

# The Call of the Siren: *Bod, Baútidos, Baítai,* and Related Names (Studies in Historical Geography II)

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## 1. Introduction

**G**eographical or ethnical names, like ethnical identities, are like slippery fishes: one can hardly catch them, even less, pin them down for ever. The ‘Germans’, for example, are called so only by English speakers. The name may have belonged to a tribe in Belgium, but was then applied by the Romans to various tribes of Northern Europe.<sup>1</sup> As a tribal or linguistic label, ‘German (ic)’ also applies to the English or to the Dutch, the latter bearing in English the same designation that the Germans claim for themselves: ‘deutsch’. This by the way, may have meant nothing but ‘being part of the people’.<sup>2</sup> The French call them ‘Allemands’, just because one of the many Germanic – and in that case, German – tribes, the Allemannen, settled in their neighbourhood. The French, on the other hand, are called so, because a Germanic and, in that case again, German tribe, the ‘Franken’ (originally meaning the ‘avid’, ‘audacious’, later the ‘free’ people) moved into France, and became the ruling elite.<sup>3</sup>

The situation is similar or even worse in other parts of the world. Personal names may become ethnic names, as in the case of the Tuyuhun.<sup>4</sup> Names of neighbouring tribes might be projected onto their overlords, as in the case of the Țaža, who were conquered by the Tuyuhun, the latter then being called Țaža by the Tibetans. Ethnic names may become geographical names, but then, place names may travel along with ethnic groups. If sticking to the place, ethnic names may attach to new in-coming groups, as in the case of the Sogdians, whose name became attached to some Mongolian people: as the latter

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<sup>1</sup> See URL 1. A list of URLs in order of their appearance is provided after the references.

<sup>2</sup> See URL 2.

<sup>3</sup> See URL 3.

<sup>4</sup> Molè 1970: xiii.

arrived in the place that was formerly associated with the Sogdians, they were called *Sog.po* by the Tibetans. We find the name *Cīna* in the *Mahābhārata* or the *Bṛhat Saṃhitā*, not for ‘China’ or ‘Chinese’ as many translations would have it, but most likely originally for some place or people in the Pamirs, possibly under Chinese suzerainty; later the same people (or only their name?) are apparently attested in Kinnaur.<sup>5</sup> By contrast, one can find in Greek sources the name *Taugast* for *Taugats* < *Ταβγατ* (~ *Taqbač*) used by the Turks for China,<sup>6</sup> apparently referring retrospectively to the time when the latter was ruled by the *Tuoba* (*Taqbač*) or Northern Wei (386 to 534).<sup>7</sup>

I don’t think this is a new insight. Aldenderfer, e.g., writes that ethnicity “can be both ascribed by outsiders as well as generated within some group. As such, it is highly fluid, situational, and subject to great variability”.<sup>8</sup> Recent ethnographic research has emphasised the vagueness of the terms *Tibet*, *Tibetan*, *Tibetanness*, and *Tibetan culture*, mostly when dealing with ethnic groups at the fringes of the so-called ‘Tibetan cultural sphere’. Nevertheless, for a long time, all this has been, and still tends to be, forgotten when dealing with *the* Tibetans in history. There has been, and still is, a strong tendency to perceive them as having been all the time the same people at the same place, that is, all over the Tibetan Plateau, and as always having been called, or even always having referred to themselves, with the same name. If possible ancestors are discussed, at all, there is similarly only one single candidate, the Sino-Tibetan/ Tibeto-Burman *Qiang*, often enough treated as a mere synonym.

In a similar vein, hardly anybody doubts that the Greek designation *Βαῖται/ Baītai*, as found in Ptolemaios’ 2<sup>nd</sup> century description of Central Asia, and the Kashmīrī designation *Bhauṭṭa*, as appearing in the 12<sup>th</sup> century *Rājatarāṅginī*, are foreign renderings of the Tibetan ethnonym *Bod*, even though this assumption has never been proven. One of the rare exceptions, critical to this position, is de La Vaissière,<sup>9</sup> see further below.

Two exemplary citations from Laufer and Kaschewski, one from the beginnings of serious Tibetan studies and the other a more contemporary one, may suffice:

The Tibetans designate themselves *Bod* (Sanskrit *Bhota*), and Ptolemy knows them by the name *Βαῖται* inhabiting [!] the river *Bautisos*, identified with the Upper Yellow River. The

<sup>5</sup> See Tucci 1971; 1977: 82.

<sup>6</sup> See Chavannes 1900: 230, n.2.

<sup>7</sup> See URL 4.

<sup>8</sup> Aldenderfer 2017: 2.

<sup>9</sup> de La Vaissière 2009.

present territory of Western Kansu and Sichuan was the cradle of the Tibetan branch which moved from there westward into the present territory of Tibet, probably during the first centuries of our era.<sup>10</sup>

There is evidence that the name *Baῦται* is derived from the Indian *Bhota*, the latter word stemming from *bod*, the proper name of Tibetans from antiquity. The river *Bautisos* might be the *Tsangpo*, the main river of Central Tibet. Ptolemy seems to have been familiar with Tibetan customs, although we are yet to determine what cultures and languages mediated such knowledge.<sup>11</sup>

Kaschewski overlooks that the Greek travellers and geographers could not have encountered a form *Bhota* or *Bhoṭa* in the 2<sup>nd</sup> c CE, if the first variants of the Indian designation were *Bhauṭṭa* or *Bhāṭṭa*. From a geographical point of view it is more than surprising how the *Bautisos* could have ever been associated with the *Brahmaputra* or *Yar.kluñs Rtsañs.po* of Central Tibet.

From a linguistic point of view, one may wonder how the Greek and Indian forms could have been derived from a Tibetan word – or how the Tibetan word should have looked like initially: an original initial *b* would hardly have turned into a *bh*<sup>12</sup> and a final dental *t* or *d* would most probably not turn into a (double) retroflex *ṭ(t)*, as in the case of the *Bhauṭṭa* or the present day *Bhoṭa* or *Bhoṭia*. An original plain *o* would most likely not turn into an *au* (except in an attempt at Sanskritisation, reverting the natural sound change), not to speak of an *ai* or an *ā*. But which original vowel or diphthong should we assume? The question of the original vowel would depend on the question when and where could the Indians have come into contact with people being called, or calling themselves, something like *bod* or, for that matter, *bhauṭ*. It would likewise depend on the question when (and where) did the 'Tibetans'-to-be start to call themselves *bod* (see also section 4)? Any positive answer would, by necessity, be circular.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Laufer 1914: 162.

<sup>11</sup> Kaschewski 2001: 4.

<sup>12</sup> This might perhaps have happened at a comparatively recent time, when voiced initials not 'protected' by a prefix developed into low tone, semi-aspirated, voiceless initials, although they might well have been perceived as aspirated voiceless initials. Unfortunately, nobody knows when and where this development of devoicing started, and whether the Indians could have taken notice of it.

<sup>13</sup> Nathan W. Hill, who believes a) in the corruption of the name *Baῦται* and thus in a 'correct' *\*Baῦται*, and b) in the relationship with Tibetan *bod*, refers in this context to the *Fā Qiāng* (發羌), whose name would likewise contain a rounded vowel, see Hill 2006: 88. These people are believed by some late Chinese sources to be the founders of the 'Tibetans'-to-be.

If there is an identity between the names, at all, then the Tibetan word *bod* could well be the derived one, because an initial original *bh* might be interpreted as *b* in Tibetan,<sup>14</sup> an *au* (though not an *ai*) would automatically become *o*, a final retroflex *t* would similarly have turned automatically into a dental *t*, written as *d*. Historical linguists might say that we perished in the arms of the *Sirene des Gleichklangs* (the Siren of phonetic similarity).<sup>15</sup>

Nevertheless, the apparent similarity of these names makes it difficult to believe in mere coincidence. I shall thus argue that the Tibetans acquired the name *bod* from some of their neighbours, either because they, that is, the ruling elite, was, or wanted to be, associated with these neighbours or because the name was transferred upon them by outsiders. A further name, that of the Bhaṭa Hor, settling in Gansu, seems to belong to the same set. I shall first discuss the Baitai and the river Bautisos in section 2. Subsequently, section 3 will deal with the Bhauṭa (var. Bhāṭa, Bhaṭa, Bhuṭa) of the 12<sup>th</sup> century *Rājatarāṅgiṇī*, which were in all likelihood a non-Tibetan tribe, as well as with the possibly related Bhatta or Bhattavaryân of Turkic origin, who settled in or near Gilgit. A rather brief note on the references to the various entities called *bod* in Old Tibetan documents follows in section 4. This will be followed in section 5 by a discussion of the Fā Qiāng, putative ancestors or founders of the Tibetans and on Fánmí, son of Tūfā Lìlùgū, another putative founder of Xianbei/ Tuyuhun, that is, Mongolic origin. Section 6 will deal with the Bhaṭa Hor and their protector deity Pe.har(a) as well as with other names in *-hor* or *-hara*. As a conclusion, some hypotheses about the possible relations between all these names will follow in section 7. Digressions on two more Ptolemaian names,

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N. W. Hill wants to follow Beckwith 1977: 1–6, according to whom the character 發 (simplified 发) would have been “pronounced something like *bwat*”. Beckwith 1977: 5, however, is initially somewhat more cautious. He gives the pronunciation as “/b’uât/, /b’wât/, /p’iwat/ (etc.)”. Unfortunately, vowels and vocalic glides are particularly difficult to reconstruct, and so the rounded vowel glide is all but certain. For the element Fā 發, the Chinese Text Project gives the Middle Chinese (Tang) reconstruction as \*biæt (URL 5), which is, in fact, closer to the Greek rendering *Baítai*. Wikimedia lists the following reconstructions: Middle Chinese \*/puæt/ (Zhengzhang Shangfang) or \*/puæt/ (Pulleyblank) or \*/p’iæt/ (Wang Li) or \*/p’iwæt/ (Karlgren), as well as Old Chinese \*/Cə.pat/ (Baxter and Sagart), see URL 6.

Whatever the correct reconstruction, it is by no means clear that the Fā Qiāng (發羌) have anything to do with the ‘Tibetans’-to-be. This question will be taken up in section 5.

<sup>14</sup> The aspiration might possibly have triggered a perception of the initial as not being fully voiced or as not being prenasalised, hence a rendering without the *h* preinitial.

<sup>15</sup> For this often-repeated metaphor see Hoefler 1839: 26.

the *Βύλται*, Býltai and the *Δαβάσαι*, Dabásai will be found in Appendix A and Appendix B.

The problem of fluidity or internal complexity not only holds for large ethnical groups, such as the Qiang or the Tibetans, but also for each of the smaller subgroups, such as tribes, clans, or even families. As I cannot avoid referring to these groups and subgroups as if they were homogeneous units, because otherwise, I could not talk about them, I, nevertheless, hope that I can avoid essentialising them. Where I fail, the reader is kindly requested to mentally undo any such notion of homogeneity and identity.

Before going on, it seems to be necessary to spend a few lines on the question how to write or transliterate foreign names. There is a growing tendency in academic writing to dispense with diacritic signs, whether they refer to tones, vowel quantity, vowel quality, or special consonants. I am not quite convinced that this always furthers the progress of understanding. In the context of this investigation, exact name forms are in many cases crucial for the argument, in other cases, the use of diacritics also signals the kind of respect towards foreign cultures, personages, and languages, that I would expect for my own culture and language (in the particular case of German, the Umlaute *ä*, *ö*, and *ü*, or the sharp *s*/ *eszett* *ß*).

Indian names thus require the distinction of vowel length (with a macron on the latter: *ā*, *ī*, *ū*), the distinction of dental and retroflex consonants (with a dot below the latter: *ṭ*, *ḍ*, *ṇ*, *ʃ*), the distinction of various nasals (*ṅ* (*ng*), *ṅ̄* (*ny*), *ṇ*, *n*, *m*, and *m̄* for nasalisation), the distinction of three sibilants: dental *s*, retroflex *ʃ*, palatal *ś*, and the distinction of consonantal and vocalic *r* and *l* (with a dot below the latter). I shall compromise only on a few modern place names, where *ś* will be rendered as *sh*, *ṅ* as *ng*, but vowel length and retroflexes will be kept.

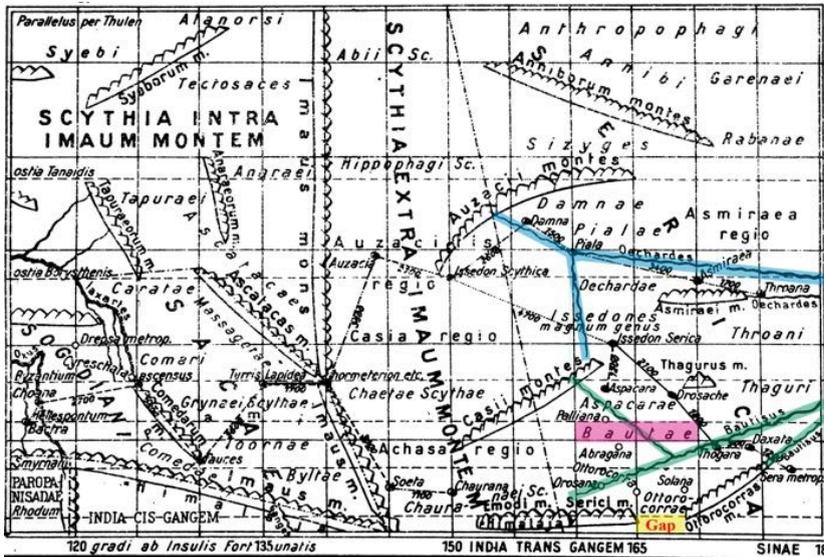
Transliteration of Old and Classical Tibetan names will basically follow the same principles, with *ž* and *š* for the sibilants *ʃ* and *ʃ̣* and *ḥ* for the (originally voiced, velar, postvelar, or even laringal) consonant *ṇ̇*. Syllable boundaries within words, but not between words, will be indicated by a dot.

Following a recommendation by the editors, most Chinese names will be given in simplified pinyin. Only in special cases, Chinese characters and tone marks will be given.

## 2. *Baitai and Baütisos – the Central Asian Perspective*

The *Baítai* are first mentioned by the 2<sup>nd</sup> century Greek geographer Ptolemaios in his description of the land *Serike*, or the Scythian land east of the Imaon range in his *Geographike Hyphegesis; Γεωγραφικὴ Ὑφήγησις*. Ptolemaios' maps have not come down to us. But he gave detailed coordinates, after which maps were drawn throughout history. I will base the discussion on the maps drawn by Herrmann,<sup>16</sup> Ronca,<sup>17</sup> and Lindegger.<sup>18</sup>

At the western part of the northern rim of the region in question, one finds the so-called Auzakia mountains, on the southern rim, one finds the Emodos and/ or Seric range and after a certain gap the Ottorokoras range. In the middle, somewhat surprisingly, one finds another larger mountain chain, the Kasia mountains and, further to the east, the Asmiraia mountains. In the northern half, between the Auzakia and the Kasia mountains, with two confluents coming from both ranges, flows a large river, the Oichardes. This river can be easily identified as the Tarim. In the southern half, somewhat more to the west flows a second river, again with two confluents, one from the Kasia mountains, and the other from the Seric range. This is the river Baútidos *Βαύτισος*, the identity of which is in debate, Map 1.



Map 1 — Ptolemaios' map as represented in Herrmann 1938: Tafel IX. With additional emphasis on the Oichardes and Bautisos river systems, the gap between the 'Emodi' and 'Ottorocoras' ranges, and the position of

<sup>16</sup> Herrmann 1938: Tafel IX.

<sup>17</sup> Ronca 1967: Tabula II.

<sup>18</sup> Lindegger 1993: Karte I and Karte II.

the 'Baute'.



Map 2 — Cutout of Map 1.

Somewhat north of the Baútis, across the northwestern confluent live the Baitai, *Βαῖται*, see enlarged cutout, Map 2. Later variants of the name are attested as *Βαεῖται*, *Βᾶται*, and perhaps rarely also *Βαῦται*;<sup>19</sup> an Arabic translation of Ptolemaios has the form *Bâtis*.<sup>20</sup>

This ethnic name has since long been associated with the river name. The spelling *Βαῖται* is commonly taken as a corruption of an original *Βαῦται*. Arguably, Ptolemaios often derived ethnic names from mountains, rivers, or towns, see the Oichardai south of the Oichardes or the Ottorokorai somewhat northeast of the Ottorokoras mountains. According to this derivation principle, one could have expected to find some \*Bautisoi or the like near the river Baútis. If the derivation should be the other way round, one could have expected a name form \*Bautis. It is thus all but certain that the name Baitai, *Βαῖται* is derived from the river name and not perhaps an originally independent and unrelated name. However, from the more or less fictional form Baûtai, *Βαῦται*, it is not far to *Bod*, even less to the *Bhauṭṭa*. As de La Vaissière puts it:

[t]he problem is that this interpretation is problematic, to say the least. First of all, not a single manuscript gives the reading *Bautai*.<sup>21</sup> All of them give *Baitai*, or *Baeitai*, or *Batai*. Ammianus gives *Beatae*. In other words the text has been corrected by most commentators to match *Bhauṭṭa-Bod*, while

<sup>19</sup> Lindegger 1993: 89, n.4, 153, critical apparatus to line 14 of the Greek text.

<sup>20</sup> Beckwith 1977: 53.

<sup>21</sup> Except possibly the one text mentioned by Lindegger 1993: 153, critical apparatus to line 14 of the Greek text.

Ptolemy predates the next mentioning of Bhauṭṭa-Bod by more than half a millennium.<sup>22</sup>

Ptolemaios bashing has become a common sport. His 'crime' was not only that he was too conservative to switch to the heliocentric model, which, at that time, did not yet result in better astronomical calculations. He also apparently 'handled' his observational data in order to reach a practical table from which to calculate the positions of the stars, a table that served its purpose astonishingly well, as noted by Gingerich.<sup>23</sup> As Gingerich further comments, cleaning up data according to one's theoretical preconception is quite a common practice also in our times.<sup>24</sup>

Ptolemaios' amazing geographical knowledge certainly should be valued independently. Ptolemaios was the first to set up a coherent coordinate system of latitudes and longitudes, complete with a catalogue, containing 6345 names of settlements and landmarks according to their position in the coordinate system, plus another 1404 names of peoples and landscapes with only rough localisations.<sup>25</sup> He was also the first, not to design just an individual map, but an atlas with a world map and 26 separate regional maps within this coordinate system,<sup>26</sup> the first Global Positioning System, so to speak. His explicit aim was to prevent the usual distortions that would normally occur through the process of repeated copying by adding up repeated minimal deviations.<sup>27</sup> Accordingly, all available Ptolemaian Renaissance maps, as well as the modern redrawings, look very much the same. What varies is only the interpretation of the data and the exact position of items without fixed coordinates. Again, Ptolemaios' main purpose was perhaps not so much to describe the earth scientifically, than to set up a practicable model. Given the fact that his maps or coordinates were copied through the centuries, they apparently served their pragmatic purpose to a certain extent.

It is true that Ptolemaios' geographical coordinates for Central Asia, and particularly for the Tarim Basin, are not unproblematic, as he manipulated those of his predecessor Marinus in a – by modern standards – not very scientific way. He did, however, make his changes explicit. Without exactly knowing the data, he shortened the distances in the east-west direction, partly because he had based his calculations on too small a circumference of the earth,<sup>28</sup> and partly because the distances

<sup>22</sup> de La Vaissière 2009: 532.

<sup>23</sup> Gingerich 1993: 70 and passim.

<sup>24</sup> Gingerich 1993: 70f.

<sup>25</sup> Stückelberger and Graßhoff 2006: 23.

<sup>26</sup> Stückelberger 2004: 38.

<sup>27</sup> Stückelberger and Graßhoff 2006: 13 ad. Ptol. 1.18.2, 1.19.1-3, 105, 107.

<sup>28</sup> He used the 180,000 stadia, as calculated by Poseidonios, instead of the 250,000 stadia as calculated by Eratosthenes. The length of a stadion varies considerably,

were given far in excess by Marinus. It was certainly easier to validate the positions of the stars than the positions of landmarks handed down in imprecise itineraries by pragmatically oriented travellers. Such itineraries would at best contain distances in terms of days spent on the road. They would also give a few directions and landmarks, but usually not enough to avoid ambiguities. The itineraries of Chinese pilgrims, written down up to a decade or more after they passed a certain place, are a case in point.<sup>29</sup> Even if distances were established by counting one's steps or by mechanically counting the number of turns of a chariot wheel, the 'distance as the crow flies' necessary for the cartographer could not have been established, because all roads were more or less meandering, especially those in the hills and mountains.

Nevertheless, while Ptolemaios may have misinterpreted some information in Marinus' notes and maps or from other sources, it is not very likely that he messed up everything that Marinus had right, as Herrmann suggests.<sup>30</sup> Marinus, on his part, had used an itinerary compiled by commercial travellers on behalf of a certain Maës. Herrmann's 'reconstruction' of the 'original map' is in itself not without circularity. Herrmann assumes without any further proof that the travellers had used an official Chinese itinerary, translated for foreigners to serve as a tour guide. He further assumes that the Chinese information was absolutely correct.<sup>31</sup> Therefore much of Marinus' map would have been in the correct order, and Ptolemaios would have been the main culprit for the resulting confusion. Most likely, however, there never existed anything like a Chinese 'tour guide', particularly also because the trade routes were segmented, and the individual segments were travelled or controlled by different ethnic groups, so that no Greek and no Persian trader ever came further east than to the so-called 'Stone Tower', and no Chinese trader would have come that far west:

This eye-witness report [conveyed to Maes] ends within our range of concern. It starts in Bactria and ends at a certain place at the eastern end of the Pamir plateau. The caravan did not

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hence the circumference calculated by Eratosthenes corresponds to 39,690km, that calculated by Poseidonios corresponds to 35,514km (Stückelberger and Graßhoff 2006: 25, n. 64), an error of somewhat more than 10%. As a result, the known east-west distances from Europe to the Caspian Sea, which were based on realistic measurements, are way too long in relation to the circumference. This forced Ptolemaios to compress the east-west distances further east, while the north-south distances automatically became elongated, see Geus and Tupikova 2013: 125–27. This also implies that distances in north-south direction should not further be increased, and mountains, rivers, and people not be shifted further south.

<sup>29</sup> This will be discussed in more detail in Zeisler, to appear c.

<sup>30</sup> Herrmann 1938.

<sup>31</sup> Herrmann 1938: 112.

proceed further than that final point, and the merchants learned that there is another meeting point down in the Xinjiang plains, and that from there cargo will go a long way to where the people called Seres barter silk against western goods.<sup>32</sup>

There is, quite surprisingly, one gross misunderstanding, which Herrmann allows Marinus to commit: Jiaohe (Yar-Khoto), the ancient capital of Turfān, some 200 km north of the Tarim or Oichardes is embraced by two arms of a comparatively insignificant river, but Marinus would have identified this river with the Oichardes. Furthermore, Marinus, and with him Ptolemaios, apparently locate the confluence of the two main sources of the Oichardes/ Tarim at Turfān.<sup>33</sup> Accordingly, the Kasia mountains and the Auzakia mountains (that is, most probably the Tianshan or one part of the Pamirs), where the two real confluents of the Tarim originate, are placed in the middle of the Tarim Basin fully disconnected from the mountain chains to which they belong.

A third conceptual error – which may be only Ptolemaios' – concerns a third confluent arising in the eastern end of the Asmiraia mountains near Dunhuang. On the other hand, or perhaps as a result, the Lop Nor is missing in Ptolemaios' data and the maps based thereupon.<sup>34</sup>

The Kasia mountains might be the centre of the problem: they appear as a northern branch of the Emodos range in Herrmann's 'reconstruction' of Marinus' map, but are placed much further north, and are disconnected from any other chain in Ptolemaios' map.<sup>35</sup> There is no place for such a range, except if one would identify the Kasia mountains with the Kunlun, and the Emodos range with a mountain chain further south.

Nevertheless, with respect to his 'reconstructed' map of Marinus, Herrmann identifies the Emodos range with the Kunlun. With respect to Ptolemaios' coordinates, however, he suggests an identity of the Emodos range with the far away Himalayas.<sup>36</sup> As a result, the Kasia mountains, having to be identified with the Kunlun, would lack both their eastern continuation (the Arkha Tāgh or Przhevalsky range and the Bokalyk Tāgh or Marco-Polo range) and their northeastern continuation (the Altyn Tāgh). I do not really understand Herrmann's

<sup>32</sup> Falk 2014: 16a.

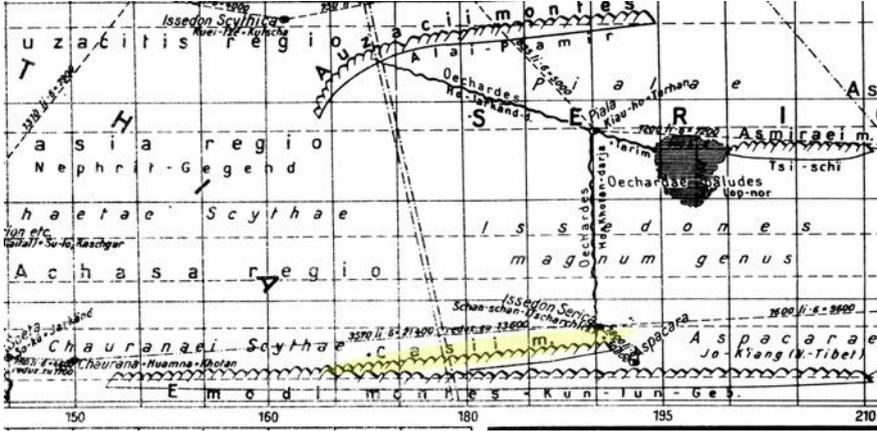
<sup>33</sup> Herrmann 1938: 113–15.

<sup>34</sup> See, e.g., Herrmann 1938: Tafel IX, 1, 2.

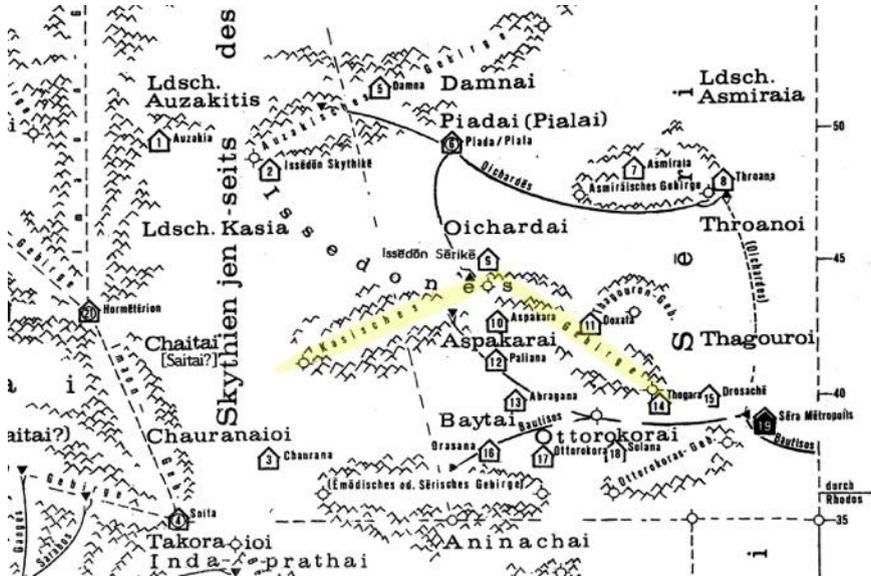
<sup>35</sup> Herrmann 1938: Tafel IX; Ronca 1967, Tabula II; Lindegger 1993: Karte I and Karte II.

<sup>36</sup> Herrmann 1938: Tafel IX.

motivation for these different identifications of the Emodos range, which in both cases, starts just beyond (south) of where Khotan lies (called Chaurana by Marinus and Ptolemaios).



Map 3 — Cutout of Herrmann's (1938: Tafel IX) 'reconstruction' of Marinus' map, Kasia mountains highlighted.



Map 4 — Cutout of Lindegger (1993, Karte I), Kasia mountains highlighted, courtesy Tibet-Institut Rikon.

One reason, for identifying the Emodos range *also* with the Himalayas is the fact that according to Ptolemaios' Indian coordinates, India is joined just beyond this range, see the lower edges of Map 4 and Map 5, or also Map 23 and Map 25 in Appendix B.<sup>37</sup> But this would imply that for Ptolemaios and his sources Tibet or rather the Tibetan Plateau simply did not exist. The vast plateau just shrank into a single line of mountains.

Lindegger has a different approach: according to him, the Emodos can be identified with the Kunlun and its east-southeastern extension.<sup>38</sup> This would then be joined by the Ottorokoras range, identified as a range in Qinghai, east of the Kokonor. This latter range, however, could then only belong to the Qilianshan. The Kasia mountains could then be identified with the Altyn Tāgh. As a result, Lindegger has to stretch the Kasia mountains far to the southeast, so that they meet with the Ottorokoras range. The Bautisos would then have to be located in the Tsaidam. This is quite unlikely: there is simply no large river flowing immediately north of the eastern Kunlun continuation (the Arkha Tāgh and Bokalyk Tāgh).

de La Vaissière, on the other hand, suggests identifying Kasia with Kashgar<sup>39</sup> and the Kasia mountains with the Pamirs and (part of) the Tienshan continuation.<sup>40</sup> This would possibly well fit the source rivers of the Tarim/ Oichardes. It would leave the directions of the Emodos and the Ottorokoras ranges intact, and it would also leave enough space to the south for the second river.

The second river, the Bautisos, appears almost as a schematic copy of the Oichardes, hence Herrmann, following v. Richthofen, suggests that the river was merely invented by Ptolemaios,<sup>41</sup> a rather fancy idea, rejected already by Thomaschek.<sup>42</sup>

For Herrmann it is beyond doubt that the Bautisos is related to the 'Bautae' (not Baitai!), and these can only be the Tibetans, which he assumes to have been sitting in Yar.kluñs since at least the 1<sup>st</sup> century. Herrmann bases this latter assumption on the 17<sup>th</sup> century Ladvags Rgyalrabs and the Tibetans' imagination of a long line of ca. 29 proto-

<sup>37</sup> This fusion might perhaps also follow from the perspective of the approach to the Pamirs from the western side. According to Falk 2014: 19b, an important early trade route would pass from Khorugh, Xopyr in Tajikistan through the gorge of the Ghunt river to the famous 'Stone Tower' or Tashkurgan, leading over the Nezatash pass near Tashkurgan, from where, according to Falk, one would get a glimpse on the Himalayas. This, however, appears somewhat doubtful.

<sup>38</sup> Lindegger 1993: Karte II.

<sup>39</sup> de La Vaissière 2009: 530.

<sup>40</sup> de La Vaissière 2009: 532.

<sup>41</sup> Herrmann 1938: 59.

