CHAPTER VI

THE CHÓLAS OF KONIDENA

Origin

Konidena was an ancient town in Addanki taluk of Prakasam district. F. Venkataramanayya believes that the early members of the Chōlas of Konidena were brought from Kotyadóna in Bellary district by the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa when they held sway over coastal Andhra between 1120 and 1135 A.D. But this is not corroborated by any other evidence. Had these Chōlas been subordinate to the Chālukyas they should have acknowledged them in at least one inscription. The mention of the Chālukya-Vikrama year 46 (1122 A.D.) in a single inscription of Kannaradeva at Drākṣhārāma in East Godavari district cannot be taken as the criterion. As K.A.Nilakanta Sastrī puts it, the use of an era in some inscriptions may be no more than the continuance of a habit even after the reason for it had disappeared. The Konidena Chōlas had, on the other hand acknowledged the suzerainty of the imperial Chōlas. It cannot also be said with certainty that they came from the-
Bellary region because the Telugu Chōlas who ruled over that area had a different prāśasti, viz., svasti samadhiṣṭa panchamahasāḍā, etc., whereas the Konidena Chōlas had the charaṇa-sarōruṇa, etc., prāśasti. The latter prāśasti takes them nearer to the Pottapi Chōlas. The word Pottapi borne by the Konidena Chōlas with their personal names such as Pottapi Kāmadēva Chōḷa Mahārāja further establishes their connection with the Pottapi Chōlas.

Extent of the Konidena Kingdom

The Konidena Chōlas ruled over Kammanāḍu which is known in inscriptions also as Karmmakṣhiti, Kammakṣhiti, Kammavishāya and Karumarāṣṭra. It is difficult to fix the boundaries of this ancient territorial division. The inscriptions, however, give us certain clues by referring to some villages as having been situated in this division. The villages thus referred to are Prempalli, Madhukamballi, Pallametta, Uppugunduru, Pedda Ganjam, Kadakuduru, Kuravāḍa, Pṛyūmḍoru, Chinna Ganjam, Kanupariti, Pulicheruvu, Kotadona, Ākarāju Cheruvu, Ballikuruvu, Guṇḍiyapūṇḍi, Jonnaprāḷūru, Ammalapūṇḍi, Eddanipūṇḍi, Rāmakūru, Chenjervu, Koppāram and Somgarēvu.
Most of these villages are situated in the southern and south-eastern taluks of the composite Guntur district. The inscriptions of these rulers are spread over Sepetla, Narasaraopet, Vinukonda and Tenali taluks of Guntur district, and Addanki, Ongole and Markapur taluks of Prakasam district. If the dispersal of their inscriptions and the mention of the above villages are any indication, it can be presumed that their principality comprised the southern and south-eastern taluks of the former Guntur district.

**Capital City**

Their capital Kotyadona was called the *nīśrajāhāṇi*. It figures also as Kotyada, Kottiyanadon, Kottadon and Kontridona. It was called a *pattana* meaning a city and compared to Alakapuri, the capital of Kubera, the god of riches, who is the regent of the north, in splendour. Kotyadona is identified with Konidena in Addanki taluk of Prakasam district. The discovery of as many as twenty-two inscriptions referring directly to the Konidena Cholas at Konidena alone makes such an identification of Kotyadona with Konidena plausible.
Genealogy of the Konidena Chōlas

The inscriptions present considerable difficulty in tracing the genealogy of the Konidena Chōlas. Many inscriptions give the names of the members of this family sometimes specifying the relationships and sometimes not. They are listed below.

1. Taingedumalle
   inscription
   inscription

2. Srlkalahasti
   inscription

3. Konidena
   inscription

4. Konidena
   inscription

Kāma Chōda
Kammapoda

Kāmarasār
Kannaradēva
Nādēvi

Kāma, (m. Srlīyadēvi)
Tribhuvanamalla

Tribhuvanamalla
(m. Sambalamahādēvi)
Namm Chōda
5. Chennupalli
Agraharam
inscription 14

6. Konidena

These different lists can be coordinated as below.

Kasmineva

Kannadéva  Chóda Balli  (m. Pómašadévi)

Mádévi    Kasmineva (m. Šríyadévi)

Tribhuvanamalla (m. Jftachaladévi)

Nani  Kannadéva  Chóda  Chóda
Chronology of the Konida Cholas

With the exception of a few, the records of these chiefs are dated in the Śaka era. Some mention the regnal years of their overlords besides the Śaka year. Some of the figures in the Śaka years are either damaged or worn out beyond recognition. However, an overall period of each ruler can be tentatively fixed.

