

Studies in Indian Epigraphy

(Bhāratīya Purābhilēkha Patrikā)

Volume XXXI, 2005



Published By
The Epigraphical Society Of India
Mysore

25/7

Studies in Indian Epigraphy

(Bhāratīya Purābhilēkha Patrikā)

JOURNAL OF THE EPIGRAPHICAL SOCIETY OF INDIA

VOLUME XXXI, 2005

Executive Editor
K.V. RAMESH

Editor
M.D. SAMPATH



Published By
THE EPIGRAPHICAL SOCIETY OF INDIA
MYSORE

Studies in Indian Epigraphy (Bhāratīya Purābhilēkha Patrikā) Volume XXXI, 2005,
Edited by Dr. K.V. Ramesh and Dr. M.D. Sampath, Published by **The Epigraphical Society
of India, Mysore.**

First Published 2005

Copyright © THE EPIGRAPHICAL SOCIETY OF INDIA,
MYSORE

The publication of this Journal has been financially supported by

(1) Indian Council of Historical Research, New Delhi

***The responsibility for the facts stated, opinions expressed or conclusions reached is entirely
that of the authors of the articles and The Indian Council of Historical Research accepts
no responsibility for them.***

This publication has been further supported by the interest accruing from the

(1) Raman and Raman Shri N. Sethuraman Endowment; and

(2) Prof. Ajay Mitra Shastri Endowment

THE EPIGRAPHICAL SOCIETY OF INDIA

MYSORE

XXXI ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 2005

Mysore

General President

Dr. S. Nagaraju

Honorary Fellows

**Sri. Krishnadeva; Dr. R. S. Sharma;
Dr. B. Ch. Chhabra; Dr. S.R. Rao;
Sri. P.R. Srinivasan ; Dr. S.R. Goyal**

Office-Bearers

Patrons : Smt. Lalitha Sethuraman
Sri. Nellai Nedumaran

Chairman: Dr. S.H. Ritti

Vice - Chairmen : Dr. M.G.S. Narayanan
Sri Madhav N. Katti, Dr. K.M. Bhadri

Secretary & Executive Editor :

Dr. K.V. Ramesh

Editor : Dr. M.D. Sampath

Treasurer : Sri P. Natarajan

Asst. Secretary : Dr. H.R. Nagaraja Sharma

Executive Committee Members : Dr. H.S. Thosar,
Dr. Farukh Ali Jali, Dr. P. Shanmugam, Dr. Leela Shanthakumari,
Sri C.R. Kadkol, Dr. Ravindra S. Thipse, Dr. S. Swaminathan,
Smt. N. Pankaja, Dr.(Mrs.) Sankaranarayanan.
Dr.(Mrs.) A.K. Ranade

Membership Fee

Individual : Life - Rs.1000	Annual - Rs. 100
Institution : Life - Rs.2000	Annual - Rs. 200

CONTENTS

Editorial	vi
1. Chalukyas of Vātāpi and the Ecliptic Period of Their History. <i>H.S. Thosar</i>	1
2. A Shell Inscription in a Garhwal Temple <i>B.N. Mukherjee</i>	7
3. The Significance of Nomenclature of the Buddhist Cave No.3 at Nasik <i>Shobana Gokhale</i>	9
4. Naḍiābhāṅgā Copper Plate Charter of the time of Prithivīvigraha, Year 253 <i>Snigdha Tripathy and K.K. Basa</i>	15
5. Interpretation of Inscriptions for Writing History <i>M.D. Sampath</i>	29
6. Aḷagarkōyil from Inscriptions and Literature <i>N. Pankaja</i>	39
7. Land tax and Transfer during the Medieval Period <i>S. Kayarkanni and S. Saroja</i>	50
8. A Stone Inscription from Nīmach <i>Jai Prakash</i>	56
9. Kōvaṇa Nāṭakam <i>M. Nalini and R. Kalaikkovan</i>	59
10. In the Name of a Ghost ! <i>M. Nalini and R. Kalaikkovan</i>	63
11. Buddhism through Inscriptions : Some Observations <i>Swapna H. Samel</i>	65
12. Buddhist Community in Kalyāṇ during the Early Centuries of Christian Era <i>A.K. Ranade</i>	70
13. Symbols and Syllables : Understanding the Origin and Development of the Brāhmī Numerals <i>Subrata Kumar Acharya</i>	76
14. Mausahāniā Copper-plate Grant of Hammīravarmaṇ Chandella V.S. 1347 <i>K.L. Agrawal</i>	108
15. Amṛitavarshiṇī Step-well of Ahmedabad : An Epigraphic Overview <i>Bharati Shelat</i>	112
16. Four Unpublished Kannada Inscriptions <i>A.V. Narasimha Murthy and N. Havalaiiah</i>	118

17. Inscriptions of Akbar Period <i>S. Farrukh A. Jlali</i>	125
18. Thresholding : A Pre-processing Technique for an OCR System for the Brāhmī Script <i>H.K. Anasuya Devi</i>	132
19. The Recently Discovered Kurukshētra Vāraṇāśi Grant of Harsha : Year 23 <i>Shankar Goyal</i>	136
Book - Review I <i>Madhav N. Katti</i>	147
Book - Review II <i>K.V. Ramesh</i>	149

Editorial

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

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.

Dr. Sarhruddin Ahamad, Guwahati delivered Dr. Vijayavenugopal and Saraswati Endowment lecture, while Dr. Swapna Samel, Kalyan delivered Shri. K. Subramanyam, Endowment Lecture to whom we express our sincere thanks.

We regret to inform the members about the sad demise of Sri. E.N. Katkar, Dharwad, a life-member of the society.

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
March 24, 2005

K.V. Ramesh
Executive Editor

M.D. Sampath
Editor

CHALUKYAS OF VĀTĀPI AND THE ECLIPTIC PERIOD OF THEIR HISTORY

H.S. Thosar

According to the Humcha inscription from Karnataka, belonging to the reign of Vikramāditya VI, the Chālukya king Kalyāṇa dated (1070-1125 A.D.), Gaṅga Durvinīta is stated “to have captured Kāḍuveṭṭi (Pallava king) on the field of battle, and set up his own daughter’s son in the hereditary kingdom of Jayasimha.”¹ This information from the Humcha inscription has not been given due importance by historians, while reconstructing the history of the Chalukyas of Vātāpi. As a matter of fact, the historians should have accepted the evidence as authentic, because though it comes from the records of the Chālukyas of Kalyāṇa, we have sufficient instances from their inscriptions, which unfold the events of the history of the Chalukyas of Vātāpi, about which even the latter’s records are silent.²

Unfortunately, there is no unanimity among scholars about the exact translation of the related matter from the Humcha inscription quoted above. For example, G.R. Rangaswamiah has interpreted the passage as under. “Durvinīta having defeated the Kāḍuveṭṭi (Pallava) who was like Rāvaṇa, established his daughter’s son, Jayasimha on his hereditary throne”.³ On the authority of the same epigraph, as well as the Chellūr grant of Vīra Chōḷa, he further states “it (Humcha inscription) also refers to the death of Vijayāditya, the father of Jayasimha in the battle against Kāḍuveṭṭi.”⁴ The interpretation of Rangaswamiah differs from the opinion of the majority of scholars, who identify the daughter’s son of Gaṅga Durvinīta with Chalukya Vikramāditya I, the son and successor of Pulakēśi II.⁵ It is a fact that Vikramāditya I put an end to the temporary eclipse of 13 years of a power of the Chalukyas and ascended his father’s throne in 655 A.D. However, Vikramāditya I cannot be treated as the daughter’s son of Gaṅga Durvinīta. There is a hot controversy among scholars about the chronology of the Western Gaṅgas to which Durvinīta belonged. Majority of the scholars place his reigning priod between 540 and 600 A.D.⁶ Even by keeping some margin, Durvinīta’s lifetime cannot be pushed further beyond the year 642 A.D., the date of the death of Pulakēśi II. This is substantiated by the fact that Durvinīta was the patron of the Sanskrit poet Bhāravi, who was the contemporary of

Chalukya Kubja Vishṇuvardhana, (the younger brother of Pulakēśi II) and Pallava king Siṃhavishṇu *alias* Narasiṃhavarman I.⁷ Had Durvinīta been the maternal grandfather of Vikramāditya I and the father-in-law of Pulakēśi II, this fact must have been recorded in the royal documents of the Chalukyas of Bādāmi. The records of Vikramāditya mention Gaṅgamahādēvi as his chief queen. Had the daughter of Durvinīta been the mother of Vikramāditya, the records of his reign would not have failed to refer to this relationship. Since it is not there, and since the chronology also does not allow such a possibility, Vikramāditya I cannot be treated as the daughter's son of Durvinīta. Otherwise, the Humcha inscription, which mentions the name of Jayasiṃha as the daughter's son of Durvinīta would have certainly mentioned the name of Vikramāditya I. It follows that the daughter's son of Gaṅga Durvinīta, who was installed on the Chalukya throne by the latter was Jayasiṃha and not Vikramāditya I. Let us examine the identity of this Jayasiṃha.

G.R. Rangaswamiah has identified the daughter's son of Gaṅga Durvinīta with Jayasiṃha, the progenitor and the first historical person from the house of the Chalukyas of Bādāmi. This view is totally untenable, firstly because it militates with the accepted chronology of the Chalukyas of Bādāmi as well as the Western Gaṅgas. Secondly, since Jayasiṃha was the founder of the Chalukya kingdom, it cannot be treated as his hereditary kingdom as recorded in the Humcha inscription quoted above. The present writer is of the opinion that the daughter's son of Durvinīta, who was re-installed by the latter in his hereditary kingdom was neither Vikramāditya I, nor Jayasiṃha, the progenitor of the Chalukya ruling dynasty. Durvinīta's grandson Jayasiṃha might have been a scion of the Chalukya family having the name Jayasiṃha. He can be identified with Chalukya Jayasiṃha, the father of Buddhavarman mentioned in the Kaira grant of Vijayarāja⁸ and Dhārāśraya Jayasiṃha I, the brother of Pulakēśi II and the father of Nāgavardhana Chandrāditya known from the Nirpan and Uñchhavṛitti grants.⁹ The present writer has established the identity of Nāgavardhana, son of Dhārāśraya Jayasiṃha I with Chandrāditya, who according to the Uñchhavṛitti grant was the actual Chalukya reigning king.¹⁰

This evidence unfolds an unknown fact that during the eclipsic period, Nāgavardhana-Chandrāditya was on the Chalukya throne with his headquarters in the South Konkan region of Mahārāshṭra. It follows that though Vikramāditya was consecrated as the *Yuvarāja* during the lifetime of his father, he could not

be installed on his ancestral throne following the death of Pulakēśi II. Under these circumstances, Gaṅga Durvinīta who was an ally of the Chalukyas and the arch-enemy of the Pallavas, appears to have come to the rescue of the former. He probably proposed the name of his daughter's son Jayasimha as a regent, which Vikramāditya was probably compelled to accept under the force of circumstances. Jayasimha was anointed as the regent king of the Chalukyas in Mahārāshṭra, because he was already appointed as the governor of the Nasik region by Pulakēśi II himself as per the Nirpan plates. Jayasimha probably did not survive for a longer period, following his coronation as the Chalukya king. Because of his early death, his son Nāgavardhana-Chandrāditya seems to have succeeded Jayasimha on the Chalukya throne in Mahārāshṭra. It is probably due to this reason that Vikramāditya continued to play the role of the *Pādānudhyāta* of Nāgavardhana-Chandrāditya and the latter continued to be the *Bhaṭṭāraka* till his death, sometime before 654 A.D. Vikramāditya who had probably come of age by 655, ascended the Chalukya throne and re-conquered the southern part, which was under the Pallava domination. Nāgavardhana-Chandrāditya probably did not have a male issue and hence Vikramāditya appointed his widow sister-in-law Vijayabhaṭṭārikā as the feudatory chief of South Koṅkaṇ as known from her Kochre and Nerur copper-plates.¹¹

On the basis of these assumptions, the history of the ecliptic period from 642 to 655 A.D. can be reconstructed as shown below. In 642 A.D., Narasimhavarman I suddenly attacked Chalukya kingdom and occupied the whole territory upto Vātāpi. In this sudden attack, Pulakēśi II along with his uncle and general Vijayāditya (the father of Jayasimha) was also killed as stated by Rangaswamiah. This Vijayāditya may have been the son-in-law of Gaṅga Durvinīta. On the basis of this assumption, Jayasimha will have to be treated as the daughter's son of Durvinīta, who was installed as the Chalukya king as a stop-gap arrangement till Vikramāditya attains the age of 24, which he seems to have attained in the year 654 A.D.

If we accept the presumption of Rangaswamiah about Vijayāditya as the father of Jayasimha, we get the information about the earliest and one more generation of the family of Jayasimha. Vijayāditya might have been the younger brother of Kīrtivarman I like Maṅgalēśa and the third son of Pulakēśi I, about the historicity of whom, we have been able to know for the first time. In eight forged copper-plate grants issued by Chalukya Vinayāditya, which belong to

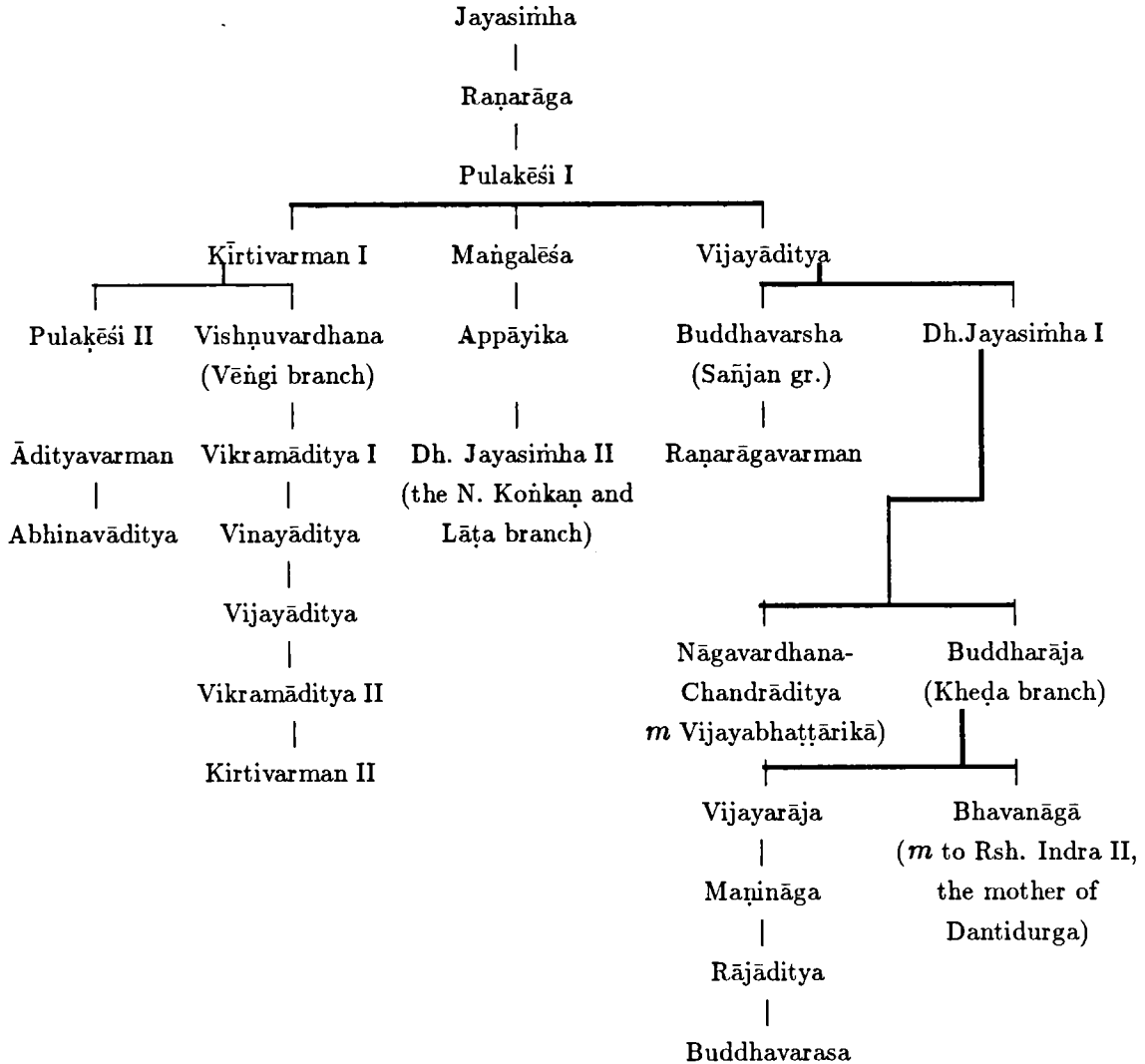
the 10th century A.D., the name of Vijayāditya occurs as the grandfather of Vinayāditya.¹² Vijayāditya is described as the son of Pulakēśi I. These records also mention that Vijayāditya succeeded Pulakēśi I to the Chalukya throne after the latter's death. The evidence cannot be treated as completely authentic, yet it also cannot be totally rejected, because according to the Godchi plates of Kīrtivarman I, he had to fight against the *Dāyādas*.¹³ It certainly indicates that Kīrtivarman did not have a smooth succession. There is no other Chalukya prince who can be treated as the *Dāyāda* or Kīrtivarman. In the light of these evidences, the historicity of Vijayāditya will have to be accepted even though it comes from forged inscriptions. The forger seems to have the knowledge about the names of the early rulers of the Chalukya dynasty, which included Vijayāditya. He was described as the progenitor of the line of the Chalukya princes mentioned in the forged documents referred to above.

This Vijayāditya might have been the father of Dhārāśraya Jayasimha I. It is indicated by the occurrence of the name Vijayarāja in the Kaira grant, as the grandson of Dhārāśraya Jayasimha I. This is in keeping with the contemporary practice of naming descendants after the names of their prominent ancestors, which was so common in ancient India. According to the forged documents referred to above, Vijayāditya was described as the son and successor of Pulakēśi I, but the fact seems to be something different. The present writer has shown in one of his research papers that Dhārāśraya Jayasimha of the Nirpan grant was the brother of Pulakēśi II.¹⁴ Historians are unanimous about one fact that there is no consistency in the order of princes mentioned in the genealogy of different charters. For example, between Kīrtivarman and Pulakēśi, the name of Neḍamari is mentioned in some of the records. In the same way, Vikramāditya and Ādityavarman have been treated as identical by some scholars. This is because of the confusion and chaos that prevailed during the eclipse period.¹⁵ Under these circumstances, evidence from a single inscription about the position of the Chalukya princes mentioned in the genealogy cannot be treated as final. Therefore, Dhārāśraya Jayasimha I, who describes himself as the brother of Pulakēśi may not be his real brother. He may be his cousin. If it is so, his father Vijayāditya can be treated as the son of Pulakēśi I and the brother Kīrtivarman I.

Same is the case of Chalukya Buddhavarsha known from his Sanjan plates.¹⁶ In this charter, he describes himself as the brother of Pulakēśi II and the paternal

uncle of Vikramāditya I. But actually he also seems to have been a member of the family of Dharāśraya Jayasimha I and a cousin of Pulakēśi II rather than his real brother. This conjecture is based on the repetition of the name Buddhavarsha or Buddharāja three times in the genealogy of the branch of Dhārāśraya Jayasimha I. It occurs in the Sanjan plates as Buddhavarsha, in the Kaira grant as Buddharāja and in the Torkheḍe grant as Buddhavarasa.¹⁷ Sten Konow has rightly observed that Buddhavarsha of the Sañjan grant belonged to the same branch of the Chalukyas, to which Buddharāja of the Kaira grant and Buddhavarasa of the Torkheḍe grant belonged.¹⁸

The complete genealogy of the Chalukya family as deduced through the Nirpan, Uñchhavṛitti, Kaira, Sañjan and Torkheḍe plates as well as the records of the Chalukyas of Bādāmi has been proposed as under by the present writer.



Notes and References:

1. *Ep.Ind.*, Vol. VIII, p.5
2. K.V.Ramesh, *Chalukyas of Vātāpi*, Delhi, 1987,
3. M.S.Nagarajarao (Ed.), *The Chālukyas of Badami, Seminar papers*, Bangalore, 1978, pp. 212-221
4. *Ibid.*
5. R.C.Majumdar (Ed.), *The Classical Age*, p. 235
6. *Ibid.*, p. 269
7. S.K.De, *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol. I, pp. 31-36
8. J.F.Fleet, *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. VII, pp. 241-51
9. a) J.F.Fleet, *Ind. Int.*, Vol.IX, p. 123
b) K.V. Ramesh *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XIII, pp. 1-5
10. H.S.Thosar, *Studies in Indian Epigraphy*, Vol. XXVII, pp. 94-102
11. a) *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII pp. 44-47
b) *Ibid.*, Vol. VII pp. 163-164
12. V.B.Kolte, *Maharashtratil Kahi Tamrapat va Shilalekh, Mumbai*, 1987, pp. 82-83
13. P.B.Desai, *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XXVIII, pp. 59-62
14. H.S.Thosar, *Studies in Indian Epigraphy, op.cit.*
15. M.N. Katti, *Seminar Papers, op.cit*, p. 70
16. Sten Konow, *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XIV, pp. 144-152
17. *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. III, pp. 3-58
18. *Ibid.*, Vol. XIV.

A SHELL INSCRIPTION IN A GARHWAL TEMPLE

B.N. Mukherjee

Recently Dr. Y.S. Katoch of the Uttarakhand Shodh Sansthan, Pauni, sent to me an eye-copy of a short inscription "on the outer wall of a temple in the Garhwal region of Uttaranchal". It is being published with his kind permission. The inscription consists of one line and is written obviously in the so-called Shell script. Following two of the well-known characteristics of the Shell script¹, all the recognisable letters are ornamental and they are moved to the right (from the reader's point of view), from their usual vertical positions.

The first character may be considered as a form of the letter *ka* with two curved lines on the two sides of its vertical line. It can be a variety of *ka* of the Gupta period and more probably of the post-Gupta age (upto c. 7th century A.D.)². The two curved lines, joining with each other at their base, placed above the letter, signify the sign for a medial *o*. The next character can be compared with a form of initial *i* as it appears in an inscription of the 8th century A.D.³ Here one of the two circles, usually put above the main body of the letter, appears to its left (from the reader's point of view). However, the other circle is missing. Nevertheless, the letter may tentatively be taken as a distorted and ornamental form of initial *i*. The next character may be considered as a variety of the letter *tha*, and can be compared with the same letter in some epigraphs of c. 8th and 9th centuries A.D.⁴ The following figure is a beautiful design. It is followed by the letter *ga*. The last letter may be taken as an ornamental form of *ta*. Here the usual semicircle (facing downwards) above the lower part of the letter as shown here is detached from it, as noticeable in some epigraphs of c. 8th and 9th centuries A.D.

On the basis of the above noted palaeographic features the inscription can be dated to c. 7th-8th century A.D. It can now be read as follows :

Ko itha gata

Each letter is ornamental. Each of the last three of them has a curved upper stroke (serif). The first letter has its sign for medial *o* detached from it and placed with brackets. Two curved lines are placed slantingly over the head of the second letter. The lower part of *ta* is detached from its upper part and is attached to an additional curved line.

The language of the inscription is a form of Prakrit, influenced by Sanskrit. It can be Sanskritised and translated as follows :

Sanskrit version

Ko itaḥ gataḥ [?]

Translation

Who has [ever] gone.
from here?

This epigraph probably claims that no visitor to the temple can or likes to go away from it. This claim emphasises on the sanctity of the shrine. The sanctifying character of the record confirms to the already known nature of the short Shell epigraphs.⁶

Notes and References :

1. B.N. Mukherjee, *Decipherment of the Shell script*, Lucknow, 1983, pp.27f.
2. G. Bühler, *Indische Palaeographic*, Stassburg, Tafel 4, XIX, 7; 5, I, 7, etc; 5, XII, 7, XVII, 7; A.K. Singh, *Development of Nāgarī Script*, Delhi, 1991, pl.3, A 15.
3. A.K. Singh, *op.cit.*, pl.5, A 15.
4. *Ibid.*, p.1.4, A 16; pl.36, A 16.
5. *Ibid.*, pl.1, A 12; pl.5, A 12; pl.7, A 12; pl.19, A 12; pl.31, B 14; pl.35, B 15; etc.
6. B.N. Mukherjee, *op.cit.*, p.29.



The Garwal Shell Inscription

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF NOMENCLATURE OF THE BUDDHIST CAVE NO.3 AT NASIK

Shobana Gokhale

Nasik has occupied an ideal geographic position. It is an important pilgrimage centre on the banks of the river Godavari in Maharashtra. Nasik had linkage through Thalghat with important sea-ports on the western coast viz., Kalyan, Sopara and Bharukachcha. It had continuous communication with north and south India. The soil on the banks of the river Godavari produced the flourish of corn and culture. Against this favourable geographical conditions the Buddhist monastic activity developed and firmly established at Nasik during the Sātavāhana period.

There is a group of twentyfour Buddhist caves at Nasik. In this group of caves the Cave no. 3 has exclusive and distinct character. The inscriptions, its architecture and the nomenclators of the cave have embodied not only the unique features of the cave but they have retained the extraordinary evidence of Buddhist activities in the Nasik region.

There are four inscriptions in this cave. Two incipitions are of Gautamīputra¹ Sātakarṇi dated in regnal years 18 and 24. The inscription (year 18) was issued by Gautamīputra Sātakarṇi from his victorious camp at Govardhana after his memorable victory over the Kshatrapa king Nahapāṇa. The inscription (year 24) records the pious gift of a land for the welfare of the king. The other two inscriptions were issued during the reign of Vāsishṭhīputra Puṣumāvi.

The inscription of Puṣumāvi² (regnal year 19) is mainly the grandiloquent description of the political achievements of Gautamīputra Sātakarṇi who uprooted Śaka, Yavana and Pahlavas. (*Śaka - Yavana- Pahlavānīshū - dana*)

The inscription further tells us that Mahādevi Gautamī Balaśrī, the grandmother of the king Vāsishṭhīputra Puṣumāvi has caused to be excavated the cave as her pious gift resembling a heavenly palace on the top of the Trirashmi hill which looked like the peak of the *Kailāśa* mountain. The cave was donated to the fraternity of Bhadrāyāṇiya sect. The inscription has recorded two nomenclators of the cave viz., *Mahidhika leṇa* and *Dhamasetu*. Further the inscription has noted that the cave was similar to '*Vimānavara*'. The two nomenclators and the simile '*Vimānavara*' convey the real meaning and propriety par excellence.

Monastic institutions were the most remarkable contribution of Buddhism to Indian Culture. Their original object was to give suitable accommodation to monks for carrying on their studies and meditation. These monasteries gradually developed into academic centres for the right type of men, well grounded in religion and philosophy to propagate the teaching of Buddhism.

The Buddha awarded prominence to some of his disciples by extolling them for their attainment of proficiency in certain branches of Buddhist Dhamma. Sāriputra³ was the foremost among the highly intelligent followers - *Mahāpañnavanta* (Highly intellectual person). Mahā-Moggallāna⁴ was the foremost among the followers who was Arhat and possessed miraculous powers - *Siddhimanta*. Bhikkhus under Mahāmoggallāna's tuition were named as *Mahidhikas*. In this cave the followers of Mahāmoggallāna were staying and therefore the 'leṇa' was named as '*Mahidhika Leṇa*'. Mirashi⁵ translated *Mahidhika* as pious gift. The Vinaya text⁶ has described the term '*Mahidhi*' as who had adherence to doctrine and discipline and therefore the cave appropriately named as '*Mahidhikaleṇa*'.

The Buddha wanted to admit into Sangha only those persons who acquired merits. *Atthasālini*⁷ has prescribed four essentials for accumulation of good i.e. *Kusalamulas*. The four essentials for accumulation of merits are:

- 1) Chīvara (offering of clothes), 2) Piṇḍapāta (offering of food), 3) Senāsana (offering of beds and seats), 4) Bhesajjaparishkāra (offering of medicines to sick people).

The person who was admitted in the fraternity had to undergo various disciplines and follow the rules of the fraternity. There are four stages of sanctification in the Buddhist code. The first is Sottāpanna i.e., one who is in the stream leading to *Nirvāṇa*. Sottāpanna is the preparatory stage which leads to the comprehension of four truths. A monk who had to his credit sufficient merits was entitled to become Sottāpanna. Sottāpanna had no retrogression from the Sottāpanna stage. The second is *Sakadāgāmi* i.e., one who will be reborn once more in this mortal world to reach the goal. The third is *Aṇāgāmi*⁸ i.e., one who will not come to the world of men but will be reborn among the gods to attain *Nirvāṇa*. The fourth is 'Arhat' i.e., one who has destroyed all impurities and attained *Nirvāṇa* and will have no more rebirth.

The inscription records that the donation was granted to the Bhadrāyāṇiya sect. The Bhadrāyāṇiyas were the followers of the doctrine of *Anupubbābhisamaya* i.e. the gradual realisation of the four noble truths. Therefore, the above

mentioned four stages seem to be divided into eight stages. *Kathavathu*¹⁰ of the *Abhidhamapiṭaka* has mentioned the eight stages as :

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| (1) Sotāpattimagga, | (2) Sotāpattiphala, |
| (3) Sakadāgāmmimagga | (4) Sakadāgāmmiphala, |
| (5) Aṇāgāmmimagga, | (6) Aṇāgāmmiphala, |
| (7) Arhatmagga, | (8) Arhatphala |

Dhamasetu the name of the cave is the most appropriate name where the monks were trained to cross the stream leading to *Nirvāṇa* and therefore the Bhadrāyāṇīyas who were followers of *Anupubbabhisamaya* doctrine have named the cave as *Dhamasetu*.

The inscription further describes that the *lena* was similar to *Vimānavara*. The adjective *Vimānavara* has significant technical meaning.

*Vimānavatthu*¹¹ of the *Suttapiṭaka* describes different abodes of the deities who are born there as a result of their past merits. *Vimānavastthu* further describes that a monk having yogic superhuman power queries a celestial being as to what meritorious act he had done due to which he has attained that sublime state of existence and gets the reply from him narrating the particular acts done by him in the long long past. The adjective *Vimānavara* significantly conveys that the followers of Mahāmoggallāna who were staying in cave no.3 must be having superhuman yogic power.

The word *Vimāna* occurs in the Aśokan Rock Edict¹² number four. It is believed that the king Aśoka had built no less than 84,000 *vihāras*. The king made provision to show different *Vihāras* to people. The term became so popular that even in brahmanical architecture the term *Vimāna* is used for the *śikhara* of a temple. The inscription describes the cave as *Vimānavara* best in all *Vimānas*. In the cave no.3 there is a *stūpa* and gate (*Toraṇa*). In *Dighanikāya*¹³ (2.23.7.8) it is explicitly mentioned that *stūpas* are to be built on *Tathāgata*, Arhat, *Pachchek Buddha* and *Chakravarti* king (*Thuparhapudgala*). The *stūpa* and the gate (*Toraṇa*) in the cave was considered as the *Prāsāda* of the Buddha. At Pitalkhora Buddha's *Abhinishkramaṇa* is beautifully shown. The Buddha is coming out of the palace from the gate. At Nasik above the entrance of the cave there is a '*Toraṇa*'. It seems that the pattern of gate is meticulously observed at Sanchi, Barhut, Pitalkhora, Ajanta and Amaravati. *Vimānavatthu*¹⁴ describes the heavenly abode

of the Buddha. The cave no. 3 displays all these particulars of the *Prāsāda* of the Buddha and therefore, it is compared with the peak of the *Kailāśa*.

The architectural remains of the cave at Nasik give us a remarkable evidence of the Buddhist monastic centre.

While studying the architecture of western Indian caves it could be observed that the cave-cutters created a paradise. The artisans have meticulously retained the architectural norms uttered by the blessed one. Of the *Vinaya text* which are mentioned in *Chullavagga* in details about the building of monasteries. The cells of the monasteries measured one *Sugata Vitasti*¹⁵ (i.e. Buddha's span). Buddha's span is generally considered as 6' x 7'. The cave¹⁶ measures 4 x 5 *Sugata Vitasti*. It has twenty rooms. The architecture has offered a unique evidence in Western Indian caves. The inscription has recorded the grant to the Bhadrāyāṇiya Saṅgha and the architecture of the cave has preserved the remarkable evidence of the Bhadrāyāṇiya Saṅgha. The twenty rooms indicate that the Saṅgha of twenty monks was dwelling at Nasik. The Bhikkhusaṅghas¹⁷ of four, five, ten, twenty and more than twenty monks. But the Saṅgha which included twenty monks was entitled to perform all official acts. The official acts were named as *Samgha Sāmagiri* and consisted of following acts:

- 1) Tajjaniya Kamma (act of rebuke)
- 2) Nissaya Kamma (act of subordination)
- 3) Pabbajaniya Kamma (act of banishment)
- 4) Paṭisāraṇiya (act of reconciliation)
- 5) Ukkhepaniya Kamma (act of suspension)
- 6) Parivāsa Kamma - If a Bhikkhu conceals his offence for one or two or more days, the monk was sentenced to *Parivāsa* discipline. He had to stay away from *Vihāra* for six days. After *Manatta* the Saṅgha was to grant restoration (Mulayapaṭikassana) to him. After completion of all the above disciplines the monk had to declare before the Saṅgha that he had completed all disciplines. The Saṅgha which consisted of twenty monks then declared thrice that the monk could be rehabilitated (*Abbhāna Kamma*) and the Upsampadā ordination was granted to him.

The above discussion suggests that Nasik was the training centre of the Bhadrāyāṇiya Sangha.

The names 'Mahidhika' lena, Dhammasetu and the superlative adjective *Vimānavara* have preserved the inner meaning of the *Bhadrāyāṇiya* sect of Buddhism. These names have embodied a beautiful synchronism between inscriptional, architectural evidence and Buddhist literary tradition. The name *Mahidhikalena* conveys that the followers of Mahā Mogglana were staying at Nasik. The name *Dhamasetu* indicates that it was the centre of *Bhadrāyāṇiya* sect which was preaching the doctrine of 'Anupubbhābhi samaya' i.e., the gradual realisation of the four noble truths. The superlative adjective *Vimānavara* tells us that the *Sangha* of twenty monks of *Bhadrāyāṇiya* Sangha who were gifted superhuman yogic powers was staying at Nasik.

Notes and References

1. E. Senart, *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol.VIII, pp. 71-73.
2. *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, pp. 36-49.
3. Dutta Nalinaksh, *Buddhist Sects in India*, Varanasi, 1977, p.46.
4. Dutta Nalinaksh, *Ibid.*, p.47.
5. V.V. Mirashi, *The History and Inscriptions of the Sātavahanas and the Western Kshatrapas*, Bombay, 1981, p.48.
6. T.W. David Rhys, *Vinaya Text*, Vol.II, Delhi, 1981, pp.1-8.
7. P.V. Bapat and R.D., Vadekar *Atthasalini*, Pune, 1942, p.170.
8. Shobhana Gokhale, *Kanheri Inscriptions*, Pune, 1991, p.114.
9. J.Kashyapa Bhikhu, *Kathāvalthupali*, 1961, pp.194-201.
10. *Ibid.*
11. Bhikhu, *Vimanavatthu Khuddakanikayapali*, Vol.II, Varanasi, 1959, p.64.
12. *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol.I, pp.2,3,8,9, 13.
13. Bhikhu, *Dighanikāya*, 1960, pp. 110-111. Pali Publication Board, Bihar Govt. Motilal Banarasidas, Varanasi.

14. Shobhana Gokhale, *JBBRAS.*, Vol.75, *Buddhist Architecture: Its Literary Tradition with special reference to Kanheri and Nasik*, 2001, pp.87-93.
15. Blikhu, *Vimanavatthu*, p.30. *Khuddakanikayapali*, Varanasi.
16. *JBBRAS.*, *Buddhist Architecture: Its Literary Tradition with special reference to Kanheri and Nasik*, Vol.75, pp.88-93.
17. S. Nagaraju, *Buddhist Architecture of Western India*, 1981, pp.59-60.
18. W.T. Davids and H. Oldenberg, *Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XVIII. *Vinaya Text*, Vol.II, 1965, p.268.

NADĪĀBHANĠĀ COPPER PLATE CHARTER OF THE TIME OF PRĪTHIVĪVIGRAHA, YEAR 253

Snigdha Tripathy and K.K. Basa

A single copper plate charter was secured by the Anthropology Department of the Utkal University, Vani Vihar, Bhubaneswar, from a resident of the village Nadiābhaṅgā near Sukinda division of the newly formed Jajpur District (formerly in the undivided Cuttack District), Orissa, during January, 2002. The plate is reported to have been unearthed from a cashew-nut plantation area in the said village along with two other sets of copper plate records. Unfortunately, the whereabouts of the two sets are not exactly known now nor anything about their historical significance.

This single plate measures 19cms × 14 cms. To the middle of the proper left end of the plate, a bronze lump containing the royal seal is soldered. The seal is much corroded and only the traces of an emblem, the lower portion of which looks like a lotus and below it traces of the legend in two lines are faintly visible on its countersunk surface. The letters used in the legend are now beyond recognition, only the word *dēvasya* at the end of the legend in the second line can be read. The round surface of the seal is 7.4cms in diameter. The plate contains writing on both obverse and reverse sides. The preservation of writing on both the sides are quite satisfactory in comparison to that engraved on the seal. There are 13 lines of writing on the obverse and 11 lines on the reverse.

The script belongs to the class commonly characterized as the Gupta script of about 5th and 6th centuries of the Christian era. The letters have a general resemblance with those used in the Sumaṇḍala charter of the time of Prīthivīvigraha, dated in the Gupta year 250(569-70 A.D).¹ But there are also certain remarkable differences in the form of letters and vowel marks. Many of the letters as well as medial signs show earlier varieties. The letter *k* has retained its earlier cross-bar type whereas in the Sumaṇḍala plates we find the looped *k*. The letter *ṣ* in the present record has triangular loop having no inside opening, whereas the said Sumaṇḍala charter has displayed both the varieties of round loop as well as triangular loop types. The letter *y* in the present record has retained its earlier tripartite form having a left loop, whereas the Sumaṇḍala record shows its later development. Of the initial vowels, we have instances of *a* (ll. 4 and 6; *ā* (ll. 11, 12, 23 and 24); *U* (6, 21 and 24). The vowel *I* (ll. 11, 12,

23 and 24) does not consist of three dots, but two dots placed side by side and a horizontal cursive stroke below them. The medial signs in the present record have retained their earlier forms, whereas the Sumaṇḍala charter exhibits certain later development as in medial *ā* with a small vertical stroke at the right of the consonant. The present record shows the medial *i* in two types, the ornate form noticeable particularly in the elongated up-curved form and in the rectangular head added to the long vertical at the top of the consonant (cf. *Prithivī* in line 1; *-parika* in line 2; *Aśvinī* in line 6 etc.). This type of medial *I* is found in the Mehrauli iron pillar inscription of Chandra,² which has been described as "very marked *mātrā* or horizontal top stroke". This type of medial *I* sign is conspicuous by its absence in the Sumaṇḍala charter of the time of Prithivīvigraha-bhaṭṭāraka. The distinction between *v* and *b* has been maintained in all cases excepting in Vappaśarma (line 12), Vappadēvaśarmma (line 20). In one instance, *b* has been used in place *v* (line 2). Interpunctuation is totally absent in the record. The medial *i* sign for *ti* in lines 23 and 24 is joined cursorily with the long horizontal stroke indicating full-stop or the double stop at the end of the record. This also features in the Sumaṇḍala charter of the same period.

The language of the inscription is Sanskrit although Prakrit influence can also be traced in words like *dāṇḍavāsikān* for Sanskrit *daṇḍapāsikān* in line 2. Moreover, there are several omissions and commissions as we shall see from the subsequent discussion. The sentences are sometimes incomplete. With the exception of two imprecatory and benedictory verses in lines 21-23, the record is throughout written in prose. As regards orthography, occasional reduplication of certain consonants in conjunction with a preceeding or following *r* is noticed (cf., *śarmma*, in lines 6, 7, 9 etc; *dharmma* in the 21; *maryyādaya* in line 21; *Kaivartta* in line 8, etc). Attention may also be drawn to the occasional reduplication of some consonants in conjunction with a following *t* (cf., *Pavittra* in line 20). The *visarga* followed by a sibilant has been modified as in *pitribhis* = *saha* in line 23. But the sign of *visarga* is absent throughout the record. The rules of *sandhi*, though optional in prose, has not been observed in such cases as *Dhanishthēna iti* in line 24. Final *m* has been wrongly changed to *anusvāra* in *phalam* (in line 22) and *vasundharām*.

The date of the inscription is indicated in numerical symbols as *saṁvat* 200. 50.3(=253), but the occasion of the grant is not furnished in the charter. We shall see from the subsequent discussion that the record is dated in the Gupta era corresponding to 572-73 A.D.

The inscription does not contain the usual auspicious symbol nor the word *svasti* indicating the beginning of the record which is noticed as a conventional practice in the copper plate grants of different royal families belonging to different period of history. Instead, the charter begins with the expression *sthiti Tōsalyām* denoting the presence of the issuer of the record in Tōsali country. The place or the chief locality of issue of the charter is also conspicuously absent which is regular in other copper plate records of the period. The above expression is followed by the reference to the name of Pṛithivīvigraha-bhaṭṭāraka, endowed with the epithet of *parama-daivata* who is again described by the expression *pādānudhyātō*, indicating one who is devoted at the feet of (Pṛithivīvigraha-bhaṭṭāraka). The first line of the record would thus tend to suggest that the subordinate king whose name is omitted inadvertently, is devoted at the feet of his overlord, i.e., *parama-daivata* Pṛithivīvigraha-bhaṭṭāraka who was present in Tōsali (apparently Tōsali kingdom), and addresses the royal order relating to the grant. Lines 1-3 record the royal order, issued apparently by the obscure subordinate king and the donor of the grant to the persons associated with the administration of the region in his time, including the *Mahārāja*, *Mahāsāmanta*, *rājaputra*, *Kumārāmātya*, *Uparika*, *Vishayapati* and others including the royal favourites and the office of the *Mahāmahattara* of Saṁśula-āhāra. This is followed by the mention of Pṛithivīvigraha- bhaṭṭāraka again endowed with the epithet of *parama=daivata* in line 4, which may suggest to indicate that the unknown subordinate chief issued the charter by informing his overlord. Lines 4-6 record that the village named Ayalavindhaka, situated in the *vishaya* of Mādīyā- ṇjayā, which remained uncultivated for a long time and infested with wild animals like deer, buffaloes, wild boars and tigers, was granted by means of a copper plate charter to brāhmaṇas of different *gōtras* and *charaṇas* for their settlement. The name of eightyfour brāhmaṇas are then recorded in lines 6-20, including the (1)³ *Mahattara* named Vidūshasvāmin and others namely, (2) Uttaraśarmasvāmin, (3) Aśinīsvāmin, (4) Jīvabhūtīsvāmin, (5) Nāgasvāmin, (6) Yajñasvāmin, (7) Paśupatīsvāmin, (8) Bhavaśarmmasvāmin, (9) Śambhusvāmin, (10) Kṛittīsvāmin, (11) Āḍaṅgasvāmin, (12) Śambhusvāmin, (13) Śivadattasvāmin, (14) Śivasvāmin, (15) Bhavasōmasvāmin, (16) Kaivarttasvāmin, (17) Mārttasvāmin or Māttaṇḍasvāmin (18) Balasvāmin, (19) Pālīśarmmasvāmin, (20) Chandrasvāmin, (21) Āḍaṅgasvāmin, (22) Bhāvayaśasvāmin, (23) Kumārasvāmin, (24) Ballabhasvāmin, (25) Dēvaguptasvāmin, (26) Dhruvajasvāmin, (31) Indrabhūtīsvāmin, (32) Kōmalasvāmin, (33) Chandrabhavasvāmin, (34) Gōvindasvāmin, (35) Dhōyīsvāmin, (36) Kumārasvāmin, (37) Jīvisvāmin,

(38) Indrasvāmin, (39) Bappaśarmmasvāmin, (40) Bappadēvasvāmin, (41) Dhanisvāmin, (42) Dhruvaghōshasvāmin, (43) Ravisvāmin, (44)svāmin, (45)svāmin, (46) Jyēshthasvāmin, (47) Rōhinīsvāmin, (48) Dhruvasvāmin, (49) Śivasvāmin, (50) Rāmadēvasvāmin, (51) Jihvisvāmin, (52) Chitravasusvāmin (53) Chhaisvāmin, (54) Kaśānasvāmin, (55) Dēvakunḍasvāmin, (56) Svāmikōkasvāmin, (57) Maghasvāmin, (58) Vishṇusvāmin, (59) Sēvasvāmin, (60) Nandanasvāmin, (61) Nāthaśarmmasvāmin, (62) Sōmasvāmin, (63) Śamarisvāmin, (64) Svātisvāmin, (65) Matisvāmin, (66) Durmmatisvāmin, (67) Matisarmmasvāmin, (68) Rudrasvāmin, (69) Dhruvaśarmmasvāmin, (70) Bhavarōdhasvāmin, (71) Jīvaśarmmasvāmin, (72) Matighōshasvāmin, (73) Śaṅkarasvāmin, (74) Tāḍimbaspvāmin, (75) Vishṇudattasvāmin, (76) Kumāraghōshasvāmin, (77) Dhruvasvāmin, (78) Dēvaśarmmasvāmin, (79) Jīyadēvasvāmin or Jivadēvasvāmin, (77) Dhruvasvāmin, (78) Dēvaśarmmasvāmin, (79) Jīyadēvasvāmin or Jivadēvasvāmin, (80) Gōpasvāmin, (81) Dēvasvāmin, (82) Pavitrasvāmin, (83) Rōhinīsvāmin and (84) Bappasvāmin.