<sup>42</sup> Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft Bd.III,1 1897, Sp. 175–76, URL 7.

historic kings.<sup>43</sup> Therefore, the name *Bautisos* can only refer to the *Rtsaṅs.po*, i.e., the *Brahmaputra*,<sup>44</sup> and Ptolemaios has committed a severe fraud, which is best ignored.<sup>45</sup> Herrmann, accordingly, does not waste a single word on the position of the *Baitai*.

I do not think that the situation is as simple. After all, we do not know what *Marinos'* map looked like. I would further think it more than rash to infer an ethnic identity from the superficial similarity of names, and even more so in the case of an apparent conflict of data. If a geographer of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century had committed a fraud, we would need other sources, contemporary or nearly contemporary to him, in order to correct this fraud. It cannot be based on a 'nation'-building fiction of the 7<sup>th</sup> or even only 9<sup>th</sup> century Tibetan empire, transmitted, in this case, by a 17<sup>th</sup> century text. Nor can it be based on an exonym that dates from the 12<sup>th</sup> century, even if this exonym might refer to events of the 6<sup>th</sup> century (the *Bhauṭṭa* of the *Rājataranṅinī*).

There was enough reason to postulate a second river. According to the maps drawn by Herrmann, Ronca, and Lindegger,<sup>46</sup> and all ancient maps, the *Bautisos* flows *north* of the *Emodos* range, and further on the northwestern side of the *Ottorokoras* range. Due to its northeastern direction, the *Ottorokoras* range corresponds to the *Altyn Tāgh* and the more southeasterly bent *Qilianshan*. Both ranges together are also known as *Nanshan*.

The *Bautisos* arises roughly 1000 km east of *Chaurana* / *Khotan*.<sup>47</sup> It flows in an east-north-east direction, more or less along the *Ottorokoras* mountains (that is, along the *Altyn Tāgh*). From the northeast it is reached by a 'confluent' from the misplaced *Kasia* mountains. Another

<sup>43</sup> In all likelihood this exaggerated line is not an intentional concoction, but the accidental result of putting into writing, and thus into vertical or successive order, a horizontal template of more or less contemporary neighbouring principalities.

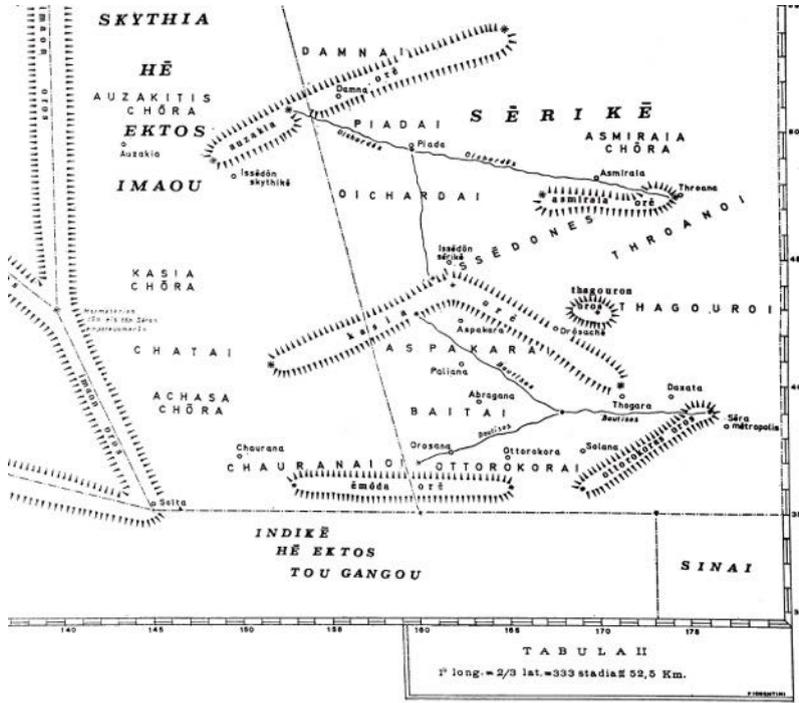
<sup>44</sup> With this more than naïve misconception he is in respectable society. V. Richthofen (*China I*, 493; cited after Herrmann 1910: 24) identifies the *Bautisos* with the upper *Brahmaputra* and complains that Ptolemaios "über das tibetische Hochland im N. des *Bautisos* (des oberen *Brahmaputra*) aber gar nichts wußte" ('but did not know anything about the highlands of Tibet north [!] of the *Bautisos* (the upper *Brahmaputra*)). Even Thomaschek (*Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft Bd.III,1 1897*, Sp. 175–76, URL 7) thinks it worth considering Richthofen's suggestion that the *Bautisos* should have been identical with the Upper *Brahmaputra*. Its knowledge would have been transmitted by Indian merchants, but *Marinos* would have transferred this name to the upper course of the *Yellow River*, so that the two rivers would have been united into a single great system.

<sup>45</sup> Herrmann 1938: 59.

<sup>46</sup> Herrmann 1938: Tafel IX; Ronca 1967: Tabula II; Lindegger 1993: Karte I and Karte II.

<sup>47</sup> 10 Ptolemeian degrees according to Ronca. The maps of Herrmann and Lindegger are somewhat unclear in their raster and would allow 15 degrees, but while Ronca gives only 52.5 km per degree, Herrmann has 105 km per degree.

‘confluent’ reaches it from the northeastern end of the Ottorokoras range (that is, the Qilianshan) near Sera metropolis, flowing westward somewhat south of Daxata and Thogara.<sup>48</sup>



Map 5 — Cutout of Ronca (1967, Tabula II).

According to Herrmann, the Bautisos would continue eastwards and pass Daxata in the north, but would then be joined by a parallel river starting from (the north-eastern end of) the Ottorokoras range.<sup>49</sup> According to Lindegger, the Bautisos would flow eastwards towards Sera and would then continue in a southeastern direction as the Yellow River.<sup>50</sup> The town Sera (metropolis) is most probably Lanzhou in Gansu, and not the Chinese capital.<sup>51</sup> Daxata has been identified by Herrmann with the Gate of Yangguan west of Dunhuang.<sup>52</sup> West of it lies the Lop Nor.

<sup>48</sup> Ronca 1967: Tabula II.  
<sup>49</sup> Herrmann 1938: Tafel IX.  
<sup>50</sup> Lindegger 1993: Karte I and Karte II.  
<sup>51</sup> See Herrmann 1938: 143; Lindegger 1993: 38.  
<sup>52</sup> Herrmann 1938: 128ff.

We are thus clearly dealing with a second river system of Eastern Turkestan. Despite the conceptual errors in Ptolemaios' data and despite the differences in interpretation, it matches the Qarqan (Cherchen) river quite well. The Qarqan arises just where the Altyn Tāgh branches off from the Kunlun in a northeastern direction, flowing closely along its northwestern rim. We can find the Ottorokoras mountains in Ptolemaios' data, roughly where one would expect the Altyn Tāgh, although certainly too much in the south. There is quite a large gap between the Ottorokoras range and the Emodos range, which corresponds in a gross manner to the pathway leading across the Altyn Tāgh or to the actual source of the Qarqan. Ptolemaios posits the source of the Bautisos not in this gap, but somewhat west of it.

The Qarqan ended up in the marshes of the – now completely dried up – Lop Nor, where it met the Tarim (Map 6 and Map 7).<sup>53</sup> This might in part explain what appears to be a copied structure.

The far eastern 'confluent' might correspond to the Shule river, which flows into the Lop Nor from the east, passing Dunhuang in the north or, if this river is considered too insignificant, it might also correspond to the Shazhou river, which flows westwards in the direction of the Lop Nor, but, of course, ends far away from it – the missing gap or also a conflation of both rivers could result from Ptolemaios' arbitrary shortening of the distances.

One should also be aware of massive changes in the river system, caused by the flatness of the Tarim Basin in combination with tectonic changes, desiccation due to an increasingly dry climate, and an increase in irrigation systems. Some rivers changed their courses, and some of them disappeared, so that we cannot match Ptolemaios' coordinates against the present courses. Among the lost rivers is a more southern parallel of the Tarim, Herrmann's "Südfluß", met by a more northern course of the Qarqan, Herrmann's "Dsü-mo" river.<sup>54</sup> What appears to be misrepresented as the northeastern branch of the Bautisos from the western Kunlun could have been one of the delta branches of the Tarim or even the southern river (Herrmann's "Südfluß"), see Map 7 and the detail in Map 8.

<sup>53</sup> Compare also Zhou Hongfei et al. 1999: 129, fig. 1.

<sup>54</sup> See Herrmann 1931: 58.

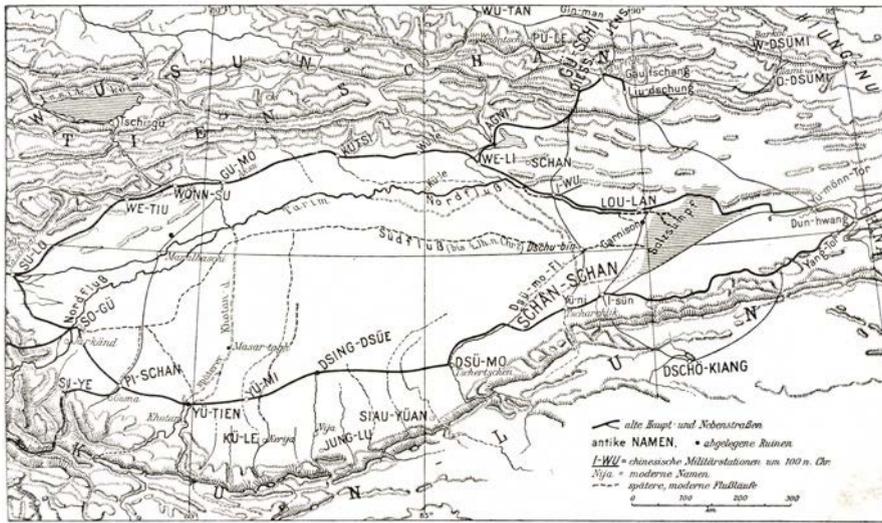


Map 6 — Tarim River drainage basin. Created by Karl Musser, URL 8.

According to Herrmann, these two ancient courses are attested in Chinese sources for the mid-3<sup>rd</sup> century, and are thus relevant for the interpretation of Ptolemaios' coordinates. After 330, the lower Tarim and the Qarqan turned more to the south, while the southern parallel of the Tarim dried up.<sup>55</sup> Herrmann further suggests that the Lop Nur extended at some time much further to the East, almost up to Dunhuang.<sup>56</sup>

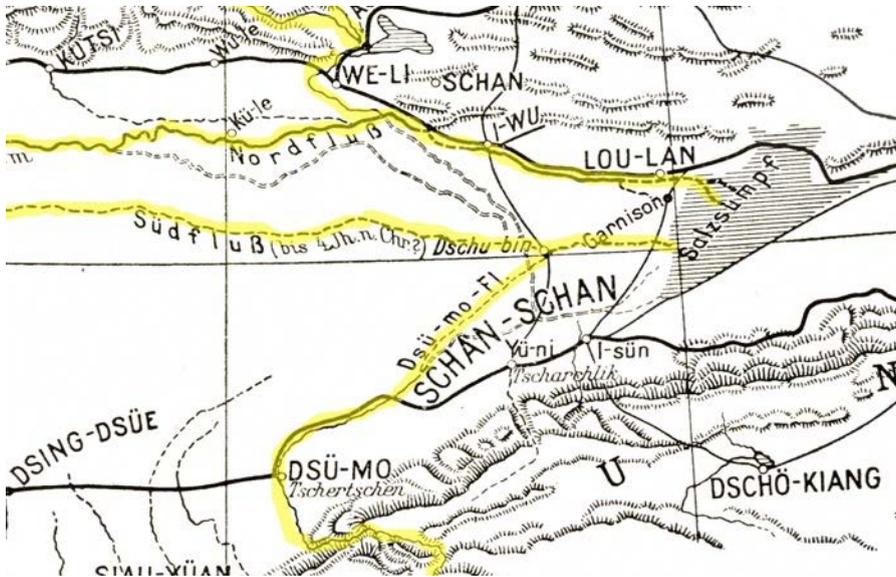
<sup>55</sup> Herrmann 1931: 59–64.

<sup>56</sup> Herrmann 1910: 69.



Sturzfliß im Altertum.  
 Bearbeitet von Albert Herrmann.

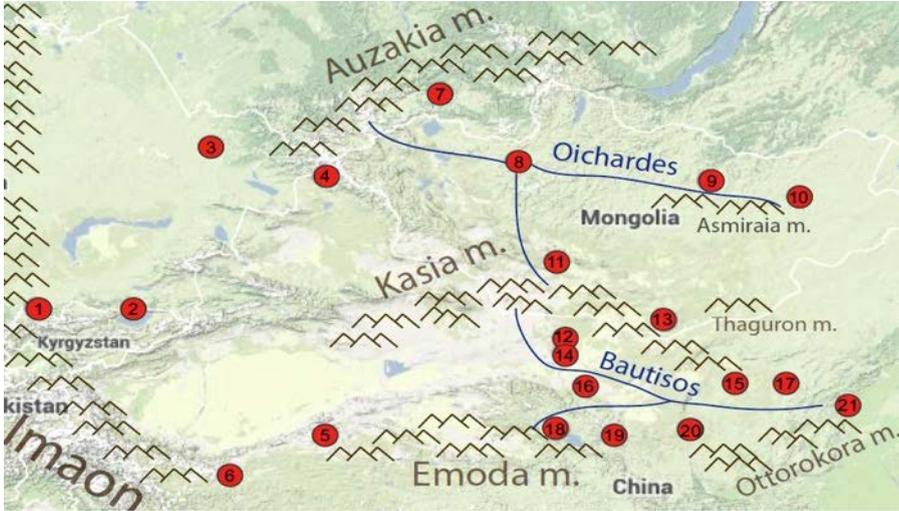
Map 7 — Old River system, Herrmann 1931: 30.



Map 8 — Cutout of Map 7.

One may further have to take into account that the rivers of the Tarim Basin form a complicated net that was most probably not fully understood by the travellers of the day. Legends that the Tarim disappears

in the Lop Nor and continues underground to become the Yellow River (as reported in the *Hanshu*, 96 A<sup>57</sup>) may have added to the confusion on the southeastern end.



Map 9 — *Cutout of Tupikova et al. 2014: 37, Fig.11: projection of Oichardes and Bautisos;*  
courtesy, Irina Tupikova.

Nevertheless, the idea that the *Bautisos* is a mere invention or at least an erroneous copy of the *Oichardes* has been taken up by de La Vaissière<sup>58</sup> and more recently by Tupikova et al.<sup>59</sup> Although the latter state “that the turning of the *Bautisos* recalculated relative to *Ottorokoras/ Miran* matches remarkably well with the position of the Lop Nor”, they think that the doubling of the river was a result of Ptolemaios’ using different itineraries.<sup>60</sup> Their Figure 11,<sup>61</sup> here Map 9, shows clearly a different orientation of the two river systems, and their “corrected” representation in Figure 17,<sup>62</sup> here Map 10, further doesn’t show the Tarim, but rather the *Qarqan* with a confluent from the final end of the Tarim and a confluent from the east, possibly the *Shule* river. It may be noted that in their article, they also include the above Map 6 of the Tarim Basin, without apparently realising that it is not only the

<sup>57</sup> See Herrmann 1910: 63, 65; Lindegger 1993: 50, n.1, 83f. n.8.

<sup>58</sup> de La Vaissière 2009: 532f.

<sup>59</sup> Tupikova et al. 2014: 46.

<sup>60</sup> Tupikova et al. 2014: 49.

<sup>61</sup> Tupikova et al. 2014: 37.

<sup>62</sup> Tupikova et al. 2014: 51.

Lop Nor that matches the description, but its southern source river, the Qarqan.



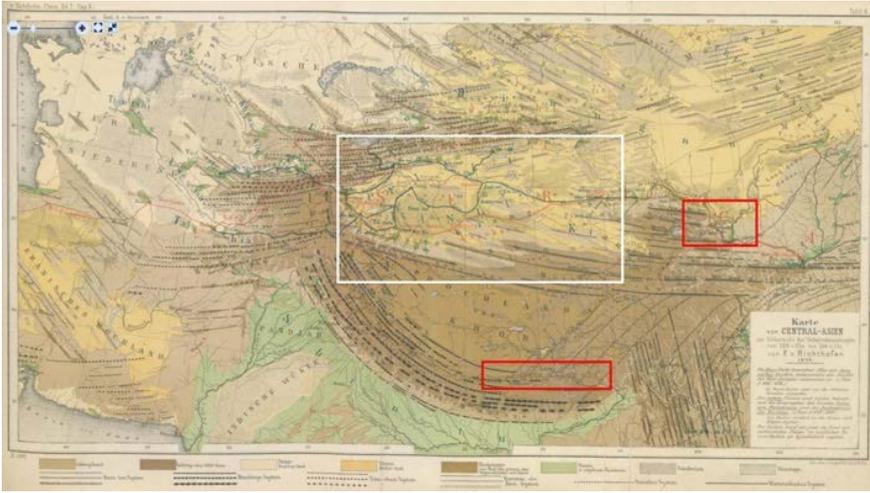
Map 10 — *Cutout of Tupikova et al. 2014: 51, Fig.17: "correction" of the "duplicated" river system; courtesy Irina Tupikova.*

For travellers along the southern route, the Qarqan was certainly an important landmark. It is thus no accident that a river appears in Ptolemaios' description, roughly where the Qarqan flows. The river name and the name of the people living in its vicinity must have been indigenous, transmitted with the typical deformations of the time.

While the Qarqan river was still unknown to many geographers of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century (see Berghaus' maps,<sup>63</sup> where the river is conspicuously missing), Herrmann knew it well.<sup>64</sup> Even Richthofen seems to have known about the river, although it is not yet correctly rendered in his map: it is a nameless river that flows straight north and meets the Tarim way before the Lop Nor, which also seems to be too far up in the North, Map 11 and Map 14.

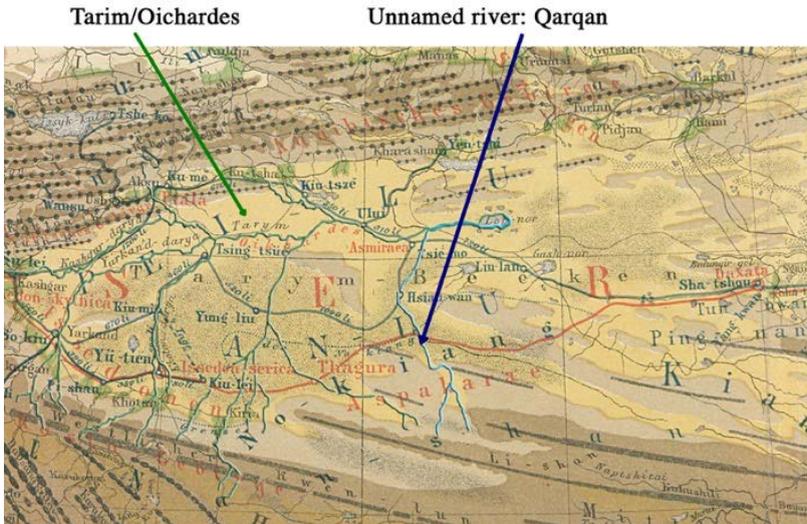
<sup>63</sup> Berghaus 1845–1848 [2004]: 40/41, 62/63, and 162/163.

<sup>64</sup> See Herrmann 1910: 73f.



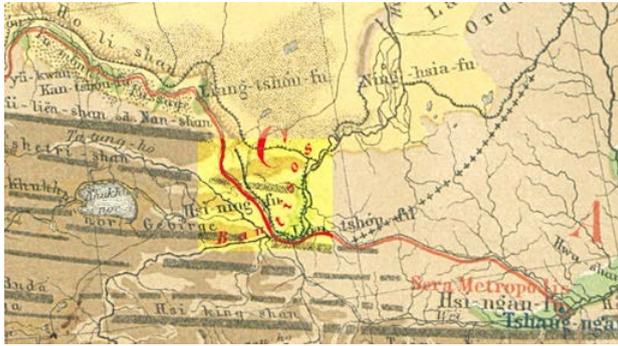
Map 11 — Von Richthofen (1877: opposite to p. 500),  
 Karte von Central-Asien zur Übersicht der Verkehrsbeziehungen von  
 128 v. Chr. bis 150 n. Chr.  
 (Map on the traffic relations in Central Asia). Digitalisat by the Staatsbibliothek Berlin. URL 9

White frame: Tarim and Qarqan river, see below Map 12.  
 Red frames: locations of the Baútisos and the Baítai, see Map 13 and Map 14.

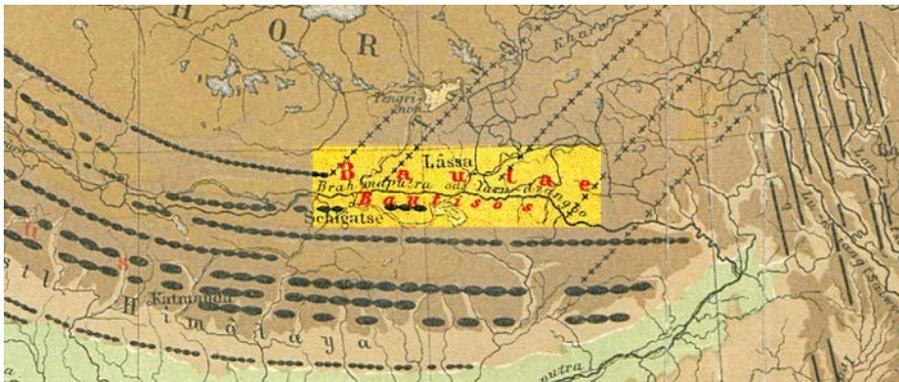


Map 12 — Cutout of Map 11. The Qarqan and the Tarim river system are enhanced.

V. Richthofen never travelled through the Tarim Basin<sup>65</sup> and had thus only second-hand information. He manages to identify the Bautisos with both the Brahmaputra and the upper course of the Yellow River. His 'Bautae' are only to be found in Tibet, see Map 13 and Map 14.



Map 13 — Cutout of Map 11. Identification of the Bautisos with the Yellow River.



Map 14 — Cutout of Map 11. Location of the Bautai in Central Tibet and identification of the Bautisos with the Brahmaputra.

It seems that the mere association of the name Bautisos with Bod has had a blinding effect; otherwise, it is not really intelligible how the identity of the Bautisos with the Qarqan river and the identity of the Ottorokoras range with the Altyn Tāgh and the Qilianshan could remain unnoticed.

Both the Oichardes (Tarim) and the Bautisos (Qarqan) are described by Ptolemaios as rivers of Serike or Seres, the 'Silk Land' or 'Land of

<sup>65</sup> See Richthofen 1877: Tafel I, opposite to p. 32 for his route.

the Silk People', by which designation first of all only the Tarim Basin as the region of the silk *traders* was referred to, and only secondarily Northern China as the land of the silk *producers*. Although Ptolemaios apparently restricted the term Seres to the Tarim Basin, using the designation Sinai for China, the erroneous continuation of both rivers beyond Seres could have left it somewhat open where to look for the Baitai.

But the position of the Baitai, according to Ptolemaios' coordinates, clearly north of the Kunlun and north of the upper course of the Baútidos should not leave any doubt: they are the people of Shanshan (Loulan) and / or Kroraina, located approximately on the same latitude as Thogara, Daxata, and Sera. They might well have belonged to the population that left the famous mummies at Qiemo, dating from 1800 BCE to 200 CE. These people, however, were, in all likelihood, Indo-Europeans. According to genetic tests, the more recent Tarim mummies show strong affinities with the population of the Pamirs, Iran, and India.<sup>66</sup>

A passage of the Syrio-Roman historian Ammianus Marcellinus (ca. 330–395) describes the *Bætæ* as extending *over* a southern mountain highland (viewed from the Tarim Basin) with the towns of Asmira, Essedon, Aspakarai / Asparata, and Sera.<sup>67</sup> Since most of the towns are to be located in the Tarim Basin, it should follow that the *Bætæ* settled mainly along the *northern* rim of the Qilianshan or Richthofen Range, but had also access to the Kokonor region and to Gansu. As the name Asmira is apparently related to the Asmiraia mountains, which should be found near Dunhuang, Asmira may actually refer to Dunhuang or a place nearby.<sup>68</sup>

This position of the *Bætæ* corresponds well to the settlements of the Lesser Yuezhi, attested in Chinese sources during almost the same period, that is, from about the mid-1<sup>st</sup> century to the early 3<sup>rd</sup> century, both north and south of the Altyn Tāgh, across the northern Tsaidam, at the north-eastern shore of the Kokonor, and near Lanzhou and Ganzhou, that is, in the territory of the later Šara / Sarī (Yellow) Uyghur.<sup>69</sup> The settlements of the *Bætæ* and the Lesser Yuezhi cover thus the region, where we find, in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and perhaps already in the late 8<sup>th</sup> century, the Bhaṭa Hor, whose name might have reflected an ancient geographical and / or tribal designation, only later transferred to, or adopted by, an Uyghur population.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>66</sup> See Shizhu et al. 2008.

<sup>67</sup> Lindegger 1993: 89, 172.

<sup>68</sup> Herrmann (1910: 73, map) positions the Asmiraia mountains east of the Kokonor.

<sup>69</sup> Haloun 1937: 263f. and *passim*.

<sup>70</sup> It is, of course, also possible that the Bhaṭa Hor reached their 8<sup>th</sup> century destination after having settled in the original Bhaṭa region, wherever this may have been.

Without much discussion, Beckwith takes Seres to be identical with China; hence, the Oichardes and the Bautisos must necessarily be the Yellow River and the Yangtze respectively.<sup>71</sup> Lindegger, on the other hand, concludes that the Oichardes represents the Tarim and the Bautisos its subterranean 'continuation', the Yellow River.<sup>72</sup> While it cannot be precluded that some of the Bætæ crossed over the south-eastern extension of the Kunlun, reaching thus the upper course of the Yangtze, one should note that the sources of both the Yangtze and the Yellow River are approximately on the same latitude, with the source of the Yellow River being located further to the east. The Yangtze flows almost straight southeast until it reaches the gorges of Yunnan. This geographical situation does not at all match Ptolemaios' coordinates given for the Bautisos.

Ptolemaios' Βαῖται are to be located south of the Aspakarai (Ἀσπακάραι), which again settle south of the Issēdones (Ἰσσηδόνας).<sup>73</sup> The latter two tribes apparently settle in the middle part of the Tarim Basin. Herrmann, however, places the Aspakarai directly at the northern flank of the Kunlun,<sup>74</sup> which would then shift the Baitai across the mountains to the southern flank. Beckwith thinks that the Aspakarai should have settled on the southern flanks of the Kunlun range,<sup>75</sup> which would shift the Baitai even further south. Similarly, Lindegger's identification of the Bautisos with the Yellow River would shift the Baitai to the Kokonor area south of the Kunlun. I do not think that it is justified to shift all of the Baitai across the Kunlun, but even if Beckwith's or Lindegger's identifications were correct, we would still be far away from Central Tibet where the 'nation' of 'Bod' took shape in the early 7<sup>th</sup> century.

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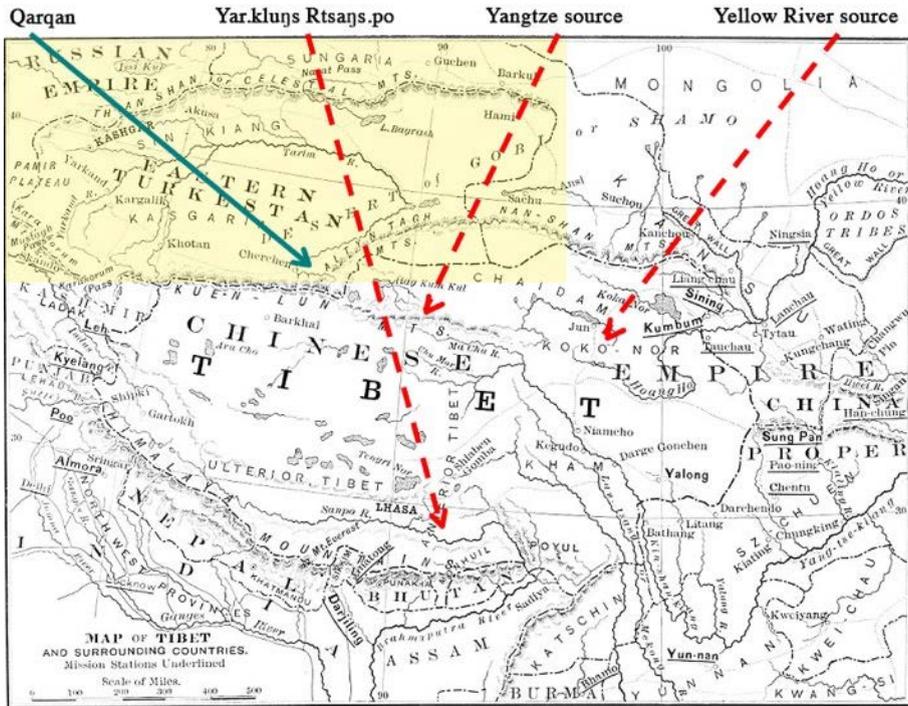
<sup>71</sup> Beckwith 1977: 56.

<sup>72</sup> Lindegger 1993: 84.

<sup>73</sup> Lindegger 1993: 57.

<sup>74</sup> Herrmann 1938: Tafel II, 1.

<sup>75</sup> Beckwith 1977: 60.



Map 15 — Shaw, F. Becker. "The Siege of Tibet," *The Missionary Review of the World*, vol. X (n.s.), February 1897: 91–95 (The map is printed opposite p.92). Various internet sources; URL 11.  
Yellow part: Ptolemaios' Serike.

de La Vaissière gives the whole story yet another twist with the suggestion that the name *Bautisos* could be an approximation to the Han-time Chinese name of the Lop Nor: Puchang hai (蒲昌海, B'uo-t'š'jang).<sup>76</sup> The *Bautisos* would then represent the lower course of the Tarim, and the *Baitai* should be located north of the Lop Nor, most probably in Loulan (Shanshan). The only other options would be Qarashar, or other locations along the northern rim of the Tarim Basin. Following the common assumption that the *Bautisos* is merely a projection of the *Oichardes*, de La Vaissière holds that Ptolemaios "created coordinates devoid of any value".<sup>77</sup>

<sup>76</sup> de La Vaissière 2009: 533, n. 26. The name is attested in the *Hànshū* chapter 96A (Tupikova et al. 2014: 26, n.33) and probably means something like 'reed marshes'. Herrmann (1910: 69) refers to a translation as 'stengeltreibend' (driving out or producing stalks), the Wikipedia has 'Sea of Abundant Reed', URL 10.

<sup>77</sup> de La Vaissière 2009: 531.

The Qarqan river, ending up in the Lop Nor would certainly be an equally good candidate for a confluent of the Lop Nor, and thus for an extension of its name, and it lies quite exactly where the 'valueless' coordinates locate the Bautisos. It is quite strange that the assumed 'copy' should by mere chance find its place where a river flows in reality.

