

# VELANADU IN MEDIEVAL ANDHRA (From the earliest to 1325 A.D.,)

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**Abstract:** Eastern Chalukyas, Cholas and kakatiyas inscriptions refers to Velanadu as an Administrative division. However, Velanati Chodas a mandilika family who were feudatories to Eastern Chalukyas and Cholas ruled Velanadu as a semi-independent rulers after downfall of Cholas. Kakatiyas subjugated Velanati Chodas annexed Velanadu is part of Kakatiya kingdom.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In this paper an attempt is made to identify geographically the region Velanadu. Velanadu a geographical region was a administrative under Eastern Chalukyas. Prior to Eastern Chalukyas i.e., Chalukyas of Vengi, though geographically Velanadu was a part of the kingdom of Sathavahanas, Ikshvakus, Bruhatpalayanas, early Pallavas, Salankayanas and Vishnukundians it was not referred to either in the copper plate or lithic records.

## 2. VELANADU IN MEDIEVAL ANDHRA

The earliest epigraphic reference to this region i.e. Velanadu, is found in not less than ten records issued by the Eastern Chalukyan kings. The Tenali plates of Vijayaditya I<sup>1</sup> records this region as Vilanandu vishaya along with ten villages Sancharambu, Kavuru, Sannavrolu, Inturu, Gottimuku and Karamcheadu. The Cheruvu Madhavaram plates of Kali-Vishnuvardhana V<sup>2</sup> refer to this region along with its village Kandravati, A record of Amma I<sup>3</sup> found at Tenali refers to this region as Velinadu-vishaya and a village Pulivarru ( modern Pedda Pulivarru in the Repalli taluk of Guntur District) located in it. This region is also referred to in one of the records of Amma II,<sup>4</sup> which states that Alaparti, Chinturu, Pedda Galidiparru, Valiveru, Tapparala and Konda-Galiparru, were located in this region which was an administrative division under Chalukyas of Vengi.

One of the inscriptions issued by Badapa,<sup>5</sup> dated 945 A.D. includes Arumbaka, Cherukumballi, Sripundi, Kavuru and Gomaduvu in this administrative division. This region as an administrative division, was also figured in the inscription issued by Tala II,<sup>6</sup> An inscription found at Valiveru<sup>7</sup> in the Tenali taluk of Guntur district refers to this region as Velananti vishaya in which Valiveru was included. It is of interest to state here that another record found in the same village<sup>8</sup> mentions it as Velanandu-6000.

After the downfall of Chalukyas of Vengi the present Andhra desa passed on to the Chola kingdom. Kulottunga Chola amalgamated Andhra desa into Chola kingdom and started ruling it from Tanjavaur, the Chola capital. During the time of the Cholas this region was referred to in the inscriptions by several names, namely, Velanandu,<sup>9</sup> Velanandu-Vishaya,<sup>10</sup> Velananti-desa,<sup>11</sup> Aruvela-nadu, Shat Sahasravani<sup>12</sup> (this is the Sanskrit form of Telugu, Aruvela nadu, and Trisatottara Shatsahasravani, that is the land that contained 6,300 villages<sup>13</sup>

The inscriptions refer to several villages included in this division. Nidumbrolu, (modern Nidubrolu in Guntur district) Chembrolu, (modern Chebrolu) Valiveru, (present Valiveru) Perumanduru (modern Penumarru) Davuluru (present Davuluru) Cherumumballi, Kroyyuru and Dhanadapura were some of them.

It is interesting to note that during the time of the Chalukyas of Vengi this region i.e. Velanadu was confined to Guntur, Tenali, and Repalle taluks of present Guntur district. But however the inscriptions issued during the rule of the Cholas, some parts of the adjacent region i.e. Divi taluk of the Krishna district also were added to it. Another interesting fact is that in one of the records<sup>14</sup> this unit is mentioned as the land of 6,300 villages. This was the only unit in Andhra desa which was referred to the numerical strength of the villages it comprised in lieu of its original name.

The downfall of the Cholas witnessed the independent rule of their feudatory Velanati Choda for a few decades, It became prominent under the Velanati Chodas. They were the rulers of this region. They were originally the sub-ordinates of the Cholas, but for a few years they exercised as semi independent rulers of this region. However they became the feudatories of the Kakatiyas of Warangal when they invaded the region and subjugated it. The Velanati chodas or chiefs made Chandavolu or Dhanadapuramu as their capital. The Chandavolu inscription describes this region as Velanadu.<sup>15</sup> The Pedda Makkena epigraph, dated A.D.1175,<sup>16</sup> refers to it as Velanandu vishaya. The Amaravati pillar inscription dated 1182,<sup>17</sup> the Pithapuram pillar inscription<sup>18</sup> and the Chebrolu<sup>19</sup> record refers to this division as Krishnavenna nadi dakshina tata sahasravani that is the land of 6000 villages situated on the southern side of the Krishna river. This region under Velanati chodas, may be identified with Tenali, Repalle, and Bapatla taluks of Guntur District,. It also covered modern Divi taluk of adjacent Krishna District.

Under Kakatiyas the Velanadu became a mere administrative division until the downfall of Kakatiyas. The Duggirala epigraph<sup>20</sup> states that Duggirealapundi, Ivani, Merampundi, and Duggamapundi were the constituent villages of the unit. Kroyyuru (presnt Krosuru, Divi taluk of Krishna District was included in Velanadu.<sup>21</sup> It is known from the Chebrolu record dated A.D.1235<sup>22</sup> that Mromtakuru was a part of Velanadu. Thus Velanadu, during Kakatiya rule embraced the region that extended to the north of the Krishna river, that is to the present Vijayawada region in the Krishna District.<sup>23</sup>

From the above discussion it was the most popular and prominent region in Andhra desa. It is probable that it included the present Repalle, Tenali, and Guntur taluks of Guntur district., Divi taluk and Vijayawada taluk of Krishna district It lay on the southern bank of the Krishna river and adjacent to Kammarashtra in south and Pallinadu in the west. Geographically it became an important region in the coastal Andhra desa for nearly 300 years.

### 3. CONCLUSION

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