

Cevuru plates of Amma I

Dániel Balogh

Author of digital edition: Dániel Balogh

Identifier: DHARMA_INSVengiCalukya00027

Repository: Eastern Cālukya (tfb-vengicalukya-epigraphy)

File path: xml/DHARMA_INSVengiCalukya00027.xml

Languages: Sanskrit [Southern Brāhmī (unspecified)], Telugu [Southern Brāhmī (unspecified)]

Commit: 2026-10-16 17:02 (a1bf930), last modified 2026-09-18 17:45 (0273b8a)

Palaeographic description

Halantas resemble the regular consonants in their principal part, but have no headmark; instead, a sinuous line is attached to their top right, resembling a tilde with the right-hand end extended upward into a repha-like vertical stroke (possibly with a headmark there). It is my impression that this extension is a stylisation of the was subscript consonants are attached to primary consonants in conjuncts, with the implication that a character incorporating this stroke is attached to a non-akṣara. The body of M has a reduced body resembling an archaic ma but definitely different from the standard ma in this script, e.g. l3 pādānudhyātānām. (In l34, phalaM is not quite clear but seems to have a much reduced body.) The body of N is like regular na, but slightly smaller, e.g. l22 ārādhitaVāN.

Original punctuation marks are short, plain, raised vertical bars extending from head height down to about median height or above. The one after phalaM in l34 seems not to be raised but to float at median height.

Other palaeographic observations. Anusvāra is at headline height to the right of the akṣara to which it belongs, e.g. l1 śrīmatām. It is separated from its akṣara by a line break in l16-17 kuṭu/mbinas; Chhabra refers to E Cālukya parallels in ll 29-30 of the Reyūru

grant of Viṣṇuvardhana II (where, however, the dot in question may be something other than an anusvāra), and ll 61-62 of the Masulipatam plates of Amma . The stroke for medial e sometimes bends to the right and up, attached to the top of the consonant on the left (l20 sāhasena, l22 saṃpṛtair). In addition to these, Chhabra points out as unusual the o in l1 sagotrāṇām, but I see nothing striking in it; Chhabra's point may be that the left-hand stroke in this case curls down and back to touch the body of the consonant. Subscript l (e.g. l6 vallabhendrasya, l16 guṇakkenallā°) is a simplified spiral continuing to the right in a notched horizontal line, then attached upward to the body of the main consonant. It sort of reminds me of the way halanta consonants are formed in this script, with what could be a halanta l turned 90 degrees to the right.

Edition

Seal

⟨1⟩ śrī-tribhuvanāṃkuśa

Plates

⟨Page 1r⟩

⟨Page 1v⟩ ⟨1⟩ svasti⟨.⟩ śrīmatām sakala-bhuvana-saṃstūyamāna-mānavya-sagotrāṇām⟨2⟩ hārīti-putrāṇām kauśiki-vara-prasāda-labdha-rājyānām mātṛ-gaṇa-pari⟨3⟩pālītānām svāmi-mahāsena-pādānudhyātānām bhagavan-nārāyaṇa⟨4⟩-prasāda-sa○māsādita-vara-varāha-lāñchanekṣaṇa-kṣaṇa-vaśīkṛtā⟨5⟩rāti-ma○ṇḍalānām aśvamedhābahr̥tha-snāna-pavitrikṛta-vapu⟨6⟩śām cālukyā○nām kulam alamkariṣṇoḥ satyāśraya-vallabhendrasya kula-tila⟨7⟩kāyamāna-svāsi-dhārā-namita-ripu-nṛpati-makuṭa-taṭa-ghaṭita-maṇi-mayū⟨8⟩kha-puṃja-piṃjarita-pāda-padma-yugalasya cālukya-bhīma-bhūpālasya pautraḥ⟨9⟩ sāsī-sannahana-sva-tanu-tulā-tulita-bhūri-bhāra-bhāsura-hema-rāṃs⟨10⟩i-mahā⟨Page 2r⟩⟨10⟩dāna-vīśeṣāḥ⟨11⟩yīkṛta-vipra-kula-kalpavṛkṣasya samasta-bhuvanāśra⟨11⟩ya-vijayādityasya putraḥ Amma-mahīpatir ggaṇḍaragaṇḍo rājamahe⟨12⟩ndra Iti vikhyā-taḥ dāyāda-timirodyad-dinakara-kiraṇāyamāna-bhāsurā⟨13⟩si-sanāthī○kṛta{ta}-dakṣiṇa-ḥbh?⟨b⟩āhus sa{sa}rvva-lokāśraya-śrī-viṣṇuva⟨14⟩rddhana-mahā○rājādhirāja-paramēśvara-parama-bhaṭṭārakaḥ parama-mā⟨15⟩heśvaraḥ gu○dravāra-viśaya-nivāsino rāṣṭrakūṭa-pramukhān kuṭu⟨16⟩mbinas samāhūyetham ājñāpayati⟨.⟩