One should neither expect that an 'official' Chinese road map for the 'Silk Road' – if there could have been any – would have referred to the upper course of the Yangtze, not to speak of the Brahmaputra, nor should one expect that Ptolemaios had been mistaken by an additional latitude of ca. 10 degrees (see also Map 15). The north-south distance between Oichardes and Bautisos should be diminished rather than further be increased, see n. 28.<sup>78</sup>

### 3. *Bhauṭṭa, Bhāṭṭa, Bhaṭṭa, Bhatta, Bhuṭṭa – the South-Asian Perspective*

There is no doubt that in the Indian world from a certain moment onwards the designations *Bhauṭṭa*, *Bhoṭa*, or similar forms came into use for the Tibetans in general. However, it remains unclear when exactly the Indians started to use this or similar names, and who they would have referred to originally.<sup>79</sup> It has always been taken for granted that

<sup>78</sup> Ptolemaios' problematic coordinates give rise also to rather irrelevant interpretations: we not only find the Bautisos to be identified with the Yellow River or the Yangtze, but the Oichardes has been identified with the Yenisey (Ferguson 1978: 584) or with the Orkhon, see de La Vaissière 2009: 534. Such suggestions are certainly not based on consultations of the relevant maps: the Orkhon is part of the Mongolian river system flowing into the Baikal lake from the south, whereas the Yenisey is a Siberian river flowing straight northwards into the Polar Sea, its eastern branch being the Angara, which comes out of the Baikal.

<sup>79</sup> It is equally unclear when exactly the Tibetans applied the name *Bod*, and to which part of the country, see section 4. In the 11<sup>th</sup> century, Alberūnī mentions a peak or mountain range *Bhōteshar* between Nepal and Tibet, which functions as the ethnic, linguistic, and cultural border, Sachau 1910 I: 201, 206.

Thapar (2003: 407) speaks of "increasing references [...] made of the *bhauṭtas* or Tibetans along the Himalayas" after 700, but unfortunately she does not mention in which sources these references would appear, and in which form.

A bilingual glossary, the *Tang-Fan liangyu shuangdui ji* gives the Sanskrit equivalent for Chinese Tūfān (吐蕃) as 僕吒 with the reconstructed pronunciation /bəwk trai/ or /bəwk trɛ/ for a possible *Bhuṭṭa*. This glossary may perhaps be dated into the 7<sup>th</sup> century, as it refers to the Turks and to Persia, but does not mention yet the Uyghur or the Arabs and their religion, see Ishikawa 2010. Unfortunately, the earliest copy of this glossary dates to the 11<sup>th</sup> century, it is found in a Song Buddhist Canon collection, see Ishikawa 2010. As with most Sanskrit sources there would be much room for retrospect corrections or adaptations to a later-on firmly established convention.

these forms would correspond to the Tibetan self-designation *Bod*. However, what has been overlooked all the time, is that these Indian forms cannot have been directly derived from any known Tibeto-Burman language, and particularly not from Old Tibetan, as the latter would have lacked both the *media aspirata* and the retroflex final. There is no apparent reason for adding aspiration or a retroflex in a foreign name. Since the name referred to what the Kashmīrī or Indians perceived as barbarians, there was particularly no incentive on the Indian side to make it look more Sanskritic. On the other hand, if the Bhauṭṭa had been a Himalayan Tibeto-Burman tribe, they would hardly have been interested to Sanskritise their name, but if they had done so, why would this new name form not have been preserved among them? By contrast, the Tibetan form could have naturally developed from an Indian or Iranian form, or from whatever its real origin was.

The possibly earliest *documented* mentioning of the Bhauṭṭa in the Indian context occurs in the 12<sup>th</sup> century *Rājataranṅiṇī* of Kalhaṇa,<sup>80</sup> but with retrospect reference to the reign of the Hūṇa king Mihirakula (i, 313).<sup>81</sup> The reign of Mihirakula is to be dated roughly into the first half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>82</sup> The Bhauṭṭa in question are merely listed as intruders along with the Darada and Mleccha. Nothing is said about their settlements or points of intrusion, but a lot is said of the sexual ‘perversities’ of these three groups taken together.<sup>83</sup>

<sup>80</sup> It is conspicuous that the name or its variants does not appear in the 6<sup>th</sup> century *Bṛhat Saṃhitā* of Varāhamihira (see ed. 1981, 1982). Monier-Williams and Böthlingk and Roth have as only attestation for this name form the *Rājataranṅiṇī*, see Monier-Williams 1899: 768b and Böthlingk and Roth 1868: 392. This implies that the name is not known in the *Mahābhārata* tradition, nor in that of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. It does not occur in the critical editions of either epic or early Paurāṇic sources. The earliest attestation of the name form Bhoṭa is found in the *Satruñjāyamahātmya* of Dhaneśvara, a late Jaina text of the 14<sup>th</sup> century (Monier-Williams 1899: 768b; Böthlingk and Roth 1868: 391; for the dating of the text, see Balbir 1994: 94). See also Róna-Tas 1985: 28–30. Róna-Tas takes the *Satruñjāyamahātmya* as contemporaneous to the *Rājataranṅiṇī*. However, the information he cites is “nicht früher als nach Hemaandra (1089–1172)” (not earlier than Hemaandra), so that a later date is not precluded.

<sup>81</sup> M. A. Stein 1900 I: 151.

<sup>82</sup> M. A. Stein 1900 I: introduction, p. 78 § 76.

<sup>83</sup> The word Mleccha tends to be used unspecifically for barbarians, although mostly referring to the west. A passage from the *\*Abhidharma Mahāvibhāṣā* quoted by Silk shows that the term can refer to the Zarathustrian priests of Iran, the Magi: “In the West there are *mleccha* (barbarians) called Maga”, see Silk 2008: 438.

The exaggerated ‘perverse’ sexual customs associated with the Mleccha in the *Rājataranṅiṇī* are again customarily associated by Indian (as well as Greek, Arab, and Chinese) authors with Iranian, and specifically Zoroastrian, marriage practices deviating from the Indian ideal. Another text cited by Silk (2008: 442) locates such customs in Anxi (Parthia). Apart from fraternal polyandry and various patterns of generalised levirate, these stereotypes are based on the Zoroastrian practice of *x<sup>v</sup>aētuuadada*, the so-called next-of-kin or close-kin marriage for the sake of lineage

The early translators, Marc A. Stein and Pandit, have taken it for granted that the Bhauṭṭa were identical with the *Tibetans* and that these putative *Tibetans* were – already at this early time – the inhabitants of Ladakh, Dras and Skardo.<sup>84</sup> There is no compelling reason for the former assumption, except the superficial similarity between the designations *Bhauṭṭa* and *Bod*. While some of the Bhauṭṭa might have been sitting in Bolor and in some parts of Žaṅ.žuṅ, the tribes of Central Tibet had yet to become ‘Tibetans’ and to conquer the western regions.

Žaṅ.žuṅ was conquered by the Tibetans only in the mid-7<sup>th</sup> century (see the Old Tibetan Annals, OTA, year 644, see also the Chinese sources referred to by Pelliot,<sup>85</sup> which give the year 649). It is possible that at the same time the first attacks were directed against Bolor,<sup>86</sup> implying that at least parts of Ladakh had come under the rule of the Tibetan empire. However, there is also evidence that these areas were not fully integrated into the growing empire, at least not with respect to the military administrative ‘horns’ (*ru*),<sup>87</sup> and they seem to have retained a certain amount of autonomy.<sup>88</sup> Whatever the exact status, this did not necessarily lead to a replacement of the original non-Tibetan inhabitants or a shift in their self-identification or the adoption of the Tibetan language. It is certainly possible that the Kashmīrī associated them with their new rulers. Hundred years earlier, in the time of Mihirakula, there was definitively no reason for such an identification, and either the reference to the Bhauṭṭa as ‘Tibetans’ is an anachronistic back-projection from the 12<sup>th</sup> century or the name refers to an unknown non-Tibetan people.

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purity, mostly between brothers and sisters, but infrequently also between sons and mothers, see Silk 2008: 444–51, also for the relevant comments by Non-Indian authors.

In one, possibly interpolated, gloss (see M. A. Stein 1900 I, text edition, p. 46, note to i, 307), the Bhauṭṭa, here named Bhāṭṭa, along with the Darada and Mleccha, are accused of practising incest with their sisters and daughters-in-law, and of selling their wives (M. A. Stein 1900 I, text edition, p. 46, note to i, 307).

Most probably, such passages also refer to the custom of polyandry and / or group marriage. Polyandry, however, was not very specific for the Ladakhī or Tibetans. Polyandry was common among the Dards, who, unlike the Ladakhī, also practised group marriage, as well as among the Hephthalites and other tribes, see Vohra 1989. de La Vaissière points out that “[p]olyandry was a genuine Bactrian custom”, de La Vaissière 2007: 119.

<sup>84</sup> M. A. Stein 1900 I, text edition, p. 47, note to i, 312–16; Pandit 1935: 43, note to i, 312.

<sup>85</sup> Pelliot 1963: 708.

<sup>86</sup> See Beckwith 1987: 30.

<sup>87</sup> See Tucci 1956: 81–83.

<sup>88</sup> See Pelliot 1963: 708.

The Bhauṭṭa re-appear, together with the Darada, as victims of Lalitāditya-Muktāpīḍa's (reg. c.733–769)<sup>89</sup> raids in the northwest.<sup>90</sup> M. A. Stein takes the Bhauṭṭa again for "undoubtedly the Tibetan inhabitants of Ladakh and the adjacent regions".<sup>91</sup> Vohra, by contrast, takes this reference as a proof that the Darada, as neighbours of the Bhauṭṭa-'Tibetans', were occupying the whole "area of Baltistan and Ladakh".<sup>92</sup>

For the year 744, the *Tang annals* report a message sent by Lalitāditya, in which he claimed, according to Chavannes:

moi même et le roi de l'Inde du centre, nous avons obstrué les cinq grands chemins des T'ou-po (Tibétains) et nous avons empêché leurs allées et venues; nous avons livré bataille et nous avons été aussitôt victorieux. (I myself and the king of Central India have blocked the five great roads of the Tibetans and have hindered their coming and going; we have fought them and have been victorious within no time.)<sup>93</sup>

This translation is followed approximatively by most later authors. Sen, however, renders this slightly different:

<sup>89</sup> His reign is erroneously given with 699–736 in M. A. Stein (1900 I: introduction, 88, § 85). This is followed by various Indian and Western authors, while the Government of India specifies the date as 697 to 738, URL 12. These dates evidently clash with the dating of various letters sent by Lalitāditya and his elder brother Vajrāditya-Candrāpīḍa to the Tang court, the last one being sent in 744 (see main text below). M. A. Stein (1907: 13) mentions two earlier letters: "on his succession to the Kashmīr throne (733 A. D.)", Muktāpīḍa requested an "investitur by imperial decree, as accorded before in 720 A.D. to his brother and predecessor Candrāpīḍa". M. A. Stein adds: "My reference to the Chinese data about Muktāpīḍa, in *Rājat.* iv. 126, note, should be rectified accordingly", M. A. Stein 1907: 13, n. 21. 720 and 733 apparently correspond to the first year of the respective reigns. Marks (1977: 45) gives the dates as 725–754, Witzel (1991: 27) as "725–". Dani (1991: 214) dates the king from 699 to 736, but on p. 149, he identifies the king with the Kashmīrī king Muduobi (Mu-to-pi) of the Chinese sources, who offered assistance to the Chinese in 750 (*recte* 747), when Gao Xianzhi (Kao Hsien-chih) sent an expedition across the Pamirs against the Tibetans, see M. A. Stein 1922 for a description of this expedition. Dani further suggests that Lalitāditya's campaign in the northern areas would have taken place shortly afterwards in 751. A quick look into the internet reveals that most authors favour 724–760, assuming a reign of 36 years. Some sites will also mention year 699 for Lalitāditya's birth.

<sup>90</sup> According to Róna-Tas (1985: 29), the Bhauṭṭa were mentioned also under the reign of Vajrāditya-Candrāpīḍa (reg. c.720–728; he was followed by the middle brother Udayāditya-Tārāpīḍa for four years before the youngest brother, Lalitāditya-Muktāpīḍa assumed power). Unfortunately, Róna-Tas does not give any reference for this statement. *Rājataranṅinī* iv, 45–125, dedicated to Candrāpīḍa and Tārāpīḍa's short-lived reigns, does not mention any foreign tribes.

<sup>91</sup> M. A. Stein 1900 I: text edition, p. 98, note to iii, 332; see also p. 137, note to iv, 171–75.

<sup>92</sup> Vohra 1988: 541.

<sup>93</sup> Chavannes 1900: 167.

The Tibetans on the five great routes distressed this vassal and the king of Middle India. [The Tibetans] blocked [us from] entering and exiting [through these routes]. [Therefore, we] fought and at once emerged victorious.<sup>94</sup>

It is unknown in which language the letter was originally written and by which term Lalitāditya referred to the Tibetans. By 'vassal', he refers to himself; the king of Middle India should be King Yaśovarman of Kanauj, of whom the *Rājataranṅiṇī* claims that he was subdued by Lalitāditya (iv 135–46). One may think of the three known access routes from Northern India: via Nepal, via Guge, via Manali, Ladakh, and the Changthang, plus the route from Kashmīr via Sonamarg and Purik, plus a more western route via Baltistan and/ or Gilgit. Most probably, 'blocking the roads' means that some border posts were set up in the lower parts of those 'roads'. Depending on the different translations, these posts may have been set up either by the Kashmīr-Kanauj coalition or even by the Tibetans. In both cases, this can be taken as evidence that the Kashmīr troops fought some battles in the border areas, but it is rather unlikely that they reached Ladakh or Baltistan. The claimed victory should also be seen in the light of the subsequent request to be bestowed the title of a king.<sup>95</sup> It may thus be exaggerated to a certain extent. The Old Tibetan documents remain silent about a conflict with Kashmīr.

Despite this silence, it is quite certain that Lalitāditya entered the Tibetan dominions in the west, which at some time extended as far as Kābul in the south and to the middle course of the Oxus in the north.<sup>96</sup>

The mid 8<sup>th</sup> century shows the Tibetans at the height of their conquests in the west. They had started to lead military campaigns into Western Turkestan by 676 (OTA, II. 67/15f.), eventually concluding an alliance with the Western Turks. An initial conquest of Lesser Bolor (possibly the north-western part of Gilgit with the side valleys of Yāsin, Ishkoman, and Hunza) in 722 had been quickly terminated by Chinese forces<sup>97</sup>). However, in 738, they had subdued Lesser Bolor (OTA, II. 276/224f.) and had set up outposts in the Pamirs. They lost Lesser Bolor and the Wakhan area in the subsequent clash with the Chinese forces in 747 (OTA II, I. 10).

In this context, Kashmīr had taken up diplomatic ties with China against Tibet and the Arabs,<sup>98</sup> but her troops do not seem to have been

<sup>94</sup> Sen 2014: 146.

<sup>95</sup> See again Chavannes 1900: 167.

<sup>96</sup> Beckwith 1987: 161f.

<sup>97</sup> See Beckwith 1987: 95; Sen 2014: 143.

<sup>98</sup> Beckwith 1987: 89, 95f., n. 62.

actively involved in this defeat. As evident from the above letter, the Kashmīr troops provided agricultural supplies to the Chinese army,<sup>99</sup> which could not have been supported by the limited production of Lesser Bolor.<sup>100</sup>

The *Rājatarāṅgiṇī* seems to refer to these events in the course of a *cakravartin's* campaign in the northwest, the second, after Lalitāditya allegedly had toured India. Lalitāditya would have first raided the Kāmboja (somewhere in Afghanistan) and would have robbed them of their horses.<sup>101</sup> Subsequently, he would have invaded Tuhkhāra (Tochari-stan). He would then have subdued an unidentifiable Mummuni (iv, 167), possibly a ruler or army chief of the Turks.<sup>102</sup> *Thereafter* Lalitāditya would have fought the Bhauṭṭa and the Darada (iv, 169).

<sup>99</sup> Chavannes 1900: 167.

<sup>100</sup> Sen 2014: 147. Sen, 2014: 148, further suggests that the Kashmīr troops might have cut the bridge over the 'Sai' river, the So-yi of the Chinese sources, convincingly identified by M. A. Stein, 1922: 124, with the Gilgit river, a long suspension bridge which the Tibetans had constructed over the course of one year, see M. A. Stein 1922: 124. The biography of the Korean general in charge, Gao Xianzhi (or Go Seonji) in the *Jiu Tangshu*, chapter 104 and the *Xin Tangshu*, chapter 135, however, does not mention any help from the southern side, see Chavannes 1900: 152f. In fact, this could hardly have been possible as the Tibetans arrived only shortly after the destruction of the bridge, see Chavannes 1900: 151, 152, n.1; M. A. Stein 1922: 124.

<sup>101</sup> Lévi 1918: 118, locates them around Kābul. According to the Wikipedia, their nucleus would have been the area between along the Kunar Sindh, and would have included Kapiśa, but the Kāmboja may have also lived in the Pamirs, in Badakhshan, and even Balkh. The Kāmboja were apparently famous for their horses and their horsemanship, URL 13.

<sup>102</sup> Lévi and Chavannes 1985: 15, having noted a gloss: *Mumen khān*, conclude that this may be an adaptation of the title *Emir al-Mumenin* (amīr al-Mu'minīn), 'Commander of the Faithful', as used by the caliphs. M. A. Stein, 1990 I: 137, note to iv, 167, however, rejects this, as the gloss would be comparatively late. M. A. Stein, 1900: I, introduction, 91, takes him thus as a "chief of a Turkish tribe on the Upper Indus, named here by his title or family designation", M. A. Stein 1900 I: introduction, 91; see also I, text edition, p. 136, note to iv, 165. By "Upper Indus" Stein most likely referred to the so-called 'Upper Indus valley' in Pakistan below the confluence with the Gilgit river or even to the Gilgit river, which originally was perceived as the source river of the Indus, see Tucci 1977: 84, n.112d.

The *Rājatarāṅgiṇī* apparently knows several persons with the name Mummuni: A king Mummuni had been also mentioned in the context of an earlier king, Pravaraśena II (florished in the 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> century, about a century earlier) (iii, 332); while another Mummuni is mentioned as belonging to the night-guard of grandson Jayāpīḍa (770/82–813) (iv, 516). A fourth Mummuni is mentioned in a list of allied foreign princes (viii, 1090, 2179), see M. A. Stein 1990 I: text edition 98f., note to iii, 332; II: 527, index.

For reasons not evident to me, Jettmar, 1975: 207, takes Mummuni to be a Dard chieftain. An irrelevant identification is proposed by Goetz, 1969: 12, who neither takes the temporal coherence nor the geography of the *Rājatarāṅgiṇī* in any way serious: Mummuni of the northern campaign, to be located between Tuhkhāra/Tocharistan and the Bhauṭṭa, would have belonged to the southern expedition and

Subsequently, he would have invaded the town of Prāgijyotiṣa (iv, 171). He would then have passed through the 'Sea of Sand' (*vālukāmbudhi*, iv 172),<sup>103</sup> after which he should have reached the *Strirājya* (iv, 173–74), later mentioned again with a possible reference to Uḍḍiyāna / Swāt (iv, 185). Thereafter he would have invaded the more or less mythological land of the tree-born Uttarakuru (iv, 175).

Uttarakuru was located by Ptolemaios in Eastern Turkestan (where we find the above-mentioned Ottorokoras mountains). Much later, the Tibetans identified Uttarakuru with the land of Phrom Gesar, somewhere north of Tibet,<sup>104</sup> that is, in Eastern Turkestan, although perhaps more to the west. But here, from the Kashmīrī perspective, this name might refer to a relatively close-by area north of the Darada, from where their allies would come.<sup>105</sup> If the Darada were already confined to the Kishangaṅgā valley, the name Uttarakuru could have referred to Bolor and her neighbours, less likely perhaps to Bactria or the Sogdiana, or to other regions under Turkic dominion. From there, the closest desert would be possibly the Taklamakan in the Tarim Basin, but one might wonder how a military campaign could have been conducted there, given the control of the Oasis states by either the Chinese or Tibetan Empire.

There are also several desert areas in Tajikistan and Afghanistan, although more to the west or to the south, and I don't know whether they would really match the description of a 'Sea of Sand'. The great desert Karakum between the upper Oxus and the Caspian Sea or the Kyzyl Kum between Oxus and Iaxartes could be other candidates, but are possibly too far away. Closer to Kashmīr and or the *Strirājya* in question is the desert Thal in the Panjab between Chenab and Indus.<sup>106</sup>

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would have been a Śīlāhāra king of Konkan (i.e., the western coast of India along Maharashtra and Goa). This fancy is not impeded by Goetz' knowledge that no such Śīlāhāra ruler of this name is known at the relevant epoch, see Goetz 1969: 13. Goetz 1969: 10, further posits the northern campaign before the southern one, which does not speak for his academic standards. That according to him, Lalitāditya finally also campaigned in the "Taqlamaqan into the Kuchā-Turfān districts and possibly, beyond, into the Western Gobi" Goetz 1969: 11 may thus safely be ignored.

Goetz' only useful suggestion is that a severe political crisis might have hit the subcontinent, which eventually led to the breakdown not only of the Gupta empire but also of various other smaller dynasties, see Goetz 1969: 8–10. Such scenario would explain why, within short temporal distance, both Yaśovarman of Kanauj and Lalitāditya could have conducted a *digvijaya* or a several years long roundabout campaign throughout most of India, see also n.124 below.

<sup>103</sup> According to M. A. Stein 1900 I: text edition, p. 138, note to iv, 171–75, this would refer to a desert tract in Eastern Turkestan, but this is rather unlikely, see also Sen 2014: 148–55.

<sup>104</sup> Haahr 1969: 278, plate II.

<sup>105</sup> Dani 1991: 214f.

<sup>106</sup> See URL 14 and URL 15.

The location of the *Strīrājya* is also not evident. However, since Lalitāditya is said to have set up a Viṣṇu image there, the *Strīrājya* should be part of the Indian cultural sphere.

Prāḡjyotiṣa would usually refer to the capital of Kāmarūpa, that is, Assam.<sup>107</sup> Most commentators thus let Lalitāditya lead his campaign through Eastern Turkestan and Tibet,<sup>108</sup> but it is absolutely impossible, given the geopolitical situation, that Lalitāditya crossed any part of Tibet proper, and while he might have reached Assam on a southern route, this would then belong to the southern ‘expedition’ to India, which preceded the ‘conquests’ in the north.

On the other hand, there are important Hindu traditions, which treat Prāḡjyotiṣa as a legendary home of the *western* Asura<sup>109</sup> and particularly of the Asura Naraka, somewhere in, or rather beyond, the Pamirs near the ‘western ocean’ or an ocean in the western quarter. Lévi points out that this localisation is not only found in the *Vālmiki-Rāmāyaṇa*, see the citation below, but that the location in the north-west is also mentioned several times in the Mahābhārata.<sup>110</sup> With respect to the *digvijaya* of Lalitāditya, Lévi is convinced that Prāḡjyotiṣa is found in the suite of the Bhauṭṭa, which he takes, like everybody else, for Tibet, and the Darada, and immediately before the ‘Sea of Sand’, a desert, which he identifies with the Taklamakan<sup>111</sup> – but does one reach the Taklamakan from Tibet via the lands of the Darada? And wouldn’t the Chinese administrators have had a word to say (and a historical note to write)?

There were the western ocean with the golden peak where twenty-four Gandharvas lived, the mountain Cakravān which was the disk created by Viśvakarman to attack the Asuras, the land of the five tribes, the mountain Varāha of sixty-four yojanas, the golden city of Prāḡjyotiṣa where lived the Dānava Naraka, and the mountain of Śakra where on the rock called Suṣena he was consecrated. Beyond it were sixty thousand golden mountains with golden peaks, in the midst of which was situated the mountain Meru... (*Vālmiki-Rāmāyaṇa*, NW IV, 35, 27ff.).<sup>112</sup>

<sup>107</sup> M. A. Stein 1900 I: text edition, p. 69, note to ii, 147.

<sup>108</sup> M. A. Stein 1900 I: text edition, p. 138, note to iv, 171–75; Lévi 1918: 121.

<sup>109</sup> Hopkins 1915: 257.

<sup>110</sup> Lévi 1918: 121.

<sup>111</sup> Lévi 1918: 121.

<sup>112</sup> Guruge 1991: 219. Book IV, 41.4–41.40 of the critical edition (Vālmiki, ed. 1994: 269–74) has a more elaborate and convoluted description of the western quarter (of the known world). The monkeys are told to go to “Vāruṇa’s western quarter”. Having searched in the “inaccessible western quarter, covered by a network of mountains” the monkeys would reach “the impertubable western ocean”. They would then

Rolf A. Stein has shown that the complete Pamirian geographical template was transferred to Yunnan, Assam, Bānglādesh, Laos, and Vietnam.<sup>113</sup> The Buddhist geographical tradition as transmitted to Tibet seems to have preserved a rough notion of the Pamirian geographical template. The exact locations of the countries or provinces in question may vary to a greater or lesser extent, but are usually found in the close vicinity of other clearly Pamirian locations. The tantric pilgrims to Uḍḍiyāna, e.g., knew of a Kāmarūpa in the west, between Lahul and Chamba;<sup>114</sup> this would be an instance of greater variation. All areas and tribes mentioned in the *Rājataranṅī* in the context of this second round of 'conquests' in the north should thus be looked for in present-day Pakistan and Afghanistan, along or across the Hindukush and the Pamirs. The mere mentioning of the Darada after the Bhauṭṭa does not necessarily prove their close vicinity. But if the account had been systematised according to the available literary and geographical models (see also below), and thus followed a strict geographical order, the Bhauṭṭa would have been situated *between* Tuhkhāra (in or across Badakhshan) and the Darada. This would match the above-mentioned cooperation of the Kashmīr army with the Chinese army in lower Gilgit. It would further indicate, that the Bhauṭṭa were, in fact, not Tibetans, but identical with the Bhatta of Pakistan, mentioned by Albērūnī:

The river Sindh rises in the mountains Unang in the territory of the Turks [...] [T]hen you have [...] on your left the mountains of Bolor and Shamīlān, Turkish tribes who are called *Bhattavaryān*. Their king has the title Bhatta-Shāh. Their towns are Gilgit, Aswira [Astor] and Shiltās [Chilās], and their language is the Turkish. Kashmir suffers much of their inroads.<sup>115</sup>

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come across a set of mountains: Hemagiri, "where the Sindhu river meets the ocean", "Pariyātra with the 'twenty-four times ten million swift and terrible gandharvas", Cakravān "where Viśvakarma fashioned a discus with a thousand spokes", and "Varāha, sixty-four leagues high. On it is a city of pure gold named Prāgjyotiṣa, in which lives the evil-minded *dānava* named Naraka". This is followed by a mountain named Meghavān, then Meru, then, at the limits of the world in the far west, the sunset mountain. One of the complications is that the text refers to the Indus delta. The commentators think of a place in Gujarat (Vālmīki, ed. 1994: 310, note to verse 41.25). It seems that from there the imagined path leads again upriver towards the north, see Lévi 1918: 117. The intention is apparently to cover the west from the southernmost point (the Indus delta) up to the northernmost point (Mt. Meru).

<sup>113</sup> Stein 1959: 308, n.77.

<sup>114</sup> See Huber 2008: 104.

<sup>115</sup> Sachau 1910 I: 207.

The expression 'river Sindh' is ambivalent. It could have referred to the Gilgit river as the source river of the Indus, in which case, the Unang mountains would be the Pamirs. However, the name apparently equally applied to the Kunar Sindh, arising in the Hindukush and flowing through Chitrāl. It could have been counted as (one of) the source river(s) of the Kābul river, which itself was counted, according to the *Ḥudūd al-'Alam* (6.13), as the source river of the Sindhu.<sup>116</sup> In this case, the Unang mountains would be identical with the Hindukush, which appears to be the more likely scenario if the rulers in question reigned in Kābul.

The Bhatta-Shāh are most probably identical with, or a subgroup of, the Turki Shahi, which are known from coins of the area. In the 7<sup>th</sup> century, the Western Turks had moved into the areas west of the Altai and north of the Tianshan and then further west into Western Turkestan and into Afghanistan, where they replaced the Hephthalites. The Hephthalites or White Huns, on their part, appear to have been part of the tribal confederation of the Yuezhi<sup>117</sup> or Kuṣāṇa. At least they may have identified themselves as descendants of the Kuṣāṇa ruling elite, and they apparently handed down this identification to the Turki Shahi, whose rulers directly or indirectly claimed to be descendants of Kanīška.<sup>118</sup> Even the title *Shāhiya* may have been inherited from the Kuṣāṇa.<sup>119</sup>

There is certainly no necessity to see all alleged conquests of Lalitāditya as a single coherent expedition. The enumeration follows a similar tour de force through all of India, a *digvijaya*, and cannot be taken at face value in all details. As M. A. Stein notes, "Kalhaṇa makes Lalitāditya start on a march of triumphal conquest round the whole of India, which is manifestly legendary".<sup>120</sup> Much earlier, Albērūnī had already commented upon this claim:

<sup>116</sup> Minorski 1937: 72, 209.

<sup>117</sup> M. A. Stein 1905: 80.

<sup>118</sup> See M. A. Stein 1905: 85. With respect of the Turki Shahi, Lévi and Chavannes 1985: 45 talk of "turcs d'origine tibétaine" (Turks of 'Tibetan origin'), whatever one should understand by this description. Maybe this is based on Albērūnī's statement that "[t]he Hindus had kings residing in Kābul, Turks who were said to be of Tibetan origin", again a very enigmatic description. The last king of that lineage, Lagatūrmān, is again classified as "the last king of this Tibetan house", see Sachau 1910 II: 10, 13. It seems that Albērūnī (or one of his sources) takes the name Bhatta to be identical with Bhaṭṭa, and thus for Tibetan. Another possibility is that they were called Tibetan because they were under Tibetan suzerainty. Lévi and Chavannes 1985: 45 also note that the Turki Shahi trace their origin to Kanīška, hence to the Kuṣāṇa and Yuezhi. This is also corroborated by Albērūnī. He mentions a king of this lineage with the name Kanik, who had, according to the legend great, supernatural powers, see Sachau 1910 II: 11–13.

<sup>119</sup> M. A. Stein 1905: 86.

