



The Dynasty of Rajaraja Narendra and his Kingdome

By

Bodda Haribabu
Department of History
Andhra University
Visakhapatnam

Abstract

Rajaraja Narendra (1019–1061) was the Eastern Chalukya king of the Vengi kingdom in South India. Rajaraja Narendra established Rajahmahendravaram (Rajahmundry). The Social and Cultural legacy of his era was renowned. During the reign of Rajaraja Chola I, the Western Chalukya laid waste to Rajahmundry. Western Chalukya and neighbouring dynasties engaged in conflict, with Chola dynasty providing political support. Amangai Devi married Rajaraja Narendra, the son of Vimaladitya Chalukya. The feudal relationship between the powerful Cholas and Chalukyas lasted for three centuries after Arinjaya Chola. Rajendra Chalukya, also known as Kulottunga Chola I, son of Rajaraja Narendra, raided Kedah (Indonesia) for his maternal uncle. He ascended to the throne and merged the Chola and Chalukya dynasties when a political void arose in Gangaikondacholapuram. He is the first King of the Chalukya Cholas. Members of the Shudra community who served as generals and royal officials received multiple land grants during his reign, indicating that he was a tolerant ruler. Due to the tax cuts he enacted, he was also known as "sungam thavirtha cholam." In his Timmapuram plates, the progenitor of the Eastern Chalukyas, Kubja Vishnuvardhana, claimed to be a member of the Manavya gotra. In contrast to their claimed ancestor, the Vijayanagara empire's Aravidu dynasty belonged to the Atreya gotra.

Keywords: Rajaraja Narendra; dynasty; administration; literacy; social and cultural heritage.

Introduction

Between the seventh and twelfth centuries, the Eastern Chalukyas, also called the Chalukyas of Vengi, ruled portions of South India. In the Deccan region, they began as governors of the Badami Chalukyas. Until approximately 1130 CE, they ruled the Vengi region of modern-day Andhra Pradesh as a sovereign power. Chola feudatories continued to rule the region until 1189 CE. Originally, the capital of the Eastern Chalukyas was located in Vengi (modern Pedavegi near Eluru). It was subsequently moved to Rajamahendravaram (modern Rajahmundry). The Eastern Chalukyas were responsible for numerous conflicts between the more powerful Cholas and Western Chalukyas over the strategic Vengi nation throughout their history. Telugu culture, literature, and art flourished during the latter half of Vengi's rule under the Eastern Chalukyas (Rao, P. Raghunatha, 1994)¹.

Historical background of Eastern Chalukyas

Chalukyas of Badami were the ancestors of Chalukyas of Vengi. Badami ruler Pulakeshin II (608–644 A.D.) defeated the Vishnukundina dynasty's remnants and conquered the Vengi region in eastern Deccan. In the year 624 A.D., he appointed his brother Kubja Vishnuvardhana as the new territory's governor (Nilakanta Sastri & N Venkataramanayya, 1960)². Subsequently, Vishnuvardhana's viceroyalty became an independent kingdom, possibly after Pulakeshin was killed fighting the Pallavas at the Battle of Vatapi (Ramesan, 1975)³. Thus, the Eastern Chalukyas were descendants of the Kannadas (Modali Ngabhaarma et al., 1995)⁴.

According to the Timmapuram plates of Kubja Vishnuvardhana, the progenitor of the Eastern Chalukyas, they were of the Manavya Gotra and Haritputras (sons of Hariti), like the Kadambas and Western Chalukyas (Murali, et al., 2007)⁵. The dynasty began claiming legendary lunar dynasty origins in the eleventh century. According to this legend, the dynasty descended from the Moon through Budha, Pururava, the Pandavas, Satanika, and Udayana. Ayodhya was ruled by 59 unnamed descendants of Udayana. Their descendant Vijayaditya was killed by Trilochana Pallava during an expedition to Dakshinapatha (Deccan). His pregnant widow sought sanctuary with Vishnubhatta Somayaji of Mudivemu (modern Jammalamadugu). Her son was given the name Vishnuvardhana to honour her benefactor. By the grace of the goddess Nanda Bhagavati, the boy grew up to become the ruler of Dakshinapatha (Ramesan, 1975).

Rajaraja Narendra (1019–1061) was the Eastern Chalukya king of the Vengi kingdom in South India. Rajaraja Narendra established Rajamahendravaram (Now it is noted as Rajahmundry). The Social and Cultural legacy of his era was renowned. During the reign of Rajaraja Chola I, the Western Chalukya laid waste to Rajahmundry. Western Chalukya and neighbouring dynasties engaged in conflict, with Chola dynasty providing political support. Amangai Devi married Rajaraja Narendra Chalukya, the son of Vimaladitya Chalukya. The feudal relationship between the powerful Cholas and Chalukya continued three centuries after Arinjaya Chola.

