EIAD 174. Copper plates from Tummalagudem (set I) — reign of Govindavarman I, year 37

Arlo Griffiths and Vincent Tournier

Authors of digital edition: Arlo Griffiths, Vincent Tournier

Identifier: DHARMA_INSEIAD00174

Repository: Early Āndhradeśa (tfb-eiad-epigraphy)

File path: texts/xml/DHARMA_INSEIAD00174.xml

Language: Sanskrit [Script (unspecified)]

Commit: 2026-09-22 13:22 (151ff65), last modified 2026-09-22 13:22 (151ff65)

Edition

〈Page 1b〉 〈1〉 (□)svasti

1. Anuṣṭubh

jitaṁ bhagavatā tena
saṁbuddhena kṛpātmanā
nirvvāṇaprāptaye yena
sadbhy(o) mārggaḥ pra(da)rśitaḥ ||

satvasatya〈2〉tyāgābhi(ja)nanayavinayotsāhādiguṇagaṇasaṁpadā svayamadhigatarājyānāṁ samyakprajāpālanāt pra〈3〉◯ thitāvadātapṛthuyaśasāṁ rājñāṁ viṣṇukuṇḍīnām amalavipulasakalakulatila〈4〉◯kena śrī-mahārājendravarmmasatpautreṇa mahārāja-śrīmādhavavarmmaṇaḥ suputreṇa svataya〈5〉bhujabalotsāhaprabhāvānurāgāvāpta-svarājyena śauryya-dhairyya-pratāpānubhāvād a〈6〉〈Page 2v〉nyasāmantākrāntarājyāntareṇa dānamānādibhir anuraktavarṇṇāśramasvajanaparijanena grāmakṣetra〈7〉hi(ra)ṇya-dviradaturagagobalīvarddaśayanāsanayānapānabhojanabhājanabhavanavasanābha

hasrāṇāṁ dātrā Anekadevāyatanavihārasabhāprapātaḍākodupānā〈9〉◯rām(a)pratisaṁskārapūrvvakaraṇenālaṁkṛtasakaladigantareṇa bhikṣudvijā(n)ātha(yāca)kavyā〈10〉dhitadīnakṛpaṇajanopabhujyamānanyāyādhigatavibhavadhanasamudayenāsa(kṛ)dasakṛtsa(r)vva〈11〉svatyāginā sakalaśāstrārtthaśravaṇaparijñānād iha paratra cānanyaca(kṣ)u(ṣ)ā vi(d)vachhūramahā〈12〉〈Page 2v〉〈marginleft: 2〉kulīnajanasamāśrayeṇa sakalasatvadhātutrāṇāyotpāditamahābodhicigtena mahārājaśrī〈13〉govindavarmmaṇā Ātmanaḥ pravarddhamāna-vijaya-rājya-saṁvatsare saptatriṁśatke vaiśākhapūrṇṇamāsyāṁ bhaga〈14〉◯vato daśabalabalinaḥ caturvvaiśāradyaviśāradasyāṣṭādaśāveṇikabuddhadharmmasamalaṁ(k)ṛ〈15〉◯tamūrtter dvātriṁśatmahāpuruṣalakṣaṇavaropalakṣitasya jātijarāmaraṇaśokādiṣu bahu〈16〉saṁsāraduḥkhanimagnasarvvasatvottāraṇāyānekakalpāsaṁkhyeyopacitapuṇyajñānasaṁbhārabhāra〈17〉syāpagatarāgadveṣamohajananamaraṇaduḥkhasyāpratihatānāvaraṇasakalajñeyaj(ñ)ānā〈18〉〈Page 3r〉 t samyaksaṁbuddhasya buddhasya mā(rg)gam abhiprapannaṁ nirvvidvirāgaśīlaśikṣādhutaguṇāddhyayanaśravaṇa[ci]〈19〉ntanabhāvanādhy(ā)nasamādhisamāpattyādibhi guṇagaṇair anuttaraṁ puṇyakṣetraṁ triyānayāyinaṁ cāturdd(i)〈20〉◯śam āryyasaṅgham uddiśya tyāgaparibhogānvayam aupadhikañ ca puṇyakriyāvastvabhinirvvartta〈21〉◯yiṣyatā mātāpitroḥ sarvvasatvānāñ ca nikhiladāridye duḥkhopaśama-hetoḥ svasyā Agra〈22〉mahiṣyā parama-mahādevyā vihārasya dīpa-dhūpa-gandha-puṣpa-dhvaja-pāna-bhojana-śayanāsana-glāna〈23〉-bhaiṣajya-khaṇḍasphuṭita-śīrṇṇa-saṁskārādi-k(u)śalamūlānupac(ch)edārtthaṁ dvāv em(b)u(d)ala-peṇ(k)apaṛa〈24〉〈Page 3b〉〈marginleft: 3〉 -nāmadheyau grāmau Udakadāna-pūrvvakaṁm atisṛṣṭau sanidhisopanidhisadaṇḍakaravriṣṭisocche(ṣaṇa)bhāga〈25〉bhogapradey(a) cārabhaṭadūtavallabharājapuruṣair apraveśyau vimuktasakalapari(hā)rau viṣ(ṇu)k(u)ṇ(ḍ)i〈26〉◯kulavaṁśyai rājabhis saṁrakṣaṇīyau saṁvarddhanīyau ca sthitir eṣā sthā(p)it(a) sthityatikrame pa(ñ)ca〈27〉◯mahāpātakayogaḥ pravṛttapuṇyakriyāvicchede cānattaduḥkhabhūyiṣṭh(a)nara(ka)ti(r)yya〈28〉kpretagatiṣv aniṣṭakarmmaphalopabhogam anubhavanti ||bhavanti cātra manugītā ślokā ||_

