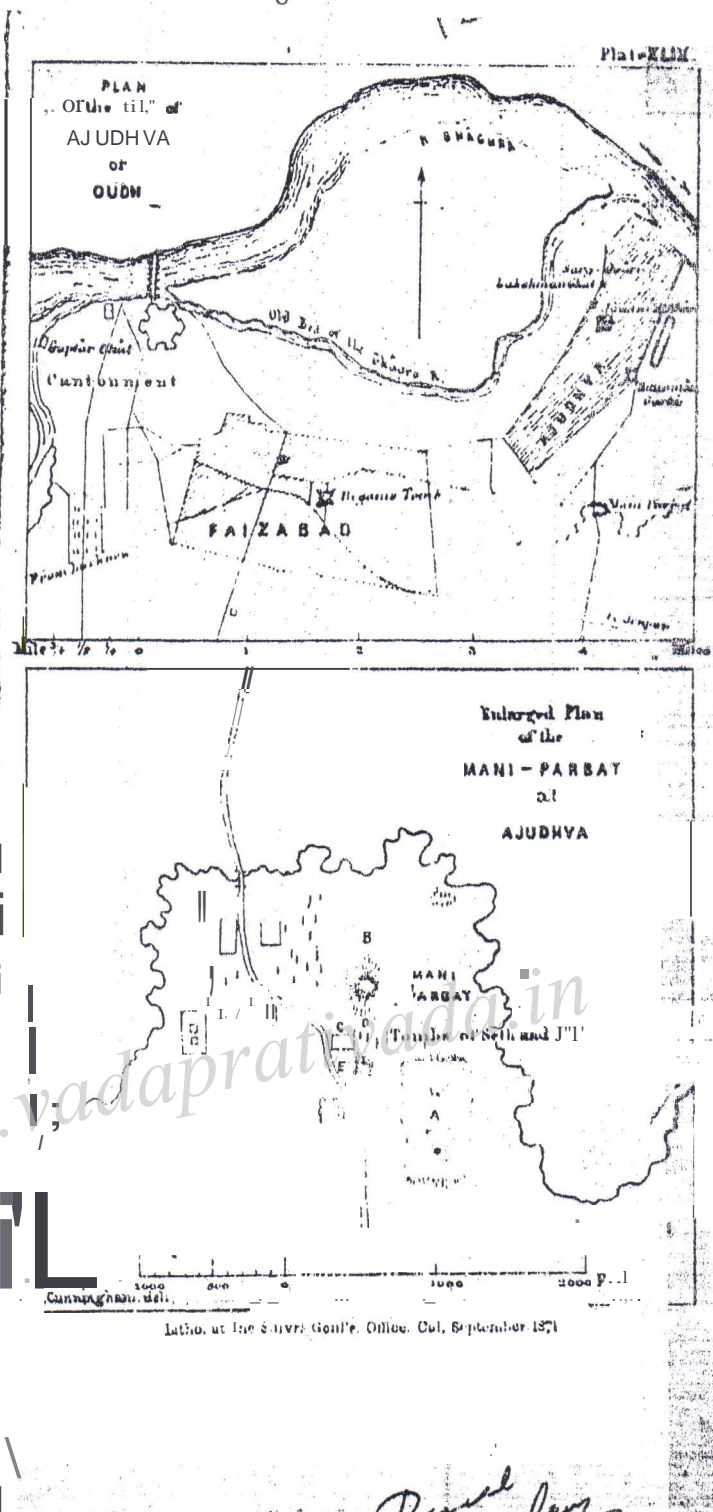


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The identity of *Sāketa* and *Ayodhya* has, I believe, always been admitted; but I am not aware that any proof has yet been offered to establish the point. Csoma-de-koros, in speaking of the place, merely says "*Saketana* or *Ayodhya*," and n. n. Wilson, in his Sanskrit Dictionary, calls *Sāketa* "the city Ayodhya." But the question would appear to be set at rest by several passages of the *Rāmāyana* and *Raghuvansa*, in which *Sāketanagara* is distinctly called the capital of Raja *Dusaratha* and his sons. But the following verso of the *Rāmāyana*, which was pointed out to me by a Brahman of Lucknow, will be sufficient to establish the identity. *Aswajita*, father of *Kaikeyi*, offers to give his daughter to *Dasaratha*, Raja of *Sāketanagara* :—

