

NOBLES, BUREAUCRATS OR STRONGMEN? ON THE “VASSAL KINGS”
OR “HEREDITARY GOVERNORS” OF PRE-ANGKORIAN CITY-STATES:
TWO SANSKRIT INSCRIPTIONS OF VIDYĀVIŚEṢA, SEVENTH-CENTURY
GOVERNOR OF TAMANDARAPURA (K. 1235 AND K. 604), AND AN
INSCRIPTION OF ŚIVADATTA (K. 1150), PREVIOUSLY CONSIDERED
A SON OF ĪŚĀNAVARMAN I¹

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*nagare nagare caikam kuryāt sarvārthacintakam
uccaiḥsthānam ghorarūpaṃ nakṣatrāṇām iva graham*
(*Manusmṛti* 7:121)

And in each town let him appoint one superintendent of all affairs,
elevated in rank, formidable, (resembling) a planet among the stars.
(Bühler 1886:235)

Before it grew to its present length, this article was initially conceived as a first edition and annotated translation of a short inscription in Sanskrit verse (K. 1235) dated to the first third of the seventh century (627 CE, or 549 *śaka*). K. 1235 is engraved on a stela that is unfortunately

¹ All three of the inscriptions in the title were to have been edited and translated by Gerdi Gerschheimer and myself working together. It was he who produced the first transcription of K. 1235 and suggested in March 2007 that we study it, in tandem with K. 604, in sessions of the CIK seminar (“Corpus des inscriptions khmères”) held in the Maison de l’Asie in Paris. His contribution to the editions and translations presented here is very considerable, and it is certain that this article would have been greatly improved had we been able to draw it up together. Dominique Soutif has provided me with materials and many useful pointers throughout this and other works. I should also like to thank Bertrand Porte and Chea Soheat, of the Stone restoration workshop of the National Museum of Cambodia, who have helped me with most of my ventures into Cambodian epigraphy, and who accompanied me on a fruitful and pleasurable field-trip in which we called in upon the Museum in Takeo and saw K. 1235. My colleague Arlo Griffiths, in the midst of an extremely busy autumn, took the time to read through this lengthy piece and make invaluable suggestions. Finally, I am most grateful to Mr. Ang Chouléan, who warmly pressed me to make this contribution to *Udaya*. Since I began to draft out this article last year, two of its principal “discussants” have sadly passed away: Michael Vickery, to whom I have only ever spoken on the telephone, and Claude Jacques, with whom I happily collaborated for several years over irregularly spaced lunches, dinners and seminars in Paris. I have added these sentences to express my indebtedness to them for communicating to me something of their enthusiasm for Khmer history. The discussion will have to be carried forward by other interlocutors.

of unknown provenance but that is currently housed in the Museum at Takeo. It records the construction of a bridge or dyke (Skt. *setu*) at the place where the stela was once erected. This construction was an act of merit accomplished by a certain Vidyāviśeṣa, an administrator, a connoisseur of belles lettres and Indian philosophy and also the governor of Tamandarapura, a still unidentified town with an only partly Sanskrit name (Skt. *°pura*, “town”) to which we find allusions in two other seventh-century inscriptions.

Happily we have another inscription that records another act of piety performed by the same governor in the same year, namely K. 604. The two inscriptions complement and throw light upon each other and it seems probable that they were written by one and the same person, probably Vidyāviśeṣa himself. Having found that a considerable improvement is possible upon both the transcription and the interpretation of K. 604, published by Louis Finot in 1928, I present here as well a new edition of K. 604.

Given that several pre-Angkorian inscriptions were produced in the name of figures who proclaim themselves to have been loyal favourites of the seventh-century kings of Īśānapura (Sambor Pre Kuk) and who declare that they were appointed governors of towns by those kings, and given that this pattern was not recognised by the editors of all such inscriptions, an examination of the corpus of these “governors’ inscriptions” is further included. This has led me in turn to republish K. 1150, and to reconsider passages of K. 151 and K. 723 (touching also on K. 506, K. 53, K. 54, K. 55, K. 109 and K. 1059). My investigation leads me to frame a few questions about governorship in the seventh century, several of which lead to an untidy muddle of mixed answers. Where were the towns? Were they mostly on the fringes of the apparently newly formed seventh-century “empire” or closer to its heart? In other words, were governorships bestowed principally in order to expand the region of control or to consolidate power in the core region? Were some governorships not appointments but the inherited or appropriated kingdoms of local strongmen that the ruling king simply chose to recognise? Were some governorships merely fleeting career appointments and not intended to be hereditary from the moment of appointment? Were men of Indian ancestry typically preferred? Were the appointees principally tax-collecting bureaucrats of intellectual leanings or more typically soldiers rewarded for military exploits? The entitlement of governors to collect certain taxes is implied (by such titles as *bhoja*, *bhojaka*: “enjoyer”), but did they live off them or pass most of what they earned to the ruling king?

I am painfully conscious that I do not have a wide range of qualifications that might have enabled me to answer these questions in a manner that could have gone some way to satisfy an economic or political historian, and I know that several true historians have long wrestled with these or similar questions already, in the recent past notably Michael Vickery in his stimulating monograph of 1998. What I can do, however, as a Sanskritist, is extend the corpus of “governors’ inscriptions” by editing (or re-editing) some of the relevant Sanskrit documents and pointing out a handful of egregious misinterpretations that marred the interpretation of others and, that in a couple of cases, may even have erroneously prevented them from being seen as relevant.

It seems to me that it is also useful that a Sanskritist’s perspective on the hierarchisation of Sanskrit terms of administration should be juxtaposed with Vickery’s arguments on such matters. Vickery, eager to tease out all the implications about the changes in usage and relative hierarchy of

Khmer terms, seems to have difficulty fighting the impulse to treat the Sanskrit ones in a similar way. He observes, for instance (1998:24):

Throughout the pre-Angkor period there is no reference to any political or administrative entity higher than the *pura* (with the possible exception of three *nagara*, whose rank relative to *pura* is not known), of which some thirty are mentioned in the inscriptions. [...] Chiefs of *pura* other than the king bore Khmer titles, *mratañ kloñ*, *kurāk kloñ*, and possibly *kurum*, in Sanskrit *svāmī* or *īśvara* ('lord', 'king') of their *pura*, the latter probably a higher rank than the former.

I believe that an attempt to see a hierarchy expressed by such expressions for “governor”, to understand, for example, that the *īśvara* (“lord”) of a given *pura* held a post higher than a *pura-svāmin* (“town-possessor”), is to be abandoned.² While true synonymy may be a theoretical impossibility, it is well-known that literary Sanskrit employs as exact equivalents such kennings for “king” as *bhūpāla* (“protector of the earth”), *parthiva* (“connected to the earth”), *avanibhuj* (“enjoyer of the earth”), *bhūbhrt* (“sustainer of the earth”), *adbīśa* (“overlord”), *narendra* (“Indra among men”), *bhūmisvāmin* (“possessor of the earth”) and many more. It seems to me therefore impossible to base our notions of the distinctions of rank between the administrators of cities on the use of literary expressions whose literal meanings are “who protects”, or “who owns”, “who enjoys” a particular *pura* or *nagara*, or the like. Unlike the Khmer texts of the period, which are both literally and metaphorically prosaic, the Sanskrit texts are metrical pieces of politico-religious poetry and they therefore obey contemporary Sanskrit literary conventions, including the liberal use of kennings. It is therefore not a safe assumption that Rudrapurīśa (“lord of Rudrapura”) in one poem is of a higher rank than Jyeṣṭhapurasvāmin (“lord of Jyeṣṭhapura”) in another. It seems to me similarly risky to attempt to rank or distinguish such terms for settlements as *pura*, *purī*, *nagara*, etc.³

There are also other sorts of confusions that result from a tendency to regard certain Sanskrit words as items of vocabulary with relatively fixed value. Consider for instance this statement (Vickery 1998:24):

It is notable that *mratañ kloñ* governors were called *-purasvāmī* ‘lord of a *pura*’ (i.e. *Jyeṣṭhapurasvāmī*) in Sanskrit records, and *-svāmī* was sometimes affixed to their personal names in Khmer, but that *poñ*, even when clearly important members of their community, were never called *-svāmī*. This is a detail illustrating the different hierarchies, and probably indicates that *poñ*-ship was anchored in more ancient local tradition.

The ending *-svāmin* as part of the personal names of brahmins is, as it happens, an ancient but unrelated naming convention that is attested in other parts of the Indic world.⁴ Also barely

² Vickery instead hangs on to and returns to this distinction (e.g. 1998:184).

³ Kulke’s attempts to do precisely this sort of thing, for instance to distinguish different meanings for *purī* and *pura* in two consecutive Sanskrit stanzas of the C8th Dinaya inscription of East Java (1991:14), also seem to me fanciful.

⁴ A brief discussion of *-svāmin* as an ending for brahmin names, along with a handful of other such pre-Angkorian names that have come to light since 1998 and can now be added to Vickery’s list may be found in the 2nd footnote of

related or unrelated is the ancient and widely attested phenomenon of theonyms, typically names of Viṣṇu, ending in *-svāmin*. Nonetheless, Vickery confusingly draws all this into the picture as though it were relevant (e.g. 1998:209) and tabulates together instances of pre-Angkorian anthroponyms, theonyms and titles ending in *-svāmin* (1998:201).⁵ In fact, it is indeed natural that those claiming to be brahmin by such means as the use of distinctive personal names ending in *-svāmin* should be precluded from making the contradictory claim of having inherited the title *poñ*. But that a *poñ* should receive an administrative title that happens to end in *-svāmin* is not, as Vickery appears here to suggest, impossible.⁶

Without further apologetic preamble, let us begin our consideration of the pair of inscriptions referring to Vidyāviśeṣa, namely K. 1235 and K. 604.

Synopses of K. 1235 and K. 604

The first stanza of K. 1235 is an invocation of Śiva. Stanzas II to VI praise the king Īśānavarman I. Stanza VII introduces his “servant” Vidyāviśeṣa. Stanza VIII mentions Vidyāviśeṣa’s scholarship in Sanskrit philosophy and literature; stanza IX gives the date of the construction of “this” dyke or bridge (the deictic pronoun indicating that this was almost certainly a structure next to where the stela was once erected); and stanza X, almost identical with the last stanza of K. 604, relates that the same king had employed him as governor (*svāmibhojaka*) of Tamandarapura after the performance of the meritorious act which the inscription commemorates.

The structure of K. 604 is similar. Śiva, who appears there under the name of Kadamveśvara, is invoked in the first stanza. Then follows the conventional description of the king Īśānavarman (stanzas II–VI) and the presentation of his “servant” Vidyāviśeṣa (stanzas VII–IX). Then (in stanzas X and XI), the foundation by Vidyāviśeṣa of a *līṅga* is recorded (there is no explicit mention of its name, but it seems likely, given the inscription’s opening, that it was called Kadamveśvara) and his donation of a village called Śākatīrtha (“leaf-vegetable ford”), which was furnished with slaves, cows, buffalo, garden(s) and fields. Stanza XII declares that a Pāśupata Brahmin (*dvija*) to be named by the king should live off the temple (*devakulam bhoktum*) and protect it forever.

Goodall 2017. Such a survey for data for a comparable period covering any area from the subcontinent was not known to me at the time of that article going to press, but I have since seen the substantial appendix (2017:192–215) to Furui’s account of “Brāhmaṇas in Early Medieval Bengal”, in which he lists the data from land-grants to brahmins from hitherto published inscriptions. It seems that although brahmin personal names with other endings, notably *-śarman*, might be more common overall, the commonest ending in the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries is *-svāmin*: for this early period, there are more than 230 personal names of brahmins ending in *-svāmin*, most of them in one seventh-century record from Sylhet in which the majority of names are presented as ending in *-svā* (Furui 2017:207–212), which, as Bhattacharya explains (1928:117), is used there as an abbreviation of *-svāmin*.

⁵ In justice, I should observe that elsewhere Vickery is quite clear in distinguishing the sense of *purāsvāmin* from other senses: as he observes in another context (1998:341): “However *svāmin* may be glossed in dictionaries, or whatever its attested use in other contexts, Śivadatta and Īśvarakumāra were not just *svāmin*, but *purāsvāmin*, and in Pre-Angkor Khmer that status always indicated someone appointed by higher authority, usually by a king, as an administrator, not an independent ruler.”

⁶ An example, as we shall see below, is Śivadatta, who is described as *poñ* in K. 54 and as Jyeṣṭhapurāsvāmin in K. 1150.

Before I give the text and annotated translation of each inscription, which will be followed by a discussion of “governors’ inscriptions” in general and the text and annotated translation of K. 1150, a few remarks about Vidyāviśeṣa’s name may be useful, as well as about the religious context that the name might appear to suggest.

The religious context

Names ending in *-viśeṣa* are not very frequent in the Khmer corpus: a Bhadraviśeṣa appears in K. 22 and a Kumāraviśeṣa in K. 154. But it is worth exploring the possibility that Vidyā- might have been a Pāśupata naming prefix. We may recall that Pāśupata names can be distinguished in India as well as in Cambodia not only by distinctive endings, such as *-rāśi* and *-soma*, but also by prefixes such as *Bhā-* and *Bhāva-*.⁷ As for Vidyā-, we find it in several contexts that could be called Śaiva in a broad sense (*māheśvara*), some of which are Pāśupata. We may cite the following examples.

Vidyākumāra K. 79/639,⁸ K. 561/681.

Vidyākīrti K. 127/683.

Vidyādeva* K. 80.

Vidyādharadeva K. 561/681.

Vidyāpuṣpa* K. 733.

Vidyāvarabindu K. 652/687.

Vidyāvinaya* K. 54/629.

Vidyāvindu* K.13/624.

Vidyāviśeṣa* K. 604/627.

Vidyāśakti K. 493/657.

The names marked here with an asterisk occur in inscriptions that contain clear indications that they come from what is in some sense a Pāśupata milieu. Vidyāpuṣpa, for instance, in K. 733, is explicitly stated (in st. IV) to be a Pāśupatācārya learned in grammar, Vaiśeṣika and Nyāya, and the foundation that K. 733 records is explicitly to be for the benefit of Pāśupatas (st. IX). The Vidyādeva known from K. 80 is not explicitly said to be a Pāśupata teacher, but we learn that the religious foundation he created, perhaps an *āśrama* or monastery, is to be frequented by those who belong to the religious path that is “beyond the [sanctioned brahminical] walks of life” (*atyāśraminiṣevitam*), in other words, we propose, to those who belong to the Atimārga.⁹ The link

⁷ For a brief account of some Śaiva onomastic conventions that are attested in ancient Cambodia, see Goodall 2015:21–26.

⁸ Here and in another table towards the end of this article, each inscription is identified first with the K. number assigned to it (for which see the concordance in *IC VIII* and, for inscriptions inventoried since 1966, the online inventory at cik.efeo.fr) followed, after a forward slash, with the date, if the inscription bears one, converted (from the *śaka* era) to the Common Era.

⁹ Atimārga (literally “the path beyond”) is used of the Śaiva Pāśupata traditions to distinguish them from the Śaiva tantric traditions, which make up the Mantramārga (“the path of Mantras”). For an overview of the Śaiva traditions, see Sanderson 1988; for an overview of the Atimārga, see Acharya 2011; for evidence of Atimārga Śaivism in Cam-

in the case of K. 13, which records the Śaiva foundation of a certain Vidyāvindu, is much more tenuous and open to doubt: salvation is promised to “one who worships the feet of Paśupati/ one who shares in [viz. imitates ?] the condition of Paśupati” (*paśupatiṭpadabhāg*, in st. X). For the Vidyāvinaya of K. 54, the evidence is also fairly tenuous: it transpires from K. 54 that he was an *ācārya* (st. I) and that he was married (st. III), but from K. 55, which continues on from K. 54, we learn that he installed an image of Somaśarman (st. VI in IC III, p. 159), which may be a Pāśupata form of Śiva (for this interpretation, see Goodall 2017). K. 604, which celebrates the same Vidyāviśeṣa as K. 1235, mentions, as we have just seen, that a Pāśupata brahmin is to be appointed as a priest in the temple whose endowment the inscription records. The other seventh-century instances do not furnish details that suggest a specifically Pāśupata milieu.¹⁰ On the other hand, most Śaiva religious professionals in the seventh-century Khmer-speaking world probably belonged directly or indirectly to such a milieu.¹¹ What this faint pattern of names suggests is that names beginning in Vidyā- were popular among Pāśupatas, but they were high-status names that were probably not the exclusive preserve of religious professionals.

There is, by the way, no very clear index of the presence of Tantric Śaivism (Mantramārga) in the Khmer-speaking world of the seventh-century (Sanderson 2004:435ff). The most obvious and frequent indication of the presence of the Mantramārga in the Angkorian period is the presence of what are clearly initiatory names consisting of the name of a mantra followed by the ending -śiva (Sanderson 2004: 398f.). The first well-dated allusions to tantric traditions on the Indian mainland, which take the form of (typically veiled) allusions to royal initiations in several parts of the subcontinent (see Sanderson 2001:8–10), date from the seventh century. For Southeast Asia, I have suggested that the arrival of the Mantramārga is first detectable in a punning allusion to a royal initiation in Campā in the second half of the seventh century (in C. 137; see Goodall and Griffiths 2013:284–286) and the first indication in the Khmer-speaking world is found about a century later, in 763 CE, in an inscription of Jayavarman I *bis*, namely K. 1236 (Goodall 2015a:76–78). The presence of Pāśupatas in seventh-century Cambodia, on the other hand, is well documented. And so, while it is true that in many seventh-century inscriptions of Śaiva obedience there is nothing that enables us to identify precisely what type of Śaivism is in question, it seems possible that it is always a milieu that we could call, in the widest sense possible, “Pāśupata”.

bodia, see Goodall 2015.

¹⁰ I have not included here post-seventh-century names beginning in Vidyā- from the Khmer epigraphical record, since these seemed not relevant (with the possible exception of Vidyāvāsa in K. 524 of 1039 CE). A more complete list of such names, including also instances belonging to the Angkorian period, may be found in Cœdès’ list of proper names in IC VIII. I have also not included examples from any other part of the Indian world, which should be sought for as well. The only ones of which I am aware are considerably later and probably not relevant since what makes them distinctive as names of religious affiliation is probably their endings rather than their prefixes. Thus, I know of a Vidyācakravartin from a copper-plate inscription of the reign of Paramāra Bhojadeva (1003–1060) that was edited online by Somdev Vasudeva (<http://sarasvatam.blogspot.com/2006/03/p-of-ujjain.html>), and of a Vidyārāśi from the ‘The Koḍumbālūr Inscription of Vikrama-kēsari’ (Nilakantha Sastri 1933), a ninth-century epigraph that speaks of a monastery of fifty Kālavakra ascetics.

¹¹ A couple of cave inscriptions (including the previously discovered and then lost and still unpublished K. 1040) that have recently (2017) been brought to light by Christine Hawixbrock and David Bazin on the Southern slope of Vat Phu may provide evidence of exceptions to this rule.

Provenance, current situation and physical description of the stela K. 1235

Unfortunately, we do not know where or exactly when the stela K. 1235 was discovered. According to the records in the Museum of Takeo, it was first reported as being in Pailin province, somewhere near the Thai border, in or before 2006, whereupon it was taken to the house of the governor of Takeo, before being transferred to the Takeo Museum. During the reorganisation of Takeo Museum in 2006–2007, it was taken to Phnom Penh, where it was cleaned, photographed (Fig. 1) and given a socle at the Stone Restoration Workshop of the National Museum of Cambodia, and an estampage was made (Fig. 2) before it was returned to the Takeo Museum. It was there that I examined and photographed it in July 2013 on a field-trip with Bertrand Porte and Chea Socheat (both from the same Stone Restoration Workshop).

