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INSCRIPTIONS

Unpublished Stone Inscription from Anjaneri

ANJALI SANJAY VEKHANDE
District Court, Nasik

ABSTRACT: In this article I am making an attempt to trace the history of Kalachuri dynasty. This article throws light on the existence of Kalachuri dynasty in Anjaneri near Nasik around AD 1178 and describes the reigning of Bijjaladeva's son Vajradeva or Vajramanya parallel to another son Sankamadeva in north Maharashtra with the help of the stone record. The stone inscription has seven lines in verses. In this inscription a charitable deed was executed. It was in the form of restoration or renovation of a reservoir. This deed was directed by Vajramanya or Vajradeva with his wife Yamuna. The restoration work was done on an auspicious occasion of Hindu God Ramchandra. This is the most ancient, authentic evidence of celebration of auspicious Hindu festival 'Ram Navami'. This is not mere charitable record on the stone but also reigning of the Kalachurias is indicated in the north of Maharashtra.

KEYWORDS: Anjaneri, epigraph, Nagari, Kalachuri, Vajradeva, restoration.

Introduction

The village of Anjaneri is picturesquely situated on the eastern slope of the northern spur of Anjani hill about twenty-six km from Nasik and eleven km from Hindu holy place Trimbakeshwar. Anjaneri is a birthplace of Hanuman (a Hindu deity). Just below the village, in the plain, scattered over an area of about six km, there have been innumerable small shrines, of which sixteen now stand in whole or in part, while the rest are represented by mounds upon which lie heaps of their material, columns, images, beams and other carved stones. Some temples belong to Jain religion while some are Hindu temples.

The work of renovation like removing the existing damaged chain link, fencing and construction of a boundary wall in stone masonry is in progress in the group of temples by archaeological department. The stone inscription which is studied in this article was found in front of Anjaneri Jain temple number two. This unclaimed inscription was kept over there by some worker in front of the temple. As it was told by worker over there, that it was found in a nearby farm by some people.

Sanskrit Language

॥ श्रीमान्नृपशास (सा) लिवाहन शके ॥ ११०० ॥ विलं ॥
॥ बीनाम संवत्सरे यष्ट¹ मा तिथीः १० श्री रा ॥
॥ म चंद्रा प्रीत्यर्थ जननी² ऋन(ण) कांतिः ॥ फलेवा ॥
॥ पी³ जलाशयस्य जीर्णोधारकृतः च्या तीर्वि⁴ ॥
॥ स्थापना स्त्री (य) मुना श्री वज्रमान्याः ॥ कृत ॥
॥ स्य जलाशयस्य संप्राप्तिः अगमता ॥ श्री ॥
॥ रामचंद्रार्पणमस्तु ॥

Transliteration

|| Shreemannrupshas (sa)livhan Sake || 1100 ||
Vilam ||
	binam sanvatsare yasht ma tithi: 10 shree Ra	
	mchandra prityarth Janani runkantihi faleva	
	pi jalashayasya jirnoddharkrutaha chya tirvi	
	sthapana stri (y)muna bhri Vajramanyaha	
kruta		
	sya jalashayasya spraptihi agmata	
	Ramchandrarnpanmastu	