viditam astu vaḥ guṇakkenallā⟨17⟩para-nāmadheya-vijayāditya-mahārāja-

prasādikṛta-hasty-āroha<18>ṇāvāpta-gudravāra-viṣaya-śrīmad-umikili nāma grāma-
rāṣṭrakūṭa<Page 2v><19>-mṛ̣a?<ā>hātmyasya konakula-candeyarājasya putraḥ
rājādityānuja-mano<20>hitāryasya putraḥ vemarājo nāma subhaṭaḥ sāhasena
kali<21>-yuga-ṛ̣s?<ś>ūdrako mat-pitaraṁ vijayāditya<ṁ> baddha-karppaṭakaḥ
svāmi-bhakti<22>r ārādhitavāN<.> tad-ārādhana-svāmi-bhakti-saṁpṛ̣r?<ri>tair as-
mābhiḥ kumāra-vija<23>yādityāṀnna-prāṛ̣s?<ś>ana-nimitte kramāgata-siddhāyāṣṭa-
gadyāṇa<24>kaṁ parityaṀjya sarvva-kara-parihāra{ṁ}m umikilī-grāma-grāmaṇis
sa<25> vemarāja<ḥ> kṛtaḥ<.>

grāma-dakṣiṇataḥ Ervvoka-cenu<.> Asyāvadhayāḥ<.><26> pūrvvataḥ vranta'
dakṣiṇataḥ dūdrupāka-sīmaiva' paścimataḥ rāca-cenu<27> cāṇḍṛ̣a?<ā>la-kṣetraṁ ca'
Uttarataḥ koḍu'

grāmottara-diśi Aypa-Ervvoka-ce<Page 3r><28>nu' Asyāvadhayāḥ' pūrvvataḥ koḍu'
dakṣiṇataḥ vanneru' paścimataḥ<29> koḍu' Uttarataḥ kolani mulugu'

puṭṭi-nirugu saveram Iruvadinālgu vuṭṭla-ni<30>ṇḍrāyam padu-gaṇḍu padelḥ dumu'
tamulaṁmula-tūmeṇḍu'

Asyopari na<31> kenacid bāṀdhā karttavayā<.> yaḥ karoti sa paṁca-mahā-pātaka-
saṁyu<32>kto bhavaṀti' tathā ca vyāsenāpy uktam'

1. Anuṣṭubh

bahubhir vvasudhā dattā
bahu<33>bhiś cānuṀpālītā
yasya yasya yadā bhūmis
tasya tasya tadā<34> phalaM,

2. Anuṣṭubh

sva-dattāṁ para-dattāṁ vā
yo hareta vasum̐dharāṁ
ṣaṣṭiṁ varṣa-sa<35>hasrāṇi
viṣṭhāyāṁ jāyate kṛ̣ri!<ṛ>miḥ

3. Āryā

veṁgī-maṇḍala-rakṣaṛ̣no?<ṇa>-bhuja-bala<36>-kaṭakeśvaras samājñāptiḥ
bhaṭṭa-ni(ravadya-sa)ntati-bhaṭṭa-mahā(kāla)-viracitaṁ

<Page 3v>

Apparatus

Plates

⟨3⟩ -mahāsenā- • As Chhabra duly notes, there is a superfluous dot high above *se*.

