

Some new Light on Kuśinagara from "The memoir of Hui-Ch'ao"

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Since FUJITA TOYOHACHI published his *E-chō-den sen-shaku* or the *Expository Notes on the Memoir of Hui-ch'ao* in 1910¹, more than half a century had passed. Apart from the necessity of a full English translation of this important document on Indian and Central Asian history, a fresh investigation of this memoir is essential. Our experience shows that such an effort frequently sheds new light on the several aspects of histories of these regions. Two years ago, with the help of archaeological findings, the author re-identified the West India mentioned by Hui-ch'ao with the Valabhī kingdom in Surāshtra peninsula. This identification seems more reasonable than Sindh previously suggested by FUJITA².

It is under the same circumstance that efforts are being made by the author with the aim to write a new commentary and to publish it along with the forthcoming English translation of *Hui-ch'ao wang Wu-l'ien-chu-kuo chuan* or *Hui-ch'ao's Memoir of a Pilgrimage to the Five Regions of India*. In this connection, the result that came out from the new effort provides another interesting example, which shows that with accessibility of more material, this old fragment of the memoir often has a new meaning.

Now, let us see what is the statement of Hui-ch'ao on Kuśinagara. In his memoir, the pilgrim says:

„After one month's journey, I arrived at the country of *Chū-shih-na*.

This is the place where the Buddha entered into *nirvāṇa*. The city is desolate, no people reside in this place.

A stupa was built at the spot where the Buddha entered into *nirvāṇa*.

There is a Master of *Dhyāna* who sprinkles water and sweeps the place.

¹ FUJITA's work was written in Chinese and published in Peking in 1910. Later, the work was also included in the collection of *Dai-Nihon Bukkyō Zenshu* (A Complete Collection of Buddhist Books in Japan), vol. 133 (Tokyo, 1915). After the death of FUJITA, his notes on the *Memoir of Hui-ch'ao* has been edited and published by Ch'ien Tao-sun in Peking, 1933. Page numbers of Fujita's notes as mentioned in this paper are from Ch'ien's edition.

² The paper was submitted to the XXV Session of Indian History Congress, (1962) and has been accepted by the *Indian Historical Quarterly* for publication in 1963, but it is still remaining in the Press.

On the eighth day of the eighth month every year, monks and nuns, clergy and laymen, hold great assembly for worship on this spot. [On such an occasion,] numerous banners would appear in the sky, which are visible to all people. On the same day, many people would resolve their mind [for religion].

On the western side of the stupa, there is the river *Yi-lo-po-ti*. The river flows southward, after two thousand *li*, it enters the Ganges. The stupa is isolated from all sides, no people reside there, and the forest here is very deserted. Pilgrims to this place are often wounded by rhinoceroses and tigers.

Thirty *li* southeast from the stupa, there is a monastery named *Sha-pan-l'an* (Bandhana). There are . . . some . . . who constantly give offerings to the Master of *Dhyāna*, to enable them maintaining religious service at the stupa . . . ³."

Commenting on this part of document, FUJITA has reaffirmed the textual readings made by Lo Chen-yü⁴. On the matter concerning the subject, he agreed to the identification of Kuśinagara with present Kasia as suggested by Wilson, and identified by A. Cunningham. He also accepted the conclusion made by Cunningham, which identifies the present Mathā-kunwar-kot with the site where the Buddha entered into *nirvāṇa*⁵.

Apart from this agreement of identification of geographical and proper names, FUJITA however expressed his doubt about the location of the river *Yi-lo-po-ti*. He writes:

"The river *Yi-lo-po-ti* should be that of *A-shih-to-lu-ti* as mentioned in *Hsi-yü-chi*, which means *Wu-sheng* (i. e. Invincible) in Chinese language. This was the general name of the river at the time of the pilgrim. The old name *A-li-lo-pa-l'i* is a mistake. The word *li* should be a miscopying of *yi*. This name has been restored by Watters as *Airāvati*. Now, the *Memoir* has exactly named the river as *Yi-lo-po-li*, so it is correct⁶. But according to *Hsi-yü-chi*, it was stated that 'three or four *li* to the north-west of the city, crossed over the Ajitavati river, not far from the western bank, one reaches to the Sāla Grove . . .'. This indicates that the stupa should also be situated on the west side of the river. Now, this *Memoir* mentions that 'On the western side of the stupa, there is the river *Yi-lo-po-ti* . . .'. This is probably a mistake made by the editor, when he abridged the original text of the *Memoir* into the present form⁷."

