

THE NEWLY DISCOVERED THREE SETS OF SVETAKA GANGA COPPER PLATES

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Recently three sets of Svetaka Ganga Copper Plates were discovered from the village Padmatola in Sanakhemedi Block of Ganjam district. One Sri Narasingha Swain, while digging his land found the plates and informed Orissa State Museum. The plates were subsequently brought to the Orissa State Museum by the author on 27.9.2004 for preservation and study.

The Gangas belong to an ancient illustrious dynasty with longest glorious history and culture of about one thousand years from 498 to 1435 A.D. During their long regime, they passed through many a trials, tribulation and vassitude of time. However, the present day culture of Orissa owes a lot to their epoch. The early or eastern Gangas, a branch of the Gangas of Kolahalapura in Gangavadvishaya of Mysore occupied Kalinga and ruled from their capital Dantapura. Hastivarman, the 3rd ruler shifted his capital to Kalinganagar on the bank of Vansadhara. Their territory mostly comprised erstwhile Ganjam, Koraput districts and parts of present day Andhra Pradesh. During the rule of eastern Gangas Kalinga was known to have been divided into five parts till they were consolidated by the imperial Gangas in 11th century A.D. Simultaneously with the eastern Gangas by about 7th/8th century A.D. two other collateral branches of the Gangas the Ambavadi and Svetaka branches of the Gangas were known to have ruled in parts of Ganjam, Koraput and Kalahandi districts. Two copper plate grants of the Ambavadi branch have been found which throw some light on their history and culture.

The Svetaka branch of the dynasty ruled for a long time. Sixteen copper plate grants of the rulers of the dynasty have been discovered earlier from which we get a graphic account of their history and culture. The newly discovered plates are edited and presented here. Out of the three grants one was issued by Maharaja Indravarma while the other two, were issued by Maharaja Anantavarma. One copper plate grant of Anantavarma had already been discovered from Palajhadi village of Bada Khemundi which records the donation of Belro village to Bhattananata Sharma of Vajasaneya branch of Vastagotra. The present two grants of Sana Khemundi may be assigned to Anantavarma, the issuer of Palajhadi grants on palaeographic ground.

(A) Sanakhemedi Grants of Maharaja Anantavarma

This 1st set consists of three plates, each measuring 14.4cm x 8cm, hinged together by means of a copper ring at one end, which held the royal seal, marked with the figure of

a lying bull. The first plate is engraved on one side only, the second and the third plates are engraved on both sides. The inscription which is in a good state of preservation, consists of thirty one lines of writing. The record is not dated but on the Paleographical ground it may be assigned to the 8th century A.D. The language of the charter is Sanskrit. Except the customary verses, the whole record is written in prose diction.

As regards Orthography, the following peculiarities may be noted. The form of 'b' and 'v' are not distinguished, both being indicated by the use of 'v' for both the letters. In certain cases a letter or Visarga has been wrongly left out. Again 't' followed by 'r' is doubled, like Sakti-ttraya, gottra, etc. Palatal 's' is often used for middle 'sha', (pasana). There are certain other errors which have been duly corrected by the transcribed text.

The inscription is of the illustrious king of 'Svetaka, Maharaja Anantavarma, who has acquired a store of virtue by the worship at the feet of Gokarnasvamin established on the summit of the Mahendra mountain, who was like the moon in the sky, who was the ornament of the spotless family of the Gangas, who was a devout worshipper of Mahesvara (Siva) and who was the great meditator at the feet of his parents, and who by the excellence of the three constituents of his regal power had attached to himself the whole circle of feudatories, and had acquired by the valorous strength of his arms the sovereignty over all Kalinga. From his residence at 'Svetaka' the king through this document informs his officials and the inhabitants concerned, that on the occasion of a Solar eclipse he granted the village *Salavanika* in *Hemvaka Vishya* to the Brahmanas named Deva Rama and Deva Vinu (Vishnu) of the Bharadvaja gotra, and Vajasaneya Charana, for the benefit of his parents and himself. The engraver of the charter was *Padmachandra*. The village *Salavanika* and *Hemvaka Vishya* may be identified with the present village *Sanadumula*, (P.S.-Nuagao) and *Halapanka* of *Mohana P.S.* respectively.

