

Vol 3 Issue 5 Nov 2013

Impact Factor : 1.9508 (UIF)

ISSN No :2231-5063

Monthly Multidisciplinary  
Research Journal

*Golden Research  
Thoughts*

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**RNI MAHMUL/2011/38595**

**ISSN No.2230-7850**

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## RASTRAKUTAS AND VENGI CHALUKYAN - RELATIONS



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**Abstract:** The history of the relations between the two ruling dynasties of South Indian between 7th century and the 13th century is an engrossing tale of political activity that overhauled the entire political spectrum of a region and time. Rastrakutas were one of the most powerful dynasties of South Indian who ruled from Malkhed and created one of the biggest empires in the whole of South India and India. Their ambition to expand the political boundaries led to several battles and wars with the contemporary dynasties. They not only invaded the Tamil country but also penetrated into the Andhra desha.

The Andhradesha, was ruled by the Vengi Chalukyas, a half shoot of a dynasty created by Kubja Vishnuvardhana, the brother of Pulicasin-II. Though, the Vengi rule was safe until, the supremacy of Chalukyas of Badami, they became the targets of attack, with the decline of Chalukyas of Badami. They were chiefly troubled by the Rastrakutas on several occasions and many battles took place between them. However, the mighty Rastrakutas were ably challenged by the rulers of Vengi mandala and stiff resistance was posed at every time.

In this present paper, an attempt is made to highlight, the political struggle that took place between the Rastrakutas and the Vengi Chalukyas and how many wars were ensured between them towards this. It is a portrayal of the growing political ambitions of the South Indian medieval powers towards their own rise and fall, on the basis of many inscriptions and grants.

**Key words:** history , dynasties , political activity , political spectrum .

### INTRODUCTION:

Karnataka and Andhra are two important component regions which played a vital role in the evolution of the political and cultural history of the Deccan. Their contact with each other was very close and of long duration and produced fruitful results. In the ancient and early medieval periods Andhradesha came into contact with the neighbouring regions. The southern-western Andhradesha for about three centuries were replaced by the Chalukyas of Vengi in the former region and the Chalukyas of Badami in the later. It continued and lasted although the periods of early Chalukya, Rastrakutas and later Chalukya rule for about seven centuries. Telangana or western Andhra and Rayalasima or South-western Andhra were under these dynasties during this period. The Rastrakutas Empire was a royal dynasty ruling large parts of the Indian sub continent between the sixth and the 10th centuries. The earliest known inscriptions is a 7th century copper plate grant that mentions their rule from Manpur in the Malwa region of modern Madhya Pradesh, other ruling Rastrakuta clans from the same period mentioned in inscriptions were the kings of Achalapur. The clan that ruled from Elichpur was a feudatory of the Badami Chalukyas by name of Dantiduraga who, overthrew Chalukya Kirtivarman II and went on to build an empire with the Gulbarga region in modern Karnataka as its base. This clan came to be known as the

Rastrakutas of Manyaketa rising to power in South India in 753. An Arabic writing 'Silsilat-Twarikh' called the Rastrakutas as one of the four principal empires of the world. The heart of the Rastrakutas Empire included nearly all of Karnataka, Maharashtra and part of Andhra Pradesh. An area which the Rastrakutas ruled for over two centuries. The Samangadh copper plate grant confirms that the feudatory king Dantidurga, he also brought the eastern Chalukyas and Gangas of Talakadu under his control. According to Alteker, the Rastrakutas became a pan India power during his rule. Eastern Chalukyas or Chalukyas of Vengi were a South India dynasty whose kingdom was located in the present day Andhra Pradesh. Their capital was Vengi and their dynasty lasted for around 500 years from the 7th century until 1130 CE. They had their capital originally at Vengi near Eluru of the west Godavari district and later changed to Raja Mahendravarma (Rajamundry). Pulakeshi-II the greatest Badami Chalukya king conquered the eastern deccan corresponding to the coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh 616 CE defeating the remnants of the Vishnu Kondina empire. He appointed his brother Kubja Vishnu Vardana as viceroy. Thus the history of the Chalukyas of the Vengi or the Eastern Chalukyas as they are also called is the history of the Andhra country for six long centuries beginning with the conquest of the Vengi about 611 CE by the western Chalukya, king Pulakeshi-II and ending with total disappearance of the

