Part-I

Chapter

I Introduction

a) Nature, scope and purpose of the study

b) The source material

II The political conditions during the period under study

III Feudatory families : General Observations
CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

A. Nature And Scope of Study

An interesting feature of the administrative system in ancient India, more so in Karnataka, is a sort of a dual system of administration, in the sense that within the jurisdiction of a given empire there arose small chieftaincies which conducted the administration of their territory almost independently under the suzerainty of their overlords - the ruling monarchs. Such families which enjoyed such semi-independence are usually called feudatory families. While we discuss the nature of such feudalism elsewhere it is to be noted that the general relationship between the emperor and the feudatories was marked by honour and dignity. The feudatory chiefs owed their allegiance to the emperor, but they maintained a fair amount of independence within their jurisdiction and they enjoyed a high status in the court of the king. Many of them, by dint of their ability, proved to be indispensable to the ruling monarch and enjoyed his full confidence. The feudatories played a significant role not merely in the safety and security of the empire, but also in the expansionist
activities of the emperor. Thus, side by side with the study of the history of imperial houses, a study of the history of feudatory families becomes essential for the proper understanding of the development of the history, culture and society of any given region.

As for the structure of administration of such feudatory chieftaincies it was, like that of the imperial kingdoms, hereditary in character. Such feudatories ran a parallel government in their territory with all ingredients of an independent kingdom. They had their own administrative machinery consisting of offices at different levels. They had their own army to safeguard the territorial integrity and also to assist the ruler in times of need. They had their own system of economy and, like imperial rulers, they contributed to the overall growth of their territory. In fact, they were miniature kingdoms almost independent within, but recognising an overlord without. There have been many instances when such feudatory families rose to the occasion, and, seizing a favourable opportunity, elevated themselves to the imperial status. The history of Karnataka is replete with such instances.

Many such families enjoyed a very high position in the political hierarchy and they maintained matrimonial
relationship with the imperial rulers. There have also been instances when the feudatory chiefs stood by their overlords and saved the kingdom from annihilation. Thus the feudatory families have played a very important role in the history of Karnataka. In fact the study of the history of Karnataka cannot be complete without the study of the history of the feudatory families. Or, it can even be said that history of any imperial dynasty is inseparably interwoven with the history of the feudatory families.

There has been another side of the picture as well. Just as the feudatories helped in maintaining peace in the kingdom and its territorial integrity, there have been feudatory families which exploited to the fullest extent the prevailing political conditions and working against the overlord, succeeded in establishing themselves as independent rulers. Also from this point of view, they played a very effective role in the history of the region. As pointed out above, the history of Karnataka provides very good examples for the study of the nature and function of such feudatory families.

A study of such families was first commenced by Fleet in his "Dynasties of Kanarese Districts" where he chose some major families like the different branches of the Kadamba
of Goa and Hangal, the Sindas of Yelburga and the Guttas. Analogous to the nature of his work these studies mostly pertain to the genealogy and chronology of the members of such families including some political events. That a detailed study of such families was necessary, was first realised by Dinker Desai who undertook to study the history of several feudatory families in his work Mehamandalesvaras under the Calukyas of Kalyani (Bombay, 1951). His is the first work to contain an independent study of many feudatory families. Earlier, G.M. Morese, attempted to bring in one place, the matter pertaining to various branches of Kadamba families, in his Kedamba Kula (Bombay, 1931). Apart from these, there are notices of such families made in the works on different dynasties attempted by different scholars such as the Rashtrakutas and their times by A.S. Altekar, The Hoysales by L. Coelho, the Sennas by Dr. Shrinivas Ritti, (Dharwad, 1973) and the Chalukyas of Kalyana and the Kolechuris by Dr. B.R. Gopal, (Dharwad, 1982). Another notable work on this subject in Karnataka in the recent years is the Minor Dynasties in South India (Karnataka), Volume I by B.R. Gopal (1982). Smt. (Dr.) Balambal's work, Feudatories of South India, though primarily deals with Tamil region, has much bearing on Karnataka as well. All these put together bring to light only a few of the large number of such families which were predominant in the long period of the history
of Karnataka from the 4th century to the 14th century A.D. As such there is wide scope for further study. With more and more discovery of the source material, namely, the inscriptions, many more such families are coming to light widening much more the scope for such a study.

