

A Study on T'iao-chih 條支

Of all the countries distinguished in the western region by Chinese historians of the Han period, Ta-ch'in and T'iao-chih appear to have been the westernmost two. For this reason, and moreover because the Nestorian inscription glorifies Ta-ch'in as an earthly paradise; because, too, it seems from the Han and Wêi chronicles that Ta-ch'in was always reached by way of T'iao-chih, these two countries have long been the subject of eager research by western orientalisks. On account of difficulties, however, arising from the textual obscurities, suspicious statements concerning distance and corrupt transcriptions of names in the Chinese records available, it has remained a perplexing problem during the last century and a half to locate these historical countries, or to identify the original names hidden behind the Chinese transliterations. Even now we can hardly say the question has ever been clearly settled. For my part, I am of the opinion that Ta-ch'in meant Egypt, with Alexandria as its capital. This view of mine I ventured to set forth twenty years ago in the Japanese historical magazine, *Shigaku-Zasshi*,⁽¹⁾ and, if I may be permitted to rectify some faults I have since discovered in my observations and inferences, I hope still to be able to maintain my point. As for T'iao-chih, my own inquiries into its location and name have brought me to a conclusion more or less different from any theory offered hitherto. Recently I had occasion to present it as my contribution to a book of sinological essays compiled and edited to commemorate the 60th birthday of my respected friend and fellow sinologue, Dr. NAITO. It is my aim to have it coupled eventually with the translated and revised version of my study of Ta-ch'in just referred to. In the meanwhile, however, I wish to present this as an independent monograph. It was in 1776 that A. VISDELOU, introducing, in the course of a commentary on the Nestorian Monument, his translation of the *Hou-han-shu* account of T'iao-chih, first proposed to connect it with Egypt.⁽²⁾ His suggestion, however, does not seem to have met with much approval. Since then a considerable variety of opinions has been published on the same subject, but I think they may be reduced to the following three

(1) K. SHIRATORI, *On the Countries of Ta-ch'in and Fu-lin*, *Shigaku-Zasshi* Vol. 15, Nos. 4, 5, 8, 10 and 11.

(2) A. VISDELOU, *Bibliothèque orientale*, IV, p. 421.

classes:—one which places the country on the coast of the Caspian Sea, another which assigns it to Persia proper or Fars, and a third which prefers the Irak Arabi district. The first was initiated by F. NEUMANN. In his *Asiatische Studien*, 1837, he quotes in translation a paragraph of the *Wei-shu* relating to Persia, and, commenting on the country of T'iao-chih mentioned there in, refers to the Hsi-hai 西海 which, the *Hou-han-shu* says, bounded the country, asserting that this sea was the Caspian itself. He went no further, however, in his identification; for he did not point out any particular part of the coast or any historical name known in the west which fitted with the country in question.⁽³⁾ It was left for RICHTHOFEN to reach a more exact idea of the location, fixing it on the pasture land of Khiva in the low basin of the Oxus. As for the name 'T'iao-chih,' he thought it to be a transcription of *Tadjik*; but was not original in this, for this interpretation was first suggested by RÉMUSAT and adopted likewise by NEUMANN, PAUTHIER, YULE, and other scholars.⁽⁴⁾ This theory of RICHTHOFEN's, set forth in his masterpiece '*China*,' was followed ten years later by another of the same category, put forward by H. J. ALLEN in opposition to HIRTH's suggestion that T'iao-chih refers to the district of Chaldaea. There was a peninsula at the southeastern corner of the Caspian, and since this was surrounded by water on all sides except the north-west, thus answering to the description of T'iao-chih in the *Hou-han-shu*, ALLEN claimed that this part of the Caspian coast was the ancient country. He also surmised that the inhabitants of T'iao-chih were most probably the Carduchi, the people ascribed to the corresponding district in XENOPHON's *Anabasis*, pointing out at the same time the phonetic resemblance which T'iao-chih seemed to bear to the name of the Daci tribe known to have invaded the region by way of the pass of Caspi in alliance with the Alans.⁽⁵⁾ Still another Caspian theory was published in the following year by GUTSCHMID in his history of Iran, where the *Hou-han-shu* statement about T'iao-chih was explained by assuming that the country was situated within the limits of Media, perhaps in Gilan, Mazanderan, or somewhere else and by identifying the name T'iao-chih with the old Persian word *dahjâus*, which signified 'land.'⁽⁶⁾

As will be clearly seen, all these assignments of T'iao-chih to the Caspian coast, however at variance in detail, were the same in presupposing that the Hsi-hai, referred to in the *Hou-han-shu*, meant the Caspian Sea. This, however, would be ignoring the facts of Chinese literature in that the name was applied to other seas as well. What is of particular significance in this connection is the term *Ssu-hai* 四海, or *Four Seas*, which, found on record from very remote times, is indicative of the primitive idea that the earth was

(3) F. NEUMANN, *Asiatische Studien*, 1837, p. 155-165.

(4) RICHTHOFEN, *China*, I, p. 451-452.

(5) H. J. ALLEN, *Where was Ta-ts'in?*, J.C.B.R.A.S., XXI, p. 93.

(6) A. von GUTSCHMID, *Geschichte Irans*, p. 65-67.

washed on its four sides by four oceans. The *Tung-hai* 東海 on the east and the *Nan-hai* 南海 on the south were obvious choices for these directions and for the north side, the Baikal and the Aral were regarded by Han authors as the *Pèi-hai* 北海, 'North Sea.' In those times the Koko Nor, at the head of the Yellow River, was known as the Hsi-hai, because it marked in the contemporary imagination the western limit of the world. Later on, as a result of CHANG Ch'ien's expedition into the western region, the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf became known in China, and then the name *Hsi-hai* was applied to them. In the later Han dynasty, the Indian Ocean was also called by that name, historians having heard of it as lying to the south-west of Kao-fu 高附, i.e. Afghanistan. Finally, in the T'ang period it was the turn of the Mediterranean to be referred to as the Hsi-hai, in the *Ching-hsing-chi* 經行記 by Tu Huan 杜環. In this way, the Hsi-hai moved further and further west in the Chinese imagination as the known world extended by degrees in that direction. But it is remarkable at the same time that every water once called Hsi-hai was allowed to retain the name even after the latter was applied to another farther west. So it happens that in the later Han dynasty, the Caspian Sea, the Persian Gulf, and the Indian Ocean, all referred to as the Hsi-hai indiscriminately. It cannot, therefore, be taken for granted, in the identification of T'iao-chih, as by the advocates of the Caspian theory that the Hsi-hai in the *Hou-han-shu* account of T'iao-chih meant the Caspian Sea. Further, there is evidence from the Han histories that the country of T'iao-chih was situated west of An-hsi 安息 (Parthia) and Wu-i-shan-li 烏弋山離 (Arachosia and Drangiana), and it seems impossible that it should, at the same time, have lain on the Caspian.

The first connection of T'iao-chih with Fars was made by DEGUIGNES. He based his theory on the statement in the *Ta-yüan-chuan* of the *Shih-chi*, that T'iao-chih was situated west of An-hsi, and reasoned that the Hsi-hai was the Persian Gulf, comparing the subjection of T'iao-chih by An-hsi mentioned in the same history with the political relation known between Parthia and Persia.⁽⁷⁾ It seems, however, that this theory has not met with favour in the west, although we may perceive its influence in K.V. SPRUNER's historical maps of Parthia and China in the Han period in which he shows Parsi and Carmania as corresponding to T'iao-chih. It is, therefore, the more remarkable that Dr. FUJITA in his essay treating of T'iao-chih published in the *Tōyō-Gakuhō*, 1923, strongly supported DEGUIGNES. He used the thorough method of collecting together all the accounts given of T'iao-chih in the *Shih-chi*, the *Han-shu*, the *Hou-han-shu*, and the *Wai-chih*, and comparing and considering these from the geographical point of view, reaching the conclusion that Fars was the district referred to. He traced a connection also between the name *T'iao-chih* and *Taḥkē*, a name mentioned by STRABO, ARRIAN, and

(7) J. DEGUIGNES, *Histoire générale des Huns*, II, p. 51.