The absence of information about provenance is regrettable, but, even if Vidyāviśeṣa had become governor of Tamandarapura at the time the stela was first erected, this does not mean that the inscription necessarily belonged to or was found in the environs of that unknown city. K. 604, after all, commemorates the foundation of a *līṅga* in Īśānapura (Sambor Prei Kuk). The toponym Tamandarapura appears only in our two Sanskrit inscriptions K. 1235 and 604, and in an inscription that is partly in Sanskrit and partly in Old Khmer, namely K. 9. Vickery (1998:339) is of the opinion that K. 9 allows us to place Tamandarapura in southern Vietnam, which is where it was found,¹² but does not exclude the possibility that there may have been more than one city of that name (1998:209). As for the form of the name, Vickery proposes a partly Malay etymology (1998:182–183):

...the Khmer name of the location where the *kañben* gave rice fields was *çpar pares*, ‘deer park’, a name still attached to that region. Cœdès noted that in Sanskrit ‘deer park’ would have been *mṛgadāva* [...] But *tamandara* is probably not to be construed as Sanskrit. In Malay *taman* is ‘park’, and in the usual structure of such inscriptions, the location named in the Khmer text is repeated, or translated in the Sanskrit prologue. The only term for ‘deer’ at all resembling *dara* which I have found in any of the languages known in the area is Old Khmer *dray*, which is not a good fit, and one would have to assume poetic license to give the name a classical Sanskrit flavor. This is thus only a suggested hypothesis, not a conclusion.

Arlo Griffiths (e-mail of 19.xi. 2017) has further suggested to me that *tamandara*^o could be explained as being entirely made up of Malay terms: ‘park (*taman*) on dry land (*dara*[*ṭ*]’): see the lexicographical note on the Cam term *darāk* in Griffiths and Lepoutre 2016:269. The final -t or -k of such an Austronesian word, he suggests, would have been pronounced as a glottal stop and would have been dropped when Sanskritised.

The stela, a standstone slab measuring 91.5 x 63.5 x 10 cm, is inscribed on only one side

¹² Lunet de Lajonquière (1911:478) describes K. 9 as being from a temple in the village of Phu-hu’u in the then province of Sadec, in the delta of the Mekong, where (as the same page reveals) there have evidently been many other finds of inscriptions of comparable date, some of them published by Cœdès in the *BEFEO* in 1936.

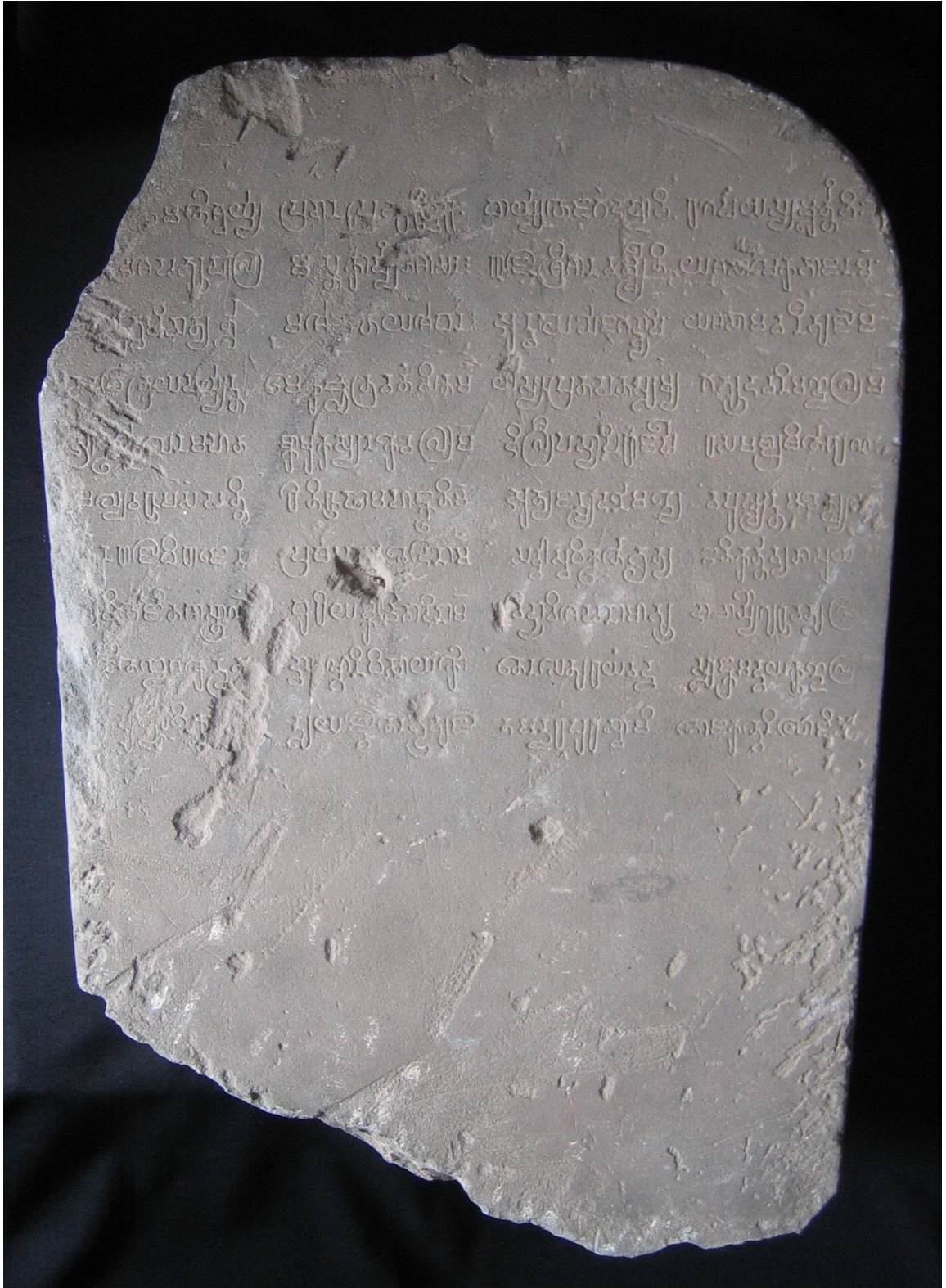


Fig. 1



n. 1788 / K. 1235

Fig. 2

(see figure 1). It bears 10 lines in Sanskrit written in sober but elegant letters, neatly engraved, that are typical of the seventh century. I draw the attention of readers to two characteristics to note. The engraver writes the retroflex *ṇ* in both the older and the “newer” seventh-century fashion (lines 4, 5, 8, 9 and 10), in other words both with and without the central vertical bar, and what is elsewhere sometimes a loop in the lower left part of the dental *n* is here closed. Each line contains a stanza in the most common Sanskrit metre, *anuṣṭubh*, each verse-quarter (*pāda*) of which is separated from the next by a small space on the stone, giving the effect of a “page-layout” in four columns of text, a feature common enough in Cambodian inscriptions but unusual in the Indian subcontinent (cf. Goodall 2017: 157). The letters are, for the most part, plainly legible, but we lack some of them, especially at the beginnings of lines.

Edition of K. 1235

The text here constituted is based on the examination of the EFEO/NMC (National Museum of Cambodia) photograph AMPP004228 (Fig. 1). A transcription was first produced by Gerdi Gerschheimer (GG) and this checked first against my own transcription of a photograph of the estampage of the EFEO, numbered n. 1788 (Fig. 2) and later against the stone.

In the editions below, I have followed the conventions of the CIK project (“Corpus des inscriptions khmères”) in placing partially legible syllables within round brackets and syllables that I have supplied that are not legible (but that probably once were) within square brackets. A capital X indicates an illegible syllable; a capital C indicates an illegible consonant; a capital V indicates an illegible vowel. The letter *f* is employed to transcribe the symbol that indicates an aspiration of the type known as an *upadhmanīya*; the letter *x* is used for an aspiration of the type known as *jihvāmūlīya*. The sequence ‘(g/d)’ indicates that one might read ‘g’ or ‘d’.

I.

- (1) 𑀧 𑀧 𑀧 𑀧 mataiśvaryyapradānaprabhur ī(ś)varaḥ
 dhāryyate jagad aṣṭābhir a(ś)eṣaṃ yasya mūrttibhiḥ
 [d.] a(ś)eṣaṃ] It is probably an abrasion of the stone that leads
 one at first blush to read *ageṣaṃ*.

II.

- (2) [āsi]d aśeṣabhūpālamastakār(p)pi(ta)śāsanah
 rājā śrīśānavarmmeti yaśasām ekabhājanam

III.

- (3) 𑀧 𑀧 (ru)gmam ivātyarttham aśobhata yaśodhanaḥ
 anvaye yo jagadvyāpiyaśasām avanībhujām
 [a.] Before *rugmam*, we can see the lower part of what could be a *t* at the end
 of a ligature: it would therefore be possible to restore [tap](*taru*)gmam.

IV.

- (4) u(da)dhitrāyaparyantam ekacchatravataṃsitam
yasya pratapatas samyag abhūd avanimaṇḍalam
[d.] °maṇḍalam] As often elsewhere in Khmer epigraphs, the retroflex stop seems to have been written as a dental (in this ligature it is difficult to be certain).
Understand: °maṇḍalam.

V. [a. na-vipulā : - - - - ॐ ॐ ॐ -]

- (5) ā[k]ṛ[s](to) yena mahatax kārmukasya na kevalam
dilīpasyāpi rājarṣer asamaf prathito guṇaḥ

VI.

- (6) (ma)yy eva rūpasamṃpattir iti rūḍhām ahaṅkṛtim
atyajan madano manye vapuṣmantam avekṣya [yam]

VII.

- (7) [te]na rājādhirājena pratha(ma)[x kṛta]vedinām
sarvvāsv adhikṛto bhṛtya itikarttavayatāsu ya[h]
[b.] [kṛta]vedinām : for this restitution, see notes to the translation.
The syllables in square brackets here are totally obliterated by damage to the stone.

VIII.

- (8) (l)[i](khi)to j(i)taśāstrā(ṇā)ṃ dhuri yax k(a)vivādinām
vidyāviśeṣanāmābhūd ācāryyo guruvatsal[aḥ]

IX.

- (9) [ga](ṇi)te bde śakendr(a)[sya] dvā[rā]mbhonidhisāyakaiḥ
tena setur ayam vaddhas saṅkramadvayakuṇḍal[aḥ]

X.

- (10) [kṛte] pu(ṇ)y(ā)dhik[āre smi]n sa yajvā tena bhūbhujā
tamandarapurāsvāmibhojakatve niyoji[ta](h)
[a.] The illegible syllables have been restored with the help of stanza XV of K. 604, which is almost identical to the present stanza. The present stanza confirms in turn that it is indeed *puṇyādhikāre* that one must read in K. 604, XVa!

Annotated Translation of K. 1235

- I. [[May He]] whose eight forms support the entire universe, the Lord, who possesses the power to accord the [[desired]] gift of sovereignty, [[protect you]].

Here the words in doubled square brackets translate conjectured words that we cannot actually read, for although the beginning is missing, the sense can be guessed at. As a first step, we may surmise that the poet intended *abhimataiśvaryya*^o, and we would next require a main verb, such as *pāyāt* or *pātu* (“may he protect”), or *avatu* (“may he help”) or *jayati* (“he is victorious”). We suggest therefore the following two restitutions (although others may be possible): *pātu vo ’bhimataiśvaryya*^o (cf. K. 604 below) or *jayaty abhimataiśvaryya*^o (cf. K. 733, stanza I: *jayatinduravinyomavāyvatmak śmājalānalaiḥ/ tanoti tanubhiś śambbur yyo śṭābbir akhilaṃ jagat*).

- II. [[There was once]] a king whose edicts were borne upon the heads of all [other] kings, the glorious Īśānavarman, the sole receptacle of glories,

The restitution *āsīd* seems to us assured (*abhūd* may be excluded because it would result in an ungainly sequence of iambs). We find the same half-verse in the fourth stanza of K. 291, applied to King Yaśovarman two centuries later. Some letters there are not legible and Cœdès has restored it as follows: *āsīd aśeṣabhūpāla[mastakadhṛ] taśāsanah*. But that restitution transgresses a metrical rule, namely that the second and third syllables of the *pāda* may not be both short. It seems to us that here too one must read *āsīd aśeṣabhūpāla[mastakārppi]taśāsanah*.

- III. who, rich in glory, shone intensely in the lineage of kings whose glories filled the universe, just as [[molten]] gold [shines].

The poet here compares the king, who is nominative masculine singular, with gold, which is nominative neuter singular, and this, for the later Indian theorists of *alaṅkāraśāstra*, and therefore also for many medieval commentators and transmitters of works of Indian poetry, was a defect (see, for example, *Kāvyālaṅkārasūtra* 4.2.8 and see Goodall 2009 *passim*). But at the time of the composition of this inscription, such a difference of gender (*liṅgabhedā*) was still acceptable in the case of comparisons between a neuter and a masculine noun, according to Bhāmaha (*Kāvyālaṅkāra* 2.57).

- IV. whose kingdom (*avanimaṇḍalam*), over which he reigned fully (*pratāpatas samyaḡ*), and which extended up to the boundaries that are the three oceans, was adorned with a single parasol.

The text of this stanza does not seem entirely satisfactory. If one maintains it as it is, perhaps *yasya pratāpataḥ* can be taken as forming a genitive absolute construction: “Up to the limits of the three oceans, the extent of the earth was embellished by a single parasol, while he shone fully [as regent]”. Another solution, as Harunaga Isaacson (personal communication) has pointed out to me, is to assume that *pratāpatas* is the engraver’s error for *pratāpatas*: “Because of his fullsome splendour,

the extent of the earth, up to the limits of the three oceans, was only embellished with one parasol.”

- V. That king drew towards himself not only the string (*gūṇah*) of his great bow, but also the famous unequalled virtue (*gūṇah*) of the king-sage Dilīpa.

It is well-known that the earliest dated reference by name to the poet Kālidāsa is that which we find at the end of the inscription composed by Ravikīrti in 634 or 635 and preserved in a wall of a temple in Aihole (Karnataka, India) that is today called Mēguṭi. However, Kielhorn (1902:3–4), in the introduction to his edition of that inscription, mentions some echoes, “of that most perfect poem of Kālidāsa, the *Raghubarṣa*” that are to be found in Indian inscriptions of the sixth century. He then observes that such echoes appear at the very beginning of the seventh century in Cambodia, pointing out that stanzas VI and VII of face A of K. 81 (Barth and Bergaigne 1885:13) use ideas borrowed from the *Raghubarṣa* 4.49 And 4.54 (4.52 and 4.48 in the numbering of Vallabhadeva) respectively. Similarly, the two inscriptions of Vidyāviśeṣa, although they do not explicitly allude to Kālidāsa, also contain echoes of the *Raghubarṣa*. The mention of Dilīpa, the first king of the solar dynasty to figure in the poem, in this stanza might therefore be a conscious echo of Kālidāsa. For while Dilīpa was certainly known to much older genealogical lists of the Raghu dynasty, he seems not to have mattered much to other poets before his story was told by Kālidāsa.¹³ Further, in the fifth stanza of K. 604 we find an allusion to the importance attached by Indra to his name Śatakratu (“he of one hundred sacrifices”), which is central to Raghu’s history, since it is to protect

¹³ In connection with a similar mention (in which Rudravarman is compared with Dilīpa) Barth notes (1885:68) that a description is given of Dilīpa’s reign in *Mahābhārata* “VII, 2263”, in other words, “in a sequence of verses beginning with 2263 in book 7”. This passage, however, appears not to have been accepted into the text of the critical edition. It is nonetheless conceivable, of course, that Dilīpa’s proverbial devotion to the moral code of *dharma* was known to seventh-century Khmer poets from the recension(s) that they knew of the *Mahābhārata*, but it seems to me more likely that their direct source was the *Raghubarṣa*. I should mention that there is, however, one historical king who is compared to Dilīpa in an inscription that dates from before Kālidāsa, namely the third-century Ikṣvāku king Ehalacāntamūla (see No. B.4 of 1957–1958 in the *Annual Reports of Indian Epigraphy*, which has been most recently edited and translated by Arlo Griffiths and Vincent Tournier online as Early Inscriptions of Āndhradeśa (EIAD) no. 53 (<http://hisoma.huma-num.fr/exist/apps/EIAD/works/EIAD0053.xml?&odd=teipublisher.odd>), consulted 4.viii.2017). But in that case the reason for comparing Ehalacāntamūla with Sagara, Ambarīṣa and Dilīpa is perhaps primarily that they all belong to the legendary Ikṣvāku dynasty (the most famous scions of which were Daśaratha, Rāma and the Buddha). For Ehalacāntamūla belonged to a dynasty that called itself Ikṣvāku and whose epigraphs sought to claim to be identical with the legendary Ikṣvākus. (For an early list of Ikṣvākus, see, e.g., *Ramayana* 1.69.) In the early Khmer cases, there could be no such justification, for the Ikṣvāku dynasty was solar, whereas Khmer kings were not: the first claims of their being lunar, if one discounts the claim of Guṇavarman’s father in st. VII of K. 5 (on the grounds that it is not sufficiently clearly formulated: the stanza is quoted below in our annotation to the list of governed cities given just before our conclusion), appear perhaps in K. 81, st. XI, and in K. 1142, in which the claim is made that Īśānavarman, through a certain Candravarman, was descended from Somā, the daughter of the moon (*pace* Jacques 1986:74–75, whose interpretation and whose genealogical table on p. 94 differ: I follow here instead the interpretation of Eric Bourdonneau, yet to be published, which he explained to me in an email of 13.xi.2006), after which the claim is echoed for subsequent monarchs (e.g. Jayavarman I in st. XI in Cœdès’ numbering of K. 55).

Indra's unique right to that name that Indra intervenes and blocks the completion of the horse-sacrifice that would have been the hundredth Vedic sacrifice of Raghu (see annotation to K. 604 below). It therefore seems possible to us that Vidyāviśeṣa, the author of our inscriptions, may thus provide the oldest firmly dated allusions to the *Raghuvamśa*.

For the virtues of Dilīpa, see *Raghuvamśa* 1, particularly verses 14 and 22.

A different interpretation is perhaps conceivable: “not only was the string (*gūṃḥ*) of his great bow pulled [towards him], but his virtue (*gūṃḥ*) was also bruited abroad [or: “the string was released”], [a virtue] unequalled even [by that] of the royal sage Dilīpa.”

- VI. Having seen this beautiful king, it seems to me, Madana had to abandon the pride that had taken root in him for thinking “Perfection of beauty resides only in me”.
- VII. By this king of kings, a servant, the first among those who are conscious of what is done for them, has been employed to attend to all his duties.

