INTRODUCTION.

Gangavadi was a kingdom ruled by an ancient and celebrated dynasty known as the Gangas. The Gangas stand foremost among the most ancient dynasties who ruled parts of Karnataka. Because not only they ruled for the longest period of more than 600 years, but also they stabilised and settled their territory. While the names of other kingdoms went into oblivion along with the dynasties the Ganga kingdom continued to have its name even after the dynasty expired. In fact the name remains green in the memory of the people of the soil who live in that area even today who are known by the name Gangadikaras. This name is nothing but the shortened form of Gangavadikaras, that is, the people of Gangavadi. Though they did not build a large empire like the Chalukyas or Rashtrakutas their kingdom was a fairly big one and it occupied a strategic position. The question of their original home or their early settlements and also their political achievements, is out of our periphery. But the extent of their kingdom and its designation requires detailed study.

Since their early history is shrouded in mystery, it is not easy to determine the extent of their kingdom and also its name in early days. We have therefore to depend on stray references and circumstantial evidences. The earliest reference is found in the Greek accounts which mention a Gangaridae. Pliny also mentions Gangaridae Kalingae. However the locality of
this Gangaridae and the kings who were ruling over that area is not easy to identify. This Gangaridae is supposed to have existed at the mouth of the river Ganga with Ganga as its capital. But this lacks support. However the name suggests that it might have been connected with the name of the Gangas. If this is accepted the antiquity of this dynasty goes back to the prechristian era.

We do not come across in early records as to how the Gangas got their name. Later inscriptions of 11th century which have preserved for us the long genealogy of the Gangas connecting them to the Solar race state that in that line Bharata's queen Uijayamahadevi of bore a son after swimming in the Ganga river and therefore he was given the name of Gangadatta and thus was the Ganga line came into existence. However, much stress cannot be laid on this as we know that in about 10th and 11th centuries the genealogy making was a past time. And as Fleet observes, "All the great families of Southern India were looking up their pedigrees and devising more or less fabulous genealogies. The analogy of its name with that of river Ganga the dynasty seems to have been connected with it. Without going into the details we take it that this Ganga dynasty existed in the south from a sufficiently ancient

1. M.V. Arishna Rao, "Ganges of Talakad", P.8
2. L.C. VII Sh 4, VIII Ng 55, etc
3. S.K. Iyengar, "Ancient India" P.91
period and the area ruled by them was named after them.

M.V. Arishma Rao depending upon the later inscriptions states that the kingdom founded with the help of Simhanadi was named Gangavadi country. But we do not come across this name in the earliest inscriptions at all, though we have some references beginning from about 10th Century in some Jaina records about Simhanandi's connection with the Ganga kingdom. In so far as the available contemporary records are concerned the earliest record that mentions the name of the kingdom is Malekote plates of Madhava III. This record is assigned to 400 A.D. by R. Narasimhachar. Fleest, however from the perusal of its characters puts its date a century later. It is said that Madhava Varma while in Ganga kingdom (Gangeya Rajya) made certain grants to Buddhagratva. Thus by about 500 A.D. the kingdom ruled by the Ganges was known as Gangeya Rajya. A record of Tadangala Madhava refers to a grant made probably to some Jaina basadi wherein the witnesses for the grant are said to be the people of Gangamandala. But quite obviously the record is spurious and therefore cannot be taken into account.

1. M.C.VII Sh 4, VIII Ng 35
2. M.V. Krishna Rao, "Gangas of Talakad" P.7
3. M.A.R. 1910 P.17
4. Ibid
5. M.A.R. 1921 P.27
6. Eemin Gangeya Rajya ta'min Sri Madhava Varmanaha Sasanaa
   Buddha Satvaya Datham a Chanuratarakam.
Further the records of Avinita, Durvinita and others up to Sivamara I do not mention the name of the kingdom they were ruling. We hear from their inscriptions several Vishayas and Rashtra. Madhava is said to have granted a village Kumara-pura to a Jaina basadi in Perbolal which was in Mudukotkur Vishaya. Avinita’s Sringeri Copper Plates mention a Marukara Vishaya and his another record mentions Paruvi Vishaya. Uttanur and Gummarednipur inscriptions of Durvinita mention a pudal nada Rashtra, while Nallala inscription mentions a Karigunda Vishaya. Durvinita is said to have been the lord of Pannada and Punnada. Pannada might be the Bana country while Punnada was Punnata in the southern parts of Mysore district. Bhuvikrama is praised as the lord of Pannata Punnata and many other kingdoms. The same record mentions Kolala vishaya. But this record seems to be spurious. Sivamara I is also referred to in his kulagana record as the lord of Pannata Punnata and other kingdoms.