The description of the gift village would tend to suggest that it was created for the first time out of the forest region with the settlement of the above brāhmaṇas. They were presumably entrusted with the responsibility of the development of the said forest region for habitation and cultivation.

Lines 21-23 contain two of the usual imprecatory and benedictory verses stated to have been quoted from *Dharmaśāstra* relating to land grants. Line 24 mentions the date of the grant in numerical symbols are 200.50.3 (=253). This is followed by the name of the engraver as Dhanishṭha.

Prithivīvigraha-bhaṭṭāraka of the Vigraha family is already known to the scholarly world, as the ruler of Kalinga-rāshṭra from the Sumaṇḍala grant of his subordinate chief Dharmarāja, dated in the Gupta year 250, corresponding to 569-70 A.D. already mentioned above. This subordinate king is known from the said charter to have been ruling Padmakholi in the present Khallikōṭe region of the Ganjam District in the southern part of Orissa, which formed a part of ancient Kalinga during the period in question. In this context, we may note here that the charter issued by Dharmajāja consists of three plates attached to a ring and an oval seal containing the emblem of a *tōraṇa* or gateway and the legend reading *mahārāja-Dharmma*. The date is mentioned in this record in words as *varttamāna-Gupta-rājye varsha-śatadvayē-pañchāśad-uttare*, i.e., the grant was issued in the Gupta year 250 when the *rājya* or the empire of the Guptas was still existing. Prithivīvigraha-bhaṭṭāraka is known again from the present record

of another of his feudatories installed in his Tōsali kingdom. Unfortunately, the name of this feudatory cannot be ascertained from this record. It is only the expression *parama-daivata-śrī-Prīthivīvigraha-pādānudhyātō* which enables us to presume that the charter was issued by one of his subordinate chiefs who seemed to have control over the region comprising ancient utara Tōsali. It is to be noted that the present charter consists of a single plate. In this context, we may refer to one Lōkavigraha-bhaṭṭāraka, evidently of the same Vigraha family and a successor of Prīthivīvigraha in the Tōsali kingdom who is already known from his own Kanas copper plate grant ⁴ issued in the Gupta year 280 (599-600 A.D.), from a locality situated in Dakṣiṇa Tōsali⁵. This charter also consists of a single copper plate, unlike the charter of Dharmarāja of the Ganjam region of Prīthivīvigraha's time. Lōkavigraha is stated in his grant to have ruled Tōsali consisting of eighteen forest states. The epithet used for him in his record is *parama-daivat-ādihidaivata*. The Gupta year mentioned in this record in words as *paravarttamāna-Gupta-Kāla-samvatsare āśīty- utara=śata-dvayē* (existing Gupta year 280). The year is again quoted in line 15 of the charter in numerical symbols as *samvat* 200.80 (=280).

We have thus, three copper plate records of the time of the Vigraha rule in Orissa, known so far, including the present one under discussion. But the interesting point to be noted is that the present record is silent about the expression of *Gupta-kāla* or *Gupta-rājya-varsha* and quotes only the word *samvat* before the numerical symbols for 253 and seems to have been issued three years after that of the Sumaṇḍala grant. However, the palaeography of both the records as well as the study of the political history of Orissa during the later part of 6th century A.D. would at least suggest the Prīthivīvigraha-bhaṭṭa of the records was one and the same ruler of the Vigraha dynasty.

The epigraphic records of the royal families ruling in different parts of Orissa during the period ranging from the beginning of 6th century to about the middle of 7th century A.D., indicate the spread of cultural influence of the Guptas of Northern India, especially in the use of the Gupta era and scripts in their respective inscriptions. It is sometimes believed on this basis that a short Gupta supremacy was acknowledged during 5th and 6th centuries of the Christian era, although no direct evidence in this regard has come to the notice of the scholarly world. Prīthivīvigraha is also believed to be originally a viceroy or a provincial governor of the Gupta monarchs installed in Kalinga-rāshṭra. But, during the Gupta year 250, when his feudatory issued the Sumaṇḍala grant, he appeared to

be an independent king of Kalinga-rāshṭra which was then confined to the region comprising the northern part of the Ganjam district and the area around Chilka lake (now included in the newly formed Nayagrah District). The Gupta cultural influence in the epigraphic records of the period may suggest that they held certain parts of both southern and northern Orissa through some of their viceroys till at least the middle of 6th century A.D. But the disintegration of the Gupta empire in Northern India during this period paved the way for these viceroys or provincial governors to assert independence in their respective area of rule. As we shall see subsequently, these new independent rulers of different royal families of whom, Prithivivigraha was one, vied with each other in order to expand their area of influence. The deliberate omission of the expression *Gupta-rājya-kāla* or the Gupta era with the date in the present charter would suggest that Prithivivigraha practically ruled independently, but the date was calculated and followed conventionally according to the era of the Guptas, without specifying the name of the era. Moreover, as we shall see that the era was continued to be followed till at least the year 300(619-20 A.D) by other contemporary royal families of Orissa with occasional reference to the name of the era.

About the beginning of the 6th century A.D., a part of northern Orissa seems to have been under the control of a sovereign ruler named Gōpachandra as known from a copper-plate grant of one of his subordinate chiefs *mahārāja* Achyuta⁶, then ruling in the area around the northern part of Balasore District in Orissa and Daṇḍabhukti or the south-western part of the Midnapore District in West Bengal in the first regnal year of his overlord. Gōpachandra, who assumed the sovereign title of *mahārājādhirāja*, is known from several epigraphic records of his subordinate chiefs acknowledging his supremacy. One of these chiefs was *mahārāja* Vijayasēna who ruled Vardhamānabhukti (the present Burdwan region in West Bengal)⁷ during the 3rd regnal year of Gōpachandra. Another copper-plate charter refers to his name as the overlord, issued during his 18th regnal year, by one of his chief administrative officers designated as *kumārāmātya-mahāpratiṭhāra*, from Vārakamaṇḍala (the present Faridpur region in Bangladesh)⁸. He seems to have acquired an extensive region, presumably after the disintegration of the Gupta supremacy in Bengal.

Several such local rulers who may have been originally the provincial governors or subordinate kings under the Gupta rule in Tosali and Kalinga regions asserted independence and rose to power on the ruins of the Gupta empire during about the same period as could be known from the epigraphic records of their own

or of their feudatories. Apart from Pṛithivīvigraha and Lōkavigraha, we may refer here to one Śāmbhuyaśas of the Mudgala dynasty who is known from at least four copper-plate records including the one issued by one of his feudatories. All these records are presumably dated in the Gupta era, without specifying the name of the era and conventionally adopted. The earliest of these records is dated in *saṁvat* 211, the corresponding date of which in the Christian era may be 530-31 A.D.⁹ The charter was issued from Sarepha or the present Soro in the Balasore District, situated in Uttara Tōsali division of his kingdom. But he granted a village, stated in this record to have been situated in the Dakṣiṇa Tōsali division of his kingdom. Another of his copper-plate charter dated in *saṁvat* 235(554-55 A.D.)¹⁰, is stated to have granted land in Dakṣiṇa Tōsali is also mentioned in another of his charter dated in *saṁvat* 260(759-80 A.D.). This locality was known to have expanded as a *vishaya* or district in the subsequent period of history from the inscriptions of Bhānudatta and Sōmadatta of the Datta family who succeeded in the region after the downfall of the Mudgalas.¹¹ Śāmbhuyaśas enjoyed the status of a paramount ruler and held sway over a wide tract of the country of Tōsali which was divided into two divisions of Uttara Tōsali and Dakṣiṇa Tōsali since earlier times.¹² He assumed the full sovereign titles of *Paramadaivata*, *Paramabhṭṭāraka* and sometimes, in his feudatory's grant as *Parama-daivat-ādhidaivata*. His feudatory named Śivarāja was ruling in the year 283, presumably in the Gupta year, corresponding to 602-03 A.D. in the southernmost region of Dakṣiṇa Tōsali, then comprising, Buguda-Aska-Khallikōṭe region of the present Ganjam District and issued a copper-plate charter¹³ from a locality called Varttanoka, or the present Bartini in the Athgarh Taluk of the Ganjam District. This locality also formed a *vishaya* or district as revealed by the records of the early Eastern Gaṅgas of Śvētaka ¹⁴ and the Śailōdbhavas ¹⁵ who occupied the region and established a new kingdom called Koṅgoda-maṇḍala in the subsequent period of history.

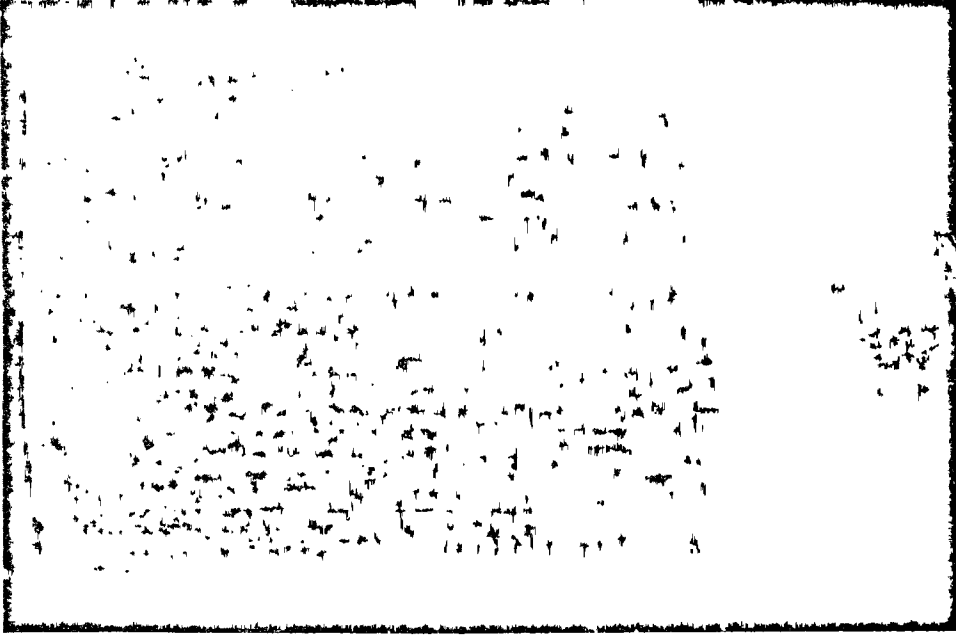
But in the Gupta year 250(569-70 A.D.), we find Pṛithivīvigraha, another provincial viceroy of the Guptas who acquired sovereign power in the kingdom of Kalinga-rāshṭra as known from the Sumaṇḍala plates. It is also interesting to note that the region under control of Dharamarāja, comprising a part of Kalinga-rāshṭra, during the Gupta year 250, became a part of Dakṣiṇa Tōsali of Śāmbhuyaśas during the year 283 as revealed by the record of Śivarāja. Though we know from the charter of the year 235 of Śāmbhuyaśas that he had control over Dakṣiṇa Tōsali, but he seems to have lost the southern-most part of it

to Prithivivigraha sometime after this year. Prithivivigraha also seems to have managed to acquire parts of Uttara Tōsali, evidently from Śāmbhuyaśas during the period between the Gupta years 250 and 253. During this period he probably lost his kingdom of Kalinga-rāshṭra to the early Eastern Gaṅgas who claimed to have acquired the whole of Kalinga country and assumed the prestigious title of *Sakala-Kalinga-ādhipati*. The date used in the Sumaṇḍala charter as well as in the present one under discussion would suggest that Prithivivigraha was a contemporary of the early Eastern Gaṅga kings Hastivarman and Indravarman¹⁶ who were ruling Kalinga from its capital at Kalinganagara during the Gaṅga era 79-80, corresponding to about 577-78 A.D and claimed to have acquired suzerainty over the whole of Kalinga kingdom. The present charter is silent about Prithivivigraha's hold over Kalinga.

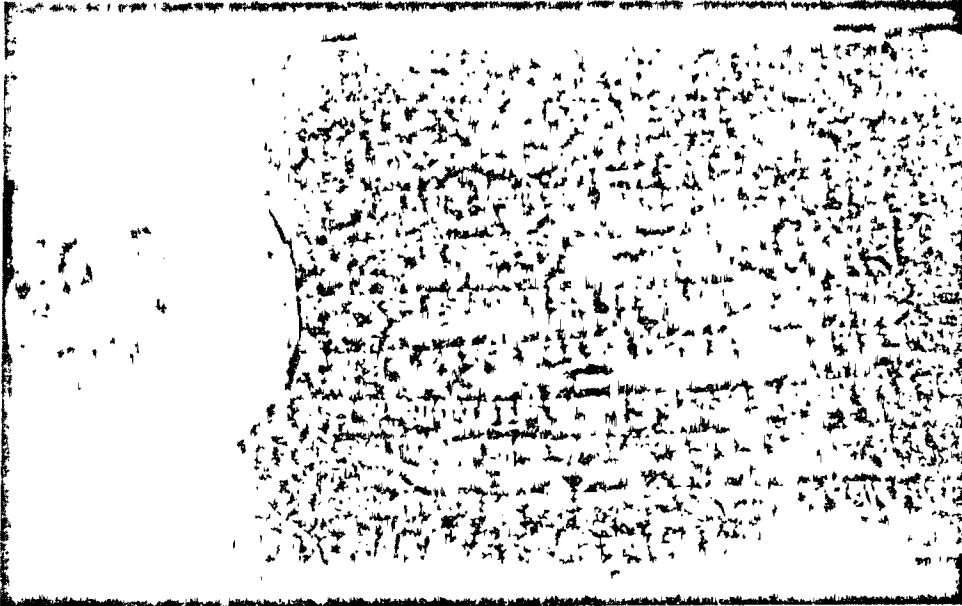
Moreover, the date is mentioned in the Kanas plate of Lōkavigraha, a successor of Prithivivigraha in the Gupta year 280 in Tōsali and that of Śivarāja in the year 283 in Dakshiṇa Tōsali from the Mudgalas. It may be noted in this context that Lōkavigraha in his record does not claim to have control over Kalinga-rāshṭra, but over the Tōsali country comprising eighteen forest states. He issued the charter from Dakshiṇa Tōsali as stated earlier. But his claim of suzerainty over Tōsali seems to have ended within a few years or more probably, immediately after the Gupta year 280, as we find the feudatory of Śāmbhuyaśas ruling over Dakshiṇa Tōsali in the year 283. Before the Gupta year 300(619-20 A.D), the Vigrahas were ousted from Tōsalis also came to an end. The part of Dakshiṇa Tōsali ruled by Śivarāja under Śāmbhuyaśas, came to be ruled by the Śailōdbhavas under the supremacy of Śaśāṅka of Gauḍa. The kingdom of the Śailōdbhavas called Koṅgoḍa-maṇḍala comprising the northern-most parts of the present Ganjam District (Buguda-Aska-Khallikōṭe region) and the region around the Chilka lake upto Khurda (now under Nayagarh District) thus grew out of the ruins of the part of Kalinga-rāshṭra of the Vigrahas and part of Dakshiṇa Tōsali of the Mudgalas. Dharmarāja, the subordinate chief of Prithivivigraha ruled over this region fifty years before the advent of Mādhavarāja Sainyabhīta II, the earliest known Śailōdbhava king under Śaśāṅka. The dates found in the copper-plate records of Śāmbhuyaśas and his time as well as in the present charter of Prithivivigraha's time under discussion, do not specifically mention the name of the era which may raise controversy among scholars about their identification. Moreover, Śivarāja, the feudatory of Śāmbhuyaśas has not referred to this as his

family name in any of his extant records. Further, we do not have any evidence so far to show the existence of Māna rule in any part of Orissa during any period of history. Moreover, Śaśāṅka of Gaud, who succeeded the Mudgalas in Orissa adopted the Gupta era as known from his feudatory's record. The Gupta era seemed to have been conventionally continued to be followed in different areas of their influence, although the supremacy of the Gupta dynasty had ended by the last part of 6th century A.D. This era has been confounded in the lone grant of Śivarāja with the fictitious Māna era which never existed in part of Orissa.

Of the geographical names mentioned in the present charter under discussion, Saṅsulāhāra, may denote either a district or a division consisting of a group of small villages or a small village itself, was situated contiguous to the gift village. It appears from the text of the record that the order relating to the grant was informed to the office attached to the *Mahāmahattara* (village elders) of the said *āhāra* indicating that the gift village and the district in which the gift village was situated, were originally under the administration of this *āhāra*. This may be tentatively identified with the present locality of Suliā, situated about half a kilometer to the north-east of Nāḍiābhaṅgā, the findspot of the charter. We are not able to locate the gift village Ayalavindhaka and its *vishaya* of Māḍiyāñjayā. The internal evidences furnished by the record as well as its provenance would tend to suggest that the area was a part of the forest region of Uttara Tōsali, infested with various wild animals during Pṛithivīvigraha's reign which is also corroborated by the record of Lōkavigraha. The area was for the first time made habitable by establishing a Brahmin settlement. The findspot of the charter, situated under the Sukinda division of the Jajpur District was covered with dense forest until recently.



Nadiābhaṅgā Copper-plate Charter of the time of Pṛithivīvigraha ; Year 253
Obverse



Nadiābhaṅgā Copper-plate Charter of the time of Pṛithivīvigraha ; Year 253
Reverse

Test.¹⁷

Obverse

1. Sthiti Tōsalyām [I*] Parama-daivata-śrī-Pṛithivīvigraha-bhaṭṭāraka-pād-ānudhyātō mahārāja-mahāsāmanta-
2. rājaputra-kumārāmāty-ōparika-vishayapati-dāṇḍavāsikān¹⁸- anyāms=cha ba(va)llabha-jātīyān-Samñsul¹⁹ -a(ā)-
3. hārīya mahāmahattar-ādhikaraṇaṇ=cha yathābhir-vijñāpayanti (yati) pūjayanti(yati) ch=āstu vō [vi*]ditam para-
4. ma-daivata-śrī-Pṛithivīvigraha-bhaṭṭāraka Mādīyāñjayā²⁰-vishaya(ye) mar-yyādayā Ayalavindhaka-
5. grāmam chira[-khila*]-śunya mṛiga-mahisha-varāha-vyāghr=ākīrṇṇe tāmra-paṭṭēna prativāsanāya nānā-gōtra-
6. charaṇa²¹ mahattara-Vidū(du)shāsivāmi-pramukhāna(nām) Uttaraśarmmasvāmi Aśvini(nī)svāmi Jīvabhūtisvā-
7. mi Nāgasvāmi Yajñasvāmi Paśupatisvāmi Bhavaśarmmasvāmi Śambhusvāmi Kṛittisvāmi
8. Āḍaṅgasvāmi Śambhusvāmi Śivadattasvāmi Śivasvāmi Bhavasōmasvāmi Kaivarttasvāmi
9. Mārttasvāmi²² Balasvāmi Pālīśarmmasvāmi Chandrasvāmi Āḍaṅgasvāmi Bhavayaśasvāmi
10. Kumārasvāmi Ba(Va)llabhasvāmi Dēvaguptasvāmi Dhruvajasvāmi²³ Varuṇasvāmi Dhōyisvāmi
11. Nandisvāmi Dēvadā²⁴ Indrabhūtisvāmi Kōmalasvāmi Chādrabhavasvāmi Dhōyi-
12. svāmi Kumārasvāmi Jīvisvāmi Indrasvāmi²⁵ V(Ba)ppaśarmmasvāmi Va(Ba)ppadēvasvāmi Dhanisvāmi
13. —²⁶ Dhruvaghōshasvāmi Ravisvāmi —²⁷ svāmi

Reverse

14. —²⁸svāmi Jyēshṭhasvāmi Rōhiṇīsvāmi Dhruvasvāmi Śivabhūtisvāmi Rāmadēvasvāmi Jīvasvāmi

15. Chitravasusvāmi Chhaḍḍisvāmi Kaśānasvāmi Dēvakuṇḍsvāmi Svāmikōkasvāmi Maghasvāmi
16. Viṣṇusvāmi Sēvasvāmi Nandanasvāmi Nāthaśarmmasvāmi Sōmasvāmi Śamarisvāmi
17. Svātisvāmi Matisvāmi Durmmatisvāmi Matīśarmmasvāmi Rudrasvāmi Dhruvaśarmmasvāmi
18. Bhavarōdhasvāmi Jīvaśarmmasvāmi Matighōshasvāmi Śaṅkarasvāmi Tāḍimva(mba)svāmi
19. Viṣṇudattasvāmi Kumāraghōshasvāmi Dhruvasvāmi Dēvaśarmmasvāmi Jīyadēvasvāmi²⁹
20. Gōpasvāmi Dēvasvāmi Pavitrasvāmi Rōhiṇisvāmi Va(Ba)ppasvāminai³⁰ Pratipādita-
21. steyrayaṃ³¹ dharma-gauravāt-pratipālayishyatha³²[I*] uktaṃ cha Dharmma-śāstre[I*] Bahubhir=vasudhā dattā
22. rājabhis=Sagar-ādibhi[h*I] yasya yasya yadā bhūmis=tasya tasya tadā phalaṃ- (lam) [II*1] Sva-dattāṃ para-
23. dattāṃ vā yo harēta vasundharāṃ(rām)[I*] sa viṣṭhāyāṃ kri(kṛi)mir=bhūtvā pitribhis=saha pachyate[II*2] iti I³³
24. Saṃvat 200.50.3 [I*] utkīrṇaṃ Dhanishṭhēna iti³⁴ II³⁵

Notes and Reference

1. *Ep.Ind.*, Vol.XXVIII, pp.79 ff and plate
2. *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol.III,,p.43 and plate.
3. The numbers against each name has been furnished by us in order to distinguish the names from each other.
4. *Ep.Ind.*, XXVIII, pp.329 ff; S.Tripathy, *Inscriptions of Orissa*, Vol. I,(Delhi, 1997), pp. 184 ff.
5. Dakṣiṇa Tōsali comprised the region of the undivided Puri District and the Ganjam District up to the river Ṛishikulyā. Uttara Tōsali denoted the region comprising the undivided Cuttack (including Jajpur), Dhenkanal, Balasore districts, the river Mahānadi being the dividing line between the two Tōsalis.

6. S.Tripathy, *Inscs. Or.*, Vol. I, pp. 174 ff.
7. D.C, Sircar, *Select Inscriptions* (1942), Vol. I; Ep. Ind., Vol.XXIII, pp. 159 ff.
8. *Ind. Int.*, Vol.XXXIX(1910), pp.204 ff; Sircar, *Sel.Inscriptions*, Vol.I,pp. 357 ff.
9. This copper plate grant was noticed by the Archaeological Survey of India, Bhubaneswar Circle during 1996-97, and reported to have been discovered from the village Sēnapatisāhi near Gop in the Puri District. The photograph of the charter which consists of a single plate was shown to S.Tripathy, one of the editors of the present charter. The gift village named Dāku-grāma mentioned in this record, situated in the *vishaya* of Antarakuddā, was presumably situated in the vicinity of Gop as the *vishaya* or the district name, also found in another charter of Śāmbhuyaśas dated in *Samvat* 235, issued from Dakṣiṇa Tōsali (See, S. Tripathy, *Inscs. Or.*, Vol.I, pp. 180 and note) has been indentified with Antarkul, situated under Gop P.S. in the Puri District.
10. S. Tripathy, *IO.*, Vol.I,pp.180 ff.
11. *Ibid.*, pp.56 ff.
12. The Asanpat Śiva image inscription of Śaturbhañja of the Nāga dynasty, assigned to about 5th century A.D refers to Ubhaya Tōsali, i.e., both the Tōsalis indicating Uttara Tōsali and Dakṣiṇa Tōsali which are found in the epigraphic records of the subsequent period of history., (For this inscription, see, *Ep. Ind.*, Vol.XL, pp. 121-26; also S.Tripathy, *IO.*, Vol.I, pp. 171 ff.)
13. S. Tripathy, *Ibid.*, pp. 187 ff.
14. S.N.Rjaguru, *Insc Or.*, Vol.II(Bhubaneswar, 1960), pp.258 ff.
15. S. Tripathy, *IO.*, Vol.I, pp.261 ff.
16. S.N.Rajaguru, *IO.*, Vol.II, pp. 14, 19 ff.
17. From the original and photographs.
18. Read *daṇḍapāśikān*
19. *Anusvāra* is redundant.
20. This may also be read as Mādīyājuyā
21. The intended reading is *charaṇēbhyaḥ*
22. The intended reading is Mārttaṇḍasvāmi or Māṭṛisvāmi

23. There is a dot like mark in between the top of the two letters *va* and *ja*. If it is taken to be the mark for *anusvāra*, then the name is to be read as *Dhruvam̐jasvāmi*.
24. The intended reading is *Dēvadēvasvāmi*
25. The conjunct *ra* of *-ndra* has been elongated downwards, covering a space for one letter in the last line.
26. A space for about five letters has been left blank at the beginning of the line, the rest of which is engraved almost on the edge of the plate.
27. There are about five letters looking like scratching on the edge and not legible.
28. The letters at the beginning of the line are not legible due to corrosion.
29. The intended reading is *Jīvadēvasvāmi*
30. Read *-svāmibhyah*
31. The intended reading may be *s=tad=ēshām*
32. The intended reading may have been *-t=pratipālayitavy=ēti*.
33. The medial *i* sign for *ti* is joined cursively with the long horizontal stroke at the end indicating the punctuation mark.
34. The *sandhi* has not been observed here.
35. The same type of punctuation mark is shown here but horizontal stroke is considerably longer in this case, possibly indicating a double full-stop.

INTERPRETATION OF INSCRIPTIONS FOR WRITING HISTORY

M.D. Sampath

Interpretation of inscriptions is considered to be the genesis for writing history. While interpreting any record, it is necessary to take care of its genuineness or spurious nature, the distortions, the ambiguities, the shades of meaning, etc. It is not only the palaeography of inscriptions that is to be looked into but also their date and purport. The norms to be observed in interpreting a record are many. If epigraphs are not deciphered in the real sense, then one may mislead the historians. Theories raised depends on the correct text of records. Also the pre-conceived notions should not be entertained.

Evidences on forgeries of inscriptions and coins are not wanting. One is likely to encounter the duplication of inscriptions, either with similar or different meanings. Forgeries of inscriptions or coins were evidently motivated by the irresistible greed for acquiring property, wealth, etc. Many a times the state use to put up stiff opposition in this front due to the lapse of the authorities concerned. Interpretation of terms or phrases occurring in inscriptions, be it political, geographical, social, economical or cultural is the prime job of an epigraphist and the historian. Truth should be culled out to set up a healthy trend in history. Some problems concerning the interpretation of inscriptions are focussed here with an idea to invite criticisms.

Interpretation of Jambai Record :

Though it cannot be said on sure grounds about the validity of Jambai in South Arcot District, Tamilnadu, yet an attempt has been made to fix the date of the inscription to first century A.D. This can be justified by orthographical errors not suited to the period to which the record belongs.

In the edicts of Aśoka, the ruling kings referred to are Choḍā, Pāḍā, Satiyaputo and Keraḷaputo. It is already known that Choḍa, Pāḍa and Keraḷa are identical respectively with Chōḷa, Pāṇḍya and Chēra kings. Keraḷaputa has been taken to be the name indicating Chēramāṇ. If *puta* is taken as the translation of the word *māṇ*, then the suffix to the term Chēra is justifiable. On this analogy the suffix *-oṗuta* attached to the name Satiya should be considered as meaning *Satiyamān*, thus revealing the Tamil form Atiyamāṇ. There is a reference to Sātīyaputra, a

Sanskrit form of the Prākṛit word Satiyaputa. Instead of suggesting the mixing of the letters *a* and *sa* due to some confusion while writing, it may be said that *puta* is in the place of *māṇ* and *Satiya* is in the place of *Atiya*. The *māṇ* suffix attached to the dynastic affiliation or the name of the founder of the dynasties is seen in the names like Chēra, Atiya, Malaiya, Toṇḍai, etc. The form *māṇ* is a contraction of the word *makaṇ* (i.e., *Skt.-putra*) meaning 'son or descendant'. Linguistically this can be compared with the abbreviated form like *Perumāṇ* for *Perumakaṇ* resulting due to the loss of *ka* in the centre and giving rise to the form *māṇ*. Here the word *Atiyamāṇ* has occurred due to the dropping of the sound in the first part *Atika* (*Atiga*) and replacement of the sound *ya* in its place. Dr. D.C. Sircar has taken the name *Sātiyaputa* as signifying the king (or his country) and identified this with the area, north of Malayālam speaking people. The identification of *Sātiyaputa* with *Atiyamāṇ* (also called *Adigaimāṇ*) was first suggested by K.G. Sesha Iyer. Some scholars have accepted the identity of *Sātiyaputa* with *Kōśar* and their country with *Koṅgu* region. Since the *Jambai* record makes a reference to *Atiyaṇ*, as the son of *Satiya* (or *Atiya*), the identification suggested by K.G. Sesha Iyer may be accepted for the present. Dr. K.V. Ramesh has rightly said that the *Jambai* record does not set at rest the controversy concerning the location of *Sātiyaputas*.

Sātiyaputa referred to in the *Aśokan* edict has a real importance to understand the history of the Tamil people. *Atiyamāṇ*, a translation of *Sātiyaputa* was ruling over an area on the borders of the Tamil country. This is the justification for the mention of *Satiyaputa* in the *Aśoka's* edict. It may be said that *Atiya* began to rule over this area before the Christian era. Their rule over the Tamil country mentioned in the *Jambai* record of 1st century A.D. is confirmed by the Tamil literary sources of the *Ṣaṅgam* period.

Varṇa System :

Even as early as the period of *Aśokan* inscriptions, we find reference to four distinct groups (*varṇas*). The fifth rock edict (*Mānsehrā* rock edict)¹, mentions the four groups viz., *bhaṭamayeshu*, *bramaṇibhyeshu*, whose welfare and happiness he is concerned along with the destitute and the aged. Hultzsch has understood this phrase as 'servants, masters, *brāhmaṇas* and *ibhyas*. D.C. Sircar has rendered this in Sanskrit and meant *Śūdrēshu*, *Vaiśyēshu*, *Brāhmaṇēshu* and *Rājanyēshu*. The real Sanskrit interpretation is *bhṛitāryēshu*,

brāhmaṇēbhyaśhu. The four-fold *varṇa* system mentioned in this edict is to be understood respectively to mean Śūdras, the Vaiśyas (*ārya*) the *Brāhmaṇas* and the Kshatriyas (*ibhya*). The terms *Ibhya*, *Rājanya* and *Kshatriya* are known from the Vēdic period onwards. In the post Aśokan and pre-Sanskrit period (2nd century B.C. to 2nd Century A.D.), there are a number of references to the profession oriented caste names due to the fact that those records are mostly donative in nature. In a record from Mathurā in Uttar Pradesh dated Śaka 93 (171-72 A.D.) and belonging to the reign period of Vāsudēva (Kushāṇa) a *Kāyastha* Śramaṇa is stated to have donated the image of Pitāmaha.² *Kāyastha*, mentioned here, is the name of a sub-caste, whose forefathers were born of a Kshatriya father and Śūdra mother. This is the name of a caste and not the profession or designation as asserted by Bhandarkar. The *Yājñavalkya-smṛiti* (I, 322, 336) a work of c.350 A.D. refers to the profession of a scribe for a *Kāyastha*.

Even though the inter-group marriages started alongside the formation of castes, some enforcements were there in order to preserve caste system intact. In this regard, the Sātavāhana king Sātakarṇi I, who according to the Nāsik record of Pulumāvi, has taken the steps to stop the mingling of the four castes. This applies to the society which had four caste system. The text says that he stopped the union of the castes (*Vinivartita Chātu-vaṇasankarasa* (Skt. *Vinivartita Chāturvarṇya-sankarasya*). It is after this date that this king became the son-in-law of the Śaka king Kardamaka. That is Sātakarṇi married a princess, the daughter of Rudradāman. Since it was politically viable this marital alliance took place. Later we find that in order to legitimise such alliances, the Śaka kings seem to have been taken to Brihatphalāyana-gōtra. A Kshatrapa princess Varmabhaṭa, queen of Ehavala Chantamūla and the foster mother of Rudrapurushadatta is said to have belonged to the Bahaphalasa (i.e., Brihatphalāyana)-gōtra.

Numerous divisions in the castes came up inspite of the efforts of rulers like Sātakarṇi. The legal provisions for the changing scenario arising out of the mingling of the main castes as well as the social status, rights and privileges inherent in their law-codes are documented in the inscriptions from Tiruvārūr, Uyyakkonḍāṇ-Tirumalai and Tirukkaṇṇapuram, all in Tamilnāḍu.

In ancient Tamilnāḍu there was a group called Āyōgavas (a Śūdra born to a Vaiśya woman) who migrated to a *brahmadēya* village Tirukkaṇṇapuram as evident from a record of Vikramachōla dated in his 10th year (1128 A.D.)³ *Śrī Nāgābhinandanam*, pp.581ff). Four families of Āyōgavas from each of the five

villages came and settled down here. These families were to render services in the temple here *in lieu of* the exemption from all taxes and privileges granted to them. They were to feed on certain occasions the Śrīvaishnavas at *Āyōgava-śālai*. A Sūchaka born of an Āyōgava and a Kshatriya is mentioned as a donor of two *Kāśus*.

The Kammālar or Kaṇmāḷa or Kammāra came to the lime light in ancient Tamilnāḍu after the slow fusion of the cultures. This group consisted of people engaged in different work took their problems with regard to the status, rights and duties to the learned *brāhmaṇas* of an *agrahāra*. This problem came up on account of the birth-status, based on which the status was determined. The *sabhā* investigated on it, prepared a legal document with final decisions as recorded in the 12th century on a stone at Tiruvārūr in Thanjavur District⁴. The *brāhmaṇas* examined the *Smṛitis* in order to take decision in this matter. This record refers to the profession to be adopted by the Rathakāras *alias* Kammāḷas, who are *anulōmas* i.e., people born of males of a higher caste and the females of lower castes. The text quotes about the birth of Rathakāras as - (1) a male who is an offspring of a Kshatriya father and a Vaiśya mother and a female who is born of Vaiśya father and a Śūdra mother and (2) as one who is born to an *ambashṭa* male and a female. The inscriptional text reads II 12-13.:

*Vaiśyataḥ-Śūdrakannyāyām san-jātaḥ Karaṇa-striyām-asmād-ambashṭhatō-jātō Rathakāra
iti Śmṛitaḥ ||*

*Kshatriya-Vaiśy-ānulōmānta-rajōtpannō | Rathakārar-āna Kammālarōm anulōmarōm
pratilōmar-āna jātigalil iḷitoḷil cheyyōm-āgavum Smṛiti-vachanaṅgalil*

Those belonging to the first group have the right of performing, Vēdic rites without uttering the *mantras*, while those of the second category have no right to do this. According to the text, the Kammāḷas who are the *anulōmas* of the first category have been asked to follow the profession of an architect, *śilpi* etc., and they are not supposed to get into the menial job (*iḷi-toḷil*) performed by the *pratilōmas* i.e., those born of males of a lower caste and females of a higher caste.

The inscriptions discussed above clearly states that the *brāhmaṇas* of the assembly acted as the arbitrators in the case of dispute between the different sub-castes and the Sanskrit texts of the earlier period have been followed with regard to their social status and the privileges.

These sub-castes had their residential areas. Among the *varṇas*, the *brāhmaṇas* resided in the *agrahāra* or *brahmadēya* villages while the agriculturists and other associated groups in the smaller villages (*ūr*). The merchants and traders naturally had their stay at *nagaram* (*town*) for their transactions.

The other sub-castes had their habitations in these types for their own benefit. One of the quarters mentioned in the Karandai Saṅgam plates of Rājēndrachōḷa I is known as *tīṇḍāchchēri* or a quarter of untouchables. A second year (1014 A.D.) record of this king from Bāhūr clearly refers to the elimination of the group called *tīṇḍādār* while excavating the village lake (*tīṇḍādār- oḷiya nīkki niṇṇōril kuḷi-kutti-paḍuvad-āgavum*), etc.

In a number of Kannada records the victims of excommunication mentioned as a sort of punishment, are called *nālku-jātiyam-poṛagu* (i.e., kept away from the four-fold caste system). Such victims of social boycott and excommunication are referred to as *pañchama-varṇa*.

Authenticity of documents :

Epigraphical records are the valid and authenticated documents to fix the historical events and to settle the disputes. They are legal documents for the arbitrators of disputes are concerned. It is, therefore, necessary to examine the genuineness of the land-grant documents. The main basis for the primary examination rests on the nature and contemporaneity of the script employed with the date on which the record narrates the grant. A concrete example is seen in the case of Nidhanpur (Bangladesh) plates of Bhāskaravarman. Many of the scholars are well aware of this plate. In order to recapitulate the events, it may be repeated once again, that Bhūti-varman, a Kāmarūpa ruler of early 6th century A.D., had issued a charter of tax free land grant. The plates were burnt and as a result of the loss of the documents, the lands have been made taxable. After a gap of hundred years, a new charter was issued in lieu of the old one (*tat-tāmrapaṭṭi-ābhāvāt-karadam-iti..... vijñāpya punar-asy-ābhinava- tāmrapaṭṭa-karaṇāya-śāsanam-dattvā*). In the course of hundred years of gap the Siddhamātrikā script underwent changes. It is interesting to note that care has been taken with regard to the use of the script in the later charter without detracting from the veracity of the details recorded in the charter. Dr. K.V. Ramesh in his address had emphasized “the human factors responsible for the making of the epigraphical documents. The

verse find mentioned in this charter viz., *śāsana-dāhād-abhinava-likhitāni-bhinna rūpāṇi -tēbhyō-'ksharāṇi-yasmāt-tasmān-n-aitāni kūtāni* speak of the intellectual and technological skill employed by the human agencies in regard to the preparation of epigraphical documents." The records can be straight forward unless the responsibility is felt by the composer, the person who prepares the material for writing, the writer of the text and lastly the engraver (or inscriber) of the document. Though there is no mention of such categories of persons as the producers of records, yet, care has been taken to record them in other media in Tamilnāḍu. The inscriptional texts were originally recorded on palm leaves (*ōlai*) and subsequently they have been engraved on stone and copper plates. This is seen from the mention of the text *ivv-ōlaippaḍiyē kallil-veṭṭina or ivv-ōlaippaḍiyē kallilum-chembilum-veṭṭikkolga, etc.*

While comparing this practice noticed in Tamilnāḍu as early as the 9th century A.D., the engraver of the charter of Nidhanpūr should have taken care to see that the text is not lost by incorporating the text on a permanent media i.e., on stone verbatim from the copper-plate charter version.

In the early period, particularly in Tamilnadu, while a structure is taken up for repairs, it was a customary practice to record the text of the inscriptions in a register in order to avoid the distortion in fixing the inscribed stones. An endorsement for this practice is documented in a record from Tiruvallam in North Arcot District reading *paḷaiya-kalpaḍi-inda-Śrīvimānattilē- ēṇa-veṭṭinamaiyil*. This reveals the interest shown by the builders in the renovation process. Another concrete example for the credibility given to an earlier text comes from a record of Yādavarāya chief (12th century) engraved on the northern wall of the outer *prākāra* in the Tirumala temple. An order was issued by this king to restore the original document of the period of Rājarāja I at the time of rebuilding of this temple by getting it engraved on the northern *prākāra* wall (*iv-vāchagattai-vaḍakku-visaiyil-eḍuttu-eḷuduga*). Therefore, it is not surprising to date the main *vimāna* prior to the period of Rājarāja I on the basis of the authenticity of the record.

Lot of speculations came up among the scholars to date the temple or Gōmukṭīśvara at Tiruvāḍuturai on account of the occurrence of two records of one and the same Chōḷa king, i.e., Parāntaka I (acc.907 A.D.). A copy of the original record of the reign period of Chōḷa Āditya I was engraved during the reign

of his successor i.e., Parāntaka I and this record enabled the scholars to confirm the date of reconstruction of the temple at Śrīnivāsanallūr in Tiruchchirappalli district.

It should not be taken for granted that all the inscriptions are genuine on the basis of which the history can be reconstructed. Infact quite a good number of spurious or fake documents are found recorded in the temples of Tamilnāḍu. To quote a few examples, inscriptions from Tiruppattūr, Perichchi-kkōyil, Iraṇiyūr, Ilayāttānguḍi-all in Ramanathapuram district, Tamilnadu may be considered as spurious ones on account of more than one reason or the other.

Of the two records of Māṇavarman Sundarapāṇḍya dated in the 15th and 15 + 1st regnal years⁵, the record dated earlier, can palaeographically be assigned to a century prior to the record dated later. The language, the contents, careless engraving, the wrong representation of the deity's name - all contribute to the fact that the 16th year record is rather spurious. The historical events described in these two inscriptions differ from each other. Though both the records refer to the remission of taxes on lands, yet one of them has to be taken as a forged document made during 14th century A.D. or later in order to grab the lands belonging to the temple. Also the incongruities seen in this record attests its spurious nature. So also the record from Iraṇiyūr which recounts similar achievements of Sundarapāṇḍya wrongly.

When Sundarapāṇḍya (acc. 1216 A.D.) had a court poet named Koḍikoṇḍāṇ, Periyāṇ Ādichchadēvaṇ, who was honoured for composing a poem Pillaiḱavi in his honour, he would not have allowed for the grave mistakes to occur in the record.

The lands given to the poet in the village Sāttanēri have been declared as a *dēvadāṇa* of the temple of that village. While the descendants of this poet wanted to retain these lands along with tenancy rights, they had to produce the documents issued in the king's 14th year (1230 A.D.). Unfortunately in the 15th year (1231 A.D.) record of this king from Iraṇiyūr⁶, the beneficiary of the land is mentioned as a resident of Tiruppattūr and the remission of taxes on these lands as to be enjoyed by the god Āṭkoṇḍīśvaram-uḍaiya-nāyaṇār. This record seems to be a false document, for the events recorded does not seem to be correct. This clearly proves that hereditary tenancy rights over the lands were misused by the known individuals by forging the documents. Even in the fourteenth century

such fake documents have been recorded on the stone walls of the temple with a view to appropriate the lands. Prof. K.A. Nilakanta Sastri suspected the two records cited above as spurious records when he wrote the book *Pāṇḍya Kingdom*.

Again another Pāṇḍya inscription belonging to Māṇavarman Kulaśēkhara reports that a certain Villiyāṇḍāṇ *alias* Aḷagapperumāl of Tirupputtūr and his younger brothers not only committed sin to the *brāhmaṇas* but also engaged a widow brought from outside (*puṇa-dēśam*) for the family, utilised the food-offerings, articles, taken the wages from the *dēvadāṇa* lands after ransacking the *bhaṇḍāramudal*, the trees felled from those lands, and redrafted the document (*aḍaivai*) by assigning to their own persons, of the lands that have been supervised by those in the village all along, etc. The inscription lacks its authenticity for, the decision taken against the above person to defalcate the amount due from him, has not been attested by the signatories. The lands owned by the individual and his brothers seem to have been confiscated on account of the atrocities committed by them and sold by the *sabhai*. Another charge that was levelled against him was that the sale amount due to the temple treasury was taken away by him. Here besides reducing the status of a community in the social strata, the transfer of *dēvadāṇa* lands had affected the productivity of the temple properties at large.

