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NARENDRA NATH LAW

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CAXTON PUBLICATIONS

- LSG Langdon's Sumerian Grammar (1911)
 LSI Linguistic Survey of India
 MEZ Moulton's Early Zoroastrianism
 MLB Myths of Babylonia by Donald, A. Mackenzie
 MR Modern Review
 MSG Macdonell's Vedic Grammar for Students
 OAS Origin of the Aryans
 ODB Origin and Development of the Bengali Language
 PG Pushtu Grammar by L. Vaughan (1901)
 PL The Piśāca Languages of North-Western India by Dr. Grierson (1906)
 RPV The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda by Dr. Keith
 RV The Ṛgveda
 TI The Times of India
 TIW The Times of India Illustrated Weekly
 ZDMG Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft

JAINATHI PATI

Ravana's Lanka located in Central India

The earliest known history of the Indian people in an epic form is what is contained in the Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmiki. The language and metre of the work, which are nearer to the Vedic language than anything to be found in classical Sanskrit, point out the work to have been written in very ancient times. Indeed the writer claims it to be a contemporary work, and if the interpolations made in it, which are many and intermixed throughout the book, are deleted, what remains appears to be an authentic narrative, although subject to exaggeration here and there on account of its very nature as epic poetry. To the same reason is due the fact that it contains many riddles. Many of them have been successfully solved by that distinguished scholar Mr. C. V. Vaidya, M.A., LL. B., in his book entitled the "Riddles of the Rāmāyaṇa." But he too has failed to solve the toughest riddle in it, namely, the identity of Laṅkā, the capital of Rāvaṇa, with any site in modern countries. There was a time when it came to be believed that like Dvārakā of a later epoch it disappeared in the sea.

But the question is so important that on its right solution depends the authenticity of the greater part of the history embodied in the epic.

The story of Rāma and Sītā is well-known. After Rāma had attained the age of maturity and was about to be installed as the heir-apparent, he was asked to go and live in the forest for 12 years. His younger brother Lakṣmaṇa and wife Sītā accompanied him. His adventures in the forests form the central theme of the epic. As commonly found in such narratives, it is full of adventures, into which the lapse of time has introduced elements of absurdity and exaggeration. They have so obscured history that doubts have been thrown on its authenticity, and some have gone so far as to assert that it is a myth of Nature.¹ Prof. Jacobi in his monumental work on the Rāmāyaṇa takes the hero to Assam, which he calls Rākṣasa-sthāna (the abode of demons). The Indian astronomer Bhāskara (14th century) locates Rāvaṇa's Laṅkā, the destination of Rāma, on the equator in the ocean. Some identify it with an island near Sumatra, or Java. A few would locate it in the Arabian Sea on the west coast. Recently, however, some people have begun to place it in the Chhattisgarh District of the Central Provinces. But the most popular theory current in India for the last two thousand years is that Laṅkā is none other than Ceylon. The believers in this theory differ as to the route by which Rāma went to that island, one holding that he went through the middle of the Peninsula, and another asserting that he followed the East Coast.

It is not an uncommon phenomenon that when emigrants leaving their mother country go on founding colonies one after another, they carry with them to their new homes the names of places for which they have some attachment. From the places, which, as described in the preceding paragraph, claim the honour of being associated with Rāma's principal exploit, the theory set forth here receives confirmation.

There is, however, ample material in the earliest narrative of it, which, with the corroboration now made available by research, points to a place far nearer the country of Rāma's birth than the wild stories which later became current. Vālmīki's Rāmāyaṇa or the history of the exile of Rāma contains a plain narrative of facts, which has been laid under contribution for the writing of this paper.

1 Imp. Gaz., vol. I, p. 419.

From it, it is claimed that the site of Rāvaṇa's Laṅkā must be found in the Amarakaṅṭaka Mountains at the source of the Narmadā on the frontier between the Chhattisgarh Division of the Central Provinces and the Rewa State of the Central India Agency.

The Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki is not only the first and earliest history of the great hero, Rāma, but from the view-point of language and metre it is nearer to the Vedic Sūktas than anything found in the later Sanskrit literature. The story became so popular that not only the Mahābhārata but almost all the 18 principal Purāṇas and later works in modern Indian languages, among which Paumacariyam (published and edited by Prof. Jacobi), Tulasīdāsa's Rāmāyaṇa in Hindi, Kṛttivāsa's Rāmāyaṇa in Bengali, Moropant's 108 Rāmāyaṇas in Marāṭhi and Pambam Rāmāyaṇa in Tamil are the most famous, have delighted to describe the beautiful and almost divine story, not to speak of several inferior versions of same in Sanskrit, and other works. Not only has not Vālmīki's work escaped interpolations to suit the later editions of the story, but they have been rendered by additions and exaggerations beyond recognition. Not only does the description in the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa connected with Rāma's journey in forest and subsequently to Laṅkā preclude the possibility of its being so far away, as is indicated by the different places which claim the honour of being referred to in the history of the exploit, but, the other countries also which are described in it and which are equally wrongly identified with countries bearing the old names in modern times stand in the same position. As an example the identification of Videha, the kingdom of Janaka, the father of Sītā, with modern Bihar, can be cited. According to the Rāmāyaṇa (1, 69, 8) it was at a distance of four days' journey from Ayodhyā. This cannot justify the identification of Videha with modern Bihar. From Oudh it cannot but be at a greater distance than what is indicated by the above mentioned fact. No such army as is described in the Rāmāyaṇa, not even a chariot drawn by horses, could traverse the distance from Ayodya (Oudh) to Videha (Behar) in such a short time as is distinctly mentioned.

The data in the Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa are sufficient to identify Ayodhyā, from where Rāma started on his journey, and Citrakūṭa, where he was met by his brother Bharata, who came to him with the tidings of the death of their father Daśaratha, with the places bearing these names. The difficulty of identification commences with the further progress in the journey.

On leaving the last named place Rāma entered the Daṇḍaka forest. There he came across a colony of Ṛṣis which was situated in an inaccessible place (3, 1, 1). Then he entered the forest and met with an adventure (3, 2). Here he saw a hermitage (3, 5, 4). He requested its owner to show him a suitable place for settling (3, 5, 33).

The Ṛṣi was about to die and so he directed Rāma to go to another Ṛṣi by name Sutīkṣṇa, in the neighbourhood (3, 5, 35). He desired him to follow the course of the Mandākinī which having its rise in the Citrakūṭa mountain joins the Jumna. Here there was a number of colonists who complained to Rāma of the harassment to which they were subjected by the fierce Rākṣasas (3, 6, 5). They described to him the extent to which their colonies, which were subjected to the harassment, had spread (3, 6, 17).

They were established on the area between the Pampā and the Mandākinī, and the Citrakūṭa mountain.

Being accompanied by the members of the colony, he went to the hermitage of Sutīkṣṇa after crossing the river (Mandākinī) (3, 7, 1). He stayed here for one night (3, 8, 1).

He then wandered over different places in the forest and returned to the same place after ten years (3, 11, 27). Here he was requested by the Ṛṣis to protect them from Rākṣasas which Rāma promised to do (3, 1, 34).

Here on enquiry Rāma heard that Agastya lived in the same forest (3, 11, 30 et seq.).

He is told that the hermitage of Agastya's brother was 32 miles to the south from there and Agastya's hermitage eight miles further to the south. He is advised that he should halt at the former place for the night and then proceed to the other place which was at the back (or end) of the part of the forest the next morning (3, 11, 37-42).

He goes to Agastya and asks him to show him a good place to live in (3, 13, 11).

He is pointed out a place 16 miles away near the Godāvarī, a place which was said to be not far away (3, 13, 18-21).

