SECTION 'B'

Cultural Attainments
CHAPTER VIII

ADMINISTRATION
The feudatory states, during the period under review were almost enjoying an independent status even if they were subordinate to their respective overlords. The sovereigns exercised minimum interference in the internal administration of the feudal lords. The motive behind such liberal attitude was to keep the feudatory states strong enough to guard their frontiers against outside incursions. The feudatories took advantage of this and established an administrative system which was almost a replica of that of their overlords.

Royal Epithets

In ancient India, Rājā was a royal title used by the sovereigns. Even Ashoka is described as a Rājā although he was a Chakravarti monarch. In the first century B.C., Kharavela, the ruler of Kalinga, took the title of Mahārājā. During the rule of the imperial Guptas, the grandiloquent titles of Mahārājādhirāja, Paramēśvara, Paramabhaṭṭāraka were assumed by the sovereign rulers whereas the title of Mahārāja was taken up by some of their feudatory chiefs. This practice was also followed in Orissa during the period of our review.

The epigraphic records of this period provide us with a large number of titles used by the feudatories. The feudatory states were known as Mandalas and the rulers assumed
the titles of Mandalesvara and Mahamandalesvara, Mahamandalika and Mahamandaladhipati. Dhammakhej of the Eastern Kādamba family, a feudatory of the Eastern Gaṅgas, was known as both Mahamandalesvara and Mandalesvara. Ränaka Jayarāma, a feudatory chief of the Somavārī king Mahāśivagupta Karnaḍeva, was described as Mahamandalika and Mahamandalesvara in the Kalamāpur plates. In the Kesari copper plate grant, Satrubhaṇja of Khijjiṅga-Koṭṭa, the donor, was depicted as Mahamandaladhipati. The title Mahārāja, signifying probably a higher status, was used by some powerful feudatory chiefs. Ranabhaṇja Deva of Dhrttipura and Vidyadhara-bhaṇja and his son Nettabhaṇja of Vāṇjulvaka were all known as Mahārājas. Ränaka was a military title, very common among the feudatory chiefs. It is a point to note here that Ranabhaṇja Deva of Dhrttipura discarded the epithet Ränaka towards the last part of his reign and assumed the title of Mahārāja. This title was also used by his father Satrubhaṇja Deva in his Kumurkela charter. We come across the title 'Rājā' used by a feudatory chief in the

2. J.O.H.I.P.I; Text lines 11-12.
5. ibid, XVIII, pp.282-300; ibid, IX, pp.271-277.
7. ibid, II, pp.429-38.
two incomplete plates of Dharakot. Some rulers assumed such titles which denote the territories under their jurisdiction. The Singhara plates of Ranabhanjadeva describe him as Udbhayakhiṅjalyādhīpati. Yasabhaṅja of Khiṅjali-Mandala belonging to Vaṅjulvaka branch bore the title of Sāmantakhīṅjalyādhīpati.

In the Pherava grant the title of Sakalakaliṅgādhīpati was assumed by Sāmantavāmā of Śvetaka Ganga line. Ambitious feudatory rulers, sometimes, assumed imperial titles probably in defiance of their overlords. Śatrubhaṅjadeva of Khijjinga-Kotṭa was described as Mahārājādhīrāja and Paramēśvara in his Kesari Copper plate grant. The Ālāki ruler Kulaṭambhaṇadeva had assumed imperial titles like Mahārājādhīrāja and Paramabhaṭṭaraka as well as feudatory titles like Kanaka in his Talcher grant. The assumption of both imperial and feudatory titles indicates that Kulaṭambha gradually enhanced his authority from the feudatory rank to the semi-independent status. Another Śulki ruler Rāṇastambhaṇadeva who was a feudatory of Subhākaradeva III of the Bhauma-Karas, was described as Mahāsāmantādhīpati in his Dhenkanal grant of Samvat 103 (A.D. 839). In the second Dhenkanal grant he

1. I.O., I, Part-II, No.7, pp.248ff
2. J.B.O.R.S., VI, pp.481-86
3. E.I., XVIII, pp.298-299
5. E.I., XXV, pp.161-64
6. ibid, XII, pp.156-59.
was known as Mahārāja whereas he assumed the imperial titles Mahārājadhīrāja and Paramabhattāraka in his last known Talcher grant. Devānandadeva II, the Nandodbhava chief of Mārāvata-Maṇḍala, assumed the titles of Paramabhattāraka and Mahāmaṇḍalā-dhipati as revealed from his Basapalla grant. Anantavarmā, the Śveta rules, had been adorned with the titles like Mahārājadhīrāja, Paramēśvara and Paramabhattāraka. In the Pandiapaṭhar grant the Māla king Shimasena has been depicted as Mahārājadhīrāja and Paramēśvara. It is to be noted that the overlord tried to curb his power and bring him under control. A common feudatory title of this time was Sāmaṇa of which Mahāsamanta and Mahāsa- mantādhipati indicate superior grades. Rāṇaka is also another feudatory military title, assumed by almost all feudatory rulers of medieval Orissa. D.C. Sircar thinks that this title is derived from Rājana, Rajyanaka or Rājasaṃgī. The feudatory chiefs like their sovereigns also used some religious titles indicating their devotion to specific religious sects. Svārubhāṇa of Sonepur Copper plate grant was declared as Paramavaishnava which shows that he was a worshipper of Viṣṇu and belonged to Viṣṇuism. Vidyādharabhāṇa, a ruler

2. Svalpavelur grant, B.I., XXIV, pp. 129-37.
of Vañjulvaka branch of Khinjali-Mandala assumed the title of Paramamäheśvara in his Orissa plates. This title clearly reveals his faith on Šaivism. Devanandadeva of Nandodhava dynasty was a Paramabhättaraka.

One of the most important titles used during the period under study was Samādhigata-Pańcha-Mahāśavda which means the obtainer of five great sounds or five great titles. According to description, given in the Rājatarangini of Kalhan, the five Mahāśavdas represent five official designations with the prefix 'Maha', namely, (a) Mahāpratihāra (Superintendent of the troops in charge of the defence of the gates of the palace and capital and probably also king's body guards), (b) Mahāśāndhi-vigrahika (Minister of War and Peace), (c) Mahākṣapatalādhikṣita (Chief officer in charge of records and accounts), (d) Mahābhāndagaśārika (treasurer), (e) Mahāśandhānāika (Commander of the forces). In the Western part of India these five designations were known as (a) Maharaja, (b) Mahādaṇṇanāyaka, (c) Mahāśāmanta (d) Mahākarta-Kritaka and (e) Mahāpratihāra. Raksakopyāchārya, the Jaina Writer, states that "Samādhigata-Pańcha-Mahāśavda" are five musical instruments, namely, Śrīṅga (horn), Śāṅkha (conch), Śheri (drum), Jayaghaṇṭa (the Victory bell) and Tamrata (holiage on timbrel) were allowed to the feudatories for their use. It is not possible to give a

1. E.I., IX, pp. 271-77.
2. ibid, XXVII, pp. 325-30.

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conclusive opinion as to which of the meanings was in vogue in our period of study. But there is no doubt that this title was used by almost all the feudatory rulers.

