

# Vikramaditya-I and Kālakāchārya Suri of Jainism

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## Abstract

One of the many Hindu calendars that were used in the past or are in use, only two have survived. One bears the names of “**Vikram**” and other bears the name of “**Saka**”. However, in the history of India, there were two Vikram calendars and two Saka calendars, the one in use in both cases replacing the old ones. The original Vikrama era was initially named after a powerful ruler of Malla tribe of 8<sup>th</sup> Century BCE, who repulsed Saka invaders in Ujjain and second Vikramaditya was Harsha Vikram of 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE that wanted to switch the calendar from Luni to Luni-solar eras, ostensibly on the advice of the astrologers. The first Vikram era was named after a mysterious king of 8<sup>th</sup> century BCE, who was forgotten by the history but existed in various inscriptions and Jaina texts and the new one with Vikramaditya Harsha also from Ujjain dated to first century BCE, who replaced the old one that exists and in use now. The first Vikrama era is referenced in several inscriptions thus making it more relevant in establishing real chronology of Indian civilization and genealogy of kings and dynasty.

There are various legends attached to the first king of 8<sup>th</sup> century BCE and he was called “**Vetala**” or “**Betala**” Vikramaditya. He came from ancient Malla tribe often mentioned in Buddhist text and by Alexander’s historians as the tribe of “**Malloi**”, where one of the Malla fighter threw an arrow piercing Alexander’s lung, while wounding him critically. Vikramaditya-1 did not decree the era but assumed another era that was in use called Malwa Gana or Kṛta era. He was bestowed this era by his people because he freed them from tyranny of the Saka invaders. He was a fascinating figure with all the proper virtues of a ruler, but now lost to the history due to his namesake Vikramaditya-2’s confusion. Vikramaditya-1 was recognized as the follower of Jainism and his mentor and uncle renowned Jaina monk Kalkacharya suri have shared with us an interesting life story in the manuscript called Kalkacharya Kathanaka. This article describes the history of their respective era and how they are forgotten or overlapped by other eras that cause utter confusion in establishing proper chronology of the ancient India. We lost 660 years of history in our chronology.

## History of Malla Tribe

Malla tribe was classified as a “**Vratya**” tribe of Indo-Aryan world. Malla people did not observe the Vedic Brahmanical religion. Malla is assumed to have migrated from Northwest of India, probably from the Sistan region along with other tribes like Shakya (**Who Buddha belonged to**) and Licchavis (**Who Mahavira belonged to**). Their first migration with Shakya, Licchavi and Koliya clans took them to Videha country (**Northeast India**), north of Magadha. The subsequent migration took place later and they establish settlement near one of the five

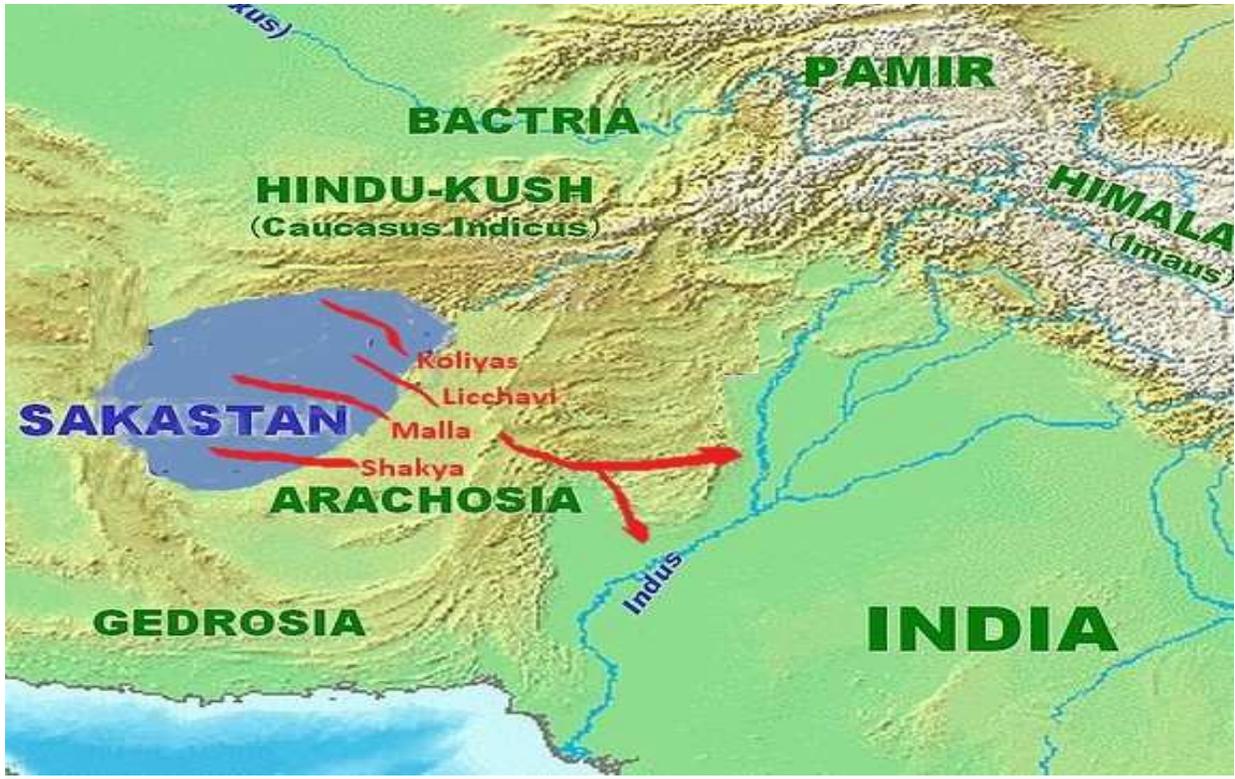
rivers delta of Punjab. They chose republican form of the government than kingship. Their confederacy with other tribes was named as Vriji confederacy based in metropolitan city of Vaishali of Videha country. Videha country of ancient India was located near the North east of India that had sizeable native tribal population of Naga , Kirata and other tribes. As per Buddhist text, Mallava was one of the favorite place of Buddha where he spent considerable time at Malla city of Kusinagara and Vriji city of Vaishali. Two founders of heretic traditions of Jainism and Buddhism-Mahavira and Buddha, both had chosen Malla Republic as their death place.

