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GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

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[Signature]

Buddhist Antiquities in the
neighbourhood of Berwada

In my Archaeological Report
printed with G. O. No. 1620 of 1st November
1878 (Pub. Arch.) Section I was devoted
to noticing some Buddhist Remains
in Villages near Berwada. The last
notice was of (1) Kontaram and
other Villages

To this I desire now to add
another, detailing Remains near
the Village of Mogaliyapuram,
about 2 miles east of Berwada.

Mogaliyapuram

The Village of Mogaliyapuram, or the "Town of the Mogal
Christ", lies under a lofty hill about
2 miles east of Berwada. A high
sawback ridge shuts it in on the
north, and a spur of this encloses
it

it on the East, while on the west and south-west two low detached hills rise out of the plain. The Village lies about a mile north of the Krishna.

I have noticed previously that according to Hiouen-Tsang, the town of Bezvada was in his days a city of six or seven miles in circumference. If it is supposed that the city was then, as it is now, shut in on the west by the ridge on which stood the Buddhist Monastery called the Avaracilā Sān-ghārāma, and partly confined on its north side by the hill which now encloses it, it may readily be assumed that the city spread itself out laterally to the eastwards along the River bank. Magalāsāpuram would therefore lie just at its north-east corner, and the space so included would exactly give a circumference of seven miles or so:- the area mentioned by the Chinese Pilgrim.

Whether the city was compact or scattered, whether Magalāsāpuram was part of the city, or an outlying hamlet.

hamlet, probably will never be determined, but the numerous Rock-cut cells and halls found in the hills surrounding it testify to its having been, no less than Bezvada itself, a place of common resort for the Buddhist Clergy and Laity.

As with the other Rock-cut Remains in the neighbourhood, so here, the original Buddhist rock surfaces are found sculptured all over with Brahmanical figures, cut in a very early style, while here and there pure Buddhist designs remain, on cornices and friezes, showing that their work was not altogether devoid of ornamentation.

Fragments of inscriptions remain here and there, and the letters are those of the 7th or 8th century. I now proceed to details.

On the most westerly of the two detached hills mentioned above as lying to the south-west of the Village

Village are found several rock-cuttings.
On the north side of it there is
a deep cut into the hill side some
50 feet long, by 20 feet broad. It
is much choked up with debris fallen
from above, but there are symptoms
of its having been like the others near,
hollowed out so as to form an open
court with a pillar supported chamber
inside. The whole roof has however
fallen in, and the appearance seems
to show that it was never properly
completed.

Near this, higher up the
hill side, is a small cutting, and
below it another with a figure sculptured
on the rock face, almost
intelligible but apparently of prior design.

The principal cutting in this
hill is a small cave on the west side.
Behind an outer Court is the
perpendicular pillar supported front
of the chamber. The rock above is
unornamented, but appears to have
been simply smoothed and underneath

it a cornice of dancing ^{3/4}Buddhagana
overlies the plain architrave.

The chamber is supported
on three rows of rock-cut pillars, of which
the bases and capitals were left square
and plain, while the shafts were shaped
into rough octagons.

The front and back rows are
very much destroyed, the centre one
being in good preservation.

Above the outer row the
rock was cut into long unornamented
brackets, while the interior rows upheld
brackets with the well known fluted
edges.

The roof between the outer and
centre rows of pillars was unornamented,
but that between the centre and
inner rows was elaborately and elegantly
sculptured with the purely Buddhist
design of ganas supporting the waving
Roll as in the frieze on the coping stones
of the outer Amaravati Rail.

The rock at the back contains
a hollowed out cell about 3 ft 6 in.

square

about which is sculptured the Chaitya. ornament roof; - that is, a representation of a roof with designs at intervals taken from the shape of a Buddhist Dagoba. On each of these is sculptured a human head, probably that of a Saint, but they are much weather worn. At the sides the rock is divided into plain panels divided by pilasters. In one of these is an interesting guardian figure. These guardian figures are generally represented as supernatural beings. But in this case, the figure is purely human - a soldier on guard.