³ Translated from original text in *Taishō shinshū laizōkyō* or the *Taishō Edition of Tripitaka in Chinese*, (hereafter, it is referred to as T. in this paper), vol. LI, p. 975. Also cf. W. FUCHS, op. cit. pp. 431 and 458.

⁴ The textual readings made by Lo Chen-yü on Hui-ch'ao's Ms. is included in his *Tun-huang shih-shih yi-shu* or *The Documents recovered from the Stone-cave of Tun-huang*, (Peking, 1909).

⁵ Cf. FUJITA, op. cit. pp. 3b—5a; A Cunningham's report on Kasia, in *Archaeological Survey of India Report*, No. 1 (1871. Simla), pp. 76 ff.

⁶ Cf. T. WATTERS, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, (London, 1905), II, pp. 28—29.

⁷ Translated from FUJITA's notes, op. cit. p. 4b. Also cf. S. BEAL's translation of Hsüan-tsang's travel, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, (popular edition), vol. II, p. 32.

So far as the original text of *the Memoir* is concerned, we cannot say anything definite. Whether it is a mistake made by the presumed abridger, or the original text was like that, we have no authentic evidence which can give us a clear answer to this question. It is so because the present text is the only version that came down to our hands. FUJITA's inductive reasoning may not be entirely groundless; nevertheless, it cannot also be accepted as the solitary conclusion. There is other evidence which may prove that the passages contained in the *Memoir* are correct, but it was the river that has changed its course from time to time.

According to the authentic report of the archaeologists, the river near the spot of Buddha-*nirvāṇa* often changes its course. In his survey of Kasia, A. CUNNINGHAM reported:

"Owing to the wanderings of the Little Gandak River, it is somewhat difficult to follow Hwen-thsang's (i. e. Hsüan-tsang's) account of the sacred edifices at Kuśinagara . . .

"The changes of name would, however, appear to have been as numerous as the changes of channel . . . while the present name is Chota Gandak, and the east inundation branch is called Khanna . . ."⁸

Cunningham has, however, found that the situation of the spot was identical with the description given by Hsüan-tsang. He reported:

"The spot where Buddha died is fixed by Hwen-thsang at 3 to 4 *li* or rather more than half a mile, to the northwest of the city, in a forest of Sal trees, at a short distance from the western bank of the Ajitavati River. The distance and direction correspond exactly with the site of the great mound now called the Fort of Māthā Kuār . . ."⁹

Twenty years after the publication of Cunningham's report, when A. C. C. Carlleyle conducted the archaeological excavation at the site of ancient Kuśinagara, he wrote a report which indicated that the channel and the name of inundations of Gandak had already differed from the report of Cunningham. Carlleyle observes that out of the eight river channels, the second and the third were near the spot where Buddha entered into *nirvāṇa*. He describes the location of these two inundations as follows:

"2. 'Khadi' or 'Khari', to the South and South-east of the great mound of the Māthā Kuṇwar-ka-Kot.

3. The 'Rakshahwa Chawar', close to the North and North-east of the Māthā Kuṇwar-ka-Kot . . . These eight channels are, of course, simply various old beds of the ancient Ajitavati or Hiranyavati . . ."¹⁰

The differences appearing in these two reports are indeed significant. This clearly proves that within a period of twenty years, the position and direction of the channels of Chota Gandak had a drastic change.

According to a calculation made by V. A. Smith, Hsüan-tsang has probably visited Kuśinagara in 635 A. D.¹¹ The date of Hui-ch'ao's pilgrimage to the

⁸ A. CUNNINGHAM, *op. cit.* p. 81 and also see his map in plate XXVI.

⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 82.

¹⁰ A. C. C. CARLLEYLE, *Archaeological Survey of India Report*, vol. XVIII (1883), p. 98.

