

Hedin, the distances from Khotān to Keriya and from Keriya to Niya, according to Hwen Tsiang, become 91 and 55 miles instead of 86 and 52 as given in the table, which is not far from the true distances, 97 and 64.

“If, however, Pimo is identical with Kenan, as Stein thinks, the distances which Hwen Tsiang gives as 86 and 52 miles become respectively 60 and 89, which is evidently quite wrong.

“Strong confirmation of the identification of Keriya with Pimo is found in a comparison of extracts from Marco Polo’s and Hwen Tsiang’s accounts of that city with passages from my note-book, written long before I had read the comments of the ancient travellers. Marco Polo says that the people of Pein, or Pima, as he also calls it, have the peculiar custom ‘that if a married man goes to a distance from home to be about twenty days, his wife has a right, if she is so inclined, to take another husband; and the men, on the same principle, marry wherever they happen to reside.’ The quotation from my notes runs as follows: ‘The women of the place are noted for their attractiveness and loose character. It is said that many men coming to Keriya for a short time become enamoured of the women here, and remain permanently, taking new wives and abandoning their former wives and families.’

“Hwen Tsiang observed that thirty ‘li,’ seven or eight miles, west of Pimo, there is ‘a great desert marsh, upwards of several acres in extent, without any verdure whatever. The surface is reddish black.’ The natives explained to the pilgrim that it was the blood-stained site of a great battle fought many years before. Eighteen miles north-west of Keriya bazaar, or ten miles from the most westerly village of the oasis, I observed that ‘some areas which are flooded part of the year are of a deep rich red colour, due to a small plant two or three inches high.’ I saw such vegetation nowhere else and apparently it was an equally unusual sight to Hwen Tsiang.

“In addition to these somewhat conclusive observations, Marco Polo says that jade is found in the river of Pimo, which is true of the Keriya, but not of the Chira, or the other rivers near Kenan.” (Ellsworth HUNTINGTON, *The Pulse of Asia*, pp. 387-8.)

XXVIII., p. 194. “The whole of the Province [of Charchan] is sandy, and so is the road all the way from Pein, and much of the water that you find is bitter and bad. However, at some places you do find fresh and sweet water.”