⟨4⟩ -varāha- • As Chhabra duly notes, there is a superfluous dot at mid-height between *va* and *rā*.

⟨13⟩ -sanāthī° • According to Chhabra, there is a superfluous dot above *sa*. This is not visible in the scanned rubbing. — ⟨13⟩ *sa{sa}rvva-* • As Chhabra notes, emendation is not strictly necessary, as the first *sa* may be interpreted as a pronoun. I believe a scribal error is more likely.

⟨22⟩ -saṃpṛ̣ṭ?⟨rī⟩tair • As Chhabra points out, *saṃpṛ̣ṭa* could be derived from the verb *pṛ̣ṇoti*, but this is restricted to Vedic usage and thus the intent here must have been *saṃpṛ̣ṭa*.

⟨26⟩ -sīmaiva¹ • I follow Chhabra's edition, which prints an original punctuation mark here. In the estampage, only a space is visible.

Translation¹

Plates

⟨1–16⟩ Greetings. The grandson of King (*bhūpāla*) Cālukya-Bhīma, whose pair of lotus feet were engilded by a mass of beams from gems fitted to the surfaces of the crowns of enemy kings bowed down by the blade of his sword and who was like forehead mark on the dynasty of Satyāśraya Vallabhendra (Pulakeśin II), who was eager to adorn the lineage of the majestic Cālukyas—who are of the Mānavya *gotra* which is praised by the entire world, who are sons of Hārīti, who attained kingship by the grace of Kauśikī's boon,² who are protected by the band of Mothers, who were deliberately appointed (to kingship) by Lord Mahāsenā, to whom the realms of adversaries instantaneously submit at the ⟨mere⟩ sight of the superior Boar emblem they have acquired by the grace of the divine Nārāyaṇa, and whose bodies have been hallowed through washing in the purificatory ablutions (*avabhṛ̣tha*) of the Aśvamedha sacrifice—; the son of Vijayāditya (IV), the shelter of the entire universe (*samasta-bhuvanāśraya*) who was a

¹For the Telugu words and passage in this inscription, I rely on Chhabra's translation, who in turn had received language help from N. Laksminarayan Rao (and, apparently, from C. R. Krishnamacharlu).

²Or, alternatively, by the grace of Kauśikī's bridegroom, i.e. Śiva. In spite of its slight awkwardness, I prefer the former interpretation because the Bādāmi Cālukyas refer to themselves as nourished *saṃvardhita* by Kauśikī.

wish-fulfilling tree to the class of Brahmins whom he endowed with that special great gift (*mahā-dāna*) that is a pile of gleaming gold whose great weight has been weighed in the balance against his own body <girt> with sword and armour: King (*mahīpati*) Amma (I) Gaṇḍaragaṇḍa, widely known as Rājamahendra, the shelter of all the world (*sarva-lokāśraya*), His Majesty Viṣṇuvardhana (VI) the Supreme Lord (*paramēśvara*), the Emperor (*mahārājādhirāja*), the Supreme Sovereign (*parama-bhaṭṭāraka*), supreme devotee of Maheśvara, whose right arm is complemented with a gleaming sword that is like a ray of the sun rising against the darkness consisting of his rivals, convokes and commands the householders (*kuṭumbin*)—including foremost the territorial overseers (*rāṣṭrakūṭa*)—who reside in Gudravāra district (*viṣaya*) as follows:

