

The Rashtrakutas

Origin of the Rashtrakutas

There are many theories regarding the origin of the Rashtrakutas. The view of Fleet was that the Rashtrakutas were the descendants of the Rathors of the North. The view of Burnell was that the Rashtrakutas were connected with the Dravidian Raddis of Andhradesa. The most probable view seems to be that the Rashtrakutas of Malkhed descended from the Rastikas or Rathikas who were so important in the middle of the third century B.C. that they were mentioned in the edicts of Asoka.

It is suggested that the designation of the Rashtrakutas arose from an official designation. Officials named Rashtrakuta meaning thereby the head of a Rashtra or district are mentioned in many records. The family of the imperial Rashtrakutas introduced in the 9th century a claim that it descended from the Yadu family of the Mahabharata times. The court poets of the Rashtrakuta rulers up to 808 A.D. compared the Rashtrakuta family with the Yadu race and contended that the Rashtrakutas became as invincible with the birth of Govind III as the Yadu family became invincible with the birth of Murari or Lord Krishna. The author of the Sanjan Grant of 871 A.D. declared Lord Krishna to be the progenitor of the Rashtrakuta family which was identified with Yadavanvaya. In the later records, the Rashtrakutas were made the descendants of the eponymous Ratta, born in the family of kings who were styled Tunga and belonged to the Satyaki branch of the Yadu-vamsa. Inscriptions refer to individuals and families known as Rashtrakutas ruling in different parts of the Deccan before the collapse of the Chalukyas of Badami about the middle of the 8th Century A.D. *Govindaraja*, a Rashtrakuta, appears to have ruled the Satara-Ratnagiri region under the Chalukya king Vikramaditya II about 743 A.D. It cannot be said definitely whether he had any relation with the earlier Rashtrakutas of the same area who ruled in the 5th and 6th centuries A.D. Another Rashtrakuta family ruled in the Betul and Ellichpur districts of Madhya Pradesh in the 7th and 8th centuries A.D.

Inscriptions and coins tell us that Rathika and Maharathi families occupied Maharashtra and portions of Karnataka in the capacity of feudatory rulers. According to Dr. A.S. Altekar, their original home was in Karnatak and their mother tongue was Kanarese. They are described in many inscriptions as "Lords of Lattalura, the excellent town." It is pointed out that there is a Kanarese-speaking locality known as Latur in the Bidar district in former Nizam State. These arguments are opposed to the view of some scholars that the Malkhed Rashtrakutas were the natives of Maharashtra.

Rise of the Dynasty

The first rulers of the Rashtrakuta dynasty were Dantivarman, Indra I, *Govinda I*, Karka I and Indraraja II. They do not seem to have achieved anything important. As a matter of fact, we do not even know definitely where their territory was. The view of Dr. Altekar is that their territory was "somewhere in Berar." The family must have migrated from its original home in Karnataka. According to

Dr. Altekar, the Rashtrakutas were either the direct or the collateral descendants of the Rashtrakuta king, Nannaraja Yudhasura who was ruling at Ellichpur in Berar in the middle of the 7th century A.D.

Dantidurga

The Rashtrakutas of Manyakheta began their career of greatness under *Dantidurga* as he was the first independent ruler of this dynasty. The records of his reign give a grand picture of the victorious career of *Dantidurga*. It is stated that he fought on the banks of the Mahi, Mahanadi and Reva and won victories over Kanchi, Kalinga, Kosala, Shri-Saila, Malava, Lata and Tanka. He is stated to have performed the *Hiranyagarbha* ceremony at Ujjain in which "kings such as the Gurjara lord and others were made door-keepers." He defeated the Chalukya king and also won victory over Vallabha. He is stated to have wrested the supreme authority from the Chalukyas and "humbled the circle of proud kings from the Himalayas down to the limit of Setu."

Dr. A.S. Altekar points out that though, *Dantidurga* was the real tounder of the greatness of the Rashtrakutas, it is difficult to arrange in a chronological order his various victories. According to him, some of his victories were won while he was still a feudatory of the Chalukyas. He took part in the campaign organised by *Vikramaditya II*, the Chalukya emperor and *Pulakesin* to push back the Arabs. A bloody battle was fought in about 738 A.D. in which the Arabs were so completely defeated that they never dared to invade Gujarat again. The Chalukya emperor was so happy that he conferred the titles of *Prithvivallabha* and *Khadgavaloka* on *Dantidurga*. *Dantidurga* followed *Vikramaditya II* in his expedition against Kanchi in about 743 A.D. and shared the credit for the victory over the Pallavas.

When *Vikramaditya II* died in 747 A.D., *Dantidurga* started a career of conquests. However, he avoided coming into conflict with the Chalukya emperor. He destroyed the Gurjara kingdom of Nandipuri and appointed his nephew to rule over that region. He led an expedition into Malava. He brought eastern Madhya Pradesh under his political influence. By 750 A.D., *Dantidurga* became the master of central and southern Gujarat and the whole of Madhya Pradesh and Berar. *Kirtivarman II*, the Chalukya king, decided to fight against *Dantidurga* and the armies of the two met in Khandesh. *Dantidurga* was victorious and he became the master of the whole of Maharashtra by the end of 753 A.D. *Dantidurga* also took up the titles of *Maharajadhiraja*, *Parameshvara* and *Paramabhataraka*. *Dantidurga* died sometime before 758 A.D. and was succeeded by his uncle *Krishna I*.

Krishna I (758–773 A.D.)

Although *Kirtivarman*, the Chalukya ruler, had been defeated by *Dantidurga* he had not been completely crushed. This was done by *Krishna I*. *Kirtivarman* was defeated by *Krishna I* and the Chalukya empire was completely finished by about 760 A.D. After that, *Krishna I* defeated the Gangas who were ruling in Mysore and occupied their capital for some time. *Krishna I* also sent *Govinda* to invade the Chalukya king of Vengi. The expedition was successful. *Krishna I* also defeated another king named Rahappa. He also conquered Southern Konkan. The whole of the Marathi-speaking part of Madhya Pradesh came under the control of *Krishna I*.

Krishna I was not only a great conqueror but also a great builder. He got a magnificent temple of Siva constructed at Ellora. This was made of solid rock. According to Dr. V.A. Smith, this temple is "the most marvellous architectural freak in India." It is considered to be a marvel of architecture. *Krishna I* took up the titles of *Subhatunga* and *Akalavarsha*.

Govinda II (773–780 A.D.)

Krishna I was succeeded by his eldest son *Govinda II*. He took up the title of *Prabhutavarsha Vikramavaloka*. It is true that as Yuvraj, he had inflicted a crushing defeat on the Chalukya king of Vengi, but after ascending the throne, he became a worthless person. He took to a life of pleasures and debauchery. The work of administration was left in the hands of his younger brother, *Dhruva*. After

some time, *Govinda* realised the danger of the situation and removed *Dhruva* from the administration. *Dhruva* took up arms and there was a fight between two brothers in which *Govinda* was defeated and *Dhruva* was successful.

Dhruva (780–793 A.D.)

After ascending the throne, *Dhruva* took up the titles of *Nirupama Kali-Vallabha*, *Dharavarsha* and *Shri-Vallabha*.

Dhruva decided to punish those rulers who had helped his brother against him. *Muttarasa*, the Ganga king, was defeated and his Crown prince *Sivamara* was taken prisoner. The whole of Gangavadi was annexed. *Dhruva* proceeded against *Dantivarman*, the Pallava ruler, and the latter made an offer of elephants to *Dhruva*. The ruler of Vengi was also humbled. All these victories made *Dhruva* the overlord of the whole of the Deccan.

All this did not satisfy the ambition of *Dhruva* and he decided to make himself the overlord of Northern India. He caused *Vatsaraja*, the Pratihara ruler of Ujjain, "to enter upon the path of misfortune in the centre of (the deserts of) Moaru" which means that *Dhruva* defeated his enemy and drove him into the inhospitable regions of Rajputana. *Dhruva* also invaded the territories of the Gangetic Doab in the reign of *Indrayudha* and "added the emblem of the Ganges and the Jamuna to his imperial insignia." *Dhruva* also marched against *Dharmapala* of the Pala Dynasty. He was successful against his adversary and the latter had to run away from the battlefield leaving behind his white imperial umbrellas. *Dhruva* spent some weeks on the banks of Ganga and Jamuna and added these two rivers in the banner of the Rashtrakutas. *Dhruva* could not go up to Kanauj and occupy the same. However, he returned in about 790 A.D. with an enormous booty.

Dr. Altekar rightly points out that "at the close of *Dhruva*'s reign the Rashtrakuta power had reached its zenith. The Ganga Crown prince was in the Rashtrakuta prison, and the Pallava king could save himself only by surrender; *Vatsaraja* had fled and *Dharmapala* had been overthrown. There was no power in the country to challenge the Rashtrakuta supremacy."

Govinda III (793–814 A.D.)

