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The Classical Inscriptions Of The Kakatiyas Of Orugallu – A Study

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Abstract: Inscriptions are of great value since they are the mirror of the cultural life of the contemporary society as well as the colloquial language and expressions of the period to which they belong. While some of them are composed in excellent classical style some are written in the language of the common people. The main purpose of the inscriptions is to record an endowment made to an individual or institution with necessary details. But scholars while composing inscriptions availed the opportunity to give expression to their erudition and as a result we have classical inscriptions which stand in comparison to classical literature. The present paper deals with the classical inscriptions of the Kakatiyas of Orugallu or Warangal as gleaned from the inscriptions.

Keywords: Classical, Cultural, Inscriptions, Kakatiyas, Mini Kavya, Orugallu or Warangal, Sabhdalankara, Sanskrit, Society, Telugu Country.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Kakatiyas occupy a distinguished place in the history of South India, particularly that of Telugu Country. The Kakatiyas of Orugallu or Warangal played a very vital role in the annals of the medieval Telugu country from the 10th century till the first quarter of the 14th century A.D. They were the first to establish sway over the entire Telugu speaking areas after the fall of the Satavahanas and before the rise of the Vijayanagara Empire. The present paper deals with the classical inscriptions of the Kakatiyas of Orugallu as gleaned from the inscriptions.

The main purpose of the inscriptions is to record an endowment made to an individual or institution with necessary details. But scholars while composing inscriptions availed the opportunity to give expression to their erudition and as a result we have classical inscriptions which stand in comparison to classical literature. Such inscriptions can be considered as mini *kavyas* answering the generally laid down principles of rhetoric. Some of the inscriptions of the present corpus serve as good examples of mini *kavyas*. Interestingly some inscriptions are also good examples of *chitra kavitva* and *bandha kavitva*. With the proper usage of *arthalankara*, *sabhdalankara*, poetic imagination and appropriate rasa (sentiments like *srngara*) the classical inscriptions captivate the hearts of the readers.

In this connection, though not included in the present corpus, for obvious reasons, two inscriptions of the Kakatiya period under study deserve notice. They are inscriptions at Anumakonda and Ursugutta.

Inscription at Anumakonda in Hanumakonda District:

The first is an incomplete inscription from Anumakonda.¹ It is interesting in that the poet avoided the use of *Osthyas* (labials) throughout the inscription and hence it belongs to the *nirōṣṭhya* type. For reasons not known the inscription stops with the description of the capital city Orugallu.

Inscription at Ursugutta in Hanumakonda District:

The second inscription is the Ursugutta Siddhodvaha inscription.² This inscription is engraved on the rock of a hillock near Urusu in the vicinity of Warangal. This is a complete work in sixty verses in the meter *Sardulavikridita* and two concluding verses in *Sragdhara*. It narrates the marriage of a Siddha couple. This work is, interestingly, on the lines of *Meghadutam* (or *Meghasandesam*) of *Kalidasa*. The author of this classical inscription is Narasimharsi, son of *rajaguru* Vishveshwara. He is known only through this inscription.

Coming to the present corpus the first classical inscription belongs to the reign of Rudra I.³ It is dated 1163 A.D. It begins with an invocation to Varaha Hari followed by Heramba and Sarasvati. The *upamalaikara* used in the praise of the goddess Sarasvati is simple and beautiful. This is followed by the mention of the composer poet Achintendradeva, the son of Rameshwara diksitha and disciple of Advayamrta yati. Next is the narration of the *vamsavali* of Rudranareshwara, the king. The *sabdalankara* in verses 24 and 34 enhance the beauty of the composition. The *saili* (style) is of *praudha* type and charming. The poet is known through this epigraph only.

Inscription at Bekkallu in Jangaon District:

The Bekkallu inscription of the same king also deserves notice.⁴ The pathetic condition of the defeated kings is described well in this record (verse 14). The *sabdalankara* in the verse 21 is noteworthy. The description of Uma-sahita-murti as also of Shiva is simple and yet picturesque (verses 23 f). This inscription was composed by Nagadeva kavi, son of Damodara, a *brahman* a of Gautama kula (i.e., *gotra*).

