

HERMAN TIEKEN and KATSUHIKO SATO

THE *GHAṬIKĀ* OF THE TWICE-BORN IN
SOUTH INDIAN INSCRIPTIONS

INTRODUCTION

In inscriptions, mainly from South India, we come across the term *ghaṭikā* referring to some kind of establishment of brahmins (*dvijānāmi ghaṭikā*). The *ghaṭikā* has been identified as a primarily educational institution where the four Vedas were taught.¹ In addition, it appears to have wielded considerable political power as well, as in one inscription the members of the *ghaṭikā* have been mentioned among the interest groups involved in the selection and, after that, the *abhiṣeka* of the new king. As Mahalingam wrote: “The *ghaṭikā* was essentially an educational institution but it also seems to have had some influence or authority over the selection of rulers”.²

As we will try to show, all this is true. At the same time it presents only a part of the picture. The *ghaṭikā* was indeed staffed with brahmins, but its primary function lay not in the sphere of religion or education but in that of the economy and in particular that of trade. A key role in our proposal for a new interpretation of the *ghaṭikā* will be played by a passage from the *Arthaśāstra*, which for some reason has been generally ignored so far.³ However, before discussing that passage, the reference to the *ghaṭikā* in the Tālaguṇḍa Pillar inscription will be dealt with first.

THE TĀLAGUṆḌA INSCRIPTION

The Tālaguṇḍa inscription⁴ of the Kadamba king Śāntivarman relates, among other things, the adventures of the brahmin Mayūraśarman, the founding-father of the dynasty. The relevant passage comprises the verses 9 up to and including 13, given below together with Kielhorn’s translation:

*evam āgate kadambakule śrīmān babhūva dvijottamaḥ
nāmato mayūraśarmmeti śrutaśīlaśaucādyalamkṛtaḥ [9]
yaḥ prayāya pallavendrapurīm guruṇā samaṁ vīraśarmmaṇā
adhijigāmsuḥ pravacanaṁ nikhilam ghaṭikām viveśāsu tarkkukaḥ [10]*

atra pallavāśvasamsthena kalahena tivreṇa roṣitaḥ
kaliyuge'sminn aho bata kṣatrāt paripelavā vipratā yataḥ [11]
gurukulāni samyag ārāddhya śākhām adhīyāpi yatnataḥ
brahmasiddhir yyadi nṛpādhinā kim ataḥ paraṁ duḥkham ityataḥ [12]
kuśasamidṛṣatsrugāyacarugrahaṇādīdaksena pāninā
udvavarha dr̥ptimac chastram vijigīṣamāṇo vasundharām [13]

In the Kadamba family thus arisen there was an illustrious chief of the twice-born named Mayūraśarman, adorned with sacred knowledge, good disposition, purity and the rest. [9]

With his preceptor Viraśarman he went to the city of the Pallava lords, and, eager to study the whole sacred lore, quickly entered the *ghaṭikā* as a mendicant. [10] There, enraged by a fierce quarrel with a Pallava horseman (*he reflected*): Alas, that in this Kali-age the Brāhmaṇs should be so much feebler than the Kshatriyas! For, if to one, who has duly served his preceptor's family and earnestly studied his branch of the Veda, the perfection in holiness depends on a king, what can there be more painful than this? And so – [11 and 12]

With the hand dextrous in grasping the *kuśa*-grass, the fuel, the stones, the ladle, the melted butter and the oblation-vessel, he unsheathed a flaming sword, eager to conquer the earth. [13]

The brahmin Mayūraśarman in his desire to study the complete Veda is said to have joined the *ghaṭikā* in the capital of the Pallavas, that is, Kāncīpuram. Mayūraśarman apparently did so in his capacity of *tarkuka*, which word has caused some embarrassment. Kielhorn translates it as “mendicant”, for which he refers to *Rājatarāṅginī* 3.254. In the passage in question the insatiability of a king is compared to that of a *tarkuka*, a beggar or petitioner.⁵ It is clear that in the *Rājatarāṅginī* passage we are dealing with a secondary meaning, which would reflect a particular attitude towards brahmins. For *tarka* is a specifically brahmanic science. As we will try to show, the word *tarkuka* in our inscription is indeed used in its original, “etymological” meaning.