Note that *kṛtavedin* is used elsewhere in the Cambodian epigraphical record uniquely of vassal-kings (*sāmanta*) and high-ranking officials of the court of Bhavavarman I and of his successors (as in this case): see K. 151, st. IV (quoted below) and K. 53, st. VI. Note furthermore that the synonymous expression *kṛtajña* (which is incidentally more common generally, beyond this period) is also employed to describe similar vassal-king figures in the seventh century: see K. 1239, st. II; K. 151, st. VI (quoted below); K. 506, st. V (quoted below). The perhaps unparalleled expression *kṛtavedaka*, again doubtless with the same sense of “conscious of [favours] rendered”, occurs in another still unpublished inscription of the same genre, in other words one recording the pious activity of another favourite of one of the same group of kings who was rewarded for loyalty by being appointed governor of a town, in this case Liṅgapura. In collaboration with Claude Jacques, I hope soon to publish the inscription in question, K. 1059, but here is the relevant stanza (III):

(3) tasya rājādhirājasya rājñāś śrībhavavarmmaṇaḥ
yo bhṛtyo vallabhatamaś śūraḥ kṛtavedakaḥ

Of that overlord of kings, the illustrious King Bhavavarman [II], there was a servant most dear to him (*vallabhatamah*), a hero (*śūrah*), grateful for what was done [for him] (*kṛtavedakah*)...

We may furthermore note that a similar insistence upon loyalty to friends is to be found in *pāda* b of stanza IX of K. 604 below.

The intended sense of the expression *itikartavyatāsu* (parallel to the expression

itikartavyavastuṣu in stanza 7 of K. 604) is open to doubt. In religious contexts, *itikartavyatā* can mean “the manner of accomplishing a rite” and we find it frequently employed as a gloss of *vidhāna* (e.g. in the tenth-century commentary of Nārāyaṇakaṇṭha on the *Mṛgendrantra*, ad *krīyāpāda* 2.6, and in the eleventh-century *Svacchandantrodhyota* of Kṣemarāja *passim*, for example ad *Svacchandatantra* 9.42). But it is possible, and rather more likely given the man’s qualifications and the fact that he enjoyed the king’s confidence, that the word here refers instead to duties relating to government, as this usage in the *Manusmṛti* suggests (7.60–62):

*anyān api prakurvīta śucin prajñān avasthitān
samyag arthasamāhartīn amātyān suparīkṣitān
nirvartetāsya yāvadbhir itikartavyatā nṛbbih
tāvato tandritān dakṣān prakurvīta vicakṣaṇān
teṣām arthe niyuñjīta śūrān dakṣān kulodgatān
śucin ākarakarmānte bhīrūn antarniveśane*

Georg Bühler (1886:225), rendering *itikartavyatā* with “business”, translates as follows:¹⁴

60. He must also appoint other officials, (men) of integrity, (who are) wise, firm, well able to collect money, and well tried.
61. As many persons as the due performance of his business requires, so many skilful and clever (men), free from sloth, let him appoint.
62. Among them let him employ the brave, the skilful, the high-born, and the honest in (offices for the collection of) revenue, (e.g.) in mines, manufactures, and storehouses, (but) the timid in the interior of his palace.

The expression *itikartavya*, apparently in a similar sense, occurs also in *Manusmṛti* 7.142. The qualifier *sarvasu* (“all”) implies that Vidyāviśeṣa was either a prime minister of Īśānavarman, or a secretary. The latter seems somewhat more likely, since it would be an odd demotion to become a provincial governor after being a prime minister. (Of course we cannot absolutely rule out that the context was after all a religious one and that Vidyāviśeṣa was a ritualist master of ceremonies.) Finot too is inclined to assume that he was in some sense a secretary, characterising him in his introduction to K. 604 as “Secretary General of the Commands of King

¹⁴ Olivelle’s translation, which uses “obligations” for *itikartavyatā*, is rather confusing at this point, for, although his edition has the same text, it is clear that he is unhappy with it, and we learn from his note (2004:296) that he would rather have read and translated the last stanza in this way:

*śucin arthe niyuñjīta śūrān danḍe kulodgatān
śucin ākarakarmānte bhīrūn antarniveśane*

“appointing the honest to financial affairs, the brave from illustrious families to the army; the honest to mines and factories; and the timid to the interior of his residence”.

Īśānavarman”.¹⁵

VIII. [This same servant] was the master named Vidyāviśeṣa, the favourite of his own master, inscribed (*likhitah*) at the head [of the list] of poets and philosophers who have conquered the *śāstras*.

The somewhat uncertain reading here is confirmed by stanza VIII of K. 604. Finot there transcribed *dhuri* and *yo* together as one word, but the relative pronoun is required for the stanza to fit the wider structure of the text. Furthermore, it turns out that *dhuri likhitah*, although rare, is an idiom attested elsewhere. We have found only the following two instances in Indian works of poetry:

Subhāṣitāvalī 741 (the anthology of Vallabhadeva):

*likhitakamale saundaryena prakāmahṛtātmanā
kim iva na kṛtaṃ tatra bhrāntvā madbusprhayālinā
adhigatarasaḥ so'bhūt tasmān manāg api nālpadhīr
dhuri tu likhitas tṛṣṇāndhānāṃ janena vivekinā.*

What will [such] a bee not do who, wandering because of his desire for nectar, is captivated in delight by the beauty of a [mere] picture of a lotus? He has known its taste and therefore cannot in the least be described as of small understanding; but discriminating people will write him at the head [of the list] of those blinded by thirst.

Pādatāḍitaka 21 of Śyāmilaka:

*yasmād dadāti sa vasūni vilāsinibhyaḥ
kṣṇendriyo 'pi ramate ratisaṃkathābhīḥ
tasmāl likhāmi dhuri taṃ viṭapuṅgavānāṃ
rāgo hi rañjayati vittavatāṃ na śaktiḥ.*

Because he bestows his wealth on graceful ladies and, even though his faculties are exhausted, he relishes tales of sexual pleasure, I therefore inscribe him at the head [of the list] of heroic rakes. For it is passion, for the rich, that gratifies, not capacity.¹⁶

IX. In the *śaka* year counted by the (9) orifices [of the body], the (4) oceans and the (5) arrows [of

¹⁵ In Finot's exact words (1928:44): “secrétaire général des commandements du roi Īcānavarman”.

¹⁶ Dezső and Vasudeva (2009:29) render the expression that interests us less literally and translate “Since he presents riches to coquettes, and, though his senses are weak, finds pleasure in talking about sex, therefore I reckon him the leader of pimp-bulls, for it is passion, not potency, that satisfies the rich.”

the god of love], this causeway, characterised by round [holes] that give two passage-ways [for water to escape], was built by him.

This stanza presents two problems of interpretation. The first concerns the date: Gerdi Gerschheimer and myself have taken *aṇava* (“ocean”) in the sense of “four”, which is, it seems to us, the typical usage. But the same inscription, in stanza III, speaks of “three oceans”. The same date appears in stanza XIV of K. 604, followed by other astronomical details, but, as Chris Eade kindly informs us, these details do not allow us to exclude, with certainty, either the date 532 or the date 542. We preferred the second because we believe that the strength of this convention of *bhūtasamkhyā*-numbering (where “ocean” typically stands for “four”) is more powerful than the particular context of our inscription.

The second problem is that we are not certain of having understood the meaning of the expression *saṅkramadvayaḥkuṇḍalah*. Even the ending, which makes it a *bahuvrīhi* qualification of the *setu*, is only conjectural (though it is admittedly difficult to imagine how any other ending could be construed). The word *setu* is of course itself somewhat ambiguous since it may refer to a bridge or a solid causeway or a dyke punctuated with sluice-gates. Given this ambiguity, one could imagine that what was built was a bridge, “whose arches (*kuṇḍalah*) [supported] two lanes [of traffic] (*saṅkramadvaya*)”. But this is not particularly likely both because lanes suggest heavier traffic than is probable and because vaulted arches were not used. But the “passage-ways” (*saṅkrama*) need not be for traffic on the surface: they could be paths for the passage of water beneath, and my colleague Bruno Bruguier has indeed suggested to me (in conversation in November 2014) that we should probably understand “une digue trouée (*setuh*), caractérisée par des trous ronds (*kuṇḍalah*) qui donnent deux exutoires (*saṅkramadvaya*)”, in other words, a dyke perforated by round holes that allow water to pass. It is this suggestion that I have followed in my translation. Whether or not these were closeable with sluice-gates is not made clear.

X. Having accomplished this [deed] which gives right to merit, the same king appointed this founder as governor of Tamandarapura.

Finot’s interpretation of the almost identical last stanza of K. 604 is based on an erroneous transcription: *kr̥te pūnyavikāre sminn atha yajvā sa bhūbhujā/ tatandarapurāsvāmī bhojakaprarāḥ kr̥tah*. He translates “Et cette fondation étant faite, le fondateur fut créé par le roi seigneur de Tatandarapura [et] premier astrologue.” (“And this foundation being made, the founder was appointed lord of Tatandarapura [and] First Astrologer by the king.”). Among other problems, this translation fails to specify how Finot understood *pūnyavikāre*. Cœdès (IC IV, p.18) corrected to *pūnyādhikāre* and proposed the following translation for the stanza: “Et le privilège de cette

fondation ayant été fixé, le fondateur fut fait par le roi le premier bénéficiaire du (dieu) 'Tamandarapurasvāmin' ("And once the privilege of this foundation had been fixed, the founder was appointed by the king to be the first beneficiary of [the god] 'Tamandarapurasvāmin.'"). Subsequently, Bhattacharya (1961:54) wished to restore Finot's reading *pūnyāvikāre* as "tout à fait exacte" ("absolutely correct"), on the basis of which he proposed the following translation of the stanza:

Lorsque son mérite se fut ainsi affirmé (*kr̥te pūnyāvikāre'smin*), le donateur (litt. sacrificateur, cf. st. XI) fut nommé par le roi chef de Tamandarapura — le premier des gouverneurs ("When his merit had been thus affirmed, the donor (literally: 'sacrificer', see stanza XI) was appointed by the king to be the chief of Tamandarapura - the first among governors.").¹⁷

The study of K. 1235, however, confirms that we should after all indeed read *pūnyādbikāre*, a rare collocation that we do not find in our dictionaries, but one which we have found in three inscriptions of another epigraphical corpus of the seventh century, that of the Licchavi kings in Nepal.¹⁸ as well as in the later (ninth-century) Ghosrawa inscription in honour of a scholar of the Buddhist monastery of Nālandā.¹⁹ The Nepalese inscriptions in question are those that Lielukhine numbers 79 (= Gnoli [1956] XLII and Vajrācārya [1973] 84), of the reign of Aṃśuvarman; 99 of the reign of Dhruvadeva (= Gnoli LII and Vajrācārya 107); and 131 (not included in Gnoli, but 138 in Vajrācārya 1973) of the reign of Śivadeva II. Let us quote from Dhruvadeva's inscription from Vajrācārya's edition (1973:407–408), where the expression is found twice.²⁰ The text is too lacunose to allow us to translate it fully, but it shows that our interpretation "[act] which gives right to merit" is plausible. Only the concluding lines are quoted here:

16. - - - *eśvarasvāminah pūjā pāñcālībhojanañ ca divasaniyamena - -*

17. - *tilamakapratīsam.skāras ca kālānatikrameṇaiva kārya ity eṣo*

18. *sya pūnyādbikāro vyavasthā cāsmatprasādapajivibhir anyair vā na kaiścid apy a-*

¹⁷ Vickery, aware of the divergent opinions of Finot, Cœdès and Bhattacharya, has also discussed the same stanza (1998:209), but he simply plumps for the overall interpretation of Bhattacharya, which he paraphrases in English without glossing or commenting on the expression *pūnyādbikāre*.

¹⁸ I first found them thanks to the Licchavi corpus that D.N. Lielukhine once put online (that of Dhruvadeva was once here : www.orientalistica.ru/eng/resour/nepal/base/99.html = Gnoli's LII), along with a useful concordance of the numberings used in different editions, which Somdev Vasudeva converted to a more practical encoding and kindly passed to me so many years ago that I can no longer supply a date of consultation. The website is not maintained, but others too may still use some downloaded version, and so his numeration is mentioned here.

¹⁹ I am grateful to Arlo Griffiths for pointing out to me, at the copy-editing stage, the expression *ṛ̥batpūnyādbikāre sthite* in stanza 14 of the Ghosrawa inscription. Kielhorn (1888:312) translates it there with "while his high holy office was continuing", but it seems to me that the interpretation "when the act/foundation that gives entitlement to merit had been established" would fit the context equally well, thus making this a further relevant parallel.

²⁰ In Gnoli's edition (1956:68–69) it occurs only once, for he has not been able to transcribe as much of the text as Vajrācārya.

Nobles, Bureaucrats or Strongmen?

19. *nyathā karaṇṭyā yaḥ kaścid etām ajñām atilaṅghyānyathā kuryāt kārayed vā*
 20. *tasyā(smadā)jñātikramakṛto vaśyam eva daṇḍo vidhātavyo ye py asma(d ūrdhva)*
 21. *(m bhū)bbujo bhaviṣyanti tair apy ātmīya iva puṇyādhikāre smatkr̥tapra*
 22. ----- *sya rakṣāyām anupālāne ca (satata)m avahitair bhavi(tavyam)*
 23. --- *sya deva* -----
 24. -- *tra iti* --

“...worship of ...śvarasvāmin, and feeding of the Pāñcālī [community of brahmin priests (?)]²¹ on a daily basis, and repairs for the canal²² are to be performed without delay. This is the act that gives entitlement to merit for him.²³ And [this] arrangement is not to be changed by those who live off our grace or by anybody else. Whoever should transgress this command and make or cause to make changes is definitely to receive a punishment [that will be] dispensed in due course according to our command. As for the kings who will come into being later than us, they too are to be constantly attentive to the protection and preservation of this [temple ?] made by us, given that this act giving entitlement to merit (*puṇyādhikāre*) is, as it were, [to be considered also] their own ...”

Two dated inscriptions from the reign of Dhruvadeva belong to the years 48 and 49 of the Licchavi era of Mānadeva or Aṃśuvarman, in other words to 623–625 CE, in the very decade in which our two Cambodian inscriptions were engraved. Also in the same Nepalese corpus, we find several instances of the parallel expression *dharmādhikāra*, which is probably intended as a synonym. Indraji and Bühler (1880:171), however, translate *dharmādhikāra*sthiti when it occurs in the inscription that Gnoli numbers XLI, with “the proper establishment of courts of justice”, to which they add in a note (1880:171, fn. 24) “The translation hardly covers the entire meaning of *dharmādhikāra*, which includes both the civil and criminal courts, and the authorities dealing with religious and charitable institutions”. Largely because of other occurrences of *dharmādhikāra* and because of the existence of the parallel expression *puṇyādhikāra*, I suspect that they are not correct in this interpretation. Like *puṇyādhikāra*, the term *dharmādhikāra* seems to me more likely to mean “[that which gives] entitlement to merit” and therefore effectively “acts of merit”. Consider, furthermore,

²¹ Pāñcālī is a term found often in Licchavi inscriptions whose sense is difficult to pin down and which has invited speculative commentary beginning perhaps with that of Indraji and Bühler (1880:171, fn. 26). As Nina Mirnig has pointed out to me (letter of 17.viii.2017), it is sometimes incorporated into village names, but, rather than being toponymic, it seems instead to be used of groups of people put in charge of certain areas or of temples and their assets. Shortly before going to press, Arlo Griffiths kindly sent me Gopal 1974, which comprises a detailed discussion of the term.

²² I am grateful to Nina Mirnig (letter of 17.viii.2017) for informing me that *tilamaka* in Licchavi inscriptions refers to a sort of canal.

²³ Nina Mirnig (letter of 17.viii.2017) has suggested to me that the original work of merit must be that of the *mahāsāmanta śrījvadeva* (lines 13–14) who appears to be the one who originally set up the canal.

the following parallel in the collection of moral advice for kings attributed to Nāgārjuna (*Ratnāvalī* 4.18):

*dharmādhikārā ye cānye pūrvarājapravartitāḥ
devadronyādayas te 'pi pravartyantām yathā sthitāḥ*

As for other [works giving] entitlements to merit (*dharmādhikārāḥ*) that have been set in place by previous kings, such as processions of gods, those too may continue exactly as they were established.

The notion of °*purāsvāmin* still requires commentary, but since this will necessitate a lengthy excursus involving K. 1150, K. 151 and K. 725, we postpone it to the discussion that will follow our edition and translation of K. 604 below.

One other issue calls for comment because Vickery has made the odd claim (1998:163) that pre-Angkorian inscriptions in which the term *yajamāna* is mentioned gradually give way to inscriptions in which in similar contexts the concept of *punya* is mentioned. Throughout his stimulating work, the weakest passages are the discussions concerning the meanings and uses of Sanskrit words. His lengthy digression (1998:158–163) on the terms *yajamāna*, *yajvan* and *punya* is no exception: all of his observations on these words seem off the mark. A step-by-step demonstration of the vagaries of usage of labile terms with long histories would be tricky to produce, dull to read and would risk not convincing those determined not to be convinced, so instead of attempting such a demonstration, I shall simply assert that I see no evidence to suggest that usages in the Khmer epigraphical record do not conform to usages of these terms attested elsewhere in the Indic world, and plenty of evidence that would at least be consistent with them sharing the same conventions of usage: in other words, *yajamāna* and *yajvan* can both mean “sacrificer” or “worshipper” or “agent of an act of merit” or “founder [who, without being the direct agent, is held to receive the benefits] of an act of merit”, with the last sense being particularly common in Khmer epigraphy, as Barth and, following him, Cœdès and others have reflected in innumerable translations. The two terms cannot be kept strictly apart, for they are often used interchangeably and they are sometimes used to gloss each other. Thus, to take an example at random, in the *Pañcīkā* on *Anargharāghava* 2.1 (p. 53), *yajvan* glosses *yajamāna*, and, ad 6.22, *yajamāna* glosses *yajvan* (p. 218). I see no problem therefore in understanding that the term *yajvan* here (in whose place *yajamāna* could equally have been used if the metre had allowed it) makes explicit the idea that Vidyāviśeṣa commanded the creation of a *setu* and regarded himself as the recipient of the merit that this act earned. Furthermore, that act of merit is referred to explicitly in the same stanza with an expression that involves the term *punya*. The observation that “the *punya* foundations were later than those giving prominence to *yajamāna*”, from which Vickery attempts to draw further

conclusions (1998:163), seems to me to give emphasis to a meaningless chance phenomenon based on a small data-set; moreover the inscriptions edited in this article contain two stanzas that challenge it: this one and st. XV of K. 604.²⁴

Provenance of K. 604

Finot sums up the provenance of this inscription thus: “It is engraved on the Southern doorjamb of a new shrine discovered by Mr Goloubew in June 1927 in the Southern group [at Sambór Prei Kū̄k].”²⁵ Cœdès (*IC* IV, p.17), using the plan published in *BEFEO* XXVII, p. 490, designates this shrine “la tour F” and adds the information that it is 30 metres to the north-east of the northern gate of the inner enclosure of the southern group of temples in Sambór Prei Kū̄k. Since Vidyāviśeṣa made this pious foundation, a temple to Śiva that is in the capital city, before being appointed to a governorship elsewhere (see stanza XV), and since he was preoccupied with the king’s day-to-day business, it seems possible that he was a courtier at the capital who was rewarded with a provincial governorship (rather than, for instance, a provincial magnate whose local power was formally recognised by the king proclaiming him governor in his own home town).

Edition of K. 604

The text here has been constituted on the basis of an examination of the estampages of the EFEO numbered n. 502 and n. 1779 (Fig. 3). Differing readings by Finot (*Bulletin de l’Ecole française d’Extrême-Orient* 1928) have been noted, as have the corrections suggested by Cœdès (*IC* IV). The punctuating *daṅḍas* in Finot’s edition, are not visible on the estampages and have been abandoned.

I.

- (1) śrīkadamveśvaraf pāyād ayam akṣīṇasaṃpadaḥ
- (2) yuṣmān aśakyanirddeśaprabhāvātīśayodayaḥ
[a.] °śśvaraf] °śśvarah BEFEO 28.

