CHAPTER 1
CHAPTER I

Sources of the Bhauma-karas and the Somavamsis of Orissa.

INTRODUCTION

A very significant event in the political history of early medieval Orissa is the rule of the Bhauma-kara and the Somavamsi dynasties. The activities of the two powerful royal dynasties continued for quite a long period of four centuries (736 AD to 1110 AD) and during this period they contributed many new elements that helped the growth of life and culture of Orissa in particular and of India in general. To re-construct the history of this period, we have to largely depend on the epigraphic records which form the principal source materials of our thesis. Large number of inscriptions, both on copper plates and on stones were caused to be written by the rulers of Bhauma-kara and the Somavamsi dynasties from the 8th century to 11th Century AD. The inscriptions have been incised on the objects like rocks, lithic, metallic, earthen and wooden pillars, tablets, plates and pots as also bricks, shells and ivory plaques. But the inscriptions of Orissa during this period were mostly copper plate charters and a few stone records. The Charters were composed under the direct supervision of a Sandhi-Vigrahika (Minister of war and peace) and were engraved by the court scribes at the royal command. They were granted to Brähmin donees for religious purposes. The copper plates
contain interesting informations regarding the genealogy and chronology of the dynasties, their administrative organisations with a list of the important ministers and officers. Besides they also focus ample light on social, economic and religious conditions of the then Orissa.

On the contrary, the stone inscriptions are of votive and commemorative type and they are mostly private records. The study of these stone inscriptions throw a flood of light on the religious conditions and provide ample informations about the achievements of the Bhaumakaras and the Somavamsis. The inscriptions of some contemporary ruling dynasties in and outside Orissa like the Bhañjas, the Sulkies, the tungas, the Nandas, the Gaṅgas, the Pālas and the Kāśṭrakūṭas also help us a great deal in this regard.

The epigraphic records of the period under study are written in Sanskrit language. The alphabets are of eastern variety of North India popularly known as Kutila variety. As regards the design of the copper plates, some difference is seen. The Bhaumā-kara copper plates consist of one big plate and the royal seal is affixed on the ring at the top with Saivite symbols like bull and trisula. The Charter begins with an invocation and the description of the capital. Then follows the prasasti (the eulogistic portions) in which the name and achievements of the ruler and his ancestors are recorded in almost a set form which
is common to many other records of these rulers. After this comes an address of the king to different officers, feudatory rulers who are informed of the land grant. Then comes a short description of the donees and his ancestors. Next comes the gift formula with pouring of water from the hands of the donor for his permanent and un-disturbed enjoyment. Then the object which is donated is described. Often it is a village or a land given along with various kinds of taxes. Sometimes, the boundaries of the land are carefully specified. After this the record concludes with an imprecation on anyone who may terminate the charity or otherwise disturb it and with the praise of those who will maintain and protect it in the future. The different parts of these land charters are valuable for they supply information on economic, social and religious matters.

The Somavamsi inscriptions invariably differ from the Bhauma-kara epigraphs. Their records consist of three copper plates called the Triphali grants. The plates are attached to a ring on which the royal seal is affixed indicating the authenticity of the charter as royal order. In the royal seal usually we find the figures of Goddess Laxmi seated on a throne or a lotus flanked by two elephants on either side of her with their trunks raised on her head. The arrangement of the subject matters of the charters are identical with those of the Bhauma-kara records as described above.
Many of the Bhauma-kara and the Somavamsī epigraphs discovered so far have been dated either with a Somvat or with regnal year of the ruler. The inscriptions have been used for construction of the political as well as cultural history of Orissa. Various administrative units such as Visaya, Bhukti etc. royal titles, duties and powers of the kings have been gleaned on the basis of the epigraphic records. Epigraphic records do not throw any light on the functions and powers of ministers. They merely name them in connection with land grants which sometimes makes it difficult to determine their functions.

The inscriptions throw some light on the Varna-srama Dharma and the social history of the period.

The economic conditions of the people of this period is gleaned from the inscriptions of the Bhauma-karas and the Somavamsis. We get detailed idea about agriculture trade and commerce, irrigation facilities, industry and craft. Our records of the period refer to certain articles of trade and mention the names of some ports and commercial towns.

The inscriptions supply valuable data about land revenue settlement, tenures, purchase and sale of land. The inscriptions of our period refer to a number of fiscal terms and various coins, such as gold, silver and copper have been mentioned also. It is curious to note that no coins issued by any Bhauma-kara or Somavamsi rulers have been
brought to light so far. The inscriptions enlighten us about the various religions such as Buddhism, Jainism, Śāivism, Vaiṣṇavism and Śaktism. The early Bhauma-karas were great Buddhists but the later Bhauma-karas were all devout Śāivites. On the other hand, the Somavamsīs were great devotees of Lord Siva and during their rule Śāivism reached its high water mark which culminated in the construction of Śaiva Shrines at Ekāmra Ksetra, the greatest of which is the temple of Lingarāja. Though the Bhauma-karas and the Somavamsīs patronised Buddhism and Śāivism respectively they did not neglect the other faiths and this shows their tolerant attitude towards other faiths.

On the whole we have taken the epigraphic records as the principal as well as authentic source material for making our thesis.

Bhaumakara Copper plate Inscriptions

The Bhauma-kara inscription consists of a single copper plate with the royal seal at the top containing the Śaivite emblem of a bull. The charters are described below in some details.

