

Newly Acquired Copperplate of Gāhaḍavāla King Govindacandra from Varanasi, VS 1208 (CE 1151)

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The copperplate under reference, hailing from Varanasi, is recently acquired in the Jñāna-Pravāha Museum, Varanasi (Acc. No. 2014.27; Size 43.5 x 33 cm). The Gāhaḍvāla ruler Govindacandra (CE 1114-1155) issued this land-grant on 5th day of *Māgha* (December-January), VS 1208 in chaste Sanskrit, written in Devanagari script by the scribe Thakkura Śrī Selhaṇa of Śāṅḍilya *gotra*. A separate seal with ring is also found along with this copperplate, which originally might have been attached to it. It depicts a flying Garuḍa and a *śaṅkha* (conch-shell) with the name *Śrīmad Govindacandra-deva* in between. It is quite interesting that though Govindacandra, like his predecessors, calls himself *parama-māheśvara*, this seal has Vaiṣṇava symbols on it.

The inscription is engraved only on one side of the plate in 31 lines. The plate has a circular hole (1.6 cm in diameter) on the upper side for the ring with royal seal. The corners of the plate are slightly rounded off. Barring the historical portion (lines 9-23) and scribe's name (last line) being in prose, the text runs in verse.

Forty-five¹ charters of Govindacandra of Gāhaḍavāla dynasty and his wife queen Kumāradevī have been found so far from different places. This new addition

from Varanasi records the grant of village *Kumbhāvadaḡrāma* of *Muñjacaurāsī Pattalā* (district) to various *brāhmaṇas*. The inscription on the plate resembles with several other charters of Govindacandra in palaeography, orthography and style.

The record begins with the symbol *om* and the word *siddhiḥ*. These are followed in lines 1-9 by 9 *ślokas*, which are already well known from the published Gāhaḍavāla charters.² The first of these verses contains an adoration of the goddess Śrī (*Lakṣmī*).



Seal with Ring



Seal

Verse 2 introduces Yaśovigraha who flourished after the rulers of the solar race (i.e. the Gurjara-Pratihāra emperors of Kannauja) passed away. Verse 3 introduces Yaśovigraha's son Mahicandra, verses 4 and 5 Mahicandra's son Candra who is stated to have obtained by his valour the empire of Gādhipura (Kuśikapura or Gādhipur, i.e. Kānyakubja or Kannauja) and protected the holy places in the Kāśī, Kuśika (Kannauja), Uttara-Kośala and Indrathāna (Indore) regions. It is further stated that King Candra eradicated all afflictions of the subjects of Gādhipura empire. Candra's son Madanapāla is described in verses 6-7 and Govindacandra is described in

the next two stanzas (verses 8-9). A passage in prose in lines 9-12 re-introduces Govindacandra as *Paramabhṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Parameśvara Paramamāheśvara* and as meditating on the feet of Madanapāla who himself meditated on the feet of *Paramabhṭṭāraka Mahārājādhirāja Parameśvara Paramamāheśvara* Candra, who acquired the sovereignty over Kānyakubja by (the strength of his) own arms, orders, informs and commands all the people assembled, residing in this village, (namely) in the midst of *Kuṁbhāvāḍagrāma* in the district (*Pattalā*) of *Muñjacaurāsī* as well as the kings, queens, crown-princes, ministers, preceptors, door-keepers, generals, treasurers, record-keepers, physicians, astrologers, chamberlains, messengers and officers charged with the care of elephants, horses, towns, mines and cattle, in the following manner :

Be it be known to you, that above written village together with land and water, together with metal and salt-mines, together with sources of fish, together with the fields producing betel-leaves, together with pits and barren lands, together with *mahuā* and mango, trees, woods, gardens and branches and including grasslands and pasture grounds, together with what is above and below the surface of the earth with the four boundaries demarked, including the boundaries today on Wednesday, the 5th *tithi* of the bright fortnight in the month of *Māgha* (Vasanta Pañcamī) in the year [*Vikrama*] *sainvat* 1208, after bathing in the Ganges and propitiating the sacred texts, divinities, sages, men, beings and groups, deceased ancestors, adoring the sun whose luster can dispel heaps of darkness, worshipping the moon crested (Śiva), worshipping Vāsudeva, the protector of the three worlds and after offering to (the god of) Fire an oblation rich in milk-rice for the increase of merit and fame of my mother and father and myself, bestowed by a charter by (pouring) water by the palm of my hand, sanctified by the ear of the holy cow (*gokarṇa*) and Kuśa-grass, I have granted 8 *visuā* (given both in words and in decimal figures) land of aforesaid village *Kuṁbhāvāḍa* in the district (*Pattalā*) of *Muñjacaurāsī* to Śrī-Buddha Śarman,

