṇapāla fit well with this synchronism also.

The Vikrama year 1083 (1026 A.D.) supplied by the Sarnāth inscription of Mahīpāla I falls in his reign period, 995-1043 A.D. The Tirumulai inscription refers to Rājendra Coḷa's fight with Mahīpāla I, and the invasion must have taken place between 1021 and 1024 A.D.[3] There is no chronological difficulty in this respect also.

We have dated the reign of the Candra king Śrīcandra in c. 930-975 A.D. and in a verse of the Dacca plate of Kalyāṇacandra Śrīcandra is said to have helped Gopāla.[4] The reign period assigned to Gopāla II fits in well in this synchronism.

The synchronism of the Kalacuri king Lakṣmīkarṇa (c. 1041-1070 A.D.), Nayapāla (c. 1043-1058 A.D.) and Vigrahapāla III, (c. 1058-1075 A.D.)[5] is also confirmed by our chronology.

We have also seen earlier that the rise of Vijayasena, founder of the Sena rule, can be placed in the first half of the 12th century A.D. and there is no chronological difficulty in assigning Vijayasena's success against Madanapāla after the latter's 8th regnal year, 1151-52 A D.[6]

Thus we find that the above chronology fits in well with all the known facts. We are on stronger grounds because of the fact that the Valgudar inscription offers us a sure starting point.

The names of Govindapāla and Palapāla cannot be introduced in the Pāla chronology as it is not possible to connect them

[1] *Supra*, pp. 53 ff.
[2] B. N. Puri : *Op. cit.*, p. 66.
[3] *Supra*, pp. 81 ff.
[4] *Supra*, pp. 156, 173-175.
[5] *Supra*, pp. 92 ff.
[6] *Supra*, pp. 120 ff.

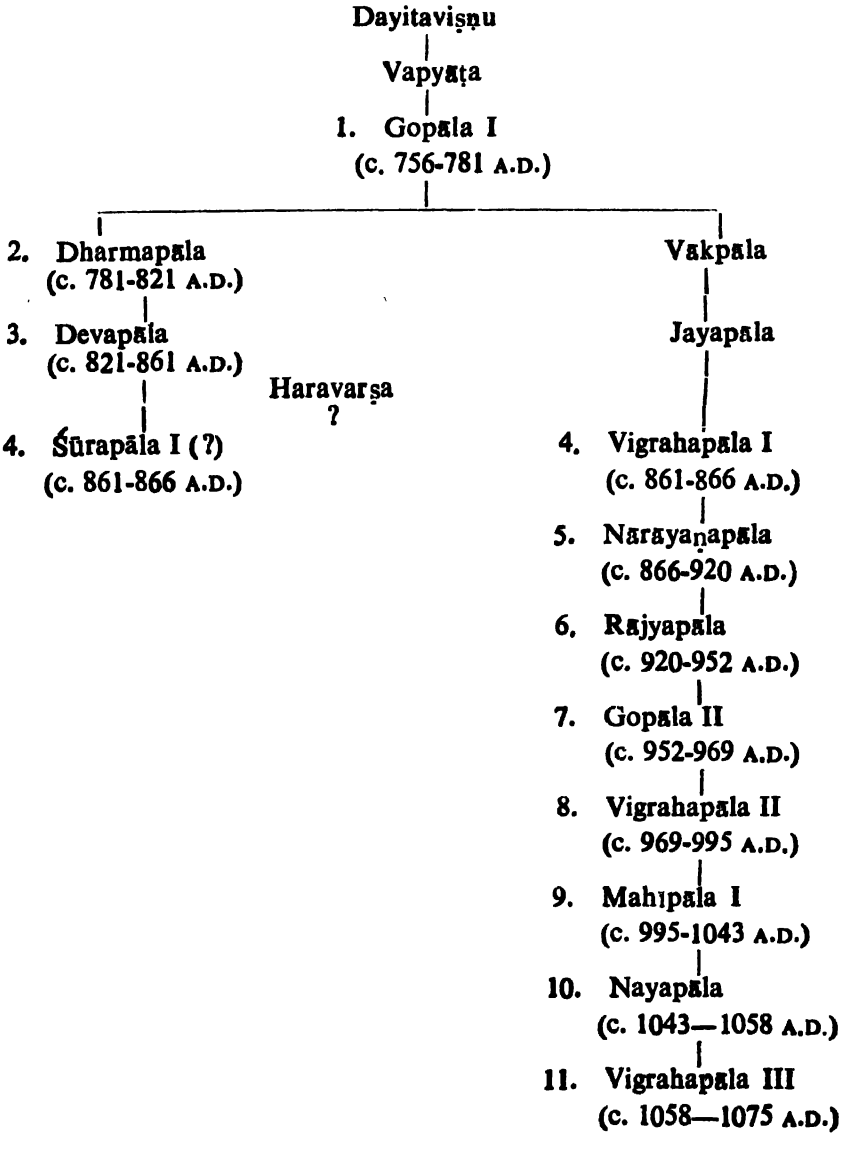
on definite grounds with the Imperial Pālas.[1] Moreover it seems certain that Govindapāla's accession is to be placed in 1162 A.D.,[2] and he and Palapāla must be placed after 1162 A.D., the last known date of Madanapāla.

