

the value of the old Chinese foot. It was divided into ten inches, each  $9/10''$ , or 22.9 mm., and was accordingly 9 inches or 22.9 cm. long. The width of this silk roll was accordingly 19.83 inches or 50.38 cm., and the length 36 inches or 9.16 m.

These old measures seem to have remained in use for silk rolls down into the time of the Chin dynasty. Our silk strip is therefore evidently incomplete, only a little more than half the original width.

A welcome corroboration is furnished by another find described by Sir AUREL pp. 701 ff. It consists of two strips of silk, and one of them shows a width of about  $19\frac{1}{2}$  inches or close on 50 cm. It is, moreover, of importance because it bears an inscription in Brāhmī letters of the first, or more probably of the second century A. D. Sir AUREL has followed M. BOYER in reading it as *aiṣṭasya paṭa giṣṭi ṣaparīsa*, which he explains as meaning 'a piece of cloth of aiṣṭa, 46 giṣṭi', taking aiṣṭa "to designate the particular quality of material of the silk contained in the roll", or as "intended to designate the purchaser or something of the sort", and giṣṭi to correspond to Pañjābī *giṭṭh* 'span', 46 designating the length of the cloth.

In his important paper *Textilien im alten Turkistan*<sup>3</sup> Professor LÜDERS has shown that the word *paṭa*, Sanskrit *paṭṭa*, which repeatedly occurs in the Central Asian Kharoṣṭhī documents, means 'silk roll', and, on p. 37, he corrects M. BOYER's reading *ṣaparīsa* to *caparīsa* 'forty', i.e. we again have the same length of the roll as in the Chinese inscription.

The reading of the legend can, however, be further improved. I am confident that we must read *śrīraṣṭrasa paṭa dhiṣṭi caparīsa* 'silkroll of Śrīrāṣṭra, forty dhiṣṭi'. Whether *Śrīrāṣṭra* is the name of the country of origin, as seems to be likely, or of the owner of the roll, is of comparatively small importance. It is of greater interest that we get a well-known word instead of the hypothetical *giṣṭi*. *Dhiṣṭi* is undoubtedly = *diṣṭi*, for which we regularly have *diṭhi* in the Kharoṣṭhī records from Eastern Turkistan, a designation of a measure, which evidently corresponded to the Chinese foot. The initial *dh* instead of *d* points to a spirantic pronunciation, which was evidently due to Iranian influence.<sup>4</sup>

The silk inscriptions mentioned above show what we ought to expect in our strip. And this expectation is fully borne out by an examination of the inscription itself.

The first letter is, as already remarked, a little blurred, but perfectly legible: *sim*. The second is clearly *dha*, with the stroke indicating length below, so that the reading *dhā* is justified. There is, however, an upward bend of the bottom, and if it had been continued a little farther and backwards, we should have to read *dhu*, and then, according to the Central Asian practice, combine this with the lengthstroke and read *dhū*. If we bear in mind the frequent coupling of more than one vowel-sign which we know from Central Asian Brāhmī records, it is, however, tempting

<sup>3</sup> Abhandlungen der preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Jahrgang 1936. Phil.-Hist. Klasse. Nr. 3. pp. 24 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Acta Orientalia xiv, pp. 235 ff.