

But the Ch'i-tan words which have been transmitted to us in Chinese transcriptions of the Sung period leave no doubt that the Ch'i-tan spoke a Mongol language, with some archaic features and much palatalization. The purely Tungus words given by WYLIE and HOWORTH (*JRAS*, 1881, 123-126) as occurring in the Ch'i-tan language are fanciful restitutions made by Ch'ien-lung's Commissioners. I cannot dwell here on the problem, which moreover will be susceptible of a more precise solution when some progress has been made in the deciphering of the newly discovered inscriptions in Ch'i-tan writing.

The « Upper Capital » (Shang-ching) of the Ch'i-tan was in Jehol Province; in 938, they established their southern capital at Peking, for which they revived in 1012 the old name of Yen, calling it Yen-ching (see « Cambaluc »). In the meantime, they had adopted, in 947, a Chinese dynastic name, 遼 Liao (*Liao shih*, 4, 7 a). Although there is no mention of it in the *Liao shih*, it is stated in the *Tung-tu shih-liao* that the Emperor Shêng-tsung reverted in 983 to « Ch'i-tan » as the dynastic name, and that « Liao » was not adopted a second time until 1066; this is confirmed, to some extent at least, by contemporary inscriptions (cf. *Ssü-k'u... t'i-yao*, 46, 20 a). It has often been said, for instance by D'OHSSON (*Oh*, I, 115), YULE (*Y*, I, 12; *Y*¹, I, 147) and HOWORTH (*JRAS*, 1877, 269), that « Liao » meant « iron » or « steel », but this seems to me to rest on a misinterpretation. The dynastic title « Liao » was clearly adopted by the Ch'i-tan because the original seat of their power was in the region of the « Liao » River, a name which goes back at least to the 3rd cent. B.C. On the other hand, neither Liao in its usual form nor any ancient variant of the character is in the slightest degree connected with iron or with steel. A confusion with 鏢 *liao* is not possible; moreover this *liao* could only mean « fine silver ». The text which forms the basis of YULE's and HOWORTH's argument is the edict by which the Jučen Emperor adopted in 1115 the dynastic title of Chin, « Gold » (see « Ciorcia » and « Roi Dor »). The text says : « The Liao had adopted for their designation (*hao*) 寶鐵 *pin-t'ieh*, on account of its hardness. But although the *pin-t'ieh* is hard, finally it also alters and decays; gold alone does not alter nor decay. The colour of gold is white (in the theory of the five elements, gold, *i. e.* metal, corresponds to the West, the colour of which is white), and the Wan-yen tribe (the ruling Jučen tribe) venerates the white colour. Thereupon the dynastic designation was Ta-Chin (« Great Gold »). The *pin-t'ieh*, in which MAILLA (*Hist. gén. de la Chine*, VIII, 374) erroneously saw « iron from Pin-chou », is the kind of steel of which I speak at some length in another note (see « Andanique »). Since there is no possible connection between « Liao » and « steel », we must suppose that the dynastic appellation of the Liao referred to in the text is not « Liao » itself, but some native name, perhaps the very name « Ch'i-tan » which was in fact twice adopted as dynastic title, and which may have had some traditional meaning which has not come down to us. I must add that, although this passage is given in the *pên-chi* of the *Chin shih* as part of an Imperial edict, I entertain some doubt as to its real value : it seems that the name « Chin », « Gold », adopted by the Jučen is exactly of the same nature as that of « Liao » chosen by the Ch'i-tan, that is to say it is of geographical origin (see « Roi Dor »).

It was of course during the 10th cent. that the name of the Ch'i-tan began to supersede that of Taβγač as the designation of China among the nations of Central and Western Asia. But while the Chinese said Ch'i-tan (*K'jət-tân), and the Orkhon inscriptions « Qītaǵ », the basic form