PTOLEMY; indicating that the recorded capital of the country could be placed in the vicinity of the modern Bushire.⁽⁸⁾ Before judging this interpretation, we must examine the materials used by the author.

There is little doubt that he was principally influenced in his inference by the following passage from the account of the country of Tê-jo 德若 furnished by the *Hsi-yü-chuan* of the *Hou-han-shu*: "From P'i-shan 皮山 you go south-west through Wu-hao 烏耗, Hsüan-tu 懸度, and Ch'í-pin 罽賓 for 60 days to the country of Wu-i-shan-li 烏弋山離, whose territory extends for several thousands of *li*, and is now called by the revived name *P'ai-ch'ih* 排持. Then you go again south-west for more than 100 days on horseback, and reach T'iao-chih."⁽⁹⁾ Wu-i-shan-li is identified with Drangiana and Arachosia, corresponding to the southern section of Afghanistan, and measuring distance which would be covered in 100 days on horseback in a south-westerly direction from this region, one might be justified in fixing the end of the journey in the vicinity of Bushire. I have, however, reason to question the reliability of the *Hou-han-shu* account in this respect. Our present author, no less than DEGUIGNES himself, seems to have taken it for granted that the alleged journey from Wu-i-shan-li to T'iao-chih was recorded from actual experience, but in fact there is strong indication that the information was inaccurate reproduction being nothing more than a none too faithful reproduction of what had been already recorded in the *Han-shu*.

In the first place, we may observe in what context the above-quoted passage occurs in the history. The account of the country of Tê-jo 德若 begins with these words: "It has over 100 families, a population of 670 and 350 well-trained soldiers. You go 3,530 *li* east to the residence of Chang-shih 長史, and 12,150 *li* to Lo-yang. The country is conterminous with Tz'ü-ho 子合, which is the same in its popular customs."⁽¹⁰⁾ This is directly followed by the passage in question, "From P'i-shan you go south-west....." In reading through this account, one cannot but be struck by the strange lack of relevance between the two passages. They are apparently independent descriptions and one does not easily see why they should have been thus presented together. This leads one to a closer inspection of the names of the countries mentioned.

P'i-shan is a name which occurs repeatedly in the *Hou-han-shu*, though never as a separate subject of description, and we may safely assume the existence of a country of this name in the later Han period. As regards *Wu-hao* 烏耗, however, the case is different. Not only do we find no separate account

(8) FUJITA, *Jōshikokukō* 條支國考 (A Study of T'iao-chih), Tōyō-Gakuhō, 東洋學報 vol. 13, 1923.

(9) 自皮山西南經烏耗, 涉懸度, 歷罽賓, 六十餘日行, 至烏弋山離國. 地方數千里, 時改名排持. 復西南馬行百餘日, 至條支. (後漢書, 卷一百十八, 西域傳德若國)

(10) 德若國, 領戶百餘, 口六百七十, 勝兵三百五十人. 東去長史居三千五百三十里, 去洛陽萬二千一百五十里, 與子合相接, 其俗皆同. (ibid.)

of this country in the history, but the name is never to be discovered in any other part of it. It occurs only once in the present paragraph on Tê-jo 德若, and then in the context already quoted. One is led to enquire the reason for this apparently strange fact. One looks up the commentary to the *Hou-han-shu* and reads the following comment on the name Wu-hao: "As the Ch'ien-shu-yin-yi 前書音義 (i.e. Phonetic Notes on the *Ch'ien-han-shu*) shows, 烏 was pronounced 鷄拏反. Again the *fan-ts'ie* of 烏 is 一加, and that of 耗 is 直加. Thus, the name, pronounced very rapidly, will sound like 鷄拏."⁽¹¹⁾ From this it is almost certain that what we see written 烏耗 in the existing editions of the *Hou-han-shu* is a corruption of 烏耗, as found in the *Ch'ien-han-shu*, which must have been pronounced *Wu-cha*. But what relation could this Wu-cha have borne to the country of Tê-jo 德若, the subject of the aforementioned account? The *T'ang-shu* mentions the country of Tê-jo 得若 and the *Wèi-liao* quoted in the *Wèi-chih* records the country of I-jo 億若 as a dependency of Kashgar 疏勒,⁽¹²⁾ and these being obviously identical with Tê-jo, we may fairly judge that of these three names one was the genuine spelling, and others corruptions of it. Taking up for examination the *Wèi-liao* spelling 億若, it is recognised that the characters were pronounced *ok-ja* in the Han age. Now notice the considerable resemblance between this *ok-ja* and the name above Wu-cha. It seems quite possible that these names, though distinguished from each other in the *Hou-han-shu* passage, really meant the same country, the fact being that the name, originally the same, was reproduced differently in the two dynastic histories, as Wu-cha and Ok-ja. This granted, the spelling *ok-ja* will be seen to be the latter, the correct one of the three alternative. Now suppose the writer of the *Hou-han-shu* account of Ok-ja to be drawing and rearranging the data regarding the country, found in the previous dynastic history, then it will be no wonder its older name should have been mixed in the passage, and this will account to a great extent for the seeming incoherence we have detected in it.

Apart from the above observation, it must be noted about the latter half of the *Hou-han-shu* passage in question that the text will sound too similar to what we read in the *Hsi-yü-chuan* of the *Han-shu* concerning the same region, to be written from a new source of information based on actual observation. I refer to the text of the *Hsi-yü-chuan* of the *Han-shu* about the country of P'i-shan: "You go 1,340 *li* south-west to the country of Wu-cha.....To the south-west, the road leads to Chi-pin 罽賓 and Wu-i-shan-li";⁽¹³⁾ also about the country of Wu-cha: "*Hsüan-tu* 懸度 is *Shih-shan*

(11) 前書音義音鷄拏, 又云烏音一加反, 耗音直加反, 急言之如鷄拏。(後漢書, 卷一百十八, 西域傳德若國注)

(12) 楨中國·莎車國·竭石國.....滿犁國·億若國·榆令國.....琴國, 皆并屬疏勒。

(13) 西南至烏耗國千三百四十里,西南當罽賓·烏戈山離道。(漢書, 卷九十六上, 西域傳皮山國)

石山 (stony mountain) ”;⁽¹⁴⁾ and about the country of Wu-i-shan-li: “You go north-east for 60 days to the residence of the Governor-General. The country is adjacent to Chi-pin on the east, P'u-t'iao 撲挑 on the north, and Li-kan 犁軒 and T'iao-chih on the west. You travel about 100 days and reach the country of T'iao-chih, which faces the Hsi-hai.....It (T'iao-chih) is the remotest region and rarely visited by Chinese agents. You start at the gate of Yü-mên-yang-kuan 玉門陽關 and take the southern road through Shan-shan 鄯善, and going thus south you reach Wu-i-shan-li, where terminates the southern road. Then you turn to the north and again to the east to attain An-hsi 安息.”⁽¹⁵⁾ Take together these passages and compare them with the *Hou-han-shu* one in question, and one can readily perceive that the latter seems to be nothing but a condensation and summation of the various others.

