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CONTENTS

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Banner calligraphy Huai Su 懷素 (737–799), Tang calligrapher and Buddhist monk

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MORE ABOUT THE STORY OF CINGGIS-QAN AND THE PEACE-LOVING RHINOCEROS

Igor de Rachewiltz

In recent years two important new contributions to the history and lore of the *chüeh-tuan* 角端 have appeared in Japan and the United States respectively. They are Etani Toshiyuki's article 'Gen-shi no "kaku tan" setsuwa to sono haikei' 角端 (On the *chüeh-tuan* Legend of *Yüan-shih* and Its Historical Background) published in 1965,[1] and Chun-chiang Yen's article 'The *Chüeh-tuan* as Word, Art Motif and Legend', published in 1969.[2]

Etani's work is a very careful survey of the major Chinese sources on the famous episode concerning Cinggis-qan, Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai and the *chüeh-tuan*. His conclusion is that Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai 耶律楚材, who was both a political adviser of Cinggis-qan and a Buddhist believer, invented the whole story of the encounter with the *chüeh-tuan* for the following reasons: 1) to prevent the Mongol conqueror from becoming further involved, politically and militarily, in western and southern Asia, at a time when the situation in the eastern regions, that is, in China, was becoming increasingly difficult for the Mongols; 2) to persuade Cinggis-qan to stop the wanton destruction of human lives that his army had been carrying out in the course of the Western Campaign.[3]

For his part, Yen treats the whole episode as legendary; however, in his interesting paper he traces the literary antecedents of the *chüeh-tuan* and shows how the *chüeh-tuan* 'as art motif and legend reflects aspects of totemism, divine power, literary imagery, and the use of narrative'.[4] Furthermore, through careful and painstaking linguistic analysis, Yen convincingly demonstrates that the *chüeh-tuan* does not represent a mythical 'unicorn', as most Chinese scholars would have it, but a rhinoceros. He reconstructs the word *chüeh-tuan* as **kark tuân*, which corresponds to Greek *kartázōnos* or **kargázōnos*, Persian *kargadān*, Arabic *karkadann* or *karkaddan*, all going back to Sanskrit *khaḍga-dhenu-*, and all meaning 'rhinoceros'.

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1 In *Bukkyō daigaku kenkyū kiyō* 佛教大學研究紀要 48 (Sept. 1965): 47–62. Hereafter: Etani.

2 In *Journal of the American Oriental Society,* 89 (1969): 578–99. Hereafter: Yen.

3 Etani, pp.56–59; *cf.* Yen, p.579 for his summary of Etani's work. Besides the Chinese sources, Etani quotes also one Mongolian source, *viz.* Saγang-secen's *Erdeni-yin tobci*. See below, n.48.

4 *Ibid.*, p.578.

With regard to Etani's contribution, it should be mentioned that other scholars before him, even though ignorant of Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai's Buddhist faith, had already suggested that the story of the *chüeh-tuan* was devised by him for the express purpose of sparing human lives.[5] The identification of the *chüeh-tuan* with a rhinoceros had also been proposed many years ago (by Laufer), but on different grounds as we shall presently see. Nevertheless, Etani's and Yen's investigations have refined considerably our understanding of the entire *chüeh-tuan* problem. Recently, Herbert Franke has discussed the story in the context of portents and mirabilia associated with the rise of the Yüan dynasty.[6] It still remains to determine, by reviewing the contemporary sources and other relevant material, what could be the truth behind the 'legendary' account of the encounter with the *chüeh-tuan*. It may also be interesting to find out how the story of Cinggis-qan and the *chüeh-tuan* is reported in some of the later Mongol sources. This is what I propose to do in the following pages. To some extent, I shall have to tread on ground already covered by previous investigators, including myself, but this is inevitable.[7]

In the Chinese literary tradition the *chüeh-tuan* is a legendary animal closely related to the *ch'i-lin* 麒麟 or unicorn. It is, in fact, with the latter that we find it associated in Ssu-ma Hsiang-ju's (d.118/117 B.C.) 'Shang-lin fu' 上林賦.[8] According to Chang I 張揖 (3rd cent. A.D.), the *chüeh-tuan* has the body of an ox (the *ch'i-lin* has that of a deer), and a single horn that can be used for making bows. Huo P'u 郭璞 (276–324), on the other hand, states that it resembles a swine, with a horn on it nose suitable for making bows, adding further that Li Ling 李陵 (d.74 BC)[9] once sent ten such bows as a present to Su Wu 蘇武 (140–60 B.C.). According to the *Hou-Han-shu*, among the animals found in the country of the Hsien-pi there were '*chüeh-tuan* oxen' 角端牛 whose horns were used for making bows, which were then popularly knows as '*chüeh-tuan* bows' 角端弓.[10] That the *chüeh-tuan* resembles a swine, with a horn which is good for making bows, is also stated by Hsü Shen 許慎 (2nd cent. AD).[11] Finally, we learn from the *Sung-shu* that the *chüeh-tuan* can travel eighteen thousand *li* a day, that it is a polyglot, and that it appears in conjunction with a virtuous ruler.[12]

From the above references to the use of the horn of the *chüeh-tuan* in the manufacture of bows, it is clear that we are dealing here with a real animal, which Berthold Laufer had no hesitation in identifying with the one-horned rhinoceros of India (*Rhinoceros unicornis*). According to this scholar, the term *tuan* 端, or *chüeh-tuan*, is a counterpart of the word 'monoceros'.[13] On the other hand, the resemblance to the swine points also to the wild pig and Burton Watson renders *chüeh-tuan* in fact as 'boar' in his translation of the 'Shang-lin fu'.[14]

As a symbol, the *chüeh-tuan*, no doubt because of its resemblance to the benevolent unicorn, acquired over the centuries similar characteristics of goodness and wisdom and, like the unicorn, came to be regarded, at least from the fifth century onwards, as an auspicious creature.[15]

Returning now to the famous apparition in Cinggis-qan's lifetime, we read in Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai's biography in the *Yüan-shih* the following account:

> In [the year] *chia-shen* (1224), when the Emperor (that is, Cinggis-qan), having reached Eastern India, was encamped at the Iron Gate Pass, a one-horned animal with a body like a deer's, but with a horse's tail and green in colour, addressed the imperial bodyguard in human speech saying, 'Your master should return home as soon as possible!' The Emperor questioned Ch'u-ts'ai about it. He replied 'This is an auspicious animal called *chüeh-tuan*. It is capable

5 See, e.g., L. Wieger, *Textes historiques* (2nd ed.: Hien-hien, 1922–23), II, p.1652: 'Sa (that is, Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai's–I.R.) farce de la Licorne, que le superstitieux Gengis-khan goba fort heureusement, sauva probablement la vie à des millions d'hommes'.