Royal Succession

Kingship during the period under consideration was hereditary. The Law of primogeniture was applied for the nomination of the successor. An heir-apparent was generally chosen during the lifetime of the ruling king. This heir-apparent was named Yuvaraja or Raja Prat. The younger brother was selected to succeed to the throne if the king died issueless. In the Kesari copper plate grant of Satrubhañjadeva, the name of Śrī Narendrabhañja has been mentioned as Yuvaraja. Śrī Kottabhañja was the Yuvaraja as found in the Adipur Copper plate grant of Durjayabhañja. The name of Yuvaraja Virabhañja has been located first among the list of dignitaries in the Antirigam Copper plates of Vaśobhañjadeva of Vañjulvaka. The Madras Museum plates of the time of Narendradhavala depict Vigraha as Raja Prat. All of them with all probability succeeded to the throne after the death of the ruling monarchs. We, however, do...

3. Antirigam Copper plate grant of Jayabhañjadeva, E.I., XIX, pp.41-45.

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not come across the titles like Kumāra, Maharājputra and Kumārādhirāja in the position of heir-apparent in the feudatory states as noticed among the sovereigns.

The role of regents in the administration was commonly approved. During the minority of an heir-apparent a male or a female, closely related to the king, acted as regent. There is no reference to female succession in the epigraphic records of the feudatories though we come across a number of such examples in the sovereign ruling dynasties during this time. But it is interesting to note that a good number of queens actively took part in the administration of the states as custodians of the royal seals. The feudatory records, mostly of the Bhaṅgās and the SvetakasGangas, mention the names of such queens. Trika-liṅgamahādevī, the queen of Vidyādharabhāṣīja, was the custodian of the seal. Śrī Jayamahādevī, the queen of Nettaḥbhāṣādeva, affixed the seal of Dasapalla grant. The seal of another Dasapalla grant of Rāṇaka Satrubhāṇa of Samvat 138 was affixed by Prthvimahādevī, the queen. The Orissa Museum plates of Netta-bhāṇa Kalyāṇakalasa mention the name of Jivalokamaḥādevī as the

   ibid, XXVIII, pp. 321ff.
5. E.I., XXVIII, pp. 272-78.

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custodian of the royal seal. Another Trikaliingamahādevī, the queen of ŚvetakaGaṅga king Jayavamādeva, was the custodian of the seal of Badakhimādi plates. Mahādevī Paramavaishnavī Gosvāminīdevī was the enshriner of the seal of Śānakhimādi plates of Indravarma.

Powers and Duties of the King

The monarchy was absolute in nature and the feudatory kings also enjoyed unlimited powers in the internal administration of their respective states. King was the source of all the three branches of powers, namely, executive, legislative and judiciary. He was also the supreme head of the armed forces. All appointments, civil and military, were made by him. He conferred honours on the deserving scholars and promoted the ministers and other officials to higher ranks. Kings issued secular and religious land grants to individuals and institutions alike. He defended his state from foreign incursions and helped his overlords in conquering new lines.

Protection to the poor and extension of liberal patronage to the learned scholars and the Brāhmaṇas were considered as important duties of the kings. Our epigraphic records abound in registering grant of land to the Brāhmaṇas, belonging to various gotras and pravaras. Manu is of the opinion that

2. ibid, pp. 78-80.
the kings should go on periodical tours to different parts of
the country to supervise the works of corrupt and oppressive
officers and to assess the attitude of the people towards the
royalty. Such a practice was in vogue in the ancient and
medieval India.

It was one of the bounden duties of the ruler
to see that the subjects of his kingdom lead a life of peace and
happiness. The VishnuDharmaśāstra\(^1\) prescribes that one who digs
a well for the common men gets the benefit of washing away half
of his sins when the water begins to flow. The kings of medieval
Orissa implemented multifarious public welfare works by construct­
ving tanks, wells, markets, roads and bridges. The Bhaṭṭa
chiefs Ṛṣabhaṇāja and Rājabhaṇāja of Khijinga-Kotta\(^2\) have
compared themselves with the epic king Yudhīśṭhira in protecting
the people of their kingdom. Kings performed some religious
duties as the heads of the states. They patronised all religions
and religious institutions. They organised religious councils
for discussions and deliberations and constructed buildings and
temples for religious merits. The temples and religious insti­
tutions were endowed with land grants. The kings also tried to
preserve the Varnāśramadhama. Vāsātā, the Somaśvēti queen, has
been described as the protector of the four Varnas and four
Āshramas\(^3\).

   ibid., pp. 168-69.
Ministers and Officers

The indispensability of a council of ministers (Mantriperisāda), for the smooth discharge of royal duties in the administration, has been emphasized in glowing terms by the political philosophers of the ancient and medieval periods. Śukra¹ stresses on the necessity of the services of ministers and says that it is quite impossible to rule a kingdom single-handed. Manu² believes that the king can never dare to govern a kingdom efficiently without the co-operation of the ministers. Kautilya³ and Somadeva⁴ have also expressed their views in support of ministerial utility in the polity. Matsya Purāṇa⁵ and Agnipurāṇa⁶ consider the advice of the cabinet imperative for the healthy growth of a kingdom. Kāmandaka⁷ conceives the ministry to be an important limb of the state and prohibits the king to go astray. The feudatory states of this period maintained their own cabinets, just like those of their overlords. Bhatta Kesavadeva⁸ was designated as the Prime Minister under Vidyādharabhaṇḍa of the Vaṇju-vaṇaka branch of Khiṇjali-Mandala.

1. Śukranīti, II, I.
3. Āś, 1-3.
4. Nītivākyāmṛita, Ch. 10.
7. N.V.K, Ch. XIII
Qualifications of Ministers

Polity writers like Šukra, Kāmanda, and Bṛhaspatya prescribe qualifications for the ministers. According to them a person to be selected for the ministerial post should be high born, well-to-do and well-versed with the principles of polity. They should also possess enough courage for immediate action and should be modest in behaviour and speech. They must keep themselves away from vices like gambling, drinking and sensual pleasures. It is a point to note that the ministers of our period under review did not fall short of the aforesaid standards. The kings also were very much cautious in the selection of their ministerial nominees. Choice of ministerial posts was on the basis of merit where nativity and nationality were ignored.

The ministerial posts were generally assigned to the persons of Brāhmaṇa caste as prescribed by the Smritis. Śrīśādhāraṇa, the eminent Prime Minister of the Somavāṃśa ruler Mahābhavagupta Janamejaya I, was a great Brāhmaṇa. He was a

1. Šukramatītīsāra, II, 53-54.
2. N.V.K., Ch. X, III.