<sup>120</sup> M. A. Stein 1900 I: 90f. Perhaps not so much. On the one hand, it appears quite

The 2nd of the month Caitra is a festival to the people of Kashmîr, called Agdûs (?), and celebrated on account of a victory gained by their king, Muttai [i.e., Mukṭāpīḍa; <sup>121</sup>], over the Turks. According to their account he ruled over the whole world. But this is exactly what they say of most of their kings. However, they are incautious enough to assign him to a time not much anterior to our time, which leads to their lie being found out. It is, of course, not impossible that a Hindu should rule (over a huge empire), as Greeks, Romans, Babylonians, and Persians have done, but all the times not much anterior to our own are well known. (If, therefore, such had been the case, we should know it.) Perhaps the here mentioned king ruled over the whole of India, and they know of no other country but India and of no other nations but themselves.<sup>122</sup>

It may be noted that such a *digvijaya* was already part of Indian literary traditions with Kālidāsa's Sanskrit epic poem *Raghuvamśa* (ca. 5<sup>th</sup> century)<sup>123</sup> featuring a mythical king Raghu, who conquers all quarters of India, including the northwestern quarter.<sup>124</sup>

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unlikely that Lalitāditya, and before him Yaśovarman of Kanauj, could have been able to take their troops all around India which should have taken several years of absence from their own realm (for quite a different opinion with respect of Yaśovarman, though not Lalitāditya, see Smith 1908: 777–79). It may appear conspicuous that Lalitāditya's victory over Yaśovarman and the subsequent negotiations are given in some realistic detail, while the rest is summed up. One could thus easily declare it poetical fiction, although this would be somewhat unexpected for Kalhaṇa's otherwise historical approach (see his motivation and initial critical assessment of sources I.8–21; M. A. Stein 1900 I: 2–4).

On the other hand, as suggested by Goetz 1969: 8–10, it may have also been the case that a political crisis affected India as a whole, causing instability and decay in many larger and minor kingdoms, so that short term conquests were possible. In any case, as the critical note of Alberūnī (see below in the main text) shows, the alleged *digvijaya* or universal conquest had become official propaganda in Kashmîr quite some time before Kalhaṇa sat down to write about it.

<sup>121</sup> For the identification, see also Sen 2014: 156.

<sup>122</sup> Sachau 1910 II: 178.

<sup>123</sup> The date of Kālidāsa is uncertain. The Encyclopædia Britannica dates him to the 5<sup>th</sup> century, URL 16. This is followed by the Wikipedia under the entry for the *Raghuvamśa*, URL 17. However, the main entry states that Kālidāsa's works "were most likely authored before [the] 5<sup>th</sup> century CE", URL 18. Since Kālidāsa mentions the Hūṇa, he can hardly have lived *before* the 5<sup>th</sup> century. The name Hūṇa referred to several different originally Central Asian tribes. Among them, the Kidarites were the first to bother India, and they are reported in Indian sources in present-day Afghanistan by the first half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, URL 19. It is rather unlikely that an Indian author could know about them much earlier.

<sup>124</sup> There, Raghu fights the Persians and the Yavana (Greeks), then turns north and reaches the river Sindhu (Indus) and a place where saffron grows – this seems to

M. A. Stein, notwithstanding the earlier reference to the above description by Albērūnī and the mentioning of Gilgit, takes Bolor as being identical with Baltistan,<sup>125</sup> and hence concludes that the Turkic Bhatta of Albērūnī were identical with the allegedly Tibetan Bhauṭṭa of the *Rājataranṅinī*.<sup>126</sup> Being trapped in his preconception, Stein suggests that Albērūnī might have been mistaken when describing the language of the Bhattavaryān as Turkish. He contends that

it must be remembered that he had spoken previously (i.p.206) of ‘the Turks of Tibet’ as holding the country to the *east* of Kaśmir. There the Tibetans in Ladākh and adjacent districts are clearly intended (emphasis added).<sup>127</sup>

The ‘Turks of Tibet’, however, were located by Albērūnī at Kābul (see n.118), to the *west* of Kashmīr, not to the east.

Despite Stein’s misconceptions, the identity between the two names, Albērūnī’s Bhatta and Kalhaṇa’s Bhauṭṭa, is not completely unlikely. In two manuscripts of the *Rājataranṅinī*, in an apparent interpolation after verse i, 307, one can also find the form Bhāṭṭa instead of Bhauṭṭa (the interpolated verse would refer to a somewhat earlier date than the first reference of the Bhauṭṭa in the period of Mihirakula).<sup>128</sup>

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be a reference to Kashmīr. Subsequently, he fights the Hūṇa and the Kāmboja (somewhere in present day Afghanistan). King Raghu seems to have been modelled after Chandragupta Vikramāditya (380 – ca. 415) of the Gupta Dynasty, who apparently also drove a campaign in the northwestern quarter, URL 20.

To a certain extent, the tone of Kalhaṇa’s description of the two campaigns resembles that of the *Raghuvaṃśa*. Pandit 1935: 128, n. to l. 126 suggests instead that Kalhaṇa had been inspired by the *Gauḍavaho* of Vākpatirāja (see ed. 1975), featuring King Yaśovarman of Kanauj, who claimed in inscriptions to have performed a *digvijaya*. Such inspiration is rather unlikely, given the hyperbolic tone of the *Gauḍavaho* of Vākpatirāja and the fact that it never really described these conquests. Rather Kalhaṇa’s description of a *digvijaya* by Lalitāditya might be a reaction to the inscriptional claims by Yaśovarman, since Lalitāditya is supposed to have subdued Yaśovarman.

<sup>125</sup> For the problem of the identification of Bolor, see also Zeisler 2010: 381–88 and the discussion of the Byltai, *Βύλται* in Appendix B. I don’t think that Bolor, or more particularly, Greater Bolor could be identified with Baltistan; at best, Baltistan may have been temporarily part of Greater Bolor. Bolor certainly encompassed Gilgit with the valleys of Hunza and Nagar, but also the regions of Chilās and Chitrāl. By the geographical conventions of the day, Lesser Bolor referred to the part closer to China, hence to Hunza and Nagar, while Greater Bolor, as indicating the part further away from China, should have referred to the southern parts along the so-called ‘Upper Indus valley’. The exact demarcation of the two parts is unknown. It seems likely, however, that the Gilgit river served as a natural boundary so that its southern bank and thus Gilgit belonged to Greater Bolor.

<sup>126</sup> M. A. Stein 1900 II: 363, n. 64.

<sup>127</sup> M. A. Stein 1900 II: 363, n. 64.

<sup>128</sup> See M. A. Stein 1900 I, text edition, p. 46, n. i, 307. The Bhāṭṭa are obviously seen as

Since the Turkic tribes arrived in Afghanistan only in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, the Bhāṭṭa or Bhauṭṭa of the Mihirakula period a hundred years earlier, might have referred to one of the Hephthalite or Hūṇa tribes.

If, alternatively, the listing of the Bhauṭṭa *before* the Darada means that they were settling along one of the access routes between Kashmīr and the Dards, this could indicate that the original homeland of the Bhauṭṭa lay in an area around Sonamarg and Dras (see also below). This area would give access to Ladakh, and then further on to Tibet, which makes it likely that the name got transferred to all those people whom one could reach, or who came along, this route, first to the people of Žaṅ.žūṅ, later to the Tibetan conquerors and their colonies, Baltistan and Ladakh. This kind of name transfer would be mirrored by Ladakhī naming habits as observed by Rebecca Norman (p.c.): elderly people used to call all Indians 'Kashmīrī' or 'Panjabī', apparently because the two main routes to India lead through Kashmīr and Himācal Pradesh, once a part of the Panjab.

Even, if no linear order were intended, all regional and tribal names refer to places in the north and the northwest of Kashmīr, that is, in the Hindukush, the Pamirs, and beyond. There is no reason, apart from the seductive name similarity, why the Bhauṭṭa should be found in the northeast.

Interestingly enough, with reference to Lalitāditya's alleged conquest, Kalhaṇa's *Rājatarāṅgiṇī* notes that the Bhauṭṭa have extremely pale faces (iv, 168).<sup>129</sup> I should think that this anthropological feature (to be understood in relation to the Kashmīrī complexion) is not very characteristic for the present-day Tibetans, and also not for the present-day Ladakhī or Balti. Neither was it in the 8<sup>th</sup> century: almost contemporary to the events related in the *Rājatarāṅgiṇī*, the Korean pilgrim Hyecho characterises the Tibetans as having a very dark complexion with only very few fair people.<sup>130</sup>

As Albinia notes, Indian and Kashmīrī elites had become quite obsessed about skin colour by the 11<sup>th</sup> century, and had developed negative stereotypes about more whitish people of Turkic origin.<sup>131</sup> She refers to Sheldon Pollock for a Kashmīrī description of a Ghurid ambassador with the following words:

it was almost as if the colour black had shunned him in fear of being stained by his bad reputation ... so ghastly white he

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barbarians and are accused of practising incest with their sisters and daughters-in-law, and of selling their wives, see M. A. Stein 1900 I: text edition, p. 46, n. to i, 307. See also n. 83 above.

<sup>129</sup> M. A. Stein 1900 I: 137.

<sup>130</sup> Fuchs 1938: 444.

<sup>131</sup> Albinia 2008: 57.

was, [...] whiter than the snow of the Himalayan region where he was born.<sup>132</sup>

Kalhaṇa's statement might thus easily be dismissed as a racist stereotype, but it might also give us an indirect clue as to who the Bhauṭṭa or Bhāṭṭa actually were. They may have been a tribe associated with the (Śveta) Hūṇa or Hephthalites, who mainly settled in present-day Afghanistan and Pakistan, but seem to have settled, in part, at least, also in Western Tibet, near the Kailāś.<sup>133</sup>

The Hephthalites were known for their extremely white complexion. It seems that many Turkic tribes initially shared this anthropological feature. Hence, it is quite likely that Kalhaṇa actually described Albērūnī's Turkic *Bhattavaryān*, settling in Gilgit.<sup>134</sup>

For the period of the early half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, Kalhaṇa's *Rājatarāṅgiṇī* uses the name form *Bhuṭṭa*. This might imply that Kalhaṇa did not assume an identity between the Bhuṭṭa and the Bhauṭṭa. Under the reign of Jayasiṃha (1128–1149), the Darada propose to lead a rebellious Kashmīrī noble, Bhoja, through the land of the Bhuṭṭa (viii, 2886–

<sup>132</sup> Pollock 1993: 277; the full passage, taken from the *Prthvīrājaviṅaya*, 10.43–46, datable to 1191–93, Pollock 1993: 275, runs as follows: “His head was so bald and his forehead so broad it was as if God had intentionally made them thus to inscribe [as on a copper plate] the vast number of cows he slain. The color of his beard, his eyebrows, his very lashes was yellower than the grapes that grow in his native region [of Ghazni]-it was almost as if even the color black had shunned him in fear of being stained by his bad reputation. Horrible was his speech, like the cry of wild birds, for it lacked cerebrals; indeed, all his phonemes were impure, impure as his complexion. ... *He had what looked like skin disease, so ghastly white he was, whiter than bleached cloth, whiter than the snow of the Himalayan region where he was born*” (Pollock 1993: 276–277, emphasis added).

<sup>133</sup> The *Harṣacarita* of Bāṇabhaṭṭa (chapter v) mentions the Hūṇa in “the region which blazes with Kailāśa's lustre (Bāṇabhaṭṭa ed. 1897: 132). Note also the name *Hundesh* or *Hūṇadeśa* for the Mñāḥ.ris region. The University of Cambridge hosts a “Map of Hundes or Ngarikhorsom, Almora and Garhwal Districts. Tehri State, Tibet and U.P.”, URL 21.

<sup>134</sup> If the anthropological feature of the whitish skin had been merely projected onto the Tibetans from the perspective of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, this would still shed light on the ethnic composition in Western Tibet during the 12<sup>th</sup> century. In the Arabic sources, the historical Tubbat (i.e., Tibetans) of the 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> centuries are likewise associated with the Hayṭāl (Hephthalites) or the Turks by Ṭabarī and Ya'qūbī, or only with the Turks by Mas'ūdī (Bailey 1932: 947). This can only mean that the westernmost ‘Tibetans’ or the ‘Tibetans’, with whom the Arabs and Kashmīrī first came into contact, did not look quite like Tibetans today. The reason may be that the Tibetan military administration employed ‘westerners’, that is non-Tibetan tribes, for their wars in the west. As Denwood, 2005: 10, states, “the inhabitants of Zhangzhung, once it was conquered by the Tibetans, were highly valued as shock troops to be used against the Chinese and others”. Therefore, the passage in the *Rājatarāṅgiṇī* cannot simply be dismissed.

88)<sup>135</sup> to another warring lord Trillaka. This is apparently a trap.<sup>136</sup> As far as I understand the sinuous context, the main conflict is staged partly in Jammu and partly in the Valley of Kashmīr.

At that particular point, when they make the above suggestion, the Darada are camping at the Madhumatī river, a left-hand tributary of the Vyeth or Jhelam joining it at the Wular Lake near Bāṃḍīpurā in the Bārāmullā district. According to M. A. Stein, the main seat of the Darada, Daraddeśa, was located along the upper part the Kishangaṅgā river,<sup>137</sup> which flows behind a mountain ridge around the Valley of Kashmīr in a long-bent curve from near Sonamarg to Muẓaffarābād.

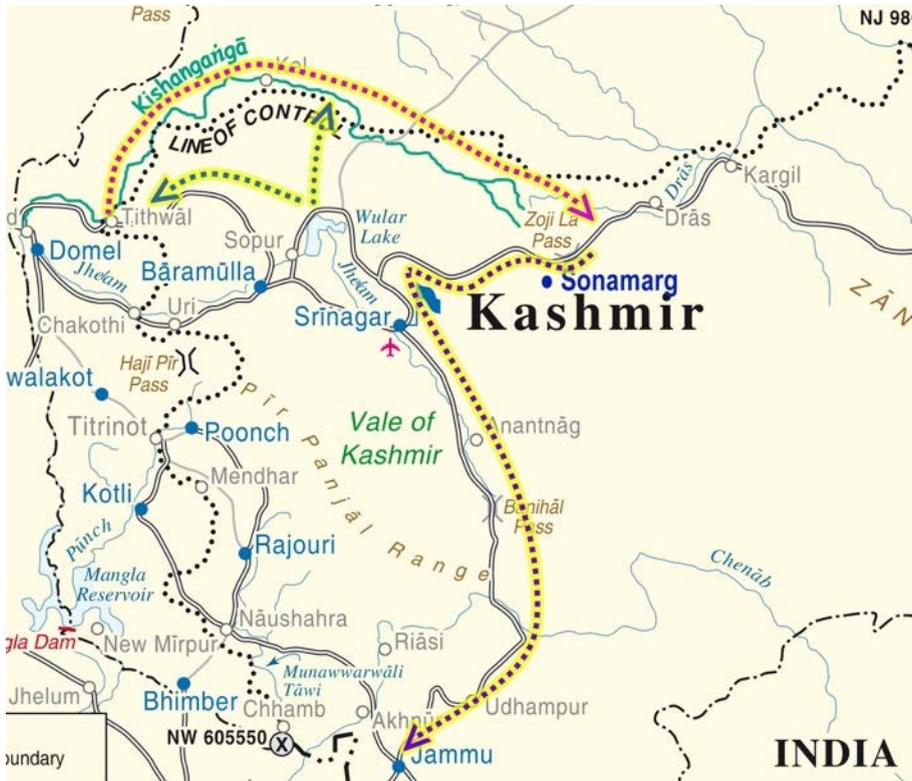
The proposal, notwithstanding its being a trick, could have implied to bring Bhoja either further west, in order that he may hide at a secret place for some time or it could have implied that Bhoja could have reached Srīnagar or Jammu from an unsuspected direction. In the latter case, the Darada could thus have led the rebel Bhoja either further west to the lower Kishangaṅgā at its confluence with the Jhelam or, perhaps more likely, directly up the Madhumatī across the mountains to the upper Kishangaṅgā and then up to the Zoji la and to Sonamarg, from where Bhoja ideally could have reached Srīnagar or could have continued to Jammu, see Map 16.

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<sup>135</sup> M. A. Stein 1900 II: 227.

<sup>136</sup> See also Róna-Tas 1985: 30.

<sup>137</sup> M. A. Stein 1900 II: 435.



Map 16 — Cutout of Map No. 3828 Rev. 22 UNITED NATIONS April 2017  
(Colour),  
Department of Field Support Geospatial Information Section (formerly Car-  
tographic Section), URL 22.  
Kishangaṅgā river enhanced and names and arrows added.

This could have been a promising perspective. It is quite unlikely that Bhoja would have entered Purik in order to make a greater detour through Zanskar or even Central Ladakh. If not settling at the lower Kishangaṅgā, the Bhuṭṭa in question may thus have been a tribe settling in the eastern or upper part of the Kishangaṅgā valley and in the adjoining areas to the east. They could have settled on either side of the Zoji la, perhaps around Dras, perhaps also in other areas of Purik. Whether they identified themselves (wrongly) with the Tibetans, or whether they were (wrongly) identified with the Tibetans, or whether the Tibetans got (wrongly) identified with them, must remain an open question.

In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, then, the name form *Bhuṭṭa* appearing in Śrīva-  
ra's *Rājataranṅī* did, in fact, refer to Ladakh, and, more specifically,

with the additional qualifications 'Little' and 'Great' to Baltistan and Ladakh, respectively. A report on a raid against Little and Great Bhuṭṭa by two generals, tells that while Little Bhuṭṭa was sacked, Great Bhuṭṭa apparently massacred the second troop completely (III, iii 440–43).<sup>138</sup> Again, no particular place is mentioned, so that the identification with present-day Baltistan and Ladakh remains somewhat problematic. It is particularly unclear how far to the east (or to the west and north-west) the application of the name Bhuṭṭa extended.

Both forms: *Bhaṭṭa* and *Bhuṭṭa* appear as personal names or elements of personal names in the Indian context (for the latter see Kalhaṇa's *Rājatarāṅgiṇī* viii, 2429–2432).<sup>139</sup> In the first case, we typically deal with a Sanskrit princely title. However, like *Bhuṭṭa*, the form *Bhaṭṭa* seems to have been used also like an adjective, and apparently also as a tribal designation. Kalhaṇa's *Rājatarāṅgiṇī* (i, 331–35)<sup>140</sup> mentions a 'sorceress', that is, a tribal priestess, named Bhaṭṭā. She invites Mihirakula's son and successor Baka to a sacral feast. The latter accepts the invitation as he does not suspect that he (and his male family members) had been chosen as the sacrifice to the goddesses!

This anecdote, legendary or not, may indicate that the Bhaṭṭa, at least, belonged to the pan-Pamirian cultural complex of the Dard,<sup>141</sup> Burusho, and Nuristani tribes. See also Jettmar for ancient sexual rituals or 'black masses' with possible homicides in the context of the worship of female mountain deities among the 'Dards'.<sup>142</sup> It is conspicuous that the Bhaṭṭa or Bhuṭṭa are almost invariably mentioned in one

<sup>138</sup> Dhar 1994: 546–47.

<sup>139</sup> M. A. Stein 1900 II: 189.

<sup>140</sup> M. A. Stein 1900 I: 49.

<sup>141</sup> I am using this term loosely, to refer to the possible descendants of the Darada. I am aware of the problems associated with this designation (see Clark 1977 and Mock 1997–2010, for a critical discussion of the notion *Dard*; Jettmar 1982 for an emphatic approval of the designation, at least in the actual socio-political context of the Northern Areas of Pakistan; Sökefeld 1998 more categorically for the impossibility of defining ethnic or other social or cultural groups). Leitner, who seems to have had his own political reasons to invent a *Dardistan* as a neutral no-man's land in the Pamirs, states: "In a restricted sense the Dards are the race inhabiting the mountainous country of the Shináki [...], but I include under that designation not only the Chilásis, Astóris, Gilgítis, Dareylis, etc. but also the people of Hunza, Nagyr, Yasin, Chitrál and Kafiristan", Leitner 1890s: 58. According to Leitner, there seems to have been only a single tribe, "on the left bank of the Kandiá river", that was baptized *Dard* – by its neighbours (Leitner 1890s: 58). Only the Shina speaking people of Gurēz (Gurais) would call themselves Dard or did so in recent times, see Grierson 1918: 78. However, the name *Dard* or *Dardu* seems to have been common mainly in Kashmír, see Shaw 1878: 27, n. \*. Peissel, 1984: 122, claims to have observed the use of the designation Darada or *Darade* for the hill tribes north of Srīnagar by Kashmīrī living around the 'Wahur', i.e., Wular Lake. See, however, Rizvi and Kakpori's (1988) very critical evaluation of his work.

<sup>142</sup> Jettmar 1961: 89.

breath with the Darada, and it may thus be safe to conclude that they belonged to the same cultural complex and were, for the greater part, in the loose sense 'Dards' themselves.

In a personal communication, Ruth Leila Schmidt comments on the Bhaúṭṭa as follows:

Re Bhaúṭṭas, this name is almost certainly derived from Bhaṭṭa, which appears to be the name of a dynasty in Dardistan. The name can be traced to Sanskrit and appears in the rock carvings at Chilās. It has survived in Kohistani Shina legends as Bóṭi, and in Indus Kohistan as Bhaṭ-. [...] This does not prove that the Bhaṭṭas were ethnic Dards, of course. But the name looms large in Shina legends as well as Palula genealogies.<sup>143</sup>

In genealogies relating to Chilās, the name appears in the variants *Bota*, *Bôṭâ*, and *Bóṭi*, and these forms may be reconstructed as being derived from Sanskrit *bhártr̥* 'husband, lord' > Bhaṭṭa > *Bôṭa* > *Bóṭi*.<sup>144</sup> The royal title *bhaṭṭāraka*, fem. *bhaṭṭārikā* 'great lord'<sup>145</sup> is abundant in inscriptions and colophons relating to Gilgit and Chilās. Its intensification as *parambhaṭṭāraka* served as part of the titles assumed by the Palola (Paṭola) Śāhis, but this latter title was also used by the Hephthalite ruler Khiṅgila.<sup>146</sup> This demonstrates once again the ideological continuation of names and titles from the Kuṣāṇa over the Hephthalites to the local dynasties along the 'Upper Indus'. Róna-Tas' conclusion:

daß Bhaúṭṭa nicht für Zentraltibet, sondern für Ladakh, Baltistan, also Westtibet verwendet wird ('that [the designation] Bhaúṭṭa is not used for Central Tibet, but for Ladakh [and] Baltistan, hence West Tibet'),<sup>147</sup>

would thus need the qualification that the name may have originally referred to Dardic or associated tribes further west and further south. More particularly one could think that the reference to Ladakh might have got established in Kashmīrī sources only with the late Dardic migrations into Ladakh around the 15<sup>th</sup> century. But I do not want to preclude, that the name, originally referring to a Dardic tribe, was applied to the Tibetans in general at an earlier time, just because of the superficial similarity between the elements *bhaúṭ* and *bod*. It could also be

<sup>143</sup> Personal e-mail communication 04/2008.

<sup>144</sup> Schmidt and Kohistani 2008: 9–13.

<sup>145</sup> See Monier-Williams 1899: 745b.

<sup>146</sup> See von Hinüber 2004: 109–11.

<sup>147</sup> Róna-Tas 1985: 29.

the case, that the name was applied to the Tibetans at a time when the western and southernmost 'Tibetans' had a Dardic appearance, if not affiliation. And it is further possible that the Tibetans adopted the name *Bod*, just because they, or an important part of their population continued to be called so by outsiders or also because they wanted to be associated with a tribe that had a certain fame as warriors.

In spite of this, it remains entirely unclear when and where exactly the Bhauṭṭa or Bhuṭṭa tribes resided in Western Tibet, or which tribes could have been similar enough to the former so that the name could have been transferred onto the latter.

#### 4. *Spu.rgyal Bod* and *Rtsaṅ Bod* – the Tibetan Perspective<sup>148</sup>

The official reference *Bod.yul* is found in the two versions of the *Old Tibetan Annals*, the civil version OTA (PT 1288/IOL Tib J 0750) and the military version (Or 8212 0187), in the *Old Tibetan Chronicle*, and in the *Treaty Inscription* 821/22 (w0058). It remains unclear, however, which areas were included under this designation, and whether the notion of *Bod.yul* expanded with the expansion of the Empire.

The first mention, at the beginning of OTA (PT 1288, l. 11), which resumes the last years of Sroṅ.brtsan Sgam.po retrospectively, refers to the arrival of the Chinese princess Wencheng in *Bod.yul* in 641 (or 643). The dated part of the Annals starts only with the year 650. It is possible that this is also the time when the retrospective part was written, but it is also possible that this section was added at a later time, when the annals and its shortened copies were circulated in the imperial chancelleries.

The next mention, and the first one to be reliably dated, appears in the Hare year *yos.buḥl lo* 727. This belongs to the reign of Khri.lde Btsug.brtsan (704-755). This is exactly the reign for which the *Old Tibetan Chronicle* likewise has two casual mentions of the term (PT 1287, ll. 356, 361). The so-called military version of the *Annals* (Or 8212 0187), which contains quite a few mentions (ll. 1, 30, 53, 55, 57, 63, 87), covers the years 743–765.

Apart from this official designation, the name *Bod* appears in Old Tibetan documents for at least two regions. These are potential candidates for earlier, protohistoric usages of the designation.

<sup>148</sup> The text sigla refer to the following document collections: "PT": fonds Pelliot tibétain; "Or": British Museum's Oriental collections; "IOL Tib J": India Office Library, Tibetan manuscripts from the library cave at Dunhuang. These texts are available via Old Tibetan Texts Online, URL 23.

The document PT 1038, *Origin and genealogy of Btsan po*, l. 18 mentions a *Spu Bod* in connection with the royal lineage.<sup>149</sup> Most probably, this refers not only to the lineage but to the seat of the dynasty. However, in l. 16 the same document also mentions the ‘country’ or ‘province’ (*yul*): *yul Bod.ka G’yag.drug* ‘the country of the six? of the *bod-collective*’ to which the first legendary ruler descends. The latter phrase is also found in PT 1286, *Catalogue of the Ancient Principalities and a List of the Royal Genealogy*, l. 34. Rolf A. Stein emends this into *Bod.kha g’yah.drug*, translated as ‘division en six parties’<sup>150</sup> (division in six parts), without accounting for the fact that *g’yah* usually means ‘rust’ or ‘slate’, yielding thus the ‘division of *bod* (called) the six slates’.

It seems quite unlikely that in this context the element *g’yag* means ‘(male) yak’ in its literal meaning. In some documents, the yak is mentioned together with the ‘enemies’ *dgra*, being thus associated with great danger. If this is the relevant association here, the phrase might be translated ‘to the land/ region [called] the six dangerous/ inimical parts of Bod’. However, given the possibility of a sound alternation between nasal and oral stop consonant (see also n.149 above), one may perhaps read *g’yan* ‘abyss, precipice’ and hence the ‘six gorges’.<sup>151</sup> It is not unlikely that we deal here with a loan from a Burmish language, referring to gorges or simply river valleys, although in this case, one might have expected a spelling *\*gyag*, *\*k(h)yag* or even *\*khyog*.<sup>152</sup> In any

<sup>149</sup> Note also the exceptional reading *bon* in l. 2: *Spu.rgyal Bon*, which gave rise to the idea that the name had something to do with the Bon ritual practices and practitioners, see Lalou 1953: 275f.; W. Simon 1955: 8; Haarh 1969: 289. This could well be a simple mistake; the writer might have confounded the names, accidentally or perhaps not so accidentally: R. A. Stein 1985: 123 suggests a possible voluntary deviation in order to differentiate the king from the official lineage; and later attestations prove to be Bonpo propaganda, see R. A. Stein 1959: 11, n. 28. On the other hand, the spelling variant might be due to a well know alternation between nasals and plosives. With respect to the initials, W. Simon 1949: 14 n. 2; 1975 implicitly takes this sound change to be unidirectional, from nasal to plosive. If that would apply also for the finals, the textual evidence could then indicate that the name for Tibet originally had nothing to do with the Baitai and the Bhautta. But one could also think of a hypercorrect form or an intentional archaism. This could happen if the sound change was still productive and nasal forms were still common besides their plosive counterparts, if only in closely related dialects: the writer, perhaps a non-native speaker, might have been tempted to invent what he thought to be a more prestigious archaic form. Finally, the sound change might not have been fully unidirectional, at least not with respect to finals (the alternation seems to be much more frequent with finals than with initials). Another option is to see in both forms a nominal derivation from the root *√bo* ‘call’ and a more general meaning ‘speak’. In that case, both forms would refer to regions where people were speakers of the same language. The Tibetan self-designation *Bod*, if it were one, would then signify nothing but “we, the speakers (of the same language)”.

<sup>150</sup> R. A. Stein 1985: 126.

<sup>151</sup> See Zeisler 2011b: 175, 176 n. c.

<sup>152</sup> The corresponding proto-Tibeto-Burman forms are reconstructed as 1. *\*grawk*

case, an interpretation as 'gorge' or 'valley' would certainly be more suitable than a reading 'yak' or 'hostility'.

What is likewise strange is the unmotivated element *ka*. According to Hahn, *ka* may be used to form abstract nouns from verbs or to form pronominal and numeral collectives.<sup>153</sup> We know it also as postposition 'on', and it is infrequently attested also with nouns for collective entities, such as Zanskarpa *rika* 'mountains' or 'mountain chain'. But does it make sense to speak of a 'collective of *bod*' if *bod* is the name of a province or country? It could make sense, perhaps, if *bod* was related to the *verbum dicendi* *hbod* 'call, name', and if there was a more general meaning of 'speaking' so that the *bod.ka* could have been the 'collective of speakers' or a collective 'we'.

With an interpretation of *g'yag* as 'ravine, gorge', the expression could have referred to a comparatively restricted mountainous area or, perhaps more likely, to the altogether six gorges of the Brahmaputra, the Nag.chu-Salween, the Dza.chu-Mekong, the Dri.chu-Yangtze, and the Ñag.chu-Yalong, plus one of the other headwaters of the Yangtze (or alternatively the headwater of the Irrawaddy), all in or to the southeast of Tibet. The number six also recalls the 'six original tribes'.<sup>154</sup> While it is certainly not necessary to take the number six too literally, the expression could well refer to southern Kham<sup>155</sup> or, even further south, to Spo.bo, the region from where the Spu.rgyal dynasty or part of the lineage of the emperors might have originated (or from where, according to the legend, the 'mad' king Dri.gum's 'son', Spu.(l)de/Ho.(l)de Guñ.rgyal was 'brought back').<sup>156</sup>

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'ravine, valley', related to Classical Tibetan *grog.po* 'ravine' (used in Ladakhī for smaller rivulets) and Written Burmese *khyauk* 'chasm, gulf', URL 24 and 2. \*kl(y)u(ŋ/k) 'valley, river' related to Classical Tibetan *kluñs* 'river, valley' and Written Burmese *khyoŋ ~ khloŋ ~ khyuiŋ* 'valley' or 'river', URL 25. The two reconstructions are related and show – as in many other cases – that there is not only some variation between oral and nasal stops (especially in the syllable finals) but also a great variation between the post-initial glides *-y-*, *-r-*, and *-l-*, and sometimes also in the voicedness of the initial. This variation might be a sign that such words have been repeatedly borrowed between the languages in question.

<sup>153</sup> Hahn 1996: 37f.

<sup>154</sup> See R. A. Stein 1961.

