

K.V. Ramesh



Chalukyas of
VĀTĀPI

the book . . .

THE PRESENT work on the History of the Chalukyas of Vatapi has resulted from the author's conviction that there was a need for re-examining the old records of the Chalukyas of Vatapi as well as to undertake a critical study of the fresh epigraphical discoveries. The present work incorporates the results of the author's intensive study of almost all the available Chalukya records. The value of this book is considerably enhanced by the full utilisation of the interesting information provided by such recent epigraphical discoveries as the Tembhurni plates of Vikramaditya I, the Alampur Prasasti of Vijayaditya and the B.N. Jalihal Tomb temple inscription of Vikramaditya II.

Besides, our knowledge of the history of the Chalukyas of Vatapi has been considerably altered and improved by the re-examination and re-ascription of some of the important Chalukya records by the present author. An attempt has been made to rationalise the present-day names of many of the Chalukya temples with the help of the epigraphical data and to ascribe them to the different reigns in which they may have been built.

Rs. 190.00

CHALUKYAS OF VĀTĀPI

CHALUKYAS OF VĀTĀPI

K. V. RAMESH

**AGAM KALA PRAKASHAN
DELHI
1984**

First published 1984

© K.V. RAMESH (b. 1935)

Published by : DR. AGAM PRASAD M.A., Ph.D., Dip. in Museology
for AGAM KALA PRAKASHAN,
34, Central Market, Ashok Vihar
Delhi—110052 Ph. 7 11 33 95

Printed at : PRINT INDIA
A 38/2, Mayapuri, Phase I,
New Delhi—110064

TO
MY DEAR BROTHER-IN-LAW
PROF. K.S. HARIDASA BHAT
(DIRECTOR, RASHIRAKAVI GOVINDAPAI MEMORIAL
RESEARCH INSTITUTE, UDUPI, KARNATAKA)
AND
MY DEAR SISTER
SMT. SUMATHI H. BHAT

Preface

THE TIME is not yet ripe for writing a comprehensive chronological-cum-political history of the Chalukya dynasty of Vātāpi or, for that matter, of any of the Indian ruling houses of the past. In spite of nearly one hundred years of sustained epigraphical collection and research, there are many gaps which can be filled up only by conjectural arguments and assumptions. Nevertheless, the present work on the history of the Vātāpi Chalukyas has been written because it was felt that even a critical re-examination of the already available Chalukya records and a study of their newly discovered inscriptions considerably improve our knowledge of their history. The reascription of such important Chalukya inscriptions as the Yekkēri Rock inscription and the Māruṭūru grant, the critical re-examination of many records of this family such as the Badami cliff inscription of Polekēśi, the Mahākūṭa pillar inscription, the Rāvaḷaphaḍi cave label inscription, and the Aihole inscription of Polekēśi II, and the full utilisation of the new information contained in fresh epigraphical discoveries such as the Tembhurṇi plates, the Alampur Praśasti of Vijayāditya and the Tomb Temple inscription of Vikramāditya II in the present work have considerably altered and improved our knowledge of the history of the Chalukyas. The information contained in the grant portions of the Chalukya records have been brought into greater use than in the previous histories of the family though, for reasons of lack of running information, no attempt has been made to study, in detail, their socio-economic implications.

The work also embodies the results of the author's attempt at rationalising the present-day names of many Chalukya temples with the help of the epigraphical data which helps in the proper

assignment of different temples to different reigns on grounds other than purely stylistic.

The figures within brackets following the mention of an inscription in the body of the book refer to the serial numbers of the inscriptions included in the list of Vātāpi Chalukya inscriptions at the end of the book.

Mysore—5

K.V. RAMESH

January 1, 1984

List of Illustrations

[While I owe my thanks to the Office of the Chief Epigraphist, Archaeological Survey of India, Mysore for illustrations III, IV, VI and XV, all the other illustrations in this book are through the courtesy of the American Institute of Indian Studies, Vārāṇasī. I am particularly thankful to Shri M.A. Dhaky for the personal interest he has shown in the preparation of this volume]

- I The Maṇṭeśvara temple at Mahākūṭa, Bijapur District, Karnataka. The temple was in all probability so named after Polekēśi I.
- II The small *maṇḍapa*, enshrining a *liṅga*, in the *pushkarinī* of the Maṇṭeśvara temple. This is, in all probability, the *dēva-droni* (divine water-vessel) referred to in the Mahākūṭa pillar inscription of Maṅgalēśa.
- III The Mahākūṭa pillar inscription of Maṅgalēśa which, in addition to its manifold importance for Chalukya history, mentions the Maṇṭeśvara temple and its *dēva-droni*.
- IV (a) The Bādāmi rock cliff inscription of Polekēśi I, dated Śaka 465 and engraved at an inaccessible height and (b) the badly damaged duplicate version of the same, engraved on a boulder in front of the Bādāmi Site Museum.
- V Bāṇanti-guḍi, Bādāmi, Bijapur District. The modern name *Bāṇanti* appears to be the corrupt form of Bāṇuśatti=Bhānuśakti which is the name of a Sēndraka ally of Polekēśi I. It is likely, therefore, that the temple was built either by him or in his memory.
- VI Bādāmi Vaishṇava Cave inscription of Maṅgalēśa, dated in Śaka 500.
- VII Chikki-guḍi, Aihole, Bijapur District. The name has in all probability, resulted from the corruption of the original name Śrī-Kirttivarman-guḍi. It was, therefore, built, in all probability, either by Kirttivarman I or in his memory.
- VIII Mālegitti-Śivālaya, Bādāmi. Taking the word *mālegitti* in its literal sense, the name of the temple has been translated as 'the temple of the female garland-maker'. However, *māle* is in reality *myāle* which, in the dialect of North Karnataka, means 'upper'; and *gitti* from *kirtti* is the stunted form of the name Kirttivarman. This temple also, therefore, appears to have been built either by or in memory of Kirttivarman I.

- IX Rāvaḷaphaḍi Aihole. The present name has resulted from the original *Rājakula-prati* [*mā-griha*]. This cave temple was, therefore, meant to serve as the royal portrait gallery of the Chalukyas.
- X The Naṭarāja image in the left chamber of the Rāvaḷaphaḍi, flanked on either side by the images of the seven divine mothers. The label inscription on the rock pedestal (No. XI below) helps to identify this Naṭarāja image as the deified representation of Maṅgalēśa.
- XI The label inscription *Raṇāvi* [*krama*] engraved on the rock base of the Naṭarāja image in Rāvaḷaphaḍi. This inscription had earlier been wrongly read as *Śrī-Kaṇami*[*ñchi*]. *Raṇa-vikrama* is the favourite epithet or second name (*apara-nāmdhēya*) of Maṅgalēśa.
- XII The Mēguṭi (Mēl-guḍi, literally ‘upper temple’) temple, Aihole. The slab on which the famous *praśasti* of Polekēśi II, composed by Ravikirtti is engraved is built into the wall of this temple.
- XIII Lāḍkhān temple. Some of the architectural features which do not conform to the known ones of the region and period in question may have come from Lāṭa (Southern Gujarat) over which the Chalukyas had established their segemony.
- XIV *Śikhara* of the Bāla-Brahma temple, Alampur, Mahbubnagar District, Andhra Pradesh. A pillar in the front *maṇḍapa* of this temple, when exposed, revealed the recently discovered *praśasti* of Vijayāditya.
- XV The Alampur *praśasti* of Vijayāditya, engraved in Sanskrit *śloka*s on three faces of the pillar.
- XVI The Tomb Temple inscription of Chalukya Vikramāditya II from B.N. Jālihāl, Bijapur District.
- XVII Huchchappayyana-guḍi and Huchchappayyana-maṭha, Aihole. & These names have been understood in their literal sense as the XVIII temple and *matha* of the ‘lunatic gentleman’. It is known from epigraphical source that Kirtttivarman II, the last of the Chalukya rulers, had gone mad towards the end of his reign. It is, therefore, likely that the temple and *matha* in question were built either by him or in his memory and serve today as poignant reminders of his tragic transformation from emperor to lunatic.

Contents

<i>Preface</i>	vii
<i>List of Illustrations</i>	ix
Chapter one PRE-CHALUKYA KARNATAKA	1—11
Chapter Two THE BEGINNINGS	12—30
Chapter Three A KINGDOM IS BORN	31—48
Chapter Four THE EMPIRE-BUILDER	49—56
Chapter Five A REGENT COME TO GRIEF	57—73
Chapter Six SATYĀŚRAYA POLEKEŚĪ (II), THE GREAT	74—99
Chapter Seven THE FIRST ECLIPSE	100—103
Chapter Eight THE GREAT VENDICATION	104—125
Chapter Nine THE HARBINGER OF PEACE	126—136
Chapter Ten THE ERA OF BENEVOLENCE	137—154

Chapter Eleven	
THE LAST FLICKER	155—167
Chapter Twelve	
THE TOTAL ECLIPSE	168—176
<i>Appendix</i>	177—184
<i>Index</i>	185—189
<i>Plates</i>	

CHAPTER ONE

PRE-CHALUKYA KARNATAKA

I

From about the middle of the fourth century A.D., for nearly two hundred years, a substantial portion of the territory of present-day Karnāṭaka was under the sway of two major ruling houses, the Kadambas of Banavāsi and the Gaṅgas of Talakāḍu. Prior to the advent of these two powers, the geographical and political image of Karnāṭaka did not possess, as far as the historical eye can discern, any identity of its own. For, the families which are known to have held sway, intermittently though, over parts of Karnāṭaka prior to the middle of the fourth century A.D., such as the Mauryas of Magadha and the later Mauryas of Koṅkaṇa, the Sātavāhanas and the Chutus were all alien to the soil of Karnāṭaka; and, even during the periods of their political control over that territory, the respective nucleus of power, from which they derived their hegemony, was clearly located outside Karnāṭaka. Hence, speaking in rather general terms, the pre-Kadamba-Gaṅga era of Karnāṭakā's regional history can be termed the pre-Karnāṭaka or, more precisely, the pre-Kannaḍa epoch, for even the language used in their inscriptions was Prakrit.

It is only with the rise of the Banavāsi Kadambas and their southern contemporaries, the Gaṅgas of Talakāḍu that the picture of Karnāṭaka as the land of the Kannaḍiga, with his own political, social, cultural, religious, economic, architectural, linguistic and literary innovations, adaptations and styles, falls into proper historical perspective. In many respects the Kadamba-Gaṅga era, dominated by Sanskrit epigraphs betraying the slow ascendancy of Kannaḍa, serves as a broad-based historical starting point for an objective

study of the evolutionary phases, of Karnāṭaka as an enduring geopolitical entity, of the Kannaḍiga as a dialectal community and of the Kannaḍa as a major regional language.

II

For the Kadamba-Gaṅga era of nearly two hundred years (c. A.D. 350-550), copper plate and stone inscriptions of the Banavāsi Kadambas have been discovered in the Belgaum, Dharwar, North Kanara, Shimoga, Chitradurga, Chikmagalur, Hassan and Mysore districts in Karnāṭaka and the Kozhikode and Malappuram districts in Kerala; the genuine among the copper-plate charters issued by the contemporaneous Gaṅgas hail from the Chikmagalur, Tumkur, Bangalore and Kolar districts in Karnāṭaka and from the southern half of the Anantapur district in Andhra Pradesh. On the basis of the provenance of these inscriptions, it may be roughly stated that, while the Kadamba realm spread over a wide area to the south of the Malaprabhā and to the west of the Tungabhadra, and included the northern half of the Karnāṭaka coast, the territory of the Gaṅgas was confined to a smaller area bounded by the Hagari, the Vēdavati and the Kāvēri rivers. Besides, there existed in the Karnāṭaka of those days, some minor powers such as the Mauryas of Koṅkaṇa, i.e. roughly the Goa region, the Ālupas of South Kanara, and, more or less sandwiched between the Kadamba and Gaṅga domains, the Bṛihad-Bāṇas, the Kēkayas, the Koṅgālas, the Sēndrakas and the rulers of Punnāḍu.

In many respects, and particularly from the political and social view-point, the moment of the birth of the Kadamba kingdom, deriving its hegemony *in situ*, proved of great significance for the succeeding centuries of Karnāṭaka's history. The advent of the Kadambas, besides endowing the Kannaḍigas with such political acumen and stamina as could stand them in good stead for centuries at a stretch, also heralded the birth of many worthwhile, though not always original, political and social institutions and conventions which, as the centuries rolled by, so transformed themselves as to become at once the distinctive hallmarks of the Kannaḍigas' creative culture and conservatism.

During the life-time of Mayūraśarman, the Kadambas, according to their own claim a deeply religious family of *vaidika Brāhmaṇas*, successfully rebelled against the predominance of the *kshatriya* power as wielded by the Pallavas of Kāñchī, whose overbearing arrogance had allegedly placed in jeopardy the age old superiority of the *brāhmaṇas* in the Hindu socio-religious hierarchy; the first indigenous Karnāṭaka kingdom was thus born in a huff of righteous indignation, when, towards the middle of the fourth century and at the end of a bitterly contested guerilla war, the hapless Pallava emperor Skandavarman (c. A.D. 350-75) perforce condescended to recognise and himself crown the erstwhile *brahmachārin* as the lord of the region south of the Malaprabhā and east of the Arabian Sea.

Perhaps not long afterwards there appeared, on the political horizon, the kingdom of the Gaṅgas which, in terms of time though not in terms of sovereignty, far outlived its elder contemporary. The same Pallavas, who had crowned the *brāhmaṇa*-turned-*kshatriya*, Kadamba Mayūraśarman, are acknowledged by the Gaṅgas as the anointers of Hari (or Āryya)varman and Mādhavavarman, the third and fourth rulers respectively of their family. While, in the subsequent decades of their existence, the Kadambas, being only distant neighbours, maintained only a tenuous contact with the Pallavas, the Gaṅgas, whose borders were co-extensive with those of the Pallavas, found their fortunes fatefully linked with those of the Pallavas and, even later, with those of the successor-empires. This geographical proximity and political inter-dependence with the Tamil country naturally resulted in considerable and prolonged Tamilian cultural and linguistic influence on the Gaṅgas as amply born but by the diction of their genuine epigraphical records.

During the two hundred and odd years of its existence there sat on the Kadamba throne at Banavāsi no less than fifteen kings, with two or three more laying claims of a dubious nature while, for the same period, the Gaṅga throne was occupied by eight monarchs in all. While epigraphical records belonging to this period are not as communicative as those of the succeeding epochs, it has been possible to deduce with considerable certainty that between them the

Kadambas and the Gaṅgas had sometimes entered into mutual alliances and conflicts and that each of these two dynasties had also been involved in similar contracts and conflicts with one or an alliance of the other contemporaneous minor ruling houses of Karnāṭaka. A discussion of the genealogy and chronology of these early dynasties of Karnāṭaka, which have long remained matters of controversy, largely owing to paucity of or conflicting evidence, and a narration of the political history of Karnāṭaka during the Kadamba-Gaṅga era are not relevant to the aims of the present work for, the historical significance of the Kadamba and Gaṅga kingdoms lies for us not in what they achieved for themselves but in what they bequeathed to posterity.

III

The most far-reaching legacy left behind by the Kadambas and the early Gaṅgas, and eagerly imbibed by their successors was, of course, in the political sphere. To try to isolate and identify this legacy is not an easy task but, certainly, worth the while.

The Kadambas and the Gaṅgas were, no doubt, the first to found, on the soil of Karnāṭaka, the nuclei of their political powers which, even during their sway and largely through their own pioneering efforts, had, at times, shown the potentials of developing into imperial proportions. Rulers belonging to both these dynasties fearlessly assumed titles and epithets which, on a comparative study, indicate a status of absolute autonomy, an essential prerequisite for touching the high watermark of imperialism. Their vaunt went unpunished obviously because, by their very establishment of these two kingdoms, realisation had dawned upon the ambitious among the suzerains of those days that Karnāṭaka had outgrown the stature of merely forming a part of a *Chakravarti-kshētra* having the centre of its power elsewhere. That, inspite of the potentials being there, neither of these two kingdoms, of whom the Kadambas had more of a chance, ever once actually flowered into an empire was due not so much to the fact that they could not thrive under the shade of the already existent mighty Pallava empire as to the fact that their growth was stunted by

an abiding political situation in which neither found it feasible to eliminate and expropriate the other.

The succeeding epoch of the Chalukyas of Vātāpi witnessed a shift in this situation. With the rise of the Chalukyas, the bigger and more powerful kingdom of the Kadambas went out of existence and the smaller and less powerful Gaṅga kingdom was permanently relegated to the level of a buffer state.

The storm of imperialism raised afresh by the Guptas in the north was rather slow in blowing across Karnāṭaka and when it finally did so in the first half of the sixth century, it brought in its wake the Chalukyas who were quick to inherit and exploit the potential left behind by the Kadambas and given up by the Gaṅgas. In a short span of less than three decades after their arrival on the scene, the Chalukyas succeeded in developing that potential into a mighty empire which, in terms of space, far outgrew the confines of Karnāṭaka and, more significantly, in terms of time, far outlived the Chalukya dynasty itself. For, the empire thus built by them soon came to symbolise not the might of the one dynasty which had built it but the creation of a new and abiding *Chakravarti-kshētra* with the nucleus of its power centred in Karnāṭaka, only its peripheries expanding and shrinking from time to time.

IV

While, thus, the seeds of an enduring political hegemony were sown in Karnāṭaka during the Kadamba-Gaṅga era, the social and cultural transformations registered during that period were, for the Kannaḍiga, no less significant and consequential. But, we find that even in those early days, much in keeping with the rest of the sub-continent, in Karnāṭaka too these factors had become inextricably intertwined with religion which, more often than not, not only sanctioned and governed but also provided the motive force for all such metamorphoses.

Roughly speaking, in the pre-Kadamba-Gaṅga era of Karnāṭaka's history, in the area which subsequently became the Kadamba

domain, Buddhism, and, in the area which later came under the Gaṅgas, Jainism appear to have relegated Vēdic religion, if not in terms of numerical strength, at least in the matter of patronage and influence, to a secondary status, taking away, in that process, much of the aura of social pre-eminence from the *vaidika-brāhmaṇas* and conferring it on the members of the Buddhist and Jaina *saṅghas*. That, as a *brahmachārin*, Kadamba Mayūraśarman had to journey upto distant Kāñchi in order to prosecute his studies is a clear pointer to the fact that in the Karnāṭaka of his days the pursuit of the Vēdic lore was merely rudimentary. It is only natural, therefore, that he interpreted the slighting he had suffered at the hands of the Pallavas as indicative of the widespread apathy or, at least, indifference towards the hoary Vēdic faith, not in the least engendered by the indulgence shown to Buddhism and Jainism by the Pallava royalty. By a strange stroke of political irony, the indignant Mayūraśarman gave up his brāhmaṇical pursuits and instead, adopted the bearings and elan of a righteous *kshatriya* if only to resurrect, thereby, the eroded pre-eminence of the brāhmaṇical Vēdic religion.

It may be safely deduced, on the strength of the available records, that both the Kadambas and the contemporaneous Gaṅgas gave the lion's share of royal patronage to the Vēdic religion. It is even likely that, as part of his campaign to rejuvenate his ancient faith, Mayūraśarman imported into his new-found kingdom a number of *vaidika brāhmaṇa* families from the north (more precisely, if the legends are to be believed, from Ahichchhatra) where brāhmaṇism had started scaling new heights of sanctity and influence under the patronage of the Guptas. It is not surprising, therefore, that many of the Sanskrit charters of the Kadambas, in contrast with the predominantly Buddhistic Prakrit inscriptions of the earlier epochs, record grants made to accomplished *vaidika brāhmaṇas*. Even in the case of the Gaṅgas who, if the later legends are to be believed, were put on the road to royalty by a Jaina monk, most of their genuine charters, issued during the period in question, pertain to the grant of *brahmadēyas* i.e. lands meant for *vaidika brāhmaṇas*.

This rejuvenation of the Vedic religion must have been rendered considerably easy by the rapidity with which Buddhism suffered decay, having begun to fall a prey to complex and somewhat detestable Tāntrik influences. Jainism, on the other hand, by and large, kept itself away from such contamination and was then still full of stamina. As a matter of fact, it almost seems certain that, since its complex and heterogeneous character had rendered the Vēdic religion a poor, if not wholly unacceptable, substitute to Buddhism, the Karnāṭaka rulers of those days employed Jainism as an effective antidote with which to smother the influence of Buddhism and thus ensure the progress of the Vēdic faith. Forgetting for a moment this curious religious interplay, which did bring about the anticipated result, we should accord due credit to the Kadambas and the Gaṅgas for not wantonly indulging in activities prejudicial to the continued practice of Buddhism and Jainism in Karnāṭaka. Far from it, it was they who set the stage, particularly for Jainism, to prepare itself for long centuries of significant role in the religious, educational and literary history of Karnāṭaka.

The large number of Buddhist and Jaina monks and lay followers apart, the Hindus, who must have, as at all other times, retained their numerical majority during the Kadamba-Gaṅga era, had their socio-religious hierarchy patterned out on the lines of the *chatur-varṇa-dharma*, the presently none-too-popular and much maligned four-fold caste system, with the *vaidika brāhmaṇa* restored to his familiar and lucrative position at the apex, next only to the gods (*dēva-dvija-guru-sādhū*). Records of the period clearly indicate that a legion of *brāhmaṇas*, fastidiously clinging to the performance of prescribed vēdic rites, immensely benefitted from this reaction in their favour. At the same time, in these records, there are practically no direct references to the other three castes, though we hear of *kshātra-vṛitti* or the *kshatriya* profession in the context of Mayūraśarman's wrath against the Pallavas and of the non-brāhmaṇical professions of goldsmithy and carpentry in the context of the engraving of the royal charters.

The *vaidika brāhmaṇas* had to justify their emancipation the

hard way by acquiring deep knowledge of the vēdic and allied lores (*vēda-vēdāṅga-pāragāḥ*), by meticulously pursuing the six-fold duties (*shat-karma*) prescribed for them, viz., performance of religious sacrifices (*yajana*), conducting religious sacrifices for others (*yājana*), learning (*adhyayana*), teaching (*adhyāpana*), munificence (*dāna*) and receiving gifts (*pratigraha*). Besides, they had to develop the qualities of self-control (*dama* or *yama*) and piety (*niyama*) and were expected to have mastered at least that particular vēdic *śākhā* to which each of them belonged (*svādhyāya*).

If the contents of the Tālagunda inscription¹ truly reflect the then prevalent conditions, it may be supposed that, in the Karnāṭaka of the Kadamba-Gaṅga period, deeply religious and erudite *brāhmaṇa* families, such as that of the Kadambas themselves, served as centres of ceaseless religious activities and advanced learning.

Even as the *brāhmaṇa* was at the apex of the socio-religious hierarchy, the king was at the top of the socio-administrative hierarchy. We find members of the Kadamba and Gaṅga dynasties vaunting their erudition with great pride, may be because the first occupant of Karnāṭaka's indigenous throne was himself a student-turned-kingdom builder. This royal love for learning, exhibited by these early rulers, is seen as an abiding factor in the succeeding centuries of the history of Karnāṭaka which has produced a greater number of royal authors and authoresses than any other similar territorial unit in the sub-continent. Again, it was the Kadambas and the Gaṅgas who set the trend in Karnāṭaka as far as the drafting of royal eulogies (*praśastis*) concerning dynasties and individual monarchs, and factual as well as merely conventional narrations of the kings' erudition, munificence, bravery and martial exploits are concerned.

From a study of the epigraphical records of the period, it may be concluded, outside the pale of controversy that, except in the case of the *brāhmaṇa* community, caste classification depended more on a family's or individual's aptitude and accomplishments. We have the classic example of the Kadambas, *brāhmaṇas* by birth, getting converted to the *kshatriya-jāti*, though the reverse process would have

been an impossibility. That Śrutakīrti, a Jaina by faith, was not only considered holy enough by Kākusthavarman who, so as to achieve salvation, bestowed on him a grant of land, but was also a general (*sēnāpati*) in the Kadamba army is another instance on hand to show that the *kshātra-vṛitti* and, on that analogy, the other *jāti-dharmas* were open to choice and were not necessarily caste-oriented. This rational approach, boldly pursued in those days when a considerable degree of rigidity must have been generated by the restoration of orthodox Vēdic religion, had its benign influence on Karnāṭaka for centuries and we find, particularly in the medieval period, a number of *brāhmaṇas* weilding the pen, the sword and the *darbhā* with equal facility.

While erudite *brāhmaṇa* households served as educational institutions to which flocked students drawn from all the four castes, temples and Jaina *vasatis* had become centres of socio-religious activities by conducting, as per some available inscriptions, grandiose festivals which, then as now, may have been more secular than religious in nature. One point which clearly emerges from a study of the Kadamba-Gaṅga records is the fact that, unlike in the medieval period, mostly kings and other royal personages and occasionally feudal lords and officials played the role of donors, merchants and common folk not being able to do so, a situation which more or less remained unchanged during the Chalukya period obviously owing to economic circumscriptions, including very little flow of liquid cash.

V.

And it is on the economic front that we fail to notice any distinct contribution, by way of setting new and lasting trends, made by the Kadambas and the Gaṅgas. Land, as is proved by the sanctity attached to its donation, and cattle, as is indicated by the oft-repeated invocation '*svasty-astu gō-brāhmaṇēbhyaḥ*' were the most priced properties and whatever money was in circulation appears to have had little or no influence on everyday life. In marked contrast, during the medieval period of Karnāṭaka's history when money, which is the most

mobile form of wealth and hence a good social leveller, was brought into full circulation, we find individual and corporate merchants and common folk in their hundreds making gifts of movable as well as immovable properties to temples and *brāhmaṇas*.

VI

The number, nature and size of religious monuments built and donations made in any given period heavily depend upon the intensity or otherwise of the interaction of religious fervour and economic prosperity. Viewed from this angle, it is but natural to find that during the Kadamba-Gaṅga period the practice of building temples had but taken only humble strides. We hear of a few Hindu temples such as that of Praṇavēśvara at Tālagunda and that of Mahādēva built by Nilakanṭha, the *brāhmaṇa* physician (*vaidya*) of Kadamba Ravivarman. We do hear of a larger number of Jaina temples both in the Kadamba and the Gaṅga kingdoms. The reference to the construction of a temple for Jina-Manmatha at Guḍṇāpura by Ravivarma would have been of absorbing interest but for the unfortunate and insoluble controversy as to whether the temple in question was a Hindu *dēvālaya* or a *Jinālaya*.

VII

It is in the field of language that we find the Kadamba-Gaṅga era covering a very significant period. Starting their careers at the fag end of the Prakrit era, the Kadambas and the Gaṅgas stepped into the age of classical Sanskrit having fully imbibed the love and fervour of the Guptas for that immortal yet presently moribund speech. While the diction and style of their inscriptions fully reflect the advancement of that language, the best among them, the Tālagunda inscription, written by the poet Kubja, captures that language in all its classical excellence and intricacies.

Yet, for the Kannaḍiga, the Kadamba-Gaṅga era is of momentous importance not because of the heights scaled by Sanskrit but because that period saw the elevation, hesitant though, of his own mother tongue Kannaḍa as an official language. For it is true that of

all the historical vestiges of the Kadamba-Gaṅga era that have come down to us, none stirs the heart of a Kannaḍiga as much as the Halmiḍi Kannaḍa inscription of Kadamba Kākusthavarman does. Though more than ten decades rolled by before the next Kannaḍa inscription got written, the Halmiḍi epigraph proves beyond doubt that Kannaḍa had come to be recognised as the language of the soil at least by the middle of the 5th century A.D.

CHAPTER TWO

THE BEGINNINGS

I

After an eventful sway of nearly two hundred years, the stamina and energy of the Kadambas began to show signs of decline and, as if to fill the impending vacuum, there appeared, towards the middle of the sixth century A.D., on the northern peripheries of Karnāṭaka, the new political power of the Chalukyas who, right from the very moment and manner of their arrival, made very clear their intentions to stay at and spread far and wide from Vātāpi, their first foot-hold in Karnāṭaka.

II

Name of the dynasty. The members of the Vātāpi ruling house have come to be popularly, though erroneously called by almost all historians as the 'Chālukyas of Bādāmi', Bādāmi, the modern name of their ancient capital Vātāpi, being invariably associated in order to distinguish them from their scions who had ruled over Gujarat, their offshoots who had established a kingdom in Andhra and their alleged successors who ruled over Karnāṭaka from the city of Kalyāṇa during the 10th-12th centuries. While it is only proper to call the Āndhra and Kalyāṇa dynasties as 'Chālukyas' (or 'Chālukyas' owing to Dravidian influence), in which dynastic appellation the lengthening of the first syllable is in accord with the rules of Sanskrit grammar, scholars should take note of the fact that an overwhelming number of their own records name the Vātāpi family as the 'Chalikya', 'Chalkya' or 'Chalukya' *kula* using short *cha* for the initial syllable, and also, rarely as the 'Chulukya' *kula*. Of 'Chalikya' and 'Chalukya', though the former form is older and slightly more frequently met with in the earlier inscriptions, the latter form has

been adopted for the present work because it is found used in the Aihole inscription (26), composed by Ravikirti, the doyen among Chalukya poets and historians, and also because that name with medial *u* as against medial *i* had been preferred by the Gujarat, Andhra, and Kalyāṇa houses. As far as the present work is concerned, Chalukya denotes the Vātāpi house and Chālukya, the Kalyāṇa house unless otherwise specified.

III

Legendary explanations of the dynastic name. It was customary for talented Indian court-poets, particularly of the 11th and subsequent centuries, to concoct, no doubt with the consent of their royal masters, fanciful stories and anecdotes to explain the cause of the origin of any given dynastic name, imperial or otherwise, with absolute abandon and scant regard for historicity. There are, no doubt, one or two instances, like that of the Kadambas of Banavāsi, where the proffered explanations appear plausible and even historical. In the case of the Kadambas, for example, it is stated that that ancient family came to be called 'Kadamba' because of a Lone and hence distinguished Kadamba tree (*Kadamba-aika pādapam*) in the vicinity of their ancestral house, a down-to-earth explanation which sounds at once historical and convincing.

In the case of the Chalukyas of Vātāpi, while their own charters as well as those issued by their Gujarat subordinates and by their early scions of the Āndhra country are totally silent, some of the records, issued during and subsequent to the 11th century A.D., by the Eastern Chālukyas of Vēṅgi and the Western Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa contain capricious and unhistorical explanations of the dynastic name.

These later Eastern Chālukyas would have us believe¹ that a certain Vijayāditya of the north, prompted by the ambition to conquer Dakṣiṇāpatha, marched south only to lose his life in a battle against Trilōchana-Pallava. His loyal servants, including the female attendants of the harem, the senior ministers and the family priest somehow managed to escort the pregnant wife of the deceased invader to the safe confines of a *brāhmaṇa* settlement called Muḍivēmu where

she came to be looked after by Vishṇubhaṭṭa Sōmayāji who showered upon her all the affection due from a father to his daughter. In due course she gave birth to a son who was christened Vishṇuvar-dhana, perhaps after his foster-grandfather, and was told in proper time, by his mother, the story of his antecedents and birth. Having come of age, he retired to a hill known by the name of Chālukya in order to propitiate the gods and attain the wherewithal needed to reclaim his royal status. Thus do the later Eastern Chālukyas trace the origin of the dynastic name to the name of the hill on which Vishṇuvar-dhana performed austerities.

The inscriptions and court-poets² of the Kalyāṇa Chālukyas have a different story to narrate. It appears that once when Brahmā, the Creator, was engaged in the performance of the *sandhyā* (twilight) rituals, Indra approached and beseeched him to create a hero who could put an end to the increasing evil on earth. On being thus requested, Brahmā looked steadily into the *Chuluka-jala* (the water of oblation in His palm) and out sprang thence a great warrior, the progenitor of the Chalukyas. Inscriptions³ of the same period, belonging to the Chaulukyas of Gujarat, who may also have been in some way related to the Vātāpi Chalukyas, trace their dynastic name through a similar story. As a matter of fact the derivation of Chaulukya from *Chuluka* can be grammatically sustained while that of Chalukya or Chālukya cannot.

Barring these fanciful stories which are best summarily dismissed, we have very little information of a historical nature on which to postulate an acceptable theory. There is, however, an evidence, though of a very uncertain nature, provided by an Ikshvāku Prakrit inscription⁴ of about the 2nd century A.D. from Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, Andhra Pradesh. It gives the name of an officer, with the designations of *mahāsēnāpati* and *mahātalavara*, as Khamda (=Skt. Skanda)-Chaliki. It is not impossible that the above inscription contains the earliest reference yet known to the Chalikya or Chalukya family and that they had built up the prestige and stature of their family while under the Ikshvākus preparatory to their arrival and venturesome stay in Karnāṭ aka. But the above suggestion bristles with serious problems in-

sofar as it goes against whatever little we can deduce about the probable time and route taken by the migrant Chalukyas on their way to what turned out to be their final destination, namely, Vātāpi.

IV

The caste of the Chalukyas. A discussion as to which rung of the *chāturvarṇya* ladder of traditional Hindu social stratification the Chalukyas adorned, in case they were not *kshatriyas* by origin, is neither relevant nor healthy in the present context in which the caste system has become, for all Indians, intellectuals as well as illiterates, a tradition to be condemned and stigmatized in public and wrongfully exploited in private. Nevertheless, the following observations are made for purely academic reasons. A verse from the 12th century court-poet Bilhaṇa's *Vikramāṅkadēva-charitam*, which compares the growth of the Chālukya family with the ever increasing flow of the Ganges from the feet of Viṣṇu, has led some scholars to conclude that the Chalukyas were originally *śūdras* who, according to ancient Indian mythology, issued forth from the feet of Brahmā. This conclusion is unwarranted because this verse should be attributed rather to the poetic imagination of Bilhaṇa than to his knowledge of and desire to utilise any valid historical information. Added to this we have inscriptional poets of the same age stating, with equal felicity of imagination, that the Chālukyas were born from the arms of Brahmā, a statement which would give them *kshatriya* origin. This controversy can be justifiably ignored on the ground that the Chalukyas of Vātāpi belonged to a period in which the particular *varṇa* to which a person belonged did not depend so much upon his birth as upon his mien, character and career. And, judged from this point of view, we see in the Chalukyas, right from the moment of our acquaintance with them, the best as well as the worst characteristics of all the four *varṇas*, as it inevitably is with all mortal beings; and, to narrow down the issue further, ever since the Chalukyas made their presence felt, even if Khamda-Chaliki is accepted to be one among them, they had been pursuing the *kshātra-vṛitti*.

V

Mythical genealogies. Another unhistorical trend met with in the epigraphical records of the 11th and subsequent centuries is the attempt, on the part of court-poets, no doubt, again, with the consent of their masters, to invent mythical genealogies which seek to carry back the antiquity of the royal families not merely to the periods of the epics and the Vēdas but to the very moment of their creation in the heavens. As far as the Chalukyas of Vātāpi are concerned, the blame for engineering such travesties attaches, once again, to the Western Chāḷukyas of Kalyāṇa and their Eastern Chāḷukya contemporaries. The Eastern Chāḷukyas, for instance, have concocted the following long list of fifty-two names commencing with no less a personage than the divine preserver :

1. Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu)
2. Svayambhūḥ (i.e. Brahmā, the creator)
3. Atri (born of Brahmā's mind)
4. Sōma (i.e. the Moon)
5. Budha
6. Purūravas (a *Chakravartin*)
7. Āyuh
8. Nahushaḥ
9. Yayātiḥ (a *Chakravartin*)
10. Puruh (a *Chakravartin*)
11. Janamējaya (I) (performer of three *aśvamēdhas*)
12. Prāchīśaḥ
13. Sainyayātiḥ
14. Hayapatiḥ

15. Sārvabhaumaḥ
16. Jayasēnaḥ
17. Mahābhaunaḥ
18. Aiśānakaḥ
19. Krōdhānanaḥ
20. Dēvakīḥ
21. Ṛibhukaḥ
22. Ṛikshakaḥ
23. Mativaraḥ (performer of *satras* and *yāgas*)
24. Kātyāyanaḥ
25. Nilāḥ
26. Dushyantaḥ
27. Bharata (a *Chakravartin* who performed *aśvamēdha* on the banks of the Gaṅgā and Yamunā).
28. Bhūmanyuh
29. Suhōtaḥ
30. Hasti
31. Virōchanaḥ
32. Ajamilaḥ
33. Saṁvaraṇaḥ (married Tapatyā, daughter of Tapana)
34. Sudhanvā
35. Parikshit (I)
36. Bhīmasēna (I)

37. Pradīpanaḥ

38. Śāntanuḥ

39. Vichitravīryaḥ

40. Pāṇḍurājaḥ

41. Yudhisṭhiraḥ

42. Bhīma
(II)

43. Arjuna

44. Nakula

45. Sahadēva

46. Abhimanyu

47. Parīkṣit (II)

48. Janamējaya (II)

49. Kṣhēmukaḥ

50. Naravāhanaḥ

51. Śātānikaḥ

52. Udayanaḥ

The mention of Udayana's name is followed by an ambiguous statement that fifty-nine (*ēkāṇṇa-shaṣṭi*) rulers had sat, without a break, on the throne of Ayōdhyā before the raise of Vijayāditya. It is of no historical consequence whatever that, in the said passage, the expression *tataḥ param* would lead one to believe that this unbroken line of fifty-nine rulers had followed Udayana while, at the same time, the other expression *tat-prabhṛti* would have us believe that the fifty-nine was inclusive of the fifty-two named in the list. This list, which should be summarily dismissed as being totally unhistorical, is interesting if only because it testifies to the erudition of the concoctor in epic lores and also because it shows the ingenuity with which the mythical genealogy has been construed on the strength of the meagre and, for the most part, unintelligible information provided by the Vātāpi Chalukyas themselves regarding their antecedents.

The Western Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa do not appear to have been

interested in conjuring up any such mythical ancestry but they do aver that fifty-nine of their remote ancestors had ruled from distant Ayōdhyā before the advent of their Chalukya progenitor in the south.

VI

Their original abode and early activities. How far could the information, possessed by both the Western and the Eastern Chālukyas, that the Chalukyas originally hailed from Ayōdhyā be historical ? It is customary for historians dealing with the dynastic history of Karnāṭaka to summarily dismiss this claim as a mere later concoction in spite of the fact that the approved draft of the *praśasti* of the Kalyāṇa Chālukya copper-plate inscriptions contains a surprisingly high percentage of historical truth, as will be shown in the sequel, proving thereby that they had access to genuine ancestral documents pertaining to the Chalukyas of Vātāpi. In the light of this, it is worthwhile examining if the claim of the Kalyāṇa Chālukyas that the Vātāpi ruling house had connections with the Ayōdhyā region can be otherwise substantiated. One piece of credible though unexpected admission of this Ayōdhyā connection is met with, for instance, in the Sañjān plates of Rāshtrakūṭa Amōghavarsha I in which, in the context of eulogising Kṛishṇa I, the following lines are inscribed :

Chakarsha-Chālukya-kula-śriyaṁ balāt Vilōla-Pālidhvaja-māla-
bhāriṇim //
Ayōdhyā-simhāsana-chāmar-ōrjitaḥ Sit-ātapatrō prati-paksha-
rjāya-bhāk /
Akālarvarshō hata-bhūpa-rājakō babhūva-rājarshir-aśēsha-puṇya-
kṛit //

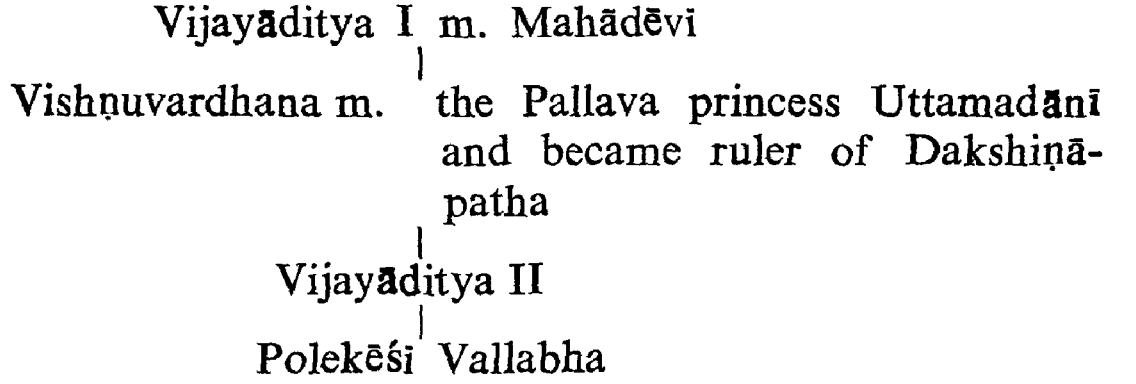
Being prejudiced against the Kalyāṇa Chālukya claims of the Ayōdhyā-connection of the Vātāpi house, Bhandarkar took the expression '*Ayōdhyā-simhāsana-chāmar-ōrjitaḥ*' to mean 'elevated by means of *incontestable throne* and chowries' and lost sight, in that process, of the clear reference therein to the 'throne of Ayōdhyā'. The above quotation from the Sañjān plates is the earliest and definitely pre-Kalyāṇa-Chālukya admission of the connection of the ancestors of the Vātāpi rulers with far off Ayōdhyā. It may be mentioned here that.

the discussion appearing in the sequel, on the fields of activity of the early Chalukyas before they had entrenched themselves at Vātāpi, renders it possible that they had moved from the north *via* Gujarat and Mahārāshṭra and, if the reference to a Chaliki general in the Nāgārjunakoṇḍa inscription does pertain to them, *via* the Andhra country too. The absence of any reference to their connections with Ayōdhyā in the Vātāpi Chalukya inscriptions themselves may be attributed to their fear that, in the wake of their claim to belong to such a far off place, they may not be easily accepted in their newly acquired territories in the south. Again, since they had, before long, lost their alien identity and become one with the Kannaḍigas, and their place of origin had nothing to do with their subsequent careers as emperors, war-lords and administrators the actual place of their origin has lost some of its historical relevance. But the possibility of their migration from Ayōdhyā or, generally speaking from the north, does have an interesting aspect which may be stated as follows.

By summarily discarding the Ayōdhyā-connection of the Chalukyas historians have lost sight of what appears to have been a well organised mass migration, the likes of which have time and again, and from very early times, taken place the world over and for various reasons. When it set out, and the reasons must have been indeed compelling, if not from Ayōdhyā proper, at least from somewhere in the Ayōdhyā region, on its long march through unfamiliar terrain towards no destination in particular, the Chalukya band-wagon must have included families and individuals drawn from all sections of society, of both sexes and of all ages, from all the four castes and from outside, from all the professions and crafts. That impressive caravan must have also included, without doubt, skilled architects and sculptors, artisans and stone-masons. The trek having been long and arduous and the destination unknown, many must have dropped or died *en route* and, because the leadership was enterprising and the prospects promising, many must have joined it *en route*. It is not from nowhere that many Chalukya temples have incorporated the northern style of architecture; and to argue that the Chalukyas, once they had settled down in and around Vātāpi, freshly imported architects and

sculptors from the north would indeed be naive. It is, on the other hand, only reasonable to suppose that the northern architects who had come thither with the Chalukyas, and their local counterparts, working side by side, were responsible for the excellent open air museums of Chalukya architecture at Bādāmi, Paṭṭadakal and Aihole. If nothing else, at least this should serve as a compelling reason for scholars to examine seriously the Ayōdhyā-connection of the Vātāpi Chalukyas instead of straightway dismissing it as a later unhistorical concoction.

As for the vicissitudes undergone by the Chalukya family during the period between its departure from Ayōdhyā and appearance in Vātāpi, the Eastern and Western Chālukyas have different stories to narrate. The former story would have us believe that Vijayāditya of the line of fifty-nine rulers who had adorned the throne at Ayōdhyā, prompted by the desire for conquests, marched against Dakṣiṇāpatha where, in a fateful encounter with Trilōchana Pallava, he met with his end. His widowed queen Mahādēvi, who was pregnant, was spirited away from enemy territory through the machinations of her female attendants, senior ministers and priest (*purōhita*) and was placed in the care of Viṣṇu-bhaṭṭa Sōmayāji, a resident of Muḍivēmu. Under his paternal care she duly delivered a boy who was given the name of Viṣṇuvardhana and to whom, even as he came of age, she confided all details regarding his antecedents and deprivation. Bent upon regaining his royal status, the young Viṣṇuvardhana repaired to the hill (*giri*) called Chālukya and, after due penance, acquired, from various deities, all the insignias and paraphernalia which had originally belonged to his ancestors. Thus armed, he gave battle to Trilōchana Pallava, defeated him and married his daughter who bore the name of Uttamadāni. After vanquishing many other rulers including the Kadambas and the Gaṅgas, he ruled over Dakṣiṇāpatha. To Viṣṇuvardhana was born, of his Pallava spouse, a son named Vijayāditya whose son was Pulakēśi-Vallabha, none other than the famous Polekēśi I. The above information may be tabulated as follows :



Either because they had culled out such information from historical documents in their possession or merely because they were influenced by the Eastern Chālukya narrative, the Western Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa, without once alluding to the story quoted above, simply say that the Chalukya family had such names of distinction as Vishṇuvardhana and Vijayāditya and then, in strict accordance with the credible genealogy of the Vātāpi rulers, give the names of the early rulers as Jayasimha, Raṇarāga and Polekēśi I. A concordance of these names works out as follows :

<i>Eastern Chālukya</i>		<i>Western Chālukya</i>
Vijayāditya I	—
Vishṇuvardhana	—	Jayasimha
Vijayāditya II	—	Raṇarāga
Polekēśi I		Polekēśi I

The above concordance, while not adding to the credibility of the Eastern Chālukya narrative which, any way, stands discredited by its own fanciful nature, does hint at the possibility of Vishṇuvardhana and Vijayāditya being the alternative names, respectively of Jayasimha and Raṇarāga, particularly when viewed in the light of the Chālukya claim that these two names were of special significance to the Chalukya and, of course, Chālukya families.

Before we commence our narrative on Polekēśi I who actually launched the Vātāpi Chalukyas on the high seas of southern imperialism, it only remains for us to discuss their familial attributes and inheritances and, as far as can be convincingly done, the career of

Jayasimha and his son Raṇarāga, the grandfather and father respectively of Polekēśi I.

VII

When the Chalukyas entered the political arena at Vātāpi, the Deccan and the regions to its immediate south had already come under the influence of what may be called the classical Sanskrit culture which was a concomitant of the revival of the brāhmaṇical culture under the aegis of the Guptas. The dynastic eulogies as occurring in the copper plate inscriptions of the Kadambas whom the Chalukyas supplanted, and of the Western Gaṅgas whom they later subjugated, are couched in classical Sanskrit and some of their inscriptions, such as the Tālagunda inscription of Kadamba Kākusthavarman are seen to reach the heights of literary excellence. The Chalukyas allowed themselves to be fully influenced by this classicalism right from the moment they settled down in Vātāpi, as is borne out by the cliff inscription of Polekēśi I and, at a later stage, even though they adopted the vernaculars for writing the texts of their stone inscriptions in Karnāṭaka and Āndhra Pradesh, they never let themselves be alienated from the Sanskritic culture as is borne out by their copper plate inscriptions, particularly those portions in them which contain dynastic eulogies as well as eulogies of individual rulers.

The *Varṇśika-praśasti* (dynastic eulogy) of the Chalukyas, culled out from their own records, reads as follows :

Chalukyānām kulam [The family of the Chālukyas (who)]

1. *śrīmatām* [are illustrious],
2. *Svāmi-Mahāsēna-pād-ānudhyātānām* [meditate at the feet of Lord Mahāsēna, i.e. Kārttikēya, the son of Śiva],
3. *sakala-bhuvana-saṁstūyamāna-Mānavya-sagōtrāṇām* [belong to the lineage of Mānavya who is eulogised the world over],
4. *Hāriti-putrāṇām* [are the descendants of Hāriti],
5. *Kauśiki-saṁvardhitānām* [are reared by (the goddess) Kauśiki],

6. *Mātri-gaṇ-ābhishiktānām* [have been anointed by the group of (divine) mothers],
7. *sapta-lōka-mātribhis-Sapta-Mātribhir-abhivardhitānām* [are brought up by the Seven Mothers who are the mothers of the seven worlds],
8. *Kārttikēya-parirakṣaṇa-prāpta-kalyāṇa-paramparāṇām* [have obtained their series of fortunes through the protection of (the god) Kārttikēya],
9. *Bhagavan-Nārāyaṇa-prasāda-samāsādita-Varāha-lāñchchhan-ēkṣaṇa-kṣaṇa-vaśikṛita-mahābhṛitām* [bring under their spell (enemy) rulers, without exception, by the very display of their Boar-insignia bestowed on them by Lord Nārāyaṇa],
10. *agnishtōm-āgnichayana-vājapēya-pauṇḍarika-bahusuvarṇ-āśvamēdh-āvabhṛitha-pavitri-kṛita-śīrasām* [have their heads sanctified by the ablutionary baths taken after the performance of the *agnishtōma*, *agni-chayana*, *vājapēya*, *pauṇḍarika*, *bahusuvarṇa* (and) *aśvamēdha* (sacrifices)],
11. *apratihat-ōtsāha-bala-mati-pratāpa-śaurya-dhairya-vīryāṇām* [are endowed with unbeaten perseverance, strength, intelligence, prowess, bravery, courage and valour],
12. *mātā-pitṛi-pād-ānudhyātānām* [meditate at the feet of their parents],
13. *yathā-vidhi-hut-Āgninām* [offer sacrifices to Agni (the fire-god) as per (Vēdic) injunctions],
14. *yathā-kām-ārchit-ārthinām* [bestow gifts on the needy with abandon] and
15. *anēka-dharma-karma-puṇya-prasavānām* [have earned merit by (the performance of) numerous acts of piety].

Even a cursory glance at the above *vaṁśika-praśasti* is enough to convince any one that its draft and diction owe much to the *vaṁśika praśasti* of the Kadambas and the Gaṅgas. Like the Chalukyas, their predecessors, the Kadambas, too were worshippers of Mahāsēna and claim to have been anointed by the Divine Mothers (*Svāmi-Mahāsēna-Mātrigaṇ-ānudhyāt-ābhishiktānām*); they too belonged to the same *gōtra* (*Mānavya-sagōtrāṇām*) and were the descen-

dants of Hāriti (*Hāriti-putrāṇām*). The Kadamba family too had been purified by the ablutionary bath taken on the occasion of the *aśvamēdha* sacrifice (*aśvamēdh-āvabhṛitha-snāna-pavitrikṛit-ānvayānām*). These common claims are enough to argue that the Chalukyas considered themselves as the full-fledged successors of the Kadambas not only in the political sphere but in the matter of patronising the Vēdic religion as well, which, the Kadambas, having first resurrected, so zealously promoted, during the entire tenure of their suzerainty, all over their domain.

The fact that the Chalukyas adopted Varāha (the divine Boar) for their insignia and the fact that many of their records commence with a stanza in praise of Lord Viṣṇu in his *Varāh-āvatāra* (Boar incarnation) have led scholars to conclude that they were predominantly Vaiṣṇavites by faith. The *vaṁśika-praśasti* has, however, a slightly different tale to tell for, while, in it, the beneficence of Nārāyaṇa, i.e. Viṣṇu, is acknowledged only once for His bestowal of the *Varāha-lāñchchana*, the eulogy is rather heavily Śaiva-oriented. Mahāsēna, whose worshippers the Chalukyas were and who had showered upon them a torrent of fortunes, is the son of Śiva; the seven Divine Mothers who are praised for bringing about the phenomenal rise of the family, are closely connected with the worship of Śiva and are also said to be attending on His son Mahāsēna; Kauśiki, who had reared them, is none other than Durgā, i.e. Pārvatī, Śiva's consort. When we add to these the point that their religious patronage, as deduced from a study of their available records, does not betray any bias in favour of Vaiṣṇavism, we are left with the only incontrovertible information that the Chalukyas were patrons of the Vēdic religion in a total sense and not with reference to its Śaivite or Vaiṣṇavite wing.

It will be shown in the sequel that this total commitment to the Vēdic or brāhmaṇical religion did not, in the least, render them fanatical. On the other hand, the two other major faiths, Jainism and Buddhism, of them the former in a larger measure, also received enough patronage from the members of the imperial house of Vātāpi and from their subordinates and officials. This leads us to

the question as to whether at all any dynasty as a whole could be dubbed, on the strength of interpretative source material such as epigraphy certainly is, as belonging to one particular faith or the other, more so in the case of ancient dynasties such as that of the Chalukyas which had held sway in an age of comparatively greater enlightenment when the chains of rigidity and intolerance had not shackled religious freedom, reasoning and choice.

While, of the fifteen eulogistic sentences enumerated above, the first is merely an honorific, the subsequent eight (Nos. 2-9) cannot be brought within the purview of history proper; the last five (Nos. 11-15) are more or less of a conventional nature. No. 10 which describes the Chalukya dynasty as purified by the performance of a number of Vēdic sacrifices is of some historical significance insofar as it shows that the Chalukyas had no qualms about attributing the elevation of their family into a major ruling house of Karnāṭaka to the all-round efforts of Polekēśi I; for, it was he who had performed all these morale-boosting *yāgas* as asserted by most of the available drafts of the *Vamśika-praśasti* of the Chalukyas which appears, though in its rudimentary form, even during the reign of Kīrttivarman I and in its more or less stereotyped phraseology from the reign of Polekēśi II. Thus having benefitted most consequentially by the efforts of Polekēśi I, pioneered at a time and place which suited them best, it was but natural for the Chalukyas to have recorded scant details of his predecessors whose exploits were all performed outside and, perhaps, *en route* to Karnāṭaka.

VIII

Jayasimha. One of the two such predecessors of hazy memory was Polekēśi I's grandfather, Jayasimha whose is the first historical name in the Chalukya genealogy and whose earliest mention occurs in the Kaira plates (i) of his grandson Vijayarāja issued in the year 394, obviously of the Śaka era corresponding to A.D. 472-73. We next hear him mentioned in the Mahākūṭa pillar inscription (ii) of Maṅgalēśa written on All Fool's Day, A.D. 599. It is stated therein, in a rather conventional vein, which does not necessarily betray, on

the part of his descendants, ignorance of hard historical facts, that the king (*nṛipah*) Jayasimghavallabhēndra was born in the family (*anvaya*) of the Chalukyas, that he was comparable to Maghavān (i.e. Indra) and Vaiśravaṇa (i.e. Kubēra) in matters respectively of good qualities and wealth and that he was the very receptacle of brilliance, energy, valour, memory, intellect, splendour, polity and refinement. The next reference to him, of a slightly more intimate nature, is made by Ravikirti, the friend of Polekēśi II and composer of the Aihole inscription (26) of A.D. 634-35. With no concern whatsoever for time and place, a serious defect which unfortunately characterises all Indian historical writings of the past, Ravikirti adverts rhetorically to a battle in which bewildered horses, elephants and infantry were struck down by many hundreds of weapons and headless trunks and flashing swords leapt to and fro in a *dance macabre*, at the end of which the victorious king (*Rājā*) Jayasimghavallabha of the Chalukya lineage made his own the otherwise flirtatious Lady Fortune (Lakshmiḥ). Though both the Mahākūṭa (11) and Aihole (26) epigraphs credit Jayasimha with being a king (*nṛipah*, *rājā*), for all that we know, he may have been such only in rank without a land to rule.

