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NOTES ON MAPS  
OF  
ANCIENT KĀSMĪR AND ŚRĪNĀGAR,

BY

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At one of the Meetings held by this Section three years ago at Geneva, the Members present had been kind enough to testify their interest in the labors which I have devoted for some time back to the elucidation of Kalhaṅga's Kāsmīr Chronicle, by signing a recommendation which was intended to secure for me the leisure necessary to complete my task. In accordance with this recommendation the Panjab University was induced to lend my services for this purpose to the Kāsmīr Darbār for several months in the summers of 1895 and 1896. The leisure thus obtained made it possible for me to prepare a full translation and commentary of the Chronicle.

I believe therefore to obey merely a command of gratitude if I venture to lay before the Section an advance copy of volume I which is now approaching completion. When issued in its final form, it will contain the whole of books I to VII, that is, the greater half of the Chronicle, together with the necessary exegetical and historical notes. The printing of the second volume will be begun within a few weeks, and the whole work, I trust, will be published in the course of next year.

The two maps of which I have the pleasure to lay separate copies before you, will form a supplement to the work. They

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are intended to illustrate in a graphic form and in full detail the results which a prolonged study of the Chronicle and a series of antiquarian tours have furnished me as regards the ancient topography of Kaśmīr and its capital Śrīnagar. If I venture to detain you on the present occasion with some short notes on these maps, it is because the soil to which they refer, may for more than one reason claim the attention of the Indologist. I also think that a brief account of the procedure followed in the preparation of these maps might interest those who may have occasion to illustrate in a similar form the results of their antiquarian researches in other parts of India.

Kalhaṇa in his Chronicle relates the history of his own country, — a mountain territory of relatively small extent and of well-defined limits, — and he writes for readers whom he supposes to be as familiar with all its main topographical features and sites as he himself was. It is, therefore, only natural that the narrative, particularly in its later and more accurate portions, is interwoven with a mass of topographical detail, which, as long as it remained unexplained, presented a serious obstacle to the modern student of the Chronicle. Insufficient knowledge of the ancient geography of Kaśmīr accounts for many of the difficulties and obscurities which have baffled former interpreters of the *Rājatarāṅgiṇī*. Nobody had recognized this fruitful source of error more clearly than Professor Bühler. Already more than twenty years ago he pointed out the importance of a close study of the ancient topography of the country and indicated the ample materials available for it. These are contained in the extant Māhātmyas of the sacred springs and other pilgrimage places of which the valley has always boasted in plenty; in other Kaśmīrian Sanskrit texts; in the surviving local traditions, and, last but not least, in the

detailed references of the *Rājatarāṅgiṇī* itself and the later chronicles which continue its narrative.

But, however valuable these indications are, especially when confronted and combined with each other, they would by no means suffice for an accurate solution of the many questions concerned if close attention were not paid to the actual topography of the country. With the latter I had ample opportunity of acquainting myself in the course of the antiquarian tours which I had made in the valley and the mountains around it during consecutive vacations. I must ascribe it chiefly to this fortunate circumstance, that in my notes on the chronicle I have been able to propose, what I hope will prove *safe* identifications, for the great majority of the old sites and local names with which Kalhaṇa's work acquaints us in so great a number.

When I considered the plan of recording these results in a map of Ancient Kaśmīr, it appeared to me that such a map would be specially useful to the student of the chronicle if it were made to exhibit at the same time also the modern topography of the country with all needful detail and accuracy. This would enable him to follow and check the arguments upon which my identifications are based, without reference to other maps and in the most convenient manner.

