CHAPTER SEVEN

THE VĀKĀṬAKAS AND OTHER CONTEMPORARY DYNASTIES

I. THE VĀKĀṬAKAS

1. Early History

The middle of the third century A.D. marks the commencement of an important epoch in the history of South India. The Śatavāhanas, who held a major part of the peninsula for more than four centuries and a half, disappear from the stage of history about this time. Puḷumāvi IV is the last known Śatavāhana king mentioned in the Purāṇas. His stone inscription has been found at Adoni in the Bellary district of Karnāṭaka, while his potin coins have been discovered at Tarāḷā in the Akola district of Vidarbha. He ruled, therefore, over an extensive country, probably stretching from the Narmadā in the north to the valley of the Tungabhadrā in the south. On his downfall in c. A.D. 250, several small kingdoms grew up in the different provinces which were previously under his sway. The Ābhīras, whom the Purāṇas call Āndhrabhṛityas and who probably held positions of power and vantage under the Śatavāhanas, usurped the provinces of Gujarāt, Konkan and Northern Mahārāṣṭra, including the districts of Nāsik and Khāndesh. The Ikṣvākus became supreme in the Andhra country. South Kośala and Kaliṅga were probably divided into small States, each ruled by a petty chief. Vidarbha and Southern Mahārāṣṭra were overrun by the Vākāṭakas.

The Vākāṭakas have generally been regarded as a northern dynasty. This view is chiefly based on the Purāṇas. The section in the Purāṇas which mentions Pravīra and his father Vindhyāśakti, undoubtedly two Vākāṭaka kings, is introduced with the words ‘Hear also the future kings of Vidiśā.’ But it may be doubted if the scope of

1 EI, XIV, 153 ff.
2 JNSI, II, 92. The king’s name occurs as Puḷumāvī on the coins.
3 DKA, 45.
4 See below, Sect. II.
5 These dynasties have been dealt with in Vol. II.
6 PHAI, 454; NHIP, VI. 96; HCIP, II, 218.
this statement extends up to the passage in which the Vākāṭaka kings are mentioned. For just before it we get a reference to Śiśuka ruling at Purikā, which was situated to the south of the Narmadā and far from Vidiśā.7

Javaswal held that the Vākāṭakas originally hailed from a place called Vākāṭa which he identified with Bāgāṭ in the northernmost part of the former Orchha State.8 In support of his view he tried to show that three coins discovered at Kosam and another place in North India were issued by Pravarasena I, Rudrasena I, and Prithivīshena I.9 The first two, according to him, bear the dates 76 and 100, respectively, which he refers to the era starting from A.D. 248. This era, though called by the name of the Chedi or Kalachuri era, was, according to Javaswal, really started by the Vākāṭakas. But Javaswal’s readings of the legends and numerical symbols have been proved to be erroneous.10 As a matter of fact, the Vākāṭakas never struck any coins in their own names, but utilised the monetal issues, first, of the Western Kshatrapas and, later, of the Guptas.11 Again, the theory that the Chedi era was really founded by the Vākāṭakas is disproved by the fact that the Vākāṭakas themselves never used it, but dated all their records in regnal years. No early records of the Vākāṭakas have been found north of the Narmadā.12 The identification of Bāgāṭ in the former Orchha State with Vākāṭa, the supposed home of the Vākāṭakas, cannot be accepted as certain in the absence of corroborative evidence. There is thus no valid argument in favour of the theory that the Vākāṭakas had their home in North India.

7 DKA, 49. According to Harivannā, Purikā was situated at the foot of the Rikshavat mountain. This is to be identified with the Satpura mountain as Kālidāsa places it to the south of the Narmadā (Raghuvanā, V. 44), and the Vishnupurāna mentions it as the source of the rivers Tāpi and Paoshat (modern Pūrunā). Some scholars, however, identify Riksha with the central part of the Vindhyā Hills (H. C. Raichaudhuri, Studies in Indian Antiquities, 123).

8 IHII, 67 ff. Javaswal thought that the dynastic name Vākāṭaka was derived from Vākāṭa as Traikūṭaka was from Trikūṭa.

9 Ibid., 71 ff.

10 JNSI, V, 130 ff.

11 Hoards of silver coins of the Western Kshatrapas have been found in several districts of Vidarbha (JBBRAS, VII, 16; JNSI, XXII, 113 ff.; XXIII, 333 ff.; XXVII, 97 ff.; XXX, 92 ff. etc.). Gold coins of the Guptas have been found at Achalpur in Berar and Patān in the Betul district of M.P.

12 The Nachnā and Gani inscriptions (Nos. 20 and 21) are ascribed by some scholars to Prithivīshena I (NHIP, VI, 109; HCIP, III, 179, n. 1), but palaeographic evidence shows that they belong to the reign of the second prince of that name (EI, XXIII, 173; Beloalkar Felicitation Volume, 288 ff.). The so-called Indore plates of Pravarasena II probably came from some place in Vidarbha (IHQ, XXIII, 158 ff.).
There are, on the other hand, several indications that they hailed from the South. Their Sanskrit as well as Prakrit inscriptions contain several expressions which bear striking similarity to those used in early Pallava grants. The Bāsim plates, which record the earliest known Vākātaka grant, show that the Vākātakas took pride in calling themselves Ḥāritiputras ‘the descendants of Ḥāriti’. This descent is claimed by dynasties which ruled over the Karnātaka country in the South, viz. the Vinhukāḍa Chuṭu Sātakarnis, the Kadambas, and the Early Chālukyas of Bādāmi. Again, the early Vākātakas, such as Pravarasena I, Sarvasena and Vindhyavasakti II, are known to have assumed the title Dharmamahārāja, which is noticed only in the records of the South such as the grants of the Pallavas and the Kadambas. In several other respects also Vākātaka records bear close affinity to southern grants like those of the Pallavas. The earliest inscription which mentions the Vākātaka family is a pilgrim record incised in characters of about the third century A.D. on a pillar at Amārāvati in the Andhra country. It is also noteworthy that some of the hereditary ministers of the Vākātakas hailed from a place called Vallūra in the South. This place appears to be the same as Velūr in the Yelarandal district of the Andhra State. Evidence is, therefore, overwhelming in support of the view that the Vākātakas originally came from the southern part of the peninsula.

The Purāṇas do not name the royal family as Vākātaka. They perhaps refer to it as Vindhyaka after Vindhyavasakti, who was its founder, but this also is not free from doubt, because the description which the Purāṇas give of the States which rose on the downfall of the Vindhyakas does not agree with what we know of the political condition in the South after the disappearance of the Vākātakas.

13 CII, V, 15.  
14 CII, V, 96.  
15 EI, XXXIV, 241.  
16 Ibid. VIII, 31.  
17 IA, XIX, 16.  
18 CII, V, 96.  
19 EI, I, 5.  
20 Ibid. VI, 18.  
21 CII, V, pp. xv ff.  
22 EI, XV, 267.  
23 CII, V, 115.  
24 This view differs radically from that given in Vol. II, 328-29 (Ed.).  
25 According to the Purāṇas, when the family of the Vindhyakas has passed away, three Bālhiṅkas will reign. They mention the names of Supratiṅka, Nābhīrā and Sakyamāna. DKA, 50 ff. The first two of these are not known from any other source. Sakyamāna is probably identical with the Saka king Māna whose coins have recently been found in the South. He seems to have flourished in the same age as Vindhyavasakti. See Section III.
Vindhyāśakti is the earliest known king of the Vākāṭaka dynasty. He is mentioned only in the Purāṇas and in an inscription (No. 26) from Ajanṭā which calls him ‘the banner of the Vākāṭaka family’, and gives the valuable information that he was a dvija (Brāhmaṇa). Later Vākāṭaka grants mention Vishnu-vridhha as the gotra of the Vākāṭakas. The Ajanṭa inscription highly glorified him: ‘He is said to have augmented his power by fighting great battles. When enraged, he was irresistible. He had a large cavalry by means of which he exacted submission from his enemies. After subjugating his foes he made a great effort for the acquisition of religious merit by exerting himself in the cause of the gods.’ This description is no doubt vague, but it suggests that Vindhyāśakti greatly extended his kingdom and performed Vedic sacrifices which were apparently in abeyance during the rule of the later Sātavāhanas.

The capital from which Vindhyāśakti ruled is still uncertain. The Purāṇas apparently mention two capitals in connection with the rule of Vindhyāśakti’s son Pravīra (i.e. Pravarasena I), viz, Purikā and Chanakā. Of these, Chanakā was probably the original capital of the royal family. It has not yet been identified, Jayaswal’s view that it was identical with Nachnā is not tenable, because, as we have seen, the Vākāṭakas did not probably hail from the North. Chanakā, like Vallīra, the original habitation of the ministerial family which served the Vākāṭakas for several generations, may have been situated somewhere in the central part of the Andhra State. Vindhyāśakti may have continued from Chanakā notwithstanding the extension of his kingdom northward. He may be placed in the period c. A.D. 250-70.

Vindhyāśakti was succeeded by his son Pravarasena I, who was the real founder of the Vākāṭaka Empire. The genealogy in the Sanskrit and Prakrit charters of the Vākāṭakas, which was probably first drafted in Vidarbha, starts from this king. Pravarasena I extended his sway further to the north as far as the Narmadā. He performed all the seven Soma sacrifices (sapta-soma-samśthā), including Vājapeya, and also celebrated four Aśvamedhas, for which he must

26 The number within bracket refers to the serial number of inscriptions given at the end of the chapter.
27 The gotra is wrongly named as Vrishnīvṛiddha in the Bāsim plates, CII, V, 96.
28 IHIJ, 16, n. 3.
29 The affinities which the Vākāṭaka records bear to those of the Sātavāhanas and Kadambas lend support to this hypothesis.
30 The Purāṇas say that he lived a long life of 96 years.
31 The ‘seven Soma sacrifices’ are usually enumerated as Agnīṣṭoma, Atyagnīṣṭoma, Ukthya, Shoḍaśin, Vājapeya, Atirātra and Āptoryāma. Vākāṭaka inscriptions mention
have led successful campaigns in different directions. He assumed the unique imperial title Samrāt, evidently after performing the Aṣvamedha and Vājapeya sacrifices.\textsuperscript{32} His Vājapeya sacrifices are mentioned in the Purāṇas as attended with munificent largesses.\textsuperscript{33}

The extension of his kingdom so far northward must have necessitated the shifting of the original capital to a more central place. As stated before, the Purāṇas probably mention two capitals of Pravara- sena I, viz Chanakā and Purikā. Chanakā, as we have seen, was probably the original capital. The other town Purikā was, according to the Purāṇas, the capital of a Nāga family for some generations. This family seems to have been an offshoot of the ruling dynasty of Vidiśā,\textsuperscript{34} and may have previously acknowledged the suzerainty of the Sātavāhanas. If the account in the Purāṇas is correct and complete, the throne was, about this time, occupied by Śiśuka, the daughter’s son of the Nāga ruler of Vidiśā. Pravara- sena I seems to have deposed him and annexed his territory. He then shifted his capital to Purikā, which was situated somewhere in Vidarbha at the foot of the Śātputrā mountain. The Purāṇas credit Pravara- sena I with a long reign of sixty years which is not unlikely in view of his performance of four Aṣvamedhas and several Vājapeya sacrifices. He may have ruled from c. A.D. 270 to 330.

It is difficult to state the exact limits of Pravara- sena I’s dominion. He started no era and probably struck no coins. The Vākāṭakas do not seem to have insisted on the mention of their suzerainty in the records of their feudatories,\textsuperscript{35} though the latter must have been forced to pay homage and tribute. There are thus no visible signs of their supremacy outside Vidarbha. That Gujarāt, Konkaṇ and Northern Mahārāṣṭra were not incorporated in their empire seems

all these with the exception of Atyagniṣṭoma for which they substitute Śādyaskra. Pravara- sena I performed also the Brihaspatīsava which was laid down for a Brāhmaṇa, as the Rājaśīya was for a Kshatriya, after he had performed the Vājapeya. This corroborates the view that the Vākāṭakas were Brāhmaṇas by caste.

32 The Satapatha Brāhmaṇa says that he who performs the Vājapeya sacrifice becomes samrāt.

33 The Purāṇas use the plural number Vājapeyaḥ, which shows that Pravara- sena must have performed at least three Vājapeyas. DKA, 50. A ms. of the Vāyu-purāṇa mentions Vājimedhas (Aṣvamedhas) in place of Vājapeyas. Ibid., 50, n. 35.

34 Ibid., 49.

35 Except for the Nachnā and Ganj stone inscriptions we have no records of any princes mentioning explicitly the suzerainty of the Vākāṭakas. The Balaghat plates of Prithivishena II state that the commands of his father Narendrasena were honoured by the princes of Kosalā, Mekalā and Mālava. The kings who ruled at Śrīpura in South Kosala were probably the feudatories of the Vākāṭaka Emperor, but they do not name their suzerain. The Somavāṇī king Bharata-bala alias Indra covertly refers to his suzerain Narendrasena. See his Bamhani plates, CII, V, 83.
certain, for, firstly, no records of the Vākāṭakas have been found in these parts of the country, and secondly, these provinces were probably included in the dominion of the Ābhīras, whose era was current throughout this territory. In the east, South Kosala, which borders Vidarbha, may have come under Pravarasena’s sphere of influence, though it was not directly under his administration. In the north, the Nāradā seems to have been the limit, beyond which the Śakas of Mālwa and Kathiawar, the Bhāraśivas of Padmāvatī and the Maghas of Central India held sway. In the south, his kingdom may have extended to the Tungabhadrā, if not beyond.

Pravarasena I thus shared with the Ābhīras the position of supremacy in the Deccan. He sought to strengthen his position still further by a matrimonial alliance with the Bhāraśivas, who belonged to the Nāga race. They appear to have originally been ruling in Vidarbha; for an early stone inscription of the Bāra king Bhagadatta, of about the first century A.D., has been found at Pawni in the Bhandara district of Vidarbha. Like the Maghas of South Kosala, the Bhāras of Vidarbha seem to have raided North India, where they later on established themselves. Copper coins of their Adhirāja (lord paramount) Bhavanāga have been found at Padmāvatī, the well-known capital of the Nāgas, and other places in Central India. The Bhāraśivas were staunch Śaivas. From Vākāṭaka records we learn about the popular belief that they had pleased the god Śiva by carrying his emblem, perhaps trisūla or trident, on their shoulder, and owed their royal position to his grace. They had performed as many as ten Aśvamedhas and were consecrated with the water of the Bhāgirathī (Gaṅgā) which they had obtained by their valour. This description indicates that they had attained a position of supremacy in Madhya Pradesh in the second half of the third century A.D.

Bhavanāga, the Mahārāja of the Bhāraśiva family, was a contemporary of Pravarasena I. He gave his daughter in marriage to the

36 The so-called Poona plates of Prabhāvatī-guptā record the grant of a village in the Wardhā district and, therefore, originally belonged to Vidarbha. CII, V, 7.
37 CII, IV, pp. xxvi ff.
38 It was only in the time of Prithivihēna II that the Vākāṭakas extended their suzerainty to the north of the Narmadā, as shown by the Nachnā and Gaṅj inscriptions. Till then no Vākāṭaka records have been found in North India. The so-called Indore plates of Pravarasena II appear to have been granted at Rāmagiri and record the grant of a village in the Balaghat district. Ibid., 39 ff.
39 EI, XXIV, 11 ff.
40 DKA, 51. Megha in this passage is generally admitted to be a mistake for Magna. Inscriptions and coins of the Maghas have been found in U.P. and Baghelkhand. EI, XXVI, 237 ff. Their history has been treated in Vol. II.
41 JNSI, V, 21 ff.
Vākāṭaka prince Gautamīputra, who was probably the eldest son of Pravarasena I. This matrimonial alliance seems to have greatly strengthened the power of Pravarasena, for it is invariably mentioned in all records of the descendants of Gautamīputra.

