

Chou Mi's informant, 白廷玉 Po T'ing-yü, was no other than our Po T'ing seems to have escaped him, and also that a verse, with a commentary, was devoted to the *ya-pu-lu* in the *Hsü Yen-ya shih shih* (verse and commentary have both passed into the *Cho-kêng lu*; the commentary begins with *mo-pei*, «north of the Desert», as in the case of the «sowed sheep»; so in the case of the *ya-pu-lu*, this *mo-pei* cannot be an arbitrary change in the quotation made from the passage of Chou Mi by LI Shih-chên, as was thought by LAUFER, p. 4, but must come from a third unknown parallel passage in which it really occurred). Po T'ing had named to Chou Mi his own informant, a certain 盧 Lu, *tzü* 松厓 Sung-yai, who unfortunately remains unidentified.

In the miscellaneous works of Ming writers, I have noted only one passage relating to the «sowed sheep» (*chung-yang*); it occurs in the 敝帚齋餘談 *Pi-chou-chai yü-t'an*, by 沈德符 Shên Tê-fu (1578-1642; *Yen-yün i-pien* ed., 6 a-b): «An ancient saying is: 'Northerners do not believe that the southerners have junks (*chu-lu*) of 10,000 石 *shih*; southerners do not believe that the northerners have tents of 10,000 men; foreigners do not believe that in China there are worms which spit threads, which form cocoons which are unwound to make silk.' True indeed is this saying. The same thing occurs when it is said that people of the Western Countries sow sheep. Whenever this is said to people, many also do not believe it. Their custom, as to the method of sowing, is to take a sheep, flay off his skin and take off his meat, but not to break his bones, which are buried in the earth with the five viscera. The next year, after the spring rains, bubbles (*p'ao*) appear at the place of sowing and spread close to one another. Monks, holding charms, blow conchs and beat drums. When the sound is heard in the earth, countless young sheep immediately jump out, but their umbilical cord (*ch'i-tai*) remains attached to the belly of the dead sheep. The monks again, with a rite of psalmodic recitation, cut it off, and then each sheep runs away. People wait until they have grown up and then eat them. The next year, they again sow them in the same manner, and it never comes to an end. Such is the invariable account given by men of the Western Countries. Many men from China who entered that country have also seen the thing; it is only among those who have not witnessed it with their own eyes that many entertain doubts...» Shên concludes by citing, as very similar to his account, the passage from the *Hsin T'ang shu* and Po T'ing's poem. Although his tale, in which he has absolute faith, has much in common with the other sources, it offers certain details which mark it as of independent origin.

The same cannot be said, however, of LI Shih-chên's paragraph in his *Pên-ts'ao kang-mu* (50 A, 34 b; this has been copied, with all its serious mistakes, into the *T'u-shu chi-ch'êng*, *ch'in-ch'ung tien*, 112, 16 b, and, with the most obvious ones corrected, into the *Tz'ü-yüan hsü-pien*, *ch'ou*, 71). But the very title of the paragraph, 地生羊 *ti-shêng-yang*, «earth-born sheep», is not, as LAUFER thought (p. 116), «an interesting feature», but a mistake. LI Shih-chên took it from his quotation from the *Pei-hu lu*, which he begins thus: «In the kingdom of Ta-Ch'in, there is the 'earth-born sheep'»; but the actual text of the *Pei-hu lu* is «In the kingdom of Fu-lin, there are lambs which are born in the earth»; there is no specific name of the animal. It may be that LI Shih-chên devised this name under the influence of 地生毛 *ti shêng mao*, which occurs in the *Shu-i chi* (2, 8 a; cf. also *Sui shu*, 22, 13 a); but this also is no name, and really means «the earth-produced wool». After citing the various texts which speak of the sheep