

Two Copper-Plate of Śaśāṅka from Midnapore.

By DR. R. C. MAJUMDAR.

These **two plates** were secured by Mr. B. R. Sen, I.C.S., Collector of Midnapore, in August, 1937, from an inhabitant of the district, but no details of their actual find-place are known. Mr. Sen presented the plates to the local *Sāhitya Parishad*, a literary association, and Mr. Manishi Nath Basu gave a short account of them in a local Journal *Mādhavī* (*Āṣāḍhā*, 1345 B.S., pp. 3ff.). The plates, however, remained unknown, for all practical purposes, to scholars, and I find no reference to them in any discussion about Śaśāṅka during the last seven years. In course of a short visit to Midnapore I was agreeably surprised to find these plates lying in the Museum of the *Parishad*, and with the kind permission of the authorities, brought them to Calcutta. Mr. T. Ramchandram, Superintendent of the Indian Museum, Archaeology Section, very kindly cleaned the plates and prepared estampages of them. I am editing the inscriptions from the original plates which have been returned to the authorities of the *Sāhitya Parishad*, Midnapore.

As soon as the plates were brought to Calcutta they excited great interest, and at my suggestion, Dr. D. C. Sircar, who read the plates along with me, published a short account of them in the Bengali Journal *Prabāsī* (*Śrāvaṇa*, 1350, pp. 291ff.).

The **Plate No. I** measures 8" × 5½" and contains 15 lines of writing engraved on one side only. A circular **seal** is soldered to the middle of the narrower side on the proper right. It is 1½" in diameter, and on its surface is engraved, in relief, inside a slightly raised circular rim, a vase of a somewhat peculiar shape on a flat pedestal, with a few wavy lines on each side and on the top. It is most probably a representation of a sacred incense-burner between flowers and foliage. Beneath the vase, between two parallel thick double lines, is the legend 'Tāvīr-ādihikarāṇasya'. Mr. T. Ramchandram informs me that vases of a shape similar to that on the seal have been found amid the ruins of Tamluk, the site of the ancient city of Tāmralipti, in the district of Midnapore. A portion of the upper and lower right corners of the plate is broken away, and a small part of the remaining right end of the plate is badly corroded. Consequently some letters at the end of ll. 1-6 and 13-15 are missing, and some of ll. 9-11 cannot be read. One or two letters at the beginning of ll. 1 and 15 are also broken off.

The **Plate No. II** measures 6½" × 4½" and contains 12 lines of writing engraved on one side, and only six letters in a single line on the other. The **seal**, which is an almost exact replica of that in No. I, is 1·2" in diameter. The plate is in a fair state of preservation, save that a very small part of the left-hand side, both at the top and the bottom, is corroded and broken off.

The **alphabet** belongs to the type used in North-East India during the period 550-650 A.D. and shows some divergence from those used in the Ganjam plates of Śaśāṅka. While editing the four copper-plates from Soro, Mr. N. G. Majumdar¹ noted the following as chief points of difference, in respect of alphabet, exhibited by the Ganjam plates:—

1. The acute-angled type with nail-heads.
2. Medial *i* and *ī* strokes often extending below the head of the letter.
3. Later form of *j*.
4. The letter *r* with a stroke added to its base on the left side.
5. The letter *s* with an oval loop at the top.

The absence of these in the Soro plates led Mr. Majumdar to conclude that the Soro plates should be placed somewhat earlier than the Ganjam plates. Now, as the present plates which show, in respect of these points, a close resemblance with the

¹ *E.I.*, Vol. XXIII, p. 198.

Soro-plates B, C, D, belong, like the Ganjam plates, to the reign of king Śaśāṅka, the differences must be regarded as due to locality rather than age. In any case, there is no reason to conclude, on grounds of palaeography, that the Soro plates B, C, D were earlier than the present plates.

The **language** is Sanskrit, and except a portion of the first line, containing the date, both the grants are written in verses, all in *anuṣṭubh* or *śloka* metre.

As regards *orthography*, the following points may be noted. The same sign is used for *b* and *v*. *Anusvāra* is used for final *m*. Final consonants *k*, *t* and *n* are indicated by a short slanting stroke below the letter (*pr̥thak* in Pl. I, l. 6, *bhavēt* in Pl. I, l. 14 and Pl. II, l. 13 and *dr̥ṇān* in Pl. II, l. 9). In Pl. I *t* is doubled before *r* (*pōtra*° in l. 1, *ēkatra* in l. 7, *mātrā* in l. 9, and *attra* in l. 13) and consonants after *r* are also occasionally doubled (*prakīrṇa* in l. 7, *sarvān* in ll. 8, 9, 13, *carmma* in l. 9, *r̥vācam* in l. 10, *anuvartinā* in l. 11 and *varjita* in l. 13; but we have *caturjaladhi* in l. 3, *bhūmergo*° in l. 9, *svarga* in l. 10 and *adharyavē* in l. 12). This irregularity in the doubling of consonants before and after *r* is remarkably exhibited in Pl. II, where in several cases it spells differently the words used in Pl. I. Thus we have *pōtra*° (l. 1), *caturjyaladhi* (l. 3) and *varjita* (l. 6). Further, in Pl. II, consonants are doubled in *kīrti* (ll. 6, 8), *vartamāna* (l. 8), *gōtra* (l. 10) and *pittrōḥ* (l. 11), but not in *gāmbhārya* (l. 4), *dharma* and *śāstra* (l. 7), and *ṛ* is used instead of *ṛ* in *catvāriṅśad* (l. 9).