Dhruva was succeeded by *Govinda III* in 793 A.D. and he continued to rule till 814 A.D. He had to face a lot of trouble at the beginning. *Stambha*, the Governor of Gangavadi and the elder brother of *Govinda III*, challenged his succession to the throne. The cause of *Stambha* was taken up by a number of feudatories and neighbours. However, *Govinda III* was able to put down the revolt of "twelve kings headed by *Stambha*." *Stambha* was made a prisoner. *Govinda III* gave a very generous treatment to his brother and appointed him once again the Governor of Gangavadi and *Stambha* remained loyal for the rest of his life.

Sivamara, a Ganga prince, was a prisoner of the Rashtrakutas. He was released by *Govinda III* after his accession. Probably that was done with a view to put a check on the ambitions of *Stambha*. However, *Sivamara* took the side of *Stambha*. The result was that when a reconciliation was brought about between *Govinda III* and *Stambha*, the position of *Sivamara* became precarious. He was defeated, captured and put into prison.

Dantiga, the Pallava king, was compelled to submit to *Govinda III*. *Vishnuvardhana IV*, the ruler of Vengi, was a maternal grandfather of *Govinda III* and consequently, he did not challenge the authority of *Govinda III*. The result was that by 795 A.D., *Govinda III* became the undisputed overlord of the Deccan.

Govinda III was an ambitious man and he decided to try his luck in Northern India. Elaborate preparations were made for that purpose. *Govinda III* marched through Bhopal and Jhansi and his objective was Kanauj. *Nagabhata II*, the Pratihara ruler, came to meet *Govinda III* in the battlefield and the same was fought in Bundelkhand. *Govinda III* was victorious and *Nagabhata II* had to run

away to Rajputana. *Chakrayudha*, the puppet ruler of Kanauj, made an unconditional surrender to *Govinda III*. That was considered to be enough and no effort was made to march to Kanauj and occupy the same. *Dharmapala*, the ruler of Bengal, also submitted. *Dharmapala* was of the view that it was politic to submit before *Govinda III* and not to oppose him. He was convinced that *Govinda III* would not stay in Northern India for long and as *Nagabhata II* had run away to Rajputana, he would be able to take advantage of the situation created by the withdrawal of *Govinda III* from the North. As a matter of fact *Dharmapala* was grateful to *Govinda III* for breaking the power of *Nagabhata II*.

In addition to the Pratihara and Pala kings, many more kings of Northern India were humbled by *Govinda III*. However, *Govinda III* reinstated them in their dominions. He proceeded as far as the Himalayas. He returned and "followed again the bank of Narmada ... and acquiring the Malava country along with the Kosala, the Kalinga, the Vanga (or Vengi), the Dahala, and the Odraka, that *Vikrama (Govinda III)* made his servants enjoy them."

There has been a lot of controversy with regard to the year in which the expedition to the North took place. Formerly, the view was that this was done in 806 A.D. or 807 A.D. The present view is that it was done in 800 or 802 A.D.

Vishnuvardhana, the ruler of Vengi, was the maternal grandfather of *Govinda III*. When he died in 799 A.D., he was succeeded by his son, *Vijayaditya II*. Foolishly, the new ruler challenged *Govinda III*, but he was defeated and dethroned. His younger brother was put on the throne of Vengi.

When *Govinda III* was away in Northern India, the Ganga, Kerala, Pandya and Pallava rulers formed a confederacy to fight against *Govinda III*. However, *Govinda III* was more than a match for all of them and they were completely routed in 802 A.D. The king of Ceylon was struck with fear and he also submitted. He sent two statues to *Govinda III*, one of which was of his minister and the other of himself. One of these statues was placed by *Govinda III* in the Siva temple at Kanchi.

According to Dr. A.S. Altekar, "*Govinda III* was undoubtedly the ablest of the Rashtrakuta emperors, unrivalled in courage, generalship, statesmanship, and martial exploits. His invincible armies had conquered all the territories between Kanauj and Cape Comorin, and Banaras and Broach. Vengi was governed by a nominee of his, and the power of the Dravidian kings in the extreme south was completely broken. Even the ruler of Ceylon was terrified into submission. Never again did the prestige of the Rashtrakuta empire rise so high."

Amoghavarsha I or Sarva (814-878 A.D.)

Govinda III was succeeded by his son named *Sarva*, who is better known as *Amoghavarsha*. He took up the titles of *Nripatunga*, *Maharajashanda*, *Vira-Narayana* and *Atisaya-dhavalala*.

At the time of his succession to the throne, *Amoghavarsha* was a boy of 13 or 14. Before his death, *Govinda III* seems to have entrusted the work of administration to Karka. The arrangement worked well for some time. However, the forces of disruption soon made their appearance. There were dissensions in the royal house and ultimately the ministers were affected with disloyalty. The tributary princes became rebellious. The ruler of Gangavadi asserted his independence. *Vijayaditya II*, the ruler of Vengi, who had been dethroned by *Govinda III*, attacked the Rashtrakuta empire to have revenge. The result of all this was that anarchy stalked through the land and ultimately *Amoghavarsha* lost his throne. However, it appears that he regained the throne before April 821 A.D. *Amoghavarsha* was still young and his position remained insecure for a long time.

After restoring order and authority within the empire, *Amoghavarsha* attacked *Vijayaditya II* and defeated him in about 830 A.D. After this victory, the armies of the Rashtrakutas remained in occupation of Vengi for about 12 years. However, the city was recaptured by a General of *Vijayaditya II* before 845 A.D.

During the first 20 years of reign of *Amoghavarsha*, there was a continuous war between the Rashtrakutas and the Gangas. The latter were able to drive out the Rashtrakutas from most of their

territory. Ultimately, *Amoghavarsha* came to terms with them by marrying his daughter to a Ganga prince.

It is stated in the Sirur plates that the rulers of Anga, Vanga, Magadha, Malava and Vengi paid homage to *Amoghavarsha*. It is contended that these claims seem to be mere boasts without any basis in fact.

Both in the North and the South, the arms of *Amoghavarsha* did not make any progress. On the other hand, *Mihira Bhoja*, the Pratihara ruler, overran the tracts round Ujjayini up to the Narmada river and perhaps beyond. The credit of repelling this invasion goes not to *Amoghavarsha I* but to *Dhruva II*.

It is contended that the lack of martial spirit in *Amoghavarsha* was partly due to his leanings towards religion and literature. The principles of Jainism appealed to his heart and intellect. However, this does not mean that he gave up his sympathy or attachment towards Hinduism. In the Sanjan plates *Amoghavarsha* is described as a devout worshipper of goddess Mahalakshmi.

Amoghavarsha was a patron of literature and he patronised *Jinasena*, *Mahaviracharya*, and *Sakatayana*. *Jinasena* wrote the *Adipurana*. *Mahaviracharya* wrote *Ganitasarasamgraha*. *Sakatayana* was the author of *Amoghavritti*. *Amoghavarsha* himself wrote *Kavirajamarga* which is the earliest Kanarese work on poetics.

Amoghavarsha fixed his capital at Mayakheta or Malkhed in former Nizam's territory. It cannot be said with certainty whether *Amoghavarsha* was the actual founder of the city or not. However, it is definite that the prosperity and importance of that city was due to *Amoghavarsha*.

We are told that the last days of the reign of *Amoghavarsha I* were spent mostly in religious exercises. The king began to retire into solitude for short intervals to practise meditation. During those intervals, he left the administration of the country in hands of the Crown prince or a Council of Ministers.

According to Dr. Altekar, "*Amoghavarsha's* name will endure as of a ruler who established peace and order in his kingdom, encouraged art and literature, practised the principles he preached, and did not flinch even from offering a limb of his body by way of sacrifice, when he thought that public welfare demanded it."

Krishna II (878–914 A.D.)

Amoghavarsha I was succeeded by his son, *Krishna II*, who ruled for 36 years. Like his father, he had leanings towards Jainism. He took up the titles of *Akalavarsha* and *Subhatunga*.

It is claimed in many inscriptions that *Krishna II* terrified the Gurjaras, destroyed the pride of Latas, taught humility to Gaudas and his command was obeyed by the rulers of Anga, Kalinga, Ganga and Magadha. All this shows that most of the time of *Krishna II* was spent in wars.

The most important wars of *Krishna II* were those against the Pratiharas and Eastern Chalukyas. *Krishna II* fought against *Bhoja*, the Pratihara ruler. In this war, *Krishnaraja* played an important part on behalf of *Krishna II*.

Krishna II had also to fight against the Eastern Chalukyas. It has been mentioned above that *Vijayaditya III*, the ruler of Vengi, liberated his country from the Rashtrakutas during the reign of *Amoghavarsha I*. When *Krishna II* came to the throne, *Vijayaditya* decided to take the offensive and for a time he was successful. He also attacked the Nolambas and the Gangas who were the feudatories of the Rashtrakutas. His armies penetrated right into the heart of Berar. The result was that *Krishna II* was defeated on all fronts. However, he reorganised his forces, got help from his feudatories and hurled back the Chalukya invaders. The victory was decisive and *Bhima*, the Chalukya ruler, was made a prisoner. After some time, *Bhima* was released and allowed to go back to his kingdom. However, he was to act as a feudatory. It appears that *Bhima* revolted once again but he was defeated in a bloody battle.