In the present thesis, an attempt is made to deal with a few such families which are not so well known to history. With the discovery of new inscriptions, while there is more scope to study new families, there is also enough scope for a re-study of the already attempted families. It is tried to do both here in this thesis. The Sëndrakas, Manaloras, Khacharas and Siléhàras of Bijapur are being studied for the first time on the basis of inscriptions. The Guttas of Guttavolal and the Pàndyas of Uochangi were attempted by Dinkar Desai. But in view of the fresh material discovered a fresh study is attempted here.

It is, of course, known that there is nothing like a finale to such studies. Epigraphical material which is the only material for such study, is like a hidden treasure. It comes out off and on, adding new information requiring new interpretation and calling for fresh studies of new topics and restudy of those already dealt with. Attempts have been made here in this thesis to narrate the history of some of the feudatory families which have attracted my attention.
for a variety of reasons, by collecting the material up-to-date and taking into consideration the earlier discussions of the scholars in the field. The scope of the present work, from the point of view of time, spreads over a period of about thousand years from the 4th century to 14th century A.D.

B. The Source Material

It is well known that for the study of the early and medieval history of Karnataka, inscriptions happen to be the primary sources. For the study of different periods we do come across now and then, some literary works both in Sanskrit and Kannada, but they are few and far between. Especially for the study of the feudatory families no such outstanding literary works have been available. Therefore the literary sources are not discussed here.

On the other hand, epigraphs supply copious information for the study of genealogy and chronology of a ruling dynasty and they give also glimpses of political events. They also provide ample material for the study of religion, economy, society and the political geography of any given area and period.

It is also well known that, as compared to the literary works, the inscriptions are more reliable as in most cases they are contemporary. All inscriptions are not outside the
purview of exaggeration or disproportionate claims of victory and greatness to their masters, but such things can be easily warded off with the help of the more authentic records.

A notable feature of the Karnataka inscriptions is their help in fixing the chronology of the rulers. This is facilitated because of the predominant use of Saka era which helps us to fix the chronology of a ruler with a fair amount of certainty. The poetic quality of the inscriptions is, in a way, a boon and in another way, a curse. A boon because we come across many times fine examples of the description of victories achieved by different heroes, compositions in praise of members of different families, places, personalities and the like. In a way it is a curse because, amidst the literary flourish the fact is likely to get lost; but even then it is not difficult to cull out the facts out of the mass of literary material.

Thanks to the work done by the epigraphical branch of the Archaeological Survey of India, Department of Archaeology of the former Princely State of Mysore and similar other institutions and also the individuals like John Faithful Fleet, B.L. Rice, K.G. Kundangar, H.Lakshminarayan Rao, R.S. Punchmukhi, P.B. Desai and others, large number of inscriptions have come to light. They help us a lot in the
re-construction of the history of any period and region. These inscriptions are available in the famous volumes of *Epigraphia Carnatica* published by Rice (12 volumes) and continued in a small measure by the subsequent directors of Archaeology Department, Mysore like R. Narasimhachar, M.H. Krishna and Nilakantha Sastri. Happily these volumes published long back are now being revised by the Institute of Kannada Studies of Mysore University. Seven volumes in the new series have now been published and it is expected that the number of revised volumes would run to twenty.

Another valuable source of inscriptions is the series of *South Indian Inscriptions*, especially those pertaining to northern Karnataka, such as volume IX, Part i; and ii, volume XI Part I and II, Volume XV, Volume XVIII and XX published by the Archaeological Survey of India. The two series put together vis., *Epigraphia Carnatica* and *South Indian Inscriptions* provide rich material for the study of the history and culture of the Kannada people. There are some other volumes like the *Karnataka Inscriptions* (7 volumes) published by the Kannada Research Institute, Dharwad, *Inscriptions from Northern Karnataka and Kolhapur State* by K.G. Kundangar, volumes of inscriptions published in the Andhra Government Series by Dr. P. B. Desai, *Inscriptions from Nanded district* by Dr. Srinivas Ratti, published by the Yassavent
Mahavidyalaya Handed which also provide useful material for our study.