6 H. Frankce, *From Tribal Chieftain to Universal Emperor and God: The Legitimation of the Yüan Dynasty* (München, 1978), pp.40–42.

7 In my paper 'Yeh-lü Ch'u'ts'ai (1189–1243): Buddhist Idealist and Confucian Statesman,' in ed. A.F. Wright and D. Twitchett, *Confucian Personalities* (Stanford, 1962), pp.194–95, I briefly summarised the results of my earlier investigation on the *chüeh-tuan* episode, without however discussing the relevant sources in relation to each other.

8 *Shih-chi* (Takigawa Kametarō ed., *Shiki kaichū kōshō* 瀧川龜太郎: 史記會註考證; Tokyo, 1956–60) c.117, p.36. For a translation of the relevant passage, see Yen, p.579. *Cf.* Y. Hervouet, *Un poète de cour sous les Han: Ssu-ma Siang-jou* (Paris, 1964), pp.324–46.

9 *Shih-chi, loc. cit.; Han-shu (Wu-chou t'ung-wen chü* 漢書（五洲同文局本） ed.); Shanghai, 1903) c.57A. 18a.

10 *Hou-Han-shu chi-chieh* by Wang Hsien-ch'ien 王先謙: 後漢書集解 (Ch'ang-sha, 1915) c.90. 5b. *Cf.* Yen, p.580.

11 *Shuo-wen chieh-tzu ku-lin* by Ting Fu-pao 丁福保: 說文解字詁林 (*I-hsüeh shu-chü* 醫學書局; Shanghai, 1928), ts'e 20, 1890b. *Cf.* Yen, *loc. cit.*

12 *Sung-shu* (*Po-na* ed.) 宋書（百衲本）c.29. 47a. *Cf.* Yen, p.586. Regarding its linguistic skill, the text says 'it knows the speech of the barbarians of the four regions', that is, all foreign languages.

13 B. Laufer, *Chinese Clay Figures: Part 1. Prolegomena on the History of Defensive Armor* (Chicago, 1914), p.95.

14 B. Watson, *Early Chinese Literature* (New York, 1962), p.277. *Cf.* also his *Records of the Grand Historian of China* (New York, 1961), II, p.312.

15 See the discussion in Yen, p.584ff — also for the other connotations of *chüeh-tuan* in art and poetry.

> of speaking all the world's languages, it loves life and abhors bloodshed. This is a happy omen sent down by Heaven to warn Your Majesty. You are Heaven's eldest son, and all the men under Heaven are your children. Pray accept the will of Heaven and preserve the people's lives.' That very same day the Emperor withdrew the army'.[16] Brief references to this event are found in other sections of the *Yüan-shih*; in one of them the compilers added the comment: 'the significance (of the apparition) was the Heaven warned him (that is, Cinggis-qan) to stop the carnage'.[17]

As both Etani and Yen have correctly pointed out, Sung Lien 宋濂 (1310–81) and his colleagues in compiling the above account followed Sung Tzu-chen's (1186/7–1266/7) version of the episode as narrated in the latter's memorial inscription for Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai. This runs as follows:

> When the Emperor was encamped at the Iron Gate Pass in Eastern India, his body-guard saw an animal with a deer's body, a horse's tail, green, and with a single horn. Being capable of human speech, it said 'Your master should return home as soon as possible!' The Emperor, amazed, questioned His Excellency (that is, Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai), who replied, 'This animal is called *chüeh-tuan*. It [can] travel eighteen thousand *li* a day and it knows all the foreign languages. It is a symbol of abhorrence to bloodshed that Heaven Above has sent to warn Your Majesty. Pray accept the will of Heaven and spare the people's lives in these few [remaining] countries, thus giving full effect to Your Majesty's infinite blessings.' That very same day the Emperor issued the order for the army to withdraw.[18]

No date is given for this event in the inscription; however, as it follows the mention of a comet seen in the west in the fifth month of the year *jen-wu* (11 June–10 July 1222), one would assume that it occurred after June–July 1222. Both Ch'u-ts'ai's biography and the Annals of T'ai-tsu record it *s.a. chia-shen*/1224.[19] Although the *Yüan-shih*, following a general error in chronology, places the events of 1219–23 one year too late,[20] Cinggis-qan had actually crossed the Iron Gate (present Buzgala Pass, 88 kilometres south of Shahr-i-sabr, formerly Kesh, in Uzbekistan)[21] already in autumn 1222 on his return journey to Mongolia. Thus the date we can infer from Sung Tzu-chen's version (and about which more later) would not disagree with what we know of Cinggis' movements at the time.

No reference to this extraordinary encounter is found in Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai's works, or in the *Hsi-yu chi* 西遊記, the *Sheng-wu ch'in-cheng lu* 聖武親征錄 and the *Secret History of the Mongols*. It is, however, reported by other authors of the Mongol period whose accounts are not mentioned by Yen. Most of them are quoted in Etani's article. The first in chronological order is probably Chou Mi's 周密 (1232–99) story in the *Kuei-hsin tsa-chih*.[22] It is entitled 'Hsi-cheng i-wen' 西征異聞 or 'Strange Reports on the Western Campaign' and it is ascribed to Ch'en Kang-chung, that is, Ch'en Fu 陳剛中, 陳孚 (1230–1303).[23] His account is essentially the same as that of Sung's inscription; Ch'en only adds that the creature was 'several tens of *chang* 丈 high, with a horn similar to the rhinoceros' and 'a wonder like spirits and ghosts'.