¹¹ *The Itinerary of Yuan Chwang*, in T. WATTERS, *op. cit.* vol. II, p. 335.

same spot was possibly 724 A. D.¹² This means that the gap between these two visits are in an order of ninety years. Under these circumstances, there would be no occasion of surprise that in these ninety years the "wanderings of the Little Gandak River" again changed its channels and directions. And if this was the case, then the position of the river as described in the fragment of the Memoir is likely not a mistake; thus Fujita's suspicion is uncalled for.

The information given by Hui-ch'ao in his *Memoir* indicates that the general condition of Kuśinagara had further deteriorated. According to Fa-hsien's account, when he visited the city in 404 A. D., the city though "is almost deserted"¹³, yet there were "handful of monks and a few laymen as its inhabitants". At the time of Hsüan-tsang's visit, there were still "very few inhabitants" in the city¹⁴. But when Hui-ch'ao went there about 724 A. D., he found "no people reside in this place". This shows that the conditions had declined continuously with the advance of time.

Besides this, there are other interesting and significant factors contained in *Hui-ch'ao's Memoir*, which, strangely enough, have not been noted by the previous researchers. As we have seen, Hui-ch'ao writes:

"On the eighth day of the eighth month every year, monks and nuns, clergy and laymen, hold great assembly for worship on this spot. [On such an occasion,] numerous banners would appear in the sky, which are visible to all people . . ."

This is something new to our knowledge. Such an assembly had been referred to neither by Fa-hsien nor by Hsüan-tsang, except a brief reference made by I-tsing, we have no other evidence.

What is the assembly? What is its significance? There is no discussion, no reference whatsoever on these questions in the past.

Now, since Kuśinagara is the holy place where the Buddha entered *nirvāṇa*, this annual assembly must be connected with that event. To decide this, we have to take other related evidence into consideration. Fortunately, in the text of *Sa-p'o-to, pi-ni pi-p'o-sha*, the Chinese translation of *Sarvāstivādin-viṇya-vibhāṣā*, we find a passage, which says:

"[The Buddha] for the first time turned the Wheel of Law on the eighth day of the eighth month, at the moment when the Puṣya stars appear [in the sky]. [He] obtained *nirvāṇa* on the eighth day of the eighth month, at the time when the Puṣya stars appeared . . ."¹⁵

According to Hsüan-tsang, "the Sarvāstivādins say that the (Buddha) died on the 8th day of the Second half of the month *Kartika* . . .". Since *Kartika* is the

¹² This is based on the fact that after Hui-ch'ao left Kuśinagara, he spent about 625 days on walk, and then arrived at An-hsi in the December 727 A. D. Though we don't know how long was the time of his rest and pilgrimage in those places, but he should, at least, have taken another year or more for the purpose.

¹³ FA-HSIEN, *A Record of the Buddhist Countries*, translated by Li Yung-hsi, (Peking, 1957), p. 54.

¹⁴ WATERS, *op. cit.* vol. II, p. 26.

¹⁵ Translated from original text of *Sa-p'o-to pi-ni pi-p'o-sha*, ch. II, under the subtitle of *Ch'i-chung te ch'ai fa* (*The seven methods for obtaining the Commandment*), T. No. 1440, p. 510 b.

eighth month of Indian lunar system, it is obvious that both Hui-ch'ao and that anonymous translator of *Sarvāstivādin-vinaya-vibhāṣā* meant that the eighth month is the *Kartika* and not the eighth month of Chinese calendar. The mentioning of Puṣya asterism is rather confusing, because it is associated with the month *Pauṣa* or the tenth month in Indian calendar. But since the asterism was a favour star manson in Buddha legend, so the Sarvāstivādins might have injected it into their traditions¹⁶. These newly related findings are indeed of great interest, which shed new light on the anniversary assembly of Buddhānirvāṇa in India; and also on the geographical distribution of sectarian Buddhism in North India during that time.

