
UNIT 6 EARLY MEDIEVAL POLITIES IN PENINSULAR INDIA 6TH TO 8TH CENTURIES A.D.

Early Medieval Polities in
Peninsular India 8th to
12th Centuries A.D.

Structure

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6.1 INTRODUCTION

Peninsular India refers to the region south of the Vindhyas, roughly covering present Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh (the Deccan), Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Orissa, which is not included here, was also a regional polity of the post-Gupta period developing as a major political region of the peninsula. The other major polities were those of the Deccan in the Malaprabha-Krishna, Krishna-Tungbhadra and Godavari valleys, viz., the Chalukyas of Vatapi (6th-8th centuries A.D.), the Rashtrakutas of Manyakheta (8th–10th centuries A.D.), the Chalukyas of Kalyani (10th – 12th centuries A.D.), the Hoysalas of Dvarasamudra/Halebid and Kaktiyas of Warangal (12th – 14th centuries A.D.). The major powers of Tamil Nadu were the Pallavas of Kanchipuram (Palar-Cheyyar valley) and the Pandyas of Madurai (Vaigai-Tamraparni valleys) (6th – 9th centuries A.D.) and the Cholas of Tanjavur (Kaveri valley) (9th – 13th centuries A.D.). The Cholas, the most powerful of the peninsular polities, with the Kaveri valley as the nucleus of their power, succeeded in establishing the most enduring regional state in the Tamil macro-region. The Tamil region developed its distinctive politico-cultural features under them. In other words, the Tamil regional state and regional culture evolved simultaneously. Dispersed between the larger states of the Deccan and Tamil region were several smaller lineage polities such as the Gangas, Kadambas, Banas and a host of others owing allegiance alternatively to the more powerful lineages of the Deccan plateau and the Tamil plains. Here we are concerned only with those polities which emerged during the period from the 6th to the 8th centuries AD.

The period from the sixth to the eighth centuries marks a significant stage in peninsular India in several respects. It witnessed the emergence of several states, many of them for the first time in their respective localities. Secondly there took place an increase in the migration of *Brahman* communities from North India, thereby encouraging percolation of *Brahmanical* ideology and culture to South India as in Eastern India. Thirdly South India played a leading role in the spread of Indian culture overseas, through maritime contacts.

The sources for the history of this phase are found in the form of inscriptions on stone and copper plates written in Sanskrit and regional languages, namely Tamil, Kannada and Telugu according to the linguistic area. These indigenous sources are to some extent augmented by the accounts of the Chinese pilgrims, Fa Hsien, Hsuan Tsang and I Tsing.

6.2 THE MAJOR KINGDOMS AND THEIR TERRITORIAL EXPANSION

As peninsular India does not have large plains comparable to the North Indian plains, the states here could not expand very much; they were mostly confined to some core areas centred around certain rivers like the Krishna, Kaveri, etc. In more than one sense, these states paved way for the emergence of distinct regional cultures, which however were not isolated for ever.

The three important ruling lines that became visible first are the Pallavas, who ruled over parts of Andhra and Tamil Nadu, the Pandyas in the Southern part of Tamil Nadu and the Chalukyas of Badami in Northern Karnataka. The Pallavas had an earlier beginning in early 4th century in Southern Andhra, South of the Krishna river and gradually expanded Southwards up to Kanchipuram on the banks of the Palar river in North Tamil Nadu. Their history can be continuously traced from the middle of the 6th century up to the end of the ninth century. During these centuries their territory covered a wider area in the Tamil districts from the northern borders to the banks of the Kaveri river though in Andhra Pradesh it was confined to its southernmost districts only. The core territory in the northern part of Tamil Nadu was called Tondainadu.

Simhavishnu (550-80 A.D.) takes credit to this expansion, even while he was a prince, according to a copper-plate record of his father. It was almost about the same time that the Chalukyas of Badami also started ruling in North Karnataka with Badami (Bijapur District) as capital. The founder, Pulakesin I (543-66 A.D.) converted the hill near Badami into a strong fortress and launched his expansionist activities. The territory of the Kadambas of Banavasi towards the South and that of the Mauryas of Konkan on the West were soon conquered and annexed to their growing territory.

It is however in the reign of Pulakesin II (609-42 A.D.) that the Chalukya territory expanded to a large extent. The Ganga rulers of South Karnataka and the Alupas of the West coast (South Kanara District) were made their subordinates. Thus more or less the whole of Kannada speaking area was brought under one rule. In the North the army went beyond the Narmada river to Malwa and Southern Gujarat, where the Latas, Malwas and Gurjaras became submissive. Crowning all these, the Chalukyan ruler came head on against his greatest northern adversary, Harsha of Kanauj, who was planning to attack the Deccan and won a decisive victory on the banks of the Narmada.

