APPENDIX (A)

LEGENDARY ACCOUNTS PERTAINING TO THE PLACES AROUND THE CAPITAL CITY OF THE CHALUKYAS

Banashankari and Mahakuta Mahatmyas:

So far we have made a survey of the Government and administration under the Chalukyas of Badami. Now, we intend to narrate two legendary accounts - the Banashankari and the Mahakuta Mahatmyas - which relate to the capital city and its surroundings. These local accounts are available. Besides giving a mythological account of the two places, they contain an element of truth for which they deserve merit. One of these is related to the shrine of Banashankari and the other to Mahakuta and its vicinity.

The Banashankari mahatmya mentions the name of Badavi and describes the story of destruction of the two demon brothers - Ilvala and Vatapi. The story part of the account may be summarised as follows. The two demon chiefs - Ilvala and Vatapi - inhabited the forest region in the western part of Karnatak. Their daily routine was to waylay the sages hailing from the north and invite them for food, in their abode. The sages would believe the invitation and accompany Ilvala or Vatapi or both. After taking the sages home, Ilvala would cut Vatapi's body and serve the dishes to the guests. Thereupon, he was in the practice of muttering a chant recalling Vatapi into...
his former form as both of them were adepts in the art of 'mritasanjivini' (bringing the dead back to life). Then the demon-brothers ate the flesh of the guests to their full gratification. Vatapi would come to life resulting in the death of the guest. Next day, the brothers would do the same way. This sort of atrocious activity went on for a good number of years until the turn of Sage Agasthya came. The sage Agasthya was invited by Ilvala in his usual way. He was served with food. No sooner did Ilvala serve the flesh of Vatapi, Agasthya muttered a counter chant, 'Vatapi jeernabhava' (let Vatapi be digested). Vatapi could not come back to life. Thus Vatapi fell dead at the present site of Mahakuta. Ilvala was taken aback and repented for having done harm to the good sages all these days. He fell on the feet of Agasthya and prayed that he should be blessed and that he and his brother should acquire lasting fame. Agasthya took pity on Ilvala's helplessness and blessed that the brothers were to get transformed into two hillocks. The two hillocks of Badami and Mahakuta at present are believed to named in commemoration of the above event. Several years after, Pulakesi built the fort on the hillock of Vatapi and thus the city acquired the name Vatapi. The term Badami (or Badavi) is its modern name.

We are not to take mainly the myth as it has no other basis than that of a legend. But we may discern
from the story that the present surroundings of the city of Badami had not been inhabited for many years in the heavy past until Aryan penetration into the region south of the forests of the Vindhyān range, with the advent of Sage Agasthya. Another point to be observed is that the author of the local mahatmyas was aware of the name of the city of Vatapi, (modern Badami). The name of Vatapi may be equated with Badami with certainty.

The second account is on Mahākūta, Mahatmya. This account describes the surroundings of Mahākūta. Such a toponymical account shows the author's awareness of the region and it may be associated with the Chāluḵyas of Badami, with more definiteness.

It is evident, therefore, that Vatapi and Badavi are the names of one and the same city. It is also evident that the name of Mahākūta is also mentioned as a city adjacent to Vatapi or Badavi.