<sup>155</sup> Note the traditional designation *chu.bži sgañ.drug* 'four rivers, six spurs' for the Kham region, later also the name of a guerrilla group, see URL 26.

<sup>156</sup> According to the legend, represented in the *Old Tibetan Chronicle*, Dri.gum, overestimating his abilities, or simply going crazy, challenged his vassals to take up a fight with him. One of his vassals, Lo.ñam accepted the challenge, and the fight took place near Mt. Kailāś. Lo.ñam killed the king and expelled his two 'sons'. A mythical figure then invited one of these 'sons' back. While most Tibetan traditions agree that the 'son' of Dri.gum, the 'mad' king, is 'brought back' from Spo.bo, none of these sources actually specifies whereto.

For Haahr 1969: 18 and passim and Tucci 1970: 246, the narrative about Dri.gum and his 'son' would point to a break in the legendary prehistoric 'dynastic' lineage.

The document IOL Tib J 731, *End of the Good Age and Tragedy of the Horse and Yak*, ll. 29, 47, 67 mentions a *Spu.rgyal Bod* in connection with the language into which the text has been translated. The document IOL Tib J 732, *Story of the Bride of Gyim po mnyag cig*, l. 14 mentions a *Skyi.rgyal Bod*, again in connection with the language into which the story was translated. It is unclear whether this is only a variant of the afore-mentioned name or actually a separate name. However, there was a province called *Skyi.ro*, which Hazod associates with a place 30km south of Lhasa.<sup>157</sup> Most probably, he thinks of a relation with the *Skyi.chu*, the river passing Lhasa. But one might perhaps likewise think of *Skyi(d).roñ* (Kyirong) in the southwest, across the border to Nepal.

Thomas describes some documents written in Tibetan script, but in the Nam language.<sup>158</sup> These pretend to be translations, starting with the common phrase *in the language of so-and-so [it is called] so-and-so*. While the second and third documents mention the language of *Spu.-rgyal Bod*, the first document again has *Spyi.rgyal Bod*, which Thomas takes just for an error. R. A. Stein mentions that in the epic the name elements *skyi*, *spyi* and *lci* appear to be interchangeable for a meeting

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In fact, the 'lineage' is divided into six groups, which are aligned with the four cosmic realms: heaven as the abode of the deities or *lha*, the middle realm as the abode of the *btsan* or mountain spirits, earth as the abode of the humans or *mi*, and the underworld of the water spirits, the *nāga* or *klu*: 1. *Gnam.gyi Khri bdun* (the Seven Stars of Heaven – see Zeisler 2015 for this new etymology of *khri*), 2. *Stod.kyi* or *Bar.gyi Steñ(s) gñis* (two Upper or Middle Heaven[dwellers]), 3. *Sa.la* (var. *Saḥi*) *Legs drug* (six Excellent Beings on or of the Earth), 4. *Chu.la* (or *Sa.la*) *Lde brgyad* (eight Divine Beings in the Water or Netherworld or on the Earth), 5. *Bar.gyi Btsan lña* (five *Btsan* or Mountain Spirits of the Middle Realm), 6. five unclassified rulers, constituting the last group before the historically attested rulers, possibly containing some real figures. There is considerable variation in the names of the groups, their ordering, in the number and ordering of their elements, and particularly in the names of the rulers, see Haarh 1969: 72; Linnenborn 2004: 63f.

I would, however, think that the original enumeration from above (heaven) to below (the netherworld) reflects not only breaks in the 'lineage', but rather a synchronic template of more or less half-mythical principalities enumerated from west (traditionally located 'up') to the east (traditionally located 'down'). The 'second' group to which *Spu.(l)de/ Үо.(l)de Guñ.rgyal* belongs must have been added at a later time, when the historical rulers claimed to be the legitimate descendants of this 'lineage'. The secondary character of the group is shown in the very limited number of its members, its ambivalent classification as 'upper' or 'middle' and by the fact that it effectively has displaced the group of the *btsan*.

One should in any case be aware that the Old Tibetan 'nation-building' mythology is most probably a willful amalgamation of the most diverse legends from all different regions. These mythological accounts cannot be taken at face value. The reference to *Spo.bo*, however, seems to point to a southeastern origin of the imperial lineage.

<sup>157</sup> Hazod 2002: 35.

<sup>158</sup> Thomas 1928: 632.

place of Gliñ in Kham.<sup>159</sup> There is also mention of a mountain *Spyi.rgyal*.<sup>160</sup> It seems thus that the forms *Skyi.rgyal* and *Spyi.rgyal* are dialectal variants, and this may further indicate that the name *Spu.rgyal* and the respective name bearers and lineage originated in the east.

One funeral text, PT 1039, l. 7 further mentions a *Hbod.yul* in a description reminiscent of those in the catalogues of principalities: *Hbod Hbod.yul Dbye.mo yul.drug ku-na rje Dbye.rje Khar.ba* etc. 'in the six provinces [of] *Dbye.mo* [one of the many] *Hbod* provinces, the lord [is] the *Dbye* lord *Khar.ba*' etc. I take the reduplication of the designation *Hbod* as a case of distributive marking, and thus as indicating a plurality of *hbod* provinces. The spelling alternative may simply be erroneous, but it may also indicate the above-suggested relationship with the *verbum dicendi* *hbod*. On the other hand, the spelling insecurity could also point to an external origin of the name. *Dbye.mo yul.drug* is one of the 40 (or 42) smaller principalities *rgyal.phran sil.ma bži.bcu*. The place name appears also in PT 1285 (*Story of Bon and Gshen*) and IOL Tib J 374 (*Age of Decline*), but in these cases without any reference to *Bod* or *Hbod*. In the *Catalogue of the Ancient Principalities and a List of the Royal Genealogy* PT 1286, l. 12, *Dbye.mo yul.bži* (!) appears as the seventh entity after *Skyi.ro.ñi Ljañ.sñon* and *Nas.po.ñi Khra.sum*.

Finally, the *Old Tibetan Chronicle*, OTC, ll. 75, 199, 200, 319 mentions a *Rtsañ Bod*. Only this latter entity seems to have had a seizable historical reality. The name referred to a province of *Rtsañ* or perhaps also to the whole country of *Rtsañ* (on the upper course of the Brahmaputra). The ruler of *Rtsañ* appears to have been affiliated with the Tocharians, an Indo-European people 'identical' or merely associated with the Yuezhi. This affiliation is borne out by the name or title *rje Rtsañ.rjeñi Thod.kar* 'the ruler, Tocharian of/among the *Rtsañ* rulers', given to his lineage in the *Catalogue of the Ancient Principalities*, PT 1286, ll. 7f. *Rtsañ* or parts of *Rtsañ* seem to have been vassals of their western and/ or northern neighbour *Žaň.žuň*, before both were annexed by the Tibetans. *Rtsañ Bod* was conquered for the Tibetans by a *Žaň.žuň* noble, *Khyuň.po Spuň.sad Zu.tse* (who seems to have been a collaborating war profiteer) under the reign of Gnamri Slonmtshan in the late 6<sup>th</sup> or early 7<sup>th</sup> century (OTC, ll. 75, 199, 200, 319).

If one reads between the lines of the first chapter of OTC, one can get the impression that the 'Tibetan' 'nation' started to crystallise first in *Žaň.žuň*. *Dri.gum*, the legendary 'mad' king, who is said to have challenged his vassal *Lo.ñam*, only to die from the latter's hands, could have been a Western Tibetan ruler, or a ruler with interests in Western Tibet, as the combat with *Lo.ñam* is staged near the *Kailás*. Most

<sup>159</sup> R. A. Stein 1956: 8.

<sup>160</sup> R. A. Stein 1956: 27.

interestingly, the Western Tibetan tradition of the *Bkaḥ.chems/ Bkaḥ.thems ka.kholma* relates the Dri.gum-Lo.ñam episode in the context of a raid into Kashmīr.<sup>161</sup> The most likely candidates for such a raid are the Tuyuhun and/or their unnamed allies, who in the year 445 conquered Khotan and then pushed south as far as Jibin, that is, Kapiśa (possibly plus Gandhāra)<sup>162</sup> on the Kābul river, where they entered into an alliance with the Hephthalites or Hūna.<sup>163</sup>

Dri.gum's dominion, and that of the possibly neighbouring Lo.ñam, were apparently usurped by the founder of the Spu.rgyal Dynasty, Spu.(l)de Guñ.rgyal, who was, as I believe, just as much or as little Dri.gum's son, as Lo.ñam was Dri.gum's murderer. Whether or not that particular Spu.(l)de Guñ.rgyal became a ruler of Yar.kluñs, or whether or not the power centre was shifted there at a later time, is another question. But it seems that the phrase *Spu.rgyal Bod* was used, retrospectively in much later times, to discriminate his dominions from the (almost) historical Rtsaṅ Bod.

Of course, adherents of an 'early Tibet' theory would claim that Spu.rgyal Bod existed before 600, cf., e.g., Sørensen and Hazod, according to whom "the toponym *sPū-rgyal Bod* arguably goes back to the period when the initial attempt to unity [!] the country or the confederation was made by the *Yar lung rgyal po* (second half of 6<sup>th</sup> century)".<sup>164</sup> Unfortunately, there is no single historical evidence for this assumption. But the name would then have referred only to a tiny little province.

All this points to the fact that the name element *bod* did not originally refer to a 'Tibetan' 'nation' but to two or more minor entities. One

<sup>161</sup> See also Zeisler 2011b: 127, n.18.

<sup>162</sup> As Molè 1970: 97, n.105 explains, the term Jibin referred to Kashmīr in Buddhist texts from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century up to Xuanzang's time. In the Confucian tradition from the 1<sup>st</sup> century up to the 5<sup>th</sup> century, it referred to the Indian kingdoms of the north-west in general, including thus the Śakas, Kuṣāṇa, and Hephthalites. Her main reason to opt for Gandhāra is that Kashmīr was not known to the Chinese court before its conquest by the Hephthalites in 518, see Molè 1970: 98. Benjamin 2007: 110 identifies Jibin (Chi-pin) with Kashmīr, although he cites a description by which it would be located south-west (!) of Nandou (which he associates with the lower Gilgit valley), hence it can only be Kapiśa with Chitrāl and/ or Gandhāra. Lévi and Chavannes (1985: 38) note that Jibin (Ki-pin) was originally the name of Kashmīr, but the exact reference was forgotten, and when the name was reactivated, it was applied arbitrarily to regions west of Kashmīr. Gandhāra was counted as eastern capital of Jibin, but, of course, the capital of Gandhāra was Puruṣapura, modern Peshawar on the Kābul river (Lévi and Chavannes 1985: 41). For the identification of Jibin (Ki-pin) with Kapiśa on the upper Kābul river, thus west of Gandhāra, see also M. A. Stein 1905: 76; Pelliot 1934: 39, n.1 of p. 38; Sen 2014: 142, Map 1; John E. Hill 2003: Section 8 with n. 4 gives Kapiśa-Peshawar.

<sup>163</sup> Molè 1970: xv, 97f., n.105; the sources apparently contradict each other in stating that the Tuyuhun submitted to, or subdued, Jibin.

<sup>164</sup> Sørensen and Hazod 2005: 42, n. 10; emphasis added.

of these entities, Rtsaṅ Bod can be located on the upper Yar.kluṅs Rtsaṅs.po (or uppermost course of the Brahmaputra), and at least its rulers seem to have had a Scythian affiliation. The other entity, *Spu.rgyal Bod*, if not a fiction, might have existed not far from the first one, perhaps just on the other, western side of the Kailāś. At some time, the name Bod may have been projected also to the 'six gorges' of Spo.bo in the south-east of Tibet, perhaps only after the name Bod was applied to the growing empire. Alternatively, the name Bod, originally associated with the 'six gorges' of Spo.bo could have been brought along from the east with a new ruling elite.

### 5. 發羌 Fā Qiāng – the Chinese Perspective

Several Chinese sources hold that the Tibetans descended from (a sub-tribe of) the Qiang (羌 Qiāng), and this claim has found its way into Wikipedia.<sup>165</sup> Because the modern Qiang speak a Tibeto-Burman language, it is throughout the relevant literature silently assumed that the ancient Qiang were a Sino-Tibetan tribe or a rather homogeneous group of Sino-Tibetan tribes.

However, the designation Qiang as used by the ancient Chinese sources is an underspecified exonym referring to non-Chinese (that is, non-Han), mainly nomadic tribes. The corresponding ideograph refers to 'Shepherds', but its usage is rather derogative in the sense of 'Barbarians' and not neutral in the sense of 'Herdsmen'. "It is as best read as a Han conceptualisation of the 'other' [...] that reflects a distinction between a pastoral and an agricultural lifeway".<sup>166</sup> Wen Maotao adds, "Qiang was a word with a specific negative sense".<sup>167</sup>

It seems that the earliest so named Qiang, that is, those of the oracle bone inscriptions (beginning ca. 1250),<sup>168</sup> were located at the upper reaches of the Yellow River, and in the mountains along the upper reaches of the three southward bound rivers Salween, Mekong, and Yangtze. There seems to have been some southward movement in antiquity.<sup>169</sup> Whether or not the Qiang of the oracle bone inscriptions were the same people as those in the period of the Han Dynasty (202–220) remains unclear. Like with so many other designations, the reference might well have changed through the ages.<sup>170</sup> Tse asserts, "the lineage of the Qiang from prehistoric to the Han periods should be

<sup>165</sup> See URL 27.

<sup>166</sup> Aldenderfer and Zhang 2004: 40 with further reference.

<sup>167</sup> Wen Maotao 2014: 56.

<sup>168</sup> See also URL 28.

<sup>169</sup> Yü Ying-shih 1986: 422.

<sup>170</sup> R. A. Stein 1957: 3.

suspected of being an invented or an imaginative construction".<sup>171</sup> Fanye, the author of the *Hou Hanshu*, and apparently the first to write a more detailed account of the Qiang, would have

constructed a fictive relationship between the Qiang and the Han people by associating the Qiang with legendary figures such as Emperor Shun and the San Miao in order to lead his readers to believe that the Qiang were people with whom the Chinese ancestors had already associated. [...] It was a project of demystifying the Qiang and familiarizing the Han people with them. [...] Besides, as an enemy of the Han people, the Qiang were depicted as debased and barbarous as possible. They were the offspring of the ostracized San Miao and then a member of the barbarous Western Rong; their legendary chieftain Wuyi Yuanjian was originally a slave of the Qin state, which was regarded as the culturally backward regional state of the Zhou dynasty. Hence, the ancestors of the Qiang were constructed as being the worst of the worst. [...] All these depictions clearly show how the Qiang people were being despised and de-humanized in the standard history.<sup>172</sup>

When both, "Han and Qiang united to fight against the empire, [...] ethnic Han people were called Qiang by their imperial adversary".<sup>173</sup> The designation *Qiang* was thus

a label used to refer to a hostile population living west of the Later Han imperial center. At this point, "Han" and "Qiang" are malleable [read: malleable] terms that define the people who either swore allegiance to the imperial state or did not.<sup>174</sup>

There seems to be evidence that the designation Qiang was also applied to nomads of non-Tibeto-Burman, i.e., Turkic-Mongolian or Indo-European descent.<sup>175</sup> To a certain extent, all three groups must have lived in close vicinity to each other, particularly in the so-called 'dependent states', which were set up mainly for the Qiang, but were populated also with Xiongnu and Yuezhi. From time to time, these groups were joining hands in rebellions against the Han, in some cases even under Han leadership.<sup>176</sup> Whatever the 'official' identities, all these

<sup>171</sup> Tse 2012: 220.

<sup>172</sup> Tse 2012: 222–24.

<sup>173</sup> Tse 2012: 225.

<sup>174</sup> Tse 2012: 225f.

<sup>175</sup> See, with caution, Beckwith 2002: 152, n.79.

<sup>176</sup> Yü Ying-shih 1986: 428, 434.

groups were without much doubt composite federations, including clans or tribes of different ethnic origin. In this context, clan affiliations might have been much more important than tribal affiliations, and the question which language to use might have been decided more by the immediate environment than by one's origin. In this rather fluid situation, there was probably nothing that could be termed ethnic or linguistic identity in the modern sense.<sup>177</sup>

From the period of the Han Dynasty onwards, Chinese sources distinguish between several subcategories of Qiang, but it is not evident whether such distinctions merely reflected political differences (as being more or less adverse or cooperative to the Chinese power struggle) or also ethnic differences. Again, some of the Qiang are located in the present-day provinces Qinghai, Gansu, and Shensi. However, as Meakin and Luo note, the name 'Qiang was probably "a shifting exonym for tribes encountered in Chinese westward expansion and therefore included a variety of steppe tribal groups, probably sharing similar cultural and possibly linguistic traits", similar to the groups that go by the name 'Scythian'.<sup>178</sup>

One of the larger groups, the Chuò (or Ér) Qiāng, 婼羌 "had been active throughout an extremely large area in the Western Regions, stretching along the K'un-lun mountains from the neighbourhood of Dunhuang in the east to the Pamirs in the west",<sup>179</sup> reaching the neighbourhood of Hunza.<sup>180</sup> Rather than being Tibeto-Burmans, these people might have been related to the Yuezhi/ Scythians and/ or to the Pamirian population that left behind the Tarim mummies in the same area (see also above, p.23). The name variant Ruò Qiāng is still attested for a town and a county encompassing the ancient Qakilik or Charklik area near the Lop Nor, with the characters 若羌 for the town and originally 婼羌,<sup>181</sup> later also 若羌 for the county.<sup>182</sup>

While Eberhard claims that the so-called 'West Tibetans' [i.e., Western Qiang or Xī Qiāng 西羌] of the later sources had a rather homogeneous culture, distinct from the Turkic-Mongolian and Indo-European nomads,<sup>183</sup> he also cites sources according to which they are clearly to be distinguished from other Qiang tribes: they are said to have been separated from China by other Qiang tribes until the Sui dynasty (581–

<sup>177</sup> Meakin and Luo 2008 give a detailed and informative overview on the various possible relationships between the Qiang and other peoples. I benefited greatly from Meakin's English draft version, she kindly sent to me.

<sup>178</sup> Meakin and Luo 2008 with further references.

<sup>179</sup> Yü Ying-shih 1986: 425. See J. E. Hill 2004: n. 3.1 and 3.3.

<sup>180</sup> J. E. Hill 2004: n. 9.19.

<sup>181</sup> These characters actually refer to the Chuò Qiāng 婼羌.

<sup>182</sup> See URL 29 and URL 30.

<sup>183</sup> Eberhard 1942: 83–85.

618<sup>184</sup>), they are further said to live in the Qiang area, but (also) further south and west. Some of their customs bring them closer to the Xiongnu and the Iranian tribes, such as the importance of the horse, the sacrifice of horses or cattle at funerals, or the *comitatus*, the members of which will get buried with their leader upon his death.<sup>185</sup>

An analogous term, 西番 *Xī Fān* ‘Western Barbarians’, was used a) generally for the “[n]ative peoples west of Gansu under the Tang”, b) more specifically for the Qiang and their homelands, and c) also for the Tibetans and eastern Tibet.<sup>186</sup> The name contains the element 番 *fān*, which features also as part of the Chinese medieval name of Tibet: 吐蕃, 吐蕃 / 土蕃 or 吐蕃, 土蕃.

By the time of the Qing dynasty (i.e., from 1636 onwards),<sup>187</sup> the designations *Qiang* and *Tibetan*, with or without the specification ‘western’, were used interchangeably. E.g., in the *Ming Shi* 明史 (compiled between the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and completed in 1739<sup>188</sup>) it was stated that *Xī Fān jí Xī Qiāng* 西番即西羌 “Western Bod is Western Qiang”,<sup>189</sup> with the ironical result that the so-called ‘West Tibetans’ were living in the easternmost part of the Tibetan cultural sphere!

The Qiang are often described as an acephalic group, “with a pronounced tendency towards fission”.<sup>190</sup> Wen Maotao cites the *Hou Hanshu*, vol. 87, *Records of Western Qiang*, as stating “Qiang people neither establish a unified country nor obey one king. People make alliances with stronger tribes and fight for resources with each other”.<sup>191</sup>

The Qiang settling in Qinghai in the first two centuries CE are described by Bielenstein as having “retained their tribal organisation under chiefs”, one of these chiefs even proclaiming himself Son of Heaven in 108.<sup>192</sup> But according to de Crespigny, the rebellion of Dianlian, who was “sufficiently sinicised to take the Chinese imperial title and proclaim himself as ‘Son of Heaven’” was a singular instance of strong leadership, the success of which ended with his death,<sup>193</sup> demonstrating once again the “lack of unity among the Qiang”.<sup>194</sup>

An important branch of apparently more ‘tribal’ Western Qiang were the Dangxiang, one of the tribes of the later Tangut or Miñag.

<sup>184</sup> See URL 31.

<sup>185</sup> Eberhard 1942: 92–95; for the last point see p. 93.

<sup>186</sup> See URL 32.

<sup>187</sup> See URL 33.

<sup>188</sup> See URL 34.

<sup>189</sup> Wen Maotao 2014: 62 with further references.

<sup>190</sup> Yü Ying-shih 1986: 422.

<sup>191</sup> Wen Maotao 2014: 59; see also de Crespigny 1984: 58f.

<sup>192</sup> Bielenstein 1986: 270.

<sup>193</sup> de Crespigny 1984: 112.

<sup>194</sup> de Crespigny 1984: 113.

Initially, they seem to have had marriage alliances with the predominantly Mongolic Tuyuhun (吐谷渾, Tib. Ḥaža); at a later stage, the apparently likewise Mongolic Tuoba 拓拔 formed their most prominent clan.<sup>195</sup>

If being acephalic was originally characteristic of the Tibeto-Burman Qiang, then any such more 'tribal' or organised Qiang were either not Tibeto-Burman at all, or they had merged to a great extent with the tribal groups of Central Asia, the Indo-Europeans, the Turks, and the Mongols. This is, in fact, suggested by de Crespigny, according to whom

the Western Qiang came under the dominance of, and were to a considerable extent absorbed by, the expanding power of the Xianbi.<sup>196</sup>

In any case, as Franke and Twitchett state:

The ethnic and linguistic composition of the peoples bordering on China in the north and in the west was *always* fluid: Whole tribes either voluntarily joined the dominant tribe or were placed under their leadership by force or persuasion.<sup>197</sup>

All this makes it difficult, if not impossible, to understand what is actually meant when Chinese sources comment that the 'Tibetans'-to-be descended from the Qiang or a subgroup of the Qiang or perhaps more realistically that they were organised as a separate group under alleged Qiang leadership.

It is in this blurred associative terminological network that the above-mentioned Fā Qiāng appear (see above note 13), whose name may or may not be related to that of the Baitai and may or may not be related to that of the Bod.

These Fā Qiāng are mentioned *en passant* in the *Hou Hanshu* (the History of the Later Han), a text that was written during the 5<sup>th</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> century. According to Nathan W. Hill, who follows Beckwith uncritically,<sup>198</sup> the earliest reference to the Fā Qiāng would date back to the period of 126–146.<sup>199</sup>

According to Beckwith, the name would appear in a descriptive list of Qiang. With reference to HHS 87, 2898, he gives the following translation and comment:

<sup>195</sup> Dunnell 1994: 155–57.

<sup>196</sup> de Crespigny 1984: 168.

<sup>197</sup> Franke and Twitchett 1994: 12, emphasis added.

<sup>198</sup> Beckwith 1977: 4.

<sup>199</sup> N. W. Hill 2006: 88.

“The Fa Ch’iang and the T’ang-mao are extremely far away, and never had relations with us.” No date is, unfortunately, given to indicate the first time the Chinese found about the people. The immediately preceding sentence, while having nothing to do with the Fa Ch’iang, mentions the period 順帝時 “in the time of Shun-ti”, that is 126 to 145 A.D., so that the Fa Ch’iang were first heard about this time.<sup>200</sup>

This, however, is imprecise. The relevant passages are found in Chapter 117 of the *Hou Hanshu* Book 87. A translation of this chapter is provided by Meakin.<sup>201</sup> What Beckwith refers to belongs to an unsystematic resumption at the end of the history.<sup>202</sup> This summary starts with the 5<sup>th</sup> century CE ancestor of the Qiang, jumps to the period of Emperor Shun, mentions the Fā Qiāng, and jumps back to 37. From that point, it proceeds more lineally over 94 to 107, and ends with 148.

The Fā Qiāng are mentioned exactly twice in the years 101 and 102 (HHS 87; 2884-5). In autumn 98, a certain Mitang, tribal chief of the Qiang had invaded Longxi (a Commandery in Gansu) and caused military action on the part of the Han. In autumn 101, after another rebellion,

[t]he Qiang multitudes suffered losses and injuries and their people collapsed. More than 6,000 surrendered and they were moved to Hanyang, Anding and Longxi. Mitang was weakened and was left with less than 1,000 people and they moved far beyond the head of the Ci Zhi River, settling among and reliant on the Fa Qiang.<sup>203</sup>

For the year 102, an official report is quoted, which describes the situation as follows:

Today they [i.e. the Qiang under the leadership of Mitang] are weak and hard-pressed and the cooperation between them has broken down. Related peoples are turning their back on one another and the remaining soldiers who are able to fight only number a few hundred and they have fled far away to rely on the Fa Qiang.<sup>204</sup>

Meakin suggests that

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<sup>200</sup> Beckwith 1977: 4.

<sup>201</sup> Meakin 2014.

<sup>202</sup> See Meakin 2014: 27f.

<sup>203</sup> Meakin 2014: 14f.

<sup>204</sup> Meakin 2014: 15,

[f]ar beyond the head of the Ci Zhi River could be into the Qaidam basin or into the Kunlun mountains, moving towards eastern Xinjiang, which is closer to where the Er Qiang of the Han Shu seem to have been.<sup>205</sup>

According to a personal communication by Rachel Meakin (email 19.10.2020), the Cizhi river may be identical with the Xizhi river, mentioned in the *Tangshu*. This may have been one of the feeders of the upper Yellow River.<sup>206</sup> Nevertheless, this remains a conjecture. It is impossible to know where exactly the Fā Qiāng settled, who they were, or how the element fā 發 should be treated. It could represent the name of the tribe in question, but it could as well be descriptive. The character fā 發 has the meaning 'to send off' or also 'shoot', in which latter case it could describe the people as archers or describe their hostility.<sup>207</sup> As a descriptive term, fā 發 could possibly also simply mean 'distant', as suggested by de Crespigny.<sup>208</sup> In my opinion this would be the most feasible interpretation. After all, nothing more is known about them than that they provide a safe harbour for the enemies of the Han, which means that they are out of reach of the Han. There was no communication, and thus the Han quite apparently had no idea who the Fā Qiāng were, not even where exactly they settled. It is rather ridiculous to derive an ethnic identity, not to speak of a relationship, with the 'Tibetans'-to-be, from these meagre passages.

Nevertheless, this is exactly what modern authors claim. An example can be seen in Fei's earlier article, where he further shifts the temporal reference by about 300 years into the pre-Han period:

According to the Han Dynasty (206 BC–AD 226) historical records, the Tibetans were an offshoot of the western Qiang from the pre-Han period. They were called Fa Qiang or *bod* in the ancient pronunciation [!]. Tibetans still call themselves this today. The Fa Qiang were one of the many tribes living in Gansu and Qinghai.<sup>209</sup>

This practically turns into full identity in Fei's later article:

<sup>205</sup> Meakin 2014: 15, n. 114.

<sup>206</sup> de Crespigny 1984: 502, n. 87 takes the two names as referring to the same place: "Xizhi 析支, also written *cizhi* 賜支 [simplified 賜支], was the territory of the bend of the Yellow River south of the Koko Nor and west of present-day Gansu province". This was the area of the Jishi shan (積石山; simplified 积石山), identified with the Amnye Machen.

<sup>207</sup> See Meakin and Luo 2008.

<sup>208</sup> de Crespigny 1984: 56, with further references in 592, n.4.

<sup>209</sup> Fei Xiaotong 2015: 100.

Let me begin from the Tibetans in the west. According to Han-language historical records, during the Han Dynasties the Tibetans belonged to the western Qiang people. Tibet had “Fa Qiang,” pronounced “bod” in its ancient language, which the Tibetans now call themselves.<sup>210</sup>

Part of this is due to attempts in later Chinese historical sources at establishing some kind of relationship between the newly encountered Tibetans and other, more or less known, peoples. This attempt also involves the redefinition of names in several steps. The first step is to alter the second part of the name from Hútí Bóxīyě 鶻提 勃悉野 (“Huti Puxiye” in Schaeffer et al.) to Bósūyě 勃率野 (see “Hut’ip’usuyeh” in Bushell and “Huti Pusuye” in Schaeffer et al.).<sup>211</sup> The second step, implying an inversion of characters, is from Bósūyě to Sūbóyě 率勃野 (“Supuye” in Schaeffer et al.).<sup>212</sup> The third step further involves quite different characters and tones, leading from Tūfǎ 秃發, the Mongolian

<sup>210</sup> Fei Xiaotong 2017: 22. Internet sources uncritically add to such unproven claims. The unwillingness to follow academic standards and to check the sources indicates vested interests. John E. Hill kindly sent me quotations from Chinese internet sources. One of most telling runs in rough (Google) translation as follows: “According to the pronunciation of ancient Chinese, it [fa] can also be translated as Bod-rang-skyong-ljong [!] This official term, which stands for the modern ‘Tibetan Autonomous Region’, is given in Romanisation in the Chinese text]. Faqiang was originally a branch of the Qiang. [...] Faqiang first settled in the Jinsha Riverside area in western Sichuan Province, and then gradually moved westward to the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau to establish Faqiang State. [!] The country established by the Faqiang people is roughly located in the southeastern part of the present-day Tibet Autonomous Region, covering the Nyingchi and Shannan areas of the autonomous region, and the northeastern Assam state of the Indian subcontinent [...]. The Faqiang people later united with another branch of the Qiang ethnic group, Tang Chanqiang, and established the Qiang State in 101 AD with Lhasa, the Tibet Autonomous Region (in ancient times known as Luxie) as the center” (baike.baidu.com, URL 35).

<sup>211</sup> For the respective transcriptions see Bushell 1880: 439; Schaeffer et al. 2013: 7.

