Part-II
A study of some feudatory families

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CHAPTER-IV

The Sendrakas

The Sendrakas form one of the very early families of Karnataka. They figure as early as the 4th Century A.D. and they appear to have continued in the political field till the end of the period of the Chalukyas of Badami.

Original home

It is indeed difficult to pin point the original home of these chiefs. Considering the fact that they predominantly figure under the Kadambas and the Chalukyas of Badami, it can be surmised that they originally belonged to the southern part of Karnataka and gradually a branch of this family appears to have migrated further north.

It is interesting to note that a Pallava inscription\(^1\) of 5th Cent. A.D. makes a reference to Sendraka-rajya which, in the context, points to parts of Shimoga district. It is stated in the plates that the Pallava king Simhavarma made some gifts in Valvili or Valvilli agrahara situated in Sendraka-rajya. The earliest reference to Sendrakas is found in an inscription from Chandravalli,\(^2\) which is in Chitradurga district. The Denpur plates\(^3\) of Kadamba Krishna Varma II also
speak of Sëndraka vishaya i.e. the region of the Sëndrakas and states that the village Palmidi was situated in this division. Palmidi is modern Halmidi in Belur Taluk of Shimoga district. These evidences indicate that southern Karnataka, particularly the Shimoga district, was the original home of the Sëndrakas.

An inscription from Siriguppi of 6-7th Century A.D. associates a Sëndraka chief Vënasattiarasa with Mulugunda a place now in Gadag taluk of Dharwed district. Durgasakti, a Sëndraka chief made a grant of land at Puligere i.e. modern Lakshmëver to the Šankha Jinëlaya of that place. Yet another record belonging to Circa 6th Cent. A.D. a chief called Pogilli who is described as Sëndrakamahäräja is associated with the governorship of the administrative division called Nagarakhand in Banavasi-12000 and Tiduguru, Nagarakhand, we know from other sources, covered most of modern Shimoga district.

It is to be noted in this connection that a Sëndraka chief named Samiyara was ruling over the Kuhundi region (Northern part of Belgaum region) during the time of Pulikësi I. It is doubtful if this person belonged to the Sëndraka line of the Shimoga region. Anyway, it is worthy of note that a branch of Sëndrakas was in power in the northern region.
of Karnataka in the 6th cent. A.D.

The name of the family

It is difficult also to interpret the term Šendraka. In Prakrit it appears as 'Sayindaka', but even that form does not give any sense. It is interesting to note that in some inscriptions the family is associated with Nāga or Serpent, as being born of the Nāga family (Phanikula). The inscription from Lakshmēśvar also associates these chiefs with Nāga, stating that they were born of the Nāga race (Bhujagendra-nayya). On the basis of this it can be surmised that the Šendrakas were in some way or other connected with Nāga, but at the same time it is difficult to equate them with the Sindas who also have the similar association with Nāga. The Sindas figure later in Karnataka history and there are no good grounds to identify the Šendrakas with the Sindas though, etimologically Sinda can be traced to Šendraka thus: Šendraka > Sayindaka > Chhindaka > Sinda.

The Lakshmēśvar inscription calls the members of the family as born in the family of the king Šendra indicating that the family got the name Šendraka because of this king Šendra.
The Huli plates\(^3\) pose an interesting problem because of the royal emblem mentioned on the seal. This emblem consists of a tigress and a cub. The inscription belongs to the Chālukya king Māngalēśa and it is the first time that we have got a peculiar emblem for the Chālukyas of Bāḍāmi. We know that their emblem was the boar. Dr. Gai has discussed this emblem at length\(^9\) and has come to the conclusion that like the Sindas of the later days, the Sōndrakas also belonged to the Hāga race and that the emblem on the said copper plate grant is not of the Chālukyas but of the Sōndrakas. Though this surmise seems to be convincing it is not corroborated by evidences. There is no other evidence to show that the Sōndrakas had the emblem of a tiger and a cub.

**Chronology and Genealogy**

As mentioned earlier, the Sōndraka family is one of the earliest feudatory families of Karnataka. The family figures for the first time in the inscription of Kadamba Mayūrāśarma from Chandravalli\(^10\). It is stated herein that Mayūrāśarma defeated along with others the Sayindaka i.e. the Sōndrakas. It is clear from this inscription that by the time Mayūrāśarma came to power i.e. in 4th Cent. A.D. Sōndrakas were already a power to reckon with. Dr. M.H. Krishna who first edited this
record has placed these Sōndrakas in Khondesh area. But as pointed out above there is good reason to place this family in Shimoga district.

