

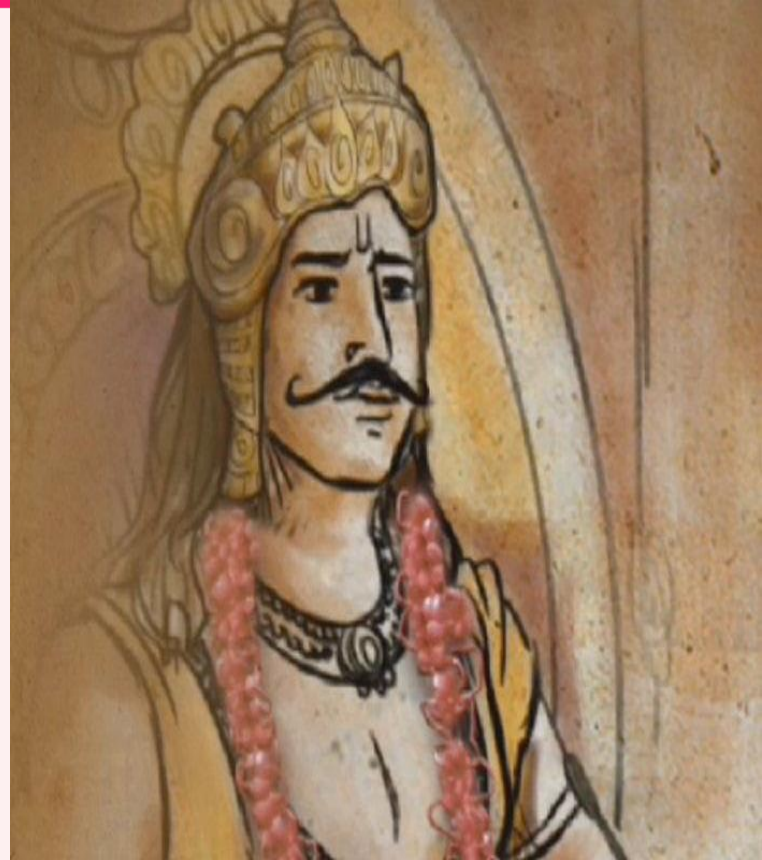


Harshavardhana Vakatakas Chalukyan

By Dr Vipin Goyal

Harshavardhana (606 – 647 AD)

- After Gupta's decline, Harshavardhana, a ruler of Thanesar, Haryana extended his authority.
- Harshavardhana was born in 590 AD to King Prabhakaravardhana of Sthaneshvara (Thanesar, Haryana).
- He belonged to the Pushyabhuti also called Vardhana dynasty.
- He was a Hindu who later embraced Mahayana Buddhism.
- He was married to Durgavati.





Rise to the throne

- After Prabhakaravardhana died, his elder son Rajyavardhana ascended to the throne of Thanesar.
- Harsha had a sister, Rajyashri who was married to king Grahavarman of Kannauj.
- Sasanka, the Gauda king killed Grahavarman and kept Rajyashri prisoner.
- This prompted Rajyavardhana to fight against Sasanka. But Sasanka killed Rajyavardhana.



Rise to the throne

- This led the 16-year old Harshavardhana to ascend the throne of Thanesar in 606 AD.
- He vowed to avenge his brother's murder and also rescue his sister.
- For this, he forged an alliance with Bhaskaravarman, the Kamarupa king.
- Harsha and Bhaskaravarman marched against Sasanka.
- Ultimately, Sasanka left for Bengal and Harsha became the king of Kannauj also.



Annexation of Kannauj

- Harshavardhana made Kannauj his capital & seat of power & became last great Hindu ruler of North India
- After the fall of the Guptas, North India was divided into many small kingdoms.
- Harsha was able to unite many of them under his command.
- He had under his control Punjab and central India.
- After Sasanka's death, he annexed Bengal, Bihar and Odisha.

