

BUT I READ IT IN A BOOK!

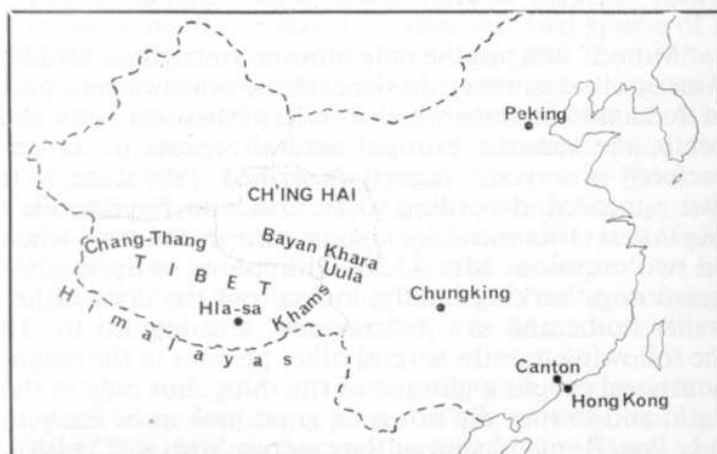
Gordon Creighton

IN two Soviet propaganda-publications¹ issued in the English language in 1967, a curious tale was reported by the popular-science writer Vyacheslav Zaitsev.² It was to the effect that, according to remarkable revelations made in a *German* publication called *Das Vegetarische Universum*, Chinese scientists exploring caves high up in the Bayan-Khara Uula (Mountains)³ in Central Asia in 1938 had found graves with many strange skeletons, rock-drawings of beings wearing round helmets, and a total of 716 mysterious 2-cm. thick granite discs, all with a very high mineral (mainly cobalt) content and all having a central hole, as modern long-playing gramophone records do. These granite discs, so the story went, bore patterns and hieroglyphs, "incised in double-grooved spirals" which represented the "oldest language in the world." This incised script "ran out spirally to the edge of the plates."

After racking their brains for two decades in attempts to decipher the mystery writing, the Chinese scientist Tsum Um Nui⁴ and four colleagues had finally been successful, but the results with which they came up were "so shattering that the Peking Academy of Prehistory banned publication." Later however the ban was relaxed and the story was finally published in 1963. It related how, about 12,000 years ago, a group of alien beings in a spacecraft had crash-landed on our planet and had lacked sufficient power to take off again. They had come into conflict with the local Earthlings and most of the visitors had been wiped out, though enough of them had survived to leave traces of their stock in two debased local tribes. In the rock-drawings and the rows of graves containing weird skeletons the Chinese scientists had found corroboration of ancient

Chinese legends that once upon a time small, ugly, big-headed, spindly-legged yellow-skinned beings had descended from the skies and, on account of their revolting appearance, had been liquidated. Even to this day, said the account, the region of the Bayan-Khara Uula was inhabited by the "Ham" and "Dropa" tribes—"frail, stunted men, averaging four feet two inches in height" who "so far have defied ethnic classification."

Since much of my work involves the part of the world in question and seeing that the story was one in which considerable linguistic investigation might be required, involving German, Russian, Chinese, Tibetan, etc., I decided that I would put some effort into following it up to its source, and see where it led me (just as much hard work by Western explorers had to be expended in the selfsame area before the source of the famous Yellow River was finally established). My immediate reason for giving now this résumé of my findings is that



China, showing the Provinces of Tibet and Ch'ing Hai

ANTHROPOIDS, MONSTERS AND UFOs *Continued from page 23*

"Wild Women." The legend reminds us unmistakably of our anthropoids—up to a point—when suddenly we discover that the other half of the tradition is just as unmistakably out of the fairy-faith. Using Hewes' logic, might we then assume that anthropoids are a kind of fairies? Of course not. Not any more than we can assume, because in recent years Irish countryfolk have reported viewing "leprechauns" stepping out of flying saucers, that fairies are really UFO beings.

Fairies, anthropoids, UFOs: in a sense all are the same, each no more and no less real than the others, and all are part of a vast riddle whose answers do not wait on another planet but much, much closer to home.