Pulakesin II tried to control the whole of Deccan by undertaking an expedition into the Eastern Deccan and coastal Andhra comprising the deltas of Krishna and Godavari rivers. This brought him into conflict with the Pallavas who had been trying to control the delta for more than one century. Mahendravarman I (580-630 A.D.) the Pallava contemporary was also an ambitious king. In the ensuing encounters the Pallavas suffered defeat and the Chalukya army penetrated deep into the Pallava territory almost up to the capital city, Kanchipuram. Soon after this Pulakesin II put up his brother Vishnuvardhana to rule over the Andhra country and this paved the way for the new long-lasting dynasty called the Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi centred in the Godavari-Krishna delta.

The Pallava king Narasimha I (630-68 A.D.) son and successor of Mahendra I proved an equal match to the Chalukyan king and after a series of battles he took his forces into the Chalukya territory and even entered into Badami where he got inscribed on rock an inscription of victory. After this the Pallava king sent two naval expeditions to Sri Lanka to help the Sri Lankan prince Manavarma in succession struggle. The latter had taken asylum in the Pallava court.

The succeeding decades saw more hostilities between the Chalukyas and the Pallavas but with no decisive changes on either side. Then followed a lull in war activities for about three decades. At this time the Chalukya king was Vijayaditya (696-733 A.D.) and his Pallava contemporary was Rajasimha (691-729 A.D.). Several of the earliest structural temples belonging to the Dravida style were built during this time at the initiative of both the rulers in their respective territories. Rajasimha's reign is also noted for the embassies sent to China.

A few years after Rajasimha's reign, there was a crisis in the Pallava kingdom, there being no direct heir to ascend the throne. Hence, a young boy was brought from a collateral line from a far off place by the efforts of officials, chief townsmen of Kanchipuram and *Brahman* scholars and was offered the throne. On becoming king he took the title of Nandivarman II. This young king who had a long reign (731-96 A.D.) had to fight on several fronts, particularly with the Pandyas on the South. The Chalukya rule in Badami was replaced by the Rashtrakutas in about 750 A.D. The Rashtrakutas continued the expansionist policy of their predecessors by undertaking expeditions into the North beyond the Vindhyas and also towards the South.

Territory and Society

The foregoing account may give an impression that the polity of the early medieval centuries was characterised by warfare more than anything else. The basis of this warfare did not result always in territorial expansion for the victorious warrior king. But it would have helped in defining clearly the boundaries of the core territory of each dynasty. Outside this area, the wars were waged to subdue the contending kings and extract tribute and booty. The eulogistic preambles (*prasasti*) of the copper-plate records of this time emphasise this aspect of the warfare. An indirect result of the warfare was the spread of new culture and political ideas into the areas of tribal communities. More and more tribal communities were brought into the political influence of the expanding kingdoms and a network of overlord subordinate relationships, mostly tenuous and flexible, came to be established. In course of time some of the tribal chiefs themselves tried and succeeded in establishing small kingdoms. Another result of the constant warfare was the migration of people seeking opportunities in new areas. This would have aided in the extension of agriculture into forest lands.

From some explicit information, it may be said that during the 7th and 8th centuries A.D. several new *Brahman* settlements called *Brahmadeyas* were created by the rulers for the sake of *Brahmans*. This in one way gave a fillip to the extension of agricultural land with irrigation facilities, generally tank irrigation. Also it introduced new kinds of land relations in those special kind of villages, with *Brahman* landowners at the top and their tenant cultivators under them. Otherwise the society was not much stratified. The *Varna* ideology that had been introduced into the Deccan during the pre-Christian centuries was certainly known to the rulers and most of their copper-plate records tell that the kings were proud of upholding the *Varna* ideology. But whether the society was actually classified into four *Varnas* is doubtful.

Some of the communities that we come across in the inscriptions are found to be just professional groups, like herders, goldsmiths, merchants, etc. Some of the professions like leather-working were considered low and so those associated with such professions were consigned to the lowest level of the society. Some of them were even treated as slaves.

6.3 MONARCHICAL POLITY

The political organisation of the times was of a simple kind. King was the head of the state. Normally kingship was hereditary and passed on through the eldest son. But there were sometimes deviations from this norm which caused some family feuds and civil wars too. At times the Matras and Mulaprakritis played an active role in choosing a king as it happened in the case of Nandivarman II (731-96 A.D.) the Pallava king who belonged to a collateral line.

