The 16th century, so important in the history of Goa, was a complex and turbulent time for the whole of the Deccan. Its history, including architectural history, is however often looked at only through the prism of religious relations and divides; 'Hindu architecture' and 'Muslim architecture' are terms still in use in popular writing and college courses. Richard M. Eaton and Phillip B. Wagoner have made a valiant attempt to get beyond these simplistic divisions with their new book, '*Power, Memory and Architecture: Contested Sites on India's Deccan Plateau, 1300-1600*' (OUP, 2014), which is a study of the syncretic and historicist approach to architecture in sixteenth-century Deccan.

The study focuses on the towns of Kalyana, Raichur and Warangal (all located close to the borders that today separate Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh), as opposed to the capital cities of the time, like Bijapur and Vijayanagara. It makes many useful points, of which I will just touch two.

The first is to do with the way these towns were fought over. Kalyana was the former capital of the long-dead Chalukya Empire (10th-12th centuries), the overlords of the Kadambas of Goa; Raichur was the heart of a fertile river valley; while Warangal was the capital of the vanished Kakatiya kingdom (12th-14th centuries), a successor of the Chalukyas. The fight over them was not just of conquering the territory but also about appropriation of legacy, especially in the case of Kalyana, revered as an ancient seat of empire. Not only did the Deccan Sultanates and Vijayanagara fight a series of wars over the physical control of Kalyana, they also, in often identical ways, declared themselves the inheritors of Kalyana's Chalukya glory. Towards this end, Vijayanagara's emperor Rama Raya had a new genealogy created for his family, which made them descendants of the Chalukyas. He also relocated various bits of Chalukya architecture, including many pillars – easy to move, great in number and very recognizable – and an entire stepped tank, to his own capital. Relocating pillars was popular with Bijapur too, but Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II also built a new palace at Kalyana around an existing Chalukya-era shrine, thus amalgamating the two edifices, while a new gate of Sultan Ali Adil Shah's fort in Bijapur had an ornate lintel from a Chalukya temple inserted below a new one carrying a Persian inscription about the Sultan.

In other words, these kings were trying to display — or invent — links with past power, and thus legitimise themselves by creating a sense of continuity. This architectural co-option from an empire that had been dead for some five hundred years, and by rulers of different kingdoms and faiths, show a long-lasting memory of power in the religion, and also how ideas of power dominated those of religion.

A second major point made by this study challenges the idea of a religious divide in the Deccan. Theidea of such a divide was actually born, according to the authors, only in twentieth-century writings. What the historical record shows instead is a complex encounter between two literary-cultural systems, the Persian (of the Delhi Sultanate) and the Sanskritic (of the Chalukyas), which transcended religion. For example, twentieth-century popular wisdom notwithstanding, the conquest of the Deccan by the Delhi Sultanate actually left most existing shrines (Brahmanical, Jain, Buddhist, and others) undisturbed, or even supported, as in the case of the repair of a Shiva temple in Kalyana by Mohammed bin Tughlaq in 1326. Only those connected to resistance were destroyed, like the chief temple of Warangal whose Kakatiya king opposed Tughlaq and was defeated. This practise matches local tradition, as seen in the *Manosollasa*, a twelfth century Chalukya text attributed to the king Someshvara III, which recommended that a conquering king should destroy his enemy's temple.

Eaton and Wagoner end with the mention of a new children's park that has been set up around the site of this chief temple in Warangal; it contains a toy train with coaches that are shaped like geese. Near it are four grand gates that belonged to the old temple, also adorned with geese motifs. But, the authors mention almost ruefully, while these ancient geese stood for 'water, fertility, and an agrarian-based prosperity', the modern ones represent a 'more profit-oriented sort of prosperity'.

But isn't this profit-oriented prosperity of today more socially inclusive than that of the ancient Kakatiyas? This small touch of nostalgia for the pre-Persian past actually echoes the attitude of current Indian governments, who will restore and popularise 'Hindu' sites, and use them to propagate a Hindutva version of history, e.g. at Vijayanagara. And it is unfortunately also fostered by the very limited discussion of caste and class in the book. There is only some

mention of the rigid social hierarchies enforced by the Chalukyas, which led to the radical Virashaiva movement;while the Kakatiyasare described as belonging to the 'lowest (sudra) section' of society and as more egalitarian than the Sanskritic Chalukyas. But there is nothing about how traditional caste structures were affected by the new Persianate culture, and the new society that must have resulted.

So, while this attempt by Eaton and Wagoner to unravel the Deccan's past is of great value, especially for challenging the idea of immutable religious divides, there is scope for more work to understand the social divides and underpinnings of power.

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