

# The Geography of the Western Region Studied on the Basis of the Ta-ch'in Accounts

## Introduction

The first appearance of HIRTH's magnum opus *China and the Roman Orient* in 1885 created the impression in the world of oriental study that the problem of Ta-ch'in and Fu-lin, which had so long refused to be satisfactorily solved, had at last yielded to his persevering efforts. I, for one, read it with close attention, was struck with the copiousness of observation and insight embodied there, and finding many of my long-entertained doubts on the subject clarified at once, I felt the joy of one who had found a torch to guide him in the dark. On some particular points, however, I could not agree with the author, and in order to submit my own opinions about them to general criticism, I ventured to publish an article, *About the Countries of Ta-ch'in and Fu-lin*, in the *Shigaku-Zasshi* in 1904. During the interval of about sixty-five years which have passed since the appearance of HIRTH's memorable work oriental studies in the West have advanced by long strides, and certain fresh views on the Ta-ch'in and Fu-lin problems were set forward by CHAVANNES, HIRTH himself, PELLLOT, etc. So far as I am aware, however, they were merely concerned with local aspects of the problems, and offered nothing to affect HIRTH's original theory as a whole. As for my own article referred to, being written more than twenty years ago, I admit that it requires correction and amplification in many respects and that it could be improved by some new conclusions which I have since reached. It was the same idea that led me, in 1926, to contribute a *Study on T'iao-chih*<sup>(1)</sup> to the *Shinagaku Ronsō* 支那学論叢 (Collection of Sinological Studies), a memorial publication in honour of Dr. NAITO's sixtieth birthday. There I endeavoured to prove that the country of T'iao-chih, so closely connected with the problem of Ta-ch'in, was identifiable in the State of Mésène-Kharacène, as it is called in western records, situated in the lower Euphrates basin and bordering on the head of the Persian Gulf. Again, in 1930, I took an occasion to publish an article in the *Tōyōshi Ronsō* 東洋史論叢 (Collection of Oriental Historical Studies), dedicated to the late Dr. KUWABARA, *the Chinese*

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(1) See the first article of this volume.

*Traditional Ideas Reflected in the Ta-ch'in Accounts.*<sup>(2)</sup> This was an attempt to explain how the Ta-ch'in accounts in the chronicles of the Han and Wêi periods contain a great measure of fictitious information which may be easily ascribed to traditional conceptions peculiar to the Chinese race. In the following paragraphs, I propose, in the first place, to deal with the geographical questions pertaining to various Ta-ch'in accounts, so as to revise and supplement my formerly published opinions, and then to give historical reflections upon the records about Ta-ch'in and T'iao-chih. As for the problem of Fu-lin, I hope presently to publish a separate article on it, in which I shall offer some later interpretations of mine to scholarly criticism.<sup>(3)</sup>

(2) See the second article of this volume.

(3) See the fourth article of this volume.

## Chapter I

It is stated in the chronicles of the Later Han and the Three Kingdoms periods that Ta-ch'in was also called Li-kan, and from this it must seem that the country of Ta-ch'in, which first appears under that name in the Later Han period, was identical with that of Li-kan mentioned in those Former Han histories, the *Shih-chi* and the *Han-shu*. Yet the geographical position of Li-kan as suggested in those earlier records does not agree with what the later histories state about that of Ta-ch'in. This has been making Li-kan a subject of much dispute among orientalists and it is now even doubted whether those two countries were really identical, therefore we shall do well to clarify the geographical position of the country of Li-kan, before entering into the discussion of our main subject, which is Ta-ch'in. No history provides any particular account for Li-kan, but its position is hinted at in the course of describing other countries. Thus, the *Ta-yüan-chuan* in the *Shih-chi* remarks with regard to the boundaries of An-hsi: "To the west lies T'iao-chih, and to the north Yen-ts'ai 奄蔡 and Li-kan 黎軒."<sup>(4)</sup> Then the *Hsi-yü-chuan* in the *Han-shu*, describing the country of Wu-i-shan-li 烏弋山離, says: "Eastwards it adjoins Chi-pin 屬賓, northwards P'u-t'iao 撲挑, and westwards Li-kan 犁軒 and T'iao-chih."<sup>(5)</sup> As 黎軒 and 犁軒 were varied forms of the same name, we might be led to understand from both statements above that the country of Li-kan lay north of An-hsi and west of Wu-i-shan-li. As soon, however, as we try to explain this relation in the light of our knowledge of the general condition of western Asia in those times, we realize that it is by no means easy to find the whereabouts of Li-kan. Let us first consider its relative position to An-hsi, as alleged in the *Shih-chi*. About the time of Wu-ti, when the history was written, we know that An-hsi was in the period of the widest expansion of its boundaries, with its territory extending eastwards to India, westwards to the Euphrates, and bounded by the Caspian Sea and the Indian Ocean on the north and south. And what countries existed beyond the northern and western frontiers of An-hsi? In the north, between the Hindu-Kush and the upper basin of the Amu was Bactria or Ta-hsia 大夏, as it was generally called in Chinese history. The lower valley of the Amu was occupied by the state of Xwarizm or Huan-ts'ien 驩潛; and the tract of country extending further west to the Caspian by the state of Dahe or Tai 大益. All the above-mentioned were immediate neighbours of An-hsi. Further away in the same direction, we may notice that the present valley of the

(4) 其西有條枝，北有奄蔡黎軒（史記，一百二十三，大宛列傳）

(5) 東與屬賓，北與撲挑，西與犁軒條枝接（漢書，卷九十六上，西域傳）

Zarafshan embraced the country of Sogdiana or Su-i 粟弋 according to the Chinese transcription, and to its north, towards the Kirghiz Steppe, there lived the Kangar, represented as K'ang-chü 康居 in Chinese records. West of this, that portion of the Steppe stretching on the north of the Aral and the Caspian was occupied by the Yen-ts'ai. How far west the territory of this race reached we can not infer either from the *Shih-chi* or from the *Han-shu*. According to the *Hou-han-shu* and some other authorities, however, the state of Yen-ts'ai was renamed A-lan 阿蘭 during the Later Han period; while in western records it appears that the Alan, no doubt the identical people, occupied the area extending eastwards to the north of the Caspian and westwards to the northwest of the Black Sea, having their central seat to the north of the Caucasus range. The statement in the *Shih-chi* that Yen-ts'ai was to the north of An-hsi could not be well accounted for, unless it meant that the two countries faced each other across the Caspian Sea. Towards the northwest of An-hsi, we may point out Armenia; towards the north, those small states of Liberia, Albania, etc., all lying on the route of traffic between the Caspian and the Black Sea, but none of them leaving any mark whatever in Chinese history. As regards the peninsula of Asia Minor, west of Armenia, its cognizance by the Chinese dated only from the Sung period, when they called it by the name of Fu-lin 拂菻. Still later, that is, in the T'ang period, did the Chinese first come to know anything of the Balkan region of the Roman Empire, to which they then applied the name Ta-fu-lin 大拂菻. Now, seeing that the regions lying north and northwest of An-hsi were divided and occupied in such a manner, we must admit that there is very little room to seek Li-kan in these quarters.

It was perhaps as the last resort necessitated by the apparent impossibility to place Li-kan in the Steppe region lying to the north of the Black Sea and the Caspian, or in Asia Minor, or in Armenia, that our Dr. FUJITA conceived the idea of identifying Li-kan with Raghā, south of the Caspian, in the northern section of the territory of Parthia. This Raghā, lying about the present district of Teheran, formed the headquarters of the Magi, a religious community which rose very early in Media, to constitute later on a privileged class throughout the land of Persia. Politically speaking, Raghā was nothing more than a province, whether under the Syrian Kingdom or under the Parthian Empire, but in the fact of its being the seat of the Magi, Dr. FUJITA argued, there was a fair chance that the Chinese traveller CHANG Ch'ien, from whom originated much of the information about the western regions in the *Shih-chi*, mistook it for an independent country. Our author also proposed to recognize a phonetical correspondence between the terms Raghā and Li-kan. Still another point of his argument was that the people of Li-kan were noticed in the Han period for their skill in juggling, and this made them comparable to the Magi, whose habit of practising the same art was evident from the

records of the T'ang period.<sup>(6)</sup>

This idea, however, is open to obvious objections. According to ISIDORUS of Kharax and to PLINY, when Mithridates I (171-138 B.C.) divided the whole kingdom of Parthia, as expanded by himself, into two regions by the Caspian Gates, with 12 provinces in the upper region and 7 in the lower, Raghā was a member of the latter group and called Lower Media. Previously, in the flourishing days of the Syrian Kingdom, Karina, Kambadēnē, and Upper and Lower Media—which were later to make up four of Mithridates' provinces—had been included within the Satrapy of Media; and thus Raghā was a mere fraction of Media at that time.<sup>(7)</sup> So, whatever chances for misinformation we might admit on the part of CHANG Ch'ien, it is not very reasonable to suppose that, mentioning the northern neighbours of An-hsi, after his actual observation of those regions, he should have named Raghā on the par with Yen-ts'ai; Raghā was a mere province of An-hsi, lying within its boundaries too, while Yen-ts'ai was a country of considerable dimensions, clearly distinguished from the territory of An-hsi. Neither did Raghā form the northernmost section of Parthia, which stretched still further northeast and northwest, and this makes it harder to regard it as lying north of An-hsi, as Li-kan is stated to have done. As for the phonetical relation between Raghā and Li-kan suggested by our author, there is no sufficient ground to recognize it. The proper form of Raghā was Rhaga or Rhagae, or, as some author puts it, Rhages; while on the other hand "Ragan" in JUDITH and "Rhagiana" in ISIDORUS were both due to corrupt pronunciation on the part of foreigners. Finally, the illustrations furnished by our author of the Magi's practice of the mystical art will not go far to identify the community with the people of Li-kan, celebrated in history for their cleverness in conjuring. Tricks of similar nature may be practised by sorcerer classes of many an old religious order, and certainly the Magi were not so unique in this respect as to compell their identity with Li-kan. We must therefore conclude that our Dr. FUJITA's proposition does not carry us far in the solution of our problem.

Finding it impossible to place Li-kan to the north of An-hsi, we might consider the western side of An-hsi as the probable alternative. In the time of Wu-ti it was Syria that bordered on An-hsi in this direction. Founded by Seleucus Nicator, this Kingdom at its height of power, possessed nearly all the tracts of land in Asia once conquered by Alexander the Great. In the course of time, however, the kingdom began to decline, and by the time corresponding to the reign of Wu-ti, it had lost all its territory except the single region of Syria proper. Still it was a kingdom of 140 years' standing, and in the way of culture and civilization, its supreme position in western Asia was unshaken. At any rate it was even then a conspicuous existence in

(6) FUJITA, *Li-hsiin 黎軒 et Ta-ch'in 大秦*. (Memoirs of the Faculty of Literature and Politics, Taihoku Imperial University, Vol. I, No. 1, p. 51-70.)

(7) GUTSCHMID, *Geschichte Irans*, p. 54-55.

the Western Regions, and although there seems to be no mention of this country in the *Shih-chi*, we can not easily imagine that CHANG Ch'ien should have failed to hear of it. So it might naturally occur to us that by the name Li-kan the author of the *Shih-chi* meant Syria itself. This hypothesis of course assigns the position of Li-kan to the west of An-hsi, but we must notice the fact that both the *Ta-yüan-chuan* in the *Shih-chi* and the *Hsi-yü-chuan* of the *Han-shu* mention T'iao-chih, not Li-kan, beyond the western frontier of An-hsi. Moreover, if Li-kan had been recognized in the quarter of Syria, it might have been described as the farthest country in the Western Region. As a matter of fact, however, T'iao-chih, not Li-kan, is so qualified in the ancient records. We read in the *Ta-yüan-chuan* in the *Shih-chi*: "The elders of An-hsi have heard that in T'iao-chih may be found the Jo-shui 弱水 (Weak Water) and Hsi-wang-mu 西王母, but they have never seen either."<sup>(8)</sup> Then the *Hsi-yü-chuan* in the *Han-shu* has a passage, in its account of Wu-i-shan-li, which begins in exactly the same words and is thus continued: "From T'iao-chih one may travel on water, and going westward perhaps above a hundred days, one comes near the place where the sun sets."<sup>(9)</sup> There was a peculiar myth current among the Chinese of the Han period, that at the eastern and the western extremity of the world, there existed a blessed country of immortal beings. The eastern paradise included the three sacred islands of Pêng-lai 蓬萊, Fang-chang 方丈, and Ying-chou 瀛州; and its western counterpart was the land of Hsi-wang-mu. It was generally believed in Former Han times that this home of Hsi-wang-mu was not far from the country of T'iao-chih, which lay immediately west of An-hsi. So far as this idea went, T'iao-chih above any other country must have been the westernmost one within the limits of the ordinary world; and this view makes it difficult to allow any country, Li-kan or otherwise, to lie further west than T'iao-chih. Thus our attempt to find Li-kan on the north or west of An-hsi, as suggested by the *Shih-chi* statement, is fruitless; but nevertheless so long as we trust the historical testimony that the Chinese at the time of Wu-ti witnessed the jugglers from Li-kan, we cannot doubt the existence itself of the country. But now we must try to attack the question on a different side.

As regards the location of T'iao-chih, I have explained at length in my *Study of T'iao-chih* how it was to be identified with the country of Mésène, which lay in the lower basin of the Euphrates bordering the head of the Persian Gulf, thus occupying an important position on the highway of commerce in ancient times. In the Han period, it was always here that Asiatic merchants, coming far overland from the east, had to embark in order to reach Arabia or Egypt by water; and so it was no accident that T'iao-chih was the only country in the remotest west which was noticed by the contem-

(8) 安息長老傳聞，條枝有弱水西王母，而未嘗見。(史記，卷一百二十三，大宛列傳)

(9) 自條支乘水，西行可百餘日，近日所入。(漢書，卷九十六上，西域傳)

porary Chinese historians. Nor is it surprising that it was imagined to lie at the extreme west of the world, since their geographical knowledge of the western regions went no further in that direction. It is to be questioned, however, why T'iao-chih alone is mentioned in the *Shih-chi* and the *Han-shu* as adjoining An-hsi on its west. For T'iao-chih, being identical with Mésène, must have been a mere dependency of An-hsi, occupying only the southwestern corner of its whole territory, and showing no larger than any province within An-hsi proper. The dominion of An-hsi at that period stretched as far west as the Euphrates, and in consequence the western neighbour of An-hsi should have been found in the Kingdom of Syria, rather than in T'iao-chih?

T'iao-chih was evidently a transcription of a western name, which we are not able to find out yet; but it is quite possible that at some time or other the original name referred to the whole region of Mesopotamia, and if the people of An-hsi applied the term in that wider sense, then T'iao-chih may well have limited their country on the west. It is equally possible that in all the extent of Mesopotamia it was the southernmost section, corresponding to Mésène in particular that first came to the notice of the Chinese for commercial reasons, and this will explain why the account of T'iao-chih as given by the *Shih-chi* and the *Han-shu* seems exclusively to concern the district about the mouth of the Euphrates. In other words, we may take it for granted that when the two histories describe An-hsi as having T'iao-chih on its west, the latter term was employed in the sense of Mesopotamia after the fashion of the An-hsi people; on the other hand, in providing a particular account for T'iao-chih, the historians had chiefly in view that country in the narrower sense, that is, equivalent to Mésène-Kharacène. In opposition to this idea, indeed, it might be argued that as Mesopotamia was part of the dominion of An-hsi from the time of Mithridates I onward, it must seem strange that T'iao-chih, in the sense of Mesopotamia, should be recognized to the west of An-hsi. But we may remember what was the policy of An-hsi towards the several states it conquered in Mesopotamia; it simply exacted tribute from them, leaving them to govern themselves in all other respects. They were vassal states of An-hsi in name, but virtually independent on the whole. The *Ta-yüan-chuan* in the *Shih-chi*, describing T'iao-chih, remarks: "The population is very numerous, with minor chiefs ruling here and there. An-hsi makes of it a dependency, holding it as an outlying territory,"<sup>(10)</sup> and here is a suggestion of the whole situation in Mesopotamia at that period. It is therefore probable that T'iao-chih, as mentioned as the western neighbour of An-hsi, meant Mesopotamia, and considering that it was the westernmost country known to the Chinese of the Former Han period, there is certainly no more chance that Li-kan might be sought to the west of An-hsi than to the north.

So we must now turn from the *Shih-chi* to seek assistance for finding

(10) 人衆甚多，往往有小君長，而安息役屬之，以爲外國，(史記，卷一百二十三，大宛列傳)

the whereabouts of Li-kan in the *Han-shu*, that is, in the following passage of the account of Wu-i-shan-li, already partly quoted. It says, "Westwards it [Wu-i-shan-li] adjoins Li-kan and T'iao-chih. One goes perhaps more than a hundred days until he reaches T'iao-chih."<sup>(11)</sup> It seems certain that the country so named in Chinese history comprised Arachosia and Drangiana, as they are called in Western records, and thus the name referred to the southern part of the present Afghanistan, or the district having Kandahar for its centre. It may be noted that this Wu-i-shan-li finds its earliest mention in the *Han-shu*, and the *Shih-chi* says nothing whatever about it. This must have been either because CHANG Ch'ien failed to hear of the country during his western travel, or because it had not come into being as yet, but let us ascertain which was the case. According to ISIDORUS of Kharax, when Mithridates I divided the whole territory of Parthia into eighteen provinces, he founded two provinces, Zarangiana (=Drangiana) and Arachosia (i.e. White India) out of southern Afghanistan, which was within the boundaries of his dominion;<sup>(12)</sup> and these two particular provinces, taken together, fairly agree in position and extent with the country of Wu-i-shan-li as recorded in the *Han-shu*. Mithridates I reigned from 171 to 138 B.C., which correspond in Chinese history to from the 9th year of the Early Reign of Wên-ti to the 3rd year of *Chien-wu* of Wu-ti. He had been dead for ten years when CHANG Ch'ien visited the court of the Ta-yüeh-chih to stay there from 129 to 128 B.C.,<sup>(13)</sup> as estimated by Dr. KUWABARA but since it is likely that Arachosia and Drangiana remain still part of the Parthian territory, and that there was no Wu-i-shan-li as yet. It must be that later on they separated from the rest of Parthia so as to form an independent state by themselves, this giving rise to what the Chinese called Wu-i-shan-li. The date is not available in any record, but it can be roughly guessed. Phraates II, who succeeded Mithridates I as Parthian King, fought with the Saka and fell in battle in 128 or 127 B.C.; the next King Artabanus I engaged with the Tochari, a branch of the Saka race, who were identical with the Ta-yüeh-chih in Chinese records, and perished from the wound received in the battle. His successor Mithridates II, a man of valor, succeeded in expelling the invasion of the Saka and in restoring in a large measure the old prestige of the Parthian Empire. During his reign, however, Parthia was first brought to encounter the advance of Rome which prevented them from devoting her attention to the expansion eastward.<sup>(14)</sup> So it was very probably within the period of five or six years, ranging from the last part of the reign of Phraates II into that of Mithridates II, that the northern Scythic horde were suffered to come down to occupy southern Afghanistan. Most likely it was they who gave rise in that region to that

(11) 西與犁鞞條交接，行可百餘日，乃至條支（漢書，卷九十六上，西域傳上）

(12) GUTSCHMID, *Geschichte Irans*, p. 55.

(13) KUWABARA, *Tōzai Kōtsushi Ronsō* 東西交通史論叢, p. 50.

(14) WROTE, *Coins of Parthia*, p. xx-xxii.



independent state which was to be recorded under the name of Wu-i-shan-li in the *Shih-chi*. Numismatists put the days of King Maues, the founder of the Saka tribe who invaded and occupied the district of the Punjab, between 120 and 100 B.C. approximately. It is highly probable that this inroad into India was carried out from the direction of southern Afghanistan, and this allows us to assume that the reign of King Maues was practically contemporaneous with the creation of the state of Wu-i-shan-li. That the country in question was ruled by a monarch of the Saka race is evident from the following passage of the *Han-shu* referring thereto: "Its coins are invariably so designed that there are on the obverse human heads and on the reverse horsemen."<sup>(15)</sup> Certainly the Saka coins unearthed in India and Afghanistan reveal the same form.

If I am not mistaken in the above observations, the country of Wu-i-shan-li must have come into existence within six or seven years after CHANG Ch'ien departed from the Ta-yüeh-chih court, and it is quite natural that it is not mentioned in the accounts of the western countries in the *Shih-chi*. There can be no doubt that what knowledge the *Han-shu* provides of this country dates from later than the great traveller's time. Now, in the *Han-shu* account of Wu-i-shan-li, we find it described as bordering eastwards on Chi-pin 罽賓, and northwards on P'u-t'iao 撲挑. As Chi-pin 罽賓 is identifiable with Gandhâra and P'u-t'iao 撲挑 with Kâbul, our knowledge of the contemporary geography of those regions may admit that they are correctly related with Wu-i-shan-li. But when the account goes on to say that the country was, on the western side, contiguous with Li-kan and T'iao-chih, this is not so easily accountable. At the time of Wu-ti, the whole area of present Persia, as well as Mesopotamia, was embraced within the boundaries of An-hsi. It follows that Wu-i-shan-li, which occupied southern Afghanistan, could only have had An-hsi as its western neighbour; but as a matter of fact, no mention is made of An-hsi on that side, but of Li-kan and T'iao-chih instead. What makes the matter even more puzzling is that the same history, in its account of An-hsi, says: "(The country of An-hsi) is conterminous in the north with K'ang-chü, in the east with Wu-i-shan-li, and in the west with T'iao-chih."<sup>(16)</sup> This must mean that An-hsi lay between Wu-i-shan-li on the east and T'iao-chih on the west. Very obviously, however, this is in conflict with that statement observed in the account of Wu-i-shan-li to the effect that T'iao-chih and Li-kan adjoined that country on its western side. The two references are plainly incompatible and, not knowing which is correct, we must at any rate admit that the *Han-shu* is faulty in contradicting itself in this instance. It must be duly remembered, however, that this criticism would be natural only from the viewpoint of modern scholars who are immeasurably better informed about the history and geography of the regions in question. To the geographical

(15) 其錢獨文爲人頭，暮爲騎馬。(漢書，卷九十六上，西域傳上，烏弋山離國)

(16) 北與婁居，東與烏弋山離，西與條支接(漢書，卷九十六上，西域傳上，安息國)

notion of the ancient compiler of the history, there could have been nothing self-contradictory or irrational in the matter. What was then, we may ask, his idea as to the travelling route from Wu-i-shan-li to An-hsi? We have the best guidance in a passage of the account of Wu-i-shan-li in the *Han-shu*, where the route of travelling to An-hsi via the Pamirs, India and Wu-i-shan-li is given as follows: "..... so remote that messengers despatched by the Han court rarely proceeded thereto. One leaves the Gate of Yü-mên-yang-kuan 玉門陽關 to take the Southern Route, passes Shan-shan 鄯善, and going on southward, reaches Wu-i-shan-li, and here the Southern Route comes to an end. Turning, however, to the north and then going east, one gains An-hsi."<sup>(17)</sup> It seems that the southern route, starting from Yü-mên-kuan 玉門關, stretched only as far as Wu-i-shan-li, and that there was no highway to take the traveller further south or west so that, in order to reach the capital of An-hsi from there, he had to start again in a northerly direction, and then shift his course westwards (assuming as is very obvious that in the last section of the above text, the phrase "going east" was a scribal mistake for what should have been "going west"). Now this line of travel finds corroboration in "*The Parthian Stations*", written by ISIDORUS, a Greek author who lived round about the dawn of the Christian era. According to this book, the traveller, departing from Alexandriapolis, the capital of Arachosia, went north past Phra in Drangiana, until he reached Alexandria in Arii, i.e. the present Herat; from there he took a westerly direction, and after passing Nisaea or the present Nishapûr, he came to his journey's end at the capital city of Parthia, that is, Parthau, which appears under the name of Fan-tou-ch'êng 番兜城 in the *Han-shu*. No doubt the writer had the same route in mind, and imagining the country of An-hsi to be lying northwest of Wu-i-shan-li he assigned the latter to the southeast of An-hsi. When, therefore, we read in the *Han-shu* account of An-hsi that it was "conterminous eastwards with Wu-i-shan-li," we may admit that "eastwards" was a conscious simplification of what should have been more accurately put as "southeastwards." It may be noted for analogy that where the *Hsi-yü-chuan* in the *Hou-han-shu* describes An-hsi as being "contiguous southwards with Wu-i-shan-li",<sup>(18)</sup> the word "southwards" must be interpreted likewise as a contraction of "southeastwards." The above observation will also serve to explain why the *Han-shu* account of Wu-i-shan-li does not mention An-hsi as its western neighbour. Since such was the idea entertained by the historian of the course of travelling from Wu-i-shan-li to An-hsi, the latter must have seemed to him too much to the northwest to be assigned to the west of Wu-i-shan-li in describing its boundaries.

The route from Wu-i-shan-li to T'iao-chih, however, does not appear so clearly as that for reaching An-hsi. "Going about a hundred and odd days

(17) 絕遠，漢使希至。自玉門陽關，出南道，歷鄯善而南行，至烏弋山離，南道極矣，轉北而東得安息。（漢書，卷九十六上，西域傳）

(18) 南與烏弋山離接（後漢書，卷一百十八，西域傳）

will take one to T'iao-chih,"<sup>(19)</sup> is all that the *Han-shu* says about it in its account of Wu-i-shan-li. The *Hou-han-shu*, in its article on the country of Tê-jo-kuo 德若國, gives this remark of the route in question: "Going southwest on horseback for over a hundred days, one may reach T'iao-chih";<sup>(20)</sup> but this affords us hardly any more help. At first thought, it might seem possible, for the purpose of interpretation, to take the word "southwest" from the *Hou-han-shu* text, and to supply it after "going" in the *Han-shu* passage. But when we remember the assertion made by the *Han-shu* that the Southern Route terminated in Wu-i-shan-li, must seem very improbable that, in order to reach T'iao-chih, the traveller went directly west or southwest from Wu-i-shan-li. In this case as well as in that of travelling to An-hsi, one must have gone north at first, and later on turned west to reach Parthia, and then continued further westward to attain T'iao-chih. Neither in the east nor in the west, is there any record contemporaneous with the Han period, which shows the whole line of travel in question. As regards the journey from the capital of Parthia up to the Euphrates, however, *The Parthian Stations* marks its several stages consecutively as: Caspian Gates, Ecbatana, Seleucia, and Neapolis. And the *Hou-han-shu*, in its account of An-hsi, states a course which agree in large measure with the above, starting from Ho-tu-ch'êng 和犢城 (=Parthau) and passing A-man 阿蠻 (=Ecbatana) and Ssü-pin 斯賓 (=Ktesiphon), until Yü-lo 于羅 (=Ura) is reached. Yü-lo in the *Hou-han-shu* and Neapolis in *The Parthian Stations* represented two points at which the main channel of intercourse traversing the Asiatic continent met with the Euphrates, and thus both places commanded positions of high commercial importance. Those who repaired to Neapolis had as their object in view Antioch, which might be reached from there by going north along the Euphrates and then turning west from passing Zeugma while those who made their way to choose Yü-lo must have aimed at proceeding south down the river as far as the head of the Persian Gulf. I believe this consideration makes it sufficiently reasonable to locate Yü-lo a little way south of Neapolis.

Now we may notice how the reverse course of travel, that is, from T'iao-chih to An-hsi, is described by the *Hou-han-shu*, in its account of T'iao-chih. "Turning north and then going east over 60 days on horseback, one reaches An-hsi,"<sup>(21)</sup> reads the passage concerned, and this may be interpreted as:—starting from T'iao-chih on the head of the Persian Gulf, one journeyed north by water as far as Yü-lo, and thence rode eastward until one reached the capital of An-hsi. This means that from T'iao-chih, that is, in the sense of Mésène, one pointed to An-hsi proper in a northeasterly direction. Thus we are assured that An-hsi was supposed to lie northeast of T'iao-chih and at the same time northwest of Wu-i-shan-li; and seeing that the southern

(19) 行可百餘日，乃至條支 (漢書，卷九十六上，西域傳)

(20) 西南馬行百餘日，至條支 (後漢書，卷一百十八，西域傳)

(21) 轉北而東，馬行六十餘日至安息 (ibid)

portion of An-hsi, including Kerman, Persis, and Susiana, was terra incognita to the contemporary Chinese, nothing would have been more natural for them than to set Wu-i-shan-li in imagination against T'iao-chih along a line from east to west. And from this it was just a step in arbitrary assumption on the part of the historian which brought him to the statement, already quoted, that the country of Wu-i-shan-li was westwards adjacent to that of T'iao-chih. A careful study of the *Han-shu* reveals the fact that the author had a way of representing two countries which were separated by some unknown region as being contiguous with each other, thus ignoring the intervening tract. For example, he describes the boundaries of the country of Nan-tou 難兜 as: "Southwards it is adjacent to Êrh-ch'iang 婼羌, northwards to Hsiu-hsün 休循, and westwards to (the country of) Ta-yüeh-chih 大月氏."<sup>(22)</sup> Now the country of Nan-tou 難兜, corresponding to the district of Gilgit, south of the Hindu-Kush, lay on the southern route of traffic, which ran from Chinese Turkestan through Tashkurgan in the Pamirs to Chi-pin 罽賓 in the lower basin of the Kābul; while the country of Hsiu-hsün 休循, being situated at the end of the Alai Plateau, bordered on the northern highway which connected the district of Kashgar with that of Ferghana, or Ta-yüan as it was called by the Chinese. Thus the two countries were widely separated by the breadth of the Pamir region, and nevertheless they were given as conterminous, simply because the Pamirs were then a quite unknown region to the Chinese. No doubt the alleged contiguity between T'iao-chih and Wu-i-shan-li was but another instance of the same peculiar practice. I think the oversight of this circumstances has led to the waste of much scholarly labour. For instance, DEGUIGNES and SPRUNER in the former days, and SCHOFF and HERMANN more recently, and also our Dr. FUJITA, taking too literally the *Hou-han-shu* statement that one went from Wu-i-shan-li southwest on horseback over a hundred days to reach T'iao-chih, interpreted the route in question as having traversed the desert of Kerman up to the Persian Gulf. This must presuppose that the contemporary Chinese knew the passage through southern Persia, but evidently that was not the case. For, if Chinese travellers had ever taken that road to the west, they could not have failed to notice that all the southern portions of Persia, namely, Kerman, Persis, Susiana, etc., were part of the territory of An-hsi, and then T'iao-chih and Wu-i-shan-li would not have been represented as neighbouring countries in the *Han-shu*. As it is, this is positive evidence that the southern passage was unknown to the Chinese of the Han period.

We have seen under what circumstances the author of the *Han-shu* assigned T'iao-chih to the west of Wu-i-shan-li, but it is as hard as ever to account for his mention of Li-kan in the same quarter. In this, as well as in his location of An-hsi to the northwest of Wu-i-shan-li, it is clear that he did

(22) 南與婼羌, 北與休循, 西與大月氏接 (漢書, 卷九十六上, 西域傳)

not take instruction from the *Ta-yüan-chuan* in the *Shih-chi*, which places Li-kan, together with Yen-ts'ai, to the north of An-hsi. As we have already remarked, he must have regarded T'iao-chih as forming the westernmost country in the world and limiting An-hsi on its western side, and this precludes the hypothesis that he recognized Li-kan in a region further west than T'iao-chih itself. Nor could he easily have conceived Li-kan as lying north of T'iao-chih, for his recognition of An-hsi to the northwest of Wu-i-shan-li, above referred to, must have implied the idea that An-hsi, instead of Li-kan, was the northern neighbour of T'iao-chih. Then the only quarter left for our consideration would seem to be the southern side of T'iao-chih. As far, however, as T'iao-chih is to be recognized at all at the head of the Persian Gulf or of the Indian Ocean, the idea of placing any country south of it is obviously out of the question. After the foregoing observations, therefore, we come to the conclusion that the *Ta-yüan-chuan* in the *Shih-chi* and the *Hsi-yü-chuan* in the *Han-shu*, with all the geographical date they afford us, do not enable us to ascertain anything as to the location of Li-kan.