To assess the socio-economic situation of a region, the documents recording the various aspects relating to them are generally attested to vouchsafe their authenticity. Even the slightest doubt or misgivings, if any, will be suspected. There are instances where the documents are forged. Two inscriptions from this place, dated in Śaka 1309 (1387 A.D.) state that an accountant Kulāḷaṇ Ambalattāḍuvāṇ *alias* Āyirattelunūṟṟu - mūvēndavēḷaṇ got the records forged to the effect that he got it from the *sabhai*, the house-site and other privileges in his village, and later escaped without the notice of the *sabhai*. He got the forged record engraved on the walls of the temple by engaging a stone mason (*kaṛtachchan*) named Alaivāy-ugandāṇ of Tirukkōṭṭiyūr through the smith Āyirattelunūṟṟut- taṭṭāṇ of Tirupputtūr. The moment that this *Śivadrōha* and *grāmadrōha* which he had committed was detected, both the smith and the stone mason were taken to custody before *Kaṇmāḷar*, from whom they reaped the punishment. They did *prāyaśchittha* to the satisfaction of the *sabhai*. On account of this fact, the Ambalattāḍuvāṇ's share of the *kāṇiyāṭchi* of the office of the account was brought to sale for a value of 300 *Āḍūr-panam*. These transactions were duly attested by the *madhyastha*.

Interpretation of economic terms :

Interpretation of inscriptional terms of social and economic import occurring in the Tamil inscriptions of the Chōlas and Pāṇḍyas should find a place in a glossary. It is necessary to study these terms contextually along with their survivals in other allied languages and epigraphs. The terms relating to land needs to be studied along with their roots and derivations. The term *Kaṇḍuḷavu* occurring in the inscriptions from 12th to 14th century of the medieval Pāṇḍyas refer to those farm lands which are under direct supervision or control. In this case there is no occupancy claim. The yield or capital derived on account of direct supervision or inspection of the lands is referred to as *Kaṇḍu-mudal* in the early records.

The term *Kāṇi* has different shades of meaning with more or similar import or with entirely different meaning. The meaning varies textually in the different periods. In a record of ninth century, the *Kāṇi* right i.e. right of possession or enjoyment of property was bestowed on a *tachchaṇ* Vaḍugaṇ.

In another context it gives the meaning of lease (of land made after purchase). The *Kāṇi* land was reclaimed for the purpose of cultivation during the 12th century. The landed property was also bestowed for hereditary enjoyment as seen in a record of the same period. The right of cultivation of the temple land was entrusted to an individual (*dēvadāṇattu-kāṇi-uḍaiya*). A share holder of land in hereditary enjoyment is referred to in a record of 12th century as *kāṇi-kāraṇ*. In the 14th - 15th century records the terms *kāṇiy-āḷaṇ* or *Kāṇiy-āṇmai* have been used in the sense of enjoying right of cultivation or occupancy right respectively. With a different shade of meaning viz., a tenure with hereditary right of enjoyments the term *Kārāṇmai-mīyāṭchi* has been used in a 10th century record. In the record of Sundarapāṇḍya dated 1324 A.D., the term *Kārāṇ-kiḷamai-kāṇi* is mentioned in the context of proprietary right on land.

A number of documents pertaining to land taxes are referred to in the Tamil inscriptions. The common term used for tax is *iṛai*. The deed of remission is referred to in a record dated 1264 A.D. as *iṛaimuṛai-pramāṇa-isaivu-tiṭṭu*. While the deed executed for the agreement on the authorised price or the land is known as *nila-vilai-pramāṇa-isaivu-tiṭṭu*. The terms *chirumuṇi* and *kaieḷuttōlai* are used to indicate respectively the short deed of agreement and promissory note. Though a satisfactory explanation cannot be given to the term *kāśu-kollā-iṛaiyili*, yet it has been used for the remission of taxes in a 16th year (1193 A.D.) record of

Kulōttuṅga III. It is also applicable to the collection of land value (*vilai-dravyam*) and the capital amount, the interest from which was diverted to meet the *irai* (tax) and other obligations (*irai-dravyam*). The deed with regard to *kudi-aḍaippu* is called lease of the tenants while the *pattu-aḍaippu* means the cultivation lease. After the sale of land has been executed by entering into an agreement, cash security is collected. The document registering the cash security is known as *kiḷip-puṇai-tiṭṭu* in an inscription of 11th century A.D.

A number of other terms with regard to the collection of taxes during the different periods needs a detailed study in an authentic form and the context in which they occur. Then a meaningful interpretation can be given. While studying these terms, it is necessary to know the different meanings in different contexts and sometimes the same term conveys one meaning and its contrary usage. This procedure is to be followed in interpreting usages like *Karpūra-vilai*, *Kuḍimai*, *Kaḍamai*, *Kuḍi-nīṅgā*, *Kuḍi-nīkki*, *irai-iḷittu*, *irai-kollā*, etc. An indepth study of the economic terms occurring in various records will help us to know the economic history of the region or state.

Finally I wish to express my thanks to the authorities of the ICHR for the opportunity given to me to make use of the thoughts in this article.

Notes and References :

1. *C.I.I.*, Vol.I, pp.74 ff
2. *Ep.Ind.*, Vol. XXXVII, pp.151ff.
3. *A.R.Ep.*, 1922, No.508
4. *S.I.I.*, Vol. XVII, No.603
5. *A.R.Ep.*, 1924, Nos. 71 and 72
6. *Ibid.*, 1926, No. 9

AḷAGARKŌYIL FROM INSCRIPTIONS AND LITERATURE

N. Pankaja

Aḷagarkōyil is referred to by the name *Tirumāḷiruṇjōlai*, otherwise known as *Teṇ-Tirupati*. It has assumed greater importance during the time of Vaishṇavite āḷvārs like Nammāḷvār and Periyāḷvār. This place was also called in the early period as *Tirumāl-kunṇam* and *Irun-kunṇam* and so on. The Saṅgam works like *Pattuppāṭṭu*, *Śilappadikāram*, etc., have interesting references to this *kshētra*. Vaishṇavite āḷvars have sung in praise of the place and the deity here in the famous work called *Nālāyira - Divyaprabandam*. In the hymns of Periyāḷvār, the place is described to have been surrounded by a fort wall called *Sōlai-malai*. Aḷagarkōyil is referred to as *Teṇ-Tirumāḷiruṇjōlai*. This was under the control of Neḍumāraṇ, who is referred to with the epithet *Teṇkūḍarkōṇ*. The deity is described as *Sundarattōḷudaiyāṇ* in his hymns. The present name Aḷagarkōyil has the antiquity dating back to the times of Nammāḷvār (e. 8th cent A.D) (*Aḷagartam-kōyil*). It is on the banks of Śīlambāru, currently known as Nūpura Gaṅgai. *Tirumāḷiruṇjōlai* said to have been watered by Śīlambāru) according to Periyāḷvār. Aḷagar festival stands for the unity in diversity. This is reflected in the Aḷōārvhymns and hence the festival was celebrated by *Teṇṇavaṇ* (i.e., the Pāṇḍyas). In this festival one can find the national integration because of the association of people from all religions and castes.

This place, situated at a distance of 13 kms from Madurai, is one of the eighteen sacred *sthalas* of Pāṇḍya-nāḍu. Several names have been attributed to the Aḷagar hills. They are Vṛishabhagiri, Vṛishabādri, Vṛishādri, Simhādri, Vāṇādhri, Vāṇagiri, *Tirumāḷiruṇjōlai*, *Teṇ-Tirupati*, etc. Similarly the deity of the Aḷagiri hills (Aḷagar hills) is described in literature and traditions by several names like Aḷaṅgāran, Sōlai Malaikkaraśar, Sundararāja, *Sundarattōḷudaiyāṇ*, Saṅgattalaṅgaṇ, Māyāvitāraṇ, Vaṅchakkaḷvaṇ/Kallaḷagar, Agattuṛai-aḷagaṇ, Allaiyāṇḍa Maindamēṇi-aḷagaṇ, Andamil-aḷagaṇ, etc.

This *Teṇ-Tirupati* has a hoary past as gleaned from the hymns of Āḷvārs. The Vaishṇava saints namely Periyāḷvār, Būdattāḷvār, Tirumaṅgai āḷvār and Nammāḷvār in their heart's ecstasies on the divine realisation have brought out through *Nālāyira-Divyaprabandam*. The hymns are in praise of the divine and sacred hill and the temple therein. The *Paripāḍal* is another early Tamil work that refers to this hill as the embodiment of Mahāvishṇu.

Aḷagar temple is very rich in the epigraphical wealth. Nearly 120 inscriptions have been noticed from this temple. Inscriptions of this temple belong to the rulers of Chōḷa-Pāṇḍya, Pāṇḍya, Hoysala, Vijayanagar and Travancore families. they bring out the acts of munificent and meritorious deeds in the form of endowments essentially religious and charitable in nature. A few of them reveal information pertaining to historical geography and sociological aspects. The records also give the details of places where from the chiefs or ministers ruled. The distinct names of the royal thrones like *Vīrasinhāsana*, *Kaṇakāsaṇa*, *Maḷavarāyaṇ*, *Kāliṅgarāyaṇ* thrones, *Chōḷa-Pāṇḍya-sinhāsanam*, *Kāchchikku-vāchchāṇ*, etc., reveal the names of the ruling monarchs who graced these during their reigns.

Inscriptions speak of a number of *maṇḍalams* as well as their sub-divisions like *vaḷanāḍus*, *nāḍus*, *kūrṇams*, etc. Among the different *vaḷanāḍus*, mention may be made of Kēraḷaśiṅga-vaḷanāḍu, Chōḷa-Pāṇḍya-vaḷanāḍu, Vīra-Pāṇḍya-vaḷanāḍu, Rājagambhīra-vaḷanāḍu, Sundara-Pāṇḍya-vaḷanāḍu, Jayaṅgaṇḍaśōḷa-vaḷanāḍu, Nityavinōda-vaḷanāḍu, etc. The different *nāḍus* referred to are Tenparappu-nāḍu, Vaḍaparappu-nāḍu, Aṇḍa-nāḍu, Kalavaḷi-nāḍu, Tirumalli-nāḍu, Sembi-nāḍu, Arināḍu, Vaḍatalai-chembil-nāḍu, etc. Miḷalai-kūrṇam, Tirukkāṇappēr-kūrṇam, etc., are also mentioned.

One of the earliest inscriptions from this temple belonging to the regin period of Jaṭāvarmaṇ *alias* Śīyaṇ Chōḷa- Pāṇḍyadēva and dated in his 22nd year refer to Tirumāliruṇjōlai as included in Kīḷiraṇiya-muṭṭam situated in Rājēndraśōḷa-vaḷanāḍu, a division of Rājarājap-Pāṇḍināḍu. After the conquest of the Pāṇḍya country by the Chōḷa kings, this region came under the governance of Chōḷa-Pāṇḍya viceroys. This occupation lasted for more than half-a-century, when the imperial Chōḷa kings Rājarāja I, Rājendra I and Kulōttuṅga I, were in the helm of affairs. Thus the name of the territorial divisions came to be called after these rulers. Incidentally it may be said that the donor was a native of Śōḷapāṇḍya-chaturvēdimāṅgalaṁ, a *brahmadēya* in Karuṇilakkuḍi-nāḍu. The inclusion of Tirumāliruṇjōlai in Kīḷiraṇiyamuṭṭam is further confirmed by a record of Jaṭāvarmaṇ Kulaśēkhara, a senior contemporary of Chōḷa king Kulōttuṅga I (acc. 1070 A.D.)

Inscriptions of the medieval Pāṇḍya period cite instances for the formation of new villages, mostly taken possession by the *brāhmaṇas*. Though four records refer to a particular transaction, especially with the founding of a new settlement, one

is dated in the 5+1st year (c. 1255 A.D.) of Māṇavarman Vikrama-Pāṇḍya. Records of this king and of his brother Māṇavarman Sundarapāṇḍya are not wanting from Āttūr, to understand the relationship between Koṅgu-Chōlas and the Pāṇḍya king as well as the bondage between Sundara and Vikramachōla. One of them states that the villages Iṛappaikulam and Vaḍamuṛi have been granted as *tiruvīḍaiyāṭṭam* by the assembly of Parāntaka-chaturvēdimāṅgalam, to the deity in the temple of Tirumāliruṇjōlai-niṇṇaruliya-Paramasvāmi. Further these two villages had been made over as *kārāṇmai* to Piḍavūr Nanda-Mādhavaṇ a malayāla *brāhmaṇa* of Malaimaṇḍalam. After the death of Nanda-Mādhavaṇ, his *jñātis* transferred these two villages to one Kaṇṇaṇ Nārāyaṇaṇ of Kaḷanikkaṛai of Malai-maṇḍalam. They have been clubbed together into a new village known as Saṅgattaḷaganallur along with *Kārāṇmai* tenure. The lands were exempted from the taxes such as *sabhāviniyōgam* in lieu of the deposit of 20 *achchu* assigned for this purpose. At the request of king's brother-in-law Vikramachōladēva, a royal order was issued making the villages of Iṛappaikulam and Vaḍamuṛi tax-free from the 5th year of this king. Another order was issued with effect from the 6th year of king Vikramapāṇḍya and communicated the same to Kaṇṇaṇ Nārāyaṇaṇ by the temple authorities. An order of the deity Paramasvāmin, while seated on the throne called Kōyilalaṅkāraṇ-pīṭha under the canopy Tyāgaṅśchiriyāṇ-pandal in the Adiyam-aḷagiyāṇ- maṇḍapa, listening to the hymns of Śaṭhagōpa on the occasion of Āṇi-Aṇiḷa festival, was issued at the instance of the Kōvaṇavar attached to the temple and of Śimpōruḍaiyāṇ Teṇṇavadaraiyaṇ, who is mentioned as *nam-vīṭṭukkāriyam-śeygira* (who is administering the temple affairs) to Kaṇṇaṇ Nārāyaṇaṇ, fixing the rates of *Kaḍamai* due to be paid by him to the temple on the cultivation made in the lands of Saṅgattaḷaganallūr. Vikramachōla, the brother-in-law of Vikramapāṇḍya has been identified with the Koṅgu ruler who ruled at this time.

In a record from Āttūr in Tirunelveli District dated in the 5th year of Māṇavarman Vikramapāṇḍya (1254 A.D.), a certain Vikramachōla is referred to as his *machchālvi* (i.e., brother-in-law). This chief is also mentioned as *machchiṇar* of king Māṇavarman Sundarapāṇḍya dated in 1253 A.D. Thus the Koṅgu ruler Vikramachōla happened to be brother-in-law of these two Pāṇḍya kings who were hitherto not known as brothers. The expression Kōvaṇavar reminds us of one of the ten *kottus* figuring in the records of Śrīraṅgam temple. They are the persons who use to supervise the worship in the temple in general.

The reign of Jaṭāvarmaṇ Sundarapāṇḍya IV (acc. 1304 A.D.) witnessed the foundation of Sāmantanārāyaṇa-chaturvēdimāṅalam at Tirumāliruñjōlai-Tirupati by Pallavarāyar of Chakrapāṇinallūr. This was a brāhmin settlement where 32 *brāhmaṇas* received the rent dues from the lands on behalf of the temple of Tirukkōṭṭiyūrtandaperumāl at Sāmantanārāyaṇa-chaturvēdimāṅalam in the reign of his predecessor who is none other than Māṇavarmaṇ Kulaśēkhara who ruled from 1268 to 1318 A.D. These dues were given to the *brāhmaṇas* in the 36th year of this king (1304 A.D.), which year coincides with the accession of his successor Jaṭāvarmaṇ Sundarapāṇḍya, who is described as *Kōdaṇḍarāmaṇ* born on the day of *Pushya*.

His contribution to the Aḷagar temple will find a place in the sequel. For conducting worship in the temple at the newly founded village, the temple remitted the taxes on lands, enjoyed by the priest Aḷagiya-maṇavāla-bhaṭṭa. The king ratified the remission of taxes mentioned above. He issued the order while the deity was seated in the Sundara-pāṇḍyaṇ-maṇḍapa, especially in the Chēdirāyaṇ-pīṭha and Kulaśēkharan-pandal. This is referred to in the eleventh year (1315 A.D.) of Sundarapāṇḍya. They have been named after father and son.

Inscriptions refer to a number of grants both movables and immovables. The latter include the villages, lands, groves, gardens, channels, etc. The movables are the construction of buildings, setting up of lamps, pūja, worship materials, kind, cash, etc. Rulers encouraged the institutions like the establishment of different *maṭhas* and attached the feeding houses to these. Grants have been made for the construction of *maṭhas*, their upkeep and maintenance and for the feeding of the *brāhmaṇas*, *śiṣhyas*, *apūrvins*, *ēkāṅkis*, pilgrims, *Śrīvaishṇavas*, etc. Two important *maṭhas* have been founded in the reign of Jaṭāvarmaṇ Kulaśēkhara. Of these two *maṭhas*, to the one founded by Araiyaṇ Tirunāḍuḍaiyaṇ Nīlagaṅgaṇ of Kīlai Koḍumaḷūr, lands were given as tax-free and as *maḍappuram* for feeding the *tridaṇḍi-sanyāsins* and *Ēkāṅki Śrīvaishṇavas* in this *maṭha*. This Tirunāḍuḍaiyaṇ-maṭha was attached to the temple at Tirumāliruñjōlai. A royal order was issued in the 2nd year of Kulaśēkhara-pāṇḍya, who is called *Tribh. Kōnēriṇmaikoṇḍāṇ*. Eleven years later i.e., in the 13th year (1203 A.D.) of Jaṭāvarmaṇ Kulaśēkhara, with the *praśasti Pūviṇ-kilatti*, etc., a certain *Śrīramaṇ-uyyavandāṇ alias* Muṇaiyadaraiyar of Kappalūr *alias* Ulagaḷandaśōlanallūr in Muttūrru-kūrram is said to have constituted the lands in Rājarājanallūr of Tirukkānappēr-kūrram as the village

called *Sundarattōḷ-viḷāgam* and granted to the Kulaśēkharaṇ-maṭha in the temple from the year 13+13. A royal order was issued at the instance of Maḷavarāyar remitting the taxes on the above lands for feeding the *brāhmaṇas* in the above *maṭha*.

Besides the above two *maṭhas*, two more *maṭhas* have been established in the 13th century A.D. They came to be called Amaittanārāyaṇaṇ-maṭha and Vāṇadarāyaṇ-maṭha. The officer Vāṇavichchādarāṇ and Aḷagaṇ Akalaṅka-Nāḍālvāṇ have endowed tax-free lands for feeding the *tridaṇḍi-sanyāsins* and *apūrvins* in these *maṭhas*.

During the Vijayanagar period villages have been granted for the maintenance of the Śrīvaishṇavas who were engaged in the different services of the temple. One of the records belonging to the reign of Vijayanagara king Veṅkaṭapatirāya and dated Śaka 1511, Virōdhi (1589 A.D.) registers the royal gift of the village Kavunḍaṇpaṭṭi *alias* Rāmānujanallūr at the instance of Sundarattōḷ-uḍaiya-Māvali-vāṇadarājaṇ, for feeding twelve Śrīvaishṇavas in the temple of Aḷagar. The association of this late Bāṇa chief with the Viṣṇu and Āṇḍāl temples at Śrīvilliputtūr is very much known from the records available there. The name of the village gifted reminds us of the association of the Vaishṇavite preceptor Rāmānuja with this temple. In the Vijayanagar period provision has been made for the feeding of people in the halls called Rāmānuja-kūṭa from out of the endowments earmarked. One such is the gift of Karaichchēri village by the cheṭṭis of Madurai to the temple of Aḷagar. Another record dated in Śaka 1578 (1656 A.D) draws our attention to the patronage extended by private individuals for the feeding of Śrīvaishṇavas. The Vaishṇavite scholars had enjoyed the privilege of being associated with the Aḷagar temple in promoting Śrīvaishṇavism. Those who recited the sacred hymns (*iyal*) during the ten days of the festival in the month of Āḍi received the donation of villages from one Nallanayiṇāpillai, a *vellāḷa* of Tirumāli ruṇjōlai. This gift was also meant for conducting festivals in the different *maṇḍapas* to the deity at Tirumāli ruṇjōlai (Aḷagar temple).

One of the fragmentary inscriptions refer to king Sundara-pāṇḍya without any *praśasti* or date. However, this record may be assigned to the period prior to the Vijayanagar period, say around 14th century on account of the mention of an officer called Jayadharap-pallavaraiyaṇ as a signatory. Though his exact connection with the Aḷagar temple is not known from the inscriptions of this

period, yet it may be inferred from the mention of his name, that he was associated with the building of temple activities such as patronising the *brāhmaṇas* or *Śrīvaishṇavas*, who recite the *Kōdaippāṭṭu* (i.e., hymns of *Āṇḍāl*) before the deity on various occasions.

Inscriptions referring to the provision made for the daily worship and food offerings to the deity Aḷagar are not wanting. On the occasion of car procession in the month of Āḍi conducted to god Aḷagar, two villages were granted to meet the food-offerings. This was done by no less a person of high rank Immaḍi-Vīraya-Daṇḍēśvara on behalf of king Kṛishṇadēva-mahārāya in Śaka 1435 (1513 A.D.). Besides the provision made on such special occasions, we can find mention of the special services instituted in the name of the Pāṇḍya and Hoysala rulers. An undated inscription refers to *Kulaśēkharaṇ-sandi* and to the seat called *Kāliṅgarāyaṇ-pīṭha*. This service was perhaps instituted in the name of Māṇavarmaṇ Kulaśēkhara, the father of Jaṭavarmaṇ Sundara Pāṇḍya (acc. 1304 A.D.). Kāliṅgarāyaṇ served as an officer under Jaṭavarman Sundara-pāṇḍya (acc. 1304 A.D.) in whose name he had instituted a special service called *Kōdaṇḍarāmaṇ-sandi* according to Tīrthanagari inscription dated in his 13+3rd year (1319 A.D.). This officer is known as Netṭūruḍaiyāṇ Ilaiyālvāṇ, Kāliṅgarāyaṇ. From the present record, it is also known that this officer had instituted a *sandi* after the name of his overlords's father Māṇavarmaṇ Kulaśēkhara (acc. 1268 A.D.) It may be inferred from these inscriptions that both father and son have contributed richly for the growth of Aḷagar temple through their liberal gifts and munificent acts. This Māṇavarmaṇ Kulaśēkharaṇ (acc. 1268 A.D.) had issued an order in his 35th year (1303 A.D.) granting of shares to the *brāhmaṇas* of *Kulaśēkhara-chaturvēdimāṅgalam* attached to the temple of Ālvār, while he was seated on the throne called *Kachchikku-vāchchāṇ*, named after the title of his father Jaṭavarmaṇ Sundarapāṇḍya I.

Inscriptions with the *praśasti Pūmalar-tiruvum*, etc., specifically attributable to Māṇavarmaṇ Sundara-pāṇḍya, the second king of this name, record the institution of the services called *Sundarapāṇḍyaṇ-sandi* and *Vīra-Sōmēśvaraṇ-sandi* in one and the same year of this king. The first one was instituted in the name of the ruling king and quotes the date 8+1+1st year. Dated in the 8th year (1246 A.D.), the record registers the remission of taxes on villages and of the *pāḍikāval* on Śaḍakuḍi, a *dēvadāṇa* for providing offerings and to meet the other expenses for the service known as *Sundarapāṇḍyaṇ-sandi* to the deity of Aḷagar temple. The royal order was issued at the instance of Maḷavarāyar.

This Pāṇḍya king, while he was seated on the *Maḷavarāyaṇ* throne in the palace at Māḍakkulaṃ, to the east of Madurai, at the request of his *māmaḍi* (uncle) of Hoysala Vīra-Sōmēśvara, ordered the assignment of the revenue of the village Tirukkōṭṭiyūr in Kēraḷaśiṅga-vaḷanāḍu, to the temple of Tirumāḷiruṅjōlai-niṅṅaruliya-Paramasvāmin for conducting the *Vīra-Sōmēśvaraṇ-śandi* instituted in the name of this Hoysala king. This service was instituted by the king in his 10th year (1243-44 A.D.). In order to meet the expenses for the offerings and worship made in the temple of Aḷagar on the occasion of this service, the village Tirukkōṭṭiyūr was endowed as *tiruviḍaiyāṭṭam*. As such, the grant made to the temple by Māḷavarmaṇ Sundarapāṇḍya in compliance with the Hoysala ruler Sōmēśvara's request, must have been a latter event. The date of the epigraph 8+1+1st year is equivalent to 1248-49 A.D., which is definitely five year's later than that of the date of the institution of the above special service.

It is quite likely that the Pāṇḍya country was under the control of Hoysala Vīra-Sōmēśvara. The latest date of the Pāṇḍya king Māḷavarmaṇ. Sundrapāṇḍya II is available from the Aḷagarkōyil inscription of his 17th year (i.e., 1255 A.D.).

It may be befitting to review the activities and services of the Hoysala king Sōmēśvara to the temples of the Pāṇḍya country. According to a record of Jaṭavarmaṇ Vikrama-Pāṇḍya dated in his 4th year (1245 A.D.), the *māmaḍi* Vīra Sōmēśvaraṇ made grant of *iṅaiyili* lands to the *brāhmaṇas* and to the temple of Tiruvēḍagam. The Pāṇḍyas followed the instructions of the Hoysala king as evidenced from the Madurai records. Further Vīra Sōmēśvara is referred to as *māmaḍi* in a tenth year (1248 A.D.) record of Māḷavarmaṇ Sundara-Pāṇḍya II from the Mīnākshi temple at Madurai. This Pāṇḍya king is known to have granted tax-free lands to conduct the worship, festival and the privilege of *tīrtha* in the temple of Tiruvālavāy on the day of the natal star *Makha* in the month of *Aippaśi*, in the name of Sōmēśvaradēva. Thus this Pāṇḍya king seem to have recognized the overlordship of the Hoysala king Vīra Sōmēśvara. The relationship of Vīra Sōmēśvara with the Pāṇḍya king Sundarapāṇḍya II is confirmed by a Sanskrit work called *Rukmiṇī-kalyāṇam*, in which it is referred to as the Pāṇḍya's daughter given in marriage to Sōmēśvara and to them was born son Narasiṃha. Probably the relationship of Sōmēśvara and Sundara Pāṇḍya(?) is expressed by the term (*māmaḍi*) meaning the 'son-in-law'.

Another service that was instituted during the reign period of a Pāṇḍya king, whose identity is not clear is called *Kurukulattarayaṇ-śandi*. The date of the

record is 20+3rd year. It states that the remission of taxes was made at the instance of Maḷavarāyar on the lands purchased from Tiruvālavāyudaiyāṇ *alias* Sundarapāṇḍya-chēdirāyaṇ of Kīlaikkoḍumaḷūr *alias* Madurōdayanallūr in Vaḍatalai-Chembināḍu. This amount was, provided to the temple by Śīrūr-udaiyāṇ Śōraṇ. Uyyaniṇṇāḍuvāṇ *alias* Kurukulattaraiyaṇ of Taḍaṅkaṇṇi Śīrūr in Tirumarai-nāḍu for the offerings to be made on the occasion of the above *sandi*. The king of this record may be identified with Māḷavarmaṇ [Sundara-Pāṇḍya], on the basis of the fact that the chief Maḷavarāyar, at whose instance the royal order was issued, seems to be one and the same. The owner of the land assigned to the temple here also hails from Kīlai Koḍumaḷūr. Of course, the purpose of the grant, in latter record is different from the former record. Aḷagaṇ *alias* Akaḷaṅka-nāḍālvāṇ, an officer of 13th century A.D. (?) is said to have instituted a service in the temple in his name as *Araśamīkāmaṇ-śandi*.

During the Pāṇḍya period, endowments have been made for various services in the temple like maintenance of kitchen, digging up of channels, to carry out repairs to the temple and to raise flowers for the supply of garlands to the deity, etc. The Pāṇḍya records refer to the provision of land made for the service in the kitchen or for the upkeep of the kitchen so as to provide various food-offerings. It is stated in a record of Vīra-Pāṇḍya that dues collected have been provided as *aḍukkalaippuṇam*. Another record mentions the grant of a village by one Aḷagaṇ Akaḷaṅka Nāḍālvāṇ as *aḍukkalaippuṇam*.

In order to meet the repairs or to raise additional structures, a village was granted as *tiruppanippuṇam*. Another endowment made for the upkeep of the channel dug so as to raise flower-gardens is found mentioned in a record of Sundara-Pāṇḍya. One can find the remission of taxes on the lands granted as *tiruōḍai-tirunandavaṇappuṇam* to the temple by Kulaśēkharaperumāl-dāśar, in the name of Nīlagaṅgaraiyar. This remission was to take effect from the 8+1+1st year probably of the reign period of Māḷavarmaṇ [Sundara Pāṇḍya] (?). Another record dated in the fifth year of Sundara- Pāṇḍya, with the *praśasti* *Tirumaḍandaiyum*, etc., that a *mantri* (minister) Perumaṇalūr had endowed land at Mēliraṇiyamuṭṭam for the upkeep of the channel dug by him (*tiruvōḍaippuṇam*). In order to meet the maintenance of the *ōḍai*, the king had issued an order remitting the taxes on lands at the request of Maḷavarāyar.

It is evident from the inscriptions of Jaṭavarmaṇ Kulaśekhara with accession dates 1162, 1190 and 1237 A.D., kings have taken care to see that the

flower-gardens are set up and maintained by appointing persons for the rearing of the gardens and endowed lands as *tirunandavanappuram* for growing red lilies to be supplied to the temple of Aḷagar. One of the queens of Jaṭāvarmaṇ Kulaśēkhara (acc. 1162 A.D.) named Dharaṇimuḷududaiyār raised a flower garden near the spring on the top of the hill. At the request of the queen, the king gifted tax-free lands in Śōḷakulāntāka- chaturvēdimaṅgalam in Pāgaṇūr-kūrṇam for the upkeep of the flower garden founded by her. Another tax-free gift of land in the same village was made by the same king, perhaps in his 8th and 9th years, to provide for the expenses of the daily sacred bath of the deity and for the morning offerings on the day of Uttiram. This perhaps includes the flower offerings offered on this occasion. Two of the records of Jaṭāvarmaṇ Kulaśēkhara, with the *praśasti Pūviṇ-kilatti* etc., refer to the royal order issued at the request of Kāliṅgarāyaṇ, while he was seated on the throne 'Kāliṅgarājaṇ' remitting the taxes on lands for a flower-garden and for growing red lilies for the temple with effect from 9+1+1st year and subsequently from the 13+1+1st year. The king had to purchase lands for the purpose of digging a channel for the growing of flowers. The king's order was executed by Kalavali-Nāḍālvāṇ exempting from taxes, the lands given, for growing red lilies. The order has taken effect from his 13th year (1203 A.D.). The communication of this order and the *uḷvari* signed by the revenue officials were issued to the trustee and the Śrīvaishṇavas of the temple of Paramasvāmi at Tirumāliruṇjōlai. After four years, the same king issued an order by providing additional lands for the upkeep of the channel meant for growing flowers when the gift made in the 13th year was found insufficient.

In the early years of Jaṭāvarmaṇ Kulaśēkhara, with accession date 1237 A.D. the king took special interest to see that the persons rearing the gardens are looked after for their living. A second year record (1238 A.D.) states that Rāmaṇ Kaṇṇapirāṇ not only gifted a flower garden for the supply of garlands to the temple of Aḷagar but also made a gift of money to the temple for the supply of offered food to the person who look after the garden. In another record the donor Śāttāṇ Ālavandāṇ endowed flower-garden and made provision for the daily supply of offered food to the persons who maintain the garden. Such instances are not wanting from the records of this temple.

Inscriptions attributable to the Pāṇḍya and Vijayanagar periods, though not exactly called the foundation inscriptions, yet record the generous attitude of the rulers in the matter of raising new structures and as well in carrying out

liberal repairs to the existing structures. Several additions have been made to this temple during the reign periods of Pāṇḍya and Vijayanagar rulers.

In the absence of a dated record on the walls of the central shrine of the Aḷagar temple, it is necessary to examine the circumstantial evidence that helps us to date in one way or the other. In this connection, let us see the content of a record engraved on the base of a *maṇḍapa*. It states that the *maṇḍapa* was built by *Tribh.* Sundara-pāṇḍya and it was called *Kōyil-Poṇṇmayndaperumāl-maṇḍapa*. This epigraph with the *meykīrtti samasta-jagad-ādhāra*, etc., belongs to Jaṭavarman Sundara-Pāṇḍya I, who had earned the epithet *Kōyil-Poṇṇmeynda-prumāl*, for having covered with gold the *vimāna* of the Raṅganātha temple at Śrīraṅgam.

One of the records recognises the contribution of an individual for the growth of different structures and the perquisites (*kalavarisai*) received by him from the king. An order was issued from *Aḷagiyamaṇavālaṅ-tirumaṇḍapam* making a gift of house, etc. to a certain *Tiruvālaṅ*. He has been instrumental in the building up of certain *maṇḍapas* and *gōpura* in the temple. The *maṇḍapa* in front of the central shrine called the *Muṇaiyadaraiyaṅ-tirumaṇḍapa* was built by *Ponparriyudaiyāṅ* *Muṇaiyadaraiyaṅ* *Viradamuḍitta-perumāl* alias *Muṇaiyadaraiyaṅ* of *Pullūrkudi* in *Naḍuvir-kūru* in *Miḷalai-kūrram*. It is in the *Muṇaiyadaraiyaṅ-maṇḍapa* that provision has been made for burning lamps. This is referred to in a record of the 10th year belonging to *Tribh°* *Kōṇērīṇmaikoṇḍāṅ*. He is the builder of the above *maṇḍapa* who is stated to have constructed the *Alaṅkāra-maṇḍapa* which is identified with the *maṇḍapa* in front of the central shrine.

A pillar record from the *Āriyaṅ-maṇḍapa* in the *prākāra* of Sundararāja temple states that *Paḍiyētta-maṇḍapa* was built for god Aḷagar by Rāghavarāja, son of Tōmarasayyaṅ. The date of this record is not available.

It is mentioned in a record on the south wall of *Sundarapāṇḍyaṅ-maṇḍapa*, that under the orders of *Tirumāliruṅjōlainiṇṇrāṅ* *Māvalivāṇādarāyaṅ* *Uṇṅavillidāsaṅ*, one *Tiruvālaṅ* *Sōmayāji* carried out renovations to this temple from the *upāna* to *stūpi* (*upānādi-stūpi-paryantam*). This work was carried out in Śaka 1386, Tāraṇa (1464 A.D.). Jaṭavarman Sundara-pāṇḍya in his 8th year is said to have constructed a *tirumadil* called *Kōḍaṇḍarāmaṅ-tirumadil*, named after the king who ascended the throne in 1304 A.D. Further the credit of erecting *gōpuras* goes to the Vijayanagara rulers, whose contribution is no less recorded in the inscriptions of 15th century. In an inscription dated Śaka 1468 (1546 A.D.) *mahāmaṇḍalēśvara*

Rāmarāja Tirumalaidēva-mahārāja is stated to have erected the *gōpura*, on which this record is engraved. Another *gōpura* that was added to this temple during the cyclic year Sarvadhāri was the contribution of Tiruvāḷaṇ. Yet another *gōpura* called *Toṇḍaimāṇ-gōpura* was the gift of one Toṇḍaimāṇār, son of Kāliṅgarāyar of Śeḷuvattūr. This must have been erected prior to the date of the Nāyaka-maṇḍapa known as *Kalyāṇa-maṇḍapa* of middle 16th century A.D.

The *Padinettupaḍi-gōpura* can be dated back to the time of Vijayanagara ruler Kṛishṇadēva-mahārāja, whose record dated Śaka 1435 (1513 A.D.) referring to the conduct of car procession is found engraved on the wall of this structure.

In order to regulate and maintain the various endowments made by several kings, the tradition of the services of Sāmāṇiyar and Śōḷiyar enjoyed during the time of Māvalivāṇādirāyar was continued during the Vijayanagar period. A record of Rāmarāja Tirumalaidēva-mahārāja dated in the cyclic year Parābhava refers to an agreement made by the temple authorities in the presence of the king. The authorities of Aḷagar Tiruvaḍi agreed to confirm to the duties and privileges enjoyed in the temple. A number of administrators who were closely associated with the performance of duties and the *kāṇiyāṭchi* rights enjoyed by the groups like Kōyil-kaṇakku, Sāmānya-bhaṭṭār, Śōḷiyar, Kaikkōḷar, Thōḷappār, Nambimār, etc., are detailed in this inscription. To avoid disputes in services and the shortcomings in the duties on matters of importance, their exact rights and duties outlined in the record was an essential desideratum.

Thus the inscriptions of Aḷagar temple stand testimony to the religious activities and the social upliftment that witnessed during the Pāṇḍya, Vijayanagar and Nāyaka periods. The festivals conducted in this temple witnessed the association and commingling of different social groups. The interest evinced by a *sahavāsi* brahman of Kāśmīradēśa named Rāmaya-daṇḍanātha in assigning the income from the lands to meet the expenses of temple servants is an instance to focus the national integration.

LAND TAX AND TRANSFER DURING THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD

S. Kayarkanni and S. Saroja

Tamilnadu witnessed brisk activities in the field of economic sphere during the medieval period. The state received its income through land tax, collected in the form of kind and coin. The king had the powers to impose taxes on land. The dues on land fall into two categories viz., direct and indirect. King use to donate lands to the donees many a times with full rights and privileges. The donees enjoyed the grant lands. Such enjoyments include the *kuḍimai* (tenancy obligations), enforced like the land revenue (*kaḍamai*). The land holders were divested of their rights of tenancy when lands were donated to *brāhmaṇas* and temples. This gives us a clue that the tenants had a *priori* right over the lands that they tilled, subject to their payment of *kaḍamai* and *kuḍimai*. This was tenable at the door of the tenant and to the income by dues (*varippāḍu*).

Inscriptions from Tañjāvūr and Tiruchchirāppalli gives enough information on the taxation on land, especially the fertile ones. They throw light on the economic condition of the people in the Chōḷa country during the 11th century A.D. The land assessed was about a hundred *kalams* of paddy per *vēli*, measured through *Āḍavallāṇ-marakkāl* introduced by Rājarāja I. This was the prevailing standard of measurement, which can be compared with the present rate of assessment. The other measures that prevailed during his period are known as *Arumoliḍēvaṇ* and *Rājakēsari*.

In the eleventh century the land assessment (*kāṇikkaḍaṇ*) was one hundred *kalams* per *vēli* (about six and two thirds acres) which is equal to about eighty *kalams* of the present time, each *kalam* being roughly 3 mounds. It was the practice to measure the lands entered in terms of *kuḷi* or in *vēli* in the Chōḷa land proper, while it varied outside this country. Prof. S. Krishnaswamy Aiyangar differed from others and said that the *kāṇikkaḍaṇ* is the demand from the government which came upto 100 *kalams* of paddy per *vēli*. It is not the gross outturn or the government's share. In 1086 A.D. Kulōttuṅga I conducted a fresh survey of the lands. It is he who abolished the tolls (*suṇgam-tavirtta-chōḷa*). In the case of less fertile lands less amount was paid. It varied from 50 to 80 *kalams* per *vēli*. Paddy was sold at the rate of two *kalams* for each *kāśu*, while three ewes could be purchased for the *kāśu* and dhal exchanged with paddy in the ratio of 1 to 3. The rate of interest was apparently 12 1/2 percent. The taxation per *vēli* could

be assessed in terms of money payments ranging from 4 to 9 *kaḷaṇṇju* of gold, one *kaḷaṇṇju* being equal to 20 *maṇṇjādi*. It was actually $1/8$ *kāśu* per annum for each *kāśu* or 3 *kurūṇi* of paddy per *kāśu* per year.

The village assembly initially collected a nominal revenue and gradually increased in two years time. In contrast to the period of Kullōttuṅga I, in the reign of Vikramachōḷa remissions were not sanctioned in case of flood while the village holdings had to be brought to public auction by the assembly. This would not seem to be enough to warrant the inference that 'remissions were unknown' during those days.

A record of the 3rd year (1073 A.D.) of Kulōttuṅga I mentions the proportion of the assessment to the produce. The record states that for dry lands in which dry crops are cultivated, there shall be paid a *mēlvāram* (renter's share of the produce) of one-fifth, while for lands well irrigated, the *mēlvāram* is fixed as one-third. As against this, in the 33rd year of Rājādhirāja I, the *mēlvāram* in the case of wet lands was two-fifths of the produce and for dry lands it was one-fourth. In yet another it is mentioned that for wet lands the ratio between *mēlvāram* and *kīlvāram* (the cultivator's share) is one to one and a half while for dry lands it was one to three. K.V. Subrahmanya Iyer says, that "these proportions indicating the theoretical division of the produce between the renter and the lessee expresses simply, what existed between the king and the tenant".

According to him, the state received a payment which might be considered as analogous to, if not actually identical with, the rent paid by the cultivators. The terms *mēlvāram* and *kīlvāram* explain the nature of the demand of the State. It was not a pressing burden to the cultivators in anyway indicating thereby that the scale has been reasonably fixed and not arbitrarily fixed.

The revenue dues seem to have been paid in kind, so as to store the same in the granaries provided for. The dues have been collected only on the cultivated lands (*viḷaindanilattukku*) as evidenced from a record which says that the *kaḍamai* was paid by the cultivators for the lands on which crops were raised. The collection realized by the state varied from land to land (i.e. categories of lands such as dry, wet, forest, and so on) and that too with reference to the irrigation facilities that were made available. The dues were more from the lands which yielded more grains at a lesser cost.

One can find the reduction of rents during the Chōḷa period as evident from

the 14th year inscriptions of Rājakēsarivarman Rājādhirāja II. They record a reduction in the rate of rents to be paid on *variśaiparru* and *vārapparru* lands held unclear the lease from the temple, through the men of the assembly of the village *Pañchavanmādēvi* (same as Āchchāpuram) by the cultivators in the hamlets of Pirpaṭṭanallūr, Alāganallūr, etc. They record the quantity of diminished rents to be paid, the reduction being ten *kalam*s in the case of higher grades of land and the amounts ranging from 5 to 2 *kalam*s in the case of lower grades. Also 15% of deduction was made in the case of dry lands and reduction further in respect of lands held in other tenures.

The changes effected in the quantity of rents to be paid are as follows :

Upto the year of the record	From the year of the record	Reduction
80	70	10 <i>kalam</i> s
75	65	
70	60	
60-45	55-35	5 <i>kalam</i> s
40-30	35-25	5 <i>kalam</i> s
25	21 $\frac{1}{2}$	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ <i>kalam</i> s
20	18	2 <i>kalam</i> s

The cultivators who come under *Kuḍipparru* shall be entitled to a third of the produce, those classed as *vellāṇ-parrru*, *dēvadāṇa* and *purapparru* shall take 2/5th of the yield.

These farmers do not come under *variśaiparru* and *vārapparru*. For lands cultivated with water baled from an irrigational source, the cultivator shall take half of the produce (*śevvāram*) and pay the remaining half to the owner. There is no change in the payment with respect to the lands cultivated with *payaru*. The cultivator shall have a right for *śevvāram*, if the lands are left uncultivated or if sown with pulse and sesamum. The charges for taking out the paddy for being measured during *kār*, shall be the burden of the cultivators.

The amount needed for the *Kuṇḍigai* during *Kār* and *Paśāṇ* shall be met from the sale of paddy. The farmers had to pay half the *śennel* produce to the *peruṅguḍi*, the wages, etc., to be borne by themselves.

With regard to the reduction of *kaḍamai*, only 17 *kāśu* was collected instead of 20 *kāśu*. Those who were paying from 18 to 10 *kāśu* got a reduction of 2 *kāśu* and a similar reduction of 2 *kāśu* in respect of lands for which a *kaḍamai* of 10 to 5 *kāśu* was given.

A record dated in the 35th year of Kōnēriṇmaikoṇḍāṇ, probably identical with Kulōttuṅga, mentions a number of fiscal terms in connection with the grant of wet, dry, the site of the village, places for sacrifice, posture for the cows (*gō-prachāra-bhūmi*), the land including the ones of the houses of the cultivators, the ponds, channels, hills, jungles and mounds, containing $94\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{40}$ th *vēli* in 50 blocks. Leaving the $16\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{4}{20}$, $\frac{1}{80}$ and $\frac{1}{160}$ th *vēli* in 9 blocks, the rest of $77\frac{6}{20}$ and $\frac{1}{160}$ th *vēli* of lands in 41 blocks figure under the taxable variety.

