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J. B. SHAH

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“CĀMUNDĪ” OF HARṢACARITA OF BĀṆA A CRITICAL REVIEW¹

Dr. SUDARSHAN KUMAR SHARMA²

Bāṇa in his Harṣacarita while dilating upon the caution of Skanda Gupta made to Harṣavardhana against his all-confiding disposition, refers to an accidental happening against Puṣkara the king of Cāmuṇḍī whose life was sipped by the spying soldiers of the army of the king of Campā.³ This happening historical event as it does striks, needs a detailed examination as to who king proper the Lord of Campā was and it also needs the identity to be proved of “Cāmuṇḍī” a place, a capital or a country proper whose king / one named Puṣkara was fond as he was of hunting Rhinoceroses who normally have their abundance in the country of Kāmarūpa / Prāgjyotiṣa, modern Assam. A review of the history of Aṅga and Kāmarūpa along with the place proper Cāmuṇḍī shall have to be taken up to arrive at the identity proper of the terms quoted above.

E. B. Cowell and F. W. Thomas⁴ in their English Translation of Harṣacarita translate the lines as under :-

“The life of the chase-loving Puṣkara King of Cāmuṇḍī was sipped while he was extirpating rhinoceroses, by the lord of Campā’s soldiers ensconced in a grave of tall stemmed reeds”.

Sūryanārāyana Chaudharī in his Hindi translation says (English version given below).

“The king of Cāmuṇḍī Puṣkara, was very fond of hunting. At the time he was killing rhinoceroses, that very moment, the soldiers ambushed within the forest of reeds of lofty stalks, brought about the end of his life.”⁵

Jagannātha Pāṭhaka says :-

“The soldiers of the king of Campā sitting having ambushed within the

forests of reeds having tall stalks put an end to the life of the Lord of Cāmuṇḍī named Puṣkara who was engaged in killing Rhinoceroses.” R. D. Karmarkar in his “Bāṇa”⁷ says

NAME	RESULT
(19) Puṣkara (Lord of City Cāmuṇḍī) addicted to hunting	Was killed in the Nala forest by the army of the king of Campā.

Jīvananda Vidyā Sāgara edition tīkā says⁸

“Uddandeti Uddandāni Udgatanalāni naḍvalesu naḍabhuyiṣṭhadeśeṣu yāni nala vanāni --- teṣu nilīnāḥ sugūdhamaṁ sthitāḥ Campeti Campā-dhipasya tadākhyā-nagarī pateḥ camūsu senāsu caranti bhramanti tiṣṭhantīti yāvat tathoktāḥ bhaṭāḥ vīrāḥ campādhipa sainikāḥ ityarthāḥ mrgayāsaktasya ākhetavyasaninaḥ gaṇḍakān-“gaṇḍāra” iti vaṅga bhāṣayā prasiddhān khaḍginaḥ mathnatab vyāpādayataḥ ityarthāḥ Cāmuṇḍī pateḥ - Cāmuṇḍī nāma nagarī tasya patīḥ īśvaraḥ tasya puṣkarasya tadākhyasya rājñāḥ prāṇān jīvanam ācemuḥ bhakṣayāmāsuḥ” Śāṅkara’s saṅketākhyā tīkā⁹ only gives a saṅketa i.e. an indication.

“saṇḍakāḥ khaḍgādyāḥ Prāṇinaḥ Cāmuṇḍīti nagarī nāma ācemurabhakṣayan” P. V. Kane¹⁰ in his Notes Says :-

Caṇḍakāḥ - A Rhinoceros. Ūddandam-High stemmed, naḍvalam abounding in reeds. Nalavana-Forest of reeds. Campā was the capital of Aṅga or North Bengal Camūṁ Carantīti Carāḥ Bhaṭāḥ Cāmuṇḍī seems to have been the name of city.

Dilīpa Kumāra Kāñjīlāl in his article — “Ancient Indian Geography in Bāṇabhṭṭa” has quoted this incident at Foot Note No. 100 but has not explained its historical value.