1. Neulpur Plate of Subhākara deva² in the 8th year

This inscription discovered in 1914 is now deposited in the Indian Museum, Calcutta. The plate was issued from Guhadeva-patāka but it is wrongly read by R.D.Benerjee as Subhādevapatāka. The record refers to the
reign of a prince named Subhākarađeva who was entitled Mahārāja indicating that he did not claim imperial dignity. He meditated on the feet of his father and mother and was a devout worshipper of Saugata i.e. Buddha (Parama Saugata). The officers mentioned in the grant were large in number and assisted the king in discharge of administrative duties.

The village Komparaka in pānchāla viśaya and village Dandānki and Yoka in the Vubhyudaya Viśaya in north Toṣāli were granted to two hundred Brāhmaṇas. Two villages combined under a new designation Solanapura. This plate reflects on the religion, administration and territorial divisions of the Bhauma-karas which we have utilised in our thesis.

2. Chaurāsi plate of Sivakarađeva II^3 (year 73)

This plate was unearthed in a Sugarcane field at Chaurāsi in Sadar Sub-division of Puri district. Mr. Narayan Tripathy edited it. It was issued from Guhadeva-patika by Sivakara II. The plate consists of two parts dovetailed together in the middle. It is 8" x 5.8", the bigger part being 5" and the small one 3" long. The rim of each part is dovetailed in one side with four projections and four depressions of equal length constructed in a manner so as to fit in exactly and support one another. On the left side of the plate, is a circular seal of what appears to be mixed metal. The diatetre of this circle is 2".
Only a small part of it is fixed to the main plate or rather the seal appears to consist of an impression of an expanded lotus flower. The seal has the representation in relief of a conchant bull facing straight to the right and chewing a bunch of creepers hanging down from its mouth. Below the bull there appears to be some inscriptions presumably some alphabets indicating the name of the donor but it has now become quite indistinct and illegible. The paleography bears resemblance to those of other copper plates of Kara family.

The genealogy of the family has been given with usual prasasti after naming the camp of Victory from which the charter was issued. The speciality of the charter is that the names of the mothers of two successive kings including the donor himself have been given in the genealogy.

The motive of the grant is to increase the virtue (Or merit) of the king and his parents. The village granted is vuvrada in Antaruda Visaya in Southern Tosāli. The camp from which the grant was issued is Guhadeva-patika. This Antaruda Visaya is the present Antarodha Pragāna in the Sadar Sub-division of Puri district. The village Chaurāsi in which the charter was found is in this Antarodha Pragana. It forms part of the northern boundary after which the district of Cuttack begins, the village Vuvarada cannot be traced but in all probability it is the present village Vanvarada which is nearly three miles distant from Chaurāsi
and it is in the same pragana of Antarodha. The plate speaks of the genealogy of the Bhauma family, which is reflected in the thesis.

3. Ganesh Gumphā Inscription of Sāntikara deva’s time.

This inscription is incised on the back wall of the righthand chamber in the Ganesh Gumphā in the Khandagiri at Bhubaneswar. The charter belongs to the later half of the 8th or the first half of the 9th century AD. King Sāntikara’s name is mentioned in the inscription. No other record mentions his name any where.

The inscription is in verse and records some dedications made by Bhimata, a physician, the son of Nannata. The second line which contains the name of the Project of the dedication, is unfortunately in a very bad state of preservation and consequently the purport of the inscription is not very clear.

4. Dhauli Cave inscription of Sāntikaradeva’s time.

( The Gāṅga year 93)

This record is incised on the right wall of the cave close to the Aśoka’s Dhauli rock edit at Bhubaneswar. The object of the inscription is to record the constru- ction of a temple(Matha) of Aghyakavarati by one bhatta Loyamaka, son of physician Nannata and grand son of Bhimata who was born of the womb of Ijya, an inhabitant of Virajo, in the year 93, during the reign of Sāntikaradeva. Sānti- karadeva is also known from the undated votive inscription
in the Gaṇesh Gūmphā at Khandaṇgiri where Ijya, Bhīmata
and Nāmnata are mentioned. This plate reflects on the
religious life of the Bhauma-kings.

5. Terundia plate of Subhākaradeva II

This copper plate was discovered by pandit
Sadasivarathasarma from an old well in the house of
Śrī Chakradhara Samal of Terundia, a village about five
miles from Nimapara in the district of Purī. The inscrip-
tion is written on a single copper plate measuring about
16" length and 8½" in height. The language of the plate
is sanskrit and it is both in prose and Verse.

The charter belongs to king Subhākaradeva II of
the celebrated Orissan imperial family i.e. the Bhauma-karas.
It was issued like other grants of the family from the city
of Guhadevapatāka or Guhesvarapatāka. This city which was
apparently the capital of the Bhauma-kara kings has been
identified with modern Jajpur on the river Vaitaranī, in the
Cuttack district of Orissa.

The plate throws a flood of light on the genealogy
and religious life of the Bhauma-kara kings. In addition to
this it mentions Bhauma-kara supremacy over Dakhīna Toṣāli
and the royal order given to large number of officers who
shouldered the responsibility of the empire.

A village called Lavaganda situated in the Sulantara
Kurbha a Viṣhaya or district of Dakhīna Toṣāli was granted by
the king as a revenue free permanent gift in favour of certain
Brahmanas at the request of the queen (Rajñi) Nrinna who was apparently one of the King's wives. The grant was made for the upkeep of the Mathas and Maṇḍapas established by Brahmanas in their native village.

