

support to the supposition that the original value of the compound letter ṣ is not *mha*, but *hma*, as advocated in my note on the subject in the *Journal* for 1901, pp. 301–305.

A striking proof of it is afforded by the word *ahmākam* (gen. plur. of *azam*), which is equivalent to Pāli *amhākam*. In the well-known Bodleian MS. of the Avesta (J. 2), dated 1323 A.D., it is written with the conjunct ṣ (Yasna 15. 2), as would be the case if it were written in the Brāhmī script. In the Bod. Zend-Sanskrit MS. J. 3, of equal antiquity, as well as in five other MSS. which Professor Mills has been so kind as to show me, this conjunct is used for *hm* side by side with its full form ṣ . Professor Spiegel has reproduced the ligature in his edition of the Avesta, whilst Professor Geldner has rejected it in his well-known edition of the same work, because he found “whole classes of manuscripts, especially the Persian, make no use of this character” (Prol., p. li).

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February 28, 1903.

10. THE KUSHĀN PERIOD.

DEAR PROFESSOR RHYS DAVIDS, — When I announced (*Journal*, January, 1902, p. 175) my discovery of an apparently satisfactory solution of the Kushān chronological problem by interpreting the dates below 100 in terms of the Laukika era, and subsequently developed my views at length (*Journal*, January, 1903), I was under the impression that the theory propounded was altogether novel. But there is nothing new under the sun. A friend reminds me that my theory had been tentatively suggested by Mr. Growse in 1883 (“*Mathurā*,” 3rd ed., p. 114). Mr. Growse’s words are:—

“The Seleucidan era is obviously one that might have recommended itself to a dynasty of mixed Greek descent; but another that might with equal or even greater probability have been

employed is the Kashmirian era used by Kalhana in the last three books of his *Rájá-Taranginí*, and which is still familiar to the Bráhmans of that country. It is otherwise called the era of the Saptarshis, and dates from the secular procession of Ursa Major, Chaitra sudi I of the 26th year of the Kali-yuga, 3076 B.C. It is known to be a fact, and is not a mere hypothesis, that when this era is used the hundreds are generally omitted.

“The chronological difficulties involved in these inscriptions seem, therefore, almost to defy solution; for the era may commence either in March, 3076 B.C., or in October, 312 B.C., or in 57 B.C., or in 78 A.D.”

This passage in Mr. Growse's book had completely escaped my recollection. I now take the earliest opportunity of acknowledging that the first hint of the true solution of the difficulty was given by the late Mr. Growse.

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