2. Anuṣṭubh

〈29〉 ṣaṣṭiṁ varṣasahasrāṇi
svargge vasati bhūmidaḥ
Ācchettā hy anumantā ca
tāny eva narake vase(t·) ||

3. Anuṣṭubh

〈Page 4a〉 〈30〉 svadattāṁ paradattāṁ vā
yo hareta vasundharām·

sa viṣṭhāyāṁ krimir bhūtvā
pitṛbhi(s) (s)aha (pac)yate ||

4. Anuṣṭubh

〈31〉 ◯bahubhir vvasudhā dattā
bahubhiś cānupālitā
yasya yasya yadā bhūmis
tasya (ta)sya ta(d)ā〈32〉 phalam· ||

5. Anuṣṭubh

bhuvi merūdadhī yāvad
divīnduravimārutā
tāvac chrīvi(ṣ)ṇukuṇḍīnāṁ
pṛthivīṁ śāstu ś(ā)sana(ṁ) (||)

Apparatus

〈1〉 satva- ◇ *sa〈t〉tva-* Sankaranarayanan 1974.

〈2〉 -tyāgābhi(ja)na- ◇ *(tyāgābhijana)* Sankaranarayanan 1974. — 〈2〉 -saṁpadā ◇ *saṁpadāṁ* Sankaranarayanan 1974; *saṁpadāṁ* Mirashi 1982 • Sankaranarayanan 1974 and Mirashi 1982 made a silent emendation. We prefer an instr. sg. ending.

〈4〉 svataya- • Read *svanaya-*, as suggested by Sankaranarayanan 1974.

〈5-6〉 a(nya)sāmantā- ◇ *anyasāmantā-* Sankaranarayanan 1974 • Emend *ananya-*?

〈6〉 anuraktavarṇṇāśrama- ◇ *anuraktavarṇāśrama* Sankaranarayanan 1974.

〈7〉 -hi(ra)ṇya- ◇ *-hiraṇya-* Sankaranarayanan 1974.

〈8〉 -taḍākodupāna- ◇ *-taḍakodupāna-* Sankaranarayanan 1974 • Sankaranarayanan 1974 erroneously suggest to emend *-kodapāna-*. On *udupāna*, already found in Aśokan inscriptions, see BHSD, s.v.

