

population representing an earlier civilization passed under Turkish rule and amalgamated with its conquerors, are, no doubt, instructive and illuminating; but by themselves they do not supply a safe basis for judging what the ethnical results of that political change may have been in a region so remote and so peculiarly situated as Khotan. The only course by which, it seems to me, we can hope to arrive at sound conclusions as regards this important question, is to compare the physical and psychical characteristics of the present population in each part of Eastern Turkestan with whatever data we possess for earlier periods. Fortunately the materials for such a comparison are not altogether wanting in the case of Khotan.

We may take in the first place the chief features of character peculiar to the Khotanese, as it is easy to test these by the direct statements contained in early Chinese records. The description which Hsüan-tsang has left us of the people of old Khotan claims special importance, not only because it is the most detailed, but also because the pilgrim, owing to the long stay he made in the oasis, apparently over eight months, had excellent opportunities for studying the nature and ways of its inhabitants.¹⁰ According to Hsüan-tsang, their manners and customs showed a sense of propriety and justice. The inhabitants were soft by nature and respectful; they loved to study literature, and distinguished themselves by their skill and industry. The people were easy-going, given to enjoyments, and lived contented with their lot. Music was much practised in the country, and men loved the song and the dance. Few of them wore garments of wool and fur; most dressed in taffetas and white cloth. Their appearance was full of urbanity; their customs were well regulated, and they greatly honoured the law of Buddha.

The features of character here ascribed to the Khotanese can almost all be traced in other Chinese notices. Fa-hsien had already described Khotan as a pleasant and prosperous kingdom, and its numerous and flourishing population as attached to the law of Buddha and very fond of music¹¹. The Liang Annals mention the religious devotion of the people of Yü-t'ien, their extremely reverential habits, and their manufacturing skill¹². They add the interesting fact that the women of Khotan were freely admitted to society, even in the presence of strangers. Sung Yün speaks of them as wearing trousers and girdles, and riding about on horseback just like the men¹³. In the Annals of the Northern Wei dynasty, under whose protection this last pilgrim travelled, we find the religious devotion of the people of Khotan equally praised; but they also refer to less commendable features, such as defective politeness and justice, and the frequency of thieves, adulterers, and other debased persons¹⁴. The ardour of the Khotanese in matters of cult is referred to by the T'ang Annals as well as their cleverness and insinuating ways of speech. The people are described as eager for pleasures, fond of dancing and singing, and skilled in textile arts¹⁵. At the same time we receive a glimpse of the debauched habits prevailing from the special mention of brothels which served as a source of revenue¹⁶.

Marco Polo's account of Khotan and the Khotanese forms an apt link between these early Chinese notices and the picture drawn from modern observation. It is brief but accurate in all details. The Venetian found the people 'subject to the Great Kaan' and 'all worshippers of Mahomet'. 'There are numerous towns and villages in the country, but Cotan, the capital, is the most noble of all and gives its name to the kingdom. Everything is to be had there in plenty, including abundance of cotton [with flax, hemp, wheat, wine, and the like]. The people

¹⁰ See *Mémoires*, ii. pp. 223 sq.; *Vie de H.-T.*, p. 288.

¹¹ See *Travels of Fa-hien*, tr. Legge, p. 16.

¹² See Rémusat, *Ville de Khotan*, p. 16.

¹³ Comp. Chavannes, *Voyage de Song Yün*, p. 16.

¹⁴ See Rémusat, *Ville de Khotan*, pp. 19 sq.

¹⁵ See Chavannes, *Turcs occid.*, pp. 125 sq.

¹⁶ See Chavannes, *Turcs occid.*, p. 115.