It was so near in the same Madhuka forest that he was told that he should go by the way on the north of the banyan tree and, getting on a hillock close by, see the Pañcavaṭī (3, 13, 25); Janasthāna was another name for it (9, 5, 69). It was Rāvaṇa's out-post (3, 21, 20). So Rāma settled there in order to keep his promise to the Ṛṣis (3, 10).

At Pañcavaṭī Rāma lived for nearly two years and from here Sītā was taken away by Rāvaṇa.

The above narrative makes it clear that Sutikṣṇa's hermitage was not far away from Citrakūṭa, and from the former place Pañcavaṭī was only 48 miles.

Rāma had gone a-hunting at the time of Sītā's abduction and Jaṭāyu tried to protect Sītā from the hands of Rāvaṇa. He was found to have been almost killed by Rāvaṇa, when Rāma returned. From the former he learnt the name of the abductor of his wife and the direction in which he had gone (3, 68, 9, 10, and 16). While going on to Pañcavaṭī, Rāma had seen a big bird perched on the banyan tree (3, 14, 1). This was Jaṭāyu, probably an aborigine.

Rāma went along that direction towards the south-west in search of his wife (3, 1 and 2).

Having gone six miles from Janasthāna (or Pañcavaṭī) he entered a forest by name Krauñca (3, 69, 5), and on going six miles eastwards he entered a valley (3, 69, 8-10), which was between the forest named Krauñca and the hermitage of Mātaṅga, who, before dying, told him to go to Sugrīva, who lived on a hillock on the banks of a reservoir named Pampā in the forest known after Mātaṅga. Sugrīva was the head of a tribe known as Vānaras, who being antagonistic to Rākṣasas was expected to help Rāma (3, 72).

Having stopped for one day on the way shown by Kabandha to the east of the hill (mentioned by him), he reached the western banks of Pampā (3, 74, 1, 3 and 4). Here was living a female hermit named Śabarī (3, 74, 4).

Then he saw Sugrīva, who was near the Rṣyamūka mount (4, 1, 130).

Rāma made friends with Sugrīva, who gave him tidings of his wife, who had been carried away by Rāvaṇa by that way (4, 6, 9).

Sugrīva had been driven away from home by his elder brother, Bālin (4, 6, 9 and 10), who lived at Kiṣkindhā, which was not at a great distance from the place (4, 12, 13 and 14). It was in a valley (4, 33, 1). From there he went to Pampā, near which was the mount Rṣyamūka (3, 75, 7).

It has been seen that Pañcavaṭī was only 48 miles from Sutikṣṇa's hermitage, which itself was not at a great distance from Citrakūṭa. From Pañcavaṭī or Janasthāna he goes into the Krauñca forest at a distance of six miles in the south-west. Going on further six miles, he entered the valley in which he killed Kabandha. He told Rāma to go to Sugrīva who, it appears from the minute description given by Kabandha such as the road leading by a banyan tree and

thence to the hillock from which Pampā and R̥ṣyamūka which enclosed Kiṣkindhā and where Sugrīva lived could be seen, did not live far away, say another six miles. Therefore Kiṣkindhā was more than eighteen miles from Janasthāna or about 66 miles from Sutikṣṇa's hermitage, or 96 miles, as will be shown later, from Citrakūṭa.

To the immediate south of Kiṣkindhā were the Vindhya (4, 46, 17).

Sugrīva sent a batch of Vānaras under the leadership of Hanumat to the south (4, 47, 14). It began to search the deep valley of the Vindhya (4, 48, 2).¹

They lost their way. They were taken out of it by a nun who was living in it and who brought them on to the shores of the sea which was washing the base of the Vindhya (4, 53, 3-5).

Here, when they were sitting ready to die, not knowing what to do, came to them the brother of Jaṭāyu, by name Sampāti (4, 56, 1-2). He told them that he had been living on the mountain Vindhya for a very long time (4, 58, 7).

