

“ginger-yellow”), *C. pallida*, *C. petiolata*, *C. zedoaria*. Which particular species was anciently known in China, is difficult to decide; but it appears that at least one species was utilized in times of antiquity. *Curcuma longa* and *C. leucorrhiza* are described not earlier than the T'ang period, and the probability is that either they were introduced from the West; or, if on good botanical evidence it can be demonstrated that these species are autochthonous,¹ we are compelled to assume that superior cultivated varieties were imported in the T'ang era. In regard to *yü-kin* (*C. leucorrhiza*), Su Kuñ of the seventh century observes that it grows in Šu (Se-č'wan) and Si-žuñ, and that the Hu call it 馬 莖 *ma-šu*, *mo-džut (dzut),² while he states with reference to *kiañ-hwañ* (*C. longa*) that the Žuñ 戎 人 call it 莖 *šu*, *džut (dzut, dzur); he also insists on the close resemblance of the two species. Likewise Č'en Ts'añ-k'i, who wrote in the first part of the eighth century, states concerning *kiañ-hwañ* that the kind coming from the Western Barbarians (Si Fan) is similar to *yü-kin* and *šu yao* 莖 藥.³ Su Suñ of the Sung remarks that *yü-kin* now occurs in all districts of Kwañ-tuñ and Kwañ-si, but does not equal that of Se-č'wan, where it had previously existed. K'ou Tsuñ-ši⁴ states that *yü-kin* is not aromatic, and that in his time it was used for the dyeing of woman's clothes. Li Ši-čen reminds us of the fact that *yü-kin* was a product of the Hellenistic Orient (Ta Ts'in): this is stated in the *Wei lio* of the third century,⁵ and the *Liañ šu*⁶ enumerates *yü-kin* among the articles traded from Ta Ts'in to western India.⁷

The preceding observations, in connection with the foreign names

¹ According to LOUREIRO (Flora Cochinchinensis, p. 9), *Curcuma longa* grows wild in Indo-China.

² This foreign name has not been pointed out by Bretschneider or Stuart or any previous author.

³ This term is referred (whether correctly, I do not know) to *Kæmpferia pundurata* (STUART, Chinese Materia Medica, p. 227). Another name for this plant is 蓬 莖 茂 *p'un-no šu* (not *mou*), *buñ-ña. Now, Ta Miñ states that the *Curcuma* growing on Hai-nan is 蓬 莖 莖 *p'un-no šu*, while that growing in Kiañ-nan is *kiañ-hwañ* (*Curcuma longa*). *Kæmpferia* belongs to the same order as *Curcuma*, —*Scitamineae*. According to Ma Či of the Sung, this plant grows in Si-žuñ and in all districts of Kwañ-nan; it is poisonous, and the people of the West first test it on sheep: if these refuse to eat it, it is discarded. Chinese *p'un-no*, *buñ-ña, looks like a transcription of Tibetan *boñ-ña*, which, however, applies to aconite.

⁴ *Pen ts'ao yen i*, Ch. 10, p. 3.

⁵ *San kwo či*, Ch. 30, p. 13.

⁶ Ch. 78, p. 7.

⁷ The question whether in this case *Curcuma* or *Crocus* is meant, cannot be decided; both products were known in western Asia. Č'en Ts'añ-k'i holds that the *yü-kin* of Ta Ts'in was safflower (see below).