It is only with the accession of Sripurusha on the Ganga throne we begin to hear about their kingdom either as Shannavati

1. Nanamangala inscription, E.C.X Mr.
2. M.A.R. 1916
3. M.A.R. 1911, Residency Copper Plates
4. E.C.XII Ml 112, M.A.R. 1912
5. M.A.R. 1924 P 69
sahasra or 96000 country. In the stone inscription of his first regnal year (726 A.D.) at Talakad, Sripurusha is said to have been ruling Srirajya. It is here again for the first time we hear of the 96000 (country). The record cites the officials of Ninety six thousand as witnesses. In another record of his first regnal year which is an copper plates we come across with Shannavatissahasra Vishaya (96000 country). Similarly his Jawall record of the 25th year also mentions 96000 Vishayas.

During the reign of Sripurusha again we come across with a province known as Gangarusanasa (Ganga 6000) round about kolar region. An inscription in Mulabagal taluk refers to the reign of Sripurusha states that his son Duggamara breyappa was ruling the Kavalalanad 300 and Ganga 6000. Similarly two other records of the same reign also have Duggamara breyappa as ruling the same provinces. One of them is dated in the 42nd regnal year of Sripurusha and it also mentions the kingdom of Sripurusha as Srirajya as noted in the Talakad inscription of his first regnal year noted above. We further get references for the rule of banas and kolambas either under the Gangas or independently in this province of Ganga 6000. Several inscriptions mandala when Shivasara was in imprisonment.

1. E.C.III Tn.1
2. Iuid
4. E.C.VI P.151
5. E.C.X Mb 255
6. E.C.X Mb 80, Sp 57
7. E.C.III Tn 1
8. E.C.X X 11 60, Nannaplanus.
mention that Makabali Banarasa was ruling Ganga 6000 province most probably under Stipurusha. A Nolamba King Nolambadhira was ruling this province under Natimarga I in 895 A.D.

Now that the province Gangarusasira is as old as Shannavati Sahaara Vishaya if not older as gleaned from inscriptions. It leads us to suppose that Ganga 6000 was the nucleus of the II Ganga kingdom - Shannavati Sahaara Vishaya. Later inscriptions of the 11th century which trace the genealogy of the Gangas in detail strengthen this view point. "After obtaining the advice of Simhanandi Acharya Dediga and Madhava ruled in 96000 country with Nandagiri being their fortresses and Kuvalala their city" say these records. Though as already said this statement cannot be relied upon, it is possible that this statement might have been made from the traditional accounts prevailing then. Apart from this we find that the Kolar region possesses good number of early records when compared to the other regions. It is in this region we get the earliest Iythic records in Avani. Unfortunately it is a fragmentary record purporting the genealogy of the Gangas commencing from Kongani-varma upto Vishnugopa as in the copper plate records. Rice puts it to about 400 A.D. on paleographical grounds. The only

1. E.C.X Kl 235, BP 48, B.P.86 etc.
2. M.A.H. 1910 P 26
3. E.C.VIII Nr 35, VII Sh 4, 10 etc.
difficulty in accepting this proposition is that we do not get any reference for the Gangas ruling at Kuvalala in their early records, though we have the mention of their residing at various other places. But at the same time we do not also get any reference for their ruling from Talakad either. Tanjore grant of Harivarsha and hercules plates of Avinita, Of course mention Talavanapura. But these records have been brushed aside by scholars as spurious and their paleography has been put beyond the 9th century. As it is natural that the territories would be smaller at the beginning and would extend as the power of the dynasty increases, we may take Ganga 6000 to be the Kumbak earlier Ganga territory which probably included Paruvi and Pudgalnad Rashtra round about Kolar region, which must have been extended into 96000 and Talakad was made its capital. At present we get the inscriptions only of Sripurusha and later rulers at Talakad. To support out? proposition it may be stated that Nolambavadi was only 1000 province in its earliest days which became a 32000 province later on.