Inscription at Kondaparti in Hanumakonda District:

The Kondiparti inscription of Ganapati is another example of the classical inscription.⁵ interestingly it contains a verse in Prakrt.⁶ The description of Chaudeshwara Sambhu deserves notice for its clement of *srigara-rasa* (verse 38):

*Gauri-pina-stana-tata-samaslesi yasya-vyudhe
vaksyadhikadhavale kumkuman kantakanti /*

*Dhatte tara-kṣitidharatati-bhasi balata-prabham
soyam Sambhuh sakala-sujanana-patu Caundesvarakhyah //*

Inscription at Palampet in Mulugu District:

The Palampet inscription of the same king has a beautiful verse describing the fame of a chief as uncomparable with a *hara*, Indra's elephant, a swan and moon because, though all of them are white they are not devoid of some flaw or the other, implying that the fame is pure white (verse 32).⁷ Attributing whiteness to fame is a poetic convention (*kavi-samaya*):

*Harastataropi randhra-sahitah Sakrasya dantavalah
subhrangopi madambuseka-malino hamsah sitopi sphutam /
Pritim yatijade Sudhamsur-amalischayopi dosakaras-
taṇṇaite sadṛṣa yadiya yasasa nirdoṣa -subhratmana //*

The rhetorics lay down that, broadly speaking, a *kavya* should begin with *ista devata stuti*, *pura-vamana*, *naayaka varṇana*, *nayik -varṇana*, and gradual development of the sentiments like *srigara* in various stages and should have an auspicious end. Some of the inscriptions of the present corpus fit in well within this frame-work. The above mentioned Anumakonda inscription of Rudra I is a good example of this. The Sanskrit portion of the record begins with *iṣṭa devata stuti* followed by the description of *nayaka vamsa* and *nayaka*, attesting to the erudition of the composer poet Achintendra. The capital city Anumakonda is described in an excellent way by using different *alankaaras* (figures of speech) including *Sesa* (eg. verse 42). Verses 46 and 47 describe the horses of the capital as can be done only by a scholar of the *Asva sastra*.

Then given is the extent of the Kakatiya kingdom, in this inscription *vira-rasa*, *yuddha-varnana* and *sringara-rasa* find place as can be found in a *kavya*. It ends with the endowment of the king Rudradeva. This format and composition of the inscription reminds us the rule *maigaladini mangala-madhyani maigalatani kavyani*. Some more inscriptions like the Bekkallu record of Rudra I (mentioned above), Kundavaram epigraph of Ganapati (Chennur Taluk of Adilabad District) authored by Balabharati kavi,⁸ Ganapeshwaram

inscription (Divi Taluk of Krishna District) of the same king,⁹ Motupalli inscription (Bapatla Taluk of Guntur District) (abhaya-sasana)¹⁰ also of the same king, fall in this category.

Inscription at Vardhamanapuram in Nagarkurnool District:

Abhinava Mayura suri or Mayura bhattopadhyaya composed the Vardhamanapuram inscription, dated 1242 A.D., at the invitation of the Malyala chief Gunda dandadhishwara.¹¹ the poet is hailed as *pada-vakya-pramaṇa-prameya-vicitra-kavitva-tattvajna*. True to this epithet the poet, to his excellent composition added a *chakra bandha*, calling it *kavya-kavi-kathanayaka lekhaka-nama-garbbhamamedu* (i.e., *garbhita*) *chakra-bandhamu* and *hrdayanandakandam-anedi slokamu gomutrika* (i.e., the *sloka hrda-yanandakandam* is in the *gomutrika bandha*). He explains that the second circle contains the title (of the *kavya* inscription), Nagesa *sasanamu*; fourth circle poet's name *Mayura-racitamu*; seventh circle hero's name (*katha-nayaka*) *Gundavira-nuti* and the ninth circle the writer's name *Nagaya-likhitamu*.¹²

The name of the poet Abhinava mayura suri which sounds more like a title, reminds us of the celebrated Sanskrit poet Mayura, the author of the Surya satakam. The actual name of the present poet is also Mayura or Mayura bhattopadhyaya, probably after the above mentioned Mayura. Otherwise this name is not common among the Andhra poets.