That we next hear of Jayasimha only in the eleventh century, after a yawning gap of more than four hundred years of hectic political and dynastic changes, is a handsome tribute to the care and attention bestowed by the Chalukyas in preserving their family documents even through their lean days of over two centuries when the Rāshtrakūṭas were supreme in Karnāṭaka. The Nilgunda plates of Chalukya Vikramāditya VI (A.D. 1076-1126) devote two verses in praise of Jayasimha. The first one is of a conventional nature hailing him as a renowned vanquisher of adversaries, as being endowed with the virtues of the kings of yore (*ādi-rāja-charitah*) and as alleviating the distress of his subjects. The second one is of absorbing interest if only for the confusion and controversy it adds to our understanding of the early history of the Chalukyas of Vātāpi. With admirable courage of conviction, so often encountered in the writings of our ancients, particularly when their intentions are to garb with a note of certainty what is not even plausible, this verse

conveys the information that Jayasimha once again resurrected the royal splendour of the Chalukyas by defeating Indra, the son of Kṛishṇa of the Rāshtrakūṭa family, whose army was backed by no less than eight hundred elephants, and after burning to death one hundred and five or, alternatively, five hundred (enemy) kings.

Historians will be, however, well advised to examine this particular claim in all its aspects before any of them chooses to further reiterate its total untenability. Any judgement passed on the above claim, if it become acceptable, should be based on the fact that the approved is to draft of the *praśasti* of the Kalyāṇa Chālukyas contains a surprisingly high percentage of historical truth. For instance, the facts that Polekēśi I had performed the horse-sacrifice and had founded the city of Vātāpi, that Kīrttivarman I had defeated the Nala, Maurya and Kadamba kings, that Maṅgalēśa had routed the Kalachuris and had occupied the Rēvati-dvīpa, that Polekēśi II had defeated Harsha and that the Chalukyas came to grief during the reign of Kīrttivarman II—facts well known to us from contemporaneous records—are all found correctly recapitulated in the Kalyāṇa Chālukya *praśasti*, proving thereby that the later Chālukyas had access to reliable historical documents pertaining to the Chalukyas of Vātāpi. This, coupled with the significant fact that the Kalyāṇa Chālukyas, unlike the Eastern Chālukyas, had made no attempts to trace their ancestry beyond Jayasimha with whom the Vātāpi Chalukyas themselves begin the history of their family, should be strong enough reason for historians to desist from summarily dismissing the claim made for Jayasimha even though it may lack direct substantiation.

Let us examine the issue afresh and with an open mind. On the strength of the Kalyāṇa Chālukya claim of an Ayōdhya-origin for the Chalukyas, a claim which had been conceded in the earlier epoch by the Rāshtrakūṭas, we have suggested above that the Chalukyas, in all probability, wended their way southwards *via* Gujarat and Maharashtra. It was not as if the early Chalukyas had set their eyes on Karnāṭaka from the very moment of their departure from their ancestral moorings. On the other hand, it will be reasonable to suppose that they must have, in their attempts

to find for themselves a new haven, moved, if not been actually driven out, from place to place until they arrived on the borders of Karnāṭaka where, with the power of the Kadambas on the wane, a political vacuum was in the offing. It could be that Jayasimha's encounter with the Rāshtrakūṭas was one such triumphant yet historically inconsequential battle fought by the Chalukyas *en route*. If this is accepted, it will naturally follow that this early Rāshtrakūṭa-Chālukya encounter must have taken place somewhere in Gujarat for the Rāshtrakūṭas claim that they were of Yādava origin and the Yādavas are, from time immemorial, associated with Gujarat. Another Rāshtrakūṭa claim that Indra II, the father of Dantidurga, had obtained the hands of the daughter of the Chalukya king (of Gujarat) by the *rākshasa* form of marriage after waging a battle for her at Khēṭaka-maṇḍapa, which is the same as modern Kaira in north Gujarat, clearly shows that the Rāshtrakūṭas, of acknowledgedly ancient origin, were active in Gujarat prior to their advent in Karnāṭaka.

Jayasimha's encounter with Rāshtrakūṭa Indra did not turn out to be a stray incident but inaugurated an era of abiding relationship between the Chalukyas and Gujarat. Raṇarāga was not the only son of Jayasimha I who had another, an elder, issue in *Raṇavikrānta* Buddhavarman. It is very likely that, after defeating Indra, Jayasimha I placed his elder son in charge of the conquered territory. We are led to this conclusion by the Kaira plates of Buddhavarman's son Vijayarāja, issued in the year 394 of an unspecified era. Their data must be referred to the Śaka era in which case that Kaira plates (1) would have been issued in A.D. 472-73, a date in no way precluded by the palaeographical features of the plates in question. There is no doubt a long interval of time between A.D. 472-73 and the earliest known date of Vijayarāja's cousin Polekēśi I, viz. A.D. 543. This is easily explained away by the possibility of there having been a long interval of time between the birth of Buddhavarman and that of his younger brother Raṇarāga and also by the possibility that A.D. 472-73 may mark the beginning of Vijayarāja's reign and that Polekēśi I may have commenced his reign years before A.D. 543.

IX

Raṇarāga. Like his father Jayasimha, Raṇarāga also finds mention only in the Mahākūṭa and Aihole inscriptions of the Vātāpi Chalukyas and in the *praśasti* of the Kalyāṇa Chālukyas. The Mahākūṭa pillar inscription (11) merely states that Raṇarāga resembled his father in virtuous qualities and heroism and affluence and that his fondness for war elicited the affection of his own people and caused vexation of mind to his enemies. The Aihole inscription (26) is no better in this regard and states that Raṇarāga, the sole lord of the earth, was of divine disposition and that his superhuman greatness could be felt, even when he was asleep, by the sheer halo around his body. From these pointless eulogies showered upon him, it may be safely concluded that, there being no kingdom to inherit, Raṇarāga merely succeeded to the leadership of the meandering Chalukya forces.

It is but natural, therefore, that the Kalyāṇa Chālukyas did not come by any tangible information about Raṇarāga and it redounds to their credit that they did not themselves concoct any. They praise his memory in a short couplet, the first half of which adverts to his fondness for war, a mere etymological allusion to his name, and the second half to his attachment or devotion to the feet of Hara i.e., Lord Śiva.

X

With the mantle of the leadership of the Chalukya forces falling upon the shoulders of Raṇarāga's son Polekēśi I, the Chalukyas set foot on the road to their tryst with destiny. From a mere mobile political power which helplessly allowed itself to be blown hither and thither, they soon transformed themselves into a well-settled force with very clear notions on where and how to expand the sphere of their hegemony. The moments when Polekēśi I stood atop the hill at Vātāpi and surveyed the extensive land sprawled southwards indeed proved to be of momentous consequence not only to the enterprising Chalukyas but to the land and its people whose unquestioned masters they soon became, and even to the lifeless cliffs, rocks and boulders which were soon transformed into the finest models of Indian art and architecture.

CHAPTER THREE

A KINGDOM IS BORN

I

In the genealogical accounts of most of the copper plate charters of his successors, and in a few of their stone inscriptions as well, Polekēśi I finds mention in the more or less settled expression *Chalukyānām kulam-alamkarishṇuḥ aśvamēdh-āvabhṛitha-snāna-pavitrīkṛita-gātraḥ śrī-Polekēśi-vallabha-mahārājaḥ*. His name proper is differently spelt in the available records of Chalukyas and their scions and later descendants as Polekēśi, Polakēśi, Polikēśi, Pulikēśi, Pulakēśi and once as Bolakēśi. The substitution of palatal ś of the final syllable śi by dental s, which is either an orthographical error or the result of the influence of regional pronunciation, is not an infrequent phenomenon.

There has been no unanimity among scholars in arriving at the meaning of this name. Some have ventured the suggestion that the name is a hybrid of Kannaḍa *puli* (tiger) and Sanskrit *kēśin* (haired), the full name meaning 'tiger-haired'. Some others, while accepting the view that it is a hybrid name, have opined that the Kannaḍa half *pole* (lustrous) and the Sanskrit half *kēśin* (haired) should be taken to mean 'lustrous haired'. According to others the hybrid name means 'tiger-lion', being a combination of Dravidian *puli* (tiger) and Sanskrit *kēśin* (lion) and they seek support from the fact that in the later history of India Śārdūlasimha, the full Sanskrit equivalent of the hybrid Pulikēśi, was a popular name among the warrior class. Yet others have argued that it is a fully Sanskrit name with two units,

the first one *pula* meaning 'great' and the second one *kēśin* meaning 'lion', thus the whole name standing for 'great lion'.

We do not accept these purely etymological interpretations and, on the other hand, believe that it is a causal name so far as Polekēśi I is concerned. Of the name Polekēśi, which is the earliest available form, the first unit *pole* is no doubt of Dravidian origin. But it must be related to Tamil *punai* which means, among other things, 'to tie into a knot'. The second unit *kēśin* is no doubt a Sanskrit word meaning 'haired'. Thus, according to us, the name Polekēśi means 'one who has his hair tied in a knot'. Students of epigraphy and of the sculptural art of South India are familiar with the fact that, right from early times, warriors, in fighting postures, were mostly represented with their hair tied in a knot either above their heads or by the sides; this was obviously done to prevent loosely hanging locks of hair from hindering the view of the soldier. Polekēśi I, who had taken upon himself the onerous task of founding a kingdom, must have been an incessant warrior and he must have appeared before his soldiers, more often than not, with his hair tied in a knot, like a *makuta*, and must have thereby earned the casual name of Polekēśi. Although in the following decades the name was many times Sanskritised as Pulikēśi or Pulakēśi, the original form of the name was never forgotten or discarded as may be learnt from the Vakkalēri plates (133) of Kīrttivarman II, the last ruler of the Vātāpi house, issued in A.D. 756, in which the name of Polekēśi I is correctly spelt as Polekēśi. We will advert to this subject again towards the end of this chapter. The name Polekēśi, mentioned as such by Ravikīrtti in his famous Aihole *praśasti* (26) is indeed crucial in this regard. We have, therefore, adopted the form Polekēśi for both the Chālukya rulers of that name throughout this work.

Three conclusions may be straightaway drawn from the *praśasti* quoted at the commencement of this chapter, viz., (1) that Polekēśi I was acknowledged by his posterity as the *de facto* inaugurator of the Chalukya dynasty as a ruling house in the Deccan, being the first of the family to be endowed with the regnal title of *mahārāja* as contrasted with the less assuming *rāja* or *nṛipa* of his two predecessors;

(2) that his performance of the horse sacrifice, which before long earned for the Chalukyas a place in the list of imperial dynasties, was considered as the most significant of his achievements; and (3) that Vallabha was considered to be, more or less, an inherent part of his name.

We have no direct epigraphical evidence on any war which Polekēśi I may have fought *en route* to Vātāpi. We may, however, tentatively ascribe to him, purely, on the strength of circumstantial evidence, a victory over Dejja-mahārāja, a Rāshtrakūṭa chieftain who was ruling over the border areas of the present day Maharashtra and Karnāṭaka States. The Gokak plates (2) were issued by him when 845 years of the Āguptāyika kings had expired (*Āguptāyikānām rājñām=ashtasu varsha-śatēshu pañcha-chatvāriṃśadagrēshu gatēshu*). On the assumption that Dejja may have flourished in the interregnum which ensued Polekēśi II's fall in A.D. 642, D.C. Sircar surmises that the Āguptāyika era may have commenced in round about (845-645=) 200 B.C. On the other hand, the palaeography of the Gokak plates is as good for the first half of the 6th century as it is for middle of the 7th and it is more likely that Dejja was one of the victims of Polekēśi I. This will mean that the Āguptāyika era could as well have commenced in the second half of the 4th century B.C., in which case it could very well have been inaugurated by or reckoned after Chandragupta Maurya. As a matter of fact, Dejja's domain was not far removed from Koṅkaṇa where, in those days, the later Mauryas were holding sway and the tradition of the Āguptāyika era may have been borrowed by Dejja from them though they themselves have not used this reckoning in any of their known charters. Chandragupta Maurya is generally taken to have ousted and supplanted the Nandas in 322 B.C. If that year is considered as the starting point of the Āguptāyika era, the date of the Gokak plates will fall in A.D. 523-24. And he must have been defeated by Polekēśi I sometime after that date and before A.D. 543, the year in which his Badami rock cliff inscription was got engraved. This, and the as yet unsubstantiated claim of the Chalukyas or Kalyāṇa that Jayasimha, the grandfather of Polekēśi I, had defeated Indra, a Rāshtrakūṭa chieftain, do call

for a closer examination of the possibility of some Rāshtrakūṭa families having existed in the Gujarat-Maharashtra region before the advent of the Vātāpi Chalukyas, a possibility which historians have hitherto been unwilling to concede.

Polekēśi I had the second name of Raṇavikrama. The Goḍachi plate (9) of Katti-arasa (i.e., Kirttivarman I), issued in A.D. 578, and the Mahākūṭa pillar inscription (11) of Maṅgalēśa refer to him as Raṇavikrama without bothering to give his proper name; the Sātārā (22) and Timmāpuram (25) plates of Viṣṇuvardhana I also omit the name Polekēśi while referring to him as Raṇavikrama. The Lohaner plates (23) of Polekēśi II mention his grandfather Polekēśi I as *Raṇavikrama-dvitiya-nāmā Pulikēśi-vallabha-mahārājaḥ* while the spurious (?) grant of Ambērā (?), the alleged daughter of Polekēśi II, refers to her great-grandfather as *Polakēśi-ty-abhikhyāta-nāmadhēyō Raṇavikrama-dvitiya-nāmadhēyaḥ*.

Polekēśi I, and not the second as is normally assumed, was the first of the Chalukyas to have used the dynastic attribute of *Satyāśraya*. The Mahākūṭa pillar inscription (11), the Hyderabad plates (19) of Polekēśi II and the Sātārā plates (22) of Viṣṇuvardhana I, among early records, give this family attribute to Polekēśi I. The Sātārā plates actually declare that Polekēśi I had earned the epithet by his exemplary conduct (*Satyāśraya-bhāvitāś-charitaiḥ*).

Only one clearly dated epigraphical record of Polekēśi I has so far been discovered, the Bādāmi rock cliff inscription (3) of A.D. 543-44. This important Sanskrit inscription, while recording the construction of the hill-fortress of Vātāpi by Polekēśi I, names him merely as Chalikyā-Vallabhēśvara, providing one more evidence to show that he was popularly known as Vallabha. The Nerūr plates (12) of Maṅgalēśa, as a matter of fact, omit the two names Polekēśi and Raṇavikrama and, instead, refer to him as *svaguṇair-lōkavallabhō Vallabhaḥ*. *Lōkavallabha* being only a synonym of *prithvivallabha*, it is interesting to note that the Mahākūṭa pillar inscription (11) refers to him as *Satyāśraya-śrī-prithvī-vallabha-Raṇavikramāṅka-nṛipaḥ*. The Mudhōl plates (10) of his son Pūgavarman as also the grant (32) of Ādityavarman, one of the sons of Polekēśi II, hail Polekēśi I as *prithvivallabha-mahārāja*. In the light of these facts, which clearly

associate the person and personality of Polekēśi I with the epithets *Satyāśraya*, *prithvivallabha* and *vallabha*, the passage *Chalukyānām kulam-alaṅkarishnōr - aśvamēdh-āvabhṛithasnāna-pavitrikṛita-gātrasya Satyāśraya-śrī-prithvivallabha-mahārājādhirāja -paramēśvara-śrī-Kīrtti-varmarājasya* occurring in the Manor plates (67) of Chalukya Vinayāditya Maṅgalarasa of Gujarat, needs to be emended and re-interpreted. According to the learned editor of this charter, the first Chalukya ruler to be referred to in the *praśasti* portion is *Satyāśraya-prithvivallabha-Kīrtti-varmarāja*, i.e. Kīrtti-varman I. This would mean that, apart from Polekēśi I, his son also had performed the horse-sacrifice, an implication which stands unproven by available records. On the other hand, on the strength of already known facts, which have been detailed above, it is certainly justifiable to insert *sūnōḥ* or some such word meaning 'of the son' after *śrī-prithvivallabha* and before *mahārājādhirāja* in the passage quoted above from the Manor plates. Such instances of scribal lapses are by no means rare in the history of Indian epigraphy. With the passage emended as suggested above, *Satyāśraya-śrī-prithvivallabha*, i.e. Polekēśi I will be the first Chalukya ruler to be mentioned in the Manor plates and the terms of his reference therein will fall in line with other conventional genealogical narratives found in the inscriptions of the Chalukyas and their scions.

Genuine epigraphical records of the early Chalukyas make it abundantly clear that Polekēśi I called himself only a *mahārāja*, a modest title of an ambiguous nature which, in terms of the polity of his days, did not advertise, nor deny, imperial status. An interesting exception, though of no political significance, is provided by the Goḍachi plates (9) of Kīrtti-varman I which introduce Polekēśi I as *Raṇavikrama-dharma-mahārāja* reminiscent of the titles *dharma-rāja*, *dharma-mahādhirāja* and *dharma-mahārājādhirāja*, borne by many rulers of the Western Gaṅga, Kadamba and Pallava dynasties of South India. It is but natural that the Goḍachi plates, which were issued during the period of Kadamba-Chalukya transition in Karnāṭaka, betray the influence of the *praśasti* of the just defunct Kadamba house of Banavāsi.

That Polekēśi I himself attached great importance to his performance of the horse-sacrifice is amply borne out by the statement *aśvamēdh-ādi yajñānām yajvā śrauta-vidhānataḥ* occurring in his Bādāmi rock cliff inscription (3). According to the Aihole inscription (26) of Polekēśi II, Mother-Earth herself was bathed with the purificatory ablutions which accompanied the performance of the horse-sacrifice by Polekēśi I—

‘*bhūś-cha yēna hayamēdha-yājinā
prāpit-āvabhṛitha-majjanā babhau*’

That his successors too attached great importance to this kingly exploit and to his performance of Hiranya-garbha is tellingly brought home to us by the Modlimb plates (20) in which Polekēśi II, the issuer of that charter, describes himself as the grandson of the performer of *Hiranyagarbha* and the *Aśvamēdha* sacrifice (*Hiranyagarbhasy-aśvamēdha-yājinaḥ putraḥ*) without naming Polekēśi I.

The Kalyāṇa Chālukyas were wonder-struck with admiration whenever they recollected the fact that their illustrious ancestor had, on the momentous occasion of performing the horse-sacrifice, given away to the Vēdic priests two thousand villages well endowed with horses and elephants. Chālukya Bhūlōkamalla Sōmēsvara III (A.D. 1126-1138), himself a historian of sorts, says, in his Sanskrit *Champū, Vikramāṅk-ābhyudayam*, that, when Polekēśi I had performed the *aśvamēdha* sacrifice, his horse had triumphantly trodden the earth bound by the four seas and that he had granted thirteen thousand villages as *dakṣiṇā* to his priests. These statements, though they are mutually contradictory in their details, highlight the pre-eminent position which Polekēśi I had earned for himself in Chalukya family traditions by the performance of the prestigious horse-sacrifice.

The word *ādi* (literally *etc.*) in the expression *aśvamēdh-ādi yajñānām yajvā* of the Bādāmi rock cliff inscription (3) implies that, besides the horse-sacrifice, Polekēśi I had also performed other religious rites on a major scale. The Mahūkūṭa pillar inscription (11) adds the *agnishtoma*, *agnichayana*, *vājapēya*, *bahusuvarṇa*, *pañḍarika* and *hiranyagarbha* rites to the list. The Goḍachi plates (9), while

enumerating the same number of sacrifices performed by Polekēśi I, endows him with the religio-regal title *dharma-mahārāja*. The Mudhōl plates (10) of Pūgavarman omit from the list *bahusuvarṇa* and *paṇḍarika* while the Nerūr plates (12) of Maṅgalēśa omit *agnichayana* and *hiranyagarbha*. The Nērūr plates (31a) of Polekēśi II describe Polekēśi I in general terms that his body had been purified by the ablutionary bath taken with the holy water from the Ganges while the same emperor's Chiplūṇ plates (28) aver, in a slightly different phraseology, that Polekēśi I's body had been purified by the ablutionary bath taken on the occasions of performing a number of sacrifices. Historical records were so well preserved and publicised in ancient Karnāṭaka that even the spurious Āltem plates (6) of Polekēśi I, purporting to belong to A.D. 489-90 and the spurious Kurtakōṭi plates (47) of Vikramāditya I, allegedly issued in A.D. 610, but both of which were in reality forged in about the 10th century A.D., refer to Polekēśi I's performance of the horse-sacrifice. Chālukya Sōmēśvara III, in his *Champū-kāvya*, referred to above, says that Polekēśi I performed the sixteen *mahādānas* during every *saṅkrānti* thereby keeping the Vēdic brāhmaṇas quite busy and contented. Reverting back to the *vaṁśika-praśasti* given in Chapter Two above, we find that eulogy No. 10, pertaining to the purification of the Chalukya family by the ablutionary waters poured during the performance of sacrifices, rests wholly on the laurels of Polekēśi I. They were obviously sacrifices of such magnitude and consequence that when once performed without let or hindrance by one ruler, they brought in an enduring aura of political stature and superiority heritable by convention. This was certainly true of Polekēśi I's *aśvamēdha* sacrifice which he must have performed more as a trial in order to find out the nature and strength of the opposition he may have to put down in the Vātāpi region than as a challenge indicative of imperial aspirations. However, it was the unimpeded run and return of his sacrificial horse which ensured a galloping speed for the journey of the Chalukyas towards the imperial goal.

Apart from the performance of these *yajñas* which must, at best, have helped Polekēśi I in successfully claiming independent

status, his most important and solid contribution to the steady growth of his dynasty was, no doubt, the construction of the hill-fortress of Vātāpi which must have progressed side by side with the founding and development of that city as the royal capital. Some of the epigraphs of his successors make pointed references to this achievement of Polekēśi I. One such much discussed passage occurs in the famous Aihole inscription (26)—*Polekēśi yaḥ śrit-Endukāntir-api Śrī-vallabhō-pyayāsīd-Vātāpipurī-vadhū-varatām*, i.e. ‘which Polekēśi, though he was the consort of Indukānti and though he was the favourite lord of Śrī (the goddess of fortune), had espoused the bride (i.e., the city) of Vātāpipurī’. While Śrī-vallabha is the result of a pun played on his favourite epithet *vallabha*, in view of the context in which the word Indukānti occurs in the expression *śrit-Endukāntir-api*, the conclusion that Indukānti was a queen of Polekēśi I appears to be much more convincing than the prosaic interpretation that Polekēśi I was endowed with the ‘lustre of the moon’ or the unproven inference that, before he built the fortress and city of Vātāpi, he was the lord of a city called Indukānti.

Polekēśi I’s founding the city of Vātāpi was well remembered even by the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa in whose genealogical accounts he is hailed as the chosen lord of that metropolis (*Vātāpipurī-varapatiḥ*). It is in this context that a passage occurring in the introductory part of the Chiplūṇ plates (28) of Polekēśi II needs to be reinterpreted. The passage in question reads:

Vātāpyāḥ prathama-vidhātuḥ anēk-ādhvar-āvabhṛitha-snāna-samādrīkṛita-puṇya-mūrttēḥ sarva-maṅgal-āyatanasya Vallabhannripatēḥ kīrttyā yuktasya Kīrttivarmanah

while editing this charter, Fleet translated the passage as ‘of Kīrttivarman (I), the first maker of Vātāpi, whose pious form was thoroughly well-moistened by ablutions performed after celebrating many sacrifices, who was the abode of all auspiciousness, who was the king of favourites (and) who was endowed with fame’. Accepting Fleet’s translation and subsequent conclusions Nilakanta Sastri says, ‘In the inscriptions of his son Polekēśi II he (i.e. Kīrttivarman I) is called the first maker of Vātāpi Vātāpi having become the capital

under Pulakēśi I, his son must be taken to have adorned it by the construction of temples and in other ways'. This is incorrect. The mere embellisher of a city cannot rightfully claim to be its *prathama-vidhātṛi* (first creator). On the other hand, in the light of the many points discussed above, that part of the passage cited above which commences with *Vātāpyāḥ* and ends with *Vallabha-nṛipatēḥ* should be taken to refer to Polekēśi I. The rest of the passage should be constructed as [*Polekēśi-*] *Vallabha-nṛipatēḥ-kīrtiyā yuktasya Kīrttivarmanah* and the entire passage translated as 'of Kīrttivarman (I), who was endowed with the fame of [his father Polekēśi] Vallabha, the first maker of Vātāpi, whose pious form was thoroughly well-moistened by ablutions performed after celebrating many sacrifices and who was the abode of all auspiciousness'. Fleet misunderstood the passage because he had allowed himself to be confused by the common case ending of *Vallabha-nṛipatēḥ* and *Kīrttivarmanah* wherein he failed to discern reference to father and son because he was unaware of *Vallabha* being a favourite epithet, if not another name, of Polekēśi I.

Similarly, Fleet interpreted the passage *Satyāśraya-prabhṛitīnām mahārājānām-atibahu-mānyē Vātāpy-adhishṭhānē* of the Bādāmi inscription (82) of Vijayāditya to mean 'at Vātāpi, worthy to be most highly esteemed by Satyāśraya (Pulakēśi II) and other great kings after him', a translation which fails to give any credit to the actual founder of the city. This interpretation was offered by Fleet at a time when it was widely held by scholars that Polekēśi II was the first Satyāśraya among the Chalukyas. Since then genuine records attributing this epithet to Polekēśi I have come to light. It is, therefore, clear that the name within Fleet's brackets should be Polekēśi I and not Polekēśi II.

Regarding the construction of the Vātāpi fort by Polekēśi I, his Bādāmi rock cliff inscription (3), beautifully engraved at an inaccessible height, says—

*Dharādharēndram Vātāpim-ajēyam-bhūtayē bhuvah
adhastād-uparishtāch-cha durggam-ēṭad-achikarat*

This verse has been translated by the learned editor to mean '[Pulakēśin I] made the best hill of Vātāpi (or, Vātāpi in the best hill) into

a fortress unconquerable from the top as well as from the bottom, for the prosperity of the earth'. This translation is committed to the possibility of Vātāpi having been the name of the hill even before the fortress on it was built. To justify this commitment recourse has been taken to Ptolemy's mention of Badamaioi, which is sought to be identified with Bādāmi=Vātāpi; and to local tradition and *Sthalapurāṇa*. The last word has not yet been written on Ptolemy's Badamaioi. Local traditions and *Sthalapurāṇas* are helpful, and to a limited extent at that, only in the reconstruction of medieval history as most of them betray clear traces of having been born only in the medieval and the late medieval periods and very little reliable historical material has gone into their making. In view of this, the verse quoted above may be more meaningfully interpreted to mean that Polekēśi I constructed the upper and lower fortress, named (by him as) Vātāpi on the hill which was unassailable. It is no wonder that the township which sprang up in the vicinity of and inside the hill-fort and served as the Chalukya capital also came to be called Vātāpi.

This will be the proper place to mention and discuss an interesting discovery made during one of our visits to Bādāmi. Scholars and students, aware of the existence of Polekēśi I's foundation inscription (3) of the Vātāpi fort, engraved at a great height on the face of a rock cliff, are also only too well aware of the Pallava Grantha inscription engraved in the 13th year of the reign of the victorious Pallava invader Narasimhavarman I, at a lower level, on a rock just behind the Mallikārjuna temple. Just below this Pallava inscription can be seen a few letters, distributed over three badly damaged lines, and engraved in typical Vātāpi Chalukya characters of the 6th-7th centuries A.D. While publishing the text of the Pallava inscription in Volume XI, Part I of the *South Indian Inscriptions Series*, it has been merely stated in a footnote that three damaged lines below that are engraved in characters of the 7th century A.D.

On an *in situ* examination of these three damaged lines, we were pleasantly surprised to discover that whatever letters had escaped damage in those lines were exactly in correspondence with certain consecutive letters of the first three lines of Polekēśi I's cliff

inscription of A.D. 543. From the illustration provided here of the two inscriptions, it will be easily seen that the first line of the damaged Chalukya inscription reads [sva]sti Śakavarshēshu, the remaining letters of that line being totally lost. Similarly, the surviving letters of the second line read śvamēdh-adi and the surviving letters of the third line read nya-garbha. These three lines thus form parts of the first three lines of the cliff inscription which reads :

- (1) Svasti-Śaka-varshēshu chatuś-śatēshu pañcha-shasṭi-yutēshu
- (2) Aśvamēdh-ādi yajñānām yajvā śrauta-vidhānataḥ
- (3) Hiranya-garbha-sambhūtaś-Chalikyō Vallabh-ēśvaraḥ

The presence, at Bādāmi, of a duplicate version (4) of Polekēśi I's inscription raises very interesting possibilities. For one thing, the assignment of the damaged duplicate version to the 7th century A.D. in the *South Indian Inscriptions* volume, whereas it actually belongs to the 6th century, to A.D. 543 to be exact, upholds our oft-repeated assertion that any palaeographical dating of early inscriptions, on whatever grounds, is subject to a fairly wide marginal error of plus or minus one hundred years if not more. For another, it is possible that, in the flush of his completion of the construction of the fort, which was indeed a great task accomplished by an upcoming ruling house, Polekēśi I got engraved an unknown number of the same inscription at Bādāmi, in different places and at different heights and that we have now discovered, by chance, the second copy. A third and more likely possibility is that, since Polekēśi I's inscription lays stress on the construction of fortifications below (*adhastāt*) and atop (*upari-shtāt*), he got two inscriptions engraved, one atop (the well preserved cliff inscription) and another at ground level (the damaged one just below the Pallava inscription). A fourth possibility, which cannot be ruled out, is that the conquering Pallavas, in a retaliatory mood, had deliberately destroyed this lower inscription before engraving their own and that, after they were driven out, the Chalukyas had symbolically retrieved their prestige by engraving the text of the same inscription at an inaccessible height where all the reengraved lines have survived without any damage to this day.

A partially worn out rock inscription (5) from Yekkēri (Belgaum District), which has all along been assigned to the reign of Polekēśi II, should properly be considered, on the strength of tangible internal evidence, as belonging to his grandfather's reign. Engraved in southern characters of the 6th-7th centuries A.D., the palaeography of this inscription bears close affinities with that of Polekēśi I's Bādāmi cliff inscription. It refers itself to the reign of Satyāśraya Pulekēśi-vallabha-mahārāja whom Fleet identified with Polekēśi II on the ground that, of the two Polekēśis, only the second bore the title of *Mahārāja*. We have shown above that Polekēśi I too bore this title. The antiquity of this inscription is further confirmed by the fact that the epithet *prithivyām-apratirathaḥ* (i.e. he who had no equal adversary on earth) is verbatim lifted from the string of titles of Samudragupta, the Gupta emperor who ruled for a fairly long time between the years c. A.D. 320-80. Polekēśi I's cousin brother Vijayarāja, in his plates (1) issued in A.D. 472, had also verbatim lifted no less than three of Samudragupta's epithets viz., *prithivyām-apratirathaḥ*, *chatur-udadhi-salil-āsvādita-yaśāḥ* and *Dhanada-Varuṇ-Ēndr-Āntaka-samaprabhāvaḥ*. In the place of the second of these three epithets Polekēśi has the slightly different version of *Chatur-udadhi-mēkhal-ōpārjita-rājya-śrīḥ* in the Yekkēri rock inscription. This similarity between the epithets borne by Vijayarāja, the grandson of Jayasimha and Polekēśi of the Yekkēri rock inscription should be enough to identify the latter as the other grandson of Jayasimha; the palaeographical features of the Yekkēri inscription are in total conformity with this conclusion.

Besides endowing him with the Gupta-like epithets discussed above, the Yekkēri inscription summarises, in one sentence, all the troubles and tribulations suffered by the Chalukyas before they settled down at Vātāpi by saying that Polekēśi I was born in a race of princes who rose to the front by confronting difficulties (*anuruddha-durit-ōdita-nṛipa-vaṁśa-prasūtaḥ*); he was the forehead-ornament of his family (*sva-vaṁśa-lalāma-bhūtaḥ*); he was the lord of Dakṣiṇāpatha (*Dakṣhṇāpatha-prithivyāḥ svāmī*); he had humbled the entire group of chieftains by his excessive prowess (*pratap-ātiśay-ōpanata-samagra-sāmanta-maṇḍalaḥ*). Of these, his claim of

lordship over *Dakṣiṇāpatha* stands fully justified by the fact of his having performed the horse-sacrifice by virtue of which not only he but also his successors in the family laid claim to similar distinction, though not in so many words.

The inscription registers the allotment, perhaps as fresh donations, of lands to the extent of 4 *nivarttanas* at Bēnīra, 8 *nivarttanas* at Dhutipura, 5 *nivarttanas* at Āgariyapura as also 5 jack-fruit trees at the last mentioned place to the god Mahādēva. Another grant of 50 *nivarttanas* of land at Kṛishṇa was also allotted for the merit of the parents of a certain Harasēna.

The Muṇḍakhēḍe plates (A.D. 681) of Jayaśakti (58) name four generations of the Sēndraka feudatories of the Chalukyas, viz. *Śrīvallabha* Bhānuśakti, Ādityaśakti, *Satyāśraya-Prithvivallabha* Nikumbha Allaśakti and *Satyāśraya-Prithvivallabha* Vikramāditya Nikumbha Jayaśakti. Of these, the last named was a contemporary of Chalukya Vikramāditya I in order to honour whom he adopted, as regal attributes, his overlord's name and favourite epithets. This was in keeping with the convention which was, for long, in vogue in Kārṇāṭaka among subordinate rulers, of prefixing to their own names the names and/or titles of the particular emperor under whom they served as feudatories. Among the Sēndrakas themselves Maṅgalarasa, the feudatory of Vinayāditya, is given the *biruda* *Vinayāditya* in the Manor plates (67) already referred to. It will be, therefore, absolutely reasonable to conclude that *Satyāśraya-Prithvivallabha* Allaśakti was a feudatory of Polekēśi II and that, since he is given the epithet of *Śrī-Vallabha*, Bhānuśakti was a contemporary and feudatory of Polekēśi I who is mentioned in Chalukya inscriptions as *Vallabha*, *Śrī-Vallabha*, *Vallabha-mahārāja* and *Vallabhēśvara*.

An undated inscription (7) from Siruguppi, Dharwar District, palaeographically assignable to the 6th-7th century A.D., refers to the rule of Vāṇusatti over Mūḷuṅgunda. This chieftain is no doubt identical with Sēndraka Bhānuśakti. He figures as a Kadamba feudatory in the Halsi plates of Harivarman, who was probably the Kadamba ruler defeated by Kirttivarman I. It is very likely that when Bhānuśakti found the weakened Kadambas incapable of checking the Chalukya tide, he, by himself, switched over his allegiance to Polekēśi I

and stood by him and greatly assisted him in his endeavour to lay the foundations of a strong Chalukya kingdom. He was obviously kept close in the Dharwar region by Polekēśi I though his successors were shifted to southern Gujarat by the latter's successors, to administer newly acquired territories.

The exact nature of Polekēśi I's pioneering contribution to the ultimate realisation of the Chalukyas' imperial aspirations is easy to determine, though many details are wanting. His best personal achievement was to raise himself to the level of a *mahārāja* while his two predecessors had to be satisfied with the much less flattering title of *rājan* or *nṛipa*; his most lasting achievement was the occupation of the northern extremes of Karnāṭaka and the building of the fort and city of Vātāpi from where his successors ruled an empire for two hundred and odd eventful years; his most noteworthy political legacy bequeathed to his descendants was the light he threw on his family's potentiality to grow into imperial proportions by his performance of prestigious religious sacrifices which were of far-reaching political significance.

One other contribution made unawares by Polekēśi I, which transcended the life-span of his dynasty and came to signify the emperor of Karnāṭaka in general, was the assumption by him, for the first time, of the epithet *Vallabha*. Whether it be his own successors of the Chalukya line, or the Rāshtrakūṭas or the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa, it became a vogue, inside as well as outside the bounds of the Karnāṭaka empire, to mention the emperor of Karnāṭaka as *Vallabha*, which is also found used in its vernacularised form of *Ballaha*. The significance of his contribution does not merely lie in its having become the catchword for addressing the emperor of Karnāṭaka, but in its having symbolised, for centuries at a stretch, the recognition, both within and without, of the historical existence of an empire with the nucleus of its power located in Karnāṭaka, be it Vātāpi, or Mānyakhēṭa or Kalyāṇa.

Besides being a military adventurer, full time warrior, founder of a dynasty and its citadel, and performer of religious sacrifices, Polekēśi I was a scholar in his own right. His second son Maṅgalēśa's Nerūr plates (12) credit him with erudition in the legal treatise of

Manu (*Mānava*), in the Purāṇas, in the great epics Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata and in history (*itihāsa*); because of his wide learning, he was equal to Bṛihaspati, the preceptor of the gods, in political science (*nītau Bṛihaspati-samah*).

Besides Indukānti, mentioned incidentally in the Aihole inscription (26), Polekēśi I also had another queen, Durlabhadēvi by name, hailing from the Batpūra family. The Mahākūṭa pillar inscription (11) conveys the information that, on the occasion of the setting up of the *dharma-jaya-stambha* as a prelude to his projected expedition right up to the Ganges, Maṅgalēśa had arranged for the gracious presence of his father's (*sva-gurōḥ*) wife Durlabhadēvi, as chaste as the legendary heroine Damayantī, her body purified by her numerous acts of piety. His reference to her as 'his father's wife' does indicate that she was not his mother. She was probably the mother of Polekēśi I's elder son, Kirttivarman I. Satyāśraya Dhruvarāja Indravarman, the issuer of the Goa grant (15) of 5th January, A.D. 610, who was ruling over four *vishayas* (or districts, probably along the west coast and including parts of Gujarat and Koṅkaṇa), and who was placed in-charge of the Rēvatīdvīpa by Maṅgalēśa, was related to the queen since he is described in the charter in question as belonging to the ancient and great Bappūra (=Batpūra) family (*ādi-mahā-Bappūra-vamśa-kula-tilakah*).

That Polekēśi I had two sons, Kirttivarman I, the elder (*vyēśthah*) and Maṅgalēśa, the younger (*kaniyān*) had been known to historians for quite some time. But an element of confusion has been introduced by the Mudhōl plates (10) which were issued by *Ranashthātri* Pūgavarman, the son of Pṛithvivallabha-mahārāja who is described therein as the performer of the *agnishṭōma*, *agnichayana*, *vājapēya*, *hiraṇya-garbha* and *aśvamēdha* rites and is, hence, none other than Polekēśi I himself. In the course of editing the Mudhōl plates (10), P.B. Desai has sought to question Panchamukhi's half-hearted identification of Pūgavarman with Kirttivarman I by declaring that these two names 'connote two distinct names'. The acceptance of Desai's contention will result in forcing a third son upon Polekēśi I much against the information provided by Chalukya sources themselves. For, the Mahākūṭa pillar inscription (11), written some thirty

years after Polekēśi I and in the reign of his younger son Maṅgalēśa, specifically uses the dual number while mentioning the number of Polekēśi I's sons (*tasya.....sutau samutpannau*); the two brothers are therein compared to the two legendary brothers Balabhadra (i.e. Balarāma) and Vāsudēva (i.e. Kṛishṇa), thus precluding the possibility of a third brother. In view of this, it is worth examining in some detail the question of Pūgavarman's identity. The period of the Vātāpi Chalukyas was one of experimentation, adaptation and innovation in the field of the vernacular languages of Kannada and Telugu. The usage of Sanskrit words as *tatsamas*, the transformation of Sanskrit words into *tadbhavas*, and the Sanskritisation of Dravidian words make for an absorbing study of the interplay of a classical language and the peoples dialects. The founder of the capital city of Vātāpi, who was one of those at the starting point of this interesting process, himself bore the hybrid name of Polekēśi. At the commencement of this chapter we have set aside others' arguments on the etymological interpretation of this name and, instead, attempted to prove that, though a hybrid name it must have been, it should be interpreted as 'one with his hair knotted on top of his head'. Extending our argument on similar lines, it may be suggested that Pūgavarman is the Sanskritised form of the hybrid name Pugaḷvarman in which *pugaḷ* is the Dravidian component meaning 'fame', its Sanskrit equivalent being *kirtti*. In Sanskritising the name Pugaḷvarman, it is only natural that, with the elision of Dravidian *ḷ*, the initial vowel got lengthened. If the above suggestion is accepted as a possibility, Pūgavarman has to be identified with Kirttivarman I, an identification which eliminates an otherwise insoluble problem created by the Mudhōḷ plates.

Besides constructing the fortification at Vātāpi as a strategist, Polekēśi I must also have initiated, as a devotee and as a connoisseur of art, construction of temples, both excavated and structural, in and around Vātāpi. While no assertion of a positive nature can be made as regards any possible contribution of Polekēśi I in the excavation of the cave temples, direct evidence is available in the Mahākūṭa pillar inscription (11) to say that the main temple as well as the tank

and the small *maṇḍapa* in the midst of its water were originally constructed at his instance. For, in the Mahākūṭa pillar inscription, Maṅgalēśa makes a reference to grants made earlier by his father (Polekēśi I) and elder brother (Kirttivarman I) ‘*Makuṭēśvara-nāthasy-āsmākaṁ pitrā jyēshthēna ch-ōpadattam*’. And preceding the word *Makuṭēśvara* and grammatically qualifying *pitrā* as per the rules of *sāmīpy-ānvaya*, is written the word *sva-dēvadrōṇyām*, ‘in his own *dēvadrōṇi*’. The term *dēvadrōṇi* has been taken by Fleet to mean ‘idol procession’. Far from it, the word has a technical connotation which may be elucidated as follows : Many of the ancient Indian temples had been built by their royal patrons in order to ensure for themselves merit in this world and bliss in the world beyond. And builders have often chosen to name their temples after themselves in the fond hope that in their afterlife they would be merged with their favourite gods. The ancient Indian belief that the liberated soul traverses through land, water and air, facing as many impediments as may have been attracted by the individual’s deeds and misdeeds while alive, is only too well known. The *dēvadrōṇi* built in the midst of the water of a temple tank is a ‘divine boat’ for the word *drōṇi* means, among other things, ‘water-borne vessel’, probably so Sanskritised from the original Dravidian word *tōṇi* ‘boat’ occurring as such in Tamil and as *dōṇi* in Kannaḍa and *done* in Telugu. *Dēvadrōṇi*, in effect, refers to a symbolic water-borne divine vessel in which the liberated soul makes its journey heavenward. It is, therefore, clear that the small pavilion now seen in the water of the tank of Mahākūṭēśvara was originally constructed by Polekēśi I to serve as a divine vessel meant to carry his own soul, after his death, heavenward.

As regards the temple now known as Mahākūṭēśvara, Maṅgalēśa’s pillar inscription names it as *Makuṭēśvara* and the deity installed therein as *Makuṭēsvaranātha*. Applying the general principle enunciated above that builders often-times gave their own names to their temples and to the main deities installed therein, and in the light of the information contained in Maṅgalēśa’s pillar inscription that it was Polekēśi I’s temple, let us examine any possible connection between the two. At the beginning of this chapter we had explained

the name of Polekēśi as a causal one meaning 'one who always tied up his hair in a knot'. In many early hero-stone reliefs the tied up knots of hair appear exactly like a *jatā-makuṭa* which it really is. It is our contention, though a somewhat tentative one, that Polekēśi's temple, which ought to have been normally named as Polekēśīśvara, was instead given the Sanskritised name of Makuṭēśvara by the builder Polekēśi I himself after a form of his own name, *makuṭa* signifying the knotted hair (*pole-kēśī*). If this suggestion becomes acceptable, it will mean that the original Makuṭēśvara temple was the earliest structural temple of the Vātāpi Chalukyas.

Besides the Makuṭēśvara temple, another ancient temple which stands on the hillside overlooking the former and known by the funny name of Bāṇanti-guḍi, was also built during the time of Polekēśi I or very soon afterwards. Of its present name, the first part *bāṇanti* means 'a woman who had just given birth to a child' which makes no sense in the context of a temple's name. On the other hand, it appears to be a corruption of the earlier name Bāṇatti. We have an inscription (134) from Aḍūr (Dharwar District), of the reign of Chalukya Kīrttivarman II, which mentions the name Mādhavaśakti of a Sēndraka chief as Mādhavatti. On the same analogy, we may suppose that the name of another and earlier Sēndraka ruler, viz., Bhānuśakti, was mentioned colloquially as Bāṇatti and that the temple built by him or in his memory was called as Bhānuśakti(or Bāṇatti)-guḍi which, in course of time, got corrupted to Bāṇanti-guḍi. Polekēśi I had a Sēndraka feudatory whose name is written in the Bagumra plates as Bhānuśakti and in the Siruguppi inscription (7) as Vāṇusatti. It is very likely that the so-called Bāṇanti-guḍi had been originally built by him or for him in the second half of the 6th century, a date which is in consonance with its early architectural features.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE EMPIRE-BUILDER

Kirttivarman I's claim to greatness lies in the fact that, after inheriting the newly built Chalukya kingdom from his father, he set about systematically exploiting his family's imperial potential to which Polekēśi I's pioneering activities had drawn pointed attention. The codified draft of the genealogical eulogy (*ānuvaṃśika-praśasti*) of his successors does Kirttivarman I less justice than is his due by merely referring to him as 'Kirttivarma-Prithvivallabha-mahārāja whose reputation rests on his occupation of enemy territories including the Vanavāsi-maṇḍala' (i.e. the Kadamba kingdom which had the city of Vanavāsi for its capital : *parākram-ākrānta-Vanavāsy-ādi-para-nṛipati-maṇḍala-pranibaddha-viśuddha-kīrttiḥ*). His conquest of the Kadamba kingdom was, no doubt, of considerable significance but it, at best, merely ensured the removal, from the political scene, of the only indigenous ruling house of Karnāṭaka which had, not long before, shown signs of blooming into an imperial power. This achievement by and large left the Chalukyas without a valid rival in the matter of their imperial pursuits. It redounds to Kirttivarman's credit that he himself began pursuing that objective with admirable tenacity and success.

Of all the annalists of the Chalukya family, Ravikīrtti, the author of the Aihole inscription (26), seems to have struck the best balance between fact and fiction when he, in the course of a brief eulogy of Kirttivarman I, confines himself to a small and convincing list of only three kingdoms, those of the Nāḷas, the Mauryas and the Kadambas, as having been annexed by him. And, through that eulogy spread over only two verses, the astute author has not left us in doubt as to the special importance attached by him to Kirttivarman's conquest of the Kadambas, which is alluded to in the first verse and

which is the substance of the second. Having made himself master of the whole of northern Karnāṭaka by eliminating the Kadambas, Kirttivarman spread his hegemony westwards and eastwards, respectively by defeating the Koṅkaṇa Mauryas who were then ruling over a small kingdom in the Goa region and the Naḷas who were holding sway in the Bellary-Kurnool region.

Either because he possessed more information or because he was simply goaded by a fraternal urge to glorify, beyond the pale of absolute truth, the achievements of his elder brother, Maṅgalēśa, in his Mahākūṭa pillar inscription (11), gives us a formidable list of fourteen countries, far and near, allegedly vanquished by Kirttivarman I. The first six kingdoms of the list, viz., Vaṅga, Kaliṅga, Aṅga, Vaṭṭūra Magadha and Madraka were located to the north of Vātāpi, while the remaining eight, viz. Kēraḷa, Gaṅga, Mūshaka, Pāṇḍya, Dramiḷa, Chōḷiya, Āḷuka and Vaijayantī were to its south. But, he was well remembered by posterity for just three achievements for, the later Chāḷukyas of Kalyāṇa, in their *vaṁśika-praśasti*, devote one verse to his praise in which they applaud him for his victories over the Naḷa, Maurya and Kadamba rulers :

*Nala-nilaya-vilōpi Maurya-niryāṇa-hētuḥ
prathita-prithu-Kadamba-stambha-bhēdī-kuṭhārah |
Bhuvana-bhavana-bhāgā-pūraṇ-ārambha-bhāra-
vyavasita-sita-kirttiḥ Kirttivarmā nṛipo-bhūt //*

It is customary among present day historians too to concede only that part of the above claim which relates to the conquest of Āḷuka (i.e. Āḷupa, the ancient ruling house of South Kanara, the southern coastal district of Karnāṭaka), Vaijayantī (i.e. Banavāsi, the Kadamba capital and kingdom), and the Mauryas, a family which held sway over the Koṅkaṇa territory in and around Goa, and to summarily dismiss the rest as mere hyperbole. It no doubt stands to reason to question the veracity of Maṅgalēśa's claim made on behalf of his elder brother, whose resources and where-withal, which were certainly limited by the very fact of his having inherited a nascent kingdom which was by no means large and militarily formidable, may not have been sufficient even for a rapid

raid through all those northern and southern territories under normal political conditions. But then, were the political conditions outside Karnāṭaka normal during the days of Kirttivarman I ?

In the north, with the decline of the Gupta power, there arose a fluid political situation in which minor principalities of the alien Hūṇas, the Maukharis, the rulers of Bengal and any number of minor chieftains got involved in numerous inconsequential battles against one another. The political map of North India had then lost all its relevance with reference to the boundaries of age old kingdoms and divisions. Thus the list of North Indian territories furnished by Maṅgalēśa's inscriptions were, at that time, mere traditional divisions and were not kingdoms under the rule of known dynasties. And, what is more, during the days of Kirttivarman I, barring the newly risen Chalukyas of Vātāpi, the only other dynasty of importance in India was that of the Maukharis in the Ganges valley. Historians have accepted without protest Maukhari Īśānavarman's claim that he had won victories over the Andhras, Śūlikas and the Gauḍas. Īśānavarman's expedition against these distant lands, even if true, could not have been more than mere raids of an impermanent nature. In view of the uncertain political conditions of the north during the second half of the sixth century, in which no individual ruler was powerful enough to subdue and lead the others, a similar and successful rapid raid of an equally impermanent nature on the part of the enterprising Kirttivarman I, should be deemed a possibility. He could very well have run the gauntlet successfully through Vaṅga, Aṅga, Kaliṅga, Vaṭṭūra, Magadha and Madraka and returned home triumphant without his having encountered, at any time and anywhere during such a campaign, an adversary who could have claimed as his the hegemony over the whole or even a major part of north India.

The situation south of Vātāpi was not different. Simhavishṇu of the Pallava dynasty was just then struggling hard to establish his moorings in the Tamil country. The Pāṇḍyas, after being in political wilderness for centuries, were just then straining hard to have their power revived. The ancient house of the Chōḷas had been left in the lurch and was practically unheard of in those days. The Kēraḷa country, which had never, in the course of its long history, asserted



itself as a dominant southern political power chiefly because of its isolated location, was, then too, a negligible political entity. North of the Tamil country, the Gaṅgas had just then begun to suffer the inconvenience of being compromisingly sandwiched between two growing powers, those of the Chalukyas and the Pallavas, and were not in a position to do more than merely manage to maintain a dubious degree of independence. Conditions thus being most conducive for a pompous display of his martial ability, it is well within historical possibilities that Kirttivarman I, after liquidating the Kadamba kingdom and defeating the Mauryas of Koṅkaṇa and the Ālupas of south Kanara, successfully carried out a campaign against the south *via* Kēraḷa and the Pāṇḍya and Chōḷa countries and also the Pallava kingdom which, by virtue of its attempts to appropriate the powers of the three traditional Tamil kingdoms, had come to be known, even during his days, as the Dramiḷa kingdom. The Gaṅgas too must have lost their battles, though not their independence, to Kirttivarman I. The location of Mūshaka is not an easy task. Some scholars would have it located in the Malabar coast while, according to some others, it has to be located either in the Hyderabad or in the Nellore-Guntur region of Andhra Pradesh.

There is one valid reason why Maṅgalēśa's claim made on behalf of his brother should not be casually dismissed. It is true that in the later history of Karnāṭaka, particularly during the 11th and 12th centuries, when the central government had created various levels of territorial and administrative hierarchies, which resulted in considerable dissipation of central control, the emperors lived in lofty ivory towers, far removed from the masses, as a result of which all sorts of incredible and impossible claims of victories made on their behalf did not, apparently, evoke the mockery of their subjects. But, in the second half of the sixth century, when the Chalukya kingdom, though powerful, was still in its infancy and when the subjects were under the direct rule of the Vātāpi king, would it have been possible for Maṅgalēśa to brag about campaigns not really conducted by Kirttivarman I and yet save himself and his brother from the mockery of his subjects ?

As a matter of fact, Kirttivarman I appears to have been so much pre-occupied with his conquests of countries far and near that he necessarily shared the reins of power with his brother Maṅgalēśa at least from A.D. 578 onwards, if not earlier. This information is provided by the Bādāmi Vaishṇava Cave inscription (8), one of only three known contemporaneous epigraphical witnesses to Kirttivarman's momentous reign. The preamble of this interesting epigraph belongs not to Kirttivarman but to his brother Maṅgalēśa and the only overriding reason why the record should be assigned to Kirttivarman is the fact that the date quoted therein is too early for commencing Maṅgalēśa's independent reign.

These two brothers appear to have been held together by the strongest bonds of fraternal affection. The Bādāmi Vaishṇava cave inscription of Kirttivarman, adverted to above, and the Mahākūṭa pillar inscription (11) of Maṅgalēśa are two moving documents illustrative not only of this brotherly love but also of the fact that Maṅgalēśa remained grateful to his elder brother for associating him, in an almost kingly capacity, with the administration of the empire and then for choosing him as the successor even if only in the capacity of a regent for his infant heir.

Of the two epigraphs, the Vaishṇava Cave inscription, which is earlier and is dated in the 12th year of the reign, most probably of Kirttivarman I and in the Śaka year 500 corresponding to A.D. 578, thus yielding the year A.D. 566 for his accession, states that in that year (i.e. A.D. 578), on the full-moon day in the month of Kārttika, Maṅgalēśa, having made munificent grants to *brāhmaṇas*, gave away, in order that the installation of the image of Viṣṇu may prove fruitful, the village of Lañjīśvara for *bali* offering to the god and for the enjoyment of sixteen *brāhmaṇas* as well as of ascetics. Towards the end Maṅgalēśa assigns to his elder brother Kirttivarman I, who was capable of subduing all the countries in the world, who was famous for the victories he had scored in battles involving chariots, elephants, horses and the infantry and who was a worshipper of the gods, *brāhmaṇas* and preceptors, all the merit that may accrue from the pious deeds recorded in the epigraph, claiming for himself only such merit as would accrue to him if he had

personally attended on his brother. There is an underlying pang of brotherly separation implied in the very manner of the above expressions which may be reasonably taken to hint at Kirttivarman's absence far away from Vātāpi on his military expeditions.

In the Mahākūṭa pillar inscription which is, in fact, of more relevance to Maṅgalēśa's reign, he introduces Kirttivarman I and himself as the two sons (*sutau*) of Raṇavikrama (i.e. Polekēśi I) and says of his elder brother that he had a great fancy for his second name *Raṇaparākarama*, which he had acquired by dint of his high qualities, that he had acquired his regal splendour through his conquests, that he had received obeisance from many diademed enemy rulers and that his body had been purified by the performance of the *bahusuvarṇa* and *agnishtōma* sacrifices.

The Goḍachi charter (9), issued on the fullmoon day of Kārttika in the twelfth year (A.D. 578) of his reign is the second of the three available inscriptions directly referring themselves to Kirttivarman I's rule. He is named therein as Kattiyara, a colloquial or, may be, pet form of his full name. He is eulogised as an intellectual who had mastered the import of all the subjects of study (*sarva-śastr-ārtha-pāra-gahan-āvabōdha-smṛiti-dhāraṇa-kuśala-buddhiḥ*), as having vanquished all his rival kinsmen, (*pratāp-ōtsādita-sarva-dāyādah*) and as having kept all his subjects (*prakṛiti*) contented by protecting them according to the law of the *varṇas* (i.e. the four fold caste system) and *āśramas* (i.e. four-fold orders of life; *varṇ-āśrama-nyāya-paripālan-ānuraṁjita-sarva-prakṛitiḥ*). The reference here to Kirttivarman as having ousted his rival kinsmen reveals a new factor in his career about which we have at present no information whatsoever.

