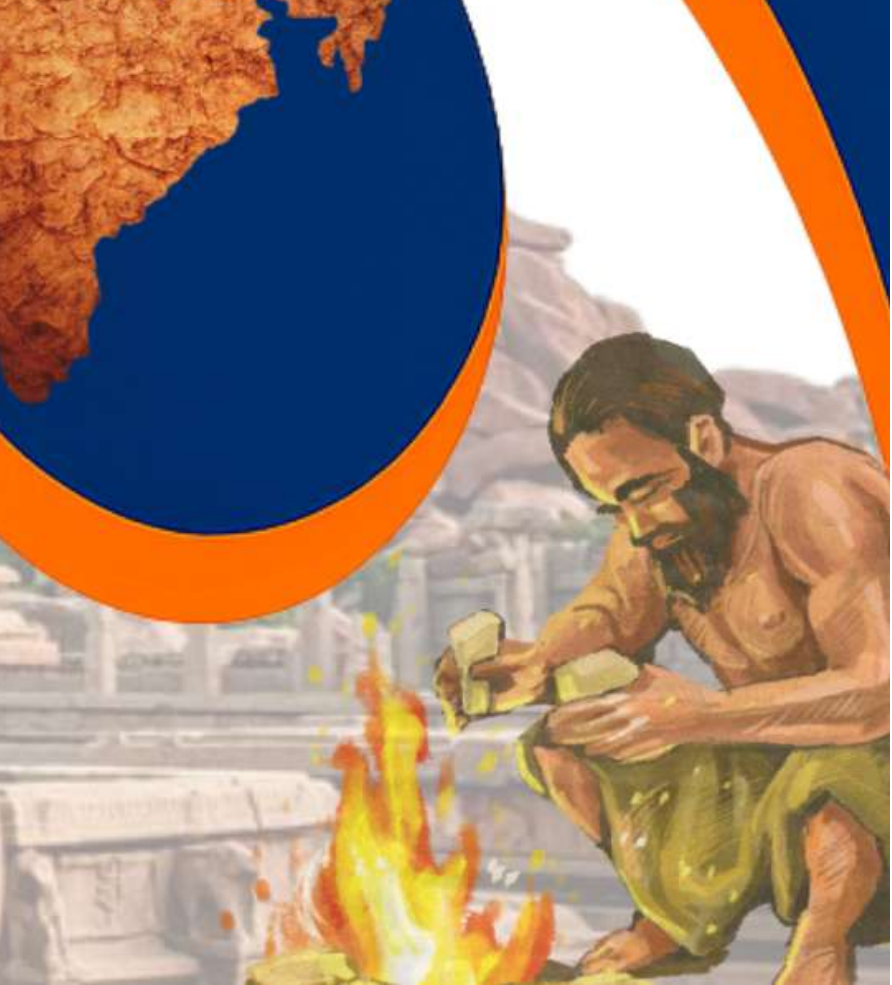
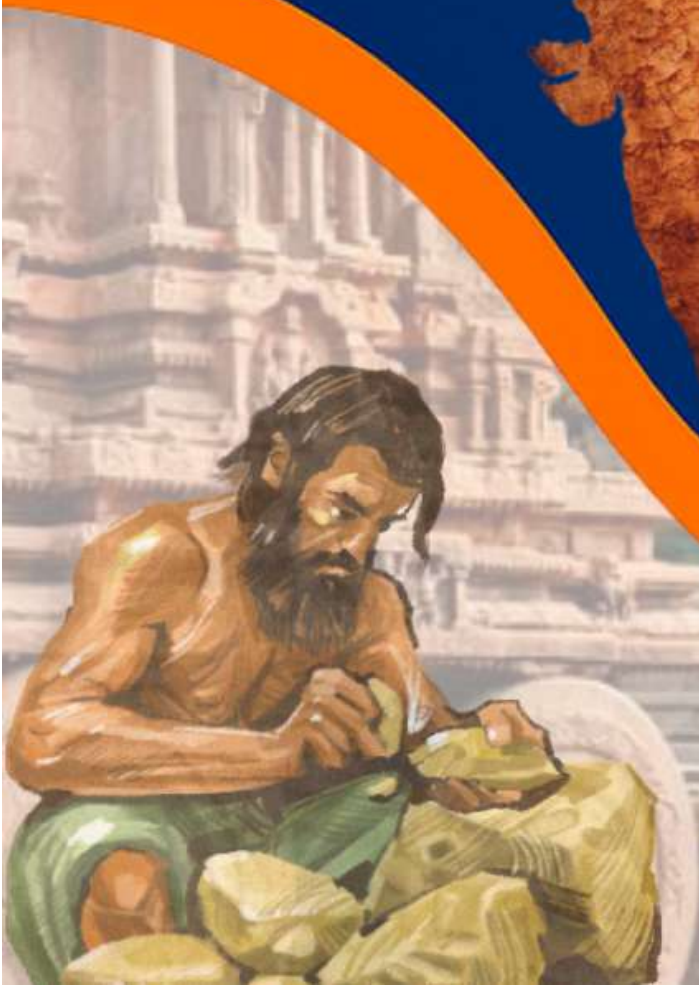




**RASonly**

# ANCIENT HISTORY





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# ANCIENT HISTORY

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# PREFACE

Welcome to Ancient History for RAS Preparation – a comprehensive guide designed specifically for the aspirants of the Rajasthan Administrative Services (RAS) exam. This book is curated by the team at **RASonly**, keeping in mind the unique requirements of students who are preparing for this prestigious examination.

Ancient history forms a crucial part of the RAS syllabus, offering both insight into India's rich cultural heritage and the foundations of its governance systems. This book simplifies complex topics while providing depth and clarity, ensuring that every concept is understood thoroughly. Whether you're just beginning your journey with the RAS foundation batch or looking to refine your knowledge, this resource will be an essential tool in your preparation.

We have crafted this content with a student-friendly approach, ensuring that it aligns with the latest exam patterns and requirements, focusing on the essential aspects of ancient Indian history. Our aim is to help you gain a strong grasp of the subject, enabling you to approach both the Prelims and Mains with confidence.

At **RASonly**, we believe in a structured and holistic approach to learning, and this book embodies that philosophy. It's not just about passing the exam but also about understanding and appreciating India's historical legacy. We hope that this resource inspires your pursuit of knowledge and supports your aspirations of becoming a distinguished officer.

**Wishing you success and clarity on your journey!**

**RASonly TEAM**

**COMPILED BY: HARSHIT SHARMA**

**DESIGNED BY: ABHINAV MEENA**

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# RAS Mains Practice Questions

## 15 Words (Very Short Answer)

1. What is the meaning of the term "Sangam"?
2. Name any two major works included in the Ettutogai anthology.
3. Who authored Silappadikaram and what is its theme?
4. Which port was known for pearl fishing in the Sangam Age?
5. What was the symbol of the Chera dynasty?

## 50 Words (Short Answer)

1. Briefly describe the Aham and Puram classification in Sangam literature.
2. Write a short note on the contributions of Karikala Chola.
3. Mention the economic significance of Arikamedu and Uraiyur during the Sangam period.
4. What does the Maduraikkanji poem tell us about Pandya rule?
5. Highlight the trade relations between Tamil kingdoms and the Roman Empire.

## 100 Words (Long Answer)

1. Discuss the major contributions of Sangam literature in understanding ancient South Indian polity and society.
2. Explain the role of ports like Puhar, Korkai, and Musiri in overseas trade during the Sangam Age.
3. Describe the political achievements of Chera Senguttuvan as mentioned in literary sources.
4. Examine the role of handicrafts and textiles in the Sangam economy.
5. Compare the political administration of the Chola and Pandya rulers as depicted in Sangam sources.

