

- . "Prince and Priest: Mpu Tantular's Two Works in the Fourteenth Century Majapahit." *Memoirs of the Research Department of the Toyo Bunko* 56 (1999): 63–83.
- Brandes, J. L. A., ed. and trans. *Pararaton (Ken Arok) of het boek der koningen van Tumapel en van Majapahit*. 2nd ed. Ed. by N. J. Krom. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1920.
- Coedès, G. *The Indianized States of Southeast Asia*. Trans. by Susan Brown Cowing, Ed. by Walter F. Vella. Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1968.
- Hall, Kenneth R. *Maritime Trade and State Development in Early Southeast Asia*. Sydney: George Allen and Unwin, 1985.
- Krom, N. J. *Hindoe-Javaansche geschiedenis*. 2nd ed. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1931.
- Kulke, Hermann. *Kings and Cults: State Formation and Legitimation in India and Southeast Asia*. Delhi: Manohari, 2001.
- Pigeaud, Theodore G. Th. *Java in the 14th Century: A Study in Cultural History*. 5 vols. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960–1963.
- Reid, Anthony and David Marr, eds. *Perceptions of the Past in Southeast Asia*. Singapore: Heinemann Educational Books, 1979.
- Ricklefs, M. C., ed. *A New History of Southeast Asia*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.
- Roboson, Stuart, trans. *Deśawarṇana: Nāgarakṛtāgama*. Leiden: KITLV Press, 1995.
- Van Naerssen, F. H. and R. C. de Jongh. *The Economic and Administrative History of Early Indonesia*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1977.
- Wolters, O. W. *History, Culture, and Region in Southeast Asian Perspectives*. Rev. ed. Ithaca, N.Y.: Southeast Asia Program Publications, 1999.
- Zoetmulder, P. J. *Kalangwan: A Survey of Old Javanese Literature*. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974.

### Sanskritized Imperialism and State Integration in Early Medieval North India (c. 950–200)

MITA Masahiko

(Research Fellow, Toyo Bunko; Assistant Professor, Graduate School of Letters, Nagoya University)

Recent historiographies often describe the history of the post-Gupta and early medieval periods as the process of regional state formation by looking at the historical changes in local societies [Chattopadhyaya 2012; Kulke 1993; Kapur 2002; Sheikh 2010; Lieberman 2009]. However, those regional states which gained independence from the declining imperial powers in the 10th century, namely the Pratihāras, Pālas, and Rāṣṭrakūṭas, did not consider unifying the regions as their political goals, and neither did they adopt the vernaculars (*deśī*) as their official languages; rather, they adopted Sanskrit, and often aimed at conquering the whole world, which often means the whole India (Bhāratavarṣa), as their ultimate purpose, just as the former imperial powers did. In the *Dharmaśāstras*, *Purāṇas*, the Epics, and other Sanskrit texts of Brahmanism in this period, ideal kings are depicted as a *samrāj* or *cakravartin* who subjugates all the kings of the world. The aforementioned ultimate purpose of the so-called regional states of this period was apparently based on this kind of ideology, a 'Sanskritized imperialism', so to speak. This paper tries to clarify the political meanings of their declaration of being world conquerors (*samrāj* or *cakravartin*) in the Sanskrit ecumene of the 10th to 12th centuries by investigating the narrative on legitimized kingship recorded in the

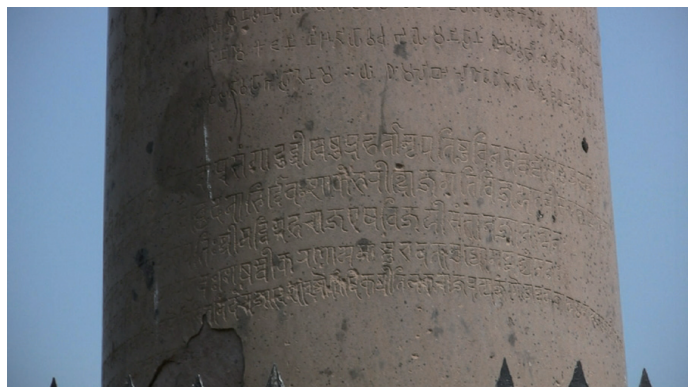


Figure Delhi-Topra Inscription of Vighraharāja IV of the Cāhamānas, Dated VS 1220, Which Is Engraved in Nāgarī on the Lower Part of the Pillar, While the Upper Inscription Is the Edicts of Aśoka.

inscriptions of “regional states” like the Cāhamānas of Rajasthan and the Caulukyās of Gujarat, presenting a case study for comparing them to the contemporary state integration in other areas of the Sanskrit ecumene like South India and Southeast Asia.