The king's image became lofty if he was a great warrior as well as an intellectual, like the Pallava king Mahendra I. Certainly this image was emphasized in the eulogy part (*prasasti*) of their charters. All the ruling families of these centuries were given a long mythical genealogy to create an image of great antiquity of the respective families and also to give them a divine origin. These details were couched in highly ornate Sanskrit poetry. That is, the *Brahman* scholars were the creators of such genealogies. Another related thing was the performance of Vedic rituals by the rulers, for which also the *Brahmans* were necessary. The performance of Vedic rituals such as *hiranyagarbha*, *agnishtoma*, *asvamedha*, etc. was an important avenue to legitimise the *Kshatriya* status claimed by the new rulers. The Pallava rulers actually claimed a *Brahma-kshatriya* status, a status of both *Brahman* and *Kshatriya*.

6.4 ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM

There are a few references to *Amatya* which is taken as minister. But scholars do not agree that there was a regular council of ministers to assist the king, in any of these early states. We come across one or two active officials, sometimes referred to as *Amatya* or *Mantri*. These are found to be a combination of military leader (*Senapati*) and civil officer (*Ajnapti* in Sanskrit or *Anatti* in Tamil). For example, in the reign of Nandivarman II Pallavamalla who had a long reign (731-96 A.D.) there were only two or three such officials who combined in themselves both military and civil duties. For example Udayachandra one of the king's few loyal officers was a big warrior too and he helped the king in several battles. These were also highly cultured people. Evidence relating to the *amatya* or *senapati* is found frequently in the eighth century records than in the earlier ones, showing the growth of the south Indian states by that time. Each of the states had some type of standing army, mostly composed of infantry and to some extent elephantry and cavalry. The Pallavas had some kind of navy also which is said to have undertaken expeditions to Sri Lanka in the seventh century. There are also some vague hints regarding conquest of some islands in the eighth century.

There is only scanty information about the administrative divisions of the times under study. There are references to *Ahara*, *vishaya*, *Rashtra*, and *Nadu*. These more or less synonymous terms denoted according to the context either the whole territory of a ruler or just the basic administrative divisions. The designation *Nadu* was

common to all South Indian languages and the other terms were of Sanskrit origin and are mentioned generally in the Sanskrit sections of the royal records. Each of these basic units included in their turn several villages within them. There were some officials in charge of these divisions, called *Vishayapati*, *Rashtrapati* or *Naduviyavan*. These officials are mentioned in the beginning of the royal charters, showing their importance. In the Pallava kingdom there was another division called *kottam* above the *Nadu/Rashtra*. Each *Kottam* therefore included some *Nadu* divisions within them.

Village was the lowest territorial unit of administration. Details regarding the village level administration are available only from the records of the 8th century A.D. and later. *Gamunda* is found as a village officer in the Chalukya area. Generally it is a corporate body or group of chief inhabitants of a village which was more important in local administration. This group was called *Mahajana*, *Sabha* or *Ur* in different places. The accountant *Karanika* was an important village official.

All the states had some sort of revenue system. The revenue office was called *nilaikkalam* in the Pallava kingdom. Land tax was an important source of state revenue. But it seems taxes on professions were equally important. Taxes on goldsmiths, braziers, oil-mongers, weavers, cattle-keepers, and toddy-tappers are frequently mentioned in the inscriptions. There was a tax on marriages and houses. Sales tax and tolls were collected in markets and along the roads. Salt manufacture was a state prerogative and therefore the salt-makers had to pay rent for making salt to the government. The property of those who died without issue became the property of the government. There was a limited circulation of coins issued by the different kingdoms.

An important activity of the government was to provide irrigation facilities and kings took interest in reclaiming more and more land for cultivation. This information is known from the records relating to the creation of new settlements (*Brahmadeya*) for the sake of Brahman scholars. The Pallavas took pride in reclaiming forest land for settling people and one of their favourite designations was '*Kaduvetti*' in Tamil meaning 'one who cleared forests'. The building of temples and towns may have been in the personal interest of the kings, making their presence more prominent and enhancing their status among their subjects. But it gave a fillip to flowering of art and architecture and provided work to a large number of artisans. There took place mobility of artisans over large distances, for example from Kanchipuram in Tamil Nadu to Badami in Northern Karnataka and vice versa. In the field of religion also, the kings had their own predispositions, sometimes there were fanatics who tried to impose their beliefs on unwilling people. Thus we hear of two kings, one a Pallava and the other a Pandya, who are said to have persecuted Jains in the seventh century A.D. But these were only aberrations. Generally kings were eclectic and patronised all religions and cults in the country. Justice was meted out both at the king's court (*Adhikaranam*) and at the local level (*Dharmasana*). According to *Mattavilasaprahasana*, a dramatic farce said to have been written by the Pallava king Mahendravarman (590-630 A.D.), justice was sometimes not impartial; rich people could influence the judges.

