

# प्राग्धारा Prāgdhārā

अंक - १७

No. 17

उ.प्र. राज्य पुरातत्त्व विभाग की  
"शोध पत्रिका"

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सम्पादक

राकेश तिवारी

सह-सम्पादक

गिरीश चन्द्र सिंह

राजीव कुमार त्रिवेदी

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## विषय सूची : CONTENTS

✓ 1. The issue of High-Tin Bronzes in Middle Ganga Plain	Ravindra N. Singh	1
2. Herbal Detergent and Shampoo in the Early Phase of Harappan Civilization (ca. 2750-2500 BC)	K. S. Saraswat	11
3. Composite Anthropomorphic figure from Haryana: A solitary example of copper hoard	S. K. Manjul and Arvin Manjul	17
4. Palaeolandscapes and Palaeolithic locales of Southern India: A Consideration of Human Dispersals and Adaptations	Michael D. Petraglia	27
5. Archaeological History of District Lucknow: Beginning to c. 10th century AD	Rakesh Tewari	45
✓ 6. Northern Madhya Pradesh: Land and the People	Arvind K. Singh	69
7. Red Polished Ware (RPW) in Gujarat, Western India- An Archaeological Perspective	Ambika Patel & Rajesh S V	89
8. The Nalanda and the Gaya Copper Plates of Samudragupta	T. P. Verma	113
9. Gorakhpur Copper-Plate Grant of Rāmapāla; [Vikrama-] Saṃvat 1215	D. P. Dubey and Ashish Kumar Dubey	123
10. Adivaraha Coins: Continuity and <del>Coins</del> <i>ange</i>	P. Bhatia	129
11. Jhansi hoard of Adivaraha / Vinayakapaladeva <del>Coins</del> <i>Coins</i>	P. Bhatia	137
12. The cult of Aditi Uttanapada in Indo-Pak subcontinent: An assessment in the light of new discoveries	Krishna Kumar	151
13. On Evidence of Pre-Buddhist Sepulchral Structures	B. R. Mani	165

14. Status of the Temple Architectural Studies in Upper and Middle Ganga Plain	Amar Singh	169
15. रुद्रपुर में नए मन्दिर के भग्नावशेष : एक संक्षिप्त रिपोर्ट	राजवन्त राव एवं ओम जी उपाध्याय	175
16. उत्तरी भारतीय मूर्तिकला में श्रृंगार दुर्गा	शिल्पी गुप्ता	179
17. पुरातात्विक सर्वेक्षण रिपोर्ट, जनपद महोबा	अम्बिका प्रसाद सिंह	185
18. Book Review		213

# Gorakhpur Copper-Plate Grant of Rāmapāla; [Vikrama-] Saṃvat 1215\*

D. P. Dubey and Ashish Kumar Dubey

The copper-plate, mostly full of patina, which contains this inscription, was brought to our notice by an antique dealer of Allahabad in 2006. It was reportedly obtained from a villager in the Gorakhpur district of eastern Uttar Pradesh (Pls. 27-28). A brief account of it was reported by us in the Annual Conference of the Indian Archaeological Society on December 2-5, 2006 at Gwalior. We edit the inscription for the first time here from the original plate which was temporarily placed at our disposal for decipherment by the owner, Sri Surendra Agrawal of Allahabad.

This is a single copper-plate measuring about 26 cm in breadth and 30.5 cm in height, not including a semicircular projection at the middle of the top which is about 9.5 cm broad and 7.5 cm high. It weighs 2.050 kg. A strip is cut off from the lower left end of the plate obviously for testing the metal. This has resulted in the loss of some letters of the writing of lines 17-23. The projection was meant to serve the purpose of the proper seal. On its front side there is engraved a four-armed figure of the Boar incarnation of Viṣṇu. The boar-faced human form of the deity, having a crown and other ornaments, is shown with a small figure of a woman (representing the goddess Earth) resting on his upward raised right elbow. The slightly tilted up boar-face of the god is looking at her with loving eyes despite the militant mood. He is standing to right in the *pratyālīḍha* (the left knee being advanced and the right leg retracted) pose; his left leg is treading the coiled body of a snake (Ādisheṣa) with slightly raised hood as if indicating a desire to see the lord. This Boar incarnation of Viṣṇu has close resemblance with that engraved on the

projection of the Lucknow Museum plate of Kīrttipāla of Saṃvat 1167<sup>1</sup>.

