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**DEDICATED TO  
THE SACRED MEMORY OF**

**Dr. H.R. Raghunatha Bhat**



Former Art Historian, Epigraphist and Executive Committee Member  
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## *Editorial*

It is really with a sense of pride and satisfaction that we are placing in the hands of our members the XXX volume of our Journal.

The Journal is devoted to the publication of original research papers of the scholars who participated in the deliberations held at Mumbai. That the Society has been able to bring out its journal, for thirty years now, without any break, is no mean achievement. This has been rendered possible due to the cooperation and support we have received from the Office-Bearers and Members of the Executive Committee besides the members of the Society.

It is our duty to express our gratitude to Dr. (Mrs). S. Sankaranarayanan, Mumbai and her colleagues because of whose sincere efforts, the last conference was well organised and achieved grand success as well as the appreciation of one and all.

In the year 2003-04, the Society has lost an eminent epigraphist Dr. H.R. Raghunatha Bhat and Historian Dr N. Havalaiiah whose services to the Society for several years are immeasurable.

We are deeply grateful to our Chairman and renowned epigraphist, Dr. S.H. Ritti, and to the Vice-chairmen for guidance in the conduct of the activities of the Society and in placing it on firm footing.

The Patronage of Dr. S.K. Somaiah, the well-known educationalist ensured the success of the ESI conference held at Mumbai. We are sure that he will continue to bestow his blessings on the Society in the years to come.

We are also thankful to our Treasurer, Sri. P. Natarajan, who has spared no pains in maintaining accounts, etc.

We would be failing in our duty if we do not thank Sri. S.K. Lakshminarayana of Ready Print and his staff including Sri. Prasad, Sri. S. Manjunath, Miss. S. Surekha, Miss. Champa, and Miss.Lakshmi for getting this volume printed neatly on time.

Mysore - 570013  
August 20, 2004

**K.V. Ramesh**  
*Executive Editor*  
**M.D. Sampath**  
*Editor*

## PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

M.G.S. Narayanan

### BRĀHMĪ INSCRIPTIONS AS KEY TO THE HISTORY OF SOUTH INDIA

Esteemed Colleagues,

As one who was involved in the discussions which led to the formation of the Epigraphical Society of India back in 1974 and one who participated in the annual conference whenever possible, all through the last three decades, I am certainly hopeful that you will accept me as a humble epigraphist. However, I am not an epigraphist in the full sense. I landed in epigraphy because the period that I selected for historical study could be approached only through inscriptions. I would rather describe myself as a historian who used epigraphy as a tool and thus got familiar with some of its problems and techniques.

I was, pleasantly surprised when you invited me to play the part of the President this year. Let me thank sincerely all my friends in the executive committee for electing me as President, an act by which they forced me to brush up my scanty knowledge of the world of inscriptions and make myself as up-to-date as possible.

The latest path-breaking study in the field of Epigraphy is *Early Tamil Epigraphy (from the earliest times to 6th century A.D)* by Shri Iravatham Mahadevan. This is a record of his original work based on book study and field study undertaken as a National Fellow of the Indian Council of Historical Research from 1992 onwards. The very fact that the Harvard University selected it for publication shows the importance of the contribution. It is perhaps the first publication of that University on South Indian history in the Oriental Series. There was some discussion earlier in the Indian Council whether a scholar without a doctoral degree or university career could be eligible for being selected for this high honour in the country. The result of Shri Mahadevan's research has more than justified the choice.

What are the implications of the appearance of Jain, Buddhist and Brahmanical inscriptions of the early period in different parts of South India? Shri Iravatham Mahadevan writes:

“The Brāhmī script reached Upper South India (Āndhra-Karṇāṭaka region) and the Tamil country at about the same time during the 3rd century B.C. in the wake of the Southern spread of Jainism and Buddhism” (*Frontline*, April, 2003).

The advent of the script in inscriptions denotes the advent of the people propagating the cults. Large groups of these monks had already penetrated into these obscure nooks and corners of the country, made their peace with the natives, and recruited some as their disciples. We may connect this phenomenon with the Aśokan Edicts which extended to the southern borders of Karṇāṭaka along the trade routes. The Jains had probably reached the South earlier than the Buddhist messengers of Aśoka as suggested by the Bhadrabāhu - Chandra Gupta legend associated with the locality of Sravaṇabelagoḷa.

The second urbanization of North India in the 6th century B.C. which saw the rise of industrial and trading classes in wealth and power has already been associated with the spread of these heretic creeds in North India. They can be considered as related to the 4th century B.C. movements in South India also because we find cities like Pratiṣṭhān, Amarāvati, Uraiyūr, Karuvūr, Madurai, etc. coming up soon afterwards, as proved by archaeology and Tamil Sangam literature. There is some difference in the sense that while the movement represented the second urbanization in the North, it was for the first time that urbanization was taking place in South India. Therefore, the urban centers in the South did not spring up haphazardly, but they had models and precedents to be followed, and even some plans readymade.

These movements are also connected with state formation - the rise of the Mahājanapadas and the Mauryan empire in the North, the rise of the Sātavāhana kingdom in the Deccan and the Tamil kingdoms in South India. Here also we find a difference between the North and South. State formation took place first in the North, in the Indo-Gangetic plains in the period between 6th century B.C. and 4th century B.C. This was gradually repeated in all regions where the classical “Hindu” society had taken roots with its caste hierarchy and culture. Thus we find that in the case of Deccan and South India, it was not primary but secondary state formation i.e., state formation following an existing model with political ideas and institutions borrowed from the original scheme and modified according to regional convenience.

It may be noted that three related movements - urbanization, state formation and the spread of the heretic creeds of Jainism and Buddhism - are indicated by the development of the Brāhmī script and the distribution of Brāhmī inscriptions during the period between 4th century B.C. (the rule of Aśoka) and the 2nd century A.D. will help us to see how North India and South India came to be integrated through the spread of the Brāhmī script and the world of ideas carried by the inscriptions composed in that script. We have to make the reasonable assumption that although Brāhmī inscriptions are found for the first time in the period of Bindusāra and Aśoka the Brāhmī script was already in use at least for one or two centuries prior to that in the northern parts of India. Without the technique of writing, such things as the growth of trade, the rise of urban centres, and the spread of new cults among the common people would not have been possible.

The use of a script was the inevitable pre-condition for the developments noticed in the North from 6th century B.C. onwards. However, the practice of inscribing messages on rock surfaces and man-made pillars must have been invented or popularised in the period of Aśoka. His attempt to address the subjects through the edicts would have been futile if at least some sections of the people were not well versed in the use of that script for self-expression in the Prākṛit languages. The trading and industrial groups which preferred Jainism and Buddhism had supported and strengthened the establishment of the Mahājanapadas and the great Mauryan empire in the North and Sātavāhana kingdom as well as the Tamil states in the peninsular part of India.

While the *Vēdas*, *Upanishads*, *Brāhmaṇas* and *Āraṇyakas* - the entire corpus of early Brahmanical literature composed in verse form or in the form of (Sūtra)-were propagated among the three upper *Vaṛṇas* through the tedious techniques of oral transmission, it was the revolutionary discovery of writing that heralded a new era of urbanisation, state formation and new popular cults. It is interesting that for the first time prose replaced verse in literature.

As illustrated in the history of writing in other centers of civilization outside India, the invention of the script was the response to the challenge of the needs of trade. In India also the crucial factor in the post-Vēdic socio-cultural movement was the adoption of writing, i.e. the Brāhmī script, to record and convey thoughts in prākṛit languages. The extreme elitism and secretive habits of the Vēdic people

expressing their faith in verse form are to be explained by the lack of writing, and the new post-Vēdic efflorescence of culture with its preponderance of prose in literature could be explained in relation to the invention of writing. Thus the story of writing (Brāhmī script) provides the key to the proper understanding of the story of the big revolution that took place in the Gangetic civilization in and around the 6th century B.C.

In this context, Shri Mahadevan has rightly pointed out in the light of the Pūlāṅkuṛichi inscriptions that they have finally set at rest the controversy regarding the origin of the Vaṭṭeḷuttu because of its circular shape. This is not true because the characters do not possess a circular shape. The present writer had suggested earlier that the term could be derived by a combination of 'vaṭa' and 'eḷuttu', meaning northern alphabet. In such a combination (*sandhi*), gemination occurs in the letter 'ṭa' so that it becomes 'ṭṭa' in conformity with the rules of linguistic change. eg. Naṭu+ellu=naṭṭellu. Hence, the alphabets which came from the North could be naturally called Vaṭṭeḷuttu or northern script by the people of South India.

Turning back from speculations about the big role of the Brāhmī script in the transformation of society from orality to literacy and from rurality to urbanity, we may take a close look at the developments taking place in South India in the period between the 4th century B.C. and the 6th century A.D.

Shri Iravatham Mahadevan makes another interesting observation with regard to the results of the introduction of writing in South India:

“The results of introduction of writing in these two regions were markedly different. The most interesting aspect of Tamil literacy, when compared with the situation in contemporary Upper South India, are: (i) its much earlier commencement; (ii) use of the local language for all purposes from the beginning; and (iii) its popular democratic character”.

He postulates the earlier commencement in the Tamil country from the end of 3rd century, or early 2nd century B.C on palaeographic grounds and stratigraphic evidence of inscribed pottery. On the other hand such inscriptions begin to appear in the Telugu and Kannada areas in 5th- 6th centuries of the Christian era only. We have also to take into account the chronology of the Sangam Tamil works of the early centuries of the Christian era which support an early date

for the advent of the Northern script and language in South India. There is a possible explanation for this reversal of the geographical order in the southward spread of script and language. They might have come to Tamil country from Srilanka where Aśoka's Buddhist mission sent by the sea route had taken roots at an early date while the Āndhra - Karnāṭaka regions received them from the Gangetic valley by the land route through the slowly expanding settlements of immigrant population.

The other point that Shri Iravatham Mahadevan raises about the use of the local language (Tamil) also may be explained in terms of South Indian history. Tamil had already evolved from a mere dialect into a literary medium before the beginning of the Christian era, due to contact with the Jain - Buddhist immigrants while other Dravidian languages like Telugu and Kannada emerged only much later. Hence, the first two aspects of Tamil literacy are inter-connected; the earlier contact of South India with the northern ideas and practices through the sea contact produced by the Aśokan enterprise explaining the earlier development of Brāhmī script and Tamil language in the Tamil region. The third point regarding the popular democratic character is also related to the use of Tamil language.

The language difference is certainly a notable factor. While the Prākṛit language used in the Brāhmī inscriptions of the Deccan kept the contents elitist, useful only to convey royal and priestly messages, the Tamil language, the spoken language of the common people, gave a wider range for the inscriptions in Tamil India.

The interior of the Deccan was an unproductive desert infested by robbers. Therefore, the monks did not think of settling down there, but skirted it and reached the southern most plains in peninsular India. In the Sangam works also it is called the '*pālai tiṇai*' unfit for habitation and agriculture. Therefore, the northern merchants also must have cut across the land without establishing settlements there. These factors will be sufficient to explain the delay of some centuries in the opening up of interior Deccan for settlements and the growth of Telugu and Kannada languages as efficient media for literature.

The abundance of inscribed pottery in urban and commercial centers like Karur, Koḍumaṇal, Madurai and Uraiyūr and ports like Aḷakankuḷam, Arikamēḍu and Koṛkai, as well as in obscure hamlets like Aḷakarai and Pōluvāmpaṭṭi attest to widespread literacy as proposed by Mahadevan. They are both religious and



secular in content, proving the use of script and language by people from all strata of Tamil society. It is also true as pointed out by Mahadevan, that the Prākṛit inscriptions in upper South India (Deccan) are confined to religious centers like Amarāvati and Sālihuṇḍam.

This finding of Mahadevan is extremely important. It highlights the powerful and crucial role of language in developing a civilization. In this context the writings in Tamil Brāhmī are the proof of the existence of a new language - Tamil. The new Jain immigrants could have had to master the spoken language for propagating their cult and ideas and communicating with the people. Therefore, the northern culture acted as a catalytic agent in stimulating Tamil society, and the interaction produced a great new civilization resembling that of the North in many respects, but having its own cultural identity expressed clearly in the Saṅgam Tamil literature. Shri Mahadevan's authentic and detailed study of the early Tamil- Brāhmī inscriptions adds a new dimension to the understanding of the Saṅgam age.

The Sangam period was studied for a long time only with the help of legends and literary evidence. Naturally the chronology was highly controversial. The traditional Tamil pandits at one end of the spectrum gave it such a great antiquity as to place it in the 10th millennium before the Christian era, while the modern scholars placed it in the period between 3rd century B.C. and 6th century A.D. It was definite that the Saṅgam age was pre-Pallava in character. The calculation based on the references in the Aśokan edicts as the bottom line is more realistic, but within the time bracket of about eight hundred or six hundred years, the actual period of rulers and the order of their succession could not be ascertained.

In the last three decades, archaeological excavations at Kāvēripūmpaṭṭanam, Koṅkai, Uraiyūr, Madurai, Karuvūr and other sites gave us a firm ground for placing the first cities in South India in the immediate post-Mauryan period, i.e. the period between 2nd century B.C. and 3rd century A.D. Thus the traditional view of early chronology was effectively challenged. However, the character of Saṅgam society and culture left much to be clarified.

Two other types of source materials-coins and inscriptions- have been understood to be useful in analyzing the history of the Saṅgam age. However, it was only in the last two decades that coins of Tamil rulers with heads, names, legends and symbols have been discovered in large numbers from the ancient

sites near the capitals-Karūr, the Chēra capital; Madurai, the Pāṇḍyan capital, and Uraiyūr, the Chōḷa capital. The credit for the convincing discoveries and studies in numismatics belonging to this period goes almost entirely to Shri R. Krishnamurthy. It was believed earlier that the period knew only the Roman coins of republics and emperors brought by sea trade and punch-marked coins of the northern Janapadas and the Mauryan empire, brought by land trade. The fact that local rulers had issued numerous imitation Roman coins in their names, with regular shapes and standard weights, changes our assessment not only about the level of technology, but also about the development of political, economic and social institutions. It is now clear from the coins that the rulers were not mere tribal or semi-tribal chieftains engaged in barter and gold exchange. The standardized and individualized coins prove that accurate values and measurements had been adopted and popularized. An elite trading class and an elite ruling class had ensured the functioning of a classical monarchy in several parts of South India. These findings re-enforce some of the descriptions of monarchy found in Saṅgam literature. A higher level of culture, a network of monarchical institutions and socio-economic ideas - all these are indicated by the newly discovered coinage.

The Tamil- Brāhmī inscriptions were also known for sometime. They had been analysed by Prof. T.V. Mahalingam, Dr. Nagaswamy, R. Panneerselvam, Mayilai Seeni Venkataswami and also by Iravatham Mahadevan, but in the absence of complete data and clear discussion, it was difficult to use the inscriptional evidence to clarify the nature of society and culture. Shri Mahadevan's definitive text and comprehensive discussion of inscriptions has now raised a new set of questions, answered a few and left a few others unanswered.

It is now clear that there were three strands in the Tamil Saṅgam culture. The native tribal elements, the incoming Aryan culture-Buddhist, Jain and Brahmanical- and the new culture produced by the Āryan- Dravidian synthesis are reflected in the different types of source materials. The problem at present is to integrate the findings from different forms of source materials and reconcile their evidence wherever they seem to be contradictory at a glance.

The corpus of Saṅgam Tamil literature has to be approached cautiously. Epic poems like *Śilappatikāram* and *Maṇimēkalai* which are clearly the products of Jain-Buddhist influence, were once assumed to be part of early Saṅgam literature.

In recent years it has been shown that they, as well as *Tolkāppiyam and Tirukkural* were compositions of the post-Sangam age. In the collections of short poems, composed by a large number of poets in honour of a large number of heroes, the Brahmanical elements and the native Dravidian elements are quite obvious, but the Jain-Buddhist elements are submerged, minimal and marginalized. As Avvayār or some other Jain poet may be identified and a few anti-war appeals and one or two direct references to heretic cults are available, but the hegemony of sacrificing orthodox Vēdic Brahmins in religious culture is unquestionable. The Brahmins were prepared to adopt the Tamil language and Tamil practices and even modify their *varṇa-jāti* attitudes. While there is reference to the shrines of the Brahmanical deities, there is no reference to heterodox monasteries in literature.

On the other hand the corpus of Tamil-Brāhmī inscriptions reveal the fact that a large number of Jain or Ājivika monks were active in Tamil region. The archaeological excavations are not able so far to suggest whether Brahmanical or Jain-Buddhist cults were more influential in shaping political, social and economic ideas and institutions. In this context, how do we reconcile the predominantly Brahmanical character of Saṅgam Tamil society displayed in literature, and the predominantly Jain-Buddhist character emerging from epigraphic evidence ?

It is difficult to answer this question. However, in one sense this dichotomy illustrates the danger of depending too much and too uncritically on epigraphic evidence or on literary evidence. Since the early Tamil- Brāhmī inscriptions give a picture of Jain Tamilakam, we should not imagine that Brahmanical influence was not present there. It is possible that the Jains adopted the practice of cutting inscriptions in caves, in out of the way sites, near the trade routes which were frequented by the traders. As the traders were in need of shelter for their pack animals and themselves they took care to establish monasteries or shrines at regular intervals on the trade routes. They stationed monks there. These people were keeping good relations with the natives, learning and speaking their languages, and adopting their food and medicines. They could tame the wild tribes and employ them to protect merchants and their goods along the trade routes.

The Brahmin pockets were to be found in the fertile river valleys where they got lands from rulers and created settlements. They frequented the courts of rulers

and cultivated their friendship, using it to get the gift of lands and privileges. Thus the simultaneous existence of the Jains and the Brahmins in the respective new southern abodes without encroaching on each other's territory, physically or socially, is possible and natural, and there is no real contradiction between the epigraphic and literary evidence.

There is another factor also which I may put down here. In the ordinary course, the epigraphy evidence in mountain caves lies beyond the reach of people and there is no possibility of manipulation or interpolation. At the same time the literacy evidence is subject to "editing" at different stages. It has to be copied by hand every time, and additions are easily managed. Evidently the songs grouped in units of hundred have been subjected to scholarly manipulation. The Saṅgam academy, comprising of the Brahmin courtiers of the Pāṇḍyan kings of Madurai, appear to have selected the poems they wanted and arranged them as *Puram*, *Akham*, etc. They must also have left out the Jain-Buddhist poems and retained the Brahmanical passages. In this process it is understandable that the Saṅgam works give a Brahmanical message while the epigraphs of the Jain monks do not convey much information about the Brahmins of the courts or their life in the countryside. We have to treat the epigraphic and literacy materials as two sides of the same coin. It is only when they are both studied and fused together with insight that we can hope to get a complete picture of the Tamil Saṅgam age. In other words, the two forms of evidence - epigraphic and literary - have to be considered as complimentary when we attempt to reconstruct the social history of the Saṅgam age.

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## A NOTE ON THE GRANT OF RĀSHṬRAKŪṬA GŌVINDA III

A.P.Jamkhedkar

These plates were obtained by Prof.G.K.Mane from Srisalve of Amaravati. Shri.Mane has given a tentative reading of this inscription and prepared a note on it in Marathi. Since he is not in a position to attend the conference, I am presenting this note on his behalf. Following are the salient features of this charter.

1. It seems to be one of the earliest charters of Gōvinda III because it was issued in the same Śaka year 716 and on the same *tithi* i.e. Vaiśākha Paurṇimā, on which his Paiṭhān grant was issued.
2. However, in this charter the ślōka about the *praśasti* of Dantidurga mentioning his conquest is absent.
3. Like his Paiṭhān grant, this charter was also issued from the Vijayaskandhāvāra, on the western bank of the river Gōdāvāri near Paiṭhān. It shows that the Rāshṭrakūṭa king had pitched his camp at Paiṭhān for quite a few days. Since Paiṭhān is at a distance of about one day's march from Ellora, it seems that Gōvinda was either on his way to an expedition to the south or on way back from his expedition to Ellora, which was the royal seat of the Rāshṭrakūṭas till the year 800 A.D.
4. The purport of the inscription is to register the endowment of a village named Pushkarikā to Brahmachāri Śrīdharabhaṭṭa, the son of Pūrṇachandrabhaṭṭa, of Bhāradvāja gōtra and Taittirīya śākhā, who was the reident of Śrimallakāgrahāra. The inscription also mentions the details about the exact location of the gifted village Pushkarikā. According to this description, it was situated two *gavyūtis* to the north of a place named Chikkala-sthāna. It was bounded on the east by the village named Hāradigāma, on the west by Bhāyigrāma, on the north by Lōkasthāna and on the south by Śālmaligrāma. On the basis of this description, the geographical name mentioned in this charter can be identified as shown below.

| S.No. | Incriptional Name  | Modern Equivalent | Taluka     | District   |
|-------|--------------------|-------------------|------------|------------|
| 1.    | Pratishṭhāna (K.C) | Paithan           | Paithan    | Aurangabad |
| 2.    | Pushkarikā (G.V)   | Pokhari           | Aurangabad | Aurangabad |
| 3.    | Chikkalasthāna     | Chikhalthana      | Aurangabad | Aurangabad |
| 4.    | Śrīmallakāgrahāra  | Malkapur          | Aurangabad | Aurangabad |
| 5.    | Bhāyigrāma         | Bhoygaon          | Aurangabad | Aurangabad |
| 6.    | Lōkasthāna         | Kolthana          | Aurangabad | Aurangabad |
| 7.    | Hāradigrāma        | Harsul            | Aurangabad | Aurangabad |
| 8.    | Śālmaligrāma       | Daulatpur         | Aurangabad | Aurangabad |

Except the last place-name all other modern place-names have phonetical similarity with their inscriptional counterparts. The last place-name Daulatpur seems to have been a changed name of Śālmaligrāma. There are several examples from Aurangabad district, where the original Sanskrit names of places were changed due to the influence of the Muslim rulers or governors. This place-name seems to have been changed during the Muslim rule because there is no place-name to the south of Pokhari having phonetical similarity with Śālmaligrāma. Its modern equivalent would have been Sarvargaon.

#### Notes and References:

The reading of the donative portion and the identification of place-name has been done by H.S.Thosar.

(K.C) - king's camp

(G.V.) - gifted village

## SIGNIFICANCE OF LOTUS SINCE ANCIENT TIMES

Jyoti Marwah

G.K. Monga

The Lotus has been held in high esteem in Indian religion and iconography. The deities of Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism are shown seated or standing on Lotus bases. The Goddesses when invoked had the ability to unlock energies in the human body. Spiritual discipline unfolds inner knowledge and power the centers of which are visualized as Lotuses inside the body.

The Lotus has been extolled as the prime symbol of creation, the seat of universal creative force, which springs from the navel or center of primordial creator. It is expressed as Brahma, the genius of creation, seated on full-blown lotus with long stalk, springing from the navel of Vishṇu. As the Lotus floats above the water, so the created cosmos emerged to surface of the deep or chaos, which originally was the confused mass out of which the order of the universe was evolved.

The birth of Lotus has been described in the Matsya Purāṇa according to which Hari, the creator of all the worlds brings forth out of his navel a wonderful Lotus of a thousand petals shining like a Sun.

Thereafter, Vishṇu out of the golden Lotus begot Brahma, the creator of the universe. This Lotus was endowed with the qualities of the earth and of Golden colour. Rasa also known as Padma Devi is the earth. The weighty portions of the Lotus are the mountains.

The Matsya Purāṇa compares the earth with the Lotus and says that the Lotus shaped the earth having four oceans on the four sides. The springing up of the earth has been termed as Pushkara. Therefore the Lotus is also called Pushkara.

The Lotus flower is a symbol derived from nature. A goddess stands on a Lotus or she is shown holding the Lotus bud. The Lotus grows in stagnant murky waters in a pond, but each morning with the rising Sun, the Lotus flower opens its petals, standing clear of the water below, clean and pure. If in sculpture a figure is shown standing on a Lotus base, it denotes the purity of the soul of that figure, suggesting divinity, something that has not been contaminated by the dirty waters from which it grew.

In Indian thought, the Universe is divided into five elements-earth, fire, water, sky, and ether, which are manifest in all arts and rituals. A painter may illustrate a pond representing the importance of water to life. The pond will have lotuses growing on it and each flower will signify the concept of time past, present or future-the bud, the full bloom or the dying flower.

Further, the popularity of Lotus in the art and religion of ancient India is manifested in sculpture, architecture, numismatics, painting and epigraphical evidences.

Vishṇu is one of the most powerful gods of the Hindu trinity. In the iconography of Vishṇu, which developed during the Epics and the Purāṇas, he was conceived to be four armed, holding a Lotus as one of his attributes, the other three being Śāṅkha, Chakra and Gada. He was also conceived to be Padmanābha because of the issuing of Lotus stem out of his navel and Padmalōchana because of the resemblance of his eyes with the Lotus flowers.

Though Śiva is not directly connected with Lotus but the Śilpa texts while describing the iconography of his various forms have connected lotus with him as his seat or an attribute.

Sūrya, also has Lotus as his attribute and has been duly defined by the Śilpa texts. Besides, Ādityas are twelve in number and each one held the Lotus as his attribute.

Lotus is one of the attributes for different forms of Gaṇapati e.g. Gaṇādīśa, Lakshmi-Gaṇeśa, Moha-Gaṇapati and so on.

There are some composite deities, which are also associated with Lotus in one or the other ways e.g. Brahma-Vishṇu-Śiva, Lotuses are held as attributes in two hands, Sūrya-Brahma-holds Lotus in each one of the two hands, Śivalōkēśvara, stands over a double petalled lotus.

Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth represents all goodness. She stands or is seated on a lotus pedestal, carrying a Lotus in one hand. Gajalakshmi is bathed by elephants, both of them standing on the Lotus base. Some other female deities carrying Lotus in one of the hands and sometimes seated upon a Lotus base are Ambā, Kālī, Siddhi, Jaya, and Vijaya, Gaurī, Uma, etc.

Lotus is associated with some of the Buddhist deities. For the Buddhists, the

tree of life of birth and immortality was the Lotus. It became symbolic not only with the birth of the blessed one but also with the religion which he promulgated.

The story of Buddha is depicted on relief sculpture panels. After his enlightenment, the stages of the Buddha's life include further meditations where he is shown seated cross-legged in the Lotus position. The figure of Buddha at the Archaeological Museum at Khajuraho is seated on a many petalled Lotus. He is in the Padmāsana position. The bronze Buddha, cast and gilded, (Sino-Tibetan Ming Dynasty) is shown in a meditative posture, seated on a double-petalled throne. The figure of Bōdhisattva Padmāpaṇi holds a large Lotus, his distinguishing emblem. Padmapāṇi is a form of Avalōkitēśvara. He is associated with the Lotus and like Brahma, responsible for creation in the cosmic process.

Some of the Buddhist deities having association with the Lotus are Amitabha, Tara, Manjughosa, Loknath and Padmanarttēśvara having double Lotus in all the hands.

The Sculpture of Bhārhūt *Stūpa* depicts symbolic representations of the Buddha. There are several Lotus medallions and the relief decorations are carved in many levels and depth.

The archaeological museum at Sāñchi contains several figures of Buddha seated in meditation on a Lotus base.

The museum at Sārnāth contains the huge lion capital, which was adopted as the emblem of the Republic of India. Below the abacus a huge inverted Lotus bulges out to join the pillar below.

Several Gupta coins depict goddess Lakshmi which is recognized by the Lotus in her left hand. Lakshmi sits or stands on Lotus base and holds the Lotus flower as well. Some of the prominent coins depicting Lakshmi with Lotuses are Skandagupta's king and Lakshmi type, Samudragupta's battle axe type, Kumāragupta's sword man type and some others. Goddess Gajalakshmi standing on the Lotus base is represented on a class of coins of the Scytho-Parthian Aziles (late 1st Century B.C.) Similar image is found at the railing medallion from the Bhārhūt *Stūpa*.

The Lotus employed in Buddhist and Hindu art and sculpture is a symbol of purity and signifies the miraculous birth of a holy or great person whose example stands distinct from the rest of humanity.

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## VALAI COPPER-PLATES OF THE RĀSHṬRAKŪṬA KING AVIDHĒYA

Shobhana Gokhale

The copper-plates recording this grant are in the possession of Shri Kantaram Bhoju Kalel, Sarpanch of the village Valai, Taluk Man, District Satara, Maharashtra. He kindly made these important copper plates available to me for study. I am thankful to him for his kind permission to publish my views on these copperplates which have provided a unique epigraphical evidence to confirm the original home of the early Rāshṭrakūṭas.

The plates three in number measure 17 cm × 8 cm. The writing is inscribed on the inner side of the first and third plates, and on both sides of the second plate.

It consists of thirty lines. The first plate consists of seven lines. The second plate is having eight lines on the inner side and the outer side of the second plate has eight lines. The third plate consists of eight lines, inscribed on the inner side. The rims of the plates are slightly raised and therefore the writing is in good condition. Unfortunately there is neither a ring nor a seal to hold the plates. They were tied with a copper wire.

The characters are mostly nail-headed type, the letters showing in many cases a triangular head with the apex downwards. The characters show a remarkable similarity with those of the Pandarangapalli plates of the king Avidhēya of the Rāshṭrākūṭa dynasty. The writer of the Pandarangaplli plates and the present plates is Dēvadatta. The present plates describe him as '*Grāmkaṣhapataḷādhyakṣha*'.

The writing is very clear and legible. Some letters are written carelessly. Nṛipati (*Nripati*). The initial *i* consists of a curve over two dots in line 5 (*ivaśritam*). The medical *i* is denoted by a double curling curve.

**Line 2 (Prajasukīrtiya).**

*n* is distinguished from *j* only by the absence of the middle horizontal stroke (*Mānāṅka* line 2). The sub script *n* is placed horizontally in the word *Vānchhaya*

(line 13). *ḍ* and *d* are clearly distinguished shad-vargga in line 9 and *Vidarbha* in line 1; *ṇ* has its upper part in two curves turned in opposite directions (*Sauryyēṇa* line 3), *t* is generally unlooped and *n* looped (*Kuntalānām* line 2). *bh* is sometimes indistinguishable from *t* (*babhūva* line 1). *Y* is tripartite except when it occurs as a subscript letter (*Kīrtiyā vinayēna* line 3) *l* has the vertical curves on both the sides of the letter. (*Dēlāhikā* line 14). *v* is generally shown by a vertical with a square at the bottom (*Vidarbha*, line 1).

### Orthography

The use of *Upadhmānīya* is noteworthy in the line 4 before the word *Prakāśatē* and in line 8 *yasya phalaiprakāśāh*. Reduplication of a consonant after *r* can be seen in the word (*Śauryyēṇa* in line 3). The language is Sanskrit and the record is composed partly in prose and partly in verse. There are no auspicious words like *Siddham* or *Svasti* in the beginning. The grant opens with the eulogy of the king Mānāṅka.

The grant was made by Avidhēya, the son of Dēvarāja and the grandson of, Mānāṅka. Mānāṅka is described as one who terrified Vidarbha and Aśmaka and as the ruler of the Kuntala country. This is followed by the verses eulogising his son Dēvarāja and his grandson the reigning king Avidhēya. The name of the family Rāshtrakūṭa is mentioned in line 23. (Second plate).

The object of the present plates is to record the grant of the village Dēlāhikā by the king Avidhēya to increase the merit of his parents and his merit and fame to ten brahmins on the lunar eclipse in the month of mahā-Mārgasīrsha-Vaiśākha. Unfortunately the copper-plates do not mention even the regnal year. The year is of the twelve year cycle of Jupiter. The date does not admit of verification for want of necessary details such as week day and *nakshatra*. Then there are names of ten donees along with their *gōtras*. The (grant) of the settlement of brahmins was registered by the forty (brahmins). The plates further mention that members of the Rāshtrakūṭa family or others should not violate the grant. The four directions of the village granted Dēlāhika are as follows - to the east Prūpalaka - sthāna, i.e., present Palasavaḍe; to the west Kutkuṭavaṭi i.e., present Kukkuḍvad; to the north Himāravāṭi i.e., present Hingani; to the south Vēṇugiri i.e., present Virali hill. The village granted Dēlāhika is the present Divad. All the places are in Man taluk of Satara district, Maharashtra.



The *brahmin donees* are as follows:

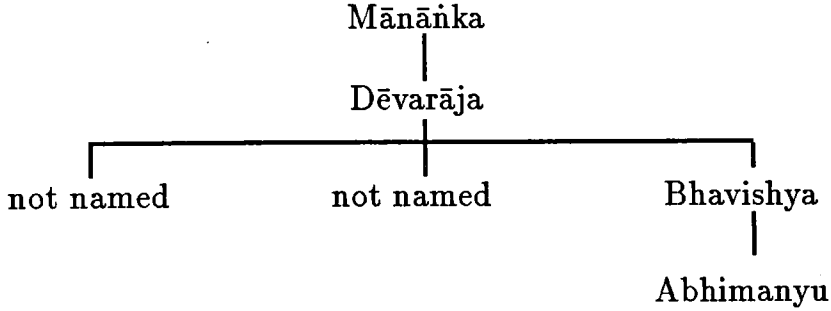
|     | Names of Brahmins | Names of Gōtras |
|-----|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1)  | Kūmārasvāmi       | Kaunḍinya       |
| 2)  | Chandrasvāmi      | Haritasa        |
| 3)  | Bollasvāmi        | Vatsa           |
| 4)  | Chavanāgasvami    | Kaunḍinya       |
| 5)  | Yajñasvāmi        | Kṛishṇātrēya    |
| 6)  | Rudrasvāmi        | Maṭharasa       |
| 7)  | Matrisvāmi        | Kauśika         |
| 8)  | Gōpasvāmi         | Bhāradvāja      |
| 9)  | Chollasvāmi       | Gautama         |
| 10) | Śrīsvāmi          | Kāśyapa         |

This is followed by imprecatory benedictive verses ascribed to Vyāsa. The last two lines of the record mention the name of the scribe Dēvadatta who was '*grāmākshapaṭalādhyaksha*.

So far Pandarangapalli grant was the only epigraphic record of king Avidhēya. But unfortunately the copper-plates do not mention the name of the royal family. The Valai copper-plates are the second grant of this king. The importance of the present plates lies in the fact that it mentions the name of the king as well as the name of the dynasty.

Till the discovery of Pandarangapalli copper-plates, the Uṇḍikavāṭika grant was the only epigraphic evidence of the early family of the Rāshtrakūṭas. But the historical evidence of these two grants was not sufficient to establish the original home of the dynasty. As the provenance of the Uṇḍikavāṭika grant was not known, there was no clue for the identification of the places mentioned in them. Consequently various interpretations were suggested about the location of the places mentioned therein. Fleet identified Dakshiṇa Śiva, the Śaiva shrine which is mentioned in the Uṇḍikavāṭika grant with the Śaiva shrine in Madhya Pradesh and the other places in the same region. About the capital city Manpur, Fleet was unable to locate it. He suggested another identification i.e. Sohagpur near Bandhogadh. Bhagawanlal Indrajī identified it with Malkhed which was the capital of the Rāshtrakūṭas in the later period. The enigmatic problem of the identification of the capital of Manpur of the Rāshtrakūṭas was not satisfactorily

solved. Rāshtrakūṭa, the name of the family is known from the Uṇḍikavāṭika grant of Abhimanyu. The plates were issued by Abhimanyu while residing at Manpur. The plates have recorded the following genealogy.



The village Uṇḍikavāṭika was granted to a Parivrājaka named Jaṭābhāra in honour of the god Dakṣiṇa Śiva of Peth Pāngaraka. In the absence of the definite information about the provenance of the plates, no clue was available for the identification of the places mentioned in the grant. Fleet suggested that Dakṣiṇa Śiva might be the God Śiva of Śaiva shrine in the Mahādēva hill in the Hoshangabad district, Madhya Pradesh and for the other places in Madhya Pradesh he could not suggest any satisfactory identification of Manpur, the capital of the dynasty which was evidently founded by Mānānka. Pandit Bhagawanlal Indrajī identified Manpur with Malkhed which was the capital of the Rāshtrakūṭas of the later period.

On the basis of palaeography of the Uṇḍikavāṭika plates Bhagawanlal Indrajī assigned the charter to the fifth century A.D. Fleet dated the plates to the second half of the seventh century A.D.

While editing the Paṇḍarangpalli grants, Krishna identified Avidhēya as the third son of Dēvarāja whose name had not been mentioned in the Uṇḍikavāṭika grant. He assumed that Dēvarāja (or Sudēvarāja), the son of the Rāshtrakūṭa king Mānānka (or Manamatra) had three sons viz., Avidhēya, Jayarāja and Bhavishya, among whom was divided the extensive empire of the Rāshtrakūṭas stretching from the Mahānadi and the Tapti in the north to the Bhīma in the south, comprising the three Maharashtra.

Jayarāja was ruling over the eastern part on the bank of the Mahānadi, Bhavishya over the northern Maharashtra and Avidhēya over the southern Maharashtra, extending upto the bank of the river Bhīma.

This hypothesis was refuted by Altekar. He pointed out that most of these kings do not call themselves Rāshtrakūṭas and secondly there were other dynasties such as the Nalas, Mauryas, the Kalachuris and Kadambas ruling over the major parts of Maharashtra.

The controversies regarding the original home of the Rāshtrakūṭas, the number of kings of the dynasty and the extension of their empire have been solved by Mirashi. Mirashi edited the Pandarangapalli copper-plates in the pages of *Epigraphia Indica* with his usual scholarly interpretations. Mirashi has established that Manapur, the capital city of the Rāshtrakūṭas which has been mentioned in the Uṇḍikavāṭika plates of Abhimanyu can be identified with the Man, the chief town of the Man Taluk of the Satara District, Maharashtra. It was obviously founded by the king Mānāṅka. The places mentioned in the Uṇḍikavāṭika plates could be located satisfactorily in the Satara district. The discovery of the Pandarangapalli plates near Kolhapur and the statement in it that Mānāṅka the founder member of family was ruling over Kuntala, show that the places mentioned in the Uṇḍikavāṭika grant must be located in southern Maharashtra and not in Madhya Pradesh.

So far the name of Rāshtrakūṭa occurs only in the Uṇḍikavāṭika plates. It is absent in the Pandarangapalli plates. Later on the name occurs in the Hingni Berdi plates. The present plates from Valai records the genealogical sequence of the family and the name of the dynasty Rāshtrakūṭa.

When did the Rāshtrakūṭa family flourish ? Mirashi supported the proposition of Bhagawanlal who assigned the Uṇḍikavāṭika plates to fifth century. The mention of a year of the twelve years cycle of Jupiter, Bhagawanlal Indraji has correctly interpreted that no such years were cited in south India after the sixth century A.D. and therefore, the early Rāshtrakūṭas were contemporaries of the Traikūṭakas and Vākāṭakas who were ruling over Vidarbha.

Mirashi has diligently shown that the records of the Vākāṭakas contain occasional references to their clashes or matrimonial alliances with the king of Kuntala.

Mirashi has further noted that the Balaghat plates state that the king Narēndrasēna married Ajjhitabhāṭṭārikā, the daughter of the lord of Kuntala. This obviously indicates that the princess was of the Rāshtrakūṭa dynasty.

The Ajanta inscription records the victory of Harishēṇa over the lord of Kuntala.

The *Daśakumāracharita* which in its eighth Uchchvāsa describes that the lord of Kuntala as the foremost among the feudatories of the king of Vidarbha.

On the basis of certain passages in the Kuntalēśvaradantya, Mirashi has pointed out that the famous Gupta King Chandragupta II - Vikramāditya sent Kalidasa as an ambassador to the court of the ruler of Kuntala. The literary and inscriptional synchronisms clearly show that Kuntala comprised the upper valley of the river Kṛishṇā and as founder member of the Rāshtrakūṭa started his political career in the Māna region.

The name Mānānka is significant i.e. the king who was near to the banks of the river Man. It conveys the meanings par excellence. The river Man flows in the Satara district. There is no place named Man. The basin which has covered an area of 625 miles around the river Man is known as Manadesh. Dahivadi is the main city of the region. It is situated on a fine gorge to the east of Dahivadi. Thirteen miles north-east of Dahivadi Satara district (north Lat. 17° - 50; east Long. 74 - 42) is a famous pilgrimage centre called Shikara Shinganapur. It is crowned by a temple of Śiva which is known even today as 'Dakshīṇa Kailāsā. It must be 'Dakshīṇa Śiva' mentioned in the Uṇḍikavāṭika grant. Nine miles north-east on the Shinganapur road there is a small habitation named Vāvarhira where there are ancient remains. There are old foundations of houses, remains of big gates, etc. All these remains are submerged in the Rājewadi dam on the river Man. Even today people have preserved the tradition that the great palace of kings is submerged in water and therefore the dam is named as Rājewadi dam. There is another small village named Dēvapūr which must be named after the king Dēvarāja.

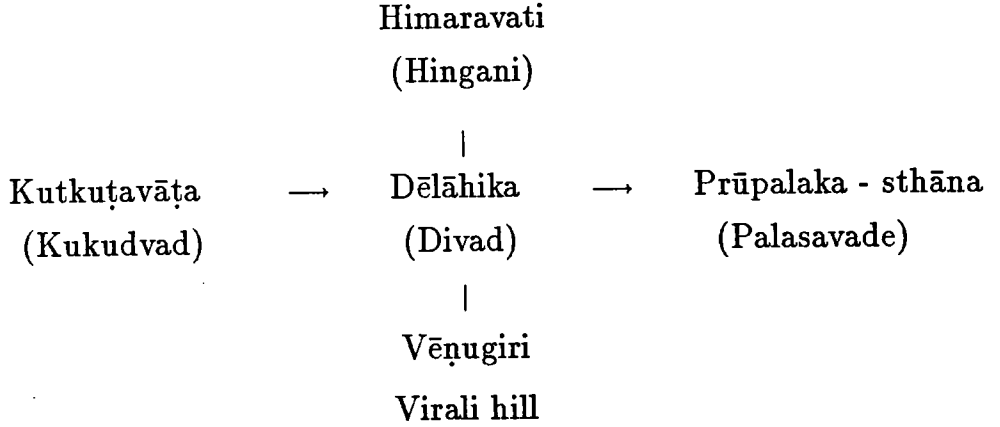
The region is arid and it has a very low rainfall. But the river Maṇ has retained a geological wonder. The winter bed is of vesicular basalt and below it there is red bole. Vesicular basalt is of porous nature. Because of its porous nature the rain water percolates in the river bed. Below the basalt there is red bole which has the retaining capacity of water. This red bole is locally known as Maṇ and therefore the river is known as Maṇ. People get water by bore-wells. The entire region is named after the river Maṇ.

Thus the present plates have provided one more important evidence to confirm the original home of the early Rāshtrakūṭas.

To sum up:

- 1) The Valai plates record the name of the Rāshtrakūṭa king Avidhēya.
- 2) All the places mentioned in the grant could be located in the Man region.
- 3) The Man region has still preserved the ancient remains.
- 4) The significant names Dēvapur, Rājewadi dam, the name of the king Mānāñka, the river Maṅ have offered entirely new evidence to confirm the original home of the Rāshtrakūṭas.

The village granted is in the Satara district.



