CHAPTER X

SĀLUVAS OF GERASOPPE

The Sāluvas of the west coast of Karnataka rose to prominence in the middle of the fourteenth century A.D. They acknowledged the authority of Vijayanagara emperors by styling themselves Mahāmandalesvara. Scholars like Saletore B.A. and Kamath S.U. connect this family with that of the Sāluvas of Vijayanagara. But we do not get clear evidence to connect these families. Two inscriptions found at Mūdadātre give great detail about the rulers of Gerasoppe. The first ruler of Gerasoppe family was Sāluva Nārana and he was followed by Sāluva Nāgana. Then followed many rulers in that line; afterwards came Honna, Kama Mangarasa (Māvarasa) and Haivarasa.
In this context it is to be noted that Moraes G.M. introduced a chief by name Hariharanripāla, on the basis of Ibn Batuta, who mentions a chief called Hariyab. But there is no epigraphical evidence to support this view.

From Haiya onwards, we get considerable details about the achievements of these chiefs. Haiya bore the title of Kali Kalāda Karna and called himself Mahamandakēśvara and his authority was recognised by Basavadeva of Chandāvara. He ruled over the regions of Haduvali, Nagire, and Gerasoppe and Gokarna.

After Haiya this family was divided into two branches; one started ruling from Sangītapura (Hadavali, Bhatkal Taluka of North Kanara District) and another from Gerasoppe (Honnavara taluk of the same district). On the basis of a few epigraphs these two lines can be drawn as follows:

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Both the lines commenced their rule round about 1400 A.D. and continued up to 1551 A.D. The ruler at Sangitapura was Chennadevi Amma. At the same time the ruler of Gerasoppe was Sāluva Krishnadēvarasa. The latter died
without any issue while in Sangītapura Chennādevīamma was succeeded by her sister Chennabhāirādevī. She was Sose (niece) of Sāluva Kṛishṇadēvarasa. Since he had no issue, Chennabhāirādevī took up the reign of the government of Gerasoppe like also and thus by about 1560 A.D., i.e. at the commencement of the period under study, both branches came to be united and both Gerasoppe and Bhāṭkaḷa enjoyed the position of headquarters of the principality.

It should be noted in this connection that the mother of Chennabhāirādevī, who was known as Bhairādevī, also bore the title of Mahāmandalēśvara, but there is no evidence to show that she ruled for some time.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF EARLY RULERS

The early members of this family unto Chennabhāirādevī contributed much to the growth of the west coast region. They promoted religious activities and became responsible for the growth of Jainism in this region. Bhāṭkaḷa, for example, became one of the Jaina centres and many basadis came to be constructed there. They also successfully checked the inroads of the Muslim and spread of the Portuguese activities.

As noted above Chennabhāirādevī was the first ruler of this family in the period under study. She began her career at Sangītapura before 1556 A.D., and took over Gerasoppe also about in 1560 A.D.
Chennabhairādevī took keen interest in defending her territory. She is said to have built armed forces and garrisoned it in three forts, one at Bhaṭkala, to keep off the Farangis (i.e. Portuguese) another on the eastern frontiers to guard against the Pindaris i.e. (Marathas) and a third at Hogawadi pass.  

THE RELATION WITH VIJAYANAGARA

Queen Chennabhairādevī recognised the authority of Vijayanagara emperor Sadāśivarāya who sought her help and earned good will for the purpose of importing horses through the port of Bhaṭkala and Honnavar.  

The absence of the name of Vijayanagara emperor in the inscription of Chennabhairādevī after 1565 A.D. made Buchanan believe that she asserted her independence and no longer recognised any higher authority. But in a few inscriptions she called herself Mahāmāndalēśvara which indicates to an imperial authority. It may be surmised that the queen was not completely independent yet. Further Fredrick Caeserm, an Italian traveller, noticed in 1567 A.D. that the queen 'Gargopam (i.e.Gerasoppa) near 'Onor' was a tribute to the king of Bezeneger' Fr. Du Jurrick remarked in the year 1586 A.D. that Onor and Batticola (Bhaṭkala etc. acknowledged the imperial authority of Vijayanagara. It is of course possible that her allegiance to the Vijayanagara authority was only nominal.
RELATIONS WITH OTHER POWERS

Queen Channabhairādevī often came into contact with neighbouring chiefs like Tōlahas of Surāla, the Biligi chiefs and the Baḷalās of Paṇḍubitre. According to the Portuguese account of 1569 A.D. the queen of Gerasoppe consented to provide 300 soldiers to the Tōlahā chief who was attacked by the Portuguese. This shows that the queen was eager to check the Portuguese menace in the Tōlahā principality.