The plates register the grant made by the king, at the request of the *mahā-brāhmaṇa* Vyāghrasvāmin, of twentyfive *nivartanas* of land, measured by the royal standard (*rājamāna*) to the *brāhmaṇa* Kṛṣṇasvāmin of Kaundinya-sagōṭṭra. The great *brāhmaṇa* Vyāghrasvāmin was obviously the chief minister of Kirttivarman for he is described as holding the foremost responsibility of the entire kingdom (*rājya-sarvasva-durandharah*). Other credits given to him are that he was well-versed in the Vēdic lore (*Vēda-Vēdāṅga-pāragah*), was an

expert in the science of political ethics (*nīti-śāstra-viśāradaḥ*) had exceptional mastery in grammar, logic, poetry, drama, historical literature, music and the *Purāṇas* (*sa-pada-vyākaraṇa-nyāya-kāvya-nāṭak-ētiḥāsa-gāndharva-purāṇēshv-asādhāraṇa-vyākhyāna-sampat*) and was verily a *Bṛihaspati* (preceptor of the gods) of his times (*adyakāla-Bṛihaspatiḥ*).

The donee *Kēśavasvāmin*, on his part, was well-versed in the Vēdic lore (*Vēda-Vēdāṅga-pāragah*) and was wont to receive everyone as guest (*sarvātithi*). It is this later quality which must have earned him the royal gift. The land granted to him lay in the village of *Nuḷgāla* and it was measured out by the royal standard called *rājamāna*. A large number of early inscriptions, including those of the Chalukyas contain references to the land-measure *nivarttana* and to the royal measuring rod *rājamāna* attesting to the fact that the alienation of land in any form, either as a gift or by way of sale, had come under a set pattern. And in more cases than not, the extent of the gift-land is found standardised to fifty (*pañchāśat*) or twentyfive (*pañchaviṁśati*) *nivartanas* or, rarely, twenty (*viṁśati*).

While stipulating the conditions which governed the donation of the land, the charter in question mentions besides *sarva-jātaka* (inclusive of all the produce), *maru-mannaṁ*, an expression which needs elucidation. It is a Kannaḍa word in which the second unit signifies 'ownership' and the first unit 'change'. Thus the donee was vested with the right to alienate the land donated to him by the king, a lenience not generally shown to the recipients of gift-lands.

We have suggested, in the previous chapter, that *Raṇashthātri* *Pūgavarman*, who issued the *Mudhōḷ* plates (10), was none other than *Kīrtti*varman I. According to that charter the deity *Vārāhidēvasvāmī* was given a second grant of land by *Pūga* (i.e. *Kīrtti*)varman in order that he may secure merit both in this life and in his life beyond.

Like his father *Kīrtti*varman I too must have patronised, perhaps on an even larger scale, the building activities in and around *Vātāpi* and, may be, elsewhere in his empire. There is no direct epigraphical evidence to identify any particular monument as having been constructed by him. No doubt the *Vaishṇava* cave at *Bādāmi* was excavated during his reign, but it was the work of his brother and,

perhaps, joint-ruler Maṅgalēśa.

However, on circumstantial evidence, we may connect one temple at Aihole, which now goes by the ridiculous name of Chikki-guḍi, with Kirttivarman I. Stylistically this is one of the earliest temples at that place and its present name is obviously the corruption of its real name beyond easy recognition. We know that in Tamil, Sanskrit *śrī* becomes *śi* or *chi* as in *Śrīrāma* becoming *Śīrāma* or *Chirāma* in inscriptional Tamil. It is very likely that the *chi* of *chikki* was originally Sanskrit *śrī*. This leaves us with the second letter *kki* which, according to us, is the muted form of the name Kirttivarman. The temple was probably built by and named after himself by Kirttivarman I or, alternatively, built by his loving brother and so named in his memory.

Kirttivarman sired as many as three sons, all of them born to him when he was at a fairly advanced age.

CHAPTER FIVE

A REGENT COME TO GRIEF

Kirttivarman died sometime in A.D. 591-92 leaving behind a loving brother and at least three underaged sons. None of the bereaved princes was eligible to claim complete kingship, the brother because established conventions of succession were against it and the sons because they had not come of age. May be because Kirttivarman had come to believe that he may have to go without issues, he had actively associated his brother Maṅgalēśa in the running of his government, probably preparatory to nominating him as his rightful heir. And then was born to him, when he was at a fairly advanced age, his first son, in later years the redoubtable Polekēśi II. It is not clearly known for certain whether Maṅgalēśa took up the reigns of government as a regent, a likely development in case Kirttivarman had died a natural death with sufficient notice and time for making arrangements for a legal succession, or whether he had proclaimed himself emperor immediately after his brother's death, in which case such death should have visited upon Kirttivarman all on a sudden, perhaps on a battle field. At any rate, whether as a regent or as an emperor, Maṅgalēśa did inherit from his brother the full glory of Chalukya royalty and, it should be said to his credit, vastly augmented the value of its import and impact. And, if we are to believe Ravi-kirtti, and there is no reason why we should not, Maṅgalēśa did succeed his brother as king (*rājā-bhavat-tad-anujah kila Maṅgalēśah*) and not as regent but, perhaps, with an assurance that he will vacate the throne in favour of his elder brother's eldest son when the latter came of age.

Kingship and the administrative responsibilities which went with it were not new to Maṅgalēśa if the Bādāmi Vaishṇava cave inscription (8) is any indication. At the time this inscription was written, in

A.D. 578, Kirttivarman was away from Vātāpi, and perhaps from his empire, in search of newer battles to quench his thirst for conquests; and Maṅgalēśa was virtually king in his place. It is very likely that Kirttivarman I and his brother Maṅgalēśa took turns, alternately ruling the kingdom and waging wars. For, the same Bādāmi inscription describes, on the one hand, Kirttivarman as one whose fame had cleared the bounds of the earth by virtue of his having scored, with the help of his chariots, elephant corps, cavalry and infantry, victories in numerous battles (*ratha-hasty-aśva-padāta-saṁkul-ānēka-yuddha-labdha-jaya-patāk-āvalambita-chatus-samudr-ōrmī-nivārīta-yaśāḥ*) and, on the other, Maṅgalēśa as one who became the receptacle of prosperity by the conquest of the earth bounded by the four oceans (*chatus-sāgara-paryant-āvanī-vijaya-maṅgal-aik-āgārah*). These descriptions could have been treated as mere conventional praises but for our knowledge that the Chalukya empire could not have grown into such vastness and power had it not been for the superhuman exertions of the early rulers, Polekēśi I and his two illustrious sons. As a matter of fact, the evidence of the Bādāmi cave inscription is evidence enough to conclude that at least from A.D. 578 onwards, until the end of Kirttivarman I's reign, Maṅgalēśa had been associated in the capacity of a joint ruler with all the paraphernalia of kingship.

In which year did Maṅgalēśa ascend the Chalukya throne? The traditional view as tacitly accepted by a majority of historians who have written on the Chalukyas is that he succeeded his elder brother sometime in A.D. 597-98. This view has recently been set aside by D.P. Dikshit who proffers a different view, namely that Maṅgalēśa's accession took place on some day in A.D. 591-92. The main forte of his argument is that the twentieth regnal year (*rājya-saṁvatsaram viṁśatimam*) mentioned in the Goa plates (15) of the Chalukya prince Satyāśraya Dhruvarāja Indravarman, which also bear the Śaka dating in the year 532, should be referred to Maṅgalēśa and not to the prince mentioned above. This view stands to reason if only because the charter in question was itself issued with the permission of or as authorised by Śrīprithvivallabha-mahārāja. And in Śaka 532 (A.D. 610), none other than Maṅgalēśa could have reckoned his twentieth regnal year, and if his twentieth regnal year covered

part of A.D. 610, it inevitably follows that Maṅgalēśa's reign commenced sometime in A.D. 591-92. Corroboration of an unassailable nature can be had, in support of this view, by a re-examination of the Māruṭūra grant (13) of the eighth year of Satyāśraya Śrīprithvivallabha-mahārāja. This charter has been time and again assigned to the reign of Polekēśi II on the flimsy ground that he alone, among the Chalukya rulers, is mentioned in some of his records merely as Satyāśraya Śrīprithvivallabha without, at the same time, his proper name being mentioned. To say the least, such assumption is unhistorical and impedes the pursuit of honest historical inquiry. This allegation gains ground from the fact that the details of date as given in the Māruṭūra grant, viz., regnal year 8, Jyēshṭha Amāvasyā, Sūrya-grahaṇa can at best be equated, for the known reign period of Polekēśi II (A.D. 610-642) only to 21st May, A.D. 616, which, however much one may try, cannot fall in the eighth year of his reign. Apart from the manner of the king's mention, another major argument put forth by those who claim that the grant belonged to Polekēśi II is that it contains a reference to the capture of Piṣṭapura and that none of the Chalukyas other than Polekēśi II is known to have performed this feat. The crux of the controversy, however, is that none of these scholars was even willing to examine such a possibility.

We had elsewhere argued that the Māruṭūra grant was issued, not by Polekēśi II, but by his son Vikramāditya I who had ascended the throne in A.D. 654-55 and for whose eighth regnal year the details of date, including the all important solar eclipse admirably corresponded to 12th May, A.D. 663. We had then suggested that Vikramāditya, who justly prided himself as the retriever of his late father's imperial possessions from the morass of confusion which ensued the vindictive Pallava invasion of A.D. 642-43, must have retaken Piṣṭapura as part of that great retrieval.

In the wake of Dikshit's revolutionary proposition that Maṅgalēśa had ascended the throne as early as in A.D. 591-92, we re-examined the relevant Chalukya records in all their aspects and thereby came across a rather startling discovery. It may be pointed out at the very outset that there is much that is common

1. *Ripujana-mṛiga-kula-bhaya-
janana-vāhana-varacharaṇa
chār-āmalanayana-śauryo
Ugra-daṁshṭra-pratāpa-vīrya-
vēg-ōdyata-nṛipati-simhaḥ*
.....
*Ripujana-mṛiga-kula-bhaya-
janana-vāhana-varacharaṇa-
char-āmalanayana-śauryo
ugra-daṁshṭra-pratapa-vīrya-
vēg-odyata-nṛipati-simhaḥ*
.....
Simha-vikramaḥ
Simha-vikrantaḥ
2. *naya-vinaya-vijñāna-dāna-
daya-dākshīnya-sampad-
ōpetaḥ*
.....
*naya-vinaya-dana-dayā-
dākshīnya-satya-sampad-
ōpetaḥ*
3. *parama-brahaan-
yaḥ*
4. *parama-brahmanyat-ādir-
aneka-guṇa-gaṇ-alamkṛita-
śariraḥ*
.....
*parama-brahman-
yaḥ*
5. *[kṛi]t-tilakabhūtaḥ*
.....
kṛit-tilaka-bhūtaḥ
6. *Babhau sa Vainya-prati-
mana-kīrtis-tamaḥ pra-
mṛidnat-sva-guṇāṁśu-
jalaiḥ*
.....
*Babhau sa Vainya-pratimāna-
kīrtis-tamaḥ pramṛidnat-sva-
guṇāṁśu-jalaiḥ*
7. *dēva-dviija-guru-charan-
ānudhyātaḥ*
.....
*dēva-dviija-guru-pūjā-
nirataḥ sva-bhuja-bala-
parākram-ōpārjit-ānya-
rāja-vittāḥ*
8. *sva-bahu-bala-samarthy-
ōpārjita-raja-sampannaḥ*

to both the Māruṭūra grant on the one hand and the Mahākūṭa pillar inscription (11) and the Nerūr plates (12) of Maṅgalēśa on the other in the manner of describing Maṅgalēśa's accomplishments. For the sake of ready reference, common or near-common passages are quoted below. In doing so some of the wrong readings of Fleet in the Mahākūṭa pillar inscription have been corrected with the help of fresh estampages and the text the Māruṭūra grant.

From the above concordance it is apparent that the Māruṭūra grant was issued by Maṅgalēśa. And this probability is made a certainty by the details of date furnished therein. Accepting the views that Maṅgalēśa ascended the throne in A.D. 591-92, and it is indeed an eminently acceptable view, the eighth year in which the Māruṭūra grant was issued, would fall in A.D. 598-99 and the other details of date, viz. Jyēshṭha Amāvasyā, Sūrya-grahaṇa regularly correspond either to 11th May, A.D. 598, or to 30th April, A.D. 599, there having occurred a solar eclipse on both the days.

Thus having ascended the throne left vacant by his elder brother in A.D. 591-92, Maṅgalēśa set himself the task of making elaborate preparations for a successful expedition against the north (*uttara-dig-vijaya-kṛita-buddhiḥ*). And within five years of his accession he had already struck the first blow, for his Mahākūṭa pillar inscription (11) of that regnal year says that, as a prelude to his projected northern campaign, he had routed, most probably in a retaliatory battle, a certain king called Buddha of Kalachuri extraction and had also confiscated all his wealth. After his very first brush with a northern power, Maṅgalēśa suddenly turned devotional and returned to Vātāpi in order that he may, preparatory to the setting up of a pillar of victory on the banks of the celestial river Bhāgīrathī (i.e. Gaṅgā), set up in the precincts of the Makuṭēśvara temple, a pillar of piety. And thus was born his famous Mahākūṭa pillar inscription which is of much interest if only because it furnishes us with a list of what all accomplishments were expected of an ideal king in those days. After stating, in a rather matter of fact manner, that, on the death of his elder brother Kirttivarman I, *Raṇavikrānta* Maṅgalēśa became king (*nṛipo babhūva*), the record lists, in rhetoric phrases, his very many accomplishments :

He was a meditator at the feet of the gods, *brāhmanas* and elders (*dēva-dvija-guru-charaṇ-anudhyātaḥ*); he was the very full-moon in the firmament of the Chalukya family (*Chalukya-varṁś-āmbara-pūrṇa-chandraḥ*); he was endowed with (qualities) of polity, politeness, knowledge, liberality, kindness and civility (*naya-vinaya-vijñāna-dāna-dayā-dākshinya-sampannaḥ*); he was desired by hordes of warriors (because he kept them employed) and vultures (because he fed them with the bodies of enemies slain by him in battles; *bhaṭa-śakuna gaṇ-ābhilashitaḥ*); he was surrounded by young damsels (*yuvati-madhukarī-kula-kalitaḥ*); he was full of charming qualities (*lalita-guṇa-kusum-ākulaḥ*); he was enlightened by the bright rays of his religious merit (*puṇyavara-sūrya-kiraṇa-vibōdhita-vibhavaḥ*); he was the very abode of the goddess of wealth (*Śrī-nishthaḥ*); as a king he resembled a cluster of water-lilies (*nṛipati-kamalavanam*); and he was pleasant like a cluster of water-lilies (*kamalavana-saumyaḥ*); the valour of this ruler who had clear vision by virtue of being well served by spies moving on vehicles as well as on their feet, was a source of fear to the host of his enemies (*ripu-jana-mṛiga-kula-bhaya-janana-vāhana-varacharaṇa-chārāmalanayana-śauryaḥ*); he was a leonine king who was well trained to be valiant, brave and fast like a fierce wild-boar (*ugra-daṁshṭra-pratāpa-vīrya-vēg-odyata-nṛipati-simhaḥ*); he was an adept (in giving or seeking) counsel, in espionage, in (the selection of) messengers, in (negotiating for) peace, in (waging) wars, in (pitching) camps, in (leading) expeditions, in attacking enemies in the rear, in invading territories, in the construction of forts, in apportioning honours to country-people and townsfolk (*mantra-chāra-dūta-sandhi-igrāha-sthāna-prayāṇa - pārshnigrahana - maṇḍalaya-trā-durgavidhāna-jānapada-paura-mānya-vibhāgaḥ*). Having thus portrayed the kingly virtues of Maṅgalēśa, the composer of the inscription further says that he was invincible like (the god-king) Mahēndra (*Mahēndra iva durddharshaḥ*), unconquered like Rāma (*Rāma iva aparājitaḥ*), munificent like Śibi, the son of Uśinara (*Śibir-Auśinara iva pradātā*), truthful like Yudhishṭhira (*Yudhishṭhira iva satyasandhaḥ*), possessed of fortune like (*Vishṇu-Krishṇa*=) Vāsudēva (who possesses the goddess of fortune: *Vāsudēva iva śrīmantah*), endowed with fame like Māndhātṛi (*Māndhātāra iva kīrtti-sampannaḥ*),

equal to Bṛihaspati and Uśanas in intellect (*dhiyā Bṛihaspaty-Uśanas-samah*), profound as the ocean (*samudra iva gambhīrah*), equal to the goddess of earth in forbearance (*kshamayā pṛithivī-samah*) and an ornament of accomplished men (*kṛit-tilakabhūtaḥ*).

His eulogy as given in the Bādāmi Vaishṇava cave inscription (8) of A.D. 578, the Nerūr plates (12), issued on the twelfth day of Kārttika in an unspecified year of his reign, and the Māruṭūra grant (13) which we have, hopefully convincingly assigned above to him, further confirm what is indicated by the Mahākūṭa pillar inscription that Maṅgalēśa loved to shower upon himself lofty praises on his person, personality and achievements.

As has been stated earlier, the Bādāmi Vaishṇava cave inscription is indicative of the possibility of Kīrttivarman and Maṅgalēśa having ruled in joint capacity from at least A.D. 578 to the end of the former's reign in A.D. 591-92. As a matter of fact this inscription describes Maṅgalēśa as *śakti-traya-sampannaḥ* i.e., one endowed with the three kingly prerequisites of *prabhu-śakti* (kingship over a territory), *mantra-śakti* (the backing of good counsel) and *utsāha-śakti* (energy to retain and to expand). He is further eulogised as the full-moon in the Chalukya firmament (*Chalikya-vamś-āmbara-pūrṇṇa-chandraḥ*), as one whose body is bedecked with many good qualities (*anēka-guṇa-gaṇ-ālaṃkṛita-śarīrah*), as one whose mind is imbued with the essence of the objects of all sciences (*sarva-śāstr-ārtha-tattva-nivishṭa-buddhiḥ*), as one possessed of extraordinary strength, bravery and perseverance (*ati-bala-parākram-otsāha-sampannaḥ*), as one whose feet were brilliant with the glitter of the jewels of the diadems of kings whose heads he bent with the edge of the sword wielded by his own arm (*nijabhuj-āvalambita-khaḍga-dhārā-namita-nṛipati-śīrō-mukuta-maṇi-prabhā-rañjita-pāda-yugalaḥ*) and as a great devotee of Viṣṇu (*parama-bhāgavataḥ*) besides praising him as becoming the very receptacle of prosperity by the conquest of the earth bounded by the four oceans (*chatus-sāgara-paryant-āvani-vijaya-maṅgal-aik-agārah*).

When compared with the Mahākūṭa record (11), the Nerūr plates (12) supply the additional information that Maṅgalēśa was a man of extreme religious piety (*parama-brahmanyah*), the conqueror of other's domains (*para-rāshṭr-āvamardī*) and the

votary of justice in his own empire (*sva-rāshṭrē nyāy-ānuvartī*); his fame had spread the world over (*sakala-maḥi-maṇḍala-vyāpi-vimala-yaśaḥ*); he had captured the wealth of other kings by dint of the strength of his arm (*sva-bhuja-bala-parākram-ōpārjit-anyarāja-vittah*); he had the gait, eyes and voice of a bull (*vṛishabha-gamana-nayana-ninādaḥ*); he sported like a rutting elephant (*samada-varavārāṇa-vilāsaḥ*); he was possessed of leonine valour (*simha-vikramaḥ*); he was endowed with the quality of truthfulness; he had the three kingly pre-requisites (viz. *prabhu*, *mantra* and *utsāha śaktis*; *śakti-traya-sampannah*); and he was a great devotee of Viṣṇu (*parama-bhāgavataḥ*).

The Māruṭūra grant (13) also provides us with some additional eulogistic phrases to the effect that Maṅgalēśa was the very sun the bright rays of whose good qualities had spread all over the vast firmament of the Chalukya family (*Cha[li*]kya-kula-vipula-nabhastal-ākkrānta-guṇa-gabhasti-māl-ālaṃkṛita-bhāskarah*); that he meditated at the feet of his parents (*mātā-pitṛi-pād-anudhyātaḥ*); that he was endowed with the qualities of determination (*mati*), strength (*bala*), energy (*utsāha*), boldness (*dhairya*), firmness (*sthairya*), charm (*mādhurya*), profundity of character (*gāmbhīrya*), manliness (*vīrya*) and sacrifice (*tyāga*); that he remembered only good deeds and forgot bad ones (*sukṛitānāṃ smartā dushkṛitānāṃ vismartā*); that he had a body of which all the five senses were unafflicted (*nirupahata-pañch-ēndriya-śarīraḥ*); his fame, obtained by the invasion of enemy territories lying beyond the wavy ocean, was so pure as to laugh at the purity of the autumnal rays of the moon (*pavana-bala-chalit-ōttuṅga-bhaṅga-taraṅ-āvali-sahasr-ākīrṇa-jalanidhi-valay-ātikrānta-ripu-maṇḍala-vijaya-labdha-śarad-amala-śaśalāñchhana-marichi-saṃhati-dhava-la-chchhāy-ōpahasita-yaśāḥ*). After their respective eulogies on Maṅgalēśa, both the Nerūr plates and the Māruṭūra grant give the same half of a verse according to which he, whose reputation was equal to that of (the Purāṇic king Pṛithu-) Vainya, dispelled the darkness (of vice) with the rays of his virtues :

*Babhau sa Vainya-pratimāna-kīrttis-
tamaḥ pramṛidnat-sva-guṇāmśu-jālaiḥ*

We have one more undated charter issued during the reign of

Maṅgalēśa, viz., the Hūli plates (14) which describe him as the very moon which has arisen on the horizon of the Chalikya family, as one who had gained the banners of victory in many battles, as one endowed with good qualities such as munificence, as being equal to Purandara (i.e. Indra) in prowess, as one on whose forehead was fastened the crown of *Prithvī-vallabha*, and as ruling over the earth bounded by three oceans.

Not much is known of the martial exploits of Maṅgalēśa. He entertained ambitious hopes of a northern conquest culminating in the setting up of a pillar of victory on the banks of the Ganges and had even, for a beginning, attacked, defeated and pillaged Buddha of the Kalachuri dynasty who, however, appears to have been Maṅgalēśa's lone northern victim for, for reasons not known to us, he does not appear to have further pursued his plans for a northern expedition. The Nerūr plates (12) mention that Maṅgalēśa drove out (*vidrāvya*) the king Buddha, who was the son of Śaṅkaragaṇa and who had formidable elephant corps, cavalry, infantry and resources and, besides, also put an end to the life of Svāmīrāja of the Chalikya lineage, who had earlier won as many as eighteen battles. The Kalachuris were at that time holding sway over the region covering parts of Gujarat, Kathiawad, and the Nāsik area. The use of the word *vidrāvya* (having driven out) implies that initially Kalachuri Buddha was the aggressor and Maṅgalēśa, the defender. Svāmīrāja, a minor scion of the Chalikya family, and perhaps allied himself with the Kalachuris with some ulterior motive. At any rate he was not considered important enough to merit a mention either in the Aihole inscription or in the genealogical accounts of the Vātāpi Chalukyas as given in the charters of the later Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa.

Another martial achievement of Maṅgalēśa, which has been applauded by Ravikīrtti, the author of the Aihole inscription (26), and in the charters of the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa, is the taking of Rēvatī-dvīpa. Even Ravikīrtti, who, on grounds of political prudence, could have justifiably omitted eulogising Maṅgalēśa, describes the capture of Rēvatī-dvīpa in glowing terms :

Punar-api cha jighṛikshōs-sainyamākrānta sālām

*ruchira-bahu-patākam Rēvatī-dvīpam-āśu
sapadi mahad-udanvat-tōya samkrānta bimbam
Varuṇa-balam-iv-ābhūd-āgataṁ yasya vāchā*

‘When he was desirous of taking the island of Rēvatī, his great army, flaunting numerous bright banners, which had ascended the ramparts (of the fort of Rēvatī-dvīpa), as it was reflected in the waters of the sea appeared like the very forces of Varuṇa, quickly come there at once on his orders’.

Some scholars have sought to identify Rēvatī-dvīpa with Rēḍi to the south of Vengurla in Ratnagiri District, Maharashtra. In the context of the sea being mentioned, the word *dvīpa*, which usually means an ‘island’, could also be used to describe a peninsular projection of the mainland into the sea. In order to take such a promontory, it will have to be besieged from the sea as well. Maṅgalēśa was, perhaps, a pioneer among the Chalukyas in building up a naval force which appears to have played a crucial role in the capture of Rēvatī-dvīpa. For, though the Aihole inscription does not contain any direct reference to his navy, the inscriptions of the Kalyāṇa Chālukyas, which, as we have pointed out above, contain much truthful historical information on the Vātāpi Chalukyas, make unequivocal mention of Maṅgalēśa’s navy :

*Sarva-dvīp-ākramaṇa-mahasō yasya nausētu-bandhaiḥ
Ullamghy-ābdhim vyadhita pritanā Rēvatī-dvīpa-lōpam*

‘The island of Rēvatī was captured by him, who had the might to occupy all the islands, on his army crossing the ocean with the help of bridges constructed with boats’. This statement makes clear at once that Maṅgalēśa did build up a naval force and that Rēvatī-dvīpa was near enough to the coast as to be reached by pontoon bridges. Since the Mārūtūra grant (13) issued in A.D. 598-99 refers to Maṅgalēśa’s overseas venture, we may conclude that the naval expedition to Rēvatī-dvīpa had been accomplished before the date of issue of that charter. Since the Goa plates (15) state that Maṅgalēśa’s subordinate Satyāśraya Dhruvarāja Indravarman was stationed at Rēvatī-dvīpa in A.D. 610, we may take it that the island continued to be with the Chalukyas right till the end of Maṅgalēśa’s reign.

The ascription of the Māruṭūra grant of A.D. 598-99 to Maṅgalēśa, hopefully on unassailable grounds, will mean that he had to his credit victory over the forces of Piṣṭapura. The capture of that fortress is described in the grant as *Pishtapurak-ādāna-grahaṇa*, in which *ādāna* means 'to reduce' and *grahaṇa* 'to capture'. From this we may conclude that Maṅgalēśa laid siege to the fortress, reduced it and then captured it. He, however, does not appear to have held it in his control for any length of time. This achievement of Maṅgalēśa, which took place in A.D. 598-99, finds no mention either in the Aihole inscription or in the later records of the Kalyāṇa Chālukyas. As regards the Aihole inscription, it may be hazarded that, since the same fortress was captured once again by Polekēśi II, Ravikīrtti got over an embarrassment by merely omitting any reference to Maṅgalēśa's capture of Piṣṭapura and its subsequent loss. For the same reason it was perhaps not mentioned in the palace records of the Vātāpi Chalukyas on which the Kalyāṇa Chālukyas must have based their draft of their ancestors' dynastic and genealogical eulogies.

In the official draft of the *praśasti* of the Kalyāṇa Chālukyas, in the portion concerning their Vātāpi ancestors, only those achievements of individual rulers were included as were considered to be major or important and enduring. Since, in the case of Maṅgalēśa, his triumph over Kalachuri Buddha and the capture of Rēvatī-dvīpa are alone mentioned, we may conclude that he never put into action his ambitious plans for a raid deep into the north.

Of the six epigraphical records referable to the reign of Maṅgalēśa, only three bear verifiable details of date. The earliest of these is the Mahākūṭa pillar inscription (11) written in the fifth year (A.D. 595-96) of his reign. The grant portion of this important record, which fully brings out the truth behind Maṅgalēśa's description as *parama-brahmanyah* and *guru-pūjā-nirataḥ*, has not so far been correctly interpreted and understood. The matter forming the last portion of line 13 and most of line 14 of the said inscription should be properly read and interpreted as follows :

*Kalatsūri-dhanam svaṁ dēva-griha-dēvadrōṇyām
gatam-idañcha dravyam sva-dēvadrōṇyām*

*Makuṭēśvaranāthasy-āsmākaṃ pitrā jyēshthēna
ch-ōpadattaṃ Śriyambātaka.....
Nandigrāma-prabhṛti daśa-grāma-paribhōgēṇa
[saha*] samarppayadhvam-iti*

‘The wealth of the Kalatsūri (king) which is my own (by virtue of confiscation in war) has gone into (the treasury of) the *dēvadrōṇi* of the (Makuṭēśvara) temple; this wealth should be entrusted (to the Makuṭēśvara temple) along with the enjoyment of the ten villages of Śriyambātaka Nandigrāma etc., which had been given by my father into (the treasury) of his own *dēvadrōṇi* in (his own) temple and by my elder brother’. The word *dēvadrōṇi* was translated by Fleet as ‘idol-procession’. On the other hand, as has been explained above in the chapter on Polekēśi I, *dēvadrōṇi* refers to the *maṇṭapa* built in the midst of the water of the temple tank and symbolises the vehicle which is supposed to carry its builder in his journey to the world of the gods on his relinquishing his mortal coil. The *dēvadrōṇi* of the Makuṭēśvara temple was Maṅgalēśa’s father’s own and this leads us to the conclusion that the main temple Makuṭēśvara, the tank and the small structure therein were all in existence, even during the period of Polekēśi I and were certainly built by him in their original forms to which the extant structures may or may not be true. The ten villages were not given all at once but some of them by Polekēśi I during his reign and the others by his first son later when he had become king. At the time of making over the wealth of the vanquished Kalatsūri ruler to the temple of Makuṭēśvara, Maṅgalēśa had requested his father’s wife (*sva-guru-patni*) Durlabhadēvi, who was fit to be emulated and who, like Damayanti, was a most devoted wife, who was an ornament of the Batpūra family and whose body had been purified by the partaking of the merit of performing many religious acts, for her immediate presence. She was obviously Maṅgalēśa’s stepmother.

The Nerūru charter (12), though not sufficiently dated, was obviously issued after the writing of the Mahākūṭa inscription (11) and before the Māruṭūra grant (13) was issued, for it makes no mention of Maṅgalēśa’s overseas expedition. The *brāhmaṇa* Periyasvāmin of the Kāśyapa-sagōtra, who was well-versed in the Vedic lore and was possessed of character and behaviour as behaves a good family, was

the recipient of the royal grant of the village of Kuṇḍivāṭaka, situated in Koṇkaṇa-vishaya, made by Maṅgalēśa after observing fast and worshipping Viṣṇu on the twelfth day of Kārtika.

The Māruṭūra grant (13), issued in A.D. 598-99 in the eighth year of Maṅgalēśa's reign, immediately after the reduction and capture of Piṣṭapuraka, deserves a somewhat detailed discussion. It registers the royal grant of the village of Māruṭūra, along with its hamlets Nātavaṭa and Vattiparuva, as an *agrahāra*, to eleven brāhmaṇas, and to another who did not belong to the three upper castes, when Maṅgalēśa was encamped at Kalūrapura (Guntur District, Andhra Pradesh), in order that the senior-most queen Kadambā could fulfil her desire to gratify (the soul of) her father (*sva-guru*) and also in order that Āḷuka-mahārāja, who had gone all the way from Maṅgalapura to Kalūra for the sake of the royal donor, and breathed his last there, may attain *akshayya-phala* (i.e. *mōksha*). Kadambā was obviously the senior-most crowned queen of Maṅgalēśa. Āḷuka-mahārāja, was, no doubt, an early Āḷupa ruler of South Kanara, Karnāṭaka, and Maṅgalapura (Mangalore on the Karnāṭaka coast) was his capital city. This ancient ruling house was more widely known as Āḷupa and, even in the Guḍṇāpur inscription of Kadamba Ravivarman, it is mentioned as Āḷupa. But of the inscriptions of the Vātāpi Chalukyas, while the Aihole inscription of Polekēśi II mentions it as Āḷupa, the only two known earlier references, that in the Mahākūṭa pillar inscription (11) and the second one in the Māruṭūra grant (13) name the family as Āḷuka, one more reason why the Māruṭūra grant should be assigned to Maṅgalēśa. Right from the time of Kirttivarman I the Āḷupas remained as the faithful allies of the Vātāpi Chalukyas until the latter were supplanted by the Rāshtrakūṭas in the middle of the eighth century. Āḷuka-mahārāja was the contemporary of Maṅgalēśa and was perhaps the one who was brought into subjugation by Kirttivarman I. Though the purpose of the Māruṭūra grant was two-fold, the diction of the text clearly implies that both were interconnected. We may, therefore, safely conclude that Āḷuka-mahārāja himself was the father (*guru*) of the queen Kadambā and that he had gone to the Āndhra country in order to be of help to his imperial son-in-law

in his campaign against Pishtapuraka. He perhaps lost his life in that battle.

Of the twelve beneficiaries of the Māruṭūra grant (13), eleven were brāhmaṇas drawn from different *gōtras*. Four of them, Jyēshṭha-svāmin Koṇḍa-Bhīmasvāmin, Jannasvāmin and Paṇḍaraṅgasvāmin were well versed in all the four *Vēdas*; three, Divākarasvāmin, Bhōrusvāmin and Rēvasvāmin had mastered the eighty Tarkas (logics); the eighth, Jannasvāmin, had received one thousand cows (*grīhita-sāhasra*) on the occasion of performing the *ēkāha* ceremony; two more, Ādityasvāmin and Viṣṇusvāmin, had mastered the thousand *Tarkas*; the eleventh, Vāmasvāmin is merely mentioned as belonging to the Vāsishṭha-sagōtra. The twelfth donee, Gōpasvāmin, is described as *Kāśyapa-gōtra-varṇṇa-traya-nivṛitta* which perhaps means that he had renounced worldly life and had become a *sannyāsin* by giving up his *gotra* and caste affiliation.

The Hūli plates (14) are also not dated but may be supposed to have been issued later than the Māruṭūra grant, for they describe Maṅgalēśa as having fought a number of battles. It is a Jaina record registering the grant of fifty *nivartanas* of land to the *chaitya* of Śāntinātha-Tīrthaṅkara in the village of Kiruvaṭṭakere by Raviśakti, the influential administrator of that village, at the behest of Maṅgalēśa (*tasy-ānuśāsanēna*). Raviśakti was the son of Kaṇṇaśakti, the Sēndraka ruler of Phaṇikula and the latter finds mention in the Araḷihoṇḍa inscription (34) of a certain Piṭṭi-amman as the earlier donor of a land grant which is stated in that inscription to have been confirmed by one Eṇeva-Konnereyangal, in the middle of the 7th century. The Sēndrakas were, like the Āḷupas, hereditary allies of the Vātāpi Chalukyas. The royal emblem depicted on the seal of the Hūli plates consists of a gress facing proper right suckling her cub, facing proper left. The royal emblem of the Chalukyas being the Boar (*Varāha*), what is depicted on the seal was, in all probability, the Sēndraka royal emblem.

The secularism of the early rulers of Karnāṭaka, as revealed by the career of Maṅgalēśa, was in keeping with the trend which generally prevailed all over the sub-continent in those times. In the case of Maṅgalēśa, we see him making grants to the Śaivite temple of

Makuṭēśvara in his fifth regnal year, making a grant, through the Nerūr plates (12), to a brāhmaṇa after offering worship to the god Viṣṇu and then instructing his Sēndraka ally, through the Hūli plates (14), to grant a piece of land to a Jaina *chaitya*.

Besides making munificent grants to the already existing structural temple of Makuṭēśvara, Maṅgalēśa was, in his own right, a great builder. It is likely that some of the smaller temples in the Mahākūṭa temple complex were caused to be built by him, though epigraphical evidence is not forthcoming in support of such an assumption. The Bādāmi Vaishṇava cave was excavated and finished during Kīrttivarman's absence from the capital when Maṅgalēśa was deputising for him on the Chalukya throne. The composer of the inscription (8) of that cave says that the temple thus excavated by Maṅgalēśa surpassed all things divine and human (*ati-dāivam-amānushyakam*), was built with most marvellous workmanship (*aty-adbhuta-karma-virachitam*) and appeared most beautiful in the midst of its surrounding and adjoining grounds (*bhūmi-bhāg-opabhāg-ōpariparyant-ātiśaya-darśanīyatamaṁ*). Having completed the work of excavation and beautification, Maṅgalēśa gave away munificent donations to deserving brāhmaṇas and caused to be installed in that cave temple the image (*pratimā*) of Viṣṇu who destroys the hosts of his enemies with his *chakra* which has the form of the sun rising on the dissolution of the universe. The cave has been deprived of its image at some unknown time in the past but from its inscriptional description, we are led to believe that it was conceived and sculptured in the Chakrapāṇi aspect of Viṣṇu.

Another great lithic monument which can be safely assigned to Maṅgalēśa on the strength of epigraphical as well as circumstantial evidence is what is now known as the *Rāvaḷa-phadi* or, sometimes, inaccurately as the *Rāvāṇa-phadi* cave. As we enter this cave temple, we find carved on the wall of the left chamber the image of Naṭarāja flanked by the *saptamātrikas* or the seven divine mothers and their divine escorts Gaṇēśa and Virabhadra. Any one familiar with the dynastic eulogy of the Vātāpi Chalukyas will, on setting his eyes on this imposing panel, at once recollect the description '*sapta-loka-mātribhiḥ sapta-mātribhiḥ parirakshitāḥ*', 'the Chalukyas who were protected

by the seven divine mothers who are mothers of all the seven worlds'. Thus the image of Naṭarāja carved in that chamber is undoubtedly the deified image of a Chalukya ruler. Who could this king be? The answer is provided by a label inscription (17) engraved in 6th-7th century characters, on the rock altar beneath the sculptured Naṭarāja panel. Hitherto wrongly read as *Kaṇamiñchi* and mistaken for the name of a sculptor, the label really reads as Śrī-Raṇavikrā [...]. Needless to say, this is to be restored as Raṇavikrāntan which was the second name of Maṅgalēśa.

Of the name *Rāvaḷa-phadi*, *Rāvaḷa* is the *tadbhava* of Sanskrit *Rājakula*, 'royal family' while in Prakrit, the Sanskrit word *pratimā* is variously spelt as *paḍimā*, *phaḍimā*, *paṭimā*, etc. It is our contention, therefore, that what was originally designated as *Rājakula-pratimā-gṛiha* got transformed during the long centuries as *Rāvaḷa-phadi* and most funnily, as *Rāvaṇa-phadi*. In short, the *Rāvaḷa-phadi* cave was conceived by Maṅgalēśa as a royal portrait gallery and, accordingly, he even had himself portrayed in the deified form of Naṭarāja and gave it a dynastic touch by enflanking the *sapta-mātrika* images.

The infant son left behind by Kīrttivarman I at the time of his death some day in A.D. 591-92 had come of age by the twentieth year (A.D. 610) of Maṅgalēśa's reign. Being by nature ambitious, the rightful heir (Eṇeyamma as a forlorn prince and Polekēśi II later) must have begun to press his claims on his father's throne. If we are to believe Ravikīrtti (26), and his was an almost contemporaneous account, Maṅgalēśa was unwilling to yield the place on the Vātāpī throne to his princely nephew and instead, began indulging in manipulatory tactics with a view to secure the throne for his own direct descendants. And, thereby, he came to grief and, in a climatic struggle, paid the ultimate penalty.

The story is told differently in the records of the later Kalyāṇa Chālukyas. After asserting that Maṅgalēśa had voluntarily vacated the throne in favour of his youthful nephew, they aver that none in the Chalukya lineage could swerve from the path of righteousness :

*Jyēshṭha-bhrātuḥ sati-suta-varēpy-arbhakatvād-aśaktēr-
yasminn-ātmany-akṛita hi dhuram*

*Maṅgalīśaḥ prithivyāḥ
tasmin-pratyārpipad-atha mahīm yūni
Satyāśrayē=sau
Chālukyānām ka iva hi pathō dharmyataḥ prachyavēta*

‘who indeed, being a Chalukya, will deviate from the path of righteousness? It is, therefore, that Maṅgalēśa, who had come by the empire because of the infancy of his elder brother’s son, himself made over the throne to the rightful heir at the opportune moment.’

The mention of such facts as the elder brother Kirttivarman I leaving behind an infant son and the mantle of emperorship consequently falling on the shoulders of Maṅgalēśa in his capacity as regent-king clearly shows that the Chālukyas had access to accurate information on the episode. The very fact that, out of concern for their family’s heavy reputation, they raise the query as to who among them could indeed stray from the path of righteousness is enough indication that they knew full well Maṅgalēśa’s attempted act of egotistic treachery. The Chālukya records would have truly reflected their readers’ feelings through all the centuries if only they had frankly stated the facts and had queried as to why such an illustrious monarch was destined with such an unedifying end. For, when all is said and done, Maṅgalēśa was indeed a great emperor.

CHAPTER SIX

SATYĀŚRAYA POLEKEŚĪ (II), THE GREAT

The hero of this chapter lived in an age in which Indian pragmatists had come to believe that any prince or adventurer aspiring to found or rule over or supplant a sovereign imperial hegemony should be necessarily armed with the three prerequisites of *prabhu-śakti* (possession of a crown of authority), *mantra-śakti* (good counsel) and *utsāha-śakti* (an inexhaustible spirit of enthusiasm or exertion). Judged from this point of view, Polekēśi II was a typical product of his times and it may be truly said of him that he was, in respect of his career and personality, moulded by the course and force of his times in shaping which his own contribution was by no means negligible. As a matter of fact the first half of the seventh century A.D. marks an important epoch in the history of India. For it was during those eventful decades that the idea of sovereign imperialism, put into experiment in the preceding period of the Guptas, Maitrakas, Vākātakas, Kadambas, and the Western Gaṅgas, came to be crystallised by the exertions of Harsha in the north, Polekēśi II in the Deccan and the Pallavas further south. *De facto* sovereignty, or even the wherewithal and stamina to achieve or enforce it, came to be considered as the primary requisite for proclaiming imperial status, more or less exclusively through the rather dubious means of assuming imperial titles and epithets, the limitations in terms of the area under actual control and jurisdiction notwithstanding. In Karnāṭaka itself, with which territory we are presently more closely concerned, beside the Chalukyas of Vātāpi, whose sovereignty and imperial status were by then absolute, the Gaṅgas of Taḷakāḍu, the Kadambas of Banavāsi, the Mauryas of Koṅkaṇa and the Āḷupas of Āḷuvakhēḍa were then basking under the often elusive sun of sovereignty, an uneasy

and insecure sovereignty which they at times made bold to present in their official records as by itself symbolic of imperial status. Circumstances being much the same elsewhere in the subcontinent during those times, it redounds to the credit of Polekeṣi II and his illustrious contemporaries at Kānyakubja and Kāñchi that, in that atmosphere of compromising politics, they strove hard for and succeeded in further elevating their respective houses to the level of absolute imperialism in terms of both *de facto* and *de jure* sovereignty.

Coming to the arena where the Chalukyas set up the nucleus of their political power, namely Karnāṭaka, we find that, while the ancient house of the Gaṅgas of Taḷakāḍu, for instance, could only muster a dubious imperial status, the continuance of which depended much upon the toleration of their traditional existence by their more powerful neighbours, the Chalukyas of Vātāpi, by their ceaseless exercises in the battle fields, had ensured the survival and steady growth of their imperial might which could stand its ground until and unless challenged and toppled by a more militant rival. Into that house of war-lords, their very martial stance advertised by such militant names and epithets as Raṇarāga, Raṇaparākarama, Raṇavikrama and Raṇavikrānta, was born, perhaps in the last decade of the sixth century, our renowned hero who, in the course of over three decades, strode the Deccan and its peripheries like a colossus.

For no fault of his and, perhaps, for no fault of his parents too, Polekeṣi II was born too late for him (*arbhakatvād-aśaktaḥ*) to have the heavy mantle of emperorship transferred straightaway to his own shoulders from those of his deceased father, Kirttivarman I (26). The onerous burden was therefore, placed, instead, on the shoulders of the dead emperor's younger brother, Maṅgalēśa, who occupied the throne perhaps as a trustee-king, though, for all practical purposes, in full imperial regalia, and at least on that solemn occasion, with no ulterior designs of perpetuating his own direct line of successors.

As emperor, Maṅgalēśa acquitted himself very creditably indeed but, as bad luck would have it, he dared break the trust which, earlier, his dying brother and, later, his ambitious nephew had placed

in him. When it became apparent that his uncle Maṅgalēśa, deigning to place his own progeny on the Vātāpi throne, considered him a *persona-non-grata* within his own kingdom, Eṇeya, for what was Polekēśi's precoronation name, rose in open rebellion; thus began one of the most colourful careers in Indian history.

In his own inscriptions Maṅgalēśa is acclaimed as a paragon of justice, for example, *sva-rāshṭrē nyāy-ānuvartti* (12), and the copper-plate charters of the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa aver that Maṅgalēśa, true to his word, voluntarily stepped down from the throne when Polekēśi II had come of age. Our most reliable source of information on this point, however, is the Aihole inscription (26) which contains the unequivocal declaration that Polekēśi II had to occupy the throne by force and that too not before performing the unpleasant task of putting an end to his own paternal uncle's life. The undated Modlimb (Satara District) plates (20) of Polekēśi II say, in no uncertain terms, that he had earned his kingdom by the might of his own arms (*sva-bāhu-bala-vikram-ōpāka-rājyaḥ*).

An almost startling and almost contemporaneous corroboration of this sanguinary incident is to be had from the Paddavaḍugūru Kannada inscription (18) which states that Eṇeyatiyaḍigaḷ, having defeated and killed Raṇavikrama in the battle-field called Elpattu-Simbhige in Nāḍanūru (*Nāḍanūroḷ-Raṇavikramanānn-Eṇeyatiyaḍigaḷ-Elpattu-Simbhiga-kolgoḷaduḷ viḷe eridu geldu*), he summoned to his presence the *mahājanas* of that village and made them choose some land for their livelihood. They, in their turn, begged Eṇeya to grant them, free of all encumbrances, the village of Nāḍanūr itself; he not only obliged them but also granted to them the income from the *ponnateṇa* levied and collected in the *agrahāras* situated in the district (*viśaya*) of the Bāṇa ruler. The preamble on top of the text introduces the above grants as the *datti* of Satyāśraya-śriprithvivallabha-mahārājādhirāja-paramēśvara-bhaṭṭāra which helps us identify the donor Eṇeya-atiyaḍigaḷ with Polekēśi II, an identification further supported by the reference to this emperor as Eṇeyamma in a tenth century rendering of one of Polekēśi II's inscriptions at Lakshmēśvara (29).

The real importance of the Peddavaḍugūru inscription hinges

round the identification of Eṛeyatiyaḍigaḷ's adversary, Raṇavikrama. Maṅgalēśa is known to have had the favourite epithet of Raṇavikrānta, which in essence is the same as Raṇavikrama, an epithet borne by his father Polekēśi I. That *vikrama* and *vikrānta* were used as synonyms is borne out by the writing of *simha-vikrama* of the Nerūr plates (12) of Maṅgalēśa as *simha-vikrānta* in his Māruṭūra grant (13). It is, therefore, almost certain that the inscription in question has a direct bearing on the battle for the throne waged by Polekēśi II against Maṅgalēśa. The ascription of the epithet *Raṇavikrama* to Polekēśi II in his Lohaner plates (23 : *sva-bhuja-bala-labdha-Raṇavikram-ākhyah*) in all probability, commemorates Polekēśi's triumph over Raṇavikrama-Maṅgalēśa.

With the offering of the above interpretation of the Peddavaḍu-gūru epigraph (18), the following new facts emerge with reference to Polekēśi II's early life, namely,

- that, when his uncle turned inimical towards him, the prince Eṛeya retreated to the Bāṇa domain whose ruler was, in all probability, well-disposed towards him;
- that, encamped in the safety of the Bāṇa ruler's protection, Eṛeya, armed though he was with only the *utsāha* and *mantra śaktis*, declared himself as at war with Maṅgalēśa who was then *śakti-traya-sampanna*, i.e. endowed with the third additional and all-important weapon of *prabhu śakti*;
- that, provoked by the rebellious act of his nephew, the trustee-turned-usurper Maṅgalēśa invaded the Bāṇa territory and gave battle to Eṛeya at Elpattu-Simbhige;
- that, the battle went in favour of Eṛeya who, after putting his uncle to the sword, betook the imperial identity of Śatyāśraya-śriprithvivallabha-mahārājādhirāja-paramēśvara-bhaṭāra, thereby making his own the *prabhu-śakti* which Maṅgalēśa had tried in vain to pass on to his own descendant.

As did commonly happen at such times of confusion, feudatories, opportunists and adventurers all over the empire, who grossly underestimated the intrinsic worth and prowess of the fresh incumbent on the imperial throne, the youthful Polekēśi II, rose in rebellion

and the imperial authority of the Chalukyas was momentarily shaken to its very foundations for the first, though not the last, time. Nearer the capital, Polekēśi II was forced to test his strength once against two rather mysterious adversaries, Āppāyika and Gōvinda (26). The identity of these twin-challengers is by no means certain. They were, perhaps, loyal adherents of the vanquished Maṅgalēśa. It is even possible that at least one of them, if not both, was Maṅgalēśa's son. Polekēśi chased and defeated them north of the river Bhīmā, Āppāyika getting utterly routed and Gōvinda seeking and securing the victor's protection. Thus ended the only serious challenge to Polekēśi's claim to the imperial throne and he was thenceforward left free to restore the shaken glories of his empire.

Once left without a rival claimant for his hard-earned inheritance, the redoubtable Polekēśi II does not appear to have lost much time in planning and implementing a series of military campaigns, those on the home ground meant to bolster up his own real aura and those outside calculated to re-establish in full measure the sovereign imperial authority of the Chalukyas. His friend and court-poet Ravikīrtti is again the only available source of information on which some sort of a probable sequence of his military expeditions can be drawn. From a study of Ravikīrtti's Aihole inscription (26), it is indeed possible to deduce that the victories of his master are therein narrated in their topographical sequence, though no tangible clue can be found as to the chronological succession of those events. All that we can say with a certain amount of conviction is that the Aihole inscription implies that Polekēśi's conquests were carried out at four different levels, two of them in the early years of his reign and the other two, nearly fifteen years later, each one of them contributing to a steady and successive improvement in his stature as one of the leading emperors of the subcontinent :

1. Campaign against recalcitrant feudatory rulers of Karnāṭaka;
2. Campaigns to the north-west of his empire, and his conflict with Harsha;
3. Campaigns to the north-east and east of his empire; and
4. Campaigns to the south of his empire.

In the confusion created by the civil war, the Gaṅgas of Talakāḍu, the Kadambas of Banavāsi, the Āḷupas of Āḷuvakhēḍa and the Mauryas of Koṅkaṇa, whose dubious sovereign status had earlier been reduced to the level of subordination by Kīrttivarman I, withdrew their allegiance and, no sooner than he had wrested the imperial throne and warded off the danger posed by Āppāyika and Gōvinda, Polekēśi II marched against these kingdoms and successfully brought them back into the imperial fold.

Egged on by the desire to expand the sphere of his *chakravartti-kshētra*, he next turned his attention northwards. And he appears to have subdued, by a mere show of force, the rulers of Lāṭa, Māḷava and Gūrjara, who probably preferred a distant master to the dreaded and overwhelming might of Harsha, and hence did not offer more than symbolic resistance. But Polekēśi's newly earned hegemony over these kingdoms must have been viewed by Harsha as punishable intrusions into his own preserve. There ensued, therefore, predictably enough an infructuous conflict between Polekēśi II and Harsha, the only tangible outcome of which was that the 'Lord of the Uttarāpatha' and the 'Lord of the Dakṣiṇāpatha' decided to leave each other alone.

Nevertheless, at the end of the collision between the two, in which Harsha was most certainly the aggressor, Polekēśi appears to have had the upper hand. The Chinese traveller Hieun Tsiang's contemporaneous observations, which clearly imply that the offensive was Harsha's, confirm the fact that Polekēśi II was more than a match to the great invader: "At the present time Śīlāditya Mahārāja" i.e. Harsha "has conquered the nations from east to west, and carried his arms to remote districts, but the people of this country alone have not submitted to him. He has gathered troops from the five Indies, and summoned the best leaders from all countries, and himself gone at the head of his army to punish and subdue these people, but he has not yet conquered their troops". Ravikīrtti (26) devotes two verses to this war, the first of which has a direct bearing on it :

*Aparimita-vibhūti-sphīta-sāmanta-sēnāmakuta-maṇi-mayūkh-
ākrānta-pādāravindah
yudhi patita-gajēndr-āṇika-bibhatsa bhūtō bhaya-vigalīta-harshō
yēna ch-ākāri Harshaḥ*

‘The powerful Harsha, whose feet were worshipped by an army of extremely prosperous feudatories, lost his mirth because of his defeat at his (i.e. Polekēśi II’s) hands and was disgusted at the sight of rows of his lordly elephants fallen in the battle’. The second verse, which is a sequel to the first, reads :

*Bhuvam-urubhir-anīkaiś-śāsatō-yasya Rēvā-vividha-puḷina-śōbh-
āvandhya Vindhy-ōpakaṇṭhaḥ
adhikatarām-arājat-svēna-tējō-mahimnā śikharibhir-ibha-varjyō
varshmaṇā spardhay-ēva*

‘Having returned from that war, while he (i.e. Polekēśi II) was ruling over the earth, with (the help of) his huge army, the Vindhyan neighbourhood, which was already lustrous with myriad sandanks of the Rēvā (i.e. Narmadā), became by the addition of his own greatness, even more lustrous, being avoided by the mountainous elephants which, in their size competed with the (Vindhyan) mountains’.

Coming very next to the verse narrating Harsha’s defeat in the war in which the major wing of his army was the elephant corps, the above verse conveys the information that the enemy (i.e. Harsha) and his elephants never again made bold to trespass the Vindhyan ranges and intrude into Polekēśi II’s territories. From this we can conclude that it is not for nothing that the Chalukyas claimed for Polekēśi II a grand victory against Harsha. As for Harsha being dubbed as the lord of the entire *Uttarāpatha*, it can only mean that he was the most powerful ruler of his times in North India for we know that there were several other fairly powerful and independent North Indian contemporaries of Harsha.

There are reasons to believe that all the above military exploits of Polekēśi II from the time of his accession to the battle he fought against Harsha, took place in the initial years of his reign. The Hyderabad plates (19), dated in his third regnal years, describe him as *samara-śatasaṅghaṭṭa-samsakta-paranripati-parājay-ōpalabdha-Paramēśvar-āpara-nāmadhēyah*, testifying not only to the fact that he had by then fought numerous battles but to the fact that he had by then earned the secondary name of *Paramēśvara* which, in the

records of his immediate successors, is, more often than not, specifically attributed to his victory over Harsha—*samara-saṁsakta-sakal-ōttarāpathēśvara-śrī-Harshavardhana-parājay-ōpātta-Paramēśvar-āparanāmadhēyah*. That after his conflict with Harsha, Polekeśi II temporarily cried halt to his war-like pursuits is clearly implied by Ravikirti's allusion, at this point of his narration, to Polekeśi's prosperous reign and his accomplished lordship over the three *mahārāshtrakas* before the poet once again reverts to the subject of his master's military exertions by describing the subjugation of the Kōsala and Kalinga rulers. And from other available indirect epigraphical evidences, which will be discussed below, we may conclude that this peaceful interlude lasted for nearly fifteen years.

