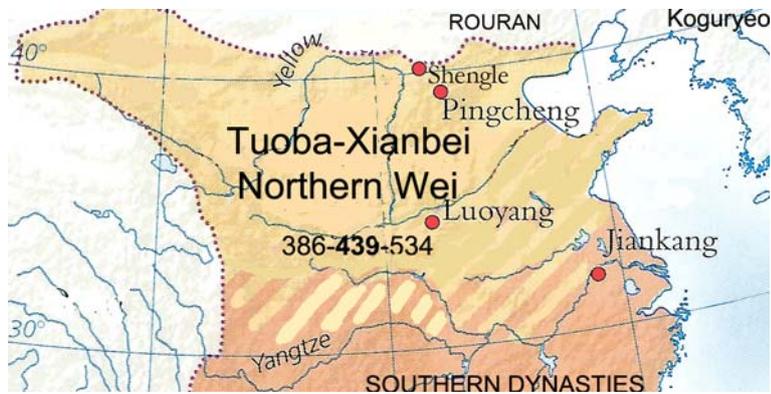


Chapter Six

The First Full-fledged
Conquest Dynasty of Tuoba-Xianbei

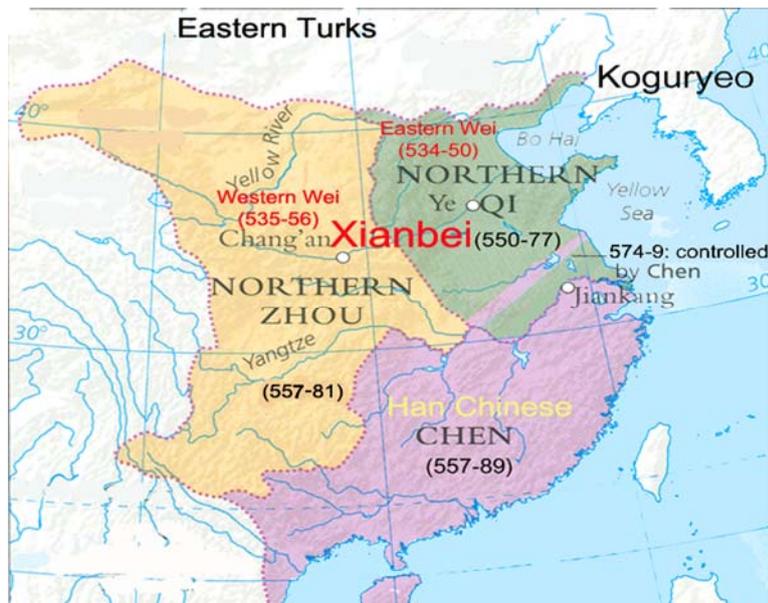
Compatriot Military and Chinese Administrators



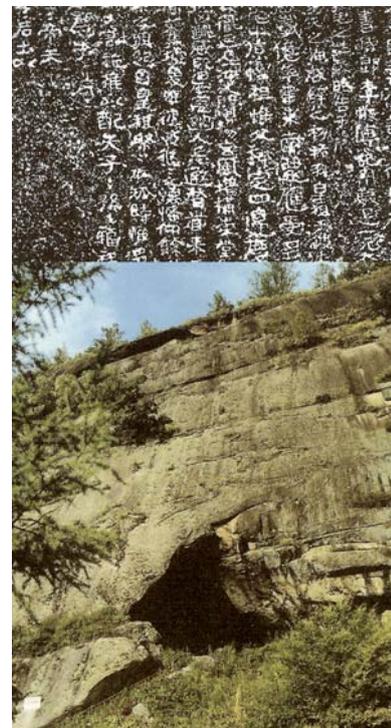
See <http://www.world-heritage-tour.org/asia/china/Yungang/map.html#/longmen/>



"Barbarian warriors" on horses: clay figures of the 6th century



Tuoba Tao (Tai Wudi, r.423-52) in Cave 18 (dated 460-70), Yungang, Datong



Gaxian Cave 祝文於室之壁



6.1. The Gaxian Cave Ancestral Temple (嘎仙洞窟) located at 200 km northwest of Nenjiang (嫩江) city, Oroqen Zizhiqi (鄂倫春自治旗=阿里河), discovered in 1980.

¹ 魏書 卷一 序紀 第一 昔黃帝有子二十五人...昌意小子 受封北土 國有大鮮卑山 因以為號...統幽都之北 廣漠之野 畜牧遷徙 射獵為業 ...北俗謂土為托 謂后為跋故 以為氏...於弱水之北...以及秦漢...山戎匈奴之屬 累代殘暴...統國三十六 大姓九十九

魏書 卷一百 列傳第八十八 烏洛候 在地豆干之北...西北有完水...干巴尼大水...世祖真君四年來朝 稱其國西北有國家先帝舊墟石室..告祭焉刊祝文於室之壁面還 [天子臣拓燾...]

CHAPTER SIX
THE FIRST FULL-FLEDGED CONQUEST DYNASTY
COMPATRIOT MILITARY AND CHINESE ADMINISTRATORS

The Tuoba rulers established an almost complete replica of the traditional Chinese bureaucratic hierarchy. The peasant masses were administered by the Han Chinese officials recruited from the Chinese landed-gentry through a refined Nine Rank system (introduced by the Cao Cao's Wei in 220) under the control of the Xianbei aristocrats who had monopolized all of the powerful positions in the government and military.

The Tuoba rulers merged not only other Xianbei tribes, but also the surrendered Xiongnu and Qiang tribes into their military units. They converted selected Xianbei people into eight artificial tribes, structured as military-service units bound to the state, in permanent settlement around Pingcheng. This professional, hereditary army, commanded by the emperor and his immediate followers, became the primary striking arm. Those who were not included in the Capital Army were settled on allocated pastureland under their hereditary chieftains, acting as frontier garrison communities. Chinese peasants were called up for logistical support roles in major campaigns and employed in local constabulary service. The Xianbei, designated as Compatriots, dominated the ranks as well as the leadership of the armies. They were clustered around the northern steppe lands with the capital of Pingcheng at its center, far away from the Chinese peasant masses in the Central Plain. Tribal people and military affairs were handled according to traditional tribal ways. The Xianbei elites were guaranteed to occupy all of the powerful positions in the government and military.

The Tuoba rulers replaced Confucianism, the cultural values of the conquered, with the alien Buddhist ideology. They encouraged the veneration of the emperor as the Buddha Incarnate while he was alive, and as the supernatural Protector of the State, posthumously. They established the Equal Field system that served as the institutional basis for the *fubing* system introduced by Western Wei and maintained by the Sui-Tang rulers. The wholesale Sinification of the Tuoba court began under the rule of the Han Chinese Empress Feng. Her grandson transferred the capital from Pingcheng to Luoyang where the Xianbei aristocrats were made to adopt the life-style of old Chinese dignitaries. The frustrated generals and soldiers in northern frontier garrisons rebelled, and so commenced the “re-Xianbei-ization” process.

1. The Tuoba-Xianbei Occupy North China

TUOBA-XIANBEI TRIBE: A BRANCH OF DONGHU

Although Twitchett (1979: 3) asserts that the Tuoba were Turks, it seems incontestable that they belonged to the Donghu-Xianbei of Western Manchuria. Holcombe (2001: 130) states: “The people known as Xianbei are said to have originated in the Xing’an Mountains of northern Manchuria. ... [I]n 443, the then reigning Tuoba Xianbei emperor [Tai Wudi] gave credence to a report that his original ancestral temple had been discovered in a grotto [*Gaxian Cave*] on the eastern slopes of the northernmost reaches of the greater Xing’an range... [by] dispatch[ing] an official to perform sacrifices there. [W]hen the Xiongnu... defeated them around the beginning of the second century BCE...they took refuge...at...Xianbei Mountain, from which they purportedly derived their name.”¹

The *Gaxian Cave* belonged to the native territory of the Shiwei and the historical Mongols. The Tuoba-Xianbei tribes could have moved southwards by the end of the second century CE into the steppe lands once held by the southern Xiongnu, the northern part of (or north of) Shanxi.²