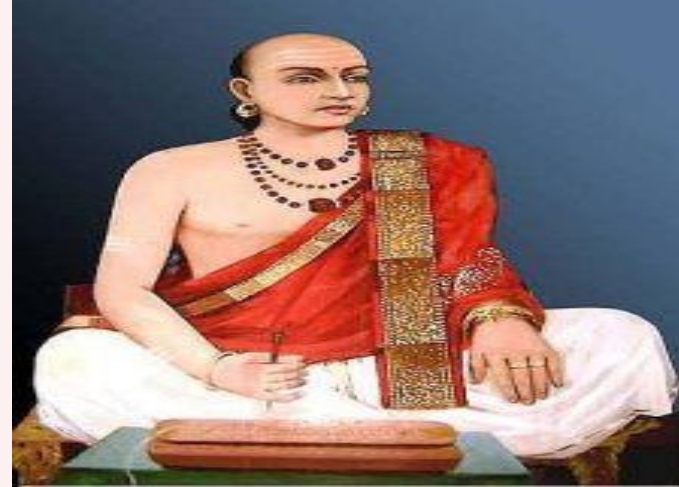
- He also defeated the Vallabhi king in Gujarat. (The Vallabhi king and Harsha came to a truce by a marriage between Harsha's daughter and the Vallabhi king Dhruvabhata.)
- However, Harsha's plans to conquer lands to the south were hampered when the Chalukya king, Pulakesin II defeated Harsha in 618-619 A.D.
- This sealed Harsha's southern territorial limit as the Narmada River.





- There were two types of territories under Harsha.
- One was directly under him and the other type was those that were feudatories.
 - Direct territories: Central Provinces, Bengal, Kalinga, Rajputana, Gujarat
 - Feudatories: Jalandhar, Kashmir, Kamarupa, Sind, Nepal
- Even the feudatories were under the tight command of Harsha.

- Hiuen Tsang visited India during Harsha's reign.
- He has given a very favourable account of king Harsha and his empire.
- He praises his generosity and justice.
- Harsha was a great patron of the arts.
- He himself was an accomplished writer. He is credited with the Sanskrit works Ratnavali, Priyadarshika and Nagananda.
- Banabhatta was his court poet and he composed the Harshacharita which gives an account of Harsha's life and deeds.





Interest in Literature

- **Nagananda:** It describes the story of the Jimutavahana's self-sacrifice to save the Nagas.
- **Ratnavali:** Ratnavali is a great drama, which narrates the story of a princess called Ratnavali and a king called Udayana.
- **Ratnavali is probably the earliest textual references to the celebration of Holi, the festival of colors.**
- **Priyadarsika:** Priyadarsika is another great play by Harsha.



- Harsha generously supported the Nalanda University.
- He had a good tax structure.
- In Harsha's Empire, the king's share was one-sixth of the agricultural produce.
- 1/4th of all the taxes collected were used for charity and for cultural purposes.
- Harsha was a competent military conqueror and an able administrator.
- Harsha was the last king to rule over a vast empire in India before the invasions by the Muslims.



Conflict with Pulkesin II

- However, his long career of victory was eclipsed by one great failure against Pulkesin II.
- **Pulkesin II**, the greatest of the Chalukya dynasty vied with Harsha and was able to stop the ambitions of Harsha towards south.
- If Harsha was **Uttarpathapati**, Pulkesin II, the Chalukya King of Vatapi was able to raise himself to the rank of lord paramount of the South and called himself **Dakshinapathapati**.
- The defeat of Harshavardhana in the hands of Pulakesin II is mentioned on Aihole inscription (Karnataka). He was the first North Indian king to be defeated by South Indian King.



Conquest of Ganjam:

- The last conquest of Harsha was the Ganjam in modern Odisha.
- Harsha was not able to annex initially because of his enmity with **Shashanka**.
- However, Ganjam was conquered in 642-643 AD and after that, Harsha became content to sheathe the sword.
- *The later part of Harsha's life is almost an imitation to the Great Asoka Maurya*, but it took 37 years and numerous conquests to Harsha to adopt the Asoka route.



Religion

- Harsha was last great Hindu king of North India.
- After the Ganjam conquest, Harsha started showing the favor for the quietest teachings of Buddhism.
- He favored the Hinyana initially and Mahayana later.
- He forbade the slaughter of any living thing.
- Use of animal flesh was a punishable offense in his reign.



Religion

- Father of Harsha was a Sun Devotee,
- His remote ancestor Pushyabhuti was a Shiva follower,
- His brother Rajyavardhana and sister Rajyashri were Buddhism devotees,
- But Harsha was benevolent of all the three and erected temples also.
- However, the in the closing part of his reign, his favorite was the faith of Buddhism.
- We find King Harsha's autograph in **Baanskhera inscription of Haryana.**



- In his early life, Harsha was devoted to Shiva but later he became an ardent Mahayana Buddhist under the influence of Chinese pilgrim Hieun Tsang. He organised two assemblies :
- **Kannauj Assembly** Harsha organised a Kannauj assembly to honour Chinese pilgrim Huan Tsang where he explained doctrines of Mahayana Buddhism & claimed his superiority over others
- **Prayag Assembly** : 2nd Mahayana Buddhism assembly by Harsha, marked by great charity of Harsha where he even gave up his cloths as charity



- **Who is Bhandi ?**
- Bhandi was a leading noble of Kannauj and on advice of the political leaders of Kannauj; he offered the crown of Kannauj to Harsha after death of Grahavarmana.
- Bhandi was later described as one of the chief officers of Harsha.
- When Harsha chased Shashanka for release of his sister, through Bhandi only Harsha could know that his sister has been released and Shashanka has escaped.