Let us therefore dismiss for a while those *Shih-chi* and *Han-shu* statements about Li-kan, and try to see if we cannot elsewhere find an answer to the question. The Book of Geography in the *Han-shu* tells us that under the jurisdiction of Chang-yeh 張掖 Prefecture there was a *hsien* 縣 (district) named Li-kan 隴軒. We have some reason to bring this name into association with the country of Li-kan, which is our main subject. In the *Biography of CHANG Ch'ien* contained in the same history we read this passage: "At first Chiu-ch'üan 酒泉 Prefecture was established for the purpose of opening traffic with the countries of the north and west. Then more and more (Chinese) embassies were despatched to reach the countries of An-hsi, Yen-ts'ai, Li-kan 隴軒, T'iao-chih, and Hsin-tu 身毒."<sup>(23)</sup> This is accompanied by YEN Shih-ku 顏師古's following notes: "Li-ch'i 李奇 remarks, '軒 is sounded like 軒'; Fu Ch'ien 服虔 says, '隴軒 is the name of a *hsien* (district) in Chang-yeh Prefecture.' According to my opinion 抵 means 'reaching.' The five countries mentioned as An-hsi and so forth are all barbarian states in the western regions. 隴軒 is the same as the country of Ta-ch'in. This reminds us of 隴軒 District in Chang-yeh Prefecture, which was simply named so after this country. 隴 and 隴 sound very much alike; 軒 reading the same as 軒. Li-Ch'i's interpretation is right: Fu's opinion is wrong."<sup>(24)</sup> As we know, the name of the country 黎軒, which occurs for the first time in the *Ta-yüan-chuan* in the *Shih-chi*, takes the form of 犁軒, in the *Hsi-yü-chuan* in the *Han-shu*; while the *Biography of CHANG Ch'ien* in the latter history puts it 隴軒 as seen above, and again the *Hsi-yü-chuan* in the

(23) 初置酒泉郡，以通西北國，因益發使抵安息奄察隴軒條支身毒國。（漢書，卷六十一，張騫傳）

(24) 李奇曰：軒音軒，服虔曰：隴軒張掖縣名也。師古曰：抵至也，自安息以下五國皆西域胡也，隴軒大秦國也，張掖隴軒縣，蓋取此國為名耳。隴隴聲相近，軒讀與軒同。李奇音是也，服說非也（漢書，卷六十一，張騫傳註）

*Hou-han-shu* spells it 犁鞞. Considering this diversity of spelling, we are justified in accepting the T'ang annotator's opinion that the name of the Chinese district 驪軒 was another transliteration of Li-kan, as adopted from the name of the western country. In the *Book of Geography* in the *Han-shu*, we come across a few other cases where a northwestern locality in China, such as lying on the main route of trade to the western world, was named after some western country or place. For instance, where Ch'iu-tzŭ 龜茲 District in Shang-chün 上郡 Prefecture is mentioned, YEN Shih-ku 顏師古's comment reads: "Such people of the country of Ch'iu-tzŭ 龜茲 as came and submitted to China were made to dwell in this particular locality, hence that name."<sup>(25)</sup> Again in the same *Geography*, we meet with a district in Chang-yeh Prefecture by the name of Chü-yen 居延 which, as will be explained later, was most likely derived from a western place name. The *Biography of PAN Chao* 班超 in the *Hou-han-shu* makes mention of the country of Ch'iu-tzŭ, and the appended notes say, "The country of Ch'iu-tzŭ has its seat of government in Chü-yen-ch'êng 居延城 (City of Chü-yeh). . . . It is conterminous southward with Ching-chüeh 精絕, eastward with Ch'ieh-mo 且末, northward with Wu-sun 烏孫, and westward with Ku-mo 姑墨."<sup>(26)</sup> This shows that the capital city of the country of Ch'iu-tzŭ was Chü-yen. The preceding history, the *Han-shu*, however, in its own *Hsi-yü-chuan*, names the capital of the same country as Yen-ch'êng 延城 instead of Chü-yen, although the description of the boundaries of the country given in the contest read practically the same as in the notes on the *Hou-han-shu* cited above. It must be admitted, however, that the famous annotator of the *Hou-han-shu*, Prince Chang-huai 章懷, who was responsible for those notes, had some reliable authority in earlier records for mentioning Chü-yen; the discrepancy in question may be explained by the surmise that the name Yen-ch'êng as appearing in the surviving text of the *Han-shu* was a scribal corruption, and that in the original it was spelt Chü-yen-ch'êng, i.e. the City of Chü-yen. What was Ch'iu-tzŭ in the Han times is now known as Kuča 庫車. It was formerly represented as Kūsān, or Kūšān and these forms seem particularly connectable with the name of the capital, Chü-yen. According to modern pronunciation, the characters 居延 read Chü-yen (Kü-yen), but in view of the character sien 涎, which has the phonetic 延, it seems highly probable that the combination 居延 was pronounced Kü-sien or Kü-siän in the Han period, and thus made an equivalent of Kūsān or Kūšān. It was not seldom in the western regions of those times that the capital of a country bore the same name as the country itself. For example, the *Hsi-yü-chuan* in the *Han-shu* shows that the king of the country of Wên-hsiu 溫宿 had his royal seat in the city of Wên-hsiu; the king of the country of Wêi-li 尉犁 in the city of Wêi-li; and the king of the country of Wêi-hsü 危須 in the

(25) 師古曰，龜茲國人來降者，處之於此，故以名云。（漢書，卷二十八，地理志註）

(26) 龜茲國居居延城。南與精絕，東與且末，北與烏孫，西與姑墨接。（後漢書，卷七十七，班超傳註）

city of Wêi-hsü 危須. Sometimes, the same name, when transcribed into Chinese, takes different forms according to whether it means the country or the capital, as illustrated in the *Han-shu* statement that the king of Yen-ch'í 焉耆 resided in the city of Yüan-ch'ü 員渠. In all probability the mention under review of Chü-yen (City-ch'eng) as the seat of government of the country of Ch'iu-tzŭ belongs to the same class, so that it may be assumed that Ch'iu-tzŭ and Chü-yen (restored to the contemporary pronunciation Kŭ-sien or Kŭ-siän) corresponded respectively to Kŭsā and Kŭsän, which were two variations of the name of the country. Now, one district in Shang-chün Prefecture was established under the name of Ch'iu-tzŭ District in the first year of *T'ai-ch'ü* 太初 of the Former Han dynasty, and if we accept YEN Shih-ku's explanation that it was because the immigrants from the country of Ch'iu-tzŭ were assigned to that locality, no doubt we may as reasonably believe that the creation of Chü-yen District in Chang-yeh Prefecture at about the same time was incidental to the assignment of people who had originated from the city of Chü-yen. If so, we may go further to presume with regard to Li-kan District in Chang-yeh Prefecture, that the district was so named because its inhabitants had arrived from the country of Li-kan. The northwestern corner of China, more especially the region of Ho-hsi 河西, including the above-mentioned prefectures of Shang-chün and Chang-yeh, constituted in early times the only gate through which western trade could approach the interior of the Middle Kingdom; and so, it remained, until far later ages, a general resort for foreign merchants and travellers. There can be little doubt that many of those foreigners became permanently resident there or even naturalized as Chinese subjects, and it must have been in consequence of this that we see the establishment in the Han period of those administrative districts bearing the names of western countries, one of them being Li-kan District which was created, in the *T'ai-ch'ü* era of the Former Han, within the prefecture of Chang-yeh, which corresponds to the present Kan-chou 甘州. But where was Li-kan itself, which was the mother country of the foreign population of that Li-kan District? In those portions of Asia referred as to the western regions by the Chinese in those early days there were a certain number of commercial peoples, who were naturally determined to be such by their geographical advantage of commanding the highway of trade between the east and west. They were, among the nearer neighbours of China, the inhabitants of Eastern and Western Turkestan; and at a greater distance, those of western Asia, i.e. the Syrians, Arabs, and Greeks. Now Li-kan is recorded as a remote people, and therefore we must look for it in the western quarter of Asia rather than in Turkestans. As already observed, the *Ta-yüan-chuan* in the *Shih-chi* mentioned Li-kan side by side with Yen-ts'ai to the north of An-hsi. But the region thus indicated was certainly the steppe which stretched on the north of the Caspian and the Black Sea and was occupied by nomadic races such as the Yen-ts'ai; and it would be absurd to seek the Li-kan people,

who were so distinctly commercial as to send their traders as far as China, in this quarter at all. We may more safely assign them to some country bordering the Persian Gulf on the Indian Ocean and marked with an active sea trade; in fact this was where the compiler of the *Han-shu*, PAN KU, vaguely imagined Li-kan to lie.

We have seen how the mention of Li-kan District established in Chang-yeh Prefecture during the reign of Wu-ti helps us to the conclusion that the country of Li-kan, the subject of our inquiry, must have been a commercial country in the west of Asia. Now there is a certain circumstance which serves to narrow the limits within which we may look for Li-kan. It is the fact that the people of the country were noted in the western regions for their skill in conjuring. The *Ta-yüan-chuan* in the *Shih-chi* mentions the *hsüan-jên* 眩人 (jugglers) from Li-kan, who were sent by the king of An-hsi as presents to the Emperor Wu-ti. It was, indeed, partly on account of the Li-kan people, being famed for conjuring that Dr. FUJITA proposed to connect them with the Magi, who had their headquarters in Rhaga in northern Persia. In this, however, he made the grave mistake of failing to see the essential difference between *hsüan-jên* and Magi. Where the term *hsüan-jên* occurs in the Biography of CHANG Ch'ien in the *Han-shu*, we find it annotated as follows: "YING Shao 應劭 says that *hsüan* 眩 means 'duping' and 'perplexing'. According to Shih-ku's opinion the character *hsüan* reads the same as *huan* 幻, 'illusion'. Nowadays one may see performed the art of swallowing a sword, spitting fire, planting melons and sowing trees (and making them grow instantaneously), slaughtering a man, cutting a horse asunder; and this is what is meant here. It originated from the western regions."<sup>(27)</sup> This shows that *hsüan-jên* were nothing other than conjurors, whose object it was to furnish entertainment. The Magi, on the other hand, were a religious body, whose activities lay in preaching, administering charm, averting evils, expelling devils, purifying souls, praying for health and well-being, and so forth. And if the fragments of the *Ti-li-chih* 地理志 which were discovered by Sir Aurel STEIN in the Hall of One Thousand Buddhas in Tun-huang, and the book of the T'ang period, Chao-yeh Ch'ien-tsai 朝野僉載, bear witness, as our author pointed out, to the fact of the Zoroastrians practising the art of conjuring, it is plain enough that in this case the practice was simply employed as a help to the aim of propagating their religion, the worship of Ahuramazda.

It is not exactly known where the art of conjuring had its earliest origin, but PELLIOT remarks, no doubt on some reliable authority, that Alexandria of Egypt was celebrated for this craft in very early times.<sup>(28)</sup> Now the *Ta-yüan-chuan* in the *Shih-chi* says, in its article on T'iao-chih, "The country is

(27) 應劭曰，眩相詐惑也。師古曰，眩讀與幻同，即今吞刀吐火植瓜種樹屠人截馬之術，皆是也。本從西域來。(漢書，卷六十一，張騫傳註)

(28) P. PELLIOT, *Li-hien, autre nom du Ta-ts'in*, T.P., 1915, p. 690-691.



skilled in *hsüan* 眩,<sup>(29)</sup> and this must mean that there were in the country many good conjurers. That T'iao-chih was at that period a dependency of An-hsi, is clear from the article under review. And yet, as stated elsewhere in the same book, the king of An-hsi presented Wu-ti with conjurers of Li-kan, not of T'iao-chih. This seems to suggest that the art in question had its principal home in Li-kan rather than in T'iao-chih. It is to be recognized, on the other hand, that there was a chance that the craft was introduced to T'iao-chih from Alexandria of Egypt, since it was identifiable with Mésène at the head of the Persian Gulf, and its advantageous position on the highway of world commerce must have favoured close intercourse with Alexandria. Since An-hsi had among its dependencies the people of T'iao-chih, so acquainted with conjuring, and since the An-hsi king offered Li-kan jugglers to the court of Wu-ti, it will be easily supposed that the people of An-hsi, or the Parthians, themselves acquired something of the art. It is interesting to notice that the craft is even mentioned in connection with a people living further north. The *Hsi-yü-chuan* in the *Wèi-shu* remarks about the Yüeh-pan 悅般 people: "In the 9th year of Chên-chün 眞君, they sent an embassy and tribute to the imperial court. They also presented *huan-jên* 幻人, who professed that they could split the veins of a man's throat, smash his head, knock the skull in, let the blood run to the measure of several *shêng* 升, or even to the full measure of *tou* 斗; and then, by putting in the victim's mouth some medical herb and letting him chew and swallow it, make the bleeding stop in an instant, and assure the wounds to be completely healed in a month, without leaving any marks even. The emperor suspected their falsehood, and ordered a test to be made with a condemned criminal, but their words were found to be true. Now it turned out that the herb in question was discoverable in every renowned mountain in the Middle Kingdom, and so the emperor ordered certain men to learn the art from them, while granting them cordial treatment. They also declared that in their own country there had been a great master in this art. Once when the Juan-juans came to plunder the country, the master of the art called forth a long rain, furious hurricane, heavy snow, swamps and puddles, thus causing two or three tens of the Juan-juans to be frozen to death or drowned."<sup>(30)</sup> We perceive two distinct lines of magic like practice, the performance of *hsüan-jên* and the so-called great master. The former was kindred to the work of the historical Li-kan *hsüan-jên*, as interpreted by the T'ang commentator, and is strongly suggestive of the Alexandrian tradition. The Yüeh-pan were a people who had their central abode about Tarbaghatai,

(29) 國善眩。(史記,卷一百二十三,大宛列傳)

(30) 眞君九年,遣使朝獻,並送幻人。稱能割人喉脈,令斷擊人頭,令骨陷,皆血出或數升,或盈斗,以草藥內其口中,令嚙咽之,須臾血止,養瘡一月復常,又無痕跡。世祖疑其虛,乃取死罪囚試之,皆驗云。中國諸名山,皆有此草,乃使人受其術而厚遇之。又言其國有大術者,蠅蠅來抄掠,術人能作霖雨狂風大雪及行潦,蠅蠅凍死漂亡者十二三。(魏書,卷一百二,西域傳)

between the T'ien-shan and the Altai, and thus commanded the highway of communication between the east and west, so it is very likely that their conjuring practice had been introduced from the direction of Persia. As for the latter, so distinguished from more legerdemain, there is every probability that it referred to the Jada, a magic widely prevalent among the Turkish and Mongolic races. Perhaps the above makes the very first instance in which any notice is taken of it in Chinese literature. What name the Yüeh-pan gave it in their own country is unknown, but the Turks and Mongols in general called it *fada*, and the Yüeh-pan, being of the Turkish race, are most likely to have used the same appellation. Now, the word *fada*, was derived from the Persian word *fadu*, a fact which seems to indicate the Persian origin of the Jada. This consideration tends to confirm the above inference that the Egyptian art of conjuring was imparted to the Yüeh-pan through the medium of Persia.

We have seen that it was at the time of Wu-ti and from the country of An-hsi that the art of conjuring was first introduced into the Middle Kingdom. Later on, as also pointed out by Dr. FUJITA, the Later Han poet, CHANG Hêng 張衡 sings about the *huan-shu* 幻術 (art of hallucination, i.e. conjuring) in his *Hsi-ching-fu* 西京賦 (The Song of the Western Capital); and the *Biography of Hsia Tung* 夏統 in the *Chin-shu* bears witness to the same art being practised by a temple sorceress 巫女. Coming to later ages, we have already seen how the T'ang annotator YEN, interpreting the *hsüan-jên* (conjurers) mentioned in the *Biography of CHANG Ch'ien*, connects it with jugglery as practised in his own times, which he ascribes to western origin. So we may broadly say that the art as witnessed so far in China had been introduced from An-hsi in the Han period. It is worth notice, however, that the *Fa-yüan-chu-lin* 法苑珠林 tells us that during the *Yung-chia* 永嘉 era of the Chin Dynasty, the *hu* (barbarians) of T'ien-chu 天竺 (India) brought in the art of conjuring. Considering the frequent intercourse between India and the Roman Alexandria from the Han and Wèi to the Chin period, there can be small doubt that the Indians had previously acquired the art from the Egyptian region. To support this inference we read in the *Hsi-nan-i-chuan* in the *Hou-han-shu* as follows: "In the 1st year of *Yung-ning* 永寧, the king of the country of *Tan* 檀, Yung-yu-tiao 雍由調 by name, again sent an embassy, who proceeding to the imperial court, offered musicians and *huan-jên* 幻人. The latter could transform things, spit fire, sever their own limbs, change the head of a horse into that of a cow (and vice versa), and skilfully toss and catch as many as a thousand balls. They said themselves that they were men from Hai-hsi 海西 (the west of the sea). Hai-hsi meant Ta-ch'in-itself. The country of Tan had intercourse southwestwards with Ta-ch'in."<sup>(31)</sup> Tan was

(31) 永寧元年，檀國王雍由調，復遣使者詣闕朝賀，獻樂及幻人。能變化，吐火，自支解，易牛馬頭，又善跳丸，數乃至千，自言我海西人，海西即大秦也。檀國西南通大秦。（後漢書，卷一百十六，西南夷傳）

a country lying south of Yün-nan, and its acquaintance with the Ta-ch'ín art in the Later Han period suggests in a great measure that India, which was its southern neighbour and decidedly more intimate with Ta-ch'ín, had learned it earlier and directly from Ta-ch'ín. Then as for the prevalence of the practice in the country of Ta-ch'ín itself, it is thus affirmed by the *Wèi-liao* account of Ta-ch'ín, quoted in the *Wèi-chih*: "The people have many sorts of curious tricks. There are many conjurers, who issue fire from the mouth, bind and release themselves, dance on (toss and catch) twelve balls at once, with dexterity."<sup>(32)</sup> From the foregoing observations, it appears that in Chinese history, first Li-kan and then Ta-ch'ín figures as the primary home of the jugglery as introduced into the realm. This strongly suggests that the two names referred to the same country; and in fact, the identity is positively asserted by the *Wèi-liao* saying, "Ta-ch'ín is also called Li-kan";<sup>(33)</sup> and by the *Hsi-yü-chuan* in the *Hou-han-shu*, as: "The country of Ta-ch'ín is also called Li-kan."<sup>(34)</sup>

In my article, *About Ta-ch'ín and Fu-lin*, previously referred to, I set forth my opinion that both Li-kien 犁鞞 in the *Han-shu* and Li-hien 黎軒 in the *Shih-chi* were transcriptions of Alexandria through the shortening process—(A)lek-(s)an(dria), pointing out, for the purpose of comparison, that the place name Alasanda found in the Pa-li text of the *Milinda Pañha* was a corruption of Alexandria, and also that Alexander himself was represented as Alikasunari on the monument of King Aśoka. Later, a similar view was offered by PELLIOT in *Likien, autre nom de Ta-ts'ín*, published in the *T'oung Pao*.<sup>(35)</sup> There he connected Li-kien 犁鞞 with A-li-san 阿荔散 met with in the *Na-hsien-pi-ch'iu-ching* 那仙比丘經, and recalled the fact that Alexandria of Egypt was distinguished in olden times for the art of conjuring, so as to reach the conclusion that the name Li-kan in the Han records was a transcribed form of Alexandria. It is generally agreed among Sanscrit scholars that the *Na-hsien-pi-ch'iu-ching* is the Chinese version of the *Milinda Pañha* in Pali, but a comparison of the two texts reveals certain discrepancies. To take, for example, an instance directly concerning our present subject, the birthplace of King Milinda was, according to the *Milinda Pañha* in Pali, a village called Kalasi in the province of Alasanda, whereas the *Na-hsien-pi-ch'iu-ching* says that it was the country of Ta-ch'ín, or A-li-san 阿荔散, the latter name being an equivalent of Alasanda. Rhys DAVIDS once thought Alasanda to have referred to Bactria, but on another occasion he regarded it as the name of an island in the Indus. Subsequently RAWLINSON connected the same with some island lying in the middle or lower course of the river. Both opinions, however, were refuted by PELLIOT who argued that A-li-san 阿荔散, i.e. Ta-ch'ín by another

(32) 俗多奇効，口中出火，自縛自解，跳十二丸，巧妙 [非常]。

(33) 大秦國一號犁鞞。

(34) 大秦國一名黎軒 (後漢書，卷一百十八，西域傳·大秦國)

(35) T. P. 1915, p. 690-691.

name, which the Scripture says, was at a distance of 2,000 yojana 由旬, or 80,000 *li* by the Chinese unit, from the royal city of King Milinda, could not possibly have lain within the boundaries of India, but more readily fell in with Alexandria of Egypt.<sup>(36)</sup> We read in the *Na-hsien-pi-ch'iu-ching* "The king said, 'I was born in the country of Ta-ch'ín. The country is named A-li-san.'<sup>(37)</sup> From this it would seem that A-li-san was a name representing the country, but the truth in this case must have been that the name of the capital city, Alexandria as transcribed into A-li-san, was extended by the Chinese to the whole region under the influence of that city, namely, the Roman dominion which stretched along the eastern Mediterranean. The Chinese translation of the Scripture in question is ascribed to the Eastern Chin period, and so we may believe that at least as late as those days the Chinese were wont to call the country of Ta-ch'ín by the name Alisan. As for the name Li-kan, which applied to the country in the Former Han period, it was nothing but another transcription of the same original Alexandria. In opposition to this view, Dr. FUJITA remarked that although the dropping of the middle sound *k*, as witnessed in the change from Alexandria to Alesan 阿荔散, had some examples in history, there was no instance to be discovered for the omission of the middle *s* sound, which would be necessary for the contraction into (A)lekan. But this objection may be easily answered by referring to the Sanscrit word denoting 'south', which was at first *dakshinā*, but later corrupted into *dakkhinā*, and then again into *dakhin* or *dehkan*. Certainly it was no less possible for Alexandria to pass into Lekan.

Having recognized that both Li-kan in the Former Han times and Ta-ch'ín in the Later Han referred to one and the same country, we have now to ascertain when and how the one name gave place to the other. So far as the results of my investigation go, the name Ta-ch'ín makes its first appearance in the *Han-shu*, in this passage of the article on An-hsi: "In the 9th year of *Yung-yüan* 永元 of Ho-ti 和帝 (A.D. 97), the Tu-hu 都護 (Governor-General) PAN Chao 班超 sent KAN Ying 甘英 as an envoy to Ta-ch'ín, who reached T'iao-chih....."<sup>(38)</sup> Many students of the subject have been inclined to regard Ta-ch'ín as a Chinese transcription of the vernacular name of the country, but this view has only tended to complicate the problem of Li-kan and Ta-ch'ín. I believe, however, the solution will be rendered much simpler by acknowledging Ta-ch'ín to be an appellation of Chinese origin, applied to what had been formerly known under the transcribed name Li-kan,—a fact I endeavoured to prove in my other article, *Chinese Ideas Reflected in the Ta-ch'ín Accounts*. No doubt it was extraordinary that the Chinese, so accustomed to boast of their own Middle Kingdom and to look down upon every other

(36) P. PELLIOU, *Les noms propres dans les traductions chinoises du Milindapañha*, J. A., IX, p. 413-418.

(37) 王言, 我本生大秦國, 國名阿荔散。

(38) 和帝永元九年, 都護班超遣甘英, 使大秦抵條支。(後漢書, 卷一百十八, 西域傳)

people, should have allowed any of them such a noble name as Ta-ch'in, which, I claim, was Ch'in another name of their own country, plus the magnifying prefix Ta. This speaks for the exceptionally high esteem and admiration which the proud Chinese had for that country on account of its brilliant civilization and conspicuous influence, military and commercial. No such country could possibly be thought of in western Asia, so long as the supremacy there was divided between the Seleucid Dynasty in Syria and the Ptolemaeos ruling over Egypt. But when the Roman Empire had come forward to annex these two regions, thus making the three continents (Asia, Europe and Africa) contribute to her vast territory, and when the whole civilized world in the west became unified under her single rule, then the Roman Empire itself was the very existence to claim that honour of "Ta-ch'in." The general outlook of the world at that time would have shown the two great empires, Chinese and Roman, well matched in the vigour of energy and the achievement of culture; simultaneously flourishing in the east and west, with An-hsi, a minor military power, intervening between them. Rome had just entered her imperial stage under Augustus, whose reign, lasting from the year 31 B.C. to 14 A.D. corresponded in China to the period from the 2nd year of *Chien-shih* 建始 of Ch'êng-ti 成帝 of the Former Han to the 5th year of *Shih-chien-kuo* 始建國 of the Usurper WANG Mang 王莽. Thus it was toward the end of the Former Han that the commercial world in the east became directly opened to Rome. Later, HIPHALOS's initiation of the direct passage to India by the help of the monsoon made for further development of the Roman trade in the far east. The exact date of this exploit is in dispute, but we may attach more importance to the year 47 A.D. proposed by VINCENT<sup>(39)</sup> and the year 45 A.D. offered by SCHOFF,<sup>(40)</sup> Then we are told in PLINIUS's *Natural History* that the money exported from the Roman Empire into India, Seres, and the Arabian peninsula amounted, at the lowest estimate, to 10,000,000 sesterces annually.<sup>(41)</sup> The date of this work is unknown, but the author lived from 23 A.D. to 79 A.D. Again China was first introduced to the West under the name *Thin* in the "*Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*", written almost certainly in the latter half of the 2nd century, though the exact date is variously given. All these data, taken together, go to indicate that by the middle of the 1st century A.D., the Roman trade with the far east had been steadily growing both in scope and in territorial extent. Judging, however, from the simplicity and vagueness of the geographical knowledge about *Seres*, i. e. China, which is so apparent in the contemporary western writers, the direct intercourse with China so far, if any, must have been very rare and scanty. Coming down to the time of PTOLEMAEOS, we find his geography giving a detailed account of the route of travel, with the mention of particular place names, for reaching

(39) W. VINCENT, *The Commerce and Navigation of the Ancients*, Vol. II. p. 47-48.

(40) W. H. SCHOFF, *The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, p. 227.

(41) PLINIUS, *Natural History*, xii. 44.

the Later Han capital Lo-yang, which is represented there by the term Sera Metropolis, via Bactria and the Pamirs. The date of this geography is generally placed about 150 A.D., and its account of travel to Seres is known to have been based on the notes which MARYNUS, probably PTOLEMAEOS's senior, had taken down from hearing the Macedonian merchant MAËS tell his own experiences; this last-mentioned must have belonged, at any rate, to the first half of the 2nd century. All these considerations lead us to the inference that Rome had been actively importing Chinese silk from the middle of the 1st century A.D. to the first half of the 2nd century.

Meanwhile what development had taken place on the Chinese side? At the end of the Former Han period, the usurpation of sovereignty by WANG Mang threw the whole country into disorder, which put a stop to the communication with the western regions, at least so far as the government was concerned. Soon the once-interrupted dynastic line was restored by Kuang-wu-ti 光武帝, the founder of the Later Han regime, but his reign was too fully occupied with the work of reconstruction at home to anything toward recovering old foreign relations with the west. The period of his successor Ming-ti 明帝 was naturally that of maintenance and perfection, and so the 16th year of *Yung-p'ing* 永平 (73 A.D.) is remarkable for the reopening of intercourse with the western regions. The *Hou-han-shu*, in the foreword to its *Hsi-yü-chuan*, refers to this occasion, as: "The western regions had been lost touch of for 65 years, but now came once more into communication with us."<sup>(42)</sup> The said 65 years represented the period from the 1st year of the usurper's reign to the 16th year of *Yung-p'ing*. The following reign of Chang-ti's 章帝 did not see much advance in the Chinese political activities in that direction. But it was in the 3rd year of *Yung-yüan* 永元 (91 A.D.) of the next emperor Ho-ti that the famous PAN Chao was appointed Tu-hu (Governor-General) of the western possessions of China, and this marks a positive extension and consolidation of Chinese supremacy westward. In the same preface to the *Hsi-yü-chuan* above quoted, we read as follows: "In the 6th year (of *Yung-yüan*) (94 A.D.), PAN Chao crushed the force of Yen-ch'i 焉耆. Now more than fifty countries paid tribute and pledged adherence to China. Among them there were T'iao-chih, An-hsi, and so forth, stretching away to the seashore, as far as 40,000 *li*; and all of them offered tribute by sending embassies who arrived after repeated interpretation (i.e. making themselves interpreted through a succession of foreign languages). In the 9th year (97 A.D.), PAN Chao despatched his subaltern KAN Ying (westward), who proceeded as far as the edge of the Hsi-Hai (western sea) and then returned."<sup>(43)</sup> We may imagine what brilliant success that Han general attained by his vigorous endeavours in making the supremacy

(42) 西域自絕六十五載，乃復通。(後漢書，卷一百十八，西域傳序)

(43) 六年班超復擊破焉耆，於是五十餘國悉納質內屬。其條支安息諸國，至于海濱四萬里外，皆重譯貢獻。九年班超遣椽甘英，窮臨西海而還。(後漢書，卷一百十八，西域傳序)

of China felt by western peoples. As we have seen, the intercourse with the western regions had previously been reopened in the 16th year of *Yung-p'ing* (73 A.D.); and it was PLINIUS, who died in 79, A.D. that made mention, in his *Natural History*, of the enormous export of Roman money to the eastern countries including Seres. We may therefore suppose that much Chinese silk was sold to Rome before the 3rd year of *Yung-yüan* (91 A.D.). In that year PAN Chao became the Governor-General, and when he sent out KAN Ying, a few years later, to visit Ta-ch'in, there can be no doubt he was largely prompted by the desire to know more about that country as one of the most important customers of Chinese silk. This gives us reason to point to the period of 25 years—beginning with 73, A.D. when the western communication was recommenced, and ending with 94, A.D. when KAN Ying was despatched westward,—as one in which the Chinese came into more or less detailed knowledge of the Roman Empire in its political and economic glory. And from what we have observed already, it will follow that the introduction of the name Ta-ch'in took place somewhere within the same period.

