The So-called 'Jaunpur Stone Inscription of Īśvaravarman'*

PREAMBLE

Few scholars can claim mastery of such a wide range of different fields within the discipline of Indology as Prof Dr Oskar von Hinüber. One of the branches of learning that owes a great deal to his studies is Indian epigraphy. My contribution here is meant as a humble tribute to Oskar and his work.

INTRODUCTION

We possess two inscriptions that undisputably belong to that branch of the Maukhari family which eventually turned the ancient Kānyakubja (Kanauj) into their new capital, viz. the well-known *Haraha Stone Inscription of Īśānavarman* of Vikrama Samvat 611 (AD 554), in which Īśānavarman's son Sūryavarman records his renovation of a dilapidated Śiva temple, and an inscription found in Jaunpur.¹ The *Jaunpur Inscription* is merely 'a fragment of a very much larger inscription'.² It deserves a detailed examination.

It is estimated that only about one-third of the width of the inscribed stone has been preserved (Plate 77), and it is unknown how many lines would have been below the last line extant. Fleet remarks that 'the probability is [...] that the larger number (seventy-two) has been lost at the beginning of this (i.e. first) line, and in proportion all the way down'.³ The other option considered by Fleet is that only thirty-eight syllables are missing at the beginning of each line. This option is invalidated by the Śārdūlavikrīḍita verse in line 3, of which the end coincides with the right side of the stone. From this and the preceding incomplete Mālinī verse of line 2 it can be deduced that altogether 69 syllables have been lost in line 3. This would bring the total number of *akṣaras* in line 3

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1 For the *Haraha Inscription of the Reign of Īśānavarman, Year [VS] 611* see: Śāstri 1917–18; Sircar SI I, 385–389; Thaplyal 1985, 141–146. For the *Jaunpur Stone Inscription of Īśvaravarman* see: J.F. Fleet in CII III (1888), 228–230; Thaplyal 1985, 139–40.

2 CII III (1888), 228.

3 CII III (1888), 229 n. 2.

to 91.⁴ Since the whole inscription consists of verses, it should be possible to estimate how many *akṣaras* have been lost in each line, notwithstanding Fleet's admittance that he has 'tried several ways of arranging the verses, [...], but without being able to satisfy myself'.⁵ It appears that the number of *akṣaras* per line varied between 91 and 99.

The inscription was published again in Thaplyal 1985, but he too refrained from a restoration of the distribution of verses. Earlier Sircar had reconstructed three verses along the lines we propose to follow here for the inscription as a whole.⁶

Figure 10
The Maukharis of Kanauj

4 That a line could contain slightly more syllables than 91 emerges from 'scroll-work to fill up the line' that follows the punctuation mark that concludes the Śārdūlavikrīḍita verse (CII III (1888), 229 n. 7).

5 CII III (1888), 229 n. 2.

6 Sircar 1964, 127–130.

The inscription had been ascribed to Īśvaravarman, on account of the fact that he is the only king mentioned by name in the fragment. When we collate our reconstruction with the *Haraha Inscription*, it appears that a similar pattern underlies both *praśastis* and that it is highly unlikely that Īśvaravarman was the last king mentioned, a conclusion also reached by Sircar 1964, though on other grounds.⁷ Both *praśastis*, however, are independent compositions and it is impossible to say which one of them is the older, although the *Haraha Inscription* seems to be slightly more ornate, having e.g. two *maṅgala* verses (the second one apparently drawing inspiration from the Kṣemeśvara Temple, the object of the inscription) against one in the *Jaunpur Inscription*. In the underlying pattern two verses are reserved for Harivarman and Ādityavarman in both inscriptions; Īśvaravarman has three verses in the *Haraha Inscription* and three or two in the Jaunpur one, depending on whether one assigns verse 8 to him or to his son Īśānavarman. The latter possibility is the most likely, in view of the explicit mention of the 'lion throne', which we also encounter in the *Haraha Inscription* verse 13. In the *Haraha Inscription* Īśānavarman has five verses dedicated solely to him, whereas in the sixth his son Sūryavarman is introduced. The pattern we conjecture in the *Jaunpur Inscription* gives to Īśānavarman at least five verses, while it remains unclear whether a son is introduced in verses 12 or 13. The Jaunpur inscription may therefore have belonged to either Īśānavarman or to one of his successors.

An edition of the thus reconstructed text of the inscription is presented below, which is followed by my translation. In the footnotes to this translation the parallel verses of the *Haraha Inscription* are given together with my translation thereof.

THE JAUNPUR STONE INSCRIPTION

The reconstruction follows basically the text of Fleet with some minor adaptations, using, for instance, standard orthography. The bold figures between square brackets are the line numbers. Angular brackets (in edition and translation) are used to indicate that the reading is conjectured. Commas indicate the end of uneven pādas. The verse numbering is mine.

