

G.N. MOHAPATRA

LOCATION OF KĀLIDĀSA'S RĀMAGIRI
A GEOGRAPHICAL VIEW

Kālidāsa has been accepted as *Mahākavi* in Sanskrit literature. For this people of each and every corner of India take interest to appropriate him as of their locality. His writings are so valuable that no such place or time is capable to confine his works to its own. His work has the potentiality to give him world-wide fame which he rightly deserved. During his life and time, communication and travel in all respects were very difficult. But this could not detect him from travelling in dense forest, busy town, beautiful country side, river basins and sea-shores. Rather had been able to see beautiful scenes of those places and explicitly described those in his poetry. In fact, this creates wonder whenever we enter into his works. Going beyond the denominational tradition he has described an ordinary matter in *Meghadūta* in such a beautiful way that could attract innumerable readers. As a matter of fact it has no other side to show.

In a dramatic way, the subject matter of *Meghadūta* has been initiated all of a sudden without any context. The cursed Yakṣa has come to the earth in exile and stayed in the asylum of *Rāmagiri*. Here there were so many trees giving enjoyable shadows and beautiful streams which were being flowed down incessantly. The water reservoir of those streams earned sacredness having earned the touch of Sītā in the way of her bath. Having seen the cloud of the month of *Āsāḍha*, *Yakṣa* has desired to send his own message to his beloved *Virahinī* (separated) spouse.

Now the question arises as to the location of that *Rāmagiri* in India, from which place the *Yakṣa* has sent his message to

his spouse. On the basis of the description of *Rāmagiri* in the *Meghadūta*, the cloud-in-person has to go to *Alakāpuri* situated near the mountain of Kailāsa. The cloud-in-person has to go to that place facing north from the *Rāmagiri*. Marching a while towards the west and crossing over *Mālapradeśa* (plateau) the cloud has to go towards the north again. On the way he has to reach the *Āmrakūṭa* Mountain situated in the eastern side of the Vindhyaḡiri. After that he would come in contact with the country of Daśarṇa. The cloud would reach *Vidiśā* the capital city of that country. He would cross the river *Nirvindhya*. After that the cloud would reach Ujjainī facing west although by going circuitous way. Then he would march to Devaḡiri, *Narmadā* and Daśapur. From this place, facing north, he would come across *Brahmāvarta*, *Kurukṣetra*, *Kanakhala*, etc. and through *Krauñcarandhra* i.e. the hole of passing the *krauñca* birds reach *Alakāpuri* the beautiful part of Kailāsa Mountain. At that place of Yakṣapuri, the cloud would tell the Yakṣa's message to the beloved wife of the Yakṣa.

This is in nutshell the description of way of cloud presented in the *Meghadūta*. From the analysis of this description it is known that there is no doubt regarding the existence of places from *Vidiśā* onwards. But the bone of contention is the starting point of cloud's march i.e. *Rāmagiri* and *Āmrakūṭa*. This was situated in a dense-forest between *Rāmagiri* and *Vidiśā*. Some scholars have tried to identify the 'Āmrakūṭa' as *Amarakaṇṭaka*. They have also collected some evidences in support of saying *Rāmagiri* as *Citrakūṭa*, *Rāmaṭek*, *Rāmagurh*, etc. Some scholars at present, are keen to have tried to identify *Rāmagiri* in Orissa without going through the opinions of their predecessor scholars. We find many a Sanskrit edition of *Meghadūta* from 1974 onwards where *Rāmagiri* is vividly discussed and identified.

Rāmagiri alia Rāmaṭek

Had the analysis been made of the views expressed by the previous scholars relating to the identification of *Rāmagiri* of Kālidāsa we can be able to follow the very purport of their views. Mahāmahopādhyāya Dr. V.V. Mirashi, the learned author of the Book *Rāmagiri* in the *Meghadūta* (Vidarbha Saśodhana Maṇḡal Series. No.12. 1959) has tried to locate and identify the *Rāmagiri* to have been at

a distance of 27 miles towards north of Nagpur having a nomenclature *Rāmaṭek*. The view of Professor Mirashi has been spread very seriously. In this view the author has shown his inclination to identify the *Rāmaṭek* as *Rāmagiri* as a token of respect and reverence to his birth place. Prof. Mirashi was the Professor of Marice College, Nagpur and Head of the Dept. of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology of Vidarbha College, Amarāvati. He tried his best to make the scholars understand this fact in the Nagpur session of All India Congress in 1959¹. Supporting the view of Prof. Mirashi, Sri Yosovanta Khushal Deshpandye, the honourable President of Śārādā Āśram, Nagpur had written the preface of Prof. Mirashi's book. He has expressed in it that the readers, having not been biased by their pre-occupation, would definitely become one with Prof. Mirashi. This was the impartial attempt and emotional attachment to the scholarship of Nagpur-based pundits regarding appropriation of Kālidāsa to their own land.

