

*Yellow Earth*, 300) expresses a similar opinion, copying JACKSON, 183. We shall soon come to this use of cowries in Yün-nan, among populations which were outside the range of Chinese culture; but I have never met with any text which would suggest that cowries continued to be used by the Chinese as currency in any part of China proper since the beginning of our era; nay, if we except Wang Mang's abortive attempt at a revival of the ancient practice, they had fallen into complete disuse on or before the downfall of the Chou dynasty in the third century B. C.

But shells long continued to be worn as ornaments, just as we have seen them mentioned in several passages of the *Shih ching* and *Shu ching*. Many texts on the subject could be adduced, ranging from Han almost to T'ang times (cf. *T'u-shu chi-ch'êng*, *ch'in-ch'ung-tien*, 156, 5a; *T'ai-p'ing yü-lan*, 807, 14; 841, 1). It is often difficult, however, to determine which texts refer to cowries, and which to other shells of various sizes, and including bivalves.

When later we find again in Chinese texts mentions of the use of a shell currency on Chinese soil, they refer to the aborigines of Hai-nan and Yün-nan.

The *Ling-piao lu-i* (c. A. D. 900; Wu-ying-tien ed., 3, 5-6; cf. *T'ai-p'ing yü-lan*, 941, 1a) says: «The 紫貝 *tzü-pei* (lit. «purple shell») is [the same as] the 研螺 *ya-lo* (lit. «polishing gastropod»). The 黎 Li Barbarians of 儋 Tan[-chou] and 振 Chên[-chou] collect them on the sea-shore and use them as currency (*huo*). The Li are the Thai aborigines of Hai-nan; Tan-chou and Chên-chou were, under the T'ang, the official names of the modern Tan-chou and Yai-chou in Hai-nan. For various *Cypræa* which have been similarly used for polishing purposes in Europe, Egypt and Indonesia, cf. SCHILDER, 315.

MAO Chin's Commentary on Lu Chi's 'Memoir on Natural History in the Book of Odes' (2B, 43-44) has the following passage: «The *Pên-ts'ao* mentions only the *tzü-pei* (*i. e.* does not mention the cowry properly so called, nor the *ta-pei*). The 唐本注 *T'ang pên chu* says: 'Its shape is like [that of] the *pei*; its size is two or three inches; it is produced in the Eastern Sea (Tung-hai) and the Southern Sea (Nan-hai). Its upper side has purple spots on a white bone (*ku*; *i. e.* «ground»)! The 圖經 *T'u-ching* says: '蘇恭 Su Kung's Commentary (*chu*) says: The *tzü-pei* is [the same as] the *ya-lo*. Its shape is like [that of] the *pei*, but [more] round; its size is two or three inches. The Li Barbarians of Tan[-chou] and Chên[-chou] collect them and use them as currency goods (貨市 *huo-shih*). Among northerners, painters alone use them [, and they use them] as polishers (研物 *ya-wu*). There are many species of *pei*. The ancients used them as currency (*pao-huo*), but the *tzü-pei* was the species particularly valued . . . ». This text, written in the more or less slipshod manner of late Ming writers, is not always clear, nor is it easy to decide where some of the quotations begin and end. To say that the *Pên-ts'ao* mentions only the *tzü-pei* is not correct, since the *Pên-ts'ao* of the T'ang spoke of the cowry properly so called (*pei-tzü*; cf. *infra*); on the other hand, LI Shih-chên's *Pên-ts'ao kang-mu* already existed in MAO Chin's days, and it contains two distinct paragraphs, one on *tzü-pei*, the other on *pei-tzü* (cowry). Perhaps MAO Chin, ignoring LI Shih-chên's work, had in view the 證類本草 *Chêng-lei pên-ts'ao* of 1108 (cf. BRETSCHNEIDER, *Botanicon Sinicum*, 1, 47), which still exists, but of which no copy is at my disposal. I do not know what MAO Chin means by *T'ang pên chu*; it may be a commentary either on the *Pên-ts'ao* of the T'ang or, less probably.