After Sripurusha though Sivamara came to the throne he was captured by the Rashtrakuta Dhrurva and put behind the bars and the Ganga kingdom was made a province under the Rashtrakutas. Dhrurva's son Khambayya was made Governor. It is only from this period onwards we hear of this country as Gangamandala that is a Ganga province. In 797 A.D. Marasimha was ruling this Ganga.

Ganga Kingdom was thus considered as a mandala (province) under the Rashtrakutas at the close of the 8th Century after it was subjugated by Dhruva. During the next century Ganga-
mandala was also called Gangavadi or Gangavadi 96000. The
earliest reference to this name of Gangavadi is found in the
Pandurangapalli plates of Avidheya. On the back of the last
plate of this record is another short record in Kannada regist-
ering the confirmation of the grant, recorded in the main
inscription, by Sarbarasa. This Sarbarasa is said to have
been the lord of Kannavada, Gangavada, Baleyavada and Rernada.
Gangavada mentioned here must be the Gangavadi, the country of
the Gangas. This rudely carved inscription is assigned to the
9th Century on paleographical grounds. Sarbarasa mentioned in
this record might be the Rashtrakuta king Amoghadvaraha who had
the other name of Sharva. If so the date of this record may be
put in about the middle of the 9th Century during which period
the Rashtrakutas claimed suzerainty over the Ganga country. It
is only at the close of the 9th Century we hear that the Ganga
king Nitimarga was protecting Gangavadi Ninety six thousand.
This name of Gangavadi is freely used only in the 10th Century
and onwards. In 942 A.D. Bhutuga was ruling Gangavadi 96000 along

1. E.C. IX N1 60, Mammepatte,
2. M.A.R.1929, No.117
3. Ibid
4. E.C.X K1 79.
with Belvola 300 and Purigere 300 under Hindu Shahivalka Krishna III. Marasimha II made a grant of the village Bagiyur which was in Badagere 300 of Punnat 6000 in Gangapatni in the year 963 A.D. Similarly he is referred to as ruling Gangavadi 96000 A.D. A fragmentary record dated in 986 A.D. mentions that Ballappa had come to Gangavadi.

Vadi means a street or an extention of a town etc. But here vadi seems to have been used in the sense of a province or a part of the kingdom. Thus we hear of Gangavadi, Nolambavadi, Taravadi, Bagavadi etc., as provinces of the larger kingdoms. That is why this term of Gangavadi is used to denote the Ganga kingdom only when this Ganga kingdom became a province under the Hindu Shahivalkas, though the Ganga kings continued to rule the kingdom as Mandalikas. Though Bmituga and Marasimha were ruling an extensive kingdom the entire area was not named as Gangavadi 96000, but included only the original territory which was being independently ruled by the Gangas specially by Sriprusha and Sivamara. Therefore when other provinces were added to the kingdom or Bmituga or Marasimha they were separately mentioned. As already noted Butuga was ruling along with Gangavadi 96000, Belvola 300

1. Huna inscription, B.K.No.175, 1926-27, Waregal inscription B.K.No.182, 1926-27
2. M.A.K. 1921, Kudur grant of Marasimha P.24
3. E.C.XI HK 88
4. E.C.III M1 25
and Purigere 300. He was also granted in addition to the above mentioned two provinces Banavasi 12000, Kisunad 70 and Bagenad 70 by Krishna III as a reward for his bravery shown in killing the Chola Rajaditya at Takkala. Even after the extinction of the main Ganga line and Gangavadi was divided into several pieces, a portion being occupied by the Cholas and the other portion by some chiefs ruling either independently or under the Chalukyas, this territory was continued to be called Gangavadi 96000 which was after great effort regained from the Cholas in the Hoysalas and again pieced together into a province of Gangavadi which continued to be so till the close of the Hoysala rule. The Hoysalas were proud to call themselves as the conquerors of Gangavadi 96000 along with other provinces and they had the distinctive title of 'Gangavadi Nolambavadi Banavase Hanungal Gonda'. Vikramaditya VI who was governing the southern parts of the Chalukya empire from Balligave xxx as a prince claims to have been ruling Gangavadi 96000. Vinayaditya, the Hoysala king, also has put forth his claim as the ruler of Gangavadi 96000. But we know that the entire Gangavadi was not under the control of either Vikramaditya or Vinayaditya. Therefore it should be presumed that these rulers tried to establish their claim and also they had as their aim the releasing of the entire Gangavadi from the clutches of the Cholas.

