

JOURNAL
OF
THE EPIGRAPHICAL SOCIETY OF INDIA
(BHĀRĀTĪYA PURĀBHILĒKHA PATRIKĀ)

[Being Vol. XXIII of Studies in Indian Epigraphy]

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Madhu N. Kulk

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EDITORIAL

It is with a sense of fulfilment that we are placing in the hands of our members the 23rd volume of our journal on the occasion of the 23rd Annual Congress of the Society. That, even in the face of steady increase in the cost of paper and printing, the Society has been able to bring out this annual issue without any break is no mean achievement. This is in no small measure due to the encouragement and support we have received from the members of the Executive Committee as well as the members of the Society.

One other major factor which has helped the Society maintain this regularity in publication is our friend and sympathiser Shri S.K.Lakshminarayana(Babu), our printer from the days of the Society's inception, who has been undertaking this job irrespective of whether the Society has been able to clear his bills or not. In fact, over the years a huge arrears of over Rs.40,000/- had been built up and there appeared to be no immediate prospects of clearing these arrears. However, Shri Babu accepted a payment of Rs.20,000/- and largeheartedly offered to waive the balance amount of over Rs.20,000/-. On behalf of the Office-bearers, Executive Committee as well as all the members of our Society and on our own behalf, we would like to record here our sincere thanks and gratitude to Shri S.K.Lakshminarayana. Besides, more than half the number of our Society's Office-bearers and Executive Committee members had positively responded to our request for donations of Rs.500/- and above which went a long way in arriving at this happy arrangement.

On behalf of the Society we also express our sincere thanks and gratitude to our respected Vice-Chairman Prof.Ajay Mitra Shastry for his generous donation of Rs.20,000/- which has been kept as an endowment the interest on which is to be spent in the printing of our journal.

While still on the subject of the Society's finances we would like to thank our Treasurer, Shri P.Natarajan who, ever since he assumed the responsibility, has been presenting us with duly audited statements of accounts. Through his initiative we have also registered an all time high in enrollment of Life Members and in the sale of our journals. We take this opportunity to thank our Auditor Shri K.R.Lakshminish of Muthanna & Co.

It is for the second time that the Society's Annual Congress is being held at Thanjavur, the 17th Congress having been earlier held in Feb.,1991 at the same venue, also under the auspices of the Tamil University and its Dept. of Epigraphy. We record here the Society's

sincere thanks to the Tamil University's Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor and to Prof.Pulavar S. Raju and Prof.Y.Subbarayalu and all their colleagues for this renewed gesture of academic hospitality.

We deeply regret the sad and unexpected demise of three of our Life Members, Prof.R.N.Mehta of Vadodara, who had earned universal respect from scholars and students alike, Dr.B.Vasantha Shetty of Brahmavar (Karnataka) who has been most cruelly snatched away from our midst at the height of his academic ventures and at a young age and Dr.Raghu Singhji of Sitamai, who had been an avid reader of our journal.

We are deeply grateful to our Chairman Dr.S. H. Ritti for his guidance, abiding interest and help. We are extremely thankful to Dr.S.S. Iyer, who needs no introduction to our members, for helping us in correcting the proofs and in other ways.

We would be failing in our duty if we do not thank Shri.S.K.Lakshminaraya, Readyprint, and his staff, particularly Mr.Manjunath, Ms. Yashodha and Mr. Shyam for accomplishing a good job on time.

We conclude as usual with the Society's motto 'vridhdhir=astu', may there be all round progress.

K.V.Ramesh
(Secretary & Executive Editor)

M.D.Sampath
(Editor)

Presidential Address

Y.Subbarayalu

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

First of all I wish to convey my profound thanks and gratitude to the Executive Committee and members of the Epigraphical Society of India for having given me this rare opportunity of presiding over this year's session. I take this honour as conferred on me more due to my long association with the Society than to any special merits on my part. I also consider it as a recognition given to the Tamil University which is one of the few institutions in the country specializing in Epigraphy. During the two decades and odd of its continuous existence, the Society has done a commendable job of bringing together both professional epigraphists and amateurs for exchange of views and propagation of information regarding new discoveries and ideas. At the same time I may share the view expressed by several scholars on this platform that there has been only a negative growth in several of our premier institutions devoted to Epigraphy during the past several years and the species of devoted professional epigraphists is fast decreasing as there are no encouraging opportunities for young aspirants to join and get proper training from elder professionals. This dismal trend must be arrested and I hope the Epigraphical Society of India has a crucial role to play in this regard.

During the past two decades some big projects were launched in the field of epigraphy, regional as well as pan-Indian. One is the UGC-sponsored project for preparation of a Topographical List of Inscriptions of India, region-wise, upto A.D. 1300 which was carried out in four centres, Calcutta, Nagpur, Mysore and Madras during the 1960s. Only the work of Madras centre done under the direction of Prof.T.V. Mahalingam, covering the states of Tamil Nadu and Kerala, has been published under the auspices of the Indian Council of Historical Research. The works carried out in the other centres are yet to be published. Then, the ambitious project of revising and republishing the *Epigraphia Carnatica* series went on well for several years and eight volumes have been published. Now the work is stuck at an advanced stage. Let us hope that at least the proposed volumes on the *Topographical List of Vijayanagara Inscriptions* prepared by Dr.B.R.Gopal and his team will be published in full by the Department of Archaeology and Museums, Mysore. Three of those volumes pertaining to the Kannada part are already in our hands. The ICHR had been promoting the publication of texts and translations of inscriptions of some select areas and dynasties. To crown it all it launched a massive

project to prepare a Dictionary of Social, Economic and Administrative Terms in Indian/South Asian Inscriptions covering all languages, Sanskritic, Dravidian and Perso-Arabic. Unfortunately it is also stuck somewhere. We have to admit that there are some inbuilt weaknesses both in our institutions and personalities. We have to overcome these weaknesses for any meaningful growth in the intellectual fields.

I am not competent to survey all the latest epigraphical discoveries in various parts of India. A comprehensive survey of the discoveries during the past one decade has been prepared by Sri M.N. Katti, Director for Epigraphy, Archaeological Survey of India and it may soon be published. One thing that is very striking is that publications both by the ASI and other institutions are not keeping pace with the discoveries. Conferences and seminars of this kind are giving some scope for publications. But that is not sufficient. In this connection I am happy to inform you that the Tamil Nadu Archaeological Society, started some years back, is bringing out a regular annual journal called *Āvaṇam* to encourage publication of inscriptions, paper records and archaeological finds discovered by the professionals as well as by those who work outside the narrow confines of the government and academic institutions. The response has been quite encouraging. Such ventures may supplement the work of the premier institutions in other parts of the country as well.

Now I wish to discuss a few problems in the study of the much talked-about merchant guilds of South India. There are several articles and a few monographs on the merchant guilds by K.A.Nilakanta Sastri (1932), K.R.Venkatarama Ayyar (1947), P.B.Desai (1959), G.S.Dikshit (1959, 1964), K.Sundaram (1968), Wijetunga (1968), Elankulam Kunjan Pillai (1970), K.Indrapala (1971), S.Guru-rajachar (1974), Kenneth R.Hall (1980), R.Champakalakshmi (1986) and Meera Abraham (1988). Most of them, of course, derive their data and ideas from several inscriptions and from the learned editorial comments on those inscriptions by the leading Epigraphists, J.F.Fleet, E.Hultzsch, V.Venkayya, T.A.Gopinatha Rao, K.V.Subrahmanya Aiyer, D.C.Sircar and a few others.

The discussion on the trade guilds started as early as 1844 when Rev.H.Gundert, who may be considered as one of our pioneer epigraphists, published some Chēra copper plates in the possession of the Jewish Synagogue of Cochin and the Syrian Christian Church of Kottayam. In the next stage, J.F.Fleet published a series of Kannada inscriptions relating to the Ayyāvoḷe guild in the early volumes of *Indian Antiquary* during 1870s and 1880s. This was followed up by articles in the volumes of *Epigraphia Indica* by E.Hultzsch and V.Venkayya and simultaneously by the publication of the monumental series of *Epigraphia Carnatica* between 1886 and 1904 by Lewis Rice. That means most of the major epigraphical discoveries had been made by the first decade of this century. Some

additional clarifications were made by T.A.Gopinatha Rao's re-edition of two of the Chēra copper plates (*TAS.*,II) and some elaborate note on the *maṇigrāmam* by the same scholar in *EI.*,XVII. A review of the data on *añjuvaṇṇam* and *maṇigrāmam* was also made by Venkoba Rao in *ARE.*,1926-27.

The first article on the guild by a historian, so to say, is that by K.A.Nilakanta Sastri (1932) on the Tamil Ayyāvoḷe inscription in Sumatra and that article is easily the most quoted one in research works on South India. After a long gap, the latest epigraphical note on *hañjamāna/añjuvaṇṇam* was made by D.C.Sircar in *EI.*,XXXV (1962-64) which was later criticized by K.V.Ramesh (1970). Most other writings by scholars who are more historians than epigraphists were published during 1970s and 1980s, with the exception of an interesting and trend-setting article by Burton Stein in 1965. That is a brief overview of the historiography of the merchant guilds of South India. In spite of such long interest shown on this problem, there are still several things that are not properly explained or understood. That is partly due to the gaps in our epigraphical evidence and partly due to the uncritical repetition of certain points made by the first writers. Let me explain this observation with reference to two terms, namely *vēḷāvura* and *añjuvaṇṇam*.

The term *vēḷāvura* (*vēḷāpura* is a variant) is mentioned in the *prasasti* or eulogy part of the Ayyāvoḷe inscriptions

in Kannada as follows :

- 1) *vīrabalaṃja-dharma-pratipāḷana viśuddha-guḍḍadhvaḷa-virājamān=ānūna-sāhasa-vīra-lakshmi-līṅgita-vakshsthaḷa bhuvana-parākram-ōnnata Vāsudēva-khaṇḍali-Mūlabhadra-vaṃsōdbhavarum Bhagavatīdēvī-labdha-vara-prasādam-āge dvātrimśa-vēḷāvuram= ashtādaśa-paṭṭaṇamum chaushashtiyōga-pīṭhamum chatur-ddesey-āśrimamum nānādēs-ābhyavantaradavargge (IA, X, pp. 185-90, no.xcxvi, ll.26ff).*
- 2) *dvātrimśat-vēḷāvuramum= ashtādaśa paṭṭaṇamum chaushashtiyōga-pīṭhamum=aruvattanālku-ghatikā-sthānamum nānādēs-ābhyantaradagavare-gātrigarum seṭṭiyarum seṭṭi-guttarum (IA., XIV, p.19, ll.60ff).*

J.F.Fleet is the first scholar who explained *vēḷāpura* as denoting seaside town (*IA.*, X, 1881), p.189). But he added a question mark to his translation; perhaps he had some doubts over it. Four years later, K.B.Pathak took the term *vēḷāvura* (variant of *vēḷāpura*) definitely as seaside town while editing an old Kannada inscription from Tērdāl (*IA.*, XIV, p.25)¹ and added a note that *vēḷāvura* is the same as *vēḷā-nagara* referred to in *Rājavyavahāra-kōśa*. Actually this term should have denoted the harbour or seaport and has another synonym in *vēḷākula* or *vēḷākūla* which is found mentioned in the inscriptions of northern Koṅkan (*EI.*, XXXI, p.12 ff, XXXII,

p.47).

The curious thing is that the world *vēlāpura* which occurs in a few Tamil inscriptions has been consistently misread as *veḷarpuram* and emended into *vaḷarpuram* to mean 'growing' or 'prosperous' town (*SII.*, VII, No.442; *ARE.*, 1912-13). Actually this discrepancy was not realized by me until Prof. Karashima and his team rediscovered the famous Barus inscription intact in the National Museum, Jakarta in December 1993. This inscription (see Appendix) when fully deciphered yielded the passage 'Vārōś-āṇa Dēśi Uyyakkoṇḍa-paṭṭiṇattu vēlāpurattu' meaning 'at Vēlāpuram in Vārōśu *alias* Dēśi Uyyakkoṇḍapaṭṭiṇam'. Of course in Tamil inscriptions, *vēlāpuram* could be read as *veḷarpuram* or *vēlāpuram* also as the medial sign for 'ā' and the letter for 'r' are almost identical and can easily be mistaken one for the other. In all the known occurrences of *vēlāpuram* in Tamil inscriptions it could be read either way. But *veḷarpuram* or *vēlāpuram* defies any meaningful interpretation. Anyway the tantalizing problem is now solved by referring to Kannada inscriptions.² Unlike the '*paṭṭiṇam*' which have some specific names, the *vēlāpuram* do not seem to have names; perhaps they existed mostly as adjuncts to the *paṭṭiṇams* on the seashore, as evidenced in the Barus inscription.

The term *añjuvaṇṇam* (or *añchuvāṇṇam*) was first noticed in the Chēra copper-plate grants edited by Gundert. In one of them, the word occurs along with *maṇigrāmam* (*maṇikkirāmam*). Gun-

dert thought that these two names stood for the Jewish and Christian principalities or corporate bodies of those two communities. V.Venkayya and T.A.Gopinatha Rao, who re-edited these records, did not concur with Gundert's view. Venkayya took the two bodies as just semi-independent trading corporations like the Vaḷaṇṇiyar (*EI.*, IV, pp.293-4). Gopinatha Rao on the other hand thought that *añjuvaṇṇam* in all probability stood for the five servicing communities assigned to the Christian church, viz., *īḷavar*, *tachchar*, *vellālar*, *vaṇṇār*, and one more (name lost) (*TAS.*, II, p.74). Later in an elaborate note he argued that *maṇigrāmam* could only be a Hindu trading corporation (*EI.*, XVII, pp.69-73). D.C.Sircar first thought that *hañjamāna/añjuvaṇṇam* could have denoted a colony of Parsees (*EI.*, XXXII, p.48), but later he rejected that view as implausible and instead he took the term as equivalent to *pañcha-kammālar* (the five artisans). Actually this idea was first proposed by E.Hultsch in a casual way while re-editing the Jewish copper-plate grant :

'The object of the grant was *Añjuvaṇṇam*. This word means "the five castes" and may have been the designation of that quarter of Cranganore in which the five classes of artisans - *aṅkammālar*, as they are called in the smaller Kottayam grant - resided' (*EI.*, III, pp.67-8).

Hultsch is certainly mistaken in this regard, as in the said smaller Kottayam

grant (re-edited by Venkayya in *EL*,IV) the 'aiṅkammālar' are given as slaves to a merchant leader who was honoured with the title of *maṅigrāmam*. On the other hand *aṅjuvaṇṇam* and *maṅigrāmam* are found in the Chēra copper plates as two independent bodies enjoying a number of trading rights at Kollam and themselves dealing in slaves also. A brief analysis of these copper plates may be in order here.

Of the two earlier grants in possession of the Syrian Christian church at Kottayam, the first one dated in the 5th regnal year of Sthānu Ravi (i.e. A.D. 849) records that the Vēnāḍu chief Ayyanaḍigal Tiruvaḍi gave a charter assigning certain *īlava* and *vaṇṇār* tenants or serfs (*kuḍi*) to *Tarisā-palli*, obviously the Christian church built at Kurakkēni-Kollam by the efforts of one Maruvān Sapīriśo. These serfs were relieved of some tax encumbrances and permitted to enter the fort and market area for carrying on their duties. The *palli* (church) was given the right to enjoy all taxes and also the right to keep the measuring instruments (*pārkkōl*, *kappān* and *pañchakkanti*), which right had been the prerogative of the donor-chief until then. The grant was made in the assembly of some dignitaries, officials and *aṅjuvaṇṇam*. Perhaps *maṅigrāmam* was also present then (the name is mutilated and illegible).

The beginning portion of the second grant containing the name of the king and date is missing. From other details and the names of the donor and the donee, etc., this should be put close to

the above one. Actually it purports to make some additional grant to the same *Tarisā-palli*. Some more serfs or tenants in the form of carpenters (*tachchar*) and cultivators (*vellālar*) were assigned to the church and some demarcated land was gifted for the supply of oil. The *palli* was given the right to punish itself its erring serfs. The officials ('our men') were warned not to interfere in those matters. The bodies called *aṅunūruvar* ('the six hundred'), *aṅjuvaṇṇam* and *maṅigrāmam* were asked to protect the *palli* and its landed property as per the charter.

From line 25 the second part of the grant is recorded. That concerns a grant of the '72 rights and privileges' (*vidupēru*) to both the *aṅjuvaṇṇam* and *maṅigrāmam* as follows :

- 1) Remission of one-sixtieth part of the customs duty (that they had been paying to the government).
- 2) No poll tax on the slaves taken or purchased by them.
- 3) They can collect 8 *kāsu* on both incoming and outgoing merchandise transported by carts and 4 *kāsu* on those transported by ships and boats.
- 4) Only in their presence should be done the fixing of the customs duty and the fixing of prices for the merchandise.
- 5) The two bodies shall make daily the accounts of the collection of customs duty.
- 6) They can receive one-tenth part of

the rent (*pati-patavāram*) on the lands let on *kārāṇmai* within the four gates (of the town).

- 7) They are permitted to carry on elephants the purificatory water (*maṇṇu-nīr*) for their rituals.
- 8) If they feel wronged (by the government people) they can get it redressed by stopping the payment of customs duty and measuring fees (*tulākkūli*).
- 9) They alone can enquire the crimes committed by their members.

Thus the *añjuvaṇṇam* and *maṇigrāmam* became the rightful *kārālar* (tenants) of the *nagaram* and they were to act always together. Sapīrīśo, who is said to have established the *nagaram* by a king's charter (*nīrērravar*), was permitted to use the measuring instruments (*pārkkōl* and *pañchakaṇṭi*) being possessed by the *palli* and (instead) pay the measuring fees to the *palli*.

This fairly long summary is purposely given here to show that *añjuvaṇṇam* and *maṇigrāmam* were important trading bodies, responsible for collection and remission of customs duty and for fixing the sale prices of merchandise. They were granted the customary (seventy-two) rights and privileges by the ruler of the area. The relation between Sapīrīśo and the two bodies is not so clear but it should be very close as the former is said to be the founder of the *nagaram* and the latter, the 'tenants' of the *nagaram*. It should, however, be stressed that the *palli* is only a beneficiary and had nothing

to do with the trade as interpreted by M.G.S. Narayanan (1972: pp.35-6). The second part of the grant is very clear in this regard. It seems M.G.S.Narayanan and his mentor Elankulam Kunjan Pillai (1970, pp.370ff) were misled by Gopinatha Rao's introduction to the text, which is somewhat ambiguous and different from his own correct translation.

The 'seventy-two' rights and privileges are again mentioned in the Cochin Jewish copper plate of Bhāskara Ravi I (A.D.1000). There one Issuppu Irappān, i.e. Joseph Rabban, obviously a Jewish merchant, was granted (the title of) *añjuvaṇṇam*, the use (?) of boats and vehicles, the *añjuvaṇṇam* rights, the use of torch in daytime, decorative cloth, palanquin, etc. He was exempted from payment of duties and weighing fees. Though brief, it is in the same vein as the Syrian Christian grant. We may not be wrong to say that Maruvān Sapīrīśo and Joseph Rabban were the chief merchants of the respective towns, like the *paṭṭaṇasvāmi* in Ayyāvoḷe inscriptions.

All said, what is there to recognize *añjuvaṇṇam* and *maṇigrāmam* respectively as Jewish and Christian bodies. It is only the possession of the above copper plates by the present owners, respectively a Jewish synogogue (at Cochin) and a Syrian Christian church (at Kottayam), that directly prompts the above identification. This fact was stressed by Venkayya while editing the Kottayam grant of Vīra Rāghava (c.1220) (*EI.*, IV, p.290 ff). At the same time the signatures in Pahlavi, Arabic and

Hebrew scripts given by several persons at the end of second Syrian Christian grant cannot be ignored lightly. Those signatures would suggest that there was a mixed population of west Asian traders, consisting of Jews, Arab Muslims and Christians and Persians at Kollam in the 9th century.

In the case of *maṇigrāmam*, however, it could only be a body of indigenous merchants as it is found very much rooted in various interior places like Rāmantaḷi and Taḷakkāḍu in Kerala, Koḍumbālūr, Uṛaiyūr, Śrīnivāsanallūr, etc. in Tamil Nadu. This aspect has been thoroughly discussed by Gopinatha Rao and others.

Before reverting back to *añjuvaṇṇam*, the information provided in the inscriptions of north Koṅkaṇ regarding *hañjama-na* may be considered. While editing some copper-plate grants of the Rāshṭra-kūṭa kings and their subordinates of the 10th-11th centuries from Chinchani in Thana District, D.C.Sircar observed the frequent occurrence of the term *hañyama-na* or its variant *hañjamana* in the inscriptions of Northern Koṅkaṇ and conceded that it could have denoted the Parsee settlements (EI, XXXII, p.48). In this regard he agreed with J.J.Modi who traced *hañyama-na* to the Avestic *hañjamana* and Persian *Añjuman* (IA.,XLI, pp.173-76). The context of the occurrence of the term is as follows :

- 1) saṁyāna-haṁyamana-paura-dhruva-
vishayik-ādhikārikān ...
(EI,XXXII, p.59, 1.31-2).
- 2) rāshṭrapati-nagarapati-dhruvapati-

janapadān haṁyamana-paura-
śrīsthāna-mōḍhavrāhmaṇa-
prabhṛiti ... (Ibid, p.74, I.14-5)

- 3) haṁyamañīya-mukhya-vallaṇa-vyava-
hāraka valkāśma vyavahāraka Alliya-
Mahara-Madhumat-ādayaḥ paura-
mukhya śrēshṭhi-Kēsari-Suvarṇṇa-
Kakkala vañijō Uva-Suvarṇṇa-
Sōmaiya-ādayaḥ tathā vishayī-Ver-
thalaiyaḥ ... (Ibid, p.66, ll. 10 - 2).

The contexts in the first two quoted passages are clear. In the third case D.C.Sircar has made some corrections to make it more grammatical and summarised it as follows :

Lines 10-14 state that, while ruling over Samyāna, Chāmuṇḍa passed an order regarding a grant, to be made by him, to his subordinates and others including the elders (*mukhya*) of the *hañyama-na* (i.e. the Parsee community), the courtiers and officials as well as the officers like Alliya, Mahara and Madhumata, the city elders named Śrēshṭhin Kēsarin, Suvarṇṇa and Kakkala, the merchants such as Uva, Suvarṇṇa and Sōmaiya, the district officer Verthalaiya, ... (p.64).

Though the language may not be strictly grammatical, I would like to point out that many emendations [which are not shown above] introduced by the learned editor D.C.Sircar are not necessary. The language used cannot be strictly called Sanskrit as it must have been influenced by the local

(Mahārāshṭra) usages and also by Kannada as far as the names are concerned. The natural interpretation of the above passage would be as follows :

The elders of Haṁyamana, namely Vallāṇa-vyavahāraka, Valkāsmavyavahāraka, Alliya, Mahara, Madhumata, etc., the elders of the Paura, namely Śrēshṭhi-Kēsari, Suvarṇṇa-Kakkala, Vaṇijo-Uva, Suvarṇṇa-Sōmaiya, etc., the district officer Verthalaiya,

The names Alliya and Madhumati, as D.C.Sircar has explained, are obviously the Indianised forms of the Arabic names 'Ali and Muhammad respectively. That means that at least some of the Haṁyamana elders are of Arabic Muslims. In the case of the Paura elders they seem to be local merchants only, if we go by the names like Kēsari, Kakkala, Uva and Sōmaiya. And the prefixing segments like Śrēshṭhi, Suvarṇṇa and Vaṇija denote their specialized professions. In the Bhandup plates of 1017 there is the passage '*haṁyamana-nagara-paura-trivargga-prabhritīmś-cha*'. J.F.Fleet the editor of that plate translated it as 'the three classes of citizens and others of the city Haṁyamana' (EI, XII, p.266). In view of the above discussion the normal rendering of that passage would be 'the three groups or classes consisting of *haṁyamana*, *nagara* and *paura* and others.³ That is, there seems to be some ethnic and professional difference between the three merchant groups or guilds called *haṁyamana*, *nagara* and *paura*.

In the Kannada inscriptions of

North and South Kannada Districts the form *hañjamāna* is mentioned in several places like Basrūr, Bārakūr, etc. even during Vijayanagara times (K.V.Ramesh, 1970, p.252-3). It is found either separately or along with *nakhara* (same as *nagara*). Ummara-marakāla, a *hañjamāna-mukhya* mentioned in an inscription of Dēvarāya I (1427) from Kaikiṇi is considered by K.V. Ramesh as a Parsee from the name Ummara (Umar), *marakāla* being sailor. D.C.Sircar, however, thought that *hañjamāna* in Kannada inscriptions could not denote a Parsee settlement as there is no other evidence for the existence of Parsee settlements so far south. He also thought that it may be a word of Kannada or South Indian origin and concluded that it may be related to Tāmil *añju-pañchālattār* through the Kannada *pañcha-vaṇṇa* and Tamil *añjuvaṇṇam* (EI., XXXV, p.292). This argument is based on so many assumptions without any valid evidence and rightly it has been criticized by K.V. Ramesh. Strictly speaking, *hañjamāna* did not denote just the Parsee settlement. Like the term Yavana/Yona/Śōnaka this term also seems to have denoted collectively the West Asian traders, Arabs, Jews, Christians, Parsees, etc. and from the above evidence it may be inferred that Arab Muslims figured more prominently than others.

Here it may be appropriate to cite some supporting evidence from Indonesia, particularly from Java. There are several inscriptions of the 9th and early 10th centuries in Java which

contain references to the terms *huñjeman*, *huñjamman* and *hiñjaman* (H.B. Sarkar, 1972a,p.54; 1972b,pp.131,140,151,236). In a copper-plate inscription dated A.D.819 *huñjamman* is found along with *sēnāmukha*, besides some other bodies (Ibid, 1972a,p.54). In this inscription the 'collectors of royal taxes' were ordered not to disturb these people. In the other inscriptions also, *huñjamān* is found as one among several bodies, which can be understood from the contexts as trading bodies coming from several foreign countries including South India. It may not be wrong to say that the term *huñjamman* is a variant of *hañjamana*. The different variants seem to be due to the peculiarities of Arabic orthography where vowel sounds are guessed according to the context.

The term *añjuvaṇṇam* (or *añchuvaṇṇam*) is found only in Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Its derivation from *hañjamana* may be conceded but cannot be verified empirically, since both the terms do not occur together in the known evidence. There is, however, no contemporary lexical support to understand *añjuvaṇṇam* differently. It is farfetched in point of time to equate *añjuvaṇṇam* and *añjupañchālattār* ('the five artisans') as was done by T.V.Mahalingam (1967, p.394) and T.N.Subrahmanyam (1957) and which was accepted by D.C.Sircar. This equation cannot be sustained on other circumstantial grounds also, for the artisans or *kammālas* did not occupy a good social position in the early medieval centuries. They were treated only as servicing communities (*kiḷ-kalanai*) to the

merchant groups and other landholding people (*SII*,IV, No.223). They get a better recognition in the society only during the Vijayanagara times and later when commodity production increased enormously (Karashima, 1992:pp.159-69).

There is some least noticed evidence which supports unequivocally that the *añjuvaṇṇam* group was made up of the Muslim community on the east coast. This evidence was discovered and produced in an article by T.V. Sadasiva-Pandarattar, a good Tamil scholar-turned-historian. According to this scholar there are a string of verses in a work called *Palchandamālai* which throw some light on the *añjuvaṇṇam*. These verses are quoted by the commentator on the *Kaḷaviyaṅkārikai* a work on prosody. In those verses, the *añjuvaṇṇam* people, otherwise also called Yavanar and Śōnakar, are said to be the followers of *Kalupati* or *Khalifa* and worshipers of Allah.

The *añjuvaṇṇam* body is found all along the west and east coasts in several port towns. Pandalāyini Kollam (near Tondi, Ramnad coast), Mayilāppūr (Madras), Kṛishṇapaṭṇam (Nellore Tk, Nellore Dt) and Vishākhaṭṇam. Of these, the evidence for the southern Kollam has already been noticed. For Pandalāyini-Kollam we get only the name in a fragmentary inscription (*SII*, VII, No.162, 1.13). In Tittāṇḍatānapuram, *añjuvaṇṇam* is found in a big assembly consisting of several merchant groups and weavers, namely, *mañigrāmam*, *sāmanta-paṇḍasāli*, *tōyāvattira-chettī*, *vaḷañjiyar* of

south Ilaṅkai (i.e. Sri Lanka), *kaikkōlar*, *tūchubar*, *vāṇiyar*, *nīṇḍakaraiyār* (*ARE.*, 1926-27, p.93). In Mayilāppūr the evidence is only a fragment, referring to both *añjuvaṇṇam* and *vaṇiga-grāmam* (*Chennaiṁānagar Kalvetṭugal*, 1970, No. 1967/20). In Kṛishṇapaṭṇam, *añjuvaṇṇam* is called as the *añjuvaṇṇam vaṇigar* of Malaimaṇḍalam and is found along with the *nāḍu*, *nagara* and the *samasta-paradēśi* of the 18-bhūmi (*ARE.*, 1963-64, No.78 & *Nellore Inscriptions*, I, Gudur 45).

The evidence from Vishākhapaṭṇam is interesting. There are three inscriptions, two in Telugu and one in Tamil, which is a duplicate of one of the Telugu records. Unfortunately the texts as published in *SII.*, X and the brief English summaries are not accurate enough. The first one (No.651) is dated in Śaka 1012 and 13th year of the Eastern Gaṅga king Anantavarmadēva, equivalent to September 21, 1090 and purports to remit taxes *aruvāṇa*, *kāniki* and *Ainnūttuva-perumballi* in Vishākhapaṭṇam *alias* Kulōttuṅgachōḷa-paṭṭiṇam by the 'Twelve' of the *nagaram* of the town. The grant was entrusted to a *viyāpāri* of the *añjuvaṇṇam* of Mātōṭṭa *alias* [Rā]makulavalli-paṭṭiṇam.⁴ This merchant has a high-sounding name, i.e. *paṭṭaṇāditya nānā-rāja-vidyādhara samaṅkattu-ghanṭi* Asāvu *alias* *padinen-midi - bhūmi - nagara - sēnāpati alias malaimaṇḍala - mātā*. Asāvu may be his personal name and the other preceding and following strings must be just titles. The title *vidyādhara* is associated with Śōnaka or Arab in some 11th century Chōḷa inscriptions. For instance a Śōnaka

official is found living first in a bazaar street called *Rāja-vidyādhara-perunderu* at Tañjāvūr (*SII.*, II, No.66) and some years later in *Rāja-vidyādhara-perunderu* at the new capital Gaṅgaikoṇḍachōḷapuram (Esalam plates). Most probably Asāvu is a Muslim merchant. Mātōṭṭam, the place from where the merchant hailed, is obviously Mahātittha (the present Māntai), a seaport town on the north-western coast of Śrī Laṅka facing Gulf of Mannar. From the second title *malaimaṇḍala-mātā* it can be suggested that he had some links with the Kerala coast too. The Tamil version of the above inscription is much mutilated. But it is not difficult to recognize its exact identity with the Telugu version from the surviving passages. Actually both the inscriptions are written on different sides of the same stone. It may also be noted that the Telugu inscription has some Tamil features. The *Ainnūttuva-perumballi* has been considered as a Jain *paḷḷi* by the Epigraphist. Actually there is no evidence to suggest that. From the foregoing discussion it may be easily guessed that the *paḷḷi* was a mosque only.

The second Telugu inscription records a similar grant to the same *Ainnūttuva-perumballi* by a chief, *Mahāmaṇḍalēśvara* Kulōttuṅga-Prithvīśvara. The date of this inscription has been read as Śaka 112[1]. Actually the intended number seems to be 1012 and so it is close to the above grant. The boundaries of the *paḷḷi* and the wording of the taxes are identical in both the cases. In this grant the receiver was another

merchant belonging to the *añjuvaṇṇam* of Paśapāl. Paśapāl could not be identified. The name of the merchant is again exotic. Sāvasāṇḍi-[ba]lla, son of Boyarāṇḍi-[ba]lla. He had the title *Mā[va]ṅgari-vallabha-samaya-chakravartti*. The reading *mā[va]ṅgari-vallabha* may be emended as *mādaṅgari-vallabha* as this form is clearly found in the Barus inscription, as part of the second name of Barus: *Mādaṅgari-vallabha-dēśi-uyyakkoṇḍa-paṭṭanam*.

Significantly the dates of the Vishakha-patnam inscriptions and that of the Barus inscription are very close to each other falling in the reign of Kulōttuṅga Chōḷa I(1070-1120) who sent some embassies to the Chinese court. *Kulōttuṅgachōḷa-paṭṭanam*, the other name of *Vishākha-paṭṭanam*, is certainly named after this king. The above inscriptions would suggest that the *añjuvaṇṇam* people were patronized by the local Ayyāvoḷe guild and even treated as members of that guild, which may be guessed from the titles conferred on the two *añjuvaṇṇa* merchants: *padinenmidi-bhūmi-nagara-sēnāpati* and *mādaṅgari-vallabha-samaya-chakravartti*. In this connection I would also call your attention to the term *marakkala-nāyaṇ*

found in the Barus inscription. That term stands for ship's captain. The word *marakkalam* means ship in Kannada, Tamil and Malayalam. The word *nāyaṇ* could also be common to all these languages. The probability here is that the term *marakkala-nāyaṇ* had its origin in Kerala coast. *Marakkala-nāyaṇ* is later corrupted to *maraiikkāyar* and denoted the seafaring Tamil and Kerala Muslims during the Portuguese times. In Kannada the word seems to have been shortened into *marakala*. Ummara-marakāla was noted above. With all these circumstantial evidence can we guess that the *marakkala-nāyaṇ* of the Barus inscription was already a Muslim in the company of the Ayyāvoḷe merchants.

I have placed before you some of my random thoughts on a few aspects of the Ayyāvoḷe guild and *añjuvaṇṇam/hañjamāna*. The point that should be stressed is that these problems cannot be studied in isolation, using the epigraphical records of a single linguistic area only. More and more interaction is necessary among the epigraphists of different linguistic areas and that is a clear justification for a robust existence of our society.

NOTES

1. In the famous Beḷagāmi inscription (*EC.*, VII, Shikarpur 118) discussed by K.A.Nilakanta Sastri the word *vēḷāpura* is mistakenly read as *vēḷōmara* and translated strangely as *vēḷōma*. Similarly in Shikarpur 94 from the same place it is read as *vēḷāmara*. This wrong reading has been repeatedly quoted.
2. In fact, the standard eulogy part is almost identical in the Kannada and Tamil inscriptions with some minor variations over time and space. By a diligent

comparative study we can reconstruct the original form of this eulogy which must have come into existence sometime in the 10th century. And a historical study of the eulogy part would be very fruitful to understand the history of the great merchant association.

3. D.C.Sircar has come to the same conclusion but for slightly different reasons :
- ‘Thus, of the expressions quoted above from the inscriptions, *haṁyamana-paura* or *hañjamana-paura* would mean ‘the artisans and other citizens’ while *haṁyamana-mukhya* would indicate ‘the elders of the artisan communities’. The expression *hañjamana-nagara-paura-trivarga* means ‘the three classes, viz. *hañjamana*, *nagara* and *paura*’. Among these, the *nagara* seems to mean ‘the merchant community’... (EI.,XXXV,p.292).
4. I thank Dr.M.D.Sampath and Dr.S.Swaminathan for helping me to verify the original of this inscription. According to Dr.Sampath Rāmakulavalli-paṭṭaṇam has to be read as Sōmakulavalli-paṭṭaṇam.

Appendix

Ayyāvole Inscription of Barus at National Museum, Jakarta
(Originally from Lobeo Toewa, Barus, Sumatra)

Text

1. svasti śrī Śakarai
2. āṇḍu āyirattup-pa-
3. ttuch-chellā-niṇ-
4. ṛa Māsīt=tiṅgaḷ
5. Vārośāṇa Madan-
6. gari-vallavat-tēśi u-
7. yyakkoṇḍapaṭ-
8. ṭiṇattu vēḷapurattu
9. kūḍi niṛainda dēśi[t-tisai]
10. viḷaṅgu diśai āyira-
11. t-tainnūṛruvarō-
12. m nam-magaṇār nagara sēṇāpa-

13. pati nāṭṭu-chetṭi-
14. yārkkum paṇṇeṇ-bhūmi
15. dēśi apparkku mā[ve]t-
16. tugaḷukkum nā vaittuk-
17. kuḍutta pariśāvadu [ma]rak-
18.
19. l marakkala-nāyaṇum kēvi-
20. gaḷum kastū[ri] vilai mu[dalagappaḍa]
21. aṅju tuṇ[ḍā]yam poṇṇum kuḍu-
22. ttup-pāvāḍai ēṇakkaḍavadāgavum
23. ippaḍikku [i]kka[l] eḷudi nāṭṭi-
24. kkuḍuttōm paṇṇeṇbhūmi dēśit tiśai viḷa-
25. ṅgu diśai āyiratt-ainnūruvarōm a-
26. ṇamaravaṅk-aṇamēy tuṇai.

The inscription was ink-copied in Dec.1993, by a team consisting of Prof. N.Karashima, Dr.K.V.Ramesh, Dr.P.Shanmugam, Dr.Ogura and the present writer. For the earlier discussion on this inscription see K.A.Nilakanta Sastri 1932 and for the present writer's article see *Āvaṇam*, 4 (1994), pp.116-24.

Translation

(1-4) In the Śaka year 1010 current, month Māśi,

(5-11) We, the Five Hundred of the thousand directions known in all countries and directions, having met at Veḷāpura in Vārōśu *alias* Mādaṅgari-vallava-dēśi-uyyakkonḍa-paṭṭiṇam

(12-17) decided to grant as follows to 'our son' the *nagara-sēnāpati* Nāṭṭu-chetṭiyār, to Paṇṇeṇ-bhūmi-dēśi-appar and to the *māvettugaḷ*

(17-22) [Each of] the ship's ..., the ships' Captain and the kēvigal shall pay the fee *aṅju-tuṇḍāyam* in gold according to the price of the *kastūri* and [then only] may step on the 'cloth spread' [=may enter the town].

(23-26) Thus we the Five Hundred of the thousand directions known in every direction in all the the Eighteen lands got this stone inscription written and planted. Do not forget the charity; Charity alone will help you.

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An Unissued Vākāṭaka Plate from Mohallā: Problem of Attribution

Ajay Mitra Shastri

This single plate¹ of an unfinished Vākāṭaka charter was published by V.V. Mirashi first in *Ep.Ind.*, Vol.XXII, pp.207-12 under the title "An Unfinished Vākāṭaka Plate from Durg" and later included in his *Inscriptions of the Vākāṭakas*,² pp.76-78, under the caption "An Unfinished Durg Plate".

However, as pointed out by Mirashi himself, the plate was actually found at Mohallā, the headquarters of the Pānabāras Zamīndārī in the Durg District of Madhya Pradesh, and, following the convention obtaining among epigraphists, we prefer to call it "Mohallā Plate". It is now deposited in the Central Museum, Nagpur.

Incised in box-headed variety of the southern class of Brāhmī and couched in Sanskrit prose in five lines, it formed the first plate of a multi-plate (three or four plates) grant of a Vākāṭaka king of what may be styled Padmapura-Nandivardhana-Pravarapura branch after its three capitals in a chronological order.³ Being the first plate, it has writing only on one side, the other side, as in other charters, being left blank. It was meant to be granted from Padmapura as shown by the expression *Padmapurāt* (ablative singular), meaning 'from Padmapura'. The absence of a suffix like *vāsaka*, 'camp or temporary residence', *skandhāvāra*, 'military camp' or *sthāna*, 'a religious centre' should most probably indicate that it was the dynastic

capital at the time of the drafting of this plate.

It was, for some unascertainable reason, left unfinished and never issued as clearly shown by two facts. The word *drishṭam*, 'seen', which occurs at the beginning of a vast majority of Vākāṭaka grants⁴ and was something like an authentication mark⁵ has been left unengraved even though space enough for it has been left blank and would have been incised after the completion of the charter if it were to be issued. However, it was not engraved as the charter was never granted. The portion following the specification of the place of issue of the intended charter gives only a part of the fixed genealogical draft of the family beginning with Pravarasēna I followed by an account of his son Gautamīputra which name in the genitive singular (*Gautamīputrasya*) familiar from most other charters of the branch of the dynasty in question is conspicuously absent despite the fact that there is enough space for it at the end of the fifth (and, for that matter, last) line on the plate. Obviously, it was left unincised because of the abrupt abandoning of the charter when it was in the midst of engraving.

The charter, or rather its preserved portion, thus adds little to what we already know from other charters of the family which give full genealogical account of the branch upto the time of their respective issuers. The only point of

interest is the mention of Padmapura as the venue of its intended granting about which we shall see more in the sequel.

It is very problematic to pinpoint with any degree of precision the issuer of the intended charter in the absence of his name which would have been given on the second plate (obverse or reverse) had the record been finished. Mirashi opines strongly that it belongs to post-Pravarasēna II period palaeographically and is hell-bent to ascribe it to his son and successor Narēndrasēna for whom we have as yet no record and for whatever information we now have about him we have to depend upon his son and successor Prīthivīshēṇa II's charters. When Mirashi wrote we had only one incomplete charter for him⁶, but thereafter three more grants have been found,⁷ shedding fresh light on the problem. Let us examine his arguments for placing the plate in the period following Pravarasēna II's reign.

The main plank is the palaeographic considerations which are not conclusive. Different varieties of Brāhmī (box-headed and nail-headed) are met with in the records of the same age and dynasty. Though most of the Vākāṭaka inscriptions are incised in the box-headed variety, there are two charters, one of Prabhāvatīguptā and the other put up after her demise most probably towards the close of her son Pravarasēna II's reign, which are engraved in nail-headed variety. Now in the charters incised in the box-headed variety, also we have two principal sub-varieties current simultaneously and used indiscriminately,

viz., filled-up box-heads and hollow box-heads. And then we have apparently 'archaic' and 'more advanced' forms of the same letters employed not only during the same reign but often also in the same records. Even the special palaeographic development cited by Mirashi in support of his contention, viz., similarity with the characters of the Riddhapur plates of Prabhāvatīguptā, more especially the downward curve at the end of the top horizontal line on the right of a letter, to indicate the length of the medial *ā* is not typical either of the Riddhapur grant or this plate as it can be noticed in the charters of Pravarasēna II from the very beginning and even in the only known charter of his father Rudrasēna II. Much depended on the training and experience of the scribes resulting in fresh devices and forms which could and did differ from person to person. Thus, palaeographical evidence can be only roughly symptomatic of a general period in terms of a century: *close palaeographic dating is just impossible unless there is something definite to warrant it.* And we feel very strongly that the same and other palaeographic considerations and a general look at the characters vouch for an earlier date.⁸

The key to its ascription is furnished by its being intended to be granted from the benefactor-king's capital located at Padmapura. Mirashi is inclined to equate it (Padmapura) with the modern village of Padampur two miles from Āmgāon in the Bhandara District of Maharashtra, where some ancient sculptural and architectural objects or their fragments

have been found. According to him, Narēndrasēna probably shifted the dynastic capital from Pravara-pura (probably modern Paunār, Wardha district, Maharashtra) to this Padampur in the east due to the menace of the Nalas of the Bastar region against whom he was hopeful of securing the support from 'his loyal feudatories' in Mēkalā and Kōsalā. But this is purely hypothetical as there is absolutely nothing to vouch for it. First, there is as of now no evidence to prove that the rulers of Kōsalā (Chhattīsgaḍh region) and Mēkalā (Amarkaṇṭak region) of the state of Madhya Pradesh were Vākāṭaka vassals. It is no doubt true that in the records of his son and successor Pṛithivīshēṇa II his (Narēndrasēna's) orders are said to have been obeyed by the lords of Kōsalā, Mēkalā and Mālava.⁹ But in view of the serious problems created by his own relations which appear to have deprived him of his own kingdom or its substantial part, as we learn from the same records,¹⁰ it is impossible to take this hyperbole at its face value. It is very likely that he participated in his Gupta cousin's campaigns of resurrecting the lost or loosening outlying parts of the empire or carried out hurried raids in these regions taking advantage of the weakness of his Gupta relations. As for Mēkalā, the notion was sought to be supported on the hypothesis¹¹ that the expression *narēndra*, met with in a verse (11) of the Bamhanī charter taken to have been granted by the Mēkalā Pāṇḍava king Bhāratābala,¹² alluded, by *double entendre (ślēsha)*, to the Vākāṭaka monarch Narēndrasēna in addition to its dictionary meaning 'king'. It was

believed accordingly that the Pāṇḍava king of Mēkalā, supposedly Bharatabala, was a feudatory of Narēndrasēna. At the time of the discovery of this charter such a reconstruction was perhaps feasible though almost baseless. However, the subsequently discovered Mallār grant of Bharatabala's son an successor Śūrābala Udīrṇavaira¹³ has proved beyond doubt that the Bamhanī charter was also issued by him only and not by his father Bharatabala as was erroneously assumed by epigraphists and historians till then. This wrong unwarranted notion was caused by the unintentional omission of the prose portion introductory of Śūrābala after describing his predecessor Bharatabala in the latter (Bamhanī) charter. Thus, the word *narēndra* introduced only Śūrābala as 'king' and did not allude, even incidentally, to the Vākāṭaka king Narēndrasēna. Moreover, the two were separated from one another by a long chronological hiatus to warrant any relationship between them.¹⁴

Moreover, there is now clear evidence that the Riddhapur grant of the Nala king Bhavattavarman¹⁵ issued from the erstwhile Vākāṭaka capital Nandivardhana has to be dated after¹⁶ the second year of the reign of Pṛithivīshēṇa II. For, his recently discovered Māṇḍhal grant of that year was issued from Rāmagiristhāna,¹⁷ modern Rāmṭēk, quite close to Nandivardhana identified with modern Nandardhan, both in the Nagpur District.¹⁸ So the Nala invasion of the Vākāṭaka kingdom must have taken place after, not during, the reign of Narēndrasēna. There was, thus, no

necessity for him to remove his capital from Pravara-pura for fear of the Nālas. Even if one were to believe in the assumption of the Nala invasion of Narēndrasēna's kingdom just for the sake of argument, he must have been prudent enough to realise that this Padmapura (Padampur in the Bhandara district) was more susceptible to the invasion of the Nālas from the east than Pravara-pura, and none within his senses could have ever thought of shifting his capital to such a place. Then, there is nothing to show that this was the Padmapura from which the charter under reference was intended to have been granted in preference to nearly half a dozen other places of this name in the Chandrapur and Bhandara Districts.

We have, however, positive proof to show that none of these Padmapuras was intended in the instant case. We find a Padmapura spoken of in two Vākāṭaka charters discovered recently, one issued by Rudrasēna II and the other by his son Pravarasēna II. Rudrasēna II's Māṇḍhal plates of his fifth regnal year purport to register his grant of some villages situated in the eastern administrative division of Padmapura (*Padmapura-pūrva-mārga*)¹⁹ and the Māsoda charter of Pravarasēna II records grant of some land in the village of Matsyadraha (modern Masoda, the provenance of the charter), included in its western division (*apara-mārga*).²⁰ These records leave no doubt about the great importance of this Padmapura during the Vākāṭaka period. From the location of the villages named in these inscriptions

it is clear that its western division comprised the Kāṭol tahsil of the Nagpur District and Ārwi tahsil of the Wardha District, and the eastern division the region to its east in the Nagpur and Wardha tahsils of the districts of the same names. It is difficult to be more precise regarding the area comprised in these *mārgas* named after Padmapura. Apparently it is the same Padmapura as that named as the issuing place of the charter under reference though it is difficult to identify it;²¹ what can be definitely averred is that it was situated in the above-mentioned region, a conclusion vouched for by the findspots of the two records as well.

Although the plate has been found at the village of Mohallā in the Durg District of Madhya Pradesh, it must have originally belonged to the said region and must have travelled to its provenance along with its owner like the Pune plates of Prabhāvatīguptā and the Indore grant of her son Pravarasēna II.

The need for a capital in Vidarbha was felt by the Vākāṭakas after their immigration there from the Vindhyan region of Madhya Pradesh. There is clear evidence that till the time of Prīthivīshēṇa I, the Vākāṭakas continued to hold the Vindhyan region though their hold was becoming increasingly precarious owing to the imperial ambitions of the Gupta emperor Samudragupta. He felt compelled to leave it to the care of his vassal Vyāghradēva who has left his short but highly important records at Nachnā-kī-talāi and Gañj in the Panna District of Madhya Pradesh.²²

He had also to look for a place suitable for his capital in Vidarbha instead of Kāñchanakā (Nachnā) in Bundelkhaṇḍ and his choice fell on Padmapura.²³ It was from here that he intended to issue this charter and probably issued a few other charters that may surface in future. It need not be averred that he is not known to have issued copper-plate charters. For, we have clear evidence to the contrary. The Tīgāon²⁴ plates of Pravarasēna II are said to have been granted in exchange for a grant originally made by Pṛithivīrāja

who could only have been Pṛithivīshēṇa I,²⁵ who must have executed it by issuing a copper-plate charter. It is equally likely that the plate belongs to his son and successor Rudrasēna II.

To conclude, Padmapura was the first capital of the Vākātakas in Vidarbha.²⁶ The reference to its western division in a record of the time of Pravarasēna II would show its continuing importance at least till his days despite the dynastic capital being shifted first to Nandivardhana and then to Pravaraपुरा.

Notes and References

1. *Technical details* : It measures 8" by 3.75" and weighs $19\frac{1}{2}$ *tolās*; it is only $\frac{1}{20}$ " in thickness and thus the thinnest of all the known Vākāṭaka plates; there is a hole, .35" in diameter, about 1.9" from the middle of the proper right margin, for the ring to string all the paltes of the set though no such ring has been discovered as there was no opportunity to connect them later.
2. *CII*, Vol.V
3. For a discussion, see Ajay Mitra Shastri, "Capitals of the Vākātakas" *The Quarterly Journal of the Mythic Society*, Vol LXXXV, No.3, pp. 17-37.
4. The exceptions to it include the Riddhapur plates of Prabhāvatīguptā *CII*, Vol No.V, No. 8) belonging to Pravarasēna II's reign and the India Office Plates of Dēvasēna of the Vatsagulma branch (*ibid.*, No.24).
5. It is found in its Prakrit form *dīṭham* in some early Prakrit charters from South India such as the well-known Mayidovōlu and Hirahaḍagalī plates and has the same purport. *Vide* F. Kielhorn in *Ep.Ind.*, Vol. IX, pp.268-69.
6. viz. Bālāghāṭ plates which were left unfinished.
7. These are his Māṇḍhaḷ plates of the second and tenth years and the Māhurjharī charter of the seventeenth year. For their account, *vide* Ajay Mitra Shastri, *The Age of the Vākātakas*, 1992, New Delhi, pp.238-46.
8. V.B. Kolte "Māhurjharī plates of Pṛithivīshēṇa II", *ABORI*, LIII, 1972, p.189, also holds that the plate was issued during the pre-Pravarasēna II period, palaeographically. He observes, "In all probability the Durga plates may have been intended to be issued by some predecessor of Pravarasēna (II)."
9. The relevant phrase is: *Kōsalā-Mēkalā-Mālav-ādhipatībhīr=abhyarchita-sāsanasya*.
10. The pertinent phrase in Pṛithivīshēṇa II's grants with reference to him actually reads *pūrvv-ādhiḡata - guṇavad=dāyād-āpahṛita - vaṁśa-śriyaḡ* and not *pūrvv-ādhiḡata-guṇa-vi śvāsād=apahṛita-vaṁśa-śriyaḡ* as read by all the epigraphists earlier. And it refers to two stages in the political annals of Narēndrasēna, viz., first succeeding to the ancestral throne (despite all odds) and then being divested of it (a major part) by his minor relations. For a discussion,

see Ajay Mitra Shastri, *The Age of the Vākāṭakas*, pp.241-42.

11. Evidently inspired by the statement in Pṛithivīshēṇa II's grants cited in *supra* note 9.
12. B.Ch.Chhabra, "Bamhani Plates of Pāṇḍava king Bharatabla, Year 2", XXVII, pp.132-45; V.V.Mirashi, *CII*, Vol., pp.83-84.
13. Ajay Mitra Shastri, *Inscriptions of the Śarathapurīyas, Pāṇḍuvamśins and Sōmavamśins*, part II, 1995, New Delhi, pp.80-85.
14. For a detailed discussion of the problem, see *Ibid.*, part I, pp.122-27; "The Date of the Bamhanī and Mallār plates of Śūrabala Udīrnavaira", *Bhārati-Bhānam*(Dr.K.V.Sarma Felicitation Volume), ed. S.Bhaskaran Nair, Viśvashvaranand Viśvabandhu Institute of Sanskrit and Indological Studies, 1980, Hoshiarpur, pp.439-43.
15. This is an error for Bhavadattavarman, da having been left out by inadvertence on the part of the scribe.
16. How much after is difficult to ascertain.
17. Ajay Mitra Shastri, "Māṇḍhal Plates of Pṛithivīshēṇa II, Years 2 and 10", *Ep.Ind.*, Vol. XLI, pp.159-69.
18. Y.R.Gupte, "Rithpur Plates of Bhavattavarman", *Ibid.* Vol XIX, pp.100-04.
19. Ajay Mitra Shastri and Chandrashekhar Gupta, "Dvitiya Rudrasenāchā Māṇḍhaḷa Tāmrapaṭa", *Samśodhanāchī Kshitiye* (Marathi), pp.223-32.
20. Ajay Mitra Shastri and Chandrashekhar Gupta, "Māsoda Copper-Plate Charter of Pravarasēna II, Year 19", *JESI*, Vol.X, p.113, line 19. For the date, *vide ibid.*, Vol.XI, p.114.
21. H.S.Thosar ("Royal Seats of the Vākāṭakas, *Studies in Indian Place Names*, Vol XVI, 1996, pp.27-35) equates it with modern Paunār in the Wardha District; however, it appears unlikely. Others identify Paunār with ancient Pravaraपुरा.
22. For a detailed discussion on their ascription, *vide* Ajay Mitra Shastri, "Nachnā-kī-Talāi and Gañj Inscriptions of the Time of Vākāṭaka Pṛithivīshēṇa: Some Reflections", *JESI*, Vol. XXI, pp.1 - 13.
23. It is not impossible that his father Rudrasēna I, grandson and successor of the strongest Vākāṭaka emperor Pravarasēna I, had made it his capital in Vidarbha in addition to continuing the main metropolis at Kāñchanakā. It is noteworthy that Pravarasēna I's only other known son and successor had established the capital of his Vatsagulma.
24. Mirashi calls it 'Pāṇḍhurnā Plates though, as pointed out by him, it was actually found at nearby Tigāon.
25. *CII*, Vol., V, p.66, line 19 (*pṛithivīrāja-pravṛitta*).
26. And not the 'last' as averred by Mirashi (*Ep.Ind.*, Vol., XXII, p.211).

