

quasi-ecclesiastical survey is available, we find the Buddhist establishments of the territories along the northern foot of the Hindukush, from Balkh (*Po-ho*) to Sarīkol (*Chieh-p'an-t'o*), attached to the 'Little Vehicle' ²⁶.

Considering the geographical position of these territories in relation to Kāshgar and the long subjection of almost all of them to Yüeh-chih rule, we may well attach historical significance to this observation. Nor would it be right, perhaps, to ignore altogether the curious fact that the 'Little Vehicle' was followed in the ancient convent of Chia-pi-shih, where the princely hostages from the western dependencies of China were believed to have resided, and where their memory was still cherished down to the time of Hsüan-tsang. In the numerous other convents of Chia-pi-shih, as elsewhere in the tracts south of the Hindukush, the Mahāyāna School seems to have enjoyed unquestioned predominance ²⁷.

SECTION III.—EASTERN TURKESTĀN UNDER THE T'ANGS

The rapid decay of Chinese power in Central Asia, which commenced under the Emperor An Ti (107–125 A.D.), accounts for the extreme scantiness of the information to be gleaned from Chinese sources about the political conditions of Kāshgar and Eastern Turkestān generally during the next five hundred years. The revolt of the Uigur tribes in the region of Turfān and Hāmi threatened the Chinese dominion in the Tārīm Basin at its north-eastern end about the same time that Kāshgar fell under Yüeh-chih influence. A nominal protectorate appears to have continued during the second century A.D. But even this must have ceased during the disturbed reign of the last Han Emperor (Hsien Ti, 190–220 A.D.) and the period of the Three Kingdoms (221–265 A.D.), so far as Kāshgar and other territories in the distant north-west were concerned ¹. According to a notice quoted by Ritter, the power of the kings of Su-lê during the latter period extended over a number of smaller states situated to the south and west, while, on the contrary, a brief extract from the Wei Annals given by Rémusat represents Su-lê as being at the same epoch dependent on Yü-t'ien or Khotan ².

Decay of
Chinese
power under
the Later
Hans.

China became united again under the Emperor Wu Ti (265–290 A.D.), who appears to have made efforts to re-establish Chinese influence in the south of the Tārīm Basin ³. But the dynasties which followed each other in rapid succession until the advent of the house of T'ang (618 A.D.) were too weak or too much absorbed by the task of internal consolidation to resume a policy of conquest beyond Sha-chou, the westernmost district of Kan-su. During

compare *Fā-hien*, transl. Legge, pp. 14 sq., and *Mémoires*, i. pp. 2, 4, 10.

This exact accord between what we may call the ecclesiastical surveys of the two pilgrims is of special interest in view of the considerable interval which separates their visits. If the territorial distribution of Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna in Eastern Turkestān had not changed during a period of nearly two and a half centuries, we may justly conclude that it went back far earlier, probably to the time when Buddhism first reached these territories from the south and the west respectively.

²⁶ See *Mémoires*, ii. pp. 30 (Balkh), 35, 37 (Bāmiān), 210 (Sarīkol). In *Huo* (Julien, *Huo*) which corresponds to the present Kunduz, both the Great and Little Vehicles were studied; see *ibid.*, ii. p. 193.

²⁷ See for the convent of the hostages, *Mémoires*, i. pp. 41 sq.; *Si-yu-ki*, transl. Beal, i. p. 57; *Vie de H.-T.*, pp. 71 sq.

It is curious that in the Punjāb tract which, according to the tradition recorded by Hsüan-tsang, served as the winter residence of Kaniška's hostages from the confines of China, and which was believed to have received from them its name *Chih-na-po-ti* (Skr. *Cināpati*?), we also find Hīnayāna monks in possession of the chief monastery (called *Tāmasasamghārāma*); see *Mémoires*, i. p. 199; *Si-yu-ki*, transl. Beal, i. pp. 173 sq.

¹ Compare Richthofen, *China*, i, p. 472.

² See Ritter, *Asien*, v. p. 421; Rémusat, *Ville de Khotan*, p. 10.

³ See below chapter xi. sec. iv.