Both the plates are **dated**. But unfortunately, I am unable to interpret the numerical symbols with any certainty. All that I can do is to offer alternative suggestions based on a comparison with similar symbols known from other records.

The upper left corner of Pl. I is broken and one, or possibly two, letters are missing. The first letter that can be read looks very much like the lower part of *mva*. The next letter looks like *tt* with a thick horizontal stroke a little to the right of the top. We may take it as final *t* on the analogy of the Soro plates B (l. 20), C (l. 17), D (l. 14), and the Amauna Plate¹ (l. 8). It is true that the final *t* is written in a different way in the present records, *viz.* a short form of ordinary *t* with a slanting stroke beneath it (Pl. II, l. 13). But we find the same thing in the Antirigam Plate (*E.I.*, Vol. XVIII, p. 298, l. 30). On the other hand it may be noted that the sign *tt* is used as the numerical symbol for 5 in the Siddhantam Plate.² So far as Pl. I is concerned there is no difficulty in taking it as final *t* and restoring the first word [*sa*] *mvat*. The two signs that follow are undoubtedly numerical symbols or figures. The first resembles the symbol for 100 with this difference that the right-hand vertical stroke makes a sharp curve open to the right instead of a more gentle curve on the left. It possesses the closest resemblance to the symbol for 300 used in the Vadner Plate of Buddharāja³ (l. 34). Indeed, I would have no hesitation in interpreting it as 300 but for the fact that it closely resembles the first of the two symbols used to denote the day of the month in both Pls. I and II. There is, no doubt, some difference. In the symbol for the year the curves, both on the upper left and lower right ends of the letter, are more open, and there are faint traces of a stroke, like an *ā-kāra* sign, at the top. In the case of the symbol denoting the day of the month we have, of course, to take it as 10 and find an analogy in the form used in the Buddha image inscription of the reign of Mahendrapāla from Behar-Shariff.⁴ It is to be noted that we have the symbols for 20 and 10, used respectively in one and three instances, in the Soro plates of Sōmadatta, but they have the usual form derived from the Gupta symbol and have not the least resemblance with the signs used in the present plates.

The next letter is the usual symbol for 30. But here, again, this interpretation is rendered doubtful by the occurrence of a similar symbol as the second figure of the day of the month. In the latter case we may interpret it as 9 on the analogy of the Paharpur Plate⁵ (l. 20) and Svalpa-Velur Grant⁶ (l. 29). In both these cases

¹ *E.I.*, Vol. X, p. 51.

² *E.I.*, Vol. XII, p. 35.

³ *Nalanda and its Epigraphic Material (MASI. No. 66)*, p. 105, Pl. XI, d.

⁴ *E.I.*, Vol. XX, p. 63.

⁵ *E.I.*, Vol. XIII, p. 215, l. 29.

⁶ *E.I.*, Vol. XXIV, p. 125.

a similar sign¹ has been so read, though I do not know on what basis. It is to be noted that the letter *l*, used for 30, has also been used in some cases with a rounded top for the decimal figure 3.² Whether in the two cases referred to above, and in the present plates the letter *l* should also be read as 3, rather than 9, is worthy of consideration. This detailed discussion shows that the reading of the date is uncertain, but we may provisionally read the year as 309 or 19. In the former case it has to be referred to the Gupta era and the date would be equivalent to 629 A.D. But the latter is more probable and we may regard the record as dated in the 19th year.

In Pl. No. II the first distinct letter in l. 1 is *ta* with a horizontal stroke on the top which we have discussed above. If it is taken as the final *t* we should expect *samva* or *samva* before, and some numerical figures after, it. The letter preceding *ta* is very indistinct, but what remains does not tally with any possible form for *va* or *mva*. The little that remains of the letter before it also does not look like *s*. The letter immediately following *ta* is simply a vertical stroke with a thickening at the top exactly like the letter *ra*. The lower part of the preceding letter being almost attached with its lower end, it looks like *la* on the estampage (though very different from the second numerical symbol in Pl. I), but a close examination of the original plate leaves no doubt that the vertical stroke forms a distinct letter. That this, together with the three (or four, for there is space for a letter in the broken corner on the left) preceding letters, denotes the year is proved beyond doubt by the expression that follows. In Bühler's Chart a vertical stroke with a *mātrā* is given as symbol for 1,000 (Pl. IX, Col. III) and the same is used in records of the Gupta period for 8.³ In spite of all appearances to the contrary, we may, therefore, provisionally read the whole as *samvat* 8.

Pl. I records that while Śaśāṅka was ruling the earth his feudatory *Sāmanta-Mahārāja Śrī-Sōmadatta* was governing the province of **Daṇḍabhukti** joined to **Utkala-dēsa**. The object of the grant is to register the donation of the village **Mahā-Kumbhārapadraka** to **Bhaṭṭāśvara**.

Pl. II records that while Śaśāṅka was ruling the earth, *Mahā-Pratihāra Śubhakīrtti* was governing **Daṇḍabhukti**. The object of the grant is to register the donation of some lands in the village **Kumbhārapadraka**, in the *dēsa* **Kētaka-padrika**, to **Dāmyasvāmin**. The donated lands, in both the grants, were situated in the *Tāvira adbhikaraṇa* to which belong the seals affixed to both the plates.