*Sāketam nagaram Raja nāma Dasaratho bali,  
Tāmāi dayā mayā Kanyā Kaikeyi nāma to janā.*

The ancient city of *Ayodhya* or *Sāketa* is described in the *Rāmāyana* as situated on the bank of the *Sarayu* or *Sarju* River. It is said to have been 12 *yojans*, or nearly 100 miles in circumference, for which we should probably read 12 *kos*, or 24 miles—an extent which the old city, with all its gardens, might once possibly have covered. The distance from the *Guptār Ghāt* on the west, to the *Rām Ghāt* on the east, is just 6 miles in a direct line: and if we suppose that the city with its suburbs and gardens formerly occupied the whole intervening space to a depth of two miles, its circuit would have agreed exactly with the smaller measurement of 12 *kos*. At the present day the people point to *Rām Ghāt* and *Guptār Ghāt* as the eastern and western boundaries of the old city, and the southern boundary they extend to *Bharat-Kund* near *Bhādarsā*, a distance of 6 *kos*. But as these limits include all the places of pilgrimage, it would seem that the people consider them to have been formerly inside the city, which was certainly not the case. In the *Ain Akbari*, the old city is said to have measured 148 *kos* in length by 86 *kos* in breadth, or in other words it covered the whole of the Province of Oudh to the south of the *Ghaghra* River.\* The origin of the larger number is obvious. The 12 *yojans* of the *Rāmāyana*, which are equal to 48 *kos*, being considered too small for the great city of Rama, the Brahmins simply added 100 *kos* to make the size tally with

\* Gladwin's translation, II., 32.



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their own extravagant notions. The present City of Ajudhya, which is confined to the north-east corner of the old site, is just two miles in length by about three quarters of a mile in breadth; but not one-half of this extent is occupied by buildings, and the whole place wears a look of decay. There are no high mounds of ruins, covered with broken statues and sculptured pillars, such as mark the sites of other ancient cities, but only a low irregular mass of rubbish heaps, from which all the bricks have been excavated for the houses of the neighbouring city of Faizabad. This Muhammadan city, which is two miles and a-half in length, by one mile in breadth, is built chiefly of materials extracted from the ruins of Ajudhya. The two cities together occupy an area of nearly six square miles, or just about one-half of the probable size of the ancient Capital of Rāma. In Faizabad the only building of any consequence is the stuccoed brick-tomb of the old Bhao Begam, whose story was dragged before the public during the famous trial of Warren Hastings. Faizabad was the capital of the first Nawabs of Oudh. But it was deserted by Asaf-ud-daulah in A. D. 1775.

According to the Jāyama, 1117 (il.) Of Ayodhya was founded by Manu, the progenitor of all mankind. At the time of Dasaratha, the father of Rāma, it was fortified with (with) mul gates, and surrounded by a deep ditch. No traces of these works now remain, nor is it likely, indeed, that any portion of the old city should still exist, as the Ayodhya of Rāma is said to have been destroyed after the death of Vrihadbala in the great war about B. C. 1426, after which it lay deserted until the time of Vikramāditya. According to popular tradition this Vikramāditya was the famous Śākāri Prince of Ujain, but as the Hindus of the present day attribute the acts of all Vikramas to this one only, their opinion on the subject is utterly worthless. We learn, however, from Hsueh Tsang that a powerful Prince of this name was reigning in the neighbouring city of Srāvastī, just one hundred years after Kinnishka, or close to 78 A. D. which was the initial year of the Śāke era of Śālivāhana. As this Vikramāditya is represented as hostile to the Buddhists, he must have been a zealous Brahminist, and to him therefore I would ascribe the rebuilding of the Ajudhya and the restoration of the holy places referring to the history of Rāma. Tradition says that when Vikramāditya came to Ayodhya, he

