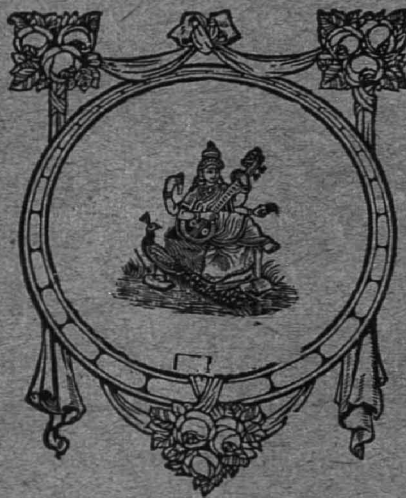


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## AN INSCRIBED POT FROM NAṆḌŪRU

BY

PROFESSOR K. A. NILAKANTA SASTRI, M.A.

The existence of the inscribed earthenware pot which forms the subject of this paper was first signified to me some months ago by Pandit Veturi Prabhakara Sastri of the Government Oriental Manuscripts Library, Madras. He also gave me for inspection two photographs of the pot, and then, at my particular request, he arranged for the pot being brought over to Madras for further examination and study. I took fresh photographs of the pot and impressions of the short inscription on it and these are now being published. I have often discussed with Mr. Prabhakara Sastri the questions centering round this inscribed pot and I owe many suggestions to him.

*Provenance*:—The pot now belongs to the Sāradā-niketana, a well-known girls' school maintained in the city of Guntur by Mr. Unnava Lakshminarayana, Bar-at-law and his wife, Mrs. Lakshmi Bai. It was discovered at Naṇḍūru some three to four years ago—more precise information regarding the time of discovery has not reached me—in the course of a digging for what is known as *pāṭi-maṇṇu*, lit. earth from ruins, for use in rice-fields; the workmen came upon what looked like the remains of an old brick wall, which turned out to be a brick encasement for the pot which forms the subject of this paper; it is owing to this encasement that the pot has been recovered entire, except for a small fracture near the mouth. I am not in a position to give any measurements relating to the size of the encasement or of the bricks comprising it. Nor have I seen the platter-like lid which is said to fit the mouth of the pot exactly. Some ashes are said to have been found in the pot at the time of the discovery, they do not seem to have been preserved and no information is forthcoming about the nature of the ash.

Naṇḍūru is a village in the Bapatla Taluq of the Guntur district, ten miles to the north of Bapatla, the Taluq centre. It is about 20 miles S. W. of Bhattiprolu, the find spot of the celebrat-

ed Bhattiprolu caskets, and about seven miles due W. of Tsandavolu, which, under the name of Dhanadapura, was once the capital of the Velanāḍu kings.

*Measurements:* In shape, the pot looks very much like one of the big burial urns recovered from Āṅdiccanallur and Perumbeir and preserved in the Madras Museum. The height of the pot is  $5\frac{1}{2}$ " , its circumference is 11" near the mouth and 16" at the level of the inscription, and a little more, somewhat lower, at its widest. The bottom is rounded and the pot cannot be easily seated erect without other support. Three simple lines, rather deeply incised, two above and one below the inscription, are the only ornamental features on the pot, besides the repetition of the double-line (in raised strands) a little higher up near the mouth, the two lines being in either case separated by  $2/10$ ". The clay has been well and uniformly burnt and presents a dull brown appearance. The inscription is in clear Brāhmī characters of the second or third century A. D. The space between the linear bands above and below the inscription has a mean width of about  $8/10$ ths of an inch, but all the letters except two extend above or below the bands, one of the ligatures extending both ways and measuring nearly  $1,4/10$ ". The inscription is just about 6" long and thus occupies much less than half the circumference of the pot. The letters are quite clear and must have been engraved when the pot was still wet, before its being fired.