He has only quoted Campā as a city, on the Bhāgīrathī four miles to the west of Bhāgalapura and as one of great six cities of the time of Buddha. He quotes Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra mentioning Campā as one of the great cities of the time.¹² Dr. Yugal Kishore Mishra¹³ in his article “AṅGA : ITS NAME AND EXTENT” has illustrated the point that the kingdom of Aṅga comprised the modern districts of Bhāgalapura and Monghyr and extended northwards upto Kosi river and included western portions of the district pūrṇia. It also included some parts of modern Santhal Pargaṇā of Bihar. Quoting Śāntiparva of Mahābhārata he says :- Aṅga had also extended its supremacy over Magadha. He also quotes a king

Brahmadatta of Aṅga having defeated Magadha and conquered Rājagriha.¹⁴ Mahābhārata Śāntiparva XXIX refers to one Bṛhadratha as the king of Aṅga^{15a} Aṅgasya Yajamānasya tadā Viṣṇupade girau¹⁶ — Likewise indicates the area of Magadha having a Visnupadagiri distinct from one referred to in the Mahrauli Iron pillar inscription of Candra (Candragupta Vikramāditya of Gupta regime). Kālidāsa in his Raghuvamśa VI 27-30¹⁷ refers to Aṅganātha coming as a suitor for Indumatī, having his elephants trained by the Professors of elephantine science but does not name him to allow the critic to trace out the name of the king who occupied the throne of Campā in the Gupta period. S. A. Sabnis¹⁸ in his Kālidāsa, his style and his times, and Dr. Bhagavat Śaraṇa Upādhāya¹⁹ in his “Kālidāsa Kā Bhārata”, Dr. V. V. Mirashi²⁰ in his Kālidāsa, Dr. Dimbeśvara Sharma²¹ in his “An interpretative study of Kālidāsa and Vāgīśvara Vidyā-laṅkāra²² have all ignored the point of identification of Aṅgarāja and Aṅganātha of Kālidāsa.

Bāṇa has definitely alluded to an incident having happened during the time of turmoils and that certainly seems to be one detailed by Daṇḍī in his Daśakumāra-carita wherein he has centred his activity of political events around the welfare and security of Aṅgarāja Siṃha Vermā for whose safeguard he has concentrated the achievements of Rājāvāhana son of King of Magadha along with the other princes namely Apahāra Varmā, Upahār Verma, Mitra Gupta, Arthaapāla, Viśruta, Puṣpabhava, Pramatī and Somadatta who symbolises the participants of the interceine struggle going on in the post Gupta epoch having Magadha-Malava conflict for regainment of the supremacy. Daṇḍī ultimately solves the riddle by ensuring the supremacy of Magadha in collaboration with Aṅgarāja Siṃha Varmā having demolished the invidious moves of the forces of Mālava Kings who did not have a sacred intention though an intention to usurp what they were not capable of because of their unrighteous tendencies. Hence we shall have to concentrate on Siṃha Varmā as Aṅgādhipa of Bāṇa who happened to have the first-hand knowledge of political happening wherein Cāmuṇḍī Pati Puṣkara fond of killing Rhinoceroses was killed by the secret spies of the forces of Aṅgarāja. Puṣkara a definite name given by Bāṇa also affords us a cue to the surmise that he must have seen a king of an area where the forests infested by Rhinoceroses were not very far away so as to enable him to reach there from his own capital Cāmuṇḍī.