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genius of high order and an erudite scholar. He was well versed with the Arthaśāstra, the Smṛtis, the Vedas, the Vedāṅgas, Vidyā, Śikṣā, Kalpa and Itihāsa. In the feudatory states of our period we come across Brāhmin ministers of great reputation also. Bhaṭṭa Keśavadeva¹, the Prime Minister of Vidyādharabhaṇja; Bhaṭṭa Vasudeva², Minister of Nettabhaṇja-deva; Himadatta³, the Sandhivigrahi of Rauṭabhaṇja-deva; Buddhadatta⁴, the minister of war and peace of Ṣatrubhaṇja Maṅgalarāja were all Brāhmins. But Yośadatta, the foreign minister of Devananda-deva III of Nanda dynasty, was a Kayastha⁵.

Poility writes do not prescribe military qualification for the ministers. But we are informed that Ministers performed military duties by leading the army to the battle field and rendering valuable services, on the defence of the state. It is, of course, not known whether a minister was entrusted with the responsibility to command an army to the war front.

Hereditary appointments to posts of military Department are noticed both among the sovereigns and the feudatories. The ministers were not elected by the people but were

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1. E.I.,XVIII,pp.282-300.
   J.S.O.R.S.,XVIII,pp.387ff.
nominated by the king. They enjoyed tenure at the pleasure of the ruler. Smritis prescribe the assignment of ministerial posts to the Brāhmaṇas in preference to other castes\textsuperscript{1}. But this practice was not strictly followed. Malladatta, the Mahāsandhi-vigrahika of Nanda king Devānanda III, was a kāyastha\textsuperscript{2}.

Composition of the Ministry

Manu\textsuperscript{3} and Kautilya\textsuperscript{4} are of the opinion that ministers should be appointed on the exigencies and needs of the state. According to Manu ministry should be of seven or eight members\textsuperscript{5}. Maximum number of members in a ministry, as propounded by Kautilya, should be limited to four or five\textsuperscript{6}. The feudatory chiefs mostly subscribed to the view of Kautilya and naturally their cabinets were small. The Ganjam plates of Viḍyādharabhaṇja provide three ministers including the queen Trikaliṅgamahādevī. The other ministers were Bhatta Keśavadeva and Stambha, the minister of war and peace\textsuperscript{7}. Durjayabhaṇja of Khijjiṅga-Kotṭa had

\begin{itemize}
\item[1.] A. S. Altekar, State and Government in Ancient India, p. 181.
\item[2.] E.I., VIII, pp. 143f.
\item[3.] Manu, VII, 61.
\item[4.] A. S. I., 15.
\item[5.] Manu Sṛīti, VII, 54.
\item[6.] A. S. I., 15.
\item[7.] E.I., XVII, pp. 282-200.
\end{itemize}
his ministers like Śrī Chichipamahādevī (Chief queen), Śrī Kottabhaṇja (heir-apparent), Atahī (Minister of war and peace) and Śrī Narendra (Chief feudatory).  

In the epigraphic records of the feudatories, reference has been made to different types of ministers which can be described as follows.

Chief Minister

The Chief Minister is the most powerful one who is considered second only to the king. Efficient and learned persons are, therefore, chosen to this exalted position. In the sovereign epigraphic records the Chief Ministers are designated in various epithets. Śrī Sādhārana, the Chief Minister of the Somavānśī king Janamejaya I, has been referred to as Mantritilaka. The Khandapada charter of Dhararatha describes Netrađeva as Mantrivara. We do not come across the terms like Mantritilaka or Mantrivara in feudatory records. We, however, get the designation "Mantri" which, most probably, denotes the Chief Minister. Bhāṭṭa Keśavađeva, the Chief Minister of Vidyādharaḥaṇja, has been described as Mantri. Bhāṭṭa Vasudēva, the

1. E.I., XXV, p. 172ff.
2. ibid., III, pp. 345ff, text line 37.
   Kalibhāna grant, I.H.O., XX, pp. 245ff, textline 40.
3. O.H.R.J., XII, pp. 280ff, text lines 61-62.
minister of Nettabhaṇjaḍeva is also called a Mantri¹.

The Prime Minister has been described as Sarvadarśi by Sukra². He has the supervisory powers over all other departments held by ministers and officers. The Prime Minister was, sometimes, entrusted with the task of drafting the royal charters. Sometimes also he acted as Dutaka or agent of the king for the execution of land grants.

**Sandhivigrahika**

Sandhivigrahika is an important portfolio, often mentioned in the epigraphic records of the contemporary period. He is the minister of war and peace and mostly performs the duty of writing the land grants. In the Sarasvatīvilāsa³ the meaning of Sandhi is "Vyavasthākaraṇam" and Vigraha is "apakāraḥ". Vyavasthā is further known as an agreement or condition of peace and apakāraḥ as the offense or condition of war⁴. Mahāsandhivigrahika was the head of the department of war and peace under whom there were a large number of Sandhivigrahikas. The name Sandhivigrahika, for the first time, appeared in

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2. Śukranātisāra, II, 84.
3. S.V., p.42.

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the Allahabad Pillar Inscription of Samudragupta. Harisena has been mentioned there as the Sandhivigrahika and also the writer of the Prasasti. The Udayagiri cave inscription depicts Savavirasena as the Sandhivigrahika of Chandragupta II. The office of Sandhivigrahika, in fact, remained as a legacy of the Gupta administration to the future history of India. In the entire medieval period of Orissan history this was an indispensable office. This minister was also in charge of royal correspondence. Śrī Prayāpati was the Sandhivigrahika of Śatrubhaṇḍajādeva of Khijjinga-Kolta. The Kumurkela charter of Śatrubhaṇḍajādeva of Khiṅjali-Mandala refers to a person named Savaradatta who was a Sandhivigrahika and as well as the writer of the charter. Sandhivigrahika Himadatta was the minister of war and peace of Rāṇabhāṇḍajādeva of Durtipura. The Tekkali or Gurandi plates of Śatrubhaṇja Maṅgalarāja of Vaṅjulvaka line mention the name of Buddhadatta who was a Sandhivigrahika.

Purohita

Purohita is, sometimes, included as a member of the council of ministers having an important portfolio, as suggested by Śukra. He is the royal priest and in this capacity he

2. ibid, III,pp 21 ff.
7. Śukraṇitisāra, II, 74.
attends to the spiritual duties of the king. The name Purohita figures in some records of sovereign rulers of Orissa. Feudatory records of our time also furnish us with many such designations. The office of the Purohita implies that he ought to be well versed in the Vedas, the Vedāṅgas, the Dharmasāstras and the Nitiśāstras. Laxmidhara¹ is of the opinion that a Brāhmaṇa should be chosen as a priest if he has adequate knowledge on the Vedas, the Vedāṅgas, Itihāsa, the Dharmasāstras and astrology and clear knowledge in the performance of religious rites and sacrifices. The Purohita as the chief priest was entrusted with performing Yajñas, Homas, Danas and chanting of the Vedas. He did all these things for the welfare of the king's family and the kingdom. The consecration ceremony and fixation of dates of auspicious occasions were done by him. He was in charge of religious merit and moral upliftment of the people. Sometimes the Purohita acted as Duta (ambassador) as is found in the case of Ghrarāmpa Nandīsārma who, on behalf of the king Devendravarmā, executed the Siddhānta plates².