He gives tidings of Rāvaṇa and Sītā, who, he says, are at a certain distance on the south banks of an island in the sea, on the shores of which they were sitting (4, 58, 20).

We find an indication of distance in the fact that he could see them, or rather the place where they lived, from the spot on which they were (4, 58, 29). It is emphasised in the same stanza that he could see what he was describing.

It was on this information that Hanumat, the leader of the party, made up his mind to leap or swim the distance. Hanumat swam this distance, through the air, after halting in the way.

It is then quite clear that Kiṣkindhā was on the northern slope of the Vindhya which was at a distance of about 96 miles from Citrakūṭa, and Laṅkā to the south of the mountain in the sea. From the fact that Śabarī, who lived on the banks of the Pampā near

1 On the the word Vindhya Govindarāja's commentary observes :

Vindhyapādapa ityanena Kiṣkindhāyā dakṣiṇato 'pi Vindhya-parvataśeṣo 'stīti gamyeta.

Here the party entered a valley which was full of trees and through which water was running and which was full of light (4, 15, and 20, 50).

Kiṣkindhā (3, 74, 4), can, as will be shown later, be said to have lived at a place within six miles of AmaraKaṅṭaka, which is identified with Laṅkā in this paper, it was about 103 miles from Citrakūṭa.

Here the toughest problem arises. Mr. C. V. Vaidya, the learned author of the "Riddles of the "Rāmāyaṇa" and "Mahābhārata : a criticism," shows that even the Mahābhārata, which is next in authority to Vālmīki's Rāmāyaṇa, corroborates that Kiṣkindhā was to the north of the Vindhya mountain. Now the difficulty about there being no sea to the south of the Vindhyas can only be got over by agreeing to the view that what is described as sea here was only an expanse of water.

Assuming this theory for the sake of argument, luckily, there is actually such a place as indicated by the Rāmāyaṇa (vide Pioneer, July 27, 1908). There is a mystery hanging about it. At a distance of some 10 miles from the Pendra Road Station of the Bilaspur-Katni Branch of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway, there is a hill-top on which there is said to be a fort, which is called after Rāṇī Bakavali, a fabulous queen. It is visible from the spot known as Bhṛḡu-Āśram about 2 miles distant from the source of the Narmadā. It is said that in the sixties of the last century Sir Richard Temple, then the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, had attempted to reach it by crossing over the marsh, with which it is surrounded, by riding over an elephant, but as the animal got stuck up in the mud the attempt had to be abandoned. From this side of the marsh the fort looks as if submerged in a mist, which makes it appear to be at a greater distance than it really is. It is in fact a peak, just as Laṅkā is in the Rāmāyaṇa. The land which is marshy at present may have had water over it once. Local tradition says that there is treasure inside the fort. It may be the Laṅkā of Rāvaṇa.

Sutikṣṇa's Āśrama, which Rāma was the first to visit after leaving Citrakūṭa, is identified with modern Sutna, which is a station on the E. I. Railway, the present head-quarters of the Political Agent in Bhagelkhand and about 30 miles from Citrakūṭa as the crow flies. It is situated on a stream which has, even now, beautiful trees on its banks. Here Rāma lived for the ten years of his exile.

Rai Bahadur Hiralal, a distinguished archæologist, is responsible for the statement that Goda, which is the name given to the river at Pañcavaṭī, where Rāma lived for nearly two years and from where Sītā was abducted, is a common name for rivers in that part of the

country. So it does not necessarily mean that Janasthāna should be located on the well-known river bearing that name, which has its source in the western Ghāts and falls into the Bay of Bengal.

From Janasthāna Rāma went to the Krauñca forest. Hereabout is Kenjuva, an offshoot of the Vindhyas. It may be identified with Krauñca.