[1] *Supra*, pp. 135-136.
[2] *Supra*, pp. 256 ff.

Appendix—II

Genealogical Tables

A. The Pālas



11. Vigrahapāla III

12. Mahipāla II (c. 1075—1080 A.D.)
13. Śurapāla II (c. 1080—82 A.D.)
14. Rāmapāla (c. 1082—1124 A.D.)

15. Kumārapāla (c. 1124—29 A.D.)
Rājyapāla
Vittapāla
17. Madanapāla (c. 1143—62 A.D.)

16. Gopāla III (c. 1129—43 A.D.)

B. The Devas

(They ruled roughly between 750 and 800 A.D.)

Śrī Śāntideva

Śrī Vīradeva

Śrī Ānandadeva

Śrī Bhavadeva

C. The Candras

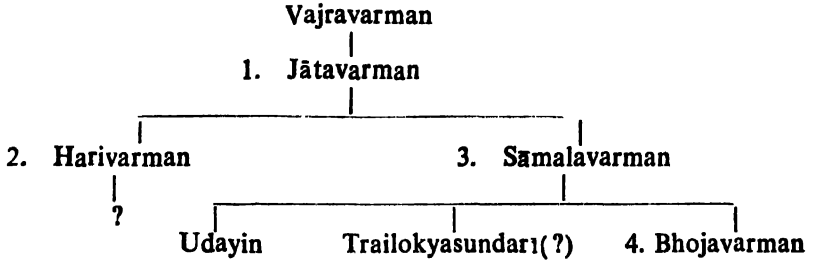
Purṇacandra

Suvarṇacandra

1. Trailokyacandra (c. 900—930 A.D.)
2. Śrīcandra (c. 930—975 A.D.)
3. Kalyāṇacandra (c. 975—1000 A.D.)
4. Laḍahacandra (c. 1000—1020 A.D.)
5. Govindacandra (c. 1020—1045 A.D.)

D. The Varmans

(Ruled between c. 1080 and 1150 A.D.)



