

Karnataka History - Chalukyas Of Kalyani Part 4

Special class

LITERATURE

The period of the Chalukyas was one of substantial literary activity, both in Sanskrit and Kannada. Great writers in Sanskrit like Bihana, Vadiraja and Vijnyaneshvara were patronised by the Chalukyas Vadiraja, the great Jaina scholar, was patronised by Jayasimha 11. He wrote Yashodharacharilam and Parshvanatha charitam, two epics, and Nyayavinishchayatika, an exhaustive commentary on Akalanka's Nyayvinishchaya He also wrote a work on logic, Pramanathraya

Bilhana, a poet from Kashmir, came to be patronised by Vikramadithya VI and he wrote Vikramankadeva Charitham, a long poem having Vikrama as its hero. This Mahakavya is "replete with classical imagery and brimming with poetic fancies". Another scholar patronised by Vikrama was Vijnyaneshvara who composed Mitakshara, a commentary on Yajnyavalkyasmriti. It is one book on the Hindu law followed all over India except in Bengal. It occupies a unique place in Dharmashastra literature. Another great scholar of the period is Emperor Someshvara III who compiled an encyclopaedia in Sanskrit, Manasollasa or Abhilashitartha Chinthamani. This work has been considered as the unique

contribution of Karnataka to the field of science, arts and scholarship. It deals with 100 topics such as polity, food, architecture, dress, cosmetics, gems, music, medicine and so on. Another Chalukyan Emperor, Jagadekamalla II, wrote Sangithachudamani, A work on music. Parshvadeva, patronised by Someshvara III, wrote Sangithasamayasa. Matisagara and Dayapala were the other two Sanskrit authors of the period. Dayapala wrote Rupasiddhi, a work on Sanskrit grammar of the Shakatayana school.

Kannada literature flourished highly during the period. Ranna, one of the great poets in Kannada, was patronised by Satyashraya. Gadayuddha or Sahasabhimavijaya is his great work which is comparable to Pampa's Bharatha. He also wrote a Jaina work, Ajitapurana. Chavundaraya II, an official of the Chalukyas, wrote Lokopakara, a compendium of useful knowledge. One of his contemporaries was Chandraraja who composed Madanatilaka, a work on Kamashastra. Sridharacharya wrote Jatakatilaka, a work on astrology, and Chandraprabha-charite under the patronage of Someshwara I. Kirtivarman, a younger brother of Vikrama VI, wrote Govaidya on veterinary science. Durgasimha, a Sandhivigrahi under Jayasimha II, wrote Panchatantra a translation of Vasubhaga Bhatta's Sanskrit Panchatantra. Shantinatha, author of Sukumaracharita, Nayasena of Dharmamritha and the noted grammarian, Nagavarma II, also lived during the period. The last named was a teacher of military art (Katakopadhyaya) under Jagadekamalla and he has left three works, viz., Kavyavalokana, Bhashabhushana and Abhidana Vastukosha. Brahmeshiva was another poet of the period, who wrote Samayapareekshe.

A major development of the period in Kannada literature is the growth of Vachanasahitya, a great contribution of the Virashaivas. The Vachanas or sayings of the Virashaiva Sharanas or saints were pithy pieces in poetic prose. Jedara Dasimayya, Basaveshvara, Akkamahadevi, Allamaprabhu and Madivala Machayya were some of the important poets of this group.

FINE ARTS

Fine arts like dance and music also flourished during the period. All temples were provided with orchestras and dancing girls. The Kalamukhas popularised this practice. Even queens rendered public performances. Chapters in Manasollasa reveal in detail the attainments in the field of dance and music, both vocal and instrumental. A number of musical instruments are mentioned in the work. Sangitha Chudamani, Sangitha Samayasara and Sangitha Ratnakara (of Sarangadeva in the Seuna court) are creations of this period. A record of 1074 speaks of one Mokari Baramayya, who is described as 'Brahma of all arts', as he was well versed in singing, in playing all instruments, in various kinds of dance and so on. Bahurupi Chaudayya, a Vachanakara, was known for his histrionic talent. Mugada in Dharwad district had a theatre in a basti.

ART AND ARCHITECTURE

The Chalukyas have left behind some of the finest monuments of artistic merit. Their creations have the pride of place in Indian art tradition. Hoysala monuments have also been classed with Chalukya constructions. No doubt Hoysala art is an offshoot of Chalukyan art, but the former has its own specialities.

