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Editor

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Cover : Padaividu grant of Venkatapati raya III, dated Saka 1553 (1631 CE).

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MYSURU**

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OBITUARY



Dr. R. Nagaswamy [1930-2022]

Director (Retd.), Department of Archaeology, Tamilnadu

Dr. Ramachandran Nagaswamy obtained Masters degree in Sanskrit language and literature (Madras) and Ph.D. in Indian Arts (Poona). His Fields of specialization are: Art, Archaeology, Architecture, Literature, Epigraphy, Paleography, Numismatics, Temple rituals and philosophy, Ancient law and society, Music, Dance and South Asian Art. He served as Curator for Art and Archaeology, Madras Museum (1959-63) and later joined the Tamilnadu State Department of Archaeology as Assistant Special Officer (1963-65) and became the First Director of Archaeology of the State and held that post till retirement (1966-88). He started an Institute of Epigraphy under the Tamilnadu State Department of Archaeology to train students in post-graduate diploma in Epigraphy and Art. After retirement he headed the Epigraphy Program, EFEO Pondichery, and as Consultant, Government of India, Documentation of Cultural property Tanjavur Brihadisvara Project (UNDP program), under the Indira Gandhi National Center for the Arts. Nagaswamy was awarded the Kalaimamani award by the Govt. of Tamilnadu for his work on Sekkilar's Periyapuram and India's third highest civilian honour, the Padma Bhushan, in 2018. He is one of the distinguished members of the Society and his passing away leaves a huge void irreplaceable in the field of historical studies in general and to the field of Epigraphy and Palaeography in particular. On behalf of the Members, the Executive Committee and the President of the Epigraphical Society of India we express our heartfelt condolences and pray the God Almighty to rest his Soul in peace.

Dr. B. Yashovarma, [1955-2022]
Secretary, S.D.M. Educational Institutions, Ujire, Karnataka

S.D. M. Educational Institutions have a great heritage of their own for they are being blessed by Lord Manjunatha and the President, Dr. D. Veerendra Heggade. Whoever enters the portal of this institution would be nurtured with the principles of discipline, sincerity, steadfastness, workmanship and humane ideologies. The one person who had personified all these qualities was Dr. B. Yashovarma, a Botanist and teacher by profession turned a great administrator and a visionary with the capacity of visualising the various types of developments of the 21st century. Though studied Science and obtained his M.Sc. degree in Botany from the Karnatak University, Dharwad, his interest was towards understanding the behavioural attitude of human beings. This led him to obtain his Ph.D. Degree in Psychology. With youthful spirit and energy and unbounded experience in the field of education he became the Principal of S.D.M. College, Ujire in 1993. Thereafter, without looking back, he led the College with a galloping speed to the Apex of glory. The scientific approach with a humane mind made him understand very quickly the needs of the Institution, of the Students and the Faculty. His policies and programmes became successful which resulted in all quietly following his footsteps. These steps led the institution towards greater achievements for reaching the Apex of glory. When he retired after a glorious 23 years of service in 2015 S.D.M. College had become a very well noted Institution of our country. Thereafter he moved to a wider area of activities which induced him to exhibit his talents in the field of development. The S.D.M. Institutions got the best possible scientific touch under his able guidance as Secretary of the entire S.D.M. Educational Institutions.

My personal contact with him made me understand the wide range of interest he had in language, literature, art, science, agriculture, horticulture, aesthetics and what not. I was surprised to know about his interest in the study of epigraphy. When we requested him to host a conference of our Society he readily responded, convened several meetings and even made some of us attend the meetings and give our suggestion regarding the Conference. During these meetings we were amazed to know about the abundance of knowledge he had in organizing a Conference on All India basis. In fact it was he who meticulously looked into every aspect of arrangement. From the time of inauguration to valediction he was very much present in the venue. Strangely we could see him in the dining hall even before the delegates enter for breakfast, lunch or dinner. Never the Society had seen a host of this type. Special arrangement was made for the delegates of the Conference for the Darshan of Lord Manjunatha in the temple. We returned from Dharmasthala with sweet memories of the conference. The humane touch of a great man made us feel so.

Most of us thought that this would remain long and the person would remain in our contact for long. Man proposes but God disposes. So it has happened. On the midnight of 22nd May 2022 we heard the sad news. After a period of short illness Dr. B. Yashovarma was no more. On behalf of the Members, the Executive Committee and the President of the Epigraphical Society of India we express our heartfelt condolences and pray the God Almighty to rest his Soul in peace.

- Dr. P. N. Narasmiha Murthy

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Editorial

It is really with a sense of pride and satisfaction that we are placing in the hands of our members the XLVII volume of our Journal. The Journal is devoted to the publication of original research papers of the scholars who participated in the deliberations held through Webinar hosted by B. K. Birla College of Arts, Science and Commerce, Kalyan, Maharashtra. That the Society has been able to bring out its journal for forty-seven years now, without any break, is no mean achievement.

We express our sincere thanks on behalf of the office-bearers and members of the Executive Committee to B. K. Birla College of Arts, Science and Commerce, Kalyan, Maharashtra. It is due to the concerned and sincere efforts of Dr. Avinash Patil, Principal, Dr. Swapna Samel, Sr. Vice-Principal (Arts) and their team that the XLVI Annual Conference held through Webinar achieved a grand success.

We are deeply grateful to the Chairman Dr. K. Munirathnam for his guidance in the event of the activities of the Society. We are deeply beholden to Dr. P. N. Narasimha Murthy, Prof. of History and Principal (Retd.), M.G.M. College, Udupi, for his thought provoking presidential address. We sincerely thank the Secretary of the Society Dr. Meka V. Raghavendra Varma and Treasurer of the Society Sri J. Veeramanikandan, who has spared no pains in maintaining the accounts, correspondences, etc., of the Society.

'Better late than never' is a saying in English. Last year we should have performed an important duty. For reasons not known we failed to do it. But memory was itching about it. Without wasting much of the time we are doing it now. It is all related to the services of Sri. G.S. Ravishankar to the 'Epigraphical Society of India'.

Most of the Members do not know the actual condition of our Society two decades ago. The society had grown with two types of Membership viz., Annual Members and Life Members. But the Society was not in a position to give the actual number of Life Members and the Annual Members. Some of the Life Members had been permitted, for reason not known, to pay their Membership Fee in 2-3 instalments. There was a need to contact these people to remind them of their instalments. How to contact them became the real problem. There was no proper list of Members with their address. The finances of the Society exhibited a shabby condition for there was no proper account for receipts and payments. Dr. K.V. Ramesh, when he was the President of the Society, tried in his own way to put it on rails, but could not succeed. Finally he felt the need of sincere and duty bound Treasurer. The most suitable person to hold this responsibility, as Ramesh viewed, was Sri G. S. Ravishankar. As a person of sincerity and duty bound nature G.S.R. was reluctant to accept the responsibility. Since it was Ramesh who pestered him often G.S.R. finally accepted the post of Treasurer of the E.S.I. He has told me many a times that but for Ramesh he would not have accepted the responsibility. When he received the charge he got a gunny bag full of old documents, receipts and payment vouchers etc with a saying that this is related to the accounts of ESI. It was just like letting a person to swim across a swollen river. Bewildered by the condition of the 'gunny bag' G.S.R. took some time to plan the next course of action. Since beginning the work was inevitable he methodically prepared a plan which I call 'GSR PLAN'. Since he had very good relations with the Members of the society it became possible for preparing a list of Members of the Society with their proper address. Though

bifurcation of Life Members from Annual Members posed a problem he succeeded in preparing these two lists. He never cared for the comments when he removed the names of default Members from the list. This provided the correct picture of the Members and the finance of the Society. He made both these transparent in the Executive Committee Meetings. Slowly the Members could understand the condition of ESI and the sincerity of GSR in presenting this picture. Every year, while getting the accounts audited, GSR was receiving a note from the Auditors about the laps of Registration of the Society. Though the Registration of the Society had lapsed long back no Office bearer had taken note of it. GSR took personal interest in solving this problem. He contacted the concerned Officials of the Department and got a fresh Registration of the Society. If we say that the present picture of the ESI is clean and transparent it is mainly because of the sincere effort of GSR which he carried out till the day of retirement from service. In this respect the Society is very much indebted to Sri G.S. Ravishankar. On behalf of all Members, the Executive Committee and the President of the ESI we express our sincere gratitude to GSR and request him to continue to guide the Society in times of need.

We are extremely happy to inform our members that Dr. D. Veerendra Heggade, the Dharmadhikari of Dharmasthala, has been nominated as a member of the prestigious House of our Parliament- the Rajya Sabha by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of our country Sri Narendra Modi. For the first time we come across a person of the calibre of Dr. D. Veerendra Heggade making his August presence in the Upper House [the House of Elders] of our Parliament. We hope that the country will reap a rich harvest from out of the unbounded experience of Dr. Heggadeji especially in the field of "Rural Development" which has dragged the attention of the entire world and the U.N.O.

Dr. Veerendra Heggade took keen interest in hosting the XLV Conference of the Epigraphical Society of India in the month of February 2020. We were all blessed by him by inaugurating the Conference which went off in the best possible manner. The excellent arrangement, the hospitality and the delicious food we enjoyed are still green in our memories. All these were because of the meticulous attention given to every aspect of the Conference by Sri Heggadeji. In this respect we are highly indebted to him. On behalf of all the members, the Executive Committee and the President of the Epigraphical Society of India we express our sincere greetings to Dr. D. Veerendra Heggade on being elevated to the position of the Member of the Parliament. We wish that this elevation may lead him to get the coveted Honour of "BHARATA RATNA". We are sure that Lord Manjunatha, the presiding deity of Dharmasthala will certainly bless him with this honour.

We will be failing in our duty if we do not thank Sri G. Srinivasa Rao, Photo Officer and Sri G. Vasant Kumar, Photographer Gr. II for making the volume press-ready by designing it in In-design software. *Vridhdhirastu.*

Mysuru
20th October 2022

P. N. Narasimha Murthy
Editor

S. Krishnamurthy
Assistant Editor

Presidential Address

Dr. P.N. Narasimha Murthy.

Respected Dignitaries, Hon'ble Guests, Dear Delegates. Ladies and Gentlemen:

1. 46 years ago the First Conference of the Epigraphical Society of India was held at Dharawad. I attended the Conference as a scholar-delegate and got the opportunity of coming into contact with a host of luminaries of Indian Epigraphy. All most all the great epigraphists of the country who had assembled then are **now “keerti-sheshas”**.

2. The coming of the Office of the Chief Epigraphist [now Directorate of Epigraphy] for Government of India, from Ooty to Mysuru widened the scope of my epigraphical studies. The encouragement I received from great epigraphists like Dr. G.S. Gai and Dr. K.V. Ramesh is still green in my memory. It is this association with great scholars that made me become one of the founder members of the **Epigraphical Society of India**. Perhaps, the present Executive Committee has taken note of this journey in the field of Epigraphy for unanimously electing me as the General President of the 46th Conference of the Society. I am very much beholden to the members of the Executive Committee for this honour done to me. I humbly accept this honour while saying – I am still a student of epigraphy.

3. While bowing to my Primary School teacher Sri S.T. Dakshina Murthy who instilled in me the spirit of doing Research I begin my speech. 20th century witnessed the period of glory in Indian epigraphical studies which added new information to the history whereby pointing out the glory of the past. Scholars like D.C. Sircar and others began to edit and publish newly discovered inscriptions. Their contribution became very valuable, for it contained fresh information about several major and minor dynasties that ruled over different parts of the country. COVID-19 has rocked the entire world. This has compelled the members of the Society to be present in the Conference in celluloid form. The credit of organizing this kind of a Conference goes to Birla Collage, Kalyan. The heritage of organizing Annual conference without any break has thus been made possible by the efforts of host of this conference. I whole heartedly congratulate the entire host team in this regard.

II

4. Study of Indian Epigraphy has crossed a hundred and seventy five years. The first inscription to be brought to light was a Copper Plate assigned to the 13th century CE, preserved in the Indian Museum, Calcutta. But the most tantalising period began with the discovery of some kind of writings, deeply engraved on rocks, boulders and highly polished pillars that later on came to be called Edicts of Aśōka. The script of it, though puzzled for quite some time, was finally deciphered and came to be called “**Aśōkan Brāhmī**”. This decipherment **revolutionised Indian Epigraphical Studies**. The then British government and the Native States showed keen interest in this regard. The entire country got the benefit of it.

5. We have to salute our seniors for they have discovered some very important inscriptions which otherwise would have been lost. While carrying on this work they have dared

several problems such as transport and communication, food, shelter and health which have now become problems of yester years. Scientific measures too have entered into epigraphical studies. As a result it has become necessary for an epigraphist to equip himself or herself properly before entering into the practical field.

III

6. The **Brāhmī** of Aśōkan period was a highly developed script. This process of development must have started taking place at least a millennium or two before Aśōka. The physical features and the vastness of the country had given rise to the growth of numerous dialects besides Sanskrit. The letters began to penetrate deep into corners of the country since the Vedic period. It is not known as to what format of script was used by the Vedic people and by what name they called it. Later, scholars began to describe the Vedic scriptures as *Śrutis* and *Smritis* with the belief that there was no script what so ever.

7. When we reach the period of Indus-Sarasvati valley culture thousands of seals with pictures / symbols attract our attention. The general view is that this script is yet to be deciphered. Scholars are doubtful of this script having any phonetic value. But, attempts have been made by some scholars to find out phonetic value in this script. Dr. S.R. Rao has tried to compare the phonetic value of the Indus script with that of the Vedic language and has opined that the Indus script is a later development of the Vedic script. According to Dr. Deringer, the famous British Scriptologist, Dr. Rao has almost deciphered the Indus script.¹ Thus we find the language Sanskrit having its own script which remained in a formative manner from the Vedic to the Indus period. Probably people speaking different dialects/ languages used this script with regional variations suited to their tongue.

8. According to Dr. K.V. Ramesh, the story of inscriptional palaeographical development all over India, without exception, has been movement from utter or stark simplicity-to progressively complex – variegation and / or ornamentation to abrupt decline and degeneration”².

9. There is a long stretch of time between the Indus and the Janapada periods of Indian History. The society of these periods were highly developed and cultured. The Mahā-Janapada period saw further development of Jainism and the birth of Buddhism. Besides so many dialects and languages spoken then, Prākṛit and Pāli came to lime light along with Sanskrit. From the time of the Janapadas to that of the Mauryas the script, probably, began to develop very fast. People speaking Sanskrit seem to have more concern with this kind of development; for we find the script of the Mauryan period friendly more with the phonetic values of Sanskrit than any other language.

10. The main features of Aśōkan Brāhmī, according to Dr. Ramesh, are:

- a. Its basic consonants being endowed with inherent ‘a’ vowel value;
- b. Presence of letter forms for soft sounds;
- c. Presence of letter forms for aspirates;

- d. Presence of conjunct consonant letter forms, and
- e. Achievement of economy of space.³

11. “All these features, which were developed to suit Sanskrit phonetic, and, in particular, the extensive use of conjunct letter forms, are signs of later developments in comparative terms”⁴. Probably, the script Kharōṣṭī too underwent this process of development from the Indus period before it got the standardised format by the Mauryan period. Aśōkan Edicts found in the North Western provinces of the Empire provide sufficient proof to it. Other than the Brāhmī and Kharōṣṭī, what else existed in the vast stretch of the Northern Plains of India is yet to come to light. It may not be a farfetched idea, if said, that many scripts in vogue must have been made to subside by the surging force and influence of the script Brāhmī which ultimately became the script of the country. This again is properly reflected in the Edicts of Aśōka where the language is Prākṛit and the script Brāhmī. Along with Sanskrit, Prākṛit language succeeded in making a great impact on the entire Indian Society. The language Pāli could not get this force. Though spread over the country as the *lingua franca* of common people, both Prākṛit and Pāli were silenced by the script Brāhmī; whereby, Sanskrit was made to reign supreme throughout the country. As a result both the Jaina and Buddhist scholars were forced to take up Sanskrit as medium of communication in their speech and writings.

12. While setting aside all the draw backs, if any, we have to recognise the contribution of the Jainas in the development of a script. This is borne out in their canonical works. They provide us information about the existence of several scripts during the pre-Mauryan period. *Pannavana sutta*, the earliest of Jaina canonical works, provides us the names of 18 scripts of which *Bambili* is mentioned first and *Damli and Polindi as the last two*.⁵

13. The scripts *Damli and Polindi seem to have made an impact throughout the country and beyond before the time of Aśōka. Recent discoveries have proved the use of scripts by people living in the far South of the country centuries before Aśōka*. Potsherds with inscribed and graffiti marks have been found at various places in Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka. The Sri Lankan potsherds with these marks are dated back to 750 BCE, while the potsherds from Tamil Nadu are placed between 475 BCE and 300 BCE.⁶ On this basis Ramesh thinks that the scripts – Damili and Polindi traversed to the eastern and central parts of India from the South. And, from the Central part it moved West wards and from there it returned to South,⁷ The best example for this kind of scriptural development can be seen in the *Bhaṭṭiprōlu casket inscription*. While commenting on this kind of development Dr. Ramesh writes “As far as up to date discoveries on the main land reveal, the first experimental phase of Indo-Aryanisation of the Damili-Polindi script appears to have taken place in Buddhist Bhaṭṭiprōlu in Andhra Pradesh where the new script was still so unfamiliar to the composers that they wrote some letters upside down or topsy-turvy; they had not even adopted the script to the Prākṛit language by adding a vowel value to the basic consonants, which is an essential characteristic of Indo-Aryan grammar be it Prākṛit or Sanskrit or of their later offshoots. But the Bhaṭṭiprōlu alphabet has symbols for soft sounds and aspirates which were obviously developed for Polindi.”⁸

14. Scholars hold the opinion that the Bhaṭṭiprōlu casket inscription as Buddhist on the basis that the casket is found in a Buddhist Stupa and on the basis that the Stupas are

Buddhist creations. They have not properly analysed the inscription engraved on the casket. The record begins with ‘*Arhadinānām*’ and ends with ‘*Samana*’ and ‘*Samana dasho*’. ‘*Namō Arhadinānām*’ in *Prākṛit* is ‘*Namō Arihantānām*’ in *Sanskrit*. It means salutations to *Arihanta*. Arihanta is a stage obtained by a Jaina soul after liberation. ‘*Namō Arihantānām*’ is the first line of *the pañcha namaskara mantra* of the Jainas. *Samana in Prākṛit is Śramana in Sanskrit. Samana dasho, in Prākṛit only means Śramana dasa, in Sanskrit. It means a devout Jaina.* How these pure Jaina terms can be considered as Buddhist? On this basis we have to consider the Bhaṭṭiprōlu Stupa as the earliest Jaina Stupa of Andhra Pradesh and the casket record as the earliest Jaina record. Elsewhere, I have made this point very clear.⁹ Thus the Bhaṭṭiprōlu casket record justifies the statement that the Jainas were the best carriers of a script and language from South to North and from North to South.

15. The local scripts generated out of Brāhmī continued to get facelift as per the local needs even after the time of Aśōka. In this respect I wish to draw your attention towards attempts made by scholars in Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh. Manjiri Thuse¹⁰ has tried to study the changing pattern of scripts in the inscriptions found in the caves at Nāsik. As many as 27 caves have been excavated here between 2nd century BCE and 4th-5th century CE. All of them are Buddhist in affiliation. The hill where these caves are located is called *Pāṇḍulēna*. But, it’s ancient name was *Trirashmi*.

16. While highlighting the importance of the contents of the inscriptions, the scholar opines that up to the 1st century CE, there was a smooth development of the old traditional Brāhmī script in Western India¹¹; important changes began to take place from 1st century CE. The inscription of Bhaṭapālīka in the Chaitya-griha at Nāsik provides the earliest example to this kind of development. Some of the early inscriptions found in the caves of Kārle, Bedsa and Junnār also provide sufficient proof to it. P.G. Singh observes that the old traditional style got mixed with the new style.¹²

17. Manjiri Thuse observes that these changes were due to the presence of Western Kshatrapas who brought with them the new style of writing.¹³ Here the Buddhists have played a major role in influencing the Kshatrapas which ultimately had it’s impact on the style of writing. If the Bhaṭṭiprōlu casket inscription becomes the earliest stage of development of script fashioned by the Jainas, the Western Indian development of script fashioned, after various types of influences, by the Buddhists forms the known next stage of development of script.

18. Many parts of Western Maharashtra were studded with professional writers and Nāsik was the centre of it. They developed different local traditions of script at different places. This is vouchsafed in the inscriptions found at Kārle, Kanhēri, Nāsik, etc., belonging to the same period.¹⁴ If the Bhaṭṭiprōlu inscription can be taken as of novice stage of learning, the Western Indian cave writings can be taken as highly advanced stage with professional writers who paved the way for regional or local traditions by fashioning script to their needs and interest.

19. Susmita Basu Majumdar and Shivakant Bajpai have tried to study and analyse the early historic cave inscriptions from Chhattisgarh in their beautifully produced Monograph.¹⁵ They have confined their study of inscriptions to a period between c. 300 BCE and 300 CE. In

the Introduction to this Monograph they write that Chhattisgarh, located on a strategic corridor connecting north India with the peninsula, had an evolution which was unique. “Rāmgārḥ caves in the State bear the earliest specimens of inscription contemporary to the Mauryan inscriptions. Here we have reinterpreted two inscriptions and have given a fresh reading too. Our study has unfolded that the Jōgimāra cave was not an amphitheatre, but a resting station and so, the inscriptions at Rāmgārḥ bear testimony to the travel of people from Magadha to Dakṣiṇapatha and vice-versa”. This information is very important for though we knew that there had been movement of people from north to south their route of movement had not been properly identified. Here we get the clue to know about their route.

20. While discussing about the Jōgimara cave inscription¹⁶, the authors refer to a tunnel, locally called *Hāthipōl*. *According to them this tunnel is partially man-made, the hill was cut to make a passage and the tunnel is so high that an elephant can pass, and hence is named Hāthipōl. “This also shows that probably this was a resting place for a contingent with elephants and chariots which were made to pass through the Hāthipōl”.*¹⁷ It is interesting to note that the scholars have drawn our attention towards the difference that existed between the Magadhi Prākṛit and Mahārāshtri Prākṛit as early as the 3rd century BCE.¹⁸

21. Regarding the palaeographical features of the Jogimara cave inscription they write: “The letters are well formed, but their size often tends to become small: for example in line 4 the words *tha and ba* are comparatively very small. Similarly the conjunct that has been considered symbolic is exceptionally big in size. The central vertical stroke of the palatal sa (s’a) in the words Devadas’i, S’utanuka and s’eye has a left bias in two cases it almost begins from the middle of the left slanting stroke where as in two other cases it is more closer to the top (centre)”.¹⁹

22. Similarly, we can notice difference in palaeography and calligraphy in the inscriptions of the early Kadambas of Banavāsi and the Gaṅgas of Talakāḍu. There also existed professional composers and writers but, probably, not to the extent of Nāsik. The early Kadamba inscriptions are known for their box-headed characters which is absent in the Gaṅga inscriptions. However the Gaṅga inscriptions look beautiful for the script is more roundish in character. Local variations can be noticed in the scriptal style in the inscriptions of the Chālukyas of Bādāmi and the Rāshtrakūṭas of Mālkhēḍ. Calligraphical standard reaching its climax can be seen in the inscriptions of the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa and the Hōysālas of Dōrasamudra with less scriptal variation. The experimental stage in scriptal writing had almost come to an end as we enter into the period of the Rāyas of Vijayanagara.

23. Besides discovering new inscriptions throughout the country we have to give attention for the study of palaeography of early inscriptions. It is high time now to find out the stages of development of script in a chronological way from the Indus period down to that of Aśōka Maurya. The Himalayan States and the States of North Eastern and Central India may provide proper clue to this problem. A proper survey of these areas for inscriptions is the present necessity. Similarly attention need be given to the study of Śārada script of North Western India.

IV

24. The next stage of our attention should be towards the views expressed by scholars. A scholar, at the time of discovery of an inscription holds a view regarding either the date or content of it. It is subject to change. Some time the old view, though not correct, remains unchanged. The best example to this is that of the date of Halmiḍi inscription²⁰. At the time of discovery, the scholar ascribed this undated inscription to c.450 CE. All scholars have retained this date even to-day. Long back scholars like P.B. Desai, B.R. Gopal and G.S. Gai have tried to re-set the genealogy and chronology of early Kadambas of Banavāsi. Dr. Gopal has assigned c. 405 - 430 CE²¹ as the reign period of Kadamba Kākusthavarma; while G.S. Gai has assigned c. 400- 430 CE.²² The five years difference between the two is negligible as the genealogy set by them is almost correct. As a result, the date of the Halmiḍi inscription, which belongs to the time of Kadamba Kākusthavarma, also should be changed. Considering the purport, the Halmiḍi inscription need be placed around 415 CE.

25. Certain discrepancies are bound to be traced in the records especially in Copper Plate inscriptions. This should not tempt us to jump into conclusion and say that the record is spurious. Most of the Gaṅga Copper Plates had been declared spurious earlier. To-day many of them have been justified as genuine records. The best example for it is the Mercara Copper Plate grant of Gaṅga Avanīta²³. The epigraph has simply mentioned the date as 388. If this is taken as śaka varsha it can be equated with 466 CE, which is the first year of rule of Gaṅga Avanīta²⁴. But, the script of the record is in the 8th – 9th century characters. Hence scholars have considered it as spurious. The other reason for this is that the inscription registers a grant of the village Badanaguppe to Śrī-Vijaya Jīnālaya of Talavanapura [Talakād]. But no basadi was found at Talakād for long time. The recent excavation has brought to light the ruins of a Jīnālaya at Talakād. This may be the Śrī Vijaya Jīnālaya mentioned in the Mercara grant. Here we are getting the help of Archaeology for deciding the genuineness of a record. On this basis the Mercara Copper Plate can be considered as not spurious but a later copy of an earlier grant. This tells us that if we keep in touch with the latest discoveries we can come to know of the truth.

26. Discrepancy may occur due to the following reasons – (1) the mistake committed by the composer (2) the mistake of the writer who writes the composed record on stone slabs or copper plates and (3) the mistake committed by the engraver. Mistake can take place at all or any one of these stages. Experience helps us to find out the stages of discrepancy. Modern Epigraphists have to be aware of this before considering a record spurious.

V

27. When an opportunity comes for deciding the date of a record or king let there not be any hesitation to do it. The long and deep study made in this regard becomes a waste if it is not done. An instance to this can be cited here. It is based on the Kudlapura stone inscription²⁵. The inscription, dated 21st August 1148 CE belongs to the reign period of Hoysala Narasimha

I. It speaks of the re-instatement of a grant made far earlier to the time of the Hoysalas. It says, at the beginning that the grant was made by Koṅganivarma dharma-mahādi-rāja and mentions him as “prathama Gaṅga”. By this it becomes clear that **Koṅgunivarma was the**

first Gaṅga King. But the problem comes next only. The record gives the date on which the Gaṅga king made a grant. The text of it is as follows:

1. Svasti-mat-Koṅganivarma dharma-ma-
2. hādi rāja prathama Gaṅgasya dattam śaka
3. varusha gatēshu pañchaviṃshati 25 nēya Śu-
4. bhakṛitu Samvatsarasu Phālguna suddha pañcha-
5. mī Sani Rōhnī Kāśyapa gōtrada Dēvakīnanda- |na . . . “

28. Lewis Rice has considered 25 as śaka varsha. The cyclic year then was Śobhanakṛitu. Cyclic year Śubhakṛitu occurred in śaka 24. Here we get two dates viz., 103 and 102 CE respectively. On this basis Rice has opined that the Gaṅgas came into existence during the 2nd century CE. But the views of scholars differ here. Some hold the view that Koṅgunivarma ruled from 350 to 370 CE. According to Gopal 325 to 350 is the date of this king²⁶. **The view of Rice is not supported by any evidence. Gopal has taken 25 as the regnal year and says the cyclic year Śubhakṛitu occurred in śaka 264 which corresponds with 342 CE. If calculated on this basis the first year of Koṅgunivarma's rule would be 317 CE. Since 325 CE has been taken as the first year, it is not possible to accept 317 CE, is the opinion of Dr. Gopal. It is strange to note that even the date 325 CE, as suggested by Gopal is not supported by any evidence. I quote here the argument of Dr. Gopal: ‘The year cited may as well be a reference to the regnal year. If the dates assigned by us for the Kadamba rulers are to be accepted, the reign period of Koṅgunivarma would be 325 – 350 CE, and the regnal year cited would correspond to c. 350 CE. However, the cyclic year Śubhakṛit cited in the record corresponds to śaka 264 i.e. 342 CE, which would even according to our dates, be the 17th – 18th year of rule and not the 25th! Nothing definite can, there, be said about this. It is interesting to note that Koṅgunivarma is described here in as the first Gaṅga king’²⁷.**

29. We have to take note of two aspects here; firstly, naming Koṅganivarma as the first Gaṅga king. Since this is correct there is nothing to point it as “interesting”. Secondly, Gopal does not accept the date 350-370 CE, given by Lewis Rice. But he imposes a date 325-350 CE on the basis of the Kadamba genealogy in the manner that it cannot be altered. In epigraphy no genealogy or chronology can remain permanent unless evidenced by proper records. In the case of present record, under study, if 342 CE, can be considered as the 25th year of rule of ‘Prathama Gaṅga’, his first year of rule would certainly be 317-318 CE. There is no need to tailor it to 325 CE and find fault²⁸. The difference between the two dates is just 7-8 years. The first Gaṅga king Koṅgunivarma [Konganivarma] might have ruled for a little longer period from 317 to 350 CE. There is no hard and fast rule to fix the reign period of a king between 20 and 30 years only. There are examples, in Indian History, of kings ruling over 40 to 60 years²⁹.

VI

30. Since the last quarter of the 20th century a trend has grown to view inscriptions in a different way. Some of them can be listed as follows:

1. Inscriptions are issued only by kings highlighting their works.
2. They neglected the society.
3. They are oriented with the activities of men [Purusha pradhana] not women.
4. They are oriented more with rightist ideas.
5. Women are neglected in inscriptions, etc.

The one word answer to all these allegations is 'No'. If the kings did not issue inscriptions from time to time, we would not have come to know of the history of India in general and of the kingdoms and dynasties in particular. Inscriptions may describe the military achievements of kings. But, through them we come to know of the type of people, kings and kingdoms that existed in different parts of India. Just for example remember here the Allahābād [now Prayāgrāj] inscription of Samudragupta and the Mehrauli Iron Pillar inscription of King Chandra. Out of the total number of records discovered so far, the number of inscriptions issued by general public is more. More than anything else take note of the number of *Viragals* –Hero-stones and Sati-stones discovered throughout the country. The kings did not neglect social welfare; if we think so the Edicts of Aśōka lack lustre. Never in the History of India, have we come across any negligence towards women. Remember the role played by Queen Prabhāvatī Gupta, the queen mothers of Sātavāhana dynasty like Gautamī, Nayanikā, Naganikā, etc. Coastal Karnataka is afloat with inscriptions referring to the great works of women in society. Epigraphists should not be influenced by 'Rightist' or 'Leftist' ideologies for they are of recent origin. Inscriptions do not belong to any of these ideologies. It is strange to note that some have even tried to introduce class-war ideas into the imprecatory section of inscriptions. Personal ideologies should not divert our attention to undermine the value of inscriptions.

31. Further about the land grants and the establishment of *Agrahāras* by the kings and their retinues. The general belief is that all these grants and *Agrahāras* enjoyed by the brāhmaṇas were tax free. This is not correct. Grants were made and *Agrahāras* were established to all types of people where in brāhmaṇas also lived. They were not free from tax payment unless stated so by the donor. The tax paid by the brāhmaṇas was on par with the tax paid by others.

32. Normally *Agrahāras* were established around a temple, near a tank and on the banks of the rivers. This provided scope for increasing economic activities. If places around some famous temples became permanent marketing ground, the religious celebrations in some other temples provided scope for establishing temporary markets. They fetched income through tax to both state and temples. These markets encouraged the people of villages to engage themselves in agriculture, industry, trade and commerce. They became a source of employment and income. Inscriptions discovered in different parts of the country give vivid account of these activities. Without the knowledge of these advantages it is not good to decry the land grants and establishment of *Agrahāras*.

33. The Paninian era to find fault with the language of inscriptions has ended. The present need is to touch upon those aspects found in inscriptions which, so far, have been neglected. Do research and write on them. Let your language be good without any unnecessary

and derogatory remarks.

VII

34. I am happy to record here the very good work being carried out by the Epigraphy Branch of A.S.I. Dr. S. Nagarajappa, an Officer in the Epigraphy Branch has brought to light a Copper plate inscription which provides a definite date for the defeat of Emperor Harshavardhana of Kannauj by the Bādāmi Chālukya Emperor Pulakēsin II. This victory on the banks of the river Narmada earned Pulakēsin II the Title “*Dakṣiṇa pathēśvara*”. The Directorate has recently received the photograph of a stone inscription which gives the definite date of the death of the famous Emperor Krishṇadēvarēya of Vijayanagara. The discovery of a big hoard of Copper Plate inscriptions from the famous temple of Śrīśailam is an important addition to the collection of this Office. Similarly about 15 Copper Plate inscriptions have been copied from Hale Belagōla near Śravanabelagōla, the famous Jaina pilgrimage centre of the country. It is strange but true that the Office has created a great awareness about the importance of inscriptions among the general public. This has resulted in the Office receiving one or two photographs of newly discovered inscriptions almost every day. From last April till today the Office has copied more than 350 stone inscriptions, which includes the Persian and Arabic inscriptions also, from across the country. The department has published Five Books on inscriptions and one volume on Malayalam inscriptions is due for publication. The publication of Annual Reports is almost up-to-date. This, I believe, is a record created by the Department even several months before the completion of the present financial year. As far as over five decades of my knowledge goes about the working of this Department this is a great achievement to be appreciated and applauded by all.³⁰

35. Despite this good work carried out by the Epigraphy Branch I find its condition not good. The number of technical Officers has dwindled. The numismatics section is suffering since decades. The pressure of work on the remaining staff is too heavy. This has resulted in the pending of too much of technical work. I believe that the great pilgrimage centres of our country may have hoards of inscriptions, both stone and copper plate. If they are brought to light the History of Bhārat and its Heritage shines better.

36. In this regard I appeal to the Union Government and the concerned Union Minister to take note of the seriousness of the condition of the Epigraphy Branch and salvage its problems. The only way out for its development is making the branch totally independent with the new name “**Epigraphical Survey of India**” under the direct control of the Union Ministry of Culture. The New Education Policy launched by the Union Government is too handy to promote this idea. Quite a good number of educated but unemployed youth can get employment opportunity throughout the country and they can become an asset to the nation. I request all the members, both jointly and individually, to make an appeal to the Prime Minister of India and the concerned Union Ministry for taking an urgent decision and action in this regard.

37. Friends, I feel that I have spoken too much and think that you have taken it with “*Hamsa-kṣhīra Nyāya*”. Last year God Manjunātha blessed us. Sri Dharmasthala Manjunathesvara College [Autonomus], Ujire hosted the 45th Conference of the Society.

Dr. D. Veerendra Heggade, the Dharmadhikari of Dharmasthala took keen interest and blessed us by inaugurating the conference. The conference, thereafter, went off very well. I take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. D. Veerendra Heggade and his brother Sri Harshendra Kumar for their whole hearted support and looking after us very well throughout the Conference time. Dharmasthala remains in our memory for the best possible arrangement. Also, it is my duty to express my sincere thanks to the Secretary of S.D.M. Educational Institutions, the Principal of S.D.M. College, his Staff and students who have strived hard to make the Conference a grand success.

38. To-day we are at Kalyan attending the 46th Conference hosted by the Hon'ble members of Birla College. The Principal of the college has taken lot of pains and interest in arranging this Conference. I express my sincere thanks to the institution and the personalities concerned. Lastly, but not the least, I humbly bow to you all for your patient hearing.

*Sarvē bhavaṃtu sukhinaha | sarve saṃtu nirāmaya | Sarvē bhadrāni paśyaṃtu |
mā kaśchid duhkha bhagbhavēt ||*

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30. My sincere thanks are due to Dr. Muniratnam, Director of Epigraphy, Mysore, for sharing information with regard to the progress of work of his Office. I am very happy with the present progress of this Office.

Meliaputti Plates of Lakṣmaṇarāmadeva, Gaṅga Year 550

Subrata Kumar Acharya

Abstract:

This is a set of copper plate inscription discovered from Meliaputti near Parlakhemundi in the Gajapati district of Odisha sometime before 1991 and copied by the Office of the Director Epigraphy in 1993-94. The inscription is edited here for the first time. It belongs to a chieftain named Lakṣmaṇarāmadeva of the Tailima (Cālukya) family ruling over a territorial division of Cikhali-pāñcāli. He was a subordinate ruler of the Eastern Gaṅgas of Kalinga. The inscription is dated in Gaṅga year 550, the Christian equivalent of which is 1048 CE. The ruling chief had donated four villages in the said division to one Revana Rāuta.

Keywords:

Eastern Gaṅga, Kalinga, Tailapa, Cālukya, Cikhali-pāñcāli.

The inscription edited here was first brought to notice in 1991 by N. Mukunda Rao in his book *Kalinga under the Eastern Gangas*. Rao included only the text of the inscription in an Appendix to his book. (Rao 1991: 209-10). It was copied by the Deputy Superintending Epigraphist (South Zone), Archaeological Survey of India, Madras in 1993-94 (ARIEp, 1993-94: A 1). It is now preserved in Telangana State Archaeological Museum, Hyderabad. During my last visit to the Office of the Director, Epigraphy, ASI, Mysore, in June 2018, I requested the Director to supply photographs of the inscription and he was kind enough to supply good photographs from the estampages of the inscription. I edit the inscription from the photographs.

This is a set of three oblong copper plates strung together by a circular ring passing through a hole in the left margin of the plates. Unfortunately, the measurement of the plates has not been recorded by the Office. The first plate is engraved on the inner face only, while the other two plates contain writings on both the sides. There are altogether forty-four lines of writing. The circular seal bears in relief a couchant bull facing left; figures of the Sun and the crescent Moon on the left side of the bull and on its right side a *ḍamaru* is depicted. A trident is depicted horizontally between the Sun and the crescent Moon. An elephant goad is also seen below the trident.

The characters belong to the Nāgarī as used in Kalinga in the 11th century CE and are similar to those of the Chicacole plates of Madhukāmārṇava of Gaṅga era 526/1024 CE. (Rao and Rao 1933-34: 168-70 and 180-82; Ramdas 1932: 272-75). The language of the inscription is Sanskrit and excepting one customary verse in lines 40-41, the rest is in prose. In respect of orthography, the letter ja is used in place of ya as in *jugala* for *yugala* (l. 8), *java* for *yāvat* (l. 39) and *jyena* for *yena* (l. 41); the initial vowels are often substituted for consonants as in *vṛdhae* for *vṛddhaye* (l. 30), *diśā* for *diśāyām* (l. 33), etc.; the anusvāra and the class nasal ña are occasionally interchanged as in *-alaṁkṛita* for *-alaṅkṛta* (l. 4), *vaṅśa* for *vaṁśa* (l. 42), and so on; and the words like *pāyata* for *pārjita* (l. 27), *iśana* for *iśānya* (l. 31), *agneyi* for

āgneya (l. 33), *thala* for *sthala* (l. 33), *utara* for *uttara* (l. 39), etc., are due to the influence of local pronunciation.

The date is given in line 42. It is written in decimal figures 550 of the prosperous and victorious reign of the Gaṅga dynasty. The initial year of the Gaṅga era is now unanimously accepted by scholars as 498 CE and as such the Christian equivalent of the charter under review would correspond to 1048 CE.

The introductory section of the charter (ll. 1-13) is the same conventional description of the Eastern Gaṅga kings of Kalinga. It agrees more or less with that of the Ponduru (Narasimham 1935: 23-30; Ramdas 1937: 7-12) and the Waltair plates of king Vajrahastadeva (Acharya 2016: 104-17), both issued from Dantapura in 500 Gaṅga era. It introduces the king Anantavarman, son of Devendravarman during whose reign this charter was issued. Lines 13-19 speak about the fact that the actual donor of the grant was one Lakṣmaṇarāmadeva who belonged to the Tailimi family and who obtained the five great sounds apparently from his overlord Anantavarman. Like the Eastern Gaṅga rulers he is also described as a devout worshipper of Śiva and the one who meditated upon the feet of his parents and had many good qualities. He was a subordinate chief ruling over Cikhalī-pāñcālī that included in Kalinga-maṇḍala. The epithets and qualities of the chieftain are also repeated in ll. 23-27.

The purport of the grant is mentioned in lines 19-23. It furnishes the information that Rāmadeva or Lakṣmaṇarāmadeva donated four villages namely Koṇiyarā-grāma, Masima-grāma, Luva and Sindhuravāḍā situated in Cikhalī-pāñcālī to Revana Rāuta, son of Vikhirāja and grandson of Ādityarāja migrated from Motetāḍi or Moṭṭavāḍi. Lines 27-30 suggest that the boundaries of the four villages were demarcated on all sides and it was granted as a permanent endowment. The villages were granted with water and land and the grant was made free from all kinds of obstructions and from the entry of regular and irregular troops. The villages were granted with an intention to gain religious merit and fame of the donor and his parents.

The boundaries of the gift villages are mentioned in lines 31-40. To the north-east up to the summit of the hill called Vaḍa-parvata; to the east the passage or road leading to the locality and again the plain land near the hill; to the south-east up to the hill; to the south up to the summit of the hill called Suliyā; to the south-west up to the summit of the Sinduravāḍā hill; again a hill and the village of Amayāgaḍa; to the west a stone fixed near an ant hill; to the north-west another stone fixed near an ant hill and from there up to the Sānadhura hill while going towards the junction of the hill, Masima (village) and the Palaśa (tree); and to the north up to the boundary stone fixed.

The inscription was written by Vināyaka, son of Māghatyana, a resident of Kalinganagara in the increasing and victorious year 550 of the Gaṅgas (ll. 42-43). The inscription however, furnishes the latest date in the Gaṅga era. The passage *mūraya 43 bhūmi* after the name of the writer at the end of the charter may mean that a plot of land measuring forty-three *mūrayas* was given to the writer of the grant.

Lakṣmaṇarāmadeva, the issuer of the record, was belonging to the Tailimi family and assumed the feudatory titles like *rāṇaka* and *samadhigata-pāñcamahāśavda*. He was ruling over Cikhalī-pāñcālī, a territorial unit attached to Kalinga-maṇḍala, in the Gaṅga year 550/1048 CE in the capacity of a feudatory chief under the Eastern Gaṅga ruler Anantavarman, son of Devendravarman.

From lines 21-22 of the inscription, it is also learnt that he was known as Rāmadeva-raṇodeva of the Cālukya family. Lakṣmaṇarāmadeva is already known to us from the Chicacole plates of the time of Madhukāmārṇavadeva of Gaṅga year 526/1024 CE, referred to above. He was a chieftain stationed at Cikhali-patana of Kalinga-maṇḍala when the Eastern Gaṅga overlord *Mahārājādhirāja* Madhukāmārṇava, son of Anantavarman, was ruling over Kalinga. He is called in the inscription as one who obtained five great sounds (*samadhigata-pañcamahāśavda*) apparently from his overlord and was an ornament of the Kudāla family (*kudāla-varṁśa-kula-tilaka*, l. 12). He was the very embodiment of Bhairava in defeating a Tamil enemy (*timila-vara-śoṣaṇa-pratyanta-bhairava*, l. 11). Although nothing is known about Kudāla-varṁśa, yet Lakṣmaṇarāmadeva who was a governor stationed at Cikhali-patana, apparently the headquarters of Cikhali-pañcāli that included in Kalinga-mandala, is the person of the same name that figured in the Meliaputti plates. The Upalada grant further refers to one Rāmadeva, who was born in the family of the Tailapas (*tailapa-varṁś-odbhava*) and was designated as *rāṇaka* and had obtained the five great sounds (*samadhigata-pañcamahāśavda*) usually held by the feudatory chiefs of the time. (Chhabra 1935-36: 141-43). He issued the charter from Cikhali. The charter is not dated and there is no reference to the overlord.

Lakṣmaṇarāmadeva and Rāmadeva of the three inscriptions referred to above are one and the same person. The reference to the fact that he belonged to the Cālukya family or the family of Tailapa/Tailimi in the three inscriptions hints at his probable connection with Tailapa II (957-997 CE), the famous Cālukya king of Kalyāṇi. Tailapa II was a feudatory of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas and governed the locality called Tardavāḍi in present day Bijapur district of Karnataka. The reference to this fact is recorded in an inscription dated in 957 CE (ARSIEp 1933-34: BK 178). He re-established the Cālukya rule by defeating the Rāṣṭrakūṭas during the reign of Karka II. According to an inscription dated in 973 CE, Tailapa II aided by the Kādamvas, defeated the Rāṣṭrakūṭas and made Mānyakheta his capital and thus restored the royal dignity of the Cālukyas. (Gopal 1981: 58-61). Credit goes to Someśvara I (1042-68 CE), son of Jayasimha II (1015-42 CE), who effectively protected the kingdom from the Coḷa aggression and shifted his capital to Kalyāṇi. B. Ch. Chhabra, while editing the Upalada plates, made a very pertinent observation that the *lāñchana* consisting of a standing boar and the elephant goad depicted on the seal of the plates of *Rāṇaka* Rāmadeva is the same usually found in the inscriptions of the Cālukyas. (Chhabra 1935-36: 141). Thus, Lakṣmaṇarāmadeva or Rāmadeva was a descendant of the Cālukya king Tailapa II and might have come to Kalinga in the late 10th or early 11th century CE. He governed the territorial unit of Cikhali-pañcāli roughly from 1024 to 1048 CE and was a feudatory chief of the Eastern Gaṅgas of Kalinga.

The charter under review discloses that Lakṣmaṇarāmadeva, the chieftain was ruling under the Eastern Gaṅga overlord Anantavarman, son of Devendravarman in Gaṅga year 550/1048 CE. While the Chicacole plates of Gaṅga year 526/1024 CE make us believe that his overlord was Madhukāmārṇava, son of Anantavarman. It may be noted here that the personal names of the Gaṅga rulers of Kalinga were usually found associated with the aliases of Anantavarman and Devendravarman alternatively. The copper plate grants of Vajrahasta III are unanimous about the chronology of the Gaṅga family together with the regnal periods of each king from Vajrahasta I onwards to the date of accession of king Vajrahasta III which took place in Śaka 960/1038 CE. (Sircar 1955-56: 191-96). Vajrahasta III (1038-70 CE) was a son of Kāmārṇava and Vinayamahādevī who succeeded Madhukāmārṇava (1018-38 CE), his paternal uncle and step-brother (*dvaimātuḥ*) of his father Kāmārṇava. Madhukāmārṇava in his Chicacole plates claimed himself to be the son of Anantavarman and, therefore, he assumed the title of Devendravarman and immediately after

him Vajrahasta III ascended to the throne of the Gaṅgas. (Rajaguru 1960: 350-55; Ramesan 1962: 137-52; Rao 1991: 1-26). The latter, therefore, assumed the title of Anantavarman. From the above discussion it is conclusively proved that Lakṣmaṇarāmadeva, the Cālukya chieftain of Cikhali-pāñcāli, served as a feudatory under Madhukāmārṇava *alias* Devendravarman in 1024 CE and Vajrahasta III *alias* Anantavarman in 1048 CE.

Lakṣmaṇarāmadeva granted four villages namely, Kaniyara, Masima, Luva and Sinduravāḍa situated in Chikhali-pāñcāli to one Revana-rāuta, son of Vikirāja and grandson of Adityarāja who migrated from Motavāḍi. The name Revana-rāutais also mentioned in the Chicacole plates of Madhukāmārṇava and there is reason to believe that he is the same person mentioned in the inscription under review. Besides, the Upalada plates mention the name of one Revana-nāyaka as the donee of the grant. In the Kambakaya plates of Udayāditya of the time of Devendravarman, dated Ś. 1003/1081 CE (Ramachandran 1931-32: 27-39), Revana-nāyaka's son Nārāyaṇa-nāyaka received the land grant. We are not sure whether Revana-rāuta is the same as Revana-nāyaka, but looking at the chronology of the above charters it appears that both were one and the same. If this proposition is conceded than we get four generations of the family of the grantee. At any rate, he was an officer in the court of the Tailapa king Rāmadeva or Lakṣmaṇarāmadeva, and the charter recorded a service grant. Very likely, Revana-rāuta received four villages as a reward for the heroic deeds against some enemies of his master. Although the villages were granted as permanent endowments, yet there is no reference to the fact that they were donated tax free. Possibly the beneficiary was supposed to pay some revenue annually to the chieftain. The amount of tax has been omitted inadvertently in this case. Revana-rāuta and his family hailed from Motavāḍi. There is a village called Mottabadi near Buguda in the Ganjam district of Odisha. We can provisionally identify this village with the place of migration of the donee of the grant.

As regards the localities mentioned in the grant, Cikhali-pāñcāli, the territorial unit governed by the chieftain and which was included in Kaliṅga-maṇḍala, i.e., the kingdom of the Eastern Gaṅgas, has been identified by S.N. Rajaguru with modern Tekkali in the Srikakulam district of Andhra Pradesh. (Rajaguru 1960: 179n). The four gift villages such as Kaṇiyārā, Masima, Luva and Sinduravāḍa as well as the village of Amayāgaḍa bordering gift villages cannot be identified at the present state of knowledge. But there is strong reason to locate them in the region around Meliaputti, Upalada and Mt. Mahendra, all situated to the north of Tekkali. In fact, there is place called Loba in the south-east of Mt. Mahendra which can be identified with Luva of the record under discussion. The hills named Vaḍa-parvata, Suliyā-parvata, Sindhuravāḍa-parvata, and Sānadhura-parvata should also be located in the same region. Vaḍa-parvata could be the Mt. Mahendra. Motavāḍi, the place of migration of the beneficiary, has already been provisionally identified with a village of same name in Ganjam district.

TEXT¹

First Plate; Second Side

1. svasti [[]] śrī(śrī) [a]marapurānukāriṇa[h] sarvvatu sukha-ramaṇī-
2. yāt vija[ya]vato vahala ṣu(su)dhā-dhava[la]-prāsāda-mālād-aviri-
3. ta vara vilāsini(nī) lalita-lāsyā-do[r]daṇḍa-paṇḍita kula(l-ā)-
4. laṁkri(ṅkr)ta śrī-kaliṅganagara-vāsakāta(t) prasidha(ddha) sidha(ddha) tāpa-

1 From the photographs.

5. s-ādhyāsita-kandar=odara mahendr-āca[lā]-mala-kanaka-giri-
6. śikhara śikhara pratiṣṭhitasya [sa-]car-ācara-guro sakala-
7. bhuvana-nirmmāṇaika sūtradhārasya śā(śa)śāṅka cūḍāmaṇer=bhaga-
8. vato gokala(rṇa)svāminah caraṇa-kamala-ju(yu)gala[h] praṇā-
9. mād-apagata kali-kalaṅko gaṅg-āmala-kula-tilaka sa(si)ta-kumuda-
10. kundenda(ndu)-vaddātta dikṣu-viddikṣu vinirggata yaśā[h] aneka āha[va]-

Second Plate; First Side

1. samasara sakṣabha janita-jaya-śavda[h] pratāp-āvanata samasta-sāmanta-
2. cakra-cu(cū)ḍmaṇi prabhā-maṇjarī-puñja-rañjita paramamāhesva(śva)ra deve-
3. ndravaromma tasya suta a[na]ntavaromma kuśali(lī) [||] kaliṅga-maṇḍala prativaddha śrī-
4. cikhali-pāñcālī || paramamāheśvara mātā-pitr-pād-ānu-
5. dhyāta naya-vinaya-dayā-dāna-dākṣanya-sairy-audā-
6. rya-satya-tyāga-guṇa-sampad-ādhāra-bhūtaḥ lakṣa(kṣma)-
7. ṇarāmadeva tailimi-vaṇś-o(mś-o)dbhava śaraṇāgata vajra-
8. pañjara pratyanta āṅkuśa samadhigata-pañca-mahāśavda
9. tu(tū)rya-ravo-cchādita-ā(rā)ti-cakra || kaṇiyārā-grāmeṇī(pi) ma-
10. sima-grāma || luva || sinduravāḍā || catu-grāma sameta

Second Plate; Second Side

1. revana rāutasa tāmva-śāsana || rāmadeva rāṇo-
2. deva || cālukya-vaṇś-o(mś-o)dbhava || motavāḍi vi[ni]rggata ādi-
3. ta dita ra(rā)ja || tasya suta vikhirāja[h] tasya suta[h] revaṇa rāuta || para-
4. mamāheśvara mātā-pitr-pād-ānudhyātaḥ samadhigata-pañca-
5. mahāśavda cchatra cāmara vilāsa vistārīta yaśo deva-dvi-
6. ja-guru-pāda-paṅkaja-bhramara dīnanāthasya kalpa-vṛkṣa
7. nava-niśita-niṣṭṛmś-ādhar-opāyata(=opārjjita) || kaṇiyārā-grāmoya
8. traya-grāma sameta || catu[s-]śī(sī)m-āvacchinna sa-jala-sthala sarva-pi(pī)-
9. ḍā-vādhā-vivarjita || a-ca(cā)ṭṭa-bhaṭṭa-pa(pra)veśa(ś-ā)-candr-ārka-kṣiti-samakālaṇ
10. mātā-pitr=ātmanya punyāyu yaśobhivṛdhaye ||

Third Plate; First Side

1. atha si(sī)mā-liṅgāni kathyate || iśana(aiśānya)-diśāyā vaḍa-parvata śi-
2. khara si(sī)mā || pu(pū)rva-diśāyā parvate samagra praveśa si(sī)mā || puna[h]
3. parvata sami(mī)pe thala-bhūmi praveśa si(sī)mā [||] agneyi(āgneya) diśā pa-
4. rvate si(sī)mā [||] dakṣiṇa-diśāyā suliyā parvata śikhara si(sī)mā ||
5. nairitya-diśāyā sinduravāḍā parvata śikhara si(sī)mā ||
6. punaḥ parvata amayā-gaḍa-grāma || paścima-diśāyā
7. valmika ropita śīla(lā) samā(sīmā) || vāyavya-diśā [valmika] ropi-
8. ta śīla(lā) si(sī)mā || triya trikuṭa parvata māsima palaśa si(sī)mā
9. jāva(yāvat) sānadhura parvvata si(sī)mā | māsima parvvata śikhara || uta(tta)ra-di-
10. sā(śā) ropita śīlāḥ [||] traya-trṇsati-koṭṛ=ādhivāśa(sa)kāt mā-
śrīta ||(l) jye(ye)na pālayat tadā jāta māvāṇśa(mahāvāṇśa)dyutaka [|| 1]

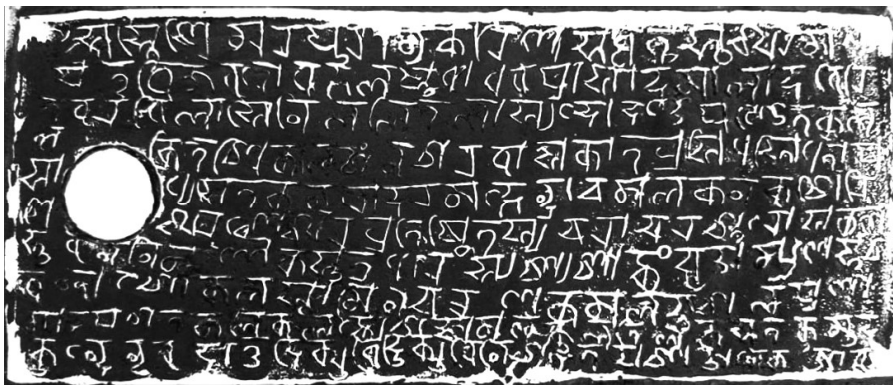
Third Plate; Second Side

1. gaṅga-vaṁśa(mśa)-pravarddhamāna-vija[ya]-rājya samvatsara śata 550 kaliṅga-
2. nagara vāstavya māghatyana suta viṇā(nā)yaka likhitaṁ || mūraya 43
3. bhūmi ||

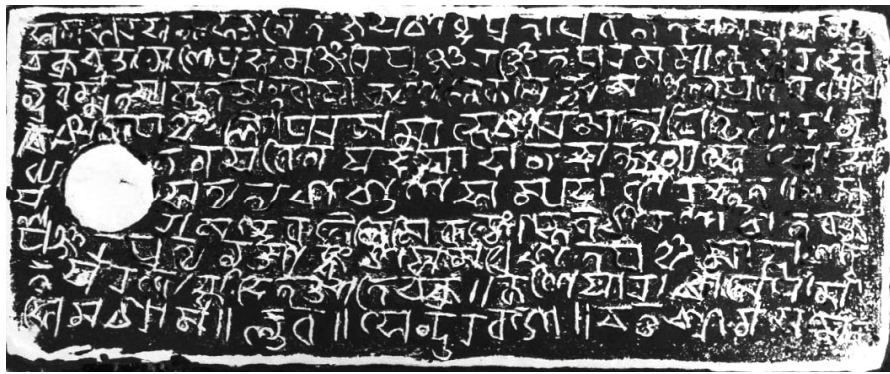
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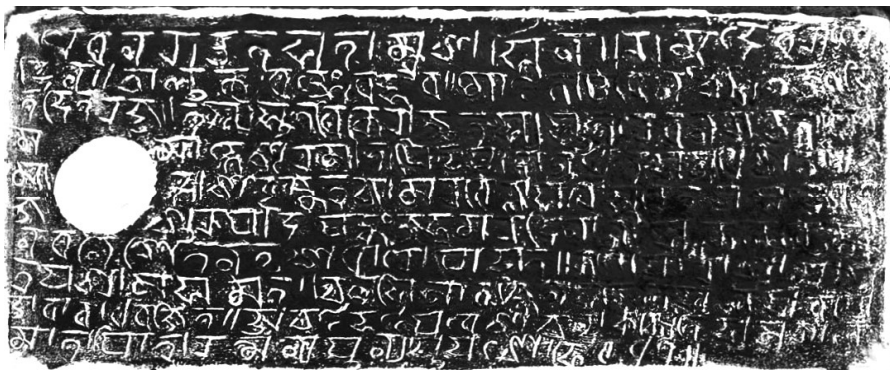
Meliaputti Plates of Lakṣmaṇarāmadeva, Gaṅga Year 550



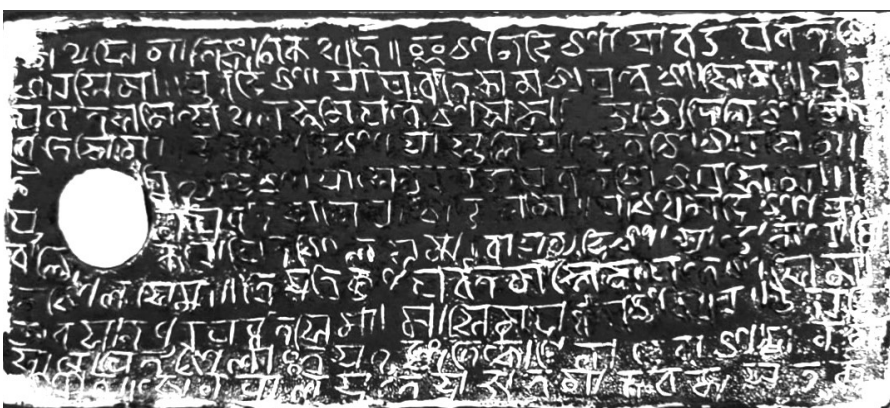
First Plate; Second Side



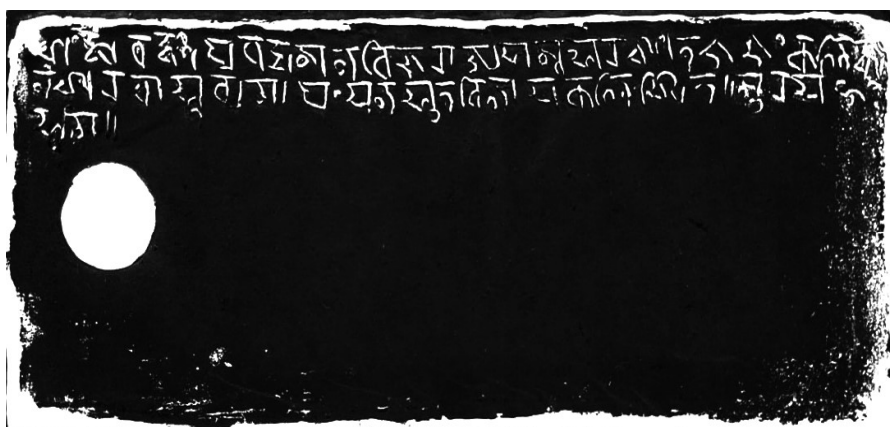
Second Plate; First Side



Second Plate; Second Side



Third Plate; First Side



Third Plate; Second Side

Prayāga copper plate of Yaśaḥkarnādeva

Jagdish Parshad

Abstract:

Copper plates are an important source for historical reconstruction. They give some indications of the social, economic and cultural life of the country. Being contemporary records, they are more dependable and reliable than other sources. Kalachurī dynasty is very rich in its copper plate inscriptional material. This research paper examines a copper plate grant of Kalachurī-Chedi dynasty issued by Yaśaḥkarnādeva preserved in the Gurukul Museum, Jhajjar, Haryana, dated Samvat 823.

Keywords:

Copper Plate, Prayāga, Yaśaḥkarnādeva, Virjānand Dēvkarni, Gurukul Jhajjar

Introduction:

The copper plate inscription edited here is now preserved in the Swāmī Omānand Sarswati Memorial Museum, Gurukul Jhajjar, Haryana. It was first reported by Virjanand Devakarni in his book *Prāchīna Tāmrapatra evaṁ Śilālekha*.¹ He states that these plates were purchased from Kauśāmbī² (Uttar Pradesh) in May 1967. Firstly, the owner of the copper plates, demanded Rs. 40,000 in total, Rs. 10,000 for each plate and Rs. 1000 for the royal seal but Swami Omanand and his disciple Yoganand Sastri, former Speaker of Delhi Vidhan Sabha requested him and finally he sold them Rs. 2900 for the museum (Rs. 700 for each plate and Rs. 100 for the royal seal).

Swami Omamand and Yoganand Sastri took them from Kauśāmbī to Sarai Aqeel barefoot on foot and then came to Delhi by train and bus. After resting in Kanyā Gurukul, Narela (Delhi) at night, he left for Bahādurgarh in a tongā. Thus, the copper plates reached Gurukul Jhajjar from Kauśāmbī and then the task of deciphering and reading was given to Vrijanand Devakarni, who read these copper plates and royal seal. These copper plates were issued by the king Yaśaḥkarnādeva and queen Vikkaldevī of Kalachurī dynasty. On request Vrijanand gave me permission to edit this copper plate and royal seal. On 6 November 2021, I went to Swami Omanand Memorial Museum, Gurukul Jhajjar, Haryana to examine the plates and took photographs. I am extremely grateful to Acharya Vrijanand and Museum for their kind gesture and extending me the necessary permission to edit the copper plates of Yaśaḥkarnādeva.

These are rectangular plates with writing on single sides measuring about 20 cm. x 14.5 cm. There are altogether forty lines; twenty-twenty on each plate. The royal seal, weights 1.950 kg and is 7.5 cm in diameter. The bottom of the seal is circular and contains the legend Śrīmad-Yaśaḥkarnādevaḥ in a single line running over the diameter, which is surmounted by the figure of Gaja-Lakshmi. Below the legend, there is a seated figure of Nandi facing proper left, with an incense-pot on either side.

The inscription is in a state of excellent preservation. The characters are of the Nāgarī

alphabets neatly engraved and the language is Sanskrit. The inscription records the grant of a village and consists of three parts. The first portion composed in different metres contains 22 lines in 24 verses eulogising the donor and his predecessors. The second portion from line 22 to 30 in prose style gives details of the grant and the last one from line 30 to 40 contains the usual benediction and imprecatory verses. The purport of the grant is to record the gift of a village Sirisa³ in Khō ncham pattalā talukā, district Prayāga to a brāhmaṇa Śrī Sukarṇṇa Bhaṭṭa, grandson of Śrī Sivasaraṇa Bhaṭṭa and son of Śrī Harisarmmaṇa by the king Yaśaḥkarṇadeva of the Kalachurī dynasty. The present plates were granted at Prayāga on the lunar eclipse, Sunday on a Pūrṇima in the bright half of the fortnight of Margasirśa in the year 823 (Chedi-saṁvat), which corresponds to, the 28th November 1072 A.D.⁴

The pedigree of Yaśaḥkarṇadeva is traced to Vishnu, Bodhan, Purūravas, Bharata, and Karttavīrya, the first historical personage, who is identical with the second prince of that name mentioned in the Bilhārī inscription, and Banāras plates of Karṇa. His son Kokall II is said to have been placed on the throne by the chief ministers of the realm. Kokall's son was Gāṅgeyadeva who became famous as Vikramāditya. In the course of his description, we are told that wishing to run away from the king Kuntala, he ceased to wield his spear and he along with his hundred wives obtained final salvation at Prayāga. His son and successor was Karṇadeva who constructed at Banāras a temple, named Karṇameru. He also established a settlement of the brāhmanas called Karṇāvati. He married a Hūna princess named Āvalladevī. They had a son named Yaśaḥkarṇa. Yaśaḥkarṇa routed the Andhra king and worshiped the god Bhīmeśvara near the Godāvarī. Yaśaḥkarṇadeva who is described in exactly like in the Khairhā⁵ or Khairā plates and Jabalpur plate.⁶ The record was written by Śrī Rāghaven.

Metres:

Verse 1, 10, 13, 15, 17: Mālinī; Verse 2: Aupachchhandaskam; Verse 3-8, 12, 16: Vasantatilakā; Verse 9: Upajāti Bhadrā; Verse 11: Upendravajrā Mālā; Verse 14: Salinī; Verse 18: Āryā; Verse 19, 21, 24, and 25 - 40: Anuṣṭup; Verse 20: Indravajrā; Verse 22: Svāgatā; Verse 23: Sārdūlavikrīḍitam.

