

as), while this section opens with the remark, "The habitat of the myrrh tree 沒 is in Po-se."¹ It may be, however, that, as argued by HIRTH, *mu* may be intended in this case to transcribe Middle and New Persian *mūrd*, which means "myrtle" (not only in the Būndahišn, but generally).² Myrrh and myrtle have nothing to do with each other, belonging not only to different families, but even to different orders; nor does the myrtle yield a resin like myrrh. It therefore remains doubtful whether myrrh was known to the Chinese during the T'ang period; in this case, the passage cited above from the *Nan čou ki* (like many another text from this work) must be regarded as an anachronism. Čao Žu-kwa gives the correct information that myrrh is produced on the Berbera coast of East Africa and on the Hadramaut littoral of Arabia; he has also left a fairly correct description of how the resin is obtained.³

Li Ši-čen⁴ thinks that the transcription 沒 or 末 represents a Sanskrit word. This, of course, is erroneous: myrrh is not an Indian product, and is only imported into India from the Somali coast of Africa and from Arabia. The former Chinese character answers to ancient *mut or *mur; the latter, to *mwat, mwar, or mar. The former no doubt represents attempts at reproducing the Semito-Persian name,—Hebrew *mōr*, Aramaic *murā*, Arabic *murr*, Persian *mor* (Greek *σύρα*, *σύρον*, *μύρον*, Latin *myrrha*).⁵

Whether the Chinese transcribed the Arabic or Persian form, remains uncertain: if the transcription should really appear as late as the age of the Sung, it is more probable that the Arabic yielded the prototype; but if it can be carried back to the T'ang or earlier, the assumption is in favor of Iranian speech.

¹ Cf. HIRTH, *Journal Am. Or. Soc.*, Vol. XXX, p. 20. Owing to a curious misconception, the article of the *Yu. yañ tsa tsu* has been placed under *mi hiañ* 蜜香 ("gharu-wood") in the *Pen ts'ao kañ mu* (Ch. 34, p. 10 b), for *mu* 沒 *hiañ* is wrongly supposed to be a synonyme of *mi hiañ*.

² Another New-Persian word for this plant is *anībā* or *anītā*. In late Avestan it is *muštemeša* (BARTHOLOMAE, *Altiran. Wört.*, col. 1189). I do not believe that the Persian word and Armenian *murt* are derived from Greek *μυρσίνη* (SCHRADER in Hehn, *Kulturpflanzen*, p. 238) or from Greek *μύρτος* (NÖLDEKE, *Persische Studien*, II, p. 43).

³ HIRTH, *Chau Ju-kua*, p. 197.

⁴ *Pen ts'ao kañ mu*, Ch. 34, p. 17.

⁵ Pliny, XII, 34-35; LECLERC, *Traité des simples*, Vol. III, p. 300; V. LORET, *Flore pharaonique*, p. 95. The transcription *mwat appears to transcribe Javanese and Bali *madu* ("myrrh"; Malayan *manisan lebah*). In an Uigur text translated from Sogdian or Syriac appears the word *zmurna* or *zmuran* ("myrrh"), connected with the Greek word (F. W. K. MÜLLER, *Uigurica*, pp. 5-7).