There is a factor which tends to narrow the period above appointed for the first appearance of the name Ta-ch'in. It is the consideration of how much the author of the *Han-shu*, PAN KU 班固, who was the elder brother of PAN Chao, knew about the country in question. His biography contained in the *Hou-han-shu* gives this account of the compilation of the history: "He first received the imperial order (to that effect) during the *Yung-p'ing* era. Since that time he had continued to concentrate his energy and thought upon that task for more than twenty years, until it was concluded during the *Chien-ch'u* 建初 era."<sup>(44)</sup> This does not indicate the exact date at either end, but the *Yung-p'ing* era in the reign of Ming-ti lasted for 18 years (58-75 A.D.), and the *Chien-ch'u* era under Chang-ti, for 9 years (76-84 A.D.). The twenty odd years occupied by the work must fall within the period between 58 and 84, A.D. while it is known the author survived until the 1st year of *Yung-yüan* (89 A.D.). So it is clear at any rate that the history was completed some time after the 16th year of *Yung-p'ing* (73 A.D.), the date of the revival of communication with the western regions. During that interval, the Chinese must have had a chance to acquire some definite knowledge about the state of things there, and more particularly our author must have had the special advantage in this respect of drawing information from his younger brother, who commenced his official career in the far west in the very year of the reopening of the western intercourse. But what reflection of this do we see on the pages of the history? There we find that T'iao-chih placed near the imaginary land of Hsi-wang-mu, evidently following the example of the *Shih-chi*, and as for Li-kan, it is mentioned as lying, together with T'iao-chih, to the west of Wu-i-shan-li, which location, we have seen, is

(44) 固自永平中始受詔，潛精積思二十餘年，至建初中乃成。(後漢書，卷七十上·班固傳)

no more accountable than the *Shih-chi* statement that Li-kan as well as Yen-ts'ai lay to the north of An-hsi. Evidently the author had no clear recognition of the country of Li-kan, and this leads to the inference that by the time of the compilation of the *Han-shu* there could have been very little chance for the appearance of the name of Ta-ch'in, which must presuppose comparatively fuller knowledge of the country. In consequence, however, of the assumption by PAN Chao of the governor-generalship of the western territories in the 3rd year of *Yung-yüan* (91 A.D.) more than fifty foreign countries expressed submission; An-hsi, T'iao-chih, and other remote peoples sent tribute; and in the 9th year of the same era (97 A.D.), KAN Ying, the intended envoy to Ta-ch'in, reached T'iao-chih and the edge of the Persian Gulf. It is indeed during this period, from the 3rd to the 9th year of *Yung-yüan* (91-97 A.D.), that we may safely assume that the report of the glorious conditions of Li-kan gave birth to that significant dignified name Ta-ch'in.



## Chapter II

If I was not mistaken above in drawing the conclusion that Li-kan was a country in the Western Regions which came into Chinese cognizance during the Han period and that Ta-ch'in was the Chinese appellation for the same country, while Li-kan was the transliteration of Alexandria in abbreviated form, then it may be taken for granted that the country of Ta-ch'in in the Chinese records referred to the Roman Orient with the city of Alexandria as its centre. As a matter of fact, Ta-ch'in proper must have consisted in Egypt; but what was the extent of the boundaries of Ta-ch'in taking in all its territories, or to what geographical areas did the term Ta-ch'in apply in the broader sense? This we shall now endeavour to ascertain, relying chiefly on evidence found in the *Wèi-liao* and the *Hou-han-shu*.

We have already seen how during the *Yung-yüan* era of the Later Han dynasty, the Chinese began to apply to the Roman Orient their own appellation Ta-ch'in, in lieu of the ancient transcribed name Li-kan; but now our attention is called to the fact that at about the same period the country was also referred to by the name Hai-hsi-kuo 海西國 (the country of Hai-hsi). To wit, if I may quote again the same passage from the *Hsi-nan-i-chuan* in the *Hou-han-shu*: "In the 1st year of *Yung-ning* 永寧, the king of the country of Tan, Yung-yu-tiao by name, again sent an embassy, who proceeding to the imperial court, offered musicians and *huan-jên*. ..... They themselves said that they were men from Hai-hsi 海西 (the West of the Sea). Hai-hsi is identical with Ta-ch'in. There was a route from the country of Tan running in a southwesterly direction to Ta-ch'in."<sup>(45)</sup> As *Yung-ning* was the name of an era belonging to the reign of An-ti, its first year corresponds with 120 A.D., and this is only 23 years later than the 9th year of *Yung-yüan* (97 A.D.), the date of PAN Ch'ao's despatch of his subaltern as an ambassador to Ta-ch'in. As for the origin of the name Hai-hsi, the same history thus explains it, in the passage opening its article on Ta-ch'in: "The country of Ta-ch'in is also called Li-kan, and also, as being situated on the west of the sea, Hai-hsi-kuo 海西國 (the country of Hai-hsi, i.e., the country on the west of the sea)."<sup>(46)</sup> This is corroborated by the *Wèi-liao* account of Ta-ch'in (quoted by the *Wèi-chih*), where it says: "The country of Ta-ch'in, also called Li-kan, is on the west of the great sea, west of An-hsi and T'iao-chih..... This country is on the west of the sea, whence it is commonly called Hai-hsi."<sup>(47)</sup> It is thus

(45) 永寧元年，揮國王雍由調復遣使者，詣闕朝賀，獻樂及幻人。...自言我海西人，海西即大秦也，揮國西南通大秦。(後漢書，卷一百十六，西南夷傳)

(46) 大秦國一號犁鞮，以在海西，亦云海西國。(後漢書卷一百一八，西域傳)

(47) 大秦國一號犁鞮，在安息條支西大海之西，...其國在海西，故俗謂之海西。(魏志，卷三十)

clear that the country was called Hai-hsi on account of its situation on the west of a certain sea, but the absence of the specific name of the sea from both accounts leaves us ignorant as to what particular sea it was. In the *Chin-shu*, however, we find this statement (in its article of Ta-ch'in): "Ta-ch'in, also called Li-kan, lies on the west of the Hsi-hai 西海 (the Western Sea);"<sup>(48)</sup> while statements remarks to the same effect are met with in the *Hou-han-shu* 後漢書 by HSIEH Ch'êng 謝承 of the Wu 吳 Dynasty and in Ssü-MA Piao's 司馬彪 *Hsiü-han-shu* 續漢書. We may be sure that it was Hsi-hai, or the Western Sea, on the west of which Ta-ch'in was situated, and which gave it the name Hai-hsi-kuo. But what was the Hsi-hai? With the Chinese of the Han period, the reference of that name was by no means unique. As already pointed out by HIRTH, it applied sometimes to the Caspian, and at other times to the Indian Ocean as well as to the Persian Gulf.<sup>(49)</sup> So it requires further inquiry to ascertain which particular sea it was that bore such relation with Ta-ch'in. Looking for a clue to this question, we may consult the *Hou-han-shu*, where it narrates KAN Ying's attempt to reach Ta-ch'in, as: "Tu-hu (General) PAN Ch'ao sent KAN Ying as an ambassador to Ta-ch'in, who arrived in T'iao-chih, on the coast of the great sea. When about to take passage across the sea, the sailors of the western frontier of An-hsi told KAN Ying: 'The sea is vast and great; with favourable winds it is possible to cross in three months; but if you meet slow winds, it may also take you two years. It is for this reason that those who go to sea take on board a supply of three years' provisions. There is something in the sea which is apt to make man homesick, and several have thus lost their lives.' When KAN Ying heard this, he stopped."<sup>(50)</sup> Inasmuch as T'iao-chih is identified with the country of Mésène in the lower Euphrates basin, there can be small doubt that the "great sea" on the coast of which it is assigned was the Persian Gulf. Now let us see how the same history describes the city of T'iao-chih: "The city of the country of T'iao-chih is situated on a hill; its circumference is over 40 *li*, and it borders on the western sea. The waters of the sea crookedly surround it."<sup>(51)</sup> It is evident that the western sea referred to here is the same as the great sea in the other passage, and then therefore it meant the Persian Gulf. Taking into account, however, the duration of the voyage across the sea put at three months on favourable winds, we are led to assume that the term Hsi-hai here must have implied also the Indian Ocean as the extension of the Persian Gulf. Such was, we may conclude, the reality of the Hsi-hai (the Western Sea) in the present case in question; and certainly it was as a country situated on

(48) 大秦國一名犁鞞，在西海之西。（晉書，卷九十七，西戎傳）

(49) HIRTH, op. cit., p. 146, note 1.

(50) 都護班超遣甘英使大秦。抵條支臨大海，欲渡而安息西界船人謂英曰，海水廣大，往來者逢善風，三月乃得度，若遇遲風亦有二歲者，故入海人皆齎三歲糧。海中善使人思土戀慕，數有死亡者。英聞之乃止。（後漢書，卷一百十八，西域傳）

(51) 條支國在山上，周回四十餘里，臨西海，海水曲環。（ibid.）

the west of this body of water that Ta-ch'in came to obtain another Chinese appellation, Hai-hsi.

HIRTH rendered the term Hai-hsi as the name of a country in various ways. He translated the Hai-hsi that appears in the account of the Tan country quoted above as "the west of the sea."<sup>(52)</sup> The Hai-hsi-kuo in the *Hsi-yü-chuan* of the *Hou-han-shu* is translated as "Country of the western part of the sea";<sup>(53)</sup> the same in the *Hsi-yü-chuan* of the *Hsin-t'ang-shu* as "Country on the west of the sea";<sup>(54)</sup> while that of the *Wèi-liao* is quoted merely as "Hai-hsi."<sup>(55)</sup> Again he rendered the Hai-hsi-kuo as "Western Sea country" in the account of Ta-ch'in of *Wèn-hsien-t'ung-k'ao* (Ch. 339).<sup>(56)</sup> Among these "the country on the west of the sea" is the best translation. When we read the text of the account of Ta-ch'in in the *Wèi-liao*, we may notice that there appear the terms "Hai-tung 海東" and "Hai-p'ei 海北" beside Hai-hsi. According to HIRTH, the sea that the Chinese of the Han period called Hsi-hai, i.e. the western sea, indicated the Indian Ocean including the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf as well as the Caspian. He says that the Hai-hsi of the account of Ta-ch'in means the western arm of the sea and therefore indicates the Red Sea, while the Hai-tung, the eastern arm of the sea, points to the Persian Gulf.<sup>(57)</sup> As an evidence, he quotes a passage of the *Wèi-liao* in which the phrase 直截海西 is comprized. HIRTH translates it literally as "traversing the west of the sea." According to him the phrase 乘船直截海西 may be interpreted as "vessels sailing from T'iao-chih to Ta-ch'in have to cross the 'western part of the sea' and this 'western part of the sea' is the Red Sea."<sup>(58)</sup>

I venture to remark, however, that such is not the proper interpretation. The phraseology allows at least as readily of reading as: "immediately or straight cross the sea, going to the west," and this, I am convinced, must have been the writer's idea. Then the whole passage concerned will read: "From the city of An-ku on the frontier of An-hsi, you take boat and go straight across the sea to the west, with favourable winds, you arrive in two months; with slow winds the passage may last a year, and with no winds at all, perhaps three years." Here is provided a very rough outline of the sea-passage to Ta-ch'in, by sailing from the city of An-ku in the country of An-hsi in a westerly direction across the ocean. Contrary to HIRTH's supposition, the reference is by no means confined to the Red Sea in this description.

After giving that brief notice of the sea-route to Ta-ch'in, from which we can learn scarcely any more than the general direction in which it tended from the city of An-ku, the *Wèi-liao* affords us a description, a little less

(52) HIRTH, op. cit. p. 37.

(53) *ibid.*, p. 40.

(54) *ibid.*, p. 56.

(55) *ibid.*, p. 68.

(56) *ibid.*, p. 77.

(57) *ibid.*, p. 163-164.

(58) *ibid.*, p. 164.

meagre, of the overland route to Ta-ch'ín, which traversed the region of Hai-pêi 海北, the North of the Sea. The passage runs as follows:

卻從安谷城，陸道直北行，之海北，復直西行之海西，復直南行經之烏遲散城，渡一河，乘船一日乃過，周廻繞海，凡當渡大海，六日乃到其國。

HIRTH translated this text into English as follows: "From the city of An-ku, one goes by land due north to the north of the sea; and again one goes due west to the west of the sea; and again you go due south to arrive there. At the city of *Wu-ch'ih-san*, you travel by river on board ship one day, then make a round at sea, and after six days' passage on the great sea, arrive in this country."<sup>(59)</sup>

It may be noted that HIRTH's version fails to recognize the character 卻 (literally, 'to turn back') at the beginning top of the passage. It is a serious omission, for that term had an important part to play in the original text. The historian had been treating of the sea-route from An-ku to Ta-ch'ín, and now he would take the reader back to the starting point by means of that term before proceeding to describe the other route to the same destination. Now the description thus commenced, though seemingly containing some obscure details, evidently refers to the line of travel which went north from An-ku (i.e. Orkoi) in the lower Euphrates valley to Hai-pêi (i.e. Syria) and whence south-westwards to Hai-hsi (i.e. Antioch) whence again across the great sea, (i.e. the Mediterranean Sea) to Alexandria, the capital city of Ta-ch'ín. HIRTH, who had taken it for granted that *Wu-ch'ih-san Ch'êng* meant Alexandria, was naturally induced to read in the latter half of the above passage a description of the route leading from Alexandria in Egypt across the Mediterranean to the Syrian metropolis Antioch, which he was convinced to be identical with Ta-ch'ín, the journey's end. Without arguing anything now against his identification of Ta-ch'ín itself, it may be pointed out at least that his interpretation would render the opening part of the passage totally unaccountable.

It must be clearly recognized that the *Wêi-liao* account of Ta-ch'ín registers two different routes, one by sea and the other by land, used for reaching the capital of Ta-ch'ín, Alexandria, from the city of An-ku at the head of the Persian Gulf. The passage up to that turning point marked by that significant character 從, running as: "From the city of An-ku on the frontier of An-hsi 安息界安谷城..... There are three great cities 凡有大都三," seems to contain some irrelevancies to the perplexity of the casual reader, but nevertheless it is clear enough that its main purport was to present the sea route from the head of the Persian Gulf to Alexandria. On the other hand, the passage which followed, as above quoted, delineated the line of traffic which ran from the head of the Persian Gulf through Babylonia and Mesopotamia, and then after traversing the northern part of Syria, went across the Mediterranean to Alexandria. HIRTH's interpretation, however, failed to discriminate the routes

(59) *ibid.*, p. 69.

given respectively in the two passages. He seemed to suppose that both referred alike to the course of travel by sea from An-ku at the head of the Persian Gulf to Alexandria in Egypt, and then across the Mediterranean to Antioch. The natural consequence of such misguided reading of the *Wèi-liao* text was the impossibility of discovering within the history any mention whatever of the land-route from the Persian Gulf to the Ta-ch'in metropolis. This latter, he believed, was only discernible in the *Hou-han-shu* account of Ta-ch'in in the following passage:

又云，從安息陸道繞海北，行出海西，至大秦。

HIRTH translates this passage as:

"It is further said that, coming from the land-road of An-hsi (Parthia), you make a round at sea and, taking a northern turn, come out from the western part of the sea, whence you proceed to Ta-ch'in."<sup>(60)</sup>

This translation shows that his interpretation of the text is not correct. The phrase 從安息陸道 does not mean "from the land-road of An-hsi" as he read, but should be interpreted as "from An-hsi (one may take) the land-road." And 繞海北行出海西 should be punctuated as 繞海北，行出海西， not as 繞海北行，出海西. Furthermore, 繞海北 means "go round Hai-pêi, i.e. the north of the sea". We may notice in passing Mr. BRETSCHNEIDER's version of the same text which runs, "From An-hsi, Ta-ch'in is reached by land, travelling around the northern shore of the sea." This conveys the general idea of the original, but cannot be regarded as a faithful translation. Nor does it seem that HIRTH himself was quite satisfied with his own interpretation, for he offers elsewhere an alternative version as follows: "Coming from the land-road of An-hsi [Parthia] you *jao* (繞) pursue a curved route, meander through, or to, *hai-pêi* (海北) [the district so-called=Mesopotamia, or the north of Syria proper] and *hsing-ch'u* (行出) going, come out at *hai-hsi*, i.e., Ta-ts'in."<sup>(61)</sup> I think this improves a great deal on his former interpretation in recognizing Hai-pêi and Hai-hsi as names; but still there remains the obviously erroneous reading of 從安息陸道 as "from the land-road of An-hsi", while the last phrase "come out at Hai-hsi, i.e. Ta-ch'in" runs a little astray from the original idea.

As already remarked, HIRTH considered the *Hou-han-shu* passage under review as the very first record to appear in Chinese history regarding any overland route from the east to Ta-ch'in. But after what we have observed in the *Wèi-liao*, that the *Hou-han-shu* here was only repeating, in abbreviation, the *Wèi-liao* account of the land-road to Ta-ch'in. Notice, for instance, how the *Hou-han-shu* passage "From An-hsi you take the land-road which traverses Hai-pêi."<sup>(62)</sup> compares with the *Wèi-liao* text "From the city of

(60) *ibid.*, p. 43.

(61) HIRTH, *op. cit.*, p. 186.

(62) 從安息陸道繞海北.

An-ku, you take the land-road, go due north and reach Hai-pêi; ”<sup>(63)</sup> and also how the phrase “come out at Hai-hsi” in the text<sup>(64)</sup> reminds one of the words “then proceed due west to Hai-hsi ”<sup>(65)</sup> in the *Wèi-liao*. Then the *Hou-han-shu* leaves out some details found in the *Wèi-liao*, until at last it concludes the statement in the words “reach Ta-ch’ín”, where the *Wèi-liao* reads “reach the country.”<sup>(66)</sup> Thus the *Hou-han-shu* adds no fresh information as to the overland approach from the east to Ta-ch’ín, but only repeats, or rather sums up, what the *Wèi-liao* reported on the subject.

There are two main factors which may be referred to as accounting for HIRTH’s failure to recognize the land-route, where it is so unmistakably mentioned in the *Wèi-liao*. One is his overwhelming presumption that the capital of Ta-ch’ín was Antioch in Syria. Not the least important of the circumstances which led him to this conclusion was the fact that *Wèi-shu*, giving account of Ta-ch’ín, mentions its capital under the name An-tu 安都, and this presented itself to HIRTH as a fair phonetic equivalent of Antioch. But this was really a sad delusion, for, as I have fully explained in my other article, *Chinese Ideas Reflected in the Ta-ch’ín Accounts*, the appellation An-tu (literally meaning City of Peace) was nothing but an invention of the historian, suggested by the legendary name An-i 安邑 (Town of Peace), where Chinese tradition placed the residence of the antique model Emperors Shun and Yü, and certainly it had nothing whatever to do with the real name of the Ta-ch’ín capital. The other root of HIRTH’s failure lay in his wrong interpretation of Wu-ch’ih-san Ch’êng as a reproduction of Alexandria. It is quite apparent from the *Wèi-liao* text that the city of Wu-ch’ih-san was so situated that the traveller, having started from the head of the Persian Gulf, and traversing first Mesopotamia and then the northern part of Syria, had to pass it before he came out upon the Medirerranean; and no doubt it is this very city that should have been identified with Antioch. The first character 烏 in the transcribed name Wu-ch’ih-san 烏遲散 is nowadays pronounced *wu* or *u*, but there is sufficient evidence that it sounded *a* in the Han and Wèi periods. I am indebted to Dr. NAGAI for the special researches he has undertaken for my benefit, revealing in fact that the Chinese translation of the *Shih-pa-ni-li-ching* 十八泥犁經, attributed to the Later Han scholar An Shih-kao 安世高, enumerates eighteen hells, one of which is named Ts’ao-wu-p’i-tz’u 草烏卑次, and this he has no doubt was transcribed from the Sanscrit term *avīci*, it being highly presumable that the first character 草 (ts’ao) was an accidental addition. This goes to show that the contemporary pronunciation of the character 烏 was *a*. It seems probable, however, that by the epoch of the Northern and Southern Dynasties that sound had changed to *o* or *u*, for we

(63) 從安谷城陸道直北之海北。

(64) 行出海西。

(65) 復直西之海西。

(66) 〔復直南行經之烏遲散城，渡一河，乘船一日乃過，周廻繞海，凡當渡大海六日〕，乃到其國。

find the Sanscrit *Oghatarana-apatana* reproduced by the characters 烏伽多羅阿婆陀那, in the *Shan-chien-lü P'i-p'o-sha* 善見律毘婆沙, translated by the Hsiao Ch'i 齋齊 priest Sêng-chia-fa-t'o-lo 僧伽趾陀羅.

So far as phonetic similitude is concerned, this would go to justify HIRTH in connecting the name with Alexandria; but it must be admitted at the same time that the name would then fit Antioch with scarcely less proximity. Moreover, from the *Wèi-liao* statement of the progress of overland travel it seems necessary that Wu-ch'ih-san was a large city lying on the highway which connected the Mediterranean with the region in which the course of the Euphrates approached nearest to the sea. This alone is sufficient indication that Wu-ch'ih-san was Antioch. But when we read, further in the *Wèi-liao* passage, that one day's journey by river from this city would take one to the seashore, our conclusion is strengthened by recognizing there the obvious reference to the Orontes flowing past Antioch and emptying into the Mediterranean. HIRTH, however, preferred to identify Wu-ch'ih-san with Alexandria, and this naturally constrained him to read the last section of the *Wèi-liao* passage beginning with the description of the land-route as: "At the city of Wu-ch'ih-san, you travel by river on board ship one day, then make a round at sea, and after six days' passage on the great sea, arrive in this country;"<sup>(67)</sup> and to assume that this was a statement of the progress from Alexandria to Antioch by sailing across the Mediterranean. Thus it happened that the single continuous account as given by the history, of the travel from An-ku at the head of the Persian Gulf to Ta-ch'in capital Alexandria, was cut asunder by the hand of HIRTH, at the term Wu-ch'ih-san Ch'êng, so that it might appear from his translation that above that term, the account referred to the travel from the Persian Gulf to Hai-hsi; and below, to the approach from Alexandria to Antioch. And all this was an inevitable result of his fundamental misconception that Wu-ch'ih-san was identical with Alexandria.

As regards the term Hai-pêi 海北 noticeable in both the *Wèi-liao* and *Hou-han-shu* passages above quoted, HIRTH, when offering an alternative version of the text concerned, interpreted it as the proper name of a region, with the suggestion that it was recognizable either as Mesopotamia or as the north of Syria proper. There he makes no choice between the two possibilities, but on the map appended to the end of his volume, we find the name Hai-pêi assigned to the north of Mesopotamia. Since he was convinced that Hai-hsi, being exactly identical with Ta-ch'in proper, referred to Syria proper, it was quite natural that he placed Hai-pêi, as distinguished from Hai-hsi, in Mesopotamia, instead of in Syria. We must see, however, whether this view can be justified by the *Wèi-liao* context. The following paragraphs, therefore, will be devoted to finding the geographical position of Hai-pêi, in the light

(67) See the foot-note 66 above.

of some other passages of the same history.

The *Wei-liao* account of Ta-ch'in has: "The king of Tsê-san 澤散 is subject to Ta-ch'in. His residence lies right in the middle of the sea. North you go to Lü-fên 驢分 by water half a year, with quick winds a month; it is nearest to the city of An-kü in An-hsi."<sup>(68)</sup> As explained in my other article, *Study on T'iao-chih*, the country of Tsê-san was identical with Mésène-Kharacène in Western records, and therefore it was situated at the head of the Persian Gulf. Going north by water from this place, one must have sailed up the Euphrates; and the country of Lü-fên, which was reached by pursuing this voyage usually half a year, and with extraordinarily favourable winds a month, must have been situated in the north of Mesopotamia and to the south of the Taurus Mountains. Now let us see what the *Wei-liao* account of Ta-ch'in says of this country in particular:

驢分王屬大秦，其治去大秦都二千里，從驢分城西之大秦，渡海飛橋長二百三十里，渡海道西南行，繞海直西行。

HIRTH's translation of the same passage has: "The king of Lü-fên is subject to Ta-ts'in. His residence is 2,000 *li* distant from the capital of Ta-ts'in. From the city of Lü-fên, you go west to Ta-ts'in. The flying bridge across the sea [river?] in Ta-ts'in west of the city of Lü-fên is 230 *li* in length. The road, if you cross the sea [river?], goes to the south-west; if you make a round at sea, [or, on the river?], you go due west."<sup>(69)</sup>

HIRTH translated the passage: 從驢分城西之大秦渡海飛橋長二百三十里 as "the flying bridge across the sea in Ta-ts'in west of the city of Lü-fên is 230 *li* in length", but this is evidently mistranslation. This passage should be read as this: "when you go to Ta-ch'in from the city of Lü-fên, you cross the sea by a flying bridge which is 230 *li* in length."

In the section of "Identifications", HIRTH renders the part of this passage in question alternatively as: "West from the city of Lü-fên is the flying bridge for crossing the sea in Ta-ts'in, 230 *li* in length,"<sup>(70)</sup> and this is followed by this interpretation: "The Chinese frequently speak of 'crossing the sea' where you actually cross 'a river'. To cross the Pearl River at Canton is up to the present day called *kuo-hai* 過海, and not *kuo-ho* 過河; .....we may therefore be allowed to interpret this passage as meaning: 'west of the city of Lü-fên you cross the *river* (the Euphrates) in a flying bridge.' .....The flying bridge, I conclude from the situation described (west of Lü-fên, on the road to the capital of Ts-ts'in), was identical with the bridge by Seleucus, the founder of the two cities facing each other on either side of the Euphrates, Apama and Zeugma. Out of the several well-known cities of the district Osrhoëne I would have given the preference to Edessa for identification with the 'city of Lü-hên,' but for the passage (p. 64), which says

(68) 澤散王屬大秦，其治在海中央，北至驢分水行半歲，風疾時一月到，最與安息安谷城相近。

(69) HIRTH, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

(70) *ibid.*, p. 192.



that 'the road, if you cross the sea [river], goes to the southwest; if you make a round at sea [on the river], you go due west.' This suggests the existence of a double route from Lü-fên to Antioch, one by land and the other by river. The city of Samosota would answer this description well enough; however, it was probably not one of the stations on the road to Antioch, for which reason I would prefer the city of Nicephorium, which lay on the road and whence you could reach the capital by going due west by river or by land via the bridge at Zeugma with its south-western road to Antioch."<sup>(71)</sup> There is every reason to accept the above identification of the "flying bridge" with the bridge at Zeugma, but I hesitate to approve that of the city of Lü-fên. In my opinion it was very unfortunate that he should have deferred his first consideration of Edessa in favour of Nicephorium; for Edessa is the very place where we must recognize the site of Lü-fên. One of my reasons rests on the consideration of the name. It has been ascertained that Edessa was not a vernacular name, but an appellation given by the Greeks. In an Assyrian inscription belonging to the 8th century B.C. the same place is called *Ruhu*; the Syrians spoke of it as *Urhoi*, the Armenians as *Urhai*, and the Arabs as *Ruha*, while the present Turks call it *Urfa*.<sup>(72)</sup> The Chinese character 驢分 Lü-fên, as pronounced nowadays, might claim considerable affinity to the Arabic name *Ruha*, but for the probability that they sounded *Lü-pün* in early periods. There is, however, this important consideration that in Chinese script the character 分 is most liable to be confounded with the character 兮. This may be illustrated by the term 勝頓 occurring in the *Ti-lí-chih* 地理志 in the *T'ang-shu* 唐書, which was apparently intended for the same place as Hsi-tun 勝頓 mentioned in the *Hsi-yü-chuan* in the *Pèi-shih*, the name by which Fu-ti-sha 弗敵沙 (Badaxšan) was represented in the Han period. Assuming a similar scribal mistake in the case of Lü-fên, and restoring it accordingly into the characters 驢兮, whose ancient sounds must have been *lü-hai* or *lü-gei*, we shall find them more connectable with *Ruha*, the Arabic name of Edessa.

My second ground for identifying Lü-fên with Edessa is the position the latter occupied as regards the contemporary route of traffic from the lower Euphrates to Antioch. HIRTH preferred Nicephorium to Edessa for the identification of Lü-fên, simply because he misread the *Wèi-liao* statement concerned, and took into account the two roads, one by land and the other by river, which led from Lü-fên to Antioch. But his reading was unjustifiable, and the text, correctly construed, would offer nothing to make the idea of Edessa improbable.<sup>(73)</sup>

(71) *ibid.*, p. 192-193.

(72) KIEPERT, *Lehrbuch der alten Geographie*, p. 156.

(73) *The Parthian Stations* by ISIDORUS who flourished round about the beginning of the Western era enables us to trace the course of travel from Antioch to Seleucia on the Tigris as follows:—Starting from Antioch one reached Zeugma on the right bank of

Identical with Edessa, the city of Lü-fên was situated at an important point of traffic, where the eastern route leading from the upper Tigris basin to Alexandria via Antioch met the southern road coming up from the lower Euphrates region, and no doubt this was why the country of Lü-fên received special mention in the *Wèi-liao* account of Ta-ch'ín. Now it is remarkable that the passage relating to the country, which runs, to quote it again: "From the city of Lü-fên you go west to Ta-ts'ín. You cross the sea by a flying bridge which is 230 *li* in length. Traversing the sea-road, you go southwest; travelling round the sea, you go due west,"<sup>(74)</sup> corresponds to the description, given elsewhere in the same account, of the land-road which was used for going to Ta-ch'ín from the city of An-ku near the head of the Persian Gulf. The latter may be cited again as: "Now from An-ku you go due north and reach Hai-pêi; then go due west to Hai-hsi; . . . .",<sup>(75)</sup> and this must mean that the land-road ran first along the Euphrates and then along the Bilecha, and having reached Edessa, or Lü-fên, turned west toward Antioch. Now take up the concluding part in particular of the above passage concerning Lü-fên: "Traversing the sea-road, you go southwest; travelling round the sea, you go due west,"<sup>(76)</sup> and see how this fits the last stage of the half-way overland route to Ta-ch'ín, described elsewhere in the same Ta-ch'ín account: "Then you go round making a circuitous way on the sea. On the whole you take six days' passage across the sea, and then reach the country."<sup>(77)</sup> Evidently both statements referred to the same sea-passage, which was taken southwestwards across the Mediterranean to reach Alexandria from the mouth of the Orontes, which flowed through Antioch. As for the term "sea" in the above passage relating to Lü-fên;

the Euphrates; crossed over to Apamea (on the other side) and went on past Dacara, Antemusias, Coraea, and Auyreth until he came upon the upper course of the Bilecha, the tributary of the Euphrates; then he went down along the river past Commisimbela, Alagma, and Ichnae, as far as Nicephorium, which lay on the confluence. Farther, he kept southwards along the Euphrates until departing from it at Neapolis, whence he turned southeast so as to reach Seleucia on the Tigris. (W.N. SCHOFF, *Parthian Stations by Isidorus of Charax*, pp. 3-5). It seems to follow that if one was to travel by water from the head of the Persian Gulf to Edessa, he would sail up as far as Nicephorium, and from there go up north along the Bilecha until he reached his journey's end. Further on, to repair from Edessa to the district of Antioch, he would follow a road which ran north of Coraea, Antemusias, and Dacara until he attained Zeugma on the Euphrates. These observations of the routes of traffic in the region in question as they must have been in the Han period, allow us to draw the conclusion that there were two different courses available for going from Nicephorium to Zeugma; that is to say, if the traveller, having first gone up north along the Bilecha to its upper course, preferred the short cut for the rest of the way, he would turn northwest and proceed to Zeugma, and if he chose the easier, though a little roundabout way, he would go on farther north to Edessa, and then proceed west slightly by south towards Zeugma.