The undated Timmapuram plates (25) were issued soon after the Koppāram plates (24) of October, A.D. 631, for in this charter, we find Polekeśi's younger brother Vishṇuvardhana being elevated to the status of *mahārāja* but at the same time cherishing his indebtedness to the former by referring to him as *Satyāśraya-Vallabha-mahārāja*. It may be reasonably concluded that, after the date of the Koppāram plates and before the issue of the Timmapuram plates, which may have been, at the most only a few months later, Vishṇuvardhana was formally installed as the ruler (*mahārāja*) of the major parts of Āndhra conquered by Polekeśi. Vishṇuvardhana came by this great honour by virtue of having taken leading parts in all the battles fought by his elder brother. As early as in A.D. 617, we find him occupying the station of *yuvarāja* and administering the northern parts of the Chalukya empire. When Polekeśi II renewed his warlike activities a decade and a half later, Vishṇuvardhana joined him and must have made his brother's task of subduing Pishtapura and Kauṇāla, one a landfortress and the other a lake-fortress, considerably easy. The Timmapuram plates make a pointed reference to his ability in capturing fortresses on land as well as on water as a result of which he earned the second name of Vishamasiddhi (*sthala-jal-ādi-durga-vishamēshv-api labdhasiddhitvād-Vishamasiddhiḥ*). Polekeśi was quick to reward his brother for his unstinted support and first made him, as known from the Koppāram plates, his official viceroy (*prithvi-yuvarāja*) in the conquered Āndhra territories. Obviously Vishṇuvardhana matched his

illustrious elder brother in kingly qualities, for the Timmāpuram plates describe him as one who by the sharp edge of his own sword humbled all the vassal kings (*sv-āsiddhārā-namita-samasta-maṇḍalaḥ*), as one who was munificent, like the wish-fulfilling-tree, towards the needy (*arthi-jana-nitya-prasnuta-kāmadhēnuḥ*), as one who was like Lord Viṣṇu (Trivikrama) because his valour had the superhuman touch (*lōk-ātiśaya-vikramatayā nara-lōk-Vikramaḥ*), as one who was a great devotee of Viṣṇu (*paramabhāgavataḥ*) and as one who was extremely pious (*parama-brahmanyah*). No wonder Polekēśi recognised these meritorious virtues in his brother and made him his equal by proclaiming him *mahārāja* and by decreeing that his brother's progeny would be members of a newly founded royal dynasty. Viṣṇuvardhana became master of the Āndhra areas he had helped his brother to acquire. The Timmāpuram plates were issued by him from his headquarter at Piṣṭapura which he must have chosen for his capital as king and, in the flush of his elevation, he granted as many as four thousand *nivartanas* of land to as many as forty *brāhmaṇas*. It is not often that we come across such a large field of and being made over to donees through one charter.

Polekēśi II made good use of the long interval of peace which ensued his war with Harsha by devoting his time for the administration of the empire, for bestowing benefactions on his subjects and for rebuilding his war-worn army. His Hyderabad plates (19) were issued on 23rd July, A.D. 613, in the third years of his reign when he had already inflicted defeat upon Harsha and expropriated the sovereign title of *Paramēśvara* from him. The plates state that when, on the date specified, Polekēśi was residing in the capital city of Vātāpī (*Vātāpī-nagarīm-adhishthitaḥ*) he granted, free of all let and hindrance the village of Mākarappi to the brāhmaṇa Jyēshṭhaśarman, of Vāsishṭha-sagōtra and Taittiriya, śākhā, in order to enable him to perform the five great *yāgas* (*pañcha-mahā-yajña-nirvāpaṇārtham*). The five great *yāgas* are the *Brahma-yajña* offering of prayer or recitation of the *Vēdas*, the *Dēva yajña*, burnt sacrifice offered to the gods, *Pitri-yajña* sacrifice offered to the manes, *Manushya* or *Nṛi-yajña*, act of hospitality due to guests and *bhūta-yajña*, oblation of food and other articles to all created beings. Alternatively, the five

great sacrifices are listed in some other inscriptions as *bali*, *charu*, *Vaiśvadēva*, *Agnihōtra* and *havana* or *kriyā*. We have seen above that Kirttivarman had, in his reign, granted land to a *brāhmaṇa* who entertained everyone as a guest. And, it will be clear from the pages to follow that all the Chalukya rulers made such grants to accomplished *brāhmaṇas*. It is likely that these donees, who belonged to the highest rung of the *varṇa* system, having no other means of income, found it increasingly difficult to cling to their expensive religious and social obligations as prescribed by the sacred texts and that the kings of those dynasties which came to rule at the time of and after the revival of the brahmanical faiths in the 4th century A.D. chose, no doubt on the advice of their subordinates and officials, worthy members of the *brāhmaṇa* community on whom they conferred lands and even villages in order to remove the impediments posed by their poverty so that they can continue to abide by sacred injunctions.

His undated Modlimb plates (20) should also be referred to the early of his reign when the memory of his war with Maṅgalēśa for the imperial throne and his acquisition of the title *Paramēśvara* as a result of his victory over Harsha was still green. This charter was issued on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha in an unspecified year to announce the grant, made by Paramēśvara (i.e. Polekēśi II), of the village of Tiyaṛē (Bijapur District) to the *brāhmaṇa* Dēva-gaṇasvāmin of Kāśyapasagōtra in order to enable him to have a tank excavated (*tatāk-ōdyamanē*). The area in question, though of fertile soil, lacked water resources and, as will be seen in the sequel, some of the Chalukya emperors evinced keen interest in the excavation of tanks to augment the meagre rain waters in the dry regions of their empire. His being named only as Paramēśvara in this charter leads us to believe that it was issued immediately after his memorable defeat of Harsha. From Hieun Tsiang's account we gather that Harsha was backed by a number of his subordinate rulers, and all of them must have shared the defeat suffered by him. This must be the reason why, in the Modlimb plates, he is described as *anēka-nṛipati-Paramēśvaraḥ* (supreme lord of many kings) for that was exactly what the great Harsha was.

In the fifth year (A.D. 614-15) Nārāyaṇasvāmin of Kāśyapa-gōtra, a brāhmaṇa from the Tamil country (*Draviḍa-vishaya-vāstavyaḥ*), who had probably migrated to the Koṅkaṇa tract in search of greener pastures, managed to get hold of a genuine Chalukya seal and had a charter (21) concocted according to which he obtained from the emperor an encumbrance-free grant of the village of Pirigipa, in the Rēvatīdvīpa, on the northern bank of the Mahānadi. Though there is nothing unhistorical in the eulogistic portion introducing Polekēśi II, the very irregular formation of the letters and the many orthographical and syntactic errors in the composition more than imply that the charter was not prepared under regular royal patronage and was, on the other hand, a contemporaneous counterfeit. Such instances, in which the motive is generally one of personal gains, are legion in Indian epigraphy and may be taken to highlight the gullibility of the common folk of the rural areas far removed from the centres of administration and rarely visited by official authorities owing to lack of easy accessibility.

Not long after his triumph over Harsha, when Polekēśi got down to the task of administrating his vast empire, he proclaimed his younger brother Kubja-Vishṇuvardhana-Vishamasiddhi as his heir apparent (*yuvarāja*) and placed him in charge of the administration of the north-western and, perhaps the northern peripheral regions of his kingdom. In the eighth regnal year (A.D. 617-18) of his brother Polekēśi's reign, Vishṇuvardhana issued the Sātāra plates (22) its writing clearly betraying Gūrjara influence, from his headquarters at Kurmarathya. The purpose of the charter was to register the perpetual grant, made by the *yuvarāja*, of the holy village of Alandatīrtha (Gulbarga District) to five brāhmaṇa brothers, namely Achalasvāmin, vēdasvāmin, Dēvasvāmin Ādityasvāmin and Nāgakumāra of Ghṛita-Kauśika-sagōtra, who were all of them well versed in the Vēdic lore. The recipients of the gift were expected to perform, in return the five great *yāgas*, *bali* (sacrificial offering of food to certain gods, demi-gods, spirits, etc.), *charu* (oblationary offering of cooked food to gods and manes), *vaiśvadēva* (a religious ceremony to be performed morning and evening involving sacrificial offering of cooked food to all the gods who give the food), *Agnihōtra* (offering oblations

to Agni, the fire-god) and *havana* (offering oblations with fire). Since all these sacrificial rites, which were to be performed allegedly for the good of mankind, involved the use of butter, ghee and grains, brāhmaṇas specialising in these acts were provided with landed properties which were the best and most steady sources of income in those days.

Polekeśī's resounding victories and his benign administration made him famous even beyond the confines of India. According to the Moslem historian Tabari, Khusru II, the king of Persia, received an embassy from the court of Polekeśī in A.D. 625-26 and himself sent a reciprocal embassy to the Chalukya emperor.

Perhaps not long before he set out on his second campaign of conquests, Polekeśī II issued, in A.D. 630, the Lohaner (Nasik District) plates (23) through which he granted the village of Gōviyaṇaka to the brāhmaṇa Dāma-dīkshita of Sāvarni-sagōra, a native of Girinagara (s.a. Girnār, Junagarh District, Gujarat), who had settled down at Lōhanagara (s.a. Lohaner), in order that he may perform the five great *yāgas*. The village was granted along with all the levies which were due to the royal family (*sarva-rājakul-ādēya-sahitaḥ*). It may be gathered from this that a certain percentage of the income accruing to the state was set apart for meeting the expenses of members of the royal household other than the reigning ones. Some Chōḷa inscriptions from Tamilnāḍu make a more specific reference to this when they describe certain plots of land as holdings of the *rāja-kula* (*rājakulam kāṇippaṟru*). In the present instance, however, it appears that a portion of the produce from the village was earmarked for members of the *rājakula* until Polekeśī waived it in favour of Dāma-dīkshita.

For ought we know, issuing the Lohaner plates may have been the last formal act of Polekeśī II before he set out on his eastern and southern expeditions. For, on 10th October, A.D. 631, in the twentyfirst year of his reign we find his presence (24) in the newly conquered Karma-rāshṭra (northern portion of Nellore District and a part of the Guntur District). From Vātāpi Polekeśī must have first marched in full force upto the borders of Kōsala Kaliṅga whose rulers appear to have acknowledged his supremacy without a fight forcing

Ravikirtti to resort to mere rhetorics in describing his master's triumph over them. As per Ravikirtti's itinerary (26), Polekēśi's next field of action lay in the Āndhara country where the subjugation and capture of the fort of Pishtapura (East Godavari District) and the conquest of the Kauṇāla region (around the Kollēru lake between the rivers Gōdāvari and Krishṇā), needed much exertion on his part.

By the middle of fall, A.D. 631, Polekēśi, with the active assistance rendered by his brother Kubja Vishṇuvardhana, had succeeded in capturing and consolidating his hold on a large parts of western Āndhra. Since those tracts lay adjacent to his own permanent possessions, he decided, for reasons of political strategy, to perpetuate his control over them by rebuilding them into a viable administrative unit and placing them under the rule of his younger brother Kubja Vishṇuvardhana who was also given the right to bequeath that newly created kingdom to his progeny. We gather all this information from the Kopparam plates (24) issued by Polekēśi II on the 10th of October, A.D. 631, registering the grant, made by him, of a field of eight hundred (*nivartanas*) in the village of Irbuli (Guntur District) in Karma-rāshṭra to the brahmaṇa Aīlaśarman of Śāṇḍilyāyana-gōtra and Āpastamba-sūtra, a resident of Mūganūr (Nellore District). The executor of the grant (*ājñapti*) was Pṛithviduvarāja who by virtue of victories won in many battles, had conquered enemy territory (*vipaksha-maṇḍalaṁ nirjitva*) and had obtained the same for (his own and) his progeny's sway. The Sanskrit word *yuvarāja* is often times mentioned in the vernacular inscriptions as *duvarāja* and *dugarāja*. Since Vishṇuvardhana appears in the Sātāra plates (22) of A.D. 617-18 as Polekēśi's *yuvarāja*, the *Pṛithvi-duvarāja* of the present charter can be safely identified with him. It is a well known fact of South Indian history that Vishṇuvardhana started a new line of Chālukya kings who ruled over Vēṅgī kingdom for nearly five centuries thence. It is even possible that the date of the Kopparam plates marks the day on which Vishṇuvardhana was proclaimed ruler of the Vēṅgī kingdom.

The newly anointed ruler of Vēṅgī, who was still ranked only as a *yuvarāja*, obviously because the conquest of that territory was still fresh and perhaps incomplete, is once designated as *ājñapti* and again as *āṇatti*. These two words give us an inkling of the history

of the development of languages in that period which was an age of innovations. The word *ājñapti* is a technical term standing for 'the executor of a grant', 'one who communicates, at the order of the king, details about a land grant to local officers' and is, probably the same as *dūtaka* figuring in inscriptions in a similar capacity. Sanskrit *ājñapti* occurs in its *tadbhava* form as *āñatti* and *āñati* in the Dravidian inscriptions. In the case of the Koppāram charter, both the Sanskrit and vernacular forms are found used.

The narrative in the Aihole inscription (26) gives raise to the belief that Polekēśi's south-ward thrust was in the continuation of his north-eastern and eastern campaigns. He invaded the Pallava empire in force and is credited with having driven the defending Pallava emperor into the safe confines of the Kāñchi fort. He marched his forces further deep and made the Pallavas appear weak and helpless in the eyes of their gleeful Chōḷa, Pāṇḍya and Kēraḷa contemporaries.

Having thus humiliated the Pallavas, Ravikirtti tells us, Polekēśi II, the conqueror of all the quarters, triumphantly re-entered Vātāpi and was, in A.D.634-35, the date of the Aihole inscription, administering his vast empire in peace.

As we have stated above, one conclusion that may be reasonably drawn from Ravikirtti's diction is that the subjugation of the Kōsala, Kāliṅga, Piṣṭapura and Kauṇāla tracts and his victorious march into the Tamil country were only two continuous stages of a single campaign. The dates and other details pertaining to Polekēśi II's Āndhra and Pallava expeditions have for long remained subjects of controversy and, without meaning to add to the confusion in the least, we venture to offer here a critical re-appraisal of Polekēśi's incursion into the Āndhra and Pallava domains.

It is held, for no valid reason, by almost all the historians who have written on the subject, that Polekēśi II had twice invaded the Pallava empire, once during the reign of Mahēndravarmān I (A.D. 600-30) and again during the reign of the latter's son Narasiṃhavarman I (A.D. 630-68). According to them, the Pallava emperor who shut himself up within the Kāñchi fort in order to escape the wrath of Polekēśi II is to be identified with Mahēndravarmān I who, they say, bore the brunt of the so-called first expedition; and they hold

the view that the battles of Maṇimaṅgala, Pariyaḷa and Sūramāra, in which Narasimhavarman I claims to have defeated Polekēśi II, were fought during the latter's second invasion whereby he invited upon himself and his empire terrible retribution in the form of a retaliatory and destructive Pallava invasion. The only justification for this theory, a flimsy one at that, offered by historians is a rather general and vague claim made for Mahēndravarmān I, in the Kaśākkudi plates of Nandivarman Pallavamalla, that he had defeated all his enemies in a battle fought at Paḷḷalūr, a place very close to Kāñchīpuram. Their argument that no ruler, other than Polekēśin II was powerful enough to penetrate the Pallava defences and offer battle in the vicinity of Kāñchīpuram is, to say the least, presumptuous.

On the other hand, applying the rule of *sāmipy-ānvaya* to the narrative sequence of the Aihole inscription, we do find that Polekēśi II's Pallava expedition, in which he forced the Pallava emperor to seek refuge within the walls of the Kāñchī fort, could not have taken place long before A.D. 634-35, when he after his triumphant re-entry into Vātāpi, was administering his empire in peace. The Aihole inscription (26), as a matter of fact, refers to Polekēśi's Pallava conquest and his re-entry into Vātāpi in the following two successive stanzas :

*Chōḷa-Kēraḷa-Pāṇḍyānām yō-bhūt-tatra maharddhayē/
Pallav-āṇika-nihāra tubin-ētara-dīdhitih||
Utsāha-prabhu-mantra-śakti-sahitē yasmin-samastā diśō
jitvā bhūmi-patīn-visṛijya-mahitān-ārādhyā dēva-dvijān/
Vātāpīm nagarīm praviśya nagarīm-ēkām-iv-ōrvīm-imām
chañchan-nīradhi-nīla-nīra-parikhām Satyāśrayē śāsati||*

‘Having promoted the interests of the Chōḷa, Kēraḷa and Pāṇḍya rulers by dissolving the Pallava army even as the hot-rayed sun dissolves hoar-frost, he (i.e. Polekēśi II), who was endowed with the three royal prerequisites, having conquered all the quarters, having dismissed all the kings full of honours and having done homage to gods and brāhmaṇas, entered the city of Vātāpi and is ruling over the earth as if it is but one city’.

On the strength of the above evidence we would like to put our view that Polekēśi II invaded the Pallava country only once, and that too not long before A.D. 634-35, the date of the Aihole inscription, not during the reign of Mahēndravarmān I but when his son Narasimhavarman I was still a fresh incumbent of the Pallava throne and that Polekēśi II successfully led his forces upto the Pallava capital and forced the inexperienced defender to shut himself up inside the fort. The battle of Maṇimaṅgala, in which victory is claimed for the Pallavas by the Pallavas (and Maṇimaṅgala is a place not far removed from Kāñchī) must have been one of the less futile attempts Narasimhavarman to ward off the danger of complete capitulation to the invading Chalukya forces.

We may, therefore, tentatively consider Polekēśi II's seige of Kāñchī as having taken place in A.D. 632-33 and this leads us to the problems of dating his military presence in the Āndhra country, his Koppāram plates (24), issued in October, A.D. 631, while stating that Viṣṇuvardhana had secured the hereditary possession of the throne of the Āndhra country, still refer to him as Pṛithvī-yuvarāja, making it quite clear that the subjugation of the Āndhra region was at that time a fresh achievement. On the other hand, taking the date of the Māruṭūra grant (13) issued on the occasion of a solar eclipse in Jyēshṭha in the eighth year of the reign of Satyāśraya-Pṛithvī-vallabha, who is stated therein to have just then captured Piṣṭapura, to fall in May, A.D. 616, one scholar has opined that Piṣṭapura and therefore, the Āndhra country had been conquered by Polekēśi II as early as in May, A.D. 616. But, as we have shown above, the Māruṭūra grant should properly be assigned to the reign of Maṅgalēśa and hence should be taken to provide evidence of the fact that, in the course of military expeditions conducted by him to boost up the prestige of Chalukya hegemony Maṅgalēśa had captured Piṣṭapura in May, 598 or April, A.D. 599. Polekēśi II's Āndhra and Pallava expeditions should, therefore, be deemed to have taken place between the years A.D. 630 and 634 as is borne out by the Koppāram plates (24) and the Aihole inscription (26).

Being no less than Polekēśi II in grit and martial spirit, Narasimhavarman I was stung to the deep by the successful invasion

carried out by the former and must have bided his time for wreaking vengeance. After over a decade of careful preparations, he marched his forces against Polekēśi II whose turn it was now to try to prevent total capitulation. Two bloody battles fought at Pariyaḷa in the Kurnool and Sūramāra in the Anantapur regions went against the Chalukyas and the victorious Narasimhavarman did a more thorough job of his expedition, than Polekēśi II, by reducing and taking Vātāpi and also, perhaps, by putting an end to the life of his arch-enemy.

For the years between A.D. 630, in which the Lohaner plates (23) were issued and A.D. 634-35 in which the famous Aihole inscription (26) was written, we have no dated records of Polekēśi II, barring the Koppāram plates which were obviously issued during a breather between his Andhra and Tamilnāḍu campaigns. In all probability Polekēśi had been kept so busy by the demanding wars of conquest that he did not have time to bestow his attention on the affairs of the state, including making grants through charters. Soon after his return from the last phase of his conquests, the Aihole *praśasti* was composed by Ravikīrtti and engraved on a stone slab which is now found built into the wall of the Mēguṭi temple at Aihole. Though Polekēśi II was himself a great devotee of Viṣṇu, for the Lohaner plates (23) describe him as *paramabhāgavata*, he was generous towards other religions and he must have helped in a big way his confidant and court-poet Ravikīrtti, a devout Jaina, in the construction of the Jinēndra-bhavan, a stone temple, at Aihole. That is why Ravikīrtti felt equally gratified over two of his achievements, the construction of the Jaina temple and the composition and inscription of his excellent *praśasti* in praise of his imperial patron. Incidentally, the Aihole *praśasti* contains the latest known date (A.D. 634-35) for Polekēśi II though we know for certain, through circumstantial evidence, that he had continued to reign for seven or eight more years.

The undated Tumbeyanūru grant (27), the undated Chiplūṇ (Ratnagiri District) plates (28) and the undated Lakshmēśvar stone inscription (29), which is a 10th century copy of an earlier charter, all belong, in all probability, to this last phase of Polekēśi's reign,

for their very diction is suggestive of a situation in which Polekēśī II must have felt that all the missions of his career had been successfully accomplished.

The Tumbeyanūru plates (27) say that like the sun he had pervaded the whole world with his brilliance; like Guha (i.e. Skanda) he had brushed aside all his enemies by his own strength, and like Nārāyaṇa (in his Boar incarnation) he bore the burden of the entire world. This is certainly description of an emperor who was at the zenith of his career. He is not mentioned in the plates by his name but is referred to as *Satyāśraya-Śrī-prithvivallabha-mahārājādhirāja-paramēśvaraḥ*. The charter registers the royal grant of the *uñchha-vṛitti* of the village Tumbeyanūr along with the *uñchha-vṛitti* of the hamlet Molaḷakanru to the brāhmaṇa Māvu-Gaṇasvāmin of Ātrēya-gōtra and Āpastamba-sūtra. By *uñchha-vṛitti* is meant 'gleaning rights' which again means that the donee was given the privilege of gathering after harvest whatever ears of corn would have been left on the fields by the reapers. The fields thus set apart in the villages of Tumbeyanūru and Molaḷakanru are referred to as *pannasa*, an interesting *tadbhava* developed in Karnataka and Āndhra during the Chalukya period. From quite a few references occurring in the early Kadamba and Chalukya inscriptions we are able to gather that the extent of the plots of lands granted was usually either *pañchāśat* (50) or *pañchavimśati* (25) or *viṃśali* (20) *nivartanas*. Even in Sanskrit charters we find gift-lands being merely mentioned as *pañchāśat* and *viṃśati* without the word *nivarttana* being used. This standardisation of the extent of the gift lands led to the formation, early in the Chalukya period, of the *tadbhavas* *pannāsa*, *pannasa* and *pannasu* from *pañchāśat* and *pannavisa* from *pañchavimśati*; of rarer but equally early occurrence is *visa* from *viṃśati*. These *tadbhavas* did not carry with them any numerical semblance and were generally used to connote any gift-land, whatever its extent. Thus we find in later inscriptions a *pannasa* or *pannavisa* (i.e. gift-land) of the extent of so many *mattars* (a land measure which replaced *nivarttana*) being granted. That this transformation had started even in the Chalukya period itself is borne out by the use of the term *pannasa* in the Tumbeyanūru charter (27)

under discussion and of the term *visa* in the cave inscription of Maṅgalēśa.

Like the Tumbeyanūru plates (27), the undated Chiplūṇ plates also speak of Polekēśi II in a manner suggestive of a ruler who was at the zenith of his career as emperor. The goddess of fortune, known for her fickle-mindness, was so constantly clinging to him that all the sandal-wood oil he had besmeared on his body was getting rubbed off (*samanushtitha-patidēvatā-vrata-Kamalālayā-vipulapayōdhara-vilupta-chandan-ālēpaḥ*); his fame was being sung in the palace of the lord of the gods (Indra) by the *kinnaris* who had gone thither (*surēndra-mandira-gata-kinnar-āṅganā-pragiyamāna-vimala-kīrtiḥ*); when he was seated on his rutting elephant, the head of which is bathed with the blood drawn from the hearts of his enemies, he looked verily like the ruddy rising sun (*sva-radana-kuliśa-vibhinna-ripu-hṛday-ōdgata-rudhira-dhārā-snapita-mastaka-matta-mātaṅg-ōdaya-parvata-taruṇa-raviḥ*); he had put down all evil men (*nigrihīta-taruṇa-janaḥ*); he received learned people with hospitality (*parigrihīta-vidvat-sakhaḥ*); he conferred favours upon his servants (*anugrihīta-bhṛitya-vargaḥ*); he had lit up the battle fields with the fire rising out of the tusks of the enemy kings when he split them with his sword (*kara-gata-khaḍg-ōtkṛitta-paranṛipa-danti-dant-ōtthita-vahni-śikh-ōddīpita-rana-bhūmiḥ*); he was the cynosure of the darting eyes of young damsels (*vara-yuvati-nayana-sāyak-aika-lakshaḥ*); his keen intellect was capable of examining the essence of the meaning of various sciences (*vividha-śāstr-ārtha-tattva-vichāra-kshama-sūkshma-buddhiḥ*); he was the ornament of the Chalukya family and the abode of all virtues; he had run short of enemies (*ripu-daridraḥ*) and his name was Satyāśraya. Having trampled upon his enemies, he had taught the flirtatious goddess of fortune a lesson in fidelity :

*yaḥ padam nyasya śatrūṇām
śauryēṇ-ōpari pārthivaḥ
prakṛityā puṁśchalim Lakshmiṁ
satī-vratam-aśikshayat*

The above torrents of praise suit an emperor best in the context of his having fulfilled all his aspirations. The Chiplūṇ charter (28),

registers the grant, by the Sēndraka ruler Srīvallabha-Sēnānandarāja, of the village of Āmraṇṭavaka and, in addition, twenty *nivarttanās* of land, to the *brāhmaṇa* Mahēśvara of Ātrēya-sagōtra. The donor is described as the maternal uncle (*mātula*) of Polekēśī II from which the obvious conclusion is that Kīrttivarman had married a Sēndraka princess. She was, in all probability, Polekēśī's mother.

While Polekēśī II was a *parama-bhāgavata*, his Sēndraka uncle was a great devotee of Śiva (*parama-māhēśvaraḥ*) which again shows that one's religious affiliation depended largely on one's personal conviction in those days. Besides, he was familiar with the right and wrong ways of honourable men and had spread the aura of his fame, born out of his great valour, the world over.

The Lakshmēśvar stone inscription (28), which as has been stated above is, in all probability, a tenth century copy of a seventh century copper plate inscription, strangely enough, refers to Polekēśī II by his pre-coronation name of Eṇeyamma, but describes him, in the style of Ravikīrtti, in the fullness of his emperorship, also naming him as Satyāśraya-mahārāja and Śrīvallabha.

śāsat-īmām samudr-āntām vasudhām vasudhādhipe
Satyāśraya-mahārājē rājat-satya samanvitē

'while the lord of the earth, the truthful Satyāśraya-mahārāja was ruling over this earth'. The inscription registers the grant made by Durga-śakti of the Sēndraka family, of 500 *nivarttanās* of land to the *chaitya* of Śaṅkha-Jinēndra. The genealogy of Durga-śakti, as given in the inscription, is as follows :

After many rulers

|
Vijayaśakti
|
Kundaśakti
|
Durgaśakti

It will be shown in the sequel that many Sēndraka chieftains figure in charters and lithic records as feudatories, allies and relations of the

Vātāpī Chalukyas and not all of them appear to have belonged to one family. There seem to have been at least two collateral families whose members had names ending in *śakti* and a third Sendrāka family had its members' names ending in *rāja*, without the *śakti* suffix.

Apart from the fact that we are separated from Polekēśī II by thirteen long and eventful centuries, the rather shocking and bloody manner of his accession, the hectic and prolonged military expeditions he led and the mysterious end he met with, all these would have added an aura of unique romance to his personality had it not been for the fact that the virtues and vices he manifested are also to be found, in equal measures, in the personalities of his illustrious imperial contemporaries on the Indian scene. In short, if Polekēśī II was an extraordinary man and ruler, and he certainly was such, so were his imperial Indian contemporaries. And there lies the difficulty in trying to assess the personality and character of a man who, by his postures, deeds and achievements, had so totally merged with the imperial image of his times.

If an objective researcher is asked to portray on the wide canvas of history the personality of Polekēśī II in all its dimensions, what features characteristic of that human colossus should he transfuse from his knowledge into that portrait? If we are to believe all the praises that are showered upon him by his contemporaries and successors we cannot but conclude that, in his own way, Polekēśī II too was a bundle of contradictions, those very contradictions contributing to his greatness as an emperor. In an objective portrayal, should his face betray the sense of forlorn despair on losing his imperial legacy, or, should it reflect the grit and determination with which he gained the throne and then entered field after field of battle, at the head of his infantry, cavalry and elephant corps, playing havoc in the enemy ranks? Should his eyes shine with the glint of hope which he must have entertained, of conquering all the quarters, when he was piling victory upon victory or, should they be blurred by the despair and agony he must have felt at the moment of his final defeat when the entire superstructure of the vast empire he had fought to build tumbled down before his weary eyes? Should

his hand be depicted as carrying the sword stained with the blood of his own uncle and innumerable other victims, or, should it be shown pouring the waters of libation for the many munificent grants he had made ? Polekēśī II was in fact a man of many parts—the refuge of truth (*Satyāśrayaḥ*), the lord of the earth (*Prithvī-vallabhaḥ*), the supreme lord (*Paramēśvaraḥ*), a king (*Mahārājaḥ*), king of kings (*Mahārājādhirājaḥ*), a chastiser of powerful enemy kings (*pradhvasta-prabala-śatru-mahimā*), propitiated by lesser powers (*pratāpātiśay-ōpanata-samagra-sāmanta-maṇḍalaḥ*), destroyer of the wicked (*nigrihīta-dushta-janaḥ*), patron of the learned (*parigrihīta-vidvat-sakhaḥ*), benevolent to his servants (*anugrihīta-bhṛitya-vargaḥ*), well-served by his legions (*bhṛitya-labdha-prasādaḥ*), of unquestioned authority (*apratihatājñāḥ*), an abode of all virtues (*sarva-sadg-uṇāśrayaḥ*), a great devotee of the lord Viṣṇu (*parama-bhāgavataḥ*) a servant of the gods, brāhmaṇas and teachers (*dēva-dvīja-guru-suśrūshaparaḥ*), Lord of the entire Deccan (*Dakṣiṇāpatha-prithivyāḥ-svāmī*) and, because of all these and many other laudable qualities, lofty as the Himalayas (*Himāchalānukārī*). If we are asked to do the impossible, namely to portray in all its dimensions, the personality of Polekēśī II, we can do no better than borrow the following words of his 12th century admirers :

*Jētur-ddiśām vijīta-Harsha-mahānṛipasya
dātur-manōratha-śāt-ādhikam-arthoyadbhyaḥ |
saty-ādi-sarva-guṇa-ratna-gaṇ-ākarasya
Satyāśrayatvam-upalakṣaṇam-ēva yasya //*

‘For him who was the conqueror of all the quarters, who had defeated the great king Harsha, who had granted generously to the supplicants and who was the repository of all good qualities including truth, the designation Satyāśraya was put a synecdoche’.

The Chinese traveller Hieun Tsang, who had come from a far distance and had seen Polekēśī II at close quarters, had said of him : ‘He is of the race of Tsa-ti-li (*kshatriya*); his name is Pu-lo-ki-she; his ideas are large and profound and he extends widely his sympathy and benefactions. His subjects serve him with perfect self-devotion.’

Hieun Tsang had gathered information that the Chalukya

empire was six thousand *Li* (1,200 miles) in circuit and that the capital city towards the west was near a large river and its circumference was thirty *Li*. Describing the country and its people, he further says 'The soil is rich and fertile and produces abundance of grain. The climate is warm; the manners are simple and honest. The natives are tall, and haughty and supercilious in character. Whoever does them a service may count on their gratitude; but he that offends them will not escape their revenge. If any one insults them, they will risk their lives to wipe out that 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 puts on 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 corporeally they make him wear woman's clothes, and by that, force him to sacrifice his own life. The state maintains a body of dauntless champions to the number of several hundreds. Each time they prepare for combat they drink wine to intoxicate them, and then one of these men, spear in hand, will defy ten thousand enemies. Whenever the army commences a campaign these braves march in the van to the sound of the drum. Besides, they intoxicate many hundreds of naturally fierce elephants. At the time of their coming to blows they drink also strong liquor. They run in a body, trampling every thing under their feet. No enemy can stand before them. The king, proud of possessing these men and elephants, despises and slights the neighbouring kingdoms'.

By the slight he offered to the Pallavas Polekēśi II brought ruin upon himself but the events which followed his fall served to prove Hieun Tsang right in his observation that any one who offended the Chalukyas 'will not escape their revenge'.

Like those of his predecessors the reign of Polekēśi II also must have witnessed brisk architectural activities in some of their major cultural centres in the Karnataka and Āndhra territories. The upper temple (*Mēguḍi*) at Aihole, built by Polekēśi's court poet Ravikīrtti, and consecrated in A.D. 634-35, and dedicated to the Jina, is of

siderable importance for architectural studies in that it happens to be the earliest precisely datable structural temple of the Vātāpi Chalukyas. If other temples had been built during his reign either at Bādāmi or at Aihole, as they certainly must have been, we have no clinching epigraphical evidence to identify such of them. All the Chalukya temples, in such important centres as Bādāmi, Paṭṭadakal, Aihole and Alampur, had been, during the successive periods of the Rāshtrakūṭas and Kalyāṇa Chalukyas, renovated or repaired, with additions and alterations, and with replacements of damaged members with imitations of the originals or with those prepared in accordance with current trends, thus disturbing, in varying degrees, the integral shape, plan and pattern of the original structures. It cannot be gainsaid, therefore, that any stylistic dating of those temples will have to be tentative in the extreme and that differences of scholarly opinion are bound to persist in the absence of clinching epigraphical data.

The temple of Lāḍkhān may be cited here as an instance. Scholars variously date this temple, on the same stylistic grounds, either to the last quarter of the 6th century or to the end of the 7th or the beginning of the 8th century or to some uncertain time in between these extremes. According to Cousens the temple got the name of Lāḍkhān from a Muslim *bābā* who had chosen that temple for his residence 'not long ago'. This, to say the least, is mere hearsay. It is not at all clear as to whether the *bābā*, by virtue of his residence in that temple, got the name of Lāḍkhān-bābā or whether, by virtue of Lāḍkhān-bābā living there, the nameless temple got that name. That temple, taken in its entirety, poses many problems of non-conformity with other known Chalukya temples. As least some of its overbearing features seem to reflect an unknown tradition imported from elsewhere. We know that the Vātāpi Chalukyas were intimately associated with Lāṭa (southern Gujarat), more so from the time of Polekēśī II, and that they had established their own government there. It is rather unfortunate that no architectural monuments assignable to the Chalukya period have been discovered in the Lāṭa region. Our contention is that Lāḍ of Lāḍkhān has to do with Lāṭa and that the temple in question may have

been built by a Chalukya prince of Lāṭa, introducing in that process quite a few architectural features indigenous to the Lāṭa region. Even if the above hypothesis were right, all that can be said about the date of the Lāḍkhān temple is that it may have been built, more likely, sometime during the reign of Polekēśi II or his son Vikramāditya I or his son Vinayāditya who, among all the Chālukya rulers, had more to do with Lāṭa.

At least one temple from the Andhra region, the Śivanandīśvara temple at Kaḍamara Kālava may be assigned to the reign of Polēkēśi II on circumstantial evidence of a tentative nature. Along the left, back and right sides of the temple are found installed a number of miniature monolithic shrines and, one of them, behind the temple, is an inscribed one. The terse, two-line inscription (30) reads :

1. *śrī-Satyāśraya-Bhaṭārārā*
2. *koṇṇun-Chakrasumānantu*

‘Chakrasumāna, the son of the illustrious emperor Satyāśraya’.

The writing is in 7th century Telugu-Kannaḍa characters. Though all the Chalukya rulers had the epithet of *Sātyāśraya*, Polekēśi II alone among them had the privilege of using it as his second name (*Satyāśrayavtvam-upalakshaṇam-ēva-yasya*). We may, therefore, safely identify the Satyāśraya of the miniature shrine inscription with Polēkēśi II. Chakrasumāna was obviously a hitherto unknown son of that emperor and may have died young. The miniature shrines were all, in all probability, commemorative in nature. Since one of them commemorates Polekēśi II’s son, we may reasonably suppose that the Śivanandīśvara temple was built by Polekēśi II. This is further strengthened by the presence in that temple precinct of a badly worn-out stone inscription recording the grant of lands to a number of brāhmaṇas by Vikramāditya I on the 5th day of the bright fortnight of Kārttika in the 8th year of his reign.

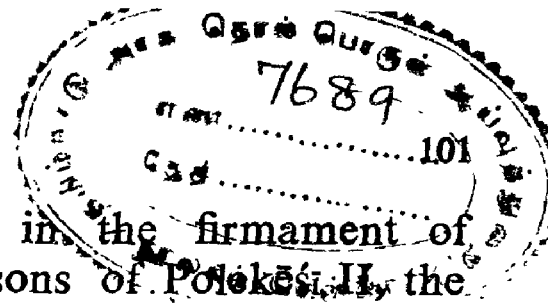
The above suggestion does not preclude another possibility, viz., that Polekēśi II had himself chosen and earmarked the site for setting

memorial temples and shrines for himself and his immediate family members. In that case, the Śivanandīśvara temple may have been built by Vikramāditya I in the early years of his reign. At any rate, the presence of so many miniature shrines at the site does point to the Śivanandīśvara temple being of a commemorative nature.

THE FIRST ECLIPSE

It is an irony of history that Polekēśi II, the events of whose reign are so well elucidated by contemporaneous epigraphical records, makes his exit from the political arena in a shroud of mystery. When the victorious Pallava forces occupied the Chalukya capital of Vātāpi, the lower foundation inscription of the city's fortress, got engraved by Polekēśi I in A.D. 543, was, in all probability, deliberately damaged beyond easy recognition by the vengeful victors and, instead, on the same historic boulder, immediately above the damaged inscription, was engraved, in becoming Grantha characters and in Sanskrit, an inscription of the conqueror, *Vātāpi-koṇḍa* Narasimhavarman. Since this Pallava inscription refers itself to the thirteenth years of Narasimhavarman's reign which falls in A.D. 642-43, it is obvious that the defeat of Polekēśi II occurred in that period. Since no inscriptions of Polekēśi II dated subsequent to this year have come to light, it is generally believed in scholarly circles that this Pallava conquest had brought about not only his rout but his death as well. From the date made available by the dated charters of Polekēśi II's son and successors Vikramāditya I we know for certain that the latter started reckoning the commencement of his reign from some date falling in A.D. 654-55. This leaves us with an interregnum of nearly thirteen years, a period for which we do not have tangible information on the goings on in the Chalukya empire. The absence of any Pallava inscription other than the boulder inscription of Narasimhavarman's thirteenth regnal year, alluded to above, may be taken to indicate that the conquerors either did not or could not establish a lasting foot-hold in Chalukya territory.

Lack of sufficient information notwithstanding, the thirteen years' interregnum is not a totally dark period but should, on the other



hand, be viewed only as a partial eclipse in the firmament of Chalukya hegemony. Of the four known sons of Polekēśi II, the youngest, Dharāśraya Jayasimhavaram does not concern us in the present context since he was drafted for the throne of Gujarat subsequently. This leaves us with Ādityavarman, the eldest son, Chandrāditya, the second son and Vikramāditya I, the third son. Polekēśi II did not die without naming his successor. A recently discovered incomplete Sanskrit inscription (31) from Aihole, engraved in characters similar to those of the famous epigraphical composition of Ravikirti from the same place, specifically refers to Vikramāditya (I) as *Yuvarāja*, the 'heir-apparent'. Since it speaks of an earlier king in the present tense and then describes Vikramāditya as *Yuvarāja* and as partaking of the wealth, the earth and the pride (of the Chalukyas) by his subservience at his father's feet (*tat-pāda-padm-ōpāśraya-prasād-opāṭṭa-śrīr-mahī-māna-bhāgi*), we may safely conclude that the inscription actually belongs to the reign of Polekēśi II and that he had preferred Vikramāditya II to his other two elder sons and had also proclaimed him as his successor. In the wake of the retaliatory Pallava invasion and the end of Polekēśi II's reign, however, anyone who desired to succeed that famous emperor had to exert himself tremendously; and, besides Vikramāditya, his elder brother Ādityavarman appears to have tried his luck at this. In gross violation of his father's nomination, Ādityavarman, who was perhaps at that time in the Kurnool region of the Āndhra country ostensibly for administrative reasons, proclaimed himself as the rightful successor of his fallen father. If, as we had suggested above, the Śivanandīśvara temple at Kaḍamara-Kālava was built in Polekēśi II's memory, it is even possible that he had met with his end in that region, in one of the battles fought against the Pallava aggressors. Perhaps Ādityavarman was, on that sad occasion, with his father and this may explain how he came to issue his only known copper plate inscription (32), referring itself to the very first year of his reign, in the Kurnool region. Perhaps quite soon after he proclaimed himself emperor, more in order to be the first to prefer his claim than because he had really inherited his father's imperial possessions, he issued a charter registering a grant of livelihood to two needy *brāhmaṇa*

brothers. This charter is dated in the very first year of his reign but since it does not quote the Śaka year, its date cannot be verified, though we may reasonably suppose that it must have been soon after his father's death. In his charter Ādityavarman makes the tall claim that he, the dear son (*priya tanayah*) of Satyāśraya (i.e. Polekēśi II), had established supreme sovereignty over all the territories of the world which had been overrun by his own strength of arm and his prowess (*sva-bhuja-bala-parākram-ākrānta-sakala-mahimaṇḍal-adhirājyah*). In the light of Vikramāditya's service as *Yuvarāja* during the lifetime of his father, and in view of the fact that Vikramāditya himself felt safe to declare himself as emperor only in A.D. 654-55, we may rightly dismiss Ādityavarman's solitary claim as mere hyperbole. His claim must have gone unchallenged firstly because he was the eldest son of the late emperor, secondly because Vikramāditya (I) had not by then consolidated his own position and thirdly because the Pallavas were not any more there to offer resistance. We have no means of knowing the actual duration of Ādityavarman's dubious emperorship. He does not appear to have survived long and, sometime before the advent of Vikramāditya (I) as the effective successor of Polekēśi II, Ādityavarman's son Abhinavāditya somehow managed to proclaim himself as the successor-emperor of his father from somewhere in Chitradurga-Bellary region. We may assign his solitary copper plate inscription (33), undated and recording the royal gift of a village to an accomplished brāhmaṇa to the period of the interregnum, for such an adventurous claim would not have been possible after the full-fledged raise of Vikramāditya in A.D. 654-55.

That the reigns of Ādityavarman and Abhinavāditya did not enjoy the official sanction of the Chalukya hierarchy is amply proved by a study of the genealogical accounts given in their charters from the time of Vikramāditya I onwards. The Chalukyas were wont to avoid any reference to those who had pretensions to the imperial throne but were not fightful heirs. Maṅgalēśa, whose treachery is so well recorded in the Aihole inscription of Polekēśi II and who did have a very successful reign as a regent-king, and was condemned and killed for trying to usurp the throne from the main line of successors, is deliberately omitted in the genealogical narratives of

the Chalukya charters from the time of Polekēśī II himself. That the Western Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa include his name in their genealogical accounts of their Vātāpi predecessors only goes to show that they had preserved in their archives all the palace records of the latter including the officially tabooed information of Maṅgalēśa's misadventure. It is obviously from the same palace records of the Vātāpi Chalukyas that the Kalyāṇa Chālukya ruler Sōmēśvara III, the author of *Vikramāṇ-kābhyudayam*, and the composers of some of the official epigraphical texts of Kalyāṇa Chalukya inscriptions culled out information of sorts which, by the very nature of its contradiction of known historical facts, amply reflects the confusion which ensued the defeat of Polekēśī II in the Chalukya empire. For, some of the Kalyāṇa Chālukya charters do mention Ādityavarman as the son of Polekēśī II but commit the palpable mistake of making him the father of Vikramāditya I. However, they contain no reference whatsoever to Ādityavarman's son Abhinavāditya in their genealogical drafts.

One more epigraphical record (34), a stone inscription from Araḷihonda in the Kalghatgi Taluk of Dharwar District, also probably belongs to this ecliptic interlude. This brief Kannaḍa record, undated but engraved in Kannaḍa characters and language of the 7th century A.D., registers the confirmation, by Eṇeva-Konneṇeyaṅgaḷ, of the gift of a piece of land made by Kaṇṇaśakti-arasa while Piṭṭi-amman was ruling over the earth (*prithuvī-rājyam keye*). The ruler's name Piṭṭi-amman is obviously the colloquial or vernacular form of Sanskrit Prithivivarman; his being described as ruling over the earth does endow him with considerable royal status even in the absence of any other sovereign epithets and titles. Though we do not know for certain the name of the family to which he belonged, in view of Kaṇṇaśakti-arasa being mentioned in a subordinate capacity and in view of our knowledge that Sēndrakas, whose names had *śakti*-endings, were traditional allies of the Chalukyas, Piṭṭi-amman may be considered as a scion of that imperial family though his place in their genealogical tree is not known. He may even have been yet another son of Polekēśī II. In the chaotic conditions which ensued the Pallava invasion and subsequent withdrawal, he perhaps established himself in the Dharwar region though he was not in a position to lay claims to rightful succession of the Chalukya empire and regalia.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE GREAT VENDICATION

In the midst of the empire-wide confusion created by the Pallava invasion and no doubt aggravated by the conflicting counterclaims of his brother and nephew and recalcitrant scions and feudatories, Polekēśi II's chosen heir-apparent Vikramāditya bided his day of ultimate triumph, obviously making hectic efforts, astride his gallant steed Chitrakaṇṭha, to regain inch by inch all the imperial possessions of his great father. To rebuild upon ruins is more difficult than to build anew. But Vikramāditya had an edge over the rival claimants in that he had been chosen as the next emperor by his father which must have added, in the eyes of Chalukya subjects, immense credibility to his imperial aspirations. It stands to the credit of Vikramāditya, as a strategist and as a statesman, that, unlike his rather rash brother and nephew, he proclaimed himself emperor only after he had accomplished the onerous task of putting the pieces of the shattered core of the Chalukya empire together once again.

It is not known for certain whether, in the course of his ceaseless efforts to regain the Chalukya throne for his family, Vikramāditya had to join issue with his brother Ādityavarman and the latter's son Abhinavāditya. A badly composed and equally badly engraved charter (37) of Vikramāditya I from Kurnool, which is undated, makes a significant departure from the more common eulogy when it says that he had achieved supreme mastery over all the regions of the earth by vanquishing all his rival kinsmen while astride his war-horse Chitrakaṇṭha (*api ch-aikēn-aiva Chitrakaṇṭh-ākhyā divy-āśvēna sarvvān-dāyādān-vijitva sakala-mahīmaṇḍal-ādhirājyaḥ*). Fleet, who had as a rule viewed with suspicion inscriptions with bad language and bad calligraphy, expressed 'considerable doubt as to the authenticity of this grant'. Significantly

enough, however, he further observed "The seal, however, is a genuine one; and the characters, though slovenly, are of the standard of about the period to which the grant refers itself. The grant may be spurious, but it seems possible that these plates were engraved not long after the time of the grant, to replace an original set of plates which had been damaged and rendered useless,—that they were copied very carelessly from the original plates,—and that they were attached to the original ring and seal, which had escaped injury". At any rate, whether the charter, as it is available now, is only a copy of an earlier original issue or is itself the original one, there is no gainsaying the fact that, nonconformity notwithstanding, its text does not contain any unhistorical statement. It is therefore very likely that the undated Kurnool charter is based on a different draft which did not gain currency in later years. Moving one step further, we may even assume that the draft of the Kurnool charter's *praśasti* was prepared immediately after the accession of Vikramāditya when the memory of his encounters with his kinsmen was still green in the minds of the people as well as Vikramāditya himself. The plural in *sarvān-dāyādān-vijīya*, possibly includes Ādityavarman, his son Abhinavāditya as well as Piṭṭi-amman of the Arāḷihoṇḍa inscription (34).

We have hinted above that Vikramāditya I did not proclaim himself emperor until he had regained control over the core of his father's empire. His achievement of this goal is more or less uniformly described in the Chalukya charters in a rather long passage as *sva-gurōḥ śriyam-avanipati-tritay-āntaritām-ātmasātkṛitya kṛit-aik-ādhiśṭhit-āśēsha-rājyabharas-tasmin-rājya-trayē vinashṭāni dēvasva-brahmadeyāni dharma-yaśō=bhivṛiddhavē sva-mukhēna sthāpitavān*. Two expressions of much historical significance in the above passage are '*avanipati-tritaya*' and '*tasmin rājya-trayē*'. The first one has been understood in its literal sense by earlier scholars and been loosely translated as 'confederacy of three kings'. On this basis attempts have been made to identify the 'three kings' variously with three successive Pallava rulers, viz. Narasimhavarman, Mahēndravarman II and Paramēśvaravarman; with Ādityavarman and Chandrāditya, the two brothers of Vikramāditya I, and the Pallava king Narasimha-

varman; and with the Chēra, Chōḷa and Pāṇḍya kings. But the real purport of the passage quoted above is to be differently understood in the light of the known facts of history. The expression *avanipati-tritaya* actually connotes here the Pallava adversary, the natural foe (*prakṛity-amitra*) of the Chalukyas, who symbolised in himself the Pallava hegemony over the three traditional kingdoms of the Tamil country, viz. Chōḷa, Pāṇḍya and Chēra, and who had brought about the eclipse of the royal splendour (*antaritā śriḥ*) of the Chalukyas by invading their empire and putting Polekēśi II's armies to route. Thus the passage starting with *sva-gurōḥ* and ending with *ātmāsātkṛitya* should be taken to mean 'he recovered for himself his father's royal fortune which had been eclipsed by the ruler who combined in himself the power of the three traditional royal houses (of the Tamil country)'. As a result Vikramāditya became the master of the entire kingdom (*aśēsha-rājya*) which was under his father's sway. Here again in the light of what is described as *tasmin rājya-trayē, aśēsha-rājya-bharaḥ* should be taken to stand for *aśēshān rājyān bibhrati iti, aśēshān rājyān* referring to all the three major regions of the Chalukya empire, which are mentioned in the Aihole inscription (26) of Polekēśi II and *Mahārāshtrakatraya*. It is very likely that Polekēśi II's imperial possessions were conventionally, if not for administrative viability, divided into three *rāshtrakas* (or *rājyas*), viz., Karnāṭaka, which formed the core of the empire, his possessions in Āndhra and, thirdly, the Koṅkaṇa-Mahārāshṭra-Gujarat portions which he had brought under his sway. When Polekēśi II fell, a period of confusion ensued during which the Chalukyas lost effective control over much of their territory in all of which opportunists must have misappropriated land grants made earlier to temples and brāhmaṇas. After driving the Pallava invaders back to where they came from, it was but natural that Vikramāditya tried hard to reestablish Chalukya hegemony over all his father's erstwhile possessions. Before he could think of further military campaigns beyond the confines of his father's empire, what he had to do in order to ensure his own credibility was to have the *status-quo-ante* established; and, an important step in that direction was his act of restoring all the earlier land grants made to the divine and brāhmaṇa recipients in all

the three segments (*rāshṭraka-traya* or *rājya-traya*) of the Chalukya empire. It is, to say the least, very unreasonable to suggest that Vikramāditya ordered and effectively implemented the restoration of misappropriated land grants in the alien territories of the Pallavas or of the Chōḷas, Pāṇḍyas and Chēras and that too almost at the very commencement of his reign.

In the light of the above discussions the early career of Vikramāditya can be deduced as follows. After the fall of his illustrious father, in the midst of the confusion created by pretenders such as Ādityavarman and his son Abhinavāditya, Vikramāditya fought against heavy odds and slowly consolidated his position, armed with the advantage of his having been already nominated by his father as his rightful successor. This interval of uncertainty having lasted from A.D. 642-43 for about thirteen years, Vikramāditya made bold to proclaim himself emperor, after eliminating all rival claimants (*sarvān dāyādan jītvā*) and after making sure that he had lifted the darkness of the eclipse brought about by the invading Pallavas over the Chalukya empire. He then set himself to the task of personally restoring to the temples and to the brāhmaṇas in those parts of his father's empire, which he could by then reconquer, all the land grants made earlier which had been illegally resumed in the period of confusion. All these had been achieved by Vikramāditya I probably even before formally declaring himself as emperor and, at any rate, latest by the third year (A.D. 656-57) of his reign, for one (36) of his Karnul charters, issued in his third year contains the lengthy passage we have quoted above. Another claim made for Vikramāditya in the same charter is that he, having vanquished enemy kings in all directions in hard-fought battles, acquired for himself the title of *Paramēśvara* which was his family's special distinction. We know that it was Polekēśi II who, among the Chalukyas, assumed for the first time this lofty title to commemorate his successful war against Harsha, the Lord of the North. Since the Turimēḷla stone inscription (35) of Vikramāditya I, dated in his second regnal year itself speaks of him as *Paramēśvara* we may safely conclude that Vikramāditya had mostly restored the *status-quo-ante* of Polekēśi II's period at the very commencement of his

reign, only some border outposts yet out of his reach. His eulogy as given in Chalukya charters, after mentioning his single-handed efforts and success in recovering his father's possession, includes a generalised claim that he reclaimed his families' fortunes as well as the epithet *Paramēśvara* after defeating his enemies in all directions :
'raṇa-śirasi ripu-narēndrān-diśi-diśi jitvā sva-vaṁśajām lakṣhīm prāpya cha paramēśvaratām-Anivārīta-Vikramādityaḥ.

It is rarely that a great emperor is succeeded by an even greater one. It happened in the case of the great Polekēśi II whose chosen successor Vikramāditya I surpassed him in all respects. The great act of vindication, which he executed so well and completely, earned for him great respect not only among his subjects but also in the minds of his successors. In the newly discovered *praśasti* of Vijayāditya at Alampur in Andhra Pradesh, Vikramāditya is afforded the pride of place in the genealogy by being the first Chalukya ruler whose praise is sung therein :

*Vaṁśe mahati vikhyātē rājā rājiva-lōchanah
 nāmnā śrī-Vikramādityaḥ kṣhīrōda jva Chandramāḥ*

'In that great and renowned (Chalikya) family there was the blue-eyed king who bore the name of Vikramāditya and who was verily like the moon born out of the milky ocean'.

The same inscription narrates, in three more *ślōkas* and in what appears to be of chronological sequence, the chief material achievements of Vikramāditya I—

*Jvalat-pratāpa-jvalana-jvāl-ālīḍh-āri-kānanah
 prājya-trairājya-vanītā-vaktr-āmbhōja-himāgamah
 anany-āvanat-ōtsikta-Kāñchīśa-makut-ārchishā
 samarchchita-pad-ambhōjah Śachīpatir-iv-ōdyataḥ
 Simhalaiḥ Kēralaiḥ Chōlaiḥ Pāṇḍya-Pallava-vaṁśajaiḥ
 sēvyamānaś-chiraṁ rējē rājā dharma-yaśah-parah*

'His brilliant fire of valour had lapped up (and burnt down) the forest of enemies and he was to the face of the *trairājya* damsel what the approach of winter (or snow fall) is to the day-lotus; His lotus-feet were well worshipped by the rays of the crown of the Lord of Kāñchī who had never before bowed before anyone; he

was elevated like Indra; and he, who was keen on righteousness and fame, flourished for long, being served by the kings of the Siṃhaḷa, Kēraḷa, Chōḷa, Pāṇḍya and Pallava families.