This grant includes all kinds of *āyam*, all vargas of taxes (*kaḍamai*) and rights (*kuḍimai*), etc. The tax in terms of money (*kāśu-kaḍamai*), *oḍukkum-paḍi*, *urāi-nāṛi*, *pāḍi-kāval* (the share of the watchman), the share of the Karṇam, in the form of paddy, the unripe fruit in Kārttigai, the tax on looms (*taṛi-irai*), the tax on oil-mills (*chekkirai*), the tax on trade (*śeṭṭirai*), tax on goldsmiths (*tattār-pāṭṭam*), dues on animals and tanks (*māvaḍai*, *kuḷavaḍai*) tax on water courses (*oḷukku-nīr-pāṭṭam*), tolls (*vaḷi-āyam*), *iṇavari*, tax on weights (*iḍai-vari*), fine for rotten goods (*aḷugal-sarakku*), tax on markets (*aṅgāḍi-pāṭṭam*), salt-tax (*uppāyam*)....., *pañjupili*, *sandhivigrahappēru*, *Ilāñchinaippēru*, *Vāśalvinīyōgam*, *paḍai-ilārmuṛaimai*, *kūrrilakkai*, *kaḍaikkūṭṭilakkai*, *daṇḍa-ilakkai*, *viḍaippēr*, *mandappaḍi*, *araikkālvāsi*, *ūśivāsi*, *vilaittuṇḍam*, *nīrāni*, *kāvērikkulai*, *tēvaikuḍimai*, *nāṭṭuppādi*, *āṇaikkūṭṭam* (tax on elephant stalls), tax on horse stables (*kudiraippandi*), etc. These benefits of income was endowed to the temple of Sāmantanārāyaṇa-viṇṇagar-emberumāṇ as per the orders (*ōlai*) of the king.

Inscriptions of the medieval Chōḷa period speak of a large number of rights conferred on donees of land grants who normally obtained the right of rent from the tenants and other means of resources in the form of tenancy obligations due from the tenants. The rights given above include the administration of the *nāḍu* and the village (*ūr*)-*nāḍāṭchi*, *ūrāṭchi*, tax on washerman (*vaṇṇārappārai*), tax on potters (*kuśakkāṇam*), marriage fee (*kaṇṇāḷakkāṇam*), tax on shepherds (*iḍaippāṭṭam*), tax on security of the *nāḍu* (*nāḍu-kāval*), tax on ferry goers, tax on toddy-drawers, *sabhāvinīyōgam* (distribution of the share among the assemblies), tax on the professions of *brāhmaṇas*, fee on ghee-seller, fee on the cattle sheds, settlement dues, tax on retainers of servants, tax on arecanuts, etc.

Rājarāja I conducted a revenue survey in the 24th year (1009 A.D.) at Tañjavūr. A regular survey was conducted prior to the sixth year of the reign when the grant was issued. In the course of the survey operations, the total area and the extent of lands paying revenue dues or rent, the yield from the cultivable lands (paddy), grains due, the amount of money to be paid to the State, were

all collected and entered into the registers. His son and successor Rājendra I is said to have confirmed the excess and deficiency in the measurements taken prior to his period. Later Kulōttuṅga I conducted a re-survey on account of the appreciable differences found in the reign of Rājendra I. This survey can be dated back to his 16th year (i.e., 1086 A.D.). In the 38th year of the reign of Kulōttuṅga III (1216 A.D.), a re-survey was made as per the records found in the reigns of his successors Rājarāja III (acc. 1216 A.D.) and Rājendra III. (acc. 1244 A.D.)

Whatever may be the assessment system that was followed, certain lands have been earmarked as communal lands and declared as free from assessment of tax is concerned. Among the portions of such lands mention may be made of those occupied by the *rathakāras*, the pariahs, the burial place, the irrigation channels, the temple lands, the ponds in the midst of fields, flower gardens (*nandavaṇam*), cattle sheds and stables, threshing floor, the streams, the highways, the rivers, grazing ground for calves, wells, cisterns, quarters for toddy drawers, washerman cairns and cist-vaens, trees marking boundaries, lands affected by floods, marshy lands with fish culture, forest tracts, etc. Registers have been maintained showing the extent of cultivated lands, lands of cultivable waste, uncultivated land set apart for specific common purposes, sterile or fallow lands, etc. The fixation of land revenue was mainly on the basis of the quantity of yield, cost of cultivation, facilities for irrigation, and similar factors.

Whenever a village was made tax-free by the ruler, the taxes were assigned to the donee; when the donor was a private individual, he had to free the land from obligations of paying taxes to the king, and this he did so either by paying a lump sum as compensation for abatement of land revenue or by binding himself to pay the taxes instead of the donee. To substantiate this argument, a record dated in 1193 A.D. registering the grant of a village as *dēvadāṇa* with the stipulation of the grantor to pay the taxes to the State. In another record it is said that the *dēvadāṇa* gift of land should be enjoyed by the donee tax-free, and that the donor should pay all kinds of taxes due. Sometimes the village *sabhai* collected from the individuals and making it a *dēvadāṇa* along with other gifts. However, a fixed amount of money, which they let out at interest and paid annually the income accrued as dues to the king. They also enjoyed the right of collecting the land tax from the cultivable and the supplementary dues.

A number of liabilities have been imposed upon the donees in case of charitable grants. In this case one can find the conditions imposed preserving the rights and privileges of the former cultivators and others. This has come in the way of

the donees from dispossessing all the old tenants, who had the right to receive the usual payments due from them.

There is an interesting record from Korukkai in Mayavaram Taluk of Thanjavur District dated in the reign of Chōla Rājādhirāja II. It reveals that the change of ownership intended as a hypothetical case in the inscription seems to refer to the right of cultivation of the land which had been once for all made tax-free and made over to the Śiva temple here. Dated in his 6th year (1168 A.D.), it registers that the assembly of Kuṟukkai *alias* Vikramaśōḷa-chaturvēdimāṅgalam made a tax-free gift of land to the temple or Tiruvīraṭṭāṇam-uḍaiyār, one of the *ashta-vīraṭṭāṇams*, which had been sung by the Śaiva saints. In this place, half a *vēli* of taxable land was lying fallow without cultivation and left unclaimed for fifty years. The assembly paid taxes including *kaḍamai* and *kuḍimai* all these years. It was again lying fallow and the taxes such as *kaḍamai* and *kuḍimai* were not paid and have been left in arrears of payment. It was, therefore, decided to grant the same to the temple after exempting it from tax. This decision took effect after raising the crops like paddy, etc., and agreed for supply from out of this income one hundred garlands daily of Śeṅgaḷuṇṇī (red-lotus) flowers perpetually, to this temple for the midnight service. In order to free the land tax-free *ūrkiḷṇaiyili*, the village assembly obtained from the temple treasury a sum of 160 *kāśu*, which amount had been deposited in the treasury by a devotee named Tirujñānasambanda and agreed to pay all *kuḍimai* taxes on this particular land. This includes the payment of taxes such as *antarāya* and *viṇṇiyōga*. Further this assembly had agreed to remit the taxes of *śilvari* and *peruvari*, in case in future any claimants for the land comes up and disagree from the exemption of taxes. In this connection it is interesting to note that the assembly took the burden to make tax-payment, even after the land had changed hands. This was possible since the assembly had received a capital sum of 160 *kāśu*, so as to meet the taxes on the lands, in case had to be paid. This is also to avoid double payment if the transferee had been asked to remit the tax amount. This is a solid case where there is change of claimant of land resulting in the exemption of land tax-free. This is not a comprehensive study to understand the land tax system that prevailed during the medieval period., especially during the Chōla period. Chōla inscriptions throw flood of light on various aspects of land revenue that was in vogue and the types of obligations that were imposed by the rulers.

A STONE INSCRIPTION FROM NĪMACH

Jai Prakash

The stone inscription edited below for the first time with the kind permission of the Director (Epigraphy) is lying loose in the Jayēśvara Mahādēva temple in Neemuch, Neemuch Tahsil and District in Madhya Pradesh. It was copied by me in December 2001 in the course of my annual collection tour.

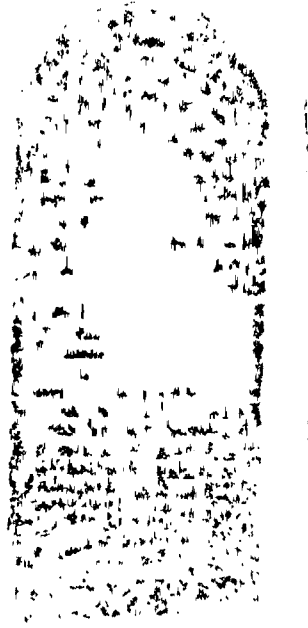
The stone slab measures 1.79 mt. in length, 60 cm. in breadth and 9cm in thickness. The inscription consists of 18 lines of writing. The writing is in a good state of preservation. Regarding orthography the use of the letter *sh* for *kh* as in *Chitāshēdē* (lines 2-3), *tārīsha* (line 17), representation of *b* and *v* by the same sign as in *sava* (line 4), and *viḥū* (line 14) but not invariably, cf. *bīja* (line 13) are noteworthy. Figures of a Sun, a cow and a moon above the inscription and figures of an ass and a pig below the inscription are found engraved. The characters are Nāgarī and the language is Hindi.

The record is dated in the [Vikrama] 1925 of the 11th day of the bright fortnight of Phālguna and in the Christian year 1869 of the February 22. Week-day which is not mentioned in the epigraph, should be Monday.

The object of the inscription is to record the commitment of the offence of robbery by the Mōghis and their acquittal by the officers of the erstwhile Gwalior state with the condition that they will not commit such crime in the District of Neemuch. The inscription also mentions some imprecations and punishment for violator of this agreement.

This is the first epigraphical reference to the commitment of robbery by the Mōghis (people of the Mōghi community) from the Northern India and their acquittal with the condition that they will not commit any such offence and violator will be punished by the Government and socially boycotted.

With regard to geographical names Nīmach is the same as the present-day Nīmach, the District headquarters. Nīmahēdē is evidently the modern Nimahera, lying about 27 km. north-west of Nīmach city on the Chittaurgarh road. Chitākhēdā is evidently the modern Chitakhara, lying about 18 km. south of Nīmach. Udēpur is undoubtedly the present-day Udaipur which is a District headquarters of Rajasthan lying about 100 km. west of Nimahera.



A Stone Inscription from Nīmach

Text¹

1. Śrī-Rāmajī
2. ilākē Nīmāhēḍē kē Mōghījōn nē Chītā-
3. shēḍē mēn dākā dālā una para kasura sāvata
4. huvā kula Mōghīyē ilākē vā sava ilākē Nī-
5. mahēḍē va Udēpura vagairē jamā hōkara māphī
6. kasura kē hākamāna jīlē Nīmacha sē huyē
7. isa sarata para māpha huvā kē kōi hamārī
8. jāta kā kabhī kīsī tarē kī vāradāta jī-
9. lē Nīmacha mēn na karēgā karavē vālē kō gau
10. mārē kī hatā lagē usakī mā pē gadhā chaḍhē
11. pañcha kā takasīravāra rōtī bētī na pāvē sarkā-

12. ra kā gunēgāra gunēgāra kō sarkāra mēn hājara
13. karē vō sajā pāvē bīja Mōghīyōn sē ā-
14. la ōlāda hamarī mēhā vīhū ētalā ka kō mā-
15. natā rahē hama pañcha kōma Mōghīyōn nē pēsī mēn
16. karama dharama sē Chaṁda Suraja Nārāyana kō sā-
17. shī dēkara rōpī tārīsha 22 February
18. sana ī 1869² mītī Phāguna sudī 11³ saṁmata 1925

Translation

(line 1) Śrī Rāmaji

(line 2-18) The Mōghis (people or Mōghi community) or Nīmāhēḍē village committed robbery in Chītākhēḍē village (and) their (Mōghis') offence was proved. The Mōghis belonging to all areas or regions or Nīmāhēḍē, Udēpura (Udaipur), etc. assembled (probably in Nīmach) and entered into an agreement with the officers of Nīmach District (of the erstwhile Gwalior state) and accordingly Mōghis were acquitted with the condition that nobody belonging to the Mōghi community (or no Mōghi) would commit offence or crime of any type in the District of Nīmach. Its transgressor (violator) will incur the sin of killing cow and his mother will be ravaged by an ass. According to the *pañch* (five wise men or elders of the Mōghi community) the offender or criminal will be socially boycotted, presented before the *Sirkāra* (Government of the erstwhile Gwalior state) and punished. Our sons (successors) will obey or honour the agreement. We the *pañch* of the *Mōghi* community installed the stone inscription after hearing of the case and considering Sun and Moon as witness by virtue of *karma* and *dharma* on the 11th day of the bright fortnight of Phālguna of [Vikrama] 1925 (and) 22nd February of the Christian year 1869.

Notes and References :

1. From estampages.
2. The year is engraved below the word *sana*.
3. 11 is engraved below the word *sudī*.

KŌVAṆA NĀṬAKAM

M. Nalini and R. Kalaikkovan

Kalyāṇa Sundarēśvara temple at Thirunallūr near Pāpanāsam in Thanjavur District of Tamilnāḍu is a *māḍakkōyil*. It has an empty *taḷa* on which rests a miśra type *dvitaḷa Drāviḍa vimānā*. The empty *taḷa* is a stone structure and has an inscription of Uttamachōḷa. The *pañjaras* of the *harṁya* of the second *taḷa* though made out of brick suggest Pallava involvement in the earlier construction. Literary evidences stand in favour of the Chōḷa king Kōcheṅgaṇāṇ as the first builder.

An explorative study undertaken by the authors and the research scholars of Dr.M. Rajamanikkar Centre for Historical Research at the temple complex in the recent past has yielded three uncopied inscriptions. The one which is found engraved on a pillar in a *maṇḍapa* in front of the sanctum reveals the name of the builder as Paḷayaṇūr Uḍaiyāṇ and the name of the donor of the particular pillar as Tirupperumaṇam- uḍaiyāṇ. Palaeographically the epigraph may be dated to the 13th century A.D. Another inscription found on a pillar of the porch drawn in front of the southern niche of the empty *taḷa* gives the name of the saint sculpted on the pillar as Śrīmāhēśvara Piriyaṇ of Mātāṇamaṅgalam. On palaeographical grounds the inscription may be dated to the 17th century A.D.

The third inscription is the most interesting one and is found engraved on the eastern wall of the second *prākāra* to the left of the entrance. Due to later renovations and a new construction in the vicinity the epigraph has lost its continuity in the middle of all the lines except the first one. Still whatever is left provides enough and interesting material to the students of art history and throws new light in the understanding of Śaivite traditions.

It speaks about a dance drama entitled, 'Kōvaṇa Nāṭakam' enacted during the reign of Rājādhirājā II (1175 A.D.). The title itself suggests that the dance drama was based on the story of Amarnīdhi.

Amarnīdhi Nāyaṇār, one of the sixty-three nāyaṇmārs of the Śaivite tradition born at Paḷaiyāru near Kumbakōṇam spent his time in the worship of Śiva and in the services of his devotees. He established a *maṭha* at Thirunallūr near Pāpanāsam and helped the poor and the devotees by providing them food and

suitable apparels free of cost. Knowing his devotion and sincerity, Śiva came to Thirunallūr to project his selflessness to the world by playing a drama. Disguising himself as a devotee, Śiva went to the *maṭha* where Amarnīdhi welcomed him and requested him to have food. Śiva agreed and gave one of his two loin-clothes which he kept in hand and asked him to keep that safely and the same he will collect after a bath at the nearby pond. Amarnīdhi received the loin-cloth and kept it in a safe place. Śiva went to the pond, had a sacred bath and changed his wet loin-cloth with a new one that he had in his hand.

He came to Amarnīdhi and asked for the loin-cloth that he had given to him. Since the loin-cloth was made to disappear by Śiva, Amarnīdhi was unable to find it. He pleaded with Śiva and requested him to accept a new loin-cloth instead of the one given to him. Śiva disagreed and insisted for the old one. People gathered around and watched this with interest. At last Śiva agreed to accept a loin-cloth that will be equal to the weight of the one which he had in his hand.

A weighing scale was brought and Śiva dropped his loin-cloth on one of its plates. Amarnīdhi had put one or two new loin-cloths on the other plate. No change was observed in the scale. The plate that carried Śiva's loin-cloth was at a lower level. Amarnīdhi put some more clothes. The level of the plate did not change. He brought all the cloths in the *maṭha* and kept them on the plate. No change occurred. A perplexed Amarnīdhi put all the vessels, jewels and other utensils of the *maṭha* on the plate. Nothing happened. He looked at Śiva. Something told him that the man who has come is not an ordinary human being. He brought his wife and son. Along with them he stepped on the plate. A tilt occurred and the plate became equal. Śiva came out of his disguise and blessed Amarnīdhi and his family with heaven.

A detailed narration of this incident is available in Sēkkiḷar's *Periyapurāṇam*. Sculptures depicting this story are seen both at his native place (Palaiyāru- Ārai Vaḍathali) and at Thirunallūr, a place where he attained *mukti*.

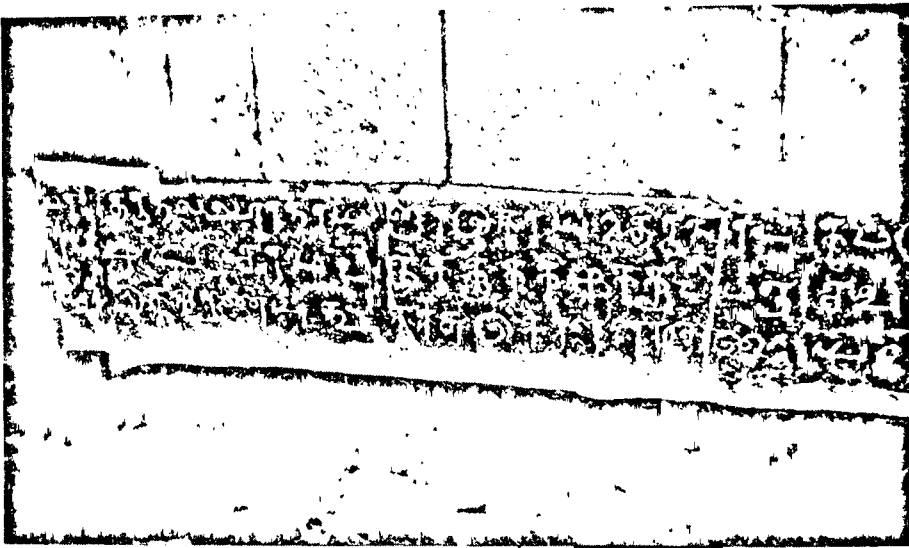
Inscription :

According to the inscription Thirunallūr *alias* Pañchavanmahādēvi-chaturvēdi-maṅgalam was included under Nallūr-nāḍu, a sub-division of Nittavinōda-vaḷanāḍu during the reign of Rājādhirājā II. *Peruṅkuṟi-mahāsabhā*, the administrative unit of the village had gifted a portion of land (two *mā* and *mukkāṇi*) free of tax to a certain Matalai *alias* Nerrikkāṇ Naṅgai to enact a dance drama entitled

Kōvaṇa Nāṭaka puṇam'. The gifted land is mentioned in the inscription as *Kōvaṇa-Nāṭaka-puṇam*. Irumuḍichōḷa-vadi and Pañchavaṇṇmādēvi channel are mentioned as the eastern and southern boundaries of the gifted land.

It is understood from the inscription that the dancing girl Matalai *alias* Nerrikkāṇ Naṅgai had learnt the dance drama Kōvaṇa Nāṭakam from a certain Vaḍugaṇ *alias* Uḍaya Pillai. It was agreed that the dance drama was to be enacted during the festive occasions at the temple by the dancer and her off springs. In case, if any one of them was not able to enact the drama at any time, they were to find suitable substitutes to enact the same. The land gifted to the *dēvaraḍiyāl* for this purpose is mentioned in the inscription as Kūttāṭṭuk-kāṇi and *kāsu kollā iraiyili*. Usually lands are made tax free by accepting a substantial amount as a token. Perhaps in this case no such token was taken by the *sabhā* from the dancer and hence named as, '*kāsu kollā iraiyili*'.

The discovery of this inscription clearly reveals that the history of all the sixty-three nāyaṇmārs of the Śaivite tradition were known to the people of Tamilnāḍu and some of them were staged as dance dramas in their own places to seed the message in the right soil. The name of the dancing girl, 'Nerrikkāṇ Naṅgai' is very impressive since the prefix *Nerrikkāṇ* denotes the third eye of Lord Śiva.



Kōvaṇa Nāṭakam Inscription

Text

1. Svastis̄rī Tribhuvanachakravartigaḷ Śrī Rājādhirājadēvaṛku yāṇḍu 12 āvadu Nittavinōda-vaḷanāṭṭu-Nallūr-nāṭṭut-Tirunallūr āṇa śrī-Pañchavaṇ-mahādēvich-chaturvēdimāṅgalattup-peruṅkuṛi mahāsabhaiyōm uḍaiyār Tirunallūr-nāyaṇār kōyiṛ tirunāṭakam ivvūrt Tirupputtūr Malantal bhaṭṭārakar Vaḍukan āṇa
2. Uḍaiya-pillaiyiḍam kōvaṇa nāṭakam kaṛṛ-āḍiṇa ikkōyiṛ dēvaraḍiyāl - - - * lamar Matalaiy-āṇa Neṛṛikkaṇ Naṅgaikkuk-kōvaṇa nāṭakappuṛam-āga viṭṭa nilam āvadu ivvūr Irumuḍichōḷa-vadikkuk-kiḷakkup-Pañchavaṇ-mahādēvi vāykkālukkut-terḷku mudar - kaṇṇāṛru
3. iraṇḍāṇ chadirattu Gautamaṇ Iruṇikki Tiruvaiyār-uḍaiyāṇ pakkal nāṅgaḷ - - - viṭṭa pottagappaḍi nilam ināl virivu nilam. . innilam iraṇḍu mā mukkāṇiyum kūttāḍa ikkāṇiyuṇ kāśu kollā iṛaiyiliyum-āga anubavittu ittēvar tiruviḷāvilēy
4. ikkūttāḍak kaḍavar-āgavun taṇakkup piṇṇum taṇ vaṁsattāl pillai nalla - - āḍak kaḍavār-āgavum taṅgaḷāl āḍa iyalāviḍiṛ prati kuḍuttāḍuvikkak-kaḍavad-āgavuṇ-cholli innilam ittirunāṭakattukkē kūttāṭṭuk- kāṇiyuṇ kāśu-kollā-iṛaiyiliyum-āgach- chandirātittavar chelvadāga iṛaiyili cheydu kuḍuttōm
5. ipperuṅkuṛi mahāsabhaiyōm ivviṛaiyili adhichaṇḍēsvara rakshai paṇmāhēśvara rakshai ippaḍikk-ivai ipperuṅkuri mahāsabhaiyōm - - - ** āvaṇam-āgak- koṇḍ-arulit-tēvar toḷak kaṛutta kaṇḍattān tūmaṛaiyōn āgiya Mukkaṇṇaṇ tōṇṇiṇāṇ vandu¹

1 Built in and portions lost.

IN THE NAME OF A GHOST !

M.Nalini and R. Kalaikkovan

Thirukkōlakkuḍi is a remote village situated near Pulankurichi in the Sivaganga District of Tamilnadu. The hill at this place has a cave temple in the form of a *maṇḍapa* shrine with a facade in the front, excavated probably during the early part of the eighth century A.D. An explorative study undertaken at this temple by the scholars of Dr. M. Rajamanikkanar Centre for Historical Research yielded several uncopied inscriptions. One among them was found engraved at the bottom portion of the southern rock wall of the facade which is hidden under a stone platform formed by the later renovators.

The inscription written in Tamil in three lines may be dated to the tenth century A.D. on palaeographical grounds. It reads as follows :

Svasti śrī Tirukkōlakkuḍi
muṇbil ūruṇi mūvēntaṇ e-
ṇnum piśāchin pēr

It is understood from the inscription that the tank that surrounds the hill on its south was named after a ghost called as Mūvēndan by the local folks. Naming places after the members of the royal family or the sacred and pious people is commonly noted in the inscriptions. But naming a tank that served as the only source of drinking water to the entire village after a spirit is special and significant and not recorded so far.

The word, 'Pisāsu' is not mentioned in any of the inscriptions copied from Tamilnadu till date. This made the authors to refer to the literature. *Anaṅgu*, *pēy* and *bhūtam* are the only three super natural beings that are referred to in the early literature. Only one poem from *Kalittokgai*, a fifth century collection, mentions the name Pisāsu.

Though lexicons published by the University of Madras and the Tamil Sangam of Madurai mention both *pasāsu* and *pisāsu* as synonyms of *pēy*, none of the Bakthi literature mention either *pasāsu* or *pisāsu*. Instead, *pēy* is mentioned very frequently as one of the participants of the group dance performed by lord Śiva at the graveyard. The lexicon published by the University of Madras places *pisāsu* in an esteemed position and mentions that *pisāsu* is included in the group of eighteen Gaṇas.

This may be the reason of annexing the word, *pasāsu* with Mūvēndaṇ, who probably was a philanthropic individual served the village during his life time. It is strange to note that a water source of a village was named after a disembodied soul, which was fondly remembered by the people of Tirukkōḷakkuḍi even after the demise of the individual. The discovery of this inscription throws light on the beliefs and customs that prevailed in this part of Tamilnadu during the tenth century A.D.

BUDDHISM THROUGH INSCRIPTIONS : SOME OBSERVATIONS

Swapna H. Samel

Inscriptions offer us some idea of the growth and existence of villages, towns and cities in various areas of Maharashtra. The rise and spread of Buddhism is one of the most significant events in the long cultural history of India and Asia. In the present paper efforts have been made to focus on Buddhist inscriptions from south Raigad districts of Maharashtra. Before 250. B.C., Buddhist communities in the region of Maharashtra must have been very small. With the reign of Aśoka and his patronage and the missionary efforts made by Thēravēda Saṅgha after the Pāṭaliputra council, Buddhism must have been spread rather extensively.¹ By 200 B.C. the Buddhist communities began to use excavated dwelling in Bhore Ghat, the Nasik region and Ajanta.² These excavated dwelling, shrines, caves give us more or less connected history of Buddhism in Maharashtra until about the 11th Century A.D.

From about 1st century B.C. we began to get archaeological evidence in the form of excavated Buddhist Chaityas and Vihāras. This activity must be related to the growing needs of the Buddhist communities on the one hand and the availability of patronage, royal and otherwise on the other.³ The distribution and location of the Buddhist excavated dwelling and shrines gives us some idea of spread of Buddhist communities in Maharashtra. For the sake of the convenience Balkrishna Gokhale has grouped these monuments in their geographical distribution in six groups : 1] Pitalkhora, Ajanta ; 2] Junnar, Nasik 3] Bhāja, Kārlā, Beḍsa, Kondana, Shelarwadi ; 4] Kanhēri, Nagethana, Kondivale ; 5] Kuḍa, Mahad, Kol, Dabol, Nadsur, Chiplun ; 6] Shirwal, Wai, Karahd.⁴

South of Sopāra in the Koṅkaṇ there were several Buddhist settlements both along the coast and interior. These were Chaul, Dabhol along the coast and Mahad, Chiplun, Kol, Nadsur in the interior. There are some 150 excavations. Of this complex the most important is Kuḍa group which includes Mahad and Kol.

Kuḍa lies on the shore of the creek of Rojapuri, 45 miles to the south of Mumbai. The caves of Kuḍa have most picturesque location. On the low hill near the village, the caves are excavated on the eastern shore of the northern arm of the creek. They are 26 in number, of which five are *Chaityya-gṛihas* and 21 *Vihāras*

which belongs to Hināyāna faith. Few caves are firstly brought to notice in 1848. Fergusson and Burgess dated them to circa 1st Cen. B.C. on the basis of their stylistic peculiarities.⁵

Kuḍa must have been a place of some importance in early historical period, probably due to its location on the creek. The excavation at Kuḍa belongs to the earliest group of rock-cut Chaityas of Hināyānists. The Mahāyāna's occupation of the site is evident from the image of Buddha carved in the Chaitya VI, sometime in the 6th century A.D.⁶ Various scholars have assigned different dates to them, ranging from 2nd Century B.C to 4th century A.D. Almost all the caves at Kuḍa contain inscriptions. There are altogether 31 inscriptions found at Kuḍa caves. Though they are not dated, they supply useful information, which enable us to date approximately some of the important caves.

Chaitya cave IX which was excavated by a Brahmin lady Bhayila,⁷ who not only records her caste as Brahmin but also adds that she was the wife of Brahmin Upāpsak Ayitulu. In such instances Buddhism could have meant only a sect to which one could subscribe intellectually or emotionally without the slightest reference to its sociological attitude.⁸ Mahad in Raigad district, is a small town on the west coast highway connecting Mumbai and Goa. Group of Buddhist caves were excavated on small hillock called Sonagad in a small village called Gandharapada, three Km., away from the town. The caves are 28 in number. It has the usual complex of Chaityagrihas and Vihāras. The largest among them is cave No. VII "combining the characteristics of the flat roofed *Chaityas* and *Vihārs* as at Kuḍa."

Except cave No.1, all belongs to the Hināyāna faith. They are dated in the early centuries of the Christian era. The Buddha figure in cave No. XXI indicates reoccupation by Mahāyānist. They continued to be occupied later in 5th and 6th centuries. There are only two Chaityas at cave No. I and VII in the complex. Chitya VII is in the center of the group. There are three inscriptions engraved in these complex of caves. Among these two are properly deciphered. The inscriptions refer to gift by Prince Kanabhōja, Viṣṇupalita and Vadarsi and an endowment of a Chaitya cell and nearby farms.¹⁰

So far as the date of these caves is concerned the only evidence is furnished by the inscription. Vidya Deheja has dated the caves to about 100 A.D.¹¹ Nagaraju places it in the late third century on the grounds of palaeography and the stylistic evidences.¹² Since cave marks a further stage of development over Kuḍa cave No. I and IV, B.G. Gokhale had placed in it in the middle of third century.¹³

Kol is a tiny village on south-east of Mahad. Mahad lies in the south of Raigad district. Kol is famous for its small group of Buddhist caves excavated on small hillock. Kol has two small groups of caves and to the north-east of Mahad there are few small cell and cisterns. There are altogether seven caves. It has the usual complex of *Chityagrihas* and *Vihāras*. There are three inscriptions respectively in the cave No. III, IV and V. So far as the date of these caves is concerned the only evidence is furnished by the inscriptions. Nagaraju has dated the caves to early part of the 2nd century A.D.¹⁴ The language and script used in the inscriptions are Prākṛit and Brāhmī. Inscription in cave No. III records the name of the donor Śivadutta, a residence from Adhakas. Inscriptions in cave No. IV records that the name of Dharmashri, wife of Śivadutta had donated the cave. Inscription in cave No. V. records the name of Saṅgharakshit, son of Gahapati who has donated the cave.

The general picture of the early Buddhist communities in South Raigad is one of the growing movements with widespread base among lay communities. A geographical location of caves shows that these communities had spread into particularly all parts of Maharashtra. Information here is limited in scope as it is based largely on cave dwellings and the inscriptions in them. Inscriptional references give us some idea of the ranges of the cultivation of agricultural, horticultural and flower garden and their economic importance.

Buddhist monks were supported by the lay society engaged in the production, transport and exchange of commodities. Farmers termed as *halika*, *halakiya*, *kutumbika*, *dhamnnika* were involved in the agricultural production.¹⁵ They had surplus production and this surplus production they might have donated to Buddhist settlement by various means. They have accumulated enough surplus cash to be able to make these donations.¹⁶

Two kinds of endowments related to land are mentioned in the inscriptions in Maharashtra. One related to the gift of a village as mentioned in the inscriptions at Kārle.¹⁷ The second kind of the land gift pertains to specific lots of farmland as mentioned in the inscriptions at Mahad.¹⁸ In such case general or specific descriptions of the location of the lands and their measurements are mentioned. In all these cases it must be inferred that the land which was gifted remained with the farmers, further they might have become tenants with the monastic fraternity.¹⁹ All these transactons of land were of religious nature.

Thus in the early period Buddhist monastic communities derived enthusiastic material support from farmers, artisans and merchants who not only paid for the endowments in land and cash for the daily needs of the fraternity.²⁰

The general social picture as presented by inscriptions in that in the social life the basic unit was the family and *Gahapati* [householder] with his *Kutumbini* [wife] and children often figure as donors. From Kuṇḍa and Kol inscriptions there is a clear indication that sons and daughters were named after grandparents.²¹ The dominant element in social life was presence of caste consciousness. Among the castes mentioned is that of brahmins and caste-consciousness among them is indicated by a Kuṇḍa inscription recording the names of *Bhayila* and her brāhmaṇa Upāsaka husband *Ayitilu*. Hence, presence of caste distinction among other caste may also be assumed. It means Buddhism in Maharashtra did not in any significant sense, pose challenge to the caste system among its lay followers.²²

Another general social picture as presented by these inscriptions is that of a Buddhist lay society that not only retained caste distinctions but also had residual affiliation with Śaivism. Vēdism and Serpent cult. Ample references have been occurred in Kuṇḍa inscription, names such as - - *Śivabhūti*, *Śivdata*, *Shicama*, *Śivaghosa*, *Śivaprīta* must be Śaivate name. Names indicative of the serpent cult - *Nāganika*, *Sapila*, *Nāga*, *Sapa*, then a few vedic names *Agnimita*, *Somadeva*. So probably for them 'Buddhims' meant periodic visits to the *Chaityas* and worship at the *Stūpas*, support to the monastic community in their needs for residential quarters, clothing and food and occasional contacts with them.²³

In these caves or Chaityas, Buddhist monks and nuns pursued their spiritual tasks of seeking nirvāṇa, studying and preserving these Buddhist scriptures and practicing meditations for their instinctual and spiritual satisfaction as their rewards.²⁴

Thus, the introduction of Buddhism into western India cannot be placed before the reign of the great Aśoka or sometime around 250 B.C.²⁵. Before 250 B.C. the Buddhist communities in these regions must have been very small possibly scattered. With the reign of Aśoka and his patronage Buddhism must have been spread rather extensively in Maharashtra. Buddhism was supported by layman and laywomen, who belonged to all sections of the society of the time. There was general trend towards the blurring of distinctions between Brahmanism and Buddhism in everyday life of the people. Finally the separate and distinct identity of Buddhism as a creed and the way of life was established firmly only in the monastic communities.

Notes and References :

1. G. Yazdani, *Early History of the Deccan*, p. 147
2. B.G. Gokhale, *Buddhism in Maharashtra : A History*, p.38
3. *Op.cit.*, p.62
4. *Ibid.*, p.43
5. Burgess, James and Indrajit, Bhaghwanlal, *Inscriptions from the Cave Temples of Western India*.
6. M.K. Dhavalikar, *Late Hinayana caves of Western India*, p.38
7. *Lüder's List Nos. 1050*
8. B.G. Gokhale, *op.cit.*, p.57
9. *Ibid.*, p.58
10. *Archaeological Survey of Western India, IV, Mahad No.1*, p.88
11. Vidya Deheja, *Early Buddhist Rock Temple, A Chronological Study*, p.250
12. S. Nagaraju, *Buddhist Architecture of Western India*, p.250
13. B.G. Gokhale, *op.cit.*, p.58
14. S. Nagaraju., *op.cit.*, p.58
15. B.G. Gokhale, *op.cit.*, p.123
16. *L.L.* 1051, 1061
17. B.G. Gokhale, *op.cit.*, p.122
18. *L.L.* Nos. 1024, 1027
19. B.G. Gokhale, *op.cit.*, p.124
20. *Ibid.*, p.128
21. *L.L.* Nos. 1024, 1045, 1048, 1127
22. B.G. Gokhale, *op.cit.*, p.129
23. *Ibid.*, p.58
24. *Ibid.*, p.60
25. S. Dutta., *Buddhist Monks and Monasteries of India*, pp.121,138-139.

BUDDHIST COMMUNITY IN KALYĀṆ DURING THE EARLY CENTURIES OF CHRISTIAN ERA

A.K. Ranade

Deccan has played a significant role in the history of our country, especially the western coastline and its ports. The Koṅkaṇ, the coastal port, was one of the most important ports of Deccan in ancient times. Koṅkaṇ was divided into two parts i.e., North and South Koṅkaṇ. North Koṅkaṇ was also called Aparānta and South Koṅkaṇ called Saptakoṅkaṇ. The former comprised of the districts of Thane and Raigad and the later, that of Ratnagiri and Sindhudurga ¹. The Kalyāṇ creek separates the plain into north and the south Koṅkaṇ. In the present paper, an attempt has been made to throw some light on Buddhist community in Kalyāṇ, as seen through the inscriptions.

Buddhism has arrived in Maharashtra (Paithan and Sopāra) by 450 B.C ². Before 250 B.C. the Buddhist communities in the regions of Maharashtra must have been very small, possibly scattered monastic settlement housed in buildings of brick, wattle, and daub, supported by a small lay community. Around 250 B.C., Aśoka organized the third Buddhist council, and the saṃgha missions, specifically of a religious character, must have been despatched to spread or strengthen the Tērāvada Buddhism in these areas.³ It was due to this that Buddhism must have spread rather extensively and by 200 B.C. the Buddhist communities began to use excavated dwellings in the Bhorphāt, the Nāsik region and Ajanta. The rock cut dwellings at these places prove the fact. The Buddhist monuments at Nāsik, Kārle, Kanhēri, Junnār, Kuḍa Mahad Kol, Bhāja Beḍsa, etc. prove the popularity of Buddhist monks in this age.⁴ From the sites of Buddhist monasteries, we come across the fact, that all these sites are on the ancient trade routes and many of them were leading towards the western coast and the port cities. When Buddhism spread in these areas, pious people, not necessarily Buddhists, listened to their Sermons and attended to their physical wants. These lay helpers at first improvised rock cut *lenas* (caves) and *chaityagrihas* (shrines) for residence of the monks, and later built *vihāras* (monasteries with brick and timber).⁵

Modern Kalyāṇ is a town which is the headquarters of the Taluka of the same name in Thane district near Bombay situated in 90° 14'N and 73° 10'E on the

river Uhas, twenty miles as the crow flies from the open sea. By rail route it is 34 miles NE of Bombay and is now an important railway junction.⁶

The town is situated at the foot of the Western Ghats and there are two routes from there, one proceeding towards Nasik and the other to Poona. It lies in a strategic position to dominate the trade routes between the coast and plateau.⁷ Because of its peculiar situation, it commanded the major portion of the Sātavāhana trade with the west.

The distribution and location of the Buddhist excavated dwellings and shrines give us an idea about the spread of Buddhist communities along the ancient trade routes in Mahārāshṭra.⁸ Many of these routes were leading towards the western coast and the port towns. During the early centuries of Christian Era, Kalyāṇ was one of the wealthy market towns and a flourishing port city due to its foreign trade.

From the epigraphic data, we get some information about the Buddhist community in Kalyāṇ. The Buddhist establishments at Kanhēri were generally supported by the residents from Kalyāṇ. It appears from the inscriptions, that most of the donors, who supported the Kanhēri establishments, were engaged in the mercantile professions. Since Kalyāṇ was a market place and prosperous city, the traders from Kalyāṇ made magnificent grants to the Buddhist establishments at Kanhēri. There are at least 10 donors from Kalyāṇ who made donations of caves, water cisterns, bathing tanks, etc.⁹ The two Vaṇijakas Gajasēna and Gajamita started the construction work at Kanhēri.

An inscription of 2nd century A.D. at Kanhēri records the donation of goldsmith Samidata of Kalyāṇ who had made the meritorious gift of a cistern together with the community of ascetics and lay brothers.¹⁰ This inscription gives some hint about the Buddhist community of the laymen and the ascetics in Kalyāṇ. Since, the inscription belongs to the 2nd century A.D., we can conveniently conclude that by 2nd century A.D., Buddhism must have had firmly established in Kalyāṇ area and the monastic order must be engaged in its religious activities in this city. The religious needs of the Buddhist laymen must have been fulfilled by the monastery here for which these laymen must have had made generous endowments to these monasteries.

Another inscription belonging to the 2nd century A.D also records the gift of a cistern by Punavasū, the son of a trader Chita as *nigama* i.e., the trader. However,

whether Punavasū was a Buddhist *upāsaka*, is not clear from the inscription.¹¹

The Buddhist community at Kalyāṇ itself is evident from the existence of a *vihāra* at Kalyāṇ. An inscription¹² at Kanhēri records the donations of an unknown donor, who has made various meritorious gifts which were bestowed at Kanhēri and other places of which one was the Ambalisa *vihāra*, situated at Kalyāṇ where the donation of a *chaitya*, a hall of reception (*Upathanaśāla*) and cells (*Ovaraka*) for the monks were built. Shobhana Gokhale opines that the business people of aristocratic lineage of Kalyāṇ might have established Ambalika *vihāra* as a prominent center of religion as well as trade activities. There was *Upathanaśāla* for religious discourses.

Another inscription¹³ at Kanhēri also records the donation of Dharma, who was a merchant by profession along with son of Sivamitra, an inhabitant of Kalyāṇ along with Budhaka and his whole family. It records the donations at Kanhēri and to the monastery at Kalyāṇ in Gāndhāri Kabhami. In this monastery at Kalyāṇ, a house with two apartments and quadrangular dining hall was constructed. Kalyāṇ was a prosperous port which was humming with foreign trade transaction and therefore, there might be a small sector of the people coming from Gāndhāre.¹⁴

Another inference from the reference of the Bhojanachatu-śāla (dining hall) can be drawn, that the construction of the dinning hall in this monastery in Gāndhāri Kabhami, is indicative of a large Buddhist community at this place. Perhaps, it could be possible that the traders and the caravans, who were traversing through this route, must be visiting the monastery which must have served as a rest house for them for the time being.

The same inscription also mentions a perpetual endowment given for these, viz., a dwelling house in the Mukudasivayiva (name of a ward of the town).¹⁵ The inscription records various gifts to the Chatudisabhikshusaṅgha and the donations were the Lena, Paniya Podhi, a Sana Pedhika, Chankama, etc. There is a separate mention of the gifts for the Bhikshus who were living here, during the rainy season, which include clothes, trifles, alms, bowls, shoes, etc.

From this it is clear, that the Buddhist establishment at Kalyāṇ was having fairly large community and was open for the monks from Chatudīśa. During the rainy season, the missionaries must be assembling in this *vihāra*, so that the separate fund from the *Akshayanīvi* was granted for their clothes, shoes, etc. Risibala,

the son of a merchant, an inhabitant of Kalyāṇ also had made some endowment in village Saphau (near Sopāra) in honour of his parents. Another inscription records the donation by Lavaṇika, the wife of *Upāsaka* Sēṭhi Achala, resident of Kalyāṇ. The donation of a path, by the blacksmith Nanda, who hailed from Kalyāṇ is also mentioned near cave No.32 at Kanhēri.¹⁶

Another inscription¹⁷ records the donation of a cave and a water cistern for the acceptance of the Bhadranyanias. The merit gained thereby shall belong to my mother Nandinika. One cell is the meritorious gift of wife Damila and the merit shall belong to all my family members which included four generations. Venhunandi was an inhabitant of Kalyāṇ and made the donation of a cave with his father Vishṇunandin who was a merchant and Gahapati, with his mother Bodhisama and with his brother and all his relatives. Perhaps this family could be a Buddhist as is suggested by his mother's name i.e. Bodhisama.

Name of female ascetic (a nun) Damila, is ¹⁸ mentioned in an inscription from Kanhēri who was an inhabitant from Kalyāṇ. This mention of a Buddhist nun shows the existence of female ascetics in Kalyāṇ and indicative of a bhikshunisāṅgha along with bhikshusaṅgha. Further interesting part is that in spite of being a nun, she made a cave and a cistern at Kanhēri, which shows that she must be possessing some property. Probably she could have inherited or at late age she must have had entered the monastic order and the property must have been utilised for the Buddhist establishment at Kanhēri.

The existence of Ambalika vihāra in Kalyāṇ and its significance is supported by another inscription¹⁹ at Kanhēri which records the endowment of *Upāsaka* Śivadata, from Kalyāṇ. He made donation of 300 *Kārshāpaṇas* to the Ambālika monastery at Kalyāṇ.

The residents of Kalyāṇ have made endowments to the Buddhist monastery at Junnār also. As, Junnār too was an important trade center, during the early centuries of Christian era, was supported by Buddhist lay communities, merchants and traders from far off places including the Yavanas. Sulasadatta, son of the Heranik from Kalyāṇ had given endowment of a *chaitya* at Junnār.²⁰ Another inscription here records the donation of a water cistern by Sanghak, a goldsmith, son of Kulira who was the resident of Kalyāṇ.