**Text**

**First Plate :**

1. Babhūva Vikrama-trasta-Vidarbh-āsmaka-maṇḍalah
2. Mānāñkō-nri(nṛi)pati śrīmān-Kuntalānām prasāsītā ||1|| prajā-sukī-
3. rtyā vinayēna sādhusu dvishatsu sauryyēṇa nayēna rājasu [|]
4. tyāgēna sarvvatra cha ya prakāsatē dēhāntar-asyōpi guṇairiha
5. sthitaiḥ ||2|| Dēvarājs=sutas-tasya Dēvarāja- ivāsritām[|] chaka(kā)rasa-
6. ma sampatti niratya ya sukhodayām || 3|| chhad-bhavyanītam vina-
7. yēna śauryya tyāgōrtthinām bhūtibhir- Apramēyaḥ satyam- kriyābhi-

**Second Plate, First Side :**

8. chchhala-vipra-praruktaṁ suddhā-guṇā- yasya-phalai-prakāśāḥ ||4|| tasy=āpi sū-
9. nu nri (nṛi) patīn-vijētā pratbhānna-vīnōpi guṇair=viśuddhaiḥ shaḍ-varga - satrōr-Avi-
10. dhēyakārī rājā yatas=tēna kil-Āvidhēyaḥ||5|| ārtthētvā māṭri dātavya vyā-
11. pārēṇa sadōchitaṁ kṛita - praṇa-yivai tṛishtya svasty-āgōpi dunōtia [ye] ||6|| pradā-
12. tuṁ priyamasyēti pūrit=āsōpi yāchakaḥ|| sēvayaivacha-yamaśtyarttham yāchatē [||]
13. kshēmaṁ vāchchhayā||7|| tatas-tēna rājñā mātā - pitrōr=ātmanaś=cha puṇya- yaśōbhi vri(vṛi)-
14. ddhayē Dēlahikā-nāma-grāma brāhmaṇēbhya- satkṛity-ōdaka-pūrvvaṁ mahā-Mārga-
15. śīrsha-Vaiśākhasya chandrōparāge pratipāditam āchandr-ārkkam

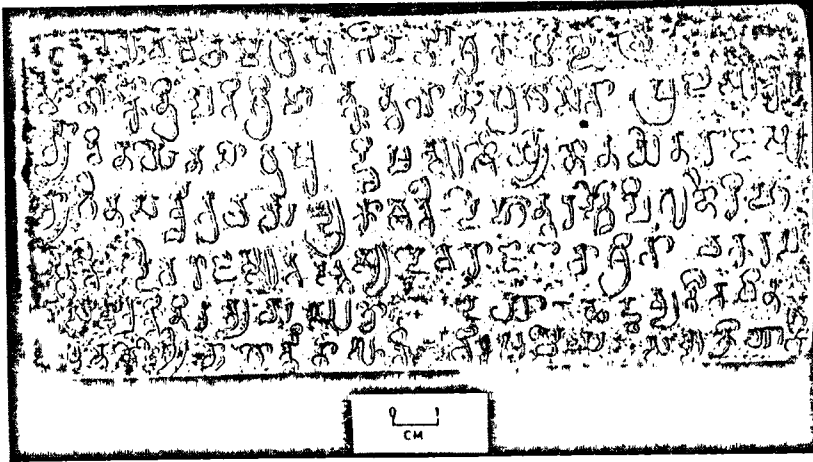
**Second Plate, Second Side :**

16. graha-nakshatra kshiti-sthiti sama-kāla-bhōgyaḥ achāṭa-bha-
17. ṭa-pravēśaḥ prāti-grāhaṇās-cha-brāhmaṇāḥ Kaunḍinya sa-gōtrah
18. Kumārasvāmī Haritasa-gōtraś-Chandrasvāmī Vatsasa-gōtrō Bolla-
19. svāmī Kaunḍinyō Chavanāgasvāmī kṛishṇ-Ātrēya sa- gōtrō Yajñasvāmī
20. Māṭhara- sa-gōtrō Rudrasvāmī Kauśika sa- gōtrō Mātrisvāmī Bhāradvāja sa- gō[|\*]trō Gōpa-
21. svāmī Gautama sa-gōtrōś-Chollasvāmī Kāśyapa sa-gōtrō- Śīsvāmī cha-vam-
22. drita kṛitvā chatvāriṁśatyā brāhmaṇānām-Adhivāsaḥ yad-achēbhyaḥ
23. rāshṭrakūṭānvayair-anyaiś-cha rājabhir-dharma paramairnna=āchchēttavyaḥ

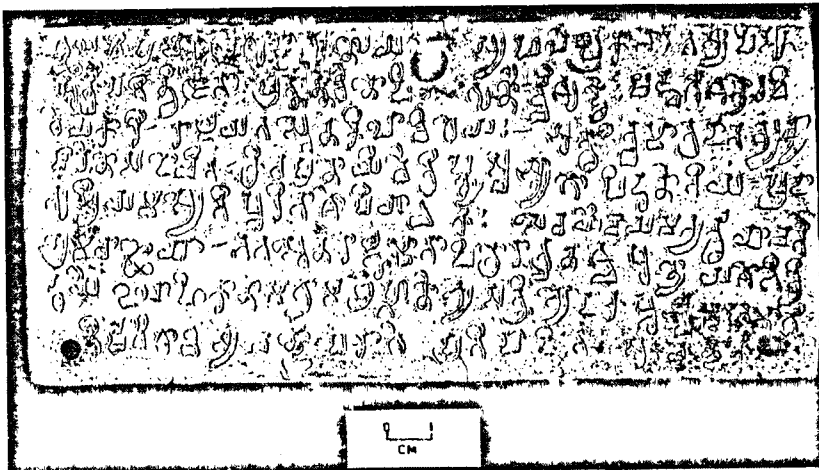
## Third Plate :

24. likhitañcha- bhōga-bhāgā vēda vyāsēna vyāsēna [||\*] Bahubhir- vvasudhā dattā
25. rājabhis=Sagar-ādibhiḥ[||\*] yasya yasya yadā bhūmis=tasya-tasya tadā pha-
26. lam [||\*] shasṭi-varsha-sahasrāṇi svarggē mōdati bhūmidah[||\*] āchchhēttā ch=ānumantā
27. cha tāny=eva -narakē-vasēt [||\*]āghāṭana pariśuddhaḥ pūrvvēṇa Prūpalaka-sthāna
28. Dakshiṇēn Vēnugiriḥ paśchimēna Kutkuṭa-vāṭāḥ uttarēṇa Himāra-vā-
29. ṭi cha tānyā-ghāṭanāni likhitañ= ch= aivach = chhāsanam = Avidhēyarāja - vishayapati
30. nā cha Dēvasantakēna grām-ākshapaṭal-ādhyakhēṇa sarvvakaraṇ- ādhya-
31. ksha pratyakha-dharmm-ādhyaksha pratyakshañ=chā Dēvadattēna siddhyai- svasty=astu[||\*]

First Plate :



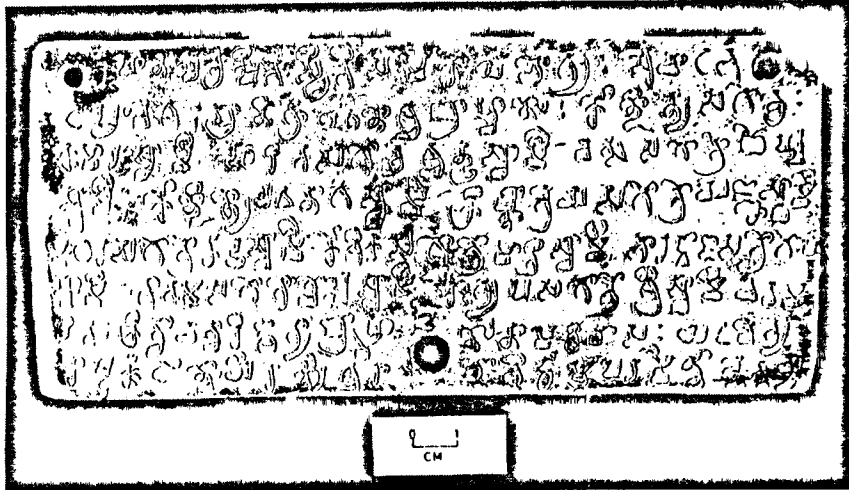
Second Plate, First Side :



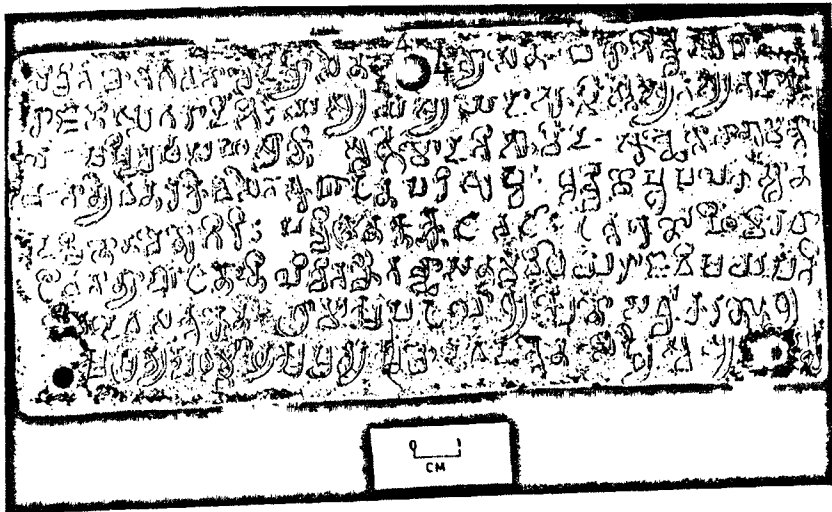
Valai Copper-Plates of Rāshtrakūṭa King Avidhēya



Second Plate, Second Side :



Third Plate



Valai Copper-Plates of Rāshtrakūṭa King Avidhēya

## GENDER RELATIONS IN GUJARAT (942-1300 AD): AN EPIGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVE

Mrinal Joshi

### I

“If recording, defining and interpreting the past, marks man’s entry into history, it occurred for males in the third millennium B.C. It occurred for women, (and only some of them) with a few exceptions in nineteenth century. Until then all history was for women pre-history “- said Lerner Gerda<sup>1</sup> in her book *Creation of Patriarchy* in 1986.

To a large extent this also holds true for India. Most of the sources of history as elsewhere were created by men, which have reflected their(men’s) point of view. There are a few notable exceptions, of course, like the ‘Therigatha’, but the fact remains that the historical experiences of women have not been recorded by the sources created by men. It was only in the 19th century and particularly in the 20th century some notable women began to pen down their experiences. Even the historiography based on the sources was until recently created by men which contained a strong andocentric bias. In the colonial period women started figuring in the historical writing of men. Altekar<sup>2</sup> was the most important of these writers. They described the position and status of women as granted to them by the men.

Feminist movement helped to raise new questions and challenge the existing historiography on women. A forceful plea was made by Uma Chakravarty<sup>3</sup> for the alternative paradigm for writing women’s history. Women’s history as a field of study has gained acceptance and recognition in the past twenty- five years. It tries to give women their due place in history denied to them by the conventional history. In the past few years historians have tried to reinterpret the sources, especially the literary ones, towards achieving this end. But the problem with the literary sources give us a picture much closer to reality. Epigraphic sources reflect the normative trends and at the same time also highlight a few cases, which represent the deviation from the norm.

Important among the authors writing on ancient Indian Women are Kumkum Roy <sup>4</sup> and K.K. Shah<sup>5</sup>. Kumkum Roy in her article had noted that the number of men and women donors is almost equal, and that the women had a fair

degree of control over their economic resources. K.K. Shah in history book has highlighted the varied possibilities of identity open to women within religious, familial, professional and royal contexts. He has also brought out the dichotomy between the textual provisions and their disregard in actual practice.

For the medieval period we have an article on the women of Tamil Nadu by Leslie Orr<sup>6</sup>. After studying the inscriptions of about one thousand years from 8th century to 17th century she concludes that "If instead of seeking evidence for women's participation in what we regard as key religious roles-priest, ascetic and monk - we are open to seeing that a number of keys can unlock the meaning of religious activity, we will discover that there were other people playing other sorts of roles,.... If we disengage from the assumption that normative texts, authored by the male members of particular religious elite groups, represent what is essential and authoritative for their traditions and for all time, we can begin to draw another type of map that represents religious life as it has existed in real time and space. This map, which has religious patronage at its center, shows that women were far from marginal."

As far as Gujarat is concerned, we have not come across any work relating to women based on epigraphic evidences.

## II

942 A.D. to 1300 A.D., is considered as the most glorious period of the pre-Muslim Gujarat, when the whole of Gujarat came under one rule of Chaulukyas or Solankis for the first time. The rulers encouraged literary and architectural activities. The famous Jaina Acharya Hemachandra was the contemporary of Jaisingh and Kumārapāla. We find fine monuments coming up in this period. Some of them survive to this day. People of Gujarat reached new heights of prosperity.

However, was this period equally glorious from the point of view of the Gender of Gujarat? This paper tries to answer the question by studying the epigraphic sources of this period.

Inscriptional sources have been extensively used to construct the political history of Gujarat. These sources have also been used to study the cultural, ethnographic and geographical aspects of Gujrat. Some of the famous books written on Gujarat using epigraphic sources are - *Archaeology of Gujarat* by H.D.Sankalia? The author has used the epigraphic, archaeological and architectural sources for writing

the cultural, religious and political history of Gujarat. In yet another book H.D.Sankalia<sup>8</sup> has studied the historical geography and cultural ethnography of Gujarat.

The eminent epigraphist H.G.Shastrī<sup>9</sup>, in his book, *A Historical and Cultural Study of the Inscriptions of Gujarat*, says, "But history is now no longer confined to an account of dynasties, rulers and political events. It now extends to all classes of people and covers the various aspects of life and culture." Though this book touches upon political, religious, literary and architectural activities of the people of Gujarat from ancient times upto 1300 A.D., it does not deal with women as a category.

One book on the women of Gujarat is - *Gujaratni Nari* by Ilaben Bhatt<sup>10</sup>. She gives an account of the women's activities from Puranic times to the modern times, but does not use epigraphic sources.

### III

The main aim of this paper is to study the gender relations in Gujarat between 942 A.D. - 1300A.D., focusing on the familial and religious spheres. We would also like to see whether this period was glorious from the point of view of Gender relations and whether religion had any role in deciding the Gender Relations.

Inscriptions of Gujarat have been edited in various books and journals but our paper is based mainly on the inscriptions published in - *Historical Inscriptions of Gujarat* vol 2 and 3, edited by G.V.Acharya<sup>11</sup>. These volumes contain inscriptions not only from the area which is presently known as Gujarat but also from the adjoining areas of Rajasthan and M.P., which were culturally akin to Gujarat and/or were at the point of time ruled over by kings of Gujarat. In our study we have also followed the same pattern.

Gujarati society like the societies in other parts of India, (with a few exceptions) was a patriarchal society. Therefore, the gender relations were governed by the patriarchal norms. The main characteristics of patriarchal society are :

- a) Eldest male is the head of the joint family; he takes decisions and is expected to take care of the other members of the family, both male and female,

- b) Descent is traced through males only,
- c) There is segregation of private and public spheres and private and domestic activities are considered to be women's domain and public activities are regarded as men's job,
- d) Women are dependents throughout their lives,
- e) Women identify themselves by their husband's names or by father's names, if unmarried,
- f) In many patriarchal societies polygamy exists,
- g) Women are considered inherently inferior to men.

In the light of these very general characteristics we will analyze our data and try to find out how flexible the norms of patriarchy were in Gujarat society of the period.

The two main religions of Gujarat of the period of our study were Hinduism and Jainism, particularly the Svētāmbara Jainism. Religious beliefs and practices could be one of the factors shaping gender relations. To see whether this is true in case of Gujarat or not, we have classified all the 152 inscriptions of Vastupāla and Tējapāla(V/T). These were further divided into non V and T Jaina inscriptions and V and T incriptions.

All the above classes of inscriptions have been further analysed in the following manner. Most of the inscriptions are donative in nature. They give us information, amongst other things, about the donor, donee, relatives of the donors and person for whose religious merit the donation has been made.

**Total Number of Inscriptions(century wise)**

| Century | 10th | 11th | 12th | 13th |
|---------|------|------|------|------|
| Jaina   | 2    | 0    | 11   | 54   |
| Hindu   | 11   | 7    | 30   | 37   |
| Total   | 13   | 7    | 41   | 91   |

**Analysis of the inscriptions (Total Number - 152)**

| Categories                              | Hindu   | Non V & T | V & T   |
|---|---------|-----------|---------|
| Total number                            | 85      | 29        | 38      |
| Mention of only men                     | 43(53%) | 11(37%)   | 4(11%)  |
| Mention of men & women                  | 42(47%) | 18(63%)   | 34(89%) |
| As wives                                | 8(9%)   | 7(24%)    | 8(21%)  |
| As mothers                              | 12(14%) | 6(20%)    | 8(21%)  |
| As any other                            | 4(5%)   | 2(6%)     | —       |
| Merit of mother or parents              | 26(3%)  | 6(21%)    | —       |
| Merit of wife                           | —       | 1(3%)     | 11(28%) |
| Merit of any other woman                | 2(2.3%) | —         | 23(60%) |
| Women donors                            | 3(2.5%) | —         | —       |
| Co-donors or any other important matter | 3(3.5%) | 2(7%)     | —       |

From the above analysis the following observations can be made :

- a) Number of women donors is negligible,
- b) In Hindu and Non V and T inscriptions more donations are made for the religious merit of the mother,
- c) The category of women conspicuously absent from the Jaina inscriptions is that of Sādhvis. On the other hand we find one inscription where a Śaiva sādhi is mentioned. She is also mentioned as the *guru* of a Sādhu,
- d) Polygamy is noticed in some of the inscriptions,
- e) V and T inscriptions stand apart from other two classes, in following aspects:
  - i) In these inscriptions is mentioned the number of women as greatest.
  - ii) These donations are not for the merit of their mother.
  - iii) They are for the merit of wives and other relatives, both male and female.
  - iv) Many a times in these inscriptions lineage of the wife's father is given.

## IV

Near absence of women donors from the epigraphic field speaks a lot about the then prevailing social conditions of Gujarat. The women do not seem to have taken part in the socially visible religious activities. Even the co-donors are hard to find. The patriarchal norm of the segregation of private from public as it seems followed to a large extent, in keeping with the dictates of the *smṛiti* commentaries of the period. *smṛiti* commentaries and digests of the period lay down that 'husband and other male relatives must never leave women independent. The wife must be guarded not only against physical but also mental unchastity for the sake of her offspring'<sup>12</sup>. The wife was not looked at as a partner but only as a means for producing children is also reflected in Hemachandrācharya's work on *Dvyāśrayakāvya*<sup>13</sup>. He severely condemns the company of women. In *Trishasṭīśalākapurushacharitra*<sup>14</sup>. he has narrated the biographies of sixty-three great men. All of them, except one Mallinātha, are men, but even here we are told that she got woman's birth because of the sin committed in the previous birth. In almost all of these biographies those qualities of women are appreciated which make her good mother and wife.

On the other hand, the *smṛiti* commentaries of this period indicates a tendency not only to maintain, but also to increase women's right to property. Widow it is emphatically maintained, is entitled to succeed her sonless deceased husband's property, provided she is chaste and the property is divided at the time of his death. <sup>15</sup> If this instruction had been followed in actual practice, then a much greater number of women donors could have been there. But probably the property rights were not given to them in actual practice or even if granted they did not have freedom to disburse their money.

Our analysis reveals that more donations were made for the religious merit of one's parents. This represents the presence of 'filial piety' a character of Indian civilization since the ancient times. Our traditional literature has many instances, which show that motherhood was greatly respected. Especially being mother of a son was what many women desired.

It has been noted that the category of women conspicuously absent from the inscriptions is that of Jaina nuns. This is in spite of the fact that Jainism adopted a liberal attitude towards women, and permitted them to enter the order and seek salvation. Jaina community is a four-fold community consisting of *sādhus*, *sādhvīs*, *śrāvakas* and *śrāvikās*. Of the four, three categories find mention in our inscriptions, except the *sādhvīs*. In fact the *sādhus* find mention in almost all records as the motivators or the consecrators of the images. Of course this does

not mean that the Jaina *sādhvīes* did not form a part of the Jaina community. But perhaps they had a lower status as compared to that of *sādhus*. As P.S. Jain<sup>16</sup> observes - "The Śvētāmbara position on the status of women appears very similar to that of the early Buddhists. Both believe that a women was capable of attaining Arhatship, yet was inferior to a man in the matters of eclectical organization....women's status in the *saṅgha* only reflected her standing in the society."

On the other hand, we find one inscription where Śaiva *sādhavī* finds mention as a *guru* of a *sādhu*. In the very same inscription we also find mentioned of a women donor. The inscription from Abu is of the reign of Bhīmadēva II and dated samvat 1265. The inscription was caused to be incised by Kēdārārāśi, who seems to have been the superior of a śaiva monastery at Ujjain, belonging to the Chāpala or Chapīlya sect and its object was to record his building activities. His sister Mōkēśvarī also built a temple of Śiva<sup>17</sup>. The relevant lines of the inscription are as follows -

*śishyā tasya tapasvinī vijayinī Yōgēśvarī prābhavat || Durvāsar-āsīrē tasyāḥ śishyō Druvāsasā samah | Munīnām sa vabhūvō yadīyā bhaginī sāmītā brahmacharya- parāyaṇa śivaśy-āyatanam raṁyam chakrī Mōkēśvarī bhuvī ||*

H.D. Sankalia<sup>18</sup> commenting on the inscription says that it might be the Pāsupata sect of Ujjain, as the names of the majority of its *āchāryas* ends in *rashi* A women could also become the head of the *maṭha*, as mentions Yōgēśvarī, pupil of Munirāśi and the teacher of Durvāsarāśi.

As is well known that during this period official religion of Gujarat was Śaivism. Whatever might have been the reason, but the inscription is a witness to the fact that at least a few women, may be a microscopic minority made it into the male domain and attained a place for themselves in the society.

There are some other women who are mentioned as important in our inscriptions. Girijādēvī, wife of an official, during the reign of Kumārapāla, had issued an order banning the slaughter of animals on specific days<sup>19</sup>. During the reign of Bhīmadēva II, minister Mehtā Tējapāla's wife (name missing) had donated an idol, and certain sum for the *pūja* of the idol.<sup>20</sup> Queen Udayamatī, wife of Bhīma I, and queen Maynalladēvī, mother of Jayasīmha, have also been credited by other sources as the builders of step wells<sup>21</sup> for the welfare of the people.

We can notice in some inscriptions, the mention of more than one wife. It appears that polygamy was in vogue among the royals and upper ruling classes in Gujarat like elsewhere. This was also sanctioned by the texts of the time.



Yādavaprakāśa, the Lexicographer of this period gives two fold classification of the king's wives and concubines<sup>22</sup>. The married wives comprised of chief queen (Mahishi or Mahādēvī) who has been consecrated, secondly the queen(dēvī) born of royal family, thirdly the honoured lady, fourthly the dearly beloved lady, fifthly the lady who is not the daughter of a king and sixthly the lady who has won in war. Then there were other king's favourites who though not married to him were versed in different fine arts (*gaṇikās*). The category of secondary wives from Vaiśya and Śudra caste for enjoyment were also given.

In our classification of the inscriptions Vastupāla and Tējapāla inscriptions form one group. It has been noted that these inscriptions, are different from the other two classes. Vastupāla and Tējapāla were the ministers of Raṇavīradhavaḷa for nearly twenty years from V.S. 1276 onwards, during the reign of Bhīma II. They were able ministers and great patrons of Jainism. Tējapāla built a magnificent temple at Mt. Abu dedicated to Nēminātha for the religious merit of his first wife Anupamādēvī and son Lāvaṇyasimha in V.S. 1287. The temple was called 'Lunavasahika. The surrounding 'Divakulikas' (small shrines) were contributed by Tējapāla for the religious merit of different members of his family, which included his sisters and other female members of his family." While Tējapāla spent crores of rupees after this temple for first wife Anupamadēvī, he also spent a few lakhs for his second wife Suhadādēvī<sup>23</sup>. Vastupāla also built four temples at Girnar and two for his own religious merit, and one each for his two wives.

In V and T inscriptions wives seem to have become more prominent vis-a-vis mother. Though the motive behind this is very difficult to infer, this could be explained in various ways, may be the wives came from rich and influential families or may be they felt real concern for thier wives. In any case by donating for the religious merit of their wives and other female family members they at least took care of their religious need, of gaining spiritual merit, to some extent.

## V

The purpose of all the above analysis and discussion was to see what kind of relations the men and women of our period had, whether this period, which was a glorious period in many other respects, was also a glorious period from the point of view of Gender Relations and whether religion had any role in deciding the gender relations or not.

Now for a period to be truly glorious from the gender point of view, there has to be a social structure where there is absolute equality among the sexes. Leaving

aside this modern concept of gender equality, which we have not achieved even in this age, and keeping in view the context of our period, we would expect at least a fair degree of flexibility in the system to allow some space for women.

Our inscriptional sources suggest that Gujarat society of our period was, to a great extent, a patriarchal society, where women were financially and otherwise dependent on men and were confined mainly to the domestic activities. Women rarely, if ever, took part in socially visible religious activities, like making donations, etc. Our inscriptions indicate the prevalence of polygamy suggesting that women were looked at as objects of possession. Textual sources corroborate these findings and tell us that women were considered as the obstacles in the spiritual progress of men.

Now if these were the kind of relations between men and women, the period can hardly be called as glorious from the point of view of Gender Relations.

As far as the effect of religion on the Gender Relations is concerned, it seems that the Gender Relations were governed more by the social customs than the religious beliefs.

#### Notes and References:

1. Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy*, New York, OUP, 1986, p.226.
2. A.S. Altekar, *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilization*, 3rd edition Delhi, Motilal Banarasidas, 1962.
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## THIPPIRAMALAI VAṬṬĒḶUTTU INSCRIPTION

Chenthee Natarajan

Thippiramalai is a small village, 2 Kms from Karingal town and 30 Kms from Nagercoil in Kanyakumari District, Tamilnadu. There is a round shaped, conical roofed, tiled shrine of Lord Kṛishṇa. Though it is called as the temple of Kṛishṇa the deity enshrined within is of Lord Vishṇu. It is a 13ft high stone idol of Lord Vishnu in standing posture.

Recently an altar is found submerged under the earth. The earth when cleared revealed a Tamil inscription in *Vaṭṭēḷuttu* script on all sides of its *Ḷapōta* and 3 sides on its *Kumuda-paḍai*. Myself, Mr. Gopalan, the District Archeological Officer, Mr. S. Ramachandran of Chennai Archaeological Museum conducted the field work.

The letters did not receive any damages. They are deep and clear. There are altogether 35 lines.

### Text

1. Svasti śrī Virīchchigattil Viyā-
2. ḷa ninṛa Tulā - nāyaru mudal Tirup-
3. piṛaimalai perunthirukōvi-
4. lk - Karumāṇikkatāḷvā-
5. rkk-iraṇḍu tirunandā-
6. viḷakku seluttuvāṅ kallin mē-
7. l veṭṭiṇapaḍi idiṇu pukattē tiruchchuṛ-
8. ṛil veṭṭikki(ru) nṛa erumai leḷalu i-
9. vanōḍa koṇḍu viṭṭa erumai o-
10. nṛinālu peruṅkuṇḍa-
11. raiyalu tuḍaval-iraṇḍināl-i tankarai pu-

12. rai viḍattanālu kilakkiṅ tachchan maḷai ā-
13. rōṅ - nālu taṅ śatti mugattil paṭṭa purai-
14. viḍaṅṅaḷ-aṅaittu koṅḍu ti-
15. runandāviḷakk-iraṅḍu selu-
16. ttuvadu Vikkiramannukkaṅu tambī māru puki-
17. virai manattālu tirunandāviḷakk-iraṅḍukku ti-
18. ṅṅaḷ tirumaḍaipalliṅil padinnāḷi-
19. chchai ney koṅḍu saṅkirānti va-
20. ḷi nam Vīrainīlarayan ko-
21. ḍuppitu Vikkiramannukkaṅu tambimāru iva-
22. ḡgattār ippunṅā svāmikku dēvarkku vaippi-
23. du ippūmi -
24. viḷakkiraṅḍu mutṭigil mutṭiraṭṭiy aḷappidu i-
25. ppūmiyu pu-
26. rai viḍa taṅ puṅaippa muṭṭi i[va\*] nōruḷagil panniruka-
27. laṅju poṅ teṅḍakki ppuraiviḍatti-
28. Vikkiraman-
29. ṅukkiṅu tambimā-
30. rai voli-
31. ṅa-
32. puraivari-
33. sabaiyō-
34. Svasti śrī Dēvanā-
35. rāyaṅa pratishṭai||

The text runs like this:

Hail! Prosperity! When Jupiter is in Vṛiśchika, from the month of Tulā (of Kollam era) it is agreed to maintain two *perpetual lamps to Tirupiraimalai peruntirukōvil Karumāṇikkattālyār* so engraved already in stone, is now engraved in *prahara*.

For that purpose, along with the Seven buffalos already left with, one more buffalo is added to. With these and with two lands at Perumkuṇḍarai, and other *puraiyiḍams* at the river side, east of Dakṣiṇamalai, the *puraiyiḍams* decreed by the royal order, two perpetual lamps ought to be maintained. Vikramaṇanukkaṇ and his brothers for the perpetual lamps to this donation. Fourteen *nāli* of ghee should be handed over to, on every month on *Sankrān̄thi* day (ie. the first day of Kollam month) by our Vīra Nīlarayaṇ, so authorized by Vikramaṇukkaṇ and his brothers. His '*Vargattār* dedicates the land to Punnāḍusvāmī Thēvar'

If any obstruction happens to this lamp, double the shortage (as penalty) should be given. If any obstruction (for the revenue) from the lands happens twelve *kalañju* of gold should be given as penalty. The lands are tax-free. This agreement is made before *puravari sabhā*<sup>3</sup>.

Hail! Prosperity! The altar is erected by Dēvanārāyaṇaṇ

1. Land with trees yielding.

2. Successors.

3. The committee looking after the temple

1. The deity in the shrine is referred to in the inscription as "Thirupiraimalai Peruntiru Kōvil Karumāṇikkattālyār". At present the place is known as Tippiramalai instead of Tirupiraimalai - that too ought to have been Tirupiranmalāi. *Piraṇ* means lord/god -(Kaṇṇapirāṇ, Kṛiṣṇapirāṇ, Śivapirāṇ) etc.
2. In Tamil *Karu* means the foetus in the womb. The inscripational wording of the name of the god reveals the legend prevalent in the area about the deity.

"Dēvaki, the mother of Kṛiṣṇa was worrying about the fate of her 8th child in her womb at the hands of Kāmsa, her brother. Then the child

Kṛishṇa has shown her his Viśvarūpa (and hence the 13ft, high statue) and pacified her”(which explains why the idol of Lord Vishṇu is referred to as Lord Kṛishṇa by the local people)

The statue of mother Dēvaki(1.5m high) is also found in sitting position at the right hand side of Lord Kṛishṇa.

3. The inscription mentions about one Vikramaṇukkaṇ and his brothers. Vikramaṇukkaṇ might have been a local chieftain or ruler of a small province.
4. Hence by ordinance he allows certain lands for the lamps and made the lands tax-free. He made one Vīra Nīlaraiyaṇ responsible for the supply of fourteen *nāḷi* of ghee on *Saṅkrānti* (day) of every month in Kollam era. Vira Nilayaṇ might have been an army head. Even today a place known as Perunṅaṇḍarai exists at the locality of the temple. There are paddy fields in that place.
5. Donating buffalos to the temple is a unique news in this area. The tradition regarding this kind of donation is worth investigating.
6. The astronomical data are insufficient to fix the date. No mention of Kollam era is in this inscription. But mentioning of the position of Jupiter at the background of constellation and the name of month as ‘Tulā-ñāyaru’ reveals that Kollam era is at the making. The period of the record may be 12th or 13th century A.D.

## PERSIAN INSCRIPTIONS OF NĀMI & HIS ASSOCIATION WITH RAJASTHAN

M. Yaseen Quddusi

Amir Muhammad Masum Nāmi is well known as poet, ambassador, nobleman and scholar of repute and historian under the Mughal emperor Akbar (1558-1605). He was also closely associated with Akbar and accompanied him in various journeys. There are a number of Persian inscriptions of Nami in various parts of India. Being a calligraphist of extra-ordinary calibre, he used to inscribe the text of inscriptions which are still intact on various monuments and buildings. As far as the present state of Rajasthan is concerned, there are about 26 such inscriptions wherein the name of Mir Muhammad Masum Nāmi is preserved. The places are as under :

| <u>S.No.</u> | <u>Place</u>                | <u>Date</u>                    | <u>Content</u>   |
|--------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| 1.           | Bada Bagh<br>Dt. Jaisalmer  | A.H.1008 i.e.<br>1599-1600 A.D | This Persian inscription provides information about the enroute stay of Mir Muhammad Masum Nāmi at this place when he was called back from his Qandhar posting by Akbar. <sup>1</sup>      |
| 2.           | Barambad<br>Dist. Bharatpur | A.H.1007 i.e.<br>1598-99 A.D.  | Rubai (Quatrain) composed by Amir Muhammad Masum of Bakkar by domicile and of Tirmidh (Tirmiz) by origin, with the poetical name Nāmi. Text written by (his son) Mir Buzurg <sup>2</sup> . |
| 3            | Baran<br>Dist. Kota         | A.H.1010 i.e.<br>1601-02 A.D   | Slab contains a Persian couplet composed by Mir Muhammad Masum Nāmi. <sup>3</sup>  |



- |      |                              |                                  |  |
|------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| 4    | Bari Khatu<br>Dist. Nagaur   | A.H.1008 i.e.<br>1599-1600 A.D   | Mir Buzurg (son of) Amir Muhammad Masum describes that he visited the holy tomb (of Magribi Shah) in the company of his father. <sup>4</sup>                           |
| 5    | -do-                         | A.H.1010 i.e.<br>1601-1602 A.D   | Contains information that Akbar deputed Mir Muhammad Masum Bakkari as an ambassador to Iraq (i.e. Iran). <sup>5</sup>  |
| 6&7. | -do-                         | A.H.1013 i.e.<br>1604-05 A.D.    | This inscription describes that Mir Buzurg visited the holy tomb (of Maghribi Shah) with his father Nāmi at the time of his return from Iran. <sup>6-7</sup>           |
| 8.   | Bayana Dist.<br>Bharatpur    | A.H.1010 i.e.<br>1601-02 A.D     | Information regarding Akbar's passing through this place after his conquest of Dakkan and Dandesh (Khandesh). Text composed by Nāmi. <sup>8</sup>                      |
| 9.   | Chaksu<br>Dist. Jaipur       | A.H.1010 i.e.<br>1601-02 A.D     | Rubai (quatrain) composed and inscribed by Nāmi. <sup>9</sup>  |
| 10.  | Harsore<br>Dist. Nagaur      | A.H. 1014 i.e.<br>1605-06 A.D.   | Contains a verse composed and inscribed by Nāmi. <sup>10</sup> .   |
| 11.  | Jaisalmer<br>Dist. Jaisalmer | A.H. 1008 i.e.<br>1599-1600 A.D. | States that Mir. Masum was called back from Qandhar and on his way back, he reached Jaisalmer and also constructed a building in the course of his halt. <sup>11</sup> |
| 12.  | - do -                       | A.H.1010                         | It states that when Mir Masum was deputed on his mission as an ambassador, he visited Jaisalmer and proceeded further on his way to his mission. <sup>12</sup>         |

- |     |                            |                                  |  |
|-----|----------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| 13. | do                         | do                               | This inscription speaks about his halt for ten days on the request of Rawalji in the said year. <sup>13</sup>                                    |
| 14. | do                         | A.H. 1014 i.e.<br>1605-06 A.D.   | Mir. Masum Nāmi constructed a building as a memento on his return in the said year. <sup>14</sup>  |
| 15. | -do-                       | -do-                             | Masum Nāmi entitled Aminul-Mulk constructed a building at Jaisalmer for the convenience and comfort of the public. <sup>15</sup>                 |
| 16. | Ladrova<br>Dist. Jaisalmer | Akbar's period                   | Record damaged. Visit Nāmi. <sup>16</sup>  |
| 17. | Loharpura<br>Dist. Nagaur  | A.H. 1008 i.e.<br>1599-1600 A.D. | Informs that Mir Buzurg visited the tomb ( of Pir Zuhuruddin) in the company of his father Nāmi. <sup>17</sup>                                   |
| 18. | Merta<br>Dist. Nagaur      | A.H. 1014 i.e.<br>1605-06 A.D.   | Three verses composed and inscribed by Nāmi. <sup>18</sup>   |
| 19. | Nagaur<br>Dist. Nagaur     | A.H.1008 i.e.<br>1599-1600 A.D.  | Quatrain composed by Amir Muhd. Masum Nāmi and inscribed by his (son) Mir Buzurg. <sup>19</sup>  |
| 20. | -do-                       | A.H.1008 i.e.<br>1600 A.D.       | Records the saying of Prophet Solomon, inscribed by Mir Buzurg s/o Nami of Bakkar of Tirmidh by origin and al-Husaini in pedigree. <sup>20</sup> |
| 21. | -do-                       | -do-                             | States that Mir Buzurg visited the tomb with Nāmi (his father). Quatrain composed by Nāmi and inscribed by Mir Buzurg. <sup>21</sup>             |

|     |                           |                                |  |
|-----|---------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| 22. | -do-                      | A.H.1010 i.e.<br>1601-02 A.D.  | Two verses composed by Nāmi who also inscribed the same. It also states that Akbar after the conquest of Dakkan, sent him on mission to Iraq (Iran). <sup>22</sup> |
| 23. | -do-                      | -do-                           | States that Akbar despatched Nāmi to Iraq (Iran) on mission. <sup>23</sup>   |
| 24. | -do-                      | A.H. 1013 i.e.<br>1604-05 A.D. | Couplet composed and inscribed by Nāmi on his return from the mission of Iran. <sup>24</sup>   |
| 25. | Naraina<br>Dist. Nagaur   | A.H. 1014<br>i.e. 1605 A.D.    | Verses comosed and written by Nāmi. <sup>25</sup>  |
| 26. | Parbatsur<br>Dist. Nagaur | A.H. 1013<br>i.e. 1604-05 A.D. | Persian couplet composed by Nami and states that he reached here on his way back from his ambassadorial assignment to Iraq (Iran). <sup>26</sup>                   |

In the light of the above Persian inscriptions from Rajasthan, Mir Muhammad Masum Nāmi emerges as very close to Rajasthan and its places. The other silent aspect or features would not be out of place that he was selected to go to Iran by emperor Akbar. The inscriptions are related to it, but the other documents or archival sources are also at our disposal. It is found that a royal letter from Akbar was handed over to him. It is found that a royal letter from Akbar was handed over to him. It was issued from Agra. It is dated Rajab 12, 1012 Hijri i.e. 1603 A.D., December. It was addressed to Shah Abbas I of Iran. In this letter the conquest of Dakkan or Khandesh is referred to and the letter bearer i.e. Mir Muhammad Masum Nāmi has been highlighted as one of the most eminent Sayyids of this country i.e. India. In course of time, he passed through Rajasthan and after submission of the royal letter and meeting with the Iranian ruler, he came back again via Rajasthan in the light of epigraphical evidences. The archival material, the reply of Shah Abbas of Iran to Mughal emperor Akbar is dated Dhulgada 1013 i.e. March-April 1605 A.D. Thus he was on the royal mission from Dec., 1603 A.D. to March-April 1605 A.D excluding the journey days from Agra to Iran and Iran to India.<sup>27</sup>

As far as visit to Rajasthan is concerned, Mir Muhammad Masum Nāmi and his son Mir Buzurg are mentioned in the epigraphs found at Merta, Nagaur, Bari Khatu Parbatsar, Jaisalmer, Lodrova, Bada Bagh and Naraina etc. Either it was their visit to the shrines of the saints to pay their respect and offer 'Fatiha' or in the form official journey when assigned and deputed for the specific purpose. It is also to be noted that he had visited some old site and remarkable places like Naraina where a large Mustafasar i.e. tank was built by the Khanzadas of Nagaur in 1437 A.D. This walled tank with ghats and chatris is still intact. Tripolia gate is also in it. Here Mir Masum Nāmi has inscribed his verses in A.H.1014 i.e. 1605 A.D. in memory of his visit to this place.

The conquest of the kingdom of Khandesh of the Faruqi rulers was very significant development of Akbar after the annexation of Berar or Vidarbha. Akbar himself had come to Burhanpur and when the Asirgarh fort fell to Mughals, thus began the rule of Akbar in 1601 A.D. Mir Masum Nāmi was also with the Mughals and the victory was epigraphically documented on stones. It is at Asirgarh, Burhanpur and at other places from where Akbar's royal journey was enrouted. Mir Masum did the job of scribing the victory of Khandesh. It is also found at Bayana too.

نامی کما چشم بصیرت در باب بنیاد زمانه بنحو نقشی است بر آب  
 باتو کویم که حاصل دنیا چشم بیدار کن یکنه ان باقی همه و  
 بتاریخ شسته در خدمت نواسه امیر محمد معصوم نامی بزمارت این مجاز  
 ۱۰۰۸ هجری

Another inscription from the same town dated 1010 H.

دیو جان بر نظر دیو و دراز چشم  
 ناتو بدیده مهر و وفا بر نیست  
 نامی لاشده ایو پیدوار و در  
 بعد از فتح کن چشم را جلایه را با عراقل خمس فرمود و در

Another inscription from the same locality dated 1013 H.

درین برجفت از ایران در زمانت زاب امیر محمد معصوم نامی  
 باینجا رسید و این چند بیت از خدایگان که درینو لا با تمام رسانیده  
 او دند خرد و دور  
 بحر زردا شد کاسه کز  
 حدیث لالین سر چشمش  
 بگو چنان گلستان شدم  
 جینست دریم زنده او  
 هست نامت اندامی  
 نامی از جو و تو یاید  
 شده بر این جور لب کوش  
 سراپا و اردمان شدم  
 خولی کل فریده او  
 بتوا غار و اشامی

Rawaljiu or ji is also referred to by Mir Masum Nāmi in Jaisalmer inscription. Specifically, it is stated that Nāmi had halted or encamped for ten days at that place on the request of Rawalji. It, thus speaks about his personal relation with the chiefs of Rajasthan and Mughals.

Nāmi being a poet, had full opportunity and discretion to cite his own composed verses and quatrains in the epigraphical works or activities alongwith the events, journeys, halts or achievements. He fully utilised the occasion without any hesitation or objection from any one including the ruler. Being a calligrapher, he himself adorned the stones with epigraphs. Apart from all these aspects, the places of his selection for inscriptional display and highlight the events and achievements, are the public places where the residents or other visitors used to go. It served the very purpose of the record. In those days, epigraphs communicated and highlighted the state of affairs to the masses.

Mir Muhammad Masum Nāmi and his family remained in prominence and enjoyed the confidence of the people in the social life. They had respectable status in the govt. For such details, the scholars and academicians may consult the available sources.<sup>28</sup>

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## TWO BRĀHMĪ INSCRIPTIONS FROM ĀNDHRA

K.Munirathnam

The survey of Krishna and Guntur Districts has yielded a number of Prakrit inscriptions in Brāhmī characters. Of these, the Prakrit inscriptions from Allūru<sup>1</sup> in the Nandigama taluk of Krishna district and Takkellapāḍu<sup>2</sup> (now preserved in Guntur Museum) in the Guntur taluk and district are of interest. Both these inscriptions are found engraved on two different pillars in respective places mentioned above. A detailed examination of these two records, reveals that their text are one and the same. The inscription from Allūru is noticed in the *Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy* for the year 1924 under C 331. The Takkellapāḍu inscription has been copied recently and the same has been included in the *Annual Report* for the year 2002-03. A comparison of the text of these two records reveals that, the first line seen in the Allūru inscription is not seen in the Takkellapāḍu inscription for the simple reason that the latter has been damaged. Both the inscriptions are fragmentary because the beginning and the end of these two are lost. Palaeographically both the records may be assigned to the early 2nd century A.D. The characters resemble with those of Nasik inscription of Gautamīputra Śātakarṇi<sup>3</sup> and Yajña Śrī Śātakarṇi<sup>4</sup>. Both these inscriptions are undated ones and do not mention the king in the text portion of the records. The object of the inscriptions is to register a number of gifts in the shape of land, money, vessels, cows etc., by certain, *mahātalavaras* alongwith his wife, son and grand daughter. The gifts are donated to the students of Buddhism (*nikāya or nigāya*) of the *purvaseliya*, a sect of Buddhist monks of *Ariya-saṅga*. The inscription gives the details of the extent of lands at different places belonging to different territorial divisions. The record also registers a gift to a certain *vihāra*, the name of which is lost, and refers to a tank attached to the *vihāra*, the exact portion of which reads *Kheta-saras*, probably denoting Sanskrit expression *Kshētra-saras*.

