

JOURNAL

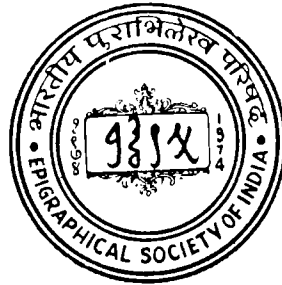
OF THE

EPIGRAPHICAL SOCIETY OF INDIA

[BHARATIYA PURABHILEKHA PATRIKA]

(BEING VOL. XVIII OF STUDIES IN INDIAN EPIGRAPHY)

VOLUME EIGHTEEN : 1992



PUBLISHED BY

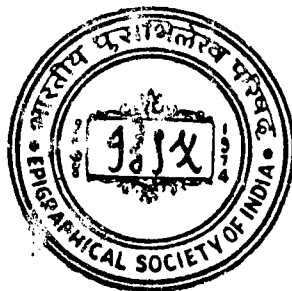
THE EPIGRAPHICAL SOCIETY OF INDIA
MYSORE

JOURNAL OF THE EPIGRAPHICAL SOCIETY OF INDIA

[BHARATIYA PURABHILEKHA PATRIKA]

(BEING VOL. XVIII OF STUDIES IN INDIAN EPIGRAPHY)

VOLUME EIGHTEEN : 1992



Secretary and Executive Editor

Dr. S. P. Tewari

MYSORE

PUBLISHED BY
THE EPIGRAPHICAL SOCIETY OF INDIA
MYSORE

Journal of the Epigraphical Society of India [Bhāratīyā Purābhilēkha Patrikā] [Being Vol. XVIII of Studies in Indian Epigraphy] : Vol. XVIII, pp. vi + 131 + vi Plates Secretary and Executive Editor : Dr. S. P. Tewari, Published by the Epigraphical Society of India.

The publication of the Journal was financially supported by the Indian Council of Historical Research. The responsibility for the facts stated, opinions expressed or conclusions reached is entirely that of the authors of the articles and the Indian Council of Historical Research accepts no responsibility for them.

First Published - 1992

Copy Right © Epigraphical Society of India

PRINTED IN INDIA AT
READYPRINT

2907, III Main Road, V.V. Mohalla, Mysore 570 002

EDITORIAL

While presenting volume XVIII of the Society's journal, we feel happy in welcoming all our accredited members in this Puṇyapattana of Maharashtra. Thanks to the co-operation of all of you the regularity in bringing out the journal could be maintained. Chances are that in spite of our best efforts some articles could not be accommodated here but, their number being negligible, we are hopeful to clear all the arrears by the time the next issue of the journal goes to press.

On the occasion of the eighteenth anniversary of our Society's meaningful existence which puts it on the threshold of maturity, we consider it our bounden duty to recall (as a token of *ashṭādaś-ōpachāra*) the pioneering services of all our founder members who conceived the idea of launching this Society. We pray, on the analogy of Buddhist records as to whatsoever credit the Society has earned so far, let that be towards the personal welfare and the attainment of supreme knowledge of all our predecessors: *yad-atra puṇyam tad-bhavatu āchāryy-ōpādīyāyānām arōga-dakṣiṇāyē anuttara-jñān-āvāptayē cha*.

The fact that the Society has gained maturity both in experience and age is well reflected in its annual proceedings and deliberations. Besides the record of its ever growing fraternity and the fact that the Society has by now successfully organised its annual sessions in almost every part of this continent, the heartening news is that now it has started gain-

ing momentum even in the regions beyond our frontiers. Time is not far and a day will come when the Society, with the help of its own stalwarts, will herald its flag, like the army of a *digvijayin*, though for the cause of fraternity and friendship, in almost all the important centres of the globe and be proud of announcing: '*ashṭādaśa-dvīpa nikhāta-yūpāh*'.

Recently, our chairman, Dr. K.V. Ramesh, along with Dr. K.V. Raman, Dr. Y. Subbarayalu and Dr. P. Shanmugam, was invited by the Department of Culture, Government of Japan and the Tokyo University, to survey, jointly with the team of Japanese scholars, under the leadership of Prof. Noboru Karashima, the areas of Vietnam and Laos, with the aim to explore the possibility of finding new epigraphs and to prepare an account of the already existing ones. Besides the remarkable discoveries that this team of scholars came across and that forms the theme of the paper from Dr. Ramesh we have included here, the matter of pride for us is that they are all, including the leader of their team Prof. Karashima, closely associated members of our Society. While our honourable members of this team deserve a real hearty congratulation, the agencies that provided funds for such a noble cause do deserve our grateful thanks. Hail to such people who are using their funds in pursuit of *jñānāya, dānāya cha rakṣaṇāya*.

Maturity brings freedom which, while enjoyed with the restraint of self-

assessment, leads to the sense of responsibility in itself. In our case, now since the society has reached the stage of maturity, its responsibility in maintaining the norms it has set forth, and the endeavour of an all-round enhancement of its image, has just got doubled in circumference both horizontally and vertically. To be able to meet the international standard, particularly in case of its publication and there too, its presentation and contents, a review of the whole matter is highly desirable. How best it could be done within the available resources of the Society is a moot point towards which we shall invite suggestions from all our members.

The job of publication, whether small or big, is like an act of *sētubandha* where the services of many hands are needed. Thanks to an incessant source of guidance and patronage in the form of Dr. K.V. Ramesh, our *Kulapati* of the family of Mysore epigraphists, we were never

short of hands. In a way, that is also the trade secret of this journal's uninterrupted regularity so far. From among all these friendly hands gladly extended for the job, our thanks are due to those of Mr. M.N. Katti, Dr. M.D. Sampath, Dr. S.S. Iyer, Dr. S. Swaminathan and Mr. P. Natarajan of the Mysore office and Mr. P. Venkatesan of the A.S.I., Bangalore. Pandit V.S. Subrahmanyam who moves with the blessings of *śubhamastu* on his lips and is an easily found friend of all his juniors, deserves our thanks for composing the draft of the copper-plate to be given to the scholar being honoured. Finally, though in the same breath, thanks are due to the *chira-mitra* of the Society and its journal Mr. S. K. Lakshminarayana (Babu) and the young team of his colleagues of the M/s. ReadyPrint and M/s. Vidyasagar Printing Press, Mysore who helped us in materializing our moto of *vṛiddhir-astu*.

S.P. Tewari.

CONTENTS

| | | |
|---|------------------------------------|-----|
| Presidential Address | <i>N.Sethuraman</i> | 1 |
| 1. Balesvara - Bhattaraka A hitherto unknown Saiva establishment at Sripura | <i>Ajay Mitra Shastri</i> | 15 |
| 2. The Vestiges of the Mahabharata in Inscriptions | <i>H.S. Thosar</i> | 24 |
| 3. Shell Inscriptions in Central India | <i>R.K.Sharma</i> | 31 |
| 4. On Kavidi honorific of a Devadasi | <i>K. Sadasivan</i> | 34 |
| 5. Tenneri Inscription of Rajaraja I | <i>S. Swaminathan</i> | 37 |
| 6. Ennayiram Inscription of Rajaraja I | <i>S.Rajavelu</i> | 42 |
| 7. Perumpaludur Inscription of Karunandadakkan | <i>V. Manmathan Nair</i> | 48 |
| 8. Sri Lankan Epigraphs and Sriparvata Vijayapuri | <i>Dr. I.K Sarma</i> | 51 |
| 9. The records of the Pandavas of Mekala : Some observations | <i>Nisar Ahmad</i> | 55 |
| 10. Epigraphy as a tool for writing Social History | <i>Aloka Parasher</i> | 62 |
| 11. Historical Interpretation of Agrarian and Economic System | <i>M.D.Sampath</i> | 74 |
| 12. Epigraphic Search-light on the chronology of Sthavira Achala and cave no. xxvi at Ajanta | <i>H.S. Thosar</i> | 79 |
| 13. Epigraphical Studies and South Indian Historiography | <i>Madhav N. Katti</i> | 86 |
| 14. An Incription from Hijli, district Midnapur, West Bengal | <i>S.S. Hussain</i> | 95 |
| 15. Two Interesting Incription of Emperor Aurangzeb from Kanchipuram, Tamilnadu | <i>G.S. Khwaja</i> | 99 |
| 16. Wages and Remuneration from Inscriptions | <i>P. Shanmugam</i> | 105 |
| 17. Scriptal Transmutability of Chola Inscriptions In Karnataka (Mysore District) | <i>C. S. Vasudevan</i> | 110 |
| 18. Koduru Inscription of Irivabedenga | <i>C.A. Padmanabha Sastry</i> | 118 |
| 19. Three Weeks in the Mekong Delta | <i>K.V. Ramesh</i> | 122 |
| Book Reviews | | 125 |
| Plates for Article No. 19 | | |



PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

N. S. vraman

I am extremely happy to be present here on the occasion of the 17th Annual Conference of the Epigraphical Society of India. I am greatly indebted to you and the Epigraphical Society of India for the kind gesture in electing me as the General President of this Conference. While I deem it a great honour and privilege done to me, I am also fully aware of my limitations because it is a known fact that I am a businessman turned epigraphist. I trust that with the co-operation of the fellow delegates and other friends I will be able to discharge my duties and responsibilities to the satisfaction of all.

This conference is held under the auspices of the Department of Epigraphy, Tamil University, Thanjavur. Honourable Vice-Chancellor Dr. C. Balasubramaniam is a well-known Tamil Scholar and his deep interest in history and epigraphy has enabled us to assemble in this hall. Dr. Y. Subbarayalu, Head of the Department of Epigraphy, Tamil University and Sri Raju, Associate Professor of Epigraphy, are known for their contributions to Tamil Epigraphy. I am sure these two dedicated scholars will conduct the three-day conference in a fitting manner.

In my early days I studied chemistry. Later I joined the Madras Institute of Technology (1950) and specialised in Automobile Engineering. In 1953 I worked

in the Hindustan Motors Factory, Calcutta. At that time my father was running a large fleet of transport buses and as in the case of every family, and in accordance with the wishes of my father, I took up the responsibility of running the bus transport. In 1962 I went to England and had special training in diesel engines and bus body constructions. After the demise of my father our buses were nationalised and so I turned my attention to the automobile industry, marketing and distribution. This is the short history about myself which you will find strange and odd when you read the subsequent lines.

Civil servants' and other interested private individuals' straying into the field of epigraphical researches is well-known in the historiographic traditions in our country. I fall in the latter category. The year 1975 was a turning point in my life. That was the first time I started reading historical literature. Curiously I found ambiguities in the narration of the same event by different authors. I used to get doubts in certain specified areas. When I referred to the text-books they also had the same doubts projected in different fashions and added much more confusion. In order to support their surmises the authors of the text-books quoted the same source materials. Most of them were

* *Delivered at the XVII Annual Congress of the Epigraphical Society of India held at Thanjavur on 2nd, 3rd & 4th February, 1991.*

epigraphs. The interpretations given to some of the inscriptions 50 or 60 years ago were religiously followed even though they did not agree with the new discoveries. This shows that a fresh and uninhibited approach should be made in the reading and the interpretations of those records in the context of new discoveries. Such an attempt revises earlier surmises and we come closer to the truth. This experience of mine prompts me here to quote Dr.K.V.Ramesh who, while addressing the Epigraphy section of the 37th Indian History Congress held at Calicut in 1977, observed thus: "Epigraphy is a strange subject and what is more, it tends to become stranger and stranger even as you try to get more and more familiar with it. No sooner do we propound seemingly flawless fool-proof and pet theories on such subjects as palaeography, chronology and history based on careful appraisals of the vast epigraphical materials already available than they are disproved by fresh discoveries of inscriptions".

Against this background I would like to state here about my maiden attempt in epigraphical research. The first innings starts with the Pallavarāyaṇpēṭṭai Tamil Inscription of Rājādhiraṅga Chōḷa-II, year eight (433/1924). At the moment I am not going into the details of the record because this is not the place for a full discussion on this inscription. I would like to project some important aspects of this inscription and the interpretation made by the scholars in 1934. The episode is a sample case and the researchers will understand the need for adopting new

methodologies in the investigation of the ancient records.

The record is a very long one. It speaks of Rājārāja Chōḷa, heir apparent (and some more details of Ceylonese war, Chōḷa invasion, etc. about which we are not concerned now). The inscription runs on small pillars and the little space in between them. In certain places there are damages. The gaps of the damaged portions vary from 3 to 12 cm. Earlier scholars filled up those gaps with certain letters for which there was not enough space on the walls and pillars. After filling up the gaps, they surmised as follows :

1. Rājārāja Chōḷa II of accession 1146 had two sons who were very young. Rājārāja became sick. Therefore, in 1163 he selected his relative Rājādhiraṅga as heir apparent and died in the same year.
2. In the fourth year after the selection, i.e., in 1166 Rājādhiraṅga became the Chōḷa emperor.

The above surmise does not agree with other records and historical events. The records of Rājārāja Chōḷa are available upto 1173 A.D. But the scholars had already surmised that Rājārāja died in 1163 A.D. If this is so how can his records appear for another 10 years after his death? Scholars explained this anomaly by stating that the Chōḷa officers were not aware of the king's death and so they continued engraving the records in his name (vide, Pandarathar, *Chōḷar Varalāryu*, Annamalai University). This surmise is illogical and cannot be accepted.

It was surmised that in 1163 when Rājarāja died Rājādhirāja was *selected heir apparent* and in the fourth year i.e. in 1166 only he was crowned as Chōḷa emperor. It means that in these four years nobody sat on the Chōḷa throne and it was empty. This is also illogical.

Scholars considered 1163 as the accession year of Rājādhirāja. This was based on the calculations done by Kielhorn in 1906. He consulted the astronomical data in the then available five inscriptions. In one record the data are imperfect. In another record the quoted star falls on the next day. Kielhorn was not satisfied. He said that the accession date 1163 proposed by him was based on approximation, probability and assumption. He clearly said that he was not fully convinced of the correctness of his general result. (*Epigraphia Indica, Vol. IX*). He stated that new discoveries could help in revising the date. He kept his surmise under reserve and did not publish it. Kielhorn died in 1906. The dates proposed by Kielhorn about which he too was not convinced were published in 1907. Scholars relied on this surmise and religiously followed it in spite of the caution and warning given by Kielhorn.

Some of the inscriptions of later discoveries quoted the Śaka and Cyclic years. Certain records furnished the solar day of the month also. These records confirm the accession of Rājādhirāja in 1166. The question arises whether 1163 or 1166 was the accession date. Therefore, scholars corrected the regnal year of the records and took it to be 1163. This

is also not logical. We have no business to touch the numerals which are the letters of the language of mathematics. (Had Kielhorn lived longer, he would have certainly revised his own surmise in favour of 1166 because the astronomical data of the records of Rājādhirāja agree with this date).

The above anomaly was again justified by filling up the damaged portions of the Pallavarāyanpēṭṭai inscription. It was suggested that Rājādhirāja was selected in 1163 and crowned in the fourth year, i.e., 1166. This suggestion was proposed in order to satisfy Kielhorn whose proposed date was 1163 and also the later discoveries of inscriptions which pointed out 1166 as the accession date. Sastri went to the extent of stating that in certain records Rājādhirāja counted his initial year from 1163 and in others from 1166 (*E.I.XXXI* p. 271). There cannot be two initial dates for the same king.

I found that Rājarāja ruled till 1173. In 1166 he crowned Rājādhirāja as his successor. Both ruled jointly for seven years. Other historical events were extracted from the earlier and later records. This research experience of mine helped me in reconstructing the historical events of this period.

There is no harm in attempting to restore the missing letters in the gaps of a damaged record. But such an attempt should not be harmful to earlier records. Any guess undertaken in filling up the damaged portions should not make the earlier records null and void. Otherwise

such a guess may be accepted as historical truth and the earlier records may become false. Therefore in such cases it is better to leave the gaps as they are and try to make the interpretation with the help of other known authentic records. For example, let us see the Kuḍimiyāmalai record (Pd. 221). It is a later copy of an earlier record. But the engraver of the 13th century, in the reign of a Pāṇḍya king, while re-engraving the earlier record of Kulōttuṅga Chōḷa, states that twenty letters are missing in the first gap and seven letters in the second gap. He did not try to restore them. Thus he avoided confusion and set an example to the future epigraphists.

While reviewing my above research on the Pallavarāyaṅpēṭṭai inscription, Dr.K.V.Ramesh said that Sethuraman took the measuring rod as a reliable approach in the investigation of the damaged records. It is true. In my subsequent researches I used another scale which is used for the measurement of space called time. I mean astronomy. I started learning it.

I consulted the astronomical data furnished in the inscriptions of the Chōḷas and Pāṇḍyas. I discovered twenty-six new Pāṇḍya kings and four Chōḷa viceroy-princes. This helped me in not only reconstructing the history of these two dynasties but also in finding the dates of many Tamil poems which are very famous in Tamil literature. This sort of exercise also gave me an opportunity to consult the records and poems of the adjacent Karnataka and Andhra

States and also Śrīlāṅkā.

In Tamil, *āṇḍu* means year. *Yāṇḍu* also means year. But there is a vast difference between *āṇḍu* and *yāṇḍu*. *Āṇḍu* is a solar or calender year and it contains 365 to 366 days. *Yāṇḍu* is a lunar year and it is based on the position of the moon. In the ancient Saṅgam Tamil literature *Yāṇḍu* refers to age also. Age is based on the star in which the moon stood at the time of birth. Naturally age is of lunar measure. In the lunar year there will not be 365 days. It will vary from 354 to 385 days. All the Tamil inscriptions mention the regnal year of the king as *yāṇḍu* only. It means that the regnal year is of lunar measure. It is counted on the basis of the star in which the moon stood at the time of the coronation of the king. Let us see some sample cases.

It has been already proved that Rājēndra Chōḷa I came to the throne in the middle of 1012 A.D. We will now consider two of his records, apply the Indian calender system and find his exact accession date. His Eṅṅāyiram record (341/1917) quotes year 30, day 27 of the regnal year, month Kaṛṇāṭaka, Aparapaksha Daśami, star Kṛittikā and Thursday. The data correspond to 25th June 1041.

Year 30, day 27 = 25th June 1041

Year 30, day 1 = 30th May 1041 = Mṛigaśirā in Āṇi (Mithuṇa)

Year 1, day 1 = Mṛigaśirā in Āṇi in 1012 = 20 th June 1012.

Therefore Mṛigaśirā was the accession star of Rājēndra Chōḷa I and he came to

the throne on 20 th June 1012 A.D.

S.I.I., XVII, Kālahasti No.326 of Rājēndra quotes year 23, day 4 of the regnal year, Thursday and Pushya.

1. Year 23 begins on the day of Mṛigasirā in Āṇi in 1034 corresponding to 17th June 1034.

2. The 4th day of the 23rd year was Thursday the 20th June on which day star Pushya was current. This date agrees with the data of the record.

3. The above calculations establish that every year the regnal year of the king changes on the day of the accession star Mṛigaśirā in the month Āṇi (Mithuṇa).

Accession date of Kulōttuṅga Chōḷa I

Śrīraṅgam, *S.I.I.* XXIV, No. 93 of Kulōttuṅga Chōḷa I quotes year 41, day 352, month Āṇi, Tuesday, Rōhiṇī which correspond to 6th June 1111 A.D.

Year 41, day 352 = 6th June 1111 A.D.

Year 41, day 1 = 20th June 1110 A.D.
Puṇarvaśu in Āṇi (Mithuṇa)

Year 1, day 1 = Puṇarvaśu in Āṇi in 1070 agrees with 12th June 1070.

Puṇarvaśu was the accession star of Kulōttuṅga Chōḷa I. He came to the throne on 12th June 1070. Bāpaṭṭa, *S.I.I.* VI, No. 167 and Kāñchīpuram, No. 45 of 1921 state that the birth star of Kulōttuṅga was Pushya. Śrinivāsanallūr inscription, *S.I.I.* VI, No. 659 states that the accession star of Kulōttuṅga was Puṇarvaśu. Every year the regnal

year of Kulōttuṅga changes on the day of Puṇarvaśu in the month Āṇi (Mithuṇa).

In the above cases records supply the regnal year, day of the regnal year and astronomical data. This helps us in finding the exact accession date of the king. In many cases we do not get the day of the regnal year. With the help of other records we can find the shortest interval during which period the king would have come to the throne. The date thus obtained will help us in identifying another king of the same name who existed in the same period or in different periods.

The Pāṇḍyas occupied the Chōḷa-maṇḍalam (Thaṅjāvūr area), Toṇḍai-maṇḍalam (Kāñchīpuram area) and part of the extreme southern areas of Āndhra, etc., during the period from 1252 to 1371. Therefore, if we find any Pāṇḍyan record in this area with the palaeographical features of 13th and 14th centuries and with the title *Tribhuvanachakravarti* we can immediately conclude that the record was engraved in the above period and the astronomical data given in the records should be applied to this period only. On this basis let us see three records in which the name of the king is Śaḍaiyavarmaṇ Sundarapāṇḍya.

1907, Nandalūr Records of Śaḍaiyavarmaṇ Sundarapāṇḍya:-

Record No.590 quotes year 13, cyclic year Virōdhi, month Kuṇḍha, Pūrvapaksha Daśami, Puṇarvaśu and Monday. The data correspond to 20th February 1290. Accordingly Puṇarvaśu

in Kumbha in 1277 belongs to regnal year Zero. The date falls on 15th February 1277.

Record No. 594 quotes year 17, cyclic year Nandana, month Mīṇa, Pūrvapaksha Pañchami, Rōhiṇī and Saturday. Accordingly, Rōhiṇī Mīṇa in 1277 falls in the first year. The date was 11th March 1277.

15-2-1277 = regnal year zero.

11-3-1277 = regnal year one.

Śaḍaiyavarmaṇ Sundara came to the throne between 16th February and 11th March in 1277. The shortest interval is 24 days only. Twenty records of this king supply astronomical data and all of them agree with the initial date February-March 1277. Let us see another record (376 of 1929) which comes from Tiruppālaivaṇam near Chingleput (Tamil Nadu). In this record also the name of the king is Śaḍaiyavarmaṇ Sundara. The data are Year 14, month Āṇi (Mithuṇa), Solar day 8, Makha and Sunday. In the 13th and 14th centuries, during which period the Pāṇḍyas ruled this track, the data produce only one date and it was 3rd June 1291.

June 1291 of Sundara = 14th Year

June 1277 of Sundara = year zero

June 1278 of Sundara = year one

We have already seen that the former Sundara was a king in June 1277. The latter Sundara was not a king in June 1277. But he came to the throne prior to June 1278. Eleven records of this Sundara with the astronomical data agreeing with the initial year 1278 are found.

Here the Indian calendar system helps us in identifying two kings of the same name coming to the throne in 1277 and 1278 respectively. Such phenomena are not unknown in the history of the Pāṇḍyas. For example, two Śaḍaiyavarmaṇ Vīrapāṇḍyas of accession 1253 and 1254 are discovered. In 1303 a Śaḍaiyavarmaṇ Sundarapāṇḍya and a Māḍavarmaṇ Sundarapāṇḍya came to the throne. In the next year 1304 another Śaḍaiyavarmaṇ Sundara alias Kōḍaṇḍarāma also came to the throne. The Indian calendar system helps us in identifying the kings who had the same names and who existed in the same period or in different periods.

Certain records supply the day of the regnal year in thousands. Though it may look curious the fact remains that they are calculated from the date of coronation. For example, the Tiruchchendūr record of Varaguṇa (of accession 863) quotes 5001st day from the date of coronation. If we divide it by 365 we get 13 years passed and balance 256 days. It means that the regnal year is 14 and it is elsewhere confirmed by the record itself.

Śaḍaiyavarmaṇ Kulaśēkhara of *Pūtalavaṇitai* Tamil *praśasti* came to the throne in the middle of 1237 A.D. His Tiruvālīśvaram record (370 of 1916) quotes the following data:

Year 3, day 2690 also called

Year 10 - month Mārgaḷi (Dhaṇus) = 16th December 1246 A.D.

20th Solar day, Pūrvapaksha Saptami, Uttiratṭādi, Sunday.

Therefore, year 3, day 2690=16-12-1246

Less days 2589 = Less days from the above date.

Year 3, day 1 = 6th August 1239, the day of star Svāti in the month Āvaṇi

(Śrāvaṇa) in 1239.

Therefore year 1, day 1 = 1237 Āvaṇi, Svāti correspond to 30th July 1237, the accession date.

Three more records of this king supply the regnal year and the days in thousands. Astronomical data are not given. However, with the help of the above Tiruvāliśvaram record we can find the dates of these records. They are tabulated below:

| | | | |
|----------|-----------|-----------------|------------|
| 673/1916 | Śērmādēvi | Year 3 day 2594 | 12-9-1246 |
| 665/1916 | Śērmādēvi | Year 3 day 2638 | 26-10-1246 |
| 507/1916 | Idaikāl | Year 3 day 2766 | 2-3-1247 |

The authors who have written the Pāṇḍyan history did not notice the above Tiruvāliśvaram record. They said that the king ruled for 3 years and then died. They did not understand the meaning of the days which run into thousands. With the help of other records internal and external evidence I established that this king ruled for 26 years.

A record of Parāntaka Chōla (of accession 907) comes from the village Grāmam situated on the southern bank of the river South Pennār. It quotes the data as follows:

1. Regnal Year - 36
2. Kaliyuga current - 4044
3. Day of Kaliyuga - 14,77,037
4. Month Makara
5. Saturday and star Rēvatī

Kielhorn found the correct date 14th January 943. From this date he deducted 14,77,036 days and found that the Kaliyuga era commenced on the day of Mēsha Saṅkrānti (Mēsha first day) in the year 3102 B.C. This agrees with the Indian astronomy and it is in vogue even today. There are three more records which quote the Kaliyuga days running into several lakhs and all of them are found in Tamilnadu. They agree with initial data Mēsha Saṅkrānti 3102 B.C. Internal evidence of the records shows that the days of the Kaliyuga were probably calculated by the astronomers of Kerala.

Elsewhere above I said that the Indian calendar system will help us in identifying kings who ruled in the same period or in different periods. I give below three interesting cases :

Case - I

195/1908 = Vaḍakōyilūr

Rājarāja
Year 20
Makara
Śu 7

136/1932 - Tirūppūndurāi

Rājarāja
Year 20
Makara
Śu 7

Āsvati
Monday =
10th January 1166
(Rājarāja II of accession 1146)

414/1908 - Tiruvilimilalai
Śadaiyavarman Sundarapāṇḍya
year 9
Tulā
ba 7
Pushya
Sunday =
22nd October 1285
(Sundara of accession 1277)

Āsvati
Wednesday =
16th January 1236
(Rājarāja III of accession 1216)

Case - II

15/1894 - Vikkiramangalam
Śadaiyavarman Sundarapāṇḍya
Year 9
Tulā
ba 7
Pushya
Saturday =
18th October 1326
(Sundara of accession 1318)

Case - III

Kōvilūr temple, south wall

Left side
Pd 450
Vīrapāṇḍya
year 34
Āni 8th day
Star Makha
4th June 1367
(Māravarman Vīrapāṇḍya of
accession 1334)

Right side
Pd 451
Vīrapāṇḍya
Year 33
Vaikāśi 29th day
Star Viśakha
Wednesday =
24th May 1374
(Māravarman Vīrapāṇḍya of
accession 1341)

In the first table the name of the king and the astronomical data are the same except the week days which expose the existence of two kings of the same name. The second case is also an interesting example. The week days point out the existence of two Śadaiyavarman Sundarapāṇḍyas of accession 1277 and 1318. The distance between the two villages where the records are found is 300 kilometers.

The third case is an important one. Two records are found on the same wall. In each record the name of the king is Vīrapāṇḍya and the palaeographic features are in characters of 14th century. Both the records supply the solar day of the month. Swamikkannu Pillai found the correct dates. They indicate that the first Vīrapāṇḍya came to the throne in 1334 and the second in 1341. Since the records quote the same name for the king,

Pillai suggested that in the second record the regnal year 33 should be corrected as 40.

I took up this case in 1986. I was always against correcting the regnal year. I came to the conclusion that two Vīrapāṇḍyas could have existed with the accession dates 1334 and 1341 respectively. Unfortunately the dynastic title Śaḍaiyavarmaṇ or Māṛavarmaṇ is absent in the above two records. At any rate it is definite that as per the traditions they should be either Śaḍaiyavarmaṇs or Māṛvarmaṇs. I collected the astronomical data given in the records which bear the name Śaḍaiyavarmaṇ Vīrapāṇḍya. The data did not agree with either 1334 or 1341. Next I collected the records which bear the name Māṛavarmaṇ Vīrapāṇḍya and in which the astronomical data are given. There were thirty two such records. Astonishingly seventeen of them agreed with 1334 and fifteen with 1341. Thus I discovered two Māṛavarmaṇ Vīrapāṇḍyas of accession 1334 and 1341.

In 1916 a record of Māṛavarmaṇ Vīrapāṇḍya (64 of 1616) was discovered at Tirukkaḷakuḍi near Madurai. It states that the Vijayanagar prince Kampaṇa destroyed the Mohammadans and established orderly government. When did this happen? The record supplies the data year 31, month Kaṇyā, pūrvapaksha, tritigai, Svātī and Friday.

What was the date? None could suggest it because as on 1916 the researchers were not aware of the existence of two Māṛavarmaṇ Vīrapāṇḍyas of accession 1334 and 1341 respectively. Scholars said that the historic event should have happened prior to 1373 because the records of Kampaṇa dated 1373 and 1374 are found in this tract.

The Tirukkaḷakuḍi record belongs to Māṛavarmaṇ Vīrapāṇḍya of accession 1341. It gives the date Friday the 12th September 1371. On this date Kampaṇa drove out the Mohammandans and established orderly government. This date agrees with the Madurai temple chronicle which states that Kampaṇa destroyed the Mohammadans at Madurai in Śaka 1293, cyclic year Virōdhikṛitu corresponding to 1371. Sanskrit and Telugu poems corroborate this historical event and support the date 1371. My principle is always against correcting the regnal year. It paid me rich dividends.

In the course of seven hundred years (1000 to 1700 A.D.) scores of Pāṇḍya kings existed. They had only six names often repeated. They are Kulaśekhara, Sundara, Vīra, Vikrama, Śrīvallabha and Parākrama. These are the royal (*abhishēka*) names bestowed on the princes at the time of coronation. They had the dynastic titles either Māṛavarmaṇ or Śaḍaiyavarmaṇ. Princes with same or different royal names and

with same or different titles ruled jointly or concurrently. Overlapping of the reigns is common. Brothers and relatives may also have anointed names. The princes are identified by their *Prasastis*, titles, surnames, birth star, accession dates and other internal and external evidences. Sometimes princes with same name will also have same epithets. The

personal names bestowed on the princes at the time of their birth are not known. Records mention the anointed names only. In the midst of these oddities we can identify and find the dates of the princes with the help of the Indian calendar system. For example, I give below the number and names of kings who existed in the 12th, 13th and 14th centuries.

Pāṇḍyan Records

12th, 13th, 14th - Centuries

Number of Records with Astronomical Data

(They quote regnal year, month, tithi, star and weekday)

| Number of king | Names of kings | Discovered upto 1920 | Addition | As on 1973 |
|----------------|-------------------|----------------------|----------|------------|
| 4 | Mār. Sundara | 18 | 23 | 41 |
| 3 | Mār. Kulaśekhara | 71 | 76 | 147 |
| 2 | Mār. Vīra | 17 | 15 | 32 |
| 7 | Mār. Vikrama | 16 | 12 | 28 |
| 2 | Mār. Parākrama | 10 | 4 | 14 |
| 2 | Mār. Śrīvallabha | 13 | 4 | 17 |
| 9 | Śaḍa. Sundara | 88 | 69 | 157 |
| 3 | Śaḍa. Kulaśekhara | 19 | 17 | 36 |
| 5 | Śaḍa. Vīra | 63 | 38 | 101 |
| 2 | Śaḍa. Vikrama | 5 | 2 | 7 |
| 4 | Śaḍa. Parākrama | 14 | 8 | 22 |
| 4 | Śaḍa. Śrīvallabha | 7 | 2 | 9 |
| 47 | TOTAL | 371 | 270 | 641 |

The above table is self-explanatory. As on 1920 astronomical data were found in 371 Pāṇḍyan records only. The earlier scholars consulted the data and identified 22 kings. Later, in the course of 53 years, 270 more records supplied the astronomical data. In all 641 records contain the data. With the help of the Indian calen-

dar system I was able to identify 25 new kings and also revised the dates of the 22 kings already identified.

Reconstruction :

In the beginning of this century little was known about the history of the

Pāṇdyas. In spite of the scarcity of source materials, earlier scholars made honest attempts in proposing the dates of some of the Pāṇḍya kings. The repetition of the names confused them. Records of many kings who had same names were mixed up. Earlier savants were aware of this. They said that the dates proposed by them were only tentative and they were subject to revision in the after years. Kielhorn the pioneer chronologist, while proposing the dates of some of the Pāṇḍya kings who existed in the 12th, 13th and 14th centuries, said in 1901:

“..... How my results will fit into the history of the time to which the dates refer, others may decide; I have been solely guided by the dates and have not allowed myself to be influenced by other consideration (*E.I.* Vol. VI, p.301)”.

Kielhorn continued his research and proposed the dates of some more Pāṇḍya kings. The dates furnished by certain records did not agree with the known results. In 1905, while winding up his discussion on the subject, Kielhorn said,

“..... of the nineteen new Pāṇḍya dates here published, Nos. 44 to 56 confirm the general results previously arrived at I have 35 other dates which seem to belong to 18 different Pāṇḍya kings. These cannot be published till more dates of the same kings have been discovered. (*E.I.* Vol. p. 274)”.

The statements of Kielhorn are very clear. He expected that the future scholars would revise the proposed dates on the basis of other considerations and also

discover some more Pāṇḍya kings. Again Kielhorn was aware of the existence of not less than 37 kings. After eighty-five years, his statement has come true. Today in 1991 we see 47 kings in the table.

Kielhorn said that the dates were subject to revision due to other considerations. What are they? They are internal evidence, historicity, literature, information extracted from the poems and records in other languages of the contemporary periods and the Indian calendar system. Jacobi, Sewell and L.D. Swamikkannu Pillai continued the research. Revisions, based on new discoveries and consequent reconstructions were proposed from time to time.

The discovery (1978) of the measure of the regnal year, the application of the Indian calendar system and other considerations stated above help us in the identification of the kings who had same or different names and who ruled jointly or concurrently in the same or different period. They not only help us in revising the earlier surmises but also in discovering the existence of the hitherto unknown kings. I give below an interesting sample case.

Kulōttuṅga Chōḷa III had another name Vīrarājēndra. Kielhorn surmised that Kulōttuṅga *alias* Vīrarājēndra came to the throne in the month Kaṛṇāṭaka in 1178. Later discoveries of inscriptions pointed out the accession date in the month Mithuṇa in 1178. This shows that the records of some other king who had the same name Vīrarājēndra

were mixed up. I collected all the data and found that there was another Vīrarājendra Chōla of accession 1244 and he ruled till 1291. He was a Telugu Chōla prince.

His records are available around Madras and also in the districts of Nellore and Cuddappah. His chieftain was Manumasiddhi who patronised Tikkana Sōmayājin the author of *Nirvachanōttara Rāmāyaṇamu*. The poet was held in high esteem in the court of the Kākatiya king Gaṇapati. Thus a change in the accession month Kaṛkaṭaka to Mithuṇa exposed another king of same name who came to the throne sixty six years later. (N. Sethuraman 'Hoysalas in Pāṇḍimaṇḍalam', *Journal of the Epigraphical Society of India*, Vol. 16, pp. 55 to 66.

The Chronologist and the Historian:

In this connection, I would like to draw the attention of the scholars to an important distinction to be drawn between the approaches of a chronologist and the historian. The chronologist is very much concerned in finding the date of the record. He has to face too many kings who had same names. He proposes the dates on the basis of the then available materials. Later discoveries prompt him to revise the earlier surmises. He is fully aware of his responsibility cast on him in the matter of justifying mathematics and historicity.

The position of the historian is different. He relies on the dates proposed by the chronologist and writes the his-

tory. When the chronologist comes up with fresh proposals, the historian is very much upset because he has no chance or opportunity to understand the problems faced by the chronologist and the amount of pain the latter suffered in his labour in delivering the goods. For example, let us see what the veteran historian Sastri states in his monumental work *The Pāṇḍyan Kingdom*, 1929 edition. He says-

“These astronomical results yield different results in the hands of different scholars and often in the hands of the same scholar at different times. New kings have been postulated and given up in a manner that has tended to make the chronology a game of nine pins. As one wades through the results of Kielhorn, Jacobi, Swamikkannu Pillai and Sewell, one almost gets the feeling that ignorance at least of astronomy is bliss

Such a frustrated statement coming from a stalwart probably frightened and caused fear among the students of Pāṇḍya history. What was the result? In the past sixty years no researcher either from the Government side or any University took up the case of the Pāṇḍyan chronology. The long interval has created a vacuum and in the result most of the present day students do not know the previous research and also the technique of applied astronomy with reference to epigraphy. Sastri should have stated the other way. He should have encouraged and advised the students to take interest in the science of Astronomy. Had he done it, the result would have been dif-

ferent.

In the past sixty years the Department of Epigraphy, the wing of the Archaeological Survey of India, discovered thousands of Pāṇḍya inscriptions and they are reported in the *Annual Reports*. The epigraphists, while making their comments, pointed out the variations. They have also furnished the clues which could help the researchers in reconstructing the chronology and the history. Unfortunately, no researcher came forward to make the best use of the fruits of the labour of the epigraphy department.

Recently the department of epigraphy, Archaeological Survey of India, Mysore, opened their branches at Jhansi and Madras. We must thank Dr.K.V.Ramesh, Director of Epigraphy, who is responsible for opening these two branches. I trust that the epigraphic researchers of these regions will be happy and come forward to utilise the services of the new branches.

Friends, I realise that I have crossed my limitations, tested your patience and delivered a long talk. The sample cases quoted above will show the importance of the Indian calendar system which was neglected for a long time. The laws of astronomy are same throughout India. However, Tamil inscriptions alone supply the data in different colours and fashions. The quoted instances help us in extracting necessary equations and formula which, when applied to the other areas, will definitely yield fruitful results. I trust

the present and future students will use the system and bring out major discoveries.

Inscriptions and Literature :

In this connection I would like to mention here one more important thing. An epigraphist must also have acquaintance with the contemporary literature of not only his mother tongue but also those written in Sanskrit and other languages of the adjacent areas. Inscriptions and literature are complementary to each other. Where epigraphs are not able to deliver the goods, particularly in finding the genealogy, literature comes to our rescue. I have written many articles on the subject and at the moment I do not want to elaborate on the subject because it will consume your valuable time. However, I will quote some examples and leave you free. I identified the heroes of two Tamil poems *Śaṅkara Chōlaṅ-Ulā* and *Kulōttuṅga Chōlaṅ Kōvai* which were discovered some ninety years ago. In 1947 during the partition of the country the manuscripts of the Sanskrit poem 'Pāṇḍya Kulōdaya' were transferred from the Lahore Museum to the Punjab University which started the investigation of the poem in 1981. With the help of my books the princes mentioned in the poem were identified. I also found the hero of the poem. In turn the poem helped me in the construction of the genealogy of the Pāṇḍya kings who existed in certain important periods.

In her Sanskrit poem *Mathurā Vijayam*, Gaṅgādēvī, the queen of

Kampana describes the contemporary historical event. She says that her husband Kampana killed the Śambuvarāya king. The Sanskrit poems *Rāmābhyudayam*, *Sālvābhyudayam* and the Telugu poem *Jaiminī Bhāratham* state that Kampana defeated the Śambuvarāya and again established him on the throne. The Maḍam inscription of Kampana states that the Śambuvarāya was defeated. Scholars compared the poems and the inscriptions and came to the conclusion that in narrating the same event the contemporary source materials were contradictory to each other. It is not so. With the help of the Indian calendar system, I proved that at that time there existed three Śambuvarāya kings with the same coronation (*abhiśhēkha*) name Rājanārāyaṇa. Rājanārāyaṇa I *alias* Mallinātha and Rājanārāyaṇa II *alias* Poṅṅin Tambirāṅ were brothers. Tirunīru champan *alias* Rājanārāyaṇa III was the son of the elder brother. Kampana killed the younger brother Rājanārāyaṇa II and established the elder brother Rājanārāyaṇa I and his son Rājanārāyaṇa III. Indian calendar sys-

tem came to the rescue of both literature and epigraphy and solved a very big issue which was a puzzle for the past sixty years. (N. Sethuraman, Śambuvarāyas of the 14th Century', *Journal of the Epigraphical Society of India*, Vol. 13).

Before concluding my speech, I would like to offer some tips to the young epigraphists who have assembled here. India is the biggest county in the population of inscriptions. We have materials which the epigraphists can consult at least for another two hundred years. In the mean time future discoveries will also be added to stock. Sky is the limit for epigraphical research. So friends, please do your research freely in any field. Do not take things seriously. Stop worrying and start living with your research, in a happy mood. If any comment is made against your surmise, please take it easy and do not get upset. Nothing serious will happen and the sky will not fall down. What we want is truth and truth only. Please try to cultivate the sense of appreciation in favour of truth. This should be the goal of every epigraphist.

Jai Hind.

1. BALESVARA - BHATTARAKA

A HITHERTO UNKNOWN SAIVA ESTABLISHMENT AT SRIPURA

Ajay Mitra Shastri

The Pāṇḍuvamśins were the supreme political power in South Kosala (Chhattisgarh region of Madhya Pradesh and the adjoining region of Orissa) during the seventh - eighth centuries AD,¹ and the Sōmavamśins, who played such an important role in Orissan history, were their lineal descendants.² Under them religion, art and architecture witnessed a great efflorescence, and some of the finest specimens of the Nāgara style at Sirpur and Bhubaneswar were built under their active patronage.