<16–25> Let it be known to you <that> the grandson of Candeyarāja of the Kona family, who had achieved the exaltation of <becoming> the overseer (*rāṣṭrakūṭa*) of the magnificent village named Umikili in Gudravāra district and who ascended an elephant as a favour of King (*mahārāja*) Vijayāditya (III) who was called Guṇakkenalla, the son of Manohitārya who was the younger brother of Rājāditya, the good soldier named Vemarāja who by his daring is a Śūdraka of the Kali age, has sought the favour of my father Vijayāditya (IV), taking on a *karpaṭaka* (vow)³ in his devotion to his lord. Being pleased with his worship and devotion to his lord, on the occasion of the *anna-prāśana* of Prince Vijayāditya (V) we have made that Vemarāja the headman (*grāmaṇi*) of Umikili village, exempt from all taxes except for the traditional dues of cultivated land <which are set at> eight *gadyāṇakas*.⁴

<25–27> To the south of the village is the *ervvoka* field (*cenu*).⁵ Its boundaries <are as follows>. To the east, a marshy pool (*vranta*). To the south, the perimeter of Dūdrupāka itself. To the west, the king's field (*rāca-cenu*) and the field of the Cāṇḍālas. To the north, a stream (*koḍu*).⁶

<27–29> In the northern direction of the village is the *Ervvoka* field (*cenu*) of Aypa.⁷ Its

³Literally, a vow of wearing rags. See the commentary.

⁴Chhabra understands the text to mean that Vemarāja was raised to headman by this grant, and was, incidentally as it were, granted a tax exemption. This does not seem so certain to me; the charter may well mean that he was already headman by heredity, and the object of the grant is only the exemption, which may in turn be limited to the two fields specified below. A note in Chhabra's edition (Chhabra [1956] 1947–1948, p. 43, n. 2), signed C. R. K. and probably added by C. R. Krishnamacharlu, points out that the donation may have been comprised only of these two fields.

⁵In this paragraph and the next, I follow Chhabra in the translation of the Telugu words. Chhabra further notes that according to C. R. Krishnamacharlu, *ervvoka* may be connected to the Telugu word *eruvāka*.

⁶Translating *koḍu* as “brook,” Chhabra refers to Kielhorn (1898–1899, p. 139), who in turn refers to Campbell's *Teloogoo Dictionary* which translates this word as “a rivulet, the branch of a river”.

⁷According to Chhabra, Aypa is to be understood as Ayyapa.

boundaries <are as follows>. To the east, a stream (*koḍu*). To the south, the Vanneru⁸
To the west, a stream (*koḍu*). To the north, the landing to the lake (*kolani mulugu*).⁹

<29–30> The arrangement (for the remuneration which he is to receive) in grain
measures (i.e. in kind) is as follows: the income of *saveram* is ten *kaṇḍus* and seventeen
tūmus (measured by measure) of 24 full *puṭṭis*; of *tammulam*, one *tūmu*.¹⁰

<30–32> Let no-one pose an obstacle (to his enjoyment of his rights) over it. He who
does so shall be conjoined with the five great sins. So too Vyāsa has said:

1.

Many (kings) have granted land, and many have preserved it (as formerly granted).
Whosoever at any time owns the land, the fruit {reward (accrued of granting it)} belongs
to him at that time.

2.

He who would seize land, whether given by himself or by another, shall be born as a
worm in faeces for sixty thousand years.

3.

The executor (*samājñapti*) is the castellan (*kaṭakeśvara*)¹¹ the power of whose arms is the
protection of the territory of Veṅgī. <This charter was> composed by Bhaṭṭa Mahākāla,
progeny of Bhaṭṭa Niravadya.¹²

<47>

Translation into French by Estienne-Monod 2008

Plates

<1–16> Prospérité ! le petit-fils du roi Cālukya Bhīma, dont les pieds de lotus sont rougis

⁸According to Chhabra, this is the name of a river. If this is correct, then this river, major enough to have
a name of its own, separated the field from the village to which it belonged.

⁹Chhabra: “the bathing place at the lake (@or the drain from the lake@)”.

¹⁰The translation of this Telugu passage has been adopted literally from Chhabra.