## 100 Words (Analytical Answer)

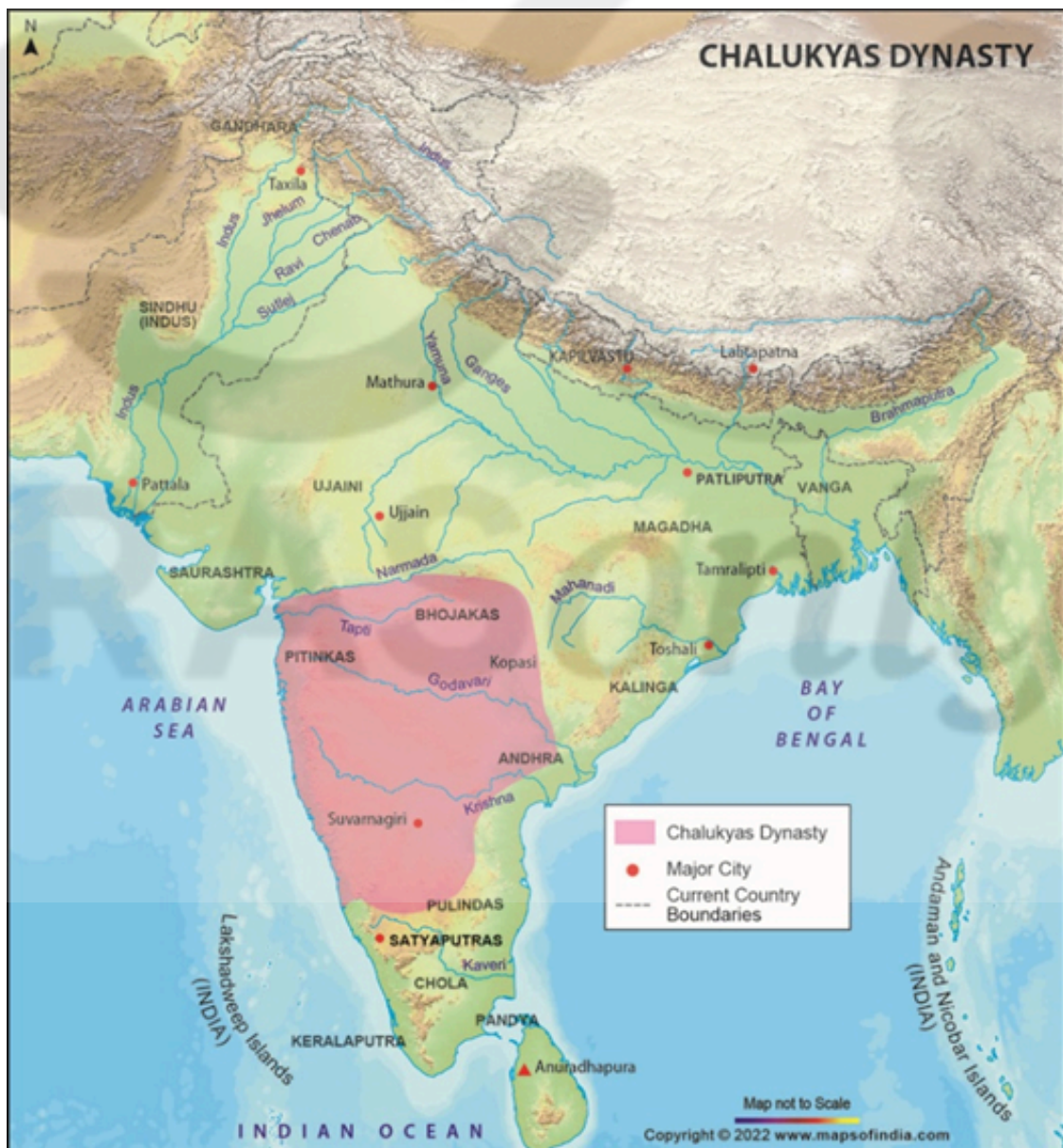
1. Evaluate the socio-economic life during the Sangam Age based on literary and archaeological sources.
2. Discuss the religious, cultural, and literary significance of the Sangam assemblies.
3. Analyze the significance of Sangam ports and trade routes in the economic prosperity of ancient Tamilakam.
4. Describe the structure, themes, and historical value of Sangam literature, especially the five great epics.
5. "The Sangam Age represents a highly developed civilization in the pre-Pallava era." Critically examine.



# CHALUKYAS, PALLAVAS & CHOLAS

## CHAPTER - 11

### CHALUKYA DYNASTY



## Branches of the Chalukya Dynasty

- The Chalukya Dynasty had three main branches:
  - Chalukyas of Vatapi/Badami (Western Chalukyas)
    - Founder: Jayasimha
    - Real Founder: Pulakesin I
  - Chalukyas of Kalyani (Later Western Chalukyas)
    - Founder: Tailapa II
  - Chalukyas of Vengi (Eastern Chalukyas)
    - Founder: Vishnuvardhana (brother of Pulakesin II)

## Chalukyas of Vatapi / Badami (543 – 753 AD)

- They ruled the Deccan region, with Vatapi (modern Badami) as their capital.
- The dynasty rose after the decline of the Guptas and Kadambas.
- Their emblem was Varaha, the boar incarnation of Vishnu.
- They made significant contributions to Indian art and temple architecture, especially in the Vesara style.

## Emergence and Expansion

- The dynasty started with a vassal, feudal of the Kadambas who later declared independence.
- Pulakesin I was the real founder and established Vatapi as capital after overthrowing the Kadambas.
- He performed major Vedic sacrifices including Ashvamedha, Hiranyagarbha, Vajapeya, Agnistoma, Bahusuvana, and Paundarika.
- Titles: Satyashraya, Vallabha, Rana-vikrama, Rajasimha, Dharmamaharaja.
- His rule is recorded in the Badami cliff and Amminabhavi inscriptions.

## Important Rulers and Achievements

- Ranaga: Skilled in mace warfare (gada-yuddha).
- **Kirtivarman I (566–597 AD):**
  - Defeated the Kadambas, Mauryas of Konkan, and Nalas.
  - Annexed Goa (Revatidvipa).
  - Described in the Aihole inscription as "the night of doom" for enemies.
  - Mentioned in the Godachi copper-plate.
- **Mangalesha:**
  - Uncle of Pulakesin II.
  - Was killed by Pulakesin II in a succession conflict.

- **Pulakesin II (608–642 AD):**

- Greatest ruler of the Chalukyas of Badami.
- Expanded control over the Deccan and defeated Harshavardhana near the Narmada River, earning the title Dakshinapatheshvara.
- Defeated Pallava king Mahendravarman I in the Battle of Pullalur (618–619 AD).
- Was later defeated and killed by Narasimhavarman I in the Battle of Vatapi (642 AD).
- His achievements are recorded in the Aihole inscription by Ravikirti, who also praised himself as equal to Kalidasa and Bharavi.
- Sent Vishnuvardhana, his brother, to rule eastern Deccan, leading to the formation of the Vengi branch.
- Court featured Sassanian ambassadors (depicted in Ajanta Cave 1).
- Visited by Hiuen Tsang, who described him as a great ruler.
- He was a Vaishnavite, but tolerant of Shaivism and Buddhism.
- Built temples like Upper Shivalaya, Lower Shivalaya, Malegitti Shivalaya, and Meguti Jain Temple.
- Aihole Prashasti also mentions construction of a Jinendra temple.