Chalukyas supremacy from the Andhra country about 1200 CE. Both in the records of the eastern Chalukyas and in those of other dynasties like the Rastrakutas of Malkked which show that just as after the period of Rastrakuta sovereignty. The king of the eastern branch in Andhradesa founded by Kubja Vishnuvardhana. It began to rule of the rule of Vengi according to the chronology adopted in the present work, in A.D.642.

Between 641 CE and 705 CE some kings except Jayasimha-I and Mangi Yuvaraja ruled for very short durations. Then followed a period of unrest characterized by family feuds and weak rulers. Meanwhile the Rastrakutas of Malkked ousted western Chalukyas of Badami. The weak rulers of Vengi, had to meet the challenge of the Rastrakutas, who overran their kingdom more than once. There was no eastern Chalukya ruler who could check until Ganga Vijayaditya-III come to power in 848 CE.

The reign of Vijayaditya-Bhattaraka marks the commencement of a new chapter in the history of the Deccan and that of the eastern Chalukyas of Vengi as well. The Chalukyas of Vengi had by this time acquired a permanent and abiding interest in Vengi and began to love it as their home. The decline of the Pallavas almost synchronized with the fall of the western Chalukyas of Badami. These events apparently made the eastern Chalukyas of Vengi more powerful than ever. The Rastrakutas of Malkked, turned against the place of the western Chalukyas in Kuntala, turned against the Chalukyas of Vengi, who opposed them in their expansion and were therefore constantly at war with their rivals on the east. The history of the next two centuries thus turns upon the struggle for supremacy and influence and the establishment of a vast empire in the Deccan and South India. Vijayaditya-I appear to have ruled in peace until almost the end of his reign. Although Dantidurga is said to have conquered the neighboring kingdoms of Kanchi, Kolasa, Kalinga and Srisaila, Vengi does not find a place among the states conquered by him. It is reasonable to inter from this that Dantidurga, for some reason unknown at present considered it advisable to leave Vijayaditya alone; but towards the end of his reign, the Rastrakutas became more aggressive and invaded Vengi from the west.

The Rastrakutas came into contact with Andhradesa almost from the first ruler, is said to have conquered, among others the king of Srisailam. This can only man a contemporary ruler of the Bana family who was governing the Karnool district as a subordinate of the early Chalukyas. During the time of the second Rastrakuta king Krishna-I his son Yuvaraja Govinda, camped at the confluence of the Musi and the Krishna in the Nalgonda district of Telangana and defeated the Vengi Chalukya king Vishnuvardhana-IV. This must have resulted in the acquisition of the Telengana of Andhradesa by the Rastrakutas.

One remarkable feature of the history of the Rastrakutas is the continued and unceasing effort made by them to conquer Vengi. The Eastern Chalukyas who ruled over Vengi made equally determined efforts to resist the aggressions of the Rastrakutas. This brought the two dynasties into frequent clashes.

The first encounter was in the reign of Krishna-I,

the Rastrakuta king Vijayaditya-I, the ruler of Vengi Krishna's son Yuvaraja Govinda invaded Vengi and pitched his camp at the confluence of the Musi and the Krishna. A Battle was fought in the neighbourhood in which the king of Vengi sustained a defeat and surrendered his treasury and much of his territory. This event is assigned to 770 CE. It is suggested that this Rastrakuta invasion was a counter to the invasion in the Rastrakuta kingdom by the east Chalukyas while Krishna was busy fighting with Rahappa.

