

from Ta-yüan (that is, a Hu country), *hu ma* also, being a Hu plant, must likewise have emanated from that quarter. Such vagaries cannot be accepted as history. All that can be inferred from the passage in question is that T'ao Huñ-kiñ may have been familiar with *hu ma*. Li Ši-čen, quoting the *Moñ k'i pi t'an* 夢溪筆談 by Šen Kwa 沈括¹ of the eleventh century, says, "In times of old there was in China only 'great hemp' *ta ma* 大麻 (*Cannabis sativa*) growing in abundance. The envoy of the Han, Čaň K'ien, was the first to obtain the seeds of oil-hemp 油麻² from Ta-yüan; hence the name *hu ma* in distinction from the Chinese species *ta ma*." The Čaň-K'ien tradition is further voiced in the *T'un či* of Čeň Tsiao (1108-62) of the Sung.³ The *T'ai p'in yü lan*,⁴ published in A.D. 983, quotes a *Pen ts'ao kiñ* of unknown date as saying that Čaň K'ien obtained from abroad *hu ma* and *hu tou*.⁵ This legend, accordingly, appears to have arisen under the Sung (A.D. 960-1278); that is, over a millennium after Čaň K'ien's lifetime. And then there are thinking scholars who would make us accept such stuff as the real history of the Han dynasty!

In the T'ang period this legend was wholly unknown: the *T'an Pen ts'ao* does not allude to any introduction of *hu ma*, nor does this work speak of Čaň K'ien in this connection.

A serious book like the *T'u kiñ pen ts'ao* of Su Suñ, which for the first time has also introduced the name *yu ma* ("oil hemp"), says only that the plant originally grew in the territory of the Hu, that in appearance it is like hemp, and that hence it receives the name *hu ma*.

Unfortunately it is only too true that the Chinese confound *Sesamum indicum* (family *Pedaliaceae*) and *Linum usitatissimum* (family *Linaceae*) in the single term *hu ma* ("Iranian hemp"); the only apparent reason for this is the fact that the seeds of both plants yield an oil which is put to the same medicinal use. The two are totally different plants, nor do they have any relation to hemp. Philologically, the case is somewhat analogous to that of *hu tou* (p. 305). It is most probable that the two are but naturalized in China and introduced from Iranian regions, for both plants are typically ancient West-Asiatic cultivations. The alleged wild sesame of China⁶ is doubtless an escape from cultivation.

¹ This is the author wrongly called "Ch'en Ts'ung-chung" by BRETSCHNEIDER (Bot. Sin., pt. II, p. 377). Ts'un-čun 存中 is his *hao*.

² A synonyme of *hu ma*.

³ Ch. 75, p. 33.

⁴ Ch. 841, p. 6 b.

⁵ See below, p. 305.

⁶ FORBES and HEMSLEY, *Journal Linnean Soc.*, Vol. XXVI, p. 236.