II. [c. bha-vīpulā : -- ◡ -- ◡◡ --]

- (3) vikramāvajitāmbhodhiparikhāvanimaṅḍalaḥ
- (4) śrīśānavarmmety abhavad rājā viṣṇur ivāparaḥ
[b.] °maṅḍalaḥ] °maṅḍalaḥ BEFEO 28.

III.

- (5) prayuktanayamātreṇa kadācid avanībhṛtām
- (6) pakṣacchidāpakartṛṇām bajrī yena viśeṣitaḥ
[b.] °bhṛtām] *IC* IV (p. 18, n. 2); °bhujām BEFEO 28.

²⁴ Other less clear-cut cases of exceptions, in addition to the couple mentioned by Vickery (1998:163), can be found: see, for example, st. XXXI and XXXIV of K. 81, or K. 1214, where *puṇya* is in the Khmer text and *yajvan* in the Sanskrit.

²⁵ “Elle est gravée sur le piedroit Sud d’un nouveau sanctuaire découvert par M. Goloubew, en juin 1927 dans le groupe Sud [à Sambór Prei Kū̄k].” Finot (1928:44).



n. 1779 / K. 604

Fig. 3

IV.

- (7) yo nirākṛtaniśśeṣakalidurllalitodayaḥ
(8) varṇṇamuṣṭir abhūd eko yugādipṛthivībhujaṃ

V.

- (9) samkhyātītatayā yasya kratūnām amarādhipaḥ
(10) śatakratukṛtan nāma manye na bahu manyate

VI.

- (11) nirādhāram idaṃ mā bhūd dagdhe kusumadhanvani
(12) iti viśvasṛjā nūnaṃ vapur yyatra niveśitam
[d.] *yyatra*] IC IV (p.18 n. 2); *yatra* BEFEO 28.

VII.

- (13) tena bhūmibhujaḥ vyāptadiśāmaṇḍalakīrtinā
(14) bhṛtyo yo dhikṛtas sarvveṣv itikarttavayavastuṣu
[b.] °*diśāmaṇḍala*°] °*diśā maṇḍala*° BEFEO 28. Understand °*diśāmaṇḍala*°.

VIII.

- (15) śabdavaiśeṣikanyāyasamīkṣāsu gatādhvanām
(16) dhuri yo likhito nekaśāstraprahata vuddhibhiḥ
[b.] °*samīkṣāsu gata*°] °*samīkṣasugata*° BEFEO 28.

IX.

- (17) kavir vvādī suhṛdvarggam ātmaprāṇān amanyata
(18) vidyāviśeṣanāmā ya ācāryyo lokaveditā
[a.] *subṛdvarggam*] IC IV (p.18 n. 2); *subṛdvargga* BEFEO 28.
[b.] *ātmaprāṇān*] *ātmaprāṇād* BEFEO 28.

X. [c. na-vipulā : - - - - ∪ ∪ ∪ -]

- (19) icchatā bhaktīm īśāne sthīrāñ janmani janmani
(20) teneha sthāpitam i(da)ṃ liṅgaṃ śuddhābhisandhinā
[c.] *i(da)ṃ*] *idaṃ* BEFEO 28.
[d.] In the word *śuddhābhisandhinā*, the *bhi* is poorly written and resembles a *gi*.
We should nonetheless read *bhi*.

XI.

- (21) śākatirttham iti grāmo dattir īśāya yajvanah
(22) bhṛtyagomahiṣārāmakṣetraprabhṛtipūritaḥ
[a.] °*tirttham*] °*tirttham* IC IV (p.18 n. 2); °*tirtham* BEFEO 28.
Understand °*tirttham* (with a long *ī*).

XII.

- (23) dvijaf pāsupato rājñādhikṛto devatārccane
(24) idan devakulaṃ bhoktum arhaty ābhūtasamplavam
[a.] *dvijaf*] *dvijaḥ* BEFEO 28.
[d.] °*samplavam*] °*sa[m]*plavam BEFEO 28.

XIII.

- (25) tena cāvaśyakarttavyam asya yatnena pālanam
(26) svapuṇyasyeva sadvarggakṛtām āśiṣam icchatā
[a.] *cāvaśya*°] *mā vaśya*° BEFEO 28.

XIV.

- (27) dvārārṇṇaveśuśākābde dvāviṇśe puṣyayogini
(28) iṣasya divase siṅhalagne cāyaṃ sthito haraḥ

XV.

- (29) kṛte puṇyādhikāre sminn atha yajvā sa bhūbhujā
(30) ta(m)andarapuravāmibhojakapraravaḥ kṛtaḥ
[a.] *puṇyādhikāre*] IC IV (p. 18 n. 2); *puṇyādhikāre*
Bhattacharya 1961 (p. 54 n. 9); *puṇyādhikāre* BEFEO 28.
[c.] *ta(m)andara*°] IC IV (p. 18 n. 3); *tatandara*° BEFEO 28.
[cd.] °*svāmibhojaka*°] IC IV (p. 18), Bhattacharya 1961 (p. 54 n. 9); °*svāmi bhojaka*°
BEFEO 28 (proposing a correction to °*svāmi bhojaka*° : cf. BEFEO 28 p. 46 n. 1).

Annotated Translation of K. 604

- I. May Śrī-Kadamveśvara protect you, who is the source of a superabundance of ineffable power,
so that your good fortune remains undiminished (*akṣīṇasampadaḥ*)!

It is likely that Kadamveśvara is the name of the *līṅga* installed in this place. It would be possible to take *prabhāva* in the sense of prosperity, as Finot does, but it seems more likely that the word alludes to the notion of *aiśvarya* that we see in the first stanza of K. 1235. Another seventh-century inscription that begins with the name of the deity installed as a *līṅga* is K. 3, whose first stanza reads:

śrīvarddhamānadevo varddhitabhāvo nṛṇāṃ kuśalabhājāṃ
jayati sa sakalabhuvanapatir uditapṛthulalitaśilālīṅgaḥ

The glorious Varddhamānadeva, Lord of all worlds, who causes the condition of men possessed of merit to flourish, whose stone *līṅga* is lofty, broad and beautiful, is victorious.

The inscription (published in Cœdès 1936) comes from the same province of Southern Vietnam in which Tamandarapura is probably to be located.

- II. There was a king named Śrī-Īśānavarman, who, since he conquered by his valour [/ his footsteps] (*vikrama*^o) the circle of the earth that has the seas for its moat, was like another Viṣṇu.
- III. Being one who sometimes cut the factions [/wings] of wrong-doing kings [/mountains] by employing policy alone, he excelled [even] the wielder of the thunderbolt, [Indra].
- IV. Stifling the odious birth of all quarrels [/the birth of all the maliciousness of Kaliyuga], he became, alone (*ekah*), the quintessence of the properties of the kings of the early Yugas.

Finot understands *yugādi* as “the first of the *yugas*” (“le premier des *yuga*”), but it seems to us that the expression must designate either the beginning of the *yuga* or the period of the first three *yugas*, as in this definition in *Vāyupurāṇa* 32.6d–7b: ... *kālas tu yugasamjñītaḥ/ kṛtaṃ tretā dvāparaṃ ca yugādīḥ kalinā saba*. “Time is well-known as [being made up of the four] eons: Kṛta, Tretā and Dvāpara [together are known as] Yugādi; also with these [comes] Kalī [as the fourth eon].”

The expression *varṇamuṣṭi* appears literally to mean “fist of colours/properties/glories”. Finot renders it with “l’abrégé de la gloire” (“compendium of glory”) and points out the only other use of the expression known to him, which occurs in the first stanza of K. 79 of 639 CE. That stanza describes Bhavavarman II thus: *asti manvādibhūpālavarṇamuṣṭir yyaśonidbhīḥ/ rājā śribhavavarmmeti...* “There is a king called Śrī-Bhavavarman, a treasury of glories (*yaśonidbhīḥ*), [and] the quintessence of the properties of such kings as Manu...” We shall return to the last quarter of this first stanza of K. 79 in our commentary on the opening of K. 1150 below.

In fact there is another contemporary parallel, for the idiom *varṇamuṣṭi* also occurs, with in some editions the variant *varṇakamuṣṭi*, in the description of a hunter at the beginning of the eighth chapter of Bāṇa’s seventh-century *Harṣacarita*. Every detail of the hunter’s dress and appearance is there colourfully described and in the midst of this long description he is qualified as

*uttaratribhāgotam.sitacāṣapicbacāruśikhare khabdirajaṭanirmāṇe khabraprāṇe
pracuramayūrapittapatralatācītritatvacī tvacīsāragurūṃ
vāmāskandhādhyāsītadbanuṣī doṣī lambamānenānākśīrasā
śītaśarakṛtaikanalakavivarapraveśitetarajaṅghajānitāsvastikabandhena
bandhūkalohitarudhirarājirāñjitagrāṇavartmanā
vapurvītatīvyaktavībhāvyamānakomalakeroḍaromaśuklimnā śāśena,
śītaśanīśīkhāgrathitagrīveṇa cāpāvṛtacañcūttānatāmṛatalunā **tittiriṇā**
varṇakamuṣṭim iva mrgayāyā darśayantam...*

In Cowell's and Thomas' translation this becomes (1897:231–232):

...he carried a hunter's extemporised box of colours with him in a partridge whose red palate was displayed through its open beak, while its neck was strung on the end of the sharp notched extremity of the bow, and a hare whose soft white hair on its breast was clearly seen by reason of its body being stretched out (as it hung suspended), while its nostrils were stained with a line of blood red like a *Bandhūka* flower and an extempore *svastika* sign was produced by one of its legs which was caught in a hole cut by an arrow in the other one, — it hung head-downwards on his stout bamboo-like arm which bore a bow resting on his left shoulder and which was adorned with a profuse pigment of peacock's gall, and was full of fierce vigour and with its sinews fashioned of Khadira roots, while the top of the arm was gay with a blue jay's tail fastened on the upper part.

Without going here into all the difficulties of interpretation in this baroque word-painting, we may observe simply that the last five words, rather loosely conveyed with “he carried a hunter's extemporised box of colours with him in a partridge”, could be rather more literally translated with “he showed (*darśayantam*), as it were (*iva*), a fistful of [all] the colours (*varṇakamuṣṭim*) of the hunt (*mṛgāyāḥ*) because of [the fact that he was carrying] a partridge... [and a hare...]”. P.V. Kane's edition also has the reading *varṇakamuṣṭim*, which in his endnotes (p. 589) he glosses as “a handful of paints or unguents”.²⁶ Now we could treat *varṇamuṣṭi* (which is the reading of Kuṅjan Piḷḷai's edition) as having exactly the sense of *varṇakamuṣṭi*, for indeed we can see that *varṇa*, at least in this context (where it is explained with reference to peacocks, blue jays, white hair, a partridge's mouth, blood, *bandhūka* flowers, and [yellow] gall/bile), definitely seems to refer to colours. But it is possible (given the presence of various dead animals, sharp weapons and, again, blood) that *varṇa* might also refer at the same time to the characteristic *properties* of hunting (a sense that is less likely to be borne by *varṇaka*). The Southern commentator Raṅganātha, who plainly reads *varṇamuṣṭim*, seems indeed to understand the idiom to refer both to colours and to other properties (p. 371): *bahuvihavarṇanyāśasattvanadbasaṅgrahaṇarūpāyā mṛgāyāḥ tattadvarṇān muṣṭiśaḥ saṅgrhya darśayantam ity arthah*. Perhaps what is meant by this is: “The meaning is that he grasped in fistfuls and then displayed the various properties of the hunt, which takes the form of an assemblage [consisting on the one hand] of a palette of various colours and [on the other] of killings of creatures”.

Instead, then, of our loose translation “the quintessence of the properties of the kings of the early Yugas”, we might more literally render this with “a fistful of the [distinctive] pigments/properties of [all] the kings of the early aeons”.

²⁶ Führer's edition, with the oldest commentary, that of Śaṅkara, also prints *varṇakamuṣṭim* (p. 311), but Śaṅkara's commentary unfortunately passes over the word in silence.

V. Surpassed by him in the number of sacrifices [offered], the king of the gods, I think, no longer attached much value to the name that his hundred sacrifices (Śatakratu) earned him.

In *Raghuvaṃśa* 3, Indra famously blocks a horse-sacrifice so that Raghu cannot complete his hundredth sacrifice and in doing so become a rival to Indra for the name Śatakratu. Thus *Raghuvaṃśa* 3.49:

*barir yathaikaḥ puruṣottamaḥ smṛto maheśvaras tryambaka eva nāparaḥ
tathā vidur maṃ munayaḥ śatakratuṃ dvitṛyagāmi na hi śabda eṣa naḥ.*

“Just as Viṣṇu alone is remembered as Puruṣottama (“best of souls”) and none but Tryambaka (“three-eyed”) is Maheśvara (“the great lord [Śiva]”), so too sages know me as Śatakratu (“him of a hundred sacrifices/rages”); this label of mine does not apply to anyone else.”

VI. In him, I suppose, Brahmā established Beauty (*vaṣuḥ*), so that it would not remain without a locus after the flower-bow-wielding [god of Love] had been burned.²⁷

VII. This (*tena*) king, whose glory extended to the cardinal points, appointed a servant to [take care of] all his duties:

See commentary on stanza VII of K. 1235 above.

VIII. The experts of many sciences inscribed him at the head of the list of those who have followed [to the end] the paths of grammar, of Vaiśeṣika, of Nyāya, and of the philosophy [of the Sāṅkhyas] (*samikṣā*).

The interpretation of the list of disciplines is the suggestion of Arlo Griffiths (email of 18.xi.2017); Finot did not include a word-split before *gatādhvanām*, which meant that he understood the path of the Buddhists (*°sugatādhvanām*) to be added to the end.²⁸ Finot’s choice results in a relatively unconventional list of intellectual disciplines, which in turn could be used to suggest that Vidyāvīśeṣa really was familiar with them. But the inclusion of Buddhism seems less plausible from the point of view of both structure (the idiom *dhuri likhitaḥ*, which we examined above when it occurred in K. 1235, st. VIII, requires a genitive plural referring

²⁷ Finot’s translation reflects a misunderstanding: “En lui, sans doute, Brahmā créa un corps pour que l’Amour consommé ne demeurât pas sans support.” (“In him, doubtless, Brahmā created a body so that Love, devoured [by flames], should not be without a locus.”)

²⁸ Finot translates (1928:46): “Celui-ci fut proclamé par les connaisseurs de multiples sciences comme la plus haute autorité dans les systèmes de la Grammaire, du Vaiśeṣika, du Nyāya, du Samikṣa (=Sāṅkhya) et du bouddhisme.” (“This man was proclaimed by the connoisseurs of many disciplines as the highest authority in the systems of Grammar, of Vaiśeṣika, of Nyāya, of Sāṅkhya and of Buddhism.”)

to accomplished people, not to disciplines or “paths”) and of sense (because of several parallel lists of disciplines mastered by Cambodian intellectuals). Among parallels that group the other disciplines together, but without Buddhism, we find for instance the same domains recorded as having been studied by a royal chaplain of the twelfth century, the Saiddhāntika Mūrdhaśiva (K. 364, 3.18):

dikṣāvidhau sati na kevalam eva somam
āmantrito sakṛd apāyayad ānṛśaṃsāt
yo nyāyasāṃkhyakāṇabhūmataśabdaśāstra-
bhāṣyārthasomam api sūrijanān pipāsuh

We probably have to take the nominative singular adjective *pipāsuh* as having causative sense:

Not only did he more than once cause Soma to be drunk when the ceremony of [Vedic] *dikṣā* had been accomplished and when he had been invited, but also, from his kindness (*ānṛśaṃsāt*), he was desirous of causing scholars to drink the nectar that was the purport of [the disciplines of] Nyāya, Sāṅkhya, Vaiśeṣika and Grammar and of the Bhāṣya [of Patañjali].²⁹

IX. Poet, philosopher, knower of the world, this *maître* named Vidyāviśeṣa considered his friends as dear as his own breaths.

Finot’s mistaken reading of the text led him to a different translation here.

X. He whose intentions were pure (*śuddhābhisandhinā*), wishing that [his] devotion to Īśāna would remain firm in every birth, erected this *liṅga* here.

Śuddhābhisandhi is not a frequent collocation and I have found it only in a definition of *dharma* in the *Padārthadharmasaṅgraha* of Praśastapāda and in the commentaries thereon:

*dharmah puruṣaguṇah. kartuh priyahitamokṣahetur atindriyo
'ntyasukhasaṃvijñānavirodbi puruṣāntahkaraṇasamyogaviśuddhābhisandhijo
varṇāśramaṇām pratiniyatasādhananimittaḥ* (*Padārthadharmasaṅgraha* cited in the
edition by Jetly and Parikh of the *Nyāyakandalī*, Baroda 1991, pp. 621–622).
Dharma is a property of the soul. It is the cause of pleasure, of good, and
of deliverance for the agent; it is imperceptible; it ceases with [its production

²⁹ The translation of Louis Finot (1912:25) is not quite accurate: “Plus d’une fois, dans une cérémonie de consécration (*dikṣāvidhi*), il consentit avec bienveillance à faire boire aux sages altérés, non seulement le Soma, mais encore le nectar des systèmes Nyāya, Sāṅkhya, Vaiśeṣika, du Çabdaçāstra [de Pāṇini] et du Bhāṣya [de Patañjali].” (“More than once, at a consecration ceremony (*dikṣāvidhi*), he deigned with kindness to allow thirsty sages to drink not just Soma, but also the nectar of the systems of Nyāya, Sāṅkhya, Vaiśeṣika, of the Grammar [of Pāṇini] and of the Commentary [of Patañjali].”)

of] an awareness of pleasure [as its fruition] at the end; it arises from a pure intention [when there is] a contact between the soul and the internal organs [of intellection]; its immediate causes are the means of attaining it that are peculiar to the persons belonging to particular *varṇas* and *āśramas*.

It seems possible that Vidyāviśeṣa, who proclaims that he was learned in Vaiśeṣika, was the author of the texts of his inscriptions and that he incorporated this expression as an allusion to Praśastapāda's definition of *dharma*.

XI. The village named Śākatīrtha, filled with servants, oxen, buffalo, gardens, fields, etc., is the gift of the founder (*yajvanah*) to Īśa.

For the translation of *yajvan* as “founder” (and therefore as a synonym of *yajamāna*), see the conclusion of our note on K. 1235, st. X above.

XII. A Pāśupata brahmin appointed by the king for the service of the god should enjoy the revenues of the temple until the destruction of the world.

It seems quite clear from the context that Vidyāviśeṣa, was not himself the brahmin priest, which is what Coedès erroneously supposes: “From which it follows that Vidyāviśeṣa, who must have been a Pāśupata brahmin, was charged by the king with the office of being the priest of the *liṅga* that he had founded...”³⁰ Vidyāviśeṣa is rather the benefactor (the *yajvan* mentioned in the previous stanza), who has endowed the temple on the understanding that whoever should be king in the future should make sure to appoint a Pāśupata priest.

My expression “Pāśupata priest” might seem like a contradiction in terms for those familiar with the surviving prescriptive Pāśupata literature, which speaks only of brahmin male ascetics who are cut off from society for much of their lives and which does not allude to the existence of temple priests. We have earlier (Goodall 2015:28) quoted Peter Bisschop's remarks on the disconnect between the prescriptive literature and the testimony of inscriptions and those remarks bear quoting again (Bisschop 2010:485):

The Pāśupata system as outlined by Kauṇḍinya involves a lifelong career of extreme asceticism, which is hard to reconcile with other early references to Pāśupatas, in particular epigraphical records. Thus, for example, the earliest explicit epigraphical references to Pāśupatas that we possess are at the same time among the earliest examples of copper-plate grants recording endowments for temple worship.