- **Who is Simhanada ?**
- Simhanada was the General of the Harsha's army and his Prime Minister.
- When Harsha was preparing to conquer the South, Simhanada warned him about the dreadful consequences.
- This was for the first time that Harsha did not pay attention to his seasoned councilor and paid the price for the same when Pulkesin II defeated him.



Administration in Harshavardhana's Reign

- The revenues of Harsha's Empire were divided into four parts.
- The first part was spent on the king.
- The second part was spent on scholars.
- The third part was spent on public servants and the fourth part was spent on religious activities.
- The administration during Harsha's reign was similar to that of the Guptas. Hiuen Tsang has described it in much detail.
- The administration was more feudal and decentralized during Harsh's reign as compared to that of the Guptas.



Administration in Harshavardhana's Reign

- Harsha probably began the practice of granting land to officers in lieu of salary.
- The maintenance of Public records was a characteristic feature of Harshavardhan's administration.
- The records of good as well as bad events that occurred during the the time have been recorded in them.



Administration in Harshavardhana's Reign

- Taxation was light and forced labour was also rare.
- One-sixth of the crop produce was collected as land tax.
- The king made frequent visits of inspection throughout his dominion.
- Harshavardhan's Army consisted of four divisions- foot, chariot, horse and elephant. It was much more than that of the Mauryans.
- There was provision of cruel punishments, similar to the Mauryan times.
- Harshavardhan had diplomatic relations with China.



Society during Harsha's rule

- There was fourfold Varna system in place comprising- Brahmins, kshatriya, Vaishya, and Sudra.
- Brahmins received land grants from the king, Kshatriyas were the ruling class, Vaishyas were involved in trading and Sudras practiced agriculture. There were many sub-castes.
- **Position of Women:** Women lost the privileges of Swayamvar(the choice of choosing the husband), Widow remarriage was not permitted, especially among higher castes. The practice of Dowry and Sati became prevalent.
- **Burial of dead:** dead were disposed either by cremation, water burial or exposure in the woods.



Economy

- During Harshavardhana's reign, trade and commerce declined, as depicted by an decrease in trade centres.
- This decline also affected handicraft and agriculture.
- This also led to rise of self-sufficient village economy.



Developments in Art & Culture

- The architecture during Harsha's period was based on Gupta style primarily.
- Hiuen Tsang refers to a 8 feet tall copper Buddha statue.
- He also talk of a multistory monastery at Nalanda.
- In Chhattisgarh at Sirpur, a brick temple of Lakshman is surviving example of architecture during Harsh'a period.