The only real survey which has hitherto been made of the Valley of Kaśmīr and the neighbouring hill regions, is that executed by the Officers of the Great Trigonometrical Survey of India in the years 1855-1860. Barring a certain want of accuracy in the spelling of the Kaśmīrī local names (no easy matter even for a philologist), the work of the Survey Department has been in Kaśmīr of the same high standard of excellence which has distinguished its labors in other parts of India. It is evident that without a fresh survey a new map of Kaśmīr could be based only on those sheets of the *Atlas of India* in which

the Survey Department has definitively embodied the results of its labors. To prepare such a new map specially for the purposes of my work, would have entailed very great, almost prohibitive, expense without adequate advantages to compensate for it. In view of this, it seemed to me the only practical and convenient way to secure my object if I were to obtain mechanical reproductions of the actual Survey maps and to insert on these the ancient sites and names in a distinguishing colour.

Last summer I submitted this plan to my friend Dr. Grierson, then Hon. Philological Secretary of the Asiatic Society, Bengal, and he, with the zeal and energy he never fails to display where the interests of the Indologist are concerned, lent me his powerful support in the matter. Thanks to his recommendation, the Survey of India Department was induced to undertake the preparation of the maps, and the Bengal Asiatic Society to bear the main expenses connected with it. For the careful execution of the maps, I am chiefly indebted to Colonel J. W. Waterhouse, the late Assistant-Surveyor General, under whose charge the Photographic and Lithographic Offices of the Survey have attained their wellknown standard of efficiency. For the great care and trouble he has personally bestowed on the work, I may be allowed to record here my grateful acknowledgments.

The «ground-map» of the larger map now before you has been obtained by combining and transferring direct to the stone portions of the original steel plates engraved for sheets 28 and 29 of the *Atlas of India*. The map thus obtained has the advantage of showing, at the large scale of 4 miles to the inch and yet in a *single* sheet, the whole of Kaśmīr and the mountain regions from the Kiṣāṅgā in the North to the Cināb in the South. Over this ground-map, the positions and names of some two hundred and fifty identified ancient localities have been printed in a red colour which makes them at once easily distin-

guishable. For those old local names which are found already in the *Rājatarāṅgiṇī*, grotesque type has been used, whereas all those which are known only to the later chronicles, the *Māhātmyas* and other texts, are shown in italic type. Thus the relative age of the source in which a particular local name first occurs, can be seen at a glance.

The map shows all ancient sites mentioned by Kalhaṇa for which certain or probable identifications could be found by me. But of those old sites which are named besides in other texts, only the most important ones could be inserted. The number of such ancient local names is so great that it would have been impossible to show them all on the map, — large as its scale is, — without interfering with its legibility and clearness. A glance at the map will show that, notwithstanding this restriction, certain portions, e. g. that showing the vicinity of Śrīnagar, are already sufficiently crowded with names. I need scarcely explain at length that the fact of a certain local name being found only in a comparatively recent text proves nothing against the antiquity of that name itself. More than once, I have had the satisfaction to note that names known to me before only from *Māhātmyas* of doubtful date have subsequently turned up in compositions of Kṣemendra or even earlier sources. (Compare e. g. *Pañcāladhārā*, as a designation of the Pir Pantsāl Pass, in Kṣemendra's *Samayamātrkā*.)

The smaller map which shows the modern topography of the City of Śrīnagar and its environs, together with the ancient sites and names identified, has been prepared exactly on the same lines. Though the scale of this map is one mile to one inch, it has yet been impossible to show on it all the identified old sites in the city proper. So much of the ancient topography of the Kaśmīr capital can yet be traced with certainty, and so great was the number of temples and other important structures

situated within its precincts, that a plan of much greater scale would have been needed in order to indicate the position of all these sites. Yet even in its present modest dimensions, this map of Ancient Śrīnagar may justify the belief that we know more of its old topography than of that of any other Indian capital.

In order to illustrate the extent to which the identification of important ancient sites and with it the correct interpretation of the chronicle depends upon a close scrutiny of topographical features of the present day, I may be allowed to refer to a single instance, Kalhaṇa's account of the foundation of Śrīnagar.

The tradition recorded by Kalhaṇa as to the origin of the Kaśmīr capital is no doubt largely interwoven with legendary matter. But its main point, the attribution of the city to king Pravarasena, can easily be proved to be based on historical fact. And even of its legendary features we can show that, when correctly traced out and interpreted with reference to the actual topography, they throw an interesting light on the history of the city.