The second phase of the conflict took place during the reign of Dhruva, the Rastrakuta king and Vishnuvardhana the king of Vengi. Krishna-I was succeeded by his eldest son Govinda-II, who was opposed by the younger son, Dhruva. Govinda obtained the help of the rulers of Kanchi. Gangavadi and Vengi and fought with his brother but Dhruva defeated the confederation in 780 CE. Dhruva ascended the throne after this victory and soon turned his attention towards the ruler of Vengi. This conflict seems to have ended peacefully for Vishnuvardhana gave his daughter Silamahadevi in marriage to Dhruva who was pleased to make her his chief queen.

The third and a serious stage in the conflicts was confined to the reigns of the Vengi Chalukyan king Narendra Mrigaraja Vijayaditya-II and the Rastrakuta kings Govinda-III. Amoghavarsha-I, information about this stage of the conflict available in the records of both the dynasties. Nagabhata the pratihara king, formed a league with the king of Vengi as seen of its members and attacked Dharmapala. Govinda instructed his generals to keep the kings of Vengi. Kalinga and Kosala under check and dispatched his brother, Indra, to attack the Pratiharas in 806 or 807 CE. This was the time which Vijayaditya II succeeded to the throne of Vengi. According to the Radhanpur plates, the ruler of Vengi was defeated and made to raise a compound for the stabled of Govinda. The Sanjan plates state that Vijayaditya was also made to clean the floor of Govinda's camp. This relates to the struggle in the reign of Govinda and till 814 CE the year in which he died. Regarding the later and subsequent part of the struggle during the early years of the reign of Amoghavarsha-I, there was complete chaos in the Rastrakuta kingdom and according to the Begumra plates, the glory of the Rastrakuta kingdom sunk deep in the Chalukyan Ocean. There was a change in his fortune with the death of Govinda-III in 814 CE and the succession of his son Amoghavarsha I who was a boy of six years and this led to the out break of anarchy in the Rastrakuta kingdom. Consequently Vijayaditya took advantage of this and intensified, his struggle subsequently he was able to defeat and drive away the Ganga and the Rastrakutas from Vengi in 818 CE after continues struggle for 12 years and after fighting 108 battles. Thus Vijayaditya-II was able to turn the tables and triumph over the Rastrakutas.

The next phase of the conflict belongs to the time of the Chalukyan king Gunaga Vijayaditya-III and the Rastrakuta kings Amoghavarsha-I and Krishna-II. Eastern Chalukyan grants supply valuable information about the achievements of Vijayaditya and incidentally about the achievements of Vijayaditya and about several events in this conflict. He captured Stambha a Rastrakuta stronghold from the Cambay says sangli plates. It is know that



Amoghavarsha-I over whelming defeated the Vengi Chalukyas and drove them out of their strongholds in the battle of Vingavalli. The Bagumkra records mention a 'Sea of Chalukyas' invading the Ratta kingdom which Amoghavarsha-I successfully defended.

The king of Vengi is said to have cut the head of Mangi the ruler of Nolambavadi and was helped in this by the advice given by a Brahman named Vinayadisarman. The Rastrakuta inscriptions also throw useful light on this conflict. One record of 866 CE states that the king of Vengi did obeisance to Amoghavarsha. Another record of 872 CE states that Vijayaditya worked for daily wages and swept road on which Amoghavarsha rode. The Chalukyan king is said to have invaded Stambha and destroyed it but the Rastrakutas defeated him and made him acknowledge their superiority. One eastern Chalukyan grant states that Vijayaditya fought with the Gangas at the command of the Rastrakuta king. These events took place obviously in the reign of Amoghavarsha. Vijayaditya must have taken the offensive and invaded and burnt stamba which was in the Rastrakuta dominion. His defeat in the battle that ensued must have resulted in the loss of his independence. Amoghavarsha must have commanded him to punish the Gangas who rose in rebellion. Vijayaditya invaded Gangavadi and killed the Molamba king Mangi who opposed him. In Gangavadi he defeated the Gangas, in several places and inflicted a crushing defeat on them when they took refuge on the Ganga Kuta hill. The situation changed with the death of Amoghavarsha after a long reign and at a ripe old age, Vijayaditya asserted his independence and started the offensive. There after Gunaga Vijayaditya ruled independently for thirteen years till his death in 891 CE.