Thus the inscriptions at, Kanhēri and Junnar have revealed a very simple picture of the Buddhist influence and community in Kalyāṇ. Residents of Kalyāṇ,

who were engaged in different occupations, made donations such as caves, cells, water cisterns, lands and cash endowments in *Kārshāpaṇa* currency of the time, sometimes as a fixed deposit. From the interest on these deposits, the expenses to provide the alms, bowls, clothes, shoes and other necessary commodities to the Buddhists monks residing in Ambālīka-vihāra and the Mukudasivayiva in Gāndhārīka-bhūmi circle are to be met with. The purpose of the endowments made by these donors was to acquire religious merit for them and their family members and for the welfare of all living beings. Mention of the *vihāras*, a *Upathanaśāla*, cells for the monks, *upāsakas* (the laymen), a nun Damila, etc. from Kalyāṇ proves the existence of the Buddhist community in Kalyāṇ during the early centuries of Christian era. Further, we can say that the religious activities in Kalyāṇ were generously supported by the mercantile community of Kalyāṇ, lying on the ancient trade route, and being a junction must have been visited frequently by the Buddhist missionaries from all directions. Kalyāṇ was a place for the missionaries, during the rainy season and arrangements were made to meet their necessities.

Another fact is that many of the Buddhist *upāsakas* and a Bhikshuni Damila who endowed Kanhēri and other Buddhist monasteries at Junnār and Kuḍa (the places on the trade routes) were from Kalyāṇ. This indicates the contribution of the residents of Kalyāṇ in the monastic activities at Kanhēri.

These caves mentioned in the inscriptions were essential to monasteries, but they also served as rest houses for the time being for the merchants, traders and the Sārthavāhas. The economic prosperity of the time led by these merchants could be the reason for the charity endowments to the religious establishments by the merchants i.e. community which was responsible for the religious and cultural development.

Notes and References :

1. *The Gazetteers, Bombay District*, p.127
2. B.G. Gokhale, *Buddhism in Maharashtra*, p.37
3. *Ibid.*
4. G. Yazadani, *Early History of the Deccan*, pp.142-43
5. B.G. Gokhale, *op.cit.*, p.37

6. P.N. Gupta, *Geographical Names in Ancient Indian Inscriptions*, p.57
7. Shobhana Gokhale, *Kanhēri inscriptions*.
8. B.G. Gokhale, *op.cit.*, p.43
9. Shobhana Gokhale, *op.cit.*
10. Ins. No.3, Cave No.2.
11. Insc. No.4, Cave No.2.
12. Insc. No.6, Cave No.3.
13. Insc. No.28, Cave No.32.
14. Shobhana Gokhale, *op.cit.*, p.17
15. H.P. Ray, *Monaster and Guild*, pp.80-81, also Shobhana Gokhale, *op.cit.*, p.81
16. Insc. No.29, near Cave No.32.
17. Insc. No.33, Cave No.50.
18. Insc. No.55, Cave No.98.
19. Insc. No.57, Cave No.101.
20. *Ep.Ind.*, *Lüders List*, No.10, 1909-10, p.135 No.1179.

SYMBOLS AND SYLLABLES : UNDERSTANDING THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE BRĀHMĪ NUMERALS

Subrata Kumar Acharya

Scholars so far dealing with the origin and development of the Brāhmī numerals generally agree on the point that there is some similarity between the numerical symbols and syllables either in the incipient or later stage. This dominant approach rests on the assumption that the Brāhmī numerals consisting of the units, the tens, the hundreds and the thousands are all syllables, derived from certain letters, groups of letters or signs of alphabet, and that the (numeral) syllables changed their shapes according to the change of letter-forms in various alphabets. In other words, the variations which occurred in their forms in the inscriptions of different ruling families and centuries were caused chiefly by the variations of the forms of the letters in the alphabets of the sametime and localities. The use of this letter system is known as *aksharapalli*. This theory was originally propounded by Bhagwanlal Indraji.¹ Following Indraji, Bühler echoed a similar opinion² but when Burnell published his findings and claimed the Egyptian demotic origin of the Brāhmī numerals,³ he gave up Indraji's theory and believed that Indians borrowed the numerical signs from the hieratic notational system of the Egyptians.⁴ Although Burnell and Bühler slightly differed on the point of their borrowing from the Egyptian source, yet they almost agreed that once the signs were borrowed the Hindus modified the signs and transformed them into *aksharas* (letters). Bühler even went a step further and viewed that the system of numeral syllables was settled by the Brahminical schools. As a proof of this assertion, he held that nobody but a Brāhmaṇa could have dreamt of making the *anunāsikā*, the *jihvāmūlīya* serve for the numerals.⁵ G.H. Ojha argued for an indigenous origin of the ancient Brāhmī numerals and largely subscribed to Indraji's theory that the Brāhmī numerals are fashioned after the letters or syllables of the Brāhmī script.⁶ In order to substantiate his argument he classified the units (except the first three) and the tens of the Brāhmī numerals under different letters or syllables of the Brāhmī alphabet. Leaving aside the question of the origin of the Brāhmī numerals, both the schools seems to have perceived some similarity between the (numerical) symbols and syllables either in the incipient or later stage. In the past few decades attempts have been made to study the Indian numerals, but their approach remained basically descriptive and not analytical. Many fundamental questions such as a) Does the earliest known symbols derive from the letters or groups of letters?, b) Does all the











symbols exhibit any similarity with the given syllables of the period?, c) Does the symbols change according to the change in the forms of the letters or signs of alphabet?, d) Is the principle applicable universally to all the symbols in a given time and space?, and so on have not been resolved as yet, Recently Dani has outrightly rejected, without showing any reason thereof, the idea that some of the symbols represented alphabetical forms as 'fantastic, unconvincing and unreasonable', and thereby compounded the problem. In the present paper we have made a fresh investigation into the whole problem of the similarity between the symbols and syllables, if any, at different times and localities, and the possible reasons thereof, in the light of the vast mass of inscriptional literature spanning over a thousand years roughly from the third century BC to the tenth century AD.

Earlier we have attempted to devise the basic forms of the twenty symbols used in the Brāhmī to express the numbers one to nine, ten to ninety, hundred and thousand.⁸ The study further rendered it impossible to accept the *akshara* theory on the ground that out of the twenty symbols only four resembled the Brāhmī letters. The simple cross type of the 'four', the vertical with three arms on the right type of 'six', the circular type of the 'twenty', and the semi-circular type of the 'fifty' are akin to the Brāhmī letter-forms of *ka*, *ja*, *ṭha* and *ta*. An investigation into the process of development of these numerical symbols and the letter-forms from their respective rudimentary forms, and a comparison between them leaves it beyond doubt that none of the derivatives of these symbols resembles those of the letter-forms. In the following figure we have arranged the numerical symbols which outwardly confirm to some letter-forms and a comparison between them would reveal the truth behind the substance of argument made earlier by the scholars. It seems that the resemblance is purely accidental. The advent of the numerical signs is entirely separate from the Brāhmī characters.

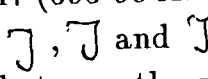
4	+	→	𐑦	→	𐑧	→	𐑨	→	𐑩	→	𐑪	→	𐑫	→	𐑬	→	𐑭	→	𐑮	→	𐑯	→	𐑰	→	𐑱	→	𐑲	→	𐑳	→	𐑴	→	𐑵	→	𐑶	→	𐑷	→	𐑸	→	𐑹	→	𐑺	→	𐑻	→	𐑼	→	𐑽	→	𐑾	→	𐑿	→	𐒀	→	𐒁	→	𐒂	→	𐒃	→	𐒄	→	𐒅	→	𐒆	→	𐒇	→	𐒈	→	𐒉	→	𐒊	→	𐒋	→	𐒌	→	𐒍	→	𐒎	→	𐒏	→	𐒐	→	𐒑	→	𐒒	→	𐒓	→	𐒔	→	𐒕	→	𐒖	→	𐒗	→	𐒘	→	𐒙	→	𐒚	→	𐒛	→	𐒜	→	𐒝	→	𐒞	→	𐒟	→	𐒠	→	𐒡	→	𐒢	→	𐒣	→	𐒤	→	𐒥	→	𐒦	→	𐒧	→	𐒨	→	𐒩	→	𐒪	→	𐒫	→	𐒬	→	𐒭	→	𐒮	→	𐒯	→	𐒰	→	𐒱	→	𐒲	→	𐒳	→	𐒴	→	𐒵	→	𐒶	→	𐒷	→	𐒸	→	𐒹	→	𐒺	→	𐒻	→	𐒼	→	𐒽	→	𐒾	→	𐒿	→	𐓀	→	𐓁	→	𐓂	→	𐓃	→	𐓄	→	𐓅	→	𐓆	→	𐓇	→	𐓈	→	𐓉	→	𐓊	→	𐓋	→	𐓌	→	𐓍	→	𐓎	→	𐓏	→	𐓐	→	𐓑	→	𐓒	→	𐓓	→	𐓔	→	𐓕	→	𐓖	→	𐓗	→	𐓘	→	𐓙	→	𐓚	→	𐓛	→	𐓜	→	𐓝	→	𐓞	→	𐓟	→	𐓠	→	𐓡	→	𐓢	→	𐓣	→	𐓤	→	𐓥	→	𐓦	→	𐓧	→	𐓨	→	𐓩	→	𐓪	→	𐓫	→	𐓬	→	𐓭	→	𐓮	→	𐓯	→	𐓰	→	𐓱	→	𐓲	→	𐓳	→	𐓴	→	𐓵	→	𐓶	→	𐓷	→	𐓸	→	𐓹	→	𐓺	→	𐓻	→	𐓼	→	𐓽	→	𐓾	→	𐓿	→	𐔀	→	𐔁	→	𐔂	→	𐔃	→	𐔄	→	𐔅	→	𐔆	→	𐔇	→	𐔈	→	𐔉	→	𐔊	→	𐔋	→	𐔌	→	𐔍	→	𐔎	→	𐔏	→	𐔐	→	𐔑	→	𐔒	→	𐔓	→	𐔔	→	𐔕	→	𐔖	→	𐔗	→	𐔘	→	𐔙	→	𐔚	→	𐔛	→	𐔜	→	𐔝	→	𐔞	→	𐔟	→	𐔠	→	𐔡	→	𐔢	→	𐔣	→	𐔤	→	𐔥	→	𐔦	→	𐔧	→	𐔨	→	𐔩	→	𐔪	→	𐔫	→	𐔬	→	𐔭	→	𐔮	→	𐔯	→	𐔰	→	𐔱	→	𐔲	→	𐔳	→	𐔴	→	𐔵	→	𐔶	→	𐔷	→	𐔸	→	𐔹	→	𐔺	→	𐔻	→	𐔼	→	𐔽	→	𐔾	→	𐔿	→	𐕀	→	𐕁	→	𐕂	→	𐕃	→	𐕄	→	𐕅	→	𐕆	→	𐕇	→	𐕈	→	𐕉	→	𐕊	→	𐕋	→	𐕌	→	𐕍	→	𐕎	→	𐕏	→	𐕐	→	𐕑	→	𐕒	→	𐕓	→	𐕔	→	𐕕	→	𐕖	→	𐕗	→	𐕘	→	𐕙	→	𐕚	→	𐕛	→	𐕜	→	𐕝	→	𐕞	→	𐕟	→	𐕠	→	𐕡	→	𐕢	→	𐕣	→	𐕤	→	𐕥	→	𐕦	→	𐕧	→	𐕨	→	𐕩	→	𐕪	→	𐕫	→	𐕬	→	𐕭	→	𐕮	→	𐕯	→	𐕰	→	𐕱	→	𐕲	→	𐕳	→	𐕴	→	𐕵	→	𐕶	→	𐕷	→	𐕸	→	𐕹	→	𐕺	→	𐕻	→	𐕼	→	𐕽	→	𐕾	→	𐕿	→	𐖀	→	𐖁	→	𐖂	→	𐖃	→	𐖄	→	𐖅	→	𐖆	→	𐖇	→	𐖈	→	𐖉	→	𐖊	→	𐖋	→	𐖌	→	𐖍	→	𐖎	→	𐖏	→	𐖐	→	𐖑	→	𐖒	→	𐖓	→	𐖔	→	𐖕	→	𐖖	→	𐖗	→	𐖘	→	𐖙	→	𐖚	→	𐖛	→	𐖜	→	𐖝	→	𐖞	→	𐖟	→	𐖠	→	𐖡	→	𐖢	→	𐖣	→	𐖤	→	𐖥	→	𐖦	→	𐖧	→	𐖨	→	𐖩	→	𐖪	→	𐖫	→	𐖬	→	𐖭	→	𐖮	→	𐖯	→	𐖰	→	𐖱	→	𐖲	→	𐖳	→	𐖴	→	𐖵	→	𐖶	→	𐖷	→	𐖸	→	𐖹	→	𐖺	→	𐖻	→	𐖼	→	𐖽	→	𐖾	→	𐖿	→	𐗀	→	𐗁	→	𐗂	→	𐗃	→	𐗄	→	𐗅	→	𐗆	→	𐗇	→	𐗈	→	𐗉	→	𐗊	→	𐗋	→	𐗌	→	𐗍	→	𐗎	→	𐗏	→	𐗐	→	𐗑	→	𐗒	→	𐗓	→	𐗔	→	𐗕	→	𐗖	→	𐗗	→	𐗘	→	𐗙	→	𐗚	→	𐗛	→	𐗜	→	𐗝	→	𐗞	→	𐗟	→	𐗠	→	𐗡	→	𐗢	→	𐗣	→	𐗤	→	𐗥	→	𐗦	→	𐗧	→	𐗨	→	𐗩	→	𐗪	→	𐗫	→	𐗬	→	𐗭	→	𐗮	→	𐗯	→	𐗰	→	𐗱	→	𐗲	→	𐗳	→	𐗴	→	𐗵	→	𐗶	→	𐗷	→	𐗸	→	𐗹	→	𐗺	→	𐗻	→	𐗼	→	𐗽	→	𐗾	→	𐗿	→	𐘀	→	𐘁	→	𐘂	→	𐘃	→	𐘄	→	𐘅	→	𐘆	→	𐘇	→	𐘈	→	𐘉	→	𐘊	→	𐘋	→	𐘌	→	𐘍	→	𐘎	→	𐘏	→	𐘐	→	𐘑	→	𐘒	→	𐘓	→	𐘔	→	𐘕	→	𐘖	→	𐘗	→	𐘘	→	𐘙	→	𐘚	→	𐘛	→	𐘜	→	𐘝	→	𐘞	→	𐘟	→	𐘠	→	𐘡	→	𐘢	→	𐘣	→	𐘤	→	𐘥	→	𐘦	→	𐘧	→	𐘨	→	𐘩	→	𐘪	→	𐘫	→	𐘬	→	𐘭	→	𐘮	→	𐘯	→	𐘰	→	𐘱	→	𐘲	→	𐘳	→	𐘴	→	𐘵	→	𐘶	→	𐘷	→	𐘸	→	𐘹	→	𐘺	→	𐘻	→	𐘼	→	𐘽	→	𐘾	→	𐘿	→	𐙀	→	𐙁	→	𐙂	→	𐙃	→	𐙄	→	𐙅	→	𐙆	→	𐙇	→	𐙈	→	𐙉	→	𐙊	→	𐙋	→	𐙌	→	𐙍	→	𐙎	→	𐙏	→	𐙐	→	𐙑	→	𐙒	→	𐙓	→	𐙔	→	𐙕	→	𐙖	→	𐙗	→	𐙘	→	𐙙	→	𐙚	→	𐙛	→	𐙜	→	𐙝	→	𐙞	→	𐙟	→	𐙠	→	𐙡	→	𐙢	→	𐙣	→	𐙤	→	𐙥	→	𐙦	→	𐙧	→	𐙨	→	𐙩	→	𐙪	→	𐙫	→	𐙬	→	𐙭	→	𐙮	→	𐙯	→	𐙰	→	𐙱	→	𐙲	→	𐙳	→	𐙴	→	𐙵	→	𐙶	→	𐙷	→	𐙸	→	𐙹	→	𐙺	→	𐙻	→	𐙼	→	𐙽	→	𐙾	→	𐙿	→	𐚀	→	𐚁	→	𐚂	→	𐚃	→	𐚄	→	𐚅	→	𐚆	→	𐚇	→	𐚈	→	𐚉	→	𐚊	→	𐚋	→	𐚌	→	𐚍	→	𐚎	→	𐚏	→	𐚐	→	𐚑	→	𐚒	→	𐚓	→	𐚔	→	𐚕	→	𐚖	→	𐚗	→	𐚘	→	𐚙	→	𐚚	→	𐚛	→	𐚜	→	𐚝	→	𐚞	→	𐚟	→	𐚠	→	𐚡	→	𐚢	→	𐚣	→	𐚤	→	𐚥	→	𐚦	→	𐚧	→	𐚨	→	𐚩	→	𐚪	→	𐚫	→	𐚬	→	𐚭	→	𐚮	→	𐚯	→	𐚰	→	𐚱	→	𐚲	→	𐚳	→	𐚴	→	𐚵	→	𐚶	→	𐚷	→	𐚸	→	𐚹	→	𐚺	→	𐚻	→	𐚼	→	𐚽	→	𐚾	→	𐚿	→	𐛀	→	𐛁	→	𐛂	→	𐛃	→	𐛄	→	𐛅	→	𐛆	→	𐛇	→	𐛈	→	𐛉	→	𐛊	→	𐛋	→	𐛌	→	𐛍	→	𐛎	→	𐛏	→	𐛐	→	𐛑	→	𐛒	→	𐛓	→	𐛔	→	𐛕	→	𐛖	→	𐛗	→	𐛘	→	𐛙	→	𐛚	→	𐛛	→	𐛜	→	𐛝	→	𐛞	→	𐛟	→	𐛠	→	𐛡	→	𐛢	→	𐛣	→	𐛤	→	𐛥	→	𐛦	→	𐛧	→	𐛨	→	𐛩	→	𐛪	→	𐛫	→	𐛬	→	𐛭	→	𐛮	→	𐛯	→	𐛰	→	𐛱	→	𐛲	→	𐛳	→	𐛴	→	𐛵	→	𐛶	→	𐛷	→	𐛸	→	𐛹	→	𐛺	→	𐛻	→	𐛼	→	𐛽	→	𐛾	→	𐛿	→	𐜀	→	𐜁	→	𐜂	→	𐜃	→	𐜄	→	𐜅	→	𐜆	→	𐜇	→	𐜈	→	𐜉	→	𐜊	→	𐜋	→	𐜌	→	𐜍	→	𐜎	→	𐜏	→	𐜐	→	𐜑	→	𐜒	→	𐜓	→	𐜔	→	𐜕	→	𐜖	→	𐜗	→	𐜘	→	𐜙	→	𐜚	→	𐜛	→	𐜜	→	𐜝	→	𐜞	→	𐜟	→	𐜠	→	𐜡	→	𐜢	→	𐜣	→	𐜤	→	𐜥	→	𐜦	→	𐜧	→	𐜨	→	𐜩	→	𐜪	→	𐜫	→	𐜬	→	𐜭	→	𐜮	→	𐜯	→	𐜰	→	𐜱	→	𐜲	→	𐜳	→	𐜴	→	𐜵	→	𐜶	→	𐜷	→	𐜸	→	𐜹	→	𐜺	→	𐜻	→	𐜼	→	𐜽	→	𐜾	→	𐜿	→	𐝀	→	𐝁	→	𐝂	→	𐝃	→	𐝄	→	𐝅	→	𐝆	→	𐝇	→	𐝈	→	𐝉	→	𐝊	→	𐝋	→	𐝌	→	𐝍	→	𐝎	→	𐝏	→	𐝐	→	𐝑	→	𐝒	→	𐝓	→	𐝔	→	𐝕	→	𐝖	→	𐝗	→	𐝘	→	𐝙	→	𐝚	→	𐝛	→	𐝜	→	𐝝	→	𐝞	→	𐝟	→	𐝠	→	𐝡	→	𐝢	→	𐝣	→	𐝤	→	𐝥	→	𐝦	→	𐝧	→	𐝨	→	𐝩	→	𐝪	→	𐝫	→	𐝬	→	𐝭	→	𐝮	→	𐝯	→	𐝰	→	𐝱	→	𐝲	→	𐝳	→	𐝴	→	𐝵	→	𐝶	→	𐝷	→	𐝸	→	𐝹	→	𐝺	→	𐝻	→	𐝼	→	𐝽	→	𐝾	→	𐝿	→	𐞀	→	𐞁	→	𐞂	→	𐞃	→	𐞄	→	𐞅	→	𐞆	→	𐞇	→	𐞈	→	𐞉	→	𐞊	→	𐞋	→	𐞌	→	𐞍	→	𐞎	→	𐞏	→	𐞐	→	𐞑	→	𐞒	→	𐞓	→	𐞔	→	𐞕	→	𐞖	→	𐞗	→	𐞘	→	𐞙	→	𐞚	→	𐞛	→	𐞜	→	𐞝	→	
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	--





Even if we do not subscribe to the theory that the Brāhmī numerals are derived from the Brāhmī alphabet, yet we have a firm belief that subsequently some of the intermediate forms of the symbols resembled the syllables and this led scribes and engravers to alter the existing symbols into syllables. As will be shown below this was not the universal practice and was limited in time and space, and when the decimal system began to supersede the numerical system of notation from Indian epigraphy all such fanciful approximations have been waived and only the symbols which developed through an evolutionary process came to be in general use as decimal figures.






Of the units, none of the intermediate forms of the first three numerals such as 1, 2 and 3 appear to have been equated with any of the syllables or alphabetic signs. The symbol for 4 which initially looked like the letter-form of *ka*, *kī* or *ko* latter on developed into altogether different forms without exhibiting any similarity with the letter-form of *ka*. Likewise the symbol for 6 evolved independently and at no stage of its evolution it has been confused for the syllables. But the intermediate forms of the rest of the numerals have been mistaken for letters or syllables by the scribes at different times and localities.





In the inscriptions of the Traikūṭakas⁹, early Kalachuris¹⁰, Gurjjaras¹¹, Maitrakas¹² as well as in those of the recently published Bagh cave inscriptions of the time of the Guptas¹³, the numeral 5 is represented by a stroke that goes down and forms a loop at the base ; optionally the stroke denoting the head-mark is slightly projected to the right and then curves down . These symbols resemble the looped variety of *ta* or *tā* as used in the records of some of the ruling families of western and eastern Deccan. It may be said in this connection that one of the intermediate forms of the numeral 5  has appeared in the Nasik¹⁴ and Karle¹⁵ cave inscriptions of the early centuries of the Christian era roughly resemble the letter-form of *ta*  as used in the same inscriptions. This type of the numeral 5 is essentially derived from its basic form of curving the right side stroke   and the resemblance between the symbol and syllable in any case is accidental. This is also noticed in the numerous Kushāṇa inscriptions¹⁶ and the Yūpa inscriptions from Rajasthan¹⁷, but the symbol   and the syllable *ta*  or *tā*  can easily be distinguished. However, in the Sātavāhana inscriptions of western Deccan, the looped variety of *ta* began to appear from the middle of the second century and within a century it got transmitted to a wider region in the Deccan. With the change in the letter-form of *ta* from the Deccanese variety to the looped variety¹⁸,

there seems to have been a corresponding change in the symbol for 5. Although we do not know the use of this looped variety of 5 in any of the epigraphic records before the date of the Bagh cave and inscriptions of the Mahārājas of Valkha, yet the possibility of its first occurrence somewhere in western Deccan in the 2nd-3rd century A.D cannot be ruled out. The looped variety of 5 is exclusively found used in the records of the Mahārājas of Valkha in the 4th-5th centuries. Although the same letter-form is not popularized in Malwa and Gujarat, yet this variety of 5 is regular there in the charters of the Traikūṭakas, early Kalachuris, Gurjjaras and the Maitrakas. The Alina copper plate grant of the Maitraka king Śilāditya of Kalachuri year 447 (767 A.D.) records the lower limit of the use of this looped variety of 5.¹⁹ In some of the lithic records of the Guptas of the 5th century²⁰, the symbol for 5 is written like the down-facing curve type of *ta* with the medial *ri* as popularized in north India. Like the looped variety of 5, this down-facing curve type does not appear to have been passed through any known intermediate stage, rather both the forms seem to have been appeared as a result of the fanciful equations between the symbol and the syllable. This has also occurred in the Madhuban plate of Harsha of year 25 (631 A.D.)²¹, the Sambhal plate of Nāgabhaṭa II of V.S. 885 (828 A.D.)²² and the Barah plate of Bhōjadēva of V.S. 893 (836 A.D.)²³. In the Siddhantam plates of the Eastern Gaṅga king Dēvēndravarman of Gaṅga year 195 (693 A.D.), the numeral 5 resembles the syllable *tu* or *ttu*.²⁴






In the Kesaribeda (Koraput district, Orissa) plate of the Nala king Arthapati Bhaṭṭāraka,²⁵ the Sirpur (West Khandesh district, Maharashtra) plate of the Valkha king Rudradāsa of the Gupta year 117 (437 A.D.)²⁶ and the Abhona (Nasik district, Maharashtra) plate of the early Kalachuri king Śaṅkaragaṇa of Kalachuri era 347 (595-96 A.D.)²⁷, the symbol for the numeral 7 is drawn after the syllable *re*, e.g.,  respectively. There is hardly any doubt about the approximation between the symbol and syllable, because in all these cases the usual head-mark is applied and the medial *e* is distinctly seen. But the reason for engraving the symbol closely after the syllable *re* perhaps due to the fact that in some of the inscriptions of the 4th-5th century A.D.²⁸, the down-facing curve of the symbol for 7 is drawn like a slanting stroke to the left which is later on confused by the scribes and engravers for the medial vowel *e* and the rest of the symbol resembles the letter-form of *ra*. Hence, subsequently the scribes and engravers committed the error of approximating the symbol to the letter-form of *re*. Besides,







it is well-known that in the Buddhist and Jaina manuscripts, the symbol for 7 is written just like the syllable *gra* or *grā*.²⁹ So far as the epigraphic evidences are concerned, the Sambhal copper plate grant of Nāgabhaṭa of V.S. 885³⁰ furnishes a type of the symbol of 7 which closely resembles the *kuṭila* letter-form of *grā* . The other instance is noticed in the Banpur plate of the Bhaumakara queen Daṇḍimahādēvī of Bhauma era 187 (923 A.D.)³¹ where the symbol can easily be recognized as the *kuṭila* or photo-Nāgarī letter-form of *grā* . This may be attributed to some of the earlier records of central and western India where the symbol has got some resemblance with the letter-form of *ga* with a definite foot-mark in its left limb  or *gra* .³² The latter variety is also noticed in some of the Western Kshatrapa coins.³³

In some of the copper plate grants of the ninth and tenth century such as the Sambhal plate of Nāgabhaṭa of V.S. 885 (828 A.D.)³⁴, the Barah plate of Bhōjadēva of V.S. 893 (836 A.D.)³⁵, the two Baud plates of Pṛithivīmahādēvī of Bhauma era 158 (894 A.D.)³⁶, the Bamanghati plate of Raṇabhañja of (Bhauma) era 188 (924 A.D.)³⁷ and the Bengal Asiatic plate of Vināyakapāla of V.S. 988 (931 A.D.)³⁸, the numerical symbol for 8 is engraved after the *kuṭila* or proto-Nāgarī letter-form of *hrā* . Later on in the Buddhist manuscripts of Nepal and the Jaina manuscripts of Rajasthan, the same similarity can be established between the symbol and the syllable *hra* or *hrā*.³⁹ It is very difficult to fit this symbol for 8 in the process of its evolution through centuries. But the genesis of the confusion between the symbol and the syllable can be traced back to the time of the Kushāṇa inscriptions and the Western Kshatrapa coins and inscriptions. In the numerous Kushāṇa inscriptions found from Mathura,⁴⁰ there is little difference between the symbol for 8  and the letter-form of *ha* , except that in the case of the former the right arm is slightly elongated. But the scribes and engravers of the Kushāṇa records possibly did not make any confusion between the symbol and the syllable, and the elongated right arm probably distinguished the former from the latter. Subsequently in the inscriptions and coins of the Western Kshatrapas we notice a minor change in the letter-form of *ha* which is more like a left-facing hook hanging from the head-mark .⁴¹ Dani has termed it as the hooked variety of *ha* and attributed it to an influence from Eastern Malwa and Kauśāmbī.⁴² At any rate, the change in the letter-form of *ha* led to a corresponding change in the symbol for 8  and this is particularly true in the case of the Western Kshatrapa coins. It may be argued here that the limited space on the surface of the coin





resulted in the change of the shape of the numeral but it is equally reasonable to hold that the scribes made a deliberate attempt to approximate the symbol with the syllable. This tendency is also noticed in the 5th-7th century inscriptions of Nepal. In the Lazimpat Śiva-linga base inscription of Śaka. 388 (466 A.D.)⁴³ and the Deo Patan Śiva-linga base inscription of Śaka. 402 (480 A.D.)⁴⁴, the numeral 8 is written very much after the hooked variety of *ha*  . In the case of the former, it is very difficult to distinguish between the numeral 8 in line 1 and the letter-form of *ha* in the word *sahitēna* in the same line. The hooked variety of *ha* along with other peculiar traits of the Kauśāmbī style of the Gupta inscriptions, as has been observed by Dani, reached Nepal through Bengal.⁴⁵ However, further on, the same symbol for 8 has occurred in the inscriptions of Nepal,⁴⁶ excepting a solitary instance, right upto the close of the seventh century A.D., in spite of the progressive development of the letter-form of *ha*. The solitary instance is the Aryaghat Śiva-linga base inscription of Śaka. 467 (545 A.D.)⁴⁷ where with the change in the form of the letter *ha* , the shape of the numerical symbol is also changed  . A more pronounced example of the approximation between the symbol and the syllable can be obtained from a grant of the early Guhila king Bhavihita of Harsha year 48 (654 A.D.) where the numeral 8 is closely engraved after the *kutīla* letter-form of *ha*  .⁴⁸




While editing the Nivina plates of the Śailōdbhava king Dharmarājadēva,⁴⁹ N. P. Chakravarty read the date portion of the grant (line 47) as *saṁvat [Vai]śākha-sudi-prathama-paksha-dviti[yā]* and remarked, "From an examination of the plate it becomes clear that the broken space would not allow any numerical sign to be incised before *Vai*, the whole space being covered by partly missing vowel sign in this letter. Moreover, the signs for the numerical figure 9 and the final *t* are so much akin that it is not impossible that the scribe, finding two similar signs on the document omitted one of them, either through inadvertence, or because of his not understanding its significance. If this supposition is correct, then the date of the inscription would be the second day of the bright fortnight of the 9th year of the reign of Dharmarāja."⁵⁰ In fact a comparison of the numerical sign for 9 in line 47 and the final *t* in lines 34 and 39 of the same charter gives credence to the above remark of Chakravarty. But the question is why the scribe of this particular charter tried to draw the numerical sign for 9 closely after the final *t*. It should be remembered here that one of the popular symbols for this numeral is represented by two left-facing curves with a broad curve after covering






the entire left half turns to the right  and it is widely used in the inscriptions of India. The same symbol is also easily recognized as the form of the final *t* in some of the inscriptions. In the other charters of Dharmarāja and his predecessors, this type of the final *t* is invariably found used.⁵¹ But when there appeared a change in the form of the final *t* (from the rounded type  to the down-facing curve type ), the scribe possibly committed the error of making a corresponding change in the numerical sign. However, this is the only example of its kind and not repeated in the later documents. The other peculiar sign represented by a broad down-facing curve with its left arm curling in which is noticed in a few records of the 8th-10th centuries appears to be a survival of the rounded type of the numeral 9 by substituting a simple line  for the left-facing curves .⁵²



Optionally, the symbol for the numeral ten is being confused for the syllable *lṛi* and this is particularly true in the case of some of the charters of Orissa and north India. In at least two 6th-7th century copper plate grants of Orissa such as the Erbang plate of Śambhuyaśa⁵³ and the Soro plate of Bhānudatta,⁵⁴ the symbol  is very much akin to the acute angled letter-form of *la*  with the medial *ṛi*. The scribes of both the plates seem to have made a deliberate attempt to approximate the symbol for ten with the syllable *lṛi*. A similar fanciful approximation has also been noticed in the Ahar stone inscription of the time of Bhōja⁵⁵ and the Dighwa-Dubauli plate of Mahēndrapāla of V.S. 955,⁵⁶ both belonging to the tenth century AD. In these two epigraphs of north India, the symbol  is drawn closer to the proto-Nāgarī letter-form of *la* with the medial *ṛi*. This is also the case in the Buddhist manuscripts of Nepal and the Jaina manuscripts of Rajasthan. Thus, this is a clear indication about the change in the formation of the numerical sign consequent upon a change in the letter-form. But the genesis of this confusion lay in a particular intermediate form of the symbol which is denoted by an open-mouthed curve attached to the right upright and another curve or angle that projects to the right from its lower end   Occasionally, the left arm is angularized with its upper tip slightly projects to the left as in some of the inscriptions of Nepal  which has got some resemblance with the syllable *lu* or *lṛi*.⁵⁷ The scribes of the aforesaid records of Orissa and north India probably got confused between the symbol and the syllable and endeavoured to approximate the two. The manuscript writers too committed the same mistake and continued the practice of approximating the symbol for ten with the syllable *lṛi*.


The Ponnutūru plates of Sāmantavarman of Gaṅga year 64 (562 A.D.)⁵⁸ furnish

a peculiar instance of the symbol for twenty which closely resembles to the letter-form of *ma* as used in the charters of the early Eastern Gaṅgas of Kalinga. This symbol does not appear to have been evolved from any of the antiquated intermediate forms but its occurrence in this grant may be explained as a confusion on the part of the scribe regarding the symbol for twenty as noticed in the Jirjingi plates of Indravarman of Gaṅga year 39 (537 A.D.).⁵⁹ In the Jirjingi example, the symbol is devoid of the upper arm which leaves it as open-mouthed  and has got a remote resemblance with the letter-form of *ma*  The scribe of the Ponnūtūru plates probably failed to understand the real significance of the symbol and tried to draw it closely after the letter-form of *ma*. However, this is not the case in the subsequent charters of the family. In the Buddhist manuscripts of Nepal optionally the symbol resembles the letter-form of *tha* and this probably due to the fact that one of the intermediate signs  of this numeral resembled the letter-form of *tha*  and this variety is widely popularized in the inscriptions of Nepal and eastern India in the 7th-9th century A.D.

In some of the 7th-8th century inscriptions of India such a grant of Maitraka Dhārasēna IV of Gupta-Vallabhi era (649-50 A.D.)⁶⁰, another grant of Maitraka Kharaghara II of Gupta-Vallabhi era 337 (656-57 A.D.)⁶¹ and the Kondedda plates of Śailōdbhava king Dharmarāja of regnal year 30 (early eighth century A.D.)⁶², the symbol for 30 resembles the acute angled letter-form of *la* . This is also the case with atleast three inscriptions of Nepal of *śarivāt* 32⁶³, 37⁶⁴ and 39⁶⁵, all belonging to the 7th century AD. Since most of these records are written in the acute angled alphabet it may be argued that the numerical symbol in these records too come under the impact of the prevalent script and the base-line of the symbol for 30 is lowered to meet the right upright at an acute angle. But the inscriptions and the Buddhist manuscripts of Nepal prove it otherwise. A closer look into the process of development of the symbol and the letter-form of *la* in the above records of Nepal makes it abundantly clear that it was not the change of the general characteristics of the alphabet in a given time and space but the change in the form of an individual letter which had a remote resemblance with the numerical sign in the earlier documents that affected the shape of the latter. Prior to the date of the three Nepalese inscriptions referred to above, there are two more inscriptions, viz., the Paśupati Śiva-līṅga inscription of Śaka 402 (480 A.D.)⁶⁶ and the Jaisidēval stone inscription of Śaka 435 (513 A.D.)⁶⁷ where the symbol for 30  can hardly be distinguished from the letter-form of *la*  as appeared


in the same inscriptions, vide *kila* (line 1) and *lingvala* (line 8) respectively. It seems that by the close of the fifth century AD, the scribes in Nepal had already started the fanciful practice. Moreover, in the Buddhist manuscripts of Nepal the symbol is closely drawn after the Nāgarī letter-form of *la*. Thus, the inscriptions and the manuscripts of Nepal offer a good scope for understanding the process of development of the symbol and the letter-form from time to time. This fairly establishes that compared to other localities, the practice of approximating the symbol with the syllable or letter continued for long in Nepal. In passing it may be said here that the Jaina manuscripts of Rajasthan use a type of the numeral 30 which is very much kin to the Nāgarī letter-form of *la* .⁶⁸ However, the probable  reason for this approximation between the symbol and the syllable is that in a majority of inscriptions of north India and western Deccan belonging to the early centuries of the Christian era, the symbol for 30 has got some resemblance with the letter-form of *la*. In the Kushāṇa inscriptions of Mathura and other places,⁶⁹ there is absolutely no difference between the symbol for 30 and the letter-form of *la*. In the subsequent epigraphs, a conscious attempt has been made to distinguish the two as evidenced from a number of examples of western India and Deccan. In the Western Kshatrapa coins although the letter-form of *la*  do not exhibit much difference from its Kushāṇa counterpart, yet the base-line of the numeral 30 is rounded . In the Bagh cave inscriptions of the time of the Guptas, the letter-form of *la* is much more rounded  but the symbol is distinguished by suppressing the upper curve and adding a head-mark.⁷⁰ The same is also the case with the Vākāṭaka inscriptions.⁷¹ In the records of eastern Deccan, the scribes do not make any confusion between the numerical sign and the letter-form.⁷² Thus, in all these cases there has been a conscious attempt on the part of the scribes to distinguish between the two. But in the inscriptions and manuscripts of Nepal, there has been a deliberate attempt to approximate the sign with the letter-form.

There are two types of confusion on the part of the scribes about the engraving of the numerical sign for 40. Firstly, it is met with in the grants of the Traikūṭakas, the early Kalachuris and in those of the Maitrakas of Vallabhi. In the Surat plate of Traikūṭaka king Vyāghrasēna of Kalachuri era 241 (490 A.D.)⁷³, the Abhona plate of Śaṅkaragaṇa of Kalachuri era 347 (597 A.D.)⁷⁴, the three grants of the Maitraka king Guhasēna of Gupta-Vallabhi era 240 (559 A.D.)⁷⁵, 246 (565 A.D.)⁷⁶ and 246 (565 A.D.)⁷⁷ and the Alina plate of Maitraka Śilāditya VII of Gupta-Vallabhi era 447 (766-67 A.D.)⁷⁸, the symbol  is indistinguishable from 

the letter-form of the dental *sa* . All these records are found from western India and the genesis of the confusion should be looked for in the precursors of the numerical sign as appeared in the documents of the same locality. On an investigation it is found that the Western Kshatrapa coins display a type of the symbol for 40 which has got some resemblance with the letter-form of *sa*.⁷⁹ The coins which had a wide circulation in western India in the 2nd-4th century A.D., ultimately provided a model for scribes of the royal courts to know about the character of the symbol. But the scribes in the courts of different ruling families of western India failed to understand the real significance of the symbol on the coins and made a deliberate attempt to draw it just like the dental *sa*. As per the chronology of the above epigraphic records, the Traikūṭakas were the earliest to commit the mistake and later on the early Kalachuris and the Maitrakas of Vallabhi used this form of the numeral 40 in their official charters as the standard form. However, the last example cited above can be considered as the lower limit of the dental *sa* used for the numeral 40.

The second mistake has been committed mostly by the scribes of Nepal from the 5th century onwards. In the Paśupati Śiva-linga inscription of Śaka 402 (480 A.D.)⁸⁰, the Kisipidi inscription of Śaka 449 (527 A.D.)⁸¹, the ancient water tank inscription of *sarivāt* 45 (621 A.D.)⁸² and the Tavajhya inscription of *sarivāt* 48 (624 A.D.)⁸³, the symbol for 40 is engraved like the conjunct *pta* (*pa* with the subscript *ta*). It appears that the numeral 40 resembling the syllable *pta* has been the standard form in the Nepalese inscriptions. Again it appears that the same symbol got transmitted to a wider area in the subsequent centuries. Its use is seen in at least two grants of western India, viz., the grant of Bhavihita of Harsha era 48 (654 A.D.)⁸⁴ and the Lunavada grant of Maitraka Śīlāditya V of Gupta-Vallabhi era 441 (760-61 A.D.)⁸⁵. However, the latter is the only Maitraka grant where the symbol is very much akin to the syllable *pta* while in the rest of the grants of the family the symbol resembles the letter-form of *sa*. The impact from the Nepalese source is also felt in some of the charters of the Bhaumakaras of Utkala (north-central Orissa), belonging to the second half of the ninth century. In the Talcher plate of Śubhakaradēva IV of Bhauma era 145 (881 A.D.)⁸⁶ and the two Talcher plates of his successor Śivakaradēva III of Bhauma era 149 (885 A.D.)⁸⁷, the symbol for 40 is either written as *pa*, *pu* or *ptu*, and they may be attributed to the slovenliness on the part of the scribes or engravers. This observation holds good when we find the symbol formation in the

Buddhist manuscripts of Nepal and the Jaina manuscripts of Rajasthan where it is written closely after *pta*.⁸⁸ It may be said here that the inscriptions of the time of the Kushāṇas found from Mathura⁸⁹ and those of the Western Kshatrapas from Nāsik caves⁹⁰ furnish a variety of the symbol for 40 which has got some resemblance with the conjunct *pta*. But this similarity between the symbol and the syllable appears to be accidental. The same symbol is also noticed in a few grants of Mahārāja Bhulūṇḍa of Valkha belonging to the 4th century A.D.⁹¹

The rudimentary form of the symbol for 50 with a broad curve facing right survived long in the inscriptions of India. Optionally, the symbol is drawn differently with the curve facing to the left and its upper limb bent doubly. This variety at first appeared in the Western Kshatrapa coins⁹² and later on the scribes of the Maitraka⁹³ and the Gūrjjara plates⁹⁴ made a further corruption of it. Although it is not known to us precisely as to why the broad curve is reversed in the coins and inscriptions of certain ruling families of Gujarat in western India, yet the evidence of the Western Kshatrapa coins goes a long way to prove that it was during this period the form of the symbol for 50 which was once wrongly reversed by the scribes or engravers of the Aśokan rock-edicts in different parts of India (except Sahasram) has been popularized by the scribes under the Western Kshatrapas. The Maitrakas of Vallabhi and the Gūrjjaras continued the practice in their charters. However, neither the rudimentary form of the symbol for 50 nor any of its off-shoots confirm to any letter, syllable or alphabetic sign. But, Bhagwanlal Indraji remarked, "The sign for 50 used in the manuscripts and on the Eastern plates corresponds to *Anunāsikā* () as it occurs in the manuscripts of the *Madhyandina Śākhā* of the *White Yajurveda*. The sign on the Kshatrapa coins is the same, only turned on the way, and that on the Vallabhi plates a further corruption of the latter."⁹⁵ It may be argued here that the alphabetic sign of *anunāsikā* with an inward dip at the centre of the right-facing broad curve as occurred in the manuscript of *White Yajurveda* does not tally with any of the intermediate forms of the symbol for 50. Moreover, the turning of the Western Kshatrapa coin example to establish any connection between the symbol and the alphabetic sign is fanciful and misleading.