Malla are mentioned in Ramayana and Mahabharata and they were known to be affiliated with Madra clans. The Punjab migration of Malla clans moved further south into India. They first passed through Nagar (**Malla Nagar**) in Rajasthan and then in later centuries moved toward the region of Avanti (Ujjain), where they establish region known as Malwa kingdom bordering Gujrat (Anaratta Desh-non-aryan). Panini describes Malla as war like people, Patanjali describes them as "Sangha". Mahabharata referred to them as martial race same as Kshudraka. Alexander's historians connect Malla to Malloi, who fought them viciously and inserted a poisonous arrow in Alexander.

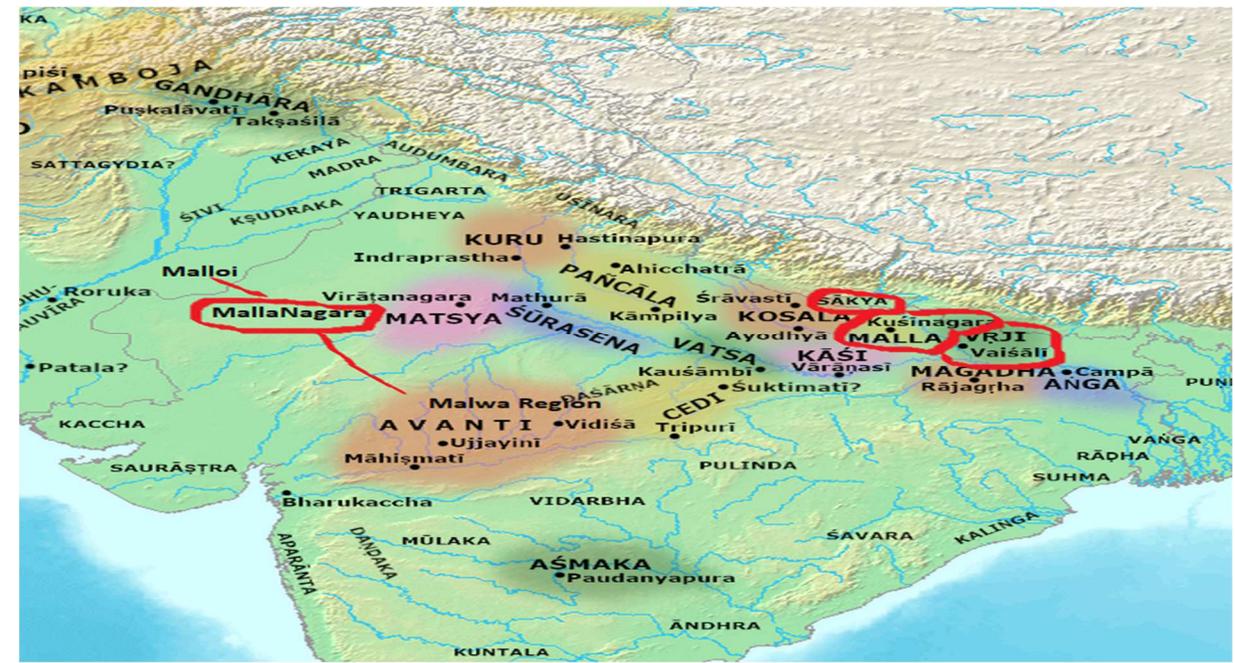
ASI (Archeological Survey of India) has excavated sites at Malla Nagar, Rajasthan. The hordes of Malla Coins were found at this site. The coins of Mala and settlements of Malla tribes in ancient period is shown below in pictures and maps.

The first King legendary Vikramaditya belonged to Malla tribe. This article narrates the story of kings and Jaina monk Kālakāchārya. Mallava people followed their own eras called "Malla or Kirti Gana" most likely suggesting the years they established colonies in ancient India. Gardbhilla, a tyrant and corrupt king ruled Malla people at Ujjain. Gardbhilla also was known as Gardhsena, Gandhravasena to some historians. "Vikramaditya and Betel (vampire)" a legendary children TV series depicting first King Vikramaditya and Vampire Vetal that featured in Indian TV was based on '**Betaal Pachisi**', written in the 11th century by Kashmiri poet Somdev Bhatt. Kālakāchārya Kathānaka also mentions him in Jain Prakrit.





First migration of borderland tribes forming Republic in Northeast India



Second migration through Rajasthan to Malwa region

## Who was Vikramaditya First of 8th century BCE? Differing opinion of Malla Tribes and distributions within India

An eminent Jaina historian K.C. Jain identifies Gardabhilla, Trigarta, Aulikaras, Kshudrakas and Mukhari as the Malla people of Ancient Malla republic. According to Valmiki Ramayana, Malla were considered as descendant of Ikshvaku clan from Chandraketu, son of Laxman. Aulikaras which was the tribe of Malla, King Yashodharman at Mandasore stone inscription calls for worshipping sun. Porwadi Jain originated from Malwa region.

