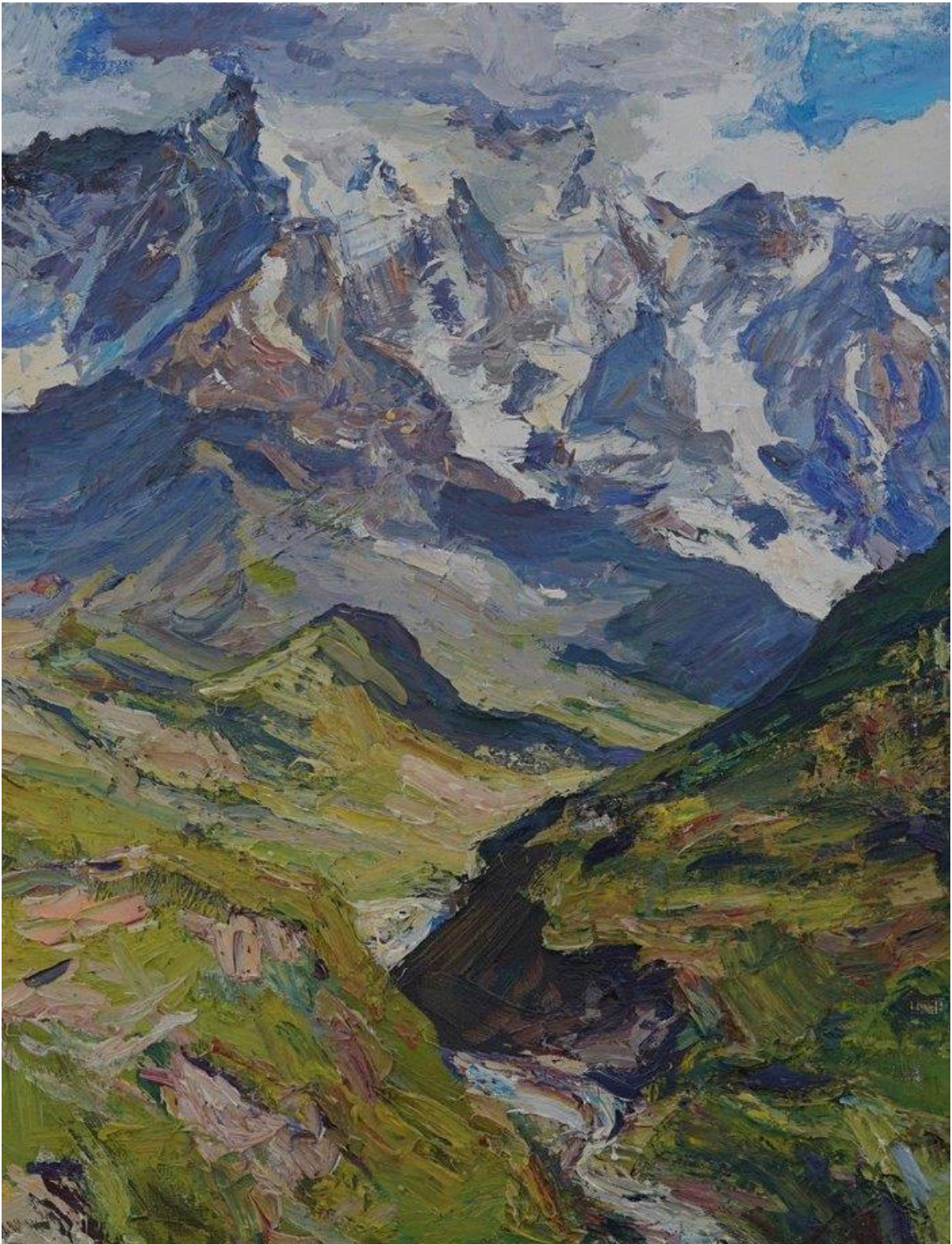


# *Caucasus after Wilford*



From Captain Francis Wilford's essay "On Mount Caucasus," in: *Asiatick Researches*, Calcutta, 1801; Vol. VI (xii), pp. 455-69. *Frontispiece*: Caucasus by Ruzanna Teterina. *Last page*: Himalayas, Pamir, Karakoram, Tian Shan and Hindu Kush from an altitude of about 750 km. It has been rendered as part of the Views of the Earth in a size of more than 1 gigapixel (2<sup>nd</sup> July 2007).

**Casus or Cas** The real name.

**Cau or Coh** Mountain in Persian.

**Coh-cas** In Sanskrit becomes Cas-giri (Cas-ghar, Cas-car).<sup>1</sup>

**C'hasa-giri** The true Sanskrit name, *i.e.*, Mountain of the C'hasas.

**C'hasas** A most ancient and powerful tribe, who inhabited this immense range from the eastern limits of India to the confines of Persia; and most probably as far as the Euxine and the Mediterranean seas. The original country of the C'hasas seems to have been the present (1798) country of Cash-gar, to the north east of Cabul.