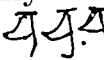




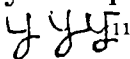
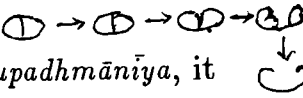





In the inscriptions of Nepal and eastern India, the symbol for 60 is very often confused for the letter-form of *chu*, *pu* or *tu*. In the Nepalese records the symbol is invariably written like the letter-form of *cha* with the medial *u*. Its earliest occurrence is noticed in the Paśupati Śiva-linga base inscription of Śaka. 462 (540 A.D.).⁹⁶ Later on it is found in the Aryaghat bridge Śiva-linga base inscription of Śaka. 467 (545 A.D.).⁹⁷, the Bhṛṅgārēśvara temple inscription of *saṁvat* 65 (641 A.D.).⁹⁸, the Lunjhya (Patan palace) inscription of *saṁvat* 67 (643 A.D.).⁹⁹ and so on. In all these Nepalese examples the medial vowel *u* attached to the letter *cha* is regularly indicated by a downward stroke with or without a small tick at the bottom . Although the other type of the medial *u* denoted by a left-facing curve is also used in these inscriptions, yet this downward stroke type continued to be used optionally in the inscriptions of Nepal at least up to the 7th century A.D. as is evidenced from the last example cited above.¹⁰⁰ In at least two copper plate grants of Orissa of the last decade of the ninth century, the symbol is again written just like the letter-form of *chu*. In the Dhenkanal plate of Tribhuvanamahādēvī of Bhauma era 160 (896 A.D.)¹⁰¹, the second numerical sign in the date portion is a clear *chu*. The medial *u* in this example is a small tick facing left which is regular in the Bhaumakara charters. The other example is furnished by the Khadgaprasad plate of Vinītātūṅga of (Bhauma) *saṁvat* 161 (897 A.D.)¹⁰², where the symbol does not strictly confirm to the letter-form of *chu*, but may be considered as a corruption of the same. The medial *u* in this case is represented by a left-facing curve . In the Buddhist manuscripts of Nepal we further come across this equation between the symbol and syllable. It is pertinent to note here that in spite of the development and popularization of the left-facing curve type of the medial *u* in the later epigraphic records and manuscripts, the symbol for 60 resembling the letter-form of *chu* does not make a corresponding change in the medial *u* in the manuscripts. As will be shown below, the symbol for 70 is also written like *chu* in the Nepalese inscriptions and it has been distinguished from that for 60 by using the left-facing curve type of the medial *u*. Total ignorance about the precursors of the symbol for 60 in the pre-sixth century records of Nepal notwithstanding, one of the popular forms of this numeral  when written on the surface of the rock might have looked like a triangle (with its loop scooped out) attached to the right upright  and very likely the engravers committed the mistake of confusing it with the syllable *chu*. At this stage of our knowledge this may be the only explanation for the equation between the symbol and the syllable. In the Soro (Balasore district, Orissa)





plate of Śambhuyaśa of (Gupta) *saṃvat* 260 (579-80 A.D.)¹⁰³ and the Bodh-Gaya inscription of Mahanaman of Gupta era 268 (588 A.D.)¹⁰⁴, the symbol resembles the letter-form of *tu* or *pu* respectively. Since these peculiarities do not appear in any other epigraphic records of eastern India, they may be attributed to the idiosyncrasies of the scribes or engravers. The symbol 70 in the inscriptions of Nepal is again denoted by the letter-form of *chu* where the medial *u* is drawn as a left-facing curve. This peculiar type of the symbol is noticed in the Paśupati Śiva-linga inscription of Śaka. 402 (480 A.D.)¹⁰⁵, the Kasaitol inscription of *saṃvat* 71 (647 A.D.)¹⁰⁶, the Naksal road inscription of *saṃvat* 78 (654 A.D.)¹⁰⁷ and the Changu Narayana gate Śiva-linga base inscription of *saṃvat* 172 (748 A.D.)¹⁰⁸. In the Pharping Kochhutol inscription of Śaka 479 (557 A.D.), the lower curve of the symbol instead of facing left turns up to the right ¹⁰⁹. This upturned curve yet another known sign for the medial *u* is attached to the letters like *ga*, *ta*, *na*, *śa*, etc., but not normally added to *cha*. In the Buddhist manuscripts of Nepal, the symbol is represented either by the letter-form of *chu* or *chū*.¹¹⁰ As in the case of 60, so also in the case of 70, the confusion between the symbol and syllable began to appear in one of the well-known intermediate forms of 70 which is represented by the open-mouthed curve attached to the right upright having a loop at its base ¹¹¹. The surface of the rock on which the symbol appeared might have given it a different look consequent upon flaking at the upturned curve. This could have been one probable reason for confusing the numeral 70 for *cha*. Alternatively, the small size of the letters and numerals of any preceding record might have confused the scribe for the letter *cha*. But how the looped base has been converted into a medial *u* or *ū* is difficult to explain. At any rate there seems to be a conscious attempt on the part of the scribe to distinguish between the symbols for 60 and 70 by using different types of signs for the medial *u* in order to avoid any confusion between the two. It is for the same purpose often the medial *ū* is added to the letter *cha* to indicate 70. Moreover, in the Jaina manuscripts of Rajasthan and optionally in the Buddhist manuscripts of Nepal, the symbol is expressed by the letter-form of *thū*. Although it is difficult to explain how and under what circumstances the symbol has been confused for *thu*, yet there is only one epigraphic instance, e.g., the Kharitalai plates of Uchchhakalpa king *Mahārāja* Jayanātha of (Gupta) *saṃvat* 174 (493-94 A.D.)¹¹² that furnished a symbol for the numeral 70 which has got some resemblance with the letter-form of *thū*. In no other epigraphic record of India do we come across this variety of the symbol for 70. The possibility that the manuscript writers


of the later period derived the inspiration from this Kharitalai example and its off-shoots cannot be dismissed altogether.


Like the symbol for 50, the numerals 80 and 90 do not resemble any letter, syllable or alphabetic sign at any stage of their evolution. But Bhagwanlal Indraji pointed out that the sign for 80 and 90 correspond to that for *upadhmāñīya* and *jihvāmūlīya* respectively and that in some cases the sign for 90 also resembled the *upadhmāñīya*.¹¹³ So far as the sign for 80 is concerned, it appears to have been evolved independently from its basic form in the following process: . However, if any of its intermediate forms tallies with the sign for *upadhmāñīya*, it can be considered as accidental. As regards the sign for 90, it has undergone significant changes through the centuries. Whereas barring a few peculiar instances, the old form of the *jihvāmūlīya* survived long in the inscriptions and at times the sign for *upadhmāñīya* is also wrongly interchanged for *jihvāmūlīya*. It is therefore, not safe to establish any connection between the sign for 90 and that for *jihvāmūlīya* or *upadhmāñīya*.

Unlike the symbols for other numerals, the symbol for 100 is one of the earliest to have been mistaken for syllables. The symbols for the multiples of 100, where the sign for 100 is essentially present are also helpful to establish any equation between the symbols and the syllables. In the Nāsik cave inscriptions, it has been indicated by a down-facing curve attached to the right upright by an additional stroke or curve.¹¹⁴ The earliest reference to the numeral 100 is traced to the Nānāghat inscription where the symbol  is seen in the form of a left-facing curve with its lower end moves to the right to make another curve facing right and it joins the right upright by a horizontal mid-line.¹¹⁵ Pushing further back is antiquity, the symbol for 200 which appeared in the rock edicts of Aśoka also exhibit almost a similar form for the hundreds element  where the second hundred being denoted by a small stroke attached to its right ¹¹⁶ We have suggested elsewhere that the rudimentary form of the symbol for 100 is denoted by a down-facing curve with its right arm elongated and it joins the right vertical by a horizontal mid-line . The Nānāghat example is undoubtedly derived from this form by making a gentle curve in the lower part of the left-limb . The Nānāghat and the Nāsik examples are separated by a century or so, but the latter can hardly be considered as a progressive development of the former. It becomes exceedingly difficult to account for the peculiar sign in the Nāsik inscriptions. On an investigation it is found that the Nānāghat example roughly corresponds

to the letter-form of *su* (dental *sa* with the vertical type of the medial *u* drawn in continuation with its right arm) and the Nāsik example to the letter-form of *sū* (palatal *śa* with the vertical type of the medial *u* drawn in continuation with its right arm). The scribes of the Nāsik cave inscriptions might have committed the mistake of reading the Nānāghat symbol for 100 or any of its unknown off-shoots or corruptions as *su* and tried to draw it closely after *śu*. It is well-known that in Prakrit inscriptions there occurred a wonderful confusion of the sibilants *śa* and *sa*, and this could have been the reason for incising the numerical sign for 100 closely after *su*. However, this new form of the symbol continued to be popularly used in the inscriptions of western India upto the 8th century. Its use is noticed in the Western Kshatrapa coins and inscriptions and in the records of a number of ruling families of western India such as the Ābhīras, the Traikūṭakas, the Mahārājas of Valkha, the early Kalachuris, the Gūrjjaras, the Sēndrakas, the Chālukyas, and the Maitrakas of Vallabhi. While the Sāñchī stone inscription of Gupta era 131 is the only Gupta record to exhibit this type of the numeral¹¹⁷, its occurrence in some of the Eastern Gaṅga charters of the 7th century A.D.¹¹⁸ may be attributed to the influence from the western source.







In a wider region of north and central India another development took place in the formation of the numerical symbol for 100, and again it is the Nānāghat example and other subsequent examples of the sign which confused the scribes from time to time at least up to the 10th century A.D. The Kosam inscription of Mahārāja Bhīmavarman is dated in Śaka. 130 (208 A.D.) and the numerical sign for 100 in this particular instance is written like a left-facing curve that forms a loop at the bottom and then moves right to meet the right vertically medially .¹¹⁹ In the next two three centuries, the same symbol with a minor variation  is found used in a number of inscriptions of the Imperial Guptas and their contemporaries in north, central and eastern India.¹²⁰ However, the Kosam inscription is the earliest to use this variety of the symbol and the possible reason for this change in the symbol formation may be accounted for the same confusion between the symbol and the syllable *su*. The new symbol with a loop in the left limb corresponds to a type of *sa* which optionally appeared in the Kushāṇa inscriptions of Mathura¹²¹ is regular in the Magha inscriptions of Kosam¹²² and the scribes of the latter records might have committed the error of transforming the existing symbol which more or less resembled the syllable *su*  to the looped form of *sa* with the medial *u* . The Kauśāmbī style of engraving





that transmitted to eastern India in the 4th-5th centuries AD resulted in the introduction of this sign for 100. The subsequent development of this sign in the epigraphic records of north India is still interesting in the sense that with the change in the progressive development of the letter-form of *sa* there appeared a corresponding change in the numerical sign. In the next couple of centuries, the acute angled script is mostly the dominant style of engraving in north India and the acute angled *sa* has developed a definite triangular head-mark in its left limb, the loop is drawn as a solid triangle and horizontal mid-line is lowered to meet the right upright . With this change in the letter-form, the symbol for 100 is also changed and in the Kusuma inscription of V.S. 693¹²³ and the Samoli inscription of the time of Śilāditya of V.S. 703¹²⁴, the symbol is incised just like the acute angled *sra*. Both the records belong to Rajasthan. Chronologically in another earlier record from the same locality, e.g., the Dadhimati-Mata inscription of the time of Dhruvana of Gupta era 289 (609 A.D.), the same symbol is used for 200.¹²⁵ But why the scribes preferred to incise the subscript *ra* in place of the medial *u* is not known.¹²⁶



Further on the symbol progressed in the direction of opening the solid triangle and adding another line to the right  which is again in consonance with the development of the letter-form of *sa*. In the *kuṭila* and the proto-Nāgarī inscriptions of the 8th-10th centuries, the solid triangle at the lower end of the left limb is opened up and this led the scribes to effect a similar change in the symbol. In the Barah copper plate grant of Bhōjadēva of V.S. 893 (836 A.D.)¹²⁷, the Ahar stone inscription of the time of Bhōja¹²⁸, the Dighva-Dubauli plate of Mahēndrapāla of V.S. 955 (898 A.D.)¹²⁹, and the Bengal Asiatic Society's plate of Vināyakapāla of V.S. 988 (931 A.D.)¹³⁰, this variety of the symbol for 100 corresponding to the syllable *srā* or *sro* is used. Very often these symbols can be confounded for *tsrā* or *tsro*, and this is because in the word *saṃvat*, the final *t* after *saṃva* instead of being written separately is mixed with the numeral symbol and the whole symbol looks like the conjunct *tsrā* or *tsro*. Thus, starting from the Kosam example there has been a conscious attempt on the part of the scribes to approximate the symbol for 100 with the syllable *su*, *sra*, *srā* or *sro*, and this can be very well understood from the following comparison :

$$sa \quad \text{su} \rightarrow \text{sr} \rightarrow \text{srā} \rightarrow \text{sro} \rightarrow \text{tsrā} \rightarrow \text{tsro}$$

$$100 \quad \text{su} \rightarrow \text{sr} \rightarrow \text{srā} \rightarrow \text{sro} \rightarrow \text{tsrā} \rightarrow \text{tsro}$$

In another set of inscriptions mostly found from eastern India, the symbol for 100 and 200 resemble the letter-form of *lu* or *lū* respectively. This is particularly true in the case of the inscriptions of Orissa of the 9th-10th century AD. In about a dozen of official charters of the Bhaumakaras and their contemporaries the symbol for 100 is written closely after the syllable *lu*, the medial *u* being represented either by a small leftward tick at the lower end¹³¹  or a small triangle¹³²  or a left-facing curve¹³³  and the symbol for 200 is written after *lū*, the medial *ū* being expressed by a left-facing curve¹³⁴ . This tendency of approximation between the symbol and the syllable has also occurred in the Buddhist manuscripts of Nepal. But in a few inscriptions of Orissa such as the Khadgaprasada plate of Vinītātūṅga of (Bhauma) *saṃvat* 161 (897 A.D.)¹³⁵, the Santiragram plate of the Bhauma queen Daṇḍimahādēvī of Bhauma era 180 (916 A.D.)¹³⁶, the Dasapalla plate of Dēvānandadēva of (Bhauma) *saṃvat* 184 (920 A.D.)¹³⁷ and the Bamanaghathi plate of Raṇabhañja of (Bhauma) *saṃvat* 188 (924 A.D.)¹³⁸, the symbol in the hundreds place is written like the syllable *lu*, which actually denotes 200. While editing the Santiragram plate of Daṇḍimahādēvī, D.C. Sircar has aptly remarked that the first symbol in the date portion of the record is clearly to be read as 200 and that the first symbol of the other dated records of the same ruler such as the Ganjam¹³⁹ and Banpur plates¹⁴⁰ is to be read as 100. According to Sircar, "It can hardly be normal to read the date of one record of the same person as 280, as one is not expected to date one's different records in two different eras with epochs exactly separated by a century. The first symbol in the date portions of the Ganjam and Banpur plates as well as of the present record seems to have the same value either 100 or 200. There seems, however, to be strong evidence in favour of reading 100 instead of 200."¹⁴¹ Thus, *lū* in the Santiragram plate actually stands for *lu* indicating 100. The mistake may be due to the confusion of the medial signs for *u* and *ū* in the said plate. The same conclusion is also applicable to the symbol in the hundreds place of the date portions of the Khadgaprasada, Dasapalla and the Bamanaghathi plates already cited above. But the genesis of the confusion between the symbol and the syllable can be traced back to some of the records of the 6th-7th century AD. The Betul copper plate grant of Parivrājaka Mahārāja Samkshōbha of Gupta era 199 (518-19 A.D.)¹⁴² exhibits one of the earliest examples of the symbol for 100 which closely resembles the syllable *lu* . A century later, in the Egra plate of the time of Śaśāṅka (c. 600-25 A.D.)¹⁴³, we come across a similar sign  for 100, where the medial *u* is shifted to the left. During this period, the symbol for 200 is

represented by the same symbol for 100 with an additional stroke on the top right as in the Soro plate of Śambhuyaśa of (Gupta) *saṃvat* 260 (580 A.D.) ¹⁴⁴ the Bodh-Gaya inscription of Mahānāman of Gupta era 269 (588-89 A.D.)¹⁴⁵ ¹⁴⁵ and the Kanas plate of Lōkavigraha of Gupta era 280 (600 A.D.) ¹⁴⁶ The symbol in the hundreds place of the Patiakella plate of Śivarāja of (Gupta) *saṃvat* 283 (603 A.D.) possibly also supplies a similar symbol but due to mutilation of a portion of the record containing the date, the whole symbol cannot be reproduced fully.¹⁴⁷ The symbol for 200 ¹⁴⁸ in the Erbang plate of Śambhuyaśa of (Gupta) *saṃvat* 235 (555 A.D.)¹⁴⁸ closely resembles the one noticed in the hundreds place of the grant of Vakulamahādēvī of Bhauma era 204 (940 A.D.).¹⁴⁹ Looking to the stage of development of the letter-form of *la* and the medial *u* in the middle of the sixth century, the Erbang example gives room to doubt about its genuineness. The letter-form of *la* with double curves facing down and the medial *u* with a curve opened to the right as has been noticed in this case are never met with in any of the inscriptions of Orissa and eastern India before the 7th century. Thus, the letter-form of *lū* denoting 200 is not at all regular for the period and locality to which the record belongs. Moreover, the symbol does not occur in any of the inscriptions of India before the tenth century. Hence, there is some force in the argument that the date portion of the Erbang plate of Śambhuyaśa is tempered by some one after the middle of the seventh century. However, paucity of examples relating to the equation of the symbol for 200 with the syllable *lū* in the records of the 7th-9th century precludes the possibility of ascertaining the tentative date of its advent. At any rate, there seems to be a conscious attempt to engrave the symbol after the syllable *lū*, partly for convenience and easy comprehension and partly for suitably differentiating from the syllable *lu* that stands for 100.

In the Buddhist manuscripts of Nepal very often the symbols for 100 and 200 resemble the letter-form of *a* ¹⁵⁰ and *ā* ¹⁵⁰ respectively. Tracing back in point of time, in numerous inscriptions of Nepal mostly belonging to the 8th century, the symbol for 100 is written like the letter-form of *a*. To cite a few examples, in the Vajraghar inscription of *saṃvat* 103 (679 A.D.)¹⁵¹, the Lagantol inscription of *saṃvat* 119 (695 A.D.)¹⁵², the Sonaguthi stone inscription of Śivadēva II of *saṃvat* 125 (701 A.D.)¹⁵³, the Minanatha water conduit stone inscription of *saṃvat* 137 (713 A.D.)¹⁵⁴ and in the Paśupati stele inscription of Jayadēva II of *saṃvat* 157 (733 A.D.)¹⁵⁵ the symbols for 100 can hardly be distinguished from the form of the initial *a* as used in the respective records. An examination of the precursors of

this symbol reveals that the Nepalese inscriptions of the 4th-6th centuries mostly preserved the archaic form of the symbol as appeared in the Nānāghat inscription of Nāganikā and Kushāṇa inscriptions from Mathura. But in the records of the 6th century, the initial *a* has developed a right-facing curve at the bottom of its left limb 𑀅 which resembled very much the numerical symbol for 100 𑀆. In the beginning of the 7th century when the acute angled script reached Nepal, the initial *a* obtained its acute angled form 𑀇 and with this there occurred a corresponding change in the symbol for 100. In the subsequent period, with the change in the letter-form of *a*, the symbol for 100 is also changed accordingly. So far as the symbol for 200 is concerned, we do not have any epigraphic evidence of its use from Nepal so far, but as per the evidence of the Buddhist manuscripts, it can aptly be said that the initial *ā* is used to denote the second hundred. A date somewhere in the 8th-9th century for this approximation between the numerical sign for 200 and the letter-form of *ā* may not be far from the truth.

In at least two isolated examples such as the Tekkali plates of Anantavarman of Gaṅga year 358 (856 A.D.)¹⁵⁶ and the Shergarh inscription of Sāmanta Dēvadatta of V.S. 847 (789 A.D.)¹⁵⁷, the hundred element is expressed by a symbol that closely resembles the palatal *śa* as used in the respective records. At the present stage of our knowledge it is quite inexplicable why the scribes of these documents made an attempt to draw the symbol closely after the palatal *śa*.

The symbol for the thousand in the Nānāghat inscription¹⁵⁸ is indicated by a simple vertical hanging down from the middle of the top horizontal 𑀈. In the next stage of its development, it is seen in the form of a semi-circle attached to the right upright and thereby forming a closed loop at the top left 𑀉. This variety is noticed in the Nāsik cave inscriptions.¹⁵⁹ The Chammak plates of Vākāṭaka Pravarasēna II¹⁶⁰ which furnishes the lower limit of the use of this numerical symbol for one of the multiples of the thousand has an upturned curve in its bottom 𑀊. The addition of this upturned curve is decidedly as a result of the box-headed script in which the charter has been engraved. Bhagwanlal Indraji believed that the oldest sign for the thousand may be read as *ro* which later on became *dhra*.¹⁶¹ Buhler tried to interpret the later as *chu* or *dhu*.¹⁶² Neither Indraji nor Buhler explained how the numerical syllable for the thousand is transformed from *ro* to *dhra* or *chu* or *dhu*. Besides, if at all its earliest form corresponds to the syllable *ro*, then with the change in the letter-form of *ra* and the medial vowel *o* in the subsequent centuries, the numerical symbol should have been

changed accordingly and it is quite unintelligible why a totally different syllable is chosen for that. At any rate, the Nānāghat example represented by a horizontal and a vertical is so simple and ingenious at the sametime that any attempt of establishing its connection with the syllable *ro* may be held superfluous.






Thus, the numerical symbols passed through an independent process of evolution notwithstanding, in different time and space, there had been a deliberate attempt to approximate the symbol with the syllable. Apart from such fanciful approximations, the forms of the numerals which came through an evolutionary process continued to be used without any confusion on the part of the scribes or engravers. It is wrong to believe that the separate signs for the units, the tens, the hundreds and the thousands are all syllables, derived from certain letters, groups of letters or signs of alphabet. The earliest specimens of the respective numerals do not strictly conform to the syllables. Out of the twenty symbols, only four, viz. 4, 6, 20 and 50, have some resemblance with the letter-form of *ka*, *ja*, *ṭha* and *ṭa* respectively and the progressive development of the numerical symbols is not concomitant with that of the respective letter-forms. Any avowed similarity between the symbol and the syllable can be perceived from the second century AD. The symbol for 100 is one of the earliest to have been confused in the records of western India. But in the case of the other numerals, similar confusions have been occurred in different parts of India from the 5th century onwards. It has also been observed that this type of confusion between the symbol and the syllable is not seen in the case of all the twenty numerical signs. Certain numerals such as 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 50, 80, 90 and 1000 do not seem to have been resembled to the syllables or alphabetic signs. All of them evolved independently and none of their respective intermediate forms have been mistakenly taken to be syllables or alphabetic signs. Sometimes change in the script does not at all affect the symbols. The symbol for 5 as noticed in the charters of some of the ruling families of western India in the 4th-8th centuries is of looped variety which is admittedly as a result of the confusion on the part of the scribes for the looped variety of *ta*, as used by the Śātavāhanas in western Deccan from the middle of the second century AD. But the type of *ta* as known from the numerous grants of these ruling families of western India does not tally with its looped variety and the latter is never popularized in western India. To cite another example from western India, the symbol for 100 which has been drawn like the letter-form of *śu* in the Nāsik cave inscriptions, continued as such in the

subsequent centuries in the coins and inscriptions of the Western Kshatrapas and in the official charters of the Mahārajas of Valkha, the early Kalachuris, the Maitrakas and others. The progressive evolution of the letter-form of palatal *śa* AA in the inscription of western India did not make a corresponding change in the formation of the numerical sign for 100. Thus, the old belief that the numeral syllables changed their shapes according to the change of the alphabetic syllables is not applicable to all the numerals. The instances cited above fairly establish that very often certain symbols gained popularity among the scribes, engravers, manuscript writers and even the accountants for quite sometime in spite of the change in the letter-form. Moreover, the same symbol has also been written or confused at different times and in different localities differently. Although the symbol for 40 is confused for dental *sa* in the inscriptions of western India, the scribes in Nepal attempted to write it just like the syllable *pta*. A more marked example is the symbol for 100 which has been confused greatly in time and space. It resembles the letter-form of *su* in the inscriptions of central and eastern India of the 3rd-5th century, to the initial *a* in the Nepalese inscriptions of the 7th-8th centuries, to *lu* in the records of Orissa of the 9th-10th centuries, to *sra* or *srā* in the inscriptions of Rajasthan and north India of the 7th-10th centuries and so on. In the Buddhist manuscripts of Nepal and in the Jaina manuscripts of Rajasthan, it is drawn closely after *a* or *lu* and *su* respectively. Similarly the symbol for 200 is often written like the syllable *lū* in one of the deed plates of Orissa of the 10th century, *ā* in the Buddhist manuscripts of Nepal and *su* in the Jaina manuscripts of Rajasthan. Thus, the attempt to approximate the symbol with the syllable is of a varying nature both chronologically and spatially, and a particular numerical sign is mistaken for several letters, groups of letters in one and the same period, though not in one and the same locality.

An investigation into the symbol formation and their approximation with different syllables or alphabetic signs furthermore reveals that this type of confusion is mostly found in western India, Orissa and Nepal. Optionally it is also seen in central and eastern India and Rajasthan. Deccan and south India are relatively free from this fanciful practice. Western India seems to be one of the palaeographical zones where this practice at first started and from time to time the scribes in this part confused between the forms of the several numerals and those of the letters or groups of letters. Orissa, in eastern India is another such zone where similar approximation began to occur in the epigraphic records

from the 5th century onwards. While in western India, the fanciful approximation between the symbol and the syllable had its lower limit in the 7th- 8th centuries, the practice continued in the official charters of various ruling families of Orissa for two centuries more. Gujarat and eastern Malwa in western India and Orissa in eastern India have at least one thing in common and that is the geographic situation. Situated between the north and the south, not only the traditions and traits of both the halves converged in these localities but also many important routes passed through them. The palaeography of these two localities exhibit that the writing traditions peculiar to north and south India got transmitted to these localities from time to time and considerably influenced the existing local styles. Compared to Orissa, Gujarat and eastern Malwa had experienced this trend of reinforcement and commingling of scripts from early centuries of the Christian era and to be more precise it began with the Sātavāhana domination in these regions. Increasing palaeographic ramification and its convergence in western India might have confused the native scribes mostly and might have tried to locate the identical forms of the numerals and letters irrespective of the source of the latter and pronounced them like the alphabetic syllables for easy comprehension. No doubt this has put a brake on the process through which those symbols evolved but the 'new' or 'innovated' symbols or numeral syllables gained popularity among the local scribes for long. This construction explains away the incongruity regarding the advent or innovation of the looped variety of 5 and the palatal *śa* standing for the numeral 100 and their survival up to the 8th century in the official records of western India. In the case of Orissa, it received impingements from different source regions from the 4th-5th centuries and as in the script of the inscriptions so also in the use of the numerical symbols, it displayed great variety. The symbols for 7, 10 and 20 as appeared respectively in the Kesaribeda plate of Arthapati Bhattaraka, the Erbang plate of Śambhuyaśa of (Gupta) years 23 (554-55 A.D.) and the Ponnutūru plates of Sāmantavarman of Gaṅga year 64 (562 A.D.) are the earliest examples from Orissa to have been confused for the letters or syllables *re*, *ṛi* and *ma*. Although the attempt to equate the numeral 7 with *re* is also met with in the records of north Maharashtra in the 5th-6th centuries, similar approximations between the symbol for 10 and the syllable *ṛi* does not seem to have occurred in any part of India until three centuries after its first occurrence in the above Orissan charter. The symbol for 20 resembling the letter-form of *ma* as prevalent in the Kālīngan inscriptions of the 6th century is the solitary example of its kind and is not repeated in the

subsequent charters. Excepting these three isolated instances, there are several other cases where the symbols have been imported into Orissa from different source regions. In this respect, the numeral syllables as have been popularized in Nepal exerted great influence as the scribes of Orissa especially of the 8th -10th centuries. The symbol (30) resembling the letter-form of *la*, (40) to that of *pu* or *pta*, (60) to that of *chu* and (100) to that of *lu* are decidedly borrowed from the Nepalese source. But the symbol for 100 as used in the deed plates of the Eastern Gaṅgas of Kalinga appears to have been derived from the west Indian source.

Unlike western India and Orissa, where the confusion between the symbols and syllables has mostly occurred consequent upon the commingling of different scripts or impingement of scripts and symbols from different source regions, in Nepal most of the symbols have been wrongly engraved after the syllables because of the idiosyncrasies of the local scribes. The symbol for 30  and 40  resembling the letter-form of *la* and *pta* respectively have already been noticed in the inscriptions of Nepal as early as the 5th century AD. In the subsequent centuries, the numerals 60 , 70  and 100  are also approximated with the letter-form of *chu*, *chu/chū* and the initial *a* respectively. In the Nepalese inscriptions of the 5th-8th centuries, one may find the continuity in the process of approximation between the symbols and syllables, and the numeral syllables changed according to the change in the alphabetic syllables. The same trend also continued in the Buddhist manuscripts of Nepal.

So far as the inscriptions of the other localities are concerned, one of the inscriptions of the Maghas of Kosam datable to the early third century AD furnish a type of the numeral 100 which has been wrongly equated for the looped variety of *sa* as was current then in the same locality. The same numeral syllable is also found used in the documents of eastern India in the 5th century AD. Again in the inscriptions of central and eastern India of the 6th-7th centuries, the numeral 100 is written just like the syllable *lu*. In a few inscriptions of the Guptas the numerical symbol for 5 is drawn closely after *tri*. In the epigraphic records of Rajasthan and north India, the numeral syllables have been used at a comparatively later date, say in the 7th-10th centuries. Some of the numeral syllables such as *tri* for 5; *ha*, *hrā* for 8; *lri* for 10; *pta* for 40; and *sra*, *srā* or *sro* for 100 have occurred in the inscriptions of the Guhilas, Gūrjjara-Pratīhāras and other ruling families of these regions during this period. But it has been

observed that the precursors of these numeral syllables can be traced out from the epigraphic records of these localities and in a majority of cases they seem to have been borrowed from different source regions. It is, therefore, not unreasonable to believe that the numeral syllables as appeared in the records of Rajasthan and north India might have been due to the migration of the Brāhmaṇas, professional scribes, manuscript writers, traders, accountants, itinerary monks, scholars and teachers. They were the real agents who were instrumental in transmitting the numeral syllables to distant places.

Another problem that merits attention here is that often the same numeral syllable or any of its off-shoots or corrupt forms diffused to a wider area, and they are so much scattered chronologically and spatially that it becomes very difficult to offer any possible explanation. When we look to the numeral 100 resembling the looped variety of *sa* with the medial *u* as seen in the Kosam inscription of the early third century AD and its popularization in the middle Ganges valley and eastern India in the subsequent centuries, it is intelligible to us that the Kauśāmbī style of engraving got transmitted to the middle Ganges valley and eastern India in the 4th-5th centuries and along with the script the numerals too made a flow from Kosam to these regions. The same may also be true in the case of the numeral 7 resembling the letter-form of *re* as used in the Kesaribeda plate of Arthapati Bhaṭṭāraka and that of 5 resembling to the syllable *tri* as used in the Madhuban plate of Harsha. In the case of the former, it is well-known that the writing style of the Nalas in south-western Orissa came under the influence of the box-headed characters of central India and along with the script the numeral syllable *re* for 7 might have travelled to Orissa. The Sirpur plate of the Valkha ruler Rudradāsa of Gupta year 117 (437 A.D.) which also uses this type of the numeral is not far removed from the above grant of Arthapati in point of time. In the case of the latter, the numerical syllable *tri* for 5 is met with for the first time in at least two lithic records of the Guptas of the 5th century AD and the same syllable is also noticed in the Madhuban plate of Harsha. It is again a known fact that in the 6th century, the characteristic traits of the writing style of western India began to flow and supersede the eastern variety and along with this the numeral syllable *tri* might have been incorporated in the records of eastern India. But it is difficult to explain how the same syllable survived upto the date of the Barah plate of Bhōjadēva (836 A.D.) without any known example inbetween and how its corrupt forms occurred in the Siddhantam plates of Dēvēndravarmān of Gaṅga year 195 (693 A.D.).

Besides, it has been observed that there are some numeral syllables which are used in different palaeographical zones without the evidence of their occurrence in the intermediate zones. For example, the numeral syllable *lri* for 10 is found used in the Gūrjjara-Pratīhāra records after three centuries of its occurrence in one of the charters of Orissa. The syllable *hrā* for 8 has been simultaneously used in the records of the Gūrjjara-Pratīhāras of Rajasthan and north India, and the Bhaumakaras of Orissa. The letter-form of *la* intending for the numeral 30 which has been popularized in the records of Nepal in the 5th-7th centuries travelled as far as Vallabhi and Kōngoda in the western and eastern India respectively. The numerical symbol for 40 resembling the syllable *pta* which has been regular in the Nepalese inscriptions from the 5th century onwards travelled to Rajasthan and Maharashtra in the 7th-8th century AD. Some of the corruptions of this numeral syllable have also survived in a few records of the Bhaumakaras of Orissa of the 9th century. The symbol for 100 which is regular in western India during the 2nd-7th century AD inspired the scribes under the Eastern Gaṅgas of Kalinga in the 7th century. Although it becomes difficult to account for the occurrence of similar signs in the inscriptions of separate palaeographical zones far removed in time and space, yet the flow of the writing traditions from one region to another as well as the mobility of the professionals, traders and scholars might have been responsible for transmission of the numeral syllables to distant places.

Notes and References :

1. "On the Ancient Indian Numerals", *Indian Antiquary (IA)*, 6, p.42-48
2. *Ibid.*, p.47-48. Also see Bühler's article, "On the Origin of the Indian Alphabet and Numerals", *Ibid.*, 11, pp.268-70.
3. A.C. Burnell, *Elements of South Indian Palaeography*, London, 1878, p.66.
4. G. Bühler, *Indian Palaeography*, Indian Studies: Past and Present, 1(1), Calcutta, 1959, 125; *On the Origin of the Indian Brahma Alphabet*, third edition, Varanasi, 1963, p.115-19.
5. *I.A.*, 11, p. 270.
6. *Bhāratiya Prācīna Lipimālā* (in Hindi), third edition, Delhi, 1959, pp.103-14.
7. A.H. Dani, *Indian Palaeography*, second edition, New Delhi, 1986, pp.ix-xvii.
8. See my article "Symbol Formation in Brahmi: Construction of an Alternative Paradigm", to be published in the *Journal of Ancient Sciences and Archaeological Society of India*.

9. V.V. Mirashi, *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, (CII.), 4(1), pp.25-29 and pl., l. 18.
10. *Ibid.*, pp.50-56 and pl., l. 35.
11. *Ibid.*, pp.57-66 and pl., l. 51.
12. *Ibid.*, pp.80-85 and pl., l. 36.
13. K.V. Ramesh and S.P. Tiwari, *A Copper-Plate Hoard of the Gupta Period from Bagh*, Madhya Pradesh New Delhi, 1990, No. III, pp.6-8 and pl., l. 8; No. VIII, pp.17-19 and pl., l. p.8; No. IX, pp.19-21 and pl., l. p.9 and so on.
14. *Epigraphia Indica (EI)*, 8, pp.59-96 and pls., No. 5, l. 12.
15. *Ibid.*, 7, pp.73-74 and pls., No. 21, l. 1.
16. *Ibid.*, 1, pp.371-93 and pls., No. II, l. p.1; No. X, l. 1; No. XIX, l. p.1.
17. *Ibid.*, 23, pp.42-52 and pl.
18. Dani, *op.cit.*, pp.282-83.
19. Fleet, *CII.*, 3, pp.171-91 and pl. XXV, l. 78.
20. *Ibid.*, pp.262-64 and pl. XXXIX A, l. 1; 88-90 and pl. XII A, l. 3.
21. *EI.*, 7, pp.155-60 and pl., l. 18.
22. *Journal of the Ganganath Jha Kendriya Sanskrit Vidyapitha*, 46, pp.101-10 and pl., l. 29.
23. *EI.*, 19, pp.15-19 and pl., l. 16.
24. *Ibid.*, 13, pp.212-16 and pl., l. 29.
25. *Ibid.*, 28, pp.12-17 and pl., l. 13.
26. *CII.*, 4(1), pp.10-12 and pl. II C, l. 9.
27. *Ibid.*, pp.38-42 and pl. VI, l. 34.
28. *EI.*, 6, pp.315-19 and pl. 7; Ramesh and Tiwari, *op.cit.*, pp.1-3 and pl., l. 8; *CII.*, 4(1), pp.17-19 and pl. III B, l. 6.
29. *IA.*, 6, pp.44, Cols. 8 and 9. In the Bower manuscript, the symbol for 7 is also written like *gra*. (A.F. Rudolf Hoernle, Bower *Manuscript*, ASI, Calcutta, 1893-1912.

30. See note 22 above.
31. *Journal of Bihar and Orissa Research Society (JBORS)*, 5(4), pp.564-81 and pl. l. 36.
32. Ramesh and Tiwari, *op.cit.*, pp.60-63 and pl., l. 10.
33. E.J. Rapson, *A Catalogue of Indian Coins in the British Museum*, Oxford, 1967, pp.ccvii-ccviii.
34. See note 22 above.
35. *EL.*, 19, pp.15-19 and pl., l. 16.
36. *Ibid.*, 29, pp.210-20 and pls., l. 36.
37. *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (JASB)*, 40(3), pp.168-69 and pl., l. 36.
38. *IA*, 15, pp.138-41 and pl., l. 17.
39. *Ibid.*, 6, pp.44, Cols. 7 and 8.
40. *EL.*, 2, pp.195-212 and pls., No. XIII, l. A; 8, 179-82 and pls., l. 1.
41. See note 33 above.
42. Dani, *op.cit.*, p.137.
43. R. Gnoli, *Nepalese Inscriptions in Gupta Characters*, Roma, 1956, pl. IV, l. 1a.
44. *Ibid.*, pl. XI, l. 4.
45. Dani, *op.cit.*, p.137.
46. Regmi, *Inscriptions of Ancient Nepal*, pl. XCVII, l. 21; pl. CXXIII, l. 1.
47. *Ibid.*, Pl. XXXIV, l. 4.
48. *EL.*, 34, pp.167-74, No. 1, l. 24.
49. *Ibid.*, 21, pp.34-41 and pls.
50. *Ibid.*, pp.35-36.
51. *Ibid.*, 29, pp.38-43 and pls., l. 54; 19, 265-71 and pls., l. 61; *JBORS*, 16(2), pp.176-88 and pls, l. 61.
52. *IA.*, 12, pp.151-56 and pl., l. 1; *EL.*, 18, pp.87-99 and pl., l. 21; 41, pp.148-53 and pls., l. 32.

53. *Orissa Historical Research Society (OHRJ)*, 12(3), pp.113-22 and pl., l. 16.
54. *EI.*, 23, p.203 and pl., l. 14.
55. *Ibid.*, 19, pp.52-62 and pl., l. 2.
56. *IA.*, 15, pp.105-13 and pl., l. 14.
57. Regmi, *op.cit.*, pl. II, l. 2; pl. XXVI, l. 3.
58. *EI.*, 27, pp.216-22 and pls., l. 29.
59. *Ibid.*, 25, pp.281-88 and pls., l. 25.
60. *IA.*, 7, pp.73-75 and pl., l. 53.
61. *Ibid.*, pp.76-79 and pl., l. 50.
62. *EI.*, 19, pp.265-71 and pls., l. 61.
63. Regmi, *op.cit.*, pl. LXXIV, l. 23.
64. *Ibid.*, pl. LXXVII, l. 16.
65. *Ibid.*, pl. LXXX, l. 22.
66. *Ibid.*, pl. IX, l. 4.
67. *Ibid.*, pl. XXIII, l. 20.
68. *IA.*, 6, p.44, Col. 8.
69. *EI.*, 1, pp.371-93 and pls., No. VI, l. p.1; No. VII, l. p.1; No. XXV, l. p.1; 8, pp.179-82 and pl., No. B, l. 1; 9, pp.241-46 and pl., l. 5.
70. Ramesh and Tiwari, *op.cit.*, No. XXVII, pp.57-59 and pl., l. 8.
71. *CII.*, 5, pp.93-100 and pl., l. 28.
72. *EI.*, 12, pp.4-6 and pls., l. 15; 15, pp.249-52 and pls., l. 15; 25, pp.281-85 and pls., l. 25; 36, 1-7 and pls., ll. 17-18; 37, pp.337-40 and pls., l. 19.
73. *Ibid.*, 11, pp.219-22 and pl., l. 18.
74. *Ibid.*, 9, pp.296-300 and pl., l. 34.
75. *IA.*, 7, pp.66-68 and pl., l.16.

76. *EI.*, 13, pp.338-40 and pl., l. 18.
77. *IA.*, 5, pp.206-07 and pl., l. 15.
78. *CII.*, 3, pp.172-91 and pl. XXV, l. 78.
79. *ASI., Annual Report*, 1913-14, pl. LXVI.
80. Regmi, *op.cit.*, pl. IX, l. 3.
81. *Ibid.*, pl. XXV, l. 7.
82. *Ibid.*, pl. LXXXVIII, l. 1.
83. *Ibid.*, pl. XCVII, l. 21.
84. *EI.*, 34, pp.170-73 and pl., l. 24.
85. *IA.*, 6, pp.16-21 and pl. l. 70.
86. B. Misra, *Orissa Under the Bhauma Kings (OUBK)*, Calcutta, 1934, pp.32-39 and pl., ll. pp.42-43.
87. *Ibid.*, pp.40-51 and pls., l. 30.
88. *IA.*, 6, pp.45, Cols. 7 and 8.
89. *EI.*, 1, pp.371-97 and pls., No. IX, l. 1; No. XXX, l. 1.
90. *Ibid.*, 8, pp.59-96, No. 12, ll. 1, 4.
91. Ramesh and Tiwari, *op.cit.*, No. I, 1-3 and pl., l. 8; Appendix I, 60-63 and pl., l. 10.
92. Rapson, *op.cit.*, CCVII-CCVIII.
93. *IA.*, 8, pp.301-05 and pl., l. 35; *CII.*, 3, pp.164-71 and pl. XXIV, l. 36.
94. *IA.*, 13, pp.70-81 and pl., l. 42.
95. *Ibid.*, 6, p.47.
96. Regmi, *op.cit.*, pl. XXXIII, l. 5.
97. *Ibid.*, pl. XXXIV, l. 1.
98. *Ibid.*, pl. CIX, l.21.
99. *Ibid.*, pl. CXVI, l. 24.

100. *Ibid.*, cf. *mukhe*, l. 4; *ny*=*anudarsayati*, l. 8.
101. *JBORS*, 2(4), pp.419-27 and pl., l. 33.
102. *EI.*, 38, pp.124-28 and pl., l. 41.
103. *Ibid.*, 23, pp.201-02 and pl., l. 19.
104. *CII.*, 3, pp.274-78 and pl. XLI A, l. 14.
105. Regmi, *op.cit.*, pl. IX, l. 5.
106. *Ibid.*, pl. CXIX, l. 29.
107. *Ibid.*, pl. CXXX, l. 5.
108. *Ibid.*, pl. CLX, l. 1. The symbol in the hundreds place has been very much corroded. Gnoli has deciphered it as 100 (*op.cit.*, No. LXXXIX) while Regmi took it as 200. The former appears to be more near the truth.
109. Regmi, *op.cit.*, pl. XXXVII.
110. *IA.*, 6, p.45, Col. 9; Ojha, *op.cit.*, pl. LXXIII.
111. *EI.*, 2, pp.195-212 and pls., No. XX, l. A.
112. *CII.*, 3, pp.117-20 pl. XVI, l. 24.
113. *IA.*, 6, p.47.
114. *EI.*, 8, pp.59-96 and pls., No. 5, l. 10; NO. 15, l. 11.
115. D.C. Sircar, *Select Inscriptions Bearing on the Indian History and Civilization*, I, Calcutta, 1942, pp.186-90 and pls. XXXIV-XXXV, ll. 11, 14, 15.
116. E. Hultzsch, *CII.*, *Inscriptions of Aśoka*, I, second edition, Varanasi, 1969, 166-80 and pls. facing p.170 (l. 7), p.177 (l. 8), p.179 (l. 16), p.181 (l. 12).
117. *CII.*, 3, pp.260-62 and pl. XXXVIII B, l. 11.
118. *IA.*, 13, pp.119-22 and pls., l. 20; *EI.*, 30, pp.37-42 and pls., l. 20.
119. *Indian Culture* (IC), 3, Inscription No. 1, pp.177-83 and pl., l. 4.
120. *CII.*, 3, pp.45-47 and pl. VI A, l. 2; 88-90 and pl. XII A, l. 3; 106-09 and pl. xiv, l. 20; 117-20 and pl. xvi, l. 24; *EI.*, 21, pp.78-83 and pl., l. 25; 23, 52-66 and pl., l. 19.

121. Satya Shrava, *The Dated Kushana Inscriptions*, New Delhi, 1993, No. 40, 35-40 and pl.; No. 164, 130 and pl.
122. *EI.*, 3, p.306 and pl.; 24, 146-48, 253-56 and pls.; *IC*, 3(1), 177-83 and pl.
123. *EI.*, 36, pp.47-49 and pl., l. 13.
124. *Ibid.*, 20, pp.97-99 and pl., l. 12.
125. *Ibid.*, 11, pp.299-304 and pl., l. 13.
126. In the Jaina manuscripts the symbols for 100 and 200 are represented by *su* and *sū*. (Ojha, *op.cit.*, pl. LXXIV).
127. *EI.*, 19, pp.15-19 and pl., l. 16.
128. *Ibid.*, pp.52-62 and pl., ll. 1, 2.
129. *IA.*, 15, pp.105-13 and pl., l. 14.
130. *Ibid.*, pp.138-41 and pl., l. 17.
131. *EI.*, 28, pp.211-16 and pl., ll. 22-23; *JBORS.*, 16(1), 69-83 and pl., l. 25; B. Misra, *OUBK.*, 32-39 and pl., ll. 42-43; *Ibid.*, 40-51 and pls., l. 30; *JBORS.*, 2(4), pp.419-27 and pl., l. 33.
132. *EI.*, 6, pp.133-40 and pl., ll. 35-36; *JBORS.*, 5(4), pp.564-81 and pl., l. 36; 2(4), pp.396-400 and pl., l. 32.
133. *Ibid.*, 15, pp.87-97 and pl., l. 39; *EI.*, 41, pp.148-53 pls., ll. 32-33; *Ibid.*, 25, pp.147-57 and pl., l. 41.
134. *Ibid.*, 36, pp.307-12 and pl., l. 39.
135. *Ibid.*, 38, pp.122-31 and pl., l. 41.
136. *Ibid.*, 29, pp.79-89 and pl., l. 37.
137. *Ibid.*, 29, pp.183-89 and pl., l. 39.
138. *JASB.*, 40(3), 1871, pp.168-69 and pl., l. 36.
139. *EI.*, 6, pp.133-40 and pl., ll. 35-36.
140. *JBORS.*, 5(4), pp.564-81 and pl., l. 36.
141. *EI.*, 29, pp.80-81.

