

A NOTE ON THE STUDY OF THE  
*TA-T'ANG HSI-YU-CHI* (大唐西域記)

The Ta-t'ang Hsi-yu-chi 大唐西域記 is a record of the travels by Hsüan-chuang 玄奘 (596-664 A. D.) in central Asia and various parts of India during 629-645 A. D. After Hsüan-chuang returned, his disciple, Pien-chi 辨機 of the Ta-tsung-ch'ih-ssü 大總持寺, arranged his notes on the travels as commanded by the Emperor T'ai-tsung 太宗 and completed them in 12 volumes in the following year (646 A. D.)

The Hsi-yu-chi is not a mere travel book but a detailed record of Hsüan-chuang's observations of the various areas visited concerning their conditions, commerce, topography, products, customs, religion, etc. Inasmuch as Hsüan-chuang's descriptions were based upon actual observation and are fairly accurate, they are considered to be invaluable materials for the pursuit of various Oriental studies, such as geography, archaeology, history, Buddhism, and so forth.

The results of studies on the Hsi-yu-chi by M. S. Julien, S. Beal, T. Watters, T. Haneda, K. Hori, G. Ono, Takakusu and K. Atachi, have already been published, while other research has been made by Saint-Martin, Alex. Cunningham, H. Mule, R. Sewell, J. Ferguson, W. Simpson, V. Smith, A. Stein, A. Foucher, K. Takakuwa, R. Hatan, O. Takada, and others. But there are still numerous problems to be solved. For example, most of the proper nouns cited in the work are Chinese transliterations, and in many instances their meaning or even their origin has not yet been determined. Similarly, there are numerous geographical names which have not yet been located. These and other doubtful points remain to be studied in the future.

Some years ago, a manuscript which may facilitate the study of the Hsi-yu-chi was found from among those various books belonging to the Peking Edition of the Tibetan Tripitaka which is preserved in the Otani University Library in Kyoto. (This Peking Edition of the Tibetan Tripitaka has been recently issued in a photographic edition.) The manuscript is the Tibetan version of the Hsi-yü-chi entitled *Chen-po than-gur dus-kyi rgya-gar-shin-gi bkod-pahi kar-chag* and transliterated from the Chinese Ta-t'ang Hsi-yu-chi as *Ta-than sihi yus-kyis*. The translation was made by Kun Mgon-pos-kyabs, a mongolian scholar in the Ch'ing Dynasty. The revision was done by *Mchod-rten dkar-pohi*

*dgon-gyi ja-sag-bla-ma-cha-kan-shabs druñ-bskal-bzaiñ dge-legs rgyal-mtshan* (白塔寺札薩克喇嘛).

The book is 14 cm. wide and 63 cm. long. It is handwritten in Chinese ink on fairly thick paper. The back side of the first leaf and the front side of the second leaf contain 5 lines each, whereas the back side of the second leaf and each side of the remaining leaves contain 7 lines each. There are 152 leaves in all; however, on the 44th leaf, two numbers 44 and 45 are written.

In this manuscript there are notes written in small letters under the place names, such as "Now it is called ...". With regard to the proper nouns cited, at the present time it is not certain upon which edition their transcription from Chinese into Tibetan was based, but the pronunciation current at that time seems to have been used. Thus the work may provide useful information for Chinese phonology and the study of proper name transcriptions into and from Chinese. (The rendering of Central Asian and Indian names into Tibetan is much closer than that into Chinese; hence it may be possible now to determine and reconstruct the originals of those names given in the *Ta-t'ang Hsi-yu-chi*.)

The results of a detailed study of this manuscript will be published in future as the work progresses and it is hoped that a contribution will be made to Oriental and Buddhist research.

*Kyōgō Sasaki.*