Krishna II had his relations with the Cholas. *Aditya I*, the Chola king, was married to a daughter of *Krishna II*. In spite of that, *Krishna II* invaded the Chola kingdom in order to put his grandson on the throne. However, he was defeated at Vallala. It is pointed out that most of the wars of *Krishna II* ended in failure and sometimes in disaster although there were some initial successes.

Indra III (914–922 A.D.)

Krishna II was succeeded by his grandson *Indra III*. He took the titles of *Nityavarsha*, *Rattakandarpa*, *Kirtinarayana* and *Rajamartanda*. *Indra III* renewed the war against the Pratiharas. It is stated that the expedition of *Indra III* was merely a phase of the old hostility between the two powers. *Indra III* marched against Kanauj and occupied it. The capture of Kanauj was a very great achievement for the Rashtrakutas. It is stated that Mahipala ran away and many persons were sent to pursue him. The war against Vengi was fought but there was not much success on either side.

Indra III died in 922 A.D. and he was succeeded by his son *Amoghavarsha II*. However, he was killed by his younger brother *Govinda IV*. *Govinda IV* was a young man of 25 at the time of his accession to the throne. He started living a life of pleasures and vices. He became a tyrant. He was removed from the throne by his uncle, *Amoghavarsha III*, who ruled from 936 to 939 A.D. *Amoghavarsha* was known for his righteousness but he did not take any active interest in the administration of the country. During his reign, the government was carried on by his son *Krishna* who later on succeeded him. An expedition was sent to Gangavari and its ruler was deposed. An expedition was also sent to Bundelkhand and the forts of Kalanjar and Chitrakuta were captured.

Krishna III (940–968 A.D.)

Soon after his accession to the throne, *Krishna III* invaded the Chola kingdom along with *Butuga*, his brother-in-law. The important cities of Kanchi and Tanjore were captured in 943 A.D. The Chola king was able to push back the invaders from some territory but the invaders remained in effective control of Tondamandalam consisting of Arcot, Chingleput and Vellore Districts. In 949 A.D., the Chola army was defeated in the battle of Takkolam. *Krishna III* led his victorious march up to Rameshvaram where he built a pillar of victory. He built the temples of *Krishneswara* and *Gandamartandaditya* at or near Rameshvaram to shine there "as resplendent hills of fame." Tondamandalam was annexed to the Rashtrakuta empire.

In about 963 A.D., *Krishna III* led an expedition to Northern India. He seems to have marched into Bundelkhand but nothing else is known about him. He also led an expedition to Malava and occupied Ujjain. He also brought Vengi under his control by putting his nominee on the Vengi throne.

Dr. Altekar is of the opinion that *Krishna III* was one of the ablest monarchs of the Rashtrakuta dynasty. He may not have been as successful in his campaigns in Northern India as *Dhruva*, *Govinda III* or *Indra III*, but it cannot be denied that he was the lord of the whole of the Deccan. *Krishna III* was in effective possession of a large part of the Chola kingdom and his temples proclaim his conquest of the extreme south of the Peninsula. No other Rashtrakuta king was the overlord of the entire Deccan in so complete a sense of the term as *Krishna III* was.

Khottiga

Krishna III was succeeded by his younger brother named *Khottiga* in 967 A.D. The new ruler was an old man. No wonder, he was not able to meet the invasion of his kingdom by the Parmara king named *Siyaka*. The latter was successful in capturing and plundering Malkhed, the capital of the Rashtrakutas, in 972 A.D. The treasury was emptied. This was too much for *Khottiga* who died broken-hearted in September 972 A.D.

Karka II

Karka II succeeded Khottiga. The prestige of the empire was already gone and the new ruler worsened the situation by bad administration. The result was that within 18 months of his coming to the throne, *Karka II* lost his throne. What actually happened was that *Taila II* who was a feudatory of the Rashtrakutas made preparations against the new king and revolted in the end of 973 A.D. *Karka II* was defeated and managed to run away. Efforts were made to restore the Rashtrakutas but all those failed and by 975 A.D., *Taila* became the overlord of the Deccan. Thus it was that after a vigorous career of almost two centuries and a quarter, the imperial Rashtrakutas disappeared from history.

Rashtrakuta Administration

King: In Rashtrakuta administration, the king was the centre and fountain of all power. His titles were *Maharajadhiraja*, *Paramabhattacharaka*, *Dharavarsha*, *Akalavarsha*, *Suvarnavarsha*, *Vikramavolaka* and *Fagattunga*. The king attended the royal court regularly except when he was away in connection with some expedition. There was a lot of pomp and show at the royal court. That was considered to be a visible proof of the might of the king. At the reception hall, visitors were admitted only by express permission of the royal chamberlain. Feudatories and ambassadors had to wait until they were ushered in by the officials. The emperor was seated on an imposing throne, wearing a number of costly jewels and ornaments. A bodyguard was always in attendance. Dancing girls, also added to the dignity of the scene. The court of the king was attended by vassal chiefs, foreign ambassadors, high military and civil officers, poets, doctors, astrologers and the representatives of the guilds.

Kingship was hereditary and usually the eldest son succeeded to the throne. He was formally installed as *Yuvaraja*. In certain cases, a younger son could also be appointed heir-apparent if he was considered to be abler. Such a thing was done in the case of *Govinda III*. In certain cases, the elder brothers were deposed by the younger brothers. This was done by *Dhruva* and *Govinda IV*.

It was the duty of *Yuvaraja* to help the King in the administration of the country. He was expected to lead military expeditions or accompany his father on those expeditions. The princes other than the *Yuvaraja* were appointed as provincial governors. Princesses also occupied important government posts in the Rashtrakuta period. *Chandrabelabba*, a daughter of *Amoghavarsha I*, administered the Raichur Doab in 837 A.D. *Silabhattacharika* made a land grant without the permission of her husband *Dhruva*. On many occasions, succession was not a peaceful one.

Ministers: The work of the administration was carried on by the king with the help of ministers. We do not possess definite information regarding the names of the portfolios of the various ministers. However, the ministry must have consisted of the Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, Revenue Minister, Treasurer, Chief Justice, Commander-in-Chief, and Purohita or head priest. We do not know anything regarding the qualifications of the ministers and the manner in which they were appointed. However, it can be presumed that they must have been chosen for their general competence and proficiency in political and military matters. Most of the ministers were also military officers. There was complete confidence between the king and his ministers. The latter are described as the right-hand of the king.

We have no knowledge about the existence of a superior civil service like that of the *Amatyas* under the Mauryas or the *Kumaramatyas* under the Guptas. We do not know as to how the central government exercised supervision and control over the various provinces and districts within the empire. However, it appears that there were officers of the central government under the Rashtrakutas who went on tours of inspection throughout the empire. Feudatories and district officers were often called to the capital to explain their conduct. The central government employed its own agents to keep a watch over the whole of the empire and it was their duty to send the necessary information to the central government.

Vassal States: The Rashtrakuta empire was partly directly administered and partly it consisted of the vassal states. Important feudatories enjoyed almost complete autonomy. They could even alienate

villages without the consent of the king. They had their own sub-feudatories. The latter had very little of independent power and were called Rajas merely by courtesy. They could not alienate land without sanction from higher authorities. The feudatories were required to obey the orders of the sovereign. They had to attend his court at periodical intervals. They were bound to pay regular tribute. They had to supply a certain number of soldiers. Sometimes they were required to take part personally in the military campaigns of the king. They had to keep a resident of the Central government in their courts. Likewise, they had to keep their own representatives at the imperial capital to keep a watch over the happenings there. If the feudatories revolted, they were subjected to a number of indignities. They were required to surrender their treasures, elephants and horses.

Directly Administered Areas: As regards the directly administered areas, those were divided into *Rashtras* and *Vishayas*. The number of villages in a *Vishaya* varied from 1,000 to 4,000. Each *Vishaya* was subdivided into *Bhuktis* and each *Bhukti* consisted of 50 to 70 villages. The *Bhuktis* seem to have been named after the names of the towns of the headquarters. Each *Bhukti* was divided into 20 villages. The village was the smallest administrative unit.

The head of a *Rashtra* was *Rashtrapati*. He was in charge of both civil and military administration. It was his duty to maintain peace and order within the area in his jurisdiction. He was required to keep a watchful eye on lesser feudatories and officers. If any one became rebellious, he was required to put him down immediately. The *Rashtrapati* had a sufficient military force under his command. He was usually a military officer as well. He enjoyed the status and titles of a vassal. A *Rashtrapati* can be compared with *Uparika* in Gupta administration. It was their duty to collect the land revenue. They were also required to keep careful records of local rights and privileges. They were required to note down the names and numbers of the lands and villages whose revenue had been granted to temples and Brahmanas. They could not alienate any revenue without the permission of the king. They could not appoint district and sub-divisional officers.

Vishapatis and *Bhogapatis* exercised the same functions within a restricted area which were performed by the *Rashtrapatis* within a wider area. Appointments to the above posts were made either as a reward for military service or as a recognition of the administrative ability. In some cases, posts became hereditary.

Vishapatis and *Bhogapatis* performed their duties of revenue collection with the help of the hereditary revenue officers known as *Nadgavundas* or *Desagramakutas*. These officers were paid in the form of rent free lands.