According to the Purāṇas, Pravarasena I had four sons, all of whom became kings. Until recently this statement of the Purāṇas appeared incredible, for there was no evidence that the Vākāṭaka family had branched off so early. The discovery of the Bāsim plates has, however, shown that besides Gautamīputra mentioned in several Vākāṭaka grants, Pravarasena I had at least one other son named Sarvasena. His name has also been subsequently noticed in an Ajaṇṭā inscription. It seems therefore certain that the extensive empire of Pravarasena I was divided among his four sons after his death. The eldest branch probably continued to rule from the old capital Purikā. The second son Sarvasena established himself at the holy city of Vatsagulma, modern Bāsim in the Akola district. The Ajaṇṭā or Indhyādri range seems to have been the dividing line between these two kingdoms. The remaining two sons, whose names are still unknown, may have held parts of South Kosala and southern Mahārāṣṭra, but their records have not been found.

2. Main Branch

Gautamīputra, the eldest son of Pravarasena I, seems to have predeceased his father; for in the records of his successors the expression Vākāṭakāṇām Mahārājah, which invariably precedes the name of every ruling prince of the family, is not used in his case. His son Rudrasena I succeeded Pravarasena I and ruled over the northern parts of Vidarbha. In later Vākāṭaka records he is invariably mentioned as the daughter’s son of Bhavanāga, the Mahārāja of the Bhāraśivas, which indicates that he had the powerful support of the Nāgas of Padmāvatī. Only one inscription of his reign has been discovered, namely, that at Deotek in the Chanda district (No. 1). The palaeographical evidence shows that Rudrasena mentioned in it was the first king of that name.

42 DKA, 50.
43 CII, V, 96.
44 Ibid, V, 105 ff. See Inscr. No. 25. This name was previously read as Rudrasena (I), but the reading is clearly incorrect as the latter prince was not the son of Pravarasena I as stated in the record.
45 The branch in South Kosala may have been overthrown by Mahendra, who was ruling there in the time of Samudra-gupta. That in Kuntala or South Mahārāṣṭra seems to have been supplanted by the Rāṣṭrakūṭas who rose in that part of the country in c. a.d. 350. See below, Sect. V.
46 The unlooped form of n used in this record shows that it is much earlier than the grants of Pravarasena II, which throughout use the looped form of the letter.
The Deotek inscription is undated, and we have no other means of fixing even approximately the limits of the reign of Rudrasena I. But he seems to have been a contemporary of the mighty Gupta king Samudra-gupta. The extermination of the Nāga princes of Aryāvarta by the latter deprived Rudrasena of their powerful support and crippled his power and prestige. Samudra-gupta next led a victorious campaign to the south, in the course of which he defeated Mahendra, the ruler of Kosala, who was probably a feudatory of the Vākāṭakas. Since then the rulers of South Kosala seem to have acknowledged the suzerainty of the Guptas, in token of which they dated their records in the Gupta Era. The kingdom of the main branch thus became greatly circumscribed. It was confined to Northern Vidarbha extending from the Narmadā in the north to the Ajanṭā range in the south, and from the eastern limit of the Khandesh district in the west to the western boundary of Chhattisgarh in the east.

Samudra-gupta returned to the north after subjugating the rulers of Kaliṅga, Andhra, Kāṃchī and other southern States along the eastern coast. For some reason not known to us, he does not seem to have crossed swords with the Vākāṭakas.47 There are no signs of Gupta supremacy in the Vākāṭaka records of that age. The Vākāṭakas did not adopt the Gupta Era, but always dated their grants in the regnal years. As they themselves struck no coins, they were not loth to use the gold coins of the Guptas as they used the silver currency of the Sakas, but that was certainly not an indication of Gupta suzerainty. Samudra-gupta may have thought it prudent to have friendly relations with his southern neighbour who occupied a strategic position with respect to the kingdom of the powerful Western Kshatrapas, whom he had not yet subdued.

Rudrasena I was succeeded in c. A.D. 345 by his son Prithivishena I. This king seems to have pursued a peaceful policy, which brought happiness and prosperity to his people. Across the northern frontier of this kingdom, the Gupta Emperor Samudra-gupta and Chandragupta II had adopted an aggressive policy, subjugating their neighbours and annexing their territories. Prithivīshena wisely refrained from being entangled in these wars and devoted himself to the consolidation of his kingdom in the South and the amelioration of the condition of his subjects. The results of his policy are summed up in the official Vākāṭaka records in the following words: Prithivīshena (I) had sons and grandsons and a continuous

47 Some scholars identify Rudrasena I with the prince Rudradeva exterminated by Samudra-gupta, but the identification does not appear to be correct as the latter was a ruler of North India. For other reasons, see IC, IX, 103 ff.
supply of treasure and army which had been accumulating for a hundred years.

Prithvīśheṇa I had probably a long reign which seems to have terminated about a.d. 400. About a.d. 395, Chandra-gupta II, who had by this time become the lord paramount of a large part of North India, launched his attack on the Śaka Satraps of Mālwā and Kāthiāwār. It is not unlikely that in this campaign Chandra-gupta sought the alliance of his powerful neighbour, the Vākāṭaka king Prithvīśheṇa I. After his victory Chandra-gupta sought to cement the political alliance with the Vākāṭakas by giving his daughter Prabhāvatī-guptā in marriage to the Vākāṭaka prince Rudrasena II, the son of Prithvīśheṇa. Like his father, Prithvīśheṇa I was a Saiva, for he is described in Vākāṭaka records as a fervent devotee of Maheśvarā. During his time the Vākāṭaka capital seems to have been shifted to Nandivardhana (modern Nandardhan or Nagardhan), about 28 miles from Nagpur. This place is surrounded by strongly fortified forts such as Bhīvgarh and Ghughusgarh, which may have been the reason for its selection for a royal capital.⁴⁸

Prithvīśheṇa lived to a good old age. The description in the Vākāṭaka grants shows that when he died his grandson Divākarasena had already been born. Prithvīśheṇa was succeeded by his son Rudrasena II. Unlike his ancestors, who were all Saivas, this king was a devotee of Chakrapāni (Vishṇu), to whose grace he ascribed his prosperity. This change in religious creed may have been due to the influence of his wife Prabhāvatī-guptā, who, like her father Chandra-gupta II, was a worshipper of Vishṇu.⁴⁹ She greatly venerated the foot-prints (pāda-mūlas) of Rāma on the hill of Rāmagiri, where she made both her known grants (Nos. 2 and 8). This Rāmagiri is modern Rāmtek, a well-known place of pilgrimage, which lies only about three miles from the then Vākāṭaka capital Nandivardhana.⁵⁰

Rudrasena II died after a short reign of about five years, leaving behind at least two sons Divākarasena and Dāmodarasena, who succeeded him one after the other. Divākarasena was a minor at the time of his father’s death. So Prabhāvatī-guptā looked after the

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⁴⁸ JASB. (N.S.), XXIX, 160. Nandivardhana retained its ancient name down to the time of the Bhoslas, for it is mentioned in the Sanskrit play Puraṇāñjana-charita (Vidarbhā Saṃśodhan Manḍal—Ed.) staged at Nagpur. See p. 7. Its identification with Nandpur, 34 miles north of Nagpur (ibid., 159) is therefore untenable.

⁴⁹ The Poona plates record a grant of a village which Prabhāvatī-guptā made after offering it to the feet of the Bhagavat, who was evidently Rāmachandra. The Riddhapur plates (No. 8) were issued from the feet of the lord of Rāmagiri (Rāmagiri-viśvānātha, pāda-mālāt). CII, V, 35.

affairs of the State as the regent for her minor son. The so-called Poona plates, which record the earliest grant of this branch were issued by Prabhâvatî-guptâ as regent for the Yuvarâja Divâkarasena, in the thirteenth year, evidently of the boy prince’s reign. This shows that Divâkarasena was probably less than twelve years old at the time of his accession.51 As he was probably born before the death of his grandfather, his father Rudrasena II may not have reigned for more than eight years at most. This charter is inscribed in the acute-angled script of North India, not in the box-headed characters, which were current in Vidarbha in the age of the Vâkâṭakas. Besides, it gives the genealogy of the Guptas and not of the Vâkâṭakas. All this plainly shows that Gupta influence was predominant at the Vâkâṭaka court during the regency of Prabhâvatî-guptâ. Chandra-gupta II had evidently deputed some of his trusted officers and statesmen to assist his daughter in governing the kingdom.52

Divâkarasena also seems to have been shortlived. He was succeeded by his brother Dâmodarasena, who, on accession, appears to have assumed the name Pravarasena after his illustrious ancestor.53 More than a dozen grants of this prince have been found in the different districts of Vidarbha such as Amraoti, Wardha, Betul, Chhindwara, Nagpur, Bhandara and Balaghat. The latest of these is that recorded on the Pawni plates (No. 15), dated the thirty-second regnal year.54 He had, therefore, probably a long reign of about thirty-five years from c. A.D. 420 to 455.

51 In ancient times princes attained age when they completed the age of 24 years. EI, XX, 79. D. C. Sircar thinks that the age of maturity for princes as for other people was sixteen years. But this seems doubtful. See discussion on this question in JASB, L. XII, 71 ff.

52 One of these was probably the famous Sanskrit poet Kâlidâsa, who seems to have stayed at the Vâkâṭaka court for some time. He composed his world-famous lyric Meghadûta at Râmagiri, which is undoubtedly identical with Râmâjet, three miles from the Vâkâṭaka capital Nandivardhana. His graphic description of the six year old prince Sudarśana in the 18th canto of the Raghuvârsâ may have been suggested by what he observed at the Vâkâṭaka court.

53 According to R. C. Majumdar, Prabhâvatî-guptâ and three sons—Divâkarasena, Dâmodarasena and Pravarasena, and Dâmodarasena ruled for 15 years before Pravarasena II. JRASBL, XII, 1 ff. This view does not seem to be probable. No grants made by Dâmodarasena have been discovered. Besides, the description of Prabhâvatî-guptâ in the Riddhapur plates, viz. Vâkâṭakânâh Mahârâja-sri-Dâmodarasena-Pravarasena tânâni, points to Dâmodarasena’s identity with Pravarasena. Otherwise, it would look strange that the title Vâkâṭakânâh Mahârâja is used with Dâmodarasena who was dead at the time and not with Pravarasena who was reigning. Besides, there does not seem to be any reason for the omission of Divâkarasena’s name from the aforementioned expression. For these reasons Pravarasena seems to be the coronation name of Dâmodarasena. For a full discussion of this matter, see CII, V, pp. vii ff.

54 Nagpur University Journal, XVIII, 73 ff.
Till his 11th regnal year Pravarasena II continued to rule from the old capital Nandivardhana. Thereafter, some time before the 18th regnal year, he founded a new city which he named Pravarapura and made his capital. Pravarapura is probably identical with Pavnār in the Wardha district, where several sculptural remains of the Vākāṭaka age have been discovered. They show that there was a magnificent temple of Rāmachandra there. It was probably erected by Pravarasena for his mother Prabhāvatī-guptā, who was a devotee of that god.

Another grant, made by Prabhāvatī-guptā, may be mentioned here. It was recorded on the plates found at Riddhapur (No. 8) in the Amraoti district of Vidarbha and is dated in the 19th regnal year of Pravarasena II. In this grant, also, Prabhāvatī-guptā mentions her Gupta pedigree in detail, while she names the Vākāṭaka family only in connection with her husband. This clearly shows how proud she was of her Gupta descent. In this grant she describes herself as having long-lived sons and grandsons. The grant was made at the foot-print of the lord of Rāmagiri (modern Rāmtek in the Nagpur district), which clearly indicates that the holy place continued to receive royal attention even after the shifting of the capital to Pravarapura. Pravarasena II was a devotee of Sambhu (Śiva), by whose grace he is said to have established on the earth the reign of Kṛityuga or golden age. He was a liberal monarch, as more than a dozen grants made by him have been discovered so far. Having come into contact with such an illustrious poet as Kālidāsa, he also acquired a taste for poetic composition. Though himself a Saiva, he composed, probably at the instance of his mother, the Prākrit Kāvya Setubandha in glorification of Rāma. This work has been highly eulogised by Sanskrit poets and rhetoricians. Daṇḍin calls

55 CHII, V, 26.
56 Pravarapura is probably identical with Pavnār (Sanskrit, Pravaranagara) in the Wardha district, where several ancient images of the Gupta-Vākāṭaka age have been discovered. Sarupa-Bhārati, 271 ff.; CHII, V, pp. lx ff. They show that there was a magnificent temple of Rāmachandra erected there by Pravarasena II probably at the instance of Prabhāvatī-guptā.
57 Prabhāvatī-guptā is described in these plates as sāgravarṣaśata-diva-purapauṭrā, where diva is probably a mistake for ṛṣa. This expression is usually taken to refer to the long life of Prabhāvatī-guptā. HCIP, III, 183. R C. Majumdar takes the expression quite literally. His scheme of Vākāṭaka chronology based on it (JRASBL, XII, 1 ff.) involves several suppositions and appears unconvincing. (CHI, V, pp. vii ff.) The expression was probably intended to convey that Prabhāvatī-guptā had at that time living sons and grandsons who, it was hoped, would be long-lived. Compare the use of dirghāyuṣ in connection with the twelve-year old Lava in the Uttara-rāmācharita, IV, 26.
58 This can only be regarded as probable. (Ed.)
it an ocean of gems in the form of good sayings. Bāna says that by means of this Setu the fame of Pravarasena crossed the ocean as Rāma’s army of monkeys had done before by means of a bridge. Anandavardhana, the famous Sanskrit critic, has also paid in the Dhvanyāloka his tribute of praise to this kāvya. From the ninth verse of the first āsvāsa it seems that Pravarasena began to compose this work soon after his accession and occasionally received assistance from others in the correction of mistakes. Tradition avers that the work was composed by Kālidāsa for the sake of Mahārāja Pravarasena by the command of Mahārājādhirāja Vikramāditya, who is probably identical with Pravarasena II’s maternal grandfather Chandragupta II.59 Perhaps Kālidāsa’s contribution was confined to giving occasional help and final touches to the composition of his royal friend and pupil Pravarasena II.

Narendrasena, who succeeded his father Pravarasena I in c. A.D. 455, is known only from the Balaghat (No. 18) and Mahurzari (No. 19) plates. The description in these plates that he enticed the royal fortune by the noble qualities which he had already acquired suggests that there was some trouble about his succession. Perhaps he superseded his elder brother as conjectured by Kielhorn. Narendrasena married the Kuntala princess Ajjhitabhaṭṭārikā, who probably belonged to the Rāshṭrakūṭa family founded by Mānānaka.60 She may have been the daughter of the Rāshṭrakūṭa king Avidheya, who flourished from c. A.D. 440 to 455.