- (74) 從驢分城西之大秦，渡海飛橋長二百三十里，渡海道西南行，繞海直西行。  
 (75) 卻從安谷城，陸道直北行之海北，復直西行之海西。  
 (76) 渡海道西南行，繞海直西行。  
 (77) 周廻繞海，凡當渡大海六日，乃到其國。

which HIRTH proposed to interpret as river, it had really nothing to do with the Euphrates. However, in order to account for that phrase, "cross the sea by a flying bridge, which was 230 *li* in length," and recognize here the historical bridge at Zeugma, it might seem at all events necessary for us to follow HIRTH in interpreting the "sea" in the sense of the Euphrates. But we must remember that, in spite of the illustrations to that effect offered by him, it was a very unusual matter to find a river represented as sea, and this reflection set me long ago on the suspicion that there might be some scribal mistake in this case. Later, this view of mine was strengthened by noticing this passage in the *Hou-han-shu* account of Ta-ch'in, "They also say that there is a flying bridge of several hundred *li*, by which one may cross to the countries of Hai-pêi 海北."<sup>(78)</sup> In all probability, this referred to the same historical fact as did the above *Wei-liao* passage, and so leads us to inference that in the *Wei-liao* text the character *pêi* 北 which should have followed was dropped through a scribal mistake; rectified accordingly, the passage would read "cross to Hai-pêi by a flying bridge....."<sup>(79)</sup> If this revision is accepted, we may be sure that the term Hai-pêi here signified the Syrian region stretching west of the Euphrates; while, on the other hand, Hai-tung represented Mesopotamia lying east of the river.<sup>(80)</sup>

While confirming the above explanation of the *Wei-liao* passage pertaining to the travel from Lü-fên westwards to Ta-ch'in, it must be noted that the distance of 2,000 *li* given in the context as lying between those two places falls far short of the reasonable distance between Edessa and Alexandria. To HIRTH, however, who believed in the identity of the Ta-ch'in capital with Antioch, this record of distance seemed to lend assistance to this identification of Lü-fên as Nicephorium. Estimating the distance from Antioch to Zeugma at about 1,100 stadia on the authority of Strabo,<sup>(81)</sup> and that from Apamea to Nicephorium at 930 stadia on the basis of ISIDORUS'S *Parthian Stations* he argued that the total of the two distances sufficiently approached the 2,000 *li* of Chinese records. Yet it does not appear very probable that, measured from Antioch, the distance to Edessa did considerably differ from that to Nicephorium, and therefore we do not see why Nicephorium should be preferred to Edessa on the ground of that 2,000 *li*. In any case, however, it might seem to follow that this record of distance, if accepted as genuine, and then taken by itself, would necessarily tend to identify the Ta-ch'in capital with Antioch. But we have already seen how the fact of the sea-passage forming part of the route recorded as from Lü-fên to the Ta-ch'in

(78) 又言有飛橋數百里，可度海北諸國。

(79) 渡海北飛橋長二百三十里。

(80) As for the questionable length of the bridge, 230 *li*, I suggested in my article, "Chinese Ideas Reflected in the Ta-ch'in Accounts," that it might be a mistake for what should have been written 230 *chang*.

(81) XVI, p. 749.

capital renders impossible the idea of recognizing Antioch at the journey's end, and as for the deficient distance, we can but account for it by assuming that there was some mistake about the record, either in calculation or in the course of transcribing.

Having clearly recognized in the *Wèi-liao* account of Ta-ch'in the record of the two roads, one by sea and the other by land, available for reaching Ta-ch'in from the head of the Persian Gulf, we may now proceed to point out in the same account evidence of another overland route to Ta-ch'in, which ran through Palmyra, instead of through Antioch, as did the one above observed. "The king of Ch'ieh-lan 且蘭 is subject to Ta-ch'in," says the *Wèi-liao*, "having repaired to the country of Ssü-t'ao 思陶, you go due south and cross the river, and then proceed due west to Ch'ieh-lan 3,000 *li*. The road comes out in the south of the river, and then leads westwards. From Ch'ieh-lan, you go again due west to the country of Ssü-fu 汜復 600 *li*. The Southern Road (the above described road) joins at Ssü-fu. Then you go southwest to the country of Hsien-tu 賢督. To the south of Ch'ieh-lan and Ssü-fu, there is Chih-shih 積石 (Accumulated Stones, i.e. Stony Land); and south of Chih-shih, there is a great sea, which produces coral and pearls."<sup>(82)</sup> As HIRTH justly conjectured, Ssü-t'ao must have meant Sittake on the right bank of the Tigris. From this place, the traveller might have first gone due south along the Euphrates, and then having followed up the river for a distance, left its bank near the present Is, to go west through the desert to Ch'ieh-lan, which HIRTH suggested, was identical with Palmyra. The stated distance of 3,000 *li* he explained by setting down the distance between Sittake and Palmyra at 3,000 stadia, on the basis of the distance between Palmyra and Seleucia, which was given by PLINY as 337,000 paces, i.e. about 4,500 stadia. There seems every reason to accept the identification of Ch'ieh-lan with Palmyra, as a matter beyond dispute. I may venture, however, to add an explanation of the name Ch'ieh-lan, which our author left untouched. The vernacular name of the place was Tadmôr or Tadamôra, which came from the Arabic epithet, "the land of palms," and *Palmyra* was the Latin translation of this. Now the characters 且蘭, as they stand on record now, seem to have no connection at all with either western name, Tadmôr or Palmyra. In Chinese literature, however, the first character 且 is quite liable to be confounded with the character 旦. Where, for instance, the account of the Wu-wan 烏丸 race in the *Wèi-chih*, of the *Ch'ien-lung* 乾隆 edition, mentions the name of the Wu-wan chieftain 郝且, we find this commentary appended: "Both the Pêi-sung 北宋 edition and the *Hou-han-shu* spell it 旦." This indicates that the personal name in question was elsewhere written 郝旦, and by analogy we may hold it as highly possible that 且蘭 was the corrupted

(82) 且蘭王屬大秦。往思陶國，直南渡河，乃直西行，之且蘭三千里。道出河南乃西行。從且蘭復直西行，之汜復國六百里，南道會汜復。乃西南之賢督國。且蘭汜復南乃有積石，積石南乃之大海，出珊瑚真珠。

transcription for 且蘭. Now the character 且 is now commonly pronounced *tan*, but seeing that its derivatives 担 and 韃 are in some cases pronounced *tat* (or *tad*), we may fairly assume that 且 itself had the same sound in early times. This makes the name presumed 且蘭 *tan-lan* also pronounceable as *tad-lan*, and then it may be easily recognized as a transliteration of Tadmôr or Tadamôra, with the dropping of the middle syllable *mo*. This inference, if accepted, will also serve to corroborate HIRTH's identification.

As for the country of Ssü-fu, HIRTH thought it identifiable with Emesa on the western bank of the Orontes. No doubt he owed this idea to the corresponding passage in a different edition of the *Wèi-chih* (with quotations from the *Wèi-liao*), which he translated: "Coming from Ch'ieh-lan you go again straight to the country of Ssü-fu on the western river 600 *li*."<sup>(83)</sup> The original text, however, runs as follows: 從且蘭復直西河之汜復六百里. Other texts read 西河 as 西行. Any one who is acquainted at all with the genius of literary Chinese will easily perceive the impossibility of reading it after the manner of HIRTH. Moreover, as HIRTH himself was aware, it was not in all editions of the history that the character *ho* 河 instead of *hsing* 行 occurs at the point in question. No doubt HIRTH was prepossessed by the idea that Emesa must be the city at which the Palmyran road leading through the desert joined the "southern road" coming up north from Petra to Antioch. But we wonder how the passage continued: 南道會汜復乃西之賢督國, can ever be construed, as done by HIRTH, to the following effect: "Where the southern road joins Ssü-fu (i.e. the road to Ssü-fu), there is the country of Hsien-tu in the southwest."<sup>(84)</sup> It was this apparently forced interpretation, however, that he placed Hsien-tu at Damask. But neither his identification of Hsien-tu, nor that of Ssü-fu, answer to the indication of directions in the original text. There Ssü-fu is assigned due west of Ch'ieh-lan, whereas Emesa lies northwest of Palmyra. Again, Hsien-tu is mentioned to the southwest of Ssü-fu, whereas Damask is situated rather due south of Emesa. Apart from this, there is this important consideration that the series of cities given in the order of Ssü-t'ao, Ch'ieh-lan, Ssü-fu, and Hsien-tu, with the relative positions as indicated, tends, on the whole, from a westerly to a southwesterly direction. This probably justifies us in assuming that those cities lay all on the route which led from the lower Euphrates region to the Ta-ch'ün capital at Alexandria in Egypt. It does not appear very likely, then, that the road, with such a general trend, should have taken a roundabout course, turning once to the northwest and then to the south; and on this account we have good reason to prefer Damask to Emesa for the identification of Ssü-fu, mentioned as lying 600 *li* due west of Ch'ieh-lan, or Palmyra. Besides, it will be in good conformity with the nature of the Chinese language

(83) HIRTH, *op. cit.*, p. 194.

(84) *ibid.*, p. 195.

to interpret the passage: 南道會汜復 as referring to the fact of Damask being situated at the point where the eastern road coming from the quarter of Palmyra met with the southern road reaching there from the direction of Petra. Furthermore, the name Ssü-fu affiliates itself better with Damask than with Emesa. There is evidence that the archaic pronunciation of the characters ssü fu 汜復 was *zi-biuk* or *tsi-biuk*;<sup>(85)</sup> but certainly this suggests no shade of similarity to Emesa, which was the Greek name of the place, neither to the Roman name *Hemesa*, the Syriac name *Chemes*, or the Arabic name *Homs*. On the other hand, Damask was called *Dimasqi* in Assyrian, *Dammeseq* in Hebrew, and *Dimešq* in Arabic;<sup>(86)</sup> and it is the last-mentioned *Dimešq* that is far more comparable with *Zi-biuk*, the archaic equivalent of Ssü-fu. For the mutual exchangeability of the sounds *m* and *b* is very apparent in certain place names in Syria. Heliopolis, for example, is indifferently spoken of by the natives as *Maalbek* or *Baalbek*; and Hierapolis as *Manbeg* or *Bambeg*. It is therefore highly probable that the characters 汜復 now pronounced *Ssü-fu*, but *zi-biuk* of old, formed the transliteration of the Arabic name *Dimešq*, as corrupted to *Dibešq*.

The above statement of the direction of the road from Ssü-fu to Hsien-tu is not accompanied by any entry of the distance, as might have been required for the uniformity with the context; and we are led to suspect that here was some accidental omission. A little further in the same account, however, we are given to understand that it was 600 *li* from Ssü-fu to Hsien-tu; and if Ssü-fu was identical with Damask, that distance laid on in a southwesterly direction from that city can but take us into the realm of Judea. Needless to say, the most important, the most celebrated place in this quarter was Jerusalem. Its native appellation was *Yerûšalaim*, while the Greeks called it *Hiercsôlyma*. Now we may proceed to inquire whether the name Hsien-tu could claim any linguistic relation with either. The archaic sound of the characters 賢督, as generally accepted, is *hsien-duh*. It is remarkable, however, that the *Shuo-wên* defines the second character as: “督 means ‘viewing and observing’”. It is derived from 目 (eye) and sounded after 叔.<sup>(87)</sup> And as the old sound of the last-mentioned character 賢 (now pronounced *shu*) was *siuk*,<sup>(88)</sup> we may safely assume that the name 賢督 sounded *hien-siuk* in the Han and Wêi periods. Now it is noteworthy that when the ancient Chinese reproduced a foreign name in their own language, they had a way of applying a character whose sound ended with *n* so as to represent an original alien syllable ending with the *r* sound, to witness—the adoption of the characters 安息 (with the old sound *An-sik*) in order to transcribe *Arsak*. So in our present case, we may be allowed to compare the character 賢 *hien* to *hierô*

(85) B. KARLGREN, *Analytic Dictionary of Chinese and Sino-Japanese*.

(86) KIEPERT, p. 166.

(87) 督察視也，从目，叔聲。(說文解字四篇上)

(88) KARLGREN, *op. cit.*, p. 266.

of Hierosôlyma or to *yerû* of Yerûšalaim; while the other character 督 (*sjuk*) may be taken as standing for the syllable *sol* or *sal* in the latter half of either western name. If I am not mistaken in this observation, it may be taken for granted that the *Wêi-liao* passage under review described a commercial route running from Damask to the locality of Gaza via Jerusalem.

As regards Chi-shih (Stony land) assigned to the due south of Ch'ieh-lan and Ssü-fu, that is, Tadmôr and Dimešq, we might suppose that it referred to Hamad or the Stony Desert which stretches in the north of Arabia. Immediately below in the *Wêi-liao* account, however, we find the great sea described as lying south of it and as producing corals and pearls; and as this could have been nothing but the Red Sea, we may rather assume, with HIRTH, that Chi-shih meant the western portion of the Desert, namely, the rocky portion of Arabia Petraea, the country about Petra. We may also notice that the mention in the history of this particular region and the Red Sea is a strong indication that the contemporary Chinese knew of the commercial route which reached from Damask to the Gulf of Akaba by way of Petra.

In the hope of promoting the right interpretation of the Ta-ch'ín accounts in Chinese history, I may now venture to cite and comment on the explanation of Ssü-fu and Hsien-tu proffered by PELLIOT, which is entirely different from HIRTH's, and from mine, too. In his opinion, the *Wêi-liao* statement concerned, that the southern road joined (the eastern road) at Ssü-fu, referred to the fact that the southern road which came up north along the Euphrates from the quarter of Babylon fell in at that point with the other route of traffic which came eastwards from Antioch, to cross the Euphrates, a little further on and going through the north of Mesopotamia and traversing along the northern frontier of Persia, was to reach China in fine. HIRTH had recognized such a juncture of such roads in Zeugma, but now PELLIOT, identifying the one couple of roads with the other, would place the meeting point (i.e. Ssü-fu) at Hieropolis, which lay a little south of Zeugma, west of the Euphrates. His reason was that Bambyke, the native appellation of Hieropolis, which is a Greek name, fairly identified itself with the Chinese name Ssü-fu 汜復, on the assumption that the latter was the corruption of 汜復 Fan-fu, whose sounds were so suggestive of Bambyke. As for Hsien-tu, he proposed to identify it with Antioch, because the characters representing that name, 賢督, taken in their ancient sound *hiän-tuk*, seemed to claim phonetic affinity to Antioch.<sup>(89)</sup> Such identifications of Ssü-fu and Hsien-tu may seem plausible from the linguistic point of view, but otherwise there is ample reason to oppose them.

Long as was the whole course of the Euphrates forming the frontier line between Syria and Mesopotamia, it was seldom crossed by commercial routes unless at a limited number of points, whose situations had been traditionally fixed for ages. History shows that the most important ferries across the river

(89) PELLIOT, *Note sur les anciens itinéraires chinois dans l'Orient Romain*, J. A., 1921, p. 139-145.

known in early times were Thapsacus, Zeugma, and Samosata. Among these, Thapsacus, the lowest one, was greatly resorted to from remote antiquity to the days of Alexander, but thence it went on gradually declining in importance, and towards the end of the Former Han period, it was very little in use. The ferry of Samosata, lying in the farthest north, must have been indispensable for traffic between Asia Minor and Mesopotamia, but then it is very certain that those who sought to reach Mesopotamia from the district of Antioch were invariably bound to pass Zeugma.<sup>(90)</sup> As pointed out by PELLIOU himself, the name Zeugma, originally a Greek word denoting 'connection,' and extended to the sense of 'bridge' or 'ferry,' was not primarily a proper name peculiar to any particular place; but we know that during the Han and Wèi times, the word came to apply in particular to Bir on the Euphrates, which was an important point on the highway of world commerce. ISIDORUS'S "*Parthian Stations*" bears witness to the fact that contemporary travel from Antioch to Nicephorium was generally performed via Zeugma, while the *Wèi-liao* account of Ta-ch'ín enables us to surmise that those who repaired from the city of Lü-fên, i.e. Edessa, to Antioch must have passed the same place. In view of this, Zeugma was the most likely point where the southern road from the direction of Babylon should have joined the eastern route which came from the north of Mesopotamia. On the other hand, there is no sufficient evidence to show that Hieropolis ever occupied a position of comparable importance in the history of world traffic.

Further objection to PELLIOU'S identification comes from the study of the *Wèi-liao* account itself. There the country of Ssü-fu is placed in a quarter whose direction from the starting point, i.e. the country of Ssü-t'ao (Sittake), tends westwards,—if identical with Hieropolis, one must have gone north or northwest to reach it from Ssü-t'ao. Then, farther than Ssü-fu, the road is described as going southwest to Hsien-tu, whereas from Hieropolis to Antioch (which PELLIOU identifies with Hsien-tu) the passage must have a westerly, rather than southwesterly course. Lastly comes the consideration of Chi-shih mentioned as "lying due south of Ch'ieh-lan and Ssü-fu." We have seen how the name must have referred to Badiet eš Šam, or Hamad, i.e. the Syrian desert, as it is now called; yet Hieropolis had certainly no such desert region to its south. As for PELLIOU'S proposal to rectify the spelling Ssü-fu 汜復 into Fan-fu 汎復, I should think there can be no absolute denial of it. The surviving text of the *Wèi-liao* is quite liable to betray corrupted spellings in place names, and I myself ventured to suggest similar corrections in the cases of Lü-fên and Ch'ieh-lan observed in the history. Needless to say however, such assumptions are only permissible when supported by other than linguistic conditions, and we have seen how PELLIOU'S theory fails in that respect.

(90) BUNBURY, *History of Ancient Geography*, II, p. 107.



As regards PELLIOU's identification of Hsien-tu with Antioch, it will suffice to say that Antioch lay in a westerly direction from Hieropolis (the site of Ssü-fu, in his opinion); whereas the *Wèi-liao* mentions Hsien-tu to the southwest of Ssü-fu. But that is not all. If I may anticipate what I am going to discuss more fully hereafter, there is this fundamental truth that in the minds of the contemporary Chinese historians, the general tract of country lying south of the Taurus and west of the Zagros fell naturally into three divisions, which they termed respectively Hai-tung 海東 (East of the Sea), Hai-hsi 海西 (West of the Sea) and Hai-pêi 海北 (North of the Sea). Now Antioch, as will be later explained at length, was part of Hai-hsi and lay within the sphere of Ta-ch'ín-proper; Hsien-tu, on the other hand, was included in Hai-pêi, forming a dependent state subject to Ta-ch'ín; and of course this consideration makes it impossible to imagine any relation of identity between Hsien-tu and Antioch.

Having elucidated that PELLIOU's divergent different identification of Ssü-fu and Hsien-tu offers no real check to my own, we shall now return to the observation of the *Wèi-liao* text. Up to the point where we have left it, the history traces the overland route in a direction always tending to the west, that is, from the starting point in the country of Ssü-t'ao, through Ch'ieh-lan and Ssü-fu, Hsien-tu. Reading a little further, however, we find the same stretch of road retraced from west to east. The passage concerned is: "The king of Hsien-tu is subject to Ta-ch'ín. His residence lies 600 *li* northeast to Ssü-fu. The king of Ssü-fu is subject to Ta-ch'ín. His residence is 340 *li* northeast to Yü-lo 于羅 across the sea. Yü-lo is subject to Ta-ch'ín. The residence (of its king) is to the northeast of Ssü-fu across the river. From Yü-lo northeast one again crosses a river, and one crosses another river northeast of Ssü-lo 斯羅. The country of Ssü-lo is subject to An-hsi, while lying adjacent to Ta-ch'ín."<sup>(91)</sup> The statement that from the royal capital of Hsien-tu it was 600 *li* northeast to Ssü-fu does not merely answer to the previous passage telling us that Hsien-tu, lay in a southwesterly direction to Ssü-fu but also supplies the distance between the two cities mentioned there. Farther, we read about Ssü-fu that from its royal capital it was 340 *li* northwest to Yü-lo across the sea, and then about Yü-lo that its capital lay northwest of Ssü-fu across the river. Very obviously the latter statement repeats the same fact as expressed in the former, in spite of the strange (remarkable) contrast between "across the sea" in the one and "across the river" in the other. We cannot but assume that both phrases referred to the Euphrates which had to be crossed before reaching Yü-lo; and in fact, it was this couple of expressions that HIRTH pointed out as an instance where the same water was spoken of in Chinese literature as 'river' and as 'sea' as

(91) 賢督王屬大秦，其治東北去汜復六百里。汜復王屬大秦，其治東北去于羅三百四十里，渡海也。于羅屬大秦，其治在汜復東北，渡河。從于羅東北又渡河，斯羅東北渡河，斯羅國屬安息，與大秦接也。

well, when he claimed to interpret the phrase “Tu hai p'í ch'iao 渡海飛橋” (flying bridge across the sea) in the other passage of the *Wèi-liao*, as referring to the bridge of Zeugma thrown across the Euphrates. But we have already seen how in that *Wèi-liao* passage relating to the flying bridge, the term “hai” should be regarded as a mutilation of “Hai-p'ei” as the name of a district. And in our present case, the only explanation allowable will be that the character *hai* (sea) in the former statement was a corruption due to scribal mistake, of what should have been *ho* (river) in the sense of the Euphrates.

As we are told that Yü-lo was 340 *li* northeast of Ssü-fu (i.e. Damask), we might perhaps seek it at a distance of 300 *li* or so northwest of Ch'ieh-lan (i.e. Palmyra), on the basis of what we have learned of the relative positions of Ssü-fu and Ch'ieh-lan. However that may be, we are confronted with the difficulty of finding in the quarter indicated any important river which may answer to the river mentioned which had to be crossed before reaching Yü-lo from the direction of Damask. We are naturally led to question the evidence of the *Wèi-liao* in this respect; and this sends us to the *Hou-han-shu* to see what is said there of the country of Yü-lo. The account of An-hsi in that history has: “From An-hsi you go west 3,400 *li* to the country of A-man 阿蠻; from A-man you go west 9,600 *li* to the country of Ssü-pin 斯賓, from Ssü-pin you go south, crossing a river, and again southwest to the country of Yü-lo, 960 *li*, the extreme west frontier of An-hsi; from here you travel south by sea, and so reach Ta-ch'in.”<sup>(92)</sup> From this it must seem that Yü-lo was a city lying on the route of traffic which led from the capital of An-hsi to the head of the Persian Gulf via Ecbatana (i.e. A-man), and Ktesiphon (i.e. Ssü-pin), and most probably situated on the Euphrates. There seems no reason to doubt this report of the *Hou-han-shu*, and so we may be allowed to assume that the author of the *Wèi-liao* was somehow greatly misguided in placing Yü-lo in such a direction and at such a distance from Ssü-fu, i.e. Damask.

HIRTH considered that Yü-lo was Hira situated on the north bank of Lake Nedjef.<sup>(93)</sup> But if we follow him, many obstacles will occur. First it is only in the latter part of the Later Han Dynasty that the City of Hira was first established and the city began to flourish in the first half of the third century, while the Chinese were informed of Yü-lo by KAN Ying who reached T'iao-chih about 97 A.D. Secondly Yü-lo was located on the left bank of the Euphrates, for the country was reached across a river from the country of Ssü-fu according to the *Wèi-liao*, whereas Hira was on the right bank of the Pallacopas which was a right branch of the Euphrates. Thirdly Hira was in the south from Ktesiphon, while Yü-lo is said to have been in the southwest of Ssü-pin, i.e. Ktesiphon. For these reasons we cannot conclude

(92) 自安息國西行三千四百里，至阿蠻國。從阿蠻西行三千六百里，至斯賓國。從斯賓南行渡河又西南至于漢國九百六十里，安息西界極矣。自此南乘海乃通大秦。(後漢書，卷十八，西域傳)

(93) HIRTH, *op. cit.*, p. 149-151.

that Yü-lo is Hira.

Chinese histories teach us that the country of Yü-lo was situated on the left bank of the Euphrates and that the site was 960 *li* southwest of Ssü-pin, i.e. Ktesiphon, but its location cannot be definitely identified. If we are allowed, however, to identify it with Ura which is mentioned in PLINY's *Natural History*, it will be possible to be specified much more closely where it was situated. PLINY, describing Syria in the basin of the Euphrates, says: "Other towns in Syria are those of Europus, and what was formerly Thapsacus, now Amphipolis. We then come to the Arabian Scenitæ. The Euphrates then proceeds in its course till it reaches the place called Ura, at which, taking a turn to the east, it leaves the Syrian Deserts of Palmyra, which extend as far as the city of Petra and the regions of Arabia Felix."<sup>(94)</sup> In another passage of the same book he also says: "When the Euphrates ceases, by running in its channel, to afford protection to those who dwell on its banks, which it does when it approaches the confines of Charax, the country is immediately infested by the Attali, a predatory people of Arabia, beyond whom are found the Scenitæ. The banks along this river occupied by the Nomades of Arabia, as far as the deserts of Syria, from which, as we have already stated, it takes a turn to the South, and leaves the solitary deserts of Palmyra."<sup>(95)</sup> When we consider places inhabited by tribes along the Euphrates by means of these two accounts, it was difficult for Arabian nomads to invade in the interior of Mésène beyond this river, for Mésène abounded in swamps. In the north, as the west bank of the Euphrates was immediately adjacent to the desert, it was easier for Arabians to plunder the inhabitants along the river across it. When we enumerate these Arabians northward from here, it is the Attal tribe who occupied the western territory of the Euphrates. The Nomades inhabited the area extending to the south end of the Syrian desert while it would be the Scenitæ who occupied both the east and west of the river extending to Thapsacus from here. J. St. MARTIN considered that the land of these Scenitæ was located between Thapsacus and the south of Mesopotamia.<sup>(96)</sup> *Scenitæ* is a Latin word meaning 'a people of tent', derived from *scena* 'tent', and is not a proper noun designating a certain nomad people inhabiting the Syrian Desert. According to the description of PLINY quoted above, the road from Thapsacus to Ura seems to have passed through the territory of Scenitæ. Therefore it is assumed that this territory was in the vicinity of Babylon, south of Mesopotamia, but its definite location cannot be identified. It is said in Chapter 21 of Volume 5 of *Natural History* that the Euphrates turns towards the east at Ura and goes into the Syrian Desert. This passage is considered to be valuable for the identification, but PLINY says in Chapter 30 of Volume 6, that the river turns towards the south at the same place.

(94) PLINY, *Natural History*, Bohns ed. vol. I, p. 444-445.

(95) *ibid.*, vol. II, p. 74.

(96) J. ST. MARTIN, *Recherches sur la Mésène et Characène*, p. 56-57.

Thus we cannot determine which of these two is right. The stream of the Euphrates flows generally in the direction of the south and it is difficult to discover any point at which the river is directed to the east. We find, however, the following passage in Chapter 31 of Volume 5: "The Euphrates is divided into two branches in the neighbourhood of a village called Massice, 594 miles in the distance from Zeugma. The left branch flows through Mesopotamia and passing around Seleucia pours into the Tigris. The right branch runs towards Babylon, the ancient capital of Chaldaea, flows through the city and passing through another city, Otris, at last disappears into swamps." If the description preceding this passage about the turn of the river towards the east at Ura is justified, it denotes the left branch of the Euphrates. But if it is admitted that this left branch passes around Seleucia and pours into the Tigris, as stated in the text above, the stream here denotes a canal called Nahr Malka, but not the main stream of the Euphrates. And if we approve the account of Vol. 6 and therefore we assume that this river turns towards the south at Ura, it denotes the river that flows towards the south in two branches divided at Mussaib, the right branch passing through Lake Nedjef and the left passing by Babylon. In reality the right branch is the main stream of the river, while the left one is a canal. However since the time of Alexander the Great the right branch had come to be called Pallacopas and the left Euphrates. This holds good even in the time of PLINY, as European people have called the left branch as Euphrates since the time of Alexander while Arabians have kept the name of Euphrates for the right branch. Therefore either of these two alternatives should be adopted. If Ura was located at the place where the river turned towards the east, it should be identified with Neapolis of ISIDORUS's "*Parthian Stations*", where the Nahr Malka poured into the Euphrates. On the other hand, if Ura was at the point where this river flowed southward, it should be located near Mussaib, where the river is divided. Neapolis, as stated above, was in the west of Ktesiphon and Seleucia and was an important point on the route along the Euphrates from Antioch, while Ura may be considered to have been situated in the south of Neapolis, if it is identified with the Yü-lo of Chinese histories, as Yü-lo was a key point on the route along the Euphrates towards the Persian Gulf. Whether the river may turn towards the east or towards the south, we can perceive sufficiently from PLINY's writings that this left the desert at Ura and entered the fertile land. The soil of the present Mesopotamia shows a great difference between the south and the north with Hit or Is as a boundary. In the north from there extends the Syrian desert that is almost sterile, while the land in the south belongs to alluvium and is fertile. Therefore no doubt Ura, i.e. Yü-lo, was located in the valley of the Euphrates between Hit in the north and Babylon in the south.

From the foregoing observations it is certain at all events that the road from Damask to Yü-lo must have tended in a southeasterly direction, inspite

of the *Wei-liao* statement to the contrary, that is, that it ran northeastwards, as apparently the corresponding distance, given as 340 *li* in the *Wei-liao*, was absurdly understated. If we are to add up the distance given by the history as from Ssü-t'ao (Sittake) to Ch'ieh-lan (Palmyra) 3,000 *li* and that as from Ch'ieh-lan to Ssü-fu 600 *li*, the resultant might be utilized to guess approximately the whole distance from Ssü-fu to Yü-lo via Palmyra (Ch'ieh-lan), at three thousand some hundred *li*. We see, however, no mention made in the *Wei-liao* account of any intervening station which was passed on the way from Ssü-fu to Yü-lo, and this seems to suggest the probability that the route in question did not touch Palmyra, but ran southwest through the desert to Yü-lo. We can easily imagine how Ssü-fu was a real hub with several important roads converging there from many directions, from Petra, Hsien-tu, Ch'ieh-lan and Yü-lo, a circumstance than which no better proof is needed to convince us that it was identical with Damask.

## Chapter III

In the foregoing paragraphs we have observed how, going westwards from T'iao-chih across the great sea, one was supposed to find the country (countries) of Hai-hsi, and how, going westwards from the country of Lü-fên and passing beyond the "flying bridge" (thrown across the Euphrates at Zeugma); one might reach the countries of Hai-pêi. Now there was another group of countries recognized by the Chinese historians under the name Hai-tung (the East of the Sea). For witness, the *Wêi-liao* account of Ta-ch'ín, while describing the fine variety of fabrics woven in the country of Hai-hsi, i.e. Ta-ch'ín, remarks: "They are all excellent, and their colours are of brighter appearance than those manufactured in the countries of Hai-tung."<sup>(97)</sup> It is thus that we come to the conclusion that the Chinese historians of the Han and Wêi periods mentally divided a certain portion of western Asia into the three districts, namely, Hai-hsi, Hai-tung, and Hai-pêi. As for Hai-hsi and Hai-tung, we can easily gather their respective positions from the following passage of the *Wêi-liao*: "On the north of Ch'ieh-lan, Ssü-fu, Ssü-pin, and A-man there is a range of mountains extending from east to west; on the east of Ta-ch'ín and (on the east of) Hai-tung, there is respectively a range of mountains, each extending from north to south."<sup>(98)</sup> As conclusively identified by HIRTH, the first-mentioned range being one which extended from east to west to the north of Ch'ieh-lan (Palmyra), Ssü-fu (Damask), Ssü-pin (Ktesiphon), and A-man (Ecbatana), was the Taurus Mountains; the range which ran from north to south to the east of Ta-ch'ín, (i.e. the country of Hai-hsi) was the Lebanon; and the range that ran in the same direction to the east of Hai-tung, the Zagros Mountains.<sup>(99)</sup> From these data we may draw an inference as follows:—Hai-hsi comprised, on the one hand, the northern part of Syria which lay south of the Taurus and which included Antioch within its limits; it embraced, on the other hand, Phönicia, Palästina, Egypt, etc., all lying on the Mediterranean coast; and therefore it was coextensive with Ta-ch'ín proper. Hai-tung meant the whole region between the Zagros and the Euphrates, so that those cities and countries mentioned in the *Wêi-liao* as Ssü-pin, Ssü-lo 斯盧, Ssü-t'ao, Lü-fên, Yü-lo 于羅 (or Yü-lo 於羅), and T'iao-chih (i.e. Tsê-san 澤散, as shall be later explained), all belonged in the category called "the countries of Hai-tung." This leaves the whole tract of land between the Euphrates and the Lebanon, namely, Syria proper, to be identified with Hai-pêi, and in conse-

(97) (有織成細布，言用水羊羖，名曰海西布。此國六畜皆出水。或云，非獨用羊毛也，亦用木皮或野蘭絲，作織成毼毼毼毼屬帳之屬。)皆好，其色又鮮於海東諸國所作也。

(98) 且蘭沱復斯賓阿蠻北有一行山東西行，太秦海東東各有一山，皆南北行。

(99) HIRTH, op. cit., p. 195-196.

quence the Hai-pêi countries must have included Ch'ieh-lan, Ssü-fu, and Hsien-tu.