This inscription is interesting from the following points of view, namely, schools of Buddhism, the ancient boundaries and the ancient coinage. While referring to the boundaries of land grant, the expression *simā* (*Skt., sīmā*) does not mean any territorial division as seen in the later times. Here it either signifies the boundaries of the village or the land boundaries. The two *sīmās* namely *pāpikala-sīmā*, *Ra.rapura Sīmā* may be mentioned here. The place Pāpikala has been identified by

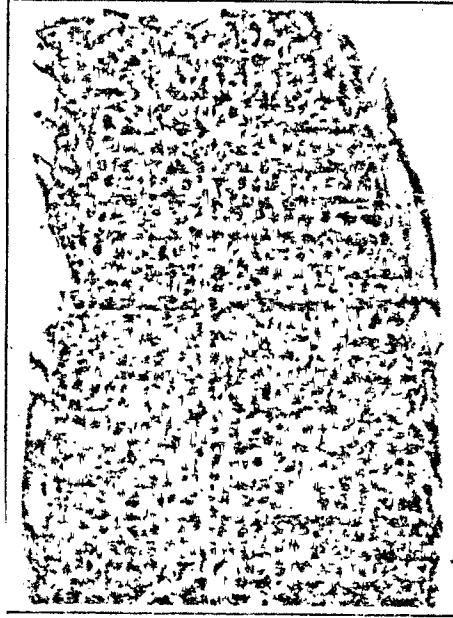


scholars with Prākerla or Pākerla in the Gudivada taluk of the Krishna district. While referring to this boundary, a tank called *Kheta-saras* is mentioned. This tank probably existed at a place called *Vetarakuda*, the exact identity of which is not known. The expression *Atalagiri* seems to refer to a hill of historic times. This hill may be compared with the other *giri* ending names like Puphagiri i.e., Pushpagiri, Dhāmmagiri<sup>5</sup>, Devagiri, etc. It is generally known from the early inscriptions that in these sites the buddhist monastery existed. For instance, Chula-Dhāmmagiri<sup>6</sup> was known as the site of a monastery where the Bōdisiri founded the *chaitya-griha*. It is quite likely that at *Ataragiri* a monastery attached to a *vihāra* should have existed during the 2nd cent.A.D. This is indirectly confirmed by the reference to the *parichāarakas* attached to the monastery, the *parichārikas* who are in service in the above monastry attached to the *vihāra*. The expression *parichārikas* indicates the servants (attendants) who render services to the Buddhist monks. The expression *lohiya* seems to indicate a metal worker, who has been employed to prepare the vessels mentioned to have been donated. The earliest reference to the coins i.e., *Kahāpaṇa* and *puraṇa* is available from the present inscriptions. The expression *Kahāpaṇa* indicated the gold coin which is mentioned as *Karśapaṇa*<sup>7</sup> in several inscriptions. In ancient period the *Karśapaṇas* were meant to indicate the copper coins. Also, we hear from the codified laws of Manu and Yajñavalkya, that, the fines imposed by the rulers were paid in terms of *Karśapaṇas*. Since the record under discussion, in which *Karśapaṇa* is referred to, has been assigned to Sātavāhana period, parallel evidence for its useage can be drawn from Nasik inscription of Nahapāṇa<sup>8</sup>. It is not known whether the Kahapāṇa referred to in this record was intended for purchasing the vessels for donation to the kitchen. Another coin, *puraṇa* may be a reference to the *punch-marked* coins that were issued in the early period. These coins were the earliest type of coins known to us from the South Indian Coinage.

#### Text

1. ... mo vihāro deyadhama paricha ...
2. ... [ni]gala simāya vetarakuḍho na ...
3. ... Khetasarasa pāpikala sīmāya ...
4. ... nivatanāni rājadatini charaṭhe machha ...
5. ... [pa]da sīmāya baṁtisa nivatanāni Rā

6. ... rapura sīmāya chatuvisa nivatanāni
7. ... lasa gāvina pachasatāni choyāṭhi baliva
8. ... kaḍāni pesa rupāni dāsi dāsasa chatā[sa]
9. .. bhi Kaḍāhasa chatari lohiyābe kaḍāhāni ka[sa]
10. .. [Sa]bhāyanāni chatari Vadalābhīkaro karoḍiyo ..
11. ... ka divikāyo cha Ataragiriy - apicha pāke taḷā ..
12. .. Kahāpanāna cha puranaṁ sahasaṁ akhayana ..
13. .. esa mahātalavarasa deyadhama parichāko .
14. .. ātape [u]tarapase bāpana nivatanā ...
15. .. etasa bhariyasa saputakasa sanatukasa ..
16. .. Ayirāna puvaseliyāna nigāyasa ..



Takkellapāḍu Brāhmī Inscription.

**Notes and References**

1. *Buddhist Inscriptions of Andhradesa; A.R.Ep.*, 1924. C. 331
2. Under compilation in *A.R.Ep.*, 2002-03
3. *Ep.Ind.*, Vol. VIII, p. 73
4. *Ibid.*, p. 93
5. *Ibid.*, p. 35
6. *Ibid.*, p. 23
7. P.L. Gupta, *Punch-marked Coins*
8. *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. VIII, pp. 78 ff., and plate

## ANCESTRY OF THE CHALUKYA PRINCES OF THE KAIRA GRANT OF VIJAYARĀJA

H.S. Thosar

More than a century has passed after the discovery of the Kaira grant of Chalukya Vijayarāja, but so far no ultimate opinion about the ancestry of the Chalukya princes mentioned in this grant has come out so far.<sup>1</sup> The charter under discussion mentions three generations of princes of the Chalukya family i.e. Vijayarāja, the issuer of the grant, his father Buddhavarman and the latter's father Jayasimha. The inscription is dated 394, which has been equated with all the three prominent eras of ancient India i.e., the Śaka era, the Chedi-Kalachuri era and the Gupta or the Valabhi era by different scholars. According to these equations, it gives three different dates namely 472 A.D., 643 A.D. and 713 A.D.<sup>2</sup>

J.F. Fleet, who was the first editor of this charter initially equated its date with the Śaka era and took it as equivalent to 472 A.D. On the basis of this date, Fleet suggested the identification of Chalukya Jayasimha of the Kaira grant, the grandfather of Vijayarāja with Chalukya Jayasimha I, the progenitor of the Chalukya house of Vātāpi and the grandfather of Pulakēśi I. However subsequently Fleet himself abandoned this equation as it did not help to settle the ancestry of the other princes of this grant. He, therefore, suggested the equation of Jayasimha of the Kaira grant with Dhārāśraya Jayasimha I, the brother of Pulakēśi II known from the Nirpan or Nandgaon plates<sup>3</sup>. This equation also did not hold ground because most of the epigraphists declared the Nirpan grant as a spurious document. Ultimately Fleet tried to equate Jayasimha with Dhārāśraya Jayasimha II who was the brother of Vikramāditya I as per the Nasik and Nausari plates of the south Gujarat branch of the Chalukyas. This contention also did not receive the approval of scholars because it was chronologically impossible.

Pt. Bhagavanlal Indrajī equated the date of the Kaira grant with the Gupta or Valabhi era, which gave 713 A.D., as the date of Vijayarāja.<sup>4</sup> Since the southern part of Gujarat was already being ruled over by a branch of the Chalukyas of Bādāmi, this equation should have been accepted. But the fervor of the Chedi-Kalachuri era was so high in those days that it did not allow to prevail upon the opinion of Pt. Bhagavanlal and consequently the ancestry of the princes of the Kaira grant remained unsettled even to this date.

K.V. Ramesh seems to have accepted the first equation of Jayasimha with the grandfather of Pulekēsi I as suggested by Fleet, but he has not clarified as to the ancestry of identity of the remaining two members of this branch i.e., Buddhavarman and Vijayarāja.<sup>5</sup> So the dispute is still alive and needs a logical solution. The present writer, therefore, subscribes to the contention of Bhagvanlal Indrajī and takes 713 A.D. as the date of the issue of the Kaira grant on the following grounds:

1. The insistence of equating most of the dates of inscriptions from the Deccan and Gujarat with the so-called Chedi-Kalachuri era has already done a considerable harm to the reconstruction of the ancient history of this region. Therefore let us not commit the same mistake again of equating the date of the Kaira grant with the Chedi-Kalachuri era. This issue has remained still unsettled because of this equation.<sup>6</sup>
2. Since the Kaira grant comes from northern Gujarat, it would be logical to equate its date with the Gupta era because there are inscriptions from this area in which Gupta era was adopted. The Hilol plates dated 470 is one of the examples.<sup>7</sup>
3. If the date of this inscription is equated with the Gupta or the Valabhi era, it falls in 713 A.D. During this period the descendants of Dhārāśraya Jayasimha II were ruling over southern Gujarat with Nausari as their royal seat.<sup>8</sup> So the existence of another Chālukya family in the Kheda district of northern Gujarat was historically justified.

On the basis of these evidences, it can well be presumed that Vijayarāja of the Kaira grant was governing central and northern Gujarat with Kheda as his headquarters during the first quarter of the 8th Century A.D., and he had probably inherited this position from his grandfather Jayasimha through his father Buddhavarman. Vijayapura from which place the Kaira grant was issued by Vijayarāja has not yet been identified. It may be the other name of Kheda given to it by Vijayarāja himself as the Modha chief Vijjala had done in the case of Sanjan and renamed it as Vijayapura after his own name as per his Chinchani grant.<sup>9</sup>

As far as the identity of Jayasimha, the grandfather of Vijayarāja is concerned, the present writer subscribes to the second equation suggested by Fleet according

to which he was identified with Dhārāśraya Jayasimha I, who describes himself as the brother of Pulakēśi II and the father of Nāgavardhana in the Nirpan or Nandgaon plates.<sup>10</sup> This equation of Fleet could not hold any ground because of the discovery of the Nasik charter of Vikramāditya I dated 685 A.D. This inscription introduced another Dhārāśraya Jayasimha who styled himself as the son of Pulakēśi II and brother of Vikramāditya I.<sup>11</sup> Inscriptions from Koṅkan and South Gujarat further confirmed the historicity of not only Dhārāśraya Jayasimha II, but of his family which founded a separate branch kingdom in North Koṅkan and South Gujarat and hence his namesake of the Nirpan or Nandgaon plates was treated as a fake person.

Two years back the present writer wrote an article on the historicity of Dhārāśraya Jayasimha I and his son Nāgavardhana and tried to establish the existence of both the Dhārāśraya Jayasimhas.<sup>12</sup> The equation of Jayasimha, the grandfather of Vijayarāja of the Kaira grant with Jayasimha I of the Nirpan plates as suggested by the present writer in his article quoted above further substantiates this contention and also helps to settle the ancestry not only of Vijayarāja but both of his ancestors. In my article referred to above, I have shown that Dhārāśraya Jayasimha I of the Nirpan plates and his son Nāgavardhana were historical persons. It was further established that Nāgavardhana of the Nirpan plates was identical with Chandrāditya, the brother of Vikramāditya I as per the Unchhavṛitti grant. Because of this a new fact came to light that, Chandrāditya-Nāgavardhana was not the real brother of Vikramāditya I, but a cousin as he was the son of Pulakēśi's brother Dhārāśraya Jayasimha I of the Nirpan plates. As we have equated Jayasimha of the Nirpan plates with the grandfather of Vijayarāja of the Kaira plates, it reveals another historical secret that besides Nāgavardhana- Chandrāditya, Dhārāśraya Jayasimha I of the Nirpan plates had another son named Buddhavarman who was the father of Vijayarāja of the Kaira grant.

In the light of these evidences the present writer further feels that Jayasimha's son and Vijayarāja's father Buddhavarman might have been named after Buddhavarsha of the Sanjan plates,<sup>13</sup> because the latter claims to have been the brother of Pulakēśi II (Satyāśrayānuja) and the uncle of Vikramāditya I (*Vikramāditya-pitravyah*). On this basis Buddhavarsha of the Sanjan plates will have to be treated as the brother of Dhārāśraya Jaysimha I of the Nirpan plates and the uncle of his two sons Nāgavardhana - Chandrāditya of the Nirpan plates

and Buddhavarman of the Kaira grant. Through this relationship, we come to know a totally new fact about the dynastical history of the Chalukyas, that Jayasimha I of the Nirpan plates was also the founder of a branch of the Chalukyas and Nāgavardhana - Chandrāditya and Buddhavarman were the brothers of each other.

Because of the irregularities, Sten Konow, the editor of the Sanjan grant of Buddhavarsha was initially about to declare this grant as a forged document. But he was reminded of another Chalukya prince with the name Buddhavarsha who figures as a subordinate of Rāshtrakūṭa Gōvinda III mentioned in his Torkhede plates dated 812 A.D. As a result of this, he anticipated some sort of relationship between these two princes and hence although he continued to have his doubt about the genuineness of the Sanjan copper-plate, but so far the historicity of Buddhavarsha of this grant is concerned, he remarked, "I am thus inclined to think that the older Buddhavarsha is no fiction."

Chalukya Buddhavarsha of the Sanjan plates was probably one of the lieutenants of Pulakēśi II during the course of his expedition to North Koṅkaṇ and the conquest of Puri. The Sanjan plates mention 'Anāṅśraya' as the epithet of Buddhavarsha. He claims to have conquered the terrible four-tusked elephants of the lord of the 'Gaṇa of Achchatāyana' or 'Natyana'. Sten Konow has expressed his inability to explain the term 'Gaṇa of Achchatāyana'. The present writer however feels that the term 'Gaṇa' must either be indicating a confederation of the enemies of Buddhavarsha in which Achchatāyana or Achyuta was the chief. Alternatively '*gaṇa*' may also have been the suffix of the personal name Achyuta like the name Saṅkaragaṇa. Since the expedition was directed against the Mauryas of Koṅkaṇ, Achyutagaṇa may have been the last Maurya king humbled by Pulakēśi II and Buddhavarsha. The Aihole inscription states that hundreds of warships had to be employed for the conquest of Puri. As the Sanjan plates were issued from Pinukanagara (Pen in Raigad district) it was probably the main base of the Chalukya army during this expedition.

Following the conquest of Puri and extinction of the rule of the Mauryas of Koṅkaṇ, Pulakēśi II probably appointed Buddhavarsha of the Sanjan plates as the first governor of North Koṅkaṇ. His brother Dhārāśraya Jayasimha I of the Nirpan plates had already been nominated as the administrator of the Nasik region where he was succeeded by his elder son Nāgavardhana as per

the Nirpan plates. Buddhavarsha of the Sanjan plates seems to have continued to hold his position prior to the appointment of Dhārāśraya Jayasimha II. At the beginning of the reign of Vikramāditya I, Buddhavarsha seems to have died because after this period nothing is heard about him. Buddhavarsha's appointment as the first Chalukya governor of North Koṅkaṇ is further confirmed by some recently discovered coins on the island of Elephanta near Mumbai, which represents Puri, the royal seat of the Mauryas. On these coins only the epithet of Buddhavarsha namesly 'Anaṅgāśraya' has been engraved.<sup>14</sup> These coins thus confirm that Anaṅgāśraya was the epithet of Buddhavarsha and the historicity of this Chalukya prince (about which Sten Konow had doubt) was also thus corroborated both by epigraphic as well as numismatic evidences.

It seems that Buddhavarsha of the Sanjan plates died sometime before 670 A.D., following which Vikramāditya appointed the sons of Dhārāśraya Jayasimha II as the governors of North Koṅkaṇ and Gujarat.<sup>15</sup> At the sametime Nāgavardhana was probably shifted to South Koṅkaṇ as known from the Kochre and Nerur grants of his queen Vijayabhaṭṭārikā.<sup>16</sup> Jayasimha's another son and the brother of Nāgavardhana i.e., Buddhavarman was also probably transferred by Vikramāditya to central Gujarat where his son Vijayarāja inherited his position. It is also possible that Dhārāśraya Jayasimha I was present in the battle between Pulakēśi II and Harshavardhana and following his victory, Pulakēśi kept his trusted brother in northern Gujarat and rewarded the latter's elder son Nāgavardhana - Chandrāditya with the administration of the Nasik region as known from his Nirpan grant. In this way through this discussion we come across, the existence of another subordinate kingdom of the Chalukyas of Bādāmi in northern and central Gujarat. This was probably founded initially to check the aggression from any north Indian power and subsequently was continued to check incursions in Gujarat and Khandesh. An inscription of the Gurjara king Jayabhaṭa III from Anjaneri in Nasik district reveals that in the year 710, the Gurjaras had occupied the northern part of Dhule district of the Chalukya kingdom and gifted the village Toranaka, which is identified with Toranmal near Nanadurbar.<sup>17</sup>

The present discussion further sheds a new light on an important historical event concerning the history of the Chalukyas of Bādāmi and the imperial Rāshtrakūṭas. It is thei *Svayamvara* of the Chalukya princess Bhavanāgā performed at Khetaka (Kaira or Kheda, a district headquarter in northern

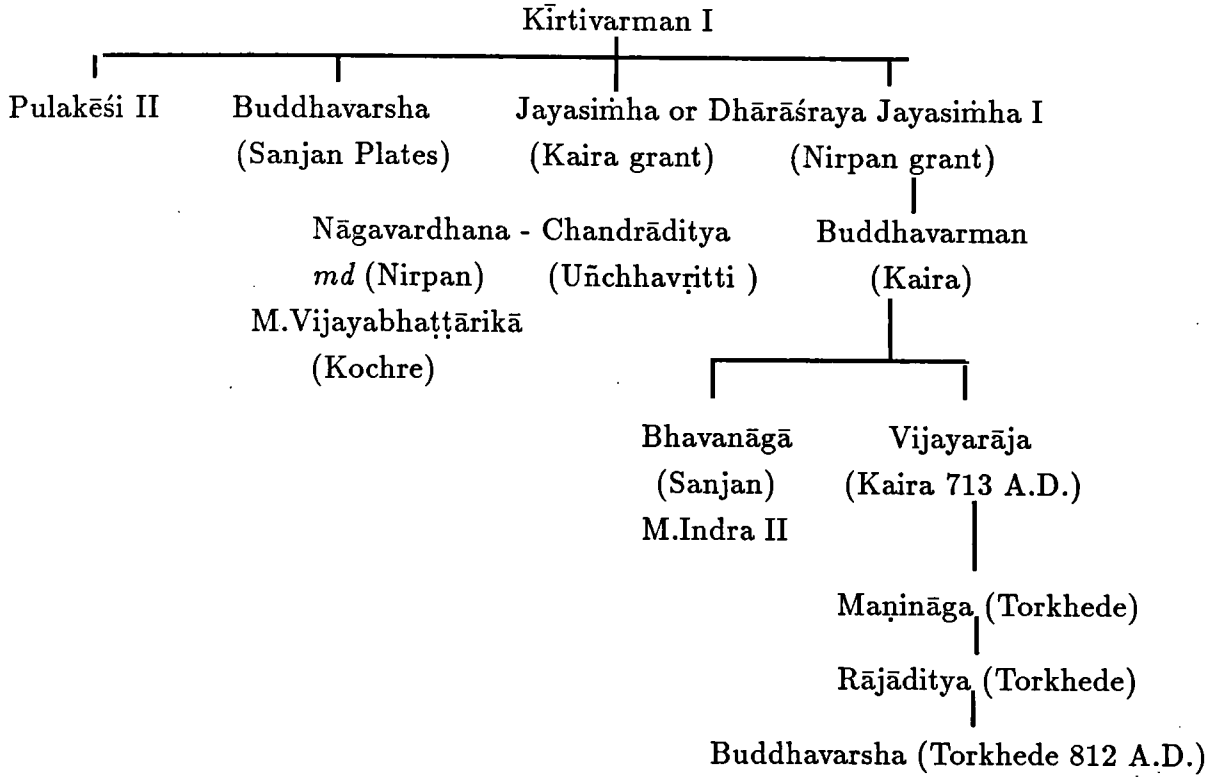


Gujarat and the provenance of the copper-plate of Vijayarāja under study.) as mentioned in the Sanjan plates of Amōghavarsha I.<sup>18</sup> According to this incscription, Bhavanāga was kidnapped by Dantidurga's father Indra II who married her through the Rākshasa form. Uptil now Bhavanāgā was supposed to be a princess of the family of Dhārāśraya Jayasimha II; most probably the daughter of Jayāśraya Maṅgalarasa whose brothers were governing the Nausari region in south Gujarat. However the exact identity of the father of Bhavanāgā was still uncertain and there was also no answer to the question as to why the *Svayamvara* was performed at Khetaka Mandapa instead of Nausari. Now we got a correct explanation of the above question that Bhavanāgā belonged to this branch of the Chalukyas, which had Khetaka as its royal seat. This inference is further substantiated by her name Bhavanāgā. There are atleast two princes in the Khetaka branch of the Chalukyas with 'nāga' as their name content as will be seen in the genealogy. As per this new equation and the probable dates of the princes of the Kaira grant, it seems that Bhavanāgā was the daughter of Buddhavarman and the sister of Vijayarāja.

The Chalukya rule over Gujarat came to an end at about 740 A.D. and the Rāshtrakūṭas became the sovereigns of the Deccan. It seems that the descendants of Vijayarāja of the Kaira grant accepted subordinate position in the Rāshtrakūṭa empire. This is known from the Torkhede copper-plate grant of Rāshtrakūṭa Gōvinda III dated 812 A.D.<sup>19</sup> This grant was issued by *Mahāsāmanta* Buddhavarsha of the Śalukika family with the consent of his overlord and gifted the village Govatṭaṇa (Gaothane near Torkhede in the Shahada taluka of Dhule district of Maharashtra). This area was governed by Buddhavarsha from Serkhi near Vadodara in Gujarat. He gives his genealogy in the following order.

Buddhavarsha - Rājāditya - Maṇināga

Sten Konow had expressed his opinion that this Buddhavarsha must have some sort of relation with Chalukya Buddhavarsha of Sanjan grant.<sup>20</sup> We have already stated above that Buddhavarsha of Sanjan plates was the paternal uncle of Buddhavarman of the Kaira grant and the latter was probably the grandfather of Buddhavarsha of the Torkhede grant. In this way the ancestry of all the princes of the Kaira and Torkhede grants as well as the Sanjan plates can be finalised. Following is the genealogical table of this branch and its relationship with the main branch of the Chalukyas of Bādāmi.



Names in bracket indicate the inscriptional sources.

### Notes and References :

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3. *JBBRAS*, Vol. II, pp. 4-12, Vol. XIV, p. 16, *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XIX, pp. 123-125
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12. H.S.Thosar, *SIE*, *op.cit.*
13. Sten Konow, *Ep.Ind.*, Vol. XIV, pp.144-152
14. These coins are still unpublished and are in the possession of Shri. Virendra Padte, Coin collector from Elephanta.
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16. (a) Jacob, *JBBRAS.*, Vol.III, Part II, p.211  
(b) J.F. Fleet, *I.A.*, 1879, Vol.VIII, pp.44-47  
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17. (a) Vatsa and Diskalkar, *Ep.Ind.*, 1939-40, Vol.XXV, pp.292-296,  
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## DUBARĀṆĪ STONE SLAB INSCRIPTION OF VASUNDHARAVARMAN : A STUDY

Dharmeswar Chutia

The Doyang-Dhansiri valley in the Golaghat District of Assam in the south-south-east region of the State, has, in recent times, come to limelight in the archaeological map of Assam. Several archaeological sites with invaluable relics of antiquarian importance have been unearthed in the region, more particularly in the Borpathar-Sarupathar area of the district.

Encased between the Mikir hills in the north-north-west and the Naga hills in the south-south-east, Barpathar-Sarupathar region is an alluvial plain, spreading over, and touching the foot-hills in both ends, while the N.F. Railway line passes across. The recent archaeological explorations, including trench digging conducted by a team of explorers from Dibrugarh University as well as by the Department of Archaeology, Assam, reveal that the valley is very rich archaeologically as is evident by the recovery of large tanks, well-fortified habitational sites surrounded by high ramparts and spreading ditches, brick structures including plinths of buildings, watch towers of varied forms, besides a large number of artifacts, sculptures, icons of brahmanical deities of varied details and epigraphic evidences, tracing back atleast to the fourth-fifth century A.D., if not earlier.

The following three are the most important among such archaeological sites from the region:

1) Ālichigā-Teṅgāni:

This site in Borpathar is located in a reserved forest area, skirted by the river Dhansiri (Dhanaśrī).

According to reports,<sup>1</sup> the ruins of two fortified habitation sites are noticed in the (Ālichigā)-Teṅgāni area. The bigger of the two, locally called Rājābārī (lit. royal residential site) covering about 100 *bighas* (approx. 33 acres) of land area, is surrounded by ramparts (*prākāra*) and water ditches (*parikhā*) about 30mt. wide with a square ground plan. A reinforced brick boundary wall is also noticed in the north-south alignment. A row of earthen mounds of equal height is found

*in situ*; these are presumed to be watch towers. A sufficiently wide passage to the site and a canal connecting ditches with the nearby Dhansiri river are also found *in situ*. At the centre of the fortified compound, there exists structural remains of the plinth of palatial building, may be that of the royal palace.

- 2) The Second Fortified Site at Ālichigā-Teṅgāni: This site is located at a little distance outside the walled Rājābāri compound and to its north-east.

According to reports<sup>2</sup> it is also surrounded by square ditches *parikhā*, measuring about 60mt x 60mt. The elevated platform is connected to the southern bank of the Dhansiri river by a passage, besides a canal connecting the ditches to the river nearby. There is a heap of brickbats in one of its corners which appears to be the ruins of a large brick structure, most probably a temple dedicated either to Viṣṇu (Vāsudēva) or Sūrya,<sup>3</sup> or any of the important brahmanical deities. It is worth-mentioning that a mud-stone slab (79cm x 43cm x 13cm) bearing an inscription, which may be ascribed to about 4th-5th century A.D. on palaeographic ground, has been recovered from this site not long ago;<sup>4</sup> it was a chance surface find recovered from the brick debris of the same site. A small terracotta seal, also a chance surface find, was collected from the same locality. The seal was collected by H.N. Datta, an officer in the Department of Archaeology, Assam, and was studied.<sup>5</sup>

- 3) Dubarāni:

This site is situated about 5 km south-west of (Ālichigā)-Teṅgāni site, described above.

P.C. Saikia,<sup>6</sup> one of the early explorers of this site, reported : “An extensive area of Dubarāni, measuring about 40 *bighas* of land, is said to have been surrounded by a badly damaged brick wall. Traces of outer ruined high ramparts extending from east to west are to be seen. There are two tanks measuring about 1 *bigha* and 2 *kathas*, respectively, in the south-east and outside the inner wall of the ruined habitation site.” This fortified area is also locally known as Rājābāri, the site of royal residence. The explorers by digging trenches, it is reported, have recovered from a depth of 120cm., some chiselled stone pieces, containing ‘Brāhmī letters engraved there on. These letters are identified as *a*(अ), *ā* (आ), *i*(इ), *ga* (ग), *ja*(ज), *va*(व), *ma*(म), *ya*(य) and *ra*(र), besides two parallel strokes representing either the numerical figure (2) or a double stop.<sup>7</sup>

## II

From this Dubarāṇi-site a one-line record engraved on a black-stone slab has been recovered very recently. According to reports the slab was recovered by two gentlemen, namely Shri Phani Debnath and Shri Pratap Debnath of the village Dubarāṇi, while digging a pit in their residential compound on October 27, 1997. The information of the chance find reached Dr. H. N. Dutta, the inquisitive young Exploration Officer of the Department of Archaeology, Assam, who, with the help of some local gentlemen, could manage to recover the inscribed slab on October 21, 1997.<sup>8</sup>

The record under study is incised on a smoothly chiselled flat surface of the stone slab. It is engraved on the upper part of the slab, about 2 cm inside below the upper ridge. The characters are very nicely executed-the lines being deep and clear, and well preserved (see Plate). The script employed belongs to the eastern variety of the Brāhmī alphabet of the final phase, i.e. the one widely employed in the imperial Gupta records (c 4th- 6th cen. A.D.). The letters, with wedge-type triangle head-mark are written in the same style, popularly called Kauśāmbi style, and is akin to those of the now famous Nagājari-Khanikargaon fragmentary stone inscription,<sup>9</sup> recovered from the Sarupather area, not far away from the present Dubarāṇi site. Subject to individual taste, skill and style of the engraver, as well as the surface of the medium and the tool employed, palaeography of the record is verbatim similar to that of the Nagājari- Khanikargaon fragmentary stone inscription. In the circumstances, the present record may be assigned to the period c. 4th-5th cent. A.D.

The language of the record is Sanskrit written in classical prose. Written in a style, popularly called Kauśāmbi style with wedge-type angle head-mark as visible in the Allahabad *praśasti* and others, the palaeography of the record, as stated before, is akin more particularly to that of the Nagājari-Khanikargaon stone inscription and the Umāchal Rock inscription. However, in respect of certain individual letters, older forms may also be noticed. For instance, the initial *a*(अ), in the word *akshaya*(अक्षय), is of the old curved type of Mathura style with its left upper stroke coming downwards with a slight slant to meet the vertical in the right, while the lower stroke maintains its curved form with the lower lip coming down with an inward turn.<sup>10</sup> The initial *ya* (य) as again in

*akshaya* (अक्षय) maintains its old tripartite form of Mathura variety with a loop in the upturned foil, that is the extreme left limb. But it is important to note that its base seems to have been divided into two parts, viz., a slanting left half and an angular right half. But the form of the letter *ka* (क) in the ligate (क्ष), the left limb/hand is drawn downward with an inward curve extending to the head-mark of the letter (ष), may be stylised, -an innovation by the scribe. It indicates an advanced state, suggesting a later date than that of the Nagājari-Khanikargaon stone inscription. The base stroke of *sa* (स) is made round, and attached as a loop to the central bar, [e.g. in the ligatures (क्ष) (*ksha*) and (ष्ट) (*shṭa*) as in [उत्सृष्ट] which stands comparison to those in Allahabad *praśasti*. So also the initial *sa* (स) with a loop at the foot of the left vertical limb when it joins the horizontal baseline. But when combined with medial *u* (उ) as *su* (सु) in *Vasundhara*-, the right vertical is lengthened downward with a slightly flattened end. The initial *u* (उ) has its lower limb turned leftward and is similar to the one in the word *uktañcha* in the Nagājari-Khanikargaon fragmentary stone inscription. *s* has a flat top with a foot-mark in the left leg and an upturned stroke in left end of the *mātrika*, horn-type as in *śriḥ*. It looks same as the *s* in both the Umachal rock inscription as well as in the Nagājari-Khanikargaon fragmentary stone inscription. *Ma* (म) is in typical eastern Gupta style with a flattened elongated base and an extended tongue. *Ra* (र) is a straight vertical with a flattened top, wedge type. The superscript *ra* (र = *rēpha*) is that of nail/screw-type standing above the letter concerned, as in the ligature-*rvva* (र्व्व), [e.g. श्रीर्व्वसुन्धर. *Ṇ* (ण) is typically of open-mouthed variety of Kauśāmbi type with a loop at the left foot of the limb [e.g. ण in - वर्म्मण] as is often seen in the Allahabad *praśasti* and other records of the time, while the hook-mark added to the lower right of the letter represents the only medial 'ā (i.e., *t-kāra* as in - वर्म्मणा) in the record. *Va* (व), as noticed in the Nagājari-Khanikargaon record, is triangular in shape [e.g. in व in वर्म्मणा], which is seen very often in the north-Indian records of the period. The medial signs for both the short and long *i* (इ) *ī* (ई) are stylised, double arch-type, twisted in the left lower end made round, turning left; starting from the right end of the head-mark (*mātrikā*), the lines move upward and turn left-ward stylistically, in both cases looking alike, (umbrella-type), yet distinct from each other. While in case of the long *ī* (ई) the medial sign, the twisted arch turns downward to reach the left end of the head-mark, the horn of *ś* as in *śrī* (श्री), in the other case the twisted arch ends midway with a downward sharp bend, as in *-tti* (- ल्ति) of *datti*

(दत्ति). This tendency is noticed in the Nagājari-Khanikargaon fragmentary stone inscription, particularly in the ligature *Śchi* (श्चि) in the word *simā-paśchimoto* (श्चि=सीमा पश्चिमतो).

Orthographically, as in other records, consonant following a *rēpha* is doubled, e.g. (श्रीर्वसुन्धर, वर्म्मणा). It may be pointed out that there is no orthographical mistake noticed. One important point is that by the 5th cent. A.D. confusion arose between *sh* (ष), *ś* (श) and *sa* (स) and vice versa. Thus *shṭa* (ष्ट) became 'sta' (स्त). This tendency is not noticed here. This indicates that the record is written before the confusion took place in the records of this region.

### The auspicious Symbol :<sup>11</sup>

The text of our record is preceded by an auspicious symbol representing a schematically combined *trisūla-paraśu*-type emblem [plate-2]. The emblem here contains four attributes, such as a *trisūla* (trident), a *paraśu* (battle-axe), a *ḍamaru* (or *dombaru*, i.e. kettle-drum) and a *kalaśa* (pitcher), usually associated with the cult of Lord Śiva. Here the *trisūla* is placed upright in a vase *kalaśa*=*water vessel* which probably represents the *maṅgala-ghaṭa*. The *paraśu* is just-affixed on the middle part of the shaft of the trident. The *ḍamaru*, surmounting the *trisūla*, looks like hanging in the middle prong (or stick) of the fork, thereby giving the appearance of a cross-bar. Like the *trisūla*, the *paraśu*, the *ḍamaru* and the *kalaśa* are also Śaiva emblems, which are found frequently depicted either singly or all together at a time in Śiva images or in Śiva-liṅgas of later periods. It is indeed very conspicuous in respect of the early epigraphic records of Assam recovered so far.

In this connection, attention of the scholars may be drawn to the fact that all the epigraphic records of early Prāgjyōtisha-Kāmarūpa kings, unearthed so far, found to have begun with the auspicious *āñjī*, pronounced *siddham* by some scholars, which is followed by the word *svasti*. But, here is a departure from the current tradition, in that, in the present case, we have, instead a trident-battle-axe-type emblem with the addition of new elements, viz., a kettle drum and a pitcher. It may be recalled that the trident-battle-axe-type emblem is found depicted in some early coins and seals unearthed by T. Bloch, D.B. Spooner, Sir John Marshall and others in the process of their explorations in different places, such as Basarh, Bhita and some other sites of northern India.<sup>12</sup> The learned scholar-archaeologists have explained that the 'trident-battle-axe emblem' belongs to the Śiva cult,



which is what in the present case also. Here in our record, the *damaru* (drum) and the *maṅgalaghata*, two other attributes of Śiva, are new additions to the combined trident-battle-axe type emblem of the coins and the seals.

It may also be remembered that the earliest form of worshipping different divinities in India, and for that matter in most other parts of the ancient world, is in cult emblems. Thus, the mode of representation of the worshipful divinities in aniconic symbols goes back to hoary antiquity, which may be dated back to the fourth millenium B.C. down to the late Gupta period in the first millenium A.D.<sup>13</sup> as is evident by the unearthing of innumerable coins and seals of different hues, forms and shapes, and other aniconic /animistic objects standing for anthropomorphic, therio-morphic and sometimes therio-anthropomorphic forms of particular gods and goddesses.

In ancient Indian epigraphic records, particularly those in stone we find highly ornamented *maṅgala* symbols being used "to ensure its completion and preservation." Such symbols include *śaṅkha*, lotus, the Nāndi, the fish, the Sun-wheel (chakra), the stars, the *āñjī*, the *chandra-vindu*, the *svastikā*, the long necked pitcher, the Garuḍa, etc., These symbols are used at the beginning, the middle, or at the end.<sup>14</sup> So far as the epigraphic records of Assam is concerned, we find the use of the *āñjī* invariably at the beginning of the records, whether copper plates or records in stone. But in the present record we find the use of a symbol *albeit* against the usual practice, and this is the single instance so far found. This combined symbol seems to imply making salutation to Śiva. If the *āñjī*-symbol implies the Kuṇḍalinī, i.e., lit. the intestinal canal that lies coiled like a snake in the lower base of the body (*mūlādhāra* i.e., the vital energy), representing the female principle, the present one seems to represent the male principle. It may be remembered that the Varman kings of Prāgjyōtisha-Kāmrūpa also were Śaivite as is evident from their records, in that salutation/invocation is always made to Śiva at the beginning of their records invariably. But here is a significant difference a departure from the current practise. The donor of the record is one Vasundharavarman, probably a ruler of the realm belonging to the same Bhauma-Nāraka origin. In such circumstances, does it signify a separate ruling dynastic set up distinct from that of the great Varmans of the same Bhauma-Nāraka dynasty ruling at Prāgjyōtisha-Kāmarūpa about the time?

### The Epigraph:

The text of the record is as follows : <sup>15</sup>

अक्षय - दत्ति-उत्सृष्ट-श्रीर्वसुन्धरवर्मणा

*Akshaya - datti - utsrīṣṭa - śrī- Vasundharavarmmaṇā*

The meaning and implication of this short epigraph is not that easy to comprehend, though apparently seems so. Hence, it deserves some amount of explanation for our understanding so far as the purpose of the record is concerned.

### III

The auspicious *triśūla-paraśu-damaru-maṅgalaghata* symbol described above is followed by the legend beginning with the word *akshaya* (अक्षय). Lexicographically, the word *akshaya* (अक्षय = नास्ति क्षय यस्य) has a wide range of meaning, such as 'undecaying, permanent, imperishable, undying' so on and so forth.<sup>16</sup> The expression *akshaya* is sometimes used to imply the Supreme Soul *paramātmā*, the Supreme Being, Viṣṇu, etc. If the latter meaning is accepted, the word may imply 'salutation' to the Supreme Being, here the Lord Śiva, as the very combined emblem at the beginning shows. However, it does not appear to be the intended context. It may, however, be pointed out that the term *akshaya* is found to have been used in some early records in combination with the word *nīvi*, meaning 'captial, principal or stock'.<sup>17</sup> Thus, the expression *akshaya-nīvi* implies 'a perpetual /permanent endowment' in terms of cash or landed property, made in favour of some religious or charitable institution(s) as may be seen in some early inscriptions. In such cases, the term implies that the donee, whether an individual or an institution, may enjoy only the interest or the produce accruing out of the fund, without touching the principal/original fund or the capital<sup>17</sup>. The expression is synonymous with *-nīvi-dharma*, *akshaya-nīvi-dharma*, *apradā-dharma*, etc.<sup>18</sup> But here in our record the expression is *akshaya-datti*. The word *dattiḥ*, with the short medial *i* (इ), derived from Skt. root *dā* (दा = दा + कर्मणि क्तिन्, =wealth implies a gift, donation, etc., or, in wider sense, 'an endowment' given for maintenance or subsistence. It may be pointed out that the burnt clay seal legend from Ālichigā-Tengāni site, literally bears the same text.

Thus, the expression *akshaya-datti*, in the manner of the expression *akshaya-nīvi*, seems to imply 'an imperishable gift'. The purport of the record, it appears, is a kind of royal decree (?), declaring the creation of 'an imperishable or permanent endowment out of liberal donation.'

Again, the word *utsrishṭa*, derived from Skt. root *srj* (सृज् - उत् + सृज् - त्क) 'to create, to produce' etc. among others, with the particle (उत्) (-intensity) prefixed to it, seems to be employed here in the sense of (उत्सर्ग) i.e. ardently giving away, or 'making gift of wealth'. It may be mentioned in this connection that the word *utsrishṭa* has a wide range of menaing, such as, (i) created, produced; (ii) poured out, ommitted; (iii) let loose; (iv) left, abandoned; (v) dismissed, sent away; (vi) ascertained, determined; (vii) connected, joined; (viii) much, abundant, numerous; (ix) ornamented, Here, we may safely accept the meaning 'created', 'abundant' in the sense of "created by giving abundant or boundless wealth (श्रीः)."

#### IV

But, who is this Vasundharavarman ? His identity is not known. It is also not clear whether Vasundharavarman was the ruler, or a courtier, or an official. It may be noted in this connection that the name of Vasundharavarman is found, besides this record, in two other places, viz., (i) Nagājari- Khanikargaon fragmentary stone inscription (2nd fragment), (ii) the burnt clay-seal obtained from Ālichīā-Teṅgāni, recovered from the area only a few kilometers away from the provenance of the present record. Since the name of the same donor is found in three relics, one of which is a seal, the one that looks like a royal insignia, he must be a person of some authority, presumably a prince. But the difficulty is that no royal epithet, like *mahārāja* or *mahārājādhirāja* is prefixed to his name.<sup>19</sup> There is no reference to the royal house he belonged to, if he was a ruler at all; there is no royal insignia embossed therein to, unless the combined symbol of *trīśūla-paraśu-ḍamaru-kalaśa* is taken as such. However, from the epithet 'varman' appended to 'Vasundhara', probably as surname, it may be inferred that the donor was a scion of the great Varmans of Prāgjyōtisha-Kāmarūpa. But in the chronological list of the great Varman rulers of the time so far obtained from the records of Bhāskaravarman and, for that matter, from those of the Sālastambhas and the Pālas of subsequent times who also claim descent from the same Bhauma-Nāraka, there is no ruler bearing the name Vasundharavarman. Palaeographically, the record may be ascribed to the same period as of the Nagājari- Khanikargaon fragmentary stone inscription. (4th-5th cent. A.D.) In the circumstances, it is reasonable to assume that Vasundharavarman belonged to a collateral branch of the great Varmans of Prāgjyōtisha-Kāmarūpa kingdom, and was ruling in the region. It may also be pointed out that the Allahabad *praśasti* of Samudragupta refers to Ḍavāka, along with Kāmarūpa, etc. as one of the five frontier kingdoms, the rulers of which submitted to the Gupta emperor<sup>20</sup>.

Ḍavāka is identified with modern Ḍabakā region. Is it then a fact that the Doyang-Dhansiri valley, which presents a rich cultural tradition tracing back to c. 4th-5th cent. A.D., if not earlier formed a part of the ancient kingdom of Ḍavāka (*sic.* Ḍabaka) ? Or, alternatively, whether there existed an ancient kingdom independent of both Kāmarūpa and Ḍavāka in the region ?

It is not easily possible to find an answer to these questions convincingly.

In this connection, however, attention of the learned scholars may be drawn to a statement in the copper-plate charters of Vanamālarman (so far four copper-plate charters issued by him are recovered) of the house of Sālastambha wherein it is stated that Kṛṣṇa having killed Naraka, spared his (Naraka's) two sons, Bhagadatta and Vajradatta, at the sad wailing of his wife. It is also stated that when the elder, Bhagadatta, obtained the lordship of Prāgyōtisha, the other, Vajradatta, went to the forest and propitiated Īsvara (Śiva) with penance, and the Lord Śiva having been pleased, granted him the lordship of Uparipattana, along with a boon that in future his progeny would gain the lordship of Prāgyōtisha also<sup>21</sup>. In an earlier write up<sup>22</sup> we have shown that Uparipattana of Vanamāla's records is identical with the kingdom of Ḍavāka(modern Ḍabakā in Nagaon district in central Assam), mentioned along with others in the Allahabad pillar *praśasti* of Samudragupta, and that both Ḍavāka and (Prāgyōtisha-Kāmarūpa) are conterminous. This implies that according to the legend recorded Vanamāla's as well as their progeny ruled side by side independently of each other, which might have continued for generations.

