CHAPTER II

Political History of the Period

- A Brief Survey

The name 'Daksināpatha' was used since early times to denote the region between the river Narmadā in the north and the river Kāveri in the south, the Arabian sea and the Bay of Bengal on the western and eastern sides respectively. This area in the modern times known as the Deccan plateau was one of the earliest habitats of man with abundant natural resources. The early man is said to have settled here. The organised life began in this area with the commencement of the historical period. Since our study falls in the historical period, a brief political history of this region from the beginning upto the end of the period of our study is given here, to provide a background for the study of the economic history.

Leaving aside the pre and proto history of the region, it can be stated that the proper history of the Deccan commenced according to traditions, with the spread of the Nanda kingdom followed by the Mauryas in this region. Quite a few edicts of Aśoka have been discovered throughout this region to show the rule of this kingdom over this area. Early explorations, brought to light one minor edict at Maski, two at Koppal in Raichur district, three in southern Karnataka at Siddāpur, Brahmagiri and Jaṭingarāmēśvara.
in Chitradurga district. Later in the last decade
two each at Niţţur and Udegoḷam in Bellary district were
discovered. Recently some fragments of eleventh and
twelfth edicts have been discovered at Sannati in Gulbarga
district.¹

In the eastern Deccan which is the present day
Andhra Pradesh state, Aśoka edicts I to XIII have been
found at Erraguḍi in Kurnool district. In Maharashtra a
fragment of a major edict has been found at Sopārā in
Ţhāṉā district. All these evidences show that during the
reign of Aśoka the whole of Deccan was a part of the
Mauryan empire and formed its southern boundary. Suvarṇagiri
and Isilā in the Deccan were two important provincial
headquarters of the days of Aśoka. It is well-known that
the Mauryas introduced sound fiscal administration which
must have been prevalent in this part of the empire also.

The Sātavāhanas

After the decline of the Mauryan empire in 2nd
Cent. B.C. we see a big vacuum in the Deccan history upto
the beginning of the Christian era. It is presumed that
some minor or local rulers might have ruled the Deccan
area in some principalities. In around 1st century A.D.
the Sātavāhanas came into prominence and established a
fairly big empire covering considerable portions of
present day Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh states and came to be known as the 'rulers of Daksinapata'. Fairly good number of inscriptions and coins of these rulers have been discovered in western Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh. In recent times a few inscriptions have been discovered in the Karnataka region testifying to the extension of their rule in this region also.

The SÄtavÄhanas were the first rulers of the Deccan in whose period trade and commerce received impetus and extended over the vast region. The important commercial centres of this period were NÄsik, Pratiṣṭhāṇa, Tagara, Kalyāṇa, Sōpārā, Banaväsi and Dhānyakaṭaka.

After the SÄtavĀhanas the parts of the Deccan were shared by the Chuṭus and Ikśvākus. The Chuṭus occupied the southern part and the Ikśvākus and Andhra region. Very little is known about the Chuṭus and the names of three rulers of this dynasty appear in the inscriptions and a few coins are discovered in the southern Deccan area.

The Kadambas

With the decline of the SÄtavĀhana power, the southern parts of the Deccan appear to have come under the Pallavas. The Kadambas rose to power by resurrecting this region from them and came to prominence in the western Deccan. They even established matrimonial relationship with the
contemporary Guptas. Their kingdom extended over most parts of the western Karnataka stretching into the eastern district of Bellary and the adjoining Andhra region.

The Tāḷagunda inscription of Śāntivarman hails Mayūraśarma (325-345 A.D.) as the founder of this kingdom who had to fight with the Pallavas to achieve this feat. The Guḍnāpur inscription of Ravivarman introduces the names of his father and grand father as Bandhusena and Vīraśarma respectively, who are also ascribed in the inscription the Kṣatriya traits. His Chandravalli inscription is supposed to name the kings and the countries said to have been conquered by him.

Next prominent ruler was Kākusthavarma (405-430 A.D.) who established friendly relations with the neighbouring kingdoms of the Guptas, Vākātakas, Chief of Bhaṭāri family and the Gangas, through matrimonial alliances.

After the death of Kākusthavarma, the Kadamba family was divided between his sons Śāntivarman (430-455 A.D.) and Kṛṣṇavarman I (430-460 A.D.). The former started ruling with the capital at Banavāsi and the latter at Triparvata, said to be identical with Śriśailam in the present day Andhra Pradesh state.
Śāntivarman's son Mṛgēśavarma (455-480 A.D.) came in conflict with the Gangas and Pallavas for his policy of expansion. He also expanded the kingdom northwards and made Palāsikā (modern Halsi in Belgaum district) as his second capital. His Halsi plates highlight the achievements of this ruler.

Mṛgēśavarma's son Ravivarman who had a long rule (485 to 519 A.D.) claims to have defeated the Pāṇḍyaś, Kongāḷvas and the Āḷupas. He made Uchchaśṛṅgi (Uchchangi in Bellary district) another headquarters of the Kadamba kingdom. He appointed his two brothers Bhānuvarma and Śivanātha as the governors of Halsi and Uchchaśṛṅgi.

Ravivarman's son Harivarma was the last ruler in Śāntivarman line. He faced the opposition from Kṛṣṇavarman II of Triparvata line who overthrew him and established his rule over Banavāśi.

In the Triparvata line started by Kṛṣṇavarman I, his grand son Kṛṣṇavarman II (516-540 A.D.) was a prominent ruler. He defeated Harivarman of the main Banavāsi line and established himself at Vaijyanti or Banavāsi, thus uniting the two branches of the Kadamba kingdom. Soon however, he was overthrown by Pulakeśi I, a Kadamba feudatory who later founded the mighty empire of the Chālukyas of Bādāmi.
The rule of the Kadambas in the history of Deccan and particularly of Karnataka is noteworthy. They established themselves as the able successors of the Sātavāhanas and continued their policies of administration.

The Gangas

The Ganga kingdom was established in the southern part of the Deccan between the Kadamba territories in the west and that of the Pallavas in the east. Konguṇivarman was the first ruler of this dynasty. The Ganga region came to be known as Gangavādi and later it developed into a very big administrative division consisting of 96000 villages. Konguṇivarman ruled from 325 to 350 A.D.

Konguṇivarman's son Mādhava I was responsible for the expansion of the kingdom. Mādhava had a son called Harivarman who is also known as Āryavarman and Kṛṣṇavarman. Some scholars consider the different names of Harivarman as the names of different sons of Mādhava and others identifying Harivarman with Mādhava himself. Anyway Harivarman succeeded Mādhava to the Ganga throne.

Harivarman was succeeded by his son Mādhava II. He was followed by his younger brother Viṣṇugopa. Later on he was succeeded by his son Mādhava III. He ruled for about 30 years from 440 to 469 A.D. and during his rule the Gangas came into prominence.
Avinīta was the son of Mādhava III. He ascended the throne in his infant days and later on continued to rule for many years. He was succeeded by his son Durvinīta. He obtained Punnāṭa territory though his mother belonged to the family of Punnāṭa chiefs. He was a scholar of repute and was a patron of literature. He is credited with the authorship of a work known as Śabdāvatāra and a commentary on the Kirātarjunīya of Bhāravi. He also translated the Vaḍḍakathā of Guṇḍāḥya.

With the rise of the Chālukya power in the Deccan, the Gangas were reduced to the status of the feudatories. They continued to govern some parts of Karnataka as subordinate rulers upto the 10th century A.D. The history of the Gangas from Śivamāra I onwards is interwoven with the history of the Chālukyas of Bāḍāmi and the Raṣṭrakūṭas.