*The inscription:* The style of writing adopted in this short inscription reminds us forcibly of the remarks of Buhler on the script of the inscriptions from Jaggayyapetta, and may now be compared with the inscriptions from Nāgārjuni-koṇḍa.<sup>1</sup> The sign that looks like a *visarga* and yet differs from it so much by the insertion of a curve between the two dots is, I think meant for a stop. It occurs at the end of each of the two words comprising the inscription.<sup>2</sup> I read the inscription directly from the pot and from mechanical reproductions of it as follows:—

ā ya ma ṇi / pru ṣṭi k̄a /

In ā the length is indicated by a slight stroke on the right side of the vertical of the letter; I do not think that the dot below the left short vertical has any significance. The letter ṇa

1. Ind. Pal. Sec. 20 C; EI. XX, p. 11, XXI, pp. 61 ff.

2. The curve alone is used as a stop in Nāgārjuni-koṇḍa G II

1. EI. xxi plate opp. p. 62.

(in *ni*), it may be noted, is intermediate in form between the two forms of *na* illustrated by Buhler in his tables (III 1. 20) from Junnar and Jaggayyapetta; the letter sometimes shows a loop in the Nāgārjuni-koṇḍa inscriptions.<sup>1</sup>

A dot over the left vertical arm of *pru* falls on the lower one of the two lines above the inscription. I neglect this dot like the one under *ā* noticed before. I may add that three or four similar dots are found on the uninscribed surface of the pot, a fact which supports the surmise that these dots do not form part of the inscription. The ligature *ṣṭi* is of rare occurrence; but there seems to be no room for doubt about its reading. Note that the *i* sign starts on the left vertical of *ṣṭa*.

To take up the word *pruṣṭikā* first. The word in this form is uncommon and I am not aware of any other instance of its use in literature or epigraphy. But I think it may be safely connected with *pruṣṭa*, a word known to Amarasimha (*pruṣṭa-pluṣ-ṭoṣitā dagdhe*- III. i. 99) in the sense of 'burnt'. An analogous formation to *pruṣṭikā* is furnished by the word *vartlikā* derived in the *Uṇādi-sūtras* from *vrt* with the addition of the termination *tikan*.<sup>2</sup> *Pruṣṭikā* would, if what has been said so far is correct, mean literally anything that is burnt. Though it may thus conceivably mean a pot, I think it is meant to apply to the contents of the pot, the relics of some person preserved in it.

If this interpretation of the second word is correct, the first should naturally give the name of the person whose relics were thus preserved. The name as we read it is *Āyamaṇi*. Considering the provenance of the pot, one is tempted to say that this word, *Āryamaṇi*, shows the pot to be the reliquary of no less a person than the celebrated Buddhist divine *Āryadeva*. It is of

1. *EI.* XX plate facing p. 16. C 3, 1. 4 *hirana*; also A.S.W.I. V Pl. li. Kanheri No. 2 1.2, and several examples in No. 15. See also Burgess—Amaravati and Jaggayyapettah Pl. Lx. ii. No. 2. 1.2.

Pandit Prabhakara Sastri is, however, inclined to read this letter as *ni*. He thinks that the correct reading of this and the preceding letter is *muni*. The *u* in *mu* is by no means distinct, but there seems to be a slight extension towards the right of the cross stroke of *ma* faintly visible to the naked eye on the pot and seen also in one of the photographs, though many carefully prepared impressions did not get it in. He also suggests that if it is not *muni*, it may be *mati*.

2. *Uṇādi-sūtras*—ed., Dr. T. R. Chintamani, Part ii, Sūtra 419.

some interest to note, in this connection, that, to this day in the Krishna and Guntur districts, there are said to be found families with the significant names Ayyadevara, which, together with other family names like Thera and Buddharāja, indicates that these families, now Hindu, might be the representatives of the ancient Buddhist houses of the Āndhra country.

The family name Ayyadevara is of special significance, for it is just another form of Āryadeva. Another fact, perhaps worth noting, is the testimony of the Nāgārjuni-koṇḍa inscriptions<sup>1</sup> to the constant intercourse between the Āndhra country and Ceylon in the second and third centuries A. D., and Ceylon is said to have been the original home of Āryadeva.

