Aracalāpuram, memorial stone for a cock

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Summary

Memorial stone set up in honour of a cock, which fought for the western quarters (*mēl-cēri*) of a village. It is not clear whether the stone commemorates the death of the cock when fighting (as in the case of a deceased warrior) or its victorious fight.

Palaeographic description

The *puḷḷi* is used. There are characters of eccentric ductus: *ku* and *k=ka* (line 2).

Edition

〈1〉 mukaiy¿u?〈ū〉ru mēṟ-(c)[ē]〈2〉ri(k)uy āṭi-(k= ka)〈3〉rukiya kōḷi

Apparatus

〈1〉 mukaiy¿u?〈ū〉ru ◇ *mukaiyūru* SR; *mukaiyuru* IM1997 IM1998; *mukaiy¿u?〈ū〉ru*

IM2003. — 〈1〉 mēṟ·(c)[ē]〈2〉ri(k)uy ◇ *mēṟcē〈2〉riṭuy* SR; *meṟc[e]〈2〉riṭuy* IM1997 IM1998; *mēṟ·c[ē]〈2〉ri(k)uy* IM2003 • The syllable *ku* of eccentric ductus was previously read *ṭu*.

〈2〉 āṭi(k=) ◇ *āṭi* SR; *āṭik* IM1997 IM1998; *āṭik=* IM2003.

Translation by Mahadevan 2003

〈1–3〉 〈The image of〉 the cock was engraved after it had fought on behalf of Mēṟcēri in 〈in〉 Mukaiyūr.

Translation

〈1–3〉 The cock, which was scarred[1] when fighting for Mēṟcēri[2] of Mukaiyūr.

Commentary

This inscription is counted in the Pallava corpus, insofar as its date (5th century CE according to Mahadevan 2003) and provenance correspond the period and the area of the Pallava rule in northern Tamil Nadu.

A similar inscription, commemorating a victorious cock with a strikingly similar image of a cock, has been found at Intaḷūr (Pallava 401). The two inscriptions appears to be closely related: the present Aracalāpuram inscription commemorates the fighting cock of the western quarters, whereas the Intaḷūr inscription commemorates the fighting cock of the eastern quarters.

See the comments by Mahadevan 2003, pp. 624–626.

Bibliography

Reported in No name 1991–11–13.

Edited in Rajavelu 1996, in Makātēvaṉ 1997, Rajan 1997, Makātēvaṉ 1998. Edited and translated in Mahadevan 2003.

[1] Mahadevan 2003 translates as "was engraved" as he equates *karukiya* with *karukkiya*. We suggest that *karukiya* is the past form of *karuku-tal*, one of the meaning of which, according to the *Madras Tamil Lexicon*, is "to be scorched, scarred."

[2] That is, the western quarter.

This revised edition by Emmanuel Francis and Valérie Gillet, based on photos and visual documentation in Mahadevan 2003.

Primary

[D] No name. 1991–11–13. "[Discovery of inscribed stele at Arasalapuram]." *Dinamalar*. Pondicherry. No place. Section News item.

[SR] Rajavelu, S. 1996. "Inscription from Araśalāpuram." JESI 22, pp. 88–89.

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[KR1997] Rajan, K. 1997. *Archaeological Gazetteer of Tamil Nadu*. Thanjavur: Manoo Pathippakkam. Pages 315–316.

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[IM2003] Mahadevan, Iravatham. 2003. *Early Tamil epigraphy, from the earliest times to the sixth century A.D*. Harvard oriental series 62. Chennai; Cambridge, Mass.: Cre-A; Harvard University Press. Item 112, pages 466–467, 530, 624–626, plate 47A.

Secondary

[KR2000] Rajan, K. 2000. *South Indian memorial stones*. Thanjavur: Manoo Pathippakam. Page 65.