Another account of the same story, by far the most interesting, is that by Yeh-lü liu-ch'i 耶律柳溪, a grandson of Ch'u-ts'ai and a contemporary of Chou Mi and Ch'en Fu.[24] Two lines from one of his poems, together with his own commentary, are quoted by Sheng Ju-tzu 盛如梓 (fl. second half of the 13th cent.) in his *Shu-chai lao-hsüeh ts'ung-t'an*.[25] They run as follows: 'The *chüeh-tuan*, symbolising good fortunes, caused the imperial camp to move./In the

16 *Yüan-shih* (*Po-na* ed.) 元史（百衲本）c.146. 2a–b. *Cf.* Etani, p.49; Yen, pp.590–91.

17 *Yüan-shih* c.50. 2a. See also *ibid.*, c.1.22a; Yen, pp.590.

18 Sung Tzu-chen, 'Chung-shu-ling Yeh-lü Kung shen-tao-pei 宋子貞：中書令耶律公神道碑,' *Kuo-ch'ao wen-lei* (*Ssu-pu ts'ung-k'an* 國朝文類（四部叢刊本）ed.) c.57. 11b–12a. *Cf.* N.T.s. Munkuey. *Kitaïskü istocnik o pervykh mongol'skikh khanakh, Nadgrobnaya nadpis' na mogile Elyuï Cu-tsaya* (Moscow, 1965), p.71; Etani, p.53; Yen, pp.589–90.

19 *Yüan-shih* c.1.22a.

20 On this problem, see Wang Kuo-wei, *Yeh-lü Wen-cheng kung nien-p'u* 王國維：耶律文正公年譜, (*Hainin Wang hsien-shen i-shu* ed. 海寧王靜安先生遺書 *ts'e* 32), *yü-chi* 餘記, 5b.

21 There is a vast literature on this famous pass, called in Chinese T'ieh-men kuan ('Iron Gate Pass') and in Persian Dari-i āhan or Dar-i āhanīn. See especially, E. Bretschneider, *Mediaeval Researches from Eastern Asiatic Sources* (London, 1888; new ed. 1937; rep. 1967), I, pp.82–84, n.211; W. Barthold, *Turkestan down to the Mongol Invasion* (4th ed.; London, 1977), p.73 *et passim*; M.Th. Houtsma a.o. ed., *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leyden, 1913), I, pp. 919–20; *idem*, new ed. (Leiden, 1960–), II, pp.115–16; Yen, pp.589–90, n.86 (also for further references).

22 *Kuei-hsin tsa-chih* (*Chin-tai pi-shu* ed. 癸辛雜識 (津逮秘書本), 14th Ser.), *hsü-chi* 續集 A, 38b–39a. Not in Etani.

23 On Ch'en Fu see *Yüan-shi* c.190, 9a–10b. As the story does not appear anywhere in his literary works, it is possible that he personally communicated it to Chou Mi.

24 Liu-ch'i is the *hao* of one of Ch'u-ts'ai's many grandsons from his son Chu (1221–85), whose *ming* is not known and whose literary works, the *Liu-ch'i shih-chi* 柳溪詩集, unfortunately are lost. However, from indirect evidence I think that he should be identified either with Yeh-lü Hsi-i 希逸 or with Yeh-lü Hsi-t'u 希圖. Brief references to Liu-ch'i are found in the *Shu-chai lao-hsüeh ts'ung-t'an* (see below, n.25), A. 1a, 2b. See also the *Yüan-shih chi-shih* (see below, n.26), pp.43–44.

25 *Shu-chai lao-shüeh ts'ung-t'an* (*Chih-pu-tsu-chai ts'ung-shu* 庶齋老學叢談（知不足齋叢書本), 23rd Ser.), A. 1a–b. The passage in question is found on pp.1a–b. Sheng Ju-tzu, *h*.Shu-chai 庶齋, was a native of Yang-chou and former official in the Sung administration. On him and his work see the *Ssu-k'u ch'üan-shu ts'ung-mu t'i-yao* 四庫全書總目提要 (Commercial Press ed., 1934), pp.2558–59. See Etani, p.54.

Western Regions, subdued and punished, peace was restored'. Liu-ch'i's commentary says:

> The *chüeh-tuan* travels eighteen thousand *li* a day and it is capable of speaking and understanding all foreign languages. Formerly, our August Emperor Sheng-tsu (that is, Cinggis-qan) took the field to punish the Western Regions. In the summer of the year *hsin-ssu* (1221), when he was encamped at the Iron Gate Pass, my late grandmother, the Chief of the Secretariat, presented the following memorial to him:
>
> > On the evening of the twentieth day of the fifth month (11 July 1221), your personal attendants while climbing a mountain saw a strange animal which had two eyes like torches, a scaly five-coloured body, a single horn on top of its head, and was empowered with speech. This is the *chüeh-tuan*. We should prepare an offering and sacrifice to it in the place where it appeared.

According to what they say, □□ [=? the *chüeh-tuan*] is auspicious. This is a spiritual being sent down by Heaven as a good omen.[26]

In his *nien-p'u* of Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai, Wang Kuo-wei (1877–1927) quoted the above story in support of the statement in the *Yüan-shih* to the effect that Cinggis pitched camp at the Iron Gate in the summer of 1221. He concludes:

> Thus, the apparition of the *chüeh-tuan* occurred in the fifth month of the year *hsin-ssu*, just at the time when T'ai-tsu was about to march southwards and two years before he [actually] withdrew his army. Sung Chou-ch'en 宋周臣 (that is, Sung Tzu-chen) erroneously combined [these two events, that is, the apparition of the *chüeh-tuan* and the withdrawal of the army]; therefore, later people (that is, authors) suspected [this story] to be spurious. This is because they did not examine Liu-ch'i's account.[27]

Now we know from the Persian sources that Cinggis crossed the Amu-Darya on his way to Balkh in the spring of 1221 and the did not cross it again until autumn 1222, when he finally returned to Samarqand.[28] Although the location of the imperial encampment in the summer of 1221 is not positively known, it was beyond doubt south of the Amu. Liu-ch'i, therefore, appears to be incorrect with regard to the date. His error is the same as that made by Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai's son Chu 鑄 in the note to the preface of his 'Nine Elegies to Celebrate the Victory' ('K'ai-ko yüeh-tz'u chiu shou') 凱歌樂詞九首, where we read: 'Formerly, our August Emperor T'ai-tsu took the field to punish the Western Regions. In the summer of the year *hsin-ssu*, when he was encamped at the Iron Gate pass, etc., etc.'[29] Although the event to which Chu refers is Kou Meng-yü's 苟夢玉 mission to Cinggis-qan, which did actually take place in 1221, the location is incorrect.[30] This is due, I believe, to the general error in chronology for the year 1219–23 that I mentioned earlier. Cinggis-qan's stay at the Iron Gate Pass to which our Chinese sources refer was in 1220. We know that Cinggis spent the summer of this year in the neighbourhood of Nasaf (modern Karshi), that is, in the proximity of the Iron Gate, before advancing on Tirmidh (modern Termez) in the autumn.[31] He did not cross the Iron Gate again until the autumn of 1222.

