PREFACE

The present work is an attempt at dealing with problems connected with the political history and administration of the Chālukyas of Badami. The history of this family, which is the earliest among others, namely, the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇī, those of Vengi and the Chālukyas of Gujarat, has no doubt been studied by several scholars in the past and this work, therefore, cannot be claimed to be terra-incognita. It, nevertheless, needs fresh thinking in the light of new evidence available in the form of inscriptions. This would, no doubt, mean a reconsideration of the origin and history of this dynasty and its relations with the contemporary powers both in the North and in the South.

It is equally interesting to note that history has repeated itself in the rise and fall of the Chālukyas. The early Chālukyas, as has been shown in the following pages, rose to power from a vassal status and had yielded to their vassal’s imperial aspirations. This is even true in the case of their successors, the Rāṣhṭra-kūṭas, who had to submit to a branch of the Chālukyas. Besides the political history of the dynasty, detailed notice has also been taken of their administration, together with their revenue system and army organisation, as deduced from the dynastic records. The Chālukyas patronised the art and architecture of no mean order, as is evident from the temple-cities of Vatāpi, Aihole and Paṭṭaḍakal.

Unfortunately, no ‘Bāṇa’ or ‘Kalhaṇa’ nor any contemporary poet of the South Indian languages has detailed the exploits of a particular king or kings of the dynasty. Hence the paucity of literary evidence. Yet the importance of the period is suggested by the achievements and exploits of the rulers both in peace and in war. As such, an attempt has been made to throw light on the tangled skeins of the events, based on their inscriptions, which have aroused numerous controversies.

The idea to work over this dynasty occurred to the present author, while preparing the ‘Topographical List of the Inscriptions of Mahārāṣṭra and Goa from earliest time to 1300 A.D.’,
as a U.G.C. Project, which involved not only the compilation of several details concerning the political history but also summarising the inscriptions. The pursuit of the above research project provided an opportunity to go through Chālukyan epigraphs, many of which were found with contents not in full conformity with the published history of the dynasty. The engagement also offered an opportunity to study the inscriptions afresh. It took several years to compile and collect the available material from different libraries and the office of the Chief Epigraphist for India, Mysore. Before the enquiries could take the form of the present thesis, a few problems crept in which proved a stumbling block in getting it processed, and though the time was a little exacting, it was utilised in making the enquiry more comprehensive and up to date, as far as was possible.

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