Kosalananda Kavya and Jayachandrika: Myth and Reality of Chauhan Establishment in West Odisha

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Kosalananda Kavya and Jayachandrika have defaced the reality of Chauhan establishment in West Odisha.

Kosalananda Kavya was written by Pandit Gangadhar Misra, who was a court-poet of Baliar Singh (1660 A.D.-1690 A.D.) of Sambalpur and the Jayachandrika was composed in the last quarter of the 18th century by Prahallad Dubey, the court poet of Sarangarh. These two literary works are highly appraised and based upon by scholars of Odisha, who go to the extent of expressing that the early history of Chauhan rulers of Patna is known from a Sanskrit work Kosalananda written by Pandit Gangadhar Mishra and a Hindi work called Jayachandrika, written by Prahallad Dubey.

Supporting the historical value of the Jayachandrika, J. K. Sahu says that, it narrates how on the defeat and death of Prthviraj Chauhan at the hands of the Muslims, his enceinte queen fled to Patnagarh in West Odisha and was sheltered in the house of one Chakradhara Panigrahi where she gave birth to Ramai Deva who eventually became the founder of Chauhan rule in West Odisha. This story is told with some alterations in the Gazetteers, travel accounts and indigenous records dealing with the Chauhanas of Odisha. The Kosalananda Kavya, which is the earliest of the kind, gives the names of ten Kings who lived and ruled at Garh Sambhar after the death of Prthviraja and it states that the last of the line, Visala Deva, was killed by the Yavanas (the Muslims) whereupon his enceinte queen fled to Patnagarh. The accounts of the Kosalananda and that of the Jayachandrika may be put to a mathematical test on the basis of a dated inscription of Narasimhanathath temple engraved by Vaijala Deva, the fourth Chauhan ruler of Patnagarh. The date of the inscription has been calculated and fixed as 17th March 1413 A.D. If the three Rajas who preceded Vaijala Deva would have ruled for 50 or 60 years, the foundation of the Chauhan rule at Patnagarh would have been laid by Ramai Deva about the year 1360 A.D. As by that time Ramai Deva was a young lad of about twenty years old, his birth and the death of his father must have taken place about the year 1340 A.D. Prthviraj Cbauhan was killed in the year 1191 A.D. So, if we accept the story of the Jayachandrika we have to account for the big gap of 150 years which we can safely assign to the ten Rajas who find mention in the Kosalananda Kavya.

The Gazetteer's authorities also, with the common trend of these two literary works, went to the extent of expressing their views; N.K. Sahu says that the early history of Chauhan rulers of Patna is known from a Sanskrit work Kosalananda written by Pandit Gangadhar Misra belonging to the first half of the 16th century A.D., a Hindi work called Jayachandrika by Prahallad Dube written in Samvat 1838, i.e. 1782 A.D. and an Odia work named Nrusimha Mahatmya by Lakshmana Mishra who was living in the later part of the 19th century. H. B. Impey, who was a Deputy Commissioner of Sambalpur, prepared on the 29th May 1863 a note on the Garjat State of Patna which is of great help for study of the history of the Chauhan rulers of this ex-state. All these authorities have written about the origin of the Chauhan rulers in Patna on the basis of the long preserved tradition and although they differ on some minor details they agree on the salient point that one Ramai Deo, scion of the Chauhan ruling family of Garhsambar usurped the throne of Patna and founded the rule of his dynasty in that territory. Impey writing in 1863 states, "the Maharajas of Patna claim direct descent from a race of Rajpoot Rajahs of Garh Sumbul near Mynpooree and count back the individuals of this race for 32 generations."
"On the basis of the available evidence, it may be said that one Hamir Deo was killed about the middle of the 14th century A.D. by the Sultan of Delhi who was very probably Feroz Shah Toghluq after which his queens excepting one named Asavati (alias Yayanti) performed the rite of Suttee. Asavati fled away to save her life and honour and ultimately got shelter at the residence of a Brahmin of Patna named Chakradhar Panigrahi. There she gave birth to a son who was named Ramai and the child became virtually the adopted son of Panigrahi.