E. The Senas

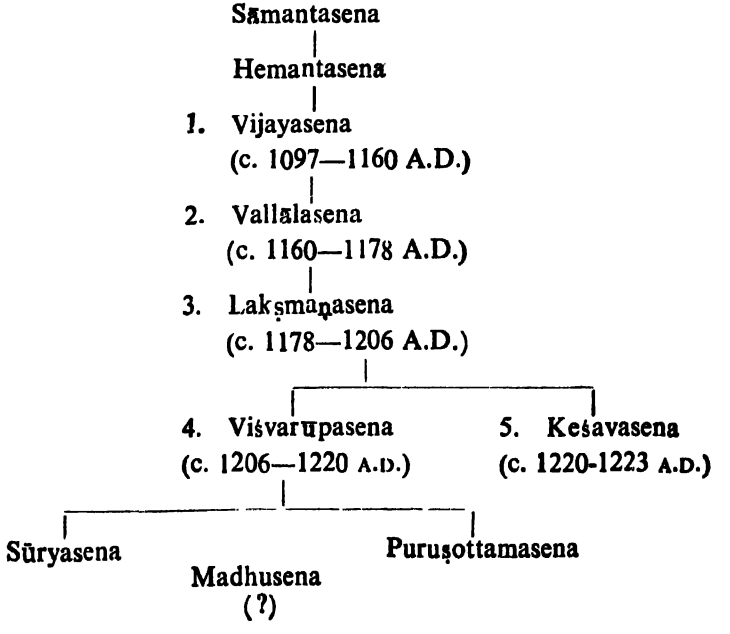
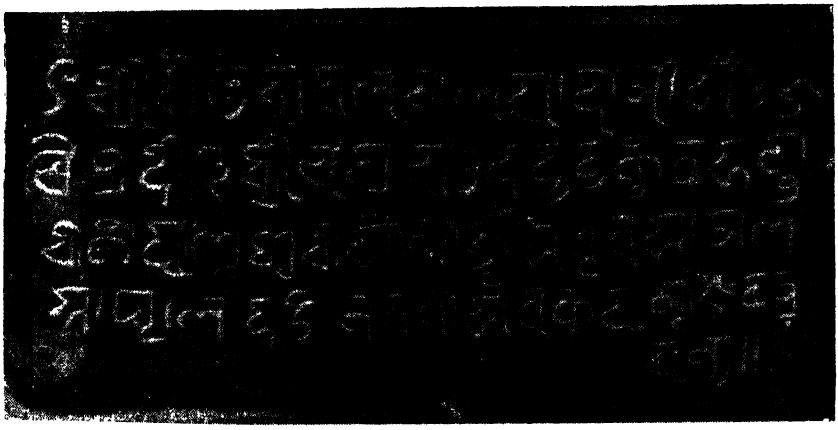


Plate I



Imādpur Image Inscription of Mahīpāla I

Plate II



Jaynagar Image Inscription of Palapāla

Text and Translation[1]

1. *Siddhaṁ (by symbol) Śrī Ge (Gau) ḍeśva (ra) Palapāṇa (la) pādānāṁ Saṁ 35*
2. *Caie (tra) dī (di) 3 Śrī Caṁpāyaṁ 2 hu (or hna) Ūtakv [ena] bhaṭṭa*
3. *rī (ri) kā Puṇṇeśvarī saumāja siddhava sāmaṇa*
4. *Sāṁghṛnau haḍinevadhā saṁva kuṭumva jadatra*
5. *punya //*

Text after emendation :

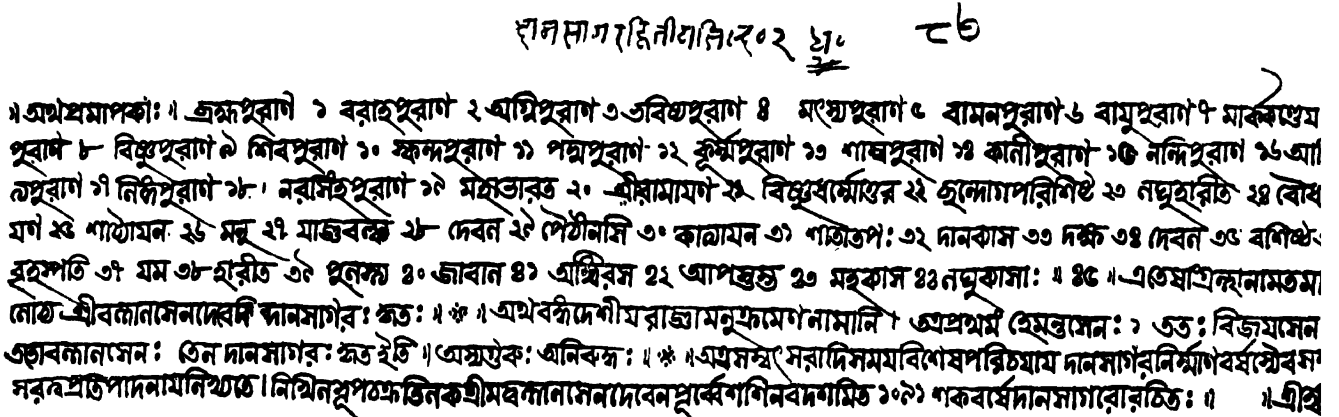
Siddham // Śrī Gauḍeśvara-Palapāla-pādānāṁ saṁvatsare 35 Caitra divase 3 Śrī-Caṁpāyām-iha Utakvena bhaṭṭārikā Pūrṇeśvarī (or Puṇyeśvarī) [pratiṣṭhāpitā] Siddha-samāja-śramaṇa-saṁghānāṁ haḍinibaddha-sarva-kuṭumbānām [ca] yad-atra puṇyaṁ [tat-sarvam bhavatā] //

