

Miscellaneous official orders, &c., on Chinese slips.

Interesting information can be gleaned also from those Chinese records which do not mention otherwise known localities, officers, &c., in spite of the fact that most of the slips are in a fragmentary condition, and that few if any among them, even when intact, are likely to have formed by themselves a complete text. Their translation in M. Chavannes' Appendix clearly proves that, notwithstanding all uncertainties of detail, we can safely recognize in the great majority of them portions of official orders and reports. That judicial and police functions were exercised by the officers from whom these miscellaneous 'papers' originated is shown by the numerous pieces which refer to the arrest of, or accusations against, particular individuals<sup>35</sup>. The order 'to all prefects and sub-prefects to furnish escorts to a person on official duty', which N. xv. 101. a reproduces, touches an item of administrative routine familiar to us from the Kharoṣṭhī wedge-tablets. Orders of various officials (governor, prefect, deputy, *ts'ung-shih*) are alluded to in several short fragments, without their subjects being indicated by the extant text<sup>36</sup>. Actions arising from pecuniary obligations seem to be reported upon in some other slips<sup>37</sup>.

Chinese 'passes' to individuals.

But far more numerous are the pieces which describe specific individuals as to age, personal appearance, dress, &c., and manifestly represent permits or passes of some kind<sup>38</sup>. Of special interest among these is N. xv. 53, describing 'the [*Yüeh*]-*chih*, i. e. Indo-Scythian, barbarian *Chu*, [a native] of the *Yüeh-chih* [i. e. Indo-Scythian] kingdom, aged 49 years, of middle stature, dark complexion'; and N. xv. 191, which also refers to 'a barbarian, of the *Yüeh-chih* kingdom', possibly the same individual. From which part of the wide Indo-Scythian dominion 'the barbarian *Chu*' came, it is impossible to guess. Kashmir, which formed part of it, undoubtedly lay nearest. In any case we have a trace here of that foreign intercourse with China for which the territory of Khotan long formed a favourite line of transit. Some of the individuals to whom these slips may have been issued as means of legitimation are likely to have passed the post, evidently existing at this point of the settlement, more than once; for we find '*I*, also called *Nu*, 56 years of age, of middling height, with hair and beard turning grey', described in almost identical terms in two different slips<sup>39</sup>. Individuals are repeatedly described as wearing trousers and coats of linen, while hemp shoes, such as I found in one of the ruined dwellings of Dandān-Uiliq, are mentioned in one instance<sup>40</sup>. Evidently with a view to authorize the passage of certain property, N. xv. 61+62 specifies in the case of a certain individual two bullock-carts and two bullocks. The mention in N. xv. 324 of 'a white horse, spotted, with a saddle and bridle, old and common', may have served a similar purpose. The specification in N. xv. 78 of 'ginger, betel-nuts of the south' as merchandise, may possibly have some connexion with customs duties.

Dress and appurtenances of individuals named.

Character of Chinese administration as indicated by documents.

The very pettiness of the affairs treated in the majority of the Chinese records seems an indication that Chinese control at that period cannot have been restricted to a purely military occupation of the territory. What division of functions existed between the Chinese officers established at places like the Niya Site and the indigenous administration we are not likely ever to ascertain in detail. But whatever we know of Chinese methods of control in the 'Western Countries' must *a priori* lead us to suppose that the indigenous ruler and his

<sup>35</sup> See N. xv. 314 (which relates to the examination of a fugitive by the prefect and his deputy); 189, 362 (an order for the arrest of eight individuals); 315 and 37 (both relating to an accusation by a military officer); 176; 123; 125+127.

<sup>36</sup> See N. xv. 145, 010, 59, 117.

<sup>37</sup> Comp. N. xv. 109, 353, 123, 207.

<sup>38</sup> See N. xv. 53, 191, 337, 152, 08, 192, 09, 02, 339, 169, 175.

<sup>39</sup> See N. xv. 08, 192.

<sup>40</sup> See N. xv. 337, 09, 02; for a hemp shoe see above, p. 272.