In the past, our knowledge about the anniversary of Buddha *nirvāṇa* was only limited to certain regions of Central and Eastern Asian countries. For example, Hsüan-tsang informs us that when he was in Bamiyan, "there is a figure of Buddha lying in a sleeping position as when he attained *nirvāṇa* . . . The king of this (country), every time has assembled the great congregation of the Wu-che at the monastery, in which he offers all his possessions from wife to the royal treasury . . ." ¹⁷

Some Chinese Buddhist historical documents had also confirmed that such anniversary assembly of Buddha-*nirvāṇa* prevailed in China from the sixth century of Christian era and onward. In the text of a memorial submitted to the king by Hsiao Kang (503—551), we find the earliest Chinese reference of such ceremony, which stated that "a confessional ceremony of *nirvāṇa* was held" on an order from Emperor Wu of the Liang kingdom of the Southern Dynasties, who reigned between 502—549¹⁸. Subsequently according to a confessional prayer attributed to Emperor Wen of the Ch'en kingdom of the Southern Dynasties, who reigned between 560—566, he had also called one hundred monks for the Great Assembly for commemoration of the Event of Sāla Grove (*Sa-lo ta-chai*)¹⁹. Thereafter, we have a number of Chinese Buddhist texts, which continuously supplied information that this anniversary of Buddha's deathday became an official ceremony of Chinese Buddhists: for instance, in *Shih-shih yao-lan (An Important Reader to Buddhists)* by TAO-CH'ENG, dated 1019 A.D., it was stated: "The fifteenth day of the second month is the day of Buddha-*nirvāṇa*, there are monks and lay disciples of the world, who organize ceremony of worship. This is the rite of death-day anniversary"²⁰.

According to the discipline book of the Ch'an sect, there are detailed regulations of this ceremony. On the occasion, the monks led by their abbot

¹⁶ See Hsüan-tsang's record translated by S. BEAL, op. cit. p. II, 33. For the significance of Puṣya stars in Buddha legend, see J. PRZYLUCKI, *Concile de Rajagrha*, p. 88 and E. H. JOHNSTON, *The Buddhacarita*, (Calcutta, 1936), pp. XXIX, liv, 1—9, 2—36n. Puṣya is the asterism of the month *Pauṣa* or the tenth month of lunar calendar in India, in which the moon is under the star manson of Puṣya.

¹⁷ Cf. S. BEAL, op. cit., p. I, 53.

¹⁸ See Hsieh Ch'ih-chien *nieh-p'an ch'an ch'i (A letter of gratitude for the royal order of calling the nirvāṇa-ceremony)* in *Kuang Hung-ming chi*, ch. XXVIII, T. No. 2103, p. 330c.

¹⁹ See *Sa-lo-chai ch'an-wen* or *Confessional Prayer for the ceremony which commemorates the event in Sala Grove*, in *ibidem*, p. 334c.

²⁰ Quoted and translated from the original text of Tao-ch'eng, in T. No. 2127, p. 309c.

hold celebration in the main hall of their monastery, offer incense and chant hymns in praise of the Sage, chant scriptures and again offer incense to the shrine . . .²¹. With the spread of Ch'an Buddhism to Japan, this anniversary ceremony was also performed by the Japanese monks of the Zen sects. Later on monks of other schools in Japan have also accepted this practice, and performed yearly on the anniversary of *Buddha-nirvāṇa*²².

As far as India is concerned, the images of *Buddha-nirvāṇa* have been unearthed from the holy places of Buddhists such as Kasia, Mathura etc., nevertheless, we are unable to trace any literary evidence of this annual commemoration of the great *nirvāṇa*.

In the inscription of Aśoka and Sanskrit sources like the *Aśokāvādāna*, the assembly of *Pancavārṣika* was repeatedly mentioned, but it was a festival in honour of Bhiksus as well as the priests of other religions, which recurred every five years. During the festival the Bhiksus and priests were served with food and clothes²³, and the officials "go forth on official tours . . . for imparting this instruction in the Law of Piety . . . respectful attention to . . . and Sramanas²⁴". According to the *A-yü-wang chuan* or *Biography of King Aśoka*, the Chinese translation of *Aśokarājavadāna* (?), after the king was converted into Buddhism, accompanied by Monk Upagupta, he went to Kuśinagara and other Buddhist holy places. When he was at the spot of *Buddha-nirvāṇa*, he heard the story of Buddha's death. On hearing the story, the king was pained and fell senseless on the ground. Water was sprinkled on his face, he then recovered consciousness, and he donated a huge amount of gold, to construct a stupa on the spot²⁵. This episode is also mentioned in the *A-yü-wang ching* or the *Sūtra of King Aśoka*, which states that after the king regained consciousness, "he used ten thousand ounces gold, to maintain the worship on the spot where the Tathāgata had entered *nirvāṇa*, and also built a stupa . . ."²⁶ Despite these references, none of them supplied any definite information to solve the problem, viz. whether the *Pancavārṣika* assembly was, in any way, connected with the anniversary celebration of Buddha's death.