7 Sircar 1964, 129 draws this conclusion from verse 11, in which the king's victory over the Andhras is celebrated. This victory was obtained by Īśānavarman, as *Haraha Inscription* verse 13 tells us (see below, n. 26 on p. 388).

--- ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ --- ∪ --- ∪ --- ,
 --- ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ --- ∪ --- ∪ --- |
 --- ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ --- ∪ --- karmaṇā,
 yājñam dh(ū)mavitānameghanivahaḥ puṇyam vitene divi || 4 ||¹¹

[4] --- ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ --- ∪ --- ∪ --- ,
 --- ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ --- ∪ --- ∪ --- |
 --- ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ --- ∪ --- ∪ --- ,
 --- ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ °lakasrastālakāgram kulaiḥ || 5 ||¹²

tasya dikṣu ⟨v⟩itatāmalakīrter, ātmajo nṛpatir ĪŚVARAVARMĀ |
 [5] --- ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ --- ∪ --- ∪ --- ∪ ∪ ∪ --- || 6 ||¹³

--- ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ --- ∪ --- ∪ --- ,
 --- ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ --- ∪ --- ∪ --- |
 --- ∪ ⟨kr⟩pānurāgaśamitakrūrāga⟨mo⟩padravair,
 lokānandakarair guṇair guṇavatām ko nāma [6]--- ∪ --- || 7 ||¹⁴

--- ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ --- ∪ --- ∪ --- ,
 --- ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ --- ∪ --- ∪ --- |
 --- ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ --- ∪ --- ∪ --- ,
 --- ∪ ⟨a⟩dhiṣṭhitam kṣitibhujām siṃhena siṃhāsanam || 8 ||¹⁵

dhārāmārgavinirgatāgnikaṇikā [7]--- ∪ --- ∪ --- ,
 --- ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ --- ∪ --- ∪ --- |
 --- ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ --- ∪ --- ∪ --- ,
 --- ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ --- ∪ --- ∪ --- dam || 9 ||¹⁶

vindhyādreḥ pratirandhram andhrapatinā śaṃkāpareṇāsitaṃ,
 yāto raivatakācalaṃ [8] ∪ ∪ ∪ --- ∪ --- ∪ --- |
 --- ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ --- ∪ --- ∪ --- ,
 --- ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ --- ∪ --- ∪ --- || 10 ||¹⁷

--- ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ sām vāraṇānām ghaṭāsu,
 vyāpteṣūtkhātakhadḡadyutikhacitabhujēṣv andhrasenābhateṣu |
 [9] --- ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ --- ∪ --- ∪ --- ,
 --- ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ ∪ --- ∪ --- ∪ --- || 11 ||¹⁸

11 Metre: Śārdūlavikrīḍita.

12 Metre: Śārdūlavikrīḍita.

13 Metre: Svāgatā.

14 Metre: Śārdūlavikrīḍita.

15 Metre: Śārdūlavikrīḍita.

16 Metre: Śārdūlavikrīḍita.

17 Metre: Śārdūlavikrīḍita.

18 Metre: Śārdūlavikrīḍita.

- - - - - ,
 - - - - - raprapātasalilaiḥ snātaṃ śīlāgandhibhiḥ |
 prāleyādribhuvaś ca śītapayasasḥ prakṣā- [10] <litam>- - - ,
 - - - - - || 12 ||¹⁹
 - - - - - ,
 - - - - - |
 - - - - - reṇubhir girisaritpūrormibhaṅgākulair,
 utsarpadbhir anuprage 'pi divaso yasyāp- [11] - - - || 13 ||²⁰
 ... ḥ ya ... || 14 ||
 ...

Translation and annotation

... (1)²¹

[*Harivarman*]

<Harivarman> who by innate martial power (*kṣātra*), fully accomplished, <wielded> the bow of the Self-born (?) with his own two arms, ...

19 Metre: Śārdūlavikrīḍita.

20 Metre: Śārdūlavikrīḍita.

21 The first two *maṅgala* verses of the *Haraha Inscription* run (EI XIV, 115 vv. 1–2):

lokāviṣkṛtisaṃkṣayaasthikṛtāṃ yaḥ kāraṇaṃ vedhasaṃ,
dhvastadhvāntacayāḥ parāstarajaso dhyāyanti yaṃ yoginaḥ |
yasyārdhasthītayoṣito 'pi hṛdaye nāsthāyi cetobhuvā,
bhūtātma tripurāntakaḥ sa jayati śreyasprasūtir bhuvaḥ || 1 ||
āśoṇāṃ phaṇiṇaḥ phaṇopalarucā saimḥiṃ vasānaṃ tvacāṃ,
śubhrāṃ locanajanmanā kapiśayad bhāsā kapālāvalīm |
tanvīm dhvāntanudaṃ mṛgākṛtibhrto bibhrat kalāṃ maulinā,
diśyād andhakavidviṣaḥ sphuradahi stheyasḥ padaṃ vo vapuḥ || 2 ||