son of Dikṣita Śrī-Nārāyaṇa, grandson of Dikṣita Śrī-Candana, a Brāhmaṇa of Sāṃkr̥tya gotra whose three *pravāras* were Sāṃkr̥tya, Āṅgīrasa and Gaurivīti and *visuā** 8 (both written in words and in decimal figures) land to Dikṣita Śrī-Keśava, Dikṣita Śrī-Golhaṇa, Siṭa, Bālha Gayapāla, Pāhula, Rāhula and Nārāyaṇa, sons of Agnihotrī Śrī-Viṭu, grandsons of Śrī-Tolā, brāhmaṇas of Bhārgava gotra whose three *pravāras* were Bhārgava, Cyāvana and Āpnavāna. And again *visuā* 12 of land, of which one share were given to Eṇa of Bhāradvāja gotra, Pavaṇāha of Śāṅḍilya gotra, Jagadhara of Śāṅḍilya gotra, Vāsudeva, Jālha, Eṇa and Vaukana of Vatśa gotra, Māinda, Lakṣmīdhara, Veda, Mādhava and Jālha of Sāṃkr̥tya gotra assigning to each of the doni one share to them. Obedient to my command you shall pay all the taxes including revenue, the trade duty, Tark's duty and two Kumaragadī-āṇaka and all the fixed and to be fixed in future. The land grant was written by a *dvija* (twice-born) of Śāṅḍilya gotra Ṭhakkura Śrī-Selhaṇa.

The *paurāṇika* verses also occur in this context :

He who receives land and who gives it, both the virtuous parties certainly go to heaven [line 24]

O Indra! the conch, the throne, the umbrella, excellent horses and excellent elephants are the result and marks of land-gift [lines 24-25]

Rāmabhadra makes request to all future Kings 'all of you should all times maintain this religious duty common to all men' [line 25]

Sagar and many other Kings have enjoyed the earth: he gets the fruit to whom the land belongs for the time being [lines 25-26]

Taking away a single cow, one piece of gold and even one finger measure of land; a man lives in hell until the destruction of all beings [line 26]

One taking away land cannot be purified by a thousand tanks, a hundred horse-sacrifices and the gift of crores of cows [lines 26-27]

One who takes away land given by himself or by another is drowned in dung with his ancestors, being a worm [line 27]

A donor of land lives in heaven for sixty thousand years and one, who takes it away as also his approver, lives in hell for the same number of years [lines 27-28]

Those who take away a deity's or a Brahman's property are born black serpents living in the dry hollows in waterless forests [line 28]

*Most probably 'bishwa' (a land measurement unit used in Uttar Pradesh) of modern day equivalent to 1361 sq. ft. approx.

Poison is not so dangerous as a Brahmana's property is; because poison kills one who takes it away. But taking away of Brahmana's property whole family is uprooted [line 29]

What good man takes away again those gifts which were given before by Kings for virtue, wealth and fame; for those gifts are like left off garlands and vomiting? [line 29]

Command over the earth is sportive like a blowing cloud; enjoyment of sensuous objects is sweet until its fall; lives of men are like dew-drops at the tip of a grass-blade: Certainly



Copperplate

virtue alone is real friend when one has to leave for the next world [line 30]

This was inscribed by a (dvija) twice-born Śāṅḍilya race Ṭhakkura Selhaṇa.

Endnotes

1. Ashish Kumar Dubey, *Culture under The Gahaḍavālas - An Epigraphical Study*, New Delhi, 2011, pp.4-9.
2. J. Burgess (Ed.), *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol.II, A.S.I., New Delhi, Reprint 1983, pp.361-363.