TEXT

First Plate

1. Om namo brahmanell jayati jalajanābhastasya nābhīsarōjamjayati jayati tasmājjāta vānavjasūtiḥ|| atha jayati satasyāpatyama trista daksṇastadanu jayati janma-
2. Prāptavānavdhivandhuḥ|| [1] jathavodha nāmādirājaputramḥgrhayā mātarāmavjavāndhavasya ||tanayam janayāmvabhūva rājā gaganā-bhogataḍāga rājahānsaḥ|| [2] putram pu-
3. rūvasamaurasamāpa sunurddevasya saptajalarāsirasāyanasya || Āsīdananyasamabh āgyasatopabhogyā yasyorvvasī cha sukalatramihorvvarā cha || [3] atrānvaye
4. kila satādhika saptimedhayūporuddhaya munokta vivikta kīrttiḥ|| saptāvdhiratnarasa- nābharaṇābhīrāma visvamBharāsu bharato bharato vabhūva ||[4]helāgrhīta-
5. punaruktasamastastro gotre jayatyadhikamasya sa kārttavīryaḥ|| atraiva haihayam pānvaya pūrṇvapuṁsi rājeti nāma śāśalakṣmaṇi chakṣame yaḥ|| [5] sa himāchala e-

6. va kalachurivansamasūta kśamabhṛtām bharttā|| muktāmaṇibhirivāmalavṛttaiḥ
pūtaṁ mahīpatibhiḥ|| [6] tatṛānvaye nayavatām pravaro narendraḥ pauraṇḍrīmiva
purīmtripurīm punā-
7. naḥ|| Āsīnmadāndhanṛpagandhagajādhirājanirmāthakesariyuvā yuvarājadevaḥ ||
[7] siṅhāsane nṛpatisiṅhamamushya sūnumārūrupannavanibhartturamātyamukhyāḥ||
koka-
8. llamarnṇavachatusṣṭayavīchisaṅghasaṅghaṭṭaruddhachaturaṅgachamūprachāraṁ ||
[8] induprabhām nindati hāraguchcham jugupsate chāndanmāksīpanti|| yatra prab-
hau dūratraṁ prayāte viyoginī-
9. va pratibhāti kīrttiḥ|| [9] marakatamaṇipaṭṭapraudhavaśāḥ smitākśo nagaraparigha-
dairghī laṅghayandordvayena|| śīrasi kulīśapāto vairiṇām vīralakśmīpatirabhava-
dapatyaṁ yasya
10. Gaṅgeyadevaḥ|| [10] savīrasinhāsanamauliratnaṁ sa vikramaditya iti prasiddhaḥ||
yasmādakasmādapayānamichchannakuntanaḥ kuntalatām vabhār || [11] prāpte
prayāgavaṭamūlanivesavandhau
11. sārddham satena grhiṇībhīramutra muktiṁ|| putrosya khaḍgalitārikarīn-
drakumbhamuktāphalaiḥ sma kakubhorchhati karṇadevaḥ||[12] kanakasikharavel-
lad vajayanti samīraglapitagaga-
12. nākhelatkecharī chakrakhedaḥ|| kimaparamiḥa kāśyām yasya dugdhāvdhivīchīva-
layavahalakīrtteḥ kīrttanam karṇameruḥ|| [13] agrayaṁ dhāmstreyaso vedavidyāval-
likandaḥ svaḥ stravaṁ-
13. tyāḥ kīrtiṁ|| brahmastambho yena karṇāvaṭīti pratyashṭhāpi kśmātalabrahma-
lokaḥ|| [14] vyajani kalachurīṇām svāminā ten hūṇānvaya jalaṇidhi lakśmyām śrīma-
dāvalladevyām || śasabhṛduda-
14. yasaṅkāksūvdhadugdhāvdhivelāsahacharitayaśaśśīśriyaśaḥ karṇadevaḥ|| [15]
chāṇḍrārka dīpavati parvvatarājapūrṇa-khumbhāvabhāsini mahāvdhichatuska-
madhye || chakre purohitapuraskṛ-
15. tipūtakarmā dharmātmanosya hi pitaiva mahābhishekaḥ||[16] na khalasalabhagosṭ
hī pakṣapātasya pātraṁ na khalu kalushacharyākajjalodgārakāraḥ|| kalayati kalinā-
16. manyudgamaṁ yastriyāmā tamasi jayati jambūdviparatnapradīpaḥ|| [17] chintāmaṇ
iklīptaśuktiyugmakroḍe syād yadi kāmadenudugdham || dṛsyetadṛśostasya dātuh
sādṛsyam dha-
17. valāruneśaṇasya || [18] yaḥ kakupkuṇjarālānastambha sabrahmachāriṇaḥ||
kśmopānteshu jayastambhānudastambhayaduchchakaiḥ|| [19] yo brahmaṇām pāṇ
ishu pañchashāṇi dātāni dhatte paya-
18. saḥprshanti || taireva tṛshṇāmavadhūyate cha ratnākarepi prathyantyavajyām|| [20]
mahībharttā mahādānaistaistulapurushādibhiḥ|| garimṇā meruratyā-
19. -rthamkīrtārthayati yorthinaḥ|| [21] svarggarājagajadantaruchīni kśīranīranidhisāṅkha
suchīni || sārṅgitalpaphaṇikaṅchukabhaṇsi sphītatām dadha-
20. -ti yasya yasānsi|| [22] andhrādhisamarandhradorvīlasitām svachchhanda-
muchchhindatā yenābhyarchyata bhuribhiḥ sa bhagavan bhīmesvaro bhūshaṇaiḥ||
yasyā

Second Plate

21. bhyarṇagatā pranṛtyalaharībhrūvālligodāvarī gāyatyunmahansaṇādāmadhuraiḥstrotāḥ
svaraḥ saptabhiḥ|| [23] kurvvanmahīm brāhmaṇasādarikśātranirhaṇaḥ|| sārddham
parasurā-

22. meṇa yaḥ sparddhāmadhirohati || [24] sa cha paramabhaṭṭāraka mahārājā-dhirājaparamesvara śrīvāmadevapādānudhyāt parambhaṭṭāraka mahārājādhirāja-paramesva-
23. ra paramamāhesvara trikaliṅgādhipati nijabhujopārjīṭās vapati gajapati narapatirāja-trayādhipati śrīmadyaśaḥ karṇnadevaḥ || śrīmahādevīmahārāja-
24. putraḥ | mahāmantri | mahāmātyaḥ | mahāsāvantaḥ | mahāpurohitaḥ | mahāpratīhārāḥ | mahākṣapaṭalikaḥ | mahāpramātraḥ | mahāsvasādhanikaḥ | mahābhāṇḍāgarikaḥ | mahādhyā-
25. kṣāḥ | etānanyānscha pradāsyamānagrāmanivāsijanapadānśchāhūya yathārham sam-mānayati bodhayati samājyāpayati yathāviditametadastu bhavatām yathā sam-
26. vat 823 mārge māsi suklapakṣe paurṇimāyām prayāge veṇyām somgrahaṇe ravidine vṛhadgrhe khaunchamapattalāyām sirisāgrāmāḥ | saśīmāparyantaḥ | chaturāgha-
27. ṭavisuddhaḥ | sajalasthalaḥ | sāmramadhūkaḥ | sagarttosharaḥ | sanirggamapravesaḥ | salavaṇākaraḥ | sagoprachāraḥ | sajāṅgalānūpaḥ | vṛkṣārāmādbhedodyānatṛṇādisahi-
28. taḥ | bhāradvāja gotrāya | bhāradvājāṅgirasavārhaspatyatṛipravārāya | vājasaneyā-sākhine | bhaṭṭasrīśukarṇapautrāya | bhaṭṭasrīśivasaraṇaputrāya | harisarmmaṇe-
29. brāhmaṇāya | mātāpitrorātmanascha puṇyayaśobhivṛddhaye grāmoyamas mābhiḥ sā-sanatvena sampradataḥ || atra chābhyarthanā dāturbhavati yathā sarvvānetān bhāvi-
30. naḥ pārthivendrān bhūyo bhūyo yāchate rāmabhadraḥ sāmānyoyam Dharmmaseturṇ pānam Kāle kāle pālāniyo bhavadbhiḥ || [25] bahubhīrvvasudhā bhuktā rājibhiḥ sagarā-
31. - dibhiḥ | yasya yasya yadā bhūmistasya tasya tadā phalam || [26] suvarṇamekaṁ gāmekam bhūmerapyekamaṅgalaṁ || harnnarakamāproti yāvadāhūtasāṅplavam || [27] tadāgā-
32. nām sahastraṇa asvamedhaśatena cha || gavām kotipradānena bhūmiharttā na sudhyati || [28] savadattām pardattām vā yo hared vasuṇḍharām | sa viśṭhāyām kṛmīrbhūtvā piṭṛbhiḥ saha ma-
33. jīti || [29] phālākṛṣṭām mahimādyātsavījām sasyasālīnīm || yāvatsūryakṛtāmloke tāvatsvargge mahīyate || [30] shasṭīm varshasahasrāṇi svargge vasati bhūmidāḥ || āchchhe-
34. ttā chānumantā cha nānyeva narakam vaset || [31] vārihīneshvaraṇyeshu sushkakotāra-vāsinaḥ || kṛṣṇasarppāstu jāyante brahmadevasvahrīṇaḥ || [32] anyāyena hṛtā bhūmi-
35. -raṇyāyena tu hārīnaḥ || harato hārayantascha dahatyāsaptam Kulam || [33] asmatku-lakramagatāḥ samudāharanti anyaischa dānamidamabhyupamopanīyam || lakṣmīscha-
36. - lāsālilabudbudavaddharāyām dānam phalam paramataḥ pratipālānīyam || [34] pra-jāhitārtham sthitayaḥ praṇītā dharmmeshu vidvān paripālayettu || yo lobhamohāddha-rate durātmā-
37. sondho vrajedurggatimāsu kashṭam || [35] yāniha dattāni purā narendri[ndrai]rindānāni dharmārthayaśaskarāṇi || nirmālyavanti pramitāni tāni ko nāma sādhuḥ punarādadīta || [36] bhūmīm
38. yaḥ pratigrhṇāti yaścha bhūmīm prayachchhati || ubhau tau puṇyakarm māṇau niyatam svarggagāminau || [37] saṅkho bhadraśanam chhatram varāsvā varavāraṇaḥ || bhūmi-dānasya chihnāni pha-
39. lametatpuraṇḍara || [38] asmin vanse parikṣīṇo yaḥ kaschinnṛpatirbhavet || tasyāham hastalagnosmi sāsanam na vyatikramet || [39] vātābhṛavibhramamidam Vasudhādhipa-
40. tyamāpātāmātramadhuro viśayopabhogāḥ || prāṇāstrāgnajalavindusamā narāṇām dharmāḥ Sakhā paramaho paralokayāne || [40] dharmmalekhi śrī rāghavena likhitam ||

Translation

Om! Adoration to Brahman!

(Verse 1) Glorious is the lotus-navelled (god), glorious is the lotus which sprang from his navel, (and) glorious is the (god) Brahmāborn from that lotus! Glorious again is his offspring Atri, and glorious is the friend of the ocean who had his birth from Atri's eye.

(V. 2) Now the king, who is the swan in the expanse of heaven, begat Bōdhana (i.e. Budha), the son of (that) primeval king, (who became) a son-in-law in the house of the friend of lotuses.

(V. 3) The son of the god (moon), who is the elixir of the seven oceans, obtained as a legitimate son Purūravas, who had here as his faithful wife Urvaśito be enjoyed (only) by hundreds of matchless blessings, and also the earth.

(V. 4) In this family verily was born Bharata, whose pure fame is proclaimed by the Yamunā, hemmed in by posts of more than hundred horse-sacrifices (performed by him); who was devoted to securing the well-being of the earth made beautiful by the jewelled girdle by the seven oceans.

(V. 5) Exceedingly glorious in his family that Kārtavīrya who wielded with ease all weapons, superfluous (though they were in his case), and who allowed the title of king only to the Moon, the progenitor of the family of these Haihaya princes.

(V. 6) As the Himālaya, the lord of mountains, produces a bamboo, which is rendered bright by stainless and round pearls, so did that lord of princes beget the Kalachuri family, which is purified by kings of spotless conduct.

(V. 7) In that family was a king, the foremost among those (who are) eminent for political wisdom, who purified Tripurī as Indra does his city, -Yuvarājadeva (II), who destroyed the lords of princes blinded by arrogance as a young lion kills the leading scent elephants infuriated by rut.

(V. 8) The chief ministers of that lord of the earth placed on the throne his son Kōkalla II, a lion-like prince, the advance of whose four-membered army was checked (only) by (its) encountering the multitude of waves of the four oceans.

(V. 9) That lord having gone far away, his fame appears like a woman separated from her husband; (for) throwing away the white sandal paste, she derides moon-light and detests pearl necklaces.

(V. 10) His offspring was Gāṅgeyadeva, a thunderbolt falling on the heads of (his) enemies, the lord of the fortune of heroes, whose chest was broad like an emerald tablet, and who, having smiling eyes, surpassed with both his arms the length of a city-bolt.

(V. 11) He (was) the crest-jewel of heroic prices; he (became) famous by the title of Vikramāditya; wishing suddenly to run away from whom (the lord of) Kuntala ceased to wield his spear.

(V. 12) When, fond of residing at the foot of the (holy) banyan tree at Prayāga, he attained salvation there together with his hundred wives, his son Karṇadeva worshipped the quarters with (the offerings of) pearls from the frontal globes of the best of enemies' elephants cleft by his sword.

(V. 13) What more (need we say about him) than that here at Kāśī the (temple) Karnameru proclaims his great fame, which is like the circle of waves of the milk-ocean (the temple which is so high that) it lessens the fatigue of multitudes of celestial damsels playing in the sky, with the breezes of the flags waving from its golden spires.

(V. 14) He established a settlement of Brāhmaṇas called Karṇāvati, the foremost abode of bliss, the root of the creeper of Vedic scholarship, the crown of the heavenly river (and) the world of Brahmā on the surface of the earth.

(V. 15) The lord of the Kalachurīs begot on the illustrious Āvalladevī, the goddess of fortune produced from the ocean of the Hūṇa family, the illustrious Yaśaḥ-karṇadeva, the splendour of whose fame is the companion of the waves of the milk-ocean, that surge up mistaking it for the rise of the moon.

(V. 16) Of this pious price the father, whose actions were pure, being guided by his family priest, performed himself the great coronation ceremony in the quadrangle (surrounded) by the great oceans, which had the sun and the moon as lamps and which was rendered resplendent by the lord of mountains as by a full jar.

(V. 17) Glorious is he, who, like a jewel-lamp of the Jambūdvīpa shines in the Kali age, as (the jewel-lamp shines) in the darkness of the night; who is not influenced by partiality for the assemblies of wicked men, as a jewel-lamp is not filled by the wings of night-months, and who does not display evil conduct as a jewel-lamp does not give out lamp-back.

(V. 18) If the milk of the cow of plenty were put in two shells made of the wish-fulfilling gem, then there would be seen a likeness with the white and red eyes of this liberal king.

(V. 19) He erected high pillars of victory near the confines of the earth, as companions of the posts to which the elephants of the quarters are tied.

(V. 20) (This) liberal (king) pours five or six drops of water on the hands of the Brāhmaṇas. Even with these, they satisfy their desire for wealth, and afterwards show their contempt (the ocean which is) the mine of jewels.

(V. 21) Occupying a high position like Meru, (this) ruler of the earth exceedingly gratifies the suppliants by his great gifts such as the tulā-purusha.

(V. 22) Bright as the tusks of the elephant of the lord of heaven, white like the conches of the milky ocean, and (resplendent) like the slough of the serpent which forms the couch of Vishnu, his fame has attained abundance.

(V. 23) Extirpating with ease the lord of Andhra, the graceful movements of whose arms were flawless, he worshiped with (the offering of) many ornaments the holy Bhīmeśvara, near whom the Gōdāvarī, with her dancing eye-brows of waves, sings his glory with the seven notes of her streams sweet with the cries of the intoxicated swans.

(V. 24) Extirpating the hostile Kshatriyas and bestowing the earth on Brāhmaṇas, he is (as it were) vying with Paraśurāma.

(Line 22) And he, the Paramabhaṭṭāraka, Mahārājādhirāja and Parameśvara, the illustrious Yaśaḥkarṇadeva, - the devout worshipper of Maheśvara, the lord of Trikaṇḍa, who has attained by his arm sovereignty over three kings, (viz.), the lord of horses, the lord of elephants and the lord of men, who meditates on the feet of the Paramabhaṭṭāraka, Mahārājādhirāja, and Parameśvara, the illustrious Vāmadeva (Śiva)- having called together the illustrious Mahādevī, the Mahārājaputra, the Mahāmantrin, the Mahāmātya, the Mahāsāmanta, the Mahāpurōhita, the Mahāpratihāra, the Mahākshapaṭalika, the Mahāpramātri, the Mahāśvasādhamika, the Mahābhāḍāgārika, (and) the Mahādhyaksha- these and other (officials) and (also) the inhabitants of the village which is to be granted, duty honours, informs and commands them (as follows):-

‘Be it known to you that on (the occasion of) the lunar eclipse, on Sunday, the Purnimā of the bright fortnight of the month Mārgaśīrṣa in the year 823, have given a grant for the increase of the religious merit and fame of (Our) mother and father and of our self, this village Sirisa, situated in the pattaḷa of Khōṇcham in the Prayāga district, to the extent of its limits, with its four boundaries well-determined, -together with land and water, together with mango and madhūka trees, together with its pits and barren land, together with

(the right of) egress and ingress, together with mines of salt, together with pasture-lands, together with arid and marshy lands, together with the groves of trees, the gardens of plants, grass and so forth, -to the Brāhmaṇa Hariśarma, the son of Sivasaraṇa Bhaṭṭa and grandson of

Sukarn Bhaṭṭ, who belongs to the Bhāradvājagōtrawhichhas the four pravaraś–Bhāradvāja, Aṅgīrasa, Barhaspatya, and Atri. In this matter (this) is the prayer⁷ of the donor-

(V. 25) Thus does blessed Rāma again and again conjure all these and future protectors of the earth:–Common to men is this bridge of religious merit to be guarded by you from time to time.

(V. 26) By any kings, Sagara and others, has the earth been enjoyed: Whosoever at any time has been the soil, his at that time has been the fruit of the previous bestowment (thereof).

(V. 27) He who deprives (a Brāhman) of even a single gold coin, a cow or a finger of land, abides in hell until the deluge.

(V. 28) The confiscator of land is not expiated by (excavating) a thousand tanks, by (performing) a hundred horse sacrifices (or) by the gift of ten million cows.

(V. 29) He who resumes land whether given by himself or by another, is born an insect in ordure (and) grovels there with his ancestors.

(V. 30) He who gives land furrowed by the plough together with seed and abounding with crop, abides in heaven so long as the sun continues to give light to the world.

(V. 31) The giver of land dwells sixty thousand years in heaven, the confiscator and he who consents to such an act, live so many years in hell.

(V. 32) They who seize property dedicated to Gods or Brāhmaṇs, are born as black serpents residing in dry caves in woods destitute of water.

(V. 33) (If) land (is) wrongly appropriated or wrongly caused to be appropriated, the usurper and his agent burn (in perpetual fire) until the 7th generation.

(V. 34) Those of our lineage declare that this gift should be approved by others. Fortune (of moon) is fickle like bubbles of water on this earth; gift alone is its fruit, therefore it should be preserved.

(V. 35) For the good of the people the laws have been established. The wise one should keep them in justice. The reprobate who from avarice or delusion shall usurp, will promptly incur a painful hell down below.

(V. 36) The gifts which have been here granted by former princes producing virtue, wealth and fame are comparable to the remains of offerings to the gods. What good man could resume them

(V. 37) He who receives land and he who gives, both are doors of meritorious acts and certainly go to heaven.

(V. 38) A conch, a couch, an umbrella, good horses, and good elephants are the indication of land gift. This is the fruit, O Purandara.

(V. 39) If any king is born in this family whose treasury is exhausted, of him I beg with clasped hands, - “let him not resume this grant.”

(V. 40) This sovereignty of the earth totters like the wind and the clouds; the enjoyment of realm is sweet but for an instant; the breath of man is like a drop of water on the tip of a blade of grass. Only religious merit is the friend on the journey to the other world.

(L. 41) Written by the illustrious Rāghaven a writer in (the department of) religion.

References

1. Devakarni, Virjānand, 2009, Prāchīna Tāmrapatra evṁSilālekha, Gurukul Jhajjar, Haryana Prāntīya Purātattava Saṅgrāhalaya.
2. It is located in the south-west of the Prayāga (Allahabad) on the north bank of the Yamunā river about 55 km away from Allahabad. It was the capital of the Vatsa kingdom, one of the sixteen Mahājanapadas.

3. Sirisa is a town and a nagar pañchāyat and Uruwān Tehsil in Allahabad district in Uttar Pradesh. It is the biggest town area in the Allahabad district. The town has huge religious importance, being on the bank of the River Ganges area. It is located 49 km to the east of District headquarters Allahabad, 13 km from Uruwān, and 253 km from State capital Lucknow.
4. I am thankful to Prof Man Mohan Sharma, Jyotishsāchārya, for help in calculating the date of the copper plate inscription with the help of Indian Jyotish methods.
5. Rai Bahadur Hirā Lāl, (1913-14) “Khairhā Plates of Yaśaḥkarnadeva”, *Epigraphia Indica*, vol. XII, edited by Sten Konow, New Delhi, Director General, Archaeological Survey of India, pp. 205-217.
6. F. Kielhorn, 1894, “Jabalpur Copper Plate of Yaśaḥkarnadeva [AD 1122]”, *Epigraphia Indica*, vol. II, edited by Jas. Burgess, Calcutta, The Superintendent of Government Printing India, pp. 1-7.
7. Like Khairhā Plate inscription this plate has also sixteen benedictives and imprecatory verses. (Rai Bahadur Hirā Lāl, (1913-14) “Khairhā Plates of Yaśaḥkarnadeva”, p. 217.)



Royal Seal of Yaśaḥkarnadeva

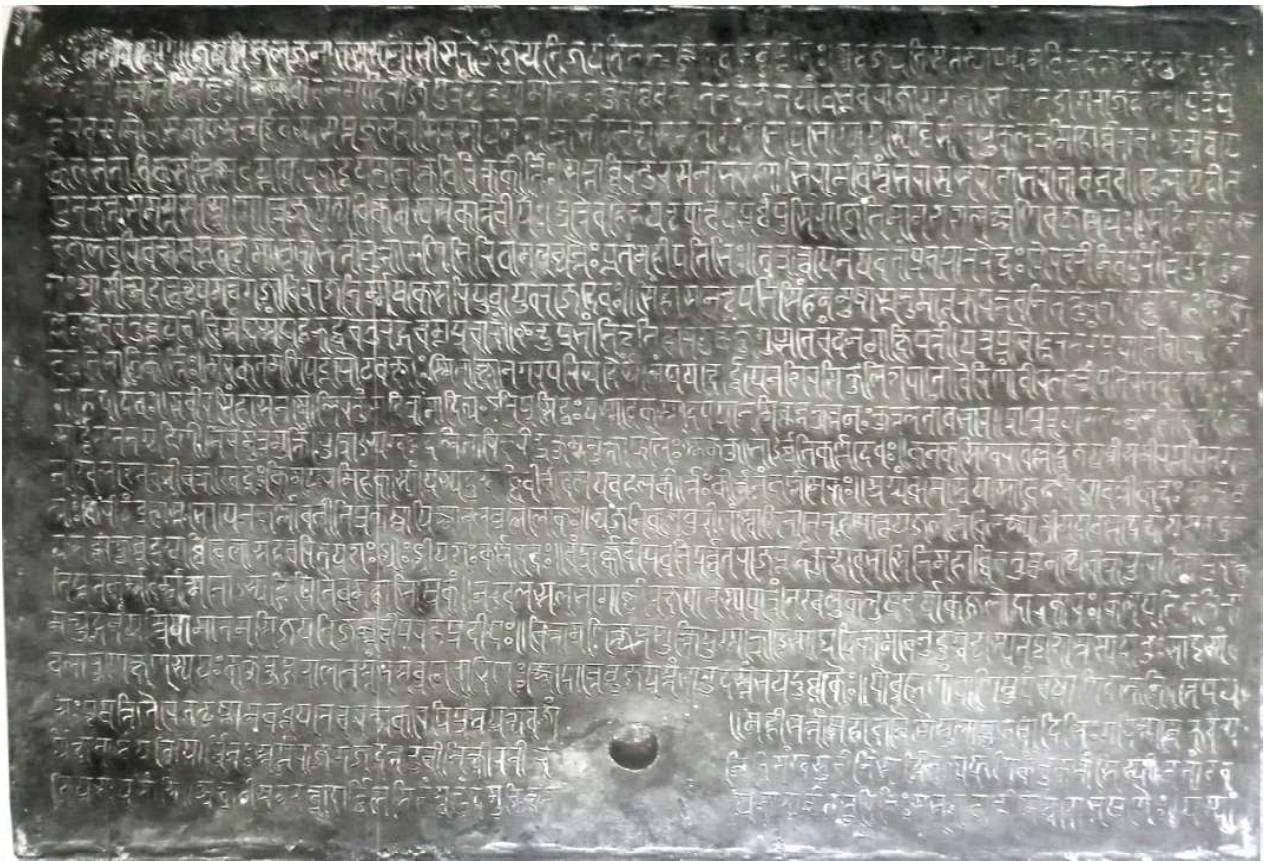


Plate I

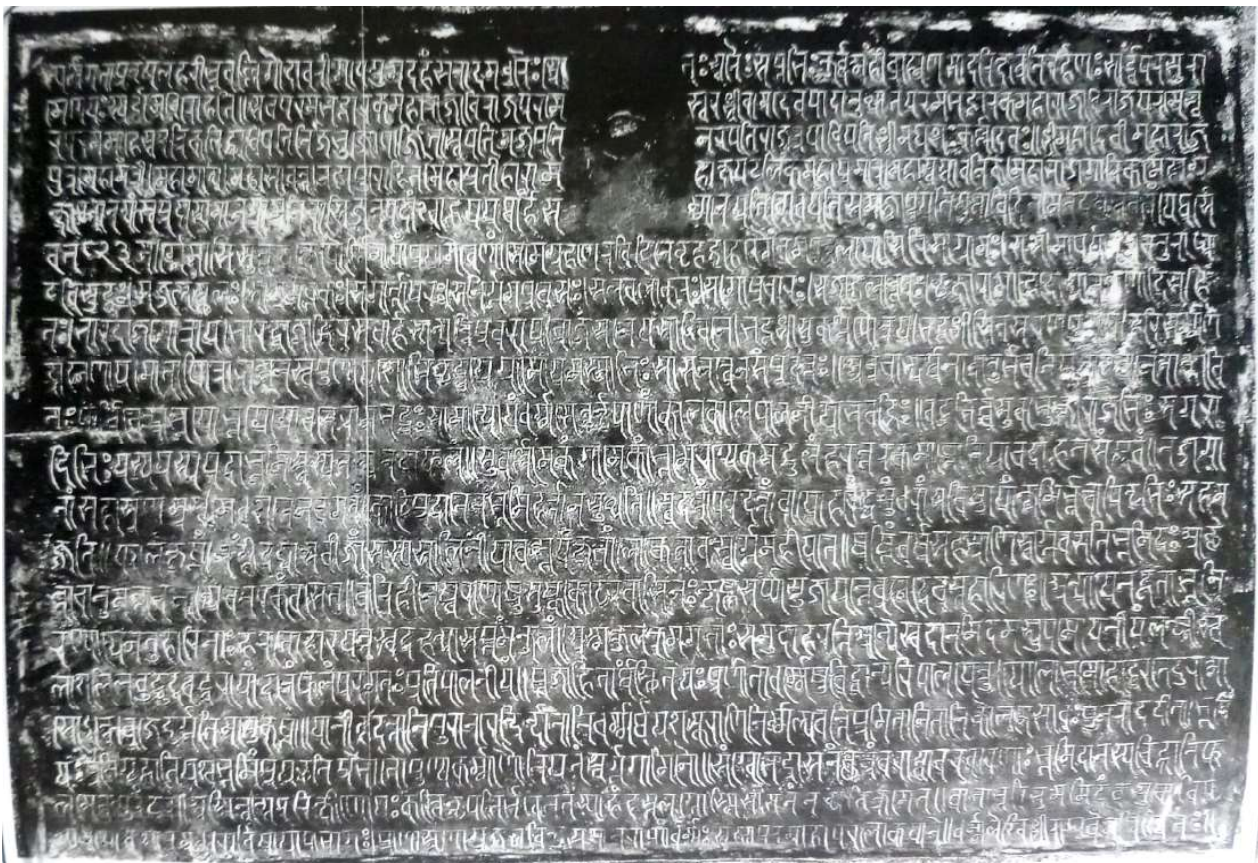


Plate II

New inscriptions from Durgā Kuṇḍ, Chunnār

Aditya Kumar Singireddy

Abstract:

This paper studies a set of inscriptions engraved on the wall in the cave of Durgā Māta temple surroundings in Chunnār, locally called Durgā kōh. These inscriptions, written in Brāhmī, late Brāhmī, early Nāgarī and Nāgarī scripts in Sanskrit and local dialect, seems to record the names of pilgrims.



Keywords:

Brāhmī, Chunnār, Durgā kōh, late Brāhmī, Nāgarī

A set of single line inscriptions engraved on the walls of the cave locally known as Durgā Kōh in the Durgā Māta temple at Durgā kuṇḍ in Chunnar taluk, Mirzapur district, Uttara Pradesh, is a protected monument of ASI, Saranath circle.

Earlier in 1953, Epigraphy Branch of ASI made an attempt to copy these inscriptions. But due to constant flow of water from the top of the wall where the inscriptions are engraved it became difficult to copy the inscriptions and only 24 of them were copied and listed in the Annual Report of Indian Epigraphy of the year 1952-53. The remaining unnoticed inscriptions came to light through photographs received from the good offices of the SA, ASI, Sarnath circle. Subsequently the site was visited by me accompanied by Mr. Mahesh Chandra, MTS. After a fruitful wait for 3 days till the flow of water got reduced we could examine the inscriptions. As a result 8 new inscriptions came to light. Among them 2 are in two lines and the other 6 are single line writings. The inscriptions are of different time periods written in Brāhmī, late Brāhmī, and Nāgarī scripts and the languages are Sanskrit and local dialect. They seem to record the names of pilgrims.

Decipherment of the Inscriptions

Sno	Photograph	Text	Language	Script	Date
1		<i>Jayaṇa</i>	Sanskrit	Brāhmī	2 nd c.CE
2		Vāvaharōna	Sanskrit	late Brāhmī	4th c. CE

3

*Samatāyivi*

Sanskrit

late
Brāhmī4th c.
CE

4

*Īśanasha[du]
dhi*

Sanskrit

late
Brāhmī4th c.
CE

5

*Nagara[ka]*

Sanskrit

late
Brāhmī5th c.
CE

6

*Vachhaka*

Sanskrit

Nāgarī

10th c.
CE

7

*1 Rāvaka*Local dia-
lect

Nāgarī

11th
c.CE*2 Rālala*

Memorial Stones related to commemoration of vows based on inscriptions

Dr. Priya Thakur

Abstract:

The idea of heroism has always commanded appreciation and recognition from the society. Such men, who altruistically pledged and gave their life for the protection of their village people and property, were given the position of hero and later one can observe the trend of these heroes acquiring the status of demigod in the village, especially in southern India. The idea and iconography of the hero was uniform in the different part of the country since early medieval period. This act of self-sacrifice was also deeply associated with the religious fervor of the period and the memorial stones became a visible medium of propagation of the idea of voluntary death and the glory of the act. The present paper is a study of epigraphs related to the memorial stones recording the commemoration of self-sacrifice based on a vow by the deceased in a socio-political as well as religious context.

Keywords:

Commemoration, memorial stone, vow, sacrifice

Introduction

Several global traditions of memorial art serve didactic functions; they aim to inspire heroic or pious behavior among the living. For example, religious and political martyrs are memorialized to celebrate their selfless acts and to inspire the living. (Belli 2014: 7) Hero stones commemorated many forms of noble behavior in ancient India, such as death in battle, encounter with wild animals, or death while protecting people or cattle. Abstract religious principles were not sufficient to create a climate conducive to religious self-decapitation. Changes in politics, sectarian movements, and societal stress factors such as war, religious persecution, epidemic disease, or famine could and did influence an individual to take his or her life. (Storm 2014:61) One of the ways in which the societies or groups construct their identities is to conceive of themselves as continuously existing groups or societies. (Connerton 1989: 21) The valor and sacrifice of the heroes were recognized by the rulers and the public. According to Settari and Kalaburgi, (1982: 17)

“... The age (early medieval times) expected chivalry from every able-bodied individual, just it expected charity from the wealthy citizen. The hero- whether a chieftain or a soldier- took upon

Memorials commemorating Oath or Vow

The notion of self-sacrifice can be seen in literary as well as visual mediums across the historical period. Dave (1965: 24-25) mentions an Indus seal with a probable scene of human sacrifice to a tree deity or fertility goddess (?) with a male figure sitting on his knees in front of the deity and a unicorn standing behind him. Vogel (1931: 539-543) discusses the sculptural representations from the so-called *Draupadi ratha* and *vārāha maṇḍapa* at the Pallava period site of Mahābalipuram, Tamil Nadu related to self-sacrifice and suggests that the men sacrificing themselves to Goddess Durgā may be patron portraits. The heroes who gave their life on their master's orders (*ere-vesa*; *ere*-master and *vesa*-order) formed a kind of bravery with martial connotation – where the heroes were brave enough to accept or invite death but did not question the rationale behind it. The Kannaḍa

literature identified such heroes as *vēlevali*, *joḷavali*, *lenka* etc. *Vēle* means time or occasion, *pāli* means duty or obligation; the principle and philosophy of the *vēlevalis* were to do their duty and fulfill their obligation whenever they were called upon. The *joḷavalis* were different group of men who declared their vow in return for subsistence. *Joḷa* means millet and *joḷavalis* received subsistence from their masters. (Settar and Kalburgi, 1982: 31-33)

Veluthat (1990: 151-159) discusses the *vēlevali* and *garuḍa* traditions involving the individual soldiers attached to the chiefs taking oath of unswerving loyalty to them even in death and states that this institution occurs in the Kannada records from the beginning of the 9th century in high number. Veluthat (1990: 154) also points out to the fact that there are rare examples of person abrogating the oath of *vēlevali* who received punishment and highlights the notion of instinct of self-preservation in conflict with obligations of a socio-political nature. The Mevundi inscription of CE 865 is one of the earliest records making a clear reference to the institution of *vēlevali*. This record state that a *vēlavadica*, Retteyana, took the king for his real parents and that he took an oath to die if his master died. His master died while he was away and he could see only his master's body burning in the funeral pyre. He immediately cut his head off. (Krishnamacharlu 1940: Ins. 11)

The term '*garuḍa*' was used in the Hoysala records to denote the *vēlevalis*. The implication is perhaps that the servant stood to his master in the same way that Garuḍa did to Vishnu. Thus, the expression *garuḍa* which, to begin with denoted bravery, loyalty etc., came, by the time of the Hoysalas, to stand for those who laid down their lives following the death of their masters. (Veluthat 1990: 154) By the 13th century, this *garuḍa* tradition had reached at its peak as reflected in the inscriptions that mention one thousand of heroes (called as *lenkas*) died with Kuvaralakshma who committed *garuḍa* when his master Hoysala Vīra Ballala died. (Narasimhamurthy 1990: 9) An elite and well-trained force of bodyguard s known as *Garuḍas* protected the members of the Hoysala royal family at all times. Hero stones erected in memory of these bodyguards are called *Garuḍa* pillars. The *Garuḍa* pillar at the Hoysalēśvara temple in Halebīḍu was erected in honor of Kuvara Lakshma, a minister and bodyguard of King Vīra Ballāla II. (Pl. 1) Based on the epigraphical evidences, Veluthat (1990: 155) states that the terms: *vēlevadicas*, *garuḍas* and *lenkas* were different names for a band of trusted soldiers gathered around the person of the king or some other political chief and bound to him by an oath of allegiance to follow him even in death.

The Western Gaṅga records mention about the *vēlavalis*, who were loyal bodyguards of the royalty, were fierce warriors under oath (*vēle*). They moved with the royal family and were expected to fight for the master and be willing to lay down their lives in the process. If the king died, the *vēlavali* were required to self-immolate on the funeral pyre of the master. (Adiga 2006: 233-34)

Two inscriptions record instances of friends having thrown themselves into the fire out of sorrow for their late masters, the Gaṅgā kings Nītimārga and Satyavākya, respectively. Such vows, once made, were apparently not merely expected to be carried out, but sometimes the votary was asked to make good his words, for example, in the 5th year of Tribhuvanmalla Vīra Someśvara IV, i.e. 1185 CE, his senior wife Lachchala Devi died. Bōka, an officer of the king, had previously taken a vow that he will die with the Devi. On his master calling him, saying, '*you are the brave man who with resolution have spoken of taking off your head,*' with no light courage, Bōka gave his head, while the world applauded, saying 'he did so at the very instant.' (Aiyangar 1985: 129-131) A record dated c. 991 CE informs that a man named Kaṭega took a vow to offer his head to the goddess Guṇḍabbe of Havye, if his king Sāntivarman got a son; a son was soon born and then

Kaṭega allowed the royal soldiers to cut off his head, and of course went to heaven. (Rice 1904a: 81) A śirōchheda (cutting of head) stone of Kalyāṇa Chālukya period from Gadag Museum shows a man cutting the head off a seated man facing away from him. (Pl. 3)

The practice of *siditale*, a form of self-sacrifice, is also mentioned in an inscription from Chitradurga dated 1215 CE. It states that when Honnavve Nayakitti, mother of Halivana Savanta, died, Honni, a Malaya Nayakitti, gave her head to the hook and attained *svarga*. (Abhishankar 1969: 45) One interesting example from Nidugal shows the narrative of the self-sacrifice and the attainment of *śivaloka* by a man and woman. (Pl. 3) The stone represents the tradition of *siḍḍitale* or bursting (cutting) of one's head as offering. The man committed *siḍḍitale* and the wife performed *sati* – thus both attained heaven. The narratives in the second and topmost panels are similar to the traditional hero stones where the couple is being carried to the heaven by the celestial nymphs on a palanquin. (Thakur 2019: 53)

One interesting example comes from Nidugal site in Tumkur district which has Śūla Brahma depiction on a stone. (Pl. 4) This relief is carved on a black basalt stone and represents two male figures standing in *tribhanga* on the either sides of two spears placed in the centre part of the panel. The face portion and left hand of the male figure standing on the left side of the spear is damaged. According to local Vīraśaiva traditions, these male figures are identified as Gundayya and Brahmayya famous in the folk traditions as ardent devotees. (Pujar 2010: 88-89) Both figures are shown touching the spears with their one hand and the other hand is holding a small *Liṅga*. (Thakur and Moorti 2018: 239) The Belgali inscription from Hassan district of mid- 10th century CE registers the donation of the village of Belgali to Ankada Katayya, who was the *vēḷe* or loyal retainer of Mahādevi Revakānimmaḍi Gaṅga. This grant is for perpetuity and it is specifically stated that the royal and local tax officials were not to enter the village and the right of *abhyantara siddhi* or tax-free grant that vested in Ankada Katayya and his successors. (Gopal 1984: 8)

The Jaina memorial stones called as *Nishidi* represent examples of memorials dedicated to people committing *sallēkhna* i.e. starving oneself to death in fulfillment of a vow; by falling on a sharp piercing weapon like arrow or spear; by sitting on a sharp object thus piercing the body. The *sallēkhna* ceremony was performed by men and women alike, who devoted themselves to contemplation of the divinity for days without food or water – several such instances are recorded in the inscriptions from sites like Śravanabelagola.

Discussion

Kuppuswamy (1982: 307) analyzed the economic factors governing the memorial stones in Karnataka by examining the purpose, content and procedure and proportion and value of grants made on such occasions. The hero's family was also offered some kind of gift or economical relief as evident from inscriptions. Such land grants were known as *bāl-gaḷchu*, *kalnāḍu*, *śivane*, *koḍagi* or nettara- koḍagi. (Rice 1909: 171) Two records of Gaṅga period mention the donation of land as *vālgaḷchu/ bālgaḷchu* for the heroes who served the Gaṅga general Siyegalla died fighting the enemies and some land was granted to the fallen hero. (Sastri 1955: Tm 86 and Tm 94) Another inscription records a grant of land as *talgaḷchu*. (Sastri 1955: Tm 99) Some Hoysala records dated early 14th century CE mention about grant of a village as *koḍagi*. (Sastri 1955: Tm 79, Tm 105 and Ck 68). Another interesting record from the same period also clearly mentions that such grants were transferable as it states the recipient of the village Hiriyaguṇḍagal as the *koḍagi* transferred it to his son-in-law at the time of the marriage of his daughter. (Sastri: 1955, Tm 106).

In conclusion, one can understand the important economical and social contexts reflected in these memorial stone inscriptions which offer information about the recognition and financial reward for the ultimate acts of bravery for various causes by men and women. (Thakur 2021: 344) The grants along with the memorials provided a prestigious social status to the family members in their society and at the same time served as a formal monument dedicated to the memory of the hero. Thus, the act of taking ones' own life was commemorated by the family and the fulfillment of such vows were considered as an act of grand bravery as well as loyal gestures.

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Memorial stone representing sidditale by a couple, Nidugal



Garuda Pillar at Halebidu

Memorial Pillars in Brahmanical Context: An Analytical Survey

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Susmita Basu Majumdar

Abstract:

Memorials are part of human civilization from a very ancient past. The origin of the tradition of erecting memorials in India may be traced back to the pre common era. The most common form of the memorials was memorial pillar. The three most prominent religions, i.e. Brahmanism, Buddhism and Jainism adopted the tradition of erecting memorial pillars. In the present article we will focus on the Brahmanical tradition of erecting memorial pillars and its gradual evolution.

Keywords:

Chhāyāstambha, Yashṭhi, Gotraśailikā, Pālīya, Govardhana

Memorial stones with inscriptions form a special genre in epigraphic studies. It has been a subject of study by several scholars in the past. This paper attempts to address the desideratum of a general survey or a critical appraisal of the epigraphic data from various categories of memorial pillars for a better understanding of the early Indian society and the norms and practices related to death and death rituals and commemorative practices. Since it is a huge corpus we shall restrict ourselves to an analytical study of the select memorial pillar inscriptions associated with Brahmanical culture of early and early medieval period, unearthed from various parts of the Indian subcontinent, for having a better understanding of the social attitude towards death. Death has always a stigmatic effect on the society and very often epigraphic records work as the mirror of the society. Therefore we will take the opportunity to analyse memorial pillar inscriptions not only from the epigraphic perspective but also try to engage with its socio-cultural aspect. The paper addresses several issues like the geographical aspect and the category of records, their names and evolution like the *chhāyāstambha*, *pālīya*, *govardhana*, *yashṭhi*, *gotraśailikā* and so on. This paper will investigate through several Indian memorial pillar inscriptions for having a practical insight of Brāhmaṇical society and try to relate the textual references with epigraphic data for highlighting the existing social practices.

Memorial pillars are commonly termed as *chhāyākambha*, *chhāyāthambha*, *chhāyāstambha* or *balayasthi*, *lashthi*, śilalashthi, *yashṭhi*, *yathi* etc. in epigraphic records. D.R. Patil (1982: 47 - 50) thinks that the origin of the memorial pillars may be traced back to the period of composition of the later Vedic literature as archaeological data suggests. In this case he has used the evidence from the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*. But Patil cites the reference of a copper plate inscription which is Buddhist in context found near the Sui Viharastupa. This copper plate inscription may be dated to c. 1st century CE written in Kharoshṭhi script. On the basis of this inscription he concluded that the tradition of erecting memorial stones was prevalent among the Buddhists as well (Patil 1982: 52).

The term *chhāyāstambha* denotes a memorial pillar which may or may not be sculpted. However often such pillars are found with symbolic representations or image of the dead person or his religious affiliation and visual narratives from his life (Sircar *et.al.* 1987a: 20 - 21). The

chhāyāstambha type of memorials are found from sites in Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh like Pawni, Nāgārjunakoṇḍa and so on. These records mostly are early historic and have been assigned to around 3rd century CE. (Sarkar 1982: 199) The *chhāyāstambha* memorials are free standing limestone pillars and one of these from Nāgārjunakoṇḍa was part of a Buddhist monastery. These memorials commemorate death of four distinct groups – members of royal family, chieftains and royal personnel, priests and/or persons associated with religious institutions and soldiers (Sarkar 1982: 199 - 201). The sole exception is that of an artisan whose death has also been commemorated in Nāgārjunakoṇḍa. With the change in the geographical locale we find that the term *chhāyā* was adopted in neighbouring upper Mahānadī region i.e. present day Chhattisgarh. But here it does not come with the suffix *stambha* as these were memorial stones and not pillars. Further it is worth mentioning that in one of the records the term *chhāyā* is used as a suffix to *nisa* which has been taken from the technical term *nisidhi*. *Chhāyā* here replaces ‘*dhi*’ which means in ‘memory of’.

Andhra-Telangana-Eastern Maharashtra Complex (*Chhāyāstambhas*):

Coming back to the geographical context of the Andhra-Maharashtra region of Deccan one finds the profusion of such records issued in the early historic phase. One of these *chhāyāstambhas* was erected in the memory of Vāśishṭhiputra Chāmtamūla (Sircar 1987b: 1 - 4). In this inscription the king has been represented in several scenes. The inscription is basically a panegyric of Chāmtamūla eulogising his generosity. This memorial was however erected in the reign of his successor Vīrapurushadatta. The *chhāyāstambha* erected during the reign of Rudrapurishadatta commemorates the death of queen and mother of Rudrapurishadatta, Varmabhaṭā. This is the lone *chhāyāstambha* in Nāgārjunakoṇḍa, erected in the memory of a woman (Sircar 1987a: 22). Another inscription of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa was erected in the memory of a member of the royal family Elī Ehavūladāsa, the brother of king Ehuvala Chāmtamūla. The prefix Elī clearly reflects the administrative post which he held i.e. the post of *mahāsenāpati* (Sircar 1987a: 22).

A few broken inscriptions have been recovered from Nāgārjunakoṇḍa which have the depiction of a person riding a horse, an elephant or a chariot these are dedicated to or were issued in memory of *senāpatis* or *mahātalavāras* (Sarkar 1982: 203). One of these inscriptions commemorates the death of Chāmtapula, a Kulahaka chief. Here Chāmtapula has been honoured with epithets which indicate that he was an expert in seizing elephants and who subdued his enemies (Sircar 1987b: 13 - 14). Another inscription mentions of *mahāsenāpati mahātalavara* Mayabhala. In this inscription Mayabhala has been shown riding on a chariot (Sircar 1987b: 13 - 14).

Five *chhāyāstambhas* are found to be erected in the memory of dead soldiers. Mention of the term *chhāyāstambha* on these pillars suggests that these are memorial inscriptions. At least three names can be deciphered from these inscriptions. These names are Raṭapura, Karadaru and Haraka. Haraka has been mentioned as a *raṭhika*. Raṭapura and Karadaru were perhaps *senāpatis* (Sircar 1987b: 14 - 16).

Chhāyāstambhas in Nāgārjunakoṇḍa also were raised in memory of religious personages which is the fourth category as mentioned above. One inscription refers to Kodaraka who was āryakabhaṭṭāraka and *yatisamaṇakṛta*¹ (Sircar 1987b: 13). *Yati* in this context has been used to indicate a person who has renounced worldly life. This inscription being discovered from the vicinity of a temple probably indicates its Brahmanical affiliation. Another memorial inscription from Nāgārjunakoṇḍa was dedicated to a certain artisan or *avaseni* named Mūlabhūta (Sircar 1987b: 16).

A *chhāyāstambha* of third or fourth century CE has been found from Gangaperuru which records the death of Gona during a cattle raid or *go grahaṇa*. This is one of the earliest epigraphic evidences of death during a cattle raid. (Sarkar 1982: 207)

From Maharashtra the Pawni pillar inscription of the time of *Mahākshatrāpa Kumāra* Rupiamma is quite interesting. It is mentioned as a *chhāyākambha* which was erected in the memory of Rupiamma who belonged to Kārdamaka family of Śaka lineage. This inscription has been assigned to c. 2nd century CE. (Mirashi 1965: 51 - 54)

It is interesting to note that a memorial inscription found from Gurrampodu of Nalagonda district, Telangana refers to the erection of a memorial pillar in the memory of Devalayya. Here the term used to denote a memorial is *sasavakambha*. This term *kambha* is derived from *stambha* or *kambha* which was in use in this Andhra-Telangana-Eastern Maharashtra complex.

***Yashṭhi* memorials (Gujarat Complex):**

Inscriptions referring to *balayashṭhi*, *yashṭhi* or *lashṭi* also belong to the memorial pillar category but these do not bear any sculptural representation of dead person. The geographical expanse where this term was used in memorial context includes two regions - on the western part we find its use in Gujarat and it was also used in middle Ganga valley especially the area around Uttar Pradesh. Perhaps the term *bala* here has been derived from term *balaya* and it may be assumed that these kinds of memorial pillars were erected within an encircled area. The earliest of these kinds of inscriptions were issued in the early historic phase. Andhau inscriptions of the time of *Mahākshatrāpa* Rudradāman mention such memorial pillars (Banerji 1985: 19 - 25). R. D. Banerji has assigned a date as early as c.130 CE for these records. One inscription of this group mentions that it is a *lashṭi* or memorial pillar, which was erected by Madana, son of Sīhila in the memory of his sister Jesṭhvirā (Banerji 1985: 19 - 25). The second of these Andhau inscriptions was dedicated in the memory of Ṛshabhadeva, son of Sīhila (Banerji 1985: 24). Third Andhau inscription refers to a *lashṭi* which was erected by Madana in the memory of his wife Yaśadatā. Here Yaśadatā has been mentioned as a śramaṇeri or a female ascetic (Banerji 1985: 24). The last of the Andhau inscriptions also states of erection of a *laśṭi* in the memory of Ṛshabhadeva, son of Tresṭadata. This Ṛshabhadeva was a different person from the Ṛshabhadeva mentioned in the second Andhau inscription (Banerji 1985: 24). Here he is referred as a śramaṇera². Interestingly the first three Andhau inscriptions record death of three members who belonged to the same family. We do not know whether Ṛshabhadeva of the fourth inscription was connected with the family of Madana and his mother Sīhila. If he was connected with the family of Madana then it was a family memorial. Mentions of such memorials (*gotraśailikā*) are available in Supiya pillar edict of the time of Skandagupta (Chhabra 1981: 317 - 319). The use of the terms śramaṇeri and śramaṇera³ tempts one to affiliate these memorials with either Buddhists or Jainas but another fascinating point to be noticed in these four inscriptions is that all these inscriptions were issued in the dark fortnight i.e. *kṛṣṇapākṣa* of the month of *phālguna*. There are śāstric prescriptions of performing śrāddha in the dark fortnight of the month. It may be assumed that these memorial pillars were actually erected on the occasion of śrāddha of the concerned persons. Therefore these pillars may be termed also as post funeral pillars. In the absence of any evidence of performance of such rites and rituals by Buddhists and Jainas in the dark fortnight or establishment of such post funeral memorials by these two communities one can assume as a hypothesis that these were Brahmanical records.

***Yashṭhi* memorials (Middle Ganga Complex):**

Reference to *balayashṭhi* may also be found in a recently found pillar inscription from Babhaniyava in the Varanasi district. This inscription has been dated in the 2nd century CE on the basis of palaeography. It is in Sanskrit and it is partially damaged. The inscription refers to the installation of a *balayashṭhi* by Purnavardha(na). Once again the religious affiliation of Purnavardhana is not quite clear from this record.

Terms like *yashṭhi* or *yathi* also appear in some later inscriptions from this region. Bhumara pillar inscription of the time of Hastin may be discussed in this context. This inscription has been

dated in the 6th century CE (Sircar 1987c: 167 - 172). The term *valayashṭhi* mentioned here has been interpreted earlier as sacrificial pillar or boundary marker by Cunningham (Sircar 1987c: 167), but later D.C. Sircar interpreted the term *valayashṭhi* as memorial pillar (Sircar 1987c: 171). The inscription informs us that the memorial pillar was erected by Śivadāsa who was son of *grāmika* Vāsu and grandson of Indanā, in the kingdom of *Mahārāja* Hasti.

The Supiā pillar inscription (Chhabra *et.al.* 1981: 319), issued during the time of Gupta ruler Skandagupta (c. 460 CE) which has been mentioned above also uses the term *balayashṭhi* for indicating a memorial pillar. It is interesting to note that this *balayashṭhi* has been designated as a *gotraśailikā* erected by Varga who was a *grāmika*. As already mentioned above the term *gotraśailikā* denotes a family memorial pillar.

In this context mention may be made of later inscription issued during the reign of *mahārājādhirāja* Vallādeva c.1360 CE (Sircar 1987c: 172). The inscription refers to a person named Mahārājā, after whose death his two wives performed sati and a commemorative memorial pillar was erected in memory of these three dead persons. Interestingly enough the term used in this inscription to denote the memorial pillar is *gotra*. D.C. Sircar thinks that the term *gotra* is actually a changed version of the term *gotraśailikā* as referred to in the Bhumara pillar inscription and this memorial pillar was thus a family memorial (Sircar 1987c: 172).

Eran pillar inscription (Mirashi 1955: 605 - 611) of the time of Śrīdharavarman is another example of erection of a memorial pillar. This inscription may be dated back to the 4th century CE on the basis of the palaeography and language. This inscribed pillar was later converted into a Śivaliṅga. Śrīdharavarman has been designated as *mahākshatrapa* in this inscription and he was son of Śaka Nanda, who was a devotee of Mahāsenā or Kārtikeya. The inscription mentions about a *yashṭhi* erected by Satyanāga, the *senāpati* and ārakshita of *mahākshatrapa* and his family.

Another pillar inscription found from Kinnimangalam of Madurai district of Tamilnadu mentions to the erection of a pillar in the memory of Ekan Adan. This inscription may be dated to the 1st or 2nd CE composed in Tamil Brāhmī. Interestingly it refers to the erection of *kottam* and in Sangam literature which actually denotes memorial pillar or burial ground.

Viragal:

A recently discovered memorial inscription from Udayvara village of South Kanara district of Karnataka records the erection of a pillar in the memory of Gesappan by his wife Odidevi. The inscription was composed in Kannada language issued sometime in the 8th or 9th century CE. The term used here is *kallu* which has been adopted from the *virakal* tradition.

Rajasthan Complex (Govardhana) Memorials:

The term *Govardhana* which indicated memorial pillars was mostly used in inscriptions from Rajasthan. These are alternately termed as *Govardhanadvajas*⁴, *Govardhana* or as *Tīrthambas* (arrow shaped pillars, *tīra* or arrow+ *thamba* or pillar) which reflects its association with the followers of Krishna cult.

Another inscription from Pokran of 1013 CE says that a *govardhana* pillar was erected in the memory of a member of Guhila family who died during a *go graha* or a cattle raid (Chattopadhyaya 2012: 128). In this context two more Govardhana pillar inscriptions may also be discussed. First one is a unique record which commemorates the death of a poet named Ādivarāha (Chattopadhyaya 2012: 128). It was found near a Chāmūṇḍā temple at Jaisalmer c.1158 CE. Another inscription from Jaisalmer mentions that during the rule of Vijayarāja, his wife Rājādevī erected a *govardhana* in the memory of her grandson Sohapāla (Chattopadhyaya 2012: 128).

Rajasthan, Govardhana cum Sati Memorials:

Four such inscriptions are found from Nagaur district, Rajasthan. These inscriptions are dated in 686 CE, 688 CE, 692 CE and 770 CE. The text of these inscriptions clearly reflects that they were sati memorials yet are also mentioned as *govardhana* pillars. Each of them refers to the practice of *sati* or self-immolation by four women separately on the above mentioned years (Chattopadhyaya 2012: 127). Another such *sati* memorial record is found from Puskar of 1130 CE mentioning the death of Hīrādevī, wife of Kolhava (Chattopadhyaya 2012: 128). Hīrādevī perhaps also committed sati. Lohari inscription of 1179 CE informs about the death of Jalasala and his nine wives. Wives of Jalasala probably performed *satī* after his death (Chattopadhyaya 2012: 128).

Gujarat – Rajasthan Complex: Pāliyas

In Guajrat and Rajasthan one find the use of both the terms *yashṭhi* and *pāliyas* for memorials. *Yashṭhis* were basically memorial pillars whereas *pāliyas* were memorial stones and not necessarily pillars besides the fact that the former was a term used in early context and the latter was used in a later period. However a superficial survey also brings to light the fact that *pāliyas* were mostly issued in elite context or urban context whereas the *yashṭhis* were more from rural background. *Pāliyas* were little bit different in appearance from the memorial pillars. These may be defined as memorial steles. B.D. Chattopadhyaya contemplates that these *pāliyas* were modified forms of earlier *Govardhana* pillars (Chattopadhyaya 2012: 126). H. Sarkar thinks that the Mulwasar inscription of the time of *mahākshatrpa* Svāmī Rudrasena I was actually a *pāliya* (Sarkar 1982: 205), although we do not find any direct mention of *pāliya* or of any specific term to indicate a memorial in this inscription. The date of this inscription is c. 200 CE. On the basis of the outer appearance of this inscription he had formed his opinion. The inscription was dedicated to the memory of the son of *Vāñijaka* (Sarkar 1982: 206). Most of the *pāliyas* may be dated in early medieval period. These *pāliyas* are still regarded as the effigy of the dead ancestors and very often the family *pāliyas* are worshipped in a certain day of year. Saryu Doshi (1982: 162) considers that the *pāliyas* were actually memorial stones, which were believed to be the protector of the locality. *Pāliya* stone consists of the image of the dead person with sun and moon. Most of the *pāliya* stones are devoid of inscriptions, but some of them bear inscription. One of the *pāliya* of 1419 CE found from Phulka informs us about the death of Parmar Rāj Kāśiā, son of Maru Haria (Doshi 1982: 167). He died during a battle to protect his village, cows and women. Another *pāliya* found from Piprali of 1490 CE states that Rat Hemo died during a cattle raid (Doshi 1982: 167). *Pāliyas* were erected principally for commemorating death of the soldiers and the *satīs*, although there are *pāliyas* dedicated to pet animals and even for the men who died of snake bites.

Another record which falls into the *pāliya* category is the inscription issued in 1283 CE found near Bikaner. Besides the use of the term *pāliya* there is the use of another term *devalī* which is quite interesting (Chattopadhyaya 2012: 129).

Conclusion:

hroughout this article we have tried to relate Brāhmaṇical social norms with various processes of preserving memory of a dead man through the erections of memorial pillars. This research allows us to understand a gradual transition of the process of preserving memories. The earliest memorial stones menhirs, dolmen or *chhāyāstambhas* were associated with ancestral worship in one hand and preservation of memory on the other. Later with the growing complexities of society, memorials became the way of displaying economic affluence in one hand and connecting with the religious domain on the other. One may notice overlapping practice of installing memorials like *Pāliyas* or *Govardhanastambhas* in the western region of the subcontinent. This hints towards a cultural assimilation in one hand and shared practices among several groups on the other hand. It is interesting to point out how grief had been structuralized in early Brāhmaṇical society through

temples, *Śivaliṅgas* etc. We have also cited how the tradition of building memorial shrines or images or *liṅga* in Brāhmaṇism gradually propagated. Interestingly it may be noticed that the practice of installing memorials and incising inscriptions on it was quite prevalent in the western and southern parts of sub-continent. On the other hand northern and eastern parts of the sub – continent were refrained from such practices. Death rituals are generally water type practices and in most of the societies these do not evolve rapidly, thus the study of the memorials helps to understand the approach of society to commemorate the deceased persons.

Table 1

Geographical Distribution of the Memorial Pillars in India		
	Memorial Pillar Category	Place of Availability
	<i>Chhāyā</i> or <i>Chhāyāstambha</i>	Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh
	<i>Govardhana</i>	Rajasthan
	<i>GotraŚailikā</i>	Uttar Pradesh
	<i>Yashṭhi</i> or <i>lashṭhi</i> or <i>balayashṭhi</i>	Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Bihar
	<i>Pālīya</i>	Gujarat, Rajasthan
	<i>Virakal</i>	Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra
	<i>Devālī</i>	Rajasthan

Notes:

(Endnotes)

1. “*Yatisamaṇakṛita*” - this denotes a Jaina monk. ‘*Samaṇa*’ in Prākṛit is ‘*Śramaṇa*’ in Sanskrit. *Samaṇa*/*Śramaṇa* is a word commonly used to denote a Jaina. Hence, here ‘*Yatisamaṇakṛita*’ only means a Jaina monk. – Eds.
2. This term probably is indicating to Buddhist monk. Perhaps Rṣabhadeva was a Buddhist devotee, but the religious status of other members of this family is unknown.
3. *Śramaṇeri* and *Śramaṇera* are no doubt peculiarly formed Gujarati words corresponding to the Prākṛit words - *Śramaṇi* and *Śramaṇa* which only mean a Jaina. The entire discussion under section “*Yashṭhi* memorials (Gujarat Complex)” refers to Jaina memorials erected in honour of the deceased members of a particular family which was truly Jaina. Its Jaina affiliation is attested by the names of its members found in the records. – Eds.
4. The term *dhvajā* has been severally used to indicate pillar.

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Analysis of Seal and Sealings in Archaeological Context, Urēn, Bihar

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Niraj Kr. Mishra

Abstract:

The village Urēn, in Surajgarha Block of Lakhisarai District, Bihar, located 160 kms from Patna, was described as rich with many Buddhist stupas, monasteries and Brahmanical temples by the famous Buddhist pilgrim traveller Hieūn Tsang who visited the region in 7th century CE. The archaeological excavations conducted by the Excavation Branch III of the Archaeological Survey of India, Patna during 2016 – 17 and 2017 - 18 revealed a continuous habitation of nearly 2600 years from the middle of the 2nd millennium BCE to the early 2nd millennium CE. Apart from numerous architectural features and potsherds, the excavation also revealed a number of terracotta sealings and a solitary ivory seal. The legends and symbols engraved on them are of great historical significance and it is the main focal point of discussion in this article. Importance is equally given to the archaeological context in which these antiquities are found, so that its cultural affiliation and purpose can be better understood.

Keywords:

Baḍkī Pahāri, Bihar, Black and Red Ware, Black Slipped Ware, Brahmanical, Brāhmī, Buddhist, Gaṅga, Guild, Gupta, Hieūn Tsang, Ivory, Kushāna, Lakhisarai, Prakṛit, Monghyr, Nāgarī, Northern Black Polished Ware, Kīūl, Pālā, Post-Gupta, Potsherds, Seal, Sealing, Stupa, Śunga, Surajgarha, Trade, Yamuna, Urēn.

Introduction

The village Urēn (25°10'3"N; 86°13'11"E), in Surajgarha Block of Lakhisarai District, Bihar, is located at a distance of 160 kms from Patna, the state capital and 30 kms from Lakhisarai, the district headquarter (Fig. 1).

Urēn falls within the larger geo-political region known as the South Bihar Plains. Settlement in this geographical unit generally conform to the hydrographic configuration of the land guided by the Gaṅga and her numerous tributaries and distributaries as well as the nature of land forms. Urēn locates itself at a geographical point of intersection of the active alluvial plains of the Gaṅga to the north and the comparatively infertile central rocky uplands to its South-Southeast. The area is fed by the dual flow of the river Kīūl to the northeast and the river Halōhar. The region lying immediately to the south of the Gaṅga and stretching along its bank is an alluvial belt which lies in the Kharagpūr hills. The sprawling Kharagpūr hills, extending in a wide area from east to west against the southern horizon dominates the view from atop the Urēn Pahāri. The isolated peak of the Urēn Pahāri is part of similar other low ranges and equally isolated peaks that are recognized to be part of Chotanāgpūr plateau. Apart from the Kharagpūr hills the general physiography of the area is marked by agricultural fields (Fig. 2) (Bhattacharya *et. al.* 2017:195-196).

The first historical description of the general region of South Bihar is found in the account

of Hiüen Tsang, who passed through parts of this region during his travels in the first half of the 7th century CE. Hiüen Tsang describes Buddhist stupas, monasteries and brahmanical temples to south

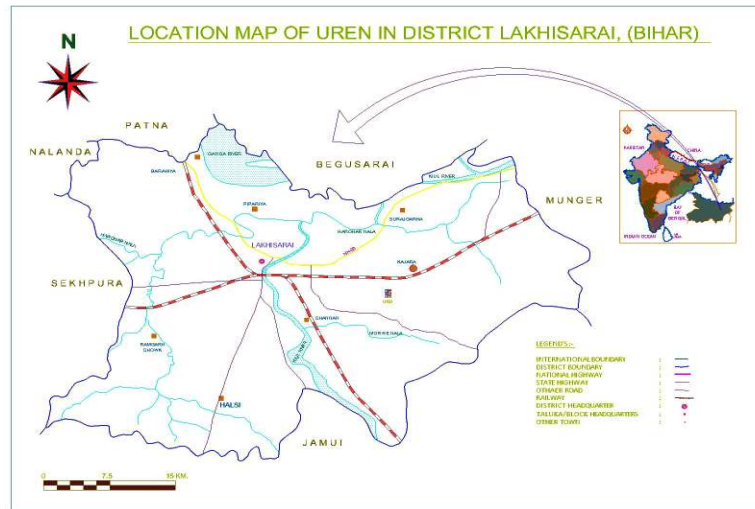


Fig. 1: Map locating Urēn in Lakshisarai district, Bihar state, India



Fig. 2: General physiography of Urēn and its surroundings

of the river Ganges eastward, from modern Sheikhpura to Lakhisarai and Monghyr, further identified by Sir A. Cunningham. Hiüen Tsang mentions that further east (from Rajaona in Lakhisarai) he passed through “forests and gorges of high mountains” (in all probability refer to the Kharagpūr Hills) and entered the country of ‘*I-lan-na-po-fa-to*’ (*Hiranya-Parvata*) which is identified by A. Cunningham to the region around Monghyr. Hiüen Tsang mentions that on the western frontier of this country (‘*I-lan-na-po-fa-to*’) was another hill which was hallowed by the presence of the Lord Buddha for three months during monsoons. It was at this hill that Buddha also defeated a demon named Vakula/Bakula (*Yo-c’ha Po-khu-la*). Hiüen Tsang also mentions the traces of the foot-prints of Buddha, a built stupa, numerous rock-markings and some hot water springs at the hill. Cunningham identifies this hill with the Mahādeva hill in the Kharagpūr hills (Cunningham: 1882). In 1892, L.A. Waddell physically verified the Mahādeva hill and stated that “*Mahādeva hill is certainly not the site referred to by pilgrim...*”. L.A. Waddell’s identification of the granite outcrop at Urēn with the solitary hill of Hiüen Tsang’s description seems more appealing from the geographical and antiquarian points of view. According to the Waddell “*the Urēn hill fully satisfies the pilgrim’s description, even to the minutest detail...*” (Waddell, 1892:1-22; Bhattacharya *et. al.* 2017:195-196).

Quite interestingly, though General Cunningham visited the areas in and around Urēn, he could not notice the antiquarian wealth of the site. In his report on the tour carried out in 1871-72, he describes in depth the antiquarian wealth of Rajaona, Kīul, Jaynagar, Nōngarh, Indpe, Birdabān (Cunningham 2000:151-162). Again in 1879-80 he revisited Rajaona, Monghyr, Bhīmbandh and Śingirikhi, all located in the vicinity of Urēn (Cunningham 1882:15-20). J.D.Beglar undertaken the tour of Lakhisarāi, Balgudar, Jaynagar, Nōngarh, Indpe in 1872-73 but could not notice the antiquarian wealth of Urēn (Beglar 1878). The archaeological importance of this site was first noticed by L. A. Waddell, who visited the village in 1892 and published a detailed report entitled “Discovery of Buddhist Remains at Mount Urēn in Mungir (Monghyr) district, and Identification of the site with a celebrated Hermitage of Buddha”, in the *Journal of Asiatic Society of Bengal*. He identified the Urēn hill with the one described by Hieūn Tsang as the place where Buddha stayed for three months during the monsoons. His description was justified by the findings made by Waddell. He noticed many rock engravings depicting symbols and motifs of Buddhist affiliation, ruins of a brick built *stupa* and numerous inscriptions engraved on the Urēn hill. He also reported many architectural and sculptural remains with or without inscriptions belonging to both Buddhist and Brahmanical faith from the village (Bhattacharya *et al.* 2017:196).

Archaeological Excavations: Settlement and Chrono-cultural succession

The archaeological excavations at Urēn was conducted during 2016-17 and 2017-18 under the direction of Dr. Goutami Bhattacharya the then S.A. (I/C) Excavation Branch - III, Patna, Bihar of Archaeological Survey of India. The ancient mound of Urēn is presently occupied by the modern population that gives no scope for the horizontal excavation. In order to obtain maximum result with least disturbance to the present populace, trenches were laid out in all four directions of the mound and also in the central high part known as *garh* area of the village. Archaeological excavations was taken up at URN IA and IB, located along the eastern slope of the mound, URN II located on the northern side of the mound, URN III approximately in the central high part of the mound, URN IV located at the western part of the village and URN V on the southern slope of the *Baḍki Pahāri* in the southern direction of the mound (Bhattacharya *et al.* 2017:201-202).

The antiquarian remains retrieved from the excavation, data gathered from the surface during the exploration of the village and Urēn hillock and detail examination of the extant architectural and epigraphical material conclusively proves the continuous habitation at the site approximately from the middle of the second millennium BCE to early second millennium CE (*ARIEp.* 2017 – 18 No. B 38 – 48 and *ARIEp.* 2018 – 19 No. B 58 – 79). The most detailed and unbroken cultural sequence of the site is preserved in the index trench URN III (Bhattacharya *et al.* 2019:91-93). On the basis of cultural material retrieved from this trench and supplemented with recorded evidences from the other trenches the chrono-cultural succession is as follows:

	Period I	: Black and Red Ware-Associated Rural Settlement
	Period II	: Black Slipped Ware-Associated Rural Settlement
	Period III	: Northern Black Polished Ware Settlement
	Period IV	: Sunga - Kushāna Period
	Period V	: Gupta Period
	Period VI	: Early Medieval (Post-Gupta and Pāla) Period

Archaeological context of each cultural period is defined by its cultural markers as well as confirmed by absolute dating of carbonic materials (Bhattacharya *et. al.* 2019: 95-96).

The earliest cultural period I belong to BRW associated rural settlement characterized by the presence of Black and Red Ware proto-historic pottery of the Ganga plain. The distinctive pottery markers are dish-on-stand, spouted vessels, post firing and white painting, etc., which were reported from the other sites of the region. The associated ceramic industry comprises of Black Ware and ubiquitous Red Ware. Other associated finds of this period include cut bones, stone debitage, stone celt, charred grains, terracotta hoppers, etc.

The evolving cultural period II is defined by the presence of Black Slipped Ware. Perforated vessels like jar, basin, dish, etc., are the pottery types of this period. Associated cultural materials include iron arrow head, stone celt terracotta beads, bone point, etc. The presence of reed impressed clay lumps is the only evidence of structural activity during this period.

Period III is distinguished by the presence of the famed NBPW. The recorded evidences of pottery types and other antiquarian remains of this period witnessed the overall improvement in growth and development of settlement. NBPW sherds of different hues have been reported from the excavated trenches. The NBPW cultural phase is marked by rich variety of antiquities, metal objects, etc. The notable finds of a sherd of Rouletted ware and a terracotta female figurine with distinctive non-Indic features of face and hair style indicates that Urēn probably participated in long distance trade network during this period. Structural activities of this period include post-holes, circular hut with sunken floor, terracotta ring well and broken pieces of tiles.