He who is the cause of the acting deities that effect the manifestation, destruction and preservation of the world; the one on whom yogis, for whom the mass of darkness (i.e. *tamas*) has been destroyed and who have overcome their passions (*rajas*), meditate; the one in whose heart passion has no place, although a woman occupies half (his body); he, the soul of (all) living beings, the destroyer of the Triple City, the fountainhead of bliss on earth, is victorious. (1)

MAY that figure of Andhaka's Foe, on whose body snakes glimmer, offer you a stable abode—a figure who wears a lion skin that is slightly crimsoned by the light of the jewel in the hood of the serpent that is his sacred thread, and who reddens the white line of skulls that is the chaplet by the radiance from his third eye, and who bears on his crest the slender, darkness dispelling digit of the moon. (2)

The verse describing the mythic descent of the Maukharis is found in the *Haraha Inscription* verse 3:

sutaśataṃ lebhe nṛpo 'śvapatir vaivasvatād yad guṇoditam |
tatprasūtā duritavṛttirudho mukharāḥ kṣitīśaḥ kṣatārayaḥ || 3 ||

THE MUKHARA kings, who destroyed their enemies and stopped evil doing, descended from that eminent century of sons which king Aśvapati obtained from Vaivasvata. (3)

the mighty... (2)²²

... ⟨Who was born⟩ in the rising dynasty of the MUKHARA kings; the strength of whose bow was fully revealed by his manliness... (3)²³

[Ādityavarman]

... due to ⟨his⟩ activity ... a mass of clouds, being the canopy of smoke (that rose from his sacrificial fires), spread his sacrificial merit unto heaven. (4)²⁴

... the tip ⟨of his⟩ curls falling ... profusely. (5)

[Īśvaravarman]

The son of this (king), whose spotless fame spread worldwide, was ĪŚVARA-VARMAN ... (6)

... who, indeed, ... of the virtuous people ⟨would equal him in⟩ virtues, (virtues) which brought happiness into the world and alleviated the distress caused by the arrival of cruel (people) through compassion and love? (7)²⁵

22 For the verses 2 and 3 compare the *Haraha Inscription* verse 4:

*teṣv ādau harivarmaṇo 'vanibhujo bhūtir bhuvo bhūṭaye,
ruddhāśeṣadigantarālayaśasā ruṇārīsampattviṣā |
saṃgrāme hutabhukprabhākapiṣitaṃ vaktraṃ samikṣyāribhūr,
yo bhūteḥ praṇatas tataś ca bhuvane jvālāmukhākhyāṃ gataḥ || 4 ||*

AMONG them (there arose) at the beginning, for the well-being of the world, a ruler of the earth, the (powerful) being (called) Harivarman, (a powerful being) measured by his fame, by which all quarters of space were besieged, and his brilliance, which destroyed the happiness of his foes; for whom the enemies bowed in fear, when they saw his face at the battlefield, as this was aglow with the lustre of (sacrificial) fire, and who for that reason obtained the name Jvālāmukha (Flame-face) on earth. (4)

23 Cf. *Kirātārjunīya* 13.14: *cāpanāma prathamam pauraśacinam*.

24 Cf. the *Haraha Inscription* verse 7:

*hutabhujī makham adhyāsaṅgini dhvāntalīlam,
viyati pavanañjanmabhrāntivikṣepabhūyaḥ |
mukharayati samantād utpatad dhūmajālam,
śikhikulam urumeghāśaṅki yasya prasaktam || 7 ||*

WHEN his (Ādityavarman's) fire was kindled for sacrifice, the thick smoke, black as the night, rising up to the sky on all sides and swelling through its whirling and tossing in the wind, continuously made the peacocks cry (*mukharayati*), since they mistook it for a large rain-cloud. (7)

25 Cf. the *Haraha Inscription* verse 8:

*tenāpīśvaravarmaṇaḥ kṣitipateḥ kṣatraprabhāvāptaye,
janmākāri kṛtātmanaḥ kratugaṇeṣv āhūtavṛtradviṣaḥ |
yasyotkhātakaliśvabhāvacaritasya cāramārgaṃ nṛpā,
yatnenāpi yayātītulayaśaso nānye 'nugantum kṣamāḥ || 8 ||*