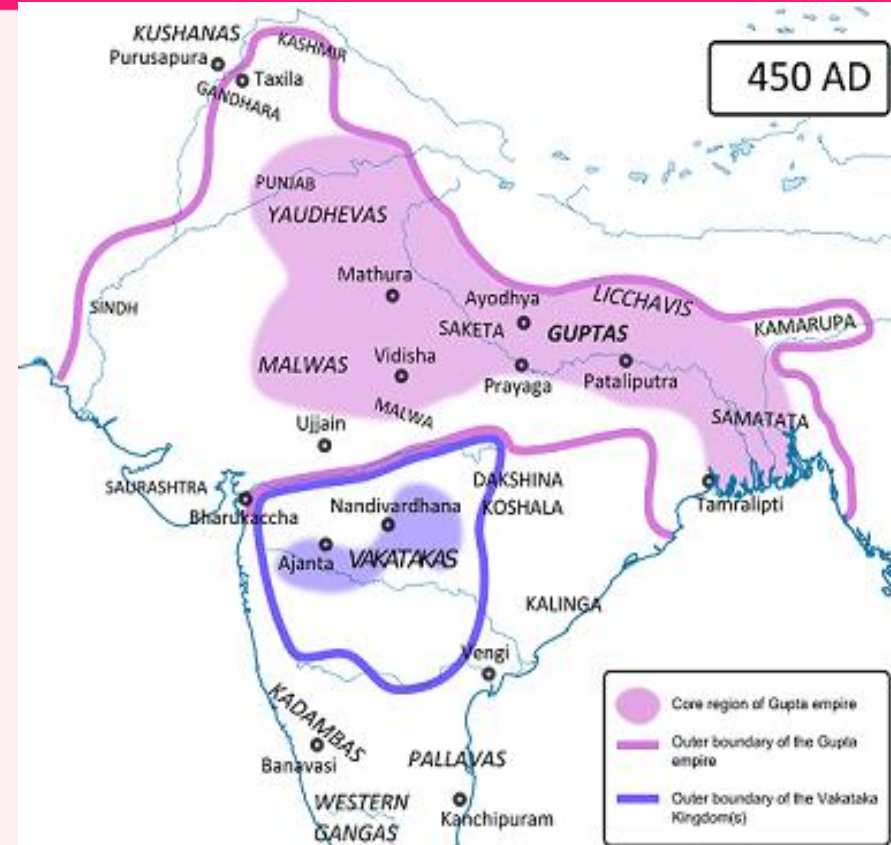
Harsha's death

Harsha died in 647 AD after ruling for 41 years.

Since he died without any heirs, his empire disintegrated very soon after his death.

Vakataka Dynasty

- The Vakataka dynasty ruled parts of South-Central India from 250 AD to 500 AD.
- They were important rulers whose power was firmly established in the Deccan just like their contemporaries, the Guptas in the north.
- They were important successors of the Satavahanas.



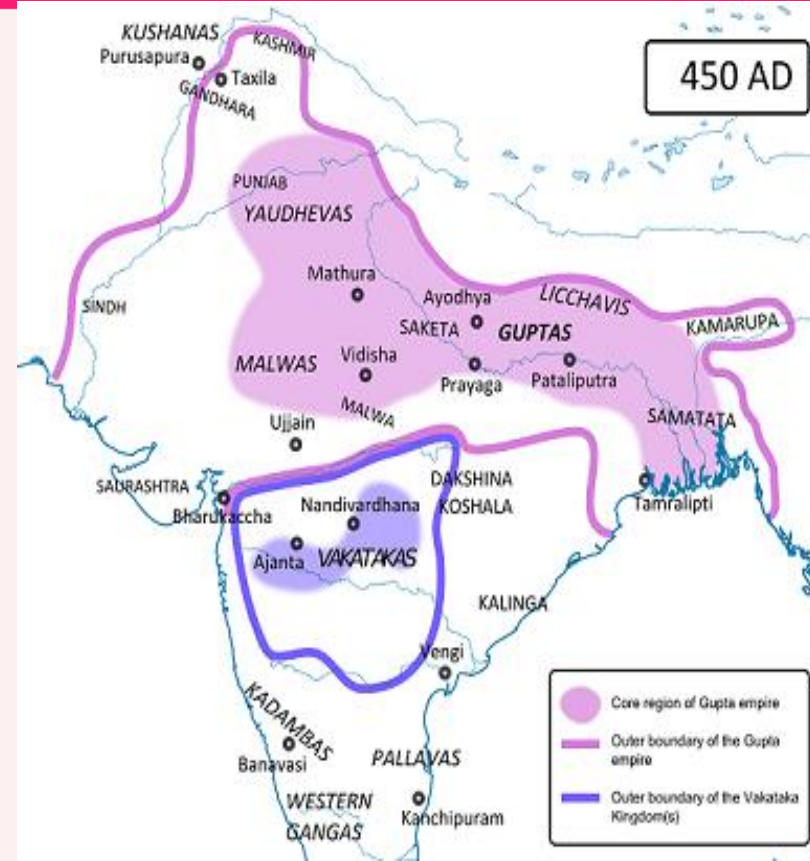


Origin

- The Vakatakas were Brahmins.
- They have Sanskrit and Prakrit inscriptions which are similar to those belonging to the southern Pallavas.
- Also, no records of the Vakatakas have been found north of the Narmada.
- They are also mentioned in the Puranas.