Now two of the Soro plates, mentioned above, record the grant of two villages by *Mahā-Balādhikṛta, Antaraviṣa, Mahā-Sāndhivigrahika* Sōmadatta. These villages were situated in the *Sarēph-āhāra-viṣaya* in Uttara-Tōsali which again formed a part of the *Ōdra-viṣaya*. As Mr. N. G. Majumdar has pointed out, Uttara-Tōsali included the Balasore district, and Sarēphā is to be identified with Soro in the same district. As Sōmadatta of the present Pl. I was governing both Daṇḍabhukti and Utkala, the region comprising the southern part of Midnapore and the Balasore district must be regarded as within his jurisdiction. As palaeographically also, the two Soro plates of Sōmadatta belong to the same period as the present Pl. I, it may be presumed that all the three plates refer to the same individual. The two Soro plates of Sōmadatta refer to, but do not mention the name of, his suzerain lord. In the light of the present Pl. I we may identify him with king Śaśāṅka.

If these identities be presumed, the four Soro plates, along with the present Pl. I, supply interesting information regarding the history of northern Orissa in the sixth century A.D.

The Ganjam plates show that the suzerainty of Śaśāṅka was acknowledged by the Śailōdbhava rulers of Kōṅgōda, which certainly comprised southern Orissa, in the year 619 A.D.⁴ But we had hitherto no means to ascertain, either the stages by which Śaśāṅka, king of Gauḍa, gradually extended his sway so far south, or the

¹ According to Mr. S. N. Chakravarty the symbol for nine in the Paharpur CP. resembles the *au* vowel (*J.A.S.B.L.*, No. IV, p. 388), but the published facsimile shows a clear *ta* sign.

² Jirjingi Plate, *E.I.*, Vol. XXV, p. 281; Purle Plate, *E.I.*, Vol. XIV, p. 361; Chicacole Plate, *E.I.*, Vol. III, p. 131.

³ Baigram Plate (l. 25), *E.I.*, Vol. XXI, p. 81.

⁴ *J.A.H.R.S.*, Vol. X, pp. 7-8.

degree of subjection in which the region lying between Gauḍa and Kōṅgōḍa was held by him. The present plates inform us that Śaśāṅka conquered at first *Daṇḍabhukti* and then *Utkala*. The two Soro plates of Sōmadatta and the present Pl. II show that at first both *Daṇḍabhukti* and *Utkala* formed integral parts of Śaśāṅka's dominions and were ruled by his own officers; the former by *Mahā-Pratīhāra Śubhakīrti*, and the latter by *Mahā-Balādhikṛta, Antaraṅga, Mahā-Sāndhivigrahika Sōmadatta*. Pl. I evidently refers to a later period when Sōmadatta was raised to the rank of *Sāmanta-Mahārāja* and ruled over both the provinces under the suzerainty of Śaśāṅka;—an administrative arrangement analogous to that introduced in *Kōṅgōḍa-maṇḍala* or southern Orissa, which Śaśāṅka presumably conquered later.

According to Soro Pl. A, the region which Sōmadatta governed, *viz.* Uttara-Tōsālī, was in possession of Śambhuyaśas in the year 260 of an unspecified era. The same king Śambhuyaśas seems also to be referred to as the ruler of Dakṣhiṇa-Tōsālī in the *Patiakella Grant*¹ dated probably in the year 283 of the same era. Mr. R. D. Banerji, who edited the later plate, referred the year to the Gupta era. But Mr. N. G. Majumdar held that as the alphabets in the Soro plates B, C, D were earlier than those of Ganjam plates, dated 619 A.D., and those in the Soro plate A were still earlier, this last should be assigned to the second half of the sixth century A.D.² and the year referred to the Kalacuri era. As shown above, the present plates prove that the Soro plates B, C, D may be regarded as contemporaneous with the Ganjam plates, and as such the Soro plate A may belong to the latter half of the sixth century A.D. Thus the date 260 of this plate should be referred to the Gupta era which is proved by the Ganjam plates to have been current in that area, and it is unnecessary, on palaeographic grounds, to fall back upon the Kalacuri era which is not known to have been used in Orissa.

If, then, Śambhuyaśas ruled in N. Tōsālī in the year 580 A.D., it may be safely presumed that he or his successor was defeated by Śaśāṅka. If the date of the *Patiakella Grant* is really 283 (= 603 A.D.), we have to assume that the conquest of Kōṅgōḍa by Śaśāṅka did not take place till some time after this date. If, as seems probable, the southern campaigns of Śaśāṅka were finished before he set out for Kanauj about 606 A.D., his conquest of *Daṇḍabhukti, Utkala* and *Kōṅgōḍa* may be put between 580 and 605 A.D.

