

character *pin* has been formed *ad hoc*, and, as already remarked by Mayers, is written also without the classifier; that is, in a purely phonetic way.

86. 瑟瑟 *se-se*, *sit-sit (Japanese *šitsu-šitsu*), hypothetical restoration *sirsir, a precious stone of Sasanian Persia, which I have discussed at some length in my "Notes on Turquoise in the East" (pp. 25-35, 45-55, 67-68). For this reason only a brief summary is here given, with some additional information and corrections. I no longer believe that *se-se* might be connected with Shignan (p. 47) or Arabic *jaza* (p. 52), but am now convinced that *se-se* represents the transcription of an Iranian (most probably Sogdian) word, the original of which, however, has not yet been traced. Chinese records leave us in the dark as to the character of the Iranian *se-se*. It is simply enumerated in a list of precious stones of Persia and Sogdiana (K'an).¹ The T'ang Annals locate the *se-se* mines to the south-east of the Yaxartes in Sogdiana;² and the stones were traded to China by way of Khotan.³ Possibly the Nestorians were active in bringing to China these stones which were utilized for the decoration of their churches. The same history ascribes columns of *se-se* to the palaces of Fu-lin (Syria);⁴ in this case the question is of a building-stone. In ancient Tibet, *se-se* formed part of the official costume, being worn by officials of the highest rank in strings suspended from the shoulder. The materials ranking next to this stone were gold, plated silver, silver, and copper,⁵—a clear index of the fact that *se-se* was regarded in Tibet as a precious stone of great value, and surpassing gold. The Tibetan women used to wear beads of this stone in their tresses, and a single bead is said to have represented the equivalent of a noble horse.⁶ Hence arose the term *ma kia ču* 馬價珠 ("pearl or bead equalling a horse in price"). These beads are treated in the *Ko ku yao lun*⁷ as a separate item, and distinct from turquoise.⁸

In the T'ang period, *se-se* stones were also used as ornaments by the

¹ *Pei šu*, Ch. 97, pp. 7 b, 12; *Čou šu*, Ch. 50, p. 6; *Sui šu*, Ch. 83, p. 7 b; *Wei šu*, Ch. 102, pp. 5 a, 9 b.

² *T'an šu*, Ch. 221 B, p. 2 b.

³ *T'an šu*, Ch. 221 A, p. 10 b.

⁴ *Kiu T'an šu*, Ch. 198, p. 11 b; *T'an šu*, Ch. 221 B, p. 7 b.

⁵ *T'an šu*, Ch. 216 A, p. 1 b (not in *Kiu T'an šu*).

⁶ *Sin Wu Tai šu*, Ch. 74, p. 4 b.

⁷ Ch. 6, p. 5 b.

⁸ As justly said by GEERTS (*Produits de la nature japonaise et chinoise*, p. 481), it is possible that *ma kia ču* (Japanese *bakašu*) is merely a synonyme of the emerald. Also in the *Pen ts'ao kañ mu* (Ch. 8, p. 17 b) a distinction is made between the two articles, *tien-tse* 靛子 being characterized as *pi* 碧, *ma kia ču* as *ts'ui* 翠.