HIRTH proposed to interpret the term Hai-hsi (the West of the Sea) in the sense of the western arm of the sea, viz. the Red Sea, and accordingly to place the "country of Hai-hsi" on the western side of that Sea. Egypt might indeed satisfy this condition, but surely not the Syrian countries on the Mediterranean. And yet he elsewhere identifies the mountain-range forming the eastern boundary of Ta-ch'ín (i.e. Hai-hsi) with the Lebanon and claims to fix the site of the Ta-ch'ín capital at Antioch;—a self contradiction not to be overlooked. Likewise, as he considered the term Hai-tung to mean the eastern arm of the sea, that is, the Persian Gulf, consistency of method would have required him to place the countries of Hai-tung on the eastern side of that Gulf, where there lay, in the north, the country of T'iao-chih, and down toward the south, the several provinces of An-hsi, such as Susiana, Persis, Carmania, etc. But what we see marked out on his map as Hai-tung is not this, but the region corresponding to Babylonia and Mesopotamia and lying far inland to the north of the sea, too. It might not be impossible to make a compromise, recognizing the Red Sea into the term Hai-hsi and at the same time taking the country of Hai-hsi, i.e. the country on the west of the Red Sea, in such a manner as to include part of Syria; identifying Hai-tung with the Persian Gulf and still admitting Mesopotamia within the category of the Hai-tung countries, i.e. the countries on the east of the Gulf. But could such a principle of explanation work with Hai-pêi as well? It is clearly out of the question to interpret the term Hai-pêi in the sense of the northern arm of the sea. The region of the "Hai-pêi countries" referred very obviously to that of Syria proper (or, according to HIRTH, to the north of Syria proper), and yet we find no "northern arm of the sea" to be pointed out on the south of Syria proper, where there are, instead, the deserts of Syria and of Arabia. Certainly the idea of the eastern and western arms of the sea does not go far to explain the terms Hai-tung, Hai-hsi, and Hai-pêi, and we must seek to interpret them in another way. I believe the most obvious explanation of those triplet names is that they signified three land regions on three sides of a certain sea,—in other words, Hai-tung meant the region lying on the east of that body of water, and so on with Hai-hsi and Hai-pêi. But it remains to be seen what particular sea was held in view. HIRTH, and also most other scholars engaged in the study of the history of Ta-ch'ín, have attempted to solve geographical problems concerning the country on the sole basis of modern geography, and this attitude, I should think, has led to many difficulties and confusions in their explanations. It is obvious that to do any justice to such questions we ought to have due regard to the peculiar conceptions which the ancient Chinese historians must have entertained concerning the geography of the Western Regions. Above all, there is reason to suppose that the Chinese of the Han and Wêi periods did not know anything

of the Arabian Peninsula, but vaguely imagined that there was an extensive bay spreading itself from the coast of Persia westwards straight up to the coast of the country of Ta-ch'in; that is to say, an arm of the sea which involved, in effect, the Persian Gulf, Arabia, and the Red Sea. I venture to suggest that it was this imaginary body of water which gave birth to the triplet names under review. Babylonia, Mesopotamia, etc. were called Hai-tung countries because they were situated on the eastern side of that hypothetical sea; Egypt and the Mediterranean coast of Syria, as lying west of the sea, counted as Hai-hsi countries; and the several districts in Syria proper, as lying north of the sea, were classified as Hai-pêi countries.

The above theory presupposes that the contemporary Chinese knew very little of the sea-passage to Ta-ch'in, which must have traversed the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Sea and the Red Sea, and this idea again casts a new light on the interpretation of the overland route and the sea-road to Ta-ch'in as mentioned in the *Wêi-liao*. The author, by way of commencing his enumeration of those small countries described as subject to Ta-ch'in, remarks: "Formerly only the water-road was spoken of; they did not know there was an overland route. Now the accounts of it are as follows."<sup>(100)</sup> It might seem as if he was granting previous acquaintance with the sea-route as a matter of course. But was that really the case? To reach Ta-ch'in by the so-called sea-route, one must have sailed from the mouth of the Euphrates, went through the Persian Gulf generally in a southeasterly direction until reached Ras el Had, the southeastern corner of the Arabian peninsula, then turned west and sailed straight on off the southern coast of the peninsula until one came to Ocelis at its southwestern end, whence steering northwards one sailed as far as Berenice or Myos Hormos, as the case might be, on the eastern coast of Egypt; here one disembarked and travelled on horseback (the camel's back) to come out upon the Nile at Coptos, and then availed oneself of the waterway afforded by the river to reach journey's end at Alexandria. What is extraordinary is that in their account of the re-route, neither the *Wêi-liao* nor the *Hou-han-shu*, give the faintest idea of such a course and stages.

We are informed only of the number of months which it took to sail from the head of the Persian Gulf to reach the capital of Ta-ch'in. The *Hou-han-shu* reports that, in the words of the sailor whom KAN Ying met at the western frontier of An-hsi, the voyage lasted from three months on favourable winds to two years with slow winds;<sup>(101)</sup> while the corresponding paragraph in the *Wêi-liao*, seemingly independent of the story of KAN Ying, counts two months with quick winds, one year with slow winds, and three years

(100) 前世但論有水道，不知有陸道，今其略如此。

(101) 和帝永元九年，都護班超遣甘英使大秦，抵條支臨大海。欲渡而安息西界船人謂英曰，海水廣大，往來者逢善風，三月乃得度，若遇遲風，亦有二歲者，故入海人皆齎三歲糧。海中善使人思土戀慕，數有死亡者。英聞之乃止。（後漢書，卷百十八，西域傳）



with no winds.<sup>(102)</sup> The minimum differs between the two histories, from two months in one case to the three months in the other; but judging from the manner of writing, their source must be the report of KAN Ying. Which was the genuine record of time it is hard to say, there being no western account of the same line of voyage on which we might rely for comparison. In PLINY, however, we find a count of the days occupied by a journey from Alexandria to Muzilis on the southern Malabar coast of India, namely,—12 days from Alexandria up the Nile to Coptos; another 12 days to Berenice by camel 30 days sailing down the Red Sea to Ocelis; 40 days to reach Muzilis assisted by the monsoon; thus making up the total of 94 days for the whole course.<sup>(103)</sup> As to the duration of the voyage from the head of the Persian Gulf to Ocelis, we have no contemporary information available, but presumably it did not considerably differ from the time taken in sailing from Ocelis to Muzilis, which is given as 40 days. Computing on these data we may fairly guess that it took something over 90 days to sail from the head of the Persian Gulf and reach the Ta-ch'in metropolis in fine. This result agrees better with the *Hou-han-shu* record of "three months," while inducing us to attribute "two months" in the *Wèi-liao* paragraph to a scribal mistake. We perceive indeed an unmistakable tone of intimidation and hyperbole in the tale related by the sailor of An-hsi to KAN Ying, but nevertheless we may be satisfied that the foreigner was telling the truth in saying "three months."

However conforming to the fact we may find that historical count of the days required for reaching the country of Ta-ch'in by sea from the head of the Persian Gulf, it did not come from any actual experience of Chinese travellers who had ventured on that sea-passage, but merely from the second-hand knowledge imported to KAN Ying by an An-hsi sailor. Moreover, the *Wèi-liao* account of the sea-road is strangely void of details. In the first place, it is evident that the boat had to change its course several times during the voyage, beginning in a southeasterly, then turning into a westerly, and finally into a northerly direction. And yet the author of the *Wèi-liao* simply remarks: "From the city of An-ku one took a boat and went straight west across the sea."<sup>(104)</sup> Then in another paragraph, about the country of Tsê-san, (i.e. T'iao-chih), he observes, evidently with the sea-passage in view: "Southwards you go to the capital of Ta-ch'in. The number of *li* is unknown."<sup>(105)</sup> It is very remarkable that he takes no notice of changes of directions in either case. Secondly, there is no doubt that the boat had to touch a number of ports on its way from the Persian Gulf to Berenice or Myos Hormos on the eastern coast of Egypt, during the voyage which perhaps lasted two months; and yet we find no mention whatever of such ports of call. Having given,

(102) 從安息界安谷城，乘船直截海西，遇風利二月到，風遲則或一歲，無風或三歲。

(103) WARMINGTON, *The Commerce between the Roman Empire and India*, p. 50.

(104) See note 102.

(105) 西南詣大秦都，不知里數。

as he does, the general direction and the duration of the sea passage, his next step might naturally have been to furnish information of that sort, but as a matter of fact, he immediately goes on to say: "This country is on the west of the sea, whence it is commonly called Hai-hsi. There is a river coming out from the west of this country, and there is another great sea. On the west of the sea there is the city of Ch'ih-san 遲散."<sup>(106)</sup> As shall be more fully explained hereafter, the river mentioned here must have been the Nile; and the "other great sea," the Mediterranean; while the name Ch'ih-san, being the abbreviation of Wu-ch'ih-san identifies itself with Antioch. So all that is represented in this *Wêi-liao* paragraph is a fragmentary knowledge of the geography of the Mediterranean region, and it has no real relevance to the main subject of the sea-route. Then he continues: "From below the country one goes straight north to the city of Wu-tan 烏丹. In the southwest, one again crosses a river, which on board ship one passes in one day. Again southwest one crosses a river which is passed in one day. There are, all told, three large cities."<sup>(107)</sup> Plainly enough, this is a description of the overland journey taken from the point where one first arrived in the country of Ta-ch'ín as far as its metropolis. It may be regarded as a sequel to, but no integral part of, the passage over the western sea. It is true, the author of the *Wêi-liao* explicitly recognizes both routes to Ta-ch'ín, on the overland road which traversed through Mesopotamia and Syria, and the other the water-road in question; and so far as the mere form of his account goes, he even appears to be tracing out each of them. But on examining the substance of his account, we know that he is giving scarcely any material information as to the sea-route itself. There might seem reason to argue that it was his intention to stress the overland road at the expense of the sea-route, for he commences his account of the former by alluding to the previous partiality of historical knowledge to the latter. But, in view of the fundamental lack of knowledge on the part of the contemporary Chinese as to the waterway surrounding the Arabian peninsula, as reflected in the terminology of Hai-hsi, Hai-tung, and Hai-pêi, we may safely judge that he was obliged to be reticent on the subject of the sea-route because he had really very little to say about it.

Having no adequate material for producing any plausible description of the sea-route, the following was the manner in which the author of the *Wêi-liao* contrived to make a patch-work of it:—in the first place he gave a general remark on the voyage and the number of days occupied, these no doubt derived from the report of KAN Ying's attempt to sail to Ta-ch'ín from T'iao-chih; then he eked it out by desultory topographical knowledge about the Mediterranean region; and finally described the overland course of journey from the first landing place in the country of Ta-ch'ín up to its capital. This

(106) 其國在海西，故俗謂之海西，有河出其國西，又有大海，海西有遲散城。

(107) 從國下直北至烏丹城。西南又渡一河，乘船一日乃過。西南又渡一河，一日乃過。凡有大都三。

concluding part is generally considered to be the most difficult to interpret in the whole paragraph; but at any rate HIRTH explains it as follows: "The *Wèi-liao* further says: 'From below the country one goes straight north to the city of Wu-tan.' The phrase 'from below the country' may mean 'before one arrives in the country,' and the Chinese author may write from the standpoint of a traveller entering the Red Sea. He would have to sail in a northerly direction in order to reach the port of Myos Hormos, which may have been called Wu-tan locally. Southwest of it the commercial route joined the river Nile near the city of Koptos, and the remark made by the Chinese author that it took a day to cross the river in the south-west may be a hyperbolic allusion to its size."<sup>(108)</sup> During the Han and Wèi periods, the traveller from the orient who sought to reach Alexandria by sailing up the Red Sea part of the way, might land either at Berenice or Myos Hormos, but there is every reason to suppose that Berenice was more frequently preferred. In the identification of Wu-tan, however, HIRTH passed over Berenice to take up Myos Hormos situated further north, apparently for no other reason than that the *Wèi-liao* mentions to the southwest of Wu-tan a river which he recognizes to be the Nile. But in reality in that direction near the port of Myos Hormos there was nothing but deserts, and certainly no river which might take one day to cross. Granted that the river was the Nile, as suggested by HIRTH, how could we account for the other river which one came upon in the farther west? Moreover, so long as Alexandria was the journey's end, the traveller, having landed on the Egyptian shore of the Red Sea, must have proceeded on the whole in a northerly direction. Nevertheless, what we can gather from the *Wèi-liao* text is that the way further than Wu-tan always tended to the southwest. It is plain that HIRTH's interpretation in this case is not acceptable.

I think the above question can be easily solved by assuming that the route described was one which led from the Syrian quarter into the lowest basin of the Nile. We have already seen that the "southern road", described in the *Wèi-liao* as meeting at the city of Ssü-fu with the road coming from the east, was none other than the commercial route which ran from the Gulf of Akabah to Damask via Petra. This gives us reason to conjecture that the Chinese historians of the Han period had an indefinite idea that the voyage which had to be taken for going to Ta-ch'ín terminated in the quarter corresponding to the Gulf of Akabah. So, in an attempt to identify Wu-tan, we might first think of Aelana at the head of the Gulf, but after all should prefer the city of Petra, 60 Roman miles north of Aelana, in view of the special importance which must have been attached to it as a centre of traffic from which one might go in three directions, to Arabia, Syria, or Egypt. Travelling north from this place, one reached Damask, while in a northwesterly direction one would come out at Gaza or Rhinikolura, whence one might further proceed

(108) HIRTH, op. cit., p. 181-182.

southwest and enter the Delta. This observation goes, by the way, to explain the *Wèi-liao* paragraph on Ta-ch'in already cited: "This country is on the west of the sea, whence it is commonly called Hai-hsi. There is a river coming out from the west of this country."<sup>(109)</sup> Within the limits of the country of Hai-hsi as we understand it, the notable streams are the Orontes and the Nile, but certainly neither is a river flowing from the west. The Nile, however, separates into seven channels running through the Delta region. The Pelusium is the easternmost, and therefore the first branch of the Nile to be crossed by the traveller seeking Alexandria from the direction of Gaza. It pursues a northeasterly course from the branching point down to the sea; but, observed at its lowest section, it might have appeared to be coming from the west, and probably this impression gave rise to the description of the river as coming out from the west of the country. Very likely, too, this Pelusium, was the same river which was crossed in a quarter southwest of Wu-tan; and the other river one reached by travelling further southwest must have been one of the other branches of the Nile. To trace the journey made in those days from the city of Pelusium to Alexandria by the Roman high-road; one set out by crossing the Pelusium branch, and went west until one reached the city of Tanis on the western bank of the Tanis branch; then went southwest to the city of Leontopolis on the eastern side of the Sebannitus, and then crossing that channel went further southwest to the city of Andropolis on the western bank of the Canopis, whence one proceeded northwest to Alexandria.<sup>(110)</sup> So it must have been at rate two of those three branches of the Nile that were meant by the two rivers which the author of the *Wèi-liao* tells us the traveller crossed after passing Wu-tan on his way to Alexandria. All these observations, by the way, throw more light on that *Wèi-liao* statement concerning the route which led from the country of Lü-fên to the capital of Ta-ch'in: "Traversing the sea-road; (渡海道) you go southwest; travelling round the sea, (繞海) you go due west."<sup>(111)</sup> In all probability, the first half referred to the sea-passage taken from the mouth of the Orontes to the city of Pelusium in the northeastern corner of the Delta; and the latter half to the approach to Alexandria made from Pelusium by the Roman road. As for our main subject, that is, the overland journey given as the continuation of the voyage of the western sea, we may be fairly certain that it referred to the route which entered the Delta from the Syrian side. When the author concludes the paragraph as: "There are, all told, three large cities,"<sup>(112)</sup> he must have meant certain important towns which were passed during that journey. Apparently there is no reason to read here "three great divisions" instead of "three great cities," as proposed by HIRTH, who suggested, for the identifica-

(109) See supra, note 106.

(110) RENNEL, *Geography of Herodotus, the map appended.*

(111) 渡海道西南行, 繞海直西行.

(112) 有凡大都三.

tion of the three divisions, the Delta, Heptanomis, and Thebais.

Let us now take up the phrase "From below the country," (從國下)<sup>(113)</sup> which opens the paragraph. It is clear that this referred to some place in the south of the country of Ta-ch'in, and learning from the context that this was a point whence one went straight north to Wu-tan, (i.e. Petra), we must seek it somewhere to the south of the latter city. Myos Hormos as well as Berenice might seem to answer to this condition; but in order to reach Alexandria from either port, the most convenient way for the traveller must have been to go to Coptos and then down the Nile; while it would have been an impossible detour if he were to sail again northward to enter the Gulf of Akabah, whence to proceed to the Delta region via Petra. Thus it seems necessary that "below the country" (國下) referred to some port lying to the south of Petra and frequented by vessels from the east, or more particularly, to the vicinity of Aelana on the Gulf of Akabah. HIRTH, and also I myself at first, did not doubt that the next phrase "you go straight north to Wu-tan" alluded to the sailing north on the Red Sea, but now we find it very probable that it meant the northward progress by land from Aelana to Petra. There is, however, a significant consideration which might seem to weigh against such interpretation of Wu-tan. It is almost certain that during the Han and Wéi periods the traveller who sought to reach Alexandria from the Gulf of Persia by sea-route was wont to land at Myos Hormos or Berenice so as to come out at the Nile and if we are to identify Wu-tan with Petra and thereby place Petra on the line of the sea-route from the city of An-ku 安谷 to the Ta-ch'in capital Alexandria, it would make the whole course of travel an absurdly circuitous one. This objection, however, is one which can only occur to the modern scholar, who is fairly equipped with knowledge as to the commercial routes in the western regions of those days. It is necessary again for us to take the viewpoint of Chinese historians of that period. Perhaps all that they knew of the geography of their Hsi-hai or the western sea was scarcely more than this:—that the capital city of the country of T'iao-chih, or the city of An-ku in the country of An-hsi, was where one embarked for Ta-ch'in; that the road leading south from the country of Ssü-fu passed the city of Wu-tan and further reached the great sea which produced corals, and it was thereabouts that the sea-journey from the east had its terminus; and that intervening between the place of embarking and the final port of arrival lay that western sea, an arm of the sea extending far north into the continent. These limited data may easily have brought them to the simple conclusion that, sailing from the city of An-ku straight across the western sea, one should arrive at the point where the southern overland road from Ssü-fu had its end due south of the city of Wu-tan. This particular spot the author of the *Wéi-liao* might well speak of as "below the country," in the sense of the

(113) See note 107.

country; for, the territory of Ta-ch'in comprising Syria and Mesopotamia, the region about the Gulf of Akabah can be regarded as the southern quarter of the country. It is true that the country of Ta-ch'in as known in the Han and Wêi periods meant the Roman Orient with Alexandria as its capital; but from the above interpretation of the *Wêi-liao* text it must appear that the geographical account of Ta-ch'in in that history mostly concerns the regions of Syria and Mesopotamia; while of Egypt, the Delta district alone receives a brief notice, and the portion next the Red Sea is quite untouched.

It seems that the historians of the Northern and Southern Dynastic period were under the same illusion which made their predecessors in the Han and Wêi period imagine that the western sea, stretched over the area of Arabia. For witness, the account of Ta-ch'in provided in the *Pêi-shih* contains this passage:

大秦國一名黎軒，都安都城，從條支西，渡海曲一萬里，去代三萬九千四百里，其海滂出猶渤海也，而東西與渤海相望，蓋自然之理，地方六千里，居兩海之間，……從安息西界，循海曲，亦至大秦，廻萬餘里。<sup>(114)</sup>

HIRTH translated this from the *Wêi-shu* text as follows: "The country of Ta-ts'in is also called Li-kan. Its capital is the city of An-tu. From T'iao-chih, west you go by sea, making a bent, ten thousand *li*. From Tai (=Ta-t'ung-fu?) it is distant 39,400 *li*. By the side of its sea one comes out at what is like an arm of the sea, and the east and the west (of the country) look into that arm of the sea is a natural arrangement. Its territory amounts to six thousand *li*. It lies between two seas..... It is said that from the western boundary of An-hsi (Parthia), following the crooked shape of the sea (coast) you can also go to Ta-ts'in, over 40,000 *li*."<sup>(115)</sup> The corresponding paragraph in the *Wêi-shu* (ch. 102) reads practically the same, except that it says 滂出 (reaches out on its side) in lieu of 滂出 and 四萬里 (40,000 *li*) instead of 廻萬餘里. The same paragraph has been translated from the *Wêi-shu* text, also by VISDELLOU, his predecessor by a century.

"Le Royaume de Taçin est aussi nommé *Likien*. La Ville Royale s'appelle Ngan-sii. Elle est à 1000 lieues de distance et à l'Occident du Royaume de *Thiao-chi*, (c'est peut-être l'Egypte,) un golphe de la Mer entre deux. Elle est éloignée de 3940 lieues de Tai, (ville Chinoise). Ce golphe de Mer s'étend au côté de *Taçin* de la même manière que le golphe de Mer qui est entre la Chine et la Corée, et ces deux golphes sont à l'opposite l'un de l'autre, l'un tourné vers l'Orient, l'autre vers l'Occident; ce qui, sans doute, est un effet raisonné de la nature. Le Royaume de *Taçin* a 600 lieus en tout sens; il est situé entre deux Mers."<sup>(116)</sup>

Since it was through the translations of these two scholars, that western scholarship first came into contact with that *Wêi-shu* passage, it will be

(114) *Pêi-shih*, ch. 97.

(115) HIRTH, *op. cit.*, p. 48-51.

(116) D'HERBELOT, *Bibliothèque Orientale*, IV, p. 392-393.

instructive to criticize whether these translations are really faithful to the purport of the original text.

The phrase "hai-ch'ü 海曲" occurs twice in the paragraph, and HIRTH interprets it differently in one case from the other, translating 從條支西渡海曲 as "From T'iao-chih west you go by sea, making a bent; and 從安息西界循海曲亦至大秦, as "from the western boundary of An-hsi, following the crooked shape of the sea (coast) you can also go to Ta-ts'in." VISDELOU, however, takes the combination of characters 海曲 as a fixed term and renders it alike in both cases by "golphe de mer", and no doubt he is right in this respect. But what is the most open to criticism in their translations pertains to the passage which runs as follows in the original: "其海傍出猶渤海也, 而東西與渤海相望, 蓋自然之理也." HIRTH renders this as: "By the side of its sea one comes out at what is like an arm of the sea, and that the east and the west (of the country) look into that arm of its sea is a natural arrangement." Certainly the opening phrase "By the side of the sea one comes out, etc." is a most glaring distortion of the original 其海傍出; and VISDELOU read here "Ce golphe de la mer s'étend au côté de Taçin," he may be said to have been better guided, so far as the *Wêi-shu* text is concerned. But as I have remarked above, the *Pêi-shu* text reads 滂出 instead of 傍出, and we shall presently see that this *Pêi-shih* form, with quite a different meaning, was genuine. Then VISDELOU continues: "de la même manière que le golphe de mer qui est entre la Chine et la Corée, et ces deux golphes sont à l'opposite l'un de l'autre, l'un tourné vers L'Orient, l'autre vers L'Occident; ce qui, sans doute, est un effet raisonné de la nature." He thought that the sea extending on the side of the country of Ta-ch'in was likened to the P'o-hai 渤海, i.e. the Gulf of Pechili in North China; and that those two seas, so far apart, were set over against each other in the mind of the Chinese author. This view, farfetched as it seems, was a natural consequence of his taking the phrase "p'o-hai" in the sense of the proper name, as representing that particular gulf in the far east. But there is sufficient evidence in authentic literature that the term "p'o-hai", in its primary literal sense, meant a vast sea; and that the character p'ang 滂 found in the context of the *Pêi-shih*, signified "copious and broad."<sup>(117)</sup> So we may fairly assume that the passage "其海傍出猶渤海

(117) That P'o-hai 渤海 was also written P'o-hsieh 渤海 in classics is evident from this passage in the Biography of Ssü-MA Hsiang-ju 司馬相如 contained in the *Shih-chi*: "(The country of) Ch'i 齊 looks on the immense sea on the east, and the Lang-yeh 琅邪 Mountains on the west. One might command a wide prospect from on Ch'eng-shan 成山, hunt in Chih-fu 之罘, and sail out on the p'o-hsieh 渤海"; the last term unmistakably pointing to the later P'o-hai, or the Gulf of Pechili. Now the commentary appended to the *Shih-chi* text contains the explanation of P'o-hsieh: "勃 expresses of a sea that it is 旁; 澗 denotes a splitting water 斷水 [gulf]." Then looking up the character 旁 in the *K'ang-hsi-tz'u-tien*, we find this quotation from the *Po-ya* 博雅: "旁 means 'great, broad'." As for the character 滂, it is defined by the *Shuo-wên* as: "滂 is 沛 'copious'".

也” simply conveyed the impression that the arm of the sea spread itself so extensively into the continent as to make a vast ocean in effect. We may further notice how HIRTH interpreted the passage which he rendered: “the east and the west (of the country) look into that arm of the sea.” He thought that this might be explained in a twofold manner:—firstly, the east and the west might refer to the fact suggested by PLINY’S “bivium”<sup>(118)</sup>: that the commercial road parted at Petra in two directions, one branch making “the Palmyrian road which supplied the east of Syria, and the other the road to Gaza which connected the Gulf with the west of Syria, or the Red Sea with the Mediterranean Sea”; so that the east and the west, uniting at Petra or Aelana, might look into the Gulf, “in which case the Sinus Aelaniticus would correspond to the arm of the sea.” Secondly, “the Arabian Gulf itself might be that ‘arm of the sea’, and ‘the east and the west’ of the country ‘looking into it’ might be its outlets, viz., Aelana and Petra leading to Syria in the east, and Berenice, Leukos, and Myos Hormos leading to Alexandria in the west.”<sup>(119)</sup> All such involved explanations were found necessary because our scholar failed to take into consideration the original author’s point of view. But here again the idea of the hypothetical sea filling up the place of the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Peninsula, and the Red Sea has an important part to play. The passage in question must have simply meant that both the country of T’iao-chih and the country of Ta-ch’in looked into that great arm of the sea, one on the eastern and the other on the western side.

After the foregoing observations, it is not difficult to explain the next passage in the *P’ei-shih* (or the *W’ei-shu*) account of Ta-ch’in: “Its territory extends over 6,000 *li*, lying between two seas.” One of the two must have been the Mediterranean. The Ta-ch’in account in the *P’ei-shih* (or the *W’ei-shu*), indeed, makes no separate mention of a sea corresponding to the Mediterranean, but the Ta-ch’in account in the *W’ei-liao* remarks: “On the west of the country there is another sea,” and HIRTH was perfectly correct in recognizing here the Mediterranean. There is no reason to doubt that this Chinese cognizance of the Mediterranean at the time when the *W’ei-liao* was written had been preserved until the period concerned by the *P’ei-shih*, or that of the Northern and Southern Dynasties, and we may fairly assume that one of the said two seas was the Mediterranean. But the question left to us is what was the other sea. Suppose it was the Red Sea, then the land placed between the couple, i.e. the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, could correspond to Egypt alone; whereas the subject of description was so apparently the whole territory of Ta-ch’in, inclusive of the Syrian quarter. Was it then the Persian Gulf? It is hardly conceivable that this Gulf and the Mediterranean, so widely separated by Arabia and the Red Sea should have been supposed to bound between them the territory of Ta-ch’in, which was confined to Syria

(118) PLINY, *Natural History*, V. 28. 144.

(119) HIRTH, *op. cit.*, P. 162-163.



and Egypt. If, however, we are to take, on one hand, the Mediterranean, and, on the other, that imaginary arm of the sea corresponding to the Persian gulf, Arabia, and the Red Sea, then the territory of Ta-ch'in will well fit in between the two.

We have seen that in the Han and Wêi periods, the country of Ta-ch'in was also called the country of Hai-hsi because it lay on the west of the western sea, this "western sea" being in reality an imaginary sea coextensive with the Persian Gulf, Arabia, and the Red Sea; and also that the mountain range which ran from north to south on the east of the country was identical with the Lebanon. Now these data make us draw the conclusion that the country of Ta-ch'in as then recognized by the Chinese historians meant the Roman Orient in the narrower sense, that is, the Mediterranean regions lying south of the Taurus, exclusive of the Roman possessions in Asia Minor and in the Balkan Peninsula. It must be noted by the way, however, that there is a historical passage which might seem to argue against this decision. It is this paragraph in the *Wêi-liao* account of the country of the Yen-ts'ai 奄蔡: "Besides, there is the country of the Yen-ts'ai, which is also called A-lan 阿蘭. The people have the same manners of life as the K'ang-chü 康居. Their country is contiguous westwards with the country of Ta-ch'in, and northwestwards with the country of K'ang-chü. It abounds in fine sables. The people engage in pasturing and move about seeking water and glass. The country borders upon a great marsh. Formerly the people were subject to the K'ang-chü, but not nowadays."<sup>(120)</sup> The remark that the country of Ta-ch'in was the western neighbour of that of the Yen-ts'ai must needs have an important bearing upon our demarcation of the territory of Ta-ch'in. For the Yen-ts'ai have been generally recognized as identical with the Alans in Western records, and the latter are known to have lived on the north of the Caspian and the Black Sea. So our task is to ascertain, as far as possible, where the Yen-ts'ai had their tribal abode. It is in the *Ta-yüan-lieh-chuan* in the *Shih-chi* that we meet with the first mention of the name Yen-ts'ai, where the people and their country are described as: "The country of the Yen-ts'ai is situated about 2,000 *li* northwest of that of the K'ang-chü. They are a nomadic race, and show much the same manners of life as the K'ang-chü. There are over 100,000 archers among them. Their land looks upon a great marsh, which stretches out boundless. It is believed to be the same as the North Sea."<sup>(121)</sup> But where was the country of the K'ang-chü? Western scholarship pointed out Sogdiana as the home of the historical K'ang-chü, and this identification has long been regarded as established beyond dispute. But as I explained in my "Study on 粟特 Su-tê" a few years ago,

(120) 又有奄蔡國，一名阿蘭，皆與康居同俗。西與大秦，東北與康居接。其國多名貂，畜牧逐水草，臨大澤。故時羈屬康居，今不屬也。

(121) 奄蔡在康居西北可二千里，行國，與康居大同俗。控弦者十餘萬。臨大澤，無崖，蓋乃北海云。(史記，卷百二十三，大宛列傳)。

it was an error due to certain misleading statements contained in the histories of the Sui and T'ang periods. In reality Sogdiana was identical, not with the proper home of the K'ang-chü, but with the abode of another people subject to the K'ang-chü, yet appearing in history under its own name Su-i 粟弋 (or 粟弋 in the corrupted form); while the proper sphere of the nomadic K'ang-chü covered an area extending from the north of the Syr into the Kirghiz Steppe, and their central seat lay in the neighbourhood of the present Chimkend. We may take the distance of 2,000 *li* northwest from this place in order to find the country of the Yen-ts'ai, and thus come to the steppe stretching on the north of Lake Aral and the Caspian Sea. So this was where the country of the Yen-ts'ai lay; and the great marsh next the country must have referred to one or the other of those waters.