The Chālukyas of Bāḍāmi

After the decline of the Kadambas and the Gangas the Deccan witnessed the growth of a series of mighty empires for nearly seven hundred years. The Chālukya dynasty united this vast area of the Deccan and its people as one nation and gave it a high political status. The first king of this dynasty Pulakeśi I, who was probably a feudatory of the Kadambas earlier, defeated Kṛṣṇavarma II of that dynasty and established the Chālukya kingdom with Bāḍāmi as the capital.
Pulakesi I (540-566 A.D.) and Kirtivarma I (566-596 A.D.)

Some later records mention the names of the ancestors of Pulakesi I, Jayasimha and Ranaraga as his grand-father and father respectively. He is said to have performed many Vedic sacrifices to commemorate his victory and built a strong fort at Badami. He assumed the title of Vallabhēśvara and Sri Prithvī Vallabha.

The credit of consolidating and expanding of the newly established kingdom goes to Kirtivarma, the son of Pulakesi I. The Mahākūṭa pillar inscription of Mangalesa describes the victory of Kirtivarma over the several rulers of north and south. It is known that he defeated the Mauryas of Konkaṇ, the Āḷupas of South Kanara, the Naḷas of Naḷavādi and the Kadambas and the Gangas. The Sēndrakas transferred their allegiance from Kadambas to the Chālukyās by establishing matrimonial relations.

Thus, the rule of the Kirtivarma was marked by the expansion of the kingdom. Kirtivarma had four sons named, Pulakesi II, Vishṇuvardhana, Dharāśraya Jayasimha and Buddhavarasa.

Mangalesa (596-610 A.D.) and Pulakesi II (610-642 A.D.)

Mangalesa, the younger brother of Kirtivarma assumed the power after the death of Kirtivarma as Pulakesi II,
the eldest son of Kīrtivarma was too young to rule. Mangalēśa also continued the policies of expansion of his brother. He defeated the Kaṭachūri king Buddhharāja and established authority over the Gujarat region.

He had to face the opposition of Pulakēśi II, the rightful heir to the throne, since he tried to nominate his son as the successor to the exclusion of the latter. This resulted in a civil war in which Pulakēśi became victorious and Mangalēśa lost his life. Mangalēśa's lasting contribution was the construction of the Vaiṣṇava cave temple at Bādāmi in memory of his brother.

Pulakēśi II was the greatest of the Chālukya rulers. He put down the rebellions of feudatories and subjugated the Kadambas by besieging the capital city Banavāsi. He also subdued the Gangas of Talakāḍ and the Āḷupas of South Kanara. The famous Aihoḷe inscription extols his conquests which included the Lāṭa, Gūrjara, Māḷwa and the island of Rēvatī and his resourceful confrontation with Harshavardhana on the bank of the Narmadā. With these conquests he became the victorious sovereign of three Mahārāṣṭrakas (Mahārāṣṭraka-traya) which consisted 99000 villages.

Pulakēśi's other conquests included Kōsala, Kalinga, Kuntāla and the fortress of Piṭāpura (modern Piṭhāpuram in the east Gōdavari district of Andhra Pradesh). Kuṇāla
was the area around modern Kolleru lake which formed the Vengi region.

In the South, Pulakeśi's campaigns included the war with the Pallavas who were his formidable opponents. His battle with Mahēndravarman I at Pallalūr, near Kāñchi brought him victory but it marked the beginning of a prolonged enmity between the two great south Indian ruling dynasties who constantly fought with each other to extend their territory at the expense of the other.

With these spectacular conquests, he firmly established himself at Bādāmi as the master of the vast empire. He paid due attention to the administration by appointing governors to different regions, including his brothers Dharāśraya Jayasimha and Vișṇuvardhana as governors of Nāšik and Vengi regions respectively. He is said to have sent a diplomatic mission with the valuable gifts to the Persian king Khusru II. The Chinese Pilgrim Hiuentsang who visited the northern part of the empire speaks highly of the king and the people.

Pulakeśi's confrontations with the Pallavas however, did not end. Narasimhavarman I, the son of Mahēndravarman I took the offensive and a series of wars were fought at Periyāla, Maṇīmangala and Šūramāra. Finally the Pallava advanced upto the capital Bādāmi and Pulakeśi seems to have lost his life in the fight. After this victory, Narasimhavarman
engraved an inscription on a rock in the fort of Badami and assumed the title Vatapikonda i.e. the conqueror of Vatapi (Badami). This event took place in the year 642 A.D.

After this war the Chalukya empire remained in a state of eclipse for over thirteen years until his son Vikramaditya I once again established the Chalukya rule.

Vikramaditya I (655-681 A.D.) to Kirtivarma II (645-757 A.D)

The restoration of the Chalukya power by Vikramaditya I brought stability to the empire though fights with the successive Pallavas continued. The rule of Vikramaditya's son Vinayaditya (681-698 A.D.) and that of his son Vijayaditya (696-733 A.D.) were generally peaceful. Vikramaditya II, the son of Vijayaditya finally avenged the defeat of Pulakeši II by Narasimhavarman, by leading his army as far as Kāñchi and taking possession of it. But the glory of the Chalukya empire was finally eclipsed in the period of the last king Kirtivarma II (745-757 A.D.), the son of Vikramaditya II. The continued conflicts with the Pallavas had considerably weakened the empire and Kirtivarma could not cope up with the situation. Taking advantage of this situation the Rastrakūṭa chief Dantidurga challenged the authority of the Chalukyas and became successful in establishing as an independent ruler by defeating Kirtivarma.
Thus the mighty empire of the Chalukyas came to an end after ruling whole of Deccan for nearly 250 years. The fall of the Chalukyas gave rise to another mighty empire that of the Rastrakutas who practically continued all the traditions of their predecessors.

The rule of the Chalukyas of Badami had a lasting impact on the successive dynasties. For the first time it carved out a unified empire covering the whole of the Deccan and formulated a centralised system of administration on the basic principles laid down by the political theorists of the earlier ays. Occupying the place of supremacy in the contemporary world it gave an impetus to the all round growth of the land and the people in religious, cultural, artistic and economic activities. In the field of commercial activity, it laid the foundation of an organised system of trade across the borders of this vast kingdom. 'Ayyavole' or the modern Aihole which enjoyed the position of a capital along with Badami, came to grow as an important centre of trade and commerce with the establishment of a merchant-guild of 500 permanent members who extended their trade activities much beyond the borders of the kingdom. Traditionally known as 'Ayyavole Ainuryvaru' or '500 of Ayyavole', this merchant-guild continued to flourish in the subsequent centuries as a 'model chamber of commerce', to use the modern
The Rastrakutas

The term Rastrakūta, like 'Grāmakūta' originally meant an official designation of the head of a region and later it denoted the name of the family. It is interesting to note that not many theories are put forward regarding the origin of this dynasty, though some records ascribe Yadava descent to this family also. Further evidences point to their place of origin in the Marathwada region of Maharashtra State. They are called Lattalūrapuravaradhiśvara i.e. the 'Lord of Lattalūra' which is modern Latur in the Osmanabad district (Marathwada region) of Maharashtra state. Another source describes them as Kandhārapuravarāśvara which may refer to modern Kandhār in the Nanded district of the same region and the state. The earliest inscription of the first ruler Dantidurga is discovered in this region. One of the early rulers of this dynasty, Kṛṣṇa I constructed the famous Kailāsa temple at Ellora which is also in the same region. As suggested by the scholars all these facts indicate that the Rastrakūtas originally hailed from this area and ruled
as the feudatories of the Chālukyas of Bādāmi in the early years of their career.

The history of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas as the independent rulers commences with Dantidurga though the names of his predecessors are also known. They are placed in this order: Dantivarman-Indra I-Govindarāja-Karka I-Indra II-Dantidurga.

Dantidurga (635-756 A.D.) to Govinda II (774-780 A.D.)

The Rāṣṭrakūṭa inscriptions claim that Dantidurga led expeditions to Kāñchi, Kaliṅga, Kōsala, Śrīsaila, Mālwa, Lāṭa and Lāṅkā. Though these victories appear to be exaggerated, the credit of laying the foundation of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa empire goes to him.