* * * * *

One last item, a letter from Mrs. Beulah Schroat of Decatur, Illinois, published in the *Decatur Review* of August 2, 1972:

"To the Editor:

"In reference to the creatures people are seeing, I am 76 years old. My home used to be south of Effingham. My two brothers saw the creatures when they were children. My brothers have since passed away.

"They are hairy, stand on their hind legs, have large eyes and are about as large as an average person or shorter, and are harmless as they ran away from the children. They walk, they do not jump.

"They were seen on a farm near a branch of water. The boys waded and fished in the creek every day and once in a while they would run to the house scared and tell the story.

"Later there was a piece in the Chicago paper stating there were such animals of that description and they were harmless. This occurred about 60 years ago or a little less.

"My mother and father thought they were just children's stories until the Chicago paper told the story."

a lady correspondent has just taken me to task because I am not a fervent believer in the *Hams* and *Dropas* from Space and their reverberating discs. She explains that the story *must* be true, and the reason she gives: "Because I read it in a book!"⁵

While I will yield place to nobody in my enthusiasm for Wang Chieh of China who, on May 11, 868 A.D., issued the oldest surviving example of the printer's art, and for his successor Johann Gutenberg of Mainz, I regret to have to point out that, most unfortunately, the existence of something in print confers no guarantee of its authenticity, and that nowhere is this warning more necessary than in the murky field of "Ufology," where we have been regaled during the past quarter-century with some of the most phoney, slipshod, and half-baked stuff that has ever found its way on to paper.

My enquiries started with a letter in February 1968 to the Soviet engineer in Moscow who is my regular correspondent and who, being the unofficial secretary of the Russian group of UFO investigators, performs the function of serving as the link with some of us in the West. I asked him for any information that he could supply about this story. He replied in due course that, although the two English-language Soviet publications where I had seen it were not available to the Russian public, he had been able to ascertain that Vyacheslav Zaitsev had done no original investigation of his own and had simply taken the story as it had appeared in the German publication *Das Vegetarische Universum* (no date given) and in the German publication *UFO-Nachrichten*, No. 95 (of 1964). He also said he thought it had appeared in a "French" (sic) UFO journal described by him as "BUFOI" journal No. 4, of March/April, 1965). My Soviet correspondent confirmed that, according to the original German version, the discovery of the discs had been in 1938, the finder being "the Chinese archaeologist Chi-Pu-Tei."⁷

The next step, in November 1969, was to make enquiries in Germany about *Das Vegetarische Universum*, and in due course I was informed that it was an obscure vegetarian affair produced by a firm known as the Vegeta-Verlag (in English "Vegeta Press") of 7291 Grüntal b/Freudenstadt. So hopefully I wrote off to them too, saying how anxious we were to learn more about the marvellous stone discs. The date of my letter was November 21, 1969, and the result was precisely *nil*. Evidently the Vegeta Press was unwilling to divulge its secrets.

I wrote next to the Soviet *Novosti News Agency's* London office, and asked to be put in touch with the Editor, in Moscow, of *Sputnik*. They replied that the Editor was Mr. Oleg Feofanov and that his office was in the headquarters of the Novosti News Agency on Pushkin Square, Moscow.

So I wrote off to Comrade Feofanov, asking for details as to the authenticity of the wonderful tale.

Result: again *nil*.

My next letters went to the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Peking (Red China) and to the Chinese Academy of Sciences at T'ai-Pei, in T'aiwan (Free China). I also buttonholed several visiting Chinese professors and academic types, and received some more than usually astonished glances when I whispered the tale of the spindly-legged Spacemen who had dropped in on

China all that long time ago.

Results: *nil* again all round. No reply from either Peking or T'aiwan.

It did not look as though the story enjoyed too much credit anywhere.

Meanwhile the years were passing, and we have been favoured with a fantastic spate of books by Messrs. von Däniken, Peter Kolosimo, and a shoal of imitators. According to the startling new thesis propagated by these gentlemen, virtually every prehistoric scratch nicked on a rock by our shaggy ancestors or by African or South American primitives, and every portrayal of a big-headed monster, demon, or tribal deity, is in reality a representation of one of our Elder Brethren from the Cosmos, a "Space-man." Likewise, it now turns out that wellnigh every hitherto unexplained mystery, be it archaeological, palaeontological, anthropological, theological, geographical, topographical, or toponymical, simply *has to be* connected with "Outer Space" and "Flying Saucers." So, "Flying Saucers" are at the bottom of the Baalbek Temple of Jupiter; the Great Pyramid; the Piri Re's map; the Nazca desert images in Peru; Stonehenge; Atlantis; the Old Straight Track, and so on. It looks as though "They" have been responsible for pretty well everything except perhaps Coventry Cathedral and the Pentagon. The agencies at work everywhere—the whole lot of them, Uncle Tom Cobley & All, have been "Space-Men." And the only fools have been you and I, who failed to perceive these self-evident truths.

One can imagine no doctrine more likely to bring down upon us the scorn and wrath of all honest investigators in the fields of Archaeology and Anthropology, and more calculated to put paid for ever to any claim by the "Ufological" fraternity that the archaeologists and anthropologists should take them and their crackpot theories seriously.

One of the most enthusiastic propagators of the New Evangelium is of course Herr von Däniken, who tells us in one of his books that in May 1968 he went to Moscow specially to hear all about the stone discs and the *Hams* and *Dropas* from another Russian popular-science and space-science writer, Aleksandr Kazantsev.⁸

Kazantsev told von Däniken that the plates and all the documentation about the whole story were "preserved in the Peking Academy and the historical archives of Taipeh in Formosa." (Vyacheslav Zaitsev, in his original article, had said however that the discs "had been sent to Moscow for study.")

It seems improbable that Comrade Kazantsev knows any more about the matter than does his colleague Zaitsev.

Let us now return to our granite discs and, since we can find nobody anywhere who will vouch for them or show us a photograph or drawing of one of them or of one of the famous Space-men's skeletons, let us examine some of the features of this well-loved, well-parroted tale.

According to Vyacheslav Zaitsev, there was even in existence an age-old Chinese legend⁹ to the effect that, thousands of years ago, a horde of "small, gaunt, yellow-faced men came down from the clouds." The locals (presumably the ancestors of the Chinese or of the Tibetans or of the Mongols in the area) took a

dislike to the ugly gentry with their huge heads and thin, weak bodies and spindly legs, and there was soon conflict. Evidently the struggle did not end in the total liquidation of the aliens, for, while the graves in the Bayan-Khara Uula contain their skeletons, Zaitsev goes on to tell us that the present inhabitants of precisely that very area of China, who are known as the *Ham* and *Dropa* peoples, evidently contain much of the alien blood still, for they are "frail, stunted men, averaging four feet, two inches in height," who "so far have defied ethnic classification."

Well, of course, it is undeniably a humdinger of a story, and how lovely it would be if it were true. Because my own work involves this precise area of Central Asia, I have, most of the time, on my desk in the House of the Royal Geographical Society in London, the maps showing the journeys of all the foreign travellers (including Russians) who have ever been in any part of Tibet or Ch'ing-Hai in general or near the Bayan-Khara Uula in particular, and I am familiar with, and have read, the official accounts of most of them. Not one of them, and not a single Chinese writer of whom I have heard, has a word about any "small, stunted, big-headed, spindly-legged" race or people or tribe known as either *Hams* or *Dropas* and who "defy ethnic classification."

The sad facts of the matter are rather more prosaic and here they are . . .

Let us take first the word *Ham*. This is obviously a garbled rendering of a perfectly ordinary Tibetan word which the Tibetans write *Khams*¹⁰ and pronounce *Kham*. And this word is in fact nothing more than the normal, indeed the only, Tibetan name for the eastern portion of their country. So everybody living there is a *Khams-Pa* (pronounced *Khamba*), meaning "a man of Khams."

The Bayan-Khara Uula (Mountains) lie in what is today the Chinese province of Ch'ing-Hai, or, if one prefers its Mongolian name, Kokonor. Both names mean "blue lake" and derive from a large lake there. The population of the area in past centuries included a few Chinese (it is today being flooded with them), and sparse tribes of Tibetans and Mongols. The region is not nowadays counted as part of Khams or of Tibet at all, since Tibetan influence is now in retreat there. But the region does lie on the immediate northern side of Khams, and in past times was usually considered by the Tibetans to be part of their country. The whole area is a melting-pot of Chinese, Mongols, and Tibetans, plus a few tiny minority peoples like the Muslim Salars. Since the region adjoins Khams on the north, it is not surprising that many of the ordinary Tibetans found today in Ch'ing-Hai are identical with those of Khams. They are all Khams-Pas (*Khambas*).

Then what about the *Ham* and *Dropa* runts, frail, stunted creatures averaging four feet two inches in height, who so far have defied ethnic classification? (To quote Zaitsev.)

The people of Eastern Tibet, Khams, far from being miserable spindly-legged little folk, are great strapping robust fellows, who make marvellous soldiers. They have long been dreaded by all their neighbours, Chinese, Mongols, and western Tibetans alike, for their martial prowess, particularly displayed as marauding bandits, robbers, and highwaymen lying in ambush on

the mountain-passes. In the great lamaseries around Hla-Sa, vast beehives where hordes of monks had to be ruled with a rod of iron, none were more turbulent than the men of Khams, the Khambas. None more loyal either to the Dalai Lama and to his theocratic government in Hla-Sa, and it is therefore not surprising that, when the moment came for His Holiness to escape into India after the rape and pillage of his country by the Chinese Communists, the bodyguard chosen to ride with him on circuitous and dangerous mountain-paths through South-Eastern Tibet were also some of the barrel-chested men of Khams.

There remain now the *Dropas*. "Well, at least they must have been Space-Men!" someone will perhaps hopefully argue.

I am sorry to have to be a wet blanket again, or to disappoint anybody, but, once more the sad fact is that, just as the word *Ham* or *Kham* does not signify any species or tribe or *kind* of men but simply a whole vast area of Central Asia, so the Tibetan word *Dropa* (correctly rendered into English under the Gould-Richardson system of transliteration for Tibetan as *Drok-Pa*)¹¹ means simply an inhabitant of the high pasture lands or high solitudes of Tibet. In other words, what we might call, in Scotland, a "highland herdsman," or a *crofter*. The primary meaning of the word is *solitude*.

Again, should anyone suffer from the misapprehension that perhaps these *Drok-Pas* may be more promising candidates than the Khambas for the description of "stunted," "frail," "spindly-legged" and so on, I hasten to add that not one of the European travellers (often terrified) who have encountered these Upland nomads, in their black tents, guarded by their fierce and positively gigantic mastiffs, has ever described them, so far as I know, in such terms. They are in fact, like their south-eastern neighbours the Khambas, some of the most impressive and robust-looking ruffians and robbers on our planet.

I hope it may now be clear that a *Khams-Pa* (pronounced *Khamba*) is a man of Eastern Tibet, and a *Drok-Pa* or *Dok-Pa* is a Tibetan Highlander, that is to say a person from the even higher region of Northern Tibet which is known as the *Chang-Thang* (written *Byang-Thang*),¹² meaning the "Northern Expanse." Neither term has, or has ever had, any sort of "tribal" or alien or exotic meaning, and certainly no "Space-Man" meaning!

All *Khambas* and *Drokpas* are Tibetans, pure and simple. To say that they are two exotic, different species is like saying that Yorkshiremen or Scottish crofters are not British but are "Space-Men."

It looks, alas, as though our spindly-legged Ham and Dropa "Space-Men" of the Bayan-Khara Uula are beginning to recede into the murky realms of speculation and fantasy where they were no doubt begotten. It has been undeniably most enjoyable to hear all about them and their cobalt discs inscribed in a language from out of this world, and I have no doubt that their saga will go on being repeated parrot-fashion, without checking, and without the least comprehension, by "Ufologist" after "Ufologist" for many years to come, and will feature in book after book. The Condon Report (Section V, Chapter 1) poked fun at this weakness of

the UFO Buffery, and the criticism was well merited.

I am gratified that, at any rate until today, the Hams and the Dropas do not seem to have got into the pages of *Flying Saucer Review*, and I can only express the fervent hope that the present article will suffice for them.

If of course somebody (and somebody a little nearer to China than a Black Forest vegetarian journal) can come up with any real information—and any photographs—relating to caves high up in the Bayan-Khara Uula containing evidence that Central Asia received a visitation from elsewhere 12,000 years ago, FSR will be very glad to print it. Meanwhile, I hope I have given some idea of how a nice story can get around.

As we have said before: *se non è vero, è ben trovato*.