Another problem is caused by the phrase *pallavāśvasamsthena kalahena tivreṇa roṣitaḥ*. Kielhorn translates: “enraged by a fierce quarrel with a Pallava horseman”, taking *aśvasamstha* as a synonym of *aśvāroha*.⁶ The problem in this translation is that the combination of *aśva* and *samstha* or *samsthā* is otherwise unknown. However, before being able to suggest an alternative interpretation on the basis of a regular Sanskrit construction, it is necessary that we have a clearer picture of the exact function of the *ghaṭikā*. For that, we may now turn to the *Arthaśāstra*.

THE ARTHAŚĀSTRA

In *Arthaśāstra* 2.21.1-6,⁷ which passage deals with the activities of the superintendent of the customs, we come across the term *ghaṭikāsthāna*:

1. *śulkaādhyakṣaḥ śulkaśālām dhvajam ca prāṇmukham udaimukham vā mahādvārābhyāse niveśayet.*
2. *śulkādāyinaś catvāraḥ pañca vā sārthopayātān vaṇijo lekheyuḥ ke kutastyāḥ kiyatpanyāḥ kva cābhijñānam mudrā vā kṛtā iti.*
3. *amudrāṇām atyayo deyadvigūḥ.*
4. *kūtamudrāṇām śulkāṣṭagaṇo daṇḍaḥ.*
5. *bhinnamudrāṇām atyayo ghaṭikāsthāne sthānam.*
6. *rājamudrāparivartane nāmakṛte vā sapādapaṇikam vahanam dāpayet.*

Kangle's translation of the above passage runs as follows:

1. The Collector of Customs and Tolls should establish the customs house and the flag facing the east or the north in the vicinity of the big gates (of the city).
2. The receivers of duty, four or five in number, should record in writing (details about) traders who have arrived in a caravan, who they are, from what place, with how much merchandise and where the identity-pass (was issued) or the stamping was made.
3. For (goods) without stamp the penalty is double the dues.
4. For those with a forged stamp, the fine is eight times the duty.
5. For those with broken stamps, the penalty is distraint in the ware-house [*ghaṭikāsthāne sthānam*].
6. In case of change of the royal stamp or of (change in) the name, he should make (the trader) pay a fine of one *paṇa* and a quarter per load.

Unfortunately, Kangle does not justify his translation of *ghaṭikāsthāna* with "warehouse". With this translation Kangle indicates that according to him the *ghaṭikāsthāna* is a different building from the *śulkaśālā* of 2.21.1, or *śulkasthāna* as it is called in 2.21.21.⁸ However, it cannot be denied that this warehouse appears so to speak out of the blue. The first and most logical idea would be to take *ghaṭikāsthāna* as a synonym of *śulkaśālā* or *sthāna*. In fact, this interpretation is borne out by 2.21.15, where the *Arthaśāstra* enumerates some other specific tasks carried out in the custom house:

tasmād vikrayaḥ paṇyānām dhr̥to mito gaṇito vā kāryaḥ, tarkaḥ phalgubhāṇḍānām ānuṛāhikāṇām ca.

The passage may be translated as follows:

Therefore, the sale of goods should be made by weighing, measuring or counting; of goods which are very light and of *ānuṛāhika* goods the value has to be established by estimation.