In order to identify *Rāmaṭek* with *Rāmagiri* Prof. Mirashi has quoted one of the copper plates of Prabhāvati Gupta². The weight of copper plate is 116 Kg. and it is preserved in Bhārat-Itihāsa Samsodhana Maṇḍal. Prabhāvati Gupta was the daughter of Gupta king Chandragupta-II and queen of Rudrasena-II of Vakataka dynasty. The lineage of Gupta dynasty is recorded in this copper plate. But it is a matter of great wonder that we do not find any description of Vakataka dynasty. This copper plate was incised by Pravarasen II, the worthy son of queen Prabhāvati. This plate was issued on eleventh day of bright fortnight of Kartika (Prabodhana-Ekadasi) near the lotus feet of *Rāmagiri* Swāmi at *Rāmaṭek* – Mountain during the time of the king Pravarasen³. From this, Prof. Mirashi inferred that this *Rāmagiri* Swāmi was nothing, but Śrī Rāmachandra himself. This donation has been made at his lotus feet.⁴

Acceptance of this premise given rise to question that if *Rāmagiri* Swāmi is to be meant as Śrī Rāmachandra, then the idol of Śrī Rāmachandra available there is not of the time of Kālidāsa,

¹ Mirashi, V. V., *Meghadūta me Rāmagiri*, Vidarbha Samsodhana Mandal, 1959.

² *ibid.* p.104.

³ *ibid.* pp. 105-07.

⁴ *ibid.* p.108, *ārāmagirisvāminah padamulātā*.

because Kālidāsa was flourished during first century A.D. Since the inscription incised there is associated with the time of Pravarasena of Vākāṭaka dynasty, there is no question as to Kālidāsa's connection regarding the worship of Śrī Rāmachandra there by Kālidāsa himself. Had he worshipped Śrī Rāmachandra there he could have described *Rāmaṭek*, the idol of Śrī Rāmachandra and the temple, etc. That is why, it is observed that this *Rāmaṭek* is not supposed to be the *Rāmagiri* of Kālidāsa. The copper plate, depending upon which this theory exists is of latter period and in *Meghadūta*, Kālidāsa has not used the very word *Rāmagiri* Swāmi. Apart from this, the copper plate has not been discovered from that very place of *Rāmaṭek*. This was discovered from Amarāvati and it is known as Rḍhapur copper plate. Again it can be said that there is no relation of this copper plate with *Rāmaṭek* because of the fact that there is mention of the name of Candragupta who was the son of Ghaṭotkaca, the king of Gupta dynasty.

Further it is known that Prof. Mīrashi was not silent after discovering this copper plate. He had also discovered one inscription ascribed to Śrī Rāmachandra, the King of Yādavas. This inscription was very big in size and there were sixty three lines in it. In this, beautiful description of the bravery and valour of the kings of Yādavas was found. This inscription was incised in the right-hand side of Garbhagrha (inner) wall of a temple ascribed to Śrī Lakṣmaṇa in *Rāmaṭek*. Since non-availability of description of this temple in the *Meghadūta*, it is inferred that this might be of latter time. A peculiar matter, available so far, is this that the Cola Kings of Āndhra deśa have been eulogized there. This proves that this inscription has no direct relation with the *Meghadūta*. However, Prof. Mīrashi has tried to the maximum to substantiate his hypothesis taking recourse to so-called *Rāmagiri*. This inscription was for the first time used by Mr. Begler, the faithful associate of Mr. Conninghom in 1878. He had come in contact with this inscription in 1873-74. Subsequently, scholars like Dr. Fleet, Dr. Kielhern, etc. had drawn attention of western scholars regarding this inscription. Whatever it may be, it is our prime venture to identify direct and indirect proofs regarding *Rāmagiri* from the *Meghadūta*.