To complete our survey of Yüan sources relating to the *chüeh-tuan* episode we should briefly mention the account in Su Ti'ien-chüeh's (1294–1352) *Yüan-ch'ao ming-ch'en shih-lüeh* 蘇天爵：元朝名臣事略,[32] which is quoted directly from Sung Tzu-chen's inscription, and T'ao Tsung-i's (?1320-?1401) 陶宗儀 version of the story in his *Cho-keng lu*.[33] The latter is based chiefly on the account related in the *Kuei-hsin tsa-chih*, with the difference that the *Cho-keng lu* has

26 *Cf.* also Ch'en Yen, *Yüan-shih chi'shih* 元詩紀事 (*Kuo-hsüeh chi-pen ts'ung-shuī* ed. 國學基本叢書), p.44.

27 Wang Kuo-wei, *op. cit.*, 4b.

28 See Barthold, *op. cit.*, pp.438–55; I. de Rachewiltz, 'The *Hsi-yu lu* by Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai,' *Monumenta Serica*, XXI (1962), pp.67–68, n.159; p.69, n.168.

29 *Shuang-ch'i tsui-yin chi* 雙溪醉隱集 (*Liao-hai ts'ung-shu* ed. 遼海叢書, 6th Ser.) c.2. 1a.

30 In the *Yüan-shih* c.1, 20b, the Sung embassy of Kou Meng-yü and the Chin embassy of Wu-ku-sun Chung-tuan 烏古孫中端 are mentioned under the fourth month in summer of the year *hsin-ssu* (24 April–22 May 1221), when Cinggis 'had set up camp at the Iron Gate Pass'. The place where Cinggis received these embassies was, in all likelihood, in the area of Tālqān, that is, modern Qunduz in NE Afghanistan. See Barthold, *op. cit.*, p.444. Iwamura Shinobu 岩村忍 in *Tōyōshi-kenkyū*, XV (1956), pp.26–42. On Kou's mission, see also T'u Chi's remarks in *Meng-wu-erh shih-chi* 屠寄：蒙兀兒史記 (1934 ed.; rep. Taipei, 1962) c.3. 22b.

31 See Barthold, *op. cit.*, p.427.

32 Yüan ed. of 1335 (ph. rep. Shanghai, 1962), c.5. 2b. The report of the *chüeh-tuan* apparition in the *Fo-tsu li-tai t'ung-ts'ai* (*Taishō shinshū daizōkyō*, v.49, no.2036) c.22, 729a, derives from the *Yüan-ch'ao ming ch'en shih-lüeh* quotation of the account in Sung Tzu-chen's inscription.

33 *Nan-ts'un Cho-keng lu* (*Ssu-pu ts'ung-k'an* ed.) 南村輟耕錄 (四部叢刊本) c.5. 1a-b. See Etani, p.53.

'Western India' instead of 'Eastern India' and that it contains additional literary embellishments. T'ao's account has been translated and discussed by Yen.[34] The later Chinese compilations on the history of the Mongol dynasty quote the story of the *chüeh-tuan* either from the inscription or from Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai's biography with little or no variation.

Of the Western scholars, Abel Rémusat translated the account of the *chüeh-tuan* in the *Yüan-shih lei-pien* biography of Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai (based on the *Yüan-shih*), without commenting on it.[35] Bretschneider merely reports the incident, extracting it from the Annals of T'ai-tsu in the *Yüan-shih*, and translates *chüeh-tuan* as 'upright horn'.[36] Wieger calls the *chüeh-tuan* 'Règle Cornue' and makes the incident — to which he refers as Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai's 'farce del Licorne' — occur in the year 1222, at the time of Cinggis-qan's attempt to reach Tibet.[37] Wieger's idea of placing this event on the Himalayas was probably influenced by D'Ohsson, who mentions it in connection with the conqueror's plan of returning to Mongolia via India and Tibet.[38] In order to reconcile the date 1222 with the location given in the Chinese sources, Wieger states that the 'Portes de Fer' mentioned in these sources are not those of Kesh, but probably those near Leh. I do not know of any mountain pass by the same name in this region, and presume that Wieger means the Karakoram Pass. In any case his suggestion is unfounded, since Cinggis' troops never went as far as Kashmir and Ladakh. From the Persian historians we learn in fact that Cinggis gave up his plan of returning home through India while he was still on the Indus at the beginning of 1222. The reasons were, according to Rašīd al-Din, the difficulty of crossing rugged mountains and dense forests, the bad climate and drinking water, and the reports that the Tanguts had revolted.[39] According to Jūzjanī, whose account has particular relevance for us, Cinggis-qan was taking the omens, in the Mongolian traditional way, by examining the shoulder-blades of sheep in his encampment at Gībarī (or Gīrī), near Peshāwar?), when he received the news of the Tanguts' rebellion. This and the contrary advice of the soothsayers dissuaded him from proceeding further into India.[40]

Krause and Haenisch, in their respective translations of the passage relating to the *chüeh-tuan* in the Annals of T'ai-tsu in the *Yüan-shih*, have both rendered *chüeh-tuan* as 'Einhorn' without commenting on the story.[41]

What the truth is behind the story of the *chüeh-tuan* is difficult to say. The Ch'ing scholar Ch'eng T'ung-wen 程同文 (a *chin-shih*) of 1799) rejected it as spurious, claiming that it was fabricated, presumably by Sung Tzu-chen, in order to add glory to Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai.[42] Although Ch'eng's arguments in support of his statement are all debatable, the story of the *chüeh-tuan* may of course be entirely devoid of truth. Most other scholars, as we have seen, either reject it or do not comment upon it. For my part, I am inclined to believe that a real incident occurred which gave origin to it and which was later distorted and magnified. It is, indeed, not only possible, but likely, that some Mongol soldiers saw a rhinoceros. This explanation was suggested long ago by Hung Chün 洪鈞 (1840–93),[43] but it seems to have escaped the notice of both Chinese and Western historians.