Annual Reports on South Indian Epigraphy, later in 1946 converted into Annual Reports of Indian Epigraphy being published every year by the Epigraphy branch of Archaeological Survey of India is another source of rich material for the study of history. They contain short summaries of inscriptions discovered in the respective years, thus containing new material gathered every year. It is these sources that have been utilised in the reconstruction of the history of the feudatory families chosen for the study here.

The Sëndrakas form one of the earliest feudatory families in Karnataka. The inscription giving an earliest reference to this chief viz., the Chandrawalli inscription\(^1\) of Mayura-śarman is too well known to be reviewed here. A comparatively recent one is the Sakrepatna copper plate inscription\(^2\) of Pallava Simhavarman. These plates make a mention of Sëndra-rājya. These plates are reported to have been found while digging a pit near Sakrepatna in Chikmagalur taluk. The inscription is contained in a set of five plates. It is engraved in the Southern characters of about 5th century A.D. and it is composed in Sanskrit language. Our interest in the inscription lies in the reference to Sëndrakarājya as
early as in this period. It states that Pallava Simhavarman made a grant of gṛṇīhēra Valvillī situated in Śaṅḍrakarājya. The inscription has been edited by Dr. G. S. Gai in Epigraphia Indica XXXVIII, pp. 99 ff.

An inscription from Siriguppi in Hubli taluk of Dharwad district is of considerable interest. The provenance of the record is a little too beyond the Śaṅḍraka territory. It mentions an early Śaṅḍraka chief Vanasati-arasa and probably his son Kundaśati-arasa. They are associated with Muṅguṇḍa and Siriguppe respectively. This inscription, together with the inscription of Laksāmēśvar belonging to Pulakēśa II indicates the hold of the Śaṅḍrakas beyond the river Tungabhadrā in the north. The latter inscription mentions a Durgasakti, the son of Kundaśakti as making a grant of land to the Śaṅkha Jinaśayā at Purigore or Laksāmēśvar.

That the Śaṅḍraka chiefs belonging to one branch or the other had spread over different regions is indicated by an one line inscription at Deśāmi, which mentions a Bhamasakti. It is ascribable to 7th-8th century A.D. The Huli plates of Mangalarāja discovered in 1969 deserve to be discussed here. They are edited in the pages of the Journal of Karnataka University, Social Sciences Vol. V by Dr. P. B. Desai. The record is of unusual interest because it is the only copper plate grant of Mangalarāja i.e. Mangalēśa of the early Chalukya.
family so far. It mentions his Sëndraka subordinates Kannasinga and Ravisakti who were not known to history earlier. Another point of interest is the reference in the inscription to Śāntinātha Tīrtheśvara and the gift to the Jaina ascetic Abhayanandi. The inscription is not dated, but it can be placed in the late 6th century A.D.

The Gokak plates of Dejja Mahārāja are interesting since they mention a separate branch of Sëndrakas with their name ending with ‘śānta’. As will be pointed out later, they had family relationship with the Chālukyas of Dēśēmi. An inscription from Mūrī belonging to Kīrtivarman II and dated in 750 A.D. is of unusual interest. It mentions Nādhavasyattiarasa who was obviously a Sëndraka chief. It mentions a SindaraSa, who also claims to belong to the Śimūtavāhana line, i.e. it is one of the very early inscriptions mentioning both the Sindas and Sëndrakas. The Nagad grant and Kasare plates of Sëndraka chiefs of the Nīkumbha family are worthy of consideration here. They mention hitherto unknown chiefs of this family. They have been edited by G. N. Khare in Epigraphia Indica XXVIII, pp. 34 ff.

The Mundakhede plates give the name of the latest Sëndraka chief Jayasakti in the Nīkumbha line. These plates have been edited by V. V. Mirashi in Epigraphia Indica XXIX pp. 116 ff. The Mehunabare plates mention yet another...
Nikumbha branch of Sëndrakas giving the names Devasakti, Dëndirëja and Vairedëva.

Thus the inscriptions provide us considerable information for the reconstruction of the history of the Sëndrakas. These and other inscriptions have been utilised in the following pages for this purpose.