As a matter of fact, in this inscription we don't find mention of *Rāmagiri*. A lot of nomenclatures with regard to Śivaliṅgas like

Rāmeśvara, Kedāreśvara, Varuṇatīrtha, Śuklatīrtha, Lakṣmītīrtha, Cakraīrtha, Hamsatīrtha, Kālīpanadī, Suranadī, Rāmatīrtha, Mokṣakuṇḍa, Mahābhairava, Candramauli, etc., find mention in this inscription. Although names like Mokṣakuṇḍa, Mahābhairava, Chandramauli, etc. are depicted nowhere the name of Sītakuṇḍa is marked. From the names of kings mentioned in it, it is held that, this inscription may be ascertained to 10th or 11th Century A.D. at best. This proves that this inscription has no connection with *Rāmagiri* for which one should not take his brain-strain in this respect. Mention may be made here that the very name of Rāmatīrtha was Rāmapuskara or Ramatāl. *Tal* means pond like Nainitāl or Bhīmtāl, etc. This has no relation with *Rāmagiri* or any description of subjects found in the *Meghadūta*. Later on a basin has been erected there in order to say that this *Rāmatek* was *Rāmagiri* of the *Meghadūta*. This is, now a days, said as *Sītā nyahani* or *Sītā nahans* (or bath place of Sītā).

Prof. Mirashi has drawn a map depicting the way of the cloud in his book (p.114). According to this, the cloud, starting his journey from *Rāmatek* has reached *Āmrakūṭa* passing through *Māla* region facing north and west gradually. From that place after marching to some extent towards the west, he had reached *Vidiśā* the capital city of the Daśārṇa where he has to face towards north. The cloud has also crossed the mountain *Vindhya* and the river *Narmadā* between *Āmrakūṭa* and *Vidiśā*. This river *Narmadā* or *Revā* has reached its confluence and met with the Arabian Sea flourishing toward west in the foot of the Vindhyan range coming from *Amarakaṇṭaka* in the east. After reaching *Vidiśā*, the cloud has reached Ujjainī in a curved way having moved narrowly toward west. In course of its journey, he has to fly over the rivers *Vana*, *Nirvindhya*, *Kālasindhu*, etc. He has also moved toward north having crossed the river *Siprā*. In Ujjainī, passing over the *Siprā* in the north, and meeting *Gambhīrā*, *Devagiri*, *Carmaṇvatī* and *Dasapur* (Mandasore) has reached Brahmāvarta and proceeded to *Alakā*. From this discussion it is observed that there is no controversy about the identification of the way of cloud after *Vidiśā*, whatever point is to be raised is regarding the way connecting from *Rāmagiri* with *Vidiśā* only.

The thing to be known from the map given by Prof. Mirashi is the fact that Kālidāsa has pictured the cloud as messenger from

Rāmaṭek, which is situated near Nagpur. Here a question arises as to why Kālidāsa has not used the very name of *Rāmaṭek*? Besides this, if the cloud would proceed towards the north⁵, Jabalpur and its adjacent Bhēḍāghāṭ would be most nearer. In these places a number of marble mountains have beautified the scenario on the very precinct of the river *Narmadā*. Whoever might be overwhelmed having seen these scenes. But this is a prime question as to why Kālidāsa did not desire to describe these places though he was very fond of nature. There were also *sanctum sanctorum*s of sixty four *Yoginis* along with *Dhuāndhāra* water falls. These could not also attract the great poet Kālidāsa. Answers to these questions are clear and straight forward. The cloud has not passed through these places. Apart from this the place which has been identified as *Āmrakūṭa* by Prof. Mirashi is *Amarawādā*. The Sanskrit rendering of this name has been *Āmravātaka* and subsequently this has been named as *Āmrakūṭa* by him. *Vāṭaka* or *Vāṭikā* in Sanskrit means *Udyāna* or garden. That is the garden of Mango trees. The reason behind this renaming of *Āmrakūṭa* is still unknown. The very word *Kūṭa* in Sanskrit conveys the meaning of mountain or summit thereof. For this, Kālidāsa named *Girimallī* as *Kutaṭa* in the *Meghadūta*. Therefore, it is held that *Āmrakūṭa* is nothing but a mountain⁶ full of mango trees⁷. Professor Mirashi has not identified *Āmrakūṭa* properly. Not only this, has said *Amarawādā* as *Āmrakūṭa* on account of the fact that Śrī Varlinge has named *Rāmagada* as *Rāmagiri*. But the very term *Āmara* could not be possibly a corrupt form of *Āmra* in *Apabhraṃśa* as well as *Rāmaṭek* as *Rāmagiri*. Although much development has been done in it with the gradual rise of temples devoted to Bhogarāma, Varāha, Trivikrama, Narasiṃgha, Dhumreśvara, etc. These were not existed during the period of Kālidāsa. However, there was the foot print of Raghupati in *Rāmagiri*⁸. Besides this, had other temples existed during this time, the poet could have been forced to describe those.