"It was the time when the territory of Patna was being administered by an Oligarchy consisting of eight Chieftains - (Asthmellik). These Chieftains (Asthmellik) were the lords of eight forts (garhs) which are (I) Patnagarh, (2) Kagaongarh, (3) Salebhattagarh, (4) Jarasinghagarh, (5) Sindhekelagarh, (6) Kholangarh, (7) Goragarh and (8) Kumnagarh. These Chieftains used to rule as head of the territory for one day by turn. The Kosalananda while referring to these eight Chiefs (whom it calls eight Mantrins) ruling the country by turn like brothers, also reveals that the real sovereignty was vested in the people who were selecting and appointing these Mantrins. This work further states that once a ferocious man-eater wrought great devastation and when all attempts to kill it became futile it was decided by the people that whosoever would kill man-eater would be the king of Patna. The Mantrins also hailed the decision of the people. Subsequently, it was Ramai Deo, a young man then, who succeeded in killing the tiger and the people, true to their promise, appointed him as King. The Jayachandrika, however, presents a different story. According to it, Chakradhar Panigrahi, who was virtually the adoptive father of Ramai was one of the eight Chieftains who were ruling over Patna by turn for a day. When once the turn of Panigrahi came, he deputed Ramai to run the administration that day. The young Ramai lavishly rewarded the army and the people and made them highly satisfied while at the same time he grossly misbehaved with the other Chieftains. Next time when once again Ramai was deputed to rule by Chakranhar Panigrahi, he managed to kill all the seven Malliks with the help of the army and usurped the throne of Patnagarh.

"It is difficult to know about the correct evidence regarding: the foundation of the Chauhan rule in Patna. This much, however, can be said that prior to the coming of the Chauhans the territory of Patna was being ruled by a popular form of Government which was destroyed by Rama Deo who started the monarchical system of Government. L.P. Pandey remarks, "A branch of Patna family of Chauhan dynasty of Odisha, which the Indian students of history will ever remember as the destroyer of an ancient Indian system of popular Government soon rose to power and importance extending its sovereignty over 8 chiefs or lords of forts or Garhas as they are usually called,"

State editor Bhaba Krushna Mahanti writes in the Gazetteer that from about 14th century A.D. Sambalpur came under the Chauhan ruler of Patna who was the head of a cluster of eighteen states known as the Athargarhjat and dominated a large tract to the east of Ratnapur Kingdom. Their ancestor is said to have been one Hammir Deo who lived near Mainpuri in North India and was killed by the Sultan of Delhi. One of his wives named Asavati, who was pregnant, fled away to save her life and honour and ultimately got shelter at the residence of one Chakradhar Panigrahi of Patna. There, she gave birth to a son known as Ramai who ultimately succeeded to capture power from eight Chieftains (Asta Mallik) and became the sole ruler of Patna. From all available evidence, Ramai Deo was the founder of the Chauhan rule in Patna. The Odisha Chauhans claim themselves to be 'Mainpuri' as well as 'Garh-Sambhan' (place located in Rajasthan) because of the fact that they regard themselves as the descendants of the Chauhan ruling family of Mainpuri, whose ancestors were Chauhans of Garh Sambhar related to famous Prithviraja III. In
course of time, the Chauhans of Patna extended their influence over surrounding territories including Sambalpur and the adjoining states.

These views show that because the scholars have not gone deep into investigating more evidences on the establishment of Chauhan power in West Odisha, they are of these opinions and J. K. Sahu puts emphasis and says that it may be pointed out here that scions of the Mainpuri Chauhans have founded various chiefships in different parts of Northern and Central India, notable among which are Rajpur, Dalippur, Partapner, Eka, Dera and Patnagar. Further, he has done critical study and though there are different opinions regarding the date, he has fixed circa 1360 A.D. as stated above and states that all available records regarding the Chauhans of Odisha unanimously agree that the Chauhan principality at Patnagar was founded by Ramai Deva who hailed from the ruling family of Mainpur.

To put much forcible or impressive expression on Chauhan establishment, N. K. Sahu has gone up till the extent of saying that Ramaideva founded the Chauhan rule which became powerful within a short time. A stone inscription of the time of Ramaideva and a portion of the gate of his fort at Patnagar are preserved in the University Museum. This statement of the renowned scholar cannot be accepted because the finding of a stone inscription of the time of Ramaideva at Patnagar is not genuine and therefore cannot be based upon. This statement of the scholar is vague and contemplated thought.

Now, let the available records be scrutinized. The earliest record is the Kosalananda Kavya which was written after long duration of Chauhan establishment at West Odisha. Except Prabodha Chandrika composed by Vajala Deva of Patna Kingdom where the royal poet has introduced himself as an illustrious scion of the Chauhan family (Chauhana Vamsa Tilakah) in 1500 A.D. or thereabout no record or narration of Chauhans have survived and much fanciful tradition had developed within this period, which find expression in Kosalananda Kavya. Then, followed Jaya Chandrika with such capricious information because these literatures are traditional in form and hence much interpolation of the reality have found place, Kosalananda Kavya and Jaya Chandrika are Darbar literatures, which are of more trivial kind. Because of this reason, there are hardly any truth of the early narration and the Astamallik administration. Some truth of the contemporary period, when they were composed, may be found only. Therefore, only after supporting discoveries, the account of the series of events recorded in these two literary works should be based upon.

