

and the same blanket two years. Thus *mu-mien* was clearly not a luxury (the Imperial tents were usually made of black felt outside, but lined and decorated with pieces of vermilion silk; cf. *T'ang liu-tien*, 11, 9-10). CIBOT (*Mém. conc. les Chinois*, II, 603) has spoken of the «robe de coton» of Wu-ti, and the same has been done by MAYERS, W. Williams (*The Middle Kingdom*, II, 36-37), PARKER (*China Review*, XIX, 192), and Dyer BALL (*Things Chinese*³, 149); but I can find no authority for such a meaning of *chang* (the only alternative meaning, instead of «tent», would be «curtain»). Though without a verb, the sentence *mu-mien tsao-chang* is independent from the preceding one. The *K'ang-hsi tzū-tien* (s. v. 棉 *mien*), which cites the *Tzū-chih t'ung-chien*, suppresses the first sentence and then, wanting a verb, gives «Liang Wu-ti sent (送 *sung*) a black tent of *mu-mien*», which is an alteration of the text. This, however, like the misquotation from Shih Chao which follows (cf. *infra*, p. 501), was merely copied by the authors of the *K'ang-hsi tzū-tien* from an earlier dictionary or encyclopaedia, since it is already quoted, in the same terms, by the *Ch'ün-fang p'u* of 1630 (*Mien p'u* section, 5 b) from the *Wu-Hsün tsa-p'ei*, then a recent work (cf. *supra*, p. 438).

I shall not dwell on the mere mentions of *mu-mien* in the T'ang period (the term occurs in the works of at least half a dozen T'ang poets), and still less under the Sung and Yüan, when cotton gradually spread over central and north-western China, but I wish to draw attention to a fact which is not without interest for the use of cotton, of whatever sort it may have been, among the aboriginal tribes of Yün-nan. These tribes were often designated from some particular characteristic of their dress or of the products of their country. Now one of them, belonging to the group of the 濮 Pu (which included the Tattooed Pu, the Red-mouth Pu, etc.), was known as the Mu-mien Pu, «the Cotton Pu» (cf. also *BEFEO*, VIII, 367, where the name is left untranslated). This information occurs in a group of five quotations expressly said to be drawn from Kuo I-kung's *Kuang chih*; they have been preserved in the *T'ai-p'ing yü-lan*, 192, 3 b, and are found also, without indication of source in the *T'ung tien*, 187, 8 b-9 a, and in the *T'ai-p'ing huan-yü chi*, 179, 16 b-17 a; I do not know why they have been left out in the *Yü-han-shan-fang chi i-shu* (perhaps because the compiler thought that the attribution was erroneous). The text is as follows: «In the country of the Mu-mien Pu, there is the *mu-mien* tree, which has abundant leaves, and very numerous carpels; in the carpels, the floss is similar to that made by silkworms; [the pod] is as big as the fist».

We have seen that the word used for «cotton», *mu-mien* was made with the word which meant silk-floss, to which *mu* had been added to mark that it was a vegetal floss. But when cotton became of more common use in China, a new graphic specification was made, and 綿 *mien* began to be written 棉 *mien*. Although the *K'ang-hsi tzū-tien* gives only the latter form in *mu-mien*, even for examples of pre-T'ang and T'ang times, and although *P'ei-wên yü-fu* arbitrarily gives some of these examples under one form and some under the other, there is no indication that the new character was ever used before the Sung dynasty; it has not been traced before the *Kuang yüan* (A. D. 1007-1011), and it is given as a new form by Yüan Wên (12th cent.) in his *Wêng-yü hsien-p'ing* (4, 3 a; cf. also *Kuei-ssü lei-kao*, 7, 21 a-b; 14, 6 a). But it is then of frequent occurrence, and, if we can trust the texts established by Ch'ien-lung's Commissioners for the *Ssü-k'u ch'üan-shu*, it is regularly used by Chou Ch'ü-fei (1178; 10, 9 a), Chao Ju-kua (1225), Wang Chêng (1313, with some inconsistencies in the present editions), the authors of the *Nung-sang chi-yao* (1273;