Three inscriptions mention Kama Chôda or Kâmasêva Chôda. One of them is dated Ś. 1028 (1106 A.D.) and the regnal year is given as 42nd year of Kulôtunga. The other two are dated in Ś. 1033 (1111 A.D.) and they give the regnal years of Kulôtunga as 42 and 43. There is obviously some mistake in giving the regnal years. Depending on the Śaka years we can give him two dates, that is, 1105 A.D. and 1111 A.D. As his son and successor Kannaradêva is mentioned in two epigraphs of Ś. 1337 (1115 A.D.) it can be presumed that Kama Chôda ruled till that year, i.e., 1115 A.D. Kannaradêva is also mentioned in inscriptions of Ś. 1038 (1116 A.D.), Chêlukya-Vikrama year 46 (1122 A.D.), 12th year of Vikrama Chôla (1129 A.D.), and Ś. 1058 (1136 A.D.) and 4th year of Kulôtunga. These records place Kannaradêva between...
1115 and 1136 A.D. For the next chief Chōda Balli, or Ballaya Chōda or the brother of Kannaradeva we have only one date, that is, Š. 1057 (1135 A.D.) when his queen Ponnamadēvi is stated to have made certain grants to a temple. It is also to be noted that we have a date in 1137 A.D., for his son and successor Kāma Chōda Mahārāja. This means that this Chōda Balli did not come to power at all. But Kāma Chōda also does not appear to have stood long. In fact, for his son Tribhuvanamalla also we have a record dated 1137 A.D. This situation only indicates that Kāma Chōda was then in power only for a few months.

For Tribhuvanamalla we have as many as eight dates and they are Š. 1059 (1137 A.D.), 1064 (1142 A.D.), 1069 (1147 A.D.), 1070 (1148 A.D.) to 1073 (1151 A.D.) and 1075 (1153 A.D.). In three of these records, the 15th regnal year of Kulōttunga is mentioned, and it is equated with Š. 1059 (1137 A.D.) in one of them. This Kulōttunga can be identified with Chōla Kulōttunga II and as he came to power in 1133 A.D., Š. 1059 (1137 A.D.) would be his 5th regnal year and not his 15th which is apparently a mistake. In an inscription at Kanamarlapudi, in which Tribhuvanamalla is mentioned,
S. 1070 (1148 A.D.) is equated with the 4th regnal of Kulottunga which is also not correct. We may note here the inscription in which an early member of this family Kannaradeva is mentioned equating S. 1058 with the 4th regnal year of Kulottunga. Another inscription at Valaparla wherein Tribhuvanamalladeva figures mentions S. 1070 as corresponding date of the 16th regnal year of Kulottunga. Depending on the Saka years we can tentatively fix his date between 1137 and 1153 A.D. For his son Nanni Choda we have five dates and they are S. 1070 (1148 A.D.), 1073 (1151 A.D.), 1075 (1153 A.D.), 1077 (1157 A.D.) and 1082. These show that for sometime he seems to have been associated in the administration of the kingdom by his father. The date of his inscription at Degaramudi is doubtful. The Government Epigraphist reads it as S. 1002, or S. 1072, or S. 1082. V. Yasodadevi takes it as S. 1082 (1159 A.D.) and says that he ruled till that year. It could not be S. 1002 because we come across his records from S. 1070, and of the latter two dates there is every possibility of its being S. 1082. We can, therefore, tentatively fix his period between 1154 and 1159 A.D. His brother Kannaradeva is mentioned in two inscriptions dated S. 1081 (1159-60 A.D.) and S. 1098 (1176 A.D.). He thus seems to have
ruled between 1160 and 1176 A.D. All this discussion can be condensed into the chart as below.

The Rule of the Konidena Cholas

Kamadeva

About the rule of Kamadeva, the first member of this family, nothing is known except that he acknowledged the suzerainty of the Chola ruler Kulottunga I in 1111 A.D.
Kannaradeva

Kāmādeva was succeeded by his son Kannaradeva. Soon after becoming king, he visited the Somesvara temple built by his minister Māra at Koppāra in Kamma-vishaya and granted the Koppāra-grāma to the deity.36 Koppāra is identical with Koppāram in Narasaraopet taluk of Jntur district. Kannaradeva's brother Chōda Balli also granted the village Bidepalli to the same temple.37 This grant is stated to have been confirmed by Rudraya Nāyaka, and Sēnāpati Prōla, the son of Gunasāgara is also mentioned in this connection. V.Yasodadevi identifies Prōla with Kākatiya Prōla.38 This identification cannot be accepted because in the inscription he is described as a Sēnāpati and as a son of Gunasāgara. These Telugu Chōlas were subordinates of the imperial Chōlas. They appear to be changing sides now and then consequent to the fights between the Chōlas and Chālukyas. That is how we find Kannaradeva's inscription from Drākshārāma39 is dated in Chālukya-Vikrama year 46 (1122 A.D.), while his inscription of 1130 A.D. at Śrīkālahasti40 is dated in the 12th regnal year of Vikrama Chōla. These conflicting details only bear witness to the confused state of affairs during this period. In the Śrīkālahasti inscription mentioned above,
Madevi, the daughter of Kannaradeva, is said to have provided for a perpetual lamp in the temple at the place Kamadeva.

Kannaradeva was succeeded by his brother’s (Choda Balli) son Kāmadēva or Pottapi Kāmadēva Chōḍa II. But nothing is known about him also.