Similarly is the case with the Mañalera family. It was also a small family but quite effective in the local area. About a dozen inscriptions from Dharwed district provide useful information about this family. Though the word Mañalera appears to be the name of the family it figures as a personal name in the Ātakūr inscription which makes room to think that the family got the name through an individual called Mañala.

Interestingly, an inscription from Bulgūr dated 1033 A.D. mentions a chief Irivabedaṅga Mārasimhadeva. We are familiar with the name Irivabedaṅga who was the Kalyāṇa Chālukya king ruling between 997-1008 A.D. But the name Irivabedaṅga Mārasimha suggests that Mārasimha was a subordinate of the Chālukya king. Irivabedaṅga Satyaśraya and Mārasimha is identified with the Mañalera chief of that name. Thus the inscription indicates indirectly close relationship between the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa and Mañalera chiefs. The dates of the inscriptions of the Mañalera chiefs range from 9th century.
to the middle of the 12th C. A.D. These inscriptions give
the names of the chiefs and indicate their relationship with
the ruling emperors and the areas of authority.

An inscription from Kuyibāl\textsuperscript{12} contains a word of lexical
interest. It mentions the Maṇalera chief Indrakēśiyarasa
as a Rāṣṭrakūtaka. We know that the Maṇalera chiefs are
described as Nāḷgāvunda. Thus, the term Rāṣṭrakūtaka can
be considered as a Sanskritised equivalent of Nāḷgāvunda.
Rāṣṭra stands for Nāṇa and Kūṭaka represents Gāvunda. The
term occurs in another inscription also of the same chief
from Lakshmēśvar\textsuperscript{13}.

Two more inscriptions from Lakshmēśvar are important.
They provide a genealogical account and thereby furnish new
information. These have been discussed in the relevant places.

The Khacharas, are a comparatively very small family,
but as we know, even very small families have made conside­
rable contributions to the political and cultural growth of
the region. In order that such small families should not
go unnoticed, an attempt is made here to collect the available
material and present a cogent account.

As discussed below, they held a small office of
Nāḷgāvunda of the region known as Bēsavura-140, covering
southern portions of Dharwad district. Naturally, therefore,
they have no independent records of their own and they are mentioned in the inscriptions of their overlords, the Chálukyas of Kalyána. As many as twenty inscriptions mentioning these chiefs and referring to their political and other activities are discovered. They are of considerable help for working out the genealogy and chronology of the family and also to know their activities in the capacity of the chief of big and small territories. These inscriptions have been utilized in the narration below.

The chapter on the Siláháras of Bijapur is also based on inscriptions. As pointed out in the chapter, recent discoveries in the Bijapur region have brought to light many inscriptions which introduce to us a new branch of Siláhára ruling different headquarters in the regions such as Akkalkot in Sholapur district, Agarkhed, Salotgi, Muttagi and the like in the Bijapur district. As pointed out in the narration Dr. P. B. Desai was the first to bring to the notice of the scholars the existence of these branches. Dr. Gopal has tried to give an account of these different families in his Minor Dynasties of South India: (Karnataka) Volume I (New Era Publications Madras, 1982). It is attempted here to study these inscriptions afresh and to consolidate the results taking into consideration, of course, the observations made by these scholars.
As for the inscriptions, those from Akkalkot are important as they give a detailed genealogy from the beginning up to the 12th century A.D. An inscription from Agarkhed also gives us a lengthy genealogy up to the end of the 11th century A.D. The one from Hyrobevinur and another from Salotgi add few more names to this. Thus there are different genealogies and their coordination is difficult because of the difference in names and descriptions and the relationship mentioned. It is also difficult to fit all the names in one genealogy. However, all these inscriptions have been studied afresh, and all the earlier discussions have also been taken into due consideration in attempting to give as cogent a picture as possible.