"...found it utterly desolate and overgrown with *jungal*, but he was able to discover all the famous spots of *Rāma's* history by measurements made from *Lakshman Ghāt* on the *Sarju*, according to the statements of ancient records. He is said to have erected 360 temples, on as many different spots, sacred to *Rāma*, and *Sītā* his wife, to his brothers *Lakshmana*, *Bharata*, and *Satrughna*, and to the monkey god *Hanumāna*. The number of 360 is also connected with *Sālvāhana*, as his clansman the *Bois Rajputs* assert that he had 360 wives,

There are several very holy Brahmanical temples about *Ajudhya*, but they are all of modern date, and without any architectural pretensions whatever. But there can be no doubt that most of them occupy the sites of more ancient temples that were destroyed by the Muslims. Thus *Rāmkot*, or *Hanumān Garhi*, on the east side of the city, is a small walled fort surrounding a modern temple on the top of an ancient mound. The name *Rāmkot* is certainly old, as it is connected with the traditions of the *Mani Parbat*, which will be hereafter mentioned; but the temple of *Hanumān* is not older than the time of *Aurangzib*. *Rām Ghāt*, at the north-east corner of the city, is said to be the spot where *Rāma* bathed, and *Sargadwāri* or *Swargadwāri*, the "Gate of Paradise." On the north-west is believed to be the place where his body was burned. Within a few years ago there was still standing a very holy *Banyan tree* called *Asok Bat*, or the "Griefless Banyan," a name which was probably connected with that of *Swargadwāri*, in the belief that people who died or were burned at this spot were at once relieved from the necessity of future births. Close by is the *Lakshman Ghāt*, where his brother *Lakshman* bathed, and about one-quarter of a mile distant, in the very heart of the city, stands a small *Asthān* or "Birth-place temple" of *Rāma*. Almost due west, an upwards of five miles distant, is the *Guptār Ghāt*, with its group of modern white-washed temples. This is the place where *Lakshman* is said to have disappeared, and hence its name of *Guptār* from *Gupla*, which means "hidden or concealed." Some say that it was *Rāma* who disappeared at this place, but this is at variance with the story of his cremation at *Swargadwāri*.

The only remains at *Ajudhya* that appear to be of any antiquity, are three earthen mounds to the south of the city, and about a quarter of a mile distant. These are called



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*Mani-Parbat, Kuber-Parbat, and Sugrib-Parbat.*\* The first, which is nearest to the city, is an artificial mound, 65 feet in height, covered with broken bricks and blocks of *kaukar*. The old bricks are cloven inches square and three inches thick. At 46 feet above the ground all the west side, there are the remains of a curved wall faced with *kaukar* blocks. This mass at this point is about 40 feet thick, and this was probably somewhat less than the size of the building which once crowned this lofty mound. According to the Brahmans the *Mani-Parbat* is one of the hills which the moukoyas made use of when assisting Itāma. It was accidentally dropped here by Sugriva, the monkey-king of *Kishkindhya*.<sup>1111</sup> The common POOHs, who know nothing of this story, say that the mound was formed by the labourers shaking their baskets on this spot every evening on their return home from the building of Ramkot. It is therefore best known by the name of *Jhova-Jhār* or *Ora Jhār*, both of which mean "basket-shalings." A similar story is told of the large mounds near Barāras, Nimsir, and other places.

Five hundred feet due south from the large mound stands the second mound called *Kuber-Purta*, which is only 28 feet in height. The surface is an irregular heap of brick rubbish, with numerous holes made by the people in digging for bricks, which are of large size, 11 inches by 7½ by 2. It is crowned by two old tamarind trees, and is covered with *jungal*. Close by on the south-west there is a small tank, called *Ganes-Kund* by the Hindus, and *Musen Kund* or *Imām Telao* by the Muslims, because their *Tdizus* are annually deposited in it. Still nearer on the south-east there is a large oblong mound called *Sugrib-Parbat*, which is no more than 8 or 10 feet above the ground level. It is divided into two distinct portions; that to the north being upwards of 300 feet square at top, and the other to the south upwards of 200 feet. In the centre of the larger enclosure there is a ruined mound containing bricks 8½ inches square, and in the centre of the smaller mound there is a well.

Between the *Mani* and *Kuber* mounds there is a small Muhammadian enclosure, 64 feet long from east to west and 47 feet broad, containing two brick tombs, which are attributed to *Sis Paighambar* and *Ayub Paighambar*, or the "prophets Seth and Job." The

\* See Plate No. XLIX, for a map of the ruins of Ajudhya.