6. Hindol plate of Subhā-kaṭādeva III⁶ year 103

This plate was discovered at Chitalpur in the Hindol sub-division in the district of Dhenkanal. The plate was issued from Guhadevpatisa by king Subhākaṭādeva. The record registers of gift of the village Noddilo in the Kankavira Visaya in Northern Tosāli. The gift was made at Yavāṅgulopāṭikā at the request of Pulindarāja to the God Vaidyanātha Bhaṭṭāraka (Siva) enshrined at the temple of Pulindesvara, built by Pulindarāja. The village was divided into two parts. The income of one part was spent for the maintenance of daily rituals (such as sandal paste, flowers, incense, lamp, vali, caru etc.) and the servants who were employed in the service of God. The income of the other part was set apart for supplying the Saivite ascetics with satra meal free of cost, Kaupinottari (garments) and medicines against any malady.

7. Dharakoṭe plate of Subhākaṭādeva.

Pandit Ananta Tripathy, Sahitya Siromani, collected this copper plate from the village Balich-chai, situated at a distance of two miles from the village of Dharakoṭe-gada in the district of Ganjam. The plate was discovered between
two big stones on a boggy land which was being utilised as a common cattle grazing ground of the village. The grant is important as it throws considerable light upon the religion of the Kara kings. We know from it that Subhākaradeva of Kara dynasty was parama Saugata (a Buddhist) and also parama bhattaraka and Paramesvara (a Paramount Sovereign).

8. **Tālcher plate of Subhākaradeva IV (year 141)**

A set of copper plates consisting of three plates was discovered from a place near Jagati situated within Colliery area in the Tālcher State.

The plate was issued from Guheswarapātaka by the king. The donee was Kulaputtraka Sūryapalla. The epithet Kulaputtra indicates that the donee was born of a noble family and as there is no mention of his gotra it appears that he was a non-Brahmin.

This plate throws light on the socio-political, economic and religious life of Orissa under study.

9 & 10. **Two Tālcher plates of Sivakara III**

These two copper plates discovered from Tālcher issued by the ruler in the year 149 (A.D. 885).

We find a good deal of resemblance between the two plates in respect of description, text, donor, object of gift, date and the officers. The first differs
from the second only in point of some place names. Except this, the second may be considered as the replica of the first.

11 & 12. Two plates of Tribhuvana Mahadevi from Boud.9

Two plates of Tribhuvana Mahadevi of the Bhauma-kara dynasty were discovered from Boud and were exhibited on the occasion of the Cuttack session of the Indian Historical Records commission and Indian History congress in Dec. 1949. Now the plates are preserved in the Orissa Museum, Bhubaneswar.

The Characters closely resemble those of the Dhenkanal plate10 of Tribhuvana Mahadevi and the Talcher plate of Sivakaradeva III.11

Both the plates are dated in the year 158 of the Bhauma era (A.D. 894)

13. Dhenkanal Plate of Tribhuvana Mahadevi.

Samvat 160 (A.D. 896)

This plate of Tribhuvana Mahadevi is dated by the symbolical letter "Lu chu" which means Bhauma Samvat 160 i.e. 896 A.D. Pandit B. Misra and D.C. Sircar have taken it as 110 and 120 Samvat respectively in order to identify the donor with Tribhuvana Mahadevi I, wife of Santikaradeva I. But the symbol in the plate is very much clear and it is definitely 160 which indicates that the
donor comes after Prthvimahādevi T.M.II of the Boud plate (A.D.894). She was the widow wife of Lalitahara allias Sivakaradeva III and is known as T.M.III, the engraver of the plate Haravardhana also engraved the two Boud plates of Prthvi Mahādevi. This plate is an important source material for history and culture of our period.

14. Santirigrāma Copper plate of Dandi Mahādevi

This copper plate was traced out from a village in the Angul Sub-division of Dhenkanal district. Sri Radhamohan Garnayak a renowned Oriya poet collected this grant from the village and deposited it in Orissa provincial Museum.

The charter records the grant of a village called Santirigrāma together with another locality within the Tamura Viṣaya in Dakshina Toṣāli. The grant was made by the Parama Mahēśvara (Devout worshipper of Śiva) Dandi Mahādevi, was decorated with imperial titles.

The occasion of the grant was a solar eclipse. It was made at the request of Parama mahesvara Raṇaka, who was the lord of Yama-garta Mandala which formed a part of Bhauma-kara kingdom. The plate throws a flood of light on the feudatory states and administration of the Bhauma-karas.
15. Kumurang plate of Dandi mahādevī

The plate was discovered from Ghantasila situated on the bank of river Ghantasila about half a mile west of Banpur in the district of Puri and one mile north of Kumurang. This copper plate was brought to light by Gopabandhu Das,

The plate throws same light on the short rule of Dandi Mahādevī who brought peace to the land and pleased his subjects having extirpated all her enemies.

16. Ambagoan copper plate grant of Dandimahādevī (Unpublished)

The Ambagoan copper plate grant of Dandimahādevī has not been published yet. It was in an extremely damaged condition at the time of discovery. Late Dr. Sarat Chandra Behera, Professor of Sambalpur University deposited it in Sambalpur University. The grant mentions the name of a village in Gahanju Visaya in the Kōngoda Mandal of Dakshina Tosāli. The date of the grant in the plate is illegible.

17. Arual copper plate grant of Dandimahādevī

The Arual copper plate grant of Dandimahādevī was discovered from Arual, a village situated at a distance of fifteen miles from Jajpur in the district of Cuttack.

The charter records the grant of a village in
Vendahara Visaya of Uttara Toṣali by the queen Dandi-mahādevi in the year 187 of unspecified era. The occasion of the grant was solar eclipse on the fifteenth day of Jyeṣṭha.