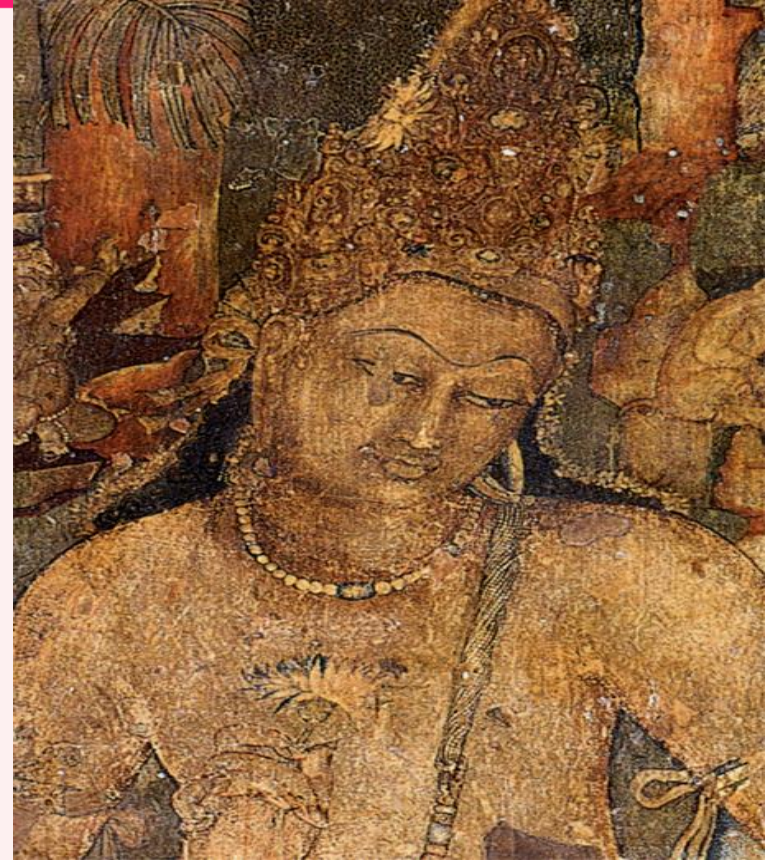
Extent

- The Vakataka kingdom extended from the southern extremities of Malwa and Gujarat in the north to the Tungabhadra River in the south; and from the Arabian Sea in the west to the edges of Chhattisgarh in the east.



Rulers

- Vindhyashakti (Reign: 250 – 270 AD)
- Founder of the dynasty.
- From Ajanta cave inscription stating that he is the banner of the Vakataka family and that he is a Dvija (Brahmin).





Pravarasena I (Reign: 270 – 330 AD)

- Son and successor of Vindhyaashakti.
- His other titles include Samrat, Dharmamaharaja and Haritiputra.
- His empire included a good portion of northern India and the Deccan.
- He conducted Vedic rituals like Ashwamedha, Vajapeya, etc.
- He conducted wars with the Nagas.
- He had four sons as per the Puranas and it is possible that the empire split up among his sons.



Pravarasena I (Reign: 270 – 330 AD)

- His son Gautamiputra died before him and his grandson (son of Gautamiputra) Rudrasena I succeeded him to the throne.
- After his death, there were two divisions of the Vakatakas.
 - Pravarapura-Nandivardhana Branch (in present Wardha, Maharashtra)
 - Vatsagulma Branch in present Nagpur district.



Rudrasena I (Reign: 330 – 355 AD)

- Grandson of Pravarasena I.
- He was succeeded by his son Prithvishena I who reigned from 355 – 380 AD.



Rudrasena II (Reign: 380 – 385 AD)

- Son of Prithvishena I.
- Married Prabhavatigupta, daughter of Chandragupta II.
- Rudrasena II died leaving behind minor sons and during this time, the imperial Guptas of the north is said to have controlled the Vakatakas through Prabhavatigupta who was the regent on behalf of her sons.



Pravarasena II (Reign: 400 – 440 AD)

- Was named Damodarasena.
- Second son of Rudrasena II.
- He became the king after his elder brother Diwakarasena died.
- Founded the city of Pravarapura.
- Also composed Setubandha in Maharashtri Prakrit.



Sarvasena (Reign: 330 – 355 AD)

- Son of Pravarasena I.
- He authored Harivijaya in Prakrit.



Harishena (Reign: 475 – 500 AD)

- Fifth generation descendent of Sarvasena.
- Patronised Buddhist art and architecture.
- Many of the Buddhist caves, Viharas and Chaityas at Ajanta were executed under his reign.
- The later caves at Ajanta show the high perfection and sophistication in art achieved under the Vakataka kings particularly Harishena.



Chalukyas

The Chalukyas ruled parts of Southern and Central India between the 6th century and the 12th century.