The Guttas of Guttavolal form another important feudatory family in medieval Karnataka. They rose to fame during the days in the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa. Inscriptions pertaining to this family are found mainly in Havori and RamBennur taluks of Dharwad district and the adjoining Bellary district, on the other side of the river Tungabhadra. Some of these inscriptions were utilised by Fleet for his account of Guttas, published in the Bombay Gazetteer Volume I part ii and Dinkar Desai's account (Nabāmendalaśvaras under the Gāluksa of Kalyāṇa) also does not much differ from that of Fleet. Subsequent discoveries have added new information
and have furnished more details about the activities of the members of the family. Some of these inscriptions have been reviewed here.

An inscription from Honnatti dated 1124 A.D. mentions the earliest members of the family, thus taking back the origin of the family to the middle of the 10th century A.D. The same inscription is worthy of notice here from other points of view also. It mentions Jōmadēva as an Anuja or younger brother of Mallidēva as one of the early members of the family. It shows that Mallidēva for whom we have a tentative date as 1115 A.D. was succeeded by his brother Jōmadēva i.e. Jōyidēva I. This chief was not known either to Fleet or to Dinker Dosai. An inscription adds another piece of new information when it says that this Jōyidēva had a sister named Bāchaladēvi who was married to a Kadamba chief of Nūruādega called Bāradēva.

Similarly, an inscription from Haralalahalli also gives the new information that Vikramāditya I had a wife called Siriyādēvi. That this Vikramāditya I had also a sister called Jāliyādēvi is known from another new inscription from Rattihalli which states that she was married to Kōtara, also a Kadamba chief of Nūruādega. The information that Vikramāditya had also a daughter called Bāchaladēvi comes
from an inscription from the same record. She was married to a Pändya who was the son of Laliyādevi i.e. Vikramāditya I gave his daughter in marriage to his sister's son. This custom of giving in marriage one's son or daughter to the daughter or son of the sister is prevalent in Karnataka even today.

That the Guttas had matrimonial connections with the Pändyas of Uohchangi is known from an inscription from Hullatti[18] which states that Sōvalādevi, the queen of Vikramāditya II came from the Pändya family. That the latter had a sister called Vijayamahādevi is also a new information coming from another Haraḷahallī inscription.[19]

An inscription from Chauḍadēnpur[20] reveals the existence of a brother for Gutta III, by name Vikramāditya who was fourth of that name in the family. An inscription from Hīrebidari[21] not noticed either by Fleit or by Dinkar Desai carries forward the genealogy by adding the name of yet another Vikramāditya (7th person to bear that name) as the son of Jōyidēva-IV. The same inscription also names the queen of Vikramāditya as Padmaḷādevi. Thus these inscriptions add useful information to the study of Gutta dynasty.

Comparatively, the Pändyas of Uohchangi were more prominent feudatories who held sway over Dillary and
Chitradurg regions from about the end of the 10th century till the conclusion of the 12th century A.D. Naturally the number of inscriptions pertaining to this family is also fairly big. Most of them are found in Chitradurg and Bellary districts while some of them we find around Davanagere, and a few in Hassan district.

Some of these inscriptions are fairly lengthy and give a genealogical account but not all are unanimous in giving this account. Naturally this has given rise to controversies and difference of opinion. These inscriptions have been made use of by Rice as well as Dinker Desai who were the pioneers in working on this family. I have tried to make a re-study of the inscriptions in the light of which I have tried to reconstruct the genealogy taking into consideration the writings of both Rice and Dinker Desai. The Davanagere record\textsuperscript{21} is a fairly big inscription giving the genealogy of the family from the beginning. But the faulty nature of the text has given rise to certain controversies; for example, on the basis of this inscription Rice and Dinker Desai hold that the first member of the family, Adityadēva, had an alternative name Mangeya. But this is doubtful as discussed below. Similarly, there are other problems such as the identification of Chēdirāja, the so called Śāndya chief Toji Rāja and Irukkaveśa. These names occur in EC V A. 102 a.
HK 56, Dg 39, Dg 43 in Epigraphia Carnatica Volume XI are some of the inscriptions which give us the genealogy. All these accounts have been studied in detail and effort is made to reconstruct a correct genealogy of the family. These and many other inscriptions in Bellary region also give us many details indicating the relationship of these chiefs with the ruling monarchs and then their other activities such as construction of the temples, donations and the like. All these inscriptions have been studied afresh and an attempt is made to give a cogent account of the activities of the members.
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