We see that one of the tasks carried out in the customs house, beside those of the weighing, measuring and counting of goods, is *tarka*.⁹ The term *tarka*¹⁰ appears to refer to the difficult task of estimating the value of substances which are too light to weigh. A comparable difficulty arises in the case of bulk goods, which are simply too heavy or too voluminous to weigh. The total weight has to be estimated or calculated (*tarka*) on the basis of a sample (*anu-graha*).¹¹ This same term *tarka*

has been found in the Tālaguṇḍa inscription, where Mayūraśarman is said to join the *ghaṭikā* as a *tarkuka*. Combining the two passages, from the inscription and the *Arthaśāstra*, we have to conclude that the *ghaṭikā(sthāna)* and *śulkaśālā* or °*sthāna* refer to one and the same institution.

PALLAVĀŚVASAMSTHA KALAHĀ

We are thus dealing with an institution regulating trade. In that case *pallavāśvasamstha kalaha* might be translated simply as “a quarrel about, or concerning, (*samstha*) Pallava horses”.¹²

It is not difficult to understand why the *ghaṭikā* was staffed with brahmins. In the first place, we have seen that in the *śulkaśālā/ghaṭikā* records were kept of the incoming trade, and writing and keeping records were a typical brahmanic profession. In the second place, and more importantly, brahmins were supposed to have no personal interest in the ongoing trade, a condition which was essential especially in the case of estimates (*tarka*) of the value in which one could not fall back on quantifiable criteria such as size and weight.

Another thing is the exact nature of the quarrel between Mayūraśarman and the Pallavas. Apparently the Pallavas, who did not breed horses but imported them from the north, were themselves also active in the horse trade in the south of India. It is unlikely, however, that the conflict about the horses, whatever it was exactly about, would have arisen in Kāñcīpuram (the *pallavendrapurī* of the inscription), which constituted the very centre of the Pallava realm. Most likely Mayūraśarman was employed in a custom house somewhere along the border. The reference in the inscription to Kāñcīpuram is probably merely a way of saying that the *ghaṭikā* belonged to the jurisdiction of the Pallavas. In actual practice this meant that merchandise bearing the seal (*mudrā*) of the Pallavas could be forwarded without paying toll, but that for those imported from outside dues did have to be paid. As such Mayūraśarman’s quarrel about the Pallava horses most likely involved a dispute about the possession of the *ghaṭikā* itself. Probably he no longer let Pallava horse traders pass but had started to extract money from them, in this way challenging the Pallavas.

In this connection it should be noted that occasionally we find the extent of the realm defined in terms of the number of *ghaṭikās*. Thus, in the Miraj inscription,¹³ dated Śaka 1065 and 1066, among the constituent elements of the realm are mentioned the 64 *ghaṭikāsthāna* (*[aru]vattanālku ghaṭikāsthānam*, ll. 5–6). The number 64 seems to

represent an ideal, as becomes clear from other Kannāḍa inscriptions, such as the one from Sugatūr,¹⁴ Kolar Taluq, which mentions the “64 *ghaṭikāsthānas* within the various regions (of the realm)” (*nānādeśābhyantaram-ull-aravattunālku ghaṭikāstānamu*).¹⁵

This situation would explain the occurrence of disputes among dynasties, or between a dynasty and an ambitious upstart like Mayūraśarman, about the possession of a *ghaṭikā*. A case of a ruler seizing the *ghaṭikā* from another ruler, is actually mentioned in the Velūrpalāiyam Plates of Nandivarman III.¹⁶ In verse 7 of that inscription we read of King Skandaśiṣya seizing the *ghaṭikā* of the twice born from a certain King Satyasena:

*anvavāyanabhaś candraḥ skandaśiṣyas tato 'bhavat
dvijānām ghaṭikām rājnas satyasenāt jahāra yaḥ,*

After him (Vīrakūrca) came Skandaśiṣya, the moon in the sky of his lineage, who seized from King Satyasena the *ghaṭikā* of the twice-born.¹⁷