1. Rona inscription, B.K.No.75, 1926-27.
2. Ibid.
The name Gangavadi 96000 as we have seen above is applied to a particular area whose limits had been fixed, Sripurusha was the first king who mentions the Ninety-six Thousand and therefore the extent of his kingdom will have to be taken as the extent of Gangavadi 96000. But neither Sripurusha nor any other ruler of the main Ganga line ever mention the boundaries or the extent of their kingdom. It is only in the later inscriptions of 11th Century in Shimoga district the boundaries of Gangavadi are mentioned as follows. In the north Marandale, in the east Tondanad or Tondaimandalam, in the west the ocean in the direction of Chera and in the south the Kongu country. Marandale, the northern boundary is also known as Madarkale which is not identified. Tondanad is the Tondaimandalam, the Pallava kingdom. Cheram in the west is the modern Kerala while Kongu laid in the taluks of Salem and Coimbatore. Thus roughly the area comprised of the modern Karnataka in its southeastern districts of Kolar, Bangalore, Mandya, Mysore, Coorg, Chikmagalur and parts of Shimoga and Tumkur districts. This kingdom of Ninety-six thousand has been divided and subdivided into several nadus within the Ganga kingdom. There were provinces like Gangarurasira, Punnad 6000, Kongalnad 8000, Male 10000, Mandali 10000, Elusavira same, Kolar 300, Edenad 70.

1. E.C.VII Sh 4, 64, VIII Nr 36
2. Ibid Sh 4
3. E.X Mb 80, Sp 57
4. E.C.I Cg 1
5. E.C.IV Sh 92
6. E.C.I Cg 96-97
7. E.C.VII Sh 24, 96
8. E.X Mb 80, Sp 57
To sum up Gangavadi was first known as Gangeyaratya when it was well established and became prosperous in the 7th Century under Sripurusha got the name of Srirajya and its area or extent was also fixed up as Ninety six thousand and it came to be known as Shannavati Sahaara Vishaya. When it was conquered by Rashtrakuta Dhrusva and was ruled by Khamba came to be known as Gangamandala and finally when it became one of the provinces under the Rashtrakutas in the close of the 9th Century through the matrimonial relations between the Rashtrakutas and the Ganges, the Gang Kingdom got the designation of Gangavadi 96000. Puttage and Karanincha ruled not only Gangavadi but also other provinces like Belvola 300, Banavasa 12000, Puregare 300 etc. Even within this Gangavadi province there were several nadus of different dimensions.
What these numbered numbers attached to the main province and to some of its territorial divisions is a matter of great discussion among the scholars. These numbered numbers which seem to have been introduced by the Rashtrakutas might have been adopted by the Ganges during the reign of Sripurusha. From inscriptions we understand that the larger divisions were divided into smaller units. For example Badagere 300 of Punnata 600 in Gangapatip. These subdivisions often had the still smaller units, as for example, Biliyur 12 was situated in Peddoregere which was a seventy divisions. We have reference for such subdivisions with numbered numbers in the Rashtrakuta Empire and also in the empire of the Kalyani Chalukyas like Santalige 1000, Sinohavadi 1000, Sambbi 1000, Kogale 500, Kukkavadi 30-etc. Later on the Hoysalas also continued to have such divisions with numbers like Gangavadi 96000, Nolambavadi 32000, Banavasi 12000. Whereas during the same period the Cholas do not seem to have their divisions named with numbers.

It has been variously interpreted by the scholars. Rice refers them to revenue value and says apparently that indicate Nishkas. But P.V. Kane rejects this theory for the reasons that the taxes were not usually collected in money in ancient or medieval period, it is difficult to assume that the revenue never fluctuated since we notice that the numbers attached are continued

1. M.A.R.1921, Kudalore grant of Marasimha P.24
2. E.C.I No.96
3. E.C.V Bl 17
to be the same in different centuries, and there is nothing
to show that the standard of value was uniform in the entire
area. S.K. Iyengar remarks that the figures attached to each
name seem to indicate either the revenue paid or the value
of produce as it customery even now in certain localities. Fleet on the other hand asserts that they stand for the townships
in the division, but says that the figures are exaggerated.
There is also another theory that the figures stand for the
population of the divisions concerned. As regards the larger
divisions like Gangavadi 96000, Nolambavadi 31000 etc., it is
supposed that these indicate the number of divisions these pro-
vinces had and each division containing thousand villages.
Thus Gangavadi 96000 means 96 divisions or nadas, Banavadi 12000
had twelve divisions and so on.

