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Abstract :

It was well known in the tenth century that the founder of the Parmara Dynasty had emerged out of a fire pit in Arbudachal. The famous poet Padmagupt was a contemporary of both Vakpati Munj (972 - 995 AD) and his successor Sindhuraj. The Udaypur prashasti of the rule of Udayaditya is the oldest known rock inscription of the prominent dynasty of Dhara. In this inscription, an imaginary birth of the founder of the dynasty is written. In this way we see that the Parmara Dynasty came in Malwa by Upendra Krishnaraj from the south of Narmada. After Upendra, a genealogy of kings followed which ruled over this region for almost 500 years, till this dynasty was finally defeated by the Muslims.

Keywords : Gupta, Chalukya, Maukhari, Yashovarman, Harsha, Pratihara, Kannauj, Malwa

Introduction :

In the second half of the fifth century AD, North India fragmented into many independent states due to decline of the Gupt Dynasty. The Maitrikas of Vallbhi rose in Eastern Saurashtra and ruled there till the middle of the eighth century AD. 1 For some time (634 - 740 AD), a branch of the Chaulukya dynasty enjoyed sovereignty over Gujarat. 2 A brave warrior named Yadhodharman ruled in Eastern Rajasthan for a few years. A branch of the Gupt Dynasty established its rule on Malwa (about 500 -590 AD)³, but the Kattucchuris snatched away Malwa from them in the second half of the sixth century. 4 The Makhauris ruled over the vast land from Bengal till Kannauj.⁵ In the early years of the seventh century, a brave warrior named Shashank strengthened the rule of Bengal and exhibited exceptional ability in achieving great political success.⁶ Prabhakarvardhan acquired an independent position for his dynasty in Thaneshwar.⁷ Prabhakarvardhan's youngest son Harshavardhan ascended the throne in 606 AD. The sovereignty of the Maukharis literally came to an end in Kannauj after Grahavarman was murdered by Katakchuri Buddharaj (602 - 609 AD)⁸ of Malwa. Harshavardhan tried to shift his capital

to Kannauj in order to establish total sovereignty over the whole of North India. It cannot be said with certainty as to how far he succeeded in achieving his ambition. In 630 AD, when Huen Tsang was in India, he observed that there were many independent kingdoms in India. At that time, Malwa was under some unidentified dynasty. With the death of Harsha in 646 AD, the political authority of his family came to an end. After this when the Katucchadis drove the Gupts out of Malwa, they reestablished their power in Magadh under the leadership of Adityasen and ruled there for almost hundred years.⁹

During the first half of the eighth century, the Pratiharas ruled in Malwa. One of their branches was already ruling in Jodhpur (Rajasthan) from many years.¹⁰ In the mid eighth century, the powerful Pal Dynasty emerged in Bengal.¹¹ In the second half of this century and the beginning of the ninth century, a battle took place between the Pratiharas of Malwa and the Pals of Bengal to establish supremacy over Kannauj, which continued over a long period of time. The Pratiharas had a face yet another formidable enemy in the form of the Rashtrakootas of South. Due to the great pressure of the Rashtrakootas, the pratiharas had to cede Malwa to them in the early years of the ninth century. Later Malwa remained under the surveillance of Upendra who was the founder of the Parmar Dynasty. After ceding Malwa, the Pratiharas moved towards the North. Finally the Pals had to retreat and Kannauj was taken over by the Pratiharas.

In the beginning of the tenth century AD, the Pratiharas re-conquered Malwa and their absolute rule was established in most of the part of North India. Their kingdom spread till the foothills of the Himalayas in the North, Northern Bengal in the East, Narmada in the South and Saurashtra, Sindhu and Punjab in the West. This vast empire declined in the middle of the tenth century and many independent dynasties rose on its fragments. The Parmars regained their rule in Malwa and established themselves in this place. The regions around Bundelkhand were taken over by the Chandels. The Kalchuris established their rule in Jabalpur. The Chaulukyas established their rule in Gujarat. The rule of the Chahamanas was established in Northern and Southern Marwar and the Guhils gained prominence in Mewar. Later, the Gaharwals conquered Kannauj in the second half of the eleventh century. In the early years of the twelfth century, the Sens snatched the rule of Bengal from the Pals. The last powerful ruling dynasties of North India were the Parmara, Chaulukya, Chahaman, Guhil, Kalchuri, Chandel, Gaharwal and Sen. They remained in power before being defeated by the Muslims. The history of North India of this period is the history of the rise and fall of these dynasties. Hence, the study of the history of the Parmaras is of utmost importance.

Captain Luward and Mr. Lele had written an essay on the Parmaras of Dhar in the

Gazetteer of Dhar district in 1901. But it does not present a detailed description on the topic. Later, a lot of material related to the history of the Parmaras was published. With the help of all the available evidences, I have made an effort to present an introductory study on this topic. The book entitled History of the Paramara Dynasty had been submitted by Dr. D.C. Ganguli in London University as a research treatise for the title of Doctor of Philosophy. On the recommendation of the Examiner Committee, his research treatise was accepted. It was the very first authorised and published research work on the great Parmaras.

References :

1. Bombay Gazetteer Vol. I, Part I, page 78 onwards.
2. Ibid, p 107 onwards.
3. 'Gupta Inscriptions' by Fleet, p 146.
4. E.I., Vol. 9, p 296
5. 'Gupt Inscriptions' by Fleet, p 219 onwards. E.I., Vol. 14, p 117 onwards, shloka 13.
6. 'Banglar Itihas' by Dr. R D Banerjee, Vol. 1, p 99 onwards.
7. 'Life of Harsha' by Dr, R K Mukherjee.
8. Cf. 'Malwa in the Sixth and Seventh Century AD'
9. J.A.S.B., 1920, p 322
10. J.D.L., Vol. 10. P 6 onwards
11. 'The Pals of Bengal' by R D Banerjee, Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal