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THE TANG DYNASTY (A. D. 618-901)**

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(1) The term used to designate Negro Slaves under the T'ang dynasty.

Neither the name of Africa nor the term "negro slave" was known in China during the period of the Tang dynasty, but we often encounter the term *K'un-lun-nu* ("K'un-lun slave") in the individual works of T'ang authors that have come to us as parts of the following *Ts'ung-shu* ("Collections of Reprints") : "*T'ang-jen Shuo-k'uai*"; "*T'ai-p'ing K'uang-chi*"; "*Ku-chin Shuo-hai*" etc. These works generally describe the *K'un-lun-nu* as black-skinned folk. Some of the aforesaid authors even use the term *K'un-lun* adjectivally as a synonym for *black-*, or *dark-skinned*. Others use it as an equivalent for "Negro." What then is the meaning of the term *K'un-lun*, and who were the *K'unlan-nu*?

(2) *The location of the Land of K'un-lun.*

To throw light on the above question, let us take account of what certain ancient Chinese works have to say on this subject :

(1) The Lin-yi Kuo Chuan, ("Topography of the Land of Linyi") contained in Book 197 of the *Chiu T'ang Shu* ("Old Dynastic History of T'ang") says: "The people living to the south of Linyi have woolly hair and black skin, and are commonly known as K'unlun." In the *Chen-la Kuo Chuan* ("Topography of the Land of Chen-la") contained in the same volume, we find the following:

"Chen-la is situated to the north-west of Lin-yi. It was formerly a dependency of Fu Nan. Its inhabitants belong to the race of K'un-lun." In Part II of Book 222 of the *Hsin Tang Shu* ("New Dynastic History of T'ang"), we read : "P'an-p'an is situated on the Gulf of Nan-hai. To the north it is separated from Huan-wang by a strait and it is contiguous to Lang-ya-hsiu . . . Its subject tribes are the P'u-lang-so-lan, the K'un-lun Ti-yeh, the K'un-lun Bo-ho, and the K'un-lun Po-ti-so-kan. The tribe last mentioned is also known as the Ku Lung, which is phonetically akin to K'un-lun." In another part of the same volume, it says: "Fu Nan is situated a distance of 70 *li* (about 25 English miles) to the south of Jih Nan. The country is low and the climate moist. The people have customs similar to the folk of Huan-wang. In this land are walled towns and palaces. Its king, whose name is Ku-lung, lives in a two-storied structure built upon a raised terrace. The roof is thatched with leaves. When the King goes abroad, he rides on an elephant. The inhabitants have black skin and woolly hair, and they go about naked."

(2) In the *Yi Ching Nan-hai Chi Kuei Nei Fa Chuan* ("The Code of Esoteric Laws brought

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back from Nan-hai by Yi Ching"), there is a note to the following effect: "Enumerated in order from west to east, the succession of islands is as follows: Po-lo-shih, Mo-lo-yu (i.e. the Kingdom of Shih-li-fu-yi), Mo-ho-hsin, Ho-ling, Tan-tan, P'an-p'an, Po-li, Chüeh-lun, Fu-yi-pu-lo, Ah-shan, Mo-chia-man, and innumerable other smaller islands." In the text proper, to which this note refers, we read : "All these islanders are buddhists. The majority of them belong to the Hinayana sect, with the exception of a few adherents of the Mahayana sect who live on the island of Mo-lo-yu. As to the size of these countries, some are 100 *li*, others several hundred *li*, and some even a hundred horse-stations in circumference. Though it is not easy to estimate distances at sea, still we rely for them on the data furnished by mariners. The first of these to reach Tonkin and Canton gave to Chüeh-lun the name of K'un-lun. The inhabitants thereof have woolly hair and black skin, but the inhabitants of the other islands are like the Chinese, except that they go about bare-footed and wear a kind of cloth called *kanman*." The French Sinologist Chavannes believes that the "Chüeh-lun" of Yi Ching is the same as the land of Lin-yi and Chen-la in the *T'ang Shu* ("Dynastic History of T'ang"), namely, modern Siam and the Malay Peninsula. But this is hardly tenable in view of the fact that "Chüeh-lun" is distinctly characterized by Yi Ching as *an island*.

[scanner's note: the following is the exact text from the original article and it makes no sense.] Peninsula. But this is hardly ten-sinologist, identifies Chüeh-lun with Puler Condore. He also affirms that, at the time of Yi Ching's visit, the inhabitants of that island were negroes.

(3) In the "*Yi Ching Ta T'ang Hsi Yü Ch'iu Fa Kao Seng Chuan*" ("Yi Ching's Biographies of Famous Monks of the Tang Dynasty who went to the West in search of the Law"), the following statement occurs : "When he reached the land of Fo Yi (Sriboga), he learned the Ku-lun language and devoted much time to the study of Sanskrit." Ku-lun is the same as K'un-lun, and the land of Fo Yi is the region of Palembang in Sumatra. From this it appears that the K'un-lun language was by no means confined to Puler Condore.

(4) In the "*Man Shu*" ("Book about Barbarians"), volume VI, we have the following: "The River Liang Shui flows southwest to join the River Lung. Further south it skirts the highway which goes to the Ch'ing-mu Mountains, and continues southward until it reaches the land of K'un-lun." In the Geographical Section of the *Chiu T'ang Shu*, mention is made of a district (*hsien*) called Liang Shui in the county (*chou*) of Li. In the same volume, we further read : "In the towns of Wei-yuan, Feng-yi, Li-yün, there are over one hundred salt wells. Ten tribes including the Mang-nai-tao and the Hei Ch'ih ("Black Teeth") inhabit the region in question. From this locality a journey of ten days brings the traveller to Yung-ch'ang. Thence it is thirty-days' journey downstream to the land of Mi-ch'en. Further south one reaches the sea, across which it is a three-days' voyage to the land of K'un-lun." In volume X of the same work, we find the following passage : "The northern frontier of the land of K'un-lun is eighty-one days' journey from the Hsi-erh River in the land of Man (i.e. of the "Barbarians"). The country abounds in ebony, sandalwood, spices, glazed wares, crystal, medicinal herbs, precious stones,

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rhinoceroses, etc. Once upon a time the Barbarians invaded this land lured on by a feigned retreat of the natives, who cut off their return by digging a moat which they filled with water. As a result most of the Barbarians died of starvation, and, before permitting those who survived to leave, the natives amputated their left forearms as a warning."

(5) In the *Wang Wu Tien Chu Kuo Chuan* ("A Record of travels in the Five Indies") by Hui Ch'ao, the following statement occurs : "To reach India and K'unlun, one must go by way of Gandahara." In the section of the same work which treats of Persia, it says : "Voyages from the Western Sea to the Southern Seas are frequently made for the purpose of procuring precious merchandise from Ceylon and gold from K'unlun, and they even sail as far as Canton to secure silk and other textiles."

(6) Book CDLXXXIX of the *Sung Shih* ("Dynastic History of the Sung") contains the "*Cheh-po Kuo Chuan*" ("Topography of the Land of Cheh-po"), in which is to be found the following passage: "It is a month's journey from the eastern frontier to the sea, and from the sea it is a voyage of a fortnight to reach the land of Kunlun. A voyage to the west for 45 days, then to the south for 3 days, and finally along the coast for 5 days more, brings the traveler to Arabia."

Hence, according to the data contained in works of the T'ang (A.D. 618-907) and Sung (A.D. 960-1280) dynasties, it would appear that the Land of K'un-lien is identical with modern Siam. These works, however, only describe the inhabitants as being woolly-haired and black-skinned; they nowhere describe them as being ugly nor do they ever make use of the term *K'unlun-nu*.

(III) *Who were the K'un-lun Slaves?*

The first Chinese scholar to become interested in this question was Ku Yen-wu, who lived in the early part of the Ch'ing or Manchu dynasty (A.D. 1644-1911). In a commentary on the *T'ang Shu* contained in Book CXIX of his *T'ien-hsia Chün Kuo Li Ping Shu* ("Advantages and Drawbacks of Various Parts of the Empire"), he says: The inhabitants of Chen-la are black in color and are known as K'un-lun ; they are the K'unlun-nu of the T'ang, dynasty."

The next writer to deal with this problem was Hsü Chi-yü who flourished during the Tao Kuang period (A.D. 1821-1850). In the second volume of his "*Ying Huan Chih Lioh*" ("Outline of Geography") where he treats of the South Sea Islands, he remarks: To the south of the Ch'i Chou Yang ("Ocean of the Seven Isles") there are two peaks of unequal altitude which rise sheer above the dancing waves This region is known as K'un-lun or K'un-t'un (Marco Polo's "Condur"). Here converge all the sea-routes of the Southern Ocean. The slopes of the aforesaid mountain-peaks are covered with trees bearing juicy fruits. The place is lonely and the only inhabitants are immortal dragons." In another part of the same work, our author, alluding to the already-quoted words of Ku Yen-wu, adds : "The majority of the inhabitants of the South Sea Islands are black-skinned. It is not only the people of Chen-la who are black; there are others who are even blacker. Kun-lun of the Two Peaks is a small island of the South Sea where only dragons and no human beings

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dwell. Though situated near Chenla, it is not a dependency there-of. Why are the terms K'un-lun and Chen-la used to designate black people? It is because all ships must pass K'un-lun on voyages to and from the South Sea, and hence its name is familiar to mariners who naturally extend this designation to denote all savages of the South Seas. In this way the name came to signify black people in general. The analogous use of Chen-la is due to the fact that this country was very powerful during T'ang times, having subjugated all the various tribes of South Sea Islanders." In a note, the same author further says: The *Sung Shih* ("Dynastic History of Sung") tells us that the Persian envoys to China were accompanied by attendants who had sunken eyes and black skin and who were called *K'un-lun-nu*. It is evident that these black Persian slaves were Hindoos. Thus it would appear that the term *K'un-lun* is here used to designate the K'unlun of the West."

It is my personal opinion that Fei Hsin, a writer of the early Ming dynasty, was responsible for the corruption that changed *K'un Tun Shan* ("Condur". "Pulo Condore") into *K'un-lun*. In his *Hsing Chai Sheng Lan* ("Description of the Beautiful Isles"), he says: "This mountain rises very high in the midst of the sea, and forms as it were a triangle with Chan-ch'eng and the islands of Du. The mountain is a lofty rectangular eminence that extends over a large area. The surrounding sea is known as the K'un-lun Ocean. All trading vessels bound for the Western Sea pass this point after a voyage of seven days, provided the winds be favorable. The sailors have a rhyme that runs thus:

'Northbound the Seven Isles we fear;
Southbound we dread K'un-lun;
If rudder break or compass veer,

Nor ship nor crew return.'

"Nothing remarkable is to be seen on this island. The inhabitants neither build houses nor cook their food. They eat fruit, fish, and shrimps, and they live either in caves or in nests built in the trees."

According to Western scholars of modern times, K'un-lun is the largest of a group of islands, its length being about 12 English miles. The group comprises other islands, the next two in size being each about three English miles in length, and there are about six smaller islands besides. The modern name of the largest island is Pulo Condore. It has an excellent harbor, fresh water, and luxuriant vegetation. The inhabitants, who number about eight hundred, are of Cochin China stock. The islands are under the control of the French authorities of Saigon. It is absurd to suppose that these small islands could supply such an enormous number of black slaves to so many lands, in both East and West, during the T'ang dynasty. The notion, too, that K'un-lun Slaves were natives of Chen-la is equally groundless; for the people of Chen-la being of the Malay race have the same complexion as the Cantonese and the Annamites. The suggestion that K'un-lun came to designate black men in general, because "all ships must pass K'un-lun island on voyages to and from the South Sea," is nothing more than a conjecture. On the other hand, we have no reason to suppose that the K'un-lun Slaves derived their name from the K'un-lun Shan of the West; for the latter region has been familiar to the Chinese from

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the earliest times, and no Chinese work has ever described its inhabitants as black-skinned. Inasmuch as it is clear from T'ang literature that the term *K'un-lun* is not a Chinese one, we may take it for granted that it is a transliteration of some Foreign name. The following passage occurs in Book II of Chu Yu's *Ping Chiu K'o T'an* ("Notes on P'ing Chiu") : "Many wealthy people of Canton keep *Kwei-nu* ('devil slaves'). These are endowed with prodigious strength and can carry burdens weighing several hundred catties. Their language and tastes differ from ours, but they are docile and do not run away. They are also spoken of as yeh-jen ('savages'). Their skin is inky black, their lips red, their teeth white, and their hair is woolly and tawny. They are of both sexes. Their native haunts are the mountains beyond the sea. They eat their food raw. After being captured, they are fed on cooked food, which gives them the diarrhea. While in this condition they are said to be 'renewing their entrails.' Some of them die of the process, but those who survive become domesticated, and learn in time to understand human language, although unable to speak it themselves. Those of these savages who come from maritime regions, can dive into water without closing their eyes, and the same are called K'un-lun-nu."

In Book CDXC of the *Sung Shih* ("Dynastic History of Sung") where it speaks of Arabia, we read: "In the second year of T'ai-P'ing' Hsing Kuo (i.e. A.D. 977), Arabia sent the ambassador P'u-sze-na, the vice-ambassador Moho-mo ('Mahmud'), and the judge P'u-lo, with the products of their country as presents. Their attendants had sunken eyes and black skin and they were called K'un-lun-nu."

(IV) *The Native Land of the K'un-lun Slaves*

Having determined the signification of the term K'un-lun-nu, we must next determine the land of their origin and the race to which they belonged. We may dismiss without further ado the suggestion that the

K'un-lun-nu were natives of Arabia. The *Ho-ling Kuo Tiao* ("Topography of the Land of Ho-ling") contained in Book CCXXII of the *Hsin Tang Shu* ("New Dynastic History of T'ang") says: "In the eighth year of the Yuan Ho period (A.D. 813), the land of Ho-ling presented four Seng-chih slaves." In Book III of Chiu Ch'u-fei's *Ling-wai Tai-ta* ("Notes on the Lands beyond the Mountains") there is to be found a section that deals with a land named *K'un-lun Ts'eng-ch'i*; here, among other things, it says: "Many savages dwell on the islands. They have lacquer-black being used as a bait, and they are captured by the thousands, food being used as a bait, and they are subsequently sold into slavery." In the first part of Chao Ju-k'uo's *Chu Fan Chih* ("Information about Barbarians"), there is one section which treats of the various lands beyond the sea, and which says among other things: "The Land of *K'un-lun Ts'eng-ch'i* is situated on the shores of the Southwestern Sea behind a screen of large islands. In this land are to be found gigantic *Rukhs*, enormous birds whose wings outstretched darken the sun and turn day into night. They prey upon wild camels, which they swallow at a single gulp. The quills of the feathers which they shed, are cut into sections by the natives to serve as water-casks. The products of

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the land consist of elephant tusks and rhinoceros' horns. To the west there is an island peopled with savages whose complexion is like black lacquer and whose tresses resemble wriggling tadpoles. They are captured by using food as a bait, and are sold at great profit to the Arabs as slaves. The Arabs entrust them with their keys, knowing that they will be faithful because they have no kith nor kin."

From the last two quotations we obtain detailed information regarding the place from which the Arabs got their slaves. *Seng-chih* and *Ts'eng-ch'i* are identical with the *Zinj* of Cosmas' *Topographia Christiana*. On the maps and in the geographical works of the present day this place is designated as *Zanzibar*. Marco Polo, in Book III, Chapter 34, of his *Travels*, calls the locality *Zanghibar*, "which being interpreted means The Region of the Blacks." The Arabs give the name of *Zanzibar* to that portion of East Africa that stretches from the Juba River to Cape Delgado, eleven degrees south of the equator. According to Abulfeda, the King of *Zinj* resided at Monbasa. In the parlance of modern Europeans the name of *Zanzibar* has been restricted to a small island.

In Book III, Chapter 33, of Marco Polo's *Travels*, where he speaks of the Island of Madagascar, we have the following passage: "In this Island, and in another beyond it called *Zanghibar*, about which we shall tell you afterwards, there are more elephants than in any country in the world. The amount of traffic in elephants' teeth in these two Islands is something astonishing." Further on we read: "Tis said that in those other Islands to the south, which the ships are unable to visit because this strong current prevents their return, is found the bird *Gryphon*, which appears there at certain seasons. The description given of it is however entirely different from what our stories and pictures make it. For persons who had been there and had seen it, told Messer Marco, Polo that it was for all the world like an eagle, but one indeed of enormous size; so big in fact that its wings covered an extent of 30 paces, and its quills were 12 paces long, and thick in proportion. And it is so strong that it will seize an elephant in its talons and carry him high into the air, and drop him so that he is smashed to pieces; having so killed him the bird *gryphon* swoops down on him and eats him at leisure. The people of those isles call the bird *Ruck*, and it has no other name. So I wot not if this be the real *gryphon*, or if there be another manner of bird as great. But this I can tell you for certain, that they are not half lion and half bird as our stories do relate; but

enormous as they be they are fashioned just like an eagle." Later he adds : "They brought (as I have heard) to the Great Kaan a feather of the said Ruc, which was stated to measure ninety spans, whilst the quill part was two palms in circumference, a marvellous object!"

In Chapter 34 of the same Book. we read : "Zanghibar is a great and noble Island, with a compass of some 2000 miles. The people are all idolaters, and have a king and a language of their own, and pay tribute to nobody. They are both tall and stout, but not tall in proportion to their stoutness. for if they were, being so stout and brawny, they would be absolutely like giants; and they are so strong that they will carry for four men and eat for five.

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"They are all black, and go stark naked, with only a little covering for decency. Their hair is as black as pepper, and so frizzly that even with water you can scarcely straighten it. And their mouths are so large, their noses so turned up, their lips so thick, their eyes so big and bloodshot that they look like very devils; they are in fact so hideously ugly that the world has nothing to show more horrid.

"Elephants are produced in this country in wonderful profusion. There are also lions that are black and quite different from ours. And their sheep and wethers are all exactly alike in color ; the body all white and the head black ; no other kind of sheep is found there, you may rest assured The women of this Island are the ugliest in the world, with their great mouths and big eyes and thick noses; their breasts too are four times bigger than those of any other women ; a very disgusting sight."

Marco Polo's description of Madagascar and Zanzibar agrees perfectly with Chao Ju-k'uo's description of *K'un-lun Ts'eng-ch'i*. And it is beyond all doubt that *Ts'eng-ch'i* is a Chinese rendering of *Zinj*, or *Zenj*, or *Zanzi*, or *Zanghi*. Zanghibar, according to Marco Polo, means the "Region of the Blacks." Hence we have every reason to believe that the prefix *K'un-lun* signifies "black" for which it is a Chinese rendering of either the Arabic or the Persian. Hui Ch'ao speaking of Persia in his previously quoted work says that the Persians were wont to go to K'un-lun for gold. This agrees with what Cosmas records regarding the people of Axum who go to Africa for gold." Hence we have the strongest reasons for identifying K'un-lun with Africa.

(V) *The traffic of the Arabs in Negro Slaves and a revolt of the latter in the Eastern Caliphate.*

The K'un-lun slaves of the T'ang dynasty were imported into China by the Arabs. That the employment of negro slaves played an important part in Arabian social life, may be gathered from their famous collection of tales. known as "The Arabian Nights' Entertainment," In his work entitled *Der Islam von seiner Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart* (cf. pp. 199-201), C. Brockelmann gives a detailed account of a Negro rebellion in the Eastern Caliphate. It may be summarized as follows:

The wealthy Arabs of Basra employed negro slaves in the exploitation of the neighboring salt mines. A certain Persian named Ali ibn Muhammed roused these slaves to open revolt by preaching to them a doctrine of liberty, equality, equal distribution of wealth, the removal of all social and racial distinctions, etc., etc. The rebellion broke out on Sept. 10th, A.D. 869. The rebels under the personal direction of Ali

occupied Basra and its environs and defeated the soldiers sent against them by the Caliph of Bagdad. Even the black mercenaries of the Caliph's army deserted and made common cause with the rebels. The richest regions of the Caliphate including the whole valley of the Lower Tigris and the cities of Basra, Wässit, Kh•ristān, etc. were utterly devastated. The rebellion was only suppressed in A.D. 883 by Al-Muwaffak, the brother of the Caliph Al-Mo'tamid. This rebellion, therefore, lasted fifteen years in all, a period as long as that of the T'ai-p'ing Rebellion and much longer than those' of the revolts of An Lu-shan, Shih

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Ssu-min, and Huang Ch'ao under the T'ang dynasty. From this fact we may infer how numerous were the black slaves held in captivity by the Arabs.

In novels written during the Tang dynasty there is frequent mention of Foreigners who sell K'un-lun slaves. Since the Chinese and the Western records mutually corroborate each other, there can be no doubt that the *K'un-lun-nu* were African Negroes. And by the same token it is also evident that the *K'un-lun-nu* were in no way related to the inhabitants of the K'un-lun in the Malay Peninsula. The confusion between the two may have arisen from the fact that some negritos whose complexion is similar to that of negroes, are to be found in the Malay is-lands. But these negritos were never numerically strong and had in earlier times been driven by the Malays into mountain fastnesses from which they seldom reappeared. On the other hand, Western records nowhere make mention of the capture of negritos by Arab slave-traders. The *Hsin T'ang Shu*, however, states explicitly that in the eighth year of the Yuan-ho period (A.D. 813) the Land of Ho-ling (i.e. Java) presented to the Chinese Court four *Seng-chih* slaves. Hence it is possible that in some cases negro slaves were imported to China by way of the South Sea Islands.

In the sections to follow, an attempt will be made to collect and classify the various references to K'un-lun slaves that are to be found in works of the T'ang dynasty. Some of these allusions amount to little more than expressions of what was then popular gossip, but they should not on that account be dismissed as pure fiction; for they faithfully reflect the conditions prevalent in those days.

(VI) *Instances of the use of the term K'un-lun in a loose sense.*

In Book XXXII of the *Chin Shu* ("Dynastic history of Chin") which gives the biographies of empresses and imperial concubines, the following passage occurs: "When the Empress Li was still a concubine of Emperor Hsiao Wu Wen (A.D. 373-297), she used to work in the spinning department. Because she was tall and of dark complexion, the other concubines used to call her K'un-lun." From this passage it is clear that negro slaves were known in China as early as the Eastern Tsin (Chin) dynasty (A.D. 317-419), but it was not until the T'ang dynasty that they were to be found in large numbers.

The passage that follows occurs in Fang Lu's *Yün Hsi Yu Yi* as well as in Book CCLVI of the *T'ai-p'ing Kuang Chi* :

"Tsui Ya was a rhapsodist of the land of Wu Once he wrote a lampoon about a certain courtesan

that runs thus :

'Her toilet-set's of ebony
But she yearns for one of tortoise;
After ten months of pregnancy, She bears a K'un-lun baby.'

Book CXCII of the *T'ai-p'ing Kuang Chi* which treats of valiant men, contains a biography of Mo K'un-lun written by Feng Yenyi that runs as follows :

"Mo Chün-ho was a native of Chen-ling and was known in his childhood as San Wang. His family had been poor for generations and the profession hereditary therein had been that of a butcher. When he was in his mother's womb, she dreamt of an alien monk who presented her with a shiny black child, saying, 'I give thee this child to be

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thy son; years to come he will be of great benefit to you.' When born he had protruding brows and skin as black as iron. When he was about fifteen years of age, Prince Yung became Emperor and chanced to meet the boy. He was delighted with the youngster and exclaimed : 'Whence this marvel that we have here a K'un-lun child!' And when he learned that his surname agreed so well (Mo means ink) with his personal appearance, he renamed him *Mo K'un-lun*, and bestowed upon him a suit of black raiment After the Emperor had escaped from the peril of Prince Yen, he sent for Mo K'un-lun and bestowed on him a reward of one thousand taels of silver, a magnificent mansion, and ten thousand *mu* (mere than sixteen hundred acres) of good land. In addition to these gifts, he received the privilege of ten exemptions from cerital punishment as well as the official rank of *Kuang Lu Tai Fu*. He remained in favor throughout that Emperor's entire reign, which lasted forty years. Hence at that time it became customary to console a woman who had given birth to an ugly child by saying: 'Never mind about his swarthyness or his ugliness; who knows but he may become another Mo K'un-lun?' "

Book CDXLI of the *T'ai-p'ing Kuang Chi*, which treats of plants, records the fact that Emperor Yang (A. D. 605-616) of the Sui dynasty (A.D. 589-618) changed the name of the Egg-plant from *Chia-tzu* to *K'un-lun Tzu Kua* ("The K'un-lun Purple Melon"). This changing of its name is also adverted to by Tun Ch'eng-shih in his work entitled *Yu Yang Tsu*. The reason for thus prefacing the qualification *K'un-lun* was most likely because the Egg-plant assumes a very dark hue when ripe.

The following anecdote is narrated in Book CCCLXI of the *T'ai-p'ing Kuang Chi*, which treats of monsters and specters:

"General P'ei Hsiu-chen, in the days before he rose to prominence. lived in Chiao-yeh-li. Once a guest came to his house whom he entertained at wine in company with his brothers. Towards evening the guest departed and P'ei retired to sleep alone in the hall. During the night he awoke suddenly to hear a voice near his couch saying: 'My Elder Brother, you will lose your mother: As this saying was constantly repeated, he opened his eyes and beheld a frightful being who was making the round of his bed. In his terror he rushed to the door and called for the servants. The servants entered with a lamp and were

followed by his brother. The lamp-light showed the monster to have the semblance of a Kunlun; his teeth were large and white and he was five feet in height. Pei's brother, who was a man of extraordinary strength, struck the creature a resounding blow with his fist and found that it was as hard as iron or stone. Instantly the monster vanished. And his mother died that same year." It is interesting to compare this allusion to the notorious ugliness of the K'un-lun folk with Marco Polo's description of the Negroes.

In Book CDXIII of the *T'ai-p'ing Kuang Chi*, which also treats of plants, we read as follows:

"Once upon a time certain seafarers anchored their ship near an island. Some of the voyagers who went ashore discovered about a dozen K'un-lun folk asleep among the reeds with their hands and feet in motion. Alarmed at the sight they betook themselves back to their ship and informed the sailors. They were told by some of the sailors who had experience,

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that these were mushrooms."

In a work entitled *K'ai Tien Chuan Hsin Chi* by Cheng Ch'i, the following passage occurs: "Before Su Hui came to realize who T'ing was, he employed him as a stable-boy. One day when a guest arrived, T'ing was told to show him to the parlor. T'ing, who was sweeping the stable at the time, came out so hurriedly that he dropped a paper. This was picked up by the guest who found written thereon the following lines descriptive of the K'un-lun slaves:

'Fingers like tablets ten of ink,
Ears like enormous spoons.'

The following passage is taken from Book CDVIII of the *T'ai-p'ing Kuang Chi*, which likewise treats of plants:

"In Annam there is a kind of red and thorny ivy named *Jen-Tzu* ("Men-like Seeds") because its seeds have the form of human beings. The K'un-lun folk burn them in order to lure and capture elephants. The plant is very rare even in the south." In this case it is clear that the term *K'un-lun* refers to the negritos of Cambodia.

(VII) *Fragmentary references to the K'un-lun-nu in Chinese literature.*

In Book CXXIX of the *Tzu Chih T'ung Chien* which is a chronicle of the Sung dynasty, the section treating of the seventh year of the *Ta Ming* period (A.D. 463) contains the following passage: "Moreover Emperor Hsiao Wu showed favoritism towards a K'un-lun slave to whom he gave the privilege of beating any mandarin with a stick, none of the state-officials, even the Prime Minister Liu Yüan-ching himself, being immune from chastisement at his hands."

The following passage occurs in both the *T'ai-p'ing Kuang Chi* (Book CDLXIV treating of aquatic creatures) and Liu Hsun's *Ling Piao Lu Yi* ("Record of Strange Things beyond the Southern Mountains") : "When the former Minister of State Li Teh-yü was degraded and banished to Ch'ao-chou, his boat was

damaged while passing over O-yü-t'an (the "Shallows of the Crocodiles") and many of his valued treasures, old books, and pictures fell into the waters: whereupon he bade a K'un-lun man dive into the water in search of them. The latter, however, perceiving the exceedingly large number of crocodiles that swarmed in these shallows, was afraid to make the attempt (the place being notorious as a haunt of crocodiles).

The following story is recounted in several works including the *T'ai-p'ing Kuang Chi* (Book CXCIV, treating of chivalrous and doughty deeds), the *Ku Chin Shuo Hai*, the *Shuo Yüan*, the *T'ang Jen Shuo K'uai*, the *Chien Hsia Chuan*, and the *K'un-lun Nu Chuan* ("Record of K'un-lun Slaves") :

"During the Ta Li period (A.D. 766-779) of the T'ang dynasty there was a young man named Ts'ui whose father was a famous mandarin and a personal friend of the Chief Imperial Astronomer Yi P'in. When Ts'ui was a *Ch'ien-niu* mandarin, he visited Yi P'in who was sick. Now Tsui had a complexion like unto jade. He was of a calm and retiring disposition; his demeanor was placid and courteous and his accent was distinct and cultured. When he reached his destination, Yi P'in ordered a singing girl to lift the door-curtain and bid him enter. After Ts'ui had communicated the greetings of his father and paid the customary homage to his host,

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Yi P'in, who became charmed with the young man's appearance, invited him to sit down for a chat. In a little while three singing girls of extraordinary beauty entered the room, the foremost carrying a golden bowl full of pink peaches, which she peeled and sprinkled with sweet milk. Yi P'in then ordered one of the girls who was dressed in a robe of red silk, to serve the peaches to his guest in a small bowl. Tsui, who by reason of his youth was exceedingly bashful in the presence of the girls, declined to partake of the proffered fruit. Thereupon Yi P'in ordered the girl in red to feed him with a spoon. Ts'ui was forced to yield to such insistence and the girl smiled at him on taking her departure. When Ts'ui finally took leave of his host, the latter said: 'If you can bear with the company of an old man like myself, you must by all means come again whenever you are at leisure.' The girl in red was again ordered to attend on Ts'ui's departure. As he was leaving he looked back for another glimpse of the girl and saw that she held up three fingers, and that turning her hand three times she pointed to the small mirror on her breast saying: 'Remember!' Thereupon she withdrew without further ado. Having reported the result of the visit, Ts'ui retired to his study. During the ensuing days he was absent-minded and listless, his words were few, and his face assumed a far-off expression. For hours he would sit and brood, and he lost all appetite for food. However he then composed a poem, which runs as follows:

'In my wand' rings I strayed
To the top of P'eng-lai,*

*In Chinese folklore P'eng-lai is celebrated as "the Mountain of the Fairies."

Where a jewel girl I found
With eyes like the stars;
When thru the vermillion gate half-closed
The moonlight floods her palace court.
May it cause the flower-sweet,
Snow-white maid to think of me.'

"All the servants were alarmed at the condition of their young master. At that time there was in the household a K'un-lun slave named Mo-leh who observed him closely and said: 'What have you on your mind? Why do you act like one distraught with some great sorrow? Why not give your confidence to me, your old slave?' Ts'ui made answer: 'How could an uncouth fellow like you appreciate that which is in my heart?' 'But tell me anyway,' said Mo-leh, 'and I shall find a remedy for your troubles, be they present or future.' Ts'ui, greatly impressed by the assurance of the slave, made a full confession. Whereupon the latter declared: 'That is an easy matter. Why did you not tell me sooner and save yourself much worry?' When Ts'ui asked him to explain the signs made by the girl, Mo-leh replied: 'Why should they be hard to interpret? When she held up three fingers, she meant that she dwells in the third of the ten courtyards that Yi P'in assigns to the singing girls. When she turned her hand thrice, she meant *fifteen*, that is, the fifteenth of the moon. By pointing to the small mirror, she meant a night when the moon is full. In other words, she wanted to make an appointment with you.'

"On hearing this Ts'ui was overcome with joy and ecstasy. 'What plan,' he asked, 'would you suggest for attaining my heart's desire?' With a smile, Mo-leh answered: 'The night after next

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will be the fifteenth night. . Pray dye two pieces of silk to a dark hue to make a vesture for yourself. In the house of Yi P'in there is a ferocious hound that guards the entrance to the courtyards of the singing girls and is sure to kill anyone who attempts to enter. This dog is as clever as a demon and as fierce as a tiger; it was bred at Menghai in the district of Tsao-chow. None in the world save myself is capable of killing this dog, and I shall kill it tonight.'

"After Ts'ui had feasted the slave on meat and wine, the latter departed taking with him a chain and a hammer. After the space of a meal time he returned and said: 'The dog is now dead, and we shall meet with no obstacle.' At midnight on the appointed date, Mo-leh bade Ts'ui don his dark attire and lifted his master over the wall, which was ten *li* in circumference. Thence the two made their way to the courtyards of the singing girls and stopped at the third gate, which they observed to be ajar revealing a dim light within. When they entered they heard the singing girl sigh and noticed that she sat as though waiting for someone's arrival. Her lustrous hair was somewhat dishevelled, her countenance slightly flushed, and she looked very sad and forlorn. As they watched her, they heard her sing the following lay:

'Like an oriole in some lonely vale
Seeking its mate with plaintive note,
My jewelery I cast aside and

Stealthily creep 'neath the blossoms;
But the azure cloud is wafted away
Without leaving behind any token:
Despondent I lean on my flute of jade
And envy the bliss of the Phoenix. ●●

"It was an hour when all the watchmen were asleep and when everything was quiet and silent. Finally Ts'ui lifted the curtain and entered her room. The girl remained motionless gazing at him for a long time. At last she sprang up from her couch and seized Ts'ui by the hand saying: 'I knew that your wit was keen and that you would interpret aright the signs which I made to you. But I never anticipated that you would respond with such alacrity.' Whereupon Ts'ui told her all about Mo-leh's cunning and how he had made it possible for his master to scale the wall. 'Where is he?' she asked, and he replied : Standing outside.' Thereupon the girl bade Mo-leh enter and gave him wine in a golden goblet. Turning to Ts'ui the girl said : 'My home is in So-fang. I was the ward of a general who compelled me to become a singing girl. I have often wished I were dead but have never had the courage to take my own life. Though my face may seem fair and radiant, yet my heart is oppressed with heavy sorrow. Though I eat with chopsticks of jade and drink from golden goblets ; though I am surrounded with magnificent screens and clothes in the finest cloth; though I sleep on a silken couch inlaid with pearls and precious stones: yet all these things, far from giving me happiness, make me feel as if I were a prisoner. Since your noble body-servant is endowed with such extraordinary prowess, will you not easy to rescue me from this captivity? If you but harken to my prayer, I will rejoice to become your humble handmaiden and will die so without

●●In Chinese folklore the Phoenix is the syntol of conjugal fidelity

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regret. Pray suffer me to bask in the light of your countenance. Lo, I am eagerly awaiting your reply !'

"As Ts'ui stood silent and irresolute, Mo-leh spoke up. 'Since the lady,' said he, 'has made up her mind, it will not be hard to fulfill her wish.' The maiden was overjoyed at this reassurance. Mo-leh requested her to pack up her clothing and other gear, which he carried out in three trips. Returning from the third trip, he warned them of the approach of dawn. Then picking up both Ts'ui and the girl, he vaulted with them over the wall and ran off carrying them on his shoulders for a distance of ten *li*. As none of the watchmen noticed what was going on, the trio reached Ts'ui's home in safety and there they concealed the girl.

"Yi P'in's household did not become aware either of the girl's absence or of the death of the dog until the following morning. Yi P'in was then greatly alarmed and exclaimed: 'The seclusion of my gates and walls has been hitherto inviolate, every means of ingress being barred by bolts and locks. The intruder would seem to have been a winged being, for he has not left behind a single trace. He must forsooth be a knight of stupendous prowess. Do not noise the matter abroad. lest perchance we incur some further

misfortune.'

'After the girl had lived in seclusion with Ts'ui for the space of two years, she ventured forth in blossom-time riding on a cart to Ch'u-chiang. There she was recognized by one of Yi P'in's servants who duly report. T'sed the matter to his master. Yi P'in in his surprise summoned Ts'ui and questioned him closely. 'Ts'ui in his fright made a full confession, .describing Mo-leh's part in the affair. Yi P'in said: 'The girl has indeed been guilty of a great offense. Inasmuch, however, as she has lived with you for more than a year, I will overlook the matter. But touching the complicity of Mo-leh, I must needs put an end to him ; for he is a public menace.'

"Whereupon Yi P'in ordered fifty mail-clad soldiers, all armed to the teeth, to surround Ts'ui's house for the purpose of capturing Mo-leh. Whereat the totter, snatching up a dagger, vaulted over the wall, seeming to his pursuers like some winged being endowed with the speed of an eagle. They let fly at him a veritable shower of arrows but none of these could reach him. An instant later he completely vanished from view. This feat not only astounded Ts'ui but terrified Yi P'in as well, causing the latter to rue bitterly the rash step he had taken. Thenceforth Yi P'in was wont, when he retired at night, to surround himself with a guard of servants armed with swords and spears. And he continued this practice for a while year before he finally gave it up.

"After an interval of more than ten years one of Ts'ui's servants, on a visit to Loyang, saw Mo-leh selling medicinal herbs in the market-place. Time had not availed to change his appearance in the least."

In the *T'ao Hsien Chuan* ("Biography of T'ao Hsien") by Hsien Chi-tsi as well as in Book CDXX of the *T'ai-p'ing Kuang Chi*, which treats of dragons, the following narrative is given:

"T'ao Hsien was a descendant of T'ao Yuan Ming (a famous scholar of the Chin dynasty), the magistrate of P'eng-tseh (in Kiangsu). During the T'ai Yüan period (A.D. 713-741) he lived at K'un-shan (in Kiangsu). He owned

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vast lands and rich merchandise. Having set over his affairs and possessions an honest and capable servant, he himself left home to wander about the country and was not infrequently absent for periods covering several years. He did not even know the names of his grown-up sons and .grandsons. So great was his scholarship that he might have been a mandarin of the highest rank, but he never sought political preferment, alleging that he was too careless and irresponsible for such a calling. He was also an accomplished musician and had an exceedingly sensitive ear. Those who knew of his gift tested it by means of tiles the date of whose baking they had recorded. When such tiles were struck, he was able to tell their exact age from the sound given forth. Moreover, he was the author of a treatise on music. He personally designed three boats of great beauty and exquisite workmanship. One of them was for his own use, another for that of his guests, while the third served as a floating pavilion for social gatherings. Among his guests were the Doctors of Literature, Meng Yen-shen and Meng Yu-ch'ing, and the commoner Chiao Sui, together with their respective wives and servants. T'ao Hsien had a chorus of singing girls who were very talented in music. So manned, his three boats visited various parts of the

country to take in the scenery. Such trips were made mostly in spring-time. Since the name of T'ao Hsien was known at the Imperial Court and the times in question were peaceful, he was welcomed by the officials of all the cities that he visited. But he generally declined their hospitality saying: 'I am a simple rustic and quite unworthy to be the guest of princes and nobles.' Occasionally, however, he would stop where he was not invited. The people of Wu (S. Kansu) and Yüeh (N. Chekiang) called him a water-genius because water-genii are believed to have no fixed abode and are wont to inhabit any stream or mountain. Having a relative who was then the magistrate of Nanhai (Canton), T'ao went thither to visit him. This magistrate was so flattered by the visit of one who had come from such a great distance that he gave T'ao a million cash. With this sum the latter bought an antique sword which was two feet in length, a jade bracelet four inches in diameter, and a Kun-lun slave named Mo-ho, who had belonged to a trading vessel and who was an expert as well as daring swimmer. These possessions,' said Tao,' will become heirlooms in my family.'

"On his return journey T'ao Hsien entered the Peh River (Pehkiang) by way of Pai-cheh. As the water was remarkably clear, he dropped the sword and the bracelet into its limpid depths, ordering Mo-ho to dive for them. As this sport gave him a delightful thrill, he repeated it on many occasions in the course of ensuing years. Once as he was sailing on Lake Ts'ao (Ts'ao Hu in Anhui), he again dropped into the water the sword and bracelet, and ordered Mo-ho to dive for them. In the twinkling of an eye the slave reappeared from the depths holding aloft the sword and bracelet, but he informed his master that he had been bitten by a poisonous snake and obliged in consequence to cut off his finger in order to save his life. On hearing this Chiao Sui said: 'Mo-ho has been very likely wounded by some spirit of the deep; for those who dwell in the waters do not tolerate the inquisitiveness of men.' Whereupon T'ao Hsien replied : I respectfully



T'AO HSIEN PURCHASES MO-HO

Ink sketch by Chen Hsü, Department of Fine Arts, Catholic University

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bow to your judgment, but I must needs own a certain admiration for the sentiment of Hsieh K'an-loh who said : *Even death shall not avail to rob my joy in the scenery; I suit my own pleasure forgetful of all else.* To sojourn in inns and taverns, to be borne to all places, to be attired in the clothes of a commoner, to enjoy the cornpanionship of cultured fellow-travellers, and to have roamed about for thirty years according to the dictates of my fancy: such is my destiny. But to ascend the jade staircase (i.e. to become a mandarin of high rank), to have audiences with the Emperor, to render signal service, to be rewarded with high honors, and to see the fulfilment of every ambition: that is not the supreme goal to which I aspire.'

"Thereupon he ordered his boats to weigh anchor saying: 'Let us pay a visit to Hsiang-yang Shan before returning to the capital of Wu (Soochow).' When they reached Hsi-seh Shan. they cast anchor before a buddhist temple called Chi-hsiang. Observing that the waters were dark and stagnant Tao exclaimed: 'Verily some monster must lurk in these depths!' Whereupon he again threw in the sword and the bracelet bidding Mo-ho dive for them. The latter having vanished beneath the waves did not reappear for a long time. When he rose again he was gasping like one in the throes of death, and coming on board was too weak to stand on his feet. He reported his experience as follows: 'I was not able to recover the sword and the bracelet because they had chanced to fall at the feet of a gigantic dragon twenty feet in height. Whenever I attempted to draw nigh to the sword and bracelet, the dragon gave me an angry scowl.' T'ao replied: 'Yourself, the sword, and the bracelet are my three treasures. Now that two of them are lost, of what use are you to me? Do your utmost, therefore, to recover them.' Having no alternative but to dive once more, Mo-ho unbound his hair, uttered a fearful yell, and with tears of blood exuding from his eyes plunged headlong into the waters, never to reappear. After a long while fragments of his body floated up to the surface, a mute reproach, as it were, to T'ao. At this sight the latter began to weep bitter tears and gave orders to sail home forthwith. From that time on he ceased to roam about the country and staid at home instead, devoting his time to writing poetry. One of his poems is quoted below:

'Who was there to watch with heedful care over my home and estate?
Serene is the life at my new abode ensconced in the Land of Wu-yüeh,
Yet not till my hair had turned to gray did I find its peace again.
Descrying the hills in the distance blue I reckon the miles to my home.
The stork shakes the leaves on the maple bough as sinketh the sun at even;
The crane stands erect 'mid the flowering reeds while sparkle the waters of autumn.
To what shall I turn for solace then, now that my boats I've abandoned?
Wine banners and fans of the singing girls, these shall welcome me!'"

It seems to me that *Mo-leh* is a Chinese abbreviation of *Moladah* and *Mo-ho* a similar rendering of *Mohammed*, names widely current among the Arabs. The extraordinary physical strength of these K'un-lun (Negro) slaves is adverted to not only by Chinese authors, but also by Foreign writers such as Marco Polo.

In the treatise on dragons found

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in Book CDXXII of the *T'ai-p'ing Kuang Chi* we read :

"During the Cheng Yüan period (A.D. 785-804) there flourished a man of noble character and scholarly attainments named Chou Kan. Once a foreign slave-dealer had for sale a youthful slave of fourteen or fifteen years, who was bright and intelligent in appearance. The dealer alleged that the slave could make his way through water with the same facility as the average man on land; that he could remain under water for half a day without any discomfort and dive into any river, rapids, pool, or well in the whole land of Shu (Szechwan). On hearing this the aforesaid Chou Kan purchased the slave and gave him a new name *Shui Ching* ('Water Sprite') in token of his prowess as a swimmer. On one occasion when Chou

Kan was sailing downstream from the land of Shu to Kiang-ling and was passing the famous gorges of Ch'ü-t'ang and Yen-yü, he commanded Shui Ching to dive in and report the depth of the water. The latter remained under the water for a long time and when he reappeared he brought with him to the surface a large number of gold and silver articles, a feat that gave great satisfaction to his master. Thenceforth whenever they passed any gorge or rapids, Chou would order Shui Ching to dive, and in this way the former acquired many treasures. Once when they were approaching Chiang-tu they passed a place called Niu-chu-chi where from of old the water was reputed to be very deep. It was also famous as the spot where General Wei Chiao kindled the horn of rhinoceros to cast light on the water-monsters. After Shui Ching had dived, he reappeared in short while bearing precious stones. He declared that there were in those waters monsters of unspeakable ugliness who had glowered at him and had been on the point of seizing him, and that he had just managed to make good his escape.

"Thanks to the aforesaid practice, Chou became in time very affluent. After a lapse of several years he visited one of his friends named Wang Tseh at Hsiang-chow, of which city the latter was the Prefect. Wang was so delighted at his coming that he spent most of his time visiting the notable places of his prefecture in company with Chou. On one occasion they paid a visit to a celebrated well located in the northern part of the district. The mouth of the well was octagonal in shape and was made of eight slabs of natural rock, whence it had received the name Pa Chiao Ching ('Octagonal Well'). It was more than thirty feet in diameter. Every morning and evening a puff of vapor would rise from the well and diffuse itself over an area one hundred paces in diameter. At night a great beam of red light would shoot forth from the well to a height of one thousand feet making the surrounding district as bright as day. The elders of the place told them that a golden dragon dwelt at the bottom of the well, who, when duly invoked in times of drought, was wont to send showers of rain. Wang said: 'Unquestionably there are treasures hidden in this well but unfortunately we have no means of investigating.' On hearing this Chou Kan replied with a smile: 'There is no difficulty about that.' Thereupon he gave to Shui Ching the following command: 'Dive into this well and find out whether anything strange lurks therein. Wang will adequately reward you for your

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pains.' Now Shui Ching had not been in water for a long time, but on hearing the command of his master he cheerfully divested himself of his garments and plunged into the well. After a long while he rose to the surface and said: 'Down below there is an enormous tawny dragon whose scales glitter like gold. Between its paws are several resplendent pearls. It is now in deep slumber. I was about to snatch away the pearls when I realized that I was unarmed, and feared therefore to awaken it. If I had had a good sword, I should unhesitatingly have slain the dragon in the event of its waking up.'

"On hearing these tidings both Chou and Wang were highly pleased. The latter said: 'I have here a priceless sword. You may take it to slay the dragon.' Thereupon Shui Ching, having drunk some wine, took up the sword and dived once more into the well. By that time a huge crowd of curious spectators had formed, as it were, a thick, impenetrable wall about the well. Suddenly they saw Shui Ching shoot out of the well to a height of several hundred paces. He was simultaneously pursued by a golden paw, several hundred feet in length and armed with fearfully sharp claws, which seized Shui Ching in mid-air and dragged him back into the well. The spectators were so terrified that none dared to remain near the

edge of the well, but all shrank back aghast, listening to the lament of Chou for his slave and of Wang for his sword. Soon after they saw an old man approaching. He wore a buff-colored robe and had a very venerable aspect. Pausing in front of Wang he said : 'I am the local tutelary god (*T'u Ti*). Why has Your Excellency been so thoughtless as to expose your people to such frightful danger? The Golden Dragon inhabiting this well has been sent by Heaven with his jewels to exert a beneficent influence. How could you have been so rash as to treat this dragon with contempt, as though he were of no account, intending even to kill and to rob him? If the dragon had really lost his temper and had wished to avail himself of his stupendous power, verily he could have shaken the gates of heaven, dislocated the axle of the earth, rent mountains asunder, ground hills to powder, converted into a lake an area one hundred *li* in diameter, and transformed ten thousand men into fishes. Should all this have come to pass, what would have become of your own body of flesh ? Even Chung Li-ch'uan (the greatest of the Eight Immortals) did not covet the Dragon's treasures and no less a person than Meng Chang-chün restored to the Dragon his pearls! You, on the contrary, far from emulating the noble example set by these illustrious men, have given free rein to your cupidity and have permitted your rascally slave to attempt in his audacious presumption to rob the Dragon of his treasure. Already the wretch's body has been devoured and the Dragon has caused his pearls to vanish.' *

"On hearing those words, Wang was overwhelmed with shame and remorse. As he stood thus confounded and powerless to utter a single word, the Land God continued : 'Your only course now is to repent without delay and to offer to the Dragon a sacrifice of expiation, lest perchance you be

* According to Chinese folklore, the Dragon has a magic pearl that it can cause to appear or disappear at will.

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marked out for his future vengeance.' Having spoken these words the old man vanished, and Wang offered sacrifice in accordance with the admonition he had received.'

Although the term *K'un-lun* does not occur in the foregoing passage, it is clear, nevertheless, that Shui Ching was a *K'un-lun-nu* from the following three considerations: (1) this story is strikingly parallel to the preceding narrative regarding Mo-ho; (2) it is explicitly stated that he was sold to his master by foreign slave-trader; (3) the changing of his name implies the previous possession of a non-Chinese soubriquet.

In Book III of the Jesuit Giuglic Aleni's *Chih Fang Wai Chi* where this work treats of Abyssina and Monamotaba, we read : "Many lands lie to the northeast of Libya along the Red Sea. All the inhabitants thereof are black-skinned. Those living in the north, however, are less dark than those living in the south. The farther south one goes the blacker the people become, until at last one meets with men whose color resembles the hue of black lacquer. All these folk, however, have exceedingly white eyeballs and teeth. They are divided into two races. The first comprises those living to the east of Libya, who are known as

the Abyssinians. Their country is vast in extent, occupying about a third of the continent and stretching from the Red Sea to the Moon Mountain (23° S. Latitude) whose steepness makes its summit inaccessible to climbers. The other race dwells to the south of Libya in a country called Monamotaba which is the largest in area on that continent. The people there are of an extremely low level of intelligence, having no culture whatever. Their huts are exceedingly filthy and resemble pig-styes. They are fond of eating elephant meat and are also cannibalistic. In their markets are to be found venders of human flesh, which the natives eat raw. Hence they all have sharp teeth like those of a dog. They can run with the speed of a horse. Not only do they wear no clothing but they ridicule anybody who does. Sometimes they smear themselves with paint thinking thus to beautify themselves . . . Their bodies exhale a foetid odor, of which they cannot rid themselves. Like brutes they are without either worries or foresight. The sound of any musical instrument is sufficient to stimulate them to dance. They are, withal, simple and patient by natural disposition, and whenever they hear wise instruction, they willingly follow it. As slaves, they are exceedingly faithful to their masters, for whose sake they will endure any hardship, yea even death itself. They are all good swimmers. Hence other peoples are wont to refer to them as sea-devils. . . .

It is interesting to compare this knowledge of the negro possessed by Europeans in Ming times with that of the Chinese on the same subject during the T'ang dynasty; both have many points in common. Though the tales just cited concerning Mo-leh, Mo-ho, and Shui Ching are in certain respects extravagant, nevertheless it is evident that they have some foundation in fact.

(VIII) *K'un-lun Slaves in Fiction.*

In Book CCCXXXIX of the *T'ai-ping Kuang Chi* which discusses ghosts and devils, the following story is recorded :

"In the first year of the Hsing Yuan period (A. D. 784) when Chu Tz'u was stirring up trouble

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at Ch'ang-an (the Capital), Yen Ching-li who was a secret messenger of Tuan Hsiu-shih, escaped by stealth and made his way to the Feng-hsiang Hills, where he purposed to spend the night in the *Kuan* ('communal palace') called *T'ai-ping*. This *Kuan* had been abandoned for many years, having been replaced by a new one built ten miles away, but Yen was unaware of the fact. When he entered, he was surprised to note the dilapidated condition of the place. Soon two persons clad in black garments came forth to welcome him and he was led by them into the hall. 'Why,' he inquired of them, is this *Kuan* in such a desolate condition?' 'It is still habitable,' they answered. He had not rested very long when they re-entered with the following announcement: 'His Excellency Liu Chiao, ex-Magistrate of Ho-chih in the Prefecture of Fengchow and present mandarin in charge of this *Kuan*, has come to pay his respects.' When the two had exchanged civilities, Yen asked his host: 'Why is it that this *Kuan* looks so deserted?' 'In these .evil days,' replied his host, 'the whole country is in a ruinous state. Even the palaces of the Emperor are invaded by weeds and brambles. What then can you expect in a mere communal palace?' Yen was astonished to hear such a sentiment expressed, in that it betokened a mentality much above the ordinary. 'All the servitors of this *Kuan*,' resumed Liu 'have deserted. These,' he said pointing to the two dressed in black are K'un-lun slaves belonging to my own household, whom I am forced to employ here.

This one's name is Tao Nu and the other is called Chih Yuan.' Thereupon Yen lifted up the candle and scrutinizing the slaves noted that they wore purple and white raiment beneath their black cloaks. Their features bore the unmistakable K'un-lun stamp and the white brand-marks on their faces indicated that they belonged to Liu. . . .

In Book CCCXL of the same work and dealing with the same theme, we read as follows:

In the tenth moon of the sixth year of the Cheng Yuan period (A.D. 790), La Shu was residing at Ch'ien-yang He had a maid-servant whose name was Hsiao Chin (Little Golden One) and who was about fifteen years old. . . . One night she dreamt of an old man mounted on a huge lion similar in color to the Lion that bears Manju Sri. The lion's speed was so great as to render it all but invisible when it moved. On either side of the lion were K'un-lun slaves to hold the reins. 'It came to my ears,' the old man said to her, 'that you were being persecuted by demons. For which reason I have come hither from a very great distance purposing to save you. You are even now under a malignant influence and the demons are proposing to make you their guest. For they have said among themselves: 'We can dispose of her for a price.' Had I not come, you would have been dead by the fourth moon.' To these words Hsiao Chin replied: 'I am grateful for your warning. At this moment my back and waist are sore with intolerable pain, which I beseech you in your mercy to remove.' The old man answered: 'That is no hard matter.' Whereupon he ordered one of the K'unlun slaves to present the palm of his hand, into which he dipped his own fingers. When he withdrew them, his two fingers were as though he had dipped them in black lacquer. He then touched her back with the fingers and bade her

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warm the spot he had touched at the fire. When she awoke she recounted her dream and it was found that there actually were two spots on her back. . . . On her warming the place as she had been bidden, the pain in her back ceased instantaneously Hsiao Chin said: 'The last time you came, O Holy One, you cured my back, but my waist still continues to be racked with pain.' 'Last time,' replied the old man, 'I did not heal your waist because I desired you to remember me. Now, however, I will cure you entirely.' Whereupon he repeated the same treatment that he gave on the former occasion, and when she awoke she found the same sort of marks on her waist. All pain left her after she had warmed herself at the fire."

In Book XVI of the *T'ai-p'ing Kuang Chi* which treats of fairies and genii, the following tale is narrated :

"When Chang Lao married the maiden named Wei, her father became a target of much criticism on the part of his neighbors who said to him: 'You are a very miserly man. Are there not many poor and deserving young men in the village? Why then did you give your daughter in marriage to an old gardener? And now that she is married to him, why do you suffer them to reside in your own home?' Thereupon the father gave a dinner to his daughter and Chang Lao. After they had drunk several cups of wine, the father hinted at what was on his mind Chang Lao bade his wife ride on a donkey wearing a straw hat while he himself followed on foot with a staff in his hand. For several years after the time of their departure, the father received no news concerning them. Becoming lonesome for his daughter and fearing lest she had been reduced to squalid penury, he sent his son Yi Fang in search of her. When the latter

reached T'ien-t'an, he met a K'un-lun slave plowing the field with an ox. On being asked by Yi Fang: 'Does one named Chang Lao reside in these parts?' —the slave prostrated himself before his questioner saying: 'My Young Master, why did you delay so long in coming? The homestead you seek is not far off. Come! I will lead you to it.' The two made their way eastward over a mountain range, after which they crossed a stream. In the sequel they forded about forty other streams: whereupon the whole country assumed a strange, unearthly aspect. At last, the slave pointing it out exclaimed: 'Behold the homestead of Chang.' Much astonished Yi Fang presented himself at the gate, where he was met by a servant clad in purple livery who conducted him into the reception-hall When the maid-servant had led him in, he beheld a man of stately mien and fair complexion. After closely scrutinizing his features, he became aware that the personage was none other than Chang Lao himself. The latter said to him. The world is filled with toil and sorrow and men dwell, as it were, in the midst of fire. The flame of one sorrow follows so fast upon the flame of another that no one has a respite in which to cool himself between times. Hence no peace is possible on earth. You yourself have travelled about for a long time, but has life brought you any consolation? Your sister is now dressing. She will soon be ready to receive you. Shortly afterwards a maid-servant came in to announce that her mistress was ready and to usher Yi Fang into his sister's presence. . . . Chang

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Lao and his wife said to Yi Fang: 'You must feel lonesome abiding here. Moreover this earthly paradise is not meant for ordinary mortals. Though you were pre-destined to visit this spot, yet you may not tarry too long. To-morrow we shall have to bid you fare-well.' . . . Chang Lao gave him twenty pieces of gold and an old hat saying: 'Whenever you are in need of money, call at Wang Lao's drug-shop in the northern suburb of Yangchow where you will be able to barter this hat for a sum of ten million cash.' The K'un-lun slave was bidden to conduct him back to Tien-t'an A few years later Yi Fang on one of his journeys reached the northern suburb of Yangchow, where he unexpectedly encountered the self-same K'un-lun slave. The latter asked him; 'How fares it at your home? Though my mistress has never been able to return thither, yet she is aware of all that has happened there.' Thereupon the slave presented him with ten catties of gold saying: 'My mistress ordered me to give this to you. Will you please sit here under the banner of the wineshop while I go in to inform my master, so that he can have the pleasure of drinking a cup of wine with you. As no one came forth, though he waited till sundown, Yi Fang finally went into the wineshop himself, but saw no sign of either Chang Lao or the K'un-lun slave. He examined the gold that had been given to him and found that it was genuine. Thus he returned home filled with wonder and admiration. The money, he had received, sufficed to sustain his family in comfort for many years, but he never again heard or saw anything of Chang Lao."

The fact that in T'ang folklore the demons (servants of the fairies) are described as having K'un-lun features, shows that the ugliness of the negro, to which Marco Polo so graphically alludes in chapter XXXIV of Book III of His *Travels*, had become proverbial among the Chinese.