Now what concerns us most is this particular sentence in the doubtful passage: “You go again south-west (from Wu-i-shan-li) for over 100 days on horseback and reach T'iao-chih.” This leads us to suppose that the southern road stretched farther west beyond Wu-i-shan-li to T'iao-chih. But if I am not mistaken in the above observation, this was a mere rewriting of the *Han-shu* account of Wu-i-shan-li: “You travel about 100 days and reach the country of T'iao-chih.” And it was in truth an inaccurate and very misleading version. For the *Han-shu* text not only in no way suggests the southern road, but clearly states within a few lines that the route had its end in Wu-i-shan-li; and we may safely assume the *Han-shu* was correct on this point. It allotted 100 days to the journey to T'iao-chih, but clearly this did not mean travelling from Drangiana through Karmania and Fars to the Persian Gulf. We have already read in the above extract from the *Han-shu* that from Wu-i-shan-li, where the southern road ended, “one turned to the north and again to the east to attain An-hsi,” and allowing for the mistake in the word “east”, for the whole statement would be unaccountable without replacing it with “west”, this indicates the general course of the journey. To travel from Wu-i-shan-li to T'iao-chih, we may assume that one started at the western frontier of Drangiana, and going north to Aria, turned west and proceeded to Hekatompylos, the capital of Parthia, then shifting to the south-west, went through Ecbatana, Ktesiphon, and Seleucia, to Ura, a city supposed to have been situated near Babylon, after which a voyage down the Euphrates to its mouth completed the journey. That the *Han-shu* was correct in stating that it took 100 days, seems probable from other records. The *Hou-han-shu* describes in its T'iao-chih account the journey from that country to An-hsi thus: “You turn north and then east, and go further on horseback for 60

(14) 縣度者石山也。(ibid, 烏秣國)

(15) 東北至都護治所六十日行, 東與屬賓, 北與撲挑, 西與犁軒, 條支接。行可百餘日, 乃至條支國, 臨西海,絕遠漢使希至。自玉門陽關, 出南道歷鄯善而南行, 至烏弋山離南道極矣。轉北而東得安息。(ibid., 烏弋山離國)

days to reach An-hsi."⁽¹⁶⁾ This must mean that one went north from T'iao-chih for some distance, and then turned east, after which it was 60 day's ride in the same direction to the capital of An-hsi. For the location of the turning point we may refer to what the same history relates about the journey from An-hsi to the head of the Persian Gulf: "From An-hsi you go west 3,400 *li* to the country of A-man 阿蠻; from A-man you go west 3,600 *li* to the country of Ssü-pin 斯賓; from Ssü-pin you go south, crossing a river, and then south-west 960 *li* to the country of Yü-lo 于羅, the extreme west frontier of An-hsi. From here you travel south by sea and reach Ta-ch'in."⁽¹⁷⁾ Of the several countries mentioned, we know that the country of Yü-lo most nearly fulfils the conditions of being north of T'iao-chih, (granting it was on the coast of the Gulf,) and 60 day's ride west of An-hsi. A-man was identified by HIRTH with Ecbatana, and Ssü-pin with Seleucia, and as for Yü-lo, though I do not agree with the author in connecting it with Hira, at the northern edge of Lake Nedjef, yet we may assume from the above account it was at any rate in a westerly direction from An-hsi. The closing part of the last extract might give the impression that Yü-lo itself faced the Gulf, but the fact of its having been situated, though not exactly at the same place as Hira, somewhere near Babylon seems to be reaffirmed by its direction and distance from Ssü-pin, or Seleucia. We have no record of the distance from Yü-lo to T'iao-chih, but assuming that the latter was near the mouth of the Tigris, we may estimate the journey between the two points to have been a matter of 15 or 60 days, from CHESNEY's measurement of the distance between the mouth of the river and Diwaniyah on the Euphrates at 302 miles. For the distance from An-hsi to Yü-lo, we have the record of 60 days. Now what about distance between Wu-i-shan-li and An-hsi? Neither the *Han-shu* nor the *Hou-han-shu* says anything about it, but in this matter we may be assisted by PLINY's testimony that it was 566 Roman miles from the Parthian capital Hekatompylos to Alexandria in Aria (Herat), 199 miles from Alexandria to Prophthasia in Drangiana, and 515 miles from Prophthasia to Arachotus in Arachosia. This makes a total of 1,280 miles from the Parthian or An-hsi capital to Arachosia, part of Wu-i-shan-li; and the journey from Wu-i-shan-li to An-hsi, whether starting from Arachosia or Drangiana, may be roughly estimated to have taken about 30 days. Now put together the number of days calculated respectively for those three stages of the journey from Wu-i-shan-li to T'iao-chih, the result will be 105, which is very close to the "about 100 days" which the *Han-shu* assigned to the journey between the two countries. We may be certain that the path to T'iao-chih ran through Aria and the Parthian capital Hekatompylos to its destination at the head of the Gulf. Obviously the *Hou-han-shu* was incorrect in its statement "south-west

(16) 轉北而東，復馬行六十餘日至安息。(後漢書，卷一百十八，西域傳條支國)

(17) 自安息西行三千四百里至阿蠻國。從阿蠻西行三千六百里，至斯賓國。從斯賓南行度河，又西南至于羅國九百六十里，安息西界極矣。自此南乘海乃通大秦。(ibid., 安息國)

for over 100 days," for starting from Wu-i-shan-li, one must have gone, not south-west, but north-west as far as An-hsi. Perhaps we may account for this mistake, by surmising that the historian knew somehow of the south-westerly direction from An-hsi to T'iao-chih, and took the liberty of applying the same direction by guess work to the whole course of the journey.

There are serious objections to taking the *Hou-han-shu* literally and tracing the supposed journey along an imaginary line running from Drangiana through Karmana to Fars. Starting from Wu-i-shan-li, whether at Drangiana or Arachosia, one could have crossed the Kirman desert and, passing through Shiraz, reached the sea at Bushire in far less than 100 days, perhaps little more than 60 days. We must, moreover, remember what a hard journey it would have been to go through the Kirman desert and then by the very rough road from Shiraz to the Persian Gulf. True, this route was taken by one of Alexander's generals Kraterus and by the Syrian king Antiochos, but that was only out of urgent military necessity. When, however, KAN Ying, the first Chinese on record as having been to T'iao-chih on the mouth of the Persian Gulf, started from Eastern Turkestan, can it be easily imagined that he should have preferred to take such a difficult route. From all these considerations, we may be confident that 100 days' journey to T'iao-chih recorded in both the Han histories implied a route via An-hsi.

I should like to venture a comment on another part of the *Hou-han-shu* account of Tê-jo 德若, which tells us that "from P'i-shan one went south-west.....for 60 days to the country of Wu-i-shan-li."⁽¹⁸⁾ We may compare this with the *Han-shu* statement already quoted, "(From Wu-i-shan-li) you go north-east for 60 days to the residence of the Governor-General."⁽¹⁹⁾ Plainly enough this last-mentioned place was Wu-lêi-ch'êng 烏壘城 near the modern Ku-ch'a 庫車, and as we know Wu-i-shan-li must have been at a great distance from this place than from P'i-shan, which corresponds to the present Guma, it follows that the statements that each journey took 60 days could not have been correct. From what we have seen, however, about the manner in which one history borrowed from the other, we may suppose that the *Hou-han-shu* record of the distance between P'i-shan and Wu-i-shan-li was only dictated by analogy with the 60 days between Wu-lêi and Wu-i-shan-li recorded in the *Han-shu*. In the same *Hou-han-shu* paragraph about Wu-i-shan-li, one may further note that the statement that the country was then called by the revived name P'ai-ch'ih 排持, seems likely to have been copied from this passage of the *Wèi-liao*: "Wu-i 烏弋 is also called P'ai-ch'ih 排持."⁽²⁰⁾ As for the information that its territory extended for several thousands of li, I think there is considerable likelihood that the author had no better authority for his statement than his own imagination.

(18) See note 8.

(19) See note 15.

(20) 烏弋一名排持.

Now we come to the third category of theory, which may be credited to HIRTH. It is set forth in his "*China and the Roman Orient*," 1885. Of the value of this work, with the exhaustive collection of Chinese literature about Ta-ch'in and Fu-lin, carefully translated into English and interpreted and studied in a very enlightening manner, there cannot, indeed, be two opinions; and it is fairly natural that his identification of T'iao-chih as well as of Ta-ch'in has nowadays great influence. As I say, however, I have reached a different conclusion about Ta-ch'in, and as for the former country, I feel that his identification of this too is open to question. HIRTH identifies the city of *Hira* on the north coast of *Nedjef* with *Yü-lo* 于羅 mentioned in the *Hou-han-shu* and the *Wèi-liao*, suggesting that this "*Yü-lo* seemed to have occupied the same or at least a similar site as the city of T'iao-chih, KAN Ying's port." As the author himself admits, it was only about 200 A.D., towards the end of the Han period, that the city of *Hira* was founded, or at least it had not attracted any particular attention until the first half of the 3rd century. On the other hand *Yü-lo* was a name known to the Chinese as early as 97 A.D., the year in which KAN Ying paid his visit to T'iao-chih. To explain this apparent anachronism, HIRTH found it necessary to imagine that long before *Hira* came into existence, there had been about the same spot a populous city, whose name was recorded by the Chinese.⁽²¹⁾ This is, however, a mere hypothesis, with no evidence to prove it.

