

Tribute to a Famous Singer

A Statue Found at Nandivardhana (Nagardhan)

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Abstract

The article discusses a small image that was reported to have been found in the Nagardhan area, the ancient Nandivardhana, at the foot of the Rāmagiri in 1987. The image has earlier been identified by me (Bakker 1997) as a bard or singer, kavi, on account of the fact that it has an open book in its left hand. This book contains an inscription that until now has remained undeciphered. In the present publication I propose a reading of the two-lined inscription. It seems to be a tribute to the singer embodied in the sculpture. It is argued that the image may have been commissioned by the Vākāṭaka king Pravarasena to honour his guru, but whether or not it represents the famous author of the Meghadūta remains uncertain.

Keywords: Kālidāsa; King Pravarasena; Setubandha; Pravarapura; Mansar excavations; *gāṭī*; singer of