In the record of I-tsing, the Chinese pilgrim reported that when he was visiting the Pan-t'an-na monastery, "there usually dine more than a hundred monks. In spring and autumn, at the time of worships, there once had five

²¹ Different versions and regulations on this ceremony made by the ch'an-monks, see *Ch'ih-hsiu po-chang ch'ing-kuei* or the *Pure Regulations of Master Po-chang*, in *Hsü-tsang-ching* (Shanghai reprint, 1923) or the *Supplementary Tripitaka in Chinese and Japanese*, II/XVI/3, p. 243 b line 8 ff. Also see notes on this book by YI-JUN (compiled in 1823), by TSUNG-CHE (first published in 1103). Both of these commentaries are included in the same collection, II/XVI/4, pp. 311 b—312 a and II/XVI p. 443. Other works like MING-PEN's *Huan-chu-an ch'ing-kuei* or the *Pure Regulations of Huan-chu temple* (*Hsü-tsang-ching*, II/XVI/5, p. 487 b) also contain information on the regulations how to celebrate *nirvāṇa*-day of the Buddha.

²² Cf. list of Japanese references as cited by MOSHIZUKI SHINKŌ in his *Bukkyō Daijiten* (*The Great Dictionary of Buddhism*), vol. V, pp. 4149 ff.

²³ Cf. *The Aśokāvādāna*, edited by SUJITKUMAR MUKHOPADHYAYA, (New Delhi, 1963), pp. 126 and 175.

²⁴ Ref. to the Royal Edict III as translated by B. M. BARUA, the *Inscription of Aśoka*, part II, Calcutta 1943, p. 181.

²⁵ Cf. original text in T. No. 2042, p. 104 a.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, No. 2043, p. 138 a.

hundred monks arrived unexpectedly at the monastery . . . ²⁷ This reference seems comparatively significant, yet is too brief, and fails to clarify whether those worships were related to the annual celebration of *nirvāna* of the Buddha or not.

It was under such an obscure position that a well-informed scholar, Mochizuki Shinkō, could only make a guess. Thus he said that "such assembly should have also taken place in India to commemorate the death anniversary of Buddha" ²⁸.

Now, under these circumstances, the information that we quoted and translated from *Hui-ch'ao's Memoir* is, indeed, of great significance. This is perhaps the first literary evidence which clearly proves that such an anniversary ceremony was actually held at Kuśinagara during the first quarter of the eighth century A. D.

Further, since this anniversary of Buddha's *nirvāna* was celebrated in concord with the Sarvāstivādin tradition, it has indirectly proved that the monks and lay disciples who gathered at the assembly on the spot where the Buddha entered *nirvāna*, belonged to the Sarvāstivāda sect. In this connection, our guess does not solely depend on the hint given by Hui-ch'ao, but we have to collect other evidence. According to I-tsing, when he was in India during the last quarter of the seventh century A. D., "all the four Nikayas were in practice" over the region of Central India. Of these four, the Sarvāstivādins "flourishes the most" ²⁹.

This evidence is also indirectly supported by the term of *ch'an-shih* as mentioned in the *Memoir* itself. As we have seen, when Hui-ch'ao writes his record on Kuśinagara, he called the monks there *ch'an-shih* or the Master of *Dhyāna*. This is the only place in his *Memoir* where Hui-ch'ao has employed the term.