In Śabarī dialect (Aboriginal Names in the Rāmāyaṇa by G. Ramdas Iyar, B.A., Journal of the Behar and Orissa Research Society, March, 1925) Jaitan means a place below the mountains just as Laṅkā means the high mountain. It is not difficult to hold that Janasthāna, which was in a forest, was with no habitation, as otherwise its meaning might imply the Sanskrit form of Jaitan. It was the advanced post of Rāvaṇa's army (3, 20, 22). Mr. Ramdas maintains that in Śabarī language Daṇḍaka means a place full of water.

Laṅkā itself was on the top of a peak known as Trikūṭa (5, 1, 2). In this paper it is proposed to identify it with a peak on the Amara-kaṇṭaka mountain. According to Rai Bahadur Hiralal there is a peak called Āmrakūṭa (a place with mango trees) on the Amara-kaṇṭaka mountain. It would not be difficult to identify the other two peaks as Śālakūṭa (Sal trees) and Madhūkūṭa (Mahua trees). Within seven miles of Amara-kaṇṭaka there is a place called Śabarī Nārāyaṇa, after the hermit of that name mentioned in the Rāmāyaṇa (3, 4, 75). He met Rāma when he was on his way to and near Pampā or Kiṣkindhā (ibid.).

There also appears to be a striking phonetic similarity between the names Śālakāṇkaṭa, the family name of Rāvaṇa and Amara-kaṇṭaka. The inhabitants of these parts call themselves Rāvaṇa-vaṃśīs¹ and a song on Hanumat's exploits is sung with great zest by them. In that part of the Vindhya range in which is situated the Amara-kaṇṭaka, and which is called the Kaimur range, there are traces of old habitations of men. In its caves are drawings of great antiquity.² This region, therefore, seems to have been connected with aborigines, and the tradition of Laṅkā may be traced to them.

There now remains the difficulty about Sāgara or the sea. In Sanskrit, according to Mr. Nundolal Dey, the word Sāgara includes a lake, a sea or an ocean. In these parts there are many lakes which are called Sāgaras. Rai Bahadur Hiralal asserts that in some of these lakes pearls are found (Journal of Hindi Sammelan, vol. 14, 5).

¹ Imperial Gazetteer, vol. XII, p. 323. ² Ibid., vol. XVI, p. 275.

Now the question remains as regards the tribes of Vānaras, monkeys, which inhabited the land between Janasthāna and Laṅkā, and the Rākṣasas who lived beyond. That these two tribes had brotherly relations may be gathered from the mention in the Rāmāyaṇa that Hanumat, the companion of Sugrīva, introduced his name to Rāvaṇa, as that of a brother (5, 2, 51). It is said that Vānaras had a tail. Apart from the fact that in medical works evidence is available of men having tail, Mr, T. C. Hadson, in his "Naga Tribes of Manipur" describes a costume in which such a tail is added. The Rākṣasas too had different sorts of costumes (e.g., the ten heads of Rāvaṇa). But it is not the object of this paper to enter into that discussion. I have avoided any reference to the last canto of the Rāmāyaṇa as it is held to be an interpolation. Nor has any reference been made to the date of the Rāmāyaṇic events, which preceded the Mahābhārata War by about a thousand years.

The object of this paper has been to prove that the place-names in the Rāmāyaṇa are not fictitious and even today they can be identified with sites in existence. If, as is claimed in this paper, the hypothesis that the Laṅkā of Rāvaṇa was located on the now inaccessible peak of Amaraṅṭaka, stands the test of criticism, it may lead some adventurous and enterprising person to survey it from the air.

M. V. KIBE

Religion and Philosophy in Kerala

I propose to describe here some of the aspects of the Hindu religion as current amongst us and then to briefly dwell upon the three premier philosophical systems of Mīmāṃsā, Advaita and Dvaita which had their origin in Kerala. I may add at the very outset that it is not intended here to go into details on these subjects. What I here intend to dwell upon is to point out some interesting religious rites and practices which appear peculiar to us and to sum up some of the Malayali traditions regarding the founders of the three systems of theistic philosophy which form, as it were, the stable foundations of the wonderful superstructure of what is briefly summed