They are scattered throughout the subcontinent from Afghanistan, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Andhra Pradesh. The Mallas was mentioned as a nation in Mahabharata, Harivamśa, and other Puranic texts. Other references describing Mallas were Mallabhumi and Mallarastra that referred to the northern parts of India. The Siddhantakaumudi mentions in a passage that refers to Panini, V. 3, 114, and classify them as Bhallah instead of Mallas, this expression is found in the commentary by Dr. Bohtlingk's edition of Panini. This quotation is significant as the Brhatsamhita also mentions Mallas as the Bhalla. As per Dr. Bohtlingk's opinion, Bhalla are identical with Malla and are only different with pronunciations or formations of the same word. It was also believed that they were related to Madra tribe of Mahabharata. Some of the ancient writers furnish important details about Malla tribe's physiognomy,

**“Mallas were of greatest stature and were tallest men in Asia. Their complexion were of brown color and they were simple in their habits. They were great as wrestlers and fierce warriors. “**

Another Jaina work by Vichara Suri composed under famous Merutunga Acharya of the 14th century AD from Malwa region records that Gardabhilla tribe ruled Avanti (Ujjain) area of ancient Malwa region for 135 years. Adding further to the information of Malla tribe, Malayaketu, the son of the mountain king Parvatika, who figures in the drama Mudraraksasa, represents the northern branch of the Mallas, settled in Malayabhumi, near the Himalaya (**known as Malla Republic in above map**), while the Pandya kings Malayadhvaja, Malayanarapati, Malayaprabha, Malayasimha and others are representatives of the southern group of Malla tribe. Even to this day the name of the Mallas is preserved among the population all over India, for the Malas (Mals), Mala Arayar or Malai Arasar, Malacar, Malayalis, Malavas (Malvas), Malair (Maler or Paharias), Mallar, Mars,(Maras, Mhars, Mahars, Maharas), Maris, Maravar, & as they are named in different places, are found scattered all over the country.

The Mallas were considered special to Buddha and Mahavira both, the great religious reformers of ancient India, who preferred to die among the Mallas in Kusinagara. The citizens when they heard of his arrival of the dying saint, met him sorrowfully, and among the last acts of Buddha was that he appointed the Malla Subhadda as an Arhat.

One branch of Malla tribe called **“Gardbhilla”** moved into Avanti-Malwa region, headed by his chief, where Vikramaditya-I arose. Malla tribe initially called their eras **“Krta”** Gaṇa. After founding Malwa in Madhya Pradesh, they renamed it to Malwa Gana, this may suggest that they originated in an ancient place called **“Krta”**. CAIS (Circle of Iranian study suggest that **“Zadra-Krta”** was the capital of ancient Hyrcania (Mazandaran and Astarabad) in Iran-Siestan region. B. Bosworth opined that **“Phonetically at least, in the name one hears the echo of the proto-toponym Sa-Karta [= village of Saka], where karta in Old Persian of the Achaemenians meant "village," as in a karta Abiradush nama (a village named Abiradu) in Susa Inscription (Darius Sf, line 46).”** Consequently, I am inclined to believe that **“krta”** or **“Karta”** suggested a place name in Siestan, Baluchistan region and when they moved to Malwa region they renamed them as Malla, or it can be other way around. The original place can be named as **“Malla Karta.”=village of Malla.**

Vikraditya-1 of 720-719 BCE chased Saka out of Malwa (less than 100 in numbers) who were staying in Ujjain, even after their invitation was expired and tyrannizing people. His deed of chasing them out all the way to the boundary of Sindh along with other conquest earned him is era. The people renamed the Malla Gana as Vikram era in 719 BC. Since this was renamed in Kartik month as beginning month of the calendar, the historians named it as Karttikadi Vikram era . The several Indian inscriptions carry this era for dating purposes. Vikramaditya was nephew of kalkacharya and son of deposed Gardbhilla or Gardhsena.

### Who were Saka and how Saka era was introduced ?

Similarly, India also had two eras of saka. Saka in this case assumed to be **“Indian- Saka”** living in the Siestan area of the ancient history. Siestan was included as part of India in ancient history. Chach Nama clearly states that Baluchistan, Siestan were part of hind. Saka also had many tribes. Some were influenced by Persian culture and some were influenced by Indian culture. They knew Sanskrit as well as Persian language. They were mercenaries and fighters for hires. After small group of Saka were expelled by Vikramaditya of Ujjain during 8th century BCE, Saka’s interest was spiked and they regrouped, and after 136 years, they witnessed the opportunity to invade again with large force and reoccupy. After Vikramaditya’s successor’s defeat by southern dynasty in 6th century BCE. Saka satraps returned and annexed western India and Ujjain . There was nearly over 500 years of struggle between various southern Hindu kings and saka rulers. Saka were defeated numerous times by various southern Hindu kings. However, after every attack they will retreat to their base in Sindh and returned after Southern kings returned to their base. The logistics and military move in ancient period was awfully expensive.

To occupy and rule a distant land for a long period of time was a logistical nightmares for Hindu kings. The vassalage system through matrimonial alliance did not work well with Sakas as it did with other Hindu kings. Even then, it was as good as the strength of the dominant ruler. As soon as powerful monarch died and/or a weaker successor took over, the empires folded, and vassalage relationship disappeared. In case of Saka, the defeat was temporary.