18. A grant of Vakula Mahādevi. 14

It is the only charter of the reign of queen Vakula mahādevi, known to us so far. It gives an idea about the city of Guhesvara-Pataka, we find nine verses which describe the Bhauma-kara family up to Dandi Mahādevi. Verse eleven introduces her step mother Vakulamahādevi who issued the charter under discussion. Further verse twelve states that she was born in the Bhaṅja family of Orissa.

The grant is said to have been made for the increase of the merit and fame of the donor as well as her parents on the occasion of a vishuvat on the given date, namely the fifth day of the dark half of Vaiśākha of the year 204. The plate also mentions the poet Jambhala who served during her reign. The record is stated to have been engraved by Kumaraka.

19. Angul plate of Dharma mahādevi. 15

Angul plate of Dharma mahādevi was in possession of a person named Babu shyama Sundar Garnayak who was resident of village Santiri, in Angul sub-division of Dhenkanal district. Sri Pramananda Acharya, an archaeologist of the Mayurbhaṅja state, handed over the grant
to Pandit Binayak Mishra to publish it in the Annual report of the archaeological survey of India (1925-26).

The plate throws a flood of light on the genealogy of Bhauma kings up to Sāntikaradeva, the husband of Dharma mahādevi. The main object of the charter was to record the grant of land in the village Desana-grama to a Brāhmaṇ named Sridhar Bhaṭṭa.

20. **Taltali plate of Dharma mahādevi.**

This copper plate grant came to limelight from the village Mālishahi, very near to village Taltali, a non-Brāhmin village situated about seven miles away from Angul sub-division head quarters. It was unearthed at the time of digging the foundation of a house. Sri Radhamohan Garnaik, the poet of eminence of Angul brought the plate to the notice of Prof. G. Das, who wanted to acquire it for cuttack Museum. The plate bears no date but the donor was the last of the two successors of Dandi Mahādevi whose last date, so far known is Bhauma Samvat 187 i.e. 794 A.D. The record can be roughly placed in the first quarter of the 9th century AD.

The chief importance of this record lies in the fact that it clears the difficulties relating to the succession of the later ruling members of the Bhauma dynasty. Dandimahādevi was succeeded by her step mother Vakulmahādevi of the Bhaṇja family, who in her turn was succeeded by Dharma Mahādevi, the donor. It gives us a clear understanding
of the succession of four queens after Subhākara Deva IV which is an unusual phenomenon in the Bhauma-kara history of Orissa.

This new Subhākara might have existed between Lakshmi kara, who is the earliest known member of the dynasty and Ksheman kara from whom we have an unbroken genealogy for nine generations. Further the grant throws some light on the religious life of the later Bhauma rulers.

21. *Hamesvara temple inscriptions of Madhavidevi*  
wife of Subhākara Deva.  

This plate was discovered from a place named Hamesvara near Jajpur town (from the temple of Biraja). The inscription is not in good state. It exists only in fragments. The inscription may be roughly assigned to the third or fourth quarter of 7th century AD.

The importance of the inscription, lies in the fact that it was the only Bhauma-kara record that was discovered from Jajpur proper, which was close to the capital of the rulers of Bhaumakara family.

This copper plate throws a flood of light on the religious life of the Bhauma-kara rulers. Although the early rulers were Buddhists they patronised Śaivism.
22. Camunda image inscription of Vastadevi

The inscription under discussion refers to an image of goddess Camunda, whose fame was popularised by queen Vastadevi, one of the queens of the early Bhaumakara rulers. Perhaps Vastadevi enshrined the deity Camunda in one of the temples at Jajpur town which was a famous centre of Tantrik worship and mother goddess cult.

The importance of the inscription lies in the fact that it mentions the name of Kshemanhara and Laxmikara as the predecessors of Subhakara I. The inscription throws some light on earliest predecessors of the Bhauma family.

SOMAVAMŚĪ INSCRIPTIONS

Janamejaya Mahābhavagupta

1. The Vakратentuli grant of Mahābhavagupta Janamejaya

This grant of Janamejaya Mahābhavagupta I was issued from Suvarnapura, the military Head Quarters in the 3rd. R.Y. of his reign. Suvarnapura's modern name is Sonepur on the river Mahanadi in the district of Bolangir. The donee of the grant is Bhattaputra Jatarupa, son of Bhattaputra Srivachcha of Kaundinya gotra.

In 1898 B.C. Mazumdar edited these plates. Each of the three plates measures about 4.5" X 9". They are branded through a copper ring with the royal seal affixed on it. There is the figure of goddess Laxmi with elephants flanked
on both sides of her in the usual manner of the other Somavamśī plate grants.

In the prasasti portion, he has assumed the titles of Paramabhattāraka, Mahārajādhirāja, Paramesvara, Somakulatilaka and Trikaliṅgadhipati.

We find the mention of another officer in the three grants (Nos. 16 to 18) who is designated as Kayastha. He was Koighosha, son of Vallabhaghosha.

2. **Kalibhana plates of Mahābhavagupta Janamejaya R.Y. 6**

This was issued by Janamejeta Mahābhavagupta from the town of Murasima during his 6th R.Y. It was discovered by a villager named Bhula Pradhan from his village Kalibhana, situated about nine miles north of Bolangir. The ring, which is generally attached to the plate in other grants of the Somavamsī rulers, is found to be missing.

In this copper plate inscription the donor is the Mahābhavagupta Janamejaya and the donee is one Bhattaputra Govinda, son of Bhattaputra Konda. The village Jambugrāma was granted to the above donee on permanent basis in the presence of a panel of officers.
3. **Pātnā plates of Janamejaya Mahābhavagupta R.Y. 6**

The pātnā plates of Janamejaya I were discovered from under the earth preserved inside an earthen pot. The plates are tied with the ring on which the royal seal is affixed and the usual figures of Goddess Gajalaxmī flanked by two elephants on either side of her.