The writing commences immediately beneath the projection and covers the whole of the first side and half of the second side of the plate. There are 23 lines of the writing engraved on the first side, the second side containing 12 lines. The size of the letters is about .4 cm broad and .8 cm high. The characters are early Nāgarī of the twelfth century, and may be compared to those of the Gorakhpur copper-plate of Kīrttipāla, belonging to Lucknow Museum and edited by F. Keilhorn in the *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. VII, 1902-03, pp. 93ff. The language is Sanskrit and the record is written in a mixture of verse and prose. Lines 1 to 16 contain 13 verses, the first verse glorifying the god Shiva and the rest giving the genealogy of donor and donee; and lines 26-33 contain 8 benedictory and imprecatory stanzas. Owing to carelessness on the part of the writer or engraver the text, besides numerous minor errors, contains several corrupt words and passages, some of which we are unable to correct. Among palaeographical peculiarities, mention may be made of the undistinguishable representation of च, व and घ. The orthography is characterised by wrong spellings exhibiting the influence of local pronunciation. Cf. नाम्न (line 15) for नाम्ने, रजपाल (line 22) for राज्यपाल, रिषि (line 22) for ऋषि, <sup>०</sup>क्रस्न (line 25) for कृष्ण, सवधर (line 25) for शिवधर, ताम्नाच(प)त्रे (line 35) for ताम्रपत्रे, etc. Reduplication of consonants after र् is noticed in some cases. Cf. कीर्त्तिपाल (line 6), स्वर्ग<sup>०</sup> (lines 8, 28), पूर्व<sup>०</sup> (line 9), आकर्ण्य (line 11), सर्व<sup>०</sup> (lines 10, 28), निज्जिता (line 10), etc. The letter व denotes both व and ब, and dental sibilant is often used for the palatal (e.g.,

\* Paper received on 25 July 2007

हुतासन for हुताशन line 6, समन<sup>०</sup> for शमन line 6, सवधर for शिवधर line 25, सिवमस्तु for शिवमस्तु line 35) and the palatal instead of the dental in श for स line 4.

The donation, in line 13-14, is stated to have been made on the fifteenth *tithi* of the dark half in the month of Bhādra at a *saṁkrānti* of Bhāskara (or Sun), given in words; and the same *data*, with the year 1215 in [Vikrama-] Saṁvat but without the reference to Sun's position, are repeated in figures in line 34. For the Vikrama year 1215, according to the *pūrṇimānta* reckoning, it corresponds to Monday, August 29, 1158 CE when the Sun entered the zodiac sign of Virgo in the evening.

The text, after the auspicious word *svasti*, commences with a verse invoking the Umā-Maheshvara form of Shiva. Then it proceeds to give the genealogy of the donor in verses 2-9. We are told that there was a renowned king (*prathitaḥ nripaḥ*) **Bhuvanapāla**, an ornament of the rulers of the earth, who had defeated his enemies by the valour of his arms. His son was **Vikramapāla** who, by the impudent wrath of his own arms, had destroyed the prowess of prominent adversaries. His son again was **Kīrttipāla** who was an ornament of the family of **Malayaketu** (*malayaketu-kula-tilakaḥ*, line 5). His son **Rāmapāla**, the issuer of the present grant, succeeded him when he died. **Rāmapāla**, who propitiated gods and brāhmaṇas, ruled over his subjects with power, wisdom and charity. His fame was proclaimed aloud by the female Gandharvas and *Shukasārikās* from the peak of the mount Kailāsa to that of the Vindhya mountain. Verses 11-12 give the genealogy of the donee Ṛṣi who was endowed with the qualities of a noble brāhmaṇa. The proper grant follows in lines 17-26. It was written by the *karaṇa*, *kāyastha*, *ṭhakkura* Keadūka, and engraved on the copper-plate (*tāmvrapātra*) by Kobhaṇūka.