In connection with the identification of *Mahārājādhirāja* Surēndravarman of the Umāchal Rock Inscription<sup>23</sup>, we have surmised that he was very much the ruler of Kāmarūpa with his seat of administration at Prāgyōtishapura, the provenance of his inscription, and that he was a scion of the Bhauma-Nāraka family devolving from Bhagadatta. We have also ventured the suggestion that when *Mahārājādhirāja* Surēndravarman died, probably without leaving any heir, the throne passed on to Pushyavarman, the founder of the great Varman dynasty of Kāmarūpa. It may be pointed out that the antecedents of Pushyavarman is not found in any available record; the name of his parents are not mentioned except that he is said to be the progeny of Bhagadatta-Vajradatta (*bhagadatta-vajradattānvayo*) in the Nālanda terracotta seals of Bhāskaravarman. Pushyavarman seems to have appeared in the political scene of Prāgyōtisha-Kāmarūpa most suddenly, as was the case with Sālastambha, founder of the Mlēcchha dynasty,

claimed to have devolved from Bhagadatta, and Brahmapāla, the founder of the Pāla dynasty of Kāmarūpa claiming descent from the great Varmans. Thus, it seems that Pushyavarman was not the legal heir to the throne of Prāgjyōtisha; he, like Sālastambha, who by a trick of fortune (*vidhi-chalanē-vaśād-ēva*) grabbed the realm at Prāgjyōtisha seemed to have either usurped the throne after the death of Surēndravarmān, who probably died without leaving any heir to succeed him, or he (Pushyavarman) was made king by the people (*prakṛitayāḥ*) in the same manner and for the same reason, as Brahmapāla was made king about seven hundred years later, when Tyāgasim̄ha, the twenty-first king of the dynasty of Sālastambha, died without leaving any heir.<sup>28</sup> If our surmise is correct, it is quite obvious that Vasundharavarman was a prince of that branch of the Bhauma- Nārakas devolved form Vajradatta and ruled the kingdom of Ḍavāka (Ḍabakā), comprising the Kapilī valley and the adjoining region which included the provenance of the records under reference.

However, it requires to be confirmed by more affirmative evidence, and as such the questions relating to the identity of Vasundharavarman of our records (including those of the seal legend and Nagājari- Khanikargaon second fragment mentioned above) remains open for further examination.

The present record under study seems to have the bearing or import of the stamp of a royal decree or public notice emphasising the gift of a particular permanent endowment.

#### Notes and References :

1. H.N. Dutta, *JARS.*, Vol., *XXXIII*, pp. 85ff.
2. P.C. Saikia, *JARS.*, Vol. *XXV*, pp., 32f.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 36

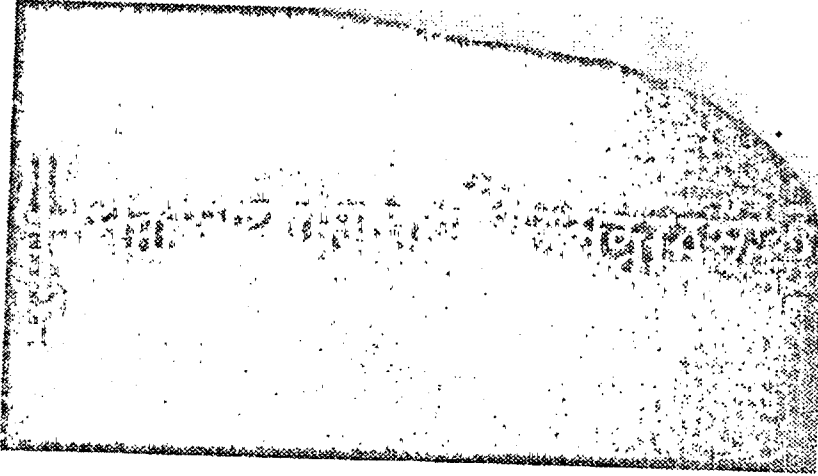
Dr. Saikia reported that the villagers of the Teṅgāni forest reserve had found a stone image, 'of Lord Vishṇu or Sūrya along with a model of a stone conch-shell' which they installed atop a hillock and propitiated. 'The most important characteristic feature of the deity' is that 'it is depicted on a chariot drawn by a group of seven horses' and flanked by two figures believed to be those of 'Gaṇēśa and Kārttika', besides four female attendants carved on the four corners of the stele.

But from the description, it appears to be an image of the Sun-god along with the *parivāradēvatās* instead of that of Vishṇu (Vāsudēva), as popularly believed. It was perhaps installed in a ruined temple, now in debris.

4. The inscribed mud-stone slab bearing the epigraph at the time of examination was in the possession of the Department of Archaeology, Guwahati. The record is not in a good state of preservation since the ribs of most of the letters curved out in relief are broken off.
5. The terracotta seal bears the same text as the one presently studied.
6. vide, *JARS.*, Vol. XXV, pp. 32f.
7. *Ibid.*  
A list of the sites explored and the objects obtained are given therein.
8. Dr. H. N. Dutta relates the event about the recovery of the inscribed slab in a pamphlet, *A New Light on History and Art of Ancient Assam*. He has given the details of the provenance of the record, among other things, and the information gathered from the said write up has been utilised here for our study. However, we cannot agree with his reading and interpretation of the text of the record. We must, however, be thankful to Dr. Dutta for his arduous task of exploring the area and recovering these valuable antiquities.
9. The now-famous Nagājarī-Khanikargaon Fragmentary Stone inscription has been differently read by several eminent scholars. Details, vide, M. M. Sharma, (ed.) *IAA.*, pp. 303ff. See also *JARS*, Vol. XXVI, pp. A second fragment of the said Nagājarī-Khanikargaon Fragmentary Stone inscription is also subsequently recovered not long ago by the Department of Archaeology, Assam, and was studied by the present writer. vide *JESI.*, Vol. XXVII, 1997.
10. vide, T.P. Verma, *Development of Script in Ancient Kāmarūpa*, p. 26
11. As regards the use of auspicious symbols in epigraphs, see Sircar, D. C., *Indian Epigraphy*, pp. 92ff
12. These are well-described in the pages of the *Annual Reports of the Archaeological Survey of India*. (*ASIAR.*, 1903-04, 1911-12, 1913-14 etc. with plates.)
13. J.N. Banerjea, *Development of Hindu Iconography*.
14. D. C. Sircar holds a fruitful discussion on the use of auspicious symbols in Indian epigraphic records. vide, *Indian Epigraphy*, New Delhi, 1965, pp. 92ff.
15. From photograph. See Table-II.
16. vide, V.S. Apte, *Practical Sanskrit - English Dictionary*.
17. vide, D.S. Sircar, *IEG.*, p. 15.  
Other terms/expressions connoting the same sense as of *akshaya-nīvi* are *akshayani*, *akshaya-nīvi-dharma*, *akshayaṇikā*, *akshaya-nīvika*, etc.

18. D.C. Sircar, *SI.*, vol. 1, p. 152, n. 10. see also IEG, pp. 15, 26; Bhandarkar, Chhabbra, & Gai, *CII.*, Vol. III, (Revised), p. 287. n. et al. The expression *akshaya-datti-utśriṣṭa* seems to be analogous to *akshaya-nīvi-grāma-kshētram* in Bihar stone Pillar Inscription of Buddha-gupta, line 26, vide *CII.*, vol. III, p. 341, to the Śaiva cult, and thus in the present case the emblem implies making salutation to the great god Śiva.
19. As suggested by D. C. Sircar, such anomaly is not uncommon in a short record like this. vide the *Journal of Ancient Indian History*, Calcutta University.
20. See. line 22. vide, *CII.*, vol. III, (Revised), p. 213  
 'समतट - डवाक - कामरूप - नेपाल - कर्तृपतिभिः सर्वकरदानज्ञाकरण' etc.  
 The name Kāmaruūpa, identical with Prāgjyōtisha, is noticed for the first time in this record where it is mentioned as one of the frontier kingdoms whose rulers voluntarily offered allegiance to the great Gupta emperor. This implies that all these were very old sovereign kingdoms and existed there for long before the imperial Guptas came to power. It also appears that these kingdoms were independent of each other and conterminous. (Prāgjyōtisha-)Kāmarūpa seems to have comprised the western part of modern Assam encompassing in it some parts of north and east Bengal so as to make it conterminous with Puṇḍravardhana, Samataṭa and Tāmralipti, "while the kingdom of Ḍavāka, identified with modern Ḍavāka, near Nagaon comprised the present Cacher District, including the North Cacher hills and the Kapilī valley."
21. कृष्णेन तन्निहत्य च सुष्टौ भगदत्त-वज्रदत्ताख्यौ । तस्यसुतौ तद्वनिताकरुणविलापहतहृदयेन ॥ ४ ॥  
 संप्राप्ते भगदत्ते श्रीमान्प्रागज्योतिषाधिनाथत्वम् । वनमितरोपि तदेत्य प्राराधयदीश्वरन्तपसा ॥ ५ ॥  
 तुष्टेन तेन तस्मै दत्तमुपरिपत्तनाधिनाथत्वम् । प्रागज्योतिषाधिराज्यं कालेन तदन्वयस्यापि ॥ ६ ॥  
 This prediction seems to have been materialised when Pushyavarman became king of Kāmarūpa with his seat of administration of Prāgjyōtisha.
22. vide, "A Note on the Umāchal rock Inscription in *Archaeology of North-Eastern India*, 1991, pp 232ff
23. vide, M. M. Sharma, (ed) *Inscriptions of Ancient Assam*, 1978, pp. 1f. D. C. Sircar ascribes the record to the 5th century A.D. But we have shown that the record may be placed in the 4th century since our record is akin to the Śusuniya Rock Inscription of Chandravarman (c. 340-60 A.D.) not only in respect of palaeography, but also in the matter of its contents. He preferred to identify Mahārājādhirāja Surēndravarman with Mahēndravarman (c 470-94 A.D.) of the Bhauma-Nāraka dynasty since both Surēndra and Mahēndra are synonymous, meaning Indra, the lord of the gods. However, we have shown that the identification of Surēndravarman with Mahēndravarman does not appear to be based on sound reasoning. vide Jay Prakash Singh and Gautam Sengupta (ed), *Archaeology of North Eastern India*, NEHU History Series 1, 1991, pp. 232ff

24. Bargaon copperplates of Ratnapālavarṃadēva,  
 (एवं वङ्गशक्रेण क्षितिमथ निखिलां भञ्जतो नारकानां राज्यां ।  
 म्लेच्छाधिनाथो विधिचलनवशादेव जग्राह राज्यम् ॥  
 सालस्तम्भः क्रमेस्यापि हि नरपतयो विग्रहस्तम्भमुख्य ।  
 विख्याताः सम्भवद्विगुणित दशसंख्यया संविभिन्नाः ॥  
 निर्वङ्गं पुनरहो भौमो हि नो युज्यते ।  
 स्वामोति प्रविचिन्त्य तत्प्रकृतयो भूभार-रक्षाक्षमं-  
 सागन्ध्यात्परिचक्रिरे नरपति श्रीब्रह्मपालं हि यं ॥ vv.9-10

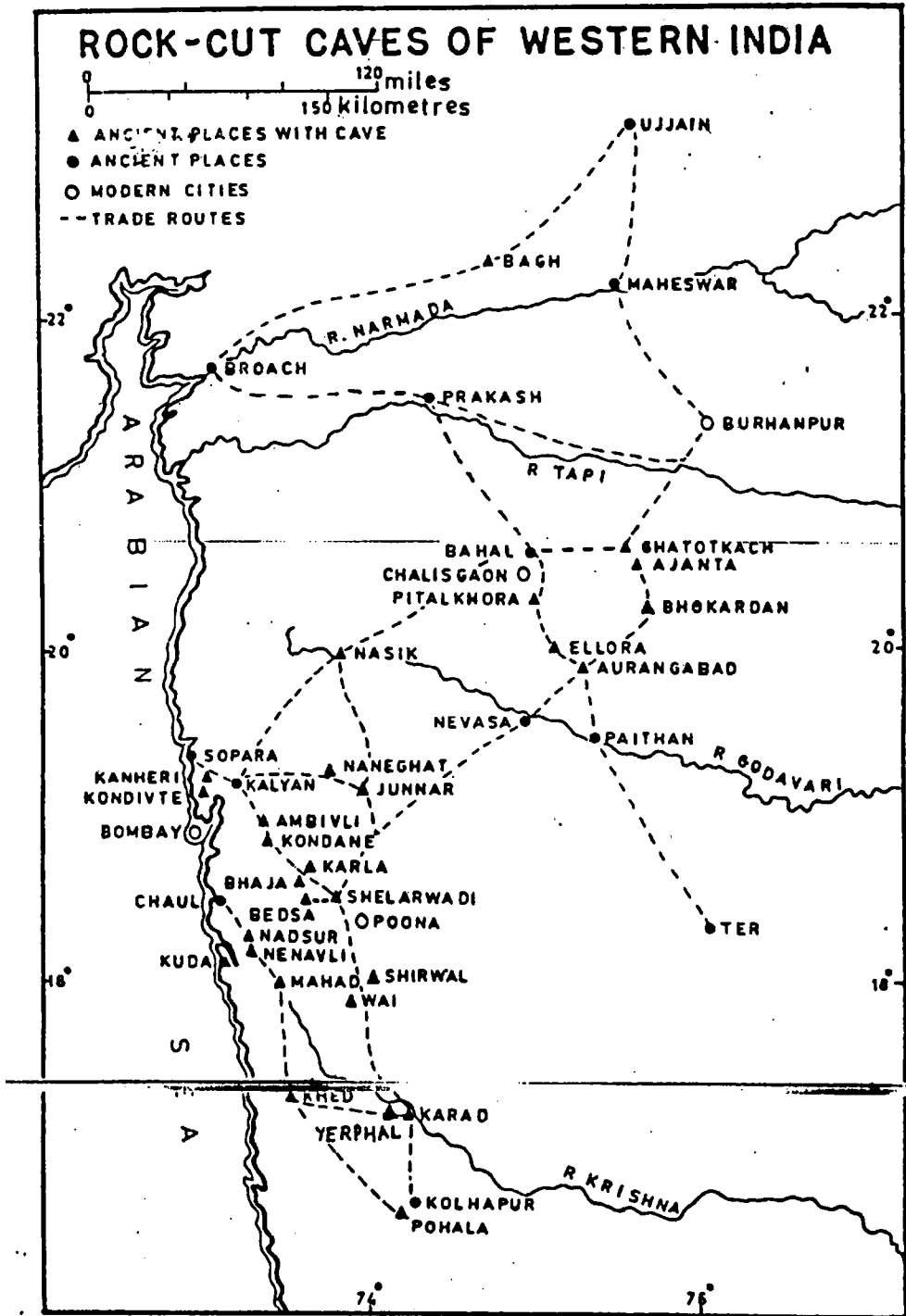


Plak-I

सक्रेण क्षितिमथ निखिलां भञ्जतो नारकानां राज्यां ।  
 म्लेच्छाधिनाथो विधिचलनवशादेव जग्राह राज्यम् ॥

Inscription of Vasundharavarman





1. Map showing rock-cut caves of Western India

## DONORS AND THEIR ENDOWMENTS AT KARLE CAVES

A.K. Ranade

The early centuries of Christian era was the period of remarkable progress in trade and industries in Deccan. It was a period when western coastline and Deccan which was a part of Sātavāhana kingdom witnessed the growth of brisk foreign trade with the Roman Empire. There were many industrial centers and market towns such as Nasik, Govardhan, Paithan, Tagar, Junnar, Dhenukataka etc., are mentioned in the inscriptions of this period. These inscriptions throw light on the fact that from early times, several important trade routes passed through Thane, Pune and Raigad districts of Maharashtra. In the present paper an attempt has been made to throw light on the donors and their endowments at Karle Caves, a Buddhist establishment, which lies on an ancient trade-route in the Bhor ghat area of Sahyadri mountains in Pune district.

The distribution and location of the Buddhist excavated dwellings and shrines give us an idea of spread of Buddhist Communities along the ancient trade routes in Maharashtra.<sup>1</sup> One of the six major groups of rock cut caves in Maharashtra is Bhorghat area in Pune district. These are the caves at Bhaja, Bedsa, Karle, Kondane and Shelarwadi.

As a matter of fact, the Bhor Ghat (Bhor pass) was a highway of trade between 100B.C. and 600 A.D.<sup>2</sup> It was an important trade route connecting Pune Junnar areas with the port cities of north Koṅkaṇ, such as Sōpāra and Kalyāṇ on the west coast. From the sites of Buddhist monasteries, we came across the fact, that all these cities are located on the ancient trade routes and fine Buddhist caves at Bedsa, Bhaja, Karla etc., on Bhor pass area prove it. Though, these were Buddhist Monasteries, they served as rest houses for the time being for the merchants, traders and the sārthavāhas (i.e. caravans), who moved from one place to another. The caves at Bhaja, Bedsa and Kondane caves belong to 1st C. B.C.-1st C. A.D. whereas Karle caves belong to 1st C. A.D. and early part of 2nd C. A.D.

In the Bhorghat group of caves are the best caves, and it has one of the finest *chaityagrihas* in western India. There are 7 excavations of which one is the larger *chaityagriha* and the rest *Vihāras*<sup>3</sup>. The finest *chaityagriha* owed its excavation largely to the munificence of the banker Bhutapala from Vaijayanti (on the bank

of the river Varada in North Kanara) as is mentioned in the inscription, on the top of the left side of the front verandah of the same grand *Chaitya*. The inscription itself describes "it as the greatest *Chaitya* of the whole Jambudvīpa" a collective name of the Indian sub-continent<sup>4</sup>

Karle must have been located on the strategic position and therefore, it played a vital role in economic activities like trade and commerce and also in religious activities by preaching Buddhist ideas in these areas of Maharashtra. As compared to Bhaje and Bedsa caves of the Bhorghat group, Karle had a larger Buddhist Community, and its number may have been around 100. Gokhale<sup>4</sup> opines that the community here may have begun its career in the middle of 1st Century A.D., if not earlier. The construction of grand *Chaityagriha* is placed between A.D. 50 and 70.

The epigraphic records tell us that resources for the religious monasteries came generally from 3 categories of donors, the ruling elite, merchants and other occupational groups and the monks and nuns. These monks and nuns began to receive the pious attentions of the poorer layman and women, cultivator of soil as well as Śakas, Yavanas and Pahalavas<sup>5</sup>

As elsewhere in India, Karle establishments also received generous donations from a variety of sources. Among the donors at Karle were merchants, sēṭhi, traders, other occupationals, a guild, Gahapatis, foriegners as well as Buddhist monks and nuns. Women were not behind in endowing to this establishment. There were nuns as well as common women, who have made their endowments as recorded in the inscriptions there.

The beginnings of Karle establishments were probably made under the patronage of local communities of lay devotees led by Mahāraṭhis<sup>6</sup> but soon merchants and other professionals added their contributions. Most of the times, the name of the donor and his endowment is recorded in the form of inscriptions here.

The term Mahāraṭhi occur in the inscriptions at Karle. The term Mahāraṭhi seems to have had both a tribal connotation and official or bureaucratic designations. The endowments of Mahāraṭhi Sōmadeva (son of Mahāraṭhi Mitradeva), and Mahāraṭhi Agnimita are recorded in the inscriptions.

In ancient times, trade was carried on through the Śrēṇis i.e., guilds. These Guilds engaged not only in the production and transport of merchandise, they did also banking business<sup>7</sup> and earned much profits, some amount of which they

use to spend on charity endowments. An inscription from Karle<sup>8</sup> records the donation of a pillar in grand *Chaitya* by a guild from Dhēnukakaṭaka.

There were many Yavana donors at Karle, Nasik and Junnar. The Sphinxes at these sites owe their existence to the Yavana donors and were carved probably by Yavana artists.<sup>9</sup> Most of the donors were the residents of Dhēnukakaṭaka. These Yavanas must have had established in Dhēnukakaṭaka and probably were busy in mercantile activities and made their generous endowments to Buddhist establishments at various places. The Yavana donors at Karle were<sup>10</sup>: Sinhadhaya, Dhamma, Dhamadhaya, Chulayanka, Yashavardhan, etc. were from Dhēnukakaṭaka. Among other donors from Dhēnukakaṭaka<sup>11</sup> some were the professionals like Sinhadatta (a Gandhika) and Samika (a carpenter) while some others were Mitradāva (s/o Gola, a trader) and Dharmadēvi (relative of Asek, a Gahapati of Dhēnukakaṭaka). This proves that Karle was an important site on the trade route between Āndhra-Mahārāshṭra.

Some of the endowments recorded in the inscriptions at Karle are given to the Buddhist communities residing here. As a matter of fact, the Buddhist monks moved from place to place for preaching the tenets of Buddhism in winter and summer and spent the rainy season in some place of shelter like a *vihāra*.<sup>12</sup> Generous donors use to arrange for the supply of clothing and medicines to monks either by investing large sums of money in local guilds or by endowing the villages to the establishment. At Karle we get examples of village endowments. A village was donated by Usavadatta<sup>13</sup>, son-in-law of Nahapāṇa, a Kshatrapa ruler. He has specifically mentioned that an endowment of a village Karajika is made to the Buddhist Saṅgha who were residing in the cave of Valuraka during the rainy season. Another village endowment for the monks of Vallurka at Karle was made by Mahārāṭhi Sōmadēva of Okhalak.<sup>14</sup>

From several cave inscriptions we find that monks and nuns themselves met expenses of carving of sculptures, even getting entire caves excavated<sup>15</sup>. Karle was no exception to that. This establishment also received endowments from many monks and nuns as referred to in the inscriptions.<sup>16</sup> They were - Acharya Bhadraśarman, Bhadata Indradeva, Acharya Satimitra, Dhamul- a layman and the nuns like Asadhasmita, Ghunikamata kodi, Ushava and her sister Śravika, etc.

Women were not behind the charity of endowments to these establishments. These were not necessarily the Buddhist nuns. They were sometimes common

women or the relatives of eminent persons of the age. Among the women donors at Karle, housewife Bhayila, mother of Samana, Kodi -mother of Ghunika (who had become Bhikshuni), Mahamata, Dharmadēvi, etc. made their endowments and are recorded in the inscriptions here.<sup>17</sup>

Although Karle received the maximum donations from the residents of Dhēnukakāṭaka, it also received endowments from far off places such as Sopāra, Vaijayanti and other places, as evident from the epigraphic records there. Another inscription here records the gift of a *vihāra* cave by Harharan, son of Setapharan of Abulama. According to Dr. Mirashi<sup>18</sup>, these persons appear to be Parthians judging by their names.

The monks of Mahāsāṅghika<sup>19</sup> and Dharmōttariya<sup>20</sup> schools of Buddhism were residing here and are mentioned in Karle inscriptions. This shows popularity of these two faiths/sects in the Bhorghat region of Maharashtra.

Thus from the above discussion we can conclude that Karle had its own importance. Excavation of finest *Chaitya* cave at Karle shows us that it received the donations from far off places. This was possible only due to the reason that it was lying on major trade route of ancient Maharashtra. Its presence on the major trade route must have contributed greatly towards development of trade and commerce.

The Karle establishment seems to be the residential place of the Buddhist monks during the rainy season and for their maintenance and meeting their necessities, endowments of villages were made.

These caves were essentially the monasteries, but they also served as rest houses for the time being for the merchants, traders and the Sārthavāha. The economic prosperity of the time led by these merchants could be possible reason for the charity endowments to the religious establishment by the merchantile community which was responsible for religious and cultural development.

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Table No. 1

## YAVANA DONORS AT KARLE CAVES

| Sr. No. | Name of the Yavana Donor | Profession | Place of Residence | Endowment | Reference                                |
|---------|--------------------------|------------|--------------------|-----------|--|
| 1.      | Sinhadhaya               |            | Dhēnukakataka      | A Pillar  | <i>Ep.Ind.</i> , Vol.7, p. 53, No. 7     |
| 2.      | Dhamma                   |            |                    |           | <i>Ibid.</i> , Vol. 7, P. 55, No. 10     |
| 3.      | Dhamadhaya               |            |                    |           | <i>Ibid.</i> , Vol. 18, p. 326, No 4     |
| 4.      | Chulayakha               |            |                    |           | <i>Ibid.</i> , Vol. 18, p. 327, No. 6    |
| 5.      | Yasavardhana             |            |                    |           | <i>Ibid.</i> , Vol. 18, p. 328, No. 7    |
| 6.      | Vitasangat               |            |                    |           | <i>Ibid.</i> , Vol. 18, p. 325-26, No. 1 |

Table No.2

## OTHER DONORS FROM DHĒNUKAKAṬAKA

| Sr. No. | Name of the Donor      | Profession                                    | Place of Residence | Endowment              | Reference                                |
|---------|------------------------|---|--------------------|------------------------|--|
| 1.      | Sinhadatta             | Gandhika                                      | Dhēnukakataka      | Door of Chaitya        | <i>Ep.Ind.</i> , Vol. 7, p. 55, No.9     |
| 2.      | Samika(sø Venuvasa)    | Carpenter                                     | "                  | A doorway & upper door | <i>Ibid.</i> , Vol. 7, p. 53 No. 6       |
| 3.      | Mitadeva (s/o Usavdat) |   | "                  | A Pillar               | <i>Ibid.</i> , Vol. 7, p. 56 No. 11      |
| 4.      | Rohimita               |   | "                  | "                      | <i>Ibid.</i> , Vol. 18, p. 326-27, No. 5 |
| 5.      | Somilanaka             |   | "                  | "                      | <i>Ibid.</i> , Vol. 18, p 326, No.3      |
| 6.      | Isalaka (s/o Gola)     | Son of a trader                               | "                  | "                      | <i>Ibid.</i> , Vo. 18, p. 327-28, No. 9  |
| 7.      | Mahamata               |   | "                  | "                      | <i>Ibid.</i> , Vol. 18, p. 328, No. 11   |
| 8.      | Dharmadevi             | Relative of Asek, a Gahapati of Dhēnukakataka | "                  | "                      | <i>Ibid.</i> , Vol. 18, p. 328, No. 12   |

Table No. 3

## WOMEN DONORS AT KARLE

| Sr. No. | Name of the Donor  | Profession  | Place of Residence | Endowment                        | Reference                             |
|---------|--------------------|---|--------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1.      | Usava              | A nun/Bhikkhuṇi                                     | -                  | A Cave                           | <i>Ep.Ind.</i> , Vol. 7 p. 73, No. 21 |
| 2.      | Shravika           | Sister of a nun<br>viz., Usava                      | -                  | A Cistern                        | <i>Ibid.</i> , Vol. 7, p. 73, No.21   |
| 3.      | Bhayila            | Mother of Gṛihastha<br>Mahādevanaka                 | -                  | A Pillar                         | <i>Ibid.</i> , Vol. 7, p. 52 No.5     |
| 4.      | Ashadhmita         | A nun/Bhikkhuṇi                                     | -                  | An Arch & a<br>portion of a cave | <i>Ibid.</i> , Vol. 7, p.56, No.12    |
| 5.      | Mother of<br>Saman | Mother of Saman                                     | -                  | A Relic                          | <i>Ibid.</i> , Vol. 7, p. 63, No. 17  |
| 6.      | Kodi               | A Nun/Bhikshuṇi<br>Mother of Ghunika                | -                  | Vēdikas carved by<br>Nandika     | <i>Ibid.</i> , Vol. 17, p. 64, No. 18 |
| 7.      | Mahamata           | -   | Dhēnukakaṭaka      | A Pillar                         | I. Vol. 18, p. 328, No. 11            |
| 8.      | Dharmadevi         | Relative of Asek, a<br>Gahapati of<br>Dhēnukakaṭaka | -                  | -                                | <i>Ibid.</i> , Vol. 18, p. 328, No.12 |



Table No. 4

## OTHER DONORS AT KARLE

| Sr. No. | Name of the Donor                     | Profession Residence                                 | Place of   | Endowment   | Reference                              |
|---------|---------------------------------------|--|------------|---|--|
| 1.      | Usavadata                             | Son-in-law of Kshatrapa ruler Nahāpāna               | -          | A Village for a Bhikkhusaṅgha   | <i>Ep.Ind.</i> , Vol. 7, p. 57, No. 13 |
| 2.      | Pariguta                              | An Officer   | -          | A Village donated to Mahāsāṅghika Bhikkhu Pavjit (mendicant) a govt. order recorded |  |
| 3.      | Somadēva<br>S/o Mahārāṭhi<br>Mitadeva | Mahārāṭhi  | -          | A Village donated to the Bhikkhusaṅgha at Valuraka Caves                            | <i>Ibid.</i> , Vol. 7, p. 61 No.14     |
| 4.      | Harapharan                            | Son of Setapharna                                    | Abulama    | A Chaityahala with 9 rooms for the Mahāsāṅghika                                     | <i>Ibid.</i> , Vol. 7, p. 71, No. 20   |
| 5.      | Bhutapal                              | A Śrēṣṭhi  | Vaijayanti | The Grand Chaitya   | <i>Ibid.</i> , Vol. 7, p.48, No. 1     |
| 6.      | Agnimitrana-<br>ka                    | Mahārāṭhi  | -          | A pillar with lion Capital  | <i>Ibid.</i> , Vol. 7, p. 48, No.2     |
| 7.      | Indradēva                             | Bhadant  | -          | Two carvings of elephants and the vedikas up & down.                                | <i>Ibid.</i> , Vol. 7, p. 51, No. 3    |
| 8.      | Satimita<br>s/o Nanda                 | Disciple of Dharmottariya Bhadant from Sopara        | Sopāra     | A pillar  | <i>Ibid.</i> , Vol. 7, p. 54, No.8     |
| 9.      | Satimita                              | Son of a sister of Dharmottariya Bhadant from Sopāra | Sopāra     | A pillar with Relic   | <i>Ibid.</i> , Vol. 7, p. 55, No. 9    |
| 10.     | Bhadra<br>Sarman                      | A Bhikkhu  | -          | Sculptures in the Varandah  | <i>Ibid.</i> , Vol. 7, p. 63, No. 15   |
| 11.     | Buddharakhita                         | A Bhikkhu  | -          | Part of a chaitya in cave No. 3   | <i>Ibid.</i> , Vol. 74, No. 22         |
| 12.     | Dhamul                                | Upāsaka  | Gonekak    | A pillar  | <i>Ibid.</i> , Vol. 18, p.326, No.2    |

## EPIGRAPHIC EVIDENCES OF NAWAIT KING OF THĀNE-KOŅKAŅ REGION

Mohsina Mukadam

Since ancient times many communities from various parts of the world came to India and settled here permanently. They not only added to pluralistic structure of the Indian society but also enriched the cultural heritage of India. Information about some of these communities is available. But there are others, like Nawait or Naita community from coastal region of Maharashtra about whom very little is known. Indigeneous literary sources are silent about them. Under such circumstances inscriptions supported by foreign travellers accounts gain importance.

Nawaits or Naitas trace their ancestry to Arab race. It is a well known fact that, since pre-Islamic peiod Arabs had commercial contacts with Western India and they had their settlements at Chaul, Kalyan and Sopara<sup>1</sup>. This contact continued even after the advent of Islam in 7th century A. D. The Muslim Arabs too, established their colonies on the Western coast of India. About them Sturrock says: 'from the seventh century onwards it is known that, Persians and Arab traders settled in large numbers at the different ports on the Western coast of India and married women of the country<sup>2</sup>. Their number increased considerably in the early part of 8th century when many families migrated to India to escape from the harrassment of Hajjaj bin Yusuf, the governor of Iraq. The emigrants belonged to the four families who traced their descent from Nazr, son of Kinanah one of the ancestor of Prophet<sup>3</sup>.

Soico- political environment was favourable for their settlement. Traders, merchants, seamen were welcomed by native Hindu rulers. All facilities were provided to them to acquire land and to practice their religion. By 10th century they were well established in this region, swiftly gaining privileged and influential status in the society. Al Masudi who visited India in the beginning of 10th century found over ten thousand Muslims of Siraf, Oman, Basra and Bagdad at Seymore (Chaul), beside numerous others who were childern of Arabs born there<sup>4</sup>. They had their own chief who received his authority from the local king. The descendent of these Muslim Arab who settled in the KoŅkaŅ region were called Nawaits<sup>5</sup>. They were also known as Naitas.

Andheri<sup>6</sup> and Dombivli<sup>7</sup> inscriptions throw considerable light on Naita kings of Thāṇe-Koṅkaṇ region. Dombivli inscription of 1396 A. D. belongs to Alunaka Rana whose title *Mahārājādhirāja* indicates his political status. Andheri inscription of earlier pēriod, too, refers to Alunaka Rana as a governor of Nasir-rai, the emperor of Delhi. This inscription also mentions Alunaka's son Hamarana who was his deputy as well as commander-in-chief of army whereas his grandson Shree Jaffer Muhammad was commandant of one batallion. From these two inscriptions it may be said that Alunaka ruled over Thāṇe-Koṅkaṇ region between 1377 to 1396 on behalf of emperor of Delhi<sup>8</sup>.

Alunaka was a Naita king can be easily corroborated with contemporary literary source. Mahikavatchi Bakhar provides us with additional information about this dynasty. Nika Malik, representative of emperor of Delhi gave charge of newly conquered territory of Thāṇe - Koṅkaṇ to Naita king Alunaka. He is also referred to as Ali Nakuwa, Alaji Nakuwa and according to Bakhar he was the first Nawait ruler of Mahim<sup>9</sup>. Along with Alunaka eight other kings of same dynasty are mentioned<sup>10</sup>, of which Hamirkhan (Hamarana) and Dafferkhan (Jaffarkhan) are mentioned in Andhēri inscription as well. Probably Hambirrao of Nagao inscription also belonged to the same family<sup>11</sup> While tracing the origin of Alunaka V.B. Kolte suggest that he belong to Koli community and was newly converted to Islam<sup>12</sup>. Rajwade too expresses similar views and states that as Naitas were originally lower caste Hindu and then converted to Islam, as such they were acceptable to both i.e. the native Hindus as well as Nika Malik<sup>13</sup>.

This deduction is based on various connotations of the word Nawait and Naita. The meaning of Nawait is given as 'a name given to Muhammedan of mixed race in the Koṅkaṇ and South Kanara<sup>14</sup>. The Koṅkaṇi word Nawait is derived from Sanskrit word Nava menaing new, thus Nawait means 'newcomers'. It is also interpreted as new convert<sup>15</sup>. Similarly, word Nakuwa as well as Naita which means shipmaster is also associated with Alunaka. The above implies that Alunaka and his successors embraced Islam after the arrival of Malik Kafur's army into Deccan.

However, in earlier narrative it has been already mentioned that, descendents of the early Arab settlers in the Koṅkaṇ region were called Nawaits. Secondly, according to tradition, Naitas were those people who belonged to the Prophets tribe i.e. Queresh tribe<sup>16</sup>, who took asylam in India to escape from persecution

of Hajjaj bin Yusuf. They were famous for their skill as ship pilot' striking across the ocean from Arabia to India'<sup>17</sup>. Furthermore, Dafferkhan (Jafferkhan) is called 'Jamait' in the bakhar which means a person of direct Arab descent <sup>18</sup> These early settlers followed Shafi school of jurisprudence whereas later converts followed Hanafi school. It is also important to note that those who were converted from Koli community are known as Daldies.

Above discussion indicates that, even before the advent of Khilji's army in Deccan, Muslims were well settled in this region, especially along the coast. They enjoyed privileged and influential status and were politically active as well. The writings of foreign travellers and historians give the impression that the Balaharas i.e. the Rāshtrakūṭas of Malkhed were extremely favourable towards Muslim Arab and employed them as administrators, governors, etc. Sulaiman writes 'there does not exist among ruler, a prince who likes the Arabs more than Balahara, and his subjects follow his example'<sup>19</sup>.

The observations of early writers can easily be supported by inscriptional evidences. Chinchini<sup>20</sup> inscription mentions that Madhumat (muhammad) who belonged to 'Tajik' community ruled over the region around Sanjan during the reign of kings Kṛishṇa II and Indra III of Rāshtrakūṭa dynasty. It is significant to note that Tajik means those Arab who were born and brought up in foreign land. Other rulers too employed Tajiks as governors. Panjim inscription of Kadamba Jayakēśi I states that Chhadma who belonged to Tajik-vaṁśa was capable and popular administrator<sup>21</sup>. Śilāhāra also appointed Arabs on important posts, as Kharepatan inscription mentions that Vasaid an Arab was a *mahāmātya* of Śilāhāra king Anantadēvapāl<sup>22</sup>. Vasaid, Madhumat, Aliya, and Chhadma who were prominent Arab citizen of Śilāhāras and Kadambas were called *nawvitika* which means a person who earns his livelihood from ship. Similar meaning of the word Naita is given by Garcia da Orta. He describes Naitas as 'solely traders by sea'<sup>23</sup>. Tradition of appointing Naitas on responsible position was upheld by Yadavas as well, is evident from Khoprad inscription, wherein Muhammad Prostradi is mentioned as a deputy of the governor of Koṅkaṇ region<sup>24</sup>. Thus appointment of Ālunaka as a governor was in continuation of this tradition and not the beginning of new one.

Hence legends of the Muslim inhabitants, various epigraphic records corroborated with traveller's accounts conclusively establish the antiquity of Nawait

community. It also shows that they were well settled in this region, enjoyed socio-political prominence long before the coming of the rulers from North India. In the absence of indigeneous literary sources epigraphic records helps us to construct history of this community which will facilitate our understanding of present.

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## PERSIAN INSCRIPTIONS OF UMDATU'L MULK GHAZIU'D DIN KHAN FHIROZ JANG FROM BID DISTRICT

Vidya Prabhu

The Bid district has several inscriptions belonging to the reign of Aurangzeb. The script of these records is Nasta'liq but not of a very high order, and the language is Persian. In the entire set, inscriptions of Ghaziu'd Din Khan Firoz Jang throws light on the building activities of Mughuls during the final Deccan campaign of Aurangzeb.

According to tradition, Bid was called Durgavati, and its name was subsequently changed to Champavati. There are yet two more versions as to how the present name came to be given to the town. The first of these tells that a Muslim ruler finding water at a very low depth in the town named it Bhir which in Persian means 'water'. The second one states that as the district is situated at the foot of the Balaghat range it looks as if it is in a hole and the name bil (meaning hole in Marathi) was given to it which in course of time corrupted into Bid."<sup>1</sup> History has recorded that about the year 1326 Muhammad bin Tughlaq changed the name of Champavati to Bid. He made it the head quarters of one of his Deccan province. "A subhedar by name Junakhan belonging to the Tughlaq dynasty introduced many reforms for the welfare of the ruled. He is said to have been responsible in diverting the course of the Bendsura (Bindusura) river from west to east."<sup>2</sup> The Bid has witnessed rule of Bahamani, Nizamshahi and Mughals. Under the Mughals, it was a pargana headquarter in the subha, i.e. province of Ahmednagar.

During Aurangzeb's final phase of Deccan campaign, Mughals were continuously pursuing the Marathas in various directions but their activities produced little effect on the Marathas. The district of Bid which during the Mughal period was divided into sarkar of Bid and Dharur could not remain unaffected in this bitter contest.

"The Tarikhe Dilkusha described the conflict of Rav Dalpat against the Marathas in the district of Bid to guard communications between Aurangabad and Bijapur."<sup>3</sup> The disorder in Deccan continued for long and district of Bid was no exception. Aurangzeb was making efforts to capture the Maratha forts at enormous cost with men and money.

“The inscription on Kotwali Darwaza of Bid is of considerable historical interest. It records the names of various fortresses captured by Aurangzeb in the Deccan and the appointment of Ghaziud Din Fhiroz Jang as the subhedar of the newly captured territory.”<sup>4</sup>

#### Translation

In the name of God the most merciful, the most compassionate !..... Sultan Abu'l muzaffar. Muhiu'd Din Muhammad Aurangzeb, the victorious king..... Bijapur, Haidarabad, Adani, Narnala, Jingt etc. was conquered. And in the year 47 (Regnal), when, after the capture of the fort of Khelna..... the governorship of the province, extending from Bijapur to Khujasta Bunyad (Aurangabad) was associated with the distinguished name of the Nawab of exalted court, 'Umdatul Mulk Ghaziud Din Khan Fhiroz Jang.....

During this period, Aurangzeb maintained two highly mobile, aggressive field armies. Each was headed by experienced noblemen. The first battle group was commanded by Zulfikar Khan Nusrat Jung and the second group was commanded by the Turani Nobleman Ghaziud Din Khan Fhiroz Jang. According to this inscription Aurangzeb has assigned him an important province extending from Bijapur to Aurangabad to safeguard the communication with Burhanpur.

The family of Ghaziud Din Fhiroz Jang belonged to central Asia. “Khwaja Abid, the father of Ghaziud Din Fhiroz Jang migrated from Samarkand and obtained service under Aurangzeb in 1658. He was killed in the siege of Golkonda in 1687. Ghaziud Din Fhiroz Jang also migrated from central Asia in 1670 and rapidly rose to the position of commander under Aurangzeb.”<sup>5</sup> His son Nizam ul-Mulk was the founder of Nizam dynasty in Deccan. Ghaziud Din Fhiroz Jang served as governor of Bijapur and Berar and took an active role in the defence against Maratha incursions from that province. In spite of that the Marathas overran the entire province of the Deccan and even penetrated into Gujarat and Malva.

In 1703 the Maratha Sardar Nemaji Shinde looted Berar province and proceeded to Malva. Aurangzeb deputed Ghaziud Din Fhiroz Jang against Nemaji Shinde. Fhiroz Jang, defeated Nemaji near Sironj. But Nemaji escaped and Fhiroz Jang chased Shinde all the way across Malwa into Bundelkhand. For his victory. “Fhiroz Jang was awarded with title of *Siphasalar* and *mansabdari* of 7000 rank along with one crore Dam reward.”<sup>7</sup> Most probably to commemorate this event he has founded a small quarter or *pura* called Ghaziuddin nagar.



This inscription the puranapura records.

### Translation

“O Opener - During the caliphate of the king, the defender of the faith, Abu'l Muzaffar Muhiu'd Din Muhammad Aurangzeb Alamgir, the Victorious and the civil and military administration of the Nawab of exalted rank 'Umdatul Mulk Ghaziu'd Din Khan Bahadur Fhiroz Jang extending from Daru'z Zafar Bizapur to Khujasta Bunyad (Aurangabad) through the efforts of the pilgrim of the two holy shrines (of Mekka and Medina) Haji Sadr Shah Beg, Naib Faujdar and the co-operation of Siddhuji Deshmukh, Dhondaji Deshpandya and Shimbhu Seth this auspicious *pura*, styled Ghaziu'd Din Nagar was built.

The inscriptions are bilingual both in Persian and Marathi. The names of Maratha Deshmukhs and Deshpande are mentioned in this inscription. This must be the part of strategy to appease the Deshmukh and Deshpande and to win their loyalty as both Tarabai and Aurangzeb were competing for the loyalty of large Deshmukh families. Both offered rights and recognition to them. “The other inscription on Dhonda Gate states that building of Dhondapura bastion was completed in 1704 under the superintendence Deshpande. Another inscription in the tomb of Shahinshah wali records the building of a mosque by Haji Sadr Shah during the government of Ghaziu'd Din Khan Fhiroz Jang.”<sup>8</sup>

The inscriptions under analysis are very important as they bring to light the building activities of Mughuls in Bid. It is interesting to note how the Mughuls, side by side with their conquest, improved the town coming under their sway.

Though ample source materials in literary form are available, very few gives information about architectural activity. The inscription immortalise the builder as well as the monument and supply correct dates, names and titles of personalities.