The usage of the term *ch'an-shih* in Chinese history has its own evolution. At the time of Kumārajīva in China, i. e. in the first two decades of the fifth century, a Chinese monk Seng-chao (384—414) called Buddhahadra (357—429) *ch'an-shih* or a Master of *Dhyāna* or Meditation ³⁰. This probably is the earliest reference to the term, and Buddhahadra himself was a Master of *Dhyāna* and closely associated with the Sarvāstivādin tradition ³¹. Between the sixth and eighth centuries, *ch'an-shih* was a common term for the eminent monks who practised Meditation, and the term is not limited to

²⁷ Quoted and translated from the original text by I-tsing, in *T. No. 2125*, p. 209b lines 27—28. The passage which I translated here as "In spring and autumn, at the time of worships, there once had . . ." is from original text *Ch'un-ch'iu erh-chi, li-pai chih-chi . . .* (in line 28). Previously, this passage has been loosely translated by J. TAKAKUSU as "In spring and autumn, the best seasons for pilgrimage . . .", see *A Record of the Buddhist Religion as Practised in India and the Malay Archipelago*, Oxford, 1896, p. 38. His translation has eventually lost the significant passage of "at the time of worships" as contained in original text.

²⁸ MOCHIZUKI SHINKŌ, op. cit. p. 4149c.

²⁹ Cf. J. TAKAKUSU, op. cit. p. XXIV. The Chinese Buddhist records always classified the location of Kuśinagara within the territory of Central India.

³⁰ See T'ANG YUNG-T'UNG, *Han-wei liang-chin nan-po-ch'ao to-chiao-shih (A History of Buddhism in China during the period from the Han to the Southern and Northern Dynasties)*, new edition (Shanghai, 1955), pp. 305—6.

³¹ Cf. E. ZÜRCHER, *Buddhist Conquest of China*, (Leiden, 1959), p. 223.

sectarian Buddhism. But from the end of the eighth century and onwards, the Ch'an sect had achieved a great development, and overshadowed the meditative monks who belonged to the other sects. Thereafter, *ch'an-shih* became a term that was exclusively used for the monks of the Ch'an sect.

From this brief survey, we know that at the time of Hui-ch'ao, the term *ch'an-shih* was an honorary title of the monks who practised Buddhist meditation, but according to earlier tradition the term was once specifically coined and used for the monks of Meditation according to the Sarvāstivādin tradition. It looks likely that Hui-ch'ao has specially employed the term to distinguish the Sarvāstivādins from the rest members of the Saṅgha in India.

The identification and allocation of Sha-pan-t'an monastery is a difficult problem. This is because the literary sources related to the monastery are extremely confused. According to Pali and Tibetan traditions, and also the Chinese translation of *Ta-pan nieh-p'an ching* or *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, after the Buddha entered *nirvāṇa*, his corpse was carried on a bier through the northern gate to the centre of Kuśinagara town, and then through the eastern gate to the coronation hall of Mallains for cremation. This hall was then known as the Makuta-bandhana monastery. This indicates that the hall or monastery was situated outside the eastern gate of Kuśinagara town. This tradition was further strengthened by the account given by the *Keng-pen-shuo-i-ch'ieh-yu-pu pi-nai-yeh tsa-shih*, the Chinese translation of *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya-kṣudrakavastu*, which had a similar description about the site of the monastery³².

The second tradition claims that the spot where the corpse of Buddha was cremated, was located outside the western gate of Kuśinagara. This was mentioned in two different Chinese translations of the *Nirvāṇa-sūtra*, viz., the *Fo-ni-huan ching* and the *Pan-ni-huan ching*³³.

Thirdly, according to the *Yu-hsing ching* and the account of Hsüan-tsang, the spot of Buddha's cremation was described as outside the northern gate of the town³⁴.