The inscription records a grant of land by the *Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Parameshvara Paramamāheshvara Rāmapāla, the jewel of the family of **Malayaketu** (*malayaketu-kula-tilakaḥ*, line 18), who by inheritance had obtained the lordship over*

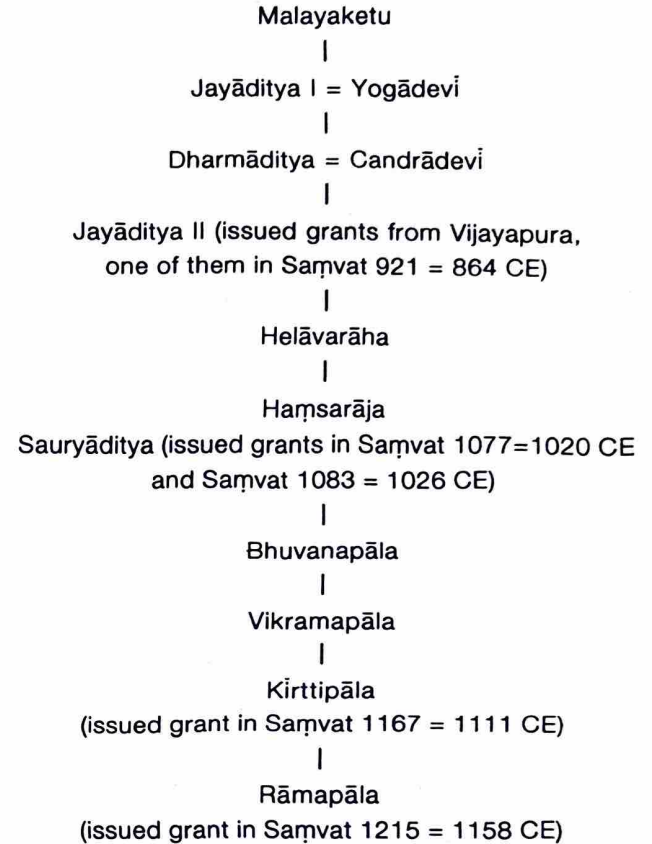
**Uttarasamudra**. This king, while residing at the royal camp in the village named **Popākapatra**, after having water with sesamum in his hand, donated the village named **Babaharā**, with its water and dry land, ravines and saline soil, and including its groves of mango and *madhūka* trees, defined as to its four abuttals, located on the western bank of the river **Javā**, in the **Bhasakī pattalā**, to the high-souled (*mahātman*) brāhmaṇa (*dvijātman*), the *mahāmahattaka* Ṛṣi who belonged to the Bhāradvāja *gotra* and the Bhāradvāja, Āṅgīrasa and Bārhaspatya *pravaras*, and was the son of the *ṭhakkura* **Rājyapāla** and the grandson of the brāhmaṇa (*dvija*) **Shivapāla**. The grant was made with the consent of subordinates which included *mahārājñī* Jayatalladevī, *mahārājaputra* Vijayapāla, *mahāpurohita* Vāmana, *mahāmahattaka* Bhopāla, *mahākṣapaṭalika* Shivadhara, *aṣṭavarggika* Kiritta, *mahāshāsanika* Harikrasna, *thasīdhita* (*prasādita/pasāyita?*) Jasū.

The inscription describes king **Rāmapāla** and his father **Kīrttipāla** as ornaments of the family of **Malayaketu**. The names of his father **Kīrttipāla**, grandfather **Vikramapāla** and great grandfather **Bhuvanapāla** occur in the same order in the Lucknow Museum plate of **Kīrttipāla**<sup>2</sup> (lines 4-9), which informs that the *Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Parameshvara Paramamāheshvara Vikramapāla had acquired the lordship over **Uttarasamudra** by his own arms and the *Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Parameshvara Paramamāheshvara Kīrttipāla had obtained the lordship over **Uttarasamudra** by inheritance (lines 18-21). King (*nripa*) **Bhuvanapāla** is referred to as an ornament of the rulers of the earth of the family of **Sāvārṇi (Manu)** descended from the Sun (line 5). It is conspicuously silent on the association of **Kīrttipāla** with the family of **Malayaketu**. The **Malayaketu** family is known from the Gurmhā and Gorakhpur plates<sup>3</sup> (the first of the two grants in Saṁvat 921 = 864 CE), both issued from the royal capital (*nripadhānī*) Vijayapura, on the declivity of the northern mountain (*uttaragiri*), by king **Jayāditya II**, the son of **Dharmāditya** and queen **Candrādevī** and the grandson of **Jayāditya I** and**

