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XI. *INSCRIPTIONS UPON ROCKS, IN SOUTH BIHÁR, described by DR. BUCHANAN HAMILTON, and explained by HENRY THOMAS COLEBROOKE, ESQ. Director.*

Read December 4, 1824.

DR. BUCHANAN HAMILTON, while engaged in statistical researches in the provinces subject to the government of Bengal, gave attention to the antiquities of the country, as to other scientific objects, which he had the opportunity of investigating. His reports, comprising the result of his inquiries, are deposited in the Library and Museum of the East India Company: and, at his instance, the Court of Directors have sanctioned a liberal communication of the information contained in them, to this Society. Among the antiquities collected by him, there are many *fac similes* of inscriptions. I purpose submitting to the Society explanations of such among them, as are interesting: and I now present the translation of one, which appears curious.

It is an inscription upon a rock, denominated, from an idol delineated on it, *Táráchandi*, in the vicinity of *Sahasram*, in South *Bihár*; and contains the protest of a chieftain, named PRATÁPA DHAVALA DÉVA, bearing the title of *Náyaca*, and that of *Rája* of *Japila*, against an usurpation of two villages, by certain *Brádhmanas* in his neighbourhood, under colour of a grant, surreptitiously obtained through corruption of his officers, from the *Rája* of *Gádhinagara* or *Canyacubja* (*Canoj*) who was the celebrated VIJAYA CHANDRA (JAYA-CHAND). Its date is 1229, *Samvat*, corresponding to A.D. 1173.

In Dr. Buchanan Hamilton's collection, there are copies of two other inscriptions upon rocks, in the neighbourhood, exhibiting the name of the same chieftain, in conjunction with many of his kindred in the one; and followed by a long series of his successors in the other. I observe little else interesting in them, besides the names and the dates.

The site of the principal inscription is thus described by Dr. Buchanan Hamilton. "In a narrow passage, which separates the northern end of the hills from the great mass, and through which the road leads from *Sahasram* to *Rautásghar*, is a place where *Táráchandi* is worshipped. The image is

carved on a ledge of rock ; and is so small, and so besmeared with oil and red lead, that I am not sure of its form. It seems, however, to represent a woman sitting on a man's knee ; but not in the form usual in Bihár, which is called *Hara-gauri*. Adjacent to the image, a cavity in the rock has been enlarged by one or two pillars in front, supporting a roof, so as to form a shed, to which the priest, and a man who sells offerings and refreshments for votaries and passengers, daily repair. A few persons assemble in the month of *Srávan*. But the chief profit arises from passengers ; who are very numerous : and all who can afford, give something. The priest is a *Sannyási*. Above the shed, the Moslemans have erected a small mosque, in order to show the triumph of the faith : but it is quite neglected. The image is usually attributed to the *Chérós* : and many small heaps between the place and *Sahasram*, are said to be ruins of buildings erected by the same people. But a long inscription, carved on the rock within the shed, refers to VIJAYA CHANDRA, sovereign of *Canoj*."

That inscription was strangely misinterpreted by the *Pandita* attached to the survey on which Dr. Buchanan Hamilton was engaged. The *Pandita* supposed the chieftain, PRATÁPA DHAVALA, to premise an intention of commemorating his descendants ; and to proceed to the mention of VIJAYA CHANDRA, proprietor of *Canoj* ; and SATRUGHNA, son of the *Maháráj* : whence Dr. Hamilton inferred, that VIJAYA CHANDRA was son of PRATÁPA DHAVALA. Dr. Hamilton observes, indeed, that others gave a totally different interpretation : considering it as "an advertisement from PRATÁPA DHAVALA, that he will not obey an order for giving up two villages, which, he alleges, had been procured by corruption from the officers of VIJAYA CHANDRA, King of *Canoj*."

The oriental scholar, upon inspection of the fac simile, will have no difficulty in perceiving that the latter was the right interpretation ; and it is therefore needless to pursue remarks which were built upon the *Pandita's* grossly erroneous translation.

