

Taking into account that the territory of Wu-sha, according to Hsüan-tsang's definite statement, was at his time in dependence on the rulers of Chieh-p'an-t'ò or Sarikol, it is easy to understand why the city corresponding to the present Yarkand, whether its capital or only one of its chief centres, was passed over in silence by both Hsüan-tsang and the T'ang Annalists. The importance of Yarkand or its earlier representative must at that period have been still further impaired by the existence, immediately to the south, of the separate kingdom variously designated in our Chinese sources as Chu-chü-po, Chu-chü-p'an, or Chê-chü-chia, which intervened between Wu-sha and Khotan, and, as will be seen below, must be identified with the present district of Karghalik.

The *So-ch'ê*
of Han
Annals.

During the supremacy of the Han Dynasty the latter territory was split up among a number of small chiefships, and possibly we may connect with this political condition the fact that the Annals of that early period show us a relatively important kingdom, the Chinese designation of which, 莎車, is variously transcribed as *So-ch'ê*, *Sha-keu*, *So-khiu*, *So-kü*, *So-kiü*, &c, in a position that probably corresponds to the present Yarkand as assumed by Chinese geographers¹¹. The account of the *Ch'ien Han shu*, as extracted by Wylie, places the kingdom of *So-ch'ê*, with its capital of the same name, at a distance of 560 li from Su-lê or Kāshgar, the direction being variously stated as south or east instead of the true one which lies between these two¹². A still clearer topographical indication is contained in the notice that the territory of 子合 *Tzū-ho* (Tseu-ho or Tse-ho in M. Chavannes' transcription), which can safely be identified with Karghalik and the valleys above it, adjoined *So-ch'ê* from the south¹³. The population of *So-ch'ê* is estimated at 16,373, nearly double that of Su-lê, with 3,049 trained troops, which indicates a principality of some consequence. A mention of some dynastic changes during the reign of the Emperor Hsüan Ti (73-49 B. C.) seems to imply special relations of its rulers with the powerful Wu-sun nation, while from the list of Chinese official posts there located it may be concluded that, in the administrative system intended to maintain the protectorate of the Hans in the country, some importance was attached to *So-ch'ê*. At the commencement of the Later Han period *So-ch'ê* is said to have exercised supremacy over Khotan¹⁴.

Commercial
importance
of Yarkand,

My stay at Yarkand did not bring to my notice ancient sites in its vicinity nor any antiquarian objects of pre-Muhammadan origin. On the other hand, it helped me to realize the exceptional advantages which the town enjoys as a commercial centre. Yarkand undoubtedly owes its old-established prosperity and its flourishing trade to its position at the point where the great routes from Khotan, Ladāk, and the Oxus are joined by those leading to Kāshgar and the north-eastern part of the Tārīm Basin. The abundance of local produce favours the growth of a large town population, and this, with its quasi-cosmopolitan colonies drawn from all parts of the Oxus Valley, from Ladāk, Baltistān, Afghānistān, and the border regions of China, reflects the true causes of Yarkand's importance. 'Hiarchan, the capital of the kingdom of Cascar', thus Benedict Goëz tells us, 'is a mart of much note, both for the great concourse of merchants, and for the variety of wares. At this capital the caravan of Cabul merchants reaches its terminus; and a new one is formed for the journey to Cathay¹⁵.' Though the

¹¹ Compare, besides Wylie's paper quoted below, Bretschneider, *Med. Researches*, ii. p. 47; Ritter, *Asien*, v. pp. 405 sq., where earlier extracts from the Han Annals by De Guignes, Rémusat, P. Hyacinth are quoted; also Julien, *J. as.*, 1846, viii. p. 245; Franke, *Zur Kenntniss der Türkvölker*, pp. 51, 70.

¹² See Wylie, 'Notes on the Western Regions,' *J. Anthropol. Inst.*, x. pp. 47 sq.

¹³ Compare Wylie, *ibid.*, p. 31. The reference to the relative position of *So-ch'ê* and *Pu-li* is less instructive, since

the latter territory, which seems to have been situated somewhere on the Upper Yarkand river, is placed in different passages either 740 li to the south-west or 540 li to the west; see *ibid.*, pp. 47, 32.

For *Tzū-ho* (Tseu-ho) compare Chavannes, *Voyage de Song Yun*, p. 19, note 4; and below, p. 92.

¹⁴ See Rémusat, *Ville de Khotan*, p. 5; below, chap. vii. sec. iii.

¹⁵ Yule, *Cathay*, ii. p. 563.