Period IV belongs to the early centuries of the Christian era co-terminus with the Kushāna period. The cultural material of the period was documented from all the excavated trenches except URN V. Here again we find a quantum jump in the material culture as attested by structural remains and other associated finds. Structural remains of the period have been documented in the form of bricks walls, a terracotta ring-well, an unlined well, burnt floor levels and large number of tiles. Burnt floor levels and associated finds of number of crucibles attest to intensive craft-activity during this period. A large number of terracotta sealings bearing personal names in characters of the 1st- 2nd century CE further strengthen our assumption on the upward mobility of the settlement as a whole. The palaeographic evidence gathered from the inscribed sealings also help in fixing the chronology of the associated cultural material. The kiln and its associated fire-activity area also help to strengthen our assumption on the advanced stage of craft-related activities at the site during this period. The cache of terracotta tokens all bearing a common motif resembling the Brāhmī letter *ka* and their find-spot compel us to postulate that they probably belong to craftsman guild. The available AMS date of this period is 6 CE-211 CE (Cal. Age).

Period V, Gupta period, was again recorded from all the trenches except URN V. Brick floors and brick walls are characterized by the typical Gupta feature of exclusively using brickbats in their construction, evidently procured from the structures of preceding culture. Hearths in association with floor levels have been documented from URN IIB. Multiple hearths in groups of two were also found from URN IIC. URN III gave evidence of a partially exposed structure which can be identified as a granary based on the discovery of large amount of charred grains-predominantly rice. Of the several antiquities belonging to this period, special mention may be made of a fragmentary bone comb. This comb is beautifully carved on both the sides. One side depicts auspicious symbols

like *svastika*, fish and conch, while the second side has the depiction of *Kalpa-vṛiksha* motif.

Period VI, post-Gupta and Pala period, at the site was dominated by the Buddhist monastic establishment. However, it is to be admitted that the said religious establishment pre-dated this period and in all probability was in existence from the preceding Gupta period. Nevertheless, it reached its zenith during the post-Gupta and Pālā periods. The long brick wall and its associated circular bastion, though heavily robbed, appear to have been part of a Buddhist monastic complex. Similar architectural features are known from the excavated Buddhist sites of Antichak (Bhagalpur), Jagjibānpūr, Māldah, (West Bengal) and the recently excavated site of Jainagar (Lakhisarāi). Numerous finds of inscribed Buddhist sculptures of the Pālā period as deciphered by D.C. Sircar, stupa and engravings of votive stupa on the adjoining hillock all lend their weight in favour of the flourishing Buddhist set-up at Ureñ. Brick walls, brick lined well, pieces of decorated stucco and lime floors are other structural remains belonging to the Pala period. The pottery repertoire is predominantly Red Ware. The surface decoration comprises of painted bands, mica application, applique and stamp decoration, etc. One inscribed sealing datable to 10th century CE was also found from the trenches. Other miscellaneous finds include iron nails, terracotta beads, balls, hopscotches, good numbers of lamps, miniature pots, etc. (Bhattacharya *et. al.* 2019:91-95).

Details of the seal and sealings:

The details of the legend on the individual seal/sealing (*ARIEp.2018 – 19* No. B 66 – 79), along with its photograph and accession number as registered by the Excavation Branch III, Patna is given below:

	Acc. No	Description of seal/sealing	Legend/Symbol	Language & Script	Date
	39	Circular terracotta sealing (Pl. 1)	<i>Bhala[dha]sa</i>	Prākṛit, Brāhmī	1 st century CE
	193	Elliptical terracotta sealing (Pl. 2)	<i>Dhanutara</i>	Do.	Do.
	Nil	Circular terracotta sealing (Pl. 3)	<i>Dhanutara</i> (Reversed legend)	Do.	Do.
	306	Terracotta lump (roughly spherical) bearing impression of a oval seal having zigzag design along its flank (Pl. 4)	Legend partly worn out at the beginning Reads . <i>visa</i>	Do.	Do.
	302	Spherical terracotta lump with impression of a circular seal (Pl. 5)	The legend <i>Ighagutasa</i> is prefixed by a symbol resembling Brāhmī letter <i>ka</i> with a prominent nail head.	Do.	Do.
	321	Elliptical terracotta sealing (Pl. 6)	Legend <i>Dasakasa</i> prefixed by a indistinct symbol	Do.	1 st -2 nd century CE.
	Nil	Terracotta lump (roughly spherical) bearing impression of a square seal (Pl. 7)	<i>Chapalasa</i>	Do.	Do.

	209	Terracotta lump (Irreguar in shape) bearing impression of a square seal (Pl. 8)	<i>Udaranasa</i>	Do.	2 nd century CE.
	462	Irregular oval shaped terracotta sealing (Pl. 9)	Legend <i>Sirikasa[pa]</i> prefixed by a indistinct circular symbol	Do.	Do.
	207	Circular terracotta sealing (Pl. 10)	<i>Revati[mi]tasa</i>	Do.	Do.
	208	Circular terracotta sealing with a zigzag design preserved at one flank (Pl. 11)	<i>Dasaka[sa]</i>	Do.	Do.
	203	Ivory seal having oval shaped matrix and a circular knob with a perforation at the handleportion. The body of the seal bears petal like decorations and beaded design along the rim (Pl. 12 and 13)	Legend <i>Namdisa</i> (engraved in negative) suffixed with a <i>svastika</i> symbol. The knob bears a symbol resembling the Brāhmī letter <i>ka</i> with a prominent nail-head.	Do.	Do.
	186	Irregular terracotta lump with impression of a square seal (Pl. 14)	<i>Pushya[sya]</i> Two symbols are noticed above the legend: <i>Svastika</i> and a symbol resembling Brāhmī letter <i>ka</i> with a prominent nail head.	Sanskrit, Brāhmī	Do.
	13	Irregular terracotta lump bearing impression of circular seal (fig. 15)	<i>[Śrī] Jāṇaka</i>	Sanskrit, Nāgarī	10 th century CE.

Thus the legend on the sealings are short words formed of three to six letters and seems to record names of its owner viz., Bhala[dha], Dhanutara, Ighaguta, Kasapa, Chapala, Dasaka, Revatimita, Uda[ra]na, Pushya and Ja[na]ka. The seal contains a legend carved in negative, which can be read as *Namdisa*, with probably a *svastika* symbol (damaged) prefixing the legend. The knob portion of the seal also bears an engraving, which can be identified as a symbol and is in the form of the Brahmi letter *ka*, with a prominent nail-head. Numerous sealings bearing only such *ka* like symbol with a pedestal like form attached to its base, was also found from the same excavation at Urēn. Similar symbol is also noticed on a sealing prefixing the legend *Ighagutasa* and also on another sealing with the legend *Pushyasya*.

Archaeological and Palaeographical context of the seal and sealings:

The excavation yielded different categories of antiquities. An important category among terracotta objects are sealings. Majority of sealings bear inscription and thus are useful

as chronological markers of associated cultural materials on the basis of their palaeography. The excavation has yielded fourteen sealings bearing legends and one inscribed ivory seal. Except one sealing that is written in Sanskrit language and Nāgarī script of 10th century CE the remaining sealings are paleographically dated to 1st-2nd centuries CE. They are in Prakṛit language and Brāhmī script. All the sealings bear personal names. The ivory seal-pendent, paleographically dated to 2nd century CE is another notable find as it is essentially a personal seal but it was also probably worn as a pendent as is evident from the extent perforations.

Another important finding from Kushāna period is more than two dozens of terracotta tokens from trench URN IB. Some of them were found in a cache kept in a bowl. All of them have a single uniform character/symbol that resembles the Brāhmī letter 'ka' with prominent triangular nail head on top (Pl. 16). The find spot compel us to postulate that they probably belong to craftsmen guild.

As stated above that majority of sealings are recorded from the Kushāna cultural phase i.e. period IV. The overall growth and development can be visualized in settlement during this period. The earliest evidence for the use of bricks in structural activities is noted from Kushāna period onwards. During the course of excavation craft activities also received an impetus suggested by the presence of number of crucibles and burnt floors. The evidences of copper smithy and iron smelting have also been recorded. Archaeological data shows that the material prosperity of Kushāna period gave rise to trade and commerce in the region. In archaeological context we may assume that the occurrence of terracotta sealings and tokens witnessed the commercial activities and the presence of mercantile guilds in the area.

The area of Urēn falls within the ancient Anga – Magadh region in the South Bihar Plain which is considered as one of the core areas of the Indian historical archaeology. The archaeological sites located in South Bihar Plains along the Ganges and its tributaries were well connected to both land and riverine routes (Chakrabarti 2001:170-72, 186). Several literary references and archaeological data clearly suggest that the region participated in long distance trade. The Buddhist literature mentions the movement of country boats along the Ganges as far as Sahajati, along the Yamuna as far as Kauśāmbi and downwards along the Ganges as far as Champa and Tamralipti. It was preferred to sail down from Vāraṇāsi to Tāmralipti despite the carvan route. The *Samudda-Vanija Jātaka* narrates a story of the village of carpenters near Vāraṇāsi, who, failing to deliver the goods for which they had been paid in advance, built a ship secretly, embarked with their families, went down the Ganges and out to an island overseas (*Jātaka* IV, 466, 15-17). The *Mahājanaka Jātaka*, which recounts the adventures of a prince who set out from Champa for Suvarṇabhūmi, also suggests that the Ganga was navigable from Bhagalpūr till the sea (*Jātaka* V & VI, 539, 19-22) ; (Sinha, 2016:25). The notable find of NBPW cultural phase from Urēn, is a sherd of Rouletted ware and a terracotta female figurine with non –Indic features indicates that Urēn probably participated in long distance trade.

The settlements around the Surajgarha were located at a turning point on the route from Magadha to Mungēr-Bhagalpūr (Anga) region and *vice-versa*. Therefore, any one approaching from Magadh to Munger must cross this region along the alignment of Kharagpūr range. This is exactly the zone where Urēn still fed by the Kīul and the Halohar rivers locates itself. Thus by the virtue of its location the people inhabiting the site would have taken a major role in the early historic Gangetic network of exchanges relating to production and consumption of ceramic, metals, stone

carvings and most importantly the preparation of alcoholic beverages which were consumed over a wider geographical territory (Chattopadhyay *et al.* 2008: 247-280). While archaeological materials suggested that the practice was essentially early historical, epigraphic records may indicate the continuity of such a traditional practice. An image inscription of as late as 8-9th CE from Balgudar, an area neighbouring Urēn, describes the donor of the image as Madhusinika(h), i.e. belonging to the class of honey collectors (Sircar, 1949-50 : 137-44). It is notable in this context that honey still forms a major component in the preparation of alcohol from Mahua flower in this region.

The site Urēn may have functioned as a nodal point in the trade network that routed valuable forest products from the Kharagpur Hills. In fact, the inhabitants of Urēn were procuring raw materials from different source area of the region. Scholars believe that during NBPW period villages were linked with local market centres. In fact the several village sites of Anga –Magadha region have yielded NBPW sherds and witnessed manufacturing and production of various goods. The frequency of artifacts from Champa and Oriya in Bhagalpur area, Urēn and Nongarh in Lakhisarai area showing the evidence of metal using activities (both iron and copper with its alloys), production of ceramics, stone carving and wine manufacturing. Scholars visualised the growth and development of these economic activities of the region in different stages from BRW phase and onwards. (Chattopadhyay *et al.* 2008: 247-280).

Thus the study of epigraphical date in association with archaeological findings proves useful, as it helps not only in the interpretation of epigraphical material but also aids in absolute dating of the associated archaeological artefacts and features.

Acknowledgement:

We would like to thank profusely Dr. Goutami Bhattacharya, the then Superintending Archaeologist (I/c), Excavation Branch III, Patna for approaching the Office of the Director (Epigraphy) for deciphering the legends on the sealings and seal and also for extending all possible support. We are grateful to Director (Epigraphy) for orally granting permission to edit the legends on the sealing and seal for the first time and to present the same in the 46th Annual Congress of the Epigraphical Society of India.

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Pl. 1: Sealing reading
Bhala[dha]sa, Uren, Bihar.



Pl. 2: Sealing reading
Dhanutara, Uren, Bihar.



Pl. 3: Sealing reading
Dhanutara (in reverse), Uren, Bihar.



Pl. 4: Sealing reading
.visa, Uren, Bihar.



Pl. 5: Sealing reading
Ighagutasa, Uren, Bihar



Pl. 6: Sealing reading
Dasakasa, Uren, Bihar



Pl. 7: Sealing reading
Chapalasa, Uren, Bihar



Pl. 8: Sealing reading
Udaranasa, Uren, Bihar



Pl. 9: Sealing reading
Sirikasa[pa], Uren, Bihar



Pl. 10: Sealing reading
Revati[mi]tasa, Uren, Bihar



Pl. 11: Sealing reading
Dasakasa, Uren, Bihar



Pl. 12: Ivory seal reading
Nandisa, Uren, Bihar



Pl. 13: Knob of the ivory seal with a symbol
resembling reading Brāhmī letter *Ka*, Uren,
Bihar



Pl. 14: Sealing reading
Pushya[sya], Uren, Bihar



Pl. 15: Sealing reading
[Sri] Janaka, Uren, Bihar



Pl. 16: A cache of sealings with a symbols re-
sembling Brāhmī letter 'ka'.

Jaina aspect of the Hathigumpha and other minor inscriptions at Udaygiri hills, Odisha

Charu Atul Shah

Abstract:

Epigraphy plays a very important role in understanding the history, geography, politics, social scenario of a society, religious beliefs and practices, different ideologies of a country's past. The earliest written evidence is seen in the rock edits of emperor Aśōka. Then on, we find many inscriptions on the walls of caves, pillars, temples, etc., caused to be engraved by the kings, their families, ministers, donors, craftsmen, etc. The inscriptions with their names, deeds and timeline helped historians trace our history. In this paper we will be looking into the Jaina aspect of the 1st century BCE cave inscriptions on the Udayagiri hills, near Bhubaneshwar, Odisha issued by Khāravela of Kalinga.

Keywords:

Khāravela, Kalinga, Rock cut caves, Inscriptions, Jainism.

Hathigumpha is a cavern discovered in Bhubaneshwar, Odisha during the early 18th century by the British explorers. The caves are dated between the 2nd and 1st century BCE, which remained hidden like many others in the Indian subcontinent, until their accidental discovery.

These inscriptions, carved on the façade and part of the inside of the roof were discovered by A. Sterling in 1825 and eye copied by Lt. Kittoe in 1837. A paper was presented by Sir James Princep in the Asiatic research journal. Since then, these have been studied by many scholars who have called them the Hathigumpha inscriptions, because of the shape of the cave onto which they are inscribed are elephant like, hence the name HATHI(elephant) GUMPHA(caves). These are situated on the southern side of the Udayagiri hills directly facing the rock edits of Aśōka at Dhauri.

The 17 lines composition is in *kāvya* style, engraved in Brāhmī script datable paleographically to 160 BCE. It describes the activities of king Khāravela, a staunch Jaina follower, whose services towards Jainism are incomparable, but yet said to be without any shades of fanaticism, it adds to importance from Jaina history point of view. According to historian Romila Thapar these inscriptions are the earliest biographical sketches of a king in India. The period of Kharavela is said to be from 2nd c. BCE to 1st BCE.

The inscription starts with Jaina religious symbols and salutations to the Arhats and to the Siddhas reading “*Namo arahantanam namo sava Siddhanam*”.

Making it the earliest epigraphical evidence of Navakar mantra, we also find the first written reference to Bharatvarsha, the ancient name for our country. The Jaina monarch conducted military campaigns in the western parts of India, to the north Magadha and Anga and to the south towards northern part of Andhra Pradesh, amassed a lot of wealth and made these regions open to the spread and rise of Jainism, saving the honour of the religion he was born in, during the 8th year of his reign. He drove back the Indo-Greek king who had plans to capture Magadha and was camping at

Mathura. Mathura was a sacred place of pilgrimage for Jainas and a great centre of Jaina activity. Khāravēla marched into Mathura, but ensured the safety of its people. He carried back the kalpa tree burdened with foliage along with a long procession under military surveillance to Kalinga, on his way distributing gifts to all houses and inns, also gifting away the spoils of victory to the brāhmaṇas.

In the 11th year of his reign, he reclaimed the ancient metropolis of Pithunda by totally destroying the confederation of the South Indian kings, to win back the land where Bhagavān Mahāvīr himself had visited and met the merchants of this port town. The port town was ploughed by yoking the asses symbolising the total destruction of the place and reclaiming it. The defiling of land was done as a final insult by conquering armies to assert the power over the masses.

In his 12th year, he defeated the Śunga king Brihspatimitra of Magadha and brought back the golden idol of Adinath, the Kalinga Jina, which had been taken away by Mahāpadmananda, a follower of Jainism, around 4th c. BCE., which is believed to be the *kuladevata* of Kalinga. The idol of Rishabhadēva, was re installed by Khāravēla, in the presence of *āchārya* Susthisūri and *āchārya* Supratibuddhisūri, thereby giving a new life to Jainism.

In his 13th year he took up religious activities as a Jaina monarch and carved caves for the Jaina monks for *varsha vāsa* (stay during rainy season) at the Khandagiri and Udayagiri hills.

Thus by this act of the king at the Kumārigiri or Kumāri parvat, a part of Udaygiri, the wheel of *dharma* started moving again. This is believed to be the place where lord Mahāvīra himself had given sermons in the 6th c. BCE, according to the text *Haribhadriya vritti*. It was the region where Emperor Śrenik of Magadha made pilgrimage and placed the golden statue of lord Adēśvara.

Being a follower of the Svētāmbara sect, there is a mention about Khāravēla donating the white chinese silk cloth to the monks. Kumāri hills became a place for religious discourses. It is here that he called for the council to compile the Jaina canonical texts. The inscriptions describe the celebrated *śramanas*, *yatis*, *tapasas*, *rishis* and also Buddhist *bhikshus*, showing the secular nature of Khāravēla.

Jainism received a boost and lot of encouragement throughout the region that he had conquered –from the eastern coast to the western coast and northwest of south India.

His queen, prince, grandson, nobles and officers also took his work ahead by excavating a number of caves and dwelling places for the Jaina monks and religious practices on the hills of Udaygiri- 18 in number and Khandagiri - 15 in number, known by names such as Hathigumpha, Anantagumpha, Ganeshgumpha, Jayagumpha, Manchapurigumpha, Vyaghra and Sarpagumha. We find inscriptions here which mention name of his son and his immediate successor, Mahārāja Kudepasiri, prince Badukha, brother or son of Kudepasiri. We also find the name of the chief queen, who was the daughter of Lalaka, who along with his wife, donated for the *varanda* or the floor of the cave.

We thus find physical evidence of the healthy existence and celebration that Jainism during his rule and the restoration of the glory of Jaina, which existed in the Kalinga region from at least 850 BCE, when Bhagvān Pārśvanātha travelled here to preach in person (as per *Uttaradhyān sūtra*) and visited in 558 BCE (as per the *Bhāgvatī sūtra*).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Jaina religious zeal and dedication of *Sāmrāt* Kharavēla, a true *upāsaka*, is proven through the archeological findings in the form of inscriptions, the multiple caverns and the details noted in these inscriptions down to the fiscal as well as religious and physical investment made during that era. *Sāmrāt* Khāravēla was lost to history due to lack of textual evidence. It is only through these inscriptions that we know of the history of Khāravēla and the political, social and religious scenario during his reign in the Kalinga kingdom, today known as Śīsupālgadh in Oḍisha, according to some scholars.

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Herostone in Eksar in Borivali (Mumbai)

Dr. Rekha V. Gore

The herostone, also called ‘*veeragal*’ at Eksar in LIC colony, Borivali east dated 10-12th century CE have intricate carvings and is made of basalt¹. It is of about 8-ft high, built as a tribute to warriors of the navy of Shilahara dynasty. The uniqueness of this stone is the depiction of the navy’s battle scene². It was lying near a pond for many years and women from Eksar village used it for washing clothes unaware of its historical importance.

According to historical evidence when a warrior dies in the village, locals along with priest would first identify the stone to be used for the memorial worship, cut it and carve according to the requirement and then it would be installed with complete rituals at a particular spot, ideally on the banks of water body or close to a temple.

The hero stone is divided into different panels with the uppermost part having a jar of nectar,. The first panel show usually Shiva. The middle panel depicts the warrior being lifted towards heaven. The lower panel depict the battle scene. In period between 8th to 10th century CE navy battle scenes are rarely found depicted on herostones³.

In the absence of official protection, the stone are caught in a tug of war between scholars, government officials and locals. They stand on the edge of what was on a pond and between towers.

Notes and References

1. Personal Visit to eksar herostone Borivali in June/July 2021.
2. Tripathi Sila, Ships on the stones from the west coast of India. *International Journal of National Archaeology* Vol. 35, 2006, Issue.1.
3. Most show land-battles, but those in the Archaeological Musuem, Goa and Eksar in Mumbai show naval warfare. The old Goa stones belong to the Kadambas who ruled Goa from 950-1300 CE. The Eksar stones to the reign of king Bhoja of Malwa in 1020 CE. Similar hero stones with boat motifs of the 18th to 19th century CE have been reported from Aramda in Gujarat.



Lower Panel

Upper Part
Middle Panel



Śrīśailam plates of Pedakōmaṭi Vēmā Redḍi

Meka Venkata Raghavendra Varma

Abstract:

This paper examines a set of copper plates discovered recently during the course of renovation work in Gantā *maṭham* at Śrīśailam, Kurnool district, Andhra Pradesh. It is written in Telugu characters. The language of the inscription is Sanskrit with the exception of the passages in Telugu describing the boundaries of the villages granted. The donor of the grant is Pedakōmati-Vēmāredḍi and is dated 1405 CE, January 1, Thursday.

Keywords:

Bhikshāvṛitti-maṭha, Bhikshāvṛitti- Siddayadēva, Dakshārāma, Kāśī, Kēdār, Mallikārjunadeva, Origāṇi, Pedakōmati-Vēmāredḍi, Redḍis of Koṇḍavīḍu, Sanskrit, Simhāchalam, Śrīkūrmam, Śrīnātha, Śrīśailam, Telugu, Velanāṁṭi-sīma.

After the downfall of the Kākatīyas in Andhra, the Redḍis of Koṇḍavīḍu came into prominence and ruled the country for about two centuries. Unlike the Gajapatis of Oḍhisa and the Narapatis of Vijayanagara, who held their sway over Andhra for some time, the Redḍis were the undisputed Telugu rulers of the country. That the country had its golden age under these Redḍi rulers is clearly borne out from a number of their records and from the literary works of the great Telugu poets such as Errāpregaḍa and Śrīnātha who were patronised by these rulers.

The set of copper plates were discovered recently during the course of renovation work in Ghanṭā *maṭham* at Śrīśailam, Kurnool district, Andhra Pradesh. The news reached Sri Ramarao, an Executive officer of the Śrīśailam Dēvasthānam, who secured the plates and requested Director (Epigraphy) to examine them. Director (Epigraphy) deputed me to copy the inscriptions.

The set consists of 4 thick copper plates which have slightly raised rims; each measuring about 9 inches length and 5 inches in breadth and the second side of the fourth plate was originally left un-engraved. The edges of the plates are made thicker to protect the writing from the damage which it would otherwise have suffered by the plates rubbing against each other. Each plate is perforated with a ring-hole of ¾ inch diameter towards the left margin. Plates are held together by a stout ring, which has been cut; there is no seal. The plates are numbered in Telugu-Kannaḍa numerals on their inner sides and in the left margin.

The writing is neatly executed and is in excellent state of preservation. The inscription is written in Telugu characters. The script and orthography of this inscription are similar to those of the Ālapāḍu grant of the Peda-Komaṭi Vēmāredḍi¹. However, the following palaeographical peculiarities may be noted. No distinction is made between the medial signs of *a* and *ā*, *e* and *ē* and *o* and *ō*.

The language of the inscription is Sanskrit with the exception of the passages in Telugu describing the boundaries of the villages granted. Besides its historical importance, this charter is

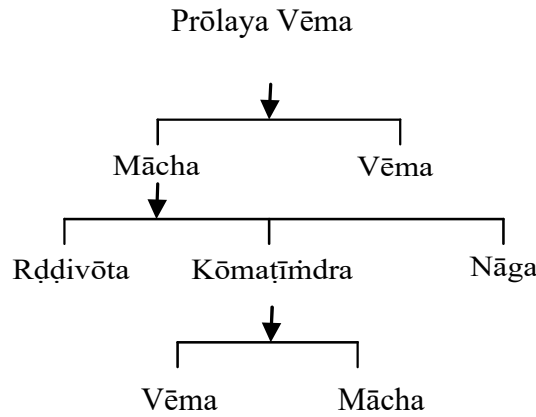
1 Epigraphia Indica, vol. XI, pp. 313-26.

an excellent specimen of beautiful inscriptional composition in chaste Sanskrit verse replete with good *alamkāras*. The author's command over poetics is indeed very remarkable. The content of the charter is summarised below.

The donor of the grant is Pedakōmaṭi-Vēmāreḍḍi. The record opens with an invocation to the boar incarnation of Viṣṇu. Second verse devoted to Śiva. Next verse is devoted to praise the Sun and Moon. Next 3 *śloka*s describes the birth of Prōlaya-Vēma who constructed the flight of steps leading to Śrīśailam and made all the gifts enumerated by Hēmādri (v. 6). This verse is similar to Phirangipuram pillar inscription of Pedakōmaṭi Vēmāreḍḍi¹. He performed various meritorious deeds and defeated several hostile kings.

He had an elder brother named Mācha, who had three sons, viz., Reḍḍivōta, Śrī-Kōmaṭīndra, and Nāga, who were like *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma* personified (v.8). The 8th verse is found in *Śringāradīpikā*, a commentary on the *Amaruśataka* by Kōmaṭi-Vēma². Concerning the various royal personages mentioned above the record supplies a certain amount of eulogy. Verse 11 and 14 describe the military greatness of Vēma, while 9, 12 and 13 praise his charities which extended from Śrīśailam to Kāśī (Banaras), touching on the way Kumārāchala, Pañchārāma, Simhāchalam, Śrīkūrmam and Purushōttama. The last Sanskrit verse tells us that this *dharma-śāsana* was composed by Śrīnātha who was the *Vidyādhikāri* of Vēma and a storehouse of learning. The signature at the end consists of the phrase *Śrī-Vīranārāyanasya*, i.e. of the glorious Vīranārāyana.

The regular historical genealogy given in the plates is as follows:-



The details of the date are in Śaka year counted by *rasa*(6), *ayana* (2), *agni*(3), *chandra*(1), i.e., 1326, year Tārana, Paushe (Pushya), *Rāhugrasta-divākare* (solar eclipse), which corresponds to 1405 CE January 1, Thursday.

The purport is to record the gift of the village Origāṇi, situated in Velanāṁṭi-sīma to the god Mallikārjunaḍēva of Śrīśailam for conducting festivities in the temple by the king Peda Kōmaṭi Vēmā Reḍḍi on the occasion of solar eclipse. The gift was entrusted to Bhikshāvṛitti- Siddayyadēva, pontiff of the Bhikshāvṛitti-maṭha. Further it records the gift of 15 *khaṇḍugas* of land in the same village to the following deities viz., Perumāl, Mahādēva, Vighnēśvara and goddess Gangādēvī; and also to the *brāhmaṇas* viz., Pōtu of Bokkanālapalli and Tippu of Maṁdavāḍi as *dēvabrāhmaṇa-vṛitti*.

1 Phirangipuram pillar inscription of PedakōmaṭiVēmāreḍḍi, *Epigraphia Indica* vol. XI, pp. 313-26

‘श्रीशैलायात्प्रभवतिपथिप्राप्तपाताळगंगेसोपानानिप्रमथपदवीमारुरुक्षुश्चकार।’

2 See the late Rai Bahadur Venkayya's remarks on the Phirangipuram inscription, in the *Report on Epigraphy* for 1900, p. 21, paragraph 55.

This Bhikshāvṛitti- Siddhayadēva's successors seems to have been treated with great respect even by the Vijayanagara kings. Sidda-Bhikshāvṛitti, who was the donee of the Śrīśailam grant of the Vijayanagara emperor Virūpāksha, was one of the gurus of the Vīraśaivamaṭha on Śrīparvata. (Sidda-Bhikshāvṛitti, is the same person mentioned at the instances?). Perhaps he was granted the privilege of supervising the objects of the gift and also utilizing a portion of the income for feeding, under his auspices, a number of ascetics. The *Kurnool District Manual* states that even to-day the *pūjas* are done to the god Mallikārjuna by the *Jangamas*. The author of the Manual writes "In 1840, when the Government ceased their connection with the temples, the pagoda was handed over to Śrī Śankarāchārya as its warder. The *pūjāris* are *Jangamas*."¹ He also states that there is at present a Jangama high priest of Śrīśailam, who is said to have kept some inscriptions².

Special interest attaches to this inscription as well as to the two following ones from the fact that they were composed by the great Telugu poet Śrīnātha.

Vēma, son of Pedda-Kōmaṭi, bore the titles *Samgrāma-Dhanamjaya* (vv. 9 to 11) and *Vīranārāyana*(v.21). He seems to have been both a scholar and a patron of scholars. The *Śringārādīpikā*, of which he is reputed author, says that he was well versed in all the branches of knowledge and that his court was the resort of poets among whom was the great Sanskrit poet Vāmanabhaṭṭa Bāṇa, the author of the drama *Pārvatīpariṇaya* and of the poem *Vēmabhūpālīyam* (*Poet Laureate*³) under Pedda-Kōmaṭi-Vēma and he seems to have held the same position under his son Rācha-Vēma, as seen from the Ālapāḍu grant of Pedakōmaṭi-Vēmāredḍi⁴. He is the author of the following works:- 1. Maruttarāṭ-charitramu 2. Śālivāhana-Saptaśati 3. Śringāranaishadhamu 4. Bhīmakhandaṃ 5. Kaśīkhaṇḍamu 6. Haravilāsamu 7. Paṇḍitarādhyacharitramu 8. Krīḍābhīrāmamu (Vīthi-Nāṭakamu).

Śrīnātha was a much travelled man in his time. He tells us, in a stray verse attributed to him, that he visited the courts of the Vijayanagara king Harihara II, and Rāvu Sarvajña-Singamanīḍu of the Velugōṭi family, and that he was patronised by Sāḷuva Telugu Rāya. He spent, however, the best part of his life at the courts of the Redḍi chiefs of Koṇḍavīḍu and Rājahmūḍri and dedicated most of his works either to those chiefs or to their officers. The *Paṇḍitārādhyacharitramu* was dedicated to Māmiḍi-Praggaḍayya, commander-in-chief of Vēmāredḍi's forces; the *Naishadham* to Mantri-Singana, Praggaḍayya's brother; the *Bhīmēśvara-khaṇḍam* to Bendapūḍi Annayya, minister to Vīrabhadra redḍi; and the *Kāśīkhaṇḍam* to Vīrabhadra redḍi⁵.

Of the geographical names mentioned in the charter, Śrīśailam, Simhāchalam, Śrīkūrmam, Kāśī, Kēdār, Velanāti-sīma and Dakshārāma are well-known. The five *ārāmas* (*Pañchārāma*) viz. Dakshārāma, Amarārāma, Kshīrārāma, Kumārārāma, Somārāma are respectively identified with five places Dakshārāma, Amarāvati, Pālakollu, Sāmarlakōṭa and Bhīmavaram, all in the Godavari (East and West) and Guntur Districts.

1 Kurnool District Manual by Narahari Gopalakristnama Chetty, pp. 144-45.

2 Ibid, p. 183.

3 [*Vidyādīkharin* appears to have been a responsible high place somewhat similar to the "President, Board of Examiners" of the present day. That Śrīnātha did occupy such a place is evident from what is said of him in the introduction to the *Bhīmakhandaṃ*, in the Sīsa-foot *bhāsimchināḍavu-bahudēśa-budhalatōvidyāparīkshana-vēlanandu*]

4 Epigraphia Indica, vol. XI, pp. 313-26.

5 See Rao Bahadur Kandukūri Vīrēśalingam's *Telugu Poets*, Part I. p. 66.

TEXT

Plate - I: 1st side

1. Śrīnāthasya varāhadivyavapushō vaḥ pātu damshṭrā chira-
2. m syūtōnnīta mahītalō paritaḥ niryātaśṅgā-
3. m̐kurāl yāmātmīyajalōditām śaśikalāmā-
4. śam̐kya jātaḥ kshaṇam sauhārdēna vijr̐mbhamāṇa sali-
5. lāram̐bhō mahāmbōnidhiḥ | [] līlādyūtajitā-
6. m̐ kaḷādharakaḷām mauḷau dṛḍham kīlitāmāhartu-
7. m̐ Yugamunnamayya bhujayōrviślēshayaṁtyā mi-
8. thaḥ| pārvatyāḥ kucakumbhapārśvayugaḷē saprēma-
9. lōlēkshaṇaḥ kālakshēpaṇamindumōcanavidhau kā-
10. m̐kshan śīvaḥ pātuvaḥ| bhavatu bhavatām phalāptyai kalpa-

Plate - I: 2nd side

11. latākāpi karaṭi rājamukhīl amṛta makarandadārāśidhara
12. śītām̐su sakala kusumavatiḥ tamō harētām tava puṣpavaṁ-
13. tau rākāsu pūrvāparaśailabhājau| rathāṅgalīlāmiva da-
14. r̐sayantau purāpurārēḥ pṛthivīrathasya| [] yanmauḷau nihita-
15. m̐ cirāya nigamairdhyēyam̐ cha yadyōgibhīryallakshmīmṛdu-
16. pāṇipadmayugaḷī sanvāhanairlālitaḥ| jātā ya-
17. tra viyannadī trijagati(tī) santāpanirvāpaṇō tasmādāvi-
18. rabhūt padānaduriporvarṇāśvatudtōvaraḥ| tasmādabhūt
19. prōlayavēmanāmā śrīśaila sōpāna vidhāna śālī hēmādri-
20. kalpōditadānadakshō niḥsīmabhūdānanirūḍhakīrtiḥ| Vēmakshītī-
21. śōvṛṣa(me)(mē)kapādam̐ khañjapracāram̐ kalikāladōshāt| dattāgrahāra
22. dvijavēdaśaktyā padakramairaskhalitaḥ cakāra| māchakshō-

Plate - II: 1st side

23. ṇipatirmahēndramahimā vēmakshītīśāgrajō rāmādyai-
24. ḥ Sadṛśō babhūva suguṇaistasya tayōnandanāḥ| kīrtiyā jā-
25. grati redḍivōta nṛpatiḥ śrīkōmaṭīndrastatō nāgakṣmāpati
26. rityupātta vapushō dharmārtthakāmāiva| vēmādhipō mā-
27. chavibhuśca nandanau śrīkōmaṭīndrasyaguṇaika sam̐śrayau
28. bhūlōkamēkōdarajanmavāṇcha(chha)yābhūyōvatīrṇā-
29. viva rāmalakshmaṇau| cūḍāmaṇi nṛpāṇam̐ durma-
30. dāparipanthīśīkharidambo(bhō)līḥ| sarvajñacakravartī Pedakōmaṭi vē-
31. mabhūpatirjayati| abhimanyukaragrāhyāmutterām̐
32. Khaḍgaputrikām̐| nartayatyāhavē raṅgē yaḥ saṅgrāma(mē)-
33. dhanañjayaḥ| [] śrīśailē sthīramūlatāmupagatā-

Plate - II: 2nd side

34. vṛddhiṁ kumārācalē pañcārāmatale pratāna susha-
35. mā simhācalēndrē tataḥ| śrīkūrme purushōttamē
36. kusumitā yadharmakīrtirlatā kāśyām viśvapa-
37. tēḥ puraḥ phalavati nityā(tyō)pahārōchitam|| yatkīrti
38. gānasamayēpaṇi sundariṇamālōkitum
39. cha mukharāgamaṇgamūlam| śrōtum cha
40. gītarachanām yugapannadakshō nāgādipōnasa
41. hatē nayana śrutitvarim|| dā(dhā)ṭṭidundubhibhāṅkr-
42. tim kalayatō nirghātarāvaṁ ripūnnāmāni dru-
43. tamarjunasya japatō yasyāji gāṇḍīvinah|

Plate - III: 1st side

44. grāmōpapadāni tāni bhavatām rakshākṛt sarvadāvaṇyaṁ tā-
45. mitibōdayantyadhipatin diyantriṇō mantriṇaḥ sō-
46. yaṁ vēmamahipālō bhūpāla paramēśvaraḥ bhūdā-
47. na viramūrddhanyō dhīrōdāttaguṇōttaraḥ| śākābdē rasana-
48. [Yanā]gnicandra saṅkhyāmupēyūṣi| tāraṇa vatsa-
49. rē paṣe rāhugrastadivākare| yēna vira prakām-
50. dēna kōdaṇḍē kuṇḍalikṛtē| svargiṇaḥ prāpurātithya-
51. m saptapātālavāsibhiḥ| sarvōnnataḥ kumārādriśchandra
52. kāṅkita mauḷinā| bhujaṅgahāriṇā yēna nīlakaṇṭhē-
53. na sēvyatē| svasti śrīmanmahāśaiva sārvaabhauma śīrōma-

Plate - III: 2nd side

54. ṇiḥ| trailōkya bhakti sāmrajyabhadrapirimupēyūṣaḥ| vīra-
55. māhēśvarāchārapratishṭāpārādṛśvanaḥ| ēkacchhatratapō-
56. rājya mahēśvaryēkaśālinaḥ| śrīmatpañchākṣarī-
57. mantradīkshāśikshitakalmashāt śrīśaila kāśi kēdāra pa-
58. mchārāmādiṣu kshitau| mūlastānēshu sarvēshu śaivā-
59. jñā rakshaṇakramāt| śrībhikshāvṛtti siddhayaḍvā-
60. t pramatha puṅgavāt| nityōtsavamayī mahāmahā-
61. ṇamavigarhitām| svīkurvan yaḥ kumārādrārājate
62. rājaśēkharaḥ| tasmigandhavati sindutaraṅgakshōḷitām
63. pra. yōtripurāmbābhidānāyāḥ pārvatyāḥ prā-
64. ṇabandhavē| tripurāntakadēvāya trilōkinya

Plate - IV: 1st side

65. grāmēdinē| prādādōṅkāravāhinyā stirē velnāṇṭi sīma-
66. ni origaṇiritikhyātām grāmamācandratārakam| asya
67. grāmasya aṣṭadik sīmācihnāni nandi śilāstambā-

68. tpūrvānaṅgala dēvabrāhmaṇavrittulul perumāḷuku kha-
 69. 1 Mahādēvaraku kha 1 vighnēśvarunikinu 5 gaṅgādēvi-
 70. kinu 5 brāhmaṇḍu bokkanālapallipōtuku kha 1 mandapā-
 71. ṭi tippaku kha 1 na 15 svadattā dviḡṇaṁ puṇyaṁ paradattānu-
 72. pālanam| paradattāpahārēṇa svadattaṁ nishphalaṁ bhavēti vi-
 73. dyādhikāri śrīnāthō vīraśrīśrīvēmabhūpatēḥ| akarōdākarōvā-
 74. bāṁ nirmalaṁ da(dha)rmaśāsanam śrīvīranārāyaṇasya
 75. aṣṭabhōgasvāmyamu

Śrīśailam plates of Pedakōmaṭi Vēmā Redḍi

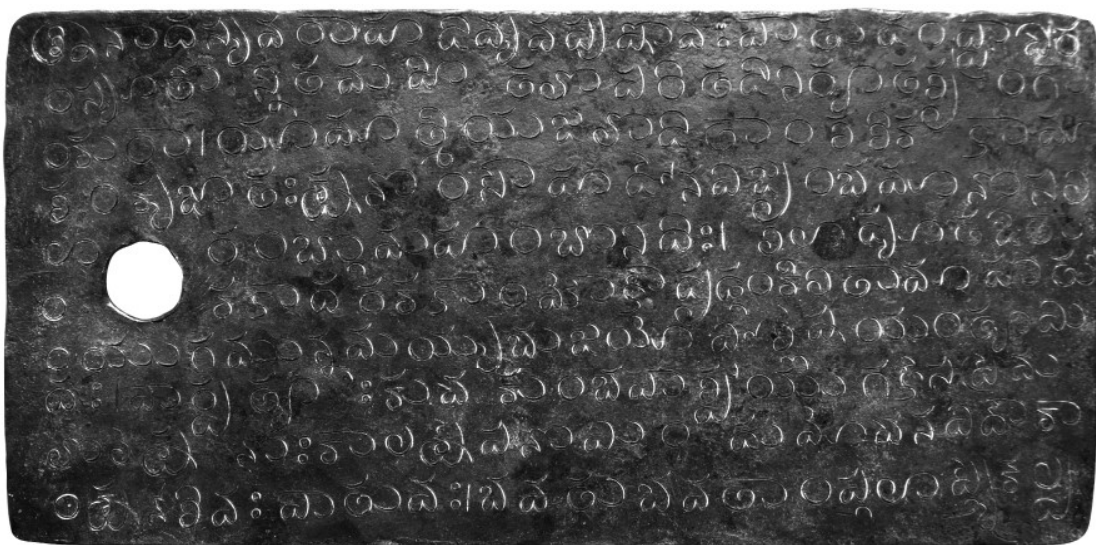


Plate - I: 1st side



Plate - I: 2nd side

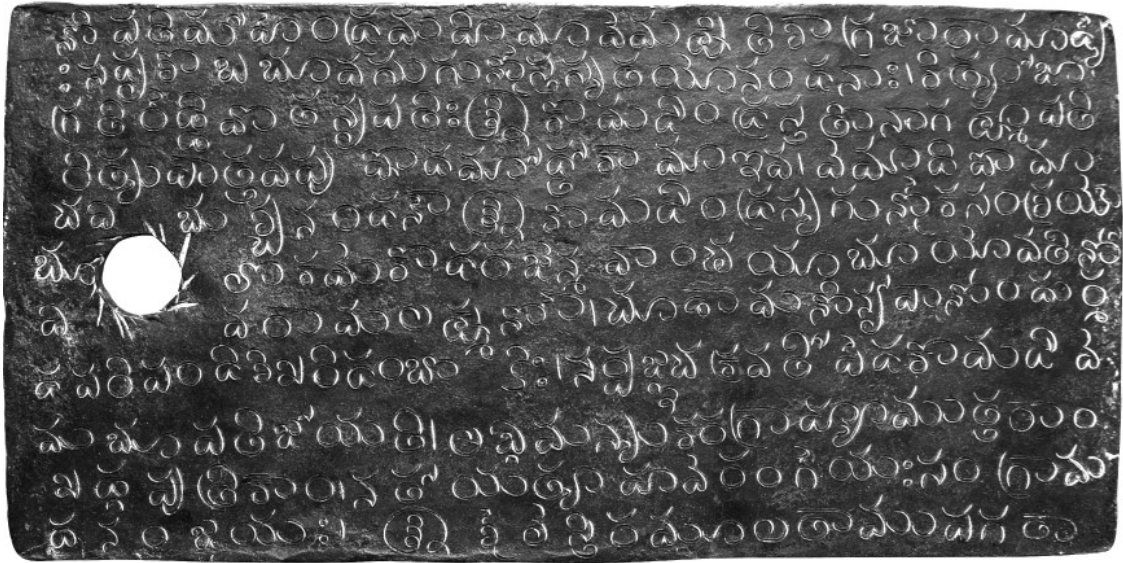


Plate - II: 1st side

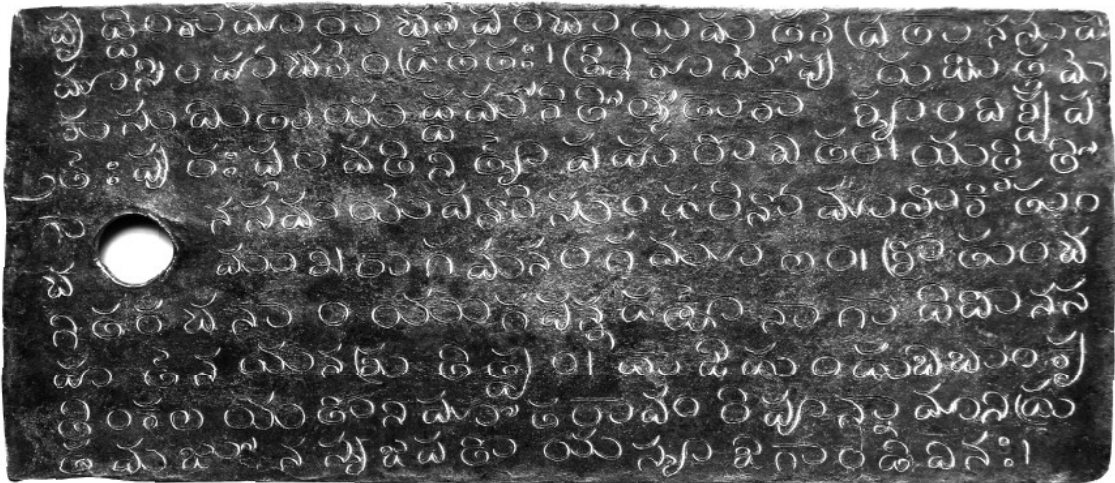


Plate - II: 2nd side

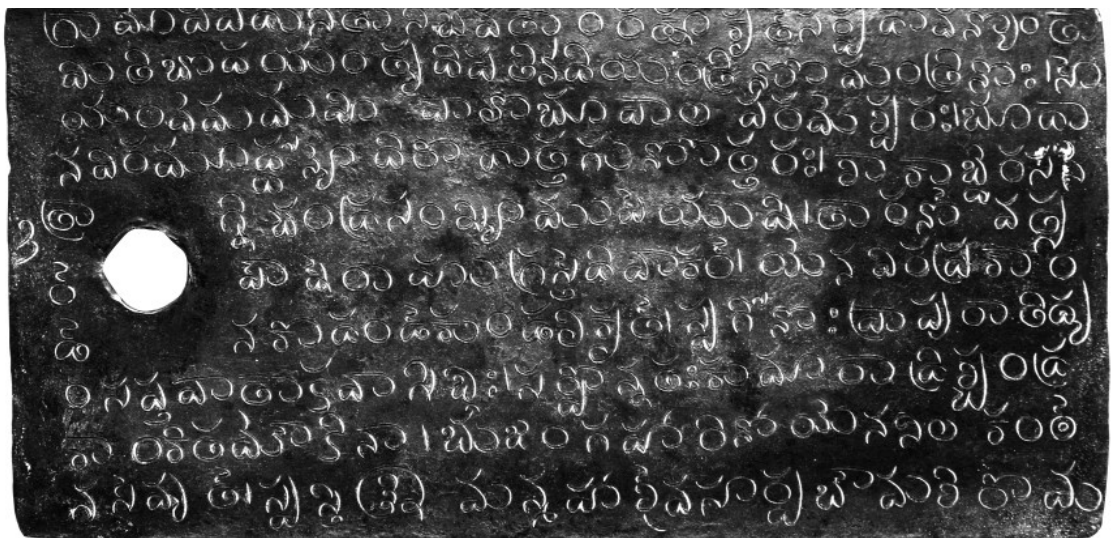


Plate - III: 1st side

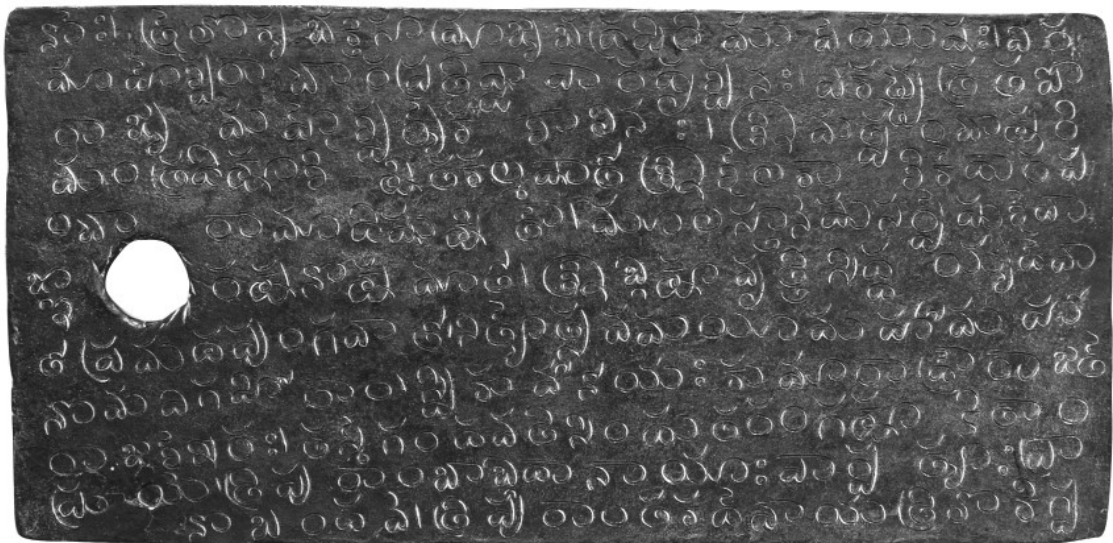


Plate - III: 2nd side

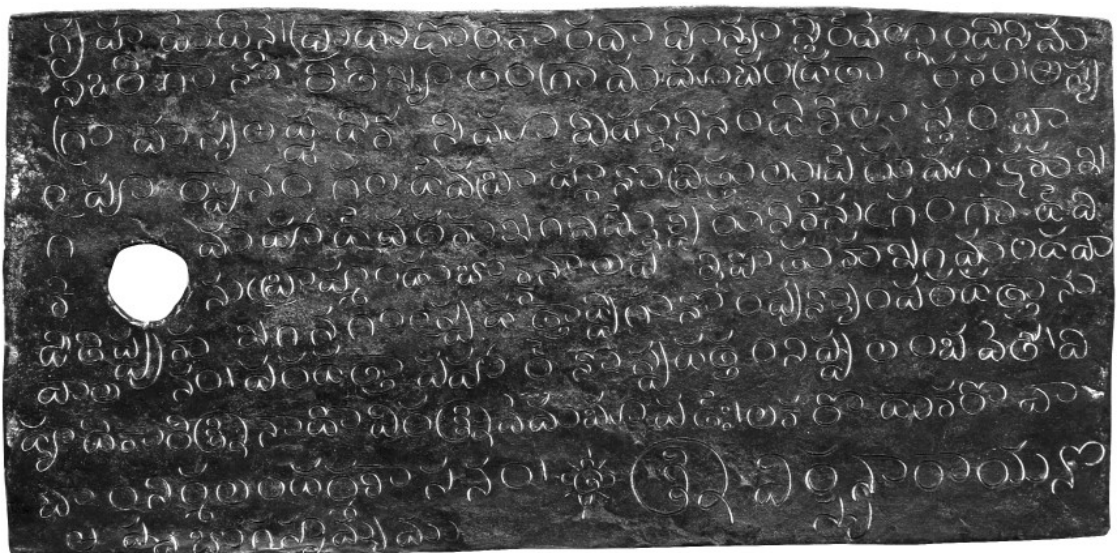


Plate - IV: 1st side

Padaividu grant of Venkatapati raya III dated Saka 1553 (1631 CE)

N.S.Ramachandra Murthy

Abstract:

The photographs of the sub joined grant under study were given to me by Prof.Y.Subbarayalu, former Prof. in Epigraphy, Thanjavuru. The place where they were found is not known. The script is Nandināgari, commonly met with in the Vijayanagara grants. The language is Sanskrit verse written in different meters such as Anuṣṭup, Śārdūla vikṛīḍita, Rathōddhata, Vasaṃtatilaka, Sikharīṇi, Imḍravajra etc. The date of the grant correspond to Saturday, Nov 6, 1630 CE. The record falls in the reign of Peda Veṃkaṭa III of the Āravīḍu dynasty.

Keywords:

Ādavāni giri durga, Āravīṭi Bukka , Aḷiya Rāma rāya, Āravīḍu, Āravīṭi nagarīvibhoh, Āravīṭi Sāḷuva Narasiṃha rāya, Sōmidēvarāja, Chātur māsyā vrata, Cheraku chiefs, Copper plate grant, Gobburī chiefs, Ibrahim Qutb Shāh, Kaṃḍanavōlu, Kāmpili rājya, Paḍaivīḍu mahārājya, Palugunābhi kotta , Sanskrit, Śrī Veṃkaṭeśa, Tāta Pinnama , Timiri nāḍu, Tomḍīra maṃḍala, Vamduvaṃtāṃgali, vritti

The plates are in a fairly good state of preservation and hence cause no problem at all for decipherment. The grant contains a total of 5 plates soldered to a ring with seal. The seal bears the figure of a squatting boar to left. Above it, are the corroded figures of sun, crescent and dagger faintly visible.

There is writing on all the plates excepting on the front and back sides of the 1st and 5th plates respectively. On the 5th plate, at the end, below the last line is the sign manual in Kannaḍa characters reading “Śrī Ve[m]kaṭeśa”. There are a total of 156 lines of writing.

The script is Nandināgari, commonly met with in the Vijayanagara grants. The language is Sanskrit verse written in different meters such as Anuṣṭup, Śārdūla vikṛīḍita, Rathōddhata, Vasaṃtatilaka, Sikharīṇi, Imḍravajra, etc.

The grant is dated in chronogram reading “śakti bāṇa kaḷaṃbēṃḍu” i.e. Śaka 1553 (śakti -3, bāṇa -5, kaḷaṃ -5 and iṃḍu -1) Pramōḍuta, kārtika, 12, which is described as “mahā tithi”. It correspond to Saturday, Nov 6 1630 CE. As regards the expression “mahā tithi” Svamikannu Pillai observes “Kārttika śu 12 is a mahā dvādasi when either it or the previous tithi i.e. śu 11, is current on two successive sun rises”¹.

But, according to L.D.Barnett “technically it was not one of those days i.e.a mahā dvādasi in the language of the Pañcāṅgas. But Kārttika Śu 12 is always an important tithi as it is the end of the Chātur māsyā vrata and is the occasion of the “prabōdhotsava” festival, when awakening of Viṣṇu is celebrated, also his marriage to the Tulasi plant(Basil leaf) i.e.tulasī vrata. More over the fore noon marks the “manuvādi” day.”²

Thus the record falls in the reign of Peda Veṃkaṭa III described as “Śrī Dēvarāyāgrani” and thus on the basis of the date, he belonged to the Āravīḍu dynasty, also called as IVth Dynasty,

the last remnant of the Vijayanagra empire. This is the only record of this king so far discovered. Here, attention may be drawn to two records (viz.) Śrī Virūpākṣa grant of Śrī Raṁgarāya dated Śaka 1498, Dhātṛi, Karttika Śu 12, i.e. utthāna dvādaśi which corresponds to 1576 CE, Nov 3 and the Śrī Rāma grant of Śrī Raṁgarāya, dated Śaka 1569, Tāraṇa, Māgha Śu 12 i.e. 1647 CE. Thus the present grant falls in between the above two.³

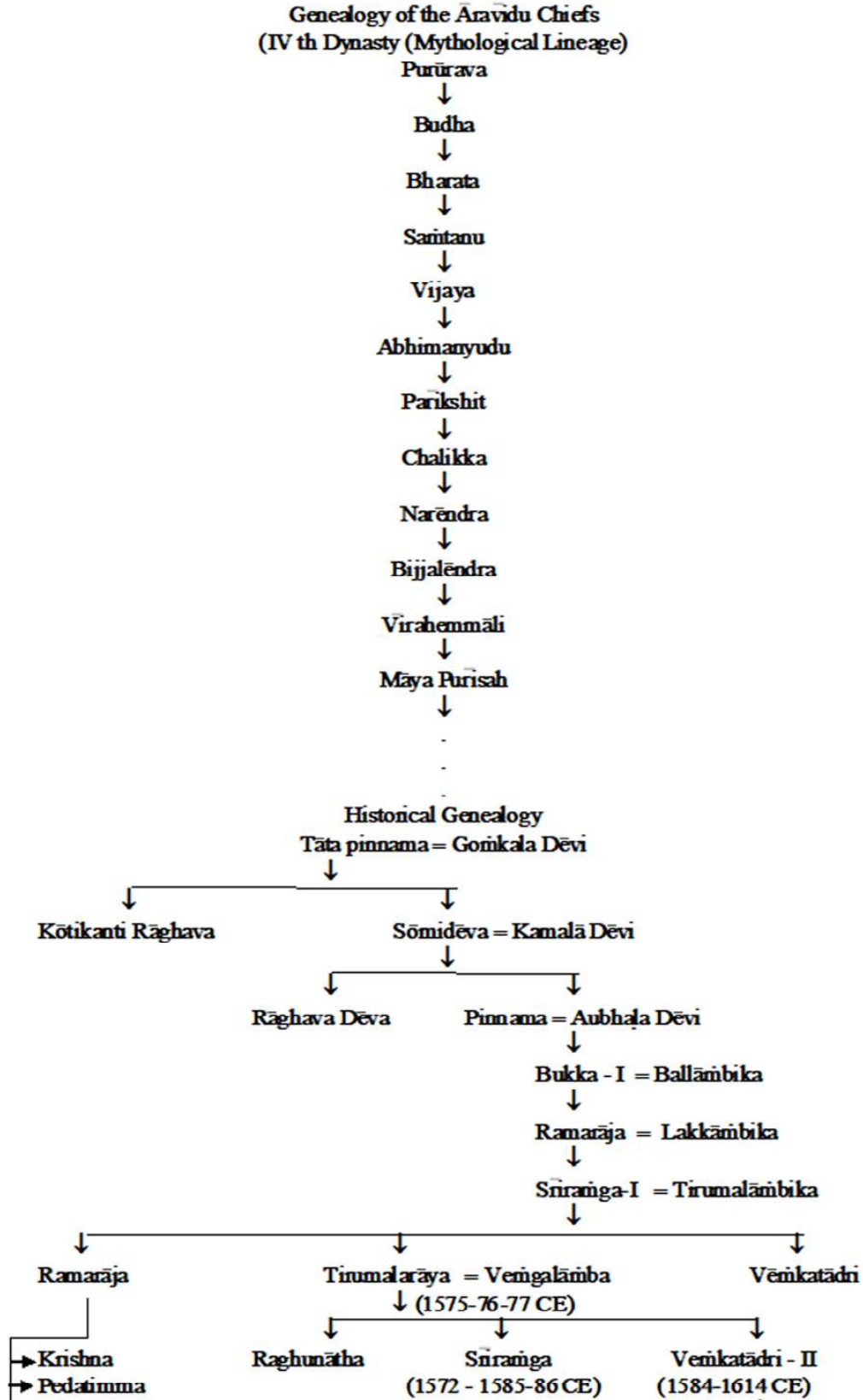
As regards orthography, there are not many peculiarities worth mentioning. However, the following may be noted. (1) Visarga (:) is indicated through two vertical circles or dots one below the other. (2) Invariable use of anusvāra (am) which is indicated by means of a dot above the letter. (3) End of the slōka (verse) is not indicated as is done normally through vertical strokes. (4) Secondary or medial forms of short and long (hrasva and dīrgha) letters are suggested through a vertical stroke on either side of the letter with a round circle on the top as in Ki and Kī. Similarly “u” and Ū are indicated through short curves at the bottom of the letter on the right side. Same is the case with “e” and “ē” like ki and kī on the top of the letter. Similarly, long forms (dīrghas) of vowels like “ā, ī”, are indicated by a vertical on the right side. (5) Double or conjoint letters like “Chha”, “ghna”, “shṭa”, “shka” are written below the letter. (6) In the same manner are written “r” forms like tra by a small stroke at the bottom, turned towards right. (7) Verse endings do not bear numbers. (8) Omission of the first member in double consonants. (9) Occasional use of the letter “a” followed by “I” to denote “ai” (10) Substitution of mere vowels for the letters “Ya” and “Va”.

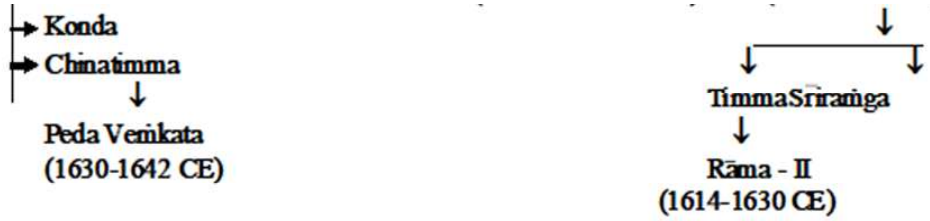
The present grant was issued by the king Venkaṭapatiṛāya donating land as vrittis (tenure) to a host of learned Brahmanas well versed in Vedic lore who specialised in different branches of knowledge. They number about 30 who belonged to different gōtras (lineages) and also specifies the number of shares (vrittis) of the “sthiti” (tenure of land) granted to each. The grant was made in Paḍaivīdu mahārājya, Tomḍira maṁḍala, Palugunabhi Koṭṭa, in Timirināḍu. Then it mentions the boundaries of the grant villages viz Gudipādri, Kaṛīramamṅala grāma, Sītāramapura, and the rivulets Maridēri, Upakēri and Puṭṭēru and finally the grant village Vaṁduvaṁtāmgali. It is interesting to find the term “upagrāma” the significance of which is not clear. Thus the grant falls in the reign of Venkaṭapatiṛāya III (1630—42 CE) of the IVth Dynasty i.e. Āraṁḍu. The early history of the Āraṁḍu chiefs is not known due to the absence of their inscriptions. In addition to the present grant under study, there are two more grants viz Virupakṣa grant of Śrī Raṁa dated 1576 CE and Sri Rama grant of Śrī Raṁga III dated 1644 CE. which contain the same praśasti verbatim, excepting the grant portion i.e the name of the donor and the place and other details of the grants.⁴ These inscriptions furnish the genealogy of the early Āraṁḍu chiefs but do not contain their dates or regnal periods.

The record begins with invocation to gods Venkaṭēśa and Viṣvaksēna and states the mythological genealogy from lines 1 to 14 i.e in the first 6 verses. In it, it mentions the names of Purūrava, son of Budha, followed by Āyu, Nahuṣa, Yayāti and Pūru. In this vaṁśa were born Bharata, whose progeny were Śaṁtanu, Abhimanyu son of Arjuna of Mahābhārata fame and his son Paṛikṣit. Then comes in the 8th generation after him, a certain Naṁda and to his 7th generation belonged a certain Chālukya king named Rāja Rāja Narēndra and in his 10th generation was Bijjala. After him in the 3rd generation was Vīra Hemmālī rāya and his son was Māyā Puṛīsa. According to the Virūpākṣa grant of Śrī Rāṁga I dated 1576 CE and Śrī Rāma grant of Śrī Raṁga III dated 1644 CE.⁵ there were a total of 16 kings between Paṛikṣit and Rāja Rāja Narēndra. Thus the genealogy mentioned goes to remote past and it is difficult to identify Vīra Hemmālīrāya and Māyāpuṛīsa. This praśasti is the same verbatim as found in the Virūpākṣa and Śrī Rama grants.⁶ There is another grant

viz., Kandukuru plates of Vemkaṭapatidēva II dated Śaka 1535 (1613 CE) which furnishes the same genealogy.⁷

Then comes the historical genealogy (in lines 14—76, i.e. verses 7 to 28) beginning with Tāta Pinnama, the originator of the family of Āraṇḍu chiefs. The genealogy furnished is as follows.





The above genealogical table shows 11 generations comprising about 18 members in all. But none of the Āraṇḍu records furnishes the regnal periods of the chiefs thus making it difficult to fix their chronology. Further there are no contemporary inscriptions of the early members of Āraṇḍu chiefs. This makes it more difficult to find the chronology of the chiefs. Therefore, we have to take recourse to literary works --contemporary and near contemporary. Some of them are Dvipada Padya Bāla Bhāgavatamu of Dōnēru Kōnēru kavi written in Ś 1468 (1546 CE),⁸ Vasu charitra of Dhūrjaṭi,⁹ Sudakṣinā Parīṇayam,¹⁰ Sāmbōpākhyānam,¹¹ Kaḷā Pūrṇodayam of Piṅgaḷi Sūrana¹² and Narapati Vijayam also known as Rāma Rājīyamu and Rāmābhyudaya of Amdugula Vemkannā.¹³ Further, Kaifiyats and local records also come to our aid. The originator of the family i.e. Tāta Pinnama had, according to Dvipada Bāla Bhagavatam of Kōnēru kavi of Dōnēru had two wives (viz) Sūrama and Komkaḷa dēvi.¹⁴ (Gopala Krishnayya, V “Śrī Virūpākṣa –Śrī Rāma Copper plate Inscriptions” 1973, Hyderabad, pp. LV) The present grant places him in the IV th generation after Māya Purīśa (II: 13-14). There is no source to identify this Māya Purīśa. Tāta Pinnama the progenitor of the family, over threw the Cheraku chiefs who held authority in Kurnool district under the Kākatiyas of Warangal and captured the region around Kurnool and thus rose to prominence.¹⁵ He is also said to have obtained the title “manne puli” having defeated a certain Rajendra.¹⁶ This attack against the Cheraku chief Rājēmdra, who were traditional loyalists of the Kākatiyas, it appears, is, because, he shifted his allegiance to Kāyastha Āmbadēva who rebelled against Rudrama dēvi and hence the attack, at the instance of Rudramadevi who put an end to his evil career. This took place when Rudrama dēvi was fighting with Āmbadēva and the recalcitrant Cheraku chief in the West in her Tripurantakam expedition. It is not unlikely, according to Venkataramanayya and Somasekhara Sarma, that Tāta Pinnama was prompted to attack the Cheraku chief who shifted his allegiance to rebellious Kāyastha Āmbadēva.¹⁷ It is not known as to how Tāta Pinnama drew the attention of Rudrama dēvi and entered in to her army. Though he is described in the present grant as “mahīpāla”, he does not appear to have held any royal position. Contrary to this, another scholar Sri P. V. P. Sastry, says “it is not correct to brand the Cheraku family as traitors and question their loyalty to their masters i.e. Kakatiyas”,¹⁸ on the ground that the Goruvankapalle¹⁹ and Kurella grants²⁰ of Rajēmdra dated 1293 CE and 1295 CE declare in unmistakable terms that Rājēmdra was showing undiminished loyalty to Pratapa Rudra. If this were to be correct i.e. Tāta Pinnama defeating Cheraku Rajēmdra, it must have taken place after 1295 CE. Probably he took advantage of the disturbed political conditions prevailing in the Kākatiya kingdom in the wake of strained relations with Kāmpili, a neighbouring Hindu state in the South –west, on the bank of the river Tuṅgabhadra, who made an attack on Pratapa Rudra’s territories and provoked Tāta Pinnama, who was probably a Kākatiya chief and his son Kotikanti Rāghava defeated Kāmpilirāya and deprived him of his royal insignia.²¹ This fact is supported by the statement in the family chronicle Dvipada Bāla Bhāgavatamu of Kōnēru Dōnēru kavi.²² It states that Kotikanti Rāghava won a brilliant victory against the Kāmpili chief and wrested the title Gaṁdraguli (Bull among the heroes) and won applause of kings who were his equals.²³ Therefore Tāta Pinnama became a dependent of kumāra Rudradēva and was employed by him in reducing the Cherakus to subjection.

He seems to be a valorous general and took as many as 14 forts in a single campaign. (Il:14--16: “tatturyōjani Tāta Pimnama mahīpālō nijālakanatrastā mitra gaṇastatō jani haran durgāṇi saptahitāt ahnaikēna”)

This Tāta Pimnama was probably a contemporary of Kākatiya Rudrama dēvi and Pratāpa Rudra and fell prey in the wars against the Muslim invasions i.e. Alla ud din Khalji and Zia ud din Tughaq which began in 1303 CE and continued till 1323 CE. Thus Tāta Pimnama can be assumed to have lived between 1285 to 1323 CE i.e. till the fall of Warangal. Probably this could have been a reason for, his son Sōmidēva, taking active part in the liberation movement against the Muslim occupation of the land and thus a contemporary of the Musunuri brothers Prōlaya and Kāpaya, who were engaged in liberating Telangana.²⁴

The poet Dōnēru Kōnēru kavi, author of “Dvipada Bāla Bhagavatam” states that Tāta Pimnama had two sons (viz) Kotikanti Rāghava the son of his first wife Sūrama. But the present grant does not mention two sons for Tata Pimnama. Instead, it states that he had a son by name Rāghavadēva who is identical with Rāghava mentioned above. Probably he perished in the wars fought along with Kam̐pili rāya against the Muslims. Hence the absence of any praśasti for him. Next comes Sōmidēvarāja, younger son of Tāta Pimnama, who finds mention in the Virūpākṣa and Śrī Rāma grants also. He is described as “tatojaniharam durgāṇi sapatāhitāt ahnaikēna sa Sōmidēva nṛpatiḥ,” (Il: 15-16).