- **Vikramaditya I (655–680 AD):**

- Restored Chalukya rule after Pulakesin II's death.
- Drove the Pallavas out of Vatapi, regained lost territory.
- Plundered Kanchipuram and fought against Mahendravarman II and Paramesvaravarman I.

- **Kirtivarman II (746–753 AD):**

- Last ruler of the Chalukyas of Badami.
- Defeated by Dantidurga, leading to the rise of the Rashtrakuta Dynasty.

## **Art and Architecture**

- Developed Vesara style (a blend of Nagara and Dravida styles).
- Known for rock-cut and structural temples with intricate carvings.
- Contributions continued under later dynasties like the Rashtrakutas and Hoysalas.

## **Chalukyas of Kalyani (Later Western Chalukyas) – 973 to 1180 AD**

- Re-emerged after Rashtrakuta decline, under Tailapa II, who defeated Karka II and ruled from Tardavadi-1000 Bijapur district.
- Capital: Kalyani (modern Basavakalyan).
- Known for reviving Chalukya power in the western Deccan.

## Important Rulers

- Vikramaditya VI:
  - Most powerful ruler of this branch.
  - His reign started the Chalukya Vikrama Era (1076 AD).
  - Patronised Mitakshara commentary on Yajnavalkya Smriti.
  - Promoted architecture, literature, and learning.
- Someshvara II:
  - A scholar king known for literary pursuits.

## Decline

- Ended around 1180 AD due to the rise of Hoysalas, Kakatiyas, and Seunas.

## Eastern Chalukyas (Vengi Chalukyas)

- Founded by Vishnuvardhana, brother of Pulakesin II, after being appointed governor of eastern Deccan in 616 AD.
- Initially governors under Badami Chalukyas, became independent after Pulakesin II's death.
- Capital: Vengi; ruled territory from Nellore to Visakhapatnam.
- Engaged in frequent conflicts with Rashtrakutas.
- Regained strength by 1000 AD.
- Initially promoted Kannada, later encouraged Telugu language and literature.

## Cultural Contributions of the Chalukyas

### 1. Temple Architecture and Styles

- The Chalukyas developed a unique architectural style known as Vesara, which is a fusion of Nagara (North Indian) and Dravidian (South Indian) styles.
- The main centers of their temple construction were Aihole, Badami (Vatapi), and Pattadakal, all located along the Malprabha River in Karnataka.
- Aihole is famously called the "Cradle of Indian Temple Architecture" and has more than 70 temples.
- Pattadakal is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, noted for its harmonious blend of northern and southern temple styles.
- The Chalukyas used sandstone and sometimes black granite in their structures.
- The Kadamba-Chalukya Shikhara was a local innovation combining older features with a new fusion style.

## Features of Temple Styles

| Style            | Features                                    |
|------------------|---|
| Nagara           | Curvilinear Shikhara, square base           |
| Dravidian        | Pyramidal tower, axial frontal layout       |
| Vesara           | Fusion of Nagara and Dravidian              |
| Kadamba Shikhara | Local Karnataka version with mixed elements |

## 2. Major Temple Sites and Monuments

### Aihole (Early Phase)

- Flourished during Pulakesin I and II's reign.
- Known for structural temples and early cave shrines.

- **Famous temples:**

- **Durga Temple:** Apsidal plan, sandhara layout (with pradakshina path).



- **Lad Khan Temple:** Flat-roofed, panchayatana layout.



- **Meguti Jain Temple:** Built by Ravikirti.



- **Huchchimalli and Huchchapayya Gudi:** Rekha-Prasada style.



- **Ravanphadi Cave:** Sculptures of Shiva, Parvati, Saptamatrikas, Ganesha.



- One Buddhist monument found on Meguti Hill.



- Shikharas included Mundamala, Rekha-Prasada, Dravidian Vimana.

### **Badami (Vatapi)**

- Known for rock-cut cave temples, both Hindu and Jain.
- Caves 1–4 are monolithic and carved from sandstone.
- **Features:**
  - Cave 1: Depicts Shiva as Nataraja in tandava dance.
  - Vaishnava Cave (578 AD): Contains images of Vishnu, Anantapadmanabha, Narasimha.
  - Bhutanatha Temples: Initially Jain, later used by Lingayats.
  - Mallikarjuna Temple: Built in later Western Chalukya style with a Dravidian shikhara.
- Early Chalukya temples here are mostly nirandhara (no pradikshinapatha path).

### **Pattadakal (Raktapura)**

- On the western bank of the Malprabha River.
- Ten major temples from the 7th–8th century AD, mainly dedicated to Shiva.
- Out of these, 4 temples are in Nagara style and 6 in Dravidian style.
- **Famous temples:**
  - Virupaksha Temple: Largest structure, built in 740 AD by Queen Lokamahadevi to celebrate her husband Vikramaditya II's victory. Also called Sri Lokeshwara Mahashila Prasada.



- Dravidian style with Ramayana carvings.
- Depictions of deities from Shaivism, Vaishnavism, Shaktism, and Harihara (half Shiva-half Vishnu).

- Sangameshwara Temple: Pure Dravidian style.



- Papanatha Temple: Best example of northern (Nagara) style with a stunted shikhara.



- Other temples: Chandrashekara, Jambu Lingeshwara, Kadasiddheshwar, Mallikarjuna, Galaganatha, Kashi Vishwanath, Jain Narayana.

### 3. Cave Temples

- Located in Ajanta, Ellora, Nasik, and Badami.
- These temples were monolithic, carved into sloping hills.
- Though dedicated to Brahmanical deities, their techniques were Buddhist.
- Structure of each cave includes a pillared verandah, columned hall, and central shrine.

### 4. Jain Monuments

- Several Jain temples were built between the 6th and 12th centuries in Aihole.
- Located at:
  - Meguti Hill
  - Chanranthi Matha
  - Yoginarayana Complex
  - Early Jaina cave temple
- Jain temples followed the same intricate architectural plans as Brahmanical shrines.

## 5. Chalukyan Paintings

- Found in Badami cave temples and Ajanta caves.
- Cave Paintings of Badami

### Cave Paintings of Badami



- Adopted the Vakataka style of painting.



- Themes include:
  - Incarnations of Vishnu.
  - Pulakesin II receiving a Persian embassy (Ajanta).
  - Palace scene of King Mangalesan (597-609 AD) in Vishnu cave temple at Badami.

## 6. Literature and Education

### Languages Used

- Sanskrit – Used in inscriptions and literary works.
- Kannada – Spoken locally, and developed as a literary language.
- Prakrit – Occasionally used in local communication.
- Telugu – Promoted by the Eastern Chalukyas.

## Notable Literary Works and Authors

| Author/Reference     | Work/Inscription                        | Language |
|----------------------|---|----------|
| Gangaraja Durvinita  | Shabdavatar                             | Sanskrit |
| Pandit Udayadeva     | Jainendra Vyakarana                     | Sanskrit |
| Somadeva Suri        | Neeti Vakyaamrita                       | Sanskrit |
| Ravikirti            | Aihole Inscription (Meguti Jain Temple) | Sanskrit |
| Vijjika (royal lady) | Kaumudi Mahotsav                        | Sanskrit |
| Kappe Arabhatta      | Tripadi poetry (inscription)            | Kannada  |
| Syamakundacharya     | Prabhrita                               | Kannada  |
| Srivaradhadeva       | Chudamani (Jain text)                   | Kannada  |
| Vijnaneshwara        | Mitakshara (Hindu law text)             | Sanskrit |
| Somesvara III        | Encyclopedia on arts & sciences         | Sanskrit |
| Nannaya Bhatta       | Telugu Mahabharata (early part)         | Telugu   |

## Chalukya Patronage to Education

- Hiuen Tsang noted that Chalukya rulers were fond of learning and promoted education.
- Patronised scholars from different sects and disciplines.
- Kannada Literature saw the rise of the Three Gems (9th–10th century):
  - Adikavi Pampa
  - Sri Ponna
  - Ranna

## 7. Regional and Historical Significance

- Chalukyas built over 150 monuments from 450–700 AD in the Malaprabha Basin.
- Their art laid the foundation for later architectural styles adopted by Rashtrakutas and Hoysalas.
- Their contributions were not limited to Hinduism but also extended to Jainism and Buddhism.
- Their style and temple-building techniques deeply influenced the Deccan and South Indian architecture.