Of the three *śloka*s quoted above, the first two refer to Vikramāditya's conquest of the *trairājya* territory as a result of which the Pallava ruler of Kāñchi bowed down before him. Here again the reference to *trairājya* and next to the Pallava king goes to support the suggestion made by us earlier that the term *trairājya* in such a context stands for the Pallava hegemony over the three traditional Tamil kingdoms and not individually for the three Tamil kingdoms themselves.

The third *śloka*, on the other hand, singles out the rulers of the southern kingdoms who were allegedly brought into subservience by the Chalukya emperor. We have positive evidences to show that this claim of a southern conquest was not merely conventional but was, by and large, historical truth.

Vikramāditya did not feel fully avenged by the mere act of retrieving the imperial credibility of his family. The humiliation to which his father had been subjected still remained to be erased out of memory and his perseverance and determination brought upon the Tamil country and the Pallavas and their subordinates terrible retribution. But Vikramāditya, who was all the time busy reconstructing the Chalukya empire from the debris left behind by the Pallava invaders and must have been simultaneously building up a formidable invasionary force, did not execute his vendetta for fifteen long years after his accession. Came the sixteenth year of his reign and we already find him encamped in his great military camp at Malliyūr-grāma to the west of the Pallava citadel of Kāñchīpuram. Since the Honnūr plates (49), issued in Śaka 592 (A.D. 670) in the sixteenth year of his reign, which furnish this information, contain only his stereotyped *praśasti* as found in his earlier records, we may reasonably suppose that Vikramāditya had not yet fought any decisive battles against the Pallavas at the time of issuing that charter.

By the time Vikramāditya I issued his two Tembhurni charters (52 and 53) in the summer of A.D. 672, his campaign for vendetta was near-complete, and its primary goal achieved. For, we learn from these

charters as well as from the Gadval plates (54) of A.D. 674 and the undated Hyderabad plates (55) that by then Vikramāditya I was vociferously claiming victories over three successive Pallava rulers, viz. Narasimhavarman I, his son Mahēndravarman II and the latter's son Paramēśvaravarman I. The relevant stanza in these plates reads :

*mṛidita-Narasimha-yaśasā vihita-Mahēndra-pratāp-viḷayēna
nayana-vijit-Eśvārēṇa prabhunā Śrīvallabhēna jitam*

'Victory was achieved by the lord Śrīvallabha who has rubbed off the fame of Narasimha, who has dissolved the power of Mahēndra and who has subdued Īśvara (i.e. Paramēśvaravarman I) by polity'. The references to Narasimha's and Mahēndravarman's route have a ring of finality about them and it is more than likely that the two had not only suffered defeat but also death at the hands of Vikramāditya. Both these rulers seem to have fallen easy prey to the Chalukya invader, the former because of his infirmity at the lagend of his reign and the latter probably because he was either a weak or sickly king.

Three more successive verses in these plates further elucidate this war of vendetta launched by Vikramāditya I. The first of these reads :

*kṛita-Pallav-āvamarddam dakṣhiṇa-dig-yuvatim-ātta-Kāñchikah
yō bhṛīśam-abhiramayann-api sutarām śrī-vallabhatvam-itah*

'Though on the one hand he paraded himself as the beloved of the goddess of fortune (yet, on the otherhand) he forcibly wooed the damsel that was the Southern region by grasping Kāñchī (the city in the case of the Pallavas, and the girdle in the case of the Southern region personified as a damsel)'. This verse has a clear reference to the capture of the city of Kāñchī by the Chalukya ruler, though it is not clear from this verse as to who the Pallava ruler was when that famous city fell.

The next verse reads :

*vahati svam-arthavantam Raṇarasikah śrīmad-uru-bala-skandhah
yō Rājamalla-śabham vihita-Mahāmalla-kulanāśh*

'Possessed of powerful shoulders, Raṇarasika (i.e. Vikramāditya I) bears the meaningful epithet of Rājamalla, he having caused the destruction of the family of Mahāmalla (i.e. Narasimhavarman I)'. This verse obviously contains a reference to the claim made in an earlier

verse, also quoted above, that Vikramāditya had vanquished not only Narasimhavarman but also his son and grandson.

The third verse reads :

*durllamgha-dushkara-vibhēda-viśāla-sālā
durggādha-dustara-bṛihat-parikhā-paritā
agrāhi yēna jayat-Ēśvara-Pōtarājaṁ kāñchī-
va dakṣiṇa-diśaḥ kshitipēna Kāñchī*

‘By whom, Īśvara-Pōtarāja (i.e. Paramēśvaravarman I) having been defeated, even as one holds the girdle of a damsel, was captured (the city of) Kāñchī which had a large, insurmountable and inaccessible rampart surrounded by a deep moat which was hard to cross’.

What was left unsaid in the second of the above three verses is made apparent by this last verse from which we learn that the city of Kāñchī was taken by force by Vikramāditya I from Paramēśvaravarman. This Pallava ruler, however, does not appear to have capitulated without struggle. For, we learn from the genealogical account contained in the Udayēndiram plates of Nandivarman, obviously based on reliable palace records, that Paramēśvaravarman had won a battle at Peruvaḷanallūr in Chōḷa territory, against the forces of the Vallabha (i.e. Vikramāditya). It is almost certain that the palace records of the Pallavas had mentioned the lone victory scored by Paramēśvaravarman in his war against his Chalukya adversary, not caring to maintain any records of his defeats, including the surrender of his capital city.

The third *ślōka* in praise of Vikramāditya I, quoted earlier in this chapter from the recently discovered Alampur inscription (114), says that Vikramāditya was waited upon by the vanquished kings of the Simhaḷa, Kēraḷa, Chōḷa and Pāṇḍaya countries besides the Pallavas. The very fact that the two Tembhurni sets (52 and 53) dated in A.D. 672 were issued from within the Chōḷa territory and that the Gadval (54) and Savṇūr plates (56) were both of them issued in the summer of A.D. 674 from the city of Uragapura (modern Uṛaiyūr, Tiruchirappalli District), the traditional headquarters of the Chōḷas, shows that Vikramāditya had well and truly overrun that ancient Tamil kingdom. Upto this point in the campaign, Vinayāditya

was only second in command, lending a helping hand to his father. On the other hand, the subjugation of the Pāṇḍya kingdom was an achievement, not of Vikramāditya I but, at his behest, of his son and heir-apparent Vinayāditya who had accompanied his father on his southern expedition. This important information is furnished by the Alampur *praśasti* (114) referred to above, which says of Vinayāditya :

*Tat-sūnur-Vvinayādityaḥ vinītas-sādhuvatsalaḥ
dhanyō virah prabhur-vyāgmī dātā jētā guṇ-ādhikaḥ
Vikramāditya-bhūpasya svagurōś-śāsanam guru
prāpya laghvī-ti manvānaḥ prayātō dakṣiṇām diśam
Pāṇḍya, pratāpa-saṃpannam śauryya-śālinam-utthitam
balāj-jitvā-grahīd-āśu Madhurā-vanītā-karam
Kumārī-dvīpam-ākrāman-tad-īśvara-kramān-vaśē
kṛittavān-yauvarād-dhyēyam yaśō dikshu-kshipan-nṛipam*

‘His (Vikramāditya I’s) son was Vinayāditya who was (by disposition) humble, a friend of the good, virtuous, brave, lordly, eloquent, munificent, victorious and full of good qualities; making light of his father Vikramāditya’s tall order, he set out southward and vanquished by force the powerful, brave and recalcitrant Pāṇḍya king and captured his capital city of Madhurā. He further occupied the Kumārī-dvīpa (Cape Comarin) and took the ruler prisoner and, thus spreading his fame everywhere, the crown-prince made the king (his father) happy’. As a matter of fact *Yuvarāja* Vinayāditya played a leading part not only in the subjugation of the Pāṇḍya ruler but also in Vikramāditya’s overall campaign against the Pallava emperor as master of the three Tamil kingdoms. The services rendered by Vinayāditya in his father’s campaigns are thus eulogised in the *praśasti* of the prince in his plates issued after his accession :

*pitur-ājñayā Bālēnduśēkharasy=ēva Sēnanīr=
ddaitya-balam=atisamuddhataṃ trairājya-
Kāñchīpati-balam=avashtabhya samasta-
vishaya-praśamanād-vihita-tan-monō-
nurañjanaḥ*

‘Even as Kārttikēya destroyed the formidable army of the daityas at

the bidding of his father Lord Siva, Vinayāditya routed the forces of the Lord of Kāñchī, the supreme master of the three (Tamil) kingdoms, at the bidding of his father (Vikramāditya I) and having thus brought under subjugation all the (three) *vishayas* (viz., Chōḷa, Pāṇḍya and Keraḷa) he was a source of pleasure to his (father's) mind'.

We have no evidence to say that either Vikramāditya or his son Vinayāditya extended their arms further into Keraḷa and Siṃhaḷa. We have shown above that, at the time of issuing the Honnūr (49) plates in the summer of A.D. 670, Vikramāditya I had pitched his military camp at Malliyūr-grāma to the west of Kāñchī. This would mean that the Chalukya avenger was in the Tamil country with his armed forces for at least four long years between April, A.D. 670, the date of the Honnūr plates, and April, A.D. 674, the date of the Gadval (54) and Savṇūr (56) plates. He could have encamped at Malliyūr and Uragapura during that long span of time only if he had successfully kept the Pallavas under effective check. And such supremacy over the Pallavas in their own territory meant, in an extended sense, supremacy, direct or indirect, over the traditional Tamil kingdoms of Chōḷa, Kēraḷa and Pāṇḍya whose cumulative power was in those days vested in and symbolised by the Pallava emperor in his capacity of *trai-rājya-Kāñchi-pati*. In a historical sense, Vikramāditya would thus be justified in expropriating to himself that symbolic supremacy in which the king of Kēraḷa seems to have acquiesced. But the Pāṇḍyan ruler who could have been only Arikesari Māṇavarman (A.D. 670-700) seems to have thought otherwise and raised the banner of revolt (*utthitah*). This must have prompted Vikramāditya I, whose capacity at that time to overrun the entire Tamil country was very real, to detail his son and heir-apparent Vinayāditya at the head of a punitive force, to invade the Pāṇḍya kingdom and bring its ruler to book. This his son appears to have accomplished without much fanfare.

As regards Siṃhaḷa (Ceylon), the Pallavas were then in the enviable position of being king-makers in that island kingdom and it is but natural that the drafters of the official *praśasti* of Vikramāditya included Siṃhaḷa also in their eulogistic refrain.

Besides Vinayāditya, Vikramāditya was ably assisted in his protracted campaigns in the Tamil country by the Gaṅgas of Talakāḍu whose kingdom was like a buffer zone between the Chalukya and Pallava hegemonies. The Gaṅga prince who was physically present in the Chalukya military camp at Malliyūr-grāma in April, A.D. 670, bore the name of Mādhava and he had married the daughter of Raṇarāgavarman, another elder brother of Vikramāditya.

Vikramāditya I was on the Chalukya throne for about twenty-seven years (A.D. 654/55-681) and this reign period can be divided into three distinct phases. For the first fifteen years of his reign, he engaged himself in the difficult task of consolidating his hold over the vast empire which the defeat of his father had left in mere shambles. During that period, besides attending to the noble task of restoring to the original beneficiaries the many *dēvasva* and *bhrahmadēya* grants, he and his subordinates also made fresh grants to deserving donees. Prabhākarasvāmin, belonging to the Gautama-sagotra, a *brāhmaṇa* well-versed in the Vedic and sub-vēdic texts, was the recipient of the royal grant of one hundred and twenty *nivartanas* of land located on the east of the village Ratnagiri in the Nalavāḍi-vishaya of the Kurnool region in the third year [(A.D. 656-57) of Vikramāditya's reign (36). In all probability, in the same year, and perhaps on the same date, another badly composed and equally badly engraved charter (37), with a genuine Chalukya seal, was issued registering the royal grant of the village of Agunṭe and Tembuḷaūra to the same Prabhākarasvāmin. This charter may be a contemporaneous forgery, concocted for reasons of gain, or it may be a slightly later and extremely poor copy of an earlier genuine grant. Whatever the truth may be, there is no reason to discredit the historical information contained in the charter including the significant statement that Vikramāditya I had eliminated rival claimants from his own family before his accession to the throne.

Though the charters of the Chalukyas normally commence with an invocation to the Boar incarnation of Viṣṇu, which has misled some scholars to argue that they were staunch Vaishṇavites, Vikramāditya himself was a great devotee of Śiva and in the fifth year (A.D. 658-59) of his reign he underwent *Śiva-maṇḍala-dīkshā* under the

supervision of a guru named Sudarśanāchārya at the village of Maṛṛūra (in Mahbubnagar District, Andhra Pradesh). After the initiation ceremony, the emperor gave away the village of Ipaṛunkal (not far removed from Maṛṛūra) as *guru-dakṣiṇā* to Sudarśanāchārya who, in his turn, distributed plots of land in the gift village to twenty-seven *brāhmaṇas*, belonging to various *gōtras*, probably for having assisted him in conducting the ceremonies connected with the emperor's initiation (39). It is interesting to note that at least some of these twentyseven donees belonged to the more extreme sects of the Śaiva school leading to the conclusion that in the Chalukya domains, and in those times, 'there was no general antagonism between the solar and extremist sects of the followers of Śiva.'

Vikramāditya had one more preceptor in Mēghāchārya of the Vasishṭha-sagōtra to whom, on the 13th of July, A.D. 660, he granted, in the sixth year of his reign, the village of Eḷasatti (in the Nellore District of Andhra Pradesh). Mēghāchārya was also an erudite Vēdic scholar (40).

A badly worn out stone inscription (41) written on the 5th day of the bright fortnight of Kārttika in the eighth year (A.D. 662-63) of his reign and now set up in front of the Śivanandiśvara temple at Kadamara Kālava (Kurnool District) registers the royal grant of lands to a number of *brāhmaṇas* drawn from different *gōtras*.

In the tenth year (A.D. 664-65) of his reign, Vikramāditya I, on being so requested by his Sēndraka subordinate Dēvaśaktirāja, made a grant of five hundred and ten *nivartanas* of land as well as a piece of garden land at the village of Raṭṭagiri (obviously in the Kurnool region), on the west bank of the river Andirikā to ten *brāhmaṇas* who were constantly engaged in performing sacrificial rites, in enabling others to perform them, and in imparting knowledge, who were well versed in the Vēdic lore, and who were engaged in performing the prescribed six-fold duties (42). Prabhākaraśvāmin, who figures as the donee of a grant of land made in (A.D. 656-57) and perhaps of more land made in the same year, if we are to believe the badly composed charter above mentioned, figures in the present instance as one among ten donees (mentioned here Prabhākaraśarman). He was obviously a *vēdic* scholar of great repute

in his days and in that region. The list of ten donees also included Prabhākaraśarman's father Kēśavasvāmin.

As at present known, the last charter issued by Vikramāditya I before he set out on his campaign of revenge against the Pallavas, was the recently discovered *Uñchhavṛitti* grant (44) dated in his 16th regnal year, Śaka 591, on the day of the equinox, the 8th day of the dark fortnight of Āśvayuja, corresponding to 23rd September, A.D. 669. This charter, which records the royal grant the gleaning rights (*uñchha-vṛitti*) of the villages of Bhramarādāla and Avuganūru (near Saundatti, Belgaum District, Karnataka) in Kūṇḍi-vishaya, to the brāhmaṇa Kumārasvāmin, is of considerable importance for the dynastic history of the Chalukyas. It is stated in the charter that the grant was made by the emperor on the orders (*ājñayā*) of the illustrious Nāgavardhana-Chandrāditya-bhaṭṭāraka. It is known from the Nerūr plates of Vikramāditya I that Chandrāditya was his elder brother (*jyēshṭha-bhrātri*) and hence one of the sons of Polekēśi II. As a matter of fact, it is known from different records that Polekēśi II had at least five sons, Ādityavarman who issued one of the Kurnool plates, Chandrāditya, the prince under discussion here, Raṇarāghavarman who, according to the Honnūr plates, was an elder brother (*agraja*) of Vikramāditya I, Vikramāditya I himself and Dharāśraya Jayasimhavarman who started the III Gujarat branch of the Chalukya ruling house and with whom we are not concerned here.

Of the other brothers, it has been pointed out earlier that Ādityavarman, who may have been the eldest, probably became indignant at being overlooked by his father in preference to Vikramāditya for the post of *Yuvarāja*, in all probability declared himself emperor immediately after his father's death and ended his reign in disaster even before Vikramāditya I's official accession in A.D. 654-55. The two other elder brothers, Chandrāditya and Raṇarāghavarman seem to have not only resigned themselves to their subordinate princely status but also seen to have wholeheartedly approved of their father's choice of their younger brother, Vikramāditya as the heir-apparent. It is not clear from the context of his mention in the Honnūr plates (49) as to whether Raṇarāghavarman was alive in

A.D. 670, in which year that charter was issued. Even if he was living, he does not seem to have merited repeated mention in the charters of Vikramāditya I unlike Chandrāditya, who finds mention in no less than four epigraphical records of the Vātāpi Chalukyas, viz. the Nerūr plates (38) of A.D. 658-59, the recently discovered *Uñchhavritti* grant (44) of A.D. 669, the Kochre plates (46) of Vikramāditya I, which do not have a verifiable date, and the undated Kukkanūr (Raichur District) stone inscription (45) of Vikramāditya I, all of which attest to his being alive when they were written. Of these the Kukkanūr inscription is perhaps the earliest and, after introducing the Chalukya family and the earlier rulers in the fashion of their copper-plate inscriptions, it mentions the ruling king, *Śriprithvivallabha-mahārājādhirāja* Vikramādityabhaṭṭāraka, his elder brother *Śriprithvivallabha-mahārājādhirāja* Chandrāditya-bhaṭṭāraka and the former's son Vinayāditya and goes on to record some grant of land while Sindarasa was administering Kukkanūr. The date of the Nerūr plates (38), the earlier of the two dated charters mentioning Chandrāditya, needs to be properly interpreted and fitted into Chalukya history. After Vikramāditya introduces himself as the reigning king, the text goes on to say :

*Tasya (Vikramādityasya) jyeshṭha-bhrātuḥ
śrī-[Cha*] ndrāditya-prithvāvallabha-mahārājasya
priya-mahishī Vijaya-bhaṭṭārikā sva-rājya-
pañchama-saṁvatsara-Āśvayuja-paurṇamāsasya
dvitīyāyām vishuvē*

in which the expression *sva-rājya-pañchama-saṁvatsara* should properly be ascribed to Vikramāditya, Chandrāditya's subordination to whom is clearly implied in the latter's reference in the possessive case. More important, as is usual in the case of other royal donors, Vijayabhaṭṭārika, to whom some scholars have chosen to ascribe the fifth regnal year, does not address herself in the first person in the usual phrase *viditam-astu vōsmābhiḥ*. It is, therefore, certain that neither Chandrāditya nor his wife laid any claim to rulership through the Nerūr plates. This conclusion is further confirmed by the Kochre

plates where the three royal personalities are mentioned in the following manner :

*Vikramādityas-tasya jyēshthō bhrātā
śrī-Chandrāditya-prithvivallabha-
mahārājādhirājas=tasya priya-mahishī
Kali-kāla-pratipaksha-bhūtā śrī-
Vijayamahādēvi bodḍi-pōthi sarvvān-
ājñāpayati viditam-astu yaḥ*

Here again, the first person plural instrumental *asmābhiḥ* with reference to Vijayamahādēvi is conspicuous by its absence. It can only be explained away by the assumption that she was not a ruling queen and that she was not entitled for the royal 'we'. That she was not recognised as 'queen' is further clarified by the expression *bodḍi-pōthi* suffixed to her name in the present grant. It is known from some other Chalukya inscriptions that those members of the harem, who enjoyed the status of courtesans of kings and princes were referred to as *poḍi*, *pōṭi*, *bodḍi*, etc. From the Kochre plates we learn now that even the anointed wives of those princes who were not entitled to the throne were addressed in such manner.

Chandrāditya, initially by not contesting his father's choice of his own successor, and subsequently by helping his younger brother Vikramāditya in consolidating his hold on the throne and the empire, earned the latter's gratitude in full measure. Vikramāditya gave public expression of this gratitude by endowing his elder brother with all the imperial regalia as may be gathered from the undated Kukkanūr stone inscription (45), which narrates the dynastic and genealogical eulogies in the fashion of the Chalukya copper-plate inscriptions. While mentioning Chandrāditya as the elder brother of Vikramāditya I, this inscription endows both of them with the usual Chalukya titles and epithets of *Satyāśraya-śrīprithvivallabha-mahārājādhirāja-paramēśvara-paramabhaṭṭaraka*, which goes to show that though the younger brother had superseded the elder on the throne, the latter was, in principle, and, perhaps, in deference to his age, given the full status of an emperor without, of course, the powers inherent in such a status. And, by the time Śryāśraya-Śilāditya of the Gujarat Chalukya

branch, in several of whose charters Nāgavardhana finds mention, issued his Navsāri grant (48) in A.D. 671, Vikramāditya had elevated his elder brother to the same status as that of his parents. For, in the Navsāri plates, Vikramāditya is introduced in the following manner :

*Paramamāhēśvara-mātāpitṛi-śrī-Nāgavardhana-
pād-ānudyāta-śrī-Vikramāditya-Satyāśraya-
śrīprithvivallabha-mahārājādhirāja-
parama-māhēśvara-bhaṭṭārakaḥ*

Scholars had earlier suggested that Nāgavardhana may be the name of a god or of an ascetic. But that it was merely another name for Chandrāditya is clear from the recently discovered *Uñchhavṛitti* grant (44) wherein it is stated that Vikramāditya I made the grant recorded therein on the orders (*ājñayā*) of śrī-Nāgavardhana-Chandrāditya-bhaṭṭāraka Sanskrit diction being what it is, the above expression may be interpreted either as 'the illustrious Nāgavardhana and Chandrāditya-bhaṭṭāraka' or as 'the illustrious Nāgavardhan *alias* Chandrāditya-bhaṭṭāraka', or, assuming that Nāgavardhan is a place-name, as 'the illustrious Chandrāditya-bhaṭṭāraka of Nāgavardhana'. Of these the first possibility is ruled out because we do not know of any prince of the royal blood who was at once of the Chalukya stock, contemporaneous with Vikramāditya I, bore the name of Nāgavardhana and was senior enough to receive mention ahead of Chandrāditya in an official Chalukya document. The third possibility need not engage our attention seriously until and unless a place bearing the name of Nāgavardhana and enjoying a position of importance during the Vātāpi Chalukya period comes to our notice. We are thus left with the second alternative according to which Nāgavardhana was another name by which Chandrāditya was known. This possibility, we believe, is clinched by the evidence of the Mudgapadra grant (43) of Yuvarāja Śrīyāśraya Śīlāditya and the Navsāri plates where Nāgavardhana is mentioned immediately after his parents as those whose feet were the objects of Vikramāditya I's meditation. The learned editor of the Mudgapadra grant reads the name as Nāgavarman in the phrase *mātā-pitṛi-śrī Nāgavarmma-*

pād-ānudhyātaḥ and says that he is mentioned in several other epigraphs of the Gujarat Chalukyas as Nāgavardhana. In doing so he has failed to notice that what was originally engraved as *Nāgavarmma* had been meticulously corrected by the engraver as *Nāgavardhana*, accommodating the additional letter *na* in small size but all the same very clearly between *rmma* corrected to *rdha* and *pā* of the following word *pād-ānudhyāta*. The above evidence is clearly indicative of the fact that Nāgavardhana was junior to the emperor's parents but was senior to him to merit his obeisance. When these charters are studied together, the conclusion is inevitable that Nāgavardhana and Chandrāditya were the names of one and the same person.

A jarring note is struck by the Nirpāṇ plates (50), of the Gujarat Chalukya ruler Nāgavardhana, the son of Dharāśraya Jayasimhavarman and grandson of Polekēśi II. The charter, which is undated and is written in the Gūrjara variety of Southern characters, describes Polekēśi II as *śrī-Nāgavardhana-pād-anudhyātaḥ*. This must certainly be dismissed as wrong information contained in a charter which abounds in such other serious discrepancies too, like ascribing Vikramāditya I's war-horse Chitrakaṇṭha to Polekēśi II. The plates are no doubt genuine but the composer of the dynastic eulogy must have had to depend upon hearsay in the absence of any form of written annals. That this was the case is clearly brought home to us by the Manor plates of Vinayāditya Maṅgalarasa issued on the 15th day of the bright half of Vaiśākha in Śaka 613 (=7th April, A.D. 691). The composer of this charter had access to fairly accurate information and his eulogy of Polekēśi II and his son Vikramāditya I is in accordance with the information furnished by the Vātāpī Chalukyas themselves. Giving the prefix of *Kokkuli* to Vikramāditya I, he correctly describes his martial exploits achieved astride his favourite steed Chitrakaṇṭha and, more important, describes him as *śrī-Nāgavardhana-pād-ānudhyataḥ*. Nāgavardhana's mention along with the parents of Vikramāditya I in the Mudgapadra grant and the Navsari plates may be taken to indicate that, like his parents, Nāgavardhana *alias* Chandrāditya too was no more at the time of the issual of the Mudgapadra grant (43) on 23rd May, A.D. 668.

The second phase of Vikramāditya I's reign covers the four

years between the summer of A.D. 670 and the summer of A.D. 674 when he was on a protracted retaliatory campaign in the Tamil country, the main events pertaining to which we have already enunciated. Even while in the occupied territories, Vikramāditya found time to offer patronage to deserving subjects. We have stated above that one of the allies of Vikramāditya I in his punitive expedition against the Pallavas was the Gaṅga prince Mādhava. The Honnūr plates (49), issued in April, A.D. 670, which furnish this information, also tell us that Mādhava had for his queen the beloved daughter of Vikramāditya I's elder brother Raṇarāgavarman about whom we have yet no other source of information. As many as twenty *brāhmaṇas* including the doyen among them, Śyāmaśarman, who was well versed in the *Vēdas*, *Vēdaṅgas*, *Itihāsa*, *Purāṇas* and the *dharma-śāstras* and whose body had been purified by the ablutionary baths taken while performing sacrificial rites such as *agnishtōma*, received from the hands of the imperial invader, at the request of Gaṅga Mādhava and his queen, five hundred *nivartanas* of paddy fields below the tank in a locality which was perhaps in the Tamil country but not far removed from the Gaṅga domain.

The Kurtakōṭi (Dharwar District) plates (47), allegedly issued by Vikramāditya I is in Kannada characters datable to the 10th century A.D. The text of this charter is a mixture of historical and unhistorical information. While the Regnal year 16, mentioned therein, falls well within the known period of Vikramāditya I, the Śaka year quoted, 532 (=A.D. 610) is palpably wrong. Nevertheless, in view of the fact that much of the historical information contained in the charter is true, it may be suggested here that the charter in question is a later recopy of an earlier genuine charter issued by Vikramāditya I in his 16th regnal year. The wrong informations contained therein seem to have resulted from the incapacity of the recopyist of the 10th century and his collaborators to fully transcribe the entire text of the genuine charter because of the lack of their familiarity with its mostly obsolete script. If the charter be a recopy, we will have to assume that sometime in A.D. 669-70, Vikramāditya granted the village of Kūrutakuṇṭe in Beḷvola-vishaya to the brāhmaṇa Raviśarman of the Agastya-gōtra who was learned in the six branches

of vĕdic studies. The donees grandfather Mādhavaśarman was well versed in the Sāma-vĕda.

Two very badly broken sets of copper-plate inscriptions, both issued in the Śāka year 594, in the 17th year of Vikramāditya I's reign A.D. 672) were recently brought to the notice of scholars by H.S. Thosar and A.A. Hingmire, having been discovered at Tembhurṇi (Sholarpur District). Both the charters were issued, within a span of one month, when the emperor was encamped in the village of Daśaṇūka (?) to the east of Virājamaṅgala in the Chōḷa country which he had entered in the course of his anti-Pallava campaign. Both the charters record grants made at the request of the emperor's son *yuvarāja* Vinayāditya. Of these, Set No. 1 (52), issued one month earlier, in Vaiśākha, registers the royal grant of the village Pippangakakhēṭa (modern Pimparkhēḍ, Osmanabad District) to the brāhmaṇas Durgaśarman and Vishṇuśarman, both of the Śāṇḍilya-gōtra. Of the two donees, the former alone is described as well versed in the *Rig* and *Yajur vĕdas*. Set No. 2 (53), issued in Āshāḍha, registers the royal grant of the village Pariyaṇḍa (modern Paraṇḍa, Osmanabad District) in Kuṛumayi-vishaya to the brāhmaṇa Vishṇuśarman of Śāṇḍilya-sagōtra, obviously the same as the second donee of Set No. 1. All the four sets issued by Vikramāditya I while he was in the Chōḷa country, viz. the two Tembhurṇi plates as well as the Gadval (54) and Savṇūr (56) plates were written by *Mahāsāndhivigrahika* Jayasēna who had obviously accompanied the emperor on his southern expedition.

Vikramāditya I and his lieutenants had, in all probability, been accompanied in their southern expedition by some members of their harems. While the Honnūr plates (49) attest to the presence of Gaṅga Mādhava's wife at Malliyūr-grāma near Kāñchi in A.D. 670, the Gadval plates (54), reveal the presence of Vikramāditya's queen Gaṅga-Mahādēvi at Urāgapura, the Chōḷa capital, in A.D. 674. At her request her husband made a grant of fifty *nivartanas* of land each to three brāhmaṇas at the village of Vaḷnalli situated probably in the Chōḷa country.

The Savṇūr plates (56), issued in April, A.D. 674 attest to the presence of one more lady of Vikramāditya I's harem at Urāgapura; she was not one of his queens but must have been his favourite

concubine and she bore the name Aṁgi-poḍi. At her request the emperor made a grant of the village Kuvvaḷapāḷu in Kukkanūru (Raichur District, Karnāṭaka) to the brāhmaṇa, Kūchiyaṇa of Kāmakāyana-gōtra, who, like his father Mādiśarman, was well-versed in the *Ṛig-vēda*.

The Gadval plates (54) which were also issued in the summer of A.D. 674, when the emperor was still in the Chōḷa country, and had actually stationed himself in the ancient Chōḷa capital of Uragapura, registers the royal grant of fifty *nivartanas* of land in the village of Cheḍulli, each to three brāhmanas, viz. Kanhaśarman of Kāpya-sagotra, Pādammasvāmin of Vatsa-sagōtra and Konnāśarman. Of these, it is interesting to note that the grant to the first donee was made at the instance of Gaṅga-mahādēvi, obviously a member of the emperor's itinerant harem. The appellation *mahādēvi* does more than suggest that she was an honoured queen of Vikramāditya I.

As has been stated above, the undated Hyderabad charter (55) must have been issued not long after the issual of the Gadval plates but after the return of Vikramāditya from his southern expedition. For, while this charter contains the four verses which find place in his charters issued in the Chōḷa country, it does not refer to the emperor's entry into the Chōḷa domain and his stay over there. It registers the royal grant of the village of Chintakuṇṭha in Kanna-vishaya to the brāhmaṇa Nandasvāmin of Kauśika-sagōtra. The donee is eulogised as having acquired the ultimate vedic knowledge by the performance of various austerities including the highly challenging one of *Chāndrāyana-vrata* which entails 'a fast regulated by the moon, the food being diminished every day by one mouthful for the dark fortnight, and increased in like manner during the bright fortnight'.

During this second phase of Vikramāditya's reign, when he was far away from his capital city and imperial possessions for as many as four years, the affairs of his empire were placed by him in the hands of his grandson Vijayāditya whose father Vinayāditya had accompanied his father to the Tamil country. Vijayāditya's *praśasti* in his own charters contains the statement : *dakṣiṇ-āśā vijayini pitāmahē samunmūlita-nikhila-kaṇṭaka-saṁhatiḥ*, 'he who had eliminated all sorts of threats while his grandfather had proceeded on his southern

expedition'. The recently discovered Alampur *praśasti* (114) is more direct when it says : *Trairājya-Pallavaṃ jētum prayātē sva-pitāmahē-tad-ājñayā-sva-rājyaṃ yaḥ prārakshad-dhvaṃsita-dvisham*.

'when his grandfather had set out on his expedition in order to vanquish the Pallava of the three kingdoms, he (i.e. Vijayāditya), on his (i.e. Vikramāditya I's) bidding, protected his own kingdom well by eliminating the opponents'.

From the statements quoted above, one thing becomes clear, namely that Vijayāditya had to put down enemies of the Chalukya kingdom, by which obviously are meant ambitious subordinates who may have turned recalcitrant emboldened by the simultaneous absence of the emperor as well as his heir-apparent from the Chalukya domains.

The third and final phase of Vikramāditya's reign, covering roughly the last sixteen years upto A.D. 681, was largely one of peace and prosperity. Not many inscriptions belonging to this phase of Vikramāditya's reign have come to light. A stone inscription (57) from Dimmagudi (Anantapur District, Andhra Pradesh) has the distinction of being his latest known inscription, being dated in the 27th, the very last year, of his reign.

We have seen above that Vikramāditya I had anointed his younger brother Dharāśraya Jasimhavarman as the ruler of the Gujarat possessions of the Chalukyas. Sometime before A.D. 670, Dharāśraya was succeeded on the Gujarat throne by his son Śryāśraya Śilāditya who, in that year, issued his Navasāri grant (48). Śryāśraya outlived his paternal uncle and was ruling even as late as in A.D. 693, during the reign of Vinayāditya, as can be gathered from his Surat plates (72) issued in that year.

Polekēśi II's younger brother and Vikramāditya's paternal uncle Buddhavarasa was administering the Aparānta or Northern Konkan territory as the latter's feudatory when he issued his Sañjān plates (51) on the occasion of a solar eclipse in the month Pausha of an unspecified year. Since the plates describe Vikramāditya in the fullness of his power, as one who was capable of ruling over the earth (*prithvī-palana-kshamaḥ*) and as having won all his battles like Arjuna (*Arjuna iv-āśēsha-saṃgrāma-vijayaḥ*), we may suppose that the plates in

question were issued during the later years of Vikramāditya's reign. As a matter of fact, the year of issue could be 671, 672, 673 or 681 in all of which years there was solar eclipse in the month of Pausha.

Vikramāditya I, the early years of whose reign were war-studded, ended his reign in peace, peace which was inherited and nurtured by his successors with the sole exception of the Tamil country where the continued rule of the Pallavas was viewed by them as an affront to their dynasty's dignity.

CHAPTER NINE

THE HARBINGER OF PEACE

Vinayāditya inherited from his father Vikramāditya I a fairly peaceful and prosperous empire which had not been involved in any wars important enough to merit mention in an epigraphical record since the end of the protracted anti-Pallava campaign in A.D. 674. There were no provocations from any quarters on the death of Vikramāditya for the obvious reason that the crown-prince awaiting anointment as the new emperor was no stranger to crises and had, even as a prince, proved beyond doubt his penchant for war by not only actively participating in the anti-Pallava wars waged by his father but also by himself successfully leading, at the bidding of his father, an invasion of the Pāṇḍya country in the course of which he had marched his victorious army right upto the tip of the peninsula. We will not be far from the truth if we assume, on the strength of available evidence, that Vinayāditya had made better use of his martial accomplishments as a crown-prince than as an emperor. It is not surprising therefore that the recently discovered Alampur *praśasti* of Vijayāditya devotes four out of the seven *ślōkas* dedicated to Vinayāditya for describing his career as crown-prince.

The earliest available epigraphical record of his reign is the Paṇiyal grant (59), issued in the second regnal year, when 604 Śaka years had elapsed, on the full moon day of the month of Vaiśākha (27th April, A.D. 682). This charter attest to the peace which attended upon the Chalukya empire at the commencement of Vinayāditya's reign by eulogising him in a merely conventional vein which contains no direct reference to any battle fought :

*atyanta-vatsalatvād-Yudhishṭhira iva Śrī-
rāmatvād-Vāsudēva iva nṛip-āṅkuśatvāt-
Paraśurāma iva rāj-āśrayatvād-Bharata iva*

‘because of his extremely affectionate disposition, he was like Yudhisṭhira; because of enjoying fortune (*śrī*), he was like Vāsudēva (i.e. Viṣṇu-Kṛiṣṇa who enjoys Lakshmi or Śrī, the goddess of fortune); because he kept enemy kings under check, he was like Paraśurāma, because he afforded refuge to (defeated) kings, he was like Bharata’. Most of the charters of Vinayāditya as well as his successors, besides repeating these set phrases of a purely conventional nature, confine themselves only to the narration of his exploits as a prince. He appears to have spent the first two years of his reign in inspecting different parts of his empire. On the day he issued the Paniyaḷ grant, he was encamped at Pānuṅgal-nagara (modern Panangallu, Mahabubnagar District, Andhra Pradesh). The beneficiary of the grant of the village of Paniyaḷ, situated not far from the township of Dharmapura on the southern banks of the Kṛiṣṇa-veṇṇā river, was the brāhmaṇa Mādhavasvāmin of Bhāradvāja-sagōtra, who was an erudite Vedic scholar. Vinayāditya made the grant at the request (*viññāpanā*) of a certain Svāmikarāja who may be identified with his namesake of the Kumbhakarna family of Sthālakanagara who round about this time was ruling from modern Thalner in Southern Maharashtra.

Having tasted the fruits of victory as a prince, Vinayāditya wanted even more of it as an emperor and soon enough and before the expiry of his fifth regnal year, he once again paraded the armed might of his family with phenomenal success. There is, in Lakshmēśvar, Dharwar District, Karnataka, a stone inscription (61), engraved in 10th century Kannaḍa characters, which is obviously a genuine later copy of the text of a genuine charter issued in Śaka 608, in the 5th year of his reign. The original charter was probably damaged enough to warrant its text to be thus recopied on stone. The original charter was probably issued in A.D. 686 in the fifth year of Vinayāditya’s reign and, while copying it on stone the writer (or the engraver, if the text was straightaway engraved on stone) appears to have inadvertantly omitted one full side of the engraved copper plates as a result of which a part of Vikramāditya I’s *praśasti* as well as his name and the beginning portions of Vinayāditya’s *praśasti* are missing and Vikramāditya’s ventures accomplished while astride his war-horse Chantrakaṇṭha are seemingly ascribed to

Vinayāditya. This anomaly, though a serious one, need not prompt us to dismiss the genuine nature of this later copy for such omissions are not unknown in Indian epigraphy. That portion of the *praśasti* as given in this later copy which is truly ascribable to Vinayāditya reads :

*Trai-rājya-Kāñchīpati-Pallava-balam-
avashṭabhya kara-dīkṛita-Kamēra-
Pārasika-Simhaḷ-ādi dvīp-ādhipasya
sakaḷ-ōttarāpatha-nātha-mathan-
ōpārjjita-pāḷidhvai-ādi samasta-
pāramaiśvarya-chihnasya*

Of these, the first part concerning his victory over the Lord of Kāñchi, who symbolised in himself the cumulative power of the three ancient Tamil kingdoms (or Chōḷa, Pāṇḍya and Kēraḷa) and extracting of tributes from Kamēra, Pārasika and Simhaḷa is to be referred to Vinayāditya's career as crown-prince. In fact, the levying of tributes from the three islands is mentioned in the same sentence as part of or consequential to his victory over the Kāñchī ruler. It is a well known point in history that the Pallavas of those days had much political say in Simhaḷa because of their military might and that they also played a dominant and vital role in the affairs of the South East Asian kingdoms. It is, therefore, very likely that, having scored a decisive victory over the Pallavas, the Chalukyas considered themselves as masters over all such territories over which the Pallavas had spread their influence. It is even possible that they had appropriated to themselves whatever tributes had been paid by these islanders to the hapless Pallavas. Since Vinayāditya, though he was only a prince then, had played an important role in those wars, it is quite likely that his court bards attributed these achievements to him. Of the three *dvīpas* mentioned, Simhala in Ceylon and Kamēra is the same as Khmer by which name Cambodia was and, even now, is known. As for Pārasika, unless it connotes some South East Asian territory yet to be identified, it will have to be identified with Persia and it is difficult to assert, in the absence of positive evidence, that Vinayāditya conquered distant Persia either as a prince or within five years after

his accession. It is known that Polekēśī II had sent an embassy to the Persian Court, a courtesy which was duly reciprocated. On the same analogy, we may presume that an embassy may have visited Vinayāditya's court from Persia and the royal presents offered to the Chalukya emperor may have been described as 'tribute' as there was no fear of reprisal.

It is the second part of the above *praśasti*, which is found repeated in other Chalukya charters as well, and which mentions his triumph over the lord of the whole of Uttarāpatha, that is relevant to Vinayāditya's reign. This claim reminds one of a similar exploit of Polekēśī II against Harshavardhana, the then lord of Uttarāpatha. The Lakshmēśvara inscription as well as most of the relevant Chalukya records mention this victory of Vinayāditya without ever naming the Uttarāpatha king whom he had laid low. An exception is the Jejuri plates (62) of Vinayāditya, issued on the full-moon day Āshāḍha in Saka 609 during the 9th year of Vinayāditya's reign. This charter, which will be further discussed in the sequel, furnishes a list of territories subjugated by Vinayāditya (most of them as prince) in which, besides Pallava, Kaḷabura, Kēraḷa, Haihaya, Viḷa, Chōḷa and Pāṇḍya, the kingdom of Mālava is also included. The same phrase also occurs in Vinayāditya's Sorab plates (69) issued in Saka 613 (A.D. 691) in the eleventh year of his reign. We know that in those early medieval times the vast area between Bundelkhand in the east and Rajasthan in the west was known as Mālava. Since it is the only North Indian territory mentioned in Vinayāditya's list, the conclusion is inevitable that its ruler was the then lord of Uttarāpatha. As to the name of this ruler of Mālava, we get the much-needed information from the recently discovered Alampūr *praśasti* (114) which has been referred to more than once earlier by us. This inscription devotes three *ślōkas* to describe Vinayāditya's triumph over the lord of Uttarāpatha, after his accession to the imperial throne :

prāpta-sāmrājya-lakshmīkaḥ
dvishas-sarvān-samuddharam
Lāṭa-lakshmī-latā-bhaṅga-
karam Vajraṭam-āhavē

*parājitya-hṛit-ānēka-māṇikya gaja-
sāadhanam
padha-dhakkā-mahāśabda-loḷa-pāḷidhvaj-
ādikam
puṇḍarik-ātapatram cha mūrttaṁ yaśa
iva svayam
Paramēśvara-chihnam vō jagrāha Paramēśvaraḥ*

‘Having attained the position of emperor, and having extirpated all enemies, he (i.e. Vinayāditya) defeated in battle Vajraṭa, who had broken the creeper that is (the Lāṭa (country)); defeating him (Vajraṭa), the emperor took away his army, precious stones, elephants and (other valuable) commodities, his kettle-drum (*padha*), war-drum (*dhakkā*), his royal standards (*pāḷidhvaja*), his white parasol which looked like the personification of his (Vinayāditya’s) fame, and his insignia of sovereignty.

Vajraṭa was in all probability the ruler of Mālava at that time. He invited upon himself the wrath of Vinayāditya by injudiciously invading Lāṭa which was then under the rule of Dharāśraya Jayasimhavarman, a Chalukya scion, actually a son of Polekēśi II and hence Vinayāditya’s paternal uncle. Dharāśraya by himself succeeded in stemming the progress of Vajraṭa’s army and inflicting upon him an ignominious defeat for, his Nasik plates (60), issued on 20th March A.D. 685 which name Vajraṭa in the colloquial form of Vajjaḍa state that he annihilated the entire army of Vajjaḍa in a battle fought somewhere in between the rivers Mahi and Narmadā : *Mahi-Narmad-antarāla-dhavala-phala-śili-mukha-jāla-vijita-vinihata-Vajjaḍa-samasta-sainyah*. But, for Vinayāditya, who had fought many successful battles even as a prince, and his heir-apparent Vijayāditya, who was itching to emulate his father, Vajraṭa’s attempted intrusion into Lāṭa, a part of Chalukya imperial hegemony, was provocation enough to warrant a terrible retribution. Vinayāditya ordered his army to march against Mālava, the kingdom of Vajraṭa. We know for certain that Vinayāditya himself led his forces in person but we also know that his crown-prince Vijayāditya literally stole a march over his father and was entitled to a lion’s share of the claim for the route of Vajraṭa. For, in his charters Vijayāditya is described

as having made over to his father the royal standards (symbolising supremacy over Gaṅgā and Yamunā, the kettle-drum, the war-drum, the (right to use the five) *māhāśabdas*, precious stones and war-elephants captured by him after splitting open the foreheads of the elephants of his foes and forcing them to turn their backs in the battle field, having stood in the vanguard of his father's army when the latter had wished to conquer the north (*Uttarā-patha-vijjishōr-gurōr-agrata-ēv-āhava-vyā-pāram-ācharann-arāti-gaja-ghaṭ-āpātana-viśīrya-māṇa-kṛipāna-dhāras-samagra-vigrah-āgrēsaras-sat-sāhasa-rasikaḥ parēṇ-mukhikṛita-śatru-maṇḍalō Gaṅgā-Yamunā-pālīdhvoja-paḍha-dhakkā-mahāśabda-chihna-māṇikya-mataṅgaj-ādin-pitrisāt-kurvan*).

Though these claims of father and son are no less eloquent than that of Polekēśi II on a similar encounter with his North Indian contemporary, it is obvious that even in the eyes of the Chalukyas themselves, including Vinayāditya himself, Vajraṭa did not stand comparison to the great Harshavardhana. For, in none of the Chalukya charters do we find the name of Vajraṭa mentioned, though more often than not, the successes registered by Vinayāditya and his son Vijayāditya in the formers' northern campaign are described in the stereotyped phraseology above quoted. The event was, nevertheless, remembered as a worthy achievement in the charters of the successor dynasty of the Rāshtrakūṭas, the mighty Karnāṭaka army which they defeated is described as having been powerful enough to defeat Harsha and Vajrati (*Śriharsha-Vajraṭa-vibhēda-vidhāna-dakṣhaṁ Karnāṭakaṁ balam*). On the strength of Lakshmēśvar inscription of A.D. 686 and the Nāsik plates of Dharāśraya Jayasimhavarman, issued in March A.D. 685, we may conclude that the war against Vajraṭa had been fought in the course of A.D. 985-86.

There having occurred no further provocations, Vinayāditya had all the time to devote to the affairs of the empire and to perform such other duties as were normally expected of a benevolent patron of his subjects. Though he had scored a decisive victory against Vajraṭa, he had briefly lost the helping hand of Vijayāditya until his escape from captivity when the fleeing northern army had somehow taken him prisoner.

Blessed with peace everywhere, Vinayāditya became an itinerant

emperor and during the last ten years of his reign visited different regions of his vast holdings. Sometimes on his own and sometimes on the supplication of his subordinates, he munificently granted villages and plots of land to learned brāhmaṇas in order that the light of traditional knowledge may continue to enlighten the society of his days. If available inscriptions are any indication, Vinayāditya gave away more gifts to deserving men than any other member of the Vātāpi Chalukya house.

In December A.D. 686, during the 5th year of his reign, the Jaina temple Śaṅkha-Jinālaya of Lakshmēśvara (Dharwar District, Karnāṭaka) received from him the tax-free grant of the village Haḍagile for the conduct of services to the god installed therein and for running the alms house (*dāna-śālā*) attached to the temple (61). In A.D. 688-89, during the ninth year of his reign, when Vinayāditya had pitched his camp at the village of Bhāḍali (modern Budleebudruk, Pune District, Maharashtra) the brāhmaṇa Allaśarman, of Kaunḍinya-gōtra, received from him the village of Vīra as the tax-free grant (62). In A.D. 688-89, in the tenth year of his reign Vinayāditya was encamped somewhere (near Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh) on the bank of the river Pampā (i.e. Tungabhadra) when he issued orders granting the gleaning rights in the villages of Togarachēḍu, Guḷḷavelendoṛu, Vareyūr and Baṭṭeyūr (all in the Kurnool District) to the brāhmaṇa Bhīmaśarman of Bhāradvāja-sagōtra in appreciation of his all round scholarship (*sarva-śāstra-vid*) and erudition in the Vedic subjects (63). It was perhaps during his sojourn in the Kurnool region that he made an endowment of land to the god Pañchalingadēva of the village Panchalinga when he was encamped at Rāmēśvaratīrtha. This information is contained in an inscription of Chālukya Bhuvanaikamalla, dated in A.D. 1068. On the 29th of April, A.D. 690, also in the tenth year of his reign, when he was encamped at Mañchuḷgrāma (Bijapur District, Karnāṭaka) along with his queen (*mahādēvī*), he granted, at her request, 50 *nivartanas* of land in the village of Tarave (Bijapur District) to the brāhmaṇas Durgāśarman and Raviśarman of Kāśyapagōtra in order to enable them to give away their daughters in marriage (*kanyādharma-ārthan*). In the same year he had repaired (64) to the domains of his Bāṇa feudatory Baṇarāja of Vaṅganūr-nāḍu (Anantapur region,

Andhra Pradesh) and in the very next year we find him encamped at the village of Eṇupundale (Kurnool District) along with his crown prince Vijayāditya, at whose request, in January A.D. 691, a number of brāhmaṇas, belonging to different gōtras, received gifts of land (66) from the emperor in the village of Masuṇiparu (Kurnool District). Of these donees one is mentioned as well-versed in two *Vēdas* (*dvi-vēdin*) and another as learned in the six sub-vēdic studies *śhaḍ-aṅga-vid*). The others who are merely named along with their gōtras were perhaps not learned but deserved the gifts because of their indigent circumstances. Surprisingly enough, one of the donees was a brāhmaṇa lady who is not named but is stated to belong to the Mānavya-sagōtra (*Mānavya-sagōtrāyai brāhmaṇyai*) and to have received her gift as *prājāpatya*. The donee mentioned next to her, Dēvaśarman of Kaunḍinya-sagōtra also received a piece of land as *prājāpatya*. Besides other things, *prājāpatyam* also means 'a particular sacrifice performed before appointing a daughter to raise issue in default of male heirs'. It is likely that the land-grants received by the brāhmaṇi and Dēvaśarman were interrelated and had to do with the religious sacrifice elucidated above. In the next year of his reign, we find him still in the Kurnool region whence, while encamped at Mahākōṭatīrtha (Kurnool District), in the Śaka year 614 (A.D. 691-92) he made a grant of the gleanings as well as one hundred and eight *nivartanas* of land in the village of Ālikunde (Kurnool District) to the brāhmaṇa Trivikramaśarman of Bhārgava-sagōtra for his erudition in the *Vēdas* and *Vēdāṅgas*; the donee's father and grandfather were respectively learned in all the four Vēdas and in the six branches of Vedic studies (68).

In June, A.D. 692, while still in the 11th year of his reign, Vinayāditya was back in Karnāṭaka and on the 22nd of that month, when he was staying at Chitrasēdu (Shimoga District) he granted, at the request of Chitravāhana-mahārāja, the son of Guṇasāgara-Ālupēndra, the village of Sālivoge near Banavāsi to the brāhmaṇa Divākaraśarman of Dēvarāta-Kauśika-gōtra in appreciation of his profound scholarship in *Ṛig-Vēda* (69). The places mentioned above were all situated in the Banavāsi or Kadamba maṇḍala, the erstwhile domain of the extinct Banavāsi house of Kadambas, which, under the

Chalukyas, had been placed under the care of their trusted allies, the Ālupas of South Kanara. After the earlier reference to Āluka-mahārāja as the father-in-law of Maṅgalēśa in the Māruṭūra plates (13) of A.D. 598-99, the next reference to the Ālupas in a Chalukya grant occurs only in the Sorab plates under discussion. Chitravāhana who was in charge of the Kadamba-maṇḍala in addition to his own ancestral Tuḷuva kingdom (=South Kanara) subsequently became Vinayāditya's son-in-law as will be shown in the sequel.

We next find Vinayāditya stationing himself at Taḷayakhēḍa-grāma (Tahirkhed, Osmanabad District, Maharāshṭra) perhaps in the course of inspecting his northern possessions in southern Maharāshṭra. While camping in that village, the emperor issued the Dayyamdinne plates (70) on the 4th of July, A.D. 692, which fell in his twelfth regnal year, registering the grant of 50 *nivartanas* of land each in the village of Uḷchal (Kurnool District) to the four brāhmaṇas, Dūśaśarman of Kauśika-gōtra, Kaṇṇaśarman of the same gōtra, Sarvaśarman of Ātreya-gōtra and Sarvaśarman of Gārgyāyana-gōtra.

While still on his soujourn in southern Mahārāshṭra, Vinayāditya had pitched his camp (somewhere in the Kolhapur region), on the banks of the river Sinna when, in the Śaka year 615 (A.D. 693-94), in the 13th year of his reign, on the full moon day of Māgha, he made a grant (71) of lands in the village of Uruvige (Kolhapur District) to the brāhmaṇa Daśaḡaṇaśarman of Bhāradvāja-sagōtra at the request of a certain Kaliṅgēti, obviously a Chalukya subordinate entrusted with the administration of that region.

In the next year of his reign, when the Śaka year was 615 (A.D. 693-94), Vinayāditya was in southern Karnāṭaka and, being encamped at the village of Karañjapatra (Chikmagalur District, Karnāṭaka) not far from Harēshapura (Hairhar, Chikmagalur District), he made a grant (73) of the village of Kiṛukāgāmāsi (Chikmagalur District) to the brāhmaṇa Iśānaśarman of Vātsya-sagotra, in appreciation of his accomplishment as a scholar in the *Vēdas* and *Vēdāṅgas*. The donee's grandfather Śrīśarman was a specialist in performing the Sōmayāga. The grant was made on the full moon day of Kārtika at the request of Āluvarāja who must be identical with the Ālupa ruler

Chitravāhana figuring in the Sorab plates of the same emperor, discussed above.

From the charters of Vijayāditya we learn that he had succeeded to the Chalukya throne sometime before the 3rd of April, A.D. 697, on which date he issued his Jamaḷagāma grant (79) in the very first year of his reign. It, therefore, follows that his father Vinayāditya ended his reign, perhaps as a result of natural death, sometime in A.D. 696. Vinayāditya's charters, by mentioning the various villages which he had chosen for his camps while on tours to different regions of his empire, reveal to us that he was able to devote his time and energy, spared by the blissful absence of wars with neighbours, towards the more constructive work of attending to the needs of his subjects. Though, with the exception of his clash with Vajraṭa, in which more than him his son was involved, Vinayāditya had, for the major part of his reign, laid down his arms, his posterity cherished the memory of his exploits as a prince and the later charters of the Kalyāṇa Chālukyas refer to him by his second warlike name of Yuddhamalla by which name he is once mentioned in his undated stone inscription (78) from Iṭagi (Raichur District).

Apart from Vijayāditya, Vinayāditya appears to have had another son named Lōkāditya who is referred to in an inscription (76) from Alampur as *eḷā-arasa*, literally *yuvarāja*. This Kannḍa inscription, which is undated, is engraved above the *dvārapālaka* image in the Svargabrahma temple and states that the temple in question was of the queen (*mahādēvi*) of Vinayāditya-*prithivīvallabha śrī-Vinayāditya-prithivīvallabha-mahādēviyarā-dēvakulam*). The next sentence reveals that the temple was constructed by Lōkāditya-*eḷā-arasa* (*śrī-Lōkāditya-eḷā-arasan-māḍisidon*). And Lōkāditya's queen (*mahādēvi*) granted to that temple the villages of Koḷkola, Kurimbala and Kalale as *dēvasva*. The expression *mahādēviyarā dēvakulam* may mean either that the temple was built posthumously in her memory or that it was constructed in her honour, even while she was alive. The way in which Vinayāditya is mentioned in the inscription does not necessarily indicate that he was alive at that time. It is very likely that the Svargabrahma temple was built by the prince Lōkāditya in memory or in honour of the emperor's queen when he was in

charge of the administration of the Alampur region as the deputy of Vijayāditya (A.D. 733/34-744/45) who may have been his elder brother.