Aksimapātalādhiṅkrita

We get the epithet Mahāksimapātalādhiṅkrita in the records of sovereign kings. He is described as the superintendent of the records and accounts. He also performs the work of

maintaining land records and writing copper plate grants. According to Fleet, Mahākṣapātalika was superior to the keeper of records. He is also assigned the duty of a Dutaka. The Neulpur plates of Bhauma-Kara king Subhākaradeva I reveal that Mahākṣapātalāchikrita Somadatta was a Dutaka. It seems that in feudatory states there were Akshapātalikas who were subordinate in rank to Mahākṣapātalikas but were entrusted with similar duties and responsibilities. In the Antiriga charter of Jayabhāujadeva we get the name Vajradatta acting as Akshapa-tali of the king.

Mahāpratihāra

Mahāpratihāra used to perform the duties of the royal household and attend to the person of the king. He acted as a mediator between the king and the people and communicated royal orders to other officers. His name was sometimes found among the Council of ministers and he occupied a position second only to the Purohita. The feudatory charters provide us with scanty information regarding the position and role of Mahāpratihāra. A solitary reference to such a high ranking official

1. E.I., XV, pp. 1ff.
2. Ibid., XIX, pp. 41-45.
4. V.V. Mirashi, C.I.I., IV, Part-I, p. CXL.

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is noticed in a Śvetaka Ganga record. The undated Bisamagiri grant of Indravarmā mentions the name of the Mahāpratihāra Adityavarmā who has been described as a writer. We, of course, come across Pratihāras in some of the Bhanja records, who almost perform similar duties like the Mahāpratihāras. It may be presumed that the Pratihāras were subordinated to the Mahāpratihāras. Kumadaka was a powerful Pratihāra during the reign of Nettabhaṅjadeva. The title Pratihāra has come first among the officers of Rānaka Satrubhaṅja of Samvat 193. The Pratihāras were also entrusted with the duty of entering land grants into records.

Kulaputraka

Kulaputraka literally means high born and it is the same as Kulaputra. Yakshadatta, the writer of the Adipur copper plate grant of Narendraśvara, has been described as Kulaputraka.

Mudrāhasta

Mudrāhasta is the custodian of the royal seal. His importance is revealed from the mention of his name among the officers of Rānaka Satrubhaṅja of Samvat 193.

   J.A.H.R.S., III, pp. 183-188.
2. Orissa Museum Plates of Nettabhaṅjadeva.
3. Dasapalla copper plates of Rānaka Satrubhaṅja.
   O.H.R.J., I, pp. 208-212.
4. ibid.
5. E.I., XXV, pp. 147ff, text line 41.

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Great personalities like Yuvarāja, Sandhivigrāhika, Pratihāra and Puraśreṣṭhi. Śrī Bhima was the Mudrāhasta of king Śatrubhānjadeva of Khijjinga-Kotta. The chief queens of the Bhanjas were generally assigned this job. This is an exception and this naturally speaks of the higher responsibility of the person mentioned above.

Puraśreṣṭhi

Puraśreṣṭhi signifies that he is the head or the mayor of the town. We come across this name in the Bhanja Copper plate grant of the period of our discussion.

Kumāramātya

Scholars are not unanimous in their opinion as to the meaning of such a designation. Bloch is of the opinion that a person who serves the king from his boyhood is known as Kumāramātya. Fleet thinks that he is a minister of crown prince. B. Mishra holds that a Kumāra, performing the duty of a minister, was called Kumāramātya. According to D. C. Sircar Kumāranātya was an Amātya or executive officer of

3. Ibid., X, p. 50, fn. 2.
royal blood. R.C. Majumdar\(^1\) believes in the hereditary right to the high office of a state. Mirashi is of the opinion that Kumāramātya was a general term used for the officers of different grades\(^2\). From the opinion of the majority of scholars it is evident that Kumāramātya was a high official in the administration. In the Sulki\(^3\) and Tuṅga\(^4\) records of our period, Kumāramātya occupied an exalted position.

**Dutaka**

Dutaka literally means a messenger and he appears to be an ordinary officer. But from the study of the contemporary epigraphic records, Dutaka is known to be an important officer equal in status with other officers of the state. His duty was to convey the message of the king to the officers who were incharge of delivering the charters to the donees. Charters, issued by the feudatory chiefs, acquaint us with a number of posts bearing the Dutaka title. Mahāśāmanta Kṛitavamā\(^5\), the Dutaka of Bhaṇja King Ṣatrubhaṇja Mahāgalakalasa, was an important officer. The Kotama\(^6\) and Petasara\(^7\) grants of

2. V.V. Mirashi, C.I., IV, Part-I, p.CXL.
4. ibid, IV, pp.237ff.
7. ibid, XVIII, pp.282ff.
the Bhaṅjas also describe the Dutaka as a high ranking officer.

Akṣaśāli

Akṣaśāli is known as the engraver of letters and inspector of documents. D.C. Sircar\(^1\) calls him a goldsmith. The Bhaṅja records give us the name of Akṣaśāli. Śrī Ajāmanda\(^2\) was the Akṣaśāli of Mahāmandaleśvara Netta-Bhaṅja of Vañjulvaka Bhaṅja dynasty. The Pettasara grant of Netta-Bhaṅja Kalyāṇakalasa mentions the name of Durgadeva as Akṣaśāli\(^3\).

Vargulika

The feudatory copper plate grants of our period mention the name of Vargulika as one of the important officers. The Pettasara grant of the Bhaṅja king Netta-Bhaṅja-deva\(^4\) gives the names of Vargulika Vachchhika as an officer along with Dutaka, Sandhivigrahika and Akṣaśāli. D.C. Sircar\(^5\), of course, interprets the term as betel box bearer of the king which indicates an inferior position. Sometimes it is taken as an alternative term for Dutaka\(^6\).

1. Ind. Ep. GL., p. 15.
4. ibid.
We come across the term in the epigraphical records of the Brahmans where Patra has been described as a courtier. Sri Ya^odhara was the Patra of Nettabhañjadeva\(^1\) of Vañjulvaka. According to D.C. Sircar\(^2\) this officer enjoyed the position of a minister during the period of the Imperial Gaṅgas of Orissa.

**Dandanāyaka**

The ordinary meaning of the term is rod applier or a judge. R.C. Majumdar is of the opinion that he was either a judge or a general or a magistrate\(^3\). S.C. De takes it as a judge only\(^4\). V.V. Mirashi\(^5\) and Hemachandra\(^6\) place him as the head of the military. Dr. H.K. Mahatab\(^7\) interprets the term as magistrate posted in the Visaya. The literal meaning of the word suggests that he was an officer superior to Dandanāyaka. Dandanāyaka figures in some of our copper plate grants. Garbhesvara\(^8\) was the Dandanāyaka of Nettabhañjadeva of Vañjulvaka.

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1. E.I., XXIV, pp. 15 ff.
6. Śavdakalpadruma, p. 408.
Chāta and Bhāta

The charters of the period under review give a description of a class of officers called Chātas and Bhātas. Vogel\(^1\) is of the opinion that Chāta was the head of a Pargana and Bhāta was a sub-ordinate officer under him. Buhler\(^2\) holds both of them as irregular and regular troops.