Village administration was carried on by the village headman and the village accountant. These posts were usually hereditary. The headman was responsible for maintaining law and order in the village. He had a local militia at his disposal. The peace of the village was not disturbed by thieves and dacoits but it was disturbed by the rebellions of feudatories and rivalries of neighbouring villages. Headmen were required to discharge the duties of military captains. They were responsible for the collection of village revenues. They had to pay the revenue to the royal treasury or put the same in granaries. The village accountant worked as an assistant.

The question has been asked as to how far there was a popular voice in the administration of the country. The view of Dr. Altekar is that the popular element was fairly effective. Each village had a popular council on which every adult householder was represented. Sub-committees were appointed to manage local schools, tanks, temples and roads. They could also receive trust properties and administer them according to the conditions laid down by the donors. The sub-committees were required to work in co-operation with the village headman. Village councils also decided civil suits and those decisions were enforced by the Government. There were similar popular councils in towns.

There are references to *Vishayamahattaras* or Elders of the District and *Rashtramahattaras* or Elders of the Province. It appears that there must have been popular bodies at the headquarters of the district and province. Their functions were similar to those of the village councils. We have no

direct evidence to show the existence of council of the districts and provinces. A popular assembly or Parliament at the capital of Rashtrakuta empire is not mentioned anywhere. It is possible that there may not have been any council as such. That must have been partly due to the difficulties of communications and transport in those days.

The popular voice must have been effective only in the villages.

Military: The Rashtrakuta emperors were very ambitious persons and no wonder they did all that they could to make their military machine powerful and efficient. The Rashtrakuta rulers maintained big armies but we have no definite information regarding their exact number. Dr. Altekar is of the opinion that the Rashtrakuta army could not have been less than 5 lakhs. A large part of the army was stationed at the capital. There was also an army of the South and an army of the North. Standing armies were maintained for purposes of defence and also for conquests. The army was famous for its infantry division, but this does not mean that cavalry was not important. Some battalions were supplied by feudatories and provincial governors. This was done when some important military venture was to be undertaken. The troops of the military castes had their military training before joining the army. The commissariat was organised with the help and co-operation of rich merchants. Recruits to the army were taken from all the castes, including Brahmanas and Jains. The Rashtrakuta Generals like *Bankeya*, *Srivijaya*, *Narasimha*, etc., were Jains.

Sources of Revenue: There were many sources of revenue of the Rashtrakuta empire. A lot of money came in the form of tributes from the feudatories. Income also came from mines, forests and waste lands. Land tax known as *Uddranga* or *Bhogakara* brought in a lot of money. It was about one-fourth of the produce. It was collected in kind in two or three instalments. The lands given to Brahmanas and temples were also taxed although the rate was lower. Remissions of land revenue were made only on the occasion of famines. Taxes were also connected with fruits, vegetables, etc. Octroi and excise duties were levied on a large number of articles. Villagers were required to arrange for free boarding, lodging and transport for officers visiting the village.

Religious Condition

The worship of Siva and Vishnu was popular within the Rashtrakuta empire. There are many references to these gods in the inscriptions. Their seals have either *Garuda*, *Vahana* of Vishnu or Siva, seated in the attitude of yoga. Many Brahmanical sacrifices were performed during this period. *Dantidurga* celebrated the *Hiranyagarbha* sacrifice at *Ujjayini* or *Ujjain*. There are references to *Tuladanas* or gifts of gold equal to one's own weight.

Temples were constructed to instal images for purposes of worship. These images were worshipped every day and an elaborate ritual was employed on that occasion. The only important monument of this period is the Siva temple at *Ellora*.

Jainism was patronised by *Amoghavarsha I*, *Indra IV*, *Krishna II* and *Indra III*. Buddhism had declined during this period and its important centre was *Kanheri*.

Art

The Rashtrakutas made a splendid contribution to Indian art. The rock-cut shrines at *Ellora* and *Elephanta* belong to this period. The temple of *Kailasa* at *Ellora* is the most extensive and sumptuous. This temple was hewn out of a rocky hill-side by *Krishna I* in the 8th century. It is similar to the *Lokesvara* temple at *Pattadakal*. It is hewn out of a great rectangular quarry. It measures 276 feet long and 154 feet wide with a scrap of 107 feet deep at the back. There are four main parts of the temples and those are the main shrine, the entrance gateway to the west, a *Nandi* pavilion and cloisters all round the courtyard. It is possible that the supplementary shrines were excavated at a later date. According to *Piggot*, "There is an immense profusion of sculptured ornament in high relief and the most outstanding feature in this respect is the huge frieze of elephants and monsters around the plinth

... which rather unexpectedly succeeds in bearing the obvious weight of the superstructure despite its contorted frenzy of movements". (Some Ancient Cities of India, p. 64). The sculptured panels of Dasavatara Bhairava, Ravana shaking the Mount Kailasa, dancing Shiva and Vishnu and Lakshmi listening to music are superb. According to Percy Brown, "The temple of Kailasa at Ellora is not only the most stupendous single work of art executed in India, but as an example of rock architecture it is unrivalled. Standing within its precincts and surrounded by its grey and hoary pavilions, one seems to be looking through into another world, not a world of time and space, but one of intense spiritual devotion expressed by such an amazing artistic creation hewn out of the earth itself. Gradually one becomes conscious of the remarkable imagination which conceived it, the unstinted labour which enabled it to be materialised and finally the sculpture with which it is adorned, this plastic decoration is its crowning glory, something more than a record of artistic form, it is a great spiritual achievement, every portion being a rich statement glowing with our meaning. The Kailasa is an illustration of one of those occasions when men's minds, hearts and heads work in unison towards the consummation of a supreme ideal. It was under such conditions of religious and cultural stability that this grand monolith representation of Siva's paradise was produced". (Indian Architecture: Buddhist and Hindu, p. 90).

The Dasavatra temple is the largest and the simplest. There are figure sculptures of great size surrounding the wall depicting both the Vaisnava and Siva themes. The Hiranyakasipu relief is the most outstanding sculpture among them. Dr. Commaraswamy observes thus about this sculpture: "It would be difficult to imagine a more splendid rendering of the well-known theme of the impious king who met his death at the hands of the avenging deity in man-lion form. The hand upon the shoulder, the shrinking figure with the mocking smile that has had no time to fade—what could be more terrible?"

There are five Jaina shrines cut from rocks and the important among them are Chhota Kailasa, Indra Sabha and Jagannatha Sabha. Percy Brown puts special emphasis on "the richly carved details and perfect finish, particularly of the pillars" and "the finish and the accuracy of the cutting" of these shrines. To quote him, "Moreover, as in many of the productions of the Jains, in spite of the beauty of the embellishment or perhaps in some obscure way on account of it, there is a cold and impersonal feeling in the rock-cut halls which is not found in those of the Buddhist or Hindus, a circumstance of some irony in view of the pronounced humanitarian character of the creed that inspired them."

As regards the Great or Main shrine at Elephanta, it is considered to be superior to the shrines at Ellora. It is pointed out that the sculptured reliefs of Nataraja and Sadasiva at Elephanta are better executed than the Bhairava relief at Ellora. It is pointed out that the sculptures of Ellora seem to be "less accomplished in technique, though more florid in style." In sculptured reliefs of Ardhanarisvara and Trimurti or Mahesamurti at Elephanta, God is represented in triple form corresponding to three aspects of his functions, the creation, protection and destruction of the universe. According to Grousset, "The three countenances of the one being are here harmonised without a trace of effort. There are few material representations of the divine principle at once as powerful and as well balanced as this in the art of the whole world. Nay, more, here we have undoubtedly the grandest representation of the pantheist God ever made by the hand of man."

It is pointed out that originally there were paintings on some of the shrines. Fragments of those paintings are even now seen in the porch of the great temple of Kailasa at Ellora and the ceilings of the Mahesamurti shrine at Elephanta.

We may conclude with the following observation of Dr. Altekar: "The period of Rashtrakuta ascendancy in the Deccan from about A.D. 753 to 975 constitutes perhaps the most brilliant chapter in its history. No other ruling dynasty in the Deccan played such a dominant part in the history of India till rise of the Marathas as an imperial power in the eighteenth century. No less than three of its rulers—*Dhruva*, *Govinda III* and *Indra III*—carried their victorious arms into heart of North India, and by inflicting severe defeats upon its most powerful ruler changed the whole course of the history of that region. Their success in the south was equally remarkable, and *Krishna III* literally advanced as

far as Rameshvara in the course of his victorious career. All the great powers of India, the Pratiharas and the Palas in the North, and the Eastern Chalukyas and Cholas in the South, were subjugated by them at one time or another. They, no doubt, suffered reverses at times but on the whole their military campaigns against powerful adversaries were repeatedly crowned with brilliant success."

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The Chalukyas

The Chalukyas were the dominant power in the Deccan from the 6th to the 8th century A.D. and then again from the 10th to the 12th century A.D. We have to deal with the Chalukyas of Badami or the Early Western Chalukyas, the Later Western Chalukyas of Kalyani and the Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi. The Early Western Chalukyas ruled for about two centuries from the middle of the 6th to about the middle of the 8th century when they were ousted by the Rashtrakutas. The later Western Chalukyas of Kalyani overthrew the Rashtrakutas in the second half of the 10th century and continued to rule till the end of the 12th century. The Eastern Chalukyas ruled from the 7th century to the 12th century.