Tribhuvanamalla

Kāmadēva Chōḍa was succeeded by his son Tribhuvanamalla. His rule is represented by a large number of epigraphs obviously indicating his prominence in the line. He acknowledged the suzerainty of two Chola rulers, Kulottunga II and Rājarāja II. He bore the titles Karikāla-Kularatna, Kumārānku, Ādityavamsa-tīlaṇa, Tenkanāditva and Mahāmandalēvara. An epigraph at Konidena registers a gift of land and some taxes to the Tribhuvanamalla Śrī Kesāvedēva temple by Tribhuvanamalla and Velanāti Kulottunga Chōḍa Gonka. The mention of the Velanāti chief in this inscription is taken to mean that Tribhuvanamalla was defeated by Velanāti Gonka and that to indicate the liege lord relationship this epigraph was set up.
There is nothing in the inscription to warrant this conclusion. The mention of both the chiefs may be due to the fact that the villages gifted probably lay on the border of their territories and that both of them were subordinates of the same ruling monarch. It is not unlikely that both joined together in making a gift of a portion of the revenue realised from the sale of the salt manufactured at the salt pans held by both of them in common. An inscription of S. 1072 (1150 A.D.) also at Konidena records that Tribhuvanamalla conquered Kammanādu, Gundikarru and Mottavādi. The conquest of these areas must have been effected by him earlier, for yet another inscription at the same place registers a gift made by some individuals belonging to these areas. He had two wives, Māchaldēvi and Kāmidēvi. He had three sons by the first wife, and they were Nanni Chōda, Kannadarāva Chōda and Chōdadeva.

During the last years of his rule, he seems to have associated his eldest son, Nanni Chōda, in the administration of his principality. This is indicated by the overlapping of the dates of this chief as well as his son.

**Nanni Chōda and His Brothers**

On the death of Tribhuvanamalla, Nanni Chōda.
ascended the throne. Though he is referred to as the sole ruler in some of his records, there is reason to believe that he shared the administration of the kingdom with his brothers Kannaradēva and Chōḍadēva, for in an inscription at Boppudi dated Ś. 1079 (1157 A.D.) they informed their subjects in Kammanādu in their joint address that Sudanipādu was granted to Juvanērya, a Vaiṣṇya of Penugonda. It is said that Vēlanāṭi Kuṭṭungrā Chōḍa Gonka II led an expedition against them for a second time because they repudiated his authority and ruled independently. He is said to have defeated them in a battle at Cheruvulakōṭa identified with Kancheruvulakōṭa in Vinukonda taluk of Guntur district. It is also said that Nanni Chōda's brother Kannaradēva lost his life in this battle. Inscriptions of the latter, however, show that he was ruling from 1160 to 1176 A.D.

In this same period we come across another Nanni Chōda who was a famous Telugu poet and the author of the Kumārasambhavam. His father is stated to have been the governor of Pakanādu. Though V. Yasodādevi places him in Konidena family, there are no supporting grounds to do so.
1. JOR, XXX, p. 51.
2. SII, IV, No. 1328.
4. SII, VI, Nos. 620 and 651.
5. Ibid., Nos. 155, 163, 170, 606, 608, 610, 613, 620, 624, 634, 640 and 646.
6. Ibid., Nos. 606, 608, 609 and 632.
7. Ibid., No. 644.
8. Ibid., No. 624.
9. ARSTE for 1899-1900, part II, para 47.
10. SII, X, No. 73.
11. ARSTE, No. 102 of 1922.
12. SII, VI, No. 624.
13. Ibid., No. 645.
15. SII, VI, No. 609.
16. Ibid., X, Nos. 235, 67 and 68.
17. Ibid., Nos. 73 and 74.
18. Ibid., VI, No. 155.
19. Ibid., IV, No. 1328.
20. ARSTE, No. 102 of 1922.
21. SII, VI, No. 143.
22. Ibid., No. 170.
23. Ibid., No. 606.
24. Ibid., No. 530.
26. Ibid., Nos. 185, 189 and 192 of 1899.
27. Ibid., No. 217 of 1935-36.
28. SII, VI, No. 143.
30. ARSIE, Nos. 199, 200 and 205 of 1899, and 363 and 444 of 1915.
31. SII, X, No. 58.
32. Ibid., Appendix II, p. XXXVI.
33. JAHRS, XXIII, p. 58.
34. ARSIE, Nos. 341 of 1934-35 and 365 of 1915.
35. SII, X, No. 68.
36. Ibid., No. 74.
37. Ibid., No. 73.
38. JAHRS, XXIII, p. 55.
39. SII, IV, No. 1328.
40. ARSIE, No. 102 of 1922.
41. ARSIE, Nos. 185, 189 and 192 of 1899.
42. Ibid., No. 203 of 1897.
43. SII, VI, No. 635.
44. Ibid., No. 644.
45. Ibid., No. 639.
46. Ibid., X, No. 651.
47. Vijjanasarinayana, III, p. 212.
48. ARSIE, Nos. 341 of 1934-35, and SII, X, No. 75.
49. JAHRS, XXIII, pp. 51-53.