A Note on the Jagjibanpur Inscription of Mahēndrapāla

B.N.Mukherjee

The Jagjibanpur Copper plate inscription of the Pāla King Mahēndrapāla (third quarter of the 9th century A.D.) records the grant of the town of Nandadīrghika "along with its land" for

the worship and other beneficial acts in the monastery founded by him in that locality. The beneficiaries and benevolent acts are mentioned in the following way in lines 41 to 44:

“...yath=ōpari-likhita-Nandadīrghik=
ōdra (ngo) bhagavatō Vu(Bu)ddha-bhaṭṭāarakasya
Prajñāpāramit =ādi-sakala-dharma-nettrī- sthānasya
Āry = āvaivarttika-Vō(Bō)dhisattva-
gaṇasy =ashta-mahāpurusha-pudgal=
ārya- bhikshu -samghasya yathārham
pūjana - lēkha(pa)n = ādy=ārthē
Chīvara - piṇḍapāta-śayan = āsana-
glāna - pratyaya - bhaishajya-
-parishkār = ādy-artham khaṇḍa-
sphuṭita - samādhān = ādy = ārtham
anyēshām-api mam=ābhimatānām=
=mat - parikalpita - vibhāgēn =
= ānavadya - bhōgārtham
śrīmad = Bhaṭṭāarakapāda[h]
dadatu = iti [h]”

Dr. K.V.Ramesh, and Dr. S.S. Iyer, who edited, interpreted, and translated the epigraph,² missed two important points in the above noted section. He translated the section concerning the monks as “the venerable group of monks, the group of Bōdhisattvas and the eight great holy personages and others”.³ The expression *āry = āvaivarttika - Bōdhisattva - gaṇa* refers to the noble sect or school of Avaivarttika Bōdhisattvas. According to the old Buddhist belief, an Avaivarttika (or Avaivartika) is of unwavering conduct (*avivartana-sīla*) in attaining merit. He has crossed eight spiritual stages (*bhūmis*) without sliding back. After reaching the eighth stage

an Avaivarttika Bōdhisattva has his mind full of “great compassion”. He attains unsurpassing perfect wisdom.⁴ A state of saintly abstraction is attained in the body of an Avaivartika (monk) fixed in the Knowledge of the Buddha. By his sharpness (of spiritual power) others are dissuaded (from the wrong path).⁵

The monks believing in such a philosophy, which probably originated in Hīnayāna, formed a sect of the Mahāyāna.⁶ The Gunaighar inscription of the Gupta year 188 (507-08 A.D.) refers to the congregations of Avaivartika monks of the Mahāyāna order” in the Avalōkitēśvara-Āśrama Vihāra.⁷ The monastery was apparently in the locality

of the discovery of the inscription at a site situated 18 miles to the north-west of the town of Comilla (now in the Comilla District of Bangladesh). These data prove the existence of the Avaivartika-saṅgha in the Comilla region (included in ancient Samatāṭa) in c.6th century A.D.

Obviously, this Buddhist sect is mentioned in the Jagjibanpur Copper plate inscription as residing in the monastery founded by the Pāla monarch Mahēndrapāla in the third quarter of the 9th century A.D. The monks of the same congregation are indicated also in the expression *asṭa-mahāpuruṣa-pudgal = ārya-bhikṣu-saṅgha*. The editors have has missed both these points.

The section concerned can now be translated as follows. "For the proper worship, anointment, etc. of the above noted Lord Buddha of the town of Nandadīrghika and of the place (i.e. abode) of all religious leaders starting with Prajñāpāramitā, and for the cause of (providing) clothing, food, bed(s), seat(s), furnishing with medicine for the need of the sick, purification [after illness?] etc. and for fragmented (or) fully blown (i.e. deep) religious meditation etc. of the noble congregation of monks consisting of personal entities of great men of eight (stages) of (i.e. belonging to) the noble school of the Avaivarttika Bōdhisattvas and also for others of my (i.e. the king's) choice and by the division settled

by me for the faultless enjoyment (by the beneficiaries) the king gives thus (i.e. in the following manner)".

Thus the section concerned indicates the existence of the members of the Avaivarttika Bōdhisattvas in a monastery founded by Mahēndrapāla. Here he made certain donations on the seventh day of his regnal year. It has to be placed in the known period of his reign of about 15 or 19 years in the third quarter of the 9th century A.D.⁸ Unfortunately The editors have not translated the portion of the inscription containing the data.

The *dūtaka* (messenger) of the Jagjibanpur grant was a certain *mahāsēnāpati* Vajradēva. A seal impression of c.9th century, discovered during an excavation at the site of the monastery concerned in 1996 refers to Vajradēva. Another seal impression, unearthed at the site in the same year and datable to c. 12th century A.D., speaks "of the noble congregation of monks of the H(N)ain(dī)rghi - vihāra, caused (to be founded) by the illustrious Vajradēva".⁹

Thus while the monastery was caused to be constructed by king Mahēndrapāla, Vajradēva was the founder of the congregation of monks (belonging to the Avaivarttika school) at the monastery. It is not certain whether Vajradēva, the *dūtaka* of the above noted grant and a army commander, later became a monk and founded the said congregation. In fact, they could have been different persons (of even different times) sharing a common name.¹⁰

Notes and References

1. *Ep.Ind.*, Vol.XLII, p. 22.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 6 ff.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 27.
4. *Mahāvastu Avadāna*, 1st bhūmi; edited by R.G. Basak, Vol.I, 1963, Calcutta, p.93; 7th bhūmi; R.G. Basak, *op.cit.*, p. 161; F. Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Grammar and Dictionary*, Vol. I (reprint), 1970, Delhi, p.81.
5. *Samadhirāja - sūtra*, 17th 23rd and 35th *parivartan*; N.K. Datta (ed), *Gilgit Manuscripts*, Vol. II, pt.II, 1953, p. 253, Calcutta and Vol.II, pt.II, p. 465; etc. In this connection see also S. Sengupta "Buddhism in the Classical Age", *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol.XXXII, p. 194; Sutapa Ray, "Prāchin(a) Vānlar(a) Ekṭi Mahāyānī Bauddha Sampradāya Samparke Samīkshā", *Itihas(a) - Anusandhān(a)*, pp. 119-20.
6. *IHQ.*, Vol.XXXII, p. 194.
7. D.C. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions Bearing on Indian History and Civilization*, Vol.I - *Sixth Century B.C. - 6th Century A.D.*, 1965, Calcutta, pp. 340-41.
8. D.C. Sircar, *Pāla-Sēna Yugera Vamśānucharita*, 1982, Calcutta, p.34.
9. Our paper on this seal impression will be shortly published in the *Pratnasamīkshā*, no. 4.
10. The Jagjibanpur copper-plate inscription was first noticed by Sri Gopal Laha. It was first properly deciphered and scientifically analysed by Dr. Amitabha Bhattacharyya (*Monthly Bulletin, The Asiatic Society*, March, 1988). The latter was also the first scholar to deliver a public lecture on the subject (at the Vangiya Sāhitya Parishad, in December, 1987, Calcutta. Unfortunately, the names of these pioneers have been conveniently forgotten by the subsequent writers on the inscription concerned.

The Kāñchīpuram Inscription of Rājarāja Chōla III

N. Sethuraman

T.V.Mahalingam wrote the article on "Two Eastern Gaṅga inscription at Kāñchīpuram" in the *Epigraphia Indica* Volume XXXI published in 1955. It is a long one and he made many surmises in accordance with his understanding of the record. In the same volume D.C. Sircar vehemently opposed Mahalingam and made drastic criticism. However, he too believed that they were Eastern Gaṅga records. The object of this article is to prove that it is a single inscription, in two parts, engraved in the 20th Year of the reign of the Chōla King Rājarāja III. It refers to two independent grants made on two occasions first by the queen and later by her husband the king of the Eastern Gaṅga kingdom. The title "Two Eastern Gaṅga Inscriptions" is not only wrong and a misnomer but will certainly mislead the present and the future historians unless a proper attempt is made atleast now, to rectify the mistake. At the outset the Tamil text of the inscription and also the English translations as published in the Volume of *Epigraphia Indica* XXXI are reproduced below:

Inscription No.I

TEXT

1. Svasti[*] Chatu[r*]ddaśa -bhuvan -ādhipati -śrī - Purushōttama - charaṅ - ādēs-(śā)t[*] Samara-mukh -ānēka -ripu di(da) ripa -marddana -bhujabala - parākra(nma)
2. paramavaishṅava - paramabha-ttāraka - jaganmūlakāraṇa - śrī - Purushōttama - putra - traiva-

sundharā - samundha(ddha)raṇa - praba(cha)ṇḍa - dō-

3. rddaṇḍa - [ma*]hāvarāha -śrīmad - ēkādaśi - vratarāja - saṁsēvana - vidalita - Kalikāla - kalushamasi - spa[r*]śana - lēśa - mahāvāky - ārtha-pari-
4. charry - ābhyās-āparōkshī[kṛi]ta - paramabrahmānanda - bhāva - maharājādhirāja - rājaparamēśvara - Gaṅg - ānvay - āvala[m]bana - sta[m*]bha - śrīmad-Ana-
5. ntava[r*]mma - rāhutadēvaṅ - udaiya prava[r*]ddhamāna - vijaya - rājya - saṁvat[s]aramgaḷ pattoṅbadā(dā)vadilē Mīna - śukla-pañchamiyum Budha-
6. ṅ kiḷamaiyum peṅṅa Rēvati - nāḷ Abhinava - Vāraṇavāsīyil irundu Antarudra - vishayattil Udaiyakāmam - eṅṅiṅ[pe] -
7. yar-udaiya ūr Allālanāthanaṅṅukku pūjā - naivēd[y-ā]/[r*]ttham - āga Sōmaladēvī - mahādēvī ā - chandra(ndr-ā)rka - sthāyiy -ā-
8. ga dhārā-pūrvvakām - āga kkuḍuttēṅ Sōmaladēviyen[*] Śrī - Vishvaksēṅṅasya - likhanam

Translation

Hail! At the command of (the god) Purushōttama, the lord of the fourteen worlds; in the 19th year of the increasingly victorious reign of mahārājādhirāja rājaparamēśvara Anantavarma - rāhutadēva who has destroyed by the prowess of his arm the arrogance of the enemy in many a battle, who is a

paramavaishṇava (and) *paramabhaṭṭāraka*, who is the son of (the god) Purushōttama the original cause of the universe, who is the (veritable primieval) great boar that raised high the three worlds, who by his observance of *ēkādaśī* the bet of the all the *vratas* is free from the slightest touch of the black evils of the Kali age, who has attained the supreme bliss of Brahman by constant devotion to and practice of the meaning of the Mahāvākya, and who is the pillar supporting the family of the Gaṅgas on Wednesday. Mīna-śukla-pañchami, Rēvati, while staying at Abhinava - Vāraṇavāsi, Sōmaladēvi-mahādēvi grants, with libation of water and for as long as the moon and sun endure, the village of Udaiyakamam in Antarudra-vishaya, for worship and offerings, to the god Allālanātha. (Thus) I, Sōmaladēvi, (give). (This is) the writing of Vishvaksēna.

[t*]tavarai chelutta-kkaḍavōm
Perumāl kōyir(yil)-

13 sthānattōm śrī[*]

In the 20th year of Rājarājadēva, on Monday, Āḍi 12, saptāmi, Aśvati, we, the *sthānattār* of the Perumāl temple, agree to supply (daily) as long as the moon and sun endure, a *nāḷi* of ghee measured by the *Ariyēnavalla-nāḷi* for burning four perpetual lamps before (the god) Perumāl, for which purpose 128 cows made up of 64 milch cows and 64 heifers and pregnant cows and four bulls were given by Aniyānkabhimadēva-rāhuta.

“The two subjoined inscriptions are engraved, one in continuation of the other, on the south wall of the Aruḷāla Perumāl temple at Little Kāñchīpuram, Chingleput District, Madras State. They are edited here with the aid of their impressions kindly placed at my disposal by the Government Epigraphist for India.

The language as well as the script of both the records is Tamil. Wherever Sanskrit words or phrases occur, they are written in the Grantha script, the rest being in Tamil characters. The orthographical peculiarities do not call for any special remarks. The object of the first inscription is to record the gift of the village of Udaiyakamam in Antarudra-vishaya by Sōmaladēvi-mahādēvi, for offerings and worship, to the god Allālanātha while she was at Abhinava-Vāraṇavāsi (the modern Cuttack city in Orissa).

The inscription is dated in the 19th year of the reign of *mahārājādhirāja rajaparamēśvara* Anantavarma-rāhutadēva who is stated to have belonged to the Gaṅga family. The king is further

Inscription No.II

TEXT

Rājarājadēvar-

- 9 kku(ku) yāṇḍu 20 Kaliṅgēśvaran
=āyulla Aniyānkabhīmadēva-rā-
hutaṅ Āḍimāsattu 12[n] tiyadi
sapta miyum Tiṅga[t]-kki(ki)la-
- 10 maiyum perṛa Aśvati-nāḷ Ppe(Pe)-
rumālukku vaitta tiruṇandāvīlak-
ku nālukku Ariyēnavalla- nāḷiyāl
ney nāḷikku vi-
- 11 t[t]a pala-varggattuppāl- ppa(pa)śu
arupattu-nālum polimurai-na gumā
- chinai-ppaśuvum-aru arupattu
-nālum āga uru 128 ṛi-
- 12 shabha-nālum-kaikkoṇḍu i-ttiru-
nandāvīlakku nālum chandir-ādi-

described as the son of [the god] Purushōttama and a *paramavaishṇava* who regularly observed the *ekādaśi-vrata* and constantly meditated upon and practised the meaning of the *mahāvākya*. The inscription quotes other details of date, viz., Mīna śu.5, Wednesday, Rēvati. As the year of the commencement of this king's reign is known to be 1211 A.D., the particulars of the date given in the inscription seem to correspond to 1230 A.D., March 20, the *tithi* quoted having ended the following day at .02. The nakshatra Rēvati is misquoted for Rōhini.

The second inscription records the gift of 128 cows and four bulls by Kaliṅgēśvara Aniyaṅkabhīmadēva-rāhuta for four perpetual lamps to the Perumāḷ. The *sthānattār* of the temple agreed to measure the ghee required for the purpose. It is dated in the 20th year of the reign of the Chōḷa king Rājarāja III and contains the following astronomical details. Āḍi 12, Saptami, Monday, Aśvati, which correspond to 1235 A.D., July 8, the week day being Sunday and not Monday as quoted.

These two Eastern Gaṅga inscriptions are of more than ordinary interest for two reasons. Firstly on account of the fact that both of them are found engraved on the walls of a temple at Little Kānchīpuram far away from Orissa and secondly for the reason that, while the first inscription in which the Gaṅga king's wife figures as the donor, is dated in the 19th regnal year of that king without reference to the contemporary Chōḷa king Rājarāja III, the second is dated in the latter's 20th regnal year. It will be of interest to examine how the two Eastern Gaṅga inscriptions are found

at Kānchīpuram. It would appear that king Aniyaṅkabhīma III (1211-38 A.D.) took advantage of the political confusion that prevailed in South India during the reign of the Chōḷa king Rājarāja III (1216-46 A.D.) and tried to fish in the troubled waters of South Indian politics about 1229-30 A.D. either by himself or more probably at the invitation of overgrown and disloyal Chōḷa vasals like the Kāḍavarāya chieftain Kōpperuñjiṅga. The reign of Rājarāja III was marked by many political and economic troubles even from its beginning. Probably about 1229-30 A.D. he invited fresh trouble for himself and his kingdom by withholding the tribute he was to pay to Māḍavarmaṅ Sundarapāṇḍya I and despatched a large army against him. Rājarāja III, having been defeated by the Pāṇḍya king, abandoned his capital and proceeded to his relation and friend, the Hoysala king Narasiṁha II, along with his retinue. On his way he was suddenly overtaken by the Kāḍava chief with the help of a vanguard of forest and foreign (*mlēchchadēśa*) troops, taken captive after a fight and imprisoned in his capital Jayantamaṅgalam (Sēndamaṅgalam). When Narasiṁha heard of these events, he defeated the Pāṇḍya king, carried destruction into the region under the Kāḍavarāya and restores Rājarāja to his throne.

It is very probable that the Eastern Gaṅga king Aniyaṅkabhīma III sent his army to the Tamil country apparently to help the Kāḍavarāya chieftain but really to take advantage of the political confusion in the Chōḷa kingdom. Though there is no direct evidence as such to show that he either assisted the Kāḍavarāya chieftain or actually sent his

army to the Chōḷa country, it is indirectly suggested by two pieces of independent evidence.”

Mahalingam's further discussions which are elaborate and irrelevant are not reproduced here. However, I give below the gist of his arguments.

The Hoysala King Vīra Nārasimha defeated the Kāḍavarāya chief, released the Chōḷa king from the prison and installed him on the Chōḷa throne. The date of the event was the March-April 1230. Mahalingam says that in the troubled circumstances, the Eastern Gaṅga king invaded Tamil nadu and captured Kāñchīpuram. At that time the grant made by his queen to the Kāñchīpuram temple was engraved. That is why it is dated 20th March 1230. Mahalingam further says that at this exact time the Hoysalas defeated the Eastern Gaṅga king and drove him out from Kāñchīpuram. After winding up his discussions Mahalingam concluded thus:

“It is a point to be noted that though the grant was made to a celebrated Vaishṇava temple in the heart of the Chōḷa kingdom, the inscription is dated not in the regnal year of the then Chōḷa king Rājarāja III, but in the 19th regnal year of the Eastern Gaṅga king. It is not easy to explain away the circumstance, though the document could have been prepared at the Eastern Gaṅga capital, unless we take that Rājarāja III was then a prisoner at Sēndamaṅgalam with his vassal Kōpperuñjiṅga, and the Chōḷa country was without a king. But the Eastern Gaṅga occupation of Kāñchīpuram was only temporary and it was put to an end by the Hoysala army which drove the hostile forces from the

place and occupied the city. Though the Eastern Gaṅga army was dislodged from Kāñchīpuram in 1230 A.D., Kalingēsvara Aniyañkabhīma's devotion to the god Allālanātha of the place was so great that, according to the second inscription edited here, he made in 1235 A.D., a gift of 128 milch cows and 4 bulls for four perpetual lamps for the Perumāḷ, for which the *sthānāttār* of the temple agreed to measure a *nāḷi* of ghee by the *ariyenavalla-nāḷi*. It is significant that this inscription is dated in the 20th year of the reign of Chōḷa Rājarāja III. It suggests that, after Rājarāja's release from prison in 1230 A.D., Aniyañkabhīma III recognised him as the Chōḷa king and did not interfere in the politics of the Chōḷa country. No indication is available in the inscription as to whether the Kaliṅga king was at Kāñchīpuram at the time of this grant. Possibly he made the grant in absentia from Abhinava-Vāraṇavāsi itself in the same way as his wife Sōmaladēvi had done five years earlier, unless it is assumed that he visited the place in 1235 A.D. as a pious pilgrim.”

Note by D.C.Sircar

In the foregoing article, Dr. T.V. Mahalingam suggests that the Eastern Gaṅga monarch Anaṅgabhīma III (c. 1211-38 A.D.) took advantage of the chaotic condition prevailing in the Chōḷa territory as a result of the temporary imprisonment in 1230 A.D., of Chōḷa Rājarāja III (1215-46 A.D.) by the Kāḍava king Kōpperuñjiṅga I and that for a time the Eastern Gaṅga army entered Kāñchīpuram to be driven out soon afterwards by the Chōḷa king's relation Hoysala Nārsimha II (c. 1220-35 A.D.). He further contends that, since one of the

Kāñchīpuram inscriptions bears a date in the regnal reckoning of Anaṅgabhīma III, the locality must have been for the time being under the Gaṅga king. But the suggestions appear to be unwarranted in view of certain known facts of South Indian history during the period in question which Dr. Mahalingam has ignored totally.

In the first place, about a hundred inscriptions discovered in the Godavari, Krishna, Guntur, Kurnool, Cuddapah and Nellore Districts prove that the entire tract lying to the north of the Chōla dominions formed a part of the empire of the Kākatiya monarch Gaṇapati (1199-1261 A.D.), a contemporary of Chōla Rājarāja III. That the Kākatiyas were expanding their power towards the south is proved by two of Gaṇapati's own inscriptions, dated 1250 A.D., at Kāñchīpuram itself. It is interesting to note that Kāḍava Kōpperuñjiṅga II, son of Kōpperjuñjiṅga I, claims in his Drākshārāma inscription, dated Śaka 1184 (1261-62 A.D.), to have been the executor of the commands of Gaṇapati-mahārāja, i.e., a subordinate of Kākatiya Gaṇapati. The Eastern Gaṅga may, therefore, could not have penetrated as far south as Kāñchīpuram without conquering thousands of square miles of Kākatiya territory and there is absolutely no proof to show that Anaṅgabhīma III was ever engaged in a successful war with Gaṇapati.

Sircar did not agree with Mahalingam. He said that the Eastern Gaṅga king did not invade Tamil-nāḍu and hence, no need for the Hoysalas to bother about it. Further arguments made by Sircar are not necessary here in view of the

conclusion which I am going to arrive at the end. However, the last paragraph of the article of Sircar evokes some interest, since it is not free from far fetched imagination.

It has been suggested elsewhere (*Ep. Ind.*, Vol XXX, pp.22) that Sōmaladēvi, wife of Gaṅga Anaṅgabhīma III, was a sister or daughter of Rājarāja III, although her name may point to her birth from Kannada princess. We know that the name of a queen of Hoysala Nārasimha II was also Sōmaladēvi and that the said Hoysala king gave one of his daughters in marriage to the Chōla king Rājarāja III. As the practice of naming grandchildren after grandparents was a popular one, it is not impossible to think that Sōmaladēvi, wife of Anaṅgabhīma III, was a daughter of Rājarāja III by the daughter of Hoysala Nārasimha II through his queen Sōmaladēvi. If such was the case, the presence of the inscriptions, edited above by Dr. Mahalingam, at Kāñchīpuram can be easily explained.

Areas of agreement:

Mahalingam and Sircar agreed that these are two independent inscriptions. They assigned them to the Eastern Gaṅga king Aniyānkabhīmadēva.

Areas of disagreement:

Mahalingam said that the Eastern Gaṅga king invaded Kāñchīpuram but was driven out by the Hoysalas. Sircar did not agree with this surmise. His contention was that Sōmaladēvi was probably the daughter of Rājarāja Chōla and was also probably the wife of the Eastern Gaṅga king and this explains the presence of the above records (This

theory is only his imagination).

New Approach:

The question arises whether there are two records or only one inscription in two parts one engraved in continuation of the other. The answer is quite clear. It is a single inscription in two parts engraved by the same hand. The photograph of the record is also published here. There are 13 lines. The *first transaction* ends in the *eighth line* with a punctuation mark after which the *second transaction* proceeds. The second part begins simply as Rājarājadēvar Year 20 and so on. This clearly shows that the record was engraved in the 20th year of Rājarāja and while doing so the previous gift made in absentia from Abinava Vāraṇavāsi by the Eastern Gaṅga queen was also recorded. Now we come to the most important issue. The exact Tamil text of the second part of the record is not properly translated. The English translation published in the volume is as follows.

“In the 20th year of Rājarājadēva on Monday, Āḍi 22, Saptami Aśvati, we the *sthānattār* of the Perumāḷ temple agree to supply (daily) as long as the moon and sun endure, a *nāḷi* of ghee measured by the *Ariyavalla-nāḷi* for burning four perpetual lamps before the (god) Perumāḷ for which purpose 128 cows made up of 64 milch and 64 heifers and pregnant cows and four bulls were given by Aniyaṅkabhīmadēva-rāhuta.”

The above translation is totally wrong. It has misled the scholars to make unnecessary arguments and counter arguments concerning the Hoysaḷas and the Eastern Gaṅgas. The above translation implies that the cows were

given to burn four lamps which were already in existence in the temple for a long time. Actually it is not so. The exact English translation given below solves the whole issue.

“Rājarājadēvar’s year 20 - Kaliṅgēśvaran (*alias*) Aniyaṅkabhīmadēva-rāhutan - in the month Āḍi on 12th (solar day) Monday, Saptami, Aśvati day - for Perumāḷ (Vishṇu) placed four sacred perpetual lamps (for which) to supply daily a *nāḷi* of ghee by the measure *Aniyanavallan nāḷi* - 128 cows made up of 64 milch cows and 64 heifers and four bulls (*rishabham*) were received by us, the *sthānattār* of the Perumāḷ temple, and we agree to light these sacred lamps so long as the moon and sun endure.”

In the 20th year of Rājarāja, the Eastern Gaṅga king placed (*vaitta*) four sacred lamps in the temple and the *sthānathār* agreed to light these four sacred lamps for which purpose they received 124 cows and four bulls. It means that the Eastern Gaṅga king was physically present in the temple on that day and made the grants in person. He came to Kāñchīpuram on a pilgrimage in the 20th year of the Chōḷa king Rājarāja. Since the territory belongs to the Chōḷa the record is naturally to be assigned to Rājarāja Chōḷa III. It actually has his name and quotes the 20th year of his ruling.

Conclusion:

The Kāñchīpuram inscription belongs to the Chōḷa king Rājarāja III. In his 20th year on the 12th solar day of the month Āḍi, the Eastern Gaṅga king came to Kāñchīpuram on pilgrimage, gifted four lamps, 124 cows and four bulls. At the time of inscribing the

transaction the previous grant made to the Kānchīpuram temple *in absentia* from Abinava Vāraṇavāsi by the queen of Aniyaṅgabhīma in the latter's 19th year was also recorded. Since the grant by the queen was made earlier, and that too *in absentia*, it is engraved in the first part stating that this is the writing of Vishvaksēna (as per the Vaishṇavita tradition) and the subsequent grant made by her husband after five years is recorded in the second part as a straight transaction. The entire engraving was inscribed in the 20th year of the Chōla king. The title Two Eastern Gaṅga inscriptions at Kānchīpuram is a misnomer. It is the Kānchīpuram inscription of the Chōla

king Rājarāja III. It records the two independent grants made one by the queen of the Eastern Gaṅga king and the other by her husband five years later when he came to Kānchīpuram on a pilgrimage.

Both Mahalingam and Sircar relied on the English translation of the second part. Had they read the Tamil texts-there would have been no need for the publication of such long articles.

[I am thankful to Sri.Madhav N.Katti Director of Epigraphy and Dr.M.D. Sampath the Chief Epigraphist, Archaeological Survey of India who were kind enough to send me the photograph of the Kānchīpuram inscription.]

Genealogy and History of the Rāshtrakūṭas of Mānapura

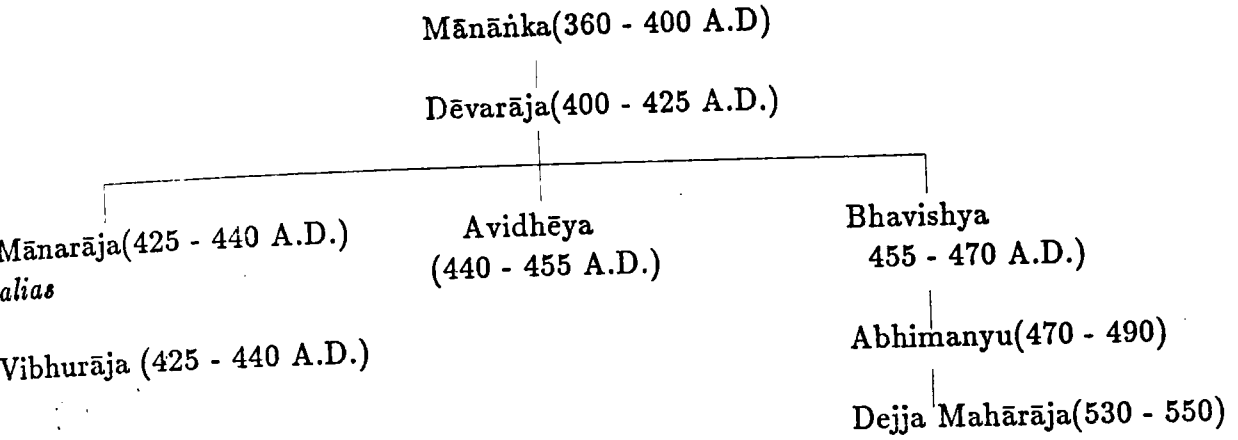
H.S.Thosar

The Rāshtrakūṭas of Mānapura who belonged to the earliest branch of this ruling dynasty were introduced to Indian history by the Uṇḍikavāṭika grant of Abhimanyu.¹ The Uṇḍikavāṭika grant records four generations of this family, namely Abhimanyu, his father Bhavishya, grandfather Dēvarāja and great grandfather Mānāṅka. Besides these rulers, the charter also mentions two more sons of Dēvarāja, whose names have not been recorded but they are described as kings. Both of them were probably the elder brothers of Bhavishya and reigned prior to him. Since the original provenance of the Uṇḍikavāṭika grant was not known, Mānapura the royal seat of this dynasty was identified with its namesake in the Rēvā-Bāndhōgaḍh region of Madhya Pradesh.² The discovery of the Paṇḍarangapalli plates of Rāshtrakūṭa Avidhēya revealed the exact location of Mānapura in the Western Deccan, because not only the provenance of the Paṇḍarangapalli grant is from this region, but the geographical names occurring in this charter were also located in Southern Maharashtra.³ Mānapura has been identified by Mirashi with Man in the Satara district of Maharashtra which has been generally accepted.⁴ The Paṇḍarangapalli grant was issued by Avidhēya from Mānapura who describes himself as the son of Dēvarāja and grandson of Mānāṅka. It follows

that Avidhēya was one of the two unnamed sons of Dēvarāja mentioned as predecessors of Bhavishya in the Uṇḍikavāṭika grant.

The discovery of the Hingni-Berdi plates of Rāshtrakūṭa Vibhurāja in the Daund Taluk of Pune District confirmed the facts revealed by the Paṇḍarangapalli grant.⁵ This grant was issued by Rāshtrakūṭa Vibhurāja who has been taken as the eldest unnamed son of Dēvarāja. M.G.Dikshit, who has edited the Hingni-Berdi plates has stated that these three grants thus provide the complete genealogy of the rulers of this house from Mānāṅka to Abhimanyu without any gap.

The Rāshtrakūṭa king Dejja-mahārāja introduced by the Gokak plates from the Belgaum District of Karnataka⁶ has also been regarded as the descendent of Abhimanyu of this family which seems to be logical.⁷ These kings ruled over the adjoining parts of Mahārāshṭra and Karnāṭaka comprising the present districts of Pune, Satara, Sangli, Kolhapur and Solapur in Mahārāshṭra and Bijapur and Belgaum in Karnāṭaka. This family thus held sway over the contiguous parts of Mahārāshṭra and Karnāṭaka from the middle of the 4th century to the middle of the 6th century A.D. On the basis of the four copper-plates referred to above V.V.Mirashi has proposed the genealogy of this dynasty as under:⁸



It seems that Dejja was the last ruler of the Mānapura house of the Rāshtrakūṭas and he or his successor had to surrender the kingdom to the Bādāmi Chalukya king Pulakēśin I or his successor Kīrttivarman I.⁹ This must have happened sometime before 576 A.D., because in that year Kīrttivarman had made land grants in Kolhapur District of Mahārāshṭra through his Godachi charter.¹⁰

There is a hiatus of about 30 to 40 years between the reigns of Abhimanyu and Dejja Mahārāja during which at least one or two rulers must have reigned. Who these rulers were is not known.

A close scrutiny of the Hingni-Berdi plates of Rāshtrakūṭa Vibhurāja provides fresh information about some so far unknown members of this royal dynasty. In the 3rd and 4th lines of this copper plate grant the endowment by Mahādēvī Śyāvalāngi with the consent of Mahārāja Vibhurāja is recorded. M.G.Dikshit, the editor of this grant has identified Vibhurāja with the unknown eldest son of Dēvarāja, which does not seem to be correct.¹¹ He has further treated Mahādēvī Śyāvalāngi as Vibhurāja's widowed mother and Dēvarāja's queen

which is also difficult to accept because, the mention of her name with the epithet Mahādēvī along with the name of Mahārāja Vibhurāja shows that she was Vibhurāja's queen and not his mother. His interpretation is probably based on the repeated reference in the 8th, 9th and 10th line of the said copper plate to the wife of Dēvarāja and the mother of Mānarāja which Dikshit has taken as the other name of Vibhurāja. The name of Prabhāvatī is mentioned along with Śyāvalāngi in these lines which has missed his attention. The reason for the mis-interpretation seems to be the vagueness of certain letters in these lines due to which this portion has not been properly deciphered. The substance of this matter seems to be the renewal of the endowment by Śyāvalāngi which formerly was made by Prabhāvatī, who is described as Āryā, Satī and dignifier of two families, namely her father's as well as husband's families.

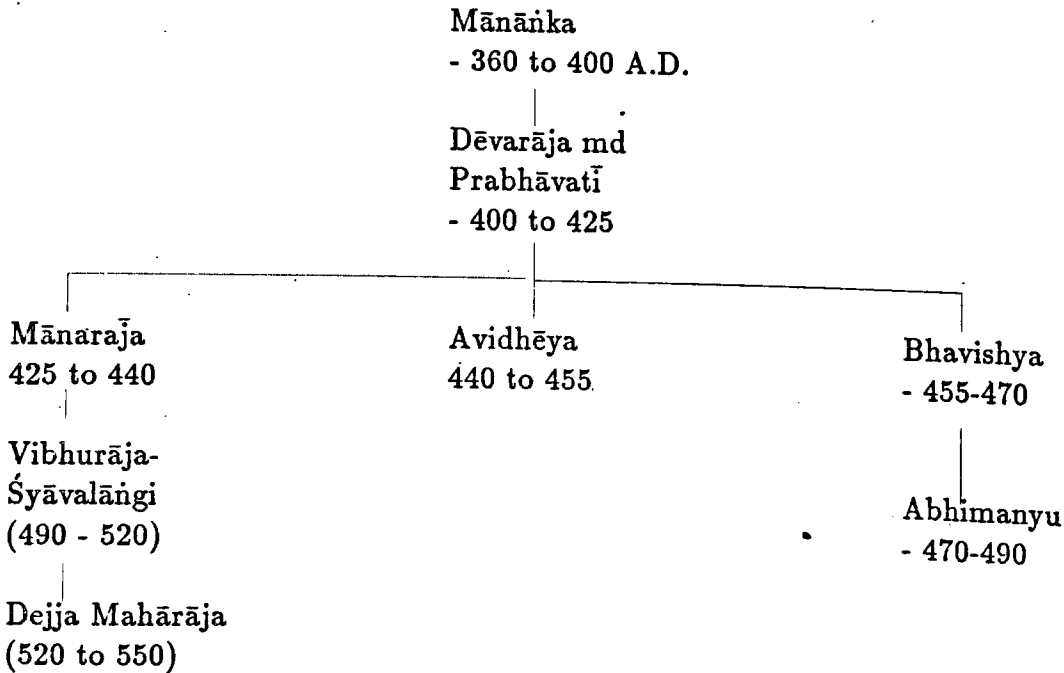
Who then was this Prabhāvatī? According to the description in the said charter, she was the wife of Dēvarāja and mother of Mānarāja. Instead of Prabhāvatī, Śyāvalāngi was treated as the wife of Dēvarāja by Dikshit and as she is again described as the mother of

Mānarāja he took it as the *alias* name of Vibhurāja. The renewal of Prabhāvati's endowment done by Śyāvalāngi clearly shows that Prabhāvati belonged to earlier generation. There is also the possibility that she was not alive at the time when this grant was issued. She might have been probably the mother of Mānarāja, whom Dikshit has taken as the eldest unnamed son of Dēvarāja. It clearly shows that the name of the queen of Dēvarāja was Prabhāvati and not Śyāvalāngi as inferred by Dikshit. It further shows that Śyāvalāngi was the queen of Vibhurāja who was actually the reigning Rāshtrakūṭa king when the Hingni-Berdi plates was issued.

The next question is about the exact place of Mahārāja Vibhurāja in the genealogy of the Rāshtrakūṭas of Mānapura. M.G.Dikshit has treated him as the eldest unnamed son of Dēvarāja whose second name was Mānarāja according to him. This interpretation is

untenable because there is no supporting evidence in the inscription. Vibhurāja was different from Mānarāja. As Śyāvalāngi and Vibhurāja had renewed the grant earlier made by Prabhāvati, the mother of Mānarāja and queen of Dēvarāja, Vibhurāja who was the reigning king seems to be the son of Mānarāja and grandson of Dēvarāja. That is why leaving the names of the other two sons of Dēvarāja he has mentioned only the name of Mānarāja who was unknown till the discovery of the Hingni-Berdi plates.

If this interpretation is correct, then it follows that after Abhimanyu of the Uṇḍikavāṭika grant, Vibhurāja occupied the Rāshtrakūṭa throne at the end of the 5th century A.D. and ruled prior to Dejjā Mahārāja. The genealogy of the Rāshtrakūṭas of Mānapura can be reconstructed as under on the basis of this inference :



The charters referred to above do not enlighten us much about the political history of this ruling dynasty. However, the following facts are gleaned through these records. In the Paṇḍarangapalli grant, Mānāṅka is described as 'Kuntalā-dhīśa'. It shows that at least during this period the Kuntala country represented the adjoining parts of the present states of Mahārāshṭra and Karnāṭaka. Mirashi, therefore, seems to be quite justified in identifying Kuntalēśa of the Sanskrit work 'Kuntalēśvaradautya' attributed to Kālidāsa with a Rāshṭrakūṭa king of Mānapura.¹² Interestingly there is a Jaina seat on a hill known as Kuntalagiri in the Osmanabad District of Maharashtra. The place is very close from the border of Solapur District which formed the part of the Mānapura kingdom. The place name appears to be the vestige of the inclusion of this part in Kuntaladēśa. Some scholars have treated Kuntala as equivalent to the Kadamba kingdom. The present evidence shows that Kuntala was to the north of Vanavāsi.

The Paṇḍarangapalli grant also describes Mānāṅka as a terror to Vidarbha and Aśmaka. It shows his clash with the two kingdoms of the Vākāṭakas i.e. Nandivardhana and Vatsagulma. The Vākāṭaka records also substantiate this point.¹³

Under Mānāṅka's successors their relationship with the Vākāṭakas seems to have improved, because no such conflict is mentioned in their records. On the other hand, as pointed out by Mirashi, Vākāṭaka Narēndrasēna married Kuntala princess Ajitabhṛtṭ ārikā, the daughter of Rāshṭrakūṭa Abhimanyu to normalise mutual relations. If the account occurring in the *Daśakumāra- charita* has

any historicity, it is possible that the later Rāshṭrakūṭa kings had accepted the overlordship of the Vākāṭakas.¹⁴ In the same work the kingdoms of Vidarbha and Aśmaka have been mentioned which represent the two branches of the Vākāṭakas as referred to above.

The possibility of a conflict between the Rāshṭrakūṭas of Mānapura and the Kadambas of Vanavāsi is indicated by the reference to 'Tuṅga' as an enemy subdued by Kadamba Mṛigēśavarman occurring in his charters.¹⁵ In the inscriptions of the later Rāshṭrakūṭas their family is sometimes described as 'Tuṅga'.¹⁶ If it is so, Mṛigēśavarman might have attacked the Mānapura kingdom during the reign of Abhimanyu.

Dejja Mahārāja, the last king of this house seems to have been forced to surrender his kingdom to the Chalukyas of Bādāmi. Some of his descendants probably sought shelter in Koṅkaṇ with the Mauryas of Koṅkaṇ who, as indicated by the Bandora plates of Maurya Anirjitavarman, had been assigned some lands in their coastal kingdom.¹⁷ Recently Dr. Shobhana Gokhale has reported the discovery of a copper plate grant of the Rāshṭrakūṭas of Mānapura from Ratnagiri District in Koṅkaṇ.¹⁸

In the Narvan copper plate of the Bādāmi Chalukya king Vijayāditya dated 741 A.D. Rāshṭrakūṭa Gōvindarāja, son of Śivarāja has been mentioned as his officer governing the Ratnagiri District in Koṅkaṇ.¹⁹ He might be a descendant of the Rāshṭrakūṭas of Mānapura who had taken refuge in Koṅkaṇ. Some of the descendants of this family seem to have left the Deccan and migrated to Central India as seen from the existence of several

Rāshtrakūṭa ruling families in that area, particularly in Malwa.

The copper-plates of the Rāshtrakūṭas of Mānapura referred to above highlight the cultural conditions under this dynasty. During the post-Sātavāhana period there appears a revival of the Brahmanical religion. Most of the endowments from these grants were given to Vedic Pandits.

In the Uṇḍikavāṭika grant of Abhimanyu an endowment to a Śaiva ascetic attached to the Southern Śaiva centre at Pēṭha Pāṅgaraka has been recorded. This place has not been identified. It may be identified with Bhīmaśaṅkar in Pune District which is one of the 12 Jyōtirlingas of Śiva, and lies in the territory ruled over by the Rāshtrakūṭas. There is a village named Pangri on the Bhīma river near Bhīmaśaṅkar which appears to be the modern equivalent of Pēṭha Pāṅgaraka. Uṇḍikavāṭika may be identified with Uṇḍevāḍi in the Daund Taluk of the same district. From these identifications, it appears that the Uṇḍikavāṭika grant which was in the collection of the Late Bhau Daji Lad of Bombay must have come from the Pune District.

The gift village Paṇḍarangapalli mentioned in the Paṇḍarangapalli grant has also not been satisfactorily identified so far. Some scholars have equated it with Paṇḍharpur, the famous seat of Śrīvīthala in the Sholapur District of Mahārāshṭra²⁰ but it is not acceptable to Mirashi. He has equated Jaula one of the gifted villages with Jāvli in Satara District. But in the copper-plate grant these places are stated to have been

situated to the east of Kollagiri which Mirashi has not identified. It can be identified with Kolgiri in the Jat Taluk of Sangli District. If it is so the identification of Paṇḍarangapalli with Paṇḍharpur seems to be correct because it is situated to the east of Kolgiri and it has also phonetical similarity and proximity with Paṇḍharpur. Jāula and Kāmyaka can be identified with Javle in the Sangola Taluk and Kamti in the Mohol Taluk of Sholapur District. The river Anevati is probably the name of a rivulet which joins the Bhīma near Paṇḍharpur.

In the Hingni-Berdi plates of Vibhurāja a village named Kamalibhuhaka occurs which can be equated with Kamblēśvar in the Baramati Taluk of Pune District,²¹ whereas those mentioned in the Gokak plates of Dejjā Mahārāja have been located in the Belgaum and Bijapur Districts of Karnataka. If these identifications are accepted, the antiquity of Bhīmaśaṅkar and Paṇḍharpur which are two most prominent religious centres from Mahārāshṭra will be pushed back to the 5th century A.D.

During the post-Sātavāhana period the Rāshtrakūṭas of Mānapura came to power as a result of the decline of the Ābhīra Traikūṭakas and held the central part of Western Deccan for nearly two centuries. The region around Mānapura (Man, in the Satara District of Mahārāshṭra) is still known as Manadesh and the river on which the capital was situated is also known as Mānagaṅgā. It is probably a vestige of its association with Mānāṅka, who was the founder and also the greatest king of this dynasty.

Notes and References

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2. A.S.Altekar, *Rashtrakutas and their Times*, 1934, Poona, p.5.
3. V.V.Mirashi, *Ep.Ind.*, Vol.XXXVII, pp.9-24.
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5. M.G.Dikshit, *Ep.Ind.*, Vol.XXI, pp.289-92.
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8. V.V. Mirashi, *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Vol.XXVII, pp.25ff.
9. This is borne by the twice Occurrence of the Rāshṭrakūṭas among the subdued enemies by the Chalukyas of Bādāmi in the records of the Later Chalukyas (Cf. M.S. Nagarajrao & K.V. Ramesh, Copper-plate inscriptions from Karnataka;) 1985, p.55; of these the first reference seems to be to the Rāshṭrakūṭas of Mānapura and the second to Rāshṭrakūṭa Indra, son of Kṛishṇa.
10. P.B.Desai, *Ep.Ind.*, Vol.XXVIII, pp.59-62.
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16. 1) D.R.Bhandarkar, *List of Inscriptions in Northern India*, Appendix to *Ep.Ind.*, Vols.XIX-XXII, Inscription No.1668.
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A Fragmentary Stone Inscription From Sarupathar Area

Nagājari-Khanikargaon Fragmentary Stone Inscription : Part-II

Dharmeswar Chutia.

Very recently, a block of stone bearing a few lines of writing on its dressed surface has been collected by the Directorate of Archaeology, Assam from Sarupathar area in Golaghat district of the state.¹ The incised block is said to have been traced out in the same locality from which another fragment containing the now famous Nagājari-Khanikargaon Fragmentary stone inscription (abbr. NFSI. Pt-I)² was recovered in 1972, and severally studied.³

The writing on the smooth surface of the piece of sandstone is in a very bad state of preservation. It is found broken vertically in the middle thereby causing the loss of the left half of the record. It is also broken horizontally at the bottom causing the loss of at least two lines of writing. Again, a big slice on the uppermost round top of the block from left to right is horizontally peeled off thereby causing loss of at least two lines of writing preceding the preserved three lines, leaving traces of only a few symbols to the right end.

Originally, there seems to have been atleast seven lines of writing incised on the chiseled surface of the block of stone of which only three lines are in a somewhat good state of preservation and in a fairly readable condition, although a few letters in the existing third line are mutilated impeding proper identification.

That there were atleast two lines of writing in the uppermost part of the stone, horizontally, is confirmed by the

traces of a few symbols in their respective right ends. Of the lost first line we have only two symbols at the end which seem to stand for *d* and *Visarga*, while of the second we have four symbols, again, at the end, representing *su*, *ndha ra* and *visarga*. Traces of some writings are visible also at the bottom, i.e. below the preserved third line, which shows that a portion of the writing was lost along with the broken piece (perhaps the last two lines of our reckoning). It is, thus, quite evident that the present record forms line-wise the right-middle-end part of a larger inscription. The present portion of the writing is spread over a space measuring about 50 cm. broad and 22cm. high.

The characters employed belong to the eastern variety of the Brāhmī alphabet of the final phase, that is the one widely used in the early Gupta Inscriptions (c 4th-6th cen. A.D.). The characters of our record closely resemble those of the Allahabad stone pillar inscription of the time of Samudragupta. In fact the letters of the present record are verbatim similar, both in size and shape, to those of the severally studied earlier find (NFSI-Pt.I) so much so that it goes to confirm the popular belief⁴ that the present fragment is but a complementary part of the latter, line-wise. This aspect we shall consider a little later.

The language of the record is Sanskrit and is apparently free from any influence

of local prakrit. The composition is in classical prose style. As regards the orthography it may be pointed out that a consonant following *r* (*rēpha*) is doubled, e.g. *sarvva* in line 4. Another point to be noted in this respect is the conspicuous use of a dental-nasal (*n*) instead of an *anusvāru*, or nasal (*ñ*), as was usually the case, before *ś*, e.g. *-ttrinśat* (line 5). In the same place note the doubling of *t* in conjunction with a following *r*, as in *kshētthram* in line 4. Significantly this orthographical feature is characteristic of the records of the time of Samudragupta.⁵

No date can be traced in the fragmentary record. However, as stated earlier, palaeographically our record is akin to its earlier counterpart (NFSI-Pt. I), which is roughly assigned to c.5th cen. A.D. M.M.Sharma and Dr. T.P.Varma are inclined to put the same 'closer' to the Umachal Rock Inscription of mahārājādhirāja-śrī-Surēndravarman.⁶

M.M.Sharma goes a step further when he observes that "on account of its maintaining a difference between *b* and *v*, and because of betraying no sign of any local Prakrit, we are inclined to surmise that the present record is earlier than even the Umachal inscription⁷, and his surmise appears to be correct. But, it is seen that mahārājādhirāja-śrī - Surēndravarman is unjustly sought to be identified with mahārājādhirāja-śrī -Mahēndravarman (c.A.D. 470-94) of Bhāskaravarman's records, for the simple reason that both Surēndra and Mahēndra are synonymous, meaning Indra. Since, kings in ancient India "often enjoyed a number of different names" and were "sometimes mentioned by the synonyms of their names," D.C.Sircar

and P.D.Chaudhury were inclined to 'tentatively' identify Surēndravarman with Mahēndravarman.⁸ But this 'tentative' identification seems to have been enthusiastically followed by some scholars as 'confirmative' without adducing any new evidence. But, this, to our mind is too simplistic a reasoning, and thus deserves to be rejected. In fact, as we have shown elsewhere,⁹ Surēndravarman and Mahēndravarman of the respective records are two different persons, and the former appears to be anterior in the time frame of the early history of Assam, not only to the latter ruler but also to mahārājādhirāja-śrī Pushyavarman (c.4th cen A.D.), the founder of the Varman dynasty of Prāgjyōtisha -Kāmārūpa to which mahārājādhirāja-śrī-Bhāskaravarman belonged. We have also shown that the Umachal Rock Inscription is more akin to the Susuniya Rock (cave) inscription of Chandravarman (c.A.D.340-60) both characteristically as well as palaeographically, in the light of which the former record may be assigned to a date among the middle of the 4th cent A.D., if not earlier. Since the palaeography of the NFSI-pt.I admittedly is 'closer' to the Umachal Rock Inscription, subject to individual taste, skill and style of the engraver as well as the surface of the stone concerned and the tool employed, it is quite logical to assign the present document to an earlier date. The orthographical feature of the doubling of a consonant in conjunction with a following (*supra*), which is characteristic of the records of the time of Samudragupta, seems to warrant our contention. Thus, in the fitness of things, this record may be assigned to a date in the 4th cent.A.D.

The present record is a land-grant inscription for all intents and purposes. It records the gift of an *agrahāra* (*agrahāram-imaṁ-dat(t)vā*) to certain *brāhmaṇas* (*viprēbhyō*) in a locality called *Gaurivāṭaka*. However, the name of the *vishaya* / *bhukti* / *pradēśa*, if there was any mention about it, is wanting, (perhaps lost along with the missing part.). It also records the gift of another large plot of cultivable land (*kshētrañ-cha Jattam*), a fertile one at that, yielding rich harvest of all varieties of crops (*sarvva-sasya-phala-pradam*). In the partially mutilated last available line (line 5) there seems to be some indication to the northern and southern boundaries of the gifted *agrahāra* and the fertile field when it speaks of (the existence of) thirty bread-fruit trees (*panasa-ttrinśat*) and perhaps also a big mango tree (? *brīhad-āmraka*) in the north. The southern boundary [*dakṣiṇē(na)*] is marked perhaps by a fig-tree (*nyagrōdha-pādapa*).¹⁰ Interestingly enough, in the NFSI-pt.I, there are indications to the eastern and western boundaries of an unspecified plot of land, which is bounded in the east by *Dibrumukhaḍa*, while the boundary mark in the west, which might have been given in the portion of the text after the word *paśchimatō* is now lost. If, however, the present fragment of the record (NFSI-Pt. II) is complementary to its earlier counterpart (which appears to be most likely), forming the middle-end fragment (line-wise) of the damaged bigger record (*supra*), some clues may be found in the present fragment as regards the identification and location of the unidentified plot of land, the two boundaries of which are indicated in the

earlier fragment.

The name of the donor (? - king) of the charter is not known. However, we may find a clue to this aspect in a particular naming word in the last few letters, e.g. *sundharaḥ* of the missing second line of the record. These symbols seem to form the end letters of a naming word, somewhat like, *Vasundharaḥ*. Interestingly, a clue for the reconstruction of the presumed naming word *Vasundaraḥ* may be found in the legend of a burnt clay seal¹¹ obtained from Alichiga-Tengani area which is not far away from the site wherefrom the present record was recovered. In the legend of the said terracotta seal we read the name *Vasundharavarmman*. The palaeography of the said seal is quite akin to that of the record under study, so much so that the style, execution and shape of the concerned letters, [(Va)sundharaḥ] in the two records appear to be the exact copy of one another. Thus, it is probable that the reconstructed word *Vasundharaḥ* of our record is but an abbreviation which stands for *Vasundharavarmmaṇaḥ* of the seal. If it was so, *Vasundharaḥ* of our record and *Vasundharavarmman* of the seal stand for the name of one and the same person, and, therefore, identical. But the antecedents of *Vasundharavarman* is not known. Particulars, if there were any, were perhaps gone with the broken slice. Whether this (Va)sundhara- (varman) was the donor in the record under study cannot be said with any amount of certainty. Again, whether (Va)sundhara (varman) was the donor of the grant as well as the ruling prince there, we do not know. But in case he was so, he

must belong to a different royal house, i.e. other than that of the Varmans of Prāgjyōtisha- Kāmarūpa founded by Pushyavaraman, since no king of that name can be traced in the records of the Varmans of Prāgjyōtisha- Kāmarūpa. Again, in the present state of our knowledge, it is not possible to say how (Va)sundhara was connected to or the nature of his relationship with *mahat-tara* Brahma-datta and Vāji mentioned in the earlier part (NFSI-Pt.I), if the two fragments form parts of the one and the same record.

Here below we present the reconstructed text of our record:

The Text¹²

- 1daḥ¹³
- 2(va)sundharaḥ¹⁴
- 3¹⁵ sa tra agrahāramim¹⁶ datvā¹⁷
viprēbhyō Gaurivāṭakē¹⁸
- 4 ...tuḥ kshētrañ-cha¹⁹ dattañ vipulam
sarvva- sasya-phala- pradam
- 5 ...nam²⁰ u[tta]rē[ṇa]²¹ panasa-trinsat²²
brihad-āmraka²³ dakṣiṇēna²⁴
- 6
- 7

II

The apparent closeness of the present fragment of the record to the earlier find (recovered some twenty five years ago) gives rise to a pertinent question as to whether the two fragmentary records, are but two detached portions of one and the same inscription, a larger one at that. The question cannot be answered categorically. There are both positive and negative aspects involved in it. However, we have sufficient reasons to

cite in favour of a positive answer. For one thing, the style, execution, language and script as well as the palaeography of the two fragments in size and shape are similar. Secondly, the texture of the stone and its surface are similar. Thirdly, the two records are recovered from the same locality as is also corroborated by the local accounts relating to the recovery of the two fragments. It is said that the stone bearing the inscription was located in a nearby forest, and was broken into several pieces; the broken pieces were then removed from the site to different places, and that the recovered two fragments are parts of one and the same inscription, while the rest are yet to be recovered.

Thus, if we go by the story, besides taking into consideration the other technical factors cited above, it is not difficult to recognise the fact that the two fragments (i.e. NFSI-Pt.I & II) belonged to one and the same record, and complementary to each other.

It is important, however, to point out that when the two fragments of the record are placed side by side, (see table below), the two sections cannot be linked textually with one another, in that the initial letter(s)/word(s) of any of the preserved lines of section in the right (Part-II) cannot be linked and harmonised with any of the end letter(s)/word(s) of the section in the left (Part-I). What is more, even not a single complete sentence can be had by linking the two sections in the present state. This is the most important negative aspect of the question involved.

Now let us have a look at the two sections of the available record.

TABLE

NFSI-Pt. I	NFSI-Pt. II
1.1	1.1dah ¹³
1.2	1.2(va)sundharah ¹⁴
1.3 na na cha rā	1.3 ¹⁵ sa tra agrahāramim ¹⁶ datvā ¹⁷ viprēbhyō Gaurivāṭakē ¹⁸
1.4 māhattarō bṛihadattah vāpśchēhābhi	1.4 ...tuḥ kshētrañcha ¹⁹ dattam vipulam sarvva sasya-phala- pradam
1.5 pūrvvīṇa dibrumvakhada Somā paśchimatō	1.5 ...nam ²⁰ u[tta]rē[ṇa] ²¹ panasa-trisat ²² bṛihad-āmraka ²³ dakshiṇēna ²⁴
1.6 nyagrō dha pādapaśchāgam kirtyartam	1.6
1.7 uktañcha yāvatkīrttim- manushyam	1.7

It is thus seen that there were missing links in between the two parts of the preserved fragmentary texts. Therefore, even accepting the fact that the two fragments belonged to one and the same record, and also that if Part-II of the record in Table above represented the right-middle-end portion of the said larger record and that the other constituted the left lower section, it must be admitted that a fragment in the middle, linking the one text with the other, must have been missing, and still to be recovered. The story relating to the process of recovery of the present fragment lends support to this conclusion.

It is, therefore, worth admitting that the two fragments constituted two sections of one and the same record, and also that both the sections are complementary to each other save a missing section in between, and that the presently recovered section (Part-II) of the record provides the name of the locality of the donated land, viz. Gaurivāṭaka, which is wanted in the earlier fragment (i.e.