In the identification of *Yü-lo*, I shall rather call attention to *Ura*, a place noticed by classic writers in the west which may be inferred to have been in the neighbourhood of *Hira* and *Babylon*. In a passage of his *Natural History* relating to the Euphrates valley in Syria, PLINY tells us as follows: "Other town in Syria are these of *Europus*, and what was formerly *Thapsacus*, now *Amphipolis*. We then come to the Arabian *Scenitae*. The Euphrates then proceeds in its course till it reaches the place called *Ura*, at which, taking a turn to the east, it leaves the Syrian Deserts of *Palmyra*, which extend as far as the city of *Petra* and the regions of *Arabia Felix*."⁽²²⁾ ORTELIUS and HARDOUIN suggested that this *Ura* was *Sura*, found mentioned in the same book, but this view was opposed by PARISOT. BOCHART thought *Ura* corresponded to *Ur* in *Chaldaea*, but HARDOUIN pointed out that it would be too far south. The position of *Ura*, therefore, is a question on which there has been as yet no consensus of opinions. It seems to me, however, that a proper interpretation of PLINY's account will go far in solving the problem.

It may be gathered from PLINY's words that the Arabic tribe of *Scenitae* was found on the banks of the Euphrates from *Amphipolis* or the present *El Der* southwards. J. ST. MARTIN's investigations show this people to have inhabited that part of south Mesopotamia which extended from *Thapsacus* to

(21) HIRTH; op. cit., p. 147-152.

(22) PLINY, *Natural History*, trans. by J. Bostock and H.T. Riley. vol. 1, p. 444-445.

the neighbourhood of Babylonia,⁽²³⁾ and since one passed their country on the way from Thapsacus to Ura, the latter must have been situated below Babylon, and probably at no great distance from it. It is said that the river took an eastward course from that point and Diwannieh suggests itself here as coincident in position. These considerations lead us to the inference that PLINY's Ura was situated on the river somewhere between Babylon and Diwannieh. We cannot fail to remark the linguistic similarity the name Ura bears to Yü-lo 于羅, (the Japanese pronunciation of the characters being *ura*); and this is supported by geographical evidence. We learn from the *Hou-han-shu* that from Ssü-pin one went south, and crossing a river, again marched south-west 960 *li* to the country of Yü-lo; and that this was the extreme western frontier of An-hsi, whence one might travel by sea to reach *Ta-ch'in*. *Ssü-pin* was, as asserted by HIRTH, the Chinese name for Ktesiphon, and the above statement about Yü-lo seems to apply to Ura in every respect. Ura, thus identified with Yü-lo, might seem again to correspond to Hira so far as the recorded distance from Ktesiphon is concerned, but then it is hardly imaginable that this Ura was situated on the northern coast of Nedjef, as Hira is asserted to have been. For the Euphrates itself, which bent thence in an easterly direction apparently flowed past PLINY's Ura. It is clear that the author could not have meant by "the Euphrates" that western branch of the river which entered and issued from Lake Nedjef. Of the two streams into which the river divided near Mussaib, the right one, embracing Nedjef, is the original Euphrates, the left one, which flows by Babylon being merely a canal. About the time of Alexander, however, the name Euphrates was transferred to the left stream, and the right one was called Pallacopas instead. With the Arabs the "Euphrates" still meant the western branch, but Europeans have ever since called the eastern one by that name. It is very probable, thus, that PLINY's Euphrates also was this latter, which after passing Babylon and Hilla, turned eastwards from near Diwannieh, and not the other stream flowing through Kufa and Nedjef. It follows that the country or the city of Yü-lo mentioned in the Han history, in so far as it is identical with the Roman author's Ura, is in no way similar to Hira.

If it is hard to identify Yü-lo with Hira, it is still more difficult to believe that the city of T'iao-chih was Hira either. Let us quote what the *Hou-han-shu* records in connection with the country of T'iao-chih: "The capital of the country of T'iao-chih stands on a hill, with a circumference of over 40 *li*. It faces the Western Sea, and is bordered by a curving stretch of sea-water."⁽²⁴⁾ The same history, in a passage relating to An-hsi, says: "PAN Ch'ao despatched KAN Ying on a mission to *Ta-ch'in*. He arrived in T'iao-chih, and finding himself on the coast of a great sea, sought a passage across it. The sailors of the western frontier of An-hsi, however, told KAN Ying

(23) J. ST. MARTIN, *Recherches sur la Mésène et Characène*, p. 56-57.

(24) 條支國城在山上，周回四十餘里，臨西海，海水曲環。(後漢書；卷一百十八，西域傳條支國)

that the sea was so wide that though with favourable winds one might cross it in three months, if one encountered slow winds, one might be afloat for as long as two years. For this reason, they said those who set sail on it always took with them a supply of provisions to last three years; further the voyage was apt to make one homesick, many even having died of this cause."⁽²⁵⁾ One does not have to read this account more than once to realise that the sea bordering the country of T'iao-chih was a vast ocean, to which the lake of Nedjef, on whose shores stood the city of Hira, was by no means comparable. For this reason CHAVANNES was obliged to give up his early support of HIRTH's theory that T'iao-chih was in Babylonia. In his translation of the *Hsi-yü-chuan* of the *Hou-han-shu*, published in 1907 in the magazine *T'oung Pao* he offered as his own solution of the problem that the site of T'iao-chih was to be broadly at Mésène at the estuary of the Tigris. I believe this view, characteristic of the author's insight, to be broadly correct, though I hesitate to give credence to the etymological analysis of the name T'iao-chih, on which his argument is principally based. He discovered the name Mésène to be written in Ibn KOTAIBA's notes as Dest-Misan, and since Dest-Misan was found shortened to Desht in a certain Amrou's writings, quoted by Assemani, he was led to regard this Desht as the original name from which the Chinese transliteration *T'iao-chih* was derived.⁽²⁶⁾ It must be remembered, however, that Dest, or more correctly Desht, is a Persian word for a plain or desert, and that the name Desht Misan, which thus meant the desert of Misan, must have referred not so much to the country of Mésène itself as to the district to the west of Mésène, which bordered on the Arabian desert. This is discussed in detail by J. ST. MARTIN. His argument may be abridged in the following way. He has come to think that this state (Desht Misan) corresponded to a part of the Bassora territory on the right bank of the Tigris, lying near the desert, and now in the above passage from Ibn KOTAIBA he seems to find further evidence in favour of his opinion. For this historian states that it was during the reign of Abu Bekr, the successor of Mohammed, that the Arabs conquered Desht Misan, and that the Mohammedans at that time, having just begun their aggression against the Persian empire, had not yet advanced beyond the Tigris. The region was called Desht or 'plain' probably to distinguish it from Bathihah ('swamps'), the name by which the wet, swampy land about Bassora was known.⁽²⁷⁾

From this it will be clear that Desht Misan, though perhaps forming part of the territory of Mésène, properly constituted part of the Arabian desert rather than of the water-logged soil of the lower Tigris. Moreover, it

(25) 班超遣甘英使大秦，抵條支，臨大海欲度。而安息西界船人謂英曰，海水廣大，往來者逢善風，三月乃得度，若遇遲風，亦有二歲者，故入海人皆齎三歲糧。海中善使人思土戀慕，數有死亡者。(ibid., 安息國)

(26) T.P. VIII. p. 176, note 3.

(27) J. ST. MARTIN, *Recherches sur la Mésène*, p. 60-61.

seems unlikely that the natives of Mésène, being like the Arabs of the Semitic race, should have called their own country by the Persian name. These considerations make it hard to credit CHAVANNES's opinion that *T'iao-chih* was a transcription of Desht.

In the foregoing paragraphs, we have reviewed all the important opinions hitherto made public with regard to the identity of *T'iao-chih*. As I have already indicated that I agree with CHAVANNES in placing the site of *T'iao-chih* in Mésène, but as it was through different observations and inferences that I reached my conclusion, I consider it worth while to set these forth in the hope of contributing to a final solution of the mystery. I will begin by a general survey of the occurrences of the name *T'iao-chih* in Chinese literature.