Narendrasena seems to have followed an aggressive policy and made some conquests in the east and the north. The afore-mentioned plates of his son Pṛthivisheṇa II state that he had, by his prowess, subdued his enemies and that his commands were honoured by the lords of Kosalā, Mekalā and Mālava.61 Of these countries Mālava had till then been under the direct administration of the Guptas since the overthrow of the Western Kshatrapas. Govinda-gupta (p. 65), who was holding the country at the time, may have acknowledged the supremacy of Narendrasena.62 Mekalā is the country near Amarakoṭṭak, where the Narmadā called Mekala-sūtā, takes its rise. Bha—

59 See Rāmadāsa’s introduction to his commentary on the Setubandha, I, 1. The objection to this identification that Pravarasena, being a Saiva, could not have composed this kāvya in glorification of Rāma (HCIP, III, 183 ff.) has no weight, for we have an analogous instance of Saiva Kālidāsa composing Raghuvanshā. Pravarasena must have composed this kāvya at the instance of his mother, who was a devotee of Rāma. Some identify the author of this kāvya with a king of Kashmir, but the theory seems to be wholly unfounded. Studies in Indology, I (1968), 111 ff.

60 The history of this family is treated below.
61 CII, V, 81.
62 Cf. above, p. 65. (Ed.)
ratabala of the Somavaṃśi dynasty, who was ruling over this territory, covertly refers to his suzerain Narendrasena in his Bhamani plates.63 Kosalā is, of course, Dakshina Kosala. The contemporary ruler was probably Bhimasena I, the grandfather of Bhīmasena II who issued the Arāg plates in A.D. 501-2.64 Besides these, Narendrasena seems to have annexed the Anūpa country, of which the capital was Māhishmati. That this country was incorporated in the dominion of the Vākṣṭakas appears likely from a narrative in the Daśakumāra-charita.65 Narendrasena may have conquered this country when he extended his suzerainty to Mālwā.

Narendrasena, who was probably a grown-up man at the time of his accession,66 may have had a short reign of about 10 years (A.D. 455-65). Towards the close of his reign the Vākṣṭaka territory was invaded by the Nala king Bhavadatta-varman,67 who was ruling over the modern Bastar district of Madhya Pradesh and the adjoining parts of the Vizagapatam district, as the coins and inscriptions of the family have been found in those parts of the country. Bhavadatta pressed as far as Nandivardhana, the former capital of the Vākṣṭakas, which he occupied for some time. The Riddhapur plates (No. 78), which were issued by his son Arthapati from Nandivardhana, show that a considerable portion of the Vākṣṭaka kingdom was annexed by the Nalas and was under their occupation for some years.

The Vākṣṭakas also admit this disaster to their arms. The Balaghat and Mahurzari plates (Nos. 18, 19) state that Prithivīśeṇa II, the son of Narendrasena, raised his sunken family. For some time, however, he was forced to move to the east and to fix his capital at Padmapura, modern Padampur near Amgaon in the Bhandara district.68 Prithivīśeṇa consolidated his position at this capital and after some time ousted the enemy from his ancestral country. He even carried the war into the enemy’s territory and stormed and devastated his capital Pushkarī, as admitted in the Podagarh stone inscription (No. 80) of Skanda-varman, the brother of Arthapati. After this we find no other records of the Nalas in Vidarbha.

It is not known whether Prithivīśeṇa II continued to rule at Padmapura or again shifted his capital to some other place in Vidarbha.

63 See below, Sect. VI, 3.
64 See below, Sect. VI, 1.
65 See below at the end of subsection 3.
66 His father Pravarasena II had a long reign of more than 32 years. Nagpur University Journal, Vol. XVIII (1967), 73 ff.
67 See below, Sect. VII.
68 For the identification of Padmapura, see Studies in Indology, I (1968), 22 ff.
In any case Padmapura retained its importance for a long time; for it attracted learned Brāhmaṇas like Gopāla, an ancestor of the famous Sanskrit dramatist Bhavabhūti, who performed the Vājapeya and other sacrifices there. In his Sanskrit plays Bhavabhūti mentions Padmapura, situated in Vidarbha, as the home of his ancestors.

Prithivīshena II soon retrieved his position in the north also and even pressed farther than his father; for two stone inscriptions of his feudatory Vvāghradeva, who explicitly acknowledges his suzerainty, have been discovered at Ganj and Nachna, in the former Ajaigarh and Jaso States respectively in Bundelkhand.69 This Vvāghradeva probably belonged to the Uchchakalpa dynasty; for several records of this dynasty mentioning the name have been found in the former adjoining State of Nagod. As Javaratha, the son af Mahārāja Vvāghra, was ruling from c. g. 170 to 190 (A.D. 490-510),70 Vvāghradeva may be referred to the period A.D. 470-90. He was thus a contemporary of Prithivīshena II. The Uchchakalpas were previously feudatories of the Gupta, whose era they used. They transferred their allegiance to the Vākātakas when the power of the Guptas declined in the fifth century A.D., though they continued to use the Gupta Era which had become well established in that part of the country.71

Unlike most of his ancestors, Prithivīshena II was a worshipper of Vishṇu as he is described as paramabhāgavata in his plates. He is the last-known member of this senior branch of the Vākātaka dynasty. He may have been followed by one or two princes, but their names are not known to us. Perhaps Harishena of the Vatsagulma branch, who made extensive conquests in all directions, incorporated Northern Vidarbha in his kingdom after the death of Prithivīshena II.

Thus ended the main branch of the Vākātaka dynasty after a glorious rule of more than two centuries. It produced a series of illustrious rulers who were capable leaders of men, wise administrators, and liberal patrons of religion and learning. None of the kings after Pravarasena I assumed imperial titles, but there is no reason to doubt

69 Nos. 20 and 21. Some scholars identify Prithivīshena of these records with the first king of that name (PHAI, 455; HCIP. III, 179). Their view that the palaeography of the Nachna and Ganj inscriptions is decidedly earlier than that of other Vākātaka records (JRASBL, XII, 73) does not appear to be correct. See examination of this palaeographic evidence in Belochkar Felicitation Volume, 287 ff. The records, therefore, belong to the reign of Prithivīshena II, when Uchchakalpa Vvāghra flourished.

70 His known dates are c. 174 and c. 177. The earliest known date of his successor Sarvanātha is c. 191. These dates probably refer to the Gupta and not to the Kalachuri era. EI, XXIII, 171 ff.

71 For a different view, cf. pp. 38-39 above. (Ed.)
that they maintained their independence even in the heyday of Gupta rule. No lithic monuments of their time have survived in Northern Vidarbha, but two kāvyas, Meghadūta and Setubandha—one in Sanskrit and the other in Prakrit—have immortalised their age. Many other literary works, which gave the Vaidarbhi rīti the first place among all rītis, must have been composed during this period, but they have all passed into oblivion.

3. The Vatsagulma Branch

The existence of this branch was unknown till the discovery of the Bāsim plates in 1939. Several members of this family were indeed mentioned in the inscription in cave XVI at Ajantā (No. 26), but owing to a sad mutilation of that record, their names were misread. These names have since been restored, and it has been conclusively shown that the princes who ruled the country south of the Ajantā or Indhvādri range belonged to a different branch of the Vākāṭaka family.

The founder of this branch was Sarvasena mentioned in both the Bāsim plates and the Ajantā inscription as a son of Pravarasena I. He was presumably one of his younger sons. The country under his rule appears to have stretched south of the Ajantā range up to the bank of the Godāvari. He made Vatsagulma, modern Bāsim in the Akola district of Vidarbha, his capital. This was an ancient city. The country round it, called Vātsagulmaka, is mentioned in the Kāmasūtra of Vātsyāyana. Vatsagulma was also regarded as a holy tīrtha, and according to a local māhātmāya it was so called because the sage Vatsa made by his austerities an assemblage (gulma) of gods come down and settle in the vicinity of his hermitage. In the Vākāṭaka age it became a great centre of learning and culture and gave its name Vachchhomi (Sanskrit, Vatsagulmi) to the best poetic style.

From the Bāsim plates we learn that Sarvasena continued the title Dharmamahārāja, which his father Pravarasena I had assumed, in accordance with the tradition in South India. The description that the Ajantā inscription gives of him is quite conventional. He was a liberal patron of learning and himself a poet of no mean order, for his Prakrit kāvyā named Harivijaya, is praised by Dāṇḍin in his

72 The Jayamaṅgalā, a commentary on Vātsyāyana’s Kāmasūtra, gives another derivation of this place-name. According to it, Vatsa and Gulma were two princes of Dakshināpatha, and the country in which they settled came to be known as Vatsagulmaka.

73 Vatsagulma retained its importance as a centre of learning and culture for a long time; for Rājaśekhara describes it as a pleasure-resort of the god of love where the mythical Kāvyapurusha married Sāhityavidyā (Kāvyanīmāhaśā (GOS, No. 1), 10).
'Avantisundarikathā. Änandavardhana, the famous critic of the ninth century A.D., also mentions it in his Dhvanyäloka as an instance of a good kāvya in which a traditional story was altered to suit the development of the intended sentiment. Kuntaka, the author of the Vakroktiśivita, states that like Kālidāsa Sarvasena also composed poetry characterized by natural delicacy. Besides this kāvya, Sarvasena composed Prakrit gāthās, which were later included in the Sattasaś. As his father Pravarasena I closed his reign about A.D. 330, he may be placed in the period c. A.D. 330-55.

Sarvasena was followed by his son Vindhyasena, who is named Vindhyaśakti (II) in the Bāsim plates. He pursued a vigorous policy and defeated the lord of Kuntala, his southern neighbour, who was probably Mānānika, the founder of the Early Rāṣṭrakūṭa Dynasty ruling over the Southern Marāṭhā country. The victory, however, was not decisive; for Mānānika also is said to have harassed the rulers of Vidarbha and Aśmaka. The former probably belonged to the Vatsagulma branch whose kingdom was contiguous to Kuntala. As both Mānānika and Vindhyasena claim victory over each other, neither of them seems to have emerged completely triumphant after this war.

Vindhyasena or Vindhyaśakti II made the Bāsim grant in his 37th regnal year. It was issued from the capital Vatsagulma. Like his predecessors, Vindhyasena also assumed the title Dharma-Mahārāja. He was probably a contemporary of Prithivisheṇa I of the main branch, and, like him, may have closed his reign in c. A.D. 400.

Vindhyasena was followed by his son Pravarasena II, who must be distinguished from the homonymous prince of the main branch who ruled slightly later from two capitals, Nandivardhana and Pravarapura. The Ajanta inscription states that he became exalted by his excellent, powerful and liberal rule. He seems to have had a comparatively short reign; for when he died, his son was only eight years old.

The name of this boy prince, who is said to have ruled well, is lost in the Ajanta inscription. He was succeeded by his son Devasena, whose fragmentary copper-plate inscription (No. 25) discovered somewhere in Vidarbha, has recently been published. This plate was also issued from Vatsagulma which shows that the city continued to be the royal capital to the last. Another stone inscription (No. 26) which has recently come to notice at Bāsim is dated in the Śaka year 380

74 For the contents of this kāvya, see Studies in Indology, I (1968), 116 ff.
75 Loc. cit.
76 Ibid., I (1968), 94 ff.
77 See below, Sect. V.
(A.D. 458-59). It records the construction of a tank called Sudarśana by Svāmilladeva, a servant of Devasena. Devasena may have ruled from c. A.D. 450 to 475.

Devasena had a very righteous and capable minister named Hastibhoja. His great-grandfather Ravi was the son of a Brāhmaṇa from a Kṣatriya wife, and is said to have ruled over the whole territory. Hastibhoja’s ancestors seem to have been hereditary and trusted ministers of the Vatsagulma Vākāṭakas. Devasena entrusted the government of the kingdom to him and gave himself to the enjoyment of pleasures. Hastibhoja is eulogised in the Ajanta and Ghatotkacha cave inscriptions which were caused to be incised by his son Varahadeva.

Devasena was succeeded by his son Harishena in c. A.D. 475. He is the last-known king of this line. He was a brave and ambitious prince who carried his victorious arms in all directions. Unfortunately, the Ajanta inscription (No. 26) which describes his conquests in lines 14-15 is sadly mutilated, but the extant portion mentions the names of several countries which were either overrun by him or were made to acknowledge his suzerainty. These countries lay in all the four directions of Vidarbha, viz Avanti in the north, Kosala, Kaliṅga and Andhra in the east, Lāṭa and Trikūṭa in the west, and Kuntala in the south. It would seem, therefore, that Harishena’s supremacy was recognized throughout the Deccan extending from Mālwā in the north to Kuntala in the south, and from the Arabian sea in the west to the Bay of Bengal in the east.

Harishena’s conquests do not seem to have led to the permanent annexation of this vast territory. The rulers of these countries were probably allowed to enjoy their respective kingdoms on condition of regular payment of tribute. As we have already seen, Mālwā and the adjoining parts of Central India had previously submitted to Narendrasena and Prathivisheṇa II of the senior branch of the Vākāṭakas. Their subjugation by Harishena plainly shows that he had already

78 This description was taken by Jayaswal to mean that Devasena abdicated in favour of his son Harishena (IIII, 75), but verses 12-16 of the Ajanta inscription convey no such idea. The description is intended only to glorify the minister Hastibhoja.

79 Jayaswal thought that the Chatotkacha cave inscription (No. 27) was put up by Hastibhoja during the reign of the Vākāṭaka Devasena, who is mentioned as flourishing in line 10. The lower part of the inscription is very much mutilated, but line 13 mentions Harishena, the son of Devasena and line 18 contains the name of Varahadeva partly mutilated. This leaves no doubt that it was Varahadeva who caused the Chatotkacha cave to be excavated. CII, V, 117.

80 Above, p. 141.
incorporated the kingdom of the main branch into his own dominion.\footnote{81} In Kaliṅga and Andhra, Harishena’s incursions seem to have led to the establishment of new royal families. Just about this time, in A.D. 498, the Gaṅga era was started, marking the foundation of a new power in Kaliṅga.\footnote{82} In Andhra Harishena seems to have supplanted the contemporary Sālaṅkāyana king and given the throne to the Vishṇukundin king Mādhaya-varman I who married a Vākāṭaka princess, probably Harishena’s daughter or some near relative.\footnote{83} That Harishena’s suzerainty was recognized in the west beyond the confines of Vidarbha is also shown by the inscription which a ruler of Rishika (modern Khandesh) has left in Cave XVII at Ajaṇṭā (No. 27). In Kuntala the Rāṣṭrakūṭas were ultimately defeated and had to acknowledge the supremacy of Harishena, but they continued to rule the country till long afterwards.\footnote{84}

We have seen above that Vindhyasena probably closed his reign in c. A.D. 400. He was followed by four princes whose reigns may have covered a century. The last of them Harishena may, therefore, be placed in the period A.D. 475-500.

Harishena had a pious, liberal and capable minister named Varāhadeva, the son of the afore-mentioned Hastibhoja, who was liked both by the king and the subjects. He caused the Ajaṇṭā Cave XVI to be excavated and decorated with sculptures and picture-galleries. This cave is considered to be in some respects the most elegant at Ajaṇṭā. The inscription which he caused to be incised on a wall of its verandah is our chief source of information for the history of the Vatsagulma line.

He also caused the Ghaṭotkacha cave at Gulwāḍā, a few miles from Ajaṇṭā, to be excavated, where he has left an inscription describing his ancestors.