# PALLAVA DYNASTY



## Origin and General Features

- The Pallava dynasty ruled parts of South India from 275 AD to 897 AD, with their capital at Kanchipuram (Kanchi) in present-day Tamil Nadu.
- The word "Pallava" means leaf or shrub.
- The Pallavas are believed to have originated from the Tondamandalam region.
- Their early inscriptions were written in Prakrit, while later ones were in Sanskrit.
- They claimed descent from Bharadvaja gotra and described themselves as Kshatriyas in their inscriptions.
- Though initially associated with Jainism, they later supported Shaivism and Brahmanism.
- Hiuen Tsang, the Chinese traveller, visited Kanchipuram around 642 CE and praised it as a beautiful, prosperous city with many Buddhist monasteries and a famous learning centre called Ghatika.

## Origin

- Various theories exist about their origin:
  - Some believe they came from a Persian tribe.
  - Others say they were South Indian natives, possibly linked to Kurumbas or Kallars.
  - Another theory connects them with the Naga family, or as feudatories of the Satavahanas.
  - One version suggests a Chola prince married a Naga princess from Manipallavam (Sri Lanka), and their son became the first Pallava ruler.
- Most scholars consider the Pallavas to be natives of Tondaimandalam.

## Extent of the Empire

- At their peak, the Pallava Empire stretched from northern Andhra Pradesh to the Kaveri River in the south.
- They reduced the Cholas to a minor state and captured Vatapi (Badami) under Narasimhavarman I, weakening the Chalukyas.
- The Pallavas, Chalukyas, and Pandyas together suppressed the Kalabhra uprising.

## Capital – Kanchipuram (Kanchi)

- Kanchi was not only the political capital but also a major cultural, spiritual, and educational centre.
- The city became famous for its temples, trade, and learning.
- Temples such as the Kailasanatha Temple and Shore Temple were built here, showcasing Pallava architecture.

## Political History and Rulers

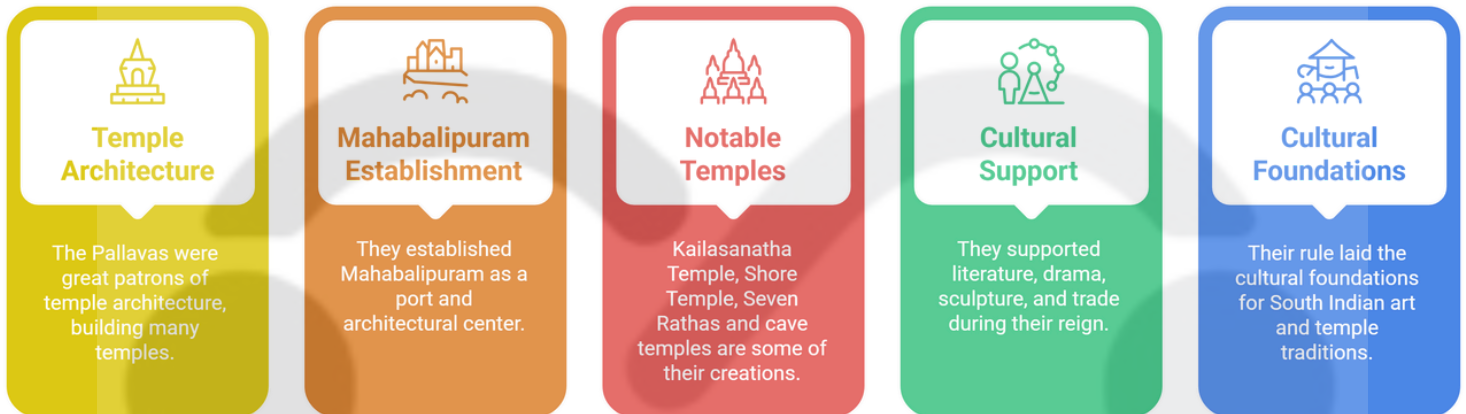
- **Sivaskandavarman (3rd–4th century AD):**
  - Considered the first great ruler of the dynasty.
  - Ruled Kanchi and surrounding areas.
  - Performed the Ashvamedha sacrifice and strengthened early Pallava rule.
- **Vishnugopa (4th century AD):**
  - Defeated by Samudragupta as recorded in the Prayag Prashasti.
  - His defeat led to a temporary decline of the dynasty.
- **Simhavarman / Simhavishnu (575–600 AD):**
  - Often regarded as the real founder of Pallava imperial power.
  - Defeated the Kalabhras and re-established Pallava dominance.
  - Royal titles included Avanisimha and Simhavishnupottarayan.

- He expanded the empire by defeating the Cholas, Pandyas, Cheras, and rulers of Sri Lanka.
- The poet Bharavi, author of Kiratarjuniya, lived in his court.
- **Mahendravarman I (600–630 AD):**
  - Son of Simhavishnu; a scholar and artist.
  - Introduced rock-cut architecture known as Mahendra Style.
  - Initially a Jain, he converted to Shaivism.
  - Composed the satirical Sanskrit drama Mattavilasa Prahasana and encouraged Tamil Bhakti literature.
  - Promoted early Dravidian temple architecture.
  - Lost Vengi to Pulakesin II of the Chalukyas.
  - Died in the Battle of Pullalur (618–619 AD) against the Chalukyas.
- **Narasimhavarman I (Mamalla) (630–668 AD):**
  - Son of Mahendravarman I; regarded as the greatest Pallava ruler.
  - Defeated and killed Pulakesin II in 642 AD, captured and destroyed Vatapi.
  - Took titles Mamalla (great wrestler) and Vatapikonda (conqueror of Vatapi).
  - Founded Mamallapuram (Mahabalipuram).
  - Constructed Seven Rathas (Pancha Rathas) and promoted rock-cut architecture.
  - Invaded Sri Lanka and restored Prince Manavarma to the throne.
  - Hiuen Tsang visited his kingdom and praised its prosperity and learning.
- **Mahendravarman II (668–670 AD):**
  - Son of Narasimhavarman I.
  - Ruled briefly and was succeeded by his son.
- **Parameswaravarman I:**
  - Continued architectural and religious traditions.
  - Kanchipuram was occupied by the Chalukyas during his reign.
- **Narasimhavarman II (Rajasimha) (695–722 AD):**
  - A peace-loving king and a great patron of architecture.
  - Built the Kailasanatha Temple in Kanchipuram and the Shore Temple at Mahabalipuram.
  - Sent diplomatic embassies to China.
  - His reign marked the third and fourth stages of Pallava architecture.
- **Nandivarman II (730–795 AD):**
  - Last major ruler of the Pallavas.
  - Faced a serious defeat in 740 AD by Vikramaditya II (Chalukya).
  - The defeat marked the beginning of Pallava decline.
- Nripatunga and other successors:
  - Tried to maintain Pallava power but could not resist growing Chola influence.