Part-I). Again, while the earlier section refers to and gives an indication to the eastern and western boundaries of the donated land, the present one gives clues to the northern and southern boundaries. In fact, the expression, '*nyagrodha-pādapaś-ch-āyam*', in line 6 in Part-I is to be linked to and read with the last word (i.e. *dakshiṇēna*) of line 5 of the extant text of the present find (Part-II), thereby indicating the southern boundary (i.e. implying a large banyan tree on the southern boundary) of the donated land, - an *agrahāra* in Gaurivāṭaka along with another extensive (*vipulam*) field (*kshētram*) yielding all varieties of crops. If it was so, line 6 of the former fragment is but the continuation of line 5 of the latter fragment. What is lost in this section actually are the latter two halves of the lines 6 & 7 which seem to have contained some statements in praise of the gift of land (*bhūmi-dāna*). The last line of the record is a citation of a *ślōka* from the *Mahābhārata*²⁵ as shown by Dr. T.P. Verma.

Now, if this position is accepted,

many conclusions drawn on the basis of the earlier text (i.e. NFSI-Pt.I) requires to be reviewed in the light of the evidence adduced from the present fragment (i.e. NFST-Pt. II) in spite of the fact that the evidence is meager and inconclusive.

III

The record is of great significance in as much as it, along with a few others which have surfaced so far, throws a new wave of light on the early history of Assam, as may be pointed out below:

1. It is the earliest and the only land-grant record incised on stone - surface so far obtained in Assam. All other land - grant records relating to early Assam (sic. the kingdom of Prāggyōtisha-Kāmarūpa of hallowed memory) recovered so far are on copper plates, the earliest ones being the records of Bhāskaravarman (c. 7th century A.D.).

It may also be noted in this respect that, while the land-grant charters of later times indicate the boundaries of the donated land in eight directions (east, south-east, south, south-west, west, north-west, north and north-east), the boundaries of the gifted land here are indicated in four cardinal directions only.

2. The place of recovery of the record is located in the east-south-east region of present Assam on the foot-hills areas of the Nāga-hills in the Dayang-Dhansiri valley. In recent times, several archaeological objects, including epigraphic specimens ranging from c. 2nd-3rd cen. A.D.²⁶ onwards have come

to light from this area. This shows the spread and popularity of Brahmanical culture in the remote eastern areas of Assam in the early centuries of the Christian era.

3. The evidence provided by this inscription along with some other records obtained from this area tends to highlight the existence of an independent political entity in this region in the early centuries of the Christian era, which till then was perhaps outside the pale of the ancient Prāggyōtisha-Kāmarūpa kingdom. Apart from the name of Vasundharavarman of the clay seal (*supra*), in another epigraph obtained from this area not long ago, we read the name of one Ratnavarman,²⁷ who perhaps was a ruling prince. Since the above mentioned two names cannot be traced in the records of Bhāskaravarman and others, it is quite logical to presume that they belonged to a separate royal house.²⁸ The just mentioned record may be ascribed to the 5th cent. A.D. palaeographically. But if this independent political entity was the same as, or different from the early kingdom of Davāka mentioned in the Allahabad *praśasti* (4th cen. A.D.) cannot be said precisely at this stage.

At any rate, the newly found record may usher in a new chapter in the political and cultural domain of early Assam.

Notes and References

1. It is said that the present dilapidated record is a fragment of a bigger inscription found in *situ* in a nearby forest. But the local people who had no idea about its contents, had, under a misconception, broken the stone bearing the inscription into several pieces which were then removed to different places. One of the pieces was traced in the house of Shri Luduram Saikia, the village headman, from whom Dr. M.K.Saikia, the then Principal of D.R.College, Golaghat collected the piece (later on transferred to Assam State Museum.) The second piece, i.e. the present fragment was kept buried in the compound of another villager's homestead and ultimately came to the possession of Shri Putud Ali from whom it was recovered presently. The other pieces still remain to be traced out.
2. Since the provenance of the two fragments is the same, for convenience, let us refer to the earlier recovered one as NFSI-Pt. I and the present one as NFSI-Pt-II. A preliminary report on the new find was published in *JARS*. Vol. XXXIII, No. 1.
3. For details P.C.Choudhury, *JARS*, Vol.XX, 1972-73, pp. 25ff, D.C.Sircar, *JAIH*, Vol.VII. 1973-74, p.245; T.P.Verma, *JESI*, Vol.XVI, pp.22ff; M.M. Sharma, *IAA*, 1978 pp.303ff; - *JARS*, Vo. XXVI.
4. See under no. 1 above.
5. Vide B.Chabra, & G.S. Gai, Rev. Edn. *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol III, pp. 206, 221, 225, 229 & c.
6. Vide, Under n. 2 above.
7. cf. M.M.Sharma, *IAA*, p.304f.
8. cf. D.C.Sircar, & P.D.Choudhury, *Ep.Ind.*, XXXI. Pt-II, M.M. Sharma, *IAA*, pp:21.
9. For a detailed discussion see our paper, 'A note on the Umachal Rock Inscription' in *Archaeology of North-Eastern India*, ed. Jai Parakash Singh, and Gautam Sengupta, 1991, pp. 232 ff.
10. See *infra*.
11. The clay seal under reference collected by Shri H.N.Dutta from Alichiga-Tengani is under study.
12. From photograph and verification of the original.
13. It is the last letter with a following *visarga* of the lost first line. The top of the symbol having gone, it looks like the lower part of *d*.
14. It may be reconstructed as '[Va]sundharah' in the light of the word 'Vasundharavarman' found in the legend on the burnt clay seal along with a stone inscription obtained from Alichiga-Tengani area of Barpathar. Interestingly, the symbols representing *sundarah* are strikingly similar to that of the clay seal under reference.
15. The stone is vertically broken here. The immediately preceding letters/part of the record have gone with the broken piece. The same is the case in respect of subsequent lines.
16. Read *agrahāra m -imam*, the nasal sign having gone with the sliced off piece. The nasal sign (*anusvāra*), probably put above the top-mark of the letter *m* perhaps gone with the lost piece.
17. Read *dattvā*.

18. Notice the form of the letter *g* with a foot-mark in combination with the vowel *au* (sic. *gau* in Gaurivāṭaka). Such form of the letter *g* (*gau* in the present case) in conjunction with a *ō* or *au* is a common feature in the copper plate inscriptions of the early Gupta period.
19. Notice the doubling of the letter *t* in combination with a following *r* (*rēpha*).
20. The remnant of a symbol looking like the right half of *v* (*d*) may be noticed before (*nam*). The symbol *m* after *n* is, however, mutilated.
21. Read *uttarēṇa*. The letter *ttā* in *uttarēṇa* is mutilated, while *ṇ* is dropped by scribal mistake, indeed.
22. Notice the use of a dental nasal instead of an *anusvāra* or a guttural nasal in combination with a following *ś*. This is a characteristic feature in the early Gupta inscriptions.
23. The letters after *bṛihadā* are broken. The mutilated symbols may represent *mraka*. Here the intended word seems to be *bṛihad-āmraka*.
24. Read *dakṣhiṇēna*. A slice of the surface of the stone with the right half of *ṇ* followed by *n* has been damaged.
25. cf. *Mahābhārata*, Ādiparvan, 202/11
26. Vide *JARS.*, Vol. XXV, pp.33ff; also Vol.XXXIII, pp.41ff
27. The epigraph engraved on one of the long thinner sides (79x13cm) of a flat stone slab (79x43x13cm), and found by chance lying amidst the ruins of a brick structure in a place called Alichiga-Tengāni in the Borpathar area of Golaghat district, Assam, is under study. The palaeography of the record is closer to that of the Kahaum stone pillar inscription of Skandagupta (A.D. 459-60). The block of stone bearing the inscription and the clay seal referred to above have been collected by Shri H.N. Datta, an officer in the Directorate of Archaeology, Assam.
28. Attention may be drawn to the present author's paper, "A Note on the Umachal Rock Inscription" in *Archaeology of North-Eastern India*, ed. Jai Prakash Singh & Gautam Sengupta, 1991, and published by Har-Anand Publications in association with Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi.

Vechchhapaṛu Grant of Kokilivarman

C.Somasundara Rao

While on an exploration work in April 1995 near Kottavalasa in the Vizianagaram district, a few research scholars of the Department of Geology, Andhra University came across an earthen pot containing the present copper-plate set at the village Tāḍitūru. This set contains three plates each plate measuring 20.5cm x 6.4cm. The plates have a thickness of 0.3cm. The plates have a hole on the left margin through which a ring passes. The two ends of the ring are soldered into a seal which contains the figures of the moon and a boar at the top. Below these figures is the legend *Śrī-Anivāritasya*. At the bottom portion of the seal is the figure of a flower. The plates, along with the seal, weigh 1Kg.125 gms.

The script of the inscription belongs to the Middle variety of the Telugu - Kannada script in general, and 8th Century A.D. in particular. The characters have the usual horizontal strokes as the serifs. However, a few new forms of the letters are noticed in this inscription. The letter *sa* is written almost like *tu* as in *samyak* (1.9). The left loop of the letter *ya* is sometimes written with the loop beginning at the top and not at the lower portion as in *Śaktitraya* (1.9). Again the same letter has a bifurcation of the vertical line with leftward and rightward curves as in *ya satu* (1.16) as in the Kalingānāgarī script. The letter *ba* has attained a more advanced form (1.17). The medial *a* form was in one case added to the right limb of the letter *pa*, which actually results in

a confusion, whether it could be *ha* as in *pālana* (1.9). There is also not much of a difference between the long medial *ū* and the subscript *ya* as in *prasūtānām* (1.4).

The language of the inscription is Sanskrit prose except for the benedictory and imprecatory verses at the end of the inscription which are in verse.

The object of the inscription is to record the gift of the village Vechchhapaṛu in the Parvata-Bhōga-Vishaya of Madhyama-Kalinga to a Brahmin scholar who was the *Mahājana* of the Tāḍtoṛu village by the king Kokilivarman, son of Vinayāditya.

The grant opens with a *praśasti* of the Chālukyas. They are described as worshippers of the feet of Svāmibhaṭṭāraka who obtained the kingdom with the blessings of Kauśikī. They belonged to the Mānavyasa-gōtra, and were the progeny of Hāritī. They were performers of Aśvamēdha and their fame reached all the worlds (11.1-4). In continuation of this, the king Śrī Kokilivarman is described as a son of Vinayāditya and as one whose feet were worshiped by the feudatories and as one who was known for his valour and virtues. He is said to have paid respects to gods, Brahmins, saints and teachers. The king was devoted to the feet of his parents and assumed the titles *Paramabrahmaṇya* and *Paramamāhēśvara* (11.5-10).

L1.10-16 record the donation of the village Vechchhapaṛu in the Parvata-Bhōga-vishaya in the Madhyama-Kalinga area to the *mahājana* of the village

Tādṭoru-500 who is described as *Ch-handōga*, who could be a scholar in *Sāmavēda*. The donation was made on the occasion of *Uttarāyaṇa-saṅkrānti*. The gift village was endowed with all the immunities associated with the *agrahāras*. This is followed by the benedictory and imprecatory verses (11.16-20). The last line of the inscription is not very clear.

The significance of the inscription is that this is the fifth record known of the *Madhyama-Kaliṅga* branch of the Eastern *Chālukyas* of *Veṅgī*. From the Eastern *Chālukyan* history we know that *Maṅgi-Yuvarāja* who ruled for twentyfive years (681-705) had three sons namely *Jayasimha II*, *Kokkili* and *Vishṇuwardhana III*. After the death of *Maṅgi-Yuvarāja*, *Jayasimha II* succeeded to the throne and ruled between 705 and 717 A.D. Then ensued probably the conflict between the other two step-brothers of *Jayasimha* namely, *Kokkili* and *Vishṇuwardhana III*. According to the later inscriptions, *Kokkili* ruled for only 6 months. He must have given place to *Vishṇuwardhana III* when the latter was successful in overpowering *Kokkili*. The latter seems to have come over to the *Madhyama-Kaliṅga* area with its capital at *Elamañchi*. That *Kokkili* and three generations of his successors ruled over *Madhyama-Kaliṅga* is attested by four sets of *Muñjēru* plates which were noticed by the Epigraphy Department as early as 1908-09.¹ Out of these four grants one was issued by *Kokkili Vikramādityabhāṭṭāraka* who was the son of *Maṅgi-Yuvarāja*.²

The donor *Kokkili* should be identified with *Kokkili I*. Another grant was issued by *Maṅgi-Yuvarāja*, the son of *Kokkili I*

and grand son of *Maṅgi-Yuvarāja*.³

The two other *Muñjēru* grants record donation by *Kokkili-varma-mahārāja*, who was the son of *Vinayādityavarman* and grandson of *Maṅgivarman*.⁴ This *Maṅgivarman* may be identified with *Maṅgi-Yuvarāja II*. Out of these names we may draw the genealogy as follows :

Kokkili I
|
Maṅgivarman (or) Maṅgi II
|
Vinayāditya
|
Kokkili II

The issuer of the present inscription was *Kokkili II* as he is described as the son of *Vinayāditya*.

How long these kings ruled over *Madhyama-Kaliṅga* is not clear from their own inscriptions, because none of these refers to either the *Śaka Era* or even the regnal years of the respective kings. It is usual for scholars to assign twenty years of rule to a king when his dates are not known. In that way we can start the rules of *Kokkili I* in 718 A.D. and take the end of the rule of *Kokkili II* to 798 A.D.

This Chronology would also fit in with the other known information from the Eastern *Gaṅga* side. The *Muñjēru* plates of *Anantavarman*⁵ who was also the issuer of an inscription dated in G.E. 284⁶ and the *Alamaṇḍa* plates dated in G.E. 304 (800 A.D.)⁷ prove this point.

The four *Muñjēru* plates refer to gifts to Brahmins located in the *Bhōgapura-vishaya* which included *Dēpūḍi*, *Muñjēru* etc. Since the undated *Muñjēru* plates of Eastern *Gaṅga Anantavarman*⁸ record

donations to Brahmins of these places, we can draw the inference that the Eastern Gaṅga Anantavarman was successful over Kokkili II sometime in the last years of his reign.

Apart from political history, the inscription supplies one interesting information that the village Tāḍṭoṛu was a *Pañcha-Śata-Sthāna* probably indicative of five hundred households or families.

I am aware of the problems connected with the connotation of the numerals attached to territorial divisions. The village Tāḍṭoṛu was an *agrahāra* village because the donee of the inscription was named as *mahājana* of Tāḍṭoṛu rather than by his personal name. It is likely that he was the head of the *agrahāra* of Tāḍṭoṛu, who received this village of Vechchhapaṛu from the king. The numeral 500 may refer only to families

living in the village Tāḍṭoṛu. We have later instances of *mahājanas* of 500, 200, 100 etc.⁹

It is to be noted that the village Tāḍṭoṛu is identical with Tāḍitūru, where the plates have been discovered. The gift-village Vechchapaṛu cannot be easily identified.

It is interesting to note that the Mahājanas of Tāḍitoṛu figure in a record at Śrīkūrmam dated Śaka 1152 (A.D.1230)¹⁰ in a boundary dispute between the villages of Ponnaḍi and Bontalakōṭi. The dispute was settled in the presence of Narasiṁha-mahāmuni (possibly Narahari-tīrtha) when representatives of various administrative divisions of the Gaṅga Kingdom participated. This evidence shows that the *agrahāra* of Tāḍṭoṛu continued to flourish during the 13th Century A.D.

Text¹¹

1. Siddham |¹² Svasti śrīmad = bhagavā(n) Svāmi - bhaṭṭāraka - pād - anudhyātāna-
[m̄ *]
2. Kauśikī - varaprasāda - labdha - rājya - vibhava - vīryāṇām = Māna-
3. vyasa - gōtrāṇām Hāritī - putrāṇām = aśvamēdha - ya(yā)ji -
4. nā[m̄ *] Sakala - dig(ñ) - maṇḍalasya Chāluky - ānvaya prasūtānā(m̄) [| *]

2nd Plate, 1st side

5. Anēka - sāmanta - maṇi - makuṭa - ghaṭita - charaṇ - āravinda - yugala[h̄*]
6. Naya - vinaya - vikram - ōpā [r*]jita - tējasvī yaśa - vipula - tima (?)la gu -
7. ṇa-gaṇa(ṇ - ā)¹³laṁkri(kṛi)tasya dēva - dvija - yati - guru - visisṭ - ēshṭa
(shṭ-ā)nujīvita[sya *]
8. parama -brahmaṇya parama - ma(mā)hēśvara mātā - pitri(tri) - pād -
ānudhyātā(taḥ)
9. Śakti-traya-sa[m̄*] panna[sya*] samyak- praja(jā)-pālana [dakshasya*] Vina-
yāditya-mahārāja[sya*]

2nd plate, 2nd side

10. priya - tanaya[ḥ*] Śrī-Kokilivarmma(mmā) Madhyama - Kalīngē Parvvata-Bhōga¹⁴-vishaya
11. Vechchhapaṭu-ma(nā)ma grāme nivā(si*)na (naḥ) kuṭumbina[s*]sa(r*)vva-samavēta(tān) sa-
12. mājñāpayati [|*] Pañcha-śata - stha(sthā)nasya Tādtoṛu - grāma - mahāja -
13. nasya Chhandōgasa brāhmaṇasya punya(ṇy - ā)bhivri(vri)ddhayē Uttarāyaṇa sa[m*] -
14. krā[m*]tyām = udaka-pūrvvābhimukhō bhūtvā sarvva-kara-parihārēṇa(ṇ-ā) chandr-ā

3rd plate, 1st side

15. rka-tārakam = agrahāra(rī)kṛitāya[m*] grāmō datta(ttaḥ) [|*] Kēnachit pala-kara-
16. ṇīya(yāt) satu karōti kārayatya samatyatē vā¹⁵sa pañcha -mahāpātaka (sam)yuktō bha -
17. vaty=attra vyāsa - gīta - ślōka(au) bhavataḥ [|*] Bahubhir = vvasudhā dattā bahubhi[s*]- ch-ānupālītā [|*]
18. yasya yasya yadā bhūmitā(s = ta)sya tasya jatā (tadā) phala[m*] [||*] Shashṭi varsha
19. sahasrāṇi svarggē mōdati bhu(bhū)mida(daḥ) | Ākshēptā-ch-ānumantā cha tāny-ē-
20. va-naraka(kē) vrajēt [||*] Sammiśrad - atra Tārtoṛa praśana bhavati¹⁶

Notes and References

1. *A.R.Ep.*, Nos. 10, 11, 12 and 13 of 1908-09
2. *Ibid.*, 13 of 1908-09
3. *Ibid.*, 12 of 1908-09.
4. *Ibid.*, 10 and 11 of 1908-09.
5. See *Prof.K.A.Nilakanta Sastri Felicitation Volume*, pp.117 ff.
6. *A.R.Ep.*, 1924, pp. 97-98.
7. *Ep.Ind.*, III, pp. 17 ff.
8. See note 5 above
9. R.Narasimha Rao, *Corporate Life in Medieval Andhradēśa*. pp. 89-90.

10. *S.I.I.*, Vol. V. No. 1290.
11. From the original plates
12. Expressed by symbol
13. Read *guṇa-gadā*.
14. *ga* written below the line
15. Sentence not clear.
16. Last sentence is not clear. A spiral symbol is put between the letters *pra* and *śa*; and a form looking like subscript *ya* is put between *na* and *bha*.

Buddhist Inscriptions from Pauni: Some Observations

Ajay Mitra Shastri

Students of early Indian epigraphy are indebted to V.B. Kolte¹ and S.B. Deo and J.P. Joshi² for bringing to light a fairly good number of short Prakrit donative inscriptions of a few centuries before and after Christ found engraved on the various parts of the huge stone railing that once encased what were the two *stūpas* with over 40 meters diameter on the two mounds known presently as Jagannātha Tekḍī and Chāṅḍkāpur at the site of Paunī in the Bhandara district of Maharashtra. The site was earlier known to have yielded some early remains³ and the excavations there in 1969-70 led to the discovery of a couple of early Buddhist *stūpas* which had a history going back to the Maurya period and extending to the close of the Sātavāhana age.⁴ Recent excavations by the Excavations Branch I, Archaeological Survey of India, stationed at Nagpur have thrown open the remains of a habitation site at the same place but in a different locality.⁵

Of the Buddhist inscriptions from Paunī, five discovered in course of the explorations preceding excavations were published by V.B. Kolte and the rest found in course of excavations published later by S.B. Deo and J.P. Joshi together with their facsimiles in the Excavation Report. A section appended to this write-up dealing with the significance of personal names occurring in these inscriptions has been contributed by A.P. Jamkhedkar.⁶

There are, however, several points in the write-up of Deo, Joshi and

Jamkhedkar regarding the reading and interpretations and conjectures arising therefrom that stand in need of reconsideration, and the same is attempted in these lines.

There are in all thirty inscriptions; very short and matter-of-fact in nature registering some gift (*dāna* or *prasāda*) by some individual or a group of persons. They comprise a short line except only a single case consisting of three short lines (No. 6, p. 39). A few of the records are very fragmentary with some letters lost or of a doubtful reading making it difficult to make a sense. As stated above, most of the epigraphs are votive in nature, there being only a single exception where it is in the form of a label (No. 10, p. 40) which gives the name the Nāga Muchirida⁷ (Muchilinda) who is depicted.

Now passing on to individual votive records, in respect of inscription No. 4, of which only the middle portion reading *samikāya hima* is now extant, the possibility of *samikā* standing for *savikā* or *śrāvikā* 'a female lay follower' is indicated.⁸ There is no doubt that *savikā* or the word containing it served as an adjective of the donatrix's name which probably began with the letters *hima* which are preserved. But to believe that *samikā* stood for *śrāvikā* is not sustainable. First, the expression *śrāvikā* is of extremely rare occurrence for Buddhist lay followers, and there is not a single instance of its use in the numerous votive records in India during the few centuries preceding and following

Christ. The word very common among the Buddhists for this purpose is *upāsikā* or *uvāsikā*.⁹ The word *sāvīkā* or *śrāvīkā* as found employed in early Indian records refers to Jaina female lay-follower.¹⁰ Thus, the suggested connotation of the word is not substantiated by the extant evidence. While at the moment it is impossible to suggest any other meaning for it, it is not impossible that it formed part of some other word which is lost irretrievably.

Inscription No 5, as rightly suggested by Deo-Joshi, reads undoubtedly *Pavajitasa Utarakasa modirehi*, and not *mādirehi* as read by Kolte,¹¹ for the medial signs attached in the middle of the letter *m* are clearly *o* as will be apparent from a glance at the facsimiles given in both the writings. It definitely records the gift of a monk named Utaraka or Uttaraka. The word following Utarakasa, viz., *modirehi*, consists of four *aksharas*, not three as stated rather inadvertently by Deo-Joshi.¹² The meaning ascribed to this word by Kolte¹³, 'from Mā(o)dira.' may be correct though not quite certain.

No. 6 as stated above, is the only record inscribed in three lines even though the total number of words including two *Chas* ('and') is five. It reads *Heranikānam Utarabhatāna cha Budhadevasa cha dānam* and obviously records the joint gift of the Heranikas, Utarabhatas and a person named Budhadeva (Buddhadeva).¹⁴ The first two as indicated by the use of genitive plural were groups and the last one an individual: it was a gift made jointly by two groups and an individual. However, the suggestion of Deo-Joshi 'that the first two terms possibly stand for some sects or groups in Hīnayāna

Buddhism'¹⁵ is not quite apt. There is no evidence to indicate that Heranika was the name of any Hīnayāna sect or group. It is mentioned neither in literature nor inscriptions which mention several Buddhist sects.¹⁶ On the other hand, it occurs in many early Indian inscriptions¹⁷ and literary works¹⁸ and was apparently concerned with some economic function. Epigraphists generally take it to denote 'treasurer'¹⁹ but the employment of the word in plural renders such a meaning utterly untenable, for it is inconceivable that there should have been so many 'treasurers' as to form an organisation of their own to require a reference in the plural. The *Visuddhimagga* of the Buddhist polymath Buddhaghosha employs the term *heraññika* for a person who was highly knowledgeable about matters concerning coins including their genuineness and forgery.²⁰ And D.R. Bhandarkar took him to be an assistant of the Rūpa-darśaka who, according to the *Kauṭīliya Arthasāstra*, was an high officer of the state charged with the onerous task of examining the coins, telling genuine from fake, and only such coins as were tested and declared genuine by him were to be entered into state exchequer.²¹ And in view of the large-scale forging activity witnessed during the period in question²², it is not impossible that the coin-examiner needed the help of a large number of testers. However, it is just unthinkable that their number was large enough at and around Paunī as to require the use of plural. Thus, it would be better to take the word in question in its literal sense of a gold-smith²³, and there is nothing impossible if in the heyday of its prosperity in ancient times the

town had a large number (three or more as indicated by the plural number) of workers in gold. The goldsmiths did not necessarily specialise in gold only but in other precious metals as well though they were designated after one of the most precious metals and by their expertise could be of great help to the coin-examiner. Let it be remembered that the state could not trust them entirely in this matter as they could in that case have duped it easily because of their natural greed. Buddhaghosha is therefore fully justified in the mention of a *heraññika* or goldsmith as one familiar with the various aspects of the current coins while at the same time not meaning official coin-examiner. Another word for goldsmith used in some early inscriptions is *suvarṇakāra*²⁴, there being absolutely no difficulty in having two words for the same profession. The record in question is thus of an inestimable value in determining the exact connotation of the word *hairaṇyaka* which is neither 'treasurer' nor 'coin-examiner' as taken by some earlier scholars but only a goldsmith which is its literal meaning.

The fact that the *herañnikas* or goldsmiths are mentioned in plural would indicate that they had formed their organisation which may have been in the nature of *śrēṇis* or guilds. It thus adds one more to the list of such corporate organisations flourishing during the early centuries of the Christian era, and its presence at the town on Paunī would be an index of its economic importance and prosperity.

The expression *Utarabhatānam* which is also in plural defies a final interpretation. However, the word *Bhata* (Sanskrit

bhakta) denotes food and *Utara* (*Uttara*) 'later' or 'after'. And we know that there were elaborate rules regarding the timing of food prescribed or developed for the Buddhist monks and nuns. *Uttara* may also mean 'better' or 'superior' and may, therefore, refer to the quality of food to be consumed by Buddhist monks and nuns. The term *Utarabhata* may, thus, *conjecturally* be taken to refer to a Buddhist sect laying much emphasis on food habits which also had its lay followers. In case the word actually denotes a Buddhist sect as conjectured here, the reference may here be to its lay following.

Inscription No. 8 reads *Nāgasa pachanekāyikasa*²⁵ and apparently records a donation of one Nāga who is described as *pachanekāyika*. Deo-Joshi cite us rather out of context²⁶ and take the expression *pachanekāyika* as referring to the follower of a sect called *pachanikāya* (*pañchanikāya*)²⁷. The word *nikāya* when employed along with the name of a Buddhist or other school undoubtedly denotes a school or 'sect',²⁸ and when prefixed by *pañcha* (= five) is invariably a title of academic value among the Buddhists denoting a monk²⁹ who has mastered the five collections of scriptures traditionally attributed to the Buddha or his inspiration. They are the five divisions (*nikāyas*) of the *Dhamma-piṭaka* or *Sutta-piṭaka* which were traditionally supposed to have been preached by Gautama Buddha.³⁰ The title is mentioned in a couple of early inscriptions one from Sanchi³¹ and the other from Bharhut³². Its occurrence in an inscription from Paunī, which is the first of its kind in Maharashtra, perhaps indicates that some Buddhist monks who

has mastered all the five *nikāyas* were present at the Buddhist establishment of Paunī as well and probably the transmission of Buddhist scholarship as of Buddhism itself from North to the Deccan.

Record No. 9 has been correctly deciphered by the editors as *Mahāyasā amtevasiniya ... Vāliya (?) dānam*.³³ However, their interpretation, viz., 'gift of an "amtevasini" or a female disciple named "Mahāyasā"' ³⁴ leaves much to be desired. There is no doubt whatever that the gift was made by an *amtevasini* or female disciple. But her name was not Mahāyasā as they would like the readers to believe. Anyone familiar with the terminology of early Prakrit donative records of which there are plenty all over the Indian subcontinent would realise that the adjective *amtevasini* (or, for that matter, *amtevasi*) precedes the name which follows. Accordingly the donatrix was named Vālī, or whatever it stands for, whose name appears in genitive singular in keeping with the grammatical requirements ordinarily met with in early records. The name of the teacher preceded that of the disciple, and accordingly Mahāyasā (Sanskrit, Mahāyaśā or Mahāyaśas) whose name precedes the word *amtevasini* was the teacher. It would be seen that the name Mahāyasā is in masculine gender while the name of the *amtevasini* has to be in the feminine gender. Thus the inscription actually records a gift of a female disciple of the teacher named Mahāyasā (Mahāyaśas) meaning 'of great fame'.³⁵

Inscription no. 21, which is fragmentary with the last few letters missing, has been read as *Gohaya amteva*

...³⁶ doubtfully taken to refer 'to some 'amtevasini' (female disciple) whose name was probably 'Goha'³⁷.

Here unfortunately both the correct reading and interpretation have eluded the editors. A glance at the facsimile (Pl. LX. 21) would make one sure that the correct reading of the second letter of the personal name is *lā* not *ha*, as suggested by them. The medial stroke for *ā* to the right top of the letter *l* has been somewhat effaced. Thus, the name in question was Golā, not Goha. In this connection it may be noted that Golā as a feminine name occurs in early votive inscriptions from Sāñchī and Bharhut,³⁸ whereas Gohā is conspicuous by its absence. Moreover, the syntax should leave no doubt that Golā was not intended here as the name of a female disciple (*amtevasini*) whose name is missing, but of her female teacher.

Then as regards No. 12 which has been correctly deciphered as *Yakhadināya Pavajitāya dānam* the interpretation is totally incorrect. The editors feel that Yakhadina was the name of a monk,³⁹ whereas it was actually a nun. It may be noted that this is the only example at Paunī of a personal name beginning with Yākha (Yaksha), such names being more common elsewhere.

In No. 24, which is very short consisting of just two words which make absolutely no sense, what may be noted is that while there is no certainty about the reading of the first *akshara* of what has been taken as *Kanasa*, the last letter of the second word is clearly *pā*, not *pa* as read by the editors. Thus the correct reading of the second part is *peripā*, not *peripa*.⁴⁰ Of course, these

observations don't help us arrive at the correct interpretation.

No. 25 has been rightly deciphered as *Agidevāya*,⁴¹ but it should have been observed that it here is a female name, the *āya* being a feminine genitive singular case-ending.

Inscription No. 28 is quite fragmentary, but the reading of the intact portion consisting of just three *aksharas* should be *datāya*, not *dataya* as read by the editors.⁴² *Datā* (*dattā*) in this case was a feminine name-ending.

Before we conclude we may advert to the remarks about the personal names by A.P. Jamkhedkar.⁴³ We may limit our observations to only a few of them. *Sāmi* or *svāmin*⁴⁴ is said to refer to lord Śiva, whereas it is found commonly employed as a name-ending for the Vaishnavas and as the name of god Vishṇu often preceded by some place or personal name referring to the place where and the person by whom the divine temples was constructed.⁴⁵ The conclusion arrived at only on the basis of the name-endings *gupta* or *dinna* that some of the benefactors might have been of the Vaiśya class may not be altogether correct as we have instances of the members of the other classes assuming such names.⁴⁶ This is, however, not to deny the credit to the business community which must have played an important part in the creation of the Buddhist settlement at Paunī as at so many other places. What is intended is to observe that such an important conclusion should not be based entirely on the name-endings alone. These conclusions, it would be

observed, are followed by the editors in their concluding remarks as well.⁴⁷

The fact, however, remains that there is no royal personage referred to in any record and that the establishment, huge as it was, owed its existence and prosperity to the ordinary people. It may be pointed out at the end that many of the inscriptions are incomplete; these include even some of the well preserved epigraphs. Sometimes only the word *amtevasini* is met with while the following name and the word *dānam* or *pasādo* are left out. Likewise the name of the teacher along with his/her titles is missing. It is admitted that the space available was quite short, but these are vital details that must have been accommodated in the inscriptions in question. It is quite likely that the inscription was in two or more parts of an architectural piece, and the editors have read them separately taking them to be independent records which they were originally not. It would therefore be worthwhile to examine these architectural members afresh for getting a clearer picture of the inscriptions on them which would be of great value from the point of view of the socio-economic and religious history of Paunī in particular and of the Deccan and Buddhism in general. We may mention in this connection that none of the inscriptions published by Kolte is incomplete though they too are quite short. We had, however, no alternative but to depend on the facsimiles given by the editors in the absence of an access to the original stones. And the scope of this study is conditioned by this circumstance.

Notes and References

1. "Brāhmī Inscriptions from Pauni", *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXXVIII, pp. 169-74. These records were noticed during a visit to the site after the news of the discovery of the *Stūpas* appeared in local dailies of Nagpur.
2. *Pauni Excavations*, Nagpur University, 1972, pp. 37-43, pls. XXXI- XLII.
3. V.V. Mirashi, "Pauni Stone Inscriptions of the Bhāra King Bhagadatta", *Ep. Ind.*, Vol XXIV, pp. 11-14; "Pillar Inscriptions of Mahākshatrpa Rupiamma from Pauni", *ibid.*, Vol XXXVIII, pp. 53-56.
4. S.B. Deo and J.P. Joshi (eds.) *Pauni Excavations*, pp. 25-30, 94.
5. Personal information about the results from Dr. Amarendranath.
6. *Pauni Excavations*, pp. 42-43.
7. It is read as *Mucharido* by Deo-Joshi (*ibid.*, p. 38), but a glance at the facsimile shows that there existed, now somewhat effaced, a medical sign for *i* over the letter *ch* as well.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 39
9. *Vide* Lüders List, several inscriptions as indexed at p. 214.
10. *Ibid.*, Nos. 28, 47, 78.
11. *Ep. Ind.*, XXXVIII, p. 173, No. B, and facsimile on the opposite plate. For a better facsimile, see Deo-Joshi, *op. cit.*, pl. XXXIV. 5.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 39.
13. *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXXVIII, p. 173, No. B.
14. The first *cha* is quite redundant, and only the second *cha* serves the purpose quite adequately.
15. *Pauni Excavation*, p. 39.
16. For Buddhist sects, see Ajay Mitra Shastri, *An Outline of Early Buddhism*, Indological Book House, 1965, Varanasi, pp. 42-111.
17. Lüders List, Nos.74, 993, 996, 1179, 1239, 1247, 1297.
18. *Visuddhi-magga*, Pali Text Society edition, Ch. XIV, pp. 437, 517.
19. Lüders List, p. 224, under *hairaṇyaka*.
20. For the quotation *vide* Ajay Mitra Shastri, "Counterfeit coins of Ancient India: Literary and Epigraphic Evidence", *Nimismatic Studies*, III, 1993, New Delhi, p. 17, note-24.
21. *Kautiliya Arthasāstra*, edited by R.P. Kangle, 1960, II. 12, 25-26.
22. *Vide* for some details, Ajay Mitra Shastri in *Numismatic Studies*, III, pp. 11-18; "Presidential Address", *Coinage, Trade and Economy*, ed. A.K. Jha, Indian Institute of Research in Numismatic Studies, 1991, Anjaneri pp. XI- XIII; "Coin Forgeries during the Maurya Period", *Journal of the Academy of Indian Numismatics and Sigillography*, IX - X, 1993-94, pp. 3-12; "Contemporary Forgeries of the Yaudheya Coins". *Numismatic Studies*, IV, 1994; Contemporary Forgeries and Imitations of Sātavāhana Coins". *viśvambharā: Probings in Orients : Prof. V.S. Pathak Felicitation Volume*, edited by Ajay Mitra Shastri et al, 1994, New Delhi, pp. 52- 202, and the forthcoming work *Living With Forgeries*.
23. *Hiranya* ordinarily means 'gold', but when used in combination of *suvarṇa* it perhaps denoted 'cash'

24. Lüders List Nos. 986-1177; *Gāhā-satta-satī*.191.
25. Deo-Joshi read it as *pachanikāyikasa* though what has been read as the medial *i* over *n* is actually absent while there is clearly attached the medial stroke for *e* to the left of the letter. Kolte has read it correctly as *pachanekāyikasa* (*Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXXVIII, p. 173 No. B). Most probably the two inscriptions are identical.
26. *An Outline of Early Buddhism*, pp. 67-68, in connection with the Buddhist schools.
27. *Pauni Excavations*, p. 40.
28. *Vide* Lüders List, Nos. 987, 1105, 1123, 1124, 1248, where invariably it follows the proper name of the sect.
29. In such cases it is juxtaposed to a personal name as in the instant case. In such cases it is comparable to titles like *dvivēdin*, *trivēdin*, and *chaturvēdin* of the brāhmaṇas, prior to the time they turned into family surnames and lost their real significance.
30. The five *nikāyas* are *Dīgha*, *Majjhima*, *Saṃyutta*, *Aṅguttara* and *Khuddaka* which names are indicative of their nature and comparative status.
31. Lüders List, No. 299
32. *Ibid.*, No. 867. The term has been correctly rendered by Kolte.
33. *Pauni Excavations*, p. 39.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
35. Unfortunately the title of Mahāyaśas is not known.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 40,
37. *Ibid.*, p. 41.
38. Lüders List , Nos. 596, 836.
39. *Pauni Excavation*, p. 40.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 40, pl. XLI. 24,
41. *Ibid.*, p. 40. kk pl. XLI. 25.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 40, pl. XLII. 28.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 42-43.
44. *Ibid.*, p.42. As stated by Jamkhedkar, this was actually suggested by Bühler.
45. *Cf.* the *svāmin* -ending names of the Vaishṇava donees in the Vākāṭaka charters and the divine names Rāmagirisvāmin, Prabhāvatīsvāmin and Mondāsvāmin occurring in Vākāṭaka inscriptions which are not far removed from these inscriptions chronologically.
46. *Cf.* the names Dāmodaragupta and Abhinavagupta which were borne by well-known Brāhmaṇa litterateurs.
47. *Pauni Excavations*, p. 118.

Inscription of Nawwab Amir Mahal from Bara Banki

M.I. Quddusi

The study of this paper is based on a Persian inscription¹ of Nawwāb Amīr Maḥal, ex-spouse of Nawwāb Wājīd 'Alī Shāh, copied from Bāra Bankī, a district headquarters in Uttar Pradesh. The inscription records five verses, composed by Muḥammad Wājīd 'Alī Shāh Bahādūr, (Ex-) King of Awadh, pen-name Akhtar. Written in beautiful Nastalīq characters, the epigraph assigns the construction of a mosque to Amīr Maḥal in A.H.1285(1868-69 A.D.). The metrical record belongs to the post-deposition period of Wājīd 'Alī Shāh who ruled during the years 1847-56. Earlier, two inscriptions² of the ruling time of Wājīd 'Alī Shāh had been copied from Lucknow. The present paper is an attempt to highlight the valuable historical record, throwing new light on the relation between Wājīd 'Alī Shāh and Amīr Maḥal who had separated from each other through a divorce in 1856.

Bāra Bankī (latitude 26 56' north and longitude 81 11' east) which gives its name to the district, a mile west of the tahsil headquarters Nawābganj, is situated to the north-west of the junction of the Northern Railway and the North-Eastern Railway, being a place of some antiquity, dating back about a millennium.³

Before the study of the epigraph is taken up, it is deemed necessary to give a bird's eye view of the historical background of the Bāra Bankī region

during the medieval period.

A 17th century writer 'Abdu'r Raḥmān Chishtī, who composed *Mi'rāt - i - Ma'sūdī*, gives an account of a Ghaznavid invasion of the Bāra Bankī region of Awadh. The whole of Awadh had been under the Gāhaḍavālas until they were overthrown by Muḥammad Ghaurī in 1194.⁴

Bābar (1526-30) conquered Delhi in 1526 and assigned Awadh to an Afghān chieftain Bāyazīd Farmulī. After the death of Bābar, the Afghāns expelled the Mughal governor Junaid Barlās from Janupur and headed towards Awadh. Humāyūn defeated them in a battle at Dadra, 9 miles south-west of Bāra Bankī. The battle of Dadra proved to be a boon to Sher Khān (later Sher Shāh) as it swept away many of his formidable rivals, making him master of the situation and latter causing the exile of Humāyūn from the Indian scene for some time.⁵

It was under Akbar (1556-1605) that 'Alī Qulī Khān-i-Zamān conquered Awadh in the 4th regnal year (1559-60) and Nawwāb Amīn Khān, a local noble, built a mosque,⁶ dedicating it to the emperor, in Sarāi Akbarābād, near Nawābganj. The peaceful condition of the district under Shāh Jahān (1628-58) was conducive to the development of local industries and crafts.⁷

Under Aurangzeb (1658-1707), several persons of Bāra Bankī region were appointed to higher posts. Qāsim Qidwāi

led a Mughal expedition to the Deccan, while Shaikh Fakhru'llah held the post of Bakhshī (pay-master) for the troops in Bengal. Aurangzeb awarded the Havelī Firangī Maḥal in Lucknow to the sons of Mullā Quṭbu'd Dīn Shahīd of Bāra Bankī, a famous literary figure of his time and whose eldest son was appointed by the emperor as one of the editors of an important stupendous work on Muslim Jurisprudence entitled *Fatāwā-i-‘Ālamgīrī*,⁸ still much consulted by Muslim theologians.

With the arrival of Nawwāb Sa'ādat Khān Burhānul Mulk as the governor of Awadh, so also as the founder of the dynasty of Nawwābs of Awadh in 1722, the Bāra Bankī region acknowledged his

overlordship and since then it formed part of the kingdom of Awadh upto 1856. Āṣafu'd Daula (1775-97) was the real founder of Nawābganj, the existing headquarters of the Bāra Bankī district. Under him, Nawābganj and a few other places in the district formed part of the jāgīr of Nawwāb Ṣadr Jahān Begam and Bahū Begam.⁹

With this historical background in brief about Bāra Bankī, we now switch over to the study of the precious historical record.

The inscription is fixed over the central entrance of the prayer-hall in the mosque called Begamganj Wālī Shāhī Masjid. Its text reads as under :

Transliteration

1. Sākhta chūn Khāna-i-Rabb-i-Majīd
Ānke dar ṭā'āt-i-Ḥaq bāshad waḥīd.
2. Rashk-i-Hūrā(n) az maḥalhā-i-ḥudūr
Qurb-i-Khair-u dūr az Sharr-u-futūr.
3. Gar 'Amīr' āyad sar-i-lafz-i-'Maḥal'
Ṣāf bāshad nām-i-ān nikū 'amal.
4. Bar zamīn shud Masjid-i-Aqṣā Padīd
Dar dil-i-Karrūbiyān ham Shauq-i-dīd.
5. Guft Akhtar sāl-i-ta'mīrash chunān
Dhikr-i-īn masjid ba-bām-i-āsmān.
Sana 1285 Hijrī
(Written in very thin hands)
6. Tārīkh-i-taṣnīf-i-'Ālī Janāb Mu'allā Alqāb Ḥudūr-i-Pur
Nūr Muḥammad Wājīd 'Alī Shāh Bahādur Bādshāh-i-Awadh
(Sana 1285 Hijrī)

Translation

1. When that one who is unique in the worships of the True God, built the house of Most Glorious Lord (i.e. mosque).

2. Envy of the virgins, (once one) of the consorts of the court (of Wājid 'Alī Shāh), synonymous with good and away from wickedness and row.
3. If (the word) 'Amīr' is prefixed to the word 'Maḥal', the name of that well-doer will become evident (i.e. Amīr Maḥal).
4. On earth, Masjid-i-Aqṣā¹⁰ came into existence; in the heart of angels also, (there is intense) desire to look at (it).
5. Akhtar said its year of construction (i.e. chronogram) like this : 'honourable mention of this mosque (has access) to the height of the firmament, (yiedling) the year 1285 Hijrī (1868-69 A.D.).
6. Date of composition by 'Alī Janāb Mu'allā Alqāb Ḥuḍūr-i-Pur Nūr Maḥammad Wājid 'Alī Shāh Bahādur, king of Awadh, year 1285 Hijrī.

It is pertinent in view of the chronological sequence, to recount some aspects of the career of Wājid 'Alī Shāh¹¹, the composer of the metrical text under study.

Among all 11 Nawwābs,¹² Shī'a by faith, Wājid 'Alī Shāh was the last ruler of Awadh who inherited the kingdom¹³ in 1847 in a disorganised state. It was his misfortune that he had received no training in administration, as his early career as a prince had been, more or less, sunk in pleasure and luxury. Suddenly called upon to shoulder the onerous responsibility of administration, he naturally proved unfit for kingship. When he found his public career foiled and frustrated, his innate love of pleasure gained the upper hand. He seems to have resigned himself to a life of ease more in despair and dejection rather than deliberate planning.¹⁴

On the other hand, the East India Company, being curious to annex Awadh, left no stone unturned in depicting a grim and dark picture of the kingdom.¹⁵ Under this circumstance the

arrival of Lord Dalhousie as Governor-General (1848-56) was a curse to Awadh, who is said to have written to Sir Charles Wood, President of the India Board, saying, 'he would enjoy the honour of adding Awadh to the British Dominions'.¹⁶ Ultimately, he translated his words into action and annexed¹⁷ Awadh on 7 February 1856 on the ground of chronic misrule.

Thus having been dethroned, Nawwāb Wājid 'Alī Shāh decided to go to Calcutta and then to England to fight out his case before the British Parliament.¹⁸ He started from Lucknow in March 1856 and arrived in Calcutta in May, destined to breathe his last there in 1887.¹⁹

It was at this time in 1856 that separation between Wājid 'Alī Shāh and his spouse Amīr Maḥal of our epigraph, took place. The Nawwāb willingly offered to divorce those wives who were not desirous of accompanying him to Calcutta. Six²⁰ of the spouses sought divorce from him, Amīr Maḥal being one of them.

Amīr Maḥal, the builder of the mosque, as referred to in the epigraph under study, was one of the secondary wives²¹ of Nawwāb Wājid 'Alī Shāh. She entered his harem during his princehood at the age of eighteen, through the efforts of Nawwāb Nishāt Maḥal, another spouse of Wājid 'Alī Shāh. She was a prostitute and beautiful dancing girl with besetting melodious voice, popularly known as Karam Bakhsh Wālī. Being carried away by her person and great qualities as a singer and dancer, Wājid 'Alī Shāh bestowed on her the title of Amīr Parī and provided her all facilities, including a palatial accommodation and four attendants for her care. Having assumed the rein of Awadh kingdom in February 1847, he put her under veil, elevating her to the rank of a Maḥal²² and fixed for her two thousand rupees as monthly allowance.²³

Mention may be made of the fact that most of the Nawwābs of Awadh, enjoyed the time-honoured privilege of polygamy and maintained a large harem, despite the fact that Islamic injunctions sanctioned only four wives by the formal type of ceremony i.e. *nikāh*²⁴. Wājid 'Alī Shāh opted the *dola*²⁵ rite and *mut'a*²⁶ type of ceremony to marry as many wives as possible. Many of them were either members of his Parī Khāna or maids of his household.²⁷ To house such a large harem, he built the Qaiṣar Bāgh²⁸ (1848-50), the gaudiest of all the Lucknow palaces, at the exorbitant cost of 80 lakhs of rupees. He was always encircled by young girls of extreme beauty whom he entitled *Parīs* (i.e.

fairies) and housed them in a specially built palace called the Parī Khāna²⁹ (an abode of fairies) where they learnt music and dancing from honoured musicians. Amīr Maḥal of our record had been one of the *Parīs*, formerly entitled as Amīr Parī.³⁰

\ The character of Nawwāb Wājid 'Alī Shah was complex. A widely read scholar, he spent lavishly in honouring poets and men of letters. He was a fastidious connoisseur of fine arts like music and dance and raised them to a high level of excellence by his munificence and patronage, not failing himself in contributing books and introducing innovations in them. Thus, he stands unexampled in his literary and artistic attainments which distinguished him most from his contemporaries. He was a voluptuary, but kept away from wine. Though sunk in pleasure, he never missed his routine prayers.³¹

Amīr Maḥal, after her divorce from Wājid 'Alī Shāh, remarried Qāḍi Aṣghar 'Alī of Bāra Bankī from whom she had three sons³² and one daughter. She possessed huge property at Nawābganj in Bāra Bankī, purchased out of the wealth of her former ruler-consort Wājid 'Alī Shāh and took keen interest in building activities. She caused the construction of Lakhpedā Sarāi³³, Imāmbāḍa and an exquisite mosque in Amīrganj (named after her, but also called Begamganj) in Bāra Bankī from where our valuable record under study was copied. Before this, she had also built an Imāmbāḍa³⁴ in Lucknow during the reigning time of Wājid 'Alī Shāh, on a plot of land

purchased through Karāmat Ḥusain, a *nuzul* officer.

Apart from being a captivating dancer and singer, Amīr Maḥal was an excellent calligrapher³⁵ of her time, especially unrivalled in using the *Naskh* characters, for writing the verses of the holy Qur'ān. During the catastrophic days of the Mutiny of 1857, she, along with others, played an important role in saving the lives of certain British officials, for which, after the suppression of the Mutiny, she was greatly helped by the English authorities in her comfortable resettlement.³⁶ This lady of great qualities, greatly valued by Wājid 'Alī Shāh, expired on 28 January 1893, lying buried at Karbalā-Mīr Khudā Bakhsh in Lucknow, the city of her dreams.

The literary achievements of Wājid 'Alī Shāh have been both vast and varied, impressive and magnificent. He was a bibliophile, possessed with a facile pen, writing in Persian and Urdu and occasionally in Arabic. He has the laudable credit for having composed over a hundred works on heterogenous themes and topics.³⁷

As a poet Nawwāb Wājid 'Alī Shāh composed verses under the poetic name Akhtar³⁸, as found in the present epigraph also. This fact is to be taken into account that it was out of indelible past love and affection for Amīr Maḥal, the builder and his former spouse, that he composed the metrical text of the epigraph, referring to her therein as *rashk-i-hūrā(n) az maḥalhā-i-Ḥudūr* i.e.

envy of the virgins (i.e. pride of enchanting women), (once one) of the consorts of the court (of Wājid 'Alī Shāh.

In the light of the inscription under study, this fact is established that even after her divorce, relation between Wājid 'Alī Shāh, then at Calcutta, and Amīr Maḥal away from him at Bāra Bankī, remained cordial and both were in touch with each other through correspondence.³⁹ Personal involvement of Wājid 'Alī Shāh as the composer of the epigraphical text, shows indelible warm love and affection in his heart for his ex-consort Amīr Maḥal who started her career as a melodious singer and breath-taking dancer in the Parī Khāna of Wājid 'Alī Shāh in Lucknow, later, in the evening period of her career, reflects her religious sentiments in building activities at Bāra Bankī and elsewhere for her own merit in the next world.

To conclude, it may be remarked that the Persian epigraph under study is of great historical importance, composed by Wājid 'Alī Shāh himself with his pen-name Akhtar and further recording his royal title 'Bādshāh-i-Awadh'⁴⁰ in his post-deposition period, in consonance with the fact that the British authorities had permitted him to retain this title, even after his dethronement (1856). At the same time, it is the only epigraphical record providing us a literary specimen of historical value, displaying the mastery of Wājid 'Alī Shāh in elegant composition, denoting his poetic skill and lucid style in composing Persian verses.

Notes and References

1. This record was copied by my senior colleague, Dr.M.Y.Quddusi. It is listed in *Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy (AREp)*, 1991-92, Appendix C, No.53.
2. *AREp.*, 1958-59, App. D, Nos. 214-15.
3. For details, *Uttar Pradesh District Gazetteers (UPDG)*, Bara Banki (Lucknow, 1964), pp.24-35.
4. *Ibid.*, pp.24-26.
5. *Ibid.*, pp.29-30.
6. *AREp.*, 1965-66, App. D, No.556.
7. *UPDG*, Bara Banki, p.31.
8. *Ibid.*, pp.31-32.
9. *Ibid.*, pp.32-34.
10. Literally 'the remotest sanctuary'. Commonly used for the mosque at Jerusalem. For details, see *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New Edition, Vol.VI (Leiden, 1991), pp.707-08.
11. For his career, G.D.Bhatnagar, *Awadh under Wajid Ali Shah* (Varanasi, 1968) ; Sayyid Mas'ūd Ḥasan, *Sultān-i-Ālam Wājid 'Alī Shāh* (Lucknow, 1919); Najmul Ḡhanī, *Tārīkh-i-Awadh*, pt.V (Lucknow, 1919); Riyād Aḥmad Ja'fari, *Ākhri Tājdār-i-Awadh* (Lucknow, 1968).
12. They were : Sa'ādat Khān Burhānūl Mulk (1722-39), Saḡdar Jang (1739-56), Shujā'ud Daula (1756-75), Āsafud Daula (1775-97), Wazir 'Alī (1797-98), Sa'ādat 'Alī (1798-1814), Ḡhāziū'd Dīn Ḥaidar (1814-27), Naṣīrū'd Dīn Ḥaidar (1827-37), Muḥammad 'Alī (1837-42) and Amjad 'Alī (1842-47).
13. The kingdom of Awadh with its capital Lucknow, included an area of 23, 992 sq.miles, lying between latitude 25^o, 34', and 29^o 6' North and longitude 79^o 45' and 83^o 11' East, divided into five divisions and twelve sub-divisions for administrative convenience. G.D.Bhatnagar, *op.cit.*, p.168; T.P.Chand, *The Administration of Awadh* (Varanasi, 1971), pp.32-33; for various aspects of Awadh, see three issues of *Nayā Daur* (Lucknow), *Awadh Number* (Feb-Mar.1994), *Supplement Awadh* (Jun.1994) and *Awadh Number*, pt.II (Oct.Nov.1994).
14. G.D.Bhatnagar, *op.cit.*, p.213.
15. Sayyid Mas'ūd Ḥasan, *op.cit.*, pp.18-20, 22, 88; Mirzā 'Alī Azḡhar Barlās, *Awadh Par Angarezon Kā Ghāsibāna Qabḡa* (Karachi, 1984), pp.172-84.
16. K.S.Santha, *Begums of Awadh* (Varanasi, 1980), p.17.
17. G.D.Bhatnagar, *op.cit.*, pp.141-55.
18. Because of serious illness, Wājid 'Alī Shāh dropped the idea of going to England. He deputed others. Sayyid Mas'ūd Ḥasan, *op.cit.*, pp.146-53.