The *Ta-yüan-lieh-chuan* of the *Shih-chi* contains the first record in Chinese history of the country under this name and beyond doubt this was written from the information brought home by CHANG Ch'ien 張騫. The original object of the latter's journey (ordered by Wu-ti) to the western regions was the political mission of persuading the Ta-yüeh-chih people back to their former home so that they might combine forces with the Chinese in opposing their hostile northern neighbours, the Hsiung-nü 匈奴. As he went on, however, visiting various western countries and observing ways of life and natural features in them, he was struck by their richness in commodities which were unfamiliar to him, not being produced in China. The idea must have naturally occurred to him that these products might be taken to his own country, to satisfy the curiosity of the monarch, his master, as well as to add to the power of state. Most probably, then, he gave any attention he could spare from his political concerns, to collecting information as to the nature of such western commodities, where they were produced, and by what routes they were transported. It is indeed historically true that, having learned, while in Bactria, of the bamboo sticks and cloths made in *Shu* 蜀 being imported from India into Bactria, he immediately on his return home, formed and put into operation a plan to communicate with India by opening a south-western passage through *K'un-ming* 昆明 and *Tien-yüeh* 滇越. This evidences his interest in commerce with the western world. What is noteworthy, thus, is that the geographical information about the western region found in the records of the time had its origin less in any scholastic motive of desire to widen knowledge than in the economic one of finding how foreign resources could be profitably drawn upon. No student of history or geography seeking to identify the various western states mentioned in the Chinese annals of those periods should disregard this fact. We may observe for example how CHANG Ch'ien was interested in the *Yen-ts'ai* 奄蔡, a nomadic tribe occupying the north of the Aral and the Caspian area, because their land was situated on what was called by the Chinese the "Northern Road", the highway of communication with the west which stretched through Kashgar 疏勒 and Ferghāna 大宛, down along the Syr Darya, and then north of the Aral and the Caspian to the Black Sea. Similarly we

find recorded in the *Ta-yüan-chuan* of the Han annals such small states on the lower Oxus as Kihwarizm 驪潛 and Dae 大益, for the sole reason that they were on the "Southern Road," which started from Guma (P'i-shan 皮山) or Yarkand (Sha-ch'ê 莎車), and passing over the Pamirs to Balkh (*Ta-yüeh-chih*), continued down the Amü Darya to the Caspian coast, and thence along the southern foot of the Caucasus Mountains up to the shore of the *Euxine*. CHANG Ch'ien also referred to Alexandria of Egypt, or so I contend, under the name of Li-kan 黎軒, and in view of the important position of that city in the intercourse between east and west, it seems quite natural that he should have heard of it. In those days, we know, exports from China and central Asia reached Alexandria via the lowest stream of the Tigris and the head of the Persian Gulf, and it seems unlikely that the sea-port there or the country to which it belonged should have failed to attract the notice of the Han explorer and to be recorded in the dynastic chronicles. This suggests a connection between T'iao-chih, which faced the great sea and from which one might embark for Ta-ch'in, and Mésène, embracing the lowest basin of the Tigris.

What assists us in the above inference is that T'iao-chih was probably the westernmost country of the world as far as CHANG Ch'ien knew. True, he referred Ta-ch'in to as Li-kan, but the vagueness of his idea of its location is shown in the *Shih-chi* account of An-hsi (Parthia), in this passage: "To the north (of An-hsi) were Yen-ts'ai 奄蔡 and Li-kan."⁽²⁸⁾ This was impossible, since Li-kan meant Alexandria, if I am not mistaken in my reasoning. Nor was the *Han-shu*, any more correct on this point, saying of Wu-i-shan-li (Arachosia and Drangiana): "On the west it is conterminous with Li-kan 犁軒 and T'iao-chih."⁽²⁹⁾ This, however, does show that Li-kan was no longer supposed to be north of An-hsi. In the *Hou-han-shu* the country is mentioned for the first time with any approach to accuracy so far as regard general direction, for the *Hsi-yü-chuan* of the history says: "The country of Ta-ch'in is also called *Li-kan*, and being situated to the west of the sea, sometimes *Hai-hsi-kuo* 海西國, i.e. the country west of the sea."⁽³⁰⁾ The relative position of the countries is given more clearly in the *Wèi-liao* quoted in the *Wèi-chih*: "The country of Ta-ch'in, also called *Li-kan*, is situated to the west of An-hsi and T'iao-chih, and to the west of the sea."⁽³¹⁾ To follow the development of Chinese ideas as to the westernmost country of the world, we may refer to the tradition, in evidence in Chinese literature from the Fighting States to the Sui and T'ang periods, about the land of *Hsi-wang-mu* 西王母. This imaginary country was always assigned to the extreme west of the world just as the land of immortality, *Fu-sang* 扶桑, was fancied to be on the opposite extreme. So it happened, as has been already pointed out, that as the end of the world

(28) 其西則條枝，北有奄蔡·黎軒。(史記，卷一百二十三，大宛列傳安息國)

(29) 西與犁軒·條支接(漢書，卷九十六上，西域傳烏戈山離國)

(30) 大秦國一名犁靬，以在海西，亦云海西國。(後漢書，卷一百十八，西域傳大秦國)

(31) 大秦國一號犁靬，在安息·條支西，大海之西。

in the Chinese mind receded farther and farther west, the *Hsi-wang-mu* did the same. Now in the *Ta-yüan-lieh-chuan* of the *Shih-chi* we read: "The elders of Au-hsi spoke of the tradition that there existed in T'iao-chih the *Jo-shui* 弱水 i.e. a mystic river, and *Hsi-wang-mu*, which, however, they had never seen."⁽³²⁾ This implies that CHANG Ch'ien, and the author of the history through him, had been told that T'iao-chih was the westernmost country of the world. Coming to the *Hou-han-shu*, however, we see Ta-ch'in, instead of T'iao-chih, connected with the fairly land and the western horizon. "Some say that to the west of this country (*Ta-ch'in*) there is the *Jo-shui* and the *Liu-sha* 流沙. It is close to the place where *Hsi-wang-mu* lives, and also to where the sun sets", says the history, with this additional remark: "The *Han-shu*, in saying that from T'iao-chih going westwards for over 200 days one arrived near the place where the sun set, differs from the present history."⁽³³⁾ Such criticism and revision of the previous records is still more emphatic in the *Wèi-liao*: "The former generation was again mistaken in considering the *Jo-shui* as being to the west of T'iao-chih, for now the *Jo-shui* is placed to the west of Ta-ch'in. Still another mistake was the belief that from T'iao-chih one might go west for over 200 days to reach the place where the sun set, for now we know that it is from the west of Ta-ch'in that one can reach this place."⁽³⁴⁾ It was not until the later Han period, that as the westernmost country in Chinese conception T'iao-chih had given place to Ta-ch'in.

We may state that in the later Han period there were two routes open to by which one might reach Ta-ch'in, or Alexandria of Egypt from the Mesopotamian lowlands—one the sea-route which, starting at the mouth of the Tigris, went through the Persian Gulf, round the Arabian peninsula, up the Red Sea, then from some point on the latter's western coast overland to the Nile, and down the river to Alexandria; the other the overland route which ran from the neighbourhood of Babylon up the Euphrates as far as Birejik, whence it went west via Antiochia to the shore of the Mediterranean, and then southwards by sea to Alexandria. Even at about the time of KAN Ying's visit to T'iao-chih, however, the Chinese seem only to have heard of the sea-route, as is suggested by the *Wèi-liao* passage about *Ta-ch'in*: "The last generation only spoke of the sea-route, knowing nothing of the land-road, but the facts are as have been roughly stated."⁽³⁵⁾ From these remarks we may gather that although CHANG Ch'ien had heard of Li-kan and although he may possibly have learned something about the sea-route thither, he did not understand all its complexities or the exact quarter of the compass in which

(32) 安息長老傳聞，條支有弱水·西王母，而未嘗見。(史記，卷一百二十三，大宛列傳條支國)

(33) 或云，其國西有弱水流沙，近西王母所居處，幾於日所入也。漢書云，條支西行二百餘日，近日所入，則與今書異矣。(後漢書，卷一百十八，西域傳大秦國)

(34) 前世又謬以爲，弱水在條支西。今弱水在大秦西，前世又謬以爲，從條支西行二百餘日近日所入。今從大秦西，近日所入。

(35) 前世但論有水道，不知有陸道，今其略如此。

the country was to be sought. Thus, he may well have regarded T'iao-chih as the westernmost country despite his knowledge of Li-kan, and have informed his people accordingly.