A.S. Altekar\(^3\) interprets them as ordinary members of police force. Our epigraphic records depict the Chātas and Bhātas performing both military and police duties. Their primary duty was to fight for the state and to maintain law and order. It is, sometimes, alleged that these officers became tyrannical and utilised their power for monetary gains. Bāga\(^4\) is of the opinion that they were hated by the village folk for their oppression and coveting others' property. For these reasons perhaps the Chātas and Bhātas were forbidden to enter into rent free donated villages.

Vyavahārī

This name is found in the Bhāja\(^5\) and Tunga\(^6\) records of our period. According to H.K. Mahatab these officers

2. C.I., III, pp.98.
5. E.I., XIX, pp.41ff.
were well-versed in the Dharmaśāstras and were appointed for the administration of justice\(^1\).

**Rājavallabha**

According to the Arthaśāstra of Kautilya, Vallabha is a courtier closely associated with the king but does not occupy high administrative post. B. Misra translates the term as favourite of the king. Vallabha, mentioned in the Bhañja charter\(^2\), is identical to the Rājavallabhas of the Somavāṃsi\(^3\) charters and Vallabhas of the Bhauma charters\(^4\).

**Dandapāśika**

Dandapāśika as explained by Monier Williams in his Sanskrit-English Dictionary was a police officer who holds the fetters or noose of punishment. The Arthaśāstra provides the law of crime as dandapāśa. Bhauma-Kara\(^5\), Somavāṃsi\(^6\) and feudatory records\(^7\) give us some instances of this officer. He was a

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2. Singhara plates of Rañabhañja, J. B. O. R. S., VI, pp. 481-86.
7. J. B. O. R. S., VI, pp. 481-86.
high ranking police officer and was perhaps assisted by the Chātas and the Bhātas. The term Dandūsī, which is a synonym of the village chaukidar at present, has been derived from the term Dandapāsīka.

Sūpakāra

The Bhanjanagar plates¹ of Nettabhañjađeva mention the name of Sūpakārinī Vidyāmatī, a lady royal cook engaged in the inner apartment of the royal palace. It may safely be suggested that a Sūpakāra (Male royal cook) was also present in this period.

Sūvarnakāra

Sūvarnakāra is perhaps the goldsmith engaged in the engraving of numerous copper plate charters² of our period.

Samavāyi

Samavāyi was an officer of guilds. The name occurs in the Bhanjanagar grant of Nettabhañjađeva³ where Śrī Gamada in the Samavāyi.

1. I.O., VI, p.222 text line 16.
Bhogika literally means the owner of a Bhoga or a Jagir. He is also taken as the head-man of the village. Some are of the opinion that Bhogika is the collector of the state's share of the produce from the land, taken in kind. It appears that this officer did not pay rent for the land that he enjoyed. The land is assigned to him for the service he rendered to the state. The Bhāńja kingdom under Vidyādharabhańja was divided into two units, namely, the regularly administered districts (Visayas) and assigned areas (Bhogas). This reveals the importance of the Bhogis as the head of the Bhogas. The Bhogis are attached to the revenue administration of the kingdom.

Administrative Units

The feudatory states of the period under review had established a sound system of administration. Their administration was linked with the administration of their overlords but it was on the basis of good will and mutual understanding. The framework of administration between the sovereign states and the

2. E.I., IX, No.37, pp.271-77 text lines 16-17.
feudatories was almost same except that the former had bigger territories and larger varieties of units than the latter. The feudatory states were known as Mandalas which were almost equal in size with the provinces of the sovereign states.

The Mandalas have been referred to as parts of Adhi-mandala or Mahāmandala under Somavāmi ruler Tivaradeva. The denomination of Mandala is not fully determined as it is used diversely in our charters. In some cases Mandala included Viṣaya and in other Viṣaya included Mandala. It is also found out that the same district was called Mandala and Viṣaya at different times.

In the early medieval Orissa a number of semi-independent principalities, known as Mandalas, sprang up. The rulers of these states assumed the titles like Mandalika, Mandalādhipati and Mahāmandalika. They issued charters without even referring to their suzerains. Satrubaṇḍadeva of Khiṅga-Kotta in his Kesari plate describes himself as Mahārājādhirāja as well as a Mahāmandalādhipati.

Bhukti

In the Gupta inscriptions Bhukti denoted a province which included a group of Viṣayas or Mandalas. A.S. Altekar and R.C. Majumdar equalise it with the modern Commissioner's division. Bhukti and Viṣaya are also put on equal footing. Sometimes Bhukti is also described as an administra-

1. E.I., XXXI, pp. 220-21, text lines 5-6 and 8-9.
tive division smaller than a modern Tehsil. We, however, do not find a reference to Bhukti in the inscriptions of the feudatories.

Rāstra

In ancient India, a kingdom was described as Rāstra under the rule of the Vākāṭakas and the Rāstrakutas. Rāstra was equal to a Commissioner's division. A record of the Gāṅga king Indravāman conveys the meaning of Rāstra as a territorial division. Rāstra denoted a district under the Kālandas.

Visaya

In the epigraphic records under our study, the name of Visaya frequently occurs. Viṣaya is an important administrative unit of the Mandala states and is equal to a district of the modern time. The head of the Viṣaya was Viṣayapati. The Bāmandā Mandala of Puṇja reveals that Pallika is a division which is equal to administrative division or Viṣaya (Kudopali plates). The Adipur plate of Narendraśānta mentions the name of Odra Viṣaya which is equal to a district in the modern terminology.

1. E.I., XIV, p. 360f, text line 9.
2. ibid., IV, pp. 254-59 text line 8.
3. ibid., XXV, pp. 157-161, text line 20.
Bhoga

D.C. Sircar is of the opinion that Bhoga is a territorial unit equal to a sub-division of a district. In the Orissan epigraphy, Bhoga is smaller than the Visaya but gradually it emerged into Visaya and assumed larger proportions.

Khanda

Khanda is a territorial unit similar to Bhoga. It corresponds to a modern Taluk or Tahsil. The Sulki records incorporate in it the name of Khanda. Shivakarakhanda is a unit of administration mentioned in the Baud undated charter of Ranabhanjadeva of Khiñjali-Mandala.

Village

Village is the lowest unit of administration in this period. Villages are known by their name-ending like Padra, Pāṭaka, Grāma, Pura, and Pāḷi, Jambupadraka, Pagurasila-pāṭaka, Pāñchapali, Dharma-pura, Naṭagrama and Brihat-sarai. The Orissa Museum plates of Nettabhanjadeva refer to Gunda-patakagrama where both Pāṭaka and grāma are found in its suffix.

1. J.B.O.R.S., XX, pp. 147-52.
6. E.I., XV, pp. 275-278.
Agrahāra is a rent-free village donated to the Brāhmaṇas. Instances of many such villages in our inscriptions are noticed. Hṛṣṭivāman of the Eastern Ganga dynasty donated an Agrahāra in favour of  donated Jaya Saṃā of Vatsa gotra in his Ural plates. Some villages are donated to the gods and the goddesses for their maintenance and those are designated as Deva-graharas. It is interesting to note that another village, called Vaiṣṇava-grahara, grew up during this time. This village was the centre of guild and was peculiar to Orissa.