6.5 POLITICAL PROCESSES BETWEEN THE 6th – 8th CENTURIES A.D.

Different perspectives exist on the nature of these polities and the emergence of the state in peninsular India. "Traditional" historiography was empirically comprehensive,

but failed to perceive the inter-relationships between political and socio-economic processes, i.e., social formations in the emergence of a state system, and hence presented an inadequate and often incorrect perspectives on the nature of the state. Imperialist and nationalist approaches also impelled them to glorify these polities as empires with all the machinery of a well-developed modern state. Marxist historiography introduced the theory of Indian feudalism to explain a structural change in Indian economy and society based on the early medieval land grant system, representing the first attempt to relate socio-economic processes to the political processes and envisaging the emergence of “a hierarchical structure in the place of the binarily opposed entities of the state and peasantry, a structure of different tiers of intermediaries, which explains the mechanism of exploitation and coercion in the early medieval state”. However, by locating feudal polity at the crisis caused by the breakdown of a centralised bureaucratic state system (Mauryan) or political fragmentation, this view was again derived from European feudalism emerging after the breakdown of the classical regimes. A correction to this view is offered in the alternative explanation given for the diffused polities of the post-Mauryan period as the spread of state society in secondary formation of state and not as a crisis in state power or fragmentation. In the early medieval context, the complex system of land grants has been examined afresh to show how land grants both to the *Brahmanas* and officials as service or secular assignments led to the emergence of the “*Samanta* – feudatory network”. Hence, political integration or integrative polity has been posed as a counter point to the decentralised polity of the feudal model. This view emphasizes the correlation between roles and services and ranking in the *Samanta* hierarchy leading to an integrative polity by transforming the *Samanta* into a vital component of the political structure. Here ranking is seen as the basis of political organisation of both the local and supra-local structures i.e. the intermediate zone, with potential changes in the very formation of these structures, leading to a transformation or reordering of the hierarchy. As an analytical tool the “*Samanta* – feudatory network” would seem to have greater potential for understanding the nature of the Deccan and Andhra polities of the early medieval period, i.e., 6th – 13th centuries A.D., in all of which the “*Samanta*-feudatory system” is very conspicuous as a ranked hierarchy of the intermediate strata.

Monarchy as the major institution of political organisation developed in the Deccan under these dynasties, which followed the Gupta polity of northern India and that of the Gupta contemporaries in the Deccan and Andhra regions such as the Vakatakas, Kadambas, Vishnukundis and Pallavas. Monarchy, hereditary succession and the law of primogeniture were the characteristic features of all early medieval polities, but regional differences between the Deccan kingdoms and the Tamil monarchies exist, based on the nature and degree of influence that the northern Brahmanical Sastric texts and institutions had over the emerging kingdoms and the differences in the pre-existing and region specific non-Sanskritic traditions. Also significant were the geographic and topographic differences in the two major regions of peninsular India, viz., the Deccan plateau and the coastal plains (especially the Tamil plains), which led to significant variations in the resource bases of the kingdoms which emerged in these two zones. The Deccan is marked by relatively less continuous agricultural zones when compared to the large continuous plains of the Tamil region. It was also noted for its trading activities and craft organisation from the early historic times (3rd Century BC to the 3rd Century AD) and hilly and forested zones with several local and tribal chifships which could hardly be closely integrated into larger territorial regimes for enduring regional states to emerge. Hence the Deccan kingdoms of the Chalukyas and Rashtrakutas were polities based on the *Brahmanical*

socio-political order and institutions like the *Brahmadeya* and the temple, but remained a loosely knit *Samanta* type of feudatory states, where crisis was built into the very nature of the feudatory system, with ranking among the chiefships and an authority/power structure, in which the scale could easily be tilted by one or the other chiefship with military capability. Thus there was hardly any scope for a centralised administration to develop through there was a centralised taxation system and a hierarchically organised bureaucracy. There was no proper standing army except the royal troops at the capital and the smaller groups of fighters in the neighbouring regions held under the control of members of the royal family, some of whom were placed at strategic points in the transit zones and buffer zones held by feudatories or smaller powers owing allegiance to the main dynasty, zones leading to more powerful neighbours in the Tamil and Andhra regions.

