

of the market of the Land of Darkness « agrees almost word for word with Dr Hirth's account of the ' Spirit Market ', taken from the Chinese ». As a matter of fact, this note of PARKER, in *China Review*, XIV, 359, where he proposed to see in the Visū the Wu-sun of Chinese historians of Han times, is valueless; but it may be worth while to say a few words about the « dumb trade » in Chinese sources, compared with western accounts.

YULE (Y, II, 486; Y<sup>1</sup>, III, 259) has mentioned the « dumb trade » in a number of countries of Asia and Africa; more information is to be found in BASSET, *Muséon*, VII, 53, to which add HR, 110, and MARQUART, *Die Benin-Sammlung des Reichsmuseums für Völkerkunde in Leiden*, CLXXXI-CLXXXII; I have not had access to the monograph *The Silent Trade* by P. J. Hamilton GRIERSON, Edinburgh, 1903.

Pliny (VI, 22), followed by Solinus (41; TENNENT's statement to the contrary in his *Ceylon*, I, 571, is erroneous, since Solinus gives both; for a mediaeval adaptation, cf. LANGLOIS, *La connaissance de la nature et du monde*, 127-128), ascribes the dumb trade to the « Seræ », perhaps as a consequence of some misunderstanding. The informant was the Ceylonese envoy who came to the Emperor Claudius, and whose father had travelled to the country of the Seræ. Since, however, the envoy speaks of the Seræ as being beyond the « montes Hemodos », *i.e.* the Himālaya, it is possible that his father had reached China by the ancient route of Burma and Yün-nan, and met there some aboriginal tribe which practised the dumb trade.

But it must be admitted that Chinese texts are silent about any such practice in the south-west, and it is precisely in reference to Ceylon that dumb trade is mentioned by them for the first time. The text, which occurs in Fa-hsien, is well known; it bears on the beginning of the 5th cent. A. D. (cf. LEGGE, *A Record of Buddhist Kingdoms*, 101) : « This kingdom [of Ceylon] originally had no population, and was only inhabited by demons (*kuei-shên*, here = *rākṣasa*) and dragons (= *nāga*); the merchants of the various kingdoms carried on traffic with them (*i. e.* with the demons). When trafficking, the demons did not show themselves. They merely set forth their precious goods, marking their price, and the merchants, in agreement with the price, returned the value and took the goods. On account of the coming and going of the merchants, the people of the various kingdoms heard that the country was pleasant, and in their turn flocked to it in numbers, so that finally it became a great kingdom ». All later Chinese accounts of the dumb trade in Ceylon are copied, either expressly or tacitly, from Fa-hsien. In his work *Ceylon* (I, 570), TENNENT (who erroneously dates Fa-hsien's travels in the 3rd cent.) has connected this text with a similar practice ascribed to the Veddah, the wretched aborigines of Ceylon, by various authors of the 17th and 18th cents. (RIBEIRO, KNOX and VALENTYN). He also adduced the much earlier evidence of Al-Bīrūnī on Laṅkā (c. 1030 A. D.; cf. SACHAU, *Alberuni's India*, I, 309) : « According to the uniform report of all sailors, the ships which are sent to this country land their cargo in boats, viz. ancient Western *denars* and various kinds of merchandise, striped Indian cloth, salt, and other usual articles of trade. These wares are deposited on the shore in leather sheets, each of which is marked with the name of its owner. Thereupon the merchants retire to their ships. On the following day they find the sheets covered with cloves by way of payment, little or much, as the natives happen to own. The people with whom this trade is carried on are demons according to some, savage men according to others. » TENNENT might have added two passages from Marignolli : In the eastern part of « Seyllan » (= Ceylon),