Such a sighting may well have taken place during the Mongol raid into the Punjab in the winter of 1221–22. Although on its way to extinction, the one-horned rhinoceros of India was still to be found in the Punjab and Sind in the fourteenth century, and in the region of Peshāwar as late as the fifteenth century.[44] The report of such a sighting could have easily been distorted and

34 Yen, p.590. As Yen point out, the unusual attributes conferred by T'ao on the *chüeh-tuan*, that is, the animal represented as the spirit of the Pleiades and its coming with a book to symbolise the wisdom of the ruler with whom its appearance is associated, are traditional literary characteristics of the *lin* genus. They are interesting insofar as they show the development of the *chüeh-tuan* legend in the alter Yüan period. *Cf.* Franke, *From Tribal Chieftain to Universal Emperor*, p.41.

35 J.-P. Abel-Rémusat, 'Yeliu-thsou-thsai, Ministre tartar,' in *Noueveaux mélanges asiatiques* (Paris, 1829), II, pp.67–68. See Shao Yüan-p'ing, *Yüan-shih lei-pien* 邵遠平: 元史類編 *(Sao-yeh-shan-fang* ed. 掃葉山房本, 1795) c.11. 1b–2a.

36 *Mediaeval Researches from East Asiatic Sources*, I, p.83, and 289, n.696; in n.1090 on p.274 of vol II he refers to it as a 'legend'.

37 *Textes historiques*, II, pp.1652–53.

38 C. D'Ohsson, *Histoire des Mongols, depuis Tchinguiz-Khan jusqu'à Tamerlan* (La Haye et Amsterdam, 1834–35; rep. Tientsin, 1930), I, p.318, n.1.

39 O.I. Smirnova (tr.), Rašid-ad-Din, *Sbornik letopiseï*, I.2 (Moscow, 1952), p.225, *Cf.* J.A. Boyle (tr.), *'Ata-Malik Juvaini. The History of the World-Conqueror* (Manchester, 1958), pp.137–38 and n.16.

40 H.G. Raverty (tr.), *Tabakāt-i-Nāṣirī* (London, 1881; rep. New Delhi, 1970), pp.1043–47, 1081. *Cf.* Barthold, *op. cit.*, p.453.

41 See F.E.A. Krause, *Cingis Han. Die Geschichte seines Lebens nach den chinesichen Reichsannalen* (Heidelbeg, 1922), p.39; E. Haenisch, 'Die letzten Feldzüge Cinggis Han's und sein Tod nach der ostasiatischen Überlieferung,' *Asia Major* IX(1933), p.531.

42 See his colophon to the *Hsi-yu chi* in Wang Kuo-wei, *Ch'ang-ch'un chen-jen hsi-yu chi chu* 王國維: 長春真人西遊記注 *(Hai-ning Wang hsien-sheng i-shu* ed., *ts'e* 39), *fu lu* 附錄, 8b–9a.

43 *Yüan-shih i-wen cheng-pu* 元史譯文證補 *(kuo-hsüeh chi-pen ts'ung-shu* ed.) c.22A, p.278.

44 See H. Yule, *Cathay and the Way Thither* (London, 1913–16; rep. Taipei, 1972), III, p.42; E. Balfour, *The Cyclopaedia of India and of Eastern and Southern Asia* (London, 1885), III, p.406. Our major authority for the existence of the rhinoceros in NW India in the fourteenth century is Ibn Baṭṭūṭa (1304–68/9 or 1377), who saw one on the east bank of the Indus in 1333. See C. Defreméry et B.R. Sanguinetti (ed. and tr.), *Voyages d' Ibn Batoutah* (Paris, 1853–58), III, pp.100-01.

exaggerated by the witnesses themselves, to whom the animal was quite unfamiliar. If so, Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai's subsequent interpretation of the incident, as related by his grandson Liu-chi'i, is perfectly plausible, even if the location and date in the latter's account are not to be relied upon. We must not forget that one of Ch'u-ts'ai's main functions at court at the time was that of soothsayer, as evident from his biographies and from his own writings.[45] He no doubt belonged to the category of non-shamanic soothsayers called in Mongolian *tölgecin* or 'diviners', which included specialists in divinatory arts from different countries. Ch'u-ts'ai, of course, practised divination using Chinese traditional methods.[46] His interpretation of the incident would have naturally been influenced by his literary background, and his identification of the animal seen by the Mongol soldiers with the *chüeh-tuan*, rather than with the *ch'i-lin* unicorn, finds its logical explanation in the fact that the former is endowed by tradition with the ability to cover large distances. Since at the time Cinggis-qan was considering the invasion of new countries and further bloodshed, the 'message' of the *chüeh-tuan* — like the *ch'i-lin* a symbol of universal love — could only be one of non-violence and restraint. It is very doubtful that Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai's advice alone would have been sufficient to deter Cinggis-qan and make him alter his military plans, but together with other factors it would have certainly played its part. As mentioned earlier, Jūzjānī specifically mentions as one of the reasons for his withdrawal from India the contrary advice of the soothsayers, whereas Rašīd al Dīn speaks of bad climate and drinking water, physical obstacles and certain political considerations.

Now, Sung Tzu-chen's account of the incident is not doubt intended to enhance the role and prestige of Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai and to credit him, indirectly, with the withdrawal of the Mongol army and the sparing of countless human lives. However, the circumstantial evidence that I have presented and discussed indicates that it cannot be dismissed purely on this ground. And if, as I think, the strange creature sighted by the Mongol *kešigten* (the Imperial Guard) somewhere near the Indus in 1221–22 was a *Rhinoceros unicornis*, how very appropriate — even if unwittingly so — was Ch'u-ts'ai's designation of *chüeh-tuan*, a term that only recently, thanks to Chun-Chiang Yen, as been definitively recognised as being the Chinese transcription of the ancient Indian nae of the rhinoceros.