⁵ *Meghadūta*, Ed. G.N. Mahapatra, Cuttack: Nalanda publication. 1974: *udaṃ mukhaḥ san.*

⁶ *ibid.* *sānumānāmrakūṭaḥ.*

⁷ *ibid.* *channopāntaḥ pariṇataphaladyotibhiḥ kānanāmraiḥ.*

⁸ *ibid.* *vandyaiḥ puṃsām raghupatipadair aṅkitaṃ mekhalāsu.*

Here another term *Dāśarathi* comes for verification. As a matter of fact, etymologically the term *Dāśarathi* conveys the meaning as Rāma, the son of Daśaratha. But any body bearing the name of Rāma cannot be addressed as *Dāśarathi*. Like that *Rāmagiri* is the name of a mountain. It should not be understood that this mountain is either erected or discovered by Śrī Rāmachandra. After a long time in the mountain *Rāmagiri*, in the 45th line of an inscription written by a Yādava king, Rāmachandra, the very word *Rāmagiri* is mentioned, depending upon which Professor Mirashi has tried to guess that this *Rāmaṭek* is nothing other than *Rāmagiri*⁹. This does not clarify as to the identification of *Rāmagiri* as the mountain discovered by Śrī Rāmachandra. In course of description made in the inscription names of some royal officers of Yādava dynasty have been mentioned as Śrī Rāghava or Śrī Rāmachandra. Due to only this point *Rāmaṭek* cannot be identified as the *Rāmagiri* of *Meghadūta*.

Many old commentators have indicated *Rāmagiri* as *Citrakūṭa*. According to scholars like Śrī Śivadaspant Varlinge of Nagpur, *Rāmagiri* is situated at Rāmagurh, at a distance of sixteen miles away from Vastar. In another way Śrī V.K. Paranjipe says in his 4th edition of the *Meghadūta* that *Rāmagiri* as another Rāmagurh which is situated in Saraguja area. He also believes that this Rāmagurh is the *Citrakūṭa* of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. All these views should be taken into account while trying to determine the location of *Rāmagiri*.

Citrakūṭa: Rāmagiri

The tenth century commentator Vallabhadeva in the *Meghadūta* has said, *Rāmagiri* is *Citrakūṭa* but not Rṣyamūka¹⁰. Sthiradeva¹¹, his contemporary, is of the opinion that *Rāmagiri* is one of the famous mountains of Daṇḍakāraṇya where a latter commentator Dakṣiṇāvarta has remained silent on this issue although he

⁹ *Epigraphia Indica*. II p.230
gajendravadanaḥ sākṣādatrāste rāmakāṃkṣayā./
āste dharmeśvaro nityaṃ sa rāmasya girāvīha.//

¹⁰ Vallabhadeva on *Meghadūta*: rāmagiriratra citrakūṭaḥ na tu rṣyamūkaḥ tatra sītāyāḥ vāsābhāvāt.

¹¹ Sthiradeva on *Meghadūta*: rāmagirir daṇḍakāntaprasiddhaḥ.

has mentioned the names of Nicula and Diṅnāga, etc. in this commentary. After that Mallināth, the famous commentator of 13th century, having followed the views of Vallabhadeva has identified *Rāmagiri* as *Citrakūṭa*. This view stands accepted hitherto.