An epigraph dated in 1573 A.D. found at Hāladipura refers to her fight against Narasappa Odēyar of Bilige. In the battle Devanaṃgāyaka of Hāladipura threw himself in defensive battle and died fighting. This points out that the territory of the queen extended up to the Ghāts and her relationship with the chiefs of Biligi was not cordial. It is said that Gaṇṭendra II of Biligi crushed the forces of this queen.

Channabhairādevī maintained cordial relationship with the Baḷalā of Paṇḍubitre. An epigraph of the latter dated in 1573 A.D. speaks of the co-operation of this queen in the construction of Muniśvara basadi of Paṇḍubitre.

CHENNABHAIRĀDEVI AND THE PORTUGUESE

By the time Channabhairādevī came to power the Portuguese had established themselves well in Kanara.
They tried to dominate over the local chiefs and monopolise trade in the region. This naturally resulted in clashes between them and Chennabhairādevī. In 1569 A.D., the Portuguese attacked Hōmnāvar in order to exact tribute from her and controlled the trade activities on the coast. The queen resisted this attack heroically. The actual result of the conflict is not known. But the Portuguese sources tell us that they had an upper hand and that finally the queen surrendered the port of Hōmnāvar to them. One of the Portuguese accounts written by Antonio Pinto informs us that the Portuguese demanded heavy annual tribute and the pepper to be sold at concessional rate. The queen was not ready to accept the terms. Instead she planned to oust the foreigners from the area. She even sought the help of the Adilshahi of Bijapur and Zamorin of Calicut.

This resulted in a major clash in 1570 A.D. when the queen prepared herself to attack the port of Hōmnāvar which she had lost. The only source of information about this clash comes from the Portuguese side and it is difficult to verify their statements. These Portuguese accounts tell us that the queen failed in her attempt though they appreciated her plan in this direction.

According to the Portuguese source the relation between the opponents gradually improved and the queen agreed to sell certain quantity of pepper to the Portuguese.
The Dutch traveller Linschoten speaks of large quantity of pepper sold to the Portuguese from Honnavar port. This type of relation continued till the fall of Gerasoppa principality. It is obviously because of this relationship that she was known in the Portuguese circle as a pepper queen.

HER RELATIONSHIP WITH ADILSHAHI RULERS

As noted above, Chennabhairādevi tried to maintain friendly relationship with the Adilshahis of Bijapur by seeking their help in her struggle with the Portuguese. The statement of Sturrock that she accepted the Adilshahi authority is, however, untenable. On the other hand she first owed allegiance to the Vijayanagara emperor and in course of time she ruled almost independently.

As regards her allegiance with the Adilshahis, Pinto is of the opinion that she refused to enter into a treaty with the Portuguese at the instigation of the Adilshahi ruler. Fariya Y’Sousa tells us that on the advice of the Adilshahi ruler she recruited large army of 3000 men and secured 2000 from the former to invade Honnavar. It is also said that she secured the help of Bijapur Sultan in her struggle against the Nāyakas of Keladi. A Portuguese record of 1596 A.D. tells us that Keladi Venkaṭappanāyaka attacked Gerasoppe and the Adilshahi ruler sent a force to secure the queen. The same record informs us that the
Adilshahi forces would have captured two forts of Keladi situated above the Ghāats had not the rebellion taken place at Bijapur.\textsuperscript{38}

The relationship between the ruler of Gerasoppe and that of Keladi was characterised by hostility because of the struggle for supremacy in Kanara region. Both were the subordinates of the Vijayanagara. But with the weakening of the latter power, the Keladi Nāyakas tried to overtop other chiefs in the Kanara region. It is even said that this queen accepted the authority of Keladi Sādāśiva.\textsuperscript{39} But there is no evidence to support this view. On the other hand both Sivatattvaratnakara and the Keladimripavijayam speak of constant clashes between the two families.\textsuperscript{40} Venkaṭapāppanāyaka, however, was successful finally in subduing this queen and annexing Gerasoppe principality to his own kingdom before 1607 A.D. This is corroborated both by indigenous and foreign sources.\textsuperscript{41} Thus she was the last member of the family of Gerasoppe. It should be noted in this connection that Bhāma Shastri introduces another member in the name of Lakshmīdevi who he says, was installed by Venkaṭappa himself after defeating Chennabhairādēvi. But no source to my knowledge supports this view.