Meaning of Each Sentence

1. This abstract opens with the title of the King 'Shreemanrupshas' that means person who

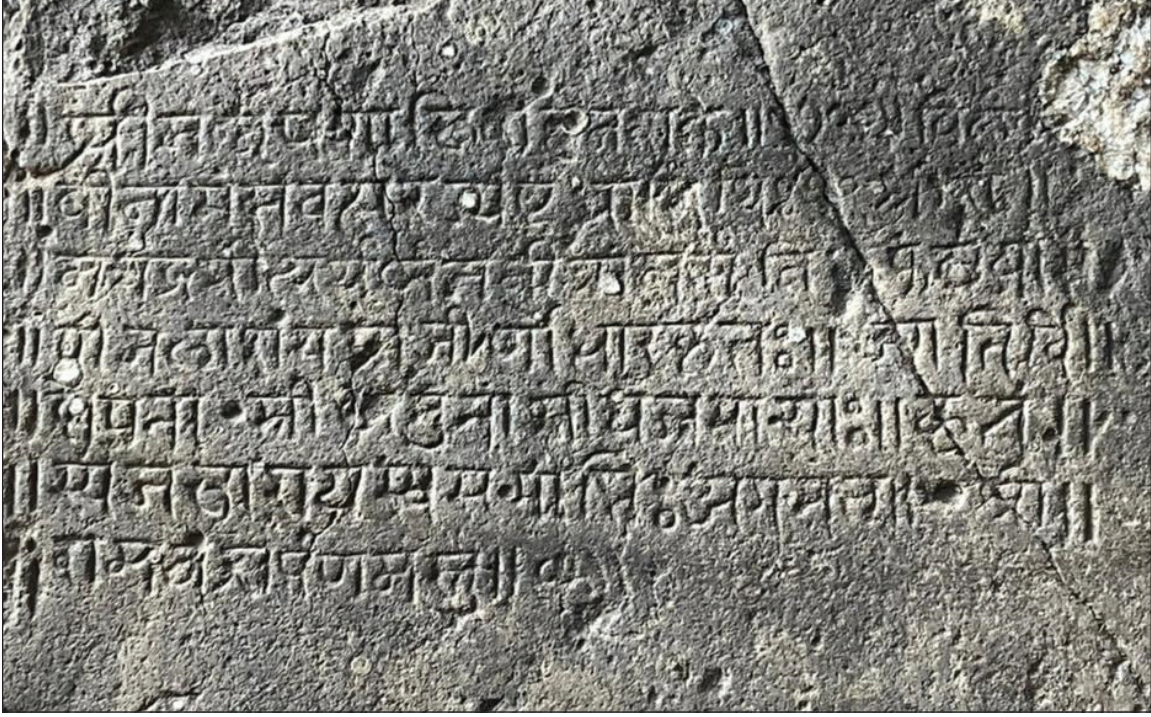


PLATE 1: Image of the inscription (*photo credit: Priya Vekhande*)

- shines, an illustrious person. This title is generally addressed to the king. In this line, year in the form of *Salivahana Saka* 1100 is mentioned.
2. In the second line 'Vilambi' *samvatsara* or the cyclic year according to Hindu calendar is mentioned. *Yajna* or the ritual done in front of sacred fire with mantras had done on the tenth 'tithi' of Hindu calendar.
 3. On the auspicious occasion of God Ramchandra, to repay motherland's debt. (There are three types of debt: debt of motherland, debt of God and debt of Sage.)
 4. Restoration or renovation of the reservoir in the form of square or oblong well with steps leading down to the water had been done.
 5. This yajna or ritual had been done by a woman named 'Yamuna' with her husband Vajramanya. In the fifth line, even though there is small pit obtained above V or 'व', it is very clear that the word is nothing but the 'Vajramanya'.
 - 6 By doing renovation, people could get a large

supply of water that could be used whenever needed.

7. Salutation to the God Ramchandra. Dedication to Ramchandra.

Analysis of the Inscription

ABOUT ANJANERI


In this stone inscription no geographical place is mentioned. As this is found in Anjaneri, I tried to locate the exact place with the help of one word 'Vapi' means big well with steps or in local language 'Barav' and its existence is confirmed.

Anjaneri holds a lot of historical and religious significance. According to Hindu mythology, it is the birthplace of God *Hanumana* and the presence of Jain caves and temples prove that the area was once under the influence of Jainism.

This incredible Anjaneri from ancient to medieval was an important place with lot of historical events. Pandit Bhagwanlal has published, a stone inscription existed in Anjaneri's

Jain ruined temple number two, in which a minor branch of the Yadava's named Seunchandra III is represented to have made some grant in *Salivahan Saka* 1063 to a Jain temple (Indraji 1883: 126). In the medieval period Anjaneri was a place of relaxation for Raghobadada, uncle of *Peshwa*⁵ while he was in exile.