It is very difficult to disbelieve the view as the *Citrakūṭa* is *Rāmagiri* due to its age old popularity. Still from the standpoint of criticism one thing arises for consideration. This is that there was no such mountain named *Rāmagiri* in the *Vālmīkirāmāyaṇa*. Sītā was not staying with Śrī Rāmachandra in Ṛsymūka, etc. But she was staying with those brothers and used to take bath in nearby water-streams¹². Here one point of consideration is that though the commentators have been saying that *Citrakūṭa* is *Rāmagiri*, why the great poet Kālidāsa has not mentioned this? He could have described as *Citrakūṭa*. There was no fear for infringement of metre. Therefore, it is observed that the residential place of the Yakṣa was termed as the *Rāmagiri* but not the *Citrakūṭa*. For this reason the poet has clearly mentioned *Rāmagiri* without referring to *Citrakūṭa*.

Besides this, *Rāmagiri* is situated in the South of *Narmadā*, *Vidiśā* and *Ujjainī* where the Yakṣa was residing. But *Citrakūṭa* is in the north at those places. If the cloud proceeded towards the north, these places could not come on his way. According to the present situation of *Citrakūṭa*, some scholars connect it with *Bandra* and some with *Satana* district. In this context Śrī Paranjipe again says that *Rāmagurh* is *Citrakūṭa* or *Rāmagiri* which is situated in *Saragaju* state near *Ambikāpur*. Now the question arises as to the identification of present-day *Citrakūṭa* and *Citrakūṭa* of *Vālmīki*.

In the *Rāmāyaṇa* of *Vālmīki* the description of *Citrakūṭa* comes in the *Araṇyakāṇḍa* (Ch.50). On his way to the forest Śrī Rāmachandra reached, at first, in *Bharadwajā's* hermitage near *Prayāga*, the modern *Allahabad*. Accepting the seer's advice, Śrī Rāmachandra decided to stay at *Citrakūṭa* with *Sītā* and *Lakṣmaṇa*. *Citrakūṭa* is situated only at a distance of ten miles from *Prayāga*. At present, *Citrakūṭa* comes at a distance of four miles only from the *Allahabad* Railway station. Needless to say that Śrī Rāmachandra, *Lakṣmaṇa* and *Sītā*, coming by foot had crossed the

¹² *Meghadūta: janakatanayāsṇānapuṇyodakeṣu.*

river Yamunā and reached *Citrakūṭa*. This proves that *Citrakūṭa* is situated in northern India. It is not so far from the city of Ayodhyā. This helped Bharata to come with the people of Ayodhyā in order to persuade Śrī Rāmachandra to return back from *Citrakūṭa*. Had the cloud come from *Citrakūṭa* and proceeded towards the north he would definitely come across the river Yamunā and would not touch places like *Āmrakūṭa*, *Vidiśā*, etc. and for this reason *Citrakūṭa* should not be considered as *Rāmagiri*.

Rāmagurh: Rāmagiri

That Rāmagurh of previous Saraguja state was *Rāmagiri*, was mentioned by Śrī Paranjipe in his first edition of the *Meghadūta*¹³. According to him Rāmagurh was *Citrakūṭa* and it is situated at a height of 3202 feet from the sea level¹⁴. There is a long cave in it. In the summit of the mountain there are three caves devoted to Śrī Rāmachandra, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā. There is a water stream on the low precinct of the stream. It is supposed that they were using that stream for bathing purpose. That is why Rāmagurh is to be treated as *Citrakūṭa*. In the inscription of Prabhāvat Gupta there is mention of the name of *Rāmagiri* Svāmin and foot prints of those were marked very explicitly.

Śrī Paranjipe opines that if the cloud proceeded towards the Alakāpuri¹⁵, passing through the plateau¹⁶ in the west it had to proceed to north¹⁷. But Prof. Mirashi had not accepted this opinion of Śrī Paranjipe. On the other hand he opines that if the cloud had the intention to proceed to the north it had to come-back to the west first, and then proceed to the north. Here the very word *paścāt* conveys two meanings: west and come-back. Depending upon this meaning one could comprehend that the cloud having come-back¹⁸ to the west would proceed to the north. By this it would reach *Amarakaṇṭaka* crossing *Narmadā* on the way¹⁹. It is a fact that *Narmadā* had started

¹³ Paranjipe, V.K., *Meghadūta*. ed. p.69

¹⁴ *Meghadūta: tuṅgamālīngya śailam*.

¹⁵ *ibid. udānmukhaḥ san*.

¹⁶ *ibid. kṣetramārūhya mālam..... kiṃcit paścāt vraja*.