### Notes and References :

1. *Maharashtra State Gazetteer, BHIR District*, Bombay 1969, pp.
2. *Ibid.*, p.642
3. Pagdi Setu Madhav Rao, *Mughul Aani Marathe*, Pune 1963, pp.173
4. *Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica(EIM)*. 1919, pp.16-17

- 5. *Maharashtra State Gazetteers, Bombay, op.cit., p.74*
- 6. Pagdi, Setu Madhav Rao, *Marathe va Aurangzeb, Pune, p.133*
- 7. (*EIM*) ed. by Yazdani 1919-1920, *op.cit., p.21*
- 8. *Ibid., p.24.*

Inscription on the Kotwali Darwaza, Bir.

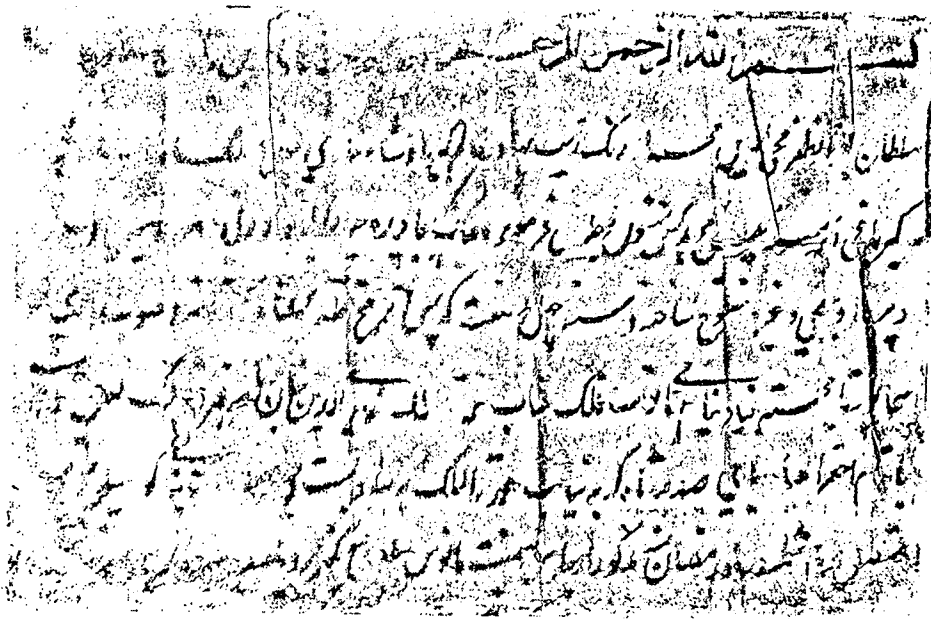
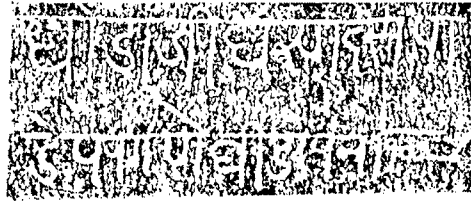


PLATE II.

Scale 1/2

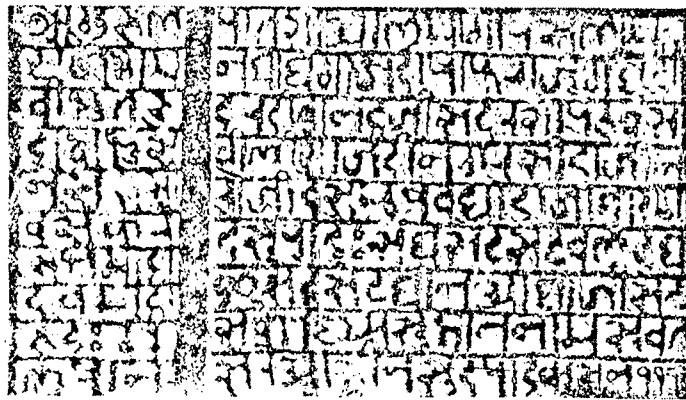
Persian Inscriptions of Umdatul Mulq Ghaziud din Khan Feroz Jang

(a). Marathi inscription on Dhondipura Gate, Bir.



Scale 1/2

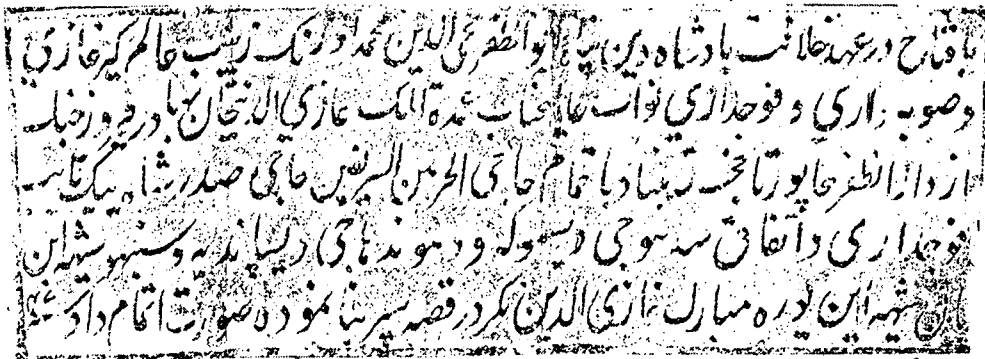
(b) Nagari inscription from the Old Pura (Market), Bir.



Scale 1/66

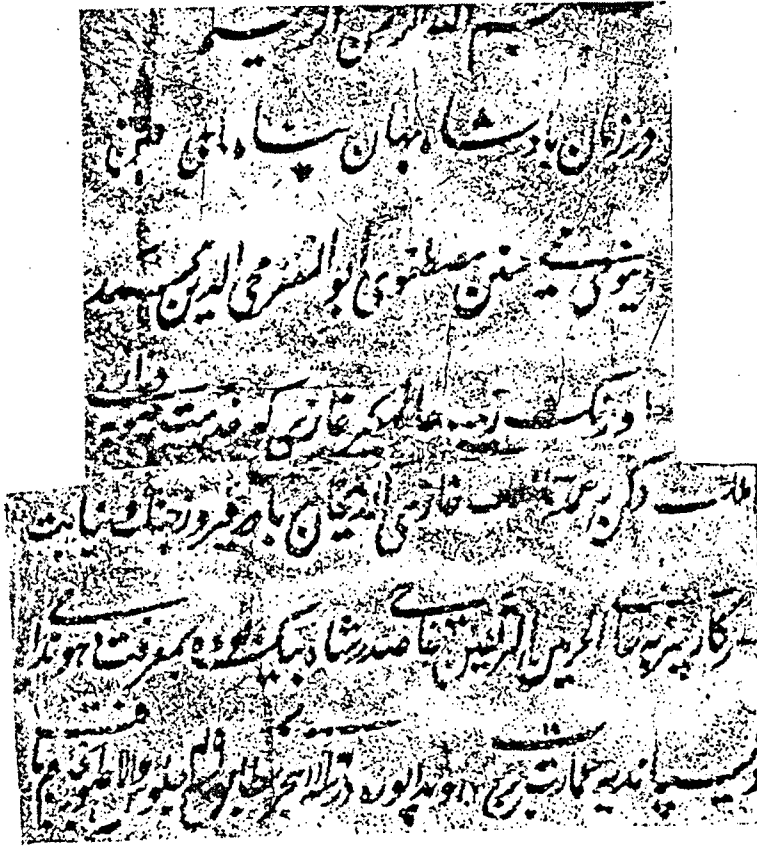
Scale 1/66

(b) Inscription from the Old Pura (Market), Bir.



Persian Inscriptions of Umdatul Mulk Ghaziu'd din Khan Fhiroz Jang

(b) Inscription on the Dhonda Gate, Bir.



Scale 1/66

PLATE IV.

## ŚRĪPERUMBŪDŪR AS GLEANED FROM INSCRIPTIONS

P.D. Balaji

Śrīperumbūdūr is a village and the head quarters of a taluk by its name, in the Kanchipuram District. In this village, there are twenty-nine inscriptions that are carved on the Bhūtapurīśvarar and Ādikēśavaperumāl temples. The earliest inscription<sup>1</sup> is found in the Śiva temple and dated in 1165 A.D.<sup>2</sup> whereas, the latest is at the Ādikēśavaperumāl temple dated in 1634 A.D.<sup>3</sup> These records are assignable to Chōla, Vijayanagara and Nāyaka periods, and throw a flood of light on the administration, society, economy and religious aspects of Śrīperumbūdūr in the medieval period.

In the absence of any tangible records datable to Pallava period, we are unable to trace the history of the place until Chōla period. During the Chola period, Śrīperumbūdūr was referred to as '*Bhūtapuri*', probably named after Būdīśvarar, the presiding deity of the Śiva temple and situated in the administrative division of Māganūr-nāḍu of Seṅgāṭṭu-kōṭṭam in Jayaṅkoṇḍachōla-maṇḍalam as gleaned from the epigraphs dated between 12th and 13th century A.D.<sup>4</sup>

It was a *brahmadēya* settlement with a surname 'Kaitava - kaitava-chaturvēdi maṅgalam'<sup>5</sup> and administered by a *mahāsabhā*. It is inferred, that the place was not a prominent Vaishṇavite centre originally. It was only after the birth of Rāmānuja(1017 A.D.) the place assumed some significance among Vaishṇavites. Probably this factor would have induced the Vijayanagar rulers, who were the followers of Vaishṇavism to extend their patronage. It is well endorsed by the absence of lithic records prior to 1565 A.D. in the Ādikēśavaperumāl temple. Thus, by 16th cent. A.D. Śrīperumbūdūr was considered to be a sacred centre for the Vaishṇavites.

In ancient days economy of a village had always revolved around a temple. The presence of number of looms in the *tirumaḍaiviḷāgam* of Būdapurīśvarar temple is interesting. To increase the temple income, the Kaikkōlas owning looms in the *tirumaḍaiviḷāgam* were directed to pay one *paṇam* per annum as *tarikāḍan* on each loom in 1430 A.D.<sup>6</sup>

Besides, Vellālas produced agricultural products and their presence in this village is well attested by the lithic records. They had their own guilds. A *maṇḍapa* was built by the members of the *chitramēḷi* guild. It was referred to as

*chitramēḷi-tirumaṇḍapam* in an undated record<sup>7</sup> of Sundara-pāṇḍya. In order to carry out the repairs to this *chitramēḷi-tirumaṇḍapam* a village called Iruṅḡḷam was granted as *dēvadāna*.

Hectic commercial activity is reflected in the epigraphs by the mention of different type of coinage terms such as *paṇam*,<sup>8</sup> *poṇṇ*<sup>9</sup> *varāhan*,<sup>10</sup> *geṭṭivarāhan*,<sup>11</sup> *geṭṭi veṅkaṭapati varāhan*<sup>12</sup> and *pudu varāhan*<sup>13</sup>. In 1591 A.D.<sup>14</sup> an interest of 96 *paṇam* accrued from out of the deposit of 40 *poṇṇ* was utilized to carry out the repairs of a tank. For the same purpose in the same year, a deposit of 19 *varāhan* yielding an annual interest of 24 *paṇam* was endowed.<sup>15</sup> A comparative study of interest rate of these two deposits, discloses that the face value of *poṇṇ* and *varāhan* stood at 1.2. Thus, by 16th century A.D. Śrīperumbūdūr had become a centre of commercial activity. Therefore, its local administration had now been shifted from *mahāsabhā* to *nagarattār*, which is attested by the inscriptions dated from 1565 A.D.<sup>16</sup> onwards.

As far as the religious history of the place is concerned the Śiva temple (Bhūtapurīśvarar) seems to be more ancient than the Vishṇu temple (Ādikēśavaperumāl). Even this Śiva temple does not appear to be very ancient since, its earliest inscription belongs to the beginning of the 12th century A.D.<sup>17</sup> Till 15th century A.D. this temple was the chief religious attraction of the place. Telugu Chōḷa chief Vijayaṅḍagōpāla himself had granted nearly 7500 *kulīs* of land to this temple in 1278 A.D.<sup>18</sup> The latest epigraph found in this temple is dated to 1430 A.D.<sup>19</sup> Thereafter, its importance has been relegated to background. This coincides with the upsurge of Vaishṇavism, ably supported by royal patronage. It is well endorsed by the inscriptions found at Ādikēśavaperumāl temple, the earliest of which is dated back to 1565 A.D.<sup>20</sup> By this time the Vijayanagara rulers, who were the staunch followers of Vaishṇavism erected a separated shrine for Rāmānuja within the above temple complex.

A number of endowments were also instituted during their reign. In 1567 A.D.<sup>21</sup> Chinna-nāyaka, son of Aḍaiṇṇan-vayyapa-nāyaka, a local chief, who held some villages as *nāyakatanam*, had been gifted to the temple. In yet another instance, Gōpāla Tirumala-nāyaka, a *daḷavōy* of *mahāmaṇḍalēśvara* Rāmarāja Veṅkaṭayyadēva- *mahārāja* (i.e., Veṅkaṭa II) donated 500 *poṇṇ* in 1582 A.D.<sup>22</sup> Likewise, in 1590 A.D.<sup>23</sup> Rāghava-nāyaka a local chief of the area, instructed the tenants in occupation of the *tiruviḍaiyāṭṭam* villages of the temple to pay annually each one *kurūṇi* of paddy for using the threshing floor (*kalam*). From the records

it is inferred that Rāghava-nāyaka had continued to be the local chief of this area till 1595 A.D.<sup>24</sup> It was during his time, Gōpu, the treasurer of Kṛishṇājīyamma, the queen of Veṅkaṭa II donated 10 *varāhan* for offerings to be made on the natal star day of Tirumaliśai-ālvār every month. Chinnama-nāyaka was yet another local chief, mentioned in a record of 1608 A.D. as a donor.<sup>25</sup>

Scholars in Vaishṇavism were honoured also. In 1611 A.D.,<sup>26</sup> during the reign of Veṅkaṭa II a village called Chittura was given as *sarvamānya* to one Ammalāchārya a scholar, well versed in the *Vēdānta-tarka* and 118 *purāṇas*. However, 23 years later in 1634 A.D.<sup>27</sup>, this village was purchased from Amalāchārya and redistributed it to Vaishṇavites by Veṅkaṭapatidēva III.

Being a Viṣṇu temple, with the support of endowments instituted, a number of festivals were celebrated. *Mahānavami* festival for ten days till *Vijayadaśami*,<sup>28</sup> *Māśi* festival for five days,<sup>29</sup> *Paṅguni* festival<sup>30</sup> and *Chittirai* festival<sup>31</sup> were considered to be major festivals celebrated for more than one day. Besides, there were also minor festivals conducted on the natal days of Tirumaṅgai ālvār,<sup>32</sup> Tirumaliśai ālvār,<sup>33</sup> Tirukkachchinambi<sup>34</sup> and Rāmānuja.<sup>35</sup> On these days provisions were made for feeding the pilgrims at this centre. In 1565 A.D.<sup>36</sup> during the reign of Sadāśivarāya provisions were made for feeding the *paradēśi Śrīvaishṇavas* halting at *Rāmānujakūṭam*. The festivals in the *Māśi*, *Paṅguni* and *Chittirai* were started with a flag hoisting. Separate provision for supplying the yellow rope for the flag hoisting was made by one Vēdāntāchar alias Eṭṭūr Tirumalai Tātāchār by depositing 16 *Varāhaṅ* in the year 1611A.D.<sup>37</sup>

The epigraphs also throw a flood of light on the temple administration. As far as the Śiva temple is concerned, it was under the control of *śivabrāhmaṇas*. They received all the donations. In a record dated 1208 A.D.<sup>38</sup> *śivabrāhmaṇa* by name Periyapillai, who was a *nārpattēṇṇāyirabhāṭṭaṅ* and his brother Śigandanāthabhāṭṭaṅ were the temple administrators. The epithet *nārpattēṇṇāyiram* prefixed to Periyapillai, probably indicates the association of that body with the *śivabrāhmaṇas* in which Periyapillai served as a member.

As said earlier, after the advent of Vijayanagar rulers, Vaishṇavism, began to flourish. In this phase majority of the inscriptions were found in the Ādikēśava perumāḷ temple and they present a very good account on the role of *tātāchāryas*<sup>39</sup> in the temple administration. In 1565 A.D.<sup>40</sup> Pārāṅkuśa Ayyaṅgār was the *śrīkāryam* of the temple. Subsequently in 1582 A.D.<sup>41</sup>, Eṭṭūr Tirumalai kumāra tātāchārya was the *śrīkāryam*(manager) of the temple. However, around

1590 A.D.<sup>42</sup>, Tiruvaraṅgam Appanayyaṅgar assumed the charge of temple administration replacing *Tātāchāryas*. Very next year in 1591 A.D.<sup>43</sup>, his son Ayya Iyyangar assumed the *śrīkāryam*. Thus for a brief period of about ten years, the temple administration was not under the *Tātāchāryas*. Once again their entry into the temple administration was noticed in a record dated to 1594 A.D.<sup>44</sup> in which it is categorically stated that Eṭṭūr Tirumalai kumāra Tātāchārya was the manager and Tiruvaraṅgam Appanayyaṅgar was his agent (*kāryakarta*). In 1595 A.D.<sup>45</sup> during the tenure of the same *tātāchārya*, Varadayyaṅgar was his *kāryakarta*. In 1596 A.D.<sup>46</sup> the temple temporarily went into the management of Tiruvaraṅgam Appanayyaṅgar, who was a *kāryakarta* in 1594 A.D. also.<sup>47</sup> Finally we hear of Eṭṭūr Immaḍi Tirumalai kumāra *Tātāchārya* as temple manager around 1634 A.D.<sup>49</sup> His *kāryakarta* was Vaidyanātha Ayyar. Thus the inscriptions brought to light the role of *Tātāchāryas* in the administration of the Ādikēśava-perumāl temple at Śrīperumbūdūr.

#### Notes and references:

1. *AREp.*, 1922, Nos. 186-207; *Ibid.*, 1962-64, Nos. 199-201.
2. *Ibid.*, 1963-64, No.199.
3. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.201.
4. *Ibid.*, 1922, Nos.203 and 205.
5. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.206.
6. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.207.
7. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.205.
8. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.207.
9. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.194.
10. *Ibid.*, 1922, Nos. 190, 195-96.
11. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.191.
12. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.198.
13. *Ibid.*, 1922, No. 192.
14. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.196.



15. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.195.
16. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.198
17. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.199.
18. *Ibid.*, 1922, No. 203.
19. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.207.
20. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.187.
21. *Ibid.*, 1922, No. 186.
22. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.194.
23. *Ibid.*, 1922, No. 189.
24. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.199.
25. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.197.
26. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.188
27. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.201.
28. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.191.
29. *Ibid.*, 1922, Nos.188 and 197.
30. *Ibid.*
31. *AREp.*, 1922, Nos.188 and 201.
32. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.196.
33. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.195.
34. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.198.
35. *Ibid.*, 1922, Nos.197 and 201.
36. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.187.
37. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.188.
38. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.206.

39. In Prapannāmrutam Anantacharya says that Tātāchāryas were the descendants of the Śrīśailanātha or Tirumalainambi, the uncle and teacher of Rāmānuja. They migrated from Tirumalai to Eṭṭūr and from there to Hampi. After the fall of Vijayanagar rule they migrated to different places. One branch came and settled in the vicinity of Śrīperumbūdūr and Kāñchī.
40. *AREp.*, 1922, No.187.
41. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.194.
42. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.189.
43. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.196.
44. *Ibid.*, 1922, Nos.190-91.
45. *Ibid.*, 1922, Nos.199-200.
46. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.198.
47. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.191.
48. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.188.
49. *Ibid.*, 1922, No.201.

## A PORTUGUESE INSCRIPTION ON A PEDRA DE MALDICA0 : A CURSE OR A THREAT

Swapna H. Samel

The Portuguese were the first European to establish a foothold in India. Portuguese rule in Goa has been the longest of any 'colonial power' in any land. The most remarkable feature has been the fact that the Portuguese were the first to arrive in India and the last to leave its shore as a colonial power.<sup>1</sup> The Portuguese who claimed to have come to India in search of Christians and spices slowly tried to establish a political domination.<sup>2</sup> On 3rd March 1510 Albuquerque took possession of old Goa from Ismail Adil Shah, the Sultan of Bijapur. Alfanso de Albuquerque after final assault on Goa island in 1510 laid a solid foundation to the Portuguese colonial structure.

The social history of Goa is very much interwoven with the church history of this territory. The Goan society in fact was essentially Hindu society with its rigid caste system, rituals and sacrifices. The Portuguese seems to have gathered some information about Goa, its strategic position and commercial importance, years before they conquered it. The conversion of Hindus and Muslim during the Portuguese rule in Goa in 16th century has a very interesting history. Conversion was a result of various forces at play that kept changing according to historical demands and several other considerations. Terms such as 'conversion' [conversao], 'Christendom'[cristandade], 'making Christendom'[fazes cristandade], 'faith' [fee], 'planting the faith' [plantara Fee], 'spiritual conquest' [conquista espiritual] and 'the affair of conversion' [negocio da conversao] appears several times in Indo-Portuguese historical sources.<sup>3</sup> The state and the church joined their hands to spread Christianity in Goa. Missionaries used various modes, methods, carriers, intensives, and penalties to convert Goans. The project of search for 'Christian and Spices' brought Portuguese state and the church together and they remained together.

The frequency of group baptism and the number of conversions performed in Goa during sixteen and seventeen centuries makes one think of the methods and measures used to achieve them.<sup>4</sup> The missionaries used same methods of conversion wherever they went depending on human and financial resources, royal support and local reaction. There were *strong methods* i.e. by force ;

there were *weak methods* i.e. charity, kindness and social service and intensives, constant preaching, appeal to emotions and many more. Numerous decrees and privileges in favour of converts were passed in Goa. Privileges like free education, favour in employment, social status, etc., were given to newly converts. With the growth of Christianity the First concilio provincial [provincial Ecclesiastical Assembly] was held in Goa in 1567. The provincial councils was law making body of the inquisition, formal rules and ordinance. These councils set forth laws in 1567, 1575, 1583, 1592 and 1600<sup>5</sup>. Assembly had passed some decrees, which created suffocating atmosphere in Goa. like Decree No.7 which states that those who on being converted induced other to follow the sects and their cults of superstitions, would be subjected to grave punishment.<sup>6</sup> This was applicable to those neo-converts who could not give up their old traditions in spite of being converted. Decrees deliberated against all types of ceremonies and festivities and modes of worship, adoration of the demons like deities, cremation of dead and other rites like fasting, procession, thread ceremony, applying sandalwood paste on the forehead, animal sacrifice, etc. Some decrees which were passed to do favours to neo-converts like tax gathering was entrusted to Christians alone. [Decree 15]. The neo-converts were given the concessions of non-payment of tithes for 15 years from the dates of conversion.<sup>7</sup> It prohibited the Hindu painter to paint the images of divine cult, the goldsmith to make the chalices, crosses [Decree 28]. It prohibited the converts to attach the caste to his son. Nor he could allow his son to marry Hindu girl [Decree 42]. There were restrictions on colourful, glittering and noisy marriage functions of Hindus.

In 1594 a royal letter reminded the viceroy Matias de Albuquerque to observe all the instructions regarding prohibition of public ceremonies. The Hindu festivals especially Bardez and Salcete were banned for attracting many new converts to them and for causing a great harm to conversion. The Hindu had no official permission to perform their ceremonies even inside their own house. The Jesuit chronicles Francisco de Souza, declare that by 1567 no less than 300 Hindu temples in Bardez were razed to the ground or burnt. The income accruing from temple lands was set aside to promote the charitable, educational and religious work of the church.<sup>8</sup> The fanatical rulers even started usurping the right to supervise the education and upbringing of orphans among Goans. Later this claim was extended to cover even children whose father alone had died. Such infants were baptized and placed in Christian homes or orphanages where they were raised in a new faith. Thus Hindu orphans were liable to be educated

and baptized by the Jesuits.<sup>9</sup> Naturally, regardless of the methods and motives of conversions employed by the missionaries, found great local resistance and oppositions.

One such incident remained in the memory of village Anjuna. In 1628, a Hindu widow from Anjuna was ordered by Franciscan Rector of Michael's church, Joao Oliverira to bring her posthumous child to the church for baptism. This order enraged her people then when Parish priest Francisco de Lisboa visited the settlement they assaulted him physically. The priest was attacked so mercilessly that priest had to be carried off to the infirmary of St. Francis at old Goa for treatment.<sup>10</sup> This act of local people had obviously enraged the rulers. D.Luis de Brito, acting Governor of Goa [1622-28] ordered those guilty of assault to be punished. The houses of guilty were demolished. The land was deliberately salted, rendering it infertile. This was not enough hence to avoid these kinds of incidences, as a grim and indelible reminder of a brutal event ; a solid padrao [Stone Pillar] was erected. On this six foot high monolith was inscribed the following warning in Portuguese.<sup>11</sup>

**'Governado este Estado, no anno do Nosso Senhor Jesus Christo de 1628, D.Frei Luis de Brito, mandou a Delacao roubar, assolare salgar as cases que estavam neste logardegredando os gentios que as habitavam para Gattes nas outras penas, proque sahindo d'ello puzeram maos violentas com excesso em im religioso, Vigario da Egreia da Aldea e para memoria do Padrao, que nenhuma pessao tirara d'este legar sob pena de ser mais rigorosamente castigado.'**

#### **Translation**

This state governed, in the year of our Lord Jesus Christ of 1628. Frei Louis de Brito, the supreme court ordered to loot, demonstrate and destroy the houses which were on this site sending in the exile the Hindu community who were staying therein to Ghats and other penalties, because coming out if it behaved excessively violent with a religious person Vicar of Parish church of the village and in memory of punishment to defeat such case ordered this movement to be erected which no person would remove from this place, on penalty of being more severely punished.

Portuguese inscription under study is a unique of its kind. The local resistance and opposition to conversion in Goa have not been systematically dealt with due to insufficient historical evidences about it. Since the missionaries would

not report reaction to conversion easily. This inscription records the incident of local resistance and opposition to the Portuguese rule in general and missionaries in particular. The inscription reveals the fact that the people in Goa were not passive recipients at the mercy of the missionaries. Secondly, the missionaries also accepted the fact that the reaction against conversions was by no means negligible. That is the reason such a huge pillar was erected with warning. Portuguese did not underestimate the local opposition, to avoid the repetitions; the diplomat rulers took proper care by giving severe punishments to guilty. They even took further care by erecting pillar with inscription, so that it should remain in the memory of the people and generations to come.

The Franciscans eventually pardoned the guilty, the matter was taken up to the council of State and directed by the Viceroy D. Francisco De Gama to the king of Portugal who decided in 1634 that only those who were not deeply involved in the attack should be spared. Those who could fled to Pernem [neighbouring area] thus lost their right as ganvkars. The ganvkars were the male descendants of the original settler in the village.<sup>12</sup> Some who made bold attempt to return after two or three years were given only half of their former share of the community benefits.<sup>13</sup> Thus we can state here that due to vigorous religious policy this period witnessed lot of interference by the Portuguese in the affairs to the centuries old institution.

One very interesting finding appears from the inscription is that Portuguese wanted to punish and threaten the local people of Anjuna by various ways. Firstly, government ordered to loot, demolish and destroy the houses of guilty. If one studies carefully the initial years of the Portuguese rule in Goa, finds the fact that Portuguese were always non-supportive for the economic growth of the non-Christians. They had created number of laws against the growth of non-Christians. But these laws were designed to encourage conversion to Christianity ; by denying non-Christians the right to practice their religion freely by excluding them from the top level of the political process and by attempting to limit their economic activities, it was hoped that conversion would seem desirable.<sup>14</sup>

Portuguese even wanted local non-Christians to leave the village and migrate to Ghats, which is part of neighbouring Maharashtra. Today migration to ghats sounds very simple. But in those days Portuguese described Ghat as being 'so high that it takes two days to get to the top where there is dense forest'.

Albuquerque's son described the Ghats as being 'very steep and rocky' adding picturesquely that 'this range hangs over Goa and over the sea like an awning'<sup>15</sup> That is the reason the inscription under study also reveals the fact that guilty were forced to migrate towards ghats, which was described as sending in the exile, may be sort of severe punishment to the Portuguese.

Another thought provoking reality appears over here is that the property of the guilty was destroyed or confiscated and their rights of gavancars were taken off. Then question comes here as to who was really benefited by these punishment? Obviously Portuguese and the new convert in the village. There are numerous references, which proves that along with other property, Portuguese had destroyed many temples also. An order of the governor on June 30, 1541 states, 'All the Hindu temples be destroyed not leaving a single one on any of the islands'.<sup>16</sup> In 1567 Diogo Rodrigues, captain of the fort of Rachol pulled down 280 temples in Salsete alone. He did not spare even a single place of worship.<sup>17</sup> All the major temples of the island of Goa were demolished by 1540. In 1560 the year of Inquisition was set up, 13,092 Hindus were forcibly converted.<sup>18</sup> Village life in those days was centered upon the temple, every activity had to be initiated and ended with offering to the village deities. The revenue of some of the most fertile paddy field of the village was applied to the expense of the cult and to the maintenance of the temple priest and other servants.<sup>19</sup> After the demolition of the temples the surplus revenue and other benefits was transferred to a new religious order. Sometime the property of the existing temples was taken away for the maintenance of newly built churches and monasteries. Hence, one can argue here that churches in Goa were partly nurtured on the properties of the temples.<sup>20</sup> The demolition of religious centers also encouraged the conversion of the families, which depended on the charity of the temples since they had no other option than conversion to Christianity. In the village Anjuna, property which was confiscated must have been transferred to the new converts of Anjuna.

The most important fact, which is also supported by the inscription under study, is that Portuguese rule was the best example of the political cum religious rule. The incident in Anjuna was of purely religious in nature. But the rulers and the party attacked belonged to the same nationality and religion, the former supported the later. Even the rule of Portuguese was furnished by the Portuguese political constitution which states, 'The Portuguese catholic mission overseas and the institutions for preparing the personnel for their services and those of the padroedo shall enjoy judicial personality and shall be protected and assisted

by the state, as institution of teaching and assistance under the terms of the concordants and other agreements signed with the Holy see'.<sup>21</sup>

In the course of this period this massive pillar collapsed and broke into two. It came to be known as in Konkani as *Morkachi Fator* and in Portuguese as *Pedra de Maldicao*, both means a 'curse stone'. A riddle to many of the monument has turned into sort of shrine, some burns the candle and some burnt sticks of agarbatti.<sup>22</sup> This great monument which witnessed the methods and depth of the conversion by Portuguese should be protected by at least enclosing it within a railing and put up a plaque explaining its significance.

Thus by the end of the 17th century the Portuguese with the help of the church had succeeded to a great extent in converting a substantially large part of the Goan population to Christianity. The choice of foreign rule offered Goans was the cross or sword. Conversion in colonial context has been associated with force or favours of material and social nature. In Goa religious conversion was done on a large scale but cultural conversion which was eqally important and more difficult took longer time than conversion. Missionaries converted some people but the new religion could not wipe out old customs. Making conversion was neither easy nor without grave reaction and obstruction. These reactions and obstructions created mixed responses to the activity of conversion, which at times forced some changes on the official stands. Study of the resistance and impediments to the work of the conversion can be useful to re-construct a more realistic story of the reception and rejection of Christianity in Goa. No other section of the Indian society must have suffered as much for sticking to assert their rights during the European expansion in India.

#### Notes and References :

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5. Karin Larsan, *Faces of Goa*, Gyan Prakashan, New Delhi, 1998,p.121.
6. P.P.Shirodakar, *Researches in Indo-Portuguese History*, Vol. II, p.41.



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  10. *Ibid.*
  11. Albuquerque Teresa, *op.cit.*, pp.12-13.
  12. Esteves Sarto, *Political Leadership in Goa*, Bangalore, 1986, p.6.
  13. Albuquerque Teresa, *op.cit.*, p.13.
  14. M.N.Pearson, *op.cit.*, p.95
  15. *Ibid.*, p.73.
  16. R.P.Rao, *Portuguese Rule in Goa, 1510-1961*, Bombay, 1963, p.41
  17. *Ibid.*
  18. *Ibid.*
  19. R.De'soza Teotonia, *Medieval Goa, A Socio-Economic Study*, New Delhi, 1978, p.21.
  20. *Many churches in Goa have been constructed by pulling down existing religious centers.*
- Reis Magos Church in Bardez replaced a temple. The stone temple tank was removed to build a cemetery.
- The church of Mapuca was built on the ruins of temple.
- Shanti Durga temple originally at Cincolin, now in Quepem.
- Albuquerque built the cathedral of St. Catherine on the site of a large mosque he had destroyed.
21. P.R Rao, *op.cit.*, p.42.
  22. Albuquerque Teresa, *op.cit.*, p.13.

## ZODIAC SIGNS DEPICTED ON PAŚUPATI SEAL

Ramesh Jain

There are living beings depicted on the Pasupati Seal i.e - (a) Rhinoceros, (b) Bison, (c) Seated horned personage, in the Yoga posture, on a pedestal underneath of which are marked the figures of two deers, standing face to face whose heads are turned backwards, (d) Tiger, (e) Human being , (f) Elephant.

These beings seem to be falling parallel to the six zodiac signs from Taurus (*Vṛishabha*) to Libra (*Tulā*). As depicted in the chart, showing the parallelisms off the zoidic sings with the Indian cultural entities, the central horned personage falls parallel to moon (Chandra) or Vāyu/Prāṇa (breath) or the *Āditya Savitri*. The seated horned figure is shown here in the *Ūrdhva-Rētas* position. The meaning of the term is "keeping the semen above" (=with erected male organ). This position of the personage which may also mean or the presence of the lord of wind (*Vāyudēv*). As *Vāyu*, this personage is identified having 'deers' as his mounts. So the pair of deers marked under the pedestal also supports the identity of the seated personage.

The rhinoceros coming at the position of Taurus is understandable. In the parallelism chart, the Phoenician letter 'Resh' (head of an ox) coming parallel to the zodiac sign Taurus. In Sanskrit the word *Gaṇḍa* means head or the profile of an animal's head and as well as it stands for Rhinoceros. Hence, the presence of rhinoceros on the position of Taurus signs stands justified.

The figure of a bison at the position of Gemini can be justified on two counts (a). In a regional Indian Language (Assamese) the word 'Mithuna' (Gemini) is applied to depict a local variety of bison. (b) The position of the third Zodiac sign (Gemini) is falling parallel to the position of the god of death "Yama" of the Indian Pantheon on the parallelism chart. *Yama* has the bison (*Mahisha*) as his mount.

The identity of the fourth zodiac sign has already been discussed above in the form of Vāyu. The fifth zodiac sign i.e. Leo is depicted on the seal in the form of a tiger. It probably suggests that for the identity of the 'king of the forest' for the Harappans, a lion or a tiger did not make any difference. Likewise the depiction of a human figure in the position of the sixth zodiac sign Virgo is obvious. Probably, by drawing a basic human figure, the Harappans meant a female - human only.

The depiction of an elephant in the position of the seventh zodiac sign 'Libra' is easy to understand. The figure of an elephant as a symbol of Libra, 'the scale' is natural. The common Sanskrit terms i.e. *Hāthi* or *Gaja* meant to denote an elephant are also depicted 'scale' in Sanskrit. Hence, the depiction of an elephant in the position of the seventh zodiac sign stands justified on the *Pasupati* seal.

### SŌMA THE LORD OF THE MUNDANE (PRĀṆĪ) WORLD

True to the ancient Indian religious history and literature the world was conceived, in the Harappan times, showing various planes. The spiritual and mundane levels were identified and demarketed with provisions of intermediary channels. These variations were further coceived and translated in the astronomical terms. It seems a cyclic pattern to express such cosmic conceptions always proved handy.

Some scholars like N.R. Waradpande have identified the presence of the concept of zodiac signs in Vedic literature. Now there are reasons to believe, on the basis of the study of the Harappans script that the Harappans had a clear understanding of zodiac system and they had their own zodiac signs. As per A.K. Kumarswamy's observation it seems the Harappans also planned their country, like most of the ancient human civilizations, on the zodiac pattern and lived there as per the nature of their sub-states governing gods or the respective astronomical entities.

In the process of recognizing different cosmic divisions of the Ancient Indians i.e. spiritual and mundane, one also finds respective parallel socio-religious entities in the name of *Śramanic and Vēdic* (Brahmanic) communities. These socio-religious entities may also be named as *Nivṛiti* and *Pravṛiti Mārgis*, respectively. Sōma the beloved beverage of the Vēdic gods may be identified as 'the Mundane (*Prāṇī*) plane'. If one trusts in Sir Monier Williams opinion, he notices that Sōma stands synonymous to Savitṛi, an Āditya of the night or the lunar family. Hence, the living beings depicted on the *Paśupati* seal as stated earlier, are the zodiac signs of the Harappans and they ought to be of the lunar family associated with the night hours. In contrast, the zodiac signs of the day hours are associated with the sun. Sun with its heat and burning nature naturally symbolized the spiritual plane or the *Nivṛitti mārgis* of the *sanyāsins*. Where as living beings (the *Prāṇīs*) were considered bound with the cyclic order of the mundane world.

The word *Amara* or *Amṛita*, as it is applied on the *Paśupati* seal, has extra ordinary significance. It reminds one that the spirit comes in existence only after the death

(*Marana*) of a being, in the Mundane terms. Hence, the Sōma keeps one alive (*Amṛita*) even though he is dead-like in appearance due to Sōma's effect or it may be seen at the philosophical plane where a living being (*Prāṇīs*) is a corrupted, defiled and dethroned entity in contrast to a liberated soul, one with *Paramātma*, the Supreme being. So, from the Mundane world's point of view, a living being (*Prāṇī*) is not dead (*Amara*) like a being while sleeping in the presence of moon or under the effect of Sōma. Hence, Sōma is the period of night (*Savitri*) having six time-units (the 6 zodiac signs) is not death (*Amṛita*). The *Paśupati* seal is an attempt to define night (Sōma) which is made up of six units having Vāyus (*Prāṇa*) as their leader / king, not death (*Amṛita*) from the mundane world's point of view.

### MRIGA, THE MOUNT OF VĀYUDĒVA

There is depicted a pair of deers under the throne of the horned personage in the *Paśupati* seal. The deers are standing face to face with, their heads turned backwards. They are ideally called Mṛigas. These *Mṛigas* are the mounts of *Vāyu*, the *Prāṇa* (=breath). A *Mṛiga* is no other than a Paśu who is so called due to its being in the trap (*Pāśa*) of the mundane world. It symbolises a corrupted and defiled soul who got throwned from the spiritual heaven above.

As shown in the partial decipherment -chart of the seals, with the depiction of this *Mṛiga* (Mahadevan's F.S. 13), various inscriptions are engraved in its association. In one or the other way, broadly speaking, these inscriptions define *Vāyu* or *Prāṇa* in its different aspects. But the inscriptions, in association with the figure of Mṛiga, with its head turned backwards, probably suggest the urge of the dethroned soul to returned to its home, the sphere of light and salvation. Hence, *Vāyudēva*, having *Mṛiga* as its mount is the god of worldly generation and sustenance who may also promise a direct channel to the supreme soul at the *Manas* or the conscience level.

### SŌMA IN VĒDIC LITERATURE

Sōmatatva is the title of a collection of articles on *Sōma* edited by Kalyanmal Lodha and Dr. Kamala Prasad Dwivedi in the book forms, in Hindi, published by *Manasa Granthalaya, Varanasi* in 1998. In this book articles are published in addition to the editors, from 12 eminent *Vēdic scholars*, including Maharishi Arvind, Swami Pratyagatmananda Saraswati and Mahamahim Giridhar Sharma Chaturvedi, etc.

*Sōma* is identified in countless forms with innumerable meanings and definitions, by these authorities referring the whole lot of *Vēdic* and other ancient Indian Literature. Following some of the terms and meanings seem most immediately relevant to the illustration as depicted on the *Paśupati* seal.

