

that the main tribal names recorded in this region by Alexander's historians show a phonetic change which is a characteristic feature in this language group and one attested from a period as early as Alexander's campaign. Both the names *Aspasioi* and *Assakēnoi* undoubtedly correspond to the Sanskrit *Aśmaka*, a name mentioned by Varāhamihira among tribal designations of the Indian North-West.¹² This conversion *śm* > *sm* > *sp* > *ss* > *s* is typical, and can be already traced in the language of Aśoka's Gandhāra inscriptions, which Sir George Grierson has proved to have been greatly affected by the influence of what he calls the 'Modern Pāṣācī languages'.¹³

SECTION II.—EARLY CHINESE PILGRIMS TO UDYĀNA

No distinct references to Udyāna can be traced in the extant records of that long and fascinating period in the history of the Indian North-West border during which the Kābul Valley with the adjacent territories passed from Alexander's immediate heirs successively under the domination of the great Mauryan empire, the Greek kings from Bactria, and the short-lived dynasties of 'Scythian' or Parthian origin to become finally the main seat of the powerful kingdom established by the Kuṣana branch of the Great Yüeh-chih or Indo-Scythians. There is reason to believe that much of the 'Graeco-Buddhist' art remains which the Buddhist ruins of the Swāt Valley, like those of Gandhāra, have preserved in abundance, dates back to the early centuries of our era when Buddhism was especially flourishing in these parts under Kuṣana rule. But among the archaeological 'finds' so far recorded there is nothing to throw light on the special conditions prevailing in Udyāna at that period.

Udyāna
under Indo-
Scythian
rule.

It is towards the close of the period of Kuṣana domination that we first receive information about Udyāna from one of those Chinese Buddhist pilgrims who are the safest guides for the ancient topography of the Indian North-west. It is furnished by the narrative of Fa-hsien who reached Wu-ch'ang about A.D. 403, from the side of the Pāmirs. The route which Fa-hsien and his Chinese fellow pilgrims followed presents points of interest, and it is therefore fortunate that by M. Chavannes' convincing identification of *Chieh-ch'a* with Kāshgar all question of his starting-place has been solved.¹ 'From this [Chieh-ch'a] the travellers went westwards towards North India, and after being on the way for a month, they succeeded in getting across and through the range of the Onion mountains. The snow rests on them both winter and summer.'² After referring to the dangers encountered here by travellers from 'venomous dragons, which, when provoked, spit forth poisonous winds, and cause showers of snow and storms of sand and gravel',³ Fa-hsien tells us: 'The people of the country call the range by the name of the "Snow Mountains". When the travellers had got through them, they were in North India, and immediately on entering its borders, found themselves in a small kingdom called *T'o-leih* (*T'o-li*), where also there were many monks, all students of the Hīna-yāna.'

Fa-hsien's
visit to
Udyāna.

¹² For a synopsis of the classical forms of this name and their derivation, see Marquart, *Geschichte von Eran*, ii. p. 247, note.

¹³ See his paper on *Linguistic relationship of the Shāh-bāzgarhi inscription*, *J.R.A.S.*, 1904, p. 725; especially p. 729 for *sm* > *sp* > *s*. Cf. also his remarks in *Z.D.M.G.*, 1912, p. 77: 'This change of *sm*, through *sv* or *sb*, to *sp*, and thence to *ss*, *s*, does not occur in any other Indian language, and is typical of "Modern Pāṣācī".—It may be noted in passing that this phonetic change helps to explain still better Ptolemy's name *Kaspeira* (pronounced *Kaspīra*)

for Kaśmīr; see Stein, *Rājat.* ii. p. 352.

¹ See Chavannes, *Voyage de Song Yun*, p. 54, note 3; Stein, *Ancient Khotan*, i. pp. 28, 48.

² See Legge, *Fa-hien*, p. 24.

³ Cf. Hsüan-tsang's similar description of the climate encountered in the 'Valley of Po-mi-lo' (the Pāmirs) with its 'great lake of the dragons', Julien, *Mémoires de Hiouen-thsang*, ii. pp. 207 sq.; Watters, *Yuan Chwang*, ii. p. 282. For the storm-producing powers of 'dragons' or Nāgas, cf. e. g., Julien, *Mémoires*, i. pp. 47 sqq., 133 sq.; my notes on *Rājat.* i. 179, 239.