It is to be noted that the family does not figure in the Aśoka edicts found in Karnataka. There are very few records of the next period in Karnataka history, viz., Śātavāhanas and we do not find any references to this family in these inscriptions. It may not be wrong therefore to place the beginning of this family sometime in the 3rd Cent. A.D. That these chiefs were contemporaries of the Pallavas is clear from the Sakrepatna plates of Simhavarma which suggest Shimoga region as Sēndakarājya as pointed out earlier. It is also known that Moyūrasarma also belonged to the Shimoga district. In fact, he came from Tālagunda a village in Shimoga district and he founded his kingdom in the 4th Cent. A.D. around this area. It is natural therefore that he came in conflict with the already existing local chiefs, the Sōndrakas. Subsequent history of both these families shows that the Sōndrakas had to submit to the Kadambas who were growing in strength and continued to be their subordinates and later the subordinates of the succeeding dynasties as well. The latest reference we have for the Sōndrakas in Karnataka is in the record of Kirtivarman II of the Bāḍēmī
Chalukya family. We do not find any clear reference to them in the records of the subsequent rulers viz., Rāṣṭrakūṭas. Indeed we get names of some Śendraka chiefs in the records outside Karnataka belonging to slightly later period. We do take into consideration these references in our discussion; but tentatively we might surmise that the Śendraka chiefs of Karnataka were in power for over four centuries between 3rd-7th Cent. A.D.

Though the history of the Śendrakas can be said to commence simultaneously with the Kadambas if not earlier, the earliest name of a member of this family we get is from 6th Cent. A.D. onwards only. This earliest name is Bhānuśakti. He figures in the Halsi plates of Kadamba Harivarman of about the middle of the 6th Cent. A.D. It is not stated in the record as to which region he was governing but it is clear that he was a feudatory of the Kadambas in the Belgaum region. The record states that this Bhānuśakti requested the Kadamba ruler to make a grant of the village Marade for the use of the Jaina ascetic of that place.

The next name of a member of this family figuring in inscriptions is that of Samiyara in an inscription of Pulekṣi I. This Samiyara is stated to be governing the Kuhundi region i.e. Northern part of Belgaum region including
the adjoining regions of Maharashtra. He was the son of Sivara and the grandson of Gonda. Samyara appears that he constructed a Jaina temple at Alaktakenagara in Kuhundi desga. This place was the headquarters of an administrative division of seven hundred villages.

The names Gonda, Sivara and Samyara do not agree with the usual Sendraka names ending with Sakti and therefore it becomes difficult to associate these chiefs with the main line. It may be that this family was a collateral one.

The Huli plates of Mangalarasa i.e. Mangalesa of Badami Chalukya family mention, viz., Ravisakti and his father Kannaakti. Though these names end with sakti just like the Bhunusakti mentioned above, it is difficult to establish any relationship between them. Ravisakti was a subordinate of Mangalarasa and he made a grant of certain villages to a Jaina ascetic. It is clear from this record that the Sendrakas were fairly prominent in the days of the Chalukyas of Badami. That they had matrimonial alliance with the latter is clear from the fact that Kirtivarma I the elder brother of Mangalesa had married a Sendraka princess. The Chiplun plates of Pulekeshi II tell us that the Sendraka Srivallabha Senananda was the maternal uncle of Pulekeshi II. It means that Kirtivarma had married the sister of Senananda. The name of the princess is however not known.
We should note in this context the Gokak plates\textsuperscript{15} of Rāshtrakūṭa Dejja Mahārāja dated in 532-33 A.D. The period of the plates falls in the reign of the first rulers of the Chālukyas of Bādāmi, but it is not known from any other source which of the Rāshtrakūṭas were the subordinates of Chālukya or where they were ruling. The point of immediate interest is that some Šeṇdraka chiefs were the feudatories of these Rāshtrakūṭas. These plates mention Aḍhirāja Indrānanda son of Vijayānanda. Indrānanda is stated to have made certain grants to a Jaina ascetic. These names are similar to the name Šeṇānanda figuring in the Chiplun plates though it is not possible to establish the exact relationship between the chiefs of these different plates it can be suggested that they belonged to the same branch of the Šeṇdraka family.

