

course of my explorations. I need only refer here to the illustrations of the most striking specimens to be found in the Plates mentioned in the footnote³².

Considering that the art of Buddhist Khotan can be shown to have remained to the last under the predominating influence of Indian models, the early appearance of such peculiar features as high cheekbones, oblique eyes, and short flat noses, can scarcely be accounted for otherwise than as a concession to a type actually represented among the local population. It can certainly not be explained as due to the imitation of Chinese models; for apart from the fact that China itself in matters of Buddhist art was mainly a borrower from India and Khotan, the features in question appear far too early to be attributed to any reflex movement from that side.

From the inquiry just concluded it results, I think, with considerable probability that the traditions about the origin of the population of Khotan, though legendary in their details, contain some genuine reminiscence of early ethnic movements. When these movements took place, and the exact manner in which they affected the earliest history of Khotan, we may never be able to determine. But even the dim outlines in which we can trace their effects, may help us to realize better the recorded historical facts about old Khotan, as well as the cultural *milieu* to which its antiquarian relics belong.

SECTION III.—KHOTAN IN CHINESE RECORDS, FROM THE HAN TO THE SUI DYNASTY

The earliest historical notices which the Chinese records furnish of Khotan begin from the reign of the Emperor Wu ti (140-87 B.C.), when Chang-ch'ien's mission had opened up the 'Western regions' to Chinese trade and political influence. These notices, and the great mass of the later ones, are contained in the dynastic Annals, from those of the Former Hans onwards. They have, as already stated in the introductory portion of this chapter¹, been translated by A. Rémusat from the chronologically arranged extracts of the *Pien i tien*, and are thus conveniently accessible for reference. Not being able myself to have recourse to the original sources, I shall reproduce these notices as briefly as possible, restricting my comments to such points as can be elucidated from my study of geographical and antiquarian facts bearing on Khotan.

Khotan
during
Former Han
period.

The Annals of the Former Hans tell us that the first embassy from Yü-t'ien was received during the reign of Wu ti². This statement is confirmed by what the T'ang shu relates of the kings of Khotan having handed down to each other the edicts and tokens of investiture received from the Middle Kingdom uninterruptedly ever since that Emperor's time³. The 'Notice of the Western Regions' embodied in the Han Annals states that the capital of the kingdom, known as the 'Western City,' was 9,670 li distant from the imperial capital Ch'ang-an

³² For terra-cotta heads of the type referred to, see Plates XLIII-XLV, also Plate XI of Dr. Hoernle's *Report on C.-A. antiquities*, ii; for pictorial representations, Plates LIX, LXIV, LXXIX, also Fig. 30; for heads sculptured in stucco, Plates LV, LXXXIV, LXXXV, where the difference from heads of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas treated in the Gandhāra style is particularly noteworthy. The characteristic features of the

type referred to (high cheekbones, prominent oblique eyes, flat noses) appear also in the human heads of the grotesque figures carved in wood and adorning an ancient armchair from the Niya Site; see Plate LXX.

¹ See above, p. 150.

² See Rémusat, *Ville de Khotan*, pp. 1 sq.

³ Compare Chavannes, *Turcs occid.*, p. 125.