Text

First Plate 1st side

- 1) Om Svasti - vijaya - Svetak - adhishtana (d) vasakad = bhagavats = cha
- 2) turdasa - bhuvan - adhipate (h) - sakala - jagatr- anaika - natha sya
- 3) devati - devas = chara - guro - sakala Sasanka - sekhara
- 4) dharasya - sthity - utpatii - pralaya karana - hetor - mahendra - acha
- 5) la sikhara - nivasinasya (h) Sri Gokarnnesvara - bhattara
- 6) kas(sya) charana - kamal -aradhana -tat parama - sa - vahu punya
- 7) samchya - Gang - amala - kul - amvar (i-amba) endu (h*)

Second plate 1st side

- 8) vala (ba) - parakram = akranta - samasta - Kaling - adhirajya (h) sakti
- 9) ttraya (tra) - prakarsh - anuranjit - asesha - samanta (h) vandita - charana
- 10) parama Mahesvaro mata - pitri - pad - anudhyata = Maharaja

- 11) Sri Anantavarmadeva(h) kusali Hemvaka vishaya Sa
- 12) lavanika grame - yatha - kal - adhyasi - sakarana
- 13) nayas = cha - chata bhata - vallbha - jatinam - yath - a hama
- 14) na yati samajna payati - viditam - astu bhavatam

Second plate II side

- 15) ----- sha - maya khanda - kshetra (tra) - Brahmanaditya Devarama
- 16) Devavinu (vishnu) ya - ka devaya graho - parage salila dha
- 17) ra purusa (sha) krutya pratipaditah - purvva disi pasana (sha)
- 18) pakti simanta (h) dakshina disi rajamarga pasa (sha)
- 19) na pakti simanta(h) paschima disi kaitanga grama sindhi
- 20) simanta (h) Uttara disi pa sa na (sha) pakti simanta(h) sva Pa(schi)
- 21) ma pi khanda kshetra (tra) grahe parage salila dhara pura

Third plate 1st side

- 22) sa(sha) krutya pratipaditah - purvva disi pasana (sha) pakti si
- 23) manta(h) dakshina disi pasana (sha) pakti simanta (h) paschi
- 24) me-disi-kaityanga-grama-samdhi simanta(h) - uttaradisi - pasa (sha)
- 25) na pakti simanta (h) - griha vastu - hasta - samenya - mata
- 26) pitor = atmanas - cha punya (nya) pavardhaya = sam-pradatah gottra
(tra) Bhara
- 27) dvaja - charana - Vajasenaya - Pravara ----- ga
- 28) rha shetya cha - sakha ----- utkirnam akshasali Padmachandra

III plate 2nd side

- 29) vahu (ba) bhir = vasudha datta ra(ja) bhi = sagar - adibhi yasya yasya
- 30) yada - bhumi - tasya - tasya - tada phalam - karas = cha nivaddha dhanya
- 31) muraja (h) shata dha muraja (h)

(B) Sanakhemedi Grants of Maharaja Anantavarma

This 2nd set consists of three plates, each measuring 14.6cm x 9.5cm, strung together by means of a copper ring at one end which held the royal seal marked with the figure of a lying bull. The first plate is engraved on one side but the second and the third plates are engraved on both the sides. Altogether forty lines of writings are noticed. The inscription is in a good state of preservation.

The character belongs to the Southern class of alphabets. Some of the Paleographical features of the inscription are (1) The consonants after 'r' is double as in hetor=m=Mahendrachalo, (2) again 't' followed 'r' is doubled, Sakti-ttraya, gottra, Kshetra, etc. (3) the scribe does not make any distinction between 'v' and 'b'. Lastly in certain cases a letter or Visarga has been wrongly left out.

The inscription bears no date but on the Paleographical consideration it may be placed in the 8th century A.D. The language of the charter is Sanskrit.

The inscription records the gift of the village Bhullavanika which was situated in the district (Vishaya) called Hemvakamatamva to four Brahmanas, Vinayaka Svami, Narayanasvami, DurgglyaSvami and Sarvva Svami, who belonged to the Parasara gottra and Vajasaneya Charana. The gift was issued from Svetaka. The donor was Maharaja Anantavarmadeva. The boundaries of the land are specified in the grant.

Of the localities mentioned Svetaka was perhaps the country adjoining Kalinga to the west, some other scholars identify it with Chikit in the Ganjam district. Mahendrachala probably refers to the name of a hill which is situated in the Ganjam district. Bhullavanika the grant be identified with present village Bhalijholo, P.S.-Pratappur and Hemvanka may be the same as Halapanka.

