



(T'ai Tsong) sent an envoy named Wang Hiuan Ts'o (Tib. Vang-hen-tse) and thirty other horsemen were sent to India. At that time Harsha was already dead and they witnessed the time when the country was not in peace. Harsha having no son, the minister Arjuna (Tib. Srid-sgrub) was on the throne and was causing great harm to Buddhism. (Arjuna) conquered the (Chinese) envoy and killed most of his friends and looted the baggages. Wang Hiuan Ts'o himself and few friends escaped in the dead of night and reached Nepal, which was under Tibet and sought the refuge with Songtsen Gampo (Srong-btsen-Sygam-po). The Tibetan king sent a crack regiment of 1,200 Tibetan soldiers and 7,000 Nepali cavalry to India. With the envoy they reached Hirahita. In round about three days battle they (Tibetans) captured the main capital. They killed about 3,000 Indians and about 1,000 were thrown into the nearby rivers. King Arjuna escaped but he brought new army and offered yet another battle but at last he was defeated by the Tibetans and he (Arjuna) with relations were caught alive and sent to Chinese emperor. The emperor was very pleased and when T'ai Tsong died, a statue of the Tibetan king was made in front of the tomb as a mark of remembrance for his deeds".

I do not intend to enter into the many disputed points about this particular Sino-Tibetan invasion after Harsha's death, and would only emphasize certain facts firmly handed down in Tibetan tradition. First, there were several Tibetan invasions into different parts of Northern India in the time of Songsten Gampo and his successors; such invasions into Chian in the east and Li-yul, (Eastern Turkistan) in the north are admitted by modern historians. Secondly, after Harsha's death Buddhism not only lost its state patronage but was undergoing much persecution; in Eastern India Sasanka's persecution of Buddhism in Bengal itself is well known; such conditions might have invited the anger of the great Tibetan protector of Dharma (Tib. Chhos-rgyal/Skt. Dharmaraja). Thirdly, Arjuna's treatment of Chinese envoy gave the Tibetan king an opportunity to vindicate the Dharma in Phagyul ('Phags-yul/Skt. Aryabhumi) itself as well as to prove the superiority of the Tibetans over the Chinese,

Two very significant facts in Gedun Chhophel's account are (i) description of the Indian region which the Tibetans invaded; and (2) the identification of the statue in front of the Chinese emperor's tomb. The region is called Hirahita, and Gedun Chhophel included Malla, Sakya, Lichchavi, Vriji and Kanyakubja in Hirahita. Scholars of Sanskrit and Chinese may consider whether Hirahita can be derived from

Hiranyavati (cf L. Petech : *Northern India according to the Shui-ching-chu*, PP. 25-33 ; Rome 1950). The statue which was placed in the front of the Chinese emperor's tomb is that of Tibetan king and not that of Indian king held as prisoner.

Gedun Chhophel does not say that both Songtsen Gampo the victor and the Indian king the prisoner were commemorated in statues as some Chinese sources, reported by the Indian Sinologist Professor Bagchi, suggest (*Sino-Indian Studies*, Vol. 1, part 2, P. 69).

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