

SULAKAS AND MULAKAS

by

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The identification of Sulakas with Cholikas put forward by Rev. Mr. Heras seems to me untenable. Mere word resemblances unsupported by other facts, cannot be accepted as conclusive. As instances of this deceptive method we can put forward the resemblances between Sulakas and Salikis, Salkis etc. Salki, Chalukya, Salikya etc., are used as variants of the same word Chalukya e.g. the Bezwada inscription of Yuddhamalla; speculations as to the origin and exact connotation of the term mulaka as found in the name of an Andhra community "Mulaka Nadu", are too numerous to mention. Reference might be made to two of such theories put forward to show the futility of such linguistic gymnastics. One theory is that it derives its name from "Mulks", Ibrahim Mulk and his descendents; the other is that it ought to be Munikula Nadu, Both of these, to put it mildly, are fanciful.

Mulaka is mentioned in the Jatakas along with Assaka. The Assakas again must be differentiated from Aswakas, a term sometimes applied to the western Kshatrapas as Skandasishya is said to have taken the Ghatika of Kanchi from one Satyasena an Assaka. Asmaka was one of the eighteen earliest Janapadas mentioned in Buddhist literature. Panini mentions Asmaka (iv. 1. 173). In the Baveru Jataka, we are told that the disciples started from the Asmaka country to Mahissati, Ujjeni, Paithana of Mulaka country, Gonaddha, Vidisa, Vanasa, Havya, Kosambi, Saketa, Savatthi, Setavya, Kapilavatho, Kusinara, Pava, Vesali, and finally to Asmaka Chetya where the Buddha was residing. Avanti was evidently North of Assaka as they are spoken of together in Anguttara Nikaya and Sona Nanda Jataka. To the south there was the Mulaka country. Assaka and Mulaka like Kasi and Kosala were probably tribal names which gradually became identified with the country the tribes occupied from time to time. At the time of Alexander's invasion, the Assakeni were to be found in the North-west also.

Assaka is always found connected with Mulaka in the early Pali Literature which distinguishes between Assaka with its capital Patna or Potali, mulaka with its capital Paittana and Kalinga with its capital Dantipura. Thus we can exactly locate Assaka—to the north Avanti, to the East Kalinga and to the South Mulaka. In the Maha Govinda Sutta, Brahmadata of Assaka is mentioned as the contemporary of Satta Bahu of Kalinga, Vessa Bahu of Avanti,

Bharata of Souvira, Renu of Videha, Dasaratha of Anga and Dasaratha of Kasi. The *Mahabharata* contains the legend of one Asmaka who ruled at Podani,

*“Asmakō nāma rajarshih
Poudanyām yō nivesayēt”* ||

In the *Chulla Kalinga Jataka*, a king of Assaka and his minister Nandisena are spoken of as having won a victory over Kalinga. Potali is once spoken of as having been under the Suzerainty of Kasi. The *Vayu Purana* speaks of Asmaka and Mulaka as scions of the Ikshvaku line. The Puranas in general, speak of the Andhras Asmakas, and Mulakas as Mlechhas.

*Andhrāh sakāh Pulindāscha
Mulikāyavaṇ āsthathā !
Kaivartābhīra Sabarah
Yēchanyē mlechha sambhavaḥ !
Teshāmparē Janapadah
Dakshināpatha vāsinah !
Kārushācha sahaishikah
Atabhyā Sabarāstathā !
Pulindah vindhya Pushikah
Vaidarbhā Dandakaissahā ||*

(Matsya Purana)

The Sankhyayana Srouta sutra mentions Mutibas one of the numerous variants of the name Mulika, the others being Muchiba Muchipa, Muvipa, Mushaka, Mushika, Mulaka, Chuchuka, Chulika Sulika etc.

*Abhirah saha chai shikah
Atabhyā ssabarascha yē !
Pulindah vindhya mulika
Vaidarbhā Dandakaissahā ||*

(Vayu Purana)

*Dakshināpatha Janmānah
Sarvē naravurandhrakah !
Guhah pulindah chuchuka
Sabarah Madrakai ssahā ||*

(Mahabharata XII)

Though the name Asmaka is not to be found after Christian Era, the names Mulaka and Mulaka Nadu as a part of Andhra country occur in inscriptions down to the sixteenth century. In the Nasik Inscription of Balasri, Asaka and Mulaka are mentioned together.

*“Asika Asaka Mulaka Suratha kukurā paranta
Anupa vidabha Akaravati Rajasa”*

(Epi. Ind. VIII)

The Mushakas are also mentioned in the Kharavela Inscription (J. B. O. R. S. 1917). Bhagavanlal Indraji identified Mulakas

with Nundakas. Senart however denies the identification of Assakas with the Arsakidae and thinks they are the same as Rishikas mentioned in the Mahabharata.

Kambhojah Rishikāyecha

Paschimanupa Kaschaye ||

Later on, under the Chalukyas, the country is called Vengi-Mulaka Nadu, Isanavarman is also credited with having defeated both the Andhras and Sulikas. (Jitvandrādhīpatim.....Bhanktvārane Sulikan), who were evidently neighbours. An inscription at Rameswara in the Proddatur Taluk of the Kadapa District tells us that the Proddaturu sima and Chernuri sima were included in the Mulaka Nadu, a sub-division of Gandikota sima a part of Udayagiri Rajya. Later on, in the days of Deva Raya II of Vijayanagara, Vinukonda Vallabhamatya—the patron of the poet Srinatha and author of Kridabhiramamu, was the ruler of Mopuru in Mulaka Nadu a sub-division of Udayagiri Rajya. However, unlike Velanadu which possessed a distinct line of rulers during the medieval days, Mulaka Nadu had no distinct political independence. But yet it preserved an individuality and integrity of its own because of the numerous far famed scholars in the community who commanded universal respect from all classes all over south India.