Two other inscriptions of Pulakeśi II\textsuperscript{16} mention some chiefs of the Šeṇdraka family with the name ending Śakti. They are Vijayaśakti and his son Kundaśakti and his son Durgaśakti. The last named chief was the contemporary of Pulakeśi II and he made a grant of land in the city of Puligere for the benefit of Jaina monastery Śāṅkha Jinalaya in that place. Both Kundaśakti and Vijayaśakti are described as great heroes and it is quite likely that they were feudatories under the earlier Chālukya rulers. We may
tentatively suggest that Kundaśakti and Vijayaśakti were the contemporaries of Kirtivarman I and Sulekēśī I respectively.

It is interesting to note that a certain Bhimaśakti figures in an one line inscription engraved on a rock of Bādāmi caves\(^7\) in at least four places. In one of them he is described as a devotee of the feet of Satyasraya normally identified with Pulekēśē II. It is indeed difficult to connect this Bhimaśakti with the Sēndraka chiefs mentioned above.

An interesting inscription from Siriguppi\(^8\) in Hubli taluk of Dharwad district presents some problems. It does not bear any date, but it can be placed in 6th-7th centuries on paleographical grounds. It mentions a Vāṇasatīyarasa as a ruler of Mullgunda and his son as ruling Siriguppe. Mention is made of a Kundasattī i.e. Kundaśakti but no details are found. Taking into consideration the contents it may even be suggested that this Kundasatti could be the son of Vāṇasatti. Chronologically the inscription can be placed in the period of Kirtivarman or in the beginning of the reign of Sulekēśī II. One is indeed tempted to identify this Kundasatti with Kundaśakti of Lakhmaēvar inscriptions mentioned above but that Kundaśakti is stated to be the son of Vijayaśakti. It is also likely that the name Vāṇasatti
is a corrupt form of Bhānuśakti. Even this of course does not help us in establishing any identity. Another interesting fact about this inscription is that there is a name here as Vakatakanadēvi. The inscription being fragmentary, no surmise can be made though one is tempted to connect the lady with the Vākātaka family on the basis of the similarity of names.

The Vākātakas were the famous rulers of central India in 5-6th Cent. A.D., and their relationship with the rulers of the lower Deccan is not an impossibility. But this inscription appears to belong to a period slightly later than the heydays of Vākātakas. It is not impossible that the later members of the family had established some relationship with the Sēndrakas who were prominent feudatories of the Chālukyas of Bêdēmi.

The next Sēndraka chief we come across is Pogilli Sēndraka. He figures in an inscription from Balligame in Shimoga district belonging to Chālukya Vijayāditya. The inscription is not dated but it can be ascribed to the latter half of the 7th Century which is the reign period of Vijayāditya. Pogilli indeed a peculiar name not similar to any other names noticed above but that he belonged to the family is clear from the inscription itself. This chief was
the governor of divisions of Nagarakhanda and Jędugur which, as we know from other sources, were parts of the Danavēsi provinces.

An inscription from Aralihonda in Dharwad district mentions a Kannasettiyarasejas a subordinate of the ruler called Pittissuma. The inscription is said to belong to the 7th Century A.D.

Shri M.N.Katti has laboured hard to suggest that this Pittissuma is a corrupt form of Sanskrit term Prithvivarman and that he is a hither to unknown Chālukya prince holding some authority in the so called dark period between the end of Pulikēsi's reign and the beginning of the reign of Vikramāditya I. He has further tried to establish a relationship between this Kannasattti and Kannasakti figuring in the Huli plates referred to above. He suggests that Kannasakti of Aralihonda inscription might be grandson of his namesake figuring in the Huli plates. But it is difficult to subscribe to these guesses in view of the absence of supporting evidence. For our purpose it is enough to know that there was a Sēndraka chief named Kannasakti as a feudatory ruler in the days of Chālukyas of Bēdēmi. Whether he was identical with the Kannasakti of Huli plates or he was his grandson, future discoveries alone will decide.
The Karnool plates of Vikramāditya I refer to three generations of Sendraka chiefs: Dēvasakti, Dandirāja and Vairadēva in the order of succession. The last of the Chālukya rulers Kirtivarma II had also Sendraka feudatories under him. They are Nāgasakti and Madhavattiyarasa. They figure in inscriptions from Ainūle and Bagumra in Hangal taluk of Dharwed district respectively. Madhavattiyarasa obviously stands for Madhavasaktiyarasa. On the similarity of the names and the area in which they are situated, it becomes clear that they belonged to the main line of the Sendrakes who ruled in the southern part of Karnataka.