queen **Yogādevī**, all of whom belonged to the **Malayaketu** family (*malayaketūnām-anvaye*) and received the titles *Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Parameshvara*. The two grants<sup>4</sup> of Sauryāditya of Saṃvat 1077 and 1083 record that king **Sauryāditya**, who enjoyed the imperial style *Paramabhaṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Parameshvara*, was the son of **Haṃsarāja** and the grandson of **Helāvarāha** and belonged to a branch of the **solar race** (*sūry-ānvaye*), of which the progenitor was a royal hero named **Malayaketu**. On the history of **Malayaketu** family, D.C. Sircar has commented that 'it may have attained imperial status after the fall of **Yashovarman** (c. 728-753 CE) of Kanauj and appears to have been subdued by the Gurjara Pratihāras of Kanauj about the close of the ninth century, either under king **Bhoja I** (c. 836-885 CE) or under his son **Mahendrapāla I** (c. 885-908 CE). The two records of **Sauryāditya** of 1020 and 1026 CE appear to show that the **Malayaketu** kings remained subordinate to the Gurjara Pratihāras for more than a century and again raised their head on the decline of the Gurjara Pratihāra power about the beginning of the eleventh century.<sup>5</sup> However, the information supplied in the present inscription goes against the observation of D.C. Sircar that "possibly **Kīrttipāla**'s family ousted the **Malayaketus** about the close of the eleventh century, to be themselves ousted by the Gāhaḍavālas shortly afterwards."<sup>6</sup> It appears from the present record that the rulers of the **Malayaketu** family, **Kīrttipāla** and **Rāmapāla**, were ruling over the north-eastern districts of Uttar Pradesh and the adjoining areas of North Bihar even during the heyday of the Gāhaḍavāla kings **Govindacandra** (c. 1114-1154 CE) and **Vijayacandra** (c. 1155-1169 CE) who ruled over a large kingdom extending from Patna in Bihar in the east to Etawah in U.P. in the west, bounded by the Gaṅgā-Yamunā in the south.

With the help of the Gurmhā and Gorakhpur plates, the two grants of Sauryāditya and the Lucknow Museum inscription referred to above and of the record now under study, the revised genealogy<sup>7</sup> of the **Malayaketu** family of the solar race may be

tabulated as follows :



Of the **localities** mentioned in the inscription, **Babaharā** may be identified either with Baraharā Doyam on the western bank of the river Rāptī, 13 km west of the Gorakhpur city or with the twin villages of Baraharā Cargahā and Baraharī on the western bank of the river Little Gaṅḍaka, 28 km east by north of Mahārājaganj which is the headquarters of the district (formerly a tehsil of the Gorakhpur district) of the same name in U.P. As the original name of the river Rāptī is Acirāvati/Ajiravati<sup>8</sup>, the twin villages Baraharā Cargahā and Baraharī, in all likelihood, represent the granted village. The river Little Gaṅḍaka takes a very sharp curve here, surrounding the villages on three sides with an outlet only to the west; a rivulet named Jeṭhan Nālā joins the Little Gaṅḍaka on the north of Baraharī. The border of Nepal is 16

km due north of these villages. If this identification is accepted, we get the original name of the Little Gaṇḍaka as **Javā** mentioned in the grant. The village **Popākapatra** where the royal camp was located and the **pattalā Bhasakī** in which the granted village was situated, we are unable to identify. The country **Uttarasamudra** may be identified with the north-eastern districts (Siddhārthanagar, Mahārājaganj, north Gorakhpur and Kushīnagar) of Uttar Pradesh and the adjoining Pashcim Campāran district of North Bihar, extending to the foothills of Himalaya in the north. In this region watered by the rivers Great Gaṇḍaka, Little Gaṇḍaka, Rohiṇī, Rāptī, etc., depressions and lakes are extremely numerous and several of them are of considerable size. A major part of it is liable to flooding every year and falls in the low lying Terai belt. This physical feature of the region would have rightly earned it the name of