The style of the protest is singular ; and, on that account alone, I should have thought it very deserving of notice. It serves, however, at the same time to show, that the paramount dominion of *Canyacubja*, extended to the mountains of South *Bihár* : and it presents an instance of the characteristic turbulence of Indian feudatories.

The second inscription, bearing the name of the same chieftain, *Náyaca* PRATÁPA DHAVALA DÉVA, with the date 1219, (A.D. 1163.) Saturday 4.

Jyaisht'ha badi, and underneath the name of his brother, the prince TRIBHÚ-VANA DHAVALA, the prince's wife SULHI and another female So'MALÍ, and two sons LACSHMYÁDITYA and PADMÁDITYA; exhibits a rude figure of a goddess *Tótalá dévi*, attributed to the family priest VIS'WARÚPA. On the other side of the figure, are the names of five daughters, and, at the foot of it, six sons of the *Náyaca*. These are VARCÚ, SATRUGHNA, BÍRABALA, SAHASA DHAVALA, YÁMI-CÁRTICÉYA and SANTA-YATNA DÉVA. Beneath are names of *Cáyast'has*, YAJNYADHARA, and VIDYÁDHARA, sons of CUSUMA-HÁRA; the treasurer DÉVARÁJA, and the door-keeper (*pratihára*) TISHALA.

The site of this inscription is described by Dr. Buchanan Hamilton: 'Where the *Tutrahi*, a branch of the *Kudura* river, falls down the hills of *Tilot'hu*, is a holy place, sacred to the goddess *Tótalá*. The recess, into which this stream falls, is about half a mile deep; and terminates in a magnificent, abrupt rock, somewhat in the shape of a horseshoe, and from 180 to 250 feet high. In the centre is a deep pool, at all times filled with water, and which receives the stream, that falls from a gap in this immense precipice. This gap may be 30 feet wide; and the perpendicular height there, 180 feet.

'The image is said to have been placed by the *Cherós*, about eighteen centuries ago; and, in fact, resembles one of the images very common in the works attributed to that people in *Bihár*. But this antiquity is by no means confirmed by the inscription, the date of which is evidently in *Samvat* 1389, or A.D. 1332.

'In another inscription it is said, that the family priest of a neighbouring prince, PRATA'PA DHAVALA, had, in A.D. 1158, made the image of the goddess: alluding evidently to a rude figure, carved on rock, and now totally neglected.

'The image now worshipped is, as usual, a slab carved in relief, and represents a female with many arms, killing a man springing from the neck of a buffalo.* It is placed on the highest ledge of the sloping part of the rock, immediately under the waterfall. From two to three hundred votaries, at different times in the month of *Srávan*, go to the place, to pray.'

The third inscription is upon a rock at *Bandugháta*, on the *Sóne* river

* It figures *Mahishásura*, vulg. *Bhainsásur*, slain by *Bhavání*.

opposite to *Japila*, which was the chieftain's principality. The date assigned to *Mahá-nripati* (i. e. Mahárájá) PRATÁPA DHAVALA, besides the number of 21 years (apparently the duration of his reign, as chief of *Japila*), is, in the *fac simile*, written 2219 *Samvat*; but the first digit being clearly wrong, it must be corrected to 1219, or 1229; most likely the latter. No date is assigned to his predecessor UDAYA DHAVALA; nor to the line of his successors, beginning with VICRAMA, who is perhaps the same with VARCU (the first among his sons, named in the second inscription,) and who appears from the epithet of *Vijayin*, "victorious," to have been the reigning prince, when his name was here set down. The rest must have been subsequently, from time to time, added; and the first among them is SAHASA DHAVALA, perhaps the fourth son of PRATÁPA DHAVALA, mentioned in the second inscription.

Above all this, there have been inscribed, at a much later period, other names, viz. 'Mahárájá NYUNAT RĀI or NYUNTA RĀYA, who went to heaven (*surapura*, i. e. the city of the gods) in the year 1643 *Samvat*;' and 'Mahárájá PRATÁPA RĀYA, or PRATAPA RUDRA, who went to heaven in the year 1653 *Samvat*.'

