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NOTE ON THE ORIYA PORTION OF THE VELIGĀLINĪ COPPER-
PLATE GRANT OF KAPILEŚVARA

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Thanks are due to Dr. D. C. Sircar for the care and interest with which he edited the above-named copperplate grant¹ as it is an important document for the history of Orissa. Kapileśvaradeva or Kapilendradeva (as in the *Mādalāpāñjī*), the greatest king of Orissa, is described in the *Mādalāpāñjī* as a beggar boy and a thief. It is stated that it was through the grace of Lord Jagannātha of Puri that he was selected as the successor by the last Gaṅga king named Bhānudeva. But the discovery of contemporary records like the grants of Raghudeva,² the nephew and Viceroy of Kapileśvara, which have also been carefully edited by Dr. Sircar, has conclusively proved that Kapileśvara belonged to a respectable ruling family of the Solar Dynasty.

In his paper published in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, Vol. XXIII, Dr. Sircar wrote as follows: 'In these lines, I am placing before scholars my transcript and translation of this interesting document with the hope that improvements on them may be suggested by more competent students of Orissan epigraphy.'³ By expressing his views in the above manner, Dr. Sircar has shown his humility only. Dr. Sircar is not a scholar in Oriya and Telugu; but the manner in which he has edited this trilingual inscription, written in Telugu and Oriya scripts, deserves great credit. This very inscription was edited first by the late Raja Sahib Lakshminarayan Harichandan Jagadeva of Tekkali, who was a scholar in both Oriya and Telugu, in the *Journal of the Bombay Historical Society*, Vol. VI, pp. 94-111; but he failed to do any justice to this interesting document. Raja Sahib of Tekkali also published a paper in the Oriya monthly *Sahakāra*, Vol. XX, pp. 756-768, which included the text of the Oriya portion in December, 1939, and his transcript there is not at all intelligible. Dr. Kunjabihari Tripathi, M.A., Ph.D. (Lond.), has edited also this Oriya portion in the first issue of the *Konārka*, pp. 95-97, an Oriya quarterly which was published by *Orissa Sāhityā Academy* for September, 1958. Dr. Tripathi's reading is in no way helpful. We are fortunate that the inscription was re-edited by Dr. Sircar in the *Epigraphia Indica* and the *Journal of the Asiatic Society* for the benefit of scholars in general.

After going through Dr. Sircar's paper published in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, I found that improvement is possible both in regard to his transcript and translation as well as his interpretation. I therefore requested Dr. Sircar to send me a reprint of his paper on the 'Veligālinī Grant of Kapileśvara, Śaka 1380' published in the *Epigraphia Indica*, and I am very thankful to him for complying with my request.

¹ *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XXXIII, 1959-60, pp. 275-92; for a separate treatment of the Oriya portion see *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, Vol. XXIII, pp. 13-17.

² *E.I.*, Vol. XXXIII, 1959-60, pp. 1-32.

³ *J.A.S.*, Vol. XXIII, p. 13.



The grant was made on the occasion of the *Simha-Bṛihaspati-puṇya-kāla*. This occasion occurs every 12 years when Jupiter enters Leo and, during the period of one year when Jupiter remains in Leo, a bath in the river Godāvarī is considered most meritorious. Kapileśvaradeva, the king of Orissa, made the gift of lands in the form of *śāsanas* to Brāhmaṇas in order to commemorate himself, his father Jāgēśvaradeva and his mother Belamādevī on this auspicious occasion most probably at Rajahmundry in the river Godāvarī on the Vaiśākhi-pūrṇimā day. The astrological works called *Jyotir nibandha* and *Nirṇayasindhu* discuss the significance of the *Simha-Bṛihaspati-yoga* in relation to the river Godāvarī. The *Jyotir nibandha* quotes verses from the *Brahma Purāṇa*, *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* and *Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa* and these Puranic references appear to be older than Śaka 1380. It seems that Dr. Sircar has missed this significance and therefore has translated this portion of the text as follows: 'while the king was taking bath for the purpose of making a grant) in the bed of the river Gautamī (i.e. Godāvarī) the Śrī-hasta (i.e. the king) poured water (i.e. made gift of the village Veligālinī by pouring water in the hands of the donees) at a time when the *kāla* (i.e. *tithi*) was Pūrṇa (i.e. Pūrṇimā), (the week-day) Bṛihaspati (and the *lagna*) Simha.'¹

While dealing with the date of the grant given in the Sanskrit portion of the copperplate grant, Dr. Sircar has written as follows: 'The Sanskrit portion states that the grant was made by king Kapileśvara while he was camping on the bank of the Godāvarī on the occasion of the Vaiśākhi (i.e. the full-moon day of the lunar month of Vaiśākha) in the year 1380 of the Śaka era, otherwise styled Bahudhānya. The Vaiśākhi-pūrṇimā in Śaka 1380 = Bahudhānya began on Thursday, the 27th April, A.D. 1458, and ended next day. Normally therefore the date of the grant should be taken as the 28th April, A.D. 1458. But the Oriya part of the inscription edited here seems to give the name of the week-day on the said date as Bṛihaspati, i.e. Thursday. It is therefore possible that the grant was made on the 27th April, A.D. 1458.'² Elsewhere also he has written, 'The Oriya part of the inscription seems to supply the name of the week-day Bṛihaspati, i.e. Thursday.'³

From the above observation of mine, it will be clear that actually there is no mention of the week-day (Thursday) in the Oriya part of the inscription. The reference is to the planet Jupiter. The Vaiśākhi-pūrṇimā in Śaka 1380 fell on Thursday, the 27th April, A.D. 1458, and this is the date of the Veligālinī copperplate grant.

