Chittagong Plate of Kāntideva

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Author of digital edition: Arlo Griffiths

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Identifier: DHARMA_INSBengalCharters00007

Repository: Bengal Charters (tfb-bengalcharters-epigraphy)

File path: texts/DHARMA_INSBengalCharters00007.xml

Language: Sanskrit [Siddhamātṛkā]

Commit: 2026-10-31 08:09 (4311b30), last modified 2026-09-09 14:21 (3462256)

Palaeographic description

The seal is engraved in relief. The scribe does not distinguish b/v and we find v throughout. The scribe uses T and M but also n·. The regular form of ā-mātrā is used in *ṇā*. The scribe does not seem to be entirely consistent on distinguishing e/ai. An ornamental form of *sti* is used in *svasti* (line 1).

Edition

Seal

〈1〉 śrī-kāntidevaḥ

Plate

〈1〉 □ ___ svasti śrīmaj-jaya-skandhāvārāT varddhamāna-pura-vāsakāT

1. Vasantatilakā

〈2〉 yo dharma-ratna-kiraṇair apavidhya sāndra〈ṁ〉
mohāndhakāra-paṭalaṁ sakalaṁ tri〈3〉-lokaM|
Āloka-lokam anayat s¿u?〈a〉 jayaty udār¿a?〈o〉
dur-vāra-māra-visara〈4〉sya jayī jinendraḥ||

2. Āryā

tad-bhakti-valita-śaktir bhuja-dvayaurjitya-vijita-ripu〈5〉-darpaḥ|
sa jayati dharmaika-rataḥ khyātaḥ śrī-bhadradat〈t〉o yaḥ||

3. Āryā

tasya su〈6〉-bhāṣita-bhārata-purāṇa-rāmāy¿o?〈a〉ṇārthavit tanayaḥ
nāmnā śrī-dhanadattaḥ〈7〉 prakaṭita-mahimānvayo yo 'bhūT||

4. Anuṣṭubh

tasya gaurī mahā-bhūbhṛt-
-sutā vudha〈8〉-guru-stutā
patnī vindu-ratir nāma
yā vabhūva śiva-priyā||

5. Śārdūlavikrīḍita

tasyā bhoga〈9〉-nidāna-dāna-salil¡e!〈ai〉r ārdrī-kṛtorjad-bhuja–
sphūrjad-vajra-valārjitāji-vija〈10〉ya-prājya-pratāpo mahān·|
saumyaḥ sūnṛta-vāg arāti-bhaya-kṛd vikhyāta〈11〉-kīrttir yaśo
jyotsnāhāra-tuṣāra-kunda-dhavalaṁ yo yātavān ātmajaḥ||

6. Anuṣṭubh

〈12〉 yaś ca kurvañ jagat-tuṣṭyai
hiraṇya-kaśi(p)u-kṣayaM|
nāvalamvitavān mā〈13〉yān
dāna-vārir api prabhuḥ||

sa khalv akhila-jana-mano-'bhirāmābhigāmi〈14〉kā□neka-guṇa-ratna-bhūṣaṇaḥ|
parama-sau□gato mātā-pitṛ-pā〈15〉dānudhyātaḥ parameśvaro mahārājādhi□rājaḥ
śrīmān¿a?〈·〉 kā〈16〉ntidevaḥ kuśalī| harikelā-maṇḍale bhāvi□-bhūpatīṁs tad-ātma-
hi〈17〉tam idaṁ vodhayati viditam astu vaḥ|

Apparatus

Plate

〈3〉 anayat s¿u?〈a〉 ◇ *anayat sa* M • It is almost impossible not to read *tsu* (cf. *tsu* in l. 7) or else *tsva* (cf. *lva* in l. 13). Majumdar simply reads *anayat sa* but that reading can only be obtained by force of emendation.