With all these different statements by scholars the
problem still is not satisfactorily solved. Each one of the
above propositions have their defects. As already noted P.V.
Kane has put forth some cogent arguments against revenue value
theory of Rice. S.K. Iyengar's remarks that the figures might
indicate the value of produce, one cannot assume that the value
always remained the same for centuries and even when the

2. Altekar, "Rashtrakutas and their times" P.149
3. S.K. Iyengar, Ancient India.
divisions changed hands. Fleet's assertion that these figures stand for township is contended by Rice that the figures in many cases are too large to admit that interpretation. He points out that Gangavadi 96000 could never have comprised 96000 villages even supposing that its area was entirely covered by villages and nothing else. However we have a reference to this figure indicating the number of villages. An inscription explicitly mentions the province as 'Shannavati Sahasra grama bhaja' that is the division consisting of ninetysix thousand villages. Dr. Premnath supposes that grama may mean an estate. But this is not supported by the inscriptions. As regards the population theory though we have a reference in the Ganga record stating "Shannavati Sahasra Vishaya Prakritayaha" thereby refering to the people of Gangavadi, they are mentioned only as witnesses and it cannot be taken as the number of people in Gangavadi but should be interpreted as the whole population of the province of Gangavadi 96000. Moreover if it is interpreted as the number of population in the division does it mean the number did not change for centuries? Finally the supposition putforth by Altekar indicates that the smaller divisions, each division containing thousand villages also cannot be accepted. Altekar further states that the term nad (division) was popularly supposed to consist of a thousand villages and he further states that it is also not likely that the term nad was applicable only to bigger

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1. Masaras - Epigraphical Reports 1911
2. Dr. Premnath, "A Study in the economic conditions of ancient India" P.6.
divisions actually containing about a thousand villages but that later on came to denote smaller divisions. But we have seen above that the smaller divisions like Ednad 70 have been found even in earlier periods.

Therefore the above theories may not be tenable. A possible explanation to these numbers may perhaps be noted as follows. We have seen that particular numbers are being used while mentioning the divisions. The smallest division is 12, the next higher division is 70 and similarly we find 300, 500, 1000, 6000, 12000, 32000 and 96000. The largest division being 7½ lakhs. Rarely we also get two six hundred, Konganad two two thousands Muraswadi 700 etc. The way in which they are referred to in inscriptions lead us to suppose that the numbers represent certain persons and not the villages. We have for example Male Sasirvar (the thousands of the Male), Thombattaru Sesirvar (the 96000 persons), Elvadimbar (the seventys), Ainurbbaru (the 500) etc. Possibly such expressions do not refer to the villages and even in the statements like Shannavati Sahasra Vishaya Prakritayah while giving the witnesses for the grants made, though it may be interpreted as the whole population of Gangavadi 96000, it is also possible to interpret it as the 96000 prakruties of the vishaya that was Gangavadi. In the expressions like Bellyur

1. Altekar, "RashtraHakutas and their times" P.149
2. E.C.V Ak 18
3. E.C.V Ag 31
4. E.C.I Chintamani 30
5. E.C.I No.96, 98 etc.
Pannirpalil it is clear that it refers to one village. There is room for interpreting as the main village with 12 hamlets. But the more probable and reasonable explanation of it would be the twelve of the village Beliyur. This 12 cannot be the number of representatives of that village who managed the affairs of the village, like the assemblies referred to so commonly in the Chola country. It is well known that the village was the administrative unit and these villages were of great importance in those days. The nadus which consisted of several villages, each having a certain number of representatives put together probably formed the number noted against the divisions like Edenad 70, Nirgunda 300, Mandali 1000 etc. Not that these representatives assembled together for administering the division, but they seem to represent the total number of the representatives of each village or group of villages in the particular division or nadu. There are several instances to show that the representatives are mentioned by numbers. Thus we have the famous Five Hundred of Ayyavole. Similarly each guild or each organisation had their own representatives mentioned by numbers like Meleasirivar. Thus we may say that these numbers neither represent the villages nor the population nor the revenue but the number of representatives put together in a particular division or province and even this may not be the actual number but only they rounded off figures.