Origin

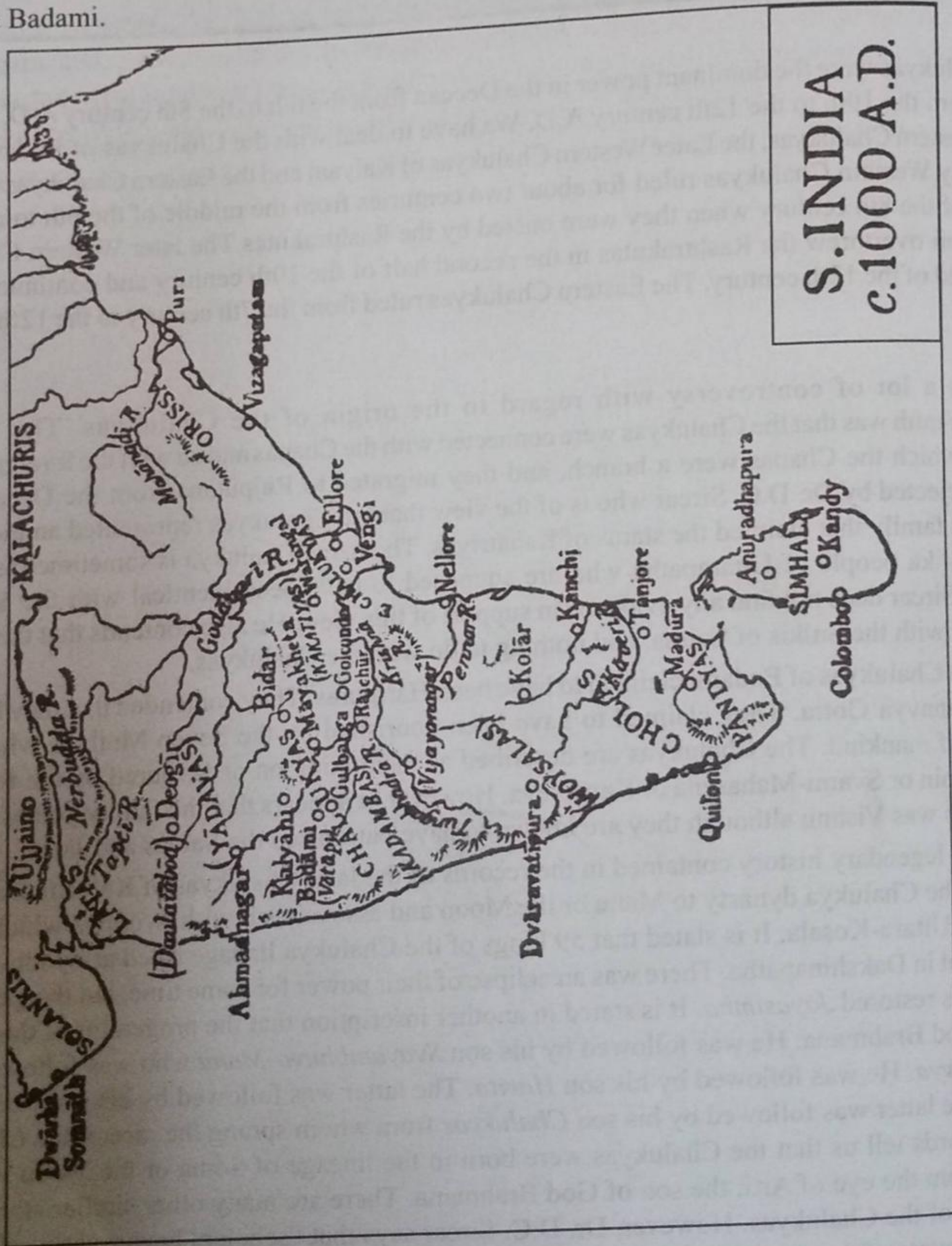
There is a lot of controversy with regard to the origin of the Chalukyas. The view of Dr. V.A. Smith was that the Chalukyas were connected with the Chapas and so with the foreign Gurjara tribe of which the Chapas were a branch, and they migrated to Rajputana from the Deccan. This view is rejected by Dr. D.C. Sircar who is of the view that the Chalukyas represented an indigenous Kanarese family that claimed the status of Kshatriyas. The name Chalukya is sometimes associated with Chulika people of Uttarapatha who are supposed to have been identical with the Sogdians. Dr. D.C. Sircar does not find any evidence in support of this view. He also contends that the Sulikas, identified with the Sulkis of Orissa, had nothing to do with the Chalukyas.

The Chalukyas of Badami claimed to have been Haripuras. They contended that they belonged to the Manavya Gotra. They claimed to have been nourished by the Seven Mothers who are the mothers of mankind. The Chalukyas are described as meditating on or favoured by the feet of the holy Svamin or Svami-Mahasena or Karttikeya. However, it appears that the family god of the early Chalukyas was Vishnu although they are known to have patronised the Saivas and Jains.

The legendary history contained in the records of the later Chalukyas of Kalyani ascribes the origin of the Chalukya dynasty to Manu or the Moon and associates it with Ayodhya which was the capital of Uttara-Kosala. It is stated that 59 kings of the Chalukya lineage ruled at Ayodhya and 16 kings ruled in Dakshinapatha. There was an eclipse of their power for some time, but the glory of the family was restored *Jayasimha*. It is stated in another inscription that the progenitor of this dynasty was the god Brahmana. He was followed by his son *Svayambhuva-Manu* who was followed by his son *Manavya*. He was followed by his son *Harita*. The latter was followed by his son *Panchasikhi* son *Manavya*. He was followed by his son *Chalukyas* from whom sprang the race of the Chalukyas. *Hariti*. The latter was followed by his son *Chalukyas* from whom sprang the race of the Chalukyas. Some records tell us that the Chalukyas were born in the lineage of Soma or the Moon who were created from the eye of Arti, the son of God Brahmana. There are many other similar stories about the origin of the Chalukyas. However, Dr. D.C. Sircar says that "scholars have rightly rejected the above accounts of the rise and early history of the Chalukyas as a mere farago of vague legends and Puranic myths of no authority or value."

Rise of Early Western Chalukyas of Badami

The Chalukya power had a modest beginning under *Jayasimha* and his son *Ranaraga*. The latter was succeeded by *Pulakesin I* who ruled from about 535 to 566 A.D. He was the first Maharaja in his family, and he can be called the real founder of the dynasty. He took up titles such as Satyasraya, Ranavikrama, Shri-Prithivi Vallabha, Sri-Vallabha or Vallabha. Pulakesin performed the Hiranyagarbha, Asvamedha, Agnishtoma, Agnichayana, Vajapeya, Bahusuvarna and Paundarika sacrifices. *Pulakesin I* is compared with such mythical heroes as *Yayati* and *Dilipa*. He is said to have been conversant with the *Manava-Dharmasastra*, the Puranas, the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata* and other *Itihasas*. *Pulakesin I* laid the foundations of the fort of *Vatapi*, modern *Badami* in the *Bijapur District*. He is not credited with any specific conquest. However, he ruled over the present *Bijapur District* with his capital at *Badami*.



Kirtivarman I

Pulakesin I was succeeded by his son *Kirtivarman I* in about 567 A.D. He took up titles such as *Satyasraya*, *Puru-ranaparakrama*, *Vallabha* and *Prithivi-Vallabha*. He is also known as "the first maker of *Vatapi*." This shows that he beautified the town with temples and other buildings. His younger brother *Mangalesa* finished the construction of the cave temples and endowed them with a village on the occasion of the installation of the image of *Vishnu*. *Kirtivarman* is also said to have celebrated the *Bahusuvama* and *Agnishtoma* sacrifices.

It is stated in an inscription that *Kirtivarman* defeated the rulers of *Vanga*, *Anga*, *Kalinga*, *Vattura*, *Magadha*, *Madraka*, *Kerala*, *Ganga*, *Mushaka*, *Pandya*, *Dramila*, *Choliya*, *Aluka* and *Vaijyanti*. *Kirtivarman* is also described as "Night of destruction" to the *Nalas*, *Mauryas* and *Kadambas*. He is also stated to have broken up a confederacy of the *Kadamba* kings.

According to Dr. D.C. Sircar, the political influence of the *Chalukyas* extended over the wide regions in the Southern part of State of *Maharashtra* and in the adjoining area of *Mysore* and the *Madras* State. It appears that *Kirtivarman* annexed part of the *Maurya* territories in the *Konkan*.

Mangalesa

Kirtivarman was succeeded by his brother *Mangalesa* in about 598 A.D. The new king took up the titles of *Ranavikranta*, *Uru-Ranavikranta*, *Prithivi-Vallabha* and *Sri-Prithivi-Vallabha*. *Mangalesa* is described as *Paramabhagavata* or a devout worshipper of the *Bhagavat* or *Vishnu*. His greatest achievements were his victory over the *Kalachuris* and the conquest of *Revatidvipa*. It is stated that *Budha*, the *Kalachuri* king, was defeated before April 602 A.D. and his entire possessions were appropriated. The struggle between the *Kalachuris* and the *Chalukyas* seems to have continued for many years after which *Mangalesa* came into complete possession of *Central* and *Northern* *Maratha* country.