Incidentally, this reveals an unknown chapter in the history of Eastern India. It appears from the *Patiakella Grant* that Śambhuyaśas was ruling South Tōsālī during the reign of the Māṇa Dynasty (*Māṇavamśa-rājya-kālē*).³ Whether Śambhuyaśas himself was the suzerain ruler belonging to this dynasty is not clearly stated. Mr. Banerji, who edited the grant, observes that 'Śambhuyaśas is styled *Paramamāheśvara Paramabhāṭṭāraka Paramadēvatādhidivata* which clearly shows his imperial position'. This statement is, however, not strictly accurate. According to Mr. Banerji's own translation, the inscription merely says that while *Parama-Māheśvara* Śambhuyaśas was ruling in southern Tōsālī, *Mahārāja Śivarāja* had obtained the position of a ruler of the earth from the *Parama-dēvat-ādhidivata Parama-Bhāṭṭāraka*. Evidently Mr. Banerji has taken this overlord to be Śambhuyaśas. Such an interpretation is not an unreasonable one, but cannot be regarded as certain, particularly when the latter is styled simply as *Parama-Māheśvara* and is said to have been ruling in southern Tōsālī. The main ground of that interpretation is, of course, the absence of any other ruler, mentioned in that record, to whom these titles can be applied. But it is to be remembered in this connection that the Soro plates B, C, D use the phrase *Parama-daivat-ādhidivata-srī-Parama-Bhāṭṭāraka-pād-ānudhyāta* without mentioning his name. The same may be the case with the *Patiakella Grant*. But in the Soro Pl. A, the corresponding phrase is *Parama-daivata-Vappa-pād-ānudhyāta*. This may mean that Śambhuyaśas' father was his suzerain

¹ *E.I.*, Vol. IX, p. 285.

² *E.I.*, Vol. XXIII, p. 198.

³ Mr. R. D. Banerji takes this expression along with the year and translates: 'In the [two hundred] and eighty-third year of the rule of the Māṇa family.' There does not seem to be any justification for this rendering which would imply the existence of a Māṇa era.

or overlord, and from the use of similar phraseology elsewhere we may even presume that he had inherited his father's position. Thus while there is no definite reference, as Mr. Banerji presumes, to the imperial position of Sambhuyāśas, this may be assumed to be the case. But, then, we should rather take '*daśajīna-Tōsalyām*' in l. 4 of the Patiakella Grant along with Śivarāja rather than with Sambhuyāśas, as Mr. Banerji has done. In other words ll. 1-5 of this grant should be taken to mean that during the rule of the Māna family, while Sambhuyāśas was ruling the earth, Śivarāja (issued the command) from Vōrtanoka in South Tōsali, etc.

This Māna family has a long history which Mr. Banerji has overlooked. He observes: 'This dynasty has been mentioned in two twelfth century inscriptions only, viz. the Nawādā Inscription of the Śaka year 1059 and in the Dudhpani rock inscription.' This is a serious blunder, for the Dudhpani rock inscription which gives the traditional account of the rise of the Māna family of rulers belongs to the seventh or eighth, and not twelfth century A.D., as Mr. Banerji supposes. Prof. Kielhorn, who edited this inscription,² says that 'the characters are essentially the same as, but somewhat more modern than, those of the Apsad inscription of Ādityasena and may be assigned to about the eighth century A.D.' It is clear from the inscription itself that the events, leading to the establishment of the Māna kingdom as described therein, had happened many generations before it was engraved. It may, therefore, be safely presumed, that the Dudhpani rock inscription preserves an account of the origin of the Māna ruling family to which Sambhuyāśas belonged. This family claimed to rule over Magadha towards the end of the eleventh and at the beginning of the twelfth century A.D., but it would be wrong to assume, as Dr. H. C. Ray has done, that the family first rose into importance in the eighth century A.D. and remained petty feudatory chiefs for about four centuries, at the end of which they emerge as independent rulers'.³ The combined testimony of the Soro plates, the Patiakella Grant, and the present plates proves that the Mānas, whose original principality lay, according to Dudhpani rock inscription, somewhere in the hilly region between Midnapore and Gaya districts, gradually extended their sway over nearly the whole of modern Orissa by the latter part of the sixth century A.D. It is presumably by defeating this Māna dynasty that ŚaśāŅka conquered Utkala, Kōṅgōda, and probably also Daṇḍabhukti.

A comparison of the Soro plates B and C with D leaves no doubt that Sōmadatta was succeeded by Bhānudatta in the government of Uttara-Tōsali. For the names of the two donees in the first two plates reappear, along with two others, in the third, and the name Āruṅgasvāmī of the former is changed to Āruṅganitrasvāmī in the latter. The same Bhānudatta is also referred to in another plate found near Balasore.⁴ Bhānudatta bears the titles *Mahā-Pratīhāra-Mahārāja* in the Soro plate D, while the title *Mahā-sāmanta* is added in the Balasore plate which was engraved only three months before. Sōmadatta is called *Sāmanta-Mahārāja* in Pl. I, while Śubhakīrtti, mentioned as ruler of Daṇḍabhukti in Pl. II, has only the title *Mahā-Pratīhāra*. On the basis of the titles of the rulers and the governors, as given in the different plates, we may provisionally reconstruct the different stages in the administration of Utkala and Daṇḍabhukti, and chronologically arrange them as follows:—

1. *Mahā-Pratīhāra* Śubhakīrtti governing Daṇḍabhukti on behalf of ŚaśāŅka (Pl. II.)
2. *Mahā-Balādhikṛta-Antaraṅga-Mahā-Sāndhivigrahika* Sōmadatta ruling in Odra or Utkala (Soro Pls. B, C).
3. Sōmadatta, raised to the dignity of *Sāmanta-Mahārāja*, ruling over both Utkala and Daṇḍabhukti as a feudatory of ŚaśāŅka (Pl. I).
4. *Mahā-Pratīhāra Mahā-Sāmanta Mahārāja* Bhānudatta ruling over Utkala, and possibly also over Daṇḍabhukti (Soro Pl. D).