Daṇḍī in his Daśakumāracarita (Kathābhāge) Ucchvāsa two, mentions “aṅgeṣu gaṅgātata bahiścāmpāyām²³ clearly indicating the point that Aṅga country in his times had Campā for its Capital and the shores of Gaṅgā were

on the outskirts of Campā. His clear allusion “Campeśvareṇa Siṅhavarmanā Sahopagatya Dhanamitraḥ Praṇipapāta”²⁴ clearly alludes to the fact that Aṅga having capital for Campā had Siṅhavarmā for its overlord. He refers to the king of Mithilā as Prahāra Varmā²⁵, Kalingarāja as Kardana,²⁶ Āndhranātha as Jaya Siṅha²⁷, Vidarbharāja Puṅyavarmā having son for Ananta Varmā and grandson for Bhāskarvarmā²⁸ hailing from Bhoja Vaṃśa Utkalapatiḥ Pracanda Varmā²⁹, king of Kusumapurī as Ripuñjaya³⁰, Suhmapati as Tuṅgadhanva³¹. Keeping in view the security and progress of Aṅga-Magadha confederacy regaining its lost prestige from the Mālavarāja Mānasāra defeated and killed, Daṇḍī has given only those kings’ names who come directly into conflict in collaboration with Mālavarāja and those who combined in confederation with the Magadharāja Rājahaṃsa defeated in a second encounter by Mālavarāja having Aṅgarāja entrapped but got released by his son Rājavāhana working in communion with the nine princes who ultimately joined him in Campā³², a fact pointedly corroborating the point that Siṅha Varmā the sovereign Lord of Aṅga was the next to kin ally of the Magadharāja to the throne of Mālava (the latter having Ujjayinī as its capital whom he ultimately in line with the other nine princes had ordered an independent role of subsidiary vassals to Rājavāhana, his son.

“ataḥ Puṣpapura rāḷye mānasāra reḷye ca rājavāhana mabhiṣicya Avaśiṣṭāni rāḷyāni navebhyaḥ Kumārebhyo yathoditam Sampradāya.”³³ As already observed by me in my earlier papers.

“nāsikyamadhyā Paritas’ Caturvarṇa Vibhūṣitā, astikā citpurī yasyām aṣṭavarṇā hvayāḥ nṛpāḥ³⁴” this verse of Daṇḍī should evidently refer to Campā (nāsikya madhyā purī) and not to Kāncī as held by jīvananda Vidyā Sāgars³⁵ in his Vyākhyā because the absolute anxiety displayed by Daṇḍī in his Daśakumāra carita for the security of the life and kingdom of Siṅhavarmā Aṅgarāja with whose help Magadharāja Rājahaṃsa and his son Rājavāhana managed to create a neutral spot a nepathya where to collect ultimately after individual victories against the ailing kings whose administration had all types of corrupt practices prevailing as such earning thereby the name of Romance of Roguery to the work DKC actually an effort on the part of Daṇḍī to ensure a unified administrative unit having supremacy of paramount sovereign.

Daṇḍī’s allusion to “Kāmandaka” in line with Kauṭilya³⁶ and Bāna’s borrowing of his first verse from Daṇḍī.³⁷

“Caturmukha Mukhāmbhoja Vanahaṅsa Vadhūrmama.
mānase ramatāṃ nityaṃ sarvaśuklā Sarasvatī”

occurring only in the Calcutta Edition but missing in Bombay edition followed by others such as P. V. Kane, Jaganātha Pāṭhaka, Sūryanārāyaṇa Chaudharī, E. B. Cowell and F. W. Thomas, and even Dr. V. S. Agravāla, prompts one to conclude the posteriority of Bāna to Daṇḍī who flourished in all probability after Kāmandaka and contemporaneously or before or even after Viṣṇuśarmā who wrote his Pañcatantra as a grand father of the donee of the Taṇḍīvāda grant which was issued from Piṣṭapūre of Ancient Kalinga (5th century A. D.)³⁸ as held by Dr. Sarat Candra Behera in Indian Historical Quarterly Volume XXXVIII 2-3, June-Sept. 1962, pp 160-167.

