

which contains a great number of valuable annotations on subject-matters mentioned in the Annals, the *kāṣāya* of Kashgar is identified with the fire-proof cloth of the Western Regions and Fu-nan (Camboja); that is, asbestos.

During the K'ai-yüan and T'ien-pao periods (A.D. 713-755), Persia sent ten embassies to China, offering among other things "embroideries of fire-hair" (*hwo mao siu* 火毛繡).<sup>1</sup> CHAVANNES<sup>2</sup> translates this term "des broderies en laine couleur de feu." In my opinion, asbestos is here in question. Thus the term was already conceived by ABEL-RÉMUSAT.<sup>3</sup> I have shown that asbestos was well known to the Persians and Arabs, and that the mineral came from Badaxšān.<sup>4</sup> An additional

<sup>1</sup> *T'añ šu*, Ch. 221 B, p. 7. In the *T'añ hui yao* (Ch. 100, p. 4) this event is fixed in the year 750.

<sup>2</sup> Documents sur les Tou-kiue, p. 173.

<sup>3</sup> Nouveaux mélanges asiatiques, Vol. I, p. 253. The term *hwo pu* 火布 ("fire-cloth") for asbestos appears in the *Suñ šu* (Ch. 97, p. 10). The Chinese notions of textiles made from an "ice silkworm," possibly connected with Persia (cf. H. MASPERO, *Bull. de l'Ecole française*, Vol. XV, No. 4, 1915, p. 46), in my opinion, must be dissociated from asbestos; the Chinese sources (chiefly *Wei lio*, Ch. 10, p. 2 b) say nothing to the effect that this textile was of the nature of asbestos. Maspero's argumentation (*ibid.*, pp. 43-45) in regard to the alleged asbestos from tree-bark, which according to him should be a real asbestine stuff, appears to me erroneous. He thinks that I have been misled by an inexact translation of S. W. WILLIAMS. First, this translation is not by Williams, but, as expressly stated by me (*l. c.*, p. 372), the question is of a French article of d'Hervey-St.-Denys, translated into English by Williams. If an error there is (the case is trivial enough), it is not due to Williams or myself, but solely to the French translator, who merits Maspero's criticism. Second, Maspero is entirely mistaken in arguing that this translation should have influenced my interpretation of the text on p. 338. This is out of the question, as all this was written without knowledge of the article of St.-Denys and Williams, which became accessible to me only after the completion and printing of the manuscript, and was therefore relegated to the Addenda inserted in the proofs. Maspero's interpretation leads to no tangible result, in fact, to nothing, as is plainly manifest from his conclusion that one sort of asbestos should have been a textile, the other a kind of felt. There is indeed no asbestos felt. How Maspero can deny that Malayan bark-cloth underlies the Chinese traditions under notice, which refer to Malayan regions, is not intelligible to me. Nothing can be plainer than the text of the Liang Annals: "On Volcano Island there are trees which grow in the fire. The people in the vicinity of the island peel off the bark, and spin and weave it into cloth hardly a few feet in length. This they work into kerchiefs, which do not differ in appearance from textiles made of palm and hemp fibres," etc. (pp. 346, 347). What else is this but bark-cloth? And how could we assume a Malayan asbestine cloth if asbestos has never been found and wrought anywhere in the Archipelago? I trust that M. Maspero, for whose scholarship I have profound respect, will pardon me for not accepting his opinion in this case, and for adhering to my own interpretation. I may add here a curious notice from J. A. DE MANDELSLO's *Voyages into the East Indies* (p. 133, London, 1669): "In the Moluccaes there is a certain wood, which, laid in the fire, burns, sparkles, and flames, yet consumes not, and yet a man may rub it to powder betwixt his fingers."

<sup>4</sup> *T'oung Pao*, 1915, pp. 327-328.