BY HIM (i.e. Ādityavarman) was begotten, destined to gain the power of nobility, the lord of the earth Īśvaravarman, whose soul was well-disciplined and who invoked the Enemy of Vṛtra (i.e. Indra) in many sacrifices; other kings, no matter how they tried, were unable to match his way of conduct, he whose deeds eradicated the very nature of the Kali (Age) and who equalled Yayāti in fame. (8)

[*Īśānavarman*]

... by (whom), lion to (other) kings, the lion throne was ascended ... (8)²⁶

Spark(s) of fire from the course of the rim (of the wheels) ... (9)²⁷

Having made cavity after cavity of the Vindhya mountains his retreat, the Lord of Andhra, seized by fear, (finally) fled to Mount Raivataka ... (10)²⁸

When the soldiers of the army of Andhra lay scattered (all over the battlefield) with their arms, pronounced by the glow of the swords (they still held), torn off, (and ?) the troops of elephants (were destroyed)... (11)

... bathed by the waters cascading from ... , scenting of camphor, and (washed by streams) of cool water that springs from the snow mountain, ... (12)²⁹

... the day of whom, even at the following dawn (?), ... by ... of which the pollen, filled with the crested waves of swollen mountain streams, rising up, ... (13)

CONCLUSION

From the collation of the Jaunpur fragment and the *Haraha Inscription* it becomes clear that both Maukhari inscriptions follow a similar tradition. This tradition assigned to Harivarman great military prowess, to Ādityavarman piety,

26 For the verses 8 to 11 compare the *Haraha Inscription* verse 13:

*jītvāndhrādhīpatiṃ sahasraganītatredhākṣaradvāraṇaṃ,
vyāvalgannīyutātisaṃkhyaturagān bhaiktvā raṇe sūlikān |
kṛtvā cāyatim(o) citasthalabhuvō gaṇḍān samudrāśrayān,
adhyāśiṣṭa nataḥṣītiśacaraṇaḥ sīṃhāsanaṃ yo jīti || 13 ||*

[*ĪŚĀNAVARMAN*] is victorious, he who has ascended the lion throne, his feet bowed to by the rulers of the earth, after having vanquished the sovereign of Andhra of whom the elephants, counted by the thousands, were passing triple fluid (scil., temple-must secretion, urine and faeces, due to excitement), after having routed in battle the Sūlikas and their galloping arrays of innumerable horses, and after having made the Gaṇḍas, driven from their territory by (his) might, take refuge at the ocean. (13)

27 Sircar 1964, 130 is right when he notes that, ‘The word *dhārā* commonly means *khaḍgāder nīṣitamukham* (*Medinīkoṣa*), so that the passage *dhārāmārgavinirgatāgnikaṇīkā* means “the sparks issuing from the passage of the [hero’s] sword” and has nothing to do with the city of Dhārā.’ However, the use of the word *mārga* in this interpretation remains problematic. For *dhārā* in the sense of ‘rim of an (iron) wheel’ see *Raghuvamśa* 13.15.

28 Sircar 1964, 128 conjectures that it was an unknown enemy, other than the Lord of Andhra, who fled to the Raivataka hill. The hill has not satisfactorily been identified. To go by its name it may have been a hill along the Revā (= Narmadā) River. A hill of this name is mentioned in the *Junāgaḍh Rock Inscription of Skandagupta*. Fleet identifies this Raivataka with the hill ‘opposite to Ūrjayat or Gīrnār’ in Kathiawar, Gujarat (CII III (1888), 64 n. 1).

29 This seems to refer to an expedition to the northwest, possibly corresponding with the Sūlikas mentioned in the *Haraha Inscription* (see above, n. 26 on p. 388).

to Īśvaravarman virtuousness, and to Īśānavarman emperorship. The latter was credited with the title Mahārājādhirāja in the seals of his successors and in the inscriptions he is said to be seated on the lion throne. His son Sūryavarman was a young man in Vikrama Saṃvat 611 (=AD 554), the date of the *Haraha Inscription*. Īśānavarman's exploits may therefore have taken place in the second quarter of the 6th century. Whether or not the heroic deeds of one of Īśānavarman's descendants were described in the missing part of the inscription will forever remain unknown.

By placing the two Maukhari inscriptions side by side, we have won a more secure basis from which the individual achievements of each of the Maukhari kings and the Maukhari history as such can be studied. The results of this study are found in Bakker 2014, *The World of the Skandapurāṇa*. The sixth century is generally considered as a 'dark age' and for that reason every piece of evidence should be treasured. It is hoped that the present preliminary study of the source material will contribute to the historiography of the Maukharis in general and may be of use to scholars who, like the present author, are fascinated by an age that started with the fall of a great empire and culminated in the magnificent rule of Harṣavardhana.