Text

First plate 1st side

- 1) Om svasti vijaya - Svetak-adhishthana(d) vasakad=bhaga
- 2) vatas=chaturdasa-bhuvan-adhipate(h*) sakala - jagatr-anaika=na
- 3) thasya = devati - devas=chara-chara-guro=sakala-Sasanka
- 4) srekhara(se) - dharasya - sthity - utpatti - pralaya - karana - hetor
- 5) mMahendra - achala - sikhara - ni vasinasya (h*) Sri
- 6) Gokarnnesva (ra) bhattarakasa (sya) - charana kamal - aradhana - ta
- 7) t parasa (ma) vahu - punya samchayoh = gang - amala - kul
- 8) amvar = (ba) enduh - sva - bhuja - va(ba) la = parakram = akranta - sama
- 9) stakaling - adhirajya (h*) sakti -ttraya (tra) praka

II plate 1st side

- 10) rsh - anuranjit - asesha - samanta (h*) vandita - charana
- 11) parasa (ma) mahesvaro - mata - pitru = pad - anudhyata
- 12) Maharaja - Sri Anantavarmmadevah = kusali
- 13) Hemvakamatamva vishaya Bhullavanika gra
- 14) me - yatha - kal - adhyasi - sakaran - anyas = cha cha
- 15) ta - bhata - vallabha - jatnam - yath = aha samajna - pa
- 16) yati - viditam = astu bhavatam = utara paschimai diga
- 17) bhage - kshetra (tra) pataka chatushtayam vastu - sahiti - na = graho
- 18) parage = sampradatvah - purvva disa bhage - tamala bhusi

II plate 2nd side

- 19) min - dakshnina - disa braha - pataka simanta (h*)
- 20) paschima - disa - bhage - kaitunga - nvasa - sakshi - simanta (h*)

- 21) uttara disa - bhage durggalya svamina svatka sima
- 22) ntah - evam = chatu - simalingani bhū - param=api - purvva sima
- 23) kshetra (tra) pataka - chatu - shtyam - sampradatah - uttaraiva - purvva
- 24) uttara disa - bhage ta da - Srunga grama - vestha si
- 25) manta dakshinena da vasakta bhumi simanta paschima disa bha
- 26) ga - tamala bhumi - simantah - uttaradisa bhage gra
- 27) ma bhumi sima = evam - simalingani = mata - pito - r - a
- 28) tmanas = cha - punya pavardhayo (h) -----

III plate 1st side

- 29) bhavati = bha - kenachitu (t) Iya ----- vavaharaniya
- 30) miti Vina (na) yaka Svami, Durggalya Svami, Sarvva Svami - Na
- 31) rayana Svami - cha = chat - chari = trata gottra (tra) parasara
- 32) charana va(ja) senaya = pravara parasara vala sakti vala (ba)
- 33) vasishtha vala (ba) sakha kanva - haras = cha - krutva sva
- 34) bhi muraja ----- ma - bhū sankava (h) paradatte
- 35) ti - parthiba (h*) svadatta - phala - modatti (ti) paradatt - anu
- 36) palanam = sva - datta paradattam = va yo hareti (ta) vasu
- 37) ndhara = sa (sva) vishthya(m) krumi - bhutva - pitrubhi (h*) sa

III plate 2nd side

- 38) ha pachyati (te) = va (ba) hubhir = vasudha datta - rajabhi
- 39) sagar - adibhi = yasya - yasya - yada bhumi
- 40) tasya - tada phalam

(C) Sanakhemedi Copper Plate Grants of Maharaja Indravarma:

This set consists of three plates, each measuring 16.6cm x 9.5cm, strung together by a copper ring at one end which held the royal seal marked with the figure of a lying bull. The first and the third plate were engraved on one side only while the second plate is engraved on both the sides.

The inscription which is in a good state of preservation consists of 32 lines of writing. The record is not dated but on the Paleographical ground, it may be placed in the 8th century A.D. The alphabets of the inscription resembles that of the Gautami plates. The language of the charter is Sanskrit. The character of the Inscription belongs to the Southern variety of alphabet. Except the customary benedictive and imprecatory verses, the whole record is written in prose.

As regards Orthography, the following peculiarities may be noted. The form of 'b' and 'v' are not distinguished, both being indicated by the use of 'v' for both the letters. In certain

cases a letter or Visarga has been wrongly left out. Again 't' followed by 'r' is doubled like Sakti-ttraya, Kshettra and gottra Palatal 's' is often used for dental 's' and vice-versa. Besides there are certain other errors which have been duly corrected in the transcribed text.

The inscription is of the Ganga king of Svetaka, Maharaja Indravarma, who was a devout worshipper of Mahesvara, the ornament of the spot less family of the Gangas, who has acquired a store of virtue by worshipping at the lotus feet of the illustrious God Gokarnesvara Bhattaraka (Siva) the Almighty-who is Lord of the fourteen worlds, who is the cause of existence, creation and destruction of the Universe, and who resides on the summit of the hill Mahendra, possessing overlordship of the whole of Kalinga territory by the strength of his own arms, endeared to all vassals by the excellence of his three fold power, a great devotee of Mahesvara and meditator at the feet of his father and mother, commanded from the city of Svetaka, stating that the village named 'Kara' was granted in favour of Brahmanas named DurggaSvami, Narayana Svami, Vinayaka Svami, and Dharmma Svami, of Parasara gotra, Vajasaneya Charana and Parasara Pravara, for the increase of merit of his father, mother and himself. The boundaries of the land are specified in the grant. It was engraved by the illustrious AkshaSalin (GoldSmith) Padmachandra. The village Kara may be identified with present village Kuruma.