Period and the Date of Inscription

The inscription is in the form of stone tablet. The language is Sanskrit. The characters are of nagari alphabets. Most of the letters are readable only few are obscure. As regards orthography, I noticed that 's' or 'स' in nagari is written as . It contains seven lines. All lines are in verses. There are punctuation marks at the initial and at the end of each sentence. The writing is overall well preserved but it is somewhat roughly and irregularly cut. Tablet is broken into two pieces by a fissure running from the first line ending to the sixth line.

The first challenge was to determine the year of the script written in this inscription. The clue was '*Vilambi nam samvatsara*'⁶ which was clearly readable along with *Salivahana Saka* confirmed the year was mentioned in the form of Saka. It was clearly visible that the year in Saka was of four digits. But as the fissure passes from the first digit, only three digits '100' (१००) were clearly readable. The first digit '1' or (१) in nagari was hidden in fissure, only the upper circular portion of 1 was visible. With the help of Hindu calendar, *Vilambi* the cyclic year was coming in the following years. These years were 2000, 1940, 1880, 1820, 1760, 1700, 1640, 1580, 1520, 1460, 1400, 1340, 1280, 1220, 1160, 1100, 1040, and 980. After observing all numbers there is only one number '1100' was finally confirmed. Saka 1100 corresponds to AD 1178.

In the inscription, month is not clearly mentioned. '*Ramnavami*' the birthday of God Ram is celebrated as per Hindu calendar, on the ninth day of bright half or *Shukla paksha* or in the first month *Chaitra* corresponding to April of the Gregorian calendar. In the second line 'tithi' mentioned is ten or *Dashami* in *Vilambi samvatsar*

and for the cause of '*Shree Ramchandra prtiyrtha*' that means for the sake of auspicious occasion of God Rama's birthday and according to the *panchang* or Hindu calendar in AD 1178, Ram-Navami was happened on 5 April 1178. Next day was '*Dashmi*' that is why the corresponding date is 6 April 1178. April month in north Maharashtra is a hot month and always faces scarcity of water. Restoration or renovation of reservoir is the most expected event of probability in this season.

Kalachuri Dynasty

This stone inscription under study is assigned to the twelfth century. The three ruling contemporary dynasties in north Maharashtra were western Calukyas, Kalachuri of Kalyani and Yadavas. After checking all the sides, I came to the conclusion that this epigraph under study belongs to Kalachuri dynasty.

This inscription is a record of the time of Kalachuri king Vajradeva or Vajramanya. Kalachuris of Kalyani were twelfth century dynasty ruled over north Karnataka and Maharashtra. In this inscription, it registers charitable deed executed by the King himself. It seems that the king was the devotee of deity Rama, the incarnation of Vishnu. At the end of the last line there is a symbol or emblem of God Vishnu 'conch shell' or 'sankha'.

Let us now look at the background or the history of Kalachuri. Kalachuri or Kulachuri ruled over Chedi or the area near Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh. The Kalachuris of Kalyana must have been an offshoot of this family. There is connection between the Kalyana branch of the Kalachuris with the Chedi family (Bhandarkar 1895: 160). Kalyani was not only the capital of Kalachuri but also Mangalvedhe near Pandhapur got privilege of being a capital during Bijjala II period (Desai 1950: 23).

The genealogical details of the family remain somewhat obscure. Most of the genealogical statements contained in several genuine records of the family are incomplete. Harasur Inscription of king Soma edited by P.B. Desai describes the genealogy of Kalachuri family upto king Soma or

king Somesvara or Sovideva, who bore *biruda* or title *Rayamurari*. Geneology of Kalachuri which was found in this inscription upto Sovideva or Somesvara is as following:

Uchita → Asaga → Raja II → Bijjala I → Karna
→ Jogama → Permadi → Bijjala II → Sovideva

Bijjala II

Let us first concentrate on the first sovereign Kalchuri king Bijjala II. Bijjala II followed his father Permadi. Bijjala II's name appears also in the form of Bijja, Bijjana, Vijjala and Vijjana (Desai 1950: 470). He was a feudatory of the Calukya Jagadekamalla II and Taila III, both his cousins. It is proved by inscription of AD 1156 where he was referred to as *Maha Mandalesvara* (Rice 1902: 75). That means this year he was not sovereign. According to Shikarpur inscription AD 1162 was the fifth year of emperor Bijjana (Rice 1902: 52). This concludes that Bijjana or Bijjala was the first of the Kalachuryas who held possession of the territory (Rice 1902: 26).