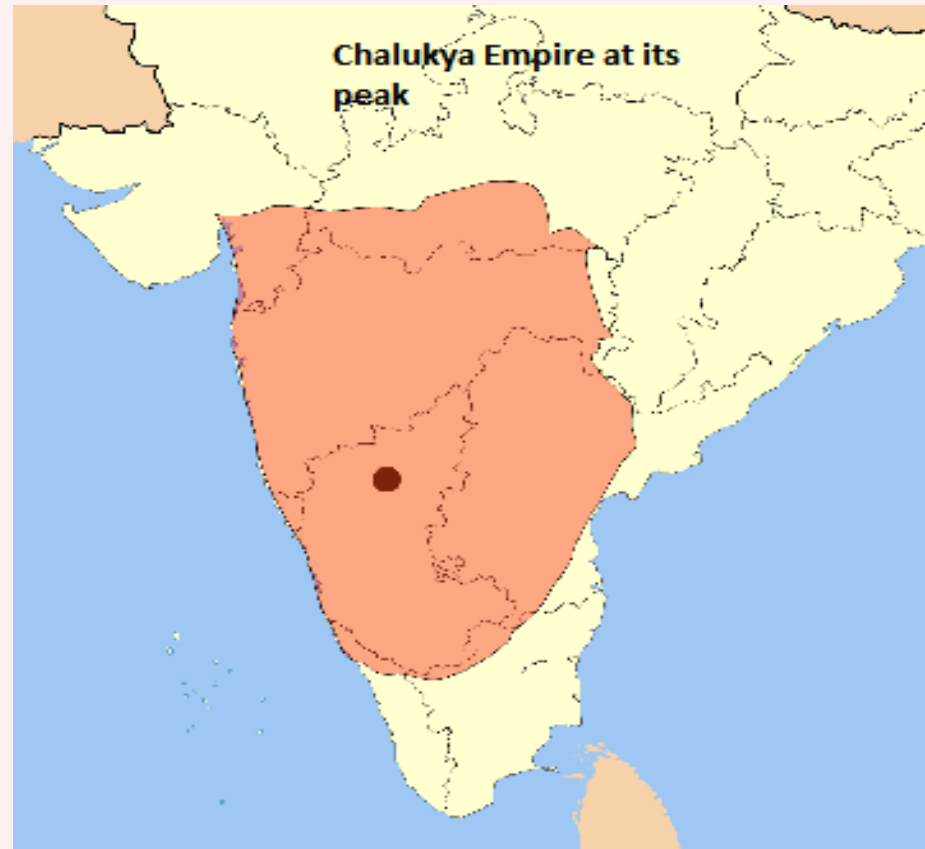


The Three Chalukyas

- There were three distinct but related Chalukya dynasties.
- **Badami Chalukyas:** The earliest Chalukyas with their capital at Badami (Vatapi) in Karnataka. They ruled from mid-6th and declined after the death of their greatest king, Pulakesin II in 642 AD.
- **Eastern Chalukyas:** Emerged after the death of Pulakesin II in Eastern Deccan with capital at Vengi. They ruled till the 11th century.
- **Western Chalukyas:** Descendants of the Badami Chalukyas, they emerged in the late 10th century and ruled from Kalyani (modern day Basavakanlyan).

Extent of the empire

- The Chalukya dynasty reached its peak during the reign of Pulakesin II.
- His grandfather Pulakesin I had created an empire around Vatapi.





Extent of the empire

- Pulakesin II subjugated the Kadambas, the Gangas of Mysore, the Mauravas of North Konkan, the Latas of Gujarat, the Malavas and the Gurjars.
- He also succeeded in getting submission from the Chola, Chera and Pandya kings.
- He had also defeated King Harsha of Kannauj and the Pallava king Mahendravarman.



Chalukya Rulers

- Jayasimha was the first ruler of the Chalukyas.
- Pulakesin I (Reign: 543 AD – 566 AD)
 - Founded the empire with his capital at Vatapi.
 - Performed Ashwamedha.
- Kirtivarman I (Reign: 566 AD – 597 AD)
 - Son of Pulakesin I.
 - Conquered Konkan and northern Kerala.



Chalukya Rulers

- Mangalesha (Reign: 597 AD – 609 AD)
 - Brother of Kirtivarman I.
 - Conquered the Kadambas and the Gangas.
 - Was killed by his nephew and son of Kirtivarman, Pulakesin II.



Pulakesin II (609 AD – 642 AD)

- The greatest of the Chalukya kings.
- Extended the Chalukya rule to most parts of the Deccan.
- His birth name was Eraya.
- Information about him is obtained from the Aihole inscription dated 634.
- This poetic inscription was written by his court poet Ravikirti in Sanskrit language using the Kannada script.



Pulakesin II (609 AD – 642 AD)

- Though a Hindu, he was tolerant of Buddhism and Jainism.
- He conquered almost entire south-central India.
- He is famous for stopping Northern king Harsha in his tracks while he was trying to conquer southern parts of the country.
- He had defeated the Pallava king Mahendravarman I but was defeated and killed by Mahendravarman's son and successor Narasimhavarman I in a series of battles he had with the Pallavas.