- **Aparajitavarman (880–897 AD):**

- Final Pallava ruler.
- Killed by Chola king Aditya I, who captured Kanchipuram.
- His death ended the Pallava dynasty.

### Pallava Contributions



## Cultural Contributions of the Pallava Dynasty

### Development of Dravidian Temple Architecture

- The Pallava period marks the beginning of the Dravidian style of temple architecture in South India.
- This architectural style started with cave temples and gradually evolved into monolithic ratha temples and finally into free-standing structural temples.
- Pallava temple architecture laid the foundation for later South Indian temples, including those built by the Cholas.

### Phases of Pallava Temple Architecture

#### 1. Mahendra Style (600–625 AD)

- This style was introduced during the reign of Mahendravarman I, who pioneered rock-cut temple architecture.
- The temples of this phase were known as Mandapas, which were cave temples carved into rocks.
- These Mandapas usually had two or three chambers inside.
- The temples were carved directly into rocky hillsides without the use of materials like bricks, lime, iron, or wood.

- **Important examples include:**

- Mandagapattu rock-cut temple (the first rock-cut temple)



- Trimurti Mandapa at Mandagapattu
- Panchapandava Mandapa at Pallavaram



- Mahendravishnu Mandapa at Mahendravadi



- Lalitankura Pallaveswar Griha Mandapa at Tiruchirappalli



## 2. Mamalla Style (625–674 AD)

- This phase developed during the reign of Narasimhavarman I, also known as Mamalla.
- Both Mandapas and Ratha temples were constructed during this period.
- The Mandapas became more decorative with lion-based pillars, and typically had three to four chambers.
- The Ratha temples were monolithic, carved out of single granite boulders, and are also known as Seven Pagodas.
- Important examples of this style:
  - Varaha Mandapa



- Mahishasuramardini Mandapa



- Pancha Pandava Mandapa
- Draupadi Ratha, Dharmaraja Ratha, Bhima Ratha, Ganesha Ratha (at Mahabalipuram)



### 3. Rajasimha Style (674–800 AD)

- The structural temples consist of two groups – the Rajasimha group (690-800 AD) and the Nandivarman group (800-900 AD).
- It marked the golden age of Pallava architecture, with the beginning of structural temples built using bricks, wood, and stone.
- Though temple sizes became smaller, more attention was given to intricate ornamentation and design.
- Notable temples from this period include:
  - Kailasanatha Temple at Kanchipuram
  - Shore Temple at Mahabalipuram
  - Ishwara Temple, Mukunda Temple, and Vaikuntha Perumal Temple at Kanchipuram

### 4. Nandivarman and Aparajita Style (800 AD onwards)

- Initiated under Nandivarman II, this phase marked a gradual decline in innovation but retained aesthetic features of earlier styles.
- Temples became smaller and less ornate but showed a refined decorative style.
- Important examples include:
  - Mukteshwara Temple
  - Matangeshwara Temple at Kanchipuram
  - Krishna's Butterball



#### Interesting Fact -

The Pallavas were the first to build stone temples in South India, starting with rock-cut caves and evolving into grand structural temples—laying the foundation for all future Dravidian architecture!

## Important Temples and Monuments

### Seven Ratha Temples (Mahabalipuram)

- Built under Narasimhavarman I, these are monolithic temples shaped like chariots.
- Although carved from single rocks, they imitate features of wooden architecture like brackets and beams.
- These represent a transition from cave temples to structural temples.



### Kailasanatha Temple, Kanchipuram

- Constructed by Narasimhavarman II near the Vedavati River.
- Built with sandstone and granite foundation, it has 58 miniature 58 devakulikas (mini-shrines) around a rectangular courtyard.
- It houses a 16-sided black granite Shivalinga and There are two sculptures of Shiva here, which are seen holding the alapini veena (musical string instrument).
- The temple features Pallava Grantha inscriptions listing various titles of Narasimhavarman II, such as Rajasimhan, Ajirnakanta, Srithara, Ranathira, and Kshatriya Simhesvara.



### Shore Temple, Mahabalipuram

- Constructed by Narasimhavarman II using granite blocks.
- It is a structural temple comprising three shrines—two for Shiva and one for Vishnu.
- A lion monolith with the image of Mahishasuramardini is found here.
- It was referred to as the Seven Pagodas by Marco Polo and is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



## Vaikuntha Perumal Temple, Kanchipuram

- Built by Paramesvaravarman (Nandivarman II) and dedicated to Lord Vishnu.
- It features a three-storeyed vimana with Vishnu in three forms, standing (sthanaka), sitting (asana), and reclining (Sayana).
- Contains sculptures depicting the coronation of Nandivarman II and a Chinese pilgrim.



## Descent of the Ganges (Arjuna's Penance)

- A massive rock relief located at Mahabalipuram.
- It illustrates the story of Ganga's descent to Earth, controlled by Lord Shiva.
- Also interpreted as Arjuna performing penance.



## Sculpture, Painting, Music, and Dance

- The Pallavas made great contributions to sculpture and painting.
- The walls of Mandapas are adorned with intricate carvings and classical reliefs.
- The Descent of the Ganges is considered a masterpiece of classical sculpture.
- Paintings in the Chittannavasal caves are attributed to this period and reflect early South Indian mural art.
- Mahendravarman I was called "Chittirakkarapuli" or "Tiger among painters."
- Music inscriptions at Kudumianmalai and Thirumayam show the popularity of music.
- Instruments used included Yaazhi, Mridangam, and Murasu.
- Dance and music were important parts of temple rituals and festivals.

## Literature and Education

- The Pallavas were strong patrons of learning, and Kanchipuram became a major centre of education and intellectual activity.
- Educational institutions called Ghatikas were established, attracting students from all over India and abroad.

- Notable students at Kanchi included:
  - Mayurasarman – Founder of the Kadamba dynasty
  - Dinganaga – A Buddhist writer
  - Dharmapala – Later head of Nalanda University

### **Notable Literary Figures and Works**

- Mahendravarman I authored Sanskrit plays like Mattavilasa Prahasanam and Bagavatha Ajikkiyam.
- Bharavi, author of Kiratarjuniyam, lived during the reign of Simhavishnu.
- Dandin, who was in the court of Narasimhavarman II, wrote Dashakumaracharita, Kavyadarsha, and Avantisundarikatha.
- Perundevanar translated the Mahabharata into Tamil, known as Bharathavenba.

### **Bhakti Movement and Religious Literature**

- The Pallava period witnessed the beginning of the Bhakti movement in South India.
- Two major groups of Bhakti saints emerged:
  - Alvars, who were devotees of Lord Vishnu
  - Nayanars, who were devotees of Lord Shiva

### **Major Bhakti Texts**

- Nalayira Divya Prabandham
  - Composed by 12 Alvars
  - Contains 4,000 Tamil devotional hymns
  - Known as the Dravida Veda or Fifth Veda
- Tirumurai
  - Composed by the Nayanars: Sundarar, Sambandar, and Appar
  - Contains 12 books, with the first seven known as Tevaram
- These hymns were sung with musical instruments and accompanied by devotional dances in temple festivals, blending music, dance, and devotion in temple culture.

## **CHOLA DYNASTY**

- The Chola Dynasty was one of the most prominent and ancient dynasties of South India, with its origins in the fertile Tamil region.
- The capital of the Chola Empire was Thanjavur (Tanjore), established by Vijayalaya Chola.
- Their early capital was Uraiyyur (modern Tiruchirappalli), which was famous for cotton trade.