They are used to this guerrilla warfare Since pre-history. Saka will regroup in northwest of India and reoccupy the region they held in western India. This struggle continued until 2nd Century BC , when Gupta and their allies defeated them and permanently removed them. Prior to Gupta's effort, once Satvahana ruler dislodged them and established Śālivāhana era and that was renamed as Sakanta era later with starting date as 78 AD. It may carry the same reason as the previous one, switching from Luni to Luni solar calendar based on astronomer's recommendation.

These two eras are still widely used in western India probably more for its astronomical value than events that justified their establishments. We do not know for sure but in early history other states continue to use other eras than gradually switching to these eras in the later part of history of India when Islam invaded India. The exact details are not available except found in various inscriptions. Kali yoga savant was the first era that was initiated before Mahabharata War. Rajataragini, a Kashmir Chronicle, by Kalhana used this era but call it as Lautika era. In South India, Śālivāhana era was extremely popular and that was later renamed as Saka era of 78 AD. The Gregorian-common era was a new phenomenon and was brought in India by the colonial rulers of India, namely British, French, and Portuguese.

The calendars with religious significance that were used together with other three religions of India were Vir savant (Jaina) and Chula Sarkara (Buddhism) and Hijra (Moslem) calendars. They were started at the death of their founders. They all used the death of their prophets as a starting point of their calendars, more as a mark of respect and identity distinction without any astrological underpinning. Hindu Panchang that is based on lunar movement is also used for astrological purpose and to identify the time for performing the auspicious events like marriage and other activities that are either social or religious in nature in conformity of their belief that the celestial object's position have some bearing on the outcome of human life events that are about to shape their destiny.

The presence of several eras in India presents a unique challenge in understanding its own chronology of the history. Some of the eras that are not mentioned here but can be found in WIKI or other Indian texts are now extinct and forgotten. I can name some of them such as Vallabhi era, Gupta era, Kanishka era, Maurya era, Kashmir era, Azes eras and so on. To make some sense out of all this messy confusion, the use of Puranic and other canonical texts of Buddha and Jainas are always helpful and sometimes pose an unfathomable challenge with their sacred numerology and mythical tales. Jaina and Buddhist monks and their rules for recording the history of India and other countries

1. They believed in truth, so accuracy was especially important. Some of them were well versed in astronomy and other science of their time. The rulers that did not patronize Jainism or became antagonist towards Jainism were never ever included in the Jaina history, as if they never existed. Therefore, we cannot find any negative references of any rulers, even the bad one. They just omitted them. This belief was rooted with their "karmic" theory and "religious vows" that mandated them. Brahminic literature mentions that King Ashoka ordered the Jaina or Ajivikas monk from Pundravardhana either killed or executed because

he showed a picture of Buddha bowing his head to Tirthankara. We do not find such mention in any Jaina texts.

2. On the other hand, those rulers or power of authority that either patronized them or did not take any adverse actions against them were mentioned in Jaina history with various degrees of recognitions. Some kings were placed in high Pedestal as **“Jaina kings”**, even though they also patronized other Indian religions. Kumar Pala Solanki of Gujarat and Vikramaditya of Malwa both were Shiva worshippers as well as the followers of Jainism. They also allowed Buddhism, and other sects but Jaina historians still labelled them as **“Jaina kings”**. Those rulers from time to time will issue a decree for a week or two so that **“no animals will go to the slaughterhouse”**. King Kharvela and King Samprati along with certain other kings of south India who issued proclamation and decrees of non-slaughter of animals or similar pronouncements or donated monies to promote Jaina activities were similarly earned the special citations and mentions in Jaina history.

3. On the other hand Buddhist historians did the same things with one major difference that invited hostilities of Brahminical leaning rulers of India. They often criticized non-Buddhist kings in their that earned them some hostilities. The Shunga, Gupta, Huna, and Some Moslem rulers were particularly hostile to Buddhism , while they remain indifferent to Jainism. In both instances, they gave us some additional clues of those personalities who were mentioned or not mentioned in Brahminical texts.

In explaining the real identity of Vikram, this understanding becomes more relevant as the early historians of India came from priestly (Brahmin) class and joined Jainism and Buddhism. Baital Pachisi and Singhasan Battisi are two books describes the legendary stories of King Vikramaditya -1<sup>st</sup>.

### The first Vikramaditya of Mala Gana ( 719-718 BCE) and Kālakāchārya Kathanaka

Jaina Pattavali of Merutunga and kalkacharya kathanaka relate this story that were extracted from their Prakrit origin. Similar version is found in “Jain Parampara” Books published from Palitana, Saurashtra.

“There was a Jain king Vairisimha of Dhara (Dhar, MP) in Avanti Kingdom or Malla who had a daughter name Sarasvati and son named Kālaka. They both decided and became ordained monks and nuns of Jainism. Once they were on a religious visit to Ujjain, where King Gardabhilla of Malla tribe ruled. Upon seeing Sarasvati, he was enamored by her beauty and kidnapped her. After futile attempts to convince and persuade king Gardbhilla that she is ordained nun and cannot marry anyone and her brother Kalka begged him to release her, Kālakāchārya got nowhere and Gardbhilla forced her to marry him, thus breaking her religious vows.