Son of Rajaraja Narendra Chalukya, Rajendra Chalukya, also known as Kulottunga Chola I, led an expedition to Kedah (Indonesia) on behalf of his maternal uncle. When a political vacuum emerged in Gangaikondacholapuram, he ascended to the throne of the Chola empire. He subsequently united the Chola and Chalukya dynasties. He was the first King of the Chalukya Cholas. Members of the Shudra community who served as generals and royal officials received multiple land grants during his reign, indicating that he was a tolerant ruler. He referred to himself as "sungam thavirtha cholan" as he reduced taxes.

In his Timmapuram plates, the progenitor of the Eastern Chalukyas, Kubja Vishnuvardhana, claimed to be a member of the Manavya gotra (Murali, et al., 2007). The Aravidu dynasty of the Vijayanagara empire, contrary to their claimed ancestor, belonged to the Atreya gotra (Nagaraja Rao, 1983)⁶.

Raja Raja Narendra (1022–1061 AD) – The King of Eastern Chalukya

Rajaraja Narendra Chalukya is a Vengi Eastern Chalukya king and a contemporary of Rajendra Chola. Imperial Cholas and Vengi Chalukyas had both marital and political ties. Rajaraja Chola got her daughter Kundavai married to Vengi prince Vimaladitya. Vengi Chalukyas are believed to have played a crucial role in the Chola Dynasty's conquests of Odisha, Bengal, and East Asia (Yazdani, Ghulam, 1960)⁷.

Son of Vimaladitya, Rajaraja Narendra chalukya constructed Rajamahendravaram or Rajahmundry, and his reign was renowned for its rich social and cultural heritage. His son Rajendra Chalukya or Kulottunga Chola I (son of Rajaraja Narendra and Ammanaga Devi, daughter of Rajendra Chola I) conquered Indonesia before becoming King of Chola Empire (as sons of Rajendra Chola I took to Chola throne in a quick succession from 1044 to 1070 AD with death of prince Athirajendra Chola's death in civil war - he took over the Chola throne to begin the In fact, he grew up in GangaikondaCholapuram as Chola Prince alongside his grandfather Rajendra Chola I and fought in numerous Chola wars on behalf of his uncles (three sons of Rajendra Chola I).

In these complex circumstances of civil war against Athirajendra Chola, Rajendra Chalukya, the son of Raja Raja Narendra, became the successor king of the Chola Empire as Kulothunga Chola I, reigning from 1070 to 1122 AD. Thus, Rajaraja Narendra was related to the Cholas through marriage, as Rajendra Chola was his father-in-law. Although he belonged to the Vengi Chalukyas, for tactical and strategic reasons he formed an alliance with the Cholas. During the reign of Raja Raja Chola I, the Cholas and Vengi Chalukyas engaged in continuous warfare, and the Chola capital Rajamahendravaram was also sacked. In a sense, the alliance prevented additional conflicts, and peace was restored to the region.

The relation between Raja Raja Narendra and Cholas

Raja Raja Narendra Chalukya is a king of Vengi Eastern Chalukya dynasty and one must be wondering how come his name sounds very similar to Raja Raja Chola of imperial Chola Dynasty emperor. There is matrimonial relation between both of them which got proved to be not only politically

strategic for their conquests into Kalinga and Gangetic plains of Pala kingdom of Bengal/Vanga but also provided future Chola prince. This trust had its origins in 1001 AD when Raja Raja Chola I (Arulmozhi varman) sensed the decline of Rashtrakuta empire, saw an opportunity of annexing the Vengi.

Decline of Rashtrakutas saw the rise of Western Chalukyas and wanted to firm up their hold on Vengi Chalukyas (who announced their independence after being feudators to Rashtrakutas. Sensing the conflict of Western and Eastern Chalukya, Raja Raja Chola I was quick to take advantage to defeat Jaya Choda Bhima of Vengi and installed his choice of Sakti varma as King of Vengi. After sensing the strength of Eastern Chalukyas, he took a strategic call of offering his daughter Kundavai in marriage to next viceroy Vengi prince Vimaladitya. Raja Raja Narendra is son of Vimaladitya.

The Dynasty of Rajaraja Narendra

Rajaraja Narendra (1022–1061) ruled the Vengi or Vengi Nadu kingdom in South India as the Eastern Chalukya king (as recorded in inscriptions). Political and marital ties brought together Rajaraja and the Cholas of Tanjavur. Rajahmahendravaram was founded by Rajaraja Narendra (Rajahmundry). The Social and Cultural legacy of his era was legendary. Throughout the reign of Rajaraja Chola I, the Western Chalukya sacked Rajahmundry. Western Chalukya and neighbouring dynasties engaged in conflict in this region, with Chola dynasty providing political support.

