

because it bears a curious resemblance to the legend recorded in Kalhaṇa's *Kashmīr Chronicle* for the foundation of Pravarasena's capital, the present Śrīnagar. I have discussed this local legend of ancient Śrīnagara at length in my comments on the *Rājatarāṅgiṇī* and in my 'Memoir on the ancient geography of Kashmīr'. It will suffice to point out here that in it king Pravarasena II, who was anxious 'to ascertain in a supernatural way the right site and auspicious time for the foundation of his new capital', and the demon who after an adventurous encounter fulfilled his desire by laying down a miraculous measuring line, play approximately the same part as the founder of the city of Khotan and his mysterious mendicant surveyor.

Seeing the length and detail in which Hsüan-tsang has recorded for us the story of the origin of the Khotan kingdom, it must at first appear puzzling that the 'Life' of the pilgrim presents us with a summary of it differing in a very essential point. After reproducing Hsüan-tsang's account of the people of Khotan and their king in almost literal accord with the *Hsi-yü-chi*, the 'Life' tells us⁸: 'The first ancestor of the king was the eldest son of King Aśoka and resided in the kingdom of Takṣaśilā (Ta-ch'a-shih-lo). Having been exiled, he went to the north of the snowy mountains, where he led a nomad life, seeking water and pastures for his flocks. Having arrived in this country [of Khotan] he established there his residence. As he had no heir, he went one day to pray at the temple of Vaiśravaṇa, &c.' The rest of the story is then told in full agreement with the *Hsi-yü-chi*, though more briefly.

Khotan legend in Hsüan-tsang's 'Life'.

It seems difficult, in view of the greatness of the discrepancy, to assume that the different version here presented was due to a mere mistake on the part of the biographer Hui-li or of Yen-ts'ung, who completed and edited the work. Our doubt on this point must grow stronger when we find that this version coincides in the essential point with the story as told in the Tibetan 'Annals of Li-yul', which also makes an exiled son of Aśoka ultimately establish his kingdom in Khotan. Without a thorough critical analysis of all those passages of the 'Life' which differ from statements recorded in the *Hsi-yü-chi*—a task wholly beyond the competence of any one who is not a Sinologist—it seems scarcely safe to express a definite opinion as to the most likely explanation of this striking discrepancy. Is it possible that the biographer or his editor, both of them contemporaries and pupils of Hsüan-tsang⁹, were aware of a different version of the Khotan tradition, communicated perhaps through the 'Master of the Law' himself? Evidence in this direction would undoubtedly add much to the critical interest of the Tibetan record to which we now turn.

In the 'Annals of Li-yul,' which Mr. Rockhill's extracts have rendered accessible, the account of Khotan history opens characteristically with the Buddhist adaptation of a legend which we find also elsewhere among the popular lore of territories in and beyond the Himālaya¹⁰. Li-yul, originally an inhabited country, was converted into a lake by its Nāgas or Spring-deities, whom the bad treatment accorded by the people to certain Ṛṣis had angered. When Buddha visited Li-yul with a number of his disciples he enveloped the lake with rays of light; these gathered into 353^{10a} illuminated water-lilies, which marked the same number of Buddhist shrines to be built thereafter in the country. Finally the united rays encircled three times the space within which 'there will be built a great city with five towers (?) called *U-then*'. Then Buddha directed his disciple Śāriputra to pierce the lake with the butt end of his staff and Vaiśravaṇa to do the same with the end of his pike. Dwelling for seven days on Mount Gośrīṣa (called Gośrīṅga in other Tibetan texts and also by Hsüan-tsang) the Blessed One then

Tibetan version of Khotan legend.

⁷ See my notes on *Rājat.* iii. 339-349; also II. pp. 442 sqq.

⁸ See *Vie de Hiouen-Thsang*, p. 279; Beal, *Life*, p. 205.

⁹ Compare Julien, *Vie de Hiouen-Thsang*, pp. lxxvii sqq.

¹⁰ See Rockhill, *Life of the Buddha*, pp. 232 sq.

^{10a} [This is the figure of the text as verified by Mr. Thomas; Rockhill, loc. cit., p. 232, has 363.]