〈9〉 -rāmaprati • A locative form is expected here: cf. the Gunaighar copper-plate inscription: *vihāre ca khaṇḍaphuṭṭapratisaṁskārakaraṇāya*. Perhaps a loc. singular form can be accepted, in which case there is no need to supply *-ṣu*. — 〈9〉 -pratisaṁskārapūrva- ◇ *-pratisaṁskārāpūrva-* Sankaranarayanan 1974 • It seems necessary to follow here the silent emendation of Sankaranarayanan 1974. For a discussion on the term *apūrvakaraṇa* in light of parallels, see Tournier 2018, pp. 28–29, n. 19.

〈10〉 -sa(rv)va- ◇ *-(sva)sarvva-* Sankaranarayanan 1974; *-sarvva-* Mirashi 1982 • The space left between the *sa* and the *rvva* might be due to the descending ya marker from the above line.

〈11〉 iha paratra ◇ *ihāparatra* Sankaranarayanan 1974 • Sankaranarayanan 1974 does a silent emendation.

〈12〉 satva- ◇ *sa〈t〉tva-* Sankaranarayanan 1974. — 〈12〉 -mahābodhicigtena • Read *mahābodhicittena* with Sankaranarayan.

〈14〉 samalaṁkṛ- ◇ *samala〈ṁ〉kṛ-* Sankaranarayanan 1974.

〈15〉 -triṁśat- • Correct *-triṁśan-*.

〈18〉 nirvviḍvirāga ◇ *-nirvviḍvirāga-* Sankaranarayanan 1974 • Sankaranarayanan 1974 suggests that *nirdviḍ* is probably the intended first word. This, however, is incorrect. Cf. BHSD, s.v. *nirvid*. — 〈18〉 -śravaṇa[ci]- ◇ *-śravaṇaci-* Sankaranarayanan 1974.

〈19〉 -bhāvanā- ◇ *-bhāvana-* Sankaranarayanan 1974. — 〈19〉 -samāpattyādibhi- • Emend *samāpattyādibhir*.

〈20〉 puṇyakriyāvastvabhi- • Understand *puṇyakriyāvastum abhi-*.

〈21〉 dāridye ◇ *dāridrya* Sankaranarayanan 1974 • Emendation of Sankaranarayanan 1974. This seems supported by the not common occurrence of *dāridryaduḥkha* as a compound in Buddhist Sanskrit texts. See *Gaṇḍavyūha* (V) 77: *... eṣa samādhiḥ, yatra hi nāma evaṁ sarvasattvānām aparimāṇaduḥkhaskandhavyupaśamāya pratyupasthitaḥ, yaduta dāridryaduḥkhaskandhavyupaśamārthena pratyupasthitaḥ |*.

〈21-22〉 agramahiṣyā ◇ *agramahiṣyā(ḥ)* Sankaranarayanan 1974.

〈23〉 -bheṣajya- ◇ *-bhaiṣajya-* Sankaranarayanan 1974. — 〈23〉 em(b)u(d)ala-peṇ(k)apaṟa ◇ *ermad(ā)lapeṇkaru-* Sankaranarayanan 1974 • The toponym is also attested in V engi Calukya 4, 14, and 15. CHECK spelling ṟa/ṟu.

〈24〉 pūrvvakaṁm ◇ *pūrvvakam* Sankaranarayanan 1974. — 〈24〉 -sadaṇḍ(a)karavriṣṭisocche(ṣaṇa)bhāga- ◇ *-sadaṇḍaviṣṭis(v)occhiṣṭabhāga-* Sankaranarayanan 1974; *-sadaṇḍakaraviṣṭi(sodraṅga)bhāga-* Mirashi 1982 • Sankaranarayanan 1974 remarks that “originally *vvi* was engraved”. While the hypothetical reading proposed by Mirashi 1982 is meaningful, the number of syllables does not match that of our plate. Moreover, the expression *sodraṅga* does not seem to be found in the inscriptions of this time and region.

〈25〉 -pradeya cāra- ◇ *-pradeyāv ācāra-* Sankaranarayanan 1974 • The akṣara *y(a)* might also be read *y(o)*, assuming the white mark running above the subscript *ra* of the

above *grā* to be a vocalic marker. This would then be a mistake for *pradeyau*. Emend accordingly.