¹ The family name is spelt as Māna in both Nawada and Dudhpani inscriptions.

² *E.I.*, Vol. II, p. 343.

³ *Dyn. Hist. N. Ind.*, Vol. I, pp. 348-49.

⁴ *I.H.Q.*, Vol. XI, p. 611; *E.I.*, Vol. XXVI, p. 239.

Although we have no definite information that Śaśāṅka was the suzerain of Bhānudatta, that seems to be the most likely conclusion as Śaśāṅka's empire most probably perished with him.

The two Soro plates of Sōmadatta are dated in the year 15, and those of Bhānudatta, in the year 5. This shows that these dates are not to be taken as the regnal year of the suzerain as should normally be the case, but have to be referred to the period of office of Sōmadatta and Bhānudatta. As already noted above, the readings of the dates of the present plates are uncertain. If we assume Pls. I and II to be dated respectively in the nineteenth and eighth years, the different stages in the conquest and administration, sketched above, must have covered a period of at least 32 years.

Of the actual system of administration some details are furnished by the two plates regarding the Tāvira-*adhikaraṇa* from which they were issued. It seems to have been the administrative headquarters of a *maṇḍala*.¹ In Pl. I it is not quite clear whether the communication about the grant is made by the Tāvira-office, or to it by *amātya Prakīrṇadāsa*. In Pl. II, however, there is no doubt that the sale of the land and its grant are announced by the Tāvira-*karana*. It is, therefore, reasonable to accept this meaning in the other plate too. The second half of v. 7, Pl. I, and the first half of v. 6, Pl. II seem to convey some information about the constitution of the Tāvira-*adhikaraṇa*, but unfortunately the full implication of the two qualifying expressions '*lōkasāṅgatam*' and '*vipra-pradhāna-saṅgatam*' is not easy to understand. Dr. Sircar takes them to mean that the *adhikaraṇa* was composed of Brāhmaṇa elders in one case and the public in the other,² but this presumed difference in the constitution of the same *adhikaraṇa* within a comparatively short time goes against this interpretation. The only other possible alternative is that the communication was addressed to the association of Brāhmaṇa elders in one case, and to the people in general in the other. This difference, however, is also not easy to explain.

The word '*karana*', used in both the plates, is obviously an abbreviation of *adhikaraṇa* mentioned in the seals. In Pl. II, the word '*adhi*' also apparently stands for *adhikaraṇika* or members of the *adhikaraṇa*. It is interesting to note that the imprecatory verses are hardly in keeping with the context, as they contain admonitions to 'those born in our family' which can only refer to a king and not to an *adhikaraṇa*.

The village granted in Pl. I is named 'Muhā-kumbhārapadraka' which is probably a mistake for 'Mahā°' and is to be distinguished from the village of the same name, but without the prefix, mentioned in Pl. II. In the latter case, certain specified quantities of land in the village are granted, *viz.* 40 *drōṇas* and 1 *drōṇavāpa* of *vāstu* land. *Vāstu* means homestead lands, and consequently we may infer that 40 *drōṇas* refer to either *khīla* (waste) or agricultural lands, though this is not mentioned in the grant. *Drōṇavāpa*, as a technical term of land-measurement, is well known, but its exact equivalent in modern measures cannot be determined.³ According to Sanskrit lexicons a *drōṇavāpa* is equivalent to one-eighth of a *kulyavāpa*, and this is corroborated by epigraphic evidence. *Drōṇa* is an abbreviated form of *drōṇavāpa*, and is even now current in Bengal.

In Pl. I the entire village of Muhā-kumbhārapadraka is granted. The qualifying epithet '*sarva-maṇḍala-varjita*' is not easy to understand. It may mean that the village is separated from the *maṇḍala*, *i.e.* the administrative unit within which it was situated, with the object, apparently, of exempting it from taxes, duties and other obligations to which other villages were subject, but this is by no means clear.

It is interesting to note that the lands were purchased, even by the ruling authority, from the local *adhikaraṇa*, as is clearly mentioned in Pl. II. The contemporary records from other parts of Bengal refer to similar transactions with more details.⁴

¹ This is not clearly stated; but seems to follow from v. 10, Pl. I.

² *Prabāṣī*, 1350, p. 294.

³ Cf. *History of Bengal* (Dacca University), Vol. I, pp. 651-52.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 266-67.

As regards **localities** mentioned in the inscriptions, **Daṇḍabhukti** and **Utkala** are well known. Pargiter distinguished the **Utkala** country from **Īdra**. According to him the former 'comprised the southern portion of Chuta Nagpur, the Northern Tributary States of Orissa and the Balasore district'.¹ Dr. H. C. Ray also follows him and places **Īdra** to the south of **Utkala**, in the Cuttack district.² But the epigraphic evidence proves that they were used as synonymous terms for modern Orissa. In the Soro plate B, Sarāphā, which is undoubtedly Soro in Balasore district, is said to be situated in Uttara-Tōsalī which was again comprised in **Īdra-viśaya**. Now, it is well known that **Īdra** is the original form of the modern name Orissa, and the Soro plate proves that even in the sixth century A.D., the name **Īdra** was applied to the northern extremity of modern Orissa. According to the Bhuvanesvar inscription,³ dated 1200 A.D., on the other hand, **Utkala-viśaya** comprises Bhuvanesvar in the Puri district. The Dirghasi Stone Inscription⁴ dated A.D. 1075, uses the term **Utkala** in the Sanskrit and **Īḍa** in the Telugu portion in the list of countries conquered by Vanapati. Other evidences may be cited to show the identity of **Utkala** and **Īdra**. Its antiquity goes back to the time of Kālidāsa who uses **Utkala** as a general designation for the country between **Suhma** (W. Bengal) and **Kaliṅga**.⁵