There was a civil war between *Mangalesa* and his nephew *Pulakesin II* who was the son of *Kirtivarman I*. The cause of the trouble was the attempt of *Mangalesa* to secure succession for his own son. The result of the war was that *Mangalesa* lost his life and *Pulakesin II* became king.

Pulakesin II (610–642 A.D.)

Pulakesin II was the greatest king of the *Chalukya* dynasty. He ruled from 610–11 A.D. to 642 A.D. He is known by various names such as *Vallabha*, *Prithivi-Vallabh*, *Sri Prithivi-Vallabh*, *Paramesvara* and *Parama-bhagavata*.

The throne inherited by *Pulakesin II* was not a bed of roses. On account of the civil war between *Mangalesa* and *Pulakesin II*, the various parts of the *Chalukya* empire declared their independence. The *Aihole* inscription puts the situation thus: "Thus whole world was enveloped in the darkness that were the enemies." Even the home provinces were attacked by *Appayika* and *Govinda*. *Pulakesin II* was faced with a two fold task of meeting the foreign invasion and subduing the rebellious subordinates. By following a policy of dividing his enemies, he was successful in his work. He won over *Govinda* and made him his ally. Thus he was able to defeat *Appayika*.

As regards the subjugation of his neighbours, a detailed account is given in the *Aihole* inscription written by *Ravikirti*, a *Jain* poet. It is stated in that inscription that *Pulakesin II* besieged and reduced *Vanavasi*, the capital of the *Kadambas*. The *Gangas* of *South Mysore* and the *Alupas* were compelled to submit. The *Ganga* king *Durvinita Konganivridha* married one of his daughters to *Pulakesin II*. The *Mauryas* of *Konkan* were invaded and defeated. The *Latas*, *Malavas* and *Gurjaras* were also forced to submit. The country thus conquered brought *Pulakesin II* into contact with King *Harsha* of *Kanauj*. In 636 A.D., *Harsha* invaded *Kathiawad*. *Pulakesin II* allied himself with *Sasanka* of *Bengal* and his feudatory *Sainyabhitta-Madhava-Varman II* of *Kangoda*, and with the kings of *Valabhi* and

Bharuch. With this combination, he was able to defeat *Harsha* in 637–638 A.D. It is rightly pointed out that “the struggle between the Kings of Madhyadesa and Dakshinapatha apparently ensued from the attempts of both to extend their power over the present Gujarat region of the Aparanta division of India.”

According to some scholars, *Pulakesin II* defeated *Harsha* before the new moon day of Bhadra in the year 534 of the Saka era which corresponds to 612–613 A.D. This contention is based on the information in the Hyderabad grant of the Chalukya King. This inscription states that *Pulakesin II* acquired the title of Paramesvara “by defeating hostile kings who had applied themselves to the contest of a hundred battles.” The records of his successors say that *Pulakesin II* got this title “by defeating the glorious *Harshavardhan*, the warlike lord of all the regions of the North.” However, it is pointed out that such a thing was not possible under the circumstances. *Harsha* came to the throne in 606 A.D. and *Pulakesin II* ascended the throne in 610–11 A.D. Both the rulers must have been so much occupied at home that they could not have thought of fighting against each other in 612 or 613 A.D. The date of *Harsha*’s defeat cannot be earlier than 630 as there is no mention of this victory in the Lohner grant of *Pulakesin II* dated 630 A.D.

The Aihole inscription states that the Chalukya army followed the coast route towards the South. The fortress of Pishtapur and another fort on the island in the Kunala were captured. The ruler of Pishtapur was deposed and *Pulakesin II* put his younger brother in charge of the new territory. It was under these circumstances that the dynasty of the Eastern Chalukyas was founded which continued up to 1070 A.D.

Pulakesin II defeated the Pallava king *Mahendra Varman I* and the latter was forced to take shelter behind the ramparts of Kanchi, his capital. After that, *Pulakesin II* crossed the Kaveri river and made friends with the Cholas, Keralas and Pandyas. After completing the Digvijay, *Pulakesin II* came to Vatapi.

It is true that the Pallavas had been defeated but they had not been completely crushed. They decided to take revenge for *Pulakesin*’s attack on their capital. They attacked Badami and captured it. The Pallava king defeated *Pulakesin II* many a time. According to one record, he wrote the word victory on the back of *Pulakesin II* which was turned in flight, as upon a plate. He savagely destroyed Vatapi and put its inhabitants to the sword. *Pulakesin II* appears to have been killed in the battle. After his death, the Chalukya empire began to crumble.

Pulakesin II was undoubtedly one of the greatest monarchs of ancient India. His reputation and influence spread beyond the limits of India. According to Tabari, a Muslim historian, *Khusru II*, King of Persia, received an ambassador from *Pulakesin II* in A.D. 625–26. It is stated that a painting in one of the Ajanta caves shows a Persian ambassador presenting the reply of *Khusro* to *Pulakesin II*.

Hiuen Tsang, the Chinese traveller, paid a visit to the Deccan in 641 A.D. At that time, the court of *Pulakesin II* was at Nasik and the Master of the Law had to face great difficulties in finding his way through the dense jungles infested with robbers. The country was then known by the name of Maharashtra. Hiuen Tsang was very much impressed by the benevolent rule of *Pulakesin II* and the loyalty of his vassals.

Hiuen Tsang gives the following description of the people: “Their manners are simple and honest. They are tall, haughty and supercilious in character. Whoever does them service may count on their gratitude but he who offends them will not escape their revenge. If any one insults them, they will not risk their lives to wipe out the affront. If one applies to them in difficulty, they will forget to care for themselves in order to flee to his assistance. When they have an injury to avenge, they never fail to give warning to their enemy after which, each dons his cuirass and grasps his spear in his hand. In battle, they pursue the fugitives, but do not slay those who give themselves up. When a general has lost a battle, instead of punishing corporally, they make him wear woman’s clothes and by that



Pulakesin II Receiving an Embassy from Khusru II

force him to sacrifice his own life." "The country provide for a band of champions to the number of several hundreds. Each time they were about to engage in conflict, they intoxicated themselves with wine and one man with lance in hand would meet ten thousand and challenge them to fight. If one of these champions meets a man and kills him, the laws of the country do not punish him. Every time they go forth, they beat drums before them. Moreover, they inebriate many hundred heads of elephants and taking them out to fight, they themselves first drink their wine and then rushing forward in mass, they trample everything down, so that no enemy can stand before them. The king in consequence of his possessing these men and elephants treats his neighbours with contempt.

Hiuen Tsang tells us that *Pulakesin II* was a Kshatriya and he was obeyed by his subjects willingly. His plans and undertakings were wide-spread. His beneficent activities were felt everywhere. The country was about 836 miles in circuit. Its capital was about 5 miles round. It was bordered on the west by a great river. The soil was very productive and was regularly cultivated.

Vikramaditya I (655–681 A.D.)

It appears that after the death of *Pulakesin II*, Badami and some of the Southern Districts remained in the hands of the Pallavas for many years. Many attempts were made to drive out the invaders but those attempts failed on account of the dissensions among the sons of *Pulakesin II*. The Chalukya throne remained vacant from 642 to 655 A.D. There were many claimants to the Chalukya throne and ultimately Vikramaditya succeeded in recovering Badami from the Pallavas and thereby seated himself on the throne of his father. It appears that the sons of *Pulakesin II* did not receive any help from the Eastern Chalukyas.

Vikramaditya I assumed the titles of Satyasraya, Ranarasika, Anivarita, Rajamalla, Sri-Prithivi-Vallabha, Bhattaraka, Paramamahesvara and Maharajadhiraja Paramesvara. *Vikramaditya* brought the whole kingdom under his control. He restored the grants to gods, and Brahmanas which had been confiscated by previous kings.

It is stated that *Paramesvara-Varman I* defeated the army of *Vikramaditya I* in the battle of Peruvalanallur and compelled him to take to flight. The Pallava ruler is also stated to have destroyed Badami.

Vikramaditya appointed his younger brother *Dharasraya Jayasimha-Varman* as the Viceroy of the Gujrat region with the provincial capital probably at Navasarika or Navsari. The latter destroyed the entire army of a ruler named *Vajjada* in the land between the rivers Mahi and Narmada. *Vajjada* has been tentatively identified with *Siladitya III* of the Maitraka dynasty of Valabhi.

Vinayaditya

Vikramaditya I was succeeded by his son *Vinayaditya* who ruled from A.D. 681 to 696. He took the titles of Sri-Prithivi-Vallabha, Satyasraya and probably also Rajasraya and Yuddhamalla. He carried on campaigns against the Pallavas, Kalabhras, Keralas, Haihayas, Vilas, Malavas, Cholas, Pandyas, Aluvras, Gangas, etc. He levied tribute from the kings of such Dvipas as Kamera or Kavera, Parasika (Iran) and Sinhala (Ceylon). He is stated to have acquired the banner called Palidhvaja by defeating the Lord of the entire Uttarapatha. The name of the Lord of Uttarapatha is not mentioned.