Cholas were already related to the Chalukya because Viman kundavai, the daughter of Chalukya king Viman II, was wed to Arinjaya Chola, the grandfather of Rajaraja Chola I and the father of 'Sundara Chola' Parantaka Chola II. Sundara Chola honoured Viman kundavai by naming his daughter kundavai. In order to differentiate from Viman kundavai, he kept Alwar paranthakan kundavai, the sister of Rajaraja Chola I. In honour of his sister, I chose the name kundavai for Rajaraja Chola's daughter (kundavai piratiyar). She was married to the Chalukya prince, Vimaladitya Chalukya.

Amangai Devi, daughter of Rajendra Chola I, wed Rajaraja Narendra Chalukya, son of Vimaladitya Chalukya. The feudal relationship between the powerful Cholas and Chalukya continued three centuries after Arinjaya Chola.

On behalf of his maternal uncle, Rajiga Chalukya, also known as Kulottunga Chola I, son of Rajaraja Narendra Chalukya, raided Kedah (Indonesia). He became king of the Chola empire in Gangaikondacholapuram due to a political vacuum. He subsequently united the chola and Chalukya dynasties.

He is the first Emperor of the Chalukya Cholas. Members of the Shudra community who served as generals and royal officials received multiple land grants during his reign, indicating that he was a tolerant ruler. He referred to himself as "sungam thavirtha cholan" as he reduced taxes. In his Timmapuram plates, the progenitor of the Eastern Chalukyas, Kubja Vishnuvardhana, claimed to be a member of the Manavya

gotra. In contrast to their claimed ancestor, the Vijayanagara empire's Aravidu dynasty belonged to the Atreya gotra.

Administration of Rajaraja Narendra

The Chalukya ruler Rajaraja Narendra ruled Rajamahendravaram around 1022. The city contains remnants of palaces and fortifications from the eleventh century. Archaeological evidence indicates that the city predated the Chalukyas. During the reign of the British, the original name gradually changed to Rajamahendravaram.

Under Raja Raja Chola I, the Cholas subjugated the Eastern Chalukyas at first (985; 1014). In the years 998 and 999, the Chola king Rajaraja, who first conquered the Vengi country and then retired after installing Saktivarman, a twelve-year-reigning prince of the royal house, on the Chalukyan throne, ended the anarchy in the Eastern Chalukyan dominions. The two sons of Danarnava, Saktivarman I and Vimaladitya, fled the kingdom and sought refuge at the court of the Chola king Rajaraja I. (A.D.985-1016). Kundavai, the daughter of Rajaraja, was married to Vimaladitya, the younger of the two princes. Rajaraja invaded Vengi on behalf of Danarnava's sons. In this conflict, Jata Choda Bhima was killed, and Vengi fell into the hands of Rajaraja. This was disapproved by Satyasraya, an early ruler of the Western Chalukyas of Kalyani. In consequence, Vengi became a point of contention between the Cholas and Chalukyas of Kalyani in the West. His successor, Vijayaditya, ruled from 696 to 733. He was in good standing with the Rashtrakutas, whose king Indra Raja married a Chalukyan princess and sired a son named Dantidurga by her. The reign of Vijayaditya's son Vikramaditya II lasted from 733 to 746 or 747. During his reign, the Pallavas rose to such prominence that the king records three victories against them, indicating that his adversaries were formidable. According to legend, he murdered their king Nandipotavarman and then entered Kanchi in triumph.

Social and Cultural heritage of Rajaraja Narendra

Rajaraja Narendra established his kingdom in southern India and founded Rajamahendravaram (Rajahmundry). The Social and Cultural legacy of his era was renowned. During Rajaraja Chola I's reign, Rajahmundry was removed from office. Conflict occurred between the Cholas, Chalukya, and other neighbouring dynasties in this region. State marriage between Rajaraja Narendra and Rajendra Chola's daughter was the solution to strengthen the Cholas' feudal relationship with their overlords. Two centuries passed during the feudal relationship with the powerful Cholas of Tamil Country.

Literary works during Rajaraja Narendra

The eastern Chalukya Dynasty championed Jainism and Shaivism. Rajaraja Narendra was a Shaivite. He held in high regard religious priests, the Sanskrit language, and religions. Rajaraja Narendra requested his teacher, advisor, and court poet, Nannayya Bhattaraka, to translate the Mahabharata into Telugu (who was only able to translate two and a half parvas of the same into Telugu). In the middle of the

eleventh century, Nannaya was Rajaraja Narendra's poet laureate. He was knowledgeable of the Vedas, the Shastras, and the ancient epics, and he translated the Mahabharata into Telugu. Narayana Bhatta, who is fluent in eight languages, assisted him in his endeavour. His unfinished work is regarded as a literary masterpiece in Telugu (Rao, P. Raghunatha, 1994)⁸.

