

Vainya is the synonym for the first king 'Pṛthu'.¹⁰⁹ Hiranand Shastri mentions Vainya as a synonym of Kubera, the god of wealth. According to Sir Richard Burn *Vainya* was another name of *Vajra* whom Hiuen Tsang mentions as the son of Bālāditya. He chiefly relies on the St. Petersburg dictionary where Vainya is derived from Vena and is connected with Indra; *Vajra* is the thunderbolt and *Vainya* is a patronymic from Vena who is Indra.¹¹⁰ But the suggested identification is extremely far-fetched. *Vajra* cannot by any stretch of imagination be described as a synonym of *Vainya*. Moreover, it is difficult to believe that Hiuen Tsang would have referred to the king by such a name in preference of the real name.

In No. 51 Vainyagupta is mentioned as a *paramabhāgavata* and *mahārājādhirāja*, but in No. 53 he is described as a devotee of Lord Śiva (*bhagavān mahādevapādānudhyāta*) and a *mahārāja* only. Some scholars hold the opinion that it shall be wrong to disconnect Vainyagupta from the Gupta family on the basis of the argument that the Guptas were Vaiṣṇavas while Vainyagupta professed to be a Śaiva.¹¹¹ We find both the epithets '*paramabhāgavata*' and '*mahādevapādānudhyāto*' for him in our records.

It is interesting that even his Pādādāsa and Uparika are styled as mahārājas (LL.3 and 16). His title Mahārāja, therefore, cannot prove that Vainyagupta was an insignificant prince.¹¹²

The legend on No. 51, though partially preserved, resembles in point of style the legend on the other seals of the Imperial Guptas. Here Vainyagupta is specifically called *paramabhāgavata*. Moreover, his name, like those of other kings in the Gupta dynasty ends in the word Gupta. It is thus clear that Vainyagupta belonged to the line of the Imperial Guptas. He seems to have ruled in any case over considerable parts of Bengal and Bihar¹¹³ almost immediately after Budhagupta. We do not know anything about the relationship of Vainyagupta with Budhagupta and Bhānugupta of the Eraṇ Inscription of A.D. 510.¹¹⁴ Some scholars assign him a reign of four years before Bhānugupta (A.D. 510).¹¹⁵

The regnal period of Vainyagupta witnessed a considerable decline in the power and prestige of the Imperial Guptas. The