Krṣṇa I (756-774 A.D.), the uncle of Dantidurga succeeded to the throne since Dantidurga had no issue. He launched a programme of expansion and put an end to the Chālukya rule by killing Kīrtivarma II and subduing the Chālukya allies like Rāhappa. His conquests included Konkaṇa and the region of the Gangas. The Silāhāra chief Saṇḍaphulla was placed in-charge of Konkaṇa and Ganga Śrīpuruṣa was allowed to rule over his province. The expedition against Vengi by his son Gōvinda II was also successful.
Gövinda was successful as a prince with impressive victory over Vengi, but inscriptions of the later kings describe him as a pleasure-loving king. This led to the lawlessness in the State and resulted in the revolt of his brother Dhruva. Some scholars hold that Gövinda might have lost his life in the civil war. But others think that he handed over the reigns of the kingdom to his brother voluntarily. Thus Dhruva assumed the office after a short tenure of Gövinda II.

Dhruva (780-793 A.D.) and Gövinda III (793-814 A.D.)

Dhruva and Gövinda III are known for their valour and the expansion of the kingdom. In north India the political condition was congenial for his military adventures. The Gūrjara Pratihāra king Vatsarāja and Dharmapāla of Bengal were vying with each other to establish supremacy over Kanauj. Taking the opportunity, Dhruva marched towards Kanauj and defeated Vatsarāja. He later defeated Dharmapāla. He is also credited with the subduing of the Vengi king Viṣṇuvardhana IV who sought the friendship of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa ruler by offering his daughter Śīlabhaṭṭārikā in marriage. Further he subjugated the Gangas and the Pallavas. He imprisoned the Ganga king and placed his eldest son Stambha or Kambha in-charge of the Ganga territory. Pallava Nandivarman also acknowledged his authority and paid tributes.
Among his four sons, Gōvinda III succeeded him. This led to a revolt by Stambha who was joined by a number of allies including the Pallavas. In order to gain the support, Gōvinda freed the Ganga ruler Śivamāra from prison. But Śivamāra joined the alliance of Stambha and Pallava rulers. But Gōvinda successfully put down the combined army of the allies. After this war, the defeated Stambha was reinstated as the governor of Gaṅgavāḍī. Gōvinda's younger brother took the charge of the Lāṭa region. Śivamāra was once again imprisoned for his betrayal.

Like Dhruva, Gōvinda also led an expedition to the north and exhibited his superior strength before the Gūrjara-Pratihāra and the Pāla kings. On his way back from this expedition a child was born to him in the camp, who later came to be known as Amōghavāra Nṛpatunga. He also interfered in the affairs of the Vengi Chālukyas and supported one of the brothers who was a Rāṣṭrākūṭa ally. He defeated the Pallava ruler Dantivarman and is also said to have received gifts from the king of Ceylon.

Amōghavarṣa Nṛpatunga I (814-878 A.D.) to Amōghavarṣa III (935-939 A.D.)

When Amōghavarṣa came to the throne he was too young to manage the affairs of the State. As a result many feudatories and State officials revolted against him.
At such a juncture his cousin Karka, who was in-charge of Lāṭa, came to the help of Amōghavarṣa and took stern measures to suppress the revolt from all sides. He restored the normalcy in the State and placed firmly Amōghavarṣa on the throne in 821 A.D.

Unlike his predecessors, Amōghavarṣa was a person of religious disposition, a lover of peace and a patron of art and letters. His long rule of sixty-four years helped him to pursue all these activities. His rule was marked by few or no fights. He cultivated cordial relationship with the neighbouring Gangas and the Pallavas through matrimonial alliances. Himself a litterateur he is ascribed the authorship of the earliest known Kannada work Kavirājamārga. It is a work on poetics. He is also credited with the building of the new city of Maṅkheḍ which became the capital of the Raṣṭrakūṭas and beautified it. One of his daughters Revakanimmadj was associated with the administration of Edatore Viṣaya.

Kṛṣṇa II (878-914 A.D.), the son of Amōghavarṣa, took the reigns of the State when it appears to have grown impatient over the long rule of his father, in consequence of which the latter abdicated the throne in favour of his son.

Kṛṣṇa's task as the ruler was to quell the rebellions of the feudatory rulers. His attack on the Gūrjara -
Pratihara Bhōja was also successful. His involvement in the affairs of Vēngī resulted in his continued enmity with the ruler of that kingdom, Bhīma I.

Meanwhile, new developments took place in the south. The Chōlas replaced the Pallavas whose power was slowly declining. Kṛṣṇa established friendly relationship with the Chōlas by offering his daughter to the king Āditya I. But Kṛṣṇa chose to fight with the next Chōla king, when his grandson, through his daughter was denied his right to ascend the throne. However Kṛṣṇa was not successful in this endeavour.

An interesting feature of Kṛṣṇa's rule is the entry of the Arabs in his kingdom. An Arab was appointed as the governor of Thānā region during his rule.

Since Jagattunga predeceased his father Kṛṣṇa II, the latter was succeeded by his grandson Indra III (914-929 A.D.) Even as a Yuvarāja, Indra proved his abilities as a fighter. He defeated the Paramāra Upendra when he attacked the northern posts of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas. Later he continued his northern expedition upto Kanauj and defeated the Gurjara-Pratihāra ruler Mahipāla and occupied his capital. But this victory was shortlived. Later Mahipāla regained Kanauj with the help of Chandella king Harṣa. The families of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas and the Kalachuris came closer during the rule of Indra through matrimonial alliances.
Indra's eldest son Amōghavarṣa II (929-930 A.D.) ruled just for one year probably because of the usurpation by his younger brother Gōvinda IV. Neither could Gōvinda rule peacefully. His licentious life coupled with a plot to dethrone him and make his uncle Amōghavarṣa III the ruler, brought his downfall and he had to abdicate the throne. The conspiracy was led by Butūga II, brother of the Ganga Rāchamalla III and Arikēsari II, a Chālukya prince of Vēmulavāḍa.

Amōghavarṣa III (935—939 A.D.), the uncle of Gōvinda IV ascended the throne at an old age and his son Kṛṣṇa III who was appointed as Yuvarāja, managed the affairs of the State. He helped Butūga II to obtain the Ganga throne. But his invading the Chēdi kingdom to which both his mother and wife belonged, was an unnecessary adventure.

Kṛṣṇa III (939-967 A.D.) to Karkka II (972-973 A.D.)

Soon after his ascending the throne, Kṛṣṇa directed his attention to the Chōlas who were threatening the borders of his empire. Parāntaka I, the third ruler of the Chōlas, challenged his paramountcy and Kṛṣṇa suffered a setback.

But then he fought another fierce battle with his adversary near Takkōlam in which the Chōla army was completely routed. The Rāṣṭrakūṭa forces penetrated deep into the Chōla territory capturing capital city Kāṇchi and Tanjore. This area continued to remain under the Rāṣṭrakūṭas
for three decades, until Rājarāja I regained the lost territories.

In his north Indian campaigns Kṛṣṇa faced stiff opposition from the Gūrjara Pratiharas, the Chandellas and the Paramāras, but later they acknowledged his suzerainty. The Ganga prince Mārasimha II played an important role during these campaigns. On the eastern side, like his predecessors Kṛṣṇa also interfered in the affairs of the Chālukyas of Vengi, but for no tangible gain.

Kṛṣṇa was the last great ruler of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa dynasty. After his death the empire began to disintegrate due to internal and external problems.

Kṛṣṇa was succeeded by his half brother Khoṭṭīga (967-972 A.D.). Due to his old age and lack of military leadership and administrative capacity, he could not manage the affairs of the State properly. Many enemies of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas who were victimised during the rule of Kṛṣṇa III took the advantage of the situation. The Paramāra king Śiyaka invaded the Rāṣṭrakūṭa empire and destroyed the capital city of Mānyakhēṭa. But the Rāṣṭrakūṭa ally Ganga Mārasimha II regained the capital city for his overlord. But Khoṭṭīga died soon after this event.