The Chalukyan temples have the following special features:

- (1) Their layout is on the principle of right lines and right angles, and they are rectangular, though with certain exceptions.
- (2) Garbhagriha or cella has no Pradakshinapatha in a majority of cases.
- (3) Entrance to the temple is generally from the sides, and not from the front.
- (4) Doorway or entrance is not only highly ornamented, but has an architectural framework, consisting of pilasters, moulded lintel and a cornice atop. The cella is provided with light through the pierced windows on both sides of the doorway. In addition, the style has certain features in common with the Hoysala style.
- (5) Its pillars are with roundish cross-section called as 'lathe-turned'.
- (6) Its mantapa has pierced windows, which are there in all the Early Chalukyan temples also.
- (7) They have Kadamba Nagara or Vesara Shikharas.

No doubt there are certain exceptions to the above rules. Though a majority of their temples are rectangular, the Dandaldoldshaveshvara temple has a star shaped Garbhagriha. Perhaps the Hoysalas borrowed this design from the temples of Kenmur and Savadi which are of an earlier date than those of Chalukyas, as pointed out by Dr. A. Sundara. Similarly, the Sarasvati temple at Gadag has a pradakshinapatha round the cella which is not common to the Chalukyan temples.

The earlier examples of this style are the temples of Konur and Savadi, of Mallikarjuna of Sudi and of Kalleswara of Kukamur. Every Chalukyan temple has a Garbhagriha or cella, an Ardhamaniapa (vestibule or ante chamber), a Mahamantapa or Navaranga and two open Mantapas on either side of the Mahamantaya where there are main entrances. On the opposite side of Garbhagriha, at the other end of the Navaranga, there is an open Nandimantapa, fully surrounded by a parapet. At places there is a supplementary cella

The outer faces of the wall are fully decorated. "As to the surface treatment of the Chalukya style, this is exceptionally well rendered", says Percy Brown. The Early Chalukyan builders spaced out the surface of the wall by means of pilasters. The later craftsmen developed this idea into much more elaborate and finished conception. In addition to the slender pilasters dividing the wall, half pilasters were added in between. On these half pilasters, small Shikharas were engraved in relief, and they have niches in between them, below the Shikhara The Shikhara here is wrought in a "most artistic refrain". Above this Shikhara is interposed a trophy of foliated curves

The columns in the Mahamantapa are cylindrical, described as lathe-turned'. They are common in Hoysala monuments also. The monuments of Kennur, Sudi, Savadi and Kukanar provide the transition from the Early to Later Chalukyan styles. Some of them are of the Rashtrakuta times. These earlier temples are built with coarse sandstone, but all later temples of the Chalukyas, like those of the Hoysalas, are built with soap stone which is close grained. Their stepped Vesara towers are made to look like curvilinear towers by the decorative motifs that are engraved on each step. The Jaina temple at Lakkundi (built by Altimabbel marks a further step of development as its outer walls have a greater ornamental effect. The Chaudadampur temple in Haveri taluk has an additional Chalukyan feature, viz., a wide projecting cave or chhajja, which is double curved. This became common in all later temples of the Chalukyas and of those of Vijayanagara. The lower of this temple of Mukteshwara is a complete, perfect form of the Chalukyan style. The stories of the earlier Dravidian towers have their prominence reduced and their outlines obscured by the wealth of plastic ornamentation.

The temples of Kashivisveshvara of Lakkundi, Mahadeva of Hagi (Raichur district), Mallikarjuna of Kuruvatti and the Kalleshwara at Bagali (both in Bellary district) are the best and the finest examples of this style. The Lakkundi temple is a double shrine with fine and rich Shikharas. Its doorway is compared to lacework The Kuruvatti temple has a wonderful Torana over the lintel of the cella and delicately carved bracket figures. Dr. Cousens has called the Itagi temple as "the finest in Kannada country after Halebidu An inscription in the temple calls it rightly as "the emperor among temples". Next to Itagi, the finest temple of the Chalukyas is at Khidrapur, now in Maharashtra, on the banks of the Krishna.

The temples of the Chalukyas are also found at Gadag, Haven, Hanagal, Bankapura, Belgami and other places In all, there are 200 monuments of the period, scattered all over the Decean. Many more have vanished

The bracket figures of the Chalukyan temples especially found at Kuruvatti and Itagi are wonderful creations. The image of Saraswathi at the temple of Gadag is a unique piece of art. The female scribe at Jalasangvi (Bidar district) must be especially mentioned. The Chalukyas and the Hoysalas used Makaratorana motif profusely to decorate their human figures. The Chalukyan art took further strides in the days of the Hoysalas. The builders of Belur temple were from Belgami or Balligamve, a centre of Chalukyan art.