<sup>212</sup> The ‘surname’ 勃率野 actually yields pinyin *bósūyě*. The final name, 率勃野 then yields pinyin *sūbóyě*. I am not aware of the particular reasons that underly the voiceless aspirated interpretation of the character 勃 in “Puxiye”, “Pusuye”, and “Supuye”. Voiced rendering in pinyin, as in the case of *bó* or *bo* stands for voiceless non-aspirated consonants, hence *po*, while the voiceless rendering, such as *pó* or *po* would stand for voiceless aspirated consonants, hence *pho*, as, e.g., reflected by *p’o* in the Wade-Gill system. I am further not aware what motivates the representation of the vowel as *u* instead of *o*, apart from making the name look more like the supposed Tibetan equivalent *spu.rgyal* (something that I would respect in pioneering attempts, as that of Bushell 1880, but rather not in contemporary studies). The character 鶻 and its traditional form 鶻 yields ambivalent interpretations: *gú*, *gǔ* or *hú*, see URL 36, but for the sake of the argument, I chose the form closest to the standard interpretation.

clan name, to Tǔfān/Tǔbō 吐蕃, the Chinese equivalent for the name of the *Tibetans*. This last 'identification' clearly demonstrates the attempt at integrating the completely unrelated Fā Qiāng into the story. One can see the 'construction' of 'coherent' history in full swing. Similarly, the reorganisation from the name Hútí Bóxīyě ("Huti Puxiye") 鶻提 勃悉野 via Bósūyě ("Pusuye" 勃率野, into Hútí Sūbóyě ("Huti Supuye") 鶻提 率勃野 shows the attempt to link the dynastic name of the Tibetan emperors, *Spu.rgyal* to a name they apparently encountered earlier, even though the background of the name Hútí Bóxīyě ("Huti Puxiye") 鶻提 勃悉野 is even more obscure than that of the Fā Qiāng.

The older Tang history, the *Jiu Tangshu* simply states that the ancestry of the Tibetans is unknown, but ventures the idea that they descended from Tūfǎ 禿發 Lilùgū of the Southern Liang and that after a certain time, his son, Fánǎi "changed his surname to 'Supoye' and adopted his original clan name Tūfǎ 禿發 as the name of his state". The latter name then became 'accidentally corrupted' – or perhaps rather forcefully reinterpreted – into Tǔfān 吐蕃.<sup>213</sup> I should like to quote the full passage from Rachel Meakin's yet unpublished translation of *Jiu Tangshu*, role 207, biography 146.<sup>214</sup> Notes in square brackets are from Meakin.

The Tufan are 8,000 li (c.2584km (Tang li = 323m) west of Chang'an in the territory which was Western Qiang in the Han period. No-one knows where their kind of tribes came from. Some say they are descended from Li Lugu of the Tufa<sup>[215]</sup> of Southern Liang. Li Lugu had a son called Fanni and when Li Lugu died Fanni was still a child so Li Lugu's younger brother Rutan took over whilst Fanni became 'Pacifying the West' general. In the 1<sup>st</sup> Shenrui year (414) of Northern Wei, Rutan was killed by Qifu Chipan of the Western Qin. Fanni then gathered his people and surrendered to Juqu Mengxun<sup>[216]</sup> and Mengxun appointed him as governor of

<sup>213</sup> See Bushell 1880: 439f.; Schaeffer et al. 2013: 7f.

<sup>214</sup> Meakin, in preparation. For a modern edition of the chapter see URL 37.

<sup>[215]</sup> *Nanliang tufa liligu* 南凉禿發利鹿孤: the Tufa, who founded the Southern Liang state (397-414), were a branch of the Xianbei peoples to the northeast of China. Although the Dangxiang are often referred to as Qiang, a dominant Xianbei tribe were the Tuoba 拓跋 which was also a Dangxiang tribal name, and indication of possible overlap.

<sup>[216]</sup> The Qifu clan were another branch of the Xianbei and the Juqu clan were Xiongnu descendants so this is an example of the inter-tribal conflict of this period.

Linsong.<sup>[217]</sup> After Mengxun's demise, Fanni led his people west and across the Yellow River, going beyond Jishi<sup>[218]</sup> 219 and establishing a state among the Qiang<sup>[220]</sup> where he opened up about 1,000 li of land. Fanni's power and kindness were respected and renowned and he was appreciated by the Qiang peoples (群羌). He fostered good relations with them to gain their favour and trust and they came over to him in droves. Then he changed his clan name to Suboye (率勃野) and used Tufa (秃發) as the name of the state, which was mistakenly said as Tufan (吐蕃). His descendants multiplied and prospered, constantly invading, and their territory gradually spread. Through the Zhou and Sui periods they were still at a distance from the various Qiang and had no communication with China.

The newer Tang history, the *Xin Tangshu*, which was compiled over a longer period and remodelled in the 11<sup>th</sup> century<sup>221</sup> fills in the following:

Included among them [i.e., the Western Qiang] were the Fa Qiang and Tangmao, who, however, had no intercourse with China. [...] Their ancestor (founder of the dynasty), named Huti Puxiye, was a powerful warrior, and most politic, and by degrees united the different Qiang tribes, and ruled over their territory. *Fan* resembles *fa* in sound, hence his descendants acquired the name of Tufan, their surname being Pusuye.<sup>222</sup>

<sup>[217]</sup> Linsong 临松: Linsong took its name from Linsong Mt and was in the Minle region southeast of Zhangye in the Gansu corridor. Lu Shui/Ruo Shui upper reaches.

<sup>[218]</sup> Jishi 积石: in today's Xunhua region of eastern Qinghai.

<sup>219</sup> de Crespigny 1984: maps p. 70 and p. 128, identifies a mountain of the same name: Jishi shan (積石山; simplified 积石山) with the main peak of the Amnye Machen range ca. 100° E, 35° N. According to de Crespigny 1984: 502, n. 87, this was near the bend of the Yellow River south of the Kokonor, see also n. 206 above.

<sup>[220]</sup> *Qiang zhong* 羌中: this can literally mean 'among the Qiang' and in this context it seems to be in Qinghai.

<sup>221</sup> See Bushell 1880: 437.

<sup>222</sup> Schaeffer et al. 2013: 7; see Bushell 1880: 439. Bushell 1880: 439 gives the first name as Hut'ip'usuyeh, possibly because of the second rendering of the 'surname'. 鶻提勃悉野 yields pinyin *hútí bóxīyě*. Given the modern meaning 'falcon' for the first character, one could be tempted (with Google translator, which always segments the name into three parts of 1 + 2 + 2 syllables) of an epithet and hence a name *The Falcon Tiboxiye* or *Tiboxiye, the Falcon*. In that case, the commonly assumed similarity with the name of the ninth legendary Tibetan king: Ho.(l)de or Spu.(l)de Guñ.rgyal or 𑄆o.(l)de Spu(r).rgyal would be lost (see also next note). I should like

The entry of the *Jiu Tangshu* clearly relates to the assumed military or political career of the warlord Fánǎi in the early 5<sup>th</sup> century. The inverted name 'Supoye' is generally taken to be identical with the Tibetan dynastic name Spu.rgyal.<sup>223</sup> Before becoming the potential ruler of the Qiang, Fánǎi had associated himself with Juqu Mengxun, the chief

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to mention this only because in the standard narratives, Tibetan, Chinese, and Western alike, so many assumptions about identities are involved.

<sup>223</sup> Li Fang-Kuei 1955: 66, n. 5; Haahr 1969: 244f.; 248. Bacot 1962: 6, n. 3 goes so far as to identify Tūfǎ Lilùgū with Dri.gum, the 'mad' king, notably not the first, but the eighth legendary king, killed by Lo.nam. Lilùgū, however, apparently simply died or was killed by an unnamed person. Nevertheless, Bacot identifies Qifu Chipan with Lo.nam, although the former did not kill Lilùgū, but Lilùgū's younger brother, and finally, he identifies Fánǎi with Spu.(l)de Guñ.rgyal.

The identification is built on the assumption that the name element *rgyal* was already realised without final *-l* and with vowel change as /kje/ (Pelliot 1915: 5) or /gje/ ~ word-internal /je/, see Preiswerk 2007: 47. The *r*-prefix would have been lost or shifted to a preceding open syllable, see Preiswerk 2007: 47, n. 57. This pronunciation is derived from the Chinese transcriptions of Tibetan names in the treaty inscription of 822/23. This may be evidence enough for an early 9<sup>th</sup> century pronunciation among the aristocrats at the court, but doesn't tell us anything about the pronunciations in the provinces, say, in that case, Qinghai or Gansu. With respect to the Fánǎi episode, the assumption would also be absolutely anachronistic. All elements of the written syllable must have been clearly pronounced in the mid-7<sup>th</sup> century, when the Tibetan script was introduced, otherwise, the spelling as *rgyal* would not exist. 200 years earlier this could not have been different. If thus the Chinese had encountered the name as /s<sup>(u)</sup>pu-r-gjal/ or the like, this should have found some reflection in the attempts at transliteration. If they failed to represent what they heard or if they encountered only a 9<sup>th</sup>-c. forms <sup>(u)</sup>-pu(r)-(g)je, then the apparent similarity does not proof any identity, the similarity could as well be accidental and, in this case, a mere back-projection.

The Middle Chinese (Tang period) reconstruction for each syllable would be: /swǎt̚/-/bwǎt̚/-/jiaX/, see URL 38, URL 39, and URL 40. While the first two characters may be taken as an approximation to the cluster *spu/ spo* or *sbu/ sbo*, I have some doubts about /jia<sup>B</sup>/ being a faithful rendering of Old Tibetan *rgyal*. Schuessler (2007: 561) gives the Middle Chinese reconstruction of the last element *yě* 野 as /jia<sup>B</sup>/, that is, /jia/ with tone B. According to Schuessler 2007: 30-33, tone B may go back to a glottal stop ʔ or a "weakened variant of final *-k* in some words". Some rhymes would also suggest original stop consonants: \**-ap*, \**-am*ʔ, and \**-et*, \**-en*ʔ. Finally, Tone B may also result from foreign final *ŋ*. A final *-l* apparently does not belong to the candidates for tone B. Hence, it seems to be not very likely that there is more than an accidental similarity between the two names 'Supoye' and Spu.rgyal. Could one thus say that the order of the characters as *sū bó yě* is more correct than the order *bó sū/xī yě*, particularly if the latter order is more frequent than the former? Even if the author/ compiler of the *Xin Tangshu* messed everything up, or perhaps just because of that, one cannot be sure that an identification between Fanni 'Supoye' and Huti 'Poxiye' was intended, as this is not made explicit. If such identification were silently intended, it cannot be trusted. It may be just an artificial projection. If the author/ compiler of the younger *Xin Tangshu* messed up everything, how sure can we be that the author/ compiler of the older *Jiu Tangshu* did not mess up the name? Just because we already know what the name should have looked like?

of the Northern Liang (a Mongolic or Tungusian tribe located in Liangzhou, Ganzhou, Suzhou, and Dunhuang). According to the *Tongdian*, the episode would have taken place at the end of the Western (or Later) Wei dynasty,<sup>224</sup> which is usually dated to 534/535.<sup>225</sup> But the situation is datable to the early 5<sup>th</sup> century: the submission to Juqu Mengxun would have taken place in 414 according to the *Jiu Tangshu* (see above). Eberhard mentions a date during the Later Wei dynasty<sup>226</sup> as well as a date at the end of the Jin dynasty,<sup>227</sup> which would be by 420. Boodberg dates the death of the father, Lìlùgū in 402.<sup>228</sup>

R. A. Stein, as cited by Macdonald,<sup>229</sup> objects that Fán ní submitted to the Northern Liang, and that, therefore, he had nothing to do with Tibet. Two different Tuoba clans, one belonging to the Qiang, the other to the Tuyuhun, would have been confounded. Against this, one could perhaps argue that Fán ní is said to have united the Qiang only sometime after his submission, apparently after he became independent. Even if Fán ní still belonged to the Tuyuhun, he could have made an allegiance with some of the Qiang tribes. His dating would be quite close to the above-mentioned Tuyuhun raid of 445 (see above, p. 52), and it cannot be precluded that in the course of this raid, he or his clan could have shifted to some part of Tibet. The location of the Northern Liang in Gansu would not contradict an impact onto the Tibetan Plateau.

Meakin, in a personal communication email 04.10.2020, on her part, cautions that Fán ní might have been too insignificant, “especially as he coincides with the Yao family who were Qiang and created the Later Qin Empire (384-417)”. Again, one might argue that since he was a child when his father died in 402, 15 years later, after the breakdown of the Later Qin, he might have had an opportunity to gather followers among the Qiang, particularly in the more western regions. But it is also well possible that the fame of the Yao family was merely projected upon him. We will never know.

I would like to object that the Fán ní myth would lead us to north-eastern Tibet, that is, Qinghai, while the Tibetan origin myth concerning the ruling lineage and the very name of the lineage, *Spu.rgyal* ‘Spuking’, points to south-eastern Tibet, namely Spo.bo (or also Koñ.po).

Whatever the historical reality behind the *Tangshu* story, it would again testify to the fluidity of ethnic appellations and identities and to

<sup>224</sup> Haarh 1969: 244.

<sup>225</sup> Similarly, a very late source, the *Daqing Yitongzhi* ‘Gazetteer of the Qing Empire’ (1734/5), states that the Tibetan *Empire* was founded by a branch of the Fā Qiāng (see again URL 27). This would shift the Fā Qiāng into the 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>226</sup> Eberhard 1942: 92.

<sup>227</sup> Eberhard 1942: 93.

<sup>228</sup> Boodberg 1936: 169.

<sup>229</sup> Macdonald 1971: 191f.

the interaction and mixing of quite distinct ethnic groups. It is impossible to decide whether (some of) the 'Tibetans'-to-be were organised by a leader of Mongolic (Tuoba) origin or not. However, it is rather likely that the authors of the *Tangshu* passages had mixed up a story belonging to the Tuoba with their faint knowledge of the Fā Qiāng, appearing at the distant horizon in the early second century.

If, for the sake of the argument, we accept that the Fā Qiāng played a certain role at some later date in the unification of some of the 'Tibetans'-to-be, it is not yet said that they were Qiang in the sense of a (homogeneous) Tibeto-Burman group. The early date could equally speak for a relationship with the Lesser Yuezhi.

The Yuezhi had been living in the Tarim Basin and the adjacent regions in the east. Their main group, the Greater Yuezhi, was driven to the west by the Hiongnu in 165 CE.<sup>230</sup> One group, the Lesser Yuezhi, stayed back in the mountains south of Dunhuang<sup>231</sup> and, at an unknown time, moved southward into Qinghai. According to Pelliot, they settled at Huangzhong, east of the Kokonor and south of the Xining river or Huang Shui. They apparently mixed with, and assimilated to, their neighbours, the Qiang tribes: they are said to have taken over clothes and food habits from the Qiang and eventually also to have spoken a language similar to that of the Qiang.<sup>232</sup> However, they were still known in Chinese sources as a separate group as late as the 2<sup>nd</sup> century. They served as auxiliary troops against rebellious Qiang. They seem to have been fully absorbed only by the first or second decade of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century.<sup>233</sup>

As mentioned above, the settlements of the Lesser Yuezhi correspond to a certain extent to those of the *Bætæ* mentioned by the 4<sup>th</sup> century historian Ammianus Marcellinus (see above, p.23). Hence, there might have been a relationship between the Baitai and the Lesser Yuezhi. The Yuezhi are generally associated with the Indo-European Tocharians, a Scythian (Iranian) people,<sup>234</sup> but they may have counted among them several other originally Siberian tribes. The Chinese sources didn't make any connection between the Lesser Yuezhi and the Fā Qiāng. This could mean that the Fā Qiāng had nothing to do with the Baitai, or that the Baitai had nothing to do with the Yuezhi. On the

<sup>230</sup> See M. A. Stein 1905: 75–79 for a summary account; Benjamin 2007 for a detailed history of the Yuezhi.

<sup>231</sup> Pelliot 1934: 36.

<sup>232</sup> Pelliot 1934: 37.

<sup>233</sup> See de Crespigny 1984: 112, 147, 168.

<sup>234</sup> The identity of the Tocharians is a problem in itself. I follow here the *communis opinio* among Indo-Europeanists, who would hold that these people were Scythians, speaking an Iranian (*satem*) language, whereas the people speaking the so-called 'Tocharian' language were a different Indo-European group, speaking a *ken-tum* language.

other hand, it could also be possible that the name of the Baitai referred to particular clans among the respective confederations, and could thus be transmitted independently of the larger group identity.

As already mentioned (p. 52), the ruler of Rtsañ Bod was associated with the Tocharians, if only by name. This might corroborate a link between the Baitai, the Lesser Yuezhi, and perhaps also with what the Chinese sources describe as Qiang or more specifically as Fā Qiāng. One might thus perhaps think of a name transfer among ruling families, possibly preserved through some ancestor cult. In that case, the name would have lost any ethnical reference it ever might have had.

#### 6. *Bhaṭa Hor, Pe.har(a), Du.har(a) nag.po – a Migratory Perspective*

This ethnic group is interesting, because the name might be, in one way or another, related to the Baitai, but also to another old ethnical group of Central Asia., the Hara or Gara. However, the following remarks can only be conjectural.

The Bhaṭa Hor are first mentioned in the context of an ‘invitation’ of their protecting deity Pe.har to Tibet allegedly in the late 8<sup>th</sup> century, but it is not exactly clear where Bhaṭa Hor were located at that time. The deity, who according to a minor Tibetan tradition originated in Khotan,<sup>235</sup> was appropriated forcefully by Padmasaṃbhava – or rather the Tibetan army. The culprit(s) either plundered a ‘meditation school’ of the Bhaṭa Hor in Gansu,<sup>236</sup> or the statue was taken as sign of victory after the Tibetan conquest of Beshbaliq (near Urumqi) in 790.<sup>237</sup> Beshbaliq and lake Balkash might be too far in the north and northwest for a relation to the original Baitai, and it would be difficult to explain how the Bhaṭa Hor ended up in Gansu.

The Pe.har episode is referred to only in comparatively late historiographic works, such as the *Dkar.chag* of the *Snar.thañ Bkaḥ.hgyur*, the *Chronicle of the V<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama* (1617–1682) by Rgyal.rgod of Mi.ñag, and the *Dpag.bsam ljon.bzañ* of Sum.pa Mkhan.po Ye.śes Dpal.hbyor (1704–1788). The earliest mentioning of this episode is in the *gterma* literature concerning Padmasaṃbhava, starting approximately from the late 12<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>238</sup> According to Sumpa Mkhanpo, as cited by R. A. Stein,<sup>239</sup> the Hbandha (=Bhaṭa) Hor were located in Gansu, seven- or eight-days’ marches north of the Kokonor. Sumpa Mkhanpo described

<sup>235</sup> Mynak R. Tulku 1967: 98.

<sup>236</sup> Mynak R. Tulku 1967: 98. See R. A. Stein 1959: 122.

<sup>237</sup> Everding 2007: 336. The identification apparently follows Thomas 1935: 299; but read lake Balkash instead of Baikal!

<sup>238</sup> Lin Shen-Yu 2010: 8.

<sup>239</sup> R. A. Stein 1959: 122.

them as Ša.ra Yu.gur, speaking a language analogous to that of Khotan. This would probably have been a Turkic language at that time. A local tradition links the ruins of a monastery in the area to the original seat of Pe.har.<sup>240</sup>

R. A. Stein thus posits the Bhaṭa Hor of the 8<sup>th</sup> century in the same region where they are found in the 17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup> century, referring further to the remnants of Tibetan troops, who after being sent against the Bhaṭa Hor in Gansu around 800, disbanded and settled there as well.<sup>241</sup>

As the second name element indicates, the Bhaṭa Hor were perceived as Uyghur by the Tibetans of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. They may not have been perceived so in the 8<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>242</sup> But even if they were, this would not necessarily imply that they were ethnic Uyghur originally, since ethnic names are easily transferred. They could have taken up, or could have been forced under, this ethnic identity only a short time before the event in question. R. A. Stein rightly concludes that we do not know who the Bhaṭa Hor actually were. They ended up in Tangut (Miñag) territory. This territory was classified sometimes as Tibetan, because the Tibetans had once occupied this region and because many Tibetan tribes still settled there, and sometimes also as Uyghur (Hor), just because the land came into the possession of the Bhaṭa Hor, who were, rightly or wrongly, associated with the Uyghur.<sup>243</sup> The Uyghur and Tanguts of Gansu were often confounded or even fused by the Tibetans; the *Dpag.bsam ljon.bzañ*, e.g., mentions the *Miñag Hor*, apparently instead of the Bhaṭa Hor.<sup>244</sup>

The Uyghur themselves seem to have been a mixed tribe, initially at least. According to the *Tangshu*, they were always associated with the 'nine clans of the Hu',<sup>245</sup> that is, with either Iranian tribes or remnants of the Xiongnu. There is also some evidence that the Uyghur tribes absorbed a certain number of Sogdian refugees<sup>246</sup> as well as Sogdian merchants and priests, who had been living in Gansu.<sup>247</sup> The region of Gansu was quite obviously a melting pot, where Qiangic, Turkic and Mongolian, as well as Indo-European peoples replaced or superseded each other, and eventually mixed.<sup>248</sup>

Between the lines, one may get the impression that R. A. Stein, if pressed hard to decide for an ethnic identity of the Bhaṭa Hor, would

<sup>240</sup> R. A. Stein 1959: 122; the last statement with reference to Damdinsüren 1957.

<sup>241</sup> R. A. Stein 1981: 12, 78. See also R. A. Stein 1961: 67–69.

<sup>242</sup> This would in part depend on the question, whether Uyghur started settling in Gansu before the breakdown of the Uyghur kingdom in 840 or only afterwards.

<sup>243</sup> R. A. Stein 1951: 250.

<sup>244</sup> R. A. Stein 1951: 234, n. 4.

<sup>245</sup> R. A. Stein 1951: 252.

<sup>246</sup> Michael Weiers, *Abrisse zur Geschichte innerasiatischer Völker: Uiguren*, URL 41.

<sup>247</sup> R. A. Stein 1951: 235, n. 3.

<sup>248</sup> R. A. Stein 1951: 252.

opt for the Miñag or Tangut. In his map, R. A. Stein posits the Bhaṭa Hor at Ganzhou.<sup>249</sup> R. A. Stein also discusses a connection with the Ḥbal or Sbal tribes or clans, attested in the Kokonor region. Their names would have been represented in Khotanese as *Ysbaḍä* (Sbal) or *Baḍä* (Ḥbal).<sup>250</sup> The first name does, in fact, appear in Khotanese documents, namely as *Ys(a)baḍä parrüm*,<sup>251</sup> where *parrüm* might stand for Phrom. Phrom is a region somewhere north of Tibet, most likely in Eastern Turkestan. The *Ys(a)baḍä parrüm* of the Khotanese document Ch 00269, l. 40 appears to be not too far from Shazhou. The writer's group, robbed of their riding animals, could reach there by foot.<sup>252</sup>

While the name *phrom* or its variant *khrom* originally referred to Byzantine Rome (via the forms *Fröm* and *Hröm*), R. A. Stein further suggests a relation with an epithet 'white'.<sup>253</sup> R. A. Stein also points to the colour term \**prum* or \**prom* 'white' in several Qiangic languages.<sup>254</sup> He also points unspecifically to Dunhuang documents containing this word. In fact, e.g., the document PT 1040, describing a funeral ritual mentions several times a *bal.mkhar dnul.phrom*, where *dnul* 'silver' and *phrom* are quite apparently synonyms (ll. 107, 112, 125). R. A. Stein further notes a celestial sister called *Kha.le ḥod.phrom*,<sup>255</sup> where the second element apparently indicates a 'white' or perhaps 'brilliant light'. Martin lists a word *phrum* 'white', but adds that it "certainly is not the usual Z[hang-]Z[hungian] word for 'white' ".<sup>256</sup> The same could be said about Tibetan. *phrum* is noted for milk products and milk processing in the THL Tibetan to English Translation Tool.<sup>257</sup> It might be a loan or, if related to silver or 'light', a *wanderwort* from a northern language. Note also Burushaski *burüm* ~ *bürum* ~ *burum* 'white'.<sup>258</sup> It is possible that some of the tribes in the north where somehow associated with the colour white.<sup>259</sup>

R. A. Stein further refers to the *Rgyal.rabs Bon.gyi ḥbuñ.gnas*,<sup>260</sup> where the Sbal are mentioned as settling at the border of the land Gesar of the north. Since Gesar and Phrom are in most cases mentioned to-

<sup>249</sup> R. A. Stein 1961, carte 1.

<sup>250</sup> R. A. Stein 1961: 68–70.

<sup>251</sup> R. A. Stein 1961: 68.

<sup>252</sup> Bailey 1948: 617/ 621.

<sup>253</sup> R. A. Stein 1959: 241.

<sup>254</sup> R. A. Stein 1961: 38f. Matisoff 2003: 71, see also URL 42, suggests an original Proto-Tibeto-Burman root \**plu* (with Written Burmese *phru*; a more related forms, closer to *phrum* and *phrom*; though linked to a root \**pram* can be found under URL 43).

<sup>255</sup> R. A. Stein 1961: 60.

<sup>256</sup> Martin 2010: 148.

<sup>257</sup> See URL 44.

<sup>258</sup> Berger 1974.

<sup>259</sup> See also Bailey 1937: 900 for Kuchā.

<sup>260</sup> R. A. Stein 1961: 68. See ed. Das, Calcutta 1915: 3 = ed. Lupon Tenzin Namdak and Khedup Gyatso 1974 fol.11.

gether (and since the Hor are perceived to live in the neighbourhood), the Sbal Phrom or Ys(a)baḍā parrūm could be related to the Bhaṭa Hor.<sup>261</sup> It is not fully clear to me, whether R. A. Stein thinks of an identity (in which case the name *Bhaṭa* would be a misrepresentation of *Baḍū* or *Ḥbal*),<sup>262</sup> or whether he sees in the Sbal or Ḥbal remnants of the mercenaries who participated in the campaign against the Bhaṭa Hor, but then revolted and became an independent tribe.<sup>263</sup> He concludes that the name *Sbal* may be a place name or the name of a Tibetan ethnic group, and may be localised *grosso modo* between Ganzhou and the Sining (Xining) river.<sup>264</sup> R. A. Stein seems to take it for granted that the Sbal or Ḥbal are Tibetans or at least Tibeto-Burmans, and have always been so. However, since he also suggests that the mercenaries could have been slaves,<sup>265</sup> this may not have been the case. It cannot be precluded that their name was Tibetanised at a later time, nor can it be precluded that their involvement in the Pe.har campaign was reinterpreted in later times.

Pe.har, the deity of the Bhaṭa Hor, is closely connected with another protecting deity of the north, Pañcaśika or Zur.phud lña.pa. Pe.har actually replaces Pañcaśika as protector of Bsam.yas,<sup>266</sup> but according to one of the legends, Pañcaśika had suggested himself to invite “a king called Hu who descended from a Klu, in the family of Dmu”.<sup>267</sup> This legend points to a basically Iranian origin of the deity and of its name.<sup>268</sup>

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<sup>261</sup> R. A. Stein 1961: 69.

<sup>262</sup> Note also that in certain Amdo varieties final *d* is realised as final *l*. Unfortunately, it is unknown when this sound change came into being.

<sup>263</sup> R. A. Stein 1961: 67.

<sup>264</sup> R. A. Stein 1961: 69.

<sup>265</sup> R. A. Stein 1961: 66.

<sup>266</sup> R. A. Stein 1959: 286–87.

<sup>267</sup> Haarh 1969: 221.

<sup>268</sup> Hu was the Chinese cover term originally for the Xiongnu, later also for Iranian, in part also Turkic people. The Dmu (var. Rmu) are commonly understood as mythical beings, demons or gods, but there seems to be some evidence that the name once referred to a real group of Scythian, i.e., Iranian, or Dardic or perhaps mixed affiliation. For the Bonpos, the Dmu are the clan of their teacher Gšen.rab Mī.bo, and this indicates a western, if not Iranian origin. For the Baltis, *rmu* once meant something like ‘downriver’, Sprigg 2002: 142. Downriver from Baltistan would point to a place in the so-called ‘Upper Indus valley’, that is, along the Gilgit river and along the Indus below the confluence with the Gilgit river, a region typically associated with the ancient Darada.

In the Old Tibetan document PT 0126 *Phyao (phyva) envoys to the Dmu*, written in about the 10th century, the Dmu are located west of the Phyao (spelled as *phyva*) of Rtsaṅ and somewhat south-east of the Rākṣasa (Demon) country somewhere in the Pamirs or the Hindukush. This again points to the ‘Upper Indus’ region. Finally, the Bonpo text *Dri.med rtsa.baḥi rgyud* from the 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> century refers somewhat cryptically to Alexander the Great for whom the Dmu would have built a town, just before he returned. One of the towns Alexander founded lay on the

The name of the deity is spelled variously as *Dpe.kar*, *Pe.dkar*, *Spe.dkar*, *Dpe.dkar*, *Be.dkar*, *Dpe.hara*, *Pe.hara*, and, in an obvious attempt at etymologisation, also *Bihara* (referring to the *vihāra* at Bsam.yas). Apart from the latter form, the forms in *-hara* point to a tribal name, such as \*Hara or \*Gara, attested in various forms in Turkestan as well as in the Ordos region. As the name variants indicate, the spelling *dkar* most probably stands for an uvular or glottal fricative initial, thus [-χar] or [-har], reflecting an early sound change of fricativisation, which affected the initial clusters.<sup>269</sup>

The same sound change or conventions also underlie the spelling of Bukhara (*Bho.dkar* in the *Ĥdzam.gliñ rgyas.bšad* of Blama Btsanpo<sup>270</sup>) and of the Tocharians, which are found as *Tho.gar*, *Thod.gar*, *Thokar*, *Tho.dkar*, *Thod.dkar* (and *Phod.kar*).<sup>271</sup> The *Catalogue of the Ancient Principalities and a List of the Royal Genealogy*, PT 1286, ll. 7f. speaks of a White Moiety (?) or a Pe.har (?) [dominion] of Myaṅ.ro, *Myaṅ.roḥi Pyed.kar* (*Phyed.dkar* in the *Chos.ḥbyuñ mkhas.paḥi dgaḥ.ston*).<sup>269</sup> Its ruler, styled as ruler of Rtsaṅ, bears a name that shows his Tocharian descent: *rje Rtsaṅ.rjeḥi Thod.kar* ‘as for the ruler, [he] is Thodkar, of [the lineage of]

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river Acesines or Chenab.

The name of the Dmu could be related to the Śakamuruṇḍa, Scythians, who first settled in Khotan, but migrated to India, possibly also on the eastern side of the Pamirs, where some of them might have become part of the Dardic communities. More details will be hopefully found in Zeisler, to appear b.

<sup>269</sup> The sound change *rk* (~*dk*) and *sk* > /h/ can be observed in some of the Kenhat dialects of Ladakh (see Sharapa /honmo/, Hamelingpa /hon/ *dkon(mo)* ‘scarce’; Sharapa, Hamelingpa /hunma/ *rkunma* ‘thief’; Sharapa /honce/ *skoncas* ‘dress sb’; Hamelingpa /hu/ *sku* ‘statue’). The fricativisation of former clusters is apparently one of the intermediate steps in the development of clusterless onsets, see Zeisler 2011a: 245–47.