19. Having stayed for over three decades at Calcutta, Wājid 'Alī Shāh expired on 21 September 1887 at the age of over 67 years. He lies buried in Matiā Burj. Shaikh Ṭaṣadduq Ḥusain, *Begamāt-i-Awadh* (Lucknow, 1956), pp.202-02; Mirzā 'Alī Azhar Barlās, *op.cit.*, p.215.
20. Besides Amīr Maḥal, these were Suḥānat Maḥal, Gulzār Maḥal, Gul-i-'Ālam and two others. Ṭaṣadduq Ḥusain, *op.cit.*, p.243.
21. For details of chief consorts and secondary wives of Wājid 'Alī Shāh, K.S.Santha, *op.cit.*, pp.209-18, 294-95, 310-12; Ṭaṣadduq Ḥusain, *op.cit.*, pp.203-87.
22. That is a queen.
23. Ṭaṣadduq Ḥusain, *op.cit.*, p.243.
24. A permanent marriage-contract signed by a judge wherein the groom agrees to pay a fixed amount to the bride as security (*mehr*). K.S.Santha, *op.cit.*, pp.30, f.n.70; F.Steingass, *Persian-English Dictionary* (Delhi, 1973), p.1421.
25. Under this rite, wives were brought to the house of their husbands in an informal way without a regular marriage process. K.S.Santha, *op.cit.*, p.30, f.n.71.
26. *Mut'a* (temporary-marriage) is a private and verbal contract between a man and a woman. In addition to the four legally allowed to all Muslims, a Shī'a Muslim is permitted to contract simultaneously as many temporary marriages as he desires. For the Sunnī Muslims, *mut'a* is legally forbidden. John I.Esposito, Ed., *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*, Vol.3 (Oxford, 1995), p.212.
27. Regarding number of such wives, various authorities differ from each other. K.S.Santha, *op.cit.*, pp.295, 310-12. According to Ṭaṣadduq Ḥusain (*op.cit.*, p.202), the number of Begams exceeded 300 in Lucknow, while in Calcutta, at the demise of Wājid 'Alī Shāh, there were 250 spouses through *mut'a* ceremony.
28. 'Abdul Ḥalīm Sharar, *Guzishta Lakhnau* (Delhi, 1971), p.102; Sidney Hay, *Historic Lucknow* (Reprint, N.Delhi, 1994), p.54; *The Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol.XVI (Oxford, 1908), p.191; Sayyid Mas'ūd Ḥasan, *op.cit.*, p.39.
29. Najmul ghanī, *op.cit.*, p.59; G.D.Bhatnagar, *op.cit.*, p.6.
30. Ṭaṣadduq Ḥusain, *op.cit.*, p.242. Wājid 'Alī was an expert in coining the titles, their numbers having reached about 1200. Sayyid Mas'ūd Ḥasan, *op.cit.*, pp.163-64.
31. G.D.Bhatnagar, *op.cit.*, p.213-14; Sayyid Mas'ūd Ḥasan, *op.cit.*, pp.19, 36, 64-65, 72-73.
32. They were Amjad 'Alī Khān, Mīr Muḥammad 'Ābid Khān and Qāsim 'Alī Khān.
33. Ṭaṣadduq Ḥusain, *op.cit.*, pp.243-44.
34. Sayyid Āghā Mehdī, *Tārīkh-i-Lakhnau* (Karachi, 1976), p.263.
35. *Ibid.* For other calligraphers of Awadh, see *Nayā Daur* (Lucknow), Awadh Number, Pt.II (Oct.Nov.94) pp.174-76.

36. Taṣadduq Ḥusain, *op.cit.*, p.281.
37. Sayyid Ma' sūd Ḥasan, *op.cit.*, pp.77-223; Lāla Srī Rām, *Khumkhāna-i-Jāwed*, Vol.I (Delhi, A.H.1325), pp.204-21.
38. As a poet, Wājid 'Alī sought guidance from Fatḥu'd Daula Mīrzā Muḥammad Rīḏā, pen-name Barq, the disciple of Nāsikh Lakhnawī (d.1838). Regarding his poetic name Akhtar, the following aspect is interesting to note. Akhtarnagar is another name for Lucknow; hence Wājid 'Alī Shāh wanted to adopt Akhtar as his nom de plume but came to know that another literary figure of the time of Qāḍī Muḥammad Sādiq Khān already composed verses under the poetic name Akhtar. At the desire of Wājid 'Alī Shāh, he was magnanimous enough to sell his pen-name to the Nawwāb, but retaining the same for himself also. Sayyid Mas'ūd Ḥasan, *op.cit.*, pp.97-98, 102-03, 122-23, 130-31.
39. For correspondence between the Nawwāb and his wives, *Ruqqa'āt-i-Begamāt*, compiled by Imtiyāz 'Alī Khān (A.H.1391); Intizāmu'llāh, Ed., *Begamāt-i-Awadh Ke Khuttūt* (Delhi, 1947).
40. Sayyid Mas'ūd Ḥasan, *op.cit.*, pp.27, 264.

An Adil Shahi Inscription From Misrikoti

M.A.Siddiqui

The epigraph under study, belonging to the reign of Ibrāhīm 'Ādil Shāh II (1580-1627 A.D.), was found in Misrikoti (15°10'N&75°00' E), a place in Kalaghatgi Taluk of Dharwad district, Karnataka.¹ It was copied by Dr. M.Y.Quddusi, Sr.Epi. Asstt., of the Epigraphy Branch, A.S.I., Nagpur, during his tour in the region, in 1984. It was included in the *Annual Report on India Epigraphy*, for the year 1984-85.²

The stone slab of this interesting epigraph is built into the wall, to the right of the central mihrāb of the Jāmi' mosque, situated in the locality called Bāzār. It comprises four lines of writing in Arabic, executed in a marvellous specimen of Naskh style. It records the construction of a mosque by 'Ainu-l Mulk Kan'ānī in the year A.H.992 (1584 A.D.).

The text of the inscription reads as under :-

- 1 Qāl-an-Nabī sal-lal-lāhū 'alaih-i-wa sallam, man binā Masjidu-lil-lāh-i-bina-al-lāhū lahū Qasran fil jannat, Le ud^{kh}hole laka, binā hāzal Masjid, fi zamān-i al-Malik al-Kabīr
- 2 Zill-ul-lāh fil arḍ wal Khalīfā, wa be lsm-i rabbe raḥīm, Khalīl-ul-lāh, Ibrāhīm 'Ādil Shāh bin Tahmāsp Shāh 'Ādil, idama be amr-i al-lāh mulkahū, wa sultānahū wa ḥekam bi nehāya, wa
- 3 Amīru-l-A'zam wazīru-l-'izz wajhatu-l ma'ālī wa hadrat-i masnad-i

'ālī wa manṣab-i ma'ālī, Khān, Malik 'Ainu-l Mulk Kan'ānī, dāma izzohū wa baqāho, binā hāzal Masjid fī wa min sāl wa bitārīkh-i hijriyah, faql wal Masjidu-lil-lāh falā tad'ū ma 'al-lāh-i aḥadā

The gist of the above text is given as under :-

1. Said the Prophet, may peace and blessings of God be upon him; who-so-ever builds a mosque for the sake of God, God will make a palace for him in the Paradise. This mosque was constructed during the reign of the great King
2. Ibrāhīm 'Ādil Shāh, son of Tahmāsp Shāh 'Ādil, the shadow and the deputy of God on the earth, may God prolong his reign.
3. (by) Amīru-l-A'zam, the respectful minister, of high manner, of high post and manṣab; Khān, Malik, 'Ainu-l-Mulk of Kan'ān (in modern Egypt), in the year A.H.992 (1584-85 A.D.) (date given in a chronogram).

The importance of this epigraph lies in the fact that it provides the name of a high-ranking person who had been associated with the 'Ādil Shāhī government of Bijāpur. It also provides high sounding titles of the dignified person not recorded even by the contemporary historians of Bijāpur. Thus, the epigraph gains a lot of

importance, being the primary source of information.

The first ever reference of 'Ainu-l Mulk Kan'ānī, the builder of the mosque, occurs in the narration of the battle of Sholāpūr, fought in 1554 A.D., between the 'Ādil Shāhīs and the Nizām Shāhī forces. In this battle Ibrāhīm 'Ādil Shāh I (1534-57) is seen participating in person and the command of his right wing of the army was held by 'Ainu-l Mulk Kan'ānī.³ Hence, in the absence of sufficient material, it may not be wrong to assume that 'Ainu-l Mulk, a native of Kan'ān (in modern Egypt) might have joined his services, sometime in the reign of Ibrāhīm I.

Incidentally, 'Alī 'Ādil Shāh's reign (1557-80) is marked for various battles, but during this period, 'Ainu-l Mulk's reference does not occur so often. The single reference of 'Ainu-l Mulk we come across is found in the year 1569 A.D. In the said year, an army was sent under his command for defending the Dhār wād fort.⁴

By the time Ibrāhīm 'Ādil Shāh II (1580-1627) ascended the throne of Bijāpur, 'Ainu-l Mulk had established his identity as an important nobleman and efficient military personnel. His name is often heard, being associated with almost all the important battles and events, which took place in the first decade of Ibrāhīm's reign.

'Ainu-l Mulk actively participated in the battle of Shāh Durg (1580),⁵ which happens to be an important battle of Ibrāhīm's reign; and after the auspicious

victory, alongwith other noblemen, he was also awarded lavishly. When Bijāpur, the very heart of the kingdom, was besieged (1580) by the combined forces of Aḥmadnagar and Golconda, 'Ainu-l Mulk was instrumental in raising the siege and caused the retreat of the besieging army.⁶

The first eleven years of Ibrāhīm Shāh's reign is termed as a period of anarchy and turbulence.⁷ In fact, when Ibrāhīm ascended the throne, he was only nine years old and therefore, in this long period, the kingdom was ruled by four regents, one after the other, who were designated as *wakīlu-s-Saltanat*.⁸ The very post of *Wakīlu-s Saltanat* had become a bone of contention among the nobles, causing lawlessness and disorder in the country, and taking advantage of the king's minority, all important nobles had a desire to have access to the highest post. Being an important nobleman, 'Ainu-l-Mulk also tried his luck to become *Wakīlu-s-Saltanat* and for that, in 1582 he made Akhlāṣ Khān, the then *Wakīlu-s-Saltanat* and third regent in succession, his captive. But for some reason or the other, he could not succeed in his design.⁹

In 1590, when Ibrāhīm 'Ādil Shāh, wanted to get rid of Dilāwar Khān, the 4th regent, who had put the king aside and ruled the kingdom as per his will, Ibrāhīm Shāh stood in need of 'Ainu-l Mulk's favour. And because of the latter's brilliant strategy, Dilāwar was compelled to flee from the political scene of Bijāpur.¹⁰

It is surprising that the contemporary sources are silent about 'Ainu-l Mulk and his other details. But on the basis of the inscription under study, we can say that, 'Ainu-l Mulk had been awarded various high-sounding titles, for his distinguished military services and other administrative matters. He was also assigned the *Jāgīr* of *pargana* Hukerī and Rāybāg.¹¹

Unfortunately, 'Ainu-l Mulk's involvement, with prince Ismā'īl, who had raised the banner of revolt, invited the wrath of the king. An army was sent under the command of Ḥamīd Khān to arrest the rebellious brother of the king and his supporters, and in this campaign

'Ainu-l Mulk was treacherously murdered by Ḥamīd Khān's men, in *pargana* Hukerī, which was his jagir, in 1594 A.D.¹²

To conclude, it may be remarked that 'Ainu-l Mulk Kan'ānī was a grand military general with remarkable capacity, serving under three 'Ādil Shāhī kings of Bijāpur. His distinguished services earned him high sounding-titles like *Amīru-l-A'zam*, *Wazīru-l-'izz*, *wajhatu-l-ma'ālī*, *ḥadrat-i masnad-i 'ālī*, *manṣab-i ma'ālī*, *Khān* and *Malik*. For all these facts, our record under study is of vital importance in giving such rare pieces of information which are not found recorded elsewhere.

Notes and References

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5. *Ibid.*, pp.49-50.
6. Maulavī Sayyid 'Alī Moḥsin, '*Ahd-i Ibrāhīm 'Ādil Shāh Sānī Ke Motawalliyān-i Reyāsat* (Hyderabad 1937), pp.101-111.
7. D.C.Verma, *History of Bijapur* (Delhi, 1974), p.24
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10. Bashīru-'d-Dīn Aḥmad, *Wāqeyāt-i Mamlekate Bijāpur*, Part I (Agra, 1915), pp. 193-94.
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Archaic Tamil Inscriptions from Excavations

Natana Kasinathan.

The study of archaic Tamil inscriptions is gaining momentum as we get large number of potsherds bearing the legend written in archaic Tamil script in Tamilnadu. Tamilnadu is the only State in which a considerable quantity of potsherds that bear the inscriptions have been unearthed.

In Tamilnadu the following places have yielded the inscribed potsherds namely Uraiyūr¹ (District Trichy), Korṅkai² (District Chidambaranar) Koḍumaṇal³ (District Periyar), Aḷagarai (District Trichy), Kāñchīpuram⁴ (District Chengai-MGR), Karūr⁵ (District Dhiran Chinna-malai Gounder), Vallam⁶ (District Thanjavur), Odakkalpālayam⁷ (District Coimbatore) and Aḷagaṅkuḷam⁸ (District Ramanathapuram), Arikamēḍu⁹ (State Pondicherry), Sālihuṇḍam in Andhra,¹⁰ Kandarodai and Poonagari and Mannitalai in Śrīlāṅka¹¹ are the other places which have yielded inscribed potsherds.

Barring the inscribed potsherds of Odakkalpālayam, the other were studied and discussed in detail. But the inscribed potsherds unearthed in recent years from Aḷagaṅkuḷam and Karūr have not so far been studied in full perspective.

Aḷagaṅkuḷam:

In the first and second phase of excavations carried out at Aḷagaṅkuḷam in the years 1986-87¹² and 1990-91¹³ six sherds bearing the archaic Tamil inscription have been collected. Of the six sherds mentioned above, two were unearthed from the trenches, the

remaining four were gathered from surface level. Four of them are written on the rouletted ware whereas two are written on the grey ware. The sherd collected from AGM-1 was at a depth of 4.10 metre bearing letters upside down on red rouletted sherd. Since it occurred at 4.10 metre which is the lower level than the carbon dated level of 2 metre depth this epigraph can be assigned to a date of not later than 3rd century B.C. Of the four surface find sherds, two are identified by I. Mahadevan as the sherds with Sinhala Brāhmī inscriptions.¹⁴ The first one is a sherd of grey ware having two letters.

Samu.....

He has restored it as *Samuda*, the old Sinhalese equivalent for Sanskrit *Samudra* employed as a personal name comparing *Samudaha* (masc) and *Samudaya* (femi) occurring in the early Brāhmī cave inscriptions of Śrī Lāṅka and dates it to 1st century B.C.

On the second sherd also the inscription is read as *Chamutaha* which can be translated as "(Vessel) of *Chamuta*". Here the letter *Cha* is used for the Sanskrit letter *Sa*, and the letter *ta* for *da*. According to him it is the Tamilised form of the Sanskrit word, '*Samudra*' and fixed the date to 1st century B.C.

In the third season (1994) the excavation at Aḷagaṅkuḷam had also brought to light six inscribed sherds.¹⁵ All these sherds were unearthed from AGM-5 bearing the letters written after

post firing. Three of these sherds were picked out from the depth ranging from 4.15 metre to 5.90 metre. The pure Tamil letters especially *l*, *r* and *ṇ* are written on majority of the sherds. One of the inscriptions read as *[Ku]ṇṇaṇ* while the other as *Kuviraṇ a*, inspite of the damage of the sherd. The legend *Kuviraṇ a* should have continued as *Kuviraṇ Āraṇ* which is found in the Koḍumaṇal sherds.

During the current season (1996) excavation also, the Archaeologists were able to unearth a considerable number of inscribed potsherds from Aḷagaṅkuḷam. So far 10 sherds bearing the archaic Tamil script are found. Out of the 10 inscribed sherds one bears the inscription with the reading *latikā ī*. A symbol found in between *kā* and *ī* is interesting as it seems to have been used as a letter in a meaningful word. This type of symbol used at the end of the epigraphs is seen in the sherds from Koḍumaṇal¹⁶ and Koṅgar-Puliyaṅkuḷam.¹⁷ The most significant point in the Aḷagaṅkuḷam sherd is the occurrence of the symbol in the middle of the word. Some scholars have identified this symbol as *logograph* standing for the word *poṇ* (gold). But here it appears to represent a letter in a word.

The second inscription reads as follows: *Putumārṅkōtai*, an individual personal name. Letter *Tai* is found written in the same way as it is found on *Mākkōtai* coins.

On a third sherd is found written the expression *Kuviraṇ a*. This can be restored as *Kuviraṇ a taṇ*. A similar expression is found on the sherds of Aḷagaṅkuḷam and Koḍumaṇal¹⁸

On another sherd four letters are found written reading *Vātumēta*. It appears to be a Prakrit form of *Vādamēdhā* in Sanskrit meaning one who is intelligent in argument. The letter *ma* resembles the form in Aśokan Brāhmī. Hence, it is presumed that this may be due to the influence of Sinhala Brāhmī inscriptions.

Karūr:

Karūr is another important site in Tamilnāḍu which has yielded considerable quantity of potsherds in the excavations conducted in the year 1973 under the guidance of Dr.R.Nagaswamy, emeritus Director of this department. One red ware sherd bearing the legend *Chātan* was found from KRR 6. The character of this inscription is akin to Pugaḷūr record according to Dr.R.Nagaswamy. Other two sherds have been collected from this trench of which one has the reading of *kati* and the other with four letters *i ra ku pa* at a depth of 1.85 mt and 2.75 mts respectively in the same trench. At KRR 1 a sherd of black and red ware with just one letter *la* was found at a depth of 3.85 metres. In addition to the above inscriptions, three more inscribed sherds have been collected from the surface. Of them one is more interesting which has the inscription reading *ku ra ka l* meaning *karu agal* meaning 'the little cup'.

During the current season this site has yielded seven inscribed potsherds. All of them have been collected from KRR 1 in the layer which is assignable to Saṅgam age on the basis of the

occurrence of black and red ware and other associated findings. Of these seven, two inscriptions are very important. One is written on a big pot which seems to be a broken urn.

The meaning of *ka ti ya ta* is not understandable. The second one is written on a black ware bowl. The legend has 12 letters that are as follows:

(ra) ya ti y ay ma raiy a yai pa

The meaning of this epigraph is also not clear. These two sherds along with the other inscribed sherds have been collected from a pit which starts from the layer that is assignable to Saṅgam age.

Probable Date:

In the light of the recent discovery of inscribed potsherds from Anurādhapura in Śrīlaṅkā¹⁹ datable to 475 B.C. by C-14 method the date 3rd century B.C. by C. 14 dating obtained for the layer (5) in AGM-2 upto the depth of 2.80 mt²⁰ and on the basis of the larger availability of inscribed potsherds even during the Megalithic period i.e., from 300 B.C. to 100 A.D. in Koḍumaṇal²¹, it would be reasonable to date the epigraphs found on the Black and Red ware sherds from Aḷagaṅkuḷam and Karūr to a period not later than 3rd century B.C.

Notes and References :

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4. S.Gurumurthy, 'Ceramic Traditions in South India', p.309.
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6. Subbarayalu. *Tamil Civilization*, Vol.2, No.4, 1984, p.30.
7. Surface find. The sherd is displayed at the Site Museum, Coimbatore, Department of Archaeology, Govt. of Tamilnadu. Letters :- *la ni ka (rē) tū tai*
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11. P. Pushparatnam, Virakesari, illustrated Weekly 25.2.90 *Yālpāna prāntiyattil aṅmaiyl kaṇḍupidiikkappaṭṭa Vēl Ilam pāriya Tamīl Brāhmī sāsanaṅgaḷ* (cyclostyled paper, pp.1-12, n.d.)
12. The first phase (1986-87) excavation was conducted under the guidance of Dr.R.Nagaswamy.
13. The second phase (1990-91) was under the guidance of the author of this article.
14. I.Mahadevan, 'Old Sinhalese inscriptions from Indian Ports: New Evidence for Ancient India-Srilanka

contacts' (1994) to be published in the forthcoming number of *Epigraphia Ceylonica*.

15. This season and the current season (1996) excavations were conducted under the guidance of present author.
16. K. Rajan, *op.cit.*, p.28.
17. I.Mahadevan, *Seminar on Inscriptions*, p.70, Corpus - 11 and 12.
18. K. Rajan, *op. cit.*, p.33.
19. *SUN*, May 9, 1990, *Sunday Observer*, 29-4-90. *The Sunday Times* 15.4.1990 reported that the Anurādhapura sherds were dated around 750 B.C.
20. Physical Research Laboratory Radio Carbon date List VI, p.329, Poona.
21. K. Rajan, *op. cit.*, p.5.

Inscribed and Graffiti Marked Potsherds from the Recent

		Excavation
Script/Graffiti	Description	
1. /ka]ti ya ta	.. KRR D.3.30 mtr. Red ware appears to be a small urn	
2. /ra]ya ti y ay ma raiya yai pa	.. KRR-1. D.1.05 mt. Black and red ware bowl	
3. ti la [r̥e]	.. KRR 1 - D.1.45 mt.Red ware bowl	
4. la ti ka ī	.. AGM - 7. D.O.78 mt. Coarse red ware with thick sections, written before firing	
5. Fish graffiti	.. AGM.8. D.3.05 mt. coarse red ware	
6. a ra ha	.. KRR-1 D.O.70 mt. Black and red thick ware, written on interior side	
7. go la ra	.. AGM 7 D.2.90 mt Redware	
8. pu tu mā r̥(u) kō tai	.. AGM 7 D.1.94 mt.Red slipped ware	
9. An engraving of a ship	.. AGM 7 D.1.12 mt.Rouletted sherd	
10. ṅa ra ṅ	.. AGM 5 D.4.15 mt. Black and red ware	
11. ra ṅa śa	.. AGM-5, D.5 mt.Balck and red ware.	
12. [Kuvi ra]ṅ [a]	.. AGM 5, D.3 mt Balck and red ware.	
13. Vā tu mē ta	.. AGM 8 D.3.80 mt. Balck ware pedestaled decorated dish written on interior side	
14. Kuvi raṅ a	.. AGM 8.D.3.35 mt. Rouletted sherd	
15. tū ka	.. AGM.8.D.3 70 mt. Rouletted sherd	
16. [ṅ]tā	.. AGM.8.D.3.55 mt. Grey ware written on interior side	
17. [śa]ra la	.. AGM 5 D.5.30 mt. Black and red ware	
18. ṅ ta	.. AGM 8 D.3.70 mt. Red slippedware	
19. ṅ ra ṅ	.. AGM 5 D.1.45 mt. Rouletted ware	

Epigraphical Evidence for Dating Talakāḍu

Sand Dunes

M.S. Krishna Murthy

Talakāḍ is situated on the North bank of river Kāvērī in Tirumukkūḍal- Narasi-pur Taluk of Mysore District. It is about 60 kms. south-east of Mysore City. Talakāḍ was one of the flourishing cities of Ancient Karnāṭaka. This town, in the beginning, was the main capital seat of the Western Gaṅgas for over 500 years. During the end of 10th century A.D., the Chōḷas under Rājarāja I annexed this city as well its adjoining areas of Karnāṭaka to their Kingdom. Talakāḍ for some time became the chief city of the Chōḷa dominion in Karnāṭaka. In about 1115 A.D. Hoysala Vishṇuvardhana drove the Chōḷas out of Karnāṭaka and possessed for himself the distinctive epithet '*Talakāḍuḅḅa*'. He also built the famous Kīrtinārāyaṇa temple over there. After the Hoysalas, Talakāḍ was an important provincial headquarters of the Vijayanagara empire. Mādhava-mantri, one of the able ministers of that empire, who is said to have hailed from Talakāḍ, built the Vaidyēśvara temple there. He is also said to have built a barrage across river Kāvērī near Talakāḍ, which is even now called by the name '*Mādhavamantri Aṅecut*'. After the Vijayanagar rule, their subordinates, viz., the Wodeyars of Mysore ruled over this region.

Talakāḍ at present is not just a pilgrim centre and a historical place, but its existence is unique for its extensive sand deposits and huge sand dunes. The

river Kāvērī at this place flows in a zig-zag curve. Inside the lower curve are the huge sand dunes of Talakāḍ, extending over an area of about 8-10 square Kms. reaching a maximum height of about 30 feet.

This strange geological and geographical phenomenon resulting in the deposition of sand of this magnitude, according to geologists, is due to the result of transportation and deposition of fine sand from the north bank of river kāvērī, by the forceful south westerly winds. Such eolian deposits are not uncommon in India. Fine desert sand in huge quantities is carried from place to place due to wind action in no time. But in a place where no desert exists, how sand movement and deposition on such a large scale could take place? If so, when did this geographical phenomenon take place? and what is the time taken for such an event? are the questions to be answered by the geologists.

Geologists have no definite explanation for the date of formation of sand dunes at Talakāḍ. However, they also depend upon the archaeological evidence and ascribe the formation of sand dunes to latest by 1000 A.D.

In Talakāḍ, three temples, at present, are situated amidst the sand dunes. They are the Pātālēśvara, Maraḷēśvara and the famous Kīrtinārāyaṇa temples built

by Vishṇuvaradhana in 1117 A.D. These temples, though they are in the midst of high sand dunes, are not built on the slippery sand. But they have their base firmly footed on the hard ground. Hence, they are at a low level, surrounded by high sand dunes, ranging from 10-25 feet high. This makes them appear as though they are at the bottom of a deep pan. A close observation of these structures would, however, prove that they were not built there after scooping out the sand upto the bottom, but that the sand dunes were formed after the construction of temples there. Hence, the sand dunes must have formed there after the 12th century A.D.

The Kīrtinārāyaṇa temple has a gateway built out of granite during the Vijayanagar period. This is also built on the hard ground at the same level as that of the main temple. This gateway, however, has no specific date. Nevertheless, it is definitely the work of 16th century A.D., in the Vijayanagar style. Therefore, the sand dunes must have been a still later phenomenon.

To substantiate this conjecture, an evidence from folk tradition of Talakāḍ is highly useful here. It states that Śrīraṅgarāya, a provincial governor of the Vijayanagar empire, was ruling from Śrīraṅgapaṭṭaṇa in Mandya District, of Karnataka. He was ailing from an incurable disease. As a result, he, accompanied by his righteous and beautiful wife Alamēlamma, came to the temple of Vaidyēśvara at Talakāḍ for a cure. However, he succumbed to his deadly disease at Talakāḍ itself.

Hearing the news of the death of Śrīraṅgarāya, his contemporary governor of Vijayanagara viz., Rāja Woḍeyar of Mysore of the Woḍeyar family, captured Śrīraṅgapaṭṭaṇa, came to Talakāḍ, and tried to possess the beautiful lady Alamēlamma and her valuable jewels. Fearing malice from Rāja Woḍeyar, the righteous lady Alamēlamma ran to Māliṅgi on the opposite bank of river Kāvērī at Talakāḍ, committed suicide by jumping into the river along with her jewels.

Before jumping into the water she is said to have pronounced three curses. They are : (1) Let Māliṅgi go into the river bed (deep river pool) (2) Let Talakāḍ be covered by sand and (3) Let not the Mysore Woḍeyars have male progeny. This event historically may be said to have taken place in about 1610 A.D. Hence, by the first curse of Alamēlamma it becomes clear that Talakāḍ was not covered by sand during the beginning of 17th century A.D. Probably her commonsense sensed the geographical traits of that time and she predicted what is going to happen to Talakāḍ in the near future, in the form of a curse.

Whatever may be the veracity of the curses, all the gossips of Alamēlamma have come true. The village Māliṅgi going into the river bed has been geologically proved. Every year the water force of the Kāvērī floods, while taking a sharp turn, inch by inch erodes the opposite bank where Māliṅgi is situated. Gradually Māliṅgi township has been moving backwards because of erosion of

its bank. It is clear by this fact that Māliṅgi, during 17th century, was several yards ahead of the present limits, where actually, at present, the river is flowing.

The eroded Māliṅgi bank is deposited in the form of silt and sand on the opposite (north) side i.e., on the Talakāḍ bank, where the force of the flood is minimum. During summers, when the water level recedes, the sand banks are exposed. South-westerly winds, which will be active during the mid year, blow with high velocity over the dry river bed and carry tiny particles of sand with it. The blowing wind moves in the north-easterly direction over the township of Talakāḍ.

This geographical event is happening since a few centuries. The blowing wind was then obstructed by high buildings and temples of Talakāḍ. The wind due to low velocity could not carry sand particles any longer and they were dropped against the walls of the buildings, gradually to form into huge dunes. When the sand started covering their township, helpless people gradually shifted their township northwards. The present old town of Talakāḍ is hardly about three centuries old. The glorious and historical city of Talakāḍ of the Gaṅga, Chōḷa, Hoysala and Vijayanagar days are actually buried under the enormously huge sand dunes. Therefore, the second curse of Alamēlamma also has come true.

Regarding the third and last curse, even now one can see from the genealogical chart of the family of the Wodeyars of

Mysore, the direct son of the king has no issues. He adopts a boy of his family. He succeeds and he has a boy whereas the boy who inherits the throne has again no issues.

To probe into this mystery of Talakāḍ sand dunes and the history of that place joint Archaeological excavations by the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums in Karnāṭaka and the post-graduate department of Ancient history and Archaeology, University of Mysore, were taken up during the year 1992-93 and 94. Startling discoveries were made during the course of the excavations regarding the age of the sand dunes, the exact geographical position of the ancient city of Talakāḍ, and its antiquity.

From the extensive explorations it was proved beyond doubt that the entire township of Talakāḍ of the days of the Gaṅgas and upto Vijayanagar times has been covered by the sand deposits. Very little portion of the Vijayanagar town of Talakāḍ is still exposed.

Trenches were laid in different locations on the sand dunes to probe into the cultural sequence of Talakāḍ. After clearing sand in some selected places trenches were laid which reached a depth of over five metres, to encounter the natural soil. The stratigraphy revealed that the lowest layers were of the megalithic period dating back to the pre-Christian centuries. This was followed by early historic, Gaṅga, Chōḷa and other periods.

Altogether 12 layers of distinct characteristic features were noticed here.

However, nowhere during excavation or in the sections of the trenches, the trace of the fine sand of the dunes was noticed. The same phenomena repeat in all other trenches located under the sand dunes.

Another trench, on the periphery of the sand dune, adjacent to the present township, where the sand deposit reaches the maximum height was selected for excavation. This area some 10 years ago was under the dune of 30 feet height. But the local people, for various purposes have taken away the sand from here thus reducing the deposit to just four feet. This lessened our task of clearing the sand for excavation. This trench is located just in front of the Kīrtinārāyaṇa temple, about 100 feet away from the temple gateway.

To our astonishment the very first layers, formed of hard dull black clay, started yielding copper coins of the Vijayanagar dynasty. They have been ascribed to Vīra Nārasimha III of the Sālūva dynasty (1505-09) on the basis of the legend on the reverse. These coins are found in layer 2 and below that they are absent. This factor proves beyond doubt that the upper most layers of this trench belong to Vijayanagar and post-Vijayanagar days. The trench reached a depth of about 3 meters to touch the natural soil. About 8 distinct and different layers in the section were noticed. Nowhere in the section could the fine Talakāḍ sand be noticed. However, in a small crevice between layers 3(a) and 3, a thin deposit of fine air borne sand was noticed. This actually indicates that the sand deposition over Talakāḍ had

just begun during the late Vijayanagar period. Above layer 1 of this trench is the huge sand deposit indicating that this place was deserted for ever after the 17th century A.D.

Thus numismatic evidence clinches at once the uncertainty regarding the period of formation of sand dunes over Talakāḍ. The availability of Vijayanagar coins in layer 2 of the trench is a proof of the habitation of that site till the late and early post Vijayanagar period. As the Geologists have surmised these sand dunes were not formed one thousand years ago, but they are just four hundred years old, as recorded in the folk tradition of Talakāḍ, further corroborated by numismatic evidence.

While searching for dunes from epigraphical evidences regarding the date of formation of sand dunes at Talakāḍ, three inscriptions were found to be of immense interest. The first (*Ep. Carn.*, Vol. III Tn.166) is a Tamil inscription inscribed on the northern plinth of the Kīrtinārāyaṇa temple at Talakāḍ. It is not dated and the characters are of 12th-13th century A.D. It registers a grant of two *nāḷi* of *prasādam* and 2 *ponṣ* for raising a flower garden named after Periyapirāṭṭiyār, situated to the north of Kīrtinārāyaṇa-perumāl temple by Pergaḍimāma.

1. *Svasti Śrī Kīrtinārāyaṇap-perumāl tirumurrattu vaḍamēlai mūlaip-Pe-*
2. *riyapirāṭṭiyār-āṇa tirunaṇḍāvaṇattukku iru nāḷi prasādamum iraṇḍu....*

The second inscription in the Vaidyēśvara temple is a fragmentary record

(*Ep. Carn.*, Vol Tn.178) without date and registers a grant of lands for food offerings to god in the Vishṇu temple at Talakāḍ *alias* Rājarājapuram. The details of the grant are lost. However, the expression "land to the north of the temple" is noteworthy.

The third inscription from Taḍimāliṅgi (*Ep. Carn.*, Vol.III Tn.245) a neighbouring village of Talakāḍ is the most important inscription of the group. It is written on a stone slab in Kannāḍa language and script. It is dated Kali era 4614, 1435 Śrīmukha, Pushya ba. 7 Monday, which corresponds to Monday, 16 January, 1514 A.D., f.d.t.53. It records that when Vīramahārāja was ruling the kingdom (probably Kṛṣṇadēvarāya), Viśvamūrti-gururāya got consecrated Viśvēśvaraliṅga at Śrīraṅgāpura *alias* Māliṅga, in Hadināḍa-vēṅṭha of Hoysaṇa- dēśa and made grant of lands to provide for its worship. The relevant portions of the grant are as follows: ".... a house site in Talakāḍu, (one) *kamba* of wet land in the area of Kīṛunagara to the west of Kīrtinārāyaṇa temple granted by Hiriya Sādhiyappa gauḍa"....

14. ne sīme Talakāḍula mane sīme
Hiriya- Sādhiyappa-gauḍanavaru
koṭṭadu Kīrtinārāyaṇa - devarim
paḍuva-

15. lu Kīṛunagarada tākinalu gadde
kamba Dhārāpurada Virupaṅṅaṁ-
daru koṭṭadu Dāsanūralu ūra -
mumdaṇa keṛeke

From these three inscriptions it becomes very clear that the surroundings of the Kīrtinārāyaṇa temple were parts

of a flourishing township atleast upto the first half of the sixteenth century A.D. The northern corner of Kīrtinārāyaṇa temple, where a flower garden is said to have existed in the 12th-13th century A.D., is now covered by a huge sand dune which rises to a height of about 15 feet. The entire western side of the Kīrtinārāyaṇa temple, upto the river bank is covered by a sheet of sand of varying thickness. It is here that a wet land existed in 1514 A.D. as evidenced by an epigraph. Archaeological excavations in this part of Talakāḍ, as said earlier, prove beyond doubt that there was no sand dune formation upto the end of Vijayanagar period. These three inscriptions give a fairly clear picture of the township of Talakāḍ during the medieval period. The surroundings of the Kīrtinārāyaṇa temple must have had a lush green landscape of the riverside, full of paddy fields, flower gardens, canals, wells, tanks and temples. The entire area must have been a plain land, dotted with residential and religious edifices. It is only after the 16th century that the sand dunes gradually formed over this township. Folklore, numismatic and archaeological evidences suggest the same period for the formation of sand dunes at Talakāḍ. And this is further corroborated by precisely dated epigraphs from Talakāḍ region. Epigraphy, which has been helping us reconstruct the political, social, religious and other histories, now gives a helping hand to understand some aspects of the ecology of our past also.

An Inscribed Metal image of Buddha

V.N. Srinivasa Desikan

This bronze icon of Buddha comes from Pratāparāmapuram, a small village near Nāgapattinam in Thanjavur District. Nāgapattinam was one of the important ports of ancient India on the east coast. The town was known by several names viz., Nikama (Ptolemy), Nagavadana (It-sing), Pa-tan (Marco Polo) and so on and so forth. It may be mentioned that the treasure troves found in Nāgapattinam yielded nearly 350 bronzes, some of them inscribed. Nearly 80 such bronzes are now in the Madras Museum, while others are available in other museums.

In this connection, mention may be made that a *vihāra*, known as *Chūdāmaṇivarma Vihāra* was built during the reign of Rājarāja I, by Śrī Māravijayōttuṅgavarman, and named after his father Chūdāmaṇivarman. The above mentioned Buddha must have belonged to this *vihāra* from where 350 bronzes were unearthed earlier.

The image under reference measures 35cms. in height and the pedestal is 10cms in diameter. It weighs 4 kilos.

Notes and References

1. T.N.Ramachandran, *Nāgapattinam and other Buddhist bronzes in the Madras Museum, Madras, 1954* pp. 13 to 20.

Buddha stands on a *padmāsana*. The right hand is in *abhayamudra*, while the left is in *varadamudra*. He wears a long *Sanḡāṭi*, draped over the body in wavy lines, covering it from neck to feet. The ends of the *Sanḡāṭi* are in elegant zigzags, giving it a fascinating appearance at the bottom. Ear lobes are empty and elongated. The *ūrṇā* mark is not clear. It appears to be hook-like in shape and is incised. The hair on the head is in rows of stud like curls and is surmounted by a tapering and flame like protuberance known as *ushnīsh* indicative of supreme knowledge.

The image bears an inscription in Tamil characters at the lower rim of its pedestal. It reads as *Tiru - Attiyāṇḍāṇ - mātākkal*

On the grounds of palaeography, the image may be dated to about the 12th century A.D

The Nāyakar (Lord Buddha) was set up or donated by the parents of Tiru Attiyāṇḍāṇ (who seems to be a native of the village Tiru-atti, which may be identified with Kāñchīpuram).

Sannati Inscriptions, Early Coins and Other Antiquities

I.K.Sarma

Sannati in Chitapur taluk, Gulbarga District, has come to limelight as a Buddhist site ever since its first discovery by Sri Kapatral Krishna Rao¹ of Gulbarga in the year 1954. Explorations were carried out during April, 1964 to Jan.65 by late (Dr.) M.Seshadri,² who published an account of the site. P.B.Desai of Karnataka³ University, Dharwad further explored the place in 1968 and noted that it is "the biggest Buddhist Centre in Karṇāṭaka".

The Archaeological Survey of India, Hyderabad Circle in collaboration with James Howell,⁴ a Research Fellow, of the Society for South Asian Studies undertook excavations at the place from the year 1986-87 onwards for three seasons. A.Sundara⁵ as Director of State Archaeology, Karnataka conducted a small scale probe between Dec. 1986 - May, '87 closer to the fortifications. This fortified site called *Seturājāna kaṭṭa* is about 86-hectares in extent with an inner Citadel area called *Raṇamaṇḍala* (SAN-2) of 16-hectares. (Fig.1)

I. Aśōkan Inscriptions and NBP from Sannati (Fig.2)

The discovery of Aśōkan inscriptions - Major Edicts XII and XIV and Special Edicts I and II at Sannati on a unique granite stone stele evoked great excitement and interest among the scholars of South Indian history.⁶ These edicts do not fall under the well known category of Major, Minor, Pillar or Separate Edicts issued by the Mauryan

king, Aśōka but happened to be a unique type by itself. M.C.Joshi⁷ is nearer the truth when he spelt out "the area of Sannati was included in the Mauryan *Vijita* almost around the same time, when he conquered the Kalingas, perhaps after defeating the rulers of Sannati as well". In all probability, like Dhāṇyakaṭaka (Amarāvati) in coastal Āndhra, the areas of north Karnataka formed part of the Mauryan empire, even perhaps during the pre-Mauryan periods and religiously swayed by the early spread of Jainism.⁸ Nanda-Maurya conflicts in the South need not be taken any more as mere literary conjectures. It was precisely this factor perhaps that made Aśōka the most powerful ruler of the Mauryan dynasty, to annex the area into his empire, (*antaḥ* or *iha Rāja viśhaya*) and close the northern borders of Karṇāṭaka, caused several Rock Edicts, thus amplifying the spread of *dharma*, (Nittur and Udegolam, in Bellari district; Brahmagiri, Siddāpur and Jatiṅga Rāmeśvara in Chitradurga district; Māski, Gavimath and Palkiguṇḍu in Raichur district). In this political scenario, Aśōka soon after the Kalinga war, perhaps, made a dent and annexed parts of north Karṇāṭaka and firmly established Buddhism.

What is highly interesting is, in recent months a small scale excavation at this very place in a spot called *Raṇamaṇḍala* (site-2) by K.P.Poonacha of Bangalore Circle of the A.S.I. which resulted in the discovery of a handful of NBP sherds apart from the highly polished

sand-stone fragments, polished Black ware and Black-and-red ware pottery similar to those of Ujjain and Kausambi sites. Though, not much can be said of these minor antiquities, due mainly to a very small scale attempt, the interest lies in the fact that these new evidences coming, for the first time, from Karnāṭaka, amply confirm the Magadhan impact with NBP and associated relics within the early historical Buddhist context. These evidences open up an exciting prospects for a planned research.

II Some more Early Evidences:

According to Mahāvārṇśa (XIV, 6 and XIX, 11-12) Moggaliputta Tissa sent one Mahādēva to Vanavāsi. We also came to know that several Buddhist *āchāryas* under the leadership of one Chandagutta proceeded from Vanavāsi to Śrī Laṅka to attend the inaugural of the great *Stūpa* raised by King Duttahagamiṇi (101-77 B.C.). Vanavāsi, (Banavasi) did not yield any Mauryan or Pre-Christian era evidences till date. But Hiuen Tsang (640 A.D.) refers to Aśōkan *Stūpas* at Vanavāsi. Sannati has clearly revealed an extensive fortified township, (Fig.1) besides Buddhist relics and pottery as in the early Magadhan sites of North-east India. It may be stated that Magasthenese mentioned extensive fortified townships, nearly 30 in number, existing in South India and on the present evidence Sannati qualifies to be one among them.

The spread of Buddhism from Āndhra-patha to north Karnāṭaka appears to be through inland Rāyalasima area. It is necessary here to state that Sir Mortimer Wheeler himself corrected his

older views¹¹ when he declared that "the three copies of Aśōka's Minor Rock edicts at Brahmagiri were appropriately addressed to the southernmost colonists of his Father's Empire, and not, as I had previously conjectured to their eucolic precursors".

The recent excavations in Śrī Laṅka by the Anurādhapura citadel Archaeological Project (ACAP) resulted in the discovery of NBP ware, PMC and Black-and-red ware from Anurādhapura citadel and Gedige *Chaityas*. A consistent run of C-14 dates from the excavations suggest that the earliest settlements can be dated to 600-450 B.C. Basing on these evidences F.R.Allchni¹² pointed out that "some of the major settlements in the south, no less than Śrī Laṅka, may have been the products of pre-Mauryan Gangetic colonialism; while others may be found to have been the products of Mauryan Imperial and administrative expansion". What is of great importance is the discovery of Brāhmī inscriptions on numerous broken pottery sherds associated with structures and deposit dated to early and middle 5th century B.C. A tantalising theory is put forth redefining the very origins and development of Brāhmī writing in the Indian sub-continent. The Śrī Laṅkan sequence, no doubt, brings earliest recorded examples as on date, of the Brāhmī writing from a pre-Mauryan strata.

This might have been so even in some of the historical city sites of Magadha, Madhyadēśa and on the long south-east coast of Bengal-Orissa, Andhra and Tamil-nadu where evidences of early

historic urban cities are prolific (Fig.3). Unfortunately the archaeologists and epigraphists did not come together¹³ and worked in an analytical manner recognising and assigning the evidence of writing from a pre-Mauryan strata in a given site. The extant examples of Brāhmī writing particularly on such media, like pottery, clay tablets, etc. were generally bracketed and assigned to the times of Aśōka only. No doubt this Mauryan Emperor has been the greatest advocate of *dharma* preaching through Brāhmī writing on an unprecedented scale over a permanent media, such as lofty stone pillar Edicts, Minor or Major Rock Edicts through-out the length and breadth of the country. This evidence has overwhelmed the Archaeologists and Historians of the country for the past several decades. Even now attempts are scarcely made to document the evidences of early Brāhmī writings from the pre-Mauryan levels.

A Polished Ring Stone from Sannati Digs:

A new dimension to the early Mauryan sequence is forth-coming from a unique find of a polished ring stone (6 cm. diameter), discovered by Dr. Devaraj and his team of the Dept. of Archaeology and Museums, who are conducting excavations at Sannati. These stone discs focus an imagery of fertility and the luxuriant stylised Palmyra Palm trees intermittently with birds, (peacocks and geese) animals (Bull, humped camel, etc.) and fecund Goddesses with large breasts and hips, small waist and exposed genitalia. These examples are confined to North-West

India (Taxila) to Gangetic Magadhan¹⁴ area of Nanda-Mauryan date. These enigmatic group of objects are perhaps meant for ritual use prevailing during the Mauryan times.

III. The Post Mauryan Phase:

The numismatic evidence found in recent times from the ancient mounds of Sannati provides us more food for thought. As a result of intensive explorations, Sri J.Varaprasada Rao accounted for circular coins from *Raṇamaṇḍala* site (SAN-2). These coins, all lead types, circular or ovalish, belong to King Siri Sātavāhana, son of Śrī Sātakarṇi(I), the earliest ruler of the Sātavāhana dynasty.¹⁵ The three-arched hill centrally and surmounted by a crescent or triangle-headed standard clearly recalled the issues of this very same king from Nevasa.

It seems then that king Sātavāhana, son of Sātakarṇi I, has reduced the waning post-Aśōkan Mauryan power in the regions of North Karṇāṭaka and annexed these very territories to his home province of *Pratishthāna*. The conflict may have taken place at *Raṇamaṇḍala*. Thus, Karṇāṭaka like Kalinga, was once an important territory lost by the later Mauryans after the rise of the early Sātavāhana power during the closing decades of 3rd century B.C. Sannati has also yielded a remarkable series of later Sātavāhana inscriptions along with lead coins which have been dealt with of course in greater detail, in my earlier published work.

A Sanskrit Inscription from Sannati:

During explorations at the site, a partly broken limestone stele with sculptured scene of elephants (Ph.1) was noted by Dr. Varaprasada Rao¹⁶ on 12-7-1992 at the mound locally called "Khatal". (SAN-8) towards north-west of the PWD Bungalow. (Fig.1). The sculptured part depicts a highly decorated royal elephant a *mahout* on hind part and a *chouri*, bearer walking in front (Ph.2). Another elephant is seen in the overhead panel. An inscription is partly extant along the left marginal border of the stele in a descending order (Ph.3). Dr. Varaprasada Rao is of the view that this sculpture as well as a bigger one published earlier (ph.1) formed part of a single memorial set¹⁷ up at this very spot and so both belong to the time of Sātavāhana monarch Gautamīputra Sātakarṇi. But they seem to be distinct although the purport may be identical and were caused for different kings on different occasions.

The text of the inscription (Ph.3) in single line, is in chaste Sanskrit and in *Vasantatilaka* metre. The reduplication of consonants, highly curved letter endings, particularly the lower parts of *ra*, *ka* and twisted *la* are characteristic of this record.

Text (single line): *Yas-svatrgata ssamā vasujva Narendra Lakshmi Puttrottama Suta sahasra Sāmāyasare Rājakulākshaya karam Kula....*,

The expression - *Yas-svatrgata* - (*Kīrti-seshuḍu* to heavenly abode) makes this stele a royal Memorial. The dominion of the King was expansive (*Samāvasujva*

Narendra Lakshmi) : He was supreme or most excellent among the sons (*Puttrottama*) whose prowess was equal to thousand sons (*sutasahasra Samāyāsare*) and who perpetuated the well being of the royal family (*Rājakulākshayakaram*). The records ends with the incomplete expression (*Kula*).

It may be noted that the earliest use of Sanskrit among the Brāhmī records of South India is known from Amarāvati of the time of Gautamīputra Yajña Śrī Sātakarṇi.¹⁸ This was on a decorative dome slab of the *Mahā Stūpa*. In the light of the present record from Sannati, we may add one more earliest example in metrical Sanskrit antedating the Sanskrit inscriptions of the Ikshavāku rulers of Śrī Parvata Vijayapuri.¹⁹

Before I conclude this write up on the early historical phase of Sannati, I deem it my pleasant duty to place before the scholars that Prof. Lokesh Chandra has made certain meaningful corrections²⁰ and interpretations in respect of a few later Brāhmī records published by us.

Inscription No. C2 : This was on a broken slab (SAN-6) and the short inscription "Nāga Bodhinikaya" was rendered by me as a *Memorial for Nāgabodhi*. But Prof. Lokesh Chandra has rightly pointed out that *Nikāya* means 'denomination' and Nāgabodhi was an eminent teacher of *Mantrayāna* Buddhism whose biographies are found in Chinese *tripitaka*. Similarly Inscription C-9 reads *Sela nikāya* which refers to *Pūrva* and *Apara Śailīya* group of Buddhist residing at Śrīparvata and Dhānyakaṭaka (Nāgārjunakoṇḍa and Amarāvati). It may be noted that *Nikāysangraha*, a

Sinhalese work, provides the history of Buddhist denominations and particularly valuable is the citation of *Śrīparvata* as *Vajraparvata nivāsi-nikāya*. Thus *Śrīparvata* and *Vajraparvata* are one and the same. Banavāsi, Sannati and Śrī Laṅka were closely linked to *Śrīparvata* of Nāgārjunakoṇḍa.²² The Bodhi house (*Bodhirukka Pāsāda*) and monastery of Śrī Parvata was a choice resort for *āchāryas* (*Theriyas and Vibhājja-vādins*) who converted to the doctrine people belonging to various countries - Kashmir, Gāndhāra, Vanavāsa and Tāmraparṇid-vīpa. They were adept in nine fold teachings of the *Śāstrī* (Buddha). These teachers were of Śrī Laṅkan origin, and lived in *Chuladhammagiri Vihāra*.

A record of the time of the Ikshvāku king Vīra-Purushadatta dated to 14th regnal year refers to these teachers and states that *Theravādins* converted to the faith those who belonged to Vanavāsa, besides several other countries. More interestingly, the royal houses both²³ of Vijayapuri and Vanavāsa were related to each other by marital alliances. They were frequently visiting each other too. Even the Buddhist *Saṅghas* and *sects*, the style of *stūpa* architecture and sculptures, including the raw material, i.e. lime stone (grey or greenish), were imports from the Palnad area. The style of carvings both in relief and round, relating to Buddha's life and legend vividly demonstrate this in an unmistakable way.

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23. I.K.Sarma, "Ābhīra Vasusheṇa Inscription at Nagarjunakoṇḍa", *Indica*, Vol.7, no.1 (March,1970) pp.11 and 17; Mahādevi Kodabala Siri daughter of Śrī Vīra Purushadatta the second Ikshvāku ruler of Śrīparvata Vijayapuri was married to the Mahārāja of Vanavāsa. This Mahārāja might be the Vishṇu-Rudra-Śivalananda Sātakarṇi referred to in the Ābhīra Inscription cited above. Chūṭus of Banavāsī and Ikshvākus were also matrimonially related to each other.

Differential connotation of 'ūr' in the epigraphic records of Tamilnad and Kēraḷa

M.G.S.Narayanan

Ūr and *Sabhā* in Tamilnadu

Professor K.A.Nilakanta Sastri describes ūr, *Sabhā* and *nagara* as "primary assemblies of the residents of the localities concerned" which, generally speaking, "regulated all their common concerns." He pointed out that the ūr was the simplest type of these assemblies. The term was applied to village or town and was also employed in the sense of the assembly of the village. The ūr according to him "ordered the drafting and engraving of the records by its agents, like the *Sabhā*." "The ūr functioned in several places alongside the *Sabhā*, but the ūr was the only assembly in other places."¹

The learned historian says that the *Sabhā* was "invariably associated with the Brahmin village-the *chaturvēdimāngalam*."² Many of these brahmin settlements known as *agarhāras*, *brahmadēyas*, *dēvadānas* or *maṅgalams* were created by royal grants.³ The *Sabhā* and the ūr co-existed when a new settlement of brahmins was 'super-imposed' on a more ancient community by the constitution of a *maṅgalam*. "The common people continued to meet as the ūr and carry on their affairs as before, the newcomers formed themselves into a *Sabhā* of the usual type."⁴

He is "led to postulate these" from the inscriptions of the Chōḷa period and nothing seems to be wrong on the surface. However, some of the assumptions and implications appear doubtful on closer scrutiny, though they have not been

questioned seriously by scholars before. For instance, the term 'common people' is anachronistic, since the common people emerged as an influential factor in public life only in the modern age. He must have had in mind the non-Brahmin groups like the Vellālar, Āyar, Eḷavar, Pulayar, etc. Did all of them constitute the ūr assembly? Very unlikely.

In the caste-bound hierarchical society of the Chōḷa period, it is difficult to imagine that important matters regarding land and cultivation were handled by all and sundry. Some of these groups were untouchable from the point of view of the *Dharmaśāstras* which the Brahmin leaders of society followed. They were to be categorised as *sūdra*, *avarṇa*, etc., and were to be condemned. The possibility is that the Vellālar who owned cultivable land, and not all the residents of the village, constituted the ūr which managed the affairs of an agricultural village.

The Āyar who were cowherds and sheperds might have lived in their own villages, but other service groups, high and low, had a marginal position in the agrarian villages though they were excluded from participation in the meetings. Their status was only that of tenants on service tenure or occupants of hutments and as such they would not be welcome where the landlords met and decided matters of revenue and expenditure. The *Pulayar* who were numerous in the agricultural areas were certainly kept out of the village

assemblies. They are simply invisible in historical records, like the tribals, not because they did not exist, but because they were put down and pushed out of the arena of civil life.

Professor Sastri himself mentions elsewhere that the village was primarily a settlement of peasants; and the village assembly an association of landlords.⁵ Even among the Vellāla landlords, only the male householder was represented, as women at that level were usually excluded in those times.

A Historians Bias

In the circumstances we have to assume that the Vellālar constituted the *ūr* in the village and started functioning side by side with the *Sabhā* of the Brahmins when those new settlers came. However, Professor Sastri's statement that "the advent of the new class of settlers must have been welcomed for many reasons" appears to be a product of wishful thinking rather than rational inference.⁶ The likely rise in land values, the possibility of receiving much cash, the prospect of increase in projects of public utility, the expectation of contact with higher culture - these might have counted to some extent in some places, but that need not be the case everywhere.

When a king or a chief was super-imposing a set of new Brahmin settlers, proud and exclusive landlords, the Vellālar had no option but to accept it whether they liked it or not and consequently there was no guarantee of peaceful co-existence. The very fact that military training was imparted along with Vēdic education to the Chhātra Brahmins at the *ghaṭikas* or *sālais* shows that the need for self protection during

periods of conflict was felt and recognised by men of wisdom and experience.⁷

Colonisers who placated rulers and came in to sit on the shoulders of the natives were not accepted without protest anywhere in history at any stage. Therefore, one should expect the historian to furnish evidence if, contrary to human experience throughout history, the new colonising Brahmin who came with royal support was uniformly well-received.

Professor Sastri's idea is "that the process benefited the people by bringing them into touch with the best and the highest culture available at the time and giving them a class of natural leaders to whom they could turn for advice and guidance in their difficulties."⁸ This expression reminds us of the British claims in India and brings out the historian's communal bias as it is a projection of the coloniser's view regarding the ideal approach for the colonised. It assumes that the 'people' were eagerly waiting for leaders to be supplied to them by kings and that the Brahmins formed a class of natural leaders. The implication is that the Tamil natives were all natural followers, quite submissive and servile, fit only to be led by settlers from outside. Professor Sastri does not explain the nature of the 'difficulties' that the people were experiencing, to make them desperately in need of advice and guidance.

This much of clarification is indispensable for a proper understanding of the Chōla inscriptions in which the *ūr* figures, but the process of the establishment of the Brahmin settlements in Tamilnadu is not the main theme of discussion

here. We are attempting to expose the differences in the connotation of the term *ūr* as it is used in the inscriptions of the same period in Tamilnāḍu and Kēraḷa.

It is only necessary for our purpose to remember that the process of Brahmin migrations and settlement through land grants in this period was not uniform or smooth or natural, but apt to vary from region to region depending on the direction of the thrust, the nature of the existing settlements if any and various other geographical, political, socio-economic and cultural factors.

A Different Model in Kēraḷa

In present day Tamilnadu, in the old regions of the Pallavas, Chōḷas, Pāṇḍyas and Koṅgu Chēras, the rulers created new settlements for the Brahmin immigrants by clearing forests or buying fertile land in the river valleys from the native inhabitants and carving out *agrahāras*, *brahmadēyas* etc., for which royal copper plate charters were issued.⁹ This procedure is not observed in Kēraḷa in the Chēra times.