Inscriptions at Bothpur in Mahabubnagar District:

Ishwarasuri, credited with the epithet *Paniniya-vyakarana-vicitra-kavitva-tattvajna*, composed the Bothpur inscription, dated 1259 A.D.¹³ This inscription also has a *kavi-kavya-katha nayaka-garbhachakra-bandhamu*. In its second circle is the title of the *kavya* inscription *tadaga-sasanamu*; fourth circle name of the *katha-nayaka* *Caundavira-nuti*; seventh circle name of the poet *Isvararya-krtamu*.¹⁴ The inscription was written by Oddaya. Ishwarasuri is stated to be of Atreya gotra and the son of Mayurarya, who may be same as Mayura bhattopadhyaya of the Vardhamanapuram inscription noted above. If so both father and son were in the court of the chief Malyala Gunda and both were experts in *Vichitra-kavitva*.

Another inscription from Bothpur itself, dated 1272 A.D., is the best example of *chitra-kavitva*.¹⁵ This was also composed by the same Ishwarasuri, who is credited with an additional epithet in this record, viz., *Pada-krama-yuta-Yajurveda-paragundu (paragah)*. The poet in this epigraph excels in *chitra-kavitva*. Perhaps in this respect this is a very rare example in Indian epigraphy. This is also a *tataka sasana*. The following are the types of the verses:

1. *Nirddantyamu*: Avoiding the dentals in the composition.
2. *Arya garbhamu*: A poem in the Arya-meter within the poem of a different meter.
3. *Kriyapada-bhramakamu*: Many *kriyapadas* (verbs) are used in a particular way.
4. *Punaruktabhasa*: Appearing to be *punarukta* (repetition). In *kavyas punarukti* is a *dōsa*) but not so here.
5. *Nistalavyam*: Avoiding the use of *talavyas* (palatals) in the composition.
6. *Niskanthiyamu*: Avoiding the use of *kanthiyas*.
7. *Avyayabhasa*.
8. *Padadi Yamakam*: Use of the *Sabdalaikara* called *yamakam* in the beginning of every pada of the verse.
9. *Kriyapada-traya-gopakam*:
10. *Vibhasa padalu aru*: Use of six vibhasa-padas.
11. *Stabakavali*.
12. *Mithunavali*.
13. *Aksara-muṣṭika*.
14. *Nimurddhanyam*: Avoiding the use of *mudhanyas* (cerebrals) in the composition.
15. *Apasabdabhasa*: Appears to be an *apasabda* but not actually so.
16. *Anaytakṣaram*.

Finally the inscription has a *padma-bandha*; a *sloka* in two *gomutrikas* and *jalabandha* and *gudha-chaturtha-padma-vytta*. This is followed by the procedure to read the *Padma-bandha* and the statement that one *pada* is *lalita-kautuka-rasa-prabha tōṣila-vachakam*.¹⁶ The *Padma-bandha* has the name Gundaya (see the last verse given as foot note to the inscription).

Apart from the liberal use of *chitra-kavitva* and *bandha-kavitva*, the inscription is a good example of poetic imagination and the use of *sabda* and *arthalankaras*. The style is highly ornate. The inscription refers to Taranikanti Ishwara-bhatt-opadhyayulu as a recipient of a piece of land. If he is same as the com poser-

poet of the inscription his surname can be taken as Taranikanti. Both Mayurarya and Ishwara-bhaṭṭ-opadhyaya are known only through their inscriptions. The same Ishwara-bhaṭṭ-opadhyaya composed a third inscription from Bothpur itself, dated, 1277 A.D.¹⁷ The purpose of the inscription is to record the consecration of a Shiva linga in memory of her deceased husband Malyala Gunda dandadhisa by Kuppambika.

The Plates at Khandavalli in West Godavari District:

The Khandavalli plates of Prataparudra, composed on the pattern of a *kavya* begins with the obeisance to the god Gaṇapati in a beautiful verse.¹⁷ This is followed by invocation to the eight armed goddess Mahiasuramardini with a prayer to destroy the enemy kings. Then Prathama-Kiri (Adivaraha) and Chandrasekhara Siva are praised. Next follows the reference to Andhradesa, to the river Gautami (Godavari) and the description of the capital city Orugallu in four verses. Then comes the narration of Kakati-vamsa. The narration is embellished with poetic imagination and different *alankaras*. The style is simple. This is also a good example of a classical inscription.