The fact of handing over the kingdom of Magadha and Mālava to his son by the Magadha overlord as per Daṇḍī's assertion in Daśakumāra carita the possibility of handing over the sole monarchy of Malaveto Siṃha Varmā (originally Aṅgarāja) as an ally and subsidiary confeduate, is not an impossibility. That is why in post Gupta panegyrics of Naravarman (Mandasor Praśash) we find one Siṃha Varmā, Son of Jaya Varmā and father of Naravarmā,³⁹ (and in Gangadhara Lekha of Viśva Varmā⁴⁰ dated Mālava Samvat 480 i. e. 423 A. D.) we find Viśvavarmā as the son of Naravarmā reigning as subsidiary vassals holding supremacy in their own territories (Jaya Varma narendrasya pautre devendra Vikrame Kṣitīṣe Siṃha Varman-ah Siṃhavikkrānt gāmini, satputre Śrīmahārāja nara Varmaṇi Pārthive” and śrīmān-abhūva naravarmma nṛpati Prakāśah-tasyātmajah- bhūvi Viśva-Varmmaā.

Obviously Naravarmā's time tallies with that of Candragupta II Vikramāditya of Gupta dynasty and that of Viśva Varmā with that of Kumāra Gupta I, the successor of Candra Gupta II in so far as Mehrauli Iron Pillar Inscription of Candra (Candra gupta II Vikramāditya)” is dated 413 A. D. and Bhilasad Pillar Inscription of Kumāra Gupta I is dated Gupta era 96 i. e. 415 A. D.⁴² Siṃha Varmā father of Naravarmā dating his Inscription as 404 A. D., obviously comes much earlier in the reign of Candragupta II whose Sanchi Pillar Inscription is dated Gupta Era 93 i.e. 412 A. D.⁴³, and Udaya Giri Guptā lekha is dated 82 Gupta era i. e. 401 A. D.) and Mathurā Pillar Inscription is dated Gupta era 61 i. e. 380 A. D.⁴⁴ Daṇḍī as the acquaintance of Siṃha Varmā Aṅgarāja holding sway over Mālava, by all means becomes a contemporary of Candra Gupta II or Kumāra Gupta and even Skandagupta whose Jūnāgaḍha Inscription is dated Gupta era 136 i. e. 455 A. D.)⁴⁵

and Indore Inscription is dated 146 i. e. 465 A. D.,⁴⁶ Kahaum Pillar Inscription is dated 460 A. D.⁴⁷ In any way Daᅇᅇi cannot be placed posterior to Bāᅇa and positively he can have referred to the days of Kumārgupta Bandhu Varmā, and even Yaśo-varman-Viᅇᅇuvardhana (532 A.D.) being their contemporary at the most and not at all posterior to them.

Hence “CampādhīpaCamū-Cara bhaᅇāᅇ” of Bāᅇa in Harᅇa Carita Ucchvāsa VI quoted above⁴⁸ can easily refer to Siᅇha Varmā of Daᅇᅇi's Daśakumāra Carita as the Aᅇgarāja who might have had the chance to combat some Cāmuᅇᅇīpati Puᅇkara whom his army-spies could have taken the opportunity to do away with while he was engaged in hunting of rhinoceroses apprehending he might have the knack to usurp Aᅇgas having Campā as their Capital. Regarding the name Puᅇkara referred to by Bāᅇa as the king of Cāmuᅇᅇī we can say for certain that Bāᅇa means by him a king in the annals of history quite closer to his epoch and not to one a son of Nakᅇatra, a father of Antarikᅇa⁴⁹ (bhavitā marudevo'tha Sunak-ᅇatro, the Puᅇkararᅇ” or one among the sons of Durvāᅇᅇi and Vᅇka⁵⁰” takᅇa puᅇkara'ᅇalāᅇᅇin durvāᅇᅇyām Vᅇkāᅇadhe” or one among the sons of Kᅇᅇᅇa⁵¹ “puᅇkaraᅇ veda bāᅇuᅇca śruta-devaᅇ Sunandanah” nor does he mean to refer to puᅇkara a younger brother of Nala⁵². We even cannot think of his allusion to Bharata's son named as Puᅇkara in Rāmāyaᅇa⁵³ -Raghuvamᅇa XV. 89⁵⁴.