The last ruler of the dynasty was Karka II (972-973 A.D.). Total disorder prevailed in the State due to the increased
dissident activities of the feudatories. At last Taila II of the Chālukya family put an end to the Rāṣṭrakūṭa supremacy and revived the Chālukya power in the Deccan which had gone into eclipse for two centuries.

Like their predecessors, the Rāṣṭrakūṭas also extended their power far and wide, even wider than that of the Chālukyas of Bāḍāmi. They gave a sound administration to the people of Deccan and built up a strong economy also.

The constant engagement of the rulers in wars did not in any way affect the growth of the kingdom on the cultural side. Temple building activities, a legacy from the Chālukyas of Bāḍāmi continued unabated. The architectural marvel in the form of rock-cut temple of Kailasā at Ellora is a unique contribution of these rulers to the world of art and architecture. In the domain of language and literature also Rāṣṭrakūṭas made a mark. Kannada language came to be used more profusely in communication through inscriptions. This period is a landmark in the history of Kannada literature with the earliest known Kannada work Kavirājaṃarga being produced in this period, by no less a person than the king Amōghavarṣa Nṛpatunga I himself. An interesting development in this period was the settlement of the Arabs in the coastal region of the kingdom. We hear of a Tājīka or an 'Arab' officer named Madhumati Sugatipa who was a governor of the Thāṇā region under Kṛṣṇa II. This naturally
must have given impetus to expansion of economic activity into the outside world. Inscriptions of this period do indicate increased agricultural and trade activities, through the land grants and mention of different types of taxes and the coinage. The famous guild of 'Ayyāvoḷe 500' slowly expanded their activities in further south.

The Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa

The Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa had their lines with the Chālukyas of Bādāmi. As noted above, Taila II of the former dynasty reinstated the Chālukya supremacy by overpowering the Rāṣṭrakūṭas.

Taila II (973-997 A.D.) to Somesvara II (1068-1076 A.D.)

Taila II was a subordinate of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa Kṛṣṇa III in-charge of Tarḍavāḍi-1000. Taking advantage of the changing conditions in the Rāṣṭrakūṭa kingdom, he overthrew Karka II and established his independent rule in 973 A.D.

Taila's rule was not smooth. He had a formidable enemy in Chōla Rājarāja I. He thwarted the efforts of Taila to overpower the Gangas and himself succeeded in regulating them and reducing them to a subordinate position.

His position in Vengi was no better either. Earlier the Rāṣṭrakūṭas had kept up their impact in that region but Taila could not manage it. The ambitious Rājarāja manoeuvred to practically annex the Vengi region to his
own kingdom. Yet Taila did succeed in winning over some portion of that region over which he appointed his elder son Irvabeđanga Śatyāśraya as the governor. Inscriptions claim for Taila victory over the kings of Chēdi and Nepāla. But this seems to be more conventional than real.

The next ruler Satyāśraya (997-1008 A.D.), the eldest son of Taila II had to continue the fights with the Chōlas.

Soon after coming to the throne he had to face an attack of Chōla Rājarāja, in which Satyāśraya lost his brother Daśavarma. Vengi had been a bone of contention between the Chālukyas and the Chōlas, and each supported the rival claimants to that throne. When Satyāśraya came to power, Śaktivarma was on the Vengi throne with the help of Chōla Rājarāja. Satyāśraya led an expedition against Vengi in 1005 A.D., but this opportunity was ceased by the Chōla when he invaded the Chālukya territory and even penetrated deep into it as far as Dōnūr, thus forcing the Chālukya to retreat from Vengi. He is said to have arranged this defeat through another attack, under the leadership of his general. Inscriptions ascribe him victory over Śilāhāra chief Aparājīta also.

Irvabeđanga Satyāśraya was succeeded by his nephew Vikramāditya V (1008-1015 A.D.) and later, Vikramāditya was succeeded by his brother Ayyaṇa. The only notable
thing about Vikramāditya is his invasion on the Chōḷa country which was unsuccessful. Ayyaṇa ruled for few months and he abdicated the throne in favour of his brother Jayasimha II (1015-1044 A.D.).

The early years of Jayasimha's rule were not peaceful. He had to face the combined army of the Paramāras, Kalachuris and the Chōḷas. A fierce battle was fought on the banks of the river Gōdāvari. It is said that during this war the Chōḷa king Rājendra burnt down Malḵhēḍ, while the Paramāra king Bhōja overran Konkaṇ. But these appear to be tall claims. Jayasimha led a counter attack on the Paramāra to avenge the raid. He also put down the insurgent subordinate Sōuṇa Bhillama III and befriended him by offering his daughter Avvaladēvi in marriage to him.

The Chālukya-Chōḷa fights continued over the affairs of Vengi. Many wars were fought over this issue. But ultimately no one was successful. One such battle was fought at Maski in Raichur district which seriously affected Jayasimha.

The period of Sōmēśvara I (1044-1068 A.D.) witnessed a series of wars with his three Chōḷa contemporaries, Rājādhirāja, Rājendra II and Vīrarājendra. Many battles were fought but with no distinct advantage to either, though in the inscriptions, both claim victory to their side. But the battle of Koppam proved to be damaging for
the Chālukyas. Though in the early stage of the war the Chōla ruler Rājadhirāja was killed in the battle, Rājendrā II, the younger brother of the deceased ruler fought bravely and won the war for the Chōla side. The later Chōla records glorify their victory over the Chālukyas and the Chālukya records also narrate the atrocities caused by the Chōlas. But the Chālukya king repulsed the invading army, with the help of his Hoysala ally. In 1064 A.D. when Vīrarājendrā succeeded to the throne one more battle was fought between the constant enemies at Kūḍala-sangama. Inscriptions also claim that he fought successful battles with the Paramāras.

Thus, most of the career of Sōmeśvara was filled with warfare. This hero of many battles is said to have drowned himself in the Tungabhadrā, afflicted by serious disease.

Of the three sons of Sōmeśvara I, Sōmeśvara II, Vikramāditya VI and Jayasimha IV, the eldest one Sōmeśvara II ascended the throne. His career, however, started with a depressing note since he discovered the designs of his brother Vikramāditya VI to oust the ruling king and usurp the kingdom. Vikramāditya almost left the capital with an army and mustered the support of the feudatory chiefs like the Kadambas of Goa and Hāngal and the Seiṇas. His younger brother Jayasimha IV also remained on his side. Sōmeśvara also tried to build-up his own side. But the
events show that ambitious Vikramāditya had an upper hand and he finally succeeded in ousting his brother and occupying the throne himself in 1076 A.D.

Apart from the personal setback of Somesvara II, the period up to the rise of Vikramāditya VI can be described as one of ascent when Chalukya empire grew from strength to strength culminating in the rule of Vikramāditya VI which can be described as the zenith of the Chalukya empire.

Vikramāditya VI (1076-1127 A.D.)

The rule of Vikramāditya ushered in an era of peace and prosperity, though tainted by usurpation. He was an ambitious king and an able ruler. He commemorated his coronation by starting a reckoning of his own, by the name Chalukya Vikrama Śaka or the 'Chalukya Vikrama Era' by wiping out the existing (Sālivāhana) Śaka, as an inscription puts it. This era was in vogue for over hundred years after this event.

Vikramāditya ruled for fifty long years and his period is marked by the absence of major wars. The traditional enmity with the Chōlas subsided after both sides realising the strength of each other and the futility of wars. On the northern borders he espoused the cause of Jagaddeva for the Paramāra throne as against his rival after the death
of Udayāditya. Failing in his efforts he brought him to his empire and made him a provincial governor. The latter participated in the warfares also of Vikramāditya. This is a rare instance of a king developing a paternal affection for an unknown prince.