The year in which he issued them is his 6th R.Y. The donees are four Brāhmaṇas. Socio-political and economic life of Orissa during the Somavamśis have been gleaned from these inscriptions. The king commands to agriculturists residing at the village Vakaweddā as well as all officials and servants. The plates also reflect the social life of the Brāhmaṇas, their gotras, pravaras and anupravaras. The Kayasthas, who were known as Karanikas, the present karaṇa caste in the society, were the writers of these plates.

4. **Pātna Museum plates of Janamejaya Mahābhavagupta R.Y. 6**

Another set of copper plate inscription, known as patna Museum plates of Janamejaya was issued in the 6th R.Y. of his reign and was discovered from the ex-state of Pātna in 1905.

This set of copper plates focus a flood of light on the military, political and economic conditions of the period under review. Janamejaya I followed the policy of expansion to the east and in the wake of his eastern campaign he established military Head Quarters at three
places, namely Suvarṇapura, Murasima and Arama Kataka. The last one has been identified with Rāmput, a town on the bank of river Mahānadi in the district of Bolāngir. Perhaps Janamejaya I had stationed his powerful army in the above mentioned places and had made elaborate plans for the subjugation of the Bhauma-kara empire. Further, the inscriptions inform us of the royal command to the agriculturists and other inhabitants of the village as well as to the dependents of the king. From this we can know that the kings had got control over village life and administration.

This charter of Janamejaya I may be regarded as a revenue charter since it deals with the revenue policy of the ruler. For the increase of religious merit and glory of Śrī Devamalapitroh this whole village with its hidden treasures and deposits was granted with libations of water and made revenue free. He fixed the annual revenue at five silver coins. Thus this copper plate inscription renders great help to our thesis.

5. Nagpur Museum plates of Mahābhavaqupta Janamejaya R.Y.8

The set consisting of three copper plates was issued from Murasima, one of the military head quarters of Janamejaya I. The plates are preserved in the Nagpur Museum.

The donee of this grant is Santhakara, son of Dhritikara of Gautama Gotra. The plate highlights the
names of some important officers who held key posts in the administration of the Somavamsis. For example Mahāmahattamā Śādhārana son of Sabhana a scholar of erudition acted as the prime-minister of Janamejaya. And I have mentioned this fact while I described the council of Ministers.

6. **Gaintala plates of Janamejaya Mahābhavagupta R.Y.17**

This set of copper plate inscription is so named because it was found from the village Gaintala in the district of Bolāngir and the person who traced out the plate was Bansidhara Gaintiā. The ring which should have been attached to the plate with the emblem and the royal seal is missing. The village Rishi grama was granted to a Brāhmaṇa called Bhaṭṭaputra Śrī Tikhu while the donor Mahābhavagupta Janamejaya was staying in the charming city of Arma Kataka, modern Rampur in Bolangir.

The composer of the plate was Śrīvatsa and Scribe was Haradasa.

7. **Sonepur plates of Janamajaya Mahābhavagupta R.Y.17**

The set consisting of three copper plates, was discovered in 1933, from a place near the temple of Śrīvrajesvarī in Sonepur town. The image of Laxmī is not clearly visible as the plate remained under earth for a long time. This set of copper plate reflects a flood of light on the grandeur of the capital city of Armā Kataka.
The Chaudwar plates of Janamajaya Mahabhadra-vagupta, issued in the 31st R.Y. of his reign from Aramaka-taka, the modern Rampur in the district of Bolangir, sheds much light on the religious life of the ruler. Janamejaya I was a devout worshipper of Lord Siva, the god of gods. We find that Saivism reached the peak of its influence during the Somavamsi rule in Orissa and Janamajaya was a pioneer in this regard. This plate discovered from Chaudwar in 1875, by a cultivator, provides valuable data to our thesis regarding religious aspects.

Another set of copper plate inscriptions, bearing the same name (Chaudwar plates of Janamejaya Mahabhadra-vagupta), issued in the same regnal year (31) from the same place to the same donee came to light in 1879, while digging under ground at Chaudwar (Cuttack district) on the left bank of river Mahanadi.

This is the last known copper plate inscription of Janamejaya Mahabhadra-vagupta issued in the 34th. R.Y. from the village of Kalibhana near Bolangir town along with copper plate No.17, which we have described earlier. In this grant, the ruler assumed another name that of Dharma Kandarpa.
The plates mention the existence of an astrologer named Devu in the court of the King. This fact is one of the sources that corroborates the social condition of the time depicted in our thesis.

11. The Deogāon plates of Janamejaya's time

Smt. S. Tripathy and B.K. Rath presented papers on "Deogāon copper plate grant of the Rastrakuta king Mugdhaṅgaladeva" in the 6th annual conference of the Epigraphical Society of India, Ahmedabad March, 1980. This copper plate granted to Brāhmin Bhubanāga of the village Antarala of Telatata Viṣaya in parakula Maṇḍala by Rastrakūta king Mugdhaṅgalodeva feudatory of Janamejaya I. It is announced from Sukarakataka, Head quarters of the donor.

12. Sambalpur University Copper Plate

This plate now preserved in the Sambalpur University Museum, has been edited by Dr. J.K. Sahu. This plate was granted by Mahamandalesvāra Ranakadevapya in the 23 R.Y. of Janamejaya I on the occasion of Solar eclipse.
13. Three recently discovered copper plates of Janamejaya.