### *Kingship, Gods, and Temples*

The legitimation of kingship in Sanskrit literature developed considerably in the post-Gupta and early medieval periods. From about the 8th century onwards, royal clans began to compose genealogies and claimed their descent from *Sūrya-vaṃśa* or *Candra-vaṃśa*, i.e., pure Kṣatriya origin, while some less powerful clans claimed the descent from Brahmaṇa or *Brahma-Kṣatra*, depending on their actual political status. From the 10th century onwards, when many regional powers sprang from the declining Pratīhāra empire, they assimilated their former tribal gods and goddesses to Viṣṇu and Śiva, and built gigantic royal temples of their own tutelary deities, as in the cases of the Khajuraho temple complexes of the Candellas, Jagannātha temple of the Gaṅgas, Rājarājeśvara temple of the Cōḷas, Rudramālā temple of the Caulukyās, and Harṣanātha temple of the Cāhamānas. These pan-Indian temples and gods were the ideological devices of their rule, which was expanded beyond their own tribal areas through conquest.

The relations between the transcendent gods and the newly emerging “regional” overlords are expressed by narratives depicted in the eulogy (*praśasti*) of the epigraphical records of the Caulukyās and the Cāhamānas: their kingship (*rājya*) being granted through the grace (*prasāda*) of Śiva. At the same time, the king was even considered as Śiva himself, a transcendental power encompassing the whole universe, as in the case of the Cōḷa dynasty. Thus, the overlords whose kingship was conferred by Śiva were regarded as exactly *samrāj* or *cakravartin* as described in Sanskrit literature; in fact, some overlords are called *cakravartin* in the *praśasti* portion of the copper-plate charters issued by the Caulukyās.

Along with this ideology of paramount kingship, the construction of royal temples signified the “centralization” of emerging regional powers in peripheral areas. For instance, when the Cāhamānas of Śākambharī in northern Rajasthan, gaining independence from the Pratīhāra empire, constructed the temple dedicated to their tutelary deity Harṣanātha on the top of the mountain Harṣa in the mid-10th century, they engraved a *praśasti* inscription on the god Harṣanātha and the Cāhamāna family, eulogizing the temple as follows: although the water of the mountain Harṣa is not that of the Ganges, the mountain Harṣa is equal to Mt. Meru and the temple Harṣa possesses supreme grandeur because Harṣanātha or Śiva dwells there. The Cāhamānas, as an emerging power in periphery, appeared to claim their land to be the same as the Ganges basin; ideologically, their land is the centre of the imperial power ruling over the whole world. That ideology must have supported their imperial proclamation declared by Vīgraharāja IV in the latter half of the 12th century, as demonstrated in the Delhi-Topra inscription dated to VS 1220.

### *Sāmanta and Cakravartin (Samrāj)*

The early medieval state structure was the so-called *sāmanta* system in which the state was composed of many subordinate rulers (*sāmantas*), as overlords were called *mahārājādhirāja* or “a great king of kings” in early medieval inscriptions, and as *Dharmaśāstra* literature stipulates that *dharma-vijaya* or “righteous conquest” is to make defeated kings subordinate. The ideology and legitimation of kingship in early medieval India must, therefore, be analyzed in the context of the *sāmanta* system. In one aspect, some copper-plate charters indicate the unity of the kingship in the *sāmanta* system. *Sāmantas*, though subordinate, were still rulers, and

issued land-grant charters within their own domains. In these charters, they asserted their rulership of the land to have been given through the grace (*prasāda*) of their overlords, in order to claim the land to be their own legitimate territories, even in the case of powerful *sāmantas* who were formerly independent kings like the Nadol Cāhamānas, *sāmanta* of the Caulukyās. Considering the ideology of kingship given by gods mentioned above, kingship in the *sāmanta* system was, thus, composed of a chain of *prasādas* from the overlord's tutelary deity, by way of overlord, to *sāmantas* (even to *sāmantas* subjugated to powerful *sāmantas*), which ideologically emphasized the unity of the overlord's state. The overlords, *cakravartins* or *samrājs* were the pivotal points of kingship of the states in the sense that they were the resource of kingship which was directly granted to them by the gods.

But in another aspect, and in actuality, *sāmantas*, particularly powerful ones, were strongly independent. They were, in a real sense, former independent kings who had their own domains; in fact they necessarily had their own tutelary deities who appeared to have granted kingship to them. Therefore, they did not need the ideological support of kingship by their overlords, as mentioned above as a chain of *prasādas*. On the contrary, the status of overlords was fragile and unstable, and was not guaranteed by any legal institutions. According to *Nītisāra* (XI, 28–32), the literature on politics dating to the early medieval period, subordinate kings' seeking independence was a righteous deed. The same text also says that the overlords who come from a noble family and are truthful, generous and highly powerful, deserve begging protection for *sāmantas*; nobility and power were prerequisites for the stability of the status of the overlords. While nobility came from the divine royal genealogy as mentioned elsewhere, power appears to have been associated with the capability of the conquest of the whole world or of being *cakravartin* or *samrāj*, as is apparent from ideal kings depicted in Sanskrit literature and inscriptions.