The above identification, however, concerns only the proper seat of the Yen-ts'ai. Perhaps their whole territory extended farther west, but there is nothing in Chinese records directly to help us in this matter. The *Wei-liao* and the *Hou-han-shu*, however, show that the Yen-ts'ai called themselves A-lan in later years; and if we are to follow HIRTH in identifying this name with "Alan" in Western records,<sup>(122)</sup> we can perhaps draw some more information from that direction. The Western notice of the Alan race occurs for the first time in the poetry of DYONISIUS PERIEGETES, who is generally supposed to have lived in the beginning of the first century, and from him we learn that the Alans were pursuing a nomadic life in the steppe north of the Meotis or the present Sea of Azov. Perhaps a little later in the same century JOSEPHUS's history tells us that the Alans had their home to the north of the Caucasus and the east of the Tanais, i.e. the Don, and pushed from time to time through the passes of the Caucasus into the regions of Armenia and Media. We may also name PLINY, SENECA and LUCIAN, all belonging to the same century, who make mention of the Alans in their works. What is remarkable, however, is that their predecessors and famous geographers, STRABO and POMPENIUS MELA, give no notice of the race. And it was in view of this circumstance that VIVIAN DE SAINT-MARTIN formed the conjecture that the Alans became a dominant power in the region north of the Caucasus only in the middle of the first century, and not before.<sup>(123)</sup> As regards the ethnology of the Alans, modern scholarship acknowledges them to have been a white race, closely resembling the present Ossets dwelling in the Caucasus Mountains. On the other hand, the Yen-ts'ai, as the results of our own investigations show, were of the Turkish stock, alike to their neighbours the K'ang-chü. This gives rise to the suggestion that when the Yen-ts'ai assumed their new name A-lan in the Han and Later Han period, there was this underlying fact that the Alans, rising from the north of the Caucasus, had conquered and absorbed the Yen-ts'ai people, whose home lay on the north of the Aral and

(122) HIRTH, op. cit., P. 139. note 1.

(123) VIVIEN DE SAINT-MARTIN, *Étude de géographie ancienne*, II. p. 126-127.

the Caspian Sea. If this idea is admitted, it will further lead to the inference that the A-lan as known to the Chinese in the Later Han period were not Alans in western records, but the Yen-ts'ai who were living to the northeast of the Caspian, as a people subject to the supremacy of the genuine Alans, who had their proper home farther west, in the regions from the north of the Caspian to the valley of the Don. This brings us to the question:—Did the Chinese cognizance of the western world in the Han and Wêi periods go so far west as those borders of the Black Sea and the Caspian which constituted the proper country of the Alans?

It might seem that this question is to be answered affirmatively, for the above-quoted *Wêi-liao* passage shows that the country of the Yen-ts'ai, i.e. the A-lan, was westwards contiguous with Ta-ch'in; and this Ta-ch'in is placed in the same history at the western extremity of the world. Let us, however, first consider what the civilized world then knew of the northern borders of the Caspian Sea. Here stretched those desolate steppes naturally unfavourable to commercial traffic, and made the more repellant to the traveller by the danger from predatory nomads, and for this reason, it is not until comparatively late ages that any record pertaining to the geography of those regions or to the routes of travel traversing there begins to appear in western literature. A little before the middle of the 5th century B.C., when HERODOTUS visited the northern shores of the Black Sea, the merchants of the Greek colonies there were carrying very extensive trade with eastern peoples. So we learn from his history that the commercial route available for that purpose started, on the modern map, from the mouth of the Don, and followed up the Volga and then its tributary Kama to the Ural Mts., whence it went on in a southeasterly direction to the south of the Altai range, and then further across the Tien-shan, until it finally reached the district of Sha-chou 沙州. It is remarkable, however, that the same history mentions no commercial road traversing the northern borders of the Caspian, although it takes notice of that water, and as an inland sea, too. Thereafter, it seems, the geography of that region lapsed into utter darkness, and in fact, by the time of Alexander the Great the real shape of the sea had passed out of Western memory. Thus in the geography of ERATOSTHENES in the 3rd century B.C., and also on the maps provided by STRABO, PLINY, and POMPONIUS MELA in the 1st century A.D., we find it connected with the Arctic Ocean by a strait. In the 2nd century A.D., PTOLEMAEOS represents it again as a closed inland sea, but in shape, he shows it to be longer from east to west than from north to south. Moreover he assigns, the Sarmats to the north of the Caucasus, the Scythians to the east of the Rha, i.e. the Volga, and to the north of the Caspian, and then the Alans to the north of the Scythians. These facts suggest how scanty and inaccurate was the information available in those days as to the route of travel leading from the northeastern borders of the Black Sea to Lake Aral via the north of the Caspian Sea. In 568 A.D., however, when the Eastern

Roman emperor JUSTIN sent an embassy to the western T'u-chüeh king, who had his royal court established in the Tien-shan mountains, the party made the first record of travelling through the northern borders of the Caspian and of Lake Aral before reaching their destination, and thus the situation of the route has been handed down by the work of Menander Protector.

On the Chinese side, we have already seen how the annalists of the Former Han period knew the country of the Yen-ts'ai to lie at a distance of 2,000 *li* northwest of the abode of the K'ang-chü; but further in the same direction, what countries were supposed to exist is a question to which history affords no answer. Let us now consider in this connection the *Shih-chi* passage above cited, relating to the country of the Yen-ts'ai: "It looks upon a great marsh, which stretches out boundless. It is believed to be the same as the North Sea."<sup>(124)</sup> If the North Sea was the Arctic Ocean itself, then the country lying next to it, must have been the remotest one in that quarter of the world, and there could have been no land beyond it, whether on the north or on the west. But, as a matter of fact, the North Sea in Chinese literature did not always mean the Arctic Ocean. For instance, that North Sea to the shore of which Ssü Wu 蘇武 was banished, as the story is told in the *Shih-chi*, referred most likely to the Baikal. It is true that, so far as the *Shih-chi* and the *Han-shu* go, the country of the Yen-ts'ai was the only country recognized by the historians in the whole region extending to the north-west of the country of the K'ang-chü. In the Later Han period, however, we find some other countries mentioned in the same quarter. The *Hou-han-shu* says: "The country of Yen 嚴 lies to the north of that of the Yen-ts'ai. It is subject to the K'ang-chü. It produces sable furs which are carried to the latter as tribute;"<sup>(125)</sup> and the *Wêi-liao* remarks: "Besides, there are the country of Liu 柳, the country of Yen 嚴, and the country of the Yen-ts'ai, also called A-lan."<sup>(126)</sup> No doubt the country named 嚴 in one instance was identical with that represented by 嚴 in the other. Again, we read in the *Hou-han-shu*: "The country of the Yen-ts'ai or of the A-lan, as they have been renamed, and the country of Liao 聊<sup>(127)</sup> are situated in the earthen walls. They are subject to the K'ang-chü. The climate is temperate, and there grow in abundance chên 楨, sung 松 (pine), pai-ts'ao 白草. The people are much like the K'ang-chü in social manners and dressing."<sup>(128)</sup> We may be allowed to

(124) See note 121.

(125) 嚴國在奄蔡北，屬康居，出鼠皮以輸之（後漢書，卷百十八，西域傳）。

(126) 又有柳國，又有嚴國，又有奄蔡國，一名阿蘭。

(127) In the original text, the paragraph runs: "奄蔡國改名阿蘭聊國," and to the casual reader this might seem to be interpretable as "The country of the Yen-ts'ai, renamed A-lan-liao." But from comparison with the *Wêi-liao* passage it seems inevitable that we should separate Liao 聊 from A-lan, so as to read here the name of another country.

(128) 奄蔡國改名阿蘭聊國，居地城，屬康居，土氣溫和，多楨松白草，民俗衣服與康居同（後漢書，卷百十八，西域傳）。

assume that the name 聊 in this *Hou-han-shu* passage and the name 柳 above noticed in the *Wèi-liao* were variations, each of the other, both referring to the same country. Now the *Hou-han-shu* assigns the country of Yen to the north of the country of the Yen-ts'ai, and we may safely place the country Liu in the same quarter. This view of the geographical position of the two countries, combined with the fact that one was noted for the production of sables and the other for the luxurious growth of chên 楨 and sung 松 (pine), go to show that both countries lay in the Ural regions, and not on the northern borders of the Caspian, where such natural products would have been out of the question. We remember that the *Wèi-liao* describes the country of the Yen-ts'ai as abounding in fine sables, and this perhaps means that those things were imported by the Yen-ts'ai from their neighbours in the countries of Yen and Liu.

It was the basin of the Kama, as it flows from the northeastern direction into the Volga, more particularly the district about the present Perm, that occupied the most important position in the whole Ural regions in connection with the commercial intercourse between east and west of Asia in those ancient days. So there is enough reason to place in this particular quarter that country which is mentioned as Yen 嚴 in the *Wèi-lian* and as Yen 嚴 in the *Hou-han-shu*. Both characters, with their archaic sounds *ngiam* and *ngiäm* respectively, were suitable for reproducing the term Kama, which was probably applied to the inhabitants of the valley of the river Kama. As for the name of the other country, mentioned as Liao 聊 in the one history and as Liu 柳 in the other, we know that the early pronunciation of the character 聊 was most likely *liau*, and that of the character 柳 *lau*. This reminds us of Rha, the name by which PROLEMAEOS's geography represents the Volga, and also of Rau and Raw, as the present Mordwins call that river; and thus we are led to infer that the name Liao 聊 (or Liu 柳) signified the tribe which, as inhabiting the borders of the Volga, owed its name to the ancient appellation of that river. And on the strength of these observations, we may go further to identify the country of Yen with that of the Budini, which lay on the commercial route noticed by HERODOTUS, and to recognize the country of Liu in the neighbourhood of the junction of the Kama and the Volga, which district was later occupied by the Bulgars.

The reason why the Chinese historians of the Han and Wèi period know of those remote countries at all must be simply that these were significantly positioned on the highway of commerce between east and west in those early times. Just as, in the days of HERODOTUS, the Greek merchants having their headquarters on the northern shore of the Black Sea went up the Don and the Volga, and then up through the valley of the Kama, and further across the Ural range to its eastern side, in order to obtain Siberian furs; so might the Chinese, or at least the K'ang-chü, traders in the Han times, trace the Syr down to the northwest, and from the northern side of the Aral travel through the neighbourhood of the present Orenburg, come out first at the

Kama, and then turn west so as to reach the Volga. What is noteworthy in this connection is the following passage of the *Wèi-liao*; "The country of short people 短人 lies northwest of that of the K'ang-chü. Men and women there are all three feet high, and the population is very numerous. It is very far away from the country of the Yen-ts'ai and others. The aged among the K'ang-chü say they have heard that there are always some traders who go over to that country; which is perhaps more than 10,000 *li* away."<sup>(129)</sup> There is of course no identifying of that dwarfish race, but as the chief class of goods sought after by the K'ang-chü merchants in this case must have been furs, it is quite possible that they ventured even farther north than the country of Yen, into the basin of the Obi, and thus had chance to hear, say, of the Samoyedes, who had their abode lower down the river.

Thus we see that in the whole world west of the Tien-shan, the Chinese authors of the Han and Wèi periods knew of the region stretching from the southern Urals westwards to the valleys of the Kama and the Volga; but it is very doubtful whether they were informed at all of the tract of country lying south of that, nearer to the Caspian and the Black Sea. We have observed how the *Shih-chi* and the *Wèi-liao* describe the country of Yen-ts'ai as bordering upon a great marsh, which, as the former history adds, extended boundless; and since the countries of Yen and Liu were known to lie to the north of the country of the Yen-ts'ai, the boundless marsh must have been supposed to stretch in a westerly direction. This suggests the probability that the historians were not even aware of the fact of the Caspian and the Black Sea being separate bodies of water, with a land area lying between them. There is in the *Pèi-shih* an evidence which may be cited in favour of this inference. The author of that history, in his foreward to the Book of the *Hsi-yü-chuan*, tells us how the whole Western Region had its four divisions. "The Western region, from the time of the Han emperor Wu-ti onwards, comprised more than 50 countries," he says. "Later on, they tended to gradual union, and by the era of Ta-yen, they had been reduced to 16 countries. The total area covered by them falls in four divisions:—from Ts'ung-ling 葱嶺 eastwards and from Liu-sha 流沙 westwards, it is one region; from Ts'ung-ling westwards and from the Hai-ch'ü 海曲 (the arm of the sea) eastwards, it is another; from Chê-shê 者舌 southwards and from the Yüeh-chih northwards, another; between the seas 兩海 and from the marsh 水澤 southwards, another."<sup>(130)</sup> The first division, limited by the Ts'ung-ling, i.e. Pamirs, on the west and Liu-sha on the east, identifies itself with the Tarim

(129) 短人國在康居西北，男女皆長三尺，人衆甚多，去奄蔡諸國甚遠，康居長老傳聞，常有商度此國，去康居可萬餘里。

(130) 西域自漢武時五十餘國，其後稍相并，至太延中，爲十六國，分其地，爲四域，自葱嶺以東，流沙以西，爲一域，葱嶺以西，海曲以東，爲一域，者舌以南，月氏以北，爲一域，兩海之間，水澤以南，爲一域（北史，卷九十七，西域傳）。

depression, or the present Chinese Turkestan.<sup>(131)</sup> The second division, apparently placed between the Hindu-Kush and that hypothetical arm of the sea occupying the place of Arabia, coincides with the territory which was formerly possessed by An-hsi and later by Persia.<sup>(132)</sup> The third division lay between Chê-shê, i.e. the present Tashkend, and the seat of the Ta-yüeh-chih, which we know to have extended over both sides of the Hindu-Kush, and so it must have corresponded on the whole to Sogdiana and Bactria.<sup>(133)</sup> It follows

- (131) The first appearance in the classics of the term Liu-sha 流沙 (literally, drift sands) occurs in the Book of Wu-k'ang 禹貢 in the *Shu-ching*, where it receives mention in conjunctions with the term Jao-shui 弱水 (Weak Water) and since then it has been almost the rule with Chinese writers to use the expression "Liu-sha and Jao-shui" when speaking indefinitely of the remotest western world. In the case under review, however, Liu-sha must have referred to a particular desert region. The *Wêi-liao*, describing the three different routes leading from the Gate of Yü-men-kuan 玉門關 to the Western Regions, says: "從燉煌玉門關入西域, 前有二道, 今有三道, 從玉門關西出, 經婁羌, 轉西越葱嶺, 經縣度, 入大月氏爲南道, 從玉門關西出, 發都護井, 回三隴沙北頭, 經居盧倉, 從沙西井轉西北, 過龍堆, 到故樓蘭, 轉西詣龜茲至葱嶺, 爲中道, 從玉門關西北出, 經橫坑辟三隴沙及龍堆, 出五船北, 到車師界戊己校尉所治高昌, 轉西與中道合龜茲爲新道." From this we learn that the Middle Road which reached the Pamirs via "the former Lo-lan 樓蘭," (i.e. the later Shan-shan 鄯善, situated near Lob Nor) had to "sweep round the northern head of San-lung-sha 三隴沙 (ridges of sand)" and to "pass Lung-tui 龍堆 (dragon-heaps)" among other places; and that the New Road which was to join the Middle Road at the last stage after "having passed the frontier of Ch'ê-shih 車師 (i.e. the present Turfan)" traversed in such a way as to "avoid San-lung-sha and Lung-tui." It is these sandy deserts, which laid the most formidable obstacles before the traveller going through this part of Asia, that answer best to Liu-sha, as mentioned in the *P'ei-shih*.
- (132) That the term Ts'ung-ling meant at times, as it must have done in this case, the Hindu-Kush instead of the Pamir Plateau, is evidenced by the following passage of the *Wêi-shu*: "The country of An-hsi lies west of the Ts'ung-ling. It has its capital in the city of Wêi-sou 蔚搜, and westwards adjoins Po-ssû 波斯 (Persia). It is situated northwest of (the country of) the Ta-yüeh-chih. 安息國在葱嶺西, 都蔚搜城, 北與康居, 西與波斯相接, 在大月氏西北, (魏書, 卷一百二, 西域傳)." The kingdom of An-hsi which occupied the land of Persia had passed away in the Wêi period, and properly speaking, there could have been no An-hsi at this time unless in the sense of Persia itself. But since the author places An-hsi northwest of the seat of the Ta-yüeh-chi, it probably referred to the neighbourhood of Merv. And if it lay to the west of the Ts'ung-ling, the latter must needs have been the western part of the Hindu-Kush.
- (133) Chê-shê, obviously the transcription of the name corresponding to Čač (Chach) or Šaš (Shash) in western records, referred to the present Tashkend. As regards the seat of the Ta-yüeh-chih, it is thus described by the *P'ei-shih*: "The Ta-yüeh-chih, have their capital in the city of Shêng-chien-chih 監贖氏. Their king Chi-to-lo 寄多羅, a valiant character, at last raised an army, crossed the great mountains and invaded southwards the north of T'ien-chu 天竺 (India), until all the five countries lying to the north of Kan-t'o-lo 乾陀羅 fell under his supreme rule." (the *P'ei-shih*, chp. 97). The city of Shêng-chien-chih 贖監氏 is the same place which is referred to as Lu-chien-chih-ch'êng 盧監氏城 in the *Wêi-shu* (the *Hsi-yü-chuan*), as Chien-shih-ch'êng 監氏城 in the *Shih-chi* (the *Ta-yüan-lich-chuan*), and as Chieng-chih-ch'êng 監氏城 in the *Han-shu* (the *Hsi-yü-chuan*), and thus coincides with the ancient Bactria or

then that the remaining, fourth, division must have referred to Syria. It lay "between the two seas," and no doubt, one of them meant that imaginary arm of the sea, and the other the Mediterranean. This region also stretched "southwards from the marsh," and this marsh might seem to point to the Black Sea. But why was it called marsh? I suppose it was simply because, in the mind of the contemporary historians, the Aral, the Caspian, and Black Sea were quite without distinction; instead of them, there was imagined one continuous expanse of water, corresponding to that great marsh mentioned as lying next the country of the Yen-ts'ai, and described to be boundless, by the author of the *Shih-chi*. This is a sufficient test of the ignorance of the ancient Chinese historians as to the entire region westwards from the country of the Yen-ts'ai. And when notwithstanding the *Wèi-liao* passage in question runs: "the country of the Yen-ts'ai was westwards contiguous with Ta-ch'in," we can easily guess its real meaning. The extent of the country of the Yen-ts'ai as known in the Later Han period was confined to the northeast of the Caspian, while the country of Ta-ch'in had its northern limit in the north of Syria; and thus there was a considerable distance between the two countries. Still nothing was known about the intervening territory; and this must have made the author describe them as conterminous, as was a familiar practice on the part of Chinese annalists under similar circumstances.

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the present Balch. The mountain range crossed by the king in approaching India was evidently the Hindu-Kush; and Kan-t'o-lo 乾陀羅 identifies itself with Gandhara. These circumstances taken together, the territory of the Ta-yüeh-chih meant by the author of the *P'ei-shih* must have extended from the northern side of the Hindu-Kush over to the southern.



## Chapter IV

It has been our object in the present study to observe the geographical relations of the "Western Region" so far as it is surveyable from the Ta-ch'in account of Chinese history. Every dynastic history, however, from the Later Han down to the Sung period, provides an account of Ta-ch'in, and it is essential to know how to discriminate their historical value, and see what particular Ta-ch'in account or accounts ought to have most weight in guiding our observations. Not long ago, I had an occasion, in another article of mine on Ta-ch'in, to discuss the country of Ta-ch'in as known in the T'ang period, and presently I intend, in a paper I am now preparing under the title "A New Interpretation of the Fu-lin Problem," to reveal how the country figured in the historical mind of the Sung period. In both the T'ang and Sung times, in short, what the historians referred to as Tach'in was something of a spurious nature, decidedly divergent from Ta-ch'in in the proper sense of the term, and this makes their Ta-ch'in accounts negligible for our present purpose. In the historical literature prior to the T'ang period, the principal books providing an account of Ta-ch'in are as follows: the *Hsi-yü-chuan* in the *Hou-han-shu*; the *Wèi-liao* as preserved in quotations in the *Wèi-chih*; the *Hsi-jung-chuan* in the *Chin-shu*; and the *Hsi-yü-chuan* in the *Pèi-shih*. Besides these, the *Hsi-yü-chuan* in the *Wèi-shu* may be mentioned as also furnishing an article on Ta-ch'in; but the fact is that this *Hsi-yü-chuan* is in its entirety a transfer from the *Pèi-shih*, so that its Ta-ch'in account can not be taken as a different specimen. Neither does the Ta-ch'in account of the *Pèi-shih* itself seem to claim an independent position. To the casual reader, it might appear to be adding some fresh elements to the previous knowledge of Ta-ch'in, but as I have already pointed out in my other paper referred to, a close examination will reveal that it is nothing but a reproduction of the account of Ta-ch'in from the *Wèi-liao*, in abbreviation, expansion or paraphrase of the original, as the case may be; so that we discover there scarcely any data to be properly ascribed to the contemporary, the Later Wèi, period. The same criticism also applies to the Ta-ch'in account of the *Chin-shu*: The author repeats in outline what has been related at length in the *Wèi-liao* and the *Hou-han-shu*. Only, toward the close of the account he gives the new fact that the king of Ta-ch'in sent tribute to the court of Wu-ti of the Chin dynasty during the era of *T'ai-k'ang* 太康, but this is the single instance where he deals with any contemporary occurrence.

So it seems that the two Ta-ch'in accounts, in the *Hou-han-shu* and the *Wèi-liao*, are the only ones to be trusted as genuine original records of facts about Ta-ch'in. Now the *Hou-han-shu*, in its *Pên-chi* 本紀 covers the period

from the 1st year of *Chien-yüan* 建元 of Kuang-wu-ti to the 1st year of *Yen-k'ang* 延康 of Hsien-ti, of the Later Han dynasty (25-220 A.D.); while, as for the *Wèi-liao*, whose original text is long extinct, we can only guess that the dynastic annals forming its main body began with the history of the founder of the Wèi dynasty, Wu-ti, preceding the 1st year of *Huan-ch'ü* 黃初 of Wên-ti (220 A.D.), and lasted to the 3rd year of *Ching-ch'ü* 景初, the last year of the reign of Ming-ti (239 A.D.). Thus, in the chronological line of dynastic histories, the *Hou-han-shu* takes precedence of the *Wèi-liao*. This order is reversed, however, regarding the date of authorship. The *Hou-han-shu* was compiled by FAN Yeh 范曄 of the Sung period, and the *Wèi-liao* by YU Huan 魚豢 of the Wèi period. Now let us see how the Ta-ch'in accounts compare between the two histories. The *Wèi-liao* account of Ta-ch'in affords by far the more lengthy and circumstantial description of the country; but there is much agreement in essence between the two. Nor does it appear from the comparison that the *Hou-han-shu* account gives facts contemporaneous with the Later Han, while that in the *Wèi-liao* embodies the information acquired in the Wèi period. It is even probable that the facts stated in the *Wèi-liao* account dated earlier than the Wèi period, considering that other *Wèi-liao* paragraphs preserved than the Ta-ch'in account deal not seldom with earlier times. As to the date of the information contained in the Ta-ch'in account, therefore, we have no reason to regard the *Wèi-liao* to be later than the *Hou-han-shu*. With these observations, we are naturally led to the suspicion that the author of the *Hou-han-shu* was another borrower from the *Wèi-liao* in respect of the Ta-ch'in account. In order to decide the question, it will be well to go through the whole length of the Ta-ch'in account of the *Hou-han-shu*, comparing it section by section with the corresponding passage in the *Wèi-liao*.

The Ta-ch'in account of the *Hou-han-shu* opens with this paragraph: "The country of Ta-ch'in is also called Li-kan 犁鞞, and also, as being situated on the west of the sea, Hai-hsi-kuo 海西國 (the country of Hai-hsi)." (134) This is no doubt a combination as well as a contraction of the following passages in the *Wèi-liao*: "The country of Ta-ch'in also called Li-kan 犁鞞, lies on the west of a great sea west of An-hsi and T'iao-chih;" and "The country is situated in Hai-hsi (i.e. in the region west of the sea), and for this reason is commonly called Hai-hsi." (135) It may be noted above that the *Hou-han-shu* differs from the *Wèi-liao* in its spelling of the other name of the country, 犁鞞. The *Wèi-liao* form 犁鞞 is nearer to 黎軒 in the *Ta-yüan-lieh-chuan* of the *Shih-chi*, and agrees exactly with the spelling in the *Hsi-yü-chuan* of the *Han-shu*. The *Hou-han-shu* form, on the other hand, finds its duplicate in the history with the same title, the *Hou-han-shu* 後漢書, written by HSIEH Ch'êng 謝承 under the Wu dynasty, and also in the *Hsü-*

(134) 大秦國一名犁鞞，以在海西，亦云海西國（後漢書，卷百十八，西域傳）。

(135) 大秦國一號犁鞞國，在安息·條支西，大海之西……其國在海西，故俗謂之海西。

*han-shu* 續漢書 by the Chin author SŪ-MA Piao 司馬彪, in both of which histories we read about the country: "Ta-ch'in, also called 犂鞬 lies in Hsi-hai (the region of the western sea)."<sup>(136)</sup> In the use of that particular spelling, we may suppose, the author of the *Hou-han-shu* simply imitated what was a scholarly practice from the close of the Three Kingdom epoch to the Chin period. Now the *Hou-han-shu* text continues: "Its territory extends over several thousand *li*; it contains over four hundred cities, and there are several tens of small states subject to its supremacy."<sup>(137)</sup> This is a summing up of these several passages in the *Wèi-liao*: "There are in the country small cities to the total number of above four hundred. Its area extends several thousand *li* in all directions of the compass"<sup>(138)</sup> "In the country several tens of small kings are established;"<sup>(139)</sup> and "It has also outlying tributary small states over which are appointed the Kings of Tsê-san, Lü-fên, Ch'ieh-lan, Hsien-tu, Ssü-fu, and Yü-lo. Besides these, there are so many other small kings that there is no mentioning them one by one."<sup>(140)</sup> Then the *Hou-han-shu* goes on: "The walls of cities there are built of stone,"<sup>(141)</sup> and this is evidently an extract, with some modification, of the *Wèi-liao* paragraph: "The residence of the king stands on the edge of the river-sea (the river-mouth?), the walls of the city being made of stone."<sup>(142)</sup> Next the *Hou-han-shu* reads: "There are established series of postal stations, all of which buildings are decorated with white plaster."<sup>(143)</sup> This compares with the *Wèi-liao* statement: "It has postal stations and *t'ing* 亭 and *chih* 置 stages on the road, like those in the Middle Kingdom."<sup>(144)</sup> Perhaps in those days it was the custom in China itself to decorate post-offices with white plaster, and we may assume that the author of the *Hou-han-shu* took liberty to attribute the same aspect to those of Ta-ch'in on the strength of the above *Wèi-liao* passage "like those in the middle kingdom." The *Hou-han-shu* text runs next: "There are pine and cypress trees and all kinds of other trees and plants. The people work at farming with industry, plant trees a great deal, and also grow mulberry trees for silk-worms;"<sup>(145)</sup> and this is very apparently an abbreviation of the *Wèi-liao* passage: "In the land there are the trees sung (pine), po (cypress), huai (Sophora), tzü (a kind of Euphorbia?); bamboos, rushes, poplars, willows, the wu-t'ung tree (the *Sterculia platanifolia*) (?),

(136) 大秦一名犂鞬在西海。

(137) 地方數千里，有四百餘城，小國役屬者數十（後漢書，op. cit.）。

(138) 國有小城邑，合四百餘，東西南北數千里。

(139) 其國置小王數十。

(140) 其別枝封小國，曰澤散王，曰隴分王，曰且蘭王，曰賢督王，曰汜復王，曰子羅王，其餘小王甚多，不能一一詳之也。

(141) 以石為城郭（後漢書，op. cit.）。

(142) 其王治濱測河海，以石為城郭。

(143) 列置郵亭，皆堅壁之（後漢書 op. cit.）。

(144) 郵驛停置如中國。

(145) 有松栢諸木百草，人俗力田作，多種樹蠶桑（後漢書，op. cit.）。

and all kinds of other plants. The people are engaged in farming, cultivating all kinds of grain. Their live-stock are: the horse, the donkey, the mule, the camel, and the mulberry silk-worm.<sup>146)</sup> Then the *Hou-han-shu* reads: "They shave their heads and wear embroidered clothing;"<sup>147)</sup> and although this has no counterpart in the *Wèi-liao*; we have reason to suppose that the particular coiffure referred to being well known to the Chinese to be customary with the barbarian race, the author may easily have taken a hint for his statement from where the *Wèi-liao* describes the people of Ta-ch'in as "wearing barbarian dress." Now the *Hou-han-shu* continues: "They drive in small carriages, drawn by a pair of horses, and covered with white canopies; when going in and out, they beat drums, and hoist flags, banners, and pennants;"<sup>148)</sup> and this is nothing but a paraphrase of the *Wèi-liao* passage: "They hoist flags and banners, beat drums and use small carriages with white canopies."<sup>149)</sup> Next the *Hou-han-shu* text runs: "The walled city in which they live is over a hundred *li* in circumference. In the city there are five palaces, ten *li* distant from each other. In the palaces, they use crystal to make pillars, and their table-wares are also so made. The king goes to one palace a day to hear cases; and after five days, all the palaces have been visited. He makes it a rule to have a man with a bag follow his carriage. Those who have something to say to the king may write it down and put it in the bag. When the king arrives at his palace, he has it inspected, and decides the right or wrong of the case. In each palace there is an official staff and archives. There are appointed thirty-six generals, who meet together to discuss state affairs."<sup>150)</sup> In the above quotation, the passage relating to crystal pillars and table-wares corresponds to this *Wèi-liao* paragraph: "They use crystal for making pillars, vessels and utensils";<sup>151)</sup> while the description of the king's contrivance for collecting popular advice has its model where the *Wèi-liao* remarks: "Whenever the king goes out, he makes an attendant with a leather bag follow him. Those who have something to say to the king have their words received and thrown into the bag. When he returns to his palace, he examines into and decides the cases."<sup>152)</sup> As for the rest of the above quotation from the *Hou-han-shu*, we may trace it all to the following *Wèi-liao* paragraph: "The city where the king has his residence, is over a hundred *li* in circumference. There are official staffs and archives. The king has five palaces, one being ten *li* away from another. The king goes in the early

(146) 其土地有松栢槐梓竹葦楊柳梧桐百草，民俗田種五穀，畜有馬騾驢駝，桑蠶。

(147) 皆髡頭而衣文繡 (後漢書, op. cit.).

(148) 乘輜駟白蓋小車，出入擊鼓，建旌旗幡幟 (後漢書, op. cit.).

(149) 旌旗擊鼓白蓋小車。

(150) 所居城邑周圍百餘里，城中有五宮，相去十里。宮室皆以水精爲柱，食器亦然。其王日游一宮聽事，五日而後徧。常使一人持囊隨王車，人有言事者，即以書投囊中。王至宮發，省理其枉直。各有官曹文書，置三十六將，皆會議國事。(後漢書, op. cit.).