Three sets of copper plates of Janamejaya Mahabhavagupta have been recently obtained from a teacher of Loisinga of Bolangir district. Steps have been taken to preserve them in Sambalpur University Museum. The first plate was donated from the capital Suvarnapura in the first regnal year of the king on the occasion of coronation ceremony. It reveals the second name of the king as Svavaba Tuenga and the name of his queen as Sinduragouri.

Thus it solves a great problem for us in identifying the father of Pr-thivimahradevi who in both of her copper plate charters has claimed that she was the daughter of the Somavamsi King Svabhaba Tuenga. This charter also reveals that Suvarnapura was conquered not by Janamejaya but apparently by his father Mahasivagupta Rajadeva. Janamejaya in all his copper plate charters has ascribed sovereign titles not only for himself but also to his father whom he describes as paramesvara, Maharajadhira, Paramabhataraka. This inscription of Janamejaya thus bear great historical significance.

The second plate was also announced from Suvarnapura in the 10th regnal year of Janamejaya donating the village
Jollamura to a number of Brāhmins on the occasion of a lunar eclipse. The third plate was issued from Murasima kaṭaka in the 12th regnal year.

These three plates throw good deal of light on the period of our discussion.

Yayāti I (Cir 885-925)

Mahāśīvagupta Yayāti I succeeded his father Mahābhavagupta Janamejaya about 885 AD and continued in power about 925 A.D. The task, that drew the attention of Yayāti I, was the shifting of the capital to Vinitarpura, identified with modern Binkā on the bank of the Mahānadi. He spent 15 years there and then shifted the capital to Yayātinagar, identified with Jakti which he named after himself. The modern name of Yayātinagara is Jakti, a small town near Boudh on the bank of the river Mahānadi. From these two places where he concentrated his political power, he issued as many as six copper plate inscriptions which shed a flood of light on the life and culture of Orissa. The epigraphic records of Yayāti I are given below:

1. Orissa State Museum plates of Mahāśīvagupta
   Yayāti, R.Y. 4.
2. Patna Museum plates of Mahāśīvagupta Yayāti R.Y. 8

3. Cuttack plates of Mahāśīvagupta Yayāti R.Y. 9

4. Nibinna charter of Mahāśīvagupta Yayāti R.Y. 15

5. Patna plates of Mahāśīvagupta Yayāti R.Y. 24

6. Patna plates of Mahāśīvagupta Yayāti R.Y. 28

He issued his first grant in his R.Y. 4 and the last in the R.Y. 28. Like his father Yayāti remained at the helm of affairs for a long period exceeding more than twenty eight years. A brief description of the above inscriptions have been given in the subsequent pages.
14. **Orissa State Museum plates of Mahāśīva-gupta Yayāti-I**

The set consisting of three copper plates is preserved in the Orissa State Museum at Bhubaneswar. The place from which the plates were discovered has not been traced out. The plates were brought to lime light by Sri B. V. Nath in the year 1959. Yayāti-I issued the plates from Binitapura (Binka) in the early years of his reign (4th regnal year).

These plates of Yayāti I focus a flood of light on the Judicial and administrative matters of the Somavamsis. Proper and equal justice was given to the citizens for which the ministers, who held the portfolio of justice, were very popular in the kingdom. Further the plate reflects on the economic and religious conditions of the people from which we derive our source for the thesis.

15. **Pātna Museum plates of Mahāśīva-gupta Yayāti.**

The Pātna museum plates of Mahāśīva-gupta Yayāti have been discovered for the Ex-State of Pātna and edited in the year 1905. The Editor G.M. Laskar puts the
number of this inscription as H. The plates are now preserved in the Orissa State Museum at Bhubaneswar. The set consists of three Copper plates each measuring 8" X 5.5". The ring which is attached to the plates bears the royal seal of Yayati I. The donor was issued the plates from Binitapura, identified as modern Binka in the district of Bolangir. But Fleet wrongly identified this place with Cuttack.

16. The Cuttack plates of Mahāsīvagupta Yayāti issued by the donor Yayāti from Vinitapura in the 9th R.Y. of his reign. The set consists of three copper plates, each measuring about 8" X 6½4". The ring which usually bears the royal seal and which should have been attached to the plates is lost.

This set of copper plate inscriptions indicates the supremacy of the Somavamśi king Yayāti Mahāsīvagupta, which we have utilised in this thesis.

17. The Nibinna Charter of Mahāsīvagupta Yayāti was issued from Vinitapura the prosperous capital, in the R.Y. 15. Nibinna was a village in Kośala country which was gifted to the Dikshita Pundarikasārman.

The Pātana plates of Mahāsīvagupta Yayāti are the two sets of copper plate inscriptions issued by donor Yayāti from Yayatinar in the 24th. and 28th. R.Y. of his reign respectively. The two plates have been edited by
the same editor. Mr G.M. Laskar in J.A.S.B. Vol. I in 1905. But the plates differ in measurement. Each of the former plates measures 8.5" X 6.5" and each of the later plates 9/2 X 7".

The plates reflect a flood of light on the social, political, economic, religious and military life of Orissa, from which we have got valuable data to feed the thesis.

The capital of the Somavamśi kings was transferred from Suvarṇapura to Yayātinagara towards the close of the reign of Yayāti I. The cause of transfer was that during the reign of his father Janamejaya, there arose a great disturbance in Odra Vishaya which induced Yayāti to shift the capital to a more secure and convenient place, even though peace was restored in his dominion. The grant was issued by him in the 24th R.Y. of his reign, for the first time, from the city of Yayātinagara. It is said to be a very charming town being situated on the banks of the Mahānadi.

