

translation, I, 556, and from it in YULE's *Hobson-Jobson*², 270, is misleading, since it is neither Persian nor English. My friend MASSÉ was good enough to check for me the original passage in the edition of the *Bibliotheca Indica*, 149). *Kawdah* was still understood and occasionally used in Egypt down to c. 1800 (cf. DE SACY, *Chrestomathie arabe*, I, 253). Of the two forms the better one is of course *kawdah*, a correct rendering of Prâkrit *kavadda* > **kavḍa*. *Kawdah* has not survived in modern Persian, which, according to MASSÉ, employs only a word کجی *kojī*, «small shell», «cowry», not given in the usual Persian dictionaries; its etymology and history are not known.

There are many species of *Cypræa*, but the one which comes *par excellence* under the designation of «cowry» is *Cypræa moneta*, the second in rank being *Cypræa annulus*, both sea-shells. From prehistoric times the *Cypræa moneta* has been carried across almost the whole of Europe and Asia, and was used as an ornament and as a means of exchange. There is no doubt moreover that because of its shape a sexual magic attached to the cowry (for China, cf. KARLGRÉN, *Some fecundity symbols*, in *The Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities*, Bull. No 2 [1930], 34-36, and ANDERSSON, *Children of the yellow Earth*). It also came to be used as regular currency in many parts of Asia and, at a later period, in Africa. Something similar occurred in America with the «seawan» and «wampam» shell beads of North American Indians.

The earliest mention of a shell currency comes from China. Since TERRIEN DE LACOUPERIE's days it has been customary to state that the cowry, adopted by the Chinese from prehistoric aborigines of the east and south, could be traced as early as in the «Tribute of Yü» section of the *Shu ching* «about the 14th cent. B. C.», that it was gradually superseded by metallic currency, and was finally suppressed in 338 B. C. by the prince of Ch'in owing to «irregular and insufficient supply» (cf. YULE, *Hobson-Jobson*², 269; TERRIEN DE LACOUPERIE, in *Coins and Medals, their Place in History and Art*, by the authors of the British Museum Official Catalogue, London, 1885, p. 190-197, 235, where the suppression of the shell currency is dated in the 2nd year of Hui-wên «i. e., 335 B. C.», an error for 336 B. C.; also in *JRAS*, 1888, 438-439; COULING, *Encyclopædia Sinica*, 136. In TERRIEN DE LACOUPERIE's *Catalogue of Chinese Coins ... in the British Museum*, London, 1892, IX, XII-XIV, no mention is made of the suppression of the shell currency, and the monetary reforms of the Ch'in state are dated not 338, but 336 B. C.). Unfortunately TERRIEN DE LACOUPERIE, whose monograph *On Barter and the Shell Currency of Ancient China*, referred to in his *Catalogue*, IX, was never published, was content with the bare affirmation of the suppression of shell currency in 338 B. C., and never mentioned his source; on the other hand it is well known that LACOUPERIE's biased treatment of Chinese texts was often tantamount to complete distortion. The whole problem must be approached anew in the light of recent discoveries.

Cowries have been found on the late neolithic sites of Yang-shao in Ho-nan and Chu-chia-chai in Kan-su, and they also form one of the typical motifs of prehistoric painted pottery in China (cf. J. G. ANDERSSON, *Archæolog. Studien in China* [*Mitteil. d. anthropolog. Gesellsch. in Wien*], 1924, 78; *Preliminary Report on Archæological Research in Kansu* [*Mem. of the Geolog. Survey of China*], 1925, 18; *Children of the Yellow Earth*, 323). These sites were inhabited by tribes which, from the anthropological point of view, may be termed proto-Chinese,