This was the period when the Hindu chiefs (viz) Harihara I and Bukka I were fighting for liberating the land from Muslim yoke on one side when Āravati Sōmidēva rāja was holding control of the country of Kandanavōlu (Kurnool) while Musunuri Prōlaya and Kāpaya launched the liberation movement for liberating Telangana. In this, Sōmidēva took a leading part and it appears, he took “even material support from Prōlaya and Kāpaya”.²⁵ Sōmidēva, in his pursuit against the Muslim governor “set about the reduction of the forts belonging to the Sultan and his vassals.”²⁶ According to the family chronicles Bāla Bhāgavatam and Narapati Vijayam, he conquered 14 forts taking simultaneously no less than seven of them viz Mosalimaḍugu, Sātānikōṭa, Kam̐danavōlu, Kalvakolanu, Rāchur, Ētagiri and Gaṁginēnikonḍa in a single campaign.²⁷

Dvipada Bāla Bhāgavatamu, describes him as “caused consternation to his enemies, cut off the hands and feet of the unapproachable Gujjila Vīranēni, Aḍabala Annu, Rudrappa nāyaka, the famous Ganra reḍḍi and Gangināyaka and had their bodies tied to the pillars of the eastern gate. He made a determined attack up on the fort of Mangilla, captured it, beheaded the Gosangi chief and offered his head as oblation to the God Bhairava”.²⁸

This Sōmidēva, thus must have been a contemporary of Harihara I and Bukka I, founders of the Vijayanagara empire in 1336 CE, when Warangal in Telangana was liberated. While we do not know the relations between them, it appears for certain, that he defeated his Muslim contemporary Malik Muhammad, governor of the province of Kampili under the Sultan who made a vainful attempt to regain the forts from Sōmidēva with a force of 6000 horse but “fell in to the hands of Sōmidēva, promising to acknowledge his supremacy” which he did not keep.²⁹

Nuniz gives a graphic account of the events. He calls Muhammad Khan as “Mileque Neby” i.e. Malik Na’ib Muhammad and states “was compelled to take shelter in a fortress closely besieged by the rebels. He also wrote a letter to the Sultan informing him that “the land was risen against

him; everyone was lord of what he pleased and no one was on his side”. The people came to besiege him in the fortress, allowing no provisions to go in to him, nor paying him the taxes that had been forced on them”.³⁰

Subsequent to his victory over Mālik Muhammad and the conquest of Harihara I and Bukka I, not much is known about Sōmidēvarāja. Even the early records of Harihara I do not mention Sōmidēvarāja. Probably he confined himself to the region around Kamdanavōlu i.e. the present Kurnool, with Āravidu as his capital.³¹

These facts are mentioned verbatim in the Virūpākṣa and Śrī Rāma grants also. While the inscriptions or literary sources do not provide the date of Sōmidēvarāja, it may be presumed that since he was a contemporary of Malik Muhammad, Harihara I and Musunuri chiefs, he may have lived during the first half of 14th century CE. Since the chronicles Bāla Bhāgavatam and Narapativijayam ascribed the titles “Māḷavarājeṁdra mastaka chūḷa –Hosabirudaragamḍa” Sōmidēva probably lived between 1310 -1347 CE.³²

The record then mentions Vīra Rāghava, son of Sōmidēva i.e. the 3rd member of the family. (v:7:ll :16-17). It does not ascribe any military achievements to this Vīra Rāghava. The same is the case with the other two records also, mentioned above. They mention him as “sa sōmidēva nṛ ipatistasyauva jainē sutō vīrō Rāghava rāḍiti” (ll:16—17).

But Bāla Bhāgavatam describes him as “urusaurya dhairya bhāsuruḍu” while Narasabhūpāliyam calls him “ghana bhuja śaurya Rāghavuḍu Rāghavadēva dharaṇīsuḍu”. Amḍugula Veṁkayya’s Narapati Vijayam informs that he bore the epithet “yavanabala mardanōtsāha” and “tuḷuva bala vīra saṁhāra”.³³

From this it appears that this Vīra Rāghava must have fought with the nascent Muslim kingdom i.e. the Bahmanis of Gulbarga which came in to being in 1347 CE on the one hand and the rising Vijayanagara chiefs Harihara I and Bukka I who were expanding their power. Probably he died in one of these battles, most probably the Vijayanagara chiefs. Hence the absence of his achievements. On this basis he must have lived for less than 50 years i.e. between 1350-1400 CE. The grant then mentions his son “Pinṇama” described as lord of Āravīḍu city “āravīṭi nagarī vibhōḥ” (ll: 17—18). It is a matter of interest to find that the records of this family do not mention the names of wives of the early members i.e. from Tāta Pinṇama to Pinṇama, the fourth member of the family. We do not know how long this Pinṇama ruled or his date. As regards the identification of Āravīḍu, attention may be drawn to the existence of two Āravīḍus - one lying on the banks of the river Chitrāvati at a distance of 30 miles west of Gaṁḍīkōṭa in the present Kadapa district, Andhra Pradesh, while the other was a village Āravīḍukōṭa situated in Cumbum taluk of the present Prakasam district also in Andhra Pradesh. However, the former may be taken as Āravīḍu in view of its association with the early history of the Āravīḍu chiefs as seen from their family chronicles.³⁴ Even the family chronicle Dvipada Bāla Bhāgavatamu does not help in the matter. However, he must have had a short span of less than 5 years i.e. between 1400 –1405 CE. Pinṇama was succeeded by his son Bukka who was the first and most notable member of the family. It is from this period onwards that the Āravīḍu chiefs began rising in power and strength and thus drew the attention of imperial lords of the Vijayanagara kingdom. The record describes Bukka as “budha kalpa śākhi” (ll :21) (boon giver to the learned) and married the beautiful and virtuous Ballāmbikā. (ll:22). It also states that it was by him, the kingdom of Sāḷuva Nṛisimha, was stabilised. (ll:18-19 [Yēna Sāḷuva Nṛisimha rājyamapyēdha māna mahasā

sthīrīkṛitah]”.

Here arises the problem of the long chronological gap between Pinnama, who probably lived in the first quarter of 15th century CE where as Sāluva Narasimha appears on the political scene of Vijayanagara in the last quarter of 15th century CE and occupied Vijayanagara in 1485 CE. But the present record and the other two records state in uninequivocal terms that Bukka was the son of Pinnama. Bāla Bhāgavatamu states that Āravīti Bukka was the son of Aubhala devi, wife of Pinnama.³⁵ In this connection it may be noted that since the grants also are not contemporaneous and none of the early members issued any inscription, it appears that the compilers of the grants simply followed the literary accounts like Padya Bāla Bhāgavatamu, Narapati vijyamu, Vasu charitra, Sāmbōpākhyānam etc. Padya Bāla Bhāgavatamu ascribes Bukka the title “Sāluva Narasimha rāya rājya pratishṭhāpanāchārya”.³⁶

While the circumstances in which he stabilised the authority of Sāluva Narasimha are not known, it appears for certain, that he played a leading part in the battle with the Bahmanis, who rendered support to Haṁvīra, brother of Purushōttama, in the internecine struggle of the Gajapatis between Purushōttama and Haṁvīra. In the eastern expedition of the Gajapatis under the command of Purushōttama, Āravīti Bukka went in support of Purushōttama, made inroads in to Telangana and made the Bahmanis and their ally Haṁvīra helpless.³⁷

This war with the Bahmanis took place around 1474-75 CE, during the reign of the Bahamani Sultan Muhammad Shah III (1463-1482 CE).³⁸ “(Medieval History of Deccan)”

According to an account contained in Karnataka rājya vṛittāntamu, “Bukka, with the help of his followers, arrested the progress of the enemy and acquired great glory by putting them to flight. The rāya who was struck with the courage of Bukka, conferred up on him as jāgir Āraṇḍu and Celamanur, yielding a revenue of 2 lakh varahas in addition to the estate fetching 1 lakh which he was already enjoying”.³⁹

He is said to have played a significant role in establishing and stabilising the kingdom of Sāluva Narasimha and earned the title “manne puli” commonly known as tiger among the feudatory chiefs.⁴⁰

Kumāra Dhūrjaṭi, a poet who adorned the court of Krishṇarāya, says that Āravīti Bukka lived for over 100 years and even witnessed Krishṇarāya’s coronation.⁴¹ If this were to be believed, Bukka must have been at least 50 years old to take part in the war with the Bahmanis in 1475 CE, in which case, he must have been born around 1350 CE and thus lived a long life to witness the coronation of Krishṇarāya which took place in 1509 CE. From this period onwards the fortunes of the Āraṇḍu chiefs changed and they began playing an important role in the Vijayanagara administration in some position or other continuously and finally became even the lords of the remnant Vijayanagara kingdom in 1575 CE with Tirumala as the founder of the last or IVth Dynasty. They carried on for almost another 100 years i.e. till 1650 CE. The record also describes Bukka as “budha kalpa śākhī” (boon giver to the wise or learned) who married a beautiful woman named Ballāmbika who resembled the goddess Lakshmi, daughter of the Ocean (II:19-23 “svaḥ kāmīnī svatanu kāmītibhiḥ rākshipaṁtīm bukkāvanipa tilakō budha kalpa śākhī| kaḷyānī nīm kamala nabha ra(ri)vābdhi kanyāṁ ballāmbikā mudavaha bahumānya ś(ś)ilām”) The other two records also contain the same description verbatim.

These records do not mention the parentage of Ballāmbikā. This Ballāmbikā gave birth to a son named Rāma rāja, like Śachīdēvi wife of Īndra, whose son was Jayamta.(Il:23-26).It also describes this Rāma rāja, who, with a force of 70,000, defeated a certain “simḍhu janushā” of Bijapur.(Il :26-29 “sahasraissaptatyā sahitamapi yaḥ simḍhu januṣām pādasyāṇīkaṁ Samiti bhuja śauryēṇa mahatā |vijityā datēsmādavani giri durgam Vibhutayā vidhu(dhū)temdraḥ kāsappaḍaya mapi vidrātya sahasrā”). The simḍhu janusha mentioned in the grant may be identified with Yousuf Adil Shah 1489-90-1510 CE, who advanced up on Raichur doab from Vijayanagara.⁴²

In this expedition Bukka, after defeating Yousuf Adil khan, captured Ādavāni i.e.modern Adoni in Kurnool district, A. P. and drove away the powerful Kāsappa Oḍaya and even took hold of Kandanavōlu, i.e., modern Kurnool. Bāla Bhāgavatamu also supports the above statement.⁴³

This Kāsappa may be the same Peda Kāṇappa Oḍaya who was a contemporary of Mallikārjuna of the Saṁgama dynasty as noticed in the Alampur inscription dated Śaka1389 (1468 CE).⁴⁴

Dvipada Bāla Bhāgavatam also lends support to the above stating that Kāchappa was in the service of Saṁgama dynasty. He is also identified with Kāsappa nāyaka of Ādavāni who figures as a subordinate Sālva Narasimha in Ś 1420 (1498 CE).⁴⁵ Thence forward, Rāma Rāja Bukka began ruling over Kandanavōlu, bearing the title “mahā maṇḍalēśvara” and even made a grant to a certain “nāmāla paṁḍuga” on Monday, Mārgaśira ba :11, Śaka 1420, Kālayukti, during the reign of Immaḍi Narasimgarāya, (1491-1503 CE), while Narasānāyaka was governing the kingdom as his deputy. This gift was made for the merit of Immaḍi Narasimha, Narasānāyaka and his father “manne puli” Bukkaraya, for obtaining religious merit.”⁴⁶

During this period we find an invasion of certain Savāyi Bībi who captured Kandanavōlu, a subordinate chief of the Bahmani ruler who was ruling at Kalubarigi.⁴⁷

The Bahamani ruler towards the end of 15 th century CE was Shihabuddin Mahmud (1482-1518 CE). While it is difficult to identify this Savāyi Bībi, it can be presumed that it was the occupant of Kandanavolu against whom Rāmarāja proceeded with a strong force of 70,000, defeated Savāyi Bībi and drove him further South. Having established himself at Kandanavolu, he built a fort on the banks of the river Tumgabhadrā and captured Ādavāni i.e.Adoni. Perhaps this was the battle that took place in 1493 CE, between Yousuf Adil Khan and the Vijayanagara kingdom for supremacy over the Krishna –Tumgabhadrā doab. He first occupied Ādavani which stood at the entrance of the doab and later occupied Kandanavōlu (modern Kurnool).⁴⁸

According to Sarasvatī vilāsamu, the Gajapati king Pratāpa Rudra, lent support to the Adil Shah but was defeated. Hence he acquired the title “hallisusēnōllāsita sapta sata saimdhava grahaṇa parākrama dhanya” (Il:30-31) “sahasrā kaṁdana ōli durga marukumḍaladabhyudayō bāhubalēna y yō bahutarēṇa vijitya harēḥ”). The record states that his chief queen was beautiful Lakkāmbikā. (Il 33-35 “Śrī Rāma rāja kshitipasya chintāmaṇēradhi kaḁamkānām Lahshimīrivāmbhōruha lōṇ anasya Lakkāmbikā mukhya mahiṣyalāsīt”).

The other two records (viz) i.e.Virūpākṣa grant and the Śrī Rāma grants also mention the same. The fact that Lakkāmbikā is described as chief queen (mukhya mahishī) leads to the surmise that Rāmarāya had some more wives, in addition to Lakkāmbikā. According to Dvipada Bāla Bhāgavatam, Rāmarāya had four wives. They were Oubalāmba, Lakkāmbā, Raṁgamāmba and Anatāmba. Among them, to Lakkāmba was born Śrī Raṁgarāja where as Bāla Bhāgavatam mention

two more sons of Lakkāmba (viz) Timmarāja and Konḍrāju. But the other two records uniformly state only one son of Rāmarāya.

Rāmarāya was succeeded by his son Śrī Raṅga I, born to his righteous and beautiful wife Tirumalāmbikā. (ll :38-42 (verse 14) “saṭim Tirumalāmbikā charita līlayārumdhātī prdhamapi titikshya yā vasumatī yasōrumdhātī ||himāmsuriva rōhiṇīm ha(hṛ)daya hāriṇīm|| sadguṇairamōdata sa dharminī maya mavāpya vīrāgraṇīḥ”). To them were born three sons named Rāmarāja, Tirumalarāya and Vemkaṭādri. We learn from Narapati Vijayaṁ of Aṁdugula Venkanna, Śrī Raṅga I flourished in the court of Śrī Krishṇadēva rāya as one of the mahā maṇḍalēsvaras⁴⁹. and ruled over the Kurnool region between Saka 1447 -1475 (1525-1553 CE).⁵⁰

In this context it must be noted that Rāma rāja, eldest son of Śrī Raṅga I is identified with Aḷiya Rāmarāya, the protege of Sadāśivarāya and son in law of Krishṇadēvarāya. This prefix Aḷiya before his name appears as a result of his marriage with a daughter of Krishṇadēva rāya. It may be noted that the term Aḷiya ascribed to Rāmarāya appears in Telugu inscriptions from S1465 (1543 CE) onwards and not earlier as seen in the Udayagiri inscription of Sadāśivarāya.⁵¹

Further Rāmarāja, son of Śrī Raṅga I does not appear in any inscription of Krishṇadēvarāya. It is also not known whether Rāmarāja held any position of political importance during the reign of Krishṇadēvarāya. More so, it is not known whether Krishṇadēvarāya had any daughter at all to offer her in marriage to Rāmarāja as we find in the inscriptions of Krishṇadēvarāya. Yet, the repeated occurrence of the term Aḷiya in quite a good number of inscriptions leads us to accept the surmise that he was the son in law of Krishṇadēvarāya. This gains support from the evidence supplied by Rāmābhyudayamu which states that the famous “Rāmarāja became the husband of the daughter of Krishṇadēvarāya.”⁵² Further the Kaiḷiyat of Tadipatri⁵³ states that “after the death of Krishṇadēvarāya, Tirumaladēvi, his queen, had given her only daughter in marriage to Rāmarāja and kept her near her. Thence forward Rāma Rāja came to be known as Aḷiya Rāmarāya”.⁵⁴

But both Rāmābhyudayamu and the Tadipatri kaiḷiyat do not mention the name of Krishṇarāya’s daughter. Even inscriptions also fail us in this matter. More over, it is not known why Krishṇadēvarāya chose Achyutarāya to succeed him in preference to his own son in law Rāma rāya. From the above study it appears that the marriage of Rāmarāja with Krishṇarāya’s daughter took place in or about 1543 CE i.e. after the death of Krishṇarāya and Achyutarāya. But it should have taken place certainly after the death of Krishṇarāya only and not after Achyuta rāya. Rāmarāja does not appear on political scene of Vijayanagara in the reigns of Krishṇa dēva and Achyuta. It is said that Rāmarāja was over 70 years old.⁵⁵ and according to the Portuguese writers Couto and Sousa, he was 96 years old.⁵⁶ when the battle of Banihatti was fought in 1565 CE, in which Rāmarāya fought valiantly in spite of his old age. If this were to be believed, Rāmarāya must have been born around 1450 CE and his age at the time of marriage must have been at least 60 years or more. In all probability this marriage must have taken place due to political exigencies. Another point of interest is that queen Tirumalāmba is not heard of during the reign of Achyutarāya (1530—42 CE). Above all, the present grant under study and the other two grants i.e. Virupāksha and Sri Rāma do not refer to the battle of Banihatti and the death of Aḷiya Rāma rāya at all. However, the present grant states that Rāmarāja’s younger brothers –Tirumala and Vemkaṭādri assisted his elder brother like Lakshmaṇa to Rāma, who assisted his elder brother Rāma rāya. It appears that he did not rule the kingdom.

Then comes Tirumalarāya I (Il :51-54,verse 17) who had three sons (viz) Raghunātha, Śrī Raṁga and Śrī Rāma. Interestingly enough the record does not mention Vemkaṭapatirāya, popularly known as Venkaṭapati II. It also does not mention the name of his wife. However this lacunae is filled by the Virūpāksha and Śrī Rāma grants, which state that her name was Vemgaḷāmba.⁵⁷ The present grant under study describes the greatness of Tirumala in Il :50-59,verse :20-22) and states in unequivocal terms that he anointed himself as king. This event took place in Śaka 1493 i.e. 1571 CE as attested by his earliest record at Kōvilakumṭla in Kurnool district dated Śaka 1493, Prajāpati, i.e. 1571 CE.⁵⁸

This shows that there is a gap of 6 years between the battle of Banihatti of 1565 CE in which Aḷiya Rāma rāya lost his life and the anointment of Tirumala I. During this intervening period we find Sadāśiva continued to rule, assisted by Tirumala, as evidenced by his inscriptions Nos 265 -277 dated between Śaka 1487 i.e. 1565 CE and undated inscription at Mushturu, Dharmavaram taluk, Anantapur district in Andhra Pradesh.⁵⁹ But the present grant and the other two grants i.e. Virūpāksha and Sri Rama ignore this fact and fail to mention. From this it appears true that the belief of scholars that Sadāśiva was allowed to rule till his death by Tirumala acting as his regent exercising defacto authority. The anointment of Tirumala in 1571 CE marks a new epoch in the history of Vijayanagara empire and the beginning of a new dynasty called Āraṇḍu i.e. IV th Dynasty.⁶⁰

Tirumalarāya's reign was a short period of 2 or 3 years and hence no significant achievements worth noting during his rule i.e. between 1571 –72 CE. The grant states that Tirumala had three sons named Raghunātha, Śrī Raṁga, and Sri Rāma (Il. 58-61) . Among them, Śrī Raṁga succeeded his father in 1572—1584 CE, as seen from his inscriptions Nos 281 to 297 dated between 1572 to 1584 CE.⁶¹ In l.:65 the present grant describes him as “Āraṇḍi pura hāra nāyakaḥ”. His successor was Raghunātha whom historians ignore as there are no inscriptions for him. Next comes Vemkaṭapatirāya II considered as most powerful in the Āraṇḍu dynasty and ruled for a long period from 1586 to 1614 CE. His Kamdukuru grant is dated Śaka 1535, Pramādi, Vaiśākha Śu. 12 corresponding to 1613 CE, Aprī 21. He was ably supported by the nobles headed by Jaggadēva rāya.⁶² His first attempt to recover Udayagiri led him to fight with Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah. At this, Ibrahim Qutb Shah sent the general Amin ul Mulk to defeat Vijayanagara forces. Amin ul Mulk first marched against Gandikota which was captured and then he took the forts of Gutti and Kurnool and proceeded against Penugonda. Venkata realising the danger, tried to enter in to peace and supported by his chiefs Jaggadēva, Maṭli Anaṁta, Velugōṭi Kastūri Raṁga, Velugōṭi Chenna and his son, who suddenly fell up on Amin ul Malik and made him flee. This is attested by the Sidhout record and Rāmābhyudayaṁ which refer to the defeat of Muslim forces.⁶³ During his reign arose a rebellion led by Nandela Krishnamaraja in 1597-98 CE which he quelled successfully. Later on, he shifted his capital to Vellore.⁶⁴ As he had no male issues to succeed him, he nominated his brother's son “Sri Raṁga” which was however not acceptable to Jaggarāya who espoused the cause of his son in law which resulted in a civil war in which Yācha killed Jaggarāya in the battle of Toppur and crowned Rāmādeva, son of Śrī Raṁga as emperor in 1617 CE. This Rāmādeva ruled for a period of 15 years from 1417 to 1430 CE. After Venkaṭapatirāya, the remnant Vijayanagara kingdom fell in to anarchy and disorder due to internecine struggles for succession between agnate members of the family. With this the grant stops mentioning the successors of Venkaṭapati II and mentions the grant portion followed by the details of the grant by the donor Peda Venkaṭa, grand son of Aḷiya Rāmādeva and son of Śrī Raṁga, at the holy Feet of Śrī Vemkaṭēśa – to a host of learned Brahmins belonging to different gōtras (lineages) and Sūtras who specialised in different branches of Vedic lore. (Il :79-82).

It also specifies their names and parentage and the number of shares (vrittis or tenures) granted to each considering their qualifications.

Another important point of interest is the mention of the Gobburi chiefs. These chiefs appear for the first time during the reign of Krishṇadēvarāya in his expedition against Kalinga.⁶⁵ After this, again they rose to prominence during the rule of Sadāśiva and his successors. We find a certain Gobburi Ōbaya dēva mahārāja as a subordinate of Sadāśiva in Ś1469 i.e. 1547 CE in an inscription at Ahobalam.⁶⁶ During the same period we notice some more Gobburi chiefs ruling over Kurnool, Kadapa and Chengulpet districts. Barbodos mentions a certain Ōbarāya as the brother in law of Venkata and Chinna Ōbalarāya, as a brother of the traitor Jaggarāya.⁶⁷ whose daughter Bāyamma was married to Venkaṭa. This Obaraja ,probably was the the same “Aubhala bhūpāla” mentioned in the present grant (ll:103—106 :Gobūraubhala bhūpāla pautrasya guṇa śālinah Abarāja tanūjasya tādṛuśī | vinayaudārya sī(śī)lasya vijnapti manupālayan |Śrī Vīra Venkaṭa mahārāja mahīpatiḥ||) After the death of Rāma rāya in 1630 CE, Peda Venkaṭarāya ,son of China Timma and grand son of Aḷiya Rāmarāya, ascended the throne with the active support of the Gobbūri chief Abarāja, grand son of Aubala bhūpāla.

In the end the grant states that land was granted to about 30 brāhmaṇas specifying their names and the number of shares (vrittis) granted to each in ll 107-143, verses 32-57). The text of the grant was drafted by a certain Venkaṭarāya, son of Vīraṇāchārya who was the poet of Kāmakōṭi.

As regards the identification of the places mentioned in the grant the following may be noted. Paḍaivīḍu rājya is identical with the present Paḍaivīḍu situated in Tiruvaṇṇāmalai district south of North Arcot district. Tomḍīra maṇḍala is identical with a sub division of Paḍaivīḍu mahā rājya which formed part of Tondaimaṇḍala. Timirināḍu is identical with the present Timiri (Thimiri) situated about 8 miles South of Arcot town. Vamḍvamtāṅgali the grant village can be identified with modern Vidvamtamgal, about 10 kms further south of Arcot. Upa grāma, probably a hamlet of the main village called Piḍakai in Tamil. Palugunābhi koṭṭa is probably Palugunāra or Palkunra koṭṭa which was one among the 24 traditional divisions of Tondaimaṇḍala or Tomḍīra maṇḍala of the present record, supposed to have been made by the Pallava rulers. The boundary villages (viz) Guḍipādri mahā grāma, situated towards west of Paḍaivīḍu, Kanirāmaṅgala lying on the east and Sītāramapuram and the rivulets Maridēri, Mupakēri and Putṭēru are not identifiable for want of the List of Villages in Tamilnadu.

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Text

Plate - I: 2nd side

1. Śrī Verṇkaṭeśāya namaḥ|| yasya samparka puṇyēna –
2. nārīratna mabhū(chhi)ṇīlā| yadupāsyam Sumanasām
3. tadvastu dvaṁdvamāśrayē |yasya dviradavaktrāyā : pārishadyā para ---
4. śśataṁ vighnaṁ nighnamti bhajatām vishvaksēnaṁ tamāśrayē | jayati –
5. kṣīra jaladhērjātaṁ Savyēkṣaṇaṁ harē : | ālāmbanaṁ ṇakōraṇi ---
6. mamarāyus(ka)skraraṁ maha; | pautrastasya Purūravā Budhasutastasyā---
7. yurasyātmaja ; | saṁjajne Nahaṣo Yayatirabhavastasmacha--
8. pūrusta : | tadvaṁśe Bharatō bhabhūva nṛpatistasamtatā Śamta --
9. nu ; tatturyō VijayōbhimanurudarabhūttasmātParīkṣita ; |
10. Namdastasyāṣṭamōbhūtsamajani namasyarājnaścalikka-----
11. kṣmāpassaptama Śrīpatiručirbhavadrājapūrvō Narēndrah---
12. tasyāśidBijjalēndrō daśamayihanṛipāṁ Virahemāli ---
13. rāyustāṭiyakō Murārai kṛitanaatirudabhūstastyaMāyā ---
14. purīsa ; | ttatturyōjani Tāta Piṁnama mahīpālō nijālāka ---
15. natrastā mitraganastatō janiharan durggāṇi saptahitāt –
16. ahnaikēna sa Sōmidēva nṛpati(stasyai)staysyaiyauvajne sutō vīrō --
17. Rāghavadēva rāditi tasyā Piṁnamōbhunṛipa ; | Āravīti na---
18. garī vibhōrabhūstasya Bukka dharanīpati ssuta ; |yēna Sālu(lu)vanri[nara]
19. simha rājyamapyēdhamāna mahasā sthīrīkṛita ; | sva ; kkāminī--

Plate –II : 1st side

20. svatanukāmtibhirākṣipamtiṁ Bukkāvanī pati ---
21. lakō budhakalpa śākhī | kalyāṇinīm kamalanā---
22. bhara(ri)vābdi kanyāṁ Ballāmbikā mudavaha bahumānya sī --
23. laṁ | sutēva kalasāmbudhēśś(ssu)rabhilāśugaṁ Mādhavā --
24. tkumāra miva Śāṁkatkula mahībhṛita ; kanyakā | Ja----
25. yaṁta mamaraprabhōrapi Śācīva ba (bu) kkāvadhipāśrutaṁ Ja ---
26. jati Ballamālabhata Rāmarā[jaṁ]sutaṁ| sahasraissapta tyā---
27. sahitamapiya ; simdhu janūṣāṁ sapādasyāṇikaṁ Sami –
28. ti bhuja śauryēṇa mahatā | vijityādatēsmādavani giri du –
29. rggaṁ vibhutayā vidhu(ū)tēndrah ; Kāsappoḍayamapi vidrātya(vya) saha—
30. sā (srā) ||Kāmdana Ōli durggmurukāṁdaladbhyudayō bāhubalē ---
31. na yō | bahutarēṇa vijitya hare ; | sannihitasya tatra cara ---
32. ṇāṁbuṣu bhaktatayājñātibhirarpitaṁ Sa(su) dhayatismāni—
33. pētya(vya) viṣaṁ | Śrī Rāma rāja kṣi(ksṛi)tipasya cīmtāma—
34. ṇēardhi kadambakānām | Lakṣmīrivāmbhōruha lōṇanasya –
35. Lakkāmbikā mukhya mahiṣyalāśīt | tasyādhikai ssama –
36. bhavattttaa (tta)yastapōbhi Śrī Raṁgarāṇa nṛpatiŚŚaśi vaṁśa dī---
37. pa ; | āsan samullasati dhāmanipēsyā cītraṁ nētrā---
38. ṇI vairi surdṛuśāṁ ṇa niraṁjanāni | satīm Tirumalām –

39. bikā çarita līlayārumdhātī pradhamaṇi titikṣa (kṣhyaya ś(kṣa) ---

Plate –II : 2nd side

40. yā vasumatī yaśōrumdhātā(tīm) || himamśuriva rō
 41. hiṇīm ha (hr)daya hāriṇīm || sadguṇairamōdata sadharminī --
 42. maya mavāpya vīrāgraṇī ; | raçitanayaviçāram Rāmarā--
 43. jamça dhīram vara Tirumalarāyam Vemkaṭādri kṣitīsam | a
 44. janayata sayētā(ētā) nānupūrvvām kumārāniha Tirumaladē---
 45. vyāmēva rājā mahaujā ; | sakala bhuvana ka(m)ṭakānārātati--
 46. n samiti hitya(nihatya) sa Rāmarāja vīra :| Bhaatamanu Bhagi---
 47. radhādī rāja pradhita yaśa ; praśāsāsa çakra mūlrvyām |
 48. vyarājata Śrī Vīra Vemkaṭādri rājakṣitau Lakṣmaṇa çā--
 49. ru mūrti : | jyāghōṣa dūrikṛita mēghanāda : kurvvan sumi---
 50. trāsaya harṣa pōṣam | triṣu Śrī Raṁga kṣmāparibriḍa kumā---
 51. rēṣvadih (dhi)raṇam | vijityariksmāpān | Tirumala mahārā---
 52. ya nṛipath : | mahaujassāmrajyē sumati rabhi ṣiktōni –
 53. rupame praśāstyurvīm sarvāmapi tisruṣu mūrtiṣvivaha---
 54. ri : || yaśsvinā magrasarasya yasya paṭṭābhiṣēkē sa ti –
 55. pārthivēmdro : | dānāmbu pūairabhiṣiçyamānā dēvīpada[m]
 56. bhūmiriyam Dadhāti | sāmādayāthi mukhādiva satya va—
 57. ça ; sāmādyupāya nivhāyuva sāmnyugīnāt | Rāmā---
 58. dayōdaśaradhādiva rājamaulē : tasmādamēya sa –
 59. stanaya babhuvuhu | rājātātōbhūdraghunādha namā Śrī
 60. Raṁga rāya śrita pārijāta : | Śrī Rāma rāja śśīśI ---

Plate –III : 1st side

61. rāmttaramga : | Hari puri nimēṣānō[pada] pāvaka—
 62. nām hōdrā birudara gaṁgarāya rāhuttaḍa : |mahi---
 63. ta çarita dhanyōmanniyān sāmūlādī prakatita biru[da]---
 64. Śrī : pāṭitārā tilaka : | sāravīramasyā samullabha---
 65. n Āravīti pura hāra nāyaka : | kuṁḍlīśvara mahābhujam---
 66. śrēyan maṁḍalika dharāṇī varāhatām | Ātrēya gōtra jā----
 67. ta(nā) magra sarō bhūbhujamudāra yaśa : | patirudatura---
 68. ya dhaṭṭō mati guru rāraṭa magadhamānya pada : |Śāla(lyā)---
 69. ri nīti śālī kalyaṇa purādhipa : kalā çatura : ---
 70. Çālikka çakravartī māṇikka mahā kirīṭa mahanī---
 71. ya ; yē biruda rāya rāhuta vēsyaika bhujamga biruda---
 72. bharita Śrī : | śōyam nītijitādi bhūpatita ti sūtrā---
 73. ya śākhī sudhī | (sau)sāryanām bhujā tējasa svavaśya ---
 74. karnāta śīm(sim)hāsanam | āsētōrapī çā himādrivi –
 75. matān samhṛtya śāsan mudā | sarvorvvīm praçakāsti—
 76. Vemkaṭapati Śrī dēvarayāgraṇī : | śakti bāṇa kalam---
 77. bēṁdu gaṇitē Śaka vatsarē | pramōdutābhidhē varshau mā[sa]

78. kā[r]ttika nāmani | pakṣaurēdha lakṣē puṇya jaudvādasām(syam)ça---
 79. mahā tithau | Śrī Vemkaṭēsa pādāmbu (pādābja) sannidhau śrē--
 80. ya sānnidhau | nānā śākhābhidhā gōtrasūtrēbhā (bhya :) –
 81. (śāstra vittayā) | vikhyātēbhyō vijemdrōbhyō(dvijātibhyō) vēda –

Plate –III : 2nd side

82. vi(bhyō)dbyōyā viśeṣata : | Paḍaviḍu mahārājya –
 83. Tomḍirākhyētu maṁḍalām Palugunābhithē koṭṭepari---
 84. Timirināḍukē | Paramdarāmi nāmāchat Patta madhyē--
 85. suśobhine ||
 86. Guḍipādri mahā grāma dakṣiṇā[di]śā pratiṣṭitam|kṛiṣṇā--
 87. purōttarē dhārā Paḍaviḍōstu paścimē |Karīrāmarṁga—
 88. la grāma prācībhāga virājitaṁ |Sītāramapuroddharmapra---
 89. tināma sama samanvitaṁ |maridēri mupakērilava—
 90. Puṭṭēri nāmabhi : | Upagrāmaisti (stri) abhiyuktaṁ nānāsaśya—
 91. samanvitaṁ|Varṁduvarṁtāṁgali grāmaṁ taṭākārāma—
 92. śōbhitaṁ | nṛubhānumanūratta rudra lōka diśām karmāt |--
 93. saṁkhyābhi ssaṁvibhajjāya yētābhi ssaṁsaṁsaṁtām|---
 94. sarvamānyaṁ ṣaṭussimā sahitaṁ ṣa samamṁtata : |nidhi—
 95. nikṣēpa pāṣāṇa siddha sādhyā jalānvitaṁ |ādiṣyā(akṣiṇyā)—
 96. gāmi sa(myu)ktaṁ gaṇabhōjyaṁ sa bhūruhā | vāpī kūpa ta----
 97. ṭākaiśṣaa(kaṇṇā)raśṣārāmaīśṣa samyutaṁ |putra pautrādibhirbhō--
 98. jyaṁ kramadācamdra tārakam | dānā nādhamana vikṛiti yō--
 99. gyaṁ vinimayōcitaṁ ||Śrīmatkāsyapa gōtrasya varā----
 100. .pastam̐ba sūtriṇa : |yajuśśākhā samētasya satya sa[m̐dha]
 101. sya dhīmata : | sarva viprānavadrusya pratāpa jita vai –
 102. riṇā : |Śrī Rāma ṣaraṇāmbhōja bhramarādata ṣētasa : |--

Plate –IV : 1st side

103. Gobūraubhala bhūpāla pautrasya guṇa śālina : --
 104. Abāraja tanūjasya pati rājasya tādrīśi |vina---
 105. yaudārya sī(śī)lasya vijṇapti manupālayan |Śrī Vīra Vemka ---
 106. ṭapati mahārāya mahīpati : | sa hiraṇyasya payōdhārā pū--
 107. rva kam dattavān mudā || vritti maṁtrōtta likhyam̐tē viprādēsa ---
 108. tra pāragā : | Śrī Hari pradhamaṁ Tatra vritti rēkām samasnutē |
 109. yēkaṇayatiśśiva śśakṣādvṛutā vatti maṁtāvāra : | addhya ---
 110. pakāya vēdānām vritti rekōdrussate | sa Gārgēyasa—
 111. gōtrasya varāpastam̐ba sūtra (trina) : | yajurvēda vatō nārasim ---
 112. hasyātma bhavasya ṣa | Vemkaṭāyābhi dhānasya vritti traya mi –
 113. ha dhruvaṁ | tatkanishṭasya ṣa harērekaṁ Vrittirīhasmṛutā ā--
 114. trēya gōtra saṁjāta : āpastam̐ba matēstita | Śrīnivā--
 115. sōtrayassaiyaikā vṛiti ratra prakīrtitā | vatsa gōtrāmburā--
 116. śim̐dra : āpastam̐ba matānuga : | ahōbalātmaja Śrīni—

117. vāsastvēkāṁ samasnutē | Bādarāyaṇa gōtrābdhi ṣaṁdramā--
 118. guṇa rōhaṇa : dvitīya vēda nilayōvarāpastambā sūtravā--
 119. n | jīyyagāru suta śrīmān Vemkaṭādrabhi dhāyuta ; ---
 120. trānu vritti sarvēśāṁ vritti dvaya mihāsnutē | tatkaṇiṣṭa ; vritti --
 121. madhō vritti dvayamihāsnutē | Bhāradvāja kuḷi kṛiṣṇa gō--
 122. pālāstvēka vrittimān | tadgōtra naināśēṣā vritti dva---
 123. ya samanvita : |tadgōtra kṛiṣṇa bhāṭṭasya Rāghavastvēka vri---
 124. ttimān |tadgōtra pītāmbara sutastvēkāṁ vritti samanvitē--

Plate –IV : 2nd side

125. || Śrī | sāvaṇya gōtra saṁjāta : su budhyāyana --
 126. sūtravān | adhīta sāma vēdasṣa sarva vidyā viśā--
 127. rada ;| sabhāpati kavē : putra : kāma kōṭi kavē ; suta ;--
 128. śāsana Śrī Rāma kavi ; praṣaṁḍa jōḍimdrimāgraṇi :---
 129. śāsanōllēkhana dravya nimittaṁ Sarva saṁtaṁ | sītā---
 130. rāmābhidha grāmē vritti dvaya mayasnute | Vaiśvāmitrē--
 131. yajurvēdī varāpastambā sūtravān | Nārāyaṇomta pu ---
 132. rvā vritti mēkāṁ samasnutē | Kaumḍinya gōtra Koṁḍappa su ---
 133. tā vritti dvayāṁkita : | Yallāmbhāṭṭastatkaṇiṣṭān vrittire---
 134. kāṁ samasnutē | tadgōtra sūtratyērnata Appātaiyāva ---
 135. dhātān | Śrīmattirumalarāyā dau vrittimēkāṁ sama --
 136. snute | tadgōtra Tirumala sūtō Vemkaṭastvēkāṁ vritti mā--
 137. n | tadgōtra Rāmaṣaṁdra suta dvayamihāsnuṭe | tadgōtra --
 138. --- śaṁrī putrastāstvēkāṁ samasnutē | tadgōtra ṣokka---
 139. tanujō vritti mēkāṁ samasnutē | Maitrēya gōtra padmā---
 140. tma bhaja vritti dvayāṁkita : | Jāmadagni vatsa bhavanā---
 141. ra śimhō dvivrittimān | Kausikāppā suta styēha vritti ---
 142. trayamiti smritaṁ | tadgōtra Nārāyaṇiātmaṁ vritti dvaya[sa]ma—
 143. snutē | tasyō dharma purītra ta vritti mēkāṁ samasnutē |---

Plate –V : 1st side

144. Śrī Vemkaṭapati rāya kṣitipativarēśya kāmṭi dhurē---
 145. strayā | Śāsanamidāṁ sudhijana kuvalaya ṣaṁdrasya bhūmahē---
 146. (o)dra syā | Śāsaṇiṣṭāni padyāni Kāma kōṭi kavē suta : | Rājō Vem[ka]—
 147. ṭa rāyasya nidaṁ śārada garīṭkavi : | Śrī Viraṇāṣārya varēśya sūtā---
 148. varāṣyutauryōgaṇa pārē putra : | sūktābhīṣyat Vemkaṭarāya maulē pa ---
 149. dyānihaṣṭā nmaya śāsanasyā | dāna pālanayōrmadhyē dānā śrēyōnu --
 150. pālanāṁ | dānatsvargamavāpnōti pālanāṣyutaṁ padaṁ |svadattā dvigu ---
 151. ṇaṁ puṇyaṁ para dattānu pālanāṁ |paradattāpa hārēṇa svadattaṁ ni; sphalaṁ----
 152. bhavēt | svadattāṁ para dattāṁ vā yō harēta vasuṁdharāṁ | ṣaṣṭirvarṣa saha—
 153. srāṇi viṣṭāyāṁ jāyatē krimi : | yēkaiva bhaginī lōkē sarvēśāmē---
 154. va bhūbhujāṁ | na bhōjya na kara grāhyē viṣa dattā vasuṁdharā | sāmānyō---
 155. yaṁ dharma sētum nripāṇāṁ kālē kālē pālanīyō bhavadbhi ; sarvānētā

156. n | bhāvina : pārdhivēṁdrān bhūyō bhūyō ya(yā)ṣatē Rāma ṣaṁdraa : || Śrī ||

Śrī Venkaṭeśa

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Padaividu grant of Venkatapati raya III



Plate - I: 2nd side



Plate - II : 1st side



Plate -III : 2nd side



Plate -IV : 1st side



Plate –III : 2nd side



Plate –IV : 1st side



Plate –IV : 2nd side

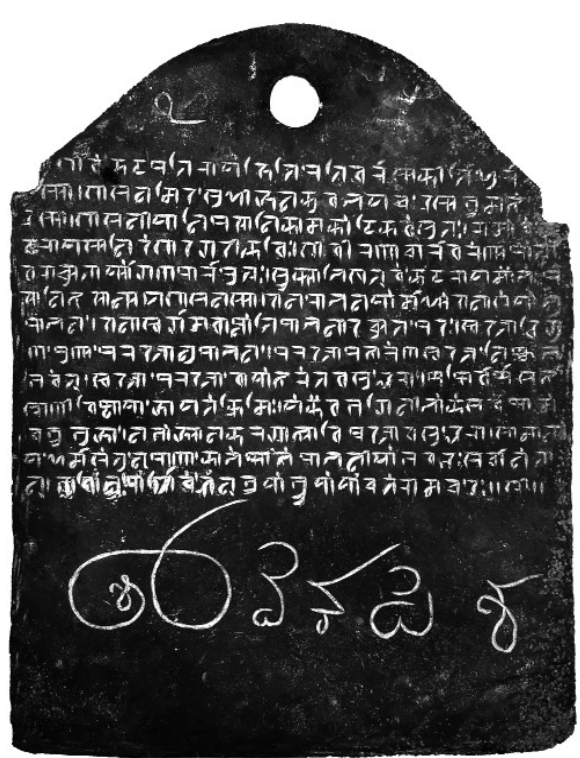


Plate –V : 1st side



Seal

The Madras Museum Plate of the Cēra King, Kō Iravi Kōta

S. Rajendu

Abstract:

This paper examines an unnoticed set of copper plate of the king Kō Iravi Kōta, the 6th ruler of the Makōtai Cēra dynasty, whose coronation happened in the year 1022 CE.

Keywords:

Cēras of Makōtai, Kō Iravi Kōta, Travancore, Madras, Egmore, Grantha, Sanskrit, Vaṭṭeluttu, Tamil

Introduction

During the survey on the inscriptions of the Cēras of Makōtai kings, the author found an unnoticed set of copper plates of the king Kō Iravi Kōta. The Cēras of Makōtai kings ruled Kerala between circa 844 – 1122 CE. The first king of this dynasty was Sthāṇu Ravi Kulaśēkhara who came to power in 844 CE. The last ruler Rāma Kulaśēkhara ended his rule in circa 1122 C.E. No inscription of the last king Rāma was found after 1122 CE. Therefore, it is undoubtedly said that their regime ended before 1124 CE., the year in which the Malik Dinar inscriptions were written.

King Kō Iravi Kōta

Kō Iravi Kōta was the 6th ruler of the Makōtai Cēra dynasty.¹ The king got coronated in the year 1022 CE. The end of his regime is unknown. Another inscription of the same king at Vembath temple, Perumvembu, Palghat was noticed by the author during this survey.

The set of copper plates now being examined here would have been originally found from southern Travancore area and it is now displayed in the Madras Government Museum, Egmore, Chennai. This set added one more to the list of 170 Cēra inscriptions.

About the copper plate in brief

Place of deposit	: Madras Government Museum, Chennai.
Material	: Copper.
Date	: King Iravi Kōta, Kō, Year 2, 1022 C.E.?, 2 nd year of <i>tiruveluppu</i> (coronation?). Not sure that this king belongs to Makōtai Cēra dynasty. There are no historical evidences for the invasion of the Cēra king Iravi Kōta, Kō to Kongu Nadu.
Contents	: Installation of the temple deity. Scribe is mentioned as Peruvān Paṭṭan.
Publication	: <i>I.A.R.</i> , 1966-67, Unpublished

¹ The new chronological list is given by the author in the thesis: *The Resurvey of Cēras of Makōtai Inscriptions*

Remarks	: Madras Government Museum Copperplate of Iravi Kota, 2 nd year. This king was possibly from the dynasty of Kongu Cēras. A few more inscriptions of the same king have been seen on the walls of Tiruttonṭīśvara temple, Erode, Tamilnadu.
Comments	: Author visited the museum on 04/02/2020 to prepare the text. Photographs taken.
Location	: 13.0716° N, 80.2568° E

Transliteration: Grantha

1. yamaṇa śrī virasira tungasya jayaceramasya sarayanme
2. koyiravi kotaikku tiruveluppu cellāṇi
3. nṛayāṇṭu 2 nuku irairappu viṣṇusthāṇattu cceruvā
4. kka viṇṇakar rāṇa abhiṣēka viṇṇakara maṇṭapattil kar
5. ma abhiṣekame paṇṇiceyiya abhiṣeka viṇṇakara
6. śrī ka [...] 23 kame paṇṇikkuṭutta ūrmai
7. vakarinātāmunānātān pūnturaināṭṭu 2 a
8. yurrarai tiruviḷa maṭaikkala maniyamūrkkku ela
9.
10. koṇam 2 [...]
11. tenparate ko ārai naraviṭṭaṇṇa maṇitan
12. koṇamarriyāṭṭu yālimevapapalai oḷu
13. ku kuṛuṇkāṭṭukkume vakaraṭirri karaikāṇam
14. kararṛatakure vaṭake pa [...] riṭṭa [...]
15. rritankonru tūkkikkun maṛiyyicai nakarapperunna
16. tevesakuṭappattān [...] ceyvun ceya
17. marekku yakkumaraṇkupaṇakku ta kuṇru 2
18. pumpoṭi āṇamatavaḷavvappaṇi paḷame bhāgamum bha
19. āgāśrīmum 2 ṭappaṭakkuṛayappaṛa śrīkaravūrru maṇi
20. yūrkkku ceruvenanra mukkonparrumavaippayyava 2 pava
21. yā amka nāyanum mavenu samuprāptakanum kanakkamakkanu ra-
22. bhikta yanara ānābha nipṭaṭikku 23 kame
23. paṇṇiccamaiyirru [...] ppākkututte
24. n koyir kotaiyin abhiṣeka viṇṇakarkku
25. nitya śrī vaiṣṇavāni rakṣainityanerkkuyarapaikatam
26. eṇṇanimevina ko nirkku yāṇaḷi yeḷḷi mukkama
27. ruvāṇna akanāṛaraiyaṛavamukku ttirumantira mukkama
28. eḷutinona eḷukanarānāṭṭi peruvān paṭṭan eḷutta [*]

Translation:

Hail prosperity! The victorious Cēra king, a jewel, like Lord Siva, in his 2nd year granted this to the Viṇṇakar or Vaiṣṇavaite. The name of the scribe is Peruvān Paṭṭan.

Notes on the Madras Museum Plate of Iravi Kōta

During the survey on the Cēra inscriptions, the author noticed an unpublished set of copper plates exhibited in the Madras Government Museum, written on the plaque as “Cēra Inscription”.¹ When expressed the curiosity to check the plate, the curator of the Museum opened the glass door of the show-case and brought it for reading.²

There are two plates in the set. The first side of the first plate starts with *svasti śri* in the grantha characters. The first and second lines show a Sanskrit verse. Then starts the text in Vaṭṭeluttu and they often used Tamil script. The language used in the inscription is in Sanskrit and Tamil.³

The inscription is a copy of the original palm-leaf manuscript, possibly scribed into the copper plate, circa 13th century CE. It is a grant given to a temple, Īroṭṭu⁴ Viṣṇu sthānam⁵ with certain privileges given to the Vaiṣṇavite Brāhmanas⁶ in the second Tiruveḷuppu⁷ year of the king Iravi Kōta. The word Kō, the precedence to the king's name indicates he was a king of a ruling dynasty. Later the author identified that probably this king belongs to Kongu Cēra dynasty.⁸

The author saw another three stone inscriptions in Tiruttontisvara temple, Erode. Here the king had Cola and Cera titles, means he may be a chief in this region.

The king had the title of Kō Kalimūrkkar. Sources said that Kalimurkkar was a Kongu Cera king. The coronation titles (*abhiśēka nāma*) for the kings of Makōtai Cēra dynasty were generally Sanskrit names like Kulaśēkhara, Vijayarāga and Manukulāditya. Interestingly, this is the first known Dravidian title for a king, if he belongs to the Makōtai Cēra dynasty or a king or chief in the Cēra lineage. Circumstantial evidences show that once the Kongu Nāḍu extended its territory to Palghat.

Questions:

1. Is the king Kō Iravi Kōta mentioned in the Madras Museum plate belongs to Kongu Cēra or Makōtai Cēra dynasty?
2. Is there any evidence in history or other sources about the invasion of the Cēra king Iravi Kōta to Kongu country?

Content of inscriptions of Iravi Kōta at Tiruttoṇṭīśvara temple, Erode

Kō Iravi Kōta, Kō was also the name of a chief of Kongu Cēra dynasty. The researcher assumed that a few inscription including the Madras Government Museum copper plate and Erode inscriptions were written during the regime of the Kongu Cēra chief. We can assume without historical evidences that the King Iravi Kōta of Makōtai Cēra dynasty invaded Kongu Nadu and conducted a victory ceremony in the Tiruttoṇṭīśvara temple at Erode.

The summary of the inscriptions other than Madras Government Museum Plate which mentions Kō Iravi Kōta, Kō are given below.

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- 1 The author visited the Madras Government Museum in June 2019 to decipher the plate.
 - 2 When the plate cleaned with vibhūti, it became legible. Vibhūti = ashes, *Ēṇḍo*, *G.D.*, p. 953
 - 3 Malayalam, part of the Dravidian languages, is derived from Tamil and later combined with the Sanskrit language. See: Kovunni Nedungadi, *K.K.*, Koonammavu, 1878
 - 4 It can be also read as Īrairotṭu
 - 5 the seat of the Lord Viṣṇu
 - 6 Viṇṇu = Viṣṇu, *G.D.*, p. 947. Viṇṇakar = Vaiṣṇavaite Brahmanas
 - 7 Eḷuppu = to awake, *T.L.*, p. S165
 - 8 See: Appendix X : Iravi Kōta inscriptions at Erode

Inscription: 1

Location	: South-East wall of the Tiruttoṇṭīśvarar Siva Temple, Erode.
Publication	: A.R.E. No: 15 / 1891, S.I.I. No: 4 : 416; Inscriptions of Erode District, I, Chennai, 2007
Language	: Tamil and Sanskrit; Script : Tamil with Grantha
Dynasty	: Cēra (Kongu Cēra ?); King: Iravi Kōta, Kō
Type	: Stone. 5 lines.
Date	: On the 22 nd Regnal year of the king Kō Iravi Kōta, Kō
Content	: Royal Charter, a grant given to certain lords.

Inscription: 2

Location	: Now kept in the Erode Kalaimakal Higher Secondary School, Erode District.
Publication	: Inscriptions of Erode District, I, Chennai, 2007
Language	: Tamil; Script: Tamil with svasti śri in Grantha
Dynasty	: Cēra (Kongu Cēra ?); King: Iravi Kōta, Kō
Type	: Stone. 24 lines.
Date	: <i>circa</i> 11 th cent. CE.
Content	: Royal charter. A grant given to certain chiefs.

Inscription: 3

Location	: Tiruttoṇṭīśvarar Siva Temple, Erode District, Erode Taluk, Erode Town.
Publication	: A.R.E. No: 12 / 1891; Inscriptions of Erode District, I, Chennai, 2007
Language	: Tamil; Script : Tamil.
Dynasty	: Cēra (Kongu Cēra ?); King: Iravi Kōta, Kō
Type	: Stone. 17 lines.
Date	: <i>circa</i> 11 th cent. CE.
Content	: Royal charter, a grant given to the certain lords. Kō Rājakēsari is mentioned.

A New Copper Plate Charter of Harihara II

S. Nagarajappa

Abstract:

Harihara II, the issuer of the present charter is an important ruler of the Sangama family of the Vijayanagara empire who ruled from 1377 to 1404 CE. He played a vital role in expansion of territories to Warangal and Goa. Apart from this, he renovated many temples, which are destroyed by the Muslim invasion in the south. He is an able administrator, patronized the literature and created many *agrahāras*. In view of his contribution in revival of culture and Hindu religion, he is called as *Hindūrāya-suratrāṇa*.

Key words:

Bukkarāyapuaṁagrahāra, Harihara II, Bukkarāya II, Kannaḍa, Muḷuvāyirājya, Nāgarī, Penugomḍerājya, Sāmavēda, Sangama, Vijayanagara.

The present charter discussed below is noticed in the *Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy* Appendix A. No. 9 of 1963-64, from New Delhi.¹ It was in the possession of some private individual and was sent to the (then) Office of the Chief Epigraphist of Government of India, by the versatile scholar Dr. B. Ch. Chhabra, when he was Joint Director General of Archaeological Survey of India, through Dr. G.S. Gai, a well known Epigraphist. The find spot of the charter is not known.

This set consists of 5 thick shouldered copper-plates, each with a hole near its apex, strung together by a thick circular ring to which is soldered a square seal. The whole set weights 5 kg, 480 grams. Each plate measures 26 cm x 14 cm. The diameter of the ring is 11 cm and its thickness 1.4cm. The seal is a 3.3cm square; and in its counter-sunk surface is a powerful representation of a boar facing proper right and with its tail twisted and thrown above its left thigh. Above the boar are the symbols of the sun and the moon.

Each plate has developed a small crack which is seen on both sides of some plates on one side only of the rest. The first and the last plates have writing only on their inner faces, while the remaining three plates bear writing on both their faces. The writing is in good state of preservation owing to the fact that it is engraved in a counter-sunk surface of each face of every plate. The shoulder portion of the plates is also counter-sunk and in it is engraved the numerals, standing for numbers, in serial order, of the faces containing the writing. The first, second and last plate has 19 lines of writing. Rest of the third plate first side 20, second side 21, the forth plate first side 25 second side has 23 lines of writing. Thus there are 162 lines of writing in all. The engraving is bold and neat and is in excellent state of preservation.

The inscription is engraved in Nāgarī characters of the 14th century CE. The diction of the text as well as paleographical features of the record are regular for the period to which the charter belongs. The language of the record is Sanskrit from line 1 to 116 and 146-165. Line numbers 117 to 145 is in Kannaḍa language dealing with the description of the boundaries.

The date of the record is given in lines 75-77 as ‘yuga-viayad-anala-niśākaraśamkhyēŚāketh

aDum̐dubhauvarshē || Chaitra sitapam̐chadaśāyamsauridinē. The Śaka year given in chronogram as *yuga* (4)*viyad* (0), *anala*(3) *niśākara* (1) i.e, 1304, *Dundhubhi*, *chaitrasu*. 15, *sauridinē*, śaśinirāja *nāgrastē* (lunar eclipse). These details would regularly correspond to the Saturday, March, 29/9 1382 CE. The lunar eclipse also occurred on the date specified.

The inscription belongs to the Harihara II of the Sangama family of the Vijayanagara dynasty. His elder son Bukkarayaruling over Pruthulaśailapurī.

The record opens with the invocation of the lord Varāha i.e., Viṣṇu and Gaṇēśa as found in the other Vijayanagara copper plates. It mentions the genealogy from Bukkāraya I to Bukkāraya II in line numbers 7 to 51. Line number 53 to 75 describes in detail, that Vāsudēva, son of Śellarāya of Gautama *gōtra* was well versed in the Vēdas and in music, was a great minister and warrior and was an *advaitin*. He created an *agrahāra* named after his lord as Bukkārayapuram and distributed lands to many Brahmins of different-*gōtras*. Further it states that he was caused to be excavated a tank named Guṇasindhu-taṭāka therein. The newly created *agrahāra* and tank both were situated on the western side of the village Ārevīḍu in Penugom̐de-rājya.

The details of the donee and their *gōtras* are mentioned in line numbers 39-116. Two persons of the said village, whose names are not recorded in the charter, were experts in Sāmavēda also got some share. The donee's names are enumerated below:

Sl. No.	Name of the Donee	Father name	Gōtra
1	Jōgārya	Kūchanārya	Kāśyapa
2	Chaudārya	-	Viśvāmitra
3	Kaluvārya	-	Viśvāmitra
4	Siddhārya	-	Viśvāmitra
5	Mallayārya	-	Viśvāmitra
6	Mādhavārya	-	Viśvāmitra
7	Jogayārya	Hari	Parāśara
8	Virayārya	Dēvayārya	Śrīvatsa
9	Tippārya	-	Bhāradvāja
10	Mallayārya	-	Bhāradvāja
11	NṛuhariMallayārya	ViṣṇuNārāyaṇa	Vasishtha
12	Mallārya	-	Kāśyapa
13	Viṣṇusūri	-	Kāśyapa
14	Śingārya	-	Kāśyapa
15	Manchanārya	-	Kāśyapa
16	Dēchārya	-	Bhāradvāja
17	Viṣṇusūri	-	Bhāradvāja
18	Śingārya	-	Bhāradvāja
19	Vissayārya	-	Bhāradvāja
20	Śingārya	-	Viśvāmitra
21	Viṭṭhalārya	-	Viśvāmitra
22	Gaurayārya	Muddanārya	Śaunaka

23	Mallayārya	Chittayārya	Kaudinya
24	Mallayārya	Peddisūri	Harita
25	Mādhavārya	Mallayārya	Gārgya
26	Anantasūri	-	Gautama
27	Puruṣōttama	-	Gautama
28	Śingārya	-	Ātrēya
29	Viṭṭhayārya	-	Ātrēya
30	Kēśava	-	Ātrēya
31	Pōtisūri	-	Ātrēya
32	Ellārya	Kēśavārya	Ātrēya
33	Vāsudēva	Śellarāya	Gautama
34	Īśvarārya	Vishṇusūri	Harita

Line numbers 146-165 contains the imprecatory portion. The copper plate end with the sign manual ŚrīRāmanātha, which is in Kannada characters. Generally Vijayanagara copper plates issued by the reigning kings mention the ŚrīVirūpāksha as sign manual. But in some copper plates we have some exception from this tradition such as, T. Narasipur, Vadanakallau copper plate charters issued in the reign of Harihara II.

The prince Bukkarāya II was appointed as provincial governor of Muḷuvāyi and Penugomḍerājya. The date of the record falls well within the reign period of Harihara II who ruled from 1377 to 1404 C.E. It only indicates that Bukkarāya started claiming himself to be an independent ruler even while his father was alive. This system of appointing the King's close relatives and family members as provincial rulers is followed in this period. Most of the records of Harihara II's reign from Tamilnadu and a few records from Andhra Pradesh mention the provincial ruler as king.² It cannot be taken to mean that Harihara II was no more by this date, since two of his inscriptions clearly state that he died on 30th May 1404 CE.³ All these indicate that each of the sons of Harihara II was staking his claim to the throne during the life time of his father.

Vāsudēva, son of Śellarāya, the creator of Bukkarāyapuram *agrahāra*, is also mentioned in BrāhmaṇaKrāku plates⁴ of Harihara II datable to 24th February 1377 CE. This is the first copper plate inscription issued by Harihara II, which refers the renaming of village the Krāku situated in Pākanāṭivishaya, as Bukkarāyapuram and creating it as an *agrahāra* in memory of his deceased father Bukkarāya I. He. i.e., Vāsudēva, son of Śellarāya of Gautama *gōtra* has received his share as one of the donee for his proficiency in Sāmavēda. Present inscription also mentions him as minister of Bukkarāya II. With his great knowledge, scholarship and goodness, he might have reached the position of a minister by the time of issuing the present record. Since he created *agrahāra* and distributed it among the 26 Brahmins, he also kept some share in the present grant.

The place names Ārevīḍu, Ghanagiri and Pruthulaśailapurī were mentioned in the record. The village Ārevīḍu can be identified with the present Araveedu in Yellanur taluk of Anantapura district, Andhra Pradesh which is very close to Hosanabad. The Ghanagiri and Pruthulaśailapurī can be identified with present Penugomḍe, a taluk head quarter of the Anantapura district of Andhra Pradesh. The name Pruthulaśailapurī is noticed for the first time in the present record.

Text

First plate: second side

1. HarērlīlāVarāhasyadamstrādamdaḥsapā-
2. tuvaḥHēmādri-kalaśa-yatradhātrī
3. chchhattraśriyamdadau ||bāhubhyāmaivalambya
4. nāgharabhasastastājaṭadhūrjaṭē-rdau-
5. lakhēnanamācharannavatuṇvōbāla-
6. ḥ saLambōdharah|śumdanītasurāpagām-
7. Buk[k*]aṇikāsītkāṁgamālōkyamvē-
8. gākṛṣṭatushāra-śailaśikharambhrāntim
9. bhajamtesurāḥ ||vishva-pratītamahi-
10. mā-Yadupārthīvānāmastiprasasta
11. vibhavāspadamanvavāyāḥ|tatrā-bha-
12. va-tribhuvanaprathamānakīrti[ḥ*] Śrī-Bu-
13. kka-bhūmipatiradbhutabāhuśauryaḥ ||
14. Jātastatōvimatarāyavibhāla-kī-
15. rtti[ḥ*] Śrī-Haryapa-kshitipati[ḥ*] śritapāri-
16. jāta[ḥ*] |yasyōn-madadviradakēli-
17. sarōvaratvaṁprāgdakshināparapayō
18. nidhayōbbhajamte||Atisurabhūruha
19. vibhavēdhāritayasminn-aśēsha-guṇa

Second plate: first side

1. ghuryēadimadhyamaṁganānāmavi-
2. śadaśōbhītamarthināmkaśīyam||pā-
3. tālāntaḥsadasibhujagīgīyamā-
4. naṁguṇaughamnyasy-aścharya-pulakitava-
5. puḥśṛṇvatāmpannagānām|Ānamdām-
6. bhuprasarapihitēpāṭavēlōchanā-
7. nāmāsīttēshām-adhikamahitō
8. nētrayō[ḥ*] śrōtrabhāvah||Āchāra-
9. kshatiradrishustanayugēshūdvarṭtatā-
10. yōshitāmālīnyammahadambarēku-
11. valayaglāniḥprabhātōdgamē|śāstrē-
12. shuchchhalajātīnigrahakathāḥsūtrēshuva-
13. ṛṇālpataākāvye-satpadabam̐dhanam Hari-

14. hara kshōṇīśvarērājani||jātō-
15. HaryapabhūpālātkumārōBukka-
16. bhūpatiḥ|Nandanādivamaṇḍārō mala-
17. yadivachamaṇḍanaḥ||dhṛtyāmērumahī-
18. dhara-sphuṭamayamṇītyā cha vāchaspa-
19. tiḥkāṁtyālōkadurāpayāRavira-

Second plate : second side

1. yaṁśāṁtyā-śara-chchamaṇḍramāḥ|mūrtyā-paṁcha-
2. śara[h*] Svayaṁvimalayākīrtyāmarutvā-
3. nitispashṭamaṇḍadgūṇavarṇanampratika-
4. laṁkurvaṁtisarvāḥprajāḥ||nṛpati-
5. laṁkurvaṁtisarvāḥprajāḥ||nṛpati-
6. r-navayauvanābhiraṁamvinayēnāna-
7. tamunnatamaṇyaśōbhiḥ|Abhishichya-
8. Ghanādrirājadhānyamakarōttaṁ
9. yabhārasyārdhamasmindadhānē vi-
10. nayavatikumārēshvagrajēBukka-
11. bhūpēHariharanarapālōdakshiṇaṁsva-
12. syabhāhumdvijagurusuarapūjākarma-
13. kēliyashvayuntam||atisamṛuddhimatīm pi-
14. turājñyāPruthulaśailapurīm-anupā-
15. layan|aniśamēshavannakhilā-
16. ḥ kālājanamanamdayadimdurivō-
17. ditaḥ||sarvvōnnaddhajaṭānibaddha
18. vilasadbālēmdukhamḍasphurajyōtsnā-
19. nirmalamastiGautamamunēr-gōtraṁ pa-

Third plate: first side

1. pavitraṁbhuvī|tatrābhūdaticitra-vākya ma-
2. himāśrīśellarāyaḥkṛtikshīrābdēri-
3. vachamaṇḍramāḥsamajaniśrīVāsudēvasta-
4. taḥ||jihvāgrēnivasamtiyasyasakalā-
5. vidyāḥsamanśamabhiḥtyāgaḥpāṇita-
6. lēsurā-ddrumayaśōgarvaikasarvaṁkashaḥ|
7. Vīraśrīr-bhujayōrguṇastribhuvanēśrīVā-
8. syamahimā-vāchāraṁkathaṁgōcharaḥ||yasya
9. jīvēśayōḥsamyagabhēdagrāhimā-

10. nasam|padmapatrapayōdharminabahi-
11. tōr-Bukkavībhōradhikamānanīyōbhū-
12. t |sachivaḥśūrōvidvānsaṁgīta
13. jñāḥkalaśukuśalaścha | labdhvāBukka-
14. vibhōrajñāmVāsudēvōmhāmatih
15. |bhūdānakartumaihishtaparitushtamanā
16. ḥ kṛtī| Yuga-Viyad-Anala-Nisākara
17. saṁkhyēŚākēthaDum̐dubhauvarshē|| Chaitra si-
18. ta paṁchadaśyāmSō(Sau)ridinēŚaśinirā

Third plate: second side

1. jaṇā(nā)grastē||guṇaratnarōhaṇādrēr-Hari-
2. hara tanayasyaBukkarāyasya | brahmām-
3. ḍaśaktisaṁputapūraṇa-paṭu-kīrti-maukti-
4. laṁkurvaṁtisarvāḥprajāḥ||nṛpati-
5. kaughasya|arinārīchikuratanōni-
6. nhutinipuṇa-pratāpatapanasya|nija-
7. bhartur-ārōgyaiśvaryārtham̐saVā-
8. sudēvāryaḥ|ayam-Ārēvīdunāmnā
9. prathitagrāmasyapaśchimēbhāgē|
10. Guṇasim̐dhu-nā[ma*] taṭākam̐rachitam̐svasu-
11. tēnaŚellarāyēṇa|sīmāvibhāga
12. sahitam̐dhārāpūrvakam̐ cha vipravaryēbhyaḥ
13. |akhilāshṭabhōgatējasvāmyayu-
14. tam̐dattavānanaghaḥ||itikṛtvāgrahāram̐
15. tamakalpayadanalpadhīḥ||svāminō
16. nāmādhēyēnaBukkarāyapurābhidham̐||
17. athabrāhmaṇānām̐gōtranāmāni||
18. Kūchanārya-sutōJōgayāryaḥKāśyapa-gō-
19. trajah̐Chaum̐ḍāryaḥKaluvāryōjathaḥsiddhāryō-
20. Mallayāryajaḥ|VāmāryōMādhavāryōthō Vi-
21. śvāmitrānvayāamī| Hari-sūnur-Jōgayā-
22. ryah̐Parāśara-kulōdbhavaḥ|VīrayāryōDēva-

Forth plate: first side

1. yārya-suta[h*] Śrīvatsa-gōtrajaḥTippāryōMallayā-
2. ryōthōBhāradvājānvayōdbhavaḥ|Nṛharir-Mallayā-
3. ryōthōVishṇur-NārāyaṇātmajaḥVasishṭha-gōtra-

4. jāvētāvityuktābahvṛchāamī||Mallāryajō Vi-
5. shṇusūriḥŚimḡāryōMaṁchanāryajah|Kāśyapānvaya-
6. jāvētauDēchāryōVishṇusūrijah|Śimḡārya-
7. jōVissayāryōBhāradvājānvayāvimau|Śimḡā-
8. ryajōViṭṭalāryōViśvāmitra-kulōdbhavaḥ|Gaura-
9. yāryōMuddanārya-sutaḥŚaunaka-gōtrajah|Chitta-
10. yārya-sutōMallayāryahKaumḍinya-gōtrajah|| Pe-
11. ddisūri-sutōMallayāryōHarita-gōtrajah|Mā-
12. dhavāryōMallayāryatanayōGārgya-gōtrajah|Gau-
13. tamānvayajō [A*]naṁtasūrijahPurushōttamah|Śim-
14. ḡāryajōViṭṭayāryahKēśavaḥPōtisūrijāḥ|
15. EllayāryaKēśavārya-sūnur-Ātrēya-gōtrajāḥ|
16. Śellarāya-sutōVāsudēvō Gautama-gōtrajah|Īśva-
17. raryōVishṇusūri-sutōHarita-gōtrajah|dvausā-
18. magāvimēsarvētamgrāmam-anubhumjatē||athasī-
19. mā||Īśānyamodalḡimūḍaṇa-sīmeĀre-
20. vīḍakālue- gaddesīmeKallinagaddeyapaḍuvaga-
21. ḍeleBaṁduRāmiṣeṭṭimāḍidagaddeyaĀgnēya-mū-
22. le paryam̐taallim̐dadakshiṇasīmeRāmiṣeṭṭi
23. gaddeyaĀgnēya-mūlemodalāḡipaḍuvamun-
24. tāḡiāgaddenairutyasīme|tanakamunde
25. nairutyamukhavāḡiDom̐tiredḍiAm̐ṇayanakē-

Forth plate: second side

1. yanaḍuvebaṁduāpaśchimabhāgadagum̐ḍinamēle
2. hōḡibaṇabebaṁḍeyapaḍuvaṇamūru-śīlinagum̐-
3. ḍinamēledodḍabattugum̐ḍuparyam̐taallim̐damūḍa-
4. ṇasīmeā battugum̐ḍu modal-āḡidakshiṇamukhada-
5. luBaṇabe-guḍḍadapaḍuvaṇatappalaardha-śīlina
6. chappateḡum̐ḍinamēlehōḡi ā beṭṭadapaḍuvaṇa
7. tappalakaṭṭubemēlehōḡitāli-tōṭadadā-
8. riparyam̐taadumodalāḡimūḍdetāli-tōṭa-
9. da dāriyapaḍuvaṇabhāḡeleChim̐takāyamar̐desī-
10. me paryam̐tamūḍedakshiṇasīmepaḍuvamukhavā-
11. ḡiChim̐takāyamar̐desīmeyāGoḍḍumarriyasīmemē-
12. le hōḡiRēkum̐ṭeyasīmeparyam̐tamūḍepaśchimada
13. sīmeuttaramukhavāḡiRem̐gum̐ṭeyasīmemēlehōḡi
14. MaddigubeyasīmemēlehōḡiUluchalakōnepa-

15. ryaṁtaallimdauttarasīmeUluchalakōnimda Ī-
16. śānyamukhavāgiUpparraNāgayamāḍida ga-
17. ddeyauttaradalevānavōliyaHalḷavadāṭi ā ha-
18. ḷḷadadakshiṇabhāgelehōgiĀrevīḍakāluvesī-
19. me kallinapaḍuvaṇabhāgeyavāyuvyadadeśeyim-
20. da Īśānyakkekūḍittu [|*] Ī chatuḥsīmeyaoḷaga-
21. ṇagaddekāḍārambhanidhinikshēpajalapāshāṇa
22. sahitavāgi ā Bukkarayapuraveṁbaagrahāra-
23. kkesaluvudu||athapurāṇa-ślōkā-likhyaṁtē|

Fifth plate: first side

1. Śrī-Rāmaṁvākyam|bahubhir-vasudhādattā-rājabhiḥsa-
2. garādhībhiḥ|yasyayasyayadābhūmis-tasyatasya
3. tadāphalam|Ādityapurāṇēsvalpām-api
4. mahīmyastudadātiśraddhayānvitaḥsayāti-
5. brahma sadanaṁyasmānnāvartatēpunah|bruha-
6. spatih|taṭākānāmsahasrēṇaAśvamēdha
7. śatēnacha|gavāṁkōṭipradānēnaBhūmihartā-
8. naśudyati||Svadattāṁparadattāṁvāyōharētava-
9. suṁdharām|shasṭīmvarshasahasrāṇivishṭyāmjā-
10. yatēkrimih|ēkaivabhaginilōkēsarvvē-
11. shām-ēvabhūbhṛtām|nabhōjyanakaragrāhyā
12. vipradattavasumḍharā||dānapālanayōrma-
13. dhyēdānaśchēyōnupālanam|dānāt svarga-
14. mavāpnōtipālanādachyutaṁpadaṁ||sāmā-
15. nyōyaṁdharmaśētur-nṛpāṇāṁkālēkālē
16. pālaniyōbavadbhiḥ|sarvanētānbhā-
17. vinaḥpārthīvēndrānbhūyōbhūyōyāchatē
18. Rāmachaṁdraḥ||Śivamastu||ŚrīŚrīŚrī [|*]
19. Śrī-Rāmanātha [|*]

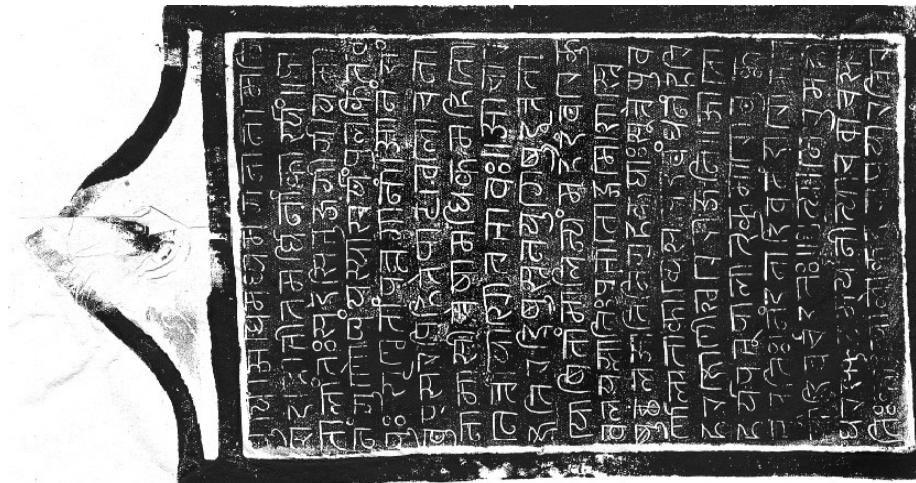
Notes and References

1. I am very much thankful to the Director (Epigraphy), Archaeological Survey of India, Mysuru, for his oral permission to publish the present copper plate.
2. *Epigraphia Carnatica*, vol. II (Revised), Sravaṇabelagoḷa Inscriptions, No. 446 and *Epigraphia Carnatica*, vol. XIII (Revised), Tirthahalli-129

3. Harihara appointed his sons Bukka II, Dēvarāya and Virupāksha II as provincial officers to Penugomḍe, Udayagiri and Tamilnadu region respectively. They have issued many inscriptions in their names and cited the titles of the sovering king.
4. Ramesan N., 1974, The Krāku Grant of Harihara II, Venkataramanayya N and Parabrahma Sastry (ed.), *Epigraphia Andhrica*, Vol. II, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Hederabad, pp.73-83.



