

main road I had followed in 1900-1, and offered no scope for antiquarian observations. Nor should I have anything to add to the account I have given in *Ancient Khotan* of the historical past of Yārkand and its great oasis,<sup>7</sup> had not M. Chavannes' translation of the chapter of the Later Han Annals dealing with the Western Regions and of another chapter containing the biographies of three Chinese generals famous for their Central Asian exploits, rendered accessible a great deal of fresh information on the political condition of this ancient territory of *So-ch'ê* during the first century of our era. Referring to M. Chavannes' original publications for all details, I shall content myself here with supplementing my former account by a summary of the essential facts.

In striking contrast to the T'ang period when Yārkand manifestly was not a place of importance, receiving definite mention neither in the Annals nor in Hsüan-tsang's account, the records of the Later Han dynasty show it clearly as a powerful state, for a time exercising predominance over the whole Tārīm Basin and even beyond it. *So-ch'ê* 莎車, of the identity of which with the present Yārkand there can be no doubt,<sup>8</sup> under its king Yen was stronger than the rest of the territories of the 'Western Regions', and refused to submit to the Hsiung-nu or Huns when these profited by the troubles under the usurping emperor Wang Mang (A.D. 9-23) to assert their power in this region.<sup>9</sup> K'ang, the successor of Yen, also remained loyal to the distant Imperial power and received in A.D. 29 nominal command over the 'fifty-five kingdoms' then counted in the 'Western Countries'. In A.D. 38 all the kingdoms east of the Ts'ung-ling are described as subject to Hsien, king of *So-ch'ê*, who from A.D. 33 to 61 figures as the strongest ruler in those regions.<sup>10</sup> In A.D. 41 the Imperial Court, whose authority in the Tārīm Basin still remained more or less nominal, was induced for a time even to grant him the title of 'Protector-General'. Subsequently Hsien threw off this allegiance, attacked the territories of Khotan, Shan-shan (or Lop-nōr), and Kuchā and forced them to accept his own nominees as rulers or else to seek protection from the Hsiung-nu in the north.<sup>11</sup> Even in Ta-yüan, or Farghāna, he asserted his authority. Finally, Khotan in A.D. 60 successfully rose against Hsien. After several vain attempts at reconquest he was himself besieged in his own capital *So-ch'ê* and succumbed in the following year to Kuang-tê, king of Khotan.<sup>12</sup>

*So-ch'ê* in  
Later Han  
Annals.

Subsequently the Hsiung-nu or Huns appear to have asserted their power at *So-ch'ê* for a time and even to have reduced Khotan to a tributary state.<sup>13</sup> But by that time Chinese power had begun to reassert itself in the Tārīm Basin under the great general Pan Ch'ao. After securing Khotan and Kāshgar for the Imperial cause about A.D. 74 he extended his influence over other territories.<sup>14</sup> In spite of several revolts and set-backs his policy 'of using the barbarians to attack the barbarians' enabled this able leader and statesman gradually to consolidate Chinese authority among the contending states.<sup>15</sup> At last, in A.D. 88, he succeeded in subjecting *So-ch'ê* in spite of the aid brought by the then powerful state of Kuchā.<sup>16</sup> Three years later Kuchā itself, which appears to have relied first upon the Huns and subsequently upon an invasion attempted by the Yüeh-chih, or Indo-Scythians, from the Oxus, was obliged to make its submission with other territories along the northern rim of the Tārīm Basin. In A.D. 94 the

*So-ch'ê* sub-  
ject to Huns.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *Ancient Khotan*, i. pp. 87 sq.

<sup>8</sup> This identity is fully recognized also by the present Chinese administration which gives to the Yārkand district the designation of *So-ch'ê*.

<sup>9</sup> See Chavannes, *Pays d'Occident*, p. 50 (*T'oung-pao*, 1907, p. 196).

<sup>10</sup> See *ibid.*, p. 51 (*T'oung-pao*, 1907, p. 197).

<sup>11</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 52 sqq. (*T'oung-pao*, 1907, p. 199).

<sup>12</sup> See *ibid.*, pp. 56 sqq. (*T'oung-pao*, 1907, p. 203).

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58 (*T'oung-pao*, 1907, p. 204); Chavannes, *Trois généraux*, p. 13 (*T'oung-pao*, 1906, p. 218).

<sup>14</sup> See Chavannes, *Trois généraux*, pp. 13 sqq. (*T'oung-pao*, 1906, pp. 218 sqq.).

<sup>15</sup> See *ibid.*, p. 18 (*T'oung-pao*, 1906, p. 222).

<sup>16</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 23 sqq. (*T'oung-pao*, 1906, pp. 231 sqq.). A previous attempt on *So-ch'ê*, in A.D. 84, appears to have failed.