Nepal and South India

Thakurlal Manandhar.

A passage in 'The Chronology of Indian History' by C. Mabel Duff runs as follows:

"A.D. 1231-Monday, 7th April, ś. 1153 and ś. 1172. Ganapvesvaram and Ekamranath inscriptions. Ganapati, Kakatiya of Orangal, son and successor of Mahadeva, claims to have defeated Simhana (the Yadava Singhana II, A.D. 1210-1247), the king of Kalinga, and to have had the Lāṭa and Gauda kings as vassals. Ganapati's dates are stated by Professor Wilson (Mackenzie coll., I, CXXXI) to range from A.D. 1228-1261. On the other hand, tradition alleges that he died in A.D. 1257, when his widow Rudramā ā succeeded him. The Ganapvesvaram inscription mentions Ganapati's general, Jāya or Jāyana, who built at Dvīpa a temple to Siva called Ganapesvara or Ganapatisvara in honour of his patron, King Ganapati-I.A. XXI, 197. E.I. iii, 82 and ASSI, i and ii".

Again, another passage in the same work reads:

"A.D. 1257-Rudramā ādevi, wife (or daughter) of Ganapati, Kakatiya of Orangal, succeeds to the throne on his death. Tradition says she reigned thirty-eight years. Marco Polo mentions her as ruling at the time of his visit to that part of the country. For inscriptions see ASSI. i and ii".

Surprisingly enough, the Bendall Vamsāvali2 gives evidence of the fact that Ganapati, Kakatiya of Warnagal had the Gauda king as his vassal. This is mentioned in connection with the religious offerings and donations made by Yuvarājini Viramādevi, widow of the crown prince Yuvarāja Jayādityadeva in the shrine of Pashupatinath. It says, "Paschāt Gavudarājanamāgatam Kapa-tīyā Ganapatiśeṇa Kṛtam Vṛṣadhvaja Suvarna-lepitam Śrī Paṇapatiṣṭhāne Śrī Jaya Sakti sva (sya) mātā Vīramā devinā".

This means: "Later (after the year 417 N.E. corresponding to A.D. 1297) Viramādevi, mother of prince Jay Sakti (deva) had the image of the bull and the flag-staff plated with gold at the shrine of Pashupatinath which were set up by Kapatiyā Ganapati who had come from the kingdom of Gauda".

Dr. D.R. Regmi, the historian, was mistaken in taking this passage to mean that "one Gavudarāja had set up an image of Ganesa and plated with gold the flag-staff and the bull holding it in the
shrines of Pashupatināth. After much speculation as to who this Gavudarāja is, he concludes: 'As his name is not mentioned in the chronicle it is difficult to suggest anything about his identity'.

It was before A.D. 1231 that King Ganapati came to Nepal from the kingdom of Gauda since Ganapati Kākatiya reigned between 1198-1257. Dr. Regmi's contention that 'Gauda as a Hindu kingdom had ceased to exist at the time the chronicler makes a reference to its Raja' holds no ground. That 'Kapatiyā' is a wrong spelling for Kākatiyā is obvious. In the sentence we have quoted nam is a Newari ablative case-ending signifying 'from' and rājā is just a Newari variant of Sanskrit rājya since 'ya' is pronounced ye by Newari speakers. That the language of this passage is a mixture of debased Sanskrit and Newari is beyond doubt.