Harishena is the last known king of this line. He may have been followed by one or two kings, but even their names have not come down to us. In any case, the dynasty seems to have been overthrown

\footnote{81} The Uchchakalpa kings, who ruled further to the north, seem to have thrown off the Vākāṭaka yoke after the death of Prīthivīśeṇa II; for Jayanātha, the son of Vyāghradeva, does not mention any Vākāṭaka suzerain in his copper-plate grants. See CII, III, 117 ff.
\footnote{82} See Studies in Indology, IV, 166 ff. As shown there, the Gaṅga era commenced on Chaitra śudi. 1 in the Saka year 420 (14th March A.D. 498). [There is, however, difference of opinion on this point—Ed.]
\footnote{83} See below, Sect. XI.
\footnote{84} As conjectured by R. G. Bhandarkar, Govinda who invaded the Chālukya territory during the civil war of Mangaleśa and Pulakeśin II probably belonged to the Rāṣṭrakūṭa lineage.
in c. A.D. 550\textsuperscript{85} by the early Kalachuris. The silver coins of Krishnaraja, who heads the genealogical list in early Kaṭachchuri or Kalachuri inscriptions, have been found over an extensive country stretching from Vidiśā in the north to Nasik and Karhad in the south, and from Bombay in the west to the districts of Betul and Amraoti in the east. This Kalachuri king flourished in c. A.D. 550-75. He seems to have raised his empire over the ruins of the Vākṣṭaka dominion.

The causes which led to the sudden disintegration and downfall of the vast Vākṣṭaka empire have not been recorded in history, but Daṇḍin’s Daśakumāracharita, which was composed within about a hundred and twenty-five years after the fall of the Vākṣṭakas, seems to have preserved a living tradition about the last period of Vākṣṭaka rule. This Sanskrit work, in its eighth chapter called ‘Viśrutcharita’, narrates the adventures of Viśruta, one of the ten Kumāras who were the followers of the prince Rājavāhana of Magadha.\textsuperscript{86} This narrative shows that the central power in the Vākṣṭaka empire became weak, and feudatories began to show signs of revolt during the reign of Harisheṇa’s misguided successor, who led a dissolute life. There was chaos and confusion everywhere in the Vākṣṭaka kingdom which led to its invasion by the Kadambas of Vanavasī (North Kanara) at the instigation of the ruler of Aśmaka. Owing to the treacherous defection of several feudatories, the Vākṣṭaka king suffered a disastrous defeat and was killed in the battle which was fought on the bank of the Wardhā. His son, who was then a boy of tender age, was removed by a trusted minister to Māhishmati, which was then ruled by his uncle. The ruler of Aśmaka then annexed Vidarbha to his kingdom. As Daṇḍin’s narrative ends abruptly, we do not know whether Harisheṇa’s grandson regained the ancestral kingdom with external help. He may have succeeded in doing so with the aid of Viśnukundin king Mādhava-varman I, who was his relative and must have been the most powerful king of the time inasmuch as he performed as many as eleven Aśvamedhas. This conjecture receives support from the find of Viśnukundin coins in recent excavations at Paunar (ancient Pravarapura).\textsuperscript{87} But neither the Vākṣṭaka prince nor his Viśnukundin relative could have retained his hold over Vidarbha for a long time; for, as we have seen, the Kalachuri Krishnaraṇa, who, in the meanwhile, had established himself at Māhishmati, soon extended his rule

\textsuperscript{85} Svāmirāja, who was ruling over Vidarbha in A.D. 573, was probably a feudatory of the Kalachuri Krishnaraṇa. He has dated his grant in the Kalachuri-Chedi era which was first introduced in Vidarbha in the time of the Kalachuris.

\textsuperscript{86} For a summary of the narrative and the historical data it furnishes see ABORI, XXVI, 20 ff.; Studies in Indology, I, 1968, p. 182.

\textsuperscript{87} Paunar Excavations (1967), 13 ff.
to Vidarbha. The Somavānśis, Gaṅgas and Viśnukumāṇḍins asserted their independence in the east, while the Rāṣṭrakūṭas gradually gained strength in the south. Thus disappeared the last vestiges of Vākāṭaka power after a glorious rule of about 300 years.

II. THE ĀBHĪRAS

We have seen before\(^{88}\) that on the downfall of the Sātavāhanas the Ābhīra Īśvarasena established himself in Northern Mahārāṣṭra. He started an era in A.D. 249, which, with the extension of the Ābhīra rule, seems to have spread to parts of Central India (ancient Anūpa), Gujarat and Koṅkan. According to the Purāṇas, there were ten Ābhīra rulers, but no other name except Īśvarasena is definitely known to have belonged to that family. Another king Rudrasena mentioned in the Devni-Mori (Sabarkantha district) casket inscription also probably belonged to the Ābhīra family.\(^{89}\) The inscription is dated in the year 127, which probably belongs to the Ābhīra era. It is called there the year of the Kathika kings, which probably signifies that Kathika was the family name of the Ābhīras. One of the other kings may have been Koṭṭarājā who, according to Vātsyāyana’s Kāmasūtra, was assassinated by a washerman.\(^{90}\)

The Purāṇas assign a period of only 67 years to the ten Ābhīra rulers, which gives a very low average of 6.7 years per reign. The correct period seems to have been 167 years given by a manuscript of the Vāyupurāṇa.\(^{91}\) Ābhīra rule may, therefore, have ended in c. A.D. 417.\(^{92}\)

Until recently we had no information about the feudatories of the Ābhīras, but from three copper-plate inscriptions (Nos. 32-34) originally discovered in Khandesh,\(^{93}\) we get the names of three rulers, viz.

\(^{88}\) Vol. II, 231-33.

\(^{89}\) Studies in Indology (SI), IV, 120 ff. [An inscription of an Ābhīra king, named Īśvaradeva is referred to in the Indian Archaeology, 1967-68, p. 52. It is dated in Śaka 254. But the inscription has not yet been published (Ed.).]


\(^{91}\) The reading sapta-shashṭi-satān-ṭha stating the period of Ābhīra rule, which occurs in MS. of the Vāyupurāṇa (DKA, 46), is probably a mistake for sapta-shashṭi-satānch-ṭha meaning 167 years. For, a similar expression see pāñcha-varsha-satān-ṭha which Pargiter takes as ‘probably meaning 105 years’ (Ibid., 72. n. 15).

\(^{92}\) A different view is expressed in Vol. II, 332 (Ed.).

\(^{93}\) D. C. Sircar refers these dates to the Gupta Era on the ground that the title Mahārāja applied to these kings came to signify a feudatory prince first in the time of the Guptas (IHQ, XXII, 64 ff.). But the argument is not convincing. Apart from these doubtful cases we have no dates of the Gupta Era from any part of Northern Mahārāṣṭra. Besides, it is doubtful if the Guptas had penetrated to Khandesh as early as c. 67 (A.D. 388-87). On the other hand, the Ābhīra era continued to be used in the Nasik and Khandesh districts down to the eighth century A.D. For other arguments, see ABORI, XXV, 169 ff.; IHQ, XXIII, 158 ff.
Mahārāja Svāmidāsa, Mahārāja Bhulunḍa, and Mahārāja Rudradāsa, who described themselves as ‘meditating on the feet of the Great Lord’, and were, therefore, feudatories of some paramount power. Their grants are dated in the years 67, 107 and 117, respectively. These dates probably refer to the so-called Kalachuri-Chedi era founded by the Ābhīra king Īśvarasena. It would, therefore, seem that the paramount power to which these princes owed allegiance was that of the Ābhīras. These grants thus indicate that Ābhīra rule lasted much longer than 67 years, which is the period assigned to them in many of the Purāṇas.

These princes issued their grants from Valkha, which appears to have been their capital. It is probably identical with modern Vāghlí near Chalisgaon in the Khandesh district. There was another and collateral branch of the same family ruling somewhere else in Khandesh, which also must have at first acknowledged the suzerainty of the Ābhīras. More than ten generations of this latter family are known from a fragmentary inscription in Cave XVII at Ajanṭā. Some of the later princes seem to have submitted to the Vākāṭakas. The last of them, whose name is unfortunately lost, was a son of Krishṇarāja. Being overwhelmed with sorrow at the premature death of his younger brother, this prince began to lead a pious life. He got excavated the magnificent Ajanṭā Cave XVII, which has now more paintings than any other single cave at Ajanṭā. This work was done while Harishena, ‘the moon among princes’, was protecting the earth. This ruler of Rishika was, therefore, probably a feudatory of Harishena. When exactly these rulers transferred their allegiance from the Ābhīras to the Vākāṭakas is not known. Perhaps they did so after the fall of the Ābhīras at the beginning of the fifth century A.D.

Another feudatory of the Ābhīras was probably the Mahādanda-
nāyaka Saka Śrīdhara-varman, whose stone inscription recording the excavation of a well has been found at Kānakhēra, near Sanchi in Madhva Pradesh. The inscription was put up in the thirteenth year, evidently of the reign of Śrīdhara-varman himself. The record contains another date at the end which has been variously read and interpreted. The correct reading seems to be the year 102 which, being referred to the Ābhīra era, becomes equivalent to A.D. 351-52. Another

94 CII, IV, xxii ff.
95 Ibid., V, 120 ff.
96 R. D. Banerji read the date as 201, which he referred to the Saka era and took as equivalent to A.D. 279. N. G. Majumdar, on the other hand, proposed to read it as 241 and, referring it to the same era, took it as equivalent to A.D. 319. For the reading and interpretation proposed here, see CII, IV, 14 ff.
inscription of Śrīdhara-varman has recently come to light at Eran in the Saugar district of Madhya Pradesh. In this record Śrīdhara-varman has discarded his previous military title and calls himself Rājan and Mahākshatrapa. He has also omitted therein all reference to the Ābhīra era. This shows that he had declared independence at the time of this record which is dated in his twenty-seventh regnal year.

III. THE SAKAS OF MĀHISHAKA

Another family which rose to power in the Deccan after the downfall of the Sātavāhanas belonged to the Saka race. Its progenitor was the Saka king Māna, whose copper and lead coins have recently been discovered in the Andhra State. The coins found at Kondapur have on the obverse a large svastika in the centre surrounded by the legend which describes Saka Māna as Mahāsenāpati and son of Bharadvāja. The reverse of these coins has the device of the thunderbolt and an arrow pointing downward, which was the distinctive badge of the Kshaharātas. The family of Saka Māna was evidently connected with the Kshaharāta family of Bhūmaka and Nahapāna. It would seem, therefore, that after the overthrow of Nahapāna by Gautamiputra Sātakarni, some Sakas moved to the south where, in course of time, they rehabilitated themselves and attained the status of feudatories who could issue their own coinage. They may have taken part in the overthrow of the last Sātavāhana king Pulumāvi IV in the third century A.D.

Some other coins of Saka Māna found at Hyderabad are imitated from the coins of the Sātavāhanas. They have the figure of the elephant with the trunk raised on the obverse and the Ujjayinī symbol on the reverse. The svastika is not completely discarded but appears in a very small size on both the sides. The legend describes Māna as Saka and Rājan and as Mahisha, i.e. the ruler of the Mahisha dynasty. This dynastic name seems to have been derived from the country of Māhishaka. There are several references to this country in the Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābhārata and Purāṇas which indicate that it was situated in the South; for it is mentioned with such southern countries as Vidarbha, Rishika, Kuntala, Karṇāṭaka, Dravida and Kaliṅga. From the provenance of the coins which were discovered in the excavations at Kondapur and Maski in the Andhra

97 CII, IV, 605 ff.
98 SI, III, 56 ff.
99 Loc. cit.
100 SI, III, 60 ff.
State, it would appear that Māhishaka was the name of the southern part of that State and the adjoining Kannada districts of the Mysore State.

These coins show that Saka Māna, who had previously the feudatory title Mahāsenāpati, declared his independence and assumed the title of Rājan after the overthrow of the Sātavāhanas. He had evidently a fairly extensive dominion; for he is one of the few kings of the historical period to be named in the Purāṇas. He was evidently the founder of a dynasty that continued to flourish for some generations in the Deccan.

The coins of two successors of Māna have been discovered in the Andhra State. The legend on one of them discovered in the excavations at Maski is fragmentary. The royal name on it ended in yasa (Sanskrit, yasā). The other successor was Sivala. The Purāṇas say that among the successors of the Andhras (i.e. the Sātavāhanas) there were 18 Saka kings who ruled for three hundred and eighty years. These Saka rulers probably belonged to the dynasty founded by Māna. Pargiter takes the Puranic statement about the duration of their rule to signify 183 years. If this is correct, the rule of these Saka kings may have come to an end in A.D. 433, since they had risen to power in c. A.D. 250.

Like their ancestor Nahapāna, these Saka rulers were probably using the Saka era in dating their records. Unfortunately, no records of their age have yet been discovered; but we know that the Saka era was current in the Kannada country after their downfall. It was used by their successors the Chālukyas of Bādāmī and spread from there to Mahārāshṭra and Andhra with the extension of Chālukyan power.

IV. THE TRAIKUṬAKAS

The earliest mention of this royal family occurs in the Chandravalli inscription of Mayūraśarman, which, on palaeographic grounds, may be referred to the fourth century A.D. This record mentions the Traikūṭakas separately from the Abhiras, which indicates that the royal families, though contemporary, were not identical. The Trai-

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101 DKA, 51. The Purāṇas give the name as Sūkyamāna, which is plainly a mistake for Saka-Māna.
102 SI, III, 72 ff.
103 Ibid., III, 74 ff.
104 DKA, Introduction, xxiv ff. Pargiter took the statement in the Purāṇas ātāni trīñya-aśītiṅ-cha to mean 183 years.
105 For the spread of the Saka era in South India, see SI, II, 95 ff.
106 MAR, (1929), 50 ff. Some scholars, however, doubt the genuineness of this record (NIIHP, VI, 238). Cf. also Ch. XIV, Sect. II.
kūṭakas appear to have been at first feudatories of the Ābhīras whose era they used in dating their records. They derived their name from Trikūṭa, doubtless the range of hills which borders the Nasik district on the west. The district was, therefore, the home province of the Traikūṭakas.

The early history of the Traikūṭakas is shrouded in obscurity. As stated above, they may have been at first feudatories of the Ābhīras. Kālidāsa, who flourished in c. A.D. 400, probably knew of the Traikūṭakas; for he mentions Trikūṭa, situated in Aparānta or North Koṅkaṇ, in the description of Raghu’s digvijaya. The Traikūṭakas seem to have risen into prominence on the downfall of the Ābhīras in c. A.D. 417. The names of only five princes of this family are known from copper-plate grants and coins. The first of these was Indra-datta, who flourished in c. A.D. 415-40 and therefore may have been instrumental in shattering the power of the Ābhīras. He is known only from the coins of his son Dahrasena, which mention his title Mahārāja.

The second king Mahārāja Dahrasena is known from a copper-plate grant (No. 40) dated A.D. 455 as well as from silver coins which have been found over a wide territory, from Daman in the north to Sātārā in the south, and from Bombay in the west to Nasik in the east. His kingdom seems, therefore, to have comprised Gujarat, Koṅkaṇ and some districts of Northern Mahārāṣṭra such as Poona and Nasik. Traikūṭaka coins are not known to have been found in Khandesh, which may have become independent after the downfall of the Ābhīras. Dahrasena was a devout worshipper of Vishnu. To proclaim his independence he performed an Aśvamedha sacrifice. He seems to have ruled in the period A.D. 440-65.