On the other hand, it seems almost inevitable, as we have already seen, that CHANG Ch'ien should have heard of the country of Mésène, and its location makes it very probable that it was the westernmost country of which he had any definite knowledge. Now, the lowest part of the Tigris basin, which the country of Mésène is known to have occupied, was the very cradle of human civilization, and without doubt this was not due more to its rich soil and abundant growth of cereals than to its preeminent position in ancient oriental communications. We learn that Assyria and Babylon made it a point of political necessity to hold the head of the Gulf, and that Alexander the Great, laying out his empire over the conquered areas of Asia, founded the city of Alexander at the mouth of the Tigris, as well as its namesake at the mouth of the Nile and Pattala at the estuary of the Indus. It is in the light of these facts in the history of ancient communications that we are led to connect this region with T'iao-chih, which marked the western limit of the world recognised by CHANG Ch'ien, and from which one could journey to Ta-ch'in.

For further proof of the above inference, we may refer to the following description of T'iao-chih in the *Hou-han-shu*: "The capital of the country of T'iao-chih stands on a hill, measuring over 40 *li* around. It faces the western sea, and is surrounded by a curving stretch of sea-water. On its south and north-east, on the three sides, it is inaccessible. Only at the north-western corner has it access to a land-road. The land is hot and low."⁽³⁶⁾ This strikes us as bearing a considerable resemblance to PLINY's remarks about the city of *Spacina Charax*, the capital of the country of Mésène. The Roman naturalist writes as follows: "Charax is a city situated at the furthest extremity of the Arabian Gulf, at which begins the more prominent portion of Arabia Felix: it is built on an artificial elevation, having the Tigris on the right, and the Eulaeus on the left, and lies on a piece of ground three miles in extent, just between the confluence of those streams. It was first founded by Alexander the Great, with colonies from the royal city of Durine, which was then destroyed, and such of his soldiers as were invaded and left behind. By his order it was called Alexandria, and a borough called Pella, from his native place, was to be peopled solely by Macedonians; the city, however, was destroyed by inundations of the rivers. Antiochus, the fifth king of Syria, afterwards rebuilt this place and called it by his own name; and on its being again destroyed, Pasines, the son of Saggonadacus and king of the neighbouring Arabians, whom Juba has incorrectly described as a satrap of Ting Antiochus, restored it, and raised embankments for its protection,

(36) 條支國城在山上，周回四十餘里，臨西海，海水曲環，其南及東北三面路絕，唯西北隅通陸道，土地暑溼。（後漢書，卷一百十八，西域傳條支國）

calling it after himself. These embankments extended in length a distance of nearly three miles, in breadth a little less. It stood at first at a distance of ten stadia from the shore, and even had a harbour of its own. But according to Jubā, it is fifty miles from the sea; and at the present day, the ambassadors from Arabia, and our own merchants who have visited the place, say that it stands at a distance of one hundred and twenty miles from the sea-shore. Indeed, in no part of the world have alluvial deposits been formed more rapidly by the rivers, and to a greater extent than here; and it is only a matter of surprise that the tides, which run to a considerable distance beyond this city, do not carry them back again."⁽³⁷⁾

"Eulaeus" was the contemporaneous name for the present *Karūn*, so that the city of Charax must have been situated near the junction of the Tigris with the *Karūn*. On the modern map, it is true; these two streams do not actually flow together, but are connected at their mouths by a crosswise canal called *Haffar*. Taking it for granted that the same was the case in PLINY's time, we must assume that there was some distance between the mouths of the two rivers. What part of the space then was occupied by the historic city?

The Tigris and the Euphrates meet nowadays at *Gurmat Ali*, but formerly joined a little further north, at *Korna*. Below this confluence the united stream takes the name of Tigris or *Shat el Arab*. Southwards from the *Haffar* connection, the *Shat el Arab* and the *Karūn* embrace between them a delta, over which they spread out into seven channels all discharging into the Persian Gulf. VINCENT, enumerating these seven from west to east as *Cossia Bony*, *Bamishere*, *Karūn*, *Selege*, *Mohilla*, *Gabam*, and *Deree Bony*, identifies the delta with Mésène and fixes the site of the capital, *Spasini Charax*, at its north-west corner, just south of where the *Haffar* meets the *Shat el Arab*. He also observes that DALRYMPLE's map assigns the site of an ancient city, *Haffar*, to this spot and still another to one a little further north, beyond the canal; and that THEVENOT, passing this area on his way to *Bassora*, found these two cities still in existence.⁽³⁸⁾ The modern map, it may be noted by the way, calls the space between the *Cossia Bony* and the *Bamishir*, *Abbādān* Island.

As PLINY records a tremendous volume of silt is brought down by the Euphrates and the Tigris, and we may safely assume the condition of the delta, especially near the head of the Gulf, to have varied greatly from period to period, and therefore the physical aspect of the region at present to differ from what it was in Han times, when the state of Mésène flourished there. "They then arrived at the mouth of the Euphrates", says PLINY of Nearchus' expedition, "and from thence passed into a lake which is formed by the rivers Euphrates and Tigris, in the vicinity of Charax, after which they arrived

(37) PLINY, op. cit., II, p. 80-82.

(38) W. VINCENT, *The Commerce and Navigation of the Ancients*, p. 423 seq.

at Susa, on the river Tigris."⁽³⁹⁾ The same voyage by the same hero is described by ARRIAN thus: "On his arrival at Diridotis, he received the news that Alexander was marching upon Susa, and forthwith turned his fleet about that it might sail up the Pasitigris and join the royal army. On this occasion, while sailing in sight of Susa on the left, they passed through a lake into which the Tigris discharged."⁽⁴⁰⁾ These statements show that there was a lake of considerable size near the mouth of the *Shat al Arab*. We may quote again from XIPHILINUS's account of the Parthian conquest by the Roman emperor Trajanus: "On the fall of Ktesiphon, Trajanus determined to go forward by the Erythraea.He found on the way an island artificially constructed by the Tigris, which was called Mésène and occupied by King Athambilus. This place the emperor easily succeeded in subjugating, but then he was confronted with the bad season the flooding of the rivers, and inundation by extraordinary tides, which combined to threaten his life. Fortunately, however, he was rescued and welcomed by the inhabitants of the city of Tospasinus." The same incident is referred to by DION CASSIUS in these words: "The emperor left Ktesiphon, went down the Tigris, landed on an island in the river, by the name of Mésène, and thence proceeded to a place called *Spasini-Charax*, which belonged to the monarch of Mésène." This Spasini-Charax corresponds to XIPHILINUS's Tospasinus, and it seems the latter name was a corruption of the former, since it is known that Spasini-Charax took its name from Spasinus, its founder. Thus we understand that the *Shat al Arab* embraced at its mouth an island as well a lake, and this must have been the same island mentioned by MARCIAN in his account of Spasini-Charax: "In this vicinity, there is an island called Apphadana, which some consider as part of Arabia." It is probably also the place described by the Arabian geographer Edriçî thus: "Abadan is a small city attached to the continent and bounded by a great sea." Sir Henry Rawlinson made the following deductions from those facts; "*Abadan* is an island lying between the *Bashmir* and the *Shat al Arab*, and this territory answers to the Southern *Mésène* of the Greeks, and the *Misan* of the Arabs. The name in the inscription of Sennacherib, which has been read *Khupapan*, ought to be pronounced *Hubadan*, the same as the *Abadan* of the Arabs and the *Apphadanz* of the Greeks."⁽⁴¹⁾ From this evidence we may conclude that in the Han period there were at the mouth of the Tigris a lake and an island, both of which were known by the name of *Mésène* or *Abadan*. But how may we determine the site of the lake? This question is fully answered by VINCENT, whose explanation may be outlined as follows: "The existence of such a lake at the mouth of the Tigris, or *Shat-el-Arab*, must now be sought for; and, if we take a view of the map, we find a tract on the west of that stream called

(39) PLINY, op. cit., VI, 26.