The Tuoba-Xianbei were the most westward and most nomadic of the Manchurian tribes. They had settled around Shengle in 258, and then extended their territory to the north of Shang’gu (modern Huailai county of Hebei), and also to the Ruyuan (the upper course of the Luan River), neighboring the Yuwen Xianbei. In 315, Tuoba Yulu (猗盧) was appointed king of Dai by the Jin Emperor, but was killed by his son. Yulu’s nephew Tuoba Yulu (鬱律) succeeded to the throne in 316; he was killed by a cousin in 321. Yulu’s son, Tuoba Yihuai (翳槐), succeeded to the throne in 329. Shi’ijian (什翼犍 b.319 r.338-76), another of Yulu’s sons, succeeded his brother Yihuai in 338 and founded the Dai Kingdom. Dai was a traditional appellation for the north Shanxi region.³

In 341, Shi’ijian lost his wife, who was a sister of Murong Huang (r.333-49). Shi’ijian asked Huang for another princess. Huang demanded one thousand horses as price for the new wife. Shi’ijian refused to pay the price and added abuses to his refusal. In 343, Huang sent his heir apparent, Jun (r.349-60), and Ping with troops against the Tuoba. Shi’ijian and his entire

² See Janhunen (1996: 191-3) and Klein (1980: 95).

³ Graff (2002: 57); Klein (1980: 32-3)

魏書 卷一 序紀 第一 獻帝 [詒汾 r.189-220] 命南移...始居匈奴之故地...力微立...遷於定襄之盛樂[258]...在上谷北 濡源之西 東接宇文部...猗盧統一部[296]...始出并州...北徙雲中...晉愍帝進...為代王[315]...什翼犍立...稱建國元年 [338] 二年 始置百官

⁴ One year after Shi’ijian came to power [339], he married the sister of Murong Huang, who died in 341. Schreiber (1956: 68) notes that Shi’ijian’s new wife [married in 344] died in 360, and he married yet another princess of Yan in 362. See quotes from the *Zizhi Tongjian* and *Weishu* by Schreiber (1949-55: 473), and Xu (2005: 156).

魏書 卷一 序紀第一 昭成皇帝諱什翼犍立...建國二年 [339] 慕容元真妹為皇后...四年 [341] 皇后慕容氏崩...七年 [344] 遣...秋 迎后慕容氏元真之女於境...慕容元真...求交婚...以烈帝女妻之

資治通鑑 卷九十七 晉紀十九 建元元年 [343] 代王什翼犍復求婚於燕王皝使納馬千匹為禮 什翼犍不與又倨慢無子壻禮...皝遣世子儁 帥前軍師評等擊代 什翼犍帥眾避去 魏書 卷二 太祖紀第二 太祖道武帝諱珽 昭成皇帝之嫡孫...年六歲昭成崩 [376]...苻堅遣將...國眾離散 堅使...分攝國事...[383] 苻堅敗于淮南 [385] 帝乃馳還...苻堅為...所殺 登國元年 [386] 帝即代王位...四月改稱魏王...車駕還盛樂

魏書 卷二 太祖紀 第二 皇始元年 [396]...置百官... 天興元年 [398] 遷都平城...天興三年 [400] 立皇后慕容氏 天賜三年 [406] 發八部五百里內男丁築壘南宮

⁵ 魏書 卷二十四 列傳 第十二 燕鳳 堅問鳳...空弦之士數十萬 馬百萬匹

⁶ 魏書 卷二十五 列傳第十三 長孫嵩 代人也...父仁昭成時[什翼犍r.338-76]為南部大人 嵩...代父統軍...太祖 [道武帝 珪 r.386-409]承大統...累著軍功...歷侍中,司徒,相 州刺史...太宗即位...聽理萬幾...節,督山東諸軍事...世祖即位 進爵北平王...薨年八十...後高祖[孝文帝]追錄先朝功臣 ...長孫道生 嵩從子也...進封上黨王