Towns with the name-ending Paṭā, Pattana and Purā flourished in Orissa with a separate administration of their own. Khollipāti was a town in the territorial jurisdiction of Nettābhajadeva of Vaṭjulvaka. The Ganjam plates of Prthvīvāmanadeva mention Kolālapura Pattana as the capital of Śvetaka Ganga State. Nanda king Devānandaadeva issued his Jurupur grant from the town of Jayapura.

Relation between sovereign and Feudatories

We have already described the existence of feudatory states in Orissa during the period under our project.

3. ibid, VI, Parts 2 and 4, p. 202.
5. E.I., IV, pp. 198–201.
6. ibid, XXVII, pp. 325–30.
These states owed allegiance to the three sovereign powers, namely, the Bhauma-Karas, the Somavamśis and the Eastern Gaṅgas. All the territories of the feudatories were not annexed to the dominions of the overlords and the latters seldom interfered in the internal affairs of the formers. In spite of this, there existed between the sovereign powers and their feudatories a relationship which is interesting to study. All these feudatory states paid nominal annual tributes and supplied their quotas of militia at the time of war and emergency and in lieu of that they enjoyed perfect autonomy in their respective territories.

Feudatory states are not a new feature in the Indian polity. In fact they existed in this country from the ancient times although this institution gained prominence only from the Gupta age. The invasion of Samudragupta, the Gupta monarch, had a definite impact on the growth of feudatory states. The conquests of Aryavarta and Dakshināpatha by Samudragupta and the formulation of his dual policy of complete annihilation and restoration of ruling families provided a congenial atmosphere for the growth of feudatory or protected states. A number of petty principalities which might have retained their freedom but for the aggressive warfare of Samudragupta felt, nevertheless, the weight of his arms and hailed him as their overlord. They agreed to pay tributes in lieu of their internal autonomy and freedom from future aggression. Considering the spirit of the time and the political trend of the 4th century A.D. the Gupta monarch probably did not attempt at the complete annexation of the whole of India and preferred the middle path between strict
imperial control and local autonomy. The principle of non-annexation and recognition of feudatory states initiated by the Guptas was followed after them all over India by almost all important dynasties. The records of the Pālas, the Pratihāras, the Rāstrakutas, the Chālukyas, the Cholas, the Chedis and many others reveal that they had large number of feudatories under them. Orissa during this period, had also a large number of feudatory states the Chiefs of which were serving under the sovereign powers mentioned above.

The existence of feudatory states in a vast country like India where communication facilities were very poor in ancient and medieval times, was a natural and necessary phenomenon. On the basis of this fact the writers on polity have expressed their views in favour of continuing the existence of feudatory chiefs. Manu\(^1\), for example, states that when an enemy or a king was defeated and conquered, the conqueror was expected not to annex the kingdom of the vanquished king, but to crown him or any other member of his family, provided he agreed to be loyal in his attitude. The Śānti-parva of the Mahābhārata\(^2\), the Vishnu-dharmaśāstra\(^3\) and the Agnipurāṇa\(^4\) prescribe that the conqueror should place some relatives of the vanquished king on the throne of the conquered country. Even Sulaiman, an Arab merchant of

1. Cf, Sathapayeltaratadvamayam Kurtyachassamayam kriyam, Manu Smṛti, VII, 22.
4. Agni Purāṇa, 236, 22.
medieval period, observes that "when a king subdues a neighbouring state in India, he places over it a man belonging to the family of the fallen prince who carries on the government in the name of the conqueror".

Secular copper plate land grants which are available in Orissa in large number than in any other province of India, also gave rise to a group of land owners many of whom probably served the donor chiefs as military vassals. Different categories of such vassals in Medieval Orissa were Bhupala, Bhogi, Bhogirupa, Mahâbhogi, Brihadbhogi, Sâmanta, Mahâsâmanta, Raâna, Râjaputra, Râjavallabha etc. These vassal land holders also figure in the numerous charters of the powerful feudatory chiefs like the Bhanjas, the Sulkis, the Tuñgas, the Nandodbhavas, the Śvetsaka Gangas, the Mayuras etc. They, without doubt, constituted a class of sub-feudal lords.

As mentioned earlier, the use of various titles by the feudatories indicate that they belonged to different grades and their status and powers were not always the same. On the basis of incomes of the feudatory Chiefs, Śukra² gives an interesting account of their status and position. According to him, a Sâmanta with a revenue of one lakh of silver karshna was at the lowest level whereas Sârvabhauma with a revenue of fifty

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1. Elliot and Dowson, History of India, 1.P.7.
2. Śukranītisāra, I, p.153.
crores was at the highest. Altekar\(^1\) disagrees with the scheme of Šukra on the ground that it is theoretical and ideal one based more on the decimal calculations than on the relation of life. The account of Šukra, however, may be taken as an evidence only to show that several grades of feudatories existed in ancient and medieval times with varying powers and incomes. Our epigraphic records reveal that the more powerful feudatories were served by a number of sub-feudatories. The Mahānandaleśvaras and Mahānāndalikas have under them some Māndalesvaras or Māndalikas who were their sub-feudatory chiefs. The great feudatory ruler Ranabhañja of Dhrātipura is described in his charters as one worshipped by a number of Mahāsāmantas (Mahāsamantavandita) whereas the Śulki ruler Ranastambhadeva and the Nandōdbhava chief Devānandadeva II were known as Mahāsamantādhipati. In these cases the Mahāsāmantas were sub-feudatory chiefs who, in their term, were served by a number of Sāmantas. The feudatories probably had the power to create sub-feudatories by the prior permission of their overlords.

The degree of autonomy, enjoyed by feudatory chiefs, varied according to their status and powers and according to the circumstances. The less powerful feudatories had to take permission of their overlord when they wanted to alienate some lands for the sake of donations. A Ganjam Copper plate grant\(^2\) describes that Jayavamandēva, the feudatory ruler of Śvetaka-

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2. I.H.O., XII, pp. 499ff.
Mandala who desired to grant a village of Kōngoda-Mandala, sought permission from Ummattakesari of Viṣṇu through Rāṇaka Viśavāṃśadēva who was apparently a governor of Kōngoda. The Hindol copper plates of Śubhākaraśēva III reveals that Pulinda-rāja constructed a temple called Pulindaśvara (Sīva) and donated the village Nāḍīlo (Mandelo in Dhenkanal district) to meet the expenses of the temple and for which he had to take official sanction of his sovereign authority. The Talcher plates of Śivakaraśēva III register the grant of the villages for the management of the temple establishment of Buddhabhāṭṭāraka at the request of the feudatory chief Rāṇaka Vinītātika of Yanagaraṭṭa-Mandala. The Saṅga grants of Prthivimahādevī were issued at the request of Saṅgeśhē and her husband Mahāmaṇḍala-dhipati Śī Maṇḍalakalasa, governor of Maṇḍabhakti-Mandala who had the desire to donate some villages for the maintenance of the temple dedicated to Maṇḍalakalasa. The Vizag plates of the Gaṅga king Devendrabauaman II, dated the Gaṅga year 254 reveal that it was at the request of Dhamakshādi that the Gaṅga king Devendrabauaman donated grant for the worship of Dhamesvara Sīva. Rāṇaka Śī Puṇja, the feudatory chief of Banamāna-Mandala, donated the village Lōgarā to the Brāhmaṇa son

1. Śivakaraśēva I, the Gaṅga king.
3. Two Talcher plates of Śivakara II, B.Miser, O.B.K., pp. 40ff.
5. I.A., XVIII, pp. 144ff.