The misguiding tradition of Kosalananda Kavya influenced the later works and the first to be influenced was Jaya Chandrika. The different versions of this tradition are found in later works. It will be better to mention them serially.

(1) Mottee, T. visited Sambalpur in 1766 A.D. and gives "A narrative of a journey to the Diamond Mines at Sumbhulpooor in the provinces of Oriss." He states, "Sumbhulpooor was founded by Balram Dakee of whom they relate the following history. About two centuries are past since a company of Hindus set out from the banks of the river Sommer in the province of Azmir on a pilgrimage to the temple of Juggernut. On their return the whole party was murdered except one woman who made her escape to Patna, a place thirty coss south from here, at that time the capital of this part of the country. She supported herself with begging until her son grew up and shewed such a happy genius for learning and such dexterity at his exercises that the Rajah adopted him. When he succeeded, he built this place and made it his residence calling it Sumbhulpooor from the country of his father. Had his family come from the Sommer, he would have called it
Sommerpoor, whereas I should think he came from Sumbhul, a large city in the Rohilla country.”

(2) Impey, H. B., "Notes on Gurhjat State of Patna." 14

Major H. B. Impey states that, the Muharajas of Patna claim direct descent from a race of Rajput Rajahs of Garh Sumbul near Mynpooree and counts back the individuals of this race for 32 generations.

Notes on the Gurjhat state of Patna by H. B. Impey is dated 1863 and most probably for the first time this author connects the Chauhans of West Odisha with Mainpuri. So, it shows that, the new interpolation of connecting the Chauhans of West Odisha with the Chauhans of Mainpuri developed in nineteenth century A.D.

(3) Charles Grant 16 in "Gazetteer of the Central Provinces," has based upon the account of H. E. Impey and mentions that the Maharajas of Patna claim direct descent from a race of Rajput Rajas of Garhsambar near Mainpuri and trace it through thirty one generations.

(4) Lethbridge, Roper 17 in The Golden Book of India, 1893 states about the Maharaja of Patna thus: “According to the traditions of the family, came from Sambalgarh in the Mainpuri district of the North-West Provinces, probably at the time of the earliest Muhammadan invasions.” This narration shows that the interpolated link with the Mainpuri Chauhan house, of the Patna Chauhan house, which developed in nineteenth century, finds its full expression here.

(5) O'Malley, L. S. S. 18 in his Bengal District Gazetteers - Sambalpur writes that, according to tradition, Sambalpur was at an early period under the rule of the Maharajas of Patna, who were the head of a cluster of States known as the Athara Garhjat (i.e. the 18 forts) and dominated a large tract to the east of the Ratanpur kingdom. Their ancestor is said to have been a Rajput prince, who lived near Mainpuri and was expelled from his territories by the Muhammadans. He came with his family to Patna, where he was killed in battle, but his wife who was pregnant, was sheltered by a Binjhal in whose hut she gave birth to a son. At that time, Patna was divided amongst eight chiefs, each of whom took it in turn to reign for one day over the whole territory. The Rajput boy Ramai Deva, on growing up, killed the eight chiefs and made himself a sole ruler of Patna.

This statement also shows that it is based upon the interpolated tradition, which had developed in nineteenth century A.D.

(6) Shreeram Chandra Mallick 19 in his Short History of Kosala (Odia) has based mostly upon the interpolated narration of Kosalananda Kavya.

(7) Cobden Ramsay 20 states, “It is said that Hamir Deva had fled from Grah-Shambar and established himself at Manikgarh fort in the hills of Khariar. On one occasion before proceeding to battle he took leave of his seven wives and told them that should he not return they would be apprised of his death by the homeward flight of some carrier pigeons. He failed to return and was never afterwards heard of the return of the pigeons satisfied the Ranis that he had fallen. Six of them drowned themselves in the pool called Ramdarha near Narsinghnath to the north of the Patna State and the remaining Rani was found wandering in the jungles near Ramud on the border between Patna and Khariar. She was kindly treated by her preserver, a Binjhal. In due course she delivered a child
Ramai Deva who put an end to the *Ath-malik gadi* by murdering the eight chiefs and himself assuming supremacy over the eight *garhs* (forts) which he wielded into the compact state of Patna and thus introduced the administration of Chauhan family."

(8) B. C. Mazumdar informs, "There is a tradition in the form of a legend of quasi-mythical character that so early as the 12th or 13th century A.D. one Humeri of the family of the Chauhan Rajputs of Mainpuri in the United Provinces came to Patna with his wife who was then enceinte and acquired there a. position of some significance by his heroic deeds. It is also narrated in this legendary account that the son of Humeri born in Patna State became by his mythical powers the chief of the eight Malliks who had the Government of Patna and Sambalpur in their hands and thus established the Chauhan rule in the Kšsala country by being installed at Gad-Sambar.