- The region ruled by them came to be known as "Cholamandalam", which gave rise to the term "Coromandel Coast".
- Their control over rivers like Pennar and Velar ensured agricultural prosperity and trade growth.
- The Cholas were renowned for:
  - Strong local self-governance systems.
  - Patronage of Shaivism and Bhakti movement.
  - Development of Nataraja sculpture.
  - A powerful navy that made the Bay of Bengal known as the "Lake of the Cholas".
  - A flourishing economy supported by agriculture, trade, and commerce.

## Sources of Chola History

- Over 10,000 inscriptions (on stone and copper plates) serve as the primary source of Chola history.
- These inscriptions record:
  - Land donations and temple endowments.
  - Administrative divisions, taxes, genealogies, wars, and royal orders.
- Copper plates preserve royal edicts and taxation policies.
- The Uttaramerur inscription from Parantaka I's reign is found on the walls of the Vaikunda Perumal Temple, provides in-depth information about village administration and election procedures.
- Tamil literary works like Muvarula and Kamba Ramayanam also offer insights into their cultural and religious life.

## Founding and Early Expansion

- **Vijayalaya Chola (850–871 CE)**
  - Founder of the Imperial Chola Dynasty.
  - Captured Thanjavur from the Muttaraiyars around 815 AD.
  - Built a Durga temple and renovated the city.
  - Rose to power during the decline of the Pallavas.
- **Aditya I (871–907 AD)**
  - Defeated the Pallava king Aparajita, ending the Pallava rule.
  - Annexed Tondaimandalam and maintained good relations with the Cheras.
  - Prepared the ground for future expansion by his successors.

## Parantaka I and Village Administration

- **Parantaka I (907–955 AD)**

- Took the title “Madurain-Konda” after capturing Madurai.
- Famous for the Uttaramerur Inscription, which detailed the system of local self-governance:

### Uttaramerur Inscription



- Villages were divided into 30 wards.
- A 30-member committee called "Sabha" or "Ur" managed village affairs.
- Selection was done by lottery among eligible candidates:
  - Minimum 1 acre of land and own house.
  - Age: 35–70 years.
  - Knowledge of Vedas and good conduct.
  - No criminal background (self/family/friends).
  - A person could not be selected more than once.
  - Lottery was drawn by children.
- Conquered the Pandyas and northern Sri Lanka.
- Fought and lost to Rashtrakutas at the Battle of Takkolam (948 AD), where his son Rajaditya was killed.

## Mid Phase and Transitional Rulers

- Gandaraditya Chola (955–956 AD) – Second son of Parantaka I.
- Arinjaya Chola (957–958 AD) – Younger brother of Gandaraditya.
- Parantaka II (Sundara Chola) (958–973 AD)
  - Defeated Pandyas and Ceylon and recaptured Tondaimandalam.
- Uttama Chola (973–985 AD)
  - Ascended the throne after Aditya II's assassination.
  - Known for issuing gold coins.

## Golden Age of Chola Dynasty

### Rajaraja Chola I (985–1014 AD)

- Son of Parantaka II; one of the greatest Chola rulers.
- **Titles:** Kandalur Salai Kalamarutta, Jayankonda, Mummidi Chola, Sivapadasekara.
- **Conquests:**
  - Defeated Cheras in the naval battle of Kandalur Salai.
  - Conquered Pandyas, Mysore region, and Sri Lanka.
  - Annexed northern Sri Lanka and shifted capital from Anuradhapura to Polonnaruwa.
  - Installed Shaktiverma on the Vengi throne and married his daughter Kundavai to Vimaladitya.
- **Achievements:**
  - Built a dam across the Kaveri River.
  - Constructed the Brihadeshwar Temple at Thanjavur in 1010 AD.
    - Also called Rajarajeswara Temple.
    - Known for its pyramidal vimana and octagonal shikhara.
    - Commemorated by a Government of India coin in 2010.
  - Maintained a strong navy and efficient bureaucracy.
  - Abdicated the throne to his son Rajendra I.

### Rajendra Chola I (1014–1044 AD)

- Son and co-regent of Rajaraja I.
- **Titles:** Mudikonda Cholan (the crowned Chola), Gangaikondan, Kadaram Kondan, Pandita Cholan.
- **Conquests:**
  - Defeated Chalukyas, Pandyas, Cheras, and captured entire Sri Lanka.
  - Defeated Mahipala I of Bengal and took the Ganga water to the south.
  - Conducted naval expeditions to:
    - Kadaram (Srivijaya Empire/Indonesia)
    - Java, Sumatra, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, and Singapore.
  - Assumed titles like Gangaikondan and Kadaramkondan.
- **Achievements:**
  - Founded Gangaikonda Cholapuram as a new capital.
  - Built Rajesvaram Temple and Cholagangam tank.
  - Promoted Indian culture in Southeast Asia.
  - Known as a scholar-king and devotee of Lord Vishnu.

## Later Military Campaigns and Decline

### Rajadhiraja Chola (1044–1052 AD)

- Son of Rajendra I.
- Titles: Jayamkonda Solan, Yanai-mel-thunjina Devar (king who died on an elephant).
- Died in the Battle of Koppam against Someshvara of Western Chalukya.
- Chalukyas were defeated despite his death.

### Rajendra II (1052–1063 AD)

- Took over after Rajadhiraja's death.
- Defeated Someshvara in the Battle of Kundal-Sangamam in 1062.
- Conquests included Kalinga and Sri Lanka.
- Built Agastheeswar Temple and expanded Ulagalantha Perumal and Veetrirundha Perumal Temples.

### Virarajendra Chola (1063–1067 AD)

- Defeated Someshvara I and his son Vikramaditya VI.
- Regained Vengi and led campaigns to Kadaram and Sri Lanka.

## Later Chola Rulers and Decline

### Kulottunga I (1070–1122 AD)

- Grandson of Rajendra I through daughter Ammangadevi.
- Titles: Sungam Tavirtta (Remover of Taxes).
- United Vengi with the Chola Empire.
- Sent merchant embassies to China and maintained relations with Srivijaya.
- Patron of scholars like Kampan and Jayakonda.
- Was contemporary of Ramanujacharya.
- Later rulers were weak and failed to maintain Chola supremacy.

### Rajaraja Chola III (1216–1246 AD)

- Faced internal rebellions and invasions from Hoysalas and Pandyas.
- Marked the beginning of the decline.

## **Rajendra Chola III (1246-1279 AD)**

- The last ruler of the Chola Dynasty.
- Defeated by Pandya king Jatavarman Sundarapandya II.
- Chola rule ended and the Pandya and Hoysala kingdoms rose to prominence.

## **Overseas Influence and Trade**

- The Cholas were early Indian rulers to conduct overseas expeditions.
- Garveras and Gaudas/ Gavundas: Trading castes
- Rajendra I led naval expeditions to Southeast Asia and spread Indian culture.
- Kulottunga I sent merchant embassies to China, showing commercial diplomacy.

# **CULTURAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE CHOLA DYNASTY**

## **Influence of Pallavas on Chola Art and Architecture**

- The Chola architectural style was inspired by the earlier Pallava tradition, but the Cholas enhanced it in both scale and intricacy.
- Vijayalaya Chola built the Choleswar Temple at Nattamalai, marking the early phase of structural temple construction.
- Parantaka I constructed the Koranganatha Temple at Srinivasanallur, which is famous for:
  - A four-storeyed vimana (temple tower).
  - Sculptures of Saraswati, Durga, and Lakshmi.

## **Phases of Chola Temple Architecture**

### **1. Early Phase (850 – mid 10th century)**

- Influenced by Pallava style; temples were relatively smaller but featured elegant sculptures.
- Notable structures:
  - Vijayalaya Choleswaram, Pudukkottai:  
Early temple with Vishnu sculptures.