The text of the inscription may be divided into three parts, *Part I* dealing with the locality and the occasion of the grant, *Part II* with the donees and *Part III* with the conditions of the grant.

My transcript of the Oriya text is given below. The corrections have been shown within brackets.

TEXT

Obverse

1. Meḍura-thala-madhye Belagālini-kāhākara-⁴nāmā-khaṇḍe āti-

¹ *J.A.S.*, Vol. XXIII, p. 17. ² *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14. ³ *E.I.*, Vol. XXXIII, p. 277.

⁴ Dr. Sircar reads the word as *koshtha-karaṇa*. There is no *o* sign with *kā* which is clear. The letter after *kā* is of peculiar shape. It looks like *ha* (cf. *hā* in *mahārājā* at the end of line 6). If it is a conjunct it may be *mbha*. The fourth letter is of peculiar shape and I read it as *ra*. Thus Dr. Sircar's *koshtha-karaṇa* stands for *kāhākara* or *kāmbhukara* according to my reading. It is a Telugu place name which has been used in Oriya.

2. to(thye)-bhogyama-Daṇḍapāṭa-mūla-koṭha-deśa(śa)ru pheḍi Śrīhastā¹
3. santake Gau(Gau)tāmī-nadi(dī)-garabha(garbha)-nirē Śiṅgha-
(Siṁha)-Bre(Bṛi)haspati-punya²(punya)-
4. kāli(kāla)-smāe(samaye) Śrī-haste pāṇi(pāṇi) chhāḍilā-bhumī(mi)-
dāna-nānā-gotra-Brā-
5. mha(hma)ṇāṅku (|*) Bi(Vi)ra-Śrī-gajapati(pati) Gau(Gau)de-
sa(śva)ra ṇa(na)ba(va)-koṭi-Karṇāṭa-
6. Kalabarage(varge)sa(śva)ra-Pratāpakapi(pi)lesa(śva)ra-
deba(va)-mā(ma)hārājā-
7. ṅkara data(tta) Jagesa(śva)rapura-sā(śā)sana-Belamapura-
sa(śā)sana-Pratāpa-Ka-
8. pī(pi)lesa(śva)rapura-sā(śā)sana (|*) E tini sā(śā)sanaku
bhā 40 lekḥāe bhāga 120 madhye³
9. Bāḍi-tolā⁴(tā)-jaḷabhumī(mi) madha(dhya) kari dei-hoilā (|*)
E gā(gāṇ)ara bhumī
10. gā(gāṇ)a aimbhe(āmbhe) sarva māinya(mānya) chhatisa(śa)
ābadāna(avadāna) madha(dhya)kari chhāḍilāke bho-

Reverse

11. ga karāibā (||*)

TRANSLATION

Beligālini-kāhākara-khaṇḍa (or Kāmbhākara-khaṇḍa) situated in the holy place of Meḍura and allotted for the hospitality and entertainment of guests is separated from the original Koṭha-deśa (or *Khasmahal*) of the king by the seal and signature (*Śrī-hasta-santake*) of the king who poured water on the gift of land (*pāṇi-chhāḍilā-bhumī*) or donated the land to Brāhmaṇas of various *gotras* on the auspicious occasion of Siṁha-Bṛihaspati (when Jupiter is in Leo) in the stream of the river Gautamī (i.e. Godāvarī).

The gift of *Vīra-śrī-Gajapati-Gaudēsvara-navakoṭi-Karṇāṭa-Kalavara-rgēsvara Mahārāja* Kapileśvaradeva consists of Jāgēsvarapura-śāsana, Belamapura-śāsana and Pratāpa-Kapileśvara-pura-śāsana and these three *śāsanas*, consisting of 40 *bhāgas* (shares) each, comprise 120 *bhāgas* in total including homestead land, garden land and cultivable wet land.

I make the donees enjoy the lands of the village and the village itself declaring it free from all imposts including thirty-six taxes.

¹ This form of *ha* is still in use in the Karaṇī script. There is no sign of super-script *r* with it.

² Dr. Sircar's reading is *purṇa*. The *y* sign in this letter is the same as that *nya* in *māinya* line 10.

³ This stands for *madhye* in Karaṇī writing.

⁴ This letter is *la*; but the word *tolā* does not give any sense. *Bāḍi-tolā-jala-bhumī* means homestead land, garden land and cultivable land.