In despair and anger, Kālākāchārya went westward ,crossing river Sindhu, he reached the country, where number of saka chiefs, who were under Shahi (Persian) rulers. Kālaka spent years learning astronomy and other sciences, while developing relationships with Sakas. Kālaka brought them under his influence. Once their overlord King became angry with them, Kālaka persuaded these Kshatrapa to migrate with him to India. They appeared to be mercenaries made up of Indo-Saka group numbering less than 100. It is not mentioned, if they were offered any monies or promise of monies. They came to Ujjain rampaging all along the way. Sakas defeated and captured Gardabhilla alive and forced him to flee in forest where a tiger devoured him. Upon fulfilling their mission, and collecting bounty, Sakas were expected to leave, but they refused to leave. They established their rule in Ujjain and divided the country among themselves. Kālaka recovered Sarasvati and avenged his family's humiliation and dishonor.

After four years of saka rule, Gardabhilla own son Vikramaditya drove away sakas and established his rule. Gardabhilla ruled for 13 years, (736 BCE) and Saka 4 years and Vikramaditya 60 years." We do not know how long Kalkacharya stayed abroad, but I assumed for at least a decade or longer. Sarasvati had a son from Gardbhilla named Bahumitra . He was assigned the governorship at Bhriggu-Kachha (Bharoach). This probably makes Bahumitra Kālākāchārya's nephew. This Kālākāchārya lived during Vir Samvant 376 (736 -725 BCE) and according to Pattavali, he was listed as Kalkacharya-II. The Kālākāchārya-I lived around 813 BCE and Kālākāchārya-III lived around 196 BCE."

Mahesara Suri composed and wrote the story of Kālākāchārya Suri during 12th century AD. The Kathanaka (meaning "an account") tells the story of a famed Jain monk Kālākāchārya. Baital Pachisi and Singhasan Battisi are two ancient story books connected with Vikramditya-1<sup>st</sup>.

### Ethnic origin of Kālākāchārya Family

Haihayas, the branch of Yadu clan of Kshatriyas settled in Andhra Pradesh (south of Vindhya mountain) from north and intermixed with local habitants since Rigvedic age . They had split from main Vrisni Yadu clans of Mathura and Saurashtra as per the legend. Purana referred them as part of Andhra clan.

According to one account : "Kalachuri was a name of a tribe residing in Ujjain area (Avanti). Kalkachuri Acharya may have derived the name from tribe of Kalkachuri when he was initiated in Jainism. His father was a ruler of Dhara city. During later period, a Kalachuri dynasty sprang up in the same region. Although there is no certainty of this connection , but there is a strong suspicion of his clan origin. Later dynasty of the Kalachuri (**Kalacuri**) were an Indian dynasty that ruled in west-central India between 1<sup>st</sup> century BCEs. They are also known as the descendants of Haihayas and called "**early Kalachuris**". The Kalachuri territory included parts of present-day Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, and Maharashtra. Their capital was probably located at Mahismati. Epigraphic and numismatic evidence suggests that the earliest of the

Ellora and Elephanta cave monuments were built during the Kalachuri rule. According to the Kalachuri inscriptions, the dynasty-controlled Ujjain, Vidisha and Anandapura. Literary references suggest that their capital was located at Mahismati in the Malwa region.

Another version is that Kalkacharya belonged to Bhabhra community. Bhabhra is an ancient merchant community from Punjab region that followed Jainism. Bhabhra had formed the powerful merchant guild in Ujjain and were responsible for overthrowing Pālaka kings and installing Vaisya dynasty, where Jain king Samprati originated from. Bhambhasara or Srenika of Mahavira , who served as minister and advisor to his master may belonged to the same guild or community. They were Brahmin and married to Kshatriya woman and called “Brahm-Kshatriya” still selecting priesthood as profession. It is believed that legendary Jain Acharya Kālākāchārya belonged to Bhabhra clans. They are now known as Bhavadar or Bhavada Gachcha.

Vikramaditya himself was initiated in Jainism as a Shravak by Acharya Shridhasena Divakarji. This Vikramaditya also worship Shiva and Goddess kali. This account is extracted from “Jain Itihas Paramparas” compiled by three reputable Jain Munis, utilizing various Jaina manuscript from Jodhpur Jain library and may differ slightly from Puranic sources.