With the borders being quiet, Vikramāditya turned to subdue the unruly subordinates. One was his brother Jayasimha IV himself who had stood by him in the early days. Now he tried to rise against the king but was promptly curbed. The Śilāhāra chief Bhōja was also put down. But the more formidable one was the Hoysaḷa subordinate Viśnuvardhana who perhaps was as ambitious as the master himself. In his plan to carve out an independent kingdom for himself, he first wrested Gangavādi from the Chōlas and started moving into the interior of the Chālukya empire. He could overpower the Kadambas of Hāngal and the Pāṇḍyas of Uchchangi and establish his military posts in their regions. Vikramāditya sent Paramāra Jagaddēva to curb the rebel but it was of no avail. Viśnuvardhana marched further across Tungabhadrā and into Beḷvola. Vikramāditya himself proceeded against him and without giving any further scope, pushed him back to his territory. Viśnuvardhana had no option but accept the subordination of Vikramāditya.
These activities did not affect the peaceful atmosphere in the empire which had now spread between Narmada and Kaveri. He launched a programme of Nityabhūmidāna or donating land everyday and was responsible for the construction of a large number of temples. Litterateurs received encouragement. Bilhana from Kaśmir came to his court and wrote the Vikramāṅkādeva-charita, a romantic biography of his master. Viśiṣṭēmayya, the author of Mitakṣara, a commentary on Vājñavalkya-smṛti, lived in his empire.

Śomēśvara III (1127–1139 A.D.) to Śomēśvara IV (1158–1198 A.D.)

If the days of Vikramāditya were a zenith, those that followed referred to decline and downfall of the dynasty. The next ruler Śomēśvara III (1127–1139 A.D.), the son of Vikramāditya VI, was more a scholar than a statesman. He gave to the world a Sanskrit work Abhilāṣitārtha-chintāmaṇi or Mānasollāsa, an entertaining work of encyclopaedic nature testifying to his versatile scholarship. He also wrote a biography of his father called Vikramāṅkābhūtyudaya, of which only a portion is now available. He is hailed in inscriptions as Sarvajña-chakravarti.

Śomēśvara's scholarly disposition adversely affected the stable political conditions in the empire. The ambitious feudatories like the Hoysālas and Sēuṇas started raising their heads. The hold on Vengi was lost, with Vikrama Chōla gaining an upper hand. The next ruler
Jagadekamalla II (1139-1149 A.D.) could not check the tide. Now in the Andhra region Kākatīyya Prōla started revolting and Viṣṇuwardhana was exhibiting superior military strength by attacking the forts of Hāṅgal and Bankāpur, above the Tungabhadra in Dharwad District.

At this juncture, Kalachuri Bijjāla II who was the son of the daughter of Vikramāditya VI raised a banner of revolt, taking advantage of the situation. He was the governor of Tarikāḍu in the Solapur region. At this time Jagadekamalla II died and he was succeeded by Taila III (1149-1162 A.D.) who too was weak ruler. Bijjāla ousted him and occupied the capital Kalyāṇa and declared himself the king (1162 A.D.). This was a major blow to the Chālukya empire from which it could not recover at all. The successors of Taila had to remain incognito for about twenty years which was covered by the rule of Bijjāla and his successors. Taila's son Sōmeśvara IV (1158-1198 A.D.) did succeed in reoccupying Kalyāṇa (1182 A.D.), but could not hold the State together. The Śēṇa chief Bhillama V and the Hoysaḷa Ballāḷa II were already active in occupying as much of the Chālukya territory as they could from the northern and southern sides respectively. Finally the former struck a fatal blow to Sōmeśvara and occupied Kalyāṇa (1189 A.D.). Sōmeśvara had to take shelter under his Kadamba subordinate at Banavāsi until he died in 1200 A.D.
The disintegration of the Chālukya empire gave rise to two new dynasties in the Deccan. The Sēṅgas or Yadavas of Dēvagiri rose to power in the northern parts of the Deccan while the Hoysalas of Dōrasamudra in the southern parts. On the eastern side the Kākatīyas established their independent rule, with their capital at Warangal. This resulted in the apportionment of the vast Chālukya empire into three kingdoms, with Tungabhadrā as the dividing line between the Sēṅgas and the Hoysalas. Most of the Andhra region except extreme western fringes, was covered by the Kākatīya kingdom.

The Chālukya empire was not only vast but also most prominent in the whole of the Deccan. With the subduing of the Paramāras, the northern borders of the empire became totally free from enemies and peace and prosperity reigned in the empire though the traditional enmity between the Chālukyas and the Chōḷas continued and which was effectively met by the able ruler Vikramāditya VI. An elaborate system of administration was brought into practice with decentralisation and regional autonomy of the feudatory rulers. Religious and cultural activities continued unabated. The generous and benevolent approach of the rulers helped the growth of different religions like Jaina, Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava which received equal patronage from the rulers and administrators. Temple building activities were encouraged giving rise to such monuments of architectural excellence like
those at Ittagi, Lakkundi, Gadag, Annigiri, Kuruvatti, Bagali, Belgaum and numerous other places. This period witnessed a social and religious revolution under the leadership of Basaveshvara who revolted against the existing orthodox practices which had become obsolete and upheld equality of human beings and dignity of labour.

There was enormous growth in the field of economic activity also. The trade guild to Ayyavole-500 became more prominent extending their activities as far as Gujarat in the north and Tamil Nadu in the south. They regulated the commercial activities in the whole region by framing rules and regulations and prescribing code of conduct to different group of traders.

To a student of history this period is the most fruitful one in the sense that it provides copious and highly useful material for all aspects of study including financial, which is our present concern. The liberal patronage to different religions by the rulers, regional governors, merchants and others resulted in the writing of large number of inscriptions since the practice was to place on record the deeds of liberal gifts and donations through inscriptions for the information of posterity.

Numerically speaking this period has produced the largest number of inscriptions running into thousands compared to those pertaining to other dynasties of the Deccan. These inscriptions provide rich material for our
study. When they record the gifts of land, they refer to sale and purchase, gift and mortgage. They mention units of land measure and means of measurement. They speak of construction of tanks and irrigation facilities. They refer to different types of crops in different types of lands with varying yield. When they record the exemption of taxes, they give details of commercial activities such as sale, purchase and transport of goods, roads and means of transport. They speak of several types of taxes levied at different stages on different types of goods. They mention different types of coins with relative denominations and their minting. They give a fairly good picture of revenue administration mentioning a hierarchy of tax officials from village to the central level. All these and many more figuring in such inscriptions are the mainstay of our study.

The Kalachuris of Kalyana

Mention is made of Bijjala II and his feat of overthrowing the Chalukya Taila III. His family claims descent from the Kaṭachchuris of Kālanjara in Madhya Pradesh. Their inscriptions describe them as Kālanjara-puravarādhiśvara. They appear to have migrated to the Deccan in the wake of the attack on Kaṭachchuris by Rāṣṭrakūṭa Kṛṣṇa III. They carved out a principality for themselves in the Solapur-Mangalavēdhe regions in the present day Maharashtra state. They figure as governors of this region under the Chalukyas of Kalyana.
The first known member of this family Bijjala I (1057 A.D.) was a feudatory of Chalukya Somesvara I. Next prominent member of this family was Jogama (1080-1118 A.D.), the grandson of Bijjala I. He was the governor of Karahaḍa under Vikramāditya VI. His daughter Sāvaladēvi was married to the latter. Jogama's son Permadi (1118-1130 A.D.) married the daughter of Vikramāditya VI. Thus through these alliances the relationship between the two families became closer. This was very well exploited by Permadi's son Bijjala II who as noted above occupied the Chalukya throne itself.