The initial may or may not have been aspirated originally. For the Old Tibetan writing ‘convention’ of dropping the distinctive stroke when there is a subscript (including vowel *u*), see Zeisler 2004: 869, n. 335. PT 1285, *Story of Bon and Gshen*, r184 mentions a *Rtsaṅ.pho Phyed.kar*, PT 1290, *Catalogue of the Ancient Principalities*, r04, v05, gives *Myaṅ.roḥi Phyr.khar*. The latter spelling might indicate that we deal here with the name of a castle, but the document seems to be nothing more than a scribal exercise and may thus contain copy errors. The spelling *rtsaṅ.pho* might perhaps stand for \**rtsaṅs-po* ‘river’ (for *sp* > /ph/ or /f/, see Gya-Sasomapa /safo/, Hamelingpa /sāfo/ for Shamskat /ltsaṅspo/ ‘river’). The spelling alternations might indicate that the writers did not really understand the name because of its foreign origin.

The position of the *tsheg* or the omission of the *d-* pre-radical is here irrelevant, the Kenhat dialects show that the fricativisation also operates across a morpheme boundary, cf., e.g., Hamelingpa /leha/ *las.ka* ‘work’ (s.k > h), /yarha/ *dbyar.ka* ‘summer’ (r.k > r, /fjafo/ *rgyal.po* ‘king’ (l.p > f), Sharapa /kaχfo/ *gag(s)-po* ‘difficult’ (s.p > f).

<sup>270</sup> Blama Btsanpo 1962: 5.

<sup>271</sup> See Thomas 1935–1955, and the corresponding index 1963: 55b–56a, 63a.

the rulers of Rtsaṅ.<sup>272</sup> Since the vowels *e* and *i* had at some unknown time a palatalising effect on the preceding consonant,<sup>273</sup> the spelling *p(h)yed* for 'half' could perhaps be an attempt of etymologisation for an original \**Pe.har(a)*.

R. A. Stein points to another tribal name, that of the Du.har(a) nag-po, apparently settling in the Tsoṅ.kha province of A.mdo. The Du.har nag-po are mentioned in the *Btsun.mo bkaḥi thaṅ.yig* (p. 46–50), they appear in the *Lo.paṅ bkaḥi.thaṅ* (209b/62a) and the *Blon.po bkaḥi.thaṅ* (272b/60a) as Bal.po Du.har, while the *Gesar epic* mentions a district Du.ha.ra in Tsoṅ.kha as homeland of the minister Mgar.<sup>274</sup> According to R. A. Stein, the *Padma thaṅ.yig* of O.rgyan Gliṅ.pa further mentions a minister and wise man from China, called *Ha.ra nag.po*.<sup>275</sup> In the parallel version, the *Gser.gyi phreṅ.ba* by Saṅs.rgyas Gliṅ.pa,<sup>276</sup> this person is actually called Du.har nag.po, and this is, as Schuh indicates, a master of divinations, and one of the most important Chinese scholars who came to the court of Khri.sroṅ Lde.brtsan.<sup>277</sup>

R. A. Stein thinks that the *-hara* forms of the names, both of Pe.har and the Du.har were extensions of an original *-har*,<sup>278</sup> but he might well be mistaken. The name of the Du.ha.ra is, accidentally or not, fairly close to the old names of the Tocharians. *Hara* appears in Khotanese documents as a designation of a land (the initial possibly corresponds to either [ɣ] or [χ]). This land lies in the Ordos region and the name is represented in Tibetan transliterations as *Kha.a* (ཁ་ཨ་), with the glottal ཨ་ representing Khotan-Saka *ra* as in *ka.a.sta* (ཁ་ཨ་སྤ་) for Khotan-Saka *karasta* 'skin, hide'.<sup>279</sup> The name would correspond to Chinese Xia (夏) and the place would be found "middle of the loop of the Huang-ho,

<sup>272</sup> See also Zeisler 2011b: 128, n. 18 for the analysis of this name or title and its parallels in the document.

<sup>273</sup> This palatalisation effect is reflected in Tibetan orthography: only very few words with vowel *i* or *e* do not show a palatalised consonant. Interestingly enough, the *e-ablaut* forms of verb stem I (the so-called 'present stem') never led to such palatalisation, which could indicate that these forms are a comparatively late development or first developed in a variety where the palatalisation effect did not take place. In some modern dialects, the palatalisation of consonants before *i* and *e* has likewise been neutralised, see Ladakhi [khi], rarely [kh'i] for Classical Tibetan *khyi* 'dog', [phet] for *phyed* 'half'. Such dialectal variance could easily lead to alternative spellings and the knowledge of such dialectal variance would make it easy to interpolate a *-y-* subscript to make a foreign name look more Tibetan.

<sup>274</sup> R. A. Stein 1961: 69f.

<sup>275</sup> R. A. Stein 1961: 70, n. 200. The name can be found in the online edition, URL 45, which corresponds, *inter alia*, to the edition Delhi 1988: fol. 178r, 189r, and 189v.

<sup>276</sup> Edition Punakha/ Thimphu 1985: fol. 205v6, 206r1.

<sup>277</sup> Schuh, Tibet-encyclopedia, Duhar Nagpo, URL 46.

<sup>278</sup> R. A. Stein 1961: 70, n. 200.

<sup>279</sup> Bailey 1985: 20f., 117, 129f.

eastward of Šuo-fang”.<sup>280</sup> According to Bailey, the name *Ha.ra/ Kha.a* would most probably be related to the Gara or Lesser Yuezhi near Sha-zhou.<sup>281</sup> It has been suggested that the latter name Gara was preserved in the name of the mighty Mgar clan,<sup>282</sup> whose members were certainly anything else but black smiths. The Lesser Yuezhi, one may recall, had settled in approximatively the area, where the *Bætæ* were located, and at approximatively the same time.

All this points to a connection of *Pe.har(a)* with Iranian tribes, such as the Yuezhi, or perhaps also with the Hephthalites or White Huns (as far as they were speaking an Iranian language and / or adapting to Iranian culture). The spelling of *Pe.har* as *Spe.dkar* might well have referred to a \*White Hara (Gara) group, with the element *spe-* corresponding to the *Spēt* or *Šveta* in the Iranian and Indian designations of the White Huns. Note that Chinese *pai* also means white<sup>283</sup> (alternative explanations for the name *Pe.har* have been Turkish *bäg*, Persian *paihar* ‘picture, idol’<sup>284</sup> or *paikār* ‘war, fight’, both ultimately from Avestan *paitikara*<sup>285</sup>). Possibly the second element of the deity’s name (*-har(a)* ? < /*yara/* ~ /*χara/*) shows a fusion with the Tibetan word for white (*dkar* > /*χar/* ~ /*har/*), so that the name forms *Pe.dkar*, *Spe.dkar*, *Dpe.dkar* and *Be.dkar* became translational compounds, meaning ‘White-White’, whereas the more common form *Pe.har* could represent the further phonological development from both an original \**Spe.ha.ra* and an original *Spe.dkar* or *Dpe.dkar*.

It might be worth mentioning that Jäschke has the entry *Pe.te.hor* ‘name of a people’, as found in Isaak Jacob Schmidt’s dictionary.<sup>286</sup> This name may well refer to the Bhaṭa Hor.

One could perhaps conclude that the tribe deprived of *Pe.har*, the Bhaṭa Hor, were originally in the possession of *Pe.har*, just because they were themselves (originally) \*White Hara. It may well be that at the time of the contact with the Tibetans they had already acquired an Uyghur identity, but one should not rule out that the name element *Hor*, in this case, did not originally refer to the Uyghur but to a tribe with the name element *Xara* (*Hara*, *G(h)ara*) or *Xōr* (*Ghōr*). The form \**Ghwār*, \**Ghūr*, or \**Ghōr* is possibly the Iranian designation of the

<sup>280</sup> Bailey 1967: 100.

<sup>281</sup> Bailey 1985: 20f.

<sup>282</sup> Bailey 1985: 112.

<sup>283</sup> Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956: 107.

<sup>284</sup> According to Rainer Kimmig (p. c.), this should be *Paikar*, see Junker and Alavi 1997: 143b: “*pejkar* پيگر ‘figure, body form, appearance, image’”; Steingass 1892: 268: “*paikar* پيگر Face, countenance; form, figure, mould, model; portrait, likeness; an idol-temple”.

<sup>285</sup> Nebesky-Wojkowitz 1956: 107 with further reference.

<sup>286</sup> Jäschke 1881: 324b.

main tribe of the Hephthalites known by the Chinese as *hua* 滑, to be reconstructed as  $y^{wat}$ .<sup>287</sup>

### 7. Some Hypotheses – Listening to the Call of the Siren

The following figure presents a timeline for the identification of the respective people in question and the text sources. Since several identifications have been made retrospectively, and several centuries after the presumed facts, these identifications are unreliable and marked by light pink shading. Contemporaneous or historically probable identifications are marked with light green shading. Arrows on the right side of the scale point to authors and documents further down on the left side of the scale. Arrows on the left side of the scale point to identifications further up on the right side of the scale.

Author	Document	Time-line	Locating peoples in time & space
		101–102	retrospectively: Fā Qiāng beyond Gansu not in reach of the Han, → Fan Ye
Ptolemaios	<i>Geographike Hyphegesis</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> c.	contemporaneous or slightly in retrospective: Baitai in the Tarim Basin
Fan Ye 范曄	<i>Hou Hanshu</i> 後漢書 → Fā Qiāng	5 <sup>th</sup> –6 <sup>th</sup> c.	
		ca. 5 <sup>th</sup> or 6 <sup>th</sup> –mid 7 <sup>th</sup> c.	retrospectively, but possibly historical: Rtsañ Bod, Western Tibet, conquered mid-7 <sup>th</sup> c. → <i>Old Tibetan Chronicle</i>
		ca. 6 <sup>th</sup> c.	retrospectively: Bhaṭṭa (/Bhāṭṭa) appear in Kashmīr, → Kalhaṇa
		6 <sup>th</sup> –7 <sup>th</sup> c.	retrospectively: Spu.(rgyal).bod, Bod.ka G'yag.drug, locations unclear, → Old Tibetan documents

<sup>287</sup> Enoki 1959: 5.

Author	Document	Time-line	Locating peoples in time & space
	<i>Old Tibetan Annals</i>	ca. 650-765 c.	contemporary: Bod.yul in 641, 727, plus several entries in the Military Annals for 743-765, extension unclear
		mid-8 <sup>th</sup> c.	retrospectively: Bhaütta as victims of Lalitāditya-Muktāpīḍa's raids in the northwest, → Kalhaṇa
		late 8 <sup>th</sup> c.	retrospectively: Bhaṭa Hor appear in Gansu, → Padmasambhava <i>gterma</i> , → V <sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama, → Sum.pa Mkhan.po
	<i>Treaty Inscription</i>	821/822	contemporary: Bod.yul, extension unclear
	Old Tibetan documents → Spu.(rgyal).bod, Bod.ka G'yag.drug	ca. 8 <sup>th</sup> –9 <sup>th</sup> c.	
	<i>Old Tibetan Chronicle</i>	mid-late 9 <sup>th</sup> c.	contemporary: Bod.yul, extension unclear
Albērūnī	<i>Tahqīq mā li'l-Hind</i>	11 <sup>th</sup> c.	contemporary or slightly in retrospective: Bhatta in Afghanistan/Pakistan
Kalhaṇa	<i>Rājataranḡiṇī</i> → Bhaütta as neighbours of Kashmīr 6 <sup>th</sup> c., mid-8 <sup>th</sup> c.	12 <sup>th</sup> c.	contemporary: Bhuṭta probably on the upper Kishangaṅgā river
	Padmasambhava <i>gterma</i> → Bhaṭa Hor in Gansu	late 12 <sup>th</sup> c.	
Śrīvara	<i>Rājataranḡiṇī</i>	15 <sup>th</sup> c.	almost contemporary: Little and Great Bhuṭta, i.e., Baltistan and Ladakh, extensions unclear
Dalai Lama V	<i>Bod.kyi deb.ther</i> <i>Dpyid.kyi rgyal.mo'i glu.dbyaṅs</i> → Bhaṭa Hor in Gansu,	1643	

Author	Document	Time-line	Locating peoples in time & space
Sum.pa Mkhan.p o	<i>Dpaḡ.bsam ljon.bzañ</i> → Ḥbandha (=Bhaṭa) Hor in Gansu	1748	contemporary: Ḥbandha (=Bhaṭa) Hor in Gansu de- scribed as Turks from Kho- tan

Fig. 1 Timeline; light green: contemporary and/ or historical identifications;  
light pink: retrospective and ahistorical identifications.

One millennium lies between the Baitai of Ptolemaios and the documentation of the name *Bhauṭṭa* or *Bhāṭṭa* in the *Rājataranḡiṇī*, while the Bhatta of Afghanistan or Pakistan appear in Arabic sources one hundred years earlier than in the *Rājataranḡiṇī*.

Six centuries lie between the Baitai of the southern Tarim Basin, Qilianshan, and Gansu and the recording of the Bhaṭa Hor in part of the same area.

Five centuries lie between the Baitai and the appearance of the Tibetans as a crystallising 'nation'; and perhaps yet one or two centuries passed before the name *bod* was adopted. Similarly, five centuries lie between the mentioning of the Fā Qiāng and the appearance of the Tibetans as a crystallising 'nation', while one or two more centuries may lie between the appearance of the Tibetans and the forceful rewriting of history on the part of the Chinese historians to make a connection between the two groups.

Still four centuries lie between the Baitai and the alleged first appearance of *Bhauṭṭa* in Kashmīr. Only two centuries lie between the *Bhauṭṭa* at the borders of Kashmīr and the Bhaṭa Hor in Gansu, but it is difficult to believe in a direct connection between these two.

The following conclusions are possible:

1. All five names or name groups are unrelated and the similarity in form is just accidental and a contraption of the *Sirene des Gleichklangs*. In particular, the Tibetan word *bod* only designates a group of 'speakers' of the same language or alternatively a 'command', that is, a dominion – in which case it would need a qualification, such as *Rtsaṅ* and *Spu.rgyal*.
2. There might be 3 name groups of different origin:
  - a) the Central Asian names of unknown origin, with the names of the Baitai of Ptolemaios and the Bhaṭa Hor, perhaps also the Bhadra-Aśva being related to each other; if being an eth-

nonym and not just a descriptive term, even the Fā 發 element of the Fā Qiāng may belong to this group;

- b) the Pamirian group: the Bhauṭṭa/ Bhāṭṭa of the *Rājatarangiṇī* and the Bhatta of Albērūnī being related to each other and the designation being independently derived from a Sanskrit or Prakrit word;
  - c) the Tibetan word *bod*, just designating a group of 'Speakers' of the same language or a dominion.
3. All names, except the Tibetan designation, are related: the Baitai of Ptolemaios, the Bhauṭṭa/ Bhāṭṭa of the *Rājatarangiṇī*, the Bhatta of Albērūnī, and the Bhaṭa Hor. The Tibetan word *bod*, just designating a group of 'speakers' of the same language or a 'dominion', is unrelated.
  4. The Tibetan word *bod* derives from a group of non-Tibetan Baitai, who emigrated from the Tarim Basin into Eastern Tibet.
  5. The Tibetan word *bod* is derived from the name of the non-Tibetan Bhauṭṭa/ Bhāṭṭa of the *Rājatarangiṇī*. The name was transferred onto the Tibetans, most probably because the Bhauṭṭa/ Bhāṭṭa were sitting in an area through which Tibet could be accessed.
  6. The word *bod* is Tibetan, but it merged with the perhaps more prestigious name of the non-Tibetan Baitai, who emigrated from the Tarim Basin into Tibet and particularly into Rtsaṅ.
  7. A combination of 5 and 6, that is, all three name forms merged. This could have been more likely, if the names of the Baitai and the Bhauṭṭa or Bhāṭṭa were, in fact, related, and if the people living between these two groups were still aware of the relationship in the 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> century.

No. 1 is the zero hypothesis, against which all other solutions should show a higher degree of feasibility, if not even evidence. Nos. 4 and 6 face the problem that an original *ai* would not easily turn into *o*.

Apart from this, the time frame and the regional distribution of the names do not really speak in favour of an ethnic identity, but the similarity in shape speaks against mere coincidence. The most likely solution is that the name wandered *and* got transferred.

In that hypothetical scenario, the name should perhaps be taken as a clan name rather than referring to an ethnic group. The original name,

transmitted as Baitai by the Greeks, must have been the name of a group in the southern Tarim Basin and in Gansu. This group was in all likelihood associated with the Yuezhi or with some of their subgroups or affiliated groups. Part of the group or all of them seem to have moved west, leaving their name associated with a particular location in Gansu, where the name could have been transferred to a group of different ethnic affiliation, such as the Bhaṭa Hor. Alternatively, a smaller part of the Baitai could have stayed back and merged with different ethnic groups in due course of time and may so have preserved the name. In the west, the name could have been carried along always with the same out-migrating group, but this group could likewise have changed its affiliation by being absorbed into a larger unit, say, of the Hephthalites and then of the Turks.

In any case, the appearance of the name *Bhaṭa* in part of the same area as the original Baitai does not seem to be mere accident, and it might indicate that the name transmitted by Ptolemaios not only had a dental, or rather retroflex, consonant in the middle, but also a voiced and aspirated initial. These sounds could not be recognised by the Greeks, as the retroflex dental and the voiced-aspirated labial are both foreign to Greek phonology. The so reconstructable \*Bhaiṭai<sup>288</sup> might then well be related to the Bhaṭṭa, and ultimately and indirectly perhaps even to the Bod.pa – if only by name.

What strikes me most, is that neither the Uyghur language nor Tibetan (originally) have retroflex dental finals and, even more importantly, that apart from them, none of the Tarim and Pamir languages, that is, Iranian, (modern) Dardic, and Burushaski (not to speak of the so-called 'Tocharian' language) have a systemic *media aspirata*. The only ancient language current in the area to show this feature is the North-Western Prakrit, but from the time of Aśoka, there is a growing tendency in the northern Prakrits not to distinguish aspirated and non-aspirated voiced consonants.<sup>289</sup>

Nevertheless, as there is no alternative candidate in view, it seems to be most likely that the name *Bhaṭa* belonged to, and was transmitted by, a North-Western Prakrit, which still kept the *media aspirata*, at least in names or prestigious words, where it was felt necessary to give them a Sanskritic appearance. In that case, there are several ways to interpret this form.

<sup>288</sup> As a few names of in Ptolemaios' *Geographike Hyphegesis* show, the Greeks must have heard Indoaryan names via Persian, where the aspiration of voiced aspirated consonants was generally lost (Rainer Kimmig, p. c.).

<sup>289</sup> The North-Western Prakrit of the Kharoṣṭhī documents of Niya, described by Konow, shows a strong tendency of deaspiration in the case of voiced consonants, but also the frequent occurrence of voiced aspirated consonants in place of voiced consonants, indicating that the distinction was no longer effective in the spoken language, see Konow 1936: 606.

Schmidt and Kohistani derive the form Bhaṭṭa from Sanskrit *bhāṭṭ* ‘husband, lord’.<sup>290</sup>

Martin suggests a relation with Sanskrit *bhaṭa* ‘mercenary’.<sup>291</sup> According to Monier-Williams, this latter word, which has the additional meaning ‘servant, slave’, was used for degraded tribes.<sup>292</sup>

While it is not unlikely that the \*Bhaiṭ(t)a ~ Baitai developed out of a mercenary tribe, I think it somewhat less likely, although not impossible,<sup>293</sup> that they adopted such a negative exonym for themselves and again somewhat less likely that other tribes appropriated the name as a name of prestige for themselves, except if the original meaning was already forgotten or reinterpreted in the above sense, or that the negative meaning was obscured by the other possible interpretations.

Some Old Tibetan documents apparently mention a division or regiment of Bzañ Hor: M.[=Mazār] Tāgh 0345: *bzañ.hor.gyi sde*,<sup>294</sup> possibly also M. Tāgh a, iii, 0013 *bzañ.ho[rđ.gyi sde]*.<sup>295</sup> Thomas further suggests that this designation refers to the Bhaṭa Hor,<sup>296</sup> and that *bzañ* reflects the Sanskrit word *bhadra*.<sup>297</sup> Among other things, *bhadra* has the meaning ‘blessed, fortunate, good, gracious, etc.’. As Thomas admits himself, the interpretation *bzañ* for *bhadra* might well have been the product of folk etymology. Furthermore, there is no regular sound change leading from *bhadra* to *bhaiṭ(t)a*. The word is attested in Younger Avestan as *baḍra* and in Dardic languages as *bhadda*.<sup>298</sup> One would need very special pleading to arrive at a form that loses the voiced consonant word-internally but preserves not only voicedness but also aspiration word-initially. There might be, nevertheless, a more indirect relation between the ethnonym in question and the Sanskrit word.

*Bhadrā* is a popular Sanskrit river name, and Paurāṇic sources speak of a river Bhadrā or Bhadrāsomā, flowing through the land of the Utarakuru.<sup>299</sup> This river would originate from Mt Meru and flow into the northern ocean, that is, the Aral Sea. The river would thus have been the Iaxartes.

<sup>290</sup> Schmidt and Kohistani 2008: 9–13; see also Monier-Williams 1899: 745a.

<sup>291</sup> Martin 2010: 154.

<sup>292</sup> Monier-Williams 1899: 745a.

<sup>293</sup> It may be noteworthy in this context that Pelliot 1921: 324f. attempts to reconstruct the name of the Haṣa or more particularly the Chinese form *Achai* 阿柴 as being derived from a Xiongnu word for ‘slave’.

<sup>294</sup> Thomas 1931: 832, 1951: 292.

<sup>295</sup> Thomas 1930: 287.

<sup>296</sup> This has to be taken with caution: unfortunately, Thomas is prone to misreadings, his (1935: 299) “Bzañ-Hor chief” of the Chronicle “ll. 196–7” turns out to be Ҳbro Чуñ.bzañ Ҳor.mañ, ll. 249f.

<sup>297</sup> Thomas 1935: 299.

<sup>298</sup> Mayrhofer 1996: 244.

<sup>299</sup> See Ali 1966: 61f., 152.

According to an old semi-mythological four-river template, Mt Meru lies at the centre of the sources of four great rivers, flowing roughly in the four cardinal directions, and each one ending in an 'ocean' or at least the salt swamp of Lop Nor. These rivers can be easily identified. The eastern river, the Tarim, was believed to continue underground into the Yellow River, reaching thus even a real ocean. The Indus was the river to the south. Note that until the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Gilgit river was held as its source river. The Oxus was the western river, as a great amount of its water would flow via the now dried-up Uzboy into the Caspian Sea, while the Iaxartes would flow into the Aral Sea. The template of the sacred mountain and the four rivers has only later been transferred upon the Kailaś, where it does not really match the geography.<sup>300</sup> Mt. Meru can thus be identified with one of the most prominent mountains of the Pamirs or the whole Pamir knot.<sup>301</sup>

The 'eastern continent', 'where the Sītā, i.e., the Tarim flows, is called *Bhadrāśva* ('Excellent Horses' < *bhadra* + *aśva*), see e.g., *Viṣṇu-purāṇa*<sup>302</sup> 2,2,34. This designation might well refer to a horse-breeding people, perhaps even to the Aspakarai/ Asparata, in whose name one may recognise the Avestan word *aspa* 'horse', the same word as Sanskrit *aśva* 'horse'.<sup>303</sup> Ptolemaios' Aspakarai/ Asparata are the immediate northern neighbours of the Baitai.

The older Paurāṇic concept of the continent's centres on the Pamirs. Hence, the 'continent' of the 'Excellent Horses', the Tarim Basin, lies in the east. With further adaptations in India and transmitted to China as the scheme of the Kings of the Four Quarters or the Four Sons of Heaven, this 'continent' shifts to the north. In R. A. Stein's corresponding list, two entries for the north are of great interest, as they note the Yuezhi as associated with plenty of (excellent) horses. The third entry, from Xuanzang's report, simply mentions the lord of the horses, *aśvapati*.<sup>304</sup>

- "I. K'ang T'ai (245–50)", i.e., the report of Kang Tai, an early Chinese traveller: "Yue-tche (Indoscythes), foule de chevaux";
- "III. *Che-eul yeou king* (392 AD)", that is, the *Fushuo Shi'er you jing* 佛說十二游經, roughly "The sūtra of the twelve stages of the Buddha's

<sup>300</sup> See Zeisler [2011c] / to appear a.

<sup>301</sup> Note the element *mir*, which simply means mountain, and which seems to be related to the name Meru. The Pamirs are the more original 'roof of the world' (*Bami-Dunya*, see Encyclopedia Britannica 1911, Vol. 20: 657.

<sup>302</sup> See ed. Schreiner 2013.

<sup>303</sup> See also Lindegger 1993: 57, n. 4.

<sup>304</sup> R. A. Stein 1959: 254–61.

vagrant life': "Nord-Ouest : [...] des Yue-tche (Indoscythes): beaucoup de bons chevaux";

- "IV. Hiuan-tsang (Si-yu-ki) (646)", i. e. Xuanzang's *Xiyu ji* "[...] 'Records of the western regions': "*aśvapati*, seigneur des chevaux [...] habitants cruel et violents; nomades".

Xuanzang further adds an interesting short description of the horse breeder's way of life:

The people of the country of "the lord of horses" are naturally wild and fierce. They are cruel in disposition; they slaughter (animals) and live under large felt tents; they divide like birds (going here and there) attending their flocks.<sup>305</sup>

A late echo of these conceptualisations is found in connection with the legends about the wooing of the Chinese princess. Here the king of Bhaṭa Hor appears as the king of the north.<sup>306</sup>

- XXIII a. "*rGyal rabs* (1508)", i.e. *Rgyal.rabs gsal.baḥi me.loñ*, "Roi des Bhaṭa Hor";
- XXV e. "dPa'o gCug-lag phren-ba (1545–1565) ... Ba-ta Hor".

R. A. Stein comments:

Les Yue-tche [...] ont été célèbres par leurs bons chevaux. [...] Mais les chevaux excellents (chevaux-dragons, *long-ma*) sont également célèbres à Koutcha aussi bien que dans le Kansou et le Kokonor, là précisément où les Yue-tche avaient d'abord vécu et où ils avaient laissé une partie des leurs, les Petits Yue-tche, mélangés aux K'iang. (The Yuezhi [...] were famous for their excellent horses. [...] But the excellent horses (the so-called dragon-horses, chin. *long-ma*) were renown at Kuchā as much as in Gansu and the Kokonor region, the latter region exactly being the place where the ancient Yuezhi had been living and where they left back a part of their population, the Lesser Yuezhi, who mixed with the Qiang.)<sup>307</sup>

Given the identity between the Tarim Basin and the 'continent' of the 'Excellent Horses', *Bhadraśva* and the relationship of these horses with the Yuezhi, given further the relationship of a section of the Yuezhi

<sup>305</sup> See ed. Beal 1884 I: 14.

<sup>306</sup> R. A. Stein 1959: 257.

<sup>307</sup> R. A. Stein 1959: 269.

with the Kokonor region, it would be more likely that the name element Bhaṭa appearing in exactly this region may be indirectly associated with *bhadra* 'excellent', rather than being derived from *bhaṭa* 'mercenary'. There is also the possibility that the Paurāṇic designation implies some kind of folk etymology of an aboriginal name \*Bhaiṭa or \*Bhaṭa, combined with the knowledge about the source of 'excellent horses'.

The third option, the derivation of an original name form \*Bhaṭ(ṭ)a from Sanskrit *bhārṭṛ* 'husband, lord' has the disadvantage that the meaning would be too unspecific for a tribal name to be endlessly perpetuated. It might be possible, however, that the designation was transmitted proudly by a family formerly associated with a royal lineage.

Whether or not any of these Sanskrit words might actually underlie the Greek rendering *Baῖται*, whether the original name as preserved by Ptolemaios has been re-interpreted by speakers of Indoaryan languages, or whether these two names are completely unrelated, must remain an unsolved question.

The relationship with *bod* is much more difficult to establish, and the following scenario is absolutely hypothetical.

If the name Pyed.kar of the people on the Yar.kluṅs Rtsaṅ.po or uppermost course of the Brahmaputra in Rtsaṅ may be analysed as \*Spe.hara, then they may have shared their belief system with the Bhaṭa Hor and other tribes from Turkestan. They or a more western and southwestern offshoot could then have been known by the Kashmīrī as *Bhāṭṭa* or *Bhauṭṭa*.

Whether or not the name is of Prakrit or otherwise Indo-Iranian origin, there might have been an ethnical continuity from Turkestan to Afghanistan as well as over Baltistan to Purik, and possibly via Ladakh and Guge to the upper reaches of the Brahmaputra. This would further imply that an important group among the populations of Žaṅ.žuṅ was of (Indo-) Iranian or at least non-Tibeto-Burman origin. One might think of a name transfer directly from Turkestan to Rtsaṅ Bod, but then the vowel in the Tibetan designation *bod* would presuppose the same sound change that seems to have worked in Kashmīr. The likelihood is not very great.

As for the Tibetans-to-be, it would then seem that the name of the *Bhauṭṭa* was transferred onto them in the 6<sup>th</sup> century, when the Yar.kluṅs rulers first allied themselves with the Žaṅ.žuṅ rulers before they extended their power over Žaṅ.žuṅ, and particularly over Rtsaṅ Bod. Whether outsiders (that is, the Kashmīrī and other Indians) had misapplied the name by neglect or whether the Yar.kluṅs rulers appro-

appropriated a new identity and name for its prestige, must remain open. The *Old Tibetan Chronicle*, however, seems to betray a story of usurpation.<sup>308</sup>

It should have become clear that several ethnical groups with different social, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds contributed to the Tibetan 'nation'-to-be. It is thus not advisable, in fact, not possible, to identify the later Tibetans with any one of these groups. Certainly, Tibeto-Burman subgroups of the Qiang contributed to the ethnogenesis of the common people and in part also to that of the elite groups. The ruling elite, and with them also larger groups of dependants, definitely had also links to other ethnic and / or linguistic groups, and the ancestors of some of them may, in fact, have been living along the river Baútidos or the swamps of the Lop Nor. These distant links may then be indirectly responsible for the appearance of the name *Bod* with the 'Tocharian' rulers in Rtsañ and perhaps also in other regions of Tibet.

#### *Appendix A: Byltai, Βύλται*

In the context of Ptolemaios' Central Asian and Indian coordinates, two more names have been associated with the Tibetans, the *Βύλται*, *Býltai*, and the *Δαβάσαι*, *Dabásai*. The *Byltai* were (and may still be) taken for the inhabitants of Baltistan, see Cunningham:

*Balti*, or *Balti-yul* is called Palolo or Balor, by the Dards, and *Nang-kod* by the Tibetans. *Balti* is the most common name, and perhaps the oldest, as it is preserved by Ptolemy in *Byl-tae*.<sup>309</sup>

To the north are the people of *Balti*, *Ladak*, and *Chang-Thang*, who were known to Ptolemy as the *Byltae* and *Chatae Scythae*.<sup>310</sup>

Similarly, Thomaschek writes:

**Byltai** (*Bῦλται*), nach Marinus bei Ptol. VI 13, 3 ein Volk der sakischen Region, das von den Grynaioi und Toornai südwärts bis zu den Daradai an der Indusbeuge und bis zum Himavos (Himavat) reichte; es bewohnte demnach das entlang dem [echten] oberen Indus gedehnte Hochthal Baltistân mit

<sup>308</sup> See Zeisler 2011b.