“Bharatsyā tmajau vīrau takᅇaᅇ puskala eva ca” and
 “ᅇaᅇ takᅇa puskalau Putrou rājadhanyastadakhyaᅇᅇ.
 abhiᅇcyābhiᅇekahau rāmāntikamaᅇāᅇpunah.

Almost quite pertinently Bāᅇa has referred to all the incidents or accidents happened as such in the period ranging between the time of the sixteen Mahājanapadas down to the one closely anterior to his own times. Hence we shall have to bank upon some king of an age not very distantly removed from his own times. Gupta and post-Gupta period appears to be the most reasonable period when such an accident might have happened.

“Kāᅇmīraᅇ Puᅇkarākaᅇ”⁵⁵ of Viᅇākhadatta alleuding to Puᅇkarāᅇa as a king of Kāᅇmīra in the day of Candra Gupta Maurya and even earlier when Cāᅇakya contrived to bring Candragupta Maurya by counter posing the covins of Rāᅇᅇasa can hardly have any bearing for an identity of Puskara, Cāmuᅇᅇīpati. Caᅇᅇapura, Chayenpur, five miles to the west of Bhabua in the district of Shahbad in Bihar may tentatively be taken to be the ancient Cāmuᅇᅇī referred

to by Bāna because the famous battle described in the Caṇḍī between Kāli and the two kings Śumbha and Niś-umbha is said to have been fought in this place. Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa (chapter 85 Verses 41, 42, 43, 54) refers to the scene of battle as Himācala.⁵⁶ Vāmana Purāṇa (chapter 55) places it in Vindhyaācala. The name of Caṇḍa pura according to Nando Lal Dey⁵⁷ is derived from the name of one of the two brothers Caṇḍa and Muṇḍa who were the generals of the two kings.

The Caumukhi Mahādeva and Durgā in a temple at Muṇḍeśvarī are said to have been established by the other brother Muṇḍa. Muṇḍeśvarī is seven miles South west of Bhabua. The temple according to Dr. Bloch is very old, the carising being of the Gupta style. (Bloch's archaeological Report (1902). The temple bears a date which is equivalent to A. D. 635. Vāmana Purāṇa takes the two as generals of Mahiṣāsura who were killed by the goddess Bindubhāsinī on the Vindhya mountain.

"Caṇḍamuṇḍī mahāsthāne caṇḍinī Parameśvarī"⁵⁸ in the postscript of Śākta pāthas of Dr. D. C. Sircar quoting Devi Bhāgavata VII. 385.30 L.27 refers to Caṇḍī at Mahāsthāna, identified as modern area in the Bogra district of north Bengal by Dr. D. C. Sircar himself⁵⁹ being earlier Pundravardhana, now in East Pakistan (Bangladesh since 1971). D. C. Sircar also identifies Aṅga as comprising the present Bhāgalapura-Manghyr region of East Bihar having head quarters at Campā Bhāgalapura. Karūṣa he identifies with Shāhbad region of South West Bihar⁶⁰ while commenting as the topic "The Eight elephant forests" and refers to-

"Kaliṅgāṅga rajāḥśreṣṭhāḥ prācyas-Cedi Karūṣajāḥ"⁶¹

R. P. Kangle⁶¹ corrects it to "Kaliṅgā-riga gajāḥ śreṣṭhāḥ. in his note to English translation.

I. Ganapati Śāstrī's ed. p. 117 has the reading Kaliṅgāṅga gajāḥ śreṣṭhāḥ⁶². Kaliṅgāṅga deśod-bhavās gajāḥ.

This makes us take a point in view that Caṇḍamuṇḍī could be the original name of Cāmuṇḍī taken as such by Bāna or may be a scribal error like so many visible in Sanskrit manuscripts.