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first is 17 feet long and the other 12 feet. These tombs are mentioned by Abu! Fasl, who says—"Near this city are two sepulchral monuments, one seven and the other six cubits in length. The vulgar pretend that they are the tombs of Seth and Job, and they relate wonderful stories of them." This account shows that since the time of Akbar, the tomb of Seth must have increased in length from 7 cubits, or 10½ feet, to 17 feet through the frequent repairs of pious Muslims.

The mounds are surrounded by Muslim tombs, and as it is the Muhammadan practice to bury the dead along the sides of the high roads close to their cities, I infer that the road which now runs close to the westward of the mounds, is one of the ancient high ways of the district. This is confirmed by the existence of an old masonry bridge of three arches over the *Tilahi nala*, to the north-west of the Mani-Parbat, as well as by the direction of the road itself, which leads from the south-end of the city straight to the Bharat-kund, and onwards to Sultanpur or *Kusapura*, and Allahabado: *Prayaga*. I notice this road thus minutely, because the identifications which I am about to propose are based partly on its position and direction, as well as on the general agreement of the existing remains with the holy places described by the Chinese pilgrims.

According to Fa Hien the place where Buddha planted the holy trees was to the east of the road, on issuing from the town by the southern gate. Hsuan Tsang's account agrees with this exactly in placing the "extraordinary tree" to the south of the capital and to the left of the route. This tree was the celebrated "tooth brush," or twig used in cleaning the teeth, which having been cast away by Buddha, took root and grew to between 6 and 7 feet in height. Now, it will be observed that the ruined mounds that still exist, as well as the tombs of Seth and Job, are to the south of the city and to the east or left of the road. The position, therefore, is unmistakably the same as that described by the Chinese pilgrims, and as the actual state of the ruins agrees well with the details given by Hsuan Tsang, I think that there can be no reasonable doubt of their identity.

Hsuan Tsang describes the city of *Uttara* as being 16 li, or 2½ miles in circuit. In his time, therefore, the capital of

\* Chinese name of the city, *Uttara*, li, 22



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Nāma was much more than half of its present size, although it probably continued greater population, not above half of the present town is inhabited. III; old city then possessed no less than twenty monasteries with three thousand monks and about fifty Brahmanical temples, with a very large Brahmanical population. From this account we learn that so early as the seventh century more than three hundred of the original temples of Vikramāditya had already disappeared, and we may therefore reasonably infer that the city had been rapidly declining for some time previous to the Buddhist monuments, however, would appear to have been in good order, and the monks were just as numerous as in the eminently Buddhist city of Banāras.

The first monument described by Hsien T'sang is a great monastery without name, but as it was the only notable monastery, it was most probably either the *Kūlakārāma* of Sāketa, or the *Purvārāma*, both of which are mentioned in the Ceylonese *Mahāvamsa*. The monks were of the school of the *Samattiyas*, and their monastery was famous for having produced three of the most eminent Buddhist controversialists. This monastery I would identify with the *Sugrib Parbat* which is nearly described as being about 500 foot long by 300 feet. The great size and rectangular form of this ruin are sufficient to show that it must have been a monastery, but this is placed beyond doubt by the existence of an interior wall and by the remains of cloistered rooms forming the four sides of the enclosure. Its position to the south of the city, and to the east or left of the road, has already been specially noticed as agreeing with the recorded position of the monastery.

Beside the monastery there was a *Stupa* of Asoka, 200 feet in height, built on the spot where Buddha preached the law during his six years' residence at Sāketa. This monument I would identify with the *Mani-Parbat*, which is still 65 feet in height, and which with its masonry facing must once have been at least as high again, and with the usual lofty pinnacle of metal may easily have reached a height of 200 feet. Hsien T'sang ascribes the erection of this monument to Asoka, and I see no reason to question the accuracy of his statement, as the mixed structure of half earth and half masonry must undoubtedly be very ancient. The earliest *Stupas*, or topes, were simple earthen mounds or barrows,