He stands in an easy attitude, one leg crossed over the other, with a drawn sword held erect in his right hand, while with his left he leans on a shield resting on the ground. Judging from the height of the man, the shield would be about 2½ ft. high, projecting considerably forward in the centre. The sword is straight and has a blade of not more than 2 ft. The scabbard hangs on the right side. Folds of cloth hang loosely over the loins and to the knees. The

¹⁴
The figure is too much ~~destroyed~~ to judge of his dress above the waist, or as to how his head was defended.

A fragment of an inscription is discernible on the rock to the right but only the first letter **S** Sri can easily be made out.

On the second of these small hills are some unimportant cuttings here and there; and one very well preserved and interesting sculpture cave which I proceed to describe in detail.

It is hollowed on the same design as the one last mentioned.

On the left side of the open Court, a small chamber seems to have been hollowed in the rock; consisting of a recess supported on 2 square pillars only 3½ ft. high. The rock above has broken in and it is impossible to say without excavation how deep the chamber was cut.

To the right of this the Brahman sculptured a figure of Ganesa. The front of the rock immediately over the outer row of pillars has the Chaitra.

~~Chaitya~~ ornament, the ~~Chaitya~~
representation being repeated 3 times
each containing well-executed
human heads. The one to the left
seems to have 3 heads on one body,
an ~~inverted~~ design. Each head
has the high head-dress noticed in
so many of these designs. The centre
design has 2 heads, apparently male
and female placed as if they were
standing together or conversing (a king
and queen). On the right hand 3
~~Chaityas~~ are also two heads, some-
what similar, but behind the male
is a serpentine head, ~~showing~~ by the
show that the design was intended
to represent a ~~king and queen~~.

The ~~Chaitya~~ has 2 rows
of pillars, ~~in all respects~~
to those on the ~~other~~ hill
with bracketed capitals.
The ~~Chaitya~~ is a pillar-like
portion of solid rock which forms
the support on the extreme left of
the outer row of pillars is a guardian
figure or ~~Demigod~~ with a pan-
ther cap. Beside being high and
ornamented

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ornamented it has 2 curved horns
like those of a bison. Opposite to it
on the right is a similar figure.

On one of the pillars of the
outer row is a curved circle of
arabesque work surrounding a wor-
shipping figure. The design is remark-
ably graceful and is especially
interesting from its being decidedly
Buddhist in type.

On another is a fragment
of a figure with uplifted hand,
while on the inner side of the same
pillar capital is a sculpture repres-
enting a figure beating a kneeling
Elephant.

On another is a child on
its mother's breast.

It is just possible that these
carvings may be really Buddhist.
that the child and mother, may be
a child Buddha and his mother,
and that the figure vanquishing
an elephant may be a representation
of the scene in the earlier princely life
of Siddharta where he is said to have
conquered

conquered and, single handed,
hurled over the city-wall on an
Elephant sent to destroy him.

Or they may be Brahmanical -
one representing Krishna the other
Durga. They are much injured.

The back wall of the cave
contains 3 cells, the wall between
being panelled, and having above
a cornice showing the usual style of
Chaitya roof.

The chief interest however, in
this cave is the elaborate and very
bold group of figures above on the
roof outside.

I have mentioned that the
architecture is surmounted by a
Chaitya, ornamented roof along
the front. This is not more than 2 ft.
high. Above the roof is left flat
for a breadth of 2 feet and behind
this is a frieze of bulls, Elephants
and lions &c. boldly cut in animated
attitudes.

Above this and about 2 ft.
back from the perpendicular front
of the solid rock. But on this 2 foot
flat form is sculptured in very high
relief

relief out of the ~~natural~~^{solid} rock, a
crouching figure with bent legs, and
body resting on the ground, seizing
a serpent by the neck and head. The
serpent's head is erect and the head of
the figure is raised, the two apparently
glaring at one another.

