

The Hindu pilgrim Jinagupta, who in 555 A. D. passed through Yü-t'ien on his way to China, contents himself with a bare mention of this territory³⁷. The Annals of the Northern Chou (557-581 A. D.) judging from the extracts of the *Pien i tien*, have no information to offer about Khotan except a *réchauffé* of some notes from the *Pei shih* and the brief mention of an embassy in the year 574 A. D.³⁸ Extracts from the *Pei shih* also make up most of what the *Pien i tien* has to tell us of Khotan in the time of the Sui dynasty (581-618 A. D.)³⁹. But we learn besides that the family name of the king was Wang, and his title (or according to M. S. Lévi's explanation, his name) Pei-shih-pi-lien⁴⁰. His headdress is described as of a fabric worked with gold and lined with sable. It was forbidden to look at the king's hair, as this was popularly believed to cause a bad harvest. A mission with tribute is recorded for the year 615.

SECTION IV.—KHOTAN DURING THE T'ANG PERIOD

In chapter III a brief account has already been given of that effective reassertion of Chinese power in the Tārīm Basin which took place under the reign of the T'ai tsung, the second T'ang emperor (627-650 A. D.), and which had a determining influence on the political destinies of that region until the close of the eighth century. We have seen that from the year 648 onwards Khotan figured as one of 'the Four Garrisons' representing the main seats of Chinese authority in Eastern Turkestan. With the political importance of the territory thus recognized it is easy to understand the relative wealth of data which are furnished about Khotan by the Annals of the T'ang dynasty. We are fortunately able to consult them now in the translation of the 'Notice on Yü-t'ien' given by M. Chavannes from the original text of the T'ang shu¹.

Khotan
described in
T'ang
Annals.

The remarks on the varying names of Khotan with which this notice opens have been discussed already, and so also those bearing on the former territories of Jung-lu, Yü-mi, Ch'ü-lê and P'i-shan, which since the Han period had been absorbed in the kingdom of Khotan². The capital was still known by the designation of the 'City of the Western mountains' (*Si-shan*), as mentioned in the Han Annals³. The number of selected troops was estimated at four thousand. The river carrying jade is duly mentioned, and we are told the folktale that the people used to discover pieces of the precious stone in it by observing the spots where the reflexion of the moonlight was strongest. The account given of the character of the inhabitants, their industrial skill and their amusements, has been discussed already⁴. It may, however, be noted that the Annals describe not only Buddhism as flourishing but also 'the cult of the celestial god', by which the Zoroastrian religion is to be understood⁵.

A subsequent passage, which appears to be identical with one previously noted from the account of the Liang Annals⁶, relates to the ceremonious manners of the Khotanese which made them kneel down on meeting each other. Each time they received a private letter they

³⁷ See Chavannes, in *T'oung-pao*, Ser. II, vol. vi (1905), p. 341.

³⁸ Rémusat, loc. cit., p. 28.

³⁹ See Rémusat, loc. cit., pp. 30 sqq.

⁴⁰ Comp. Hoernle, *Report on C.-A. antiquities*, i. p. 7 note.

¹ See *Turcs occid.*, pp. 125-8.

² Compare above, pp. 153, note 11, 167.

³ See above, p. 167.

⁴ See above, p. 139.

⁵ Compare Chavannes, *Turcs occid.*, p. 125, note 3, and for evidence on the point, *ibid.*, p. 170.

⁶ See above, p. 170; Rémusat, *Ville de Khotan*, p. 16.