The northern boundary of **Utkala** or **Īdra** seems to have varied in different ages. But we can fix it with a tolerable degree of certainty for the sixth century A.D. Pl. I shows that **Daṇḍabhukti** and **Utkala** were coterminous, and the former certainly comprised the Midnapore district or at least the greater part of it. That it did not extend much further south into the Balasore district is proved by the Soro Pl. B, as mentioned above. Thus the present boundary line between Balasore and Midnapore districts roughly corresponds to that between ancient **Daṇḍabhukti** and **Īdra** or **Utkala**.

The present plates contain the earliest reference to **Daṇḍabhukti** and push back the antiquity of the name by nearly four centuries. For the next mention of it occurs in the Irda CP.⁶ belonging to the tenth century A.D. But in the latter period it had ceased to be an independent administrative unit of the *bhukti* class and is referred to as **Daṇḍabhukti-maṇḍala** comprised within the **Vardhamāna-bhukti**. It is probable, therefore, that **Śaśāṅka** created this new *bhukti* when he conquered the southern districts, but in course of time it was incorporated into the **Vardhamāna-bhukti**, though curiously enough, the suffix *bhukti* was not discontinued. Evidently, like **Tirabhukti** in North Bihar, *bhukti* came to be a part and parcel of the geographical name **Daṇḍabhukti** irrespective of its original connotation as an administrative unit. **Daṇḍabhukti**, as the name of a principality, occurs in the list of countries conquered by **Rājendra Chōla** and of the feudal States that helped **Rāmāpāla** in his fight against the **Kaivarta** chief **Bhima**. In the former it figures as a neighbouring State of **Īḍa**, and in the latter, that of **Utkala**.⁷

Tāvira, the administrative headquarters in **Daṇḍabhukti**, from which both the grants were issued, may be identified with **Debra** about 15 miles south-east of **Midnapore**, and shown in **Rennel's Map No. IX**. The village **Kumbhārapadraka** and **dēśa Kētaka** padrika I am unable to identify.

TEXT NO. I.

1. [Sa*]mvat 10, 9 Bhādra di 10, 9 [1*] Viṣṇōh pōṭṭr-āgra-vikṣēpa-kṣaṇabhā[vita-sādhdvasām | sēs-ā.*]
2. śeṣa-śirō-madhyam = adhyāsina-mahā-tanuṁ || [1 [1*] Kām-ārāti-śirō-bhraṣṭa- [Gaṅg-augha-dhvasta.*]
3. kalmaṣām [1*] Śrī-Śaśāṅkē mahīm pāti catur-jaladhi-mēkhalām || [2 [2*] Tasya pāda-na[kha- jyōtsnā.*]

¹ *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāna*—English Transl., p. 327, note.

² *Op. cit.*, Map 7. But on p. 461 Dr. Ray regards **Utkala** and **Īḍa** as identical.

³ *E.I.*, Vol. XIII, p. 150.

⁴ *Raghuvamśa*, IV, v. 38.

⁴ *E.I.*, Vol. IV, p. 314.

⁶ *E.I.*, Vol. XXII, p. 150.

⁷ *History of Bengal* (Dacca Univ.), pp. 23, 32, 138, 157.

4. vibhūṣita-sirō-maṇau [1*] Śrī-sāmanta-mahārāja-**Sōmadattē** guṇādhikē || [3 ||*]
Sa¹ × × ×
5. gam-ōtsanna-kālēya-dhvānta-saṁhatau [1*] Sahitām=**Utkala-dēśēna Daṇḍa-
bhuktiṁ** praśā[sati ||4 ||*]
6. Satya-śaurya-kṛt-āstratva-rūpa-vidy-ādayaḥ pṛthak [1*] Pāṇḍavēṣu sthitāḥ
santi ya[smi]
7. nn=ēkattra tē guṇāḥ || [5 ||*] Amātyō yasya guṇavān=**Prakīrṇadāsa** iti
śrutāḥ [1*] Sādhuakāri-
8. tayā nityam yaḥ pūjyaiḥ pūjyatē dvijaiḥ || [6 ||*] Āgāminō nṛpān=sarvvān
jñāpayivā
9. praṇamya ca [1*] Prāha **Tāvīrakam** sarvvam karaṇam lōka-saṅgataṁ || [7 ||*]
Bhūmēr=gō-carma-mātrā[yāḥ*]
10. dānē svṛgaḥ phalaṁ smṛtam [1*] Parāśara-sutasy =ōccair=vvācam śrutv=
ēti bhāsitām || [8 ||*] Tēn=[ēdam ca*]
11. samāmnāta[m*] Manu-śāstr-ānuvarttinā [1*] Śrī-sāmantēna kṛtinā **Sōmadattē**
[na]
12. dāmatā || [9 ||*] Bhaṭṭēśvarāya guṇinē Kāśyapāy=ādhvaryavō [1*] Muhā(?)-
Kumbhārapadrakō=
13. dattaḥ sarvva-maṇḍala-varjjita[h*] || [10 ||*]
Tad=yō=ttr=āsmat-kulē jātō mōhād=anyō=pi vā [naraḥ 1*]
14. Pāpam prakuritē lōbhān=mahā-pātakavān=bhavēt || [11 ||*] Sukhānām=
anva × × × ×
15. × × sy=āty-alpa-dhīmataḥ [1*] Dvija-dēvasya bhāhētōḥ ślōkāḥ × × × ×
sahitā × ×

TRANSLATION.