On the other hand we find that even the southern most of the 32 original big Brahmin settlements had developed sufficiently to throw up *upa-grāmas* or subsidiary settlements by the beginning of the 9th century when the Chēra kingdom was established. Thus the earliest Chēra inscription is a copper-plate grant of Rājaśekhara in which some plots are donated for the expenses of the Śiva temple at Tiruvaṛruvāy, a suburb of Tiruvalla, one of the 32 old Brahmin settlements in Kēraḷa.¹⁰

There are several inscriptions dated

in the regnal years of Chēra kings or datable, recording the transactions of the village assemblies in charge of the Brahmanical temples. They met in the premises of the temple in the presence of the Perumāḷ or Naḍuvaḷi or their official representative. The terms like *agrahāra* and *brahmadēya* have not been used for the settlements which are designated as *ūr* or *grāma*.¹¹ The assembly itself is referred to variously as *ūr*, *ūrār*, *ūrāḷar*, *ūrkkūttam* or mentioned in terms of the numbers like 16, 18, 27, etc.¹²

As many of these settlements with such records have survived to the present day, with their *grāmakshētra* still functioning, we can identify them as some of the 32 original settlements or their *upagrāmas*.¹³ Still they are not called *agrahāra*, but *grāma* only. The Kēraḷa Brahmins invariably identify themselves as members of a *grāma*, and not as members of an *agrahāra* or *brahmadēya*.¹⁴

These and some other characteristics misled Professor Elamkulam Kunjan Pillai into thinking that the *ūr* of the Chēra inscriptions referred to ordinary non-Brahmin villages. He also assumed that the *ūrāḷar* who jointly took decisions about the temples and temple properties were elected representatives of the *ūr* which was, according to him, composed of the entire body of the residents of the village.¹⁵ He might have taken this idea of all the residents forming the *ūr* assembly from Professor Saṣtri cited above.

He believed that although a good number of Brahmins might have been elected in this manner into the *ūrāḷar* assembly, it was not an exclusively Brahmin group and that the settlements concerned were not exclusively Brahmin

settlements. However, he is proved wrong in these matters by a closer study of the materials available. The combined evidence of tradition, inscriptions and current practice reveals that the *ūrālar* of the Chēra and post-Chēra inscriptions were hereditary Brahmin proprietors of the village and trustees of the village temple.

Free Hand for Brahmins

Apart from the fact that the traditional chronicle of Brahmins named *Kēraḷōt-patti* described the 32 *grāmas* as exclusively Brahmin villages, managed by the Brahmins,¹⁶ there are many other pointers to their Brahmin character. They met in the *Yōgamaṇḍapa* of the temple, where non-Brahmins are not admitted.¹⁷ The properties which they dealt with have been referred to as *dēvasvam* (property of the temple) and *brahmasvam* (property of Brahmins) in the Chēra inscriptions and later inscriptions also.¹⁸

They frequently invoked the *Mūḷikalam kachcham* (agreement of *Mūḷikalam*) which sought to bind the *ūrālar* to a code of conduct and prescribe punishment including confiscation of property, excommunication and exclusion from *tānam* (*sthānam* or seat on the temple committee) and *pariḍai* (*parishad* or membership of the executive/judicial committee).¹⁹ *Mūḷikalam* itself was one of the four leading Brahmin settlements around the capital, which sent representatives to the council called *nālu taḷi* or four temple officers to advise the sovereign.²⁰

They are also described as hereditary proprietors following patrilineal system with primogeniture.²¹ Again some of the family names of the managers or proprietors have survived in medieval

inscriptions and literature and a few of them are still current in Kēraḷa, in association with the management of the same temples.²² These are the family names of Nambūdiris or Kēraḷa Brahmins and it is clear from these facts that the *agrahāra* system was replaced by the *grāma* system in Kēraḷa.

Perhaps the pattern of scattered households, distributed over a vast area, with their big compounds and some fields around each household, was responsible for this change. The crucial geographical factor of plentiful water supply through wells in every compound must have caused this difference in the traditional Kēraḷa set-up where street formation of houses was extremely rare.²³

As pointed out already the term *ūrālar* is most commonly employed in the records of the Chēra period and later periods in Kēraḷa to refer to the Brahmin proprietors of the Brahmin temples and temple villages.²⁴ This would imply that these Brahmin settlers did not feel the need to distinguish their agrarian settlements from similar settlements of Vellaḷār either in the same place or in nearby places. Thus it would appear that the founding families of the Brahmin settlements simply cleared the forests and occupied some of the best lands in Kēraḷa in the name of their patron deity Paraśurāma without having to approach a ruler for land grant or money to purchase land from natives.

Paraśurāma Tradition

In spite of evidence about their existence in mature form even by the beginning of the 9th century, the details of the mechanism by which these 32 original Brahmin settlements - and the

other 32 *grāmas* in Tuḷu region, just north of Kēraḷa - were brought into existence is not clear today, because written records prior to the 9th century are not available. However, it is evident that not even unwritten traditions and local legends attribute the foundation of these early Brahmin settlements to kings, or refer to grants and charters in this connection.

What little we know about pre-Mākōtai Chēra history of Kēraḷa would also agree with this interpretation. Most parts of the country, blessed with heavy rains on account of the monsoon, must have been thickly forested and largely uninhabited. The Tamil Saṅgam works refer only to the Eḷimalai chiefs in the north, the Chēra kings of Musiri and Toṇḍi in the middle and the Āy chiefs of Potiyilmalai in South Kēraḷa. Several small villages of the Saṅgam age are identifiable in the rest of Tamiḷagam, but such habitation centres are conspicuous by their absence in Kēraḷa.²⁵ The nāḍus found in the Chēra inscriptions were evidently formed after the Chēra kingdom, because none of them figured in Saṅgam literature.²⁶

The large, strong, well-organised groups of Vellāḷa peasants, found in the Saṅgam age and the later age in Tamilnāḍu area, providing a challenge to the Brahmins occasionally, cannot be found in Kēraḷa.²⁷ On the other hand the groups of Nāyars in Brahmin settlements, that acted as tenants and servants, were probably recruited from nomadic tribals and trained by the Brahmins themselves to help them, as the term Nāyar itself is derived from the Sanskrit *Nāyaka* and never figured in Saṅgam literature.²⁸ The Nāyars of Kēraḷa, unlike the Vellāḷas

of Tamilnāḍu, gave their women in marriage to Brahmins and this itself is a sign of their subservience.²⁹

Against this background, the use of terms like *ūr* and *grāma* for the early Brahmin settlements instead of *agrahāra* and *brahmadēya* and the use of *ūr*, *ūrār*, *ūrāḷar*, etc. for their assemblies in place of *sabhā*, acquire new significance. The term *sabhā* is employed for assemblies rarely, but only in the case of minor Brahmin settlements which were attached to major Brahmin settlements.³⁰ The common term *ūrāḷar* used for major Brahmin settlements point to the closer integration between the Brahmin immigrants and the natives whom they must have found almost in a tribal situation and easily recruited for service. This is different from the case of the strong Vellāḷas of Tamilnāḍu, who maintained their ethnic and cultural separation and their independence.³¹

As a matter of fact, we find that outside the large number of Brahmin *ūrs* there were only the *Chēris*, directly administered by the *Naduvaliṣ* or their agents, as their private estate. These were also subordinated to the Brahmin settlements for protection and maintenance.³² Nevertheless, there is no instance of the non-Brahmin *ūrāḷar* with their own tradition of local administration. Only in later middle ages do we get records about *tara* and *dēśam* units with their own assemblies.

Thus the Brahmin settlers had a freer hand and fuller control of their new homeland in Kēraḷa when compared to the rest of Tamiḷagam, with which Kēraḷa had shared the old Tamil language and culture. This lends credibility to

the Brahmin claims in their traditional chronicle that the Paraśurama Brahmins were king makers and controllers of policy in the case of the Chēra Perumāls of Kēraḷa.

The difference in the pattern of settlement and constitution of the

Brahmin settlement, as indicated by the difference in the nomenclature, holds the key to the crucial developments which separated the language, society and culture of Kēraḷa from Tamiḷagam of which it was an integral part in the Saṅgam age.

Notes and References

1. K.A.Nilakanta Sastri, *The Colas*, Madras, 1975, Second Edn. (Revised), pp.492-494; T.V.Mahalingam, *South Indian Polity*, Madras, 1967, Second Edn.(Revised), p.368.
2. Sastri, *op.cit.*, Mahalingam, *op.cit.*, pp.350-82; C.Minakshi, *Administration and Social Life under the Pallavas*, 1977, Madras, Revised Edn., pp.140-53.
3. Sastri, *op.cit.*, pp.570-73; Mahalingam, *op.cit.*, pp.347-350; Kesavan Veluthat, "The Sabhā and Parishad in Early Medieval South India", *Tamil Civilisation*, III, Nos.2 & 3, 1985, pp.75-82.
4. Sastri, *op.cit.*, p.493.
5. *Ibid.* p.567.
6. *Ibid.* p.493.
7. M.G.S.Narayanan, "Kandalur Salai...", *Indian History Congress Proceedings*, 1970, Jabalpur, Kesavan, "Cattas and Bhattas...", *IHCP*, Aligarh, 1975.
8. Note No.4 above.
9. Note No.3 above.
10. *Travancore Archaeological Series*, II, pp.8-14. This copper plate records the decision of a joint meeting of the 18 Nāṭṭār of Tiruvāṅṅuvāy and the Ūrār of Valappalli in the presence of Rajaśēkhara, the Perumāl, to institute certain rituals in the temple. Here the editor. T.A.Gopinatha Rao, went wrong in translating the term *Patineṭṭu Nāṭṭār* as 'the men of the 18 Nāḍus'. The term literally means only '18 men of the locality', but it stands for the committee of 18 persons who were the trustees of Tiruvāṅṅuvāy temple. This is evident from the manner in which they make regulations for the temple. The same committee is referred to as the *Sabhā* of Tiruvāṅṅuvāy in a record of Sthanu Ravi, 17th year. Valappalli is the name of village where this Tiruvāṅṅuvāy temple is located. The term Ūrār of Valappalli stands for the village assembly of the place. Valappalli has been an *upagrāma*, subsidiary village, of Tiruvalla Brahmin settlement, governed by hereditary Brahmin proprietors. See M.G.S.Narayanan, "Temple Councils and Trade Corporations of South India", *Re-Interpretations in South Indian History*, Trivandrum, 1977; Kesavan Veluthat, "The Tiruvalla Settlement-A Case Study", *Brahmin Settlements in Kerala*, Calicut, 1978.
11. There is only one exception to this rule in the Chēra period. In the undated Ayranikkalam stone inscription of the 10th century, the Ayranikkalam Brahmin settlement, which is referred to as Ūr and

Grāma in the Tamil text, is mentioned as an *Agrahāra* in a Sanskrit *ślōka*: This would indicate the common practice and the exception which is obviously made for metrical convenience. *Rama Varma Research Institute Bulletin*, IX.II.p.134.

12. See M.G.S.Narayanan, "Temple councils and Trade Corporations..." in *Re-Interpretations*, op.cit.
13. See M.G.S.Narayanan, *Political and Social Conditions of Kerala* (c.800 - 1124 AD.), Ph.D. Thesis in Kerala University, 1973, Chapter VIII. Local Bodies; Kesavan, *Brahmin Settlements....*, op.cit., Chapter III. The Original Settlements, pp.21 - 38.
14. There are several practices which distinguish Kerala Brahmins from those in other parts of India. They did not generally mention the *gōtra* label in records, but used the name of *grāma*. When they migrated and settled in a new place, they were identified by the name of their original village. See Kollur Madham Plates, Kilimanur Record and Tiruvadur inscription. *T.A.S. IV.No.7*.pp.22-65; *V.I*.pp.65-65 and No.477 and 478 of *Annual Report of Epigraphy* for 1925. See also M.G.S.Narayanan, *Thesis*, and Kesavan Veluthat, *Brahmin Settlements*, op.cit., Moreover, they seldom used the suffix *Sharma* in early inscriptions and literature. They used Sanskrit personal names in their colloquial forms. eg. *Chāttan* for *Śāsta*, *Centan* for *Jayantan* etc. Professor Elamkulam failed to identify them clearly as Brahmins on account of these unorthodox practices. Even today they continue these practices.
15. Elamkulam P.N.Kunjan Pillai, *Studies in Kerala History*, Kottayam, 1970.p.252 & 333.
16. Herman Gundert, ed. *Keralolpatti*, Mangalore, 1843, Reprint 1874, pp.5-8.
17. Tiruvalla Copper Plates, Fifth Plate, Second Side, L.50. "*Tiruvallavalappan piratimughattu yogaman-dapattil urar tiruvatimar avirotattal kūḍiyirunnu*", *T.A.S. II*.p.175.
18. Kilimanur Record of 1168 AD. op.cit. "*Tirukkivil brahmasvattinu Kilimanur pūmiyum kadum manidamum*", Kollur Madham Plates of 1189 AD., being an official re-issue of an earlier Prasasti of Sri Vallavan Kota, governor of Vanad in the period of Bhāskara Ravi's rule. op.cit. "*Sree Vīra Utaya Mārtāṇḍavarman Tiruvanantapurattu Devidevesvarattu Sabhāi irunnaruli tevattuvatinum pirammattuvattinum pannittanna piracatti...*"
19. Elamkulam, *Studies....*, op.cit.pp. 336 - 8.
20. M.G.S.Narayanan, *Thesis....op.cit.*, Chapter IV. Nature of Monarchy, Councillors and Secretaries.
21. Tiruvadur Inscription, op.cit., Kilimanur Record, op.cit.
22. Kesavan Veluthat, *Brahmin Settlements*, op.cit., Original Settlements.
23. In Kerala, only the Tamil Brahmins of border areas like Palghat and Trivandrum, the Śāliya community of weavers from Karnāṭaka and the Kumbāra community of potters from Karnāṭaka lived in villages with a street formation.
24. See Note No. 12 above.
25. Apart from the Ezhimalai, and harbour towns like Tonḍi, Musiri and Viḷiṅjam, no other village figures in Saṅgam literature. This may be checked with the help of village names in any study of the Saṅgam age.

26. The *Vēls* of southern Kēraḷa figure prominently in Saṅgam works, but a *Nāy* called *Vēnā* (*Vēl + Nāḍu = Vēnāḍ*) seems to have been formed only in the beginning of the 9th century when the harbour town of Kollam was founded by the Chēras in 825 AD. Earlier Pāṇḍya inscriptions mention the conflict with *Vēls*, but unlike the *Āys*, they did not possess a separate region for themselves.
27. For *Vellalas*, See N.Subramanian, *Sangam Polity*, Bombay, 1966.pp.93 ff.
28. For Nayers, See Fawcett, *Nayars of Malabar*, Madras, 1915. This relationship was called *sambandam*, and it enjoyed social approval in Kerala whereas it was prohibited in the Brahmanical texts and condemned by Brahmins outside Kerala.
29. The younger sons of Kerala Brahmin families co-habited with Kshatriya or Ampala Vāsi or Nayar women in the traditional society of Kerala. This kind of relationship, known as *sambandam*, was prohibited in the Brahmanical texts and condemned by Brahmins outside Kerala.
30. See Note No.10 above. Other examples like *Valisseri Sabhā* and *Pulikkal Purai Sabhā* are found in the Chokkur Inscription of Kōta Ravi, 15th year. *South Indian Inscriptions*, VII.No.173.p.72. The *Karainjanur Sabhā* figures in Tirunelli Copper Plates of Bhāskara Ravi, 46th year. *Indian Antiquary*, XX.pp.285 - 290. These appear to have come up long after the original Brahmin settlements called *ūr* and *grāma* were founded.
31. For the part played by the Vellalas in the Chola polity, See Y.Subbarayalu, *Political Geography of the Chola Country*, Madras, 1973.
32. Mampalli Copper Plates of Śrī Vallavan Kōta, *T.A.S* Vol. IV. No.I. pp.1 - 11.

Inscription from Ranebennur Dated A.H. 1155 (1742 A.D.)

M.Y. Quddusi

During the course of my official visit in August 1984, I had copied a good number of inscriptions from various places in Dharwar district of Karnataka, later listed in the *Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy* for the year 1984-85. Of them, four inscriptions were copied from Ranebennur, a taluk headquarters in Dharwar district. The earliest among them is dated A.H. 1155 (1742 A.D.) from a gate of Qila Masjid. The other is an epitaph dated A.H.1172 (1764 A.D.) and the third one dated A.H.1185 (1771-72 A.D.) is from the Jama Masjid. The fourth one is an epitaph, containing religious text.

The inscription selected for study

in this paper belongs to Quila Masjid at Ranebennur, which is fixed over the main entrance of the said mosque. The text of the record is in Arabic and Persian verse, executed in bold *Naskh* characters. Its purport is that, a mosque was constructed by Muḥammad Raḥīm Ṣādiq, the custodian (*Qala'dār*) of the fort in A.H.1155, Sunday, Muḥarram 10 (1742 A.D.) March 6, in the time of Amīrul-Umarā Nawwāb 'Abdul Majīd Khān Miyāna (1725-54 A.D.), during the reign of Muḥammad Shāh Bādshāh (1719-48 A.D.). The builder is mentioned as a descendant of Khwāja Naqashband, claiming his association with Balkh and Bukhāra, himself being a native of Syria. The text of the inscription is as under :

Transliteration

Religious Text (Arabic)

1. Naṣru'm-Minallāh-i-wafathun qarīb
2. wa yusabbiḥūr ra'du bi-Ḥamdiḥī wal-Malāikatu min Khifatiḥī

Verse (Persian)

3. Gu ḥamd-thanā(-i) Ḥaq chūn Na't-i-Rasūl=Ba'd manqibat-i-Aṣḥāb-i-Āl-i-Qubūl.
4. Madḥ-i-Ghausth-i-A' zam bigu Khwājagān=Madadgīr -u- mushkil Shud Āsān.
5. Man Aulād-i-Khwāja-i-Naqshband-am=Bikhwāhī chūn Ḥājat Turā Nīst gham.
6. Muḥammad Shāh Bādshāh Ḥākim-i-Zamāna=Amīrul Umarā Nawwāb 'Abd'ul Majīd Khān Miyāna.
7. Sana 1155 Yāzdah Ṣad Panjāh Panj Sāl=Qal'dār Ṣādiq istiḡbāl-i-ḥal.

8. Ki Khāmdim Muḥammad Raḥīm nām-i-Khud=Balq Bukhārah waṭan Shām būd.
9. Dahum Māh-i-Muḥarram Fī yamul-Aḥad=Binā hām murattab shud ba Shahr-i-abad.

Translation

1. Help from God and immediate victory (Qur'ān, Chapter LXI, Part of verse 13).
2. Nay, thunder repeateth His praises, And so do the angels with awe (Qur'ān, Chapter XIII, part of verse 13).
3. Utter praise (and) eulogy to God and the Prophet (Muḥammad). Afterwards, (Utter) praise to the prophet's companions (who are) the accepted ones.
4. Utter praise to Ghauth-i-A'zam (khwāja-i-) Khwājagān (ʿAbdul Qādir Jīlānī). Seek (his) help and get rid of difficulty.
5. I am the descendant of Khwāja Naqashband (i.e. Khwāja Bahāu'd-Dīn Naqashbandī). If you need (him), no need to worry.
6. Muḥammad Shāh (is) the king and ruler of the time (and it being the period of) Amīrul-Umarā Nawwāb 'Abdul Majīd Khān Miyāna.
- 7-8 In the year 1155, eleven hundred fifty five; the humble servant named Muḥammad Raḥīm Ṣādiq, custodian of the fort in the present and that of the future, hailed from Balkh and Bukhāra region and Syria was his native place.
9. (On) tenth of the month of Muḥarram, on the first day i.e. Sunday, (this) foundation was completed in this eternal city (i.e. Rannebennur).

The salient features or contents of this inscription requires further elaboration. First of all, this is the earliest inscription of the Nawwābs of Savanur from Ranebennur who had created their own principality over the region, spread over the present Dharwar district of Karnataka. Nawwāb 'Abdu'l Majīd Khān Miyāna was the powerful Nawwāb of Savanur (1725-54 A.D.). The Mughal ruler Muḥammad Shāh 1719-1748 A.D. has been formally acknowledged here. As a matter of fact, the Mughal authority in this part was practically replaced by the Nizām of Hyderābād and other regional rulers, since 1724 A.D.

Another important information which we get from this record is that Muḥammad Raḥīm Ṣādiq finds mention as the custodian of the fort at Renebennur under the Savanur Nawwābs. We do find very valuable family background that he or his family hailed from Syria. He further claims that he was the descendant of Khwāja Naqashband i.e. Khwāja Bahāuddīn Naqashbandī, the founder of the Naqashbandiyah ṣūfī order, who flourished from 1318 to 1389 A.D. Thus, the builder had very religious and saintly background. We are unable to trace other details of the family in the available sources when and how they migrated to India or Deccan. But Ranebennur

was their abode and posting place, as evidenced by two or three epigraphs.

The builder Khwāja Raḥīm Ṣādiq was the son of Khwāja Muḥammad Ṣādiq and died in A.H. 1178 (1764 A.D.). He lies buried in the enclosure of the Jāmi' Masjid at Ranebennur. It is also to be noted that he had undertaken reconstruction work of an old Mosque which was completed in A.H. 1180 (1766-67 A.D.) i.e. two years after his death. Most probably, the mosque from where the inscription has been copied, formed a part of the fort-complex itself for the soldiers and other state officials, posted there to say or perform their daily prayers.

As regards the calligraphy of this record, it is of a very high order. Calligraphical specimen of such an order under such small states like Savanur is worth noticing. The arch-shaped inscriptional slab provides beautiful *Naskh* style, giving fine and pleasing visual effect.

In conclusion, we may say that the present inscription is the primary source of information about the builder Muḥammad Raḥīm Ṣādiq, his family background, place of his posting as *qala'dār* at Ranebennur and his building activities under Nawwābs of Sāvanūr.

Notes and References

1. *AREp.*, 1984-85, Appendix C, Nos.98-130.
2. *Ibid.*, Nos. 108-111.
3. This inscription was noticed in the *Progress Report of the Archaeological Survey of India*, Western Circle for the year ending 31st March 1921 (Published, Bombay 1922). On page 57 of this report only it states that his inscription records the erection of a Masjid in the reign of Emperor Muhammad Shāh by Amīrul Umarā Nawwāb 'Abdul Majīd Khān and is dated Sunday 10th Muḥarram 1155 A.H. No other details relating to it are given.
4. *AREp.*, 1984-85, Appendix C No.111.
5. 'Abdul Majīd Khān Miyāna. Another inscription of this ruler A.H.1166 (1752-53 A.D.), has been noticed in *AREp.*, 1953-54, No.C.110 from Savanur. It records the construction of a gateway of the fort.
6. Khwāja Bahāud-Dīn Naqshbandī (718-791 = 1318-1389 A.D.). The Naqashbandiyya order of sūfīs under him was reorganised. His tomb Qasr-i-'Arīfīn is near Bukhārā. The rulers of Central Asia invoked the blessings of his spirit with great devotion. *A History of Sufism in India*, Vol. II (S.A.A.Rizvi, 1983, Delhi,) p.174.
7. *AREp.*, 1984-85, Appendix C No.108.
8. *Ibid.*, No.110.

Function and Purpose of Ramgiri and Paunar:

Some Observations .

Bhagyashree Kale

The inscriptions of the Vākāṭakas have provided a lot of challenging material to the intelligence of the scholars. The Vākāṭakas were mainly ruling in the Wardha-Wainganga river valleys, during circa 3rd century A.D. to 6th century A.D. Vindhyaśakti I was the founder of this dynasty. After the rule of his son Pravarasēna I (circa 270-330 A.D.) the territory was divided between two branches i.e. the main branch and the Vatsagulma branch. Vatsagulma city was the capital of the Vatsagulma branch, while the main branch had the capital at Nandivardhana at first and later at Pravarapura.

There are in all 26 copper plates and 3 stone inscriptions of the Vākāṭaka rulers, reported so far. Among them 22 copper plates and one stone inscription belong to the Nandivardhana - Pravarapura branch. On the other hand 4 copper plate grants and two stone inscriptions were issued by the Vatsagulma branch.

With this available information, one can make some assumptions about the society and life under the Vākāṭakas. So also, important information regarding the administration can be gained. Even then some important terms and place names are to be studied and this is an attempt to understand their nature and function in the Vākāṭaka polity.

Rāmgiri :- The Vākāṭakas were initially Śiva worshipers. Prabhāvati Gupta, the 'Agramahishi' of Rudrasēna II was the daughter of Chandragupta II.

The Guptas are known for their patronage of Vaishṇavism. Prabhāvati, like her father, was a devout Vaishṇava and introduced Vaishṇavism to the Vākāṭaka family. The copper plate grants issued by her, mention the Vaishṇava deities like Rāma. Her husband Rudrasēna II was also influenced by Vaishṇavism. All the copper plates issued by the Vākāṭaka rulers, prior to Rudrasēna II, suggest their affiliation with Śaivism. The only copper plate grant issued by Rudrasēna II reported so far is found at Māṇḍhal. It contains a description of the Śēshaśāyi form of Viṣṇu in detail.

This is the first known evidence of Vaishṇavism in the Vākāṭaka epigraphs and it belongs to the first half of the 5th century A.D. This change in the religious faith of the Vākāṭaka family must have occurred due to their matrimonial alliance with the Guptas.

The conversion to Bhāgavata-dharma by Rudrasēna II did not totally change the religious tone of the Vākāṭaka family. His son, the most illustrious ruler of the dynasty, Pravarasēna II did not hesitate to declare his affinity towards Śaivism. On the other hand, he selected a theme from Rāmāyaṇa to compose his kāvya, *Sētubandha*.

Narasimha:- There are two colossal images which are very similar to each other. They are enshrined in separate temples on the Ramtek hill. These are the best examples of forceful representation of Narasimha in *kēvala*

form. He is seated in *Ardhaparyāṅkāśana* and holds a chakra in His right hand.

Purpose of the Icon :- One of them is popularly known as Rudra Narasiṃha even though there is not a single sign to suggest his Raudra form. The temple is now reconstructed on the available plan of the original. But unfortunately there is no evidence of any kind of inscription in the Rudra Narasiṃha temple. Then the question remains as to , why it is called Rudra Narasiṃha?

On the other hand, the inscription in the second temple of Narasiṃha states clearly that it was constructed to perpetuate the memory of Prabhāvatī, by her son and daughter. So the deity is named as Prabhāvatīsvāmin, in the inscription itself.

This clearly indicates that the other temple and image were created in memory of Rudrasēna II. After the demise of Rudrasēna II, Prabhāvatī Guptā, his wife, took the reins of administration into her hands. And it is very much possible that she created a temple of Narasiṃha in memory of her late husband.

Why Narasiṃha? :- This was the first time in the Vākāṭaka family, that a queen was on the throne. It might have created a feeling of insecurity among the people and subordinate associates as well as administrators. At the same time, everyone was in need of strength - physical and mental.

At this time Gōvindavarman I started his reign in the Āndhra region. This Vishṇukuṇḍi king was a very powerful and ambitious ruler. The Vishṇukuṇḍi family had friendly relations with the

Vatasagulma branch of Vākāṭakas. But by the time Gōvindavarman I began ruling independently, the rulers of the Vatsagulma branch were not powerful enough. Pravarasēna II and Prabhāvatī, taking advantage of the political weakness of the Vatsagulma branch, offered a hand of friendship to the Vishṇukuṇḍis. As recorded by the *Sthalamāhātmya* of Śrīśailam, Chandrāvati, the daughter of Chandragupta, patronised the temple of Mallikārjuna. This princess was none other than Prabhāvatī, daughter of Chandragupta.¹ With the help of religious donations Prabhāvatī and Pravarasēna II tried to establish the influence of their own family on the Vishṇukuṇḍis.

Due to these friendly relations ensued cultural give and take. The first Nārasimha icon is reported from Koṇḍamōṭu, Guntur district in Andhra Pradesh. In the age of the Vishṇukuṇḍis, Narasiṃha is included in the list of two-armed Vaishṇava deities.²

This evidence proves the origin and popularity of Narasiṃha in Andhra Pradesh. It was one of the influential and mighty kingdoms. Prabhāvatī very diplomatically used the Narasiṃha incarnation, probably to secure her kingdom from the southern side.

Hiraṇyakaśipu was killed by Narasiṃha and his elder brother was killed by Varāha as described by the Purāṇa.³ The Varāha incarnation was popularised by the Guptas with specific intentions. They spread Purāṇic religion, Sanskrit language, various performing arts and literature. After the Mauryas they were the first dynasty to rule over the largest part of the country. By popularising the Varāha-avatāra they

intended to restore and add strength to the Sanātana-dharma, old traditions, various arts and literature as well as the cultural and political unity in the same way as the world was resurrected by Lord Varāha (the Boar-incarnation of Vishṇu).

This idea of the Guptas was brought to Vidarbha by Prabhāvati. But considering the increased power of Vishṇukunḍi Gōvindavarman I in Āndhra, a neighbouring state, she very diplomatically chose Narasiṃha. She tried to delude the people as well as the assistants with the idea that the ruling royal family was one like Narasiṃha. They can tear off the evil, troublesome elements without any fear. It was a deliberate attempt to proclaim the might of their political power.

Rāmagiri is not mentioned as *sthāna* in the Riddhapur plates, issued by Prabhāvati, approximately in circa 425 A.D. But her grandson, Prithvīshēṇa II's Māṇḍhal plates have mentioned Rāmagiri as *sthāna*. The Riddhapur plates give merely the name of the deity as Rāmagirisvāmin, and in the inscription on the wall of the Narasiṃha temple the place is not mentioned specifically as *sthāna*.

By the time of Prithvīshēṇa II's rule, i.e. circa 470 to 490 A.D., Rāmagiri was established as a pilgrimage spot, a *tīrtha-sthāna*. At the sametime *Narasiṃha Purāṇa* was composed and was given the position of *upa-purāṇa*. Narasiṃha-vrata was prescribed to gain power and land, especially for the members of royal families.⁴ Due to such elaborate rituals the Narasiṃha temple had become a pilgrimage centre.

Pravarapura :- This city, named after

Pravarasēna II, appears as the most important place in the copper plate charters, issued mainly by Pravarasēna II. After Prabhāvati's regency of about 13 years, he became the crown prince and eventually ascended the throne in circa 420 A.D. The Jamb plates are the earliest known epigraphical record of this king i.e., 2nd regnal year which was issued from Nandivardhana. Both the charters from Belora were also issued from Nandivardhana, in his 11th regnal year. But the Māṇḍhal plates of his 17th regnal year were issued from Pravarapura. Later charters, i.e., Chammak (18th regnal year), Masod (19th regnal year) and Miregaon (20th regnal year) were also issued from Pravarapura.⁵ It is likely that Bhavadattavarma of the Nala clan invaded Vidarbha during Pravarasēna II's reign, that too, during his 11th to 16th regnal year. Due to this invasion the Vākāṭakas may have had to shift their capital from Nandivardhana to Pravarapura.

But the Riddhapur plates of Prabhāvati were issued in the 19th regnal year of Pravarasēna II from Rāmagiri (*Rāmagiri-svāminah pādāmūlāt.*) It is inferable from this evidence that though the capital was shifted to Pravarapura, the Nandivardhana region was still attached to the Vākāṭaka dominion. Even after Prabhāvati's death, her son and daughter erected the Narasiṃha temple on the Rāmagiri hill, near Nandivardhana. It supports the hypotheses that the Nandivardhana region was not lost in war by Pravarasēna II and that, for political convenience only, he shifted his capital. But as there is no concrete evidence to point out the specific political reason for shifting the

capital, nothing can be said firmly. Probably he wanted to shift the capital to a city, newly founded and named after himself.

Pravarapura Dēvakulasthāna:- The nomination *Pravarēśvara śaḍvimsāka*,⁶ denotes that Pravarēśvara Dēvakulasthāna was the headquarters or chief town of a sub-division of twentysix villages. The epigraphical evidences help us to conclude that Pravarapura, the administrative headquarters was also renounced for the *dēvakula* of the royal family, which was constructed by Pravarasēna II.

The term *dēvakula* suggests a temple complex, dedicated to various deities as also a portrait gallery of family ancestors since this word is mentioned in such a sense in *Rāmāyaṇa*. Archaeological evidence has shown that such *dēvakulas* were constructed to enshrine the images of dead kings, as was done by the Sātavāhanas and Kushānas. The same has been referred to by Bhasa in his *Pratimā Nāṭaka*.

Though the Vākāṭakas constructed the temples in memory of dead members of the royal family, they did not instal their images in the sanctum. The Vākāṭakas were modest enough to give the king's name to the temples and icons. This was purposely done to show their

royal power in a religious context. By this time the Vatsagulma branch of the Vākāṭakas had also lost its influence.

Besides, by then the idea of the king's divine origin, had come to be imposed on the people. This notion became popular in the 4th -5th century A.D. Altekar has discussed at length⁷ the process of sanctioning the divine origin of the king. Constructing temples for the images of dead forefathers is nothing but an effort to impose them as gods or demigods. The Vākāṭakas being the followers of literary traditions and the practices of the Kushānas and Sātavāhanas, Pravarasēna II constructed a *dēvakula* for his family at Pravarapura.

Probably, this second capital of the Vākāṭakas is the same as the present day Paunar. A number of life size sculptures unearthed at Paunar proves the existence of a flourishing Vaishṇava pilgrimage centre datable to circa 5th century A.D.

Ramtek and Paunar were established during the reign of Prabhāvatī Gupta and Pravarasēna II. These two cities were, probably, the garrison towns and main political campaigning centres to control the upper and lower parts of the Vākāṭaka domain, as indicated by epigraphical evidence.

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The Tradition of Writing at Nāsik

Manjiri Thuse

Most of the rock-cut caves in Western India contain the inscriptions of the donors of the caves. These inscriptions provide considerable data for the reconstruction of the political, social, economic and religious life in Ancient India. These inscriptions are engraved either by royal personages or by ordinary people.

The Buddhist caves at Nāsik were excavated from the 2nd cent. B.C. to the 4th-5th cent. A.D.¹ Today, these caves are called as Pāṇḍu Lēṇa. But it is known from the inscriptions that the hill was called as Tiraśmi at that time.² There are nearly twenty-seven inscriptions in these caves.³ Some of the inscriptions are engraved by the Sātavāhana rulers, some by the Western Kshatrapa rulers and the rest by the Indian and Yavana merchants.

The royal inscriptions record the achievements of the rulers in the political, social, religious and administrative fields. Their political conquests as well as the charities made to the religious establishments are proudly mentioned in the epigraphs. These royal records have proved very valuable in reconstructing the political history of this period. The inscriptions of the ordinary people are no less important. They also supply us valuable information regarding the society and life in the same era. The religious beliefs as well as the economic activities taking place can be known to us through these inscriptions. Besides this, the existence of the Yavanas at the site speaks a lot about the trading activity

and their faith in Buddhism.

Upto the 1st cent. A.D., there was a smooth development of the old traditional Brāhmī script in Western India. No structural changes can be seen even though a few stylistic changes are present because of individual mannerisms.⁴

With the beginning of the 1st cent. A.D., some important changes took place in the script. This development can be seen in the inscription of Bhatapalika in the Chaitya-griha at Nāsik, early inscription nos 1 to 11 at Kārle, inscription nos 1 to 3 at Bēḍsa and inscription no. 7 at Junnār. It is observed that the old traditional style got mixed with the new style.⁵ The presence of the Western Kshatrapas in this region was responsible for these changes. They brought the new style of writing with them, which can be distinctly seen in the so called inscription of Nahapāna in cave X at Nāsik. It was actually engraved by his son-in-law Ushavadata.

In the inscription of Ushavadata, the shapes of the letters show a marked difference from the shape of the same in the traditional style of writing. They show a distinct emphasis on the squarishness and geometrical forms of the letters. The angular characters of the Mauryan tradition became rounded. Similarly, the rounded forms of the characters became angular. The vertical lengths of the letters like 'pa', 'ya', 'sa', etc. were reduced. The letter 'ra' was shown in the form of a vertical line, which

was earlier represented by an undulating vertical line.⁶

These above mentioned changes gradually spread in Western India. But the regional peculiarities or styles remained the same. The Nāsik cave inscriptions of Nahapāna's reign and of Gautamīputra Sātakarṇi's reign are more or less of the same period. Similarly the inscriptions at Kārle, again of the time of Nahapāna and Gautamīputra Sātakarṇi are contemporary. But the Kārle inscriptions of Nahapāna and Gautamīputra Sātakarṇi show a surprising and remarkable difference in style from those of Nāsik. Same is the case with the palaeography of the inscriptions at Junnār of the same period.⁷ The styles of writing at all these three places are different from one another. This difference can be attributed to the writing tradition at those particular sites. In the same way, there also prevailed a tradition of writing at Nāsik. It was more influenced by the Kshatrapa pen-style.

Eventually, Nāsik was a great seat of learning and writing. The inscriptions in the caves at Nāsik mention a number of professional writers, namely Tapasa, Śivamita, Sujivin, Vudhika, etc.⁸ It is also a known fact that the inscriptions in the Western Indian caves (except at Nāsik, Kūda and Viśāpur),⁹ hardly refer to the term *lēkhaka* as a professional writer. But it doesn't indicate that professional writers were only employed at Nāsik, Kūda and Viśāpur. At other places also, the writers were employed. They developed different local scriptal traditions at different places. It can be observed in the style of writing the

inscriptions at the places like Kārle, Junnar, Kaṇhēri, Nāsik etc., though they belonged to the same period. Thus, it can be inferred that the presence of the professional writers at different places had resulted into different local scriptal traditions at those sites.

The evidence of the tradition of writing at Nāsik was accompanied by the evidence indicating the custom of keeping records. The process of issuing an order could also be understood with the help of the inscriptional evidences. The inscription no.5 of Gautamīputra Sātakarṇi mentions that the verbal order was written down by Lotā, the door-keeper and the charter was executed by Sujivin.¹⁰ This shows the different steps in issuing an order. Further, it is mentioned in the inscription itself that the donation was made in the 24th year of the reign of Gautamīputra Sātakarṇi, in the 2nd fortnight of summer on the 10th day. But the order was executed by Sujivin in the year 24, in the 4th fortnight of the rainy season, on the 5th day.¹¹ This shows the time gap between the donation and the execution of the order. Another inscription, i.e., inscription no. 4, by the same king also gives the evidence to a similar process.

These epigraphs at Nāsik also tell us about the custom of keeping records. The inscriptions of Ushavadata and Gautamīputra Sātakarṇi mention this custom. Ushavadata in inscription no.12 gives a list of the donations and charities made by him, like 3000 *kārshāpaṇas*, 8000 cocoanut trees, etc. Then he says that all this has been proclaimed and registered in the town hall, according to the custom.¹² It can be known that it was

the custom in those days, to announce all donations in the *Nigama-sabha* i.e., towns hall/assembly and then they were registered in the registration office. Their copies were made over to the donees.¹³ The epigraphical evidence of this custom is available only in the inscriptions at Nāsik. Similar mention is also found in inscription no.5 of Gautamīputra Sātakarṇi, in his 24th year recording the registration of the donation of a field and the immunities made along with it.

The references in the epigraphs at Nāsik are sometimes corroborated by the evidence in the sculptures. The cave-XXIV at Nāsik contains two inscriptions of a Śāka Damachika. The

inscriptions refer to him as a *lēkhaka* i.e. a writer.¹⁴ Though this cave is in a very dilapidated condition, some sculptures on the facade of the cave are intact. One of these sculptures is of purely Greek origin. It is of an owl.¹⁵ This motif wouldn't have been carved by an Indian artist. An Indian donor wouldn't have allowed any artist to carve such a motif on a religious monument, as the owl is supposed to be inauspicious by the Indians. But as the donor of the cave was a Śāka, he might have brought the Greek artists to carve such sculpture. In Greece, the owl is regarded auspicious, as it is the symbol of Athena. In any case, the foreign influence is clearly visible in the epigraphs and the sculpture.

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Tirumalaichchēri Inscription of Rāshṭrakūṭa kṛishṇa III

M.J. Sharma

A number of inscriptions were copied by the Southern zonal office of the Epigraphy Branch, Madras in the year 1992-93 from a ruined Īśvara temple at Tirumalaichchēri, Walajah Taluk, North Arcot Ambedkar District which was taken up for the conservation purpose by the Office of the Superintending Archaeologist, Southern Circle, A.S.I., Madras. The inscriptions thus discovered were mostly damaged and incomplete and they are in Tamil language and characters except one among them which is in Kannaḍa language and characters.¹ The last mentioned one which belongs to the period of Rāshṭrakūṭa king Kṛishṇa III is being edited here with the kind permission of the Director (Epigraphy), A.S.I., Mysore. This inscription was copied by my junior colleague Shri S.Rajavelu, who has taken up the architectural study of the temple mentioned above.

The inscription was found engraved on two slabs built into the basement wall of the above mentioned Īśvara temple. The loss of text portion at the beginning and on both sides shows that the slabs were cut into shape for building the basement wall at some later stage of the renovation of the temple. The extant portion of the inscription runs into 12 lines, 7 lines in the first slab and 5 lines in the second slab respectively.

The first 5 lines contain a portion of the eulogy of the king Mahārājādhirāja

Akālavarsha (Kṛishṇa III) who is described therein as the conqueror of countries like Māḷava, Kōśala, Ābhīra-vishaya, Suvarṇṇa-dvīpa, Siṅgaḷa-dvīpa, Kūcha - dvīpa and as [A]mōghavarshadēva-pādānudhyā (meditating at the feet of Amōghavarsha) along with other titles. Further it states that he accessioned the Chōḷikavishaya after uprooting the Chōḷik-ānvaya i.e., the Chōḷa family during his victorious southern expedition (*dakṣhiṇa-digvijaya*). Line 5 retains a portion of the date in words as *Śaka-nṛipa-kāl=ātīta samvatsara śataṅgaḷ=erṇtu-nūra-elpatt*, of which the last letter of the word *elpatt* is incomplete and gives rise to the reading of the probable Śaka year, as anything between 870 and 879. Lines 6 to 10 refer to the construction of the temple of the god Kālapriya named as Kīrtti-mārttāṇḍa at Kandaūra-pēṁṭe and record the specific presence of the king (*Ballavarasar-dayegeydu*) for the purpose of instituting the tax-regulations (*sumka-chchāyā-vyavasthe*) and for making provisions for different services to the god Kālapriya through apportioning the tax-amount from the tax-income of Toṇḍai-nāḍu 48,000 division. Lines 11 to 12 contain the imprecatory portion and state that the record was written by a certain Kalidēva hailing from Eḍakallu.

The inscription is important from the point of the political history of the Rāshṭrakūṭas, particularly for the period of southern expedition and occupation of the Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam comprising of

present Arcot, Chingleput and Vellore districts during the reign of Kṛishṇa III. A number of inscriptions dated from 5th regnal year to 27th regnal year have been found in these parts of Tamilnāḍu. Of them some inscriptions dated from 944 A.D. to 959-60, revealing his presence and personal involvement, are pertinent for deciding the probable date of the present inscription. The inscription from Siddlīngamaḍam,² Tirukkōyilūr Taluk, South Arcot District, belonging to his 5th regnal year (943 A.D.), refers to him as one who took Kachchai and Tanjai, thereby giving the earliest date for his conquests of Kāñchi and Tañjāvūr. The Kallamguṭṭai³ (or Śōlāpuram) inscription dated Śaka 871 (949 A.D.) and the Ātakūr⁴ inscription dated Śaka 872 (950 A.D.) referring to the decisive battle of Takkōlam, in which the Chōla prince Rājāditya was killed, mark the turning point in encouraging him for his southern expedition to Rāmēśvaram. The inscriptions from Karjol⁵ dated Śaka 879 (957 A.D.) and Karhad⁶ dated Śaka 881 (959 A.D.) refer to him as ruling from his camp at Mēlpāḍi (North Arcot District) after his return from the victorious southern expedition to Rāmēśvaram. On the basis of the above events, the present inscription which speaks of uprooting of the Chōlas and the victorious southern expedition (*dakshīṇa-digvijaya*) can be placed between Śaka 874 (952 A.D.) and Śaka 879 (957 A.D.) after giving sufficient time for his return and for the construction of the temple for the god Kālapriya at Kandaūra. The specific reference to the presence of the king (*Ballavarasar-dayegeydu*) for issuing the

above record shows that he was obviously ruling from his camp at Mēlpāḍi, a nearby place in the North Arcot District.

The Karhad plates⁷ state that his stay with his victorious army at Mēlpāḍi was purposeful for establishing his followers in the southern provinces, for taking possession of the estates of the provincial chiefs, and for constructing temples to Kālapriya, Gaṇḍamārtāṇḍa, Kṛishṇēśvara and others. Two of them, Kṛishṇēśvara and Gaṇḍamārttāṇḍāditya were stated to have been built at Rāmēśvaram⁸ (*Sētu-chakrōpānta*) i.e. Sētubandha Rāmēśvara area) while the temple for Kālapriya was believed to have been built somewhere in Kāñchi-maṇḍala.⁹ The present inscription clearly states that the temple of Kālapriya known as Kīrtti-mārttāṇḍa was built at the township of Kaṇḍaūra which was the former name of the findspot Tirumalaichchēri. The Īśvara temple, though reconstructed at a later stage, reveals architectural features of the Rāshṭrakūṭa times. Other inscriptions copied from this temple in Tamil language and characters, belonging to the period of 11th-12th century A.D., refer to the gifts made to the temple of Mārttāṇḍa Kālappriyadēvar at Kundapuram or Kundāpuri-paruru. As seen from these inscriptions the name Kundapura might have been renamed as Lōkamahādēvipuram located in Kavalī or Karaivalī, a sub-division of Perum - Bāṇappāḍi in Jayaṅḡoṇḍachōla-maṇḍalam. An inscription from Kāvēṛipākkam,¹⁰ Arkonath Taluk, North Arcot District, belonging to reign of the Chōla king Rājakēsarivarman

(probably Sundarachōḷa) registers a gift of 90 sheep for burning a lamp in the temple of Kīrtti - mārṭtāṇḍa-Kālapriyadēva by Śambakkaṇ, son of Paṇḍippāraṇ Kumāra-śeṭṭi, a merchant of Kīrtti-mārṭtāṇḍa Kālapriyam, a village in Sīrutimiri-nāḍu, a district in Paḍuvūr-kōṭṭam. The temple of Kālapriya at Khandhār, Nanded District, Mahārāshtra and the practice of erecting temples for god Kālapriya during military expeditions by the ancestors of Kṛishṇa III have been discussed in detail by Sircar elsewhere.¹¹

The inscription, though incomplete, throws some light on the revenue system through mentioning a term '*sumka-chhāya-vyavasthe*' which is significant in the context of the political situation. Kṛishṇa III, after his successful southern expedition, confined his accession of territories to the northern part of the Tamil country namely Toṇḍaimaṇḍalam. From the Karhad plates, it was clear that he stayed in his camp till 959-60 A.D. for establishing his administration

and building of temples. On the administrative side, it may be very probable that the assessment of the revenue to be collected might have been personally supervised by him and that the numerical suffix of 48,000 given for the newly accessioned Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam or Toṇḍai-nāḍu, which seems to have a bearing on the 'proposed tax-regulations' (*sumkha-chhāyā-vyavasthe*) was perhaps a part of the process of the assessment of revenue collections.

Of the geographical names mentioned in the inscription the names Suvarṇadvīpa, Siṅghaḷadvīpa and Kūchadvīpa, though they seem to be of conventional interest, are significant from the point of their being outside the Indian sub-continent and being the south and south-east Asian countries identifiable as Singhaḷadvīpa with Śrilānkā, Suvarṇa-dvīpa with Jāva or gold-island¹² and Kūcha-dvīpa with the island to the east of Malaya or Champaka-dvīpa.¹³

Text ¹⁴

Slab - I

- 1 dha - Māḷava Kōśaḷ = Ābhīra - viśa(sha)ya-Suvarṇa - dvīpa - Siṅghaḷadvīpa-Kūchadvīp = ādy = anēka-rājya-makuṭa
- 2 ghavarshadēva - pād-ānudhyāta¹⁵ paramabhaṭṭāraka mahārājādhīrāja paramēśvara śrīmad = Akāḷavarshadē[va] - [maka]
- 3 veḍangaṁ - bhuvanaikarāmaṁ śubhatuṅgadēvaṁ śauchā-mahāvratī parāṁganā-putrakam cha(chha)lake-nallātam gaṇḍa-mā
- 4 dakshīṇa-digvijayadoḷ = Chōlik-ānvayamaṁ nirmūḷanam - māḍi Chōlika - vishayaman-umḍige - jīvi
- 5 [a]mmāḍi prīthivī-rājyaṅgeyyuttire || Śaka - nṛīpa - , kāḷ = ātīta-samvatsara - śataṅgaḷ = emṭu - nūra - elpatt.

- 6 saṁvatsaram saluttire Kandaūrada pēṇṭeyoḷ - Kīrtti-mārttāṇḍan = eṁba
Kāḷapriyadēvara dēgulavan = ettisi
- 7[ō]..... [setṭiya]....[setṭiya].....¹⁶

Second Slab

- 8 .ra Siva-setṭigam eḍach-Āycha-setṭigam paṇḍara Chāūṇḍa-setṭigam Koṇḍa -
setṭigam Chāūṇḍa - setṭigam i
- 9 rbbalūnjakke Ballavarasar - ddayegeyda suṁka-chchhāyā-vyavasthe yāvud -
endode Toṇḍenāḍu-nālvatten - chhāsirada suṁka
- 10 kege eraḍu paṇavu madḍam pa[m]nera vaṇḍige āṇiyāge bachchhara kaṭṭale
kaṭṭaleyāge pūrvva sthitiyoḷ - suṁkavan - ikkuvar - bbaṇara ta
- 11 ondu - vīsōvam-i sthitiyam tappade koḷvudu kuḍuvudu Kāḷapriya-dēvargge
āvanāḍolaṁ pēṇṅe vīsōvam ī maryyādeyamn-aḷi
- 12 .suvaṁ pārvvaran - aḷida pāpamaṁ koḷvar - ī - śāsanam chandrādityar - uḷḷinam
nilke | idaṁ Eḍakalla Kalidēvam baredam [1*] mangala mahā

Notes and References

1. Inscriptions in Kannada language and characters of the time of Rāshtrakūṭa Kṛishṇa III in Tamil-nāḍu are very few in number. Mention may be made of a bilingual (Tamil and Kannada) memorial stone inscription from village Oratti, Chingleput District referring to Kannaradēva (Kṛishṇa III). (See-*Rashtrakūṭas of Mālkhed*, ed.B.R.Gopal, pp.68-69, an article by L.K.Srinivasan; Madhav N. Katti: *Bilingual Inscription on a Memorial Stone in Chingleput District*.)
2. *S.I.I.*, Vol.XXVI, No.396.
3. *Ep.Ind.*, Vol.VII, p.165.
4. *Ibid.*, Vol.VI, p.56.
5. *S.I.I.*, Vol.XVIII, No.27.
6. *Ep.Ind.*, Vol.IV, pp.269-78.
7. *Ibid.*, Vol.IV, p.281.
8. *JBBRAS.*, Vol.X, p.28, Kolhapur Plates.
9. *Early History of Deccan*, p.295 and *Ep.Ind.*, Vol.XXV, p.110.
10. *S.I.I.*, Vol.XIII, No.130.
11. *Ep.Ind.*, Vol.XXV, pp.105 ff.
12. Sircar D.C., *Cosmography and Geography in Early Indian Literature*, p.160.

13. *Ibid.*, p.105n.
14. Beginning is lost. Portions of writing on both sides of the slabs seemed to have been lost.
15. The expression '[A mō*]ghavarshadēva-pādānudhyāta' 'meditating on the feet of Amōghavarsha' may mean that Amōghavarsha III was still alive at the time the record was issued. The Ātakūr inscription (950 A.D.) mentions him as 'Amoghavarshadēva-pāda-pamkaja-bhramara' again leading to the same meaning though it was believed that he had died in 939 A.D. (See. *Early History of Deccan*, p.293).
16. This line is partly visible.

Epigraphy Helps to Trace Genealogy of Mahales of Honavar

Jyotsna Kamat

There are only three Mahale families residing at Honavar (Uttara Kannaḍa District). One is from Ankola, the second is from Idagunji and no one knows where the third one came from. However, this family is held in high esteem and the elder member of the family has to attend all important functions of Śrī Rāma Mandir, Gōpālakṛishṇa and Veṅkaṭaramaṇa temples of the town. He is invited with all traditional pomp and show, and taken in a procession accompanied by Rājadaṇḍa, chauri bearer and pañcha - maṅgala- vādyā (five auspicious musical instruments). When a youngster of the family was closely questioned he revealed that he is in possession of four copper plates which may speak of their ancestry. He was generous enough to allow to photograph them, which helped to trace their genealogy, the subject of this paper.

The copper plates and other historical evidence leads us to conclude that these Mahales are direct descendents of Gaṇeśa or Gaṇapati Mallya of Kuṁṭā (Uttara Kannaḍa). Tired of poverty and misery, Gaṇeśa Mallya thought of trying his luck in the capital city of Keḷadi. As he had no hard cash, he carried a bag full of coconuts grown in his compound.¹ He had to enter the capital through eight toll-gates for each of which an entry-tax was collected. There were no fixed rates for different commodities and therefore the officials collected the toll as per their sweet will. As the migrant had no cash, one coconut was collected as duty and another as gift by the officials at each

of the eight toll gates. In addition, two more coconuts were collected at the city entrance. Realising that some of these collections were unauthorised, he boldly set up a ninth toll-gate. He stopped persons who passed that way, entered their names, caste and occupation in a newly opened register and collected toll. In return, he gave them a receipt which read, 'new custom-station for eighteen coconuts, signature that of Gaṇeśayya Rājā of Kuṁṭā². No one questioned his right to make collections for about eighteen months. One of his passes came to the notice of the ruler Śivappa Nāyaka (1645-60 A.D.) who then sent for him. Gaṇeśa Mallya told the king what had happened and admitted that he had done it for his livelihood. The king was impressed by the honesty and ingenuity of Mallya and employed him. By sheer hard work he rose in service and became a high ranking official.

According to 1661 A.D. copper plate, Gaṇapati Mallya's grandson, Viṭṭhala Mallya got constructed Virakta-Maṭha near Shirali ferry and Veṅkaṭappa Nāyaka II (1660-62 A.D.) made a land grant in Hosur- grāma for its maintenance. Later Bhadrappa Nāyaka (1662-64 A.D.) started an *agrahāra* and a vocational centre at this place and named it as Veṅkaṭāpur in honour of his paternal uncle Veṅkaṭappa Nāyaka II³. Viṭṭhala Mallya (Vitala Malōe in Portuguese records⁴), was a very influential person of Keḷadi and was in the good books of the Portuguese and hence was sent as ambassador to Goa

(1652 A.D.)⁵

Gaṇapati Mallya's another grandson, Rāmachandra Mallya was a minister and close friend of the king, Bhadrappa Nāyaka. (1662-64 A.D.). Because of his dedication to duty and devotion to the State, the king offered to grant him whatever boon he desired. Rāmachandra asked for the royal seal and authority to use it for one and half hour (3½ ghaṭikās). When the royal seal was returned the king was anxious to know who had all benefitted by the seal. The minister promptly produced a number of copper plates declaring grants for construction and endowment of temples and *annakshētra* (food). It is this grant which helped Ramachandra Mallya to get the Veṅkataramaṇa temple constructed at Honavar (U.K.) (1663 A.D.) and make a grant of land which yielded thirty *muḍas* of rice annually.⁶

As per copper plate of 1667 A.D., two sons of Viṭṭhala Mallya, Māḷappa and Nārāyaṇa got land grant from the king for the construction of houses and digging of wells. Bhadrappa Nāyaka (1662-64) deputed Māḷappa Mallya to Goa to negotiate an important treaty which dragged on for five months. In the meanwhile, Bhadrappa was murdered at Keḷadi. Māḷappa Mallya has been referred as 'Mallappa Maloe' in Dutch and 'Mollick Molla' in English records.⁷ As early as in 1653 A.D. Śivappa Nāyakā had sent him to Honavar (U.K.) to negotiate a treaty with the Portuguese Fort-Officer. Later he was in charge of procurement of rice in Kundapura and Honavar area and Chennamāji (1671-97 A.D.) ordered him to deliver 1500 bags of rice to Portuguese as per the earlier

treaty.⁸ He sent the rice through one Kṛishṇa Nāyaka.

