

capital. Once more Taxila furnishes an absolutely safe starting-point for our investigation; for it is after dealing with the kingdom of Takshaśilā, or Taxila, that Hsüan-tsang's account takes us to Simhapura. For the sake of convenience I may reproduce it here in Mr. Watters's translation, changing only the wording where the use of the past instead of the present gives it, quite needlessly, the appearance of a paraphrase.

'From this (that is, the neighbourhood of Takshaśilā) going south-east across hills and valleys for above 700 *li* you come to the *Seng-ba-pu-lo* (Simhapura) country; this is about 3,500 *li* in circuit with the Indus on its west frontier. The capital fourteen or fifteen *li* in circuit rests on hills and is a natural fortress. The soil of the country is fertile, the climate is cold, the people are rude, bold and deceitful. There is no king and the country is a dependency of Kashmir.

'Near the south of the capital is an Aśoka tope, the beauty of which is impaired although its miraculous powers continue, and beside it is a Buddhist monastery quite deserted.'

A look at the map suffices to show that by a hilly territory situated to the south-east of Taxila and adjoined on the west by the Indus no other area can be meant than the one comprising the Salt Range in the wider sense of the term and now divided between the Districts of Rawalpindi, Jhēlum, Attock, and Shāhpur. It is true that if we take the 700 *li* to refer, as usually in Hsüan-tsang's distance reckonings, to the distance from capital to capital we should be taken far beyond the area where any town surrounded by hills can possibly be looked for. But since the pilgrim's own subsequent narrative distinctly states that he returned from Simhapura to the northern confines of the territory of Taxila, a statement confirmed also by his *Life*,<sup>5</sup> we can safely accept the explanation long ago suggested by Cunningham that the distance of 700 *li* relates to the whole length of the journey from Taxila to Simhapura and back.

Mr. Watters's suggestion 'that north-east should be substituted for south-east in the statement of the direction of Simhapura from Takshaśilā' implies an obvious geographical impossibility in view of what is said about the territory bordering on the Indus in the west. On the other hand, it is easy to account for the distance of 700 *li* if we assume that the double journey to and from Ketās is intended; for the direct distance between it and Taxila is about 72 miles as measured on the map, and 350 *li* would be a very reasonable estimate for the journey by road, considering that in hilly country not more than about 4 *li* can be reckoned to the mile.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Julien, *Vie de Hiouen-tsang*, p. 261; Beal, *Life of Hiuan Tsiang*, p. 191.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Stein, *Serindia*, ii. p. 735, note 28<sup>a</sup>, for

references to passages in Chinese records indicating the value of the *li* in T'ang times.