First plate: second side



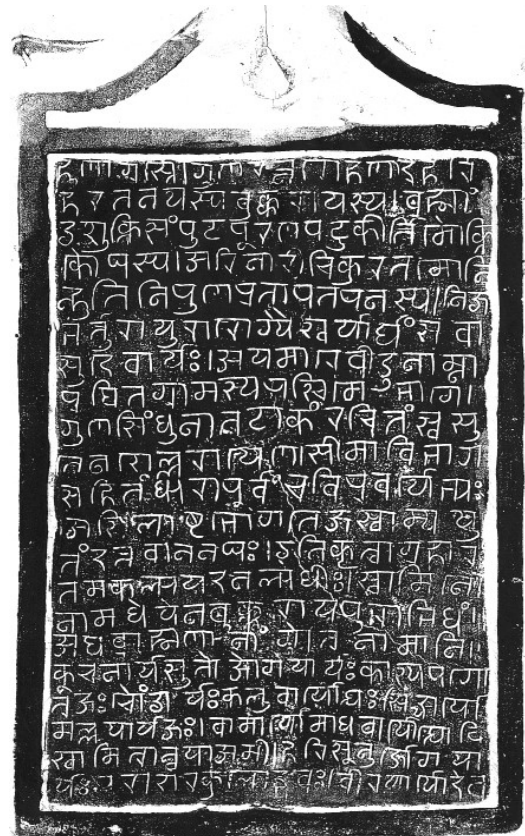
Second plate: first side



Second plate: second side



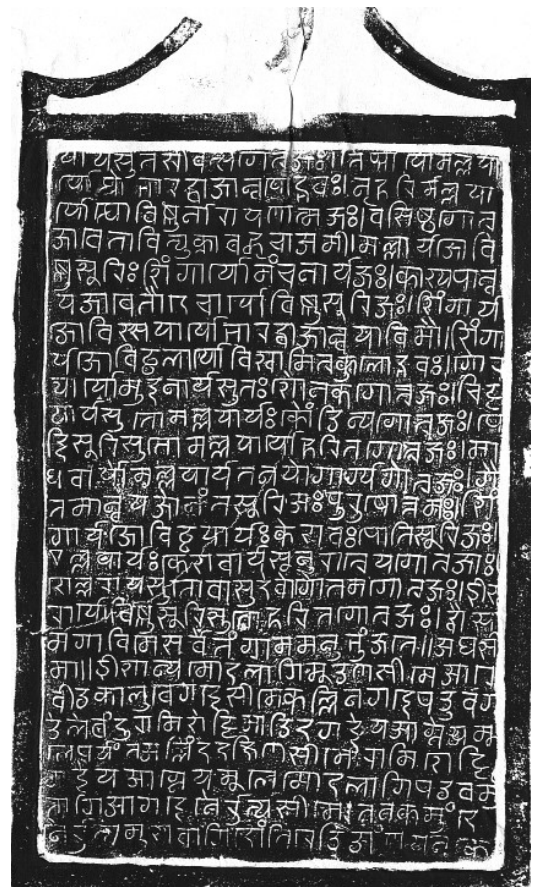
Third plate: first side



Third plate: second side



Forth plate: first side



Forth plate: second side

Umar Khayyam as imprinted on Persian inscriptions in India

Md. Tarique Rasool

Abstract:

Umar Khayyam was a philosopher poet of 11th century Iran. His '*carpe diem*' philosophy deals with the meaning of life with an emphasis upon its present, freewill, fearless and worriless living. The idea of justice, freewill and determinism shot him name and fame across the world through a chunk of English translations of his poetry (*Rubai* or *Quatrains*), especially the one translated by Edward Fitzgerald in latter half of 19th century. By the time Umar Khayyam was introduced to the West, his poetry had already got its due share of fame in the East, especially in medieval India. His quatrains which are found to be inscribed on Indian monuments date back to the Mughal rule in India that shows the poet's earlier reception in India. The monuments where the quatrains of Umar Khayyam are inscribed hold historical significance.

The present research paper will study and explore the Persian epigraphs depicting the poetry of Umar Khayyam with an outline of the monuments/places of inscriptions.

Keywords:

Inscription, Persian, Philosophy, Quatrain, Umar Khayyam

Umar Khayyam was a philosopher poet of 11th century Iran. Primarily known as an astronomer and mathematician having credited Jalali calendar (a solar chart which corrected the Islamic calendar), he shot his name and fame as a philosopher poet whose poetical work prefigured the existentialist and humanist movements. Khayyam was born in the city of Nishapūr located in today's Iranian province Khorasan.

Umar Khayyam is famous for his quatrains. His evocative poetry was expounded to the west by Edward Fitzgerald who translated hundreds of his quatrains with dazzling illustrations. By the time Umar Khayyam was introduced to the West, his poetry had already got its due share of fame in the East, especially in medieval India.

Umar Khayyam's philosophical views, based on his poetry, are often expressed specifically in terms of truth and value; the ephemerality of existence and human conditions; the inevitability of death; the infinity of time and space; the accidental nature of life; the relinquishment of both past and future in order to grasp the present before its passes; the struggle to free oneself from the bondage of life.¹

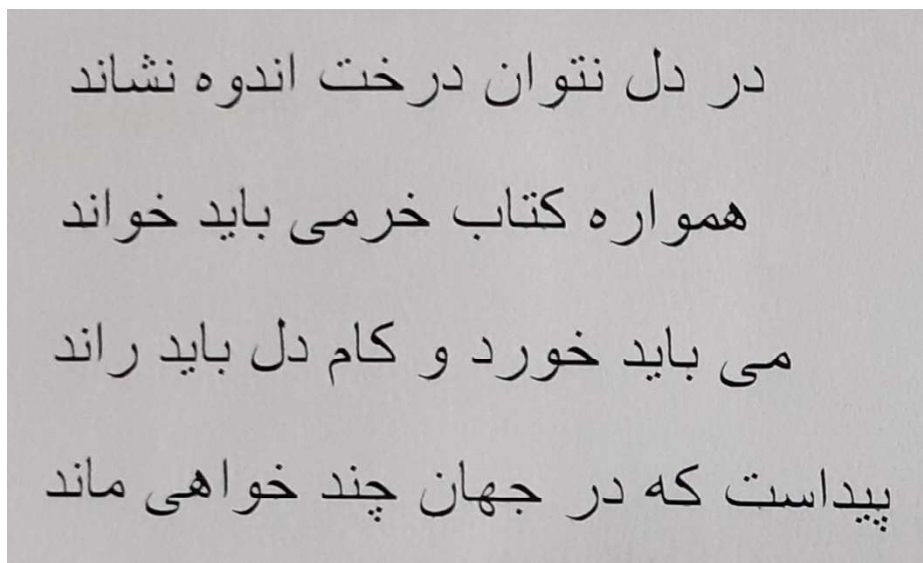
In this article, I have tried to draw attention to reception of Umar Khayyam in India with special reference to his Persian quatrains inscribed on medieval Indian monuments.

The first Persian inscription belongs to Ibrahim Adil Shāh. The tablet bearing the record is fixed on the façade of the middle gate of Tīn Darvāza of the Panhala fort, Maharashtra.² It measures 1.78 cm x 48 cm. The main panel contains two lines inscribed in large letters with all around margin enclosing it. The margin on the right has a line in Persian prose, on the top five hemistiches

of Persian verse, on the left one hemistich of Persian verse, and on the bottom the quatrain of the celebrated poet Khayyam. It is inscribed in relief in Nastāliq style of calligraphy.

This epigraph states that the old building was renovated during the reign of Ibrahim Adil Shāh, and the new one constructed during the regime of Mālik Daud Aqa, the *Naib-i-Ghaibat* (i.e. deputy in absence) in the capital of the Panhala fort in A.H. 954 (1547-48 A.D). It also records the construction of a tank or reservoir by the same person. The text is composed by Salar son of Ahmad Dabir (Secretary).

The quatrain of Omar Khayyam has been used at the bottom margin of the inscription. The text reads:



Transliteration

1. Dar dil natawān darakht-e-andooh nishānd
2. Hamwar-i-kitāb-ī- khurramī bāyad khwānd
3. Mai bāyad khūrd wa kām dil bāyad rānd
4. Paidāst ke dar jahān chand khwahī mānd

Translation

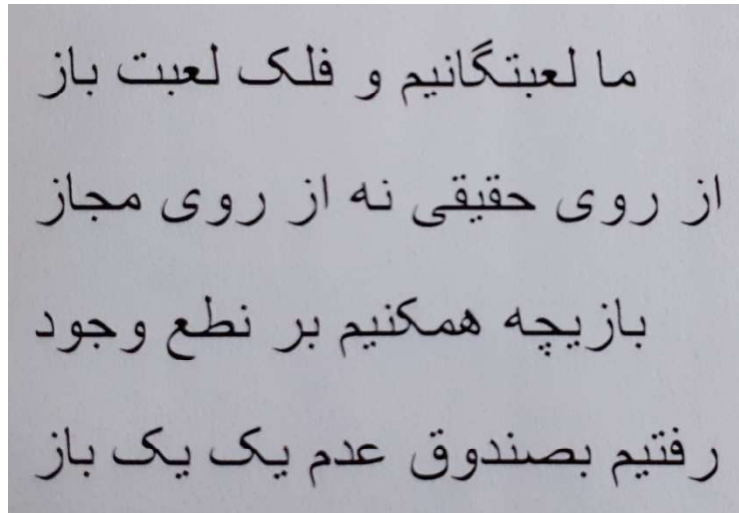
1. The shrub of sorrow cannot be planted in the heart
2. The book of enjoyment must be read all times
3. Wine ought to be drunk and the desires of heart fulfilled
4. You should be content with what little is available ³

The person, who suggested the text of inscription, seems to have been familiar and influenced by the philosophy of Umar Khayyam. He apparently tried to pass on the message of the Persian poet through inscription. In this quatrain, the poet tried to depict the philosophy of life. Umar Khayyam in the quatrain appropriates the philosophy of *carpe-diem* and decodes the secret of living which lies in present, free will, fearless and worriless living. The poet suggests that one should enjoy the moment of life instead of running after unending desires. People either waste their life in annihilation or taste from the well of life that provides ample opportunities. It is up to the people to grab those

opportunities and turn them into heaven.

The second Persian inscription is copied from the Indian Museum (loose Slab) which is undated and do not contain any historical information.⁴ It is well-known quatrain (*Rubai*) of the great Persian philosopher and poet Umar Khayyam. The text is executed in fair Nastāliq characters. The text reads:

Text



Translation

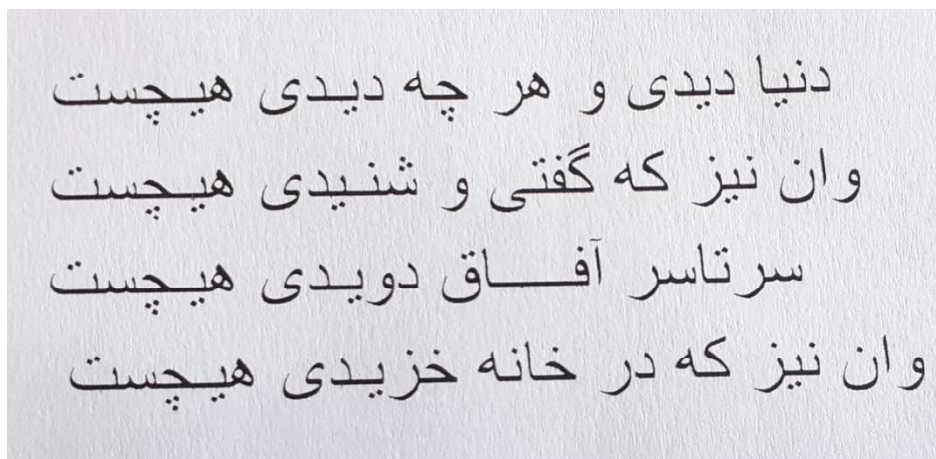
1. Tis all a Chequer-board of Nights and Days
2. Where Destiny with Men for Pieces plays:
3. Hither and thither moves, and mates, and slays,
4. And one by one back in the Closet lays.⁵

In this quatrain, the poet says that we in this materialistic world are like puppets playing in the hands of time. We are taken out of the box of nothingness like puppets, play our role on the stage of time for a short while and then returned back to the same box.

This coming and going from stage resembles our coming and going from this world and the short role played on the stage is our life that we spend in this world. Our coming and going to the stage is not in our control but the role we play on it is all we can control and regulate which once played well can be remembered for good. In the same way our coming and going from this world is beyond our access but the living is in our hands. We can give this living its worth and make it memorable in this short span of life.

The third Persian inscription is found above the left front pillar of Dargah of Khushnazar ji ghāt gate at Jaipur.⁶ The Shrine of Khushnazar Ji was built at the instance of Colonal, Sir Sawai Madho Singh Bahadur II (1880-1922 CE) in the memory of Khushnazar ji in A.H. 1327 (1909 CE).⁷ It contains six lines but first four lines are a quatrain of Umar Khayyam. It is undated and does not contain any historical information. The reading of the text is as below:

Text



Transliteration

1. Duniyā dīdī wa her che dīdī hīchast
2. Wa ān nīz ke guftī wa shanīdī hīchast
3. Sar tā sar-i- Āfāque dawīdī hīchast
4. Wa ān nīz ke dar khāna-i-khazīdī hīchast

Translation

1. You saw the world and whatever seen, is nothing
2. And even what you said and heard of it is nothing
3. The faraway place you went in this world is nothing
4. And whatsoever you hoarded from it, it is nothing ⁸

In this quatrain, the poet talks about instability of this world. Nothing exists forever. With the passage of time everybody and everything grows old and dies for good. We too have to die one day and never have to get back to this world again. Therefore, we have to do our best as long as we are in this world

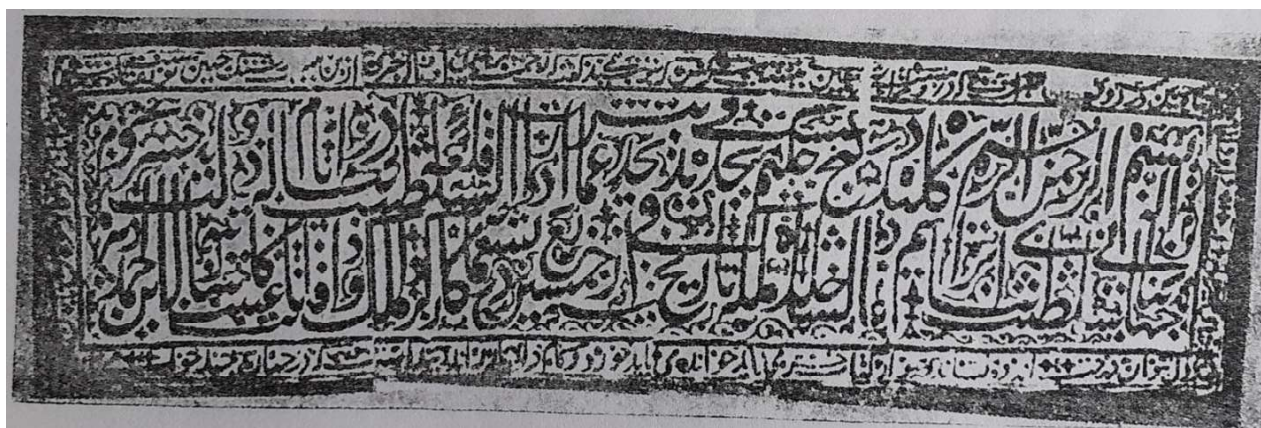
To conclude with, luckily these quatrains have survived/found, in the form of Persian inscriptions in India that not only signify the Indo-Iranian link through reception of Khayyam's poetry in India, but also propagate his universal ideas of life and living. These records are important in compiling the literary and cultural aspects of cities and regions of medieval India.

Notes and References:

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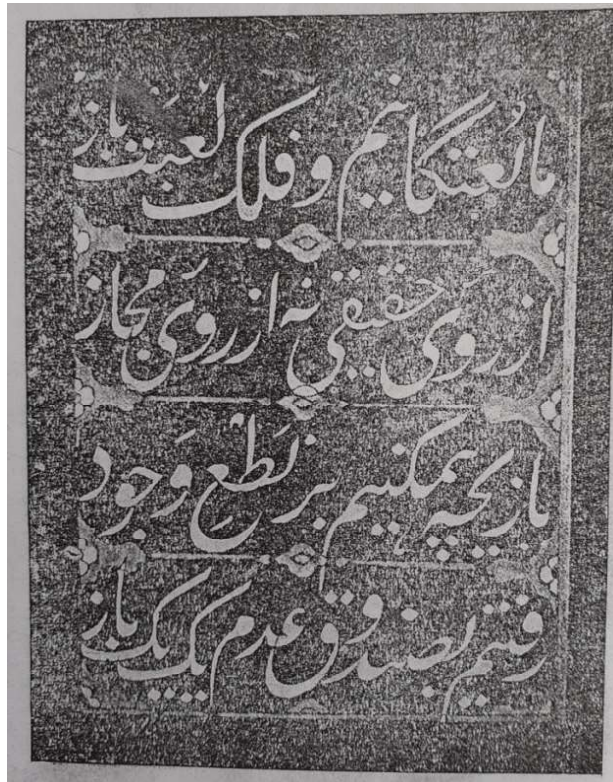
3. However, this inscription has already been dealt with in the Epigraphia Indica, Arabic and Persian Supplement 1971, Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi, reprint 1987. P 69-71. The fourth line in the translation is referred as “*it is obvious, how long can one live in this world?*”
4. Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy 1952-53, Appendix D- 24 and Epigraphia Indica, Arabic and Persian Supplement 1955-56. P. 32, Pl VIII (d).
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7. Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy 2011-12, Appendix C-22
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Plate-I



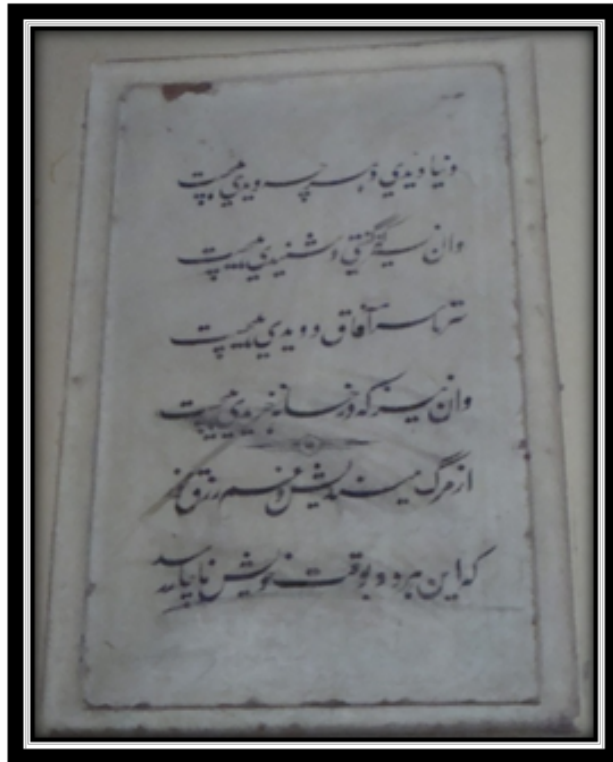
Persian Inscription from Teen Darwaza of the Panhala fort, Maharashtra.

Plate-II



Persian epigraph from the Indian Museum, Kolkata.

Plate-III



Persian Inscription from the Dargah of Khushnazar ji, Ghat gate at Jaipur

Persian epigraph from the shrine of Ḥaḍrat Z̤arzarī Bakhsh at Khuldabād, Maharashtra

Md. Shahnawāz Ālam

Abstract:

The Persian epigraph from the shrine of Ḥaḍrat Z̤arzarī Bakhsh at Khuldabād in the Aurangabād district makes an outstanding specimen of the cultural landmark which signifies the most important facet of Islamic legacies such as Ṣufi cult in Maharashtra. This undated epigraph contains a metrical verse that refers to the Ode (i.e. Qaṣīda') one of the genres of Persian poetry. Text of the epigraph runs in 11th line and is executed in eloquent Thulth style of calligraphy. This paper will review the growth of Sufi movement and highlights the significance of Sufi saints in inextricably intertwining the masses in perfect harmony in Indian culture. This Persian epigraph will make a key device to present literary study of Ḥaḍrat Z̤arzarī Bakhsh Shaiḥ Mūntajab-ūd-Dīn.

Keywords;

Epigraph, Ṣufi movement, Calligraphy, Qaṣīda, Thulth, Khuldabād

The Persian epigraph from the shrine of Ḥaḍrat Z̤arzarī Bakhsh at Khuldabād in the Aurangabad District makes an outstanding specimen of the multitude aspect of composite culture and society which signify the most important facet of Islamic legacies found in Maharashtra. Khuldabād is situated about 14 miles N.W. of Aūrangabād. It has pleasant and temperate climate within an altitude of 500 feet above the plain and 2732 feet above the sea and 4 miles from Ellora. Khuldabād, a city and a taluka of Aūrangabād district in the Indian state of Maharashtra, was known initially as Bāgh-ī- rauḍa (i.e. garden of the grave). Later it came to be known as Khuldabād (i.e. abode of the pure soul). It is also known as the valley of or the abode of eternity, because in the 14th century, several Sufi saints chose to reside here. Khuldabād is surrounded by a high fortified wall built by Mughal emperor Aurangzeb. It has seven gates. Khuldabād has not only religious importance due to the location of the shrines and tombs of the Sufi saints but has also historical importance. It is here that Mughal emperor Aurangzeb lies buried and on the account of his grave the place was named as Khuldabād and Aurangzeb was described in official document by the posthumous title Khuld makāni (i.e. he whose abode is in eternity). Moreover it is within the enclosure containing the Dargāh of Shaiḥ Mūntajab-ūd-Dīn alias Ḥaḍrat Z̤arzarī Bakhsh.

This Epigraph comes from the shrine of Shaiḥ Mūntajab-ūd-Dīn *alias* Ḥaḍrat Z̤arzarī Bakhsh engraved on a wooden plank in the northern wall of the grave situated inside the tomb. The tomb is located in the western-northern side of the compound erstwhile called Bagh-ī- Rauda' (i.e. Garden of the grave) later became known as Khuldabād (i.e. Abode of the pure soul).

This undated epigraph is written in Persian language and runs in 11 lines. It is executed in eloquent Thulth style of calligraphy. It contains a metrical verse that is called Qaṣīda' (i.e. ode) one of the genres of Persian poetry. This epigraph contains mainly praise and glory about the sainthood and highlights the significance in resorting the asylum of Sufi, especially revered Sufi like Shaiḥ Mūntajab-ūd-Dīn alias Ḥaḍrat Z̤arzarī Bakhsh

Transliteration

1. Bīsmīllah -Ar- Raḥman –Ar- Raḥīm
2. La Illāh Il-Lallah Muḥammad -Ur- Rasūl Allāh
3. Burhān Shar’a Ḥujjat Ḥaq wa Muqtada-i- Din
4. Qutub-ul- Madār Gauth i- Zamān Shaikh-i-Aqtyia Ast
5. Hum Ḥajib wa Muqarrab Dargāh-i- Kibriya Ast
6. Hum Rahbar-i- Mshaikh wa Hum Khatam[Aulyia] Ast
7. Imroz Dast-i- Shaikh Aulyia Bar az Hame Ast
8. Ān Dum Bisāt Shabe –i- Majlīsh –i- Wu Nūr-i- Jalāl Ast
9. Būdeh Dar in Jahān ra Hame az Ilteja-i- Wu
10. In Dum Panāh wa Malja Arwāḥ-i- Asfiya Ast
11. Shād Būd Khātir-i-Mā Az Laqa-i- Wu
12. Imroz Shādi-i-Qadsyian az Āan Laqa Ast
13. Bar Aulyia Nabud Ḥaq-i-Marg wa Shaikh-i-Mā
14. Zinde Ast wu Lek Bedanad Murd-i- Āan Ze Ma Ast
15. Na Kunad Kasi Ke Deede Ruḥ Āwar Deede Ast
16. Dard-i- Ḥayāt Khūb Chunin Har Ke Ra Deede Ast
17. Wu Būd Panāh-i- Dīn-i- Alamyān Bad az Royam
18. Dar Rauḍa –ī Muqadas-i-Wu Gān Panāh-i –Mā Ast
19. Banda –i-Ḥaḍrat khidmat dar in

Translation

1. In The Name Of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.
2. There Is No God But God, Muhammad Is The Messenger Of God.
3. Evidence Of Divine Law, Truth Argument , Leader Of The Faith
4. Pivot Of The Circuit , Helper Of The World And Chieftain Of The Righteous
5. Also Chamberlain And Esteemed At The Magnificence Court
6. And Also Mentor Of Chieftains and that’s Ultimate [Authorities]
7. These Days At The Hand Of The Guide Of Authorities Bestows Upon All
8. Instantly Stand of His Night Gathering Throws Magnificence Lustre
9. His Refuge Remain In This World
10. At This Moment Resort and Asylum Stands with the Spirits of Saints
11. Our Heart Gets Pleased By Looking his Face
12. These Days Sacred Rejoice Comes With his Face
13. Death Has No Right Upon Righteous and My Chieftain.
14. He Is Alive but He Knows That We See Him Dead

15. Nobody Should Think Of His Supreme Soul Being In Trouble
16. He in His Times Have Seen Many Such Troubles
17. He Be The Defender And Asylum Of This Universe After my oblivion
18. In His blessed Shrine we are under fortune.
19. Servant at the disposal of highness

The epigraph under study begins with *Bismillah -Ar- Raḥman –Ar- Raḥīm* (In The Name Of God Most Gracious Most Merciful). It is actually one of the parts of the verse of Quran from which recitation of all the chapter of Quran, except Chapter No.9 starts. Besides it is used before starting of any work by an individual in Islam. After Bismala it reads the first creed of Islam i.e. *Kalīma La Illāh Il-Lallāh Muḥammad -Ur- Rasūl Allāh* (There is no God but God, Muḥammad is the Messenger of God). It is the first and foremost basic tenets of Islam without this recitation anybody cannot enter into the fold of Islam.

The Persian text of the epigraph runs on metrical verse of the ode or eulogy meaning i.e. *Qaṣīda* (a long lyric poem), in Persian language, presented in a magnificent genre of Persian poetry. It is a literary technique that is lyrical in nature and glorifies the person and things. It is highly solemn and serious in its tone and subject matter and usually is used with elaborate patterns of stanzas. This eulogy herewith reads the praise and glorify of the saint like Shaikh Mūntajab-ūd-Dīn *alias* Ḥaḍarat Zarzārī Bakhsh to such an extent that he is stated as leader of the faith, the center point of right track of the faith, and righteous people who has esteem position at the magnificent court of God and God bestowed blessing to him to redress the grievances of the people. It is said that nobody comes back without his right wishes being fulfilled.

In short the verse of this epigraph illustrates the miracle and mystical attributes of Sufi Shaikh Mūntajab-ūd-Dīn, the asylum of the depressed masses whom he threw rejoice at their faces. The theme of the text of epigraph is of didactic and ethic which promotes friendship and compassionate among the masses just as the Sufis encourage at their doorstep. As of Shaikh Mūntajab-ūd-Dīn he is mentioned in contemporary literatures as an eminent pious personality of Sufi cult in 14th century of Khuldabād in Maharashtra. He came from Delhi along with his brother Sufi Sayyīd Būrhān-ūd-Dīn Gharīb and settled there at Daulatabad.

The 14th century marked a new phase in the history of Islam as it saw the important changes in realm of ideas and added new interpretation of the doctrine which gained currency as the Sufi mystic orders. Sufism had spread far and wide in the Islamic world by the 14th centuries and the hospices i.e. Khanqāh had already been established. Persian literature from 12th century onwards throughout the world has remained important device to disseminate the thought of mystic poets and savants. A number of Persian poets had spread the Sufi message of love that were humane in their outlook and were tolerant to people of all faith. Sufism has been most imminent aspect of Islamic legacy in India that has driven through Persian language and has had vivid impact in Indian culture in general and in the society and culture of Maharashtra in particular. It was when that Persian language had come to grow as *lingua franca* of the mystic poet and become popular among the masses. Persian language have enriched mystic literature like poetry of Amīr Khusru Ḥasan Dehlavi and in line with contemporary Sufis like Sayyīd Būrhān-ūd-Dīn Gharīb and Shaikh Mūntajab-ūd-Dīn *alias* Ḥaḍarat Zarzārī Bakhsh who promulgated the teaching of humanity among the masses irrespective of cast and creed.

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Persian Epigraph from Shrine of Ḥaḍarat Zarḡarī Bakhsh at Khuldabād

A serpentine scimitar of letters from Udaypur, district Vidisha, M.P.

Saarthak Singh

Abstract:

This paper presents a newly-discovered inscription from Udaypur (district Vidisha, Madhya Pradesh). Engraved on a rectangular sandstone slab in the parapet wall of the Udayeśvara temple, this inscription features a serpent's knotted body comprising letters of the Sanskrit alphabet along with the grammatical endings of nouns and verbs. It is accompanied by 5 lines of writing on one side that refer to the diagram as *varṇṇanāgakṛpāṇikā*, a “serpentine scimitar of letters.” The compounded designation draws attention to the unusual synthesis of aural, visual and efficacy in this inscription. The abraded surface of the stone does not afford a complete reading, but this very designation appears in dedicatory verses accompanying an identical composition at Ujjain, which is further described as a “unique magical sword” (*siddhāsiputrikā*) of the kings Udayāditya (c. 1070–93) and his son Naravarman (1094–1134). Three similar serpentine inscriptions associated with these Paramāra kings are known from Dhar and Un, allowing us to place the one from Udaypur in the late-11th century. Taken together, the epigraphic evidence suggests that such enigmatic diagrams were inscribed at royal Shiva temples as complex devices in the service of dynastic power.

Keywords:

Udaypur, *varṇṇanāgakṛpāṇikā*, Paramāra, Malwa

The Śiva temple of Udaypur in the Vidisha district of Madhya Pradesh, also known as Nīlakaṇṭheśvara or Udayeśvara, is a celebrated example of India's medieval architecture, built around 1080 in the novel bhūmija style associated with the Paramāra dynasty of Malwa, c. 972–1305 (Deva 1975). Less well known is its status as an extraordinary epigraphic archive with a continuous sequence of inscriptions in Sanskrit, Persian, and Hindi spanning eight centuries—from the temple's consecration in samvat 1137 to its archaeological restoration in samvat 1985. Almost all the inscriptions have been painstakingly copied and systematically listed in the annual reports of the archaeology department of Gwalior State (1923-24, 1925-26, 1927-28, 1928-29) and those of the epigraphy branch of the Archaeological Survey of India (ARIEp 1961-62, 1981-82, 1982-83). Only a selection of these have been fully published (Trivedi 1978, 1989; Mittal 1979), but taken together the corpus offers a wealth of information about the biography of a north Indian temple.

One unusual inscription found at the Udayeśvara temple during the course of my fieldwork has surprisingly remained unnoticed in scholarly publications (Fig. 1–2). It is in Nāgarī script and is engraved on a rectangular slab of pinkish sandstone 70cm high. The slab is built into the outer parapet wall (*prākāra*) of the temple, where its quadrangular courtyard projects out to the south. This stone is evidently not in its original position, for its flat inscribed surface is turned inside out while its carved face with an ornamental balustrade (*vedikā*) is turned outside in, contrary to what we find in other well-preserved sections of the courtyard wall. It is likely that the stone was reset into its present position during one of the restoration campaigns at the temple complex carried out under the Gwalior State (1923-24, 5; 1925-26, 5-6; 1928-29, 5-6) and then under the Archaeological Survey

of India (IAR 1981-82, 48; IAR 1983-84, 207). The shape of the block shows that it was part of this very parapet wall but originally faced into the courtyard.

The inscription features a striking visual composition of serpentine form and isolated letters, known in scholarly literature as *nāgabandha* or *sarpabandha* (Salomon 1998, 125-127), along with two short inscriptions on one side. The characters are worn off in several places due to the flaking of the sandstone, as seen in the photograph reproduced here, but are fairly well preserved to enable an understanding of the record. The palaeography bears close comparison to local records dating from the late-11th century, which are characterized by well-formed, inch-high characters in a rigidly rectilinear style and verticals that terminate in a sharp bend to the right (Singh 2019; Trivedi 1978, 65-6, 75-82, 98-101). The orthography exhibits the usual peculiarities seen in contemporary inscriptions, such as the use of *va* for *ba* and *sa* for *śa*, and the doubling of class consonants following *r*, as in *varṇṇa*.

The centrepiece of the inscription is the diagram containing individual letters within separate compartments (Fig. 3), which graphically visualise all the sounds of the Sanskrit alphabet as well as the grammatical terminations of nouns and verbs. Read in a vertical sequence from top to bottom, its geometrical “head” has 14 vowels (*svara*) ordered in short and long pairs, from the simple (*a*, *ā* > *i*, *ī* > *u*, *ū* > *ṛ*, *ṝ* > *l*, *l̄*) to the complex (*ē*, *ai*) and compound (*ō*, *au*). The tubular “body” below carries a series of consonants, from the 4 semivowels (*antaḥstha*) in its neck to the 5 classes of stops (*sparsha*) in the rhomboidal knot of its torso, and continuing with the 3 voiceless sibilants (*ūshman*) in its right leg. This series starts and ends with the voiced aspirate *ha*, occurring once before the semivowels and again after the sibilants, in conformity with the classical arrangement of the alphabet given in the Śivasūtras of Pāṇini’s *Aṣṭādhyāyī*. The horizontal base of the diagram has 3 *aspirates*, the labial *upadhmānīya*, guttural *jihvāmūlīya* and final *visarga*, but not the nasal *anusvāra*, which usually counts among the 4 dependent sounds (*ayogavāha*). The left leg contains the characters *ra*, *ya*, *u*, although it is unclear why they are repeated. The tail-end of the diagram displays grammatical endings arranged in triads in the rise and fall of a vertical loop. The former has 21 terminations for nouns of all 7 classes, and the latter, 18 terminations for verbs in present tense in both active (*parasmaipada*) and middle (*ātmanepada*) voice.

Of the short inscriptions, the one towards the middle of the slab contains three lines but the lacunae due to damage make it difficult to decipher (Fig. 4). The other, towards the top, has two faintly visible lines, but with the help of an eye copy prepared onsite I was able to read many of the characters (Fig. 5). One letter is chipped off at the end of the first line, and the second line ends abruptly with three characters following the verse number, perhaps because the surface was found unsuitable for engraving. These two lines form a metrical verse that reads:

1. bhāradvām jīvihitv=ēmām varṇṇa-nāga-kṛpāṇikām [] hitvāpāshaṇicāṇālā_
2. pālaḥ pālayatu gām || 1 || ja°abha

The action specified by the imperative verb *pālayatu* follows a causative construction, having as its agent of causation –*pālaḥ* and its agent of action, *varṇṇa-nāga-kṛpāṇikām*, giving the following sense: “may the protector cause this serpentine sword of letters to protect...” The object of protection is unclear but the main agent along with its pronoun, *imāmvarṇṇa-nāga-kṛpāṇikām*, clearly refer to

the adjacent diagram. This compounded designation would have us conceptualise the graph as a weapon for protection—a sword that is simultaneously serpentine and letterist. To follow its imagery, vowels constitute the hood of a snake, consonants its coiled body, and grammatical terminations its tail; in like manner, the snake’s hood would correspond to the barbed blade of a sword, its knotted body to an ornamental hilt, and its winding tail to a strap. The inscription, thus, presents an unusual synthesis of aural, visual and efficacy.

Further information about this inscription may be gleaned from another diagram, identical in all details and bearing the same designation, from the famous Mahākāla temple of Ujjain (Sastri 1960). A verse accompanying this diagram states it to be a “snake-scimitar of letters marked with Udayāditya’s name” (*udayāditya-nāmāṅka-varṇṇa-nāga-kṛpāṇikā*), which was “composed along with other poetic gems by the friend of talented poets,” apparently an epithet of Naravarman himself. This indicates that the graph was composed in the late-11th century, perhaps not long after king Udayāditya’s death in 1093 and the succession of his son Naravarman (Trivedi 1978, 84, 103). The purport of the diagram is specified in lines 24–26 of the inscription, which describe it as “an ornament (*vesha*) to be affixed on the chest of both poets and kings, a unique magical sword (*siddhāsiputrikā*) of Śiva’s worshippers, kings Udayāditya and Naravarman, meant for the preservation of language and social order (*varṇnasthityai*).”

What this shows is that the serpentine graph was not so much an educational tool devised to school young boys in Sanskrit, as scholars have routinely remarked (Trivedi 1978, 88–89; Pollock 2006, 177). Rather it was a complex device pressed into service of the Paramāra kings who owed their allegiance to the cosmic overlord Śiva, praised in the Ujjain inscription as a personification of language itself (Salomon 1982, 556–557). This is perhaps why a copy of the remarkable composition was inscribed at the leading Śiva temples of the Paramāra kingdom—at Ujjain the nerve centre of Malwa but also at Udaypur, a town whose temple and tank were founded and named after king Udayāditya in 1080. The grammatical inscription from Udaypur, together with those from Ujjain, Dhar, and Un, thus, forms an important addition to the corpus of “serpentine scimitars of letters” attributed to Udayāditya and dateable to the last decade of the 11th century.

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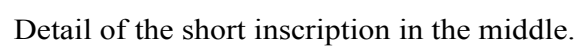
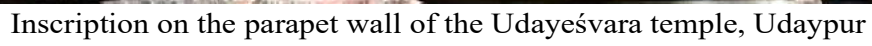


Udayesvara temple at Udaypur, view from the southeast locating the inscription on the parapet wall.



ला र द्वांतीविरिद्वेमां वर्त्तना गृह पातिकां हिवा पाषाणि चाला
पा लाः पालयतु गाम्नाशत्रय

Detail and eye-copy of the short inscription at the top.



An Epitaphic Record of Nawwāb Family of Tonk

Md. Ajmal

Abstract:

The present record belongs to the grave of Hāfiz Moḥammad Abdul Lateef Khān engraved on a white marble slab at Motibagh graveyard in Tonk city where several family members of the erstwhile state of Tonk are also taking their final rest. The central text of the eight line inscription is in Persian and records the death of Hāfiz Moḥammad Abdul Lateef Khān at a very young age and when he passed away; everyone especially his father mourned his death. In the light of the names mentioned in the inscriptions, the genealogy of the deceased may be established that he belonged to the nawwab's family of erstwhile state. The poet has used his pen-name Asad in the last verse and has also afforded a chronogram which yields the date of the demise. The epigraph is carved out by a scribe named Munshi Niamatullāh who has executed it beautifully in the Nastāliq style of calligraphy.

Keywords:

Persian, Nawwāb, Nastāliq, Tonk, Motibāgh, Calligraphy.

The inscription edited below for the first time with the kind permission of Director (Epigraphy), Archaeological Survey of India, Nagpur is discovered by me during the course of my epigraphical exploration in 2018 at *Motibagh* graveyard where several family members of Nawwāb Moḥammad Āmir Khān, the first *nawwāb* of the erstwhile state of Tonk are taking their final rest.

Tonk, the headquarters of Tonk district in Rājasthān is situated in the precincts of Rasia and Annapurna hills, but the erstwhile state of Tonk founded by Āmir Khān was situated partly in Rajputānā and partly in central India consisting of six *parganās* or districts: Tonk, Aligarh, Nimbahera, Pirawa, Chabra and Sironj of which the first three were situated in Rajputānā and the rest in Central India¹.

The first ruler of the state Āmir Khān's grandfather Tāleb Khān was the son of Kāli Khān Afghān of the Sālārzaī tribe. He came to India from Buner in 17th century and got service in Rohilkhand and finally settled in Moradābād district. His grandson Āmir khān was born to Hayāt Khān in 1768 CE. At the age of 20, Āmir Khān left home to seek his fortune and carve out a career for himself. For the next 10 years he served as a mercenary cadre and tried to find a lucrative employment. At last in 1798 he rose to the command of a large army in the service of Jaswant Rao Holkar. In 1817 he was declared the first ruler of Tonk after a treaty made between him and the British. He died in 1834 at the age of 67 years. After him his successors took the possession of the state.

The inscription was found engraved on the white marble stone fixed on the grave of late Abdul Lateef Khān Ṣahib, son of Moḥammad Obaidullāh Khān Firoz Jang. Obaidullāh Khān had served as a vice president under his nephew Nawwāb Moḥammad Ibrāhim Khān Bahādur and was well known as Iftikhār ul Umarā, Fakhr ul Mulk Sir Moḥammad Obaidullāh Khān Firoz Jang². He was the son of Wazir-ul Daulah Amir ul-Mulk Nawwāb Muhammad Wazir Khān Ṣahib Bahādur

Nusrat Jang, the second ruler of Tonk. Thus in the light of above discussion, the genealogy of Abdul Lateef khā n Ṣā hīb whose epitaph is being studied here will be constructed in the following manner.

Amir- ul Daula Amir-ul Mulk Nawwāb Moḥammad Āmir Khān Ṣāhib Bahādur Shamshir Jang

|

Wazir ud Daulah Amir ul-Mulk Nawwāb Muḥammad Wazir Khān Ṣāhib Bahādur Nusrat Jang

|

Iftekhar ul- Umara, Fakhr ul-Mulk Sir Moḥammad Obaidullāh Khān Firoz Jang

|

Hāfiz Moḥammad Abdul Lateef Khān Ṣāhib

The stone inscription measuring 45 cm in height and 62 cm in width contains 8 lines. Out of them 5 lines are in verse and the remaining 3 are in prose. It records the death of Hafiz Abdul Lateef Khān Ṣāhib on 6th Shābān 1312 Hijri corresponding to 2nd February 1895 CE. The text has been read as under:

کنوٹ ردالمب بحاص بیان فلخ موحرم بحاص ناخ فیطلال دب مع دمحم ظفاح مدازبحاص تافو خیرات (۱)
عنونج

ایک لاقبتنا وک یرجہ ۱۳۱۲ نابعش ۶ قباطم یوس ی ۱۸۹۵ یرورف ۲ (۲)

عطق (۳)

دش کاخ ریز شرسپ ناوچون فیح دص تفر گنج زوریف لد رب میظع چنر (۴)
دش کالہ رخ آ مک لیلع نانچنآ تشگ ناخ فیطلال دب مع دب دوق قلخ رومشم (۵)
دش کان درد سک ممہ لد وا گرم ز ملأ و ممدص نیازا رارق یب تشگ ناج (۶)
دش کاچ کاچ شمع و لالام ہچنپ زا مہ بیکش و ربص ناماد و رارق بیج (۷)
دش کاپ سودرف لخد مک وگب اتفگ دسا یا خیرات یپ زا مشوگب فتاہ (۸)
راوخم غزنپا راگدای روطب عن ینپمک رٹیہٹ یلبوج یسرپ کلام رظان یج بارمس یج ناوراک (۹)
اذہ مزالم نک رم ملال تمعن یشنم ملقب -ایک رذن یم تمذخ رک تسود

Transliteration of inscription

1. Tareekh e wafāt e Ṣāhabzadah Hāfiz Abdul Lateef Khān Ṣāhib marhum khalf-e-nāyab Ṣāhib bahādur Tonk jinhone
2. 2 farwari 1895 iswi mutābiq 6 Shābān 1312 hijri ko inteqal kiya
3. Qata

4. Ranj-e azeem bar dil-e-Firoz Jang raft -- Sad haif naujawān pesrash zer-e- khāk shud.
5. Mashhūr-e- khalq bud be Abdul Lateef Khān – Gasht ānchunān aleel ke ākhir halāk shud.
6. Jān gasht beqār az in sadma-o- alam – Ze marg-e- ou dīl-e- ham-e-kas dardnāk shud.
7. Jeb-e- qarār-o- dāman-e- sabr-o- shakeeb ham –Az panja-e- malāl-o- ghamash chāk chāk shud.
8. Hātif be gosham az pay-e-tārikh aye Asad –Guftā bego ke dākhil-e-firdaus-e-pāk shud.
9. Kanwar ji Sohrāb ji Nāzir mālik Pārsi Jubilee Theater Company ne batour-e-yādgār apne ghamkhwār dost ke khidmat me nazr kiya. Be qalm-e- Munshi Niamatullāh moharkan mulāzim-e- company hāzā.

Translation

1. Date of demise of Late prince Hāfiz Abdul Lateef Khān Sāhib the successor of vice president of Sāhib Bahādur of Tonk who
2. Passed away on 6th Shābān 1312 Hijri corresponding to 2nd February 1895 CE
3. Qata
4. Profound grief inculcated the heart of Firoz Jang. Alas! his son passed away at a very young age,
5. He was popular by the name of Abdul Lateef Khān among the people. He suffered to such an extent with an infirmity that resulted in his death.
6. He left his people with sorrow and grief with his demise and everyone's heart became torment.
7. Patience and endurance of people ripped from the grief and mourn of his death
8. Voice of an angel gave me clue about his date of demise and told hey Asad! You just tell that he entered into the paradise.
9. Kanwar ji Sohrāb ji Nāzir, the owner of the Pārsi Jubilee Theater Company, has installed it to the memory of his friend. Scribed by Munshi Niamatullah, an employee of this company.

It gives further information from the word *naujawān* used in the 2nd hemistich of the 1st verse that he had died at a very young age and because of his death his father Firoz Jang had become very distressed and heartbroken as the 1st verse of the inscription reads:

Ranj e azeem bar dil e Firoz Jang raft

sad haif naujawān pesrash zer e khāk shud

Meaning:

Profound grief inculcated the heart of Firoz Jang. Alas! his son passed away at a very young age.

The language of the inscription is Persian except the first two and last one line which is in Urdu. It is executed in Nastāliq style of calligraphy. The central text of the inscription is in metrical form in which poet says that Abdul Lateef was very famous among the people and everyone loved him and now when he is no more; everyone especially his father is mourning his death. Poet has used the Persian poetical elements in a beautiful way. He has used his pen-name *Asad* in the *maqta*

that is the last verse of the Persian poetry. He has also afforded a chronogram “*Dakhil-e-firdaus-e-paak shud*” in the last hemistich of the poetry which yields the death of demise as A.H. 1312 corresponding to 1895 CE. He used it as under:

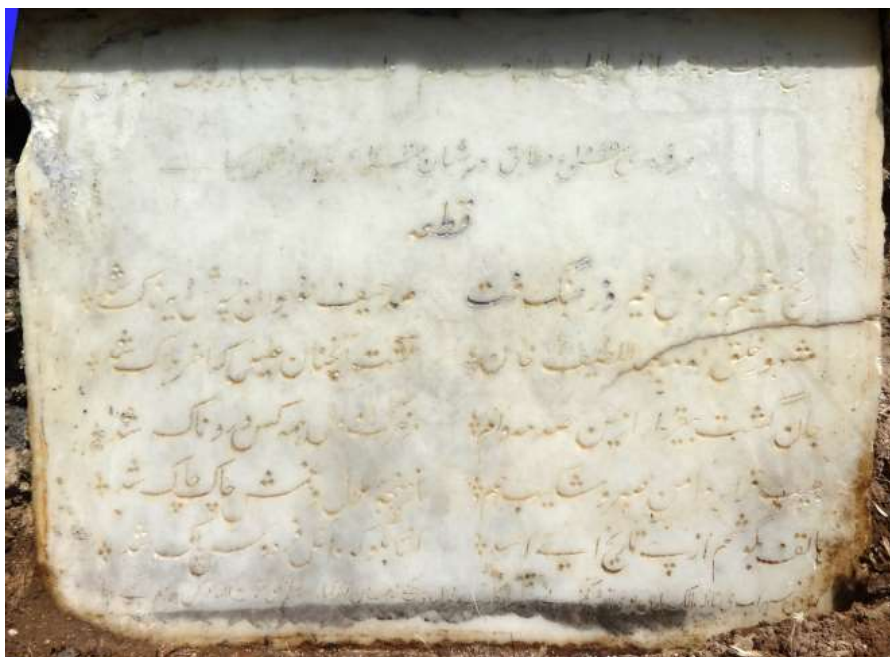
Hātif begosham az pay e tārikh aye Asad guftā bego ke dākhil-e-firdous-e-pāk shud
A.H 1312

At the end of the inscription it is mentioned that a person Sohrāb ji Nāzir the owner of Pārsi Jubilee Theater Company had gifted this stone to his friend and the inscription was carved out by a scribe Munshi Neymatullah who was a seal engraver (*moharkan*) by profession and was an employee at the above mentioned company.

We may conclude that Hafiz Mohammad Abdul Lateef Khān whose epitaph is studied here supplies several information including his genealogical order that he was from the *nawwābs*’ family and upon his death family members of the *nawwāb* especially his father mourned his death very much. Thus the Perso-Arabic inscriptions of Tonk in general and *nawwābs* of Tonk in particular can provide us more information about their history, culture and tradition if they are studied systematically and thoroughly.

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An Epitaphic Record from Nawwāb family of Tonk, dated A.H 1312 = 1895 CE.

A Marāṭhī inscription from Limb, District Satara, Maharashtra

Anita BajrangAgashe

Abstract:

This paper examines an inscription at Limb, Satara district Maharashtra, engraved on a stone slab built into a tomb of Yādava period from the perspective of socio-religious history.

Keywords:

Marāṭhī, Nāgarī, Pāṭil, Pēshva, Satara, Limb, Yādava

Introduction:

Satāra is a historically important city in western Maharashtra and it was the capital city of the Marāṭha Empire during the late medieval period. The village was donated as *Inam* to Rajaram Bhosale the adopted son of Queen Sagunabai Bhosale. The importance of the archeological site of Limb (17° 47' 33.21" N 74° 00' 24.19" E) located 17km to the north of Satara and 3 km to the east of Mumbai-Bengaluru highway (NH4) was reported by the author in the year 2014 (Agashe2014). The present village is settled on the top of an ancient habitation mound. There are some architectural relics of ghāt, temple, vāḍa, step-well, mosque, memorial stones, tombs of noble families, etc. The village is well known for 15 step wells, built by Virubai Bhosale. The present inscription being examined here is engraved on a slab built into one of the tombs situated on the banks of river Krishna.

The Inscription:

The inscription in Marāṭhī language and Nāgarī characters (fig.1), engraved on a square slab built into the lower side of the tomb facing south with a Śivaliṅga on its top, measures 1x1ft and is made of local basalt.

Text

1. Śrīrām
2. Gata śrī Lamājī vīnata-
3. ti yāchāka[ri*]sida Mata[ji]
4. dāna Matajī Pātīla chā-
5. nē puḍhīla Dighade Pātīla
6. va bhaktī vīnadādatā kālē
7. dāna[vā]chakaśrī 1112

The record begins with salutation to the god Śrī Rām, which indicates that the deity was worshipped as their family deity. It records a grant made in the name of Lamājī Pāṭil executed through his trusted servant Matajī Pāṭil to Dighade Pāṭil at the request of the deceased Lamājī Pāṭil. The record is dated at the end as 1112, which if considered as Śāka era corresponds to 1190 CE.

In early medieval period Pāṭil and Kulkarṇi were the main officers in village-administration. Pāṭils are of two types: Revenue-Mulki-Pāṭil and Police-Pāṭil. Mostly these posts used to be hereditary. This inscription does not clarify the exact position held by these Pāṭils and the relationship between the deceased Lamājī Pāṭil and donee Dighade Pāṭil. The inscription does not mention any royal regime. But historically, Bhillama Yādava IV was ruling between 1187 to 1191 CE.

Discussion:

The political situation during this period witnessed a struggle for power among the four dynasties viz., Kalyāni Chālukyas, Kalachuris, Yādavas of Dēvagiri and Hoysalas. The last king of Kalyāni Chālukya, Someshvara IV was powerful enough to regain his lost power from the Kalchuris. At that time in the north Devagiri Yādava kings were the tributaries of Chālukyas. In the south Hoysalas were ruling. Yādavas and Hoysalas were becoming more powerful. And Kalyāni Chālukyas were becoming feeble. Bhillama IV, the Yādava king of Dēvagiri defeated the Chālukyas and established his rule over them. Politically the period was unstable and because of constant battles, social life was insecure. Perhaps during such one battle before his death Lamājī might have requested his trusted servant Matajī to execute his wish. Therefore Matajī built the tomb of Lamājī and gave donation to Dighade Pāṭil in order to make the donation public. But the nature of donation given is not clear. Perhaps both Lamājī and Dighade Pāṭil belonged to the same family and some property was passed on from one generation to the next by means of donation.

A study of inscriptions of this period from this region gives us an understanding of the religious condition. A contemporary inscription of Bhillama Yādava dated Śaka 1111 from Pandharpur speaks about establishment of Viṭṭhala temple therein. An inscription engraved on the Bhairavnath temple at the village Kikli, 3 to 4 kms from Limb, datable to 12th century CE mentions about one Singham Devrāja of the reign of Bhillama. The present inscription is interesting as it refers to Śrīrām, engraved on a tomb topped by a Śiva liṅga. All these evidences show that the worship of both Śiva and Viṣṇu coexisted during this period.

Conclusion:

From this inscription it appears that any good mission is started by keeping the family deity as witness. Religious, customs and traditions in a particular society or family are known. As per the inscription it seems that some property was passed over to the next generation by means of donation. Thus both domestic and social custom is reflected in the inscription. The title Pāṭil was conferred in honor to a person engaged in social and rural administration and it seems to be hereditary. The period of this record witnessed political transition from Kalyāni Chālukya to Yādavas of Dēvagiri and Bhillama Yādava IV was ruling over this region.

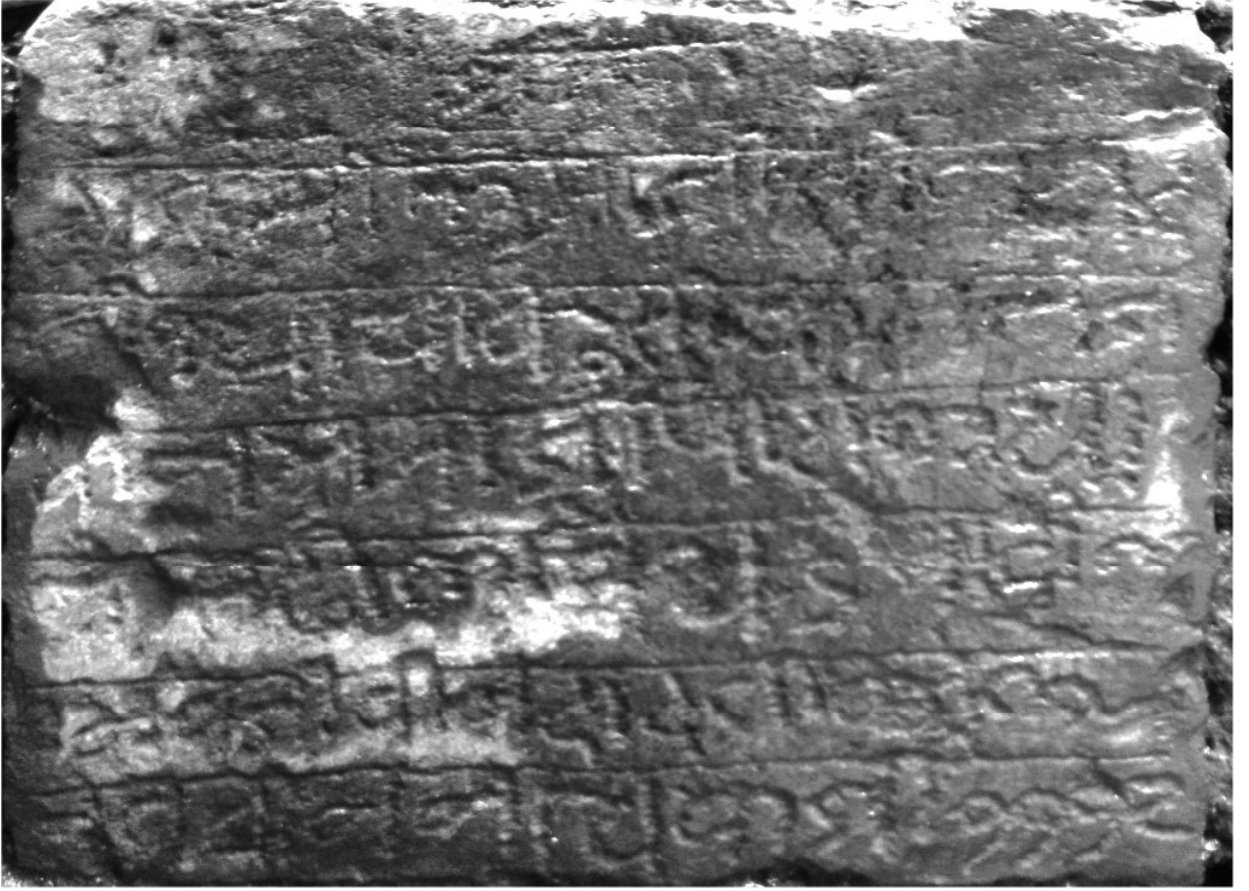
Acknowledgement:

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A Marāṭhī inscription from Limb

Historicity and date of king Jaṭila Parāntaka Pāṇḍya

M.L.Raja

Abstract:

Pandya kingdom is the most ancient, important and southern most kingdom and Jatila Parantaka Pandya is one of its famous kings. During his regnal period and after, there were engraved seven important stone and copper plate inscriptions. They are, 1 & 2. Anaimalai Narasinga Perumal temple stone inscriptions 3. Tirupparankunram Subramanya Svamy temple and Durga Devi shrine stone inscription, 4. Tirupparankunram cave pillar inscription, 5. Velvikudi copper plate inscription of Jatila Parantaka Pandya, 6. Aivarmalai stone inscription of Varaguna Pandya II and 7. Larger Sinnamanur copper plate inscription of Rajasimha Pandya III. Analysis of these seven inscriptions is much helpful in deriving the exact historicity and the date of Jatila Parantaka Pandya and the conclusion arrived confirms his regnal period from 765 to 815 CE.

Keywords:

Pandya, Anaimalai, Tirupparankunram, Velvikudi, Aivarmalai, Sinnamanur, JatilaParantaka Pandya, Varaguna Pandya II, Rajasimha Pandya III.

Introduction

Pandya Kingdom has a remote antiquity, as the ancient Tamil literature mentioned that King Pal Yagasalai Mudukudumi Peruvazhuthi, an ancient Pandyan king, ruled the land that was later submerged in the ocean, and the land was down south of Kanyakumari. His capital was Kapadapuram situated on the banks of Pahruli river. The land got submerged in the ocean and the people shifted to the present day Madurai. This is mentioned in ancient Tamil Literatures like Pura Nanuru,¹ Maduraikkanchi,² and Silapathikaram³ and in Velvikkudi copper plate inscription of Jatila Parantaka Pandya. He is mentioned as Jatilavarman, Parantakan, Nedunjadiayan, MaranJadaiyan and Varaguna Maharayar in various inscriptions, including Madras Museum Plates⁴. At least 14 stone and 2 copper plate inscriptions were issued during his rule. In this article, five contemporary and two later inscriptions are analysed in detail, to derive the correct historicity and date of Jatila Parantaka Pandya.

Anaimalai stone inscriptions A & B

Anaimalai is a rock hill in the village Narasingam, near Melur and is situated north east of Madurai in Tamilnadu. There are two inscriptions at Sri Narasinga Perumal temple at Narasingam village atop the Anaimalai hill. At the entrance into *garbhagriha*, two inscriptions were engraved, one on the right side and the other on the left. The left side inscription is in Sanskrit poetry and was inscribed in Grantha letters. The inscription on the right side is in Tamil, Grantha and Vattelutthu.

Inscription A

The inscription on the left side records that Madhurakavi, the descendant of Mara, a member of Vaidya family residing at Karavandapura, constructed the stone temple of Vishnu. He was the minister of Pandya king, Parantaka and donated to the brahmans an Agrahara. In Kali 3871, on

Revati Nakshatra, in the month of Kartika, the idol of the god is duly set in. ⁵

Inscription B

The second inscription on the right side of the entrance into the *garbhagriha* of the same temple mentions that Marankari *alias* Vaidyan Moovenda mangalaper Araiyan, the prime minister of Ko Maran Jadaiyan, constructed this temple. Marankari's younger brother Maran Eyinan *alias* Pandimangalavisaiyariyan, who became the prime minister, after the demise of Marankari constructed the *mukhamandapa*.⁶

From these two inscriptions we can infer the following facts precisely

The king who ruled Pandya kingdom, when this Sri Narasinga Perumal temple was constructed was Jatila Parantaka Pandya and was also known as Ko Maran Jadaiyan. The donors were – (A) Marankari having titles Moovendamangalaper Araiyan and Madhurakavi of Vaidya family, a resident of Karavandapura, a descendent of Mara and the Prime Minister of Parantaka *alias* Maran Jadaiyan and (B) Maran Kari's younger brother Maran Eiyinan bearing the title Pandimangalavisaiyariyan, who later became prime minister of king Jatila Parantaka Pandya, and the date of the inscription is Kaliyuga 3871.

Velvikudi copper plate inscription⁷

This inscription written in Sanskrit and Tamil language in Grantha and Vattelutthu characters was issued by Parantaka Nedunjadiyan, son of Maravarman Rajasimha Pandya, in the 3rd regnal year of Jatila Parantaka Pandya. The Anatti of this grant is Marankari with title MoovendamangalaperAraiyan hailing from Karavandapura and was a Vaidya Sikhaman. Both Velvikudi Copper Plates of Jatila Parantaka Pandya and the Anaimalai Inscriptions mention the Prime Minister's name as Marankari. Thus, the king mentioned in the Anaimalai Inscriptions was Jatila Parantaka Pandya, son of Maravaraman Rajasimha Pandya. Hence the period of King Jatila Parantaka Pandya was around 3871 Kali, as mentioned in Anaimalai inscription.

Tiruparankuntram stone inscriptions A & B

There are two stone inscriptions of Jatila Parantaka Pandya engraved on the rock hill of Tirupparankuntram, located south west of Madurai in Tamilnadu. One inscription is engraved on one of the pillars of the rock cut cave⁸ and the second one is engraved on the lintel beam of Sri Durga Devi shrine in the Sri Subrahmanya Temple⁹. The inscription at the cave is in Tamil language and Grantha and Vatteluttu script. The inscription at Sri Durga Devi Temple is in Sanskrit language and Grantha letters.

Inscription A

Inscription on the pillar of the cave mentions that Maran Jadiyan's *Mahā Sāmanta*, *Vaidya* and a resident of Karavandapura, Sattan Ganapati bearing the title Pandya AmirthamangalaVaraiyan, repaired the temple and holy tank, on the 6th regnal year of the king. Further the Dharma Patni (wife) of the king, Nakkang Kotri constructed the temples of Durga Devi and Jyeshta Devi. The word "Matru Avarku" written both before Sattan Ganapati and Nakkang Kotri denotes the king Jatila Parantaka Pandya.

Inscription B

Inscription at the lintel of the entrance into Durga Devi Shrine, mentioned the date as Kali 3864. The donor was *Samanta* Ganapati who installed the idol of Siva (Sambhu).