At the time of Rajaraja Narendra, two Kannada literary works, namely Vikramarjuna Vijayam and Gadayuddam, had already popularised the Mahabharata story in Karnataka. The Mahabharata was translated into Tamil between the seventh and eighth centuries (Narasimhacharya, 1988)⁹. However, Puranas were not available in Telugu. Brahmins would recite Puranas such as the Mahabharata in Sanskrit in temples and courts. The Eastern Chalukya Dynasty championed Jainism and Shaivism. Rajaraja Narendra was a Shaivite. He held in high regard Brahmin priests, the Sanskrit language, and religion. The success of Jains and Buddhists taught him that translating religion and the Puranas into Telugu was an effective means of promoting their popularity. Even a millennium ago, Buddhism and Jainism were preached and taught in local languages, gaining wide popularity.

During the reign of Raja Raja Narendra, the celebrated Telugu poet Nannaya produced the Andhra Mahabharatamu by translating the Mahabharata into Telugu. He was a devout Shaivite in his time who also supported Jainism and Buddhism. Therefore, Rajaraja Narendra requested that his teacher, advisor, and court poet Nannayya Bhattaraka translate the Mahabharata for his subjects from Sanskrit to Telugu (Velcheru, et al., 2002)¹⁰.

During Raja Narendra's reign, Nannaya translated two and a half parvas of the Mahabharata into Telugu. Tikkana and Errapragada resumed identical practises after more than two centuries. Raja Raja Narendra's most notable contribution to the Telugu community was assisting Nannaya in developing the first and most comprehensive grapheme script for the Telugu language, including grammar and punctuation. Which is an even greater achievement in the context of the evolution of the Telugu language, which is now the sixteenth most spoken language in the world (93+ Million / 9.3 Billion Speakers). The Telugu community owes a tremendous amount of gratitude to the visionary who decided to create a script for Telugu so that one day it will have a great language with a perfect grapheme that can write better than English. Telugu is able to produce "But" and "Put" with perfect phoneme output without requiring the speaker to remember how to pronounce them. Credit goes to Raja Raja Narendra and Nannaya Bhattaraka.

Rajaraja Narendra and Telugu language

Rajaraja Narendra, a renowned visionary and king of the Eastern Chalukya dynasty, ruled the Vengi kingdom. As the national hero of Andhras, Narendra succeeded his father Vishnuvardana (also known as Vimaladitya) as Vengi in 1019 CE and ruled until 1062 CE. His reign was characterised by pervasive political unrest.

He founded Rajamahendravaram on the banks of the Godavari and transformed it into a thriving cultural and economic centre. According to legend, he planted the seeds of literary Telugu. Nannayya Bhattaraka was commissioned to translate the Mahabharata into Telugu as part of the king's political strategy to promote Telugu literature and strengthen the unity of the regions under his rule. Without his efforts, the Telugu language would not be flourishing today. On Rajaraja Narendra, the forgotten servant of the Telugu language, few records exist. It is regrettable that we and future generations cannot learn more about his accomplishments and public service.

Perhaps this was Narendra's way of feeling powerful and relevant: his failures as a monarch were compensated for by his success as a literary patron. Perhaps situating the horrors he endured in the language of his childhood and retelling the story of his ancestors (he may have considered the Pandavas and Kauravas to be his ancestors, as absurd as that may seem) through the Mahabharata helped him recover from a shattered childhood. Mental illness, older literary experiments, a cosmopolitan courtly elite, and tragic violence thus converged.

Conclusion

Rajaraja Narendra was the Eastern Chalukya king of the Vengi kingdom in South India ruled during 1019–1061. He was established Rajamahendravaram (Rajahmundry) and famous for his Social and Cultural legacy. During the reign of Rajaraja Chola I, the Western Chalukya laid waste to Rajahmundry. Western Chalukya and neighbouring dynasties engaged in conflict, with Chola dynasty providing political support. Amangai Devi married Rajaraja Narendra, the son of Vimaladitya Chalukya. The feudal relationship between the powerful Cholas and Chalukyas lasted for three centuries after Arinjaya Chola. Rajendra Chalukya, also known as Kulottunga Chola I, son of Rajaraja Narendra, raided Kedah (Indonesia) for his maternal uncle. He ascended to the throne and merged the Chola and Chalukya dynasties when a political void arose in Gangaikondacholapuram. He is the first King of the Chalukya Cholas. Due to the tax cuts he enacted, he was also known as "sungam thavirtha cholan." In his Timmapuram plates, the progenitor of the Eastern Chalukyas, Kubja Vishnuvardhana, claimed to be a member of the Manavya gotra. In contrast to their claimed ancestor, the Vijayanagara empire's Aravidu dynasty belonged to the Atreya gotra.

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