

THE MALAYAN PO-SE AND ITS PRODUCTS

On the preceding pages reference has repeatedly been made to the fact that besides the Iranian Po-se 波斯, transcribing the ancient name Parsa, the Chinese were also acquainted with another country and people of the same name, and always written in like manner, the location of which is referred to the Southern Ocean, and which, as will be seen, must have belonged to the Malayan group. We have noted several cases in which the two Po-se are confounded by Chinese writers; and so it is no wonder that the confusion has been on a still larger scale among European sinologues, most of whom, if the Malayan Po-se is involved in Chinese records, have invariably mistaken it for Persia. It is therefore a timely task to scrutinize more closely what is really known about this mysterious Po-se of the Southern Sea. Unfortunately the Chinese have never co-ordinated the scattered notices of the southern Po-se; and none of their cyclopædias, as far as I know, contains a coherent account of the subject. Even the mere fact of the duplicity of the name Po-se never seems to have dawned upon the minds of Chinese writers; at least, I have as yet failed to trace any text insisting on the existence of or contrasting the two Po-se. Groping my way along through this matter, I can hardly hope that my study of source-material is complete, and I feel sure that there are many other texts relative to the subject which have either escaped me or are not accessible.

The Malayan Po-se is mentioned in the *Man šu* 蠻書 (p. 43 b),¹ written about A.D. 860 by Fan Čo 樊綽, who says, "As regards the country P'iao 驃 (Burma), it is situated seventy-five days' journey (or two thousand *li*) south of the city of Yün-č'añ.² . . . It borders on Po-se 波斯 and P'o-lo-men 婆羅門 (Brāhmaṇa);³ in the west, however, on the city Še-li 舍利." It is clearly expressed in this document that Po-se, as known under the T'ang, was a locality somewhere conterminous with Burma, and on the mainland of Asia.

¹ Regarding this work, see WYLIE, Notes on Chinese Literature, p. 40; and PELLLOT, *Bull. de l'Ecole française*, Vol. II, p. 156; Vol. IV, p. 132.

² In Yün-nan. The *T'ai p'ih hwan yü ki* gives the distance of P'iao from that locality as 3000 *li* (cf. PELLLOT, *Bull. de l'Ecole française*, Vol. IV, p. 172). The text of the *Man šu* is reproduced in the same manner in the *Šu kien* of Kwo Yün-t'ao (Ch. 10, p. 10 b), written in 1236.

³ I do not believe that this term relates to India in general, but take it as denoting a specific country near the boundary of Burma.