Kalhaṇa's story is contained in verses 339-349 of the third book, and runs briefly as follows. When king Pravarasena II had returned from his victorious expeditions abroad, he desired to found a new capital which was to bear his own name. He had previously resided in the old capital, *Purānādhiṣṭhāna*, the site of which has long ago been identified at the present village of *Pāndrēthan*, some three miles above the present Śrīnagar. From there the King goes forth at night in order «to ascertain in a supernatural way», as our text says, «the proper site and the auspicious time for the foundation of the new city». On his way he reaches a stream which skirts a burning ground and is illuminated by the glow of funeral pyres. On the other side of

the stream there appears to him a terrible demon. This promises to the King fulfilment of his desire, if he would cross to his own side by the embankment he prepares for him.

Then, our legend relates, «the Rākṣasa stretched out his own knee from the other bank, and thus caused the water of the *Mahāsarit* to be parted by an embankment (*setu*)». The courageous Pravarasena drew thereupon his dagger (*kṣurikā*), cut with it steps into the flesh of the Rākṣasa, and crossed thus over to a place which has since been known as *Kṣurikābala*. Thereupon the demon indicated to him the auspicious time and disappeared, after telling him to build his town where he would see the measuring line laid down in the morning. This measuring line (*sūtra*) of the Vetāla, the King finds laid down «at the village of *Śarīṭaka*, at which the goddess *Śarīkā* and the demon *Atta* resided». There he then proceeds to build his famous temple of Śiva *Pravareśvara* which is more than once named thereafter in the Kaśmīr Annals.

Though none of the specific localities mentioned in this legend had previously been identified, yet there could be no doubt as to the general position of Pravarasena's city. The identity of the latter with the present Śrīnagar was always well known to Kaśmīrian pandits. It had been correctly recognized also by General Cunningham, who referred to the testimony furnished by Hiuen-Tsiang and to the general agreement of Kalhaṇa's description of Pravarasena's capital with the situation of the present Śrīnagar. A most convincing proof is further contained in the fact, that the name *Pravarapura* (for *Pravarasena-pura*) can be traced throughout the works of Kṣemendra, Bilhaṇa, etc., as well as in the Chinese Annals as the appellation of the city occupying the site of the present Śrīnagar.

Looking then within the precincts of the latter for the local names mentioned in our legend, we can in the first place iden-

tify that of the river *Mahāsarit*. It had previously not been recognized as a name at all, but a series of passages proves that it was the ancient appellation of the stream which issues from the Ḍal lake and joins the Vitastā at the S. E. extremity of Śrīnagar.

In VIII, 339, Kalhaṇa relates that the body of King Uccala who had been murdered in his palace at Śrīnagar, was hurriedly cremated by a few faithful servants at the burning place which lay «on the island situated at the confluence of the Mahāsarit and Vitastā». A reference to the map of Śrīnagar will show that the only island in or near the capital which can be said to be situated at the meeting of the Vitastā with another stream, is the great island of May sum formed on the S. by the Vitastā, and on the other sides by the two branches of the above named stream.

The conclusion to be drawn from this regarding the identity of Kalhaṇa's Mahāsarit is further confirmed by the fact that close to the place where the western branch of the Ḍal stream joins the Vitastā, there existed till the times of Mahārāja Raṅbir Singh a Hindu burning Ghat. As the latter is mentioned already by Śrīvara I, 442 et seq., in the xv<sup>th</sup> century in the identical locality, it can be safely assumed that it marked the site of the burning-ground referred to. Śrīvara gives to the place the more modern name *Mārīsaṅgama* which from a passage of the Vitastāmāhātmya can be proved with certainty to apply to the junction above indicated.