142. *Ibid.*, 8, pp.284-90 and pl., l. 29.
143. *Ibid.*, 40, pp.133-38 and pl., l. 27.
144. *Ibid.*, 23, pp.201-202 and pl., l. 19.
145. *CII.*, 3, pp.274-78 and pl. XLI A, l. 14.
146. *EI.*, 28, pp.329-31 and pl., l. 15.
147. *Ibid.*, 9, pp.285-88 and pl., l. 18.
148. *OHRJ.*, 12(3), pp.113-22 and pl., ll. 15-16.
149. *EI.*, 36, pp.307-12 and pl., l. 39.
150. Ojha, *op.cit.*, pl. LXXIV.
151. Regmi, *op.cit.*, pl. CXXVIII, l. 37.
152. *Ibid.*, pl. CXXXII, l. 23.
153. *Ibid.*, pl. CXXXIII, l. 26.
154. *Ibid.*, pl. CXL, l. 18.
155. *Ibid.*, pl. CXLII, l. 35.
156. *EI.*, 26, pp.174-77 and pls., l. 24.
157. *IA.*, 14, p.351 and pl.
158. Sircar, *op.cit.*, pp.186-90 and pl. XXXIV-XXXV, ll. 7-18.
159. *EI.*, 8, pp.59-96 and pls., No. 10, l. 4; No. 12, ll. 2-5.
160. Mirashi, *CII.*, 5, pp.22-27 and pls., l. 19.
161. *IA.*, 6, p.47.
162. Bühler, *op.cit.*, 1959, p.124.

MAUSAHĀNĪĀ COPPER-PLATE GRANT OF HAMMĪRAVARMAN CHANDELLA V.S. 1347

K.L. Agrawal

This copper plate inscription is in the possession of Shri Govind Singh Bundela, Govt. Contractor of Mausahānīā, District Chhatarpur, M.P. Shri Bundela belongs to village Kharkā, 8 Kilometres from the village Mausahānīā. With his kind permission the copper plate is edited here.

The findspot of the copper plate in question is not known at present. The copper plate is the hereditary property of Shri Bundela. But the place names mentioned in the charter and the issuing place of issue (Samāvāsa Gahirwāri) are situated in the locality. The plate seems to belong to this Mausahānīā region.

It consists of a copper plate, which measures 38 × 28 c.m. The weight of the plate is 2500 gm. In the middle of the top between lines one and two there is a hole in which a ring is attached. The edge of the plate are slightly thickened. The figure of goddess Lakshmī in *padmāsana mudrā* has been carved below the ring-hole in the blank space provided by a gap in the middle of the first five lines. The elephants on either side usually found in most other Chandella copper plates known so far are missing here, this can be considered as a form of simple seated Lakshmī instead of Gaja Lakshmī. The goddess Lakshmī is four armed. She holds lotuses in upper two hands and her lower two hands are empty.

The plate is quite smooth. It is inscribed on one side only. There are in all 19 lines of writing. The record is in a very good state of preservation. It is neatly written. However, the letters of lines 18 and 19 are smaller and rude in comparison to the letters of the rest of the plate. The characters belong to the northern class of alphabets of the 13th century A.D. They resemble the charter *viz.*, Charkhārī plate of Hammīravarman Chandella. The average size of letters, which are well formed is about 3 cm.

The language is Sanskrit except the benedictive and imprecatory verses quoted in lines 14 to 18, the whole composition is in prose. The orthographical peculiarities are the same as the ones found in other Chandella records published before. The record is not free from mistakes. For example, in l.6 *Paramabhṭṭārake* and *tpādi* are written for *Paramabhṭṭāraka* and *Sāhi* respectively. In lines 3,4 and 6 after

the word *pādānudhyāta* double full stop has been used. Similarly in 1.7 *Duvvi*, 1.8 *Samipōpagaya* and 1.12 *Tāmreśrāsani* are inscribed instead of *Durvvi*, *Samipōpagata* and *tāmraśāsani* respectively.

The charter was issued from Gahirwāri Samāvāsa by Hammīravarman Chandella, who styled himself as the *paramabhṭṭāraka Sāhi Rājavalī trayopēta*, Lord of Kālāñjara meditating at the feet of *paramabhṭṭāraka, paramēśvara, paramamāhēśvara Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Vīavarmmadēva*, who inturn meditated at the feet of *paramabhṭṭāraka, paramēśvara paramamāhēśvara Mahārājādhirāja Śrī* Trailōkyavarmmadēva, who again meditated at the feet of the P.M.P. Sāhi Mahārāja Paramarddidēva. It records the grant of Chhidahaḍāgrāma to Raut Pīthan Brahmana. The *gōtra* of the donee was Vachha(*Vatsa*). He was the great grandson of Raut Vāghadēva, grandson of Valāladēva (Vallāladēva) and son of Raut Haripāladēva.

The date of the inscription is mentioned in the line 12 as Vikrama Samvat 1347, Jyēshṭha śu 14, Sōmadine (Monday), which may correspond to 1290 A.D.

The Chandella king Hammīravarman is already known from the Charkhārī plate,¹ which was issued in V.S. 1346 (i.e. 1279 A.D.). It records the donation of land in the Vēdēsaita-vishaya i.e., Vidiśā in Madhya Pradesh. This proves that his sovereignty in the western part of the Chandella empire was still intact. The Bamhni record also proves that his suzerainty extended as far as Damoh and Jabalpur district of Madhya Pradesh. These areas were ruled by his feudatory Mahārājaputra Vāghadēva.² Raibahadur Hiralal³ says that at that time portions of the Damoh and Jabalpur district were governed by a Mahārājaputra and Ajaygarh continued to be in his possession. From the present record, we come to know that the area around Gahirawāri (modern Gaharwār, Isānagar Block in the district of Chhatarpur, M.P.) or Sahadrauśisanya-vishaya (modern Sahāniyā, district Chhatarpur, M.P) was also included in the areas under control of Hammīravarman Chandella. Thus it is quite evident from the study of the present record that at the time of issue of the record i.e., 1290 A.D., the Chandella sovereignty was still acknowledged throughout the empire.

The inscription commences with the words *ōm Siddham*. The stereotyped introductory verse referring to the Chandrātrēya family is given next. The prose passage that follows refers to the rulers Jayaśakti and Vijayaśakti among the early kings of this family. Then the names of Paramarddidēva, Trailōkyavarmmadēva

and Vīravarmmadēva are mentioned. After Vīravarmmadēva his son and successor Hammīravarmmadēva is referred to as Kālanjarādhipati. It will be noticed that in his own case he has left out the grandiloquent titles of the *Mahārājādhirāja* and *Paramēśvara*, which he duly attached to his predecessors. This indicates that either he was fully conscious of his reducing position, which compelled him to be content with a humbler title or that he was never recognised as the Mahārājā, while his elder brother Bhōjavarman was on the throne. In the Ajaygarh fort there is a Sati⁴ record of Samvat 1346, which refers to the reign of Bhōjavarman. Raibahadur Hiralal says that the Charkhārī plate dated in the same year would therefore point to the usurpation of the throne unless Bhōjavarman died in the year before the month of Bhādrapada, when the grant under publication was made.

The adoption of the title Sāhi and dropping of the title of *Mahārājādhirāja* and *Paramēśvara* in the case of Hammīravarman is also significant. It may be a emulation of the contemporary Muslim sovereigns. However, the title was definitely known in India before their advent. It was a well known epithet of the Kushāṇas, and was also adopted by the Brāhmaṇa rulers of the north-west frontiers belonging to the Sāhi dynasty. The Khajuraho Lakshmaṇa temple inscription of V.S. 1011 also mentions it as a title of the king of Kīras.⁵

Amongst the abbreviations preceding the name of the brāhamaṇas, *Ra* and *Paṃ* appear to stand respectively for the titles such as *Raut* and *Paṃḍita*.

The village Chhidahaḍā was donated alongwith tanks, wells, *Vihāras* together with mango and Mahua trees. The king also asks the village people including the respectable persons and officials, cultivators, householders, the executor of the grant, physicians, members of the village council upto even *medas* and *chaṇḍālas* to give the entire dues to the donee. The usual injunctions are then laid down.

Amongst the dues referred to *Bhāga*, as the meaning or the word also indicates, stands for royal share of the produce and *Bhōga* means ⁶ the periodical supplies made by tenants to the king. It seems that the share in the produce like cotton, flower, hemp, plant, minerals, iron, timber, stones, etc., was called *Bhāga*, while *Bhōga* as the meaning of the word appears to suggest for the shares of sugarcane, mango, etc., which were offered in seasons and periodically. The expression *bhāga-bhōgādi* or *bhāga-bhōga paśu-hiraṇya* occurring in the Chandella grants indicate that *bhāga* and *bhōga* are different levies.⁷

Four names of geographical importance have been mentioned in the record. In line 13 the expression Gahirawāri-Samāvāse suggests that the ruler had his camp at Gahirawāri at the time of the donation of the village Chhidahaḍā in the *vishaya* (dist.) of Sahadrauśisanya (line 8). The donee came from the Padikhōharigrāma of the above mentioned district. The Samāvāsa Gahirawāri is the present day Gaharwār situated on the Chhatarpur-Isānagar road. It is 22 kilometers from the district headquarters Chhatarpur. The Sahadrauśisanya- *vishaya* is Sahāniyā, which is a flourishing town between Chhatarpur-Nowgong road. It is 15 kms from Chhatarpur and 8 kms from Nowgong. The localities of Padikhoharī and Chhidahaḍā villages are not traceable.

The document was written by Pandit Kīrtipāla.

Notes and References :

1. *Ep.Ind.*, Vol. XX, pp.134-36
2. *Ibid.*, Vol. XVI, p.10 n.4.
3. *Ibid.*, p.11 and n.1
4. *Madhuri*, Vol.V, p.2, n.2
5. *Ep.Ind.*, Vol. I, pp.129, 134, V.43.
6. Ram Sharma, *Ep.Ind.*, Vol. XL, p.129; Sircar, *Indian Epigraphical Glossary*, p.47-48 under *Bhāga*, *Bhōga-kara* which is not a single levy as suggested by him.
7. *Ep. Ind.*, Vol. XL, pp. 129-30.

AMRITAVARSHINĪ STEP-WELL OF AHMEDABAD : AN EPIGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

Bharati Shelat

Step-wells are an important part of the main current of architectural activity in western India. This unique form of architecture survives from the 7th century onwards in Gujarat and Rajasthan. The earliest reference of the stepwell inscription found in Gujarat is that of Sodhalī stepwell in Mangrol (Dist. Junagadh) dated V.S. 1375, Pausha, śu.di. 15, Ravi (January 7, 1319 A.D.).

The term 'step-well' itself indicates the basic features of architecture and function of this peculiar kind of well-monument, found in some parts of India, which received monumental importance in Gujarat. The terms 'Vāva', *Vāvaḍī*, *Bāvalī*, *Vāī* in Gujarati and Hindi for step-well are in common use. They are constructed as a form of charity to the people.

The step-wells of Gujarat have narrow stairs going deep down into the earth in order to expose little surface area to the sun and to provide large areas of shade in storeys and galleries. All over Gujarat there is a regular network of interesting and magnificent step-well monuments. Travellers' accounts transcribe step-well as *bauri* or *bowrie*. In Rajasthan and northern region of India the terms for step-well are *bāoli* or *bāuli*.

The step-wells are the monuments of which the major parts are underground. In most of the cases they are simple, but in some cases they are carved and ornamented with decorative relief work and sculptures. A step-well consists of three major architectural parts:

1. The vertical well (*kūpa*)
2. The stepped corridor leading down to several storeys in the earth starting from the entrance pavilion and ending at the water level of the well and
3. Numerous intermediate tower-like pavilions built as open halls (*maṇḍapa*) in the stepped corridor.

In the historical city of Ahmedabad *Amṛitavarṣhinī* step-well is situated just besides the wall of the Pancha Kuva gate. The ground - plan of the *vāpī* is shaped like letter 'L', i.e. the stepped corridor is not descending in a straight line, but turns at a right angle. It is a *Nandā* type *vāpī*. The first arm is longer

than the one leading to the well. L shaped step-well is the earliest variety. The *Vāpi* is not highly decorated, but is a splendid one. (fig.1) .



Front view of the Amṛitavarshiṇī step-well of Ahmedabad

From the western direction after entering the step-well, there are two pavilion towers. After crossing these two *kūṭas* the right angle is covered with a platform. Parapet wall is attached to the well. The step-well is facing to the west whereas the well is in the north. The east-west length of the step-well is 68 feet. The entrance pavilion is 5 feet. The steps are 1 foot broad and 6 inches high. After descending 10 steps, there is a three feet broad pavilion. Again after 10 steps three feet broad pavilion and at the end of the next ten steps 6 feet broad pavilion is built. Here the first *Kūṭa* ends. Again 10 steps lead down to the stepped corridor till it reaches *Kūṭa* second and eleven square feet pavilion is constructed. From here the stepped corridor starts at an angle of 90° to the north. The total length of the outer side of south-north angle is 25 feet. Again descending ten steps leads to the third *Kūṭa* and the pavilion is 4.5 feet broad. *Kūṭa* three is adjacent to the well of 11 feet in diameter. The step-well is also 11 feet broad. The total height from the ground level to the second storey is 25 feet. The ground floor is five feet high, whereas the first and the second storeys are 10 feet high. The pillars and the arches are simple without any decoration.

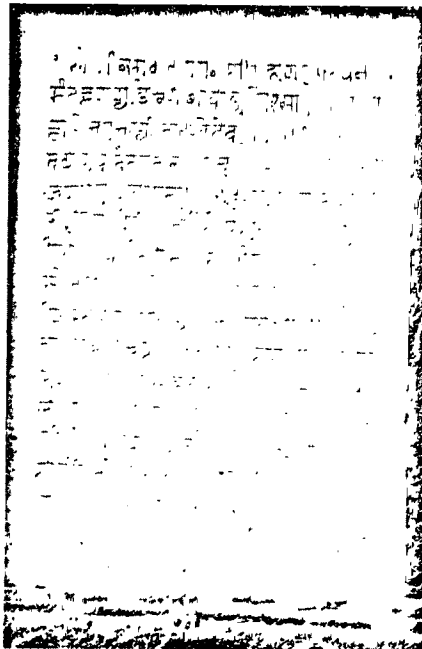
The two Sanskrit and Persian inscriptions inscribed on white marble are fixed on the left and right walls of the platform at the end of the first *Kūṭa*.

The Sanskrit Inscription : ¹

The Sanskrit inscription is dated V.S. 1779, Śaka 1644, *Pramāthin Samvatsara*, *Uttarāyaṇa*, *Śisīra Ritu*, *Māgha*, *Kṛishṇa 5*, *Guru*, *Svāti nakshatra*, *Dhruva yoga* and *Taitala Karaṇa*) (ll. 2-4 and 8-10). It starts with the auspicious symbol of Ōm| and Śrī Narmadāyai namaḥ| Śrī Mahāgaṇapatayē namaḥ|| The inscription measure 59 cms. × 41 cms. and the inscribed portion measures 47 cms. × 31 cms. The letters are 1.5cms × 2 cms. in measurement.

The *script* of the inscription is Nāgarī of the early 18th cent. A.D.

It contains 16 lines with three *Anusṭup* verses in the beginning (ll. 2-7) and the rest of the portion is in prose (ll. 8-16). The inscription refers to the construction of the *Pīyūshavarshinī* stepwell by Shri Raghunāthadāsa, son of Bhagavāna and grandson of Kshātra Gōkula (ll. 11-13). At the end of the third verse 'May Lord Viṣṇu and Lord Śiva be contented (l. 7) and after the prose portion 'May the step-well rise until the sun and the moon shine' (ll. 13-14) is expressed. The text of the inscription is written by *Mukundaji*, son of Dave Mahāśiva of *Audichya-sahasra* Brāhmaṇa caste (ll. 14-15). Thākur Paramānanda was the *Darogā* of that area in Ahmedabad (l. 15) and Kāśīdāsa and Rāmadāsa both were the sculptors (ll. 15-16). The inscription ends with auspicious words 'Śubham Bhavatu Śivam' (l. 16) (fig. 2).



Sanskrit Inscription of the Amṛitavarshinī step-well of Ahmedabad

Text

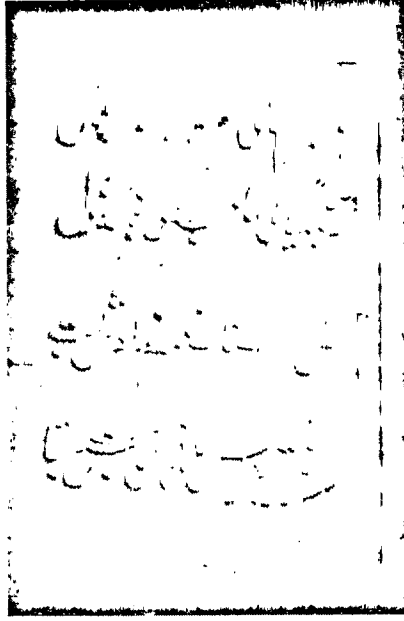
Represented by a symbol.

1. Ōm| Śrī Narmadāyai namaḥ| Śrī Mahāgaṇapatayē namaḥ||
2. Saṁvannavādray-adri-bhūmau Śākē=’bdhay-abdhi - ras - ābjakē| Māghē |
3. Kṛiṣṇē cha pañchamyām| vāsarē dēvapūjitē || 1 || vāyubhē - Duhru-
4. vayōgē cha| Taitalē - karaṇē=’ pi cha|| Kshātragōkula -pautrēṇa
5. Bhagavatt-anujanmanā ||2|| Raghunāthasya dāsēna| vāpī
6. Pīyūsha - varshiṇī|| kṛitā viśv-ōpakārāya| nagarē Gūrjjar - ā -
7. bhidhē| tayā saṁtōshatām - ētu| sām̐baḥ Śrīpatisaṁyutaḥ ||3||
8. Saṁvat 1779 varshē Śākē 1644 pravartamānē| Pramāthinā-
9. mni saṁvatsarē| Uttarāyaṇē| Śīsira - ṛitau| Māghē - māsī
10. Kṛiṣṇapakshē| pañchamyām Gurau Svātinakshatrē| Dhruva-yōgē| Taita-
11. lakaraṇē| tad-dinē mahārājādhiraja - kshatriya-Kaulati-
12. lakaraṇē Śrī Raghunāthadāsēna jagad-upakārāy-āmṛitava-
13. rshiṇī nāmni (mni) vāpi pratishṭhitā| sācha āchamdr-ārka varddhi-
14. shṇur-bhūyāt ||1|| likhitam auddhē (dī) chya-dvija-sahasra - davē Śrī 5 ma-
15. hāsivātmaja Mukam (kum) dajī| Ṭhākura Paramanaṁda darōgā|| śilpi (lpī)
Kāśī -
16. dāsa tathā Rām (Rā)madāsa Sōmapura -jñātīya militvā kṛitaḥ| subham
bhavatu śivam [|]

The Persian Inscription : ²

The Persian inscription is dated Hijri San 1135 (1723 A.D.). It measures 60cms. × 4.1 cms. and the inscribed portion measures 47 cms. × 31 cms. The letters are 9 cms. × 3 cms. in measurement. It contains four lines in a form of quatrain. The inscription records that ‘I have passed my whole life in the works dealing

with water and earth. Some righteous person may stop here. It is inscribed on marble stone slab with an iron reed. Raghunāthadāsa is the exectuor of this stepwell (lls. 1-4)', Hijri San 1135 is inscribed beneath the last line on the left (1.5) (fig. 3).



Persian Inscription of the Amṛitavarshiṇī step-well of Ahmedabad

Gurjara nagara referred to in the inscription indicates the city of Ahmedabad, the capital of Gujarat.

Text

1. Basar Burdam tamāmī (e) Umra rā da Kāre ābo Gil.
2. Kiha Shāyad yakdamī Sāhibadilī ān jā kunadā mañjila
3. Bara lauhe Sanga khāmwe folād naksha basta
4. *Raghunāthadāsa bānīe* e mamba hasta.
5. (Hijrī) san 1135

Mirat-i-Ahmadi referes to Raghunāthadāsa as the personal Diwan³ of Moez-ud-Daula Haidara Kulīkhān, a subēdār of Gujarat. He was also appointed as the chief of the department of treasury. The latter was the Hakem of Surat and in 1715 he started to build *Ālamapanāha* fort round the suburbs of Surat. In 1717 he established the Haidar Suburb in Surat. He came to Ahmedabad in 1721. During that time Diwan Raghunāthadāsa was working as a deputy of Surat

harbour. He also came to Ahmedabad. During the time of Nizam-ul-Mulk Raghunāthadāsa handed over the work to his son-in-law Bhogilal and retired from the responsibility.

Thākur Paramānand was the chief officer of the *sipahīs*. He received his *sanad* as a *Manasabdār* from the Diwan.

The date of the Sanskrit inscription V.S. 1779, Śaka 1644, Māgha, ba.di, 5, Guruvāra corresponds to 14 February, 1723 A.D. according to *Amānta* system of months. The *Samvatsara Pramādin* was prevalent in V.S. 1779, Śaka 1644 according to the Northern cycle of Jovian years. The ending moment of *Svāti nakshatra* mentioned in the inscription is 72 i.e. 17 hours and 20 minutes.

Hijri san mentioned in the Persian inscription is 1135 which is equivalent to 1723 A.D. The corresponding day and month of Muslim calendar according to Hindu month and *tithi* Māgha ba.di. 5 is 19th day of the month *Jamādal awwal*¹⁴.

Notes and References :

1. H.G. Shastri (Compiler), *Historical Inscriptions of Gujarat (in Gujarati)*, Vol. V, Forbes Guj. Sabha, Bombay, 1981, no. 58 h; *Kumar*, year 41 (July, 1964), pp. 286-288
2. *Ibid.*, p. 288
3. The Diwan of the province under the Muhammadan Government was the head financial minister of the state or of a province, being charged in the latter with the collection of revenue the remittance of it to the imperial treasury and invested with extensive powers (Judicial) in all civil and financial causes. (Wilson's Glossary). His duties were the collection of revenues of the Crown lands and dues on charitable endowments, payment under his signature of Salaries according to services rendered and of Jagirs having royal sanads issued in the other Governments and similar duties in connection with taxation receipts and expenditure. (Syed Navab and - Charles Norman Seddon, *Mirat-i-Ahmadi; Supplement*, GOS series, Oriental Institute, Baroda, 1928, p. 148).
4. L.D. Swami Kannu Pillai, *An Indian Ephemeris*, Vol. VI, Agam, Prakashan, Delhi, reprint, 1982, p. 248.

FOUR UNPUBLISHED KANNADA INSCRIPTIONS

A.V. Narasimha Murthy and N. Havalaiiah

The four unpublished Kannada Inscriptions edited here were found in Kabballi, Sāgaḍe and Channakal Kāval of Chamarajanagar district of Karnataka State.¹ They belong to early Western Gaṅga(2), Chaṅgāḷva and Vijayanagara dynasties and are important for understanding the local history of the area. Hence, they have been studied here for the first time. The inscriptions are taken for study in a chronological order.

Inscription I : The first inscription from this point of view is the Western Gaṅga epigraph found at Kabballi. It is on an irregular granite slab lying in the agricultural field to the south of the village. The record contains eight lines in Kannada characters of the eighth century A.D. The inscription is in Kannada language of the period. The inscription belongs to the reign of Western Gaṅga king Śrīpurusha, who is a well known king of this dynasty who ruled from his capital Talakāḍ. He is introduced in this inscription in the first two lines. Then the epigraph mentions his subordinate whose name cannot be made out with certainty. The inscription next introduces his feudatory or *maṇḍalika*, by name Era Arakēsi, who was the governor of the area known as Peṅkachi. This Arakēsi may be identified with a person of the same name mentioned in an inscription from Talakāḍ dated 726 A.D.² It also refers to Arakēsi as the son of Śrī Paramakūḷa and informs that at the request of Sindarasa, Dēvasatti-arasa and Manasya, Arakēsi made a grant with the permission of the king Śrīpurusha. Thus Arakēsi was an influential local chief during this period. The inscription does not mention any date but belongs to the rule of Gaṅga Śrīpurusha who is known to have ruled from 725 to 788 A.D.³ But the Talakāḍ inscription which mentions Arakēsi is dated 725 A.D., and hence the present record might have been issued during the early ruling years of Śrīpurusha. In that case its upper limit may be fixed as 750 A.D. Two place names are mentioned in the record. The first is Kabbalu where the inscription is discovered and obviously the place name has been changed as Kabballi sometime later. The other place name is Peṅkachi and it is not possible to identify the same. The words *goṭṭar* and *aḷittōn* found in the inscription are interesting from the point of view of Kannada language.

Inscription II : This inscription is found at Sāgaḍe in Chamarajanagar taluk of

the district of the same name. The inscription is engraved on a thick granite slab, now lying in the agricultural field on the Western side of the village. The epigraph contains eleven lines of writing in old Kannada characters of the tenth century A.D. The language of the inscription is old Kannada. The epigraph belongs to Satyavākya permmānaḍi, who is the Western Gaṅga king Mārasimha II and is known to have ruled from 963 to 974 A.D.⁴

It is also possible that he may be the Gaṅga king Rāchamalla IV, who is known to have ruled from 974 to 999 A.D. The record does not furnish any Śaka date but it was issued during the seventh regnal year of the king. The actual phrase is '*Paṭṭagaṭṭida ēḷaneya Varisadam̐du*'. Actually coronation of this prince Mārasimha II was performed by Rāshṭrakūṭa Kṛishṇa III. The present record states that it was the seventh regnal year of the ruling king. K.V. Ramesh has taken Kūḍalūr plates of Śaka 834 as the first inscription of Mārasimha II which corresponds to 962-63 A.D.⁵ On this basis 968-69 A.D., becomes the seventh regnal year of Gaṅga Mārasimha II. Hence, the Sāgaḍe inscription should be dated to 968-69 A.D. If the Gaṅga king is taken as Rāchamalla IV, his seventh regnal year would become 980-981 A.D. In that case the Sāgaḍe inscription should be dated to 980-81 A.D. In the present state of our knowledge, the intended date of the Sāgaḍe inscription cannot be decided.

Actually, this is a hero-stone inscription. A hero by name Paramaya of the village Sāgaḍe died in a border dispute defending his village. Consequently, a grant of land was made to a person by name Kundiga who appears to have been a son of the deceased hero Paramaya. The imprecatory passage is very interesting. In addition to the usual *Kavileya* at Vāraṇāsi, the present record includes destruction of tank (*kere*) and tree (*nārave*) in the list of the sins. This shows the concern of the contemporary people of the area for the preservation of the tanks and trees for the welfare of the society. The word *viṭṭar* found in the record is interesting from the point of view of Kannada language. The village name Sāgaḍe is found in the inscription in the same form. This shows that the place name has not undergone any change for the past one thousand years. Such place names are rather rare.

Inscription III : This inscription is found in the village Channakal Kāval of Heggadadevanakote taluk. The inscription is engraved on a black stone slab now lying in the agricultural field belonging to teacher Sri Siddaiah. This is

a hero-stone and contains eight lines of writing in Kannaḍa characters and in Kannaḍa language. From the palaeographical point of view the writing can be dated to twelfth century A.D. The inscription introduces in the very first two lines *Mahāmaṇḍalēśvara* Tribhuvanamalla Vīra Nandidēva but does not mention the dynasty to which he belonged. Hence, by other external evidences, the dynasty of Nandidēva has to be decided. Palaeographically the inscription belongs to twelfth century A.D. The provenance of the inscription of this period points towards the Chaṅgāḷva chiefs. The *Prasasti* as given in the present record also confirms this. Taking all these factors into consideration, it may be suggested that Vīra Nandidēva was a Chaṅgāḷva chief who was a subordinate of Hoysaḷa Viṣṇuvardhana and Narasiṃha I or Ballāḷa II⁶. This tallies well with the palaeographical dating also.

The inscription refers to a cattle-raid in which Lakeya and others died. The inscription mentions Tippaya-nāyaka, Sōmayya's son Haraheya-daṇṇāyaka and Mādarasa. Their part in the cattle-raid is not known. Perhaps they were the persons who were responsible for erecting this hero-stone. Finally the epigraph mentions a gift of wet land and dry land to Īśāna Paṇḍita made by Chaṇṇagala Mādarasa. The name of the village is given in the epigraph as Chaṇṇagāḷa. But in course of time it has been changed as Channakal Kāvalu. There are many places in Karnataka with the ending Kāvalu. Garikekaṭṭekāvalu, Belaganahalli Kāvalu (both in Heggadadevanakote taluk) Hodakekaṭṭekāvalu, Husainapura Kāvalu, Muttarāyana Hosahallikāvalu (all the three in Hunsur taluk), etc. may be cited as examples.⁷ In times of wars and battles people used to keep watch over the movements of the enemies or even robbers and hence such villages are added with the suffix *Kāvalu*. And hence came the present name Chaṇṇakal Kāvalu for the village where this inscription is found.

Inscription IV : This inscription is also found in the village Kabballi to which a reference has been made above. The thirteen lines of the inscription are carved on a flat stone slab now lying in the agricultural field. The inscription is in Kannaḍa script of the fourteenth century A.D. and is in Kannaḍa language. The epigraph refers to the rule of Śrī Vīra Bukkaṇṇa-voḍeya, obviously of the Vijayanagara-Saṅgama dynasty. The epigraph furnishes the details of date as Śaka year 1304, Dundubhi Saṁvatsara Māgha, ba 10, (Bu), which corresponds to 28th January 1383 A.D., Wednesday. On this date Harihara II was on the Vijayanagara throne and Bukka I had died in the year 1377 A.D., itself⁸. Hence,

the present inscription should be taken as belonging to king Harihara II. The purport of the inscription is to record a grant in the presence of the local assembly *Gavuḍu-prajes* of Kabballi. The inscription refers to the carpenter of the village who originally belonged to Narasamaṅgala. His name is Savōja. He is described as *Bayakāra* * and *Śaṅkhaṭṭaka*. The first adjective refers to his knowledge in music and it reminds us of the famous Bayakāra Rāmappayya or Rāmāmātya who was a great musicologist (composer) of the Vijayanagara period.⁹ The other word *Śaṅkhaṭṭaka* poses many problems. Literally it means one of the heads of Ādiśēsha which does not fit in in this context.¹⁰ It also cannot be said with certainty whether it refers to the *śaṅkha* or conch which is one of the sounds of the *Pañchamahāśabdas*. *Śaṅkha* also means a squad of cavalry or a formation of the army. In that case, this person might have been in-charge of either the section of the army or the squad of the cavalry. Whatever it may be, it becomes clear that the concerned person was a highly placed person.

His son was Lakṣaṇa. He was a carpenter (baḍagi). The assembly gave grants as *sarvamānya* to an individual by name Sabheyoja. Thus this stone was established with the inscription at Kabballi. The other place mentioned in the inscription is Narasamaṅgala. Obviously it is the same village famous for the Rāmalingēśvara temple, a fine monument built by the Gaṅga kings during the eighth century A.D.

Thus all these four inscriptions which are unpublished are useful for understanding the local history and importance of the area. The discovery of these inscriptions also shows that a more intensive epigraphical exploration is bound to yield many more inscriptions of importance and should be taken up urgently before they are destroyed.

The texts of these four inscriptions are given below.

Inscription I

1. Svasti Śrīma . Śrī-
2. puruṣa prithuvī rājyaṁ ge-
3. ye ā(di) .. nnādiyaṁ Ka
4. bbaḷu ā(ḷe) Peṅkachiya

5. maṇḍalika Era Arakē-
6. si sinidugalkālenvadu-
7. mvala goṭṭar idānalittō(n)
8. pañcha mahāpātakanakkum

Inscription II

1. svasti śrī Satyavākya Pe -
2. rmmānaḍiga la(m) paṭṭagaṭṭida ē-
3. laneyavarisadamdu Sāgaḍeya
4. paramaya sīmāntarada .. sa -
5. ṛadoḷ pariyatṭa ...
6. satta . . Sāgaḍeya gā-
7. vundaḡaḷu iḷdu maṇṇa
8. kundigaṅge viṭṭar i ko -
9. ḍaṅgeyan-aḷidaḍu keṛeya nā -
10. raveya kavileya vāraṇāsi
11. ya aḷidarū.

Inscription III

1. @ svasti śrīman mahāmaṇḍalēsvara Tribhuvanamalla Vīrana -
2. m̐didēva prithvīrājyam geyuta viralu avarati Tippanāya -
3. ka Sōmayana maga Haraheya-daṇṇāyakana Lakeya
4. Chaṇḡagala mādarasa tuṛupārivina tuṛuvama
5. guchi sattu svargastanāda
6. da nilisida sāsana
7. Chaṇṇagala Mādarasa Isāna-paṇḍitariga biṭṭa bhūmi . . .

8. . . . gadde beddalu innūru

Inscription IV :

1. @ svāsti samasta praśasti sahitaṁ śrī vīra Bukkaṇṇa-voḍe-
2. yaru prithuvirājyaṁ geyyuttiralu Śaka varsha 130-
3. [4] neya Dundhubi saṁvatsarada Māgha ba 10 (Bu)
4. śrīmatu Kabballiya samasta gavuḍu praje-
5. gaḷu āvūra baḍagi Narasamaṅgalada bha -
6. yakāra śaṁkhaṇḍaḷa [Sa]vōjana maga La[ka]ṇa
7. taṁna (ma) . mā Kabballi (ya) gauḍu prajegaḷige.
8. (va) niddalli (ā) maga sabheyōjaṁgey-āchandr - ā-
9. rkka tārambara (vu)ḷḷaṁnabara sarvvamāṁnyavāgi
10. biṭṭa koḍage satrada sārige Kaṁguni . . . 100
11. koṁḍu mane mānyavāgi biṭṭa koḍageya kallu
12. idake alihidavaru kavileya koṁda pā-
13. pakke hōharu |

Notes and References :

1. These four inscriptions were discovered by Dr. N. Havalaiiah, Reader in Ancient History and Archaeology, Manasagangotri, Mysore under a UGC Research Project. Unfortunately he passed away before he could see this article in print. I pay my homage to this young and budding epigraphist who is already familiar to the readers of this Journal through his articles. The authors are grateful to Sri H.M. Nagaraja Rao, Epigraphist, Revision and Reprint of Epigraphia Carnatica Project, IKS, Manasagangotri, Mysore for his help.
2. *Ep. Carn* (Revised), Vol. V, Tn 207.
3. P.B. Desai, S.H. Ritti, B.R. Gopal : *A History of Karnataka*, Dharwar, 1970, p.83.
4. *Ibid.*, p.83.
5. K.V. Ramesh, *Inscriptions of the Western Gangas*, Delhi, 1984, p.411.

6. William Coelho ; *The Hoysaḷa Varṇśa*, pp.78-79.
7. S.H. Ritti : *Karnāṭaka Grāma Sūchi*, Bangalore, 1985, p. 233-36.
8. P.B. Desai and others, *op.cit.*, p.402
9. For details of Bayakāra, refer to S.N. Shivarudraswamy : *Bayakāra Rāmappayya*, Hampi, 2001.
10. *Kannaḍa-Kannaḍa Nighanṭu*, Vol. VII, p. 8063-64.

INSCRIPTIONS OF AKBAR PERIOD

S. Farrukh A. Jilali

Epigraphic sources provide an unusual tool in the reconstruction of history, culture and civilization through ages. In the study of the Taimuri period the scholars of the Medieval Indian History have not optimally utilized the epigraphic sources, as a result some of the details of the Medieval Indian History remain unexplored. The intent of the present communication is to report the listing of the persons who served as administrators, local officials, artisans ; calligraphers, etc. during the Akbar's period, as collated from epigraphic record.

Almost all the treatise and compilations on the history of Taimuri Mughals have made reliance on the contemporary literature. The primary data available as Persian and Arabic inscriptions of the period have been little used in the data collation. As a result the administrative and cultural history of Taimuri India as enshrined in the epigraphic record has not reached to a wider readership. The historical record preserved, as engraved inscriptions of the reign are full of information, which can be helpful in the reconstruction of the untold history, culture and administrative set up of the period. It is, therefore, necessary that epigraphic data should form an essential input in any historical analysis of the administration and culture of Taimuri India.

Durng the period of Akbar the state and the nobles supported extensive construction activities. The inscription in these monuments give details of the architects (Ustad and Mir Imarat), supervisors (Karfarma), calligrapher (Katib), etc. Apart from them the inscriptions give information about nobles, poets, artisans, officers of the state, etc. The details given in these inscriptions often serve as missing link in the reconstruction and synthesis of the history of the Akbar's period.

The available historical accounts by present day writers are burden with limited access to the original Persian and Arabic inscriptions of the period.

Akbar supported the activities of Khanqah and Dargah institutions as is evident from the epigraphic inscriptions of Nagaur, Bayana, and Patan. Akbar's letter to king Ubaidullah Khan Uzbek is corroborative to his patronage of the institutions of Khanqah and Dargah (see Abul Fazal (1269 A.H.) : Insha-i-Abul Fazal,

Lucknow, pt. I, p.16) are important piece of information as available in the epigraphic record. In an attempt to provide basic data on the unknown or little known administrators, architects, artisans, poets, calligraphers, nobles and others of the period, author has prepared an inventory of the inscriptions of the period which may be useful for researchers engaged in the reconstruction of the culture, civilization, social, administrative and religious fabric of the Taimuri India.

Appendix - I

Abhangar (Ironsmith)

Sl.No.	Year	Findspot Area	Language	Name of person	Literary form
1.	1011/1602	Laharpura	Persian	Haji Husain	Ver/Pro
Maimar (Architect)					
2.	965/1557/58	Bulandshahr	Persian	Khawaja Allahdiya Ansari	Prose
Ustad					
3.	1005/1596/97	Rohtas	Persian	Ustad Mubarak Gilkar	Pro/ver
Sangharsh (Stone Cutter)					
5.	1006/1597/98	Ranthambor	Persian	Ustad-Madho	Prose
Katib (Calligraphers and scribes)					
6.	968/1560/61	Barikhatu	Persian	Fakhruddin	Prose
7.	970/1563	Sakit	Arabic	Ismail	"
8.	972/1564-65	Nagaur	Persian	Dervesh Mohd. Haji	Verse
9.	974/1566-67	Agra	"	Arab Mohammad Bokhari	"
10.	975/1567-68	Hisar	"	Kabir	"

11.	976/1569	Ajmer	"	Dervesh Mohd. Haji	"
12.	976/1569	Ajmer	Persian	Dervesh Mohd. Haji	"
13.	979/1571-72	"	"	Mohammad Baqir	"
14.	981/1573/74	Amroha	"	Arfi	"
Poets and Composers					
15.	969/1561/62	Delhi	Persian	Nisar Husain	"
16.	972/1564-65	Nagaur	"	Visali	"
17.	972/1564-65	Nagaur	"	Ramzi	"
18.	974/1566-67	Agra	"	Sadullah	"
19.	974/1566-67	Agra	"	Mauji	"
20.	976/1568-69	Ajmer	"	Ramzi	"
21.	978/1570-71	Jaunpur	"	Faizi	"
22.	978/1570-71	Jaunpur	"	Miskin	"
23.	981/1573-74	Amroha	"	Arfi	"
24.	1008/1599-1600	Nagaur	"	Nami	"
25.	1009/1600-01	Mandu	"	Nami	"
Karfarma (Supervisor of Buildings)					
26.	963/1555/56	Azampur Sherpur	Persian	Khawaja Jaman	"
27.	977/1569-71	Kothoti Rajasthan	"	Nek Bakhat	Prose
28.	1005/1596-97	Bulandshahr	"	Salar	"
29.	1013/1604-5	Kalpi	"	Baji Khattri	"
Mir Imarat					
30.	1013/1604-5	Budaun	"	Abdul Malik	"
Saints and Dargah Keepers					
31.	968/1560-61	Nagaur	"	Shaikh Sulaiman	Verse
32.	973/1565-66	Bayana	"	Shaikh Sadullah	"
33.	974/1566-67	Delhi	Arabic Persian	Sh. Sulaiman	"
34.		Ujjain	"	Shah Fakhruddin	"
35.	987/1578-79	Ajmer	Persian	Khawaja Husain	"
36.	993/1588	Pandua	Arabic	Makhdoom Shaikh	Prose

37.	996/1588	Patan	"	Shaikh Kabir	"
38.	1007/1597-98	Mangolpir	"	Shah	"
				Amanullah	
39.	1013/1604-5	Patan	Persian	Jamman Shah	Verse
Purohit					
40.	1005	Rohtas	Persian	Shri Dhar	Prose/verse
Qazi					
41.	969/1561-62	Sanpat	Persian	Kazi Ahmad	Verse
Darogha (Incharge of Building)					
42.	1005/1596/97	Rohtas	Persian	Balbdhra	Prose/verse
Faujdar Khalsa					
43.	968/1560-61	Agra	Persian	Ikhtiyar Khan	Prose
Shiqdar					
44.	973/1566	Kholkarkot	Persian	Shamsheer Khan	" "
45.	1006/1598	Ranthambor	"	Khawaja Bhod- ender Singh	"
Official and Other Persons					
46.	963/1555-56	Azompur	Persian Arabic	Kamaluddin	Verse
47.	964/1556-57	Sonpat	Persian	Ali Dost (Amir)	"
48.	965/1557-58	Bulandshahar	"	Mohammad Momin Mirza	Prose
49.	965/1557-58	Jalali	"	Mohd. Qasim Beg and Bunasar	Verse/Prose
50.	970/1562-63	Jhajhar	Persian Arabic	Nawab Rumi Khan and Mohsin Khan	Prose
51.	970/1562-63	Aligarh	Persian	Gesu Khan	Verse
52.	970/1562-63	Aligarh	"	Syed Mohd. Gesu	"
53.	970/1562-63	Kalpi	"	Nasir Ali Sultan	Prose
54.	970/1562-63	Sakit (U.P.)	"	Nizamuddin Ibrahim Badakhshi	"
55.	972/1564-65	Nagaur	"	Husain Quli Khan	Verse
56.	973/1565-66	Bayana	"	Shaikh Sadullah	"

57.	975/1586-68	Janupur	"	Nawab Mohsin	"
58.	976/1568-69	"	"	Mir Mohsin	"
59.	976/1568-69	"	"	Munim (Khan)	"
60.	976/1568-69	Ajmer	"	Ismail Quli	"
61.	"	Jhajar	"	Ibrahim	"
62.	977/1569-70	Kathoti	"	Amir Kashmi	Prose
63.	"	Jaunpur	"	Mohammad Munim Khan	Verse
64.	978/1570-71	Jaunpur	"	Masoom Khan Sultan Mohammad	"
65.	979/1571-72	Ajmer	"	Shah Quli Mehram	" "
66.	981/1573-74	Budaun	"	Mirza Mohammad	Prose
67.	"	Amroha	"	Syed Mohammad	Verse
68.	982/1574-75	Patan	"	Dost Moha- mmad Sultan	Prose
69.	982/1574-75	Mandu	"	Shah Budagh Khan	"
70.	983/1575-76	Maner	"	Tangar Khan	"
71.	984/1567-77	Ajmer	"	Mohammad Wafa	"
72.	985/1576-77	Azampur	"	Talib Khan	Pro/ver
73.	"	Patan	Arabic	Suliha Bano	Prose
74.	987/1578-79	Bareilly	Persian	Ainul Mulk	Verse
75.	989/1580-81	Jhajhar	"	Mian Reib	Prose
76.	989/1580-81	Khaderkot	Persian	Abdul Samad and Murad khan	Prose
77.	991/1582-83	Kadi	"	Shahab Khan	Verse
78.	993/1585-86	Tijara	"	Mian Mubarak	"
79.	995/1587	Jaura	Arabic persian	Khawaja Qabil	"
80.	996/1588	Patan	Arabic	Syed Qasim	Prose
81.	997/1588-89	Nagaur	Persian	Kamal Khan	Verse
82.	1000/1591-92	Tijara	"	Mian Mubarak	"

83.	1002/1593-94	Jhaihar	"	Mian Raib	"
84.	1004/1595-96	Bihar Sharif	"	Khan Raib	"
85.	1005/1596-97	Bulandshahar	"	Mian Bhalol Khan Bahlim	"
86.	"	Rohtas	"	Raja man Singh	"
87.	1006/1597-98	Shahgadh	"	Sultan Murad & Wafadar Khan	"
88.	"	Ranthambor	"	Rai Chunda and Mian Burhan	Verse
89.	1007/1598-99	Manghyr	"	Makhsoos Khan	Verse
90.	"	Margrolpir	"	Shah Murad	"
91.	1008/1599-1600	Sadalpur	"	Mohammad Masoom Nomi Bakkari	"
92.	"	Nagaur	"	"	"
93.	"	Sarangpur	"	"	Prose
94.	"	Patan	Arabic	Syed Ali S/o Syed Qasim (Barha)	"
95.	1009/1500-01	Mandu	Persian	Mohammad Masoom Nami	Pro/Ver
96.	"	Cambay	"	Mirza Khan	Prose
97.	1011/1602-03	Tharad	Persian	Amir Beg	Pro/Ver
98.	1013/1604-05	Nagaur	"	Amir Mohd. Masoom Nami	"
99.	"	Hilsa (Patna)	"	Shah Salim	Verse
100.	"	Budaun	"	Abdul Muzaffer Shah Salim	Prose
101.	"	Badaun	"	Nawab Sahikh Ibrahim	"
102.	"	Kalpi	"	Nawab Quli Khan	"
103.	1014/1605	Delhi	"	Tahir Mohammad	"
104.	"	Mandu	"	"	"
105.	"	Mandu	"	"	"

Notes and References :

1. W.H. Siddiqui, and Z.A. Desai *EIAPS.*, 1969, 7, 14, 21, 26, 28, 46, 43, 53, 57, 58, 59, 63, 64, 67, 72, 74, 85.
2. Dutt, Chinmoy, *Cat. of Arabic and Persian Ins. in Indian MUS.*, Calcutta, 1967, 9, 18, 19.
3. A.A. Tirmizi, *EIAPS.*, 1957-58 19, 11, 12, 13, 20, 35, 60, 65, 71.
4. R.N. Prasad, Raja Man Singh of Amber Calcutta 1986, 3, 40, 42, 86.
5. P. Horn, *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. II, Delhi - 1970, 10, 41, 50, 61, 75, 76, 83.
6. Salim Jafir, *ZAMANA.*, Kanpur 1946, 8, 16, 17, 24, 54.
7. S.A. Rahim, *EIAPS.*, 1969, 6, 27, 32, 56, 62, 78, 81, 93.
8. *Ibid.*, 1968, 34.
9. S.S. Husain, Z.A. Desai, Zafar Hasan, *EIAPS.*, 1973, *EIAPS.*, 1970, *EIM.*, 1909-10, 5, 45, 88, 68, 73, 77, 96, 25, 91, 95, 104.
10. J.M. Siddiqui, Aligarh District Delhi, 42, 51.
11. O. Ahmad, *Corpus of Arabic and Persain, inscriptions of Bihar*, Patna, 1973, 39, 70, 84, 89.
12. J. Burgess, *Epigraphia Indica* Vol.II, Delhi, 1970, 44,47.
13. Raziuddin, Kunzul-Tarikh, Budaun, 1907, 30.
14. Desai Z.A., *EIAPS.*, 1968, 33.
15. Abid Ali Khan, *Memoris of Gaur and Pandua*, Calcutta 1931, 36.
16. A.A. Kadri, *EIAPS.*, 1969, *Corpus of Inscription of Bhavnagri Bombay*, 1888, 87, 97.
17. Syed Ahmad (Sir), *Asarus Sandid*, Delhi, 1968, 103.