¹¹The term *kaṭakeśvara* was probably used here instead of the more common *kaṭaka-rāja* or its vernacular
variant *kaḍa-eṇṇa* for metrical reasons, as pointed out by Chhabra. These terms are normally understood to
mean a chief officer of the royal camp (cf. Fleet 1902–1903, pp. 183–185 and Sircar 1966, s.vv. *kaṭaka-rāja*).
However, as it seems to denote a very high hereditary office in the Cālukyan court, I believe it had in this
case no direct association with any army camps.

¹²The castellan may be the same person as Bhaṭṭa Mahākāla; at any rate, the descendants of Bhaṭṭa
Niravadya did normally serve in that function. The text, however, does not indicate in any way that the two
are one.

par des multitudes de rayons des pierres précieuses serties sur l'orbe des diadèmes des rois ennemis, soumis par la lame de son épée, devenue le joyau de la lignée de Satyāśraya Vallabhendra, ornement de la lignée des Calukya, illustres, du même *gotra* que les descendants de Manu, honorés dans l'univers entier, fils de Hāritī, qui obtinrent leur royaume grâce à l'excellente faveur de Kauśikī, protégés par la troupe des Mères, méditant aux pieds du seigneur Mahāsenā, dont le cercle des ennemis fut soumis en un instant à la vue du signe illustre de l'excellent sanglier, faveur octroyée par le bienheureux Nārāyaṇa, dont les corps furent purifiés par le bain purificateur de l'āśvamedha, fils de Vijayāditya, arbre à vœux pour des multitudes de brahmanes, qu'il rendit exceptionnellement riches avec le grand don d'une immense quantité d'or lumineux, dont le poids immense avait été pesé sur la balance au moyen de son propre corps, ceint de son épée, refuge de l'univers entier, le roi Amma, renommé sous le titre de Gaṇḍara-Gaṇḍo Rājamahendra, dont le bras droit était armé d'une lumineuse épée dardant des rayons, soleil se levant sur les ténèbres de ses rivaux, refuge de tous les hommes, l'illustre Viṣṇuvardhana, roi suprême des souverains de grands rois, éminent seigneur, excellent dévôt de Māheśvara, ordonne ceci aux chefs de famille rassemblés, habitants le *viśaya* de Gudravāra, *rāṣṭrakūṭa* en tête :

〈16–25〉 qu'il soit connu de vous que le petit-fils de Konakula Candeyarāja qui acquit la distinction 〈d'être〉 *rāṣṭrakūṭa* du village illustre nommé Umikili, dans le *viśaya* de Gudravāra, qui obtint de monter sur un éléphant par la faveur octroyée par le grand roi Vijayāditya, nommé aussi Guṇakkenalla, fils du frère cadet de Rājāditya, Manohitārya, 〈lui qui est〉 nommé Vemarāja, bon guerrier, Śudraka du Kaliyuga par son audace, a donné satisfaction à mon père Vijayāditya, vêtu de haillons, dévoué à son seigneur. Par nous, satisfaits par sa dévotion envers son seigneur et par ses hommages, à l'occasion de l'*annaprāśana*¹³ du prince Vijayāditya, exempté 〈de taxe〉, excepté celle des huit *gadyāṇaka*¹⁴ qui constituent le revenu fixe,¹⁵ perçu selon la tradition, Vemarāja est nommé chef de village¹⁶ du village d'Umikilī.

〈25–27〉 Au sud du village 〈se trouve〉 le terrain d'Ervvoka.¹⁷ Ses limites sont : à l'est un marécage,¹⁸ au sud la limite précise de Dūdrupāka, à l'ouest le terrain royal¹⁹ et le terrain des Cāṇḍāla, au nord un ruisseau.²⁰

¹³Rite célébrant la première nourriture de riz donnée à un enfant.

¹⁴Nom d'une valeur monétaire, D. C. Sircar, 1966, p. 432.

¹⁵ibid., p. 311.

¹⁶*grāmaṇi* est un équivalent de *grāmakūṭa*, ibid., p.121.

¹⁷Traduction de l'éditeur.

¹⁸Traduction de l'éditeur.

¹⁹Traduction de l'éditeur.