Historians of Andhra like M. Rama Rao tell us that the Kākatiyas rose to power under Polaraja II, that his grandson, Ganapati, extended his dominions as far as Kanchi in the South. The kingdom flourished under Rudramma, daughter of Ganapati, who is highly extolled by the Venetian traveller, Marco Polo. The power of the dynasty was destroyed by the Sultans of Delhi early in the fourteenth century. Andhra historians describe king Ganapati as a great builder; and since Nepal also could have had some sort of cultural relations with the Kākatiyas at least for about half a century, we can suppose that Nepal's style of architecture may have received some impetus from the South. K.P. Chattopadhyaya has shown the probable origin of the Pagoda-style of architecture in Kanara (South India). Havell suggested that this style in Nepal is founded on the Āṣana type of temple architecture in India; and K.P. Chattopadhyaya has further argued that "whether the pagoda style followed the line of evolution suggested by Havell or not, the balance of evidence is in favour of an Indian origin (in the limited sense of earlier existence) of a prototype of the pagoda style". It is not impossible that this type of temple-architecture was introduced into Nepal from the South in the wake of king Ganapati's visit to Nepal. If this did occur, we can infer that, in addition to his setting up of an image of a bull in front of the temple of Pashupatinath, he may have made a few other contributions to the temple building itself. Setting up a bull in front of a temple of Śiva brought in a new style which was not known in this country earlier. As historians tell us, the Kākatiyas were devoted worshippers of Śiva. Kakati is the name applied to the goddess Durga or Parvati, the consort of Śiva, and hence the name Kākatiyas was applied to the dynasty. They were of the Vaishya caste and some even say that they belonged to the fourth caste.

As a working hypothesis we may wonder whether there was some marriage connection between them and the ruling Banepa line of kings. Perhaps Viramādevi belonged to the dynasty of Kākatiyas. In that case we tend to believe that the kings of the Banepa line were Vaishyas. The Banepa line of kings originally founded by Jaya
Bhimadeva (who was called prior to his accession Bhonta Jaya Bhimadeva) were therefore Vaishya Thakuris in the Nepal historians' terminology. The sudden rise to power of Jaya Bhimadeva, who in a violent way succeeded Jayadeva, the last of king Arimalla's line, as well as the promotion of his son Jayādityadeva to Yuvarāja while Jaya Siha Malla of the Bhatgaon royal line was still being nominated as heir-apparent definitely point to a possible matrimonial relation. Prince Jayāditya proved to be so powerful that he deposed king Jaya Siha Malla, allowing him a reign of only 2 years and 7 months; he installed Anantamalla in his place; he also threw his own younger half-brother Andanadeva into prison at Palamchok. The fact that Yuvarājini Viramādevī gold-plated the statue of the bull raised by Kākatiya Ganapati also suggests the possibility of a kinship link between the two royal lines. Viramādevī, as her name suggests, must be related to the Kākatiyas as a sister to Rudramādevī since the Kākatiya King Ganapati had no male issue but only daughters. King Anantamalla was only a figurehead until the demise of the crown prince Jayadityadeva and only after his death could king Anantamalla declare himself as Vijayarāja in A.D. 417 on "Aśāda Sukla 5 Shri Pashupati Bhattarakasake Śhāpita Shri Ananta Malla devasya vijayarājya" as the Bendall Vamsāvalī7 puts it in its Newari portion. The waning of the power of the Banepa royal line was more or less contemporaneous with the fall of the Kākatiyas in the early quarter of the fourteenth century.

Note: Exactly at this period in history we find mentioned in the Chinese records that King Jayabhimaadeva collected and sent 80 artisans headed by Aniko, an accomplished artist and bronze-caster from Nepal to Tibet, and that he (Aniko) was persuaded from thence to go to China where he entered the service of Qubilai Khan. That was a period of great building activities in Nepal after Nepal had repeatedly suffered from earthquakes. The name Aniko, his father's name Lakona and grandfather's Mi-ti-ehr could perhaps be traced to South Indian originals.


FOOTNOTES

1. The chronology of Indian History: from the earliest times to the beginning of the sixteenth century, by C. Mabel Duff (Mrs. W.R. Rickmers), Reprint 1972. p. 183, and p. 199.

2. The Sanskrit part of the Copalaraja Vamsavali afterwards named as Copalaraja Vamsavali. This article is based on my reading of the copy printed in Himavat Sanskriti, year 1, No. 1.


New light on the Kākatīyas, J.A.H.R.S., vol. 6, Oct. 1931 Part II.


7. The Newari portion of the Copalaraja Vamsavali.