1. E.C.V Ak 13
2. E.C.V Ak 103, Cn 166.
The position of Gangavadi in the South of India was a strategic one. It had Pallavas and the Cholas to its east, Pandyaas and Cheras to the south and Kadambas to the west, Chalukyas and Rashtrakutas to the north. Many a time this Gangavadi acted as a buffer state and was an arena for the prolonged fight between the Pallavas and the early Chalukyas later between the Cholas and Rashtrakutas. Its geographical position made it possible for the blending of different cultures and architectural features which we can see in various monuments spread over the length and breadth of Gangavadi. We have monuments purely in Dravadian style with the Pallava and Chola influences. The Chalukyan style developed into the later Hoysala styles.

This long lived dynasty of the Gangas had to face a grave situation during the close of the 10th Century and their kingdom. Gangavadi had to suffer a split under the hands of the powerful imperial kingdoms. Gangas did suffer even in their earlier period certain defeats by the Chalukyas. But either as subordinates or as allies, they continued to rule their kingdom unhindered. At the close of the 10th Century however the Cholas had become more powerful in the south under Rajaraja the great. At the same time the Rashtrakutas the Gangas had given way to the Chalukyas. As allies of the Rashtrakutas the Gangas under Bhatuuga had participated in the battle of Takkola between the Rashtrakutas and the Cholas and Bhatuuga killed Rajaditya the Chola prince. When the Rashtrakutas
themselves were ousted out by the Chalukyas and the Ganas were left in the lurch. At the same time there were fratricidal wars in the Ganga family itself which had weakened their position.

Rajaraja's unprecendented conquests of the Andya, Chera, Vengi and Kalinga kingdoms prompted him to attack the Chalukyas who were the political successors of their enemies, the nasiktrakutas. And it was also his aim to wipe out the Ganas who had killed one of his predecessors Rajaditya. Even as early as 991 A.D. we find his inscriptions within the Gangavadi area. Again in 997 A.D. he had established himself near Hoakote. The conquest of Gangavadi is referred to in inscriptions dated in the 8th, 9th, 10th and 15th years of his reign.

Finally we find that Rajendra Chola who was in command of the Chola army as a prince succeeded in capturing Talakad the Ganga capital by about 1004 A.D. and bringing an end to the Ganga power. The Cholas occupied major portions of Gangavadi to the east and south and they appointed governors to rule this area. This led to a final offensive battle between the various others ruling in other parts of Gangavadi and the Chola army under Aparameya at Naliur which has been discussed in the chapter the Hoya-la's rule in Gangavadi.

The Cholas after the subjugation of the major portion of Gangavadi, also brought under their control the Changelva who were ruling in the western parts of Gangavadi. These Changelvas were however continued to rule under them. A K familiar who showed great

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1. M.A.R. 1917 ~~ 91
2. S.T.I. Vol.II 1-1
3. S.T.I. Vol.II 1-3 Vol. II B 123, III or 146 etc.
valour in the battle against the Changalvas was also given a small principality in the south of Changanad. The other parts however were annexed to the Chola empire. These parts were included in different mandalas, valanadus, nadas etc. We hear of Vikkirama Sola mandala, Nigarili Sola mandala, Jayangonda sola mandala, Nittavinoda Valanadu, Arumulideva Valanadu, Pudalnad, Kaivaranad, Kuvalalanad, Avaniyanadu, Semburnadu etc. Which were being governed by the Chola officers appointed directly by the Chola king. This system of administration by the Cholas brought a drastic change in the administrative system in this area which was under the Ganga a loose control over chiefs. One hundred years of control over parts of Gangavadi by the Chola was effective and full of activities in different fields like architecture, education etc. We find a good number of Chola monuments cropping up in Gangavadi during this period. Their inscriptions give us in detail the control over village administration, the management of temples etc. Thus though in a way Gangavadi was divided and brought under different administration, its development in various fields is noticeable.

1. E.C.IX Ml 3
2. E.C.X Mb 446, 562
3. E.C.IX Bg 7
4. E.C.X Mb 426