Vyāghrasena, the son and successor of Dahrasena, is known from a copper-plate grant and coins. He assumed the title Mahārāja and, like his father, was a devout worshipper of Vishnu. His Surat grant (No. 41) is dated K. 241 (A.D. 490-91). He was thus a contemporary of Harishena, who, in an Ajanṭā cave inscription, is credited with the conquest of Trikūṭa. We have next a copper plate (No. 42), dated K. 245 (c. A.D. 494), discovered in the Kanheri Stūpa, which mentions the victorious reign of the Traikūṭakas, but names no prince. It may have belonged to the reign of Madhyamasena, the successor of Vyāghrasena, whose Matavan plates (No. 43), dated K. 256 (c. A.D. 505), have recently come to light. They were issued from Aniruddhapura, which was probably the king’s capital. He was followed by

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107 CII, IV, 149.
109 CII, Introduction, clxix ff.
109a Itihāsa anī Śimukriti (Marathi) (IS), XXII, 5.
Vikramasena whose copper-plate grant (No. 44), dated K. 284 (c. A.D. 533), also has recently been discovered in North Konkan, 109b he is so far the last known king of the Traikūṭaka family.

The Traikūṭakas had probably to submit to the Vishnukundin king Mādhava-varman I, who extended his power to Western Mahārāṣṭra in the beginning of the sixth century A.D. His copper-plate grant has been found at Khānāpur in the Sātārā district. His grandson, who succeeded him in the west, describes himself as the lord of Trikūṭa and Malaya mountains.110 The Traikūṭakas seem to have been reduced to a feudatory rank during this period. Later, Kṛishnarāja, the Kalachuri king of Māhishmati, overthrew them and incorporated their kingdom in his dominion. He placed the Mauryas in charge of North Konkan.

The Traikūṭaka kingdom, at its largest extent, appears to have spread from the Kim in the north to the Kṛishṇa in the south, and to have comprised South Gujarat, North Konkan, Nasik and Poona districts and parts of the Sātārā district. Both Buddhism and Hinduism continued to flourish side by side under the rule of the Traikūṭakas. They maintained a powerful fleet for the protection of their maritime provinces. During their time Trikūṭa seems to have become famous as an emporium of salt. The earliest Traikūṭaka capital may have been Nasik, but during the reign of Vyāghrasena, the seat of government seems to have been shifted to Aniruddhapura. This town has not yet been identified, but may have been situated in the Surat district.

V. THE EARLY RĀṢHṬRĀKŪṬAS OF MĀṆAPURA

The southern neighbours of the Traikūṭakas were the Rāṣhṭrākūṭas who rose into prominence during the last quarter of the fourth century A.D. Their original home was Lāṭṭalūra, modern Lāṭūr in the Osmanabad district of Mahārāṣṭra. As stated before, the country to the south of the Godāvari was probably under the rule of a younger son of the Vākāṭaka Samrāṭ Pravarasena I. Vākāṭaka rule in this area seems to have been short-lived; for in the last quarter of the fourth century A.D. it was swept away by Māṇāuka, the founder of the early Rāṣhṭrākūṭa dynasty. This daring prince wrested Kuntala from the Vākāṭakas and established himself at the newly founded city of

109b These plates (No. 44) are rather intriguing. Like those of Madhyamasena, they were issued from Aniruddhapura. Their wording is exactly like that of Surat plates (No. 41) of Traikūṭaka Vyāghrasena. The name of Vikramasena ends in sena like those of other Traikūṭaka kings, but, strange as it may seem, the royal family is named Kattuchhuriṇām in place of Traikūṭakānām as in other records. However, in view of other points of similarity, I have taken Vikramasena to be a Traikūṭaka king.

110 See below, sec. X.
Mānapura, modern Mān in the Sātārā district. In the Pāṇḍaraṅgapalli grant\(^{111}\) (No. 46) of his grandson Avidheya he is called the lord of the Kuntala country and is said to have harassed the kingdoms of Aśmaka and Vidarbha. We have no information about the contemporary ruler of the Aśmaka country, which comprised the territory along the bank of the Godāvari, but the ruler of Vidarbha must have been Vindhyasena of the Vatsagulma branch of the Vākāṭaka dynasty, whose kingdom was conterminous with that of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas. In an Ajanṭā inscription (No. 25) this Vindhyasena also is said to have defeated the king of Kuntala. The war seems, therefore, to have continued for some time and did not apparently end in any decisive victory.

Mānānika was succeeded by his son Devarāja in c. a.d. 400. This prince is compared to Indra in several records of the dynasty, and, like the lord of gods, he seems to have been of an easy-going nature. During his reign the Rāṣṭrakūṭa kingdom came into the orbit of Gupta influence. The ambitious Gupta king Chandra-gupta II was gradually extending his power to the south. As stated before, he had probably deputed some trusted statesmen and officers to Vidarbha to help his daughter, the dowager queen Prabhāvatī-guptā, in governing her kingdom on behalf of her son Divākarasena, and one of these may have been the great Sanskrit poet Kālidāsa. Tradition says that the poet was asked by his royal patron to proceed to the court of the king of Kuntala and report the state of affairs there. From a passage cited by Kshemendra from the Kuntalesvaradautya\(^{112}\) of Kālidāsa, we learn that the poet was at first received with scant courtesy at the Kuntala court, but he soon ingratiated himself with the king and stayed in Kuntala for some time. When he returned to Ujjayinī, he reported to his patron that the king of Kuntala was spending his days in enjoyment, leaving the task of governing the

111 These plates describe Mānānika as Kuntalānām prāśītā. D. C. Sircar takes this expression to mean that Mānānika was ‘the chastiser of the Kuntalas’! Again, he places Kuntala proper in the heart of the Kanarese country with Vanavāsi (modern Bagavāsi in the North Kanara district) as its capital. According to him, Kuntala came to signify the Southern Maratha country only in later times with the extension of the Kanarese empire (VHP, VI. 88, n. 1: IHQ, XXII, 232; XXIII, 65 ff.). This is far from convincing. The most natural interpretation of the expression cited above would be that Mānānika was the ruler of the Kuntala country. As for the original limits of Kuntala, several literary and epigraphical references show that it included the upper and central valley of the Krishna (El, XII, 153). Karhad, in Sātārā district, was included in Kuntala. ARIE (1953-54), No. 189. On the other hand, Vanavāsi is found mentioned separately from Kuntala in early works. For further discussion of this question, see SI, II, 155 ff.

112 According to Kshemendra’s account, Kālidāsa had to sit on the ground when he was first introduced in the Kuntala court, and in a spirited reply he justified his choice of the seat. Auchityavichārocharchā (NSP), 139 ff.
kingdom to the Gupta king, to which, we are told, the latter readily agreed. Perhaps the king of Kuntala was, like the Vākāṭaka Pravara-
sena II, related to Chandra-gupta II. He was probably identical with
the Rāṣṭrakūṭa king Devarāja (c. A.D. 400-25).\textsuperscript{113}

The patronage which Chandra-gupta II extended to both the Vākāṭakas and the Rāṣṭrakūṭas seems to have healed up old sores, and
the two families soon became united by a matrimonial alliance.
The Vākāṭaka prince Narendrasena married the Kuntala princess
Ajjhitabhaṭṭārikā,\textsuperscript{114} who may have been the grand-daughter of
Devarāja.

Devarāja had three sons, Vibhurāja \textit{alias} Mānarāja,\textsuperscript{115} Avidheya and
Bhavishya. All the three brothers ascended the throne and are said
to have vanquished many kings, but we have no definite knowledge
of the events of their reigns. Bhavishya was followed by his son Abhi-
manyu (c. A.D. 470-90), who was probably a contemporary of the
mighty Vākāṭaka king Harishena. During his reign the old hostilities
between the two royal families were revived. In the war which
ensued, the Vākāṭaka king emerged victorious as stated in an Ajanṭā
inscription, and Abhimanyu was reduced to a state of vassalage.
Abhimanyu's son was probably the Kuntala king who conspired with
other feudatories and treacherously attacked the voluptuous emperor
of Vidarbha as stated in a narrative in the \textit{Daśakumārakaritā}.\textsuperscript{116}

The Rāṣṭrakūṭa family did not end with Abhimanyu's successor. A
copper-plate inscription,\textsuperscript{117} discovered at Gokak in the Belgaon
district, mentions the Rāṣṭrakūṭa \textit{Mahārāja} Dejja, who may have
belonged to this very family. The record was issued when 845 years
of the Āpūtayika kings had expired. This date is shown to correspond
to A.D. 532-33. Dejjamahārāja may, therefore, have been one of the
successors of Abhimanyu.

About this time the Vishṇukundin king Mādhava-varman I seems
to have extended his sway to Southern Mahāraṣṭra.\textsuperscript{118} The Rāṣṭra-

\textsuperscript{113} Two other identifications of this Kuntaleśa which were previously proposed
do not appear plausible after the discovery of this early Rāṣṭrakūṭa kingdom in the
upper Krisṇa valley. Heras identified this Kuntaleśa with the early Kadamba king
Kākustha-varman (\textit{IBORS}, XII, pt. iv), but the latter flourished somewhat later than
Chandra-gupta II (See \textit{SSD}, 233; \textit{IHQ}, IX, 197). Krishnaswami Aiyangar and
Altekar identified him with the Vākāṭaka Pravarasena II (\textit{NHIP}, VI, 110). This
view also is untenable, because this Vākāṭaka king never ruled over Kuntala. The
Vākāṭakas of the main branch had sometimes matrimonial connection with the kings
of Kuntala and were, therefore, plainly different from them (\textit{EI}, XXXVII, 16 ff.).

\textsuperscript{114} \textit{CI}, V, 81.

\textsuperscript{115} \textit{EI}, XXIX, 17 ff.

\textsuperscript{116} \textit{SI}, I, 1968, p. 182 ff.

\textsuperscript{117} \textit{EI}, XXI, 289.

\textsuperscript{118} \textit{Ibid.}, XXVII, 312 ff.
kūta kings ruling in Kuntala may have been obliged to acknowledge the suzerainty of the Vishnukundins for some time. The latter were, however, soon driven out of Southern Mahārāṣṭra, where the Rāṣhṭrakūtás continued to flourish till the rise of the Early Chāluvyas. Their subsequent history will be narrated in a later chapter.

VI. THE KINGS OF DAKSHIṆA KOSALA

1. The Dynasty of Śūra

We have little information about the early history of Dakshinā Kosala comprising the districts of Durg, Raipur, Bilaspur and Sambalpur, which bordered Vidarbha on the east. This country may have been included in the Sātavāhana empire; for a coin119 of Āpilaka, who figures in the Purāṇas as the eighth king of the dynasty, has been found at Bālpur on the bank of the Mahānadi. The Sātavāhana yoke must have been very light; for we find no mention of their suzerainty in two early records found in Chhattisgarh. One of these is inscribed on a rock at Gunji in the former Sakti State and refers itself to the reign of king Kumāravara-datta.120 It records some mahādānas of a thousand cows each, made by certain ministers of the king at the Rishabha-tīrtha, which, from ancient times, has been famous for its sanctity.121 This inscription may be referred to the beginning of the Christian era on palaeographic grounds. Another inscription, inscribed in slightly later characters on a yūpa or sacrificial post, was discovered at Kirāri in the Bilaspur district.122 It mentioned some king and his ministers, but owing to the unfortunate peeling off of the surface of the wooden post, most of the names have been lost.

According to the Purāṇas, a dynasty of nine powerful kings called Meghas flourished in Kosala, i.e. Southern Kosala or Chhattisgarh. They may be identical with the Maghas, who seem to have ruled from Bandhgarh. Their history has been given elsewhere.

The next mention of Kosala occurs in the Allahabad pillar inscription in connection with the southern conquests of Samudra-gupta. Like several other kings of the south, Mahendra, the ruler of Kosala, was defeated and taken captive, but was graciously reinstated by the Gupta Emperor. The descendants of Mahendra may have continued to rule in Chhattisgarh for some generations as feudatories of the

119 JRASB (Num. Suppl.), 93 ff.
120 EI, XXVII, 48 ff.
121 This tīrtha is mentioned in the Aranyakaparvan of the Mahābhārata (ABORI), 83, 10.
122 EI, XVIII, 152 ff.
Guptas, but we have no records of their reigns except perhaps the Āraṅg plate dated c. 182 (A.D. 501-2).\textsuperscript{123}

The Āraṅg plate mentions the following six generations of rulers, viz Śūra, Dayita(varman) I, Bhīshāna, Bhīmasena I, Dayitavarman II, and Bhīmasena II. Śūra, the founder of the dynasty, may have flourished in the period A.D. 350-75. He may, therefore, have been the successor of the afore-mentioned Mahendra. He is probably identical with Sūryaghosha,\textsuperscript{124} who, in a stone inscription at Āraṅg, is said to have built a temple of Sugata or Buddha, being convinced of the transitoriness of the world at the premature death of his son who had fallen from the top of his palace.\textsuperscript{125}

Śūra (or Sūryaghosha) and some of his successors may have acknowledged the suzerainty of the Guptas, an indication of which is furnished by the introduction of the Gupta Era in Chhattisgarh. But when the power of the Guptas declined in the second half of the fifth century A.D., they seem to have transferred their allegiance to the Vākāṭakas; for the king of Kosala is mentioned among the rulers who honoured the imperial commands of the Vākāṭaka Narendrasena (A.D. 450-65). This king was probably Bhīmasena I. Two generations later, the Vākāṭaka Emperor Harishena, who had incorporated Northern Vidarbha in his own dominion after the death of Prthivivihena II, invaded Kosala, probably in the course of his campaign against Kaliṅga and Audhra. The contemporary ruler, who was probably Bhīmasena II, had to submit and to pay tribute to the victorious Emperor. He continued, however, to use the Gupta Era in his records, which his suzerain may not have objected to as in the case of the Ucchakalpa kings.

The capital of these kings was probably Śrīpura, about 20 miles north-east of Āraṅg, in the Raipur district. It still shows considerable ruins of ancient temples and contains several inscriptions.

2. The Kings of Sarabhapura

Soon after the issue of the Āraṅg plate, Bhīmasena II seems to have been overthrown by Jayarāja of the Sarabhapura dynasty. The founder of this family which ruled in South Kosala for some generations was Sarabha. His date is approximately settled by the mention

\textsuperscript{123} This date was read as c. 282 by Hinalal (El. I, IX, 345). This reading has been supported by D. C. Sircar (IIH, XXII, 65). The palaeographic evidence as well as the form of the first symbol of the date shows, however, that the correct reading of the date is as given above. For further discussion, see BDCRI, VIII, 47 ff.

\textsuperscript{124} Sūra in Sanskrit means also the Sun.

\textsuperscript{125} JRAS, 1960, p. 624 ff. Hariṇāja of the Sūra-vānsa, whose copper-plates have been found in Banaras, may have been a later member of this royal family. PAIOC, 1943-44, pp. 590 ff.
of his daughter’s son Goparāja in the Eran stone pillar inscription of Bhānu-gupta, dated c. 191 (A.D. 510-11). Sarabha may have flourished about A.D. 460. He founded the city of Sarabhapura which he made his capital. This city has not been definitely located, but it may be identical with Sarabhgarh in the former Gangapur State in Orissa. Sarabha was succeeded by his son Narendra (c. A.D. 470-90), who is mentioned in two recently discovered grants—one at Pipardulā in the former State of Sarangarh and the other at Kurud in the Raipur district.

