

Sanskrit word. As Woolner has pointed out words with cerebrals are often non-Āryan or influenced by non-Āryan elements.³⁵ Another possibility is that these names show dialectal elements. Even now-a-days we give names like Maṅṭu, Baṅṭu, etc., to little children. There is also a possibility that the Sanskrit word 'mantra' meaning 'a hymn or magical formula' got changed to 'maṅṭa' through a process of Prakritization, or we may derive it from an artificial root 'maṅṭ' to act as intermediary.³⁶

4. *Nīlarāja* (No. 1, LL. 19-20) :

A king of Avamukta, one of the Dakṣiṇāpatha kings defeated by Samudragupta. The first part of the name is *Nīla* and the second is *rāja*.

Nīla means 'of dark colour' especially blue or green or black³⁷ and is also the name of a *Nāga* and *rāja* is the surname added to it.

5. *Śarabharāja* (No. 19, L. 4) :

He was the maternal grandfather of Goparāja, the feudatory chief of king Bhānugupta.

Śarabha is the name of a people and also refers to a fabulous animal supposed to have eight legs and to inhabit the snowy mountains; it is represented as stronger than the lion and the elephant.³⁸ The name may literally mean 'a king of the Śarabha people'. It may also be treated as a name based on an animal.

6. *Vyāghrarāja* (No. 1, L. 19) :

He was the ruler of Mahākāntāra and was one of the kings of Dakṣiṇāpatha defeated by Samudragupta. He has been identified with the Vākāṭaka feudatory prince Vyāghra whose inscriptions have been found at Nach-ne-ki-talai and Ganj in Central India, who is also said to have been the ruler of the Uchchakalpa dynasty in Bundelkhand.³⁹ But an objection to this view is that he must be a ruler in Dakṣiṇāpatha as mentioned in our inscription and has accordingly been identified with the ruler of Mahā-vana, a synonym of Mahā-kāntāra, also called Jeypore forest in Orissa.⁴⁰

The name is based on the animal *Vyāghra*, or tiger implying that in Mahākāntāra his subordinate chiefs were like tigers and he was their ruler. The name is a good selection in the