- Varadharaja Perumal Temple: Built by Parantaka I; served also as a Vedic school.



- Koranganatha Temple, Thottiyam: Known for its mythological animal base row.



- Muvarkovil Temple, Pudukkottai: Built by a feudatory of Parantaka II with three shrines to Shiva.



## 2. Medieval Phase (late 10th - 11th century)

- Marked by the construction of grand, monumental temples.
- Featured large vimanas, detailed inscriptions, and refined ornamentation.
- Key examples:
  - Brihadeswara/Rajarajesvaram temple, Thanjavur (1010 AD): Built by Rajaraja Chola I, with a 190 ft vimana, 80-tonne capstone, and Shiva Linga form known as Peruvudaiyar, the temple is also called Peruvudaiyarkovil.



- Gangaikondacholapuram Temple: Built by Rajendra Chola I; has features similar to the Brihadeshwara Temple at Thanjavur but with a slightly curved vimana.



## 3. Later Phase (12th - 13th century)

- Continued ornate temples but on a smaller scale.

- **Important examples:**

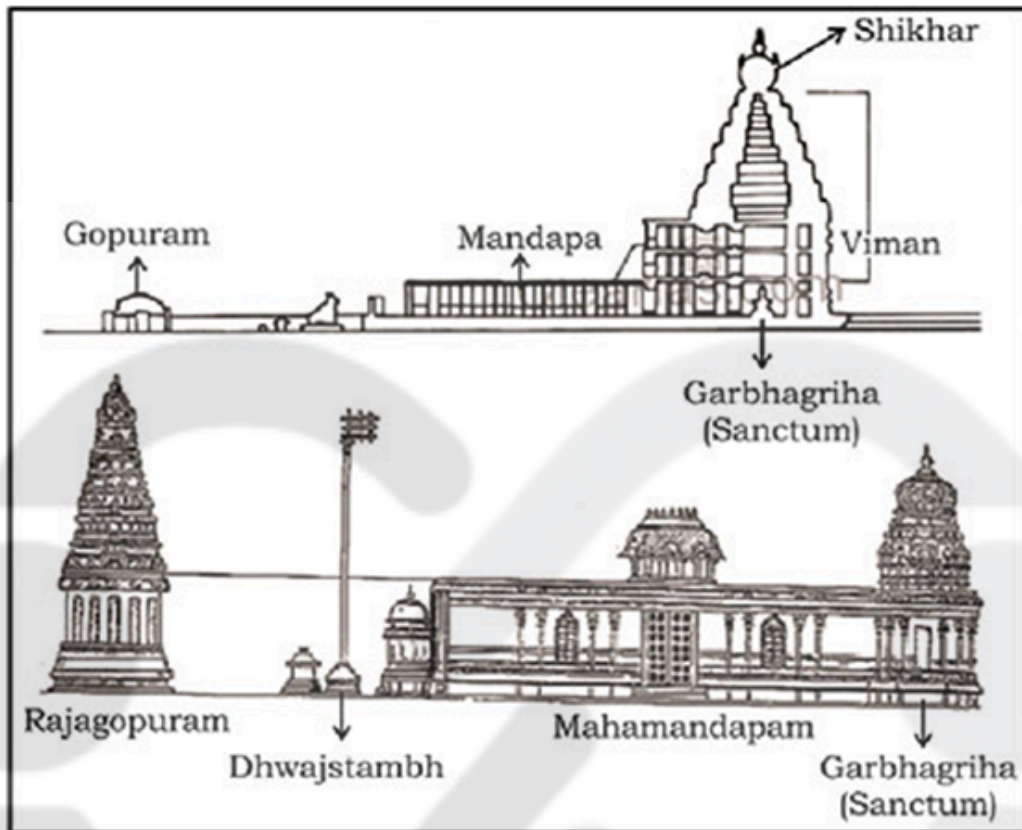
- Airavateswara Temple, Darasuram: Built by Rajaraja II; has a stone chariot-shaped mandapa.



- Kampaheśwarar Temple, Tribhuvanam: Built by Kulottunga III; stylistically similar to Thanjavur temples.



## Key Structural and Artistic Features of Chola Temples



- Use of stone instead of brick ensured durability.
- Garbhagriha (inner sanctum) with a towering vimana above it.
- Vimana: Stepped pyramid, rising vertically; capped by a shikhara often weighing up to 80–90 tonnes.
- Gopuram: Towering entrance gateway; became more prominent in later Chola temples.
- Antarala: Vestibular passage between sanctum and mandapa.
- Mandapa: Pillared hall for congregation; richly decorated.
- Panchayatan layout: Central shrine with four subsidiary shrines.
- Decorative elements include Dvarapalas, Mithuna couples, Yakshas, Ganas, and Yazhis.
- Unique Feature: Presence of a water tank inside temple premises.

| Temple Name                               | Location  | Builder          | Key Features  |
|---|-----------|------------------|---|
| <b>Brihadeswara/Rajarajesvaram temple</b> | Thanjavur | Rajaraja Chola I | Shadowless vimana, 80-tonne capstone, sculptures of Vishnu, Lakshmi, Bhikshatana Shiva; UNESCO World Heritage Site. |

|                                     |                       |  |   |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|--|---|
| <b>Gangaikondacholapuram Temple</b> | Gangaikondacholapuram | Rajendra Chola I   | Built to mark northern victories; niches feature Nataraja, Dakshinamurthy, Vishnu, Brahma, Saraswati. |
| <b>Airavateswara Temple</b>         | Darasuram             | Rajaraja Chola II  | Known for Periyapuram legends, and intricate Shaiva, Vaishnava, and Shakta iconography.               |
| <b>Kampaheswarar Temple</b>         | Tribhuvanam           | Kulottunga III   | Dedicated to Shiva as Kampahareswarar (one who relieves fear).  |
| <b>Nataraja Temple</b>              | Chidambaram           | Parantaka I  | Famous for golden vimana and depiction of Shiva performing the Ananda Tandava (dance of bliss).       |
| <b>Nageswaraswamy Temple</b>        | Kumbakonam            | Aditya Chola   | Sunlight enters sanctum during the Tamil month of Chithirai (April–May); early Chola architecture.    |
| <b>Valisvara Temple</b>             | Tirunelveli           | Rajaraja Chola I   | Early Shiva temple of the 10th century; notable for its structural simplicity and devotional art.     |
| <b>Chudamani Vihara</b>             | Nagapattinam          | Sri Mara Vijayatungavarmann (with support from Rajaraja I) | Buddhist monastery; example of Chola patronage to Buddhism alongside Hindu temples.                   |

## Chola Bronze Sculpture

- Mastered the lost-wax (cire-perdu) technique and used Panchaloham alloy (gold, silver, copper, zinc, tin).
- Famous for dynamic posture, emotional expression, and ideal body proportions.
- Iconic Sculptures:
  - Nataraja: Shiva in cosmic dance; dancing on the figure of a small dwarf. The dwarf symbolises ignorance and the ego of an individual.



- Kalyanasundara Murti: Depicts Shiva's wedding with Parvati.



- Ardhanarishvara Murti: Unified form of Shiva and Parvati.



- Independent Parvati Idols: Shown in tribhanga posture; reflecting grace.



## Painting in Chola Period

- Found on temple walls, wood, and panels.
- Themes include Shiva, Vishnu, Puranic legends, and royal portraits.
- A famous example: Rajaraja I with his guru Karuvur Devar.



- Artistic focus was on facial expression and hand gestures.