The Pāṇḍuvamśins, to begin with, in keeping with their being political successors of the Śarabhapuriyas, were devotees of Viṣṇu and some of their early members including Mahāśiva Tīvaradēva and Mahānannarāja (Nanna II) were styled *parama-Vaiṣṇava*.³ Even though no records of the next two members of the family have yet come to light, they too were apparently adherents of Vaiṣṇavism as can be inferred from the fact that it was in order to please his mother Vāsaṭā that the last known king of the family, Mahāśivagupta (Śivagupta) Bālārjuna, built a Viṣṇu temple at Sirpur (presently known as Lakṣhmaṇa temple),⁴ even though he himself had switched over to Śaivism and styled himself accordingly as *parama-Māhēśvara* in all his official records. Though in keeping with the age-old Indian tradition he practised religious catholicity and Bud-

dism also received his patronage,⁵ there can be absolutely no doubt about himself being a devout Śaiva. Most of his own records register charities to Śaiva establishments. Thus, the Lodhia plates of his last recorded year (57th) register a grant for the temple of Īsānēśvara - bhaṭṭāraka erected at the *pattana* (commercial centre) of Khadirapadra at the request of the divine (*bhagavat*) Śūlapāni, the pupil of the divine Pramathāchārya hailing from the penance-grove (*tapōvana*) known as Pañchayajña at the famous Dvaitavana, in order to meet the various needs of the temple.⁶ Likewise, one of his undated Mallar charters records his land-grant in favour of the shrine of god Kapālēśvara Śiva at Kosala-nagara erected by a certain Śivanandin.⁷ These records as well as the devices on the seal attached to these and other charters⁸ should leave absolutely no doubt about the religious transformation of the Pāṇḍuvamśa from Vaiṣṇavism to Śaivism during his reign.⁹

But while these records clearly indicate the tremendous popularity of Śaivism in South Kosala during the period of Śivagupta Bālārjuna as in practically the whole of the Indian subcontinent, a hoard of as many as nine copperplate charters from Sirpur (ancient Śrīpura), and another grant from Mallar in the Bilaspur District of Madhya Pradesh indubitably show that Śrīpura was a great centre of Śaivism during

his long reign. They bring to light the fact that Śivagupta himself had erected a temple of Bālēsvara-bhaṭṭāraka¹⁰ at Śrīpura, the Pāṇḍuvainśa capital,¹¹ fairly early in his reign and some of the members of the royal family also had erected some subsidiary shrines in its premises which resulted in the transformation of this temple into a huge establishment. Students of ancient Indian religious history, more especially Śaivism, can ill-afford to wait for the publication of these records which would easily take a few years.¹² It is, therefore, proposed to highlight here the important evidence afforded by them without prejudice to their full publication.

Seven of the inscriptions of the said hoard and the Mallar grant are directly connected with the Bālēsvara-bhaṭṭāraka temple and record charities to it and its adjuncts by Śivagupta. The earliest record mentioning this temple belongs to the thirty-seventh year of the king's long reign and refers to the installation of the temple. It may, thus, be concluded that the temple was completed in his thirty-seventh regnal year. This inscription records that at the time of the installation of the temple of Bālēsvara on the fifth day of the first fortnight of the month of Vaiśākha in the thirty-seventh year of his reign, Śivagupta gave away the village of Hastipadra situated in the division called Svalpaśarkarāmārga¹³ to the divine (*bhagavatpāda*) Vyāpaśivāchārya, pupil of the divine (*bhagavatpāda*) Dīrghāchārya belonging to Nandapura.¹⁴ Apparently Vyāpaśiva had some connection with the

installation of the Bālēsvara temple: perhaps he had installed it after getting it erected by Śivagupta. As we shall see in the sequel, Dīrghāchārya and Vyāpaśiva figure in some other records of the Sirpur hoard.

The next inscription, chronologically speaking, supplies us a very valuable piece of information about the Bālēsvara temple. It tells us that it was erected by the king himself (*sva-kārīta*) on the low-lying land at Śrīpura itself (*ih-aiva Śrīpura-tala*) and records the grant of the village Bhāṇḍāgāra-chuttāka (?) located in the Aryaṅka-*bhōga*¹⁵ to the divine Vyāpaśivāchārya, pupil of the divine Dīrghāchārya and grand-pupil of the divine Śaivāchārya Aghōraśiva hailing from Nandapura at the time of the establishment of the monastic residence (*mathikā*) attached to the shrine of Bālēsvara-bhaṭṭāraka for the performance by the line of pupils and grand-pupils etc., of perpetual sacrifice, initiation, discourses, food and maintenance of a free feeding house. The grant is dated on the full moon day of Śrāvaṇa in the king's thirty-eighth regnal year. The monastic residence was obviously added to the temple over a year after its installation.

Next to be added was a shrine of Dayēsvara-bhaṭṭāraka inside the monastic residence in the forty-sixth year by the king himself. On the occasion of its installation on the full moon day of Śrāvaṇa in that year, a village named Bhāṇḍāgāra-lakkaḍamśaka included in the Dēvī-*bhōga*¹⁶ was given for its repairs, maintenance of its precincts, daily wor-

ship and musical concerts.

Amaradēvī, evidently closely related to the king, next added to the *mathikā* another shrine called after herself as Amarēśvarāyatana. The divine Astraśiva, pupil of Vyāpaśivāchārya and grand-pupil of Dīrghāchārya, also known as Aghōraśiva, of Nandapura, received, on the occasion of its installation the king's grant of the village Dēvapadrullaka attached to Bhāṇḍāgārāśvatthaka forming part of the district (*bhōga*) of Chullāṭa-sīmā.¹⁷ The date of this event is given as the twenty-fifth day of the month of Phālguna in the forty-eighth regnal year which is removed from the previous event by about two years and seven months.

Another undated grant registers the gift of the village Katambapadūllaka situated in the district (*bhōga*) of Chullāṭa-sīmā¹⁸ in favour of the Amarēśvara shrine built by queen Amaradēvī inside the penance-grove (*tapōvana*) attached to the monastery (*mathikā*) of the temple of Bālēśvara. The shrine is said to have been established (*pratishthāpita*) by Vyāpaśiva, pupil of Dīrghāchārya and grand-pupil of Aghōraśiva of Nandapura. The grant, which was made at the request of queen Amaradēvī, was intended to meet the cost of repairs, sweeping, anointment, worship and musical performances. It excluded the produce of the village, a *pala* of milk (*gavāṅga-rasa*), vegetables and water meant for running a free feeding-house.

The next charter was given on the fourth day of the first fortnight of the

month of Śrāvaṇa in the king's fifty-fifth regnal year. It records another addition to the Bālēśvara temple. We are told that the queen named Abbanibbaḍi had built a shrine called Abbēśvara after herself in the campus of the Bālēśvara temple, and Astraśivāchārya, pupil of Vyāpaśivāchārya, acted as its teacher-in-charge (*sthāna-guru*). It records the grant of the village Virttōḍaka forming part of the district (*bhōga*) of Uṇi¹⁹ divided into two parts. Half of the village was granted to defray the expenses on the repairs to the shrine (*dēvakula-khaṇḍa-sphuṭita-saṁskāraṇa*) and offering of worship, and other sundry things, while the remaining half was meant to be a gift to her preceptor (*guru-dakṣiṇā*) in order to be able to meet the expenses on the religious sermons by the line of spiritual teachers (literally, pupils and grand-pupils) and for the maintenance of a free feeding house. This village was granted at the time of the installation of this new shrine at the request of queen Abbanibbaḍi.

The above inscriptions are dated so that it is possible to reconstruct chronologically the history of the Bālēśvara temple and additions made to it after its construction. However, there is an undated charter from which we learn that the king's wife (*dharma-patnī*) Ammadēvī had caused to be constructed a shrine named after herself as Ammēśvara in the proximity of the Bālēśvara temple (*Bālēśvara-samīpastha*) at the low-lying land at Śrīpura and at her request her husband had given the village of Kōśambraka included in the Svalpa-śarkarā-mārga²⁰ to

this shrine on the occasion of the *Vishuva saṅkrānti* of Uttarāyaṇa in the month of Māgha for meeting the expenses on repairs, *bali* and *charu* offerings, musical performances, incense, worship, sweeping and anointment. Whether Ammēśvara, like Amarēśvara and Abbēśvara, was a part of the Bālēśvara establishment cannot be decided at present, though the wording of the inscription seems to indicate that it was a separate shrine only situated close to the Bālēśvara temple. We have, therefore, to take both these possibilities into consideration.

The site of the Bālēśvara temple can be identified with what is now known as Bhālesar Pahād near the southern bank of the river Mahānadī in the suburb of the town of Sirpur. This site now conceals a lot of antiquarian remains including the temple of Bālēśvara and its adjuncts mentioned above.

The above-mentioned Mallar plates of the fifty-seventh year, which form the latest dated record of Śivagupta,²¹ also supply very valuable information bearing on the history of the Bālēśvara complex. This record supplies the important information that the penance-grove (*tapōvana*) attached to the Bālēśvara shrine was placed at the disposal and under the management of another line of Śaiva ascetics, perhaps belonging to the Sōmasiddhānta school. We learn from this epigraph that Śivagupta granted the twin villages of Pāśipadraka and Kurapadraka²² situated in the Uṇi-*bhōga* in lieu of the earlier granted village of Bhāṇḍāgāra-Tulapadraka included in the

same *bhōga* to a renowned Śaiva ascetic for certain charitable activities connected with the Bālēśvara temple. We are told that he gave for the maintenance of the *tapōvana* of this complex built by the king himself the above-mentioned villages to the illustrious revered Bhīmasōma, pupil of the illustrious Tējasōma and grand-pupil of the illustrious Rudrasōma²³ who belonged to the line of spiritual teachers descending from the celebrated Lakulīśa-nātha who himself is said to have been born in the Brāhmaṇa family of the famous Sōmaśarman, was the very 'moon for the world' and was initiated with the *mahāvratā*.²⁴ We are told that sixty-six incarnations of Śiva take place in various aeons (*yugas*) for the welfare of world²⁵ and that Śiva incarnated himself as Lakulīśa in the Kali age.²⁶ There is also a reference to the eight forms of Śiva.²⁷ The grant, which was intended to be perpetual, was placed at the disposal of Bhīmasōma in order to enable him to meet the expenses on sacrifices, initiatory rites, preaching and residence of his pupils and grand-pupils (i.e., the line of Śaiva teachers emanating from him) and of the repairs to the shrine.²⁸

We also get a detailed description of the extent of the gift villages in terms of the well-known *hasta* (cubit) measure which is expressly stated to be equal to twenty-four digits (*aṅgulas*). We are told that in the east extending north-south from the half-river (Mahānadī) the land measured 7350 *hastas*, in the south extending north-west 6151 *hastas*, in the west extending south-north 7000 *hastas*, and in the north extending west-east 6350

hastas. This sort of detailed measurement, which is quite common in mediaeval South Indian epigraphs, is unique not only in the Pāṇḍuvaiśin inscriptions but also in the entire range of early and mediaeval epigraphy of North India, as far as our knowledge goes. In fact, this is the exact measurement of the land from Pāśipadraka to Kurapadraka, now represented by the villages Pāsida and Kolapadar respectively situated almost diagonally opposite, on the southern bank of the river Mahānadī with the temple of Bālēśvara-bhaṭṭāraka, presently represented by what is known as Bhālesar Pahāḍ situated between them diagonally. As we have seen above, the Bālēśvara complex stood on the low-lying land at the Pāṇḍuvaiśa capital Śripura and the places mentioned in the grant under reference at present have been shown to have been actually situated in the neighbourhood of Sirpur.

The inscription is of great value for the history of Śaivism and its sects. The name-ending *sōma* in the names Rudrasōma, Tējasōma and Bhīmasōma and their said distant connection with the Brāhmaṇa Sōmaśarman, make it clear that this line of teachers belonged to the Sōmasiddhānta school of Śaivism. Lakulīśa, the exponent of the Pāśupata school, is said, as we have seen, to have been born in the family of Sōmaśarman, a tradition not known to have been recorded anywhere else. This shows that, in the early mediaeval age, certain traditions connecting Brāhmaṇa Sōmaśarman with the Pāśupata school and also with its founder (or exponent or reviver, if we

were to concede V.S. Pathak's view of its foundation by Śrīkaṇṭha²⁹) Lakulīśa were prevalent and are reflected in this record. This also finds an echo in some of the Purāṇas which mention Sōmaśarman as an incarnation of Śiva which took place at Prabhāsa (Prabhās Pāṭan) in Gujarat.³⁰ He is apparently the same as Sōma who is said in an inscription from Prabhās Pāṭan belonging to the time of the Chaulukya king Kumārapāla (Valabhī Samvat 850 = AD 1169) to have erected a golden temple of Sōmanātha at Prabhāsa and after originating his cult at the behest of Śiva given the place to the Pāśupatas.³¹ Not only Lakulīśa and thereby the Pāśupata school of Śaivism were sought to be brought into connection with the Somasiddhānta school, but there appears to have also been attempted an interrelationship as regards religious beliefs. As pointed out above, the Mallar plates in question refer to the eight forms (*ashṭa-mūrti*) of Śiva. This concept also is typically Pāśupata and is referred to by Kālidasa³² and represented by an early Vākāṭaka sculpture from Māṇḍhal near Nagpur.³³ It is found mentioned in numerous Indian and South-East Asian Sanskrit inscriptions of a considerably later period,³⁴ ours being probably the oldest epigraphic reference to it. The concept itself is very ancient and includes the following eight forms: (1) Śarva, (2) Bhava, (3) Īśāna, (4) Rudra, (5) Ugra, (6) Bhīma, (7) Paśupati, and (8) Mahādēva, which find mention in the Brāhmaṇa and Sūtra literature.³⁵ Attempts also appear to have been made to establish relationship of the

Sōmasiddhānta school with some practices typical of the Kāpālika sect, one such practice being the observance of *mahāvratā*. As stated above, our Mallar plates state that Lakulīśa was initiated with the *mahāvratā*. As a Kāpālika practice it finds mention in a number of early mediaeval Indian inscriptions and literature.³⁶ The Indo-Parthian king Gondophares styles himself on most of his coins as *deva-vratā*,³⁷ *deva* here referring to god Śiva who figures on his coins and *vratā* (vow) alluding to the Kāpālika practice and showing that Gondophares was a Śaiva of the Kāpālika variety. It may, thus, be reasonably concluded that a conscious effort was made to strike a great synthesis among the Pāsūpata, Sōmasiddhānta and Kāpālika sects of Śaivism by inventing and modifying certain traditions, adoption of religious practices and beliefs of each other in South Kōśala during the close of the eighth century A.D. As these references are met with in connection with the Sōmasiddhāntin ascetics, it may naturally be inferred that they took initiative in the experiment in religious (or rather sectarian) synthesis by trying to bring the votaries of the principal Śaiva sects closer and in this exercise they perhaps had the support and blessings of the Pāṇḍuvarṣin king Śivagupta in the closing year of whose reign it finds a concrete expression. How far this attempt was successful remains uncertain.

This inscription also must have originally belonged to Sirpur where the temple as well as the donated villages were situated and it must have come to Mal-

lar with the family owning it.

The Sōmasiddhāntin ascetic Bhīmasōma was in charge only of the penance grove (*tapōvana*) attached to the Bālēsvara complex, while the temple itself and its other adjuncts were managed by the Śaiva ascetics of the Śaivasiddhānta school as indicated by their Śiva-ending names. The Śaivasiddhānta ascetics attained great celebrity under the Kalachuris of Tripurī and elsewhere in the Deccan and South India.³⁸

The ascetics mentioned in these inscriptions from Sirpur and Mallar are new additions to the list of known ascetics of these schools, and the value of these records from this point of view is quite great indeed. To recapitulate, the last known Pāṇḍuvarṣin king Śivagupta Bālārjuna undertook the construction of the magnificent temple of god Śiva known after himself as Bālēsvara-bhaṭṭāraka and it was completed in the thirty-seventh year of his long reign. Next year a monastic residence (*maṭhikā*) was added to it. In the forty-sixth year a shrine called Dayēsvara-bhaṭṭāraka was erected inside the *maṭhikā*. Two years later was added another shrine called Amarēsvara after its builder, Amaradēvī. Abbēsvara shrine built by and named after queen Abbanibbadi was next erected in the campus of the Bālēsvara temple in the fifty-fifth year to be followed by the grant of the villages Pāśipadraka and Kurapadraka to Bhīmasōma for the maintenance of the *tapōvana* attached to it in the fifty-seventh year. In short, then,

the Bālēśvara, first built by Śivagupta in his thirty-seventh year, took nearly two decades for the completion of its complex including a penance-grove, a monastic residence (*maṭhikā*), which must have served not only as, residential but also as an educational centre of the Śaivas and the shrines of Amarēśvara and Abbēśvara. The shrine of Ammēśvara, built by Ammadēvī and christened af-

ter herself, also probably formed a part of this complex. This establishment naturally turned the Pāṇḍuvarṃśa capital Śrīpura into an important centre and stronghold of Śaivism. In giving it this status the generations of Śaivasiddhānta and Sōmasiddhānta ascetics, the former hailing from Nandapura, which must also have been a great centre of Śaivasiddhānta ascetics, played a great role.

References

1. This follows our own chronology which materially differs from the commonly accepted chronology. See our *Inscriptions of the Śarabhapurīyas, Pāṇḍuvarṃśins and Somavarṃśins*, I, Delhi, 1991, pp. 139-57.
2. See *ibid.*, pp. 172-76.
3. *Ibid.*, II, Delhi, 1991, Nos. III : II - V.
4. *Ibid.*, III : XI.
5. *Ibid.*, No. III : IX (undated Mallar plates) which record a grant for a Buddhist monastery (*vihārikā*).
6. *Ibid.*, No. III : VIII.
7. *Ibid.*, No. III : X.
8. It shows the couchant figure of Śiva's mount, Nandin, to left flanked by a trident on left and a *pūrṇakumbha* on right in its upper part.
9. Some private records (stone inscriptions) of his reign also record charities to Śaiva establishments, showing thereby that the religion was popular among masses as well. For these records, see *ibid.*, No. III : XII - XV and Appendix I.
10. The temple was obviously named after the initial part of his personal name, *viz.*, Bāla. It was a common practice to name the temples after the persons responsible for their erection or the places of their location.
11. The Pāṇḍuvarṃśins had inherited it as capital from the later members of the śarabhapurīya dynasty, for the penultimate known member of the dynasty, Sudēvarāja, is known to have had his second capital at Śrīpura while his own son Pravaraarāja finally shifted his capital to it.
12. These records have been brought to my notice by Shri Rahul Kumar Singh and Shri Ved Prakash Nagayach of the Department of Archaeology, Government of Madhya Pradesh, with the permission of Shri Kalyan Kumar Chakravarti, Commissioner of Archaeology, Madhya Pradesh. They are being edited by me with the assistance of some of the officers of the Department.

13. The headquarters of the division called Svalpaśarkarāmārga may perhaps have something to do with the village Śarkarāpadraka mentioned in the Pipardula plates of Narendra as situated in the Nandapura-*bhōga* (*ibid.*, No. I:I, text-line 6). or Śarkarā-pāṭaka mentioned in the Bonda plates of Śivagupta himself (*ibid.*, No. III : VII, pp. 124, 126). But in view of the fact that the donee hailed from Nandapura, the former alternative looks more likely. The addition of the prefix *svalpa* indicates that there were two villages of this name, large and small, the latter being intended in the present context.
14. Nadapura may perhaps be identical with the locality of the same name mentioned in the Pipardula plates of the Śarabhapuriya king Narendra. See *ibid.*, No. I : I. But there it is mentioned as the name of a district named after it. For its possible identification, see *ibid.*, p. 7, fn. 13.
15. Aryaṅka is evidently identical with modern Arang in the Raipur District and was apparently the divisional headquarters in those days. The donated village, however, defies attempts at its location.
16. Dēvī-*bhōga* and the donated village cannot be identified.
17. Chullāṭa-sīmā-*bhōga* is already known from the Kurud plates of the Śarabhapuriya king Narendra with the only difference that the first part of the name is spelt there as Chullāda instead of Chullāṭa as here (see *ibid.*, No. I : II, text-lines 2-3), while the villages Bhāṇḍāgār-āsvatthaka and Dēvapadrullaka cannot be identified now.
18. The village Katambapadūllaka reminds one of the locality called Kadambapadrullaka mentioned in the Mallar plates of the Śarabhapuriya king Jayarāja dated in his fifth regnal year (*ibid.*, pp. 17 and 19), on account of the near identity of the two names; but there it is said to have formed part of the administrative division called Antaranālaka, whereas the village in question was situated in the Chullāḍasīmā-*bhōga* which is well-known from several records. Thus, in spite of the closeness of the two names phonetically, they cannot be identified without assuming some change in the boundaries of the two administrative divisions of which no evidence is at present forthcoming.
19. The Uṇi-*bhōga* is evidently identical with the Oṇi-*bhōga* known from the Lodhia plates of the fifty-seventh regnal year and the undated Mallar plates of Śivagupta himself (*ibid.*, pp. 128 and 132 for Lodhia plates and pp. 138 and 140 for Mallar plates), while it is difficult to say anything definitely regarding the village of Virttōdaka situated in this *bhōga*.
20. The village Kośambraḱa cannot be identified at present. As regards the administrative division, we already know it from one of the inscriptions noticed earlier.
21. The grant was issued on the *first* twelfth day (*dvādasī*) of the dark fortnight of the month of Phālguna in the fifty-seventh year of the king's reign. There were apparently two *dvādasīs* in the dark fortnight of Phālguna that year, the first of which was intended. The Lodhia plates of the same year were given on the full moon day of Kārttika (*ibid.*, p. 131, text-lines 31-32), whereas the stray plate from Mallar, attributable to him, was issued on the thirtieth day of Māgha in the same year (*ibid.*, p. 164, text-lines 7-8). The present grant is, thus, later than the other dated Mallar charter by twelve days.
22. The expression *Pāśīpadrakē Kurapadraka-sahitē* would literally mean 'Pāśīpadraka together with Kurapadraka', indicating that greater importance was attached to Pāśīpadraka. In a subsequent line also the village Pāśīpadraka is said to have been given along with Kurapadraka.

23. Rudrasoma alone of the line is styled *guru*.
24. It is only a vague description with no mention of the generation from Lakulīśa which would have been of greater value from our point of view. Historically also it would have been somewhat important as it would have provided some evidence for fixing roughly the period of Śivagupta Bālārjuna more dependably.
25. Actual wording of the relevant portion is *Gahanēśasya mūrttayō Rudrāḥ śhaṭṣhaṣṭy-anugrāhakā yugē yugē parivartamānā*. Here the sixty-six Rudras are, in fact, described as exact replicas (*mūrti*) of Siva called Gahanēśa.
26. The relevant portion reads *adhunā Kali-kālam=āsādya śrīmal= Lakulīśanāth=ōvatīrya*.
27. The relevant expression is *Śivasya mūrttīnām=ashṭau Vighrahēśvarāṇām*, the word *vighrahēśvara* being quite significant.
28. The relevant portion of the record runs as *śishya-praśishyānām yāga-dīkshā-vyākhyānān=vasatṛi (ti)-pravarttanāya bhagna-vidīrṇa-dēvakula-saṁskṛitayē cha*.
29. V.S.Pathak, *History of Śaiva Cults in Northern India from Inscriptions*, Varanasi, 1960, pp. 7-8.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 24, fn. 5, where the *Vāyaviya Samhitā (Śiva Purāṇa)*, V.41-42, are quoted. See also *ibid.*, p. 13, fn. 7.
31. For quotation of the relevant stanza, see *ibid.*, p. 24, fn. 4.
32. *Abhi-jñāna-Śākuntala* (with Rāghavabhaṭṭa's commentary, 12th ed., Nirnaya Sagar Press, Bombay, 1958), I. 1:
Yāsriṣṭiḥ srasṭur=adyā vahati vidhi-hutam yā havir=yā cha hōtrī,
Yē dvē kālam vidhattaḥ śruti-vipatha-guṇā yā sthitā vyāpya viśvam
Yām=āhuh sarva-bīja-prakṛitir=iti yayā prāṇinaḥ prāṇavanuh,
Pratyakshābhīḥ prapannas=tanubhir=avatu vas=tābhir=ashṭābhir=iśaḥ //
33. Found in the excavation conducted by the Nagpur University's Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology under the direction of the present author, this beautiful figure depicts the eight forms of the god by eight faces with different expressions: four on top, two on shoulders and two on hips.
34. For these references, see V.S.Pathak, *op.cit.*, p. 17 and fn. 7.
35. See *ibid.*
36. For these references, see *ibid.*, pp. 20-21 S.R. Goyal, *A Religious History of Ancient India*, II, Meerut, 1986, pp. 267-68.
37. P.Gardner, *The Coins of the Greek and Scythic Kings of Bactria and India in the British Museum*, Reprint, New Delhi, 1971, pp. 103 ff; V.S.Pathak, *op.cit.*, p. 21.
38. For a detailed discussion on the Mattamayūra and Golakī line of this school, see Ajay Mitra Shastri, *Tripurī* (Hindi), Bhopal, 1971, pp. 96-108.

2. THE VESTIGES OF THE MAHABHARATA IN INSCRIPTIONS

H.S. Thosar

Three copper plates professing to be the grants made by the Pāṇḍava king Janamējaya were reported from the Shimoga district of Karnataka in the later half of the last Century.¹ A fourth charter issued by the same king was subsequently noticed at Chikurde in the Kolhapur district of Maharashtra.² The genuineness of these charters was questioned and so these epigraphic discoveries were not taken very seriously. Let us see whether there is any amount of historicity in these inscriptions.

All the earlier three grants are identical in the historical portion. They describe the donor king as the son of emperor Parikshita, of the Sōmavamśa and Pāṇḍava Kula; having a golden boar on his flag, and ruling at Hastināpura. The grants were made on the occasion of *Sar-payāga* performed by Janamējaya when he was on his southern expedition.

Lewis Rice remarks 'the inscriptions are undoubtedly ancient, but it is impossible to accept them as dating from the commonly conceived period for the commencement of the Kaliyuga when Janamējaya is said to have reigned, namely 3102 B.C.'³

As a matter of fact the synchronism between the aforesaid date of Kaliyuga with the Bhārata war has been questioned by quite a number of scholars.

Several dates ranging from 3102 B.C. to 700 B.C., have been suggested as the possible dates of this great event.⁴ D.C.Sicar has rightly pointed out 'If therefore the story developed on the basis of a genuine historical event, the latter must have been originally a petty family or tribal feud which formed the theme of a battle-song that was gradually embellished and magnified throughout the centuries by different poets and minstrels, ultimately developing into the great war-poem of the *Mahābhārata*, supposed to have been completed during the long period between the 4th Century B.C. and the 4th Century A.D.'⁵

It is thus evident that though the historicity of the nucleus of the *Mahābhārata* has been generally accepted, there is divergence of opinion among scholars about its chronology. Since king Udayana of Kauśāmbi, who flourished during the 5th Century B.C., is said to have been the 5th or 6th lineal descendent of Parikshita,⁶ the date of the war cannot be pushed back beyond the 7th Century B.C. This view is substantiated by the occurrence of personal and place names from the *Mahābhārata* in early inscriptions as will be seen below.

The draft of the copper plate grants of Janamējaya referred to above is identical with the charters of the early Chālukya rulers of Kalyāṇa and hence though

Lewis Rice has suggested 5th Century as their date they can reasonably be dated to the 11th or 12th Century A.D.⁷ It is also possible that the actual grants were made sometime earlier and were engraved on copper sheets at a later date. Janmējaya of the copper plates referred to above might have been a distant lineal descendent of Pāṇḍavas of the great epic, bearing the name of his celebrated ancestor, like the Mauryas of Konkan, who were the descendents of Chandragupta and Ashoka and had migrated to the Deccan.⁸ The *Śarpayāga* mentioned in these inscriptions may be a token of the continued tradition of the heroic achievement of his homonymous ancestor.

In the Chikurde copper plate, Janamējaya Chakravarti has been described as 'Parikshita Śātānīkasuta'. According to the Purāṇic genealogy, Śātānīka was the son of Janamējaya and grandson of Parikshita.⁹ This also shows that the donor of these charters claims himself to be a distant descendent of his name sake and not the Janamējaya of the epic. If it is so, these will have to be regarded as genuine records.

As found in the case of the Chālukyas, attempts to establish links with ancient ruling dynasties was a common practice particularly during the early medieval period. But this case does not seem to be of that category, because Janamējaya of these charters was not the founder of any kingdom. Through the earlier three grants he had gifted lands in the Shimoga district of Karnataka and the

fourth Chikurde grant registers his land grants in Karnataka 45,000 i.e., in the Satara-Kolhapur region of Maharashtra. He, therefore, seems to have been an officer of the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa governing different provinces at different times.

Several chiefs from the distant parts of India has migrated to the Deccan and entered the service under the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa. Bhima alias Bhivanaiyyā, a *Mahādaṇḍanāyaka* under Vikramāditya VI was a Kashmiri Brāhmaṇa.¹⁰ His court poet and biographer Bilhaṇa also hailed from the same region.¹¹ Another minister of Vikramāditya VI named Anantapāea, hailed from Gujarat¹², whereas Jagaddēva Paramāra, a prince of the Malawa ruling-house, was a governor of the Vidarbha - Marathawada region of Maharashtra.¹³ Shripati, the administrator of Dharmapuri under Sōmēśvara III was from Mathura.¹⁴ We have already referred to king Udayana of Kausāmbi who was a descendent of the Pāṇḍvas. Another descendent of Yudhisṭhira named Dhanañjaya figures in the Buddhist Jātaka stories.¹⁵

It follows that even after the rise of Magadha as an imperial power, scions of the Pāṇḍavas continued to hold some territories or positions in North India. In the adjoining parts of Madhya Pradesh and Orissa, two ruling dynasties known as the 'Pāṇḍavas of Mekala' and the 'Sōmavamśins of South Kosala' ruled during 6th, 7th 8th and 9th centuries A.D. In their charters they claim their descent from Sōmavamśa and Pāṇḍava Kula. Some of the kings of these dynas-

ties were named after Yayāti, Bharata, Udayana and Vatsarāja. They therefore, appear to be the descendents of Udayana of Vatsa. Janamējaya referred to above might have been a descendent of these Pāṇḍava rulers of South Kosala because in his grants there is a reference to Kaṭaka and Utkala which formed the part of the Kingdom of the Śōmavamsins of South Kosala and Janamējaya was the second name of Mahābhavagupta I of South Kosala.¹⁶ Therefore, it would not be wrong to presume that the four copper plate grants of Janamējaya referred to above have preserved the vestiges of the great epic in the form of a descendent of the Pāṇḍavas.

As pointed out by D.C.Sircar that the process of the composition of the *Mahābhārata* continued right upto the fourth century A.D., it is quite possible that some of the names of kings, their kingdoms and capitals occurring in this epic, may have belonged to later date. The reference to Antioch, Yavanas and particularly to the Rōmakas (Romans) and the Roman Dinars in the *Mahābhārata*, substantiates this conjecture.¹⁷ Several cities from the Deccan such as 'Śūrpāraka (Sopara, district Thane in Maharashtra)¹⁸ Karahāṭaka¹⁹ Karad, district Satara in the same state, Vanavāsi²⁰ (in the North Canara district of Karnataka) etc., have been mentioned in the epic.

Inscriptions from the cave temples of Maharashtra record the names of a large number of Yavanas as donors.²¹ This follows that in the Western Deccan, there

were Yavana settlements in the early centuries of the Christian era. An inscription from Nagarjunakonda belonging to the later half of the 3rd Century A.D., mentions a Yavana king of Sanjayapura among the earlier visitors to the place.²² He is mentioned along with the Śaka king Rudradāman of Avanti who flourished at the middle of the 2nd Century A.D. The place Sanjayapura has been identified with Sanjan in the Balsad district of Gujarat. In the *Mahābhārata* a place name Sanjayanti has been mentioned along with the Southern cities of Vanavāsi and Karahāṭaka.²³ Sanjayanti is also mentioned in an early inscription from Vanavāsi. It was identified with Vanavāsi which is not convincing,²⁴ because in the *Mahābhārata*, Vanavāsi and Sanjayanti have been mentioned in the same *ślōka* which shows that they represented two different places.²⁵ Sanjayanti probably represents Sanjayapura or Sanjan referred to above. This inscriptional evidence shows that the references to the Yavanas, Romakas and Sanjayanti in the *Mahābhārata*, present the picture of the Śaka-Sātavāhana period when there were brisk trade relations between India and the Roman-world and when the Graeco-Romans frequently visited the Western Coastal ports and trade centres. Dhenukāṭa or Junnar in the Pune district of Maharashtra was one of the places with the settlement of the Greeks.²⁶ Sanjan seems to be another place of such type.

The reference to a Yōnarāja of Sanjayapura is further interesting to note. It reveals that the western coastal region

not only had Greek settlements, but also a city or territory governed by a Yōna chief. The inclusion of Yavanas in the list of the subdued enemies by Gautamiputra Śātakarṇi, corroborates the same.²⁷ It follows that the political condition of the Deccan as existed during the early centuries of the Christian era, has been interpolated into the *Mahābhārata*. The evidence thus corroborates the observation of D.C. Sircar referred to above about the composition of the *Mahābhārata*. It also substantiates the possibility of the latest date (i.e., 700 B.C.) suggested by H.C. Raychaudhary about the chronology of the main story of this epic.²⁸ If investigations are carried on these lines, we may get more interesting clues connecting the places and personalities of the *Mahābhārata* with their early historic counterparts.

So far as the Deccan is concerned, the historicity of the Bhōja ruling dynasty of Vidarbha, which was related to Lord Kriṣṇa, has been established by epigraphic evidences. The Bhōjas are mentioned in the inscriptions of Aśoka and also of Khāravēla.²⁹ Their royal seat Kuṇḍinapura has been identified with Kauṇḍinyapur in the Vardha district of the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra.³⁰ Curiously enough, the place has maintained the form of its ancient name without much variation. The excavation at this town has confirmed its antiquity. It was the royal seat of Bhōja Bhīṣmaka, the father of Rukmiṇi and father-in-law of Lord Kriṣṇa. His son Rukmi, is said to have built a new township and named it as Bhōjakata.³¹ The historicity

of this place has also been established by its mention in Vākāṭaka grants³² and an early inscription from Bharhut.³³ From its geographical details, as given in the grants, the Bhōjakata division included the northern part of the present Amravati district of Vidarbha. A place known as Bhatkuli near Amravati is traditionally regarded as the present equivalent of Rukmi's Bhōjakata.³⁴ Though phonetically Bhatkuli does not have any affinity with Bhōjakata, the tradition, its antiquity and its location within the ancient division of Bhōjakata, should not leave any doubt about this identification. On the basis of these evidences the Bhōjas mentioned in the inscriptions of Aśoka and Khāravāla will have to be regarded as the descendants of Bhōja Bhīṣmaka and Rukmi. The link of this ruling dynasty which played an important role in the *Mahābhārata*, is thus established upto the Maurya-Sātavāhana period.

It seems that the Bhōjas governed Vidarbha as the subordinates of the Mauryas as long as this ruling dynasty was in power. In this respect the point raised by Ajayamitra Shastri about the history of Vidarbha following the downfall of the Mauryas is worth considering. He has pointed out that Yajñasēna mentioned in the *Mālavikāgnimitram* of Kālidāsa as the ruler of Vidarbha and the antagonist of Agnimitra and the former's cousin Mādhasēna, were historical persons.³⁵ If at all the historicity of this story is to be accepted, these princes of Vidarbha mentioned in the *Mālavikāgnimitram*, will have to be regarded as the scions of the Bhōja dynasty referred to above.

With the advent of the Sātavāhanas, the Bhōjas of Vidarbha probably accepted their suzerainty. It seems that the Bhōja chiefs asserted paramount position following the end of the Sātavāhanas. In this respect the Pauni pillar inscription from the Bhandara district in Vidarbha region, is quite important.³⁶ It is a *Chhāyā Stambha* of Kumāra Rupiamma who is described as Mahākshatrapa. Mirashi has stated that he was a Śaka chief, appointed by the Kushāṇa kings as the Mahākshatrapa of Vidarbha because, his name sounds like an 'Indianised form of a Scythian name, and his title also is an imitation of the Śaka kshatrapas.

On palaeographic grounds the Pauni inscription has been placed in the second century A.D. It follows that Mahākshatrapa Rupiamma held the eastern part of Vidarbha at least for some time following the death of the last great Sātavāhana king Yajñaśri Śātakarṇi. The sovereignty of the Kushāṇas over the Deccan is yet to be established though Mirashi thinks so.³⁷ Therefore, like the Mahākshatrapas of Western India, Rupiamma also will have to be treated as an independent ruler.

Rupiamma cannot be treated as a Scythian simply on the basis of his title Mahākshatrapa, because during the 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D., this title was adopted by several non-Śaka chiefs. Mahākshatrapa Īśvaradatta is an example from this region itself. Shobhana Gokhale has rightly identified him with Ābhira king Īśvarasēna of the Nasik inscription.³⁸ Another non-Śaka Mahākshatrapa Vāśishṭhiputra has come

to light by the discovery of his coin at Junnar in Pune district of Maharashtra.³⁹ Suresh Vasant has identified this chief with the Sātavāhana king Vāśishṭhiputra Śivaśrī Pulumāvi, which is untenable because the coin in question has more affinity with the Kshatrapa coins than that of the Sātavāhanas and secondly the adoption of the title Mahākshatrapa by a Sātavāhana king looks unhistorical. The present writer feels that since the Ābhira king Īśvarasēna or Īśvaradatta had adopted this title as seen above, Vāśishṭhiputra Mahākshatrapa will have to be treated as an Ābhira and identified with Ābhira king Vāśishṭhiputra Vāsushēna of the Nagarjunakonda inscription, whom D.C. Sircar has regarded as the successor of Ābhira Īśvarasēna.⁴⁰ An inscription from Mathura belonging to the same period, records the adoption of the Mahākshatrapa title by a *Brāhmaṇa* chief. It then follows that during the post-Sātavāhana period the Mahākshatrapa title had assumed equivalence with the title of 'Mahārāja' and was adopted by a number of non-Śaka chiefs. Rupiamma of the Pauni inscription was probably another non-Śaka chief adopting this title.

Mirashi's contention about the Scythian origin of the name Rupiamma is also untenable. This personal name contains 'Rupi' as the main content and 'amma' as its suffix. The inscription is in Prākṛit. 'Rupi' therefore seems to be the Prakrit form of 'Rukmi' which was the name of a Bhōja prince as seen above, because in the Jaina literature and the Prākṛit work *Vāsudēvahimḍi*, 'Rukmi' and

'Rukmiṇi' have been spelt as 'Ruppi' and 'Ruppiṇi'.⁴² Considering the practice of naming descendents after the names of their ancestors, which was quite common in ancient India, and the location of the provenance of the inscription within the Vidarbha region, Rupiamma of the Pauni inscription will have to be treated as a descendent of Bhōja Rukmi the brother-in-law of Krishṇa. It is quite

possible that when the Ābhiras occupied central and western Maharashtra following the death of Yajñaśrī, Bhōja Rupiamma whose family governed Vidarbha as the subordinates of the Sātavāhanas, asserted paramount position in eastern Vidarbha. If this view is accepted it will confirm the link between the *Mahābhārata* story and later period through such inscripational vestiges.

References.

1. Lewis Rice, *Mysore Inscriptions* 1879, Inscription Nos. 130,133 and 137.
2. S.G.Tulpule, *Prāchin Marāṭhi Koriv Lēkh* (Marāṭhi), Pune, 1963, Inscription No.61.
3. Lewis Rice, *Mysore and Coorg*, Bangalore, 1877, p.189.
4. D.C. Sircar(Ed.). *The Bhārata War and Puranic Genealogies*, University of Calcutta, 1969, pp. 18-27.
5. *Ibid*
6. *Ibid*
7. S.G. Tulpule *op. cit.* Due to the striking similarity between the Chikurde grant and the characters of the Chalukyas the late V.K. Rajwade, identified Janamējaya with Vijayaditya, the Chalukya king of Badami, whereas Tulpule connected him with the Chalukyas of Kalyāṇa.
8. D.C. Sircar, *The Successors of the Sātavāhanas in the lower Deccan*, Calcutta, 1939, p.216
9. D.C. Sircar (Ed). *The Bhārata War*, *op. cit* pp 52-53.
10. N.S. Pohnerkar and H.S. Thosar, 'Journal of the Epigraphical Society of of India '. Vol XIII, pp. 34-40
11. B.R. Gopal, *The Chalukyas of Kalyāṇa and the Kalachuris*, Karanataka University, Dharwad, 1981, p.425
12. R.N.Gurav, *Studies in Indian History and Culture*, Dharwad, 1975, p.229.
13. H.S. Thosar, *Studies in the Historical and Cultural Geography and Ethnography of Marathwada* (An unpublished thesis), Marathwada University, Aurangabad, 1977, pp. 25-26.
14. *Ibid*, p. 27
15. R.C. Majumdar (ed). *The Age of Imperial Unity*, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, 1968, p. 11.
16. Ajay Mitra Shastri, *Early History of the Deccan : Problems and prespectives*, Delhi 1987, pp.192-239
17. 1) F. Edgerton, "Journal of the American Oriental Society", 1938, Rome in the Mahābhārata.
2) P.V. Kane, *History of Dharmashastras*, Vol . I Part I, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona,

1968, pp.375-376.

18. Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency, Bombay 1884, Vol XIV, Thana district, p.124.
19. K.D.Deshpande, *Bharatiya Itihas Ani Sanskriti* (Marathi Quarterly) January - March 1987, pp. 16-26.
20. *Ibid.*
21. H.S. Thosar, "Journal of the Epigraphical Society of India". vol XV pp.97-107.
22. K.G.Krishnan, *Uttankita Vidyāranya Epigraphs*, Vol. II, Mysore 1989, Inscription No. 175.
23. K.d. Deshpande, op. cit
24. V.V. Mirashi, *The History and Inscriptions of the Satavāhanas and the Western Kshatrapas, Bombay, 1981* p. 94
25. K.D. Deshpande, op.cit.
26. H.S. Thosar, Dhenukākāṭa - the earliest metropolis of the Deccan, paper presented at the Poona Session of the South Indian History Congress, November, 1988.
27. V.V. Mirashi, *The History and Inscriptions*, op.cit, Inscription No. 18.
28. Hemachandra Raychaudhuri, *Political History of Ancient India*, Calcutta, 1950, P.32.
29. P.B. Desai, *Epigraphia Indica*, XXVIII, PP. 70-75.
30. M.G. Dikshit, *Excavations at Koundinyapur*, Nagpur, 1964, P. 2.
31. *Ibid.*
32. V.V. Mirashi, *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol. V, Ootacamund, 1963, Inscription No. 6.
33. 1) Lüders List No. 723
2) B.C. Law, *Geography of Early Buddhism*, P. 62.
34. M.G. Dikshit, op.cit.
35. Ajayamitra Shastri, op.cit. pp. 9-10.
36. V.V. Mirashi, op.cit, Ins. No. 62.
37. B.N. Mukherjee, *Kushanas and the Deccan*, Pilgrim Publishers. Calcutta, 1968, pp. 28-34.
38. Shobhana Gokhale, "Journal of the Numismatic Society of India". Vol. XL, pp. 37 ff.
39. Suresh Vasant, *Madhu*, Delhi, 1989, pp. 165-167.
40. D.C. Sircar, *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol XXXIV, pp. 197-203.
41. Lüder's List No. 82.
42. A.P. Jamkhedkar, *Vāsudēvahimṇī - A Cultural Study*, Delhi, 1984, P. 243.

3. SHELL INSCRIPTIONS IN CENTRAL INDIA

R.K.Sharma

Shell inscriptions are known since the times of James Prinsep but no adequate attention has been paid to the study of this script on account of its illegibility. Efforts made earlier to decipher Shell inscriptions proved unsuccessful. However, new dimensions have been added to the knowledge of this subject since key to decipherment of the script has been provided by Prof. B.N. Mukherjee.* Time is now ripe to document the Shell inscriptions located throughout India and outside the country and publish them so that the newly found source material may be fruitfully utilised by the scholarly world.

In an effort to achieve this objective, as far as Central India is concerned, the author of the present paper has extensively explored parts of M.P., and adjoining districts of U.P., and Maharashtra and his efforts have led him to locate 303 Shell inscriptions till date. Highlights of these inscriptions may be summarised as follows:-

Vidisha is the richest area in M.P. as far Shell inscriptions are concerned. Total number of Shell inscriptions discovered from the district is 158, of which 92 exist in the painted Rock - shelters at Ahmadpur, 31 in Rock - shelters at Gupha Maser, 32 in the monuments at Udaigiri Hills and 3 found during the excavations conducted in 1913-14.

Raisen, the district adjoining Vidisha is next important area from the point

of view of the Shell inscriptions. The painted Rock - shelters at Bhimbetka have 33 genuine Shell inscriptions. There are a few forged inscriptions too at the site. Then-Kā Talab Rock - shelters have 8 and Makoria 12 painted inscriptions found on the walls and ceilings of the shelters. The Asokan pillar at Sanchi has one beautifully carved Shell inscription. Thus the total number of Shell inscriptions found in the district is 54.

Bhopal, the capital of M.P., itself contains 39 Shell inscriptions painted in Rock - shelters and carved on stone.

The important site of Eran in district Sagar has 18 beautifully carved Shell inscriptions found on different monuments existing here. The inscriptions are of different phases.

From the remains of the Stupa at Bharhut (in Satna dist.) now preserved in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, three Shell inscriptions are found.

The Kankalidēvi temple at Tigowa in Jabalpur district has two well carved Shell inscriptions - the first on a pillar and the second on the side wall of the temple.

Kanwar-Palari in Durg district of M.P., has also yielded one Shell inscription carved on a pillar in the temple of Narashimhanātha.

Deogarh in the Jhansi district of U.P.,

has yielded six carved Shell inscriptions - two from the Daśāvatāra temple, one from the Varāha temple and three from the Siddha-ki-Guphā.

The remains in the fort of Kalinjar in the Banda district of U.P., have yielded three beautifully carved Shell inscriptions in a hurriedly conducted exploration. The site is potentially rich from the point of view of Shell inscriptions.

In the district of Nagpur in Maharashtra, adjoining M.P., one Shell inscription has been reported from Mahādeo Ghāt on the river Kanhan. A few more defaced Shell inscriptions are known since long from Mansar in the Ramtek taluka.

A hurried look at three inscriptions found from Central India brings to light the following characteristics.

1. These inscriptions have been noticed on stone surfaces, painted rock-shelters, structural walls, columns, stairways, and sculptures.
2. Most of the inscriptions are distinguished by high degree of calligraphy or ornamentation. However, this is not always true. The pillar inscription in the Kankalidēvi temple at Tigowa and cave no. 5 of Udaigiri hills are absolutely devoid of all calligraphy and ornamentation.
3. The reading of Shell inscriptions in India, including those from Central India has proved that the ornamented

characters are based on letters written from *left to right*.

4. Sometimes shapes of the letters are grotesque or exotic.
5. The characters are written in *cur-sive* style. Superfluous lines are often added to impose illegibility.
6. The characters are often *slanted* clockwise or anti-clockwise from their vertical position. Inscriptions from other parts of India show that the angle of slant varies from 60° to 90°.
7. The letters are often put within *circle* and / or *decorative patterns*. Diacritical marks are often added to develop ornamental flourishes. Extra strokes are now and then added to different sections of the extended diacritical marks. Also additional lines and designs, having no organic link with the characters are added to increase camouflaging.
8. Shell inscriptions are always brief. Till now not more than nine characterized inscriptions have been found. However, in our exploration at Ahmadpur in Vidisha district, we have come across a number of Shell inscriptions having fifteen characters, similar to the one found at Susunia hills in the Bankura district of West Bengal.
9. Shell inscriptions deciphered till now show that the language used in the in-

scriptions is mostly Sanskrit or Sanskrit mixed with Prakrit.

The established period of the use of Shell script is supposed to be from 1st. century B.C. / A.D. to 8th century A.D. Prof.B.N.Mukherjee has arrived at this conclusion on the basis of number of indirect references. Our exploration at Ahmadpur has not only confirmed the theory of Prof.Mukherjee as far as its earliest use is concerned, by providing an archeological evidence but has pushed it at an earlier date. In Rock-shelter no.A-9 at Ahmadpur we have come across a long Brahmi inscription datable to 1st century B.C. / A.D., which is superimposed on an inscription in Shell character. This proves a date earlier than 1st century B.C. / A.D., for the use of Shell inscriptions.

Decipherment of Shell inscriptions found in Central India is yet to be done. Readings of two inscriptions from Deogarh and Bharhut are as follows:

1. *Śrī Govinda* - on the pillar at Deogarh
2. *Savachare 90 phuva phuchavo* - (i.e., *samvatsare 90 pūrva utsavaḥ* - in the year 90, the Eastern festival). This Shell inscription is on a pillar railing near the eastern gate of Bharhut, now preserved in the Indian Museum at Calcutta.

Two other inscriptions from Bharhut along with eleven others from different sites preserved in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, have all been deciphered and are being released in the form of a monograph by the Indian Museum. The author of the present paper is currently busy in deciphering the Shell inscriptions from Eran.

The task of locating Shell inscriptions in Central India is yet incomplete. Further explorations to be undertaken during the current year may prove that Central India is possibly the richest concentrated area as far as Shell inscriptions are concerned.

*[While the decipherment of name Mahēndrāditya engraved on the back of the horse in shell script by Mukherjee, is highly creditable, the key as such to the decipherment of all inscriptions in the shell script is yet to be evolved. Ed.]

4. ON KAVIDI HONORIFIC OF A DEVADASI

K. Sadasivan

In the medieval days great honours were heaped upon a few qualified *dēvadāsīs* for their attainments in the arts or their meritorious service to the state. The Imperial Chōlas had profusely conferred a select few high sounding honorifics such as *talaikkōli*, *sāntikkūtti* and *māṇikkam*. A large number of inscriptions¹ mention *dēvadāsīs* with the suffix *talaikkōli* in their names. Expert dancing-girls, from the days of Mādavi, were recipients of this honorific as a mark of their proficiency in the art. Mādavi, an adept in the sixty-four arts, was conferred this title of honour by Karikālasōlaṅ on her majestic performance of dance on the auspicious day of her dance debut (*arrangērru*). The honorific of *sāntikkūtti* was conferred only on those *dēvadāsīs*, who had already established their mastery in performing the particular dance form called *sāntikkūtt*². The title of *māṇikkam* literally meaning 'ruby' is found in inscriptions of medieval days as another honorific conferred on quite a number of *dēvadāsīs* throughout Tamil Nadu,⁴ perhaps indicating their uniqueness. The Chōlas had even gone to the extent of naming villages after the names of *dēvadāsīs*⁵ and permitting their benefactions to go on records as *dēvadiyāl kaṭṭalāi*^{5a} (order of a *dēvadāsi*).

The later Pāṇdyas had also continued the Chōla practice in good stead. Under them *dēvadāsīs* were conferred various honorifics such as *maṅṅarai muḍisūttum perumāḷ* (the 'king-maker'),

*Kulasēkhara māṇikkam*⁷ (the 'ruby of Kulasekhara'), *Tiruvēṅkaṭa māṇikkam*⁸ (the 'ruby of Tiruvēṅkaṭam), etc. Another title of honour very rarely conferred on select *dēvadāsīs* was *Kāvīdi*. A Pāṇḍya record from Palliṁmaḍam in Ramanathapuram district refers to this title as a honorific prefixed to the name of a few *dēvadāsīs*, viz., *Kāvīdi Kaṇai Perṅṅāl* and *Kāvīdi Taṅgi*. A study is made in this paper to find out the exact meaning of this title.

The earliest reference to this title occurs in an inscription of the time of Pāṇḍyaṅ Neḍuñcheliyaṅ (probably of 3rd - 2nd century B.C.) from Mīṇākshipuram near Madurai.¹⁰ It was conferred on some important persons of the state as a symbol of state recognition. Inscriptions of the Chōla period inform us that it was conferred on some government officials.¹¹

Regarding its meaning, *Abithāṇa Chintāmaṇi* states that it was 'a title conferred on a Vellāla cultivator by the Pāṇdyas'.¹² Whereas the *Tamil-English Dictionary* says that it was an 'ancient title conferred on Vellālas by Pāṇḍya kings, title bestowed on Vaiśya ladies, ministers, accountant caste, and collector of revenues'.¹³ The *Tamil Lexicon* also traces these five classes of the recipients of this title.¹⁴ By the term *Kāvīdi*, the commentator of *Maduraikkāñchi* means the Vellāla ministers. But by the term *Kāvīdimai*, an epigraph indicates the work of accountants.¹⁶ The term, therefore,

in common parlance, may mean Vellāla minister in charge of revenue accounts.

However, it is learnt from inscriptions that it was conferred not only on artists such as *dēvadāsis*, but also on those artists who had the supervisory powers.¹⁷ The Rājarājēsvarṃ record of Rājarāja I (A.D. 985-1014) refers to one Aṛaiyaṃ Maṇalilingaṃ *alias* Śembiaṃ Peruṃ Kāvīdi, who enjoyed the supervisory power and received one share as remuneration.¹⁸ If this view is taken into consideration, then the mention of this term in the above Pāṇḍya record may re-

fer to that *dēvadāsi* who held the post of supervisor of other artists.

But to C.Govindarajan the term *Kāvīdi Kaṇai Perrāl* stands for that *dēvadāsi* who received this title of honour and as a mark of it she was presented with a *Kaṇaiyāli*, i.e., a ring in gold,¹⁹ and some tax-free lands as remuneration (*kāṇi*)²⁰. Therefore, the honorific *Kāvīdi Kaṇai Perrāl* here means that *dēvadāsi* who held the post of supervisor of other artists and in recognition of which she was complemented with a golden ring.

References

1. (Eg.) 'Uṛavākkiṇa Talaikkōli' (SITI., Vol. I, No. 520) 'Tyāgaviṇṇōdattalaikkōli' (Vol. XVII, No. 455).
2. *Talaikkōl* was a staff made of bamboo or the handle of the umbrella, taken away from the defeated king's land; it was of 7 *jūṇ* length. Decorated with beads and beautified with golden rings round, it was purified by water taken from sacred rivers. The staff representing Jayantha (Sayanthaṃ), son of Indra, was worshipped and taken out in procession on the auspicious day of *Indravūā* (festival in honour of Indra). The king, ministers, priest and others had to pay their obeisance to it. The dance-master, standing in the temple car, received and placed it in the dance theatre (*aṛaṅgu*). After the rituals were over, it was presented to the expert dancer on the auspicious day of her dance debut (*aṛuṅgēṛṇu*). Thenceforth the awardees were called as *talaikkōlis*. (*Silappadikaram*, 3: 1-140; Aḍiyārkkunallār Commentary), U.V.S. edition, pp. 116-199 and 361-378).
3. SII., Vol. XVII, Nos. 455, 593 and 606. *Pudukottai State Inscriptions*, Nos. 128 & 275.
4. (Eg.) Pollāda Piḷḷaiyānā Tirujñāna Sambanda Māṇikkam (IPS, No. 162. Also SII., Vol. I, No.118; *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. VII, p.193).
5. *A.R.Ep.*, of 1912, No. 211.
5. a) SII., Vol. XIX, No. 228.
6. *A.R.Ep.*, of 1928-29, No. 306.
7. *Ibid.*, of 1935-36, No. 190.
8. *Srivilliputtūr Sthalapurāṇam*, (1980), p.51.n.
9. SII., Vol. XIV, No. 83.

10. N. Kasinathan and K. Damodaran, *Kalveṭṭu: An Introduction*, (TI.), Madras, 1976, p. 38.
11. *SII.*, Vol. XIV, No. 16.
12. A. Singaravelu Mudaliar, *Abithāna Chintāmaṇi*, New Delhi, 1981, p.420.
13. R. Balakrishna Mudaliar, (ed.) *Tamil English Dictionary*, Madras, 1976, p.163.
14. (i) Veḷḷāḷas, (ii) Vaisya ladies, (iii) Minister, (iv) Accountant, v) collector of revenues. *Tamil Lexicon*, Vol. II, pt.i, p. 903.
15. *Maduraikkāñchi*, 1.499, Kalāḍam Commentary, 1977, p. 128.
16. *SII.*, Vol.II, No. 277: Also the author of a poem in *Narriṇai* was ḷampullūr - Kāvidi. (*Narriṇai*, 89 Mullai).
17. *SII.*, Vol. II, No. 66.
18. R. Nagaswamy, (ed.), *Thaṅjai-Peruvudaiyār Kōyil Kalveṭṭukaḷ*, part I, Madras, 1969.
19. C.Govindarajan, *Kalveṭṭuk Kalaichchol Akaramudali* (A.D. 7-12), (TI.), Madurai, 1987 p.p. 131
20. *SII.*, Vol. XIX, No. 63.

5. TENNERI INSCRIPTION OF RAJARAJA I

S. Swaminathan

Tenneri is a small village in the Kanchipuram taluk of the Chengai-Anna district. The two temples in the village Āpatsahāyēśvara temple and Kandalīśvara contain several inscriptions.¹ An inscription of the great Chōla emperor Rājarāja I² is found engraved on the north wall of the central shrine of the latter temple. This inscription, on account of its interesting nature, is reexamined here.

The *Sabhā* of Uttamaśōla-chaturvēdi-maṅgalam, a division of Ūrṛukkātṭuk-kōṭṭam met in general assembly (*peruṅguṟi*) at the courtyard of Śrīmummuḍichōla-ṅṅar-ālvār temple in the twelfth regnal year and two hundred and thirty first day of Kō-kajarājakēsari-varman, who had destroyed Śālai, and passed a resolution according to which the *sabhā* inflicted penalty (*daṇḍa kāṇam paṭṭu*) on Vikkiannaṅ *alias* Vikramachōla-brahmādarāyaṅ by divesting him of his share (of land) (*paṅgu-pōṭṭu = cheidv*) and declared the amount (realised by way of selling the same) to be deposited (in the treasury).

This inscription belongs to the Chōla king Rājarāja I (985-1014 A.D.) who was credited with the feat of destroying the Chōra king's fleet at Śālai as mentioned in our record. The date of this inscription is 6th March, 998 A.D.³ The *praśasti* of this inscription is a shortened form of Rājarāja I's usual

long *praśasti* 'Tirumagaḷ pōla'.⁴ But this contracted form Śālai kalam aṟutta Kō-Rājarājakēsari is also met with in several inscriptions of this ruler.⁵

This inscription which is engraved in the Kandalīśvara temple refers to the meeting of the *sabhā* at the courtyard of a Vishṇu temple, Śrīmummuḍichōla-ṅṅar-ālvār. Unfortunately the latter temple is not traceable though it might have been a flourishing one during the time of Rājarāja I. The Vishṇu temple was named after one of the titles of Rājarāja I, who was also called Mummuḍi-Chōla.⁶

The name of the individual suggests that he must have been a highly placed *brāhmaṇa* official.⁷ His real name was Vikkiannaṅ. The title 'Vikramachōla-brahmādarāyaṅ' must have been conferred on him by the king in recognition of some meritorious services rendered by this official. During the reign of Rājarāja I, services of senior officials were recognised and they were rewarded with titles. Sēnāpati Kuravaṅ Ulagaḷandāṅ *alias* Irāśarāśa-mārāyaṅ was a distinguished general of the Chōla army. It was he who had minutely conducted land revenue survey throughout the Chōla country and classified lands according to their quality, which fetched him the title 'Ulagaḷandāṅ Irāśarāśa-mārāyaṅ'.⁸ In the inscription edited here, the title of the official is given as Vikramaśōla-brahmādarāyaṅ. This title consists of Vikramaśōla + brahma +

adirāyaṇ. The second part *brahma* indicates his caste, *brāhmaṇa*. The third part *adirāyaṇ* is one of the few highly valued titles given to big officers. The first segment 'Vikramaśōḷa' is probably after one of the titles assumed by the king Rājarāja I himself. A bigger title *Brahmamārāyaṇ* was conferred on certain senior officials like Śēnāpati Kṛishṇaṇ Irāmaṇ alias Mummudichōḷa Brahmamārāyaṇ who had constructed the outer wall of the Rājarājēśvara temple at Thaṅjāvūr.⁹ Rājarāja Vājyamārāyan was another senior official who had enquired into the cash endowments of the temple at Vēdāraṇyam.¹⁰ In the last two instances Mummudichōḷa and Rājarāja were the names of the said Chōḷa king. Hence, in the title Vikramaśōḷa-brahmādarāyaṇ, the first segment *Vikramaśōḷa* must have been after one of the titles of Rājarāja I.

The official mentioned in the record was penalised by the *sabhā*. The nature of the misdemeanor perpetrated by him that attracted the stringent penalty is not recorded. Inscriptions of Rājarāja I inform that offences like non-payment of taxes on land,¹¹ misappropriation of common property,¹² betraying royal command,¹³ regicide,¹⁴ etc., were deemed serious offences that warranted the seizure of the property of the accused. It did not deter the local assembly from punishing an erring person though he was a high official. An inscription¹⁵ of Rājarāja I from Uḍaiyārguḍi reported that the king had instructed the *sabhā* of Vīranārāyaṇachaturvēdimāṅalam to confiscate the properties of the high officials, Sōmaṇ

and his younger brothers Ravidāsapañchavan-brahmādhirājaṇ and Paramēśvara Irumudichōḷa-brahmādhirājaṇ, who had been found guilty of treason in the murder of Āditya II Karikāla, the Chōḷa ruler. The properties of these three persons were to be taken over and sold, and the proceeds were to be deposited in the treasury. It is tempting to say that the official of our inscription might have also been guilty of such crimes. But it is to be noted here that in the above mentioned Uḍaiyārguḍi inscription the *sabhā* was ordered to effect the sale by a royal order. In the inscription edited here it seems the *sabhā* had acted on its own, independent of the central government. What could be the reason for this pre-emptory decision of the *Sabhā* ?

An inscription of Rājarāja I¹⁶ dated in his eleventh regnal year and two hundred twentieth day from the same temple in the village, Teṅṅēri, contains a declaration of the great assembly of Uttamaśōḷachaturvēdimāṅalam, that those who were guilty of pilfering property of the *brāhmaṇas* and of other heinous crimes (not specified) could not be appointed as members in the *vāriyam* committee of the village or discuss any matters in the assembly. Any one chosen in contravention of these rules would be accorded the same punishment as was usually meted out to the transgressors of the royal order.

Another record¹⁷ of the same ruler from the same place dated in his eleventh year and one hundred and sixty fourth day states that the village assembly of Uttama-śōḷachaturvēdimāṅalam met

in the temple and passed a déclaration that only those persons who were well-versed in the *mantrabrāhmaṇa* could be elected as members of the village supervision committee and could take part in the deliberations of the village assembly. Any one who was elected to the *vāriyam* and participated in the proceedings of the assembly in violation of the rules would be accorded the same punishment as was usually awarded to the transgressors of royal order.

It is not unlikely that the official figuring in the inscription edited here might have committed crimes reported above or he could have been instrumental in appointing members to the *sabhā* by using his power and influence in violation of all the established norms and the members who were so elected might have brought disrepute to the administration of the *sabhā*. It is important to note that in less than a year of passing the two resolutions detailed above the *sabhā* imposed penalty on the official *Vikkiṇṇaṇ* alias *Vikramaśōḷa-brahmādarāyaṇ*.

Incidentally these records also show the freedom and autonomy enjoyed by the village assemblies. They exercised great concern and care in maintaining the decorum of the assembly. They were equally anxious in implementing their decision and its subsequent maintenance and consolidation. They did not brook violation of rules from any quarter and did not hesitate to pull down any defaulter, however high his rank may be.

Now a word may be said about the

village place-name *Tennēri* from where the inscription under study comes. In the *Kaśākkūḍi* plates¹⁸ of the Pallava ruler *Nandivarman II Pallavamalla*, the king had donated the village *Koḍukolli* in *Ūrṛukkāṭṭuk-kōṭṭam* as *brahmadēya* to *Seṭṭireṅga-Sōmayājīn*. Among the privileges that were appended with this grant were the donee's right to dig river channels and inundation channels for conducting water from the *Śeyyāru*, the *Veḥkā*, and the tank of *Tiraiyaṇ* (*Tirayaṇēri*).¹⁹ As the village *Tennēri* is situated in the same division *Ūrṛukkāṭṭuk-kōṭṭam* it is not incorrect to suggest that it had obtained its name after this tank *Tirayaṇēri*.²⁰ The latter name, perhaps, was derived from *Toṇḍaimāṇ* *ḷlantiraiyaṇ*,²¹ the mythical ruler who ruled *Kāñchīpuram*, the capital of the Pallavas. It may also be noted that the village *Tennēri*, which is in the *Kanchipuram* taluk, is nearer to *Kāñchīpuram*. But during the days of *Rājarāja I* the village was called *Uttamaśōḷa-chaturvēdimāṅalam*.²² Perhaps a brāhmanical settlement was created during the reign of *Uttama-chōḷa* (970-85 A.D.), the predecessor of *Rājarāja I* or during the time of the latter whose inscription is the earliest one available in the village.²³ An inscription of the above ruler dated in his 11th regnal year²⁴ recounts the contributions made by *Sembiyaṇ Mahādēvi*, the mother of *Uttama-chōḷa*. It is also not impossible that the brāhmanical settlement might have been created by *Śembiyaṇ Mahādēvi*, whose benefactions and charities are well-known, after the name of her

son during the reign of Rājarāja I.

Uttamaśōḷa-chaturvēdimaṅgalam was located in the same kūṛram (*tāṅ kūṛru*), i.e., Ūṛṛukkāṭṭuk-kōṭṭam. The latter was one of the 24 ancient divisions²⁵ (*kōṭṭam*) of Toṇḍai maṅḍalam. It owed its name to Ūṛṛukkāḍu, a village in the Kanchipuram taluk.²⁶ This *kōṭṭam* was divided into:

- 1 Āṛṛūr-nāḍu, which included of the village Āṛṛūr²⁷
- 2 Pālaiyūr-nāḍu, which included Pālaiyūr²⁸,
- 3 Ūṛṛukkāḍu-nāḍu which included

Pūsiṅpākkam, Achcharappākkam *alias* Parāntakanallūr²⁹,

- 4 Kuṅṅra-nāḍu which comprised Vēlakkōṅ-maṅgalam³⁰,
- 5 Nīrvēḷūr-nāḍu, which included Kūram,³¹ Śivaṅkūḍal,³² Tīnkāḍu-pākkam.³³

The following villages were also included in Ūṛṛukkāṭṭuk-kōṭṭam :

Śīyapuram,³⁴ Brahmakuḷattūr *alias* Vēṭṭaikkāraṅ-kuḷattūr,³⁵ Vēḷimānallūr,³⁶ Aḷiṅkaṅappākkam,³⁷ Kāvāṅṭaṅḍalam,³⁸ Narrāyanallūr³⁹ and Kaṅuvūr.⁴⁰

References

- 1 There are 40 inscriptions copied from this village. They are : *SII.*, Vol. VII, Nos. 400-414, *A.R.Ep.*, 1922, Nos. 221-245.
- 2 *SII.*, Vol. VII, No. 414.
- 3 This date is arrived after calculating from the day of Rājarāja I's accession on 18th July 985, fixed by N. Sethuraman, vide *Early Chōḷas. Mathematics Reconstruct Chronology*, p. 18.
- 4 *SII.*, Vol. III, Nos. 15, 16, 17, 19; *Ibid.*, II, Nos. 3, 4, 5.
- 5 *Ibid.*, VII Nos. 32, 154, 841, 882.
- 6 *Ibid.*, II, P. 1.
- 7 *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXI, p. 167.
- 8 K.A.N.Sastri : *The Chōḷas* (1955), p. 189.
- 9 *SII.*, Vol. II, No. 33.
- 10 *Ibid.*, XVII, No. 492.
- 11 *Ibid.*, III, No. 9.
- 12 *A.R.Ep.*, 1922, No. 218; *Ibid.*, 1917, No. 199.
- 13 *TAS.*, Vol. IV, No. 29, p. 129.

- 14 *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXI, p. 167,
- 15 *Ibid.*
- 16 *A.R.Ep.*, 1922, No. 240
- 17 *Ibid.*, No. 240.
- 18 *SII.*, Vol. II, p. 345.
- 19 *Ibid.*
- 20 *Ibid.*, pp. 351-352.
- 21 R.Gopalan : *History of the Pallavas of Kenchi*, (1928), pp. 21, 28.
- 22 *SIL.*, Vol. VII, Nos. 411, 412, 413, 414.
- 23 *Ibid.*, No. 411.
- 24 *Ibid.*
- 25 *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 345.
- 26 *Ibid.*, also see *SII.*, Vol. XIII, No. 269.
- 27 *Ibid.*, XVII, No. 320.
- 28 *Ibid.*, XIII, No. 133.
- 29 *Ibid.*, XXVI, No. 84; *Ibid.*, XVII, No. 741.
- 30 *Ibid.*, XIII, No. 97.
- 31 *Ibid.*, VII, No. 37.
- 32 *A.R.Ep.*, 1912, No. 285
- 33 *SII.*, Vol. XXVI, No. 349.
- 34 *Ibid.*, XII, No. 75.
- 35 *Ibid.*, XXVI, No. 338.
- 36 *Ibid.*, XXIII, No. 330.
- 37 *Ibid.*, III, p. 91.
- 38 *Ibid.*
- 39 *Ibid.*, p. 412.
- 40 *Ibid.*

6. ENNAYIRAM INSCRIPTION OF RAJARAJA I

S.Rajavelu

The subjoined inscription of Rājarāja I is engraved on three sides of a stone slab planted in front of the Saptamātrikā temple at Enṇāyiram, Villupuram Taluk, South Arcot District, Tamil Nadu. It was copied by the author during his epigraphical survey¹. The importance of the inscription lies in the fact that it is an unique inscription which discloses an interesting information regarding a new type of village administrative body and it also focuses some light on the prevalence of *mātrikā* worship in a separate temple.

Enṇāyiram, now an insignificant village, was functioning as an important centre for learning during the middle Chōla period. An inscription of Rājarājendrachōla I furnishes some valuable information about a vēdic college and a hostel flourishing in this village².

The inscription under study consists of 87 lines of writing. It is in Tamil language and script and Grantha letters are used in writing Sanskrit words such as *Svasti śrī*, *Gaṅgapāḍi*, *Rājakēśarivarmmar*, *Rājarājadēvar*, *Brahmadēyam*, *Śrī Rājarāja-chaturvēdimāṅgalam*, *saṁvatsaram*, *Śramakāryam*, *Brahmasthanam*, *sandhi*, *saptamātrikkā*, *śilālēkhai*, etc. Palaeographically the inscription does not call for any remarks but it comes under the category of rural type of palaeography. Though it is in a good state of preservation, some letters in the signatory portion of the inscription are worn-out.

The inscription begins with the usual *praśasti* (historical introduction) of Rājarāja I, *Tirumagaḷ-pōla*, etc. The grant portion of the epigraph says that in the 23rd year, 67th day of the king's reign corresponding to 1007 A.D. the village-body called *Śramakāryam tiruttuvār*, consisting of 120 elders (*kūṭṭap-perumakkal*) of Rājarāja-chaturvēdimāṅgalam, a *taṇṇiyūr* and a *brahmadēya* in Jayankōṇḍa-chōla-maṅḍalam assembled together in the Brahmasthanam of the village known as *Rājarājan-taṇṇīr-pandal*. At that time the king was also present and gave his oral order [*tiruvāy-moḷindaruḷi*] in the august body of the village. This body had started their function from the month of Āvaṇi 1st in the same year (*Siṁha-nāyirumudal*) for one year (*saṁvatsaram*).

The village headman or the incharge (*nammūr-paripālikkinṇa*) of Rājarājachaturvēdi-māṅgalam, Pudukkudiyāṅkūvvagaṅ-Vēlaṅ Ārūraṅ of Pudukkudi in Maṅgala-nāḍu of Aruḷmoḷidēva-vaḷanāḍu in Chōla-maṅḍalam who was also serving as the king's *Śirutanattup-peruntaram* accompanied the King to this village and wrote and executed the oral order (*paṇitta cūttu*) of the King.

Accordingly, the assembly of one hundred and twenty elders of the village agreed to maintain a perpetual lamp and a *sandhi* lamp for the *Saptamātrikās* of the village. For this 60 sheep were entrusted for one perpetual lamp and 8 more sheep for a *sandhi* lamp to Śōman

mōḍāvi and Kaḍampūr Nāgandai residing in the northern quarter of the village. These two people were to maintain the lamps daily with the quantity of half *Śeviḍu* of ghee, measured in *Rajarājan-Uḷakku*. If they failed to do the service, two individuals viz. Kaḍampūran Guṇavan, a shepherd [*maṅṅāḍi*] of the village and Malaiyūr Mādēvaṅ who were nominated as surety [*puṇai*] were liable to render the service without fail.

This inscription is an unique record which provides information on a new type of village assembly known as *Śramakāryan tiruttuvōr*. For the first time we come across this type of local body. We may take the words "*Śramakāryam tiruttuvōr*" to mean the Ministry of Labour & Welfare. The meeting place in which the assembly was summoned as stated by the inscription is also interesting. Generally, the assembly used to meet at the stated hour in a public place fixed before hand. But, here it was not so. They met together in the *Brahmashānam* [the meeting place of Brāhmaṇas] of the village known as *Rājarājan taṅṅīr pandal* without any prior notice. Because the king personally visited the village the village body had to be summoned immediately. The term *Śirutaṅattup-peruntaram* which appears in our inscription is also worthy of note. The terms *perutaram*, *sirutaram* and *sirutanattupperuntaram* are often met with in Rājarājās Thaṅjāvūr inscriptions. The earliest occurrence of the term *peruntaram* is met with in the inscription of Maduraikoṇḍa Rājakēsari dated in his 5th year = c.861 A.D.³ The real significance of these terms has not yet been sat-

isfactorily explained. Dr.Hultzch opined that the terms *Śirutanam* or *peruntanam* or *peruntaram* denoted the small treasury and the big treasury and persons so entitled as officers of the treasury small and big.⁴ Prof.K.A.Nilakanta Sastri explains these terms as higher and lower grades of official nobility⁵. The terms are also sometimes explained as referring to the followers of the king during his minority and majority⁶. From the available evidences, it is confirmed that these terms were mostly bestowed on important military officials; also these terms frequently occur with the regiments' names such as *Śirutaṅattu-vaḍukak-kāvalar*⁷, *Śirutaṅattu valaṅgai-vēḷaikkārappaḍaigaḷ*⁸, *Peruntaṅattu Āṅaiyāḷgaḷ*⁹, *Peruntaṅattu valaṅgai-vēḷaikkārappaḍaigaḷ*¹⁰, etc. Rājarāja's commander-in-chief (*Śēnāpati*), Kṛiṣṇaṅ Rāmaṅ alias Mummudi Sōḷa Brahmanārāyaṅ was known as *Peruntanam*¹¹. All these evidences show that the terms may denote the ranks of military officers. *Peruntaram* was the highest rank and the *śirutanam* was the next in rank. In between these the rank *sirutanattup-peruntaṅam* was given to the military officials as an intermediate rank.

From the religious point of view, the inscription is of great value since it attests to the prevalence of the Saptamātrika cult during middle Chōḷa times. The king himself made an order for the lamps to the temple of *mātrikās*. In the middle Chōḷa period we do not get many references to separate shrines for *mātrikās* as we find in the early period. An inscription of Maduraikoṇḍa Kōpparakēsari Parāntaka in this

village mentions the gift of seven hundred sheep for a lamp to the Piḍāriyar of the village¹². Generally, the Saptamātrikā is called as Piḍāri of the village. So, it con-

firms that the separate temple for Saptamātrikā must have belonged to early Chōla period and continued to receive royal patronage under Rājarāja I.

Text

Phase I

- 1 Svasti śrī [||*] Tirumagalpōlap = peru
- 2 nilach=chelviyun taṇakkēv-urimai-
- 3 pūṇḍamai maṇanakkolāk-Kāndaḷūr -
- 4 chālai kalam=arutt=aruḷi Vēṅgai -
- 5 nāḍuṅ Geṅg-pāḍiyu-Nuḷamba -
- 6 pāḍiyun-Taḍigaipāḍiyuṁ Kuḍama -
- 7 lai-nāḍuṅ-Kollamuṅ-Kaliṅgamu -
- 8 m-eṇ=ḍisai-pugaḷ-tara Īḷa (la) - ma -
- 9 ṇḍalamum Irattapāḍiy-ēḷarai [i*] -
- 10 lakkamun-tiṇḍiraḷ venṇit=ta -
- 11 ṇḍār-konḍu taṇṇ-elil vaḷa -
- 12 r ūḷiyull=ellā yāṇḍun t -
- 13 oḷudaga viḷaṅgum yā=ṇḍēy Śe -
- 14 ḷiyarait tēsukoḷ Śrī Kō-Rā -
- 15 jakēsarivarṁmar=āṇa śrī Rājarāja -
- 16 dēvarkku yāṇḍu 23 vadu [nā*] -
- 17 ḷ 67 Jayaṅḍachōḷa-ina -
- 18 ṇḍalattu brahmadēyan-taṇi -
- 19 yūr Śrī Rājarāja-chaturvēdiman -
- 20 galattu ivvāṭṭaich-chiṅga-nā -
- 21 yaṇṇu mudal saṁvatsaram śramakāryya -
- 22 n=tiruttukiṇṇa nūrṇirupadiṇṇar
- 23 kūṭṭap=perumakkaḷōm irṇrainā -
- 24 ḷai nam Brahmasthānattu Śrī
- 25 Rājarājan taṇṇīrp=pandalilē
- 26 kūṭṭamāy=irundu nammai=udaiya cha -

- 27 kravatti - uḍaiyār Śrī Rājarāja-
 28 dēvar tiruvāymolīndaruḷa nammū -
 29 r paripālikkiṅṅa Śirudaṅṅattup -

Phase II

- 30 peruntaram Chōḷamaṅḍalattu A -
 31 rumolīdēvar - vaḷanāṭṭu Maṅgala-nāṭ -
 32 ṭup=pudukkuḍiy Pudukkuḍaiyā[ṅ] -
 33 [Kūv]vagaṅ Vēlaṅ Ārūraṅṅum i -
 34 rukkap=paṅittav=eḷuttu nammūr
 35 Saptamāṭṭrikkalukkuṭ=tirunondā -
 36 viḷakku oṅṅrukku sandhiviḷak -
 37 ku orupoḷudu oṅṅrukku cha[ndrā] -
 38 dittaval śāvāmūvāp=pērā[ḍuk] -
 39 ku ivvūr vaḍakkil Sōmaṅ -
 40 mōḍaviyum Kaḍampūr Nā[gandai]-
 41 yum=āga ivviruvar vaśamun
 42 nondā viḷakku oṅṅrukku āḍ-a-
 43 ṅupadum sandhiviḷakku oṅṅrukku orupoḷu -
 44 du oṅṅrukku āḍu eṭṭum=āga ā -
 45 ḍu aṅṅbattēṭṭuṅ-koṅḍa ivvū -
 46 r Rājarājachōḷiy-ōḍukku
 47 uḷakkāl nittappaḍi uḷakkēy
 48 Śeviḍarai neyyum chandr-ādittava -
 49 l Saptamāṭṭrikkaḷai ā-rādanappaḍi
 50 ivar vaśam aṭṭakkaḍavargaḷ=āgavum
 51 iṅṅney muṅbu niṅṅru aṭṭāt -
 52 tu pōgil iṅṅney nittalappaḍi
 53 aṭṭuvadaṅkup=puṅai ichchēṅi ma -
 54 ṅṅrāḍi Kaḍambūran Guṅṅavaṅṅum Ma
 55 laiyar Mādēvaṅṅum ivviruvaru -
 56 m puṅaiy=āga ippariśu paṅittu śi
 57 lālēkai śeyvittōm nūṅṅri -

Phase III

- 58 rupadi -
 59 ṅmar -
 60 kūṭṭa-
 61 p=pe -
 62 rumakka -
 63 lōm
 64 paṅit -
 65
 66 Chō[la]
 67 mahā -
 68 dēvich -
 69 chēri Ma-
 70 ṅalu -
 71 Añjā -
 72 ṅkanda -
 73 ṅāgapa -
 74 ṅiyā -
 75 ḷ śrī ch -
 76 chōḷaku
 77 la Sundara -
 78 chchēri ma -
 79 dyastha -
 80 n . . ykayya
 81 n Bhaṭṭa -
 82 ṅāna E -
 83 ṅṅā -
 84 yira-bra -
 85 hmapuriya -
 86 n eḷu -
 87 ttu [—*]

References

1. This inscription is included in the *AREp* 1990-91. I am thankful to the Director (Epigraphy) for permitting me to read this paper at the XVIIIth Annual congress of the Society held at Thanjavur.
2. *AREp* 1917 No. 333
3. *Ibid.*, 1912 No. 246
4. *Ibid.*, 1913 P. 97
5. K.A. Nilakanta Sastri: *The Chōlas* P. 463,
6. *AREp* 1913 P. 97
7. *E.I.* XXVIII No. 38
8. *Ibid.*,
9. *S I I* Vol. II No. 54
10. *Ibid.*, Vol. II Nos. 12,13.
11. *AREp* 1919 No. 19
12. *Ibid.*, 1990 - 91

7. PERUMPALUDUR INSCRIPTION OF KARUNANDADAKKAN

V. Manmathan Nair

The Āys were the earliest ruling dynasty in South Kerala.¹ Āys had an extensive kingdom in South Kerala before the reign of Vēṇāḍu kings. According to Prof. Elamkulam P. N. Kunjan Pillai, "upto the beginning of the 10th century A.D., the Āys were the leading political power in the area and Vēṇāḍu was only a small principality lying between Trivandrum and Quilon."²

Ahanānūru and *Puṛanāṇūru* throw some light on the history of the Āy kings. Ptolemy also has mentioned about this Āy Kingdom. The discovery and study of the inscriptions of the Āy and

Pāṇḍya rulers from 8th to 10th centuries A.D., provide some authentic information about the history of the Āy kings and their achievements.

The present inscription was obtained from Perumpaludūr, Neyyatinkara Taluk, Trivandrum District. This is the only inscription of Karunandadakkaṇ, discovered north of Kalkulam. It can be seen from the inscription that Karunandadakkaṇ had once wielded authority over Neyyatinkara also. The text of the inscription is given below. Being in a very bad state of preservation, the last two lines of the inscription are not clear.

Text

1. Svasti Śri [—*] Kō-karunandadakkaṇu
2. k̄kuch-chellāniṅṅa yāṇḍu-
3. pattu kaṅṅi Jñāyirruk=Karkkata-
4. ka Viyālanika Tirunārāyaṇamañ-
5. galattu balipīḍañ-chey ichchu
6. adiṇmēl niyadippaḍi nāli-
7. ariśi oḷukkamidatūvuvichchu
8. bcli būmimē-
9. nāli śōru aṭṭuvichchuk=koṇḍu aṭṭi-
10. k=kudutta muṭṭiṅṅa
11. Viliṅṅa
12. yakkaṅ
13. śēdu

This inscription has been cited in the Administrative Report of the Archaeological Department, Travancore State, for the year 1111 Malayalam Era, p. 16 and in the *Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy*, for 1961 - 62, p. 11. It is written in the Vatteluttu characters of the 9th century A.D. It belongs to Karunadaḍakkaṅ of the Āy family and is dated in the 10th year of his reign. The record is engraved on the side base of the *balipīṭha* among the ruins of a Vishṇu temple at Nāraṇattukāvu in Perumpaḷudūr. The inscription records the construction of the *balipīṭha* and donation of land to provide for *nālī* rice for the daily worship as well as *bali* ceremony to the deity at Tirunārāyaṇamaṅgalam.

There are three other records of a king bearing the same name, that is, Karunadaḍakkaṅ. The Huzur office plates³ in Tamil characters of the 9th century are dated as 1449087th day of the Kali Era, and the 15th day of the 9th year of the king's reign. This date has been calculated to fall on the 8th July 866 A.D.⁴ The present inscription of the 10th regnal year can be dated as 866-67 A.D.

The two other inscriptions engraved in Vatteluttu characters of the 9th century on a rock in the Śiva temple at Tiruviḍaikkōḍu⁵, Kalkulam taluk are dated in the 2nd+12th and 2nd+20th years respectively in the reign of Karunadaḍakkaṅ.