³⁰ “D’où il résulte que Vidyāviśeṣa, qui devait être un brâhmane Pāçupata, fut chargé par le roi des fonctions d’officiant du *liṅga* fondé par lui...” (Coedès, IC IV, p. 19).

Clearly the prescriptive literature aimed to lay down ideals and not to give a phenomenological description of the religion as it was really practised.

XIII. He must imperatively protect this scrupulously as if it were his own pious work, if he wishes blessings bestowed by good people.

Finot arrives at a different translation, but principally because he has misread the text of the first Finot arrives at a different translation.³¹

XIV. In the year of arrows-seas-gates (549), on the 22nd day of the month of Iṣa (= Āśvina), under the asterism Puṣya, Leo being at the horizon, this Hara was erected.

Our inscriptions (K. 604 and K. 1235), both dated in the same year, are the latest explicitly dated published inscriptions belonging to the reign of Īśānavarman I, which led Claude Jacques to propose (1986:71) that Īśānavarman I died in 628 CE. Vickery (1998:340ff) has disputed this, adducing K. 506, which is dated to 637 CE. Vickery seems indeed to be right, for the date given in K. 506 (st. VIII, *śakābde dvārabhūtārthair* = 559 *śaka*) and its mention of Īśānavarman (st. IV) are certain; but unfortunately, given how damaged the still unpublished text of K. 506 is (the first four lines, as well as much of the Khmer text, appear to have been deliberately chiselled away to render them illegible), we cannot be certain that it did not also mention a successor of Īśānavarman.

XV. After this act that entitles him to merit had been accomplished, the king then made this benefactor the excellent governor of Tamandarapura.

See note on stanza X of K. 1235 above for a discussion of the expression *puṇyādhikāre*.

Preliminary discussion of the notion of °*purāsvāmin*, “City-Governor”

As to the nature of Vidyāviśeṣa’s employment by the king, several interpretations may seem at first sight admissible, but parallel passages allow us to exclude most of them. One could, as Finot does, presuppose that *-svāmi* (which, because it is an uninflected stem-form, must be in compound) might merely be a transcription error on the part of the engraver for the inflected nominative form *-svāmī*, and conclude that *bhojakappravaraḥ* could therefore designate another function (Finot’s suggestion was “premier astrologue” [“First Astrologer”]). But the necessarily compounded formulation *tamandarapurāsvāmibhojakatve* of K. 1235 leads us to exclude this possibility: it reveals that °*svāmibhojaka*° is instead a single expression that refers to a single function exercised by

31 “Il ne devra pas en faire à sa volonté, mais protéger scrupuleusement cette œuvre pie comme la sienne propre, s’il souhaite la bénédiction promise aux justes.” (“He should not do so [*scil.* enjoy the revenue of the temple] simply as he wishes, but should scrupulously protect this pious foundation as if it were his own, if he wishes the benefit promised to the righteous.”) (Finot 1928:46).

Vidyāviśeṣa. One might also consider the possibility that Tamandarapurāsvāmin might have been the name of a divinity and that Vidyāviśeṣa might thus have been named as “a beneficiary of [offerings made to the temple of] Tamandarapurāsvāmin” (thus Cœdès in *IC* IV, p. 18, quoted above at the beginning of our annotation to st. X of K. 1235). Now it is true that the context here is Śaiva and that names of Śiva typically end in *-īśvara* and not in *-svāmin*, but there are exceptions to this rule.³² Furthermore, Claude Jacques probably had such an interpretation in mind when he proposed that the honoured personage chosen to be *liṅgapurasvāmin* in K. 1059 was appointed in a priestly capacity (Lintingre 1974:516).³³ But given the typically lowly status of those employed to perform public worship for others in Indian temples, especially when they depend on temple offerings for their livelihood (see, for example, s.v. *devalaka* in TAK 3), this is culturally speaking implausible.³⁴ What is more, stanza XII of K. 604, as we saw above, actually speaks of the king appointing another man (*pace* Cœdès), not Vidyāviśeṣa, as the priestly officiant of the temple that Vidyāviśeṣa endowed.

Moreover, another inscription, K. 9, dated twelve years later, to 639 CE (561 *śaka*), refers more plainly in other language to a ruler of Tamandarapura in this pair of stanzas:

II.

(5) bhrātā rudrapurīśasya kanīyān kulatantubhṛt

(6) bhojaf pālayate samyak tamandarapuraṃ yadā

III.

(7) kṣetrārāmānvitā sīmā sthāpitā satravṛddhaye

(8) gaṇitā rūpaśadvāṇaiś śakendrasya samās tadā

While “Bhoja”, the younger brother of the ruler of Rudrapurī, the supporter of his lineage,³⁵ correctly rules Tamandarapura, the boundaries, including fields and gardens, have been fixed for the thriving of the hospice³⁶ in the Śaka year counted by [5] arrows [of the god of Love], 6 and [1] form.

³² E.g. K. 826, st. XXXV (of 881 CE), and K. 1002, st. LVII.

³³ The expression is rendered with “*svāmin* (chef ou maître spirituel) à Liṅgapura” (“*svāmin* (chief or spiritual master) at Liṅgapura”), and it is clear from his note (1974:514, n. 60) that Lintingre is inclined to understand it to refer to a man with temporal rather than spiritual authority, but that Claude Jacques thought otherwise: “Mais, selon M. Jacques, le caractère vishnouïte de l’inscription incite à traduire *svāmin* par « maître spirituel » plutôt que par « chef ». (“But, according to Mr. Jacques, the Vaiṣṇava character of the inscription leads us to translate *svāmin* with ‘spiritual master’ rather than with ‘chief.’)”

³⁴ Exactly the same observation is made by Bühler when discussing a much earlier usage of the term *bhojaka* in a copper-plate grant in Prakrit of the early Pallava king Śivaskandavarman (Bühler 1892:7, fn. 12): “That *bhojaka* does not mean ‘temple priest,’ but ‘*ināmdār*’ or ‘freeholder,’ seems to follow from its use in line 8, where the donees are called Chillarekakoḍuṃkabhojakas, who lived in Āpitiṭṭi, and in line 50, where the privy councillor Bhaṭṭisamma receives the title Kolivālabhojake. Such a despised personage as a temple priest could hardly become a minister.”

³⁵ For those eager to find traces of a tendency towards ultimogeniture, this might be such a trace, for it could imply that it was the younger son who naturally bore the responsibility for upholding the family tradition. But it could also mean that this particular younger son happened to do so.

³⁶ Cœdès (*IC* V, p. 37) more neutrally translates “fondation”, which is perhaps also possible for *sattra*.

It is not clear whether this man was a relative of Vidyāviśeṣa, or perhaps even Vidyāviśeṣa himself, since Bhoja may be a title rather than a name, and, while the rule of some cities may have been hereditary, that of others appears to have changed frequently with royal appointments. *Bhoja* might thus be a synonym for *bhojaka*, which Bhattacharya (1991:65, § 249) has already suggested (*contra* Cœdès) means “governor” both in K. 604 and in st. XII of K. 725 (which we shall see below), as well as in st. VII of K. 5, the fifth-century inscription of Guṇavarman. Bhattacharya there refers to a handful of Indian parallels, to which one might add, for instance, two Śālaṅkāyana inscriptions of the fourth century EIAD 165 and 166.

At this point, it may be useful to consider at least the published parallel cases of favourites of early seventh-century kings who were conscious of favours rendered, who performed pious works and who were Governors of towns. (There are a few still unpublished or unsatisfactorily published instances, such as K. 1059, K. 1060, K. 506, K. 1364, and K. 1250, which will be mentioned but an exploration of whose textual problems will have to await more detailed treatment.)

It is worth quoting first a few stanzas of K.151 (of 598 CE), both because it is perhaps the earliest record to allude to the sort of figure we are examining and because the translation published by Cœdès in the *BEFEO* of 1943 can plainly be improved upon (and in places also the edition, using photographs of EFEO estampage number n. 281). It concerns a man whom we learn from st. VII to have been called Narasiṃhagupta. As for the very early date, of 520 *śaka*, it is the date of the installation of an image of Viṣṇu called Kapilavāsudeva; but the inscription itself was presumably inscribed a couple of decades later, since it mentions Īśānavarman as the ruling king in st. III, as we shall see below.

II. [*āryā*]

- (3) śrībhavavarmmā kṣītipaḥ kṣoṇīndraś śrīmahendravarmmā ca
 (4) bhrātros tayor mmato yas sāmantanṛpāgraṇīr ekaḥ //

Śrī-Bhavavarman was king and Śrī-Mahendravarman was king. There was one person highly regarded³⁷ by these two brothers who was foremost among vassal kings.

III. [*vasantatilakā*]

- (5) śrīśānavarmmanṛpakalpamahīruhasya
 sarvvānyapārthivalataikasamāśrayasya
 (6) āśīd yaśaxkusumavāsitadiṅmukhasya
 yaś caryasātkṛtavibhūtiphalasya bhṛtyaḥ //

³⁷ It seems to me that we are to understand this formulation (with *mata*) to be similar to a statement that he was a favourite (*vallabha*) of both kings. As Gerdi Gerschheimer has pointed out to me, the translation of Cœdès is off the mark here: “Le roi Çrī Bhavavarman et le roi Çrī Mahendravarman (régnerent). Celui qui fut considéré comme le premier des rois vassaux, ...” (“The king Śrī Bhavavarman and the king Śrī Mahendravarman [ruled]. The man who was considered the first among vassal kings, ...”). This oddly leaves aside the fact that the hero of this inscription, Narasiṃhagupta, is clearly esteemed by the two brothers Bhavavarman and Mahendravarman. By Pāṇini’s rules 2.3.67 and 3.2.188, the past passive participle *mata* (“highly regarded”) is to be construed with a genitive expressing what might elsewhere be expected to be expressed by an instrumental.

He was the servant of the king Śrī-Īśānavarman, a wish-fulfilling tree who is the one support for the creepers that are all other kings, who perfumes the directions with the flowers of his glories, whose fruits are his wealth that is wholly given over to moral conduct.³⁸

IV. [upajāti]

(7) tadīyasāmantanareśvarāṇaṃ

agresaraś śaurīyanayaśriyā yaḥ

(8) nirvyājayāpatsv api – ◡ – –

◡ – ◡ bhaktyā kṛtavedināñ ca //

[d.] ◡ – ◡ bhaktyā] nirata° Cœdès (unmetrical)

The foremost among his vassal kings in heroism, policy and glory, who, even in times of disasters were grateful of [favours] rendered (*kṛtavedinām*), with a ... devotion ... that was unfeigned,

V.

(9) vañśakrameṇāpi ◡ pātV – ◡

yaf prāptavān indrapureśvaratvam

(10) ā – ◡ kad[v]iṣṭhapure '(dh)irāṅyam

anugrahād indrasamasya bhartuḥ //

[c.] °d[v]iṣṭha° “la leçon dviṣṭha n'est pas sûre” Cœdès.

[c.] '(dhi)rāṅyam] virāṅyam Cœdès, who also remarks: “le caractère *vi* est douteux”.

In this last stanza, the gaps prevent us from obtaining a certain understanding of what was intended. It seems to me that we have lordship over two cities mentioned, the first being Indrapura and the second whose name is not clear: Cœdès's reading is printed above because the estampage of the EFEO at this point is really too difficult to read with any degree of certainty, but I should say that I see no trace of the vowel *i* and that I would myself, if forced to transcribe from the estampage the letters which Cœdès has tentatively read as *kad[v]iṣṭhapure*, have read instead *kac(ch)[r]eṣṭhapure*. A Śreṣṭhapura is known of, for which identifications have been proposed and abandoned, but the syllable *kac* would then be hard to account for.

Assuming next that *prāptavān* (“having acquired”) is to be construed with *vañśakrameṇa* (“by his family line”) and taking that whole collocation to mean together “having inherited”, the natural object is *indrapureśvaratvam* “overlordship of Indrapura”. Assuming after this that the missing syllables at the beginning of line 10 had a main verb, which might have been, for instance, *āpa* (“he

³⁸ The translation of the last quarter of this stanza is not certain. Cœdès' translation (1943:7) seems to brush over the difficulty by giving no apparent value to the suffix °*sāt*: “ayant pour fruits la puissance de sa conduite vertueuse” (“having as his fruits the power of his virtuous conduct”). I take °*sāt* to be what Monier-Williams describes (s.v. *sāt*) as “a Taddhita affix which when put after a word denotes a total change of anything into the thing expressed by that word”..

acquired”), the second half of the stanza would state that he was given the benefice of the second city by Īśānavarman. Quite differently from Cœdès we might then translate as follows:

Who, having inherited from his family the overlordship of Indrapura, by the grace of his master, who was equal to Indra, [[acquired]] sovereignty (*adhirājya*) over ...ṣṭhapura.

The text would thus furnish evidence of something that we would have been inclined to assume anyway, namely that such grateful (*ḷḷtavedin*) vassals (*sāmanta*) who received the overlordship (*adhirājya*) of cities from such pre-Angkorian sovereigns as Īśānavarman were at least in some cases already power-wielding rulers of city-states by heredity. Cœdès’ circumspect translation, however, allows for only one real city and cautiously deploys dots in such a way as to show that we cannot be certain how Narasiṃhagupta obtained control over it. For, omitting the footnotes, which chiefly underline how doubtful the readings and interpretations are, Cœdès translates as follows (1943:7):

Bien que, par l’ordre de succession dans sa famille..., il eût obtenu la seigneurie d’Indrapura, ... le pouvoir dans la ville ennemie, par faveur de son maître semblable à Indra (“Although, by the order of succession in his family..., he had obtained lordship over Indrapura, ... power in the enemy city, by favour of his master, who resembled Indra.”).

Let us now turn to another inscription about a seventh-century governor of cities, one that provides further supporting evidence for our assumption that it is necessary in K. 604 to understand a *karmadhāraya* relation between the elements *svāmi* and *bhojaka*: “overlord-beneficiary” or “Beneficiary, as overlord [of the city’s income]”, in other words “governor” or “collector”. The undated inscription K. 725 employs this same expression in this sense when tracing the career of the eldest son of a certain brahmin learned in the Vedas and Vedāngas (st. V) called Dharmasvāmin from a place called Dharmapura (st. VII) that might or might not have been named after him. The man in question is first described as a servant (*bhṛtya*) of kings, then he is appointed a grand equerry (*mahāśvapati*), then governor of Śreṣṭhapura (*śreṣṭhapurasvāmbhojaka*), and he then governs (*pāti*) the city of Dhruvapura.

K. 725, XI–XIV :

XI.

(12) [dha]rmmasvāmisuto jyeṣṭho bhṛtyaḥ kṣitibhujām abhūt

āptas susanmataś (c)aiva yo mahāśvapatiḥ kṛtaḥ

[c.] āptas susanmataś (c)aiva] prāptas susanmataśaiva[m] Cœdès (unmetrical).³⁹

The eldest son of Dharmasvāmin was the servant of kings; he was a person of authority

³⁹ Estampages n. 921 and n. 938 of the EFEO enable one to correct Cœdès’ reading of the text here.

(*āptah*) and highly respected (*susanmataḥ*)⁴⁰ who was made grand equerry.

XII.

(13) bhūyaś śreṣṭhapuravāmibhojakatve prakalpitaḥ
sitātapanivārādibhogair api ca satkṛtaḥ

He was further appointed as overlord and enjoyer of Śreṣṭhapura and honoured with such privileges as the white parasol.

XIII.

(14) vidhinā sthāpitaṃ yena līṅgaṃ śrīnaimiśeśvaram
naśyanti sarvvapāpāni yasya nāmaśravād api

He installed, in accordance with the rules, the *līṅga* [called] Śrī-Naimiśeśvara,⁴¹ at the mere hearing of whose name all evil deeds are destroyed.

XIV.

(15) punar dhruvapuraṃ prāpya bhīṣaṇāraṇyasaṅkaṭam
uddṛptapuruṣāvāsaṃ yaf pāti nirupadrava[m]

He then acquired Dhruvapura, crowded with fearsome forests, an abode of wild men, and governed it without misfortunes.

The inscription K. 725 next turns to the honours received from Dharmasvāmin's younger son at the hands of Jayavarman I, which allows us to conclude that the two brothers were active in the reigns of the same group of mid-seventh-century monarchs ending with Jayavarman I. Various mysterious but apparently military or naval titles or posts are bestowed (st. XV–XVIII) upon Dharmasvāmin's younger son, Pracaṅḍasiṃha, about whom we learn (in st. XIX) that he was given a particular charge connected with Dhanvipura:

K. 725, st. XIX.

(20) 𑀓 𑀓 𑀓 Cāyudhīyānāṃ yo dhanvipuravāsinām
sahasravarggādhipatiḥ punar nṛpatiśāsanāt

... further, by the command of the king, he [became] the chief of a division of 1000 of soldiers who were residents of Dhanvipura.

⁴⁰ Cœdès translation of this quarter-verse (*IC I*, p. 11), “obtenant une charge très enviée”, does not seem to reflect all the words of his reading, which would in any case be unmetrical.

⁴¹ The regular form of this name would be Naimiśeśvara (with a retroflex *ṣ*).

Here we may note that the appointment is nothing like the governorship of a city and that the city in question, Dhanvīpura, might be the same as the synonymously named Vyādhapura, which might in turn be Angkor Borei but may instead have been Banteay Prei Nokor.⁴²

The above inscription allows us to add a few further touches to the portrait we are building of the magnates honoured with the gifts of cities by seventh-century pre-Angkorian kings. First of all, we see that they seem not all, as one might have imagined, to have been powerful figures of purely local stock. Of course we do not know who was the mother (or who were the mothers) of these two sons of Dharmasvāmin, but he is clearly stated to have been a learned brahmin, which appears to have been the sole reason for his high status, and his sons are not. Since we are so often confronted, in the Cambodian epigraphic record, with instances of lineages that begin with brahmins but that do not continue with them, it seems likely that the persons explicitly said to be brahmins were indeed not simply locals judged to have the status of brahmins.⁴³ Of course it may be that the social rank of the mother of Dharmasvāmin's sons also conferred high status upon them, but of that this inscription gives us no indication.

A second uncertain detail, but nonetheless worth mentioning, is that it is unclear how much of their authority actually derives from the principal ruling sovereign and to what extent their grip on power is merely acknowledged and approved by him. We have seen above that the rule over some cities may in some cases have been inherited (e.g. Indrapura in st. V of K. 151), and we have also seen of course that most of the cases that interest us concern cities that are conferred as benefices by the principal ruling sovereign (as Śreṣṭhapura is here). But what of Dhruvapura? It is not made explicit whether or not Dharmasvāmin's eldest son receives the rule of Dhruvapura as an honour from the sovereign or whether he simply appropriates it. Thirdly, this passage leads us to an observation about the locations of these city-states and their relation to the territory of the principal sovereign. Among the cities that are bestowed as benefices or described as being under the rule of seventh-century magnates who acknowledge the sovereignty of Bhavavarman or Īśānavarman or Jayavarman I, it is striking how very few have been identified. An identification of Śreṣṭhapura with Liṅgapura was once mooted,⁴⁴ but is now no longer generally believed. This

⁴² For the identification with Angkor Borei, see Barth 1885:178, quoting Aymonier, in the 2nd note on the page, which is in turn apropos of his note 2 on p. 26. For the discussion that questions this assumption and suggests instead an identification with Banteay Prei Nokor, see Vickery 1998:398.

