

boards of the capital, the prefects of Šun-t'ien and Mukden, and all provincial governors.¹ Under the name *lo k'wei* 落葵 it is mentioned by T'ao Huñ-kin (A.D. 451-536), who refers to its cultivation, to the employment of the leaves as a condiment, and to the use of the berries as a cosmetic.² This probably came into use after the introduction of safflower. The *Ku kin ču*,³ written by Ts'ui Pao in the middle of the fourth century, states, "The leaves of *yen-č'i* 燕支 resemble those of the thistle (*ki* 薊) and the *p'u-kun* 蒲公 (*Taraxacum officinalis*). Its habitat is in the Western Countries 西方, where the natives avail themselves of the plant for dyeing, and designate it *yen-č'i* 燕支, while the Chinese call it *huñ-lan* (紅藍 'red indigo,' *Carthamus tinctorius*); and the powder obtained from it, and used for painting the face, is styled *yen-č'i fen* 粉. [At present, because people value a deep-red color 絳, they speak of the *yen-č'i* flower which dyes; the *yen-č'i* flower, however, is not the dye-plant *yen-č'i*, but has its own name, *huñ-lan* (*Carthamus tinctorius*). Of old, the color intermediate between *č'i* 赤 and white is termed *huñ* 紅, and this is what is now styled *huñ-lan*.]"⁴ It would follow from this text that *Basella* was at an early date confounded with *Carthamus*, but that originally the term *yen-č'i* related to *Carthamus* only.

The *Pei hu lu*⁵ contains the following information in regard to the *yen-č'i* flower: "There is a wild flower growing abundantly in the rugged mountains of Twan-čou 端州.⁶ Its leaves resemble those of the *lan* 藍 (*Indigofera*); its flowers, those of the *liao* 蓼 (*Polygonum*, probably *P. tinctorium*). The blossoms 穗, when pulled out, are from two to three inches long, and yield a green-white pigment. It blooms in the first month. The natives gather the bursting seeds while still in their shells, in order to sell them. They are utilized in the preparation of a cosmetic 燕支粉, and particularly also for dyeing pongee and other silks. Its red is not inferior to that of the *lan* flower. Si Ts'o-č'i

P. HOANG, *Mélanges sur l'administration*, pp. 80-81.

¹ RETSCHNEIDER, *Bot. Sin.*, pt. II, No. 148; pt. III, No. 258.

² Ch. c, p. 5 (ed. of *Han Wei ts'un šu*). In regard to the historicity of this work, the critical remarks of the Imperial Catalogue (cf. WYLIE, *Notes on Chinese Literature*, p. 159) must be kept in mind. Cf. also above, p. 242.

³ The passage enclosed in brackets, though now incorporated in the text of the *Ku kin ču*, is without any doubt later commentatorial wisdom. This is formally corroborated by the *Pei hu lu* (Ch. 3, p. 12), which omits all this in quoting the relevant text of the *Ku kin ču*.

⁴ Ch. 3, p. 11 (see above, p. 268).

⁵ Name of the prefecture of Čao-k'in 肇慶 in Kwan-tun Province. This wild flower is *Basella rubra*.