資治通鑑 卷一百六 晉紀二十八 太元十年[385]八月...珪母賀氏...夜飲顯酒令醉 使珪陰與舊臣...輕騎亡去...故南部大人長孫嵩 師所部七百餘家 ...歸珪 太元十一年 珪...即代王位...以長孫嵩為南部大人...為北部大人 分治其眾...長孫道生...侍從左右 出納教命...道生嵩之從子也 卷一百十五 晉紀三十七 安帝 義熙六年[410] 正月 長孫崇 將兵 伐柔然 五月 崇至漠北而還 柔然追圍之於牛川 魏主祠 北擊...柔然可汗社崙 聞之遁走 道死 卷一百十八 晉紀四十 義熙十四年[418] 五月 魏主嗣...遣...長孫道生...師精騎二萬 襲燕 卷一百十九 宋紀二 武帝 永初三年[418] 五月 崇宿德舊臣 歷事四世 功存社稷 卷一百二十三 宋紀五 文帝 元嘉十六年[439]九月 柔然勅連可汗...乘虛入寇...遣...長孫道生...拒之於...崇擊破...於陰山之北...勅連聞之遁去

people fled into the mountains. In 344, Shi'ijian sent his brother Zhi to Yan for his new wife. Several months later, Murong Huang sent an envoy to Shi'ijian asking for a princess for a wife. Shi'ijian consented and selected his own sister for Huang.⁴

Graff (2002: 64) quotes the *Weishu*: “by about 366, the Tuoba claimed that they commanded several hundred thousand mounted archers and their rich pastures supported a million horses.”⁵ Fu Jian, however, invaded Dai in 376, and Shi'ijian died while hiding in the mountains. The Tuoba-Xianbei were then ruled by Former Qin until the death of Fu Jian nine years later, in 385.

Tuoba Gui (珪 b.370 r.386-409), a grandson of Shi'ijian, narrowly escaped death, thanks to his mother's wits, in August 385. Tuoba Song (renamed Changsun Song after 496), whose father had been appointed leader of the southern Tuoba tribes by Shi'ijian and came to be recorded as the progenitor of Tang Taizong's (r.626-49) Empress Changsun clan, adhered to Tuoba Gui at this critical moment. Song and his nephew Daosheng (d.451) rendered the greatest military service to emperors Gui and Si (嗣 r.409-23) in founding the Northern Wei dynasty.⁶

Tuoba Gui declared himself king of Dai on February 20, 386, and then king of Wei (386-534) two months later, establishing his capital first at Shengle. Gui proclaimed himself emperor in 398, relocating the capital to Pingcheng (Datong). When the young Tuoba Gui was challenged by his uncle in late 386, Murong Chui (r.386-96) sent his son, Lin, to help Gui defeat his uncle's army. Graff (2002: 69-70) states: “Under pressure from hostile Xiongnu groups, the youthful Wei leader Tuoba Gui offered his allegiance to Murong Chui and received badly needed military assistance from the more powerful Later Yan state (386-397-407). With Yan backing, Tuoba Gui was able to defeat the Xiongnu challenge and incorporate many of the vanquished tribesmen into his own following... establishing his dominance over the nomadic peoples inhabiting the vast steppe region from the Greater Xing'an mountains in the east to the great bend of the Yellow River in the west.” Tuoba Gui, often jointly with the Murong Lin's army, could defeat the Kumo-Xi tribe in 388, the Rouran tribe in 390, and also the Xiongnu tribes in 392. Gui established military colonies in the Ordos Loop steppeland in 394, and drove out the Rourans northward across the desert.

The Tuoba-Xianbei and the Murong-Xianbei, in spite of their multiple marriage ties, could not avoid an eventual confrontation. Murong Chui sent his sons, Bao, Nong, and Lin, to attack Tuoba Gui in May 395, but the Later Yan army was completely routed in December. Chui personally attacked the Tuoba and captured Pingcheng in May 396, but he died the same month. Tuoba Gui immediately launched a full-scale invasion of the Later Yan, and Murong Bao (r.396-8) fled to the old Murong capital of Longcheng in Liaoxi in 397 where he died in 398, to be succeeded by his son Sheng (r.398-401).⁷ Later Yan fell by the coup staged by Ko Un in 407 and was succeeded by the Northern Yan (409-36), subsequently conquered by Tuoba Wei in 436.