\textbf{THE EXTENT OF THE TERRITORY}

There is reason to believe that Gerasoppe principality covered practically entire coastal region of North Kanara and
Chennabhairādevi's reign is the longest in the Gerasoppe family. She was a very active queen and tried her best to assert her power all through her career. Her reign is marked with considerable building activities and promotion of Jaina religion. The famous Santinātha Tīrthankara basadi at Gerasoppe was constructed during her rule. Most of the basadis found at Bhatkala, Haduvali and Gerasoppe were also constructed during her period. She is reputed to have made liberal grants to temples of Śiva and Viṣṇu such as Tiruvengalasvāmi at Bhatkala and Sanāsvāra temple at Baindūru (South Kanara). Three copper plate inscriptions dated 1556, 1562 and 1564 A.D. found at Uppunda (South Kanara) record her grants to Rāmachandrastraīrtha of Uppunda for the conduct of religious ceremonies. It was Chennabhairādevi who restored religious rituals in the temple of Durgaparamēśvari at Uppunda in 1562 A.D. when there was disorganization in the conduct of the religious rituals.
REFERENCES AND NOTES


4. MAR. 1928, No.108, pp.95-97, ARKRI. 1939-40 No.35.


8. Inscriptions of 1562 A.D. onwards refer to her rule over Haive, Tulu and Konaka. (Ref. ARKRI. 1939-40 1939-40, No.85-86. ARIE.1950-51, No.24. EC.VIII, Sa.57 MAR. 1928, Ins.No.112, No.70. Two unpublished copper plate inscriptions dated 1562 A.D. and 1564 A.D. found at Durgaparamësvari temple at Uppunda, (South Kanara) Linganna also holds that she ruled over the regions of Karuvara, Morabadi, Sälädu, Bhättakala, Gerasoppa, Chandëvara Gëvardanañigirë etc. (Kelañiiripavijayam Këväsa V, p.68) Frederick Caesar also speaks of the queen of Bhättajë Bhättakala ruling over Honnävar. (Purchas, *His pilgrims* p.101). A letter of the king
of Portugal to the viceroy of Goa dated on 28th January 1596 A.D. refers to the queen as Gerasoppe and Bhaktala. (Shastry B.S. The Portuguese in Kanara, p.127).


10. KI.III, Pt.I, No.17, ARKRI. 1939-40, No.80,81, Two copper plate inscriptions found at Uppunda South Kanara dated in 1562 A.D. and 1564 A.D. refer to Bhairādevī as Mahamandalesvara. Shama Shastry was of the opinion that Bhairādevī ruled Gerasoppe for some years. (QUMS.XII, p.51).


12. Ibid. I, pp.139, ARKRI, No.62,63.


14. ARKRI. No.82, Two unpublished copper plate found at Durgaparamesvar temple at Uppunda, South Kanara. The epigraphs are dated in 1556 A.D.

15. Kanara, II(GBB). p.275 FN. Here the compiler of the Gazetteer made a wrong statement that to guard against the Maratha. She built fort on the Eastern frontier. But it is not so. The Maratha were yet to rise to prominence. Therefore the Fort was built to protect against the kejādi Nāyakas as her relationship with the Nāyakas of Kejādi was not cordial.

16. ARKRI. 1939-40, No.82, ARSIE.1929-30, No.540,542.


22. Shastry B.S. The Portuguese in Kanara, p.100.

23. The Descriptive List. (KRI) 1941-42, No.67.

25. Unpublished copper plate inscription found at Paṇḍubidre. See plate No. Append i c. no.3


27. Shastry B.S. Ibid. p.97.


34. Della Valle, Travels II, p.196, 221.


39. Mackenzie collection quoted by Swaminatha, the Nayakas of Ikkerī, p.27.


42. QJMS. XII, p.51-52.


46. ❯ Unpublished copper inscription dated 156 A.D. found at Uppunda (South Kanara). For text see Appendix I, No.1.