This *Sāmanta*Ganapati was the same person mentioned in the Tiruparankuntram Cave inscription. Thus these two Tirupparankuntram inscriptions concretely prove that king Pandya's regnal period was around Kaliyuga 3864.⁹ (ARIE, Sl.No.143 of 1951 to 52)

Aivarmalai stone inscription of king Varaguna Pandya¹⁰

This inscription was inscribed on the brow of the cavern on the hill Aivarmalai, near Ayyampalayam, Palani Taluk, Dindukkal District, Tamilnadu. The hill was named as “Tiruvayirai” both in this inscription and in the ancient Tamil literature. This inscription in

Tamil language and Vattelutthu characters records that in the Saka year 792 and in the 8th regnal year of the king Varaguna Pandya, the grant of 505 *kanam* of gold was made. Thus, the regnal period of king Varaguna Pandya had commenced in 784 Saka year.

Larger Sinnamanur copper plate inscription¹¹

This copper plate inscription was issued by Rajasimha Pandya III (Vikatavadavan). It gives the genealogy of Pandya Vamsa, since its beginning and up to the regnal period of Rajasimha Pandya III. As per this inscription, Pandya genealogy from Arikesari can be narrated as, “Arikesari Parankusa→Jadila→Rajasimha II →Varaguna I (JatilaParantaka) →ParachakraKolahala (Sri Mara) →Varagunavarman II →ParantakaSadaiyan (younger brother of Varagunavarman II) →Rajasimha Pandya III (Vikatavadevan). Pandya King Jatila Parantaka was also named as Varaguna Pandya, as mentioned in the inscriptions of Jatila Parantaka Pandya, on the wall of the rock cut cave and on a pillar in the upper rock cut cave, both at Tiruchirappalli, and on the north wall of Saptarishisvara Temple, Lalgudi, Tiruchirappalli District of Tamilnadu.¹² Thus, as per this larger Sinnamanur copper plate inscription, Varagunavarman II of Aivarmalai stone inscription dated in Saka year 792, was the grandson of Jatila Parantaka Pandya. Varagunavarman II came to power in 784 Saka, as the inscription was issued in the 8th year of Varaguna Pandya in the Saka year 792. Date of Anaimalai inscription of Jatila Parantaka Pandya was Kali 3871 and thus it was at 692 Saka year. Hence, the difference between Anaimalai inscription to VaragunaVarma's coronation was 92 years which was the regnal period of two kings. It is acceptable, as the Anaimalai inscription was inscribed at the earlier period of Jatila Parantaka Pandya's reign. As per the scholars opinion the regnal period of Jatila Parantaka was 765 to 815 CE. i.e. 687 to 737 Saka. (50 years). Then Paracakra Kolahala (Sri Mara) ruled Pandya kingdom from 815 to 862 i.e. 737 to 784 Saka (47 years). Thus, both are acceptable.

Conclusion

Thus, based on these 7 inscriptions, we can fix the date of Jatila Parantaka Pandya around Kaliyuga 3870, Saka 690 and 770 CE. Hence what was stated as the regnal period of Jatila Parantaka Pandya from 765 CE. to 815 CE. is proved correct by these 7 inscriptions of Pandya kingdom.

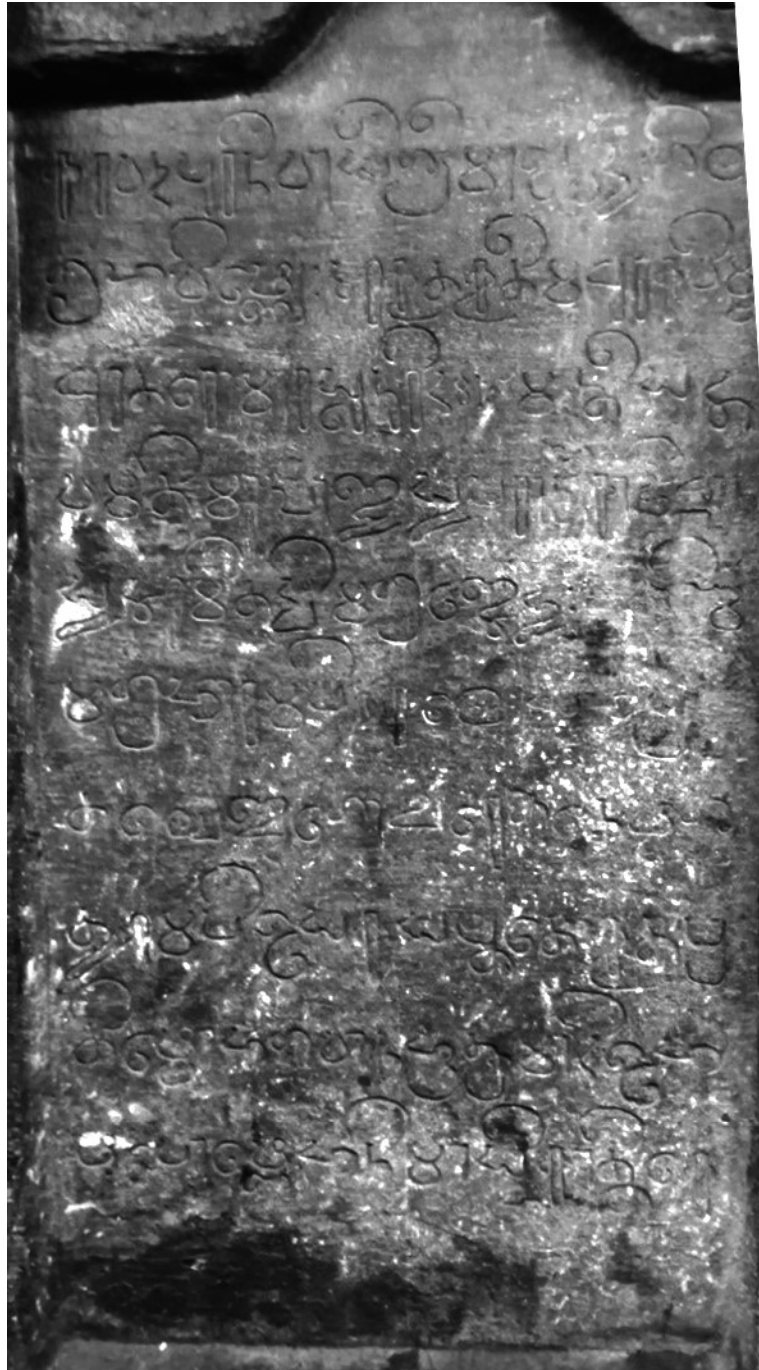
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Courtesy ASI, ARIE, Sl.No.143 of 1951 to 52





Anaimalai stone inscriptions A & B

Inscription of Vīra Ballāḷa II from Kaggala

Anil kumar R.V

Abstract

This paper examines a Kannaḍa inscription found from the village Kaggala in Malavalli taluk of Mandya district, Karnataka, belonging to the reign period of Ballāḷa II, son of Narasiṃha I of Hoysaḷa dynasty dated 1200 CE, April 24, Monday.

Keywords

Kaggala, Maḷavaḷḷi, Mandya, Basavēśvara temple, Kannaḍa, Ballāḷa II, Hoysaḷa, Dōrasamudra, Haḷebīḍu

The importance of this inscription is that this is the first inscriptional evidence of the place and worthy to construct the local history. In the year 2013-14 myself accompanied with Dr. D. M. Nagaraju Director Epigraphy (retd.) surveyed the Maḷavaḷḷi taluk of Mandya district in Karnataka and copied this Kannaḍa inscription from Kaggala village, 16 kms from Maḷavaḷḷi and 36 kms south of district headquarters (*Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy*, No. B. 109 of 2013-14). With the kind permission of Director Epigraphy, the inscription is being edited here for the first time.

The inscription is found in front of a newly renovated Basavēśvara temple engraved on a rough granite undressed slab bearing the depiction of sun, moon and Śivaliṅga. Unfortunately as the slab is fragmentary and damaged only 26 lines of the inscription are extant at present for study.

Text

1. Śrī svasti śrī samasta prasastisahitaṃ
2. śrī mahā prītvīvallabhaṃ mahārā-
3. jādhirājaṃ paramēśvaraṃ paramabha-
4. ṭhā(ṭṭā)rakaṃ yādavakuḷāṃbara dvimaṇi samya-
5. Ktachūḍāmaṇi malerājarāja maleprō-
6. *lugamḍa gamḍabhēruṇḍa kadana prachamḍa sahā-*
7. yasūra sanivārasiddhi giridurgamalla chaladam-
8. karāma vairībhakaṃṭhīrava ādiyarāya mapra-
9. (tipamaśi) . rājya nirmūla
10. bhujabala nissamka chakravarthi rājya pratishṭhāchā-
11. rya pāṃḍyarāja pratāpachakravarti hōyisaḷa
12. śrī Vīranāraṣi(gha) dēvarasara kumāra śrī Vīraba-
13. llāḷa dēvarasaru Dōrasamudrada madrājadāni
14. ra[ya]li sukhasaṃghata vinōdadiṃ prithuvirājyaṃ-
15. geyyuttaviralu ravudri saṃvatsarada vaisākha su

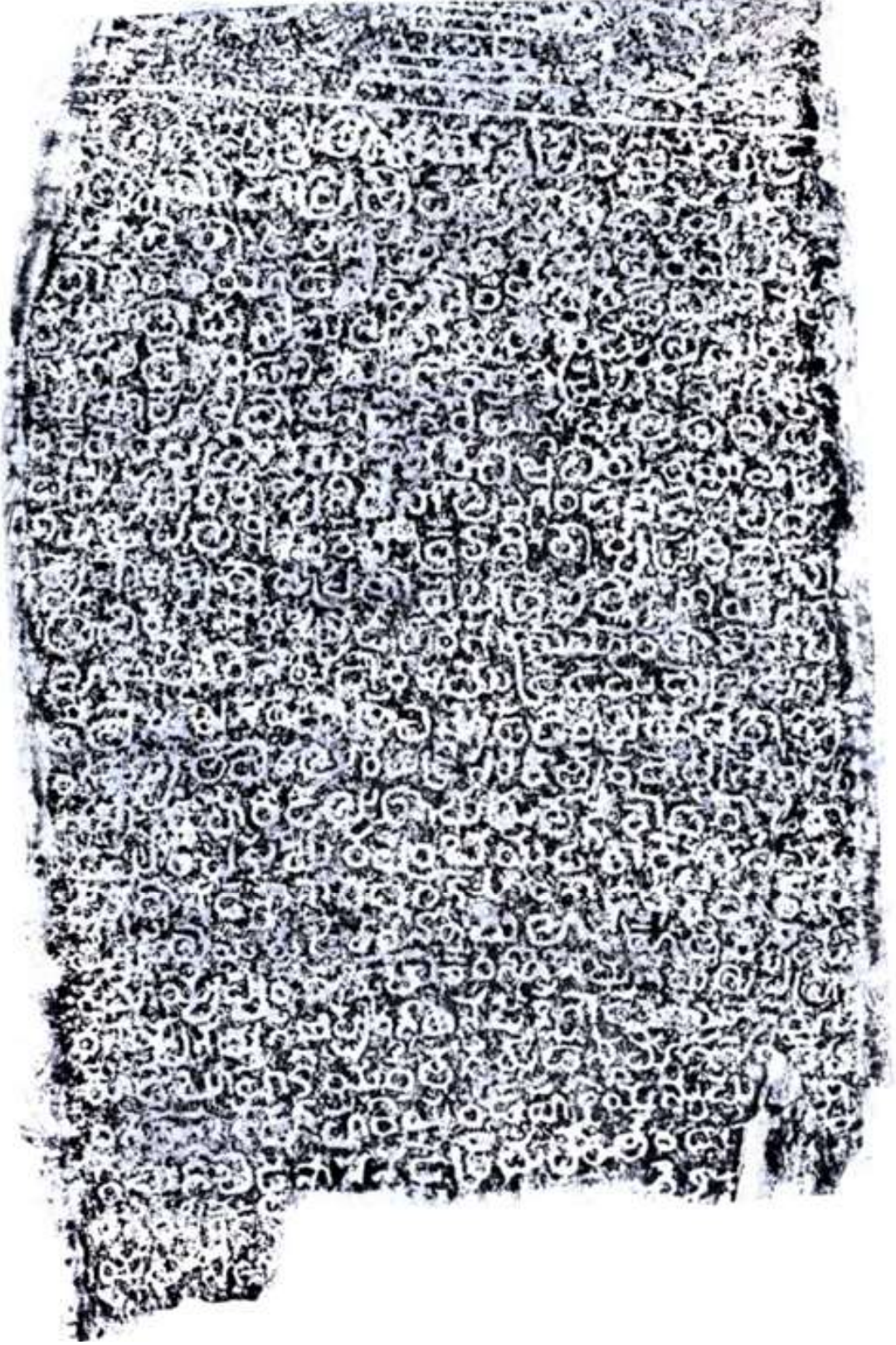
16. 9 sōmavāradalu śrīmatu Talakāḍa rājarā-
 17. japura eḷupura paṁchamaṭarādhīsvara dēvara
 18. . . . dānada nānādēśigaḷu Gaṁgā dēvara makkaḷu
 19. . . daliyaru devaṁṇa . . (ātakūtakane) ma-
 20. ga Māyyappa Kaggala Bhukaṁṇana maga mallappa hā-
 21. ranayyana maga Appaṁṇana(ja . gāda) . . . rū
 22. Kūḍi būhaḷiya Kētagāmuṁḍana maga Siṁdama-
 23. ṁge Kaggalada hariyaṁda haḷiyanu puṁṇya . .
 24. . vāgi biṭṭa sāsanada kramaveṁtemdaḍe . . .
 25. rigeya ke[age 1
 26. yali . ṛ
- [rest of the lines are worn-out]

The inscription belongs to the reign period of Ballāla II, son of Narasiṁha I of Hoysala dynasty. This record was issued when the king was ruling from the capital Dōrasamudra (*i. e.* Haḷebīḍu). It is dated Raudri, Vaishākha śu. 9, Monday. The details given are insufficient to verify the exact date of the record. But the cyclic year Raudri in the record occurred on the king's, 27th regnal year and it perfectly corresponds to 1200 CE, April 24, Monday. It records the grant of a village Hariyaṁdahallī situated in Kaggala village to Siṁdama, son of Kēta gāmuṁḍa of Bhuhallī by some individuals viz., Dēvaṇṇa, son of Gaṁgadēva, Māyappa, Mallappa, son of Bhukaṁṇa of Kaggala, Appaṁṇa, son of Hāranayya. The purport of the record and boundaries of the gifted village are lost.

From this record it is known that the name of the village remained unchanged as Kaggala from Hoysala period to modern era.

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Inscription of Vīra Ballāḷa II from Kaggala

Imprecatory verses in the inscriptions, reflecting on socio-religious aspects in Sri Potti Sriramulu Nellore district, Andhra Pradesh

T. Sreelakshmi

Abstract:

Inscriptions of the various periods in history reflect many aspects of socio, cultural and religious facets. However, it is observed that many inscriptions of donative nature contain the imprecatory verses at the end to maintain the donation for generations by the way of threatening the violators by associating with sins and its implications. These verses showcase the social aspects such as status of women, lower caste and religious merits such as attaining heaven if the donation is maintained or otherwise attaining sins leading to hell.

Imprecatory verses include the committing of five great sins (*pañchamahāpātakas*) to the violators, among which the top most being killing a tawny cow or brāhmaṇas on the banks of river Ganges. Sanskrit verses indicate the implications of donation made by self and maintaining donation of others, leading to twice the fruits for the deed (religious merits) and failing which continuous birth like a worm in excreta for 60,000 times. These verses mainly meant for the educated while for other classes in the society the curse or threat is in the form of commenting about the women in the family ravished by the lower caste persons, sometimes by the bonded labor or even by the animals. During Kākatīya period it is quite less and moderate while intensified in the period of Chōḷa, Vijayanagara and especially during post-Vijayanagara period.

Mainly, the variation could be seen while on the temple walls, streets and other places. Even, Viṣṇu, Śiva temples and Buddhist religious donations reflect variants in imprecatory verses. These curses are limited to the *pañchapātakas* on the temple walls for the donations made to the temple. If it is for the sake of public works like tanks etc., the imprecatory verses are more intense and focused towards women folk and lower caste members of the society. Thus, the status of few castes and bonded labor class is branded as lower or suppressed nature. In society, the other castes were afraid of the damage of honor in the outer world by mingling with lower sections. Popularity of the imprecatory verses specify the number of violations to the donations made. Present paper deals with the variations and socio-cultural echoes in the form of frightening and cursory verses of the imprecatory part of the inscriptions in Śrī Pottī Śrīrāmulu Nellore District, Andhra Pradesh.

Key words:

imprecatory verses, *pañchamahāpātakas*, donations, sins, hell

The donations or endowments made to the temples or for the construction of tanks by the rulers as well as individuals intended for the maintenance of the same eternally. When a village is gifted as ‘*sarvamānya*’ with its hidden treasures, deposits, stones, actuals, out standings, water with ponds, wells, tanks and embankments as an *ekabhogam* with its trees, the donor intends that the land to be enjoyed in succession by donee, his sons, grandsons etc., as long as the Moon, Stars and Sun endure. To perpetuate the donation made, almost in all inscriptions few benedictory and imprecatory verses were mentioned. The benefits/returns are described in the benedictory verses if donations/

gifts/endowments were protected for generations. At the same time, if any injury/violation caused to them results are presented in a most fearful, threatening manner to make destructors aware of the dare consequences for them as well as for their posterity.

Inscriptions found in SPSR Nellore district include stone and copper plates. The earliest inscription in the district is copper plate of Vikramāditya I of Western Chāḷukyas belong to 7th century CE. After Sātavāhanas and Pallavas, the region was under Western Chāḷukyas and Eastern Chāḷukyas during 7th to 10th centuries CE. Telugu Choḍa and Pottapi Choḍa were the off-shoots of Chōḷa regime and their inscriptions are found from 10th to mid-14th century CE, contemporary with those of Kākatīya, Yādava and Redḍi dynasties. Donative grants issued by the Vijayanagara kingdom from 15th to 17th century CE occupies major chunk. During 17-18th century many local chieftains issued inscriptions while constructing the Tanks. Apart from Telugu; Sanskrit, Tamil and Persian inscriptions are also found mostly towards southern part of the district. The religions mentioned include Hindu, Jain, Buddhist and Islam. Mainly the morality, austerities, adherence to the ethical values and fear for committing sin form the benedictory and imprecatory verses.

Initially, these curses were limited to few repeated verses in Sanskrit, where general remarks were made such as - the protection of another's gift is twice as meritorious as one's own gift, by possessing another's gift, one's own gift becomes futile. It is strongly believed that the act of illegal possession of other's property attracts five cardinal sins known as *pañchamahāpātakas* resulting in torture in another world (*naraka*). Thus, whoever obstructs, illegally enjoys the endowment, will incur the sin of killing cows (later ten thousand cows) and brāhmaṇas near the Ganges (later Kāśī, Gaya, Prayāg were also added). Even killing of children and fetus on the banks of river Ganges is also mentioned alongside. The most popular imprecatory Sanskrit verse is stating "whoever violates the charity will take birth as worm in ordure for 60,000 years" (...*śaṣṭhi varsha sahasrāniviṣṭāy āmjāyatēkrimiḥ*). The average lifespan of a worm if taken as one year against 60 years of a human being; it is understood that the violator is losing chance of taking human birth for the next 1000 times. It is continuously uttered at the end of the inscription as early as Western Chāḷukya period (7th century CE) to the end of the 17th century CE by local chieftains of the region.

Among other verses popular in the inscriptions issued by celebrated kings was "in the world there is only one sister of all kings (*ekaivabhaginī loke...*), namely, land given to a brāhmaṇa/deity; she must not be enjoyed, nor married", "consider the gift made by yourself, such as endowments for charitable uses, as your daughter; your father's donations, as your sister and those of others, as your mother" (*svadattāputrikadhāṭṭripitruḍattāsodariānyadattābhavenmatavipradatta Vasundharā*) "a charity made even by an enemy should be protected with care. An enemy indeed is an enemy, charity may not be the enemy of anyone". The property of a Brāhmaṇa is called poison. Poison kills alone, but the property of Brāhmaṇas kills sons and grandsons. Many of these cursory sentences of penalties exaggerated in later times.

1. The giver of land abides in heaven for 60,000 years but he who resumes it or he who permits (resumption) goes to hell for the same number of years;
2. Whoever injures this will incur the sin of destroying 1000 temples, 1000 tanks, 1000 cows, five brāhmaṇas and five maidens in Banaras;
3. Will be infested with worms in hell for sixty thousand years (60,000)

These verses mainly meant for the educated while for other classes in the society the curse

or threat is uttered in the form of intense remarks about the family members and women folk in regional language – Telugu.

Socio aspects:

Family members: Those who violate the charity will get the sin of killing their parents, their eldest son, children, fetus at the banks of river Ganges. Intensified verses include giving poison to the parents; who injures the donation will be considered to have killed a tawny cow and to have drunk its blood from the skull of his parents; taking food/flesh of a dog or drinking toddy in the skull of their eldest son in the graveyard are expressed along with other usual imprecations. The importance given to the eldest son in the family is realized through the above notations. Commonly these are noticed in the donations made to the temples and brāhmaṇas.

The most common and constant version of the imprecations are related to the women folk where it is expressed that whoever fails to keep the charity will be considered to have given his wife to the *veṭṭi* (bonded labor of the village), *mala*, *madiga*, *chanḍāla*, *toti* etc., will in turn ravish his wife's honor. The intense version of this is noted when the violator's wife will have intercourse with animals such as elephant, horse, donkey, dog, pig, etc. The status of the lower castes and women were observed in a disgraceful condition. Inter-mingling of castes was not accepted and viewed as degraded. The system of bonded labor (*veṭṭi*) was prevailing in the society.

Especially rude and vulgar forms are noticed when the tanks or water canals are constructed and insisting for their maintenance. Most of the tanks were made during 1630's which indicates that there was drought situation in the district for almost a decade.

Religious aspects:

Hindu religion: Few notations in the inscriptions indicate the believes of the Hindu religion. The gift of land is protected by the Varāha, thus; invocation is made to the Varāha incarnation of Vishṇu. This may be due to the fact that Varāha protected goddess earth (*dharanīdhararakshatuma ṅgalamahāchakramvarāhaḥ*). Copper plates of earlier periods are engraved with figure of boar and discus. Expressions of similar nature in the inscription such as the violators will be barred from the worship of Hari and Hara; will go to the city of Yama and reach *Raurava* hell; tortured with *kumbhipāka* indicates the conviction of the Hindu religion towards fear for the sins committed.

Jain religion: No imprecatory verses were found in these inscriptions.

Buddhist religion: In a Tamil inscription, salutations to Lord Buddha is expressed. As a part of imprecatory verses, the following lines are given - who obstructs this charity will incur the sin of giving pain to the tawny cows, causing harm to divine brahmāṇas and Rishis. Instead of killing the cows or brāhmaṇas here only mentioned about the instigating pain or hurting the creatures which is prohibited in Buddhism.

Islam: In a Tamil inscription in Ipuru, two rooms were built in the mosque in which imprecatory verse states that who obstructs charity will not prosper for seven births. 'Those who do not maintain the charity are considered like Arabs...mentioned in one of the imprecatory verses in temple. In the inscription of Krishnadevarāya it is mentioned that if the violator of charity belongs to Islam religion he will be considered as eaten pork (which is prohibited in Islam).

Therefore, donative issues invariably contain the benedictory as well as imprecatory verses to protect the charity eternally. However, violators seem to be increased and fear of the sin also reduced in later times for which intensified cursory verses introduced in fearful and abusive manner. The multiplied numbers of killing of cows, brāhmaṇas and destroying temples, tanks on the bank of river Ganges (1,000 - 10,000) as well as holy places like Kāśī, Gaya and Prayāg, etc., in imprecatory verses of the later times attest the same. The inferences could be drawn through the verses as society was divided into several castes and the classes of the lower caste were kept away from certain activities. Performing marriages or associating with them in any manner was prohibited. Any case of such incidents was viewed seriously and banishing those persons from the society who mix with them was in vogue. The donations were made for the merit of their parents, higher rank officials, kings, etc. Apart from the above, it is noticed that all religions were nurtured and beliefs of the different religions were strictly followed accordingly. Fear to commit sin or belief in landing in hell by undertaking cardinal sins (*pañchamahāpātaka*) seem to form the drive to ban the people to violate the charity.

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Agrarian expansion during the Vishṇukuṇḍin times in Telangana An epigraphic study

Dendukuri Nagamani,

Abstract:

The early historic period in Telangana shows a steady increase of agrarian settlements on the river lines. This trend is more pronounced during the Vishṇukuṇḍin times (c. 375-612 CE). Historical evidences show that, the course of river Musi emerges as one of the strong fertile bases for the extension of agrarian settlements during this period. These settlement cultures were to be understood in relation to each other as a holistic complex than isolated structures. In this endeavour, epigraphical references are important in locating historical trends in a broader perspective. The spatial extent of the Vishṇukuṇḍin records is a good indicator of their hegemony over the regions of Telangana. Their reign marked stability and gave momentum to the agrarian expansion that had lasting impact in the successive history of the region. In this article, an attempt has been made to locate the agrarian expansion of the Vishṇukuṇḍin period in sites that typify their settlement patterns in the light of epigraphical testimony.

Keywords:

Vishṇukuṇḍin, copper plates, Telangana, Musi river, Tummalagūḍem, Kēsaragutta, Agrarian expansion.

The early historic period in Telangana shows a steady increase of agrarian settlements on the river lines. In the eastern Deccan, the earlier records of the Ikshvāku attest to the rigorous state patronage extended towards agrarian expansion. The distribution of thousands of ploughs along agrarian implements by the Ikshvāku founder king Śrī Chāntamūla and the names like Adavisantiśrī, Kodabaliśrī as mentioned in the epigraphs, allude to the strong ideological convictions of this dynasty towards promotion of agricultural prosperity. The vestiges of Ikshvāku were spread on Pāler, a tributary of Krishṇa¹.

This trend is more pronounced during the Vishṇukuṇḍin times (c. 375-612 CE). Historical evidences show that, the course of river Musi, another tributary of Krishṇa, emerges as one of the strong fertile bases for the extension of agrarian settlements during this period. On the other hand, the two copper plate sets from Tummalagūḍem ostensibly refer to the donations made towards irrigational facilities that signify the geo-physical nature of this part of the Vishṇukuṇḍin kingdom². These features were shared by the regions around Telangana. An inscription of the later Sātavāhana times engraved on a stone (locally known as Jungliguṇḍu) in Myakadōni, records the digging of a tank evidently an enterprise necessary in agrarian activities in semi-arid zones³.

The Khanapūr (Sangli district) plates of Vishṇukuṇḍin Mādhavavarma II also has landscape references to donated lands by the side of tanks⁴. The other records from the eastern Deccan refer often to donations made on river banks⁵. These features in turn signify that, the Vishṇukuṇḍin inscriptions both on stone and copper show a conscious state patronage towards sedentary farming structures in the areas of their rule.

These settlement cultures were to be understood in relation to each other as a holistic complex rather than as an isolated phenomenon. In this endeavour, epigraphical references are important in locating historical trends in a broader perspective. In this article, an attempt has been made to locate the agrarian expansion of the Vishṇukuṇḍin times in sites that typify their settlement patterns in the light of epigraphical testimony.

The Vishṇukuṇḍin epigraphs were chartered towards patronising religious establishments and brāhmaṇa scholars⁶. This resulted in the creation of new villages, claiming virgin lands to settle the learned groups of brāhmaṇas and monks. A regime of about three centuries was fairly long enough for the Vishṇukuṇḍins to expand over the resource bases in Telangana region where they had a rather stable control. The strategic extension over the resource bases was vital for the long drawn rule of the Vishṇukuṇḍin as it had rich manifestations in the massive edifices essentially of religious and military nature. Their epigraphs from Telangana show that, they extended their bases on river lines, whereas the uplands agrarian expansion was marked by irrigational facilities.

The copper plates from Tummalagūḍem provide evidence to the politico-administrative activities of the Vishṇukuṇḍin kings around areas of agrarian and resource potential. Vishṇukuṇḍin administrative centres and fort sites in Telangana were located on the fertile soils of river Musi. In the hinterlands and uplands, they chose to raise monuments near the regions having potential of building material. Their forts were located in the vicinity of regions having natural building materials like the granite, steatite and other ochre clay barites. These natural rocks and other materials were required for building edifices for secular, religious and defensive purposes. Other important sites include Koṇḍāpur, Yēlēśvaram, Gollathaguḍi, Kuḍaveḷḷi⁷.

P.V. Parabrahma Sastry brings to our attention that, the important sites of the Vishṇukuṇḍin like Tummalagūḍem, Kēsaragūṭṭa, Chaitanyapuri (Hyderabad) were located on the river Musi⁸. V.V. Krishna Sastry infers that, the extant structures at Kēsaragūṭṭa (hill fort) testify the references towards the innumerable donations of tanks and edifices mentioned in the Tummalagūḍem plates⁹. The Tummalagūḍem copper plates (II) mentions its ancient name as Indrāpura.

V.V. Krishna Sastry, excavator of the site Kēsaragūṭṭa was affirmative that the place served as the capital of Vishṇukuṇḍin¹⁰. P V Parabrahma Sastry also opines that, "...this part of Telangana remained under their authority from the beginning till the end, and their capital must have been somewhere in the region, which in all probability was Kēsaragūṭṭa, a pilgrim centre about 40 kms east of Hyderabad, where excavations brought to light an extensive fortification with gateways, several temples, and a number of Vishṇukuṇḍin coins"¹¹. Tummalagūḍem (*sthaladurga*), from where we have rich archaeological information, stands as an important centre of religio - political activity. Regarding the Vishṇukuṇḍin provincial bases in Telangana region, as per the historical evidences, there were many sites associated with these kings¹². Having more provincial capitals was also a prominent feature of subsequent Chālukyan administration.

The Tummalagūḍem copper plates

Tummalagūḍem was also known as *Indrapālanagara* in the local legends which gave ample reasons to allude that, it was founded by Vikramēndrabhaṭṭārakavarman to whose reign the second set belongs¹³.

The first set of the copper plates was dated to the 37th regnal year (459 CE) of the king

Gōvindavarma. It was of four plates which record the grant of two villages, Enmadala and Penkaparru in favour of the Āryasaṅgha of the Buddhist *vihāra* built by the king's *agramahiṣi* (chief queen) Paramabhaṭṭārikadēvī. The said donation was made on the auspicious occasion of Vaiśākhapūrṇima with all the benefits like *nidhi*, *upanidhi*, and free from all impediments¹⁴. Making munificent gifts to the religious establishments by the royal women was well documented even in the earlier records of the Ikshvāku period which shows the stronghold of Buddhism around the regions of Deccan.¹⁵

The second copper plate set of Tummalagūḍem was issued by Vikramēndrabhaṭṭāarakavarma, the great-great-grandson of Gōvindavarma (of set I). This set was the first ever known epigraphic source from the united Telugu regions to give a date in the śaka era on registering a gift. They were dated to śaka 488 (566 CE) in the 11th regnal year of Vikramēndrabhaṭṭāarakavarma (II). In this grant, the king donates village Irundore in the favour of Āryabhikshu saṅgha of *mahāvihāra* earlier established by Paramabhaṭṭārika-mahādēvī¹⁶.

A Prākṛit inscription engraved on a boulder at Chaitanyapuri in Hyderabad brings to light another site on the Musi river line. According to the record, the stone cell in vicinity was meant for those who carry water for Govindarājavihāra. Tummalagūḍem copper plates (set I) credit this king with building many *stūpas* and *vihāras*¹⁷. On the right bank of Musi, 40 km away from Tummalagūḍem, Govindarajavihara was located within the precincts of Hyderabad. At the site, an undated Prākṛit inscription was incised on a big boulder. In the same line, the Kaṭṭucheruvu grant of Harivarmarāja records a contemporary donation in the eastern Deccan to Bhikshusaṅgha with injunctions to safeguard the gift¹⁸.

***Dāna and datti* as means to promote agrarian settlements**

Vishṇukuṇḍin policy of *dāna* was apparently designed to protect agrarian settlements in the vicinity of the natural resources. The practice of *dana* as a popular means of agrarian expansion shows that the kings had interest in the uninterrupted continuity of these donations. The two copper plates from Tummalagūḍem reflect the policy of donating villages as a means to agrarian expansion. These grants also show that, new settlements were encouraged by granting allied benefits and exemptions from impediments such as taxes and other obligations related to official presence.

Since the early centuries of Christian era, the Purāṇic Brāhmanism held sway over society. *Purāṇas* laid great emphasis on *dāna* which was essential to support the institutional practices¹⁹. This perhaps answers for the ideological force behind the participation of the common in the gifts and donations towards religious establishments²⁰. During this period, *utsarga dāna* (donations for the public welfare) were upheld, that resulted in donations of lands, flower gardens, watertanks and for the cause of education²¹.

Sankaranarayanan writes that Vishṇukuṇḍin gave away villages as *datti* in favour of *brāhmaṇa* donees with enormous exemptions. Expressions like *Janasrayadatti* show that the kings were known after their grants²². Vishṇukuṇḍin records also have great agro-pastoral significance. Both sets of Tummalagūḍem plates laud Govindaraja as bestower of lands, cows and many other things. The Velpūru record (c. 499 CE) extols Mādhavavarma as giver of thousands of cows (*gōsahaśraparadāyina*). Through the Chikkulla plates (c. 510 CE), Vikramēndravarma donates Rēgonram in favour of god Sōmagirīśvara. In the same record, he lauds his ancestral grandfather Vikramēndra as donor of many lands and cows. These grants of land often corresponded to the

agrarian seasons. The Tummalagūḍem plates (I) and Khānapūr plates were issued both on the occasion of *Vaiśākha pūrṇima*, which corresponds with the season for summer harvest (*Vaiśākha* - copper plate-I) where as the second set from Tummalagūḍem were dated in the time of winter harvest (*Kārttika*- copper plate-II).

Confirmation of earlier grants (sthithi, sthāpita) - honouring pūrvasampradāya

Vishṇukuṇḍin also followed a policy of honouring earlier grants and other benefits of the donees.

The earlier trends in land grants appear to have been continued by these kings. This way, Vishṇukuṇḍin stand as a link between the early dynasties and the Chalukya in terms of honouring earlier grants. Tummalagūḍem set (II) has some significant features. It restores the grants made earlier by the king Gōvindavarma who was endowed with a long list of epithets suggesting his favour towards agrarian expansion. This charter issued by the later king Vikramēndrabhaṭṭarakavarma II was in assertion (*sthitir-ēsha-sthāpita*) of the earlier land grant²³. Sankaranarayana opines that, this charter might have been drafted by the beneficiary *Āryasaṅgha* later in the reign of Vikramēndra II, basing on the earlier one²⁴. The trend of continuing earlier records was a populist means of agrarian expansion²⁵.

Sankaranarayanan opines that, the Vishṇukuṇḍin donatory pattern reflects the influence of contemporary practices known through the terms like *Sarvasddhidatti*, *Apūrvadatti*, *paradatti*²⁶. The records of Renāṭi Chōḷas from places like Kalamalla and Indukūru, register the trends of agrarian expansion in the contiguous regions of Vishṇukuṇḍin rule²⁷. Besides these donations, Vishṇukuṇḍin indulged in many populist rituals. *Sarvamēdha* which includes large scale participation of commoners was performed only by Vishṇukuṇḍin kings²⁸. These political actions were to be viewed in terms of their effect in the expansion and stabilisation of the agrarian settlements.

The spatial extents of the Vishṇukuṇḍin records are good indicators of their hegemony over the regions of Telangana. Their reign marked stability and gave momentum to the agrarian expansion that had lasting impact in the successive history of the region.

Notes and references

1. J.Ph Vogel informs that, Burgess chanced upon 3 pillar inscriptions of donatory character dated to Virapurushadatta. J.Ph.Vogel. Prakrit Inscriptions From A Buddhist Site At Nagarjunikonda EI XX pp1-37; B.V.Krishna Rao. 2015.Tolinati Telugu Rajavamsalu (Telugu tr.) Emesco, Hyderabad p.143.
2. The two sets of copper plate records of the Vishnukundin dynasty found in Tummalagudem came to light through the efforts of B.N.Sastry in 1965. B.N.Sastry.1965. 'Vishnukundina Govindavarma Indrapalanagara Tamrasasanamu' Bharati vol 41, pp14-28; Vishnukundina Vikramendrabhattarakavarma Indrapalanagara Tamrasasanamu 1965 July Bharathi vol 42; Subsequently, many scholars made discussions on these sources. For example, M. Rama Rao, 'New Light on the Vishnukundins', Journal of Indian History, XLIII-3,pp. 733-44; S.Sankaranarayanan 'Two Vishnukundin Copper Plates from Tummalagudem' Epigraphia Andhrica vol II pp 4-10
3. V.S.Sukthankar. 'A New Andhra Inscription of SIRI-PULUMAVI' EI XIV pp153-55

4. V V Mirashi. 'Khanapur Plates of Madhavavarman' EI XXVII, PP312-318; AM shastri 'Early History of The Deccan: Problems and Perspectives' Sundeep Prakashan, Delhi 1987.
5. E.Hultszsch. 'Ipur Plates of Govinda varma' Son Madhavavarman334-337' EI XVII - records of gift of Village Vilembali to Agnisarma by maharaja Madhavavarman issued from his camp at Kudavada. Who had palace at Trivaranagara; Ipur Plates of MadhavavarmanII – E.Hultszsch 337ff - EI XVII- Madhavavarman resided at Amarapura; Chikkulla Plates of Vikramendravarman II F.Kielhorn-Vikramendravarman gave village Regonram on the banks of Krishna-Venna to Somagirisvaranathapp193-198. EI IV; Ramatirtham plates of Indravarman Hultzsch, E 1914 EI XII 133-36; mention Puranisangama vasaka (temporary camp) gifts village Peruvataka to a brahmana as aghara; Velpuru Prakrit inscription the same place was mentioned as skandavara (war camp)
6. Chikkulla plates Vikramendravarman II donates Regonram to god Somagirisvara; Tummalagudem Set-I Govindavarman donates Enmadala, Penkaparra villages to Buddhist vihara, Tummalagudem Set II Vikramendrabhattarakavarman donates village Irunderu to Buddhist vihara; In Tundi plates, Vikramendravarman donates the said village to a brahmin by the name Svamisarma.
7. G.Yazdani. 'Excavations At Kondapur –An Andhra Town (Cir.200B.C.to 200A.D.)' Annals of Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute Vol XXII parts III-IV ; Abdul Waheed khan, A Monograph on Yeleswaram Excavations AP Archaeological Series no.XIV Govt of Andhra Pradesh,Hyderabad 1963; B.K.Thapar Ed Indian Archaeology A Review 1978-79. P.37; Sastry T.V.G,Kasturi Bai, M&J.Vara Prasada Rao et.al Ed. Veerapuram- A Type Site for Cultural Study in the Krishna Valley. Birla Archaeological and Cultural Research Institute, Hyderabad,1984; K.Rammohan Rao. 1992 .Perspectives of Archaeology, Art and Culture in Early Andhra Desa, Aditya Prakashan, New Delhi,
8. P.V.Parabrahma Sastry Ed.1992.*Inscriptions of Andhra Pradesh, Nalgonda District*, Government of Andhra Pradesh.Hyderabad, vol I P.XVIII; S.Sankaranarayanan. 1977.The Vishnukundis and Their Times (An Epigraphical Study). Delhi: Agam Prakashan.
9. V.V.Krishna Sastry. 2016. Suprasiddhasaivakshetram Keesaragutta pp95-104 in V.Ramakrishna Ed.,Telangana Charitr. Potti Sreeramulu Telugu University, APHistory congress,
10. ibid 96.
11. PV Parabrahma Sastry. *Inscriptions of Andhra Pradesh,Nalgonda vol I Op.cit.*
12. The Chikkulla plates mention Lendulura as Vijaya vasaka (victorious camp of Vikramendra varman II Tummalagudem set II mention Sakrapura\Ramatirtham plates mention Puranisangama vasaka (temporary camp); Ipur Copper plates Set I mentions Kudavada as Vijayaskandavara (victorious war camp); Ipur Set II mention Amarapura, Pulumboru Copper plates I mention Trivaranagara, in the Velpuru Prakrit inscription the same place was mentioned as skandavara(war camp).
13. K.Rammohan Rao. June 1977. "Vishnukundinula Rajadhani" Bharati Vol 54 pp29-34 - Indrapura mentioned in the Govindavarman's charters was Tummalagudem - the vestiges in the village affirm this opinion.
14. P.V.Parabrahma sastry Ed.*Inscriptions of Andhra Pradesh, Nalgonda vol I Op.cit.*
15. Vogel Op.cit. Chantisiri was a paternal aunt of Virapurushadatta. A pillar inscription records gift of vihara by Rudrabhattarikadevi, queen of Chamtamula. Yet another gift made by the daughter-in-law of Chantamula (wife of Virapurushadatta), Mahadevi Bhatidevi. Ikshvaku records show Chaitya grihas dedicated to Teriyas of Tamraparni on the right bank of Krishna.

16. The place names with suffixes such as *eru* suggest that they are located near water streams/resources. SS RamchandraMurthy 1985 A Study of Telugu Place Names .Delhi.p.167.
17. P.V.Parabrahma Sastry. 1984. Hyderabad Prakrit Inscription of Govindaraja Vihara. JESI 11,95-100. It mentions king Govindaraja to whom the origins of Vishnukundin family were attributed. It helped the postulations that, the dynastic origins were in Hyderabad-Nalgonda-Sripavata region.p.99. Similar was the observation of D.C.Sircar as he says that, 'The original home of the Visnikundin family may, therefore be supposed to have been not very far from Srisaila' The Successors of Satavahanas in Lower Deccan. University of Calcutta, 1939.
18. The grant village was identified with the village of same name in East Godavari district. This donation is significant in many ways as it attests the on going state patronage towards Buddhist establishments and reference to Tamraparni. It was found very similar to the Tummalagudem set I in the draft and establishes the matrimonial link of this dynasty with the Vishnukundins (Hyderabad Museum Plates of Prithivi- Sri-MulaRaja' S.S.Ramachandra Murthy EI 38 pp 192ff)
19. R.C.Hazra. 2017. Studies in the Puranic Records on Hindu Rites And Customs, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi (fp.1987) p249
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22. S.Sankaranarayanan 1977 op.citp 138
23. *Stithi*, as per the glossary meaning, refers to a decree of perpetual grant. D.C.Sircar 1966. Indian Epigraphical Glossary .Delhi:Motilal Banarsidass, p.324. So, the term as a whole means re-establishing of earlier grant.
24. Sankaranarayanan 1977 op.cit p.38
25. K.Gopalachari gives a detailed account of the early inscriptions of the Andhradesa. The Brihatpalayana, Salankayana, Kadamba, Pallava records attest to the brahmadeya donations with liberal exemptions. K.Gopalachari. 2015 . Teluguvari prachina charitra (Telugu translation). Hyderabad : Emesco.
26. Sankaranarayanan op.cit p138. .
27. P.V.Parabrahma Sastry Ed. Insriptions of Andhra Pradesh , Cuddapah District Hyd Govt of AP 1977.
28. Arundhati op.cit p 38; The brahmanical ideology was represented in Vishnukundin symbols. Especially their later leanings towards Saivism were seen in the later records with representation of humped bull (Tundi CPs of Vikramendravarma II). The kings were generally identified with insignia of pouncing lion flanked by lamps, Ipur and Velpur) .C.A.Padmanabha Sastry. 1983. The Royal Seals of The Andhra Dynasties JESI 10 pp 90-95.

Revolution in Reclamation

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R. Kalaikkovan

Abstract:

The present paper examines inscriptions of the reign of Kulōttunga I found in the Ranganātha temple at Śrīrangam, that reveal about reclamation of flooded lands of Tandurai and Karaikkūḍi, the two *maḍaippallippuram* villages of Śrīrangam temple that were made uncultivable by repeated floods in river Kāvērī, which were desilted and made cultivable during the long reign of Kulōttunga I. Government and temple authorities joined hands with meticulous plan and succeeded in reviving the two villages and there by restructuring the affairs of the temple kitchen. Inscriptions reveal the names of several government and military officers of Kulōttunga regime and also share interesting details on the process of reclamation, irrigation, crops and tax benefits.

Keywords:

Ranganātha temple, Kulōttunga I, flood, desilting, Tandurai, Karaikkūḍi, reclamation, flower gardens, irrigation channels, Chōḷa, tax.

Ranganātha temple at Śrīrangam is the oldest and the largest temple in Tiruchirappalli district. The earliest reference of this temple is found in Silappathikāram, the historical treatise of Ilangoṽḍikal and it has the credit of being sung by eleven of the twelve Ālvārs. This is the only temple in the whole of Tamilnadu to have nearly 647 inscriptions engraved on various parts of the temple complex. It is again the only temple to boast of having 191 records of the Chōḷas. But for four kings of the imperial Chōḷas, the rest of the rulers right from Āditya I to Rājēndra III have records here.

Inscriptions of Kulōttunga I

It is interesting to note that nearly 50% of the Chōḷa records found here belong to Kulōttunga I who started the Chālukya line of Chōḷa rule in Tamilnadu. No other temple in Tamilnadu has this amount of epigraphical corpus of any single ruler. Most of his inscriptions, as many as 72 are engraved on all the four walls of the third *prākāra* of the temple and made it to be known as the *prākāra* of Kulōttunga though it was not named as such.

28 of his records have lost the regnal years of the king and the rest are spread from his 10th year to the 48th year. All these 83 records (*SII* 24: 26-108) of Kulōttunga I who is celebrated as the Chōḷa who exempted the toll and gilded the temple of Naṭarāja at Chidambaram with gold, provide interesting details on the efforts taken by the administration of the temple with the support of the government to reorganize the agricultural outcome through vigorous reclamation of the lands that were silted due to heavy floods.

Maḍaippallippuram

Tandurai and Karaikkūḍi of Vilattūr-nāḍu were the two important villages that were gifted

as *maḍaippallippuram* to look after the functioning of the temple kitchen that served offerings to the deities and food for the devotees. Repeated floods in Kāvēri made the lands of these villages uncultivable by depositing enormous amount of sand. Records cry out and say that these lands were abandoned for 40 to 100 years due to heavy silting and thereby causing dent in the activities of the temple kitchen.

Decision for Sale

It was during the reign of Kulōttunga that a decision was taken by the temple authorities in consultation with the government officials to sell all the lands that were silted, to those who come forward to join hands with the authorities in the reclamation process. Lands were sold at a low price, one *veli* of land for one *kāsu* to encourage purchase at a large scale. The major land tax known as *irai* or *kaḍamai* collected generally from all the land owners was exempted for these silted lands. *Kaḍamai* which was a fold of labour levies in the form of corvee was the only tax that was expected from the purchasers. This too was demanded only to maintain the irrigational amenities. In some sales even this kudimai was exempted.

Process of Reclamation

The labour cost of reclamation per one *veli* of land was one *kāsu* in most of the cases whereas in rare cases, where desilting was a laborious process more money was collected. As per one record six *kāsu* were collected for the reclamation of less than one *veli* of land.

The purchasers were given the freedom of cultivating any crop of their choice in the retrieved land and a period of five years was given as a breathing time during which whatever the land produced was to be utilized in total by the owner himself. It was only after five years of reclamation and that too if the land yields 8 *kalam* of paddy was to be measured by one of the three standard measures known as *pallikonḍan marakkal*, *śrīrangapiriyan* and *rājakēsari* at the temple treasury as land tax. In some rare cases where the yield was not satisfactory the owners were permitted to pay the tax in two installments. In extraordinary cases it was even reduced to four *kalam* of paddy.

Lands that were desilted and made cultivable are mentioned in the records as *vayakkal* or *mayakkal* or *vilagam*. Most of such lands received the names of their owners along with any one of the above as its suffix (*Muttaraiyar Vilagam*, *Pallavaraiyar vayakkal*, *Ayarkoluntu vilagam*, *Thirunarudaiyan Vilagam* etc.). Some of the lands were named after the various incarnations of Viṣṇu such as *Narasingamayakkal*, *Tennarangan vilagam*, *Thiruvellarai Ninran Vilagam*, etc.

Such reclaimed lands were brought under cultivation with the help of agricultural labourers engaged by the land owners. In most of the cases the labourers were two in number and each received one *kuruni* of paddy per day and two *kāsu* per year as remuneration towards food and dress. Some of the lands which were either larger in size or caused difficulty in cultivation had more number of labourers as far as five persons. The produce that was left behind after the payment of tax and the labour charges belonged to the owner of the land. But in most cases the owners created various endowments of their choice at the temple out of the remaining produce and enriched the temple activities.

Flower Gardens

It is understood from the records that most of the lands brought under cultivation were converted as flower gardens. Flower plants such as jasmine, *marikoluntu*, *shenbagam*, *nanthiyavattam* and *iruvatchi* were grown along with *tulasi*. Some lands had ponds and streams to grow lily and lotus. It may be said that none of the temples in Tamilnadu had so many flower gardens as Śrīrangam during 11th and 12th century period. Some of these lands were used to raise groves of fruit bearing trees such as mango, jack and banana. Coconut and areca-nut groves were also raised in some lands. In total the entire land was properly utilized by meticulous planning, careful seeding and with hard and dedicated labour.

Irrigation

Irrigation was made possible by the careful distribution of water, utilizing all the existing irrigational facilities and digging new channels and sub-channels where and when needed. The water management expertise of the Chōla period helped the villagers to a very great extent. The records throw light on major sluices that controlled water flow from the river Kaveri into the primary channels known as *nirodukal* that supplied water to several neighboring villages.

Larger channels which branched off from the primary ones coursed through individual villages and formed sub-channels to irrigate all the lands. Channels that supplied *vellanvagai* villages were known by the name of the village (Chattakudi vaykkal, Kudalurukku nirpayum vaykkal etc.) or by the direction in which it was flowing (Terkodiya vaykkal, Kilakkunokki pona vaykkal etc.). Channels that supplied lands in the *brahmadeya* villages were named after the kings, queens, feudatories and the gods (Keralantaka vaykkal, Tribhuvanamadevi vaykkal and Thirumarbidam Kondan vaykkal etc). Drains that carried excess water from the *brahmadeya* lands were known as *vatis* and were also named as the channels. It is interesting to note that such draining channels were absent in the *vellāla* villages. *Kannāru*, (smaller channels) provided irrigation to specified lands in the *brahmadeya* villages. It is understood from a record that boats were plying in the primary channels to facilitate water transport.

Chōla Officials

It is gleaned from the records that almost all the purchasers of these silted lands were connected with the government in some or other way. More than 30 high officials of the government were involved in this noble venture of correcting the uncultivable lands. Adityan Thiruvangadevan *alias* Virudarājabhayankara Vijayabālar, one of the higher officials of Kulottunga's government made four purchases and provided the entire produce of the land at the disposal of the temple by creating several endowments in his name. Araiyan Chēndan *alias* Rājēndrachōla Adigaimān another officer appears in three records with his enigmatic gifts made to the temple out of the remaining produce received from the lands purchased and corrected by him.

Arumoli Rājāthirājan *alias* Vanādirājar, Adityan Vedavanamudaiyan *alias* Neriyan Mūvēndavēlar, Araiyan Rājēndrachōlan *alias* Rājanārayāṇa Munaiyatharaiyar, Rājēndrachōla Muvēndavelar, Rājēndrachōla Mahābali Vanatirājar, Rājarājan Madurāntakan *alias* Varsarājan, Araiyan Ādinātan *alias* Karanai Vilupparaiyar, Araiyan Garuḍavāhanan *alias* Kalingarāyar, Nārāyanan Malaikkiniyaninran *alias* Mummudichōla Vilupparaiyar, Chiralan Thiruchchirrambalam Udayan *alias* Viravichatira Mūvēndavēlan are some of the government officials who actively

participated in the reclamation process and helped the temple as well as the people to recover from the catastrophes caused by the flash floods in the river Kāvēri. It is a distinguishing fact that none other than the Ranganātha temple at Thiruvarangam had witnessed such a large number of government officials in the rank of secretaries (*adikāri*) extending a helping hand in relieving the strain of the temple management and also providing job opportunities to the agricultural labourers of its neighboring villages.

As the officers, the commanders of the Chōla army also came forward and joined hands in saving the lands of these two villages. Jeyankonḍachōlan *alias* Ilangovellar, Vīrarājēndra Adiyamān, Thaliyil Madurāntakan *alias* Rājēndrachōla Kidarataraiyar, Arikandādēvan *alias* Gangaikonḍachōla Munaiyataraiyar, Chakrapāni *alias* Vīrachōlamunaiyataraiyar, Ayarkolundu *alias* Rājēndrachōla Munaiyataraiyar, Jeyankonḍachōla Chenamuga Muvēndavēlar and Cheyyapadam are noted as the philanthropic generals who were involved in this noble venture. Adiyān Menkai, wife of Vīrarājēndra Adiyaman joined her husband and purchased two *veli* of land, rectified it and gifted the same to the temple to raise a garden for the presiding deity Lord Ranganātha.

Rājarāja Arumoli *alias* Tennavan Mādēvī, Valavan Mādēvī, Ulaga Mādēvī and Neriyan Mādēvī, queens of Kulōttunga I also participated in the reclamation process by purchasing and correcting sizeable lands. Lady attendants of the queens and the generals mentioned as *pendatti* in the records associated themselves in this process with keen interest.

Conclusion

Reclamation though as a process was widely undertaken during the Chōla hegemony throughout Tamilnadu with the aim of increasing the agricultural space, nowhere it was done with such an amount of zeal and enthusiasm especially with the involvement of so many government officials and at such a large scale but for at Śrīrangam and that too under the reign of Kulōttunga I. It may be even said that the long stretch of Kulōttunga reign that prevailed in Tamilnadu was the golden era in the annals of Ranganātha temple which made it self supporting and extensive in proportions by adding several additional structures such as *maṇḍapas*, *prākāras* and sub-shrines.

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Early inscriptions of Oḍisha – A study on Brāhmī script (3rd century BCE to 4th century CE)

Laxmipriya Palai

Abstract:

Oḍisha has a large number of inscriptions and contributed to the development of script. The paper is specially focused on the early inscription of Oḍisha, with special reference to the evolution of Brāhmī script in this region. Like from other parts of India, Oḍisha also has rock inscriptions from 3rd century BCE to 4th century CE engraved in Brāhmī and Later Brāhmī script.

Key words:

Oḍisha, Brāhmī, Kalinga

Introduction

In ancient times Oḍisha was known as Kalinga. The Buddhist Jātakas, Jain literature and Brahmanical works mention it as a country. It is believed that Kalinga extended from Gaṅga in the north to Gōḍāvarī in the South, Amarakantak hill ranges of Vindhya in the west to the Bay of Bengal in the east. The origin of the term Kalinga is a matter of great dispute. A group of scholars have opined that the term Kalinga has originated from 'Kalinga', a race of people locally inhabiting the region. However the exact origin of the term is yet in wanting¹.

Kalinga was made known to world by Aśoka, the 3rd Mauryan king of Magadh. From his time the dated history of this region became clear and meaningful. It was annexed to the Magadh empire by him and made it a separate province along with four other provinces of his empire for the sake of better administration and established two capital cities, one at Tōshālī (modern Dhauli) and the other at Samapa (modern Jaugaḍa).

Here an attempt has been made to discuss the general characteristic features of Brāhmī alphabet employed in the inscription of Oḍisha from 3rd century BCE to 3rd century CE.

The Aśōkan Brāhmī

The edicts of Aśoka provide us a clue to study the characteristic features of the earliest form of Brāhmī script in India as well as in Kalinga region. A good number of eminent scholars are of opinion that Brāhmī script employed in Kalinga represented the southern variety. In Oḍisha, Aśōkan edicts are found at Dhauli on the southern bank of river Daya, near Bhubaneswar and Jaugaḍa on the bank of river Rishukulya in Ganjam district. Unlike the rest of India, at both these places all the 14 major rock edicts are not found as nos. XI, XII, XIII are left out. Instead, two edicts known as 'Separate Kalinga edicts are found. The Aśōkan Brāhmī script found in these two places presents a general similarity found all over India. Each letter is distinctly formed and no cursive writing in the way of continuous drawn line is noticeable.

The earliest form of Brāhmī script is further divided into two broad groups *viz.*, the northern and southern, as observed from the variations in the Brāhmī epigraphs found in different parts of the

country. Due to the geographical position of Oḍisha the influence of both the classes can be seen in the Oḍishan epigraphs².

Discovery of epigraphical material and its study and publication began in Oḍisha with the arrival of the Britishers in 1803. It was in 1820 the famous Hāthigumpha inscription of Khāravēla was noticed by A. Sterling³ who with the help of Colonel Mackenzie prepared the lithograph facsimile of the inscription which was published in the *Asiatic Researches*. But credit goes to James Princep for deciphering the inscription along with other minor inscriptions in the Khandagiri and Udayagiri hills in Bhubaneswar from the freshly prepared facsimiles of Lieutenant Kittoe.

There is strong evidence that reading and writing of Brāhmī script existed before the advent of Aśōka. Some scholars have taken the origin of the Brāhmī script to the Greek alphabet; where as some other believes its North Semitic origin⁴. It is however believed that Brāhmī has its own characteristics distinct from the Greek or North Semitic script and it's clearly of indigenous origin.

G. Buhler in his book “*Origin of the Brahmi script*” (1895) argued in favour of its Semitic origin. In the writings of the Aśōkan edicts, he distinguished at least two local varieties, the Northern and the Southern. About the Dhauli and Jaugaḍa edicts, he writes:

The southern variety is most strongly expressed in the Girnār and Siddhāpura edicts, less clearly in the Dhauli and Jaugaḍa edicts, by difference in signs for *a, ā, kha, ga, ma, ra, sa*, the medial *i* and the ligatures with *ra*⁵.

However C.S. Upasak⁶ who made an intensive examination of individual letters of Aśākan Brāhmī rightly concluded that no regional variety as such could be found in Aśōkan inscriptions⁴. The polished and rounded, surface of the pillars made them suitable for cursive engraving. But angular forms are commonly found on the rocks. Angularity or cursiveness of the letter form is further depended on the nature of the surface of the rock. The letters are formed with the help of geometrical symbols, like angle, dots, circle, etc., without any head mark.

The Brāhmī script as it first appears in the inscriptions of the Mauryan period is in almost fully developed form. In Aśōkan Brāhmī only six vowels are used. And vowels like *ī, ai, au, s and sh* are absent.

The two separate edicts at Jaugaḍa are engraved within a space enclosed by lines. The upper portion of this space is marked out by two *svastika* symbols at each corner of the Separate Rock Edict in Jaugada– II. They have curved arms and their direction varies in each case. The taurine figure having a dot in the centre of its circle could be read as *maṁ*. However as it is an auspicious mark, the attribution of alphabetic meaning to one of them seems to be far-fetched. The Jaugaḍa separate edicts give the earliest specimen of such symbols. According to Cunningham these Oḍisha and Ganjam inscriptions are the most carefully and neatly engraved of all the rock edicts⁷.

The facsimiles of the Dhauli and Jaugada edicts published in Hultzsch's *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol. I⁸, has been consulted for the purpose of reference in this article.

The Dhauli and Jaugada letters is distinctly formed and no cursive writing in the way of continuous drawn lines is noticeable. In some letters the free movement of hand resulted in round forms and the letters do not have any serif on the top. In both of these rock edicts the letters are cut

but the lines appear as being chiselled by the writer.

Palaeography of Jaugaḍa rock edict:

The edicts are written at three different places on the vertical face of the rock. The first portion contains the first five edicts; the second comprises the next five and the rock edict – XIV, about one half of which has been completely lost by the peeling away of the rock. The third portion contains the two separate rock edicts⁹.

So far as the palaeographic peculiarities of the rock edicts are concerned, it is interesting to note that they are almost identical in nature with those seen in the rock edict at Dhauli. The most striking similarity is the appearance of the reversed forms of ‘o’ and ‘e’ and the constant use of the standard shape of ‘ha’. The standard form of ‘ya’ is also more common than the crescent one. As in the rock edict at Dhauli, here also angular forms of ‘ca’, ‘pa’, and ‘la’ are to be seen occasionally. The peculiar shape of ‘dha’ is identical at both the places. The hurried form of ‘ja’ is also found in both. Finally each edict at Jaugaḍa also begins with a small horizontal dash, similar to the one seen in the rock edict at Dhauli. It is therefore clear that the rock edicts at Dhauli and Jaugaḍa, were engraved on one stylistic pattern, perhaps by the same hand. The difference is noticed only in the thickness of the letters, which is obviously due to the use of different chisels. In the rock edict at Dhauli, the chisel had a thin face where as in Jaugaḍa, a broad one was used. The letters are mostly straight and well cut and the lines usually run straight and parallel to each other.

The two separate rock edicts belong to a different style, and they are less carefully engraved. The remarkable feature is the occurrence of a reversed form of ‘dha’ which does not appear in the rock edict at Jaugaḍa. The shape of ‘kha’ with a circle at the bottom is more common than that with a knob or dot. No reversed shape of ‘o’ or ‘e’ are to be seen. The letter ‘ha’ has a tendency to take a very hurried form and no standard shape appears. The separate rock edicts are surmounted with straight lines where two *svastikas* symbols are engraved before the beginning of the Jaugaḍa Rock Edict – 11. The Jaugaḍa Rock Edict – 1 begins with three *mangal* signs representing the first letter of the word *punya*, while the ‘ma’ sign with a dot in the middle is the first letter of the word *mangal*.

Paleography of Dhauli rock edict:

The edict at Dhauli occupies a space of 16 x 14 feet. On its right side is hewn out of the rock a sculpture of four half of an elephant, 4 feet high, of superior workmanship. In the middle of the elephant is inscribed the word “*Gajatame*” denoting the Buddha entering into the womb of his mother Mayādēvī in her dream¹⁰.

The letters of the inscriptions are straight and well cut. The commencement of each edict is marked by a small horizontal dash. A stylistic difference between the rock edicts and the two separate rock edicts can be detected when examined closely.

The most striking feature in the rock edicts are the reversed forms of ‘o’ and ‘e’; while the standard form of ‘ha’ is invariably seen. The use of the standard form of ‘ya’ is more common than the crescent form. The angular shapes also appear in ‘gha’, ‘da’, and ‘la’ but they are very rare.

The character of the Aśokan Brāhmī alphabet is uniformity in the writing style. But as the art of writing is mostly in the imperial hand, it also abruptly arrested its growth. However, soon after

more and more people took interest to acquire technical knowledge of the art of writing.

Post-Aśōkan period

Next to the Aśōkan inscriptions comes the Hāthigumpha inscription of Khāravēla and the Manchapuri cave inscription of Kudapasiri showing the same characteristics features of 2nd century BCE, except minor changes.

To the close of the 1st century BCE the Śaka – Kshatrapas introduced some revolutionary changes in the art of writing Brāhmī script. They used new- edged pen for writing which gave the letters a new shape. The upper part of the letters was given a special treatment. The tapering thickness of the verticals, the definite head – formation with a dot or a dash, the equalization of the verticals of the letters like *pa*, *sa*, *la*, and *ha*, the angularization of the curve of the letters and the curved flourished of the medial vowels are some of the features which developed out of the new pen style and took forward the evolution of script with more rapid changes. The 1st century CE is the most important period for the history of the Brāhmī script simply because changes introduced at the beginning of this century proved to be a turning point. Dani states that the new writing tool of this period comprised of a sharp – edged pen¹¹.

The influence of this new style is not felt in Oḍisha because of two important reasons. Firstly Oḍisha was not subjugated by any of the foreign powers such as the Indo-Greeks, the Śaka, the Kshatrapas or the Kushanas. Secondly the new tool technique was not introduced to Oḍisha. But there is no denying fact that certain changes occurred in the writing of Brāhmī script and they are due to the influence of the coin technology and palaeographical changes that occurred and became popular in north India. As a result the provincial Brāhmī script developed in Oḍisha about the 1st century BCE, like in other regions of India¹².

Due to the technical development the Brāhmī script by 1st century BCE, which can be seen in the Udayagiri hills became more angularized.

Palaeography of Hāthigumpha inscription:

The Hāthigumpha inscription of Khāravela is the earliest and the most important records in the whole series of inscriptions found in the Khandagiri and Udayagiri hills¹³. On account of its worn out condition scholars have put forth divergent views regarding its palaeography and date. Although a majority of letters such as the initial *u*, the medial vowels *ā*, *u*, *e*, *o* and the consonants *ka*, *ca*, *cha*, *ta*, *tha*, *da*, *na*, *ṭha*, *ḍa*, *ḍha*, *ṇa*, *ba*, *sa*, etc. do not deviate from their Aśōkan Brāhmī counterparts, yet the features of the rest of the letters show great variety. The transitional forms are seen in the letters viz., *a*, *kha*, *ga*, *gha*, *ja*, *ta*, *pa*, *bha*, *ma*, *la*, *va*, *ha*, etc. In such cases the verticals are found reduced in size, angles are formed in place of curves and existing angular letters are transformed into curves. Some of the letters display partly angular and partly cursive engraving. Sometimes the letter forms are much more developed as in *gha*, *pa*, *bha*, *ma*, *la*, *ha*, etc, where there is an attempt to equalization of the verticals. But nowhere do we find the tapering thickness of the letters. There is absolutely no trace of the use of the so called “new –edged pen,” but some of

the forms are very suspicious as they recall those of the new technique. It is therefore, very difficult to date the inscription on the basis of palaeography. The new tool technique was popularized in Mathura region by the Śakas only in the first century CE. Prior to that Śaka technology of minting coin and its palaeography was much influenced by the Greeks. The date of Hāthīgumpha inscription is now believed to be somewhere in the later half of the 1st century BCE. So it is very likely that the scribes employed to engrave the inscription were possibly brought from Mathura who tried to imitate coin palaeography on stone. Had there been any imitation of the new tool technique, there would also have been imitation of the tapering thickness of the letters which is an important outcome of the style¹⁴.

It should be remembered that whatever stylistic peculiarities penetrated into this region during the reign of Khāravēla, it did not outlive the existing local mannerisms. In the minor Brāhmī inscriptions in the caves of the two hills Udayagiri and Khandagiri, issued by the chief queen of Khāravēla, his son and grandson, some important officers, monks and merchants, we still notice the continuation of the archaic features with a preference for angularity of the letter forms except *kha*, *ga*, *ta*, *pa*, *ma*, etc. In the circular or broad loop of *kha*, the rounded or angular back of *ga*, the equalization of the verticals *pa*, *la* and *ha* and in the softening of the angle of the medial *i* we see transitional and developed characteristics. The minor Brāhmī inscriptions are later than the Hāthīgumpha inscriptions (later half of the 1st century BCE) and their lower limit can be fixed to the middle of the 1st century CE. on the basis of technical achievement and introduction of new writing tool and the archaic from optionally met here.

The Nanaghāt inscription of Naganika and the Hāthīgumpha inscription of Khāravēla are the two largest inscriptions after Aśōkan records in the western and eastern India respectively. The internal evidence in the latter also demonstrates the fact that Sātakarni was an older contemporary of Khāravēla. As the two records are contemporary scholars studied their palaeography in order to arrive at a tentative date. R. P. Chanda made a comparative study of both the epigraphs and on palaeographical grounds assigned them to the 1st century BCE. He maintained that Nanaghāt inscription is definitely anterior to Hāthīgumpha inscription and pointed out that the following are the most notable characteristics of the Hāthīgumpha alphabet.

The first letter of the opening word of Khāravēla inscription resembles the first letter of Aśāḍhasēna which the epigraphists have agreed to read as *Vaisidari*. It is certain that the first letter of *Vasidari* could not be read other than as *Vai*. If the first letter were meant to be read as ‘*ai*’ we would have found the letter ‘*e*’ with one ‘*e*’ medial attached to it instead of the letter ‘*va*’ with ‘*ai*’ medial sign.

Late Brāhmī script

The Bhadrak inscription and the Sītābinji boulder inscriptions are best examples to demonstrate this change from early to late Brāhmī in Odisha. The change in the face of certain letter forms, the application of head marks and the long flourished medial vowels in these inscriptions led us to group them under the later Brāhmī script in Odisha, datable palaeographically to 3rd century CE. It is

characterized by straight vertical lines with thick tops called serif and with equalized vertical lines.

In the later Brāhmī script in Oḍisha great changes occurred due to the introduction of a new writing tool of broad edged pen as a result of which the letters began with a thick top and had a gradually thin downward stroke. The verticals by their tapering thickness received a new shape which looks like the addition of a thick triangular head mark on the top. This influence can be seen in the Bhadrak stone inscription of Gana¹⁵. Some of the scholars identified Sātakarni mentioned in line 4 of this record with the Sātavāhana king of that name in the Nanaghāt inscription and placed Khāravēla to about the middle of the 2nd century BCE. The angular forms and straight base of letters like *ba*, *ma*, *pa*, *ha* and *ya* are usually found in Hāthigumpha inscription⁴. In a rock shelter called Rāvanācharya at Sītābinji there are number of votive inscription on the boulder and also a short – painted label containing one line of writing, which reads ‘ Mahārāja Śrī Disabhanja’¹⁶.

