

(1) Number of pages 28
 (2) Date of repair oct. 1886
 (3) Initials of the Referencer com ✓

TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

Public DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	31.	Press.
B.P. N		Mis.
Dated	1 8.2.1881	1881. 1972

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To: 155

Kistna District, Collector

Office, Masulipatam.

22nd January 1881.

From,

The Acting Collector

Kistna District.

To,

The Chief Secretary

to Government.

Sir

Public Department
Madras

With reference to your official memorandum No 2441, of date 23rd ultimo, I have the honor to state that a copy of the Supplementary report on archaeology referred to in the Collector's endorsement No 953 dated 3rd May 1879 was forwarded to Government with this Office No 901 dated 25th April 1879. Another copy is enclosed.

Report being
printed &

I have the honor to be

Sir
Your most obedient servant.

Ag. Collector

23

Buddhist Antiquities in the
neighbourhood of Bezwada

In my Archaeological Report printed
with G. O. No 1620 of 14th November 1875
(Pub. Arch.), section II was devoted to noting
some Buddhist Remains in villages near
Bezwada. The last notice was of (E) -
Koutaram and other villages.

To this, I desire now to add another,
detailing Remains near the village of
Mogalrajapuram, about 2 miles east
of Bezwada.

F. Mogalrajapuram.

The village of Mogalrajapuram, or the
"Town of the Mogal Chief," lies under a
lofty hill about 2 miles east of Bezwada.
A high saw-back ridge shuts it in on
the north, and a spur of this encloses
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

a mile north of the Tistna.

I have noticed previously that, according to Hiuen. Tsang, the town of Bizwada 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 Avaracilâsinghârâma, 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. Megalâzâpuram would therefore lie just at its north east corner, and the space so included would exactly give a circumference of 6 or 7 miles, or 40 li - the area mentioned by the Chinese Pilgrims.

Whether the city was compact or

scattered, whether Megalâzâpuram^{3/2} was part of the city, or an outlying 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 Bizwada 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

those of the 7th or 8th century A.D.

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 are found several rock-cuttings.

On the north side of it there is a deep cut into the hill side some 50 ft. long, by 20 ft. 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 untraceable, but

but apparently of rude design. $\frac{H}{31}$

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 Buddhaganas 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 edge.

The roof between the outer and

centre row 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 8 ft 6 in square, above 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. 5/3

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 feet. The scabbard hangs on the right side. Folds of cloth hang loosely over the loins and down to the knees. 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 ॐ śrī can easily be made out.

On the second of these small hills are some unimportant cuttings here & there; and one very well preserved and interesting

interesting sculptured cave which I found 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 squat pillars only $2\frac{1}{2}$ 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 Brahmans sculptured a figure of ganisā.

The front of the rock immediately over the outer row of pillars has the 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 unusual design. Each head has the high head-dress noticed in so

^{10/31}
many of these designs. The centre design has 2 heads - apparently male and female placed as if the two were standing together or conversing (a king & queen?). On the right hand chaitya are also two heads somewhat similar, but behind the male is a serpent's head, seemingly to shew that the design was intended to represent a Rāja - Rājā.

The chamber has 2 rows of pillars similar in all respects to those in the cave on the other hill, with bracket-capitals.

On the small 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 Biwāra with a peculiar cap. Besides being high and 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 worshipping figure. The design is remarkably 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 representing 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 & 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 and, single-handed, hurled over the city wall an Elephant sent to destroy him. or they may be Brahmanical - one representing Prishna, the other Durga. They are much injured.

7/3
The back wall of the cave contains 3 cells, the wall between being purlled, and having above a cornice showing the usual style of Chaitra 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 chaitra ornamented roof along the front. This is not more than 2 feet high. Above, the roof is left flat for a breadth of 5 feet, and behind this is a fringe of bells, elephants and lions etc. boldly cut in animated attitudes.