While this family held sway in the southern region, another branch of Sendrakes was holding authority in the northern part of the Deccan in the area bordering northern Maharashtra and southern Gujarat. Four copper plate grants from Kasare (653 A.D.), Nagad (655 A.D.), Bagumra (655 A.D.) and Mundakhede (680 A.D.) give three generations of the Sendrakes which are almost identical with the last named plates i.e. Mundakhede which carries the genealogy a step further. They are shown as below.
As can be seen, the first name in all the plates, except the first one is Bhānuśakti. In the first mentioned plates this name is Nikumbha. The third in all the plates is Nikumbhallaśakti. In the Kasare plates this last name has an alternative name Allaśakti indicating thereby that Nikumbha is either a title or a family name derived from the first name of the family. On this basis first Nikumbha of the Kasare plates can be identified with Bhānuśakti of the other plates.

The second name in the Kasare plates is Ādityarāja while the second name in three other plates is Ādityaśakti. There is no difficulty in identifying all the four with each other. The third name is Nikumbhallaśakti in all the four plates,
while the first one as noted above, gives the alternative Allasakti. As pointed out above the fourth or the Mundakhede plates carry the genealogy a step further and the person belonging to the next generation is mentioned Jayasakti.

The Kasere plates mention the village Pippalikheta which is identified with modern Pimpalner in west Khandesh. The Nagesh plates mention the places Kayavatara and Suschira-khōli situated to the south of the Baruvana in Nāndipuredvari to a Brahmana who was a resident of Pratanganaga.

Kayavatara is identified with modern Karwan in Gujarat while Nāndipuredvari i.e. identified with Nandipur in west Khandesh district. The Bagumra plates mentions the village Balisa which is identified with Wanasa in south Gujarat. The same inscription mentions the village Senāna situated in Khandekika division. The donee was a resident of Kalawana. These villages are located by modern scholars in north Khandesh district. These places name thus indicate that this branch of Sendrakeas in the area covered by south Gujarat and northern Maharashtra. As suggested by V.V.Mirashi, they appear to have been placed as governors in this region by Pulakaśi II after he conquered this region from the Kalachuris.
Nikumbhallasakti of this branch was a contemporary of Chalukya Vikramaditya I. His records are dated in year 655 A.D. which was the first year of Vikramaditya's resuming the Chalukya rule. His predecessors Adityasakti and Bhunuasakti were obviously contemporaries of Pulakesi II. Bhunuasakti must have been the chief appointed as the governor by Pulakesi II over the newly acquired area. It is not unlikely that Nikumbha figuring as a name might have been a village in Khandesh district from where these chiefs came. Jayasakti, the son of Nikumbhalaasakti was a contemporary of Vinayaditya who ruled between 681-696 A.D.

The next Sendraka name we come across is Vairadeva whose Mehnahare plates are dated in 702 A.D. when Vinayaditya, the son of Vikramaditya I was on the Chalukya throne. This chief is described as Nikumbhuasikhamani and this title clearly associates him with the Nikumbha branch of the Sendrakas discussed above. The Mundakhede plates place Jayasakti of this family in this very period but it is indeed difficult to identify Vairadeva with Jayasakti especially because the parentage of both the chiefs is totally different. Vairadeva is described as the son of Dandiraja and grandson of Devasakti. At the present state of our knowledge it is indeed difficult to equate these names with those of the predecessors
of Jayasakti. At least we can only surmise that Vairadēvas was yet another branch of Nikumbha Sendrakas.

Finally, it can be stated that the Sendrakas started as the feudatories of the Kadambas and with the rise of the Chālukyas of Bādāmi divided themselves into different branches and exercised their authority in different regions under the suzerainty of the Chālukyas of Bādāmi. It has been suggested by some scholars that for sometime at least the Sendrakas ruled independent of any suzerain over them or even that they helped the Chālukyas of Bādāmi to establish themselves in power. But such surmises are not supported by clear evidences. With the fall of Chālukyas, the fall of the Sendrakas also appeared to have taken place. On the basis of the above discussion we list below the names of the chiefs with their probable periods.