Prasannamātra, who is the next known king, must have flourished not long after Narendra and may have been his immediate successor. He is known from his rare silver coins as well as from the records of his successors. He founded the city of Prasannapura, which has not yet been located. He had two sons, Jayarāja and Mānamātra alias Durgarāja. The former, who succeeded him, extended his kingdom westwards and overthrew Bhīmasena II of Śrīpura. It seems that there was a division of the kingdom after his death. His son Pravara I, known from the Mallar plates of his brother Vyāghrarāja, ruled from Prasannapura, while his brother Mānamātra and nephew Sudevarāja had their capital at Sarabhapura. Several land-grants of Sudevarāja have been found in the Raipur district and the former State of Sarangarh. He seems to have shifted his capital later to Śrīpura on the Mahānādi. His brother Pravararāja II is the last-known member of this family. He seems to have been supplanted in c. A.D. 530 by Indrabala II, who had been serving his brother as Mahāsāmanta and Sarvādikārādikrita. This Indrabala founded the Somavamśi dynasty in Dakṣiṇa Kosalas, to whose history we shall now turn.

3. The Pāṇḍuvaṃśis or Somavamśis of Mekala and Kosala

The Somavamśis of Kosalas were also known as Pāṇḍuvaṃśis; but there was an earlier Pāṇḍuvaṃśi family ruling in the neighbouring country of Mekala (or Melakā), i.e. the region near the Amarkantak hills. A copper-plate grant (No. 63) of the Pāṇḍuvaṃśis of Mekala was found at Bamhani in the Sohagpur tahsil of Baghelkhand. It gives the names of four members of the family, viz. Jayabala, his son Vatsarāja, his son Mahārāja Nāgabala, and his son Mahārāja Bharata or Bharatabala, otherwise called Indra. While the first two kings have not been called Mahārāja and were apparently petty chiefs, Nāgabala and Bharatabala have, besides the royal title, the epithets paramamāheśvara, paramabrahmānya, and parama-devatādhiśaiva-vīśeṣa. Lokaprabhāṣā, queen of Bharatabala, is described as a princess of Kosalas. The suggestion that she was born in the family of the Pāṇḍuvaṃśis of South Kosalas is improbable in view of the late date
of the Pāṇḍuvaṁśi occupation of that country. The palaeography of the Bambhoni record suggests that the afore-mentioned rulers of the Pāṇḍuvaṁśa in Mekala ruled in the fifth century, when South Kosala was under other kings. She may have been the daughter of Bibhi-shana of the Śūra dynasty mentioned above (p. 156).

Bharatabala alias Indra (or Indrabala I), who issued the Bambhoni plates, was probably a feudatory of the Vākātaka Narendraseṇa. It is possible that he was related to the Pāṇḍuvaṁśi or Somavaṁśi kings who ruled in South Kosala with Śrīpura as their capital in the sixth century A.D. The connecting links between the two families are not yet definitely known, but the following is suggested as a possible hypothesis.

Indrabala (I) of Mekala was probably succeeded by Udayana, who may have been his son, in c. A.D. 490. He is named in several records of his descendants. He was a valiant and ambitious prince, who, taking advantage of the tottering condition of the Gupta Empire, made bold incursions in the north, and for a time succeeded in extending his sway as far as Kālaṅjara, the famous fort in the Bändā district, where he erected a temple of Bhadreśvara. He was succeeded by his son Indrabala (II) in c. A.D. 515. Shortly after, the latter seems to have been ousted from Mekala by the Parivrajaka Mahārāja Hastin, who spread his power to the Dāhala country before A.D. 517. Indrabala then moved to South Kosala, where he ruled as Mahāsāmantta and Suvacihikārādhikīta under Sudevarāja. Occupying a position of power and vantage as he did, he must have found it easy to overthrow Sudevarāja’s brother Pravararāja not long after his accession.

Indrabala II seems to have ruled as an independent king in Chhattisgarh for some time. He was probably the founder of the town Indrapura which is mentioned as the headquarters of a territorial division in a mutilated inscription at Kharod in the Bilaspur district. Indrabala’s son Iśānadeva built the temple of Lakshmanesvara (now Lakhnesvara) at Kharod and endowed it with the gift of some villages. Iśānadeva’s brother Nannadeva was ruling when the temple of Sugata (Buddha), originally erected by Sūryaghoṣha at Āraṅg, was repaired. Himself a devout worshipper of Śiva, he erected several temples dedicated to that god under the name of Nanneśvara.

126 The relation of Udayana to Indrabala (I) of Mekala is not definitely known, but as the former’s son bore the same name as the latter, and grandsons are usually named after their grandfather, it is conjectured that Udayana was the son of Indrabala (I).

127 The correct reading of the second half of the verse in ll. 4 and 5 of the Sirpur stone inscription edited by Kielhorn (IA, XVIII, 180) is probably as follows: pūrnamah Nanneśvar-āḥyair-yaś-chakor-orvēḥ Siv-ālayaḥ.
PÂNDUVAŚIS OR SOMAVAŚIS OF MEKALA AND KOSALA 159

Nannadeva's son Tîvaradeva is known from three copper-plate grants—discovered at Bonda in the Raigarh district, Râjim in the Raipur district and Baloda in the former Phulzar zamindâri—all included in Chhattisgarh. All these grants are written in a florid style and, in their formal part, use an expression which occurs invariably in the grants of the kings of Sarabhapura.128 This clearly indicates that the Somavâsîs were the successors and not the predecessors of the latter kings.

Tîvaradeva claims to have obtained the five mahâsabdâs and to be the ruler of the entire Kosala country. In the Adhbhar plates of his son Nannarâja II he is described as the lord of Utkala and other mandalas also. Unlike his predecessors, he was a devotee of Vishnu.

Soon after his accession, Tîvaradeva seems to have suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of the Vishnukundin emperor, Mâdhavavarman I. The latter penetrated as far as Tîvaradeva's capital Srîpura, which he occupied for some time.129 Tîvaradeva's grants contain no clear indication of his acknowledgement of the suzerainty of the Vishnukundins. Perhaps the reference to his acquisition of the five mahâsabdâs in all his grants is an indication of his feudatory status. It is noteworthy that the expression is omitted in the grants of his successors.

Tîvaradeva was succeeded by his son Nannarâja II, who is described in the Adhbhar plates as the lord of the entire Kosala country. Like his father, he was a devotee of Vishnu. As the Adhbhar plates are not dated, we do not know the period of his rule.

Tîvaradeva had a valiant younger brother named Chandra-gupta, who always fought in the vanguard of his battles. The latter's son Harsha-gupta succeeded his cousin Nannarâja in c. A.D. 580. He was a brave, religious-minded and liberal prince. He married Vâsatâ, the daughter of king Sûrva-varman, who is described as born in the family of the Varmans 'great on account of their supremacy over Magadhâ'.130 The identity of this Sûrva-varman has been a matter of controversy, but the probable view seems to be that he was identical with the homonymous Maukhari prince who rebuilt a temple of Siva in A.D. 555, during the reign of his father Iśâna-varman.

Harsha-gupta seems to have died soon after his accession, leaving behind the boy prince Siva-gupta, who succeeded him in c. A.D. 595. On account of his marvellous skill in archery even in his boyhood, Siva-gupta was known by the second name of Bâlârjuna.131 This king had a long reign of nearly 60 years. His mother Vâsatâ, who was a

128 EJ, XXII, 17, n. 5.
129 See below, Sect. X.
130 EJ, XI, 192 ff.
131 IA, XVIII, 180 ff.
a religious-minded lady, seems to have greatly influenced him. She led a life of piety, observing fasts and austerities, but she took active interest in the affairs of the State. She is said to have brought back the Krita-yuga on earth by checking all evil. Harsha-gupta, her husband, was, like his uncle Tivaradeva, a devotee of Vishnu. Vāsaṭā shared his religious faith and caused a lofty brick-temple of Vishnu to be erected at the capital of Śrīpura.

Śiva-gupta was himself a devotee of Śiva, but following the noble tradition of Indian kings, he held the scales even in the case of all religions and creeds of his realm. He made grants both to the Buddhist Sanghas and Hindu gods.\textsuperscript{132}

Śiva-gupta ruled from c. A.D. 595 to 655.\textsuperscript{133} He was therefore the king of Kosala who had to submit to the mighty Pulakesin II. It was probably during his reign that South Kosala was visited by Hsüen Tsang, who has left us an interesting account of the king and the country. ‘This country’, says the Chinese pilgrim, ‘was more than 6,000 li in circuit, was surrounded by mountains and was a succession of woods and marshes, its capital being above 40 li in circuit. The soil of the country was rich and fertile, the people were prosperous, tall of stature, and black in colour, the king was a Kshatriya by birth, a Buddhist in religion, and of noted benevolence.’\textsuperscript{134} The description fits the kingdom of Śiva-gupta very well. Śiva-gupta was undoubtedly a Kshatriya as the family in which he was born traced its descent from Pāṇḍu, the father of the epic heroes, Pāṇḍavas. He was not a Buddhist as stated by Hsüen Tsang, but his Mallur plates show that he liberally patronized Buddhism, which may have misled the Chinese traveller into thinking that he was a Buddhist by persuasion. His capital Śrīpura answers to the bearings and description of the capital of Kosala given by Hsüen Tsang.\textsuperscript{135}

The history of South Kosala after the death of Śiva-gupta is enveloped in obscurity. Śiva-gupta had a brother named Raṇakesarin,\textsuperscript{136} but whether he or some one else succeeded Śiva-gupta is not known. Perhaps soon after Śiva-gupta’s death, the kingdom was invaded by the Nalas, who ruled over the Bastar district of Madhya Pradesh and the adjoining territory. A stone inscription of the dynasty discovered at Rājim, which on palaeographic grounds can be referred to the eighth century A.D., mentions three Nala kings. The Nalas seem,

\textsuperscript{132} EI, XXIII, 120; PAIOC (Banaras), XII, 595.
\textsuperscript{133} For the date of the commencement of his reign, see EI, XXXV, 63.
\textsuperscript{134} Watters, On Yuan Chwang, II, 200.
\textsuperscript{135} The capital of South Kosala, described by Hsüen Tsang, has been variously located at Wairāgarh, Chândâ and Bhändak. For the view stated here, see EI, XXIII, 118 ff.
\textsuperscript{136} He is mentioned in the Sirpur stone inscription of Vāsaṭā. EI, XI, 191.
therefore, to have ousted the Somavāṁśis from Chhattisgarh and driven them to the east. The rule of the Somavāṁśis seems thus to have lasted in Chhattisgarh for about a hundred and twenty-five years (c. A.D. 530-655).

VII. THE NALAS OF PUSHKARI

The Purāṇas mention the dynasty of the Nalas ruling in Kosala i.e. South Kosala. According to the Viṣṇupurāṇa,137 as many as nine kings of this dynasty reigned. The location of their kingdom was, however, uncertain before the discovery of their stone inscriptions, copper plates and coins during the last forty years.

The earliest stone inscription (No. 80) of this dynasty has been discovered at Poḍāgarh in the Vizagapatam district of the Andhra State. Gold coins of three early kings have been found at Eḍengā in the adjoining Kondegaon tahsil of the Bastar district in Madhya Pradesh.138 The south-eastern portion of Kosala, comprising the Bastar district and the adjoining territory, seems to have been their home province. This part of the country is even now covered with dense, almost impenetrable, forest. Vyāghrarāja of Mahākāntāra (Great Forest), whom Samudra-gupta subjugated after Mahendra of Dakshina Kosala, probably belonged to the Nala dynasty.139 He may have been ruling about A.D. 340. We have no knowledge of the subsequent history of this dynasty for about a hundred years, but from some gold coins discovered in the Bastar district we know of three early kings of this family, namely, Varāha, Bhavadatta and Arthapati. They seem to have flourished in this order. Nothing is known about Varāha, but his successor Bhavadatta signalized his reign by a daring incursion into the Vākāṭaka territory and advanced as far as Nandivardhana, the earlier capital of the main branch of the Vākāṭakas, which he occupied for some time. A copper-plate inscription (No. 78), recording a grant of land which Bhavadatta made during his pilgrimage at Prayāga, was issued from Nandivardhana by his son Arthapati.140 The Vākāṭakas also admit this disaster to their arms at the close of Narendraśena’s reign. The latter’s son Prithivishena II, however, soon retrieved the situation. He drove out the Nalas from Vidarbha. They then retreated to their former capital Pushkari. A subsequent grant (No. 79) of Arthapati dated in the seventh regnal year is

137 DKA, 51, n. 23.
138 JNSI, I, 29 ff.; SI, III, 97 ff.
139 CII, III, 7.

140 The editor of the plates took Arthapati in 11. 21-22 as referring to Bhavadatta-varman himself, but the coins show that the two were different, JNSI, I, 33.
issued from the capital of Pushkari. Some time later Prithivīšheṇa II seems to have invaded the Nala kingdom and devastated the capital Pushkari. Ultimately, Skanda-varman, another son of Bhavadatta, resettled the capital and restored the glory of the family as stated in the Poḷagarh inscription.

The subsequent history of the Nalas can be briefly told here. After their crushing defeat by the Vākāṭakas, they seem to have confined themselves to their home province. They suffered another disastrous defeat at the hands of Kīrti-varman I some time in the latter half of the sixth century A.D. The Chālukya king is called 'the night of destruction to the Nalas, Mauryas and Kadambas'. The Nalas were not, however, exterminated any more than the Mauryas or the Kadambas. Like the kings of Kosala and Kalinga, they must have submitted to Pulakeśin II also, but they found a favourable opportunity for the expansion of their power when the Chālukya kingdom was overrun by the Pallavas at the end of Pulakeśin’s reign. They invaded the kingdom of the Somavāṁśīs, whom they drove to the east. A stone inscription of about the eighth century A.D., still existing at Rājim in the Raipur district, mentions three kings of the Nala dynasty, viz Prithvīrāja, Virūparāja, and Vilāsatunga. It records the erection, by Vilāsatunga, of a lofty temple of Vīshnu which is probably identical with that at Rajim now dedicated to Rājīvalochana.

The Nalas seem to have ruled in the Raipur and Bilaspur districts till the ninth century A.D. when they were ousted by a branch of the Kalachuris of Tripuri which established itself in Chhattisgarh.

VIII. THE ĀNANDAS

The Brihatphalāyanas, who succeeded the Ikshvākus in the lower Krishna valley, were overthrown by the Ānandas. The founder of this family was the king Kandara, who founded the town of Kandarpura and made it his capital. No record of this king has been discovered so far, but a much defaced inscription (No. 81) mentioning his daughter was found at Chezarla, west of Guntur. Only two other princes of this dynasty are known from their copper-plate grants, viz Attivarman (or Hasti-varman) who issued the Goranthu plates (No. 82) and Dāmodara-varman who issued the Mattepad plates (No. 83). The

141 EI, XXVIII, 12 ff. Arthapati was not the grandson of Bhavadatta-varman as supposed by D. C. Sircar (EI, XXVIII, 13). The grant was made for the religious merit of his father (Bhavadatta), not his grandfather. See lines 21-24 of the grant. Āryaka in line 24 of the Ruddhapur plates (EI, XIX, 163) means the father, not the grandfather.
142 EI, XXI, 153 ff.
143 EI, VI, 1 ff.
143a Ibid., XXVI, 48 ff.
former performed the exceedingly costly mahādāna Hiranyakarbh a several times. Dāmodara-varman, whose father is credited with a similar performance, may have been his son. 144 Both these kings claimed descent from the ancient sage Ānanda. Their grants are written in Sanskrit or a mixture of Sanskrit and Prakrit and in characters of about the fourth century A.D. The villages granted by them were situated in the Günṯūr district. Attivarman was a devotee of Śiva, but his son Dāmodara-varman changed over to Buddhism. Kandarpaura where these kings ruled is still unidentified.