(40) ARRIAN. III, XVII.

(41) W.F. AINSWORTH, *The Euphrates Expedition*, II, p. 187-189.

Duasir by NIEBUHR, the extreme point of which between the Khore Abdillah and the Shat-el-Arab we must sink, to find room for this lake at the mouth of the Tigris; and that this was really under water in the age of Alexander, and rose gradually to its present appearance, either by accumulation or artificial means, we have abundant evidence to prove. The very name, if I am not mistaken, implies inundation; and NIEBUHR supposes the whole level as high as Hasseinad, the burial-place of Hassan-ben-Hanefie, to have been under water, and even that it would be so at this day, if the inundation were not prevented by dykes. 'Everywhere, (he says,) canals are cut to convey water to the date grounds; and as the water of the river is saturated with slime, the land here must, in a succession of ages, have been raised considerably to have obtained its proper level.' This supposition of NIEBUHR's is in perfect harmony with an assertion of PLINY's, that the inundation of the waters is no where so extensive as in this part of the river. Another circumstance is the rising of Abadan, a town at the mouth of the Shat-el-Arab, at the extremity of the Duasir; for it seems possible to trace this from its emersion; first, in the form of an island, and afterwards as part of the main occasioned by the departure of the waters. I looked for it in two Apphadanas of PTOLEMY, but position of neither answers. MARCIAN, however, expresses himself thus: 'Near this part of Susiana lies an island called Apphadana, which some attribute to Arabia.' This seems to shew the emersion of land at the point of the Duasir, between the age of ALEXANDER and the time of MARCIAN. The connexion of this island with the main, or rather the withdrawing of the waters which separated it, seems to have taken place in a later period; for that it was united in the time of ALEDRISSI is evident. 'Abadan, (he says,) is a small fort, but still in good condition, situated near the sea, which is intended for watching and protecting those who frequent this part of the coast, it lies on the western bank of the Degela [Tigris], in a part where that river particularly *spreads itself over the land.*'⁽⁴²⁾

J. ST. MARTIN asserts that what was mentioned by STRABO and PLINY as the Chaldaean Sea was the southernmost or third of the groups of pools in that section of the Euphrates-Tigris basin, now known as *Bathaih* (swamp) of Bassora.⁽⁴³⁾ The modern map shows a stretch of swampy land from the north-west of Corna to the west of Bassora, and very probably a similar condition must have prevailed still farther south in ancient times. Thus we may assume that the lake recorded by PLINY and ARRIAN as receiving the Tigris corresponds to ST. MARTIN's "*Bathaih* of Bassora." As for the island of Abadan, which VINCENT established as having later emerged from Duasir, we may reasonably agree with Sir Henry RAWLINSON in connecting it with the present Abbadan, which lies between the Shat-el-Arab and the Bamishir.

(42) VINCENT, op. cit., vol. I, p. 473-474.

(43) J. ST. MARTIN, op. cit., p. 87-91.

It was in all probability also MARCIAN's Apphadana, as well, I assume, as the island of Mésène on which the Roman emperor is said to have landed to save himself. It is again closely associated with the island which PLINY pointed out as lying near the mouth of the Tigris.

To sum up the foregoing observations, in Han times a large lake spread over the area extending from the present junction of the Haffar Canal and Tigris to Khor Abdillah; in the eastern part of this lake, just south of the present canal, there was an island called Abadan, which was mentioned by XIPHILINUS, DION CASSIUS, etc. as Mésène, and by MARCIAN as Apphadana; and Spasini-Charax, the capital of the country of Mésène, was situated on or near this island. With this idea of the general position of Charax in mind, let us now return to the *Hou-han-shu* passage on T'iao-chih. There is a remarkable resemblance between these two historic places, though the Chinese description of T'iao-chih is far less detailed and accurate than the western accounts of Charax. PLINY's Charax stood on an artificial hill; and the capital of T'iao-chih was situated on a hill. Though the former was three miles in circumference and the latter over 40 *li*, we must admit that the Chinese description may have been based on inaccurate information in this point. Charax stood on the delta formed between the Tigris and the Karūn, and this fits the physical surroundings attributed to T'iao-chih. Without doubt the western sea the latter faced was the Persian Gulf. It was surrounded by sea water, the Chinese history says, on all sides but the north-west. To the west, we may suppose, it was washed by the lake remarked by western historians as receiving the Tigris. As for the water to the east, this was presumably one of the several channels which must have pierced the delta then as at present. Or judging from the swampy tracts we see on the modern map about the mouth of the Karūn, we may reasonably surmise that in the period in question, there was an extensive lagoon which rounded the east side of the city, possibly reaching the south-east of the present Haffar. Granting that T'iao-chih was so situated, it would have been connected with the continent as the history says, on the north-west side alone, that is, to the west of the present canal. This brings to mind the gradual rising of level near Duasir above mentioned. Perhaps the peninsula on which the city of T'iao-chih stood had been formed from an island by the same geological process. When all the north of the island had become dry land, it is very probable that a canal was cut there, thus forming what is now the Haffar Canal. Thus we find the description of the city of T'iao-chih shows sufficient similarity to the situation and surroundings of Spasini-Charax to enable us some confidence to identify the two cities with each other, and thus similarly to identify the country of T'iao-chih with that of Mésène, whose capital was Spasini-Charax.

It may be noted in addition that the "circumference of over 40 *li*" we read of in the *Hou-han-shu* account of T'iao-chih should more correctly be considered as referring to the city than to the country as a whole. "The

country of *T'iao-chih*," says the *Ta-yüan-lieh-chuan* of the *Shih-chi*, "is very populous, with several petty chieftains. It is subject to An-hsi, which regards it as an outer region."⁽⁴⁴⁾ The *Hou-han-shu* also says: "An-hsi afterwards conquered *T'iao-chih*, and appointed a general commander over it, to govern the several small cities therein."⁽⁴⁵⁾ These passages are sufficient indication that the country was of no mean size. Moreover, since we have identified it with Mésène, information about the latter will help us here. According to J. St. MARTIN, whose study on Mésène is most reliable, the country extended from about the city of Apamea to the south of Assyria, southward to the Persian Gulf; comprising within these limits those districts lying between the Arab "Djezair" or the Tigris and the Euphrates—the districts on either side of the Tigris below the confluence at Corna; the western region bordering the Arabian desert; and lastly those lands spreading between the outlets of the Tigris and the various channels coming down from Susiana. The country of *T'iao-chih*, therefore, occupied a considerable area, bounded by Assyria, Susiana, Elymäde, the Persian Gulf, Arabia, and Babylonia.⁽⁴⁶⁾

Lastly comes the etymological question. The first attempt to interpret the name of Mésène was made by the French geographer D'ANVILLE, whose opinion was that the "*mésèn*" of *Mésène* came from the Greek word *μσός*, meaning "middle", so that the name meant practically the same as *Mesopotamia*, which, however, applied to the whole area between the Tigris and the Euphrates. For a time this theory held the field, VINCENT being among its enthusiastic supporters; but it has now been supplanted by that of J. St. MARTIN's. The latter showed that the name was indigenous to western Asia, giving evidence that it had in fact been used there even before the coming of Alexander. When the country fell under the dominion of the Syrian empire founded by Seleucus Nikator, however, the name *Mésène* was replaced by the Greek names, *Parpotami* (Riverside region) applied to the area from the confluence at Corna northwards; and by *Erythraea* (Maritime region) was used of southern area leading to the head of the Gulf. Later, on the establishment of the Arabian dynasty under Spasinus's, who freed the territory from the Syrian hold, the old name *Mésène* was revived, but at the same time the state was also called *Charasène*, a name derived from *Charax*, the dynastic capital. Or, to be more exact, the name *Mésène* was now applied to what had been Para-potami in the Syrian period, and *Charasène* to the former Erythraea; while the country as a whole for more formal purpose called *Mésène-Charasène*. This period corresponds to that part of the Han age when the name *T'iao-chih* was introduced into Chinese literature.