High sounding titles were used by the rulers to express their very uncertain power, while officers with impressive designations like *Mahasandhivigrahika*, *Mahadandanayaka* and so on were appointed from among the kinsmen of the royal families and even from among the lesser chiefs and feudatories. Government at the local level can be located in regions called the *Vishaya*, *Rashtra* and *Desa*, with their respective heads called *Vishayapati*, *Desadhikari*, etc., while the *Grama* or the village was run by the mahajanas, the big men of the village controlling land, production and redistribution and also local administration. In most cases these divisions were not created by the central authority but were those spontaneously evolved regions which were recognized as such by the ruling powers, the centre of power shifting according to the change in the dynasties which acquired a hegemonic control over certain core regions and territories. Hence these polities may be best understood as loosely knit chiefships under a more powerful dynastic rule/control, with a monarchy supported by the *Brahmanical* order and institutional means. It was a scale of formations, which had the potential of tilting in favour of the mightier among the ruling powers.

The Pallavas of Kanchipuram ruled over the Northern parts of Tamil Nadu, historically known as Tondaimandalam (Palar-Cheyyar valley- Chingleput, North Arcot, South Arcot, Pondichery and parts of the Chittoor districts of Andhra Pradesh) and the Pandyas ruled over the Southern parts of Tamil Nadu (Vaigai – Tamraparni valleys – Madurai, Ramanathapuram, Tirunelveli and Kanyakumari districts). Both these kingdoms were products of the *Brahmanical* socio-political ideology in keeping with the general processes of political development in the whole of the sub-continent in the Gupta and post-Gupta periods. The early Pallavas are represented by several branches of the same lineage making land grants in the Southern parts of Andhra Pradesh, mostly from victorious military camps indicating a fluid situation, each of these branches being in search of a more permanent territorial base. A few of these charters mention Kanchipuram as the place of issue. The Pallavas may well have been pastoral chiefs in search of a territorial base, which they found ultimately in and around Kanchipuram.

The Pallavas inherited an administrative machinery with a set of functionaries of the Gupta type such as *Amatyas*, *Rashtrikas*, prevalent in the Deccan under the early *Brahmanical* ruling families of the 4th to the 6th centuries AD. The positions of the royal preceptor and mantri were held by one and the same person, usually a *Brahmana* or *Brahmasriraja*. Other functionaries included *Vayilkelppar* (one who took the king's orders), *Kosadhyaksha* or *Manikkappandaram Kappan* (head of the Kosa or Bhandara). They were ranked offices, many of which were held by smaller local chiefs chosen by the king and remunerated by grants of land for their

service or chieftains whose authority over specific regions/localities was acknowledged. The Pallava polity emerged by the 8th century A.D. as a system of sharing authority between the kings and chiefs in a virtual hierarchy, the king exercising a hegemonic control and the chiefs acting as his agents and functionaries. It was an expansive kingship in which the king's authority was symbolized through chiefly authority, *Brahmadeya* sabhas and temples. In other words, it was a monarchy with a hegemonic control over subordinate chiefs and institutional means like the *Brahmadeya* and the temple to integrate peasant and pastoral regions into a new socio-political order.

During their early sojourn in Andhra, the Pallavas imbibed the Northern politico-cultural norms based on the Dharma Sastras and other *Brahmanical* texts and the epics. These traditions they carried with them to Tondai Nadu, where they consolidated their power. However, the regional specificities of the Tamil society and economy led to a new synthesis of the Northern normative traditions of governance with the Southern forms of socio-political organisation which were now being integrated into a new polity. The Pallavas had to recognise the agrarian organisation of Tamilakam with local peasant regions like the *Nadus*, their entrenched peasant communities and their assemblies also called the *Nadu*, and integrate them into this new polity, in which the Sanskrit and Tamil forms resulted in a new synthesis. The new legitimating forces introduced by them were the *Brahmadeya* and the *Puranic* temple, both acting as instruments of integration of their territorial base. This was built up in two ways. One was by a subordination of the chieftaincies in this region, presumably by conquest and the other through agrarian expansion and integration with the proliferation of the *Brahmadeya*, which served the dual purpose of bringing new unsettled areas under cultivation as well as integrating pre-existing pastoral and peasant settlements into the new agrarian order. Politically they were bastions of royal power, as the *Brahmanas* in return for land grants provided ideological support to the new ruling family by creating impressive lineage connections in their genealogies and assigning divine origin to the king in their *prasastis*. The chiefly families of the region also adopted the *Brahmanical* ideology and participated as *Vijnaptis* (petitioners) and *Ajnaptis* (executors) in the land grant system, e.g., Udayachandra was a chief, who was also a military functionary under Nandivarman II and created a *Brahmadeya* with royal sanction. Traditional understanding of the Pallava polity characterised it as an empire and a centralised state, an imperialist view and inapplicable to the Pallava polity.

