



KHOTAN

KHOTAN (Hotan), a town (lat 37°06' N, long 79°56' E) and major oasis of the southern Tarim Basin in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region of China and an important kingdom with an Iranian-speaking population. The indigenous name for the people was Old Khotanese *hvatana*, the land was *hvatana-kṣīra* (later *hvaṃ-kṣīra*), and the language *hvatanau* (see below). The term *hvatana* may be from *hvata* “self” and be a self-reference to the Khotanese as the “(rulers) themselves” (pointed out by Konow, “Ein neuer Saka-Dialekt,” *SPAW*, phil.-hist. Kl., Berlin, 1935, no. 20, p. 30 [= 799]). In Indic, the land is called Gostana, literally “cow [= earth] breast” (Tibetan *sa-nu* ‘earth breast’), a name which was also applied to Kuṇāla, son of *Aśoka* (q.v.) and legendary founder of Khotan. The Tibetan name for Khotan was Li-yul “the land of Li,” with unexplained “Li.” The older Chinese form was 于阗 *yutian* from older **Hwa(h)den*, and the modern form is 和田 *hétián*.

For the early history of Khotan, see below and [CHINESE TURKESTAN i](#). See also R. E. Emmerick, *A Guide to the Literature of Khotan* (2nd ed., Tokyo, 1992) for miscellaneous information and bibliographies; and H. Kumamoto, “Kōtan-go bunken gaisetsu,” in *Kōza Tonkō 6: Tonkō ko-go bunken II: Kōtan-go bunken*, Tokyo, 1985, pp. 101-40.

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