Above this, on the perpendi-
cular Rock face, is a finely designed
six armed figure representing the
Deity. With reference to my often
repeated assertion that the early post-
Buddhist Brahmanas designed their
sculptures after Buddhist models,
I desire to call attention to the attitude
of this figure. In numberless Buddhist
groups representing Buddha as the
Prince in his Palace and in many
other instances where a seated figure
is intended to convey the idea that
he is a King or Lord or a person of
importance, the attitude adopted
is for the sitter to have one leg doubled
up on the chair or couch, and the
other resting on the ground or
on a foot stool. It must be re-
membered that all dignitaries sat
on

on chairs or sofas in those days.
See "Jergin's Tree and Serpent worship"
P. 93, and his plates LIX, LX, LXI, LXII, LXV,
LXXI, LXXII, LXXIII, LXXIV, LXXV, LXXVI, LXXVII, LXXXI,
LXXXII, LXXXIII, LXXXIV, LXXXV, XCI.) I notice
these instances specially to show how
universal was the custom in sculpture.

Now in this group we
find a six-armed Brahmanical
Deity (Vishnu I think, the figure
below being a humanized garuda
killing a cobra) represented as
sitting apparently in space, but
precisely in the attitude referred to.
His left leg is doubled beneath him,
and his right rests on the back of
the couchant figure described above.

The group is very fine and
quite startling in the boldness
of the sculpture and the excellent preservation of
the

One hand holds a double
dagger (see note I to the previous
Report P. 92) another a sword, another
a ~~club~~. The other emblems are
damaged, or so damaged that I
cannot make out what they are.

the solid rock material in ¹⁴⁷which
it was cut.

On the north side of the hill
on the East of the Village is a cave of
similar construction but not so elab-
orately carved. Being near the pres-
ent ground level it is almost choked
up, but enough can be seen to show
that it was a cave, supported on 2
rows of pillars, (2 pillars in a row
excluding the solid side pieces). In
front is a frieze of a few objects, whether
ganas or sacred geese I could not
make out. There are 3 cells in the back
wall.

The inhabitants of the
Village appear to hold this place in
holy dread. Being only able to see
in by stooping, they declared that
it was the entrance to a passage which
went straight through the hill and came
out in a small cave on the south
side, and that it was known to be
so by the fact of a sheep having
passed quite through the hill along
that passage. With some difficulty
I persuaded a man to go in, and
only

only after he had entered each cell in turn and hammered at the solid rock with a thick stick would the natives be convinced that there was no hole.

On the south side of this same hill is another cave.

On the right and left, in front, are cells with figures, 4-armed Dwārapālas, on the sides. But the figures seem rough and poor.

The main hall is broad, and unsupported by any inner row of pillars. Doubtless the strength of the rock enabled these to be dispensed with.

Outside on the left is a 3-line inscription in characters of the 7th century.

Further up to the left is another small choked up cave, supported on 2 pillars. Above the cell in the back wall is a Chaitya-ornament roof each dagoba figure having

having on each side its base a fish monster's head.

8/14/1
High up on the rock face of the lofty hill on the north of the village is a carved piece of rock which the natives allege to be a blocked up doorway, within which is a cavern filled with gold and gems. They say that any one who can get these will become the Ruler of the world, and that if enough human sacrifices were made to cause a river of blood which would flow down to the sea (50 miles off) the rock would open of itself.

I asked an intelligent native about it, and he said it was a holy place sacred to "Kanaka Durgamma" the goddess of the Begwada Komatties. Being pretty certain that the carving, if carving there was, would turn out to be Buddhist. I asked if he had ever heard of the Buddhists, and he replied that he had not.

A.

As I suspected, I found that the solid perpendicular rock-face had been cut into the shape of a Dagoba. The upper half contains another Dagoba-shaped design, in the centre of which is a figure of the seated Buddha himself, while on each side, or the lower half there has been a guardian figure now totally destroyed.

It is impossible to say what the compartment between these figures was, because the rock has been hewn into at that part by gullible Hindus eager to become "Rulers of the World". There is nothing Brahmanical to be seen near this piece of rock work.

It is strange that natives should be so totally ignorant of the very existence of Buddhism in a country where it was only stamped out finally some 600 years ago.

G. Other remains at Bezawada.
Since writing the above some other Buddhist remains have come to light at Bezawada itself.

The heavy rains of last year had deepened the water courses off the hills

hills to a considerable ¹⁴ extent and I was told one day that 2 statues had been found lying in one of these.