The successors of Bijjala were weak rulers and they could not withstand the pressure of Somesvara IV on the one hand, and the Sēuṇa chiefs on the other. Thus finally the family came to an end in about 1193 A.D. But it had lost power even earlier. One notable feature of this short period is the revolt of the social and religious reforms of Basavēśvara to whom reference is made earlier. He served Bijjala as his minister, but later abdicated the office because of differences with the king.

The Sēuṇas of Devagiri

The Sēuṇas, commonly known as Yādavas of Devagiri came to prominence as independent rulers in the latter half of the 12th century A.D. But their political career had started much earlier in the 9th century itself under the Raṣṭrakūṭas and they(Sēuṇas) trace their origin to Yadu
of the Purāṇic fame. They are said to have migrated from Dwaraka region to the south. Scholars like Bhandarkar considered them as the descendants of an indigenous marāṭhā sect. But to show their ancestry from the Karnataka region, numerous epigraphical evidences are available. Almost all the inscriptions of the Sēuṇas are in Kannada language.

During the rule of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas, they were appointed as the governors of the Nāsik region where they went and settled. The dynasty acquired its name Sēuṇas from its first ancestor Sēuṇachandra I. They are known as the Yādava of Dēvagiri, since Dēvagiri (modern Daulatabad, in Aurangabad district, Maharashtra state) became their capital.

Early Rulers

The founder of this dynasty was Sēuṇachandra I (835-860 A.D.). He ruled from the Nāsik region with the headquarters at Sindinēra or modern Sinnar. The next prominent ruler Vaddiga I (937-970 A.D.) of this family was a feudatory of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa Kṛśna III and from this period onwards this family gained ascendancy. Vaddiga's son Bhillama II (970-1005 A.D.) also served the Rāṣṭrakūṭas and the later Chālukya king Taila II. He was stationed at the northern boundary of the State and he ably faced the Paramāra attacks. But his grandson Bhillama III (1010-1055 A.D.) had clashes
with Chalukya Jayasimha II who however, befriended him by offering his daughter Avvaladēvi to him in marriage. Bhillama played a prominent role in defeating the Paramāra king Bhōja on behalf of the next Chalukya ruler Sōmeśvara I.

Sēūṇachandra II (1068-1080 A.D.), the grandson of Bhillama III was closely associated with Chalukya Vikramāditya VI during his revolt against his elder brother Sōmeśvara II, and helped him in acquiring the Chalukya throne. Sēūṇachandra was appointed as the governor of the northern territories of the Chalukya kingdom. Sēūṇachandra's son Airamma (1080-1110 A.D.) also participated in this historic endeavour. Airamma was succeeded by his brother Singhaṇa I (1110-1145 A.D.) who fought many wars for his ruler, especially against the Hoysalas. His loyalty to the king fetched him the governorship of Paḷyaṇḍa-4000 and a village named Honnatti in Dharwad district, as personal fief.

With the next prominent chief Mallugi (1155-1165 A.D.), the Sēūṇa family entered an important phase in its history. By this time the Chalukya power had declined in the Deccan and Mallugi did not accept the suzerainty of the Kalachuris. He also fought with the Kākatiya Rudradēva. He was succeeded by his younger brother Bhillama V.
Bhillama V (1173-1192 A.D.) and Jaitugi I (1192-1197 A.D.)

Bhillama V succeeded in establishing his independent rule after continued struggle with the contemporary forces like the Kalachuris, the Chālukyas and the Hoysalas. After prolonged battles with Chālukya Sōmēśvara IV, he ultimately succeeded in capturing the capital Kalyāṇa and declared himself independent (1186 A.D.). He however, had to face a defeat at the hands of Hoysala Ballāla II in a battle near Soraṭūr (Gadag Taluk, Dharwad District) with him, who was also striving for the same end (1190 A.D.). Inscriptions speak of his fights with Paramāras and Kākatīyas also.

After achieving his ambition of becoming an independent ruler, he shifted his capital from Sinnar to Dēvagiri which is today known as Daulatabad situated near Aurangabad in the Marathawada region of the Maharashtra state.

Bhillama's son Jaitugi (1192-1197 A.D.) kept up his efforts to expand his kingdom further into the southern part of Beḷvola, but was not successful due to Hoysala Ballāla II who continued to occupy this region till about 1212 A.D. On the eastern side, Jaitugi achieved some success. He killed the Kākatīya ruler Rudra and his brother Mahādēva in a battle when they tried to capture Dēvagiri. Jaitugi imprisoned Mahādēva's son Gaṇapati, but later released and reinstated him on the Kākatīya throne.
Singhana II (1199-1247 A.D.)

Singhana was the most prominent ruler of the family. He expanded his kingdom to the maximum extent, from Narmada to Tungabhadra. In this process he had to wage several wars against all his neighbours.

His series of wars against his Paramara contemporaries and in the Lāṭa region brought him success. But he had to struggle hard to wrest the southern regions from Hoysala Ballāla II. In a strategy to achieve this goal he first subdued the feudatory rulers such as the Kadambas of Goa and the Śilāhāras, and finally forced Ballāla to withdraw from his military camps at Lakkuṇḍi and Hangal and retreat below Tungabhadra. This river finally became the border between the two kingdoms though inroads on either side were occasionally made by the two armies in the successive periods also.

Hoysala Ballāla's son Narasimha II tried to regain the lost territories from the Sēṇas. This resulted in the two fierce battles, one on the bank of the river Tungabhadra in 1223 A.D. and the other was fought near Nerilage in Shimoga district in about 1228 A.D. But he did not succeed in his efforts. Thus, Singhana's long rule brought stability to the kingdom.
The period of next three rulers, Kannara the son of Singhaṇa, Kannara's brother Mahādeva and the latter's son Āmaṇa were uneventful, except for routine fights against the neighbours like Vāghēla chiefs in Gujarat and the Hoysaḷas in the south. Perhaps Mahādeva had to face a defeat at the hands of the Kākatiya queen Rudrāmbā. Kannada and Telugu inscriptions extol the heroic deeds of this queen in the war.

The death of Mahādeva and the accession of his son Āmaṇa resulted in a civil war between him and Kannara's son Rāmachandra claiming to be a rightful heir to the throne, in which Āmaṇa was killed and Rāmachandra succeeded to the Sēūṇa throne.

Rāmachandra (1271-1312 A.D.)

Rāmachandra was the last independent ruler of the Sēūṇa family. He continued his hostile activities against the Hoysaḷas and other neighbours. His army once even marched up to Belavādi which was quite close to the Hoysaḷa capital Dōrasamudra. Yet it was strongly opposed by the Hoysaḷa generals and they forced the retreat of the Sēūṇa army.
His adventures against the Kākatīyas also proved to be disastrous to the Sēuṇa kingdom. The dispute arose when Rāmachandra supported the rebel Ambadēva, a former subordinate of Kākatīyas, in his fight against the Kākatīyas. But both were defeated by the Kākatīya king Pratāparudra. The Kākatīya army marched as far as Raichur in the Sēuṇa kingdom, and even built a fort there. Inscriptions also speak of several other conquests of Rāmachandra. But these constant wars only weakened the king and the Sēuṇa kingdom. It was at this juncture that Rāmachandra had to face another serious danger in the form of Muslim invasion from north by Ala-ud-din, the nephew of Delhi Sultan Jalal-ud-din.

With a design to capture the Delhi throne, Ala-ud-din wanted to build-up an army. To collect money for that purpose, he planned a systematic invasion on the Sēuṇa kingdom, and the conditions there were favourable to him. Taking permission of the Sultan on some pretext he marched towards the south. He reached Dēvagiri after capturing Gujarat and Elichpur in Amaravati district in Maharashtra state. Ala-ud-din's attack on the fort resulted in the defeat of Rāmachandra. With this defeat Rāmachandra had to sue for peace.