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The powerful feudatories, however, issued copper plate charters without making reference to their overlords so much so that it is difficult to say to which sovereign dynasty they actually rendered their services. It is because of this difficulty that a proper identification of the overlord of the Bhañja rulers of Dhṛtipura and that of the Mayura rulers of Bōgā̄i-Mandala, has not been satisfactorily established. The Bhañjas of Vañjulvaka and the Nandodbhavas of Airavatā-Mandala also have not referred to any overlord in their copper plate charters. But as some of the rulers of these feudatory ruling families used in their records an era which has been identified as Bhauma Samvat, it is almost certain that they were feudatories of the Bhauma-Karas of Toṣali¹.

The following inferences can be drawn regarding the relation between the imperial power and its vassal chiefs in Medieval Orissa.

(a) Payment of regular tributes.
(b) Offering of homage.
(c) Military assistance in emergency and
(d) Matrimonial alliance.

(a) Some amount of regular tributes was obviously
demanded by the imperial powers from the feudatory chiefs as a

1. (i) Daspalla plates of śatrubhañja Samvat 198,
O.H.R.J., I, pp. 208ff.
(ii) Damanghati plates of Rana bhāñja, Samvat 188,
(iii) Dhenkanal plates of Rana stambha, Samvat 103,
(iv) Daspalla plates of Devānandadeva, Samvat 184,
E.I., XXIX, pp. 183ff.

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price of the precious protection which they extended or even in
consideration of the superior strength which they possessed over
them. The Mītī writers of ancient times have also approved this
principle. As for example, Arthasastra of Kautiliya\(^1\) prescribes
additional taxes such as senabhuktam (levied for the maintenance
of troops), Utsarga (a tax realised on the occasion of the birth
of a royal prince) and Aupyanika (presentation to the king on
his visit which were apparently feudal imports). The tributes
given by the feudatories were, some times, directly sent to the
imperial capital and, sometimes, collected by the overlord
during his inspection\(^2\).

(b) The feudatory chiefs, at times, were urged
upon to pay personal homage to the overlord. They ought to
present themselves at the imperial court not only on different
ceremonial occasions but also at periodical intervals\(^3\). In
Kashmir vassals used to attend the coronation ceremony of the
king. Such a practice seems to be very common in the imperial
polity all over India, especially from the time of Harsa (7th
century A.D.) who, as indicated by Hiuen-Tsang, insisted the

\(^1\) P.I.H.C., 1954, session, p.178.
\(^3\) Maṅgalāchīpati Chanda of Anāga was present at Madanapālas
coronation and spread out the rich material for this
ceremony - Rāma Charita, III, -16 commentary.
\(^4\) Rt. VIII, 3303.
attendance of his feudatory Rājān at the religious conferences of Kanauj and Prayag. It is revealed from the charter of the Somavānṭhī king Tīvra-deva of Kośala that many feudatory chiefs, endowed with the title of "Samaññigata Pañcamaññāsavda", bowed before the monarch as a result of which the nails of his feet, being rubbed with the diadems of those kings, shone like a mirror¹. We get similar references also in the records of the Bhauma-Karas and the Eastern Gahgas. The Talcher plate of Śivakaradeva III² states that the golden feet of Śaṅtikaradeva "glittered with refulgent rays at the crest gems of the feudatory chiefs when they bowed before him to pay him homage". The Dhenkanal plates of Tribhuvalamahādevī III³ speak of her lotus like feet being softly kissed by the diadems of the great feudatories, bowing before the devoted loyalty". The Jirjinga grant of Indravarman⁴ describes the king as one "whose pair of feet was made resplendent by the encircling red rays shed by the lustrous jewels placed on the diadems of the vassal chiefs when they prostrated before him for paying homage". The term "Mahā-saṁnantavandita", profusely used in the epigraphic records of our period, is suggestive of this feudal function. It is, sometimes, necessary on the part of the feudatory chiefs to be present

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2. Talcher plate of Śivakaradeva III, B. Mishra, op. cit., p. 43.

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at the time of donating land grants to the donees. Thus we see that the feudatories bearing the titles Mahārāja, Mahāsāṃanta, Kāṇaka etc. assumed a premier place in the list of persons addressed by the king in the charters.

The king, sometimes, personally paid visits to the feudatory states or was represented by his agent for inspection. It was naturally expected of the feudatory chiefs to pay homage and show respect to the king or his agent during such inspection.

The king also used to bestow due honour on his feudatory chiefs during their presence in the imperial court on different occasions. Such honour was conferred on them according to the status they enjoyed. The feudatory chiefs were sometimes felicitated by the sound of conch shells. For example, Jayamānadeva, a powerful feudatory chief of the Somavāhā king Kamadeva, was honoured by the sound of two conch shells (śaṅkhadhvayaśavaṅdabhinandita)\textsuperscript{1}.\textsuperscript{1} Netṭabhaṇjadevas of Jūrda grant\textsuperscript{2} and of Bhanjanagar grant\textsuperscript{3} on the other hand were honoured with the sound of only one conch shell (śaṅkhahaṅkaśavaṅdabhinandita).

\textbf{References:}

2. B.I., XXIV, pp. 15 ff, text line 4.
3. I.O., VI, p. 221, text line 4.

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(d) The feudatories had to supply certain number of troops to their overlords and also were often called upon to participate in the imperial campaigns. The N̄iti writers describe that the army of sovereign kings consisted of five categories of soldiers, viz Māla or regular troops; Barta or mercenary troops; Śrenivala or troops or corporation; Ātavikas or troops supplied by the wild tribes and Mitravala i.e. contingents supplied by the allies or the feudatories. The practice of taking military help was followed in India through ages down to the British rule.

The feudatory chiefs of Orissa, of our project, no doubt maintained powerful army in their respective states and for that reason they played a very significant role in the political history of the contemporary times. In 890-896 A.D. the Bhauma kingdom of Tosali faced a crisis because of the alliance and plots of its ruling queen Prthvimahādevī alias Tribhuvanamahādevī II with her powerful brother Yayāti I, the Somavānśi ruler of Kośala. The fall of Tosali and its annexation with Kośala seemed imminent. But the feudatories of the Bhaumas rose to the occasion and drove away queen Prthvimahādevī and installed queen Tribhuvanamahādevī III, the queen of Āvakara III, on the throne of Tosali. The role of the feudatory chiefs in this occasion has been eulogized in the Dhenkanal plates of the queen. The Somavānśi kingdom faced a


crisis because of the invasion of Nānendra Chola who killed
Indarathak, the king of Kośala, and brought about the devastation
of Yayātinaigara. The Somavasī power was saved from the
imminent collapse by the timely action of the ministers and
feudal chiefs of Kalinga, Kośala, Utkala and Koṅgoda who elected
Yayāti II as the king of the Somavasī and raised him to the
throne of Yayātinaigara.

