

On the Land-grant of the Maitrakas

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The Maitrakas was the kingdom of Saurashtra of western India from the end of the fifth century to the latter half of the eighth century A. D. They left numerous copper-plate inscriptions, which recorded village-grant or land-grant. Forty three of the land grants that have been published are unvaluable references in the study of the land system in Ancient India. In this article they are carefully examined, the following conclusions are reached.

(1) In these inscriptions villagers' right to the granted lands and their adjoining lands were denoted by such terms as *kṛṣṭa*, *prakṛṣṭa*, *pratyaya*, *prabhuktaka* and *satka*. *Satka* is Sanskritized form of Prakrit *santaka*, meaning 'the holding of' or 'belonging to', according to Professor D. C. Sircar (*Indian Epigraphical Glossary*, Delhi 1966, p. 306), and remarkably it is never applied to the granted lands but only to the adjoining lands. In a grant of Śīlāditya III of Gupta Era 352 (671 A. D.), a land cultivated (*prakṛṣṭa*) by mahattara Jajjaluka was granted while his adjoining lands denoted by *satka* were excluded (*Bhavnagar Inscriptions*, p. 49). *Satka* refers to Brahmadeya (the land granted to brahmins) in such terms as *Skanda-satka-brahmadeya-kṣetra*, and it clearly signifies a proprietary right in the meaning of the *Smṛti* literatures, exempt from the land-grant of the Maitrakas.

(2) *Pratyaya* in this context is found in the inscriptions of western India dating from the fourth to the eighth century and seems to mean the usufruct right sanctioned by the Government. *Prakṛṣṭa* and *kṛṣṭa* mean 'cultivated', and between both there are no actual difference as *kṛṣṭa* is found only in a grant. *Prabhuktaka* is found in one grant too: *Brāhmaṇa-Viśākha-prabhuktaka-karada-kṣetra* (tax-payable land occupied by brahmin Viśākha).

(3) The granted lands of the Maitrakas were of three types; (i) the lands designated with *pratyaya*, *kṛṣṭa*, *prakṛṣṭa* and *prabhuktaka*, (that is to say, the terms other than *satka*), and (ii) lakes owned and managed by the king (*rājakīyat-vāpī*) and (iii) uncultivated lands to which villagers had no clear right. These lands were, in most cases, situated in the outskirts of the villages, and near neighbouring villages. This study indicates that land grants were actually distinct from village grants in the Maitraka period.