If the country was called *Mésène-Charasène* at the time of CHANG Ch'ien's

(44) 條枝國，……人衆甚多，往往有小君長。而安息役屬之，以爲外國。（史記，卷一百二十三，大宛列傳，條枝國）

(45) 安息後役屬條支，爲歷代將監領諸小城焉。（後漢書，卷一百十八，西域傳，條支國）

(46) J. St. MARTIN, op. cit., p. 113-114.

travels in the western regions and probably also at that of KAN Ying's actual visit to it, it seems strange that the Chinese transcription *T'iao-chih* should suggest nothing of the name, or of either part of it, *Mésène* or *Charasène*. Indeed, this lack of linguistic evidence has been the chief reason why we have been so long in the dark about the identity of T'iao-chih. But linguistic evidence should not be given primary weight in this sort of inquiry and our identification of the country must depend on more substantial evidence.

The Greeks gave the basin of the Tigris and Euphrates the name of *Mesopotamia*, which was a combination of *mesos* (middle) and *potamos* (rivers). The same region is referred to, in an Egyptian document ascribed to the 16th century B.C., as *Naharin*,—a name obviously derived from the Semitic word *nahar*, 'rivers'. At the time of a certain Ephraem who died in 373 A.D. *Ĝezirtha*, a syriac word meaning 'island,' while the life of Appolonius, written by PHILOSTRATUS a century previously, shows that the Arabs at that time customarily referred to the region simply as "Rivers". It is fairly probable that the name *Mesopotamia* was simply a translation from the native term adopted about Alexander's time.⁽⁴⁷⁾ In the Arabian period, the area of Mesopotamia, from Babylonia northwards, was called *Ĝezire* (or more strictly *Ĝeziret*), which was undoubtedly the same as the ancient Syrian '*Ĝezirtha*' mentioned above. The Arabic name for this part of Mesopotamia has survived to this day. Now the noteworthy fact is that *Ĝezire* or its plural form *Ĝezair* is actually used for the district running south from Babylonia, especially that section from Corna northwards as far as Wasith, which was, we must remember, part of the ancient country of *Mésène*.⁽⁴⁸⁾ This means that in basin of the Euphrates and the Tigris, except in their very upper courses, there are two distinct regions, each called *Ĝezire* and separated from each other by the northern section of Babylonia or of the present Irak-Arabi. *Ĝezire*, as we have seen, was an early name for *Mesopotamia*, and it is remarkable how the application of the Greek name varied from age to age and between different writers. For instance STRABO's Mesopotamia terminated, to the south, at the Median Wall, while PLINY's stretched to the Persian Gulf itself, as also was the case in the days of the Roman emperors. Perhaps the ancient Semites called all the Mesopotamian lowlands by the name of *Ĝezire*, but when Babylonia and Assyria arose in the middle part of the basin and gave to that area their own names, the old *Ĝezire* was applied only to the remaining portions on either side of them. In the Han period, as we have noted, the southern area bore the formal name of *Mésène-Kharacène*, but it is quite possible that it was still popularly known as *Ĝezire* or *Ĝezair*. Presumably this was the name which was heard by the Chinese and which was transliterated into characters 條支 (*T'iao-chih*). The first character is pronounced *t'iao* in modern Chinese,

(47) *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 12th ed., XVIII, p. 179.

(48) K.E. SACHAU, *Am Euphrat und Tigris*, p. 61-62; J. ST. MARTIN, *op. cit.*, p. 74, 80, 113.

but from its Sino-Japanese pronunciation *den*, the Sino-Annamese *diên*, and the Wên-chou 溫州 dialect's *diên*, it seems possible that it could have been pronounced in the Han period something like *d'eu* or *dyeu*. As for the second character, its old pronunciation *ki* is indicated by the evidence that the Japanese province of *Iki* is represented as 一支, in the *Wo-jên-chuan* 倭人傳, of the *Wêi-chi*. But seeing on the other hand that Yüeh-chih 月氏 was written 月支 in the Northern and Southern dynastic periods when the Silo official title 旱岐 was written as 旱支, we may safely attribute to the character the two alternative old phonetic values *chi* and *ki*. It is therefore a reasonable conjecture that the Han transcription of the name 條支 (or 條枝) was pronounced *d'eu-chi* (*dyeu-chi*) and that this corresponded to the first two syllables *ġezi* of *Ġezire*. This Arabic name for Mesopotamia, meaning "island", must have been suggested by the physical features of the region, which not only lay between the two rivers, but was divided into islands by countless pools and channels. From this point of view, the name *Ġezire* would seem to have been more appropriate to the southern area which was occupied by the country of Mésène, than to the northern land, though both shared the title.

CHANG Ch'ien's representation of the country of Mésène by the characters 條枝 was followed at least until the time of KAN Ying, but later there appears on record another transcription "Tsê-san 澤散." "The king of Tsê-san is subject to Ta-ch'in," says the *Wêi-liao*. "His residence is situated in the middle of the sea. Northwards one may reach Lü-fên 驢分 by water travelling for half a year, or for a month with swift winds. The nearest city is An-ku in An-hsi. South-westwards one may reach Ta-ch'in by a route, of which is not known how many li."⁽⁴⁹⁾ HIRTH has already suggested that Tsê-san may have meant Charax Spasini,⁽⁵⁰⁾ and I believe he was well justified in doing so, although he did not connect it with T'iao-chih, as I propose to. In my opinion, the above description of the city of Tsê-san as lying in the middle of the sea may be understood simply as a shorter and less accurate version of the statement about T'iao-chih already quoted, that it was surrounded by sea water on three sides. I am aware, however, that this identification of Tsê-san with T'iao-chih is open to objection. For the same history mentions *T'iao-chih* also elsewhere, thus: "Ta-ch'in is also called Li-kan. It lies west of An-hsi and T'iao-chih, and west of the great sea."⁽⁵¹⁾ In view of this one might reason that Tsê-san and T'iao-chih must have been two distinct countries, and it was just this consideration which made HIRTH, having identified Tsê-san with Mésène, to place T'iao-chih elsewhere. I do not think, however, that the existence of two names proves that of two places in this case. For it is quite possible that the historian understood the names as belonging to

(49) 澤散王屬大秦，其治在海中央。北至驢分水行半歲，風疾時一月到，最與安息安谷城相近。西南詣大秦，不知里數。

(50) HIRTH, *op. cit.*, p. 190.

(51) 大秦國一號犂靬，在安息·條支西，大海西。

two separate countries, though they were in reality but different transcriptions of one name; there are considerations which make this rather probable. It is evident that the history, besides utilizing much data from previous records regarding the western region, also introduced a great deal of new information drawn from later sources than were available for the *Hou-han-shu*. To illustrate this we may compare what the two histories say about the country of Yü-lo: the *Hou-han-shu* represents it as forming the western frontier of An-hsi, implying, of course, that it was part of the Parthian domain; and the *Wèi-liao* shows it as subordinate to Ta-ch'in. There is little doubt that the *Hou-han-shu* followed the report of KAN Ying, who paid a visit to T'iao-chih in 97 A.D., at which time he must have found Yü-lo as well as T'iao-chih forming part of An-hsi. Later, however, when the Emperor Trajanus captured Ktesiphon and subjugated Spasini-Charax with its monarch Athambius in 155 and 166 A.D., all the countries of lower Mesopotamia came under Roman domination. The *Wèi-liao*, therefore, in saying that Yü-lo and T'iao-chih were subject to Ta-ch'in, recorded this changed state of affairs, and this suggests the date of the historian's material. Thus we may assume that the account of Tsê-san was based on information of the same date. Suppose some Chinese traveller, other and later than KAN Ying, went to Mésène and heard the name Ĝezire, the popular name of the country; if he did not know that the same country under the same name had already been entered in Chinese records under the transcription T'iao-chih 条支, he would have transcribed it in his own way, as he heard it, giving the transcription Tsê-san 澤散. The first character is tsê in current Chinese, but was probably pronounced d'ak or dyak in Han times, and the whole name, pronounced something like D'ak-san or D'a(k)-sar, corresponds well enough to Ĝezair, the plural form of Ĝezire. T'iao-chih and Tsê-san, therefore, may be taken as alternative transcriptions of the same name; and though they both occur in the *Wèi-liao* as standing for two different countries, this must have been simply because the historian failed to identify the newly-introduced name with the other which had been long on record.