¹⁷ *ibid. laghugatir bhūya evottareṇa*.

¹⁸ *ibid. kiṃcit paścāt vraja*.

¹⁹ *ibid. 19. revā drakṣasyupalaviṣame vindhyapāde viśirṇām*.

its course from the *Amarakaṇṭaka* Mountain. The cloud would see the *Narmadā*. Since the river *Narmadā* had come down from the *Amarakaṇṭaka* it would be beholden like the tusk of elephant²⁰.

Despite these analyses of scholars, Rāmagurh can never be identified as *Citrakūṭa* or *Rāmagiri*. Because Rāmagurh's existence is very nearer to the latitude of *Amarakaṇṭaka* and Jabalpur. Rāmagurh, in fact, is situated towards a slight south of Ambikāpur. *Amarakaṇṭaka* is situated in the east of the Rāmagurh and Jabalpur to the east of *Amarakaṇṭaka*. The river *Narmadā* had met the Arabian Sea in its confluence having come from *Amarakaṇṭaka* through Jabalpur and flourished in the feet of Vindhya mountain proceeding a little to the west. Here Śrī Paranjipe supposes to clarify that the cloud would not suddenly proceed to the west from the east in the southern coast of *Narmadā*. After that it would fly to the north and reach *Vidiśā*. If this be the case, Mālabhumi (plateau) and *Āmrakūṭa* would not come on its way due to the fact that the cloud would start its journey from *Rāmagiri* and proceed to the north as described in the *Meghadūta*. Then after going some way to the west through the Māla-region the cloud would take rest in mountain *Āmarakūṭa*. To the north of that place it would come in contact with the river *Narmadā*. But the river *Narmadā* begins her course from *Amarakaṇṭaka*, which is situated in the west of Rāmagurh. On his way neither the Māla-region nor the *Āmrakūṭa* would come. If the cloud, at first, proceeds to the north directly from Rāmagurh, it would not come across *Narmadā* on the way. Māla-region and Rāmagurh are situated in the south. *Vidiśā* would not come if the cloud proceeded to the north. Based on these arguments Rāmagurh can never be identified as *Rāmagiri*.

Rāmagiri is Rāmagiri

If the *Citrakūṭa* was not *Rāmagiri* and Rāmagurh was also not *Rāmagiri* then question arises where the *Rāmagiri* was? It is to be decided here that this mountain, due to Rāmachandra's association, during his forest-stay, was named as *Rāmagiri*. From

²⁰ *ibid.* bhakticchedair iva viracitā bhūtimaṅge gajasya.

the *Rāmāyaṇa* source it is held that Śrī Rāmachandra, along with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa, was staying there. During Kālidāsa's time this mountain has earned its celebrity as *Rāmāgiri* which forced the poet to depict that mountain as such²¹. Had it been named as *Citrakūṭa*, Kālidāsa could have been tempted to use that name. So there is no doubt regarding the nomenclature of this mountain as *Rāmāgiri*.

During Rāmachandra's stay at *Citrakūṭa* after crossing the river Yamunā this place was very beautiful. It was very nearer to both Prayāga and Ayodhyā. According to *Rāmāyaṇa*²² Ṛṣi Bharadvāja had indicated that at a distance of ten *krosas* (20 miles) the *Citrakūṭa* Mountain was situated where the ṛṣis were staying. Might you take rest there. After that Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā crossed Yamunā and reached the Nīlavana (green forest). Having proceeded to some extent they might have reached *Citrakūṭa*.

In another edition of *Rāmāyaṇa* we find mention of *Citrakūṭa* which existed at a distance of three Yojanas (24miles)²³.

This *Citrakūṭa* was very nearer to Ayodhyā. Bharata along with the people of Ayodhyā had met Śrī Rāmachandra there. Towards the south of this place *Daṇḍakāraṇya* was situated where Śrī Rāmachandra had used to stay. This was dense, lonely and sacred with the hermitages of Ṛṣis. Śrī Rāmachandra stayed there. Subsequently Rāvaṇa, the king of Laṅkā kidnapped Sītā from Pañcavaṭī, the very sacred place inside the *Daṇḍakāraṇya* region. When Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, while pondering Sītā had travelled the entire southern region and stayed in mountain caves of Ṛṣyamūka, Mālyavan, etc. At that time Sītā was not with them. That is why the *Daṇḍakāraṇya* region, where Śrī Rāmachandra was staying and Sītā used to take bath, became famous after the name of Śrī Rāmachandra. Subsequently, that place earned