*Sōma* is Moon with *Mṛigaśira nakshatra*

*Sōma* is the *Sun*

*Sōma* is *Savitri* (the sun during the night)

*Sōma* is *Gandharva /s*, the *nakshatras* or *Zodiac signs*

*Sōma* is *Vāyudev / Prāṇa* (the mounter of deer / *paśu*)

*Sōma* is *Karka Rāśi* (Cancer) as king or leader of nighty zodiac signs

*Sōma* is *lord Brahmā* (the creator & sustainer of the world)

*Sōma* is *Śravaṇa*

*Sōma* is *Bārhat*

*Sōma* is *Mṛigmarīchikā*

### ZODIAC SIGNS ON THE PAŚUPATI SEAL

| S.No. | Zodiac Signs       | Animal Figures on the Seal     | Gods Visited | Phoenician Letters<br>& other remarks |
|-------|--------------------|--------------------------------|--------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1     | Vṛishabha (Taurus) | Rhino                          | Sūrya (Sun)  | Resh<br>Gaṇḍa = Bull's Head           |
| 2     | Mithuna (Gemini)   | Bison (Assamese Mithuna)       | Yama         | Qoph                                  |
| 3.    | Karka (Cancer)     | Horned Personage (Vāyu / Sōma) | Vāyu         | Tsade                                 |
| 4.    | Singh (Leo)        | Tiger                          | Indra        | Pe<br>(King of Animals)               |
| 5.    | Kanyā (Virgo)      | Human Figure                   | Aśvinas      | Ezin<br>(Feminine Gender)             |
| 6.    | Tulā (Libra)       | Elephant                       |              | Samekh                                |

### Sphere of Sōma

Libra  
Elephant  
{Scale}

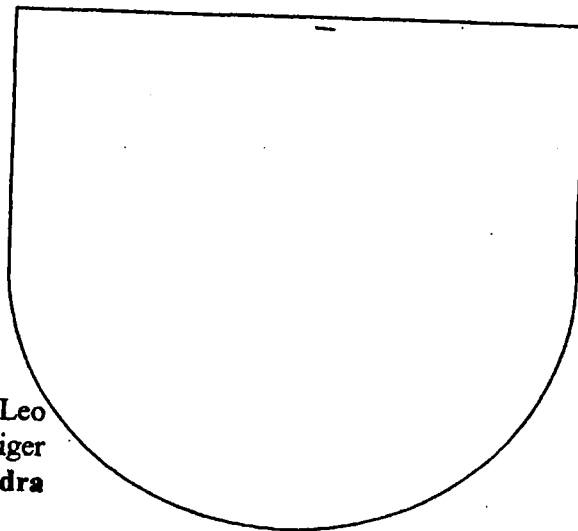
Virgo  
Human Figure  
{Feminine  
Gender}  
Aśvinas

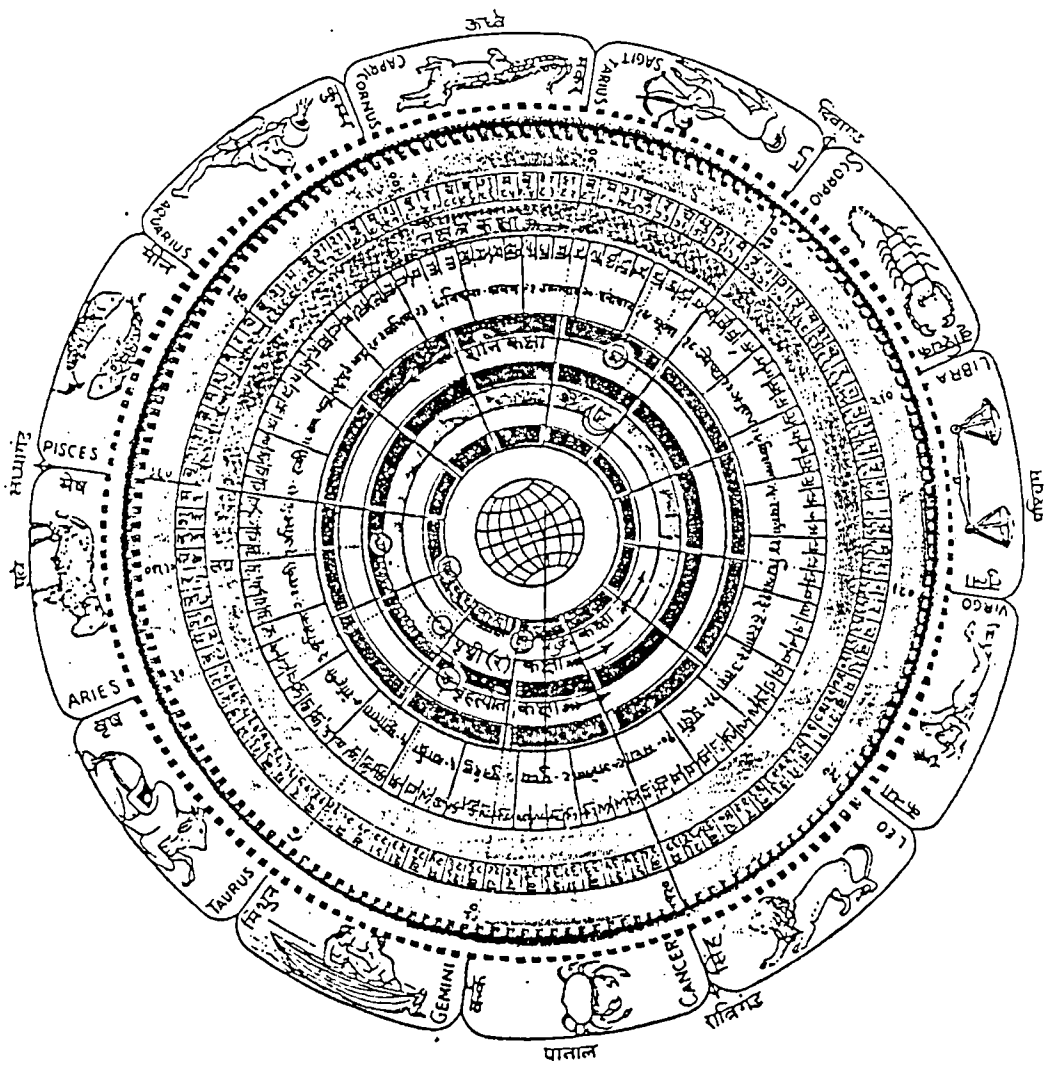
Leo  
Tiger  
Indra

Cancer  
Vāyudēv  
Pair of Deers  
Mṛigas

Taurus  
Sūrya  
Rhino  
{Rāhu/Gaṇḍa}

Gemini  
Bison  
Yama

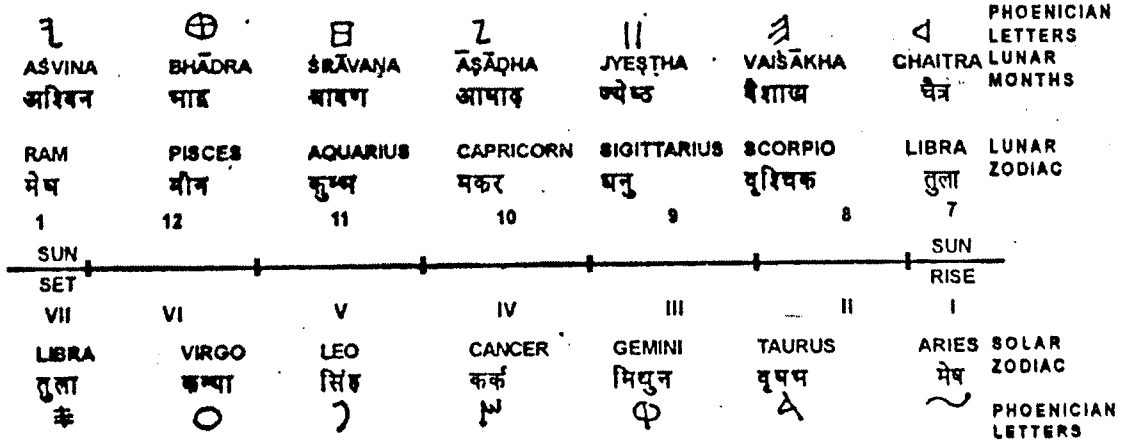




A conventional Indian Zodiac Diagram

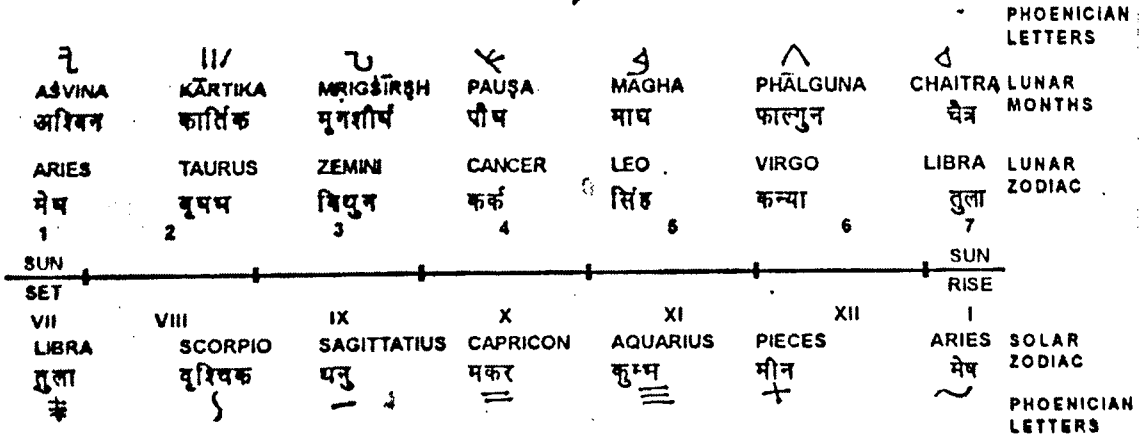
**DAY TIME**

दिन का समय



**NIGHT TIME**

रात का समय





| Incamations of Vishnu | Zodiac Signs | Hindi Months | Phoenician Alphabets | with their names        |        | Musical Notes with Pronouncing Beings  | Probable Indo-Aryan Equivalents  | Names of Animals | Names of Body Parts | Tirthankars with Mounts |           |            |          |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|-------------------------|--------|--|----------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|-----------|------------|----------|
| विष्णु अवतार          | राशि चिह्न   | महानवमी      | फोनीशियन अक्षर       | उनके प्राचीन नाम व अर्थ |        | संगीत ध्वनि व प्राचीन प्राणियों के नाम | संभावित प्राचीन प्राणियों के नाम | जन्म के समय      | शरीर के अंग         | तीर्थंकर एवं उनके वाहन  |           |            |          |
|                       |              |              | Mem                  | Water (13)              |        |  | Jewel                            |                  |                     |                         |           |            |          |
| Mina                  | Scorpio      | Mrgashirsha  | Lameth               | Oxwhp (12)              | Nun    | Snake/Fish                             | Sā Shadja                        | Peacock/Frog     | Nīga                | Snake                   | Tail      | Rishabh    | Bull     |
| मीना                  | वृश्चिक      | मृगशिरा      | लामेथ                | अधुप                    | नून    | साँप/मीन                               | सा शदज                           | मयूर/बैंग        | नीगा                | सर्प                    | पुच्छ     | रिशभ       | बुध      |
| Kacchapa              | Libra        | Kārtika      | Kaph                 | Palm (11)               | Samakh | Port                                   | Nr Nishad                        | Elephant         | Samakh              | Elephant                | Trunk     | Ayt        | Elephant |
| कच्छप                 | तुला         | कार्तिक      | काफ                  | इलेवी                   | सामख   | बंदर                                   | नर निषद                          | इल्ली            | सामख                | इल्ली                   | खुंड      | अयित       | इल्ली    |
| Varsh                 | Virgo        | Aāvina       | Yoth                 | Arm (10)                | Ayin   | Eye                                    | Dhā Dhaivata                     | Horse            | Ajina               | Ashwin                  | Hind legs | Sambhav    | Horse    |
| वराह                  | कनका         | आविना        | योथ                  | इला                     | अयिन   | आँख                                    | धा धैवत                          | खेड़ा            | अजिन                | अश्विन                  | हाथ       | संभव       | अश्व     |
| Nrisinha              | Leo          | Bhādrapada   | Teth                 | Snake (9)               | Pe     | Mouth                                  | Pā Paichama                      | Cuckoo           | Peja                | Lion                    | Stomach   | Abhinandan | Monkey   |
| नृसिंह                | सिंह         | भाद्रपद      | तेथ                  | साँप                    | पे     | मुँह                                   | पा पांचामा                       | कोकिल            | पेजा                | सिंह                    | कंठ/पेट   | अभिनंदन    | बंदर     |
| Vāman                 | Cancer       | Śrāvana      | Hath                 | Hedge (8)               | Tade   | Spearhead                              | Mā Madhyama                      | Swan?            | Hrid                | Swan                    | Heart     | Sumali     | Swan     |
| वामन                  | कर्क         | श्रावण       | हाथ                  | बाड़ा                   | तादे   | दण्ड                                   | मा मध्यमा                        | हंस              | ह्रिद               | काज/हंस                 | हृदय      | सुमलि      | हंस      |
| Paru                  | Gemini       | Ashāḍha      | Zayin                | Sickle (7)              | Ooph   | Knot                                   | Gā Gandhāra                      | Gaol             | Kandhā              | Bison                   | Shoulder  | Padma      | Bison    |
| परु                   | मिथुन        | आषाढ़        | ज़यिन                | इंसिया                  | ओफ     | नोट                                    | गा गंधार                         | गोल              | कंधा                | बिभुन                   | कंधा      | पद्म       | बिभुन    |
| Rāma                  | Taurus       | Jyeshtha     | Wew                  | Hook (6)                | Resh   | Head                                   | Re Rishabha                      | (Kashmiri)       | Rsh                 | Bull                    | Head      | Supārava   | Swastik  |
| राम                   | वृष          | ज्येष्ठ      | वेव                  | खोँक                    | रेश    | सिर                                    | रे रिशभा                         | (कश्मीर)         | रश                  | बुध                     | सिर       | सुपरवा     | स्वस्तिक |
| Krishna               | Aries        | Baiśākḥ      | He                   | Window (5)              | Shin   | Tooth/Horn                             | Sā Shadja                        | Peacock/Frog     | Sīga                | Ram                     | Horn      | Chandra    | Moon     |
| कृष्ण                 | मेघ          | भाद्र        | हे                   | खिड़की                  | शिन    | दाँत/घुँघ                              | सा शदज                           | मयूर/बैंग        | सीगा                | बैंग                    | सोँ       | चंद्र      | चंद्र    |
| Buddha                | Pisces       | Chaitra      | Deleth               | Door (4)                | Tao    | Sign                                   |                                  |                  |                     |                         |           |            |          |
| बुद्ध                 | मीन          | चैत्र        | दालेथ                | द्वार                   | ताओ    | चिह्न                                  |                                  |                  |                     |                         |           |            |          |
| Kālid                 | Aquarius     | Phālgun      | Gmel                 | Camel's neck (3)        |        |  |                                  |                  |                     |                         |           |            |          |
| काली                  | कुंभ         | फाल्गुन      | गमेल                 | कमल की गर्दन            |        |  |                                  |                  |                     |                         |           |            |          |
| Capricorn             | Māgha        | Beth         | House (2)            |                         |        |  |                                  |                  |                     |                         |           |            |          |
| मकर                   | माघ          | बेथ          | घर                   |                         |        |  |                                  |                  |                     |                         |           |            |          |
| Sagittarum            | Paush        | A'eph        | Ox head (1)          |                         |        |  |                                  |                  |                     |                         |           |            |          |
| धनु                   | पौष          | आलेफ         | बैल का सिर           |                         |        |  |                                  |                  |                     |                         |           |            |          |

Parallelism of Zodiac Signs with Indian Cultural Entities

## KAVISAMAYA IN THE INSCRIPTIONS OF MEDIEVAL ASSAM\*

Sarharuddin Ahmed

The term *Kavisamaya* means poetical convention. These represent certain fanciful ideas of the classical poets who used to uniformly incorporate these ideas into their compositions. So far as the practical world is concerned, these ideas appear to be absurd or only partially true. But for the poets, these ideas involve not even iota of unreality. Rhetoricians dealing with the poetical blemishes (i.e., *dōshas*) recognise a blemish called *Khyātiviruddhatā*. But, even a case of *Khyātiviruddhatā* would represent itself as a *Guṇa* or positive quality if it is endorsed by poetical conventions) (*Sāhityadarpaṇa*, VII,22), Viśvanātha-kavirāja in the context of discussing the merit of the poetical conventions ennumerates a number of typical *Kavisamayas*.

Most of the works concerned with *Kavisikshā* present a list of similar *Kavisamayas*. The composers of the inscriptions of medieval Assam were also no exceptions in respect of employing *Kavisamayas* in their compositions. This is evidently clear where the fame of king Śivasimha (1714-44 A.D.) is said to be as white (*pāṇḍura*) as moon rays (*himakara*), snake *vāsuki* which is put on by Śiva as a necklace (*hara-hāra*), diamond (*hīra*) and foam (*hiṇḍira*) et *himakara-hara-hāra-hīra-hiṇḍira-panḍura-yasómaṇḍala-maṇḍita*. (Inscription of Rangmahal Moat, Śaka 1654).

Besides the prescribed *Kavisamayas*, the composers of the inscriptions of medieval Assam, employ certain other *Kavisamayas* in imitation of the good poets. For example, the poets of the inscriptions, compare gravity with the depth of the sea, *sāgaragambhīra*, (land grant inscription of Rudrasimha, 1701 A.D.), valour with that of the sun, *pratāpa-tapana*= (Rock Inscription of the Māṇḍakāṭa Rampart, 1723 A.D.) and of fire 'pratāpanala' (Inscription of Kamalēśvara temple, Nīlāchala, 1728 A.D.)

On the basis of the use of the similar poetical conventions of the inscriptions, it may safely be argued that some of the composers, were original writers, while the rest were the imitators. The authors in general do not appear to have bestowed

much time and pains in the compositions. They were learned, but little gifted. With the advancement of Assamese language and its acceptance in the Ahōm court, the use of Assamese language became more and more in the inscriptions. Sanskrit was retained only in the introductory parts of the inscriptions, where the scope for using the literary elements were limited.

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\* This is part of Mrs. Vijaya Venugopal Endowment lecture delivered in the XXIX ESI conference held at Mumbai.

According to the first epitaph, Kairāt Khān's son Bābā 'Abdullāh predeceased his father by over five months and expired on 5th Rabī' II AH 1055 (21st May 1645 AD) and not in the year AH 1066 as wrongly deciphered by Mr. Bilgrāmī. While the other epitaph places the death of Khairāt Khān on 18th Ramaḍān AH 1055 (28th October 1645 AD). Here again Mr. Bilgrāmī was mistaken in reading the year as AH 1066.<sup>17</sup>

With this biographical details culled out from available sources about Khairāt Khān, it is concluded that the epigraph under study, brings to the fore altogether a new aspect of the career of Khairāt Khān in Ganjām district of Orissa where he carried out his building activities both in public and commercial interest. The construction of a *sarāi* at Khairābād i.e. Ganjām, hints towards the fact that as earlier, it had been a commercial centre under the Quṭb Shāhīs also. At the same time, the mention of the place-name, Khairābād, shows great association of the builder Khairāt Khān with the place in the official capacity or otherwise. Research works like *Muslim Administration in Orissa* (Calcutta, 1980), by Dr. M.A.Haque and *Orissa under the Mughals* (Calcutta, 1981), by B.C.Roy, do not make any reference to Khairāt Khān. Here lies the importance of the epigraph taken up for study as a contemporary and primary source.

#### Notes and References :

1. *Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy (AREp.)*, 1981-82, No. C, 152.
2. *The Imperial Gazetteer of India (IGI)*, vol.XII (Oxford 1908), p.142.
3. *Ibid.*, p.145.
4. *Ibid.*, p.146.
5. *Ibid.*, p.158.
6. This work was edited by S.A.A. Bilgrāmī and published from Hyderabad in 1961.
7. Mirzā Nizāmud Dīn Aḥmad Shirāzī, *op.cit.*, p.80-85.
8. *Epigraphia Indica Arabic and Persian Supplement (EIAPS)*, 1965, p.65.
9. Mirzā Nizāmud Dīn, *op.cit.*, pp.156-58.
10. *EIAPS*, 1965, p.65.

11. *AREp.*, 1961-62, Nos. B. 38 and D. 21.
12. *Epigraphia Indo-Moslemica*, 1913-14, pp.55,57.
13. H.K.Sherwānī, *op.cit.*, p.457.
14. *AREp.*, 1964-65, Nos. D. 4 and 5.
15. See his learned article, 'Two Epitaphs from Hyderabad City', *EIAPS*, 1967, pp.61-65.
16. *Ibid.*, p.62.
17. *Ibid.*, pp.62, 64.

# ARATALAGADDE PLATES OF ŚRĪ PRIYAVRATAVARMMA, YEAR 12

S.G. Samak and Jagadish

Aratalagadde is a small village in Jade hobli of Sorab taluk in Shimoga district of Karnataka. Some years back during agricultural operations this inscription was unearthed along with a hoard of other inscriptions and antiquities. Till recently they were in the possession of Sri. V.N. Chennabasavana gowda an advocate who hails from that village in Shimoga.

This inscription is written on a set of three copper plates (18cm × 5cm × 0.02cm each) bounded together by a copper ring of 5cm in diameter. It has a seal (3.5 × 2.5cms) having the figure of the lion, the Kadamba royal emblem. The language is Sanskrit written in typical Kadamba Box - headed characters. The first side of the first plate is empty where as the second side of the third plate has only one line. The record contains a number of orthographical and grammatical errors.

## Text

### First Plate, Second Side :

1. Śrī Vijaya - Vaijyanthyām svāmi-Mahāsēna - mātṛigaṇānuddhyātābhi-
2. shiktānām Mānavya Sagōtrāṇām Hāritī- putrāṇām pratikṛi-
3. tas-svāddhyāya- charchchā- pārāṇām Kadambānām dharmma- mahārāja-
4. sya bhuja-bala parākram - āvāpta - viśāla - vibhav-aiśvariyaḥ s=samya

### Second Plate, First Side :

5. [k] - prajāpālanarata-dēvadviya-guru- pūjakaḥ śrī Priyavratavarmmaṇaḥ
6. vijayasamva[tsa\*]rē dvādaśame Māgha paurṇamāsyām anayānu-
7. pūrvyā - anēka- janmāntar- ōpārjjita- vipula- puṇya- skandhaḥ samara-  
śūra-
8. [Brāhma]ṇāya vēda - pāragāya bālāhitāgnine vishamāsyā Svāmitrā-

## Second Plate, Second Side :

9. ya Kauśikasa - gōtrāyaḥ(ya) śrī Priyavratavarmmaṇaḥ Kākustha-  
yuvarāja-
10. sya puṇya phalam-ityartthaṁ Mūlamali- grāme pūrvva-diśāyām
11. pañchāsān = nivarttanam dakṣhiṇa - diśāyām pañchāsān = nivarttanam  
apara-diśā
12. yām pañchāsān = nivar[tta]nam utara - diśāyām pañchāsān =  
nivar[ta[nam\*]] rājamānēna

## Third Plate, First Side :

13. sapānīyapātām - sa[da\*]kṣhiṇam dattavān yō='sy-ābhirakṣhitā sa tat -  
pu-
14. ṇya phala-bhāg= bhavaty-apaharttā sa pañcha-mahāpātaka - sa[m]yu-
15. ktō bhavati [i\*] uktañcha || bahubhi[rv\*] - vasudhā bhuktā rājabhis =Sa
16. gar-ādibhi[h\*] yasya yasya yadā bhūmi | tasya tasya tadā phalam- iti

## Third Plate, Second Side :

17. Dāmasēnāpatinā likhitēyam paṭṭikā ||

## Translation :

At Vaijayanti, on the full moon day of the Māgha, in the 12th year of rule of the virtuous ruler (*dharma-mahārāja*) Śrī Priyavratavarma, the great king of the Kadambas, who was favoured and consecrated by the assemblage of the mothers and Svāmi Mahāsēna, belonging to Mānavyasa gōtra, son of Hāritī, well versed in the system of private study and inquiry adopted by him, the counter part of saintly kings of primitive times, like father to the dependants, Priyavratavarma, of a body of wide and various merit acquired during many births, who has won many battles, who has earned wealth and fame by the valour of strength of his own arms, able in well protecting his subjects, a friend of all living beings, devoted to the worship of gods, the twice born and preceptor, the *dharma - mahārāja* of the Kadambas made a grant of fifty *nivarttanas* in east, west, north and south directions of Mūlamali village to a Brahmin, Svāmitra of Kauśika gōtra, who was also a *samarasūra*, for the well being of *yuvarāja* Kākustha with pouring of water, with fee and exempt from all encumbrances.

## INSCRIPTION OF KHAIRĀT KHĀN FROM ORISSA

M. Ilyas Quddusi

This paper deals with a very short metrical Persian record<sup>1</sup> of great historical value, copied from Chhatrapūr, reported to have been originally brought from Ganjām, a district place in Orissa. This valuable inscription was discovered in 1981 by my senior official colleague M.Y.Quddusi. With the discovery of this inscription, one more aspect of the building activities of Khairāt Khān comes to light during the regime of 'Abdullāh Quṭb Shāh (1626-72 A.D.). Existence of this epigraphical evidence in Ganjam distirict, is indicative of the fact that this part of Orissa had been under the occupation of the Quṭb Shāhīs of Golconḍa with whom Khairāt Khān, the builder of a *sarāi* at Khairābād (i.e., Ganjām), was associated with.

Once the northernmost district of the Madras Presidency, Ganjām is lying along shore of the Bay of Bengal (between 18°12' & 20°26' N. and 83°30' & 85°12' E.) with an area of 8,372 square miles.<sup>2</sup> Historically speaking, Ganjām formed part of the ancient Kalinga. Subjugated by Emperor Aśoka in 260 B.C., it seems to have passed on to the Āndhra kings of Vēngī. With the removal of the Āndhras in the third century A.D., it made way for the early line of the Gaṅga kings of Kalinga. The Chōla conquest of Vēngī and Kalinga at the end of the 10th and beginning of the 11th century, included parts of Ganjām. About the time of the Chōla domination, the line of the later Gaṅga kings of Kalinga, first ruled as Chōla feudatories and later as independent sovereigns, for the next four centuries.<sup>3</sup>

The power of the Gajapatīs of Orissa, was installed in the 15th century. About 1571, they were overthrown by the Quṭb Shāhī dynasty of Golconḍa and subsequently the area was ruled from Chicacole i.e., now Śrīkākulam, by Muslims. In 1687, Golconḍa became the part of the Mughal empire and hereonwards the administration of Ganjām region was looked after by the Mughal governors of the Deccan.<sup>4</sup>

The original findspot of the inscription under study, is Ganjām, situated (in 19°23' N & 85°05' E.) in the Chatrapūr sub-division, at the mouth of the Rushikulya river, on the trunk road, so also on the East Coast Railway. The town itself and the remains of the old fort, built in 1768, still stand there. Ganjām was formerly



a seat of considerable commercial activity and its factory and fort were protected by a garrison. Apart from the mosque built at Ganjām in AH 1186 (1772-73 AD), there are scarcely any permanent traces of Muslim domination in the region.<sup>5</sup> It was once a port, closed down in 1887.

The present record under study, is one of the two loose slabs, lying in the courtyard of the mosque, located in Puti Gopālpūr area of Chhatrapūr. The slab measures 63 x 55cm., comprising three lines of writing in pleasant *Nasta'liq* characters, without bearing any date and name of the calligrapher. It is decorated with floral designs. The second and third lines make a couplet in Persian, preceded by the words *Yā 'Alī* in the first line. This inscription assigns the construction of *Sarā-i-Khairābād* to Khairāt Khān.

The text has been deciphered and translated as under :-

#### Text

1. *Yā 'Alī*
2. *Bānī-i-īn Sarāi Khairābād*
3. *Hast Khairāt Khān-i-Nīknihād*

#### Translation

1. O'Alī.
2. Founder of this Sarāi Khairābād
3. is Khairāt Khān, bearer of good disposition.

Three pieces of information in this epigraph are of vital importance. First is the construction of a *sarāi* at Khairābād and the other, the builder of the structure, Khairāt Khān. One more information that can be gleaned from this inscription is that Ganjām also bore the name Khairābād. The builder Khairāt Khān, without any iota of doubt, can be identified with his namesake who was a well known grandee at the court of 'Abdullāh Quṭb Shāh. It is also quite apparent that Khairābād was the name given to Ganjām after the builder of the above-mentioned *sarāi* Khairāt Khān.

Khairāt Khān held high position in the Quṭb Shāhī court. However, information about him is very meagre. Almost all the available information pertaining to him

from a contemporary source, *Hadīqatus Salāṭīn*<sup>6</sup>, penned by Nizāmud Dīn Aḥmad Shīrāzī, was produced by Mr. Bilgrāmī in his works, *Maāthir-i-Dakan* in Urdū (Hyderabad, 1925) and *Landmarks of the Deccan* in English (Hyderabad, 1927). Prof. H.K. Sherwānī in his work *History of the Qutb Shahi Dynasty* (N. Delhi, 1974), gives very sketchy information about Khairāt Khān. No doubt, new pieces of information about him, are available in a few noticed or published inscriptions.

According to *Hadīqatus Salāṭīn*, Khairāt Khān was the *Sar Naubat* (a head watchman) and one of the most trusted servants of ‘Abdullāh Quṭb Shāh. In 1626, when ‘Abdullāh Quṭb Shāh sat on the throne, he was attended by envoy of Irān and the king of the countries of north India, the name of the Iranian ambassador, taking precedence over the name of the Mughal envoy. Because of religious affinity i.e. Shiism, the Quṭb Shāhī ruler, to the chagrin of the Sunnī Mughals, was more drawn to the Shiite Safāvid ruler of Persia. Soon in 1627, Khairāt Khān was deputed to Irān as the Quṭb Shāhī ambassador<sup>7</sup> to the court of Shāh ‘Abbās (1587-1629 AD). He was sent from Ḥyderābād with exorbitant presents in company with Muḥammad Qulī Beg, son of Qāsim Beg, the Persian envoy. On his way to Irān, he was summoned from Sūrat, the embarkation-point, to Āgra by Mughal Emperor Shāh Jahān (1628-58 AD) who also handed over to him a letter for the Persian ruler. By the time he reached the Persian port Bandar ‘Abbās, Shāh ‘Abbās had expired on 2 Jumādā I, AH 1037/30 December 1627 being succeeded by Shāh Ṣafī (1629-42 AD). Khairāt Khān went to Iṣfahān, then capital of Persia, where he was received with open arms. He presented the letters of the Quṭb Shāhī ruler and the Mughal emperor there. Shāh Ṣafī treated him for several years as a state guest.

Khairāt Khān originally belonged to the Uymāq tribe and his kinsmen were living in a village (name not mentioned in *Hadīqatus Salāṭīn*) in Irān. The Persian ruler betowed on him the very village in *i’nām* in view of the above fact only.<sup>8</sup>

Khairāt Khān returned to India via Qandahār in 1633 in company with Iranian envoy Imām Qulī Beg, and having delivered the reply of Shāh Jahān’s letter to him, reached Ḥyderābād in 1634. Both Khairāt Khān and Imām Qulī Beg were warmly received at the Quṭb Shāhī border by Mīr Mu‘izud dīn Muḥammad, and at the palace at Khairiatābād by ‘Abdullāh Quṭb Shāh himself. After his return from Persia, Khairāt Khān was further elevated to the dignified post of a minister.<sup>9</sup>

In 1637, Khairāt Khān accompanied the grand mother of ‘Abdullāh Quṭb Shāh upto Masulīpatam on the eastern coast, from where she sailed for Jeddah on her holy pilgrimage to Mecca.<sup>10</sup>

Khairāt Khān was a man of great wealth and generosity and he took keen interest in various altruistic public building activities, as corroborated by a few newly discovered inscriptions, including the one under study here.

Among the inscriptions pertaining to him, is a bilingual record (Telugu and Persian) found at Pāngal in the Mahbubnagar district of Andhra Pradesh.<sup>11</sup> It states that Khairāt Khān constructed a watch-tower at the top of the *Bāla Qal‘a* i.e. hill fort and a well inside the fort at Pāngal in 1620 during the reign of Muḥammad Quṭb Shāh (1612-26 AD). It appears that Khairāt Khān was stationed at Pāngal in the early period of his political career or had his *Jāgīr* there.

According to a couple of epigraphical records,<sup>12</sup> published by Dr. Yazdānī, Khairāt Khān constructed several shops, a well and a garden in 1640, close to the northern steps of Mūsā Burj in the Golconda fort, and a granary under his own supervision in 1642.

The military career of Khairāt Khān is reflected in the advance of Quṭb Shāhī arms in eastern Karnātak. We come across the names of Venkata Reddi, Timma Reddi and Rāwaljī Kantia as officers who had been placed in-charge along with Khairāt Khān and Sayyid Muḥammad Māzendarānī, at the time of capitulation of the great fort at Rāpūr in Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh in December 1642.<sup>13</sup>

The family of Khairāt Khān lies buried in the Rifā‘ī graveyard near the Gowlīpūra gate of Hyderābād city. Two epitaphs<sup>14</sup> belonging to the graves of Khairāt Khān and his minor son Bābā ‘Abdullāh were discovered by chance, long back in 1922-23 and published immediately thereafter by Sayyid ‘Alī Bilgrāmī, without illustration, despite their laudable beautiful calligraphy. Therefore, my senior official colleague and former Superintending Epigraphist, Shri M.R.Khān deemed it indispensable in the interest of historical research, to rectify the year of their death and republish those epitaphic records with their fascimiles.<sup>15</sup>

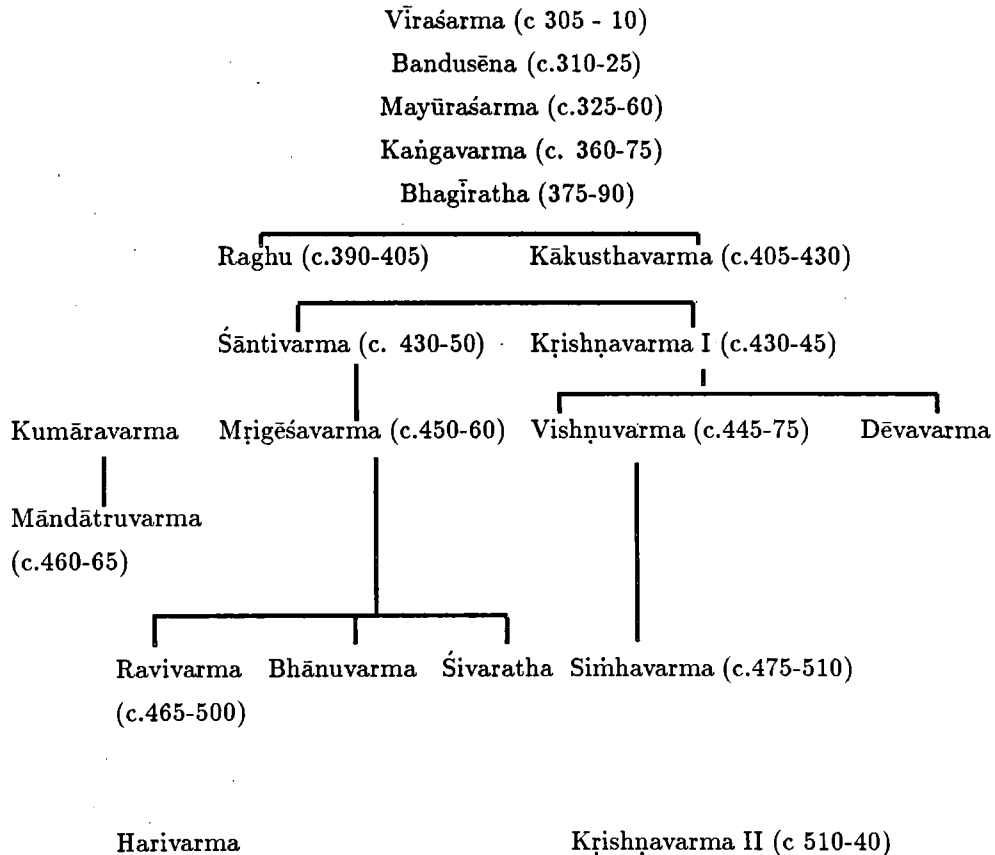
The epitaphs are engraved on two graves contained in a large tomb inside the necropolis of the Rifā‘īs within the Gowlīpūra gate of the city. The grave in the adjoining smaller tomb is said to contain the remains of the wife of Khairāt Khān, without bearing any inscription.<sup>16</sup>

Whoever maintains this will be possessor of merit. It has also been said that the Earth has been enjoyed by many kings commencing from Sagara; to whomsoever at any time the land belongs, to him for the time being, belongs to the rewarder.

Thus was written by Dāmasēnāpati.

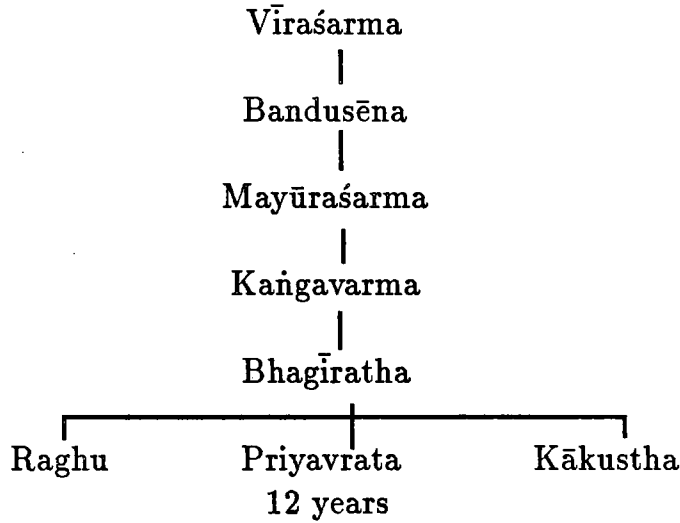
#### Discussion :

This inscription has become very important in many ways. For the first time a Kadamba king, so far unknown in Kadamba genealogy has come to light and he is Priyavratavarma. It is interesting to note that this king has given land grant for the well being of *yuvarāja* Kākustha in his 12<sup>th</sup> regnal year. This clearly shows that Priyavrata ruled Banavāsi at least for 12 years prior to Kākustha. As far as the genealogy of the early Kadambas is concerned many scholars starting from Fleet to B.R. Gopal and till recently to G.S. Gai have given different interpretations. In his latest book, *Inscriptions of the Early Kadambas*, G.S. Gai<sup>1</sup> has given genealogy and chronology as follows.

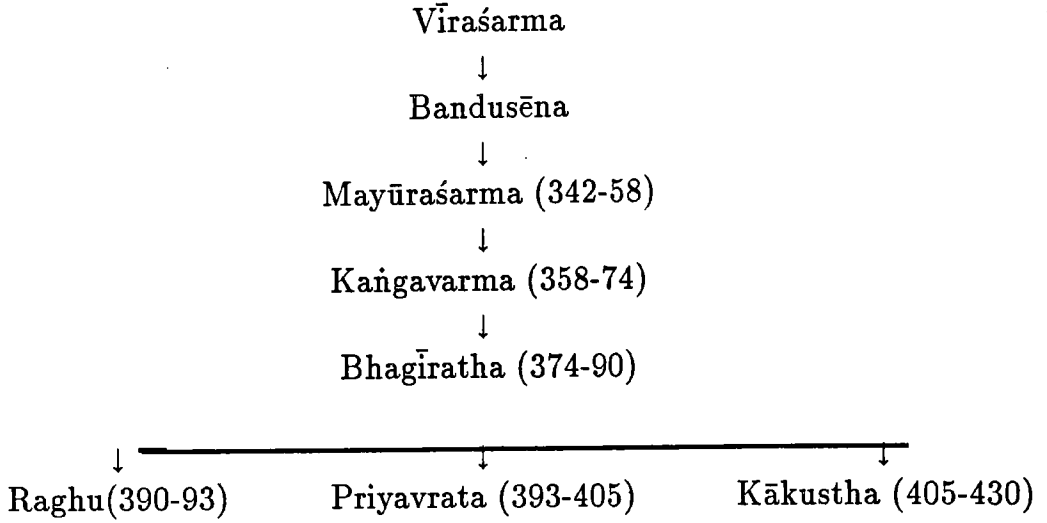


In light of the present discovery now we have to provide a suitable place for this new king Priyavratavarmma. The question is where ? In his introduction chapter on *Corpus of Kadamba Inscriptions*, B.R. Gopal basing on Gudnapur inscription of Ravivarma had said “Raghu was succeeded by his younger brother (*śrīmatō Bhagīrathasya sutō Raghur asā rājaparājitaḥ ripu gaṇais - samparāya mukhē Raghu satva vikrānthadhi guṇaiḥ || Tat = kanishṭas = śrī Kadamba kula .... narapatiḥ Kākusthā ity - āsa Kākusthavat satvadhiguṇaiḥ ....*)<sup>2</sup> Kakustha, the word younger interpreted by B.R. Gopal should be read as youngest because *kanishṭa* is to be taken as youngest. (*Kaniya* is younger and *Kanishṭa* is youngest). This clearly indicates the existence of yet another brother of Raghu who was unknown so far. And he is certainly the King Priyavratavarmma of the Aratalagadde plates. It is quite surprising, that a king who had ruled Kadamba kingdom, that too from the main capital Banavāsi for 12 long years was not mentioned by any of his succesors. It is very difficult to answer this at present. Further Kākustha was introduced as son of Bhagīratha. Gopal has suggested that Raghu and Kākustha were not uterine brothers and the latter was born to yet another wife of Bhagīratha. Priyavrata issued the present plate when Kākustha was still *yuvarāja*. Further in the light of Ravivarma’s inscription where he says that he captured that fort which could not be captured by Raghu (*Raghuṇālamibitām ilim Kuṇḍo girir adhārayath Ravēr ajñam vahathi adhya mālām iva mahīdharah*).<sup>3</sup> Here we may presume that, in his attempt to capture the fort of Kunda, Raghu might have died and Kākustha was declared as *yuvarāja*. Since Kākustha was very young and away from the capital at Pālaśika, Priyavrata might have acted as regent and started ruling from Banavāsi, till Kākustha was declared as regular king after maturity. If we accept this then Priyavrata can be considered as younger brother of Raghu and elder brother of Kākustha. To the question as to why he was not mentioned any where in the Kadamba records, we could presume that, like Kākustha he too was not the uterine brother of Raghu, and might have been born to yet another wife of King Bhagīratha. But circumstances like sudden death of Raghu and non-availability of *yuvarāja* Kākustha at Banavāsi might have compelled Priyavrata to take the responsibility of Kingship. Since Kākustha was very young, may be a small boy, Priyavrata might have ruled for 12 long years till Kākustha attained

maturity. If we accept this, then the genealogy of the early Kadambas could be written as follows :



Fixing date for Priyavrata's rule is still a difficult task. For that matter entire chronology of the Kadambas is approximate and tentative. Right from Fleet to G.S.Gai every body had their own interpretations. Basing on the Halasi plates of yuvarāja Kākusthavarma, year 80, taken as the count from the year of accession of Mayūravarma, earlier scholars have assumed and given 20 years of span to every predecessors of Kākusthavarma. They have fixed the date for Mayūravarma (385-36 A.D), Kaṅgavarma (360-75), Bhagīratha (375-90), Raghu (390-405) and Kākustha (405-430), etc. But with the discovery this new inscription from Aratalagadde the number of the predecessors of Kākustha has increased to 5 kings. Now we have to give a maximum of 16 years to each of the predecessors of Kākustha except for Raghu who might have had a very short span of 2-3years. Further on the basis of Sangolli inscription of Harivarma, year 8 (c.500-515)<sup>4</sup> basing the reference of Visu (Tulā Saṅkrānti) scholars have allotted a minimum of 25 years to other rulers. By assuming the chronology known so far as more appropriate, our question is, which is the ruling period of Priyavrata? Since Raghu failed to win the battle and lost his life quite early, we can reduce his reigning period. Then moving back from Kākustha following the same pattern adopted earlier we could rewrite the chronology of the early Kadambas as follows.



In the Hosanagara plates of Vijaya Śiva Mṛigēśavarma,<sup>5</sup> year 6, there is a reference to re-donation of lands by the king to a brahmin Nāgasvāmi which were earlier donated by Priyavrata and Mandhātri. Priyavrata had donated 6 *nivattanas* of land in Kirukaytaka. These two places seem to be adjacent ones and Mahākaytaka may be the earliest. This would suggest that Priyavrata is earlier to Māndāthri. Two of the Kadamba inscriptions belonging to Māndāthri have confirmed his kingly status. With the discovery of Aratalagadde plates even the donor Priyavrata, mentioned above is also a Kadamba king.

There are two types of measures found in Kadamba inscriptions. They are *rājamāna* and *Karpaṭēśvaramāna*. The donation here is measured in *rājamāna* i.e., the measures endorsed by the King.

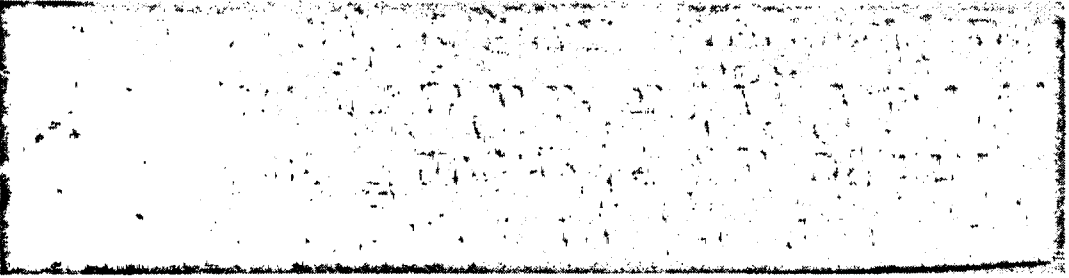
Summary : This Aratalagadde inscription of Kadamba king Śrī Priyavratavarmma dated in his 12th regnal year referring to the land grant given for the well being of *yuvarāja* Kākustha has altered both the existing genealogy and the chronology of the Kadambas of Banavāsi.

Our thanks are due to Sri. V.N.Chennabasava Gowda, Advocate who provided the hoard of Kadamba plates for study, Dr. A Sundara for encouragement, Dr. K.V.Ramesh for his valuable comments, Sri H. Khandoba Rao, Rtd. Lecturer and last but not the least to Sri. M.V.Ramesh Jois who was instrumental behind this discovery.

