

**STUDIES IN ECONOMIC
AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS
OF
MEDIEVAL ANDHRA
(A.D. 1000-1600)**

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CHAPTER I
**THE POLITICAL COMPLEXION OF
MEDIEVAL ANDHRA**

The Andhra, like many other regions of India, had a chequered past. By the beginning of the 11th century, when our study begins, 'the Andhra' has already been conceived as the region bounded by the Bay of Bengal in the east, Srisailam (Nandikotkur Taluk, Kurnool District) in the west, the Mahendra Mountain (Ganjam, Orissa State) in the north and Kalahasti (Chittoor District) in the south. It was the ambition of the successive rulers over this land to realise its unification under one authority. But, even so, not all the land was ruled over by any one king normally. More than one dynasty tried at one and the same time to establish itself on the soil. Rulers with moorings elsewhere controlled the destinies of Andhra. There were inroads into the country from aliens like Muslims. All this naturally had an impact on the peoples of the country.

The political set-up of Andhra at the beginning of the 11th century was, rather, confused. The restoration of Saktivarman of the Eastern Chalukyan dynasty to the throne in Vengi (situated at a distance of 6 miles from modern Eluru in West Godavari District) which controlled the destinies of Andhra *mandala* took place in A.D. 1000 - A.D. 1001.¹ This dynasty which was an offshoot of the main branch of Chalukyas of Badami united under its sceptre the fertile coastal tract of Andhra country comprising modern Srikakulam, Visakhapatnam, East and West Godavari, Krishna, Guntur and Nellore Districts. It was during their rule that the country began to acquire its own distinctive literature and administration, distinct