²¹ *ibid. snigdhaçchāyātaraṣu vasatiṃ rāmāgiryāśrameṣu.*

²² *Vālmīkirāmāyaṇa. – Aranyakāṇḍa*
mataṅgayūthānusr̥tam pakṣisaṃghānunādītam/
citrakūṭaṃ imaṃ paśya prabhuddhaśikharaṃ girim//
tatastau pādacāreṇa gacchantau sītayā saha/
ramyamāsedatuḥ śailaṃ citrakūṭaṃ manoharam//

²³ *ibid. 58.28-29*

iti rāmavacaḥ śrutvā bharadvājo mahāmuniḥ/
dhyātvā muhūrtamekāgro rāmaṃ vacanamābravīt//
triyojanamīstāvad girir yatra nivatsyasi/

celebrity as *Rāmagiri*. Prof. Mirashi had not supported this fact. In order to oppose the identity of Rāmagurh as *Rāmagiri* he had told the truth²⁴. He was of opinion that there was a river in *Rāmagiri*. Despite the existence of foot prints of Śrī Rāmachandra there, this could not be identified as *Rāmagiri*. If this be the *Rāmagiri*, the *Rāmagiri* of Daṇḍakāraṇya refers to Joypur of Koraput District of Orissa, would be easily identified as *Rāmagiri*. This is a beautiful place full of Cane forest (Vetravanas or Niculavana). It is dense with tribal people. From this place towards north MālaJanapada or Mālapradesa is situated. This is the view of Prof. Mirashi.

This *Rāmagiri* is situated at 2617 feet high at Joypur in the District of Koraput. This has been clearly expressed by Śrī Varlinge in his learned article in *In-qui-lab*, Sept.-Oct., 1948, published in Nagpur. He has discussed this matter coming to *Rāmagiri* which is situated at a distance of 16miles from Jagadalpur. He has pointed out the very line of the *Meghadūta* as the summit of the mountain²⁵. This version of Kālidāsa has come true in this place. From this place the Mālabhūmi of Vastar begins which has found a place in Kālidāsa's descriptions²⁶. Towards the west from this place *Āmrakūṭa*: a mango-garden would come where a number of cane forest existed²⁷. But in *Rāmaṭek* region cane forests were not found at all. Those who considered *Amarakaṇṭaka* as *Āmrakūṭa* are also not without bias. *Āmarakaṇṭaka* is the starting point of the river *Narmadā*. This is not at all nearer to *Rāmagiri*. Like this *Āmarawāḍā* also was not *Āmrakūṭa*. Because it was a village, not a mountain. *Āmrakūṭa* was like a high forest full of mango-trees, which was described by Kālidāsa²⁸ as Prof. Mirashi was also not without doubt although he had tried to say *Amarawāḍā* as *Āmrakūṭa*. He has also informed that *Āmrakūṭa* might be situated in a place inside the mountain range of Satapura²⁹. Again, he also opined that now-a-days there was no such mountain as *Āmrakūṭa*. Many old names, at present, have gone into oblivion³⁰.

²⁴ Mirashi. p. 55

²⁵ *Meghadūta*: *adreś śrīṅga harati pavanah.*

²⁶ *ibid.* *ṣeṭramārūhya mālam.*

²⁷ *ibid.* *sarasanicula.*

²⁸ *ibid.* *madhye śyāmāstanar iva bhuvah śeṣavistārapāṇḍuh.*

²⁹ Mirashi. p. 33.

³⁰ *ibid.* p. 64.

For this we have to trace out *Āmrakūṭa* in *Daṇḍakāraṇya* where mango trees in plenty were visualized. Some scholars pointed out Malkanagiri as *Mālakṣetra* which is situated towards south of the *Rāmagiri*. This view also comes under consideration. The cloud had to come back again after going to north to some extent and then would reach *Āmrakūṭa* having gone towards north after *Mālaketra*. Depending upon this view Śrī Varalinge had expressed that *Rāmagiri* was situated at 2617 feet high in *Daṇḍakāraṇya* at Sonepur. Shri Sundarlal Tripathy and the present author in his *Meghadūta* (Nalanda, 1974) have established the view in support of *Rāmagiri*'s existence in *Daṇḍakāraṇya*.