Vijayaditya

Vinayaditya was succeeded by *Vijayaditya* who ruled from A.D. 696 to 733. He had his training in military and administrative matters in the time of his father and grandfather. It was formerly believed that his reign was a peaceful one. However, it now appears that he was involved in a struggle with the Pallavas. He seems to have taken the initiative in this matter. He conquered Kanchi and levied tribute from *Parameshvara-Varman*, the Pallava king. He built the temple of *Siva* at Pattadakal in Bijapur district. His sister built a Jain temple at Lakshmeswar. He was tolerant towards Jainism and donated villages to Jain preachers.

Vikramaditya II

Vikramaditya I was succeeded by his son *Vikramaditya II* who ruled from A.D. 734 to 745. One of his successors built the great temple of *Siva* at Pattadakal. Another queen built another great temple of *Siva* near the previous one.

Hostilities continued with the Pallavas during his reign. It is stated that *Vikramaditya II* took possession of the musical instruments, the banner, elephants and rubies after putting to flight the Pallava king. Although he entered Kanchi, he did not destroy it. *Vikramaditya II* is also stated to have destroyed the power of the Chola, Kerala, Pandya, Kalabhra and other kings. He set up a pillar of victory on the shores of the Southern Ocean. There was an invasion of the Chalukya territory by the Arabs but the latter were defeated. *Vikramaditya II* was a great builder and patron of learning.

Kirtivarman II

Vikramaditya II was succeeded by his son *Kirtivarman II* who ruled from A.D. 746 to 757. He had helped his father in his Pallava campaign. He was the last of the glorious Chalukya race. After 50 years, the Chalukya power was completely eclipsed by the Rashtrakutas. *Dantidurga*, the Rashtrakuta king, defeated *Kirtivarman II* and finished the Chalukya power. He also defeated the Karnataka Chalukya army in the South with all its military traditions. It appears that after the death of *Dantidurga*, *Kirtivarman II* tried to restore the fallen fortune of his family, but he was defeated by *Krishna I*, the Rashtrakuta king. The latter is stated to have "forcibly carried away the fortune of the Chalukya family bearing the garland of waving Palidhwajas" and to have "transformed the great boar (the Chalukya crest), which had been seized with an itching for battle and attack, into a deer."

The Rashtrakuta power remained supreme for more than two centuries when the same was destroyed by the later Western Chalukyas of Kalyani.

Later Western Chalukyas of Kalyani

The founder of the later Western Chalukyas was *Taila* or *Tailapa II*. He reigned for 24 years from A.D. 973 to 997. He recovered much of the lost territory of the Earlier Western Chalukyas and took up the titles of Maharajadhiraja, Paramesvara and Chakravartin. *Taila* is stated to have conquered Chedi, Orissa, Nepal and Kuntala. No wonder, the later Western Chalukyas took pleasure in calling themselves as Lords of Kuntala (Kanarese district). *Taila* is also stated to have killed *Munja*, the Paramara king of Malava.

Taila was succeeded by his son *Satyasraya* who is also known as *Sollina* and *Solliga*. It is stated that he won a victory against the Chola invader whose riches were looted and territories conquered by him.

The successors of *Satyasraya* were *Dasavarman*, *Vikramaditya V*, *Jayasimha I* and *Jagadekamalla*. *Jagadekamalla* is stated to have defeated *Bhoja* the ruler of Malava. He is also stated to have the Malava confederacy and the Chedi king. He also defeated *Rajendra*, the Chola king, although the same is denied in the Chola inscriptions.

Somesvara I. The next king was *Somesvara I* who came to the throne in 1042 A.D. He gave up Manyakheta as his capital and made Kalyanapura of Kalyana as his capital. The struggle with the Cholas continued during his reign. It is stated in the inscriptions of *Somesvara I* that he killed in battle *Rajendra*, the Chola king, and broke his succession. However, it is contended in the Chola inscriptions that *Rajendra Chola* defeated *Somesvara I* at Koppam on the Perari rivet in 1053 A.D. *Bilhan* refers to the advance of the Chalukyas in the Chola territory and its capital Kanchi. He also refers to the sack of Dhara, the Paramara capital. He also refers to the overthrow of Karana, the Kalachuri ruler of Chedi. However, it is stated in the Chola inscription that in 1061 A.D. *Somesvara I* suffered another defeat at the hands of *Rajendra II*, the Chola king, at Kudala-Sangamam. *Somesvara I* again challenged *Vira Rajendra*, the Chola king but did not turn up at the appointed time. The dominion

of *Somesvara I* also included Kosala and Kalinga. *Dharavarsha*, the Nagavansi ruler of Chakrakuta, accepted his overlordship.

Somesvara I preferred as a successor his second son, *Vikramaditya*. The latter declined the honour in favour of his elder brother *Somesvara II*. *Vikramaditya* was appointed the leader of the army engaged in conquests achieved over the Cholas and Keralas as far as Ceylon and over Bengal and Assam. He is stated to have captured Gangaikonda-Cholapuram from the Cholas, Vengi, the capital of the Eastern Chalukyas and Chakravotra, a fortress of the Paramaras. When *Vikramaditya* was coming back, he heard news that his father who was suffering from a fatal disease had drowned himself in the Tungabhadra river.

Under these circumstances, *Somesvara II* became king in 1068 A.D. Unfortunately, *Somesvara II* fell into evil ways and he lost the loyalty of his brother, *Vikramaditya*. *Somesvara II* was forced to recognise *Vikramaditya* as Yuvaraja and the latter went to rule independently in the Southern part of the kingdom of the later Western Chalukyas. Bilhana has given a detailed account of the rebellion of *Vikramaditya* against his brother *Somesvara*. *Vikramaditya* also received the submission of Jayakesin, ruler of Konkana and also of the ruler of Kerala. *Vikramaditya* marched against *Vira Rajendra*, the Chola king, who pursued peace and gave his daughter in marriage to *Vikramaditya*. When *Vira Rajendra* died and there was chaos in the Chola territory *Vikramaditya* went to Kanchi. He put down the rebellion and placed his brother-in-law named *Adhi-Rajendra* on the Chola throne. On his return, *Vikramaditya* heard the news that his brother-in-law on the Chola throne was killed by the Eastern Chalukya king, *Vikramaditya* and *Somesvara II* backed the rival parties for the Chola throne. *Vikramaditya* was defeated but he also captured *Somesvara II* in 1075 A.D. To begin with, *Vikramaditya* thought of restoring *Somesvara II* to the throne, but later on he decided to become king himself as *Vikramaditya VI*. This happened in 1076 A.D.

Vikramaditya VI founded a new era known as Chalukya-Vikramakala which started in 1076 A.D. *Vikramaditya VI* ruled for about 50 years. His younger brother, *Jayasimha*, whom he had appointed as a Viceroy at Banavasi, revolted in 1083 A.D. *Vikramaditya* took action against the Eastern Chalukya usurper. Vengi was conquered by *Anantapala*, Commander-in-Chief of *Vikramaditya*. Two great writers, named *Bilhana* and *Vijnanesvara*, flourished at the court of *Vikramaditya VI*.

Vikramaditya VI was succeeded by his son, *Somesvara III*. He was worried more about literary matters than about military affairs. *Visnuvardhana*, his vassal, declared his independence and conquered some parts of the territories of the Western Chalukyas.

Somesvara III was succeeded by *Jagadekamalla II* who ruled from 1135 to 1151 A.D. There was invasion of the Chalukya territory by the Hoyasalas. After the death of *Jagadekamalla II*, *Taila III* came to the throne. He ruled from A.D. 1151 to 1163. He was captured by *Prola II*, the Kakatiya invader. Although he was released, he became weak on account of domestic troubles. *Bijjala*, his Commander-in-Chief, instigated a rebellion of the army and captured the throne himself. However, the Chalukyas were able to recover their position under *Gandanayaka Brahma*. This restoration did not last long. The Yadavas of Devagiri and the Hoyasalas under *Vira Ballala I* attacked the Chalukyas. The later Western Chalukya dynasty came to an end in about 1190 A.D.

The Eastern Chalukyas

The founder of the Eastern Chalukya dynasty was *Visnuvardhana*, who was a brother of *Pulakesin II*. In 615 A.D. he started as Viceroy of *Pulakesin II* in both North Maratha (Nasik) and South Maratha country. In 613 A.D. he was made Viceroy of the territory extending from Vizagapatam to Nellore District. Soon after, he asserted his independence and founded the Eastern Chalukya dynasty in the Andhra country with his capital at Vengi. He ruled for 18 years from A.D. 615 to 633.

Visnuvardhana was succeeded by his son Maharaja *Jayasimha I* who ruled from about 633 to 663 A.D. Some writers give him a reign of 33 years while others give him 30 years. It was during his reign that the Pallavas defeated *Pulakesin II* and occupied the southern part of his empire,

including the city of Badami in about 642 A.D. Jayasimha does not appear to have given any help to his relatives who were in trouble.