Above this and about 2 feet back rises the perpendicular front of the solid rock. But on this 2 foot platform is sculptured in very high relief out of the natural 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 perpendicular rock face, is a finely designed six-armed figure representing the Deity. With reference to my often repeated assertion that the early post-Buddhist Brahmans 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 remembered that all dignitaries sat on chairs or sofas

in

8/25

in those days. (see Fergusson's Treasures and serpent worship "P. 193 and his plates LIX, LX, LXI, LXII, LXV, LXVI, LXVII, LXIX, LXXII, LXXIII, LXXVI, LXXVII, LXXXI, LXXXII, LXXXIII, LXXXIV, LXXXVI, XC I.) I notice three 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 human 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.

* One hand holds a double drum - (see note I to the previous Report p. 42), another a sword, another a chakra. The other emblems are destroyed, or so damaged that I cannot make out what they are.

The group is very fine and quite startling in the boldness of the sculpture and the excellent preservation of the solid rock - material in which 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 elaborately carved. Being near the present 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 ran right 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 ^{9/3} passed quite through the hill along that passage.

With some difficulty I persuaded a man to go in, and 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, I named Sandrapālas, on the sides. But the figures seem rough and poor.

The main hall is broad, & 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 on each side its base a fish monster's head.

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 Pezwada Komattis.

Being pretty certain that the carving, if carving there was, would turn out to be Buddhist, I asked if he had

10/15
ever heard of the Buddhists, and he replied that he had not.

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 ~~seen~~ ^{broken} 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

it was only stamped out finally some
600 years ago.

By other remains at Bywada.

Since writing the above some other
Buddhist remains have come to
light at Bywada itself.

The heavy rains of last year had
deepened the watercourses off the hills
to a considerable 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 Bywada on the West, &
close to the present village of Vidhyadha-
rapuram. 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

11/21
to me, behind the S. 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 S. 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 walls, with 3 cells
behind. Is very much 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 in to unintentionally
and to make amends for the same.

In my First Report, (p. 112 passim)
I wrote as if I had been the first
positively to identify, from local knowledge,
the

the present site of the town of Bezawada with the religious centre known to -
Kionen. Shuang as the capital city of
"Shanakacheka".

But I am wrong.

In 1872 Mr. Fergusson published
a pamphlet "on Kionen Shuang -
journey from Patna to Ballabhi" in
which, (p. 50-51) he stated, after seeing
a photograph of Bezawada, and
reading the late Mr. Boswell's Report,
"It may be added that neither was
the report 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, Bezawarra to be
the city Kionen. Shuang describes." Mr.
Fergusson 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.

wrote things were mysterious enough."

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

Mr. Fergusson also points out that
Genl. Cunningham's identification of the
nāga kingdom of Majantha with the
country near the Sistna 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 Sir Walter Elliot, in which, with
reference to my remarks about Sir
Walter's "own copyist, Chipuri Zui-
Ramudeu" and his work (see p. 27),
I am informed that Zui Ramudeu
was only employed for a time as a
man

mere copyist under the Munishi,-
never had any original Documents in his
hands,- and was never employed in original
work - so that it is no wonder that his copies
are found full of mistakes.

The Masters guaranteed copies are in
the hands of Mr. Fleet of the Bombay
civil service who is making excellent use
of them.

(Signed) R. Swell

Ag. Head Master Collector

(True Copy)

Ag. Collector

13/31

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31

Latent: 169/81

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1857-4/19-1-81

R. L.

18 JAN 81

1862

Public (1881) Department

(14) Archaeology

From

The Acting Collector

Nistna District

To The Chief Secretary

to Government

Public Department

Madras.

Dated 22nd January 1881

Received. 26 —

No. 155.

No. 169.

Enclosure 1.

Subject

Stating that a copy of

Mr Sewell's Supplementary

report on archaeology referred

to, was forwarded with this

Office No. 901 of 28th April

1877-26/1/81 dated 28.1.81