<sup>309</sup> Cunningham 1854: 34.

<sup>310</sup> Cunningham 1854: 43.

dem Vororte Skar.do 35° 20' nördlich, 75° 44' östlich und das Sigarthal. (Byltai, after Marinus at Ptol. VI 13, 3 a people of the Saka region, extending from the Grynaioi and Toornai south up to the Dards at the bend of the Indus and up to the Imaon (Himavat); they, therefore, settled in the high valley of Baltistan extending along the [real] upper Indus, with the pre-historic place Skar.do 35°20' N 75° 44' E, and in the Shigar valley.)<sup>311</sup>

Francke basically agrees.<sup>312</sup> Similarly, Smith writes, without noticing the contradiction in his statement:

Byltai must be the people of Balti (Baltistan, Little Tibet), the country on the [real] upper Indus, of which Skardo (Iskardo) is the capital (76° E., about 35° N.). The territory of the Sakai, as defined by Ptolemy, therefore, extended from the Iaxartes, across the basin of the upper Oxus, as far as the Indus; and comprised the tangle of mountains now known by the names Darwāz, Shighnan, the Pamirs, Baltistan, etc., equivalent, roughly speaking, on the modern map, to the rectangle enclosed between the meridians 70°–76° E., and the parallels 35°–40° N.<sup>313</sup>

As in the case of the other names, the main question is: why should any traveller have heard from Baltistan, if even the Tibetan Plateau and the real upper course of the Indus remained *terra incognita*. Trade and pilgrim routes between Central Asia and India lead further west, mainly through the Pamirs. If the name should be associated with a modern name element *balt-*, at all, then one could equally think of Baltit in the Hunza valley. The originally rounded vowel of the name *Βύλται* fits neither Baltit nor Baltistan.

Herrmann opines that the association with the Balti can be precluded because this name would only appear in the 17<sup>th</sup> century<sup>314</sup> (he might think of the *La.dvags Rgyal.rabs*). Herrmann thus follows an earlier suggestion that the name should be corrected into "Baytai" (that is, Bautai). The wrong spelling would be the fault of Marinos.<sup>315</sup> A similar

<sup>311</sup> Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft Bd. III,1 1897, Sp. 1106–07, URL 47.

<sup>312</sup> Francke 1907: 16.

<sup>313</sup> Smith 1907: 411f.

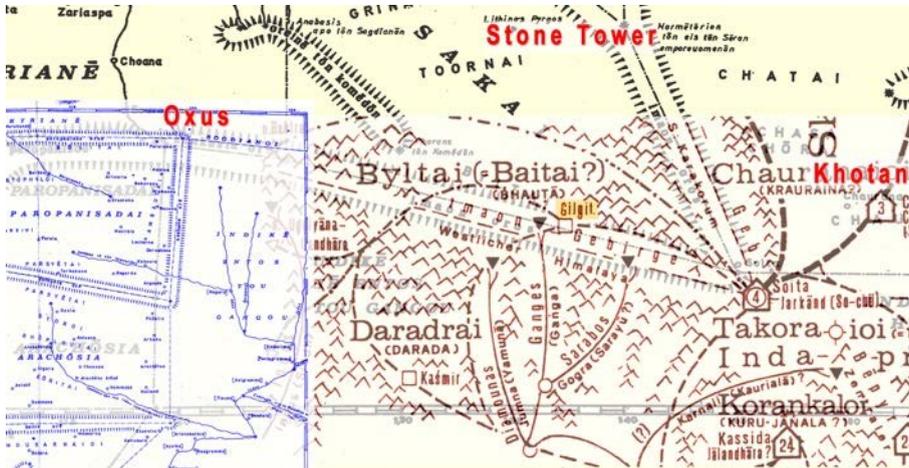
<sup>314</sup> Herrmann 1938: 137.

<sup>315</sup> Herrmann 1938: 145.

idea is followed by Lindegger, suggesting an identity with the ‘Bhautā’, i.e., the Bhautṭa of the *Rājataranṅinī*.<sup>316</sup>

One might alternatively think of a relationship with the name of Bolor. Bolor or parts of it are also commonly identified with Baltistan, but this is most probably based on a misunderstanding of the ancient pilgrim routes.<sup>317</sup> The main centre of Bolor was Gilgit with the northern valleys of Yāsin, Ishkoman, and Hunza, plus parts along the ‘Upper Indus’, down to Chilās, most likely also parts along the Kunar Sindh down to Chitrāl, and perhaps also, intermittently, parts of present-day Baltistan.<sup>318</sup> Among the trade routes from Central Asia to South Asia, which usually led through the Pamirs down to Chitrāl,<sup>319</sup> a shorter route could have led via Hunza and Gilgit down to India, rather than over the Mustagh pass into Baltistan.

Ptolemaios, however, also lists a tribe called Bolitai. These are located in the northern part of the region of the Paropanisadai, an area assumed to be located at the Hindukush and to its south. Most commentators suggest that the name Bolitai were a mistake for Kabolitai, the people of Kābul,<sup>320</sup> overlooking however, that Kābul and the Kābul river is much further south, even in the maps based on Ptolemaios. It is thus rather likely that the name Bolitai refers to the people of Bolor.



Map 17 — Composite map of the Pamir triangle.  
Yellow background cutout from Ronca (1967, Tabula II).

<sup>316</sup> Lindegger 1993: Karte II.

<sup>317</sup> This will be discussed in detail in Zeisler, to appear c.

<sup>318</sup> See also the discussion in Zeisler 2010: 381–88.

<sup>319</sup> Zeisler, to appear c.

<sup>320</sup> See, e.g., Stückelberger and Graßhoff 2006: 675, n. 254 apud Ptol. 6.18.3.

Blue-and white inset: cutout of Ronca (1967, Tabula III), proportions preserved.

Brown-and-white inset: cutout of Lindegger (1993: Karte II), proportions adapted to position, courtesy Tibet-Institut Rikon.



Map 18 – 21 — Upper left: Cutout from a Ptolemaian map by Bernado Silvani, 1511, reproduction courtesy of the Norman B. Leventhal Map and Education Center at the Boston Public Library, URL 48.

Upper right: Cutout from *Septima Asiae Tabula*, Claudii Ptolomei *Cosmographie*, by Nicholas Germanus, translation by Iacobus Angelus, ca. 1467, written between 1460 and 1477, Valencia, URL 49.

Lower left: Cutout from *Septima Asiae Tabula*, *Cosmographia Ptolemaeus*, Claudius, Ulm: Lienhart Holle, 1482, p.204. National Library of Finland,

Helsinki, URL 50.

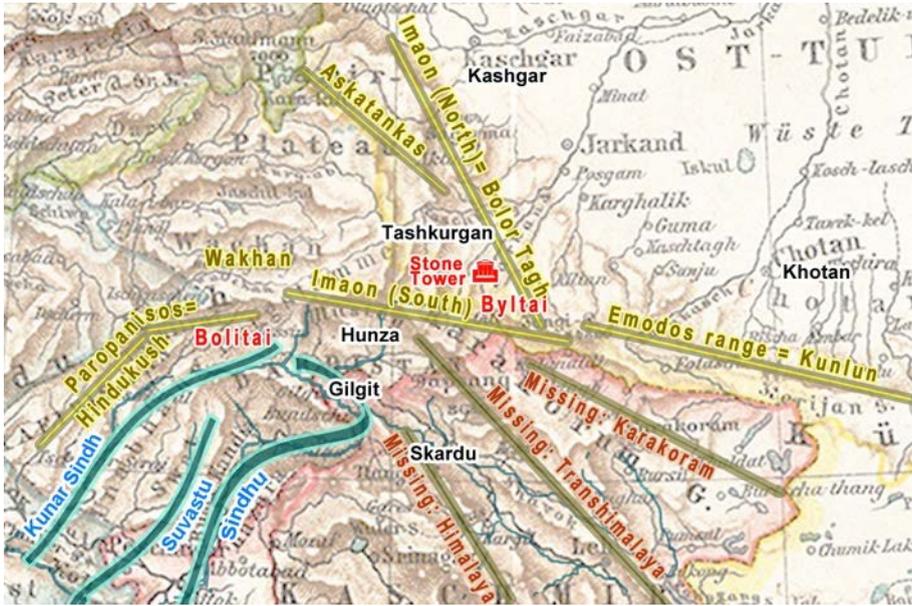
Lower right: Cutout from Thomas Porcacchi, *Tavola Settima Dell'Asia, Tabula Asiae VII, Padua 1620, University of Alabama Map Library, URL 51.*

Ptolemaios places the Byltai further north, in the region of the Sakai, a Scythian group, north of a western extension of the Pamirs, which most likely constitutes a range along the Wakhan corridor. The Byltai are located roughly on the same latitude as the Oxus source, which could point to a location in the Wakhan/ Little Pamir valley or the northern parallel, the Great Pamir valley. P'iankow suggests the area of Wulei or Puli,<sup>321</sup> which would roughly correspond to the region of Tashkurgan. The Byltai would then settle in the southernmost part. The very prominent acute angle formed by the two branches of the Imaon, visible in all maps, can be matched with reality, see Map 17, Map 18–21, and Map 22. I would not want to preclude the possibility that the names Bolitai and Byltai may have been related, nor the possibility that, despite the difference in the vowel, both names may have something to do with an ethnic name underlying the name of Baltit.

The three chains of the Karakoram, the Transhimalaya, and the main Himalayas are missing, and with them the complete Tibetan Plateau. At the same time, the more or less horizontal Kunlun-Emodos range functions as the northern border of India, and corresponds thus *also* to the Himalayas with respect to Ptolemaios' coordinates and maps of India.

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<sup>321</sup> P'iankow 1994: 43b.



Map 22 — *Byltai and Bolitai. Schematicised mountain ranges and rivers. Background: Cutout of 'Karte Zentral-Asiens vor 1893' from Meyers Konversations-Lexikon, 4th edition (1885 -1890), URL 52.*

Whether the 'Stone Tower' should be located at Tashkurgan, as assumed here with Stückelberger and Graßhoff<sup>322</sup> and Falk,<sup>323</sup> or further up north-west at Daraut-Kurghān in the Alai valley, as suggested by M. A. Stein<sup>324</sup> and recently again by P'iankov<sup>325</sup> is another question, which is of no further interest here.

The only thing that disturbs the picture is the position of the Gaṅgā, which is located much too close to the Indus, practically below the Byltai, having the source at Gilgit (see inset in Map 17). The Indus and the two parallel rivers, the Kunar Sindh and the Swāt river, are roughly in the correct position, although still too far in the west. Apart from this, the rest of India is too much compressed, especially also in the north-south direction. The compression is a result of using too small a circumference of the earth (see n.28 above). With the reduced circumference of the earth, the latitudes also shrink. Spreading of the north-south distances in the areas of Central Asia further reduces the

<sup>322</sup> Stückelberger and Graßhoff 2006: 657, n. 186 apud Ptol. 6.13.2.

<sup>323</sup> Falk 2014: 20.

<sup>324</sup> M. A. Stein 1932: 22.

<sup>325</sup> P'iankov 2015: 64.

available space in the south. In the case of India, this leads, apart from other distortions, also to an extreme compression of the north-south distances, only minimally compensated by setting the equator through Sri Lanka. This should be kept in mind.

*Appendix B: Δαβάσαι, Dabásai*

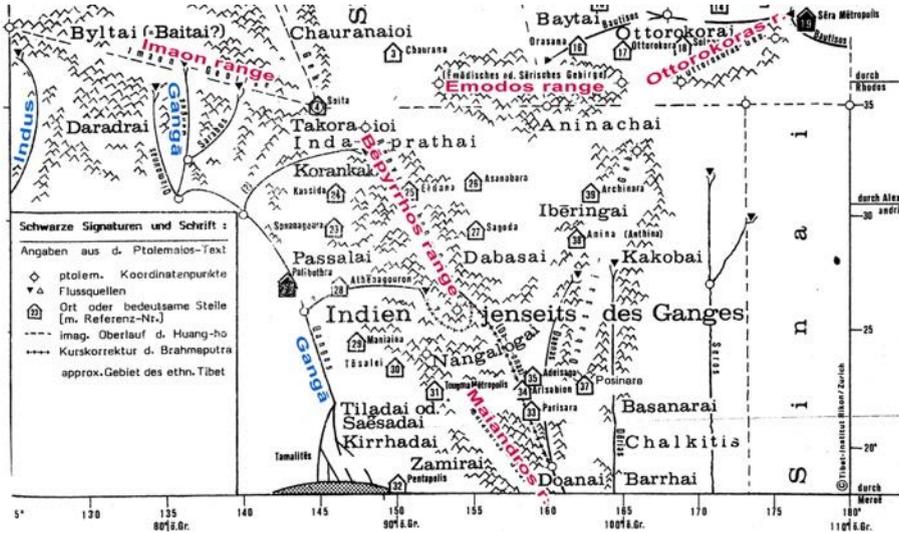
According to Herrmann, the name Dabasai corresponds to the Central Tibetan province Dbus.<sup>326</sup> This is hardly possible. First of all, if the Emodos range would be identical with the Himalayas as Herrmann suggests in his rendering of Ptolemaios' coordinates,<sup>327</sup> see Map 1, then the Dabasai, being located to their south, would clearly settle in India. Secondly, given the meaning 'Central (Province)' of Dbus, this would presuppose that there would have been already a large tribal entity that could single out a central element. R. A. Stein, who does not seem to oppose the name identification, comments upon the implication "que l'organisation administrative du Tibet ancien était pareille à celle des temps historiques, ce qui est étonnant" (that the administrative organisation of ancient [i.e., protohistoric] Tibet would correspond to that of historical Tibet, which is surprising).<sup>328</sup> Thirdly, the identification presupposes the presence of speakers of Tibetan (or the ancestral language) in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century or earlier in Central Tibet, something that has to be proven yet – exactly by the identification of the place name.

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<sup>326</sup> Herrmann 1938: 61. Herrmann refers back to August Herrmann Francke 1926: 98. Francke is often extremely rash in his identifications, but his wording: 'Dbus is supposed to be identical with Ptolemy's Dabasae', indicates an even earlier amateur identification. In fact, the identification is given by Cunningham (1894: 19): "the uncorrupted pronunciation is preserved by Ptolemy in *Dabasae*, who must be the people of dBus". Francke 1907: 16 adds "He [Ptolemy] speaks of the nation of the Dabasae and this has suggested itself to Tibetan scholars as being a Roman transliteration of the modern province of Ü (spelt dBus)".

<sup>327</sup> Herrmann 1938: Tafel IX.

<sup>328</sup> R. A. Stein 1940: 458.



Map 23 — Cutout of Lindegger (1993, Karte I), courtesy Tibet-Institut Rikon.

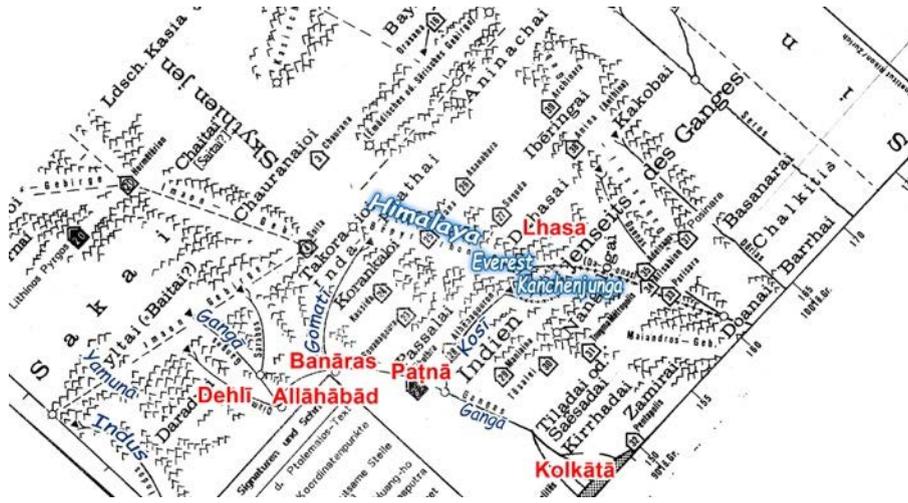
If we believe Ptolemaios' Indian coordinates, as, e.g., represented in Lindegger,<sup>329</sup> the Dabasai should be located in India beyond the Gaṅgā, already quite to the south. It is clear that Ptolemaios knew a lot of Indian place names as well as their rough orientation, and especially also their latitude, but due to the contraction of the east-west distances and possibly other problems, his Indian coordinates are extremely skewed. Not only would the Gaṅgā rise in the Hindukush below Gilgit, but the river would also flow in a south-southeastern direction, instead of flowing east-southeast, see Map 23.

If one corrects the orientation of the Gaṅgā by turning the map, the Bēphyrros range could be associated with the central Himalayas as in Lindegger<sup>330</sup> or with the with the eastern Himalayas as suggested by Stückelberger and Graßhoff.<sup>331</sup> The Dabasai to the north of that range would then be located near Lhasa.

<sup>329</sup> Lindegger 1993, Karte I and Karte II.

<sup>330</sup> Lindegger 1993, Karte II.

<sup>331</sup> Stückelberger and Graßhoff 2006: 723 apud Ptol. 7.2.8, 938b.



Map 24 — Cutout of Lindegger (1993, Karte I), orientation of the Gaṅgā adapted, courtesy Tibet-Institut Rikon.

By this exercise, not only would Eastern Turkestan be represented in the wrong direction, but also the complete area of India beyond the Gaṅgā would be messed up. Given the compressed east-west distances, the Dabasai should possibly be located further west, so that the association with Dbus would no longer hold. The Nangalogai (the ‘World of the Naked’), i.e., the Nāgā of Assam or Myanmar would be located both south and north of the endpoint of the Himalayas, that is, they would be located partly in Arūṅāchal Pradesh and partly in south-eastern Tibet, if not further east in Yunnan and Sichuan, see Map 24.

Chalkitis, which is mentioned by Ptolemaios as having (large) copper deposits, would lie in Sichuan, while Stückelberger and Graßhoff point to the fact that the greatest deposits are known from Yunnan.<sup>332</sup> One would further have to account for names such as the Eldana, Asanabara, and Sagoda along the northern rim of the Bēphyrros range, and the Ibēringai much further north.

What is worse, the Maiandros range, which is correctly identified with the Araka Yoma (or Rakhine or Chin) mountains by Lindegger<sup>333</sup> and Stückelberger and Graßhoff<sup>334</sup> and which serves as a geological boundary between India and Myanmar,<sup>335</sup> would then run east-west like the Himalayas instead of straight north-south. Given the

<sup>332</sup> Stückelberger and Graßhoff 2016: 727, apud Ptol. 7, 2, 20.

<sup>333</sup> Lindegger 1993: Karte II.

<sup>334</sup> Stückelberger and Graßhoff 2006: 723 apud Ptol. 7.2.8, 975b.

<sup>335</sup> See URL 53.

identification of the Maiandros range, it is quite surprising that Stückelberger and Graßhoff<sup>336</sup> associate the area southwest of it with East Nepal.



Map 25 — Cutout of Lindegger (1993 Karte II) with the identifications by Lindegger (reddish) and by Stückelberger and Graßhoff (orange), courtesy Tibet-Institut Rikon.

Quite apparently the Sirene has been calling too seductively: the region Kirrhadia must correspond to the Kirāta people of the Vedic literature and the epics, the name of which seems to be continued by the present-day Kira(n)ti in Nepal.<sup>337</sup> Ptolemaios' region Kirrhadia, however, is located on the eastern coast of the Bay of Bengal, with two major estuaries, that of the Katabedas and that of the Tokosannas. Ptolemaios further states that a conglomerate of five towns, Pentapolis, belongs to this region. Pentapolis might be Chittagong.<sup>338</sup>

If this coastal area should be counted as 'East Nepal', one may wonder, what happened with all the land south of it: northeast India (Arūnāchal Pradesh, Assam, Meghālaya, Nāgāland, Maṇipur, and Mizoram) and Bānglādesh.

In the somewhat earlier anonymous *Periplus Maris Erithraei* Περὶ πλοῦς τῆς Ἐρυθρᾶς Θαλάσσης ascribed to Arrian, the Kirrhadai are located west of the Gaṅgā<sup>339</sup>), but likewise on the coast:

<sup>336</sup> Stückelberger and Graßhoff 2006: 727, 968b, apud Ptol. 7,2,16.

<sup>337</sup> For this association see also Lindegger 1993: Karte II.

<sup>338</sup> For this identification see Lindegger 1993: Karte II and URL 54.

<sup>339</sup> See URL 55.

61. About the following region, the course trending toward the east, lying out at sea toward the west is the island Palaesimundu, called by the ancients Taprobane [Sri Lanka]. [...]

62. [...] Beyond this region, sailing toward the east and crossing the adjacent bay, there is the region of Dosarene, yielding the ivory known as Dosarenic. Beyond this, the course trending toward the north, there are many barbarous tribes, among whom are the Cirrhadae [i.e., Kirrhadai], a race of men with flattened noses, very savage; another tribe, the Bargysi; and the Horse-faces and the Long-faces, who are said to be cannibals.

63. After these, the course turns toward the east again, and sailing with the ocean to the right and the shore remaining beyond to the left, Ganges comes into view, and near it the very last land toward the east, Chryse. There is a river near it called the Ganges, and it rises and falls in the same way as the Nile. On its bank is a market-town which has the same name as the river, Ganges.

These Kirr(h)adai are quite apparently characterised as a mongoloid tribe (whether they were speaking a Tibeto-Burman language, as the Wikipedia wants to have it,<sup>340</sup> is another question). While most of the earlier scholars suggest that the author of the *Periplus* simply misplaced the people or misunderstood their name, and that Ptolemaios thus took over the wrong name, and while other scholars also allow the aboriginal people to have originally spread across the whole Gangetic plain,<sup>341</sup> nobody ever seems to think of the possibility of an accidental name similarity or a name transfer so that neither the author of the *Periplus* nor Ptolemaios were mistaken, but rather those who made the identification.

One can observe, however, that, like in the case of the Qiang, the designation Kirāta may have been used both specifically, referring to a particular ethnic group, and also more generally, referring to non-Aryan tribes, mountain and forest dwellers, or even 'robbers'. Rainer Kimmig (p.c.) kindly points to an enumeration in the *Mahābhārata*<sup>342</sup> 3,48.20ff, where the name Kirāta is used for a people of the western kingdom, mentioned between the Pahlava (Persians) and Darada in the beginning of the enumeration, and the Yavana (Greeks), Śaka (Scythians), 'Robber Huns' (Hūṇa), 'Chinese' (that is, Cīna, a place or

<sup>340</sup> See URL 56.

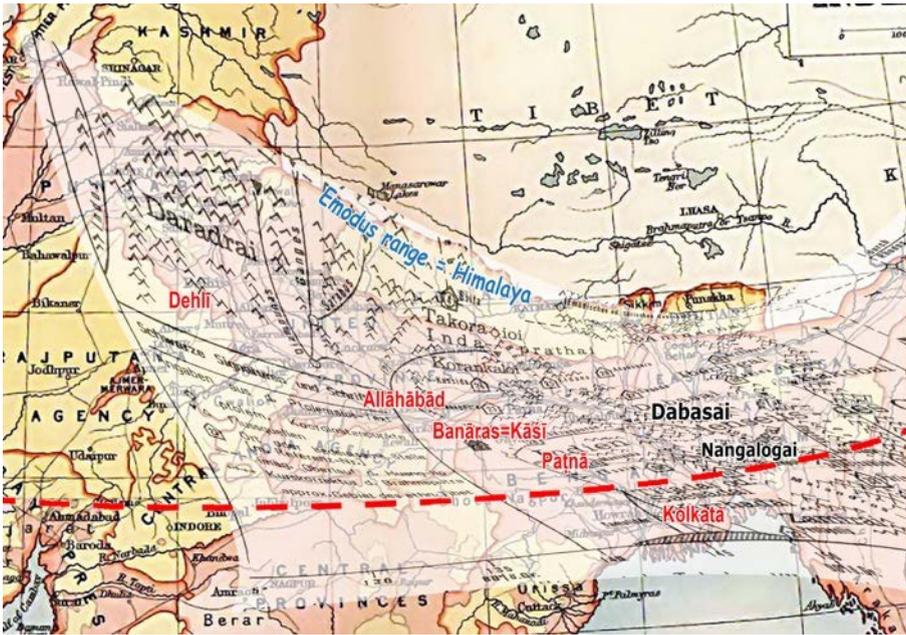
<sup>341</sup> See here McCrindle 1885: 192–94 with further references.

<sup>342</sup> See ed. van Buitenen 1975.

people in the Pamirs, later apparently attested in Kinnaur),<sup>343</sup> and Tocharians in the continuation. Tucci lists more such passages in the *Mahābhārata*, in the *Manusmṛti*, and in the *Bṛhat Saṃhitā*.<sup>344</sup> Tucci thus states “Kirāta, as known, indicates tribes of hunters or marauders, warriors outside the pale of orthodoxy. They are not only located in the East but chiefly in the West and North-West along with the Daradas, Kambojas, Cīnas [people], Sakas, Yavanas etc.”.<sup>345</sup>

Mayrhofer mentions also the meanings ‘merchant’ and ‘fraudulent merchant’ for the spelling alternative *Kirāta*.<sup>346</sup> In that case, if the identification should hold, the Kirr(h)adai could simply be tribal merchants along the coast. In any case, there is no need to evoke ‘East Nepal’.

If one tries to adjust Ptolemaios conceptual errors not by turning the map but by warping it and shifting and extending the Indian part towards the east, one might get a better impression of what Ptolemaios’ Indian coordinates could have represented ideally, and one runs into much less inconsistencies.



<sup>343</sup> See Tucci 1971, 1977: 82.

<sup>344</sup> Tucci 1977: 11, 37. The *Manusmṛti* ed. Bühler 1886: X, 44 gives among others Kāmboja, Yavana, Śaka, Pahlava, Cīna, Kirāta, Darada. The *Bṛhat Saṃhitā* of Varāhamihira. (ed. 1982), chapter 14: 17–19, lists the Kirāta in the southwestern quarter (!) together with many southwestern but and the above-mentioned north-western tribes.

<sup>345</sup> Tucci: 1977: 66, n. 90a.

<sup>346</sup> Mayrhofer 1992: 353.

Map 26 — Cutout of Lindegger (1993, Karte I), courtesy Tibet-Institut Rikon, projected onto a cutout of Map of the British Indian Empire from *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, 1909, Edinburgh Geographical Institute; J. G. Bartholomew and Sons, URL 57. Red broken line: Tropic of the Cancer.

By such an exercise, if only approximatively as in Map 25 (further contortion would make it completely unreadable), it becomes clear that Ptolemaios did not and could not have any idea of the existence of Tibet. After all, it would have been extremely unlikely that any trader following the trade routes to the Tarim Basin or that any trader following the sea routes around India could have ever provided a single place name belonging to the Tibetan Plateau.

With 'East Nepal', the identification of the Maiandros range with the Araka Yoma would no longer hold, it would then rather correspond to the eastern Himalayas, and the Nangalogai would definitely be located north of Nepal, in Tibet. Finally, Lindegger's identifications would also have the Brahmaputra meet the Gaṅgā at Pāṭaliputra,<sup>347</sup> i.e., Paṭnā, instead of in the Bay of Bengal. The Ghāghrā joins the Gaṅgā somewhat west of Paṭnā, the Gandakī follows somewhat east. The Gaṅgā is further joined by the Kosī halfway to the border to Bānglādesh.<sup>348</sup> (When the map should simply be turned, the river would arise in the Everest area, and would then correspond to the Kosī).

Scholars who have treated Ptolemaios' Indian coordinates in more detail have taken the Emodos as the northern boundary of India without any hesitation. They have accordingly associated the Dabasai with tribes in north-east Bānglādesh<sup>349</sup> or Upper Burma,<sup>350</sup> i.e., Myanmar. The individual identifications are as speculative as the identification of the Dabasai with the name Dbus, yet better justified.

The south-eastern endpoint of the Bēphyrros range (154°E 20°N) lies slightly to the east of the north-western endpoint of the Maiandros range (152°E 24°N). However, in many of the Renaissance maps, the Bēphyrros range is followed on the same diagonal line by the Maiandros range, and it seems thus to be quite likely that the Bēphyrros range corresponds to the Patkai range, which is the northern (north-east-ward bent) continuation of the Araka Yoma. The smaller unnamed mountain range that follows further south, east of the Gulf of Sabarak (i.e., Gulf of Martaban), already belongs to Thailand.

In several Latin Renaissance editions of Ptolemaios' *Cosmographia*, the map of India is given with the Tropic of Cancer, see Map 27 from

<sup>347</sup> Lindegger 1993: Karte II.

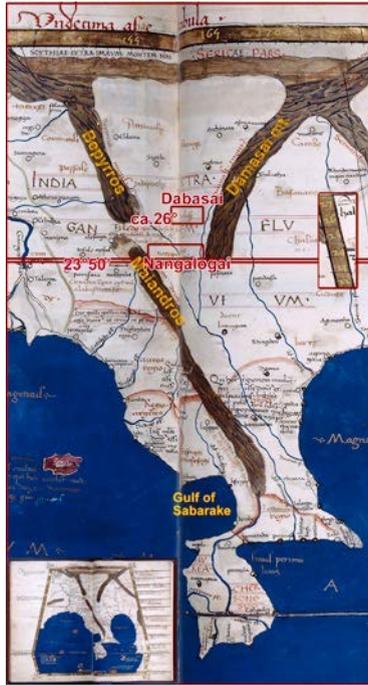
<sup>348</sup> See URL 58.

<sup>349</sup> McCrindle 1885: 223.

<sup>350</sup> Gerini 1909: 20.



Ptolemaios had the corresponding information about their positions. The respective latitude was very easy to establish even for astronomically untrained persons. All they had to do is to either count the hours of the longest day or to measure the shadow of a gnomon. It is thus rather unlikely that Ptolemaios could have mistaken the eastern Himalayas for the Patkai range.



Map 28 — Cutout from Eleventh map of Asia (southeast Asia), in full gold border by Nicholas Germanus, translation by Iacobus Angelus, ca. 1467. Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library Digital Collections. URL 59.

*Insets: miniature of full map and copy of the scale.*

Yes, it is true, Ptolemaios used the wrong model of the earth and yes, the information he drew upon were extremely imprecise. He certainly messed up the coordinates of India and South-East Asia. However, one should ask oneself whether there is any likelihood that Ptolemaios' informants had more knowledge about places in Tibet than about places in northern India and Bānglādes̄h. If one accepts the Emodos as the northern boundary of India and Bānglādes̄h, and, at the same time, as the southern boundary of the Tarim Basin, not only the landscape of

India beyond the Gaṅgā is preserved, but also the question of the Baitais and the Baitai is solved.

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