One more copper plate of 1669 A.D. was issued by the Bīlgi (Sidhapur Taluka in Uttara Kannada) branch of Keḷadi kingdom to Nārāyaṇa Mallya. Land grant was to run an *annakshētra* (choultry) at Mahābalēśvara Temple, Gokarn (U.K.). After Bhadrappa Nāyaka's murder, it was Nārāyaṇa Mallya who helped the young king, Sōmaśēkhara Nāyaka (1664-71 A.D.) to control the anarchy that prevailed. Hence he became very influential with the king and the Portuguese looked upon him to extract special concessions from the king. Nārāyaṇa Mallya was in charge of Mangalore fort and had business interests at Bhatkal. Sōmaśēkhara Nāyaka was murdered in 1671 A.D. and his sixteen years old widow Chennamāji (1671-97 A.D.) became queen-regent of Keḷadi kingdom.

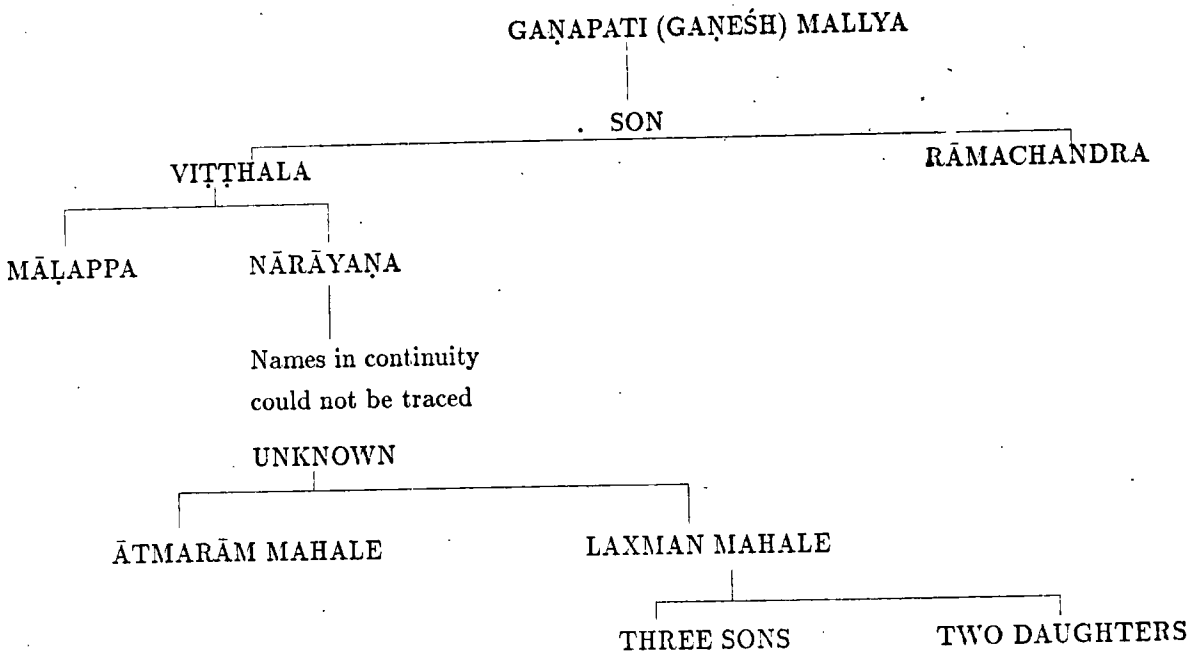
The meteoric rise in Nārāyaṇa Mallya's influence in Keḷadi kingdom infuriated the pro-Dutch lobby which included prominent Saraswats like Babu Pai and Iswar Kamat⁹. They were quick to spread the rumours that Nārāyaṇa placed a vital role in Sōmaśēkhara Nāyakas murder, in which Chennamāji believed. This made Nārāyaṇa to concentrate on his trade interest leaving the capital. As a consequence, the spice trade with Portuguese suffered. In the meanwhile the Queen learnt from British sources that Adilshah of Bijapur with the help of local chieftains was responsible for her husband's murder. Hence she recalled Nārāyaṇa Mallya from the coast and deputed him to negotiate trade-treaty with the Portuguese.¹⁰

No reference is found to the Mallya family after the seventeenth century. In all probability they might have been disgusted with palace intrigues and decided to call it a day. After the fall of the Keladi kingdom in 1757 A.D. the Mallyas returned to Uttara Kannaḍa where they had already secured a number of *ināms* from the rulers and settled down at Honavar in the vicinity of the Veṅkaṭaramaṇa temple built by Rāmachandra Mallya. Thus the Mallyas of Keladi became Mahales of Honavar as it was a fashion in those days to imitate Marāṭhi surnames.

The distinguished Mahale family might be having more documents and information regarding their fore-fathers but they are not willing to part with them. A few years ago Atmaram Mahale, a senior member of the family, breathed his last without leaving any progeny. His younger brother, Laxman Mahale

died very recently, leaving behind three sons and two daughters. They lost all their family-holdings under Tenancy Acts and are struck with poverty and ill-luck. Both the daughters could not get married as they could not meet the wedding expenses. The second son, incidentally named Vitthal Mahale, bearing his forefather's name died very young because of a brain tumour. The elder son is doing a petty job for his living and the youngest son, Prashanth is a commerce student in the local college. He is the only hope of the family. Despite all these miseries, the family did not ask for any assistance either from the government or any other agency. What a contrast with the prosperity and prestige the family enjoyed in earlier times !

With available information the genealogy of Mahales of the Honavar could be traced as follows :



Notes and References

1. '*Sāraswata Ratnamālā*', Matasta Ganesh Ramachandra Sharma, pp. 177-79.
2. '*Dākshinātya Sāraswata*', V.N. Kudva, 1972, p. 98
3. '*Keladinṛīpa Vijaya*' by Linganna Kavi, Edited by R. Shama Shastry 1921, p. 122.
4. '*Nāyakas of Ikkēri*' by K. D. Swaminathan, p. 267.
5. '*Keladiya Arasaru Hāgu Portugueseru*' by B. S. Shastri, p. 96.
6. '*Dākshinātya Sāraswata*', by V.N. Kudva, 1972. p. 98.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 95.
8. '*Keladiya Arasaru Hāgu Portuguesaru*' by B.S. Shastri, p. 97.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 122.
10. '*Pravāsi Kaṇḍa India*', Edited by H.L. Nagegowda, University of Mysore, 1983, Vol. III, p. 416-17.

Introduction

India with its diverse geographical features is a rich repository of cultural heritage. The historical archaeology illustrates this through the findings of various inscriptions written on epigraphic materials. Archaeologists have been using systematic field surveys for collecting data and analyzing the data discovered. Epigraphists read the data and interact with the archaeologists and contribute significantly to their visual interpretation and classification. India is extremely rich in epigraphic materials. It is not only rich in number of inscriptions found but also in their variety and contents. It is estimated that more than one lakh inscriptions have been discovered so far in different parts of India and many areas await exploration.

Inscriptions constitute the raw materials for serious and systematic historical studies. Inscriptions in India occur on stones, palm-leaves, copper-plates, coins, etc. These span a very wide historical period - from 3rd / 2nd century B.C. to 19th century A.D. During the past century several thousands of inscriptions have been collected / copied from various parts of India, their texts transcribed / deciphered, and systematically indexed and published for use by scholars. The primary official agency concerned with these tasks is the Epigraphy Branch of the Archaeological Survey of India, established in 1887. The headquarters of this agency is currently located in Mysore. For a variety of reasons - principally the non-availability of well trained epigraphists in required numbers - the Epigraphy Department is finding it increasingly difficult to cope with its

assigned responsibilities.

What is Epigraphy?

Epigraphy is a study of the inscriptions engraved on materials such as stones, rocks, pillars, seals, prepared slabs, different parts of the temple like ceiling, wall, pillar, door-jamb, architrave, palmleaves, coins, copper plates, silver plates, pedestals of images, hero-stones and sati-stones. They provide valuable information about the history, culture, astronomy, medicine, managements, political, religious, social, economic, administrative and educational conditions which prevailed in those regions during different times.

The Directorate of epigraphy, Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), Mysore is a store house of thousands estampages of inscriptions discovered from all over the country. The inscriptions are available in various forms. Yet it is disappointing to note that many of these inscriptions are not in good condition and are damaged. They are worn out with time due to various reasons like weathering. They contain noise and cannot be read with ease.

In this context, exploring the feasibility of tackling some of the problems through the use of appropriate technology looks attractive. Since computers are ideal tools for processing texts made up of symbol strings, creating a computerized environment to assist epigraphists in their work would seem to be a natural solution to explore. With this objective National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS) (Bangalore), decided to initiate the Epigraphy project. The overall objective is to create a computer-based environment with

the necessary software tools to assist epigraphy studies. This is the only place in India where a study of this kind has been taken up, the objectives of which are described in this paper. The purpose of this exercise is to find out whether such valuable epigraphic materials contain information that are relevant for present day problems in the areas of archaeology, epigraphy, indology, linguistics and so on.

The emergence of computer as a symbolic processing machine has opened vast vistas which enables us to decipher and interpret these epigraphic materials. A knowledge based image interpretation system for epigraphy will create an environment for the epigraphists to interact and make references to the visual scene for machine readability. This requires creation of databases, and storing the data in digital format. The

images have to be scanned with high resolution and stored in some file format. It is necessary to remove noise in the image data so that it can be preserved as noiseless data in computer readable format. With the help of this knowledge base, it is hoped that the machine can recognize a set of known characters by matching techniques. Ultimately, the computer will be used to automatically decipher the unknown epigraphic texts.

A knowledge based image interpretation system characterizes an image understanding system that uses visual data to generate descriptions which are useful for desired applications. This is done with the interaction of the domain experts. It has been observed that successive levels of abstraction required the interaction of higher levels of the system with the lower levels to give the final output.

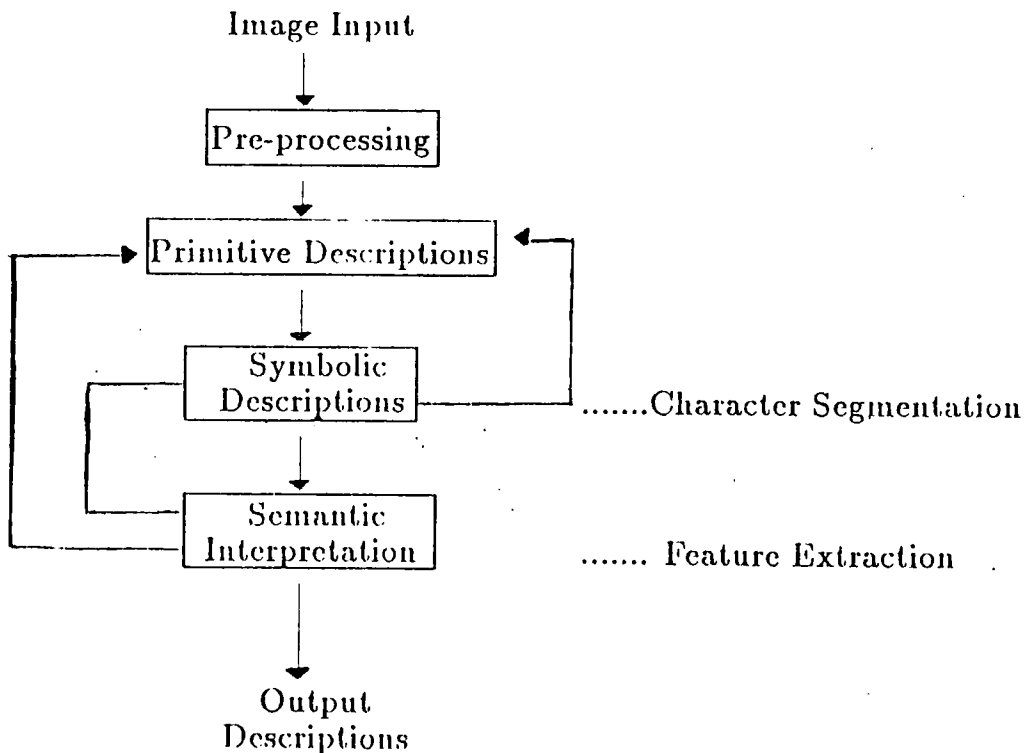


Image Understanding System

A proper primitive description level would transform the features (brightness, texture, colour) into a coordinate system where numerical distance would be related to human perceptual distance.

The symbolic description level of the system takes the primitive descriptions and forms more global and symbolic descriptions of the image. Segmentation of the image takes place at this level. The initial segmentation is based on perceptual differences. After analysis by the semantic interpretation level of the system, the symbolic level may be directed to merge or further divide regions in the image. Feedback from the semantic interpretation level is necessary to ensure that the symbolic descriptions are consistent with the goals / output of the image understanding system.

Scientific objectives

For this project to succeed, it is essential to have a close working interface with specialists in epigraphy, linguistics and related fields so that advice and consultancy area are readily available as needed. Keeping this in view an informal discussion meeting was held at NIAS on 18th February 1995. The following participated in the meeting:

External Specialists:

1. Dr.R.Narasimhan, CMC, Information Technology
2. Dr.K.V.Ramesh, ASI, Mysore, Epigraphy
3. Sir Madhava Katti, Director, Epigraphy, ASI
4. Dr.Annamalai, CIIL, Mysore,

Linguistics

5. Dr.Sadanandan, NCST, Software Technology
6. Dr.Sridhar, Software Engineering

Scientists from NIAS:

1. Dr.Raja Ramanna
2. Prof.B.V.Sreekantan
3. Prof.C.V.Sundaram
4. Dr.H.K.Anasuya Devi

During the course of the discussion the following were identified as desirable short and long term goals to explore:

* It is desirable to convert as much of epigraphic source data (i.e. source images) as feasible / desirable to a computer readable form so that archival database can be created and suitably indexed for purposes of retrieval and study. Standard compression techniques can be used to store the databases compactly on floppies, diskettes, etc.

* A serious problem faced by epigraphists in deciphering source images arises from the fact that these source images are highly corrupted by background noise. A variety of versatile noise-cleaning techniques have been developed by specialists in image-processing, and are widely available. It would be useful to devise standardized methods for cleaning the source image to the maximum extent possible before archiving them as discussed above.

* The character sets used in the epigraphy texts vary widely depending on the historical period and the geographical region to which they belong. Such

character sets have been identified and classified by epigraphists. If computer-based character matching techniques can be devised, perhaps the tasks of classifying newly discovered epigraphic source texts could be partially automated.

* The ultimate goal to aspire for is, of course, to automate fully the decipherment of epigraphic texts. This is unlikely to be accomplished in the near, or even distant, future. But what is worth investigating is the nature and extent of feasible and useful automation of this task. One could explore the feasibility of creating knowledge-based environments so that increasingly intelligent support is provided by computers to epigraphists in their decipherment task.

(a) Scope

* To begin with the scope of the project may be restricted to deal with only Tamil Brahmi(TB) epigraphy texts. The expectation is that TB characters would be simpler to handle in the computer because of their structural simplicity.

* Create a library of epigraphic image sources as a computerized image library. The library could be progressively enlarged to, say, 100 images.

* Indexing and compression techniques can be invested for creating archival databases.

* Explore efficient methods for removing background noise from the source images.

* Try character-matching techniques to identify the occurrence of specific characters in the noise-cleaned text. One could try to extend these to identify the occurrences of short character strings.

* From the technique, it might give us some clues about the kinds of domain knowledge needed for intelligently coming to grips with the character recognition problem in general. The knowledge aspects must be systematically studied and the implementation of computer - assisted text - reading techniques must be investigated.

To summarize:

* Create a *knowledge based environment* for *epigraphy studies*. To build an environment such that the system is able to remove noise in the epigraphy data and put it in a readable format. If possible help in *recognising some characters* without much human intervention.

* Create epigraphic databases that help in *preserving the various ancient manuscripts* preferably in floppies, CD-ROM format.

* Preserve the manuscripts that contain thousands of data in a *compressed format*.

* To assist the epigraphists to build an environment namely *computerisation of epigraphic data* tools for processing the data and generating outputs which can be dealt with more effectively in the kinds of work the epigraphists do.

* This requires a *close co-operation* between the *computer specialists* and *epigraphy specialists* and to this purpose we

have been interacting closely with the Directorate of Epigraphy, Archaeological Survey of India, Mysore.

(b) Status

To familiarize oneself with the nature of the source data and test the feasibility of processing them using computer-based techniques, it was decided to restrict the study, for the present, to a few of the above mentioned points.

* Level-1: *Source Material* - It is available in the form of estampages at Archaeological Survey of India, Directorate of Epigraphy. The Institute has preserved estampages of thousands of inscriptions hailing from all the nooks and corners of India. Currently about nine inscriptions belonging to 4th century B.C have been collected. This constitutes the raw-material for a systematic study.

* Level-2: *Creating databases* - Nine Tamil Brahmi source images already indexed, catalogued, were obtained from the Epigraphy Department in Mysore for the purpose of analyzing the data. Hewlett Packard Jet Scanner with a resolution of 600 dpi has been used to digitize the image data at gray levels. The *digitized images* have been stored as TIF or PCX files. Several options supporting the scanner software have been used to get finer and clearer images compatible with the original image data. These *scanned images* are considered very important for epigraphists for their *visual interpretation and classification*. With the help of photo finish supporting software the scanned images could be displayed to the end-users for their interaction with

the digitized images. For each of the original epigraphic interpretation with site / data, the corresponding *hard copy of the digitized images* with the details of custom information have been obtained. It is noticed that each of these images occupies more than 1.44 MB disk space; hence it is compressed and stored in the floppies, which is readily available to the epigraphists in computer readable format.

In addition to displaying images, in TIF or PCX format, it was found necessary to convert them into raw data before displaying it on the IBM workstation. Alchemy software has been used for this purpose. Digitized images have been reproduced as figures 1-5 at the end of this paper.

* Level-3: *Noise Cleaning*:

Filtering based on line segmentation and Boolean operations at the pixel level have been carried out at this stage. Several sub-routines in matlab have been tried out to remove the noise in various stages. Following is the set of operations used on the digitized data. Consider fig.2. It is a digitized image of Aśōkan Brahmi inscription, Brahmagiri, 3rd cent. B.C. A subimage at the beginning of the bottom line is considered, XY co-ordinate represents the size of the subimage taken for study.

The steps involved are:

Step 1- Load the image into IBM area

Step 2- From the displayed images - choose a small portion of the image

Step 3- Do median filtering on this portion of the image

Step 4- Do thresholding to get a binary image

Step 5- Skeletonize the image

Median filtered subimage: If the objective is to achieve noise reduction rather than blurring, an alternative method is median filtering. The gray levels of each pixel has been replaced by the median of the gray levels in a neighborhood instead of by the average. This is useful if the noise patterns consist of strong, spike like components and the characteristics to be preserved is edge sharpness. Median filters are non-linear in nature. From this the spurious noise has been removed, thus preserving the edges. By varying the block size from 3x3 or 5x5, it is possible to get rid of this noise.

Histogram: Gives the distribution of pixel values using the most frequently occurring pixel value to get a threshold.

Thresholdings: Several operations are required at the pre-processing stage. This is done to get a binary image. The background noise is removed. This is one of the important approaches to image segmentation. Histogram helps in selecting the threshold value which depends on how pixels are distributed.

Suppose that gray level histogram corresponds to an image $f(x,y)$, composed of light objects on a dark background in such a way that object and background pixels have gray levels grouped into two dominant modes and $p(x,y)$ denotes some local property of this point -

for example, the average gray level of a neighbourhood centered on (x,y) ; threshold image $g(x,y)=1$ if $f(x,y)$ is $> T$, 0 if $f(x,y)$ is $< T$. Thus pixels labeled '1' (or any other convenient level) correspond to objects, whereas pixels labeled '0' correspond to the background.

Edge detection: This method is used to highlight the character edges. It is by far the most common approach for detecting discontinuities in gray level. It tries to remove the noise, retains high frequency components and removes low frequency noise. Small background noise can be removed. This further helps in editing and correction. Thus follows dilation - a technique for thickening an image.

Thinning: Represents the structural shape, thins the image and removes the foreground noise.

Enclosed figures 6-10 represents the above mentioned routines applied on the digitized data sets.

KHOROS: Simultaneously a more powerful image processing library of routines called Khoros, was tried out. KHOROS is an image processing software that works on Sunsparc workstation. The propose of using this software is to remove both background and foreground noise for better readability of epigraphic materials both by human experts and machine. On an experimental basis, this software has been used to process the data. Fig. 12 represents a processed zoomed medium filtered subimage considered at random for the study. Several steps are involved in obtaining the above. To some extent

both background noise and foreground noise from the epigraphic materials have been removed. The results so obtained are a breakthrough and are on record for the first time. Further sets of data are being analyzed for building up a knowledge based image interpretation system for epigraphic materials. Enclosed are the set of figures that represent the different operations applied on the digitized data using KHOROS software as in fig. 11-12.

Applications

This study finds application in many areas of interdisciplinary research i.e. areas of archaeology, epigraphy, indology, linguistics, artificial intelligence and image processing. The final outcome of the research activity could be in terms of the following:-

1. Data products : CD-ROM,
Diskettes
2. Software development

Notes and References

1. Bulletin of the Madras Government museum. Indian epigraphy and South Indian scripts by C. Sivaramamurthi. New series - General section, Vol. 3 No. 4 1952
2. Algorithms for Graphics and Image Processing - Pavlidis. T 1986.
3. Handbook of Pattern Recognition and Image Processing - Young, Tzay Y. (ED)
4. Digital Image Processing -R.C. Gonzalez 1992.

Hero-Stone Inscriptions of Pallava King Simhavishṇu from Mēlśiṟuvalūr

S. Rajavelu

The two inscriptions copied from Mēlśiṟuvalūr in Saṅkarapuram Taluk in Viliupuram Ramasamy Padaiyatchiyar District, Tamilnadu are engraved on two hero-stones in a place locally called Vēḍiyappaṅ - kōyil.¹ The two stones bear the bas-relief sculptures of heroes standing in a defending pose, above each of which are engraved the two inscriptions. In one of the inscriptions, the letters end on the left side. Both the heroes have shields in their left hands, while their right hands hold the bent swords in the upward position. Their head-dresses are shown prominently and drawn parallelly around their heads. A sheath with the swords in each of them is seen hanging down from their belts. For the sake of convenience these two inscriptions are marked as A and B.

The inscriptions A and B are in Tamil language and Veṭṭeluttu characters of about the 6th century A.D. Both the inscriptions are later to the Irulappaṭṭi, and Kōṭṭaiyūr inscriptions in date. The letter ṇ in these records is written in the form of a curve bent downwards at the right end of a horizontal line as we have seen in Arachchalūr inscription. (Line 5 and 8 : *nāṅṇu* ; *poṅṇulutaṅṅār*). The letter ṇ has written as a full curve resulting in the form of two concaves placed one below the other. The letter v has two concaves placed one below the other. The letter v has two forms in these records. One form is engraved as the vertical line and a curvature is shown on the base,

which joins the line a little lower than its top left [A, line 1 : *Kōviśaiya*] and another form of curvature is at the bottom seen towards the right as usually found in this period [A, Line 1 ; *nālkāvatu*]. The letter e is circular in shape and with a dot in the middle as we have come across in Arachchalūr inscription. Apart from these, the practice of marking dots over the consonants is also found in these two records.

The inscription 'A' is dated in the 24th regnal year of Kōviśaiyaparumar and records the death of one Nakkiyār's son, a servant of Poṅṇulutaṅṅār, son of Nīlakaṅṭaraiśar in the course of his attack against Siṅgamaiṅchiyār, son of Kunṇratt-araiśar of Kīlkkōvalūr.

The inscription 'B' is slightly damaged at the end. It is dated in the 29th regnal year of Kōviśaiyaparumar. It records the death of a person (name lost) who fought on behalf of Poṅṇulutaṅṅār when Poṟṟāttanāṅṅ, son of Nīlakaṅṭaraiśaru fought against some Maṅṅuchinṅār.

It is interesting to note here that the two inscriptions refer to the king only by his title - Kōviśaiyaparumar and not by his proper name. Apart from palaeography, there is a supporting evidence to identify this Kōviśaiyaparumar with Simhavishṇu Pallava. The Toṅḍamānūr hero-stone inscription² (from North Arcot District) records the death of Poṅṇireveru, son of Vāṅakō-atiaraiśar, a vassal under Gaṅga Poṅṇakkaṅṅār in

a battle against Poṅṅuludaṅṅār, son of Nīlakaṅṅaraīśar at Koḍiyaṅṅūr in the 30th regnal year of Kōvisaiya Śiṅgaviṅṅaparumar (i.e. Siṅhavishṅṅu). From this record it is clear that the chief Poṅṅuludaṅṅār, son of Nīlakaṅṅaraīśar, referred to in our present record is one and the same.

Siṅhavishṅṅu must have ascended the throne by 558 A.D., and ruled upto 591 A.D. The throne was thereafter occupied by his son and successor Mahēndravarmaṅ I in that year. Siṅhavishṅṅu probably ruled for 33 years which date is arrived on the basis of his hero-stone inscription found at Naraśiṅganallūr,³ in which the highest regnal year 33 is found. Our two records mentioning the regnal year of the king as the 24th and 29th respectively correspond to A.D.582, 587. Thus we learn that within a gap of 5 years the battle took place in one and the same place and between the same adversaries.

It may be noted here that the persons who engaged in the encounter were Poṅṅulutaṅṅār and Poṅṅchāttaṅṅār, sons of

Nīlakaṅṅa-atiaraīśar and Śiṅgamaṅṅichiyār son of Kuṅṅṅatt-araīśar of Kīl̄kōvalūr. Poṅṅulutaṅṅār and Poṅṅchāttaṅṅār were brothers and sons of Nīlakaṅṅa-atiaraīśar. These names have two parts Poṅṅ + ulutaṅṅār and Poṅṅ + chāttaṅṅār. *Poṅṅ* is a prefix commonly found noticed in several hero-stone inscriptions of the Pallava period. Probably it could be the clan name of the chieftains. For instance, the names Poṅṅnarambaṅṅār, Poṅṅṅandiyār, Poṅṅṅokkaiyār, Poṅṅchēndiyār, Poṅṅmōdaṅṅār, Poṅṅmāndaṅṅār, Poṅṅkōvaṅṅār, etc. are noticed in the hero-stone inscriptions of the Pallavas.⁴

Śiṅgamaṅṅuchchiyār son of Kuṅṅṅatt-araīśar of Kīl̄kōvalūr was another chieftain of that period who cannot be identified. It is not known if Kuṅṅṅattaraīśar was the name of the ruler of the place Kuṅṅṅam or the dynasty. It is also interesting to note that the place name Kīl̄kōvalūr occurs for the first time in our inscription. The Cheṅgam hero-stone inscriptions mention Mēl̄kōvalūr-nāḍu. The Kīl̄kōvalūr area covers the eastern part of Tirukkōyilūr region.

Inscription A

Text

- 1 Kō-viśiya parumaṅṅki irupattu nālgāvadu
- 2 Kīl̄k-Kōvalūru Kuṅṅṅa-
- 3 ttaraīśar makkaḷ Siṅka-
- 4 maṅṅichiyārōḍu eṅṅi-
- 5 nda ṅṅāṅṅru
- 6 Nīlakaṅṅ-a-
- 7 raīśaru makka-

- 8 | Poṅṅu-
 9 | utaṅār śēvakar
 10 Nakkiyār makkaḷ [po]
 11 nṅūr ūr e[rin-]
 12 [du] paṭṭa kal [i]

Inscription B

Text

- 1 Kōvisaiya parumaṅki irupattoṅpadāvadu Nīlakaṅṭatiya-
 2 raiśaru makkaḷ Poṅṅāttanṅāru maṅuci
 3 nārōḍu eṅinda nāṅru Poṅṅulutaṅā
 4 tāraṅḍa cirrarai vitta(ta)nāḍu kal
 5 eṅindu pa
 6 ṭṭa ...
 7

Notes and References

1. These two inscriptions were copied by the author and included in the *A.R.Ep.* 1995-96.
2. R. Nagasamy, *Seminar on Herostones*, p.70.
3. R. Nagasamy, *Chengam Naḍukarkaḷ*, No.30 of 1971.
4. *Ibid.*, Nos. 48, 50, 63-64, 68, 33, 35, 59, 77, 88-89, 68; *Dharmapuri Kalvetṭukkaḷ*, No.66.

Tiruvēndipuram in Inscriptions

N. Pankaja

Tiruvēndipuram in the South Arcot District is situated about 5 kms from Tiruppāpuliūr. It is one out of the two important Vaishṇava centres in Naḍu-nāḍu, the other being Tirukkōyilūr in the same district. The place Tiruvēndipuram is differently called Tiruvayīndirapuram, Tiruvahīndrapuram, Ayindai, etc. The expression Ahīndra or Ayindra may be interpreted as referring to the place worshipped by Ananta-Āḷvār i.e., Ādiśēsha.

The temple at Tiruvēndipuram has yielded about forty inscriptions in all (AREp., 1944, Nos. 85-109, 1955-56 Nos, 243-57). Of these, the Pāṇḍya records are more in number than the Chōḷa records. The temple on the hill is on the bank of Gaḍilā river, a tributary of Pēṇṇār. The hill is locally called Aushadhagiri. Vēdānta Dēśika, in his Sanskrit composition *Dēvanāyaka Pañchāśat* calls this hill as Aushadhagiri (Verse no. 11) “*Nāda-dvay-ānata-janasya-bahaushadhēna - prakhyātam - Aushadhagiriṃ praṇamanti dēvāḥ.*”

Tirumaṅgai Āḷvār, a vaishṇava saint, in his *Periya Tirumoli* has sung in praise of the deity of the place and gives a picturesque description of the hill, river and the fields.

The earliest inscription in this place is of a Chōḷa king Rājakēsarivarman who may be identified with either Rājarāja I or one of his predecessors with this title. The inscriptions mention the name of the

village as Tiruvayīndirapuram. There is no mention about the deity in the earliest record. Subsequently a record dated in the 12th regnal year (1030 A.D.) of king Vijayarājendra who has been identified with Rājādhirāja I mentions the name of the deity as Mahāvishṇu. This is confirmed by another record of 12th century which refers to the gift made to god Mahāvishṇu in standing posture at Tiruvayīndrapuram. In the inscriptions of Kulōttuṅga and Vikrama-chōḷa, the deity of the temple is referred to as Tiruvayīndrapurattu Āḷvār. It is invariably mentioned as Deyvanāyaka in some of the later Chōḷa and medieval Pāṇḍya inscriptions, as well as in the hymns of Tirumaṅgai Āḷvār.

An interesting Sanskrit and Tamil inscription of Vikrama Pāṇḍya confirms the name referred to in the hymns of the Āḷvār as ‘*Aḍiyavarkku meyyaṅ āgiya Dēyvanāyaka*. Vēdānta Dēśika in his work *Dēvanāyaka Pañchāśat* calls the deity as ‘*Dāsēshu satya*’ which in Tamil means ‘*Aḍiyavarkku meyyaṅ*’

Of the several inscriptions from Tiruvēndipuram, some important ones are taken up for discussion, with a view to focus the social, religious and cultural aspects of this place.

An inscription of Kulōttuṅga Chōḷa III (acc. 1178 A.D.) refers to the gift of a necklace made of gold of 8 3/4 māṇi weighing 8 *kaḷañju*, 2 *mañjāḍi* and 2 *mā* to the god at

Tiruvayīndrapuram in Mērkā-nāḍu by an oil merchant of Vallinallūr, named Iruḷiḱki Deyvanāyakaṅ *alias* Sembiyadaraiyaṅ of Śōlakula. This reminds us of the description of the ornaments including a *vaṇamāla* worn by the deity mentioned in the work of Vēdānta Dēśika. In fact this corroborative evidence supports the date of Vēdānta Dēśika (12 century A.D.). The donor calls himself after the deity Deyvanāyakan.

In a record of the 19th year of this king Kulōttuṅga III mention has been made about the gift of 1500 *kāśu* by Sāmantaṅ Adiyamāṅ as *Śrīvaikhānasakkāṇi*. The amount was evidently apportioned in order to assign the *kāṇi* rights over the land to the *brāhmanas* who followed the Vaikhānasa Āgamic text. It is evident from this that the temple at Tiruvayīndrapuram followed the *Vaikhānasa* text for its day to day worship and rituals unlike the temple at Śrīraṅgam, which follows the *Pāñcharātra* Āgamic text. The chief Sāmantaṅ figuring in this inscription has been identified with his namesake figuring in the inscription from Timmānikuḷi in Cuddalore Taluk and he is the same as Adiyamāṅ Viḍugādaḷaḷiya - perumāl of Laḍdigam inscriptions.

Another interesting inscription (AREp., 1944, No. 94) registers an order issued to the *tāṅattār* of the temple of Deyvanāyaka at Tiruvayīndrapuram by king Jaṭāvarmaṅ Sundarapāṇḍya (acc. 1303 A.D.) for the conduct of the festival of *Māśi - Makham*, on which day, the deity is taken to the sea at Nissaṅkamalla-

paṭṭiṅam and after a bath at this place, to the place called Maṅalpaṭṭu where the worship is performed. This particular festival is performed at Kumbhakōṇam and Tirukkōshṭiyūr in Tamilnāḍu and at Tirunāvāy in Kēraḷa. Vēdānta Dēśika, besides the work *Dēvanāyaka Pañchāśat*, has composed another composition called *Navaratnamālai*. It is in this composition that there is a reference to the bathing of the deity at the sea near Maṅaltōppu on the above day. The epigraph under discussion here confirms the conduct of the festival described in the literary work of an earlier period.

It is significant to note from the inscriptions that Tiruvēndipuram witnessed the movement of itinerant merchants during the thirteenth century. The salt manufacturing centres (*pēraḷam*) of the Chōḷa period are Marakkāṅam in South Arcot District, Vēdāraṅyam and Āchchāpuram in Thanjavur District. Just as the salt manufacturing centres established by the Chōḷas in the 11th century were named after the royal founders, the *pēraḷam* called Sundarapāṇḍya - *pēraḷam* was named after the Pāṇḍya king Sundarapāṇḍya who is identical with Jaṭāvarman Sundarapāṇḍya I (acc. 1250 A.D.)

The reference to the assignment of one *uḷakku* of salt for every *Urai* i.e., 60 *marakkāl* from the salt manufacturing centres *Gaṅgaikoṇḍaśōḷoppēraḷam* and *Sundarapāṇḍyap - pēraḷam*, (AREp., 1944, No. 104) to the god Dēvanāyaka at Tiruvayīndrapuram for offerings, indicate that salt was an important item of trade in the

coastal towns like Cuddalore also termed Niṣṣaṅkamallaṭṭiṇam mentioned above. (AREp., 1944, No. 93)

A record of Māṛavarmaṅ Vikrama-pāṇḍya refers to the sale of lands in several localities or villages, of which Māḷigaipattū *alias* Karuppaḍi, to the temple is one. It is generally said that the term *maḍigai* or *maḷigai* or *māḷigai* refers to the place where grocery or provision articles are stored. The stocking of commodities for the purpose of sale or distribution was common during the period of the Chōlas, is evident from the inscriptions of Thaṅjāvūr, Maṅṅārkūḍi, etc. The present inscription clearly indicates that this practice was continued during the medieval and later Pāṇḍya periods also.

The temple received the patronage of the mercantile guilds is attested to by Pāṇḍya inscriptions. It also mentions a specific invitation by the Pāṇḍya king to the Vaiśya community which was part of the guild. The expression *Vēśāli* and *Suttamalli* reminds us of the communities involved in the trade activities in this coastal town. Attention may be drawn to a place called Suttamalli near Tirunelveli

which was known for its trade activities.

Attention may be drawn in this connection to two of the Pāṇḍya inscriptions which refers to the *sandhi* in the name of the goddess Alaivāy Ugandaperumagaḷ or Alaivāy Uganda Nāchchiyār, and to the grant of lands by the *sabhā* of Tribhuvanamahādēvi - chaturvēdimaṅgalam. The goddess was so called Alaivāy Uganda Nāchchiyār, on account of the existence of the temple in the coastal town. It may be noted here that in the 13th + 3rd regnal year of the king Kōṅṅeriṅmaikoṇḍāṅ (who may be identified with a Pāṇḍya king), lands were granted for the offerings to the deity Emberumāṅār who is none other than Rāmānujāchārya, the founder of Viśiṣṭādvaita religion. His preceptors who were managing the affairs of the temple were also the recipients of the above gift.

Thus the cultural events of the Vaishṇavaite centre at Tiruvēndipuram, sung by Tirumaṅgai - Āḷvār and Vēdānta Dēśika, whose life is connected with this place, are corroborated by the inscriptions.

Eṟumbūr Inscription of Rājarāja Chōḷa I

S. Swaminathan

The Chōḷa inscriptions prove to be a mine of information. They throw valuable light on the cultural life of the people. From their records it is evident that the Chōḷa rulers patronised art, music, painting and other fine arts. However, everything was made subordinate to religion and they served religious purposes. The Chōḷa kings vied with each other and patronised art and culture. In fact the Chōḷa ruler Rājarāja I (985-1014 A.D.) was a great patron of arts and letters so much so that it would not be an exaggeration to say that the Tamil culture reached its peak under his rule. The numerous endowments created during his reign in many temples in various parts of his empire speak volumes about the cultural attainment achieved during his period. The philanthropic donations made by the enlightened donors fed the arts well.

Eṟumbūr, called in the early Chōḷa period as Uṟumūr¹, is now a sleepy village in Chidambaram taluk of South Arcot District. The small but impressive Śiva temple now called Kadambavanēśvara temple contains many inscriptions². The temple called in Chōḷa inscriptions³ as Uṟumūr śīru tirukkōyil i.e., small illustratious temple of Uṟumūr, true to its form, came into existence during the reign of the great Chōḷa king Parāntaka I. An interesting inscription⁴ of his reign (935 A.D.) records that Guṇavaṇ Aparājitaṇ who constructed the central shrine in stone petitioned the king for

grant of exemption of taxes in respect of lands donated by him for the entire worship in the shrine.

An interesting inscription⁵ of Rājarāja I which is examined here is found engraved on the south wall of the central shrine of this temple. It is dated in the twenty-third regnal year of the above ruler (1008 A.D). It begins with the usual *praśasti* of the king 'Tirumagaḷ pōla.' It states that Araiyan Vichchādiran, a member of the *vellāḷa* community of Uṟumūr, had granted gold pieces weighing five *kaḷañju*. The *sabhā* of Uṟumūr, a *dēvadāna-brahmadēyam* at Nalvayalūr-kūṟram in Rājēndrasimha - vaḷanāḍu which received the amount agreed to pay themselves perpetually the amount fee $3/4$ *poṇ* 1 *mañjāḍi* and 1 *kuṟiṇi* due annually from the drummers of the temple who beat drums during the *śrībali* service in the temple. In other words the interest accrued from the gifted amount may be adjusted against the said annual fee to be remitted by the drummers to the local assembly and it was also stipulated that the drummers need not pay anything to the local assembly.

Accompaniment of musical instruments was a part of temple worship in Tamil country. Drums, gongs, pipes, flutes and other musical instruments were normally used on every conceivable occasion in temples. Especially the drummers played an important role in the Chōḷa society. They had to announce the meeting of the local

assembly by beating the drum⁶. They also had to function during the temple services such as *śrībali* service, festivals, processions and other important and auspicious occasions at the temple⁷. It is certain that whenever a temple was constructed or a *brahmadēya* was formed provision would invariably be made for the livelihood of drummers. Several inscriptions refer to the gift of land for the drummers⁸. The Taṇḍantōṭṭam plates⁹ of Pallava Nandivarman II records a land share allotted to the drummers. An interesting inscription of Parāntaka I (923 A.D.)¹⁰ states that a piece of land that was earmarked for the livelihood of *mahāmāttaran* who conducted the *śrībali* service by sitting on the back of an elephant (with the idol of the deity and accompanied by the devotees) fell fallow. The devotees went and represented the matter to the Chōḷa king Parāntaka I who issued a royal fiat to Chōḷaśikhāmaṇi Pallavaraiyar, the administrator of Aruvā-nāḍu (to provide land). Accordingly the latter provided a piece of land to the *mahāmāttaran*, who was also a drummer of the *śrībali* service.

An inscription¹¹ of the Rāshtrakūṭa ruler Kṛishṇa III (962A.D.) from Uttiramērūr records a decision made by the *mahāsabhā* of Uttiramēru-chaturvēdimaṅgalam. As per the decision the *ūrār* of Tiruvulliyūr had donated the income from all the taxes for the livelihood of the drummers who beat thrice in the Īśvarabhaṭṭārar temple at Tiruvulliyūr. These taxes were *āyam*, *talaiyaṇai*, *āṇellu* *tiṅgaṭchōru* and other taxes.

These instances show the importance attached to the drummers in the

society. In the above inscription revenue collected from Ulliyūr, a hamlet of Uttiramēru-chaturvēdimaṅgalam was assigned for the livelihood of the drummers.

In the Eṛumbūr record under study a piece of land could have been provided for the maintenance of drummers for performing their duties in the temple. Infact an inscription¹² of Parāntaka I which is already referred to states that when the temple was constructed in stone during his reign (938 A.D.) by Iruṅgōḷaṅ Guṇavaṅ Aparājitaṅ who obtained the royal sanction to exempt the taxes on 3-1/4 *vēli* of land, out of which 1 *vēli* of land was earmarked to the drummers as *tiruppaliṇṇam* i.e., land donated as an endowment for the conduct of *tiruppali* (i.e., *śrībali*) service. It appears that only the land tax payable to the king was exempted during the time of Parāntaka I (978 A.D.). Perhaps the other dues were not waived and the drummers had to remit them to the local assembly. It is not impossible that to exempt the drummers from the payment of the minor dues the Vellāḷa Araiyaṅ Vichchādiraṅ donated gold pieces during the reign of Rājarāja I as stated in this inscription.

The drummers were placed in an unenviable position. They had to get the land tilled by the cultivators. They had to share the produce with the temple and cultivators. Over and above, they had to pay the minor dues and meet other incidental expenditure. Very likely they themselves would have persuaded the donor to endow gold and to relieve them from the burden of taxes.

TEXT

- 1 Svasti śrī [||*] Tiru-magalpōlap-peru-nilach= che-
 2 lviyum taṇakkē urimai pūṇḍamai maṇa[k]-
 3 oḷak=Kāndaḷūr̥ch=chālai kalam-aṇutt-arulī Vēn-
 4 gai-nāḍuñ-Gaṅga-pāḍiyu-Nuḷamba-pāḍiyum Taḍigai-
 5 pāḍiyuñ=Kuḍamalai-nāḍum Kollamuñ=Kaliṅgamum e-
 6 ṇḍisai pugaltara Īla- maṇḍalamum Irattapāḍi Ēḷarai-
 7 ilakkamun-tiṇḍiral venrit=tanḍār̥ koṇḍu taṇṇ-
 8 eḷil vaḷar= ūḷiyuḷ-ellā yāṇḍun-toḷutagai-
 9 viḷaṅgum yāṇḍē Śēḷiyaraittēsukoḷ Śrī Kōvi-
 10 rājarājakēsari-panmar=āṇa Śrī Rājarājadēvarkki yāṇḍu
 11 irubattu mūṇṇrāvadu vaḍakarai Rājēndrasimha-vaḷa-
 12 nāṭṭu Nalvayalūr̥k-kūṇṇrattu dēvadāna-brahmadēyam Uṇṇu
 13 mūr sabhaiyōm [||*]iv-ūr irukkum Vellāḷaṇ Araiya-
 14 ṇ Vichchāḍiṇaṇ koṇḍa poṇ kāsū kallāl aiṅka-
 15 ḷaṅju koṇḍa pariśāvadu siṇṇuttirukkōvil Mahā
 16 dēvarkku śrībali koṭṭum ugachcha āṭṭai viṭṭaṇ
 17 eṅgaḷukku iḍak=kaḍava eḍar kāṇip poṇ mukkāl-
 18 le oru maṅjāḍiyuñ kuṇṇriyum chandr-ādittavaṇ nāñ-
 19 gaḷē iṭṭu śrībali koṭṭum ugaichchagaḷai chandr-ādi-
 20 ttaval ip poṇ kāṭṭaperādōm =āṇōm
 21 sabhaiyār panmāhēsvara rakshai [|||*]

Notes and References

1. *SII*, Vol.XIII, Nos.49 and 206.
2. *A.R.Ep.*, 1913, No.385.
3. *S.I.I.*, Vol.XIII, No.49; *Ibid.*, Vol.XIX, No.135.
4. *A.R.Ep.*, 1913, No.384.
5. *Ibid.*, No.385.

6. *S.I.I.*, Vol.XIII, No.76, *Ibid.*, No.XIX, No.739.

7. *S.I.I.*, Vol.VIII, No.739, *Ibid.*, XIX, No.240.

An inscription of Uttamachōḷa from Tirukkarugāvūr records the appointment of nine persons for beating drums during the three services of the *sandhis* of *ardhayāma*, *paḷḷiēḷuchchi* in the temple of the Tiruvellaḍai Mahādēva at Tirukkurugāvūr in Tiruvali-nāḍu and the endowment of 1 *vēli*, 3 *mā* and 3 *kāṇi* of land for their maintenance made by Sembāṇ Aruḷāṇ Uttamanidhi *alias* Uttamaśōḷa Mūvēndavēḷāṇ. An additional piece of a *mā* and *kāṇi* of land was also given to them towards their services. *S.I.I.*, Vol.XIX, No.326.

8. *A.R.Ep.*, 1913, No.385.

9. *S.I.I.*, Vol.II, p.527.

10. *Ibid.*, VIII, No.739.

11. *Ibid.*, VI, No. 324.

12. *A.R.Ep.*, 1913, No.384.

Introduction

The Imperial Chōlas, during their reign, divided the Chōla country into many provinces (*vaḷanāḍus*) for better administration. The great emperor Rājarāja I was honoured by many titles namely *Uyyakkoṇḍār*, *Periya Perumāl*, *Kshatriyasikkāmaṇi*, *Tamiḷ Nāḍan*, *Rājamārttānda-Ravikulamāṇikkam*, *Ādityaṅ* etc. As such, the *vaḷanāḍus* too were named after these titles which were mostly either after his caste name or his personal name. Further, the Chōla kings had claimed themselves as the descendants of Ravi or Āditya clan i.e., the Śāṅṅūr-kulam¹. The present paper aims to explore the importance of the title *Uyyakkoṇḍār* as well as its relationship with the names of the Chōla kings in the historical perspective.

Uyyakkoṇḍār Akalaṅka Nāḍālvār and others:-

Uyyakkoṇḍār - vaḷanāḍu.- One among the many provinces of the Chōla dynasty. It included many petty kingdoms. It is observed from the historical evidences that the rulers of the Uyyakkoṇḍār- vaḷanāḍu were the descendants of Chōla clan. For instance, the following inscription mentions one such Uyyakkoṇḍār.

Ambar-nāṭṭu śakaṭaṅṅār Moṅṅaiyar
*Akalaṅka-nāḍālvār araśu-kāṅipparru-udaiyavar*²

(The Śakaṭaṅṅār Moṅṅaiyar Akalaṅka Nāḍālvār of Ambar country had the right to possess crown lands). This inscription of the time of Pāṇḍya king

Sundarapāṇḍya further tells us that this chief Akalaṅka Nāḍālvār had the right to possess lands hereditarily. It further mentions that this Nāḍālvār had been entitled Veṅṅaikaiyāl-veṅṅra-nāḍālvān (he who won the battle without holding any weapon in his hand).³

It is noteworthy that the panegyric (*praśasti*) of Rājarāja I reveals the name of the ruler of the Uyyakkoṇḍār vaḷanāḍu as Ambarnāḍaṅṅ who hails from a warrior clan. It also observes that the temple authority of Pāmbūr region is Uyyakkoṇḍār-vaḷanāṭṭu Tirukkuḍamukkil Kaṅḍaṅṅ Kōvala Nāḍaṅṅ⁴. This gives a clear picture that the temples were administered by the ruling community i.e. the Nāḍālvārs or Nāḍans.

Dr. Gopinatha Rao who examined the inscriptions of Nāḍālvāṅṅ says in an article in *Sentamiḷ* that this chief is nothing but a Chōla prince in the period of a Chōla king and is named as Vīrachōla Ādaiyūr Nāḍālvāṅṅ (Śēṅāpati Uyyakkoṇḍār - nāṭṭu - Tiraimūr-nāṭṭu nāḍār kilāṅṅ Irājarājan - para - nirupa - rāguttar - āṅṅa Vīraśōla - Iḷāṅgōvēḷ Ādaiyūr Nāḍālvāṅṅ.⁵) Further, Mr. Sethuraman in his book entitled *Pandya History* says that the chief Akalaṅka Nāḍālvār hails from the ruling community (*Śakaṭaṅṅār Moṅṅaiyar Akalaṅka Nāḍālvāṅṅ aṭchikuḍimarapiṅṅar*)

Thus the above accounts clearly establish the hereditary rights of the Uyyakkoṇḍār Nāḍālvārs to own the crown lands as well as their kingly lineage.

Uyyakkoṇḍārs as Viḍaiyadikāris and Owners of Crown Land : -

The high official who issues government orders on behalf of the king is named as *Viḍaiyadikāri*. This person must be a close relative or associate of the king or his family as well as trustworthy. The following inscription observes that this *Viḍaiyadikāri* is nothing but Uyyakkoṇḍār⁶. From this it is clear that the Uyyakkoṇḍār was a powerful official who had proximity to the king.

A few imperial Chōlas, besides holding office at Tanjore, reigned also at Madurai, the Pāṇḍya capital. They were honoured with the titles of Chōlas as well as Pāṇḍyas. For instance, the Kaḷugumalai inscription (1043-44 A.D) of the time of Sundarachōla Pāṇḍya mentions the name Uyyakkoṇḍāṅ of Pavitramāṅikapuram of Nechchuram,⁷ who had the right to possess half of the land and empowered to donate the remaining land to the temple. This inscription observes that the Uyyakkoṇḍār is not only the owner of the land but also the kingly descendant.

The right to own half of the land by Nāḍālyārs is further supported by the following inscription. A dispute arose between two parties to own the river water, i.e. the authorities of the temple and the contractors for fishing at one side and the Vikramachōla Nāḍālyāṅ on the other side. This dispute arose on the seventh regnal year of Māṇavarman Sundarapāṇḍya (1223 A.D.) Finally a compromise was reached between them. The Pāṇḍya king ordered to release a certain quantity of water in the river for the use of Vikramachōla Nāḍālyāṅ and a part of the income out of fish sale

should go to him. The remaining income should be donated to the temple⁸. From this account it is clear that the above Nāḍālyāṅ was empowered to use river water for the lands which he owned with hereditary rights and to receive half of the income from the river. It is pertinent to remember that the persons holding the posts *talaivāy- sāṅṅōr* as noted in the Allūr inscription had similar right over using water.

Uyyakkoṇḍārs and Kuḍivilaimuṟi

Mr. Karu Rajendran has found out two inscriptions in which the names of Uyyakkoṇḍārs are seen. The first one is in Mēlappanaiyūr: Vāraṅavāśi Uyyakkoṇḍāṅ Nakkaṅ tūṟri suvarakkattāṅ¹⁰. Besides this, another inscription mentions the name Valaṅgai Āṇḍāṅ Uyyakkoṇḍāṅ. It is inscribed at the steps of the Tirukkumarēśvarar temple at Poṅṅūr in Pudukkottai District and belonged to the period of the Pāṇḍya king Sundarapāṇḍya (1227 A.D.) who gave back the Chōla country. The text is as follows.

- 1 Svasti śrī Kōmāraparṃmarāṅa Tiribuvāṅa-
- 2 chakkaravattigaḷ Śōṅāḍu - vaḷaṅgiyaruliya
- 3 Sundarapāṇḍyadēvaṅku 11 āvadu Tiruk -
- 4 kumarīśuram - uḍaiya - nāyāṅār - kōyil iv-ūr
- 5 Valaṅgai Uyyakkoṇḍārgaḷ muṅbu še[y*]da-
- 6 danmaṅgaḷ-uva Āḷuḍaiyāṅku Nāchchiyāraiyum
- 7 eḷundaruḷivittu amudupaḍikku śikaraṅa- vayak -

8 kallum paraḷu - vayakkallum ilai
kuḷiyum

9 koṇḍuviṭṭu maṇḍapamum sōpānamum
peruṅ -

10 kadavum danmam¹¹

It is understood from this inscription that the Uyyakkoṇḍārs are not only called Valaṅgaiyars during the period of the Pāṇḍya kings but also they are said to have donated lands and properties to the temples once besides constructing *maṇḍapas* and doors, etc. The Valaṅgai Uyyakkoṇḍārs, who were the land owners had issued copper-plates when they sold out their lands to Vellālas. This has been accounted in the following copper-plate and this document is named as *kuḍivilaimuri*.

“Kollam 817 ām varsham Aippaśi mādam
11 ām tēdi vaikuṇṭam svāmi Kallapirāṅ
Kōyil śībaṇḍāra Kāriyañ - cheyvāril Śīvalanā-
ttil Vīra Viṇōḍanallūril Koṟkai kāṇiyālaril
Tamburāṅ - kuṭṭiyāpillai - mudaliyavarkku
Kudanāṭṭiṅ Vellakkōvilil irukkum Valaṅgai
Uyyakkoṇḍā - rāl 40 poṇṇukku kuḍivilai
muri”

In this copper-plate (1642 A.D.) it is also observed that the Vellālas who bought the lands from Valaṅgai Uyyakkoṇḍār through the document *kuḍivilaimuri* also got slaves or servants from the previous owner to work for them.

Valaṅgai Uyyakkoṇḍārs at the time of
Later Rulers

The Vikkramaśiṅgapuram inscription clearly says that the Valaṅgai Uyyakkoṇḍārs who were the kingly clan had lost their importance during Nāyaka rule. They held the title *Valaṅgai Uyyakkoṇḍārs* and the right over the ownership of

the lands. The following inscription was engraved during the period of Vaḍamalaiyappa Pillai (1662 A.D.) who represented the Madurai Nāyaka in the South Pāṇḍya country:

*Mullī - nāṭṭil Vikramaśiṅgapuram Valaṅ-
gai Uyyakkoṇḍārgalil perumparruch - Chevva-
ndinādāṅ marruṇḍāṅa pēriluḷ nōndu ketṭupp-
ōnapaḍiyinālē.....*¹³

It is observed from the above account that the Nāyaka representative Vaḍamalaiyappa Pillai who was a Vellāla had not only honoured the previous land owners and the people of the kingly clan but also granted them privilege in taxes. Further it is noted here that the Valaṅgai Uyyakkoṇḍār was called as Nāḍāṅ and had been entitled to retain the title *perumparru* which means the lands owned by warriors. One can see many villages in the name Perumparru in South Pāṇḍya country where live the Nāḍār community only.