(Ll. 1-2)—Year 19, 19th day of *B: ādra*.

While the illustrious **Śaśānka** is protecting the earth,—whose girdle is formed by the four oceans; whose sins are washed away by the Ganges fallen from the head of the enemy of the Cupid (*i.e. Śiva*); whose great body is placed in the middle of the infinite hoods of the *Śeṣa* (*Nāga*); and who was agitated when *Viṣṇu* (*in the form of a boar*) cast his snout (*to raise her*) (vv. 1-2).

(Ll. 3-9)—While **Daṇḍabhukti**, along with **Utkala**, is being ruled by the illustrious feudatory *Mahārāja Sōmadatta*—the jewel on whose head shines by the light of the nails of his (*Śaśānka's*) feet; who has excessive virtues: by whose the mass of darkness, due to *Kali* age, is dispelled (vv. 3-4): in whom are found together the virtues such as truth, prowess, skill in wielding arms, beauty and learning which were possessed separately by the (*five*) *Pāṇḍavas* (v. 5); whose excellent minister, known as **Prakīrṇadāsa**, and daily worshipped for his good deeds by the *Brāhmanas* who are themselves worthy of worship (v. 6), having saluted and informed all the future kings, addressed all the officers and people of **Tāvira** (*as follows*) (v. 7).

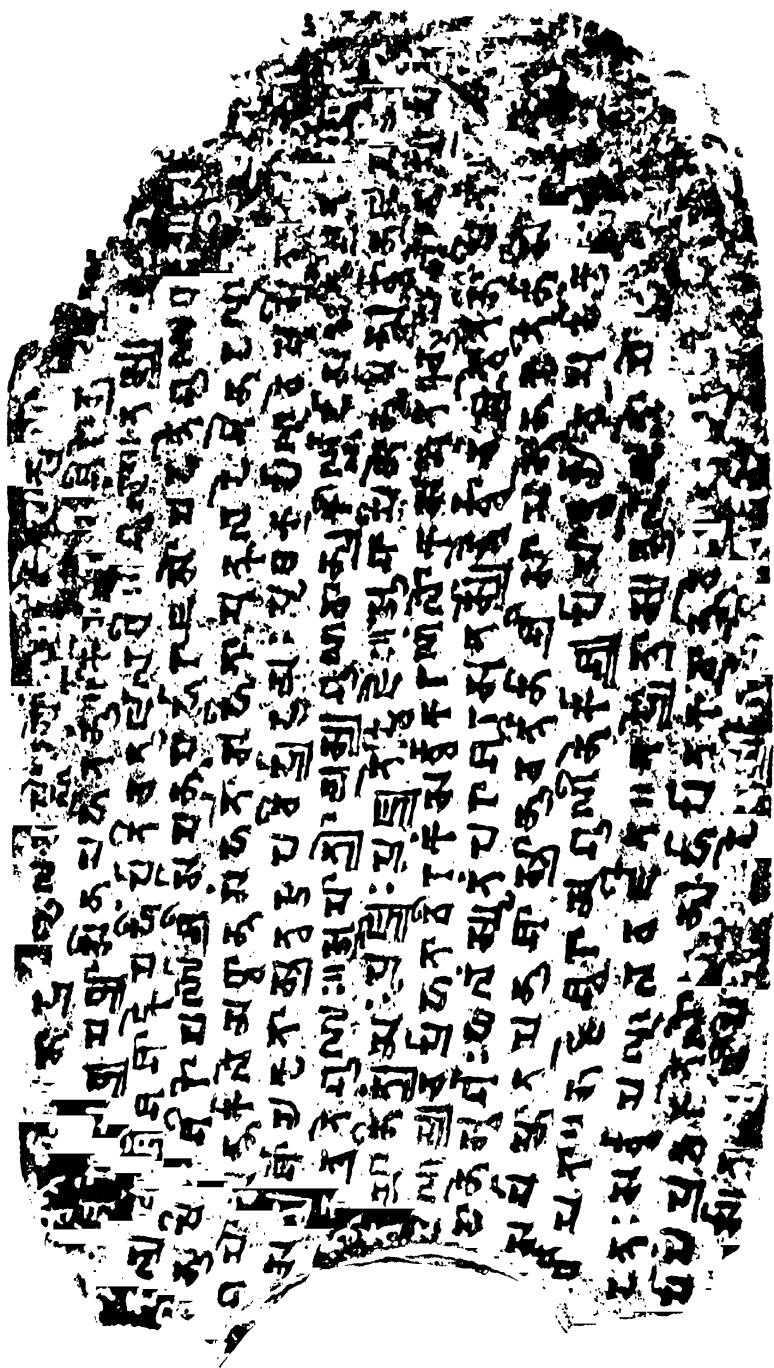
(Ll. 9-10)—It is loudly proclaimed by the son of *Parāśara* (*Vyāsa*) and (*consequently*) held that the gift of even a *gō-carma* measure (*i.e. 150 cubits square*) of land leads to the attainment of heaven (v. 8).