This survey would be incomplete without some references to the Mongolian versions of our story. To review and discuss all the variants of the *chüeh-tuan* episode in Mongol literature from the 17th century onward — there are unfortunately no earlier references —would take us too far. Therefore, I shall limit myself to two major Mongolian historical works, one of the seventeenth and the other of the eighteenth century, which I think deserve attention.

In his article Etani has already quoted[47] from the first of these, namely the celebrated chronicle *Erdeni-yin tobči* (full title: *Qad-un ündüsud erdeni-yin tobci* or *Precious Historical Summary of the Origins of Khans*) by the Ordos prince Saγang-secen (1604–?) completed in 1662. In this work the episode of the encounter with the *chüeh-tuan* is related as follows:

> Thereupon, when he (=Cinggis-qan), following the same course, rode against India, on crossing the mountain defile called the Candanarang ('Brilliant Peak') Pass, he came upon a wild animal, called the *seru* ('rhinoceros'), which had a single horn on top of its head. It made obeisance, bending its knees three times before the Lord. While everyone marvelled at it, the lord spoke thus and said,

45 See Sung Tzu-chen, *op. cit.*, 11a–b; Munkuev, *op. cit.*, pp.70–71; *Chan-jan chü-shih wen-chi* (*Ssu-pu ts'ung-k'an* ed.) 湛然居士集 (四部叢刊本) c.8. 15b4. *Cf.* also *ibid.* c.4. 10b3 and c10. 3b3. On Ch'ut-ts'ai's activity as a *bicēci* (scribe-secretary), see de Rachewiltz, 'Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai,' pp.195–98.

46 On the *tölgecin* see P.D. Buell, Some Aspects of the Origin and Development of the Religious Institutions of the Early Yüan Period (M.A. thesis, University of Washington, 1968), p.6ff. Ch'u-ts'ai's 'methods' were astrology, the *I-ching* and *T'ai-i* systems of divination, and 'esoteric mathematics' (*nei-suan*) 易經, 太乙數, 內算.

47 Etani, pp.54–55. Unfortunately, his transcription of the Mongol text is defective.

> That *vajra*-seat of India is said to be the country where the sublime Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, and the powerful Holy Rulers of the past were born. Now, why does this speechless animal make obeisance thus, like a man? If we go there (that is, to India), we will perhaps be punished [by Heaven]? Could Heaven Above, my father, have warned me?' He wheeled round and returned home.[48]

Saγang-secen's ultimate source was almost certainly a Chinese work, but I do not know which one. The story, transposed into a Mongolian Buddhist *milieu* (via Tibetan?) has been embellished and in the course of transmission has acquired a thoroughly Buddhist flavour. In the *Erdeni-yin tobci* the event is placed *s.a.* 1206, an error due, I think, to a miscalculation of a duodenary cycle.[49]

In a later version of the story found in the *Altan tobci* (*Golden Historical Summary*) of Mergen-gegen of the Urat, who flourished in the middle of the eighteenth century,[50] the *chüeh-tuan* episode is related as follows:

> In the Year of the Blue Ape (1224), when Cinggis-qan set out to conquer the Tangγund nation, Qasar set out [with him] leading the army as general. Upon reaching the Iron Gate, while they were halting [there], the soldiers discussed among themselves the fact that one night [some of them] had seen a creature with a body like that of a deer, a horse's tail, and green in colour, which, speaking in Mongolian had said, 'Qaγan, go back quickly!' On that occasion, the chief secretary Aluun-Cusai) (=Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai) memorialised [the Throne as follows:] 'This supernatural animal can speak in human tongue. It is called *kiyuu-tuvan* (=*chüeh-tuan*). It is Heaven that has spoken through it. If the Qaγan, complying with the intention of Heaven, withdraws the army, it will be real wisdom.' Qasar said, 'If you, secretary Cusai, find it difficult to proceed, [then] you withdraw your own person (that is, you yourself turn back)! Why do you interfere in (lit. ruin) important government affairs making up lies and dissuading the Qaγan? I am over sixty years old, and have been to various countries, but I have never seen it or heard of it. Whence came the so-called *kiyuu-tuvan* that day and became the messenger of Heaven? [Do you think that] Qasar will also be deceived by this fabrication of yours?' So he greatly railed [at him]. [However,] as Cinggis had long since recognised the wisdom of Aluun-Cusai, he regarded Qasar's behaviour as improper and, after reprimanding him, withdrew the great army.[51]

Although both Saγang-secen's and Mergen-gegen's versions are of no use to us in interpreting the original account of the encounter with the *chüeh-tuan*, they are excellent examples of Mongol historiography and of the way the native chronicler adapts the raw material of history to his own purposes. Mergen-gegen's immediate source was the account on the *chüeh-tuan* in the *Yüan-shih*.[52] However, his *Altan tobci* being essentially a historico-genealogical work on Qasar and his descendants, the story of the *chüeh-tuan*, duly modified, has become but an anecdote characterising the personality of Cinggis' famous brother.

In conclusion, I think we can safely assume that the historical encounter with the *chüeh-tuan*/rhinoceros — if, as it is likely, such an encounter did take place — was regarded by those immediately affected by it (Cinggis-qan, Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai) merely as a 'sign' or augury concerning an important matter at hand, that is, Cinggis' army movements in 1221–22. For the Chinese literati and historians of the Mongol period, the whole episode became an example of the civilising influence of the sinified adviser of Cinggis-qan, and of the triumph of benevolence and wisdom over military thinking — hence

48 For the Mongol text and a discussion of its reading see Appendix 1.

49 That is, the event has been registered under the Year of the Tiger 1206 instead of the Year of the Tiger 1218. The same chronological error involving a full twelve-year cycle is found in the *Secret History of the Mongols* §§199 (1205 for 1217), 237 (1206 for 1218) and 239 (1207 for 1218/19). See I. de Rachewiltz in *Papers on Far Eastern History*, 21 (March 1980), p.36, n.199; P. Pelliot, *Notes critiques d'histoire kalmouke. Texte* (Paris, 1960), p.60, n.58.

50 On Mergen-gegen (fl. 1748–65) and his work see W. Heissig, *Die Familien- und Kirchengeschichtsschreibung der Mongolen, I: 16–18. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden, 1959), pp.171–91; P.B. Baldanžapov, *Altan Tobci. Mongol'skaya letopis' XVIII v.* (Ulan-Ude, 1970), pp.7–106.

