

the countries beyond the sea and south of China, has recorded several products of Po-se, which, as we have seen, must be interpreted as the Malayan region of this name. Such is the case with benjoin (p. 464) and cummin (p. 383).

We noticed (p. 460) that the *Nan čou ki* and three subsequent works attribute myrrh to Po-se, but that this can hardly be intended for the Iranian Po-se, since myrrh does not occur in Persia. Here the Malayan Po-se is visualized, inasmuch as the trade in myrrh took its route from East Africa and the Hadramaut coast of Arabia by way of the Malay Archipelago into China, and thus led the Chinese (erroneously) to the belief that the tree itself grew in Malaysia.

64. The case of aloes (*Aloe vulgaris* and other species) presents a striking analogy to that of myrrh, inasmuch as this African plant is also ascribed to Po-se, and a substitute for it was subsequently found in the Archipelago. Again it is Li Šün of the T'ang period who for the first time mentions its product under the name *lu-wei* 蘆薈, stating that it grows in the country Po-se, has the appearance of black confectionery, and is the sap of a tree.<sup>1</sup> Su Šün of the Sung dynasty observes, "At present it is only shipped to Canton. This tree grows in the mountain-wilderness, its sap running down like tears and coagulating. This substance is gathered regardless of the season or month." Li Ši-čen feels doubtful as to whether the product is that of a tree or of an herb 草: he points out that, according to the *Ta Min i t'un či*, aloes, which belongs to the class of herbs, is a product of Java, Sumatra (San-fu-ts'i), and other countries, and that this is contradictory to the data of the T'ang and Sung Pen-ts'ao. It was unknown to him, however, that the first author thus describing the product is Čao Žu-kwa,<sup>2</sup> who indeed classifies *Aloe* among herbs, and derives it from the country Nu-fa 奴發, a dependency of the Arabs, and in another passage from an island off the Somali coast, evidently hinting at Socotra. This island is the home of the *Aloe perryi*, still imported into Bombay.<sup>3</sup>

The name *lu-wei* is traced by Hirth to Persian *alwā*. This theory is difficult to accept for many reasons. Nowhere is it stated that *lu-wei* is a Persian word. Li Ši-čen, who had good sense in diagnosing foreign words, remarks that *lu-wei* remains unexplained. The Chinese historical texts relative to the Iranian Po-se do not attribute to it this product, which, moreover, did not reach China by land, but exclusively

<sup>1</sup> *Pen ts'ao kan mu*, Ch. 34, p. 21 b. The juice of *Aloe abyssinica* is sold in the form of flat circular cakes, almost black in color.

<sup>2</sup> *Ču fan či*, Ch. B, p. 11 (cf. HIRTH's translation, p. 225).

<sup>3</sup> Regarding the history of aloes, see especially FLÜCKIGER and HANBURY, *Pharmacographia*, p. 680.