Mention may be made here that one of the researchers has travelled this area. He was of opinion that all the materials described in the *Meghadūta* of Kālidāsa are available at present even in the *Rāmagiri* of Koraput. Many a swan usually comes, to this place during rainy season³¹. The *girimallikā-s* (Kūṭaja) blossom here in plenty³². Not only this, a number of special categories of cranes are also seen in this area³³. During rainy season mushrooms are seen scatteredly³⁴. In this forest land, many tribal people stay who decorate their thatched houses with the help of red coloured soils³⁵. The country women are used to enjoy to look at the cloud in the *Mālabhūmi* region of Chotnagapur³⁶. So many water streams are also found near *Rāmagiri*. In those streams *Sītā* might have finished her bath during her stay in the forest. There might be fallen the foot prints of Śrī Rāmachandra. Due to these reasons this place might be identified as the *Rāmagiri* of *Meghadūta*. Another researcher is also in support of this view. He tries to identify Umarakoṭa as *Āmrakūṭa*. But it is to be verified once again. Umarakoṭa might be a high level mountain. There is a doubt whether *Umara* is a corrupt pronunciation of *Āmra*. In Apabhraṃśa language 'O' is pronounced as 'U'.

Despite these things had the cloud moved towards the north from

³¹ *Meghadūta: rājahaṃsāḥ sahāyāḥ.*

³² *ibid. sa pratyagraiḥ kuṭajakusumaiḥ.*

³³ *ibid. khe bhavantaṃ balākāḥ.*

³⁴ *ibid. mahimucchūlindhrāmabandhyām.*

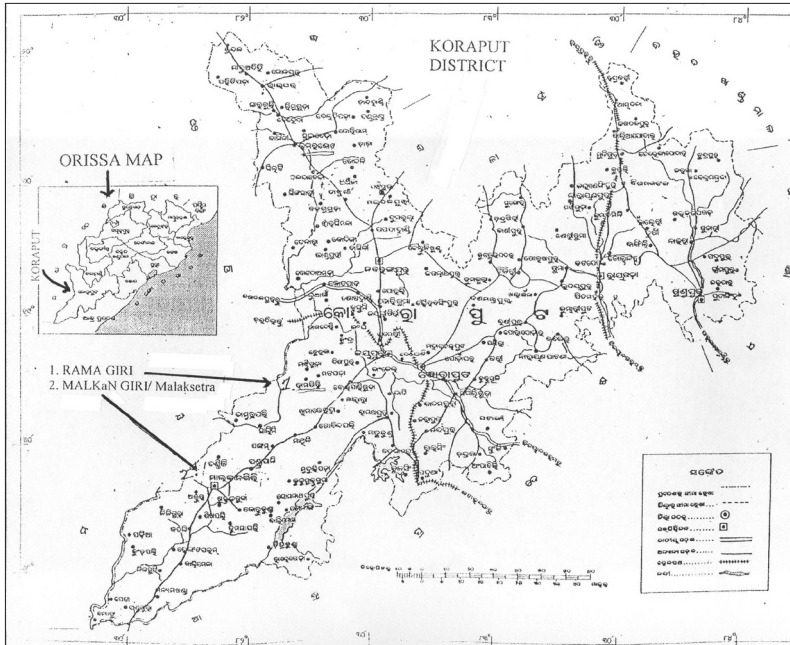
³⁵ *ibid. dhāturāgaiś śilāyām.*

³⁶ *ibid. bhrūvilāsānabhijñaiḥ.*

Rāmagiri in *Daṇḍakāraṇya*, a number of places like *Mālabhūmi*³⁷, pasture land, etc. would be visualized³⁸. From that place towards north through the west the cloud would come in contact with *Āmrakūta*, *Vindhya Range*, *Narmadā River*, etc. on its way. *Vidiśā* would also come in contact if it moved towards the north. There is no conflict of opinions relating to the way from *Vidiśā* to *Alakā*. Hence it is concluded with conviction that *Rāmagiri* is situated in Orissa.

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³⁷ *ibid.* *ṣetramāruhya mālām.*

³⁸ *ibid.* *sadyaḥ srotkaṣaṣasurabhi.*