According to the Bombay gazetteer, Bijjala II had two wives. From his first wife he had sons Sovideva (1167–77), Sankama II (1177–81) and Ahavamalla (1161–83). His other wife named Echaladevi. From Echaladevi he had a daughter Siriyadevi (who was married to the Sinda Cavunda II) and son Vajradeva and, and also, he had one gradson Karnadeva (Campbell 1896: 471). Some other names of his children are also found. According to Shikarpur inscription, King Bijjala's brother's name as well as one of the son's names was Mailugideva (Rice 1902: 27). Also king Bijjala had another son named Singhana who came into light through the copperplate inscription of Behatti of Dharwar district (Campbell 1896: 489).

Sovideva

Sovideva was the eldest son of Bijjala II. Though he was the eldest son his succession was not smooth. According to some inscriptions Bijjala II was succeeded by his brother Mallugi or Mailugi

who was followed by Bijjala's grandson Karna. Karna was called as Kandara and Kahdeva in epigraph (Campbell 1896: 27). Karna Usurped the throne ruled illegally but was eventually killed by his uncle Sovideva (Campbell 1896: 25). After Karna, Sovideva came to the throne. According to inscription found in Shikarpur Taluka, AD 1174 was the seventh year of reigning of Sovideva. In one '*Prashasti*' or eulogy published in the eighth year of *Chakravarti* Sovideva or in AD 1175, along with the emperor Sovideva his step brother Vajradeva was also mentioned and appreciated (Campbell 1896: 136).

Bijjala II's Other Sons Sankamadeva and Ahavamalla

Somesvara or Sovideva was succeeded by his brother Sankamadeva in Saka 1099. And there are indications that he was associated in the sovereignty with Sovideva from some time in AD 1176 (Campbell 1896: 487). As per Shikarpur inscription, year 1179 was the third year of Kalachuri *Chakravarti* '*Nissanka-Malla*' *Sankamadeva* who ruled the world (Rice 1902: 95). *Nissanka-Malla* was the *biruda* or the title of Sankamadeva. One more epigraph during the reign of Sankama and Sinda Vikramadeva was published in 2 October 1179, in which Siriyadevi's brother Vajradeva was addressed as '*Nrupvara*' meaning sovereign along with emperor Sankamadeva and her husband Chavunda. The last known date of Sankama from an inscription is 5 January AD 1183 (*Annual Report of South-Indian Epigraphy* 1926–7: 184). During the reign of Sankama there was a fratricidal war between himself and his other brothers, who established themselves as independent kings in certain parts of the kingdom. His brother Ahavamalla claims to have been ruling as an independent king according to some inscriptions. According to records it seems that Ahavamalla became independent in AD 1178 (Rice 1902: 88). Ahavamalla's inscriptions are found mostly in the Sikarpur taluka of the Simoga district and in the Farasgad taluka of the Belgaon district. And this suggests that Ahavamalla was associated in the sovereignty with Sankama from

some time in 1179. This seems that Sankama was retaining the northern and eastern part of the kingdom and Ahvamalla receiving the country from the south. The records do not mention the capital of Ahvamalla.

According to 1183's inscription this year was the fourth year of Kalachuri *chakravatti Raya-Narayana*⁷ Ahvamalla (Rice 1902: 140). Ahvamalla was succeeded by his brother Singhana (Campbell 1896: 489). Singhana another brother of Sankama, also appears to have become independent and ruled for a short time. An inscription of his reign dated AD 1182 gives him the title of *Maharajadhiraj* (Fleet 1875: 276).