Indravarma, the issuer of the present Padmatola grant grant of Sana Khemedi was known to have issued four other grants namely 1-Bhethi Singha grant of Sana Khemendi, 2-Visamagiri grant of Sana Khemundi, 3-Goutami grant of Bada Khemendi and 4-Palajhadi grant of Bada Khemendi. The present Padmatola grant of Sanakhemendi is the 5th grant of Indravarma so far known to us. This grant has been engraved by Padmachandra who had also engraved his Goutami grant. Interestingly one of the two grants of Padmatola of Sana Khemendi issued by Anantavarma had also been engraved by the same Akshasalin Padmachandra which indicates that Anantavarma and Indravarma were not far apart in chronology.

Text
First Plate

- 1) Om Svasti - Vijaya - Svetak - adhishtana (d) vasakad
=bhagavatas=chaturdasa
- 2) bhuvan - adhipate [h] sakala (sa) jagatra - anaika - nathasya = devati -
deva's - cha
- 3) ra chara - guro -sakala - (sa) Sasanka - Sekhara - dharasya sthity - Utpatti
- 4) pralaya - karana - hetor = mMahendr - achala -sikhara - nivasina (h) sya
Sri Go
- 5) karnnesvara - bhattarakas (sya) = charana kamal - aradhana - tat parama
- 6) sa vahu punya - samchaye = Gang - amala - kul - amvar (l-amba) endu
[h*]

- 7) sva - bhuja - va(ba)la - parakram - akranta = samasta - Kaling - adhi
- 8) rajya [h*] sakti - ttraya - prakarsh - anuranjit - asesha - Samanta [h*] va
- 9) ndita - charana - paramamahesvaro - mata - pitru - pad - anu

Second Plate 1st side:

- 10) (dhya) ta Maharaja - Sri Indravarmadevah kusali Kara
- 11) grame - yatha - kal - adhyasi - Sa - karana nyas - chata bhata
- 12) vallabha -jatinam - yath - a hamana (sa) ya - samajna pa(ya)ti cha
- 13) Veditam = astu bhavatam - Vinayaka Svamina - DurggaSva
- 14) mi - Narayana Svami - Dharmma Svami - s - Che ti
- 15) - ya khanda kshetram - Kaijana Mna - graha vastu
- 16) hasta - sata - samenya sa -pradatth - pra (pa) vvadhisraya
- 17) pisaya palli - simanta [h] tate dakshina disi

Second Plate II side:

- 18) pasana (sha) pakti - simanta(h) tato paschima
- 19) disi - sara - simant(h) uttara disi (di) gadda simantah
- 20) evam - matapito - r = atmanas=cha punya - pavardhayo(h)
- 21) grahe parage datth = yath-ana kenachit - svalpya - vadh - ta
- 22) ta karaniyam - itih - gottra - Parasara charana
- 23) Vajasenaya - Pravara - Parasara vala - vasishtha vala (ba)
- 24) sakti vala sakha kan - vala (ba) kara-s-cha dhanya (danam) muraja (h)

Third Plate

- 25) Ma bhu - phala - smka va (h) para datte ti - pathi (rthi) va (vah) sva da
- 26) tta phalam = anantyam (m) - paradatt anupalanam (ne) sva
- 27) datta paradatta - m - vayo - hareta vasundhara (m)
- 28) sva - vishthya (m) - krumi - bhutva pitrubhi (h) saha
- 29) pachyati Va (ba) hubhir = vasudha - datta rajabhi = sa
- 30) gar - adibhi = yasya yasya yada bhumi (mi) tasya
- 31) tasya tada phala (m) utkirnam Akshasali Padma
- 32) chandrena

References

- 1) N.K.Sahu & others, *History of Orissa* pp.87 to 92/ 205 to 229
- 2) S.N.Rajguru - *Odisara Itihas*, part-I, pp.360-376
- 3) From the original plates.
- 4) *EPI, Indica* - Vol. XXIV - PP 180-83
- 5) *EPI, Indica* - Vol. XV - PP - 275ff.
- 6) *EPI, Indica* - Vol. XXIII - PP - 261-68.
- 7) *EPI, Indica* - Vol. XXVI - PP - 165-168
- 8) *Ins. of Orissa* - Vol. IV - PP 292-96.

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NEWLY DISCOVERED COPPER PLATE GRANTS FROM VILLAGE PADMATOLA, SANAKHEMUNDI