The Bhadrak inscription begins with traces of a short horizontal line which may be taken as a symbol for ‘*Siddham*’. The first half of line 1 besides the *Siddham* symbol reads *Mahārāja-Siri-Hanasa sam 8*, the inscription maharaja siri hanasya sam-8. The inscription is there dated in the 8th regnal year of a king called Hanasa.

That the name of the king mentioned in the Bhadrak inscription is most probably Hana and not Śrīgaṇa seems to be suggested by the fact that, unlike Śrīgaṇa (literally meaning god Gaṇēśa or an attendant of Śiva) is actually known to have been used as a penchant name in ancient India. Gaṇa is the name of the celebrated work entitled *Aśvayurvēda* while the *Matsya purānā* speaks of a *gōtra* named Gaṇa. In regard to the reading of the second half of the line 1, we have to admit that since this part follows the regnal year, it is tempting to take ‘*pa*’ (read as *pī*) as a contraction of *pakhshe* and *diva* (read as *dāva*) before 3 as meant for *divase* in that case.

Discussion:

The earliest Brāhmī script of Oḍisha belonging to the 3rd century BCE are found at Dhauli on the southern bank of river Daya near Bhubaneswar and Jaugada on the bank of the river Rishukulya in Ganjam district. The Aśōkan Brāhmī found at these two places presents a general similarly found all over India. Each letter is distinctly formed and no cursive writing in the way of continuous drawn line is noticeable. The free movement of hand resulting in the round forms and the letters do not have any serif on the top. In both of these rock edicts the letters are cut but the lines appear as being chiselled by the writer.

Due to the technical development of using a broad or edged pen the letters used in the minor rock inscriptions of 1st century BCE in the Udayagiri hill became more angularised. As a result of which the letters began with a thick top and a gradually thin downward stroke. The vertical by their tapering thickness received a new shape which looks like the addition of a thick triangular head mark on top. This influence is marked in Bhadrak stone inscription of Gana of about the 3rd century CE.

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Medieval period land measuring rod at Sīyamaṅgalam in Tamil Nadu

P. Balamurugan

Abstract:

The present paper examines measuring rods of medieval period found in 30 epigraphs from Sīyamaṅgalam in Vandavasi taluk, Tiruvannamalai district, Tamil Nadu. However, it is difficult to understand how the measuring rod was used to measure the land. To understand the function of this measuring rod, the land has to be measured again through the modern metric system. This paper attempts to find and study the land and water body mentioned in the inscription and measuring it according to the modern scale based on the ancient measuring rod *nilam-aḷavukōl* in Sīyamaṅgalam.

Keywords:

Cāṇ, JeyaṅkoṇḍaChōlamanḍalam, *kāṇi*, *kōl*, *kīl-kīl*, *kīl-kīl-kīl*, *kulī*, *mā*, *muntirikai*, *muntri*, *nāli ulakku*, *nilam-aḷavukōl*, Pālkuṇṇak-kōṭṭam, Simhavishnu Chathurvēdimaṅgalam, Sīyamaṅgalam, Tenṇārrurnāḍu, *ūrārs*, *ūrakattu-niṇṇarṇāli*, *vēli*.

Sīyamaṅgalam is located in Vandavasi taluk of Tiruvannamalai district of Tamil Nadu. The name «Sīyamaṅgalam» might have evolved from the ancient name of this village «Simhavishnu Chathurvēdimaṅgalam» named after Pallava king Simhavishnu. A 7th century CE. rock cut cave temple dedicated to Śiva is found in this village, built by Pallava king Mahēndravarmaṇ I. One of his inscriptions mentions this temple as ‘*Avanipujanapallavēśvara*’¹ although later inscriptions mention this temple as *Tūnāṇṭār* in Tamil and *Stambēśvarar* in Sanskrit. This temple was renovated and extended as a structural temple by the later rulers such as Pallava, Chōlas, Pāṇḍya, Vijayanagara, etc. There are several inscriptions engraved on the temple wall and rocks in both Tamil and Sanskrit languages in Tamil and Grantha characters.

Nearly 30 epigraphs are found in this temple, although only 14 of them are published in the South Indian inscription volume². The remaining are yet to be published. During the historical period, Sīyamaṅgalam was under the territorial division of Tenṇārrur-nāḍu of Pālkuṇṇak-kōṭṭam in Jeyaṅkoṇḍachōla-manḍalam.

Jainism also flourished in this place as can be seen from the Jain temple and their relics found near the Śiva temple. A 9th century rock cut Jain temple is found on the hillock. It seems to be a work of by Western Gaṅga king Rājamalla II³.

Most of the inscriptions of this temple record the donation for making several services to the God, temple activities and for its maintenance. Generally, these donations are in the form of land, gold, money, ghee, paddy, etc. Each of these gifted items are measured carefully with some measuring units to express their values. A specific measuring rod was used for land donations. However, it is difficult to understand how the measuring rod was used to measure the land. To understand the function of this measuring rod, the land has to be measured again through the modern metric system. This paper attempts to find and study the land and water body mentioned in the inscription and measuring it according to the modern scale⁴ based on the ancient measuring rod *nilam-aḷavukōl* in Sīyamaṅgalam.

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4 The field work conducted under the supervision of Prof. Y. Subbarayalu, a team checked the actual measure of ancient measuring rod which mentioned in the inscription of Chola king Rajaraja I.

An inscription issued in the 19th regnal year of the Chōla king Rājarāja I (1004 C.E) with the measuring rod is engraved on a rock located to the southern side of the temple. It records the grant of 1602 *kūli* of land after purchasing it from the *ūrārs* of Sīyamaṅgalam by Vellālaṅkaṭampan Venkāṭan of Nallūr-pudukkuḍi in Tenkarai Tiruviḷundūrnāḍu of Chōla Nāḍu. The purchased land was measured by the sixteen span rods. According to modern measure that scale length is 12 feet 10.5 inches (i.e., 3 meters 92 cm)¹. The purchased waste land was converted into a cultivable land and was donated to this temple to supply ghee for lightning two perpetual lamps by the volume measure of *nāli ulakku*, which is equivalent to *ūrakattu-ninṇarnāli*. Further, a separate canal was also dug for the supply of water to this land by the measure of one *kōl* breadth of 16 *cāṇ* (span) scales. The canal was measured by us in fieldwork according to the rod inscribed in the inscription. Measuring the land and canal according to this ancient scale would help us to understand the socio-material culture of this region.

Adjacent to this temple, a big lake *Pērēri* is found with three sluices. First sluice channel was known as *mēṭṭuvāykkāl*, the central one as *pēruvāykkāl* and the last one as *kadaimadai*. The inscription mentions these sluices as *Pērunthūmbu* and *nandhimulānthūmbu*². The last sluice is not in use as it is buried under the mud. One of the inscriptions of Sīyamaṅgalam mentions *nandhimulānthūmbu* as *nandhimulān-vāykkāl* and *Pērunthūmbu* as *peruvāykkāl*. The channel from *peruvāykkāl* the central sluice was called *Ambalathāṭivāykkāl*. One of its sub-cannals was termed as *Pallavāykkāl* in the inscription. It is still called with this name *Pallavāykkāl*, hence it is easy to find it. A new concrete canal is also constructed by the modern government for the irrigation purpose alongside of this *Pallavāykkāl*. Since this sub canal was not well managed in the recent years some shrubs and small plants got accumulated. So, we found a suitable place which is quite helpful to measure it. The inner surface of the canal was read 12 feet 9 inches and the outer is 14 feet. The measurement is quite identical to the modern scale measure mentioned in the inscription. In the field study we could not find the location of the gifted land mentioned in the inscription, because the names of the land changed in modern times. To irrigate the donated land, small canals are branched towards east and northeast from *Pallavāykkāl*. This canal might be Venkāṭandēva-vāykkāl which is mentioned in the inscription.

Various kinds of measuring rods with various values are mentioned in the inscriptions of Tamil Nadu. The length of the rod differed based on a human foot such as 12 span, 16 span, 9 feet, 12 feet, 16 feet, 18 feet, 21 feet, 24 feet etc. These scales are named after the king or a village, territory, deity, nature of the land, etc. According to the present available data, the use of span measure was as early as 8th- 9th centuries, but the feet measure can be found in the inscriptions from 1071 CE only (see table 1 and 2).

Table 1*									
Span Measures for Linear									
	Period	S p a n 7 1/2	Span 10	S p a n 12	S p a n 15	S p a n 16	S p a n 18	Span 24	Span 36
	800-985	1			1				
	986-1070		1	1		19	2	1	
	1071-1350			3		17		1	1
	1351-1600								
	Total	1	1	4	1	36	2	2	1
	District								

1 This measuring rod values 16 span according to the inscription. So, the rod was also measured with our hands to know whose measure is close to the scale length. The tallest of us, Ganesh's hand was the only one that measured exactly 16 span. The others hand measure varied according to their height.

2 SII, VII, no. 64

	Chingleput	1		3	1	20	2		1
	Ramnad					2		2	
	N.Arcot			1		6			
	Thanjavur		1			1			
	S.Arcot					8			

Table 2

Feet Measures for Linear

	Period	12 f	14 f	16 f	18 f	21 f	22 f	24 f	32 f
	800-985								
	986-1070								
	1071-1350	9	4	5	3		1	2	
	1351-1600	1	2	2	3	2	1	2	1
	Total	10	6	7	6	2	2	4	1
	District								
	N.Arcot	1		1	2				
	Chingleput	3		1					1
	Ramnad	1	1	3	1				
	S.Arcot	2	4						
	Coimbatore						1		
	Madurai				1				
	Trichy	1	1	1			1		
	Tirunelveli				1	2		1	
	Salem							1	
	Pudukkottai			2					
	Thanjavur	2		1	1				

More than 40 measurement rods are noticed in Tamil Nadu. It suggests that the ruler attempted to standardize the land measurement. The Chōla king Rājārāja I who ruled over the entire Tamil speaking area initiated to standardize measuring system in his kingdom. However, he didn't disturb the local measures as it continued for longer period. The local measurement was equated to the rulers for taxation and other purposes. Therefore, no conflict arose between them.

A particular portion/square area of the land was called as *vēli*, *mā*, *kuḷi*, *kāṇi* and *muntirikai*. *Muntiri* is the basic unit when it multiplied by half was *kīl-arai*. When *muntiri* multiplied by *muntri* was called as *kīl-kīl* and next value was *kīl-kīl-kīl*. Generally, a *vēli* consisted of 2000 or 2056 *kuḷi* and one *mā* is equivalent to 256 or 510 *kuḷi*, a *kuḷi* being a square of one rod¹.

The following table are giving the details of *kuḷi* with their equivalent values.

	Unit	Equivalent Unit	Rod/Scale	Date/ CE	Reference
	<i>kuḷi</i> 256	<i>mā</i> 1	Viḷantaikōl	1007	<i>SII</i> , VII, no:142
	<i>kuḷi</i> 1000	<i>Paṭṭi</i> 1	16 span	1012	<i>SII</i> , XXXVI, no: 272

1 Subbarayalu, Y., 2001, "Land Measurement in Medieval Tamil Nadu", *Studies in Cola History*, PanpattuVeliyittagam, Madras, p.32

	<i>kuḷi</i> 2000	<i>vēli</i> 1	16 span	1072	<i>SII</i> , XXXVIII, no: 131
	<i>kuḷi</i> 128	<i>mā</i> 1	16 feet	1100	<i>SII</i> , VI, no:439
	<i>kuḷi</i> 100	<i>mā</i> 1	12 feet	1100	<i>SII</i> , V, no: 702
	<i>kuḷi</i> 510	<i>mā</i> 1	...	1177	<i>SII</i> , XXXVIII, no: 428
	<i>kuḷi</i> 522	<i>mā</i> 1		1217	<i>SII</i> , XXXVIII, no: 425
	<i>kuḷi</i> 256	<i>mā</i> 1	9 feet	1217	<i>SII</i> , XXXIV, no: 370
	<i>kuḷi</i> 160	<i>mā</i> 1	...	1238	<i>SII</i> , XXXIV, no: 160
	<i>kuḷi</i> 512	<i>mā</i> 1	C h a t u r a k ṣ ṭ h (Square rod)	1267	<i>SII</i> , XII, no: 228
	<i>kuḷi</i> 256	<i>mā</i> 1		1276	<i>SII</i> , XXXIV, no: 237
	<i>kuḷi</i> 256	<i>mā</i> 1	16 feet	1286	<i>SII</i> , XXXIV, no: 410
	<i>kuḷi</i> 256	<i>mā</i> 1	24 feet	1504	<i>SII</i> , XXXVI, no: 168

*The data compiled by the author sourced from *SII* volumes.

The above-mentioned evidence of land surveys indicates the use of different types of measuring scales in different localities. Thus, the nature of available data has restricted our full understanding of the unit of measurement. However, the available data clearly suggests the prevailing measuring system and its regional and chronological variations. The conversion of the modern metric system from the ancient rod and measuring it using modern scale would help us in understanding the economic activities of our past. A detailed study is needed to understanding the ancient measuring system in Tamil region.

Cultural geography of Nevāsa or Nidhivās: New light on Nevāsa inscriptions

Sanjay Paikrao,

Abstract:

Nevāsa is located on the bank of river Pravāra, a tributary of Godāvarī. Poet Jñānēśvar had written Jñānēśvarī at this place in 1290 CE. In this paper special light is thrown on cultural geography of the place Nevāsa on the basis of inscriptions as well as literary sources.

Keywords :

Cultural geography, Nevāsa, Pravara.

Introduction

Nevāsa is an ancient archeological site located on the bank of river Pravāra, a tributary of Gōdāvarī about 55 kms from Ahmednagar district headquarters. (Ahemadnagar District Gazetteer 1985:729) In this paper the study of inscriptions from Nevāsa has been done systematically to know its historical and cultural geography. Poet Jñānēśvar had written Jñānēśvarī at this place in 1290 CE (Sankalia, H.D & Mate M.S 1959:1)

Perspective:

Geography has been studied both in physical as well as human perspective. (Finch & Trewarn 2) Historical and cultural geography is one of them. Historical geography is the correlation of human societies and their geographical setting whereas cultural geography is composed chiefly of those material features which man has added to the natural geography through his efforts to make his living secure and comfortable. (Muley Sumiti 1960: 1) Cultural geography of place Nevāsa can be recorded on the basis of inscriptions as well as literary sources.

Epigraphical evidence

The history of Nevāsa is a part of the history of Ahemednagar district (Sankalia H.D & Mate M.S 1959: 7) The basic inscriptions which throw light on Nevāsa are located in Nevargāon in Gangapur tahsil, Aurangabad district. The first record of Nevāsa is of RāmdeorāoYādava, of Śaka 1200 (1278 CE). The place is referred as Nidhivās Khanpaka (Ahemadnagar District Gazzetter 1985:350) According to Dr. Dixit both these refer to Nevasa Budruk. In this inscription no information about the town is given but place is referred to in connection with the Neurgaon boundaries (Dixit M.G1947:90-91)

This inscription reveals that on 17th October 1278 CE king RāmdeorāoYādav had donated lands to 87 Brahmins of different gotras on Kārttika suddha Ekadashi. (Deshpande Bramhanand 1991: 24-25). This shows that the king was a devotee of Viṭhala of Paṇḍharpūr. (Deshpande Bramhanand 1991: 25). To the learned Brahmins of Nevargāon are donated the village Nupur. The word kharpukar means a small area in the region. (Deshpande Bramhanand 1991: 25).

Literary Evidences:

Līlācharitra, Ratnamālastōtra and Sthānapothi of 13th Century CE have also described Nevāsa. The Ratnamālastotra gives an account of the pilgrimage of Śrī Chakradhara from Rajaka to Nevāsa and from there to Ghargāon. In this work the place is referred to as Nidhivāsa, and Nivāsa. (Sankalia H.D & Mate M.S 1959: 3). The Līlācharitra, a biographical account of the life of Śrī Chakradhara refers to Nevāsa as Nidhivās. It mentions Daigāon, Domegrāma, Ghogargāon and Ranjangāon as

places adjoining Nevāsa.(Nene H.N 1938:53) This is an interesting cultural record of Nevāsa. It also described Mahara temple and Sun temple in Nevāsa. (Deshpande Bramhanand 1991:25)

The Sthanapothi is much more eloquent and refers to the temples of Karnēśvra, Kusumēśvra, Gopāla, Puradiya and Sangamēśvra. Out of these, it is fairly clear from the passage that the Gopāla temple was situated inside the fort probably standing at the same place as of present. (Sankalia H.D & Mate M.S 1959:3) The sculptured stones, pillars and door frames utilized in the walls of the fort and lying in and around the fort might have once formed part of the Gopāla temple.(Sankalia H.D & Mate M.S 1959:3)

The Kusumēśvaraghāt referred to in the text cannot be easily distinguished from the two extant today. The orientation of the temples was as follows: Puraditya and Sangamēśvara facing east, Mhalsa and Gopāla facing west. This passage is important as a contemporary evidence for the existence of a fort, a ghāt and six temples in Nevāsa. These temples are in ruins today and it has not been possible to determine their exact location (Sankalia H.D & Mate M.S 1959:7).

Inferences:

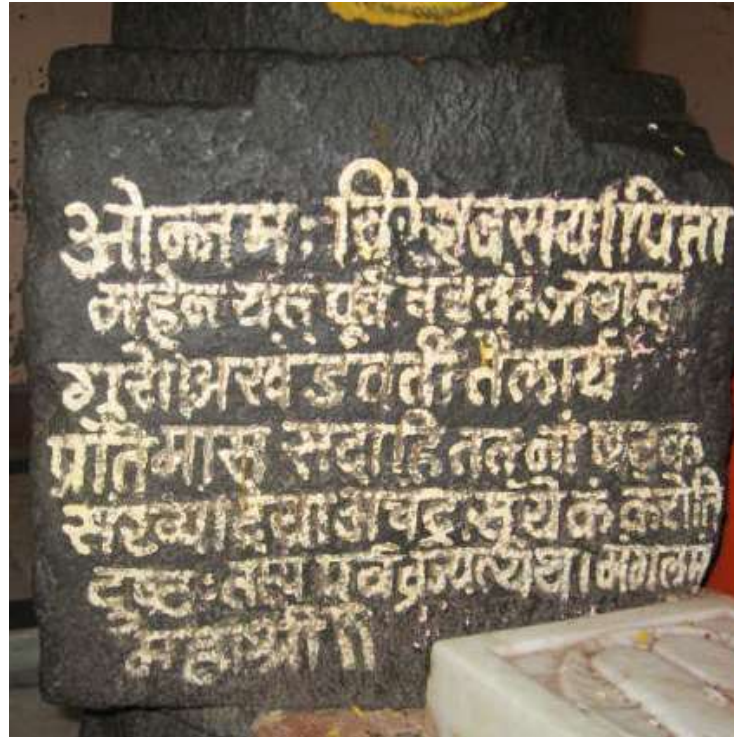
- Nevāsa was originally known as Nidhivās.
- The place is referred in Sthanpothi.
- The Nevargāon inscriptions actually refers to Nidhivās.
- Nevāsa was a temple city and place of rituals.

Conclusion:

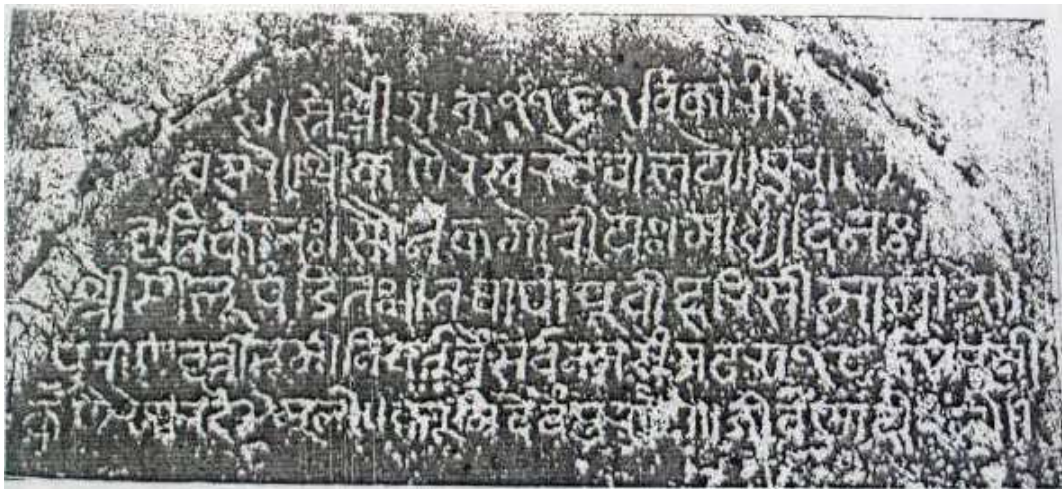
Thus, the present study shows that Nevāsa was known as Nidhivās in ancient period from Sātavāhanas to Yādava period. It had a cultural tradition from early historical period.

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1) Inscription of Jñāneśwar temple



2) Inscription of Kanereśvar temple

Epigraphical approaches for understanding *sārthas* and *Sārthavāhas* in early historic society and economy

Soumya Ghosh

Abstract:

The Indian subcontinent witnessed some remarkable changes in the socio-economic sphere around the mid first millennium BCE due to the introduction of a new material culture. There were changes in production relations, brisk transactions, proliferation of professional groups, varied beneficiaries in the society along with the emergence of state society. In the above mentioned backdrop a study of the professional groups involved in the process of exchange becomes imperative to understand the production–consumption relationship regulating the society and economy. We have selected a representative group i.e. the *Sārthavāhas* for a detailed study based on epigraphic sources in early historic period. We have limited our focus to north India and Deccan. *Sārthavāha* was the leader of *Sārtha* which was an itinerant group of merchants. *Sārtha* appeared as a bone of connection in intra and inter-regional commercial exchanges and thus facilitated the resource mobilization during the phase of second urbanization. Present paper will attempt to explore the facts and information about *Sārthavāhas* in epigraphic sources. Here we shall follow homogeneous random sampling method for data collection. Data collected from epigraphic records will be compared and corroborated with the data culled from literary sources while we will be analyzing them to situate the *Sārthavāhas* and *Sārthas* in early historic socio-economic context.

Key words:

Merchants, *Sārthavāha*, *sārtha*, early historic period, society, resource mobilization, travelling, donations, inscriptions

In the process of socio-economic evolution some remarkable as well as epoch making changes took place around the mid first millennium BCE in the Indian subcontinent. The introduction of new material culture gradually led to the changes in the production relations and surplus production played a very important role in providing impetus to trade. Besides this we notice proliferation of crafts and professional groups. In the process early historic cities emerged as important trade centers. One of the major markers of the early historic phase was interconnectivity between the cities and exchange centers and hence enhancement of trading activities. As far as the in-land network is concerned, the itinerant merchants acted as major link and acted as facilitators for long distance trade. They travelled across the boundaries of the countries/region along with their merchandises to important exchange centers of the subcontinent and even beyond¹. Thus itinerant merchants linked markets to their foreland located in cities and trade centres along the long distant commercial networks and played an important role in the process of second urbanization and economic mobility in the early historic period. In early India a mobile group of itinerant merchants who travelled from one place to the other, usually trade centers, along with their merchandises were called *sārtha*. *Sārthavāhas* were the leaders of the *sārtha*.

Caravan trade gained prominence during the early historic period and this is reflected in the profusion of references to *sārtha* and *sārthavāha* in historical sources of the time. We come across ample

references to *sārtha* and *sārthavāhas* in early historic literary sources especially in the corpus of Buddhist and Jain literatures. As far as Brahmanical literary sources are concerned, epics, normative literary texts like *Arthaśāstra*, *Smṛitiśāstras* also replete with references to *sārtha* and *sārthavāhas*. Besides the above mentioned groups of text we can also mention about some creative literatures viz., *Mṛcchakaṭika*, *Nalābhyūdaya* which refer to the same. It is quite interesting to mention that though literary sources replete with ample references to *sārthavāhas* we have found very few references to the same in epigraphic sources so far explored. This naturally raises the question about the relative silence.

As far the previous research on *sārthavāhas* is concerned we would like to mention about the fascinating works of Moti Chandra's Books viz., '*Sārthavāha*' (in Hindi) and *Trade and trade routes in Ancient India*. The former mainly based on literary sources with restricted focus and the later has a broad framework. V.K. Jain's work has a macro approach and addresses the trading communities and merchant corporations in a broad social context and also reflects upon the economic implications. Other secondary works related to this topic are the contributions of T. W. Rhys Davids, Atindranath Bose, G. L. Adhya, S. K. Maity, Ramesh Chandra Majumdar, Maganlal A. Buch, Ranabir Chakravarti and so on. The focus of these works is mainly on trade and economy. A survey of secondary sources reveals a lacuna in the field of micro level study on the basis of epigraphic sources to the chosen group (i.e. *sārthavāhas*). This desideratum has led us to select this topic for the present research.

This paper attempts to explore the references to *Sārthavāhas* in epigraphic sources in the early historic period. Here we have followed homogeneous random sampling method for data collection. Few inscriptions have been considered for critical analysis. Data collected from epigraphic records will be compared and corroborated with the data culled from literary sources wherever/if necessary while we will be analyzing the chosen epigraphic text to understand the roll and position of the *sārthavāhas* in society and economy and thus to situate the *sārthavāhas* and *sārthas* in early historic socio-economic context.

Before delving deep into the epigraphic explorations we would like to describe the role of the *sārthavāhas* in resource mobilization, position of the *sārthavāhas* within the *sārtha*, nature of the *sārthas* and position of the *sārthavāhas* in the broader society as reflected in literary sources.

Sārtha was a composite mobile community, which involved different groups and individuals moving together from one place to another. However, movement was purposive, organized and buoyant/acquisitive and traders were the main social constituent of the mobile community. Their roles were seminal in the preparation and organization of *sārtha*, in the making of the caravan and also the successful accomplishment of a journey. Traders (along with diverse groups and individuals) formed this mobile community i.e. *sārtha* mainly to combat the calamities and hazards both natural and created by human agency on the way or during the course of their journey. Besides, the *sārtha* indeed acted as a mobile corporate, the traders as a member of which could jointly control the supply as well as the demand of the goods in the market for the sake of earning profit. For a trader this networking was quite an imperative part of a long distance trade and travelling.

Sārthavāha was himself a trader. In the narrative of *Apaṇṇaka Jātaka*, the *Bodhisattva*, who is portrayed as a *sārthavāha*, introduced himself along with his fellow merchants saying "we are traders" (*mayamvaṇijā-nāma*) (Fausboll 1962: 102). Again, in *Nalopākhyana* of *Mahābhārata* we see that, the *sārthavāha* introduced him in the following words, "I am a merchant and the

leader of this caravan” (Roy 1983: 140)². In *Kaṇha Jātaka* the term *satthavāha* and *vaṇija* are used interchangeably (Fausboll 1962: 193-6)³. So, It is mainly the leadership of caravan which distinguished him from the fellow itinerant traders and this itinerant character distinguished him from other traders in general [like, *pratyantavanika*⁴, *janapada-vanika*, *nagara-vanika*⁵. He was even different from the salesman for whom the term *kacchapuṭavanija* is used in *Jātaka*⁶. It appears in the *Jātaka* stories that, *sārthavāhas* were generally the owner of a number of bullock carts⁷. It is he who played the vital role in preparation for the onset of journey for trade, fixing the suitable time of journey, organization of *sārtha* and making other arrangements. He was well acquainted with the trade routes and their difficulties, conveniences and inconveniences (the whereabouts of the route) as well as the present situation of the market. As the leader or the supervisor of the caravan the *sārthavāha* had to arrange for the necessary provision or resources required in the course of the journey for the caravan members. He was also responsible to make arrangement for safety of his fellow men and goods⁸. Interestingly, according to the *Jātaka* stories, the success and failure of the journey and the business of the *sārtha* also depended on his experience, presence of mind and wisdom⁹. So, in all respect *sārthavāha* was the leader of *sārtha*. In a certain story being asked about the way of getting rid of danger, some of the *sārthikas* replied, “we didn’t know, it was our leader who knew” (the way out of the danger). Here leadership of the *sārthavāha* is approved by the words of his followers (*Jātaka*, *Nipāṭha* 1, No. 54). Indeed he not only acted as leader but also as the spokesperson of the caravan. He dealt with the officials, forest guards, revenue officers, or price assessors on behalf of the *sārtha*.

Epigraphic explorations and analysis:

It is quite interesting to mention that though literary sources replete with ample references to *sārthavāhas*, we have found very few references to the same in epigraphic sources so far explored. This naturally raises the question about the relative silence.

Here we would like to mention the list of inscriptions of the early historic period which referred to *sārthavāhas*. These are found from different regions of north India and Deccan. These inscriptions referring to this social cum professional group are mainly of donative type. Period of their issuance ranged from 2nd century BCE to 3rd century CE.

1. Kosam stone inscription.
2. Mathura Jaina pedestal inscription.
3. A fragmentary inscription on the pedestal of an image of a seated Bodhisattva from Mathura.
4. A pedestal inscription of the time of Huviśka, from Govindpur, Mathura.
5. A stone slab inscription from Mathura.
6. Kuḍā cave inscriptions.
7. Bandhogarh cave inscription.

So far of explored we have found two sets of inscription of the classical period (3rd to 6th century CE) which referred to *sārthavāhas*.

1. Inscriptions on some of the Basarh seals and sealings.

2. Four Dāmodarpūr copper plate inscriptions (out of five) of the Gupta era.

We would like to examine the evidence of the votive inscriptions found from the Kūḍa caves situated in the Western Ghats of Maharashtra. Three votive / donative inscriptions recorded in the Kuḍā Buddhist cave mention the donation of cave shelters and refer to *sārthavāhas*. All the three inscriptions are written in Prākṛit. The inscription which records the donation of *Nāga* (Luders 1912: 113; Jacobi 1878: 257; Burgess 1881: 19; Burgess 1883: 88) is an exclusive one because it refers to a *gahapati-sārthavāha*. It mentions about the donation of a cave-shelter to the *saṃgha* on behalf of a *svāmiputa sathavāha-grhapati Nāga*¹⁰. This is worth mentioning here that, this is the sole inscription so far we have explored which mentions about the donation by any *sārthavāha*. All other inscriptions which referred to *sārthavāha* mention about donation by the person who had familial relations with *sārthavāha*. There are two other inscriptions in Kūḍa cave in which donation by the members of *sārthavāha*'s family were recorded¹¹. They had not been mentioned as *gahapati*. This in turn reflects that, the term *gahapati* which had been mentioned as an epithet in the inscription of *svāmiputa Nāga*, was not merely an honorific prefix or suffix but had some distinct connotation. Uma Chakravarti has already explored the term in various literary sources and showed the different aspects of it. She has also suggested that the *gahapati* in a narrower sense of the term stands for someone who primarily thrives on the land (Chakravarti 1996: 77). Generally possession over land and agriculture was the primary resource of the *gahapatis*¹². It is well established that his wealth and status denoted his position in the society. This is also worth mentioning here that, there could be only one *gahapati* in each family and it was he who wielded actual authority in it. According to Rhys Davids, *gahapati* was distinct from the subordinate members of the family who did not have control and management of the common property (Rhys Davids 1911: 257-8). The term *gahapati-sārthavāha* which is found mentioned in the Kūḍa cave inscription might represent a person who combined in himself the functions of agriculture and accumulated capitals, possibly through the profits from it, which he then invested in business.

It is worth mentioning here that, an inscription of 1st century BCE, found from Masharfa, near Kosam, Allahabad district, Uttar Pradesh, records the donation of a *vedikā* to the temple of Maṇibhadra. Here the donor and all of his ancestors of three generations are referred to as *gahapatis* (Sahani 1983: 159; Sircar 1993: 97-8). Though the donor and all of his ancestors are referred to as *gahapati*, interestingly Maṇibhadra is mentioned as *sārthavāha*¹³ in the record (“*namo-bhagavato-sathavāhasa-mānibhadasa* (I)...). According to D. C. Sircar the Maṇibhadra of the Kosam stone inscription is identical with *Yakṣa* Maṇibhadra (Sircar 1993: 97-8). This is worth mentioning here that, in *Mahābhārata* Maṇibhadra is mentioned as a *Yakṣa* venerable by the *sārthavāhas*. In *Nala-Damayanti* episode of *Vaṇaparva*, a caravan leader, who was himself a trader said, “...may Maṇibhadra, the king of the *Yakṣas*, be prosperous on us this day” (Roy 1983: 139-42). If the Maṇibhadra of the Kosam stone inscription is identical with *Yakṣa* Maṇibhadra, then the association of *sārthavāhas* with Maṇibhadra is common in both the sources. So, we can assume that, Maṇibhadra was well reputed among the *sārthavāhas*. They might have the faith that Maṇibhadra *would* guide the *sārtha* safely and help them to be prosperous and thus the title *sārthavāha* became associated with the deity/*Yakṣa* itself.

As mentioned earlier there are two other donative inscriptions at Kūḍa caves, which also refer to *sathavāhas*. One records the donation of a cave by *Sivadattā* who is the wife of the *sathavāha Vehamita* and the mother of *Pusaṇaka*¹⁴ (Luders 1912: 113; Burgess 1881: 20; Burgess 1883: 88).

The other inscription refers to the donation of a cave by *asālamita* who is the son of *saṭhavāha Acaladāsa*¹⁵ (Luders 1912: 113; Burgess 1881: 21; Burgess 1883: 88). Interestingly all the three above mentioned inscriptions from Kūda record the donation of cave shelters. It is reflected in the literary sources that *sārthavāhas* used to come from merchants family viz., *Vanik-kūla* (Fausboll 1962: 98; Cowell 1995: 4), *Śreṣṭhi-kūla* (Fausboll 1962: 270; Cowell 1995: 135) and *Sārthavāha-kūla* (Fausboll 1962: 98; Cowell 1995: 4). *Sārthavāhas* from Brāhmaṇa families are also evident (Bandyopadhyay 2009: 11). It is the epigraphic evidence which leads us to argue that even people of *gahapati* background also invested their wealth in itinerant trade and set out with merchandise as *sārthavāha*.

We would like to mention about another inscription in cave No. 2 in *Ganesh Pahār* at Bandhogarh. This record significantly refers to the donation of an *sārthika lāta* (Chakrabarti 1987: 178-9). N.P. Chakrabarti who edited the text opined that the donation might have been taken place in 164 CE. Interestingly the father and grandfather of the two donators were traders (*negama*) vis' *Rakhitika* and *Chela*. Though N. P. Chakravarti was inclined to translate the last line of the inscription “*iyamsā[rthi]ka-lāta*¹⁶” as “this is the merchant’s (*sārthika*) cave”, the term *sā[rthi]ka-lāta* might also mean that the cave was donated by *sārthika*. It is worth mentioning here that, inscription No. II (Chakrabarti 1987: 178) refers in the last line “*iyam chhatta [lāta]*” and inscription No. IV (Chakrabarti 1987: 9) refers “*ima iyam chha[tu]*”. N. P. Chakravarti translated neither *chhatta* nor *chhatu*. These terms might be dialectic variation of the term *sārtha*. So, the donative inscriptions of the Bandhogarh caves clearly indicate the association of *sārtha* with the cave shelters. Professor Ranabir Chakravarti refers to the probability of the cave being used by the itinerant merchants (Chakravarti 2002: 78-88). Traders might have used the cave shelter as rest houses during their journey through this region. The cave might have been caused to be constructed by or donated exclusively by the *sārthikas* i.e. the members of the *sārtha*.

It is worth mentioning here about the inscription found from Kaṁkālī *Ṭilā* at Mathura in 1888-90. The inscription engraved on the pedestal of a seated *Jina* image in Brāhmī script of 1st century CE records donation by a lady namely Dharmasomā who is mentioned as *sarttavāhini* at the request of the preacher *Aryyamātr̥dina*. Buhler translated the term as the wife of *sārthavāha*¹⁷ (Buhler 1983: 395). The seated *Jina* being the object of donation along with the veneration to the *Arhats* indicates the Jain undertone distinctly. It is mentioned that the donation was made at the request of the preacher. This reflects the closeness/relations between the family of the caravan leader and the Jain monastic community of Mathura. This in turn shows the economic potentials of the caravan leader.

In the inscriptions on some of the Basarh seals and sealings (Thaplyal 1972: 226-7) we have references to many professional groups along with *sārthavāhas*. Sealings bearing the legend *Śreṣṭhi-sārthavāha-kulika-nigama* and ‘money-chest’ device have been found in abundance at Basarh. As many as 274 were found in excavations conducted by Bloch, a few were brought to light in course of Spooner’s excavations conducted at that site, while one was unearthed quite late. The legend which occurs in the latter one, however, reads as *sārthavāha instead of sārthavāha*. The seal inscriptions are combined with others on lump of clay giving names of private individuals. A sizable number of these individuals are distinguished as *Kulikas*, *Prathama-kulikas*, *Sārthavāhas*, or *Śreṣṭhi*. This is worth mentioning here that, the name of only one *sārthavāha* Doḍḍa occurs. In one case, the legend, *Śreṣṭhi-Sārthavāha-Kulika-nigama* and the stamp of the office of the *yuvārājapādiya-kumārāmātya*

occur on the stamp lump, We also find sealings mentioning Śreṣṭhi-sārthavāha-prathama-kulika-nigama A unique sealing unearthed at Basarh shows a *stūpa*-like device and the legend Śreṣṭhi-Sārthavāha-Prathama-kulika-nigamaḥ in Gupta characters.

In the four Damodarpur inscriptions¹⁸ (out of five), *Viṣayapati* of the *Koṭivarṣaviṣaya* appear to have been aided in their administrative work (*saṁvyavahāra*) by a board of advisers which is found to have been constituting the four members, representing the various important interests of those days, viz. 1. The *nagasaśreṣṭhin*, 2. The *sārthvāha*, 3. The *prathamakulika* and 4. The *prathamakāyastha*. It is in Gupta period, that the association of the sārthavāhas with the state administration in district level is found evident in the inscriptions. So, during the course of time the social status of the *sārthavahas* gradually increased. Sārthavāhas might have made collaborations among themselves and also with other professional groups like *kulikas* and *śreṣṭhis* and formed the *nigamas*. During the Gupta period we come across direct references to the *nigamas* with which the *sārthavāhas* were associated but prior to that in *Jātakas* we have references of the term sārthavāha-jetthako. Yet there is no clear mention of guilds of *sārthavāhas*.

Endnotes:

1. There are many references in *Jātakas* where *sārthavāhas* are depicted as traders travelling from one place to another with their carts loaded with goods. See *Jātaka, Nipāṭha* 1, No.1. (Fausboll 1962: 98; Cowell1995: 4), No.2 (Fausboll 1962: 106; Cowell1995: 10), No. 29 (Fausboll 1962: 194; Cowell1995: 74), No. 54 (Fausboll 1962:270-1; Cowell1995: 135-6), No. 85 (Fausboll 1962:368; Cowell1995: 212).
2. Pratap Chandra Roy, *The Mahābhārata of Krishna-Dwaipayana Vyasa*, Vol.II, Pt.I, Calcutta, Oriental Publishing Co., 1983, pp. 140.
3. V.Fausboll, ed. *The Jātaka*, Vol.I, pp.193-96.
4. *Jātaka, Nipāṭha* 2, No. 151(Cowell 1995: 1-4); *Jātaka, Nipāṭha* 16, No. 514 (Cowell 1995: 1-4)
5. *Jātaka, Nipāṭha* 2, No. 218 (Cowell 1995: 127-9)
6. *Jātaka, Nipāṭha* 1, No. 3 (Fausboll, 1962: 111)
7. *Jātaka, Nipāṭha* 1, No.1 (Fausboll 1962: 98; Cowell1995: 4); *Jātaka, Nipāṭha* 1, No.2 (Fausboll 1962: 106; Cowell1995:10); *Jātaka, Nipāṭha* 1, No. 29 (Fausboll 1962: 194; Cowell1995:74); *Jātaka, Nipāṭha* 1, No. 54 (Fausboll 1962: 270-1; Cowell1995: 135-6). In *Jātaka, Nipāṭha* 1, No. 29 the caravan leader is mentioned as *gosuttavittthako* i.e. one who can judge the cattle. He ran his eye over the herd to see whether among them there was a thorough-bred bull who could pull the waggons across the inhospitable terrain. This indicates his expertise on maintain cattle (Fausboll 1962: 194; Cowell1995:74).
8. (*Jātaka, Nipāṭha* 1, No.1) (Fausboll 1962: 95-106; Cowell1995: 1-9).
9. Story of *Apaṇṇaka Jātaka* clearly reflects the fact that it was only due to lapses on the part of the foolish *sārthavāha* that the whole band (*sārtha*) had been destructed. On the other hand due to the wisdom of the *sārthavāha Bodhisatva*, his followers (*sārtha*) could ultimately gain grand success. See *Apaṇṇaka Jātaka, Jātaka, Nipāṭha* 1, No.1. (Fausboll 1962: 95-106; Cowell1995: 1-9).
- 10 Text: koṭa... svāmiputasa gṛhapatiṇo sathavāhasa nāgasa leṇaṁ deyadharinma; Translation: “The meritorious gift of a leṇa (cave) by Nāga, the trader and the householder who... son of svāmi...” (Burgess 1883: 88)

11. Donative record of *Sivadattā* (Luders 1912: 20; Burgess 1881: 20; Burgess 1883: 88) and donative record of *asālamita* (Luders 1912: 20; Burgess 1881: 21; Burgess 1883: 88)
12. The very sense of the term is well pronounced in a *Jātaka* story (*Jātaka*, *Nipāṭha* 15, No. 505) (Cowell 1995: 275-80)
13. Text of the inscription is cited here (Sahani 1983: 159).

Line 1. *Namo bhagava[to]*

Line 2. ***Sathavāhasa***

Line 3. *Manibhadasa*

Line 4. *Gahapatikasa ejāvati-putasa*

Line 5. *Vārisa putasa*

Line 6. *gahapatiko*

Line 7. *Seliyā-puto*

Line 8. *Kusapalo(ka)-nāmā (I)*

Line 9. *Tasa putena*

Line 10. *gahapatikena*

Line 11. *Gotiputena*

Line 12. *aṅgikāyaṁ kārītā*

Line 13. *vedikā (I) piyataṁ*

Line 14. *[bhaganā] (I)*

14. Text : *sathavāhasa vehamitasa vitiyikasa sivadatāya pusanaka-mātuya deyadhamma leṇaṁ*

Translation: The meritorious gift of a cave by *Sivadattā*, the mother of *Pūsanaka* and the second (daughter or wife) of *Vehamita*, the trader.

15. Text : *saṭhavāhasa acaladāsasa asālamitasa [le]ṇaṁ deyadhamma sahatasa ... pāyo deya.*

Translation: From the trader *Achaladāsa*'s son *Asālamita*, the meritorious gift of a cave and a path.

16. Text:

Line 1. *siddham [I] Ma[hārājā]sa Kocchiputasa P[o]ṭhasirisa savachhare chhāsīte 80 6 Hemaṁta-pakkhe pathama[me] 1 divase pachame 5 etāyaṁ puruvāyaṁ*

Line 2. *kosambeyasa negamasa chakkasa natikasa phaguhathika-putasa Rakhitikā[e] negamasa chhamikasa natikasa negemasa*

Line 3. *datikasa putasa ch[e]lāe etāna[m] dona[m] janānaṁ sahiya[m] putaka(ke)hi ārāmo lātāni cha chagavāra cha[I] dhamo va[dhatu] [I]*

Line 4. *iyamsā[rthi]ka-lāta I*

17. Text: L.1 *siddha sava 20 2 gri 1 di ---- sya puruvāyaṁ vācakasya aryamātṛdinasya ṇi*

L.2 *sarttavāhiniye dharmmasomāye dānaṁ -- namo arhaṁtān*

18. Damodarpur Inscription of the 124 and 129 Gupta era (i.e. in the reign of Kumāragupta), of the time of Budhagupta, and of the 224 gupta era i.e. in the period of Bhānugupta. (Basak 1982: 128, 130, 131, 133, 142)

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Koṅgu Chōla Inscription from Pālappanpaṭṭi and Paruttiyūr in Dindigul district, Tamilnadu

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Abstract:

The present paper examines a cluster of five Tamil inscriptions of Koṅgu Chōla dynasty found from Pālappanpaṭṭi in Oddanchattiram Taluk of Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu and discusses several aspects like identification of a new village, measurement terms, personal names, official names and orthography. Two inscriptions among them belong to the 8th and 17th regnal year of the king Rācakēcari Kulōttuṅga (1149 CE -1168 CE). Other three inscriptions belong to the 17th, 25th and 29th regnal year of the king Vīrarājēndra (1206 CE - 1252 CE).

Keywords:

Accu, Dindigul, *Irāsakēsariyāl-nīrai*, *kalane-thunippathakku*, Koṅgu Chōla, *koṅgunilaikoṇḍa-kāsu*, Muthali, Nāṭṭa[*var*]ccēvagaṇ, Oddanchattiram, *palancilakai-accu*, Pālappanpaṭṭi, Paruttiyūr, Rācakēcari Kulōttuṅga, Vīrarājēndra

Introduction

A cluster of five Tamil inscriptions of this dynasty is found from Pālappanpaṭṭi in Oddanchattiram Taluk of Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu.¹

Two inscriptions among them belong to the 8th and 17th regnal year of the king Rācakēcari Kulōttuṅga 1149 CE -1168 CE (No. 01 and 02) respectively. The earlier, registers the donation of 1 *accu* for burning a twilight lamp (*santhiyāthīpam*) to the god Tirunakkīśvaramuḍaiyār in Naḍuvīrparuttiyūr of Poṅgalūr-kā-nāḍu by Māṇikkadēvaṇ of Nimaṇi in the same *nāḍu*. The later records the donation of rice weighed 37 *kalaṇ* by the measure *irāsakēsari* for food offerings to the god Āḷuḍaiyar-Tirunakkīśvaramuḍaiyār in Naḍuvīrparuttiyūr of Poṅgalūr-kā-nāḍu by the *nāṭṭār* of the village. It is interesting to note that the measure is named after the title of the king Rājakēsari.

Other three inscriptions in the cluster belong to the 17th, 25th and 29th regnal year of the king Vīrarājēndra 1206CE - 1252 CE (No. 03, 04 and 05) respectively. The earlier, records the gift of land after purchase for 12 *accu* to the god Āḷuḍaiyār-Tirunakkīśvaramuḍaiyār in Naḍuvīrparuttiyūr of Poṅgalūr-kā-nāḍu by Vīrarājēndra-Aṇuttirappallavaraiyaṇ *alias* Vāḷvallaṇ Pāṇḍiyaṇ, and Vāḷvīchchūraṇ *alias* Vīrarājēndra iruṅgōḷaṇ, an official (*nāṭṭaravach-chēvakaṇ*) of Tiranūr in the same *nāḍu*. The second one records the donation of a *palāncilākai-accu* by Poṇṇambalachilachetṭi *alias* Munṇupuyantēvaṇ from Naḍuvīr-Paruttiyūr of Poṅkalūr-kā-nāḍu, for burning a twilight lamp (*santhiyāthīpam*) to the god Tirunakkīśvaramuḍaiyanāyanār in the village. The

third inscription records the gift of money for burning a twilight lamp *santhiyāthīpam* to the god Tirunakkīśvaramuḍaiyār by Āḷavanthāṇ of (Naḍuvīr-)Paruttiyūr. An another Tamil inscription (No. 06) of the same king and regnal year 29 is also found in the nearby village, Paruttiyūr, in the same district, along with one more inscription dated to the 31st regnal year of the king (No. 07). The earlier, records the donation of land at the rate of 10 *paḷaṅkācu*. It was donated to the goddess Nāchchiyār-Piḍāriyār at Paruttiyūr by Vīrarājēdra-cheliya-Gaṅgadēvaṇ. The later mentions the donation of some *paḷaṅkācu* on the occasion of the marriage festival to the goddess Nācchiyār-piḍāriyār at Iḷaiyakuḍi by an individual Araiyaṇ of Naḍuvipparuttiyūr in Poṅgalūr-nāḍu.

Important facts extracted from these inscriptions

New Village

These inscriptions take back the antiquity of the village Paruttiyūr to the 12th century CE. It is also important as it strengthens the Poṅgalūr-kā-nāḍu by including two more new villages viz., Paruttiyūr and Tiraṇūr.

Measurement terms

While mentioning the donation, the inscriptions denote the rate of twilight lamp at the cost of 1 *accu* or 1 *palancilakai-accu*. Other inscriptions mention the measurement of paddy as measured by 37 *kalane-thunippathakku*. One more inscription refers the rate of paddy measuring *kalane pathakku nel* is at the cost of 12 *accu*.

The names of the measures noticed in these inscriptions are *Irāsakēsariyāl-nīrai*, which may be named after Koṅgu Chōḷa king Rājakēsari-Kulōttuṅga and *koṅgunilaikoṇḍa-kāsu* which might be the term used to denominate the local currency.

Personal names

Māṇikkadēvaṇ a person hails from the Nimaṇi a nearby village in Poṅgalūr-kā-nāḍu. Persons named after the king Vīrarājēdra are Vīrarājēdra-anuttirappallavaraiyaṇ *alias* Vāḷvallaṇ Pāṇḍiyaṇ. He is mentioned as one of the officials (*muthali*) of Tiraṇūr in Poṅgalūr-kā-nāḍu. And another interesting thing here to note is he is referred as Pallavaraiyaṇ and Pāṇḍiyaṇ which seems to be unique and it needs further study. Vīrarājēdra-Iruṅkōḷaṇ another official (*Nāṭṭaravacēvagaṇ*) of the above village is mentioned as a best swordsmen. Vīrarājēdrac-celiyagaṅga-dēvaṇ could be an official of Paruttiyūr Munṇpuyandēvaṇ *alias* Ponnambalac-cilacēṭṭi, a merchant from Paruttiyūr.

Official names

Muthali, a chief of village, and Nāṭṭa[var]ccēvagaṇ, a servant or subordinate to the *nāṭṭars*, are the two titles of the officials in Tiraṇūr of Poṅgalūr-kā-nāḍu, noticed in one of the inscriptions.

Orthography

Vellālan is written in the place of Vellālan. And the word Vellālan māḍai could be the Vellālan mālai where mālai refers to the *varisai* which could be understood that Munpuyandēvan *alias* Ponnambalac-cilacēṭṭi is one among the Vellāla. The other inscription mentions Nāṭṭaravac-cēvagan which could be the Nāṭṭavar-cēvagan i.e. the official or servant to the *nāṭṭar* the assembly or the *nāṭṭavar* the general public.

Summery

The newly found inscriptions take back the antiquity of the place Paruttiyūr to 1157 CE. It also prove that the newly found villages were the administrative divisions. Further survey and study in this area may through light on the proper understanding of the history of the region. The exact meaning and the extension of the use of the *Koṅgunilaikoṇḍa-kācu* is yet to be clear. Further study and survey may give better understanding of the term.

TEXT I

1. Svastiśrī kulōttuṅkacōla tēvaṅku yā
2. ṇṭu eṭṭāvatu poṅkalūrkā nāṭṭu nimaṇi
3. Yil vellālan (ceyvayaril) māṇikka tēvar po
4. Civāciyēn paruttiyūr tirunakkīśvaramuṭaiyārku oru ca
5. Ntiyā tīpattukku acconṇu moṭukkinēn
6. ipponṇarak koṇṭēn ikkāṇi uṭai
7. civapirāmaṇar maṇiyan avaināci ulḷiṭṭoṅku paṇ
8. koṭu kōyil pukuvārerippārāka panmāhēśvara
9. irakshai

TEXT II

1. Svastiśrī kōvirācakēcari paṇmarāṇa tribhuvaṇac cakkaravat
2. tikaḷ śrī kulōttuṅkacōla tēvaṅku yāṇṭu patinēlāvatu po
3. ṇkalūrkā nāṭṭu naṭuvirparuttiyūr (śrī) āḷuṭaiyar tirunakkīśvaramuṭaiyā
4. ṛku nāṭṭōṛōm nāṭṭuk kāṇa
5.
6. ṛku canti onṛukku arici nānāliyum
7. . . . irācakēcariyāl niṛai patinenkalanē irutūṇikuṇṇiyum
8. patinenkalanē irutūṇikuṇṇiyum āka muppattēlukalanē tūṇi
9. Patakku nellu ippaṭi iraiyi
10. Lē kalveṭṭi kuṭuttōm
11. Cantirātittavarc celvatāka panmāhēśvara rakshai (ithai)kkuraiccaruṇṭā
12. Kilē

TEXT III

1. Svastiśrī vīrarācēntira tēvaṛku yāṇṭu patinancā
2. vataṛketirāvataṛk-etirāvatu poṅkalūrḱā nāṭ
3. ṭu tiranūril mutalikaḷil vālvallaṇ pāṇṭiyanā
4. ṇa vīrarācēntira aṇuttirap pallavaraiyaṇu
5. ṇāṭṭāravac cēvakaṇ vālvīccūranāṇa vīrarācē
6. Ntira iruṅkōḷaṇu ivviruvōm naṭuvip
7. pattiyūril āḷuṭaiyār tirunakkīśvaramuṭaiyā
8. ṛku nāṅkaḷ iṭṭa nīr nilam iratṭāip patuva
9. Yil teṛkalanup piḷḷaiyār kaṇikku mē
10. ṛkum muṭaiyapiḷḷai cēykku kiḷakkum tūm
11. Pil cevantaṇ teṛkum teṛkil kuṛaikku vaṭakkum innā
12. ṇkellaikkulpaṭṭa nilag kalanē patakkum nel vi
13. Taikkum panniraṇṭu accuk koṇṭu aṭṭi
14. kkuṭuttōm ivvōm antirātittavarai celva
15. tāka panmāhēśvara rakshai

TEXT IV

1. Svastiśrī vīrarācēntira tēvaṛku yāṇṭu irupa
2. Ttacāvatu poṅkalūr kāl nāṭṭu naṭuvip parut
3. tiyūril vellāḷaṇ māṭaikaḷil muṇ puyantēva
4. nāṇa ponnampalac cilaccetṭiyēn nāyanār tirunakkī
5. (śvarmu)ṭaiyārḱu cantiyā(tīpam)viḷakkum paḷancilākai
6. acconṛu kuṭuttēn itiru nakkīśvaramuṭaiya sivappirāma
7. ṇar kāciya kōccarattu avināciyum
8. kuṭi (a)vināciyum ke . . . nāci nāḷpaṭi . . .
9. koṇṭu cantiyātīpam (i tarmam viḷakkuvār) dōcatti
10. lē pukuvārāka erippārāka panmāhē
11. śvara rakshai

TEXT V

1. Svastiśrī vīrarācēntira tēvaṛku tiruve
2. ḷutti(ṭṭuc cellāni)ṇra tirunalliyāṇṭu iru
3. Pat(toṇpatāvatu nāṭuvipparut)tiyūr . . . āḷavantā
4. Nā (ti)runakkīśvaramuṭaiyārḱuc cantiyātīpa
5. M (o)ṭukkīṇa accu paḷncilākai

TEXT VI

1. Svastiśrī vīrarācēntira tēvaṛku tiruveḷuttiṭṭuc
2. Cellā niṇṇa tirunalliyāṇṭu 29 tāvatil vī
3. Rarācēntirac ceḷiyakaṇka tēvaṇēṇ paruttiyūr na
4. Cciyār piṭāriyārku irattaiṇṇatuvāyil ni
5. Lattil terkil nilattil ituk kellaoyāvatu
6. Cōḷancēykkut terkum purroṭu terku vaṭak
7. Kum peru terkil kuṛaikkku vaṭa
8. Kku kuṛaikkku kiḷakkum iṇṇāṇkel
9. laikuṭpaṭṭa nelvitai nilattukkum nācciyā
10. r paṇṭārattil . . . paḷṇkācu koṇṭu
11. koṇkuniḷaikoṇṭa (kācu pa)ttukkum ippaḷa
12. ṇkācu pattum vāṇkappaṭṭu innelvitai
13. (nilam) nācciyār paṇṭāramāka iṭṭukkuṭuttēn
14. anupavittukkumpaṭi yanupavik
15. Ka iṭṭukkuṭuttēn nācciyār piṭāriyārku ceḷiya kaṇ
16. Ka dēvaṇēn ivai ceḷiyakaṇkatēva-neluttu pa
17. Nmāyēcura yakshai

TEXT VII

1. Svastiśrī vīrarācēntira dēvaṛku
2. yāṇṭu irupattonpatāvataṛ-ketirā
3. vatuk-ketirāvatu poṇkalūrkā nāṭṭil naṭu
4. vip paruttiyūr ve . . . kāṭaḷa . . .
5. kan aṛaiyanāṇa ta ilai
6. yakuṭḷ nācciyār piṭāriyārku tirukkal
7. liyāṇattin-anṇu . . . paḷṇkācu kuṭuttu
8. kalveṭṭuvittōm

Endnotes

1. These inscriptions are edited here for the first time with the kind permission of the Director Epigraphy, Archaeological Survey of India, Mysore, It was copied by me during my epigraphical survey and are being listed in ARIEp 2020-21.

Recent discoveries of Velanāṭi Chōḷa inscriptions and their significance

Yesubabu M

Abstract:

The present paper is mainly based on the two stone inscriptions of Velanāṭi Chōḷa copied from Bhāvanārāyaṇa svāmi temples at two different places i.e., Bāpaṭḷa in Guntur district and Nāguluppalapāḍu (temple at Chinaganjam) in Prakasam district, Andhra Pradesh. As these inscriptions are interesting and very important from historical point of view; It is edited herewith the kind permission of Director of Epigraphy, ASI.

In the study of these inscriptions, an attempt is made to discuss some important contemporary social customs. Before discussing the above said aspects, a brief introductory note on Velanāṭi Chōḷa is dealt herewith.

Keywords:

Bāpaṭḷa, Bhāvanārāyaṇa temple, Nāguluppalapāḍu, Satī, Tamil, Telugu-Kannaḍa, Tsandavolu, Velanati Cholas, Velanāṭi Pridvīśvara, Yetamanāyaka.

Introduction

In the annals of Andhra history, the post-Eastern Chāḷukyan period between 1070 to 1216 CE has historical significance¹. During the close of the period, Veṅgi became virtually a province of Chōḷa empire losing its individuality and ruled by the viceroys appointed by the Chōḷa emperors². And this position was often challenged by the Chāḷukyas of Kalyāṇi and Gangas of Kālīṅga.

During this period, several feudatory families have come into existence and virtually ruled small areas as vassals and chieftains of Chōḷas. The most important feudatory families that came into prominence were the Velanāṭi Chōḷas with their capital at Tsandavolu (Guntur Dist.), the Chōḷas of Konidena, the Heihayas of Palnāḍ and Kona rāshtra, the Chōḷas of Nellore, the Koṭas of Dharanikoṭa, the Chāḷukyas of Nidadavolu and the chiefs of Sadasipuri etc., among these feudatories. The Velanāṭi Chōḷas had played a very prominent role as right hand men of the Chōḷa viceroys in the beginning and as independent rulers later on. With their valour, the Velanāṭi rulers transformed their chieftaincy into kingdom. They ruled over the country between Setu and Narmada. Their kingdom bounded on the four sides by the Eastern Ocean, the Śrī Kālāhasti hill, the Mahendrāchala and Śrīśailam³.

The later kings of Velanāṭi Chōḷas conquered the major and minor powers like Kuntalas (Kalyāṇa Chāḷukyas) Kālīṅgas (Gangas), Andhra (Kākatīyas), Marāṭha, Laṭa, Karnāṭa, Hata, Gauḍa, Kaṭaka, Chāḷukyas of Godāvarī and Telugu Chōḷas⁴. All these achievements are attested in their inscriptions. They issued many inscriptions in Telugu-Kannaḍa script all over country under their rule. Their importance lies in the fact that they furnish one of the best examples how a faithful and

In this context, it may not be out of place to mention that the Velanāṭi dynastic rule during the 11th - 13th centuries stands on par with other major dynasties in Āndhradeśa. After the Eastern Chāḷukya, the Velanāṭi rulers uphold the glorious Āndhra culture for nearly about 150 years till the advent of Kākaṭīyas and also act as an important connecting link between the Eastern Chāḷukya of Veṅgi and the Kākaṭīyas of Warangal in the annals of Āndhra History.

TEXT

- This is very rare and significant inscription which throw light on the contemporary social custom. This was issued during the reign of Velanāṭi Pṛidvīśvara, (also known as Choḍa III) the last king of the Velanāṭi dynasty. It was issued in Śaka 1132 corresponding to 1210 CE. It mainly deals with the *satī* performed by a wife of Yetamanāyaka's son (name not mentioned) who died at an

instance (not mentioned). It further records that a grant of 50 cows for lighting the perpetual lamp in the temple of Bhāvanārāyaṇa by a Marināyaka, the grandson of Yetamanāyaka for the merit of his parents. Yetamanāyaka was a *kottari* of Nidumbrolu (a superintendent of food corporation) under the Velanāṭi Pṛidhvīśvara. Another interesting point is that there are other epigraphical references mentioning about his ancestry who also rendered their services as *kottari* under the Velanāṭi chiefs.

Genealogy of Yetamanāyaka

Niḍubrolu Sabbināyaka(1151 CE)⁴

Yerrimanāyaka (1167 CE)⁵

Yetamanāyaka⁶

Not mentioned

Marināyaka (1210 CE)

Satī:

Originally means a chaste woman or a good wife, later the term applied to the custom of burning widows alive⁷ also known as *Satī-Sahagamana* ; *Satī-saha-marana* is a historical Hindu practice in which a widow sacrificed herself by sitting along with her deceased husband's funeral pyre. In Telugu a *satī* is referred to as *Peranṭalu or Mahāsatī*.

According to Romila Thapar, in the Vedic period the practice of *satī* seems to have been symbolic as is evident from the remarriage of widows, with widow performing a “symbolic self-immolation at the death of her husband, “as a status sign. In later times a variant reading of the Veda turned this symbolic practice into the practice of a widow burning herself with their husband⁸ Anand A. Yang opines that the *Rg Veda* refers to a “mimetic ceremony” where a “widow lay on her husband's funeral pyre before it was lit but was raised from it by a male relative of her dead husband. According to Yang, the word *agre*, “to go forth,” was (probably in the 16th century mistranslated into *agneh*, “into the fire, “to give Vedic sanction for *satī*.⁹

In early centuries, the custom of *satī* seems to have been existed only among the Kshatriyas only but later from the 16th onwards the practice became well prevalent among other communities in the society. Again, in the early centuries the *satī* was a voluntarily act to preserve the honor of women and also as an honorable solution rather than a shameful fate. After 16th century CE, this was done by force. *Satī* was believed to be supported by three factors; Hindu scriptures; encouraged by unscrupulous neighbors as it was means of property annexation from a widow who had the right to inherit her dead husband's property under the Hindu law and *Satī* helped eliminate the inheritor.

Descriptions by Westerners:

Francois Bernier (1620-1688) a European merchant gave the following description about *satī* practice:

“At Lahor I saw a most beautiful young widow sacrificed, who could not, I think, have been more than twelve years of age. The poor little creature appeared more dead than alive when she approached the dreadful pit: the agony of her mind cannot be described; she trembled and wept

bitterly; but four of the Brahmens, assisted by an old woman who held her under the arm, forced the unwilling victim toward the fatal spot, seated her on the wood, tied her hands and feet, lest she should run away, and in that situation the innocent creature was burnt alive.”¹⁰

Similar to the even narrated above a number of forcible *satī* incidents took place in India between 16th to early 19th century CE. William Carey in 1803-04 conducted a survey on the cases of *satī* at Serampore region within a 30 miles radius of Kolkata and found more than 300 such cases there.

In 1812 William Carey and Raja Ram Mohan Roy, founder of *Brahma Samāj*, began to champion the cause of banning *satī* practice.

On 4th December in 1829 Lord Bentinck, the Governor General of India enacted the *Bengal Sati Regulation XVII* declaring the practice of burning and burying alive of Hindu widows both voluntarily and involuntarily to be punishable by the criminal courts. The ban which was extended to whole country is credited with bringing an end to the practice of *satī* in India. It was the first major social reform legislation done by the British in India. This ban legislation (1829) was followed by other three legislations including *Hindu Widows Remarriage Act, 1856*; *Female infanticide prevention Act, 1870* and *Age of consent Act 1891* which were interrelated issues to the *satī*.

So far, an inscription of the time of Kalyāṇa Chāḷukya presently housed in Hyderabad Museum is considered as the earliest epigraphical evidence on the practice of *satī* in both the Telugu states, but the present inscription at Bapaṭla in Guntur district, Andhra Pradesh can now be identified as the earliest inscription on *satī* practice.

Nāguluppapādu inscription of Velanāṭi Chōḷa

There are three inscriptions of the time of Velanāṭi Chōḷa engraved on two sides of a granite pillar that is presently kept in a police station in Nāguluppapādu village, of the same mandal in Prakasam district. Of the three, one is in Tamil and the other two are in Telugu-Kannaḍa characters of 12th century CE.

Inscription no. I



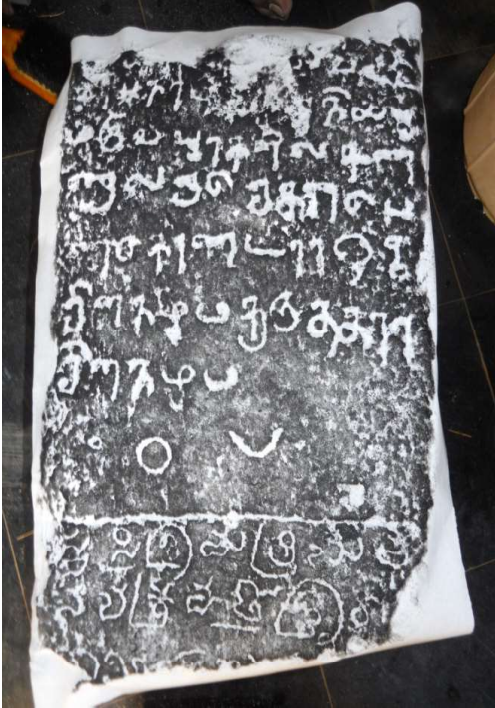
Inscribed pillar presently kept in the Police station at Nāgulapādu

Text

1. vijayabyu- - - -
2. vatsaramulu - -
3. srāhi śaka varsha- - -
4. lu 1072 (agune-
5. nṭi) yuttarāyaṇa-
6. sankrāntinimittam chi-
7. naganjana śrī Bhāva-
8. nārāyaṇa devaraku-
9. akhaṇḍa dīpamuna-
- 10 ku śrī vāranāsi
11. - - - - -
12. - - - - - ||

Gist:

This inscription in Telugu script and language dated in Śaka 1072 (1158 CE) records some grant to the temple for lighting a perpetual lamp to Śrī Bhāvanārāyaṇa Svāmī in Chinnaganjam village. This is one of the 9 important Bhāvanārāyaṇa temples in Andhra Pradesh.

Inscription nos. II and III**TEXT**

1. - - - - -
2. - - - -neyama
3. m ivvurukalil kain-
4. nalan ceidar pe
5. n kondar oru-
6. chinnammum kudutar-
7. chinnamam ippu ||

TEXT

1. svasti srimatribhuva-
2. nachakravarti sri ku-
3. (lo) - - - - - ||

Tamil and Telugu inscription on second side of the same pillar at Nāguluppalapāḍu village.

Gist:

This inscription written in Tamil language and characters of 12th century CE contains seven lines and the beginning two lines are damaged. It seems to record the levying a tax of one “*chinnam* gold” on a person of the village who wishes to get a bride or bridegroom from the same village.

The third record is a Telugu-Kannaḍa inscription and is highly damaged. It contains only two lines. It reads only a *praśasti* portion of Velanāṭi Chōḷas. The inscription seems to be a bilingual. Unfortunately the upper part of the Tamil inscription and the middle and lower part of the Telugu inscription have been damaged. The Tamil portion in the inscription suggests that in the heart of the capital city of the Velanāṭi Chōḷa there must have been Tamil settlements migrated to Andhra region along with the Tamil Governors appointed by the Kulottunga Chōḷa of Chālukya-Chōḷa dynasty. The cultural interaction between Tamil and Telugu people took place only during the time of Chālukya-Chōḷa rule in Āndhra region. The levying a tax of one *chinnam* gold during the time of marriages is also a typical trait of Tamil culture that was introduced in Āndhra during the time of Velanāṭi Chōḷa rule. The Velanāṭi Chōḷa rule gives the best example to witness the cultural amalgamation between the Tamil and Telugu lands.

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2. Ibid., P.56.
3. Epigraphia Indica, Vol.IV, No.4., p.33.
4. ARIE.No.277 of 1893 and S.I.I Vol. IV, No.1138.
5. Oldenburg, Veena Talwar (1994), “Comment; The continuing invention of the Sati Tradition”, P.112 ff.
6. Yang, Anand A. (2008), Whose Sati? Widow –Burning in early Nineteenth Century India PP. 11.ff
7. Majumdar, Ramesh Chandra, Altekari, Anant Sadashiv (1986). Vakataka-Gupta Age Circa 200-550 A.D. P.190.
8. Francois Bernier’s ; Travels in the Mogul Empire, A.D. 1656-1668. Pp.25
9. Yang, Anand A. (2008);”Whose Sati? Widow Burning in early Nineteenth Century India” PP. 44. ff.
10. Francois Bernier; Voyages of Francois Bernier P. 190.ff.