The *Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy* for 1961-62 states (p.11) that "if the Karunadaḍakkaṅs of the Tiruviḍaikkōḍu

inscriptions dated in the year 2+12 and 2+20 are identical with their name-sake of the present inscription, one would expect the year 10 of the latter to have been expressed as 2+8. This being not so, it may be surmised that Karunadaḍakkaṅ of the Perumpaḷudūr record under review and of the Huzur office inscription is probably different from his namesake in whose reign the Thiruviḍaikkōḍu inscriptions are dated." This statement is not correct because the palaeographical features of the Tiruviḍaikkōḍu inscription and the Perumpaḷudūr inscription are the same. The scripts used for these three inscriptions are identical in all respects.

In the different inscriptions of the same king the mode of dating is different. There are ample evidences for this. For example, two inscriptions of Vikramāditya Varaguna, who was the successor of Karunadaḍakkaṅ, is dated in the regnal year fourth opposite to the 17th⁶ and another one is dated in the twenty-eighth⁷ regnal year of the king. Both these inscriptions have been obtained from Chitarāl about 6 kms to the north-east of Kulitturai in Vilavangodu Taluk.

In this inscription, in the 11th line, the word Villiṅṅa is seen. It should be concluded that it was the capital of Karunadaḍakkaṅ because in the last portion of the Tirupparappu fragmentary copper-plate⁸, it is stated that "this is the writing of Aviyalaṅ-Radaḍakkaṅ, the Perumpaṇikaṅ of Śrīvallabha of Villiṅṅam, the arms-manufacturer to the king Karunadaḍakkaṅ".

It is, obvious, that the arms-manufacturer lived in the capital, in those days of limited transportation. Again in the Pāliyam plates⁹ of Vikramāditya Varaguṇa, the successor of Karunandaḍakkaṇ, is mentioned as Viliṇabharta.

From the above study, it can be concluded that Karunandaḍakkaṇ mentioned in the Huzur office plates, Tiruviḍaikkōḍu inscriptions and in the Perumbaludūr inscription was one and the same person whose capital was Viliṇam.

References

- 1 *Keralā District Gazetteers* - Trivandrum, p. 102.
- 2 *Chīla Kēraḷacharitra Presāngaḷ*, p. 100-35.
- 3 *T.A.S.*, Vol. I, p.5.
- 4 K.G.Krishnan :- *Studies in South Indian History and Epigraphy* p. 82.
- 5 *T.A.S.*, Vol. I, pp. 14-15.
- 6 *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, p. 146-48. "Svasti Śrī Kōvikkiramātitta Varaguṇarkku Yāṇḍu patinḍu Etinṇālu ivvāṇḍu Paṅkuni tiṅkaḷ"
- 7 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 283-87. "Svasti Śrī Kōvikkiramāditta Varaguṇarkku chellānirayāṇḍu irupattēṭṭu ivvāṇḍu Pērayakkuḍi"
- 8 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 295. Śrī Kōk=karunandaḍakkaṅku Āyudhaṅkaḷ cheyavāṅ Viliṇattu Śrī Vallava perumpaṅakkanāyina Aviyalaṅṭaḍakkaṅ Ilevai"
- 9 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 275-82. "Vibhūshaṇēna Dhaktyānatēṅ Balarāji parāga dhūma vyārōditāri vanitena Viliṇabharta ā"

8. SRI LANKAN EPIGRAPHS AND SRIPARVATA VIJAYAPURI

Dr. I.K Sarma

The earliest epigraph referring to the hill named *Sipavata* (*Śrīparvata*) comes not from India but from Śrī Lanka. Recently Saddhamangala Karunaratne published two important Brāhmī inscriptions¹ from Lihinimalai, District Kandy. They are dated to the reign of King Kaniṭṭha Tissa (circa 226-244 A.D.) and are anterior to the earliest Ikshvāku inscriptions available from the Nagarjunakonda valley which refer to *Siri Pavvatta*. We quote below the full texts of these epigraphs which have a great bearing not only on the proper identification of *Śrīparvata* but also on the associated monastic schools that flourished at *Śrīparvata-Vijayapurī* during the early centuries of the christian era. Apart from these epigraphs, close links existed between the Buddhist Centres of Āndhradēśa and Śrī Lanka. The large scale excavations at the Jetavana monastery², District, Anuradhapura have provided more substantial archaeological evidences in this regard. In particular the marble carvings in relief recovered from the *stūpa* site, apart from the earlier known *chandraśīlas* with running animal friezes on them, bear striking similarity with the Ikshvāku art depictions from Nagarjunakonda. Even the main Jetavana *stūpa*, in its ground plan and elevation along with the characteristics of *āyaka* platform and *kambhas*, is modelled after the Āndhra *stūpas*.

A. Brāhmī Inscriptions From Śrī Lanka :

The first inscription reads :

1. *Sidam maḷa-tisa-maharaji Naka-Mulayaha*

2. *huvahaka bujana kalahi ratiya h o na-*
3. *(ya de) vaya karavi kadara-maraya arada vaviganavaya*
4. *(na)va-(ga)ma kotu daka-patiya kara kaḍaya si-pa-*
5. *vata-veherahi bota-gehi dini mahapakavata-*
6. *hi ca dini niyadaya*

Success ! The great king Kaniṭṭha Tissa (226-244 AD) having caused to be acquired in perpetuity, the tank (named) Kadara-maraya, constructed by Devaya the *raṭṭhika* in the time when Naka Mulaya was administering the *huvaka* (province), formed a new village, gave the water-revenue (thereof), having remitted the taxes (to which it is liable) to the Bodhi-house of the *Sipavata* monastery; it was also granted as a fixed donation to the great refectory.

The second inscription reads :

1. *Si Mala-Tisa-maharaji me P(o)hota-gara Karaya*
2. *(Giri) Gama-vavi ca Māla-ketaka ca Cuvaviya ca me Tini Ta-*
3. *nahi do-patiya kara dadaya dini Sipavataviharahi*
4. *bikusagahata mahāpāka-vatahi dini*

Success! The great king Kaniṭṭha Tissa caused this *Uposatha* house to be built, and granted the two categories of revenue, having remitted the taxes (thereon) of these three lands, namely, the tank of (Giri)gama, the tract of

fields named Malaketake and (the tank) Coraviya, to the great refectory, for the benefit of the community of *bhikkus* in the monastery of *Sipavata*.

The first record refers to the remittance of revenue realised to *Bota-gehi* i.e. *Bodhigriha* (Bodhi-house) and its adjunct great refectory on *Śrīparvata* monastery while the second record states the perpetual grants made to *Mahāpākavāta*, the great refectory hall on *Śrīparvata* for the benefit of the *Bhikshu Saṃgha* stationed here.

B. Brāhmī Inscriptions From Nagarjunakonda :

1) Buddha Pada Record :

In the year 1955-56³ a sculptured and inscribed *Buddha Pāda* slab was discovered at Site no. 38, (former SV-6); a monastic establishment consisting of four-winged *Vihāra*, a *stūpa* and an apsidal *Chaitya grīha*.

It bears the representation of the two soles of human feet *Pādukas*, placed side by side with that of the Bodhi tree in railing, flanked by two human figures, on one side. The most prominent symbol engraved on each of the soles is the

chakra. Behind this are an *ankuśa*, a *Nāga* symbol, a *triratna* on *chakra* and a pair of fish with a *śaṅkha* nearby, while in front of it are two *Nāga* symbols, a *svastika*, a *śrīvatsa* and a *pūrṇa-ghaṭa* with a *śaṅkha* near it. The five toes in front of the above bear respectively a *stambha*, an *ankuśa*, another indeterminable symbol, a pair of fish and a *triratna* on *chakra*. The inscription in three lines is engraved on the section in a rectangular frame. The characters are similar to the above epigraphs and the language is *Prākṛit*. The object of the epigraph is to record the consecration of the pair of Lord's feet (*Pāda Saṅghādāni Paṭiṭhapitā*). The *Vihāra* is stated to have belonged to certain *āchāryas* who are endowed with a number of epithets. These epithets are *Therīya*, *Vibhajavāda*, *Kasmira-Gaṃdhāra-Yavana-Vanavāsa-Tāmbapāṇnidīpa pasādaka*, *Mahāvihāravāsin*, *Navamga-Sathu-sasana-athavyajana-vinichhaya-visārada* and *Ariya-vamsapaveni-dhara*. Among these epithets, the third stating that the said teachers converted to the Buddhist faith the peoples of Kasmira, Gandhara, Yavana, Vanavāsa and Tāmrparṇī-dvīpa is most interesting since it reminds us of the passage occurring in another record issued by an *upāsikā* named Bodhisiri.

TEXT

1. Sidham(|*) āchariyānaṃ Theriyānaṃ Vibhaja-vādānaṃ Kasmīra-Gaṃdhāra-Yavana-Vanavāsa-Tāmbapāṇnidipapasādakanāṃ
2. Mahāvihāra-vāsināṃ nava(m)ṅga-Sathu-sasana-atha-vyajana vinichhaya-visārādānaṃ ariyava (m)sa-paveni-dharanaṃ
3. vihāre Bhagavato pāda-saṅghādā nipatiṭhapito sava-satānaṃ hita-sukh-athanāya ti |

TRANSLATION

Let there be success ! The pair of feet of the Lord (i.e. the Buddha) has been installed, with the prayer for the welfare and happiness of all beings, in the monastery of the teachers who are Theriyas (i.e. Thera-vādins) (and) Vibhajja-vadas (i.e. Vibhajja-vādins); who caused delight to (i.e. converted to the Buddhist doctrine) (the people of) Kaśmīra, Gāndhāra, Yavana, Vanavāsa and Tāmraparṇi-dvīpa; who are the residents of the Great Monastery; who are experts in the determination of the meaning and implication of the nine-fold teachings of the *Sāstri* (i.e. the Buddha); (and) who know the traditions of the (four) classes of (Buddhist) recluses by heart.

The Buddhist teachers referred to in this record were of Śrī Lankan origin and followers of *Vibhajja-vāda* school and were *Theriyas*. The most important representation shown on the *pada* here is the Bodhi tree-in-railing worshipped by a couple.

2. Inscription⁵ from Chūladharmagiri Vihāra (Site-43)

This Brāhmī record of the time of Śrī Mātharīputra Vīrapuriṣadatta, the second Ikshvāku King, dated in 14th regnal year is the earliest record that makes specific mention of a *Chaitya griha* over the *Chūladharmagiri* on the *Śrīparvata* hill (Site-43) east of the Ikshvāku city called Vijayapuri. This was meant for the teachers from Sri Lanka who were engaged in the pursuit of spreading the *dhamma* to various countries. The *Theravādins* from *Tāmraparṇīdvīpa* (Śrī Lanka) greatly influenced the *Sanghas* at *Śrīparvata* and converted to the faith those who belonged to *Kāśmīra-Gāndhāra-Cīnacīlata, Tosali, Avaramta, Vanṅa, Vanavāsa, Yavana, Damila, Palura* and *Tambapamnidvīpa*.

“*Śiri Pavate Vijayapuriya puva-disā bhāge*

vihāre chūla-dhammagiriyaṃ cetiyam - gharam”. The countries listed in this record are also mentioned in the *Mahāvamsa* among the territories which had been converted to Buddhism after the third Council. The mention of China, besides Śrī Lanka and other places, points out to the pilgrimage of certain *ācāryas* to such far-flung countries in their pursuit of proselytizing the Buddhist order. The main thing that attracted the Śrīlankan monks to the *Chūladharmagiri Vihāra* on *Śrīparvata*, was its *Bodhiṃkṣa-prāsāda*. It is well known that Thera Mahendra a senior contemporary of Aśoka Maurya carried a Bodhi tree sappling from Bodhgaya and planted it in Śrī Lanka⁶. It appears that some such event also seems to have taken place on the east-coast of India. We presume that some time either during the Mauryan or subsequent period a branch of the *Bodhiṃkṣa* may have been planted at “*Śrīparvata*”. This is supported by the later epigraphs like the above Śrīlankan ones. But what is astonishing is that a king of Śrī Lanka during mid 3rd cent. A.D. finds the place so sacred as to cause not only a permanent donation to the *Bhikshu-saṅgha* and its adjuncts but also a large

establishment of *vihāra* and a *mahāpākaṭa* to accommodate and feed regularly the interned monks and nuns frequenting from several countries. Such was the sanctity with which the *Śrīparvata* or *Sipavata* of Nagarjunakonda was held. According to Lihinimalai inscription the name is *Sipavata*, *Si* a contraction for *Siri* and *Pavvata* is Parvata, the hill. *Siri* means an all round accomplishment. According to Buddhist works it is one of the qualifications of a *bhagava*, the others are

issariya (aṇimā, etc.), *dhamma* (transcendental virtues), *yaśa* (pure fame of universal recognition) and *kama* (all objects of desire), *payatana* (supreme to gain sovereignty over all). So the hill named *Si* or *Siri Parvata* was primarily of buddhist importance.⁷

The above evidences are merely illustrative and emphasize the need for a detailed comparative study of the Brāhmī epigraphs of South India and Śrī Lanka.

References

1. Saddhamangala Karunaratne, "Śrī Lankan Epigraphy : Its Bearing on Art History" in Fredrick Asher and G.S. Gai (Ed). *Indian Epigraphy, Its bearing on the History of Art*, (New Delhi, 1985) pp.245-247.
2. Hema Ratnayake "The Jetavana Treasure" in *Śrī Lanka and The Silk Road of the Sea*, (Ed) Senaka Bandaranayake et. al. (Colombo, 1990) pp. 45-53. Figs. 3-6
3. *Indian Archaeology, 1955-56, A Review*, PL. XXXIX-C. p. 24
4. D.C. Sircar and A.N. Lahiri "Foot print Slab Inscription from Nagarjunakonda, *Epigraphia Indica, XXXIII* (1960) pp. 247-250, PL.VI, the text and the translation is taken from this valuable publication. The Vallipuram gold plate (a small village near tip of North-Eastern part of Jaffna), is taken as a remarkable example wherein "we have definite evidence of the school of Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda writing reaching Ceylon, probably in the latter half of third century A.D." A.H Dani, *Indian Palaeography* (Oxford, 1963); pp. 215-226. Also A. Valuppillai, "Tamil in Ancient Jaffna and Vallipuram gold plate", *Journal of Tamil Studies*, Vol.19 (1981) pp. 1-14. There is evidence otherwise also of the extensive contacts between Śrī Lankan Buddhism and Āndhradēśa, cf. Haripada Chakraborti, *Early Brāhmī Records in India*, (Calcutta, 1974), pp.150-51.
5. J. Ph. Vogel "Prākṛit inscriptions from a Buddhist Site at Nagarjunakonda", *Epigraphia India XX*: Second Apsidal Temple Inscription - F, pp. 7 and 22 Site-43, Chūladharmagiri Vihāra inscription. Guna Pala Senadhara, "Cultural contacts between India and Śrī Lanka through Bhikkus, Scholars and Pilgrims", in Senake Bandaranayake (Ed), *op. cit.*, p.136.
6. P.V. Bapat (Ed) *2500 Years of Buddhism* (New Delhi, 1956), p.75
7. D.C. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions*, Vol. I (Calcutta, 1965), p. 228 note-3.

9. THE RECORDS OF THE PANDAVAS OF MEKALA : SOME OBSERVATIONS

Nisar Ahmad

So far¹ three Pāṇḍava records are discovered. They are : Bamhani, Malhar and Burhikhar plates²; the last one, being known by a single plate, is incomplete. No doubt, the Bamhani and Malhar grants are the set of three copper plates but they are not of the same size; the plates of the former measure 19.7cm in breadth and 11.3 cm in height whereas those of the latter are 18.5cm × 10.6cm. Likewise, both the plates do not show sameness in respect of the use of their flanks for writing the draft of the grant; the first plates of these charters and the third of Bamhani are engraved on one side only while the second of both and the third of Malhar have inscription on either side of the plate. Of course, these two sets are found strung by a copper ring passed through a hole cut in the centre of each plate near the margin and secured under a seal. However, the seal of the Bamhani plates is plain while that of the Malhar plate bears the figure of the couchant bull in the upper half and the legend in the lower half, which is read as *Śrīpurushah*; and, the possibility expressed in regard to the seal of the Bamhani record to have the identical device³ seems baseless.

The preamble of the the Bamhani plates contains the genealogy as follows : Jayabala, Vatsarāja, Nāgabala, and Bharatabala while that of Malhar plates, besides mentioning them, also speaks of Bharatabala's son and successor Śūrabala. Interestingly, subse-

quent to the description of Bharatabala's queen, they also refer to Udīrṇavaira, who is also named in the line 4 of the introductory portion of the Malhar plates. Notably, except Śūrabala, all are eulogized in befitting terms. Hence, on the basis of the sequence of the passage referring to Udīrṇavaira and the absence of any stanza composed in the praise of Śūrabala, it is believed that Udīrṇavaira was the precoronation name of Śūrabala; and so he was the issuer of both the Pāṇḍava records.⁴ However, if this hypothesis is accepted, we have to explain certain facts; i.e., 1) the non-existence of the name of Śūrabala in the Bamhani grant, 2) the reference of the precoronation name of Śūrabala alone in the Pāṇḍava records, and 3) more particularly, the purpose of mentioning Udīrṇavaira twice in the Malhar plates. Indeed, Udīrṇavaira is styled as *narendra* (king). However, we know that this title was also used by Mahāsāmanta Indrarāja in his Malga plates.⁵ Therefore, to us, Udīrṇavaira seems to be a vassal, and not the precoronation name of Śūrabala. No doubt, he is commended in high sounding words but such phenomenon in respect of the feudatories is not uncommon.

It is familiar reality that the duty of the *dūtaka* was also entrusted to the *rājaputras*⁶; and, Udīrṇavaira also seems to have belonged to this class. Significantly, the earlier reference of this prince, in the Malhar plates, follows the

word *likhyate*; and, this fact evidently brings out his position, in relation to these Pāṇḍava records, as of a *dūtaka*, who had the responsibility of the execution of the orders. We also recall that the phrase *saumyaḥ Somasya Vanśaḥ* used to qualify *Udīrṇavaira* shows that he too appertained to the lunar stock; it is also likely that he was a member of the collateral branch of the Pāṇḍava dynasty. In connection of *Udīrṇavaira*, there is an expression which is also a point of dispute. It is as : *Śrīmām (mān) savabhuvāsratiyam* in the Bamhani plates; and, the latter compound word is written as *samvabhūvapratima* in the Malhar plates. Chhabra, reading this term as *savabhu-vasratiyam*, feels that possibly these seven syllables are *sarvabhaumah prathita*, i.e., paramount ruler.⁷ Sitaraman (B.) and Sharma (M.J.) correct the inscribed word of the Malhar record as *Sambabhūv-āpratima*⁸. Shastri (A.M.) favours the correction proposed by Chhabra⁹. But this is mere speculation. We feel that the words *savabhuvāsratiyam* inscribed in the Bamhani plates can be corrected as *sambabhūv=āpratima*.

In the Bamhani grant, the genealogical portion of the text, which terminated with Bharatabala, is followed by the enumeration of his qualities; and, thereafter, the verse describing his queen Lokaprasā is embodied. In the Malhar plates, the same stanza referring to her is tagged to the pedigree of Śūrābala, which runs as *Śrīmām (mān) Srinatyām Mahādevyām - utpannaḥ Sri Mahārājādhirāja Śūrābalaḥ*. Sitaraman and Sharma hold *Mahādevī*, and not *Lokaprasā*, as the name of Śūrābala's mother. They also say that 'the word *lokaprasā*, which

literally means "word renowned", like many other adjectives mentioned in the stanza, only qualifies Mahādevī the queen mother and should not be considered as a proper name¹⁰. However, their contention is not tenable. In fact here the word '*Mahādevyām*' is incorporated in place of '*devyām*' which recurs in the descriptions of his predecessors; and, we are aware of the fact that this word, meaning chief queen, is popularly applied as an epithet and not as a proper name¹¹. Hence in the present context too, it is referred to in this very sense.

The Pāṇḍava documents are assigned to about 5th century AD¹² by most of the scholars, although Sircar (D.C) also speculates the probability of the time of the Bamhani charter as the beginning of the 6th century.¹³ Here we also bring out an important internal evidence as regards to the dates of the Pāṇḍava documents. This is the phrase *pādānudhyāta*, 'mediating on (father's) feet', which is applied with Nāgabala, Bharatabala and Śūrābala. This term is used for the first time to denote a legal or legitimate right to the throne in the Karamdanda inscription of Kumāragupta I¹⁴. There it occurs to show the relationship between Kumāragupta I and his father Chandragupta II. But this expression became a convention in the time of Budhagupta (477 and 495 AD) and his successors.¹⁵ Therefore, unquestionably, the occurrence of this phrase in the Pāṇḍava records does not take them before the close of the 5th century¹⁶; and, probably here its adoption was somewhat a late phenomenon. In respect of the question of the date of the Pāṇḍava records, interestingly, their comparative

palaeographical study throws welcome light. Notably, these charters are written in the southern variety of the Brahmi alphabets which was common in Central India but in regard to the application of the head-mark, they preferred a rare style of hollow triangle with its apex downwards that was occasionally used in different parts of the country. We find its use in the Shorkot Cauldron inscription of the year 83 (402 AD), the Poona plates of the Vākāṭaka queen Prabhāvatīguptā (5th century), the Majhgawan plates of the Parivarājaka Mahārāja Hastin of the year 191 (501 AD), the Sunao Kala plates of Sangama Simha of the year 292 (540-41 AD), the Kasardevi inscription (6th century), first plate of the Hingi Berdi grant of the Rashtrakūṭa king Vibhurāja, the Malhar plates of the Śarabhapurian ruler Vyaghraraja (6th century), the Malga plates of Indrarāja (7th century) and the Hilol plates of Kakka II of the year 470 (8th century)¹⁷.

To ascertain the above views, we examine here the features of some of the letters of the Poona and the Majhgawan plates belonging to the periods in which the Pāṇḍava records are supposed to have been issued. Of the former, they are as follows :

1. *Ka* has a bent horizontal bar, and the vertical's lower tip is curved to the left forming u-shaped base; 2. *Ta* is formed by a vertical and a curved hook, added near the head-mark, on the left, 3. *Da* shows two varieties (i) angular back and round base and (ii) curved back and round base 4. *Na* has a loop with straight tail; 5. *Bha* is characterized to have a hook on the left; 6. *Ya* is tripartite having

open left arm and short right arm with round base; 7. *La* is shortened; 8. *Śa* has its right limb lengthened and thick foot at its left; 9. *Sa* contains a loop at the lower end of the left side; and, 10. *Ha* is formed by turning its tail to left sharply.

The test letters of the Majhgawan plates can be detailed out as : 1. *Ka* is made by a straight vertical and a bent horizontal bar ; 2. *Ta* belongs to the Dacani style having a slanting line and a curved hook extended down, on its right; 3. *Da* has angular back and round base as variety (i) of the Poona plates; 4. *Na* is similar to that of the Poona plates; 5. *Bha* has double curved left limb and right arm lengthened; 6. *Ya* is tripartite with equal arms, characterizing open left arm turned angularly twice and right arm showing angularity and slanting base; 7. *La* is angular with elongated vertical with flat base and hook of equal arms; 8. *Śa* has equal arms with prolonged left foot 9. *Sa*, angular in nature is formed with equal arms; and, 10. *Ha*, with hook extended downwards, is inscribed in three shapes i) straight left arm with flat base, ii) slanting left arm and slanting base; and iii) curved left arm with curved base.

Here the palaeographical characteristics of the test letters of the Pāṇḍava records are mentioned as follows : 1. *Ka* is formed by a curved horizontal bar and the vertical end of U-shaped base; 2. *Ta* has curved arms, opening to left; 3. *Da* is angular with firm base; 4. *Na* is alike to that of the Poona plates; 5. *Bha* belongs to broad type's notched variety; 6. *Ya* is tripartite with two equal arms, having the central arm slanting and left arm curved and open. 7. *La* is fashioned by

curve circling around the hook, on the South Indian pattern; 8. *śa* constitutes two equal arms; 9. *Sa* is structured by equal arms and firm base; and 10. *Ha* has a slanting vertical, firm base and hook extended down.

Concludingly, we find that the shape of the letter *na* is common in all the three plates. However, we have to point out that the characters of the Majhgawan plates belong to northern class of alphabets, and, occasionally, they have simple nail head. But the letters of the Poona plates are an 'admixture of northern and southern peculiarities, the former predominating over the latter and few of them have the box-head; and, while the alphabets of the Pāṇḍava records are of the southern class, the letter *ma* alone bears the box-head. Leaving these facts, aside, admittedly, there are three test letters, *da*, *va* and *śa* of the Poona and the Bamhani plates which have the common basic structures; and, they can be taken into account to evaluate the assignment of the Bamhani plates to the fifth century.

However, strikingly, they show some dissimilarities in their shapes, which are as follows : 1. *Da* has round base in the Poona plates, but firm base in the Bamhani plates; 2. *Ya* in the former, is characterized to have the broad left arm and rounded short right arm whereas, in the latter, it contains cursive left arm and long angular right arm which is the trait of the subsequent period; and 3. *Śa*, in the Poona plates, is written devoid of the head-mark, showing lengthened right limb and thick left foot while it constitutes head-mark and equal limbs in the

Bamhani plates which is the characteristic of the later age. Hence, in view of these facts, the Pāṇḍava records can not be placed in the 5th century.

We also notice that the Majhgawan and the Bamhani plates, although they belong to two distinct classes of the alphabets have more test letters of common basic structures. They are as follows : 1. *Ta* has slanting left limb and curved right limb extended downwards in the Majhgawan plates whereas its both limbs are curved to left in the Bamhani record; 2. *Da* has round base in the former while firm base in the latter; 3. *Ya* of both resembles with each other only with the difference that its left arm has two angular turns in the Majhgawan plates and one round and the other angular in the Bamhani plates; 4. *Śa* of the former, although it has equal arms alike that of the latter, being devoid of the head mark and formed of pronged left limb, resembles with that of the Poona plates; 5. and *Sa* and *ha* being distinguished by the firm base and slanting vertical and firm base, respectively, of the Pāṇḍava records are not comparable with those of the Majhgawan plates. Thus the result acquired by the comparison of the test letters of the Pāṇḍava records with those of the Majhgawan plates lead us to put the former after the latter.

Shastri keeps the Pāṇḍava charters in the first half of the seventh century, on the basis of his observation of their resemblance with the Malga plates which is palaeographically, assigned to this time bracket. This feature according to him, is marked 'in respect of general appearance, formal features, drafting, the list

of addresses of the royal order concerning the grant, the privileges bestowed on the grantee, the mode of recording the date as well as other matters'. He further identifies Īsvara, the father of Mihiraka, who engraved the Pāṇḍava records with Dronaka, the homogenous name of the father of the Malga plates' inscriber. Besides, he also recalls the situation of the provenances of the Bamhani and the Malga plates in the same district, Shahdol; and, thereby he infers connection between Indrarāja, the issuer of the Malga plates, and the Pāṇḍavas of Mekalā. So he concludes that 'they were not separated from each other by any considerable length of time'¹⁸.

It is highly strange that Shastri brings out the feature of commonness in the structure of the passages referring to the grant and sameness in the father's names of the engravers to determine the time of the Pāṇḍava records instead of taking into account the evidence of the palaeographical characteristics of the Pāṇḍava and the Malga plates; and, interestingly, this goes against his supposition. The alphabets of the former do not belong to the type of the script in which this latter is engraved. The letters of the Malga plates show developed forms as : 1. *Ka* has looped left arm and the right arm extended horizontally; 2. *Da* is formed by the double curve with tip turned up : 3. *Na* has its cursive loop extended downwards; 4. *bha* characterizes open mouth; 5. *Ya* is of the bipartite variety; 6. *La* constitutes a cursive long vertical and hook extended downwards; 7. *Śa* is flat topped type with lower half of the left arm forming an angle; 8. *Sa* has open mouth; and 9. *Ha* shows slanting base and wide

chest. Certainly these palaeographical features are distinct from those of the Pāṇḍava records and, therefore, they indicate a considerable gap in their times. Further, the resemblance in the drafting of some land grants does not always mean very closeness in their times; for instance, the Sunao Kala plates of Sangama Simha and Vadner plates of Buddharaja being similar in wordings were written in 292 KE. (541 AD) and 360 KE. (610 AD), respectively¹⁹.

Palaeographically, the Pāṇḍava records are more comparable with the Sunao Kala plates; and hence the features of the alphabets of the latter are illustrated here; 1. *Ka* alike that of the Bamhani and the Malhar records, is made of a curved horizontal bar and the vertical with *U*-shaped base; 2. *Ta* shows an angular hook on the left of the vertical; 3. *Da* being identical to that of the Pāṇḍava documents, is angular with firm base; 4. *Na* has loop similar to that of the Pāṇḍava records; 5. *Bha* is of broad type having equal curved arms; 6. *Ya* is tripartite, with straight central and right arms, resembling to that in the Majhgawan plates; 7. *La* is written in two shapes - (i) vertical and hook as in the Majhgawan plates, and (ii) hook encircled as in the Pāṇḍava records; 8. *Śa* alike that of the Pāṇḍava plates, is formed by two equal arms; 9. *Sa* characterizes angular base; and, 10. *Ha* constitutes bent left arm and broad hook. Thus the sameness in more letters of the Pāṇḍava records and those of the Sunao Kala plates of Sangama Simha leads us to date them in the second quarter of the 6th century, in proximity of the time of the latter.

References

1. I am thankful to my colleagues Dr. R.A. Pathak, Dr. P.K. Agrawala and Dr. T.P. Verma with whom I discussed certain points.
2. Bamhani plates (*EI*, XXVII, pp. 132 ff.) ; Malhar plates (*Studies in Epigraphy*, III, pp. 183 ff.); and Burhikhar plate (*IAR*, 1975-76, p. 63; *ABORI*, Diamond Jubilee Volume, pp. 435 f.)
3. A.M. Shastri, *The Early History of the Deccan*, p. 193.
4. *SE*, III, p. 188.
5. *EI*, XXXIII, pp. 209 ff.
6. *EI*, IX, p. 345; XXI, p. 211
7. *EI*, XXVII, p. 142, n.3.
8. *SE*, III, p. 191.
9. Shastri, op. cit, p. 199.
10. *SE*, III, p. 187.
11. *CII*, III, pp. 8, 27, 43, 50, 118, 122, 127, 130-31, 136, 138
12. *EI*, XXVII, p. 132; *SE*, III, p. 184.
13. R.C. Majumdar (ed.) *The Classical Age*, pp. 222 f.
14. *CII*, III, (Revised), p. 281.
15. *Ibid*, pp. 351, 355, 357 ff.
16. The phrase *pādānudhyāta* is also used in the grants issued by the kings of the Uchchakalpa dynasty in the end of the fifth and to first half of the sixth centuries (*CII*, III, pp. 117 ff)
17. Shorkot Inscription (*EI*, XVI, pp. 15 ff.); Poona Plates (*CII*, V, p.7 f, pl. II) ; Majhgawan Plates (*CII*, III, pp. 106 ff.); Sunao Kala Plates (*CII*, IV, pp. 33 ff. pl. IV); Kasardevi Inscription (*EI*, XXXIV, pp. 248 f. pl. V); Hingi Berdi Plate (*EI*, XXIV, pp. 43 ff); Malhar plates (*EL*, XXXIV, pp. 43 ff) Malga Plates (*EI*, XXIII, pp. 209 ff); and Hilol Plates (*EI*, XXXIV, pp. 213 ff).
18. Shastri, op. cit. p. 201.
19. *CII*, IV, pp. 34 ff, 47 ff.

| S. No. | Test Letters | Bamhani Plates | Prabhavali Gupta Poona Plates | Hastin Maykgawan Plates Year 191-510AD | Sanganasimla Sunoo Kala Plates Kalachuri Year 292-540-41 AD | Indraraja Malga Plates (7th century) |
|--------|--------------|----------------|-------------------------------|--|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | Ka | 𑀓 | 𑀓𑀘 | 𑀓 | 𑀓 | 𑀓 |
| 2 | Ta | 𑀕 | 𑀕 | 𑀕 | 𑀕 | 𑀕 |
| 3 | Da | 𑀗 | 𑀗𑀗 | 𑀗 | 𑀗 | 𑀗 |
| 4 | Na | 𑀙 | 𑀙 | 𑀙 | 𑀙 | 𑀙 |
| 5 | Ba | 𑀛 | 𑀛 | 𑀛 | 𑀛 | 𑀛 |
| 6 | Ya | 𑀝 | 𑀝 | 𑀝 | 𑀝 | 𑀝 |
| 7 | La | 𑀟 | 𑀟 | 𑀟 | 𑀟 | 𑀟 |
| 8 | Sa | 𑀡 | 𑀡 | 𑀡 | 𑀡 | 𑀡 |
| 9 | Sa | 𑀣 | 𑀣 | 𑀣 | 𑀣 | 𑀣 |
| 10 | Ha | 𑀥 | 𑀥𑀥𑀥 | 𑀥𑀥𑀥 | 𑀥 | 𑀥 |

10. EPIGRAPHY AS A TOOL FOR WRITING SOCIAL HISTORY

Aloka Parasher

It would be apt to begin with a definition of what one means by social history as most of what we have to say in this paper would hinge on this definition. It is also pertinent to begin with this definition because the majority of writings in South Indian Historiography on Social History begin with a particular definition of it which we would like to reject at the very outset. John Breuilly, one of the seven historians who answered the question *what is social history* for the journal *History Today*,¹ clearly envisaged three kinds of definition for Social History that have been in use by Historians. These have been described as (a) Residual Social History, (b) Societal History and (c) History of Social Experience.²

In the first, Social History is largely considered to be a whole range of activities which are said to be conducted out of the arena of political, economic, military history and the like, and therefore, are said to be composed of such 'trivialities' as a study of dress and ornaments, weddings, eating habits leisure, manners and customs and so on. It goes without saying that this kind of history is only of marginal interest to the historian of law, or politics, or of any other institution which is the concern of a specific kind of History. The second type of Social History is elucidated to be one in which the historian begins with the assumption that all other types of History like the political, military, economic and so on have to be brought together within

an overall framework. In this approach, most successfully followed in the methods delineated by Marx and Weber, social history is in fact considered to be bringing together different dimensions of political, economic and ideological history in order to give a history of 'society as a whole' or, a 'social formation'. The problem with this is that the different dimensions of history get defined and in its inter-relationships social history loses its value. Thus, by social structure in this sense we mean inhabitants of a certain territory or, *subjects* of a certain political authority. In the third view of Social History the concern is with the particular experience and not action of the people. In this view groups of wage-earners, occupational groups, family members all have a sense of identity behind the specified role that they perform in society. In order to identify this experience one would have to go behind the people's actions to the so-called 'real' and this can then lead on to unverifiable speculation.

For India as a whole, and South India and the Deccan in particular, the maximum work done in the area of Social History is under the rubric of the first type of social history. This is clearly visible in most textbooks that take up a separate chapter on Social Conditions towards the end of their monographs.³ More specifically, the 1960's and 70's of the present century saw a spurt in the writing of separate researched volumes on social history⁴, which however, have

not done much to change the methodological approach or content of social history for South Indian history in particular. Therefore it goes without saying that the inroads of the second type of social history in the writing of South Indian History has been very limited, despite the fact that for India as a whole this approach has generated a serious debate in classifying the nature of the particular social formations for medieval times. Writings on the history of social experience have been the least approached in the context of South Indian studies. This has emerged occasionally in the writings on cultural history and studies on classical art forms. However, in this context a recent study of temple girls can be mentioned called *Nityasumangali*⁵ which, while integrating sociological data, has attempted to re-create an idealist picture of the experiences that the *devadāsīs* may have had in the past.

Given the background of the different types of social history and their application to South Indian History, it has been recognized by us that one has to come to terms with certain important issues before attempting, if at all necessary, a definition of social history. First and foremost, in rejecting its maximum application in the first type of social history described above, one has to categorically state that social history is not, or should not be, a blindly accumulated pile of facts. Connected with this is the fact that it is not a history of only trivialities and thereby, only of marginal interest to historians. In reacting to this and urging for its overall integration to other types

of history one should not lose sight of its specific role. Instead, one needs to begin with a refutation of the existing categories of historical analysis whereby rigid terms of the 'political', 'economic' and 'social' that have been hitherto used to underline the elements of continuity and change in early Indian Society. For social history this kind of categorization has major pitfalls as its linkages with the other categories gets distorted. Rather, we would like to emphasize in the words of John Breuilly "it [social history] involves making every kind of history *explicitly confront the social nature of action and institutions*". (emphasis added) Thus, in this view "social history is not a particular kind of history; it is a dimension which should be present in every kind of history".⁶

One of the important methods advocated in recent years for understanding social history has been the statistical method. It has become a common and popular method, as it were, a bread and butter, of modern social and economic history. For its application to earlier periods of history, however, one has to be wary because *given statistics* are in most cases missing and, if they do survive, they cannot be fully trusted. Extant non-statistical *insitu* sources can be reworked within a statistical framework with the help of Computers, as has been done by Karashima for South Indian history to yield hitherto undreamed of results. Though its use by him for social history *per se* has been limited it has, nonetheless, revealed an advance in the study of Chola administrative and social

organization.⁷

However, a note of caution sounded by Karashmima, one of the most ardent advocates of this method, himself needs to be re-stated in this context: "We are also aware of the limitations of the statistical method. One of the problems is *the character of inscriptions as source materials* (emphasis added). In future we plan to examine the credibility of this in relation to the existence of the inscriptions. Our argument in the following section will remain hypothetical in that sense also, besides it being based on preliminary analysis."⁸ Thus, an examination of inscriptional data within a simplistic statistical analysis can also be wrought with difficulties. The point of warning here is that in advocating scientific methods, historians have to recognize that they are dealing with source material embedded in premodern situations which are governed by their own respective rules and definitions.

The alternative perhaps can be charting out this data within the *given parameters* to gain from this a pattern of the broad levels of change with regard to the social groups being analyzed. The essential positive steps that can help us do this is if we employ the criteria of establishing the relationship between the social group and its economic underpinnings. Since the inscriptions do not necessarily mention the caste/class/group in a direct way, *the first step* in categorizing the possible nature of social entities would be through such pieces of information as names of individuals, their

designations, collective common appellations, functions performed by individuals or functionaries of the State, occupations of individuals or groups particularly in the temple and so on. Once this is achieved, it is not difficult to link up this information, that is, on functions, designations/occupations etc., to *the context* in which they are mentioned in the inscriptions. Since we are largely concerned with land grants or charters, the underlying phenomena that emerges is the different levels of interaction between social groups and landed property. It must nonetheless, be mentioned that this type of analysis is suitable for describing primarily the dominant social groups as they are directly mentioned in the inscriptions. However, it cannot be overlooked that these groups were part of a larger socially stratified society.

For the subject social groups who do not necessarily have direct visibility in the inscriptions, we need to take cognizance of institutions / occupations / practices that imply their existence. In some quarters it has been suggested that social history in fact, "derives its vitality from its oppositional character. It prides itself on being concerned with 'real life' rather than abstractions, with 'ordinary' people (emphasis added) rather than privileged elites, with veryday things rather than sensational events."⁹ To do full justice to this idea therefore, one cannot simply stop with an analysis of the explicitly mentioned social terms/groups that describe essentially elite groups but we need to go beyond this to identify explicitly stated economic/political/ideological

practices and institutions of exploitation that imply the existence of subject social groups.

As stated above the essential aim of such an analysis of the valuable inscriptional data would be to use it ultimately for finding fundamental explanations of historical change and not mere descriptions of the so-called apparent 'reality' of social life in pre-modern times. An essential pre-requisite in our understanding of given periods of how social structure is defined would be to also relate it to the factor of man's accommodation to his physical conditions at a local level. This would necessarily revolve around beginning the analysis with the rural situation. It must be stated that village society in the past related to, and interacted with, not only social categories but also with defined geographical entities. The individual thus can be placed in the context of family (*kula*), kingroup (*gōtra*), sub-caste (*jāti*) and caste (*varṇa*). This placement in turn has to be related to his situation in a house or extended household located in a village (*grāma*), or small town (*pura*), or military camp (*vādū/vāṭika*), or city (*nagara*), or province (*viśhaya*) and finally, country (*dēśa*).

These norms of social and geographical location cannot be sifted and separated from each other in a social analysis and ultimately, are both related to the primary economic underpinnings of the nature of land rights and ownership of property in pre-modern India. A small footnote to this categorization would be to recognize explicitly that vil-

lages were not a string of hierarchical isolates but had linkages with other contiguous localities¹⁰. Secondly, though not much work has gone into understanding how village societies in the past reacted to change, it must be accepted as a forewarning that we cannot accept them to have reacted to external change in an uniform way. Therefore, to conclude that there was some kind of typical formulae for social change in the village community must be untenable. In studies on more recent periods of rural history it has been suggested that village societies not only respond to external change differently but that some merely adapt to this change while other may be transformed due to it.¹¹

A final third major dimension of recognition in our categorization for social history has to be a care with which we approach our data that has been primarily garbed in with religious and ideological rubric. Though these days it is clearly accepted that we cannot unduly exaggerate the role and impact of religion on early Indian society, at the same time, scholars these days handling pre-modern records have once again brought to the forefront the concern as to how one should differentiate the material phenomena from the ideological¹² in the context of Indian society. One cannot at this juncture, for reasons of time available, enter into the pros and cons of this debate. However, given the constraint that our data comes primarily from the Brahmanical temple one has to be cautious in not merely respeaking the Brahmanical view. Since a major part of the explicit

data also states that many grants were made for ostensibly religious purposes we cannot, at the same time, undermine the ideological dimension in the analysis of social groups. It is not difficult to see that the major social groups that benefited from large scale land transactions in early medieval times were religious beneficiaries. The best way that the socio-economic can be interlinked with the politico-ideological is to map out the linkages. This would mean to identify the contributive potential of temple in the legitimization of a political power, based on social differentiation¹³.