It is reasonable to expect that, in the atmosphere of peace which prevailed during Vinayāditya's reign, the empire witnessed hectic architectural activities. However, in the absence of reliable epigraphical data, not much can be said with certainty in this regard though the Mahānandīśvara temple at Mahanandi (Kurnool District) is sought to be assigned to his reign.

The Gujarat Chalukyas, the Sēndrakas and the Ālupas of South Kanara continued as before to take a leading role in helping Vinayāditya run the affairs of his empire. We have mentioned above the reference to the Ālupa chief Chitravāhana-mahārāja as the administrator of the Kadamba-maṇḍala. In Gujarat, Vinayāditya's contemporary Chalukya ruler was Maṅgalarasa who, in his Manor plates (67) issued in A.D. 690-92, gives unto himself the epithets Vinayāditya-Prithvīvallabha-Jayāśraya, obviously in honour of his Vātāpī Chalukya overlord, Vinayāditya. Among the Sēndrakas, Pogilli-mahārāja finds mention in Vinayāditya's undated stone inscription (77) from Balagāmve (Shimoga District, Karnāṭaka) but may not have been ruling over that region since the findspot is located in the Kadamba-maṇḍala which was then under the Ālupas.

CHAPTER TEN

THE ERA OF BENEVOLENCE

Vinayāditya was succeeded by his son Vijayāditya sometime in A.D. 696 on some day in the month of Śrāvaṇa (June-July). Like his father, when he ascended the throne, he was no stranger to the complexities of imperial administration and to the rigours of the battle-field. During his grandfather Vikramāditya's protracted absence in the Tamil country in A.D. 670-74, when his father also was away, Vijayāditya shouldered well the responsibility of keeping peace and running the administration at home. That he was taking care of affairs within the empire is implied by the stereotyped phraseology of the Chalukya charters : *dakṣiṇ-āśāvijayini pitāmahē samunmūlita-nikhila-kaṇṭaka-saṁhatih*, 'when his grandfather had gone on a southern expedition of conquests, Vijayāditya had removed all hurdles (at home)'. This point is even more clearly stated in the recently discovered Alampur *praśasti* (114) :

*Trai-rājya-[Pallavaṁ jē] tuṁ prayātē sva-pitāmahē
tad-ājñayā [sva-rājyaṁ] yaḥ prāraḁshad-dhvaṁsita-dvisham*

'when his grandfather had gone away on a mission to conquer the Trai-rājya-Pallava, on his orders he (i.e. Vijayāditya) protected his own kingdom by destroying the enemies'. It was but natural that, encouraged by the continued absence of the emperor, ambitious subordinates turned recalcitrant. The young prince Vijayāditya was, however, equal to the task and put down all resistance with a firm hand.

As a matter of fact, he was groomed for the role he played as a prince and, later, as emperor, right from the days of his childhood, equal importance being given in his curriculum to his training in arms and in acquiring knowledge of the sciences. For, an oft-repeated

phrase of hiseulogy reads : *Śaiśava ēv-ādhigat-āśēsh-āstra-śāstrō* 'he who had, even in his childhood, learnt how to use all weapons and had also learnt all the sciences'.

His next big chance for showing his mettle, this time exclusively as a warrior and strategist, came when, on his northern expedition, his father Vinayāditya bade Vijayāditya to accompany him. The years of strenuous training he had undergone from his childhood stood him in good stead and he came out of the ordeal with flying colours, capturing all the royal insignia of the vanquished Lord of Uttarāpatha (Vajraṭa) and presenting them to his father. But, by a strange quirk of fate (*katham-api vidhi-vaśāt*) he was taken prisoner (*apanītaḥ*) by the fleeing soldiers of the routed enemy (*paraiḥ palāya-mānaiḥ*). And then, so continues the eulogy, putting an end to the resultant unrest and lawlessness in (his) kingdom, Vijayāditya, without anticipating help from any quarters, by himself escaped from the prison in much the same way as was achieved by Vatsarāja and became master of the entire earth by dint of the powers of his own arms :

*pratāpād-ēva vishaya-prakōpam-arājakam-
utsārayan-Vatsarāja iv-anapēkshit-āpara-
sāhāyakas-tad-avagrahān-nirgatya sva-bhuj-
āvashtāmbha-prasādhit-āśēsha-viśvambharaḥ*

The imprisonment and subsequent escapade of Vijayāditya must have occurred, as could be concluded by the application of the principle of *sāmipy-ānvaya* to the sequence adopted in the eulogistic phraseology, immediately after victory was achieved on the battle field against the army of Vajraṭa, some of whose fleeing soldiers must have chanced upon the insufficiently guarded person for the crown-prince and taken him prisoner. The capture of Vijayāditya by his fleeing enemies must have taken place in A.D. 686, and we know from the Karnūl grant of Vinayāditya that *Yuvarāja* Vijayāditya was with his father at the village of Eṛupundale (Karnul District) in January, A.D. 691 (66). From the reference in the eulogy to the anger generated among his subjects as a result of his capture and to the ensuing disorder, we may infer that Vijayāditya must have suffered a fairly long period of incarceration, though we have no means of knowing exactly

for how long.

The presumption that Vijayāditya had been taken prisoner towards the end of his father's reign and that his non-availability in A.D. 696 led to a state of kinglessness is not warranted by available epigraphical evidence.

Vijayāditya's distinguished role in the war against Vajraṭa, his falling prisoner and his unaided escape are the only recorded military events of his career, and all of them as crown-prince. After narrating these events in one breath as it were, his eulogy lapses into mere conventional strain saying that he was the Lord because he enjoyed without a break all the three *śaktis* (*akhaṇḍita-śakti-trayatvāt*), because he had humbled his enemies (*śatru-mada-bhañjanatvāt*), because he was munificent (*udāratvāt*), and because he was perfect, and, precisely because of these, he was the Lord of all the earth (*samasta-bhuvan-āśrayaḥ*); and his great reign (*prājya-rājya*) was brilliant with the prerequisites of an emperor (*paramēśvara*) such as the *pālīdhvaja* (which he had captured from the *paramēśvara* of Uttarāpatha even as a prince).

The recently discovered Alampur *praśasti* (114) to which references have been repeatedly made above and which, in all probability, belongs to the reign of Vijayāditya himself, devotes as many as twentytwo *ślōkas* out of the available seventyfour to the description of Vijayāditya's birth, childhood, prince-hood and imperial reign. The first three, describing the event of his birth, are almost wholly worn out. The next five verses speak of his childhood and career as crown-prince without adding anything new to our knowledge. The last fourteen verses have to do with his reign as emperor. And they, by enumerating all the good turns he did to his subjects, to the cause of religions, art and architecture, by highlighting him as a humanitarian, and a visionary-philanthropist who cared as much for the worldly comforts of the animals as for those of the aged and the indigent and the forlorn, project him as a noble catholic who showered patronage with equal devotion on the Śaivites, Vaishṇavites and Jains. His Alampur *praśasti* is indeed a pleasing departure from those of others which team with accounts of victories piled up in sanguinary battles, real or imaginary. The career of Vijayāditya may be studied

in the light of the information provided by the Alampur *praśasti* to great advantage.

The first of the fourteen ślōkas reads :

*Durdharō niravadya's-cha samasta-bhuvan-āśrayaḥ
Kṛitvā khyātimayim śāntim vyajānad-bhuvi viśṛitām*

‘Vijayāditya, who was irresistible and blemishless and was the refuge of all the world, created glorious and expansive peace and fanned it the world over’. The expression *samasta-bhuvan-āśraya*, which became one of the distinctive and opening epithets of the Kalyāṇa Chālukyas, was for the first time brought into use by Vijayāditya. The praise showered upon him as the establisher of peace is indeed a fitting introduction to his long reign. The next ślōka of which the second half is almost totally effaced, states that Vijayāditya was obeyed by all the subordinate rulers of his empire (*sva-rājyē prañat-āśēsha-rājanya-maṇi-mauljmān*).

The Alampur *praśasti* says that, for the sake of obtaining religious merit, Vijayāditya liberally bestowed thousands of great gifts on the brāhmaṇas, on the weak, the forlorn and the needy :

*dharm-ārthaṁ vyasṛijad-bhūri brāhmaṇēbhyaḥ sahasraśaḥ
dīn-ānātha-daridrēbhyaḥ mahā-dānāni sa prabhuḥ*

Indian epigraphy being what it is, dominated as it was by the learned sections of society, mostly brāhmaṇa by caste, particularly in the composition of the texts of charters as well as in receiving the grants recorded therein, we have no evidence whatsoever to substantiate the claim made in the Alampur *praśasti* (114) for Vijayāditya that he gave away munificent grants to the weak, forlorn and the needy, unless they were also among the brāhmaṇa recipients of the gifts which he is known to have given through his charters and lithic records.

His earliest available epigraphical record (79), issued in April, A.D. 696 in the very first year of his reign, is a charter registering the grant of the village of Jamalagama (Nasik District, Maharashtra) to three brāhmaṇas. On that date he was camping at Rāsēnapura (Rasin, Ahmednagar District, Maharashtra), when, at the request of Narendrāditya, who was obviously the administrator of the region in question, he granted that village to three brāhmaṇas, viz. Kottīsarman of

Kauśika-gōtra and two persons who bore the same name of Prabhākara and also belonged to the same gōtra of Bhāradvāja. Of these three donees, Kottīśarman and one of the two Prabhākaras had earlier received one thousand cows (*grihita-sāhasra*) for performing the *ēkāha* ceremony and the third donee was an expert scholar in the six branches of the Vēdic lore (*śaḍaṅga-vid*).

The brāhmaṇa Māraśarman of Vatsa-gōtra was the principal recipient (84) of the village of Yukrōmbe in order to enable him to perform the *agni-kārya* (kindling or feeding the sacrificial fire with clarified butter, etc., at the same time uttering the prescribed prayers), in 8th April, A.D. 700, in the fourth year of his reign when Vijayāditya was camping at Poṭṭalikā-nagara (Hoṭṭal, Nanded District, Maharashtra). It has been suggested elsewhere that Poṭṭalikā is to be identified with Paṭaṇcheru, 18 miles north-west of Hyderabad. We have seen above that the emperor had stationed himself at Rasin (Ahmednagar District) in April, A.D. 696. We again find him at Rasin on 5th of July, A.D. 700 when he issued the Nerūr plates (85). It is, therefore, more reasonable to presume that during the years in question Vijayāditya was journeying across his possessions in Southern Mahārāshṭra. The gift village Yukrōmbe was, however, situated in Peḍekalvishaya comprising part of Kurnool District. It is not unusual that an emperor encamped somewhere in the Ahmednagar District bestowed a village in the Kurnool District to donees who probably were residents of the gift-village. Most of these grants, it should be remembered, were made at the request of the subordinate rulers and officials of the empire.

The Nerūr plates (85) just now referred to state that Vijayāditya, from his camp at Rāsēnanagara, granted, on the 5th of July, A.D. 709, in the fourth year of his reign, the village of Nerūr (erstwhile Sawantawadi State, Mahārāshṭra) to the brāhmaṇa Dāsasvāmin of Vatsa-sagōtra.

In the 8th year of his reign, Śaka 625, on the 8th of September, A.D. 703, when he was staying at Karahāṭa (Karhād, Satara District, Mahārāshṭra) he granted (87) the village Jallagrāma to the brāhmaṇa Nāthēra of Śaṇḍilya-gōtra in appreciation of his scholarship in the four *Vēdas*. It will be shown in the sequel that, as per the Alampur

praśasti, Karahāṭa was the headquarters of the father-in-law of the emperor.

Three months later Vijayāditya was at Elāpura (i.e. Ellora, Aurangabad District, Maharashtra) when, on the 16th of December, A.D. 704, which fell in the 9th year of his reign in Śaka 626, he granted (88) the village of Bahmaṇavāda in Ālaktaka-vishaya to the brāhmaṇa Kēśavasvāmin of Bhāradvāja-sagōtra; and fifty *nivartanas* of land in the same village were granted to another brāhmaṇa, Durgāśarman of Kāśyapa-gōtra. The gift village was situated in the Dharwar-Belgaum-Satara region which was known as Ālaktaka-vishaya or Kuhūṇḍi-vishaya.

In his next (tenth) regnal year we find Vijayāditya encamped in the town of Kuhūṇḍi (modern Yakkūṇḍi, Belgaum District, Karnāṭaka) when, on 5th November, A.D. 705, the Śaka year being 627, when he made a grant (89) of the village Lōhagajjavāṭaka to the brāhmaṇa Sōmaśarman of Harita-sagōtra. The gift was given at the request of Kuṅkumadēvi who, as will be shown in the sequel, was the emperor's sister and wife of the Āḷupa ruler Chitravāhana.

In the same (tenth) regnal year (A.D. 705-06) eight brāhmaṇas drawn from different *gōtras* received (90) as a gift from the emperor the village of Hikūḷambha (situated in the erstwhile Sawantawadi State, Mahārāshṭra). The donees, who were all well-versed in the Vedic lore, were Dēvasvāmin of Bhāradvāja-sagōtra, Karkasvāmin of Kauśika-sagōtra, Yajñasvāmin of Bhāradvāja-sagōtra, Nāgammasvāmin of Kuṇḍinya-sagōtra, Dēvasvāmin of Maudgalya-sagōtra, Gargasvāmin of Ātrēya-sagōtra, Rudrasvāmin of Kāśyapa-sagōtra and Dēvaśarman of Vatsa-sagōtra. The grant was made at the request of Āḷupēndra, who was the same as the Āḷupa ruler Chitravāhana I who soon after married the emperor's sister Kuṅkumadēvi.

Towards the end of the eleventh year (A.D. 706-707) of his reign Vijayāditya, who had been camping at Kisuvolal (modern Paṭṭadakal, Bijapur District), journeyed all the way to Banavāsi (91) to pay a courtesy visit to Chitravāhana-Āḷupēndra who had by then become his brother-in-law. And in the third month of his thirteenth regnal year (September, A.D. 708) he was at Aihole (92).

In October, A.D. 710 (Śaka 632) in the 14th year of his reign,

Vijayāditya was back at Karahāṭanagara, this time along with his son Vikramāditya (II), paying one more visit to his Sendraka father-in-law. While there, on Sunday, the 12th October, the emperor granted (93), at the request of his son, the village of Kāruva (modern Karva, Aurangabad District) as well as 50 *nivartanas* of land at Karahāṭa-nagara to the brāhmaṇa Nāgallaśarman of Ātreya-sagōtra.

The next time we see Vijayāditya issuing a charter is only in Śaka 640, in the 22nd year of his reign, when on 21st March, A.D. 718, while he was encamped at Hatampura (i.e. Alampur, Mahabubnagar District, Andhra Pradesh) he made a grant (97) of the village Nirguṇḍi in Samagiri-vishaya to the brāhmaṇa Vatsasvāmin of Kāśyapa-gōtra. But two of his earlier stone inscriptions (96) from Alampur, both of them in Sanskrit language but one in archaic Kannaḍa script and the other in early Nāgari characters, were written in Śaka 635-36, the Kannaḍa one being dated 13th May, A.D. 713. This leads us to believe that Vijayāditya had made a protracted stay at Alampur from at least May, A.D. 713 to March A.D. 718, a period of five years during which he must have initiated and supervised hectic building and sculptural activities in that place which is a well known repository of Chalukya art and architecture. The Garuḍabrahmā and Viśvabrahmā temples at Alampur have been ascribed to his reign on stylistic grounds. It was in the eighteenth year of the same reign, in Śaka 636 (A.D. 714-15) that a certain Isānāchārya-svāmin completed the construction of the fort-wall around the temple town and christened it as *Niravadya-prākāra* after one of Vijayāditya's favourite epithets (96).

The latest available dated charter (103) of Vijayāditya, issued in Śaka 653, in his 36th regnal year (on 26th April, A.D. 731), when he was encamped at Raktapura (Paṭṭadakal, Bijapur District), records that he granted the village of Tāravadra (Broach District, Gujarat) to the brahmāṇa Bhavasvāmi-bhaṭṭa of Viśvamisra-gōtra in order to enable him to excavate a well (*vāpy-udyamanē*). The donee was well-versed in all the *śāstras* and had mastered the Vēdic lore.

After alluding to the munificent grants made by Vijayāditya to the brāhmaṇas as well as to the weak, the forlorn and the indigent, the Alampur *praśasti* (114) says :

*so-vyād-Bhāgavatān-Bauddhāñ-Jinēndra-matam-āśritān
sva-dharma-kriyayā viśyam nṛthyan-santarpayan-nṛipah*

‘The king protected the followers of (the different religious faiths, viz.) Vaishṇavism, Buddhism and Jainism and thus, through his pious acts, rendered the earth holy and satiated’. By omitting any reference to Śaivism, the composer clearly implies that, though the king himself professed Śaivism, he patronised the other faiths with equal sincerity. That this was not a false claim and that Vijayāditya was guided in his acts by a real zeal for catholicity is amply borne out by available epigraphical evidence. His Bādāmi pillar inscription (82), written on 20th May, A.D. 699 in his third regnal year goes step further and attests to the fact that the other members of the imperial house-hold were also of the same secular disposition. For, this inscription states that the queen-mother Vinayavati got the images of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara installed in what is now known as the Jambulinga temple which may therefore be assumed to have been built either during his reign or that of his predecessor, Vinayāditya.

The Shiggaon plates (91) of Vijayāditya, referred to earlier and issued on 20th June, A.D. 707 in his eleventh regnal year is another important record on hand. Vijayāditya, who had been earlier camping at Kisulvolal (modern Paṭṭadakal), had travelled all the way from there to Banavāsi (North Kanara District) in order to pay a courtesy visit to the Ālupa ruler Chitravāhana. The object of the plates is to register the emperor’s grant, made at the request of the Ālupa ruler, of the village of Guḍḍigere (Dharwar District) to the Jaina temple (*Jina-bhasana*) caused to be constructed by Kuṅkumadēvi at Purigere (s.a. Lakshmēśvara, Dharwar District). A later Jaina inscription from Gudigeri, dated in A.D. 1076-77 says—

Chālukya-chakravarti-Vijayādityavallabh-ānujey-appa śrīmat-Kuṅkuma-mahādēvi Purigereyalu māḍisid-Ānesejjeya-basadi, i.e. ‘the Ānesejjeya-basadi caused to be constructed at Purigere by Kuṅkuma-mahādēvi, the younger sister of the Chālukya emperor Vijayāditya-vallabha’. The inscription further states that, on the authority of a copper plate charter, the lands of Guḍḍigere were in the possession of the Ānesejje *basadi* built by the princess. It may be concluded from these that the copper plate inscription was the same as the Shiggaon plates and that

Kuṅkuma-mahādēvi of the later inscription and Kuṅkumadēvi of the Shiggaon plates were identical. Besides the Shiggaon plates, Kuṅkumadēvi also finds mention in the Bagalkot plates (89) of the same emperor, issued on 5th November, A.D. 705, perhaps as an unmarried princess.

The Shiggaon plates, immediately after referring to Chitravāhana's request to Vijayāditya, allude to Kuṅkumadēvi as *svahṛidaya-prahlādana-kāriṇī*, i.e., 'the delight to his hear'. From the context in which this phrase occurs, it should be interpreted with reference to Chitravāhana to whom she must have been given in marriage. It is, therefore, not surprising in the least that the emperor undertook a long journey from Paṭṭadakal to Banavāsi to meet Chitravāhana for, the latter was his brother-in-law. This close relationship is further highlighted by the lofty praises showered upon Chitravāhana, the loftiest of them being *Chalukya-rājy-ābhivṛiddhi-hētubhūtaḥ*, 'he who was the cause for the prosperity of the Chalukya kingdom'.

The Chalukyas commenced the texts of almost all their charters with an invocation to the Boar incarnation of Viṣṇu though individual members of the family, including the emperors felt free to identify themselves as specially devoted to either Śiva or Viṣṇu. Vijayāditya himself was perhaps a great devotee of Śiva as implied by his Alampūr *praśasti* (114). The Āḷupas too were traditionally great devotees of Śiva. Thus in the Shiggaon plates we find a Chalukya princess causing a Jaina temple to be built, in favour of which her husband, a staunch Śaivite arranged for the grant of a village, through the generosity of his brother-in-law who openly proclaimed his equal patronage for all religions.

Kuṅkumadēvi herself was not a dogmatic Jain. Her body had been purified by the ceremonial bath taken at the time of performing the brāhmaṇical Hiraṇyagarbha ceremony on which occasion she had gifted away many elephants, chariots, etc. (*hasti-rath-ādy-anēka-dāna-pradāna-purassara-hiraṇyagarbh-āvabhṛitha-snāna-pavitri-kṛita śarīrā*). And, according to the Bagalkot plates (89) of A.D. 705, she had requested her brother to make the grant recorded therein to a *vaidika brāhmaṇa*.

The claim made for Vijayāditya in the Alampur inscription that

he was liberal towards the weaker sections of society is vindicated by the evidence of the Shiggaon plates which also record details of further gifts given apparently to the same Jaina temple. For, while registering the gift of a piece of land in the village of Alaguṇḍi, care was taken in the context of delineating the boundaries in detail, to exclude from the gift the areas which had been set apart for the cobbler community and the outcastes (*saṃmagāra-chāṇḍālavāta-varjam*).

In the Śaṅkha-basti (Jaina temple) at Lakshmēśvar, there are two stone inscriptions of Vijayāditya's reign, both of which are 10th century copies of charters issued by the emperor and since damaged and lost. Of these, the first inscription (99) bears details of date corresponding to 20th August, A.D. 723 in the 28th regnal year of the emperor, while he was staying at Raktapuram (Paṭṭadakal, Bijapur District). The second inscription (101), bearing details of date corresponding to 7th February, A.D. 730, in his 34th regnal year also states that Vijayāditya was staying at Raktapura on that date. Vijayāditya spent the last years of his reign, as a considerably aged man, at Paṭṭadakal, directing and supervising architectural activities which were at their zenith during his enlightened rule.

The earlier of the two Lakshmēśvara inscriptions registers the grant of the village Semboḷal to the Jina-bhaṭṭāraka temple within the compound of the Śaṅkhabasti, made by Bikki-rāṇaka at the request of Vijaya who was holding the office of mahattara under the emperor. Bikki being a common abbreviation of the fullname Vikramāditya, the donor was perhaps none other than Vijayāditya's son and heir-apparent of the name. The later inscription records the grant of the village Kaddama by the emperor to the temple of Śaṅkha-jinēndra at the instance (upadēśēna) of the Jaina ascetic Udayadēva-panḍita *alias* Niravadya-panḍita whom the emperor counted among his preceptors (*sva-guru*).

Continuing his eulogy, the Alampur inscription (114) adds :

*sthānē sthānē cha satrāṇi daridr-ānātha-triptayē
paśūnām rōga-taptānām prītyā ch-āsthāpayan-nṛipaḥ*

‘Out of affection (for living beings), the king established asylums and

hospitals (*satrāṇi*) meant for the relief of the poor, the destitutes and sickly cattle.'

The grants made to the Śaṅkha-basti in A.D. 723 and 730 were meant not only for conducting worship to the Jaina deity and for carrying out repairs whenever necessary, but also for running the alms-house attached to that temple (*dāna-sālā-nimittam* and *tad-dāna-sālā-pravartan-artham*). Similarly, the grant made by him through the Shiggaon plates to the Jaina temple built by his sister at Puṛigere was also meant, among other things, to enable the running of its alms-house (*dāna-sāl-ādi dharma-pravartan-artham*). Needless to say, these alms-houses were meant to cater to the needs of the have-nots.

The available inscriptions of Vijayāditya do not associate Hindu temples with running of alms-houses. It cannot be gainsaid that the Jainas, eager to swell their numbers through conversions, undertook to serve the cause of the downtrodden and, with this in view, they had separate arrangements in their religious establishments for alms-houses. The Hindu temples which had no need to lure converts were anyway well endowed and in those days served more as media of education and entertainment than as asylums for the needy. This role of the Hindu temples is highlighted by the Alampūr inscription (114) when it is stated of Vijayāditya—

*Chira-saṁprāpta-jīrṇānām
khaṇḍa-sphuṭita-saṁskṛitē
saṁgīt-artham cha yō grāmān
prādād-dēvakulēshu cha*

'he gifted away villages to temples for their repair and maintenance as also for (holding) music concerts (in those temples)'.

Kings without number are known to have made grants for the maintenance and repairs of innumerable temples. But the credit given to Vijayāditya for arranging to regular music concerts in temples means more than meets the eye. An inscription (124) of his son Vikramāditya from Paṭṭadakal states that his queen Lōkamahādēvi confirmed to the singers the covenants (*maryādegā!*) which had been granted to them earlier by the emperor Vijayāditya-Satyāśraya. Covenants were to be followed for ever and wherever the writ of the

proclaimer lay. It is, therefore, explicit that Vijayāditya had made empire-wide arrangements for regular music concerts in temples by an imperial writ.

The next verse, of which the second half is almost wholly effaced, says that Vijayāditya had tanks excavated in all regions (*tatākā bahavas-tēna dēśē dēśē cha kāritāḥ*). There is ample epigraphical evidence to show that there were tanks and tanks in the Chalukya kingdom during Vijayāditya's reign. The Shiggaon plates, in their grant portion, contain references to no less than eleven tanks—Veṇṇetaṭāka, Kupēra-taṭāka, Kōḍi-taṭāka, Tapavi-taṭāka, Puḷivūra-taṭāka, Matkuṇa-taṭāka, Arasi-taṭāka, Kurlkella-taṭāka, Keṅgala-taṭāka, Mahishivāsa-taṭāka and Puli-taṭāka.

A comparative study of the Lakshmēśvar inscriptions of Polekēśi II (29), Vinayāditya (61) and Vijayāditya (99 and 101) leads to the conclusion that the provision of water to the subjects was not a mere fancy but had become an obsession with the last named emperor. The northern tracts of Karnāṭaka were, until recently, a very dry zone and must have been so during the days of the Chalukyas too. The earlier rulers had all been busy, mostly in the battle fields outside their domains, with the twin motives of increasing the area of their influence and keeping the enemies away from home. Vijayāditya and his times were different. Perhaps chastened by his capture by the enemies and thankful for his providential escape, he never provoked other powers nor did he let himself be provoked by them into waging futile, sanguinary wars. And he was statesman enough to utilise the peaceful conditions which prevailed during his prolonged reign to better purpose and he took pride in excelling his predecessors not as a warrior but as a benevolent ruler, not in piling up victory upon victory, but in giving away more than what all his predecessors put together gave by way of gifts and grants. The Alampur *praśasti* (114) says :

*sva-purvajā dvijātibhyaḥ
grāma-kshetrāṇy-aduḥ purā
su-grāmāṇi purāṇy-ēva
tēbhyaḥ prādād-ayam nṛipaḥ*

‘whereas his predecessors had granted villages and plots of land to brāhmaṇas, this king granted to them excellent villages and townships themselves’.

*tulāpurusha-dānāni bahu-kṛitv-ādiśat-tathā
hiranya-garbhām prithivīm hasti-yukta-rathān-api*

‘Many times giving away gifts of gold equal to his weight, he also ordered (to be given away as gifts) fertile lands and chariots yoked to elephants’.

*ānyē ch-āpi śruti-smṛityōr-uktān-
dharmān-avartayat
anyair-akṛita-pūrvams-tān
tathā śāstr-ānurōditān*

‘Besides, he also observed acts of piety, advocated by oral tradition as well as written rules, and which were approved by the religious texts, and never before observed by others’.

Having said this much on Vijayāditya's good deeds, many of them upheld by epigraphical evidence, the Alampūr inscription furnishes us with the hitherto unknown information that Vijayāditya had for his queen Mahādēvi, the daughter of Viṣṇurāja the Sēndraka lord of Karahāṭapura (Karād, Aurangabad District, Maharashtra).

*Karahāṭa-pur-ādhiśa-Sēndrak-ānvaya-janmanah
Viṣṇurājsya duhitā Madhādēvi pativrata
samasta-prithivī-patnī sapatnī Śrīr-iva-svayam
kīrttēr-mūrtt-iva yā rājñō vāmē hṛidi sushitā*

‘Mahādēvi, the daughter of the Lord of the city of Karahāṭa, Viṣṇurāja, who was born in the family of the Sēndrakas, was very devoted to her husband, was the mistress of the entire world, was verily the fellow-wife of the goddess of fortune, and (like her) was installed in the heart of her husband, and appeared as if she was the personification of his fame.’

There is no mention of Mahādēvi in any of the available records of Vijayāditya. But the Alampur inscription states that she was associated in many of her husbands philanthropic activities.

The royal couple many times jointly weighed themselves against gold and gave it away as gifts (*tayā saha samarōhat tulām-svarṇa-bharān-ayam*) and when they sat together for being thus weighed, they reminded people of Lord Viṣṇu and his consort seated on their couch, the serpent Śeṣha (*Mahālakshmyā Śēshaśayyām yathā Hariḥ*). Though by himself he had made enough donations, he was still not satisfied and he caused his queen again and again to make special gifts as were prescribed in the sacred books :

*svayam kṛitv-āpy-asantushtaḥ tayā kārītavān muhuḥ
dharmān-ātmikṛitēbhyō-pi viśiṣṭān-āgam-ōchitān*

This glorious, yet mostly tenable eulogy of the Alampur *praśasti* suddenly stops at this stage, for reasons not known. Towards the end of his reign Vijayāditya must have been a very old man, having been a youth capable of shouldering the burden of imperial administration even during the reign of his grandfather in A.D. 670-74. It is very likely that, owing to infirmities of age, he began to associate his heir-apparent as a full-fledge joint-ruler in the closing years of his reign. For, an undated Nerur charter (105) refers itself to the reign of Vijayāditya-Satyāśraya-śrīprithivivallabha-mahārājādhirāja-paramēśvara-bhaṭṭāraka who addresses all concerned (*sarvān-evam-ājñāpayati*) to the effect that his son (*sūnuḥ*) *Vikramāditya-Satyāśraya-śrīprithivivallabha-mahārājādhirāja-paramēśvara* had donated the village of Maḷavūra to the brāhmaṇa Sarvāditya-dikshita. Vijayāditya being addressed as *bhaṭṭāraka* and its omission in the case of his son is significant in so far as it is a term of address reserved for the reigning emperor and not to his joint ruler.

To the same transitional period belongs a stone inscription (106) from Paṭṭadakal which conjointly introduces the reigning father and son as *Vijayāditya-Vikrmāditya-Śrīprithivivallabha-Mahārājādhirāja-paramēśvara-bhaṭṭārar*.

The traditional foes of the Chalukya empire, in the south as well as in the north were quick to realise that the peaceful disposition of Vijayāditya was not a sign of weakness and never once provoked him until the very close of his reign when, perhaps, his advanced age encouraged Pallava Paramēśvaravarman II, the natural foe (*prakṛity-*

amitra) of the Chalukyas to try to retrieve the prestige lost during the victorious campaign of Vikramāditya I, thereby inviting upon himself the wrath of the Chalukyas. A damaged stone inscription (102) from Uḷchala, Kurnool District, informs us that *Yuvarāja* Vikramāditya went on an expedition to Kāñchi and levied tribute from Paramēśvara-Pallava. While on his way back from this successful campaign, he presented, in the 35th year of Vijayāditya's reign (A.D. 730-31), the villages of Uḷchaḷu and Pariyaḷu to the Western Gaṅga prince Durvinita Eṛeyappa, obviously as reward for assistance rendered in his war against the Pallavas.

The Western Gaṅgas of Taḷakāḍu were, like the Āḷupas of South Kanara, traditional subordinates and allies of the imperial Chalukyas. By its very situation, the Western Gaṅga domain served as a buffer zone between the warring empires of Karnāṭaka and Tamilnāḍu. It is but natural that, being a lesser power, the Gaṅgas were pushed about whenever wars broke out between the Chalukyas and the Pallavas. And most of the times they were forced to bear the brunt of the Pallava attacks though the Chalukyas were never slow in rushing to their aid. But, during the long reign of Vijayāditya, until *Yuvarāja* Vikramāditya (II)'s expedition against Kāñchi, the Chalukyas had left the Pallavas alone even though the latter continued to harass the Gaṅgas, perhaps because the Gaṅgas were acquitting themselves well in those wars even without help from their overlords.

Vijayāditya was well served by the traditional feudatory families of the Chalukyas, including the Gaṅgas. During his reign the Western Gaṅga throne was occupied successively by Śivamāra I whose reign ended somewhere around A.D. 725, and his son Sripurusha who enjoyed a phenomenally long reign. Both of them were able kings and by themselves kept the Pallavas contained, allowing Vijayāditya all the time at his disposal to look after the day to day affairs of his empire. The Āḷupa ruler Chitravāhana I who ruled almost contemporaneously with him was looking after the affairs of the erstwhile domain of the Kadambas of Banavāsi besides continuing to be the master of his ancestral kingdom on the West Coast. His importance and influence further increased by his marriage with the Chalukya princess, Kunkumadēvi, the sister of Vijayāditya. It is very likely that

Chitravāhana had successfully arrested the progress of the valiant Pāṇḍya ruler Kōchchaḍaiyaṇ (A.D. 700-730) at the coastal city of Mangalore thus thwarting the latter's designs to invade the Chalukya territories. This may be the reason for the praise *Chalukya-rājy-ābhivṛddhi-hētubhūtaḥ* showered upon the Ālupa ruler by Vijayāditya's Shiggaon plates (91).

In Gujarat, the scion of the Chalukyas, Vinayāditya-Yuddhamalla-Jayāśraya-Maṅgalarasa, who had become king as early as in A.D. 691-92 even during the reign of Chalukya Vinayāditya, continued to be on the throne at least for the major part of Vijayāditya's rule. His three known charters issued in A.D. 690-91 (67), A.D. 727-28 (100) and A.D. 731-32 (104) do not refer to Vijayāditya's suzerainty. On the other hand, Maṅgalarasa is endowed with the sovereign epithet of *prithvī-vallabha* in his charters. It is likely that the Gujarat Chalukyas who were deeply indebted to the main Vātāpī house and also acknowledged it in their charters, were allowed to flourish in a near-independent capacity by the peace-loving emperor Vijayāditya.

Another semi-independent contemporary of Vijayāditya, belonging to a traditional feudatory family was Bhōgaśakti of Harischandra-vaṁśa who, like his predecessors, was ruling over the Koṅkaṇa region with the towns of Purī for his capital. Like his imperial contemporary, Bhōga-śakti, who had the second name of Pṛithvī-chandra, evinced keen interest in allaying the spiritual and worldly difficulties of his subjects by expanding his time, energy and wealth in constructing temples, tanks, charitable feeding houses and watersheds (*satatam-ēva dēvakula-taṭāka-sattra-prapā-dharma-kriyānushṭhānavyasanī*). While granting eight villages to the temple of the god Nārāyaṇa, through his Añjanēri plates (94) issued in A.D. 710-11, he took care to see that the income from those villages was also spent on the maintenance of the charitable feeding house (*sattra*) attached to the temple as also on making arrangements for symphonic entertainment combined with dancing, singing and music (*nrīta-gīta-vādy-ōpēta-saṅgīta-ārthaṁ*).

From the Alampur *praśasti* (114) we learn for the first time that a line of Sēndraka chieftains had its seat of power at Karanāṭaka (Karhād, Satara District). The name of Vijayāditya's father-in-law

Sēndraka Viṣṇurāja makes a departure from the usual *śakti*—ending names of the other known Sēndraka chieftains, two other known exceptions being the names Sēnānandarāja borne by the maternal uncle of Polokēśi II, and Pogilli-Sēndraka figuring in the Baḷagāṃve inscription (77) of Vinayāditya. It is even possible that Sēnānandarāja and Viṣṇurāja belonged to the same branch of the Sēndraka dynasty.

Besides temples fallen into disrepair being renovated, quite a few new temples must also have been built during Vijayāditya's reign though, in the absence of clinching epigraphical evidence, we have to identify such structures mainly on stylistic grounds. We have seen above that the Jāmbulinga temple at Bādāmi and the Ānesejje Jaina *basti* at Lakshmēśvar were, as per epigraphical evidence, completed during his reign. The Garuḍabrahmā and Viśvabrahmā temples at Alampur and perhaps the Ramalingēśvara and Bhīmalingēśvara temples at Satyavolu (Kurnool District) were creations of the same reign period.

However, Vijayāditya's crowning architectural achievement was the construction of the Vijayēśvara temple now known by the name of Sangamēśvara at Paṭṭadakal. The Paṭṭadakal bīscriptal inscription (132) of Kirttivarman, after comparing Vijayāditya with Raghu in the matter of possessing a mind that was free from the evil influences of the Kali age, with Karṇa in munificence and with Bhīma in impetuosity, says that he had erected this 'great stone temple of the god Vijayēśvara-bhaṭṭāraka : *'Chalukya-varṃśa-vardhamāna-Raghur-iva Kali-yuga-nisṛishtamanāḥ Sūryasutam-iva dāna-ratas-sadā Vṛikodaram-iva sāhasaraikah śrī-Niravadyan-udāra-Vijayāditya-Satyāśraya-śrī-prithivī-vallabha-mahārājādhirāja-paramēśvara-bhaṭṭārakēna sthāpitō mahā-śaila-prāsādaś-śrī-Vijayēśvara-bhaṭṭārakah.'* In the light of the significance of the place name Paṭṭadakal, we may reasonably suppose that Vijayāditya had built the temple to commemorate the event of his coronation, in which case it must have taken a few years to complete after A.D. 696. Having built the temple he made generous land grants for its maintenance and services and also placed it in charge of the venerable Payōbhakshin who had gone to Paṭṭadakal from Mṛigathanīkāhāra, north of the Ganges. Though, in the 12th century, the temple was still known by its original name of

Vijayēśvara, the grants made to that temple by the builder had lapsed and services were not being properly conducted. Having come to know this, a noble lady of the court of the Kalyāṇa Chālukya ruler Taila III, Dāmaladēvi by name, and her son Āchidēva made a grant of land to the god Vijayēśvara on Monday, 20th May, A.D. 1163.

Another temple which can be ascribed with certainty to Vijayāditya's reign period is the temple at Kurtakōṭi (Gadag Taluk, Dharwar District) which today goes by the name of Kalamēśvara. An inscription (108) on a slab set up behind that temple states that the big temple (*mahā-dēgula*) was built by a certain Mupaṇṇa when Lōketinimmaḍi was governing Kuṛuttakuṁte. Lōketinimmaḍi was probably a princess of the Chalukya house.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE LAST FLICKER

The long reign of the late emperor Vijayāditya, spanning over a little less than four decades, had been a welcome departure from those of his war-like predecessors as much as the reign of his imperious and impetuous son and successor Vikramāditya II turned out to be a partial return to the old order; but only partial, because he combined in himself his father's liberal nature and his forefathers' thirst for wars of conquest and vendetta. From his own inscriptions and from those of his unfortunate son Kirttivarman II which are, however, not many in number, we are in a position to reconstruct a fairly authentic historical pen-portrait of this impulsive Chalukya emperor.

Vijayāditya died of old age either towards the end of A.D. 733 or very early the next year. For, the chronological data contained in the records of Vikramāditya II show that he ascended the throne as a monarch, in his own right, either in December, A.D. 733 or in January, A.D. 734, after having briefly enjoyed the status of a joint ruler.

Unlike his father who must have been on the wrong side of middle age at the time of his accession in A.D. 696, he having seen active military and administrative service even under his grandfather Vikramāditya I as early as in A.D. 670-74, Vikramāditya II was a young man well below middle age at the time of his accession, brimming with energy and enthusiasm. Even if we concede that Vikramāditya, mentioned in the Sātārā plates (93) of A.D. 710-11, without any royal epithets, as a suppliant requesting the emperor Vijayāditya to make a grant to a needy brāhmaṇa, was none other than the latter's son, the stark manner of his mention therein should be taken to imply that he had not come of age by then even to be

officially anointed as *yuvarāja*. It is likely that by the time he came of age, his father was tottering with old age and, unable to bear the full brunt of the imperial burden, straightaway proclaimed him as his joint ruler. And, before long, Vikramāditya found himself as the sole occupant of the Chalukya throne. The combination of youth and energy in his person at the time of his coronation as emperor is attested to by the Lakshēśvar stone inscription (116) which, though written in tenth century Kannaḍa characters, is obviously a later copy of a genuine charter issued on 13th January, A.D. 735 in Vikramāditya II's second regnal year, and which introduces him as one who was growing younger everyday (*pratidina-pravardhamāna-yauvanah*), a phrase significantly omitted in his later *praśastis*.

All the three major military expeditions known to have been carried out during the life-time of Vikramāditya II were directed against the Pallavas. And the first of them was carried out even when he was only a prince, in A.D. 730-31. He had then carried his arms down south and had given a sound drubbing to the Pallava ruler Paramēśvaravarman II (A.D. 728-31). Though Vijayāditya had permitted his son to undertake this expedition, which must have inevitably caused ripples of disturbance in and otherwise serene rule, perhaps desiring that his son's initiation on the battle field should precede the one on the throne, he does not appear to have whole-heartedly identified himself with Vikramāditya's adventure. For, though victory in that war had been achieved in his own reign, Vijayāditya did not lay any claim to the credit.

A Kannaḍa inscription (122) of Vikramāditya II, engraved on the front face of a pilasters on the left or south side of the doorway in the eastern gateway of the Virūpāksha temple at Paṭṭadakal alludes to the emperor as the conqueror three times over of three-fold Kañchi, i.e., Kāñchipura (*śrī-Vikramāditya-bhatārar-mūme-Kañchiyān-mūme parājisidōr*). Since only two expeditions of Vikramāditya II against Kāñchī as full-fledged emperor have come to light, we will be right in assuming that the third was the one he had organised in his prince-hood days. And, since the Paṭṭadakal inscription clearly avers that he had taken Kāñchi three times, we may further assume that in his very first expedition too, he had successfully

besieged the fortified city and broken its defences. His description, in the second year of his reign (A.D. 735) in a rather conventional vein, as one who had fostered the glory of his empire by invading the territories of his enemy (*ripu-maṇḍal-ākrānta-rājy-ābhyudaya-kēsari-kīṣōra-vikramaika-rasaḥ*) perhaps contains a veiled reference to this first expedition which he had led as a prince in the reign of his father.

Vikramāditya was not happy with his father's lack of enthusiasm for war and must have felt that his own time and youthful energy ought to be spent on battle fields. The statement included in his eulogy that he grew greatly enthusiastic following his proclamation as emperor (*sakala-bhuvana-sāmrājya-lakṣmī-svayaṁvar-ābhishēka-samay-ānantara-samupajāta-mahōtsāhaḥ*) more than implies that, though he was itching for battles, he had *perforce* restrained himself for as long as the imperial throne had not become his and that, once he became the monarch, he initiated hectic war preparations. And the very next statement of his eulogy touches upon his expedition to Kāñchi his second one, this time as emperor.

Vikramāditya II seems to have entertained an abiding grouse that the Pallavas, who had snatched away victory from one of his predecessors on the Chalukya throne (*ātma-varṁśaja-pūrva-nṛipati*) had not been sufficiently avenged. The predecessor alluded to was obviously Polekēśi II whose erstwhile victorious forces were routed in a series of battles by Pallava Narasimhavarman I (A.D. 630-68), thus putting an abrupt end to an otherwise envious reign and plunging the Chalukya empire into humiliating fiasco. As far as Vikramāditya II was concerned, nothing short of the total annihilation of these natural foes (*prakṛity-amitra*) could redeem the lost glory of his royal house. Armed with such vengeful enthusiasm (*mahōtsāha*), he set foot on the domain of his enemy (*Tuṁḍāka-vishayaṁ prāpya*) determined to uproot the Pallava ruler (*Pallavasya samūl-ōnmūlanāya kṛita-matiḥ*) who had snatched away victory from his forefather (*atmāvarṁśaja-pūrva-nṛipati-jayāpahārī*).

This invasion is for the first time referred to in the Narwan plates (117) of Vikramāditya II, issued on 21st December, A.D. 741 or 742 in the eighth year of his reign. It may, therefore, be

reasonably concluded that this invasion must have occurred sometime after 13th January, A.D. 735, the date of the Lakshmēśvar epigraph which does not allude to this war, and before the date of the Narwan plates. The Western Gaṅga ruler Śripurusha-Koṅguṇi-arasa (A.D. 725-776) fought on the side of his Chalukya suzerain in this war. A hero-stone inscription (118) at Hire-Madhure (Chitradurga District) records the death of the warrior Dāsi-amman, of the army of Koṅguṇi-arasa (Śripurusha) after putting to the sword eleven enemy soldiers in the battle which was fought by Vikramāditya for capturing Kāñchi.

Nandivarman II (A.D. 731-96), who was then on the Pallava throne, was but a boy when Vikramāditya II thus descended on him with a mighty force. The hapless boy-king nevertheless made bold to offer resistance, but suffered a stunning defeat; Vikramāditya forced him to take to his heels (*abhimukh-āgata-Nandipōtavarm-ābhidhāna-Pallavaṁ raṇa-mukhē samprahritya prapalāyya*). The unsuccessful defender did not even have time enough to carry with him his royal insignia and all of them, including the prestigious musical drum called *Katumukha*, musical instrument called *Samudraghōsha* and royal mace and standards fell into the victor's hands; besides capturing famous war-elephants, Vikramāditya II also came by a large booty which included heaps of brilliant precious stones and cart-loads of gold (*Katumukha-vāditra-samudraghōsh-ābhidhāna-vādyā-viśēsha-khatvāṅga-dhvaja-pramatta-prabhūta-prakhyāta-hastivārmś-cha kirāṇa-vikāranirākṛita-timiram māṇikya-rāsim-anēk-ōpavahaniya-mahā-hēma-rāśiṅ-cha hastēkritya*).

With Nandivarman II fleeing the battle field, the road to Kāñchi lay open and Vikramāditya carried his invasion to its logical conclusion, laid siege to the city and entered and occupied it, taking care to see that the city did not suffer from the ravages of war (*Kāñchim-avināśya praviśya*). The rout of Nandivarman II and the triumphant occupation of his capital city at once quenched Vikramāditya II's thirst for revenge and he forthwith applied himself to the task of appeasing the scared inhabitants of the city. He placated them with innumerable and bounteous gifts to the brāhmaṇas and to the weak and forlorn citizens (*satata-*

pravṛitta-dān-ānandita-dviḥ-dīn-ānātha-jaṇō). With his ego well and truly served, he transformed himself from an overbearing conqueror into a humble devotee of the gods and a refined connoisseur of art at its best. He visited the stone temples of the city, such as Rājasimhēśvara, built earlier by the Pallava ruler Narasimhavarman and, after inspecting the heaps of rich jewellery donated to those deities, most graciously returned them to where they belonged, thereby earning religious merit (*Narasimhapotavarmaṇā nirmitaśilā-maya-Rājasimhēśvar-ādī dēvakula-prabhūta-suvarṇa-rāśi-pratyarpaṇ-ōpārjita-puṇayaḥ*). This claim stands substantiated by an *in situ* inscription (119) of Vikramāditya II, engraved on the back of a pillar of the *maṇḍapa* in front of the Rājasimhēśvara shrine of the Kailāsanātha temple at Kāñchī, which states that Vikramāditya II, having captured Kāñchī, (*Kāñchiyān-koṇḍu*) and having inspected the riches belonging to the temple of Rājasimhēśvara (*Rājasimēśvarada dhanamān-kaṇḍu*) gave them again (*maguḍu*) to the god. Though the copper-plate eulogy of Vikramāditya II makes it clear that he had favoured the other temples of Kāñchī too in the same manner, the specific reference to the Rājasimhēśvara temple by name in that eulogy as also the presence therein of the Kannaḍa inscription discussed above prove that in the eyes of the local citizens as well as in the eyes of the conqueror that temple was the best as well as the most important among all the temples of Kāñchī.

The capture of Kāñchī, which symbolised in itself the cumulative power of the three traditional kingdoms of the Tamil country placed the Pāṇḍya, Chōḷa and Kēraḷa territories at Vikramāditya II's mercy. He did not let go of the opportunity and overran those territories and also defeated the Kaḷabhra ruler to boot (*anivārita-pratāpa-prasara-pratāpita-Pāṇḍya-Chōḷa-Kēraḷa-Kaḷabhra-prabhṛiti-rājanyakah*). And, in order to commemorate his extraordinary achievements, he set up on the shores of the southern ocean a pillar of victory which was verily the personification of his pure fame (*dakṣṇārṇavē śaradamala-śaśadhara-viśada-yaśōrāśimayam jayastambham-atishthipat*).

The third invasion of the Pallava territories occurred during the closing years of Vikramāditya II's reign, but on the initiative and

under the leadership of his son Kirttivarman II whose career started with a bang only to end in a whimper. Kirttivarman II's Kendūr (130) and Vakkalēri (133) plates state in identical terms that, on being proclaimed crown-prince, he begged of his father and also abstained from his orders to suppress their family foe, the lord of Kāñchī (*pitṛā samārōpita-yauvarājyaḥ svakula-vairiṇaḥ Kāñchīpatēr-nigrahāya māṁ prēshaya ity-ādēśam prārthya labdhvā*). Only after securing his father's express orders (*tad-anantaramēva*) he set out on his march (*kṛita-prayānaḥ*); on finding the Pallava adversary unwilling to face him in open warfare and, instead, withdrawing himself and his armies into the citadel, Kirttivarman broke his might (*abhimukham-āgatya prakāśa-yuddhaṁ kartum-asamarthaṁ praviṣṭa-durgam Pallavam bhagna-śaktim kṛitvā*); and he captured and took with him, in enormous quantities, rutting war elephants, precious stones and gold and presented them to his father (*matta-mataṅgaja-māṇikya-suvarṇa-kōṭir-ādāya pitrē samarpitavān*). This third invasion must have taken place after December 741 or A.D. 742 sometime during the last three or four years of Vikramāditya II's reign, once again Nandivarman II being the sufferer. At any rate there does not appear to have been much of a gap between the second and third expeditions, for the charters of Kirttivarman II state that after his return from his war against Pallava ruler, he became emperor in course of time (*kramēṇa prāpta-sārvabhauma-padaḥ*). Since he is known to have ascended the throne on some day in A.D. 744-45 and since we have to give an interval of time between his return from Kāñchī and his accession, as implied by the word *krāmēṇa*, we may tentatively suppose that the third Kāñchī expedition occurred some time during A.D. 743-44.

For all his impetuosity Vikramāditya was even more self-denying than his father. We have seen above that Vijayāditya did not share the credit with Vikramāditya II for the father's triumph over Pallava Nandivarman when he was still a crown-prince. In the Chalukya charters issued subsequently, we find that Vikramāditya II's eulogy makes no mention of his conquest of Kāñchī as a crown prince nor do they accord him any credit for the campaign conducted by his crown-prince Kirttivarman II. It is likely that Vikramāditya had himself renounced all claims on these two.

expeditions, the first one in favour of his father and third, in favour of his son, claiming for himself credit only for the second expedition which he himself had led as emperor. This is the reason why we do not find mention of three invasions of Kāñchi by Vikramāditya in his official eulogy though direct epigraphical evidence is available for all of them.

The Paṭṭadakal Tirūpāksha temple inscription (122) adverted to earlier, contains the only known direct epigraphical mention of Vikramāditya II having conquered Kāñchi thrice. It is not a royal inscription but a private one written in appreciation of service rendered to the community of craftsmen by one of their own members, the renowned Sarvasiddhi-āchari who had supervised the construction of the Lōkēśvara temple. And even here the purpose of referring to the three conquests appears to have been more for the sake of rhyme (*mūme-Kañchi*, *mūme-parājisidōr* and *mūmē-perjerēpu*) than for recording a historical fact.

Barring the two wars waged against the Pallavas, one on his own and the other under the leadership of his son, the reign period of Vikramāditya II, was a continuation of the era of peace and prosperity inaugurated by his father Vijayāditya. The successful forays into the Pallava country of both father and son were enough to register in the minds of contemporary powers the military might of the Chalukya empire. Vikramāditya II utilised the prevailing atmosphere of peace for hectic building activities. During his reign many new temples were built and many old ones must have got more than mere facelifts. Playing leading roles in building activities were his two queens, Lokamahādēvi and Trailōkyamahādēvi, who were uterine sisters hailing from the Haihaya royal family, and of whom the latter had given birth to Kīrttivarman II, the last of the Chalukya rulers.

Lōkamahādēvi had caused to be built (121) the great stone temple (*mahā-śaila-prāsāda*) of the god Lōkēśvara-bhaṭṭāraka (presently called Virūpāksha) to the south of the great stone temple of the god Vijayēśvara-bhaṭṭāraka, presently called Saṅgamēśvara (*śrī-Vijayēśvara-bhaṭṭārakas=tasya dakṣiṇa-dig-bhāgē*). There are two interesting Kannaḍa inscriptions engraved on the eastern gateway

of the Lōkēśvara temple, one on the front face of a pilaster on the right of north side of the doorway and the other on the front face of a pilaster on the left or south side of the same doorway. The right side inscription (123), when properly interpreted, states that Guṇḍan-Anivārit-āchari was the architect responsible for the construction of (the northern side of the temple of) the great queen (*mahādēvī*) of the emperor Vikramāditya; he was thrice anointed and was endowed with great prosperity (*per* + *cherapu*, s.a. Tamil *perum* + *chirappu*, 'abundance', 'wealth', 'prosperity') and was also given a name of distinction as Tribhuvan-āchāri. As part of the felicitation, it was proclaimed that the settlements of the craftsmen all over the empire were above forfeiture; if an individual craftsman should commit a crime, he will forfeit (what belongs to him) and the others will receive compensation. Sometime after the temple was completed lands (*pannāsu*) at the village of Nareyaṅgallu were donated to the Lōkēśvara temple on condition that the cultivators of those lands shall give to the temple two *kūlas* (i.e. 128 seers) of millet for every *mattar* (an ancient land measure) of land.

The second inscription (124), which also needs to be interpreted afresh, sings the praise of the architect responsible for the construction of the southern side of the temple. It says with a flourish 'know ye the fame (*pessar*) of the craftsman (*āchari*) who was thrice felicitated for constructing the Lōkēśvara temple of the senior queen (*mahādēvī*) Lōkamahādēvī, the queen of the emperor Vikramāditya who had thrice taken the three-fold city of Kāñchi and because of whom the craftsmen of this district (*vishaya*) have been exempted from forfeiture of their settlements. He is Sarvasiddhi-āchari, the abode of all good qualities, the creator of many sculptures (*rūpa*) and buildings (*vāstu*), whose utterances are entirely perfect and refined, whose diadem is verily the many houses and palaces and cars and seats and couches he has constructed and who is the builder of the southern side of this temple'. It is clear from these two inscriptions that the largest temple at Paṭṭadakal was the creation of these two master architects, Guṇḍan Anivārit-āchari having supervised the work of the left half, and Sarvasiddhi-āchāri the right half of the temple in question. Since one of these inscriptions speaks of Vikramāditya II having taken Kāñchi

thrice and since we know that the third invasion had taken place only towards the close of his reign, it is clear that the temple was completed, if not wholly constructed during that period, i.e. not before A.D. 743.