Text

मुहर - श्रीमद्गोविन्दचन्द्र-(न्द्र)-देव-(वः)॥

1. ओम् सिद्धिः ॥
अकुण्ठोत्कण्ठवैकुण्ठकण्ठपीठलुठत्करः ।
संरम्भः सुरतारम्भे स श्रियः श्रेयसेस्तु वः ॥ {1}
आसीदशीतद्युतिवंशजातक्षमापालमा-
2. लासु दिवंगतासु ।
साक्षाद्विवस्वानिव भूरि धाम्ना नाम्ना यशोविग्रह इत्युदारः ॥ {2}
तत्सुतो(ऽ)भूमहीचन्द्रश्चन्द्रधामनिभं निजम् ।
येनापारमकू-
3. पार-पारे व्यापारितं यशः ॥ {3}
तस्या भूतनयो नयैकरसिकः क्रान्तद्विषन्मण्डलो
विध्वस्तोद्धतवीरयोधतिमिरः श्रीचन्द्रदेवो नृपः ।
येनोदारतरप्रताप -
4. स-(श)-मिताशेषप्रजोपद्रवं
श्रीमद्गाधिपुराधिराज्यमसमं दोर्विक्रमेणार्जितम् ॥ {4}
तीर्थानि कासि-(शि)-कुसि-(शि)-कोत्तरकोशलेन्द्र -
स्थानीयकानि परिपालयताभिगम्य ।
5. हेमात्मतुल्यमनिसं-(शं) ददता द्विजेभ्यो
येनांकिता वसुमती शतस-(शं)-स्तुलाभिः ॥ {5}
तस्यात्मजो मदनपाल इति क्षितीन्द्र-
श्चूडामणिर्विजयते निजगोत्रचन्द्रः ।
यस्या -
6. भिषेककलशोल्लसितैः पयोभिः
प्रक्षालितं कलिरजः पटलं धरियाः ॥ {6}
यस्यासीद्विजयप्रयाणसमये तुंगाचलोच्चैश्चल -
न्माद्यत्कुम्भपदक्रमासमभरभ्रश्यन्-
7. हीमण्डले ।
चूडारत्नविभिन्नालुगलितस्त्यानासृगुद्भासितः
शेष-(षः)-पे-(पे)-षवशादिवक्षणमसौ क्रोडे निलीनाननः ॥ {7}
तस्मादजायत निजायतबाहुवल्लिबद्धावरुद्धन -
8. वराज्यगजो नरेन्द्रः ।
सा-(ने)-द्रामृतद्रवमुचां प्रभवोगवां यो गोविन्दचन्द्र इति चन्द्र इवाम्बुराशेः ॥ {8}
न कथमप्यलभन्तरणक्षमास्तिसृषु दिक्षु गजानथ वज्रिणः ।
ककु -
9. भि बभ्रमुरभ्रमुबल्लभ-प्रतिभटा इव यस्य घटा गजाः ॥ {9}
सोऽयं समस्तराजचक्रसंसेवितचरणः । स च परमभट्टारकमहाराजाधिराजपरमेश्वर-परममा -
10. हेश्वरनिजभुजोपार्जितकान्यकुब्जाधिपत्य श्रीचन्द्रदेवपादानुध्यातो
परमभट्टारकमहाराजाधिराजपरमेश्वर - परममाहेश्वर श्रीमदनपालदेव पा -
11. दानुध्यातो परमभट्टारकमहाराजाधिराजपरमेश्वरपरममाहेश्वराश्वपतिगजपतिनरपति-
राजत्रयाधिपतिविविधविद्याविचारवाचस्पति -
12. श्रीमद्गोविन्दचन्द्रदेवो विजयी ॥ मुंजचउरासी पत्तलां-(ला)-यां कुम्भावड ग्रामनिवासिनो निखिल
जनपदानुपगतानपि च राजराज्ञी युवराजमन्त्रिपु -