THE VAIKUṆṬHAPERUMĀḶ LABEL INSCRIPTIONS

As already indicated the members of the *ghaṭikā* have also been involved in the selection of a new king. Our information about this procedure is based on the VaikuṅṭhaperumāḶ label inscriptions.¹⁸ These inscriptions relate how after the death of Parameśvarappōttaraiyar II the country was left in a chaos, probably because there was no proper heir. A deputation, which included the *ghaṭikayār*, *mātrakaḷ* and *mūlaprakṛti*, went to Hiranyavarman of the Kāṭaveśa-kula, asking him to become king. He declined the offer, but passed the request on to his sons, who, however, were not very keen to accept the offer either. Finally, the youngest of the four boys, the twelve-year old Pallavamalla, was found prepared to become the king of the Pallavas.¹⁹ “After having crossed mountains, rivers, wild forests and thickets” the boy reached Kāñcīpuram, where his *abhiṣeka* took place in the presence of the *mantrimaṇḍalam*, *mahāsāmantar*, *ubhayagaṇattayār*, and *ghaṭakayār*.

In order to understand the function of the *ghaṭakayār* at the selection and the consecration of the king we have a look at what is actually done at the consecration ceremony.²⁰ During the consecration the king is given his so-called *abhiṣeka*-name, in this case Nandivarman (*nandivan(r)mman enru abhiṣekañ ceytu*). Then, the royal insignia are handed over to him. Unfortunately, not every word in the list of items is clear, but they include among other things the umbrella (*catri*) and the drum or conch (*samudraghoṣam*). Next are mentioned the *dhvaja* or

the banner or standard which has the *khaṭvāṅga*-club as its emblem, the *lāñchana* or crest consisting of the bull, and the *tiruvāṅai* or signature “Viṭē(1)viṭuku”²¹ with which to authenticate grants and proclamations.²²

Of these items the *dhvaja* has already been encountered in the *Arthaśāstra* passage, where it is mentioned as marking the custom house or *ghaṭikā*. Apart from that, the banner with its emblem (*khaṭvāṅgadhvaja*) and the crest (*vṛṣabhalāñchana*) usually appear on the seals of the particular dynasty, which, we have seen, were checked, and issued, by the *ghaṭikā* as well.

The consecration thus appears to be the occasion at which the *ghaṭikās* recognized the new king’s right to use the seal of the dynasty. In this way the king was given access to a profitable network of trade-routes, which, however, he was also expected to protect. This also means that at any moment the *ghaṭikā* could refuse to cooperate any longer with a king, for instance when he did not protect them properly. The *ghaṭikā* could seek relations with another ruler or “start its own business”, which is what Mayūrasarman, the upstart king, seems to have done.

In the Vaikuṅṭhaperumāḷ inscriptions we come across a case in which the *ghaṭikā* was clearly not satisfied with the situation which arose after the king’s death; it thus went in search of a person who might be able to protect its interests in a better way. Typically, the various interest groups did not look for such a person among themselves, but among other, neighbouring, families. In this respect Hiraṇyavarman’s “family name”, *kāṭaveśa*, is interesting, the first element, *kāṭava* (Tamil *kāṭavaṅ*) being derived from *kāṭu*. This *kāṭu* is a synonym of Skt. *aṭavī*, which refers to the uncultivated areas peopled by robbers surrounding the *janapada*.²³ Whatever may have been the motives of the other interest groups, the *ghaṭikā* may have sought the cooperation of these “forest people” to try to keep off further raids carried out by them on caravans. The *ghaṭikā* offered itself so to speak voluntarily, anticipating a violent take-over. Another motive might have been the attempt to open new trade routes after the existing ones had somehow become clogged up or proved to be no longer profitable.