Pulakesin II (609 AD – 642 AD)

- For the next 13 years, Badami remained under Pallava control.
- Pulakesin II received a Persian mission as depicted in an Ajanta cave painting.
- He maintained diplomatic relations with the King of Persia Khusru II.
- His death saw a lapse in Chalukya power.



Chalukya Rulers

- Vikramaditya I (655 AD – 680 AD)
 - Son of Pulakesin II who plundered Kanchi, the capital of the Pallavas.
- Kirtivarman II (746 AD – 753 AD)
 - Great-great-grandson of Vikramaditya I.
 - Last of the Chalukya rulers. Was defeated by the Rashtrakuta king, Dantidurga.



Administration and Society

- The Chalukyas had great maritime power.
- They also had a well-organised army.
- Though the Chalukya kings were Hindus, they were tolerant of Buddhism and Jainism.
- Saw great developments in Kannada and Telugu literature.
- Sanskrit as the language of the elite whereas Kannada was the language of the masses.



Art and Architecture

- They built cave temples depicting both religious and secular themes.
- The temples had beautiful mural paintings also.
- The temples under the Chalukyas are a good example of the Vesara style of architecture.
- This is also called the Deccan style or Karnataka Dravida or Chalukyan style.
- It is a combination of Dravida and Nagara styles.

Art and Architecture

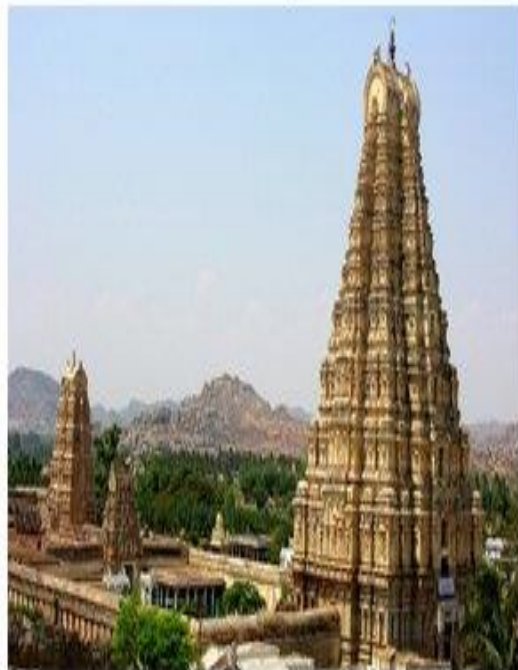
- Aihole temples/KTK: Ladh Khan temple (Surya Temple), Durga temple, Huchimalligudi temple, Jain temple at Meguti by Ravikirti. There are 70 temples in Aihole.
- Badami temples/KTK
- Pattadakal/KTK: is a UNESCO World Heritage site. There are ten temples here – 4 in Nagar style and 6 in Dravida style.
- Virupaksha temple and Sangameshwara Temple are in Dravida style. Papanatha temple is in Nagara style.
- This was also earliest example of Shiva temples, which have a Nandi pavilion in front of the temple.



Temple Architecture of Badami Chalukyas



Ravana Phadi Cave



Virupaksha Temple



Lad Khan Temple



Navbhamha Group of Temples, Alampur

Badami Cave Temples

- Badami cave temples are located at Badami.
- The red sandstone cliffs of Badami offered a spectacular setting for the excavation of four caves, **three Brahmanical and one Jaina (Parshwavanath)**.
- The largest and most impressive of these is Cave 3, dedicated to Vishnu.
- **The architecture is a mixture of the Nagara style and Dravida style.** Apart from the above four, there is a fifth natural Buddhist cave in Badami.





Virupaksha Temple, Hampi

- Virupaksha Temple is located in Hampi in Karnataka on the banks of the Tungabhadra river.
- Virupaksha Temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva and was created by the Chalukyas of Badami initially in 8th century.
- The temple was improvised in Vijaynagar Empire.
- It is in the Virupaksha temple at Hampi that full glory of the Early Chalukyan art can be seen.
- This temple was built in 735 AD by a queen of Vikramaditya II to celebrate the victory over the Pallavas of Kanchipuram.



Ladkhan Temple, Aihole

- An inscription on this temple says that it was dedicated to Durga.
- There is a Shiva ling out there.
- The temple is known as Lad Khan after its owner (in most recent times) at a place used as cattle sheds or houses.



Navabramha Group of Temples, Alampur

- The **Navabramha Group of temples** is located at Alampur in Andhra Pradesh.
- There are total 9 temples and present a marvelous piece of art of the Chalukyas of Badami outside Karnataka.
- These temple are based upon the Nagara style and do not reflect the Dravidian style of temple architecture (8 out of 9 are clearly Nagara style).
- These temples are all enclosed in a courtyard on the left bank of the river Tungabhadra.