"The character of inscriptions as source materials"¹⁴ has a lot to do with the context in which the early editing of inscriptions was done. In other words, an examination of the historiography of how epigraphical studies began in India in the eighteenth century. Apparently, this would seem a meaningless exercise and could also be misinterpreted as being unnecessarily critical of the yeoman's services done by erstwhile epigraphists. However, this task becomes a necessity. Today when it has become popular to write on aspects of social and economic history, it is inadvertently forgotten, or, unconsciously ignored, by historians that the structure and purpose of the inscription given to us often falls within a framework of analysis which defines the prime task of a historian to be writing an eventual, political or monumental history. The context in which some of the first editing of inscriptions was done was pertinently consumed with the desire to sketch the barest outlines of the

political history of the country or region in particular. Thus, when Fleet wrote that "for our knowledge of ancient political history of India we are indebted only to inscriptions and not to any historical work bequeathed to us by the Hindus"¹⁵, he was genuinely concerned about highlighting historical information within the dominant nineteenth century parameters of understanding history as primarily political in nature and within the positivistic framework of analysis. Hultsch articulates that the decipherment of South Indian inscriptions 'is an undertaking which, besides good linguistic attainments, requires careful training in the methods followed by the European school of Classical philology; and, before all, an earnest and patient desire for truth, the object of all science'¹⁶. The early concerns of scholars like Fleet, Rice, Hultsch, Buhner, Kielhorn, Bhagwanlal Indrajai, Bhandarkar and a host of others was therefore, to be largely concerned with historical issues of chronology, dynastic details, definition and description of administrative divisions and, not in the least, mapping, charting, drawing and also exploring and excavating monuments. Since the prime task was not writing or analyzing aspects of social history, it meant that any data on social groups was unconsciously interpreted under the rubric of political or cultural history.

It has to be our present concern to specify the problems this early perception and methodology of history had evoked for subsequent writings on South Indian history. The issues of special con-

cern shall be only those pertaining to the writing of social history and historiographical trends that arise out of the use of epigraphical sources. Notwithstanding the change in the perception of what history can be understood as in the twentieth century, epigraphists continue to define the importance of the study of epigraphy for reconstructing political and cultural history.¹⁷ These advantages which help us define the contemporary events of political and religious importance are said to be the very ones that can, according to Sircar, turn into demerits because after all "most records ... give the impression that references to historical events in them are incidental."¹⁸

In a recent collection of inscriptions for India as a whole¹⁹ the traditionally accepted areas of epigraphy's importance to history are delineated as those giving information on "person and events" (p.32), solving "knotty problems of early Indian chronology" (p.33), describing "village administration" (p.35), providing for "allusions to religion and to donation" (p.35), highlighting "careers" and "dynastic chronicles" (p.35), "commemorating the death of heroes in battle" (p.36), "propagation of religion and morality" (p.37), the "desire to honour religious saints" (p.37) and "records of religious endowments are also found in abundance" (p.38). The last few areas listed are significant for writing a social history but these are hardly discussed in depth.²⁰ While professing in the Preface that inscriptions could be used for socio-economic history, and while also admitting that donative inscriptions are the

maximum found, the importance of land grants in this book is nonetheless dismissed in the phrase "The inscriptions throw light on the land grants, duties, tax, fee, perquisites and privileges."²¹

Given this estimation of the value of the epigraphic record for historians, it is not surprising that in quantitative terms the majority of books on South Indian history concentrate on dynastic studies or those pertaining to define and describe art and architecture.²² In recent years there has indeed been an interest in writing about social and economic history but, in most cases, the choice of the period of study is determined by dynastic dates. An example of this type can be cited in A. Vaidehi Krishnamoorthy's *Social and Economic condition in Eastern Deccan (from A.D. 1000 to A.D. 1250)* wherein in the Preface the author defines the significance of the period chosen for study because it saw the end of the independent rule of the Eastern Chalukyas who now became the feudatories of the Cholas and "this Chola ascendancy contributed a great deal to developments in the social and religious life of the people". This, the author feels was "responsible for the cultural development of the people at a standard higher than the rest of Andhra"²³. Whereas, this book does not use a dynastic nomenclature in the title there are innumerable others which do and this explicitly gives the erroneous impression that social conditions were somehow static and special during a particular period of rule.²⁴ The period of rule of a particular dynasty does not necessarily envisage that it would also afford

a suitable periodization for understanding social change and continuity.

Similarly, in identifying the region of study one has come across many books on social and economic study that use the present day boundaries of linguistic states in a rigid manner to define their subjects of historical concern. Alternatively, the political boundaries of a dynasty's rule in the past are made to, more or less, coincide with these state boundaries thus giving enough rationale for defining the spatial context of social history. G.R. Kuppuswamy's *Economic Conditions in Karnataka A.D. 973-1336 A.D.*²⁵ takes into account both the period of rule of a dynasty as well as the well delineated boundaries of the present-day Karnataka into account. A similar study for Andhra is K. Sundaram's *Studies in Economic and Social Conditions of Medieval Andhra A.D. 1000 - A.D. 1600*²⁶. A rigid compartmentalization of social history as the scope of study written within this pattern of spatial distribution is Jyotsna Kamat's *Social Life in Medieval Karnatakā*²⁷. In contrast to these, it is when scholars make socio-economic aspects as central to their conceptual understanding of change in a society, that such rigid dynastic or linguistic delineations disappear. The exceptional example of this is seen in K. Satyanarayana's *A Study of the History and Culture of the Andhras*.²⁸ The particular note of emphasis here is on the 'Andhra peoples' and not the 'Staté'.

In exemplifying ways of mapping and categorizing epigraphical data that can be used to write a social history one has

attempted to overcome some of the above stated problems of nomenclature and periodization in the research supervision work undertaken by me in the last few years. The empirical examples for this paper can be drawn from three such studies for different parts of the Deccan — Andhra, Karnataka and Maharashtra.²⁹ These are not exclusive studies, that is, one for each of these regions separately. Also, since they have been done over a period of time, they have also registered gradual change and improvements in the presentation and mapping out of the social data from inscriptions. The first one done in 1982-83 chose a much neglected theme in social history, namely, women. Within this category it was decided to focus on the temple dancing and singing girls as they were consistently mentioned in inscriptions but had hitherto, only been targets of signifying moral degradation in our society. This study focused on a few northern districts of Karnataka between the 8th — the 12th century A.D. and attempted to pertinently relate their social position in the context of their access to the resources from land on which they were solely dependant for the continuance of their profession and religious practices. Meanings of terms are often difficult to categorically state. One such is the term *devadāsi*. In the inscriptions we studied for northern Karnataka we were not able to find it nor, its equivalent transliterated form. The girls in the temple were known through the words *sule* and *pātra* along with different suffixes and prefixes. It is pertinent to point out that the data in inscriptions

gives no information on the morally related issues of their existence in the service of the temples. On the contrary, the maximum information on them is in the context of the land grant economy. [Details in Parasher and Naik, op. cit., 1986 and Aloka Parasher (ed.) op. cit., 1992, forthcoming]. The main purpose of the inscription which mentions temple girls was to record land grants either individually, or, to the temple in which they were prominent beneficiaries. In the process all other information on them their names, designations, numbers, their work etc., was incidental. In the first set of instances we have a few examples of the girls themselves making endowments to the temple implying their access to property which they could dispose of within the traditionally accepted mode of doing so. Here, these girls are mentioned with their names. In the next set are examples of those instances which record independent grants made to temple girls wherein sometimes they are mentioned by their names. In these cases their individuality is emphasized and implicitly, a hierarchy of temple girls serving in the temples emerges. In the third set there are those instances of land grants which were made to the temple but in which it is specified that temple girls are significant beneficiaries. Here, the girls are not mentioned by their individual names but are often part of a larger dancing and singing group serving in the temple who are also recipients of a portion of the same or additional land grant. Finally, there are those instances wherein the existence of temple girls is only implied as the grant is

made for a specific function/ritual in the temple which is commonly understood to have been performed by the temple girls. Thus, we would like to emphasize here that the temple girls were integrated in a complex way to the dominant economic and ideological framework of society and in this sense, were automatically also, as it happens, the only women in society to have partial access to the productive resources in their own individual capacity, and not through the family structure. Though it may apparently seem that these girls were outside the direct patriarchal authority, in fact, their very existence outside it was the creation of patriarchal values of authority.

The second study done in 1987-89 posed to reflect on the hitherto dubbed 'dark ages' in the history of the region. Since political/dynastic details for some periods of history are minimal and not very outstanding, such periods have traditionally been of marginal interest to history. In the present context this also coincided with so-called peripheral regions which were not the seat of 'great empires'. One such period is the Deccan in the post-Satavahana times. This study therefore, took up an in depth analysis of the Vishnukundin inscriptions (copper plates) located mainly in the state of Andhra Pradesh to analyze the nature of social and economic changes between 4th - - - the 7th century A.D. An important element of this study was to link the socio-economic forces of change to the nature of settlements that the Vishnukundin rule was associated with and the nature of their polity. A further

development of these ideas emerged more specifically in the third study done between 1988-89. This intended to narrow the thematic focus into only analyzing the social groups and their relationship to the land grant economy. However, what was attempted in this study was to look at this data cutting across three dynasties that ruled over parts of Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra between the 7th - - - the 13th century A.D. Thus, samples of inscriptions issued by the Chalukyas of Badami, the Rashtrakutas of Malked and the Chalukyas of Kalyani and their subordinates were taken into account. Conclusions based on these studies are in no way absolute but indicate valuable insights into the broad trends in social and economic change. [Details in Aloka Parasher (ed.), op, cit., 1992, forthcoming).

For instance it was found by us that the most common way in which history text-books describe society in early India is within the model of the *varṇāśrama* system as defined in the *Dharmaśāstra* literature and 'the social order organized on its basis was held to be the primary duty of the ruler'³⁰. In the same text data from inscriptions is presented as a sort of deviation which is noted in the expressions and phrases used to account for it. For instance, Sastri writes 'Some curious instances of mixed castes and their trades occur in the inscriptions'³¹. The terms *varṇa*, *jāti*, *kula* and *gotra* to define aspects of social history do occur in inscriptions but there are rarely systematic accounts of how society functioned according to the norms laid down. Thus, the

question raised is to what extent a bibliocentric view of society is sustainable with the help of inscriptional data. It is clear from our brief surveys that the maximum mention is of the *brāhmaṇa varṇa* and *gotras* of many families belonging to this *varṇa*. There is also the mention of the *gotras* of the royal families but no mention of their *varṇa*. The lower orders are, in comparison, mentioned only occasionally. The important point here is that the professions in the temple are most frequently mentioned. What emerges from this is that the *varṇa* system in the normative sense cannot be culled from the inscriptional sources. Though there are one or two references to the *vaiśya jāti*, other groups like *bellāla* and *kamma* are noted as *kulas*. The *chanḍāla* is mentioned in the context of the punishments to be given in case the grants are not protected. Given this situation, in taking the analysis of the *brāhmaṇa varṇa* itself, one found that during the 6th to the 8th centuries there is a frequent mention to them by their individual names and as recipients of large, mostly village, grants. This tendency no doubt continues into the next phases but is superseded by their collective mention in groups and ultimately, the temple emerges as the biggest landowner. After the 9th century there is also the frequent mention of the *mohājana*. They emerge as donors, recipients, approvers, witnesses and 'acknowledgers' of grants signifying both their political and economic importance. As powerful rural elites they are sometimes understood as *brāhmaṇas* particularly in the *agrahāra* villages, or, as leading members of the village commu-

nity. This term is good for an analysis of the political, ideological and economic power operating through a powerful social group.

Finally, we would like to draw your attention to the maximum direct information in the inscriptions to individual names of kings, chiefs, and other different levels of officials who were sometimes known through their designations. Though it is not difficult from this data to categorize them as indicating different levels of a hierarchy, a more challenging task is, however, an attempt at locating them within a relative social hierarchy specific to their local milieu. Existing historiography has hitherto analyzed these terms to indicate largely administrative functions. In the brief survey done by us it was found that during the early phases numerous villages were in the form of grant made mainly by kings (*mahārāja*, *mahipatir*) of the main ruling families to *brāhmaṇas* as the chief beneficiaries. At a later stage the tendency of lesser chiefs (*sāmanta*, *pergāde*, *gāmunda*) to make grants, not necessarily in the form of villages, but also as donors of small measurements of land, goods and tax concessions to the temples. Finally, in the third set of examples one sees that the numbers of donors not only increase from among such categories as officials of the village, lesser chiefs and so on (*mahāpradhān*, *daṇḍanāyaka*, *naḷgāvunda*) but now, the grants are almost exclusively to the brahmanical temple. Individual recipients of such grants become rare. This broad delineation not only

suggests that the power of individual groups varies over a period of time but it also indicates that the quantum of the grant and its mode of transference also undergoes a change. In other words, the idea of the ownership of land by members of the main ruling family during the early phases seems to have been undermined in the later phases though not completely negated. Though it is not possible to go into the details of the complex pattern of ownership/rights in land that the respective groups had, it clearly emerges that when the lesser chiefs made grants we do not have specific immunities attached to them. Thus with this type of categorization one is able to highlight that rather than being mere administrative functionaries, most rural elites had different levels of access to the productive resources of the community and therefore, were part of a highly stratified society. The function of a certain group can then be best explained in its socio-political and socio-economic context.

We have briefly tried to illustrate some of the issues raised by us at the beginning of this paper. The conclusions arrived at are in no way absolute but rather tentative indications of broad trends and possible methods that can be pursued to systematically chart out and map the wealth of data available to us in the inscriptions. This can only be done at the micro level and only when several such studies have been made that we can draw firm conclusions. In the hope that one has been able to communicate with specialists in the field one will have served the purpose of writing such a paper.

References

1. March, 1985, pp. 34-42.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 39-40
3. K.A.N, Sastri, *History of South India*, OUP, 1960, Chp., on 'Social and Economic Conditions' is typical of this type.
4. Some of these have been listed below. For South India the writings of Burton Stein and Nobour Karashima during this period stirred the still waters of South Indian historiography. Both of them, however, did not advocate the Marxist method as had been done by D.D Kosambi and R.S. Sharma for Northern and Central India during this period. The impact of these writings shall not form the focus of this paper.
5. S. Kersenboom-Story, New Delhi, 1986.
6. *Op. Cit.*, 1985, p.40
7. N. Karashima, *South Indian History and Society, Studies from Inscriptions A.D. 850-1800*, Delhi, OUP, 1984, Chp., 2, 'Integration of Society in Chola Times', pp. 56-68.
8. *Ibid.*, Notes to Chp., 2, fn. 47, p. 189.
9. Raphael Samuel, 'What is Social History', *History Today*, March 1985, p. 34.
10. The works of Y. Subbarayalu, Burton Stein, N. Karashima and R. Champakalakshmi have in different ways addressed themselves to this issue in defining the economic, political and ideological linkage of the temple-centered, *agrahara/brahmadeya* and non-*brahmadeya* settlements particularly in the context of Tamil Country.
11. Concluded on the basis of analysis done by scholars of modern Indian history and summarized by Peter Robb in the 'Introduction : The External Dimension in Rural South Asia', in Peter Robb (ed.), *Rural South Asia, Linkages, Change and Development*, Segment Book Distributors, New Delhi, 1986, pp. 1-20. See particularly pp. 4-8.
12. Frank Perlin's thought-provoking article 'The Material and the Cultural : An attempt to Transcend the Present Impasse', *MAS.*, 22, 2, (1988), pp. 383-416 raises the theoretical issues at stake.
13. Ashok Shettar, 'Aspects of Agricultural Expansion in Early Medieval Southern Karnataka, in K. Veerathapan (ed.), *Studies in Karnátaka History and Culture*, (Vol II, proceedings of the Karnataka History Congress), 1987.
14. N. Karashima, *Op. Cit.*, 1984, p. 189.
15. M.S. Ramaswami Iyengar, *Eminent Orientalists*, Madras, 1922, p. 205.
16. Preface to *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. I, ASI, Madras, 1890, p.v.
17. D.C. Sircar, *Indian Epigraphy*, Delhi, 1965, pp., 17-22.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 23.
19. Radhakrishna Chaudhury, *Inscriptions of Ancient India*, Meenakshi Prakashan, Delhi, 1983.
20. *Ibid.*, pp. 38-39. It is interesting to note that the information on social history that is indeed highlighted refers to the information the mention of 1000 *Brāhmanas* in the Champaka record of the Vakataka king of which 49 are mentioned by name.
21. *Ibid.*, Preface; p. 40.
22. S. Setter, 'Twentieth Century in Ancient India' PIHC, Kurukshetra, 42nd session, 1982. References to such works for the first half of the twentieth century.
23. Secunderabad, 1970, both the quotations from p. ix. Both statements convey elements of a satisfaction with cultural imperialism.
24. Examples in A.S. Altekar's *The Rashtrakutas and their Times*, Poona, 1934; and S. Sankaranarayan's *The Vishnukundis and their Times*, Delhi, 1977.
25. Research Publication Series No. 22, Karnatak University, Dharwar, 1975.
26. Treveni Publications, Machilipatnam, 1968.
27. Abhinav Publications, New Delhi, 1980.
28. People's Publishing House, New Delhi, 1982.
29. In particular three M. Phil thesis worked under my supervision and accepted for the award of degrees by the Hyderabad University. They are : Usha S. Naik, 'Temple Girls in Early Northern Karnataka 700 A.D. - 1200 A.D.', 1983. Some results of this published in: Naik and Parasher, 'Temple girls of Medieval Karnataka' *IESHR*, 23, 1, (1986), pp.63-91; J.K.P. Babu, 'Socio-Economic Conditions in the Deccan 4th to 7th centuries A.D. (From Vishnukundin Records), 1989; P. Jejaswini, 'Social Groups Involved in production and administration of the early Medieval Western Deccan (800 A.D - 1200 A.D.)', 1989. The results of the last two studies to be published in Aloka Parasher, (ed) *Early History of the Deccan - Some Interpretations*, Manohar Books, New Delhi (Forthcoming 1992).
30. K.A.N. Sastri, *Op. Cit.*, 1960, p. 319.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 319.

11. HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION OF AGRARIAN AND ECONOMIC SYSTEM

M.D.Sampath

The epigraphical data from Tamil Nāḍu have not been fully tapped for the understanding of Agrarian and Economic systems. Sri R.Tirumalai, an erudite scholar in History, has analysed the intricate details of agrarian practices, the land problems, taxation and such others and brought out the discussions in his work 'Land Grants and Agrarian reactions in Chōḷa and Pāṇḍya times'. One can marshal a vast data relating to the land-holding pattern, classification of land system and types of economic formation of the different periods. But much labour is wanting for the judicious interpretation of the epigraphical evidences. The significance of the study will be lost, if the interpretation does not fit in with the context of agrarian and economic set up and practices: One and the same expression has different meanings in different contexts and at times varied meanings too. There is enough scope to extend the discussion on certain terms. There are some words which are obsolete and yet others occurring in the records continue to be in use to this day in certain areas. Dictionaries or lexicons may not come to our rescue for the explanation of certain words. In those cases only the contexts and local usage can help us to give interpretations. A field study of the findspot of inscriptions may also be rewarding:

The nature of medieval Tamil inscriptions is such that there is enough

material in the grant portion or operative part of the record that can be fully made use of for reconstructing the economic and agrarian systems. With his rich and varied experience in the field of revenue system, Sri R.Tirumalai has helped us in interpreting some of the subtle terms for which the import was not known to epigraphists and historians all these days. His work is certainly an eye-opener for a correct understanding of the agrarian hierarchy and economic system of Tamil Nāḍu. In the present study, let me confine myself to the significance of some of the economic terms and to the broad changes in the agrarian structure based on select records, especially the recent discoveries.

We come to know from the inscription that the medieval period witnessed a steady increase in land activities and transactions. Such increased activities resulted in the establishment of new settlements. It also necessitated a change in the pattern of *brahmadēya*, *dēvadāna*, *ūr*, etc. They had specific functions to perform in the economic and agrarian front. Large-scale availability of lands was one of the reasons for the migration of groups or families down south of Kāvēri river and for the coming up of new settlements during the medieval period. Thus the characteristic feature of the land system of this period was the creation of landholders. Not only the growth in the vigorous activity was seen in the land front,

but also in the rise of temples and other religious institutions. The kings granted lands not only to the temples but also to *brāhmaṇas*, for the accrual of religious merit. One could find the increase in the number of beneficiaries and the individual donees belonging to different communities, more so from the *brāhmaṇa* community. The creation of main occupant which includes land-holder or occupant-holder, temple, *brāhmaṇas*, gave rise to subsidiary occupants (*kuḍi*), tenants under occupants (*kīl-kuḍi*) and cultivating tenants (*uḷu-kuḍi*). The interpretation of the term *uḷudāṅ-kuḍi* as cultivating tenant or actual cultivator gets confirmed by a number of Chōḷa and Pāṇḍya records. The *mahāsabhā*¹ of Śrīvallabhamāṅgalaṃ, a *brahmadēya* in Kīḷkalak-kūrāṃ, executed an order with thumb impression (*kaittāḍi*) granting a classified land as *uḷudāṅ-kuḍi* to the *bhaṇḍāriḡaḷ* of the temple. An order recording the above details figures in a record of a Pāṇḍya king dated in his 14th + 1st year. The king granted the lands as *iṛaiyili* at the request of one Nittaviṇōḍa-pallavaraiyar of Rājavallipuram in Kīḷvembā-nāḍu. It may be said that frequent migrations gave a fillip to the growth of agriculture. Also new areas of land were brought under cultivation by migrant families. For the sake of livelihood, they went in search of greener pastures. Rather this prompted them to raise crops in distant and far-off lands. Thus more areas of land were brought under agricultural belt resulting in the increase of production. To be proportionate with agricultural production, more land owners or occupants and tenants had to shoulder

the responsibilities. The burden on the occupant-tenants and the tillers gradually increased on the one hand and the main land-holders or occupants had to face the problems or the demands of the cultivating tenants (*uḷu-kuḍi*) on the other hand. This gave rise to the reduction of obligations due from the sub-occupants to the king and to the land-holder or occupant.

According to a record² of Māṇavarman Sundarapāṇḍya dated in his 7 + 1st year from Taḷakkāvūr, the *kuḍimakkal*, who were the cultivating tenants, were obliged to pay the *kaḍamai* amount of two *rāsi-paṇam* to the deity. The *kuḍimakkal* who come under the Śiṛuppādirikkūḍi of Tēnāruppōkku were the actual cultivators. The *ūrār* of Taḷakkāvūr and certain others executed a sale-deed to the above cultivating tenants, for the dry lands sold, after making it a *dēvadāṅa-iṛaiyili*. In this context, the *ūrār* seem to have been the occupant-tenants, for they laid down certain stipulations on the cultivating tenants (*kuḍimakkal*) to whom the lands were sold.

.... *ik-kuḍimakkal uḷudu iṛuppārgaḷ-āgavum*
(line 13)

There is scope for elaboration of the terms *kuḍi*, *kuḍip-parru*, *uḷu-kuḍi*, *kuḍi-nīṅā*, *kuḍi-nīkkā-dēvadāṅa*, etc., occurring in a good number of Chōḷa and Pāṇḍya inscriptions. This study is not exhaustive and an intensive analysis of the complexity of the terminal system is bound to throw more welcome light.

Let me examine the contents of an interesting record from Taḷakkāvūr

in Ramnad District. This is dated in the 5th regnal year of Vikrama-pāṇḍya³ and registers the assignment of lands as *kuḍinṅā-dēvadāṇam* on *vāram* (lease) by the officials of the temple of Śirikāṇṭadēva-īśuram-udaiyanāyaṇār and the *ūrār* of Talakkā in Tēṇāruppōkku to a Vellāḷa of Kaḷaṇivāyil *alias* Śrīvallabhapuram. Also it further states that the lands other than the *kuḍip-parru* lands were given to the cultivating tenants of Śirukuḍi. Here the phrase *kuḍi-nṅā* may be taken to mean 'without evicting the then existing tenants'. The temple was the principal occupant or land-holder and the Vellāḷa was the first lessee or sub-occupant, to whom the lands were assigned on lease basis. The lessee necessarily had to measure the produce out of the lands to the temple. It is a situation in which he depends for a major share of the produce from the cultivating tenants or tillers of the soil. One may be able to infer from the above contents that there was some default of the *vāram* share from the Vellāḷa to the temple, resulting in the growing burden of *vāram* dues on the cultivators.

The king, after careful consideration of the problem, assigned the tax-free *kuḍipparru* lands to the lessee. Since he could not obviate the lease-holder, in order to avoid the problems, the permanent tenancy right was bestowed on the cultivators of Śirukuḍi. This arrangement was forcibly implemented to ensure the collection of the produce and to protect the restive cultivating tenants. The Vellāḷa had to yield to the condition of the temple, the primary occupant in this transac-

tion. The king had to enforce this punitive measure on the lessee, who was obviously a defaulter of *vāram* dues to the temple, so as to safeguard the interest and income of the temple. At the same time the cultivating tenant was assured of his one-third share of the produce for his cultivating labour. The discussion on the *kuḍi* and the burden of the obligations of the occupants as well as the tenants and the resultant effect as reviewed by Dr. Subbarayalu⁴ in the Indian Historical Review, has paved the way for a critical study of the medieval inscriptions.

There is another instance⁵ where the lessee failed to fulfil the obligations in respect of *dēvadāṇa* lands which were once enjoyed as *kuḍinṅā-kāṇi*. The *tāṇattār* had to transfer the lease on these lands to the second lessee for, an undertaking was given by them to the *agaparivāram* (attached to the king). The land-due obligations or the *kaḍamai* were payable by the occupants to the king as per *taram* classification. But the *mēlvāram* of one-third share was assigned to the temple. For the different crops raised in the aforesaid lands, the rate of *kaḍamai* fixed as *jīvitappaḍi* varies. Here the burden on the occupants, mostly the temple officials, had increased.

The primary occupant or the land-holder (i.e., the temple authorities) had effected a change when the occupant-tenant could not raise the crops and measure out the produce from the lands given to him as *kuḍinṅā-kāṇi*.⁶ The lands became fallow as they were not being irrigated. The evidence relating to this figuring in a record of

Māvarmaṇ Virapāṇḍya further portrays the critical tenancy condition affecting the temple worship. In order to compensate the loss of income to the temple, the previous land-holder was replaced by the officials of the temple of Mālavachakravarti-īśvaramudaiya-nāyaṇār of Uñjēnai. Such incidences of replacement by new occupants can be multiplied by a number of evidences, but one must carefully review the context of the situation, while analysing the problems.

In the agrarian set up, *brāhmaṇas* also acted as effective agents for the agrarian growth. The steps taken to build or repair the lakes, tanks, etc., the digging up of canals have a bearing on this growth. More men, particularly the forced free labour and the cultivators derived the benefit out of the above works. The temples and the *brāhmaṇas* who were the recipients of large gifts played a greater role in the agrarian growth. Does it mean that self-sufficiency was aimed by the settlements of the *brahmadēya* villages? By the establishment of *agrahāras* and the allotment of additional *vr̥ttis* to various *brāhmaṇas*, they were assured of the enjoyment of their produce from such lands. Though this had not affected the economic growth, yet the negligence of the heirs of the *brāhmaṇa* donees resulted in under-utilization of the endowment. Also they had to face the problems posed by the cultivating tenants, not to speak of their sufferings. The nature of inscriptional evidences is such that interpreta-

tions can be twisted and thus the subject matter pertaining to agrarian system is somewhat fluid.

A detailed study can be attempted to know the agricultural practices, like categories of land brought under cultivation and the assessment of the yield calculated during the different periods. The yield fixed for the various harvesting crops differs according to the nature of the land, modes of irrigation, implements, etc. A record of Māvarmaṇ Sundarapāṇḍya I from *Tatakāvūt* is interesting in that it gives the *kaḍamai* rate fixed for the lands for which the cultivating operations have been carried out. The land was statistically assessed (*pulli-pāttu*) after the completion of ridging and levelling operations. The cultivators agreed to measure the produce by the *kaḍamai-aḷakkīra-marakkāl* at the rate of *irukalanēy-padiṇ-mukkuṟuṇi* for a *mā* of land. For the crops raised in the months of *Āshāḍha* (*Āḍi*) and *Arp̥igai*, only one-fourth share of the yield was agreed to be measured out.

In the medieval period more lands were fed by different irrigation sources in order to augment food production. Moreover, agrarian settlements came up close to the irrigation sources of their own accord as well as through sheer necessity. A planned policy was developed to suit their needs and to derive maximum benefit out of the planned irrigation system. It must be remembered that members belonging to different communities had all aimed at a common cause.

References

- 1 This record copied from Rajavallipuram in Tirunelveli District is included in the *Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy for the year 1980-81*.
- 2 *A.R.Ep.*, 1980-81, No. B.219.
- 3 *Ibid.*, No. B.220.
- 4 *The Indian Historical Review*, Vol. XIV, pp. 300-04.
- 5 *A.R.Ep.*, 1980-81, No. B. 196.
- 6 *Ibid.*, No. B. 198.
- 7 *Ibid.*, No. B. 215.

11. EPIGRAPHIC SEARCH-LIGHT ON THE CHRONOLOGY OF STHAVIRA ACHALA AND CAVE NO. XXVI AT AJANTA

H.S. Thosar*

The celebrated Chinese pilgrim Yuan Chwang who travelled in India between A.D. 629 and 645 describes a Buddhist convent as situated in the eastern part of Maharashtra. He further states that the convent was built by the Arhat Achala or Achala. The identification of this convent with the world famous Ajanta caves (district Aurangabad, Maharashtra state) and of Achala with Sthavira Achala, mentioned in an inscription in the cave no. XXVI at the place has been generally accepted¹. It shows that Sthavira Achala was one of the authors of the Ajanta Caves. But we have a very meagre information about the life and achievements of this great Buddhist monk. A comparative study of epigraphic, numismatic and literary sources, sheds an interesting light on this aspect. Incidentally the study also unveils the real date of the cave no. XXVI at Ajanta which will be much earlier than its present assumed date.

James Burgess and Bhagwanlal Indraji had placed the Ajanta Inscription in cave no. XXVI in the later half of the sixth or the beginning of the seventh century A.D.² On the other hand according to B.Ch. Chhabra and N.P. Chakravarty the record belongs to a date between 450 to 525 A.D.³ The inscription in question is not dated and so the conjectures about its probable date are based purely on palaeography. With the result there is a

maximum difference of two centuries between the two dates referred to above. Its date will have to be pushed further back on the basis of the evidence gathered from other inscriptions from this area.

According to the Ajanta inscription referred to above, cave no. XXVI was completed under the supervision of Buddhahadra, who was then the chief monk of the Ajanta monastery⁴. His friend and patron Bhavirāja, a minister of the mighty king of Āsmaka had financed the excavation work. At the time of the completion of the excavation, Bhavirāja had passed away and was succeeded by his son Devarāja, who continued the financial assistance. In verse number six of the said inscription Sthavira Achala has also been credited with the construction of a Śailagriha of Lord Buddha at the place. It has not been precisely mentioned as to which Śailagriha was caused by Achala. But since his name occurs in the inscription in Cave No. XXVI, it is assumed to be the same Cave. This inference seems to be correct because in other two inscriptions from the same cave contributions from monk Guṇākara⁵ and Sanghamitra⁶ have been recorded. It shows that the *chaitya* was not the creation of one man. Buddhahadra seems to have completed the work of this cave which was probably started by Sthavira Achala and carried further by other monks. Burgess observes

that "It appears that Achala's work at the time when he (Yuwan Chwang) saw it, was already of a long past date"⁷. The exact date of Achala is however not known so far.

The Buddhist literature does not enlighten us much on the life and historicity of Sthavira Achala. Achaladeva is referred to as a Bodhisatva in the Ceylonese tradition⁸. The *Thupavamsā* mentions that Achala was one of the ten monks from India who had gone to Ceylon to attend the foundation ceremony of the Suvannamāli Chaitya built by king Duththagāmini, whose date is supposed to be second Century B.C⁹. Sthavira Achala of Yuan Chaung's account therefore cannot be identified with his namesake of the Sinhalese sources as the date is too early.

Fortunately the celebrated Chinese pilgrim has left the following account of Achala which provides an important clue to unveil the historicity of this Buddhist monk. He says "this convent (Ajanta monastery) had been built by the Arhat Achara(la). This Arhat originally belonged to Western India. His mother being dead, he watched in what class of beings she should be born. It appeared that in this kingdom (Ajanta region) she had received the body of a woman. The Arhat speedily went there with the object of converting her and to assist her as circumstances might require. Having entered the village to ask alms, he reached the house where his mother had been born. A young girl took some food and went to give it to him. At the same time

instant milk escaped from her breasts. This proof of her relationship did not seem to him a good omen. The Arhat related to the young girl, the history of her previous life, and she saw at once the holy fruit of Buddha. Touched by the goodness of her who had brought him into this world and fed him and thinking with emotion on the result of the actions of her previous life, he caused this monastery to be built in thankfulness for his great blessings.¹⁰"

This account seems to have been based on the then current traditions about the excavation activities of rock-cut caves at Ajanta, because in the sixth verse of the inscription in cave no. XXVI quoted above, it is stated that "Venerable sage Achala, even though he had achieved all which he aspired to (and had no further desire) out of gratitude (probably towards his mother) built a cave dwelling for the master which is proclaiming (so to say) his teachings".

The association of Sthavira Achala with Western India as pointed out by the Chinese pilgrim has been substantiated by an inscription at Kanheri (district Thane, Maharashtra state) near Bombay. The inscription is engraved on the right-hand gate-post of the chaitya cave no. 3 at Kanheri and belongs to the reign of the last mighty Sātavāhana king Gautamiputra Yajñaśri Sātakarṇi. In lines 15 to 19 of this inscription, Sthavira Bhadanta Achala is described as one of the Superintendent (Navakārmika) of the excavation work of this Chaitya. It also mentions the name of Aparṇu, a trader

from Kalyāna (district Thane, Maharashtra State) who had probably financed the excavation work of this Chaitya.¹² The name of Apareṇu again occurs in another inscription at Kanheri in cave no. LXXXI, which belongs to the 16th year of the reign of Yajñaśri Sātakarṇi.¹³ On the basis of this evidence the inscription from Chaitya cave no. 3 at Kanheri which mentions the names of Achala and Apareṇu can also be assigned to the same date. Sthavira Achala is thus proved to be the contemporary of Yajñaśri Sātakarṇi, who flourished in the last quarter of the Second Century A.D.¹⁴ Even if we treat Achala as a junior contemporary of Yajñaśri Sātakarṇi, Achala's date cannot be pushed beyond 250 A.D.

Construction of Sanghārāmas in the Ajanta area by a Kanheri based person has been mentioned in another inscription at the same Chaitya cave at Kanheri and also of the same date. Interestingly the places at which the Sanghārāmas were constructed were Ambālikāyihāraatlyan, Rājataḍāga and Śadāsevaja in Paithanapatha¹⁵. Paithan is Paithan (district Aurangabad, Maharashtra State) which then was the royal seat of Yajñaśri Sātakarṇi. Rājataḍāga has been identified with Aurangabad itself.¹⁶ Sadāsevaja must be a place near Ajanta, Pitalkhora or Ellora.¹⁷ The name of the person from Kanheri who caused these Sanghārāmas in Paithan - Aurangabad region is not known, but the evidence occurring in the account of the Chinese Traveller and the occurrence of Achala's name in the Ajanta

inscriptions referred to above makes us to identify that unnamed person with Sthavira Achala. If this view is correct, Achala will have to be treated as the Navakārmika responsible for the excavation of Chaityas and Vihāras atleast at Kalyan, Kanheri, Ajanta, Aurangabad and Pitalkhora.

The historicity of Bhavirāja and his son Devarāja referred to in the Ajanta inscription as patrons of Buddhabhadra has also not been satisfactorily established so far. According to V.V. Mirashi they were probably the subordinates and ministers of the Vākāṭaka king Hariṣeṇa, but he has not produced any substantive evidence to this conjecture.¹⁸ Bhavirāja and Devarāja were probably the local chiefs of the Ajanta area. In that part Bhogavardhana (Bhokardan district Jalna, Maharashtra State) was the nearest prominent city to the Ajanta monastery. Bhavirāja might have been a local chieftain of Bhogavardhana.

The conjecture referred to above is strengthened by the discovery of a Copper coin of a chief named Bhava during the course of excavations at Bhokardan. According to Ajay Mitra Shastri, Bhava was a local chief of the Bhokardan region.¹⁹ The probable date of this coin is 2nd Century A.D. He is probably identical with Bhavirāja of the Ajanta inscription. As discussed above on the basis of the Kanheri inscription in Chaitya cave no.3, Achala was the junior contemporary of Yajñaśri. The mighty Aśmaka king mentioned in the Ajanta inscription in cave no. XXVI as

the sovereign of Bhavirāja, was probably Yajñaśri Sātakarni and not Hariṣeṇa Vākāṭaka as suggested by some scholars.

In the light of these evidences the date of the Ajanta Inscription from cave no. XXVI will have to be pushed back to the first half of the third century A.D. It seems that Sthavira Achala probably executed the work of cave no. XXVI at Ajanta during the reign of Bhavirāja, who is believed to have reigned in the first half of the third century A.D. The date of the inscription of Cave No. XXVI at Ajanta is therefore to be revised to the first half of the third century A.D. In this respect a comparative study of Chaitya cave no. 3 at Kanheri, cave no. XXVI at Ajanta and the early caves (Chaitya cave no. 3) at Aurangabad may yield interesting results as they seem to be the creations of one man i.e., Bhadanta Sthavira Achala.

Few arguments might be raised against this observation. Firstly, the palaeography and the Sanskrit language of the Ajanta Inscription in question might be pointed out. We have already seen that there is a maximum gap of two centuries in the two earlier proposed dates of this inscription. In spite of its Sanskrit language, Chhabra and Chakravarty have pointed out to the ar-

chaic character of some of the letters as well as occurrence of Pali-Prakrit words in its text.²¹ More over, some of the inscriptions from this area indicate the introduction of Sanskrit as early as in the 2nd Century A.D.²² There are examples of inscriptions, the suggested dates of which have gaps of more than three Centuries. The Malhara plates of Ādityarāja is one of such example. V.V. Mirashi has placed this inscription in the third century A.D., whereas according to Ajay Mitra Shastri it belongs to the sixth century of the Christian era.²⁴ The earlier proposed dates of the Ajanta Inscription from cave no. XXVI were mainly based on palaeographic considerations. On the contrary the chronology of Achala as discussed above is based on the dated Kanheri inscription of Yajñaśri Sātakarni. So the new evidence is far more authentic. Since the Ajanta Inscription was incised few decades after the Kanheri inscriptions of Yajñaśri, its Sanskrit language is in keeping with the changing trend. The Ajanta inscription therefore will have to be regarded as one of the earliest epigraphic records written in Sanskrit.

Another question might be asked as to how a minister can issue coins? Recent numismatical discoveries indicate that feudatory and subordinate chiefs of the Sātavāhanas were authorised to issue their own coinage. This has been substantiated by the discovery of large coin hoards of the Kura chiefs of Kolhapur who were the subordinates of the Sātavāhanas.²⁵ Coins of some other subordinate rulers of this dynasty have been reported from Andhra Pradesh

also.²⁶ According to M.K. Dhavalikar the Māṇḍava Mahābhōjas of Konkan, who were also the subordinates of the Sātavāhanas, issued their own coins.²⁷ Bhava or Bhavirāja was probably the hereditary chief of Bhogavardhana and as a subordinate under Yajñaśri Sātakarni was appointed as a minister. Interestingly in an inscription from cave no. XX at Nasik the name of Bhavagopa occurs as a donor who is described as the Mahāsenāpati of King Yajñaśri Sātakarni²⁸. As the Mahāsenāpati was one of the members of the Council of Ministers, it may not be wrong to identify this 'Bhavagopa' with 'Bhava' of the Bhokardan coin and 'Bhavirāja' of the Ajanta inscription referred to above.

The foregoing discussion and the evidences quoted therein help us to fix the exact date of Sthavira Achala. It was believed so far that he must have flourished some time before the visit of Yuwan Chawng to India. The Kanheri inscription in Chaitya cave no. 3 conclusively reveals that he lived during the fourth quarter of the 2nd and first half of the 3rd century A.D., and was the contemporary of Yajñaśri Sātakarni and of the latter's subordinate from Bhogavardhana named Bhavirāja or Bhava. Bhavirāja probably brought Sthavira Achala from Konkan to Ajanta as he was a renowned expert in rock cut art. Achala initiated the excavation of cave no. XXVI and it

was completed by his successor Buddhahadra under the patronage of Devarāja, the son and successor of Bhavirāja as the chief of Bhogavardhana. The date of this cave as well as of the said inscription in it will have to be fixed between 200 and 230 A.D.

The Chinese pilgrim had visited India four centuries after the date of Achala and still he records the deeds of this Buddhist monk. It certainly indicates that Achala had a substantial contribution to the excavation of rock-cut caves in Western India. Epigraphic evidence has confirmed his share in the rock-cut excavations at Kalyan, Ajanta, Kanheri and Aurangabad. It is possible that he may have caused caves at few more places. Achala seems to have lived in Konkan during the early part of his life and later on migrated to the Marathwada region of Maharashtra. After finishing his work at Ajanta and Aurangabad, he again went back to Konkan as evidenced by the Kanheri inscription recording construction of Sanghārāmas in Paṭhanapatha and Rājatadāga as seen above. He was probably permanently associated with the Kanheri Buddhist monastery near Bombay which had been the chief centre of Buddhist activity in Western India for more than one thousand years.²⁹ The Chinese pilgrim has described Arhata Achala as the original founder of the Valabhi Buddhist monastery in Saurashtra also³⁰.