The Koḍuṅgōlūr plate of Vañchi Mārttāṇḍaṅ Thampurāṅ Vanna Kulaśēkara Perumāl dated 13th of Vaikāśi of the Kollam year 941 (i.e. 1766 A.D.) mentions the Valaṅgai Uyyakkoṇḍārs as Nāḍārs or Śāṅṟōrs. It is as follows:

*Śrī Mahāganam porundiya śattiriya-
kulattil udittār Vēdavidyādarar arulāl kaṇṇi-
mār iṅṅār - mahāganam porundiya mahā-
pattirakāli mularip-pālāl tiṭṭu tīrṇdu eḍuttu
śāṅṟōr eṅṅu peyarittadam valadu bujatti
piṇanda Vēdavidyādarar āṇadāl Valaṅgai
Uyyakkoṇḍōr eṅṅum ivar nāḍār.....*¹⁴

This plate indicates that the Valaṅgai Uyyakkoṇḍārs, in later period were called Śāṅṟōrs or Nāḍārs and were said to be born from the right arm (shoulder). This is further supported by

a judgement in the name *Chittoor jillā tīrppu* where the Nādārs were declared as Valāngai community during the reign of Paṇpūvi Chōḷa, who may be the Paṇḍita Chōḷa. The lines follow: *Kāñchīyai āṇḍa Paṇpūvich- chōḷaṇ taṇṇaich- chārṇ -davargaḷai valāngai jāti eṇṇāṇ.*

It is known from an inscription at Sērmādēvi of Nellai District belonging to the period of Śrīvallabha Pāṇḍya that a person namely Uyyakoṇḍār Sēntaṇ Sittan of Kalvaḷid-nāḍu had served as a chieftain¹⁵.

Another inscription informs us that the *Dēvargaḷ - nāyaṇ* Uyyakoṇḍār Muḍi- kātta Pāṇḍi Dēvaṇ belongs to a kingly clan.¹⁶ Further, that the Uyyakoṇḍārs had connection with crown lands is revealed by a Tiruppattūr inscription which says Neḍumarattu vayalil poṇṇam- balaka... ttā Uyyakoṇḍār - u ullittāṇ nilam¹⁷.

Priest of Uyyakoṇḍārs

The fact that the Śaiva brahmins had served as *gurus* or priests to the Uyyakoṇḍārs is now brought to light by a few inscriptions. These spiritual leaders are called Uyyakoṇḍār-bhaṭṭars who are many. Eḷuṇūrru-bhaṭṭar, Muṇṇūrruva - bhaṭṭar, Aiṇṇūrruva - bhaṭṭar and Nār pattēṇṇāyira-bhaṭṭar¹⁸ are some of the names known from the inscriptions which reveal that they served only to the Uyyakoṇḍārs.

The Kōvilpaṭṭi Nādār Copper-plate dated 1445 A.D., was first brought to light by Alakkudi Arumuga Sitharaman and was closely read by Mr. S. Ramachandran, an Archaeologist of the State Archaeology Department. The message in the Copper-plate is given below:

Iṇākkulaṁ naṅjey puṅjey nilaṅgaḷai in- nilaṅgaḷiṇ urimaiyāḷargaḷ - āṇa Pūsaṅ- kuḍi grāmattill-irunda Kāttakkutti Uyyakoṇḍāṇ Ādichechaṅkutti āgiya mūvarum- Kōṭṭaik- karuṅkulaṁ āṇa teṇṇpāl Udayamārttāṇḍanallūr grāmattil irukkun Piṇavipperumāl Nākkutti eṇbavarukku virraṇar innila virpaṇai āvanattil Pūsaṅkuḍiyil - irukkum Kuttā laṅ - chetti inda vilai muṇi naḍuvu eḷuḍiya Ādittaṇ - nāthaṇ - chetti pāṅka....¹⁹

One could see the name of Uyyakoṇ- ḍān who was a land owner.

A Few Petty Kingdoms of Uyyakoṇḍārs

Many names of petty kingdoms (*Valanāḍus*) are identified under the Uyyakoṇḍār-valanāḍu. Below three such kingdoms or towns are listed.

1. The chaturvēdimaṅgalam named after the king of whom both the parental lineage belong to non-polluting cases.²⁰
2. Immarabun Tūyaperumālṇallūr²¹
- 3 The Chaturvēdimaṅgalam named after the king who helped with arms.²²

More such names of kingdoms or towns may be identified if many inscriptions are scrutinized.

Uyyakoṇḍār Vayakkals

As the Uyyakoṇḍārs had connections with crown lands, many terms pertaining to land and town were also identified. For example,

1. Uyyakoṇḍār Mayakkal nilam²³
2. Uyyakoṇḍār Pāṇḍipperumāl - vayakkal²⁴
3. Uyyakoṇḍār vayakkal²⁴
4. Uyyakoṇḍān... ku nāṭṭāṇ tiri-

śūlakka²⁵

5. Uyyakkoṇḍār karai²⁶
6. Uyyakkoṇḍār paṭṭiṇam²⁷
7. Uyyakkoṇḍār tirumalai²⁸
8. Uyyakkoṇḍār kuṛicchi²⁹
9. Uyyakkoṇḍār maṇai³⁰
10. Uyyakkoṇḍār kuḷam³¹
11. Uyyakkoṇḍār śiṛuvayal
12. Uyyakkoṇḍār kuḍi
13. Uyyakkoṇḍār viḷāgam
14. Uyyakkoṇḍār kālvāy
15. Uyyakkoṇḍēchchuvaram.

The mercantile community who had trades with foreign countries made some of these names for their town in honour of their kings.³²

Uyyakkoṇḍārs in Kēraḷa Records

Nagamaiyya, the then Diwan of Travancore State and the author of the book *The Travancore State Manual* had noted that the Nāḍārs were entitled to have the title “Valaṅgai Uyyakkoṇḍār” or “Valaṅgai Uyyakkoṇḍār” who were the descendants of Chēra kings”.

One can observe that while the Nāḍārs were in a low status during the Tambiran’s rule, the Diwan of the State had honoured them as “The right hand caste or the support caste.”

The Nāḍārs of Kēraḷa had registered their names in the revenue and land documents as Valaṅgai Uyyakkoṇḍārs. In the 1931 Census report of the Travancoore State, the Nāḍārs of Kēraḷa and Kanyakumari district have legally registered them as Iravikula kshatriyas³⁴

Robert L. Hardgrave in his book on *Nadars of Tamil Nadu*³⁵ referred to this fact which is a strong evidence to establish Valaṅgai Uyyakkoṇḍārs are people of kingly tradition.

Valaṅgai Uyyakkoṇḍārs in Palm-leaf Manuscripts

The name Valaṅgai Uyyakkoṇḍār has been profusely cited in the panegyric poems on Nāḍār community. These poems are mostly written in palm-leaf manuscripts like Valaṅgai Vāḷttu, Valaṅgai Mālai, Śāṅṅōrkula Dīpam, Valaṅgai Nūl eṇṇum Veṅgalarājan Katakai, etc. These panegyric poems and other bow-song stories would have been composed after 1600 A.D. The historical document namely Valaṅgai Mālai mentions that the Chēra and Chōḷa kings are the descendants of Śāṅṅōr (Ravi) clan. A few lines from the above text would indicate this connection.

Chēra-nāḍu, Chōḷa nāḍu, Ḳānāḍu
eṇṇa mūṇṇum Valānāḍuḍaiya Valaṅgai
Uyarkoṇḍāravargaḷ eṭṭāyudamum Laksha-
ṇamum uḷḷavargaḷ Puṭṭāpuramum Kāñchi-
puram-uḍaiya vargaḷ

From this as well as other Valaṅgai palm-leaf texts and copper-plate documents one could understand that the Valaṅgai Uyyakkoṇḍārs are from the Āḍitya lineage.

As the Valaṅgai Mālai and Veṅgalarājan ballad (1606 A.D.) mention the existence of 700 (*eḷunūṛruvar*) Valaṅgai Uyyakkoṇḍārs, it is understood that the Śāṅṅōrs are nothing but Uyyakkoṇḍārs³⁷. This is further supported by another Valaṅgai text namely Valaṅgai Vāḷttu which identifies the Śāṅṅōrs as Nāḍārs³⁸.

Valaṅgai Uyyakkoṇḍārs and Other Kshatriyas

Besides the titles "Nāḍār", Nāḍālvār" other names such as Martāṇḍār (Kūṭṭam), Ādityaṅ (Kayamoḷi), Ravikula Kshatriyar (Agastēśvaram), Kshatriyan (in documents) are also in vogue, to show close relationship with the title Uyyakkoṇḍār and Śāṅṅrōrs. In the 1891 Census report, the Nāḍārs or Śāṅṅrōrs registered them under the panel - "Kshatriyars". More such evidences are given elsewhere by the present author viz., in the titles 'Kshatriyas of South India', 'Court of the Lords', Ēnādi, etc.

From the above accounts it is clear that the Valaṅgai Uyyakkoṇḍārs were land owners and warriors of kingly origin who were spread over Chōḷa and elsewhere in Pāṇḍya and Chēra regions. There were many divisions among Valaṅgai warriors. They are:

1. Aḷagiyaśōḷaterinda - valaṅgai-
vēḷakkārappaḍai
2. Kshatriyaśikhāmaṇiterinda-
valaṅgai - vēḷakkārappaḍai
3. Śatrubhujaṅgaterinda-valaṅgai -
vēḷakkārappaḍai
4. Rājagāṇḍībaterinda-valaṅgai-
vēḷakkārappaḍai
5. Aridurgalaṅkanaterinda -
valaṅgai- vēḷakkārappaḍai
6. Mūttavikramābharāṅaterinda -
valaṅgai - vēḷakkārappaḍai
7. Iraṅamukhabhīmaterinda-valaṅgai-
vēḷakkārappaḍai
8. Irājarāṅaterinda-valaṅgai-vēḷak-
kārappaḍai

9. Vikramābharāṅaterinda-valaṅgai
- vēḷakkārappaḍai

10. Iḷaiyarājarāṅaterinda - valaṅgai
vēḷakkārappaḍai, etc.

These regiments were organised during the Chōḷa supremacy³⁹ for administrative purposes. Valaṅgai regiments when compared with Iḍaṅgai groups, are superior without dispute. *Ēnādi Nāyaṅṅar Purāṅam* is a strong support of the statement that the Valaṅgai warriors are otherwise called the Śāṅṅrōrs. The *Takkayāgapparaṅi* composed by the poet Oṭṭikkūttar (12th century A.D.) and its commentary by an anonymous author help us to know the history of their contemporary period. This text and its commentary establishes the Chōḷas as Kshatriyas and the Pāṇḍyas as Brahma-Kshatriyas.⁴⁰

In conclusion, we have to convincingly explain the import of the term Uyyakkoṇḍār. It may be safely inferred that the people, belonging to the Śāṅṅrōr community, who trained the kings and other royal personnel in all aspects of warfare and military strategy, were called Uyyakkoṇḍārs. The region comprising Eyinanūr, (Eraṅallūr), the birth place of Ēnādināthar was called Uyyakkoṇḍār - valaṅḍu. The naming of the region after the title of Rājarāja i.e., Uyyakkoṇḍār seems to be significant. This was probably the region where the Uyyakkoṇḍārs had their hereditary right over the land. In *Sivalamāraṅ Kathai* (16th century) Uyyakkoṇḍāṅ is stated to have belonged Ādiyār (Sūrya) clan. The Nāḍārs belong to the Tāḍālvāṅ family (i.e., Sūrya family) according to a copper-plate grant of 17th century A.D.

Muttukutti Svāmigaḷ (19th century) in his work on *Akīlatirattu Ammāṇai* refers to Uyyakkonḍār-kulam. It is clear that they are *nāḍārs*.

Notes and References

1. The term Śāṁrōr (Chāṁrōr) is derived from the word Chāṁru or Śāṁru i.e., Sākshi which term also will be applicable to the Sun, the eye of the Universe. Hence, it is natural to assume that the term Śāṁrōr signifies Kshatriyas belonging to the Solar race.
2. *A.R. Ep.*, 1917, No. 249
3. *S.I.I.*, Vol VIII, No. 261
4. *A.R.Ep.*, 1911, No. 213
5. *Sentamū*, Plavaṅga, Kārttikai Issue, p. 49.
6. *T.A.S.*, Vol.I, No. 166
7. *A.R.Ep.*, 1984, No. 18
8. *Tolliyal Nōkkil* 29-30
9. See, Noboru Karashima's book.
10. *Āvaṇam*, Issue 2, p.4
11. *Ibid.*, p. 3
12. Subbaya Pillai, *Iruṅgōvēlum Narkuḍi Vēḷāḷargaḷum*
13. *A.R.Ep.*, 1911, No. 279
14. *Dakshina Māraṇāḍār Ponvūḷā Malar*, 1994, T. Tavasimuttu - Tirubuvanamāṇḍa Tiruvaḷar Nāḍārgaḷ
15. *A.R.Ep.*, 1916, No. 644
16. *Ibid.*, 1914, No. 284
17. *Tiruppatiūr Kalvēṭṭugaḷ*, Āvaṇam, Issue 2, p 53.
18. *A.R.Ep.*, 1908, No. 394
19. Message extracted from Kōvilpaṭṭi Nāḍār Copper plate.
20. *S.I.I.*, Vol No. XXIII, No. 309
21. *Ibid.*, No. 307
22. *S.I.I.*, Vol XIV, No. 145.
23. *Nannilam Kalvēṭṭugaḷ*, Issue 1, 22.
24. *A.R.Ep.*, 1916, No. 122
25. *S.I.I.*, Vol. XXIII, No. 401.
26. *A.R.Ep.*, 1917, No. 409
27. *S.I.I.*, Vol VIII, No. 590
28. *Āvaṇam* Issue 4, Tamil Inscription from Sumatra.
29. *Ibid.*,
30. *Padukkottai Inscriptions*, No. 492.
31. *Nannilam Kalvēṭṭugaḷ*, Issue 1. 8

32. *Āvaṇam*, Issue 4
33. B. Nagamaiyya, *Travancore State Manual*, Vol II, pp. 290-400
34. *Census of Travancore 1931*, part I, Report p. 384
35. Robert L. Hardgrave, *The Nāḍārs of Tamil Nadu*
36. *Valaṅgai Mālai*, p. 98
37. *Veṅḡalarājan Kathai*, 1963.
38. A. Dasarathan, *Kuṅṅālam*, 1984.
39. *S.I.I.*, Vol II, No. 35.
40. *Takkayāgaparaṇi*, 1992.

Social Legislation in the medieval period in Tamil Country.

K. Karuppiah

The discovery of an interesting inscription from Vāraṇavāsi in Tiruchirappalli District throws light on the social legislation that prevailed in the medieval period. The inscription is in Tamil language and characters of the 13th century A.D. The record belongs to the reign period of Chōḷa Rājarāja who may be identified with Rājarāja III.

The inscription mentions that the *sabhā* has passed a resolution preventing the sale of lands to the outsiders. It also stipulates that violation of this resolution is punishable. The resolution was passed by the *nāttārs* of five districts.

The political background behind this is rather interesting to note. We know that the Chōḷa empire started decaying during the reign period of Chōḷa king Rājarāja III (acc.1216 A.D.). This king was imprisoned by a Kāḍava chief Kōpperuñjiṅga and was later on released by the Hoysala ruler Sōmēśvara in 1231 A.D. This gives us an idea of the confused situation that prevailed in his country.

The *nāttārs* in order to safeguard the plight of the capital were constrained to pass the above resolution. Also it may be said that the resolution was passed with a view to protect the land-holders of the empire. The purposes of the resolution are drawn below :

1. to avoid the concentration of economic power;
2. selling, purchasing and mortgaging

of the properties within one's own community in order to remove the imbalance among the people,

3. to maintain an egalitarian society;
4. to collect the revenue smoothly;
5. to distribute the landed property equally among the community.

There is a similar instance during the reign period of Vīra Pāṇḍya where the resolution was passed restricting the inheritance of property only by the male members. Thus the *nāttārs* played an important role in safeguarding and protecting the land and the income from the same.

TEXT

- 1 Tirubhuvanachakka -
- 2 ravattigaḷ I -
- 3 rājarājadēvaṟku
- 4 yāṇḍu 21 va
- 5 diṇ edirām - ā -
- 6 ṇḍu uḍai -
- 7 yār Tiruvāḷandu -
- 8 rai-nāyaṇār
- 9 dēvadāna -
- 10 ṇ-kīlchchār -
- 11 āna Vāraṇavāsi -
- 12 yil kāṇi i -
- 13 Vāraṇavāsi -

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| 14 uḍāian | 30 chār añ - |
| 15 vandavar vi - | 31 ju-nāṭṭu |
| 16 rral orri vai - | 32 gaḷ-ūrku |
| 17 ttal - | 33 vilan - |
| 18 seyvār tañjā - | 34 gal uṇ - |
| 19 tiyārku | 35 ḍāgil n - |
| 20 virpadu ta - | 36 āngal - |
| 21 ñjāti ta - | 37 lē ērttu - |
| 22 vira virrār | 38 koṇḍu vi - |
| 23 uṇḍāgi - | 39 ṭṭuk-kuḍup - |
| 24 l nāyilu | 40 pōm āga ka - |
| 25 panniyiru - | 41 l vetṭi n - |
| 26 kaḍaiyā - | 42 āṭṭi kuḍuttō - |
| 27 ga kutti nū - | 43 m añju - |
| 28 [rāga] kaḍavad-āga - | 44 nāṭṭōm |
| 29 vum kīlch(chā) | |

T.S.Ravishankar

and

Jai Prakash

The copper-plate charter edited below, with the kind permission of the Director (Epigraphy), Archaeological Survey of India, Mysore, was discovered at Loichandā in Palitana Taluk in Bhavanagar District in Gujarat. It was copied by Jai Prakash in February 1996 in the course of his annual collection tour when the plates were temporarily in the office of the Superintending Archaeologist, Archaeological Survey of India, Vadodara Circle, Vadodara, Gujarat. Our thanks are due to Shri Hari Manjhi, Superintending Archaeologist and Shri S.V.P. Halakatti, Deputy Superintending Archaeologist of the Vadodara Circle, Vadodara for permitting Jaiprakash to examine the plates and prepare estampages.

The inscription is incised on two copper-plates, each engraved on one side only and each measuring approximately 29.4cm in length, 16.5cm in breadth and 2mm in thickness; each of the plates has two ring-holes. The weight of the plates is 1.300 kg. The inscription contains on the whole 26 lines of writing. The writing is in a good state of preservation. The average size of the letter is 7mm.

The characters are the same as in other old Valabhī plates. The language of the grant is Sanskrit prose. The numerical symbols for 200, 6 and 1 occur in ll. 25.

With regard to orthography, we may note that the doubling of the consonant following r, as in the following -*mānārjjav* - *ōpārjjit*, 1.2; -*mañir*=*mmany-*, -*dharmmā Dharmma-*, 1.6; -*ārttha-*, 1.9; *sarvvā-*, 1.11; -*pādāvartta-*, 1.14, etc. There are many orthographical and scribal errors like non-observance of *sandhi* rules, use of short medials for long medials etc. Besides, there are some scribal errors as for instance, in *Bhāṭhyinē* instead of *Bhāṭṭinē* in line 16.

The charter contains an order issued from Valabhī by the *Mahārāja* Dhruvasēna granting 70 *pādāvarttas* of land in the village Bhadrālī attached to Hastakavapra to the brāhmaṇa donee Bhāṭṭi of the Chhāndōga-sākhā and Śāṇḍilya-gōtra, who was a resident of Simhapura. The details of the land gifted are as follows : in the north-east of the village 20 *pādāvarttas* of land with a well; in the north 12 *pādāvarttas* of land with a well having an outlet; in the southeast 12 *pādāvarttas*; in the south 26 *pādāvarttas*, thus adding up to 70. The district of Hastakavapra is well known from other Valabhī inscriptions.¹ It corresponds to area around the modern Hāthab, 6 miles south of Gōghā in the erstwhile Bhāvnagar state. The name of the village Bhatrāti is not elsewhere known. The grant was issued from Valabhī, the present Wālā, situated in 21° 52' N.

and 71° 57' E. Simhapura, where the donee resided, occurs in the plates of Dharasēna IV of Saṁvat 326 published in the Bombay Journal, Vol X, p.77 ff. It has been identified with the present Ṣihōr, situated in 21° 43' N. and 72° E.

The *dūtaka* was the *pratihāra* Mammaka, who appears in the same capacity in the seven grants of Dhruvasēna two of Saṁvat 206,² three of Saṁvat 207³ and

two of Saṁvat 210⁴. The writer was Kikkaka, who wrote several charters of Dhruvasēna.⁵

The date of the grant was the first day of the bright fortnight of Āśvayuja of the (Valabhī) year 206, corresponding to A.D. 525-26. It is the third grant of Dhruvasēna bearing the date Saṁvat 206 as two charters are already known bearing the same date.

TEXT⁶

First Plate

- 1 Ōm svasti⁷ [||*] Valabhītaḥ prasabha - praṇat - āmitrāmitrāṇām Maitrakāṇām = atula - bala - sapatna - maṇḍalābhōga-
- 2 saṁsakta-saṁprahāra-śata-labdha-pratāpaḥ pratāp-ōpanata-dāna-mān-ārjjav-opārjjit-ānurāgō=nurakta -
- 3 mō(mau)la-bhṛita-mitra-śrēṇī-bal-āvāpta-rājaysrīḥ paramamāhēśvaraḥ śrī-sēnāpati-Bhaṭakkas=tasya sutah
- 4 tat-pāda-rajō-ruṇ-ōnata-pavitrikṛita-śirāḥ śirō-vanata-śatru- chūḍāmaṇi-prabhā -vichchurita-pāda-nakha-
- 5 paṅkti-dīdhitih dīn-ānātha-jan-ōpajīvyamāna-vibhavaḥ paramamāhēśvaras = sēnāpati-Dharasēna[h]
- 6 tasy-ānujas=tat-pād-ābhiprasasta-vimala-maulimanir=Mmanv-ādi-praṇīta-vidhi-vidhāna-dharmmā Dharmmarāja iva vihi-
- 7 ta-vyavasthā-paddhatir=akhila-bhuvana-maṇḍal-ābhōga-svāminā parama-svāminā svayam = upahita-rā-
- 8 jy-ābhishēka-mahā-viśrāṇan-āvapūta-rājasrīḥ paramamāhēśvarō mahārāja-Drōṇa-siṅhas =siṅha iva tā(ta)sy = ā-
- 9 nujas=sva-bhuja-balēna para-gaja-ghaṭ-ānikānām=ekavijayi(yī) śaraṇ-aishiṇām śaraṇam=avabōddhā śāstr-ārthta-
- 10 ta[t*]tvānām kalpa-tarur=iva suhṛit-praṇayinām yathābhilashita-phal-ōpabhō-gadaḥ paramabhāgavataḥ
- 11 paramabhaṭṭāraka-pād-ānudhyātō mahārāja-Dhruvasēnaḥ=kuśalī sarvvān=ēva svān-

āyuktaka-viniyuktaka-drāṅgi-

- 12 ka - mahattara- chāṭa - bhāṭa - dhruvasthānādhikaraṇa da(dā)ṇḍapāsik - ādīn=
anyāmś=cha yathā-sambadhyamānakān=anuda-
- 13 rśayaty=astu vōs(vas)=samviditaṁ yathā mayā Hastakavapra-prāpīya Bhadrālī
-grāmē uttā(tta)ra-
- 14 pūrvvasyā[m] vidiśi kūpaka-pādāvarttair-vvimśabhiḥ pratisarā vāpī
- 15 dakṣiṇ-āpara-si(sī)mni pādāvarttādv(dvā)daśa dakṣiṇa si(sī)mni pādāvarttā
shshad- vimśati ēvam-ēkatra saha-vāpibhi[h*] pādāvarttās=saptati
- 16 Simhapura-vāstavya-bra(ā)hmaṇa-Bhāṭhyinē Śāṇḍilya-sagōtrāya Chhandōga-sa
-brahmachāriṇō(nē) mātā-pitrōḥ puṇy-āpyāyanāya
- 17 ātmanaś=ch=aiḥik-āmushmika-yathābhilashita-phal-āvāpti-nimittam=ā -chandr
-ārkk-ārṇṇava-kshiti-sthiti-sarit-parvvat-samakā-
- 18 līnāḥ putra-pautr-ānvaya-bhōjyaḥ bali-charu-vaiśya(śva)dēv-ādyānām kriyānām
samutsarppaṇ=ārttham sarvva-dāna-kara-viśuddh-ō-
- 19 dak=ātisarggēṇa brahmadāyō nisṛiṣṭō yatō=chitayā brahmadāya-sthityā
bhunjataḥ kṛishataḥ karshayataḥ pradiśatō vā
- 20 na kaiśchi[t*] svalp=āpy=ābādhānā kāryy-āsmad-vaṁśajair=āgāmi-bhadra-nṛi-
patibhiś=cha sāma(mā)nyam bhūmi-dāna-phalam=avagachchhadbhir=ayam=
asma[d*]-
- 21 dāyō=numantavya[h ||*] yaś=ch=a(ā)chchhindyā=a(ā)chchhidyama(mā)nam
v=
ānumōdēt(ta) sa pañchabhir=mmahāpātakais=sōpapātakais=samyuktas=syād=
api ch=ātra
- 22 Vyāsa-gīta-slōkā bhavanti[||*] Shasṭīm varsha-sahasrāṇi svarggē mōdati bhūmi-
daḥ [i*] āchchhētā ch= ānumantā ch tāṁnyēva(tāny=ēva) narakē vasēt [||*]
- 23 Sva-dattām para-dattām vā yō harēta vasundharām [i*] gavām śata sahasrasya
hantuḥ prāpnōti kilbisham ||
- 24 purvva-dattām dvijātibhyō yatnād-raksha Yudhishṭhira[||*] mahī(mahīm) mahi-
matām chchhrēshṭha-dānāchchhrēyōnupālanam [||*]
- 25 Svahastō mama mahārāja-Dhruvasēnasya [||*] Dūtakaḥ pratihāra-Mammakaḥ
[||*] Likhitaṁ Kikkakēna [||*] Sam 200 6
- 26 Āśvayu[ja*] śu 1

TRANSLATION

(line 1) Om. Hail! From Valabhī. (In the lineage) of the Maitrakas, who forcibly prostrated their enemies, (was born) the general, the glorious Bhaṭakka, who obtained splendour in hundreds of battles fought within the circuit of the territories of adversaries of unequalled strength; who gained devotion by gifts, honours and straight forwardness towards those whom he had prostrated by his splendour; who obtained the glory of royalty by the strength of the array of devoted hereditary servants and friends; the devout worshipper of Mahēśvara.

(line 4) His son (was) the general Dharasēna, whose head was purified, bent before and reddened by the dust of his feet; the shining line of the nails of whose feet was inlaid with the lustre of the crest jewels of his foes when they bent with their heads (before him); whose wealth was being lived upon by poor and helpless people; the devout worshipper of Mahēśvara.

(line 6) His younger brother (was) brother (was) the Mahārāja Drōnasimha, whose spotless crest-jewel became auspicious by (bowing down) to his (brother's) feet; whose nature (manifested itself in) the performance of the regulations laid down by Manu and others; who like Dharmarāja (i.e. Yudhishtira) fixed the path of the laws of good conduct; whose anointment to the kingdom was performed by the paramount sovereign in person, the lord of the circuit of the territories of the whole earth, and whose royal glory was purified by (his)

great liberality; the devout worshipper of Mahēśvara.

(line 9) His younger brother, who like a lion defeated single-handed, by the strength of his own arm, the array of the troops of the elephants of (his) enemies; who was the refuge of those who sought for refuge; who grasped the real purport of the meaning of the Śāstras; who like the Kalpa-tree, granted the enjoyment of rewards according to the wishes of (his) friends and favourites; the devout worshipper of Bhagavat; who meditates on the feet of the paramount lord; the Mahārāja Dhruvasēna, being in good health, issues the following order to all his āyuktakas, Viniyuktakas, drāṅgikas, mahattaras, chāṭas, bhaṭas, dhruvasthanādhikaraṇikas, dāṇḍapāśikas, and others according as they are concerned:

(line 13) Be it known to you that I have given as a brahmadāya, free from all imposts, with libations of water, in the village Bhadrālī, in Hastakavapra in the north eastern direction a small well (and) an area of twenty pādāvartas; further on the northern border twelve pādāvartas together with an irrigation-well; on the north-southern border twelve pādāvartas; on the southern border twenty two pādāvartas and seven pādāvartas together with irrigation-well thus in one place (i.e. village) to an inhabitant of Simhapura, (viz.) the brāhmaṇa Bhātyī, of the Śāṅḍilya gōtra, the student of the Chhandōga school, for the increase of the religious merit of My mother and father and in order to obtain for Myself in this world and the other such rewards

as I wish to last for the same time as the moon, sun, ocean, earth, the rivers and mountains, to be enjoyed by the succession of their sons and sons' sons, for the performance of the rites of *bali*, *charu*, and *vaiśvadēva* and others. Therefore, not even a slight obstruction should be made by anyone to one while he is enjoying it in accordance with the proper conditions of a *brahmadāya*, cultivating it or assigning it (*to others*). And this Our gift should be assented to by whose born in our lineage and by future pious kings, bearing in mind that the reward of a gift of land is common. And he who confiscates it or assents to its being confiscated, incurs the guilt of the five great sins together with the minor sins.

(line 22) There are also three verses sung by Vyāsa about this. The giver of

land rejoices in heaven for sixty thousand years; but he who confiscates or approves (of *confiscation*) dwells in hell the same number of years.

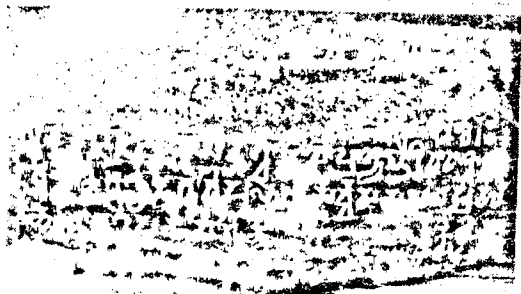
(line 23) He who rescinds grants of land made by himself or others, incurs the guilt of the killer of hundred thousand cows.

(line 24) O Yudhishtira, best of land-holders, preserve with care lands already given to the twice-born (*Brāhmaṇas*); for the preservation of land-grants is more meritorious than the making of a grant.

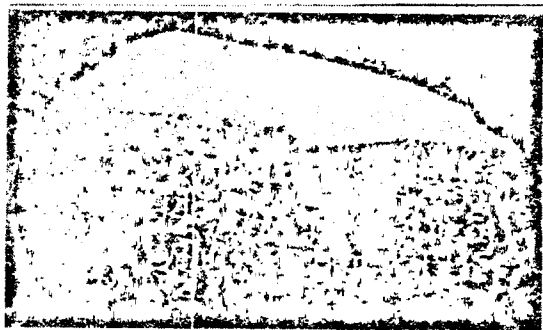
(line 25) The sign-manual of Me and *Mahārāja* Dhruvasēna. The executor is the *pratihāra* Mammaka. Written by Kikkaka. The year 200 (*and*) 6; (*the month*) Āśvayuja; the bright (fortnight); the 1st (*tithi*).

Notes and References

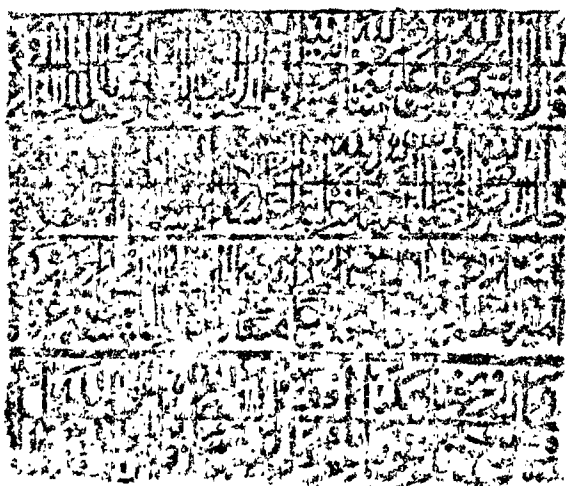
1. The Gaṇeśgaḍ plates of Dhruvasēna I of Samvat 207 (*Ep.Ind.*, Vol III, pp.318 ff); the Bhāvnagar plates of Dhruvasēna I of Samvat 207 (*Ind. Ant.*, Vol. V, pp.204 ff); the Wālā plates of Dharasēna II of Samvat 269 (*Ind.Ant.*, Vol. VI, pp. 10 ff); and the Bhāvnagar plate of Dharasēna IV of Samvat 326 (*Ind.Ant.*, Vol.I, p.45); see *Ind.Ant.*, Vol.V, p.314; Vol. VII, p.53 f; Vol.VIII, p.141; Vol.XIII, p.358.
2. *Ep.Ind.*, Vol.XI, p.105 and Vol.XVI, p. 110 and plate.
3. *Ind. Ant.*, Vol. V, p. 206; *Ep.Ind.*, Vol.III, p. 323 and Vol. XVII, pp. 107 ff. and plate.
4. *Ep.Ind.*, Vol. XI, p.109 and Vol.XV, pp.256 ff and plate.
5. See *Ind. Ant.*, Vol.IV, p. 105; Vol. V, p.206; *Vienna Oriental Journal*, Vol VII, p. 300; *Ep.Ind.*, Vol.III, p.323 and Vol. XI, Nos. II and III, Vol.XV, pp 256 ff; Vol. XVII, pp.107 ff and plate.
6. From impressions.
7. Expressed by a symbol.



Nagājari - Khanikargaon Fragmentary
Stone Inscription : Part - I
(NFSI Pt I)

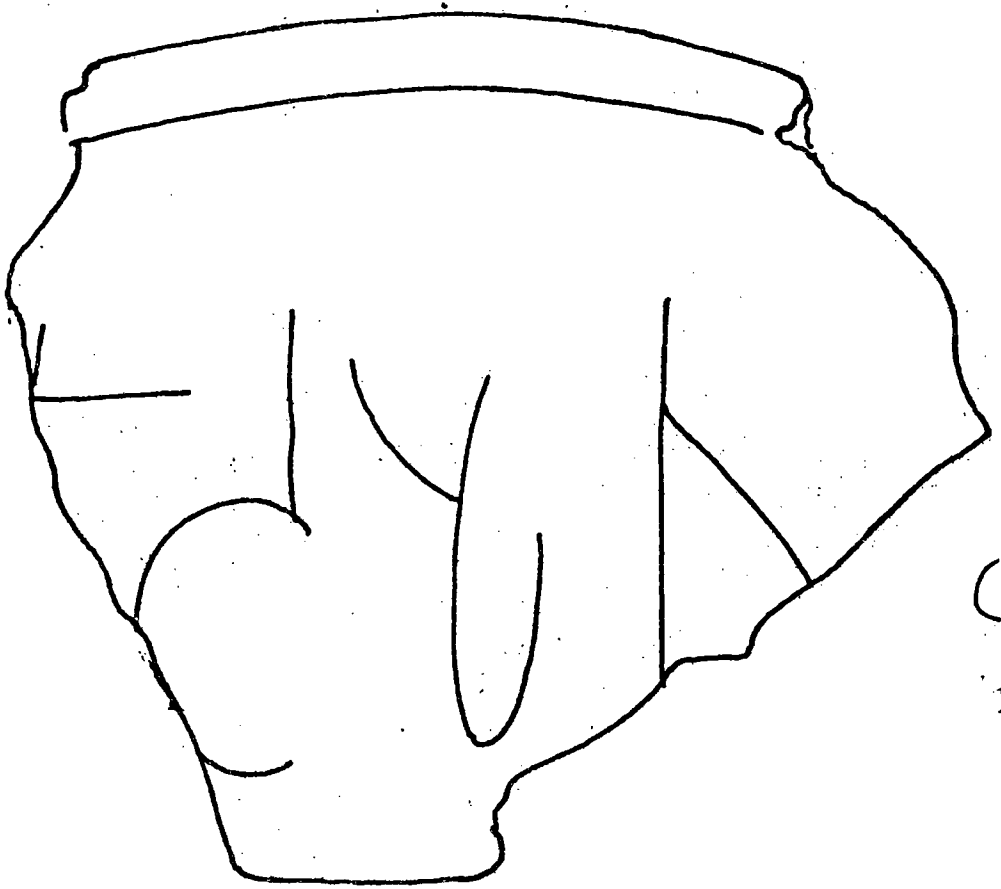


Nagājari - Khanikargaon Fragmentary
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(NFSI Pt II)

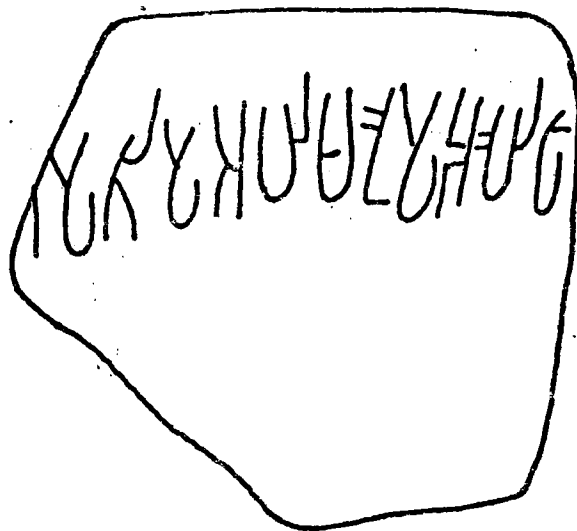


Adil Shahi Inscription from Misrikoti

AĻAGANKULAM Inscribed Potsherds

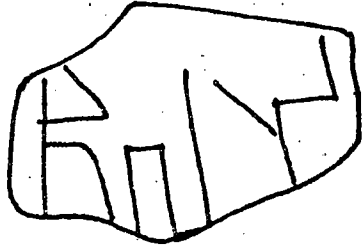


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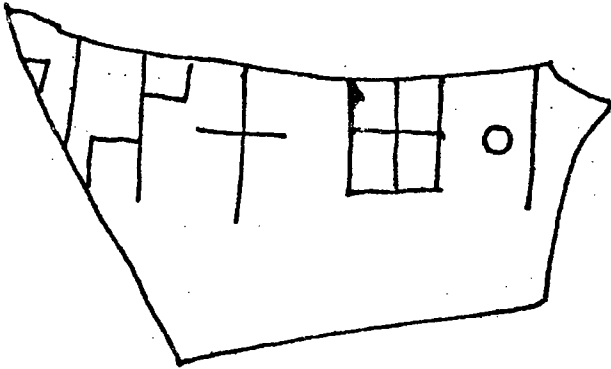


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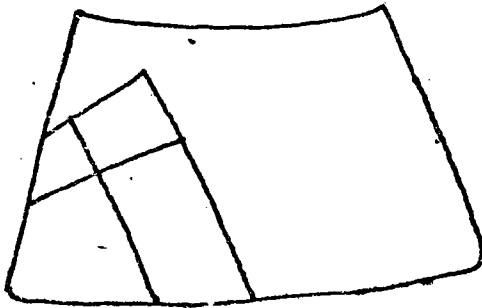
ALAGANKULAM Inscribed Potsherds



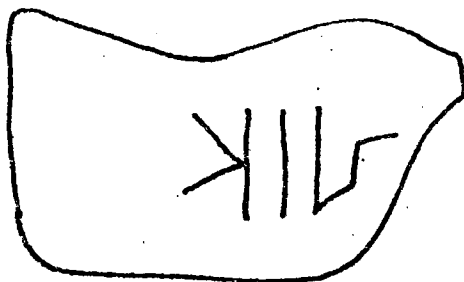
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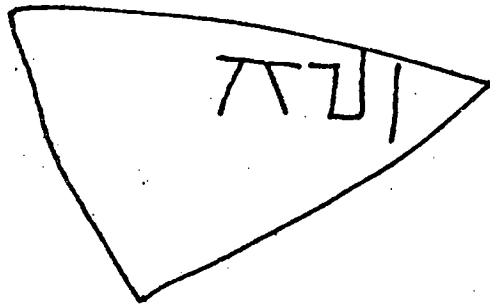


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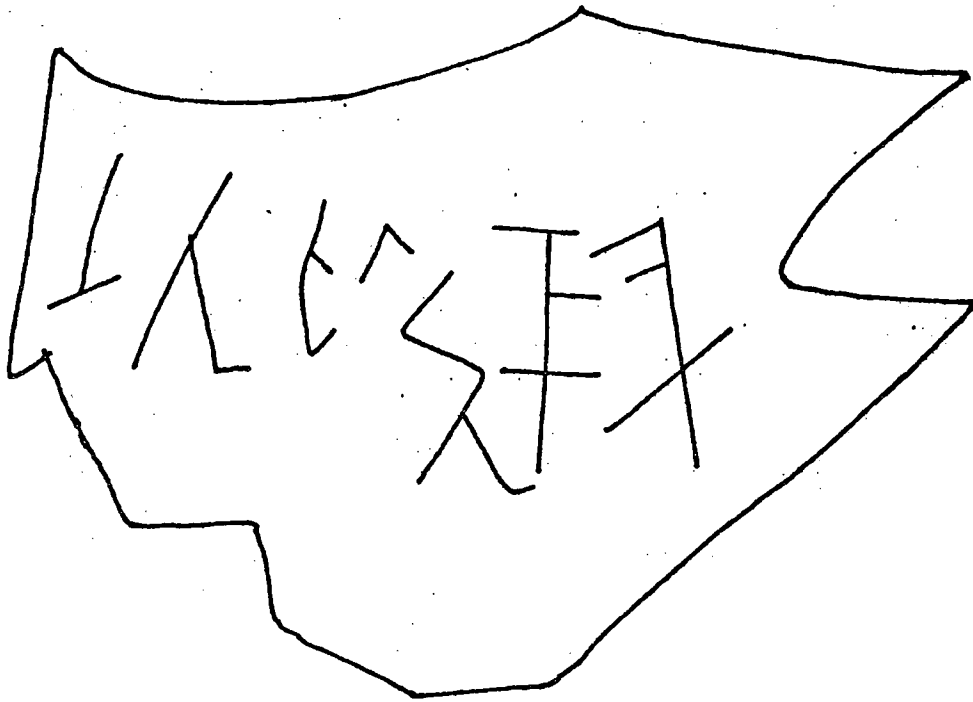


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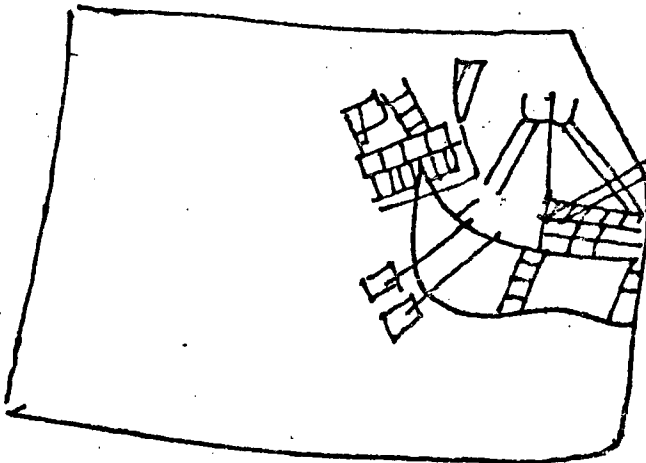
AĻAGANKULAM Inscribed Potsherds



7

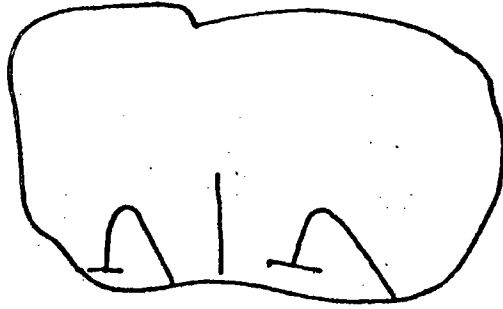


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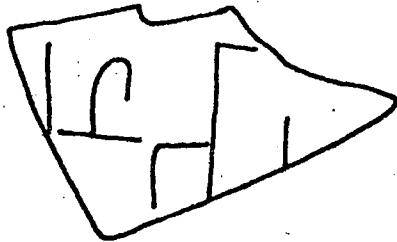


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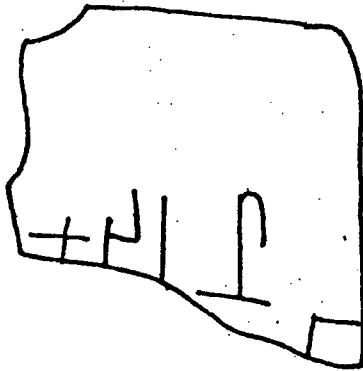
ALAGANKULAM Inscribed Potsherds



10



11

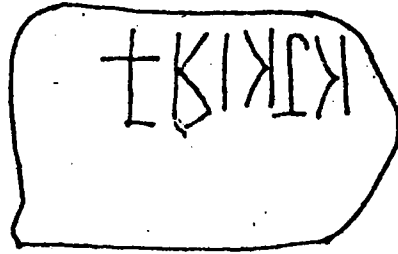


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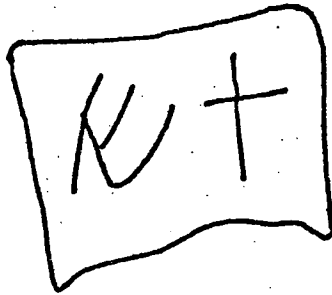


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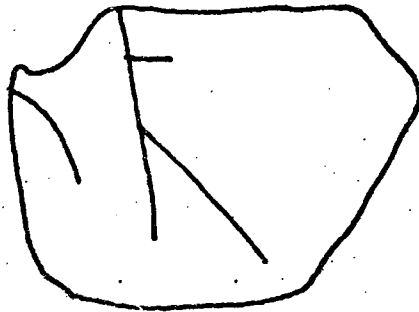
AḶAGAN̄KULAM Inscribed Potsherds



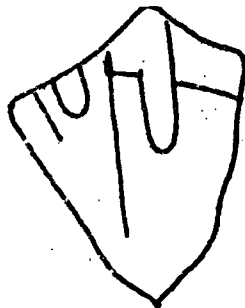
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15

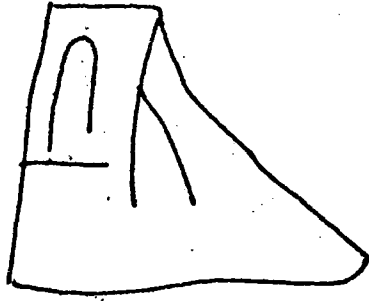


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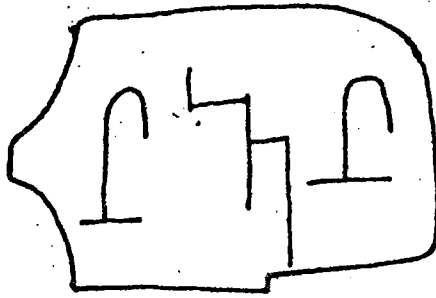


17

AĻAGANKUĻAM Inscribed Potsherds



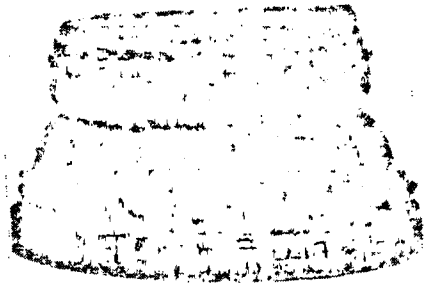
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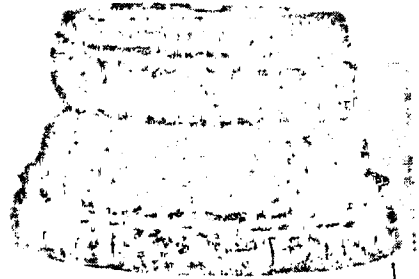
19



Inscribed Metal Image of Buddha



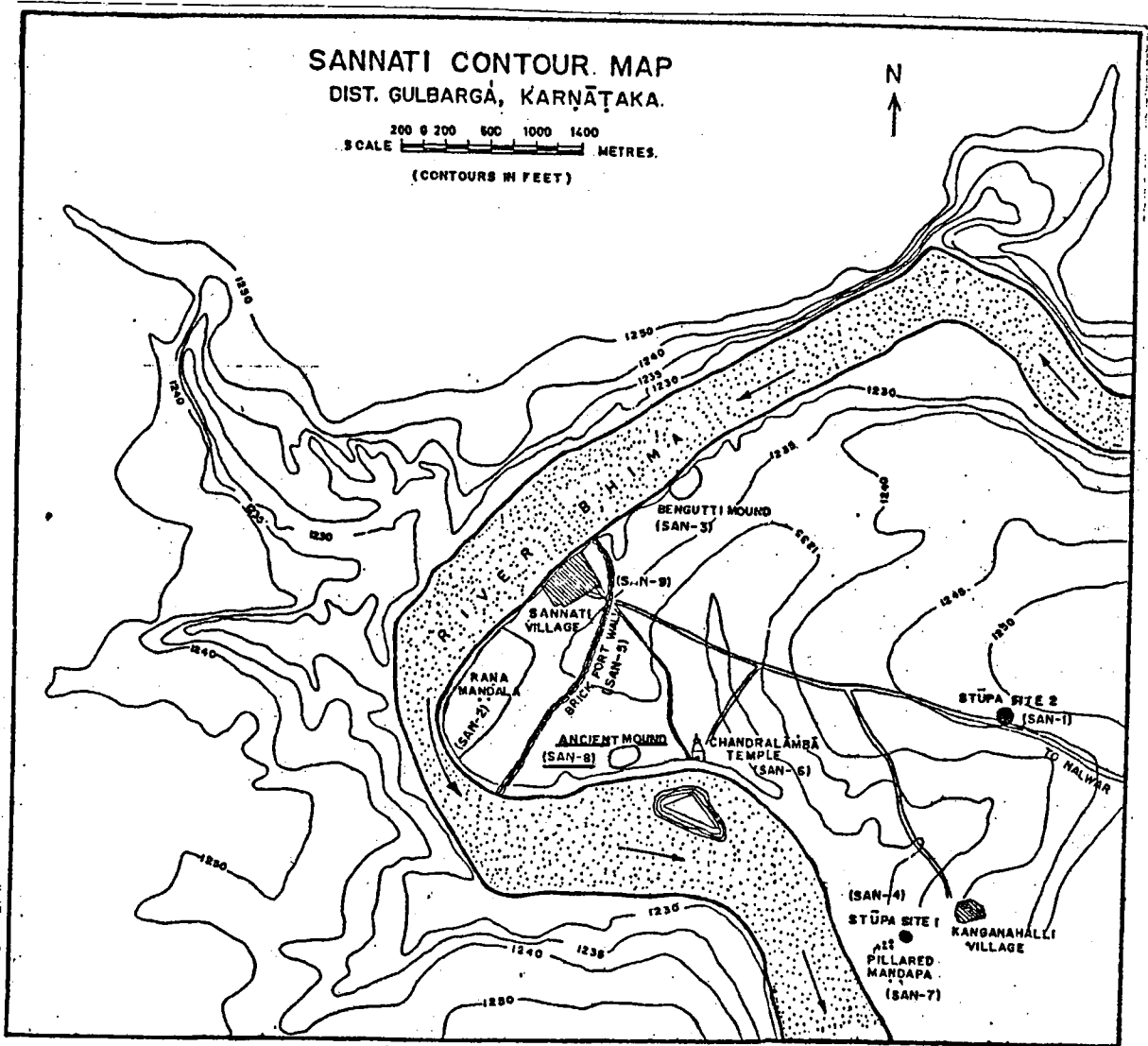
*Inscribed Metal Image of Buddha
(Pedestal) No.1*



*Inscribed Metal Image of Buddha
(Pedestal) No.2*



*Inscribed Metal Image of Buddha
(Pedestal) No.3*



ĀSOKAN EDICTS IN ĀNDHRA - KARṆĀṬAKA

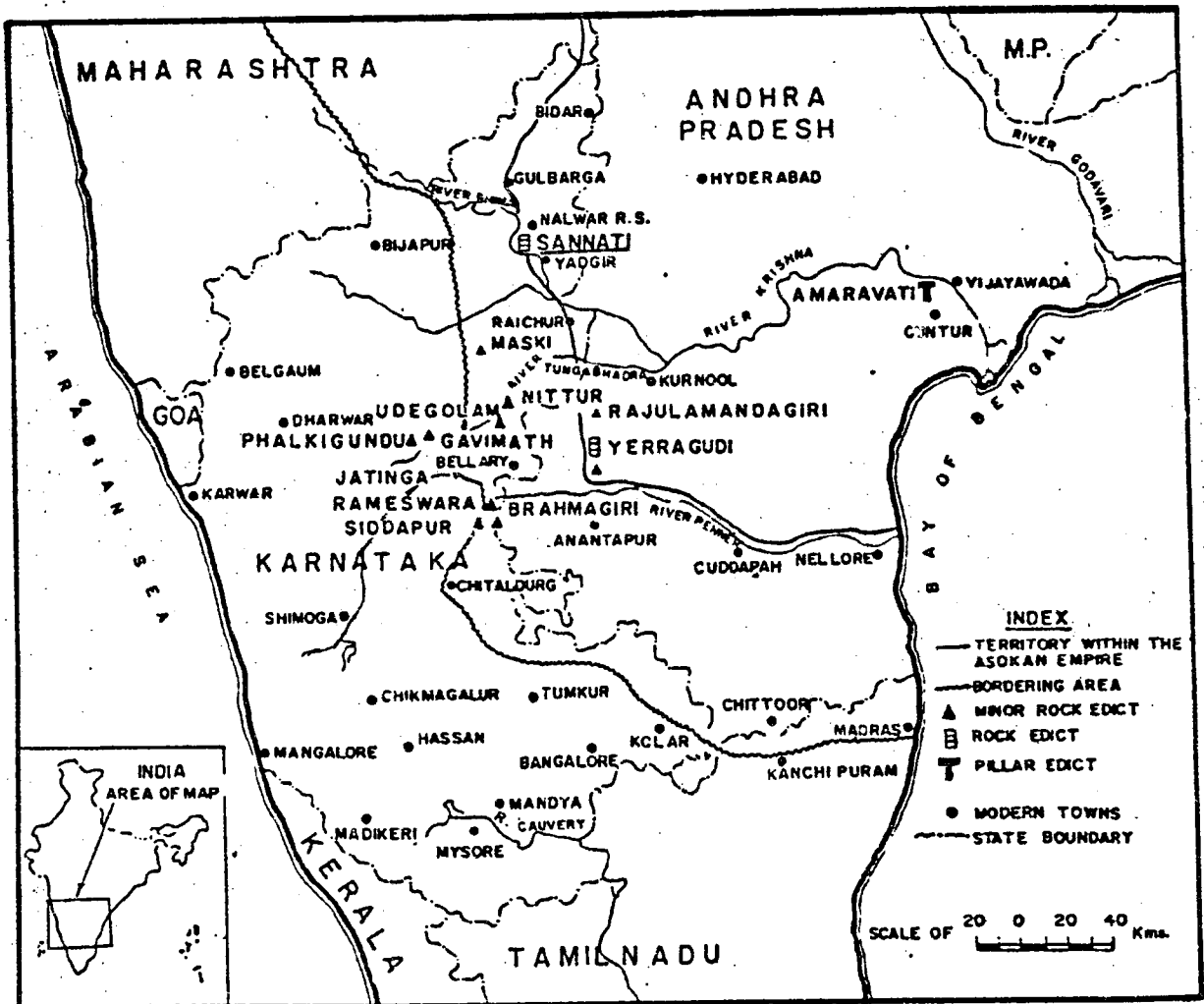


FIG.2

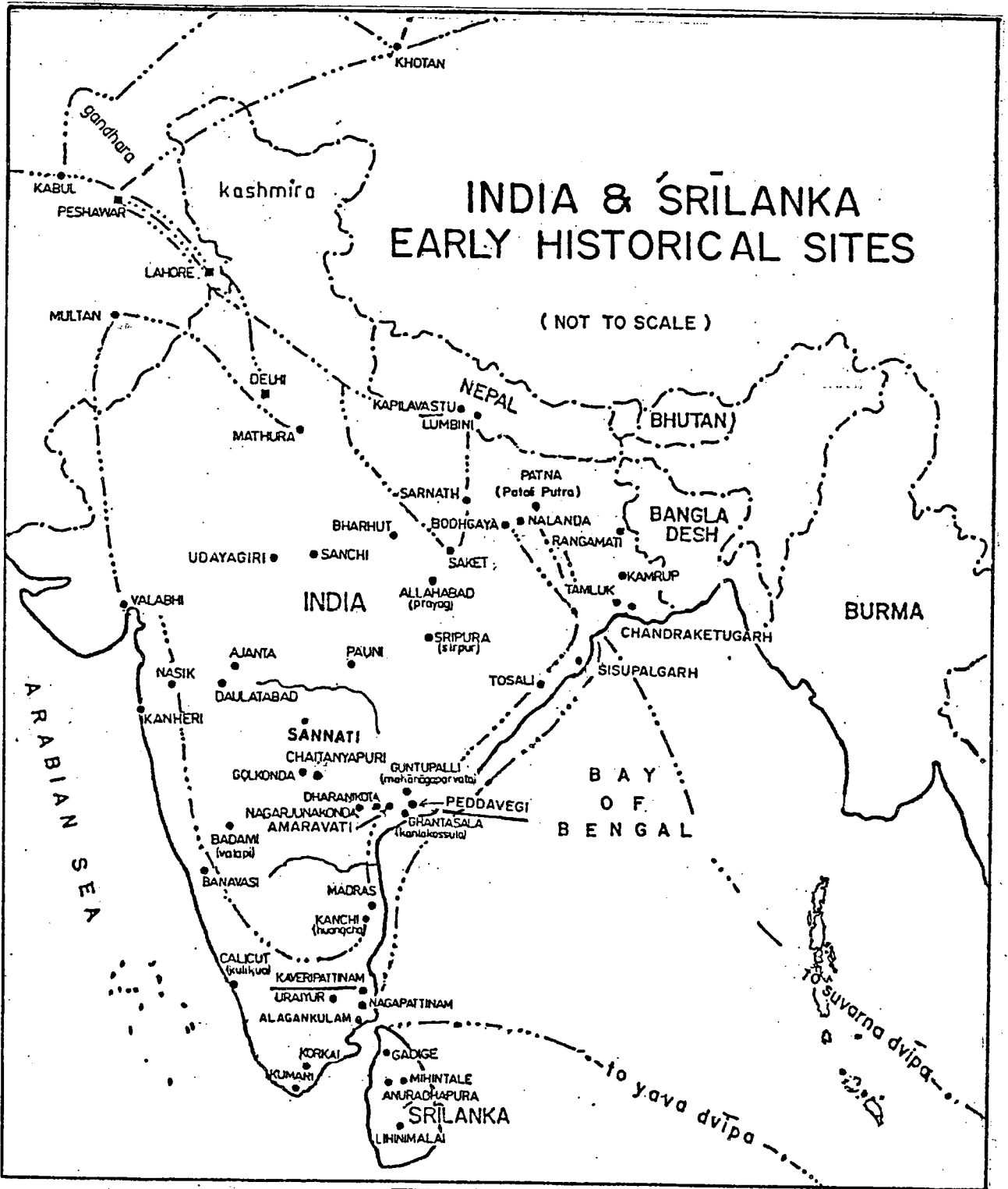
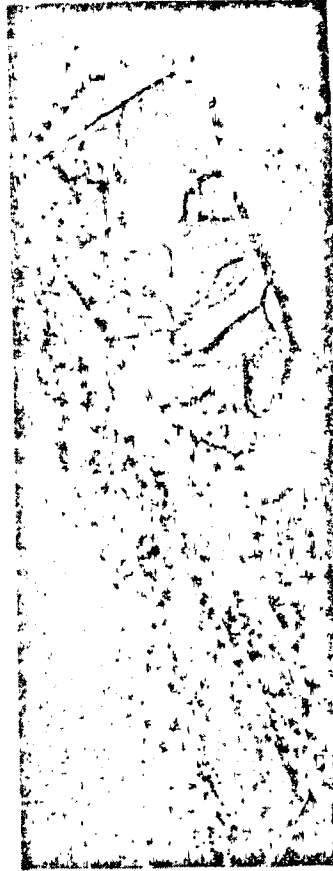


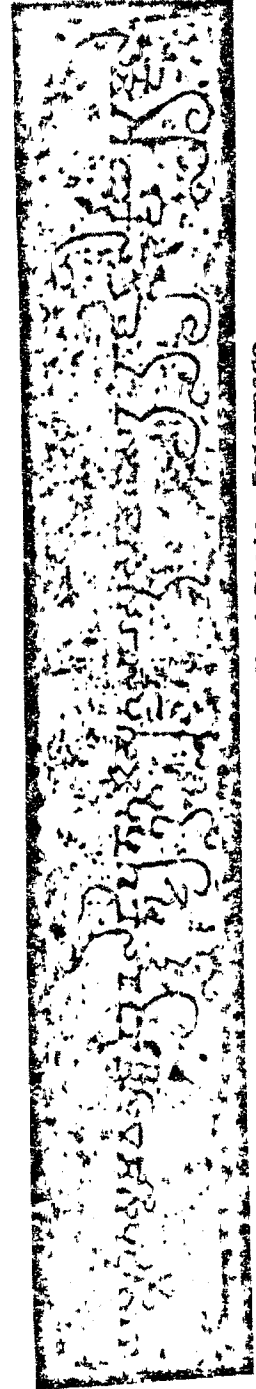
FIG. 3



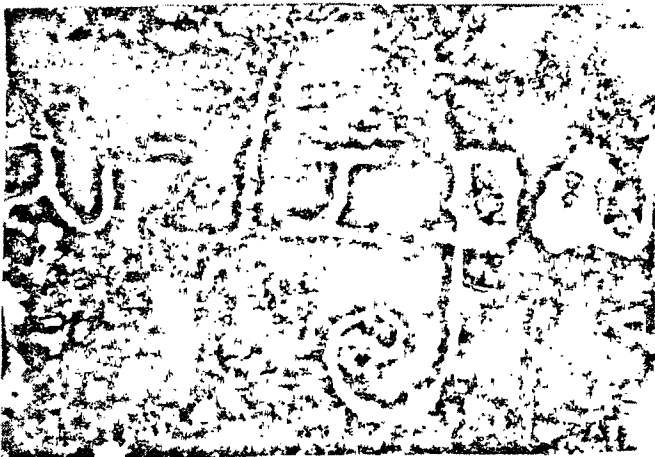
Ph.1: Sannati (SAN-8) Inscribed Stele of the Time of Śrī Śātakarṇi; below view of the elephant sculpture.