Sandhyākaranandī in his Rāma Carita⁶³ the Dvayāśraya Kāvya bearing the descriptions of Sītā and Vārendrī refers to Aṅga as bowing law before Vārendrī.

"Sukalāpāyita Kuntala ruci māvi lalāta Kāntimavandmadāṅgam.
adhārta karnātekṣeṇa līlā dhṛta madhya deśa tanimānamapi."

Vārendrī according to Dr. D. C. Sircar comprises of parts of North Bengal forming a portion of Gauḍa western and north western areas of Bengal the original home of Kullūka bhāṭṭa the commentator of Manu Smṛti.

Gauḍe nandana Vāsināmni Sujanāir Vandye Varendryām Kule.

Śrīmadbhāṭṭa divākarasya tanayoh kullūka bhāṭṭo 'bhavat.

Kāśyāmuttare vāhijalnu tanayā tīre Samam Paṇḍitaiḥ

teṇeyam Kriyate hitāya viduṣām manvartha muktāvāḥ".⁶⁵

The notes to Rāma Carita III-24 add a colophon.

"Vārendrī" before which the Aṅga country remained always bent low, Aṅga, where Rāmapāla's maternal relatives Maḥaṇa and others ruled always remained dominated by Vārendrī.⁶⁶

Rāmapāla the king of Pālas in whose praise Rāmacarita has been written reigned in second half of eleventh and first quarter of 12th century A. D.⁶⁷ Maḥaṇa or Mathana the maternal relative of Rāmapāla reigning at Aṅga can give us a cue to the point that in centuries fifth and sixth A. D. Sinha Varmā could have been the ruling king. And as per contention of Dr. D. C. Sircar Aṅga comprised of present Bhāgalapura Monghyr regions of East Bihar having head quarter at Campā near Bhāgalapura and Karūṣa (Kāruśa or Karūśa) was identical with Shahbad regions of South West Bihar the identity of Cāmundī with Caṇḍamundī alias Caṇḍapura or Chayenpur five miles to the West of Bhabua, in the district of Shahbad in Bihar may be a reality having puṣkara as a subsidiary king addicted to hunting of Rhinoceroses in Assam Bihar border areas was killed by the spies of the armies of king of Campā Sinha Varmā.

Caṇḍiman⁶⁸ or Caṇḍimau, a village situated on the old road from Silao to Ciriyeḥ in Bihar sub division of the Patna district at a distance of about three miles from the Giriyaḥ police station having a number of fine Buddhist images" may be the exact identification of Cāmundī. But Caṇḍamundī appears to be a better point from the linguistic corruption point of view of Process of Hapology which is understood as such.

NOTES

1. Paper presented to A.I.O.C. Session Forty One Jagannātha Puri University Puri (Orissa) 752 001.
2. Retired Principal M. R. Govt. College Fazilka HIG Block 61-B-3, Sector-VI Parwanoo - 173 220.
3. *Mṛgayā Saktasyāca Mathnato Gaṇḍakān Uddāṇḍa naḍvala nala nilināsoa Campādhīpa Camū-Carabhatāḥ Cāmundī pateḥ ācemuḥ prānān puṣkarasya*. Harṣa Carit VI. p. 696 LL 1-3 Calcutta edition edited by Āśuṭoṣa and Nitya-bodha, two sons of Bīvānanda Vidyā Sāgar along with their commentary *AMALĀ* IVth ed. 1939 (ONVSE) Printed at Vācaspatya Press Calcutta. P.V. Kane's ed. P51 LL 7/9 Motilal Banarsi Dass Bungalow Road, Jawahar Nagar, Delhi 110007. Second edition 1965 (PVKE).
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4. The Harṣacarita (HC) of Bāṇa p 194 LL 1-3 Motilal Banarsi Dass Bungalow Road Jawahar Nagar, Delhi 110007. 1961 By arrangement with Royal Asiatic Society of London published by Sundar Lal Jain and printed by Shanti Lal Jain at Jainendara Press.
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