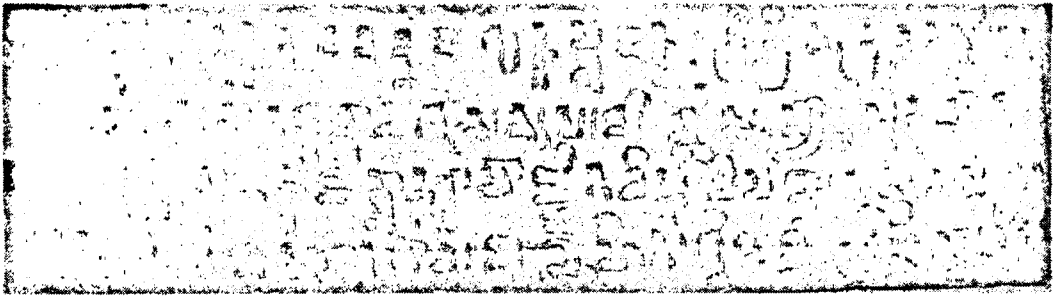
## Notes and References :

1. G.S.Gai, *Inscriptions of the Early Kadambas*, New Delhi, 1996, p.15
2. B.R.Gopal, *Corpus of Kadamba Inscriptions*, Sirsi, 1985, pp. xxxix, and No. 23 Gudnapur inscription of Ravivarma II-5,6
3. *Ibid.*, No 20, Davangere plates of Ravivarma yr 34, II-13
4. *Ibid.*, No 31, Sangolli plates of Harivarma yr8, II-8
5. *Ibid.*, No 10, Hosanagar plates of Vijaya Śiva Mṛigēśavarma, yr6, II-9 & 10

## First plate, second side



## Second plate, first side

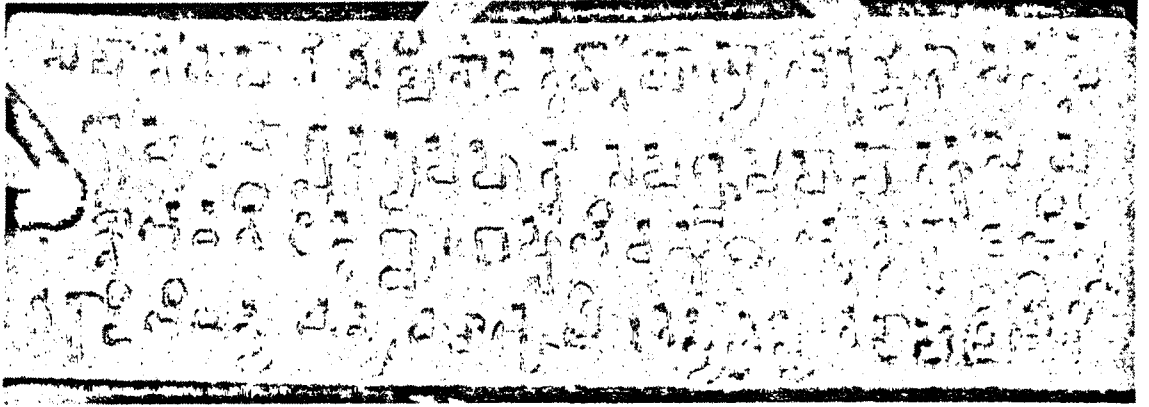


## Second plate, second side

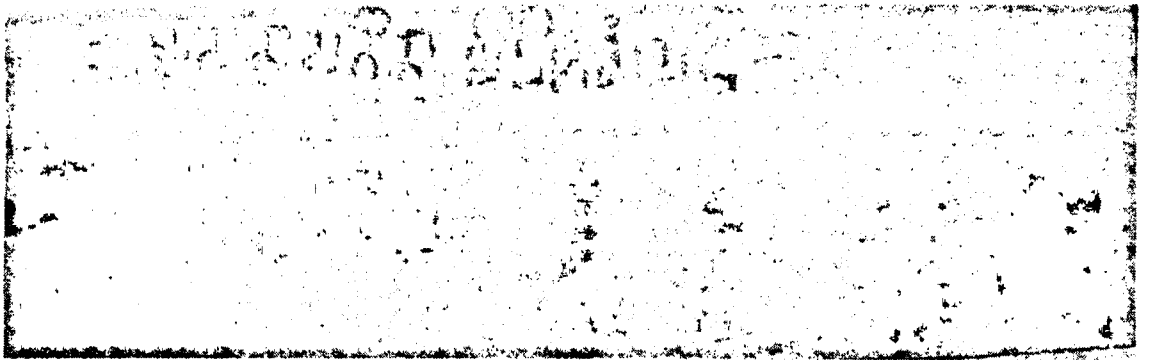




Third plate, first side.



Third plate, second side.



Seal



## HOSAGUNDA RECORD OF SINDA CHIEF BĪRADĒVARASA

D.M. Nagaraju

In the recent survey of Sagar Taluk, Shimoga District, Karnataka, the place Hosagunda has yielded two Kannada inscriptions engraved in Kannada characters. Of these two, the one engraved on a loose slab, belongs to the reign period of Sinda chief Bīradēvarasa. It is dated śaka 116[4], Subhakṛit, Māgha śu 10, (Daśami), Thursday corresponding 1242 A.D.

The record begins with the eulogy of *Mahāmaṇḍalēśvara* Bīradēvarasa of Sinda family. He is described with a number of titles like *Śaraṇāgata vajjarapañjara*, *arasaṅkaragasam murtināyaṇa*, *paranārisahōdhara* and also being described as the devotee of the holy feet of god Billēśvara. He is stated to have been ruling Sātaliḡe-100, Banavāsi-12000 division and Beḡagavartti in Sindarājya. Bīradēva is mentioned to have been the ruler or Beḡagartti in yet another record of the same date from Hireyidagōḡu (Sorab. 425). Therefore his existence from this place is confirmed from these two records.

The object of the inscription is that a minister by name Boppa is stated to have consecrated the image of Prasannanārāyaṇa and arranged for *asṡhavidārchana* to the deity. This record is interesting to trace the last phase of the Sinda family since from the historical point of view, a number of crucial events are recorded in these inscriptions.

It is generally said that the chief Bīradēvarasa does not belong to the Sinda family at all and is only a local chieftain who came to the throne after the death of Kēśavadēva.<sup>1</sup> But the present record as well as the inscription from Sorab area clearly confirm the rule of Bīradēvarasa with his strong arms from the place Beḡagavartti.

Two hero-stone inscriptions from Beḡagutti and Kullahalli Honnali taluk of Shimoga District<sup>2</sup> gives the description of the battle between Bīradēvarasa and his opponents Lakhaṇapāla, Kalidēva and others at Hattivūra and Kūḡali both probably identifiable in Shimoga district. These two records are dated in Śaka 1163 and 1165 respectively during the reign period of Bīradēvarasa. Of these two records, the one dated Śaka 1163 (1241 A.D.) refer to his rule over Beḡagavatti, while the other record dated Śaka 1165 (1243 A.D.) mentions his rule over Kallisa. From the graphic description of the battles mentioned above, it is possible to say that Bīradēvarasa had put up a stiff opposition against his enemies. However, the above records do not disclose the relationship between the two.

One of the important events referred to in our inscription is the annexation of the Sinda kingdom by Ballāḷa. The record states that the king Ballāḷa, probably the Hoysaḷa ruler had determined to uproot the Sinda territory and tried to destroy the fort at Beḷagavatti, but this was somehow resisted by the chief Bīradēvarasa. We know from the Hoysaḷa records that the reign of Ballāḷa came to an end by 1213 A.D.<sup>3</sup> A few records dated about two decades later than the above date, mention the name of Vīraballāḷa II and Narasiṃha II and their ministers.<sup>4</sup> It is quite probable that the attack on the Sinda territory by Ballāḷa might have taken place earlier to the date of our record. i.e., 1242 A.D. The reverses of Ballāḷa in the Banavāsi area is mainly on account of the opposition put up by the Sinda chiefs. In the fight against the Ballāḷa king, the Sēūṇa ruler Siṅghaṇa seems to have extended his support. The motive behind this goodwill relation is to find an entry into the Hoysaḷa territory.

The other hostile chiefs of Sinda Bīradēvarasa referred to in our record are the Sōvidēva of Gutti, Kāmadēva and Tribhuvanamalla Siṅghaṇa of the family of the Kadambas of Goa. The main target of attack and the scene of the battle, between the Sinda chief and the Kadambas and the Guttas was Banavāsi. It is said that the forces of Bīradēva reduced the arms of the Kadamba ruler.

The identification of the enemies of the Sinda chief is interesting. We know from the records of the Guttas of Guttal, a chief by name Jōyidēva,<sup>5</sup> who served as a feudatory of Yādava Siṅghaṇa in 1238 A.D. The second chief of this name i.e., Jōyidēva II of the Gutta family came to the throne when Karṇāṭaka faced a turbulent situation after the death of Vīraballāḷa II. This Jōyidēva continued to serve as a feudatory of Yādava king Siṅghaṇa till about 1250 A.D. The Sōvidēva of the Gutta family who was defeated at the hands of Bīradēvarasa may be identified with Jōyidēva II referred to above. The Guttas probably lost their hold over the region under discussion. His account of the rise of viceroy of Siṅghaṇa II is referred to in the Haralahalli copper plate grant of 1238 A.D.<sup>6</sup>

The identification of the chief Kāmadēva is rather difficult. However, from the existing records not much information is available regarding Kāmadēva. In all probability the Kāmadēva of our records may be identified with his namesake referred to in the Goa grant<sup>7</sup> of Shashṭhadēva II. In this grant, a certain Kāmadēva is stated to have supported the cause of Shashṭhadēva, the last Kadamba chief of Goa. Kāmadēva mentioned above was married to a princess born of the Kāmadēva chief Tribhuvanamalla. No information about the ruler of Kāmadēva is forthcoming from other sources.

So far we have no definite information about the chief Tribhuvanamalla, except that he was married to a princess called Māṅikadēvī. We know of one Tribhuvanamalla as the successor of Jayakēśi III from the records of Goa Kadamba. The name Tribhuvanamalla mentioned in the present record suggest that it is only a title. It is for the first time that we come to know that Siṅghaṇa was the name of the Kadamba chief Tribhuvanamalla. The Hosagunda record under discussion is the earliest and the only record that refers to the Kadamba chief Tribhuvanamalla Siṅghaṇa. His contemporaneity with the Sinda chief Bīradēvarasa is confirmed from our record. Not only this, even the tentative date of Tribhuvanamalla Siṅghaṇa may be fixed around 1242 A.D., which is the date of the record under examination. A detailed survey of Honnali, Sagar and Sorab taluks of Shimoga District may yield more information to know the rule of Bīradēvarasa and his family.

It is evident from this inscription that a temple of Viṣṇu should have come into existence before 1242 A.D. at Hosagunda. Boppa, the officer under Sinda chief Bīradēvarasa not only caused the image to be consecrated in the Prasannanārāyaṇa temple but also endowed lands for the eprformance of *ashtavidārchana*. This particular type of offering is normally done in the Viṣṇu temples at the time of the bathing ceremony of the god. The eight types of offering made at the time of bathing ceremony are *akshate* (rice mixed with turmeric), *jala*(water), *gamdha* (sandal), *pushpa* (flowers), *dhūpa* (a powder poured over agni), *naivēdya* (food offerings), *tāmbūla* or *phala* (betel leaves with fruit). According to *āgamic* conception, this is one of the rituals that is included in the festivities. The eight varieties used in the *archana* worship or offering are mainly offered in order to propitiate the god for the welfare of the subjects. It is one of the rare instances that we come across the worship details in a Kannaḍa record of the medieval period.

#### Notes and References :

1. B.R.Gopal *Minor Dynasties of South India* : Karnataka Vol. I, p.106
2. *Epigraphia Carnatica*, Vol. VII, HL 49, 54
3. *Minor Dynasties of South India*, p.103
4. Dinakara Desai, *Mahāmaṇḍalēśvaras under Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa*.
5. J.F. Fleet, *Dynasties of the Kanarese District*, p.582
6. *Ibid.*, p.583
7. *Ibid.*, p.572

## TUMBALU COPPER-PLATE OF GAṄGA HARIVARMMA

A.V.Narasimha Murthy  
and  
N.Havaliiah

The present inscription consists of three copper plates with a ring which is still intact. The seal is square and contains the elephant in bold relief which is the royal symbol of the Gaṅgas of Talakāḍ. Each plate measures 7.8" in length and 3" in width. The diameter of the seal ring is 2.2". The weight of the copper plates together with the seal is 780gms. The seal is almost square with each side measuring 1.2". The plates are well preserved. The outer sides of the first and last plates are blank and do not contain writing. The inner side of the first, both sides of the second and the inner side of the third plate have writings engraved on them.

The inscription is in Sanskrit and Kannada languages. As usual the *Maṅgala Ślōka* and the formal part of the *praśasti* of the kings with their genealogy and the imprecatory verse at the end are in Sanskrit language. The portion mentioning the gift of the village and the boundaries there of and the details of the witness are written in Kannada language. The entire inscription which contains twenty seven lines are engraved in archaic Kannada Script which can be dated to eighth century A.D., on palaeographic grounds. The writing is not elegant and also contains many orthographical errors. As this is an unpublished inscription it is discussed below for the first time.<sup>1</sup>

The inscription opens with the invocation in praise of Padmanābha and this verse is most commonly met with in almost all the Gaṅga copper plates. Then it introduces the first king Koṅgaṇivarmma and almost all the Gaṅga inscriptions are unanimous in giving credit to this king for the establishment of the Western Gaṅga family. He is praised in the usual manner. However, Dr.K.V.Ramesh has drawn our attention to a particular long *praśasti* which is found in this inscription as also common to other inscriptions.<sup>2</sup> That *praśasti* reads "*sva-khadg-aika prahāra-khaṇḍita-Mahā śilāstambha-labdha-balaparākrama yaśaḥ*".

The exact purport of this phrase has not been properly explained and Dr.K.V. Ramesh writes "this phrase has not so far been properly understood and interpreted. *Mahāsītā* is the same as *Śataghni* an ancient deadly weapon used

as a missile, supposed by some to be a sort of fire-arm or rocket, but described by the commentator of the *Mahābhārata* as a cylindrical piece of wood studded with iron spikes (Monier Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*). It may be safely deduced from this that Koṅgaṇivarmman had successfully broken the devastating effect of this weapon in some battle, a feat which must have boosted him to the status of a king”<sup>3</sup>. This is a good and plausible explanation of this *praśasti* which is quoted by almost all the inscriptions of the Western Gaṅgas while describing the powers of Koṅgaṇivarmman.

The other descriptions which are related to Koṅgaṇivarmman are of general nature. He is credited as having amassed vast booty by his victories over the contemporary kings. He is also described as belonging to *Jāhnavēya kula* and also to *Kaṇvāyanasa gōtra*<sup>4</sup>. Then the copper plate refers to his son Mādhava(I) who is described as *Mahādhirāja*. So far not even a single inscription of the first king Koṅgaṇivarmma has been discovered and all that we know of him are through the inscriptions of his successors, starting from Mādhava I. Thus Mādhava I should get the credit as the first king to issue inscriptions in his dynasty. In addition to the titles of general nature, he is described as well educated not only in the usual subjects but also in the science of polity. In addition to his military prowess and capacity for good administration he was a writer himself. He wrote a commentary on *Dattaka Sūtra*, the subject matter of which was to highlight the craft of courtesans. This is generally mentioned with great pride in many of his inscriptions and obviously this might have been his significant literary achievement. Though this work is not extant, Rice thought that this was a work in Kannada.<sup>5</sup> However, there is no corroborating evidence either to confirm or to deny this opinion until we get some concrete evidence in this regard. It is known from other inscriptions of Mādhava I that he was a follower of Vēdic Hinduism as they give evidence for his personal gifts to vēdic *brāhmaṇas*. According to Kaṇḍasāla plates he was well versed in *Upanishads* and *Nītiśāstra*.<sup>6</sup>

Then the inscriptions introduces Harivarmma who is styled as *Mahārājādhirāja* and is further described as the son of *Mādhava mahārājādhirāja*. At this point it is necessary to understand his relationship in the Gaṅga genealogy. It was believed by the earlier historians that Mādhava I had three sons, namely, Harivarmma, Āryavarma and Kṛiṣṇavarma. But while editing Kannada Sāhitya Parishad plates of Gaṅga Siṃhavarman later in 1989, K.V.Ramesh has revised his opinion in the light of new discoveries.<sup>9</sup> Accordingly Mādhava I had two sons namely,

Kṛishṇavarman and Harivarman. The former had another name Āryyavarman, and his son was Mādhavavarman II. Harivarman's son was Vishṇugōpa. However, the present copper plate mentions only Harivarman who is the issuer of this grant.

The *praśasti* as given in the present record can be compared favourably with the same given in other records as pertaining to the three generations of kings. This only betrays attempts at formalisation and leads to stereotyped eulogy. The present grant very clearly states that Harivarman was ruling from Taḷavanapura i.e. Talakāḍ and not from Paravi. Though the present record is silent about his exploits, other inscriptions refer to his military prowess. He is generally described as having employed elephants in his wars.<sup>10</sup> Another grant states that Harivarman amassed great wealth by his bow and arrow. However, his Nanjanagud copper plate refers to his fame which had crossed the four oceans. Tagaḍūr grant refers to a battle at Heñjēru in which he made rich gifts of land to an individual for destroying the enemy, and seizing his treasury. The Beṇḍiganahalli and Kūḍlūr records also refer to the grants made by this king.<sup>13</sup> The literary work *Koṅgudēśarājākkal* refers to a grant made to the brāhmaṇas for the worship of *Mūlasthānadēvēśvara*.<sup>14</sup> Another important incident that is generally associated with Harivarman is a dispute between a Buddhist scholar Vādhimada Gajendra and brāhmin scholar Mādhava Bhaṭṭa, in which the latter became successful. Harivarman was mightily pleased and gave a grant of the village Orekōḍu (Varakōḍu) to Mādhava Bhaṭṭa.<sup>15</sup> Another incident to which common reference is made is that Pallava Siṃhavarman took interest in Harivarman and anointed him on the Gaṅga throne.<sup>16</sup> There is no corroborative evidence on this point also. It is important to note that the above deeds and exploits of Harivarman are not even referred to in his own inscription, namely, Kūḍlūr inscription (year 188).<sup>17</sup> Obviously, these were the creations of the poets of the Gaṅga court at a later period to enhance the prestige of the earlier kings of the dynasty.

The inscription contains details of date in lines 11-12. It first refers to Śaka year (expired) expressed in terms of a chronogram *Śara-ritu-kāla* which works out to Śaka 365. This is equivalent to 444 A.D. The other details of date are *Tāraṇa samvatsara Chaitra śuddha pañchami Sōmavāra (Monday), Śrāvaṇa-nakshatra*. It is very difficult to verify this; but cyclic year *Tāraṇa* falling in Śaka 365 corresponds exactly to 444 A.D. This date extends the reign-period of Harivarman by three decades. This is a very important point to be remembered in deciding the correct date of the inscription.

But the palaeography of the inscription does not conform to the above mentioned date of the middle of fifth century A.D. Actually the copper plate is inscribed

in characters of eighth century A.D. Letters like *ka*, *ra*, *ma*, *ta*, *sha*, etc and the longish horizontal serif at the top of each letter *ī* and *ū* signs in association with consonants point to eighth century A.D. The present plates can easily be compared to Narasiṃharājapura plates of Śrīpuruṣa,<sup>18</sup> and Hullenahalli plates of Śrīpuruṣa<sup>19</sup> and other similar copper-plates. Hence, the palaeography of the present record confirms that this was engraved in the eighth century A.D. K.V. Ramesh who has examined about 160 inscriptions of the Western Gaṅgas has opined that some of the early Gaṅga copper plates could be later copies of the eighth or ninth centuries A.D., and not spurious as rejected by some of the early epigraphists like J.F. Fleet. Applying this model the present record may be construed as a later copy of an original inscription.

The inscription contains a large number of mistakes both in Sanskrit and Kannada portions. This is particularly true in the case of Sanskrit portions. *ḷa* is used for *ḍ*(*Khalgaika*); *ḷa* for *la*(*śīla*); *sha* for *śa* (*shaka*); *śa* for *sa* (*śōmavāra*); *ḷa* for *la* (*mūlike*); *sa* for *sa* (*triśandhi*); *a* for *ā* (*prajāpālana-mahārāja*),etc. This also proves that this copper-plate is a later copy of an earlier inscription and hence it contains many orthographical errors.

The first eleven lines of the inscription are in Sanskrit besides to the imprecatory verse at the end. The remaining lines are in Kannada.

The purport of the epigraph is to record the grant of the village Tumbalu to three heroes who showed great valour in a battle at Hombucha. It cannot be said with certainty if this Hombucha is the same place which is known as a jaina centre. While describing the boundaries of the gifted land, the inscription refers to many villages which can be identified. The following are the villages:

1. Tumbala = Tumbala-T.Narasipur taluk, Chamarajanagar district.
2. Banniyūr = Bannūr - T. Narasipur taluk, Chamarajanagar district
3. Eḍadore - T. Narsipur taluk, Chamarajanagar district.
4. Muttatti - Malavalli taluk, Mandya district.
5. Tagaḍūru - Nanjanagud taluk, Mysore district.
6. Haḍadana = Haḍajana - Mysore taluk, Mysore district.
7. Śōśali = Sōsale - T.Narasipur taluk, Chamarājanagar district.
8. Harave - Chamarajanagar taluk, Chamarajanagar district.



9. Muttalagere -not identified.

10. Hebbola - Chamarajanagar taluk, Chamarajanagar district.

T.Narasipur is a holy place where three rivers Kaveri, Kapila and *Guptagāmini* meet and hence considered a *San̄gama* where devotees take a holy bath. In recent years Southern *Kumbamēḷa* is also organised here. The presesnt inscription throws light on the antiquity of this *San̄gama* by referring to it as *Kāvēri trisandhi*. This is significant indeed! There are three donees mentioned in this record. The first one is Malligāvunḍa of the Tenadakara family. The second one was Mañchagāvunḍa of the Huggeyara family. The third person was Māragāvunḍa of the Śulḷeyara family. All the three might have jointly attacked the enemy at Pombucha and won the battle for their master.

The first donee belonged to the Tenadakara family, which perhaps is the same as Tenandarka (Tenandāka, Tenendaka or Tenendhaka) family which flourished in the Chmarajanagar area in 750 A.D.<sup>20</sup> Another person of the same family lived in K.R. Nagar area in 800 A.D.<sup>21</sup> This family is also referred to in an inscription from Mysore district dated 750 A.D.<sup>22</sup> From all these references it becomes clear that Tenadaka family had persons who had distinguished themselves in serving the ruling kings by their valour. The members of this family mentioned in the presant inscription distinguished themselves in the battle at Hom̄bucha, the details of which are not known. The details of other two families are not known.

The inscription refers to witnesses from four neraby villages. Actually they are not individuals but members of organisations of working groups or castes: Firstly a minor community (*Kurudayākara*) of Sosale, now a great centre of *Mādhva* sect of the *brāhmaṇas*; secondly the potters and basket makers (*Kommeya Kovaru*) of the village Tagaḍūr; thirdly the betel or paddy sellers! (*Kivuleya tandor*); and finally weavers (*Śelabeyaru*) of Bannūr village.<sup>23</sup> It is interesting to note that the members of the above various organisations and castes of different neighbouring villages joined toghter at the ceremony where the gift was given by king Harivarma.

After this the usual imprecatory verse *Svadattam*, etc., is engraved. Finally, it mentions Koṅguṇiyāchāri who should be taken as the engraver of the copper-plate though it is not mentioned as such. Generally the term *Utkīrṇam* is not at all used in the early Gaṅga inscriptions, but even the word *likhitam* is not used in the present inscrption. It is of interest to note that the present record was written/engraved by a carpenter. It may be noted that the Nandi plates of Mādhava I were written/engraved by Śrīpāla, a carpenter. Many inscriptions of the Gaṅgas were written by carpenters. Thus the present inscription is an

unpublished copper plate of king Harivarma of the early period for whom not many inscriptions exist. Thus it is an important addition to the copper plates of the Gaṅgas in general and that of Harivarma in particular.

### Text

#### First Plate, Second Side :

1. Svastij = jitam - bhagavatā gata-ghana-gaganābhēna padmanābhēna śrīmājjānhavī.
2. yakul-āmala-vyōmāva bhāsāna-bhāskaraḥ svakhaḷgaika prahāra- khaṇḍita mahā-
3. śilā-stambha-labdha-bala-parākrama dharuṇārigaṇa- -vidhāraṇ- oṇpalabdha-braṇa vi-
4. bhūshāna-vibhūshitaḥ Kaṇvayanasa gōtraḥ śrīmān Koṅguṇivarmma-mahā-
5. dhirājaḥ tasyaputraḥ pituranvāgata- guṇayuktō- idyāvinēyavihita.
6. vṛitti tasya prajāpālanamātradhigata-rājya-prayōjana vidvat-kavikāñchānika
7. śopalaḥbhūto nītiśāstrasya-vattaprayōkta-kuśalō- Dattakasūtra vṛittē-

#### Second Plate, First Side :

8. praṇētā śrīmān Mādhava- mahārājādhirājaḥ tatputraḥ pitṛipaitāmahā gu-
9. ṇayuktōn='ēka chāturdanta-yuddavāpta chatur-udadhi salilāsva-jita yaśō-
10. śrīmadd=Ariva[r\*]mma-mahārājādhirāja Taḷavanapura madhyē vija
11. yaskandhā[vā]rāḥ sha(śa)kavarshēshu gatēshu śara-ritu- kāla-sha(sa)tē Tāraṇa-
12. saṁvatsarē Chaitra śuddha pañchami Śōmavāre Śrāvaṇa- nakshatradandu
13. Tenadakara Malla-gāvūṇḍa Huggeyara Mañcha-gāvūṇḍa Śulleyara

#### Second Plate, Second Side :

14. Māra-gavūṇḍayavaru [Ho]mbuchada kāḷegadaḷ-iṛidu pejjaravatandūḍippigi paḍe
15. mechchi koṭṭa ūru Eḍatore-nāḍa Tumbalū- pūrbbasyāndīśi Muttatiya dviśandhi timtri

16. nivr̥iksha antē-dakshiṇa-mavaḷake-śarate-nagachanti Tumbula Muttatiya Haraveya
17. trīsandhi stapyāśila ante pachchima mavaḷake ākāme bahumūlike-stapyāśi
18. la tenagachanti Tumbula Udayamaṅgalada Kupeya trīsandi Mutilugere ante utta-
19. ra mavaḷake chanchari ante naḍadū bahumūlike tuggilamara bahumūlike gaśum-
20. gale kinchitanaga mekaḷare ākārame Tumbula Hebbola Kāvēriya trīsa-

### Third Plate, First Side :

21. ndhi keṛe ante pūrbba mavaleke nadivididū tenagachanti Tumbula Mutatiya
22. Kāvēriya trīsandhi mākabegalli ante dakshiṇa mavaleke chancharivididu
23. bahu(mūli)ke ante bandu ti(m)triṇi vṛishava kūditu @ sākshiṇā Śōsa-
24. liya Kuṛudayākaru Tagaḍūra Kommeyakōvarum Haḍada-
25. nada Kivuleya tandoru Banniyūra Śelabeyaru @ Svadattam-paradattam-
26. vā-yō harēta vasundharā shastirvvarsha śahaśrāṇi-visṭṭāya jā
27. yatē krimi [I\*] Kammara Koṅguṇiyāchāri [II\*]

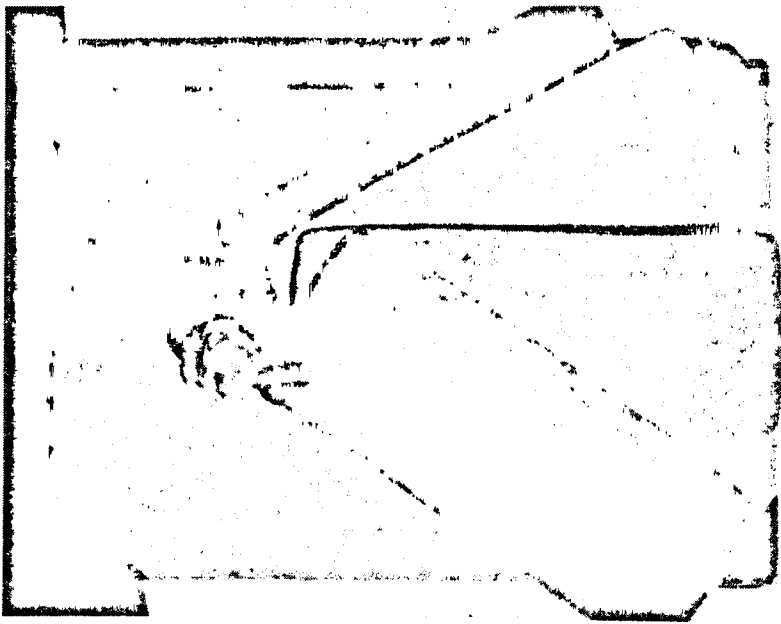
### Notes and References

1. The discovery of this copper plate forms a part of a UGC Research project, of the Department of Ancient History and Archaeology, Mysore University, under the direction of Dr N. Havalaiah, the project Director. He was able to obtain this copper plate through the courtesy of Sri.Raju Siddhāratha of Marigaḍanahuṇḍi, through Research fellow Sri Krishnappa. The authors are grateful to the former for allowing them to study and publish. The authors express their gratefulness to Sri.H.M.Nagaraja Rao, Epigraphist, Kuvempu Institute of Kannada Studies, Mysore for reading the inscription and making very useful suggestions. Dr.M.D.Sampath, Rtd. Director of the Epigraphy branch was kind enough to check the reading of the text and also suggesting many useful points discussed here. The authors have also leaned heavily on the opinions of Dr.K.V.Ramesh as given in his scholarly work on the Western Gaṅga inscriptions.
2. K.V. Ramesh, *Inscriptions of the Western Gangas*, p.Liv-Lv.(IWG)
3. *Ibid.*
4. He is described simply as *mahādhiraḷa* and the word *dharma* is absent.

5. R.S. Mugali, *Kannada Sāhitya Charitre*, p.13.
6. K.V. Ramesh, *op.cit.*, no.2
7. B.Sheikh Ali, *History of the Western Gangas*, p.46
8. *IWG.*, p.LV
9. *Ep. Ind.*, Vol.XLI, p.190.
10. B. Sheikh Ali, *op.cit.*, p.47
11. *Ibid.*
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*
16. *Ibid.*
17. *IWG.*, no.4.
18. *Ibid.*, no.71
19. *Ibid.*, no.65
20. *Ep.Carn*,IV, Chamarajanagar 63-68
21. *Ibid.*, Edatorē 60-72.
22. *M.A.R.*, 1906, 13-18.
23. The authors are grateful to Dr.T.V.Venkatachala Sastri, the famous Kannada Scholar for checking the meaning of many archaic Kannada words used in this inscription.



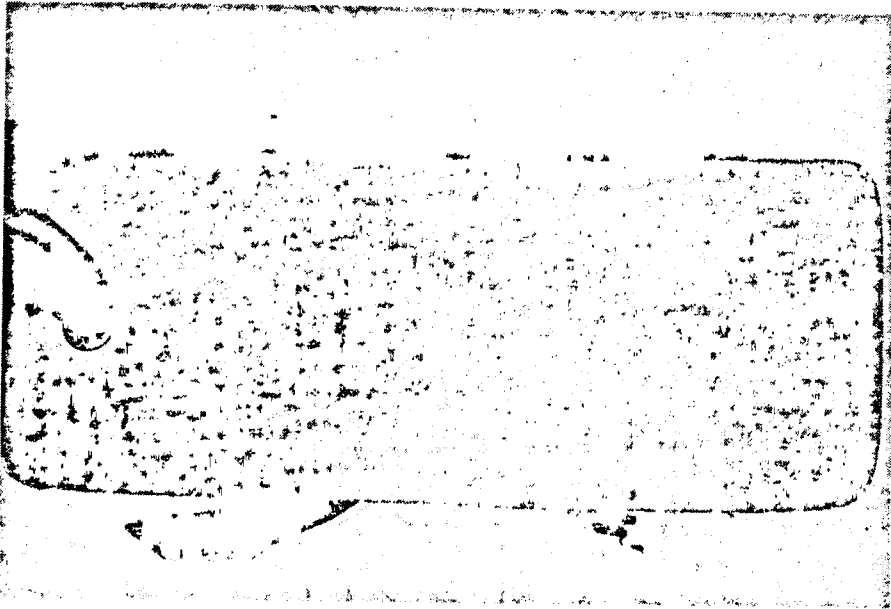
Seal



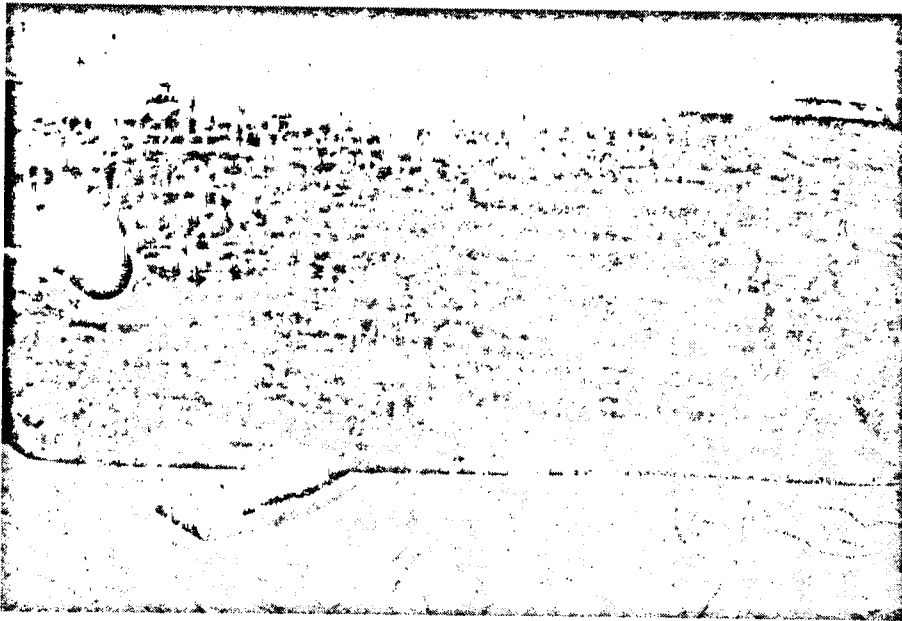
Plates and seal

Tumalu Copper-plate of Garga Harivarmma

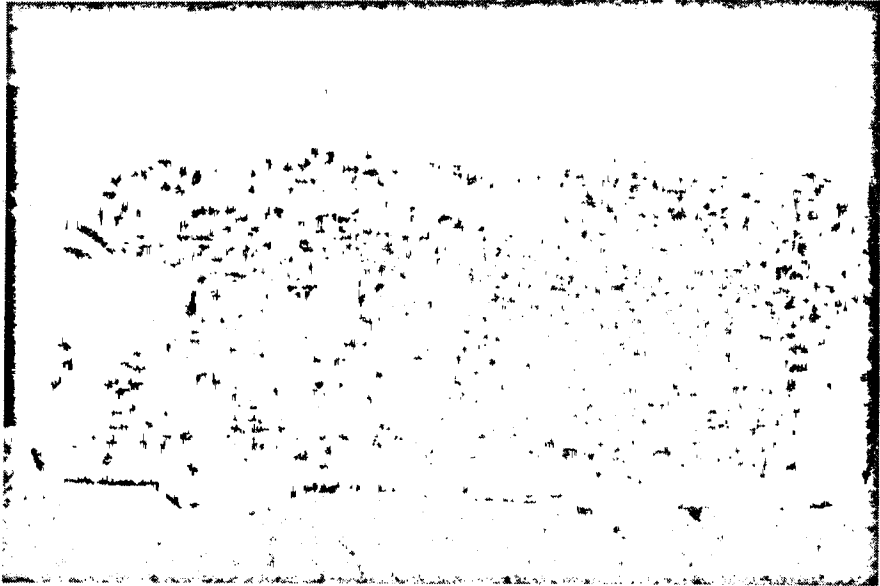
First plate, second side.



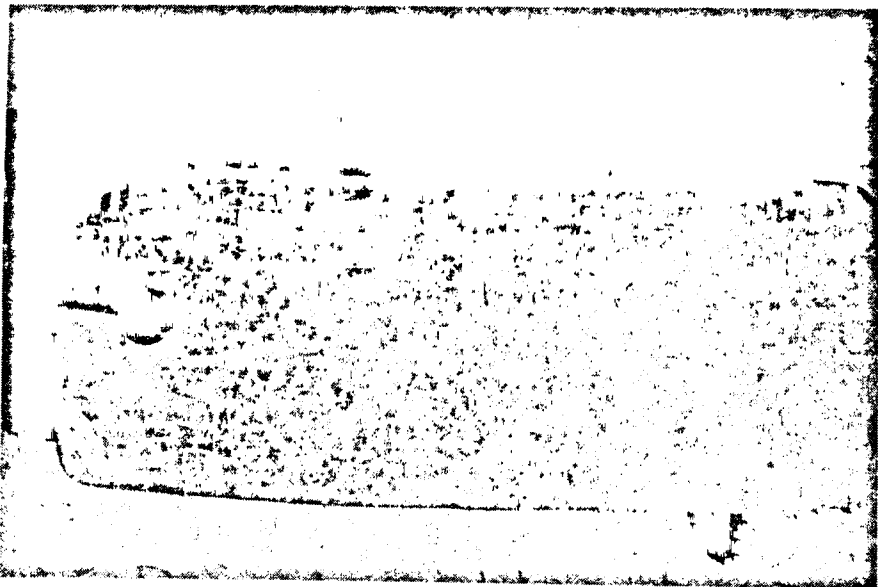
Second plate, first side.



Second plate, second side.



Third plate, first side.



Tumalu Copper-plate of Gaṅga Harivarmma

## MĀCHĀḌĪ STONE INSCRIPTION, VIKRAMA 1439

Jai Prakash

The inscription<sup>1</sup> edited below for the first time with the kind permission of the Director (Epigraphy), Archaeological Survey of India, was copied by me in May, 2002. It is engraved on a stone slab fixed on the southern wall of a stepwell locally known as *agravālon kī bāvadī* at Māchāḍī, in Rajgarh Tahsil in Alwar District of Rajasthan.

The writing on the stone is tolerably well preserved, except some of the syllables which are damaged and it covers a space of about 51 cms in length by 50 cms. in breadth. It consists of nineteen lines. The average height of the letter is 1.8 cms in the first sixteen lines but it is reduced to 1.5 cms in the remaining three lines, to accommodate the writing.

The characters are Nāgarī. *Y* is written like *p* in form, as in *dēvyā* line 1, *gamyā* in line 5, *Vikramāditya* in line 6, *pushya* and *rājya* in line 7 and *kasyapa* in line 12. It is noteworthy that the consonant *t* in *saṁvat* in line 6, is written as *tu*.

The language is Sanskrit, which is often corrupt. The record is in prose with the exception of two verses in the beginning, which are in *Upendravajrā* and *Vasantatilakā* metres respectively and one verse at the end, which is in *Anushṭup*.

The orthography calls for no remarks except that occasionally the dental sibilant is used for the palatal, e.g. in *Visvō* and *isvara* in line 2, *Jagatāmīsa* in line 4, *Siva* and *sāke* in line 6, *Vaisāsha* in line 7 and *vaṁse* in line 8; *sh* (lingual sibilant) is put for *kh* guttural), e.g. in *śaṁsha* in line 5, *Vaisāsha* in line 7, *śaṁḍēla* in lines 10 and 12, *Shēmvāṭa* in line 14 and *Shēmvasīha* in line 15. The consonant *v* in *sarvvē* in line 15, and in *sarvvē sarvvē* in line 19 is doubled as it is preceded by *r*. The sign for *v* is used to denote *b* in *Vrahma* in line 1 and *Vrāhma* in line 17. Local influence is to be seen in *Mitanadēva* in line 10, *Dōmvara* in lines 13 and 14, *Rāmvaṁchamda* in lines 13 and 15, *Shēmvāṭa* in line 14 and *Shēmvasīha* in line 15.

The inscription is of unique historical importance. It furnishes for the first time hitherto unknown king of a feudatory family<sup>2</sup> of Māchāḍī (Vaḍagujara family of Māchāḍī). Secondly, it also throws sufficient light on the socio-cultural aspects of that period.



The inscription opens with an auspicious symbol 'ōm' which is followed by the word *siddhi* (ḥ) and then it has two *maṅgala - ślōkas*. The first of these stanzas purports to eulogise the greatness of Gaṇapati (Vighnavināśana) and pays obeisance to him and the second after eulogising the greatness of Śiva invokes him to protect us.

The object of the inscription is to record the construction of the step-well (*vāpī*) by a number of persons mentioned in the record during the reign of *Mahārājādhirāja* Gōgādēva, son of king Āsaladēva belonging to Vaḍagūjara family of Māchāḍī and during the regin of imperial king Fīrūz Shāh belonging to Tughluq dynasty.

The date which is expressed in figures in lines 6-7, is Sunday, the ninth in the bright half of the month of Vaiśākha, in the Vikrama Saṁvat 1439 and Śaka 1304, which could regularly correspond to 17th April, 1383 A.D.

Śrī Sādhu Vāvaṇa whose original place was Sh(Kh)amḍēla, belongs to Sh(Kh) amḍēlavāl-ānvaya, Kāśyapa *gōtra*, resident of Māchāḍī near Alwar (District headquarters) and whose *kuladēvatā* were Jaganāth Pīpaladēva Mītanadēva. His five sons (were) Dōmvara, Dhānā, Mānā, Ratan and Rāmvaṁchaṁda. Their elder sons' name were Nāgadēva Sh(kh)ēmvaṭa (son of Domvara), Sāraṁga (son of Dhānā), Gaṁgadēva (son of Mānā), Kālasīha (son of Ratan) and Shēmvasīha (son of Rāmvaṁchaṁda) respectively. A step well (*vāpī*) was constructed by Śrī Sādhu Vāvaṇa, his five sons and son's five elder sons and others to please god, ancestors and human beings.

Here it is interesting to note that we find for the first time the names of a constructor of a stepwell, his sons and his grandsons who belong to the Khaṇḍēlvāla community.

The word 'Khaṇḍēlvāla is very interesting as it refers to a community which took its name from the place - name Khaṇḍēl (which is in Jaipur District in Rajasthan). The literal meaning of Khaṇḍēlvāla is a person from Khaṇḍēl. Thus it shows the migration of the Khaṇḍēlvāla community from Khaṇḍēl (in Jaipur District) to Māchāḍī (in Alwar District in Rajasthan). Also it indicates that place - name Khaṇḍēl became surname.

Lines 17-18 inform us that *Sūtradhāra* (artisan or engraver) was Gōlhā, son of Sahadēva, resident of Māchāḍī located near Alwar. The *Silāvaṭa* was Jaṇa and 18 others (also probably *silāvaṭa*).

Here the word *silāvata* is noteworthy as it figures in a number of inscriptions<sup>3</sup> copied by me from Rajasthan. The literal meaning of the word is one who carves the stone or stone - cutter.

Line 19(verse 3) speaks that people always drink the sweet water of the stepwell in holy place (or place of pilgrimage). The inscription ends with "there may be always auspiciousness".

Of the geographical names mentioned in the inscription, Māchāḍī (lines 8 and 11) is the same as the modern Māchāḍī, the findspot of the inscription. Alwar is same as modern Alwar, the head-quarters of the District of the same name. The place-name Khaṇḍēl<sup>4</sup> is the principle town in the Jaipur District of Rajasthan. Khaṇḍēl is situated in 27°37'N. and 75°30', about 88 kms north - by - north west of Jaipur city.