〈26〉 sthā(p)it(a) ◇ *sthāpitā* Sankaranarayanan 1974; *sthāpitā* Mirashi 1982 • We however see no trace of the *-ā* marker, although one should emend *sth(ā)pitā*.

〈27〉 cānatta- • Correct *cānanta-*. — 〈27〉 -bhūyiṣṭh(a)narak(a)- ◇ *-bhūyiṣṭhe narake* Sankaranarayanan 1974.

〈28〉 anubhavan(t)i ◇ *anubhavati* Sankaranarayanan 1974 • The *-u* marker of the akṣara nu unusually turns outwards, instead of inwards. — 〈28〉 manugītā ◇ *manugītā* Mirashi 1982; *manugitā* Sankaranarayanan 1974.

〈29〉 varṣasahasrāṇi • There seems to be a ponctuation mark at the end of the first *pāda*, although this might also be a scratch. — 〈29〉 hy anumantā ◇ *cānumantā* Sankaranarayanan 1974; *cānumantā* Mirashi 1982.

〈32〉 viṣṇukuṇḍīnāṁ ◇ *viṣṇukuṇḍināṁ* Sankaranarayanan 1974 • The medial horizontal line of the *ṣ-* element in *ṣṇu* appears to be missing. — 〈32〉 pṛthivīṁ ◇ *pṛthivī(ṁ)* Sankaranarayanan 1974; *pṛthivī* Mirashi 1982. — 〈32〉 śāstu ◇ *śāstu* Mirashi 1982; *śastu* Sankaranarayanan 1974.

Translation

Success! Hail!

1.

Victory is achieved by the Bhagavant, the complete Buddha, the Compassionate One, by whom the path towards the obtention of *nirvāṇa* is shown to good people.

〈2–13〉 The great king Śrī-Govindavarman, who is an ornament to the entire great and spotless family of the Viṣṇukuṇḍin kings, who by their possession of many qualities such as goodness (*sattva*), truthfulness, relinquishment (*tyāga*), noble descent, restraint, discipline, and perseverance, had themselves obtained kingship, and whose spotless great fame spread far and wide because of their perfect governing of their subjects; [Govindavarman,] who is the good grand son of the illustrious great king Indravarman and the son of the great king Śrī Mādhavavarman; who has gained his kingship because of his restraint, the strength of his arms, his perseverance, might, and affection; who has overcome the proximate kingdoms of neighboring rulers (*anyasāmanta*) by the force of his heroism, courage, and majesty; to whom [men of all] classes and stages, kinsmen and servants are attached due to his gifts, courtesies, etc.; who is the giver of

thousands of villages, fields, pieces of gold, elephants, horses, cows, bulls, beddings and seats, vehicles, drink and food, dishes, dwellings, garments, ornaments, brides, male and female slaves; who has adorned all directions by repairing and building anew many temples, monasteries, halls, cisterns, tanks, wells, and pleasure-groves (*ārāma*); whose array of wealth and riches, which he has lawfully acquired, is being enjoyed by monks, brahmins, those without a protector, beggars, the sick, the poor and the wretched people; who has relinquished, time and again, everything that he owns; who has an unequalled eye on this and the other world on account of his learning and understanding (*śravaṇaparijñāna*) of the meaning of all treatises; who is a refuge for the learned, the brave, and those of noble birth; who has conceived the great thought of Awakening in order to save the whole realm of sentient beings (*sattvadhātu*);