All these traditions meant that, long before the time of Hui-ch'ao, literary sources related to the spot of Buddha's cremation had already been very controversial. Now, the information from Hui-ch'ao's Memoir is not only of no help for solving this controversial problem, but added more difficulties. This is so, because, in the past, we had only three versions of account about the spot of cremation, i. e. outside the eastern gate, outside the western gate, and outside the northern gate. But, if we added the description made by Hui-ch'ao, a fourth theory now appeared, that is to say: "thirty *li* southeast from the stupa (of *nirvāṇa*)" was the Sha-pan-t'an monastery, which FUJITA thought identical with the spot where the corpse of Buddha was cremated. Though FUJITA himself was doubtful of his suggestion about the

³² For the Pali source, see the *Mahā Aparinibbāna-sūtra*, VI, translated by RHYE DAVIDS. T. W. in *The Sacred Books of the East*, vol. XI, (London, 1900), pp. 125, 129. About the Tibetan reference, see WATERS, op. cit. p. 38. For the Chinese translations, see T. vol. I, p. 206 b lines 12—13, 19 and also T. vol. XXIV, p. 400 c lines 14—15.

³³ Cf. the original passages in T. vol. I, pp. 170 c lines 5—6; 189 a line 26.

³⁴ Ibidem, p. 28 a lines 9—10 and S. BEAL, (translated.), *Chinese Accounts of India*, vol. III, Calcutta reprint, 1958, p. 287.

place, he cautiously stated that "the spot of Buddha's cremation had no tradition that is universally accepted by all. Some say it was outside the eastern gate of the city; some say it was outside the western gate. I don't know which one is correct!"³⁵

When A. Cunningham went to Kasia, to survey the ruined site of Kuśinagara, he compared both the Pali and Hsüan-tsang's account of Kuśinagara. After he surveyed the site, he was convinced that the cremation spot of the Buddha is identical with the Ramabhar-tila, a mound "partly lying to the north, partly to the east" of the old site of Kuśinagara³⁶. This identification is accepted by many other archaeologists and indologists, yet the discrepancy between different traditions is very obvious. This is the reason why there are some scholars who still hesitate to agree with the suggestion made by Cunningham. FUJITA is one of these scholars.

Another Japanese scholar, Adachi Kiruku, has also expressed his doubt about the spot of Buddha's cremation. He states: "The location of Pan-t'an-na monastery as mentioned by I-tsing and Hui-ch'ao, seemed different from that of the T'ien-kuan (Makuta-bandhana) monastery."³⁷ This remark seems worthy of consideration, because Hui-ch'ao himself did not clearly claim that the monastery of Sha-pan-t'an was the spot of Buddha's cremation. Moreover, thirty *li* southeast from the stupa is too far away, even if it is counted from the spot of Buddha-*nirvāṇa*, because all sources are agreed that the spot was closely outside the city-gate.

On any account, the location of P'an-t'an-na or Sha-pan-t'an monastery referred to by Hui-ch'ao seems still uncertain. Unless some new excavations dig out more evidence, or new material is recovered and available, the identification of this monastery would remain inconclusive, controversial and without a satisfactory conclusion.

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* This paper is abstracted from my forthcoming book *On Hui-ch'ao's Memoir of a Pilgrimage to the Five Regions of India*. Information related to the original text of this Ms. recovered from Tun-huang, see P. PELLIOU, *Une bibliothèque médiévale retrouvée, Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient*, VIII (1908), pp. 511—12; W. FUCHS, *Hui-ch'ao's Pilgerreise durch Nordwest-Indien und Zentral-Asien um 726, Sitzung der Phil.-hist. Klasse v. 22* (1938), pp. 426—27; and J. SRAM, *Hui-ch'ao's Pilgrimage to India, New Orient*, No. 4 (1961). Problems relating to the life and writings of this Sillian monk, and a general estimate about his contribution has been discussed in *Hui-ch'ao and his Works: A reassessment*, a paper read before the XXVI International Congress of Orientalists (New Delhi, 1964), and published in the *Indo-Asian Culture* (New Delhi), XII (1964), pp. 177—90.

³⁵ FUJITA, op. cit. p. 5a—b.

³⁶ A. CUNNINGHAM, op. cit. p. 85 and plate XXVI. Although there is a book, *The Remains near Kasia* by V. A. SMITH, which contains certain views contradictory to that of Cunningham, but the book is not available to me at the moment.

³⁷ Quoted and translated from *Hokken-den kōshō* (*Studies on the Record of Fahsien*), Chinese translation by HO CHIEN-MIN and CHANG HSIAO-LIU, (Shanghai, 1937), pp. 179 ff.