Translation :

May there be success. On the 3rd day of Caitra in the 35th year of the feet of Palapāla, the illustrious lord of Gauḍa, here at the illustrious city of Campā, the (goddess) Bhaṭṭārikā Purṇeśvari (or Puṇyeśvarī) is installed by Ūtakva. Whatever merit is here let it go to the communities of Siddhas and the congregation of Śramaṇas as well as to the relatives (of Ūtakva) who are bound by the fetters of (wordly existence).

1. *J. B. R. S.*, Vol. XLI, 1955, 143 ff.

Plate III



॥ অথাষ্টাদশমাপকাঃ ॥ ব্রহ্মপুরাণ ১ বরাহপুরাণ ২ অগ্নিপুরাণ ৩ ভবিষ্যপুরাণ ৪ মৎস্যপুরাণ ৫ বামনপুরাণ ৬ বায়ুপুরাণ ৭ মার্কণ্ডেয়
পুরাণ ৮ বিষ্ণুপুরাণ ৯ শিবপুরাণ ১০ স্কন্দপুরাণ ১১ পদ্মপুরাণ ১২ কূর্মপুরাণ ১৩ শাম্বপুরাণ ১৪ কালীপুরাণ ১৫ নন্দিপুরাণ ১৬ আ
দিত্যপুরাণ ১৭ নিষ্কলিপুরাণ ১৮। নরসিংহপুরাণ ১৯ মহাভারত ২০ শ্রীরামায়ণ ২১ বিষ্ণুধর্মোত্তর ২২ ছন্দোগপরিশিষ্ট ২৩ লঘুহারীত ২৪ বৌধ
য়ণ ২৫ শাঠ্যায়ন ২৬ মনু ২৭ যাজ্ঞবল্ক্য ২৮ দেবল ২৯ পৈঠীনসি ৩০ কাত্যায়ন ৩১ পাতীতপঃ ৩২ দানকাম ৩৩ দক্ষ ৩৪ দেবল ৩৫ বশিষ্ঠ
বৃহস্পতি ৩৭ যম ৩৮ হারীত ৩৯ পুলস্ত্য ৪০ জাবাল ৪১ অঙ্গিরস ৪২ আপস্তম্ব ৪৩ মহাকাম ৪৪ লঘুকামাঃ ॥ ৪৫ ॥ এতেষাংশ্চ্যানামতমা
নোক্ত শ্রীবল্লালসেনদেবেন দানসাগরঃ কৃতঃ ॥ * ॥ অথবঙ্গদেশীয়রাজ্ঞামনুক্রমেণ নামানি। অথপ্রথমং হেমন্তসেনঃ ১ ততঃ বিজয়সেন
স্তদ্বল্লালসেনঃ তেন দানসাগরঃ কৃত ইতি ॥ অস্যশ্লোকঃ অনিরুদ্ধঃ ॥ * ॥ এতস্মিন্ সরাদিসময়বিশেষপরিচয়ায় দানসাগরনির্ম্মাণবর্ষস্যৈবস
সরলপ্রতিপাদনায়নিশ্চিতে। নিখিলনৃপচক্রচূড়ামণিশ্রীমদ্বল্লালসেনদেবেন পূর্ব্বেশশিনবদশমিত ১০৯১ শকবর্ষেদানসাগরোরচিতঃ ॥ ॥ শ্রী

The last page of the Dānasāgara
(India Office Library Manuscript)