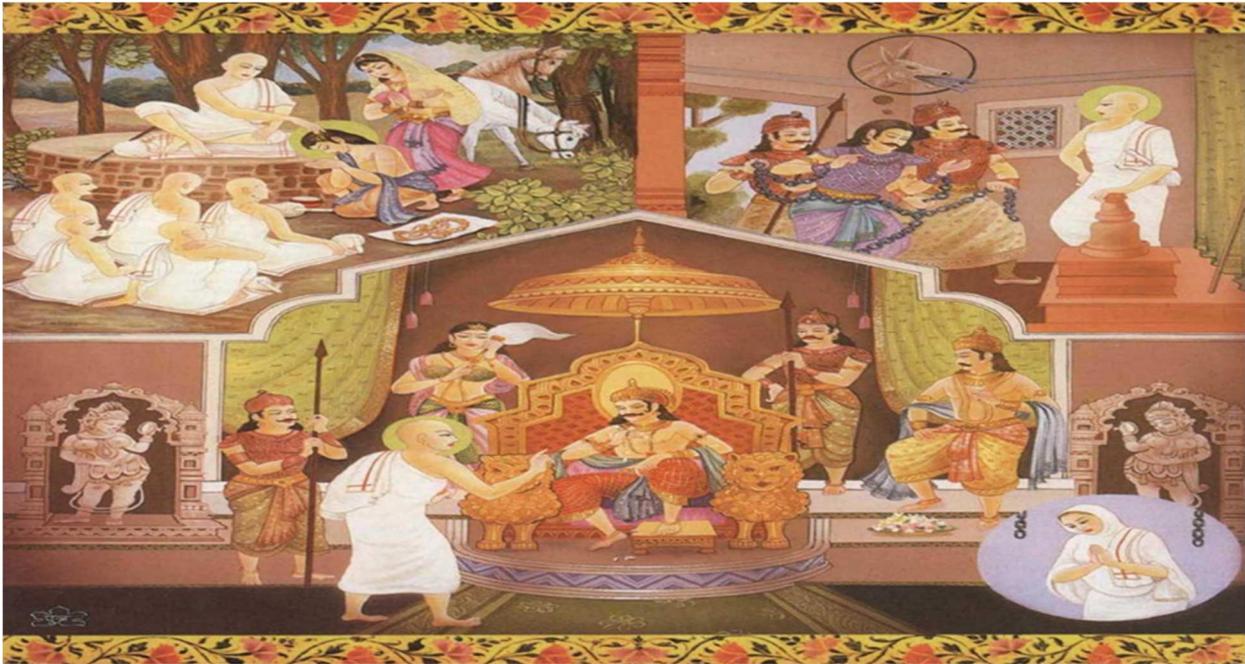
It is exceedingly difficult to sort of the confusion created by number of Vikramadityas that are featured in the history and especially the two, who initiated Vikram eras. However, the author attest that based on various sources, there were two Vikramāditya ,who thrived in Ujjain (Avanti kingdom)’s history and who established the Vikram eras under different circumstances and reasons. The three Munis who wrote Jain Itihas Paramparas from Palitana also recognizes the confusion and lack of clarity among various Jaina writers who often mixed up the accounts of two Vikram’s, their eras, their conquest, and deeds.

As stated in the beginning of this article, Kālākāchārya was an acquired name after his initiation as a monk, and this was a common practice in Jainism and Buddhism like Christian papacy. He was ordained Jaina monk and prior to his joining the Sangha was a prince of the Dhara King Vairisimha of Malla region. We have produced two versions of his origin but cannot be sure of which one he belonged to as Jaina and purana historian does not clarify. Most likely he may have belonged either Bhambhara or Bhalla for short that equates to Malla. Other speculations attest to his origin as Kalachuri or earlier Paramara tribes of Malwa region.

However, Kalka felt secured to head towards Punjab to seek help from Sakas to free his sister. So, there may be some connection with Bhambhara, Bhalla or Malla from their original homeland. He convinced Sakas to take a journey to assist him in securing the release of his sister. That must be a challenging task.



Kalkacharya Kathanaka-manuscript on display seeking saka help- Museum illustration



Vikramaditya-1 and kalkacharya depiction



Later Kalkachuri dynasty, note to the right is city named Vikrama Puri

## Satvahana Dynasty

According to Dr. Arya:

“According to Guṇāḍhya’s Brihatkathā and Someśvara’s Kathāsaritsāgara, King Dīpakarṇi was ruling in Pratiṣṭhāna. He found an abandoned child close to the den of a lion and adopted him. One of the pillar inscriptions of King Aśoka- I (1765-1737 BCE) has reference to the Śātavāhana King Simuka of the Śātavāhana dynasty (826-803 BCE) who re-established his kingdom in Pratiṣṭhāna but also extended up to Magadha. The rise of Vikramāditya I (719-659 BCE) and Śālivāhana (659-630 BCE) led to the decline of the Śātavāhana in Pratiṣṭhāna but Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi (439-418 BCE) again re-established the power of Śātavāhana for a short period.”

Someśvara’s Kathāsaritsāgara contains many mythological stories, sometimes it is aimed to elevate the caste of the warrior to be upgraded to “Kshatriya class” just like Agni Kula legend. On the other hand, in ancient India, the higher caste men could marry lower caste women, but reverse was not allowed. Kshatriya or powerful kings often married lower caste women creating a mixed and diverse population of India.

Satvahana (**Śālivāhana**) as per number of references cited in the Mysore Gazetteer and other texts related to Haihayas Yadav came from Mahismati region (on Narmada River). They also have been connected to Suryavansi clans of ancient India. Later they were followers of Jainism. According to one legend, early Vedic clans of Haihayas and Rathika migrated to Maharashtra region near Narmada river and most likely mixed with the local tribes. Kalchuri clan that emerged under satvahana were also of Vedic-Tamil origin. However, this issue is still debated by many experts. For this article, it is of little relevance of their origin but need to be brought up.

The ancient history have many legends attached to it such as miraculous survival of Moses of Hebrew , the story of Sargon of Akkad , Semiramis and baby Krishna’s escape from the prison. They were all protected by divine power when thrown into river in the basket. These are legends incorporated for every great men of the history and extremely hard to verify. There was a similar story of Śālivāhana the ancestor of this dynasty. Andhra dynasty was based at Mahismati and then moved to Pratisthana, both riverine cities.

This author believes that consistent with the history of all Kshatriya (warrior) clans, their origins were mixed. These Kshatriyas clans of south India descended from Ikshvaku, Haihayas clans and later were recognized as Vedic branch of Chedi, Madras and other clans as per the scriptures. Some of them may have brahmin origin but marrying a kshatriya woman acquired higher status often referred as (**marrying up**). Chandra Gupta-I was no exception and he married Lichhavi princess. Satvahana were once tributary to Maurya, but followed Jainism like their Chedi, kalchuri and King Kharvela, their neighbor. They also worshipped Shiva. The Shaivism was the popular religion of the common people of South India. The Śātavāhana themselves referred to them as “**Andhra Bhartiya**”. Śātavāhana native name was Satkarni.