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similar to those that still exist in England, ... There are many of these barrows still standing at *Lauriya-Navandgarh* to the north of Bettiya, but this is the only place where I have yet seen them. They are undoubtedly the most ancient monuments of the Indian population, and I firmly believe that even the very latest of them cannot be assigned to a later date than the fifth century before Christ. I base this belief on the known fact that all the monuments of Asoka's age, whether described by Hwen Thsang, or actually opened by myself near Bhilsa, are either of stone or brick. The earthen barrows are therefore of an earlier age; but such as are Buddhist cannot possibly be earlier than the beginning of the fifth century before Christ. In the case of the *Mani-Parbat* at Ajudhya I infer, that the earthen barrow, or lower portion, may belong to the earlier ages of Buddhism, and that the masonry or upper portion was added by Asoka. At the foot of the mound I picked up a broken brick with the letter *eh*, of the oldest form, stamped upon it; but as this is almost certainly of later date than Asoka, it most probably did not belong to the *Mani-Parbat* building.

Hwen Thsang next describes the sites of the tooth-brush tree and of the monument where the four previous Buddhas used to sit and to take exercise, as being close to the great *Stupa*. These places I would identify with the court-yard containing the tombs of Seth and Job, which touches the south side of the *Mani-Parbat*. The two tombs I take to be the remains of the seats of the four previous Buddhas, and the paved court-yard to be the scene of their daily walks, although I was unable to trace their foot-marks, which were seen by the Chinese pilgrim.

The last monument described by Hwen Thsang is a *Stupa* containing the hair and nails of Buddha. This was surrounded by a number of smaller monuments which seemed to touch one another, and by several tanks which reflected the sacred buildings in their limpid waters. The *Stupa* I would identify with the *Juber-Parbat*, which touches the south side of the enclosure round the tombs of Seth and Job, and is close to the west side of the ruined monastery. One of the tanks described by the pilgrim may be the *Ganes-Kund*, which has recently been noticed; but all the smaller monuments have disappeared long ago, as they afforded



cheap and ready materials for the construction of the numerous Muhammadan tombs, as well, as of the neighbouring bridge and mosque. If I am right in my identification of this mound as the remains of the *Stupa* containing the hair and nails of Buddha, I think that an excavation in the centre of the mound might, perhaps, verify the accuracy of my conclusions.

The people are unanimous in their assertion that the old city to the north of these mounds was called *Bareta*. *Ayodhya* or *Ajudhya*, they say, was the capital of Rama, but the later city was called *Bareta*. As this name has no similarity either to *Sāketa* or *Visākha*, I can only set it down as another appellation of the old town, for which we have no authority but tradition. I was disappointed when at Jui I saw not hearing even the most distant allusion to the legend of the tooth-brush, *tooth of Buddha*, but the tradition still exists, as I heard of it quite unexpectedly at two different places immediately afterwards, first at *Hatila*, distant 15 miles, and next at *Gonda*, 25 miles to the north of *Ajudhya*.

# XVIII. HATILA) ON ASOKPUR.

The ancient territory of *Ayodhya* was divided by the *Sarju* or *Chāghra* River into two great provinces,—that to the north being called *Uttara Kosala*, and that to the south *Janakpuri*. Each of these was again sub-divided into two districts. In *Banarāsa* these are called *Pachham-rāt* and *Purab-rāt*, or the western and eastern districts, with reference to their bearing from *Ajudhya*; and in *Uttara Kosala* they are *Gauda* (vulgarly *Gonda*) to the south of the *Rapti*, and *Kosala* to the north of the *Rapti*, or *Rāwati*, as it is universally called in *Oudh*. Some of the *śāstras* found in the *Puranas*; thus in the *Vayu Purana*. *Lava*, the son of *Rama*, is said to have reigned in *Uttara Kosala*; but in the *Matsya*, *Liuga*, and *Kurmu Puranas*, *Srāvastī* is stated to be in *Kuti*. These apparent discrepancies are satisfactorily explained when we learn that *Gauda* is only a sub-division of *Uttara Kosala*, and that the ruins of *Srāvastī* have actually been discovered in the district of *Gauda*, which is the *Gonda* of the maps. The extent of *Gauda* is also proved by the old

\* See Plate No. I., map of the Gangetic Provinces.