I. The Sendrakas of South Karnataka

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sendraka Chief</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Contemporary Ruling Emperor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Bhānuśakti</td>
<td>6th Cent. A.D.</td>
<td>Kadamba Harivarma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Campa</td>
<td></td>
<td>Chālukya Pulkēśi I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sīvara</td>
<td></td>
<td>-do-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Samiyara</td>
<td></td>
<td>-do-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Kannaśakti</td>
<td>6-7th Cent. A.D.</td>
<td>Mangalēśa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Raviśakti</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
1. **Vijayaśakti**  6th Cent. A.D.  Pulakeśi II
2. Kundaśakti
3. Durgaśakti

1. **Pogilli**  7th Cent. A.D.  Vijayāditya
2. Mēgahājakti  8th Cent. A.D.  Kirtivarman II
3. Madhavattiyarasa  8th Cent. A.D.  —do—

**II. The Ananda branch of Sōndrakas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sōndraka chief</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Contemporary Ruling Emperor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Indrānanda</td>
<td>6th Cent. A.D.</td>
<td>Rāṣṭrapati Dejja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Vijayānanda</td>
<td>6th Cent. A.D.</td>
<td>—do—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Sēnānanda</td>
<td>6th Cent. A.D.</td>
<td>Pulakeśi II</td>
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**III. The Nikumbha branch of Sōndrakas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sōndraka chief</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Contemporary Ruling Emperor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Bhēmaśakti</td>
<td>655 A.D.</td>
<td>Pulakeśi II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Adityaśakti</td>
<td>—do—</td>
<td>—do—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Nikumbhallasakti</td>
<td>—do—</td>
<td>Vikramāditya I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Jayabhaśakti</td>
<td>681-696 A.D.</td>
<td>Vinayāditya</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**IV. Another Nikumbha branch of Sōndrakas**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sōndraka chief</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Contemporary Ruling Emperor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Devasakti</td>
<td>7th Cent. A.D.</td>
<td>Vineyāditya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Dandirāja</td>
<td>—do—</td>
<td>—do—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Vairadēva</td>
<td>—do—</td>
<td>—do—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Nikumbhallasikhamani)
The available records of these Sendrakas do not help us much in narrating a detailed history of this family. Most of them are charters recording some or other grants. As regards their political activities practically nothing is known except that they exercised authority as subordinates of the contemporary ruling kings.

Interestingly enough, we get some material regarding their religious affiliations. Their overlords, the Kadambas and later, the Chalukyas of Badami were the protagonists of Vedic religion, but the subordinate, the Sendrakas were overwhelmingly Jaina in their religious affiliation. The Sendrakas of South Karnataka especially made profuse grants to the Jaina institutions or individuals. As a contrast, the records of the Ananda and Nikumbha branches record grants for Brahmanical purposes. These details indicate that the Jainism was quite popular in the southern part of the Chalukya kingdom and the Sendrakas naturally came under its influence. The following are the available details.

1. Bhūnāsakti granted the village Marade for Jaina ascetic.29

2. Samylara built a Jaina temple at the city of Alaktakanagara.30
3. Indrānanda donated for the worship of the divine Arhat and maintenance of learned ascetics devoted to teaching.  

4. Raviśakti granted to the Jaina ascetic Śrīnandi for the establishment of a religious institution.  

5. Durgāśakti contributed for Jaina monastery.  

The following records mention brahmanical grants:  

1. Śrīvallabha Śrīśnanda granted to a Brahmānath the village of Amravātavaka.  

2. Nikumbhalesākτi granted the village Suśchirakhāli to the Brahmāna Bhogika.  

3. Śrīśnanda was a devout worshipper of Mahēśvara.  

According to the characteristics of the period, the records are few and they are brief also in content. As such, not many details are available about the activities of these chiefs.
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7. **SII**, XX, No. 3, intro p. VII-VIII
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10. **MAR**, 1929, p. 50
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17. **SII**, XV, Nos. 417, 441-43
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22. **MAR**, 1909, p. 12-14
23. *K.I.*, No.3, p. 4-8
24. *E.I.*, XXVIII, No. 34, p.197
28. Siruar D.G. Successors of Satavahanas, p.244.
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35. *Śrikanthika*, p. 109