(9) Late Siba Prasad Das has followed the tradition left by *Kosalananda Kavya* and *Jaya Chandrika* fully in his book, *History of Sambalpur* written in Odia.

All these accounts show that the tradition which was written in *Kosalananda Kavya* have been followed in some form or the other, till present, by scholars, who have dealt on the Chauhan establishment in West Odisha topic.

No scholar has broken the traditional tie and therefore the reality has not been revealed. J. K. Sahu has so much been traditional bound that he expresses, "The tradition of the rule of the eight Mulliks is too strong to be ignored or overlooked." Moreover, as stated above J. K. Sahu has made the topic more erroneous by stating 1360 A.D. as the year of the establishment of the rule of Ramai Deva.

It has been accepted by historians that Firuz Shah invaded Odisha in 1360 A.D. during the rule of Bhanudeva III. On his return journey M.A. Haque mentions that, the victorious campaign was concluded by an elephant hunt in Padmatala in the Baramba state of Odisha, which is about 25 miles from Athgarh. Then, the Sultan passing through the jungles of Narasinghpur via Sambalpur returned to Kara. According to the genealogy followed by the author, Bhanudeva III ruled in between 1330-1338 A.D. Therefore, it will be better to assign Firuz Shah's invasion to the period of Bhanudeva IV, 1353-1378 A.D.

From the opinions of J. K. Sahu it seems that, he is inclined to date the establishment of Ramai Deva in 1360 A.D. most probably by supposing that the establishment of a fresh power would have been possible after the return march of Firuz Shah, in the belt of West Odisha. As seen, Firuz Shah marched back in his return journey by taking the route via Sambalpur. Now the question arises that why the establishment of Chauhan rule would not have been possible before 1360 A.D. as the other areas of West Odisha were peaceful under the suzerainty of the Kalachuris of Ratanpur.

As stated above, J. K. Sahu has fixed 1360 A.D. as the foundation of the Chauhan rule at Patnagarh. This statement cannot be accepted because the scholar has reached to this opinion by accepting 17th March, 1413 A.D. as the date of the inscription at Narasihinath temple.

Recent archaeological revelation has proved the temple of Narasihinath as a Kalachuri structure dating back to 12th century A.D. Hence, the base over which J. K. Sahu depends and establishes 1360 A.D. as the probable date of the foundation of Chauhan rule at Patnagarh, cannot be accepted.
The author is of opinion that *Kosalananda Kavya* and *Jaya Chandrika* have defaced the reality of Chauhan establishment in West Odisha. For knowing the truth on this topic archaeological and supporting discovery should be searched so that the reality of the Chauhan establishment will be known.

The basic difficulty has risen because, with the tradition of these two literary works, which are debased, the site of Patnagarh has been given undue importance of being the basic site of opulence and power in West Odisha. The scientific study of archaeological history has been neglected so far. Because these two literary works are causing hindrance to the scientific study of history, they should be neglected and discarded.

The most important site of opulence and power in West Odisha is the Sunabeda plateau and its adjoining Maraguda valley complex. This plateau must have played a valuable or significant part in the history of Kosala and might have dominated or prevailed over the administration of South Kosala as already known.

In sum, the *Kosalananda Kavya* and the *Jaya Chandrika* have blocked the passage for the scientific study of archaeological history of the rise of early Chauhan in West Odisha. To get the better off, the misleading literary works have to be discarded and archaeological evidences have to be searched.

REFERENCES

7. Pandeya, L.P. *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol. VI. P.568. In the Quotation given by N.K. Sahu some interpolation is found. This type of spurious word or passage in a book or manuscript, change the course of real History. The correct reading should be thus, "A branch of the Patna family of the Chauhan dynasty of Odisha, which the Indian student of History will ever remember with interest as the destroyer of an ancient Indian System of Popular Government, soon rose to power and importance extending its sovereignty over 18 chiefs or lords of forts or Garhs, as they are usually called."
26. The Suzerainty of Kalachuris in West Odisha is known from the discovery of three Gold coins of Jajalladeva in the bed of the river Ang in the ex-State of Patna. (Vide: Mirashi, V.V., CII, Vol. IV, Part I, Ootacamund, 1955, p. clxxxiv); discovery of twenty-seven Kalachuri Gold coins in the former State of Sonepur some of which have been published in *the Journal of the Numismatic Society of India*, Vol. XIII, p. 199ff, and recent scattered discoveries of Kalachuri copper coins at Maraguda valley, Kamkeda village and Nehna villages of Nawapara district, Odisha.
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