Notes

- ¹ *Soviet Weekly*, London, February 11, 1967, and *Sputnik*, No. 1, 1967, London. The first-named is still being issued by the Soviet Embassy. The second, an ambitious and interesting glossy competitor for the capitalistic *Reader's Digest* seems to have petered out after a few numbers. During its brief existence, it had several good factual articles on the UFO problem. Did it fall foul of the authorities on this account? Soviet suppression of discussion of UFOs coincided with the Condon kiss-of-death. The timing cannot have been a matter of chance.
- ² By June 1969, poor Vyacheslav Zaitsev was in the dog-house good and proper with the Red authorities for having suggested that Jesus Christ and His Disciples were "Cosmonauts" and "Space-Men," and that the Star of Bethlehem was a "Space-ship." Jesus, he said, was the representative of "a higher civilization from another planet." Zaitsev's ideas were disseminated in a series of articles (I hope to find time one day to translate them for FSR) and in letters. This was during the years 1967 and 1968. Such ideas were naturally found to be dangerously close to the hated doctrines of Christianity, and the series of articles about the bringer of Salvation from Space was terminated most summarily, half-way through, and without a word of explanation. Since then, Russia has experienced a powerful swing back to Stalinism and atheism, an intensified suppression of all religions, and, among other things, a total black-out on the subject of UFOs which, as stated above, was timed to coincide with the Condon liquidation of the subject in the U.S.A. There is far, far more in this than meets the eye, as the saying goes.
- ³ At Lat. 34°.00 N., Long. 98°.00 E. The name is Mongo-

lian, meaning "the good black mountains," and more correctly rendered into English as *Bayan Har Uula*. The Chinese name is *Ba-Yen K'a-La Shan*.

- ⁴ As it stands, this name is corrupt and quite unidentifiable. Neither *Tsum*, *Um*, nor *Nui* are monosyllables used in the transliteration of standard Chinese (Mandarin) of Peking, though they might perhaps be understandable in one of the more outlandish minor dialects.
- ⁵ For the benefit of the critic who will perhaps point out that the same doubt can be cast upon anything that we publish in FSR, I aim to show that at least we try! My investigation of this story has gone on for five years.
- ⁶ Not identified. (It is *not* BUFORA journal for March/April 1965.)
- ⁷ As it stands this name is also corrupt and unidentifiable. *Tei* is not one of the standard Chinese monosyllables.
- ⁸ Herr von Däniken gives the name, incorrectly, as *Kassanzev*.
- ⁹ Chinese literature is vast, and to comb the whole of it for possible UFO-inspired material will be a mind-boggling job if anyone ever tries it, which I greatly doubt. I have managed to turn up (and one of these days will offer for publication in FSR) a few interesting old Chinese accounts that do seem to refer to real experiences, and involve alleged meetings or fights with some decidedly odd creatures that sound rather familiar and could possibly be our old friends the Humanoids. But I have not, so far, come across any Chinese legend about creatures landing from another world or descending from the skies in a "space-ship."
- ¹⁰ In Tibetan རཱཱེལ . A Chinese name formerly in use for the same region, Eastern Tibet, was *Hsi-K'ang* (西康).
- ¹¹ In Tibetan written *Hbrog-Pa* (ཨ་བྲོག་པ་). There is no such thing yet in Tibet as a standardized national pronunciation, and this word is pronounced variously as "Drok-Pa," or "Dok-Pa," or "Do'-Pa."
- ¹² In Tibetan written *Byang-Thang* (བྱང་ཐང་). The Tibetan written language is full of irregular or "lazy," silent letters, *Hbrog-Pa* and *Byang-Thang* are good examples. Likewise, the Tibetan word for "English" is pronounced simply as "In," but it is actually written ཨ་ཁྱེན་ (Dbyin), so that it has two pronounced letters and three silent ones! I give these examples, so that it may be understood how "*Hbrog-Pa*" is read "*Dropa*" or "*Drok-Pa*."

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IMPORTANT COMING EVENT . . .

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MORE TELEPORTATIONS AND LEVITATIONS

Dr. Walter Buhler

Bulletin 81/84 of the SBDEV (Brazilian Society for the study of Flying Saucers), edited by our contributor in Rio de Janeiro, contains three further reports in which activities of this kind are alleged to have occurred. Translated from the Portuguese by Gordon Creighton who discerns, in the accounts, hints as to certain culinary tastes, namely a taste for beef suet and a taste for veal.

THE details of our first case¹ came to SBDEV from the GPECE (Paraná Group for the study of Extraterrestrial Civilizations).

The "victim" was a certain Sr. João Batista Marcelino, a farmer, who is the president of the syndicate of rural workers of the Municipality of Canelinha in the South Brazilian State of Santa Catarina.

1. The Levitated Cyclist

On the night of July 16, 1970, Sr. Marcelino arrived in Canelinha by bus from Florianópolis, and set out by bicycle to do the rest of the journey to his home at a place called Papagaios, about eight kilometres distant. The night was dark and the road, of the third class, little frequented. On a particularly deserted section of it he was astonished to encounter a sort of "headlight" shining down out of the sky from an unknown object that was making a deafening noise. He felt that he was suddenly suspended in the air, and made desperate attempts to jump off the bicycle. But he was quite unable to do so, and thus remained in this immobilized state for several minutes. He could not call out for help as, try as he might, no sound would come from his throat.

Finally he felt his bicycle being set down again gently on the ground. Assuming that he was at last free, he started pedalling madly again, but was lifted up once more, this time in total silence, the episode being otherwise a repetition in all respects of the first levitation.

By the time he had got home to his brother's house, he had recovered his voice and was able to describe what had happened. Only then did he discover that a packet of *beef-suet* which had been on his baggage-carrier was now missing, presumably, as he concluded, "sucked up" by the beam of light that had held him prisoner.

2. The Abduction from the Corral

The following case was reported to SBDEV by the GIPOVNI Group of Independent UFO investigators in Gravataí, in the South Brazilian State of Rio Grande do Sul, after they had carried out a meticulous investigation.

The date was between October 25 and 31 of 1970, and the scene of the unusual occurrence was the Palma Velha ranch, owned by Sr. Ildefonso Coutinho and lying about 18 km. from the town of Alegrete, in the First District of Rio Grande do Sul.

There were two witnesses, father and son, who were employed as *posteiros* on the ranch, i.e. as duty-men whose job it is to watch after the herds of cattle. The father, 66-year-old widower Pedro Trajano Machado, is

very slightly literate. His son, 23-year-old Euripides de Jesus Trindade² Machado is a bachelor, and totally illiterate. Their modest dwelling is only some 150-200 metres from the spot where the event occurred, and one of Sr. Pedro's daughters was inside the house at the time, but she saw and heard nothing. A married couple and other older sons and daughters who also live there were away from the house at the time.

It was at about 4.00 p.m., and the two Machados, father and son, were engaged in carrying out veterinary treatment on eighteen head of cattle that they had rounded up in the paddock. They had just picked out one Jersey cow, which had with her a calf about one month old and weighing some 20 kilogrammes.

They had tied the cow up, away from the paddock where the rest of the herd were, and the calf was loose, about five metres away from the mother. Suddenly, as they were working on her and treating her, they noticed that the cattle were beginning to get disturbed. Since these were animals that had been out on the range and so were not used to being corraled, their being disturbed did not at first seem surprising. But now the unrest spread to the tethered cow that they were treating. She began to low persistently, turning constantly to look at her calf which was close by.

Old Sr. Pedro Machado turned round too to look at the calf, which by now was also bellowing, and found that the animal was hanging in the air, at about one metre above the ground, and otherwise in the normal posture (i.e. with its feet pointing downwards). He at once shouted to his son to look, and both were now able to watch as, in so strange a fashion, the calf began to move away parallel to the ground, still at a height of about one metre, in the same position as before, and bellowing as it headed off towards the open fields. Stupefied, the two Machados just stood there, rooted to the ground, inactive and passive, observing the extraordinary unfoldment of these events.

While the rest of the cattle were bellowing and lowing and churning about in evident fear, the calf was now moving towards the barred gate in the fence, which was open. Then it passed beneath the branches of some trees, towards the North-East, until it was now about twenty metres from its mother. It was still at about one metre above the ground. But now it began to move slowly upwards, still with its feet pointing down. It had stopped bellowing now. According to the two witnesses, this slow vertical ascent lasted for about three or four minutes until, while still far below the cloud-ceiling, the calf became invisible. (Note: We do not know what type of