After proclaiming independence from the Mauryan empire, Simuka Satkarni took charge at Pristhana around 826 BCE and may have mounted an assault on Magadha empire and got himself entangled in the turmoil of the North India.

Kalkacharya also had good relationship with Satvahana Satkarni King. Both Kalkacharya and Vikramaditya were contemporaries of Sri Satkarni. Kalkacharya Kathanaka is not noticeably clear, but it is assumed that Bahumitra was the son of Gardbhilla, king of Ujjain, who earned the epithet of Vikramaditya (**world conqueror**). At that time, Ujjain controlled the lucrative port of Bhriggu-Kachha (**Bharoach**).

Vikramaditya marshalled the Malwa troops to fight and dislodge less than 100 saka satraps, who refused to leave. Satkarni of Andhra did not rule Avanti, Ujjain city or Lata region at that time but may have given some help. Satkarni were sworn enemies of Saka and Mlecchas. The mixed chronology and timing is given below.

Ujjain (Avanti)	Years Ruled	Regnal Years	Probable Birth-Death years
Vikramaditya-1 of Ujjain	60	719-659 BCE	801-659 BCE
Sri Satkarni Satvahana	56	757-701 BCE	726-701 BCE
Kalkacharya Suri II		746- 714 BCE	722-668 BCE
Gardbhilla (Ujjain)	13	736-723 BCE	766-723 BCE

Vikramaditya-1 dynasty	Years ruled	In Common Eras
Gardbhilla	13	736-723 BCE
Saka Satraps	4	723-719 BCE
Vikramaditya(Bahuditya?)	60	719-659 BCE (Malva Gana changed to Vikram era)
1 <sup>st</sup> successors	40	659-619 BCE
2 <sup>nd</sup> successors	25	619-594 BCE
3 <sup>rd</sup> successors	8	594-587 BCE
4 <sup>th</sup> successors	3	587-583 BCE
Saka reestablish-Chastana		583 BCE old Saka era resumes

Satvahana(Śālivāhana) Kings	Regnal years	In Common era
Simuka or Simhaka	23	826-803 BCE
Krishna Śri Śātakarṇi	18	803-785 BCE

Śri Malla Śātakarṇi	10	785-775 BCE
Purnotsanga	18	775-757 BCE
<b>Sri Satkarni</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>757-701 BCE</b>
Skandahastambhin	18	701-683 BCE
Lambodra	18	683-655 BCE
Apitaka	12	655-653 BCE
Megasvati	18	653-635 BCE
Swati	18	635-617 BCE
SkandaSwati Satkarni	7	617-610 BCE
Mrgendra Satkarni	11	610-599 BCE
Kuntala Satkarni	8	599-591 BCE
Saumya Satkarni	12	591-579 BCE
Śāta Śātakarṇi	1	579-578 BCE
Pulomān I	24	578-554 BCE
Megha Śātakarṇi	38	554-516 BCE
Ariṣṭaparṇi Śātakarṇi	25	516-491 BCE
<b>Hāla Śātavāhana</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>491-486 BCE</b>
Mantalaka	5	486-481 BCE
Purīndrasena	12	481-469 BCE
Sundara Śātakarṇi	1	469-468 BCE
Chakora & Mahendra	1	468-468 BCE
Śivasvati Śātakarṇi	28	467-439 BCE
<b>Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>439-418 BCE</b> <b>defeats Saka in west but they came back</b>
Pulomān II	28	418-390 BCE
Śivaśri Śātakarṇi	7	390-383 BCE
Śivaskanda Śātakarṇi	7	383-376 BCE
Yajnaśri Śātakarṇi	19	376-357 BCE
Vijayaśri Śātakarṇi	6	357-351 BCE
Chandrasri Śātakarṇi	10 murdered by Gupta minister	351-341 BCE
Pulomān III	7 murdered by Chandra Gupta's father	341-334 BCE

<b>Regent Gupta Father</b>	<b>Assassinated by his son Chandra Gupta-1</b>	<b>334-327 BCE Samudra Gupta defeats Saka in west &amp; install Bhattaraka</b>
<b>Gupta Dynasty</b>	<b>Begins</b>	<b>327- 82 BCE</b>
<b>Vikramaditya-2 Harsha of Ujjain</b>	<b>He killed Saka king of Ujjain in 53 BC, initiated Vikram era in 57 BCE and survived by accepting vassalage of Chalukya king, who died shortly after his victory over Vikram.</b>	<b>101 BC-19CE defeated by Pulakeshin II as per The Kandalgaon copper-plate inscription, dated to Pulakeshin 5th regnal year</b>

**As compiled by from book on Chronologies of ancient India(1)**

**Notes: The confusion surrounding eras on Saka and Vikrama must be either with the beginning or the end of the era . The similar names of eras at different times were the cause of the confusion.**

**1. Vikram era-1 (719 BCE) was renamed after a great King ,who evicted Saka satraps. These satraps of Saka-Abhira-Shahi origin had tyrannized Malla people of Ujjain. He earned his epithets by repelling the sakas and conquering other nearby states. They renamed the existing Malla era on his name whose name was either Vikram or Bahuditya. He was the follower of Jainism. He united Malla fighters and defeated Saka, all the way to their home turf. As a result, he established a greater kingdom in central and Northern India in 8<sup>th</sup> Century BCE. He conquered Kamboja, the home of Saka, Lata, Vanga, Gouda and Gurjara Desh. He also controlled major trading ports of Gujarat and Saurashtra.**