### Text

1. *Om*<sup>6</sup> || *siddhi (dhiḥ) | śrī - Gaṇapati-kuladēvyā (yāḥ) prasādātu(t) | yaṁ*  
*Vra(Bra)hma Vēdāṁch (Vēdānta) vidō Vadanti* |<sup>7</sup>.
2. *param pradhānam puruṣam tath- ānyē | viś (ś) v=ōdgatē kāraṇamī(ś)varam vā*  
*|<sup>8</sup> tasmai namōḥ (mō).*
3. *Vighnavināśanāya 1[1\*]1 yē (ē)kōvyaktatamōgha mūrtir- amalāḥ śāntaḥ śivā*  
*nirgu-*
4. *ṇa(ṇaḥ) |<sup>9</sup> ya(yaḥ) sarvvatra charācharēshu jagatamīsa (jagatāmīśaḥ)*  
*sutātmātmika (kaḥ) [1\*] viś-vōtpatti-pitāma(maḥ)*
5. *sthiti-vidhau śrī-śamśha(kha) - chakrā (ra) - budhvikah |<sup>10</sup> (chakr-ānvitaḥ) jyānam*  
*(jñāna - dhyāna-samādhi - yōga - nirata(taḥ) gammya (gamyāḥ).*
6. *Siva (Śivaḥ) pātu vaḥ | (|| 2) samvatsarēsmīnu (samvatsarēsmīn) Śrī*  
*Vikramādityarājyē samvatu (t) 1439 Sā (Śā)kē 1304.*
7. *Varahō (shē Vaisāsha śākho) sudi 9 Ravi dinō(nē) pushya nakshatrō(trē)*  
*śrī-Suratāṇa Perōjasāhi rājyē*
8. *pravratrō (titē) |<sup>11</sup> Māchāḍī Vasvatānō (vāstavya) Vadagūjara-varīḥ (śē) |<sup>12</sup>*  
*rājā śrī Āsaladēva - suta ||<sup>13</sup>*
9. *mahārājādhirāja śrī Gōgādēva rājya samayē ||<sup>14</sup>*

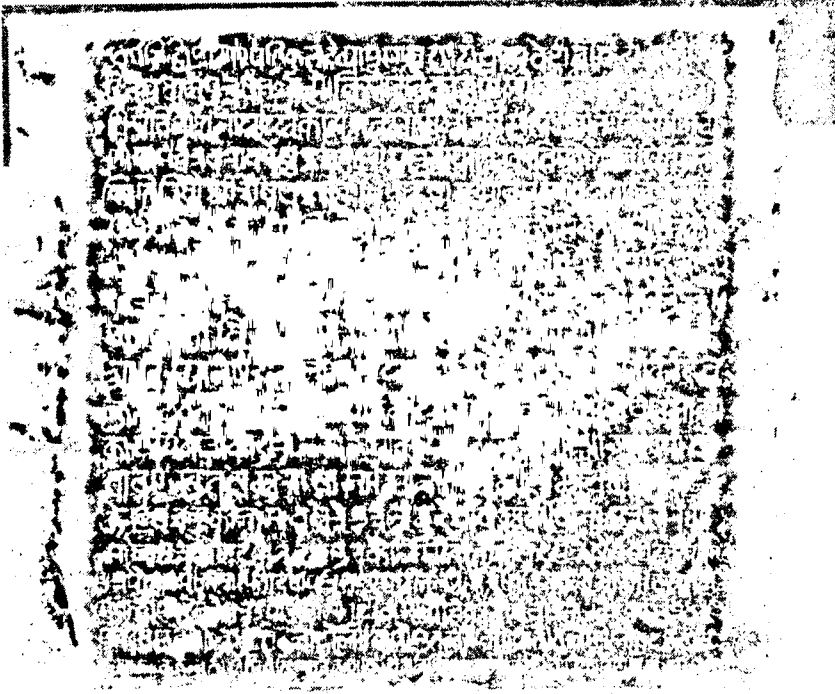
10. *ādīsthāna Sham (Kham)ḍēla-nikāsāya* |<sup>15</sup> *Jamgāmnātha (Jagannātha) Pīpaladēva Mitnadēva.*
11. *kuladēvatāya*<sup>16</sup>. *Alavara upārjanāya* |<sup>17</sup> *Māchādī vasthāna nivēsanāya* |<sup>18</sup>
12. *Kāsyam(śya)pa gōtrāya.* |<sup>19</sup> *dasāmga-kāṭhavyōkāya* |<sup>20</sup> *Sham(Kham)ḍēlavālānvē (anvayē) śrī Sādhu* |<sup>21</sup>
13. *Vāvaṇa - suta Dōmvara* |<sup>22</sup> *Dhānā* |<sup>23</sup> *Mānā* |<sup>24</sup> *Ratanam (Ratna)* |<sup>25</sup> *Rāmvaṃchamda (Rāmachandra)*<sup>26</sup>
14. *Jyēshta (ṭha) putranhukā (putrāṇām nāma Dōmvara-putra Nāgadēva* |<sup>27</sup> *Shē (Khē) mvaṭa* |<sup>28</sup> *Dhānā - putra Sāramga* |<sup>29</sup>
15. *Mānā-putra Gamgadēva* |<sup>30</sup> *Ratana-putra Kālasīha*|<sup>31</sup> *Rāmvaṃchamda-putra Shē (Khē)mvasīha* |<sup>32</sup> *apara - sarvvē* |<sup>33</sup>
16. *putra-pautra vāpī kārītā dēva-patri (pitri). manushya prīt-yartha sūtradhārikānāma (sūtradhārakāṇāmā ādīsthānu(na) nai*
17. *ṇa vrā (brā)hma.* |<sup>34</sup> *[Alva\* ]ra - upārjana* |<sup>35</sup> *Māchādī-vāstavya-chachhastha-gōcha* |<sup>36</sup> *urāra - vyōmku* |<sup>37</sup> *sutradhāri (sūtradhāra)*
18. *Sahadēva - suta Gōlhā prapaitana.* |<sup>38</sup> *hōlā* |<sup>39</sup> *vāpī - puta - ddhārai nipāyata tatha silāvaṭa Jaṇa 18 auri.*
19. *Yasya svada (svādu) jala (jalam) tīrthē piva (ba)nti satatam janā (janāh) |. kā (kim) tēna na kri (kri)tam punnyam (puṇyam) sarvvē (sarvaiḥ) sarvve (sarva) prakāraṇam (prakārakam) | [ | 3\* ] su (śu)bham-astu satatam [1\*]*

### Notes and References :

1. The first person to inform me about the availability of this inscription in the month of May, 2002 was Shri J.S. Bakshi, a freelance Journalist, 9, Moti Dungri, Alwar.
2. The Vaḍagujar family is different from the Gurjar family of Nāndīpuri. See *Ind. Ant.*, Vol. XIII. pp. 77 ff. and plate; Bhandarkar's list No. 1218.

The expression 'Gurjar jñāti' is found in three jaina inscriptions. One inscription is from Jaipur dated Vikrama 1340, another from Jaisalmer dated Vikrama 1490 and the third from Gwalior (Laskar) dated Vikrama 1515 (see P.C. Nahar's *Jaina Inscriptions*, Part II (1927), No. 1134, 1376 & Part III (1929) No. 2450). But Vaḍagujar family of Māchādī is different. I am thankful to Dr. T.S. Ravishankar, Dy. Suptdg. Epigraphist (Numismatics), Mysore for providing me above stated three references from the *Jaina Inscriptions*.

3. See *Triratna*, Vol. IV, pp. 977 ff., Delhi, 2003.
4. *The Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. XV, p. 224
5. From impressions
6. Expressed by a symbol
7. The *daṇḍa* is redundant
8. - 39 The *daṇḍa* / *daṇḍas* / is / are / redundant



Māchādī Stone Inscription, Vikrama 1439.

## A MÖGHÖLMÄRI SEAL INSCRIPTION

B.N. Mukherjee

A mound at Mogholmāri in Block I of Danton (the headquarter of an ancient administrative unit called Daṇḍabhukti) in the West Medinipur district of West Bengal has been recently excavated by the Department of Archaeology of the Calcutta University under the supervision of Dr. Asoke Kumar Datta. An inscribed terracotta seal (or rather seal impression) was found at the site earlier than the commencement of the archaeological excavation. I am publishing it with the kind permission of Dr. Datta.

The seal (or rather impression) measures  $6\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$  cms. The palaeographic features of the inscription can be favourably compared with those of some of the inscriptions of lowermost Bengal (West Bengal and Bangladesh), where lies the West Medinipur district. We can specially refer to the epigraphs of Dharmāditya (Faridpur plates) (second half of the 6th century and Śāśāṅka (Medinipur and Egra plates of c 580-619 A.D.) and Lokanātha (Tipperah grant, c 663 - 64 A.D.).

The details of our reading can be stated as follows.

Character - Religious maxim on a seal.

Language - Sanskrit still influenced by Prakrit.

Script : Post-Gupta Brāhmī

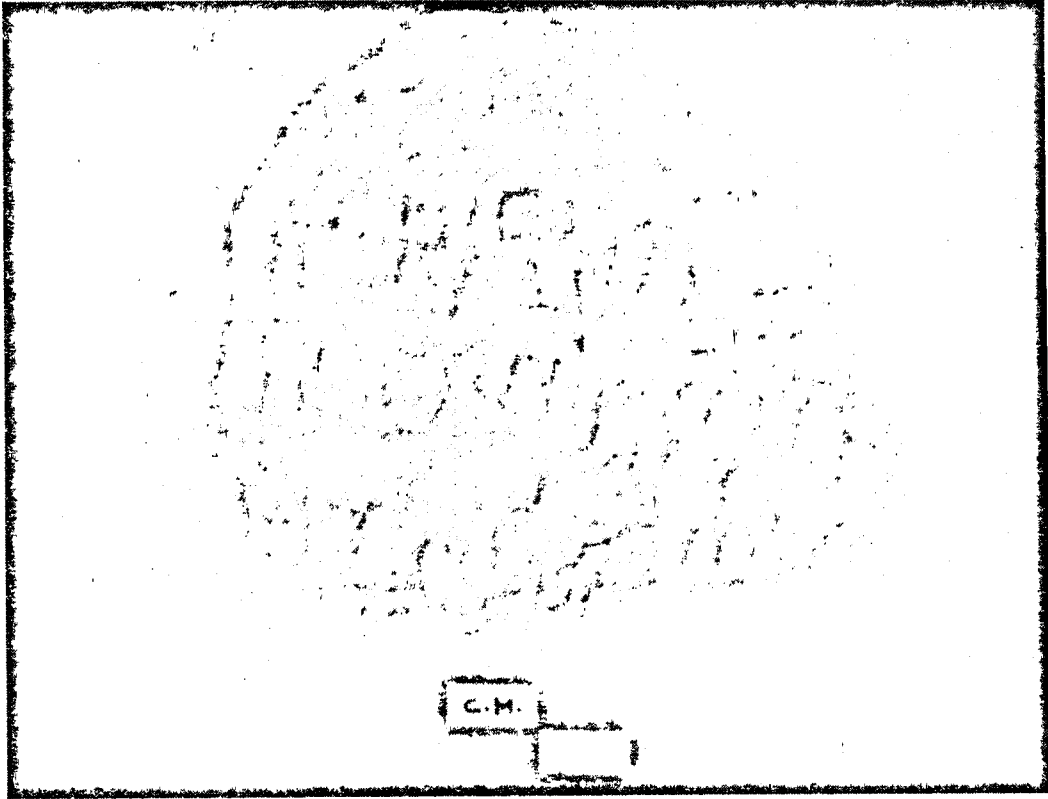
Date : c. 6th-7th century A.D.

### Text

1. Dharmo hetu prā
2. Tathāta (')gra guṃta (=guṇitaḥ ?)
3. Bahava ty(ā)g(ā)(hata ? )

### Translation

“Fulfilling (?) the religious cause, enumerated (?) from that (at) first, man sacrifices have been struck (i.e. made).”



Mōghōlmāri Seal Inscription

## CHĒRAMĀDĒVI FROM INSCRIPTIONS

N. Pankaja

Chēramādēvi in Ambasamudram Taluk of Tirunelveli District has three temples, viz., Ammainātha temple, Kailāsamudaiyār and Bhaktavatsala-perumāḷ temple. They have yielded a number of inscriptions of the ruling kings and the viceroys of Chōḷa Rājarāja I and Rājēndra I. The Pāṇḍya country was conquered by the Chōḷa kings Rājarāja I and his son Rājēndra I.

During this period of their occupation, the viceroys of the erstwhile Pāṇḍya territory were deputed to take charge of this region and then came to be known as Chōḷa Pāṇḍyas. These chiefs are called Jaṭāvarman Sundara Chōḷa - Pāṇḍya Vikrama Chōḷa - Pāṇḍya etc.

Chēramādēvi has yielded a number of inscriptions belonging to the reign period of Rājarāja I. Chēramādēvi was again brought back under the control of the Pāṇḍyas during the 11th century A.D.

The records of Jaṭāvarmaṇ Sundara Chōḷa - Pāṇḍya from Sēramādēvi refer to the *śivabrāhmaṇas* and the *mahāsabhā* of Nigariliśōḷa - chaturvēdimāṅgalam making endowments to the temple of Śrīkayilāyam - uḍaiyār while two records of this chief dated in his 14th and 15th years register the endowments made by the *sabhā* and the member of the trading guild to the Vishṇu temple called Nigariliśōḷa - viṇṇagar - Āḷyār. Two of his records dated in the 17th year<sup>1</sup> are valuable documents and are of interest in the sense the text follows the conventional form used in the Chōḷa period for preparing documents conveying lands. The record dated on the 7th day of the above regnal year registers the assignment of two *vēli* of land at Kallūr in Mēlvēmba - nāḍu in Muḍigoṇḍaśōḷa - vaḷanāḍu to the temple of Śrīkayilāsam- uḍaiya-mahādēva at the request of *Ammāṇ*, after the separation of this land from the original division and making it into a new unit known as Śivapādaśēkharanallūr from the 16th year of his viceroyalty. Rājarāja had assumed a title *Śivapādaśekhara* as he was a devout worshipper of Śiva. The present gift that was made in his honour is interesting. While making the above grant, Sundarachōḷa - pāṇḍya issued the necessary orders when he was seated in the western hall of the palace at Rājēndraśōḷapuram. In a record of his 13th year from Maṇṇārkōyil<sup>2</sup>, he is stated to have issued orders while he was seated in the western *maṇḍapa* in the *āṭṭattuvēli* or the open court yard meant for

enacting plays in the palace at Rājēndrasōḷapuram. The land sold was rejoined as a new colony called Śōḷapāṇḍyanallūr and converted into a tax-free *dēvadāṇa* village. This and other records mentioning the decisions of the *sabhā* of Rājarāja - Chaturvēdimāṅalam have been engraved in the temple built by the Chēra chief Rājasimha in the name of his Chōḷa overlord.

The Tiruvālīśvaram inscription<sup>3</sup> of Sundara-Chōḷa-Pāṇḍya recounts an order issued by his uncle (*ammāṇ*) in his 6th year diverting the income from the land to be spent for the Tiruvālīśvaram - uḍaiyār temple. Again it is mentioned that the king was seated in the western *maṇḍapa* in the *āṭṭattuvēli* in the palace at Rājēndrasōḷapuram. (*Rājēndrasōḷapurattuk - Kōyiliṇ - ullāl - āṭṭattuvēli - mēlaimaṇḍapatt - eḷund - aruḷi - irundu*). It may be inferred from the above that the transactions of these temples have been made from his palace which is nearby to the places like Śērmādēvi, Maṇṇārkōyil and Tiruvālīśvaram. Like Śivapādaśēkharanallūr, the lands in the newly constituted village Śivacharaṇaśēkharanallūr, originally called Kākkalūr, a hamlet of Rājarāja-chaturvēdimāṅalam, was endowed to the temple of Tiruvālīśvaram - uḍaiyār under the orders of the *ammāṇ* of the king. The king was seated in the Rājēndrachōḷa - Atimūrkhacheṅgirai in the *Chittirakūḍam* called Puttaṅ to the north of Madurai.

In the 17th year of Sundarachōḷa - pāṇḍya,<sup>4</sup> at the request of *Ammāṇ*, new colonies like Śivapādaśēkharanallūr, Śivacharaṇanallūr and Mummiḍichōlanallūr have been formed. The *dēvadāṇa* lands gifted to the temple of Kayilāśam - uḍaiyār at Nigariliśōḷa - chaturvēdimāṅalam by the Chōḷa - pāṇḍya viceroys have been constituted into a separate revenue unit under the name of Śivapādaśēkharanallūr. They have been taken over for cultivation by the *ūrār* who had the *kāṇi* rights over Kallūr in Mēlvēmba - nāḍu in Muḍigoṇḍaśōḷa - vaḷanāḍu. The two villages granted as *dēvadāṇa* were returned in the 19th year as the *Śivabrāhmaṇas* were unable to pay the taxes. Due to the non-payment of taxes on these lands, they relinquished their cultivation rights in favour of the *dēvakaṇmis* of the temple, who took over the lands, gave an undertaking to the tax officials *Puravari - tiṇaikkaḷattār, varipottagam - uḍaiyār* and several others, not to interfere in any affairs pertaining to these lands in the days to come. The tax exemption was made on these lands endowed in honour of the imperial Chōḷa king Rājarāja I (acc. - 985 A.D) and colonised it in the name of *Śivapādaśēkhara* held by no less than Rājarāja I himself. Thus the method followed in drafting the document recording the grant of lands in the 17th year of Sundarachōḷa - pāṇḍya continued



to be followed till the 19th year and thereon by this chief <sup>5</sup>. The system of revenue administration introduced by Rājarāja I has been adopted by his viceroys meticulously for the benefit of the subjects and to maintain the grant.

The *ammāṇ* (uncle) of the king at whose request the charities have been made may be identified with Chēramāṇār Rājasimhadēva. He is referred to as Chēramāṇār Rājarājadēvar and was a contemporary of the chief Jaṭāvarman Sundarachōla - pāṇḍya referred to in the Maṇṇārkōyil records of his 14th and 16th regnal years.

In all the inscriptions of Chōla - pāṇḍya viceroy, the place Sērmādēvi is referred to as Nigariliśōḷa-chaturvēdimāṅalam. It was only during the period of Pāṇḍya king Śrīvallabha, this place came to be called Chēraṇmahādēvi-chaturvēdimāṅalam, named after the queen Nambirāṭṭi *alias* Chēraṇmahādēvi of the Chēra king Rājasimha or Rājarāja. This is mentioned in his 2nd year record from the temple of Bhaktapriya, now called Bhaktavatsala-perumāḷ temple.

Inscriptions from Sērmādēvi are interesting to understand the land tenure pattern, the role of the dancing girls, the religious sects and *maṭhas* that existed, the types of jewels that were endowed to the temples, the revenue system and administration that were in vogue and several other aspects.

It is learnt from a Chōla record of king Parakēsari Rājēndra from Ammaināthasvāmi temple that the tenancy right was held by a merchant. A merchant of *Nagaram* Rājēndraśōḷapuram named Mannērkkāḍaṇ *alias* Tirunīlakaṇṭaśeṭṭi was conferred the right of hereditary *kārāṇmai* over the *dēvadāṇa* tank by the assembly of Nigariliśōḷa-chaturvēdimāṅalam, a *brahmadēya* in Mulli-nāḍu, against the payment of two *kāśu* per *vēli* of land<sup>6</sup>. That is why the merchant was invested with the tenancy right over the land occupied by the tank. The assembly had the powers to entrust the rights over the *dēvadāṇa* lands and the income collected against its sharing would naturally be utilised for the welfare measures of the temple in question (i.e.,) Kayilāyam-uḍaiyār temple).

We come to know from the inscriptions of Pāṇḍya king Saḍaiyavarmaṇ Kulaśēkhara and later ruling kings that the dancing girls not only made donations to the temple of Kailāsam-uḍaiya-nāyaṇār but also took the temple service like other women. It was probably during the time of Travancore ruler Tiruppapūr Mutta-tiruvāḍi of Vellangolli, the managers of the above temple had taken the approval of the *tiruvāḍi* to appoint the dancing girls of Pūlam *alias* Rājarājapuram in Tenkarai-nāḍu as servants of second *kuḍi*. It shows that to enjoy the privileged position of this *kuḍi*, royal consent was very much needed in the fifteenth century.

The *brāhmaṇa* ladies too had certain rights in the appointment of the *śivabrāhmaṇas*. In an inscription of Māṇavarman Vikramachōḷa-Pāṇḍya dated in his 25th year, a *brāhmaṇa* lady is said to have made payment for the temple service. The *aganāḷigai-śivabrāhmaṇas* of Śōḷēndraśiṅga-Īśvara and Kayilāśam-uḍaiyār temples, received 12 *achchu* from this lady to render service in the Rājādhirājach-churṛālai of the temple.<sup>7</sup> It may be inferred from this that the *śivabrāhmaṇas* were taken to different services in the temple, of which the service within the *prākāra* is one such, probably to maintain the sanctity of the temple.

The town of Sēraṇmahādēvi-chaturvēdimāṅalam seem to have been planned during the Pāṇḍya period or even earlier is evident from the prescriptions of the *āgamas* followed while raising the temples. It may be recalled in this connection that the *Marīchi-Samlita* text of the Vaikhānasa-āgama had been followed while laying the town of Uttaramēruch-chaturvēdimāṅalam. The early Chōḷa records especially of the period of Parāntaka I lend confirmatory evidences to this type of town-planning and to the construction of temples. There is a reference to *naḍuvil-tirumurram* in some of the Chōḷa inscriptions from Uttaramērūr in Chingleput District.

Similarly Sērmādēvi in Tirunelveli district falls in line with this practise. Inscriptions of Māṇavarman Vikrama-pāṇḍya, Māṇavarman Śrīvallabha-pāṇḍya as well as the record of Śaḍaiyavarmaṅ Kulaśēkhara draws our attention to the existence of *naḍuvir-tirumurram* in the centre of Sēraṇmahādēvi-chaturvēdimāṅalam in Mulli-nāḍu. The temple of Śrīvallabha-ṅṅagar-ālvār built in the centre of the town came to be called *naḍuvir-tirumurram*. It is known from the record of Śrīvallabha that while this temple was built at this palace, the king was very much camping in his place at Tirunelvēli. He endowed tax-free *dēvadāṇa* lands to this temple for various purposes when he was seated on the royal throne called *Muṇaiyadaraiyaṅ* in his above mentioned palace. Not only the festivals were instituted in the honour of the king, special services have been made and provisioned to meet the expenses thereupon. On the occasion of the processional ceremony of the deities Rāma, Lakshmaṇa and Sīta set up in the above Vishṇu-griha, the king Vikrama-Pāṇḍya had made a special gift known as *madhupārka-dakshiṇā* along with lands for conducting the festivities and offerings.<sup>8</sup>

The deity Paramasvāmi at Duvarāpati temple referred to in the record of Kulaśēkhara Pāṇḍya seem to be the god at *naḍuvir-kōyil* referred to above. In which case Duvarāvadi or Duvarāpati seems to have existed as an hamlet of Sēraṇmahādēvi- chatuvēdimāṅalam.<sup>9</sup> The present Naḍuvil- appaṅ or Appaṅ

temple may be identified with the temple of Naḍuvir-tirumurram also known as Tuvarāpatiyālvār, wherein services instituted by king Kulaśekhara include the recitation of Vēdas, Purāṇas, singing, dancing, etc. Though the order was issued after his 3rd year, the king further confirmed the same at the request of his brother-in-law Kōdai-Raviya-Paṇmar.

The revenue set up adopted by Śaḍaiyavarmaṇ Kulaśekhara-Pāṇḍya is a well knit and systematic unit in the sense that the king gave much importance to the maintenance of *uḷvari*.

It is known from his records that the king, while he was on his throne in his palace at Madurai, issued an order (*tirumugam*) for the remission of taxes on the lands granted as *dēvadāṇa* to the temple of Tuvarāpati Ālvār in the 3rd + 5th year of his reign. Though he made a promise to this gift, he seems to have given effect to it only from his 13th year. In a record of his 13+5th year it may be noted that the *uḷvari* was not written till this date but was only thought of. A record of his 13th year states that the actual order of the king to issue the *tiruvāykēḷvi* and to enter in the *uḷvari* was known. That is to say that by the 9+1+1st year the king had given his consent. Unfortunately it was not given effect to its execution till the month of Mārgaḷi in his 13+5th year. Curiously the order for the tax-free *dēvadāṇa* land gift made from his 13+1+1st year had not been given effect to evidently for the want of written order. The temple authorities made a plea to the revenue authorities for the receipt of tax amount due to the temple. This situation had arisen due to the non-entry in the *uḷvari*. Further necessary orders have been issued in the 13+5th year declaring the entry to be made in the *uḷvari* and that no other *uḷvari* besides this latest one, would be recognised.<sup>10</sup> This has facilitated the operation of *uḷvari* and accordingly the enjoyment of the money accrued on the lands in terms of *drammas* for the various requirements in the temple.

Inscription found engraved in the temple of Rāmasvāmi at Sērmādēvi date back to the period of Chōḷa kings Rājarāja I and Rājendra I. They are Tamil records engraved in Vaṭṭeḷuttu script. On the other hand the records of Chōḷa-Pāṇḍya feudatories and those of imperial Pāṇḍya kings like Śaḍaiyavarman Kulaśekhara, Māṇavarmaṇ Śrīvallabha and Vikramapāṇḍya are all in Tamil script. One of the undated records from this temple is written in Grantha script. The Vishṇu temple worship was conducted by the Vaikhānasa brāhmaṇas. This temple is referred to as Nigariliśōḷa-viṇṇagar- Ālvār while the place is called Nigariliśōḷa- chaturvēdimāṅgalam.<sup>11</sup> The Vaikhānasas of this temple managed

to maintain the lamps. The efficiency of the services of Vaikhānasas in the temple was recognised by a brahman named Vaṭuka, an *agnichit*. It was for this purpose, a *brāhmaṇa* donatrix made a deposit of six *kāśu* for maintaining half a lamp. The Pāṇḍya inscriptions not only mentions the setting up of shrines for Śiṅgapperumāḷ and his consort, Tiruvāykulattu-Āḷvār and his consort, in the temple of Vaṇḍuvarāpati-emberumāṅṅ but also to the provision made for conducting worship in the latter temple. The deity Vaṇḍuvarāpati-emberumāṅṅ may be identified with the deity Rāma, one of the incarnations of Viṣṇu. Private individuals have deposited money in the form of *āṇai-achchu* and *achchu* in this temple. This amount was to be utilised to conduct the worship in the subsidiary shrines from out of the interest accrued from the deposited money. The priests of the above Vaṇḍuvarāpati-emberumāṅṅ temple gave a written agreement (*tittu*) to this effect in the reign of Kulaśēkharadēva.<sup>12</sup>

Śaiva *maṭhas* attached to the temple of Dēviyammai-īchchuram-uḍaiyār and the Vaishṇava *maṭha viz.*, Muḍivalaṅgum-perumāḷ-maḍam attached to the temple of Tuvarāpati- Appaṅ are the ones mentioned in the Pāṇḍya inscriptions. Provision made for feeding daily seventeen persons including the *tridaṇḍi-sanyāsins* and for maintaining a teacher for the Śāstras in the latter *maṭha* referred to above finds mention in a Pāṇḍya record of 12th century.

Inscriptions of Sērmādēvi temples also highlight the patronage extended by the Pāṇḍya kings and the Chōḷa-Pāṇḍya chiefs for the promotion of cultural activities, temple rituals, festivals and for the maintenance of Sarasvatī-bhaṇḍāra. The donations made for various temples by the rulers have been kept under direct supervision of the ruling kings. Sērmādēvi, which was once a *nagaram*, has now lost its importance and remain as a small village. This may be due to the lack of control over the future heritage monuments and on account of the misuse of royal donations to several temples in this place.

#### Notes and References :

- 1-12 See, Sērmādēvi, Tiruvāliśvaram and Maṅṅarkōyil inscriptions published in the *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. XIV (Inscriptions of the Pāṇḍyas)

## INSCRIPTIONS OF THE SMALLER CAVE TEMPLE AT MALAYAKKÖYIL-A RE-STUDY

M. Nalini,  
and  
R. Kalaikkovan

Malayakköyil, a small village situated next to Nachchandupaṭṭi on the Pudukkottai - Ponamaravathi road, has two rock cut cave temples. The smaller of the two excavated on the eastern face of the rock has only a sanctum with a rock cut liṅga.

Two rock cut steps are provided in front of the entrance of the sanctum. The wall space in between the pilasters are engraved with inscriptions. The northern space has an inscription of Chaḍaiyavarman Kulaśekhara Pāṇḍya with the *praśasti* 'Pūviṅ kilatti', etc., engraved in his third regnal year. The southern space has three inscriptions, one engraved in Pallava Grantha script while the other two are in early Tamil script.

Among the inscriptions found here, the one on the northern side reveals the remission of taxes on the *dēvadāna* lands of the temple by a certain Kalvāyil Nāḍālvāṅ. The deity is named as Śrīvaram-uḍaiya-nāyaṅār of Kāṅa-nāḍu *alias* Virudarājabhayaṅkara-vaḷanāḍu.

The Pallava Grantha inscription noted on the southern side, reads as *Parivāḍini*. Scholars identify this as a seven stringed vīṅa mentioned in *Amarakōśa*, *Bhuddha Charita* of Asvaghōsa and *Raghuvamśa* of Kālidāsa. Similar inscriptions are copied from the Mēlakköyil at Kuḍumiyāṅmalai and the Sathyagiriśvara temple at Tirumeyyam and both have the famous music inscriptions in addition.

Below the Parivāḍini label are seen two Tamil inscriptions engraved side by side. The southern most one reads as follows :

1. eṅṅē pramāṅaṅ-
2. cheyta vidyā parivāḍini kaṅ

The one which is immediately in front of it reas as follows:

1. kaṅkappaḍuvadu kāṅa-

2. *ñ chōlliya pukirparukkum timi-*

3. *mukkaṭ niruvattukkum urittu*

Among the two, the second one is cut deeply with good space between the letters. The southern most inscription though palaeographically similar to the previous one, is not inscribed that deep and the letters are made smaller in size probably due to want of space. The similarity of the script with the Vallam cave inscription of Mahēndravarma I suggest their age as the early part of seventh century A.D.

The Government Epigraphist and C. Minakshi have recorded these inscriptions in their publications. In the volume of the inscriptions of the Pudukkottai State, these inscriptions find their place under No.4. A few variations are noted in the text; the most important one being the first word *eṇṇē* of the first inscription which is wrongly read as *Guṇasēna*.

C. Minakshi, author of 'Administration and Social Life under the Pallavas' claims personal verification of these inscriptions but mentions the place of occurrence as Tirumeyyam. Her recordings are probably just the copy of what is found in the IPS volume. V. Venkatasubba Ayyar, editor of the SII volume XII, which is a special volume on the inscriptions of the Pallavas has identified the word as *eṇṇai*, but mentions the place of occurrence as Tirumeyyam. According to him the label *Paṛivādini* is also found at Gōkaṛṇam cave temple.

Among the three authorities the first two agree with the word and the last two agree with the place. K.R. Srinivasan, a renowned scholar claims in his popular book 'Temples of South India' that the Pallava Grantha label that reads as *parivādini* is found at five cave temples namely Gōkaṛṇam, Malayakkōyil, Mēlakkōyil at Kuḍumiyāṇmalai, Sathyagiriśvara at Tirumeyyam and the upper cave temple at the same place. He further claims that all these five temples were associated with inscriptions on musical notations, but presently they are to be seen only at two places and disappeared in the rest. Like C. Minakshi, K.R. Srinivasan also has recorded the first word of the first inscription as *Guṇasēna* and hence claims *Paṛivādini* was enunciated by *Guṇasēna*.

The outcome of an explorative study undertaken by the scholars of M. Rajamanikkanar Centre for Historical Research at all the cave temples mentioned by K.R. Srinivasan and the other scholars may be enumerated as follows :

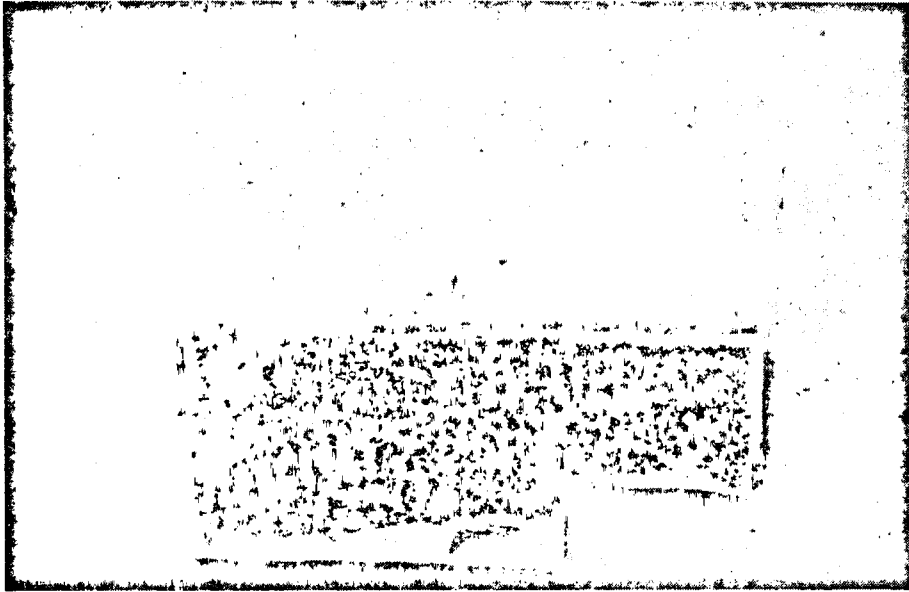
- i) Inscriptions mentioned in the beginning as engraved on the southern side are found only at Malayakkōyil.

- ii) An engraving of the label 'Paṛivāḍini' is found at two more places, namely the Mēlakkōyil at Kudumiyāṅmalai and the northern wall of the Sathyagiriśvara cave temple at Tirumeyyam and not at Gōkaṛṇam as mentioned by V. Venkatasubba Ayyar and K.R.Srinivasan. An indistinct label is noted on the northern side of the western face of the rock, where a small sanctum with a rock cut Liṅga is cut at Tirumeyyam. Nothing could be deciphered from the label.
- iii) Among the two ancient Tamil inscriptions mentioned earlier, the first one which reads as *eṇṇē pramāṇaṅ cheyta vidyā paṛivāḍini kaṛ* is found only at Malayakkōyil and not at Tirumeyyam as mentioned by C. Minakshi, V. Venkatasubba Ayyar and K.R. Srinivasan.
- iv) The first word of this particular inscription reads only as *eṇṇē* and not as *Guṇasēna*. Hence, the mentioning of Guṇasēna as the enunciator of Vidyā paṛivāḍini by K.R.Srinivasan and the identification of Guṇasēna with Mahēndravarmaṇ I by C.Minakshi may be ignored.
- v) The second inscription which reads as *kaṛkappaḍuvadu kāṇaṅ cholliya pukirpaṛukkum timi mukkaṭ niṛuvattukkum uṛittu*, is found at Malayakkōyil in three lines. At Tirumeyyam the second and the thired lines of this inscription are seen with one or two changes in the syllables, along with a third line which reads as *ppiyam*. It is to be mentioned here that the last word of the first sentence *kāṇ* was wrongly read by V.Venkatasubba Iyyar as *kārṇa*.

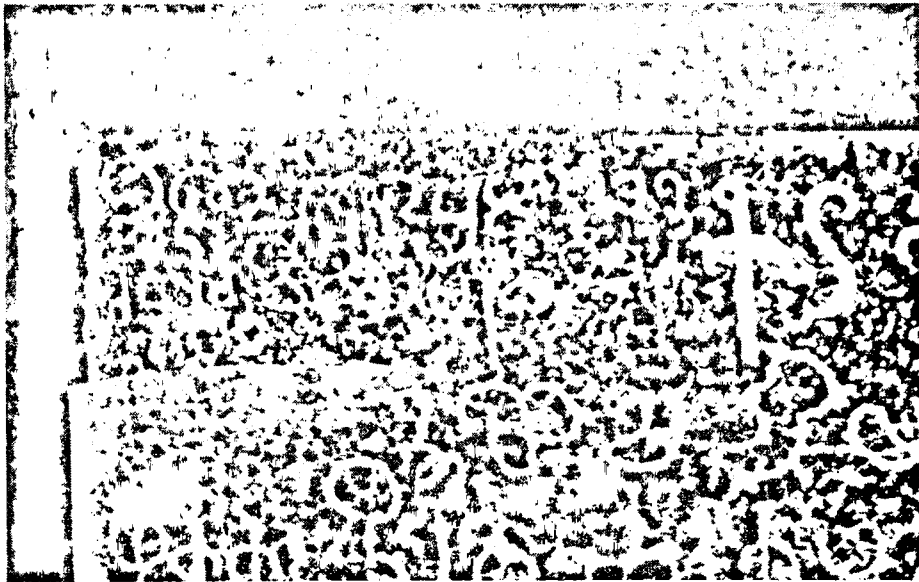
Even though various interpretations have been put forward for the above said inscriptions nothing looks meaningful and logical. Till we get some clue from some source which history never fails to produce, these inscriptions have to wait.

#### Notes and References:

1. K.R. Srinivasan, *Temples of South India*, National Book Trust, New Delhi, 1998.
2. K.R.Srinivasan (Tr.), *Inscriptions of the Pudukkottai State*, Part I, 1941.
3. C. Minakshi, *Administration and Social Life under the Pallavas*, University of Madras, 1977.
4. V. Venkatasubba Ayyar, *South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. XII, 1943.
5. *Inscriptions of the Pudukkottai State (Text)*, 1929.



Inscription on the Southern Space



Closer view

Inscriptions of the Smaller Cave Temple at Malayakkōyil



## WERE THE TAMIL BRĀHMĪ AUTHORS AND THE TAMIL SOCIETY LITERATE?

M.D. Sampath

The patronisers of the Tamil-Cave Brāhmī inscriptions were the Jaina proselytisers. The itinerant Jaina pilgrims utilized the caves with an intension to provide berth to the Jaina ascetics. The Jaina monks used to lead a secluded life before the advent of Brahmanism. The beds or the caves that were caused to be made or excavated with the munificent gifts of merchants, chieftains or rulers gave shelter to these Jaina ascetics. To mark their patronage, the events or the donations have been recorded on the rough unhewn surface. The crude surface was used as such by the *lipikāra*. It is, therefore, difficult to find all the epigraphs with a neat hand. Moreover, the engravers are not one and the same. The methods of writing differs from one cave to another. Also the writings are of the different periods. Here one can find several examples to assign them under *rural palaeography*. Though not much can be said about the palaeographical aspects, yet it is not difficult to classify them according to different chronological frame work.

Sites from Madurai, Trichy and other districts have yielded a number of Tamil-Brāhmī inscriptions. All of them are written in Tamil language and Tamil-Brāhmī script barring stray instances of Prakritic influence in a few records like the Aritṭāpaṭṭi inscription of Neḍuñchaliyaṇ and the Mēṭṭuppaṭṭi record of Utayana.

The authors of Tamil-Brāhmī records were more literate as adduced by a number of documentary evidences. Firstly, the Tamil-Brāhmī script employed during the pre-Aśokan period was rudimentary in nature. This is very well seen from the characteristic features like the *absence of inherent a-vowel value* and *absence of conjunct consonants*. There was no distinction between medial *a* and *ā*. The language need to be taken into consideration to decide this. By invoking the language the short and the long forms of *a* can be distinguished. The refined and literary forms of Tamil can be seen in most of the cave records. It is necessary at this juncture to study the orthography of these records in greater detail. The peculiarities that are observed are the use of consonants side by side instead of the superscript and the subscript, the evidence of *varga* letters and the use of Dravidian sounds like *la*, *ṇa* and *ṛa* to suit the Dravidian phonology.

The elimination of northern loan words has been strictly followed since the Tamil grammar does not allow their usage. The *Tolkāppiyam* grammar has been introduced by the authors of the inscriptions of the pre-Christian era. Some of the *sūtras* have been followed to suit the Dravidian language. The seldom use of Prakritic words in the text of Māṅgulaṃ records like the letters *dh* and *sa* and in the Mēṭṭupaṭṭi record of chief Utayana could not be avoided due to the interception of Indo-Āryan dialect at a time when there was a stiff resistance to the brahmanical imperialism. The resultant effect is the introduction of indigenous root forms in large numbers. That is how, the Tamil language had its own independent status, unlike other languages.

On the contrary in Śrīlāṅkan Brāhmī though the affinities are seen in respect of the absence of inherent *a-vowel value* and the *absence of conjunct consonants* on par with the early Tamil-Brāhmī, yet the peculiarities like the gutturalisation and the palatalisation in the former, leads us to surmise the slow infiltration of Indo-Āryan grammar. On account of these features there is no other go but to place the Śrīlāṅkan Brāhmī, next to Tamil-Brāhmī, in the chronological frame-work. However, the occasional use of dental and palatal forms of *sa*, etc. in some of the early Śrīlāṅkan records is inevitable. The reason for this is the permeation of Buddhist religion.

In Tamilnadu, the early Jaina religion and religious teachers, to whose benefit the Brāhmī inscriptions have been caused to be engraved, were rigid and seclusive in character. The secluded life they lead was one of the reasons, for the avoidance of beneficiaries from religious creed. As a result not many individuals could come forward to make liberal contributions. Also such a step was responsible for the non-employment of efficient scribes or writers for Tamil-Brāhmī inscriptions. Above all the rugged and crude unhewn surface did not help the sculptors to chisel the records in the different sites consistently. The shallow engraving of the records in some of the sites like *Ariṭṭāppaṭṭi*, etc., shows the deployment of unskilled engravers and the use of limited resources.

Archaeologically speaking, the dawn of pre-Aśokan period, coincides with the early megalithic culture in Tamilnadu. The megalithic culture, as revealed from the excavated finds, has been fixed to the period between 600 B.C. and 300 A.D. At Paiyampalli, the stratified deposits show the overlapping of early Megalithic finds over the late Neolithic objects. The stratified deposits yielded antiquities like iron objects, etc., along with Black-and-Red ware pottery. The occurrence of iron tools and the iron ingots suggests that the awareness of the use of iron implements possibly for agricultural purposes was already there. No doubt the megalithic people must have had the knowledge of the use of furnace for the smelting of iron. It is quite possible that these iron objects have been used

not only for domestication of animals and agriculture, but also for chiselling. A good number of Tamil Brāhmī records engraved on unhewn and rugged surface of the rocky outcrops of the Madurai region, etc. enable us to infer that the engravers extensively used the iron tools for chiselling purposes. The knowledge of metallurgy tends to attribute the level of literacy that the Tamils have reached.

Reverting back to the discussion on the Tamil-Brāhmī, it is well-known that most of the earliest inscriptions in the Tamil country, written in the Tamil-Brāhmī alphabet are exclusively in the Tamil language, not to speak of a few Prakrit words borrowed from elsewhere. Since Tamil was the *lingua franca* of the region, it was the popular language of the people used for epigraphs. Literacy did exist in all the regions of the Tamil country, both in urban and rural areas. This primary evidence comes from the stone and potsherd inscriptions from several sites. The pottery inscriptions attest that Tamil language was used by the common people from all strata of the Tamil Society. Literacy is based on the spoken language that reached its zenith during the early period.

Tamil Society had its own indigenous language and oral tradition that flowered into the written medium under the patronage of Jaina-itinerant merchants, rulers and chiefs. In the literate era, the Saṅgam poetry show the advanced tradition and life. Already there was widespread literacy that can be noticed among the common people. Reference to different traders and the merchant guilds in the early Tamil inscriptions show that the Tamil Society and literacy received the patronage of the higher class. Many of the Tamil-Brāhmī inscriptions found in the caves of Tamilnāḍu justify the status of the Tamil Society, the use of grammatical and pure Tamil language that was used in their engravings.

For this purpose only, the alphabetic script was introduced, of course in the more rudimentary form at the beginning. It was during the epoch of the Saṅgam age coinciding with the rule of Irumporai family at Vañchi, the changes in the alphabetic system introduced. Such differences are easily discernible in the inscriptions of the rulers of Kaḍuṅgōṅ especially the use of dot (*pulli*) to distinguish the full consonant and the half-consonant. This system has been followed by Tamil literate people so as to reduce the *mātrā* value. No doubt the efflorescence of Tamil language and literature that has reached during the Saṅgam period is also attested by the verses of *Paḍirruppattu*. Therefore, the argument that the literacy based on quasi-alphabetic script, has changed the Tamil society is not convincing. On the basis of the aforesaid arguments, it may not be difficult to argue that the early Tamil Society had witnessed the literacy through dialect, writing skill, reading and above all the knowledge of metallurgy to make it more real and meaningful.