13. रोहितप्रतिहारसेनापतिभाण्डागारिकाक्षपटलिकभिषग्नैमित्तिकान्तःपुरिकदूतकरितुरगपत्तनाकरस्थान-
गोकुलाधिकारिपुरुषानाज्ञाप -
14. यति बोधयत्यादिशति च विदितमस्तु भवतां यथोपरिलिखितग्रामः सजलस्थलः सलोहलवणाकरः,
समत्स्याकरः, सपपर्णाकरः, सगर्तोषरः, समधूकश्चूतव -
15. नविटपवाटिकातृणयुतिगोचरपर्यन्तः सोर्ध्वाधश्चतुरः घाटविशुद्धः स्वसीमापर्यन्तः ॥ सम्वत् 1208
माघ शुदि 5 बुधे । अद्यैह गंगायां स्नात्वा विधि -
16. वन्मन्त्रदेवमुनिमनुजभूतपितृगणान्तर्पयित्वा तिमिरपटलपाटनपटुं
महासमुष्ण-रोचि-मपुपस्थायोषधिपतिस -(श)-कलशेखरं समभ्यर्च्य त्रि -
17. भुवनत्रातुर्वासुदेवस्य पूजां विधाय प्रचुरपायसेन हविषा हविर्भुजं हुत्वा मातापित्रोरात्मनश्च
पुण्ययशोवि-(भि)-वृद्धयेऽस्माभि गोकर्णकुशलता पू -
18. तकरतलोदकपूर्व ॥ सांकृत्य गोत्राय । सांकृत्यम्वांगिरसगौरिवीति त्रिः प्रवराय ।
दीक्षित श्रीचन्दनपौत्राय । दीक्षित श्रीनारायणपुत्राय । दीक्षि -
19. त श्रीबुद्धशर्मणे ब्राह्मणाय ग्रामस्य विसुआ अष्टांकेपि वि 8 तथा भार्गव गोत्राय ।
भार्गवव्यावन आप्नवान त्रिः प्रवराय । अग्निहोत्री श्रीटोला पौत्राय ।
20. अग्निहोत्री श्रीवीटु पुत्राय । दीक्षित श्रीकेशव । दीक्षित श्रीगोल्हण । सीट । बाल्ह । गयपाल ।
पाहुल । राहुल । नारायण एतेषां सोदराणां पद अष्टांके -
21. पि पद 8; भारद्वाजगोत्रजैणो पद 1, शाण्डिल्यगोत्र पवणाह पद 1, शाण्डिल्यगोत्र जगधर पद 1,
वासुदेव पद 1, जाल्ह पद 1, वत्सगोत्रजैणो पद 1, वौकन पद 1,
22. सांकृत-(त्य)-गोत्र माइन्द पद 1, लक्ष्मीधर पद 1, वेद पद 1 माधव पद 1, जाहुल पद 1, एवं
विसुआ 12; एतेषां ब्राह्मणानां शासनी कृत्वा प्रदत्तो यथा दीयमान भा -
23. गभोगकरप्रवणिकरतुरुष्कदण्डयुगाकुमरगदिआणक
प्रभृत्तिन्नियताऽनियतादायानाज्ञाविधेयीसूपदास्यथेति ॥ ७ ॥ भवन्ति चात्र पौराणिकाः श्लोकाः
24. भूमिं यः प्रतिगृह्णाति यश्च भूमिं प्रयच्छति ।
उभौ तौ पुण्यकर्म्मणौ नियतं स्वर्गगामिनौ ॥ {10}
शंखं भद्रासनं छत्रं वरश्वा वरवारणाः ।
भूमिदानस्य चिह्नानि फलमेतत्पु -
25. रन्दर ॥ {11}
सर्वनिताम्भाविनः पार्थिवेन्द्रान्भूयो भूयो याचते रामभद्रः ।
सामान्यो (S) यं धर्मसेतुर्नृपाणां काले पालनीयो भवद्भिः ॥ {12}
बहुभिर्वसुधा दत्ता राज -
26. भिः सगरादिभिः ।
यस्य यस्य यदा भूमिर्तस्य तस्य तदा फलम् ॥ {13}
गामेकां स्वर्णमेकं भूमिरप्येकमंगुलम् ।
हरन्नरकमाप्नोति यावदाभूत संप्लवम् ॥ {14}
तडागानां स -
27. ह्येण अश्वमेधशतेन च
गवां कोटिप्रदानेन भूमिहर्ता न शुध्यति ॥ {15}
स्वदत्तां परदत्तां वा यो हरेच्च वसुन्धराम् ।
स विष्टायां कृमिर्भूत्वा पितृभिः सह मज्जति ॥ {16}
षष्टिवर्षसहस्राणि

28. स्वर्गे मोदति भूमिदः ।
 आक्षेप्ता चानुमन्ता च द्वावेव नरकं व्रजेत् ॥ {17}
 वारिहीनष्वरण्येषु शष्ककोटरवासिनः ।
 कृष्णसर्पाश्च जीयन्ते देवब्रह्माग्रहारिणः ॥ {18}
29. विषं विषमित्याहुर्ब्रह्मस्वं विष मुच्यते ।
 विषमेकाकिनं हन्ति ब्रह्मस्वं पुत्रपौत्रकम् ॥ {19}
 यानीहदत्तानि पुरा नरेन्द्रैः दानानि धर्मार्थयशस्कराणि ।
 निर्माल्यवान्त -
 प्रतिमानितानि को नाम साधुः पुनराददीत् ॥ {20}
30. वाताभ्रविभ्रममिदं वसुधाधिपत्यमापातमात्रमधुरा विषयोपभोगाः ।
 प्राणास्तृणाग्रजलबिन्दुसमा नराणां ध
31. र्म्मः सखा परमहो परलोकयाने ॥ {21}
 ॥ ७ ॥ ॥ ॥
 लिखितं ठक्कुर श्रीसेल्हणेनेति ॥ शाण्डिल्यगोत्रजद्विजवंश्योधृकं