

Southern Rulers

After the collapse of the Gupta empire, southern India - like the north - was divided into small regional kingdoms. The Chalukyas were local rulers who united various parts of the south for periods of time from 543-753 CE. There were three distinct dynasties, or family-based, regional rulerships, of Chalukyas. Eventually, the Chalukya dynasties gave way to the Cholas, who ruled until the late thirteenth century (1279 CE).

The Chalukya rulers were Hindu and built many temples throughout southern India. They are noted in particular for those carved from caves. Sometimes they incorporated styles from Buddhist architecture into their buildings. During periods of peace, art and literature thrived. Southern Indian styles and ideas were able to come into contact with northern Indian styles and ideas.

The Chalukya dynasty had many internal conflicts. Its leaders also fought with other neighboring dynasties and kingdoms, such as the Pallava Empire. Chalukya and Chola rulers were never able to solidify complete rulership of southern India, but they did control most of the region for over six hundred years. This gave the region enough stability for regional social traditions to develop, and for commerce with other parts of Asia and the West to carry on without too much interruption.