(Ll. 11-13)—Hence the successful, intelligent and illustrious feudatory **Sōmadatta**, who follows the Law-Code of *Manu*, has ordered as follows (v. 9):—

The village of **Muhā-Kumbhārapadraka**, detached from the district (?), has been given to the meritorious priest **Bhaṭṭēśvara** (*of the*) **Kāśyapa** (*gōtra*) (v. 10).

(Then follow the imprecatory verses, vv. 11-12.)

¹ Three letters are missing here. Dr. D. C. Sircar restores them as 'iva sama', but the second letter shows distinctly a thick stroke at the top indicating a superscript *r* or *ā-kāra*.



No. II.

First side.

1. [Samvajt 8 Pauṣa di 10 2 asmin-divasa-māsa-samvatsarē || Viṣṇoḥ pōtr-āgra-vikṣē-
2. pa-kṣaṇa-bhāvita-sādhyasān [1 *] Śēṣ-āsēṣa-śirō-madhyam=adhyāsina-mahā-tanuṁ || [1 ||*] Kām-ārā-
3. ti-śirō-bhraṣṭa-Gaṅg-augha-dhva[sta*] -kalmaṣām [1 *] Śrī-Śaśānkē mahim= pāti catur-jjaladhi-mēkhalārā || [2 ||*]
4. Yasya gāmbhīrya-lāvanya-vahu-ratna-tayā=mayā [1 *] Na samah kṣāra-kāluṣyam¹ vyālōpaya ×
5. tay=ōdadhi[h*] || [3 ||*] Yasya pāda-nakha-jyōtsnā-vibhūṣita-śirō-maṇau [1 *] Śrīmān-mahāprati(ti)-
6. hārē **Subhakirttau** vicakṣaṇēḥ² || [4 ||*] **Daṇḍabhuktim**=imām pāti pitṛvat =pāpa-varjitē [1 *]
7. Dharmasāstr-ānurōdhēna nyāy-ānyāyam vicētari || [5 ||*] Asyām **Tāvira-karaṇam** vipra-pra-
8. dhāna-saṅgataṁ [1 *] Bhaviṣyad-varṭtamān-ādhiṁ vjñāpayati sūrtaṁ || [6 ||*] Kṛitv=āsmattō
9. yathā-nyāyam **Subhakirttir**=ēy(im)am vu(bu)dhah [1 *] Catvārīn(m)sad=dadan drōṇān drōṇa-vāpaṁ ca
10. vāstunah || [7 ||*] **Kēta(?)kapadrik**-ōddēṣē³ grāmē **Kumbhārapadrakē** [1 *] Bharadvāja-sagōtrā-
11. ya Mādhyandināya dhīmātē [||8 ||*] **Dāmyasvāmīna**=ētasmai pīttrō[h*] puṇyābhivṛddhayē || [9 ||*]⁴
12. Tad=yō v=āsmat=kulē jātō mōhād=anyō pi vā narah [1 *] Pāpaṁ prakurūtē mōhān⁵=mahā-

Second side.

13. [pā*]takavān=bhavēt || [10 ||*]

TRANSLATION.

(L. 1)—Year 8, 12th day of *Pauṣa*; in this day, month and year.

(Ll. 1-3)—*Vv.* 1-2, as in *No. 1*.

(L. 4)—Who (**Śaśānka**) possesses profundity, beauty and many gems like the ocean, but cannot be compared to the latter (*on account of it's*) pollution by black salt (v. 3).⁶

(Ll. 5-7)—While this **Daṇḍabhukti** is being ruled like a father by the wise, illustrious *Mahā-Pratihāra Subhakirtti*, the jewel on whose head shines by the light of the nails of his (*Śaśānka's*) feet; who distinguishes right from wrong in conformity with the *Dharmaśāstras*; and who is free from sin (vv. 4-5);

(Ll. 7-8)—The administrative office of **Tāvira**, full of eminent *Brāhmaṇas*, situated within this (*Daṇḍabhukti*), communicates the (*following*) true and pleasant words to the present and future (*officers?*)⁷ (v. 6).

(Ll. 9-11)—Having purchased from us, according to rules, the learned **Subhakirtti** gave 40 *drōṇas* (*of land*) and one *drōṇavāpa* of homestead, in the village **Kumbhārapadraka** in the *dēśa* **Keta(?)kapadrika** to the intelligent **Dāmyasvāmī**, of the Bharadvāja *gōtra* and Mādhyandina (*śākhā*) for increasing the religious merit of his parents (vv. 7-9).

(Here follows the imprecatory v. 10.)

¹ Dr. Sircar reads: 'kṣāra-kālē-py=avyālō[pāṅga*]tay=ōdadhi[h*]'. But *kāluṣyam* is quite clear. I do not find any *ā-kāra* on *p* and it is difficult to read the next letter as *ṅga*.

² 'h' should be omitted.

³ Read *dēśe*.

⁴ The first half of the verse is wanting.

⁵ Read *lobhān* on the analogy of Pl. I for *mōhād* is already used in the first half of the verse.

⁶ The full meaning of the verse cannot be grasped on account of the uncertainty of reading at the end of l. 4. The last part of the translation is, therefore, only conjectural.

⁷ The word *adhī* seems to have been used as an abbreviation for '*adhikaraṇika*'.

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