

fruit is inferior in taste to that of the north." He distinguishes sweet, insipid, and sour varieties.

In the *T'ao huñ kiñ ču* 陶宏景注¹ it is stated that in Yuñ-kia 永嘉 (in the prefecture of Wen-čou, Či-li) there were *han kwa* 寒瓜 ("cold melons") of very large size, which could be preserved till the coming spring, and which are regarded as identical with the water-melon. Li Ši-čen justly objects to this interpretation, commenting that, if the water-melon was first introduced in the Wu-tai period, the name *si kwa* could not have been known at that time. This objection must be upheld, chiefly for the reason that we have no other records from the fourth century or even the T'ang period which mention the water-melon: it is evidently a post-T'ang introduction.²

Ye Tse-k'i, in his *Ts'ao mu tse* 草木子 written in 1378, remarked that water-melons were first introduced under the Yüan, when the Emperor Ši-tsu 世祖 (Kubilai) subjugated Central Asia. This view was already rejected under the Ming in the *Čen ču č'wan* 珍珠船 by Č'en Ki-žu 陳繼儒, who aptly referred to the discovery of the fruit by Hu Kiao, and added that it is not mentioned in the *Er ya*, the various older *Pen ts'ao*, the *Ts'i min yao šu*, and other books of a like character, it being well known that the fruit did not anciently exist in China. As to this point, all Chinese writers on the subject appear to be agreed; and its history is so well determined, that it has not given rise to attempts of antedating or "changkienizing" the introduction.

The Chinese travellers during the Mongol period frequently allude to the large water-melons of Persia and Central Asia.³ On the other hand, Ibn Baṭūṭa mentions the excellent water-melons of China, which are like those of Khwarezm and Ispahan.⁴

According to the Manchu officers Fusambô and Surde, who published an account of Turkistan about 1772,⁵ the water-melon of this region, though identical with that of China, does not equal the latter in taste; on the contrary, it is much inferior to it. Other species of melon belong to the principal products of Turkistan; some are called by the Chinese "Mohammedan caps" and "Mohammedan eyes." The so-called "Hami melon," which is not a water-melon, and ten varieties of which are distinguished, enjoys a great reputation. Probably it is

¹ Apparently a commentary to the works of T'ao Huñ-kiñ (A.D. 451-536).

² The alleged synonyme *han kwa* for the water-melon, adopted also by BRETSCHEIDER (*Chinese Recorder*, 1871, p. 223) and others, must therefore be weeded out.

³ Cf. BRETSCHEIDER, *Mediæval Researches*, Vol. I, pp. 20, 31, 67, 89.

⁴ YULE, *Cathay*, new ed., Vol. IV, p. 109.

⁵ *Hui k'iañ či*, see above, p. 230; and below, p. 562.