

A POSSIBLE AD552 COMET SIGHTING IN JAPAN AND ITS PARALLELS WITH COMETARY PHENOMENA ASSOCIATED WITH THE SARASVATI RIVER OF ANCIENT INDIA.

Robert A. Juhl, Independent researcher, Penang, Malaysia, E-mail: AD552@mac.com; and RN Iyengar, Department of Civil Engineering, Indian Institute of Science, E-mail: rni@civil.iisc.ernet.in.

Introduction: The *Enoshima Engi* (EE) was written in AD1047 by the Japanese monk Kokei. The narrative mentions spectacular phenomena that took place in the early summer of AD552, including dark clouds covering the sea, earthquakes, the appearance of a bright goddess (Benzaiten/Sarasvati) above the clouds, boulders falling from the sky, lightning-bolts, rocks and sand spurting up from the sea, flames on the water, the emergence of an island, and the descent of the goddess onto the island. In 2003 Juhl translated and studied parts of the EE [1].

The Prabhasa-ksetra-mahatmya book (PK) of the Skandapurana contains references to similar phenomena associated with the Sarasvati River. In 2004 Iyengar published an article on comet-related phenomena in the PK [2].

Discussion: Following is a list of possible comet-related parallels in the PK. All parallels with the EE listed below are from Juhl [1].

The PK mentions objects making holes in the ground in association with a smoky demon [3]. The EE parallel is the "dark clouds covering the sea" and "great boulders descending from above the clouds".

In one episode, the Sarasvati River, carrying fire, enters the ocean. Iyengar translates: "With fire in his hand, the ocean lit up... Due to the gases emanating from the sea, the waters overflowed..." [4] The EE parallel is the description "flames flickered amidst the white-tipped waves".

The level of the sea apparently rose and dropped. Iyengar writes: "... after the fire started burning, initially the sea exceeded its boundaries but later the coast started receding... In the 346th chapter, there is reference to large-scale loss of life associated most probably with a ... tsunami" [5]. The EE parallel is the loss of life as the dragon (the floodwaters) invaded the villages.

The PK has a chapter entitled Sarasvati-avatara-mahimavarnanam, meaning "description of the purpose of the avatara (descent) of Sarasvati" [6]. The EE parallel is the descent of Benzaiten from the sky.

Iyengar comments on a related story: "The further verses indicate that a metallic object eventually landed on earth, leading to earthquakes..." [7]. The EE parallel is the earthquakes before the descent of the goddess.

Conclusions: Most of the phenomena described in the EE are similar to phenomena in the PK. However, they are not copies, only similar. The presence of similar phenomena in unrelated Indian and Japanese records suggest that the phenomena actually did take place substantially as described. A fuller account of the parallels is on the Internet [8]. The phenomena may be comet/meteor related and deserve further investigation.

References: [1] Juhl, 2003. <http://www2.gol.com/users/terukoj/TranslationSeg-2.html> and <http://www2.gol.com/users/bartraj/goddessindex-1.html>. [2] RN Iyengar. Profile of a Natural Disaster in Ancient Sanskrit Literature, *Indian Journal of History of Science*, 39, 1, 11-49, 2004, available as pdf at <http://civil.iisc.ernet.in/~rni/ancientdisaster.pdf>. [3] Iyengar. 2004, pg 7. [4] Iyengar. 2004, pg 11. [5] Iyengar. 2004, pgs 11 and 16. [6] Iyengar. 2004, pg 16. [7] Iyengar. 2004, pg 22. [8] Juhl. *Parallels between the Celestial and Terrestrial Phenomena at Enoshima and Similar Phenomena Associated with the Sarasvati River of Ancient India*, <http://www2.gol.com/users/bartraj/ParallelsWSarasvatiR.html>