I went to the place pointed out. It was on the western slope of the hill that bounds Bezawada on the West, and close to the present Village of Vidhyadharaapuram. There I saw two mutilated marble statues of Buddha in attitude of preaching, and I had them removed to the Library.

While there I discovered a new Buddhist Cave, previously unknown to me, behind the D.P.W. Powder Magazine on the same side of the hill.

It had been entirely choked up with earth thrown there artificially, (I believe by D.P.W. Officers some years ago), and fallen rocks.

I had this cleared out.

The cave was a sculptured artificial excavation of considerable size, supported on 4 rows of 4 pillars each besides the half pillars at the wall with 3 cells behind. A very much destroyed

destroyed, the rock having fallen in from the top, being there very friable.

Post Script.

I desire here to correct a mistake which I have been led into unintentionally, and to make amends for the same.

In my First Report. (P. et pass.) I wrote as if I had been the first positively to identify, from local knowledge, the present site of the town of Berwada with the religious centre known to Hionen-Ihsang as the capital city of Dhama-kacheka.

But I am wrong.

In 1872 Mr. Ferguson published a pamphlet "On Hionen Ihsang's journey from Patna to Ballabhi" in which, (P. 50. 51) he stated, after seeing a photograph of Berwada, and reading the late Mr. Boswell's Reports. It may be "added that neither was the report
written

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"written - nor the photographs taken" with the smallest idea of proving any theory; but their united testimony "proves, almost beyond the shadow of a doubt, Berwarra to be the city Hionen Ihsang describes." Mr. Ferguson had before this, in his "Tree and serpent worship", been very close to the mark, though as he admits in his pamphlet, at the time he then wrote, things were mysterious enough.

I am anxious therefore, thus publicly, to withdraw all claim to having been the first to identify the site and to apologize to Mr. Ferguson for my oversight.

Mr. Ferguson also points out that Genl. Cunningham's identification of the Nāga Kingdom of Majendha with the country near the Krishna is erroneous, as the Nāga Kingdom is really only spoken of as a subterraneous one, so that my section C and part of my arguments in S. F. are superfluous.

Further I have received a letter from

1
Sir Walter's guaranteed
copies are in the hands of Mr. Fleet
of the Bombay Civil Service who
is making excellent use of them.

True Copy

Mr. J. M. Thompson
Assistant Collector.

Supplemental
Archaeological Report

Great, Little & Infant-
Print, Coleraine?

1879 to the British.
Ordinary to Governor.

Enclosure in Michael O'Sullivan
a 18901 dated 25th April

2 Dec 9 1879

From
The Acting Asst. Collector
Hudson

To
The Collector,
Kistna.

Sir,

I have the honor to enclose a Supplemental Report on Buddhist Antiquities near Bexwada, requesting that you will kindly submit it to Government.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Sir,
Your most ob^dt Servant
J^r S^r R. Sewell

A. G. H. Assistant Collector

(True Copy)

Mattherson

Assistant for Collector

Assistant for Collector
The Chief Secretary to Government.
Public Department
Potacumundo.

Fishers District
 Collectors Office
 & Harbors at Am
 25th April 1879

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1899 2nd of March

Mr. J.

12/147

Casual leave may
be granted by
the collector,

but Govt. should
not have anything

to do with that.

We had better
give him a return
leave for 20

day, without allowing
It is for him to
take it or not
as he likes.

J

13/147

Note.

* Dated 30th April/80.

The enclosed order came back from Government House on the 29th ultimo. Some modification will now be necessary.

H. B. 91

By/ This paper, which has been detained in the Office of His Grace the Bishop, will now be printed & copies distributed in continuation of the Prog. of Govt of 1st Nov 1878. No 162. - J. E. 1/1

L E 49 - 80

To R. Sewell Esq.
The Rev. Secy.
- Pub. Works Dept.
- Board of Works
- Colln of Histn.
- Accountant General.

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act. her. strength
has been written the
book, and is now
going into order.

CB/1
RHP/1

147