(151) 以水晶作宮柱及器物。

(152) 王出行，常使從人持一韋囊自隨，有白言者，受其辭，投囊中，還宮乃省爲決理。

morning to one palace and hears the cases there till evening, when he lodges there for the night. On the morrow, he goes to another palace, and so on, completing his round in five days. There are appointed thirty-six generals. Whenever there is some affair to be discussed, the rule is that, should a single general fail to appear, there shall be no discussion."<sup>(153)</sup> To return to the *Hou-han-shu*, it reads next: "Their kings are not permanent rulers, but men of wisdom are elected and placed on the throne. When extraordinary calamities visit the country, or when the winds and rains are very unseasonable, the king is deposed and replaced by another. The one thus discharged acquiesces in this degradation without taking any offence;"<sup>(154)</sup> and this almost echoes the *Wèi-liao* passage: "The country has no permanent ruler. When extraordinary calamities visit the country, they elect another man of wisdom and make him king. The former king is discharged though he is still alive but he does not dare to resent."<sup>(155)</sup> The *Hou-han-shu* continues: "The people are all tall and well-proportioned, and bear certain resemblance to the people of the Middle Kingdom, and for this reason they are called Ta-ch'in (i.e. Great Ch'in);"<sup>(156)</sup> and we can see how this agrees in general effect with the *Wèi-liao* statement: "The people are tall and well-proportioned, and resemble those of the Middle Kingdom, although wearing barbarian dress. They say themselves that they are an issue of the Middle Kingdom race."<sup>(157)</sup> Then the *Hou-han-shu* proceeds to enumerate various products of the country: "The land abounds in gold, silver, and rare treasures; one finds there Yeh-kuang-pi (Night-shining jewel), ming-yüeh-chu (Bright-moon pearl), hsieh-chi-hsi (chicken-frightening rhinoceros stone), corals, amber, liu-li (glass), lang-kan (a kind of coral), chu-tan (cinnabar), green ch'ing-pi (green jade-stone), gold-embroidered silk cloth, gold interwoven silk rugs, and silk cloth of various colours. They make gold-coloured cloth and asbestos cloth."<sup>(158)</sup> Long as this list is, it is only a fraction of the far more copious inventory which the *Wèi-liao* furnishes, consisting of fifty-nine articles produced in the country. The *Hou-han-shu* continues on the same subject of production, saying: "They further produce 'fine cloth', which is said to be made from shui-yang-ts'ui (i.e. the wool of the water-sheep) and cocoons of wild silk-worms."<sup>(159)</sup> This is nothing but an extract of the rather curious story the *Wèi-liao* tells us: "They weave a kind of fine cloth out of what they assert to be the

(153) 其王所治城周回百餘里，有官曹文書，王有五宮，一宮相去十里，其王平旦一宮聽事，至日暮一宿，明日復至一宮，五日一周，置三十六將，每議事，一將不至則不議也。

(154) 其王無有常人，皆簡立賢者，國中災異及風雨不時，輒廢而更立，受放者甘黜不怨。(後漢書，op. cit.)

(155) 其國無常王，國中有災異，輒更立賢人以爲王，而生放其故王，王亦不敢怨。

(156) 其人民皆長大平正，有類中國，故謂之大秦。(後漢書，op. cit.)

(157) 其俗人長大平正，似中國人而胡服，自云，本中國一別也。

(158) 土多金銀奇寶，有夜光璧·明月珠·駮鷄犀·珊瑚·琥珀·瑠璃·琅玕·朱丹·青碧·刺金縷繡·織成·金縷·屬雜色綾，作黃金筐·火浣布。(後漢書，op. cit.)

(159) 有細布，或言水羊毳·野蠶繭所作也。(後漢書，ibid.)

water-sheep. It is called hai-hsi-pu. In this country all the domestic animals are believed to come out of the water. Some say that they do not only use the wool of the sheep, but also the bark of trees and the silk of wild cocoons."<sup>(160)</sup> Next the *Hou-han-shu* says: "They collect all kinds of fragrant substances, the juice of which they boil into su-ho (storax?);"<sup>(161)</sup> and although there is no equivalent remark in the *Wèi-liao*, the latter certainly makes mention of su-ho among other products of the country, and the author of the *Hou-han-shu*, on consulting the *Wèi-liao*, may have seen fit to expatiate on the preparation of the spice, perhaps from his own knowledge. Then he closes his list of Ta-ch'in products saying: "All kinds of curiosities and rarities foreign to China are produced in this country;" and certainly this reflects on that longer inventory in the *Wèi-liao* referred to. The next *Hou-han-shu* statement: "They make coins of gold and silver. Ten silver coins are equivalent to one gold coin,"<sup>(162)</sup> is practically a repetition of the *Wèi-liao* passage: "They make gold and silver coins. One gold coin is worth ten silver coins."<sup>(163)</sup> The *Hou-han-shu* continues: "They traffic by sea with An-hsi and T'ien-chu (i.e. India), the profit of which trade is ten-fold. [They are straightforward and honest in character, and there are no double prices in their markets. Cereals, their staple food, are always cheap. The state budgets are rich and copious. When the embassies of neighbouring countries arrive at their frontier, they are driven by post to the capital city, and, on arrival there, they are provided with gold money.] Their kings always desired to send embassies to China, but the An-hsi wished to carry on trade with them in Chinese silks, and the way was closed up owing to their interruption."<sup>(164)</sup> Reserving the passage in brackets to later discussion, the rest of the quotation may be referred to the two *Wèi-liao* paragraphs, one of which says, in connection with the general description of the Ta-ch'in people: "They always wished to send embassies to China, but the An-hsi wanted to maintain their profitable position and would not allow them to pass their country;"<sup>(165)</sup> the other closes the description of the textile production of the country: "Further they find it a profitable business to get Chinese silk and sever it in order to make hu-ling 胡綾 (i.e. barbarian silk cloth), and for this reason they frequently trade by sea with the various countries of An-hsi. The seawater is bitter and unfit for drinking, and this is why very

(160) 有織成細布，言用水羊羶，名曰海西布，此國六畜皆出水，或云非獨用羊毛也，亦用木皮或野蘭絲。

(161) 會合諸香，煎其汁以爲蘇合（後漢書，op. cit.）。

(162) 以金銀爲錢，銀錢十當金錢一。（後漢書，op. cit.）。

(163) 作金銀，金錢一當錢錢十。

(164) 與安息·天竺交市於海中，利有十倍。[其人質直，市無二價，穀食常賤，國用富饒，鄰國使到其界首者，乘驛詣王都，至則給以金錢]。其王常欲通使於漢，而安息欲以漢繒綵與之交市，故遮闕不得自達。（後漢書，op. cit.）。

(165) 常欲通使於中國，而安息圖其利不能得過。

few travellers have succeeded in reaching the country."<sup>(166)</sup> The next few lines in the *Hou-han-shu* concern the arrival of an embassy from Ta-ch'in during the reign of the emperor Huan-ti, which event finds no mention in the *Wèi-liao*; but laying aside this passage for later consideration, we may now take up the next paragraph: "Some say that to the west of this country there is the Jo-shui (Weak Water) and Liu-sha (Drifting Sands, desert). This is near the place where Hsi-wang-mu has her abode, and not far from where the sun sets. The (*Ch'ien*)-*han-shu* says: 'Going over 200 days west from T'iao-chih, one comes near the place where the sun sets,' and this is at variance with the present book."<sup>(167)</sup> The whole remark is ascribable partly to this passage in the opening part of the Ta-ch'in account of the *Wèi-liao*: "Formerly it was also erroneously considered that the Jo-shui was west of T'iao-chih, but nowadays the Jo-shui is known to be west of Ta-ch'in. Formerly it was also wrongly believed that going over 200 days west of T'iao-chih, one came near the place where the sun sets, but now one goes west from Ta-ch'in to get near where the sun sets;"<sup>(168)</sup> and partly to these lines toward the close of the same account: "To the west of Ta-ch'in there is a sea. West of this there is a river. West again of this, there is a great range of mountains extending from north to south; west of this there is the Ch'ih-shui (Red River); west of the Ch'ih-shui there is P'ei-yü-shan (White-jade Hill); on P'ei-yü-shan there is (the residence of) Hsi-wang-mu; west of Hsi-wang-mu there is Liu-sha (corrected from Hsi-liu-sha 脩流沙)."<sup>(169)</sup> And when the author of the *Hou-han-shu* adds: "Formerly the embassies from China all returned from Wu-i, none having reached as far as T'iao-chih,"<sup>(170)</sup> it may easily have been suggested to him by the above *Wèi-liao* paragraphs. Now he goes on to say: "It is further said that from An-hsi onward, the overland road makes a circuit through Hai-p'ei, and comes out at Hai-hsi, thus reaching Ta-ch'in. The country is densely populated. Every ten *li* is marked by a t'ing (postal station), and every thirty *li* by a *chih* (major postal station). Travellers are never attacked by robbers or marauders, but the road is infested with fierce tigers and lions, which endanger and hinder traffic. Unless travellers go in parties of above one hundred, and well armed, they are easily devoured by the wild beasts."<sup>(171)</sup> This almost tallies with the following lines in the *Wèi-liao*: "From An-hsi, one makes a circuit through Hai-p'ei and

(166) 又常利得中國絲綉以爲胡綾，故數與安息諸國交市於海中，海水苦不可食，故往來者希到。

(167) 或云，其國西有弱水·流沙，近西王母所居處，幾於日所入也，漢書云，從條支西行二百餘日，近日所入，則與今書異矣。(後漢書，op. cit.)

(168) 前世又謬以爲，弱水在條支西，今弱水在大秦西，前世又謬以爲，從條支西行二百餘日，近日所入，今從大秦西，近日所入。

(169) 大秦西有海水，海水西有河水，河水西南北行有大山，西有赤水，赤水西有白玉山，白玉山有西王母，西王母西有脩流沙。

(170) 前世漢使皆自烏弋以還，莫有至條支者也。(後漢書，op. cit.)

(171) 又云，從安息陸道繞海北行出海西至大秦，人庶連屬，十里一亭，三十里一置，終無盜賊寇警，而道多猛虎獅子，遮害行旅，不百餘人齎兵器，輒爲所食。(後漢書，op. cit.)

reaches the country. The people live close together. Every ten *li* is marked by a 'ting and every thirty *li* by a chih. There is no fear of robbers, but fierce tigers and lions which do harm. Travellers cannot pass unless uniting themselves in parties."<sup>(172)</sup> Next the *Hou-han-shu* reads: "They also say that there is a flying bridge several hundred *li* in length, by which one may cross over to the countries of Hai-pêi;"<sup>(173)</sup> and certainly this is said on the basis of the *Wei-liao* statement: "From Lü-fên, one goes west to Ta-ch'in by crossing over to Hai-pêi in a flying bridge, which is 230 *li* long."<sup>(174)</sup> Lastly the author of the *Hou-han-shu* thus winds up his Ta-ch'in account: "The rare and curious products ascribed to the country are, many of them, suspiciously mysterious, and therefore they are not enumerated here."<sup>(175)</sup> No doubt he had in mind those numbers of fabulous objects mentioned in the Ta-ch'in account of the *Wei-liao*, such as for instance, the jade-stone of nine colours, the jade-stone of five colours, the divine dragon, the red dragon, pi-tu-chu 辟毒鼠 (poison-preventing rat), etc.

Thus we find that nearly every line of the *Hou-han-shu* account is a reproduction, more often contracted than expanded, of some passage or other in the *Wei-liao* account of Ta-ch'in. As has been noticed above, however, there are two passages of the *Hou-han-shu* account for which we find no equivalent in the other history, and which therefore call for special attention. One may be quoted again as follows: "The people are straightforward and honest in character. There are no double prices in their markets. Cereals, their staple food, are always cheap; the state budgets are rich and copious. Whenever the embassies of neighbouring countries reach their frontier, they are driven by post to the capital city, and on arrival there, they are provided with gold money."<sup>(176)</sup> For aught we know, the author might have drawn this information from some other source than the *Wei-liao*. On the other hand, however, it must be remembered that such notions as "no double prices in the market," "the cheap supply of staple food," and the like are those very commonly associated when Chinese writers picture their utopian government, which would allow the people to enjoy perfect peace and everlasting prosperity under the reign of a heaven-appointed ruler. Another factor equally significant in this connection is the traditional idea that all foreign peoples are bound to submit allegiance to Chinese sovereignty, and the consequent habit of calling all foreign embassies tribute-carriers to the imperial court and of encouraging them by momentary donations and appointments to Chinese offices, a practice believed to have been handed down from the ancient blessed sovereigns. Now the author of the *Hou-han-shu* is describing the Ta-ch'in as a people which

(172) 從安息繞海北到其國，人民相屬，十里一亭，三十里一置，終無盜賊，但有猛虎獅子爲害，行道不羣則不得過。

(173) 又言，有飛橋數百里，可渡海北諸國。(後漢書，op. cit.).

(174) 從驢分城西之大秦，渡海〔北〕，飛橋二百三十里。

(175) 所生奇異玉石諸物，譎怪多不經，故不記云。(後漢書，op. cit.).

(176) See note 164.



is fortunate enough to claim kinship with the Middle Kingdom race. He is naturally inclined to idealization, and he may easily attach to the people those consummate conditions of an elevated community. Then the other statement peculiar to the *Hou-han-shu*, occurring in the context once referred to, runs as follows: "In the 9th year of *Yen-hsi* 延熹 during the reign of Huan-ti, however, the king of Ta-ch'in, An-tun 安敦, sent an embassy, who came in by the outlying frontier province of Jih-nan 日南, and offered ivory, rhinoceros horns, and tortoise shell. It is from this time that dates the direct intercourse with this country. The list of their tribute contained neither rarities nor novelties; and this circumstance throws doubt on the tradition."<sup>(177)</sup> No doubt this passage states a historical fact; and as the *Wèi-liao* gives no equivalent record, we may be sure that the author of the *Hou-han-shu* had some other source to draw on for this matter. It must be noted, however, that this is the only instance in which the Ta-ch'in account of the *Hou-han-shu* ever seems to record any positive fact which does not appear in the *Wèi-liao*. After all, therefore, we may be justified in saying that among the four different accounts of Ta-ch'in contained in the dynastic histories of the pre-T'ang periods, the Ta-ch'in account of the *Wèi-liao* is the only one which can be properly called a source material on the subject.

The unique position thus claimed by the *Wèi-liao* in the whole literature on Ta-ch'in makes it a matter of high importance to fix the date of its production and find the particular period to which belonged the information embodied in its Ta-ch'in account. As already remarked, the original text of the history is extinct, and it is hard to form any definite idea of its general form and scheme of compilation. The T'ang scholar Liu Chih-Chi 劉知幾, however, in his historical commentaries, the *Shih-t'ung* 史通, remarks: "During the Wèi period, Yü Huan 魚豢, the Chiang Chao 京兆 (Prefect of the Metropolis), compiled the *Wèi-liao* on his own account. The chronicles are brought down to the time of Ming-ti," and this assists us to the inference that the compilation of the work took place in or after the time of the next emperor Ts'ao Fang 曹芳, so that the history might deal with the three preceding reigns of the Wèi emperors, Wu-ti, Wên-ti, and Ming-ti. In all probability, the author gave, in the section "Dynastic Annals", chronological records of occurrences from the foundation of the dynasty to the close of Ming-ti's reign, while in the section "Biographies" portraying eminent characters of the corresponding period. The history must have also included a division devoted to confined "Foreign Countries", but here, we may be sure that the recorded data were not to the Wèi period. This is witnessed by several *Wèi-liao* paragraphs quoted in the *Wèi-chih* in its accounts of the various eastern and western barbaric tribes. In connection with the Fu-yü race, the author of the *Wèi-liao* relates

(177) 至桓帝延熹九年，大秦王安敦遣使自日南徼外，獻象牙·犀角·瑇瑁，始乃一通焉，其所表貢並無珍異，疑傳者過焉。（後漢書，op. cit.）

the tradition pertaining to the founder of the nation, Tung-ming-wang 東明王, a legendary hero of remote antiquity; in dealing with the history of the Korean Hans 韓, he starts from the very ancient period of the Chi 箕 family and continues down to the rise of WĒi Mau 衛滿, and also mentions occurrences in the peninsula under the rule of WĒi Yu-Ch'ü 衛右渠 as under the influence of Mang; and as under the supremacy of the Later Han emperor An-ti. In reference to the Ta-yüeh-chih, again, he records the introduction of Buddhism by that race as an occurrence in the 1st. year of *Yüan-shou* 元壽 of the Former Han emperor An-ti. Lastly, in his account of Ta-ch'ín, we find the fact that in the 3rd year of *Yang-chia* 陽嘉 of Shun-ti of the Later Han dynasty, the king of Su-lê 疏勒, by the name of Ch'ên-p'an 臣槃, presented to the court some blue stones and golden girdles from Hai-hsi. It is therefore evident that we could not consider the Ta-ch'ín account of the *WĒi-liao* to be presenting facts relating exclusively to the WĒi period.

On reading through the Ta-ch'ín account of the *WĒi-liao*, every one will perceive that Ta-ch'ín, as a general term, implies two distinct elements, that is, Ta-ch'ín proper and all its dependencies. The former was coextensive with the region of Hai-hsi, and the latter were distributed in those of Hai-pêi and Hai-tung. In Hai-pêi, it is the states of Ch'ieh-lan, Ssü-fu, and Hsien-tu that are clearly indicated as dependencies of Ta-ch'ín; and in Hai-tung, those of Lü-fên, Yü-lo, and Tsê-san are so defined. As for the three other states in the Hai-tung region, namely, Ssü-t'ao, Ssü-la, and Ssü-pin, we know by inference that they were not subject to the supremacy of Ta-ch'ín, but to that of An-hsi. T'iao-chih, another country in Hai-tung, is described as tributary to An-hsi. This country, however, receives a more than passing notice in the early accounts of the Western Region, and is always so intimately associated with Ta-ch'ín, by ancient historians that a study of the history of Ta-ch'ín will not be complete without a little reflection on that of T'iao-chih. A few years ago, I published a separate study on T'iao-chih; but then my point of view being mainly geographical, I had but little occasion to deal with the history of the country. In order to make up for this omission, and also to express some conclusions I have since reached as to its geographical relation, I may take this opportunity to discuss the subject anew.

"The city of the country of T'iao-chih stands on a hill," says the *Hou-han-shu*. "It is over 40 *li* in circumference and borders on the Hsi-hai (i.e. the Western Sea), being circularly surrounded by sea-water. On the three sides, namely, on the south and on the northeast, the road is cut off; only, in its northwestern corner, there is access to it by a land road. The climate is hot and damp; it produces lions, rhinoceroes, fêng-niu 封牛 (Zebu), peacocks, and ta-ch'iao (large birds), the eggs of which are like urns. You turn to the north and then to the east, and go on horseback for over 60 days to reach An-hsi. In later days, An-hsi made T'iao-chih a vassal state, appointing generals

to govern and possess all the small cities."<sup>(178)</sup> There can be small doubt that the western sea meant the Persian Gulf, and the general description indicates, as fully explained in my previous study, that the site of the country of T'iao-chih is identifiable with the country of Mésène-Kharacène in western records. The country is stated above as a dependency of An-hsi; while the adjunct in later days might seem to suggest that it became so only at some point within the Later Han period. But T'iao-chih was subject to An-hsi as early as the time of the Former Han emperor, Wu-ti; for the author of the *Shih-chi* remarks in his *Ta-yüan-lieh-chuan*: "T'iao-chih is situated several thousand *li* west of An-hsi and borders on the Western Sea. It is hot and damp. They cultivate farms and grow rice. There is found a large bird, whose eggs are like urns. The population is very numerous, and here and there rule small chieftains. An-hsi, however, has made it a vassal state, holding the country as a foreign (outlying) territory."<sup>(179)</sup> We may notice how much like this that *Hou-han-shu* paragraph reads. Excepting the first few data which the author of the *Hou-han-shu* gives as to the lay of the country, which perhaps are later information, he is almost repeating the account of the *Shih-chi*; and we are induced to suspect that when he states T'iao-chih to be subject to An-hsi, he is merely imitating the representation by the *Shih-chi*, no matter whether or no such was really the case during the Later Han period. However that may be, we are enabled to know from another source that the statement of the author of the *Hou-han-shu* was not mistaken in effect. The *Ta-ch'in* account of the *Wèi-liao* has this passage in its opening part:—

"Formerly it was also erroneously considered that it (T'iao-chih) was stronger than An-hsi, but now An-hsi holds it as a vassal state, making it form the western frontier of An-hsi."<sup>(180)</sup> and this goes to reassure us that the country of T'iao-chih was subject to An-hsi during the period from the Later Han regime to the Three Kingdoms Age.

What was the derivation of the name T'iao-chih? It seems to have no linguistic relation with Mésène-Kharacène, the name of the country which occupied the lowest basin of the Euphrates during the Later Han period, nor with the name of its capital city, Spanisnu-Kharax. T'iao-chi, however, was the name under which the country was first introduced to Chinese knowledge by the great traveller CHANG Ch'ien during the reign of Wu-ti of the Former Han dynasty, and so we must consider by what name that country had been known in the Western world. PLINY tells us that Alexander the

(178) 條支國城在山上，周回四十餘里，臨西海，海水曲環。其南及東北三面路絕，唯西北隅通陸道。土地暑熱，出獅子·犀牛·封牛·孔雀·大雀，大雀其卵如甕。轉北而東，復馬行六十餘日至安息。後役屬條支，爲置大將監領諸小城焉。(後漢書，卷百十八，西域傳)

(179) 條枝在安息西數千里，臨西海暑熱，耕田田稻。有大鳥，卵如甕。人衆甚多，往往有小君長。而安息役屬之以爲外國。(史記，卷百二十三，大宛列傳)。

(180) (前世) 又謬以爲，疆於安息，今更役屬之，號爲安息西界。

Great, on his way home from his conquest of India, built a city at the mouth of the Euphrates, and gave it the name Alexandria. Afterwards, however, it was destroyed by an inundation of the river, and it waited for the fifth Seleucid monarch, Antiochus, to restore it from the ruins, christening it after his own name, Antiochia. But this city of Antiochia suffered another devastation from the river, and when the Arabian chieftain Spasines occupied this place, he undertook its repairs, and thus gave rise to a new name of the city, Spasinu-Kharax.<sup>(181)</sup> Among these different names, it is Antiochia that seems to me to have some linguistic connection with T'iao-chih. The characters 條 支 are nowadays sounded *t'iao-chio*, but we are not certain what was their pronunciation in the Han period. Seeing, however, that the current Japanese and Annamese pronunciations of the character 條 are *deu* and *diou* respectively, there is high probability that it is sounded something like *diou* or *diau* in China of the Han period.<sup>(182)</sup> As for the other character 支, its current sound is *chih*; but we find the author of the *Wèi-chih*, giving an account of the ancient Japanese, mentions a Japanese island province Iki situated in the Korea Strait by the characters 一支, and this strongly suggests the likelihood that during the Han and Wèi periods the character in question had the sound *hi*, at least concurrently with, or alternatively to, *chi*.<sup>(183)</sup> The same thing

(181) PLINY, op. cit., VI. 31.

(182) The *K'ang-hri-tzū-tien* explains the character 條 as: "The phonetic spelling 徒聊 *t'u-liao*, (the *Kuang-yün*); the phonetic spelling 田聊 *t'ien-liao*, (the *Chi-yün* and the *Yün-hui*); sounds similar to 迢 *t'iao*; and also spelt 滌 *ti*."

(183) The *Liang-shu*, describing the country of Hsin-lo 新羅 in ancient Korea, mentions the name of a government office, 旱支; and this is apparently the same term as 旱岐, a Korean official name noticed in the contemporary Japanese history, *Nihon-shoki*, in connection with another Korean state Jên-na 任那. That the character 岐, now *ch'i*, then sounded something like *hi* is inferable from its Japanese pronunciation, and this enables us to guess that the character 支 sounded similarly in those days, that is, toward the close of the Northern and Southern Dynastic period. In the same Chinese history, we may further notice, in its account of the Japanese island province of Iki is represented by the characters 一支, no doubt intended to sound *i-hi*. The earlier history *Wèi-chih* also makes mention of the same Japanese island, and although here the name is spelt 一大, it is very obviously a scribal error for what should have been 一支, and thus we are enabled to trace the pronunciation of the character 支 *hi* farther back to the Han and Wèi periods. What requires attention on the other hand is that *Chou-shu* 周書 thus remarks of another Korean state Pai-chi 百濟: "The king is one of the Fu-yü family, and assumes the title Wu-lo-hsia 於羅瓊. The people, however, call him Chien-chi-chih 龔支吉, the term corresponding to wang (king) in Chinese speech. 王姓扶餘氏, 號於羅瓊, 民呼爲龔吉支, 夏言並王也。(周書, 卷四十九異域傳上)." In our *Nihon-Shoki*, we find word 國王 or perhaps 國主, meaning the King or Lord of Pai-chi, furnished with the reading " *konikishi* " or " *kokishi* ", and this unmistakably points to the same title mentioned in the *Chou-shu*. The foregoing data, taken together, incline us to infer that in the late years of the Northern and Southern Dynastic period, the character 支 was pronounceable both ways, *hi* and *chi*. Perhaps it would be too hasty to assume on the strength of the evidence derived from the historical mention of the Japanese province Iki that *hi* was the only probable sound of the character 支 during the

may be said of the character 枝 forming the last member of the form used by the author of the *Shih-chi*. On these grounds we may well assume that 條支 or 條枝 was originally intended to read *diau-ki*, and thus there is no little chance that it was a shortened transcription of *Antiochia*, as referring to the city at the mouth of the Euphrates. According to Hamza Isfahâni, the Persians used to speak of the Antiochia in Syria as Andiv,<sup>(184)</sup> and this puts us in mind of Andiochia, as a possible corruption which would have been more easily connectable with *diau-ki*. As for the omission in the transcription of the first syllable in Antiochia (or perhaps Andiochia), it may be taken for granted by analogy of the fact that the city of Ktesiphon in Parthia is represented as Ssü-pin in the Ta-ch'in accounts of the *Hou-han-shu* and of the *Wèi-liao*.

Thus we find the name T'iao-chih to be etymologically traceable to the western name Antiochia; and if there were two Antiochias in western Asia, both enjoying a specially advantageous position on the highway of commerce between east and west, T'iao-chih must have referred to that Antiochia at the mouth of the Euphrates, because the country of T'iao-chih is described as lying next to the Western Sea, that is, the Persian Gulf. On the other hand, however, it seems hard to suppose that the application of the name T'iao-chih was confined to the narrow limits of the country of Mésène-Kharacène; for then what the early histories tell us about T'iao-chih must appear incongruous in many respects. For instance, the author of the *Shih-chi*, describing An-hsi, remarks: "West of it is T'iao-chih,"<sup>(185)</sup> and what is remarkable is that he mentions T'iao-chih alone on that side of An-hsi. We cannot take this T'iao-chih in the exclusive sense of the region corresponding to Mésène-Kharacène, which was a really small country adjoining An-hsi only at its southwestern corner and hardly comparable in extent to any single province of An-hsi; it is impossible that a unit so insignificant in size and lying in such a direction from An-hsi, should have been recognized as the only western neighbour of An-hsi. The second difficulty arises in connection with this once-quoted passage from the *Shih-chi* about T'iao-chih: "The population is very numerous. Here and there rule several small chieftains. An-hsi, however, has made the country a vassal state, holding it as a outlying territory."<sup>(186)</sup> The single region corresponding to Mésène could not have had room enough for a very large population, with many small rulers, too; moreover the country of Mésène is known to have been under a single ruler. The third objection comes from the passage where the author of the *Shih-chi* mentions, the immense bird whose eggs were as large as urns, which no

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Han and Wèi times. At all events, what I want to emphasize here is the importance to recognize the fact that all the attempts hitherto made at tracing the origin of the name T'iao-chih have been greatly hampered by the practice of considering the characters in their current pronunciation alone.

(184) GUTSCHMID, *Geschichte Irans*, p. 66.

(185) 其西則條枝。(史記, 卷百二十三, 大宛列傳)。

(186) See note 179.

doubt meant the ostrich as a native product of T'iao-chih. It would be absurd to attribute the ostrich to the swampish land of Mésène; its real habitat must have been the desert regions in Syria and Mesopotamia, and according to Xenophon, it was found in special abundance in Assyria. Fourthly and lastly, we may reflect on this passage in the Ta-ch'in account of the *Wei-liao*: "Formerly it was also erroneously believed that T'iao-chih was stronger than An-hsi." If there was any country which might have been reported as surpassing An-hsi in power and territorial extent, it was certainly Syria; and whatever chance of misinformation may be allowed for in this case, it would be decidedly inconceivable that the small unit corresponding to Mésène should have ever supposed to be stronger than An-hsi at all. All these difficulties are inevitable if we try to limit the reference of T'iao-chih to the single region occupied by the country of Mésène. Suppose, however, that the term covered a more extensive area, including not only the country of Mésène, but also the whole basins of the Tigris and the Euphrates stretching north of it, then all such inconsistencies will dissolve at once.

It is another matter to explain how the name T'iao-chih, probably derived from Antiochia or Andiochia, came to apply to that wider area. Although it is hard to form any decisive opinion about it, I may here tentatively offer two different conjectures on the subject. The first is that, before the Parthians effected their territorial expansion westwards into the basins of the Tigris and the Euphrates, they were wont to call the Syrian Kingdom by the name of Antiochia that when their king Mithridates I conquered the region referred to, it contained several states, each called by its own name, but as for a generic name to cover it as a whole, there was none; and that, under those circumstances, the Parthians found it expedient to call it Antiochia, thus making the name which they had previously given to the whole Syrian area denote in particular what had until so lately been a part of it. My other surmise is that the capital of Mésène-Kharacène, having been a famous centre of traffic ever since the days of the Syrian rule there, continued until far later to be called by its original name Antiochia; and that, in course of time, this came to apply by extension to the general region of Mesopotamia. In both hypotheses above presented, it is assumed that a city had given its own name to the whole tract of country in which it was situated; and in fact, similar instances are common in the history of the Western Region. For the present purpose, it will suffice to recall the country of Li-kan, which owed that name to its capital city, Alexandria.

However widely we may take the limits of the country of T'iao-chih as recorded in the *Shih-chih*, it remains a matter beyond question that T'iao-chih included the district of Mésène-Kharacene; for T'iao-chih "bordered on the western sea," that is, the Persian Gulf, while its capital city as described in the *Hou-han-shu* unmistakably points to Spasinu-Kharax, the capital of Mésène-Kharacène. Now it is a fact confirmed by Western records that for

some period beginning with the reign of Mithridates I (161-138 B.C.), Parthia dominated the regions of Babylonia, Assyria, and Mesopotamia; but can we be as certain that the country of Mésène-Kharacène itself was subject to the Parthian rule at the time when the information about the Western Region as recorded in the *Ta-yüan-lieh-chuan* in the *Shih-chi* reached Chinese cognizance? This is a question which requires further inquiry.

As already remarked, the Syrian king Antiochus V resuscitated the ruined city of Alexandria at the mouth of the Euphrates and gave it his own name, and there can be small doubt that so long as the Syrian Kingdom held dominant power in those regions, the district of Mésène remained subject to its supremacy. Later on, however, it became an independent state by freeing itself from the Syrian control, and eventually again a dependency to the Parthian king. But how to date those political changes is a problem which in my opinion still remains unsolved. There being no surviving record of the history of this country, we owe to VISCONTI the first attempt to ascertain the dates of the rise and fall of the state of Mésène-Kharacène on such numismatic evidence as might be derived from a few extant specimens of the coins struck by its rulers. Among the several scholars who followed VISCONTI in the same line of research may be reckoned J. SAINT-MARTIN, who fixed the date of the foundation of the state of Mésène in the year 129 B.C.;<sup>(187)</sup> and in later days, REINAUD, who corroborated SAINT-MARTIN's decision in this point, although differing from him as to the time of the termination of the state.<sup>(188)</sup> The date of the rise of Mésène-Kharacène has ever since been regarded as established. We need not go over the whole of the argument which led SAINT-MARTIN to his conclusion, but one of his chief data may be cited as follows. It is a fact recorded by PLINY that in 130 B.C., the Syrian monarch Antiochus VII led a campaign against Parthia, and after conquering Babylon which had belonged to Parthia, appointed Numenius to the satrapy of Mésène, in order to subdue the district of the southern sea, whereupon Numenius, advancing as far as the promontory at the entrance of the Persian Gulf, fought and vanquished the Persians, i.e. Parthians, on land and sea.<sup>(189)</sup> It seemed to SAINT-MARTIN that this appointment of Numenius as Satrap of Mésène must imply that that country had been within the Syrian dominion until 130 B.C. at least. Soon after, however, Antiochus encountered Phraates II of Parthia, was disastrously defeated, and finally perished in his camp. SAINT-MARTIN infers that it must have been on this occasion that the Arabian chieftain Spasines took his opportunity to establish the state of Mésène, and thus claims to date the foundation of the state in 129 B.C. In my opinion, however,

(187) J. SAINT-MARTIN, *Recherches sur l'histoire et la géographie de la Mésène et de la Kharacène.*

(188) REINAUD. *Mémoire sur le commencement et la fin du royaume de la Mésène et de la Kharacène.*

(189) PLINY, op. cit. VL, 32.

this argument of SAINT-MARTIN's is open to criticism.