Thus, kings emerging at the periphery, though, in fact, merely regional powers, declared themselves to be Sanskritized imperial lords in order to integrate independent *sāmanta* powers within their domain, and actually exerted themselves ceaselessly to expand their power outwards as a *cakravartin* by making defeated rulers their *sāmantas*. And what was indispensable to demonstrate their status of *cakravartin* or *samrāj* was to construct the temples of their tutelary deities with a view to centralizing their homeland ideologically. The above legitimation of kingship, which can be called Sanskritized imperialism of regional (or peripheral) powers, therefore, totally functioned in the time of the post-Pratīhāra period from the 10th century onwards, when the peripheral imperial powers sprang, up till the 14th century when the Sanskrit culture lost their absolute status as court culture among the South Asian dynasties, probably because the Muslim states, adopting Persian language as their court language, expanded their domains in South Asia around this time, and at the same time, the vernaculars (*deśī*) started to be adopted by the regional Hindu powers in northern India as their official languages used for royal charters, royal chronicles, and other court literature.

### Bibliography

- Ali, Daud, 2011, "The Early Inscriptions of Indonesia and the Problem of the Sanskrit Cosmopolis", Pierre Yves Manguin et al., eds., *Early Interactions between South and Southeast Asia: Reflections on Cross-Cultural Exchange*, New Delhi: Manohar.
- Chattopadhyaya, B. D., 1990, *Aspects of Rural Settlements and Rural Society in Early Medieval India*, Calcutta: K P Bagchi & Company.
- , 2012, *The Making of Early Medieval India*, 2nd Ed., New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Davis, Richard H., 1997, *Lives of Indian Images*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

- Gommans, Jos J. L., 1998, "The Silent Frontier of South Asia, c. A.D. 1100–1800", *Journal of World History*, 9 (1), pp. 1–23.
- Inden, R., 1981, "Hierarchies of Kings in Early Medieval India", *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, 15 (2), pp. 99–125.
- Kane, P. V., 1973–74, *History of Dharmasāstras*, Vol. II and III, 2nd Ed., Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.
- Kapur, N. S., 2002, *State Formation in Rajasthan: Mewar during the Seventh–Fifteenth Centuries*, Delhi: Manohar.
- Karashima, N., 2009, *South Indian Society in Transition: Ancient to Medieval*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Kulke, H., 1993, *Kings and Cults: State Formation and Legitimation in India and Southeast Asia*, Delhi: Manohar.
- Majumdar, A. K., 1956, *Chaulukyas of Gujarat*, Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.
- Mita, M., 2003, "Clan System or Sāmanta System? The Polity of the Śākambharī Cāhamānas in Early Medieval Rajasthan", *Journal of the Japanese Association for South Asian Studies*, 15, pp. 1–38.
- Lieberman, V., 2003, 2009, *Strange Parallels: Southeast Asia in Global Context, c. 800–1830*, 2 Vols., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Pollock, S., 2007, *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men: Sanskrit, Culture, and Power in Premodern India*, Delhi: Permanent Black.
- Sharfe, H., 1989, *The State in Indian Tradition*, Leiden: E. J. Brill.
- Sharma, Dasharatha, 1966, *Rajasthan through the Ages*, Vol. I, Bikaner: Rajasthan State Archives.
- Sheikh, S., 2010, *Forging a Region: Sultans, Traders, and Pilgrims in Gujarat 1200–1500*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Sircar, D. C., 1982, *The Emperor and the Subordinate Rulers*, Santiniketan: Visva-Bharati.
- Sompura, K. F., 1968: *The Structural Temples of Gujarat (Upto 1600 AD)*, Ahmedabad: Gujarat University.
- Willis, M. D., 1993, "Religious and Royal Patronage in North India", V. N. Desai and D. Mason (eds.), *Gods, Guardians, and Lovers: Temple Sculptures from North India, A.D. 700–1200*, New York: Asia Society Galleries, pp. 49–65.
- Wink, A., 1990, 1997, 2004, *Al-Hind: The Making of the Indo-Islamic World*, 3 Vols., Leiden: Brill.
- Yadava, B.N.S., 1973, *Society and Culture in Northern India in the Twelfth Century*, Allahabad: Central Book Depot.

"Comment"

Hermann KULKE

(Professor Emeritus, Chair of Asian History, Department of History, University of Kiel, Germany)

*Complete achievements of this symposium will be published as a book in the near future.*