Conclusion

The first line of the inscription addressed to the king. '*Shreemanrupshas*' is a title of the king which primarily applied to Prithu in Krita age, which became well-known in the case of 'Ramabhadra' whose enemies were destroyed in the Treta age, which restored to the eldest son of Pandu in Dvapara age. In present tense *Shreemanrupshas* means one who shines and illustrious person (Mirashi 1955: 394). This indicates that this unpublished stone epigraph is related to the royal person.

The inscription was doubtless intended to record the restoration of reservoir. The restoration or renovation of reservoir was made in the cyclic year 'Vilambi' which corresponded to Saka 1100 or AD 1178. The restoration of reservoir was done by Kalachuri Vajradeva or Vajramanya by performing yajna or ritual done in front of sacred fire with mantras.

In the above inscription under study at the end of the paragraph after punctuation sign there is a symbol of the 'conch shell' or 'Sankha' which is an attribute of Vishnu. According to Harasur inscription Vishnu temple was constructed by Madhava who was the minister of the Kalachuri king Sovideva. Here Sovideva was called as Sankhavarmadeva. Whether his name was derived from Sankha (Altekar et al.

1967: 352). According to coinindia.com, coins of Kalachuries of Mahismati and Kalyani found in Ellora complex. Krishnaraja's copper coins have Vaishnavite symbol the conch. This confirms the Kalachuryas were the devotees of Vishnu.

In the reign of emperor Sovideva, that is in 1175, Vajradeva was appreciated and praised as Kalachuryas gave light to the world through might of arm along with other kings of Kalachuri like Permmadi, Bijjala and Sovideva (Rice 1902: 136).

And later in the reign of Kalachurya emperor Sankamadeva according to the epigraph which was published in 2 October 1179, along with Sankamadeva, Kalachuri monarch Bijjala, his wife Echaladevi their daughter Siriyadevi, Echaladevi's husband Chavunda and their son Vajradeva were also clearly mentioned (Barnett 1927: 230). It must be noted that in this epigraph along with emperor Sankamadeva his step brother Vajradeva was called as 'Nrupavaram.'

With the help of these two epigraphs of different years, viz. 1175 and 1179, the existence of Vajradeva is clearly indicated in between these years. And this stone inscription under study shows the year 1178. It might be possible that Vajradeva had a cordial relation with his brothers Sovideva and Sankamadeva.

In Harasur Inscription of king Soma edited by P.B. Desai said Vajradeva was the eldest son and died before nomination of Sovideva to the Kalachuri stone. But this statement has no evidence. I am trying to fill up the missing gap. Parallel to brothers Sankamadeva and Ahvamalla the third brother Vajradeva was reigning in north side of Maharashtra. This can be proved with the help of the stone inscription under study. We can conclude that Vajradeva might perhaps be working under his brothers. It may be perhaps Kalachurya king Sankamadeva sent Vajradeva to govern this side of the country that is 'North Maharashtra' under his reign.

Last but not the least, this inscription shows 'Ram Navami', the most auspicious festival of Hindus was celebrated in the twelfth century.

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NOTES

1. Yashta meaning yajna or the ritual done in front of sacred fire with *mantras*.
2. Janani meaning motherland.
3. Vapi means big well with steps.
4. Tirvi means a woman.
5. A *Peshwa* was the equivalent of a modern Prime Minister in the Maratha Empire of the Indian subcontinent. Originally, the *Peshwas* served as subordinates to the Chhatrapati (the Maratha king), but later, they became the de facto leaders of the Marathas, and the Chhatrapati was reduced to a nominal ruler.
6. The names of the *samvatsaras* are made according to Hindu solar years. These calculations are made according to Jupiter's motion. There are 60 *samvatsaras*. When Jupiter changes the sign, one year ends and another year starts.
7. *Raya Narayan* was a *biruda* or title of Ahvamalla.

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