²⁰Selon le Campbell's telugu dictionary, *koḍu* désigne un ruisseau ; en kannara le même mot désigne le sommet d'une colline. Indication de l'éditeur n. 3 p.47, renvoi à Ep. Ind., V, p. 139, n.2.

⟨27-29⟩ Au nord du village ⟨se trouve⟩ le terrain Ervoka appartenant à Ayyapa.²¹ Les limites de ce dernier sont : à l'est un ruisseau. au sud Vanneru,²² à l'ouest un ruisseau, au nord un canal venant du lac,²³

⟨29-30⟩ L'arrangement ⟨pour la rémunération qu'il recevra⟩ en mesure de grains est le suivant : un revenu de saveram ? de dix kaṇḍu et dix-sept tūmu mesuré selon la mesure de vingt-quatre puṭṭi, de tammulam ? un tūmu.²⁴

⟨30-32⟩ Aucune charge ne doit lui être imposée, celui qui en impose est lié aux cinq grands crimes. Ainsi Vyāsa a dit :

1.

Beaucoup ont donné une terre, beaucoup l'ont protégée, celui qui possède la terre en possède la fruit.

2.

Qu'elle soit donnée par lui ou par un autre, celui qui prend une terre renaît ver de terre dans les excréments pendant soixante mille ans.

3.

Le *kaṭakeśvara*, dont la puissance du bras protège le royaume de Veṅgī, est l'exécuteur. ⟨Cet édit⟩ a été composé par l'éminent Mahākāla, descendant de l'éminent Niravadya.

Commentary

Discovered in Cēvūru village in Kaikalūr tāluk of Kistna District in the Madras Presidency, about 1928, by the villager Polavarapu Ankayya, son of Venkata Reddi, who was digging the debris of a collapsed mud house. Seen there by Chhabra in November 1938 and borrowed for study.

More detail about the term *karpaṭa* is found in the Māṅgallu gramt of Dānārṇava. There it is not a military man but a scholar who undertakes *karpaṭa* for the sake of the *rāṣṭrakūṭa* Kākaṭya Guṇḍyana in order to secure his favour (1150-52, *guṇḍyanam vīram uddiśya ... yena karppaṭam ābaddham tat-prasādābhikāmḥṣiṇā*). The chief in turn grants him a village. This vow (153, *karppaṭī-vrata*) is said there to involve morning baths and chastity, but the wearing of rags is not explicitly mentioned. I assume that

²¹Traduction de l'éditeur.

²²Nom d'une rivière.

²³Traduction de l'éditeur.

²⁴Passage en telugu, nous n'avons pu définir le sens de certains termes, que nous avons restitués tels qu'ils étaient indiqués dans le texte. L'éditeur ne propose pas non plus de traduction pour ces mots.

this vow was performed with the declared intent that the merit thereby acquired go to the performer's metaphysical stockpile, that it was at the time an established method of acquiring a land grant and/or the position of headman for the performer or his descendants, and that in the present case Vemarāja performed it after retiring from the military. It is also possible that, both here and there, the word is used figuratively in the sense of utterly selfless service.

As Chhabra points out, the last stanza lacks one mora at the end. He suggests *-bhaṭṭa-mahākāla idam akarot*. Though metrically correct and appropriate to the context, my preference would be *-bhaṭṭa-mahākāla-racitam idam*.

Bibliography

Edited from the original by B. Ch. Chhabra ([1956] 1947–1948), with translation and inked rubbings supplied by Hultzs. The present edition by Dániel Balogh is based on a collation of Chhabra's text with his facsimiles. Metadata associated with this edition have been published separately in Balogh 2026, available on Zenodo.

Primary

[BCC] Chhabra, Bahadur Chand. [1956] 1947–1948. "Chevuru plates of Eastern Chalukya Amma I." EI 27, pp. 41–47.

Secondary

Balogh, Dániel. 2026. "Metadata for the DHARMA editions of Veṅgī Cālukya copper plates." Zenodo. DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.22827003. [URL].