⁴³ Vickery (1998:57ff) pleads for the view that the so-called “brahmins” of the Khmer epigraphical record need not have come from the Indian subcontinent. Bourdonneau (2016:123–136), who, like Vickery, is troubled by the surprisingly widespread uncritical assumption that all figures of learning and religious authority mentioned in Khmer epigraphy must be brahmins, points out that figures who are explicitly said to be brahmins are much less numerous than might be supposed and that we never find a genealogy containing a series of generations of brahmins. The relatively small number of figures explicitly designated as brahmins, sometimes with an indication of some place of origin that could be interpreted as being somewhere in India, typically intermarried with families who are pointedly not stated to be brahmin. He therefore concludes that we may assume that those designated as learned brahmins really were figures of learning from abroad (2016:136): “Les brahmanes furent des « greffons » sur les grandes maisons aristocratiques du Cambodge ancien. S'ils jouissaient d'un prestige considérable, ils conservaient fondamentalement un statut d'étranger, à la fois à l'extérieur de la société et au cœur et au sommet de celle-ci ou, plus exactement, du royaume.” (“Brahmins were ‘grafts’ upon the great aristocratic houses of ancient Cambodia. If they enjoyed considerable prestige, they basically retained the status of strangers, both outside of society and at the heart and at the top of society or, more accurately, of the kingdom.”).

⁴⁴ “It follows from these connections that the capital of Chen-la, which was no doubt none other than Śreṣṭhapura,

seems to leave the location of only two of these governed cities more or less certain, namely Āḍhyapura (K. 53, K. 54, K. 55), to which we shall come presently, and Liṅgapura (K. 1059). Liṅgapura, whether or not it was the ancient city on the river named as Kurukṣetra in the fifth-century inscription of Devāṅka (K. 477), was clearly somewhere near the mountain of Vat Phu. As for Tamandarapura, as we have seen, it is probable that it was in South Vietnam. The others are, as far as I am aware, not identified. So were they generally cities within a central zone whose resources were under the control of the seventh-century sovereigns? Or were they rather largely peripheral places on the fringes of or well outside such a zone of control? One can at once imagine how answering this would lead us towards answers to further questions about the nature and limits of the kingdom of the principal seventh-century sovereigns and about whether the magnates we are examining primarily played a role in extending its limits or in giving shape to an internal hierarchy. Perhaps they did both. Of course no firm answers are forthcoming, but the fact that so many cities have not been identified and the description of Dhruvapura here as a defiantly wild and savage place acquired by Dharmasvāmin's elder son could together be chalked up as suggesting that several of these cities bestowed as benefices may have been peripheral.

For Āḍhyapura, there is no need to reedit K. 53, K. 54 and K. 55 again, for they have been most carefully examined first by Barth (1885:64–72; 51–60) and then again, in the case of K. 54 and K. 55, by Cœdès (*IC* III, pp. 157–163), as well as being discussed more than once by Vickery (1998), Bourdonneau (2004) and many others. But it is worth underlining the way in which these sources speak about the governorship of Āḍhyapura. In K. 53 we learn that there were two brothers, Brahmadata and Brahmasiṅha, who were the principal doctors (*bhīṣaṅmukhyaṅ*) of Rudravarman (st. III); two sons of their sister (or of their sisters) (*bhāgiṅeyāṅ*) called Dharmadeva and Siṅhadeva became the ministers (*mantriṅāṅ*) of Bhavavarman I (st. IV–VI) and then ministers (*amātyā*) of Mahendravarman (st. VII). Dharmadeva's son Siṅhavīra became the minister (*mantrisattamah*) of Īśānavarman I (st. X). Finally, in the stanzas quoted below, Siṅhavīra's son Siṅhadatta (named in st. XXIV) became the physician (*vaidya*) of Jayavarman I, then the physician of Jayavarman I's maternal uncle, and then the governor of Āḍhyapura. Here are just the relevant stanzas that concern the career of Siṅhadatta:

was in the immediate vicinity of the Vat Phu monument, and that, if the pieces of information gathered together in the history of the Sui dynasty did not predate the Sui dynasty, Śreṣṭhapura remained the capital of the first kings of Cambodia until the foundation by Īśānavarman I of the city of Īśānapura, which probably corresponds to the ruins of Sambor-Prei Kuk. As for Bhavapura, residence of Bhavavarman I, if it is not simply the name that Śreṣṭhapura took during the reign of this king, then its location remains to be found.”

“Il résulte de ces rapprochements que la capitale du Tchen-la, qui sans doute n'était autre que Çreṣṭhapura, se trouvait dans les environs immédiats du monument de Vāt Phu, et que, si les renseignements recueillis dans l'histoire des Souei ne sont pas antérieurs à cette dynastie, Çreṣṭhapura resta la capitale des premiers rois du Cambodge jusqu'à la fondation par Īśānavarman I de la ville d'Īśānapura, qui correspond sans doute aux ruines de Sambór-Prei Kük. Quant à Bhavapura, résidence de Bhavavarman I, si ce n'est pas simplement le nom que prit Çreṣṭhapura pendant le règne de ce roi, son site reste à trouver” (Cœdès 1928:124–125). The hypothesis is based on several small pieces of evidence, but most particularly on K. 475, a twelfth-century Khmer inscription from Vat Phu (published by Finot in 1915) that suggests that a region (*sruk*) called Bhadreśvarāspada was situated in the administrative district (*viṣaya*) of Śreṣṭhapura.

K. 53,

XVI.

(16) śrīmato rājasīnhasya jayino jayavarmmaṇaḥ
yo vaidyo veditavyānāṃ vettāpi nirahaṅkṛtiḥ

... who was the physician of the glorious victorious lion among kings, Jayavarman;
devoid of pride, even though he knew [all] that could be known;

XVII.

(17) punas satkṛtya yaṃ rājā prādāt sve rājamātule
alapdharājaśapde pi lapdharājārhasaṃpadi⁴⁵

whom the king honoured further and bestowed [as personal physician(?)] upon
his own royal maternal uncle, a man who, although he had not attained the title
“king”, had attained the success worthy of a king;

XVIII.

(18) paścād āḍhyapurasyāsya yo ddhyakṣatve kulakramāt
yogyo yam iti satkṛtya svayaṃ rājñā niyojitaḥ

who was subsequently appointed by the king himself as regent of Āḍhyapura
here (*asya*), [a role he inherited] from his family’s lineage, once [the king] had
honoured him [with the judgement] that (*iti*) he was suitable...

XX.

(20) ucitaṃ yaḥ karādānam ārāmebhyaḥ kuṭumvinām
anādadat prabhur api pūrṇṇaṃ vṛttim adād itaḥ

who, in not taking [even] the appropriate taxes from the gardens of householders,
even though he was their master, bestowed upon them thenceforth a full livelihood.

The presentation of the succession is worth paying attention to here. It is typical that the son of a sister is a prime successor, as Vickery has emphasised, but direct filial connections are also selected and are perhaps equally important. Vickery has suggested that the honorific title *poñ*, for instance, could only have passed to a sister’s son, which would mean that Siṅhadatta could not have inherited such a title from this lineage (1998:370–371). But perhaps direct filial lineage could also be deliberately favoured, either in the absence of sisters’ sons, or simply when so desired? For it is striking that we see a long lineage traced here, to the end of which Siṅhadatta is connected as the son (and not the nephew), and yet it is at this point that we learn that the king appointed him

⁴⁵ Understand: *alapdharājaśabde pi lapdharājārhasaṃpadi*.

governor of Āḍhyapura both on the grounds of his suitability and on the grounds of an hereditary claim. Does this mean simply that the king's approval was required, or does it also mean that the hereditary claim was not sufficient? Were such hereditary claims in fact typically negotiable? Could it not have been common to select an heir from among various candidates, primarily sons and sisters' sons, who might all have been equally eligible? If sisters' sons alone were truly eligible heirs, would it not be odd to mention here Siṅhadatta's hereditary claim to Āḍhyapura, for it could have nothing to do with the lineage that Siṅhadatta has elaborately traced for himself in the preceding stanzas? At least equally likely, it seems to me, is that Siṅhadatta here has indeed traced a lineage that he considered did give him some claim to Āḍhyapura and thus this claim was probably not entirely based on an inheritance that passed from mother's brother to sister's son. We may compare the ancestry of the sons of Dharmasvāmin of K. 725, discussed just above, where, in spite of sporadic evidence throughout the Cambodian epigraphic record of ambient notions of inheritance based on a kinship system biased towards matrilineality (from mother's brother to sister's son), high status could clearly also be passed from father to son. Cf. Vickery (1998:372–373): "...the 'Funanese' royal genealogies showed some evidence of both uncle to uterine nephew succession, with a tendency for rulers to try to overcome that rule by placing their sons in succession, and ultimogeniture". (We shall have cause to return below to ultimogeniture to question what is purported to be its most celebrated instance.)

Perhaps such a "mixed system" of inheritance patterns could go some way to explain a striking difference between genealogies in Khmer-speaking territories and those of the Indian subcontinent: whereas the names of dynasties are ubiquitous in epigraphs from the subcontinent (in this article alone we have had cause to mention in passing the Cholas, Pallavas, Licchavis, Śālaṅkāyanas and Ikṣvākus, and there are of course hundreds more), such clan-names seem to be absent among the Khmers.⁴⁶

We have dwelt at some length on questions of lineage raised by this inscription, but equally important here is the matter of taxes: it is true that Siṅhadatta chooses to waive them, but it is made clear thereby that he was regarded as having a right to collect them, it being thus implied that he could have used them for himself. This is especially interesting in the light of the fact that Āḍhyapura is one of the very few "governors' cities" that is rather firmly identified, namely as Kdei Ang, the provenance of K. 53, K. 54, K. 55 and K. 56, and thus a place which is not in some distant peripheral region, but in the province of Prei Veng, within the supposed heartland of the territory

46 This is no doubt related to the point that Vickery makes with a diagram (1998:373) of a hypothetical lineage of six intermarrying families over four generations, showing how the *poñ*-title-bearers of the first generation could see their hereditary titles crossing to each other's descendants or slipping progressively into ever more distantly related patriline. Vickery sketches out a nuptial strategy for "managing" this (1998:374), but does not mention the strategy of polygamously marrying several female relatives at a time in order to concentrate inherited authority, as for instance Vīrapurisadatta, one of the Ikṣvākus of coastal Āndhra, may have done (for a discussion of the consanguineous marriages of this royal clan, see Trautmann 1981:375–380). Here, although there is some evidence for a pattern of cross-cousin marriage, the evidence for the ideal pattern of inheritance is less clear: Vīrapurisadatta was both the son of the preceding ruler, Siri-Cāntamūla I, and also married three daughters born to two of his father's sisters, so it is not clear whether he inherited because he was the king's son or because he was the husband of the king's sisters' offspring. Furthermore, although we know of three of Vīrapurisadatta's wives, none of them was the mother of Vīrapurisadatta's successor Cāntamūla II.

that was under the control of the seventh-century sovereigns. Clearly, even if we postulate that some governorships may have been bestowed in order to tame distant regions (Dhruvapura in K. 725 might have been an example of this), Āḍhyapura does not fit this model.

After this preliminary exploration of the questions surrounding “governor’s inscriptions”, it is time to turn to one of the most important of them all, K. 1150 from Khao Noi (=Prachin Buri n° 26 in the inventory of inscriptions of Thailand), which appears only to have been published once, with numerous misreadings, in *The Silpakorn Journal*. But it has nonetheless had a prominent career in secondary literature because of a misunderstanding of the intended sense of its opening.

In what is, to our knowledge,⁴⁷ the first mention of this inscription, Claude Jacques stated that the poem was intended to celebrate a son of King Īśānavarman I called Śivadatta: “The poem’s purpose is to celebrate a son of king Īśānavarman I named Śivadatta, who, it may be recalled in passing, had the great king Bhavavarman as his younger [brother]”.⁴⁸ These relations of kinship are based on the interpretation of the term *bbūta* as meaning “son” and on a reading *tasyānujo* in *pāda* IIa. The interpretation that we shall give below differs completely from that adopted by Claude Jacques (1986:79) and subsequently by Michael Vickery (1998: *passim*), who builds into his theorisation of the important hereditary Khmer title *poñ* the mistaken information that Śivadatta, who bears the title *poñ* in K. 54, was a son of Īśānavarman (Vickery 1998:369–372). Vickery is also misled into assuming this passage to furnish “another example of a traditional practice of ultimogeniture” (1998:372). We shall consider their interpretation after having explained our own.⁴⁹

First, a synopsis of the inscription:

I-II : Presentation of the reigning king, Bhavavarman (II)

Note that the first stanza also doubles as an auspicious invocation of Śiva.

III-VIII : Praise of the principal personage, a certain Śivadatta (who must be the founder of the water-body mentioned in st. IX–X).

IX-X : the digging of a tank.

Edition of K. 1150

K. 1150/C7th (Khao Noi) Other classification: inventory of the inscriptions of Thailand: Prachin Buri n° 26.

Text : [G. Gerschheimer & D. Goodall]

Text based on the study of estampage n. 1471 of the EFEO (Fig. 4). The readings of SJ (the 1987 edition that appeared in *The Silpakorn Journal*: Keowkroy 1987) have been recorded. SJ tends not to separate the words: the vagaries of its word-separations are not recorded except where SJ

⁴⁷ I revert here to the first person plural since much of what I say here comes from Gerdi Gerschheimer, with whom I had planned to re-publish this inscription jointly.

⁴⁸ “[L]e poème a pour objet de célébrer un fils du roi Īśānavarman Ier nommé Śivadatta, dont on rappelle au passage qu’il avait pour (frère) cadet le mahārāja Bhavavarman” (Jacques 1986:79).

⁴⁹ Bourdonneau (2004, § 87 and fn. 33) has underlined how fragile Vickery’s scaffold here already was for other reasons. Correcting the misreading and misinterpretation of the opening of K. 1150 topples it.



n. 1471 / K. 1150

Fig. 4

also has different readings from those adopted. SJ concludes each stanza with a double *daṇḍa*, a feature that is not visible on the estampage.

I.

(1) śrīśānavarmmabhūto yaś cintayeśāna[dhā](raṇa)ḥ

(ya)sya varmma (sa) (v)eśāno babhū[vā]bhedyāCV ◡[≠]

[b.] °[dhā](raṇa)ḥ] °- - ṇa SJ. For the conjecture °dhāraṇaḥ, see translation and commentary below.

[c.] (ya)sya] yasya SJ.

[c.] (sa) (v)eśāno] °saveśāno SJ. The letter “(sa)” might also be read “(pa)”; as for the *ve*, it could perhaps be read as *ce* (*sa ceśāno*).

[d.] babhū[vā]bhedyāCV ◡[≠]] babhū – bhedyā --- SJ.

The conjecture adopted here is almost certain, for metre requires that the vowel be long. The following consonant (indicated with a “C”) could be *b* or *r*, and the attached vowel cannot be *e* or *o* or one that would be marked before the letter.

II.

(2) tasyā(t)ma(jo) mahārāj(o) bhavavarmmā śriyojvalaḥ

samabhūd (dh)vas(ta)niśśeśaśa(tru)sa(m) ◡[≠] ma(hā)va ◡[≠]

[a.] tasyā(t)ma(jo)] tasyātmajo SJ. The gloss of these first two stanzas given by Claude Jacques (1986:79) supposes reading *tasyānujo* (“his younger [brother]”).

[a.] mahārāj(o)] mahārājā SJ.

[b.] śriyojvalaḥ] śri yajjvalaḥ SJ.

[c.] (dh)vas(ta)°] mata° SJ.

[d.] °śa(tru)sa(m) ◡[≠] ma(hā)va ◡[≠]] gātra sam -- mahā - SJ. We should probably restore the text thus : śa(tru)sa(m)gho ma(hā)valaḥ.

III.

(3) adhikārapadasthāy(ī) śivadattābhisamjñā(ka)ḥ

śāṅkaragrāmajāto sau svāmi bhavapure purā

[a.] °sthāy(ī)] °sthāyī SJ.

[b.] °samjñā(ka)ḥ] °samjñagāḥ [*śi* !] SJ.

[d.] svāmi] svāmī SJ. Understand *svāmī*.

[d.] bhavapure purā] bhavapulapurā SJ. Several instances of *re* have been misread in SJ as instances of *la*: see IVa, IVb (twice) below.

IV.

(4) āḍhyaś cāḍhyapure dhanvipure varapure vare

samrakṣa(k)o janaughasya kāryyāṇām sādha(ś ca) ◡[≠]

[b.] agādhā(m)] agādhā° SJ.
 [d.] °gaṇākulā[m]] °gaṇākulā SJ.

X.

(10) acīkhanan nidāgheṣu maddhyāhne sūryyaraśmibhiḥ
 ārttānām sarvvasatvānām tṛṣṇānām āpraśāntaye
 [a.] acīkhanan] adhikanan SJ.
 [d.] tṛṣṇānām ā°] tṛṣṇānāha° SJ.

Annotated translation of K. 1150

I.–II.

He who, bearing Īśāna in his thoughts (*cintayā*), was (°*bbūtaḥ*) [the king named] Śrī-Īśānavarman (/was the cuirass of the venerable Lord), or (*vā*) one whose cuirass was the Lord, inviolable ...

To him was born a son: Bhavavarman [II], a great king resplendent in his majesty, with an imposing army, who destroyed all his hosts of enemies.

The first stanza has as its theme a person designated by the pronoun *yah* who is described as *śrīśānavarmabhūta*. Rather than supposing that *bbūta* here has the late and poorly attested sense of “son” (see *infra*), we interpret it in the traditional sense, that of the copula (“is”), or the copula with a nuance of metaphor (“is a veritable”, “is like”).⁵⁰ The character in question is therefore both “Śrī-Īśānavarman” and he has “that same” Īśāna for protection (*varman*): we understand then that the stanza plays on the royal name that the sovereign presumably adopted when he was consecrated king, namely Īśānavarman, interpreting it once as a *tatpuruṣa* compound (*pāda* ab), and then as a *bahuvrīhi* (*pāda* cd).

It seems that the two traditional senses of *bbūta* at the end of the compound are used here. On the one hand, the subject is really Īśānavarman, or became Īśānavarman, in that he took the meaningful royal name of Īśānavarman (“cuirass/breastplate of Īśāna [= Śiva]”) for the reason given in *pāda* b; on the other hand, he is “like a cuirass for Īśāna” insofar as he holds (*dhṛ*) the Lord in his thoughts, fixing his attention on him, this reason also being expressed by *pāda* b. The conjecture *dhāraṇaḥ* adopted here is based on the interpretation that Alexis Sanderson (2004:418, fn. 259) gives of the first stanza of the inscription K. 79, which praises Bhavavarman II:

⁵⁰ Thus Louis Renou 1968, § 91, p. 113: “Le cas de °*bbūta*- est à part : le mot fournit en fin de comp. l'équivalent de la copule libre dans la phrase nominale et souligne le prédicat (...); à partir, semble-t-il, de Kālid. se développe la nuance « qui ressemble à », *sama* ou *upamāna* des lexx.” (“°*bbūta* is a special case: the word provides at the end of a compound the equivalent of the free copula in a nominal sentence and underlines the predicate (...); from Kālidāsa onwards, it seems, it acquires the nuance ‘that looks like’, like *sama* or *upamāna* in lexicographical sources”).

rājā śrībhavavarmaneti tapasā dhāraṇād iti (conj.: *dhāraṇādditiḥ* Ep.: *dhāraṇāditiḥ* corr. Cœdès) ‘called Śrī-Bhavavarman [‘Protector of the World’] because he supported [it] through his ascetic practice’.