THE PALLAVAS AND THE ARTHAŚĀSTRA

The above discussion has been mainly restricted to the inscriptions of the Pallavas and their contemporaries, the Kadambas. Kielhorn dealt with at least two more instances of *ghaṭikā* from the Kasakudi Plates of the Pallava king Nandivarman,²⁴ namely in vv. 23 and 25 respectively. Verse 25, if Kielhorn’s emendation of *svasaṭikām* into *svaghaṭikām* is

correct,²⁵ merely shows that it concerns a brahmanic institution, thus adding nothing which we do not already know from the other instances. In v. 23 the text proper reads neuter *ghaṭikam* and not feminine *ghaṭikā*, which led the editor to suggest that we have to do with a word for “water pot” here.²⁶

The *ghaṭikā* establishment is mentioned relatively frequently in inscriptions from Karṇāṭaka, that is the realm of the Kadambas and their successors, the Cālukyas. Often these references are part of enumerations and lists of the beneficiaries of the grant or they occur in the descriptions of the boundaries of a certain area. It is difficult to derive from these brief references any specific, additional information about the *ghaṭikā*.²⁷

As noted at the very outset, instances of *ghaṭikā* as a term for an institution are found mainly in inscriptions from South India. A notable exception to this is the so-called Cintra *praśasti*,²⁸ of which v. 40 reads:

*someśvarāyatanamaṇḍapam uttareṇa śrībhāji jīrṇaghāṭikālayasaṃmidhāne
śrīkaṇṭhapamcamukhavāsam adhiṣṭhitāni yenākriyaṃta kṛtināyatanāni paṃca.*

While G. Bühler connects *ghaṭikālaya* with modern Gujarātī *ghaḍiāl* “clock”,²⁹ Kielhorn sees in it another instance of our *ghaṭikā*.³⁰ If Kielhorn is right, the most interesting aspect of this instance would be that it is found in North India.³¹ In this connection it should be noted that at the time Gujarat was ruled by the Cālukyas. This dynasty presented itself as heir to the great tradition established by the Cālukyas of South India, who, as we have seen, maintained *ghaṭikās*.

The Pallava inscriptions seem to supply the earliest instances of the term *ghaṭikā*. The agreement on this point of the Pallava texts with the *Arthaśāstra* is interesting. The case of *ghaṭikā* is matched by at least one other instance involving the expression *pratihastiprotsāhana*. As has been shown elsewhere³² *pratihastiprotsāhana* is found in the *Mattavilāsaprahasana*, a short farce by the Pallava king Mahendrarman, in the *Daśakumāracarita* by Daṇḍin, who is considered to have worked under Pallava patronage, and in the *Arthaśāstra* (1.14.7). These two instances would show that the *Arthaśāstra* has exercised a considerable influence on the political life, and the imagination, of the Pallavas.

By way of conclusion a brief note may be added on the derivation of the word *ghaṭikā*. So far, the connection with *ghaṭikā* “pot” has met only with scepticism. However, the identification of the *ghaṭikā* as an institution involved in assessing the value of commodities may lessen this scepticism somewhat. For, like *ghaṭa*, the *ghaṭikā* pot may well have been used as a measure. If so, it might be argued that the institution of the *ghaṭikā*, which term most likely is an abbreviation of *ghaṭikāsthāna*,

was named after one of the instruments, if not the main instrument, used in carrying out its task.³³

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We like to thank Henk Bodewitz, in particular for his suggestion for the interpretation of the term *ānugrāhika* in *Arthaśāstra* 2.21.15. We also like to thank Jos Gommans, who checked the article with an historian's eye.

NOTES

¹ The inscriptional evidence concerning the term *ghaṭikā* has been brought together and discussed by F. Kielhorn, "Epigraphic Notes. An unknown meaning of *ghaṭikā*", *Nachrichten von der königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen. Philologisch-historische Klasse*. Göttingen 1900, pp. 349–54 (*Kleine Schriften* I, ed. W. Rau. Wiesbaden 1969, pp. 405–10).

² T.V. Mahalingam, *Kāncīpuram in Early South Indian History*. Bombay 1969, pp. 19–20. See also his *Inscriptions of the Pallavas*. Delhi 1988, pp. xxx–xxxii. Other scholars who have dealt with the *ghaṭikā* are, among others, R. Gopalan, *History of the Pallavas of Kanchi*. Madras 1928, p. 24, note 1, C. Minakshi, *Administration and Social Life under the Pallavas*. Madras 1938, pp. 186–200, and A.S. Ramanatha Ayyar in *Epigraphia Indica* XXV, pp. 324–5.