We should not omit to note some difficulties in the way of treating the pot as the reliquary of Āryadeva's remains. The name in our inscription is Āryamaṇi; the Buddhist divine is generally known as Āryadeva, and the Chinese sources call him Deva Pusa; this means really that the name by which the Chinese called him was Deva, because Pusa is a common term they applied to all patriarchs.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand all the terms *Ārya*, *Deva*, and *Maṇi* are honorifics, and it is possible that the same person might have been meant by different combinations of these terms. Another point is that the containers of relics are more often of stone, crystal or steatite, often a number of vases and caskets one within another, the whole being deposited safely beneath a stūpa. The use of earthenware pots is however, not altogether unknown; one earthen bowl and three inscribed jars containing relics have been reported from Bhojpur;<sup>3</sup> and inscribed bricks containing Buddhist sūttas have also been found.<sup>4</sup> Then the language of our inscription seems to be more Sanskritised than is usual in such inscriptions in the mixed dialect; the form *āya* for *ārya* is known in some other instances, like Āya Karkuhasta<sup>5</sup> and Āya Bhadukiya;<sup>6</sup> but *pruṣṭikā* is a good Sanskrit word as we have seen. With Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva, however, begins the full tide of Mahāyāna, when Sanskrit came into use. Lastly, the inscriptions on the relic caskets more

1. *EI*. xx, p. 23.

2. Edkins - *Chinese Buddhism*, p. 77; Watters-Yuan Chwang.

3. Luders - List of Brāhmī inscriptions. 676-78 and 680.

4. *JASB*. 1896, p. 101; *EI* xxi, pp. 193 ff.

5. Luders 58.

6. *Ibid.* 367.

The Inscription.



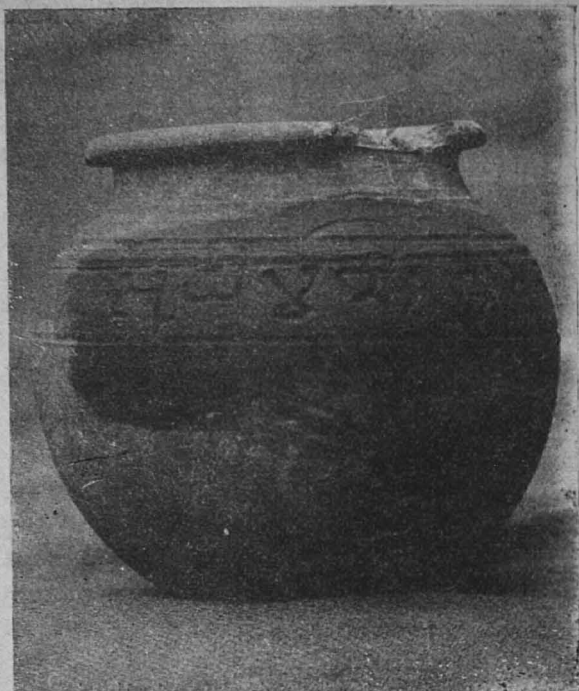
The pot with the inscription chalked.



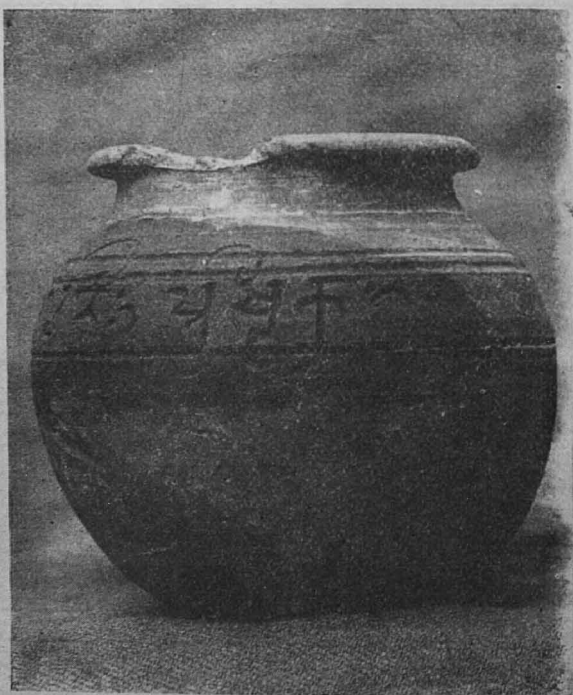
By the kind courtesy of the Editor of  
the Bhāratī, Madras.

Two views of the inscribed pot.