〈9〉 -salil¡e!〈ai〉r ◇ *-salilair* M • We do no see here the bipartite vowel marker that is used elsewhere to make *-ai*, but only the top stroke that is used to make *-e* in *aneka* in l. 14.

〈15〉 śrīmān¿a?〈·〉 kā〈16〉ntidevaḥ • The name Kāntideva is confirmed by the legend of the seal, so a parsing Śrī Mānakāntideva cannot be entertained.

Translation

Seal

〈1〉 Śrī Kāntideva

Plate

〈1〉 Hail! From the illustrious victory camp which is the residence at Vardhamānapura:

1.

Victorious is the exalted victor of the irrepressible Māras, the King of Jinas, who, after piercing the thick veil of darkness that is Illusion, with the rays of the jewel of his Law, led the entire Triple World to the world of light!

2.

Victorious is the one called Śrī Bhadradatta, endowed with the power of devotion to that 〈same King of Jinas〉, solely devoted to Dharma, who has subdued the arrogance of enemies with the force of his two arms!

3.

His son, versed in the meaning of maxims, of the Bhārata, of the Purāṇas and of the Rāmāyaṇa, whose family was of manifest glory, was named Śrī Dhanadatta.

4.

His fair wife, daughter of a great king, praised by wise masters, devoted to Śiva {〈like〉Śiva's dear 〈wife〉 Gaurī, daughter of the great mountain, praised by the gods' preceptor }, was named Bindurati.

5–6.

Her son too (*api*) is a great king (mahān prabhuḥ), gentle, soft-spoken, terrifying to enemies; of renowned fame, because he has obtained glory as white as moonlight, pearl garland, snow and jasmine, being of immense dignity due to his battle victories gained through the power of the cracking thunderbolts that are his strong arms, moistened by the oceans of (water libated on the occasion of so numerous) gifts that cause enjoyment (of merit), and because to please the world, he 〈like the〉 victor of demons (*dānava-ari*, i.e. Viṣṇu), brought about the death of Hiraṇyakaśipu {he, 〈like unto〉 gift water (dāna-vāri),[1] caused (his own supplies of) gold (hiraṇya) and food (kaśipu) to diminish} 〈but〉 without taking recourse to deception!

〈14–17〉 That one, agreeable to everyone's minds and adorned with the numerous qualities of a 〈king〉 who is approachable (*ābhigāmika*), as is well known, is the devout Buddhist (parama-saugata), blessed by the feet of his parents, the supreme lord (parameśvara), the overlord of great kings (mahārāja-adhirāja) prosperous Kāntideva, being in good health (*kuśalin*), admonishes future kings in the Harikelā country (*harikelā-maṇḍala*) of this, which is beneficial to themselves: "May it be known to you"

Commentary

2.

Can this Bhadradatta be identified with the one who figures in the Metal Vase of Devātideva, year 72?

5.

The theme *dānam bhoga-nidānam* is encountered also in the Plate of Devātideva, year 12, stanza II.

〈13–14〉 The royal virtues called *ābhigāmika* are listed in Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra* 6.1.3: *mahākulīno daivabuddhisattvasampanno vṛddhadarśī dhārmikaḥ satyavāg avisaṁvādakaḥ kṛtajñaḥ sthūlalakṣo mahotsāho 'dīrghasūtraḥ śakyasāmanto dṛḍhabuddhir akṣudrapariṣatko vinayakāma ity ābhigāmikā guṇāḥ*.

[1] In order to lend a second meaning to *dāna-vārir*, I am forced to assume poet licence in the form of masculine gender for normally neuter *vāri*, which seems plausible if the king himself is asyndetically compared to water.

〈14–16〉 The formulaics of the prose paragraph closely resembles that seen in the Odein stela of Dharmavijaya, year 2.

Bibliography

The inscription was first edited by R.C. Majumdar ([1952] 1941–1942) with an English translation and photo of an estampage; it is re-edited here by Arlo Griffiths from the same photo of an estampage plus a photo of the plate.

Primary

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