It is a question which, so far as I know, has never been raised but we must ask whether the above-suggested date of the rise of the state of Mésène can be reconciled at all with the evidence in Chinese history. The *Ta-yüan-lieh-chuan* in the *Shih-chi* tells us that the country of T'iao-chih was subject to An-hsi, and we know that this T'iao-chih, although broadly meaning the general regions of Babylonia and Mesopotamia, must needs have included the country of Mésène; but it remains to be seen what particular period the above statement of the *Shih-chi* referred to. "At first, when Ch'ien 騫 (i.e. CHANG Ch'ien) took his departure, there were in his party over a hundred men," remarks the author of the history in the opening part of the *Ta-yüan-lieh-chuan*. "Thirteen years later, only two of them returned. Ch'ien had personally visited Ta-yüan, Ta-yüeh-chih, Ta-hsia, and K'ang-chü; while gathering information as to five or six other large countries which neighboured the above-mentioned. Now he offered to the Emperor full reports on all those countries."<sup>(190)</sup> This foreword is followed by the separate accounts of Ta-yüan, Wu-sun, K'ang-chü, Yen-ts'ai, Ta-yüeh-chih, An-hsi, T'iao-chih, and Ta-hsia. There is indeed no room to doubt that the historian in working out his account of T'iao-chih, entirely relied on the report made by the great traveller. The exact date of his outward departure is not recorded; the same *Ta-yüan-lieh-chuan* as well as his Biography in the *Hou-han-shu* simply says, "during the era of *Chien-yüan* 建元," without giving any particular year. But his return home is stated as occurring in the 3rd year of *Yüan-shuo* 元朔 (126 B.C.) and as it was thirteen years after his departure, the latter event must have occurred either in the 2nd year of *Chien-yüan* (139 B.C.), as proposed by our late Dr. KUWABARA,<sup>(191)</sup> or in the next year (138 B.C.), which is preferred by HIRTH.<sup>(192)</sup> It is a matter of record that soon after his departure, CHANG Ch'ien was seized by the Hsiung-nu and thus compelled to spend over ten years in their land before he could proceed to visit the countries of the Wu-sun, the Ta-yüan, and the K'ang-chü in turn, until he finally reached the seat of the Ta-yüeh-chih; and this allows us to estimate that his sojourn with the last-mentioned people fell in 129 or 128 B.C., the latter year being preferred by HIRTH; or otherwise as Dr. KUWABARA argued, that it lasted from the one year to the other. Now it is quite reasonable to suppose that the political situation of the country of T'iao-chih as stated in the *Shih-chi* was what actually came to the notice of CHANG Ch'ien during his stay in the country of the Ta-yüeh-chih; and if we are not mistaken in the above chronological calculation, it must follow that the country of Mésène was found subject to Parthia in 129 or 128 B.C.

(190) 初騫行時百餘人，去十三歲，唯二人得還。騫身所至者，大宛·大月氏·大夏·唐居。而傳聞其旁大國五六，具爲天子言之。(史記，卷百二十三，大宛列傳)。

(191) 桑原隲藏，東西交通史論叢，p. 26.

(192) HIRTH, *Story of Chang K'ien*, J. A. O. S. xxvii, p. 135.



The sojourn of the Chinese envoy at the royal court of the Ta-yüeh-chih coincided in point of time with the general struggle in which were involved not only the Parthian and the Syrian Kingdom, but also the northern hordes which had been pressing into Central Asia. Antiochus VII of Syria lost his battle as well as his own life in his engagement with the Parthian king Phraates II, in February, 129 B.C. The Parthians were thus freed from the formidable menace on their western frontier, but now they fell into a new entanglement with the barbarian neighbours on their east. Their failure to fulfil the promise they had given to the Scythians during the war with Syria drove the latter to make a plundering assault upon Parthia; and the attempt of Phraates II to punish them by arms ended in his falling in the campaign, which event happened late in 128, or early in 127 B.C.<sup>(193)</sup> He was succeeded on the throne by his uncle Artabanus I, who, in his turn, fought with the Tochari also at the cost of his own life, the date of which incident is fixed by WROTE in 123 B.C. and by RAWLINSON in 124 B.C. The Tochari were identical with what figures in Chinese history as the Ta-yüeh-chih, while the Scythians whom Phraates attempted in vain to subjugate are discriminated by JUSTIN from the Tochari, and consequently identified by GUTSCHMID with the Sakaraukae.<sup>(194)</sup> As we know, the latter were a tribe which, having previously crossed the Jaxartes invading Central Asia together with the Tochari, i.e. the Ta-yüeh-chih, was at the time under review settled west of the Tochari. Such being the general relation between Parthia and its neighbours during CHANG Ch'ien's stay with the Ta-yüeh-chih, we may easily imagine how the internal condition of An-hsi, i.e. Parthia, was being vigilantly watched as a matter of great concern by the Ta-yüeh-chih, i.e. the Tochari; and, consequently, what ample chance there was for the Chinese guest to hear of T'iao-chih and of its relation to An-hsi. The description of T'iao-chih in the *Shih-chi* must have been the embodiment of the knowledge then and thus acquired, and this reflects the greater reliability on its information.

Let us now consider what was happening in the meantime to the political situation of Mésène. As Western records go, when Phraates II set out on his punitive expedition against the Scythians, he left his recent conquests from Syria to the care of a viceroy by the name of Hymerus, but as it happened, this Hymerus maltreated the inhabitants of Babylon and Seleucia, and also waged war against Mésène. The date of the last-mentioned event is unknown, but at any rate it must fall after February, 129 B.C., the date of Phraates winning his brilliant triumph over Antiochus VII. At length Hymerus was murdered by the citizens of Seleucia, whose enmity he had invited by his tyrannical administration. Angered by this news, Artabanus I resolved to inflict a severe punishment upon the revolting city, and would have executed it, had he not been called away to encounter the Tochari, eventually to perish

(193) GUTSCHMID, op. cit., p. 75-78.

(194) *ibid.*, p. 77, note 2.

in the battle, in 123 B.C.<sup>(195)</sup> Thus the viceroyalty of Hymerus may be roughly placed between 129 and 123 B.C., and it must follow that his military attack upon Mésène happened somewhere within these five to six years. We know, however, that Phraates II was kept busy fighting with the Scythians from 129 to 127 B.C., and as it is hardly conceivably that Hymerus could afford in the meantime to use force against Mésène on his own account, we may with much probability infer that the event in question occurred only in or after 127, B.C. when Artabanus I came to the throne vacated by the death of Phraates. Now, in the history of Mésène, this is the only instance in which the country is ever known to have suffered any assault from the Parthian force; and from this it might be argued that the recorded subjection of Mésène to Parthia was a result of this campaign, and therefore that it must date from later than 127 B.C.; at the same time assuming, with SAINT-MARTIN, that its previous separation from the Syrian kingdom and rising as an independent state occurred in 129 B.C. As we see, however, this inference does not agree with that above drawn from the *Shi-chi*: that T'iao-chih, i.e. Mésène, was found subject to An-hsi, i.e. Parthia, in 129 or 128 B.C.

SAINT-MARTIN could not have thought of dating the foundation of Mésène-Kharacène from any time earlier than 129 B.C., because he took it for granted that the country had remained subject to the Syrian supremacy until 130 B.C. Let us, however, go back to the year 140 B.C., when the Parthian king Mithridates I went to conquer the basins of the Tigris and the Euphrates, until Mesopotamia, Assyria, Babylonia, Susiana, etc. were added to the Parthian territory. True, there is no recorded evidence that Mésène-Kharacène at that time shared the fate of the rest of the Euphrates region, but still it is hard to imagine that it alone should have remained a Syrian territory, after those countries immediately upper in the Euphrates basin, like Babylonia and Mesopotamia, had been absorbed by Parthia; for the river was the most important line of approach from Syria to Mésène. The probability is that the conquest of Mithridates cut off Mésène from Syrian control, but nevertheless left it uninvaded, perhaps because the country was naturally too well protected by an intricate network of channels and swamps to be easily attacked. In the meantime, there must have been a spell of anarchy in Mésène itself, and we may well suspect that here was a good opportunity for the Arabian chieftain Spasinus to rise and bring the country under a single rule, and thus found the state of Mésène-Kharacène. Not that, however, this new state was absolutely independent of Parthian influence. Nothing would have been more foolish for such a small country as Mésène than to attempt to oppose itself against the immeasurably superior power of Parthia; and we may naturally suppose that this state did simply what the other autonomous peoples in the same region are known to have done, that is, pledging nominal vassalage

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(195) GUTSCHMID, op. cit., p. 75-79.

and paying tribute to the powerful neighbour. This political relation, I think, is reflected in that remark made by the author of the *Shih-chi* about T'iao-chih: "An-hsi makes it a vassal state, holding it as a foreign (outlying) territory."<sup>(196)</sup> If these observations are acceptable, it will be safe to conclude that the foundation of the state of Mésène-Kharacène took place during the period from 140 to 138 B.C., the latter being the year of the death of Mithridates I.

The above conclusion might be opposed on the ground of PLINY's record that in 130 B.C., when Antiochus VII marched forth into Babylonia, he appointed Numenius satrap of Mésène. We must wonder, however, why this appointment of Numenius should necessarily imply that Mésène had remained under the Syrian rule up to that time. A more liberal and natural interpretation of the matter will be that the people of Mésène, though formerly subject to Syrian supremacy, had by that time made themselves independent, or rather taken up nominal allegiance with Parthia, as did the inhabitants of Seleucia, Babylonia, etc.; that in the Syrian eyes they were nothing but revolters, and therefore Antiochus VII may well have sent Numenius to chastize them as such, at the same time empowering him to control the country in the capacity of a satrap. So, behind this appointment there was the same motive which prompted Antiochus himself to lead a campaign against his former subject populations in Babylon, Seleucia, etc., to punish them for their revolting and reconquer them from the Parthian hands. According to PLINY, Numenius then crushed the Persian, i.e. Parthian, force both on land and sea about the mouth of the Persian Gulf. It is not likely, however, that Parthia itself had any fleet in those days; although Numenius may possibly have fought at sea with the hostile sailors of the state of Mésène, as a dependency of Parthia.

When Hymerus under Phraates II of Parthia inflicted an attack upon Mésène, the motive was no doubt similar to that which had made Antiochus VII send his general Numenius to subjugate the country. Mésène, as well as Babylonia, Seleucia, and other states in the Euphrates region, had been rendering vassalage to Parthia since the time of Mithridates I, but when Antiochus VII marched forth to the east, they could not choose but turn away from Parthia to submit to the Syrian conqueror. Soon after, however, Antiochus was vanquished by Phraates, and the latter's agent Hymerus was entrusted with the duty of reestablishing the possession of those once-revolting states. Probably the severe administration with which he afflicted the people of Babylon and Seleucia was aimed to some extent at punishing their crime of infidelity. His warlike expedition against Mésène, too, must have been dictated by the same policy. It by no means marks the time of Mésène's first submission to Parthia, but rather indicates its temporary departure from under Parthian suzerainty.

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(196) See note 179.

Syria never quite recovered from the disastrous issue of Antiochus's campaign against Parthia. With the exhaustion of national resources, and with the frequency of internal strife, it had no strength left ever to push eastward again in an attempt to restore its former territories in that direction. It only sustained an enfeebled existence, until at last it became absorbed by Rome in 65 B.C. Now the Roman ambition to conquer the whole world led to Crassus's invasion of Mesopotamia, and Antonius's attack upon Armenia, both of which, however, proved unsuccessful. Later, when Augustus came into power in Rome, his policy toward the east was a defensive rather than a forward one. He was well aware that the pressure of the barbarian tribes on the northern frontier of Italy would not allow of any further draining of the Roman military resources to the end of territorial expansion in the east. He also realized the fact that the valleys of the Tigris and the Euphrates formed an immutable natural barrier separating the Roman and Parthian empires. With mountainous districts not easily accessible in the upper part, and with barren deserts prevailing in the middle and lower sections, the basins of the rivers presented a region extremely difficult for either power, on its east or west, to conquer and occupy permanently. As for the small states existing there, they were constantly in danger of being disturbed and devastated by the clash between the superior neighbours on either side; but at the same time they were naturally in such a position as to decide by their own inclination either for this or that side the comparative influence of their eastern and western neighbours, and by virtue of that advantageous situation were enabled to maintain practical independence, although avowing nominal allegiance to one superior or the other. This was invariably the case whether in the former days of rivalry between Syria and Parthia, or in the far later period when the Eastern Roman empire opposed itself against Persia under the Sassan dynasty. Augustus, sagacious enough to grasp this fundamental truth, was content to make peace with Parthia; Roman pride had to be satisfied with establishing Roman supremacy in Armenia and in the north of Mesopotamia while recognizing the Euphrates as the permanent line dividing the Roman and Parthian spheres of influence. So long as this policy of Augustus was adhered to by his successors, there was no warlike dealing with Parthia, but in the reign of Trajan, there occurred a departure from the tradition, and later we find several Roman emperors endeavouring to push the eastern frontier of the empire beyond the stream. In the rest of this study we shall see how the effects of this development of the Roman eastern policy are reflected in the Ta-ch'in accounts in Chinese history.

It was in the 9th year of *Yung-yüan* of Ho-ti of the Later Han (97 B.C.) that KAN Ying, the intended envoy to Ta-ch'in despatched by PAN Ch'ao, the Chinese Governor-General of the Western Region, reached the country of T'iao-chih. Whether the state of T'iao-chih was subject at that time to the Parthian rule is not recorded. But it was by "a sailor at the western frontier

of An-hsi" that KAN Ying, "coming on the border of the great sea with an intention to cross it", was informed of the tremendous difficulties of the sea-passage to Ta-ch'in, and from this fact we may easily gather that the country of T'iao-chih, i.e. Mésène, was then one of the western frontier provinces of An-hsi. This inference may be confirmed by quoting again that *Hou-han-shu* paragraph on T'iao-chih: "Later An-hsi made it a vassal state, appointing a general to govern all the small cities there."<sup>(197)</sup> We remember, on the other hand, what the author of *Shih-chih* stated about a similar relation of T'iao-chih to An-hsi, and all things taken together, it will be safely concluded that T'iao-chih continued to be a dependency of An-hsi from the reign of Wu-ti of the Former Han up to the time at least when KAN Ying visited the country.

The above story of KAN Ying, told in the *Hou-han-shu* account of An-hsi, shows that T'iao-chih, situated on the western frontier of An-hsi, made a starting point from which a voyage to Ta-ch'in was usually commenced. Now in the same account of An-hsi, we meet with this noteworthy statement about the country of Yü-lo: "It makes the extreme western frontier of An-hsi. Southwards from this place, you take a sea-passage to reach Ta-ch'in."<sup>(198)</sup> It must seem that both T'iao-chih and Yü-lo were recognized as a starting point for a sea-voyage to Ta-ch'in; and it was this consideration that led HIRTH to the inference that T'iao-chih and Yü-lo were practically identical in geographical position, both assignable to the vicinity of the modern Nedjef.<sup>(199)</sup> As previously pointed out in this article, HIRTH was quite correct in his assignment of the site of Yü-lo, but he was not justified in uniting T'iao-chih with Yü-lo. Certainly they were situated in quite different quarters; one bordering on the western sea, i.e. the Persian Gulf, the other on Lake Nedjef not far from Babylon.

I believe, on the other hand, there is far more reason for proposing to identify T'iao-chih with Tsê-san, which appears in the *Wei-liao* account of Ta-ch'in as a tributary state of Ta-ch'in. HIRTH suggested that Tsê-san might have been "a district on the entrance to the river (Mésène?),"<sup>(200)</sup> and I think it highly probable that Tsê-san meant Mésène itself, and in consequence that it was identical with T'iao-chih in the narrower sense of the term. We learn from the *Wei-liao* that "the king of Tsê-san, subject to Ta-ch'in, had his seat in the middle of the sea"; that from his country, "one travelled north by water to Lü-fên, reaching it in half a year, or in a month if favoured with quick winds"; the course of journey from Tsê-san to Ta-ch'in "lay in a southwesterly direction, though there was no telling the number of miles to

(197) (安息) 後役屬之，爲置大將，監領諸小城焉。(後漢書，卷百十八，西域傳)

(198) 安息西界極矣，自此南乘海，乃通大秦。(ibid.)

(199) HIRTH, op. cit. p. 140-150.

(200) ibid., p. 190.

be covered.”<sup>(201)</sup> The alleged situation of the residence of the Tsê-san king in the middle of the sea cannot be taken literally. There is no island in the Persian Gulf itself to be thought of in the identification of Tsê-san as described above. On the other hand, the manner in which the tract of the country near the mouth of the Euphrates is overrun with a network of channels and marshes might easily suggest the idea of the city lying in the midst of the sea. Moreover, in the time of the Seleucid regime, the northern part of the lower Euphrates basin was called Parapotami, and the southern part the sea-province of Erythraea and we may notice that the latter name is highly indicative of the maritime nature of the country. These observations are enough, I think, to account for the above statement about Tsê-san, in favour of its identification with Mésène. Now the obvious question is why the author of the *Wèi-liao* mentioned both as two different countries within the same account. In answer to this, I propose to assume that T'iao-chih was the name of the country as lying subject to the Parthian supremacy, while Tsê-san was its later appellation after it became a Roman territory.

We may compare this case to that of Yü-lo. The *Hou-han-shu* describes Yü-lo as “the western frontier of An-hsi”, apparently implying that it was within the boundaries of the An-hsi dominion; whereas the *Wèi-liao* represents it as a tributary state of Ta-ch'in, and the latter refers to the state of the country after it became added to the Roman eastern territory. In a similar way, T'iao-chih is recorded in the *Hou-han-shu* as a dependency of An-hsi because it was such during the period covered by that history; while the *Wèi-liao* mentions the same country as a tributary of Ta-ch'in, and under the new name Tsê-san, too; this must represent information about the country acquired after it had undergone that political change. But why is it that the *Wèi-liao* makes mention and gives an account of T'iao-chih at the same time? As observed before, the Hai-tung countries, as the *Wèi-liao* calls them, referred to the six states of Lü-fên, Ssü-t'ao, Ssü-lo, Ssü-pin, Yü-lo, and Tsê-san, all of commercial importance in the Han period. Of these, Lü-fên, Yü-lo and Tsê-san are explicitly stated as being tributary to Ta-ch'in, while the rest are only known by inference to have belonged to the An-hsi dominion. Now what is particularly remarkable is that the author of the *Wèi-liao* does not treat T'iao-chih on a par with any of the above group of small states. Perhaps here he used the name T'iao-chih as a generic term nearly corresponding to Hai-tung in the scope of reference. We may note how widely the reference of the name T'iao-chih differed from history to history. In the statement in the *Hou-han-shu* that KAN Ying, seeking passage to Ta-ch'in, reached T'iao-chih, this meant Mésène, in the southern corner of T'iao-chih in the broader sense. Coming down to a later period, we find in the *Sui-shu* the following remark about Po-ssü, i.e. Persia; “The country of Po-ssü has its capital in the city

(201) 澤散王屬大秦，其治在海中央，北至鹽分水行半歲，風疾時一月到，……西南詣大秦都，不知里數。

of Su-lin 蘇蘭 west of the Ta-ho-shui 達曷水, which corresponds to the former territory of T'iao-chih.<sup>(202)</sup> As correctly interpreted by HIRTH, the Ta-ho-shui meant the Tigris, and the city of Su-lin Madain.<sup>(203)</sup> Now Madain in the period concerned corresponded to Ssü-pin (Ktesiphon) and Ssü-lo (Seleucia); and the annalists of the Sui period, connecting it with the former territory of T'iao-chih, suggest how extensive an area the term T'iao-chih had been applied to in the earlier periods. In the course of time, however, as the Chinese came to know of the overland route to Ta-ch'in and consequently more than ever before of the geographical relations of the general quarter concerned, they must have become aware that what had been simply spoken of as T'iao-chih really contained many units, and that the particular country of Mésène, previously known indiscriminately by the name of T'iao-chih, was one of those small units situated the southernmost. Hence the introduction of the new name Tsê-san to particularize it. From what original name the term Tsê-san was transcribed is unknown. It might be suggested, however, that the name Maisan by which the Arabs used to call Mésène may have had something to do with the Chinese form, provided that we are allowed to assume the character tsê 澤 to be a scribal error.<sup>(204)</sup> However this may be, it seems certain that at and after the period when the Chinese recognized Tsê-san and the other small states in the so-called Hai-tung region, some as dependencies of An-hsi, and others of Ta-ch'in, there could no longer have been any particular country to be spoken of as T'iao-chih. Yet the author of the *Wèi-liao*, while introducing on record those Hai-tung states, still makes mention of T'iao-chih, as if it were a separate existence. In addition to those already observed, we may quote another passage from him: "West of this (Su-lê 疏勒, i.e. Kashgar), there are Ta-yüan, An-hsi, T'iao-chih, and Wu-i, the last-named being also called P'ai-ch'ih 排持. These four countries lying one west of another in the order in which they are mentioned, maintain their original seats respectively, there having been no increase or decrease."<sup>(205)</sup> Lastly we may also remember this passage of the *Wèi-liao* account of Ta-ch'in:

(202) 波斯國都達曷水之西蘇蘭城，即條支之故地。（隋書，卷八十三，西域傳）

(203) HIRTH, op. cit., p. 198.

(204) I was once led to suppose that T'iao-chih was a transcription from the Arabic term *Jeziere*, which denoted island; and Tsê-san another from *Jeziar*, the plural form of *jeziere*. Now, however, I hold it doubtful whether the Arabic term in question was so pronounced in the Han period as well. In Syriac speech, which is of the same linguistic family as Arabic, an island is called *gezirtha*, and this makes us suspect that the Arabic word, now *Jeziere*, may have been pronounced *gezire* in the early days. Furthermore, comparing the present Arabic word for camel, *jamal*, with its Hebrew equivalent *gamal*, and considering the Arabic habit of sounding the foreign names Gîg and Gurgan as Jui and Jurjan respectively, we are constrained to admit that in some cases where the present Arabs pronounce *j*, their early ancestors pronounced *g*. If so, there can be the less room to trace T'iao-chih to the Arabic term *jeziere*.

(205) 自是以西，大宛·安息·條支·烏弋，烏弋一名排持，此四國次在西，本國也無增損。

“The country of Ta-ch'in, also called Li-kan, is situated west of the great sea west of An-hsi and T'iao-chih.”<sup>(206)</sup> In all probability the author was influenced by the erroneous notion that T'iao-chih remain as it was described in the earlier histories, namely, the *Shih-chi* and the *Han-shu*, until the closing years of the Later Han period.

Having gone through the history of T'iao-chih and explained its relation with Tsê-san, we are now better prepared to find to what particular period belonged the data in the Ta-ch'in account of the *Wèi-liao*, the source material of all historical records on Ta-ch'in. We have already noticed in the account a passage reporting that the king of Su-lê presented to the Later Han court some blue stones and gold girdles originating from Ta-ch'in, in the 3rd year of *Yang chia* (A.D. 134). This time corresponds to the reign of Hadrian (A.D. 117-138) in Rome and to that of Vologases II (A.D. 78-143) in Parthia. May we take it for granted that the rest of the account also referred to about the same period? It seems to me that the key to this problem lies where the *Wèi-liao* mentions those small states subject to Ta-ch'in: Ch'ieh-lan, Ssü-fu, and Hsien-tu in the Hai-pêi region; Lü-fên, Yü-lo, and Tsê-san in the Hai-tung region. It will be sufficient for our purpose to ascertain at what period those places were simultaneously in Roman possession.

As already remarked, Augustus established the Euphrates as the eastern boundary of the Roman world, and his defensive policy in this direction was fairly maintained for half a century by his successors. In the course of time, however, Parthia fell into confusion and disorder from internal causes, and the Roman emperor Trajan took advantage of this opportunity to strengthen and expand Roman supremacy in the east. In 114 he set out on his eastern campaign; the following year, he annexed Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Assyria, and formed provinces of them; in 116 he captured the then Parthian capital, Ktesiphon and Seleucia, establishing there the province of Babylonia; then marching south down the Tigris, he beat and subdued Mésène at the mouth of the Euphrates. Such was his success in placing the whole valleys of the two rivers within the boundaries of the Roman empire. In the nearer east, he annexed Petra and created there the province of Arabia; overthrew the royal rule of Damascus, and replaced it with a Roman colony; he also subdued the state of Palmyra, which had boasted practical independence, and subjected it to Roman suzerainty. Thus the Roman supremacy in the quarter corresponding to Hai-pêi, as it is called in the *Wèi-liao*, was established more firmly than ever. May we say that this political situation in the east just after Trajan's campaign is what we see represented in the *Wèi-liao* account? So far as Trajan's conquests in the farther east are concerned, however, they were so poorly defended that even before his death in 117 they were grievously disturbed by revolts, and eventually surrendered by his successor Hadrian. While in Armenia he was content with establishing a king of the Arsacid

206) 大秦國一號黎軒在安息·條支西大海之西。



family and making his rule tributary to Rome, Hadrian gave back Mesopotamia, Assyria, and Babylonia to Parthia, making the Euphrates once more bound the Roman Empire on the east, and concluding peace with Parthia, which was to continue to the time of Marcus Aurelius; So it was only for two years, from 115 to 117, that Trajan's conquest in the Hai-tung region held on; and does the *Wèi-liao* account refer to the situation at any moment within this short period? We remember, however, that during those years, the region in question was a scene of constant revolt and turbulence, and it must have been cut off from any foreign trade for the time being. Therefore there was very little chance that the intelligence of the current political conditions there could have reached China at all. But even granting that this thing was possible, it is still hard to see why the *Wèi-liao* mentions as Ta-ch'in dependencies in the Hai-tung region only Lü-fên, Yü-lo, and Tsê-san, and not Ssü-t'ao, Ssü-pin, and Ssü-lo, which, lying in the same region, must needs have been conquered by Trajan as well; or why, on the contrary, Ssü-lo is explicitly, and Ssü-pin implicitly, ascribed to An-hsi dominion, while Ssü-t'ao is left to be inferred from its general geographical relations to have been in the same political state.

What seems to cast a good light on our present question is J. SAINT-MARTIN's view of Hadrian's real attitude toward the eastern problem. Contrary to the general historical notion that he abandoned all the territories which Trajan had won over from Parthia, our author maintains that although Hadrian abandoned parts of the colonies established in those conquered districts and also withdrew the Roman garrisons stationed there, he nevertheless endeavoured to preserve Roman prestige and authority over the regions once acquired by his predecessor. This was clear, thought our J. SAINT-MARTIN, from the fact that Hadrian once effected the replacement of certain kings in Armenia and the Caucasus region, and that the ruler of the country of Osroëne (i.e. Lü-fên in the *Wèi-liao*) began in Hadrian's time to strike his coins with the image of the Roman emperor or Empress, a practice which no vassal or ally of Parthia would have thought of. Moreover, J. SAINT-MARTIN argued, there was every reason to expect that the ruler of Kharacène (i.e. Tsê-san), who had proved himself the most staunch subject of Trajan, should have remained in friendly terms with his successor.<sup>(207)</sup>

If the above opinion of J. SAINT-MARTIN's is accepted, it may be taken for granted that Hadrian's policy toward the east was to preserve the best part of Trajan's conquest. We can easily imagine how the Roman motive in the struggle with Parthia was connected with a desire to secure and keep open free passage from Syria to the head of the Persian Gulf, so that merchandise from the far east might be brought home by way of the Euphrates. So Hadrian may well have surrendered to Parthia the cities on the Tigris, such as Ktesiphon (Ssü-pin), Seleucia (Ssü-lo), etc., but on the other hand taken

(207) - J. SAINT-MARTIN, op. cit., p. 190-195.

good care to retain in Roman hands those cities lying on the Euphrates, and which occupied very important positions on the commercial route referred to. Then it would not be surprising to see those states of Lü-fên (Osroëne), Yü-lo (Vologesia), and Tsê-san (Mésène) recorded as dependencies of Ta-ch'ín (Rome), while Ssü-pin (Ktesiphon), Ssü-lo (Seleucia), and Ssü-t'ao (Sittake) are again ascribed to An-hsi (Parthia). We can suppose that this state of things, beginning in the time of Hadrian, continued to that of his immediate successor, Antonius Pius (A.D. 138-161), whose reign is known to have been free from any trouble with Parthia. The next Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius was again obliged to fight with Parthia, and this of course altered the Roman footing in the region under review. As regards Mésène, in particular, J. SAINT-MARTIN remarks that Cassius, the general of Marcus Aurelius, battled in the course of the Parthian campaign with the Arabs of Mésène, and this indicates that the ruler of Kharacène had already turned away from the Roman cause to render allegiance to Parthia. He also suggests that from that time on every Roman campaign carried against Parthia seems to have involved an attack upon the Arabic Mésène, which always presented itself as a dependency or ally of Parthia.

After the foregoing observations it must seem that such distribution of Roman and Parthian dependencies in the Hai-tung region as appears in the *Wèi-liao* account of Ta-ch'ín could not only belong to the period corresponding to the reigns of Hadrian and Antonius Pius in Roman history (117-161 A.D.); and this again leads us to the inference that the general information about Ta-ch'ín embodied in the account was acquired during that period.

What requires to be alluded to in this connection is the fact we have already noticed as recorded in the *Hou-han-shu* that in the 9th year of *Yen-hsi* of Huan-ti (166 A.D.), the king of Ta-ch'ín by the name of An-tun 安敦 sent an embassy to the Later Han court. At first sight this might seem to suggest that the Ta-ch'ín account both in the *Wèi-liao* and the *Hou-han-shu* had its source in the information brought by that western party. The incident in question, however, receives no mention whatever in the *Wèi-liao*, and this must have been because it took place after the compilation of the history. On the other hand, we have already observed to what extent the Ta-ch'ín account of the *Hou-han-shu* was a reproduction from the *Wèi-liao*, nearly all the exception being that the *Hou-han-shu* alone reports the arrival of the Ta-ch'ín embassy. This must mean that the author of the *Hou-han-shu*, while mainly relying on the *Wèi-liao* for the material of his Ta-ch'ín account, had some other source available for drawing the data of the Ta-ch'ín embassy. As for the name, An-tun, of the Ta-ch'ín king who sent the embassy, the consensus of scholarly opinion is that it must have referred to Marcus Aurelius; and this goes to add to the improbability that the author of the *Wèi-liao* should have owed the information for his Ta-ch'ín account to the Roman embassy. Otherwise, he would not have recorded such states in the lower

Euphrates basin as Yü-lo (Vologesia) and Tsê-san (Mésène) to be Ta-ch'ín dependencies, which they were certainly not in the time of Marcus Aurelius. We may further notice that he mentions the tributary states of Ta-ch'ín in almost all cases by Arabic names, and this is what he would not have done if he had learned them through the medium of the Roman embassy. We may easily doubt the genuineness of the embassy: no one knows that it was not a bogus one carried out by foreign merchants' tricks. So far, however, as they professed themselves a Roman embassy even by pretension, they must have been Romans or Greeks; and as such, they would, if ever, have spoken of the Roman stations in the east by Greek or Latin names instead of Arabic. This inference alone, I believe, is sufficient to repudiate the idea that the Ta-ch'ín account of the *Wèi-liao* was indebted at all to the arrival of that Ta-ch'ín embassy.