References

1. B.G. Gokhale, *Buddhism in Maharashtra - A History*, Bombay 1976, P.94.

2. James Burgess and Bhagwanlal Indraji, *Inscriptions from the Cave Temples of Western India*, 1881, PP. 77-79. Inscription No. 9
3. G. Yazdani(ed), *Ajanta, Part IV*, Oxford 1940, PP. 114-120.
4. Burgess and Indraji, *op.cit.*, Bühler and Burgess, *Archaeological Survey of Western India*, 1883, Vol.IV, P. 136 No. 7. 3.
6. *Ibid*, No. 75.
7. Burgess and Indraji, *op.cit.*
8. G.P. Malalasekara, *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism*, Govt. of Ceylon, Colombo, 1963, P. 155.
9. G.P. Malalasekara, *Dictionary of Pali Prakrit Names*, P.24.
- 10 . *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. VII, P. 290.
- 11 . Burgess and Indraji, *op.cit.*
- 12 . V.V. Mirashi, *History and Inscriptions of the Satavahanas and Western Kshatrapas*, Bombay 1981, Ins. No. 28, PP.74-75.
- 13 . *Ibid*, Inscription No. 27.
- 14 . K.G. Krishnan, *Uttankita Sanskrit Vidya Aranya Epigraphs*, Mysore 1989, P.462.
- 15 . *Lüders' List* No. 988
- 16 . M.N. Deshpande, *Ancient India*, No.15, P.60
- 17 . H.S. Thosar, *Studies in the Historical and Cultural Geography and Ethnography of Marathwada* (Unpublished thesis) Marathwada University, 1977, PP.155-156.
- 18 . V.V. Mirashi, *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol.V, PP. 120-129.
- 19 . S.B. Deo and R.S. Gupte, (ed), *Excavations at Bhokardan*, Nagpur-Aurangabad 1974 P. 61.
- 20 . R.S. Gupte and B.D. Mahajan, *Ajanta, Ellora and Aurangabad Caves*, Bombay 1962, P. 35.
- 21 . G. Yazdani (ed), *Ajanta Part IV op. cit.*
- 22 . V.V. Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Satavahanas op.cit.* Ins. No.25.
- 23 . *Ibid*, Inscription No. 64

- 24 . Ajay Mitra Shastri, *Journal of the Epigraphical Society of India, Vol. IV P.30.*
- 25 . I.K. Sarma, *Coinage of the Satavahana Empire, Delhi, 1980, P.45.*
- 26 . *Ibid, P.35*
- 27 . M.K. Dhavalikar, *Journal of the Numismatic Society of India Vol. XL PP. 101-103.*
- 28 . V.V. Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Satavahanas op.cit Inscription No.26.*
- 29 . B.G. Gokhale, *op.cit.*
- 30 . Sukumar Datta, *Buddhist Monks and Monasteries of India, London, 1962, P.262*

13. EPIGRAPHICAL STUDIES AND SOUTH INDIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY

Madhav N. Katti

Historical researches in India have been progressing unhindered during the last more than a century and scholars working in the field have made all efforts to present a continuous and comprehensive history of India. Even then many facts require a re-examination and in some cases re-interpretation. Epigraphs forming the most important source material for reconstructing ancient Indian history and an authentic source material for writing the history of even later periods, where we also come across other archieval evidences, have to be utilised properly. In other words a scholar dealing with the epigraphs, by his constant study, should develop an insight into the contemporaneous living, to which period the inscriptions belong. In utilising the inscriptions, the scholar should be able to analyse the contents of the epigraphs properly so that he can find a way to unravel the past and reconstruct the history.

It is not that a student will straight away come across the facts he wants to focus, in the epigraphs. It is here that the subjective aspect plays its own role. But having a clear objective in mind he should be able to cull out what is exactly required by him. For this one has to examine several inscriptions, as per the requirement, for writing political, social, economic, cultural history, etc. What the great Sanskrit commentator Mallinātha says, about writing commentary on Sanskrit texts, *n-āmūlam likhyatē kiñchin=n-*

*ānapēkshitam=uchyatē*¹ that nothing should be written without a proper (source i.e., no conclusions be arrived at without examining original material for reviewing) and nothing unwanted stated, is an apt reminder to a historian that he should narrate his history based on facts and in a way that the narrative should properly drive home the subject.

We come across many problems in understanding a written history book. Though maximum efforts have been made by the authors, many problems remain unsolved either due to the non-availability of source-material or lack of proper background for the author to examine the facts in the right perspective or because of the difficulties faced by him in properly analysing the evidences or understanding the facts. It is here that history writing becomes a continuous process and it requires to be re-written, as new evidences come to light or new interpretations are arrived at. The gamut of Indian history, nay, even South Indian history, is too wide and all pervasive and cannot be even succinctly discussed in a paper of this type. I, therefore, confine myself to the review of some evidences pertaining to Karnataka history and there also mostly its political aspects, *vis a vis* those of other connected regions, especially the adjoining ones.

In the recent decades, a number of inscriptions have been copied, which

add new facets to the political, socio-economic and cultural history of Karnataka and their analysis and interpretation has led to a better understanding of the history of this area. A number of epigraphists have rendered yeoman service in the field and the work is continued upto this date.

Commencing with the history of the Kadambas, the earliest ruling family of Karnataka, two inscriptions from North Kanara District, *viz.*, the Banavāsi inscription of Mṛigēśavarma² and Guḍnāpūr inscription of Ravivarman³ are of much significance and help in understanding the history of this dynasty better. The Banavāsi inscription which describes *Mṛigēśavarma* as *Mṛigēśa-karm-āri-mṛigēshu nityam* (that he was like a lion to his enemy kings) states that he took away the glory of the Pallava king as (Śrī) Rāma that of (Paraśu) Rāma⁴ (*jahāra Rāmasya yath-aiva Rāmah*). It also states that the Pallava king had gathered it, (the glory) from his birth with a great difficulty (*ājanmanah sañchita duḥkha-labdham-jayaśrīyam-Pallava-Pārthivasya*). It is not clear who the Pallava monarch in question was, whose glory was taken away by Mṛigēśavarma. It is, however, clear that the Pallava king was ruling from Kāñchi at the time of the record as this Kadamba ruler is stated to have defeated the army of the Pallava ruler from Kāñchi (Kāñchīśvara), consisting of many elephants, horses and foot soldiers (*anēka hasty-aśva padāti-yaudhān*). This record does not refer to the Gaṅgas as presumed by Dr. B.R. Gopal⁵ (the ex-

pression being *yo-gāt=gām-balam-tuṅga-mad-āvalēpaṁ* and not *yō Gaṅgam=balam*, etc. Moreover the expression *Kāñchīśvar-ājñā-jaya-sādhanam*, makes it clear that the army belonged to the Kāñchīśvara (the ruler of Kāñchi) and was obedient to him. The analysis of the inscription makes it evident that Mṛigēśavarma defeated the Pallava army. The Pallava records so far discovered have not referred to this fight. It can be discerned from other sources⁶ that Viṣṇugōpa was on the Pallava throne. I will deal with the Guḍnāpūr inscription a little later.

The Arvoḷēm inscription⁷ which is in Sanskrit language and box-headed characters of about the 5th century A.D., appears to refer to Mṛigēśavarma as the expression *nara-vyāghra* indicates. The record belongs to the area ruled by the Kadambas. It is possible that Mṛigēśavarma may have caused the construction of the Śiva temple (*Śiv-ālaya*) mentioned by the record.

The Tālagunda inscription⁸ of the time of Kākusthavarma states that Mayūrasarma, went to the city of the Pallava lords with his preceptor Vīraśarman (*yaḥ prayāya Pallavēndrapurīm guruṇā saha Vīraśarmaṇā*). While the Halsi plates⁹ of Ravivarman refer to the establishment of the (Kadamba ruling) family by persons like Bandhushēṇa (*āchārya Bandhushēṇ-āhvaiḥ nimitta-jñāna-pāragaiḥ sthāpitō bhuvī yadvamśah śrī-kīrttikula-vṛiddhaye*). But it is on the discovery of the Guḍnāpūr inscription that the relationship of Mayūravarma with these two personages became

clear. The Guḍṇāpūr inscription¹⁰ states that Mayūravarma was the son of Bandhushēṇa, who was the elder son of Vīraśarma. (*Yō Vīraśarmaṇō jyēshṭhaḥ śrī Bandhushēṇaḥ priyātmajaḥ sa hi babbhūva kshātra-vṛitti-latā-mūla-guṇ-āmbu-prasēchitaḥ tat-suto Mayūra-varmm=ēti vēda-vidyā-viśāradah nṛipatir=āsa vikram-aika-rasaḥ śubhalakṣhaṇa-lakshya-vigrahaḥ*). That Bandhushēṇa was the cause for the establishment of the Kadamba ruling family is clear from both the Halsi plates as well as the Guḍṇāpūr inscription. He being endowed with *kshātra-vṛitti* was instrumental in inspiring Mayūraśarma to establish the rule of Kadamba family over the area. It may also be noted that the Guḍṇāpūr record refers to him as Mayūravarma and *nṛipati* and traces the genealogy of the family, upto Ravi-varma. The inscription also states that Mayūravarma was annointed by Tridaśa-sēnāni (*Yōbhishiktas=tridaśa sēnānyā*), i.e., Skanda. Dr. Ramesh takes¹¹ this *Tridaśa-sēnāni* (Skanda) to be Śiva skandavarman of the Pallava family and this is justified because of the fact that the Pallavas recognised the Kadambas as rulers of their own kingdom.

A few epigraphs assignable to the period have been discovered. One is from Aralīhoṇḍa¹² (Kalghatgi Taluk, Dharwar Distict). The inscription is in Kannāḍa language and characters of about the 7th century A.D. and states that Piṭṭiamma was ruling over the earth and that Kaṇṇaśakti-arasa was his subordinate. The name Piṭṭiamma could be a Prakritized version of the Sanskrit name Pṛithvīvarma. His subordi-

nate Kaṇṇaśakti -arasa who was the governor of the area around the findspot of the record, probably belonged to the Sēndraka family and was the same as his namesake i.e., Kaṇṇaśakti of the Hūli plates of Maṅgalarāja¹⁴.

It has to be remembered by the students of history that a proper analysis of the inscriptional data should automatically lead to its proper interpretation. In this respect an interesting account is provided by the Mudhōl plates of Pūgavarman¹⁵ assignable to the 6th - 7th century A.D. The relevant portion of the text of the copper-plate inscription, which is in Sanskrit, reads : *Śrī pṛithvī-vallabha-mahārājasya agra-sūnuḥ śrīmat-Pūgavarmaṇā*, etc.

The inscription was noticed as early as in the year 1949-50 and Dr. Desai who edited it¹⁶ found difficulty in identifying Pūgavarman. He came to the conclusion that this Pūgavarman might have been the eldest son of Pula-kēśin I and may have pre-deceased his father. On a re-examination of the inscription, Dr. Ramesh has shown¹⁷ that the name Pūgavarman is nothing but the combination of the two words *pūga* and *varman*, *pūga* being the variation of the Dravidian word *pugaḷ*, which means the same as *kīrtti* in Sanskrit and therefore, Pūgavarman was none else but Kīrtivarman(I) himself.

A copper-plate inscription, discovered at the village Mōḍlimb¹⁸ in South Satara district, in Sanskrit language and Kannāḍa characters of about the 7th cen-

ture A.D. provides an interesting account pertaining to the family of the Chalukyas of Bādāmi. The inscription states that *anēka-nṛīpati-Paramēśvara* referred to as the son of Kīrtivarma and the grandson of the ruler who had performed the *aśvamēdha* sacrifice, made a grant of the village Tiare-grāma to Dēvagaṇa-svāmi of Kāśyapa-gōtra. The donor also is referred to in the inscription as having obtained his kingdom by the might of his own arms (*sva-bāhu - bala - vikram - ōpāttarājyaḥ anēka-nṛīpati-Paramēśvaraḥ*) Though the inscription was copied as early as in the year 1909, it was kept without being edited, as it was regarded as a spurious copper-plate because of the mention of the ruler as *anēka-nṛīpati-Paramēśvara*, a seemingly new person, as the son of Kīrtivarma I. Dr. Gai and myself while examining the copper-plate charter found that the phrase *anēka-nṛīpati - Paramēśvara* signified a king by name Paramēśvara who was the supreme Lord of many kings. It is known from a number of records of Pulakēśin II that he was endowed with the titles likes *Paramēśvara*, *Ṣatyāśraya*, etc., and the phrase that he had obtained the kingdom by the might of his own arms is also justified in his case as he had to wrest the reigns of the Chalukya empire after a civil war with his paternal uncle Maṅgalēśa. It is a well known fact that Maṅgalēśa had succeeded his elder brother Kīrtivarman I to the throne, but did not want to transfer the reigns of the empire to the latter's son Pulakēśin II, when he was grown up. Paramēśvara is also mentioned in the charter as a grandson of the king who

had performed the *aśvamēdha* sacrifice, i.e., Pulakēśin I. Thus the proper analysis of the inscription and its interpretation has proved that not only the copper-plate is genuine but the donor mentioned by the inscription is none else but Pulakēśin II, whom the epigraphs also refer to as *Paramēśvara (Paramēśvar-āparanāmadhēyaḥ)*.¹⁹

It is well known to the students of South Indian History that the sovereign ruling families of a particular period after loosing the kingdom to other ruling families did not altogether disappear from the political scene but in many cases continued in a subordinate capacity for a number of years and at times once again gained the supreme command of the kingdom. The examples of the Chalukyas of Bādāmi can be quoted here. In some cases the earlier sovereign families later became feudatory families and remained as such until they disappeared from the political scene. For this, the example of the Kadambas of Banavāsi can be quoted here. An inscription in Kannaḍa language and characters of about the 9th century A.D., from the village Māvalli²⁰ in Dharwar district, refers to a chief by name Rāchchaya-Kaḍambā as ruling over Palāsige-12000. The history of the early Kadamba family comes to an end during the later half of the 7th century A.D., as a sovereign ruling family, but is traceable for more than two centuries from about the middle of the 10th century A.D., as a great feudatory family. During the period to which the Māvalli record belongs i.e., 9th century A.D., the Rāshtrakūṭas held sway over the Karnāṭaka empire.

Rāchchaya-Kaḍambā in all probability belonged to the family of the Kadambas of Banavāsi. When the continuous history of this family could be known (even including the period of their eclipse), we would probably be able to trace the kingship of Rāchchaya²¹.

An interesting account is again given by another inscription also from Dharwar District (from the village Tambūr)²² belonging to the reign of the Kalyāṇa Chālukya king Vikramāditya VI. The inscription is dated in the year 1125 A.D. It states that while Koṅkaṇa Chakravarti Jayakēśin II of the Kadamba family was governing the provinces of Palasige - 12000, Koṅkaṇa - 900 and Kavaḍadvīpasavālakka, *Mahāmaṇḍalēśvara* Hākiballa, the husband of Padmaladēvi, the elder sister of Jayakēśin II referred to above, was governing the provinces Banavāsi-12000. Hākiballa is also referred to as the scion of the Kadamba family. The proper analysis has led to the conclusion that the two Kadamba families were of different stocks as they had matrimonial alliance. This has also helped the identification of Hākiballadēva with Harikēsari of the Hāṅgal Kadamba family, who was a subordinate of Vikramāditya VI even when the latter was the crown prince (in 1055-56 A.D.)²³ The name Hākiballa is only the colloquial form of the name Harikēsari Ballaha (i.e., Vallabha). Thus this inscription adds a new facet to the history of both the families i.e., Kadambas of Hāṅgal and Goa.

I will now deal in brief with the ruling families of Karnataka and their rela-

tions with those from other parts of India. A thorough analysis of inscriptions is bound to lead to the understanding of the history of these families better. For example, we can consider about the relation of the families of the Kaḷachūryas of Kalyāṇa and Kalachuris of Central India. The inscriptions of the Kaḷachūryas of Kalyāṇa refer to them as *Kālāñjara-puravarēśvara* and *suvarṇa-vṛishabha-dhvaja*²⁴, thus indicating their connection with the Kalachuris of the Central India. Similarly we can say about the Chalukyas of Bādāmi, their collateral branches and offshoots. The inscriptions of the Chalukyas of Vēṅgi make it sufficiently clear that they had their origin in the family of the Chalukyas of Bādāmi²⁵ but those of the family of the Chalukyas of Gujarat do not help us likewise to trace their connection with that family definitely.²⁶ However, the ancestors of Mūlarāja I of the Chalukya family are stated to be from Ayōdhyā and trace their legendary origin to Brahmā²⁷ The eastern Chālukya records commence their genealogy with mythological references, mentioning Nārāyaṇa (Viṣṇu) and then Svayambhū (Brahmā) and show their connection with Ayōdhyā, as also is claimed by the Chalukyas of Bādāmi²⁸. The inscriptions of the Rāshtrakūṭa period²⁹, again confirm this. For example, the Sañjān plates of Amōghavarsha I³⁰ state that Akālavārsha Kṛishṇa I conquered the throne from the illustrious Chalukyas who once had ruled from Ayōdhyā (*Ayōdhya-simhāsana-chāmar-ōrjitah*). We knew that the early Chalukyas had

established a branch in Gujarat and rulers of this branch like Dharāśraya-Jayasimhavarman, Jayāśraya and Avanijanāśraya³¹ ruled upto the middle of the 8th century A.D. But it is not known whether Mūlarāja's predecessors could be traced up to Avanijanāśraya or not. However, this creates a further inquisitiveness in the minds of the students of history and future discoveries may help in solving this problem.

An inscription from the village Pūḍūr³² in Andhra Pradesh also belonging to the reign of Kalyāṇa Chālukya Vikramāditya VI, in Kannaḍa language and characters of the 12th century A.D, brings to light *Mahāmaṇḍalēśvara* Pallavarasa who is also referred to as Alampūra-bhujāṅga and Muchukundūr-Puravarēśvara. The inscription takes back the genealogy of the family of this chief to eight generations and states that Dercharāja was its progenitor. Taking into consideration various possibilities, it can be stated that some Pallava rulers may have, during the period of their eclipse, migrated from their original home in the Tamil country and settled in the Telugu speaking region and gained recognition there. They must also have gradually proved their political ability so that they were recognised as the local rulers. It is not clear which place Muchukundūr referred to by the inscription is. The river Mūsi flowing in the Telaṅgāṇa region is also referred to as Muchukundā. Probably, the chiefs of this family must have carved out a place on the bank of this river or settled in a place bearing this name in the region

and moved to the Pūḍūr region subsequently. It can be surmised that after leaving Kāñchi, a branch may have settled in that place (Muchukundūr) from where they migrated to the Pūḍūr area. During the reign of Vikramāditya-VI, Pallavarasa of the Pūḍūr record was his feudatory. He is also referred to as *āgamaśāstra-praviṇa* and caused the construction of a *sarvatōbhadra* type Jinālaya, known as Pallava-Jinālaya.

It is not possible to deal with various such accounts pertaining to different dynasties within this short span. However, I will end this paper by referring to a recently discovered inscription from Haḷēbīd³³ (Hassan District) which mentions Kaḷachūrya Bijjaḷa. The inscription is dated Śaka 1111, Saumya (1189 A.D) and states that while, *Mahāmaṇḍalēśvara* Vīra-Ballāla of the Hoysala family attacked Murāri, Kēśava and Nārasimha, Channakālama-sāhaṇi retaliated by attacking the Hoysala ruler in turn. Channakālama is referred to as being in the service of Kaḷachūrya Bijjaḷa (*nāmādi-samastaprasasti-sahitam śrīmatu Kha(Ka) ḷachurya-bhujabaḷa-Chakravartti Bijjaḷadēvara-gaṇḍapeṇḍārada-sāhaṇi*). The inscription opens the door for re-examination of the entire data regarding the period of rule of Bijjaḷa and the span of his life. The expressions *samasta - prasasti - sahitam* and *Kaḷachurya-bhujabaḷa-Chakravarti* are indicative of the fact that Bijjaḷa may have been alive on the date of the record. It is known earlier that he abdicated the throne in favour of his son Rāyamurāri Sōvidēva in the year 1167 A.D. From

other sources it is surmised that he died in 1168 A.D.³⁴ However, this inscription indicates that Bijjala lived at least upto 1189 A.D. as he is endowed with his full royal titles³⁵. The inscription from Halēbīd provides the latest date for Bijjala.

Murāri against whom Vīra-Ballāla had marched is evidently Rāyamurāri Sōvidēva, son of Bijjala himself. The frequent fights between the Hoysalas and the Kalachuryas are quite well known to the students of history.

It is a welcome factor that in the recent years a number of inscriptions have been copied from different parts of the country by the Epigraphy Branch of

the Archaeological Survey of India and various other institutions. It is absolutely necessary that all these epigraphs are fully classified, analysed and studied, keeping in view the requirements of different aspects of history with which we have to deal, like the political, cultural, socio-economic, religious, etc. I have highlighted in this paper only some important evidences brought to light through a few recently discovered inscriptions and traced the significance of re-examination of the earlier data. South Indian history being very rich and varied, cross examination of the inscriptional data, of different regions, especially the adjoining ones, is bound to bring to light many hitherto unknown facets of the history of this area.

References

1. Mallinātha while commencing his commentary on Kālidāsa's works indicates the nature of his commentary in the verse :

Ih=ānvaya-mukhēn=aiva sarvaṁ vyākhyāyatē mayā

N-āmūlam likhyatē kiñchin=n-ānapēkshitam=uchyatē (vide. *The Raghuvamśa of Kālidāsa*, with an Introduction by Prof. H.D. Velankar, Bombay, 1948, 1st canto, p.1).

2. Srinivas Ritti and B.R. Gopal (ed.) *Studies in Indian History and Culture* (Dr.P.B Desai Felicitation Volume), Dharwar, 1971, pp.57 ff.
3. K.V. Ramesh and others, *Śrīkaṇṭhikā* (Dr. S. Srikantha Sastri Felicitation Volume), pp. 61 ff. Also see S.P. Tewari (*JESI*, Vol.XI, pp.25-32).
4. In the phrase *jahāra Rāmasya yath=aiva Rāmaḥ*, the first reference is to Paraśurāma and the second to Śrī Rāma, the hero of Rāmāyaṇa.
5. *Śrīkaṇṭhikā*, *op.cit.*
6. K.A. N. Sastri, *History of India*, Madras, 1950, p. 173.
7. I have discussed about this in detail in my article published in *JESI*, Vol.VII, pp. 138ff. Also *vide* B.R. Gopal, *Corpus of Kadamba Inscriptions*, Vol. I, pp. 175 ff.

8. *Ep.Ind.*, Vol. VIII, pp. 24 ff and plate.
9. *JBBRAS.*, Vol. IX, pp. 235 ff.
10. *Śrīkaṇṭhikā*, *op.cit.*
11. This was discussed by him in his paper 'Kadamba-Pallava Gaṅga Relationship', presented at the National Seminar on the Kadambas held at Banavāsi (North Kanara District).
12. I had discovered this inscription in the year 1965-66 and this is noticed in *A.R. Ep.*, of the same year as No. B. 377. This has been edited by me in *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXXVII, pp. 333 ff.
13. This I have discussed elsewhere (vide. M.S. Nagaraja Rao, *The Chalukyas of Badami*, Bangalore, 1978, pp. 71 ff. and Dr. K. V. Ramesh and others, *Śrīkaṇṭhikā*, *op.cit.*, pp.111 ff.
14. See Dr. P.B. Desai's article, Hūli plates of Maṅgalarāja, *Journal of Karnataka University (Social Sciences)*, Vol. V, pp. 175 ff and Dr. G.S. Gaiś article in *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXXVIII, pp. 285 ff.
15. *Ep.Ind.*, Vol. XXXII, pp.293 ff and plate.
16. *A.R.Ep.*, 1949-50, No. A.7.
17. K.V Ramesh, *Chalukyas of Vātāpi* (Delhi 1984), pp 45 ff.
18. *Ep.Ind.* Vol. XXXVIII, pp. 215 ff and plate.
19. *Ibid.*, p.216 and M.S. Nagaraja Rao, *op.cit.*, p.59.
20. *Ibid.*, Vol XXXVII, p. 336. For a discussion on numerical territorial divisions, see my article published in *JPNSI.*, Vol II, pp 65 ff.
21. After the disappearance of the Early Kadambas from the political scene during the 7th century A.D. and until the appearance of the later Kadamba families in about the 10th century A.D., no account of this family is traceable. Māvāli inscription, therefore, provides a very important evidence pertaining to the period of eclipse of this family. (vide. G.M. Moraes *The Kadamba Kula* (Reprint of the Asian Education series), New Delhi & Madras, 1991), pp.68 ff. and charts containing dynastic trees, facing pp. 15, 93 and 167).
22. *Ep.Ind.*, Vol XXXIX, pp. 61 ff and pl. I have discussed about Kavaḍadvīpa in my article published in *JPNSI.*, Vol. VII, pp. 121 ff.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 63. I have also stated in my article published in the *Ep.Ind.*, Vol. under reference that the name Hākiballa is a colloquial form of *Harikēsari-vallabha* (i.e., *ballaha*), his basic name being Harikēsari for which the colloquial form is (Hāki), which form can also be met with in more than one inscription from that area, the varieties of the name being Hākiballa, Hākidēva, Hākiballadēva, etc.,
24. *S.I.I.*, Vol. XX, pp. 172 ff and P.B. Desai, *A History of Karnataka* (Dharwar 1981), pp. 194-95.
25. J.F. Fleet, *Dynasties of Kanarese Districts* (Reprint of the Asian Educational Services, New Delhi & Madras

1988), dynastic tree facing p. 336. Kubja- Vishṇuvardhana, the younger brother of Pulakēśin II was the founder of the Vēṅgi branch.

26. After Avanijanāśraya of the Gujarat branch of the early Chalukya family, there is a gap of nearly three centuries until Mūlarāja of the Chalukya family came to throne in Gujarat. (J.F. Fleet, *Ibid.* and A.K. Majumdar *Chalukyas of Gujarat, Bombay, 1956*, pp. 5ff.
27. A.K. Majumdar, *Ibid.*
28. Dr. K.V. Ramesh has discussed this in his article published in *Śrīkaṇṭhikā*, pp. 102 ff and also *vide* his book *Chalukyas of Vātāpi*, pp. 6-21.
29. *Śrīkaṇṭhikā, Ibid.*, p. 103.
30. *Ep.Ind.*, Vol. XVIII, pp.235 ff. and J.F. Fleet, *op.cit.*, pp.336 ff.
31. J.F. Fleet, *Ibid.*
32. *Ep.Ind.*, Vol. XL, pp. 81 ff. See also my article in *Indian Epigraphy and its bearing on the History of Art* (ed. by Frederic M. Asher and G.S. Gai, New Delhi, 1985), pp. 237 ff.
33. B.N. Mukherjee and others (ed.), *Śrī Dinēśachandrikā (Studies in Indology, D.C. Sircar Felicitation Volume)*, Delhi, 1983, pp.91 ff.
34. P.B. Desai, *op.cit.*, p. 201.
35. According to the literary sources, Bijjala lived up to 1196 A.D. (See B.Ramayya, *Basavēśvara Vachanālu - Samagra Samikshā*, p.222. This has yet to be substantiated by epigraphs.

14. AN INSCRIPTION FROM HIJLI, DISTRICT MIDNAPUR, WEST BENGAL

S.S. Hussain

I propose to invite the attention of scholars and historians through this paper to a short but extremely important and new Arabic inscription from Hijli, copied by me during my official tour in November 1975.

Hijli, now a small village, is situated in 22°45' north latitude and 86°40' east longitude. The village comes under the Contai Sub-Division of the Midnapur District of West Bengal. It is situated on the left bank of the Rasulpur river on the very shore of the sea.¹ We find various forms of spelling of the name Hijli in European accounts. We find INGILI (Gastaldi), GNGELI (De Barros, Purchas and De Lact), HINGELI (Van den Broucke), ANGELIN (Clavell), INGERLEY (Streyntsham Masters), INGELEE and HIDLLEY (Charnock), KEDLELIE (Pilot) and HEDGJELEE (Grant).² In the *'Āin-i-Akbarī*, Maljhatta is mentioned for the whole littoral tract comprising 1014 square miles which probably extended from the river Haldi to the boundary of Contai Thana.³

This important inscriptional slab is lying loose on a stone platform⁴ bearing the grave of Tāj Khān in front of the only mosque of the village. The mosque and the grave of Tāj Khān on a high platform, are situated to the extreme south side of the village just near the sea shore. The record under study is in Arabic language and comprises four lines of writing in *Naskh* characters. Be-

sides the Arabic text, there are a few stray words engraved at both the right and left corners of the slab written probably in Oriya or Bangala characters which I am unable to decipher. The main text in its first two lines contains the famous tradition of the Prophet regarding construction of mosques and in further two lines it records the construction of a mosque in A.H.943 corresponding to 1536-37 A.D. by *Ikhṭiyār Khān* son of *Munawwar Khān*. It also provides a phrase in the last "*(Almāl-al-Khair)-i-Islām*" for its chronogram which yields 943 A.H. if we calculate the first two words i.e., *Almal-al-Khair*. The writing space on the slab measures 45 by 26 cms.

The text of the record is :

Transliteration

- 1) Qālan-Nabī Ṣallal-Lāhu Āleh-i-wasallam
Man Banī Masjida Banī Lahu Fil-
Jannat
- 2) Ṣab'īn Qaṣūrā Ghafraḷlāhu-Lahu wal-
Waledaiye Banī al-Masjid
- 3) Fil thalātha wal-Araba'īn wa Tis'māya
Ikhṭiyār Khān
- 4) Wald Munawwar Khān Almāl-al-
Khair-i-Islām

Translation

- 1) The Prophet, may Allāh's salutations and peace be upon him, says, "He who builds a mosque, Allāh builds,

for him

- 2) seventy palaces in Paradise". May Allāh forgive him and his parents. The mosque was constructed
- 3) in (A.H.) third and forty and nine hundred (A.H.943-1536-37 A.D.) by Ikhtiyār Khān
- 4) son of Munawwar Khān. May Islām prosper in future.

The chronogrammatic phrase yields (A.H.) 943 corresponding to 1536-37 A.D.

Apart from establishing the identity of the two persons viz. Ikhtiyār Khān, the builder of the mosque and his father Munawwar Khān, the presence of this epigraph at Hijli itself is most important piece of information for the history of this region, particularly of the period of our record. We know that this part of the region i.e. Hijli, Tamluk and Midnapur, formed the northern most province of Orissa. According to O' Malley⁵ the tract of Hijli had not been conquered by the Muhammadans upto 1530 A.D. Further he says that "they i.e. Muhammadans could not have established their rule till some years later, for the last Hindu King of Orissa, Mukunda Dēva, was in possession of the country as far north as Tribeni". According to him it was conquered and passed into the hands of Musulmans in 1568 A.D. when Sulaiman Karrani's forces conquered Orissa. The Imperial Gazetteer of India⁶, while describing the village Hijli, says that "Muhammadans had a fort

here. A mosque was built by Masnad Alī Shāh, who held the neighbouring district from 1505 to 1546 A.D., and whose tomb is still visited by pilgrims." O' Malley⁷, providing legendary accounts, informs us that "about 1505 A.D., at the time when Husain Shāh, King of Bengal, had brought the rebellious Rājas to obedience 'even as far as the frontier of Orissa', one Tāj Khān Masnad-i-Alī, accompanied by his younger brother Sikandar Pahlwan (i.e. the wrestler), conquered Hijli, and founded a Muhammadan settlement at the mouth of Resulpur river, where Taj Khan's tomb still exists." H. Blockmann⁸, repeating the above statement of O' Malley, further informs that "the whole of Hijli remained in the family (of Taj Khan) for nearly eighty years, when it passed into the possession of a Hindu. As late as in 1630 we hear of the conquest of Hijli which had for many years a chief of its own, was conquered about 1630 A.D. by the Great Mogul."

The statements of O' Malley and H. Blockmann quoted above regarding the story of Masnad-i-Alī Taj Khān and his possession of Hijli from 1505 to 1568 or 1630 appear to be wrong in the light of another inscription copied from the mosque of the same place. In this inscription, one Taj Khan is stated to have constructed a mosque in A.H. 1055 corresponding to 1645-46 A.D., during the reign of Shahjahan, the Mughal Emperor. The story is based on legendary accounts as O' Malley himself quoted. There are chances that the local people might have assigned the period a century earlier to Tāj Khān who actually flourished

during Shāhjahān's reign. The Imperial Gazetteer of India has referred to him only as 'Masnad-i-Ali Shah' with out any mention of his being a ruler or the governor of that place. Besides this the further information of the Gazetteer that "Muhammadans had a fort [here and] a mosque was built by the said Masnad-i-Ali whose tomb is still visited by pilgrims" appears to be unconvincing. The fact that both the mosque and tomb were not there earlier and they were built only during the reign of Shahjahan is clearly borne out by our record. But for this record no historian of note provides any information about the Hijli tract as to when it was conquered by the Muslims or how it came under the possession of Muhammadans, during the period under discussion. In the light of this record though we can accept O' Malley's⁹ version that Gopinath Barajena remained incharge of Maljyatha Dandapāt upto 1530 A.D., as it is mentioned in the biography of Chaitanya called *Chaitanya Charitāmṛita*, the latter part of the statement that Maljyatha Mahal passed into the hands of the Musalmans in 1568 A.D. remains still unconvincing. Our record clearly provides the date of this event as A.H.943=1536-37 A.D., while referring to the construction of a mosque by Ikhtiyār Khān son of Munawwar Khān at this place. The inscription in the last line also contains a prayer for the prosperity of Islām in the future which is not possible if the region was not ruled or governed by Muslims. The inscription under study gives strength to the fact that the whole tract of Hijli was in the hands of

Muslims certainly at the time when this record came into existence.

As the slab of stone is not *in situ* and lying loose, it is not possible to say as to where the mosque under reference was situated. But, it is most likely that the new mosque might have been constructed on the remains of the old mosque during Shahjahan's period after a gap of hundred and ten years.

Ikhtiyār Khān of our record and his father Munawwar Khan are not mentioned in the chronicles. One Ikhtiyār Khān Panni is mentioned as commander of a garrison stationed at Rohtas Fort (in Bihar) having 12,000 matchlock men under him during Sher Shāh's period.¹⁰ Whether Ikhtiyār Khān of our record and the above Ikhtiyār Khān is one and the same person, is difficult to say in the absence of other particulars necessary for their proper identification. Munawwar Khān is mentioned in one of the epigraphs from Koil.¹¹ The said epigraph is of the reign of Ibrahim Lodi and records the construction of a fort in A.H. 931=1524-25 A.D. by Miṭṭha son of 'Umar and Shihāb, son of Munawwar. The two persons of the said record were the *Shiqdār* and *Dabir* respectively. The first reason for the possibility of identity in their case is the nearness of the period for both the epigraphs i.e., A.H. 931 and 943 of Koil and Hijli, respectively. Secondly, after the battle of Panipat (1526) and specially after the defeat of Ibrāhīm Lodi, the Afghāns in large numbers started migrating to the eastern provinces, particularly to Bengal and

Orissa where they always remained in pursuit of better fortunes for obtaining the lost throne. Thus, the possibility is that Munawwar Khān of the record of Koil might be the same person who, after the Mughal onslaught in Panipat might have migrated from Koil to Bengal and then to Hijli alongwith his sons (Shihāb, the Dabīr of Koil record and Ikhtiyār Khān of Hijli record) for occupying or governing the uncared for tract.

Another aspect of importance of our record may be considered in the light of a very meagre history of Bara Bhuiyas of Bengal discussed by modern scholars.¹²

The date of the record, situation of the region and period of downfall of Bengal and Orissan Kingdoms make us believe that Ikhtiyār Khān as well as his father Munawwar Khān might belong to the category of Bara Bhuiyas who, for the sake of making fortunes, occupied the Hijli region and became independent Zamindārs of this difficult terrain. If it is so, our record provides the names of these earliest known Zamindārs of Hijli who do not find mention elsewhere. Moreover, these two were also responsible for constructing the first mosque of Islām in this region.

References

1. *The Imperial Gazetteer of India* (IG), Vol. XIII, (Oxford, 1908), p.116 O'Malley, *Bengal District Gazetteers*, Midnapore, (Calcutta, 1911), p.182.
2. O'Malley: *Ibid.*, p.191
3. *Ibid.*, p.183. H.Blockmann : *Contributions to the Geography and History of bengal*, (Calcutta, 1968), p.18.
4. *Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy*, 1975-76, No. D 272.
5. O'Malley : *Op.cit.*, p.1823.
6. *IG.*, *Op.cit.*, p. 116.
7. O'Malley : *Op.cit.*, p.182.
8. H.Blockmann : *Op.cit.*, p.18
9. O'Malley : *Op.cit.*, p.183
10. Abbās Khān Sarwani : *Tarīka-i-Shāhī* (Eng.Tr.) by B.P.Ambashthya, (Patna, 1974), p.760.
11. *Epigraphia Indica Arabic and Persian Supplement*, 1955-56, pp.22-23, pl. VI(c).
12. For the history of Bara Bhuiyas see Dr. James Wise : "On the Barah Bhuyas of Eastern Bengal" vide, *JASB*, vol. XLIII, part I, 1874, pp.197-214 J.N.Sarkar: *The History of Bengal vol. II* (Dacca, 1948), pp.22, 43, 53, 55, 235-41 A.C. Roy, *History of Bengal : Mughal Period* (Calcutta, 1968), pp.53-101.

15. TWO INTERESTING INSCRIPTIONS OF EMPEROR AURANGZEB FROM KANCHIPURAM, TAMIL NADU

G.S. Khwaja

In this paper I propose to study two very interesting inscriptions of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb copied by me from Kānchīpuram, which provide new pieces of information about the socio-economic trends of Mughal administration, specially in the prospective of social-reform-based taxation policy of Aurangzeb.

Kanchipuram the Headquarters of the taluk and district situated on northern latitude 12° 50' and eastern longitude 79° 42' in Chinglepet district of Tamil Nadu about 72 kms., west-south-west of Madras city, is one of the holiest places in the South and indeed placed among the seven sacred cities of India according to Hindu religious belief.¹

The inscriptional slab under review is half buried in the ground by the side of the metalled road in Shaikhpeth Street.² The slab, with thick coat of red lead (*sindūr*) and oil is worshipped by the city-dwellers as this stone is said to be possessed with the touch-and-go-cure properties for common back-sprain and stiff-necks. This arch-shaped slab bears Persian inscriptions on both the sides. A ten line text in Persian prose, engraved on obverse side, in Nasta'liq characters measuring 104 cms. x 45 cms. dated in A.H. 1116 (1704-05 A.D.) has been deciphered as follows :

Transliteration

1. Dar Khilāfat-i-Khusrau-i-Dihlī, gītī-sitān
2. Sultān Aurangzeb, 'Ālamgīr
3. Ghāzī, nāīb, amārat-panāh, Nawwāb
4. DāūdKhān, Shaikh Islām binā-i-painṭh namūd
5. Wa nām Islāmpūr nahād wa Maḥṣūl-i-īn rā
6. Ba-tasadduq-i-farq-i-mubāarak-i-Zill-i-Subḥānī barāī langar-i-
7. Fuqarā muqarrar namūd bāyad 'ki Yellā Pullā Thalkarnī ba-mi' awlād
8. Maḥṣūl rā girdāwari namūda, ba fuqarā Kharch numāyad.
9. Har Kase ki māni' bāshad dar lānat-i-Khudā
10. Giriftār gardad, sana 1116 Hijrī.

Translation

1. During the reign of the Great King of Delhi, the conqueror of the world,
2. Sultān Aurangzeb 'Ālamgīr
3. Ghāzī, (during the time of) deputy, the asylum of authority, Nawwāb

4. Dāūd Khān, Shaikh Islām laid the foundation of a market
5. and christened it as Islāmpūr, and its revenue
6. as an alm dispensed for the auspicious head of the Shadow of God (i.e. King) for the free kitchen of
7. poors has been fixed, and Yellā Pullā Thalkarnī, with his progeny,
8. will collect and spend the revenue for poors
9. whosoever will resist, curse of God
10. he will be beset with, year A.H.1116 (1704-05 A.D.)

This first inscription is quite self explanatory in its purport recording the construction of a market during the reign of Aurangzeb and in the time of Nawwāb Dāūd Khān the deputy (*nāib*) of the commander, by one Shaikh Islām, who also named the town after his own name as Islampur. As far as the identity of Dāūd Khān is concerned he is not an unknown figure in the history of Aurangzeb's reign. He was from Afghan stocks, settled in Deccan and had a suffix of Pannī with his name. After the fall of Bijapur Kingdom in 1686 A.D., at the hands of Aurangzeb, Dāūd Khān Pannī joined the royal force and carved out a prominent place among the other Afghan officers. On merits, he was raised gradually to the rank of 6000 zat/6000 horse and was appointed deputy to Nuṣrat Juṅg Dhulfiqār Khān, commander (*faujdar*) of Karnāṭakī

Haiderābād, and took active part in the campaign of Jinjī led by Dhulfiqār Khān in 1690-1698. In 1704 he was appointed deputy to Prince Kām Bakhsh, who was governor of Haiderābād. In 1706 he took part in the stage of Vākingṛh.³ Unfortunately the inscription as well as historical works do not provide any details about the status and career of Shaikh Islām, who might have been a local official in the sarkār of Kanchi having a socio-political significance, but the other information this inscription provides, deserve special mention.

Firstly, the re-christening of the town of Kanchipuram as Islāmpūr. This inscription is the only source to provide information about this re-naming of the town under Mughal-rule, which becomes important for the place-name history.

Secondly, the mention of the post of Thalkarnī, which is an addition to the names of posts appeared so far in Perso-Arabic inscriptions. Thalkarnī, is divisional accountant having duties identical to Kulkarnī (the village accountant) or patwārīs but with a wider jurisdiction upto the level of a district or division.⁴

Thirdly, the order to collect revenues from the market and spend it for the free kitchen (langar) of poors reflects the taxation-based welfare policy of Aurangzeb for his subjects. Here a little clarification while interpreting fuqarā (poors) will not be out of topic. The word fuqarā broadly covers Emperor's Hindu subjects too. My argument for this syn-

thesis may be seen in the light of political history for the region. Kanchipuram had enjoyed a pivotal importance during the rule of Pallavas, Chalukyas, Cholas, Hoysalas and other dynasties. Even under Vijayanagara Kings, Kanchipuram was having among other things a fully developed trade of handwoven silk fabrics. A flourished town in the hands of Marathās, Kanchi was annexed to Mughal Empire after the fall of Jinjī in 1698 A.D.⁵ It enjoyed the status of the Headquarters of havelī and sarkār in the suba of Haiderābād.⁶ Naturally at that juncture of political change, Hindu population of the town, with different classes of society might have resorted to settle down here itself. The Mughal occupation could have added to it military officials, administrative staff, bureaucrats and obviously not a large number of general Muslim population. It meant the poor class of the society in Kanchipuram consisted a sizeable number of Hindu subjects including the pilgrims to this holy city.