The Paṭṭadakal inscription (132) of Kīrttivarman II, which contains historical information on the Vijayēśvara and Lōkēśvara temples, also states that Trailōkyamahādēvi's great stone temple of Trailōkēśvara (presently called Mallikārjuna) was constructed to the north of her elder sister's temple. It must be pointed out here that there is no evidence whatsoever to say that these two temples were built by the two sisters to commemorate their husband's conquest of Kāñchi thrice. As a matter of fact, even the assertion that these temples were built by the two queens is not substantiated, let alone revealed, by the diction of the inscriptions. The Paṭṭadakal inscription (121) of Lōkamahādēvi states that the Lōkēśvara temple is that of Lōkamahādēvi (*Lōkamahādēviyarā i Lōkēśvara*). The Nāgarī version of Kīrttivarman's Paṭṭadakal inscription (132) referred to above, while speaking of the Lōkēśvara temple, uses the expression *tasyāḥ* (*of her*) with reference to Lōkamahādēvi, meaning thereby that it was the temple of Lōkamahādēvi and does not specify that it was *built* by her. Nor does that inscription specifically say that the Trailokyēśvara temple was established by Trailokyamahādēvi. Even the Virūpāksha temple inscriptions refer to the Lōkēśvara temple as *of* Lōkamahādēvi and not as *built* by her. Under these circumstances any extended hypothesis to the effect that the two queens got these temples built in order to commemorate their husband's conquest of Kāñchi thrice become untenable. What is more probable is that the two queens got these temples built, each in her own name, in order to ensure for themselves divine blessings in this world and beyond. Such being the case, the two inscriptions of the Lōkēśvara (Virūpāksha) temple are to be taken not necessarily as belonging to the reign of Vikramāditya II but as merely mentioning him as the husband of Lōkamahādēvi. For all that we know, the inscriptions may even belong to the next reign and the temple itself may have been completed during the time of Kīrttivarman II. The Paṭṭadakal inscription of Kīrttivarman II which speaks of the two temples as

already completed can be precisely dated to 25th June, A.D. 754. We may, therefore, fix the upper and lower limits of the time of the completion of these temples as A.D. 743 and 754.

Like his predecessors Vikramāditya too was not lacking in secular outlook. Not many inscriptions of his reign have come down to us. But the few that are available attest to his catholicity. His earliest as yet known dated inscription (115), from Tippalūru, Cuddapah District, Andhra Pradesh, registers the grant of land at Maṇṇalūru as *pannasa* to Ísvara, a *brahmaṇa* of Vēṅgi by Aṇṇārāpūli-Vambuḷu when a certain Pōrmukharāma was governing the territory bounded by the river Peṇṇa on behalf of the Bāṇa chieftain, Vāṇarāju. Like his predecessors, Vikramāditya II also continued to enjoy the loyalty of the Bāṇa chieftains, including those of the Vaṅganūru *vishaya*.

The next dated inscription (116) of his reign was a charter, a later copy of which is found engraved on a slab in the Śaṅkha-basti at Lakshmēśvar. The original charter was issued on 24th January, A.D. 734 in the second year of Vikramāditya II's reign and states that he was, on that date, staying at Raktapura (=Paṭṭadakal). It records a gift, by the emperor, of fifty *nivartanas* of land, at the request of Bāhubali-śrēshṭhi, for repairs and offerings to Dhavaḷa-Jinālaya as also for running the alms-house attached to that temple. The gift was entrusted to the Jaina pontiff Vijayadēva-paṇḍitāchārya of Mūla-saṅgha and Dēva-gaṇa. It is interesting to note that no less than four Chalukya emperors, Polekēśi II, Vinayāditya, Vijayāditya and, finally, Vikramāditya, were associated with the Jaina establishment at Lakshmēśvara over a span of more than a hundred years.

His Narwan plates (117), issued in his eighth regnal year, Śaka 664, on 21st December, A.D. 741 or 742, state that he was encamped at Ādityavāḍa (Satara District) when, at the request of Rāshṭrakūṭa Gōvindarāja, son of Śivaraja, he granted the village of Naravaṇa along with Chindramāḍa (both in the Ratnagiri District). on the sea coast, to a number of brāhmaṇas headed by Deggula-svāmin and Nāgaḍidikshita, both of Kauśika-gōtra and students of sacred texts.

His inscription (120) on a slab in the Durga temple has been

badly misunderstood by Fleet. It registers the grant of a portion of his tax incomes by Rēvādi, who was the collector of the *vaḍḍaraūla* tax, to the Sun-god installed in the temple of Komarasinga. It is well known that the tax *vaḍḍaraūla* finds frequent mention in a number of Kannaḍa inscriptions of the 10th-12th centuries A.D. and that important officials were entrusted with its collection. We learn for the first time from the present inscription that the history of this tax goes back to the middle of the 8th century A.D., even during the period of the Vātāpi Chalukyas *Vaḍḍaraūla* is the *tadbhava* of Sanskrit *vriddha-rājakula* and obviously stands for a cess collected for the maintenance of those aged members of the royal families who had no claims for the throne but depended upon it for their subsistence. This brings to our mind the expression *rājakulam kṇippaṛṛu* of some Tamil inscriptions to denote land holdings which yielded income for the maintenance of members of the royal family who were dependent upon the king for their livelihood. Such remission of taxes by ways of grants to individuals and temples was in common practice in Karnāṭaka as elsewhere in the south from early times and, for the reign of Vikramāditya himself, we have a cognate but badly damaged inscriptions from Byāgavāḍi, Dharwar District (126). Illustrative of civic activities undertaken during the reign is a sole inscription (127) from Guḍuguḍi, Dharwar District, which refers to the excavation and construction of a tank.

The death of Vikramāditya II has been commemorated in a manner which is of absorbing interest to Indian historians. Bhadra Nāyakana Jālihāḷa is about 5 kms west of Paṭṭadakal. To the west of the village is a U-shaped valley formed by the red sand-stone hill range. A thin water-fall from a perennial spring adds to the idyllic setting. In this valley, locally called Haligevvana-kolḷa, are a cluster of eleven red-sand-stone shrines and a large rock shelter. The shrines, of different sizes, have been built at different heights. Of the eleven shrines, the largest one, at the bottom of the valley and flanked by two smaller shrines, consists of a *garbha-gṛiha* and an *ardha-maṇḍapa*. It stands on an *adhiśthāna* but does not have a *śikhara*. The shrine faces north and the entrance is flanked by two *dvārapālas*, one on each side, with a *parasol* each over their heads.

The *sanctum* has a *liṅga*. As one enters the shrine, to the right of the left *dvārapāla* is a Kannada inscription (128) in three lines which reads, with minor orthographical corrections, as follows :

1. *Svasti [*1] śrī-Vikramāditya-Satyāśraya [1*]*
2. *Dēvāriya maganu Benamma karamḍada*
3. *pāradana kēsida [*1] dharmmav-akke*

‘Be it well. The illustrious Vikramāditya-Satyāśraya. Benamma, the son of Dēvāri, made this havenward vehicle of the casket. May it be a meritorious deed’.

The conclusion which the above inscription leads to is that on the death of Vikramāditya his (cremated) mortal remains were placed in a casket (*karamḍe*) and buried at the spot over which the shrine in question was constructed.

We have stated above that Vikramāditya II was a youth at the time of his coronation, well below middle age. He was no more after a short reign of a little over a decade, and, therefore, must have met with a premature end. The site at B.N. Jālihāḷa has the appearance of a mass cemetery, all the eleven shrines having been perhaps built at the same time. It is not a little significant that just behind the memorial shrine of Vikramāditya there is a hero-stone in three panels, the lowest one depicting three bullocks, two in moving posture, and the third lying down, symbolically representing the journey’s end or death. The middle panel depicts a hero and two females being escorted to heaven by a fourth figure and the top panel depicts the hero, flanked by two females, regaling in the heavens. Such memorial slabs with unyoked bullock have been used from very early times to commemorate merchants or individuals who had died most probably while on the move and as a result of ambushes. It is possible that Vikramāditya II, his two queens and at least eight more important persons who had accompanied them fell victims to such an ambush and that, in their commemoration, these sad-looking shrines in the death-reckling site were built all at the same time in different sizes in keeping with their status? Is this be so, the two slightly smaller shrines flanking the tomb-shrine of Vikramāditya may be the ones of his devoted queens Lōkamahādēvi and Trailōkyamahādēvi.

Notwithstanding the fact that he was not an old man at that time, Vikramāditya II had, for reasons not known to us, proclaimed his son Kirttivarman II as his heir-apparent and crown-prince around A.D. 742. Neither the end of his reign soon afterwards nor the commencement of Kirttivarman's betrayed any signs of impending disaster, unless we take the sudden fall in the number of inscriptions, of copper plate inscription in particular, during these two reigns as ominous. The known fact is that thirteen years after the death of Vikramāditya II, the Chalukya empire was no more. As will be shown in the sequel, overwhelming circumstances rather than any inherent weakness either in the imperial set up or in the individual who succeeded him, were responsible for this otherwise unexpected collapse.

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE TOTAL ECLIPSE

Kirttivarman II who succeeded his father sometime in A.D. 744-45 also had a short reign, the effective part of it covering a little over a decade. He was born of Vikramāditya II's junior queen Trailōkyamahādēvi, who, and her elder sister Lōkamahādēvi, the senior queen of the same emperor, hailed from the Haihaya royal house.

His eulogy as given in the copper-plate charters issued by him shows that he was carefully groomed for the role of emperor having received training even as a child in the art of wielding arms as well as in all the sciences (*bālyē suśikshita-śāstra-śāstrah*). Pleased with his good qualities, his father proclaimed him crown prince (*sva-guṇa-kalāp-ānandita-hṛidayēna pitrā samārōpita-yauvarājyah*). And we have seen above how, on being made *yuvarāja* he beseeched his father to permit him to wreak vengeance on the family foe (*svakula-vairi*) of the Chalukyas and how well he accomplished the task he had taken upon himself. After his return from the victorious expedition to Kāñchī, he, in course of time (*kramēṇa*), became emperor (*prāpta-sārvabhauma-padaḥ*). And when follows a conventional rhetorical eulogy to the effect that his lotus like feet were rendered yellowish by the mass of pollen on the numerous crests of all feudatory kings, who bowed to him through love of his heroism (*prāptānūrāg-āvanata-sāmanta-makuta-mālā-rajah-puñja-pimjarita-charaṇasarasīruhaḥ*). That the same eulogistic phrases are verbatim repeated in his Kendūr plates (130), issued in his sixth regnal year on 2nd April, or 4th May, A.D. 749, and his Vakkalēri plates (133), issued in his eleventh regnal year, in July, A.D. 756, is clearly indicative of the fact that, for at least eleven years after his accession, he had only his lone military triumph, scored as a crown prince, to claim.

It is likely that just before his father's death, perhaps on his being seriously incapacitated in the ambushade, Kirttivarman had to take in his hands the reigns of the empire. This is suggested by the undated Chandana inscription (138) which introduces him by clubbing his name with that of his father as *Śrī-Vikramāditya-Satyāśraya-śrīpṛithivivallabha-Mahārājādhirāja-Paramēśvara-Kirttivarmma-bhaṭāra*. It refers to the rule of his subordinate Bāṇarāja over Suramaruvishaya and records the grant of a *pannavisa* to the brāhmaṇa Kaṇavadi by another subordinate, Dharaṇappan, who was administering Cheñjōṇe (i.e. modern Chandana). The donor Dharaṇappan hailed from Tagaḍūr in the Tamil country and that explains the Dravidian form of the donee's name Kaṇavadi (for Gaṇapati) who also must have hailed from the same region.

Kirttivarman II issued his Ainūli charter (129) in his fourth regnal year, in June, A.D. 748 or 749, when he was encamped at the village of Nelavoḍige (Gulbarga District) on the Western bank of the river Bhaimarathī and when, at the request of the Sēndraka subordinate Nāgaśakti, he granted the village of Kāraṇanūr to two brāhmaṇas, Bhavaśarman of Agastya-gōtra and Sarvasvāmin of Kāśyapa-gōtra.

At the time of issuing the Kendūr plates (130) in A.D. 749-50, Kirttivarman II was encamped at Raktapura (Paṭṭadakal, Bijapur District) when he, at the request of his senior queen (name not given) granted the village Beppaṭṭi (s.a. Behaṭṭi, Dharwar District) to the brāhmaṇa Rāmaśarman of Kāśyapa-gōtra, who was well versed in the Vēdic lore. The donee's father Mākeya is therein stated to have performed the Vājapēya sacrifice.

He issued the Vakkalēri plates (133) in A.D. 756 from his camp at Bhaṇḍāragaviṭṭage (s.a. Bhaṇḍārkawte, Sholapur District) on the northern bank of the river Bhimarathī when he was probably on an inspection tour of the northern holdings of the Chalukyas. Through these plates he granted, at the request of Dōsirāja, the village of Sulḷiyūr along with its two hamlets (Hangal Taluk, Dharwar District) to the brāhmaṇa Mādhavaśarman of Kāmakāyana-gōtra. The donee's grandfather Viṣṇuśarman was a scholar in Ṛig-vēda and Yajur-vēda.

Apart from these three copper-plate inscriptions, there are a few

stone inscriptions in different states of preservation, from which we can conclude that, like in the reigns of his predecessors, during Kirttivarman II's rule also, all religious faiths received sufficient patronage, royal, official as well as private. A pillar inscription (131) now set up in front of the Banaśaṅkari temple at Aṇṇigēri (Dharwar District) states that a *chēdiya* (i.e. *Chaitya* or Jaina temple) was caused to be constructed by Kaliyamma while he was holding the office of *gāmuṇḍu* for the locality called Jēbulagēri during the sixth year (A.D. 750-51) of the rule of Kirttivarman II. An undated Kannaḍa inscription (134) of this ruler from Āḍūr (Dharwar District) records the grant of eight *mattar* of wet land to the west of Karmagālūru for worship and offerings in the temple (*bhavana*) of Jinēndra built by a *gāmuṇḍa*. Sindarasa and Mādhavattiarasa figuring therein appear to have been officials serving under the emperor, the latter probably of Sēndraka extraction. A Sanskrit inscription (134) engraved above this and probably belonging to the same reign makes mention of the charitable alms house *dāna-śālā* attached to that temple. An undated inscription (135) from Nilūru (Anantapur District) states that Kirttivarman II granted certain agricultural rights and privileges to two *gāmuṇḍas* as a measure of alleviation. Another undated inscription (136), from Diḍgūr (Dharwar District) mentions Dōsi as the governor of the province of Banavāsi-12000 (i.e. Kadamba-maṇḍala) under Kattiyara's (Kirttivarman II's) universal rule and states that a certain Kaḷagaḍigaḷ rescued cattle (captured in a raid) in appreciation of which Dōsi remitted the tax income from Sangavūru (in favour of the hero). The mention of Banavāsi as a twelve-thousand province in this inscription is one of the earliest direct epigraphical references to a numerical division barring a somewhat vague reference to Mahā-rashṭrakatraya-99000 in the Aihole inscription of Polekēśi II.

Eversince the punitive expedition successfully carried out by Vikramāditya I, the indignant successor of Polekēśi II, the Chalukyas had always been on the offensive forcing the Pallavas again and again to pay heavily for the humiliation they had heaped upon the victor of the mighty Harshavardhana. After the return of the Pallava forces of Narasimhavarman from Vātāpi, never once were they able to penetrate into the Chalukya domains, intrusions, into the buffer zone

held by the Western Gaṅgas as the feudatories of the Chalukyas. This had brought about, in course of time, the realisation among the Chalukyas and, more importantly, among the other neighbouring as well as far off powers that the core of the Chalukya empire had come to stay as a *chakravartikshētra*, i.e. as a permanent imperial nucleus. From the time of Vikramāditya I onwards the Chalukyas did not have to defend this imperial nucleus, and, on the other hand, merely indulged in warlike activities to their south and north more to exhibit their imperial might than to further expand their already vast holdings. After his successful war with Vajraṭa in A.D. 685-86, which was, in fact, more of his own making than thrust upon him, Vinayāditya spent the rest of his years as emperor in an atmosphere of peace. We have seen above that, for all the extensive possessions he had under his rule, which must have been difficult to manage in those days of slow communication, Vijayāditya had a long reign of peace in the course of which there had been no threat of invasion from outside. His son Vikramāditya II and grandson Kirttivarman II, the former twice and the latter once, wantonly carried out expeditions against the Pallavas who, embroiled as they were in their own problems at home, were in no position to resist, let alone retaliate. These long years of immunity against attacks from outside must have made each successive ruler more and more complacent. They failed to realise that while the concept of an empire with its imperial nucleus in Karnāṭaka had come to stay, any complacency on their part may bring about the transfer of that empire's throne from one family to another without in any way eroding the imperial concept itself.

The traditional feudatory families such as the Western Gaṅgas, Ālupas, Sēndrakas, and Bāṇās of Vanganūr-nāḍu and Suramaṇu-vishaya had all remained faithful though epigraphical evidence indicates that, even as the emperors were becoming progressively more and more complacent, the feudatories tended to develop more and more of an indifference to the Chalukyas, basking themselves in the prevailing conditions of peace by resorting to greater regalia and cultivating greater involvement in their respective possessions than in the safety of the Chalukya dynasty and the empire as a whole. The undated Peddapēṭa inscription (137) serves as a classic example

of this feudal indifference and imperial helplessness without ascribing to him any of the usual Chalukya or imperial titles, the inscription merely refers to the rule of Kīrttivarmma-Anivārita and then states that when (his subordinate) Pṛithvi-Vāṇarāja and the Paramēśvara (i.e. Kīrttivarman II) were together, a grant of 25 *maṛutu* of land was made to Duggya, a brāhman of Vēṅgi by Raṇaviyyaya. The mention of the Bāṇa subordinate first and of the emperor next has its own story to tell.

Though the Chalukyas themselves were unaware of it, historians know full well, thanks to epigraphical sources, that the final supplanter of the Chaukyas belonged not any one of the already powerful royal houses but to an ancient but obscured family which had freshly risen and was taking quick strides southward. That was the family of the Rāshtrakūṭas who, in their inscriptions, claim to belong to the Yādava race from which we may infer that Gujarat was their original home. There having been quite a few Rāshtrakūṭa families of minor significance ruling in different parts of the Deccan during the sixth and seventh centuries A.D., the one, with which we are concerned here, was launched on its road to imperial stature by Nannarāja, the son of Svāmikarāja and father or paternal uncle of Dantivarman from whom the Rāshtrakūṭas of Mānyakhēṭa normally commence their genealogy. The careers of Nannarāja, Dantivarman and his son Indra, about which we know next to nothing, are not as relevant here as those of the latter's successors. Indra's son Gōvindarāja I and his son Karka I *alias* Pratāpaśīla are known to us, from the recently discovered, undated Bindon (Aurangabad District) plates, palaeographically assignable either to the second half of the 7th or the first half of the 8th century A.D. From this charter, we learn that Karka I, its issuer, was then ruling over the Aurangabad-Parbhani region in Marathwada. The charter eulogises Gōvinda I as *samprāpt-āśēshamahāśabdaḥ*. We have seen above that Vinayāditya claims to have seized the honour of *Mahāśbda* from Vajraṭa, the lord of Uttarāpatha. Gōvinda I, who must have been a contemporary and subordinate of Vinayāditya, perhaps greatly assisted the Chaulukya emperor in his war against Vajraṭa and had consequently partaken the credit of capturing

the honour of *mahāśabda*. The lofty claim may not have at that time rung the bell of warning, for Vinayāditya's imperial might was unassailable. Gōvinda's son Karka I describes himself in glorious terms as one whose feet were touched in worship by the diadems of enemy kings. His feudatory Svāmirāja is labelled as *anuchara* (follower, or servant) and Karka I himself is elevated to the position of *parama-svāmin*, the supreme lord. Even this did not sound a warning in the ears of his imperial contemporary and, perhaps, overlord Vikramāditya II who too knew that he was safely entrenched in the security of an invincible empire. It is claimed by the Rāshtrakūṭa charters on behalf of Karka I's son Indarāja that he forcibly married the daughter of a Chālukya ruler after a show of force in battle fought at the marriage *pandal* (*maṇḍapa*) at Khēṭaka (modern Kaira, Gujarat). The ruler defeated by Indrarāja was, in all probability, of the Chālukya house of Gujarat. Even this audacity exhibited by the Rāshtrakūṭa subordinate in picking up a fight with a close scion of the imperial house did not serve as a warning to the Chalukya emperor (either Vikramāditya II or Kirttivarman II himself) who may have lightly dismissed the incident merely as a bold adventure of a love-lorn war-like prince.

But Indra's ambitious son Dantidurga did not leave anyone, except the unfortunate Kirttivarman, in doubt as to his intentions. His claim that, at the *Hiraṇyagarbha* ceremony performed by various rulers ((*rājanyaiḥ*) at Ujjayinī, he had made the Gūrjara and other lords (*Gūrjarēś-ādi-rājakam*) his door-keepers (*pratīhārikṛitaṁ yēna*), if true, was an exploit worth of an emperor or at least of a prince who sought to be one.

We do not know whether, even at that late stage, Kirttivarman II had seen the writing on the wall. Even if he had, it was likely that it was too late in the day for him to retrieve the position of the Chalukyas. By their continued belligerence, four generations of the upcoming Rāshtrakūṭa family had, as if, proved their worthiness for an imperial throne and, sadly enough, in sharp contrast, the Chalukyas under Kirttivarman II had almost become obsolete, merely basking in the glory of an impressive genealogy of famous names and events.

Owing to the pressures of an impending loss of power which

was sure to result from the imminent Rāshtrakūṭa attack and his sad realisation that he no longer could marshall the wherewithal for a successful resistance, Kirttivarman II appears to have gone mad. A Kannada inscription, while alluding to the triumph of the Rāshtrakūṭas over the Chalukyas, says *Katyaran-ātām maruṭtanām goṇḍa samayadol'* at the time when Katyara (i.e. Kirttivarman II) had lost his senses (or, had gone mad). It is obvious from this late but, nevertheless reliable epigraphical information that Kirttivarman II was not in a mentally sound position to lead the Chalukya army when Dantidurga's final assault came. This may be the reason why the Rāshtrakūṭa charters do not mention Dantidurga's Chalukya victim by name but, instead, merely state that the usurper had defeated, with the help of a mere handful of soldiers, the invincible army of Karnāṭaka, (or, alternatively, of Vallabha) which had, in its turn, defeated the formidable armies of the lord of Kāñchi, the kings of the Jēraḷa, Chola and Pāṇḍya countries, and of Harsha and Vajraṭa :

*Kāñchiśa-Kēraḷa-narādhipa-Chōḷa-Pāṇḍya
Śriharsha-Vajraṭa-vibhēda-vidhāna-dakṣhaṁ
Karnāṭakam balam-ajēyam-ananta-rathyaiḥ
bhṛityaiḥ kiyadbhir-api yaḥ sahasā jigāya*

Good strategist that he was, Dantidurga seems to have taken the Chalukya forces by utter surprise, thus managing to rout them with the help of a small army. We have stated, on a much earlier occasion above, that, from the time of Polekēśi I himself, the emperors of Karnāṭaka had come to be distinctively known as *vallabhas*. It stands to reason, therefore, that whoever became master of the Karnāṭaka empire by defeating the army of the Vallabha, himself became the Vallabha. This is exactly what the Rāshtrakūṭa charters claim for Dantidurga when they say :

*yō Vallabham sapadi daṇḍa-balēna jivā
rājādhirāja-paramēśvaratām-upaiti
tasmin-prayātē Vallabharāje*

'[Dantidurga] who had appropriated the status of supreme king of kings by defeating, with the help of his army, the Vallabha (i.e.,

Kirttivarman II) in battle; when that Vallabha-rāja (i.e., Dantidurga) had ascended the heavens.....’.

As for Kirttivarman II having gone mad towards the end of his reign, we can also muster some kind of architectural evidence. The Huchchappayyana-guḍi and Huchchappayana-maṭha at Aihole are Chalukya monuments familiar to all students of architecture. These names literally mean the temple or *matha* of the lunatic gentleman. Stylistically these two structures belong to the second half of the eighth century A.D. Since this dating admirably suits the reign period of Kirttivarman II, and since information available with the Kalyāṇa Chālukyas says that he had gone at the end of his reign, it is very likely that the *guḍi* and *matha* above referred to were constructed either by or in memory of Kirttivarman II; the memory of his lunacy at the fag end of his career must have given these temples their funny though poignant names.

Succeeding generations seem to have been convinced that it was Kirttivarman II's personal incapacity that led the fall of the Chalukya dynasty. The Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa reflected in full measure the same conviction when they, through thier charters, squarely placed the blame at Kirttivarman's doors by bewailing :

*yēna Chālukya-rājya-śriḥ
antarayīṇy-abhūd-bhuvi*

‘On account of whose (i.e. Kirttivarman II's) failure, the grandeur of the Chālukya hegemony suffered eclipse’.

Though Kirttivarman II may not have been in a position to personally counter the military *coup* of Dantidurga, the Chaukya's did have princely leadership in their attempt to stem the tide of Rāshtrakūṭa invasion. We gather this information from a short undated Kannada inscription (141) from Sannathi (Gulbarga District) which, on palaeographical grounds, and on the strength of internal evidence may be assigned to the middle of the 8th century A.D. This inscription states that in a battle fought between the Ballaha (= Vallabha, the Chalukya emperor) and Dantiya-durgarasa (i.e. Rāshtrakūṭa Dantidurga), Rājāditya, the younger brother of Vinayāditya brought under control an elephant named Maṅgala (*Vinayā-*

dityāna tammam Maṅgalam emba āneyam paṇividdim) The names of these two brothers, with their names ending in *āditya* are typically Chalukya for the period and area to which the inscription belongs. It is very likely that they were related to Kirttivarman II as father and sons or as brothers and that they took an active part in the futile Chalukya bid to save their dynasty from oblivion.

APPENDIX

IMPORTANT INSCRIPTIONS OF THE VĀTĀPI CHALUKYAS AND THEIR CONTEMPORARIES

POLEKEŚI I

1. Kaira plates of Chalukya Vijayarāja, [Śaka] 394 (=A.D. 472) : *IA.*, VII, pp. 241-51, Plate.
2. Gokak plates of Rāshtrakūta Dejjā-Mahārāja, Āguptāyika year 845 (=A.D. 523-24) : *EI.*, XXI, pp. 289-92, Plate.
3. Badami rock cliff inscription of Vallabhēśvara, Śaka 465 (=A.D. 543): *Ibid.*, XXVII, pp. 4-9, Plate.
4. Duplicate Badami inscription of Vallabhēśvara, *JESI.*, IX, pp. 12-13, Plate III.
5. Yekkēri rock inscription, *EI.*, V, pp. 6-9, Plate.
6. Spurious grant of Śaka 441 (=A.D. 489-90): *IA.*, VII, pp. 209-17.
7. Siruguppi inscription of Sēndraka Vāṇusatti, *SII.*, XVIII, No. 7, Plate II.

KĪRTTIVARMAN I

8. Badami Vaishnava cave inscription, Regnal year 12, Śaka 500 (=A.D. 578): *IA.*, III, pp. 305-06, Plate; *Ibid.*, X, pp. 57-60, Plate.
9. Godachi plates of Katti-arasa, Regnal year 12 (=A.D. 578): *EI.*, XXVIII, pp. 59-62, Plate.
10. Mudhol plates of Pūgavarman: *Ibid.*, XXXII, pp. 293-97, Plate.

MANGALEŚA

11. Mahākūṭa pillar inscription, Regnal year 5 (=A.D. 595-96): *IA.* XIX, pp. 7-20, Plate.
12. Nerūr plates: *Ibid.*, VII, pp. 161-63.

13. Māruṭūra grant of Satyāśraya-Śrīprithvivallabha-Mahārāja, Regnal year 8 (=A.D. 598-99): *APGAS.*, 6, pp. 11-39, Plate; S. Sankaranarayanan, *The Vishṇukunḍins and their times* (Delhi, 1977), pp. 194-97.
14. Hūli plates of Maṅgalarāja: *Journ. Karn. Univ. (Social Sciences)*, V, pp. 175-81, Plates.
15. Goa plate of Satyāśraya Dhruvarāja Indravarman, Mangalēṣa's Regnal year 20, Śaka 532 (=A.D. 609-10): *JBBRAS.*, X, pp. 348-67, Plate.
16. Badami cave inscription: *IA.*, X, pp. 59-60, Plate.
17. Aihole Rāvalaphaḍi cave inscription of Raṇavikrānta.

POLEKEŚI II

18. Peddavaḍugūru inscription of Eṇyati-aḍigaḷ: *SII.*, IX, I, No. 46; *The Chalukyas of Badami* (Seminar Papers), Bangalore, 1978, pp. 55-57.
19. Hyderabad plates, Regnal year 3, Śaka 535 (=A.D. 613-14): *IA.*, VI, pp. 72-75, Plate.
20. Modlimb plates of Paramēśvara, *EI.*, XXXVIII, pp. 215-18, Plate.
21. Kāndalgāon plates, Regnal year 5, Śaka 536 (=A.D. 614-15): *IA.*, XIV, pp. 330-31.
22. Sātārā plates of Vishṇuvardhana, Polekēśi II's Regnal year 8, Śaka 539 (=A.D. 617-18): *Ibid.*, XIX, pp. 303-11, Plate.
23. Lohaner plates, Śaka 552 (=A.D. 630) : *EI.*, XXVII, pp. 37-41, Plate.
24. Koppāram plates, Regnal year 21 (=A.D. 630): *Ibid.*, XVIII, pp. 257-61, Plate.
25. Timmāpuram plates of Vishṇuvardhana: *Ibid.*, IX, pp. 317-19, Plate.
26. Aihole *praśasti*, Kali, 3735, Śaka 556 (=A.D. 634-35): *Ibid.*, VI, pp. 1-12, Plate.
27. Tumbeyanūru grant: *APGAS.*, 6, pp. 40-45, Plate.
28. Chiplūṇ plates: *EI.*, III, pp. 50-53, Plate.

29. Lakshmēśvar stone (10th century recopy) inscription: *IA.*, VII, pp. 106-07; *SII.*, XX, No. 3.
30. Kaḍamarakālava miniature shrine inscription of Satyāśraya-bhaṭṭāra.
31. Aihole fragmentary inscription of [Polekēśi II and] yuvarāja Vikramāditya (I).
- 31a. Nerūr plates, *IA.*, VIII, pp. 43-44, Plate.

THE INTERREGNUM

32. Kurnool plates of Ādityavarman: *JBBRAS.*, XVI, pp. 223-25 and 233-35, Plate.
33. Nelkunda grant of Abhinavāditya, *EI.*, XXXII, pp. 213-16, Plate.
34. Araḷihonḍa inscription of Piṭṭi-amman, *Ibid.*, XXXVII, pp. 333-34, Plate.

VIKRAMĀDITYA I

35. Turimeḷḷa stone inscription, Regnal year 2 (=A.D. 655-56): *EI.*, XXIX, pp. 160-64, Plate.
36. Karnūl plates, Regnal year 3 (A.D. 656-57): *JBBRAS.*, XVI, pp. 225-27.
37. Karnūl plates, *Ibid.*, pp. 229-31 and 240-42.
38. Nerūr plates of Vijayabhaṭṭārikā, Vikramāditya I's Regnal year 5 (=A.D. 658-59): *IA.*, VII, pp. 163-64, Plate.
39. Āmudālapāḍu plates, Regnal year 5 (=A.D. 658-59): *EI.*, XXXII, pp. 175-84, Plates; *APGAS.*, 6, pp. 54-57, Plate.
40. Talamañchi plates, Regnal year 6 (=A.D. 659-60): *EI.*, IX, pp. 98-102, Plate.
41. Kaḍamarakālava stone inscription, Regnal year 8 (=A.D. 662-63).
42. Karnūl plates, Regnal year 10 (=A.D. 664-65): *JBBRAS.*, XVI, pp. 227-29 and 238-39.
43. Mudgapadra grant of Śrayāśraya Śilāditya, [Kalachuri] year 420 (=A.D. 668-69): *EI.*, XXXIV, pp. 117-22, Plate.
44. *Unchhavritti* grant, Regnal year 16, Śaka 591 (A.D. 669).
45. Kukkanūr stone inscription: *ARE* p. 1955-56, No. B 212.
46. Kochre plates of Vijayamahādēvi, *JBBRAS.*, III, I, p. 211; *IA.*, VIII, pp. 44-47, Plate.

47. Kurtakōṭi (spurious?) plates, Regnal year 16 (=A.D. 669-70): *IA.*, VII, pp. 217-20, Plate.
48. Navasāri plates of Śrayāśraya Śilāditya, [Kalachuri] year 421 (=A.D. 670): *EI.*, VIII, pp. 229-33, Plate.
49. Honnūr plates, Regnal year 16, Śaka 592 (=A.D. 669-70): *Mys. Arch. Rep.*, 1939, pp. 129-37, Plate.
50. Nirpan plates of Chalukya Nāgavardhana, *IA.*, IX, pp. 123-25, Plates.
51. Sanjān plates of Chalukya Buddhavarasa, *EI.*, XIV, pp. 144-52, Plate.
52. Tembhurṇi (I set) plates, Regnal year 17, Śaka 594 (=A.D. 672): *JESI.*, IX, pp. 1-5, Plate I.
53. Tembhurṇi (II set) plates, paper presented by Dr. H.S. Thosar in the Ninth Annual Congress of the Epigraphical Society of India at Gorakhpur in March, 1983.
54. Gadval plates, Regnal year 20, Śaka 596 (=A.D. 674): *EI.*, X, pp. 100-06, Plate.
55. Hyderabad plates: *IA.*, VI, pp. 75-78, Plate.
56. Savṇūr plates, Regnal year 20, Śaka 597 (=A.D. 674-75): *EI.*, XXVII, pp. 115-19, Plate.
57. Dimmaguḍi stone inscription, Regnal year 27 (=A.D. 680-81): *SII.*, X, No. 23.
58. Mundakhēḍē plates of Sendraka Jayaśakti, Śaka 602 (=A.D. 681): *EI.*, XXIX, pp. 116-21, Plate.

VINAYĀDITYA

59. Paṇiyal grant, Regnal year 2, Śaka 604 (=A.D. 682) *APGAS.*, 6, pp. 58-63, Plate.
60. Nasik plates of Chalukya Dharāśraya-Jayasimha, [Kalachuri] year 436 (=A.D. 685): *CII.*, IV, pp. 127-31, Plate.
61. Lakshmēśvar (10th century recopy) stone inscription, Regnal year 5, Śaka 608 (=A.D. 685-86): *SII.*, XX, No. 4.
62. Jējūri plates of Regnal year 9, Śaka 609 (=A.D. 687-88): *EI.*, XIX, pp. 62-65, Plate.
63. Togarchēḍu plates, Regnal year 10, Śaka 611 (=A.D. 688-89): *IA.*, VI, pp. 85-88, Plate; *JBBRAS*, XVI, pp. 231-33.

64. Poona plates, Regnal year 10, Śaka 612 (=A.D. 689-90) : *EI.*, XXV, pp. 289-91, Plate.
65. Virāreḍḍipalle stone inscription, Regnal year 10 (=A.D. 689-90): *Ibid.*, XXXVIII, p. 333, Plate.
66. Karnūl plates, Regnal year 11, Śaka 613 (=A.D. 690-91): *IA.*, VI, pp. 88-90, Plate.
67. Manor plates of Chalukya Vinayāditya Maṅgalarasa, Śaka 613 (=A.D. 690-91): *EI.*, XXVIII, pp. 17-22, Plate.
68. Māyalūr plates, Regnal year 11, Śaka 614 (=A.D. 691-92) : *JOR.*, X, pp. 27-46, Plate.
69. Sorab plates, Regnal year 11, Śaka 614 (=A.D. 691-92) : *IA.*, XIX, pp. 146-52, Plate.
70. Dayyamdinne plates, Regnal year 12, Śaka 614 (=A.D. 692-93): *EI.*, XXII, pp. 24-29.
71. Kolhāpur plates, Regnal year 13, Śaka 615 (=A.D. 693-94): *KI.*, II, pp. 6-11.
72. Surat plates of yuvarāja Śrayāśraya Śilāditya, [Kalachuri] year 443 (=A.D. 693) : *CII.*, IV, pp. 132-37, Plate.
73. Harihar plates, Regnal year 14, Śaka 616 (=A.D. 694-95): *IA.*, VI, pp. 91-94.
74. Igaḍūru stone inscription, Regnal year 14 (=A.D. 694-95): *EI.*, XXXVIII, p. 334, Plate.
75. Pāṭodā plates, Regnal year 14, Śaka 617 (=A.D. 694-95): Noticed in *IA.*, XL, p. 240.
76. Alampur inscription of Lōkāditya-eḷā-arasa.
77. Baḷagāmve inscription: *IA.*, XIX, pp. 142-46, Plate.
78. Iṭagi stone inscription: *AREp.*, 1955-56, No. B 210.

VIJAYĀDITYA

79. Jamalagāma grant, Regnal year 1, Śaka 619 (=A.D. 697): *EI.*, XXXVI, pp. 313-16, Plate.
80. Niṭṭūru stone inscription, Regnal year 2 (=A.D. 697-98): *Ibid.*, XXXVIII, pp. 334-35, Plate.
81. Chandana stone inscription, Regnal year 2 (=A.D. 697-98): *Ibid.*, pp. 335-37, Plate.

82. Badami pillar inscription, Regnal year 3, Śaka 621 (=A.D. 698-99) *IA.*, X, pp. 60-61; *KI.*, I, pp. 2-4, Plate.
83. Kottapalle stone inscription, Regnal year 3 (=A.D. 698-99): *EI.*, XXXVIII, pp. 337-38, Plate.
84. Māyalūr plates, Regnal year 4, Śaka 622 (=A.D. 700): *Ibid.*, XXXIII, pp. 311-14, Plates.
85. Nerūr plates, Regnal year 4, Śaka 622 (=A.D. 700): *IA.*, IX, pp. 125-30.
86. Kottūru inscription, Regnal year 4 (=A.D. 700): *EI.*, XXX, pp. 69-71, Plate.
87. Rayagad plates, Regnal year 8, Śaka 625 (=A.D. 703): *Ibid.*, X, pp. 14-17, Plate.
88. Elāpur plates, Regnal year 9, Śaka 626 (=A.D. 704-05): *IHQ.*, IV, pp. 425-30, Plates.
89. Lohagajjavāṭaka grant, Regnal year 10, Śaka 627 (=A.D. 705): *Journ. Kaan. Univ.*, I, pp. 193-227.
90. Nerūr plates, Regnal year 10, Śaka 627 (=A.D. 705-06): *IA*, IX, pp. 130-33.
91. Shiggaon plates, Regnal year 11, Śaka 630 (=A.D. 707): *EI.*, XXXII, pp. 317-24, Plates.
92. Aihole (Huchchimalli-guḍi) inscription, Regnal year 13 (=A.D. 708-09): *IA.*, VIII, pp. 284-85, Plate.
93. Sātārā plates, Regnal year 14, Śaka 632 (=A.D. 710): *EI.*, XXVI, pp. 322-26, Plate.
94. Añjanēri plates (I set) of Bhōgaśakti, [Kalachuri] year 461 (=A.D. 710-11): *Ibid.*, XXV, p. 230, Plates.
95. Añjanēri plates (II set) of Bhōgaśakti, *Ibid.*, p. 236, Plate.
96. Alampur biscriptal inscription, Regnal year 18, Śaka 636 (=A.D. 714): *Ibid.*, XXXV, pp. 121-24, Plate.
97. Nirguṇḍi grant, Regnal year 22, Śaka 640 (=A.D. 718) *JBISM.*, IX, II, pp. 1-6.
98. Koṇdupalli stone inscription, Regnal year 23 (=A.D. 718-19.): *SII.*, X, No. 23.
99. Lakshmēśvar (10th century recopy) stone inscription, Regnal year 28, Śaka 646 (=A.D. 723-24): *SII.*, XX, No. 5.

100. Dive Agar plates of Jayāśraya Maṅgalarasa, Śaka 649 (=A.D. 727-28) : *Ind. Arch. A Review*, 1962-63, p. 52, No. 34 (ii).
101. Lakshmēśvar (10th century recopy) stone inscription, Regnal year 34, Śaka 651 (=A.D. 729-30) : *Ibid.*, No. 6.
102. Uḷchala stone inscription, Regnal year 35 (=A.D. 730-31) : *AREp.*, 1943-44, No. E 52.
103. Tārāvadra grant, Regnal year 36, Śaka 653 (=A.D. 731-32) : *EI.*, XXV, pp. 21-24, Plate.
104. Balsar plates of Jayāśraya Maṅgalarasa, Śaka 653 (=A.D. 731-32): *IA.*, XIII, p. 75; *JBBRAS.*, XVI, p. 5.
105. Nerūr plates of Vijayāditya and Vikramāditya (II), *IA.*, IX, pp. 132-35.
106. Paṭṭadakal inscription of Vijayāditya and Vikramāditya II, *IA.*, X, pp. 165-66, Plate.
107. Mahākūṭa inscription : *IA.*, X, p. 103, Plate.
108. Kurtakōṭi inscription : *SII.*, XI, I, No. 2.
109. Bannikop inscription : *Ibid.*, XX, No. 3.
110. Chippagiri Bhōgēśvara temple inscription : *Ibid.*, IX, I, No. 48.
111. Dānavulapāḍu inscription : *Ibid.*, IX, I, No. 49.
112. Betapalli inscription : *Ibid.*, No. 47.
113. Nandalapāḍu inscription : *AREp.*, 1964-65, No. B 24.
114. Alampur [Balabrahmēśvara temple pillar] praśasti.

VIKRAMĀDITYA II

115. Tippalūru inscription, Regnal year 1 (=A.D. 733-34) : *EI.*, XXX, pp. 12-17, Plate.
116. Lakshmēśvar (10th century recopy) inscription, Regnal year 2, Śaka 656 (=A.D. 734-35) : *SII.*, XX, No. 7.
117. Narvan plates, Regnal year 8, Śaka 664 (=A.D. 741-42) : *EI.*, XXVII, pp. 125-31, Plates.
118. Hire-Madhure hero-stone inscription : *Mys. Arch. Rep.*, 1939, pp. 121-25.
119. Kāñchi Kailāsanātha temple inscription : *EI.*, III, pp. 359-60, Plate.

120. Aihole Durga temple inscription : *IA.*, VIII, pp. 285-86, Plate.
121. Paṭṭadakal Virūpāksha temple inscription of Lōkamahādēvi, *Ibid.*, p. 167, Plate.
122. Paṭṭadakal Virūpāksha temple inscription : *Ibid.*, p. 166, Plate.
123. Paṭṭadakal Virūpāksha temple (entrance gate pillar) inscription, *Ibid.*, p. 164, Plate.
124. Paṭṭadakal Virūpāksha temple (entrance gate pillar) inscription of Lokamahādēvi : *Ibid.*, pp. 164-65, Plate.
125. Chandana stone inscription : *AREp.*, 1958-59, No. B 16.
126. Byāgavāḍi inscription : *Ibid.*, 1949-50, No. B 78.
127. Guḍugūḍi inscription : *Ibid.*, 1947-48, No. B 194.
128. B.N. Jālihāl memorial temple inscription, *Madhu*, Delhi, 1981, pp. 175-77, Plates XLII a-d and XLIII a-c.

KĪRTTIVARMAN II

129. Ainūli plates, Regnal year 4 (=A.D. 747-48) : *Mys. Arch. Rep.*, 1909, p. 12.
130. Kendūr plates, Regnal year 6, Śaka 672 (=A.D. 749-50) : *EI.*, IX, pp. 200-06, Plates.
131. Aṇṇigēri inscription, Regnal year 6 (=A.D. 749-50) : *Ibid.*, XXI, pp. 204-06, Plate.
132. Paṭṭadakal biscriptal inscription (A.D. 754) : *Ibid.*, III, pp. 1-7, Plate.
133. Vakkalēri plates, Regnal year 11, Śaka 679 (=A.D. 756-57) : *Ibid.*, V, pp. 200-05, Plates.
134. Āḍūr bilingual inscription : *IA.*, XI, pp. 60-61; *KI.*, I, pp. 4-8, Plate.
135. Nilūru inscription : *SII.*, IX, I, No. 51.
136. Didgūr inscription of Kattiyara : *EI.*, VI, pp. 251-253, Plate.
137. Peddapēṭa inscription : *Ibid.*, XXXVIII, pp. 338-40, Plate.
138. Chandana inscription : *Ibid.*, pp. 340-42, Plate.
139. Kurukunḍi inscription : *SII.*, IX, I, No. 51.
140. Korṛāpāḍu inscription : *AREp.*, 1940-41, No. B 418.

Index

- Abhinavāditya 102-105, 107
Adityavarman 34, 101ff, 105f, 107, 116f
Āgariyapura 43
Āguptayika
 kings, 33
 era, 33ff
Aihole 21, 29, 65f, 66, 67, 76, 78, 96, 97f, 101, 175
Aihole inscription 36, 38, 45, 49, 87f, 90, 170
Ainūli Charter (129) 169
Alampur inscription (114) 97, 108, 146, 147, 149
Āltem plates (6) 37
Āḷuka-mahārāja 69ff, 134
Āḷupa 69ff, 136, 142f, 144, 145, 151, 152
Āḷupeñdra 142
Āḷuvarāja 134
Ambērā 34
Andhra Pradesh, 69, 82, 87f, 106, 108, 127, 132, 133, 164
Andirikā 115
Aṅga 50
Araḷihoṇḍa 70
Arikesari Māravarman 113
Arjuna 124
Aśvamēdha 36, 37
Ayodhyā 18f, 19
Bādāmi 12, 20, 34, 36, 39, 40, 41f, 53, 55, 57, 58f, 63, 71, 97f
Bādāmi pillar inscription (82) 144
Bagumra plates 48
Balabhadra 46
Balarāma 46
Ballaha 175
Bāṇanti-guḍi 48
Banavāsi 1-3, 13, 35
Belgaum District 2, 42
Bēnira 43
Bhānuśakti 48ff
Bharata 127
Bhuvanaikamalla 132
Brahmā 144
Buddha 61
Buddhavarasa 124
Buddhism 5, 144
Chakrasumāra 98
Chalikya 65f
Chalukya 58f, 63, 72f, 73f, 81, 83f, 84, 86, 100ff, 110, 113-120, 124, 126, 129-131, 134f, 135, 137, 144, 145f, 148, 152f, 156-158, 161f, 164, 167, 171-176
Chāḷukya Sāmēśvara III 37
Chandana inscription (138) 169
Chandraditya 101, 105, 116f-120
Chandragupta Maurya 33f
Chera 106f
Chikkigūḍi 56
Chiplun plates (28) 37, 38, 90
Chitradurga-Bellary 102
Chitrakaṇṭha 104

Chitravāhana 134, 135, 142, 144, 145ff, 152
 Chitravāhana I 142, 151
 Chōla 52, 85, 87, 88, 106f, 109, 111f, 113f, 122f, 123f, 128, 129, 159, 174
 Dakṣiṇāpatha 42, 43
 Damayantī 45, 68
 Dantidurga 174ff, 175
 Dayyamdinne plates (70) 134
 Dejja-mahārāja 33ff
 Desai, P.B. 45f
 Dēvaśaktirāja 115
 Dharaśraya Jayasimhavarman 101, 116, 120, 124, 130, 131
 Dhutipura 43
 Dikshit, D.P. 58, 59
 Dramiḷa 50
 Durga-śakti 93
 Durlabhadēvī 45
 Eṇeyamma 93
 Fleet 38f, 39f
 Gaṅga 1-10, 21, 24, 50, 114, 131, 151, 158
 Gaṅga Mādhava 121f, 122
 Ganges 45, 51, 65
 Goa plates (15) 58, 66
 Goḍachi Charter 54
 Goḍachi plates (9) 34-36
 Godval plates (54) 110, 111, 113, 122, 123
 Gokak plates (2) 33f
 Govinda 173
 Govinda I 172f
 Gōvindarāja I 172f
 Guḍnāpur 10, 69
 Gujarat 19, 28, 65
 Gujarat Chalukyas 136

Guṇasāgara-Āḷupendra 133
 Gupta 22, 51
 Haihya 129
 Harasēna 43
 Harishchandravamśa 152
 Harsha 74, 79f, 80-84, 107, 174
 Harshavardhana 129, 131f, 170
 Hieun Tsang 79, 83, 95f, 96
 Hingmire, A.A. 122
 Honnūr plates (49) 109, 113, 116, 121, 122
 Hūli plates (14) 65, 70, 71
 Hyderabad plates (55) 110
 Ikshvākus 15
 Indra 33, 109, 173
 Indukānti 38ff, 45
 Iśvara-Pōtarāja 111
 Jainism 5, 144
 Jālihala, B.N. 166
 Jayasimha 27, 29, 33, 42
 Jejuri plates (62) 129
 Jēraḷa 174
 Kaḍamara Kālava 98, 101
 Kadamba 1-13f, 21-24, 35, 50f, 52, 69ff
 Kadamba Ravivarman 69
 Kaḷabura 129
 Kalachuri 61
 Kalachuri Buddha 65ff, 67
 Kalyāṇa 12, 13, 21, 33, 38, 44f, 50, 65f, 76, 175ff
 Kalyāṇa Chālukyas 36, 66, 67ff, 72, 97, 103f, 135, 140
 Kamēra 128f
 Kāñchi 75, 87f, 108-111f, 113, 128f, 151f, 156f-163f, 174
 Kāñchipuram 88f
 Kannaḍa 1, 11, 76, 159, 161, 174

- Kannaḍa inscription (122) 156
 Kannaḍa inscription (128) 166
 Kannaḍiga 10
 Kaṇṇāśakti 70
 Karka I 172, 173f
 Karnāṭaka 1-7f, 12, 35, 37, 69, 70, 74, 78, 106, 127, 131-133, 136, 148, 151, 165, 171, 174ff
 Kārttika 53, 54, 63, 98, 115
 Kārttikēya 112
 Kathiawad 65
 Kendur plates (130) 160, 169
 Kēraḷa 50, 51, 87, 88, 109, 111, 113ff, 128, 129, 159
 Kēśavaśvāmin 55, 116
 Kīrttivarman 49f, 50, 53ff, 54ff, 56ff-58, 83, 93, 160, 169, 173, 175
 Kīrttivarman I 26-27, 35f, 38f, 39, 43, 45ff-47, 49ff, 51ff-56, 58, 69f, 72, 73, 79
 Kīrttivarman II 32, 48, 155, 160ff, 161, 163ff, 167-171, 173ff-176
 Kochre plates (46) 117-118
 Koṅkaṇa Mauryas 1-2, 50
 Koppāram Charter 87
 Koppāram plates (24) 81, 89f, 90
 Kṛishṇa 43, 46
 Kṛishṇasvāmin 54
 Kṛishṇa-Venna 127
 Kubja Viśṇuvardhana 86ff
 Kuṅkumadēvī 142f, 144, 145ff, 151
 Kurnool 101, 104, 105, 114, 115f, 132ff-134, 136, 151
 Kurnool plates 116
 Kartakōṭi 121

 Lāḍkhān 98
 Lakshmēśvar 93
 Lakshmēśvara inscriptions 146, 148
 Lakshmi 127
 Lohaner plates (23) 34, 90f

 Lōkāditya 135ff
 Lōkamahādēvī 161-163ff, 166, 168

 Mādhava 114
 Mādhavaśakti 48
 Mādhavaśarman 122
 Madhavatti 48
 Madraka 50
 Magadha 50
 Mahābhārata 45
 Mahādēva 10, 43
 Mahādēvī 149ff
 Mahākūṭa pillar inscription (11) 34, 45-47, 50, 54
 Mahākūṭēśvara 47f
 Mahākūṭēśvaranātha 47
 Mahāmalla 110
 Mahārāshtra 19, 28, 66
 Māḷava 129f, 130
 Mahēndravarmaṇ I 87-89
 Mahēndravarmaṇ II 105, 110ff
 Maheśvara 144
 Mahākūṭa 36, 61ff, 63, 67, 68, 71
 Maṇṭeśvara 48f
 Maṅgalarasa 136, 152
 Mangalēśa 26, 27, 34, 37, 44-47, 50f-53ff, 56-59, 61ff, 63f-73ff, 75-78, 83, 89f, 92, 102, 103, 134
 Manor plates (67) 35, 43, 136
 Manu 45
 Māruṭūra grant (13) 59f, 61f, 64f, 66, 67, 69ff, 70f, 77, 89
 Mārutra plates (13) 134
 Maukhari Iśānavarmaṇ 51f
 Maurya 50
 Mayūśarman 6f
 Mēghachārya 115
 Modlimb plates (20) 36
 Mudhōḷ 34
 Mudhōḷ plates (10) 37, 45, 46
 Muṇḍakhēde plates 43

- Mūshaka 50
 Nāgavaidhana 119ff, 120ff
 Naḷa 50
 Nandivarman 111, 160
 Nandivarman II 158ff, 160f
 Narasimhavarman 100, 105-106, 110ff, 111, 159, 170
 Narasimhavarman I 40, 87, 88, 89ff, 157
 Nārāyaṇa 91
 Narendrāditya 140
 Narwan plates (117) 157
 Nasik 65
 Nasik plates (60) 130, 131
 Natarāja 72ff
 Nerūr Charter (12) 68
 Nerūr Charter (105) 150
 Nerūr plates (12) 34, 37, 44, 61, 63f, 65, 71, 77
 Nerūr plates (31a) 37
 Nerūr plates (31) 117ff
 Nerūr plates (85) 141
 Nirpaṇ plates (50) 120
 Pallava 2, 3, 7, 21, 35, 41, 59, 87, 88ff, 100ff, 101, 104-106ff, 109ff-111, 151ff, 156, 157f, 159f, 160ff, 170
 Pañchaliṅgadēva 132
 Pāṇḍya 50, 52, 87, 88, 106f, 109, 111-113ff, 126, 128, 129, 152, 159, 174
 Pārasika 128
 Paraśurāma 127
 Paramēśvaravarman 105
 Paramēśvaravarman I 110f-111
 Paṭṭadakal 20, 97
 Paṭṭadakal inscription (121) 163f
 Paṭṭadakal inscription (122) 161
 Paṭṭadakal inscription (132) 163
 Peruvaḷanallur 111
 Piṣṭapura 59, 67f
 Polekēśi 48f, 76f, 79f, 82, 84f, 85ff-88
 Polekēśi I 22-23, 26-33ff, 34ff-39ff, 48ff, 49, 54, 58, 68ff, 177, 174
 Polekēśi II 26-27, 34f, 37-39ff, 42, 43, 59, 67, 72, 74f-90ff, 92-98ff, 100ff-103ff, 106-108, 116f, 120ff, 124, 129f, 131, 148, 157, 164, 170f
 Prabhākarasvāmin 114f, 115
 Pṛithvīchandra 152
 Pṛithviduvaraja 86
 Pṛithvivarman 103
 Ptolemy's Badamaioi 40f
 Puḡaḷvarman 46
 Pūgavarman 34, 37, 46f
 Rāma 62
 Rāmāyaṇa 45
 Raṇaparākarama 54
 Raṇarāgavarman 114, 116, 121
 Raṇarāghavarman 116f
 Raṇarasika 110
 Raṇavikrama 34, 54, 76, 77f
 Raṇavikrānta 77
 Raṇavikrāntan 72
 Rāshtrakūta 27, 33, 34, 172-175
 Ratnagiri District 66
 Rāvīkīrtti 27, 49, 65f, 67, 72, 78f, 79, 86, 87f, 90ff, 93, 96, 101
 Raviśakti 70f
 Ravivarma 10
 Ṛig Vēda 122, 123, 133, 169
 Sāma-vēda 122
 Samudragupta 42f
 Sañjan plates (51) 124
 Saṅkaragaṇa 65
 Satārā plates (22) 34f
 Satyāśraya 34, 35, 39f, 98 102
 Satyāśraya Dhruvarāja Indravarman 45, 58, 66
 Satyāśraya-Mahārāja 93f