Thus the patna plates of Mahāśivagupta Yayāti is a valuable source to prepare the history of the somavamśis of our study.

18. Cuttack plates of Mahābhuvagupta Bhimaratha. R.Y. 36

The set consists of three copper plates, each measuring about 9/4" X 7". They are attached to a ring
Containing the royal seal which was completely demolished and no legend on it could be traced out.

The grant is issued on the occasion of a solar eclipse. This inscription of Mahābhavagupta does not throw any light on the political development of the time.

19. Khaṇḍaparā Plates of Mahāśīvagupta Dharmaratha

Khaṇḍaparā copper plate grant is the only grant of Dharmaratha, who was the first son of Bhīmaratha. He ascended the throne after his father and issued the above charter in the 11 R.Y. of his reign, donating a village in Antaruḍa Vishaya identified with Antarodha praganā of Purī district, which is revealed from the Chaurāsi plate of Sīvakara-deva of Bhauma-kara dynasty. The fact gives evidence that south Toṣālı was conquered by the Somavamśi kings either by Bhīmaratha after his 3rd. R.Y. or by Dharmarath before his 11th. regnal year. Again it is clear that at least for eleven years after Bhīmaratha, the Somavamśi kings did not face any political ranging, on the other hand they followed aggressive policies against the Gauda and Andhra country.

Thus the Charter reflects a flood of light on the military policy of the Somavamśīs of the period under study.
20. Bānapur plates of Indraratha R.Y. 6
(1000 A.D. - 1025 A.D.)

Indraratha, the most powerful king of the Somavamsi dynasty after Dharma ratha, issued Bānapur Plates in the sixth regnal year of his reign from Yayātinagar. In his Bānapur copper plate charter, he donated a village for the worship a Tantric deity Khandiravani Tara in Kōngoda. Again it is evident that Indraratha ascended the throne of Yayātinagar by a violent coup (defeated Nahusha) and last the throne after being defeated by the cholas. The coronation Sobriquet of Mahābhavagupta or Mahāśivagupta has not been used by him. This indicates that he was not the legitimate successor.

21. Jatesīṅgā Dungri plates of Mahāśivagupta Yayāti II
(Chandihara Yayāti) R.Y. 3
(1025 to 1035 AD)

Yayāti II Mahāśivagupta, who is also known as Chandihara Yayāti, was regarded as one of the most outstanding monarchs of the Somavamsis. He issued this copper plate inscription in the 3rd. R.Y. of his reign in which he is described as the Lord of Kaliṅga, Kōngoda, Kosāla and Utkala. But in the inscriptions of his successors, it is stated that he consolidated his rule in Utkala and Kosāla only and lost Kaliṅga and Kōngoda to Eastern Gaṅgas.
In the epigraph that was issued by Yayati II in the 3rd. R.Y. at his reign, reflects a flood of light on the military, political and cultural aspects of his reign. He claims victory over Karnata, Lata, Gurjca, Kanchi, Ganda and Radha.

Further, it is revealed that Yayati II was an ardent follower of Saivism and Saktism. He perhaps constructed a great Saivite monument, the temple of Lingaraja, at Ekambra Kshetra for the worship of Lord Lingaraja. A few years after his death, his queen Kalavati constructed the temple of Brahmesvara in the same place (Bhubaneswar) under the influence of her husband's interest in temple construction.

The 64 oginis at Rampur-Jhariāl in the district of Bolāngir were installed by the Somavamsi kings. The Goddess was apparently worshipped by the Somavamsi kings after their capital was transferred to Suvarnapura where goddess pāñchambarī Bhadram bīkā was installed. She was the ishtadevī of Yayati-II as mentioned in this inscription. From the style of these temples we can trace out the architectural skill of the 10th and 11th centuries in Orissa which we have utilised in our thesis, as a valuable source.

Udyota Kesari - 1035-1060 A.D.

The next ruler in the political history of the Somavamsis is Mahābhavagupta Udyotakesarī who succeeded his father Chandīhara Yayati in about the year 1035 AD.
He issued many copper plate charters which supply valuable materials for our thesis. The followings are the epigraphs of Udyota Kesari.

1. Narasingh-pur plates of Mahabhavagupta
   Udyota Kesari R.Y. 41
2. Samakhamerī Charter of Mahabhavagupta
   Udyota Keshari R.Y. 42 (Un-published)
3. A stone inscription of Udyota Kesari in the Khandagiri cave (Lalatendu Kesari Cave) R.Y. 43
4. A stone inscription of Udyota Kesari in the Khandagiri cave (Navamuni cave No. XIV) (18th R.Y.) 44
5. Brahmesvara temple stone Inscription of the time of Udyotakesari (18th R.Y.) 45
6. Govindapur fragmentory stone inscription of Uyotakesari's time. 46
7. A single copper plate from Mahada of Udyotakesari's time. 47

22. Narasinghpur plates of Mahabhavagupta Udyoga Kesari were issued in the 4th regnal year of his reign, from Yayati-nagara. The set consists of three copper plates grants each measuring about 8 3/4" X 6". It contains the usual emblem of the Somavatī rulers.

The epigraphic records of Udyota Kesari throw ample light on feudatory state of Bhauma-kara rulers.
From this epigraph, we know that Udyota Kesārī granted two villages called Konta landa and Lovakarada in the taluk or Khanda called Sam-sara identified with modern Sarsara near Boudh town, in the Airāvata mandala. Airāvata Mandala was situated in between Boudh and Daspallā and was ruled by the Nandodbhava rulers before the Somavam. sīs as feudatory of the Bhauma-karas of Utkala. In the time of Udyota kesārī, the Nandodbhava kings had lost their principality when Airāvata Mandala was completely under the dominion of the Somavam. sī kings. This grant further mentions that Udyota Kesārī was the Lord of Kosāla and Utkala with Odra-desa joining the two provinces.