In another part of the inscription, there occurs the name of Mahárájá MĀNASINHA, with the dates of 1652 and 1653 *Samvat*; and lower down, a string of three names, Mahárájá CANSARĀJA, PRATÁPA DHAVALA DÉVA, and MADANA SINHA. Between the two last, there is interposed the date of 1624 *Samvat*.

The name of PRATÁPA appears then to have been of frequent recurrence. The family, which yet possesses the principality of *Bilonja*, the representative of which, when visited by Dr. Hamilton, was Rájá BHÚPANÁT'HA SÁ, claims descent from PRATÁPA DHAVALA, chief of *Japila*.

Japila is a large estate, south of *Rautás* (*Róhitáswa*), in the district of *Rdmaghar*. But the territories of the ancient chieftain seem to have extended beyond its present limits, and to have reached the vicinity of *Sahasram*.

These inscriptions have no other chronological value, but as they corroborate the date of one possessing more historical interest, noticed in the *Researches of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (vol. 9, p. 441). It records a grant of land, by the same Rájá of *Canyacubja*, VIJAYA CHANDRA; and, as usual, recites the names of his ancestors, tracing his genealogy through no

less than six generations. The original was said to have been transmitted to Great Britain by the late Sir John Murray M'Gregor; but I am unable to say where it has been deposited. It would be an acceptable communication, as serving to authenticate the history of a prince among the most conspicuous in the annals of his country; on which he inflicted the same calamity which Count Julian did on Spain, by assisting a Musleman conquest of it, in revenge for the abduction of his daughter.* The analogy indeed is not quite complete; for it was *seduction* of a daughter which Count Julian sought to revenge.

Concerning the inscription at *Táráchandí*, of which a translation is here presented, it is to be remarked, that the denunciation or protest, which it records, is first expressed in verse,† and is then repeated in prose. This repetition has much assisted the decyphering of it, and the correction of some errors, either of the original, or of the copy. A few explanatory notes will be found annexed.

Translation of the Inscription at Táráchandí.

“ PRATÁPA DHAVALA, wholly divine (*déva*), possessor of happily risen and celebrated glory, addresses his own race. In these villages, contiguous to *Calahánd'i*,‡ that contemptible ill copper§ [grant], which has been obtained by fraud and bribery, from the thievish slaves of the sovereign of *Gádhinagara*,|| by priests sprung from *Suwalluhala*:¶ there is no ground of

* See p. 147 of this volume.

† In two stanzas of *Vasanta-tilaca* metre.

‡ *Calahan'd'i*; written *Calahandí*, with a long vowel, in the prose paraphrase.

§ The text exhibits, in two places, *cutámra*; which, I conjecture, should be *cu-támra*, from *cu* ill and *támra*, copper; alluding to a grant inscribed, as usual, upon copper. There may be an allusion to *Cutamba*, the name of a district in that vicinity.

|| *Gádhinagara*, the same with *Gádhipura*, is identified with *Canyacubja*.—See As. Res. ix. 441.

¶ *Suwalluhala*; written *Swallu han'tya* in the prose paraphrase; it appears to be the designation of the *Bráhmanas*, who had obtained the grant of land in question.

faith to be put therein by the people around. Not a bit of land, so much as a needle's point might pierce, is theirs.

“ *Samvat* 1229. *Jyészthá badi* 3d Wednesday.

“ The feet of the sovereign of *Japila*, the great chieftain, the fortunate PRATÁPA DHAVALA DÉVA, declare the truth to his sons, grandsons, and other descendants sprung of his race : this ill copper* [grant] of the villages of *Calahandí* and *Badayitá*, obtained by fraud and bribery, from the thievish slaves of the fortunate VIJAYA CHANDRA, the king, sovereign of *Canya-cubja†* by *Swalluhaníya‡* folks : no faith is to be put therein. Those priests are every way libertines. Not so much land, as might be pierced by a needle's point, is theirs. Knowing this, you will take the share of produce and other dues ; or destroy.”

“ [*Signature*] of the great *Rájaputra* (king's son), the fortunate SATRUGHNA.”