Even when the agreement was being reached, Singhaṇa III, son of Rāmachandra, who was away with his army from the capital returned to Dēvagiri and fell on the invading army. Enraged Ala-ud-din further plundered the city and collected
huge booty. The attack ended with an agreement that Rāmachandra would send him annual tributes and allow a Muslim garrison to be stationed at Elichpur. This was virtually the end of the independent Seuṇa rule. With the return of the invader, Rāmachandra renewed his hostilities with his neighbours which was detrimental to the interests of all.

In the meantime Ala-ud-din who was the new Sultan, planned an attack on the Kākatiya kingdom. He sent his army for plundering Warangal, but the Kākatiya Pratāparudra foiled his plan and the Muslim army had to beat a retreat.

Ala-ud-din found an excuse in the reported revolt of Rāmachandra to invade Dēvagiri again. This time he sent his general Malik Kafur with a huge army (1307 A.D.). Malik Kafur achieved the desired result and even took Rāmachandra as captive to Delhi. The latter was sent back no doubt, but deprived of sovereignty and dignity.

For Ala-ud-din, Dēvagiri became a stronghold in the south and he took full advantage of it. He sent Malik Kafur again to raid Warangal, this time with the help of Rāmachandra. The Muslim general achieved his goal in 1309 A.D.

In 1311 A.D. Malik Kafur led a campaign against the Hoysaḷa capital Dōrasamudra, with the assistance of Rāmachandra. The Hoysaḷa ruler Ballāḷa III was completely routed and the victorious Muslim army returned to Delhi in 1312 A.D.
Ramachandra did not live long after these wars. His son Singhana III succeeded his father to the Seuna throne, but with his position reduced to that of a subordinate. Even then he tried to re-establish his independence, and stopped sending tributes to Delhi. This act invited another invasion by Malik Kafur who captured Singhana III and finally put him to death (1313 A.D.).

After Singhana, some attempts were made by loyal feudatories of the Seunas to establish the lost supremacy, but in vain. Haripala deva, son-in-law of Ramachandra made much an attempt when Mubarak Khan had ascended the Delhi throne. Mubarak himself marched towards Devagiri and finally put an end to the Seuna rule. Haripala lost his life in the war (1318 A.D.)

Singhana III was succeeded by his son Mallugi III. But by this time the Seuna empire had reduced to the status of a petty chieftaincy under Muhammed Tughluk (1333-34 A.D.).

The Seunas, the successors of the ChalUKyas in this region continued their tradition - encouraging all activities, both religious and cultural. There was not much change in the administration or the system of economy. But all these must have received a serious jolt towards the end of the Seuna rule, about which, however we have no means to know.
On the socio-religious side, the period saw a new movement in the form of the Mahānubhāvi Pantha which advocated devotion to the god Kṛṣṇa and equality among all people irrespective of caste and creed. Another feature of this movement was the admission of women in it.

The Hoysalas

The Hoysalas of Dōrasamudra were the contemporaries of the Seũgas of Dēvagiri. They came into prominence in 11th century and continued to rule the southern parts of Karnataka especially the region popularly known as Gangavādi. They started their career as the subordinates of the Gangas and the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa and with the fall of the latter, declared themselves as the independent rulers.

The origin of the Hoysalas is mixed with legends and like the Seũgas, they also claim themselves to be the descendants of Yādava race. Inscriptions narrate the story that founder-member of the dynasty Sala killed a tiger at the instance of his teacher and hence the dynasty got the name Hoysaḷa (Hoy-Saḷa, 'Strike O' Sala).

Early Rulers

Kāma or Nrpa Kāma (1000-1045 A.D.) is considered to be the founder of the Hoysaḷa dynasty. He was a subordinate of the Chālukyas. Inscriptions mention his wars against
the Chōla generals in order to show his independent existence around the Talakaḍ region. Though it is difficult to ascertain their historicity it is clear that he struggled hard against the Chōla army to retain his identity.

Kāma's son Vinayāditya I (1045-1098 A.D.) continued to rule as a faithful subordinate of the Chālukyas and assisted his monarch Sōmeśvara I in his warfares. It seems that Sōmeśvara's queen Hoysalādevi was a daughter of Vinayāditya.

When Vikramāditya VI succeeded to the Chālukya throne, Vinayāditya continued as his loyal subordinate. His son Ereyanga (1098-1100 A.D.) even as a prince assisted Vikramāditya during his expeditions against the Chōlas. He is also credited with exemplary valour in the wars with the Paramāras and even the capture of the cities of Dhāra and Chakrakūṭa.

**Ballāla I (1100-1108 A.D.)**

With the accession of Ereyanga's son Ballāla I (1100-1108 A.D.) there was a shift in the Hoysaḷa outlook. Ballāla was an ambitious chief and he had the support of his equally ambitious brothers Viṣṇuvardhana and Udayāditya. Naturally they started making concerted efforts to be independent from their overlord. Sensing this development the ruling king Vikramāditya VI sent an army led by Paramāra prince
Jagaddēva to curb Ballāla. The battle which took place in about 1100 A.D. resulted in the Hoysaḷa army becoming victorious. The three Hoysaḷa brothers led by Ballāla and his brothers gave a stiff resistance to the Chālukya army and Jagaddēva faced a defeat. Encouraged by this victory, the Hoysaḷa chief raided the territories of chieftains like Chengāḷavas and occupied Ālyakhē qa. Later he proceeded against the Pāṇḍyas of Uchchangi and crossed the river Tungabhadra to gain control over the Beḷvola region.

Enraged by these activities of Ballāla, Vikramāditya this time sent an army under Āchugi of Sinda family. This chief fought the Hoysaḷas effectively and drove Ballāla back to his capital. This was a blow to the ambition of the Hoysaḷas.

Viṣṇuvardhana (1108-1152 A.D.) to Ballāla II (1172-1220 A.D.)

Viṣṇuvardhana who succeeded his brother Ballāla I kept up his struggle for independence. His first achievement was the wresting of Kolar region from the Chōḷas and capturing the whole of Gangavāḍi (1116 A.D.). Smaller chiefs like Kongāḷvas and the Niḍugal Chōḷas were easily overpowered.

He could also conquer parts of Bellary region, and after crossing Tungabhadra captured the fort of Kummaṭa.
His conquest of Nolambavadi earned him the title 'Nolambavadi - gonda'. But his attempt to capture the Belvola region led to a war with the Chalukyas which was fought at Kannegal in 1118 A.D. The Hoysala general Gangaraja won this war for his master. After this victory Visnuvardhana also defeated the Kadambas of Hangal. Vikramaditya decided to curb these expansionist activities and sent his feudatory the Sinda Achugi II and his son Permadi to fight with Visnuvardhana. This resulted in the Hoysala surrendering his newly acquired territories to the Chalukya king. He could not raise his head until Vikramaditya’s death. Nevertheless, he laid a firm foundation for the independent Hoysala kingdom.

Visnuvardhana is otherwise also known as a patron of art and letters. One of his queens Santaladevi was an ardent Jaina devotee, though the king himself was a zealous Vaisnava and a patron of Ramanujacharya. Santaladevi was reputed as an accomplished master of dances. Visnuvardhana is accredited with the building of the famous Channakesava temple at Belur.

The only event in the otherwise uneventful rule of the next chief Narasimha I (1152-1173 A.D.), the son of Visnuvardhana, was his ouster by his son Ballala II himself who perhaps grew impatient for establishing an independent kingdom. It is to his credit that he achieved this goal.
The accession of Ballāla II (1173-1220 A.D.) was followed by major political upheavals in the Deccan. As narrated earlier, Ballāla came on the scene when the Chālukya power under Sōmeśvara IV was on the decline and Sōupa Bhillama V was trying to occupy the Chālukya empire. It is also noted that Bhillama was not slow to seize the opportunity and was moving southwards by crossing the Tungabhadrā. In the initial stages both Bhillama and Ballāla were driven back by the Chālukya ruler with the help of his general Barma. However, Bhillama forced Sōmeśvara to quit the capital and proceed to Banavāsi, the headquarters of the Chālukya feudatories, the Kadambas. Ballāla held the Belvola region for some time, when a fierce battle was fought near Soraṭūr in Gadag tāuk in 1190 A.D. between him and Bhillama in which Ballāla became victorious. Thereafter Ballāla firmly established himself in Belvola with Lakkupdi as his stronghold. Then he marched towards the Raichur region and captured Kukkanur and Mānvī regions. Later however, Bhillama's grandson Singhaṇa II succeeded in forcing Ballāla to retreat from these armies.