Temples at Pattadakal

- Numerous temples at Pattadakal on the bank of river Malprabha, some kilometers from Aihole mark the return of the Chalukya patronage to Karnataka after several years of activity in the Andhra Pradesh.
- The first temple is Galagnatha Temple which is in Nagara style similar to the Alampur temple.



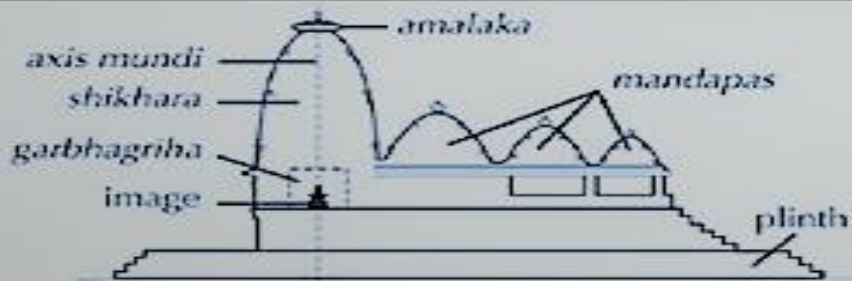
Nagara



Dravida



Vesara



northern-style temple



southern-style temple

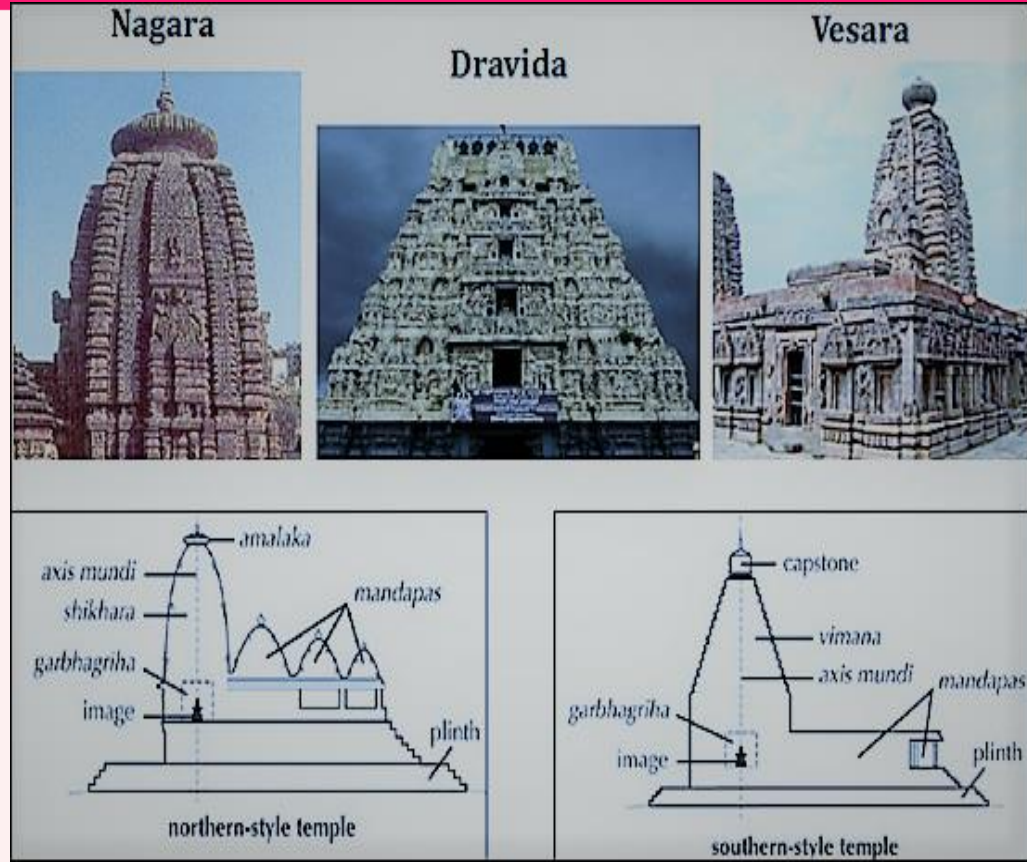
Vesara style

- The Vesara style also called the Chalukyan type possessed the Dravidian vimana and the Nagara- type faceted walls.



Special departure from Nagara and Dravida tradition

- In case of entrance hall to shrine Chalukya temple bears special uniqueness. It has two or more than two entrances .
- There is a small closed mantapa to the shrine in Nagara temples.
- There is an enlarged, open and closed mantapa in Dravida temples.





Thank You