

The background image is a photograph of a Chalukya temple facade. In the foreground, there is a large stone sculpture of a chariot pulled by three elephants. The elephants are adorned with intricate carvings and are walking towards the left. The chariot has two large, spoked wheels. The temple facade in the background is highly ornate, with multiple tiers of arches and pillars, all covered in detailed carvings. The lighting is warm, highlighting the textures of the stone.

Stones, Seals & Grants: Reweaving Chalukya Power in the Early Medieval Deccan

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Theme & Context



- The Chalukyas (6th–12th c.) were **key dynasty of the Deccan**, ruling both Western (Badami/Kalyani) and Eastern (Vengi) regions.
- Political strategies: **temple patronage, copper-plate grants, alliances with local elites.**
- Deccan power was **negotiated and networked**, not a simple centralized empire.
- Recent archaeological and epigraphic finds **new evidence of governance, religion, and society.**

Kodad Copper Plates & Pachakuta Temple

Kodad Copper Plate (c. 918 CE)

- Records a coronation grant of Vengi Chalukya king.
- Provides genealogy, land rewards and taxation clauses.
- *Earliest clear reference to the emerging Kakatiya chiefs.*



Mudimanikyam Panchakūta Temple (8th–9th c.)

- Unique five-shrine Chalukya-style complex in Telangana.
- Architectural blend of Kadamba and Nagara traditions.



Brick Temple & New Copper Plate Grants

Brick Temple Foundations (11th c., Maharashtra)

- Excavated remains show brick-based superstructures ; not all Chalukya temples were stone.
- Evidence of regional architectural experimentation and adaptation.



New Copper Plate Grants (Telangana)

- Boundary descriptions, tax divisions, and village allocations recorded in detail.
- Show agrarian management, redistribution of resources and the role of grants in building local loyalty.
- Plates demonstrate how land is equal to currency of political negotiation.



Methodology & Approach

Sources Analyzed



- Inscriptions, copper-plates
- temple foundations
- excavation reports

Techniques Applied



- Epigraphy (translating grants).
- Architectural study (plans, styles)
- Prosopography (tracking named elites)
- Archaeological context (dating, material study)

Synthesis



- Cross-linking textual data with material remains

Outcome



- A fuller picture of how Chalukya authority was constructed through ritual, economy, and everyday administration

Conclusion

- Recent discoveries show that Chalukya power depended on a web of practices such as inscriptions, temple building, and land grants rather than solely on royal conquest.
- The Kodad plates reveal how legal texts converted military service into lasting landed privileges and formalized regional genealogies.
- Mudimanikyam and the Nanded brick foundations demonstrate that both monumental and modest temple building were deliberate means of projecting political and cultural presence.
- Newly conserved copper plate grants from Telangana provide detailed evidence of agrarian administration and fiscal reallocations used to secure elite loyalty.
- Together these finds shift our focus from courtly chronicles to the everyday institutions that sustained Chalukya rule and invite targeted archival, architectural, and scientific research in the future.



THANK YOU