**Uttarasamudra** (North Sea). All the inscriptions of the kings of the Malayaketu family – the Gurmhā (Gorakhpur district) and Gorakhpur plates (the first of the two grants dated Saṃvat 921 = 864 CE and the second discovered near the river called Little Gaṇḍaka) of Jayāditya II, the Lucknow Museum plate of Kīrttipāla of Saṃvat 1167 = 1111 CE (from some village in the Gorakhpur district), and the two copper-plate grants of Sauryāditya of Saṃvat 1077 = 1020 CE and Saṃvat 1083 = 1026 CE (from some locality under the Bagahā Police Station in the Pashcim Campāran district of North Bihar) – have been discovered from this region. This name is also mentioned as another name (lines 19-20) of Saumyasindhu (Gentle Sea, in which Daradgaṇḍakī-desh<sup>9</sup> was situated) in the inscription (Saṃvat 1167) of king Kīrttipāla; "the district of Daradgaṇḍakī was apparently situated on the banks of the Gaṇḍaka."<sup>10</sup>

### TEXT<sup>11</sup>

#### First Side

[ Metres : Verses 1,4,5 Āryā; verses 2-3 Drutavilambita; verses 6,9-13,14-21 Anuṣṭubh; verse 7 Sragviṇī; verse 8 Upajāti]

1. // स्वस्ति // सुखसम्मीलितनयनत्रिनयन मृदुकण्ठ- निष्ठितो जयति / विस्तृतपुलकप्रक –
2. रो गिरिजाभुजवल्लरीवलयः // [1] इह ग(म)हीवलये व(ब)लशालिना भुजयुगेन जितारि-
3. पुरस्सरः / अवनिमण्डलमण्डयिताभवद्भवनपाल इति प्रथितो द्व(नृ)पः // [2] तदनु तत्त-
4. नुजो मनुजोत्तरः श(स) किल विक्रमपालनृपो[ऽ] भवि(व) त(त) / स्वभुजदण्डसमुद्धतचण्डिम-
5. क्षपितद्यप्रविपक्षपराक्रा(क्र)मः // [3] तस्मादजायत जगत्सुकृतफलमलयकेतुकुलति-
6. लकः / शत्रुहुतास(श)न स(श)मनस्तनयित्तुः कीत्ति(त्ति)पाल भूपालः // [4] ईशः स गतो भास्वान (न)
7. निक(ब)द्धो यः प्रजापतिर्द्वन्दः / पुरुषोत्तमः प्रचेताः सुरमय इव निम्मि(म्मि)तो जग-
8. ति // [5] तस्मिन् स्वर्गगते राज्ञि तत्तनू(नु) जेन मेदिनी / राज्ञा श्रीरामपाल(ले)न पालिता ज-
9. नशालिनी // [6] दातृविज्ञानदेवद्विजाराधनैः शक्तिकोशप्रतापष(प्र)जादा(पा)लनेः(नैः) / येन पूर्व्वे[ऽ]
10. पि सर्व्वे नृपा[ः] निर्ज्जिता भूतले भूपतेस्तस्य केस्त्रल्पता<sup>12</sup> // [7] कैलाससै(शै)लाधिपविन्ध्यसा-
11. नौ यसो(शो) यदीय(य) सुरनिज्जटेषु / आकर्ण्य गन्धर्व्वधूमुखेभ्यः किलानु घुषसु(शु)कसारो(रि)-
12. काभिः // [8] तेन त्पी(श्री)रामपाल(ले)न महीपालवरेन्दुना / तीत्र(तत्र) त्यागकुगरेण दारिद्र्यद्रुमघा-
13. तिना // [9] तिथिभास्करसंक्राते(न्ते) वत्सरवरपर्व्वणि / कृष्णाया(यां) पच(ञ्च)दस्यां(श्यां) हि भाद्रमा-