Scientific and Technological contents in the Tamil Inscriptions

G. Balaji

Abstract:

Epigraphical records form a major source for reconstructing the history of our nation. The valuable information they yield is very important for writing our political, social, economic, religious, cultural history and history of science and technology. An in depth study of these inscriptions will yield valuable data on scientific and technological subjects like agriculture, irrigation, mathematics, astronomy, architecture, engineering, geography, medicine, metallurgy, environmental science, arts and crafts etc. According to a conservative estimate there are more than sixty thousand inscriptions in Tamil Nadu alone found belonging to a vast span of time, nearly from the early centuries of the Common Era down to the early 18th century. These inscriptions are highly reliable on dating. Most of the inscriptions follow a particular format of mentioning the era, cyclical year, month, fortnight, weekday, zodiac sign and regnal year of the king. Hence they are precisely datable and valuable for the purposes of chronology as well as finding the sequence of development. The current proposed paper focuses on contents related to science and technological knowledge found in the inscriptions issued in Tamil Nadu belongs to the time span of 600 CE to 1400 CE. This is an important period in the history of Tamil Nadu as the Tamil country came under the rule of three major dynasties, namely, the Pallavas, Chōḷas and Pāṇḍyas besides numerous local chieftains who were ruling over smaller areas but under the suzerainty of the three major dynasties.

Keywords:

Pallava, Chōḷa, Pāṇḍya, Inscriptions, agriculture, irrigation, mathematics, astronomy, architecture, engineering, geography, medicine, metallurgy, environmental science, Tamilnadu

Epigraphical records form a major source for reconstructing the history of our nation. The valuable information they yield is very important for writing our political, social, economic, religious, cultural history and also history of science and technology. An in depth study of these inscriptions will yield valuable data on scientific and technological data related to agriculture, irrigation, mathematics, astronomy, architecture, geography, medicine, metallurgy, environmental science, arts and crafts etc.

According to a conservative survey estimate there are more than forty thousand inscriptions found in Tamil Nadu alone belonging to a vast span of time, nearly from the early centuries of the Common Era down to the early 18th century. The early inscriptions are small in size and fewer in number, but in medieval times they have increased in number and size. For example, the Chōḷa inscriptions found on the walls of the Brihadisvarar temple in Thanjavur issued by Rājārāja I is highly valuable in the context of their numbers and information. They speak about the social, political and cultural life of the country.

These inscriptions are highly reliable on dating. Most of the inscriptions follow a particular format of mentioning the era, cyclical year, month, fortnight, weekday, zodiac sign and regnal year of the king. Hence they are precisely datable and valuable for the purposes of chronology as well as finding the sequence of development. The astronomical content found in the inscriptions is more

reliable and genuine while compared to the dates of literary works.

The current study covers the inscriptions of Tamil Nadu and belongs to the period 600 CE to 1400 CE. This is an important period in the history of Tamil Nadu as the Tamil country came under the rule of three major dynasties, namely, the Pallavas, Chōlas and Pāṇḍyas besides numerous local chieftains who were ruling over smaller areas but under the suzerainty of the three major dynasties. Since these major dynasties ruled over for a considerable period of time, this led to continuous development in various fields. Agriculture and irrigation witnessed remarkable expansion, especially on the banks of the rivers Palar, Kaveri, Vaigai, Tamaraparani, etc. Land formations like agriculture lands, lakes for water harvesting, cutting of irrigational channels and planting of trees were all being done systematically. The walls of the temples are studded with inscriptions which throw light on various aspects of life. They bristle with innumerable technical and scientific terms which reflect the advancement of science and technology that prevailed during this time.

Agriculture and Irrigation

The five-fold classification of land (*thinai*) is described in the ancient Tamil grammar work *Tolkappiam*¹. It explains how the lands were classified according to their nature. It also briefly describes the life style of the people of each zone and their distinguishing characteristics. The five *thinai*s were: *Kuruinji* or the hilly tracts, *Mullai* or the forest or the pastoral tract, *Marudam* or the riverine plains, *Neidhal* or the coastal area and *Palai* or the desert land. All these five landscapes are distinguished with its own animals, trees, plants, flowers, people, religion and culture.

Large number of literary and inscriptional sources of South India focus on the irrigation technology of this region especially Tamilnadu from Early Historic period starting from 600 BCE. The agricultural lands were classified according to their nature and irrigational technology. If the land was feed by rain water, it was called as *vanpulam* (*puncei*) (*Aiṅḡurunūru*-469:2, *Aganānūru*-309.3, *Nālaḍiyār* 59.6) and the land which was feed by a lake, tank, pond or river it was referred to as *menpulam* (*nancei*) (*Agananuru*-79-5.)

A small pond known as *aspoykai* (rain water small reservoir) was mentioned in several inscriptions. This was fed either by the rain water or by a channel (*Patirruppattu*: 13.8). Sittannavasal inscription of fifth century CE (*A.R.E.*no.1992) refers to the name of a *poykai* near the hill.

The Pallava rulers and their feudatories constructed artificial reservoirs and renovated natural water bodies like *ēri*, *kulam*, *kuṭṭai*, *kiṇaru*, etc. and *ērivāriyam* and *toṭṭavāriyam* which were the terms that refer to the village administrative bodies of tank and agricultural lands. A few tanks named after the kings such as *Mahendra-taṭaka*, *Parameswara-taṭaka*, *Tirayan-ēri*, and a few other in their surnames like *Chitramegha-taṭaka* and *Vairamegha-taṭaka*². *Kiṇaru*³ and *perunkiṇaru*⁴ are the terms found in inscriptions for wells and which were used for irrigation purposes. The terms like *ēttam*, *iraichu*, *iraikku* – *nīr*, *kaliṅgu*, *kaṇṇaru*, *mataku*, *maṭai*, *nīrotunkal*, *vathi*, *ōṭai*, *puttēri*, *vāykkāl*, *tūmbu*, *ūrukāl*, *vāvi*, were used in a different context for irrigational methods, mechanisms and tools which were found in Pallava inscriptions⁵.

1 SheshaIyengar, T.R., 1923, *Ancient Dravidians*, Madras, p.176.

2 Minakshi, C., *Administration and Social life under the Pallavas*, Madras, 1975, pp. 119-22.

3 S.I.I Vol-XII No 136

4 Ep. Ind. Vol. XI, p.145.

5 S.I.I Vol-XII

The tanks of Kāvēripākkam, Madurāntakam, Maṇḍakappaṭṭu, Mahēndravāḍi, Māmaṇḍūr, Maṇimaṅgalam, Sempampākkam, Uttaramērūr, Pulal and Ambattūr tanks of Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam region are the few excellent examples of tank building skills in Pallava period which are still preserving the traditional irrigational systems and tools (equipments). Like the Pallavas, both the Pāṇḍya and the Chōla kings also gave importance to agriculture which was the prime occupation of the people in the medieval Tamil country. In the Chōla and Pāṇḍya country, rivers like the Kaveri, Vaigai, Thamirabarani and their tributaries served as the main sources of irrigation.

Likewise, different types of soils, crops, land management system, and cultivation methods, etc., are described in these inscriptions. The Tiruvalangadu plates of Rājendra Chōla I (1020 CE) describe all the parts of a village and how they are termed according to their nature. It states: “All the land within the four boundaries include wetlands, drylands, village sites, houses house gardens, common meeting places (*maṇru*), lands for grazing cattle, tanks, vast expanse of water (*koṭṭakam*), ant-hills and other mounds, forest lands, barren lands, streams, rivers and lands where breaches had occurred (*uṭaiṭṭu*) or channels, the lands lying on the bed of the river and edge of the normal water-course (*arṟupaṭukai*), water pits where fish swim, groves where bees build honey-combs, trees, wells, ditches, ponds, lakes, the catchment area of a lake (*ēri-nīr-kōṭṭu*) without excluding any land which is covered with water or rolled by the barrow, land where iguanas run or the tortoise creep”¹. A thirteenth century record of JatavarmanSundara Pāṇḍya describes the different types of crops grown in the field that were leased to tenants as *kāṇippitipāṭu*. The lessee or tenant shall enjoy the lands after repairing the tanks in disuse and bringing under cultivation such of the lands as are covered with jungle. He could grow crops like *tiṇai*, *varaku*, *eḷlu*, *payaru*, *kuruvai*, *karumbu*, *kozhuntu*, *karunai*, *maṇjal*, *iṇji*, *senkaḷunir*, *vaḷai*, *vazhutalai*, *pucani* etc., as well as trees like *ma*, *palā*, *teṇṇai*, *kamuku*, *nartai*, *elumiccai*, *kunaviruli*, *nelli*, *iruppai*, etc., and pay tax accordingly².

For intensive farming, the Chōla and Pāṇḍya rulers took concrete steps to implement effective irrigational methods. The major rivers that run through the lands of the Tamil country are rain flooded. So to avoid famine and floods, those caused by water scarcity due to the failure of monsoon and heavy rains, the rulers and their feudatories constructed artificial reservoirs and renovated natural water bodies like *ēri*, *kulam*, *kuṭṭai*, *kiṇaru*, etc. and *ērivāriyam* and *toṭṭavāriyam* which are the terms that refer to the village administrative bodies formed for administrating the tanks and agricultural lands. The members known as *vāriyaperumakkal* had to take care of these water bodies and maintain a systematic irrigation system.

Aṇai is a giant man-made structure that obstructs the flow of a river. At present thirty dams are functioning in seventeen river basins of Tamilnadu. The earliest epigraphy reference to Damis found in the *YathōthkārīPerumḷ* Temple at Kāñchipuram. The principal deity of this temple is addressed as *Ananda Nārayaṇa Paramaśwāmi* of *Kachchippēdu* who was pleased to lie as an *aṇicut* to the River *Vēgavathi* River (*Thiruvegha*)³. The ancient civil engineering skills of Tamils can be inferred from the dam of stones (*Kallaṇai*) which is popularly known as the Grand *aṇicut* on the Cāuvery River. It is believed that its basic structure was commissioned in 2nd Century CE by the *Saṅgam* Era Chōla King *Karikālan* (*Kallaṇaikattiyakarikālan* and *Kāvirikkurupuraṇamkaraiēduppithān*).

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- 1 Raman, K.V., 2006, *Temple Art, Icons and Culture of India and South –East Asia*, Delhi, p.123
 - 2 NilakandaSastri, K.A., 1929, *The Pāṇḍyan Kingdom*, London, p. 221.
 - 3 ARE, No. 21 of 1921

Lakes (Ēris) are man-made structures exclusively meant to store water for irrigation. They are more in the northern part of Tamilnadu. Many of their foundation dates and various details are well registered in Tamil epigraphs. Maintenance of water resources (*kudimaramaththu*) was carried out by the individuals who were the beneficiaries of that. It is evident from the Payiyanūr inscription. It states that in the reign of the Pallava King Nandivarman II Pallavamalla (768 CE), a merchant (*uḷakkuni-vāṇian*) from Māmallapuram made an endowment for the annual de-silting and strengthening the embankment of the great lake at Payiyanūr (*māmallapuraṭṭilirundhuvaḷum uḷakkuni vāṇiyan nāganemmūr perēripoliattinar rōndvaṭārkkukoduṭtanēlporkalal 6400 kādi.....āṭṭāndutōrum ēri – tōnduvippōmāyērruḷkkoṇḍōm*)¹.

In the subsequent Chōla period, Parāntaka I (907 -954 CE) was a great far-sighted ruler who emphasized the new conceptions of water sources for the expansion of irrigation practices beyond the Cāuvery basin. He excavated the massive *Vīrāṇam* Lake near Chidambaram with a 15 km lake bund. The width of the water spread, perpendicular to the lake bund varies from 1 km - 6.5 km with a live storage capacity of 1.4 TMC. It has 40 main channels that irrigate over 40,000 acres of land up to the Bay of Bengal Sea in the east. His undated inscription from Kāvēripākkam lake states that it was well supervised by the tank committee (*ērivāriyam*)².

Epigraphical records contain information about the tank irrigation and river irrigation and how systematically they are maintained in this period. Irrigational channels cut from the tanks were known *vāykkāl* or *vayākkāl* and the channels cut directly from the river were known as *arukkāl* which supply water to tanks as well as fields. Different rights were assigned to a particular set of people and the others were forbidden from cutting branches or to put up *picotahs* for getting water. Canals dug passed through the lands purchased for that purpose. Those who donated lands to temples or public welfare activities were granted permission to dig their own canals.

The canals are the functional structures in which water flows from the catchment areas to the tanks and then to the distant farming fields. They were also dug from the main rivers to feed tanks. The place of its origin is named as the mouth (*Vāy*) and which is connected to a lengthy excavated structure above the ground level is known as limb (*kāl*). Thus the term *Vāykkāl* was coined. Canals that were dug from the main rivers to feed tanks are known as feeder canals. They supplied water to the fields through branch channels. For example, the *PerumpiduguVāykkāl* was dug from the river Palar to feed the *Paramēśvaratadākā* in *Paramśvaramaṅgalam*(Kūram) near Kāñchipuram³.

The term *Kaṇṇāru* mentioned in the medieval Tamil inscriptions is identified in the last leg of the irrigation system. In this coordination, the large land divisions (*pādakams*) were further fragmented into small quarters (*sadhurams*) and they were irrigated by smaller canals (*Kaṇṇāru*) which were bifurcated from the main channel. Traditionally they were paved with stones. The *pātakams*, *sadurams* and *kaṇṇārus* were given ascending numbers and it was specifically referred in inscriptions to declare the means of water distribution to the endowed lands by the donors. Thus the share of water to different quarters of the cultivatable lands in a particular area was assured from the common water source. It was arranged with the mutual consent of the cultivators. The very large and shallow water sources with earthen bunds in the Madurai region are known as *Kaṇmāis*. They store the surface run-off water during rainy seasons. They supply water for domestic and agricultural

1 SII Vol XII No.34

2 ARE, No. 693 of 1904

3 EI, Vol. XVII, No. 22

purposes.

Some large number of inscriptions in Tamilnadu refer to the construction of important structure in the lake known as sluices. It is known in Tamil inscriptions as *kumīli*, *karkumīli*, *matagu*, *oṭṭai*, *manavāḷakkal*, *kālandtūmbu* etc. The arrangements of water regulating structure were first noticed in the inscriptions of Mahēndravarmān I at Anattur. It referred to the sluice as '*srikuṇamili*'. The main sluice (*tūmbu* or *talaimatagu* or *kumil*) and the additional sluices are built inside the tanks and lakes. From there, an underground channel looks like a tunnel made of brick structure have been cut through the bunds to link the sluices and an out let structure known as *maṭai*, i.e. the sluice gate or tail dam. It is either in circular shape or in square shape. This structure has a facility of overflowing water as well as, the holes are being cut at the bottom of the end and side walls of the structure. The water would be coming out of these holes will run through channels to various fields in the village. The size of the holes is varying on the basis of the how much water to irrigate the fields in the village. Hence, they served as the regulator devices to control the flow of the water to the fields in the villages without any difficulties. These holes have been made in such a manner to drop the last drop of water from the lake.

The entire construction has been made of stone builders with the mortar as a binding material. It would be look like a tub. The number of holes at the bottom regulates the water to various fields located in various directions or to several villages. Through this technology, the fields in the villages have received considerable water regularly. In order to distribute the water to all the fields in the villages, the *maṭai* have been constructed in various points on the outside of the lake and attached with a sluice by an underground channel.

When a *Kumīli* structure is further added with two or three horizontal crossbars with median vents and supported by two rectangular granite pillars (*iṇaikālkal*) on either side are known as *Kumīli-Thūmbu*. Normally they are erected with 1 to 1.5 metre apart with a rectangular base enclosure made of stone blocks at the base. Its height varies from 2 metre to 4 metre, depending upon the depth and size of the tank. They have the following functions:

- i. To provide support to the *Kumīli* structure
- ii. To identify and access the *Kumīli* structure when the tank is in full capacity and
- iii. To release the water according to the need / economic use of water.

The earliest Ēri – *Thūmbu* reference is found in a *Maḍagu* inscription near Arakonam in *Thoṇḍaimaṇḍalam*. It states that a *thūmbu* was installed by Sōmāsiyār in the reign of Narasiṃhavarman I (630 – 638 CE)¹ (*ŚriNarasiṅgasarumappurōyitha vētbai sōmāsiyār seiviththaThūmbuŚri*).

Maḍagu is a big water regulatory structure with one or many outlets. It is constructed in large water sources where surface runoff water flow is more. Wood or metal barriers are used to slide up or downward direction in respective grooves to regulate the water supply from the source to fields. It also controls the water level and its flow rates. The earliest *Maḍagu* is located in the Ōṅgūr lake near Villupuram which was built in the reign of the Pallava King Nandivarman II in 745 CE. In the Pāṇḍyan region, similar earliest reference was traced from the Tamil – *Vaṭṭeluththu* script

1 Gandhi. M & Mani. R., '*MudhalāmNarasimavarmananinThūmbuKalveṭṭu*', Āvaṇam (Tamil), No.22, The Journal of the Tamilnadu Archaeological Society, Thanjāvūr, 2011. p. 23

inscription (829 CE) found in the Erukkaṅgudi tank bund in Rāmanāthapuram District.

Like *kumīli*, it is also a simple sluice installed in a water source but with a vertical stone slab with a single or more vents meant for the release of water. It is firmly planted in a tank bed. An underground channel is attached to it. The vents will be closed and opened as per the requirement of water for irrigation and to safeguard the water resource in case of floods. Water from the tank gushes out through these vents and pass through the underground canal to reach the irrigation fields. It is normally in use to release flood or excess water.

In the cardinal points and in the raised land surface of the lakes, there are overflowing facilities have been built. This is the important structure of the lake. It is known as *kaliṅgal* or *kaliṅgu* i.e. surplus channel. The technology of *kaliṅgu* is to protect the bund of the tank or lake by let-out the surplus water during heavy rains. This surplus channel carries the excess water from the tank to the neighbouring tanks, streams, and river or to the sea. A *Kaliṅgu* is a stone-built siphon structure with many outlets. It acts as a flood moderator at the time of heavy rains.

Large number of epigraphs give clear picture on the maintenance of tanks and lakes. The famous Uttiramerur, Kaveripakkam, and Bahur inscriptions mentions about the annual maintenance committee for tanks namely *ērivāriyam* or *ērivāriyapperumakkal*. Besides a separate watch and ward committee was formed for looking after the surplus water channels. They were known as *kaliṅguvāriyam*.

ARCHITECTURAL ENGINEERING

The Pallava monuments exhibit the architectural and masonry skills of the artisans of the 6th – 8th c. CE. The inscriptional references to speak about the artisans, sculptors and architects. The creators or the artisans who built massive structures, intricate carvings, beautiful sculptures and fabulous paintings have different names according to their skills. *Taccan*, *cirpan*, *rathakaran*, *taccar*, *tattān*, *ācariyan*, *kollan* and *kōliyar* are the general terms found in the inscriptions and Tamil literature for denoting the artisan class. However, a few literary and inscriptional references give us more information about the sub-class divisions of these artisans¹. The artisans were engaged in different professions and honed their skills either by inheritance or by learning from the *vāstuśāstras*².

Mahendravarman I states that the rock cut shrine made here by King Vichitrachitta (the one who thinks differently) for the divinities Brahma, Siva and Vishnu was brick-less, timber-less, metal-less and mortar-less. This verse of the inscription confirms that earlier there were temples or structures made using brick, timber, metal and mortar³. Though the very name of the king gives us the idea that he is the one who initiated the construction of rock cut temples but the masonry skill of the artisan has to be appreciated.

Rajasimha Pallava had initiated the construction of stone structural temples in the early 8th Century CE as per the agamic principles. The material used in the entire Shore temple complex at Māmallapuram was a dark stone called leptinite. The floor and the *paṭṭika* at the top of the *adiṣṭanā* are made of granite slabs. The fluted *Śtūpis* of the *Rājasimhēśvaram* and *Kṣatriyasimhēśvaram* are

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- 1 Avvai Natarajan, NatanaKasinathan, 1992, *Art Panorama of Tamils*, State Department of Archaeology, Madras, p. 15.
 - 2 S.I.I. Vol. XVII, No. 603.
 - 3 Mahalingam, T.V., *Inscriptions of the Pallavas*, AgamPrakashan, Delhi, p. 24.

built with black basalt. In between these two Siva temples, the Shrine of *NarapathiSimhaPallavaVis hñugriham* is sandwiched. It enshrines an earlier reclining image of *Abhichārikā* Vishnu form. Once the broken wrist (*mañikkaṭtu*) of this God was mended by a sculptor. To appreciate his restoration expertise, poet Dandin had visited this place on request made by that sculptor¹. This reference has proved that the Pallava sculptors knew the art of preservation and conservation.

More than 40 architectural components namely *Vimāna*, *Śtūpi*, *Kumudapadai*, *Uññālīgai*, *Karṇaḷi*, *Idaināḷi* and *Sōpanam* are mentioned in the medieval Tamil inscriptions². Almost all of them are mentioned as such in the *Śilpatexts* and *VāsthūŚāstraś* which contain the forms and norms for the construction activities.

The Siva temples at Thanjāvūr, Gaṅgaikoṇdachōḷapuram, Dārāsūram and Thirubhuvanam are the engineering marvels in different scales. They are the veritable museum for the medieval art and architecture of Tamilnadu. They envisage the civil engineering skills of the Tamils which include the material sciences, building technology and construction management, transportation and structural aspects of the Chōḷas. The Rājarājēśvaramudaiyār temple inscription registers the phrase reads as ‘*UdaiyarŚriRājarājadēvarThanjāvūredupitṭatirukkārṇaḷiŚriRājarājēśvaramudaiyārpara maśwāmikku....*’. It means that the stone temple was built by Rajaraja I³. Its *Vimāna* is seems to be a seismic sustainable structure. It was built in such a way to reduce the weight of the super structure. The construction principle of this temple particularly to the ‘corbelling technology’ is considered as an insignia of the Chōḷas.

Apart from the architectural references about the *Vimāna*, construction details of its associated structures are also mentioned in Tamil inscriptions. *Prakāra* (*Thirunadaimāḷikai*), courtyards around the *Prakāras* (*Thirunadaimāḷikaippaththi*), steps (*Sōpanam*), temple tanks and sculptures related to the main deity are also built in the temple precincts. Different kinds of *Maṇḍapās* like *ardhamaṇḍapā*, *mukhamaṇḍapā*, *mahāmaṇḍapā*, *Śthābhhanamaṇḍapā*, *vaśanthamaṇḍapā*, *Dōlōtsavamāṇḍapā* and *abhiṣēgamaṇḍapā* with four, eight, sixteen, hundred and 1000 pillars were built as latter additions which was praised in the Saiva literature *Tēvarām*.

Scribes or Engravers

The Pallava period inscriptions and copper plate grants provide enough evidences to understand the artisan and professional communities and their role in the society. The Velurpalayam plate of Nandivarman III has the name of the engraver and his native place. The name of the scribe is Perayan, son of Kastakari of *Aimmaniceri* in Kaccipedu⁴ (Kanchipuram). The inscription further states that he belongs to the *sthapatikula*; this reference made to the *sthapati* class suggests that it is the general term for the artisan community. The *Aimmaniceri* village would have accommodated five different classes of the artisan community like stone masons, carpenters, blacksmiths, goldsmiths and weavers. The Bahur copper plate grant of Nirupatungavarman states that it was inscribed by the *svarnakara* (goldsmith) Nirpatunga who was the grandson of Uditodaya - *peruntaṭṭan*(chief smith)⁵.

1 ShanmugaSundaram, Kāvya: ‘*RājamanikkanārinTamilnāṭṭuVaralāru*’, Kāvya Publications, Chennai. 2008. P. 2961

2 Alagesan. P.K: ‘*Kalveṭṭukalkāṭṭumkalai sorṅkaḷ*’ (Tamil), The Parker Publications, Chennai. 2004. P.62

3 SII. Vol. II. No. 4

4 *South Indian Inscriptions (SII)*, Volume 2, Part V, No. 98.

5 Ep. Ind. Vol. XVIII, no.2, p.12

Architects

As mentioned earlier, although many names of the architects are found in important temples in Tamilnadu, none of the Mamallapuram monuments bear the name of the *sthapati* or architect of its creation. The images of the kings are found and they are identified by Chōlars as Simha Vishnu and Mahendravarman I in the Varaha cave temple, Narasimhavarman I and temple servants in Dharmarajaratha and Paramesvaravarman in Arjuna ratha¹.

We get a few names of the artisans on small rocks in a place popularly known as NondivirappanKudiraittoti near Mamallapuram. Some sChōlars like R. Nagaswamy and others believe that the names found here belong to the *sthapatis* who created the Mamallapuram monuments. The letters are scribed on the rocks in Pallava Grantha and the Tamil characters reads :1.Kevatapperuntaccan, 2. Gunamallan, 3. Payyamilippan, 4. Catamukkiyan, 5. Kaliyani, 6. NamahTiruvorriyurAbhajar and 7. KollanSemagan². Out of the above names we can easily identify the profession of two people. One is Kevatapperuntaccan and the other is KollanSemagan. The first person must be a stone mason and that too *perun-taccan* which means chief architect. The great Tamil poet Kamban refers to the *sthapatis* as *deivatachchar* or divine architects³. The second person is a blacksmith who may be the supplier of chisel, hammer and other iron implements required for the architect.

Another famous architect during the Pallava period was Paramesvara. He served in the court of Dantivarman and built a magnanimous temple for Vishnu Known as Sundaravaradaperumal at Uttiramerur. To honour his service, the king issued an order to write his name on the walls of this temple. The inscriptions read, “*This shrine, shining, as it were, as the sun among the shrines of the village and adored by its name and class etc. was built in conjunction with the agamikas of this village versed in agamic principles and practices, by one truthful and dexterous ParamesvaraTakshaka of Pataka. He who knows the essential nature of the entire science of Architecture*”. *Suṭṭōṭu*⁴ (*suṭṭōṭal mālikaieṭukkaperuvatakavum*) is a term which defines that the roofs of high class secular buildings and religious buildings were constructed with burnt tiles. *Suṭṭaiṭṭikai* is the term used for burned brick. It was used to build a structure and that was known as *iṭṭikai-padai*⁵. In another context it was mentioned as *suṭṭaiṭṭikaikyālmāmālikaieṭukkaperuvatakavum*⁶ that means “to build big multi storied mansions by using burnt bricks”.

ARTS, CRAFTS, TEXTILES AND JEWEL MAKING TECHNOLOGY

In the Chōla and Pāṇḍya country, artisans of different professions existed and various kinds of crafts were produced and taxes collected for sales and profession. *kucavar* (potter), *kaṇṇmalar* – artisans like blacksmith, goldsmith, carpenter etc., *karumān* – blacksmith, *kollan* – blacksmith / goldsmith, *pērunṭaccan* – master architect or craftsmen, *tayyan* – tailor, *vaṇṇattar* – washerman, *kaikōlar* – weavers, *aruvaivāṇipar* – cotton merchants, *ōviyar* – artists etc.,⁷ are the names for ar-

1 Padma, T.N., *Mahabalipuram*, Madras, 1957.

2 Avvai Natarajan, NatanaKasinathan, Op.cit., p. 13.

3 Raman, K.V., Op.cit., p. 23.

4 S.I.I., Vol. II. No. 98

5 S.I.I., Vol. XIX. No.292

6 S.I.I., Vol. III. No. 151

7 Mentioned in the S.I.I. Volumes of Chōla and Pāṇḍya inscriptions issued between 10th and 13th c. CE. Each will be discussed in detail while preparing final report.

tisan and professional class commonly found mentioned in both Chōla and Pāṇḍya inscriptions issued between the 10th to 13th c. CE. A large number of crafts which include musical instruments, professional tools, machinery and jewellery were mentioned in the inscriptions of the above said period. In some places a detailed description of the materials used to make that craft item and its measurements are also mentioned.

The metal smiths are workers of gold, silver, bronze, copper and brass. Both the Tiruvarur and the UyyakkondanTirumalai inscription state that it was the work of the smith to make jewellery for the king, court and temple. Vessels of bronze, gold and iron for yajna or sacrifices had to be prepared by the smiths.¹ The records of Rajaraja and Rājendra Chōla primarily from Tanjavur, refer to nearly sixty different types of jewellery. The Chōla inscriptions again refer to the making of copper-brass, gold and silver vessels, lamps, plates, ornamental stands etc.² The making of ritual objects like flat gold and copper plates called yantra for ritual use also involved certain secret procedures by craftsmen which the records refers to as '*mantrapoorvamagachedya*' literally 'making the esoteric way'.³ A record of the Rajaraja I from Panchanadisvara temple in Tiruvaiyar lists not only the usual metals but also lead, zinc and bell-metal vessels.⁴

The role function of craftsmen like the blacksmith and the carpenter, who formed an indispensable part of the village community, was very different from the craftsmen in temple towns who had a multiplicity of customers as well as patrons. Their work consisted of the manufacture and repair of agricultural tools like sickles, ploughshares, hoes, spades and axes. The inscriptions use the term *kilkalanai* for these poor craftsmen and the inscriptions of Rajaraja I and Rājendra repeatedly refer to them as being located in the *Kammanacheri*. These were low-paid artisans living at the subsistence level and catering to a custom-oriented market without the benefit of wealthy patrons like the court sculptors.

Inscriptions also gives many names of musical instruments and persons who play them like *tattali* – *tattalik-kottuvar*⁵, *cakadai* – *cakadai-kottigal*, *muttiraicanku* – *canku-uthuvar*, *vangiyam* – *vangiyam-vasippar* etc. The terms *kotti*, *uthu* and *vasi* denotes beat (percussion), blow (wind) and play (string) respectively, that divulges what kind of instrument it is.

Textile

The word *acu* is always combined with the people who are working on the tool, and in some cases they are mentioned respectfully as *acumakkalor* *acupotumakkal* in inscriptions. The term *acu* could be explained as an instrument used for making threads and the tax was on those people using this instrument. The raw cotton has to be processed before it was made into thread. In this process, the cotton fiber shall be loosened and the dirt and other unwanted materials have to be removed. An instrument known as bow or *vil* was usually used for this process. This was stated in the inscriptions as *vil* which noted along with a tax called *vilvari* or *vilpanam*, that was levied on those who used the bow for cleaning the cotton. An inscription from Madambakkam (Chingleput District) mentions

1 SII, Vol. XVII, No.603 stanza 3 and ARE, 479 of 1908

2 SII, Vol. II, pt.3, No.66.

3 SII, Vol. V, No.647.

4 SII, Vol. V, No.521; SII, vol. II, pt.4, No.85

5 SII. Vol. III. p.265

*vilvari*¹ while, *vilpanam* is mentioned in the inscriptions of Vadamadevimangalam², and Srirangam³ (Tiruchirappalli District).

We do not found any description of the type or the shape of the looms in the inscriptions except finding some names occasionally. Some of these names collected from the inscriptions are *saliyarnilaittari*⁴, *kombuttari*⁵, and *chattittari*⁶. It is clear that from these names of looms, one may not be able to understand their shape or structure and also its functions. Perhaps, the most interesting among those names is the *saliyarnilaittari*, which could represent a permanent loom (*nilaittari*) used by the *saliya* weaver community.

The textile products described in some of the inscriptions are valuable to understand the type of textiles manufactured in the Tamil country in the early-medieval and medieval periods. These evidences could be useful to understand the devices used by weavers in the manufacturing of textiles. One of the common and popular varieties of cloth manufactured was *putavai*. Another cloth was *permudichchelai*⁷, which could have been manufactured in a complex loom. A different variety of cloth manufactured during the Vijayanagar period was known as *ponneluttuchchelai*⁸. This could be a saree with some designs are executed in gold threads i.e. *jari*. The *jari* work could be used for decorating the border as well as parts of a *chelai*.

Pattuvargam could refer to any kind of silk cloth, probably manufactured in the neighbourhood of Virinchipuram. In Kanchipuram also the silk weaving was known and the silk saree was known by the common term, *pattuchchelai*.⁹ *sallappattu*¹⁰, and *pattavalippattu*¹¹ are other types of silk sarees known from Kanchipuram inscriptions.

Jewellery

While analysing the skills of crafts man making jewellery, we come across a good number of terms in the epigraphy explain their technology. Jewellery making tradition of the Tamil country reveals a high degree of workmanship while converting it into ornament. The discovery of gold diadems (*pattam*) in the excavation of proto historic burial site at Adichchanallur in Thuthukudi district by Alexander Rea in 1902 had revealed of the 3500 years old jewellery system of the ancient Tamilnadu.¹² The jewels such as *cilambu* (anklet), *todi*, *valai*, *kadakam* (bangle), *motiram* (ring) and other types are referred in the classical Sangam literary works like *Tolkappiyam*, *Akananuru* and *Purananuru* assigned to 5th c. BCE to 2nd c. CE.¹³

1 ARE.1911, 324.

2 ARE.1921, 203.

3 SII. XXIV, 317.

4 ARE.1914, 59.

5 ARE.1917, 216.

6 ARE.1916, 246.

7 ARE.1905, 30; SII. XXIV, 635.

8 SII.VII,53.

9 SII. VII,53.

10 ST.I.446.

11 Ibid.

12 Alexander Rea, *Catalogue of the prehistoric antiquities from Adichanallur and Perumbair*, Chennai, 1998 (1915), p.7.

13 Sasivalli, V.C., *Pandaia Tamilartozikal*, International Institute of Tamil studies, Madras, 1989, pp 97-111

The sculptures and bronzes (*panchaloha*) produced as per *Agamas* and *Silpasastras* are well proportioned, round face with rich treatment in dress and ornaments. The rarest solid gold figure of god Chandrasekhara (*ponnin Chandrasekharatirumeni*) weighing 4998 *kalanju* presented to the temple at Tiruvenkadu by queen SembiyanMadevi deserves to mention.¹

The inscriptions and copper plates of the Chōlas generally refer the jewels of the gods and goddesses as *aparanam* or *tiruvaparanam* (sacred jewels). These records furnish names of jewels, metals like gold or silver and number of gemstones, like diamond, (*tadavikattinamuppathharuvayiram*), ruby (*manickam*), and pearls set to their colour effects., weight system, purity of gold, donor names and the gods and goddesses to whom the jewels presented (*kudakkapatta*) due to subjection (*paravasamaikidanthu*).

A variety of jewels namely *tirukolgai*, *manimudi*, *pattam*, *vadam*, *tiruvaram*, *tirumangili*, *valayam*, *karkarai*, *padakam*, and *motiram* are commonly mentioned in the inscriptions. *Arakku*, *Pinju*, *Pothi* are the terms denoting parts of ornament either used to strengthen or support it. *Arakku* means wax which used to fill the hollow space of the ornaments to give it strength. *Pinju* is a golden piece to be suspended down to hold the ornament. *Pothi* is a golden strip used to decorating the ornament². These techniques are still in use among the jewel makers of Tamilnadu.

An inscription reads, “*Edaippattigaionrilsavimunruvadamudaiyanaettum*”, in this line *edaippattiga* means a waist ornament which was decorated by adding golden strings³. *Saradu* is a string or cord made either of textiles material or metal other than gold used to hang or tie a gold ornament. Further to set a metal piece a small strip known as *cattam* was used. *Ceppani* (copper nail) was a copper nail of small size help to fix the designs of the ornaments in their place. It was mentioned in the inscription as “*tiruvaabaranangalsaradumcattamumceppanikalumneekkiniraieduthu*”⁴. From this line it is understood that separating of non-gold objects was in practice while weighing the gold ornaments donated to the temple. *Thadavikattina* was a technique used to set precious stones on the gold ornaments⁵. Another term of fixing the pearl on the gold ornament is *thanithal*⁶ (to put into).

A term *thagattupon* or *ponrekku* i.e. thin gold foil / sheet denote that technique of embellishing the ornaments exquisitely. The verse in the inscription says “*mudionril – kattinathakatuponmukkazhanjum*”. *Vasi* and *merukiduthal* are also the two other techniques used for polishing gold ornaments were found in the inscriptions.

WEIGHTS, MEASURES AND MATHEMATICAL TERMS

Mathematics is considered as an important science and seems to have developed from very early times. Basic functions like addition, multiplication, subtraction and division of basic numbers and fractions were actively used in ancient civilized societies across the world. In the Indian sub-continent, the ancient and medieval epigraphs used these functions in their various activities involving trade, mercantile and royal and public transactions. The basic numbers and simple and

1 Vedhachalam, V., *Sembiyanmadeviyar, kalvettuidazh5*, Department of Archaeology, Government of Tamilnadu, p.26 ; S.I.I. Vol.XIII, No.144

2 S.I.I. Vol. II, Part II, No.59

3 S.I.I. Vol. II, Part II, No.51

4 *Ibid.*

5 S.I.I. Vol. XXIII, No.46

6 S.I.I. Vol. II, No.5

complex fractions were used in several transactions. One of the basic fractions was *mundiri*, is a unit divisible by 320 (ie. 1/320). There are other functions called *kil*, and *madakku* probably refer to the lower fractions than the *mundiri*.

The most important functions related to common transactions were linear, area measures, capacity measures and weights. All these functions were mentioned in detail in the inscriptions. They use certain specific terms with regard to all functions. In the case of linear measures and area measures, the Chōla inscriptions recording land transactions are unique in their nature. They mention minute area measurements and combination of units. The basic linear measurements are usually measured by hand as *can*, and by human foot as *ati*. These basic units are multiplied to make higher measurements. There are measurements used for weights and capacity. They were well incorporated and used in the various calculations. The capacity measures like *alakku*, *ulakku*, *kalam* were well known.

MEDICINAL SCIENCE

In the Tamil country, the Āyurvēdic system of medicine was practiced by the physicians. This information we get from the inscriptional sources. Āyurvēdic medicines were prepared from fully recognised medicinal plants. Medicinal herbs, namely *Chitramūlam* and *Koḍivēli* also known as Śengoḍivēli in Tamil and *Chitraka* and *Vahni* in Sanskrit were used for preparing medicine¹. The Kaśākuḍi copper plate speaks about a tax Śengoḍik-kāṇam which was collected from the cultivators of these medicinal plants². The *sabhā* of each village appointed physicians for their village health maintenance and allotted share from the land known as *Vaidhyabhōga* for their benefit. The Velurpalayam plates mentions about *uḷḷi*, *iruvēli* (*veṭṭivēr*), *damanagam* and *sengalunir* plants which were used by the physicians to prepare Āyurvēdic medicine³.

Townships have developed around the centers of destitute and medicinal centers which were established in the temples. During the Chōla period the science of medicine had developed to the extent of establishing hospitals in the important cities of their empire. The hospitals were invariably referred to in the inscriptions as *athulasalai*, *vaidyasalai* or *arogyasalai*. They established these hospitals with expert doctors, nurses and other servants and equipped with sufficient medicines. These physicians and surgeons had the knowledge of serious diseases and the medicines, including surgery to cure them. The Chōla monarchs and the members of the royal families felt that providing hospital facilities to the poor was a charitable deed with religious merit and therefore they established free dispensaries for the benefit of the poor in various parts of their empire.

The inscription of KoilDevarajanpettai in Papanasam Taluk of tanjavur district is the earliest record giving reference to the existence of an *athulasalai*(hospital) at tanjavur.⁴ This was called Sundara Chōla VinnagaraAtulaSalai.⁵ The inscription of Rājendra Chōla I dated 1016 AD in the Sivayoganathar temple at Tiruvisalur provides the details regarding a grant of land and house to a physician to offer free medical service to the public.⁶

A very important inscription from a Vishṇu temple at Tirumukkudal near Kanchipuram

1 Minakshi, C., 1975, p. 173.

2 *Thirty Pallava Copper-plates, The Tamil VaralatuKazhagam*, Madras, 1966, p.168.

3 Minakshi, C., 1975, p. 175.

4 ARE No. 248 of 1923

5 ARE No. 36 of 1898

6 South Indian Inscriptions (SII) Vol XXIII, Nos. 350, 351

throws valuable light on the maintenance of a Vedic school and a hostel besides a well-equipped hospital named Viracolan (*Viracolanātular-sālai*) on account of a royal endowment. The record is issued in the 6th regnal year of the Chōla king ViraRājendra¹. This hospital was provided with fifteen beds, a physician (*vaitiyar*), a surgeon (*challiyakiriyai-pannuvān*), two assistants for fetching medicinal herbs, three persons for preparing medicines, two nurses (*maruntaṭumpentukal*), a barber (*nāvican*) and a waterman.² A detailed list of medicines supplied in the hospital is also mentioned in this epigraph. Apart from the above, a few others mentioned are cited in other inscriptions like *marutuvakuṭi* – doctors quarters or land given for the service of doctors³, *vishaviruṭinilan* – land allotted to grow medicinal herbs in a village⁴, *angavaitiyar* – surgeons⁵, *ārōkyasālai* – hospital⁶. The inscription also reveals a list of about 20 drugs stored up in the *athularsalai* in such quantities as to suffice the needs for one-year usage.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

The Tamil people had an excellent knowledge of the environment and its related issues. The *Tolkappiam* a Sangam literature (1st – 3rd c. CE) speaks about the five-fold classification of land by the Tamils. Each zone was known as *thiṇai* and it was described with its location and characteristics. The five zones were: *kurinji* – the hilly tract and its people are tribes (*kuravar*), *mullai* – the pastoral region and its people were herdsmen or nomads (*āyar*, *iṭayar*), *marutam* – the riverine plains and its people were agriculturists (*uḷavar*), *neital* – the coastal area and its people were fishermen (*paratavar*, *mēnavar*), *pālai* – the desert land and its people were bandits (*kaḷvar*)⁷. It is interesting to note that each one of the zone had its own flowers, trees, animals, Gods, water sources, etc.

This incredible knowledge of the environment continued to flourish during the medieval period and we get information on various kinds of lands, flowers, trees, water bodies, etc. in the epigraphical records. Apart from the administration systems, a few assemblies were created at the village level to look after the environmental resources. There were separate committees (*vāriam*) to look after the tanks, groves and gardens, called respectively *ēri-vāriyam* and *tōṭṭa-vāriyam*. Tanks, wells, streams and channels, common pastures etc., were considered as the common property of the village and the village assemblies looked after their maintenance⁸. For example, *ēri-paṭṭi* or *ēri-ceruvu* – land allocated for a water body should not be misused for any other purpose and this would be looked after by the *ēri-vāriya-perumakkal*⁹. The Uttiramerur inscription of Parantaka Chōla speaks about the above mentioned *vāriyams* and how the members should be selected. The Pāṇḍya inscription from Manur also lays down the rules and regulations of the members to be selected for these *vāriyams*¹⁰.

1 E.I. Vol. XXI. Ch. 38.

2 E.I. Vol. XXI, No. 38, pp 220-250

3 S.I.I., Vol. XIV. No.7

4 S.I.I., Vol. V. No. 260

5 S.I.I., Vol. XXII. No. 13

6 E.I. Vol. XXIV. No. 12a

7 Raman, K.V., 2005, *Ecological Traditions in Tamil literature and epigraphy*, Nanditha Krishna (Ed.), *Ecological Traditions of Tamilnadu*, Chennai, p. 16.

8 NilakandaSastri, K.A., 1955, *The Chōlas*, University of Madras, pp.494-496

9 Ibid.,p.496

10 Ibid.,p.495

We find that there are a few restrictions applied on growing plants and trees in the land and waterbodies. Epigraphs also refer to taxes implemented on these plants and trees which were permitted to grow in restricted areas. A licence tax called *kuvaḷainaṭuvāri* was charged and another tax called *kuvaḷikānam* on its sale. This may be perhaps its cultivation spoiled a good tank by rendering it marshy and dangerous for people to enter¹.

Tirunandavanam or *Nandavanam* is the general term given to garden in Tamil. The traditional methods of gardening have changed over a period of time and modernization has crept into it. It is further defined as a “planned ecology of living beings” from the artistic and aesthetic point of view in both urban and rural areas. Thus it runs in hand in hand with town planning since ancient times. In the past, this practice was taken up and carried by the kings with respective of the dynasties. We are getting references in the medieval inscriptions that the gardens were created and maintained by the subjects in the name of their rulers² and in the name of the presiding deity of the particular temple where the garden established in the temple land. In this traditional method of gardening, more than 100 plant species were grown and a good number of floras were protected. Most of the flowers grown in these gardens were used only for decorating the deity of the temple. Medicinal herbs and plants were also grown and protected in these *nandavanams* and proper care was taken to nurture plants.

METALLURGY

Though, we have few inscriptional evidences to metal images from the early Chōḷa period but there is an absence of detailed information in them, like, the composition of the metal such as, copper, gold and silver was used for making and the height and weight of the icon, iconographical descriptions such as the number of arms and the attributes in each of them. These information and descriptions are precisely mentioned from Rajaraja I inscriptions onwards.

There are more than 30 metal icons donated to Rajarajesvara temple as mentioned in the Tamil inscriptions. Rajaraja I also made two golden images, they are: (i) the Kolgaidēvar which was to be present (at) the sacred offerings (*sri-bali*) in his 325th day of 25th year and (ii) the Kshêtrapālādēvaron 318th day of his 26th year. The latter stands with four arms holding *sula*, *kapala*, *pasa* and the *damarukā* in his hands.

The Chōḷa bronze icons are very famous all over the world. The technology they followed to cast the bronze icons was an indigenous practice passed on hereditarily which was still in practice. There are two ways of casting metal images were practiced. One is hollow casting and the other is solid casting. There are references to both the methods in Chōḷa inscriptions of 11th c. CE describing the images gifted by kings to the temple as “*kanamagaēluntarulivita Candikesvararprasadadevar*”, which means Chandikēśvara image was cast solid and “*kanapollalakaceytarishapam*” which means a bull (*vahana* of Śiva) was cast hollow. The measurements they used to cast these icons are also well recorded in the inscriptions. The inscriptions further speak about the qualities required for these artisans in particular the iconometry skills.

Conclusion

The present study covered a vast span of six hundred years. This is an important period

1 Minakshi, C., 1975, p.174.

2 SII. II. p. 115)

in the history of Tamilnadu since three major dynasties like Pallava, Pāṇḍya and Chōḷa ruled with prosperity. The rich cultural and socio economic condition of this period is reflected in the epigraphical records of their period. The epigraphical data has huge source of information regarding the scientific and technical knowledge of the people of the Tamil country during that time. Apart from the agriculture and irrigation system which were the back born of the economic condition of the country other trades and crafts also flourished. Due to the overwhelming prosperity in the country the growth of art and architecture was patronised by the kings and other chieftains. Inscriptions studded on the walls of the huge temple complexes in Kanchipuram, Thanjavur, Madurai, Srirangam, Kumbakonam, Tiruvarur, Rameswaram, Tirunelveli etc., throw valuable light on the science and technology of the people.

These epigraphical contents related to science and technology should be written descriptively for each term correlating it with other similar terms. For example, the terms collected related to agricultural science and irrigation technology should be interpreted by explaining their meaning and their context of utilisation put together. While the technology of jewellery making is written, the specific terms related to metals, minerals, semiprecious stones etc., must be explained along with the nature of the ornament and how it will be used. However, it is important to mention about the artisans and craftsman referred in the inscription while writing about the technology.

Further a data bank should be created in a way that it will serve as a source for understanding the scientific and technical knowledge of the Tamil country. It will help the sChōḷars to further research on any particular topic of science and technology of ancient and medieval Tamilnadu. The literary references must also include in the final output for the better understanding of these terms.

Community involvement in temple patronage in Maharashtra (1000-1400 CE)

Anuradha K. Ranade

Abstract:

The aim of the present paper is to focus on the community involvement in temple patronage in Maharashtra based on the epigraphic data between 1100 and 1400 CE. I propose to confine myself to the study of donation patterns to the temples and temple Priests with some classic examples.

Keywords:

Bhakti movement, Epigraphs, Endowments, Guilds, Maharashtra, Temple priests.

The temples proved to be the nucleus of socio-cultural life of medieval Maharashtra in post-10th century CE. Present paper aims at focusing on 'temple' as the socio-cultural institution and the role of diverse groups of the community in patronizing the temple activities through land grants and endowments in cash and kind, during the period between 10th and 14th Centuries CE. Making of land grants and other charity endowments needed public interaction and deliberations. The inscriptions of this period and region reveal the involvement of diverse social groups and their interaction in fixing community grants.

Ever since idol worship gained prime importance in the religious life of the people, temples occupied an important position for its followers. Temple form and architecture in Maharashtra witnessed many transformations. The earliest form started with erection of rock cut cave-temples which was gradually replaced by the construction of temples. In spite of erection, temple complexes were built on sites which have religious or locational significance.

The temples proved to be the nucleus of socio-cultural life of medieval Maharashtra during the period under review. The temples are connected with religion, spiritual development of various sects and saintly traditions and traditional education.

Since the 12th Century CE., the Bhakti Movement had its influence on the religious development of Maharashtra. It strengthened the temple building activity. Religious activities received impetus and temple building activity and image worship became an essential part of the religion during this period. It received the royal patronage and popular support.

Building/creation of temple was considered an act of charity which brought merit. It was considered a Purtakarma. The temple in Maharashtra region, during the period under consideration seems to be the nucleus of all socio-cultural-religions activities. Usually, the temples were placed in charge of a priest whose duty was to worship the deity daily and to look after the lands and other endowments that were received by the temple.¹ The inscriptions during this period provide valuable information about the temples of various deities that were worshiped, the pooja of the deity performed therein, rites and rituals, donations and endowments made towards the institution of temple & the individuals like the priests and other employees associated with the temple & even

1 Ritti Shrinivas, The Seunas, Karnataka Univ. Dharwad, 1973, pp

their remuneration.¹ A detailed survey of the available epigraphic data gives a clear picture about the institution of temple and pattern of its patronage and the community involvement there in.

Besides these religious functions/activities, the temple seems to be an important institution which promoted learning and it served as a centre of learning. The Mathas were attached to the temples and were also the centres of primary education. However, occasionally they were also the centres of higher education².

Epigraphs were created to record the construction of a temple or its repair work, for which it received grants and donations. Such grants and charity endowments were also made to the individuals who were either directly or indirectly associated with the temple or religious activities. It proves that the institution of temple had strengthened during this period. The Vedic followers supported the institutions like the temples- Vedic and Jain the Mathas, the Agraharas, Bramhapuris, Jain Basadis etc. that was an essential part of contemporary religion and education. The temple based Bhakti movement and its Sanskrit educated priesthood was supported by members of ruling families as well as their functionaries, local administrators and private individuals. Sometimes, there are instances of making endowments in a corporate way by the villagers or mercantile guilds or the professional also. Similarly, records of the patronage to the Jain temples- Jinalayas during the period under review are available

As a matter of fact, for meeting requirements of the temple, donations in cash and kind were made. Interestingly, things required to maintain the institution of temple, regular supply of the necessary commodities was assured. These commodities were assigned to the religious institutions by levying taxes on such commodities that were brought to the market for sell. Since the trade activities were regularly arranged in the markets, the taxes too were collected regularly. Such taxes- both in cash and kind were assigned specially to the institution of temple and are recorded in inscriptions of the time.

It is assumed that whenever the donations were made to a particular institution- religious or educational, it could not have been possible without public participation. The consent of the people, who were active in supplying, required commodities on regular basis or making donations in cash, must have come together for the consultation, discussions must have taken place and the matter must have been finalized after public interaction.

The factual epigraphic data from this region throws a welcome light on the community involvement of diverse social groups in making the charity endowments. It informs us about pattern of donations and throw light on the meetings that were organized, people of diverse social groups participated in the discussion, the Public Trusts were established, funds were raised and the witness to check the authority of the trustees and other matters. The decision on the endowment pattern seems to be finalized only after it was accepted by all the participants, which needed strong social interaction.

Study of the epigraphic data during the period under review draws certain conclusions:

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- 1 Ranade Anuradha, "Temple Priest in Early Marathi Inscriptions" in Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, 61st Session, Kolkata, 2000-2001.
 - 2 Best examples of this type are: A Matha from Patan recorded in Patan Stone Inscription, Ru panarayana Basadi recorded in Kolhapur Stone Inscription

- That the temple building activity and image worship became an essential part of the Vedic religion.
- The rights and rituals were performed on a large scale which necessitated the priestly class. The temple priests enjoyed a high position in society due to the concentration of religious power.
- The temple priests were expected to perform rituals like *Shatkarma*, the *Abhishek*, *Panchamahayajnya*, *Panchopchar Pooja*, offering *Mahabhoga*, etc and epigraphic data shows that donations were made for these rituals as well as for the maintenance of the Priests.
- The temples and the temple priests who were engaged in temple activities received Royal patronage and the popular support. It was supported by the members of the ruling families, their functionaries, local administrators and even private individuals, lay devotees etc.
- Endowments were of different kinds such as land grants, cash and kind donations.
- The land donations were in different forms such as '*Kshetra*', (a plot/ field), 'Orchard' i.e. A field with horticultural plantations and a part of village or sometimes 'entire Village' (*Gramadana*) that was donated.
- Cash donations are recorded in inscriptions that throw light on contemporary coinages, currency system, and cash transactions of the time.
- Donations in kind included the items that were required for the institution of temple for which regular supply of commodities was assured by the community.

Land Donations:

The land donation was considered as an act of achieving high religion merit¹. Land donations in epigraphic records from Maharashtra can be categorized into three main types viz. donation of fields², village or villages³, and/or orchards⁴ i.e. horticultural plantations.

Making Land grants⁵ and other charity endowments was a significant area of public interaction of diverse social groups. An important feature of the land grant was that whenever a field or an orchard was donated, generally they were made tax free and the income received from that was diverted to the temple deity and/ or temple priest. Whatever type of land grant may be, eight types of income were assigned to the donee from that land. These were: 'Nidhi', 'Nikshep', 'Jala', 'Pashana' 'Akshini', 'Agami', 'Siddha' and 'Sadhya'⁶

Sometimes, royal donations were received/ entrusted the the guilds(nagara). The members

1 Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, Vol. VI, edited by Mirashi, V. V. Insc. No. 5.

2 Field donations are recorded in the Marathi inscriptions from Ranjali, Lonad, Jalgaon etc. (Prachin Marathi Koriv Lekh, A corpus of Marathi Inscriptions by S.G. Tulpule, Pune University publication, 1963, Insc. No. 7, 14, 18.

3 Village donations are known from a number of inscriptions. For instance, Insc. From Agasan, Pallika, PMKL, No. 46, 54.

4 Donation of orchards referred to as Aramaka, Wadi, Mala etc. are recorded in Stone Inscriptions from Parel, Mahul, Ranjali, Lonad etc. PMKL< Insc. No. 7, 14, 16.

8 Mirashi, V.V., Shilahar Rajvanshacha Itihas ani Koriv lekh, Lonad Inscription of Aparaditya, II dated 1184 CE.

6 Panse, M.G., Yadavkalin Maharashtra, PP. 90-91.

of the guilds looked after its proper utilization. For instance, Bhadan Copper Plate Charter¹ records such royal grant to the temple of Lonaditya which was entrusted with the guild of Gunapura. The members of the guild seem to be involved in the maintenance of the grant.

Whenever a village was donated, it meant that the revenues received from that particular village were to be enjoyed by the temple institution and / or the temple priest.² For instance, village grants are recorded in the inscriptions from Lonad, Akshi, Thane etc.³

Endowments in cash (with reference to currency)

The cash endowments also were given to the temples and the priests various currencies / coins case recorded therein. These are ‘Dramma’, ‘Poruthhti Dramma’, ‘Dama’, ‘Visov’ i.e. 1/20th part of a coin, ‘Gadyana’, ‘Suvana Gadyana’ etc⁴. Stone inscriptions from Chanje, Koprad, Mahul etc. record donation in Dramma. Along with Dramma, Lonad S.I.⁵ records donation of some 162 poruthithi Dramma too. Chanje S.I.⁶ of Shilahara Someshwara dated 1260 CE records donation of Poruththi Dramma along with the land grant.

Thane Copper plates inscription⁷ of Apraditya- II records donation in cash to Somnatha temple in Saurashtra. It records that 4 drammas from the income of an orchard in Sthankiya Pattana to be given to deity Somnatha (at the performance of each Pooja of deity Somnath) and another 24Drammas from the income of the Paddy field, specifically for performing pooja of somnathdeva at five auspicious occasions viz Chaitrik (*Chaitra Sankrant*) Pavitrik (offering coral to Bhagvan Shankara) Shivaratri, Dakshinayana & Uttrayana.

Endowments in form of Necessary Commodities:

Donations in kind included the items that were required for the institution of temple for which regular supply of commodities was assured by the community. At many instances we see that regular supply of the necessary commodities was provided to the temples for the deities and the temple priests and workers and its associated institutions like the Mathas, Pathashalas. Such commodities included flowers, leaves, food items like oil, grains, vegetables, betel leaves and nuts, etc. Other items were utensils for performing pooja and cooking food, cotton for lighting lamp, bamboo objects, shoes, clothes and all other things needed by the temples for the rituals and its staff.

Temple Activities: Routine and Occasional:

It will be interesting to know the temple activities during the period under review. Epigraphic data shows that the very essence of the temples activities was image worship, performing daily rituals and occasional rites.

1 Mirashi, V.V., Insc. No. 7

2 Prachin Marathi Koriv Lekh, A Corpus of Marathi Inscriptions edited by S. G. Tulpule, Insc. Nos. 1, 14, 39, 46 etc. Also see Bhadan Copper Plate Charter of Shilahara Aparaditya of CE 997, Mirashi V.V., op. cit. Insc. No. 7.

3 PMKL, Insc. No. 14, 15.

4 Stone inscriptions from Chanje, Koprad Mahul, Lonad, in “Prachin Marathi Koriv Lekh” a corpus edited by S.G.Tulpule,,Pune University Publication,Pune 1963.

5 PMKL, Insc. No.

6 PMKL Insc. No. 33

7 Inscription dated 1185 CE, in Mirashi, V.V. op.cit., Insc. No. 31.

Performing daily rituals and occasional rites seems to be the activity undertaken by temples on top priority. In fact, the very essence of the temples was image worship. Hence, the utmost care was taken to perform these rituals. The rituals were known as 'Ulig' meaning an assigned task and are recorded in the inscriptions. The Marathi inscriptions provide information about a number of rituals such as:

1. Nhavana, i.e. a ritual bath.
2. Abhishek: It is also a ritual bath given to god and continues for longer time.
3. Deep, Lighting a lamp.
4. Gandha: Putting a holy symbol on deity.
5. Pardi: Offering the leaves of the medicinal plants to the deity.
6. Wausar : Offering a flower garland to the deity.
7. Dhoopa: Burning incense.
8. Nandadeep: Another kind of lamp lighted for the deity (generally lighted continuously).
9. Naivedya / Bone: It is the fresh food cooked auspiciously.
10. Tambula: Offering the betel leaves with betel nuts to the deity after the Naivedya, [which was eaten by the priest].
11. Aarti: Waving the lamp round deity and singing a prayer in praise of God.

Almost all the activities of the temple including temple rituals were patronized. An interesting feature of these rituals was that for their performance, grants of land and endowments of, cash and kind were made. Generally land grants were made permanently and the income received from it was to be utilized for the temple. The cash endowments were generally invested in the trust and the trustees looked after that and looked after its maintenance and utilization.¹

Endowments were also made for some other rites that were performed occasionally. The inscriptions of the time record such rites viz. 'Agnishtika'², 'Bodan'³ of Goddess Mahalaxmi, 'Pancha Mahayajna',⁴ Abhishek⁵ of the deity on some auspicious day etc.

The maintenance of the endowments and land grants received by the temples was an important task of the temple authorities. Cultivating land personally seems to be difficult for the priests, hence these must have been cultivated by others on behalf of the temple and the temples must have received partial income. In this regard we get a clue from Velus Stone inscription⁶. It mentions a *samadat* type donation meaning the endowment was made jointly by all the villagers. Interestingly, donation was made by six important persons of the village viz. Mai Shenvi, Hari Sawant Kum Nayak, Durg Sawant, Jakhan Sawant and Kal Sawant. It records that the vilagers of Mansarwade in Athwade division made a samadat type donation. The donation for the deity Rawalnath was:

1 Stone Insc. from Ambejogai, PMKL, Insc. No. 5, also see details in Ranade Anuradha, 'Temple Prist in Early Marathi Inscriptions, in Proceedings of Indian History Congress, 61st Session, Kolkata, 200-2001.

2 Talale CPI of Shilahara Gandaraditya, Mirashi, V.V., op.cit, p.252

3 PMKL, Insc. No. 1

4 'Bali', 'Charu', 'Vaishvadev', 'Agnihotra' and 'Atithi Poojan'.

5 Bandode Stone Insc. , PMKL, Insc. No. 59.

6 PMKL, Insc. No. 58,

- One gadyana (a gold coin) per year.
- Total income 30 *tankas* (coins) the specifications of its use are as follows:
 - i. 04 *tankas* for the *naivedya* to be offered at night.
 - ii. 6 *tankas* for *nandadeep*(lighting the continuous lamp. 1.5 *tankas* for for offering the betelnuts and betel leaves).
 - iii. 6 *tankas* for the *pujari* (the temple priest).
 - iv. 6 *tankas* for Dhuwali (the washerman).
 - v. 3.5 *tankas* for the Bhavin (the temple female artist/dancer) 1.5 *tankas* for Uli (the temple worker/servant)
 - vi. ½ *tankas* for *parvani* (to be spent on an auspicious day)
- This inscription also mentions that these villagers also took a joint decision to provide vethi i.e. the volunteer service (unpaid labour) for the temple of Ravalnath.
- This donation pattern informs us that the entire village community was involved in making donation to the temple of Rawalnath. Further it suggests, that without discussing with the village authorities, and the villagers it would not have been possible to fix the pattern of donation. The community involvement in making joint donation is clearly seen. More interesting fact is the reference of vethi, by which the voluntary services (unpaid labour) were assured by the villagers for the temple activities, whenever necessary.

It is understood from the inscriptions that whenever the donations were made by a particular village or a group of people and regular supply of the necessary cash or commodities were assigned towards a religious institution (religious or educational), it could not have been possible without the consent of the concerned members of the community. The consent of the people who were active in supplying these commodities or cash endowments must have come together for the consultations, discussions must have taken place and the matter must have been finalized after public interaction. This view is supported by a number of inscriptions in Maharashtra region during the period under review.

1. An example: Miraj Stone inscription of Vijayaditya dated Shaka era 1065, corresponding to January 1144 CE. Clearly mentions that the chief traders of the Veeravananju mercantile guild who were residents of Mirinje, Bage, Donikod, Tolakale, Kundili and Sedambal came together in a general assembly. They discussed about the pattern of endowments as the patronage to the temple of Madhaveshwara which was established by Madirajayya, the Mahaprabhu of Sedambal. In this meeting the decision was taken that the taxes levied on the commodities sold in the market of the said village were donated to the temple deity. Besides this inscription also records some other donations in cash and kind by the local merchants, the citizens and the mercantile guilds of the sedambal, the taxes were levied on oil pressers, corn dealers, traders of clarified butter betelnuts and betel leaves, cotton etc.

The inscription also records the donations to be made to the temple for specific occasion:

- For the chaitra festival the citizens were to give one gold coin, *hug* for each marriage ceremony that was performed in the city.

- In Diwali festival, for lighting the lamps, each member of the local mercantile guild was to offer one gold coin (*hug*).
 - The Cobblers were to give one pair of shoes twice a year.
 - The Buruds (the bamboo workers) were expected to give one Moru at each fair etc.
 - Besides, One Bhayipayya Nayak, the Chief Minister(Mahpradhan) as well as the Chief Revenue officer of Mahamandaleshwar and Malappayya Nayak the Chief Superintendent of the Mirinje Market had offered certain taxes for the rituals to be performed in the temple of Madhaveshwara at Sedambal. These were levied on the products sold in the market and were to be spent on the auspicious day of Shivaratri. These were:
 - i. The Oil Pressers and shop keepers were to give the house tax and one ghada of oil,
 - ii. One Pomma on the each batch of betel leaves, and 150 good quality belelnuts on its each bundle brought in the market.
 - iii. Corn dealers were to give octroi and half portion of other taxes
 - iv Also the revenue officers were to share 1/8th part of the gold coin (of their salary).
2. **Similar pattern of the endowments** made towards a religious institution viz. the Rupanarayana Basadi is seen in Kolhapur Stone inscription. This Basadi was greatly supported by the Ruling authority as well as the Ayyavolepura Veeravananju guild, the Sethis, the merchants ,shopkeepers and other professionals and also prominent dignitaries in the society. For the provision of endowment, taxes were levied on the commodities that were sold in the village market. These levies were both in cash and kind on a variety of products sold in the market. We also read about some levies on the articles sold in each shop of cloth merchant and the gold smith. The levies in kind are often mentioned in terms of differing units of cartloadsand head loads denoting small scale and large scale traders.

The most interesting part of this inscription is mention of a joint meeting of number of social groups for finalizing these levies. It mentions that the corporation consisting of Gavares, Gatriyas, Sethis, Settiguttas, the Gavundas of a number of villages, Gavundaswamins, prominent traders and merchants of Kolhapur, Mirinje, and Baleyavatiana, Chief of Torambage, the Manager of Mayisige, the Sheriff of Kavadegolla and the Royal merachant Rajashreshthin had their joint meeting in which levies were fixed on the articles sold in the market and on the shopkeepers of the village. It was neither the sole decision of the Ayyavole guild, nor of the ruling authority. It appears to be the united decision of the diverse social groups as mentioned earlier. In this meeting the chief priest of the temple from Kundipattana was also present and for the Royal confirmation, the Rajshreshthi of Shilahara ruler Gandaraditya remained present. The final decision was consented by all these members.

3. Yet another interesting example of the community involvement in temple patronage can be given from the Chikurde Copper Plate inscription. It records a charity endowment of a land to Mulasthandeva measuring 2000 hands (a measurement). It was made by Chalukya ruler Janamejaya in village Baliyawad and Chikalwad. The Land was made tax free and was received by one Rama Gavunda. It gives the details of many other cash and kind donations.

Most interesting part of this record is that it clearly mentions contribution of members of different strata of the society in making land grants (besides above mentioned land grants). The land to the temple was donated by the multi caste people as follows:

		Land of Mulasthandeva	400 hata (a measurement of one hand)
	1.	Swar	200 hata
	2.	Gundrana	600 hata
	3.	Bhavaka (a temple artist)	300 hata
	4.	Bhalari caste people	200 hata
	5.	Devadasi (female temple artist)	200 hata
	6.	Meji (Mechak or Shabar tribes)	200 hata
	7.	Brahmana (the priest)	100 hata
	8.	Sonar (the goldsmith)	100 hata
	9.	Khati (Kshatriya)	300 hata
	10.	Parit (the washer man)	100 hata
	11.	Nhavi (the barber)	200 hata
	12.	Darvanji (meaning not clear)	200 hata
	13.	Medium fertile land of(unknown)	200 hata
	14.	Malayichi (Tarva.....)	200 hata
	15.	Mali (the gardener)	200 hata
	16.	Kshetraja (the farmer)	100 hata
	17.	Anamik-antyaja (the Shudra by caste)	100 hata

The inscription clearly shows that all these social groups owned the land and some part of that was given as an endowment. Such a decision might have taken unanimously by all these people that evidence the strong social interaction within the village and thus the community involvement in temple patronage. .

Thus, making of land grants and other charity endowments proves public interaction and deliberations. The inscriptions of this period reveal the involvement of diverse social groups, strong social interaction and the community involvement among the guilds, the Sethis and the Mahajanas merchants, shopkeepers various other professionals and even petty commodity vendors, Trusts and the trustees, witnesses and even lay devotees. There are examples to show how the commodities brought in the markets for sell were levied specially for patronizing the temple activities. For fixing levies a great deal of interaction among diverse social groups was witnessed.

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Method of transliteration

Vowels

अ	a
आ	ā
इ	i
ई	ī
उ	u
ऊ	ū
ऋ	r̥

क	ka	च	cha	ट	ṭa
ख	kha	छ	chha	ठ	ṭha
ग	ga	ज	ja	ड	ḍa
घ	gha	झ	jha	ढ	ḍha
ङ	ṅa	ञ	ña	ण	ṇa
य	ya	श	śa		

Consonants

त	ta	प	pa
थ	tha	फ	pha
द	da	ब	ba
ध	dha	भ	bha
न	na	म	ma

ए	e	र	ra	ष	sha
	ē		ṛa	स	sa
ऐ	ai	ल	la	ह	ha
ओ	o	ळ	ḷa		
	ō		ḷa		
औ	au	व	va		
.	m̐				
:	ḥ				

Illustrations - Tables, Figures and Plates

Each table should be cited in the text (Table - 1). The title and headings of the table should be included with each table and must be in bold.

Figures include line drawings, graphs and maps, must be cited in text as Fig. 1 (in bold) and include a caption. For example Fig. 1: Map locating findspot of the inscriptions.

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