**2. Vikram era- 2 (57 BCE) is attributed to Harsha Vikramaditya, who dislodged one Saka satrap ruler of Sindh, but for astronomical reason, he authorized the change in Vikram calendar that changed from Luni to Luni- Solar dynasty and his era replaced the reference of the old era. There were many inscription that refers to events and regnal years in old Vikram era and there are some that refers to new Vikram era. The colonial historians have missed this part of the history and made the error in dating the Indian kings, so the textbook and chronologies are wrong and need to be corrected.**

**3. Since we are only dealing with Vikramaditya 1<sup>st</sup>, it is sufficient to say, that Chastana and his family conquered the Ujjain back, along with western India and saurashtra, after the death of the Vikramditya-1<sup>st</sup> and defeat of his weak successors by Chalukya Pulakeshin as per Nasik inscription. Pulakeshin did not do any favor to India or him by doing that. As soon as his forces returned, Saka came right back.**

4. Chastana established Saka era in 583 BC. And issued their coins. Sakas had turbulent history even though they adopted Hindu religion and culture, while retaining their original faith of Buddhism and Zoroastrianism. They were defeated several times and the people hated them due to their repressive tactics. Gaumtipura Satkarni defeated Saka satrap as per inscription recorded in Nasik Prasati, cave number 3 inscribed under order of his mother of Gotami.

[The "Nashik Prasati", inscription of Queen Gotami Balasiri, Nasik Cave No.3, inscription No.2 \(reign of Sri Pulumavi\)](#)

The portion of full inscription of Queen Gotami Balasiri is produced here:

The defeated "Saka-Yavanas-Pahlava" (Brahmi script:  $\text{𑀲𑀸𑀓𑀾𑀢𑀺𑀓𑀺𑀢𑀺𑀓𑀺𑀢𑀺𑀓𑀺𑀢𑀺}$ ) mentioned in the Nasik cave 3 inscription of Queen Gotami Balasiri (end of line 5 of the inscription).[23] "Success! In the nineteenth -19th- year of king Siri-Pulumayi Vasithiputra, in the second -2nd- fortnight of summer, on the thirteenth -13th- day, the great queen Gotami Balasiri, delighting in truth, charity, patience and respect for life; bent on penance, self-control, restraint and abstinence; fully working out the type of a royal Rishi's wife; the mother of the king of kings, Siri-Satkarni Gotamiputa."

Saka rulers came back and reoccupied the regions that they held upon the departure of Gaumtipura Satkarni. I also do not think that Two commanders who rebelled against Pulakeshin II fully accomplished their objectives. They were traitors to the king Pulakeshin. Vikramaditya-II Harsh was not killed as reported to Pulakeshin-II, by his two rebellious commanders Appayika and Govinda. They most likely belonged to Rastrakutas and accepted suzerainty of Vikramaditya Harsha under Maitrakas and came home.

Again, there are difference in opinions among experts about how the saka era began at 78 AD that marked the end of Saka era. It appears that Chalukya Pulakeshin defeated the Vikramaditya Harsha, but Harsha may be under suzerainty of Maitraka Siladitya-1 and Shiladitya accepted Suzerainty of Chalukya. Govinda and Appayika who lead the fight against saurashtra and Malwa finally rebelled against Pulakeshin II. After the death of Pulakeshin II due to internal feuds when Badami was occupied by the Pallava for a period of thirteen years, the last Chalukya king, Kirti Varman II, was overthrown by the Rastrakutas King Dantidurga. That ended the deal with Gujarat and Malwa. Pulakeshin earned the reputation to claim himself as "Vallabh raja" . However, Pulakeshin II 's [Aihole inscription broke the code in understanding key eras of the Indian history and deciphered the various eras described in this article.](#)

### How Present Saka era started ?

It is evident that the epoch marking the killing of the last Śaka ruler commenced in 78 CE. Al Biruni, a Ghaznavid Persian scholar, who visited India between 1017-1031 AD wrote in his book that is extracted here:

**“The epoch of the era of Śaka falls 135 years later than that of Vikramāditya-(2).”** That means 57 BCE -135 years = 78 AD. Here 135 years difference is not properly explained . This may be an artificial fix as an afterthought by an astrologer of Vikramaditya-2’s court or end of Vikramaditya and his successors combined rules over Ujjain. The astrologers may want to realign both calendars to Luni-calendars to maintain consistency. Al-Biruni adds

**“The here-mentioned Śaka tyrannized over their country between the river Sindh and the ocean, after he had made Aryavarta amid this realm his dwelling place. He interdicted the Hindus from considering and representing themselves as anything but Sakas. The Hindus had much to suffer from him, till at last they received help from the east, when Vikramāditya marched against him, put him to fight and killed him in the region of Karur, between Multan and the castle of Loni.”** The statement implies that the Saka ruler he killed was from Sindh. Periplus of Erythraean sea confirms that Saka ruled Sindh and Punjab.

The difference between two eras can be summarized as follows:

Eras	Vikram	Saka	comment
Original	<b>719 BCE</b>	<b>583 BCE</b>	<b>There is a</b>
Revised	<b>57 BCE</b>	<b>78 AD</b>	<b>Difference of</b>
Difference in lost years	<b>662</b>	<b>601</b>	<b>61 years between two different eras</b>

Although the earlier era were derived from the inscription readings, one would assume the difference in years should be identical, but it is not.

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