I



II



By the kind courtesy of the Editor of  
the Bāhrati, Madras.

often give only the name in the genitive case of the person whose relics are preserved without employing any word signifying relics—as the word *pruṣṭikā* does in this case; but here again instances of the mention of relics are not unknown and the words *śarīra* and *dhātu* are found employed in some inscriptions from relic caskets.<sup>1</sup>

Āryadeva is well-known as the pupil of Nāgārjuna and the author of many works. He was a native, most probably of Ceylon,<sup>2</sup> but seems to have spent much of his life in the mainland of India. Yuan Chwang mentions his connection with several places in India, but there is nothing so far known, except Āryadeva being the disciple of Nāgārjuna, that brings him into any very close relation with the Āndhra country. In view of this and in view of the difficulties already noticed, it may be doubted if our pot can yet be accepted as the reliquary of Āryadeva's remains.<sup>3</sup> But the suggestion seemed worth making in view of the other evidence cited above. This evidence is late and inconclusive; it must be left to future research to confirm or disprove the suggestion put forward here tentatively.

1. Swat Relic Vase Inscription, Jalalabad Vase Inscription and another inscription dated 146 A.D. on a box lid—*Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, ii p. 4, 52, and 152. *EI.* ii pp. 326, 328 (Bhaṭṭiprolu); *ASSI.* I. p. 86, No. 47 (Amarāvati). Of all these, only the inscription of 146 A. D. furnishes a close analogy to our record, being the interment of the relics of a Śramaṇa. The rest relate to the relics of the Buddha.

2. Or South India Watters, i, 321; Beal, v, 190, n. 76.

3. For Āryadeva see Watters - Yuan-Chwang index, s. v. Deva, and corresponding passages in Beal - Buddhist Records, in particular, i. 189, n. 76. A short metrical work on Mahāyāna ethics by Āryadeva was recovered and published by H. P. Sastri, in 1898-*J.A.S.B.* ii, pp. 175-84. Āryadeva's *Catuśśatikā* ed. also by H. P. Sāstri. *Memoirs ASB.* iii (8) pp. 449-514. Again by Vidhuśekhara Bhaṭṭācārya, Part II only—*Viśvabhāratī Series* No. 2 (1931). The *Sātaśāstra*, a short treatise of Āryadeva on logic, has been recovered and published by Tucci in his *Pre-Digṇāga Buddhist Texts on Logic*. Gaekwad's Oriental Series Vol. 49. See also *I.H.Q.* 1933, pp. 978-9 for a discussion on Āryadeva's birth-place. Kuangpai-lun in Watters, xx, i, 362.

## REALISM IN INDIAN ART

BY

C. SIVARAMAMURTI, B.A., (HONS.),

*Madras*

The cry of 'go back from nature' has now pervaded Indian atmosphere and created an Indian Art quite unconscious and ignorant of and hence totally dissociated from nature. The say that nature is no good and that the ideal artist should rise above her is a tacit though honourable way of admitting the inimitableness of God's creation. The human hand, however much aided by instruments, falls short of portraying the sublime spirit of God in nature. But that does not and should not in any way discourage an artist from depicting nature as true as his ability could allow him to do it. It is only the degree of perfection that makes the artist felt as great or small. Whatever people might feel regarding the opinions of Ruskin on art—and we are not concerned with the opinions—it cannot be gainsaid he was a remarkably great aesthete, and it is interesting to note how very plain he is on the point (Art). In his Pre-Raphaelitism he asks us to 'suppose that every tree of the forest had been drawn in its noblest aspect, every beast in the field in its savage life—that all these gatherings were already in our national galleries, and that the painters of the present day were labouring, happily and earnestly, to multiply them, and put such means of knowledge more and more within reach of the common people'—, and questions us whether 'that would not be a more honourable life for them, than gaining precarious bread by "bright effects".' He says that the painters do not think it to be so and adds that 'they think it easy, and therefore contemptible to be truthful.' Proceeding he deplores that 'the excuse is, however, one of lips only; for every painter knows that when he draws back from the attempt to render Nature as she is, it is oftener in cowardice than disdain.'

That this truth which Ruskin has been telling us is confined to England is as absurd a notion as that of Art belonging to any particular nation or country. As the instinct of man is artistic in some degree or other all the world over and as fine art was no monopoly of any country or clime, so also the supposition of

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