〈13–23〉 who, on the full moon day of (the month of) Vaiśākha, in the thirty-seventh year of his own prosperous, victorious reign, having assigned (*uddiśya*) [his gift] to the Noble Community of the four quarters mounting the three vehicles [leading to the states of *arhant*, *pratyekabuddha* and *samyaksaṁbuddha*] — (a community) that, because of its masses of qualities such as aversion from worldly matters (*nirvid*), absence of passion, virtue, proper conduct, qualities of ascetics (*dhutaguṇa*), study and learning, reflection, and mental cultivation [consisting, gradually in] meditative absorptions (*dhyāna*), concentration (*samādhi*) and attainments (*samāpatti*), is a supreme field of merit; [and] that has stridden onto the path of the Buddha, the Bhagavant, who is strong with the ten forces (*bala*) and fearless with the four fearlessnesses (*vaiśāradya*); whose embodiment (*mūrti*) is fully adorned by the eighteen exclusive attributes (*āveṇika*) of Buddhas; who is marked [externally] by the thirty-two attributes of a great man; who has accumulated, in multiple *asaṁkhyeyas* of kalpas a load of the [twofold] equipment [consisting in] merit and knowledge, in order to rescue all beings sunk in the many sufferings of *saṁsāra*, characterized by such pains as those caused by birth, old age, and death; who is free from the suffering of birth and death [rooted in] desire, aversion, and delusion; who is a perfect Buddha because of his unimpeded and unobstructed knowledge of everything that is to be known (*sakalajñeyajñāna*) — intending to bring about the ground of meritorious action (*puṇyakriyāvastu*) – which results from relinquishment (*tyāga*) and from the enjoyment (*paribhoga*) [of what has been relinquished] and is of a material kind (*aupadhika*) — aiming at the endurance (*anupaccheda*, lit. the not cutting off) of favorable roots [planted by the provision for] lamps, incense, perfumes, flowers, banners, drinks and food, beddings and seats, medicaments for the sick, the restoration of what is broken, split, and in disrepair and the like, in the monastery of his chief queen, the prominent *mahādevī*, for the sake of extinguishing all the miseries and sufferings of his parents as well as all beings,

〈23–28〉 [he, Govindavarman], having first given water, handed over the two villages of Embudala and Peṇkapaṛa together with their treasures on and under the ground, together with the right to collect punitive tax (*daṇḍakara*), corvée (*viṣṭi*), and with the share of the produce (*bhāga*) and the periodical levies (*bhoga*) left [by himself]; [the two villages] should not be entered by spies (*cāra*), mercenaries, envoys, courtiers (*vallabha*), or king's men, and are freed from all taxes, and they should be maintained and augmented by kings belonging to the lineage of the Viṣṇukuṇḍin family. This rule has been established. In the event of transgression of this rule, this is equivalent to the five great sins; [similarly], in case of discontinuation of the meritorious deed that was set in motion, one will experience the fruit and result of evil karma in the [lower] realms of hells, the animals, and the pretas, afflicted by numerous and endless sufferings. And on this [issue] are the verses sung by Manu:

2.

The giver of land revels in heaven for sixty thousand years; the one who seizes [land] as well as the one who approves (of the seizing) will reside as many [years] in hell.

3.

He who would seize land given by himself or by someone else becomes a worm in excrement and is cooked together with his ancestors.

4.

By numerous [kings], land has been given; and by many it has been protected. Whoever holds land at a given moment, to him does the fruit then belong.

5.

May the rule of the Viṣṇukuṇḍins govern the world as long as Meru and sea are on earth, and [as long as] sun and wind are in heaven!

Commentary

〈24〉 udakadāna[1]

[1]On this expression, pointing here at the preliminary pouring of water to mark the transfer of property, see Tournier 2018, pp. 74, n. 56.

Bibliography

First described and edited by Sastri in Bharati 1965 , pp. 18ff., July, pp. 2ff.., followed by Rama Rao 1965, pp. 738–41, Sankaranarayanan 1974, pp. 9–14 and Mirashi 1982, pp. 135–41. Re-edited here from published documentation and after autopsy of the plates.

Secondary

ARIE

Sankaranarayanan, S. 1977. *The Vishṇukuṇḍis and their times: An epigraphical study*. Delhi: Agam Prakashan. Pages 37ff., 153–6 (I).

Hanumantha Rao, B. S. L., N. S. Ramachandra Murthy, B. Subrahmanyam & Īmani Śivanāgireḍḍi. 1998. *Buddhist inscriptions of Andhradesa*. Secunderabad: Ananda Buddha Vihara Trust. Pages 197–202.

Tournier, Vincent. 2018. “A tide of merit: Royal donors, Tāmraparṇīya monks, and the Buddha’s awakening in 5th–6th-century Āndhradeśa.” IIJ 61 (1), pp. 20–96. DOI: 10.1163/15728536-06101003. [URL].