³ The only scholar so far who has drawn attention to the *Arthaśāstra* instance of *ghaṭikā* is R. Sathianathaier, *Studies in the Ancient History of Tondamandalam*. Madras 1944, pp. 48–50. Unfortunately, he did not attempt to link the evidence with that of the inscriptions.

⁴ *Epigraphia Indica* VIII, pp. 24–36.

⁵ M.A. Stein, *Kalhana's Rājatarānginī or Chronicle of the Kings of Kashmir. Vol. I. Sanskrit text with critical notes*. Delhi 1960 (repr.), 3. 254:

*tyāge vā pauraṣe vāpi tasyaucityonnatātmanaḥ
kṣmābhujas tarkukasyeva nābhūt parimitecchatā*

Whether in liberality or manliness this king, who had lost all sense of proportion, knew no limit to his ambition, just like a beggar/petitioner.

In addition to this passage Kielhorn gives a reference to *Abhidhānacintāmaṇi* v. 388, where *tarkuka* was equated with *yācaka*.

⁶ Likewise T.V. Mahalingam, *Kāncīpuram in Early South Indian History*, p. 38, renders *aśvasam̐stha* with "a mounted guard", and J.G. de Casparis, *Van avonturier tot vorst: een belangrijk aspect van de oudere geschiedenis en geschiedschrijving van Zuid- en Zuidoost-Azië*. Leiden 1979, p. 7, with "een huzaar" ("a hussar"). D.C. Sircar, *The Successors of the Śātavāhanas in Lower Deccan*. Calcutta 1939, p. 184, n. 1, suggests an entirely different interpretation, namely by taking *sam̐stha* as a synonym of *kratu* "sacrifice": the quarrel between Mayūraśarmaṇ and the Pallavas would have arisen in connection with an *aśvamedha* sacrifice. However, the word in question is not *sam̐stha* but *sam̐sthā*, which moreover does not refer to a sacrifice in general, but to specific forms of a sacrifice. For instance, of the *jyotiṣṭoma* there are seven *sam̐sthā*-forms (see K. Mylius, *Wörterbuch des altindischen Rituals*. Wichtrach 1995, s.v. *sam̐sthā*.)

⁷ R.P. Kangle, *The Kauṭīliya Arthaśāstra Part I. A critical edition with a glossary, Part II. An English translation with critical and explanatory notes. University of Bombay Studies. Sanskrit, Prakrit and Pali*, nos. 1 and 2. Bombay 1969, 1972.

⁸ *śulkasthānād gomayapalālaṃ pramāṇaṃ kṛtvāpaharata uttamaḥ sāhasadaṇḍaḥ.*

⁹ The same list is met with in 2.7.10: *tulāmānatarkagaṇita.*

¹⁰ For a discussion of the meaning of *tarka* as found in the *Arthaśāstra*, see H. Scharfe, *Investigations in Kauṭilya's Manual of Political Science*. Wiesbaden 1993, pp. 262–3.

¹¹ That is, one takes a sample, weighs it and estimates the total weight by multiplication. The problem is to estimate the factor with which the weight of the sample is to be multiplied. *anu-graha* could theoretically also mean “portion by portion”, that is, the bulk is divided into smaller portions which can be weighed; the total weigh is calculated by addition. However, this method has already been implied in preceding *dhṛto mito gaṇito*. Apart from that it is a highly inefficient method causing a considerable delay, because all the goods will have to be unloaded.

¹² For other instances of *saṃstha* as the final part of a compound, see W. Schwarz and O. Pfeiffer, *Rückläufiges Wörterbuch des altindischen*. Wiesbaden 1978, p. 208.

¹³ *Epigraphia Indica* XIX, pp. 35–41.

¹⁴ *Epigraphia Carnatica* X, “Kolar Taluq”, no. 170.

