

*chi-ch'êng* is enough to show that Chinese scholars could never form a clear theory as to the identification of the various *t'ung* species mentioned in ancient works. As to the present *wu-t'ung*, alias *po-t'ung*, the «soaking» (*yen-tzũ*) is perplexing; as the same term occurs in the quotation from the *Kuang-chih*, it is not probable that 漬 *tzũ* should be regarded as a corrupt reduplication, subsequently enlarged into *yen-tzũ*, of the 績 *chi* that follows. It may be, after all, that, in the 3rd cent., the natives of south-western China had a special method of preparing the cotton floss for weaving. But, since cloth was made out of it, I hold that the silk-cotton tree is practically excluded; on the other hand, the designation *wu-t'ung* cannot refer to a plant, but at least to a small tree. My conclusion is that the so-called *wu-t'ung* tree of the *Hua-yang kuo chih* and the *Hou-Han shu* may be no other than the cotton tree, *Gossypium arboreum*, and that the *po-tieh* of the Ai-lao may be the cloth which was woven from its floss.

I have said that the 幢 *t'ung* of the *Shu-tu fu* was certainly the same as the 桐 *t'ung* of the *Hua-yang kuo chih* and the *Hou-Han shu*, so that it must also be a designation of the cotton tree. Curiously enough, this identification seems to have been made by some mediaeval scholars, since an author of the Mongol period, 陳高 Ch'ên Kao (a native of Wên-chou in Chê-chiang, doctor in 1354, † 1356; cf. *Ssũ-k'u* . . . , 168, 6 a), has written a poem entitled 種幢花 *Chung t'ung-hua*, «Sowing *t'ung* flowers» (cf. *T'u-shu chi-ch'êng*, *ts'ao-mu tien*, 303, *i-wên*, 2 a), which unmistakably refers to *Gossypium arboreum*: its location in the south (炎方 *yen-fang*), its cultivation in the place of silkworms and mulberries, the care with which the young plants are attended, their full size of three feet, the yellow flowers and the white floss, finally the weaving into cloth for garments, all leave no doubt as to the identity. For once, it was a fortunate inspiration on the part of the compilers of the *T'u-shu chi-ch'êng* to include this poem not in the chapters on the 桐 *t'ung* trees like the passages concerning the *wu-t'ung* of the *Hua-yang kuo-chih* and *Hou-Han shu*, but among the notices on cotton.

To account for the use of 幢 *t'ung*, or 桐 *t'ung*, or 梧桐 *wu-t'ung* as early designations of the cotton tree, we must remember that, when the Chinese, in their advance through new countries, found unknown products, they had either to borrow their foreign names, or to use, as an equivalent, a Chinese term already referred to something more or less similar. This was how, for instance, they gave the name 胡桐 *hu-t'ung*, «*t'ung* of the Hu», and even sometimes *wu-t'ung*, to the balsampoplar, *Populus balsamifera*, of Central Asia (cf. LAUFER, *Sino-Iranica*, 339). I am convinced that they did the same for the cotton tree of Yün-nan, the more so since one at least of the *t'ung* trees was said to resemble *mu-mien* (cf. *supra*, p. 462), and that such a loose approximation accounts to a great extent for the difficulties of identification they vainly tried to overcome later on. On the other hand, the «*t'ung* flowers» and «*t'ung* flower cloth» of Yüan and Ming times were merely archaistic survivals. From T'ang times, a new name for the cotton tree of Yün-nan had been adopted; it was called the «*so-lo* tree».

We have found this use of *so-lo* in the *Man shu* and, in a corrupt form, in the *Hsin T'ang shu*. But there are other ancient examples of it. The *T'ai-p'ing kuang-chi* (406, 3 a) has preserved a long extract (the *T'u-shu chi-ch'êng*, *ts'ao-mu tien*, 312, 1 a-b, gives only the first part) from a T'ang work, the *Li-chou T'ung-wang hsien t'u-ching*, or «Monograph of the district of T'ung-wang of Li-chou» (south-west of the modern Ya-chou in Ssũ-ch'uan); this extract is