THRESHOLDING : A PRE-PROCESSING TECHNIQUE FOR AN OCR SYSTEM FOR THE BRĀHMĪ SCRIPT

H.K Anasuya Devi

Keywords : Preprocessing, thresholding, Binarization

In this paper we study the methodology employed for pre-processing the archaeological images. We present the various algorithms used in the low-level processing stage of image analysis for Optical Character Recognition System for Brāhmī Script. The image pre-processing technique covered in this paper is thresholding. We also try to analyze the results obtained by the pixel-level processing algorithms.

1. Introduction

Optical scanning of the rock inscription yields an image (file of pixels) that forms the raw input to the Optical Character Recognition System. The output is the set of recognized characters.

Pre-processing is the first phase of document analysis. The purpose of pre-processing is to improve the quality of the image being processed. It makes the subsequent phases of pre-processing methods discussed in this paper.

In thresholding, the color-image or gray-scale image is reduced to a binary image.

2. Thresholding

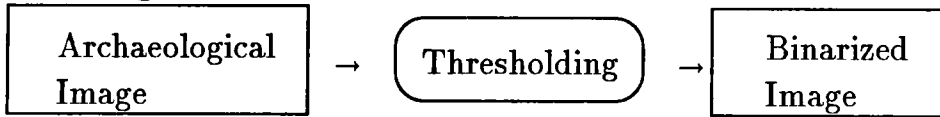


Fig 1. The process of thresholding along with its inputs and outputs.

2.1 Definition

Thresholding is a process of converting a grayscale input image to a bi-level image by using an optimal threshold.

2.2 Purpose

The purpose of thresholding is to extract those pixels from some image which represent an *object* (either text or other line image data such as graphs, maps). Though the information is binary the pixels represent a range of intensities. Thus

the objective of binarization is to mark pixels that belong to true foreground regions with a single intensity and background regions with different intensities.

2.3 Thresholding algorithms

For a thresholding algorithm to be really effective, it should preserve logical and semantic content. There are two types of thresholding algorithms.

1. Global thresholding algorithms
2. Local or adaptive thresholding algorithms

In global thresholding, a single threshold for all the image pixels is used. When the pixel values of the components and that of background are fairly consistent in their respective values over the entire image, global thresholding could be used.

In adaptive thresholding, different threshold values for different local areas are used.

2.3.1 Quadratic Integral Ratio (QIR) algorithm

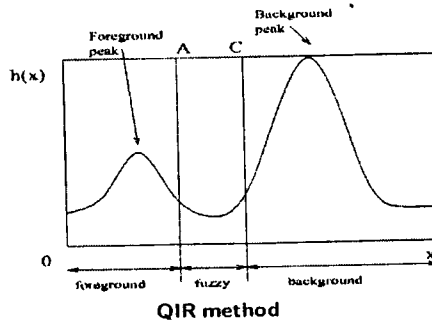


Fig 2. Three sub-images of QIR Method

Method : QIR is a global two stage thresholding technique that uses intensity histogram to find the threshold.

The first stage of the algorithm divides an image into three sub-images : foreground, background, and a fuzzy sub-image where it is hard to determine whether a pixel actually belongs to the foreground or the background. Two important parameters that separate the sub-images are A, which separates the foreground and the fuzzy sub-image, and C, which separate the fuzzy and the

background sub-image. If a pixel's intensity is less than or equal to A , the pixel belongs to the foreground. If a pixel's intensity is greater than or equal to C , the pixel belongs to the background. If a pixel has an intensity value between A and C , it belongs to the fuzzy sub-image and more information is needed from the image to decide whether it actually belongs to the foreground or the background.

The strategy is to eliminate all pixels with intensity level in $[0, A]$ and $[C, 255]$. Thus produce a range of promising threshold vlaues delimited by the parameter A and C ($T_\varepsilon [A, C]$).

Performance (with respect to our experiments) : QIR performed well as it generally was able to separate definite foreground (dark) pixels and definite (background pixels). The uncertain or fuzzy pixels were clearly defined and required further processing to determine appropriate assignment to background or foreground.

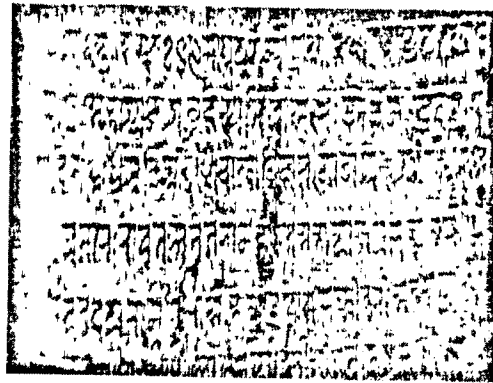


Fig 3. An input image before thresholding (Pedestal)

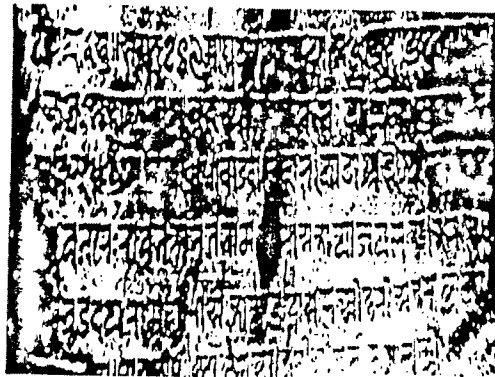


Fig 4. The output image as a result of applying QIR thresholding algorithm to Fig.3

4. Conclusions and Future Enhancement

The pre-processing algorithms discussed so far give fairly average results. A cascaded approach wherein various thinning and thresholding algorithms are successively applied on the input image can yield better results. Hybrid pre-processing algorithms can be tried out wherein new methods can be designed to perform effective thinning and thresholding. Pre-processing techniques like filtering (to remove distortions and noise) could be incorporated.

5. References

1. The multi-stage approach to Grey-scale image thresholding for specific applications Yan Solihin and C.G. Leedham.
2. Document image analysis by Rrangachar Kasturi, Louis Lam, Seong- Whan Lee and Ching Y. Suen.

6. Acknowledgement

The author wishes to thank Mr. Bipin Suresh, Ms. Dimple Kolhapure, Ms. Adithi Sampath, Mr. Prasanna Venkatesh and Mr. Santosh Kabbur for their contribution during the execution of the program.

THE RECENTLY DISCOVERED KURUKSHĒTRA -VĀRAṆĀŚI GRANT OF HARSHA : YEAR 23

Shankar Goyal

Harsha (606-46 A.D) is a well-known monarch of ancient India. He has been made famous by his biography, the *Harshacharita*, written by his court-poet Bāṇa and by the account of the travels of Yuan Chwang, the Chinese pilgrim, who visited India during his reign. Two copper plates of Harsha were also discovered in the last quarter of the 19th century. The first was found in January 1888 from Madhuban, about 50kms, north-east from Azamgarh in U.P.¹. It is dated in Samvat 25 (of Harsha) which corresponds to 631 A.D., and measures 50 × 33cms. and weighs 3.86 kgs. No seal recovered with it.

The second copper plate was found in 1894 at Banskhēra, a village about 40 kms. from Shahjahanpur.² It measures 40.5 × 32.5 cms. A seal was also shouldered to it but it was extremely blurred. The plate is dated in the year 22 (of the reign of Harsha), which corresponds to 628 A.D.³

Recently, in 1999, more than a century after the discovery of Madhuban and Banskhera grants, a copper plate grant of Harsha was found along with a seal from a place near Thānēsar or Kurukshētra, the capital of Harsha. It saw its way to Jñāna-Pravāha, the Centre of Cultural Studies of Varanasi in February 2002. It may, therefore, be called Kurukshētra-Vāraṇāśi grant of Harsha. It was published in the *Jñāna-Pravāha*, Annual Bulletin, No. 5(2001-02), of the aforesaid centre by R.C. Sharma alongwith the text, translation and photographs of the copper plate and seal. ⁴ R.C. Sharma, K.K.Thaplyal, T.P. Verma and Devendra Handa examined them to ensure their authenticity.

Written in chaste Sanskrit and incised in the post-Gupta Brāhmī characters, the Kurukshētra-Vāraṇāśi copper plate of Harsha records the land grant given to Bhaṭṭa Ulūkhalasvāmin in 18 lines on a plate measuring 42.5 cm. in length and 31.5cm. in width. The surface of the plate is rather uneven indicating rough handling at some stage. It weights 3.80 kgs. The seal, which was originally shouldered to it but is now detached, is of mixed metal which is almost bronze. It appears that during the course of fixing of the seal with the plate the edges of the seal were twisted inside and, therefore, some letters in the beginning and end of lines have become blurred. Some portion of the seal being rubbed off is

illegible, but its major part bears a sharp inscription in relief and can be read without much difficulty. It bears twelve lines which contain the genealogy of the Pushyabhūti dynasty from Naravardhana to Harshavardhana. The top of the seal illustrates a seated bull(Nandī), which symbolizes Harsha's faith in Śaivism also is recorded in the epigraph. At the end of the inscription of the seal there are traces of rising sun with two half circles and rays radiating two different directions.

The Kurukshētra-Vāraṇāśī grant was issued in the year 23 of Harsha (629 A.D.). Thus, it belongs to about the same period to which his other two grants belong. The name of scribe in this case is missing, although in other copper plates their names are clearly mentioned. In the Madhuban grant he is called 'Gurjara' while the Banskēra plate gives the name of the scribe as 'Īśvara'. The Madhuban and Banskēra plates record that land granted in each of them was given to two *brāhmaṇas* but the Kurukshētra-Vāraṇāśī grant reveals that only one *brāhmaṇa* namely Bhaṭṭa Ulūkhalasvāmin was its beneficiary. Both the earlier copper plates record the name of the *dūtaka* as Skandagupta, but in the case of the new find it is Kṛishṇagupta. Both these officers were of high rank and enjoyed the title of *Mahārāja*. The present copper plate begins with *Om* and *Svasti*. *Om* is in the symbolic form and can be explained as *Siddham* also. The Madhuban copper plate does not contain the 'signature' of the king. But the Banskēra and the present grant claim to contain it. In the Kurukshētra-Vāraṇāśī grant the last line bearing the royal signature is preceded by the figure of a peacock with large stylized plumage and terminates with a floral motif flanked by two vertical lines. The letter *dhi* in centre of this line looks like a full vase (*pūrṇaghata*) with foliage issuing from its brim. There are a few omissions and alterations in the document due to the mistakes committed by the scribe. In line 1, last letter *t* in word *skandhāvārāt* is missing. In line 4, *na* was left out in word *bhuvana* but was later incised below. In line 7, vowel *ā* is missing in *prā*. In the same line, the last letter *yaḥ* is confusing in the word *satyānurōdhēna*. In line 8, in the word *Bhaṭṭāraka*, the letter *ra* was left out but marked later and it is very small and insignificant. In line 9, in word *Mahāsāmanta*, *ma* is missing after *sā*. In line 12, word *jyeshṭha* is incised as *jāshṭha*. In line 14, the last word is recorded as *sṭhānam* instead of *sthānam*. In line 15, *Lakshmyā* is misspelt as *Lyakshmyā*. The perusal of the genealogical table of the three grants of Harsha suggests that the first three kings of the dynasty, i.e., Naravardhana, Rājyavardhana I and Ādityavardhana were simply *Mahārājas* and, therefore, must have been subordinate rulers. The next three

kings, i.e., Prabhākaravardhana, Rājyavardhana II and Harsha are, however, described as *Paramabhāṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja*. Similarly, the first three queens namely Vajriṇī, Apsaro and Mahāsēnaguptā are mentioned simply as Dēvī but the last queen, viz., Yaśōmatī, the mother of Rājyavardhana II and Harsha, has been honoured with the title *Bhāṭṭārikā Mahādēvī*. However, the grants of Harsha do not show when did Prabhākaravardhana, the first *Mahārājādhirāja*, assumed this title. In our view Prabhākara was merely a *Mahārāja* till the marriage of Rājyaśrī with Grahavarman.⁵

The first king of the Pushyabhūti dynasty does not bear any religious epithet. However, the next three are called *Paramādityabhaktas* i.e. great devotees of the Sun. Rājyavardhana II is called a great devotee of Sugata i.e. Buddha, while Harshavardhana calls himself a great devotee of Mahēśvara, that is Śiva.

Text

1. ॐ स्वस्ति महानौहस्त्यश्वजयस्कन्धावारा(त्) श्रीवर्द्धमानकोटीवासकः महाराज श्री नरवर्द्धनः तस्य पुत्रस्तत्पादानुध्यातः श्रीवज्रिणीदेव्यामुत्पन्नः परमादित्यभक्तो महाराज श्री (राज्य-)
2. वर्द्धनः तस्य पुत्रस्तत्पादानुध्यातः श्रीमदप्सरोदेव्यामुत्पन्नः परमादित्यभक्तो महाराज श्रीमदादित्यवर्द्धनः तस्य पुत्रस्तत्पादानुध्यातः श्रीमहासेनगुप्तादेव्यामुत्पन्नः चतुः समु-
3. द्वातिक्रान्तकीर्तिः प्रतापानुरागोपनतान्यराजा वर्णाश्रमव्यवस्थापनप्रवृत्त-चक्र एकचक्ररथ इ (व) प्रजानामार्तिहरः परमादित्यभक्त परमभट्टारक महाराजाधिराज
4. श्रीप्रभाकरवर्द्धनः तस्य पुत्रस्तत्पादानुध्यातः सितयशप्रतानविच्छुरित-सकलभुवनमण्डलः परिगृहीतधनदवरुणेन्द्रप्रभृति लौकपालतेजा-
5. सत्पथोपार्जितानेकद्रविणभूमिप्रदानसंप्रीणितार्थिहृदयो(5*)तिशयितपूर्वराज-चरितः देव्याममलयशोमत्यां यशोमत्यामुत्पन्न ... (परम-)
6. सौगतः सुगत इव परहितैकरतः परमभट्टारक महाराजाधिराज श्रीराज्यवर्द्धनः राजानो युधि (दु)ष्टवाजिन इव श्रीदेवगुप्तादयः कृत्वा येन कशा-
7. प्रहारविमुखाः सर्वे समं संयताः उत्खाय द्विषतो विजित्यं वसुधां कृत्वा प्रजानां प्रियं प्र(र)णानुज्झितवा (*)नरातिभवने सत्यानुरोधेन(यः)।[1] तस्यानुज-स्तत्पादानुध्यातः परममा-
8. हेश्वरो महेश्वर इव सर्वसत्(त)वानुकम्पी परमभट्टारक महाराजाधिराज श्रीहर्षः जयरतभुक्तविषयसंबर्द्धदुरिक्ताणि परिभाष्यमाणा पण्डाराट्गाक ग्रामे स-
9. मुपगता महासा(म)न्त महाराजदुस्साधसाधनिकप्रमातारराजस्थानीय-(कु)मारमात्यो-परिकविषयपतिभट्टाटसेवकादीन्प्रतिवासिजनपदांश्च

10. समाज्ञापयति विदितस्तुवो यथायमुपरिलिखितग्रामः स्वसीमा(प)र्यन्तः सोद्रङ्गः सर्वराजकुलाभाव्य प्रत्यायसमेतः सर्वपरिहृतपरि-
11. हा(रो) विषयादुद्धृतपिण्ड(:) पुत्रपौत्रानुगश्चन्द्रार्कक्षितिसमकालीनः (भू)मिच्छिन्न्यायेन मया पितुः परमभट्टार(क) महाराजाधिराज श्रीप्रभा-
12. करवर्द्धन देवस्य मातुश्च भट्टारिका महादेवी राज्ञी श्रीयशोमती देव्याः (ज्ये)ष्ठभ्रातृ परमभट्टारक महाराजाधिराज श्रीराज्यवर्द्धनदेवपादानां च
13. पुण्ययशोभिवर्द्धये भार्गवसगोत्रवह्वृच सब्रह्मचारी भट्टोलूखलस्वामिने प्रतिग्रहधर्मणाग्रहारत्वेन प्रतिपादितः विदित्वा भवद्भिः रस-
14. नुमन्तव्यः प्रतिवासिजनपदैरप्याज्ञाश्रवणविधेयैर्भूत्वा यथासमुचिततुल्यमेय- भागभोगकरहिरण्यादिप्रत्यायाः अन्यैवोपनेयाः सेवोपस्था(था)नं च
15. करणीयमित्यपि च। अस्मत्कुलक्रममुदारमुदाहरद्भिरन्यैश्च दानमिदमभ्यनुमोदनीयं।
ल्य (ल) क्षम्यास्तडित्सलिलबुदबुदचंचलायाः दानंफलं पर-
16. यशः परिपालनं च ॥ [2] कर्मणा मनसा वाचा कर्तव्यं प्राणिने हितं हर्षेणैतत्समाख्यातं धर्म्मार्ज्जनमनुत्तमं ॥
[3] दूतकोत्र महाक्षपटलाधिकरणाधि-
17. कृत सामंतमहाराज कृष्णगुप्तः तदादेशाच्चोत्कीर्णं ॥ संव 20 (+) 3
18. स्वहस्तेन मम महाराजाधिराज श्रीहर्षस्य [॥*]

Translation

Om, Success. From the victorious military camp stationed at Śrī Vardhamānakōṭī, possessing large boats, elephants, and horses (this charter is issued). (There was) Śrī Mahārāja Naravardhana. His son, who meditated on his feet and who was born of Śrī Vajriṇīdevī, (was) Śrī Mahārāja Rājyavardhana(I), a great devotee of the Sun. His son, who meditated on his feet and who was born of Śrī Apsarōdevī, (was) Mahārāja Śrī Ādityavardhana, a great devotee of the Sun. His son, who meditated on his feet and who was born of Śrī Mahāsēnaguptādēvī, (was) *Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Prabhākaravardhana*, a great devotee of the Sun, whose fame had crossed the four oceans, who subjected other kings by means of his valour and love, whose power (that is, army) was used in regulating Varṇāśrama (the system of castes and stages), who like the *Ēkachakraratha* (that is, the Sun) (having only one wheel in the form of the year) removed the sufferings of the subjects (or beings). His son, who meditated on his feet and who was born of Śrī Yaśōmatīdevī having unsullied glory, (was) *Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Śrī Rājyavardhana(II)*, a great devotee of Sugata (i.e. Buddha) and who like Sugata was wholly given in doing good to others, who had covered the whole circle of the earth by the canopy of his pure fame, who contained in himself the

essences of the (eight) guardians of the quarters - Kubēra, Varuṇa, Indra, and others, who satisfied the hearts of the supplicants by granting plenty of wealth and lands acquired righteously (and) who excelled the lives of the kings who preceded him.

Who, making all the kings, Dēvagupta and others, who had come united, to turn back like bad horses by striking with a whip and uprooting the enemies and conquering the earth and doing what was beneficial to the subjects, laid down his life in his insistence on truth, in the enemy's house.(v.1).

His younger brother, *Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Śrī* Harsha, a great devotee of Mahēśvara, who meditated on his feet, and who like Mahēśvara showed compassion towards all beings, issued commands to the Mahāsāmanta, Mahārāja Dussādhasādhanika, Pramātāra, Rājasthānīya, Kumārāmātya, Uparika, Vishayapati, Bhaṭas, Chāṭas, servants and others and the inhabitants those had assembled at Paṇḍārāṭgāka village situated in the Saṁvarddha-vishaya in the Jayarata - bhukti.

“Be it known to you, that, for the purpose of increasing the religious merit of (my) father, *Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Śrī* Prabhākaravardhana, of (my) mother the queen *Bhaṭṭārikā-mahādēvī Śrī* Yaśōmatīdēvī and of (my) revered elder brother *Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Śrī* Rājyavardhana, there is granted by me the above mentioned village, as far as its own boundaries and, as an *agrahāra* according to the rule of the ‘complete gift’ (*pratigraha*) and of *bhūmichchhidra*, to endure for the same time with the moon, the sun, (and) the earth, to be enjoyed (to be passed on to) by sons and son's sons and accompanied with the privileges of *udraṅga*, to be free from all taxes from the royal family, and to be excused from all (other) taxes, to Brahmachārī Bhaṭṭa Ulūkhalasvāmin of Bhārgava *gotra* of Vahvṛicha (Ṛigvēdī) śākhā, a righteously accepted *agrahāra*. Knowing this you should agree to this and the inhabitants with due obedience of (our) command should (henceforth pay) all taxes and fee like *tulyamēya* (merchandise tax), *bhāga* (king's share), *bhōga* (periodical offerings), *hiraṇya* (cash or gold), other benefits due to royalty and service due to him.

This gift should be assented to by those who follow the noble course of our family and also by others. Charity and the protection of the glory of others (is the) reward of the goddess of wealth, fickle like the lightning or the bubble in water.(v.2).

Men (lit. creatures) should do what is beneficial by actions, by mind, and by speech. This unequalled (way of) the acquisition of Dharma is related by Harsha.(v.3).”

The Dūtaka here (is) *Mahākshapaṭalādhikaraṇādhikṛita Sāmanta Mahārāja Kṛishṇagupta*. This is engraved by his order. *Sam* 20+3. (This has been) signed personally by me Śrī *Mahārājādhirāja* Harsha.

Inscription on the Seal⁶

Bull

1. (सिद्धम् महाराज) श्री नरवर्द्धनः तस्य पुत्रस्तत्पादानुध्यातः श्री वज्रिणी
2. (दे) व्या(मुत्पन्नः) परमादित्यभक्तो महाराज श्रीराज्यवर्द्धनः तस्य पुत्रस्त (त्)
3. (पादानुध्यातः) श्री अ (प्स)रोदेव्यामुत्पन्नः परमादित्यभक्तो महाराज श्रीमदादित्य-
4. (वर्द्धनः तस्य) पुत्रस्तत्पादानुध्यातः श्री महासेनगुप्तादेव्यामुत्पन्नः चतुः समु-
5. (द्राति)कक्रान्त कीर्तिप्रतापानुरागोपनतान्यराजो वर्णाश्रमव्यवस्थापनप्रवृत्त)-
6. चक्र एकचक्ररथ इव प्रजानामार्तिहरः परमादित्यभक्तः परमभट्टारक
7. महाराजाधिराज श्री प्रभाकरवर्द्धनः तस्य पुत्रस्तत्पादानुध्यात (अतिशयित)
8. पूर्वराजचरितो देव्याममलयशोमत्यां श्रीयशोमत्यामुत्पन्नः परमसौगत सु(ग-)
9. त इव परहितानुरतः परमभट्टारक महाराजाधिराज श्री राज्यवर्द्धन (स्त-)
10. (स्या) नुजस्तत्पादानुध्यातः परमभट्टारिका महादेवी श्री यशोमत्या (दे-)
11. (व्या) मेवोत्पन्नः परममाहेश्वरः महेश्वर इव सर्व (स-)
12. (त्वानु) कम्पकः परमभट्टारक महाराजाधिराज श्रीर्ह (षः)

Radiating Half Sun

Like the Madhuban and Banskhēra charters, the Kurukshētra-Vāraṇāśī grant of Harsha makes a reference to Rājyavardhana II's victory over 'Dēvagupta and other wicked kings' and to his giving up his life in enemy's house in consequence of his adherence to his promise. This Dēvagupta is usually and rightly identified with Mālava ruler who, according to Bāṇa, was defeated by Rājyavardhana with 'ridiculous ease'. He was, obviously, some relation of Mahāsēnagupta who had earlier succeeded in forcing the two sons of the latter- Kumāragupta and Mādhavagupta - to seek asylum in Thānēsār.⁷

As regards the murder of Rājyavardhana, Harsha's inscriptions, including the one under discussion, depose that Rājya gave up his life in enemy's house in order to adhere to his promise. This enemy is almost universally identified with Śāsāṅka of Gauda. But in recent years some scholars have opined, and rightly so, that though the murder of Rājya was certainly engineered by Śāsāṅka, yet there is some likelihood that Harsha himself was implicated in the conspiracy. R.C. Majumdar points out that Yuan Chwang has explicitly stated that Rājyavardhana was exposed to danger due to the 'fault' of Pushyabhūti ministers. One of these ministers might have been Bhaṇḍi who was a confidant of Harsha and was with Rājya at that time. Taking this testimony along with the fact that while Śāsāṅka and Harsha were Śaiva and Rājyavardhana a Buddhist, Majumdar posed the question : "Who knows that Rājyavardhana's death was not similarly encompassed by his ministers with the help of Śāsāṅka who was known to be great champion of orthodox faith ?"⁸

In 1966, V.S. Pathak made the case against Harsha stronger by pointing out that the authors of the early medieval period, justified the violation of the right of the elder brother to the ancestral throne by the younger brother, their patron, by the use of several motifs (such as some divinity had sent their patron to become king, or that their father wanted his younger son to succeed him, or that the elder son was either incompetent or unwilling to rule).⁹ As Bāṇa has used all these motifs, it logically follows that some need was felt to justify Harsha's rise to power for which Bāṇa was asked to compose his *Harshacharita*.¹⁰

The suspicion of Harsha's complicity in the murder of Rājya was made stronger by Devahuti. "It is hard to escape the conclusion" she argued, "that the unusual twists in the story (of the *Harshacharita*), from the time of Prabhākaravardhana's illness to the time of Rājyavardhana's death, however, cleverly manipulated, were rendered inevitable because of some episode uncomplimentary to the author's hero."¹¹

The case against Harshavardhana was made almost airtight by S.R. Goyal.¹² Writing in 1986 he pointed out that Bāṇa not only uses the motifs to which Pathak has directed our attention but at one place has also mentioned that "Like the lord of the Immortals (that is, Indra), he (that is, Harsha) appeared busy in wiping away the stain of his elder brother's slaughter" (*Amarapatir-iv-āgraj-abdhakalanika prakshāla-nākulah*)¹³. Now, according to Indian mythology, Indra had committed the crime of killing Viśvarūpa, the three-headed

son of Tvaṣṭṛi, who was in a sense his *agraja*. Therefore, it was said that Indra had committed the crime of killing his elder brother. Now, if according to Bāṇa Harsha was busy, like Indra, in wiping away the stain of his elder brother's murder then it can only mean that during the reign of Harsha rumours were afloat that he was implicated in the murder of Rājya. Thus, the theory proposed by R.C. Majumdar in 1943 that in some way the Pushyabhūti ministers belonging to the side of Harsha might have collaborated with Śaśāṅka in the murder of Rājya has now become an almost airtight case, certainly much more than merely *prima facie* case, against Harsha, the above-mentioned statement of Bāṇa, quoted by S.R. Goyal in 1986, providing clinching evidence for it.

The administrative structure of Harsha's empire was highly feudalized. It seems that he himself began to make use of the titles of *mahāsāmanta*, *sāmanta*, etc. to honour some of the higher state employees, to bring them on a level with those who were previously autonomous feudatories. In the present grant *Mahākshapaṭalādhikaraṇādhikṛita Sāmanta mahārāja* Kṛishṇagupta is mentioned as its *Dūtaka*. In the *Harshacharita* Skandagupta is the commander of elephant wing of the army but in the Banskhera plate he figures as *Dūtaka Mahāpramātāra*. In the *Harshacharita* he also advises Harsha. *Mahāsāmantas* or *Sāmantas* were somewhat of lower status than a *Mahārāja*.

Dūtaka brought the charter or king's order to the notice of the local officers. In the present epigraph he is described as *Mahārāja*, *mahāsāmanta* and *mahākshapaṭalādhikaraṇādhikṛita* which probably meant the highest revenue officers and in-charge of the revenue department. *Rājasthānīya* meant an officer dealing with the province as the local representative of the king. *Dussādhasāadhanika* literally means an accomplisher of difficult task. *Pramātāra* (*Pramāṭṛi*) was a land surveyor. The words *bhaṭa* and *chāṭa* are to be explained probably as regular soldiers and as adhoc soldiers or new recruits respectively.

A designation that often appears in ancient records, including the present one, is that of *Kumārāmātya* which sometimes may have been a title of honour but more often than not appears to have carried some administrative responsibilities. Some of the *kumārāmātyas* figure as district or provincial functionaries, others as members of the central secretariat. Some of the highest government officers, such as the minister of inter-state relations, were selected from among the *kumārāmātyas*.

Harsha's inscriptions mention the traditional *grāma* (village), *vishaya* and *bhukti*

but not the *dēśa* of the imperial Gupta epigraphs, although the division may have existed in his time. Anyway, in the Gupta period also *dēśa* was more or less synonym for *bhukti*. The modern districts or commissioner's divisions and provinces may be considered modern counterparts respectively of the *vishaya* and *bhukti* with regard to size.¹⁴

The governor of the *deśa* or *bhukti* was a nominee of the king. Sometimes he was designated *uparika* and could be honoured by titles such as *mahārāja* and *rājasthānīya*. *Rājasthānīya* literally meant viceroy (one who functions as a king in place of the latter).

Some designations mentioned in Harsha's grants apparently describe police duties. The *dussādhasādhanikas* were probably police officers who were expected to perform those duties which were regarded as difficult (such as arresting hardened criminals). *Chāṭas* and *bhaṭas* most likely performed police duties. The *Harshacharita* mentions *chāṭa-bhaṭas* as soldiers in the vanguard of the infantry.

The *bhukti* and *vishaya* officers were called respectively *adhikaraṇa* and *adhishtāna* and were maintained by the keepers of records, the *pustapālas*. The legal aspects of the land transactions and possibly the revenue records concerning them were supervised by the *vishaya* and *grāmākshapaṭalas*. The latter were helped by *karaṇikas* (clerks). *Grāmākshapaṭala* was probably the counterpart of modern *paṭavārī*. The *vishayapati*s worked in cooperation with representative bodies.

The land grants generally mention some taxes, which were exempted when the village was gifted away. *Udraṅga* was the main land tax.¹⁵ *Uparikara* was an extra tax. The term *pratyāya* stands for all dues. The expression *sarvarājakulābhāvya pratyāya* means all dues or taxes, which were to be paid to the state. *Tulyameya* was a tax imposed on the articles of merchandise nature.¹⁶ *Bhāga* was king's share of grain, *kara* a tax in kind (or simply a tax in general), *bhoga* periodical offerings,¹⁷ *hiranya* a tax in case and *bhāga-bhōga-kara*, sometimes written as a compound word, should mean a tax in shape of *bhāga* or *bhoga*.¹⁸ The grants also mention *bhūmichchhidranyāya*, i.e., a piece of barren or jungle land brought under cultivation. It means that when the village was gifted, the donee enjoyed all the rights and could also exercise his authority on the nearby barren or unused land.

The last line of this grant purports to contain the signature of Harsha. The Banskhēra inscription also supposedly contains the signature of Harsha. According to V.A. Smith, in the Banskhēra grant the name of Harsha was

engraved following the form of his signature though the engraver used somewhat bigger than the usual size of the letters. But, as S.R. Goyal has pointed out, the form of the letters of Harsha's signature and those of the rest of the Banskhēra grant are similar.¹⁹ Therefore, as it cannot be even imagined that Harsha himself engraved the entire copper-plate, it follows that the entire record, including its signature part, was engraved by Īśvara, the engraver of the grant. The statement of the last line that Harsha signed the record in his own hand probably only suggests what is meant by the phrase *baqalam khud* in modern parlance which only implies that only the original order was signed personally by the issuing authority. The phrase *sva hasto mama* is found in Maitraka inscriptions, there also it probably suggests the same thing.²⁰

This argument of S.R. Goyal has been proved to be correct by the present Kurukshētra - Vāraṇāśī grant because the script of its signature part is obviously different from the script of the signature part of the Banskhēra record proving that none of them is in the handwriting of Harsha.

Here it may also be pointed out that Harsha, who ruled for four decades, must have issued scores, even hundreds, of copper plate grants. That being so, it is difficult to assume that an emperor of his stature found time to personally engrave his signature on these plates, something quite different from putting one's signature on paper documents.

All the three known grants of Harsha were issued from the victorious military camp (*jayaskandhāvāra*) and not from the capital. This may perhaps suggest the celebration of important occasions of which one item was the donation of land or a village (*agrahāra*) to the learned Vēdic brāhmaṇas. The administrative and financial benefit of such gifts was availed of by the donee while the religious merit went to the king's parents and his elder brother as recorded in the epigraph.

Notes and References :

1. G. Bühler, *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. I, 1892, pp.65-75.
2. *Ibid.*, Vol. IV, pp.208-11.
3. Cf. Shankar Goyal, 'Harsha ke Abhilēkha : Kuchha Samasyayen aur Sujhāva', in S.R. Dubey (ed.), *Ābhilēkhika Adhyayana ki Pravidhi Evam Itihāsa-Lēkhana*, Delhi, 2004, pp.183-89.
4. *Jñāna-Pravāha*, No.5, 2001-02, pp.223-32.

5. Shankar Goyal, *History and Historiography of the Age of Harsha*, Jodhpur, 1992, pp.143-46.
6. The seal furnishes the same genealogy of the Pushyabhūti family as recorded in the copper plate; hence no separate translation is given.
7. Shankar Goyal, *op.cit.*, pp.110-12.
8. R.C. Majumdar (ed.), *The History of Bengal*, Vol.I, Dacca, 1943, p.76.
9. For a detailed study of these motifs see V.S. Pathak, *Ancient Historians of India*, Bombay, 1966, pp.18-21; Shankar Goyal, *op.cit.*, pp.150-64.
10. Cf. Shankar Goyal, 'The Rājyavardhana Murder Case', *Heritage of India : Past and Present* (Professor R.K. Sharma Felicitation Volume), ed. P.K. Mishra and S.K. Sullerey, Delhi, 1994, pp.579-90.
11. D.Devahuti, *Harsha : A Political Study*, Delhi, 1983, p.82.
12. S.R. Goyal, *Harsha Śīlāditya*, Meerut, 1986, pp.75-85.
13. *Harshacharita*, trans. E.B. Cowell and F.W. Thomas, 2nd edn., Delhi, 1968, p.204.
14. G.P. Sinha, *Post-Gupta Polity (500-750 A.D.)*, Calcutta, 1972, p.72.
15. C.V. Vaidya cites several epigraphic evidences in support of the view that *udraṅga* was land tax and *uparikara* was an extra tax (*History of Mediaeval Hindu India*, Vol. I, Poona, 1921, pp.131-32). D.C. Sircar takes *udraṅga* to be the principal tax (*Indian Epigraphy*, Delhi, 1965, p.360).
16. Bühler takes *tulyamēya* not as a tax but as adjective to the taxes that follow, and translates it as 'to be given according to the weight and according to measure' (*EI.*, Vol. I, *op.cit.*, p.75).
17. D.C. Sircar suggests the possibility of *bhāga-bhōga-kara* being one compound meaning 'tax in the shape of *bhāga* and *bhōga*' (*Indian Epigraphy*, p.394).
18. Bühler translates *bhāga-bhōga* as 'share of the product enjoyed by the king' (*EI.*, Vol.I, *op.cit.*, p.75).
19. S.R. Goyal, *Maukhari-Pushyabhūti-Chālukyayugīna Abhilēkha*, Meerut, 1987, p.95.
20. Shankar Goyal, in S.R. Dubey, *op.cit.*, p.188.

Book Reviews

I

Annual Report on Indian Epigraphy : These reports have been published by Director General Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi - 110011 and printed by different presses located at different parts of India. The reports for the years 1981-82 and 1982-83 edited by Dr. K.V. Ramesh, the former Director (Epigraphy) and retired Joint Director General, A.S.I., and the Reports for the years 1988-89 and 1989-90, edited by Sri Madhav N. Katti, retired Director (Epigraphy) and issued by Dr. K.M. Bhadri, the present Director (Epigraphy), A.S.I., Mysore add a new dimension to the literature on Epigraphy and Indian History. The Report for the year 1981-82, pp. I to XII and 1 to 194, price Rs.458 ; that for 1982-83, pp. I to VI and 1 to 195 (price to be fixed) ; the reports for the years 1988-89 pp. I to IX and 1 to 94, price Rs. 125 ; 1989-90, pp. I to IX and 1 to 125, price Rs.230 are a welcome edition to the reference volumes on Indian Epigraphy. The four reports have been neatly brought out.

These Annual Reports on Indian Epigraphy have been published recently between the years 2002 and 2004. The inscriptions noticed and reviewed in the Reports referred to above have been copied by the members of technical staff of the office of the Director, (Epigraphy), Mysore and the office of the Director (Epigraphy) for Arabic and Persian Inscriptions, A.S.I.; Nagpur. These Reports provide the much needed source material for compiling the political socio-economic and cultural history of India with all its ramifications. In this respect the efforts of Dr. Bhadri and his colleagues have to be highly appreciated.

The report for the year 1981-82 contains in all 602 inscriptions, while the report for 1982-83 contains 908 ; the report for the year 1988-89 contains in all 375 inscriptions and the report for 1989-90 contains 302. These reports have four indices covering respectively, information on the topography (provenance) of the inscriptions, the dynasties to which they belong; their languages and scripts. The preliminary pages include Preface and contents and a general introduction to the inscription included in the report. There is also a list of plates appended at the end of each report.

It is interesting to record here that the first three indices, viz., A, B and C deal with the copper plate inscriptions, inscriptions on stone and other materials and throw light on the important facts contained in the inscriptions. Appendix C includes all the inscriptions copied by the Arabic and Persian branch located at Nagpur.

It may also be mentioned here that the dynastic index furnishes particulars about the dynasty referred to by the particular epigraph; the language index contains the lists of languages which include Prakrit, Sanskrit, Dravidian and the modern Indian languages ; while the script index includes the past and the present scripts prevalent in India during different periods commencing with the 4th-3rd centuries B.C. The scripts include Brāhmī, Kharōshthī, Grantha and the modern Indian scripts. Also included in this list are the Arabic and Persian inscriptions.

The reports have been now made available to the scholars after long perseverance and pursuit. The editors, publishers, printers and the present Director (Epigraphy), Mysore deserve every appreciation for placing in the hands of students of Epigraphy and History these Annual Reports.

- Madhav N. Katti

II

The Hāthīgumphā Inscription of Khāravela and The Bhabru Edict of Aśoka - A critical Study - by Shashi Kant, Second Revised Edition 2000, ISBN 81-246-0139-9; pp. xxiv+168 with 19 b/w photographs, 2 Folded Maps; Price: Rs. 295/-, Published and printed by D.K. Printworld(P) Ltd., New Delhi.

It is well recognized that non-professional western as well as Indian scholars have made great contributions in tracking down, studying, editing and critically commenting on South Asian and Southeast Asian inscriptions. It is significant that, more often than not, such non-professionals have interested themselves in taking ancient rather than medieval inscriptions. One reason for this is that ancient Indian inscriptions shed light on what would otherwise be gray if not dark areas in our history. Also ancient Indian inscriptions hold forth greater challenges to researches in matters of transcription and interpretation.

The two inscriptions selected by Dr. Shashi Kant belong to this category and are of immense interest. The original version of this work was published as early as in 1971 with a Foreword by no less a luminary than Prof. A.L.Basham. Shashi Kant's treatment of the two inscriptions was so refreshing that it was very deservedly welcomed by the academic fraternity. The author needs to be lauded for bringing out the second edition with useful additions instead of merely reprinting the earlier version.

While appreciating Shashi Kant's approach to the Hāthīgumphā inscription, some scholars have expressed disagreement with his dating of that inscription. However, the present reviewer would like to point out that, of all the attempts at finding a proper slot for the Hāthīgumphā inscription in the chronological scheme of Indian history, Shashi Kant's is more convincing than all the others.

The author gives the text and translation of the Hāthīgumphā inscription. There is no doubt that Shashi Kant's text is the best we have had so far and it will be difficult to further amend his readings. He has provided very convincing justifications for differing from earlier decipherments. As a result of the text as amended by him, the translation provided by him enables epigraphs and historians to better understand Khāravela's life, career and times.

The present reviewer wonders why the author has added a short write up on "Tradition of Writing and Scripts in Ancient India" (pp. 105-110) without being able to break new ground. It is obvious that he is not aware of some recent thinking on the history of writing in India in the light of fresh approach to the early Tamil inscriptions of the Pandyan country and early writing on a potsherd from Northern Srilanka.

As regards Section II of the book, devoted to a reappraisal of Aśoka's Bhabru edict, I can do no better than quote A.L.Basham : "With this is included a further study of one of Aśoka's most obscure inscriptions, the Bhabru Edict. This little document is as important for the history of Buddhism as Khāravēla's Hāthīgumphā Inscription is for that of Jainism, and it arouses many questions as to the correct interpretation of the passages of scripture referred to and the relations of the church and state under Aśoka's regime. Here, too, Dr. Shashi Kant has produced new theories of great importance and I recommend them to all students of Indian history and religions."

In conclusion, the present reviewer would like to congratulate Shashi Kant for the work under review for the fact that its relevance has stood the test of time for over three decades.

D.K. Printworld (P) Ltd., New Delhi deserve to be congratulated for the neat production of this important work.

K.V. Ramesh