Inscription at Kolagadda in Khammam District:

Some epigraphs recording the excavation of tanks call themselves *tataka-sasanas* and read like mini *kavyas* of scholarly type. The Kotagadda inscription of Ganapati which records the excavation of Dharmmakirti-Maila-samudram by Mailama is a good example of this type.¹⁸ It fulfills the above noted prerequisites of the composition of a *kavya*.

Inscription at Pakhal in Warangal District:

The Pakhal inscription of the same king describes a tank at Maudgalya-tirtha thus (verse 30):¹⁹

Vaiduryya-dyuti-sodara-dyuti-jalan yam vikṣya rodhas-sthali-
cancat-champaka-cuta-saurabha-milat-saurabhya-saugandhikam /
Slaghante na janah kadapi sarase sarasya rekhavido
N-Acchodaya na Manasaya na punah Pampabhidhanaya ca //

The *alankara* here is *atisayokti*. The Manasa Lake is the holy Manasa-sarovara while the Acchoda Lake is described by the great Sanskrit scholar Banabhatta in his *Kadambari*, a prose work which has no parallel in the Sanskrit literature. The Pampa figures in the *Ramayana* of Valmiki.

Many arthalankaras like *upama*, *rupaka*, *utprekṣa*, *atisayokti*, *svabhavokti* and the *sabdalankaras* like *anuprasa*, *yamakam* and excellent poetic imagination enhanced the beauty of the “Classical Inscriptions”. Composed in ornate style they are a class by themselves in epigraphical literature. Various meters like *Indravajra*, *sikharini*, *Malini*, *Praharṣini*, *Sagdhara*, *Rathoddhata*, *Vasantatiaka*, *Mandakranta*, *Salini*, *Upcndiravajri*,²⁰ *Indravapsa*, *Vaymsstha*, *Prthvi*, *Puṣpitagra*, *Upendravajra*,²¹ apart from the more common ones, were chosen to compose these mini *kavyas*.

The above brief account on Classical Inscriptions’ is intended to highlight the indispensability of their study to the scholars in the fields of literature and rhetoric’s.

Footnotes:

1. *Inscriptions of Andhra Pradesh – Warangal District*, Edited by N. Venkataramanaya, No.44 and EI. Vol. XXXVI, pp.209 ff.
2. *Inscriptions of Andhra Pradesh – Warangal District*, Edited by N. Venkataramanaya, No.41 and EI. Vol. XLI, pp.219 ff.
3. *Inscriptions of the Kakatiyas of Warangal*, Edited by S.S. Ramachandra Murthy, No.16, pp.34-39 and *Inscriptions of Andhra Pradesh – Warangal District*, Edited by N. Venkataramanaya, No.36.
4. *Inscriptions of Andhra Pradesh – Warangal District*, Edited by N. Venkataramanaya, No.42.
5. Ibid. No.48.
6. *Inscriptions of the Kakatiyas of Warangal*, Edited by S.S. Ramachandra Murthy, No.35, pp.75-77.
7. Ibid. No.46, pp.112-118.
8. Ibid. No.48, pp.121-125.
9. Ibid. No.73, pp.188-191.
10. Ibid. No.89, pp.220-224.
11. Ibid. No. 94, pp.232-239 and HAS.19, No.Mn.47.
12. HAS. 19, p.104 for the *chakra-banda* diagram.

13. *Inscriptions of the Kakatiyas of Warangal*, Edited by S.S. Ramachandra Murthy, No.126, pp.294-300 and HAS. 13, No.52.
14. HAS.13, p.157 for the *chakra-banda* diagram.
15. *Inscriptions of the Kakatiyas of Warangal*, Edited by S.S. Ramachandra Murthy, No.201, pp.430-431.
16. HAS. 13, p.148 for the *Padma-bandha* diagram.
17. *Inscriptions of the Kakatiyas of Warangal*, Edited by S.S. Ramachandra Murthy, No.213, pp.452-453.
18. EA. IV, pp.103 ff and JESI, III, pp.163 ff.
19. *Inscriptions of the Kakatiyas of Warangal*, Edited by S.S. Ramachandra Murthy, No.145, pp.330-335.
20. *Inscriptions of Andhra Pradesh – Warangal District*, Edited by N. Venkataramanaya, No.67.
21. *Inscriptions of the Kakatiyas of Warangal*, Edited by S.S. Ramachandra Murthy, No.145, pp.330-335.
22. *Ibid.* No.242, pp.501-507.