51 Köke becin jildür Cinggis-qan Tangγud ulus-i dayilar-a mordaqui-dur Qasar cerig terigülen jangjun bolju mordaγad. Temür-qaγalγan-dur kürcü saγun atala. cerig-ün arad nige sonin amitan-i üjebei kemen kelelcekü anu. bey-e anu buγu adali morin segültei noγoγan önggetei mongγol kelen-iyer ügülejü qaγan qurdun buca kemeemüi keledübei. tere caγtur Cinggis-qaγan daγaγsan bicig-ün erkem tüsimel Aluun-Cusai ayiladqar-un. ene γayi-qamsiγtu görögesün kümün-ü kelen-iyer ügülejü cidamui. egünü ner-e kiyuu-tuvan. egüni tngri jaruju kelegsen anu bolai. qaγan tngri-yin sedkillüge neyilegülejü cerig bucabasu secen qambai (=qanbai). Qasar ügülerün Cusai ci bicig-ün tüsimel yabudal-i berkesiyebesü cinu öber-ün bey-e bucabasu bolumui j-a. qudal üge-i güicigejü qaγan-u sedkil-i kötelgejü yeke törö-yin kereg-i süidkekü cinu yaγun. bi edüi jira γarun nasun [71] kürcü γajar γajar yabula ese üjigdegsen ese sonosuγdaγsan kiyuu-tuvan kemegci ene edür qamiγ-a-aca tngri-yin elci bolun irebei. cinu ene qaγurmaγ-dur Qasar basa qaγurtaju bolqu buyu-uu. kemen yekede cokibai. Cinggis kedüin-ece Aluun-Cusai-I mergen kemen oyisiyaγsan tula Qasar-i öber jin (*read* jim-e) jüi ügei üjejü Qasar-i dongγodγad yeke cerig bucabai. See 'The Mongol chronicle *Altan Tobci*,' in Raghu Vira (ed.), *Indo-Asian Studies*, Part 1 (New Delhi, 1963), pp.70–71. *Cf.* Baldanžapov, *op. cit.*, pp.335–36: 37v3–38r2 (text); p.152 (translation).

52 See Heissig, *op. cit.*, p.179.

an excellent illustration of the Confucian ideal in practice. At the same time it provided also, but to a lesser extent, the literary imagery traditionally associated with the coming of a sagacious ruler in a period of turmoil. In the later Mongolian chronicles, the story has acquired a Buddhist gnomic tinge totally absent in the original, or, as in Mergen-gegen's version, it is used largely as a background for the fictional characterisation of popular heroes. Nevertheless, one dominant element in the various versions is the wisdom of Cinggis-qan as exemplified by his compliance with Heaven's command. This would explain, in my view, why a story like this, in which Cinggis is shown as actually arresting his progress and withdrawing from India, is quoted in works that strive to justify, on pseudo-historical and ideological grounds, the claim of Cinggis and his descendants to universal rule. In other words, the better judgement displayed by Cinggis on that occasion, far from prejudicing his right, is a further indication that he had the prudence and wisdom one would expect in a man who was destined to become the world leader.[53]

53 Franke, *op. cit.*, p.42, writes: 'One point concerning the unicorn story deserves attention: All sources agree that the unicorn somehow stopped Chinggis Khan's advance into India, which is in contradiction with the idea that Chinggis Khan was destined to rule over the whole world. This is suprising because ... also Buddhist ideology provided Chinggis Khan and his descendants with a legitimation to rule the universe.'