After this study of the changed situation the imposing of market-taxes on the flourishing weaving industry and trade reflects the healthy economical balance in the trade and tax infrastructure of the State on one hand and its direct link with the welfare of the poor class, comprising majority of Hindus, points towards the generosity of Aurangzeb on the other hand. This new light on the liberal policy of this monarch will be a face-lift and add a convincing glitter to his tarnished image. Appointment of Yellā Pullā Thalkarnī, a local Hindu official,

and his progeny as girdāwar⁷ (tax collector or tax inspector), again pin-points on the guarding of the interests of Hindu poors against any misuse of the revenues.

Second inscription of this study runs in seven lines of Persian prose engraved in Nasta'liq characters and was executed at the reverse of the same slab after a gap of one year i.e., in A.H. 1117 (1705-06 A.D.). The inscription measuring 55 cms. x 40 cms., has been read as under⁸:

Transliteration

1. Qual banām-i-riāyā Sakkana-i-Islāmpūr
2. Ānki sar kārkhāna-i-bāfanda dar māh do falam
3. Wa Kārkhāna-i-duwwam rā yak falam wa sar-i-manzil dūkān rā
4. Do falam wa sā'ir-i-āzār-i-Chahār-Shanba badastūr
5. Mustamir ba-sarkār mī rasānida bāshand, Kasī ki
6. Siwā-ī-in qual ziyāda mī gīrad dar lānat-i-
7. Khudā giriftār shawad, sana (A.H.) 1117.

Translation

1. Ordinance issued to the subject, by the resident of Islāmpur
2. is that Chief (or First Grade) weav-

- ing industry (will pay) monthly two falams
3. and second Grade industry, one falam and shops in the first row
 4. two falams and cess of weekly-market of Wednesday remaining as it is
 5. will continue to reach the government (exchequer), whosoever
 6. collects more than the (specified in the) ordinance, curse
 7. of God, he will be beset with, year A.H. 1117 (1705-06 A.D.).

This epigraph is in fact an ordinance (qual), in its character, issued to the subjects of Islampur and it has got a value of an annexure to the previous execution. The necessity of this second execution can easily be assumed. In response to the Emperor's previous order the traders might have evaded the taxes for want of a well-defined formula of taxation specifying the trade taxable, the rate, its periodicity, and eligibility.

This inscription is a supplement to remove the lacuna of the first order and it also specifies the taxation policy adopted by the government, according to which the weaving industry and the outlets of their products had been divided into two grades as per their size or location and accordingly revenue was imposed on them in terms of falams (the medium of transaction prevalent in Southern India) as under :

1. Sar Karkhana (Chief or first-grade industry) which were supposed to produce larger quantum of woven fabrics had been levied with the rate of two falams per month.
2. Karkhana-i-duwwam (second grade industry) with comparatively smaller quantum were given concession of one falam and levied @ one falam per month.
3. Shops in the front rows of the market, which were naturally to attract a greater turnover had to pay @ two falams per month.

The sair⁹ (cess) of Wednesday-market was maintained as per the previous practice. It was also categorically mentioned that whosoever, while remitting the above said revenue to the government exchequer, shows high-handedness to extract more than the specified, will invoke the curse of God.

The use of falams¹⁰ as a medium of transaction by the government particularly in this part of the dominion instead of any other coin circulated in the rest of the Mughal Empire, hints at two probabilities

1. A gesture to respect the prevalent medium of transaction, which in other words, might have made the revenue calculations easy for local as well as traders coming from other territories not included in the Mughal-Empire, and falams were in widespread circulation therein.¹¹

2. An economic measure to regulate the rate of revenue with the rise in the value of the metal to check the inflation or devaluation of money.
- My deliberation on some of the points discussed in this paper may not be a final verdict, even then, as a whole, these inscriptions have added some dimensions to the economic structure of Mughal Administration throwing new light on the social welfare policies of the King.

References

1. *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol, X (Oxford, 1908), p. 377; C.R. Srinivasan - *Kanchipuram Through The Ages* (Delhi, 1979) p.6.
2. To be listed in *Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy (AREp)* 1988-89, Appendix C.
3. Muhammed Sāqī - *Maāthi-i-'Alamgīrī* (Calcutta, 1871), p. 483 ; *Rukat-i-Alamgiri* - Tr. Jamshid M. Bilmoria (Delhi-1972) Letter CLXIII p.157 & F.N. 5 ; *Tazkiratul-Umara of Kewalram* Tr. S.M. Azizuddin Hussain (Delhi 1985) p. 70; Shahnawaz Khan - *Maathir-ul-Umara* Vol. II (Calcutta, 1890) p.65. M. Athar Ali - *The Mughal Nobility under Aurangzeb* (New York, 1966) p.219.
4. Dr. Yusuf Husain Khan - *Farmans and Sanads of the Deccan Sultans* (Hyderabad, 1963) Note No. 33, p.28.
5. Muhammad Saqi - *Op.cit.*, p.391.
6. Irfan Habib - *An Atlas of Mughal Empire* (Delhi, 1982)
7. H.M. Wilson - *A Glossary of Judicial & Revenue Terms* (London, 1855), p. 178.
8. *AREp.*, 1988-89, Appendix C.
9. H.M. Wilson - *op.cit.*, p.454.
10. *Falam* (or *fanam*) was a small gold coin of Southern India in ancient period which bore different legends and values during the times of Chalukyās, Cholās, Hoysalas, Vijaynagara Kings & Marāṭhās. A variation in their weights was found, by Numismatists, in different times. In 16th century, during the rule of Vijayanagar a Kingdom, which was nearer to the Mughal-rule, *Falams* were bearing values as under :
 $1 \text{ Fanam} = 1/10 \text{ Partāb} = 1/20 \text{ Varāha}$, *Varaha* weighed 50 to 52 grains and so *Fanam* 3 grains approximately. One *Fanam* was able to fetch 10 Pomegranates in Vijaynagara City. See N. Ramesan - *A Catalogue of the Vijaynagar Coins* (Hyderabad, 1962), p. 47 & 50 ; Sir Walter Elliot - *Numismata Orientalia-Coins of Southern India* (Varanasi, 1970) p. 146.
11. Sir Walter Elliot - *Op. cit.*, p. 147.



16. WAGES AND REMUNERATION FROM INSCRIPTIONS

P. Shanmugam

There are many inscriptions in the Tamil country which provide some information regarding the fixation of wages to different classes of workers. Those inscriptions have been studied in recent years by a few scholars. Among them K.A. Nilakanta Sastri¹ has given a detailed account of wages fixed to various workers. R. Nagaswamy also has made a similar study of wage structure of temple servants of the Bṛihadīśvara temple at Thaṅjāvūr known from the inscriptions of Rājarāja I.² Earlier A. Appadorai has explained the wages paid to different workers in the medieval South India. He has also utilised the material available from the *Nītiśāstras*³. These studies clearly suggest the nature and rates of different wages paid to several worker groups in the medieval Tamil country. However, it may be said that no detailed analysis of the medieval wage structure was properly attempted.

Wages are the payment for the work performed. All labourers in the fields, village and temple servants and employees of the government/king were remunerated for their work with wages. It was normally fixed for the individual worker and paid individually, since it was the work of an individual which has to be compensated. The available evidence do not point to any collective fixation or payment of wages.

Wages were fixed either on (a) daily basis or (b) annual basis. Though fixed

for the day, the total wages earned were paid for the whole year. Usually the wages included some allowance for the dress also. It was calculated for the whole year and paid accordingly. Special allowances for some works for the artists are also known from the inscriptions.

Wages and remunerations were fixed in three different commodities. They are (a) paddy, (b) money and (c) land. Though these three items were in use the most important item of payment was always paddy. Money was usually paid in terms of paddy. In some cases, though wages were fixed in terms of money, it was paid in an equivalent rate of paddy. In some other cases of lands given as remuneration the income from the land (mostly paddy or paddy equivalents) was paid and no transfer of property right was made.

On the basis of the different items prescribed for payment the wage structure may be easily divided into four groups as under: 1. wages fixed in kind (paddy), 2. wages fixed in kind (paddy) and money/gold, 3. wages paid by a grant of land and 4. wages paid by a share of the temple/village land.

In the first group wages were fixed and paid in paddy. The wage earners in this group were mostly labourers in the temple. The wage was fixed both on (a) daily basis and (b) annual basis, of which the fixation of daily wage was popular.

However, in both the cases the payment was made annually. No other allowance seem to have been paid to them.

In the Brihadīśvara temple the above two methods of payments are known. The inscriptions mention the word *nivandam* to refer to the wages. Each one of the temple musicians (i.e.) *piḍārar tiruppadiyam* singers player on *uḍukkai* and *kottimattalam* were paid a daily wage of 3 *kurūṇis* of paddy.⁵ The wages of *kaṇakkaṇ*, *kilḷkaṇakku* and *tirumeykkāppu*, the functionaries in the Brihadīśvara temple were fixed on an yearly basis. The *kaṇakkaṇ* (accountant) was fixed at 200 *kalams* of paddy per year, and a *kilḷkaṇakku* who was a subordinate accountant to the *kaṇakku* was fixed at the rate of 75 *kalams* of paddy per year.⁶ The *tirumeykkāppu* (security officer) was fixed at 100 *kalams* of paddy per year.⁶ In all the above instances no other allowances were mentioned.

In the second group, with the regular payment in paddy an allowance for the dress of the worker was made. The paddy was fixed per day but paid annually. This is usually mentioned as *ilakkai* in some inscriptions and *korru* in other inscriptions. The dress allowance was known as *puḍavaimudal* or *kappadam*. The temple priests, accountants, musicians, drummers and agricultural labourers in the temple lands were paid in that manner. A *māṇi* (junior priest) was fixed at the rate of 1 *padakku* of paddy daily with an allowance of 4 *kāśus* per annum as *puḍavaimudal*. A *dikshitar* was fixed at 3 *kurūṇis* of paddy daily and an allowance of 4 *kāśus* per annum. A temple ser-

vant was fixed at the rate of 1 *padakku* of paddy daily and 5 *kāśus* of *puḍavaimudal* annually.⁸

The Chidambaram inscriptions provide that the temple servants *tirunāndavanakkudigaḷ*, working in the temple lands were paid 1 *padakku* of paddy daily and 2 *kāśus* as *puḍavaimudal* per annum. Each of the servants, *tiruppallittāmam toḍuppōr*¹⁰ (garland makers) and *nāyagamy seivār*¹¹ (supervisor) were paid at the rate of 3 *kurūṇi* of paddy daily and 3 *kāśus* per annum. Another garland maker was fixed at 2 *kurūṇis* of paddy daily and an annual payment of 3 *kāśus* as *puḍavaimudal*.¹² A shepherd¹³ who is tending 150 cattle was paid 1 *padakku* of paddy daily and a *puḍavaimudal* of 1½ *kāśus* per annum. The annual money payments in the above instances were calculated to the equivalents of paddy and paid accordingly. According to inscriptions 15 *kalams* of paddy were priced at 1 *kāśu* in all the above instances.

In some cases the wages were fixed in terms of paddy and gold¹⁴. A *nambi* (senior priest) was fixed at the daily rate of 1 *kurūṇi*, 7 *nālis* of paddy and ½ *kalañju* of gold per annum. A *māṇi* (junior priest) was fixed at the rate of 1 *kurūṇi* of paddy and an annual payment of 1/8 *kalañju* of gold. A *talaipparai* (chief musician) was fixed at a daily rate of 1 *kurūṇi* of paddy and an annual payment of 1/8 *kalañju* of gold. The *vvachchar* (other musicians) were fixed at a daily rate of 6 *nālis* of paddy and an annual payment of 1/8 *kalañju* of gold. The *tiruppadiyam* singers were also fixed at the

rate of 1 *padakku* daily and an annual payment of $1/8$ *kalañju* of gold. Among the *tiruppallittāmam-parippōr* (florist), the male worker was fixed at the rate of 1 *padakku* of paddy daily and an annual payment of 9 *mañjādis* of gold. The woman worker in the same category was fixed at 3 *nālis* of paddy daily and an annual payment of 4 *mañjādis* of gold.

In the third group land was assigned to the worker for his wages. The individual holds a limited property right over the piece of land granted to him and he can enjoy it for his life and receive the income from the land as wages to the work performed by him. The land so assigned to the worker can also be inherited by the members of the family, provided they also pursue the same work. This arrangement is described in inscriptions in several terms. *Jīvita*, *kāṇi*, *bhōga* and *virutti* are some of the terms used in inscriptions. The Chidambaram inscriptions quoted already refer to an instance of this. The lands were assigned as *jīvita* and the prescribed wages were to be paid from the income of the land. In another instance from Chidambaram¹⁵ 5 *mā* of land were granted and was stipulated that the agricultural labourer's (*tirunandavanam cheyyum ā!*) wage had to be paid from the income derived from the land. The same inscription mentions another instance of an assignment of land of 7 *māas* *tirunandāvilakkuppuraṁ* for payment of wages. In both the cases the rates of wages were not given. In another instance¹⁶ the *tiruttoppukkuḍiga!* (the agricultural labourers) numbering 50 were paid a total area of 100 *mās* of land for

their wages, calculating at the rate of 2 *mās* per worker. Their wages fixed at 1 *padakku* of paddy daily and 2 *kāśus* per year each was to be paid from the income derived from the land assigned for the purpose.

Kāṇis were assigned for several purposes to eligible persons. For example, on those singing the *tiruppadiyam*, the sacred song in the temple, the *tiruppadiyakkāṇi* was conferred upon. *Uvachchakkāṇi*¹⁷ and *nattuvakkāṇi*¹⁸ were assigned to the musicians and dancers respectively. *Bōgam* and *viruthi* are two other forms where land was given for specific purposes. A part of the income from these lands formed the remuneration to these workers.

In the case of royal servants like ministers and other officers land was given for their service to the state and revenue from such lands were considered as salary. In this case sometimes whole villages were granted. We may refer to the *ēkabōga* grant of 10 *vēlis* of land in the village of Nanmuḷānkuḍi made to the minister Aṇiruddhaṇ *alias* Brahmādhiraṇjan.¹⁹ Village servants were also granted with pieces of lands for their wages. For potters the land was granted as *kuśappatti*²⁰ and a barber was granted with a piece of land as *nāviśappatti*.²¹ For physicians the land was granted as *vaidyakkāṇi*.²² The village accountants also received land as *kaṇakkukāṇi* or *kāvidikkāṇi* for remuneration of their services.

In the fourth group, a share in the income from the land was granted while

the land right was held by the institution. This arrangement of land share was known as *paṅgu* and the fixed quantity was paid in paddy annually. The paddy so assigned was the wage earned by the worker. This type of fixation and payment of wage seems to be a special form found only in the inscriptions of Rājarāja I from Thaṅjāvūr. Some categories of musicians and dancers (*taḷichchērippenḍugal*) dedicated to the Brihadīśvara temple, Thaṅjāvūr received their remuneration in this way. One share in this category (according to Rājarāja I's inscriptions) was 1 *vēli* of land which fetched 100 *kalams* of paddy annually which was the annual payment of wages for the worker. No provision for dress allowance was referred to. In the case of higher occupations the number of shares were increased. The musicians of all kinds, accountants, *kuśavar*, *vannattār*, tailor, copper-smith and a host of other servants in the Brihadīśvara temple and also in a number of other places were paid in this manner. In the case of the 408 *taḷichchērippenḍugal* (temple dancers) at Thaṅjāvūr, besides a share of land, one house was also given for their residence.

The historical implications of the wage structure in the Tamil country may be summarised briefly. Each worker was fixed with appropriate wages according to the nature of his work. At present we

may not be able to assess the real value of the wages. The evidence is also not clear to suggest that the fixation of wages to different worker groups was based on any principle. However, we may notice the variations in the rates of wages with regard to the same work. Though the wages were fixed on daily basis it was always calculated and paid on an yearly basis. This would go to show that some sort of regular practise was followed at least in respect of payment of wages. This regularity could have some far reaching economic activities at least in some areas of labour economy.

An important aspect that is quite apparent from the study of wage structure is the restrictive use of money in the disbursement of wages. Though several reasons could be attributed for this situation, the scarcity of coins in the monetary transaction of the medieval Tamil country could be one of the reasons. Another factor that emerges from this study is the apparent reason known for the slow growth of local industries. Since these village servants were assigned small pieces of lands in their neighbourhood they were tied to the land permanently for proper maintenance. Hence, their free movement to other areas was curtailed. Probably this led to the limited movement of workers to the other areas which resulted in the slow growth of local industries.

References

1. K.A. Nilakanta Sastry, *The Cōlas*, Madras, 1975, pp.557-59

2. B. Nagaswamy, 'Pay structure under Rājarāja Chōla', in B. Nagaswamy, *Studies in Ancient Tamil Law and*

- Society*, Department of Archaeology, Government of Tamilnadu, 1978, pp. 62-66. See also *Ibid.* pp. 135-40.
3. A. Appadorai, Economic Conditions in Southern India (1000-1500A.D) University of Madras, 1936, pp. 145-46, 275-76, 764-65.
 4. P. Shanmugam, 'Management of Temple Musicians and Dancers' in *The Bulletin of the Institute of Traditional Cultures*, University of Madras, 1989-1990, Madras, pp.69,72-73.
 5. *South Indian Inscriptions (SII)*. Vol. II, No. 65.
 6. *SII*. II, 69.
 7. *Ibid.* II, 70.
 8. *Ibid.* II, 69.
 9. *Ibid.* VIII, 55,56.
 10. *Ibid.* VIII, 55,56.
 11. *Ibid.* VIII, 55,56.
 12. *Ibid.* VIII, 56.
 13. *Ibid.* VIII, 54.
 14. *Ibid.* XVII, 222.
 15. *Ibid.* XII, 151.
 16. *Ibid.* VIII, 53.
 17. *ARE*. 1920, No. 203.
 18. *Ibid.* 1924, No. 361.
 19. *El.* XV, No. 5, p.64
 20. *Tirumala Tirupati Devastāham Inscriptions*, No. 9.
 21. *Ibid.*
 22. *ARE*. 1921-30, No. 184.
 23. *SII*. II. 66.

17. SCRIPTAL TRANSMUTABILITY OF CHOLA INSCRIPTIONS IN KARNATAKA (MYSORE DISTRICT)

C. S. Vasudevan

The study of innumerable inscriptions issued by the various dynasties from the time of the king Aśōka, lay scattered over the entire length and breadth of this vast country of ours, makes it an uphill task, especially in scrutinising and analysing them. This fact becomes further more complicated with the dawn of the medieval period i.e., from about the 9th - 10th century A.D., as the records display altogether different characteristics in case of their script-language and its content. This is specially the case with the epigraphs of South India, where besides the *śihhṭabhāshā* which was current during that period, a host of vernacular dialectes were also used.

A cursory glance at the medieval inscriptions shows the use of various scripts and languages, which were conspicuous by their absence in the early period. These records show a regional and/or linguistic affiliation which is not being examined by the scholars, as they dismiss the aberrant nature of the inscriptions by saying that, it could have happened due to "Cultural contacts or to the political supremacy" in a wider sense.

However new trait of culture cannot be superimposed on any alien people, because the cultural succession is rather a slow and steady in its process, unlike the political one which is, generally sudden. Any element of culture occupies a spe-

cific position in its stratification and the language being an element of culture, the prime-media of communication in the intra and inter geographical division, may not remain unaffected by this process. Therefore, the language and script of an inscription vary in varied degrees in and around the capital or elsewhere in the kingdom. As we do have, now-a-days, the ecological or environmental zones, the epigraphs do have their own "ZONES", which, so far, have not been identified.

I venture, here at this stage, to classify three zones of the epigraphs based on the script-language permutation and combination which were employed in the medieval inscriptions, and they are as follows:

Here, it is apt to recall the work-efforts of the noted and eminent epigraphist, Dr.K.V. Ramesh of international repute, in the zonalization of the palaeographical features of the Indian epigraphs¹. He rightly observes that, "from the 10th century onwards such palaeographical zonalization should be done in strict accordance with any relationship which any given variety of script, betrays with the growth or increasing dominance of the dialect of the locality or region to which the inscriptions belong such as Kannada, Telugu, Tamil, Vaṭṭeluttu etc, have specific regional-cum-linguistic bearings."

The important zones are :

1) CORE ZONE

In this zone², the epigraphs being in the *Rājyabhāṣa* or the prime language and the prime script, can be noticed usually in and around the capital and in important towns or cities of kingdom with a definite consistency in the usage of the script and the language.

2) LINGUAL ZONE

This zone can be identified with the peripeheral areas of the kingdom wherein the inscriptions will display deviation from the core zone and a host of permutation and combinations can be noticed, while at the same time no consistency in the employment of script and language is followed.

3) DISTAL ZONE

It is a zone³ away from the limits of the capital and kingdom and epigraphs may contain both or either of the above said characteristic features and in addition, they may also display the usage of local script and language.

Having thus classified the medieval inscriptions, the epigraphs of the Chōlas found in the present day Mysore District of Karnataka are taken up as a test-study to substantiate the Lingual Zone⁴.

During the time of the Chōlas, in this District one can notice, the following script-language combination employed in

the inscriptions⁵.

| TABLE I. | |
|---------------|----------|
| SCRIPT | LANGUAGE |
| Kannāḍa | Kannāḍa |
| Kannāḍa | Sanskrit |
| Kannāḍa | Tamil |
| Tamil/Grantha | Tamil |

Let us try to probe into this matter with the help of the Table I and II (appended). Accordingly, one can notice four clear stages in the employment of script and language in the inscriptions. The first stage being inscriptions in Kannāḍa script and language, the second in having the bilingual epigraphs, namely, Kannāḍa and Tamil with Kannāḍa as the script; the third stage represented by the language portion in Tamil while the script in Kannāḍa; and in the fourth stage, the entire inscription is in Tamil/Grantha script and Tamil language. One can, thus, say that the process of cultural conquest is rather slow but steady and no forceful imposition was laid upon, as is thought by a majority of scholars.

The possible reasons for this kind of usage of script and language in the inscriptions are generally ascribed to the engraver, who was, perhaps, available to the authority concerned locally. This view can be subscribed upto a certain extent, that too, with some reservations, especially, with reference to this region. We are aware of the fact that this region was occupied by the Gangas, prior to the Chōlas, whose inscriptions contain Sanskrit as the main language, in which one

can notice a fair sprinkle of the Tamil influenced words like 'Pallava-Kulatilakan', Vayiram-kattī eredu, 'Vinnappan keye arasi-gal anttiga⁸, etc.,. This as pointed out by K.V. Ramesh, is itself suggestive of the fact, that already the Tamil language was in vogue, but maintained a low profile and was making a gradual progress into the society, while it received a new boost with the advent of the Chōlas who made Tamil a *Lingua franca*, in a phased manner, as it was used profusely in the inscriptions⁷ during their time.

Another reason that can be suggested is that the mercantile organisations that were operating briskly in the inter-states like the *Dēśiya-āyirattaiyñūrruvar* of Ayyavole⁸, as evidenced by the epigraphs, to whom responsibility can be ascribed to. Added to this the religious institutions⁹ nurtured both by the royal house and the members of the public, caused for the engraving of records as stated above.

The fact that the local populace was aware of the local script, which was in vogue, namely Kannada and ignorant of Tamil/Grantha script, the working knowledge of Tamil language by them would have made the authority to use and issue the inscriptions in a transliterated form, namely Tamil language with Kannada script or an admixture of Tamil and Kannada languages or the *praśasti* portion in Tamil language, while the text in Kannada language and script in the initial stages. This got transformed or transmuted, to Tamil/Grantha script and Tamil language in the later period

(final stage) and continued in the later period also.

From the above fact, it is evident that the Chōlas, who imbibed the local tradition and culture exerted and succeeded in gradually converting the lingual zone into a core zone, as revealed by the scores of their inscriptions. This tradition continued with renewed zeal by the political successors, Hoysalas, who successfully employed Tamil/Grantha script and Tamil language in their records. The entire process of this transformation took about a span of five decades on an average, as noticed by the epigraphs. The colloquial dialects, besides prime language,¹⁰ would have exercised certain influence on the epigraphical records which could not be totally denied.

Before we conclude, let us sum up the study as

1. The inscriptions have their own zones with definite zonal characteristics.
2. The test-study done on the inscriptions of the Chōlas in the Mysore District shows that there was a steady process of transmutation of script and language and, it did not happen all of a sudden. Thus, the myth of the "Cultural contacts and imposition of political and other allied supremacy over the area or kingdom conquered" as thought by the scholars may not be correct in this record.
3. The study also clearly indicates the policies of the administrators who,

with their capabilities and skill, introduced a new script to an area in a phased manner, where already local script was in vogue.

4. The people, who were multilinguists and polyglots were aware of the various scripts and languages that were in existence during that period.

Therefore, the study of inscriptions

in the light of their respective zones, if done for the records of the different dynasties of the medieval period, would throw a valuable light on the script-language bearing; besides the gradual transmigration-transgression aspects, which, I think, will be of immense use to the study of the cultural, political, economic, religious and social interactions, apart from the lexicographical influences¹¹.

References

1. K.V. Ramesh, *Indian Epigraphy*, P. 77.
2. The epigraphs of this zone are outside the scope of the present paper.
3. *Ibid.*
4. The content, nature, lexicographical influence etc. are out of the purview of this paper.
5. This conclusion is mainly drawn with the help of the available inscriptions published in the *Epigraphia Carnatica*, Vols. III, IV and V.
6. K.V. Ramesh, *Karnāṭaka Śāsana Samikṣhe* (Kannada), p. 64.
7. Here one must recall the *praśasti* portion of the Choḷās, which are in Tamil like *Tirumagaḷ pōla* etc.
8. *Ep. Carn.*, Vol. IV, Ch 132; An inscription of Rāṣṭra I issued in 1049-50, is in Tamil-Grantha script and Tamil language.
9. In this region one can notice erection of edifices of religious importance, as many inscriptions give the names of the temples and deities. About 25 temples of the Chōḷa style can be seen in this District. However, due to various reasons, these temples have been renovated, thus it is very difficult to identify them.
10. Many bilingual inscriptions can be noticed. Along with these, an admixture of both Tamil and Kannaḍa words can be noticed in the inscription. Refer Table II.
11. K.G. Krishnan, 'Tamil Inscriptions in Karnataka' in *Archeology of Karnataka*, (ed) A.V.Narasimhamurthy, pp. 174-180.

TABLE II

Scriptal Provenance of Inscriptions in Mysore District (Chōla Period)

| Sl. No. | King | Date | Script | Language | Village | Taluk | Ref. No. | Remarks |
|---------|----------------------------------|--------------|---------|----------|-----------------|-------|------------------|----------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 1. | Rājarāja | 991 | Kannaḍa | Kannaḍa | Keṃpanapura | Ch | E.C. IV Ch. 145 | Kannaḍa |
| 2. | | | Kannaḍa | Tamil | Honganūru | Ch | E.C. IV Ch. 167 | Prasasti |
| 3. | | 10 th Cent. | | | | | | |
| | | A.D. | Kannaḍa | Tamil | Bānūru | Tn | E.C. V Tn. 57 | Adm |
| 4. | | 1006 | Kannaḍa | Kannaḍa | Kaliyūru | Tn | E.C. V Tn 220 | Kannaḍa |
| 5. | | 1004 - 05 to | Tamil/ | | | | | |
| | | 1013-14 | Grantha | Tamil | Tadimālingi | Tn | E.C. V Tn 230 | - |
| 6. | Rājendra | 1015-16 | Kannaḍa | Kannaḍa/ | | | | |
| | | | Tamil | Tamil | Suttūru | Nj | E.C. III Nj 213 | Adm |
| 7. | | 1015-16 | Tamil/ | | | | | |
| | | | Grantha | Tamil | Tadimālingi | Tn | E.C. V Tn 233 | - |
| 8. | | 1016 | Kannaḍa | Tamil / | | | | |
| | | | Kannaḍa | Kannaḍa | Kirugottara | Ch | E.C. IV Ch. 406 | Adm |
| 9. | | 1017-18 | Kannaḍa | Kannaḍa | Vijayapura | Tn | E.C. V Tn. 142 | Prasasti |
| | | | | | | | | in Tamil |
| 10. | | 1020 | Kannaḍa | Kannaḍa | Belatūru | Hg | E.C. III Hg. 58 | - |
| 11. | | 1020-21 | Kannaḍa | Tamil | Marūru | Hs. | E.C. IV Hs. 4, 5 | Adm |
| 12. | | 1021 | Kannaḍa | Kannaḍa/ | | | | Prasasti |
| | | | Tamil | Tamil | Naṇḍigunda | Nj | E.C. III Nj. 201 | in Tamil |
| 13. | | 1021-22 | Tamil / | | | | | |
| | | | Grantha | Tamil | Tadimālingi | Tn | E.C. V Tn. 229 | - |
| 14. | | 1022-23 | - " - | - " - | Maliyūru | Hg | E.C. III Hg. 29 | - |
| 15. | Rājendra (Chōla Gangadēva) | 1024 - 25 | Kannaḍa | Kannaḍa | Hale- Bōgādi | My | E.C. V My. 221 | - |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|-----|----------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|----|--------------------|-----|
| 16. | Rājendra (Chōla Gangadēva) | 1027-28 | Kannāḍa | Kannāḍa | Nagarle | Nj | E.C. III Nj. 241 | |
| 17. | | 1030 | Kannāḍa | Kannāḍa | Lakshmana- pura | Hg | E.C. III Hg. 98 | |
| 18. | | 1032 | - " | Kannāḍa/ Tamil | Suttūru | Nj | E.C. III Nj. 215 | Adm |
| 19. | | 1033 | - " | Kannāḍa | Belatūru | Hg | E.C. III Hg. 59 | |
| 20. | | 1033 | - " | - " | Hamipāpura | Kn | E.C. V Kn. 113 | |
| 21. | | 1034 | Tamil/ Grantha | Tamil | Kuruballi | Kn | E.C. V Kn. 85 | |
| 22. | | 1035-36 | - " | - " | Tadimālingi | Tn | E.C. V Tn. 232 | |
| 23. | | 1036 | Kannāḍa | Kannāḍa | Mallegowdana | | | |
| 24. | | 1037 | - " | - " | ^{Koppala} Ankanāthapura | My | E.C. V My. 113-114 | |
| 25. | Rājādhirāja I | 1040-41 | Tamil/ Grantha | Tamil | Talkāḍ | Tn | E.C. V Tn. 190-92 | |
| 26. | Rājendra | 1043-44 | - " | - " | Tadimālingi | Tn | E.C. V Tn. 239 | |
| 27. | Rājādhirāja I | 1045-46 | - " | - " | Shāgyam | Ko | E.C. IV Ko. 65 | |
| 28. | | 1048 | - " | - " | Madhavamañtri kaṭṭe | Tn | E.C. V Tn. 247 | |
| 29. | | 1049 | Kannāḍa | Kannāḍa | Chikkakāti | Gu | E.C. III Gu. 56 | |
| 30. | | 1049-50 | Tamil/ Grantha | Tamil | Mangala | Ch | E.C. IV Ch. 132 | |
| 31. | | 1053 | Kannāḍa | Kannāḍa | Kolagāla | Hg | E.C. III Hg. 32 | |
| 32. | | 11 th C. A.D. | Grantha/ Tamil | Tamil | Mangala | Ch | E.C. IV Ch. 133 | |
| 33. | | - | - " | - " | - " | Ch | E.C. IV Ch. 135 | |
| 34. | | - | - " | - " | Keimpanapura | Ch | E.C. IV Ch. 146 | |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|-----|---------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------|---------------|----|-------------------|---|
| 35. | Rājādhirāja I | 11th C. A.D. | Grantha/ Tamil | Tamil | Belatūru | Hg | E.C. III Hg. 60 | |
| 36. | | - | - | - | Talkāḍ | Tn | E.C. V Tn. 213-14 | |
| 37. | Rājendra | 1057 | Tamil/ Grantha | Tamil | Belatūru | Hg | E.C. III Hg. 60 | |
| 38. | Chōla II | 1058-59 | - | - | Hale-Alūru | Ch | E.C. IV Ch. 186 | |
| 39. | | 1063 | Kannaḍa | Kannaḍa | Guggapurna | Hg | E.C. III Hg. 34 | |
| 40. | | 11th Cen | Tamil/ Grantha | Tamil | Tadimālingi | Tn | E.C. V Tn. 231 | |
| 41. | Vīrarājendra | 1069-70 | Tamil/ Grantha | Tamil | Ningahalli | Hg | E.C. III Hg. 34 | |
| 42. | Kulōttuṅga I | 11th Cen. A. D. | Tamil/ Grantha | Tamil | Doddabāgilu | Tn | E.C. V Tn. 124 | |
| 43. | | - | - | - | Manalūru | Nj | E.C. III Nj. 166 | |
| 44. | | 1088-89 | Kannaḍa | Kannaḍa | Hebbalaguppe | Hg | E.C. III Hg. 61 | |
| 45. | | 1100-01 | Tamil/ Grantha | Tamil | Debūru | Nj | E.C. III Nj. 131 | |
| 46. | | 1101-02 | Kannaḍa | Tamil | Talkāḍ | Tn | E.C. V Tn. 173 | |
| 47. | | 1102-03 | Tamil/ Grantha | Tamil | Tippūru | Tn | E.C. V Tn. 110 | |
| 48. | | 1102-03 | - | - | Talkāḍ | Tn | E.C. V Tn. 179 | |
| 49. | | 1104 | - | - | Agara | Y1 | E.C. IV Y1. 98 | |
| 50. | | 1105-06 | - | - | Nilasoge | Tn | E.C. V Tn. 291 | |
| 51. | | 1106-07 | - | - | Sindhuvalli | Nj | E.C. III Nj. 348 | |
| 52. | | 1114 | Kannaḍa | Kannaḍa | Echiganahalli | Nj | E.C. III Nj. 169 | |
| 53. | | 1110 | Tamil/ Grantha | Tamil | Ennegumba | Ch | E.C. IV ch. 303 | |
| 54. | | 1112-13 | - | - | Bhadradalli | Ko | E.C. Ko. 73 | |

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|-----|--------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--|----------------------------|---|--------------|
| 55. | Kulōttuṅga I | 1115-16 | Tamil/ Grantha | Tamil/ Kannada | Annūru Agara Mudigonda Talkād Talkād | Hg Y1 Ko Tn Tn | E.C. III Hg. 10 E.C. IV Ye. 143 E.C. IV Ko. 103 E.C. V Tn. 179 E.C. V Tn. 180 | |
| 56. | - | - | - | Tamil | - | - | - | |
| 57. | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| 58. | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| 59. | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| 60. | - | - | Kannada | Sanskrit/ Tamil | Āgara | Y1 | E.C. IV Y1. 97 | |
| 61. | - | - | Tamil/ Grantha | Tamil | Mudigonda Matakere | Ko Hg | E.C. IV Ko. 102 E.C. III Hg. 44 | |
| 62. | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| 63. | - | 12th Cen A.D. | - | - | Kelasūru | Gu | E.C. IV Gu. 102 | |
| 64. | Rājendra III | 1250-61 | Tamil/ Grantha | Tamil | Kolatūru Talkād | Tn Tn | E.C. V Tn. 104 E.C. V Tn. 216 | Copper plate |
| 65. | Rājādhirāja | - | - | - | - | - | - | |

** Based on the *Epigraphia Carnatica* Vols. III, IV, V

Abbreviations used : -

1. Adm = admixture 2. Ch = Chamarajanagar 3. Gu = Gundlupet 4. Hg = Heggadadevankote 5. Hs = Hunsur 6. Ko = Kollegal 7. Kn = Krishnarajanagar 8. My = Mysore 9. Nj = Nanjangud 10. Tn = T. Narasipur 11. Y1 = Yelandur.

*** The inscriptions were insued by the kings and other persons also; while some of the inscriptions listed above belong to the period of the Chōlas.

18. KODURU INSCRIPTION OF IRIVABEDENGA

C.A. Padmanabha Sastry

The stone inscription under study was copied during the course of my official tour in the year 1986-87 and I express my sincere thanks to the Director (Epigraphy), Archaeological Survey of India, Mysore for permitting me to edit this inscription in the pages of this journal. The inscription is engraved on the four faces of a pillar planted on the bank of a tank situated at the entrance of the village Kōḍūru, Singoor Maṇḍalam (old Sangareddi Taluk) of Medak District, Andhra Pradesh.

The first face of the pillar contains fourteen lines. The first three lines are intercepted by three panels of figures. The figures of Sūrya, ardhachandra, a devotee in sitting posture in front of Śiva liṅga and a Nandi in standing posture are depicted respectively in these panels. The second, third and the fourth faces of the pillar contain writing in 26, 22 and 26 lines respectively.

The characters of the record resemble those of the inscriptions found at Puṇyavōlu (Warangal District)¹, Kāḍparti (Karimnagar District)² belonging to the King Irivabedeṅga of the Chālūkyas of Kalyāṇa and does not call much attention. The languages employed in this inscription are Kannaḍa and Sanskrit.

The epigraph is dated in Śaka 9[3]9, Parābhava, Āśvīyuja, śu.2 (*bṛihaspati vāra*), Thursday, Tulā-saṁkrānti. The

Śaka year corresponds to 1017 A.D. It is stated elsewhere³ that Irivabedeṅga *alias* Satyāśraya ruled the country between the years 1000 A.D. and 1008 A.D.⁴ As the inscription under study has fallen out of the regular reigning period of Irivabedeṅga, it is difficult to assign the date of the record to his period. However, since the other details of the record i.e. Cyclic year, month, *tithi* etc. tally with the Śaka year 929, the date of the record may correspond to 1007 A.D., September 27, f.d.t..33.

The inscription records the gift of the village Kōṛūra to the God Rāmēśvara situated at Pōlpaṛela by *mahāsāmantādhipati* Gaṅgayarasa, the feudatory of King Irivabedeṅga. Gaṅgayarasa is an unknown feudatory of Irivabedeṅga. The other feudatory chiefs are Bayyalanambi⁵ Guṇagarasa,⁶ Arasapayya⁷ known to us from the inscriptions of Andhra Pradesh. The inscription further states that another gift is made to one Brahmaliṅgi-bhaṭṭar, probably a pontiff, belonging to the temple of Gaṅgēśvara situated at Poṭṭalekere (Paṭancheuvu) by certain Sōmayya, Bhūmayya and Namayya. The pontiff Brahmaliṅgi-bhaṭṭar is known to us for the first time from this epigraph.

The inscription begins with a statement saying that let the family belonging to Śrī Biṭṭiyarasa (kingdom of Śrī Biṭṭiyarasa) live with prosperity and

longevity. The name Biṭṭiyarasa is important. This name, probably for the first time, is found, as a legend on the seal of the Satāra plates of Kubja Vishṇuwardhana of the Eastern Chālukya dynasty.⁸ The editor of Satāra grant states that the word Biṭṭiarasa is a title of Kubja Vishṇuwardhana I and is the prakṛit form of Vishṇu. While describing the origin of the Chālukyas, it is suggested that King Vishṇuwardhana who got repaired the hill called Chālukya also had the title of the same fashion and most probably the name or the title Biṭṭiarasa is the Dravidian form of Vishṇu or Vishṇurāja, akin to Vishṇuwardhana. If this is accepted, that Bittiyarasa was adorned by Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa who showed their allegiance towards their family progenitor: Vishṇu. An inscription of 12th century A.D. from Ārūru⁹, Sangareddi taluk of the same district also refers to some gift by a certain Bittiyarasa at Sindinīra (Singoora?). The fourth face of inscription contain a reference to Rāmāyaṇa and ends with the usual imprecatory verse. As far as the place names mentioned in the inscription are concerned, the gift-village Kōḍūru, Poṭṭalakeṛe (Paṭāncheruvu), both are situated in the Medak District and the other place name Polparāla is difficult to identify at the present state of our knowledge.

TEXT

FIRST FACE

1. Śrīmat Ba(Bi)ṭṭiyarasa-

2. rasara kuḷānvaya-
3. dharmmam = āchandrārka
4. Svasti [1*] samasta bhuvanā-
5. śraya śrī prithivīvallabha
6. mahārājādhirāja-
7. paramēśvara para-
8. ma-bhaṭṭārakaṁ Sa-
9. tyāśraya kuḷatila-
10. kan = akaḷaṁka charitaṁ
11. śrīmad = Irivabeda-
12. viṅga-dēvarrūvulako-
13. nḍāya biṅadga = A
14. ppayaṇaṁ geydu-

SECOND FACE

15. sukha saṁkathā vi-
16. nōdadiṁ rājyaṁ-
17. geyyutti[mi*] rē
18. ' ' = pāda paṁkaja-
19. bhramara tripu[ra]-
20. hara-charaṇa sa-
21. rasīruha paṭṭa-
22. raṇa svasti sama-
23. dhigata paṁcha-
24. mahāśabda
25. hāsāmanta gāṁ
26. bhī[rya*]navakarṇana pi-
27. tara vajra chaṁ-
28. ḍarāditya śrīma-
29. t Gaṅgayy = arasa
30. r Śaka varsha 9[3]9

31. neya Parābha-
32. va saṁvatsarada
33. Āśviyuja śu-
34. ddha bidigeyyaṁ
35. bṛihaspati-
36. vāradandu Tu-
37. ḷā-saṁkrāntti
38. yoḷ = Polpaṛēla
39. tīrttada Rāmēśva-
40. radēvara maṁ-

THIRD FACE

41. ṇḍa Gaṁgayyārāsa
42. [ta]kab = baresida -
43. ruma[m̄] Sōmayya
44. [m̄]maṁ Nāmayya
45. Bhūmayya-ndibba
46. Poṭṭalakeṛeya
47. Gaṁgēśvarada Bra-
48. hmalim̄gi-bha-
49. ṭṭara kālaṁ karachhi
50. dhārā pūrvuakaṁ Bai
51. lapāla keyy-oḷa-
52. gāgi Kōṛūra ko-
53. ṭṭar [11*] Sāmānyō-yaṁ
54. dhā (dha)rmma-sētur = nṛipā-
55. ṇāṁ kāle kāle pā-
56. lanīyō bhava-
57. dbhiḥ [11*] Sarvvān = ētan = bhā-
58. vinaḥ pārthivē-

59. ndrāḥ (drān) bhūyō bhū-
60. yō yāchatē Rā-
61. machandraḥ[11*] sō-
62. yati
63. ācham̄drasya
64. sūryyasya la(tā)
65. ḷa(va)t tishṭhati mē-
66. dinī yadarā-
67. vaṇa kathā lō
68. ka yāvadā rā-
69. jya bhīshaṇo-
70. yāvat tōya
71. dhārā dharā dharā-
72. dharā dhārā dhara-
73. bhūddharā yā-
74. va chāru [bhi] chā-
75. ru chāru chama-
76. raṁ chāmīkaraṁ-
77. chāmara yāvad = bhōgadhā
78. ga bhōga bhuvana-
79. bhōgāyatāna ni-
80. tya sayā vadra[ta]
81. vasha rāmē rāma-
82. ramaṇīm rāva (mā)
83. yaṇam śrūya-
84. tē || svadattām parada-
85. ttām vā yō hara(rē)ti(ta) va-
86. sundharā[m*] shashtir = varsha-
87. sahasrāṇi vishṭhāyā[m*]
88. jāyatē kṛimih[11*].