14. सस्य साक्षिमत् // [10] भारद्वाजसगोत्रो यः शिवपाला(लो)[S] भवखद्, द्विजः / तत्पुत्रस्य कुलीनस्य राज्य-
15. पालस्य च<sup>13</sup> धीमतः // [11] पुत्राय सप्रतिष्ठाय ऋषि- नाम्न(नाम्ने) महात्मने / ब्रा(ब्रा)ह्मण्यगुणयुक्ताय गुणिन (ना)
16. राजमंत्रिणा // [12] सव्वा(सर्व्वो) वव(बब)हरानाम सजलः समहीरुहः / ग्रामो[S] यं शासनीकृत्य संप्रदत्तस्ति-
17. [लोद] कैः // [13] // परमभट्टारकमहाराजा-धिराजपरमेश्वर-परममाहेश्वरक्रमाप्तोत्त-
18. [रसम] द्राधिपत्यमलयकेतुकुलतिलकश्रीमद्रामपाल-देवचरणाः भसकीपत्तलाया(यां)
19. [बबहर] ग्रामस्य प्रजालोकानादिशति विदितमस्तु भवता(तो) यथा ग्रामो[S] यं वव(बब)हराभिधानः
20. [सजलःस]स्थलः साम्ब्र(म्र)मधूकः सगर्तोषरः[ः] चतुराघाटविषु(शु)द्धा(द्धः) जवानदीपश्चिमकूलेभ्यणा
21. .... दु(यु)स्माभिः भारद्वाजसगोत्राय भारद्वाजाङ्गिरसवा(बा)र्हस्पत्यत्रिप्रवराय द्विज-
22. [श्रीशिव] पालपौत्राय ट(ठ)क्कुरश्रीरज(राज्य)पालपुत्राय महामहत्तकश्रीरि(ऋ)षिनाम्ने द्विजन्म-
23. [ने] ..... स्पोपाकपत्रग्रामभूमि(मि)वासितकटके / महाराङ्गीसा(श्री)जयतल्लदेवा(वी) / म-

### Second Side

24. हाराजपुत्रश्रीविजयपाल / महापुरोहितश्रीवामन / महामहत्तकश्रीभोपाल / महाक्षपटलिक-
25. श्रीस(शि)वधर / अष्टवर्गिकश्रीकिरित्त / न्मथा(महा)ख्शा, सनिक-  
श्रीहरिक्रस्न(कृष्ण) / थसीधित(प्रसादित ?) श्रीजसूप्रभूतिसर्व्वपात्र-
26. सम्मत्या हस्तोदकेन विधिवच्छासनीकृत्य संप्रदत्तः // भूमिं यःप्रतिगृह्णाति यश्च भूमिं प्रयच्छति / उ-
27. भौ तौ पुण्यकम्मा(र्म्मा)णौ नियतं स्वर्गगामिनौ // [14] शंखो(खं) भद्रासनं छत्रं वरास्वा वरवारणाश्च<sup>14</sup> / भूमिदा-
28. नस्य चिह्नानि फलं स्वर्गस्तथैव च // [15] सर्व्वेषामेव दानानामेक- जन्मानुगं फलं(लम्) / हाटकक्षितिगो(गौ)-
29. रीणा(णां) सप्तजन्मानुगं फलम् // [16] व(ब)हुभिर्वसुधा दत्ता राजभिः सगरादिभिः / यस्य यस्य यदा भू-
30. मिस्तस्य तस्य तदा फलम् // [17] गामेका(का) स्वर्णमप्येक(कं) [वा, भूमेरप्यर्द्धमङ्गुलम् / हरन(न) नरकमाप्नोति या-
31. वदाद्भूतसंप्लवम् // [18] स्वदत्तां परदत्तां वा यो हरेत वसुधराम(म) / स विष्ठायां कृमिर्भूत्वा पितृभिः स-
32. ह पच्यते // [19] विन्ध्याटवीष्वतोयासु शुष्ककोटरवासिनः / कृष्णसर्पा हि जायन्ते ब्र(ब्र)ह्मदत्ताप-
33. हारकाः // [20] कृताञ्जलिरह(हं) याचे भाविनो धरणीपतीन(न) / आत्मदानवदेतन्मे भवद्भिः पा-
34. ल्यतामिति // [21] सम्वत् 1215 भाद्र वदि 15 लिखितमिदम(म्) / करणकायस्थठक्कुरश्रीके-
35. चदूकेन / ताम्नाच(प)त्रे कभोणूकेनेति / सि(शि)वमस्तु सर्व्वदा //

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10. *Ibid.*, p. 132.
11. From the original plate.
12. Read का त्वल्पता ?
13. च is superfluous here.
14. च is superfluous here.

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