Appendix 1

Tendece mön tere yabudal-iyar-iyan Enedkeg-tür morilar-un Cidγarang-un (*read*) Candanarang-un) dabaγ-a kemekü kötel-i daban odtala: [37r] nigen oroi-dur-iyan γaγca eber-tei: seru neretü görögesün güyüjü iregseger: ejen-ü emüne γurban-ta ebüdüg-iyen bokircu mörgön abai: tegün-i qotalaγar γayiqaldun büküi-e:ejen eyin jarliγ bolurun: tere Enedkeg-ün vcir(-tu) saγurin kemekü: erten-ü degedü burqan bodisung-nar erketen boγdas qad-un törögsen oron gele: edüge ene kelen aman ügei görögesün ber: eyin kümün metü mörgökü anu yaγun: kerbe kürbesü genüger bolqu yaγan bolumu: degere tengri ecige minu idqaγsan bolbau kemeged egegerejü qarin urbaju baγubai:: See E. Haenisch, *Eine Urga-Handschrift des mongolishchen Geschichtswerk von Secen Sagang (alias Sanang Secen),* (Berlin, 1955), p.36: 36v29–37r10. *Cf.* I.J. Schmidt, *Geschichte der Ost-Mongolen und ihres Fürstenhauses verfasst von Ssanang Ssetsen Chungtaidschi der Ordus* (St Petersburg, 1829), p.88, 1.15–p.90, 1.3 (text), pp.89–91 (translation; J.R. Krueger (tr.), *Sagang Sechen. History of the Eastern Mongols to 1662 (Erdeni-yin Tobci), The Mongolia Society Occasional Papers* 2 (1967), p.61; by the same author, *Poetical Passages in the Erdeni-yin Tobci* ('s-Gravenhage, 1961), p.78. My translation diverges on several points from that of Kruger. I have amended the 'Cidγarang-un dabaγ-a' of the text (36v30) to 'Candanaring-un dabaγa', which I have rendered as 'Brillian Peak Pass'. This requires an explanation. Schmidt's text (p.88, 1.16) has Cadanaring, which is also the reading of the Ch'ien-lung printed edition and the Peking Palace MS edited by Haenisch. See E. Haenisch, *Der Kienlung-Druck des mongolischen Geschichtswerkes Erdeni yin Tobci von Sagang Secen* (Wiesbaden, 1959), ch.3, 33a5; *Qad-un ündüsün-ü erdeni-yin tobciya, 'Eine Pekinger Palasthandschrift'* (Wiesbaden, 1966), ch.3 35v2. According to Schmidt, *op. cit.,* p.386, n48, Cadanaring 'ist vermuthlich eine Corruption oder fehlerhafte Schreibung des Sanskritnamens *Tschandanâdri* 'Gebirge der Sandelbäume', womit das Malaja-Gebirge im Western Hindustan's verstanden wird'. While the reading Cidqarang of the Urga MS is also found in two of the three Ordos MSS of the *Erdeni-yin tobci* formerly in the possession of the Rev. A. Mostaert (see *Erdeni-yin tobci. Mongolian Chronicle by Saγang Secen, Scripta Mongolica II*, Cambridge, Mass., 1956, v.III, p.83 [41a] 1.6, and v.IV, p.96 1.4), the reading Cadanaring is supported by other Mongolian chronicles where the same story is found, in usually shorter and modified versions, such as the *Sira tuγuji*, the *Altan küdün mingγan gegesütü bicig* of Guosi Dharma (1739), and the *Bolor erike* of Rasipungsuγ (1774/5). The MSS of the *Sira tuγuji* give Cadanaring (not 'Cadaγrik' as in N.P. Shastina, *Shara tudži. Mongol'skaya letopis' XVII veka*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1957, p.129), Cadangrig and Cadqarig. See *ibid.*, p.24, 1.8. The *Altan kürdün* has Cinda-naring. See W. Heissig ed., *Altan kürdun, mingγan gegesütü bicig. Eine mongolische Chronik von Siregetü guosi Dharma (1739)* (Kopenhagen, 1958), ch.2, 5v5. The *Bolor erike* gives Tzidangnaring. See *Bolor erike. Mongolian Chronicle by Rasipungsuγ, Scripta Mongolilca III*. (Cambridge, Mass., 1959), v.I, p.167 [66a], 1.5 and v.IV, p.116 [112], 1.4. Now, the reading in MS Ordos A of the *Erdeni-yin tobci* is Cindanaring (see *Scripta Mongolica II*, v.II, p.94 [47b], 1.4) and in the 'Qaracin' text of the same work it is Citanaring (or Cidanaring). See Fujioka Katsuji, *'Karachin' hon Mōkogenryū* 藤岡勝二: 喀喇沁本蒙古源流 (Tokyo, 1940), ch.2, p.28. The reading Citanaring is also attested in the *Meng-ku yüan-liu*, where we read 'the ridge of the Ch'i-t'a-na-ling defile'. See Sheng Tseng-chih and Chang Erh-t'ien, *Meng-ku yüan-liu chien-cheng* 沈曾植, 張爾田: 蒙古源流箋證 (1934 ed.) c.3, 23b; *cf.* E. Haenisch, *Monggo Han Sai Da Sekiyen, die Mandschu-fassung von Secen Sagang's*

mongolisches Geschichte (Leipzig, 1933), p.45; citanaring. The readings in the three MSS of the *Erdeni-yin tobei* in the State Library of Ulan-Bator given by C. Nasunbaljur (Ts. Nasanbaljir), *Sagang secen. Erdeni-yin tobci* (Ulan-Bator, 1958), p.112, n.27, are Cadana-ring (or Cadaγ-ring?), Cadananring (or Cadaγaring?) and Cadananrang (or Cadaγarang?). I think that Cadananring and Cadananrang are actually to be read Cadanaring and Cadanarang. All these texts reflect an alternance Ci[n]danaring~Ca[n]danaring. Although *cindan~candan* are well attested Mongolian forms of Sanskrit *candana* 'sandalwood' — see P. Aalto. 'Notes on the Altan Gerel,' *Studia Orientalia* (Helsinki) XIV, 6 (1950), p.17 — I do not think that Schmidt is correct in suggesting that this name is a corruption of Candanādri. In the first place, the form Candanādri does not seem to be attested as such. The correct designation of the Malaya (Western Ghāṭs) is Candanagiri. See M. Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit–English Dictionary* (new ed., Oxford 1899; rep. 1960), p.386b. This leads me to suspect that Candanādri — grammatically a perfectly correct name (*candana* + *adri* 'mountain') — was made up by Schmidt himself. Secondly, even if this were another name for the Malaya (which I do not exclude), the identification with the mountain of the story is untenable on purely geographic grounds, the Western Ghāṭs being too far to the south. However, *canda(n)* occurs in Mongolian also as a transcription of *candra* 'brilliant, shining'. See, e.g. Raghu Vira, *Mongol–Sanskrit Dictionary with a Sanskrit–Mongol Index* (New Delhi, 1958), p.110. Now we have in Sanskrit the term *candrāgra* ('brilliant peak(ed)' (Monier-Williams, *op. cit*., p.387c) which is, of course, an excellent definition of a mountain. I am of the opinion that Cidqarang (Cidγarang) is a scribal error for Ca[n]danarang. This could have easily happened, since *-qa-* (*γa-*) and *-ana-* are indistinguishable in Mongolian script when the diacritic points are omitted. Candanarang may be regarded as a Mongolised form of Candrāgra, and 'Candanarang-un dabaγa' may then be rendered as 'Pass of the Brilliant Peak'. I doubt whether such a peak can be identified with any existing mountain; it was probably a name chosen by the pious author of the Mongolian version of the story who no doubt wished to find a fitting epithet for the place of the mystical encounter. His choice of a Sanskrit term was prompted by his knowledge that the encounter took place in India. My interpretation is to some extent supported by the *Hor chos 'byuṅ*, a work that draws heavily on Saγang-secen's chronicle and which, in its account of the story, defines the location simply as 'a high mountain pass'. As in the *Erdeni-yin tobci*, the event is placed *s.a.* 1206. See G. Huth. *Geschichte des Buddhismsus in der Mongolei*, Zweiter Teil (Strassburg, 1896), pp.25–26. Saγang-secen calls the animal *seru*, incorrectly read 'Ssaru' (=*saru*) by Schmidt, *op. cit*., p.89, and Fujioka, *loc. cit. Seru*, and not *sery* (=*serü*) as in F.D. Lessing (ed.), *Mongolian–English Dictionary* (Berkeley, 1960), p.691b, is a loanword from Tibetan (*bse-ru*). Its original meaning is 'rhinoceros', but later it came to designate a species of deer or antelope. For a rather detailed discussion of *bse-ru* > *seru*, see Laufer, *op. cit*., pp.120–24.