

(*k^wâi), 罷 *pa* (*b'âi), etc. This form *pa* must go back to T'ang times, since the 巴齒 *pa-ch'ih* of the *Man shu* (cf. *supra*, p. 544) can be no other than *pei-ch'ih*, «cowry».

When the Mussulman Sayyid Ajall was sent by Qubilai to establish a regular administration in Yün-nan, he was soon confronted with the problem of the cowry currency. We read in his biography (*YS*, 125, 2*a*) : «The people of Yün-nan used cowries (*pei*) instead of cash (*ch'ien*). At this time the paper-money system (*ch'ao-fa*) was first introduced, and the people were not pleased with it. Sai-tien-ch'ih (Sayyid Ajall) reported to the Court, which gave permission [to the people] to revert to their [old] custom.» The exact date is given in the *pên-chi* (*YS*, 9, 2*a*) : «The 13th *chih-yüan* year, in the first month . . . , on the *ting-hai* day (Febr. 7, 1276), the «moving Grand Secretary» of Yün-nan, Sayyid Ajall, came to report on the change of the names of the prefectures (*lu*) of Yün-nan. Moreover, he said that [the methods of] trade were not the same in Yün-nan as in China; the people [there] really did not understand the paper-money system. The best plan would be to permit the circulation of the cowries (*pa-tzū*) of both official and private origin, which would be more convenient for the people. The proposals were adopted.»

Less than four months later was issued an edict which has been preserved in the 通制條格 *T'ung-chih t'iao-ko*, 18, 20-21, under the heading 錢貨 *Ssū-pa*, «Private cowries»; it is dated February 7, 1276. The question had been raised in 1275 whether people trading with Yün-nan ought to be allowed the free private import of cowries (*pa-tzū*) from the stocks existing in the warehouses of the Commissariat for maritime foreign trade (*shih-po-ssū*) in Chiang-nan. Conflicting opinions had been expressed as to the advantage or disadvantage of this free import for the authorities and for the population of Yün-nan. Private import was prohibited. The interest of this edict lies in the fact that it shows that cowries were exported to Yün-nan from ports at the mouth of the Yang-tsū, and that these cowries were not collected off the coasts of China, but came by sea from foreign countries.

On November 21, 1305, «10,000 ingots (*ting*) in paper-money [currency] were given to the 'moving Grand Secretariat' (*hsing-shêng*) of Yün-nan to be used concurrently with cowries (*pei*). As to the cowries, those which were not native products were to be treated in the same manner as forged paper-money» (*YS*, 21, 9*b*). Cowries have never been a native product of Yün-nan, and the so-called «native» ones are clearly to be understood as those which had been imported from Siam and possibly Burma and, in principle, at a more or less ancient date (on the direct trade from Siam to Yün-nan at the beginning of the fifteenth century, cf. *TP*, 1933, 383-385).

The importation of «private cowries» seems to have remained for many years a sore point with the Imperial administration in Yün-nan. In the *Yüan tien-chang* (20, 31*a*), an edict dated in the eighth moon of 1301 (September 3-October 2) states that the cowry currency (*pa-huo*) of Yün-nan worked under the same conditions as obtained for other currency in the rest of China, and that it was the official number of existing cowries which determined the price of goods. But of late, officials and private people had vied with one another to smuggle quantities of «private cowries» across the customs barriers of the province, taking advantage of neglect of duty or using bribery, and a final stop had to be put to such an evil practice. All such «private cowries» were thenceforth to be confiscated and officials neglectful of their duty to be punished.

As to the exchange value of the cowries, we know from *YS*, 12, 4*a* (from which it passed