Reference

1. *Inscriptions of Andhra Pradesh, Warangal District (IAPWD)* pp 19 ff and plates.
2. *Inscriptions of Andhra Pradesh, Karimnagar District (IAPKD)* pp 26 ff.
3. B. R. Gopal, *The Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa and the Kalachuris*, p.103.
4. *A.R.I.E.*, 1947-48, No. B.99.
5. *S.I.I.*, Vol. VI, No. 102.
6. (*IAPWD*), No. 9.
7. *Ibid.* No. 19.
8. *Ind. Ant.*, Vol. XIX, pp. 309 ff and plates.
9. *A.R.I.E.*, 1962, No. B.51
10. From the photographs and inked impressions.

19. THREE WEEKS IN THE MEKONG DELTA

K.V. Ramesh

From the 20th of December 1991 to the 9th of January 1992, a three week long Research Project of Archaeological-cum-Epigraphical exploration of the Mekong Delta in Vietnam and Laos was conducted by an international team of experts under the auspices of the Department of Culture, Government of Japan and the University of Tokyo with Prof. Noboru Karashima as the team-leader, with the objective of 'Reconsidering cultural intercourse between India and South-East Asia from the 6th through 15th centuries,

The members of the team drawn from Japan and India were :

Japanese Scholars :

1. Prof. Noboru Karashima, leader of the team.
2. Dr. Yumio Sakurai, Department of History, Tokyo University.
3. Mr. Ogura Yasushi, Research Associate, Institute of Oriental Culture, Tokyo University.
4. Dr. Yasuyuki Kono, Research Associate, Kyoto University (south Vietnam part of the project).
5. Dr. Yoshiaki Ishizawa, Director, Institute of Asian Culture, Sophia University (Laotian part of the project).

Indian Scholars :

1. Dr. K.V. Raman, Prof. of Archae-

ology, University of Madras.

2. Dr. Y. Subbarayalu, Prof. of Epigraphy, Tamil University, Thanjavur.

3. Dr. P. Shanmugam, Reader in Archaeology, University of Madras.

4. Dr. K.V. Ramesh, Director of Epigraphy, Archaeological Survey of India, Mysore.

Hereunder is a brief and preliminary account of a part of the epigraphical work done by the team:

Mekong is one of the great rivers of the world and its extensive delta region is a veritable repository of successive human civilizations and cultures from ancient times. It is already known from the works of earlier scholars, of French and Indian origin, that India had played a major role in the history of the development of South East Asian Culture. The project under discussion was undertaken to take a measure of the extent of this Indianization with the help of the archaeological and epigraphical vestiges that have been brought to light in the past as well as in recent years. In the southern parts of Vietnam, where the Mekong and its numerous waterways are the life-line of the people, the team, besides visiting a number of museums, concentrated on sites connected with the ancient Oc Eo culture which, according to the Vietnamese archaeologists, flourished during the first five or six cen-

turies of the Christian era. In south Vietnam, the team visited the Oc Eo site and a few museums in different provinces in which artifacts collected from sites belonging to Oc Eo culture have been preserved. For the epigraphists, there have been some very interesting inscriptions hailing from these sites. First may be mentioned small gold leaves, hailing from Da Noi in the AHn Giang province, with embossed figures of deities who are identified by legends reading Āditya, Chandrahāsa, Aṅgāra, Buddha (Budha), Bṛihaspati, Śukra, Śaṅśvara, Vṛishabha, Vṛishabhadhvaja, Vajra and Triśūla. These identification labels are engraved in Southern Indian characters of about the 6th century A.D. Another interesting discovery is a gold plate found buried in the ruins of a Buddhist structure at a site called Goxoy. The gold plate bears five lines of writing in what may be called Southern Indian characters showing clear developments of Khmer writing and datable to 8th century A.D. The first line contains the well-known Buddhist creed *yē dharmmā hētu prabhāav*, etc. The second line contains an *Anushṭubh* verse in mixed Sanskrit-Prakrit language and reads :

duḥkham duḥkha-samutpādō
 duḥkhas-sa cha atiklamō [! *]
 airō atṭhaṅgikō maggō
 duḥkh-ōpaśama-gāmikō ||

The rest of the text is highly influenced by tāntric Buddhism. The plate is now deposited in the Tân An Museum.

After exploring the Mekong Delta region in south Vietnam, the team pro-

ceeded to Laos, where it visited the ruins of the great temple of Vat Phu. On the way to Vat Phu from the town of Pakse is the district town of Champassak where, within the compound of the residence of the erstwhile prince of Champassak, is set up an inscribed stone pillar, the existence of which had been known for quite some-time, containing writings on four sides. The script employed therein is South Indian Brāhmī of the 5th-6th century A.D., and the language employed is Sanskrit. The text begins with a verse in *Sragdharā* metre followed by a prose passage on face I. The other three faces contain a number of verses in *Anushṭubh*. The prose passage introduces a king known as Maṅgala alias *mahārājādhirāja Dēvānīka*, as having been anointed with the blessings of all the gods including Śaṅkara, Nārāyaṇa and Pitāmaha (*śrī-Śaṅkara-Nārāyaṇa-Pitāmahādi sarvva-dēva-prasād-ābhishikṭaḥ*) and as having been installed in great royal splendour after being brought from a distant country by the god Liṅgaparvata (*Bhagavatā Liṅgaparvatēn -āsmīn-dūra-dēsād-ānītō-dhishṭhitō mahati rājya-aiśvaryaē*). He established in the country of his adoption a sacred centre (obviously nostalgically) called Kurukshētra and the *Anushṭubh* verses are all in praise of the sanctity and efficacy of the holy place. The prose passage introducing Dēvānīka compares him with our epic and legendary heroes, such as Yudhisṭhira, Bhagīratha, Dhanañjaya, Indradymna, Śibi and, interestingly enough, a certain Kanaka Pāṇḍya, for highlighting his many special virtues and qualities. This Kanaka Pāṇḍya is obviously the

same as Poṅkai Pāṇḍya (the gold-handed Pāṇḍya) figuring in an episode in the Tamil classic *Śilappadikāram**. The text of this inscription makes it more than apparent that the poet who composed it was very familiar with the traditional epics and legends of the entire sub-continent. This was perhaps true of all the educated early migrants from the Indian sub-continent to South East Asia as can be gathered from a perusal of the well-composed early Sanskrit inscriptions extant in those countries.

On the way to Vat Phu from Champassak, we were shown two stone

pedestals, both of them inscribed in characters of about the 7th century A.D. The writing has striking resemblance to the early Pallava Grantha inscriptions of Tamil Nadu. It was reported that these two inscriptions were discovered in 1990-91. One of them records the installation of a stone *vr̥ishabha* in memory of his paternal uncle Kṛitāntapāśa by Chitrasēna *alias* Mahēndravarman, the son of the emperor (*Sārvabhauma*) Vīravarman and the younger brother of Bhavavarman. The other inscription records the installation of a stone *vr̥isha* in memory of his father Vīravarman by the same prince**.

* I am thankful to Prof. Y. Subbarayalu for this reference.

** This is a preliminary report on the epigraphical encounters of the team during the joint Indo-Japanese exploration. I and my three Indian team-mates are thankful to the Department of Culture, Government of Japan, to the University of Tokyo and to the leader of the team Prof. Noboru Karashima for this unique opportunity of visiting the South East Asian sites.

BOOK REVIEWS

A Copper Plate Hoard of the Gupta period from Bagh, Madhya Pradesh Edited by K.V. Ramesh and S.P. Tewari, Director General, Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi, 1990, XXV + 81 Price Rs. 100-00

This work makes available to the public both the texts and translations of a recently discovered hoard of twenty-seven copper-plate inscriptions issued by the rulers of the Bagh region of southern Madhya Pradesh. Since only five records pertaining to these kings had previously been known, our information concerning them has been greatly augmented by the publication of this book. The editors have included an appendix containing the texts and translations of the inscriptions that were discovered earlier, thus providing scholars with a complete set of records. Noteworthy features of the inscriptions – ranging from their weight, palaeography, technical terms, place-names, etc., are described in the lengthy introduction, which also discusses their historical significance. In addition to texts and translations, the book contains plates and an index of words appearing in the records.

Although the copper-plate inscriptions are rather short and uninformative, they are highly important sources of socio-cultural history due to their relatively early date – most probably the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. The fact that so many records were found from an area which the editors believe was largely tribal at the time adds to their significance. What we see represented

in this corpus, essentially, is the incorporation of a hinterland region into the larger pan-Indic civilization through the granting of lands to religious recipients. Because this phenomenon was still at a formative stage, few specifications were made regarding the nature of the tenure enjoyed by the donees or the dimensions of the dimensions of the land granted, as the editors point out. Of particular interest is the large proportion of grants made to Hindu temples, comprising nearly one-third of the corpus. Many insights into the religious trends of the fourth and fifth centuries can thus be obtained through perusal of these inscriptions.

All in all, *A Copper Plate Hoard of the Gupta period from Bagh, Madhya Pradesh* is a welcome addition to the ranks of epigraphical publications. The book will prove useful both to beginning students and experienced scholars, because of the thoroughness of the editors in presenting the material in three formats : photograph of estampage, Romanized transcription of the text and English translation. Printed at the Office of the Director (Epigraphy), Archaeological Survey of India, Mysore, this work is laid out in an attractive manner and is easy to read. The editors are to be commended not only for the quality of their labor, but also for its speed – a mere eight years elapsed between the initial discovery of the hoard and the publication of this book. Since unpublished inscriptions are, for all intents and purposes, largely inaccessible to the international community of scholars, it is to be hoped that future discoveries of a critical nature will

also be brought out in a similarly timely fashion.

Cynthia Talbot

Northern Arizonal University (USA)

A Copper Plate Hoard of the Gupta period from Bagh, Madhya Pradesh Edited by K.V. Ramesh and S.P. Tewari, Director General, Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi, 1990, XXV + 81 Price Rs. 100-00

The chance discovery of a hoard of inscriptions is nothing short of an epigraphical romance, and the present work provides one such. This hoard of twenty-seven plates belonging to the Mahārājas of Valkhā was contained in a huge copper-pot with a copper lid unearthed accidentally in course of digging in a field on the outskirts of the present day township of the well-known antiquarian site of Bagh in the Dhar District of Madhya Pradesh. While these plates, which form charters inscribed on one side only, form the main theme of the monograph in question, the rest of the plates of the Mahārājas of Valkhā known prior to the present find, numbering five, have been included in an appendix at the end for the sake of completeness. The result is what may be rightly described as a corpus of the inscriptions, all copper-plate records, of the Mahārājas of Valkhā edited with the best of epigraphical expertise commanded by two of the devoted seniormost officers of the Epigraphy branch of the Archaeological Survey of India. This publication assumes greater value as the hoard is no longer traceable.

Earlier only three members of the family, whose name still remains unknown, were known, viz., Bhulūṇḍa, Svāmidāsa and Rudradāsa, and the latest year on record was 67, but the present hoard has brought to light not only the records of all these ruling chiefs but has, for the first time, given us charters of Rudradāsa dated up to the year 70 and those of Bhaṭṭāraka and Nāgabhaṭa dating up to the year 134, thereby adding new dimensions to the history of the Valkhā chiefs.

The work falls into two parts : introduction and inscriptions. Introduction deals with general problems connected with the records. We are at one with the authors that the years of these inscriptions should preferably be referred to the Gupta era and that the Valkhā chiefs were probably Gupta feudatories. These inscriptions would thus give some of the earliest dates in the Gupta era (beginning with the year 38),¹ thereby nailing the theories that the era was initiated by Chandragupta II Vikramāditya but counted from some earlier event. It is interesting that but for Bhulūṇḍa, who is the first known chief and perhaps of tribal extraction going by his name, all the other chiefs have Sanskrit names of the two explanations suggested by the authors, viz. 1) Samudragupta initially appointed Bhulūṇḍa, a powerful tribal chieftain, and then replaced him by regular Indo-Aryan chiefs, and 2) Bhulūṇḍa's successors were themselves swayed by brāhmanisation-Sanskritisation and adopted Sanskrit names, we prefer the second one as it is in keeping with the known facts of later Indian history and also with the

now gaining feeling that the term *ārya* has no racial connotation. The representation of the number 4 by four curved horizontal strokes one below the other is so far unique and apparently an extension of the similar practice in the case of the numerals up to 3. We agree with the authors that what was read by R.C. Majumdar and V.V. Mirashi as 107 in a record of Bhuluṇḍa leading to the assumption of the existence of a second chief of this name should better be read as 57 with which the figures agree quite closely but for slight difference caused by some defect in the plate which gives the figure for 50 an appearance similar to that for 100. This would obviate the necessity of a second ruler of this name which also goes counter to the new evidence produced by the hoard which shows that in the years 102-127 hitherto unknown chief named Bhaṭṭāraka was ruling over the region.

Attention is next invited to certain matters of importance bearing on cultural history. These records show for the first time that the original form of the later inexplicable *agrahāra* was actually *agrāhāra* (*agra-āhāra*), i.e., chief food indicating the land-grant for the livelihood of the brāhmaṇas. However, the names like Yajñāgrāhāraka and Devāgrāhāraka would indicate that the term was not confined to the brāhmaṇas alone but was extended to deities and sacraments as well. The total absence of boundaries of gift villages is attributed to the initial stage of the land-grants in the region. But it must be noted that this practice (of not specifying the boundaries) is noticed in most of the Paramāra grants of the early mediaeval period also, and it is not im-

possible that it was due to the region being sparsely populated and the villages being situated at long distances in forest tracts which is, to a limited extent, the case even now in the region. It is certainly right that the land-grants contributed to the expansion of agricultural operations to fresh areas and reclamation of much waste land, but it was only an unconscious by-product of the grants; to regard it as 'the basic motivation' behind these grants is to read our present thinking on socio-economic history. That this was not the motivation is clearly indicated by the facts inferred from a reference in one of the records to a 'village-habitation established after terminating cultivation' (*krīṣhṭāvasannaka-grāmadhāna*) and the expressions *pratyaya*, 'entrusted with' or 'attached to', *bhujyamānaka* and *pūrva-bhujyamānaka* which, the authors rightly point out, indicate that the land had already been brought under cultivation by temporary tenants before it was gifted to brāhmaṇas. The authors are right in thinking that permanent land-grants to brāhmaṇas enjoyable in perpetuity unconditionally led to tension when the descendants of grantees were not fit to enjoy the grants and that temple-grants mark the beginnings of the development of the temple as an organised institution playing a vital role in food-production through cultivation. In fact, expressions like *deva-karmantika*, *deva-parichāraka*, *deva-prasādaka* and *deva-karmin* foresee the all-pervasive role the temple played in the people's life in later times. The reference in one of the grants of Bhuluṇḍa (No. VIII, text-line 9) to forged charter (*kapāṭa-sāsana*) and its replacement by a copper-plate charter when the ruler came to know

of it (*kapāṭa-śāsanasyāyamī śrutvā tāmra-śāsanam=anusṛiṣṭvā likhitam*) is very interesting. Does it mean that the original charter was written on some other object and was substituted by a copper-plate charter when forgery came to light? This reminds us of the statement in the Kurud plates of the Śarabhapuriya king Narendra that he had to issue a copper-plate charter when it was proved that the original charter on palm-leaves (*tāla-patra-śāsana*) was destroyed in a household conflagration (Ajay Mitra Shastri, *Inscriptions of the Śarabhapurīyas, Pāṇḍuvamsins and Somavamsins*, Part II, Delhi, 1991, p.8). The wording of the relevant charter of Bhuluṇḍa at least gives such an impression.

As regards the find of as many as twenty-seven charters in the hoard, it has been suggested that in all likelihood after the registration of each land-grant the copper-plate continued to be in the custody of the rulers of Valkhā in order to forestall the effective existence of any spurious grants. It is also thought possible that these charters were recalled in order to establish their genuineness in the light of the surfacing of a spurious grant (pp. XIX-XX). However, this detection of the fake charter took place in Bhuluṇḍa's time in the year 55 whereas the hoard contains charters dated up to the year 134 falling in the regime of Mahārāja Nāgabhaṭa which makes the suggestion rather unlikely. We feel that as most of the grants of the Mahārājas of Valkhā, viz., twenty-seven out of thirty two known to date, have been found in the hoard, it probably represents the royal record house where a copper-plate copy of each of the grants made by the

ruling chiefs was preserved for record's sake as well as to eliminate the possibility of faking the charters. The possibility of the hoard being the belonging of a family is ruled out by the fact that the donees belonged to different families as is clear from their being of different *gotras* and some of the grants having been made in favour of temples.

The authors propose to identify Valkhā, the headquarters of the family, with modern Balkhar to the south of the Narmadā (pp. XXIV-XXV). There should ordinarily be no difficulty in accepting this identification, more especially in view of the affinity between the two names, as the rule of these chiefs extended on both sides of this river. They also feel that at some unknown time political importance shifted from Balkhar to modern Bagh. However, we know nothing of the antiquarian importance of Balkhar whereas Bagh is a well-known site of antiquarian interest and the hoard in question has been found in a suburb of this town. Moreover, the authors themselves feel that the name Bagh itself may have been derived from Valkhā. We are therefore, inclined at least for the present in favour of Bagh.

Perhaps the only known epigraphical reference to the Vaiṣṇava community called Choksha (*Ārya-Choksha* in the record) is contained in charter III of Bhuluṇḍa dated in the year 50. These Chokshas, who are mentioned in a number of literary works, directly or indirectly, including the *Nāṭya-ūstra* of Bharata, Śūdraka's *Padma-prābhṛitaka*, Śyāmilaka's *Pādatāḍitaka*, Varāhamihira's *Bṛihatsamhitā*, Dāmodaragupta's *Kuṭṭānī-*

mata and Utpala's gloss on the *Dhatsamhitā*, were Vaiṣṇava ascetics with a liberal religious outlook. Though Vaiṣṇava by sectarian affiliation, they worshipped Śiva also, thus carrying aloft the torch of religious synthesis. In the record under reference also they are mentioned in connection with the temple of Svāmi-Nārāyanadeva, but are preceded by the Pāsūpatas, thereby supporting the literary tradition.³ It is worth mentioning in this connection that our records contain numerous allusions to the Pāsūpatas which show their great popularity among the people in those days and throw lurid light on their religious activities and persuasions which deserve a close study for enlightening us about the religious history of ancient India, especially Western Malwa. It is also worth noting that during the regime of Bhulūṇḍa there was predominance of temple grants (*devāgrāhāras*), personal grants being very few only three out of thirteen, while during the subsequent regimes grants are made only to brāhmanas (*brahmadeyas*). However, we are at present unable to know the reason if any for this strange phenomenon. It may as well be just a coincidence. These records contain very important data on religious history which deserves a close study separately. One very important piece of information from our present point of view is contained in no. I dated year 47 (AD 366). It registers a grant for a Viṣṇu temple. The description of Viṣṇu is very important not only for the mythological history but iconographically as well. The god is described as eight-armed (*aṣṭa-bāhu-śālin*) reclining in the ocean (*ekārṇṇava*) and as holding conch shell, arrow, spear, wheel, Nandaka sword, mace and lance, the eighth

hand evidently supporting his head in the Anantanārāyaṇa form which is referred to. It would be advisable to locate an early sculpture agreeing with this description. Then, he is said to have killed the Ten headed (*daśa-vadana*) Rāvaṇa and Kaiṁsa, among others. These references are of great value as they show that as early as the fourth century AD, if not earlier, Rāma and Kṛiṣṇa had come to be identified with god Viṣṇu, and the way this fact is mentioned should leave no doubt that the identification had already become deeply rooted in public mind. Other inscriptions also contain much other valuable information which we propose to study separately.

We may now pass on to the inscriptions proper contained in Part II. The editors have done well by giving a dependable English rendering in addition to the text and the transcripts. There are, however, a few points on which we beg to differ from them. In no. I, line 2, the expression *ek-ārṇṇava*, we feel, is not just an ordinary reference to the ocean but to the expansive sea at the time of the deluge as we find from the Junagarh inscription of Rudradāman. Line 7 of the same record contains the expression *a-bhāgam* which is connected with the following expression *a-bhaṭaprāveśyām(n)* in the translation ('not to be fragmented or entered by the soldiers') which is due to oversight. While the second expression refers to the donee's privilege, the first expression, in our opinion, speaks of the obligation (not to divide the *agrāhāra*) which is also specified in no. VIII. *Chhatra* in line 7 of the same record should better be taken to mean the 'umbrella-bearers of the king' rather than 'royal heralds'.

The expression *Valkhāḥ* in the beginning of all but one record (no. XXII) apparently refers to the place of issue. As pointed out by the editors after a careful consideration of references in the inscriptions, the correct form of the town-name was *Valkhā*, not *Valkha*. But the place of issue is invariably given in the ablative case and as such here *Valkhāḥ* in nominative plural has to be treated as an error for *Valkhāyāḥ*. How such a silly mistake occurred in all the otherwise chaste records is a mute question. No. II was granted in favour of the Mother Goddess temple which was evidently put in charge of the brāhmaṇa Mūlaśarman (*Mūlaśarman-pratyayam*). Likewise the grant in favour of the Nārāyaṇa temple recorded in no. IV was entrusted with three persons named Maheśvara, Nandapāla and Nandin. The next two charter record grants in favour of a shrine of Bappa-Piśācha-deva established by lady called Bhojikā-bhaṭṭa-Bandhulā at the town of *Valkhā* itself. In this case Bappa, literally father, appears to have been used as an honorific and the charters in question indicate that even cultured people had not given up the tribal practice of propitiating evil spirits. In no. VII and elsewhere subsequently in this monograph *sa-gotra* is rendered as *sago-tra* whereas it actually denotes a person's belonging to the *gotra*. In no. VIII line 9 (*kaṇṭha-śāsanasy-āyam śrutvā tāmra-śāsanam= anusriṣṭvā likhitam*, restored version is quoted here) should be better rendered as 'having heard of this being a faked deed a copper-deed was prepared and written' instead of 'having heard of the forged grant deed, this charter was produced in sequel and got written' (p.19). As we have seen above, this refer-

ence may be very important. No. IX is of great importance for religious history as it refers to the installation by Bhulūṇḍa of the shrine of god Svāmi-Mahāsenā and grant by him of three villagees and the association of the Pāsūpatas with its activities. The expression *mātrīsthāna-devakula* in no. X (line 3) refers only to the 'shrine of mother goddesses' rather than 'the shrine in the temple of mother goddesses'. No. XII (line 7), which refers to the Pāsūpatāchāryas and *Bhagavach=chhishtas*, etc., as attending upon Bappa Piśāchadeva, shows not only the participation of and harmony between the votaries of Śaivism and Vaishnavism but also the participation of the latter in rites associated with goblins which is very interesting.⁴ In no. XVII of Svāmidāsa lines 3-4 (*Mātujjasya Yajñ-āgrāhārake bhujyamānakakshetrapadam=anyach=cha Lohakārapallikāyām pūrvva-bhujyamānakam=evakshetram brahmadeya-krameṇa*) should, according to us, be better interpreted to mean that Mātujja was granted as *brahmadeya* a field at the Yajñagrārāka and another at Lohakārapallikā, both already under his enjoyment, rather than, one plot of land under the enjoyment of Yajñagrārāka and, further more, one plot of land formerly under the enjoyment of Lohakārapallikā' (p.38). In the next inscription, also belonging to Svāmidāsa *Āryya-chātva vaidya* (line 3) in genitive singular instead of in genitive plural (pp.40-41). The same is true of no. XXII of Rudradāsa (pp. 48-49). No. XXVI of Bhaṭṭārāka shows a somewhat developed draft and contains in line 6 the technical expressions *pratyāyāḥ upaneyā ājñā-vidheyaiś=cha bhavitavyam*, which instructs the inhabitants

of the donated village to bring the revenue to the donee and be obedient to him and is frequently met with essentially in the Śarabhapuriya and Pāṇḍuvamśin inscriptions. This is also warranted by the correct reading in the facsimile given by the editors. And lastly, it would have been better to observe some system in indicating the dates in the captions.

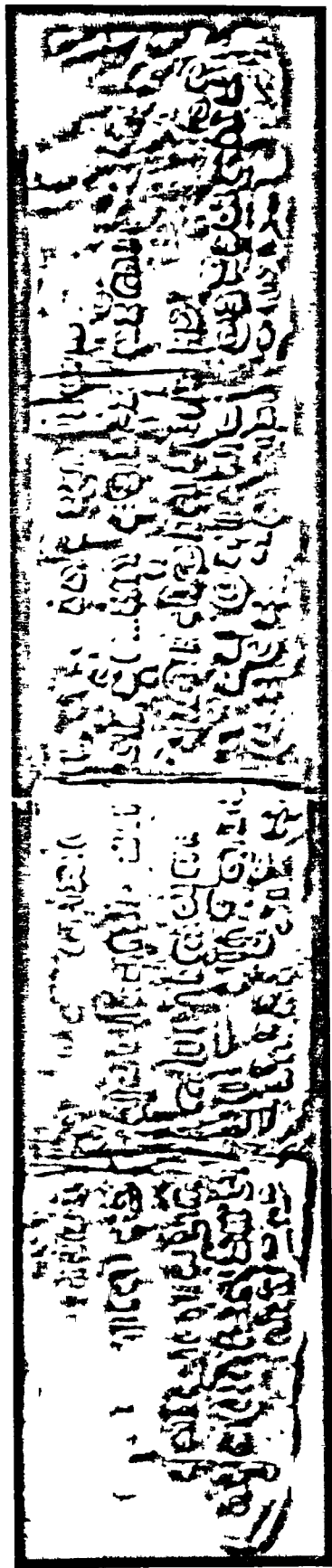
The above points, which are mostly due to oversight and reflect difference of opinion about interpretative matters and

our high expectations from great professional epigraphists, do not in any way affect the high value and usefulness of the work which is a must for all serious students of early Indian history in general and Central Indian in particular. Drs. Ramesh and Tewari deserve our congrats for this little beautiful monograph which, as stated above, forms a corpus of the inscriptions of the Valkhā Mahārājas.

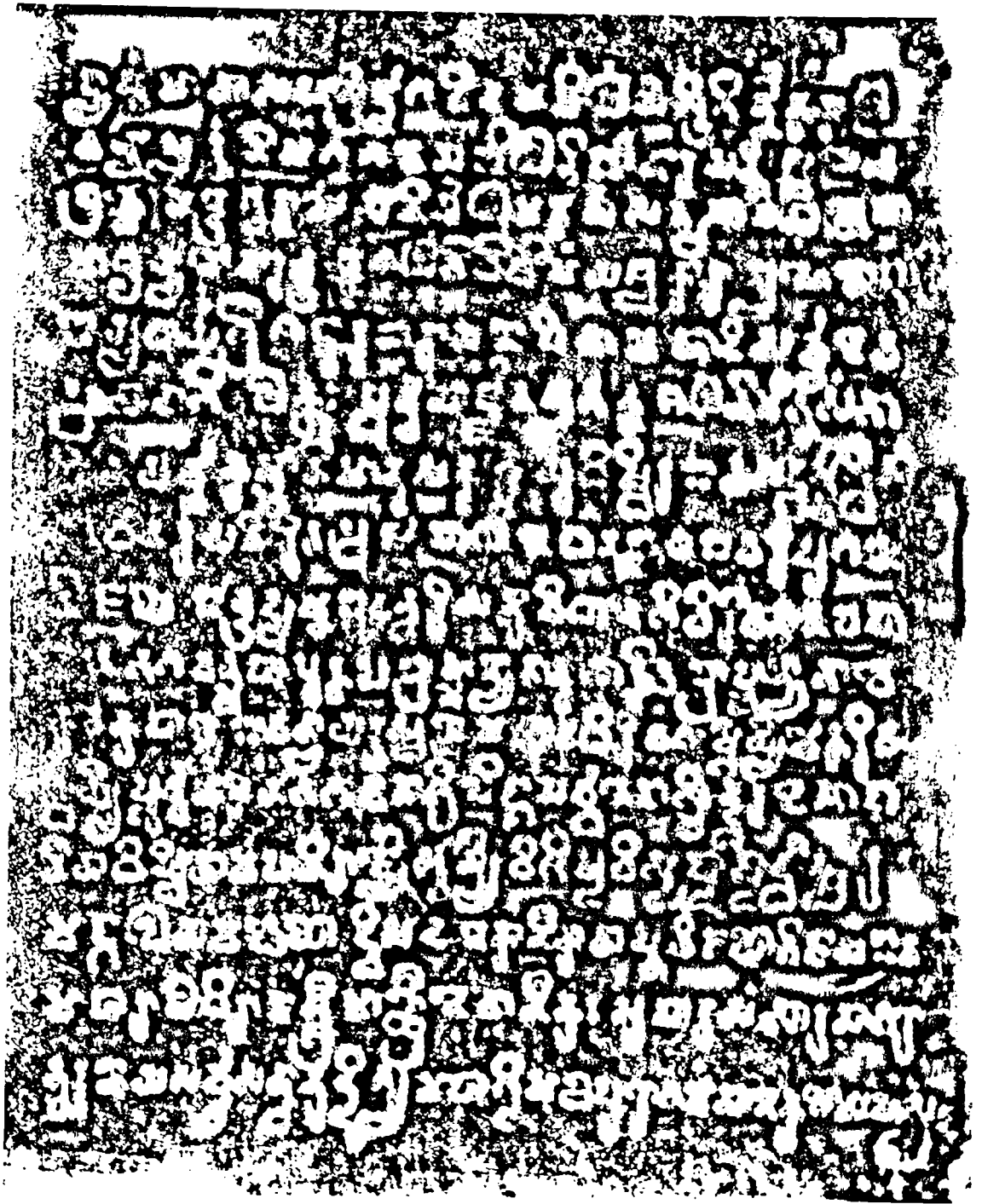
Ajay Mitra Shastri

References

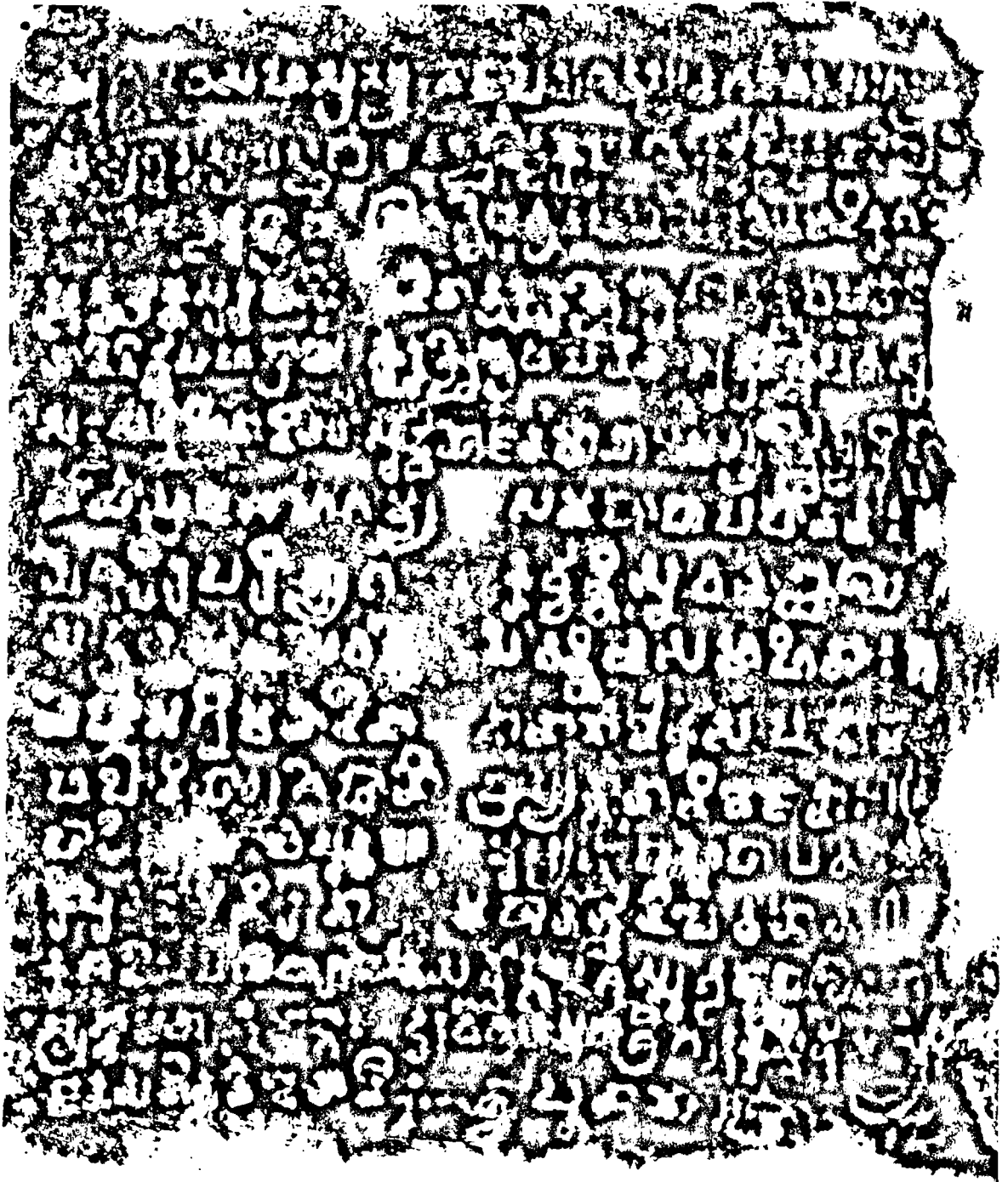
1. Narasimha cave inscription on the Mandar hill in the Gaya District of Bihar and a Mundesvari temple inscription dated in the year 30 are perhaps the earliest records dated in the Gupta era. See EI XXXVI, p. 314.
2. But when the term *pratyaya* is employed in connection with a grant to a temple as in no. II, it refers to the person-in-charge of the granted land, e.g., Mūlasāman was put in charge of the grant recorded in no. II. It must also be remembered that we have cases of transfers not only of lands in possession of others but also of *brahmadeyas* (nos. XXXIII and XXIV) and of those in possession of certain traders who had come under the impact of Vedic culture (e.g., App., III: Ārya vāñijaka-pratyaya) which must have been executed with the consent of owners, whether temporary or permanent. Therefore, we have to be cautious in drawing conclusions like 'when the Mahārāja-donor succeeded in identifying a deserving brāhmaṇa donee he merely passed in the entrusted land to latter (p. XV).
3. For discussions on Chokshas, see Ajay Mitra Shastri, *India as seen in the Bṛhatsamhitā of Varāhamihira*, Delhi, 1969, pp. 555-56; *India as seen in the Kuṣṇānīmata of Dāmodaragupta*, Delhi, 1975, pp. 72-73.
4. Cf. no. XIII which also mentions them in the reversed order.



GOLD PLATE WITH BUDDHIST INSCRIPTION FROM COXOY (NOW IN THE TAN ANG MUSEUM), VIETNAM



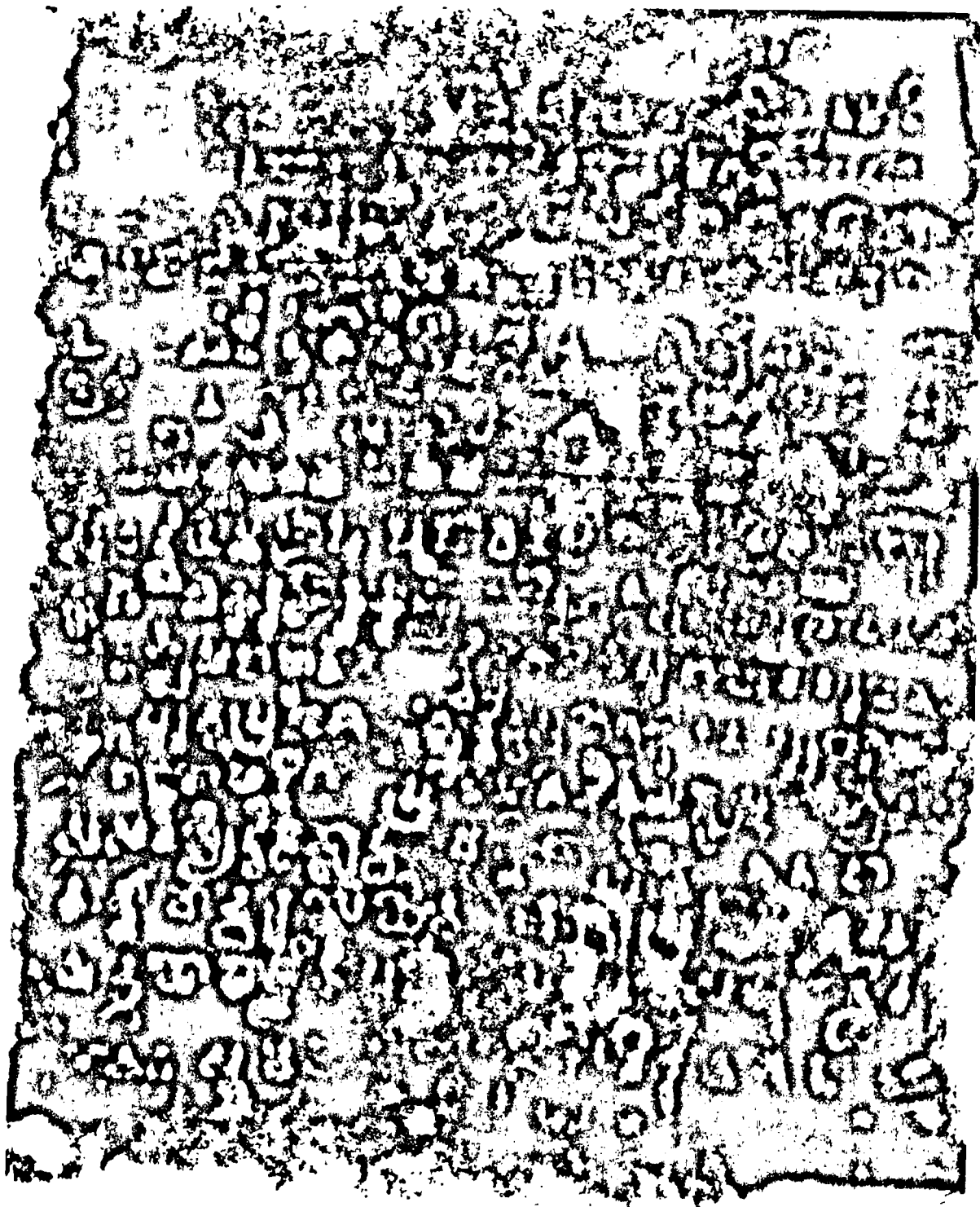
CHAMPASSAK (LAOS) PILLAR INSCRIPTION OF DEVANIKA
FIRST FACE



CHAMPASSAK (LAOS) PILLAR INSCRIPTION OF DEVANIKA
SECOND FACE



CHAMPASSAK (LAOS) PILLAR INSCRIPTION OF DEVANIKA
THIRD FACE



CHAMPASSAK (LAOS) PILLAR INSCRIPTION OF DEVANIKA
FOURTH FACE

HONORARY FELLOWS

1. Prof. Jagannath Agrawal
2. Shri Krishnadeva
3. Dr. G.S. Gai
4. Dr. H. V. Trivedi
5. Dr. K.D. Bajpai
6. Dr. R.S. Sharma
7. Shri K.G. Krishnan
8. Dr. B. Ch. Chhabra
9. Shri H. K. Narasimhaswamy
10. Prof. V.B. Kolte

XVIII Annual Conference

- Venue : Pune (Maharashtra)
General President : Dr. S.H. Ritti
Date : 1 - 3rd of February 1992

OFFICE BEARERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chairman :

Dr. K. V. Ramesh, Mysore

Vice-Chairmen :

Dr. Ajay Mitra Shastri, Nagpur

Dr. M.G.S. Narayanan, New Delhi

Shri. Madhav N. Katti, Mysore

Secretary and Executive Editor :

Dr. S. P. Tewari, Mysore

Treasurer :

Dr. S. Swaminathan, Mysore

Asst. Secretary :

Shri. P. Venkatesan, Bangalore

Executive Committee :

Dr. S. H. Ritti, Dharwad

Shri. N. Sethuraman, Kumbhakonam

Dr. I. K. Sharma, New Delhi

Dr. B.K. Kaul Deambi, Srinagar

Dr. H. S. Thosar, Bombay

Dr. S. Subramonia Iyer, Mysore

Dr. Farukh Ali Jalali, Aligarh

Dr. T. P. Verma, Varanasi

Dr. S. L. Shantakumari, Dharwad

Dr. P.N. Narasimha Murthy, Karkala

Dr. B. K. Pandeya, New Delhi

Dr. R. K. Sharma, Jabalpur

Shri. A.R. Kulkarni, Pune

Shri. M.F. Khan, Nagpur

Dr. B. R. Gopal, Mysore

Dr. M.D. Sampath, Mysore

Dr. Y. Subbarayalu, Tanjavur

Dr. C. Somasundara Rao, Waltair

Dr. Aloka Parasher, Hyderabad

Dr. Raghava Variar, Calicut

PRICE : { Rs. 50
U. S. \$ 8