It seems to us that, in the light of our stanza, one could also understand “called Śrī-Bhavavarman [cuirass of Bhava = Śiva] because he held him [in this mind] by his [meditational] ascetic practices”.

In any case, this parallel shows that compounds of the type X-*varman* can be the object of semantic explanation: “such a person is or is called X-*varman* because he is *dhāraṇa* of X”. The parallel strongly urges us to propose for the end of *pāda* b of our inscription the conjecture we have adopted. The person in question would then be said to have become king with the meaningful name of Īśānavarman by virtue of his meditation upon Śiva and to be at the same time like a cuirass for Śiva.

Īśānavarman as a *babuvrihi*:

The pronoun *yasya* in *pāda* c designates the same Īśānavarman, whose name is here further explained as a *babuvrihi* (using a formula for the analysis of such compounds that is typically used in commentarial literature): “for whom the Lord (Īśāna) is his cuirass/protection”. The uncertainties as to the reading of the letters are not enough to cast doubt on this interpretation. *Pāda* d gives the justification for this interpretation: it must contain a *babuvrihi* of the form *abbedya-X*, either in the nominative (qualifying Īśāna) or in the genitive (qualifying *yasya*).

For another stanza playing on a *babuvrihi* ending in °*varman*, cf. K. 440 st. XXIX (*mānavarman*).

Given that the final visible character of the line may be *h*, it is tempting to complete the *pāda* with a word referring to the heart, such as *hārdi*, which, extended by a semantically empty *ka*-suffix, could give us the metrical ending *abbedyabārdikah*, “whose heart was unpierceable”.

It will be noted that in this interpretation the first stanza plays a dual role in the structure of the inscription: it fulfills the office of *maṅgala* (invocation to the divinity) and is at the same time part of the presentation of the reigning ruler. This is also the case of the first stanza of K. 79 if we adopt the modified interpretation proposed just above that is based on that of Alexis Sanderson. If we do so, then the oddity pointed out by Cœdès vanishes: : “this Sanskrit text [that of K. 79] presents the almost unique peculiarity of not starting with a stanza of invocation to a deity.⁵¹

⁵¹ “...ce texte sanskrit [celui de la K. 79] présente la particularité, presque unique, de ne pas commencer par une stance d’invocation à une divinité” (Cœdès, IC II, p. 69).

The *tasya* in stanza 2 is an anaphoric pronoun referring back to the referent of the pronoun *yaḥ* in the first stanza, and it is therefore the kinship relation of Īśānavarman and Bhavavarman that is the topic here (not that of Śivadatta). Furthermore, it seems that we must read *tasyātmajo* rather than *tasyānujo*, the reading underlying the interpretation of Jacques and Vickery: Bhavavarman would thus indeed be the son (*ātmaja*) of Īśānavarman — which this inscription is apparently the first to teach us — but not, as Jacques and Vickery thought, because he was the younger brother of the son (*bhūta*) of Īśānavarman! If one were to adopt the reading *tasyānujo*, Bhavavarman would be the younger brother of Īśānavarman.

To conclude our commentary on the opening pair of stanzas, a final word is required to explain why we must reject the interpretation of Jacques and Vickery. The presence of a second relative pronoun (*yasya*) in the second half of stanza I obliged us to suppose that the first half contains both subject and predicate. In the interpretation of Jacques and, following him, Vickery, however, the pronoun *yaḥ* in stanza I should refer to Śivadatta, to whom also the *yasya* in Ic and the *tasya* of IIa would have to refer as well. Crucial to this interpretation is the sense “son” accorded to the term *bhūta*. This acceptance can be traced back among lexicographers only as far as the thirteenth-century *Medinīkośa*, which records for *bhūta* the sense *kumāra*. My colleague Gerdi Gerschheimer has prepared extensive notes on the senses that the various ancient lexica attest for *bhūta*, as well as on the few late sources that actually do attest the sense “son”, but for our present purposes it is perhaps sufficient to summarise his findings thus: we can find no attestations of such a usage in lexicographical works earlier than that in the *Medinīkośa*, nor of attestations outside lexicographical literature. Furthermore, if someone should still wish to defend this interpretation (in which *īśānavarmmabhūtaḥ* would mean “son of Īśānavarman” and would describe Śivadatta), they would still need to propose some convincing interpretation for the remaining three quarters of the first stanza. The appeal of the interpretation is clear: it would attach this evidently very powerful man Śivadatta to a royal genealogy. But it cannot be made to fit either the syntax of the first sentence or the overall structure of the inscription. That structure, as our synopsis above makes clear, would in our interpretation consist of an auspicious invocation (*maṅgala*) ingeniously doubling as a genealogy of the reigning king Bhavavarman (I–II), followed by praise of the (unrelated) donor Śivadatta, and ending with a mention of the pious work that occasioned the inscription (IX–X).

Furthermore, for a defender of the old interpretation, apart from these major difficulties of semantics, syntax, omission of *paḍas* bcd and implausibility of overall structure, another minor oddity might be regarded as requiring explanation: why would Śivadatta, after locating himself in a prestigious royal genealogy, mention his birth in Śaṅkaragrāma (st. III)? Assuming this to be, as its form suggests, the

Nobles, Bureaucrats or Strongmen?

name of a village (*grāma*), the information that he was born there makes much better sense as a one-word evocation of Śivadatta's background if the preceding two stanzas do not connect him to royalty.

III.

[There was] a man named Śivadatta [who] held a rank of [high] office; born in the village of Śaṅkara, he was at first governor (*svāmi*) in Bhavapura.

We shall return below in our conclusion to a consideration of the list of the cities (given here and in the following stanzas) that Śivadatta governed.

IV.

And, being richly endowed, in Āḍhyapura, in Dhanvapura, [and] in excellent Varapura, he protected a multitude of people and accomplished [many] works.

V.

Afterwards he became master of Jyeṣṭhapura, [and] a great warrior general who destroyed with his sharpened arrows the army of the Śamvūkas.

In K. 908, a town called Śamvūkapattana (st. CXVI) is one of a list of 23 places (including also Lavodayapura) in which Jayavarman VII is said to have installed an image of Jayabuddhamahānātha (st. CXXI). As Cœdès mentions in his annotation (1941:296, fn. 3),⁵² the name Śāmbūka appears engraved on a pre-Angkorian-period statue of the Buddha of “Dvāravatī style” from Lobpuri and, assuming that the initial long vowel might be due to this being a derived form used as an ethnonym, he deduces that Śāmbūkapattana may have been a town in this region.

VI.

Master [of ?] Bhīmapura, and Lord in Abhayavāsa, then later in Candrapura.

VII.

Powerful/capable ... master... [whose] sovereignty was honoured by people of high status with hundreds of clasped and outstretched hands.

⁵² “Le nom de Çāmbūka apparaît dès l'époque préangkorienne dans une inscription gravée sur une statue de Buddha, appartenant par son style, à l'école de Dvāravatī, exhumée dans un des édicules du Vāt Māhāth'āt de Lōp'būri (Cœdès, *Recueil des Inscriptions du Siam*, II, p. 14). La différence de quantité de la première syllabe est due sans doute au fait que, dans l'inscription de Lōp'būri ce nom est un terme ethnique, dérivé de celui de la ville. Celle-ci reste à identifier, probablement avec quelque site ancien de la vallée du Mênam.” (“The name Śāmbūka appears in the pre-angkorian period in an inscription engraved on a statue of the Buddha that belongs stylistically to the Dvāravatī school and that was dug up in one of the aedicules of Vāt Māhāth'āt in Lōp'būri (Cœdès, *Recueil des Inscriptions du Siam*, II, p. 14). The difference in length of the first syllable is no doubt due to the fact that the name is used in the Lōp'būri inscription as an ethnonym derived from the name of the city. The city remains to be identified, probably with some old site in the Mênam valley.”)

VIII.

Free of the fault of envy/jealousy, he entirely fulfilled the desires of suppliants ...

IX–X.

In order to appease somewhat the thirsts of all creatures tormented in the middle of the day in summer by the rays of the sun, he caused to be dug an extensive (*vīpulām*) oblong tank (*dīrghikām*), which was charming (*ramyām*), deep (*agādhām*), full of sweet clear water, approachable (*sevyām*), teeming with fish and birdlife.

We have assumed that *acikhanat*, the reduplicated aorist of the root *khan*, is used here with causative sense. In *āprasāntaye*, the use of the particle *ā* in compound probably has the force of “somewhat” or “a little” (see Renou, 1968, § 82 p. 95, giving as an example *ākopa*, “faible colère”). This usage is rare with substantives and more common with adjectives.

“Governors’ Cities” in the seventh century

Before we attempt to draw the various threads together in a conclusion, a final consideration of governors’ cities may be helpful. Below follows a list of the cities for which governors appear to be named in the seventh-century inscriptions we have seen in the foregoing pages.⁵³ To these I have added one or two instances from Khmer inscriptions, starting from K. 109 of 655 CE, for in this case we have a governor mentioned both in Sanskrit and in Khmer. The third stanza of the Sanskrit text reads:

K. 109, N. st. III:

tadā dhruvapureśasya nujo vyādhapureśvaraḥ
nāmnā vibhur iti khyāto dāntaḥ tyāgī śuciḥ prabhuh

At that time, the younger brother of the governor of Dhruvapura⁵⁴ was the governor of Vyādhapura, well-known by the name Vibhu; he was controlled, generous, pure, powerful.

In the Khmer text, the same man is referred to by the expression Kurāk Kloñ Vyādhapura, which gives us a basis for supposing that Kurāk before the names of other towns, such as Bhīmapura (K. 1259) and perhaps Śūragrāma (K. 927) in the list below, is a way of designating the governor of that town (in spite of Vickery’s no doubt well-founded scepticism regarding the theories about *how* it might have come to have such a meaning [1998:205–206]). We have next added the instances

⁵³ Perhaps the only published Sanskrit inscription here that I have not discussed is K. 60 of 626 CE, whose third and fourth stanzas present difficulties that Barth has explained (1885:40–42). Having no estampage or photograph, I am not going to attempt to improve upon Barth’s careful treatment. Suffice it to say that they appear to speak of a man who was governor of Tāmapura, Bhīmapura, Cakrāṅkapura and Amoghapura during the reign of Īśānavarman.

⁵⁴ Here, unlike in K. 725, Dhruvapura is not characterized as a wild place. One might have been inclined to suppose that it was gradually tamed after K. 725, so that it could be referred to in K. 109 without allusion to its wildness, but K. 725, since it belongs to the reign of Jayavarman I, should rather be dated after K. 109.

of Mratāñ Kloñ before the names of cities that were already familiar to us from the seventh-century Sanskrit “governors’ inscriptions”, namely Jeṣṭhapura (= Jyeṣṭhapura) and Bhavapura, both in K. 1, as well as Mratāñ Kuruñ Vikramapura in K. 38. Here too, there is an inscription that has both Sanskrit and Khmer expressions that speak of the governorship, namely K. 506 of 637 CE, which is unfortunately not published, but Cœdès (IC V, p. 23) describes it as recording the gifts made by Mratāñ Khloñ Jyeṣṭhapura to Samarésvara and quotes the date (st. VIII, 559 *śaka*), and from the EFEO’s estampage n. 1474, of which Gerdi Gerschheimer has prepared a preliminary unpublished transcription, we can see in the opening Sanskrit stanzas (even though each is missing its last quarter) that this man was a certain Īśvarakumāra, a true servant (*sadbhṛtyah*) of Īśānavarman (st. IV), who was appointed as governor of Jyeṣṭhapura (st. V), who was a statesman (*nayajñah*), a hero in battle (*samaye śūrah*), conscious of favours rendered to him (*kerajñah*), once again (cf. our annotation to K. 1235, st. VII above), and beloved by good people (*sajjanapriyah*), and who installed an image of Viṣṇu (st. VII). The stanza that speaks of his governorship reads thus:

K. 506, st. V :

(5) punar jyeṣṭhapurasyāsyā rakṣāyām adhikṛtya yam

tato jyeṣṭhapurasvāmi ॐ ॐ ॐ ॐ ॐ – ॐ ॐ

Whom he then [after he had been a loyal servant ?] employed for the protection of this (*asya*) [city of] Jyeṣṭhapura; then, as governor of Jyeṣṭhapura, ...

Note that the pronoun *asya* here allows us to confirm the location of one more seventh-century city, for K. 506 is engraved on a door-jamb of a ruined pre-Angkorian shrine situated on a hill called Khău Nôi in Thailand, Sa Kaeo Province, Aranyaprathet District.⁵⁵

Abhayāvāsa	K. 1150, st. VI	
Amoghapura	K. 60/626, ⁵⁶ st. IV	
Āḍhyapura	K. 1150, st. IV; K. 53, st. XVIII	= Kdei Ang
Indrapura	K. 151/598, st. V	= Banteay Prei Nokor ? ⁵⁷
Ugrapura	K. 81, st. XXXII	
Cakrāñkapura	K. 60/626, st. IV	
Candrapura	K. 1150, st. VI	
Cirañghoṣapura	K. 1250, st. I	

⁵⁵ Cf. Cœdès, IC V, p. 23: “Les trois collines Khău Răng, Khău Nôi et Khău C’ômp’u, situées en territoire siamois dans la région du poste frontière d’Arăn, ont chacune une inscription...” (“Each of the three hills of Khău Răng, Khău Nôi et Khău C’ômp’u, situated in Siamese territory in the region of the frontier post of Arăn, has an inscription.”) Cf. the exactly comparable deictic and therefore localising use of *asya* agreeing with *ādhyapurasya* in st. XVIII of K. 53 (quoted above).

⁵⁶ As in an earlier tabulation, the numbers that follow a forward slash are the Common Era dates mentioned (in *śaka* era) in the inscriptions in question.

⁵⁷ This is the tentative suggestion of Cœdès quoted by Vickery 1998:394, who evidently thought that Banteay Prei Nokor was rather to be identified with Vyādhapura (Vickery 1998:398).

Jambātta(-bhojaka) ⁵⁸	K. 5 (C5th!), st. VII	
Jyeṣṭhapura	K. 506/637, st. V; K. 1150, st. V; K. 1, l.2 (Mratāñ Kloñ)	= Khău Nôi
Tamandarapura	K. 9/639, K. 604/627, K. 1235/627	
Tāmrapura	K. 60/626, st. IV	
Dhanvipura	K. 1150, st. VI; K. 21, st. XVI	(=Vyādhapura ?)
Dhruvapura	K. 725, st. XIV, K. 109/655, st. N.III	
Pañcagrāma ⁵⁹	K. 1364, st. III	
Bhavapura ⁶⁰	K. 1150, st. III, K. 1, ll. 6–7 (Mratāñ Kloñ)	
Bhīmapura	K. 1150, st. VI; K. 60, st. IV; K. 1259 (Kurāk)	
Rudrapurī	K. 9/639	
Liṅgapura	K. 1059	= city beside Vat Phu mountain
Varapura	K. 1150, st. IV	
Vikramapura	K. 38, l.11 (Mratāñ Kuruñ)	

⁵⁸ It should be noted that Cœdès seems not to take Jambātta to be a toponym. He reads (1931:6) and translates (1931:7) as follows:

VII. (12) | | yaś śrīmatā vijayavikramivikra[meṇa]
kaunḍi[n]ya[vañ]śaśaśinā vasudhādhipena

(13) jambāttabhojakapade nṛpasūnu – 𑀓
bālo pi [sa]nn adhikṛto guṇaśauryyogāt | |

Par le roi fortuné qui a la démarche victorieuse (?) de Vikramin et qui est la lune de la lignée de Kaunḍinya, ce fils de roi, bien que jeune, a été, parce qu’il réunit en lui la vertu et la valeur, désigné comme un chef d’un domaine religieux conquis sur la boue.

(“By the fortunate king who has the victorious gait (?) of Vikramin and who is the moon of the Kaunḍinya lineage, this king’s son, although young, because he united virtue and valour in himself, was designated as a leader of a religious area reclaimed from the mud.”).

In further explanation of this interpretation involving ground reclaimed (ātta) from mud (jamba), Cœdès adds a short note to explain that *bhojakapade* is to be understood to mean “literally: ‘a place of rest of persons who live from offerings’” (as “Exactly « séjour de personnes vivant d’offrandes »”). Of course it is extremely tricky to interpret an inscription of this very early date, since we have so few fifth-century parallels from the Khmer-speaking area, but, partly on the grounds of earlier Indian usages of *bhoja*/*bhojaka*, and partly because Jambātta is not easily decodable as Sanskrit (only one attestation of *jamba* in the sense of “mud” seems ever to have been recorded in published dictionaries, and that is in a probably thirteenth-century grammatical commentary on the *Uṇādisūtra*, a work on anomalous word-formations: see Böhling & Roth 1990, s.v. *jamba*), I am inclined instead to interpret this stanza as follows:

Guṇavarman (*yaḥ*), the son of the king (*nṛpasūnu...*), although still a child (*bālo pi sañ*), because he possessed virtues and heroism (*guṇaśauryyogāt*), was appointed (*adhikṛtaḥ*) to the rank of Governor of Jambātta, by the illustrious (*śrīmatā*) king (*vasudhādhipena*), who was a moon in the lineage of Kaunḍinya, and who possessed the valour of the Victorious Strider [Viṣṇu] (*vijayavikramivikrameṇa*).

⁵⁹ That Pañcagrāma is one place (and not simply five unrelated villages) is clear because its governor, whose name cannot be discerned in what is legible of K. 1364, is described as “a favourite [and] servant [of Īśānavarman I] ... governor of Pañcagrāma and elsewhere” in the first half of st. III: 𑀓 𑀓 𑀓 [va](lla)bho bhṛtyaf pañcagrā(mā)dibhojaka[h] (unpublished transcription of Gerdi Gerschheimer and Dominique Soutif, to which I have tentatively added the first two syllables “[va](lla)”).

⁶⁰ Bhavapura plays an important rôle in Angkorian genealogy as the seat of power of legendary royal antecedents (see, e.g., K. 806, st. XVII), but we do not know where it was, nor where the Bhavapura mentioned in this seventh-century inscription may have been.

Nobles, Bureaucrats or Strongmen?

Vyādhapura	K. 109/655, st. N.III and in Khmer l. 11 (Kurāk Kloñ)	= Angkor Borei ? or Banteay Prei Nokor?
Śūrāgrāma	K. 927, l. 2 (Kurāk)	
Śreṣṭhapura	K. 151/598, st. V (?); K. 725, st. XII	

A few of these (rather generic) city-names (Bhīmapura, Candrapura and Dhanvipura) are mentioned in Angkorian-period inscriptions centuries later. But they might by then have been referring to broad administrative regions or simply to different places with the same names. How to know whether they still referred to the same cities? According to Vickery (1998:398), “[b]y the tenth and eleventh centuries some administrative entities had been enlarged, and some names, such as Amoghapura and Bhīmapura, had been transplanted from South to North.”

In short, only three places can be firmly identified, one of which, Āḍhyapura (Kdei Ang), was close to the centre of power. Liṅapura (Vat Phu) and Jyeṣṭhapura (Khău Nôi), however, seem not to have been close, but even this might be disputed: Michel Lorillard, for instance, argues that Vat Phu, although it may seem isolated today, is in fact a focal point of a network of natural paths of communication formed by the Mekong and its tributaries.⁶¹

Two other cities, although we do not know where they were, may also be surmised to be at the outer reaches of control: Dhruvapura (since it is described as wild) and Tamandarapura, which may have been in what is now Southern Vietnam.