## Music and Dance

- Encouraged by Rajaraja I in temples.
- Revival of Tevaram hymns; sung by Oduvars, Vinnappamseivars, Padikam Paduvars.
- Theli-cheri-pennugal were trained temple dancers.
- Integral part of temple rituals and festivals.

## Coins of the Chola Period

- Minted in gold, silver, and copper.
- Uttama Chola: Silver coins with tiger, twin fish, and Nagari script.



- Rajaraja I: Coins featured standing king and seated goddess.



- Rajendra I: Coins had the legend "Sri Rajendra" or "Gangaikonda Chola".



## Literature under the Cholas

- Temples and mathas were educational hubs; subjects included Vedas, epics, medicine, and mathematics.
- Rise of Saiva Siddhanta philosophy.

## Major Literary Works

| Author           | Work            | Theme/Context              |
|------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Kamban           | Ramavataram     | Tamil version of Ramayana  |
| Sekkilar         | Periyapuranam   | Life of 63 Nayanars        |
| Thiruthakkadevar | Sivakasintamani | Story of a talented prince |

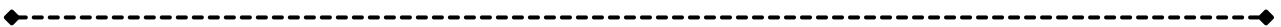
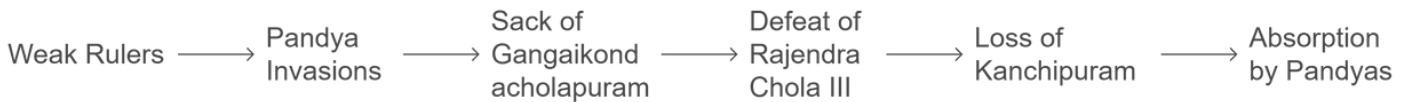
|                       |                        |                                |
|-----------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Jayakondar</b>     | Kalingattupparani      | Kalinga war under Kulothunga I |
| <b>Ottakuthur</b>     | Moovarula              | Life of three Chola kings      |
| <b>Pugalendi</b>      | Nalavenba              | Nala and Damayanti's story     |
| <b>Meikandar</b>      | Sivagnana Bodham       | Text of Saiva Siddhanta        |
| <b>Kalladar</b>       | Kalladam               | Tamil grammar                  |
| <b>Amirthasagarar</b> | Yapperungalam          | Tamil grammar                  |
| <b>Pavanandhi</b>     | Nannul                 | Tamil grammar                  |
| <b>Buddhamitra</b>    | Virasoliyam            | Tamil grammar                  |
| <b>Kesava Swami</b>   | Nannaranava Samkshevam | Sanskrit grammar               |

## Chola Inscriptions

- Mainly in Tamil, some in Sanskrit and Grantham.
- Focused on temple grants, education, taxes, and local administration.

| Location                                       | Content Description                           |
|--|---|
| <b>Brihadeshwara Temple</b>                    | Built entirely using stone                    |
| <b>Uttaramerur</b>                             | Described local self-governance and elections |
| <b>Thiruvallangadu</b>                         | Chola military campaign against Vizhinjam     |
| <b>Cholapuram</b>                              | Kulothunga's withdrawal to Kottattu           |
| <b>Ennayiram, Thirumukkudal, Thirubhuvanai</b> | Details of educational institutions           |
| <b>Visalur Temple (Koluthur Taluk)</b>         | Describes administrative structure            |

## Decline of the Chola Empire



# RAS Mains Practice Questions

## 15 Words (Very Short Answer)

1. What is the main identifying feature of Nagara temple architecture?
2. Name two important structural components of a Hindu temple.
3. Which dynasty is associated with the Vesara style?
4. Name two major temples built by the Cholas.
5. What is the hallmark of Hoysala temple architecture?

## 50 Words (Short Answer)

1. Differentiate between Nagara and Dravida styles of temple architecture.
2. Write a short note on the Panchayatana style of temple construction.
3. What are the main features of the Chalukyan temple architecture?
4. Explain the contribution of the Rashtrakutas to Indian temple architecture.
5. Highlight the architectural significance of the Khajuraho temples.

## 100 Words (Long Answer)

1. Describe the evolution of the Nagara style of temple architecture with examples.
2. Discuss the regional variations within the Dravida style.
3. Explain the Vesara style of temple architecture and its hybrid characteristics.
4. Describe the contribution of the Cholas to temple architecture in South India.
5. Examine the artistic and structural features of Hoysala temples.

## 100 Words (Analytical Answer)

1. Compare and contrast the Nagara and Dravida styles of temple architecture with examples.
2. Analyze the architectural achievements of the Pallavas and how they influenced later South Indian temple styles.
3. Discuss the features and significance of the temples built under the Chandela rulers at Khajuraho.
4. Evaluate the role of dynastic patronage in the development of regional temple styles across India.
5. Trace the evolution of temple architecture in India from the Gupta period to the Chola era, with key examples.

# GURJARA-PRATIHARA, RASHTRAKUTA, PALA

## CHAPTER - 12

### **GURJARA-PRATIHARA DYNASTY (730 – 1036 CE)**

- The Gurjara-Pratiharas were one of the most powerful dynasties of early medieval India, ruling over a large part of northern and central India.
- Their original capital was Bhinmal (in present-day Rajasthan), but later they shifted their capital to Kannauj.
- The dynasty claimed descent from Lakshmana, the younger brother of Lord Rama, who served as his doorkeeper (hence the title "Pratihara" meaning doorkeeper or guardian of the gate).
- According to Rajasthani bardic tradition, they were Agnikula Kshatriyas, born from a yajna at Mount Abu along with the Chalukyas, Parmaras, and Chahamanas to protect India from foreign invasions.
- The name of the region Gujarat is believed to be derived from "Gurjara".

### **Political History and Important Rulers**

#### **Harichandra**

- Considered the Adipurusha or founding ancestor of the dynasty.
- An early and notable ruler.

#### **Nagabhata I (730-756/60 CE)**

- Regarded as the real founder of the Gurjara-Pratihara dynasty.
- According to the Gwalior inscription, he successfully defeated Arab Muslim forces, stopping their westward expansion into India.

#### **Vatsaraja (775-800 CE)**

- Initiated the Tripartite Struggle for the control of Kannauj, competing against the Palas and Rashtrakutas.
- Defeated Dharmapala, the Pala king.

### **Nagabhata II (800–833 CE)**

- Formed alliances with Kathiawar, Andhra, Kalinga and Vidarbha.
- Captured Kannauj by defeating Chakrayudha and Dharmapala.
- Later defeated by Govinda III of the Rashtrakutas.

### **Mihira Bhoja (836–885 CE)**

- One of the greatest and most powerful rulers of the dynasty.
- Extended the empire to Punjab and Kathiawar to Koshal and Kanauj by defeating Krishna II of the Rashtrakutas.
- Took titles like Adivaraha, Prabhasa, and Mihir.
- A devotee of Vishnu, he issued coins with the Varaha (boar) image, symbolizing Vishnu's incarnation.
- The Arab traveller Sulaiman described him as the natural enemy of the Arabs (Mlechchhas).
- Sulaiman praised his empire for its prosperity, strong army, rich trade, and protection from robbers.

### **Mahendrapala I (885–910 CE)**

- Son and successor of Mihira Bhoja.
- Titles included Mahendrayudha and Nirbhayanarendra.
- Expanded the empire and maintained stability.
- Rajashekhara, a renowned Sanskrit scholar and dramatist, was his court poet and guru.

### **Mahipala**

- A ruler from the later phase of the dynasty.
- Contributed to the continuity of the dynasty but with less political significance.

### **Yashapala**

- The last known ruler of the Gurjara-Pratihara dynasty.
- His reign marked the decline and eventual end of the dynasty.