Matrimonial alliances between the paramount
power and the feudatory chiefs were matters of common occurrence
in the period under review.

The two Bhumia queens, viz. Dhamamahādevī,
wife of Śantikaradēva III and Vakulamahādevī, wife of Subhākara-
dēva V belonged to the Bhāuj family. The Somavasī prince
Trikaliṇga-mahādevī was married to Vidyādhara-bhaṇjā of Vaṇīlanka
Bhāuj family. The mother of Gayādatunga of Yamagatta-Mandala
was probably a Bhumia-Kara princess and the daughter of Śantikara-
dēva III alias Gayāda II. The Vishagpatan plates of the Gaṅga
king Devendra-varman II, dated in the Gaṅga year 254, reveal that
there was close matrimonial relations between the Gaṅgas and
their Kādamba feudatories. Dhamakhedi, the Kādamba Chief,
was a maternal uncle of the Gaṅga king Devendra-varman III. The
matrimony between the sovereign powers and the feudatory chiefs,
no doubt, contributed to bring them nearer and strengthen their
relations. It was politically necessitated. Timely recourse to

1. Tirumalai Ins., 5,1,.,III, pp. 108ff.
2. Marajamura plates of Yayāti II,
J.B.0. R.S., II, pp. 45ff, text line 14.
matrimonial alliances has always found to be a great safe-guard against any loss of internal sovereignty whenever a weaker state has confronted the pressure of a stronger and it should not, however, be supposed that a king was having matrimonial relations with his feudatory chiefs only. The records of our period unfold many examples of matrimonial alliances between two sovereign houses and also between two feudatory ruling families. Prthvi-mahādevī, the daughter of the Somavāra king Janamejaya I alias Svabhāvatūṅga, was married to Subhakaradēva IV, a Shāhama monarch. This was apparently a political marriage. Satrubhānājadēva of Dārtipura married the daughter of the powerful Sulki ruler Rānastambha which resulted in the birth of Rānabhaṇjajadeva who has proved himself as the most outstanding ruler of Khiṅjali-Maṇḍala.

The king not only maintained close relations with his feudatories but also had a vigilant watch over their activities. This important portfolio was entrusted to the responsible officer Mahāsandhivigraha who also acted as the external affairs minister of the monarch. This minister exercised general power of supervision and control over the feudatories and used to give detailed information to the king about the various happenings of the feudatory states. The Mānasollāsa of someśvaradēva (probably someśvara III of Chalukya dynasty) lays

It is interesting to note that almost each of the feudatory states had a Sandhivigrahika or a foreign minister who occupied an important place of honour and power. All the charters meant for the purpose of granting lands or villages were prepared and finalised under his supervision. The powers of the feudatory chiefs were considerably restricted by him. From the nature of his work, it seems that he was a representative of Paramount power working in the feudatory state and was under the control of the Mahāsandhivigrahika. His position is similar to that of the political agent or Resident under the British Rule.

General obedience to the imperial power was thus insisted upon the feudatory chiefs in every case and at all costs. In spite of the constant vigilance of the sovereign power, the ambitious feudatory chiefs broke into rebellion from time to time and tried to assert their independence. We come across three such instances in the history of Orissa during the period under review. The first was the rebellion of the Ehanjas of Dhṛtipura whose king Raṇabhaṇjaḍeva, in the later part of his reign, discarded the feudatory title of Raṇaka and described himself as a Mahārāja. The Brahmesvara temple inscription reveals that the

Somavānā monarch Janamejaya I who was apparently the overlord of the Bhaūjas of Bhirūpura, put down the rebellion by killing the Bhaūja chief in the battle. This led to the annexation of the kingdom of Bhirūpura to the Somavānā empire. The Bhaūjas thereafter were driven out to the southern part of Orissa. The second instance of a rebellion was that of the Sulkīs of Kodālaka-Mandala. The Sulkī ruler Ranastambhadeva and his son and successor Jayastambhadeva assumed imperial titles like Mahārājā-dhirāja, Paramabhāttāraka which established the fact of their challenge to the authority of their Bhaūma overlords.

Such defiance and ambitious designs of the Sulkīs became intolerable to their Bhaūma overlords. They not only extinguished the rule of the Sulkīs but also divided their kingdom Kodālaka-Mandala into two separate political units which were named as Yamagarrta-Mandala and Airavatta-Mandala. These two newly created feudatory states were placed under the charge of the Tunga ruling family and the family of the Nandodbhavas respectively.

The third significant rebellion of this category in the feudatory states of Orissa was led by Śatrubhañjadeva of Khijjinge-Kotta. The Kesari grant issued by him, reveals the use of titles like Mahārājā-dhirāja and Paramēśvara which signifies that he was a powerful sovereign king. He also was deposed because of his arrogance and rebellious attitude and his brother Ranabhañjadeva was installed in his place.

1. Kesari Copper plate grant of Śatrubhañja.
   I.H.O., XIII, pp.429ff.
It is thus seen that the feudatory chiefs who rebelled against their overlord and were defeated in war, were subjected to different indignities. They had to surrender their treasures, horses and elephants as a punishment for their disloyalty. Sometimes they were deposed as in the case of Satrubhanjadeva of Khijjingakotta and, sometimes, their states were taken over and annexed as in the case of the Bhanjas of Dhritipura. Personally they had to undergo many kinds of humiliations and were even asked to do menial work like sweeping the stables of the conquerors. In spite of this the feudatories were always in the look out for an opportunity to resort to rebellion against their overlords and to assert their sovereignty. Ancient Indian political thinkers encouraged their imperial ambition recognising their right to rise to the status of Chakravarti. These political thinkers probably thought that there was nothing wrong in this ideal and each king, state or province should have a sporting chance to be the leading state in the country at one time or another.

The feudatory states maintained their own armies. The king could not disarm them because he often needed their military assistance. The feudatory chiefs, in such a situation, were in an advantageous position and could dictate terms on their overlords. The success of the king mainly depended on the loyalty of the feudatories which was always uncertain.

1. S.I., XVIII, Verse 33; 
Mānasollāsa, Ch.III, pp. 60-63.
The king was to be always on the alert to maintain not only an
effective hold over them but also a balance of power among them.
When the king became weak, the feudatories not only threw off the
imperial yoke but also were engaged in internecine warfare among
themselves. It was because of this that the kingdoms of Orissa
in early medieval period were not in a state of equilibrium for
a longer period. Feudatory states, no doubt, maintained local
autonomy and gave protection to various local interests but they
also became instrumental in creating a permanent element of
instability in the body politic.

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