Their descendants are called, in some places, C'hasyas and Cossais. They belonged to the class of warriors or Cshettris. Their country was called Cassia by Ptolemy.

**Jupiter Cassius** Was worshipped

(a) In the mountains of Syria and on the borders of Egypt, like Jupiter Peninus in the Alps, and

(b) In Epirus, as Jupiter Cassius or Cassiopaeus.

**Caucasus** Was also called Graucasus.<sup>2</sup> In Sanskrit Grava, invariably pronounced Grau, signifies a mountain, hence Grava-C'hasa or Grau-C'hasa. In eastern languages, Caucasus signifies white. A mountain, close to it, is called Casis by the Scythians, in whose language it signifies snow and whiteness.<sup>3</sup>

**Parapamisus and link with Prometheus** Part of a mountainous region called Devanica in the Puranas. Known as Sheybar-Tag or Sheybar-Tau, or the mountains of Sheybar or Shabar, under which appellation Prometheus is generally known in the sacred books of the Hindus.

Also called Hindu-Cash or Hindy-kesh; the latter has been distorted by Persian authors and travellers into Hindu-Coh. It lies between Cabul, Bamiyan, and Anderab.

**Variants and link with Bamiyan** Parapamisus is obviously derived from the Sanskrit Para-Vami, or the pure and excellent city of Vami, commonly called Baniyan. Vamiyan is a derivative from of Sanskrit Vami naga-

<sup>1</sup> Not to be confounded with the famous country of Cash-ghar, or Cash-car to the eastward of Samarcand; though the appellation, and its etymological derivations be the same.

<sup>2</sup> Pliny, B.6, C.20

<sup>3</sup> Isidorus, *Origines*, B.14, C.28

ri or Vami-gram. Para, which signifies pure and holy, is also one of the thousand names of Vishnu. Obviously the same with the Latin purus. For the letter *a* here sounds exactly like *u* in murmur in English.

**Papameus**  
**Parapanisus**  
**Paro Famisus**  
**Paro Fanisus**  
**Paropamisus**<sup>1</sup>  
**Paropanisus**  
**Parpamisus**  
**Parpaneus**  
**Parpanisus**

A place of great antiquity, was considered at a very early period as the metropolis of a sect of Buddha; hence it was called Buddha-Bamiyan; but the Mussulmans have maliciously distorted this venerable title, into But-Bamiyan or Bamian of the evil spirit, or of the idols.

According to the Greeks, an extensive branch of the Caucasus. They called it Parapanisus, in the same manner that they called the river Pamisus (in the Peloponnesus) Panisus.

It's inhabitants say that this name was given to them from a certain giant, who used to lie there in wait to catch (cash) or to kill (kesh) all Hindus who passed that way.

**Thebes of the East** Description follows on pages 463-469.



<sup>1</sup> [Topology and exoteric etymology of term excerpted from Hamid Wahed Alikuzai's *Concise History of Afghanistan in 25 Volumes*. (2013) Vol. I, p. 702:

One of three divisions of a mountain range that dominate the landscape of Afghanistan, *i.e.*, the Hindu Kush system, which is the westernmost extension of the Pamir Mountains. The other two divisions are the Karakorum Mountains, and the Himalayas. The origin of the term Hindu Kush (which translates as Hindu Killer) is also a point of contention. Three possibilities have been put forward: that the mountains memorialize the Indian slaves who perished in the mountains while being transported to Central Asian slave markets; that the name is merely a corruption of Hindu Koh, the pre-Islamic name of the mountains that divided Hindu southern Afghanistan from non-Hindu northern Afghanistan; or, that the name is a posited Avestan appellation meaning "water mountains." The mountain peaks in the eastern part of the country reach more than 7,000 meters. The highest of these is Nowshak at 7,485 meters. Mount Everest in Nepal stands 8,796 meters high. The Pamir mountains, which Afghans refer to as the "Roof of the World," extend into Tajikistan, China and Kashmir. The mountains of the Hindu Kush system diminish in height as they stretch westward: toward the middle, near Kabul, they extend from 4,500 to 6,000 meters; in the west, they attain heights of 3,500 to 4,000 meters. The average altitude of the Hindu Kush is 4,500 meters. The Hindu Kush system stretches about 966 kilometers laterally, and its median north-south measurement is about 240 kilometers. Only about 600 kilometers of the Hindu Kush system is called the Hindu Kush Mountains. The rest of the system consists of numerous smaller mountain ranges. The western *Safid Koh*, the *Siah Band* and *Doshakh* are commonly referred to as the Paropamisus by western scholars.