Towards the end of the career, Ballāla had to divert his attention to the affairs of the Chōla kingdom due to his matrimonial relations with that ruling family. He sent his son Narasimha II in his war against Māravarma Sundara Pāṇḍya.
It is to the credit of Ballāla that he achieved the goal of independence long cherished by his grand father and great grand father. He carved out a fairly big kingdom in the southern parts of the Deccan. His relationship with the Seūṇas was one of rivalry and enmity but the maintained a cordial relationship with the Chōlas.

Last Rulers

Ballāla's son Narasimha II (1220-1235 A.D.) spent most of his life in protecting the sovereignty of the Chōlas. He repeatedly visited that region to support his Chōla protege. His busy engagement in the Chōla country gave an opportunity to Singhaṇa to extend his boundaries further in the South. Though a war was fought between the two forces in 1223 A.D., Narasimha could not get much benefit from it. Two more subsequent battles in 1228 A.D. and 1230 A.D. under different Hoysaḷa generals also were not successful. Thereafter, Narasimha gave up the idea of dislodging Singhaṇa and the river Tungabhadrā became the northern boundary of the Hoysaḷa State. Ultimately his involvement in the Chōla affairs made him lose interest in the affairs of the northern parts of the Hoysaḷa State.

Narasimha's son Sōmēśvara (1235-1253 A.D.) even as a prince, was placed in-charge of Kaṇṇāṇūr region which was won by his father during his conquest against the Lāḍava chief. With his accession to the throne he preferred to
remain in the Kaṇnānūr by making it his permanent headquarter. This helped Singhaṇa and his successor Kannara to proceed further into the Hoysala territory and they marched as far as the Chitradurga district.

With the accession of Rājēndra III to the Chōla throne, the cordial relationship between the Hoysalas and the Chōlas began eroding and Sōmēśvara even sided with the Pāṇḍyas and defeated Rājēndra.

By this time Sōmēśvara was growing in age. Sensing the difficulty in handling the affairs of such unwieldy State, he divided the kingdom into two portions and appointed his eldest son Narasimha III in-charge of the northern area of the kingdom with Dōrasamudra as the headquarters. His younger son Rāmanātha, was stationed in the southern region with Kaṇnānūr as the capital. Sōmēśvara preferred to stay in Kaṇnānūr till his end.

The division of the Hoysaḷa kingdom between the two brothers Narasimha III (1253-1292 A.D.) and Rāmanātha (1253-1295 A.D.) did not bring the expected results. Both the rulers constantly fought with each other. This weakened the Hoysaḷa power both in the northern and the southern parts. As seen earlier the Seūṇa ruler Rāmachandra raided the Hoysaḷa kingdom and his army even marched upto Beḷavāḍi which was barely four and half miles away from the capital Dōrasamudra. But Narasimha's generals fought
heroically and pushed back the Śūṇa army. The Śūṇa general built a Lākṣminārāyana temple at Harihar in memory of his old master Śūṇa Mahādeva.

With Śomēśvara siding with the Pāṇḍyas, the prestige of the Hoysalas was lowered in the Chōla country. When Jaṭāvarma Sundara Pāṇḍya I succeeded to the throne, he defeated the Chōlas and their allies including the Hoysalas. Thus, Rāmanātha lost his territories in the Tamil country during this Pāṇḍya invasion. Later he intensified his hostilities against his brother and succeeded in capturing some places in Kolar and Bangalore districts. He established his capital at Kundāṇi and ruled from there till his death in 1295 A.D.

Soon after Ballāla succeeded his father Narasimha III to the throne, he defeated his cousin Viśvanātha of the Kaṭṭanār branch and thus became the ruler of the unified Hoysaḷa kingdom. But he happened to be the last Hoysaḷa, because of the Muslim invasion which brought down all the southern kingdoms.

Even after the ignominious defeat at the hands of Ala-ud-din, as seen above Rāmachandra renewed his hostilities against the Hoysalas. Many battles were fought between the two kingdoms between 1301 and 1306 A.D. These wars only resulted in the weakening the strength of both the armies and invited further invasions.
Ala-ud-din's target was the Hoysala kingdom and he sent his army under the command of his general Malik Kafur to attack Dōrasamudra and further on the Malabar region. In 1311 A.D. the Muslim army arrived at Dēvagiri and with the assistance of Rāmachandra proceeded towards Dōrasamudra. Ballāla was not prepared for this attack since at that time he was busy with the affairs of the Pāṇḍya kingdom. Though he gave a tough fight to the Muslim general, he had to submit to the superior power of the Muslim army and lost much of his wealth. With the help of Ballāla, the victorious Muslim army marched further into the Malabar region and plundered the cities in the Pāṇḍya kingdom. With this invasion, Malik Kafur completed his mission and returned to Delhi.

After this defeat, Ballāla continued to interfere in Pāṇḍya affairs and supported Sundara Pāṇḍya in his war against his brother. The victory of Sundara Pāṇḍya fetched him some areas around Aruṇasamudra. In the meantime, with the death of Seūṇa Rāmachandra, a Muslim governor was appointed at Dēvagiri in 1313 A.D. on behalf of the Delhi Sultan.

In 1321 A.D. Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluk became the new Sultan of Delhi. In 1323 A.D. he sent an army under the command of his son Ulugh Khan to Warangal. Ulugh Khan defeated the last Kākatīya ruler Pratāparudra and took him as prisoner. Thus came to an end the rule of the Kākatīyas of Warangal, another contemporary dynasty of the Hoysalas.
When Ulugh Khan became the Sultan of Delhi in 1327 A.D. with a new name Muhammad Tughluk, he once again sent an army to attack Dōrasamudra. This time also Ballāla did not resist much and the Hoysala capital was ruthlessly sacked and destroyed. Ballāla was forced to stay back in Tiruvanāṇamalai. By 1330 A.D. three State capitals viz., Devagiri, Warangal and Dōrasamudra became the victims of the Muslim aggression. In the same year the small chieftaincy of Kampili also came under the Muslim rule.

These Muslim conquests all over the Deccan weakened Ballāla's hope of reviving the glory of the Hoysala kingdom. Later he was killed in an encounter with the Muslim chiefs in 1342 A.D. With his death the rule of the Hoysalas came to an end. The successor of Ballāla, his son Virupākṣa Ballāla IV was incapable to manage the affairs. Thus, after Ballāla's death all the territories merged in the empire of Vijayanagara, which rose in the Deccan in 1336 A.D.

Thus an end came to an important phase in the history of the Deccan. The phase which had begun with the formation of Chālukya empire at Bādāmi in the 6th century A.D. came to the close in the 13th cent. A.D. with the Muslim invasions over the Deccan. Throughout these seven hundred years, the Deccan witnessed political stability, though new dynasties succeeded one after the other. The stable government gave much scope for the steady economic development in the whole of Deccan.
The interesting feature to note is that the political upheavals and even the constant warfare between the rival powers did not affect the social, religious and economic institutions. Uniform patronage to all religions helped the growth of different religious sects which in turn gave enormous scope and encouragement to the development of art and architecture as well. Merchant guilds from one kingdom moved freely into another and trade and agricultural activities continued unabated. Considerable wealth was generated and the Deccan kingdoms became known for their wealth. This was perhaps an eyesore to the greedy Sultans of the north which finally led for their downfall.

In the successive chapters we will concentrate our study on the economic activity that the region witnessed during these seven hundred years.

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