Savnur plates (56) 111, 113
 Sēndraka 70, 71, 93
 Simhala 109, 111, 113ff, 128ff
 Simhavishṇu 51
 Siruguppi inscription (7) 48
 Śiva 93, 113-115, 145
 Śaivism 144f
 Shiggaon plates (91) 145ff, 152
 Śhivamāra 151
 Śivanandīśvara 115
 Sivanandīśvara temple 98, 99f, 101
 Sorab plates (69) 129
 South Kanara 69
 Srīpurusha 151
 Śrīvallabha 38, 110
 Śrutkīrti 9
 Śryāśraya Silāditya 124f
 Sudarśanāchārya 115f
 Surat plates (72) 124
 Svāmirāja 65f
 Svāmikarāja 127
 Śyāmaśarman 121

 Tālguṇḍa 10f, 23
 Tamilnādu 151
 Timmapuram plates (25) 34, 81ff, 82f
 Tosar, H.S. 122
 Trailokyamahādēvi 163, 166, 168
 Tumbeyanūru grant (27) 90
 Tumbeyanūru plates (27) 91, 92

 Udayana 18
 Udayēndiram plates 111
 Uttarāpatha 129

 Vaishṇavism 144
 Vajraṭa 130ff, 131ff, 139, 171, 172f, 174
 Vakkatēri plate (133) 160
 Vallabha 33, 44f, 111, 174f, 175
 Vaṅga 50
 Vāṇusatti 43, 48

Varuṇa 66
 Vāsudēva 46, 127
 Vātāpi 5, 20, 33, 34f, 37-40f, 42, 44, 46, 48, 50-52, 54, 55, 58, 61, 67, 72, 75, 76, 82, 85, 87, 88f, 103, 117, 119, 152, 165, 170
 Vātāpi Chalukyas 65-67, 69f-71, 94, 132, 136
 Vijayāditya 18, 21, 39, 108, 123f, 124f, 126, 130ff, 131ff, 133, 135f-144ff, 146ff-150, 152, 155ff, 161
 Vijaybhaṭṭārika 117
 Vijayarāja 26, 29, 42
 Vikramāditya 59, 104-119f, 121f-127, 137, 146, 147, 151f, 156-158ff, 160f-162f, 164f-166ff
 Vikramāditya I 37, 43, 59, 98f-105f, 107f, 124, 126, 127, 151, 155, 170, 171
 Vikramāditya II 101, 143, 151, 155ff, 156ff-162, 164f-167, 171, 173f
 Viḷa 129
 Vinayāditya 43, 98, 111-114, 117, 122-137, 144, 145, 148, 152, 164, 171-173, 175
 Vinayāditya Maṅgalarasa 120
 Vinayavatī 144
 Viṣṇu 71f, 82, 95, 114, 144, 145f, 150
 Viṣṇu-Kṛishṇa 127
 Viṣṇurāja 149f
 Viṣṇuvardhana 13, 21, 22, 81ff, 84, 89
 Viṣṇuvardhana I 34f
 Vaṭṭūra 50

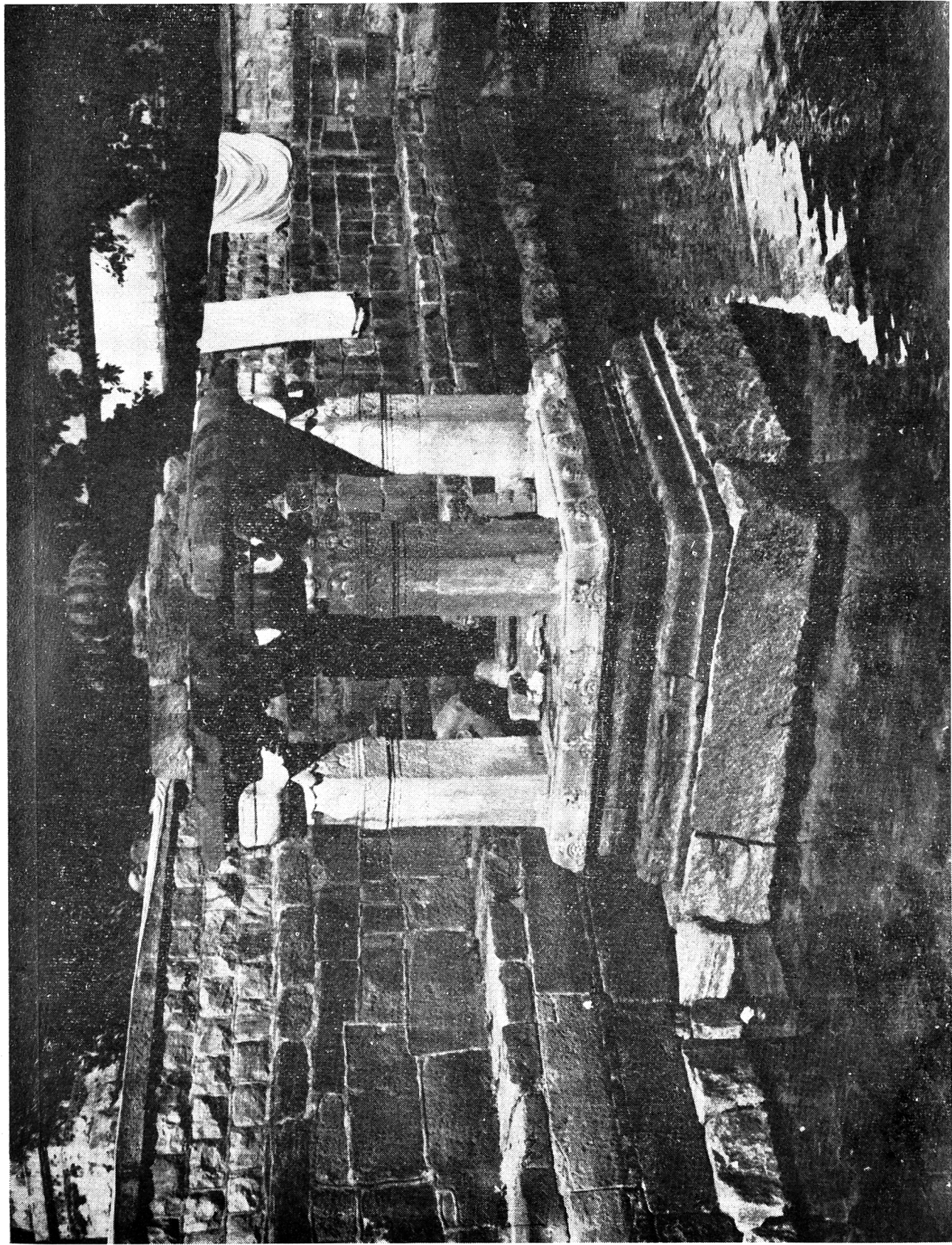
 Western Gaṅga 35

 Yajur Vēda 122, 169
 Yamunā 131
 Yekkēn 42ff
 Yuddhamalla 135
 Yudhishṭhira 62, 127

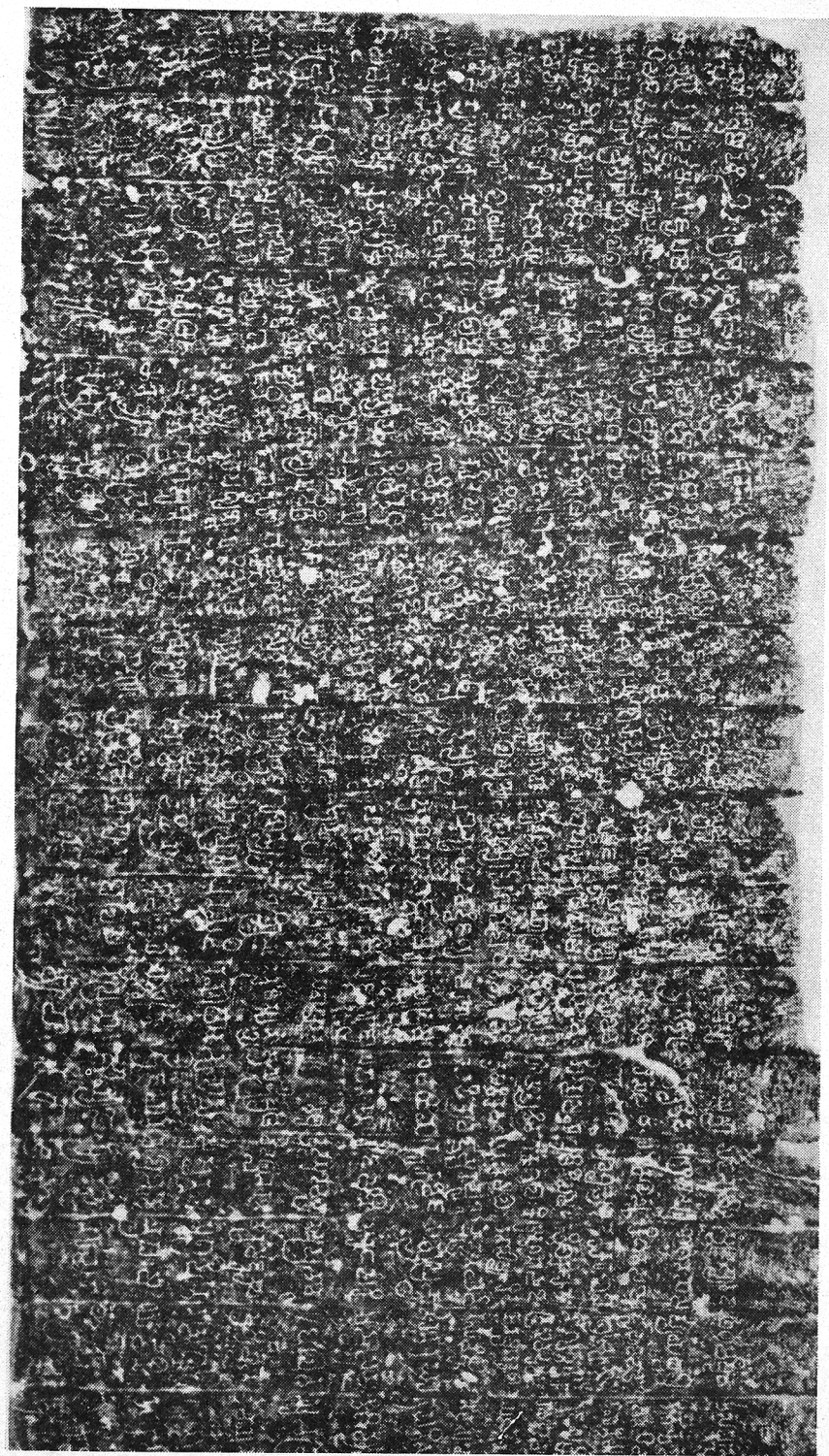
PLATES I—XVIII



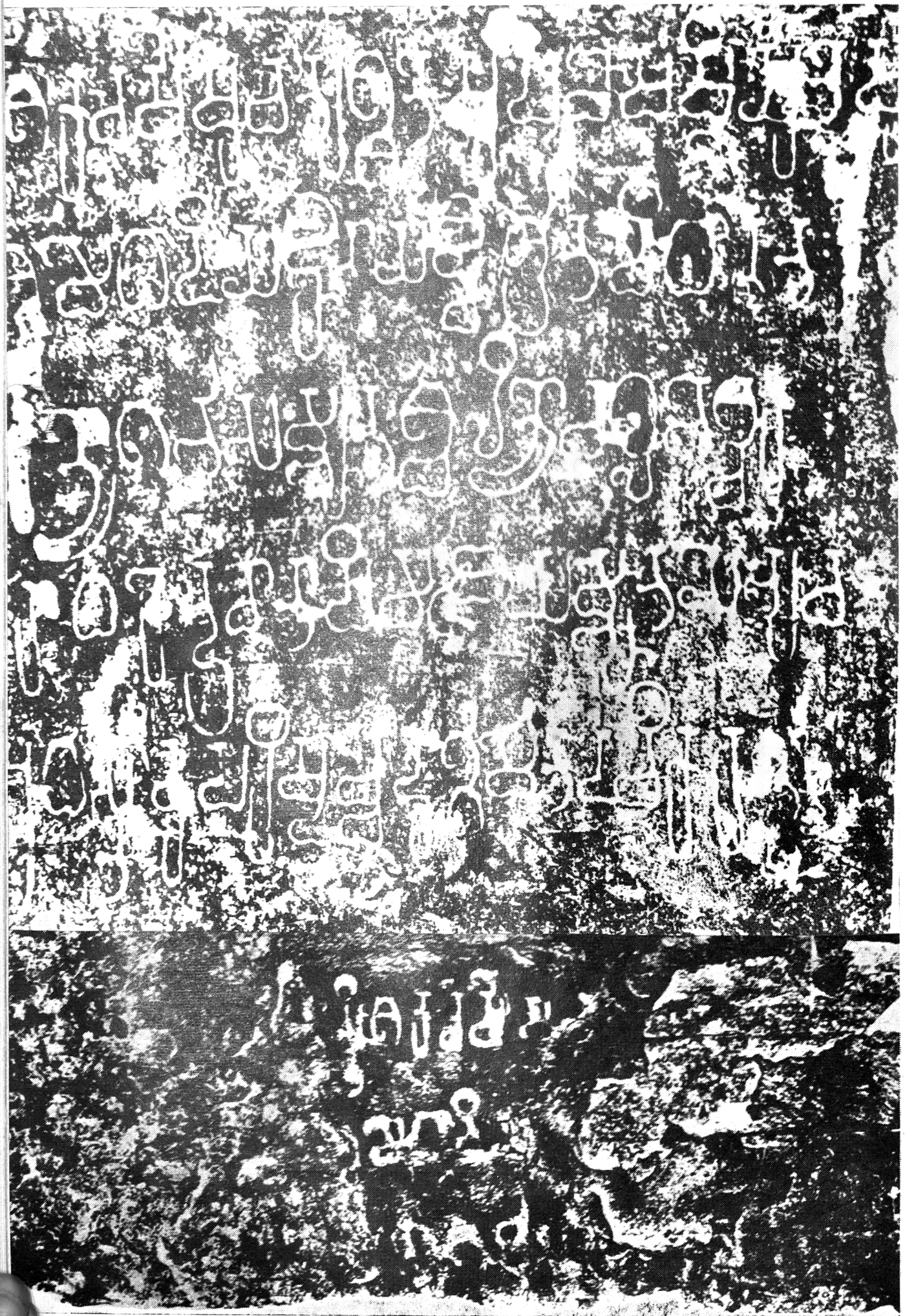
I. Makutesvara Temple, Mahakuta



II. Makutesvara Deva-Droni, Mahakuta



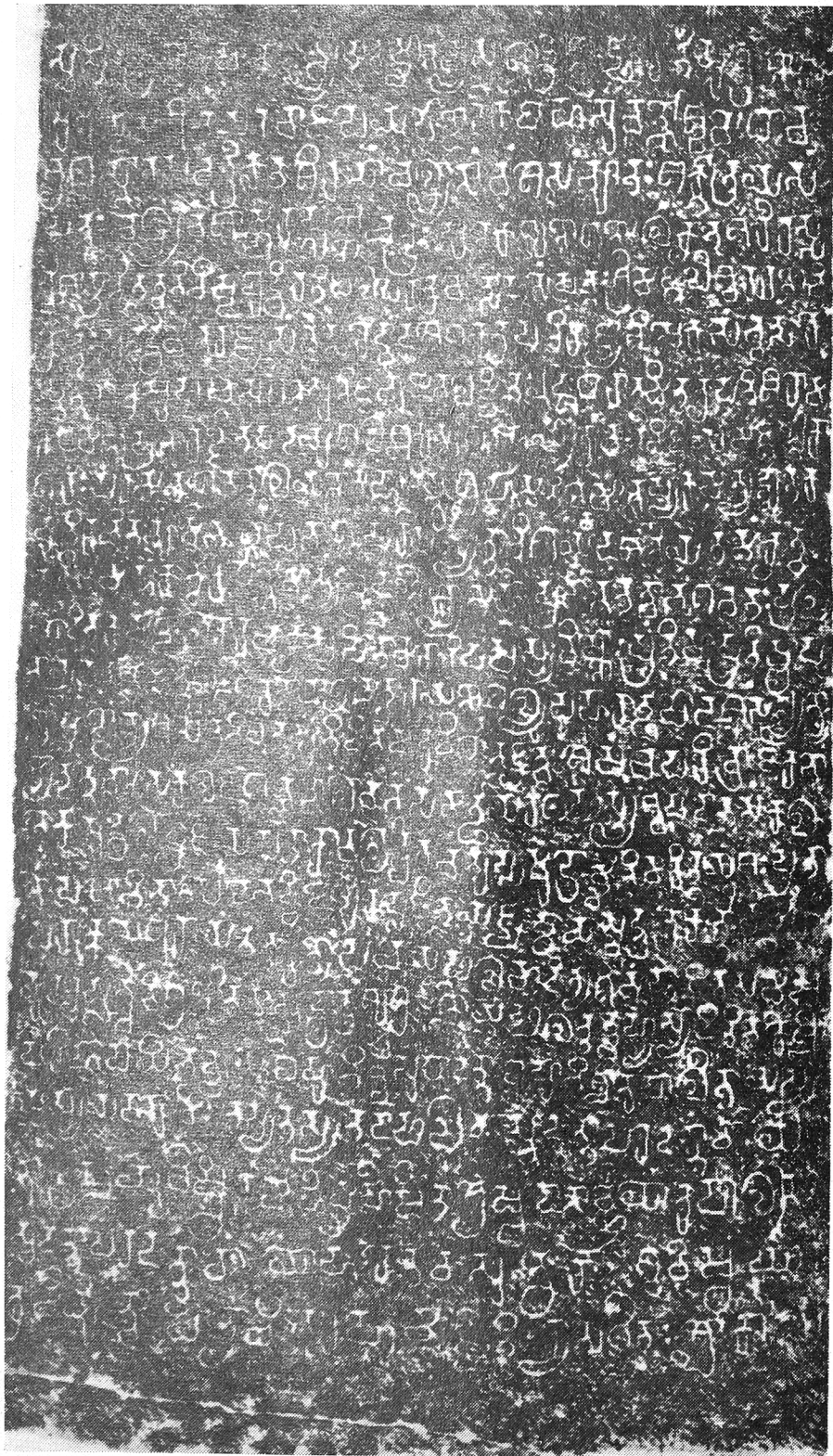
III. Mahakuta Pillar Inscription



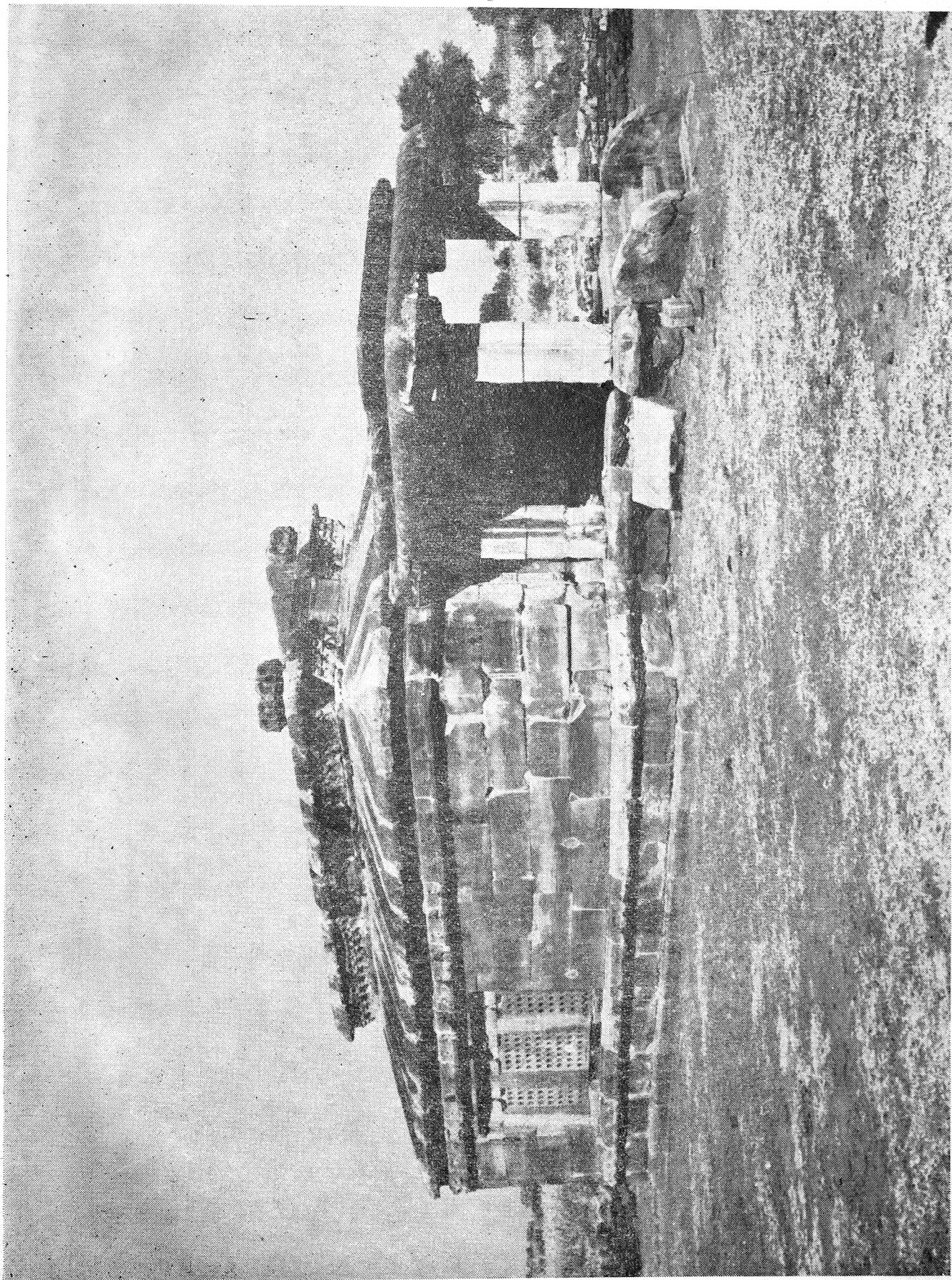
IV, Badami Inscription of Polekesi I, A and B



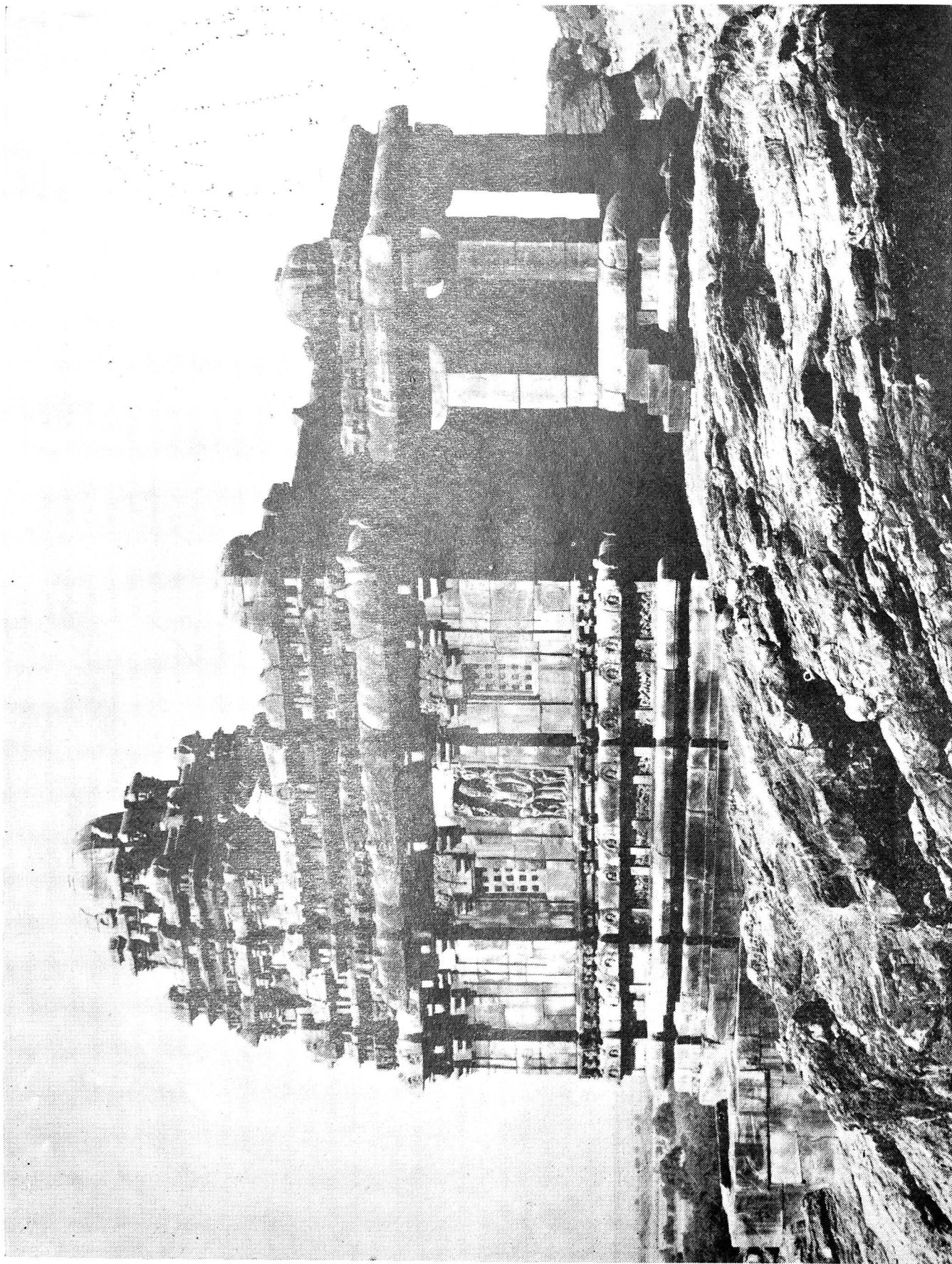
V. Bananti-Gudi, Badami



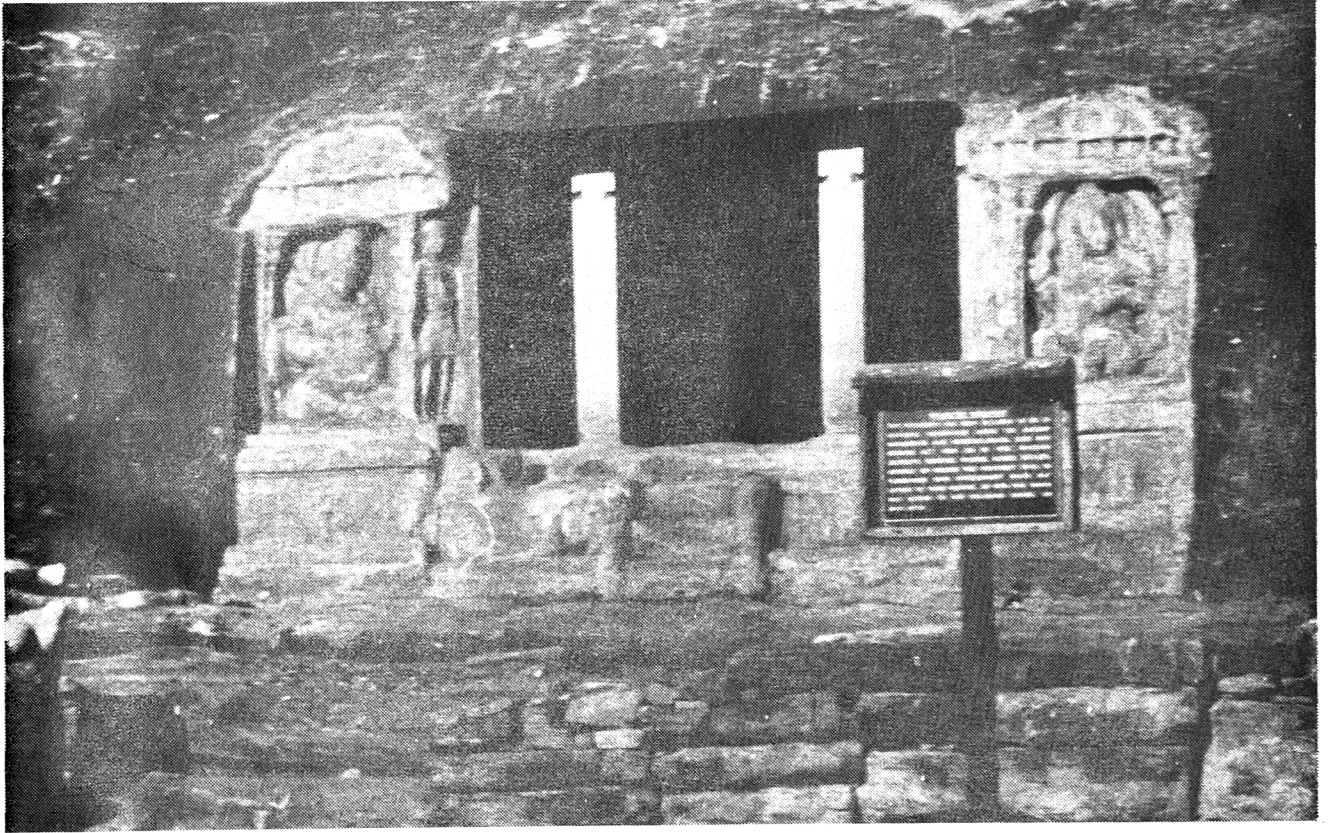
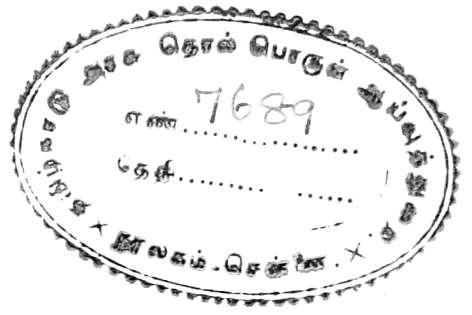
VI. Badami Vaishnava Cave Inscription



VII. Chikki-Gudi, Aihole



VIII. Myalegitti Sivalaya, Badami



IX. Ravalaphadi, Aihole

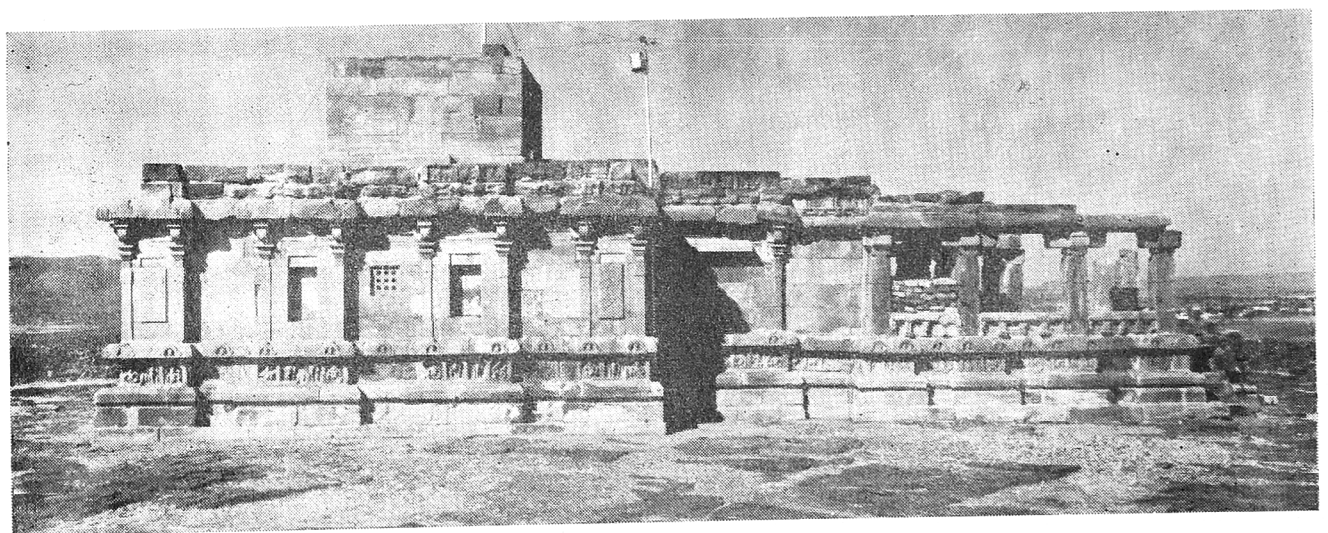


X. Ravalaphadi Nataraja

XIII. Ladhkan Temple, Aihole

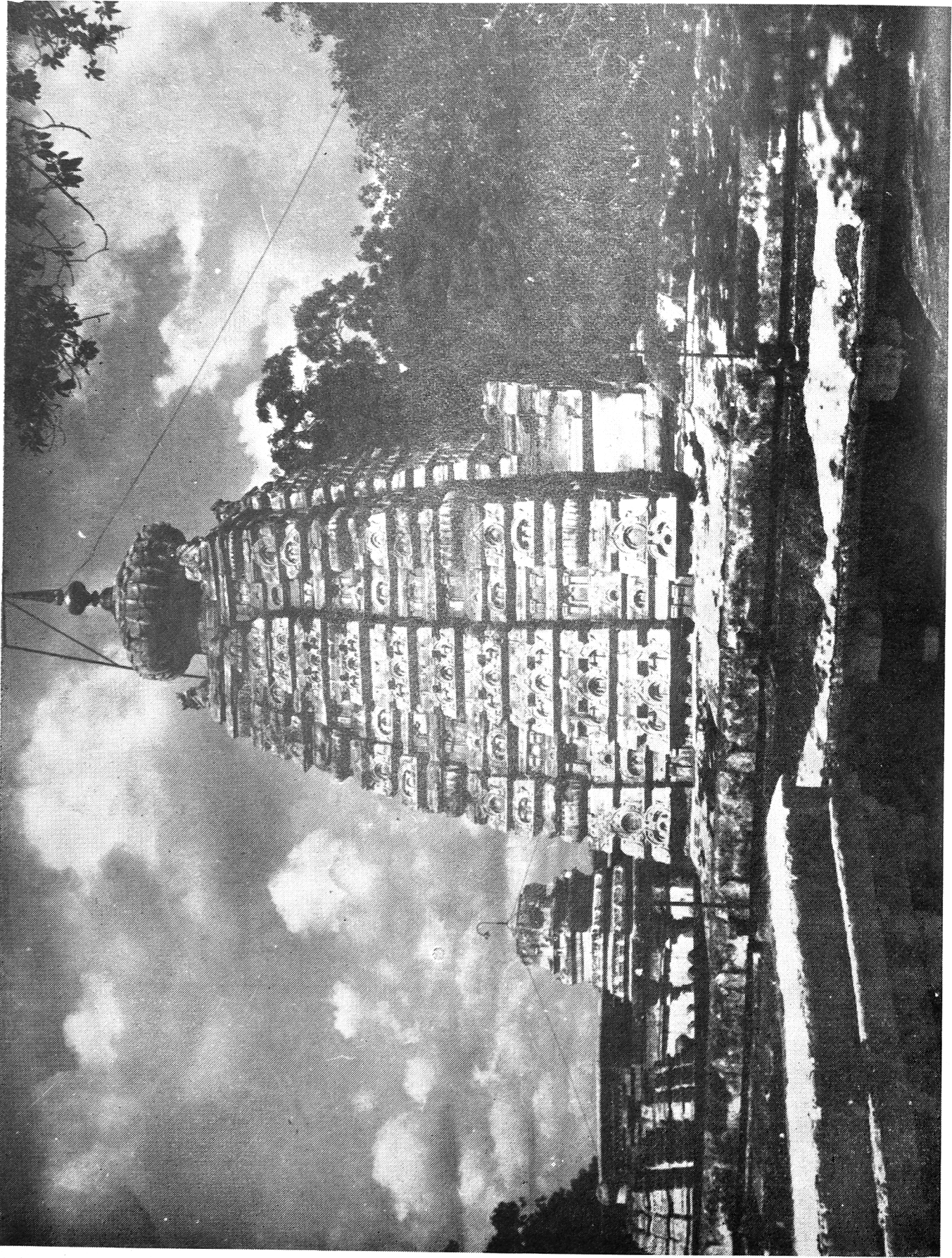


XII. Meguti Temple, Aihole



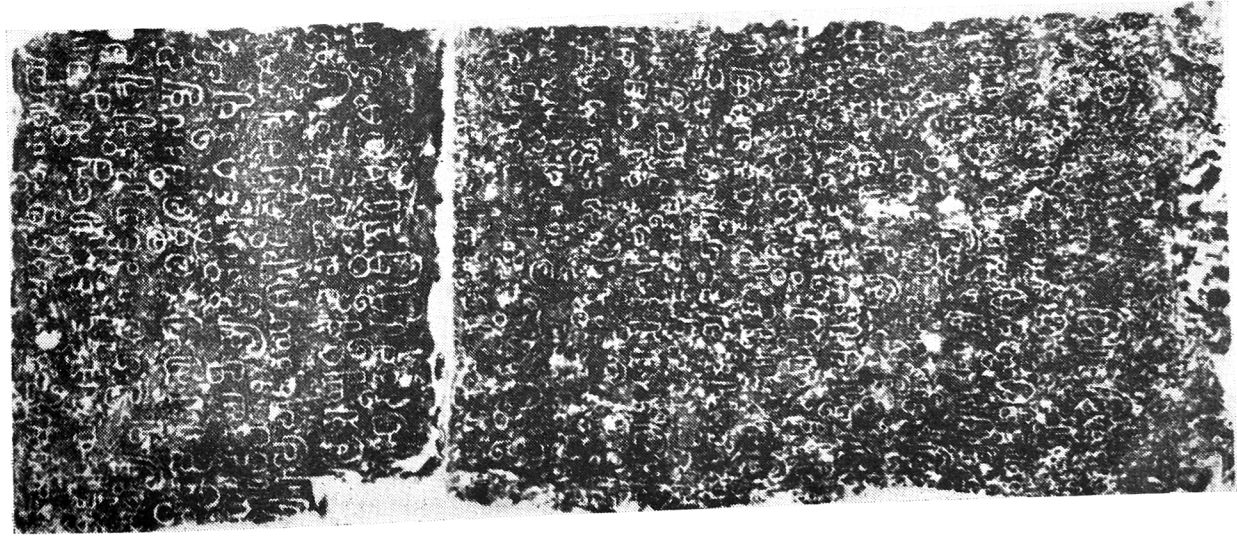
XI. Lavel Inscription Rāvalaphadi



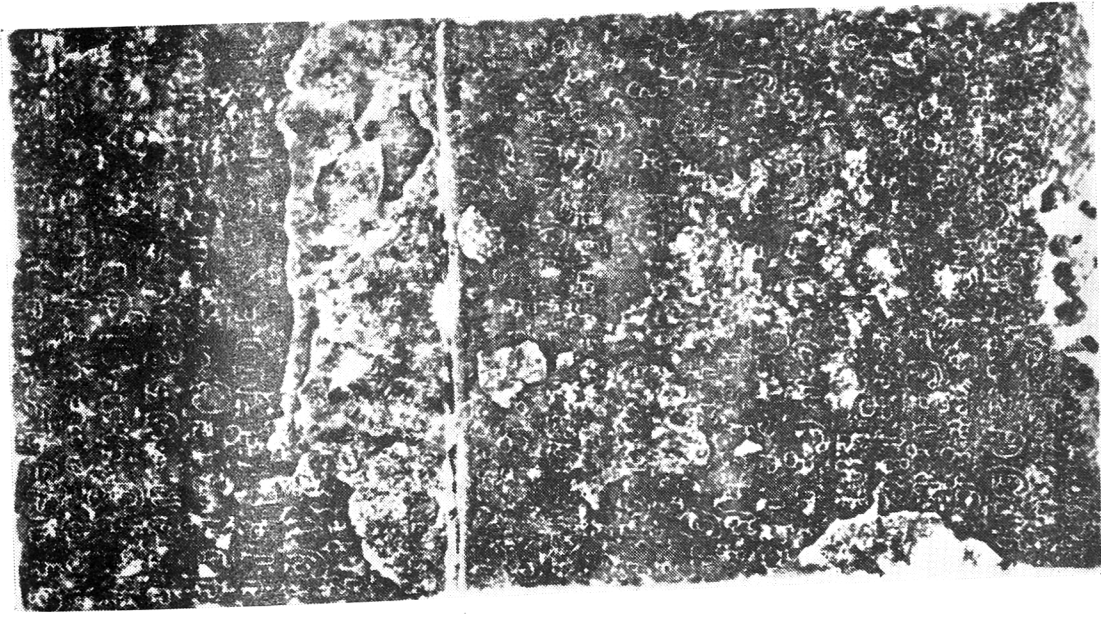


XIV. Balabrahma Temple, Alampur

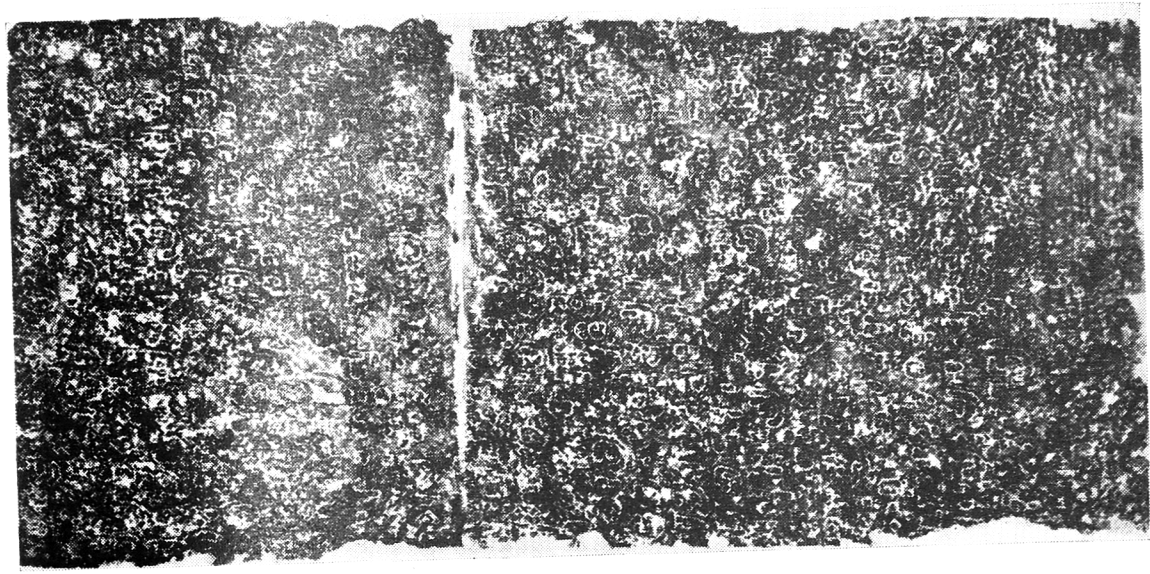
1

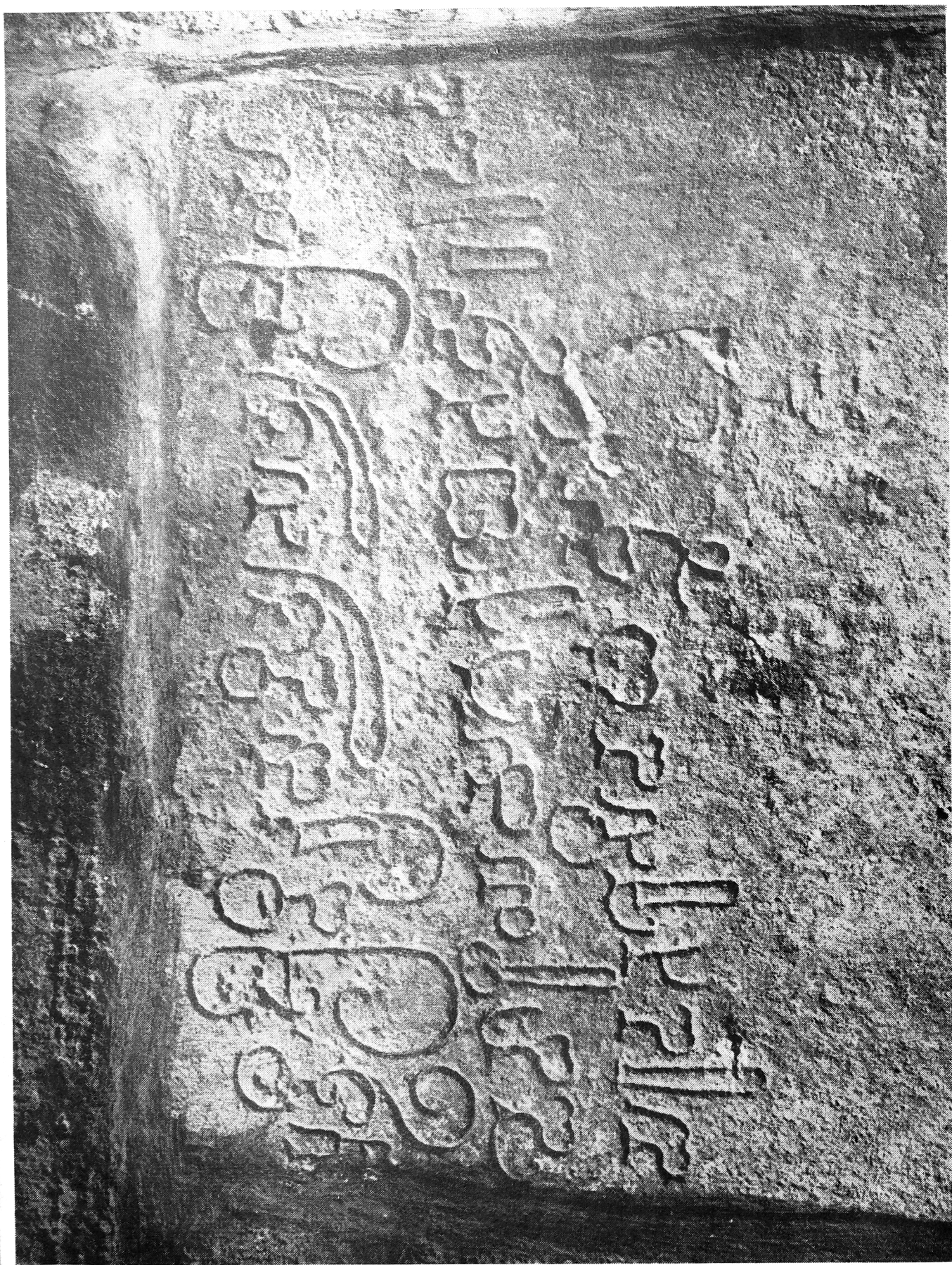


2

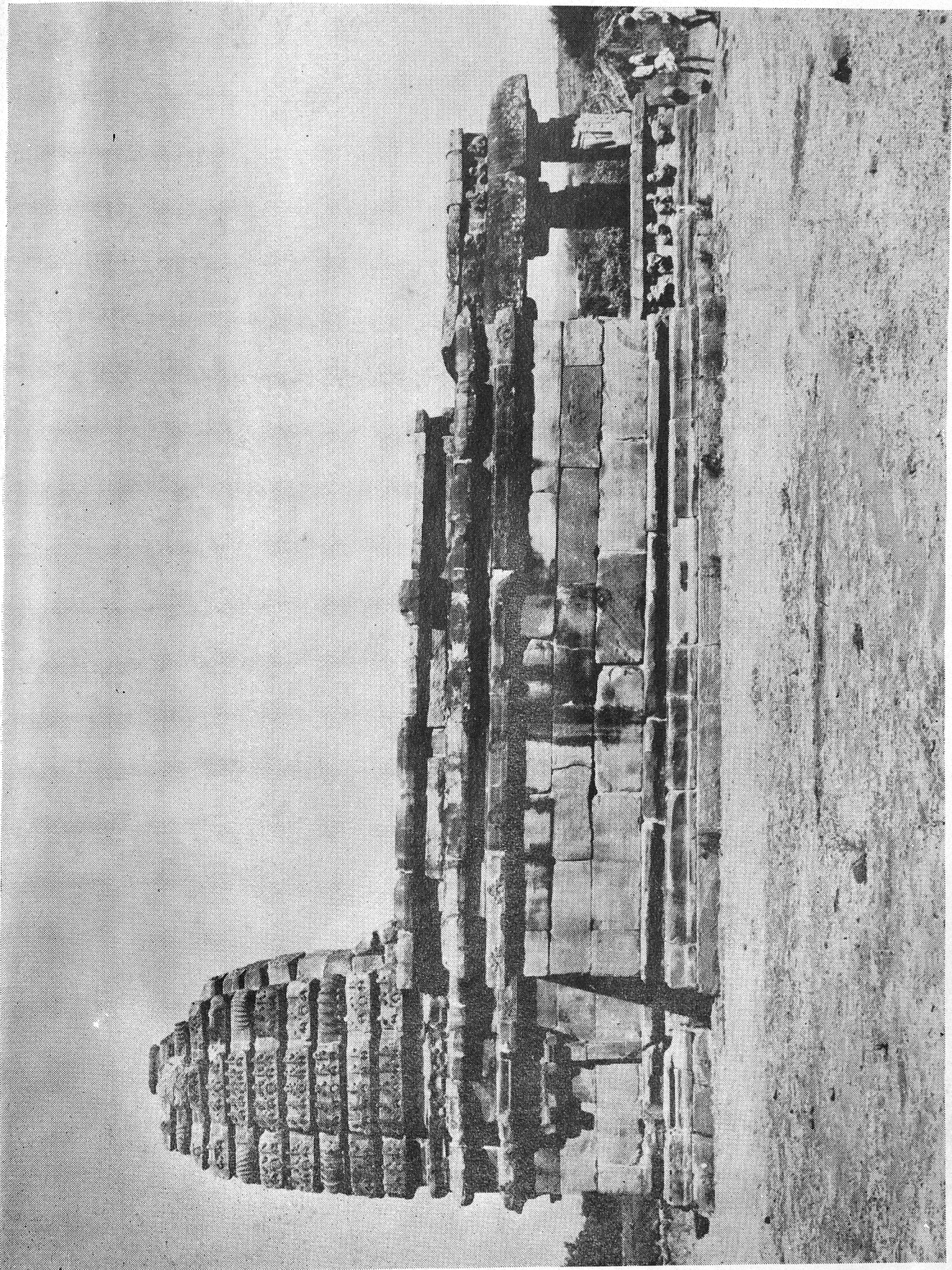


3

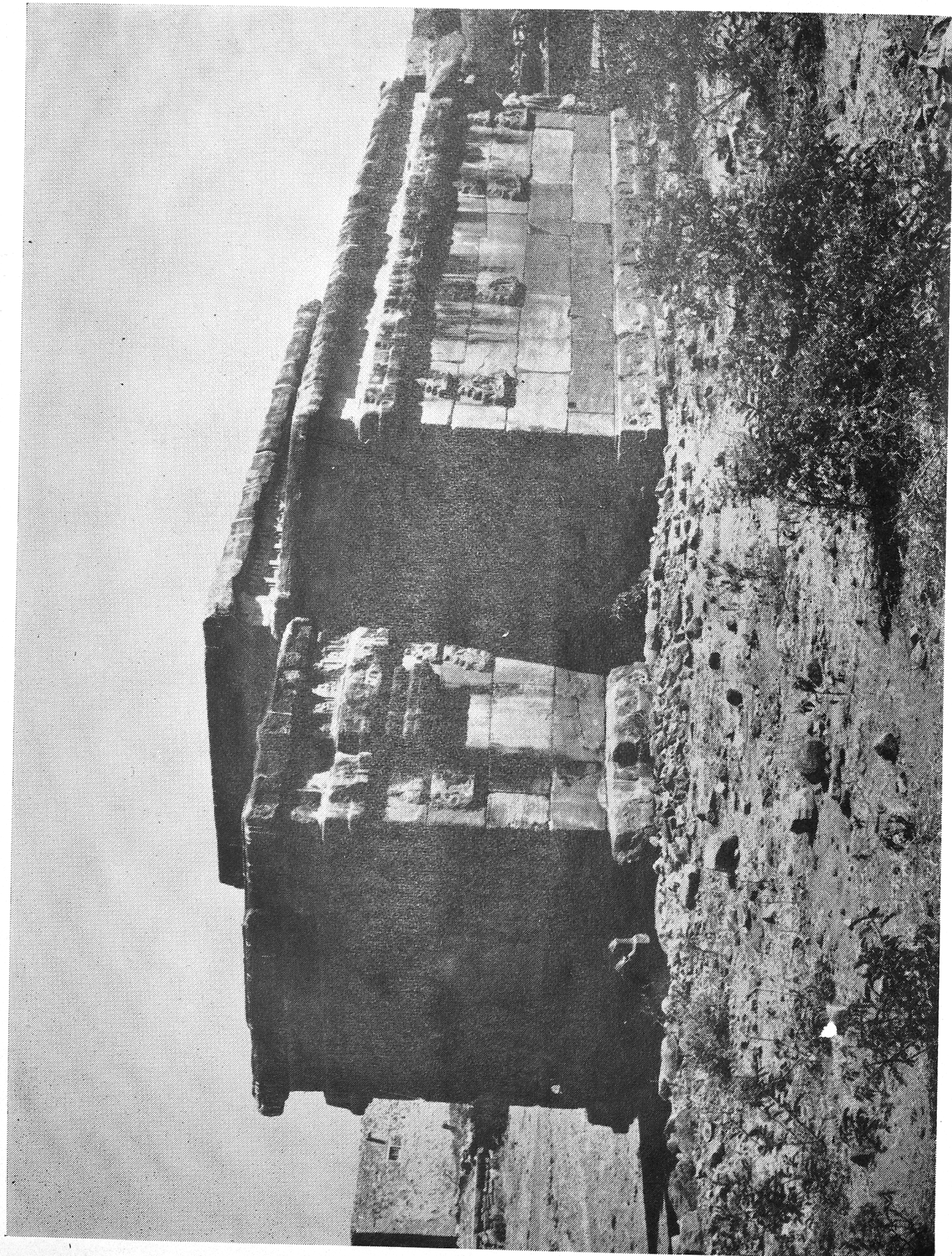




XVI. Tomb Temple Inscription, B.N. Jalihal



XVII. Huchchappayya-Gudi, Aihole



XVIII. Huchchappayya-Matha, Aihole

the author . . .

DR K.V. RAMESH (b. 1935) joined the Epigraphy Branch of the Archaeological Survey of India in 1956 and has ever since been engaged in epigraphical and historical research. Besides contributing a large number of research papers for various seminars and journals, he has authored two books in English, '*A history of South Kanara*' and '*Jaina Literature in Tamil*' and three more books in Kannada. His '*Corpus of Western Ganga Inscriptions*', being published by the Indian Council of Historical Research and his other work '*Indian Epigraphy*' in two volumes are now in the Press.

He visited Bulgaria in 1982 on Cultural Exchange and Japan in 1983 as an invitee to the XXXI International Conference on Human Sciences in Asia and North Africa. He is presently holding charge of the Office of the Director (Epigraphy) in the Archaeological Survey of India and is one of the Founder Members and a former Secretary and Executive Editor of the Epigraphical Society of India. He is also one of the Vice-Presidents of the Place Names Society of India.

Dr. Ramesh, who has the advantage of knowing, besides Sanskrit, all the South Indian languages, is currently the Editor of the *Epigraphia Indica* in his capacity as Director (Epigraphy).

Agam Kala Prakashan Delhi