Index to the place names of the Map of Bengal and Bihar

Numerals	*Names*	*Numerals*	*Names*
1. ...	Imādpur	28. ...	Pāṇḍunagar
2. ...	Hilsā	29. ...	Khālimpur
3. ...	Bodh Gayā	30. ...	Dinajpur
4. ...	Guneriya	31. ...	Bāngarh
5. ...	Nalandā	32. ...	Manahali
6. ...	Rājgir	33. ...	Tarpandighi
7. ...	Caṇḍimau	34. ...	Nimdighi
8. ...	Kurkihar	35. ...	Deopārā
9. ...	Itkhori	36. ...	Rajshahi
10. ...	Uddaṇḍapura (Bihar)	37. ...	Āmgāchi
11. ...	Tetrawan	38. ...	Bādal
1	Ghosrāwā	39. ...	Madhainagar
13. ...	Aphsad	40. ...	Dhullā
14. ...	Giriyek	41. ...	Sābhār
15. ...	Jaynagar	42. ...	Bhowāl
16. ...	Teliaghari	43. ...	Madhyapāḍā
17. ...	Paikore	44. ...	Ādābāḍi
18. ...	Sāgardighi	45. ...	Kedārpur
19. ...	Śaktipur	46. ...	Edilpur
20. ...	Naihati	47. ...	Mehār
21. ...	Apāra-Mandāra	48. ...	Madanpur
22. ...	Ānulia	49. ...	Belāva
23. ...	Barrackpur	50. ...	Ashrafpur
24. ...	Govindapur	51. ...	Bāghaurā
25. ...	Bakultala	52. ...	Deulbāḍi
26. ...	Rāmganj	53. ...	Paikpārā (Betkā)
27. ...	Jājilpāra	54. ...	Nidhanpur

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3. Nālandā Plate : *EI*, Vol. XXIII, pp. 290 ff.
4. Valgudar Ins. : *EI*, Vol. XXVIII, pp. 140-141.

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1. Munger Plate : *EI*, Vol. XVIII, pp. 304 ff.; *IA*, Vol. XXI, pp. 253 ff.; *GL*, pp. 33 ff.
2. Nālandā plate : *EI*, Vol. XVII, pp. 318 ff.; *VRS Monograph*, No. I ; *JRASB*, Third Series, vol. VII, pp. 215-216 ; *MASI*, No. 66, pp. 92 ff.
3. Ghosrāwā Ins. : *IA*, Vol. XVII, pp. 307 ff.; *GL*, pp. 45 ff.
4. Hilsa Ins. : *JBORS*, Vol. X, pp. 31 ff.; *IA*, 1928, p. 153 ; *JRASB*, Third Series, Vol. IV, p. 390.
5. Kurkihar Image Ins. : *JBORS*, Vol. XXVI, p. 251.
6. Metal Image Ins. : *ASI Annual Report*, 1927-28, p. 139.

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4. Bādal Pillar Ins. : *EI*, Vol. II, pp. 160 ff.; *GL*, pp. 70 ff.; *JASB*, Vol. *XLIII*, pp. 356 ff.
5. Bihar Image Ins. : *IA*, Vol. XLVII, pp. 109 ff.

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2. Bodhgayā Ins. : *JASB* (*NS*), Vol. IV, pp. 103 ff. ; *GL*, p. 88.
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5. Belwā Plate : *EI*, Vol. XXIX, pp. 1-9 ; *JAS,L*, Vol. XVII, pp. 117 ff.
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1. Kamauli Plate of Vaidyadeva	:	*EI*, Vol. II, pp. 347 ff. ; *GL*, pp. 127 ff.

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1. Dinajpur Pillar Ins	:	*JASB* (*NS*), Vol. VII, pp. 615-19 ; *GR*, p. 35.
2. Irdā Plate	:	*EI*, Vol. XXII, pp. 150-59 ; Vol. XXIV, pp. 43-47.

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(IV) INSCRIPTION OF THE HARKELA KINGS

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5. Mādhāinagar Plate : *IB-III*, pp. 106-115.
6. Bhowāl Plate : *EI*, Vol. XXVI, pp. 1-13.
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