Thus the inscription corroborates the thesis with ample source material.

23. A stone inscription of Udyota Kesārī in the Khandagiri cave (Lalātendu Kesārī cave) issued in the 5th R.Y. reveals that he renovated the tanks and temples of Kumāra hill and installed there the images of twenty four Tirthaṅkaras.

The Navamuni cave No.XIV inscription of Udyota kesārī states that the cave was constructed by the Jaina monk Subhachandra, disciple of Ācharya Kulachandra in the 18th regnal year.

The above stone inscriptions of Udyota kesārī
reflect on the tolerant attitude of the ruler towards jainism, though he was devote saiva.

24. Brahmesvara temple stone inscription of the time of Udyota Kesari was issued by Kalavati, the wife of Yayati-II and mother of Udyota Kesari. It was issued in the 18th. regnal year of Udyota Kesari. The original inscription has been lost. It was partly mutilated and could not be deciphered without doubts.

However, the inscription throws a flood of light on the genealogy of the Somavamsi rulers right from Janamejaya Mahabhagavupta I to Karnadeva, the last king of the Somavamsi dynasty. This inscription is a positive contribution to our thesis.

25. Sonpur plates of Kumara Somesvaradeva R.Y. 1

It is a grant issued by Kumara Somesvaradeva in the first regnal year from Suvarnapura to the Brahmanas namely Udjayakara, son of Bhatta Vidyakara of Harita gotra, Pancharisi Pravara.

The plates were unearthed at the time of cultivation in a field in the village of Kelga, which now in district of Bolangir. Generally the other Somavamsi copper plate inscriptions consist of four plates of different size. The legend on the ring is not found.

The plates reveal the charity made on the
first regnal year of Kumāradhirāja Someśvaradeva. The donees enjoyed some freedom on the economy of the kingdom.

26. A Single copper plate from Kelga.\(^{51}\)

This incomplete single inscription is not rendering any information of historical importance, except genealogy of the donee. It was detached from the original set and attached to another set.

This fact is not yet known. The donor of this plate is not mentioned in the plate. The date and place of issue are not known. The donee’s father, Udayakara, is identical with the donee of No.42. The plate is named after the village kelga from where it was discovered.

27. The Nuapātna grant of Yuvarāja Dharmaratha of Janamejaya’s time R.Y.5\(^{52}\)

This Nuapātna grant was issued by Yuvarāja Dharmaratha, the eldest son of Janamejaya-II, in the fifth regnal year of his father. Dharmaratha in the plate, is described as the Lord of Paśchima Kalinga.\(^{51}\) This territory has not been properly identified. He seems to be predeceased his father and probably died fighting with some enemies. If Paśchima Laṅka is identified with eastern Kosala, we may say that Dharmaratha was Governor of Suvarṇapura after Someśvara and died in the battle with Telugu chodas. Therefore, after Janamejaya II, his second
son Puranjaya became king of the Somavamsis. The Ratnagiri inscription further reveals that the Somavamsi kingdom was time and again invaded by the external enemies and Puranjaya had to fight hard for the defence of his territory.

Thus this epigraph focuses some light on the political history of the Somavamsi under the period of our study.

28. The Ratnagiri plates of Somavamsi Karnadeva R.Y. 6

Karnadeva, the last king of the Somavamsi dynasty, was succeeded his brother Puranjaya in about 1090 and remained upto 1118 A.D. when Utkala was completely submerged with the empire of Chodagaṅgadeva. Karnadeva issued his Ratnagiri Copper plate charter from Yayatinagara in his sixth regnal year donating a village of Uttara Toṣāli to a lady named Rani Karpurasri, daughter of Maharima Hunadevi. It is an interesting charter donating a village to a lady scholar belonging to a Brahmin family of Kāśyapa gotra.

Thus the plate highlights us about the political history of the Somavamsis providing ample source material to our thesis.

29. Kamalpur Copper plate grant of the reign of Karnadeva R.Y. 7

This copper plate grant was issued in the
seventh regnal year of Mahābhavagupta Karnadeva by Jayarnamadeva who was his feudatory king. It mentions the fact that the Somavamsis were very powerful and Karnadeva was surrounded by a number of feudatories. Jayarnama was the ruler of Koladamandal and is described as Mahāmandalika, Mahāmandaleswara and Ranaka. He was a devotee of Vishnu and Worshirper of Khambeswari.

This plate throw some light on the religious condition of Orissa during the Somavamsi rule and this fact helps our thesis as a source.

30. Surya image inscription of the Somavamsi king Karnadeva’s time 55 R.Y.3 of 13

This inscription containing the image of Surya(Sun god) was obtained by the author in 1953 from the village of Gandibedha near Soro in the district of Bālasore. It is a fine specimen of sculptured black stone image. It is not a compact piece of inscription, but broken into four pieces, which are now preserved in the state museum Orissa, at Bhubaneswar.

The donor of this inscription is Karṇnaraṇa-deva and it was built in his 3rd. or 13th regnal year by a man named Sri Garttabha. The place from which the inscription was issued is not known. The name of the donee is not mentioned. However, the inscription shows that the kingdom of Karṇadeva had extended as far as Bālasore,
which was in fact the Uttara Toṣāli mentioned in Ratnagiri plate. Thus this inscription draws our attention to the imperialistic policy of the Somavamsis which we have utilised in the thesis.
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