The Ānandas probably flourished in the first half of the fourth century A.D. and seem to have been overthrown by their neighbours, the Śalāṅkāyanas when they extended their sway to the south of the Krishnā.

IX. THE ŚALĀNKĀYANAS

In the Andhra country which lay between the lower courses of the Godāvari and the Krishnā, there flourished the ancient dynasty of the Śalāṅkāyanas. They seem to have held this territory as early as the second century A.D.; for Ptolemy, who flourished in c. A.D. 140, mentions Śalakenoī, usually identified with this royal family. 145 Śalāṅkāyana was an ancient sage, and as many as four gotras of this name with different pravaras are known. The ganapāṭha, ascribed to Pāṇini, mentions Śalāṅkāyanaka as the country of the Śalāṅkāyanas, 146 which may have been situated in the north-west. The Kāśika, an ancient commentary on the sūtras of Pāṇini, probably knew of the Śalāṅkāyana kings; for in an illustration to Pāṇini’s sūtra II.1.6 it states that the Śalāṅkāyanas conducted themselves as true Kshatriyas. 147

Seven kings of this line are known. They all ruled from Veṇgī which some scholars identify with Benagouron mentioned by Ptolemy as an important town in the country of Śalakeñoi. 148 The earliest of these rulers was Deva-varman, who may have flourished about A.D. 300. His grant is written in early characters and in the Prakrit language. He performed an Aśvamedha sacrifice and seems, therefore,

144 SSD, 59.
145 PIHAI, 1938, p. 341. n. 1.
146 See the rājanyādi gana referred to in Pāṇini. IV. 2. 53.
147 See Kāśika on Pāṇini II. 1. 6., sa-khatraho Śalāṅkāyanānām, which is explained to mean that the warlike spirit befit the Śalāṅkāyanas. The illustration does not occur in the earlier grammatical work, the Mahābhāṣya of Paṭaṇjali, and may have been suggested by some heroic deeds of the Śalāṅkāyanas in a period before the seventh century A.D. The illustration also shows that the Śalāṅkāyanas were regarded as Kshatriyas.
148 SSD, 71 ff.
to have ruled over a fairly extensive territory. The next known king is Hasti-varman I, who is mentioned in the copper-plate grants (Nos. 87 and 89) of his great-grandsons Skanda-varman and Nandi-varman II. He is probably identical with the homonymous ruler of Veṅgi who, together with some other rulers of the South, was defeated and afterwards reinstated by Samudra-gupta. Hasti-varman was a powerful ruler; for he is said to have obtained victory in several battles. Though he had to submit to the mighty Gupta emperor, he seems to have soon thrown off his yoke; for none of his descendants are known to have used the Gupta Era, which was one of the visible signs of Gupta supremacy.

Hasti-varman I was succeeded by his son Nandi-varman I whose grant written in Prakrit has been discovered at Kānukollu in the Krishnā district (No. 85). He had two sons, Hasti-varman II and Chaṇḍa-varman. The former, who appears to have succeeded him, is known from his own Penugonda plates and the Kanukollu plates (second set) granted by his son Skanda-varman. In the former he is described as a hundred years old, which is understood by some scholars to be literally true. Like other similar expressions occurring in other grants, however, it indicates only a pious wish that he would be long-lived. He receives only conventional praise in the grant of Skanda-varman. The latter, who succeeded him, was a favourite of his grandfather Nandi-varman I as he is mentioned as bālaka-mahā-rāja in the grant (No. 85). Skanda-varman granted some land in the district of Kudrāhāra, which may be identical with Kuḍūrahāra mentioned in a grant of the Bṛhatphalāyana king Jaya-varman. Skanda-varman seems, therefore, to have extended his power south of the Krishnā and overthrown the Ānanda king who was ruling over that territory.

Skanda-varman probably died childless as he appears to have been succeeded by his uncle Chaṇḍa-varman. This prince is said to have exacted submission from his feudatories, which seems to indicate that he had a fairly extensive kingdom. He was followed by Nandi-varman II, who also made a grant of land in the afore-mentioned vishaya of Kudrāhāra. He is described as the eldest son of his father, but the names of his younger brothers are not known.

Nearly all the grants of these kings were issued from Veṅgi, which

149 IA, V, 176. The correct reading of the territorial division is Kudrāhāra as stated by Hultzsch, EI, IX, 58.
150 The inscriptions of Nandi-varman II and Skanda-varman record grants of land in the Kudrāhāra-vishaya, which was previously under the rule of the Ānanda kings.
was evidently their capital. They were devotees of the god Chitraratha. Some take this god to be identical with the Sun and others with Siva. The seal of their copper-plate charters bears the figure of Nandi, which supports the latter view. Besides, Deva-varman calls himself parama-mahesvara, a fervent devotee of Mahesvara (Siva). His descendant Nandi-varman II, however, is described as parama-bhagavata, which indicates his devotion to Vishnu, though he mentions his family deity Chitraratha in the beginning of his grant. It may be noted in this connection that he made his Pedda-Vengi grant (No. 90) in honour of Vishnu, whom he describes as the lord of the three worlds.

All the grants of the Sālaṅkāyanas, so far discovered, are dated in regnal years which afford no clue to the period in which they flourished. But the contemporaneity of one of them, viz Hasti-varman I, with Samudra-gupta, indicates that they must have flourished in the period A.D. 300-500. Towards the close of the fifth century A.D. Harishaṇa, the mighty Vākāṭaka emperor, raided the Andhra country and defeated its ruler who was probably a Sālaṅkāyana. He seems to have deposed him and given the kingdom to the Vishnukundin king Mahārāja Govinda-varman. Sālaṅkāyanas thus disappear from the stage of history about A.D. 500.

X. THE VISHNUKUNDINS

The founder of the Vishnukundin dynasty was Vikramendra I. He seems to have been ruling south of the Krishnā, probably as a feudatory of the Sālaṅkāyanas; for even in the record of his grandson he is not given the title of Mahārāja. The family derived its name from the town and fort of Vinhukoṇḍa in the Krishnā district, about 50 miles south of the Krishnā, which may have been its original capital. Vikramendra’s son Govinda-varman I seems to have risen into prominence as he is the first king of this family who assumed the title Mahārāja. The real founder of Vishnukundin power, however, was Govinda-varman’s son Mādhava-varman I alias Janāśraya. He married a Vākāṭaka princess who might have been a daughter or some near relative of Harishaṇa.

Mādhava-varman I is credited with the performance of as many

152 See below, Sect. X.
153 The Pulombur plates (JAIRS, VI, 17 ff.) which mention this prince give his name as Vikramahendra which appears to be a mistake for Vikramendra, a name borne by two other kings of this dynasty. It is well known that in India grandsons are named after their grandfather. There was a third Vikramendra-varman in this line who was a grandson of the second prince of that name.
154 The Chikkullā plates (EI, IV, 193 ff.) state that his son Vikramendrā-varman’s birth was graced by the two families Vishnuukundin and Vākāṭaka.
- as eleven Aśvamedhas, a thousand Agnishṭomas as well as several other Vedic sacrifices such as Bahusuvraṇa, Puṇḍarika, Purushamedha, Vājapeya, Rājasūya, Prājāpatya and others. He also performed the costly mahādāna Hiranyakaragha. The performance of so many Aśvamedhas indicates wide extension of his dominion. During his time he seems to have become the undisputed master of the Deccan. The political condition in the Deccan in the first half of the sixth century A.D. was also favourable for his phenomenal rise; for the Traikūṭakas and the Vākātakas were then passing into oblivion, while the Kalachuris and the Early Chālukyas had not yet appeared on the horizon. Mādhava-varman may have reinstated Harishena’s grandson on the throne of Vidarbha for some time as suggested in the Daśakumāracharita. Later, he may have occupied the country himself. He seems to have soon extended his suzerainty to Western Mahārāṣṭra and possibly to Karnāṭaka also. This is indicated by the finds of Vishnukundin coins in the excavations at Paunā in the Wardha district and at Nevasā in the Ahmadnagar district. Mādhava-varman’s own rule in Southern Mahārāṣṭra is indicated by his grant of the village Reṭṭuraka, modern Reṭare-budruk, in the Sātārā district. His attempt to penetrate farther to the South may have met with strong opposition from the powerful Chālukya king Pulakesin I, who is known to have performed an Aśvamedha sacrifice before Saka 465 (A.D. 543).

Mādhava-varman’s invasion of South Kosala can be inferred from the description in his grants (Nos. 87 and 88). He is said to have sported in company, or delighted the hearts, of beautiful ladies in the city of Trivara. This Trivara is probably identical with Tivara-deva of the Somavarmi dynasty, who was ruling from Śrīpura in Daksīnā Kosala.

Mādhava-varman seems also to have invaded the newly founded kingdom of the Eastern Gaṅgas, north of the Godāvari; for he made

155 SI, I, 1938, pp. 182 ff. See Appendix I.
156 Paunār Excavations (Nagpur University), 13. S. B. Deo pointed out that they were also found in the excavations at Nevasā, but were wrongly ascribed to the Pallavaś, Ibid., 13, n. 4.
157 EI, XXVII, 513 ff. The first plate of this grant which may have contained the name and description of the royal family is lost, but the fragmentary description of the sacrifices performed by Mādhava-varman is, so far as it goes, in keeping with the description of the sacrifices of Mādhava-varman I and, on palaeographic grounds, the record can be referred to the fifth or sixth century A.D. In view of the statement in the Ipur plates and the finds of Vishnukundin coins at Nevasā it appears very probable that the grant was made by Mādhava-varman I.
158 EI, XXII, 4.
one of the grants after he had crossed the Godāvari for conquering the eastern region.\textsuperscript{160}

Mādhava-varman suffered a disastrous defeat at the hands of the Maukhari king Ḡāna-varman when the latter invaded Andhra. He opposed him with thousands of rutting elephants.\textsuperscript{161} He was, however, defeated and had probably to agree to pay tribute, but he soon threw off the yoke of the distant Maukhari emperor.

Mādhava-varman I had a long reign of about 50 years. He seems to have ruled from c. a.d. 475 to 525. He had three sons, Deva-varman, Maṅchynna-bhaṭṭāraka and Vikramendra-varman, all of whom seem to have predeceased him. After his death his extensive kingdom was divided between his grandsons. Mādhava-varman II, the son of Deva-varman, is said to have ruled over the western provinces from Trikūṭa near Nāsik to Malaya in Kārnāṭaka.\textsuperscript{162} But he was soon dispossessed of this territory; for the Kalachuris occupied Northern Maḥārāṣṭra and Vidarbha, the Rāṣṭrkūṭas regained power in Southern Maḥārāṣṭra,\textsuperscript{163} while the Chālukyas extended their sway over Kārnāṭaka and even raided distant countries.\textsuperscript{164} The Vishnukundin dominion came, therefore, again to be confined to the Andhra country.

Indra-varman alias Indrabhaṭṭāraka-varman,\textsuperscript{165} the son of Vikramendra-varman, who succeeded his grandfather in the east, continued his hostilities with the Eastern Gaṅgas. The Godāvari plates of Prithivinmūla state that his suzerain, the Adhirāja Indra, who probably belonged to the Eastern Gaṅga dynasty, fought in company with other chiefs who had united to overthrow a certain Indrabhaṭṭāraka.\textsuperscript{166} The latter's identity has been a matter of keen controversy, but the probable view seems to be that he is identical with the homonymous Vishnukundin king who was the grandson and successor of Mādhava-varman I. This Indra-varman had a long reign of about 30 years and may be referred to a.d. 525-55. His adversary may have been Indra-

\textsuperscript{160} JAHRS, VI, 17 ff.
\textsuperscript{161} EI, XIV, 117.
\textsuperscript{162} There is no doubt a hill named Trikūṭa in the Gunṭūr district in Andhra, but Malaya is not so well known in that part of the country. Besides, there is no point in describing a king as the lord of Trikūṭa and Malaya unless these hills were well known. On the other hand, Trikūṭa and Malaya are famous hills in the western part of South India.
\textsuperscript{163} Govinda who invaded the country to the south of the Bhīmā at the time of Pulakesin's accession probably belonged to the Rāṣṭrkūṭa dynasty. EI, XXXVII, 18.
\textsuperscript{164} The Chālukya king Kīti-varman I is described as 'the night of destruction to the Nalaš', who were ruling to the north of the Andhra kingdom.
\textsuperscript{165} He is called Indra-varman in the Rāmāirtham plates (EI, 133 ff.) and Indrabhaṭṭāraka-varman in the Chikkulḷa plates (EI, IV, 183 ff.).
\textsuperscript{166} JBBRAS, XVI, 114.
varman I of the early Gaṅga dynasty, who was ruling in the Gaṅga year 39 (A.D. 537-38).  

Indra-varman was succeeded by his son Vikramendra-varman II. His Chikkullā plates are dated in the tenth regnal year. His recently discovered Tummalagūḍem plates record his grant of the village Irundera to the Buddhist vihāra Indrapura. They are dated in the eleventh regnal year and also in the Saka year 488 (A.D. 556). This Saka date has proved very important in fixing the chronology of the Vishnukundins. The grant mentions one Mādhavarāja, who is probably identical with his brother Mādhava-varman (III). It seems that Vikramendra-varman II died without any male issue and was succeeded by Mādhava-varman. Another set of Tummalagūḍem plates, which also has recently come to light, mentions Govinda-varman (II), the son and successor of Mādhava-varman (III). It is dated in the 37th regnal year, and records the grant of another village to the same Buddhist vihāra.

These two new grants are very important for the chronology of the Vishnukundins. Vikramendra-varman II's last known date is Saka 488 (A.D. 566). We do not know how long Mādhava-varman III reigned, but his son and successor Govinda-varman II ruled for at least 37 years. Adding 37 to A.D. 566, we get A.D. 603. Vikramendra-varman II, Mādhava-varman III and Govinda-varman II must have reigned for some years more than what we learn from their own or their successors' grants. So Govinda-varman II was probably the Vishnukundin king who was defeated and deposed by Pulakešin II in circa A.D. 615. The battle was fought near the Kunāla (modern Kolleru) lake, where the Andhra king opposed him with his troop of elephants which had covered all space.  

Pulakeśin II placed his younger brother Vishnuvardhana on the throne of Veṇī.  

The Vishnukundins called themselves parama-māheśvara, i.e. fervent devotees of Maheśvara. Their family deity was Śrīparvata-svāmin, the lord of Śrīparvata, which is plainly identical with the well known Śrīśaila in the Kurnool district. None of the grants known so far mentions any capital of the Vishnukundins. Their predecessors, the Sālāṅkāvanas, ruled from Veṇī, and the decisive battle in which they suffered a crushing defeat was fought at the Kunāla lake, which is only a few miles from Veṇī. The Eastern Chālukyas, who succeeded them, also made the same place the seat of their government. It

168 EI, VI, 1 ff.
169 There is a sharp difference of opinion among scholars regarding the genealogy and chronology of the Vishnukundins. For a different view, cf. EDA, Bk. IV. (Ed.)
seems probable, therefore, that Veṅgī was the capital of the Vishnukundins also.