The political processes under the Pallavas mark the transformation of the early historical tribal polities into a more complex agrarian order with a new power structure dominated by monarchy, i.e., a restructuring of the early tribal and uneven socio-economic organisation into an agrarian system based on land grants, creating differential rights in land and a hierarchical power structure. The subsistence level settlements now became surplus oriented settlements through the *Brahmadeya* and the temple, two integrative institutions mobilising and redistributing resources. The *Puranic* ideology introduced the temple as the legitimating device and the innovative focus of all economic activities and social ranking based on the *Brahmanical* caste system.

The Pandya kingdom of the same period was similar to that of the Pallavas in all respects. The major difference lay in the fact that the Pandyas were an indigenous ruling family, one of the traditional trio of the Sangam Tamil polity, re-establishing their power in the traditional region associated with them, i.e., the Pandi Nadu. However, Northern Sanskrit- *Puranic* traditions influenced the development of

Pandya polity. Claiming descent from Siva and the Lunar lineage, the Pandyas also claimed to be performers of Vedic sacrifices, made *Mahadanas* (Great gifts), granted land to *Brahmanas* and built *Puranic* temples. They also achieved a socio-political organisation in which the *Brahmadeya* and the temple acted as integrative institutions in restructuring economy, society and polity.

Chronological Tables

The Chalukyas of Badami

Pulakesin I	543-566 A.D.
Kirtivarman	566-597 A.D.
Mangalesa	597-609 A.D.
Pulakesin II	609-642 A.D.
Vikramaditya I	644-681 A.D.
Vinayaditya	681-696 A.D.
Vijayaditya	696-733 A.D.
Vikramaditya II	733-744 A.D.
Kirtivarman II	744-745 A.D.

The Pallavas of Kanchipuram

Simhavarman	c.550 A.D.
Simhavishnu	c.575 A.D.
Mahendra I	590-630 A.D.
Narasimha I	630-668 A.D.
Paramesvara I	669-691 A.D.
Rajasimha	691-729 A.D.
Paramesvara II	729-731 A.D.
Nandivarman II	731-796 A.D.
Dantivarman	796-846 A.D.

The Pandyas of Madurai

Kadungon	c.600 A.D.
Avanisulamani	c.625 A.D.
Sendan	c.650 A.D.
Arikesari	c.700 A.D.
Ranadhira	c.725 A.D.
Rajasimha I	c.750 A.D.
Parantaka Varaguna I	768-815 A.D.

6.6 SUMMARY

In this Unit, we have tried to focus on the nature of state formation in peninsular India between 6th to 8th century A.D. In this period the states emerged in core areas centred around rivers like Kaveri, Krishna and their tributaries. The important kingdoms in this period were the Pallavas of Kanchipuram, Pandeyas of Madurai, and Chalukyas of Badami. It seems that the political history of this period was marked by warfare and territorial expansion outside the core areas. Political conflicts led to migration of people which brought about expansion of agriculture. It also resulted in the spread of new cultures, political ideas and development of regional identities in these areas. Thus the tribal chiefs of this period, were transformed into

kings and Varna ideology led to the social stratification and legitimisation of kingship. The political organisation was monarchical in nature. The bureaucratic system was not very well developed and mature which is proved by the few references to *Amatyas* or ministers. Administrative divisions existed but information about them is scanty. The local and revenue administration were important constituents of the administrative system. The state encouraged the creation of *Brahmadeya* settlements and promoted the art and architectural activities. The kings also gave patronage to religion. In this period, the early historical tribal polities, got transformed into a complex, agrarian order dominated by monarchy. The *Brahmadeya* and the temple mobilised and redistributed the resources and *Puranic* ideology provided the legitimating device.

6.7 EXERCISES

- 1) Trace the rise and consolidation of early medieval polities in peninsular India between 6th to 8th century A.D.
- 2) Analyse the nature of political processes between 6th to 8th centuries A.D. in peninsular India.