Other passages of the Rājatarāṅgiṇī which refer to the Mahāsarit, VIII. 733-753, are also instructive. In them the stream is spoken of as on the line of attack upon the city, in particular for forces coming from the East. A reference to the map will again show that the shallow stream coming from the Ḍal forms

actually the south-eastern boundary for that part of Śrīnagar which lies on the right bank of the Vitastā and contains the greater portion of the city. Protected as it is on the E. and W. by the lakes of the Ḍal and Anchiār, and on the S. by the Vitastā, this part of Śrīnagar can be attacked with advantage only over the narrow neck of land in the N. or across the stream issuing from the Ḍal in the S. E.

This stream, now known by the name of *Tsūnth Kul* «the apple-tree canal», is bounded along its right or N. bank by an old embankment about one and a half miles long, which stretches from the rocky foot of the Takht hill in the E. close to the high-lying bank of the Vitastā in the W. There can be no doubt as to the antiquity of this embankment. Without it large portions of the city which are built along the low-lying shores of the Ḍal and the numerous channels stretching from the latter to the W., would along with all the «floating gardens» of the lake be exposed to annual inundations from the river. A further proof of its antiquity is furnished by the fact that this embankment bears along with the quarter built on it merely the general name of *Suth*, from skr. *setu*, «dyke», whereas all the other numerous embankments and causeways about Śrīnagar have distinctive appellations.

Several topographical considerations combine to prove that it was this old dyke or *setu* which the popular legend related by Kalhaṇa represented as the leg and knee of the demon who helped Pravarasena to cross the Mahāsarit. In the first place we can see from the map that the dyke described actually turns sharply at an angle of 90 degrees opposite to the camping-ground known as the Cīnār Bāgh. It thus curiously resembles a bent knee. Still more convincing is the fact that we find the name of *Kṣurikābala*, which marked the spot where Pravarasena reached firm ground, still attaching, in its Kaśmīrī derivative

*Khud<sup>h</sup>bal*<sup>(1)</sup>, to the city-quarter situated at the W. end of the embankment.

Finally it should be noted that Kalhaṇa's description of the *Setu* dividing the water of the Mahāsarit (*mahāsarito vāri setu-sīmantitam*, III, 345) is exactly applicable to the Suth.

The name of the village *Śarīṭaka*, where the demon showed to Pravarasena the site for his new town has disappeared in the great city founded around it; but its position is sufficiently indicated by the mention of the goddess *Śarīkā*. The latter, a form of *Durgā*, has been worshipped since ancient times on the N. W. side of the hill which lies immediately to the N. of the central part of Śrīnagar and is called after her *Śarīkāparvata* or *kś. Hār<sup>a</sup>parvat*<sup>(2)</sup>.

After this examination of the several local names, we are now able to fix with certainty the original site chosen for Pravarasena's city. This was clearly the ground stretching from the rocky hill of «*Śarīkā*» down to the right bank of the *Vitastā*. It is in full agreement with our conclusion that we find just there the remains of Pravarasena's great Śiva temple. They are preserved in ruins of imposing dimensions which, though now transformed into the Ziārat of a famous Muhammadan saint, Bahā'ud-din Šāhīb, are still known to Brahman tradition by the name of *Pravareśvara*.

We have thus seen that with the help of the map exact facts of historical interest may be gleaned even from traditions which on the first look bear a purely legendary character. It is then

<sup>(1)</sup> For the phonetic connection of *Khud<sup>h</sup>bal* and *Kṣurikābala*, comp. *kś. khūr* < skr. *kṣura*. A new popular etymology which saw in *khūr* the word *khud* «hollow», might have helped in the change of *Kṣurikābala* > *Khud<sup>h</sup>bal*. The word *bal* is common at the end of Kāśmīr local names and means «place».

<sup>(2)</sup> It is curious to note that a popular etymology generally accepted by European visitors of the Valley has turned the «Hill of Śarīkā» into the «hill of Hari» or the «Verdant Mountain». It was already current in the days of Bernier.

evident that careful reference to the maps will be even more necessary and useful if those detailed and truly historical accounts are to be correctly interpreted and utilised, which Kalhaṇa has left us for the centuries immediately preceding his own time.