¹⁵ Other references to 64 *ghaṭikās* are found in an inscription from Pirānmalai (Rāmnad District) edited in *South Indian Inscriptions* VIII, No. 442 (see *Epigraphia Indica* XXVII, p. 311, note 5) and in an inscription in Kannāḍa from Balagāṛive published in *Indian Antiquary* V (1876), pp. 342–5, in particular p. 344 (“that which is the locality of the sixty-four *ghaṭikās*”).

¹⁶ *South Indian Inscriptions* II, pp. 501–17.

¹⁷ The *ghaṭikā* is also mentioned in verse 13 of the same inscription:

*tatputrasūnur nraśimhavarṃmā punar vyadhād yo ghaṭikāṃ dvijānām
śīlāmayāṃ veśma śaśāṃkamauleḥ kailāsakalpaṅ ca mahendrakalpaḥ.*

His (Parameśvara I) son’s son was Narasiṃhavarman (II) who again established the *ghaṭikā* . . .

Unfortunately, it is not clear what exactly has been meant by the words *punar vyadhād* . . . *ghaṭikāṃ dvijānām* here. It might be asked whether in between Narasiṃhavarman II and his grandfather the dynasty had lost their hold of the *ghaṭikā* to certain rivals, but Narasiṃhavarman II managed to seize it again?

¹⁸ The text has been edited several times. The edition which is followed here, is the one by C. Minakshi, *The Historical Sculptures of the Vaiṅkṭhaperumāl Temple, Kāñchi. Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India*, No. 63. Delhi 1941, in particular pp. 54–5.

¹⁹ See also the Kasakudi Plates of Nandivarman (*South Indian Inscriptions* II, pp. 345–61), vv. 27 and 28. In these verses it is said that Parameśvarapotaṅavarman was succeeded by Nandivarman, “who was elected by the people” (*vṛtaḥ prajābhiḥ*). Next, are enumerated this Nandivarman’s ancestors.

²⁰ The passage as a whole reads:

*mantrimaṇḍalamu[m] mahāsāmantarum ubhayaḡaṇattaḡāruṅ ghaṭakayāru[n] kūṭi
nandiva[r]mman enru abhiṣekaṅ ceytu tērkḡey ccatrikarivayumu[m] samudraghōṣamu[m]
[a.ra] khaṭvāṅgad dhvajamu[m] vṛṣabhalāṅccanumu[m] iraka . . . tikaḡār kūṭṭi
viṭē(1)viṭukenṅun tiruvānai naḡāvi abhiṣekaṅ ceytirunta itam,*

The passage may be translated as follows:

(In this picture) the circle of ministers, the important allies, the (relatives) from both sides and the members of the *ghatikā*, having come together, gave (the king) his *abhiṣeka*-name and they performed the consecration having given him the authority to use the name Viṭēlvituku together with (*kūṭṭi*) the *tērkkēy* (?), the umbrella (*catri*; or the umbrella for on the chariot, *tērkkēy*), (the *karivay*?), the *samudraghoṣa*-drum (or -conch), the *khaṭvāṅga-dhvaja*, the *vṛṣabha-lāñchana*, and, finally, the *irakaḷ* (?).

²¹ Viṭēlvituku is a title typical of Pallava kings; see T.V. Mahalingam, *Inscriptions of the Pallavas*, e.g., p. cvii.

²² The term *ānai*, from Skt *ājñā*, is obviously the same as *ānai* discussed in *Epigraphia Indica* XXIII, p. 175. It is usually found preceded by a proper name at the end of the inscription and the passage seems to serve to authenticate the text; sometimes the term *sattiyam*, Skt *satya*, is used instead.