Jayasimha I was succeeded by his brother Maharaja *Indravarman* in about 663 A.D. He is known by such names as Indra-rajā, Induraja and Indrabhattaraka. He took the titles of Simhavikrama and Tyagadhenu. *Indravarman* is stated to have ruled only for a week. He was succeeded by his son *Vishnuvardhana II* who ruled from about 663 to 672 A.D. *Vishnuvardhana II* was succeeded by his son *Mangai-Yuvraja* who ruled from about 672 to 696 A.D.

Jayasimha II was the next successor. He ruled from about A.D. 696 to 709. It was during his reign that *Vijayadityavarman* assumed the title of Maharaja and threw off the yoke of *Jayasimha II*.

When *Jayasimha II* died, the throne was captured by *Kokkili* or *Kokuli Vikramaditya*. He reigned for about 6 months. He conquered Madhyama-Kalinga for his nephew. However, he was overthrown by his elder brother *Vishnuvardhana III* who ruled from about A.D. 709 to 746. *Vishnuvardhana III* ruled for 37 years. He annexed Madhyama-Kalinga. *Prithivivaghra*, a Nishada king, let loose a horse for the performance of horse sacrifice. He occupied the southern part of the Eastern Chalukya dominions above the Northern fringe of the Nellore District. However, it is stated that his General *Udayachandra* defeated the Nishada king and got back his master's territory from him.

Vishnuvardhana III was succeeded by his son *Vijayaditya I* who ruled from about A.D. 746 to 764. It was during his reign that the Western Chalukyas of Badami were overthrown by the Rashtrakutas.

The next important successor was *Vijayaditya II* who ruled from A.D. 799 to 843. He was surrounded on all sides by enemies such as the Gangas and Rashtrakutas. However, he put up a stiff fight against them all. The Rashtrakuta king *Govinda III*, is said to have got his help in fortifying his new capital showing that there was an alliance between the two. *Vijayaditya II* built many temples dedicated to God *Sambhu*.

Vijayaditya II was succeeded by *Vijayaditya III* who ruled from A.D. 844 to 888. He defeated *Krishna II*, the Rashtrakuta king and destroyed his capital Manyakheta or Malkhed. He also defeated the Gangas. *Amoghavarsha*, the Rashtrakuta king, claims to have received homage from *Vijayaditya III*. Probably, *Vijayaditya III* was killed in a battle by a chief named *Mangi* who was supposed to be a Chola ruler.

Bhima ruled from A.D. 888 to 918. He was succeeded by *Amma Vishnuvardhana VI*. The new king had troubles from his own relations and feudatories who conspired with *Krishna III*, the Rashtrakuta king. The Chalukya throne was usurped by many rivals. It was only under *Bhima III* that things were stabilised. He killed the usurper *Yudhamalla*. He defeated the neighbouring kings including *Govinda V*, the Rashtrakuta king. *Bhima III* ruled from A.D. 934 to 945. He was succeeded by his son *Vijayaditya VI* who ruled from A.D. 948 to 970. During the period from A.D. 973 to 1003, the kingdom of Eastern Chalukyas was probably over-run by the Cholas. *Shaktivarman*, the Eastern Chalukya ruler, ruled from A.D. 1003 to 1015. The next important ruler was *Vishnu Vardhana VIII* who ruled from A.D. 1022 to 1063. He was succeeded by his son named *Kulottunga Choladeva*. He ruled from A.D. 1063 to 1118. The new king was more Chola than Chalukya in blood on account of inter-marriages for three generations. He preferred the Chola throne to the Chalukya throne which he left to the care of his uncle *Vijayaditya VII* who was the Viceroy of Vengi.

The Deccan under the Chalukyas

The Chalukyas were the followers of Brahmanical religion and no wonder Buddhism began to decline. However, they followed a policy of religious toleration. During their ascendancy, Jainism prospered in the Deccan. *Ravikirti*, the Jain author of the Aihole inscription, claims to have received "the highest favour" from *Pulakesin II*. Likewise *Vijayaditya* and *Vikramaditya* granted villages to well-known Jain scholars. There is nothing to show that Buddhism was also patronised by the Chalukya rulers.

Buddhism might have been on the wane but it had not become extinct. This is clear from the following statement of Hieun Tsang: "Of Buddhist monasteries, there were about 100, and the Brethren who were adherents of both vehicles, were more than 5,000 in number. Within and outside the capital were five Asoka topes where the four past Buddhas had sat and walked for exercise; and there were innumerable other topes of stone or brick."

As regards Brahmanism, the Pauranic deities rose into prominence. Superb structures were set up at Vatapi or Badami and Pattadakal (Bijapur District) in honour of *Brahma*, *Vishnu* and *Siva*. These gods were also known by a variety of names. The sacrificial form of worship received special attention. Many treatises on the sacrificial form of worship were composed. *Pulakesin I* alone is stated to have performed a number of sacrifices such as the *Asvamedha*, *Vajapeya*, *Paundarika*, etc.

Art made great progress under the patronage of Chalukya Kings. A new style of architecture known as the Chalukya style which was different from the Gupta style, was developed during this period. At Aihole alone, we come across 70 temples. In addition to Aihole, there were temples at Badami and Pattadakal. Aihole has rightly been called "the cradle of Indian temple architecture." It represents the best of Chalukyan architecture. Three temples at Aihole are particularly famous and their names are the Ladh Khan Temple, the Durga Temple and Huchhimalligudi Temple. The Ladh Khan Temple has certain characteristics of rock-cut halls. As a matter of fact, it has a low flat roofed Mandapa, 50 feet wide and enclosed by walls on three sides, with a porch on the east side, the pillars of which are carved with Ganga-Yamuna motif. "Architecturally, the temple is significant for two main reasons. We see in the pilasters at the exterior angles of the structure the beginnings of the later Dravidian order with the tapering upper end of the shaft and a capital with the expanded abacus supporting the bracket. Another feature which stayed on and influenced later Chalukyan temples is the flat roof which consists of stone slabs grooved at the joints and held together by long narrow stones which fit into the grooves." The Durga Temple contains a new feature, namely, a vestibule or antarala which is an intermediate chamber between the cella and the main hall. It has a Sikhara over the Garbhagriha which has fallen." The Huchhimalligudi temple seems to be the earliest of the Aihole group and it contains a Sikhara of the Nagara type.

It was during the seventh century A.D. that the movement of rockcut halls was initiated. There are as many as 10 temples at Pattadakal belonging to this period. Six of them follow the Dravidian style. The temple of Virupaksha is the most important one. It was built by *Lokamahadevi*, the queen of *Vikramaditya II*. It has many features similar to those of the Kailashnath temple at Kanchi. According to *Percy Brown*, there is a bold beauty in the appearance of the Virupaksha temple as a whole which is best seen in the exterior. It is a comprehensive scheme as consists not only of the central structure, but of a detached Nandi pavilion in front and it is contained within a walled enclosure entered by an appropriate gateway. The main building is 120 feet. The mouldings, the pilasters, brackets and cornices and the perforated windows are important. The exterior body of the temple consists of niches in which are kept life-size statues. The temple has a spare Sikhara. It is one of those buildings of the past in which the spirit still lingers of the men who conceived it and wrought it with their hands.

One of the achievements of the Chalukya art was the building of excavated cave temples of Hindu gods. *Mangalesa*, the early Chalukya king of Badami, got excavated at Badami a beautiful cave temple of *Siva*. Both Ajanta and Ellora were situated in the dominions of the Chalukya. A record of *Pulakesin II* is to be found in a fragmentary painting in the first monastic hall at Ajanta representing the reception of a Persian embassy. In addition to the painted hall, the Ajanta caves have a number of Chaitya halls. Some of them were probably executed in the time of the early Western Chalukyas.

We have many buildings of stone finely joined without mortar belonging to the Chalukya period. The stone temple of *Siva* at Meguti shows the art of stone building in its perfection. This was erected in about 634 A.D. It has the Prasasti on *Pulakesin II* written by *Ravi Kirti*. The *Vishnu* temple at Aihole is in a very good condition. It has an inscription of *Vikramaditya II*. The temple is built in stone on a rock in the Buddhist Chaitya hall style. There are wonderful sculptures on it. The

two high-flying Devas are excellent in design and execution. The Chaitya-cell is placed in a pillar hall with a Pradakshinapatha round the shrine.

Vijayaditya (A.D. 696–733) built the great temple of *Siva* under the name of *Vijayesvara* now called *Sangamesvara* at Pattadakal in Bijapur District. His sister built a Jain temple called *Anesejjeyabasadi* at Lakshmeswar.

The wife of *Vikramaditya II* built the great temple of *Siva* under the name of *Lokesvara* now called *Virupaksha* at Pattadakal. As regards the plan of this temple, in front of the *Antarala* or the hall of the priests, there is a pillared *Mandapam* or the meeting place of the people, about 50 feet square. The roof is supported by 16 monolithic pillars with sculptural bracket capitals. According to Havell, the great art critics, the temple "combines the stateliness of the classic design of Europe with fervid imagination of Gothic art." Another queen of *Vikramaditya II* constructed another great temple of *Siva* under the name of *Trailokesvara* in the vicinity of the *Lokesvara* or *Virupaksha* temple.

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