

burns a blue smoke floats in the air and gathers without dissipating. The guests can use scissors to divide the thread of the smoke. The reason for that is that the ambergris still retains some of the virtue of that dragon breath which produces buildings and terraces' (this is the end of the quotation from the *Ling-wai tai-ta*). Others yet say: '[Ambergris] is the spittle ejected by the dragon on the sea when he comes out or plunges in. There are three sorts [of it]; the first is called «water-drift» (汎水 *fan-shui*); the second, «sand-leaked» (滲沙 *shên-sha*); the third, «fish-eaten» (魚食 *yü-shih*). The «water-drift» [ambergris] lightly floats on the surface of the water; good seamen watch the coming out and plunging in of the dragon, and following him they pick it up. The «sand-leaked» is [ambergris] that has been drifted by waves and billows to main lands and islands. It is that which has coagulated and accumulated for many years, wind and rain have soaked it, and all its scent has leaked into the sandy earth. As to the «fish-eaten» [ambergris], when the dragon emits his spittle (=ambergris), the fish vie with each other in eating it; when digested by them, it becomes dung which is scattered in the sandy desert (a somewhat curious location for fish excrements!); its smell is rank and dirty. Only the «water-drift» [ambergris] can enter into the [composition of] perfumes; the other two [sorts] are inferior. 鄧灝 Têng Hao of 曲江 Ch'ü-chiang (in Shao-chou-fu, Kuang-tung), after comparing the three opinions, said that the third one is nearest to the truth. The sayings of the various authors do not agree, and I do not know which one is correct. But according to my humble judgment, the first one must be fairly near the mark'.

Later works, with one exception which will be noted below, have little to add to the information collected by Chang Shih-nan. «Ambergris» entered Chinese pharmacopoeia only in the Ming dynasty, with 汪機 Wang Chi and after him with Li Shih-chên (cf. *Pên-ts'ao kang-mu*, 43, 7a; *Br*, I, 152). But Chang Shih-nan's text on the three sorts of «ambergris» finds a remarkable counterpart in Barbosa (ed. DAMES, II, 106-109), who also heard of three qualities of «ambergris», which agree, as to nature and as to order, with the Chinese description.

Wang Ta-yüan's *Tao-i chih-liao* of 1349-1350 mentions an «Ambergris Island», Lung-hsien-hsü [嶼], which also occurs on the Chinese map of the early 15th cent. and is made the subject of an independent paragraph in Fei Hsin's *Hsing-ch'a shêng-lan* of 1436. The island lay off the north-western coast of Sumatra. PHILLIPS (*JNCB*, xx, 221) identified it with Pulo Way; FUJITA (*Tao-i chih-liao*'s commentary, ed. *Hsüeh-i'ang ts'ung-shu*, 10-11) decided in favour of Pulo Bras; ROCKHILL, going back to an ancient opinion of GROENEVELDT, pronounced in favour of Pulo Rondo (*TP*, 1915, 158); I think that the identification with Pulo Bras is correct. The two notices on Lung-hsien-hsü have been translated by ROCKHILL (*TP*, 1915, 158-159), but the translation is sometimes incomplete and often inaccurate. The middle part of the *Tao-i chih-liao* paragraph in particular must be understood as follows: «The colour of the [dragon] spittle is sometimes blacker than 'black incense', and sometimes it resembles pumice-stone. If smelled, it has a somewhat rancid scent. But if it be used in combination with various perfumes, then their aroma becomes extremely pure and penetrating. Even such perfumes as calambac-wood, crystal camphor ('plum flower camphor'; cf. *HR*, 193), sandal, musk, gardenia flowers, gham-wood, and rose-water must have some of it to bring out [their full scent].» In other words, Wang Ta-yüan, like some other earlier authors, maintains that «ambergris» is not a perfume in itself, but an excipient