²³ Note in this connection that Nandivarman in order to reach Kāñcīpuram had to “cross many mountains, rivers, wild forest and thickets” (*pala girinadivanagahana[m]kalaik kalintu*). The origin of the Kāṭava branch of the Pallavas from forest people has strangely enough not been considered by V. Ramamurthy, “The Pallavas and the Kadavas”, in *Srinidhih. Perspectives in Indian Archaeology, Art and Culture. Shri K.R. Srinivasan Festschrift*. Madras 1983, pp. 333–8.

²⁴ *South Indian Inscriptions* II, pp. 345–61.

²⁵ The text, as reconstructed by Kielhorn in “Epigraphic Notes”, p. 350 reads:

*devabrāhmaṇasātkr̥tāmavibhavo yaḥ kṣatracūlāmanis
cāturvaidyam avīśat svaghaṭikāṃ bhūdevatābhaktiḥ,*

Having given his wealth to gods and Brāhmaṇ[a]s, this crest-jewel of the Kṣatriyas (*viz.* the Pallava king Narasiṃhavarman) in his devotion to the gods of the earth (*i.e.* to the Brāhmaṇ[a]s) caused the students of the four Vedas to enter into his *ghatikā*.

²⁶ *tasmād ajāyata nijāyatabāhudaṇḍacaṇḍāsānī ripukulasya mahendravarmmā
yasmātprabhṛtyalam avarhata dharmmakarma devadvijanmaviṣayaṃ ghaṭikā (°am)
ca dātuh,*

From him was born Mahendrarman, whose long arms were fierce thunderbolts to the crowd of enemies, (*and*) beginning with whom, meritorious acts for the benefit of temples and Brāhmaṇas, and (*the use of*) the vessel of the donor have highly prospered.

Differently Kielhorn, “Epigraphic Notes”, p. 351.

²⁷ This inscriptional evidence from Karnāṭaka should definitely be looked into again, if only because the interpretation of the *ghatikā* as a primarily economic institution is bound to yield new insights, all interpretations so far having taken the *ghatikā* as an exclusively religious establishment instead. By way of example of one such inscription from Karnāṭaka reference may be made to one from Hoṭṭūr, published in *Epigraphia Indica* XVI, pp. 81–8, which in v. 1 gives the following description of the place Poṭṭiyūr (in L.D. Barnett’s translation): “This Poṭṭiyūr is a general [*akhila*?] *ghatikā-sthāna* in the country; in it Māra, composed of mind, a treasure of becoming speech, has dwelt happily in the office of Gāvuṇḍa.”

²⁸ *Epigraphia Indica* I, pp. 271–87.

²⁹ See R.L. Turner, *A Comparative Dictionary of the Indo-Aryan Languages*. London 1966, no. 4413 (*s.v.* *ghaṭītāḍa*). H.D.T. Sheth, *Pāia-Sadda-Mahaṇṇavo*. Varanasi 1963, p. 305^a, notes one attestation of this word in the Apabhraṃśa text *Surasundarīcariya*, which reference, however, we have been unable to check.

³⁰ “Epigraphic Notes”, pp. 352–3.

³¹ K.B. Pathak, “An Old-Kanarese Inscription at Tērdāl”. *Indian Antiquary* XIV (1885), pp. 14–26, in connection with *ghatikasthāna* in line 65 of that inscription, draws

attention in note 33 on p. 25 to a word *ghaṭika* in the compound *nijaḡhaṭikasthāna*, which would be used in particular in Jaina *paṭṭāvalīs*. Unfortunately, we have not been able to trace any attestation of the latter compound. It may not be unlikely to assume that this latter *ghaṭika* is on final analysis the same word as our *ghaṭikā*. The *ghaṭikā* as an establishment staffed with learned brahmins will no doubt have functioned as a kind of school as well, in which Vedic texts were studied, even with its own *paramparā* of teachers and students.

³² H. Tieten, "Three Men in a Row (Studies in the Trivandrum Plays II)", *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens* 41 (1997), pp. 17–52, in particular p. 34, note 45.

³³ A comparable case is the Dutch institution De Waag, the weighing-house, called after the huge scales put up in the building.

Kern Institute
Leiden