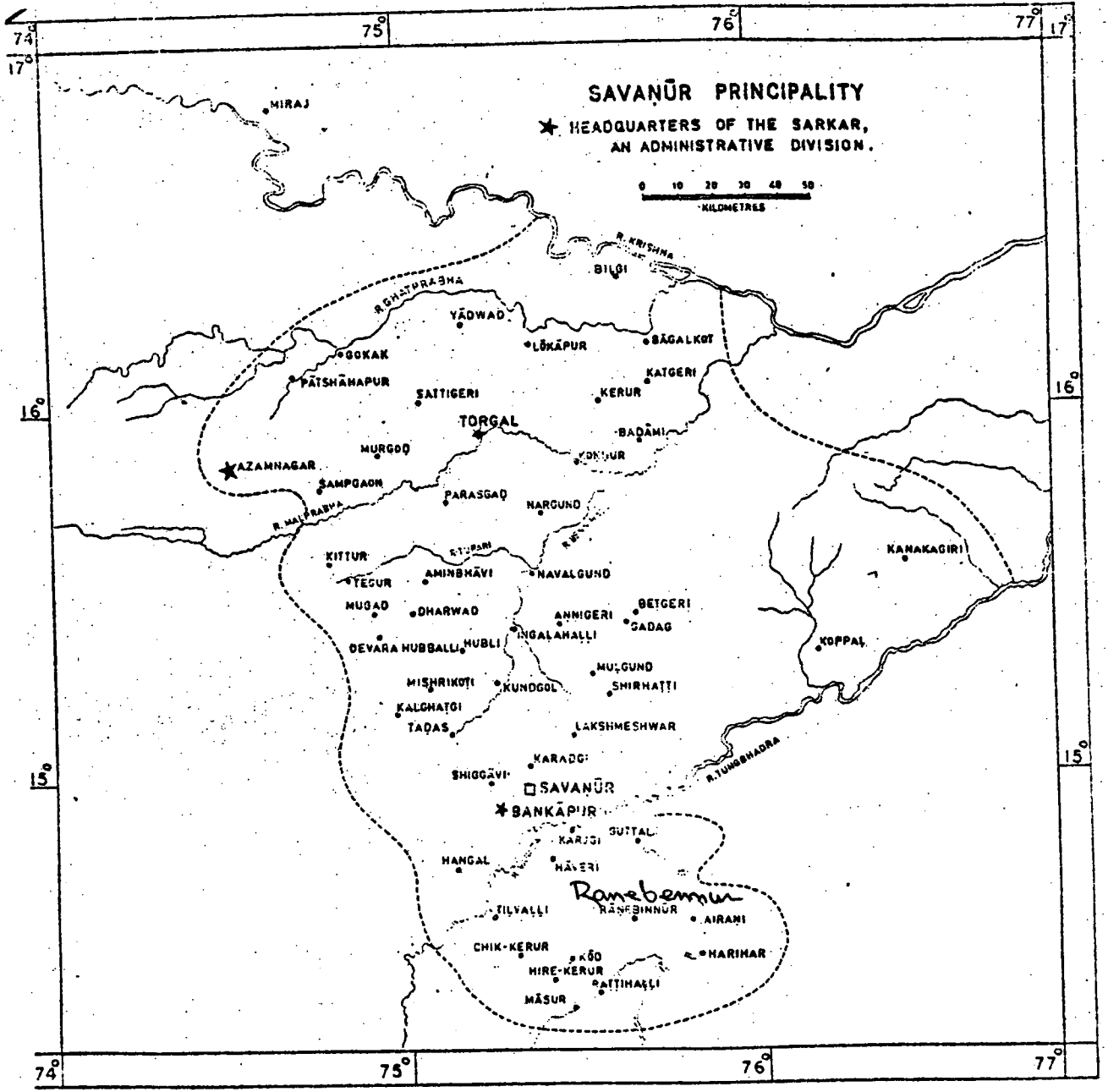
Ph.2: Sannati (SAN-8) Sculptured Stele, closer view

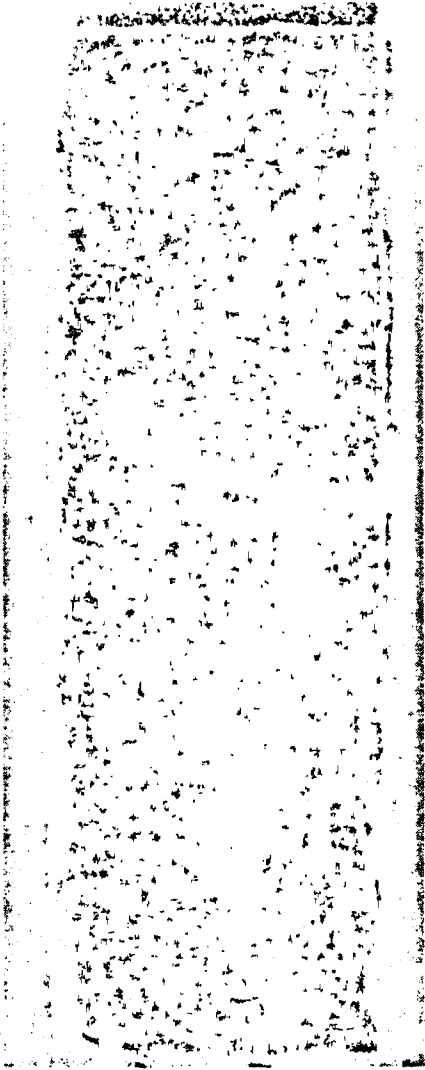


Ph.3: Sannati (SAN-8) Inscribed Stele. Estampage of the Sanskrit inscription.

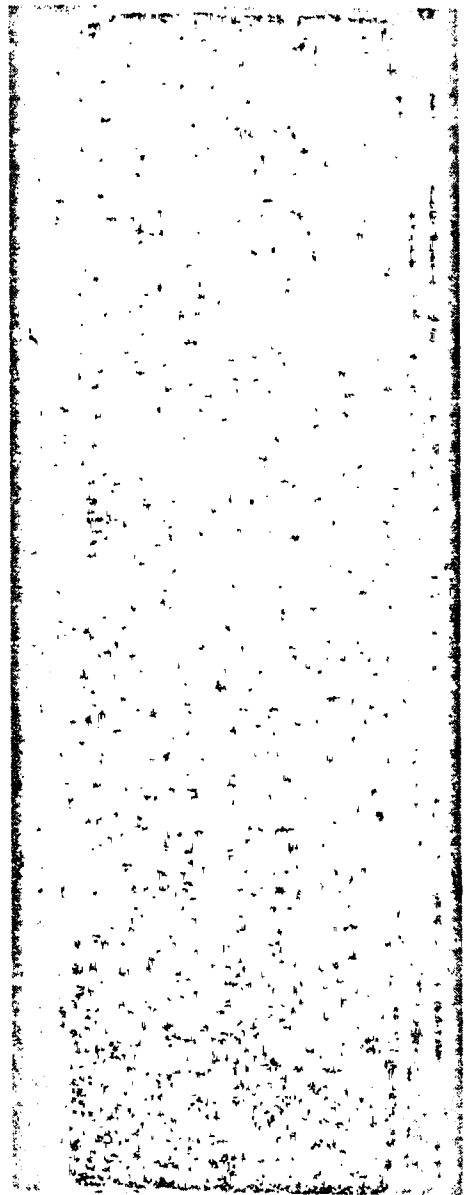


Ph.4: Sannati: Inscription C-9





*Tirumalaichetri Inscription of Rashtrakuta Krishna III
Slab 1*



*Tirumalaichetri Inscription of Rashtrakuta Krishna III
Slab 2*

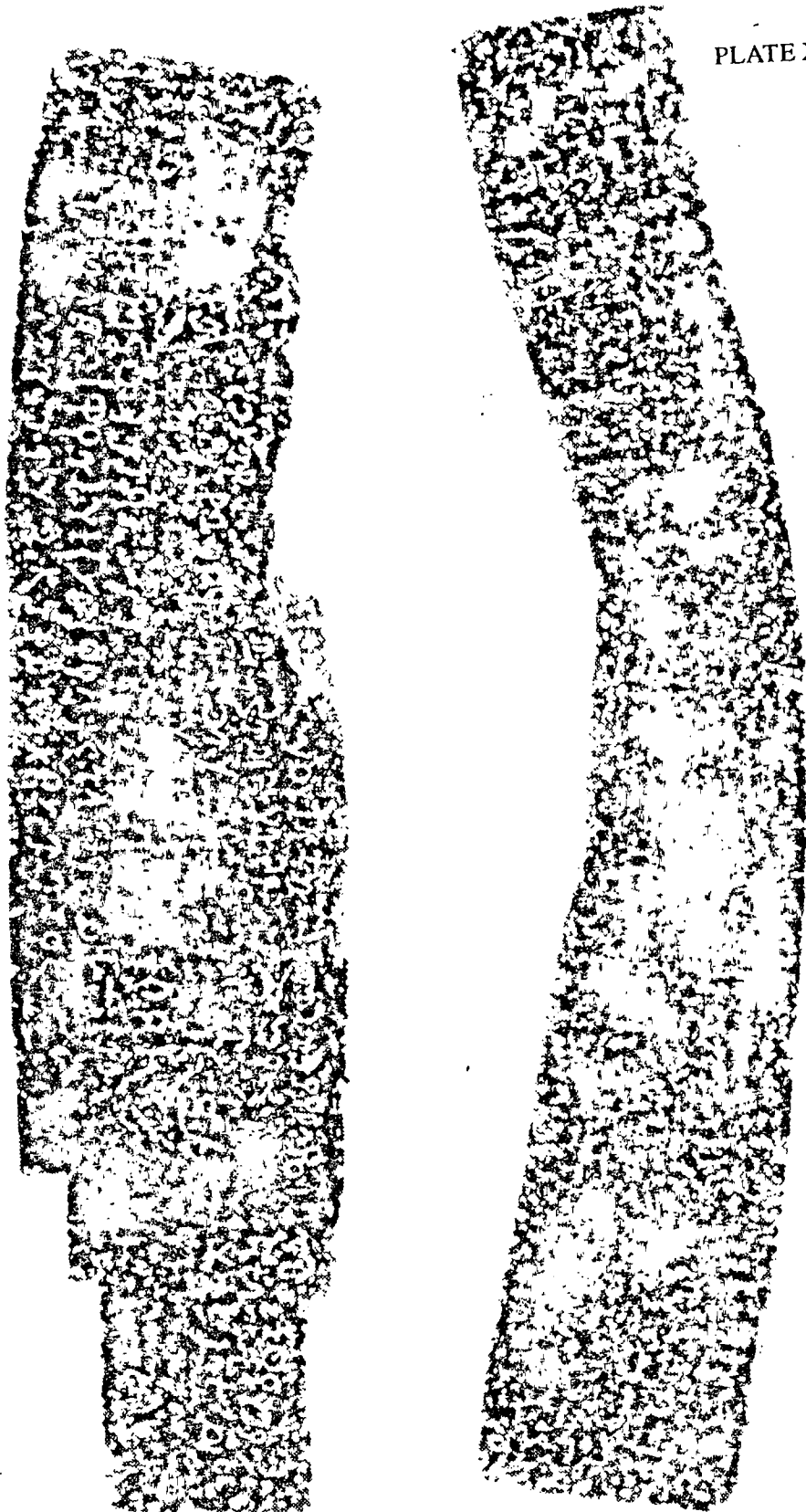
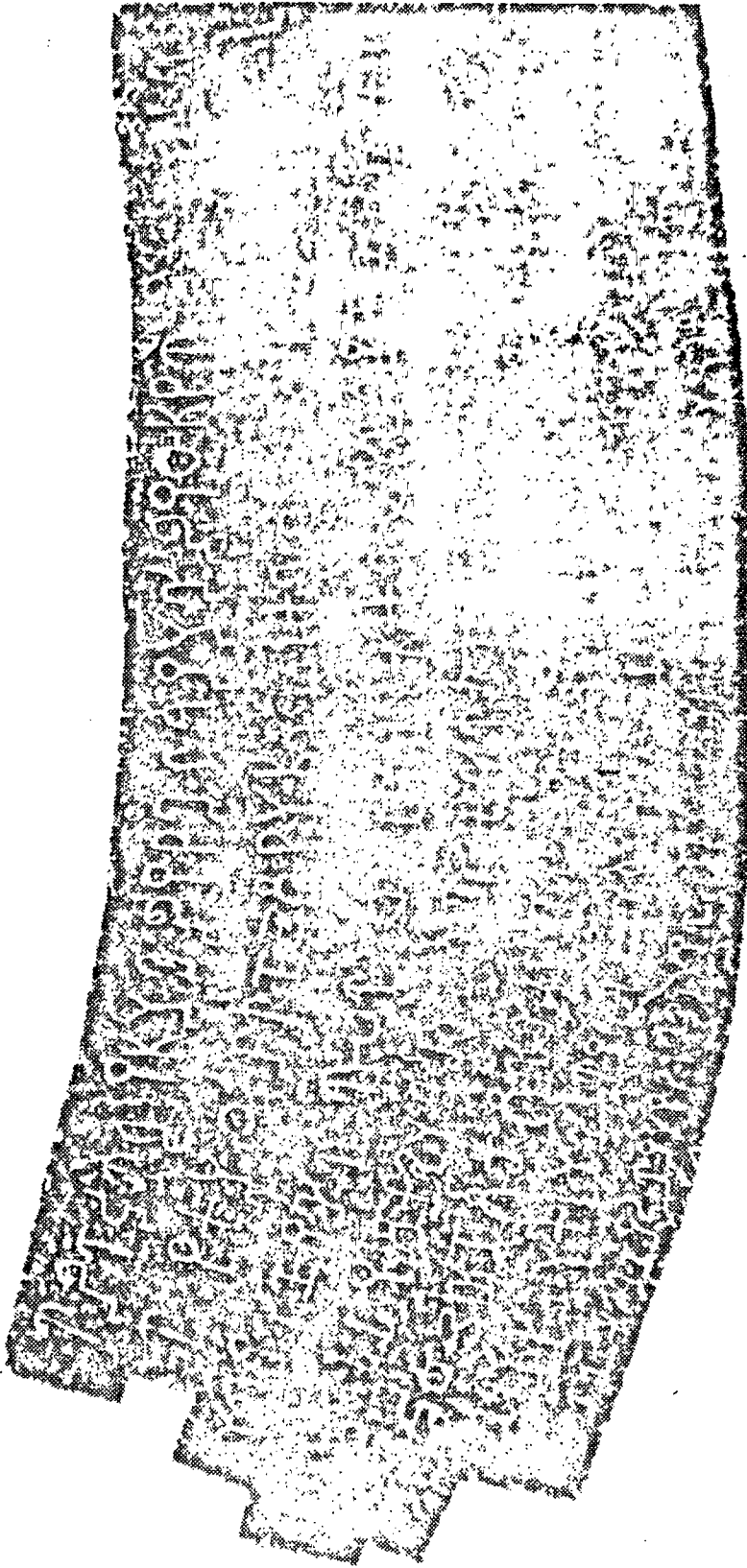
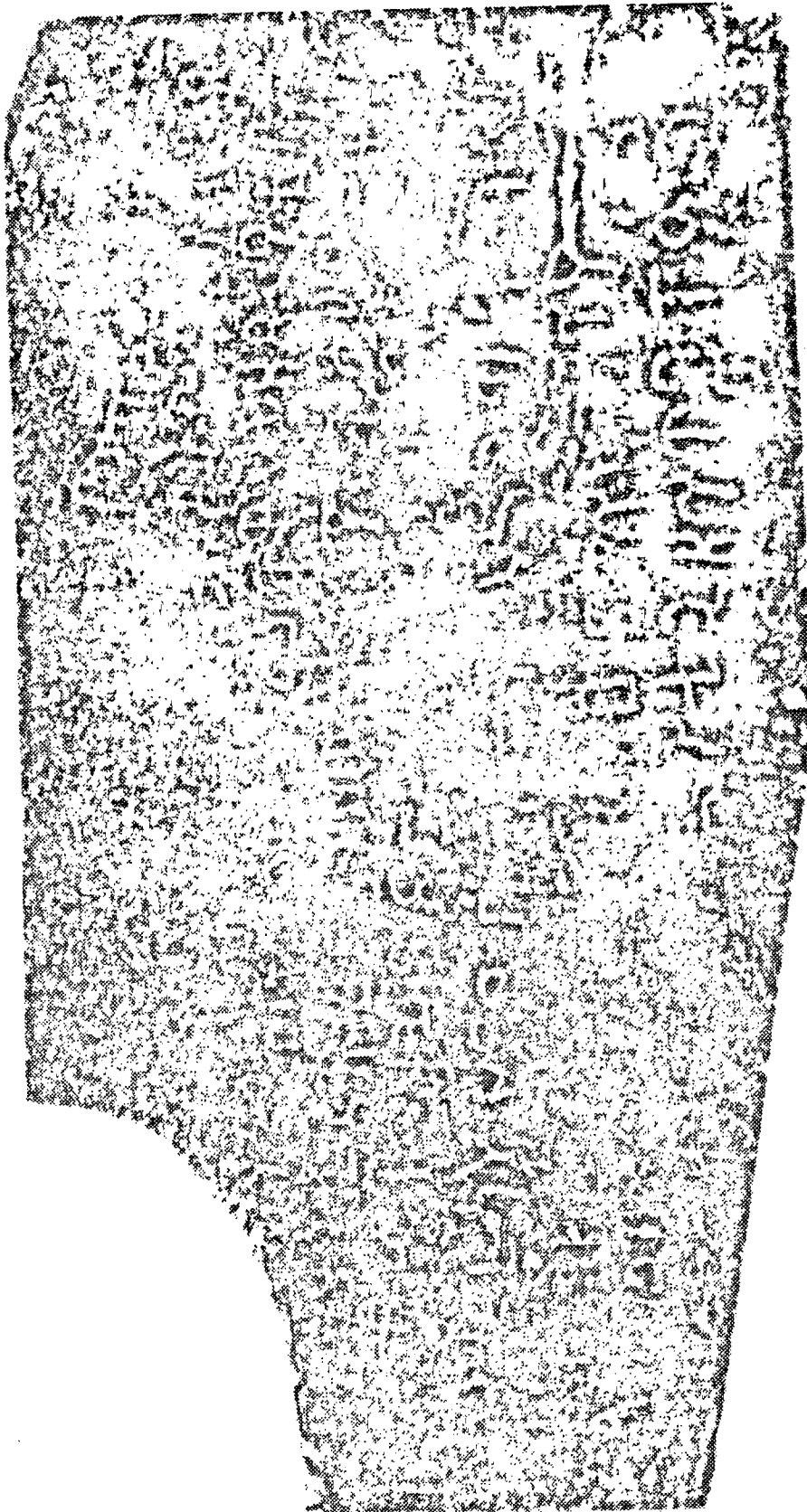


FIGURE-1



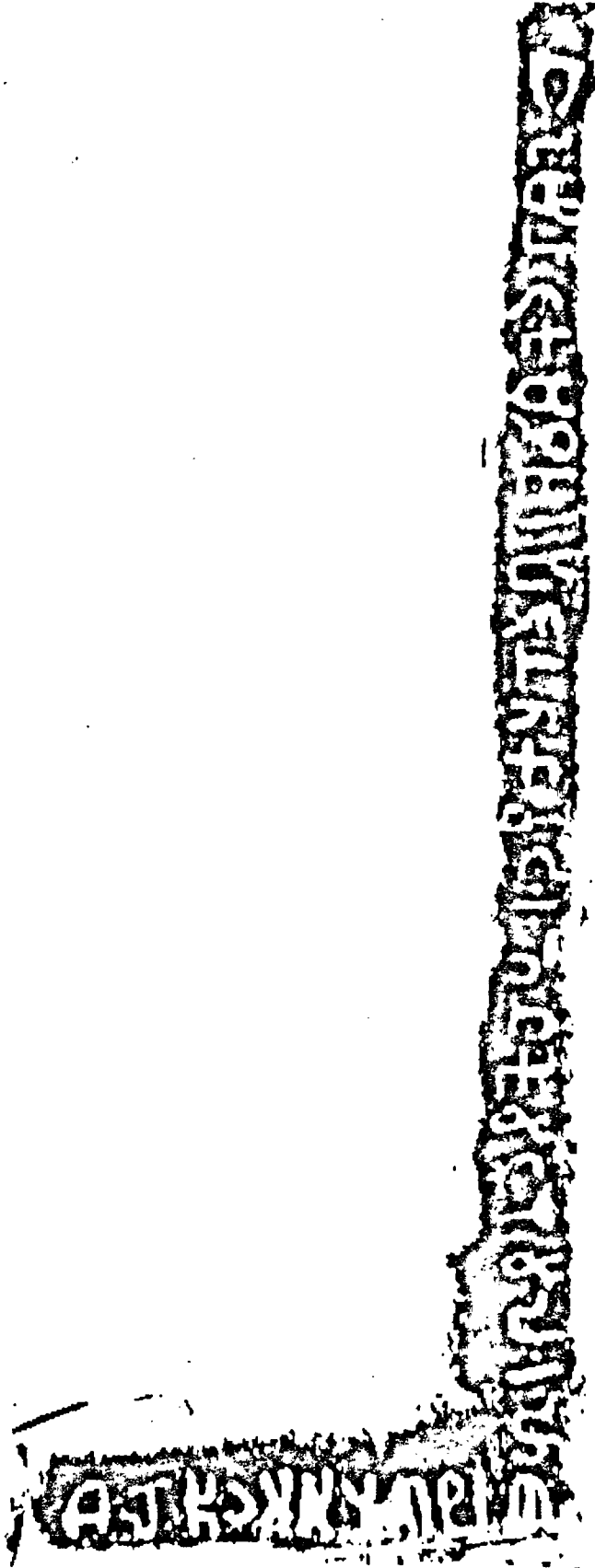
Computer Aids to Epigraphy

FIGURE-2



Computer Aids to Epigraphy.

FIGURE-3



Computer Aids to Epigraphy

FIGURE-4

Computer Aids to Epigraphy

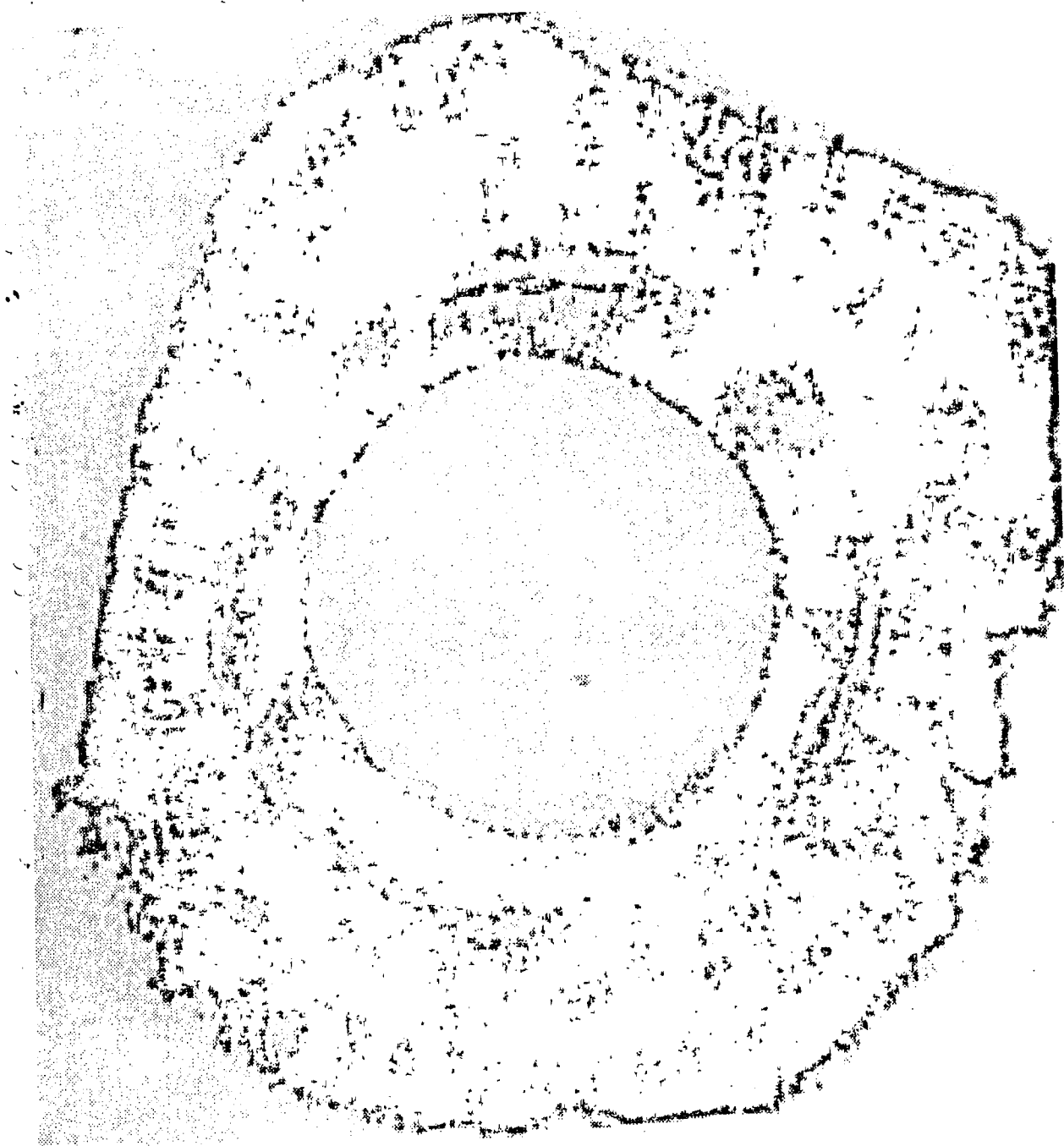


FIGURE 5

Computer Aids to Epigraphy

subimage

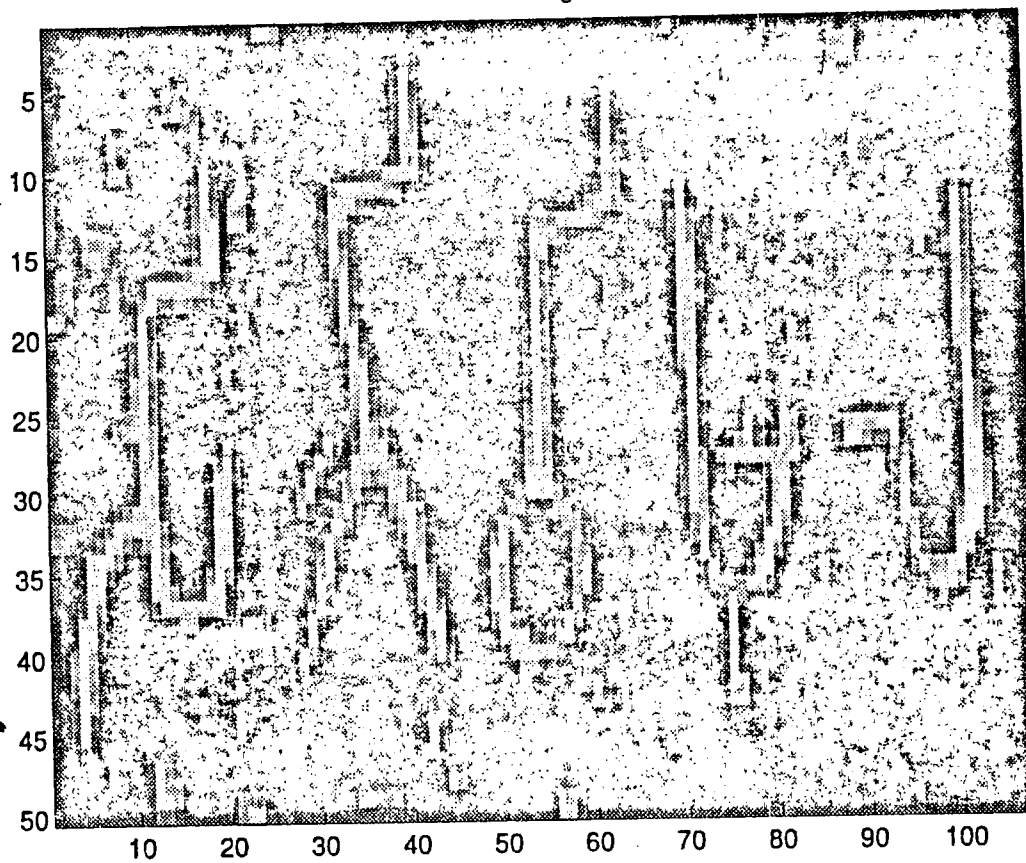


FIGURE-6

Computer Aids to Epigraphy

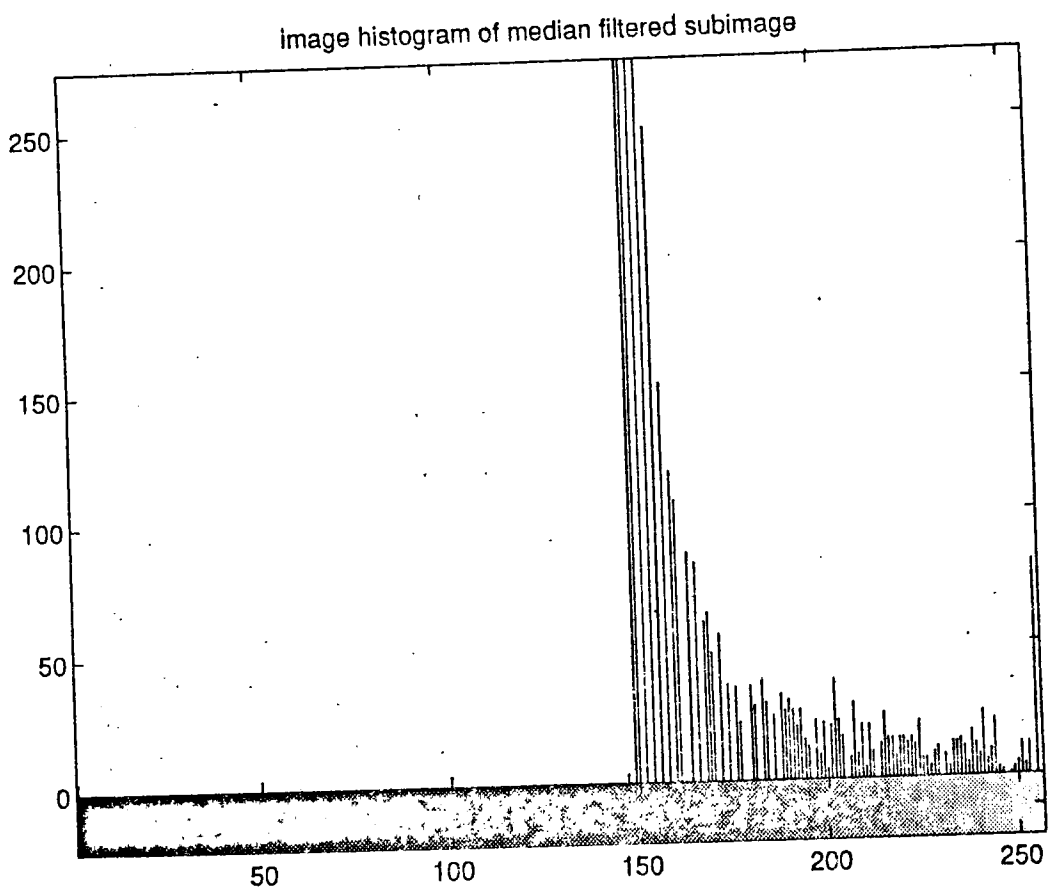


FIGURE-7

Computer Aids to Epigraphy

thresholded subimage

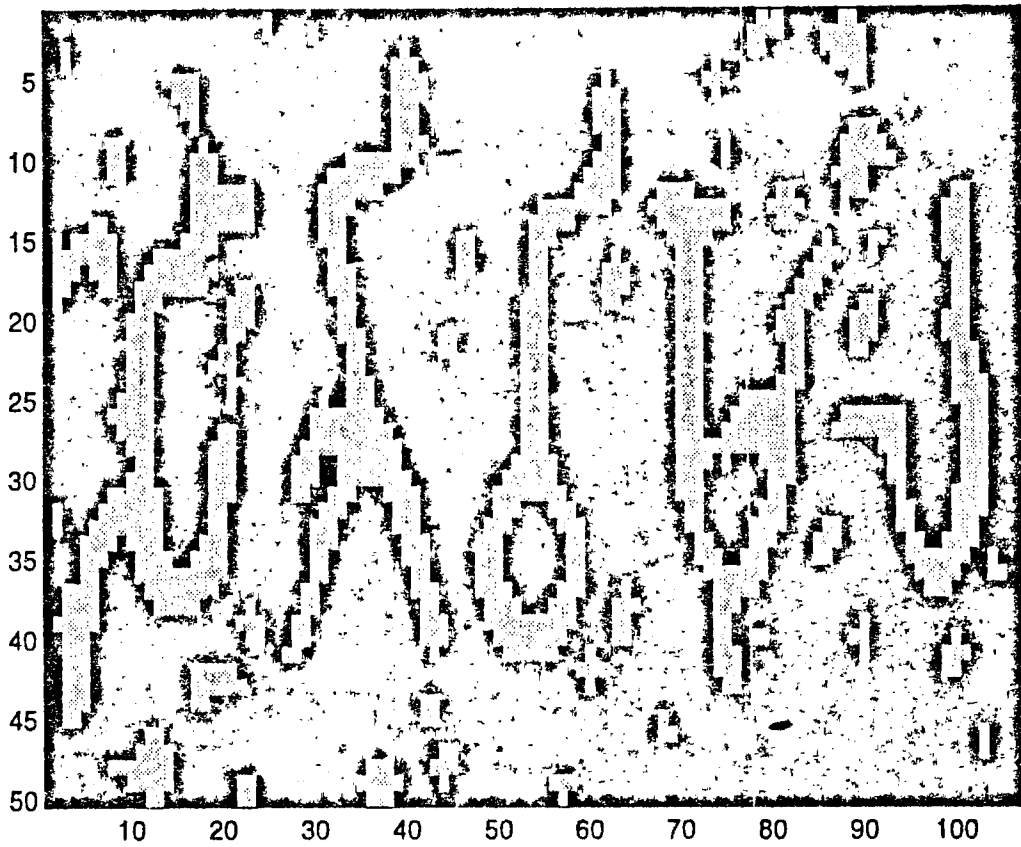


FIGURE-8

Computer Aids to Epigraphy

thresholded image of median filtered subimage

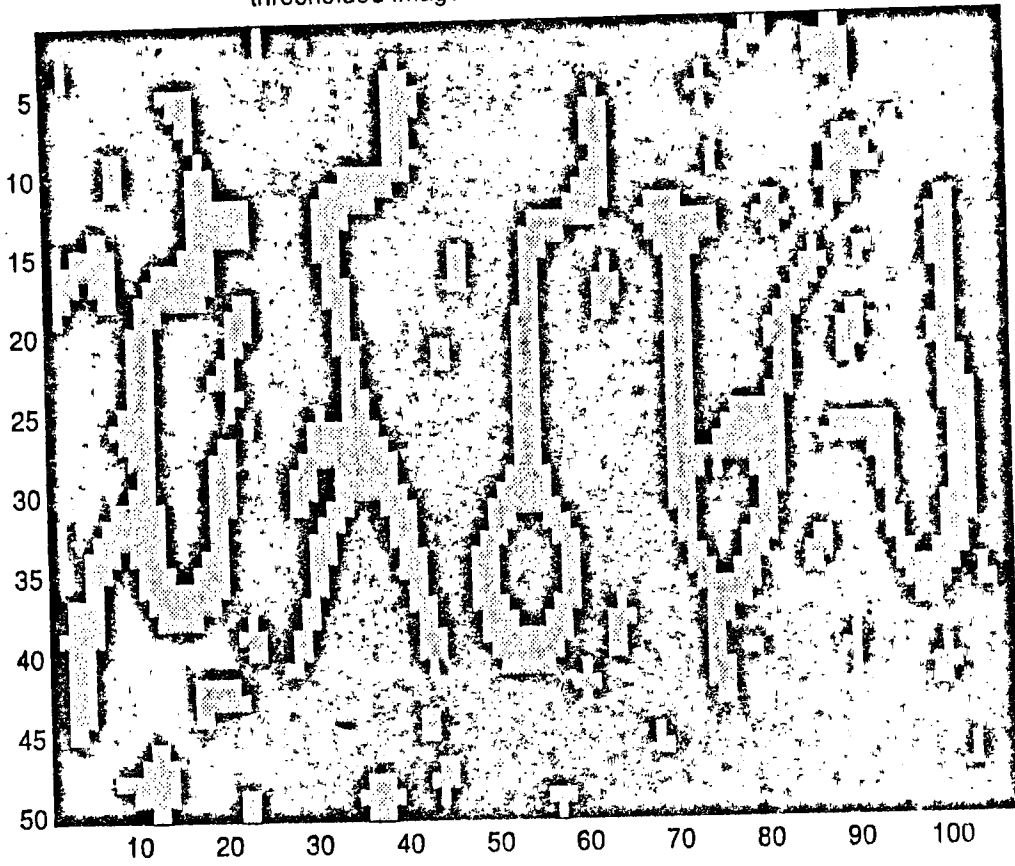


FIGURE-9

Computer Aids to Epigraphy

thined subimage

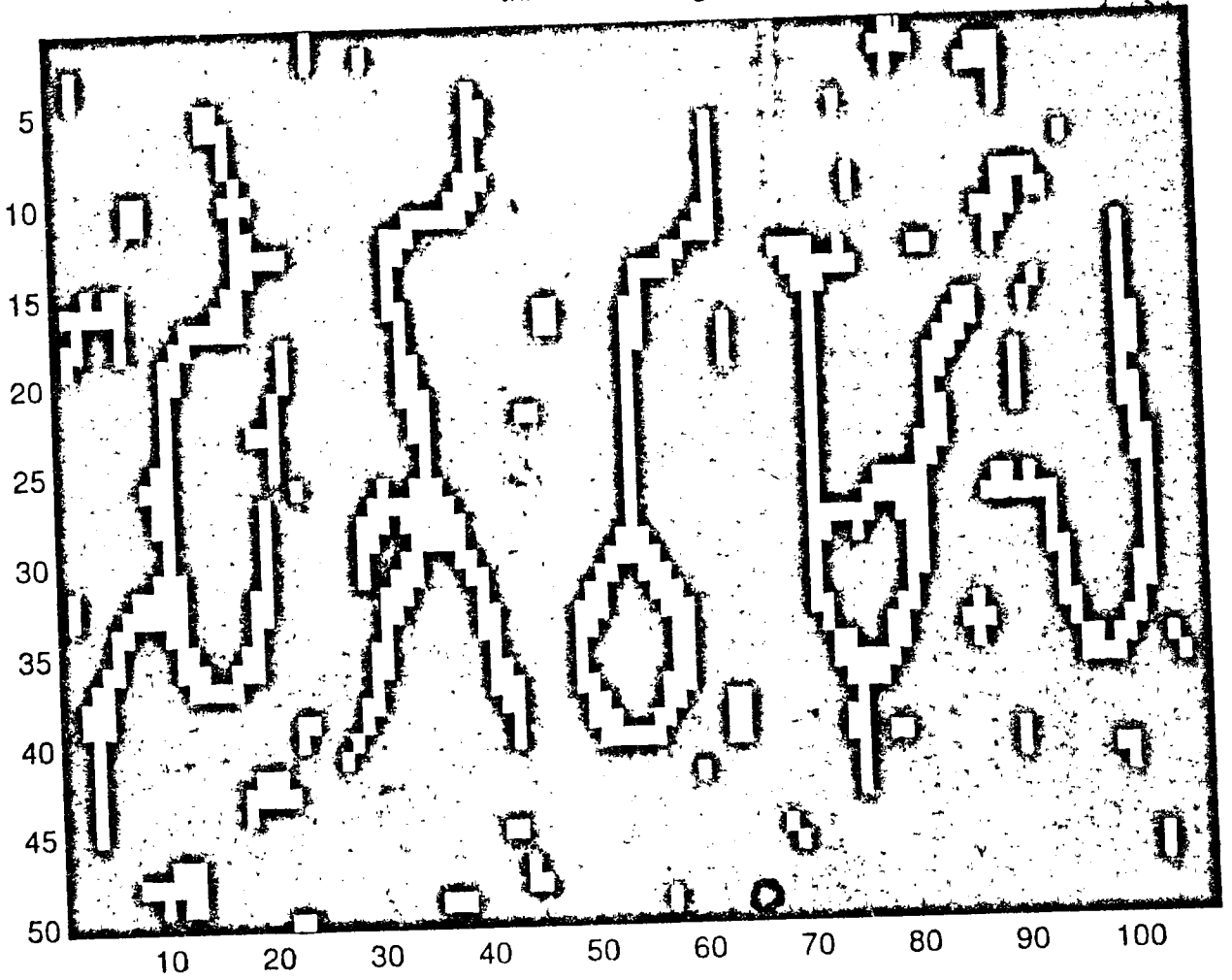


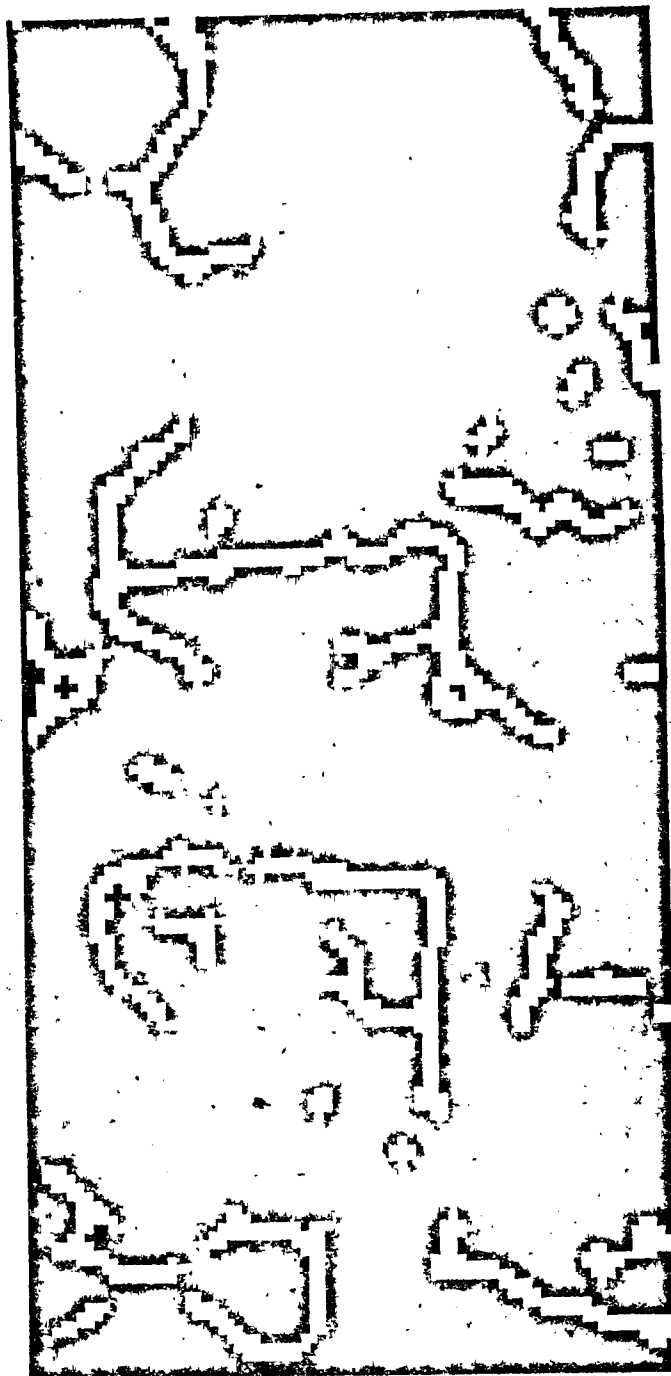
FIGURE-10

Computer Aids to Epigraphy



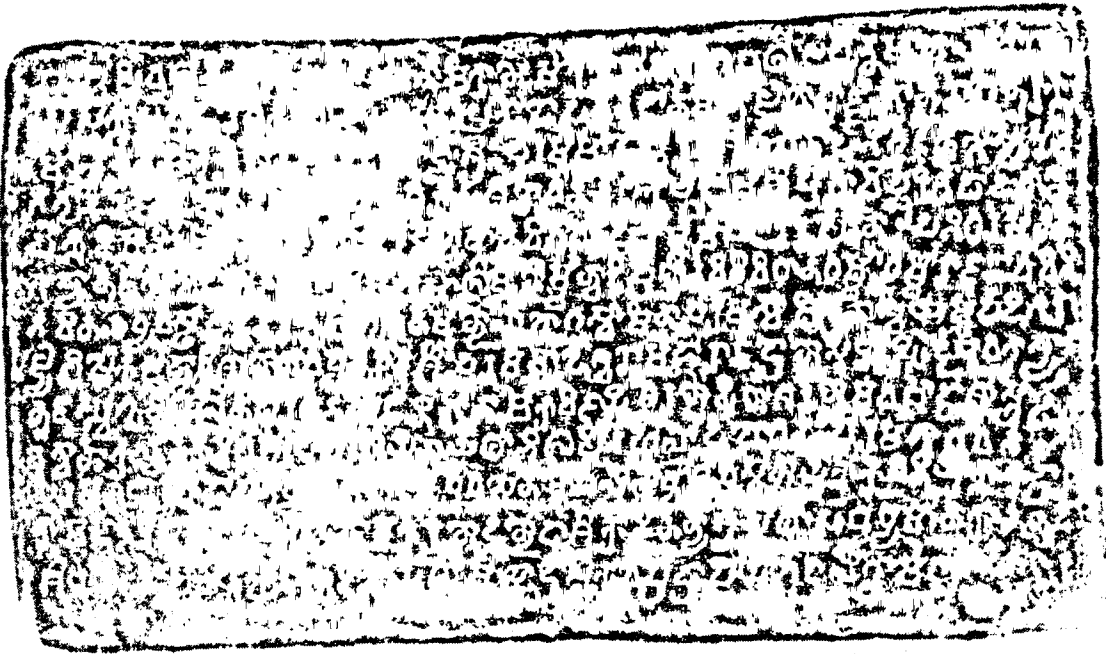
FIGURE-11

Computer Aids to Epigraphy

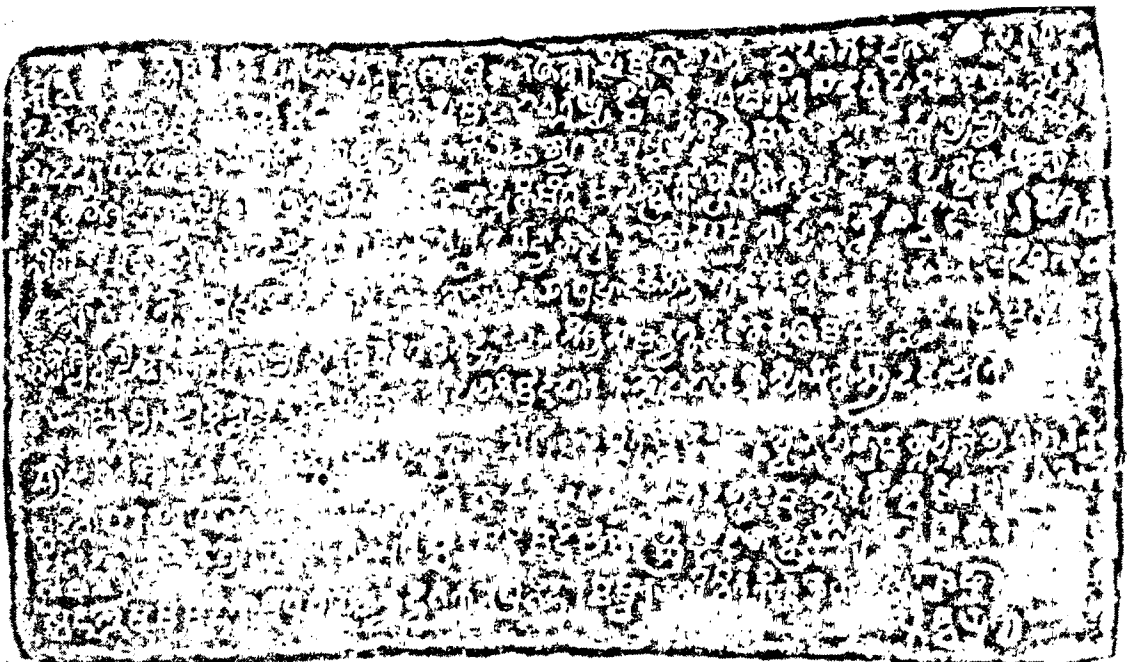


Median filtered, zooming

FIGURE-14



Loichanda Plates of Dhruvasena I [Valabhi] Samvat 206



Loichanda Plates of Dhruvasena I [Valabhi] Samvat 206

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