A second presentation of the same data but ordered by governors' names, where known, may be helpful:

Īśvarakumāra	(Jyeṣṭhapura)	K. 506
Guṇavarman	(Jambāṭta)	K. 5 (C5th)
Ciraṅghoṣa: ⁶²	(Ciraṅghoṣapura/Ghoṣapura)	K. 1250

⁶¹ “Le site de Vat Phu, qui nous apparaît aujourd’hui isolé à l’intérieur des terres, devait être perçu d’une façon très différente à une époque ancienne. Sa position géographique se trouve au centre d’un réseau de voies de communication naturelles qui a conservé jusqu’à la fin du XIX^e siècle une grande importance, et dont les premiers explorateurs européens ont d’ailleurs profité. Le Mékong formait évidemment un axe essentiel donnant accès à la côte, et par là même aux premières implantations indianisées avec lesquelles des échanges étaient organisés. A Stœng Treng, en aval de Vat Phu et des chutes de Khone, se trouve le dernier confluent des grandes rivières de la rive gauche (Sé Kong, Sé San) qui lient la cordillère Annamitique au fleuve. En amont, à l’emplacement de l’actuel chef-lieu de la province de Champassak, arrive un autre grand affluent de gauche, la Sé Don, qu’une quarantaine de kilomètres à peine séparent du confluent de la Sé Mun, le plus grand affluent de droite du Mékong” (Lorillard 2011:189–190).

(“The site of Vat Phu, which today appears to us isolated in the interior, must have been seen differently in ancient times. Its geographical position is at the centre of a network of natural lines of communication which remained of great importance until the end of the nineteenth century, and which was, incidentally, made use of by the first European explorers. The Mekong obviously formed an essential axis giving access to the coast, and thus to the first Indianised settlements with which exchanges took place. In Stœng Treng, downstream from Vat Phu and the Khone Falls, is the last confluence of the great rivers of the left bank (Sé Kong, Sé San), which link the Annamitic range to the river. Upstream, on the site of the current provincial capital of Champasak, another large tributary, the Sé Don, joins from the left, and there are only 40 kilometres separating this from the confluence of the Sé Mun, the largest tributary to join the Mekong from the right.”)

⁶² The second half of the first stanza of K. 1250 could be interpreted as meaning that the town that this “servant” of

Jayanta(ku)rāja(ka) ⁶³	(Liṅgapura)	K. 1059
Narasimhagupta	(Indrapura, Śreṣṭhapura(?))	K. 151
Vidyāviśeṣa	(Tāmandarapura)	K. 604, K. 1235
Vibhu	(Vyādhapura)	K. 109
Śivadatta	(Āḍhyapura)	K. 54
	(Abhayāvāsa, Āḍhyapura, Candrapura, Jyeṣṭhapura, Dhanvipura, Bhavapura, Bhīmapura, Varapura)	K. 1150
Siṅhadatta	(Āḍhyapura)	K. 53
? Bhoja ?	(Tāmandarapura)	K. 9
?	(Rudrapurī)	K. 9
?	(Dhruvapura)	K. 109
?	(Ugrapura)	K. 81
?	(Tāmrapura, Bhīmapura, Cakrāṅkapura, Amoghapura)	K. 60
?	(Śreṣṭhapura, Dhruvapura)	K. 725
?	(Dhanvipura)	K. 21
?	(Vikrapapura)	K. 38
?	(Jyeṣṭhapura)	K. 1
?	(Bhavapura)	K. 1
?	(Bhīmapura)	K. 1259
?	(Śūrāgrāma)	K. 927
?	(Pañcagrāmādi°)	K. 1364

From this second tabulation, a curious new fact emerges: we do not know the names of over half the seventh-century governors. In one or two cases (such as K. 60 and K. 1364) this is probably just because of physical damage to the inscription, but in most it is because the inscriptions simply do not contain such information: the prestige of the rank of the governor was enough to identify him, but perhaps not sufficient to make it a matter of course that some other identifying name would be systematically given.

Conclusions

Aside from the purely philological findings of the foregoing pages that have been brought to light by laying non-Cambodian texts beside Cambodian ones (relating, for instance, to the usage of the terms *śuddhābhisandhi*, *varṇamuṣṭi*, *puṇyādhikāra* and *yajvan*, or to the nexus °*bhojaka*, °*svāmin*

Īśānavarman I governed was called either Ghoṣapura or Ciraṅghoṣa and that the governor took his name (or his fame?) from the fact that he governed that city: *bhr̥tyas̄ ciraṅghoṣapura[dbā]patyagr̥hitānāmā raṅadr̥bdhaviryah*. The last epithet tells us that “his valour in battle was feared [by his enemies]”.

⁶³ The only point where the reading of this inscription is now doubtful concerns the form of this man’s name.

and °*svāmibhojaka*), and apart from the new detail of dynastic history that was announced already in our title, namely that Śivadatta was not the son of Īśānavarman I, what else can we be said to have learnt from this exploration?

Let us return to the bundle of interrelated questions that we raised at the beginning of this article. As we have just seen, we can locate only a tiny proportion of the towns and so cannot determine whether most were on the fringes of the apparently newly formed seventh-century polity or closer to its heart. Perhaps the emphasis on military accomplishments of certain governors (we find five qualified as “warriors” [*śūra*]: K. 1364, st. III, K. 1059, st. III; K. 1250, st. I; K. 1150, st. V; and K. 505, st. VII) could be taken to imply that some governors were warriors who typically expanded the frontiers of control.

The issue of inheritance proves also to be uncertain. We have seen only a few instances where heredity is explicitly stated to have played a rôle in the attainment of governorships (K. 53, st. XVIII; K. 151, st. V; and perhaps K. 9, st. II), but there are clues to suggest that even then the king’s recognition of hereditary claims was nonetheless necessary or desired, perhaps because inheritance rules were loose enough to cover multiple options, either inherently so or partly or entirely because a prestigious (on the grounds that it was brahminical) pattern of father-to-son inheritance created interference with a local pattern, namely one from mother’s-brother (*mātula*) to sister’s-son (*bhāginēya*). Conversely, we have also seen that several governorships seem to have been bestowed rather as successive posts in a glittering administrative career, with no clear indication that they would have been accumulated and collectively bestowed upon an heir. Could Śivadatta, for instance, really have been simultaneously governor of Bhavapura, Āḍhyapura, Dhanvipura, Varapura, Jyeṣṭhapura, Bhīmapura, Abhayavāsa and Candrapura? It is true that nothing in the account of K. 1150 explicitly rules this out, but two of those cities we know to have been rather far apart, namely Āḍhyapura and Jyeṣṭhapura; furthermore, other than logistics, the use of certain particles (for instance *paścāt* [“afterwards”] in st. V and the combination of *tadā* [“then”] and *punaḥ* [“further”] in st. VI) suggests that these were indeed successive and not cumulative appointments. So even if some governorships were heritable, some were probably not. Confusingly, Āḍhyapura appears to fall both into the short list of heritable governorships (in K. 53, st. XVIII) as well as into a list of non-heritable ones (K. 1150, st. IV). Does this mean that we should after all not assume, at least for the seventh century, that these powerful families had local strongholds in their cities or places of provenance? Could their heritable power instead have been delocalised but acknowledged amongst a nexus of power-wielding families close to the court before being made real by the formal recognition of the king? In other words, instead of being heirs to particular cities, could they have been simply heirs, potentially, to authority, which could then have been granted to them in one or other city, or in a sequence of cities, according to the decisions of the reigning monarch?⁶⁴ Instead of particular territories being heritable from one generation to the next within particular named clans (a situation common elsewhere in the Indic world), an intermarrying group of families without clan-names and (broadly) following uncle to uterine nephew succession might have shared a broad territory. But while such a model might appear to fit some seventh-century

⁶⁴ Could the characterisation of Śivadatta as *adhikārapadasthāyin* in st. III of K. 1150 suggest that he was born to such a delocalised position of authority?

documents, it should be observed that it would be out of line with Angkorian-period presentations of pre-Angkorian royal ancestry, where we see particular family lines associated with the cities of Aninditapura, Vyādhapura and Śambhupura (e.g. st. III–IV of K. 279, K. 323 and K. 701). Whatever rôle heredity may have played, it is clear that competence, whether on the battlefield, in medicine or in Sanskritic learning, must also have been a factor.

As for the collection of taxes by governors, we have seen that this is implied by the expressions *bhojaka* and *svāmibhojaka*, and we have seen also that it is spoken of explicitly as a right that one governor, Śiṅhadatta, chose to waive (K. 53, st. XX). That these taxes would have been shared with the king is implied by the suggestion that these governors were *sāmantas* or vassal-rulers,⁶⁵ as also by their being described as servants (*bhr̥tya*) of the king (K. 151, st. III; K. 725, st. XI; K. 1235, st. VII; K. 604, st. VII K. 1059, st. III; K. 506, st. IV; K. 1364, st. IV) and it is perhaps also implied by the insistence on them being conscious of favours rendered to them (*ḥṛtajña*, *ḥṛtavedin*, etc., e.g. in K. 1235, with further references given in our annotation to st. VII).

Alas, after building and combing through our corpus, few clear conclusions can be reached about the seventh-century Khmer “empire”. “Empire” is of course used here provocatively, for it would presumably not be approved of by, for instance, Kulke, for whom the seventh-century Khmer kingdom appears to belong to the second of the three phases of his periodisation of South and Southeast Asian state-formation into local, regional and imperial phases (1986:5ff).

This phase usually began with the military conquest of one or several neighbouring local nuclear areas. But during this period military conquest neither led to the annihilation or replacement of the existing political authorities, nor to a direct unification of these newly conquered areas with the centre. The defeated leaders were usually reinstalled as tributary chiefs. (Kulke 1986:6)

But the evidence of governorships examined in this article does not seem to me to fit neatly into this second phase as Kulke characterises it. As we have just seen, it is not clear that these governors were typically defeated and then reinstalled “tributary chiefs” or their descendants. Furthermore, now that Śivadatta is no longer held to be a relative of Īśānavarman I, it is not clear whether the governors are really little different from the sovereigns, coming from “the same stock”, as Kulke further suggests (1986:7):

... despite the various royal paraphernalia which surrounded these new **rajaś** and their courts, they remained basically a **primus inter pares** among the local leaders throughout this period. The structural weakness of this political system was the precarious position of the **raja**. His tributary chiefs outside his own nuclear area were often of the same stock and had therefore, at least theoretically, the same chances to become a **raja** once they were able to prove their own “prowess”.

⁶⁵ One might suppose, from the data presented here, that this characterisation appeared only in one particularly early epigraph (K. 151, of 598 CE, st. II and IV), but in fact *sāmantas* are mentioned also in K. 1364, and a “favourite” and “servant” of Bhavavarman I receives the honourable title *mahasāmanta* (“grand vassal-king”) in st. IV of K. 1059. We also find Īśānavarman described as thronged by bowing vassal-kings elsewhere, e.g. twice in K. 102, which may well also have been a seventh-century “governor” inscription, but names, date and other details are lost to damage. (For a detailed exploration of the history of the term *sāmanta*, see Gopal 1963.)

While this seems possible, it does not seem to find unambiguous support in the inscriptions we have examined. If one wanted instead to argue that the Khmer sovereigns of the seventh century already controlled a transregional “empire”, then one could as easily find clues of that: the range of successive administrative posts in far-flung places occupied by Śivadatta, for example, could point in that direction, as could the fact that Vidyāviśeṣa chose to underwrite both public works in the territory he governed (his *setu* in K. 1235) as well as the construction of a temple, which he placed under his sovereign’s control, inside the capital (K. 604), an act of public devotion that could be interpreted as the action of a powerful man attempting to ingratiate himself (or repay favours) at court.⁶⁶ Conversely, if these regional rulers were majesties potentially as powerful as the *rajā* himself, threatening to jostle him from his throne, then why do their inscriptions so often not even tell us their names? Finally (and this is not an exhaustive list of considerations), the language too that is used of Īśānavarman (e.g. *rajādbhirāja* in st. VII of K. 1235) and of those around him (we have just alluded to their being styled as *sāmantas*) makes quite plain that our primary sources considered Īśānavarman an “emperor”, at least in as much as there already existed a Sanskritic conception of “empire”, a conception characterised by Fussman, after an eloquent exploration of early evidence, as “un emboîtement de royautes” (“a nesting of monarchies”) (1980:389).

Calquing Cambodian historical developments onto Indian ones, will of course sound dangerous to many readers, and calquing them on to Indian theoretical prescriptions may sound even more treacherous, but in this case the selection of governors of cities may have been exactly as the *Manusmṛti* recommends in the quotation cited as an epigraph to this article:⁶⁷ the selection, in other words, may have been largely *ad hoc*. Such patterns as can be discerned prove inconsistent. At most there are some shared “talking points” in the way these officials present themselves: their military and intellectual qualifications are emphasised, as are their good families, where possible, and the fact that they are dear (*vallabha*) to the king, and it is underlined that they are loyal (*kṛtavedin*, *kṛtajña*). Beyond this, little can be said: they seem not consistently to have inherited, nor consistently to have been appointed, nor consistently to have been military men, nor consistently bureaucrats, and we do not really know where they ruled, nor with what degree of independence.

⁶⁶ A parallel case might be that of Jīvā, the wife of the governor of a place called either Ghoṣapura or Ciraṅghoṣapura, who also installed a *līṅga* in Īśānavarman I’s capital, according to the still unpublished door-jamb inscription K. 1250 (of Sambor Prei Kuk’s monument M57), which is currently in the depot in Kompong Thom.

⁶⁷ Cf. also *Manusmṛti* 7.60–62 cited in the annotation to st. VII of K. 1235 above.

Figure 1, photograph AMPP004228 of K. 1235 taken by the Stone Restoration Workshop of the National Museum of Phnom Penh.

Figure 2, photograph of EFEO estampage n. 1788 of K. 1235.

Figure 3, photograph of EFEO estampage n. 1779 of K. 604.

Figure 4, photograph of EFEO estampage n. 1471 of K. 1150.

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Abbreviations

EIAD *Early Inscriptions of Āndhradeśa* (<http://hisoma.huma-num.fr/exist/apps/EIAD/works/>)

IC *Inscriptions du Cambodge*. See Cœdès 1937–1966 below.

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សង្ខេប ៖

Nobles, Bureaucrats or Strongmen? On the “Vassal Kings” or “Hereditary Governors” of Pre-Angkorian City-States: Two Sanskrit inscriptions of Vidyāviśeṣa, Seventh-century Governor of Tamandarapura (K. 1235 and K. 604), and an Inscription of Śivadatta (K. 1150), Previously Considered a Son of Īśānavarman I

Dominic Goodall

នេះជាសេចក្តីបកប្រែនិងការសិក្សាទៅលើសិលាចារឹកភាសាសំស្ក្រឹតចំនួនបីនៃប្រទេសកម្ពុជាតាក់តែងឡើងនៅស.វ.ទី៧ដោយអភិបាលក្រុងពីរនាក់ព្រមទាំងមានការវែកញែកចំណុចផ្សេងៗដែលគេអាចដឹងអំពីអ្នកដែលព្រះរាជានានានៅសម្បូរណ៍ព្រៃគុកតែងតាំងជាអភិបាលក្រុងនាសម័យនោះ។ ក្នុងចំណោមសិលាចារឹកស.វ.ទី៧ចំនួនប្រមាណ២០០មាន២០ដែលមាននិយាយពីអភិបាលនៃក្រុងចំនួន២២។ ក្នុងនោះមានតែក្រុងប៊ុណ្ណោះដែលយើងដឹងថានៅទីណាច្បាស់នាខាងជើងនិងខាងត្បូងនៃតំបន់នេះ។ មួយនៅទឹកដីប្រទេសថៃឡើយដ៏បច្ចុប្បន្ន មួយទៀតនៅប្រទេសលាវ ឯទីបីនៅក្នុងខេត្តព្រៃវែងសព្វថ្ងៃ។ ក្នុងសិលាចារឹកទាំងបីដែលលើកយកមកសិក្សាមានពីរនិយាយឈ្មោះក្រុង «តមន្តរុបុរ» ដែលប្រហែលជាស្ថិតនៅខាងត្បូងនោះទៅទៀតគឺថានៅតំបន់ដីសណ្តរទន្លេមេកុងក្នុងដីវៀតណាមបច្ចុប្បន្ន។ គេឃើញមានឈ្មោះក្រុងចំនួន២២ជាសំស្ក្រឹតប៉ុន្តែក្នុងនោះមានចេញឈ្មោះអភិបាលក្រុងតែ៤ប៉ុណ្ណោះ។ រីឯអ្នកឯទៀតគឺយើងដឹងដោយសារឋាននុក្រម។

Abstract

Nobles, Bureaucrats or Strongmen? On the “Vassal Kings” or “Hereditary Governors” of Pre-Angkorian City-States: Two Sanskrit inscriptions of Vidyāviśeṣa, Seventh-century Governor of Tamandarapura (K. 1235 and K. 604), and an Inscription of Śivadatta (K. 1150), Previously Considered a Son of Īśānavarman I

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This article contains editions and translations of 3 C7th Khmer inscriptions in Sanskrit set up by 2 city-governors, embedded in a discussion about what can be known about the figures recognised as governors of cities by the C7th Khmer rulers of Sambor Prei Kuk. A corpus is drawn up of 20 inscriptions that refer to governorships of 22 cities (out of a total of perhaps about 200 surviving C7th Khmer inscriptions). The precise locations of only 3 seem certain and they are to be found in both the North and the South. One is today in Thailand, another is today in Laos, and the third is in Prei Veng, today one of Cambodia’s southernmost provinces. Tamandarapura, the city whose governor issued 2 of the inscriptions edited here, appears to have been from further South, in the region of the delta of the Mekong, in what is today Vietnam. Whereas the inscriptions furnish Sanskrit names of 22 cities, they yield only 9 governors’ names: their rank alone identifies the others.

Résumé

Nobles, Bureaucrats or Strongmen? On the “Vassal Kings” or “Hereditary Governors” of Pre-Angkorian City-States: Two Sanskrit inscriptions of Vidyāviśeṣa, Seventh-century Governor of Tamandarapura (K. 1235 and K. 604), and an Inscription of Śivadatta (K. 1150), Previously Considered a Son of Īśānavarman I

Dominic Goodall

Le présent article consiste en l'édition et la traduction en anglais de trois inscriptions du Cambodge en sanskrit, datant du VII^{ème} s. et émanant de deux gouverneurs des villes, accompagnée d'une discussion sur ce qu'on peut savoir des gouverneurs nommés par les rois de Sambor Prei Kuk à cette époque. Un corpus de 20 inscriptions fait référence aux gouverneurs de 22 villes (sur un total d'environ 200 inscriptions du VII^{ème} s.). Seules trois villes peuvent être localisées avec certitude ; elles se trouvent dans le nord et le sud de la région. L'une est aujourd'hui en Thaïlande, une autre au Laos et une troisième à Prei Veng, dans le sud du Cambodge. Tamandarapura, la ville évoquée dans deux inscriptions éditées ici, se trouvait probablement encore plus au sud, dans la région du delta du Mékong, dans l'actuel Vietnam. Alors que les inscriptions donnent les noms sanskrits de 22 villes, elles ne mentionnent que 9 noms de gouverneurs. Mais le rang seul suffit à identifier les autres.