The next stage of the struggle relates to the reign of Chalukya Bhima-I, the eastern Chalukyan king and Krishnan-II the Rastrakuta monarch. As usual many Vengi Chalukyan grants supply details of this conflict. It is stated in one grant that after the death of Gunaga Vijayaditya, Vengi mandala was surrounded by his Dayadasas or kinsmen and the Rottas and that Chalukya Bhima, the son of his younger brother Vikaramaditya, drove them away and took the throne. It is clear from these references that the dayadasas opposed Bhima's succession and invoked Rastrakuta intervention. The Rastrakutas must have invaded Vengi in response to this invitation. What followed also described in the Eastern Chalukyan grants Bhima's son Irvartigananda, a boy of sixteen years who fought two battles at Niradyaapura and Pertuvanguru and killed the Rastrakuta general Dandeya Gundaya, but was himself killed while on the back of an elephant. It is clear from the records mentioned above that there were two Rastrakuta invasions in the time of Chalukya Bhima. The first was immediately after his accession when the Rastrakutas, their allies and the opposing Dayadasas of Bhima surrounded the kingdom- Bhima defeated these enemies and drove them out and then performed his coronation on 19th April 892 CE. There seems to have been another invasion. Subsequently, the Rastrakuta general, Dandeya Gundaya led the confederate army and came very near the capital of Vengi, the Chalukyan prince Irimariganda defeated this army at Niravadyapura and Peruvanguru and repelled it. Thus this time also Rastrakuta

success was short lived and they could not obtain Vengi.

The sixth phase in the struggle took place in the reigns of the eastern Chalukyan king Chalukya Bhima-II and the Rastrakuta king Govinda-IV. There was anarchy in Vengi for five years after the death of Chalukya Bhima-I. On account of disputed succession, the opposing claimants invited the help of the Rastrakutas and the latter invaded and occupied Vengi. Yuddhamalla-II opposed Chalukya Bhima's accession. The eastern Chalukyan grants describe what happened about this time. Chalukya Bhima defeated Mallaparaja who held the crown at the time Bhima expected the army of the Rastrakutas and other enemies of Bhima mentioned above. Ayyapa was the Governor of Maseyavadi and Royalnadu under Govinda-IV.

The seventh and last phase of the struggle belongs to the time of Ammaraja-II. The eastern Chalukyan king and Krishna-III, the Rastrakuta monarch Ammaraja seized the throne of the Vengi to the exclusion of Badapa, his cousin of a collateral branch and Danarava. After ruling for a few years. Ammaraja was driven out by Badapa with the help of the Rastrakutas and fled to Kaliga. Badapa and Tala-II rules for some time and then Amma returned once again. Krishna-III invaded Vengi drove away Amma and set u his half-brother, Danaruava on the throne. Amma, however returned and made peace with his brother and resumed his rule.

After this the power of the Rastrakutas declined. In Vengi, Danaruava was killed in a fight with Jata Chola and his son's Saktivarman-I and Vamaladitya took refuge at the court of the Cholas of the South.

Andhradesa came into contact with the later Chalukyas from the time of their rise to political power in the third quarter of their 10th century AD and the contact was kept on till about the middle of the region of Taila-III. These Chalukyas took over western and south-western Andhradesa from the Rastrakutas and kept a firm hold over this area on account of its strategic importance. Particularly in their prolonged struggle with the Cholas of the south. This was a continuation of the policy purchased by their predecessors, the Rastrakutas. In purchase of that policy they also struggled hard for the possession of Vengi and the coastal strip. The provisions and the contents of the contemporary inscriptions indicate that these Chalukyas had astrologer hold over the Telangana and Rayalasima parts and that they exercised a more effective and lasting control over Vengi than the Rastrakutas.

Thus in fine it can be stated that the diplomatic relations that lasted between the Rastrakutas of Malkhed and the Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi were a saga of constant military strifes and struggles only to conquer the territories and remain in power. In course of their struggle for power, the entire south Indian political structure participated in one way or the other contributing to the overall political developments of the times.

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