

the Li aborigines, of Thai descent, who may have played there a part analogous to that played by their far-away Ai-lao cousins in western Yün-nan. The *Kuei-hai yü-hêng chih*, written in 1175 (cf. *supra*, p. 454) says (14 a): «The 'Li curtains' (黎幕 *Li-mu*) are made 'south of the Sea' (*hai-nan*, i. e. in Hai-nan; on this equivalence, see 'Cheynam'). The people of the Li districts (峒 *tung*, a technical name for the territorial divisions or the villages of the southern aborigines) acquire Chinese variegated silks, undo the coloured threads and, mixing them with *mu-mien*, weave the whole into [*Li-mu*]. A *mu* ('curtain') is made by joining four strips (*fu*).» And then: «The 'Li sheets' (黎單 *Li-tan*; *tan* is the same as the modern 禪 *tan*; *tan-mu* in Chao Ju-kua is a combination of *Li-tan* and *Li-mu*; the translation 'single curtains' in *HR*, 183, is erroneous) are also woven by the Li people; it is a cotton cloth (*mu-mien pu*) with blue (*ch'ing*) and red lines (*tao*). Kuei-lin people (in Kuang-hsi) buy them wholesale as bedding articles (*wo-chü*).»

In 1178, Chou Ch'ü-fei mentions *chi-pei* («cotton») among the products of the region occupied by the Li clans, and says that Li men «wind their waist with *chi-pei*», and that Li women «always wear skirts (*ch'ün*) made of *chi-pei*, the variegated colours (*wu-sê*) of which are glittering» (*Ling-wai tai-ta*, 2, 8 b, 9 a). But, of the Man, who, in principle, are aborigines of the mainland in southern China («Man» may refer to the aborigines of Hai-nan in other texts, but not in the *Ling-wai tai-ta* which always calls them Li-jên, unless Chou Ch'ü-fei is here drawing from another undetermined source), he says also (*ibid.* 10, 9 a): «In the winter, they plait (編) 'goose hair' (鵝毛 *ê-mao* = goose down) and *mu-mien*, and in the summer they twist (緝 *ch'i*) [the fibres of] banana [leaves], [the fibres of] bamboo, and [also] hemp and ramie, to make garments.» The word «to plait» is certainly to be understood here as meaning «to weave»; the difference in the terminology is probably due to the fact that Chou Ch'ü-fei here copies some earlier unidentified work.

Finally, there is in Chou Ch'ü-fei a special paragraph entitled «*Chi-pei*», which is worthy of a complete translation (*Ling-wai tai-ta*, 6, 12-13): «The *chi-pei* tree (*mu*) is like a low small mulberry bush; the calyx (枝萼 *chih-o*) is like that of the *fu-jung* (probably = *mu fu-jung*, hibiscus); the carpels (心葉 *hsin yeh*) of the flower all have a fine downy floss about half an inch long, just like willow down, and several tens of black seeds. The southerners collect the downy floss, roll out the seeds with iron pins, and then tease out the down by hand and spin it. They make cloth of it without the trouble of joining and twisting the threads, and it is extremely strong and good. The T'ang histories make it *ku-pei*, and also make it a herbaceous plant (*ts'ao*). If we regard 古 *ku* as a corruption of the character 吉 *chi*, still a plant and a tree are different things. Can it be that there is a distinct herbaceous *ku-pei* which is not the tree *chi-pei*? Or if we grant that a low bush (*mu*) is like a plant (*ts'ao*), still must the writing of the characters (*ku-chi*) make us leave the problem unsolved⁽¹⁾? In Tei-, Hua-, and Lien-

⁽¹⁾ *Chiu t'ang shu*, 197, 1 b. Pelliot confessed himself unable to make sense of this passage; and Gustav Haloun could do little better. The present version or paraphrase is made with the very kind help of Dr Chêng Tê-k'un. It is easy, the author seems to mean, to say that *ku* is a misprint for *chi*, but still the difference between *mu* and *ts'ao* must be explained. Were there two different things with different names? We do not know. Alternatively it is easy to say that *ts'ao* might be loosely used for a small bush (*mu*), but then the difference between *ku* and *chi* becomes a difficulty again. Shall we leave it unsolved? [A. C. M.]