XI. THE EARLY KINGS OF KALINGA

The Allahabad pillar inscription of Samudra-gupta shows that there were four or five petty states in Kalinga about the middle of the fourth century A.D. Only two of these are known from inscriptions, viz. Pishṭapura and Devarāṣṭra. Pishṭapura is identical with Pithāpuram, a few miles north of Kākināda. Devarāṣṭra seems to have comprised the territory near Vizagapatam. The other States mentioned in the Allahabad pillar inscription must have merged into one or other of these soon after Samudra-gupta’s invasion. The published records of the afore-mentioned two States also are not dated in any era and do not generally give any genealogy of their kings. Their chronology and order of succession have, therefore, to be settled from other evidence and are not quite certain.

The earliest ruler of the Māṭhara family who ruled from Pishṭapura was Śaṅkara-varman, who is mentioned in the Ningondi grant (No. 35) of his grandson Prabhaṇjana-varman. The earliest grant of the family known so far is that recorded in the Ragolu plates of his son Śakti-varman. The plates were issued from Pishṭapura which was his capital at the time. They are dated in the thirteenth regnal year. Śakti-varman bore the title of Mahārāja and called himself ‘the lord of the Kalinga country’. The identification of the places mentioned in his grant shows that the claim was not unjustified. He seems to have annexed the other petty States of Kalinga except perhaps that of Devarāṣṭra. Neither he nor any of his descendants seems to have acknowledged the suzerainty of the Guptas.

Śakti-varman was succeeded by his son Prabhaṇjana-varman, who removed his capital to Simhapura, from which place his Ningondi grant was issued. He calls himself Kaling-ādhipati, ‘lord of Kalinga’, and the ruler of the country between the Krishnavenā and the Mahānādi. It is, however, doubtful if his rule extended to the south of the Godāvari. He was followed by his son Anantaśakti-varman, who is known from two grants dated in the 14th and 28th regnal years (Nos. 102 and 103). The former was made at Vijayapura where he was encamped at the time and confirms the donation of a village made by

170 The grants generally give the name of the ruling king only. Only two grants of the kings of Devarāṣṭra, viz. the Srungavarapukota and Siripuram plates (EI, XIII, 56 ff.; XXIV, 47 ff.), mention three generations of the royal family.

171 EI, XII, 2 ff. That this is the earliest grant is shown by its simple phraseology and the forms of certain test letters. See the form of n which is mostly unlooped.
his grandfather (Āryaka) Saktibhaṭṭāraka (i.e. Sakti-varman). The other grant was issued from the capital Siṅhāpura.

These grants are written in Sanskrit and, on palaeographic grounds, may be referred to the second half of the fourth century A.D. Sankara-varman, the earliest known king of the family, seems therefore to have flourished soon after Mahendra of Pissṭapura who was vanquished by Samudra-gupta. Sakti-varman describes himself as an ornament of the Māṭhara family and as the son of Vāsishṭhī, i.e. a lady of the Vāsishṭha gotra. As the rulers of Devarāṣṭra are known to have belonged to the Vāsishṭha family, Sakti-varman may have descended, on his mother's side, from that family. Anantaśakti-varman had a long reign of nearly thirty years.

The next known king of Kaliṅga is Uma-varman, who bore the titles Mahārāja and Kalināḍhipati. Three land-grants made by him have been discovered so far. One of these was made at Siṅhāpura, which seems to have continued as the royal capital. Uma-varman had a long reign of more than 30 years; for one of his grants is dated in the thirtieth regnal year.

Uma-varman was succeeded by Chanḍa-varman, who also bore the title of Mahārāja and claimed to be the ruler of Kaliṅga. Both his known grants were made at Siṅhāpura. One of them is dated in the fourth and the other in the sixth regnal year. He is described in one of them as a fervent devotee of Bhagavat (Vishnu).

Viśākha-varman, who issued the Koroshonda plates in the seventh regnal year, was probably the next ruler. The plates record the king's grant of a village near Pārlakimedi in the Ganjām district. Viśākha-varman bore the title of Mahārāja and though he does not claim in his grant to be the lord of Kaliṅga, he undoubtedly ruled over practically the same territory as his predecessors.

The records of these kings have unmistakable likeness in respect of phraseology in the cularistic as well as the formal portions, which leaves no doubt that they belonged to the same family and flourished in the same period. Their sway seems to have extended from the Godāvarī in the south to the Mahānadi in the north. As stated before, their capital, which was Pissṭapura in the beginning, was soon

172 EI, XXVIII, 178.
173 ARE, 1935, p. 53. The Ragolu plates have the reading Maṇḍa[ha]-kul-āṇikarishṇol, which, if correct, would show that his family hailed from Magadha and may have received the country of Kaliṅga from the Gupta emperor. But the mention of such a regional name of a royal family is unusual. The correct reading appears to be Māṭhara-kula, which occurs in other grants.
174 That Chanḍa-varman came after Uma-varman is shown by the fact the writer of his Tinithānaka grant was Rudraydatta, who was the son of Matrīvira, the scribe of the Brihaspatrāstra grant of Uma-varman, EI, XXVII, 36.
changed to Simhapura, modern Singupuram near Chicacole, which seems to have continued as the seat of their government to the last. These kings may be referred to the period A.D. 350-450.

There seems to have been a dynastic revolution at the end of Visākha-varman’s reign. The royal family which was previously ruling over Devarāṣṭhra, probably as a feudatory of the family of Simhapura, rose into prominence and extended its sway over the whole of Kaliṅga. Three grants of this family have been discovered so far, from which we get the following genealogy: Mahārāja Guna-varman, the lord of Devarāṣṭhra; his son Mahārāja Prabhaṇjana-varman; and the latter’s son Ananta-varman. Prabhaṇjana had probably another name Nanda-varman as he issued a grant under the joint name Nanda-Prabhaṇjana-varman. These kings are described as ornaments of the Vasishṭha family and sometimes had matrimonial connections with the paramount dynasty described above. Their records, which are far more elaborate, are written in somewhat later characters and borrow some expressions from the grants described above, which leaves no doubt that these kings flourished in a later age.

Prabhaṇjana-varman, who calls himself lord of the entire Kaliṅga country, seems to have usurped power after the death of Visākha-varman. He and his predecessors ruled from Devapura, which has not yet been definitely identified but was probably situated in the Yellamanchili tālukā of the Vizagapatam district.

Ananta-varman is the last-known king of this dynasty. He seems to have been a contemporary of the Vākāṭaka Harisheṇa. The latter invaded his kingdom and forced him to pay tribute. The Vākāṭaka invasion, which seems to have taken place towards the close of the fifth century A.D., apparently led to a dynastic revolution in Kaliṅga as it probably did in the Andhra country. A new royal family called Gaṅga established itself in Kaliṅga and started an era commencing in A.D. 498. That it succeeded the afore-mentioned dynasties of Kaliṅga is shown by the phraseology of its records which have borrowed certain expressions from the earlier grants. These Eastern Gaṅgas, as they are called, ruled over Northern Kaliṅga for several

175 IA, XIII, 49 ff.
176 The expression a-chanḍr-ārka-tāraka-prutishṭham-agrahāram kiritvā surva-karma-pahārīs-cha pariḥṣṭha and dharna-krama-vikramānām-anuyataṁ-yogād-acāpya mālām-anuśāsitaṁ, etc. which are characteristic of the grants made by the kings of Simhapura occur also in the Chicacole grant of Nanda-Prabhaṇjana-varman. IA, XIII, 59.
177 SI, IV, 166 ff.
178 For instance, the expressions cited in n. 176 above are imitated also in the earliest grant of the dynasty, viz the Jirjingi plates of Indra-varman. EI, XXV, 287.
centuries, though they had to submit to the Early Chālukyas for some time. Their history is narrated in a later chapter.

Harishena's invasion seems to have resulted in a dynastic change in Southern Kaliṅga also. A new family, later called Durjaya, estab-
lished itself at Pissṭapura. The founder of this family was Raṇadur-
jaya, who assumed the title of Mahārāja. His son was Vikramendra. Both these princes are known only from the grants of Vikramendra's son Prithivi-mahārāja dated in the 46th and 49th regnal years (Nos. 113 and 114). The former grant was issued from Pissṭapura, which was the royal capital and the latter from the king's camp at Virajō-
nagara, which has not been definitely identified. This family was ruling at Pissṭapura till the invasion of the country by Pulakeśin II. He defeated the ruling king and annexed the country, which he placed in charge of his younger brother Kubja-Vishṇuvardhana. The earliest known grant of Pulakeśin, made after the conquest of the Durjaya and Vishṇukundin territories, is that of the village Muruṭuru in the Guṇṭūr district, which is dated in his eighth regnal year, i.e. in A.D. 617-18.\(^{179}\)
Appendices to Chapter Seven

I

LIST OF INSCRIPTIONS

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## VĀKĀTAKAS AND OTHER DYNASTIES

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DURJAYAS
PRĪTHIVĪ-MAHĀRĀJA

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II

EDITORIAL NOTE

The statement on page 165 above that Mādhava-varman re-instated Harishena's grandson on the throne was challenged by Prof. K. A. N. Sāstri, as the following observations will show:

'There is no evidence to show that Mādhava-varman ever restored the grandson of Vākātaka king Harishena to his ancestral throne. The Viśrutacharitra in the Daśakumūra Charita which is said to contain a suggestion that Mādhava-varman restored the Vākātaka prince to his kingdom does not mention either Mādhava or his Vākātaka protégé. It is a tale of adventure spun out by Daṇḍin; and this attempt to convert fiction into history cannot be accepted.

'It is true that Mādhava-varman II of the Ipūr II plates is spoken of as "Trikūṭa-Mālayādhipati". One need not go in search of these places to distant Mahārāṣṭra and Kārṇāṭaka. They are found in the Andhra country itself. Kotappa-Kopda in the Narasaraopet TK of the Guntūr district was known in the 12th century as Trikōṭīśvara (SII, IV, 915, 916, 918, 919). Trikoṭīśvara, as pointed out by B. V. Krishna Rao, is a corruption of Trikuṭīśvara (FDA, 429); the name goes back to the time of the Kandara kings who call themselves lords of Trikūṭa and the river Benna (ibid, p. 339). Malaya was also a part of the Telugu country; it was included in Veṇī during the time of the E. Chālukyas (SII, IV, 1177). "Veṇī-ṇāṭi-Malayamandalamana" in the Malaya-maṇḍala of Veṇī-ṇāḍu—"Malayammana Vishnu-vardhana Mahārājulu" is an expression frequently met with in the inscriptions. Therefore there is no reason for believing that Mādhava-varman II ever ruled over Mahārāṣṭra and Kārṇāṭaka—since the Ipūr Plates II were issued from Amarapura (Amarāvati in the Guntūr district), it is reasonable to believe that his authority was confined to the Andhra country. The only evidence in support of Mādhava-varman's rule over Southern Mahārāṣṭra is the Roṭṭūraka Grant by one Mādhava-varman. Y. R. Gupta who edited this grant is of opinion that it "can roughly be assigned to the 5th or 6th century A.D. The grantor Mādhava-varman is unknown to history" (JBBORS (N.S.), IV, p. 89). The family to which this king belonged is not known. He is said to have performed, according to Mirashi, sacrifices which correspond to those attributed to Vishnu-kundīn Mādhava-varman I. It is solely on the similarity of the names of the two kings and the supposed resemblance of the sacrifices performed by them that Mirashi identifies these two. Evidence much stronger than this is needed to justify the assumption that Vishnu-kundīn Mādhava-varman ruled over the Southern Mahārāṣṭra. It may be noted in this context that about the end of the fifth and the beginning of the sixth century, there was another Mādhava-varman—Mādhava III of the W. Gaṅge family—
who was the sister's husband of Krishṇa-varman II of the Kadamba family. Therefore the proposed identification cannot be accepted without confirmatory evidence.'

To this observation Prof. V. V. Mirashi, the author of this chapter, has sent the following note (Ed.):

"I. After the death of the powerful Vākāṭaka king Harisheṇa his weak and debauched son was killed by his feudatories who made common cause with the invader. In such a situation the young son of Harisheṇa's successor may have received help from Mādhava-varman I as suggested in the Viśrutacharita. The narrative appears to have a historical basis. That Mādhava-varman I extended his sway to Vidarbhā is now proved by the discovery of his coins in the excavations at Pavnār (ancient Pravarapura, a Vākāṭaka capital) carried out by the Nagpur University. (See "Pavnār Excavation (1967)" published by Nagpur University, pp. 14 ff.)

"There seems to be no doubt that Mādhava-varman I had extended his rule to Western Mahārāṣṭra since some Vishṇukundin coins similar to those found at Pavnār have been found at Nevasā (Ahmednagar district). (See Sankalia's From History to Prehistory, Fig. 83, Nos. 1 and 3). They have wrongly been attributed to the Pālavaras. This is shown by S. B. Deo in his Pavnār Excavations, p. 13, n. 4. So it should not be surprising if a copper-plate grant of Mādhava-varman I is found in the Sātārā district in Western Mahārāṣṭra. The description that he was a Sāvabhauma and had performed Pundarīka, Bahusuvraṇa and eleven sacrifices points to his identity with Mādhava-varman I of the Vishṇukundin family. K. A. N. Sāstī would identify him with the Gaṅga king of that name only on similarity of names. There are no such details in favour of that identification. I leave it to scholars to decide which identification is more plausible.

"II. As for the description of Trikūṭa-malay-ādhipati Trikūṭa and Malaya are well known in the senses I have taken. Hultzsch also understood them in the same way. If Mādhava-varman I had extended his rule to Western Mahārāṣṭra as shown above, it is not unlikely that one of his sons or grandsons was ruling over the western provinces of his empire. There is no point in saying that Mādhava-varman II was ruling over places which were only about 100 or 150 miles apart. Hultzsch admitted that the reading Amaratpurāt was doubtful. There is some evidence of Vishṇukundin rule over Karnāṭaka in which Malaya is situated. As I have shown elsewhere, the Saka era was current in Karnāṭaka before it spread to Mahārāṣṭra, Andhra and Kaliṅga. This was because of the rule of the Śakas over the territory. It was because of the connection of the Vishṇukundins with Karnāṭaka that one of their grants (viz. that recorded in the Tummalagudem plates of Vikramendra-bhaṭṭaraka) is dated in Saka 488 (III, Vol. XLIII, 733 ff.). Again, if we take into account the genealogy of the Vishṇukundins there is hardly any room for Mādhava-varman II of the Ipūr plates (17th year) between Mādhava-varman I and his great-grandson Vikramendra-varman II (Saka 488). See the following:

Mādhava-varman I (years 37 and 40) circa A.D. 475-526

Vikramendra-varman I

Indra-varman (year 27)

Vikramendra-varman II (year 11) (Saka 488, A.D. 566).

"So the other grandson of Mādhava-varman I (viz Mādhava-varman II) was probably ruling not in the Andhra country but elsewhere in Mahārāṣṭra and Karnāṭaka (Trikūṭa-malay-ādhipati). I have put this forward as a possible hypothesis, because I am convinced that his grandfather Mādhava-varman I was ruling over Vidarbhā and Mahārāṣṭra at least, as shown by the finds of his coins and also his copper-plate grant found at Khāṇapur.'"