Gui's grandson, Tuoba Tao (Tai Wudi 太武帝/燾 b.408 r.423-52), accomplished the unification of North China by conquering the last of the Sixteen Kingdoms, the Xiongnu Northern Liang in the Gansu area, in 439. According to the *Zizhi Tongjian*, Tai Wudi, leading the Xianbei cavalry army augmented with Xiongnu-Tibetan auxiliaries, reached the Huai River on December 4, 450, and crossed the river; arriving at the Yangzi River on February 28, 451.⁸ The area between the Huai River and the Yangzi River, however, seems to have remained as the frontier, contested by the Tuoba-Xianbei Wei and the Han Chinese émigré regime in the South until the unification by the Sui.

2. The Tuoba-Xianbei Refine the Dual System

CENTRALIZED TRIBAL MILITARY ORGANIZATION

Tuoba Gui had attributed the downfall of Later Yan to Murong Chui's practice of dividing the military forces and allotting them among his many sons to occupy strategic areas. Lewis (2009b: 79-80) states: Tuoba Gui "reorganized the [selected Xianbei] people into eight artificial tribes [八部] in permanent settlement around the new capital (Pingcheng). These artificial tribes, structured as military units, received provisions from settled herdsmen and agriculturalists. By removing their traditional leaders...Tuoba Gui converted the nomadic tribal armies into a hereditary military-service class bound to the state. ... This professional, hereditary capital army became the largest single force in the state, and its primary striking arm. Commanded by

⁷ See Klein (1980: 52-9, 69-72, 80-1, and 126). Huang was given a daughter of Tuoba Yihuai as concubine. Murong Jun and also his son Wei had a Tuoba concubine (ibid 69). Schreiber (1949-55: 404) notes: "In the year 313, the Tuoba...sent...an army from the west against the Duan. Murong Han with his troops invaded [Duan's] territory from the east. ... Here we find Tuoba and Murong Xianbei fighting as allies." When Tuoba Gui occupied Zhongshan, he captured the young daughter of Murong Bao and made her his empress on March 8, 400. Emperor Tuoba Si (嗣 r.409-23) who succeeded Gui was the son of a concubine, not of this Murong empress.

資治通鑑 卷一百一十一 晉紀三十三 隆安四年 [400] 高句麗王安 事燕禮慢 二月 燕主盛...以驃騎大將軍熙為前鋒 拔新城南蘇二城 開境七百餘里 徙五千餘戶而還 熙勇冠諸將 盛曰 叔父雄果 有世祖之風...初魏主珪 納...之女...生子嗣 及克中山 獲燕主寶之幼女 將立皇后...三月戊午 立慕容氏為皇后

⁸ 魏書 卷四下 世祖紀 第四下 太平真君十一年 [450] 九月 興駕南伐 皇太子北伐 屯于漢南...發州郡兵五萬分給諸軍...十有二月 車駕至淮...淮南皆降...車駕臨江...自歷陽至於江西...至於廣陵 諸軍皆同日臨江...正平元年 [451] 春正月 大會羣臣於江上...興駕北旋 三月 車駕至自南伐 See also Graff (2002: 125).

⁹ 資治通鑑 卷一百一十一 晉紀三十三 安帝 隆安三年 [399] 三月 珪...

凡置三百六十曹 命八部大夫主之
卷一百十三 晉紀三十五 隆安四年
[400] 十二月 珪常以燕主垂諸子 分
據勢要 使權柄下移 遂至敗亡 元興
三年[404] 十一月 珪...八國 置大師
小師 卷一百十四 晉紀三十六 義熙
二年[406] 六月 魏主珪度平城 愆擬
鄴洛長安...發八部五百里內男丁 築

魏書 卷一百十三 官氏志九 第十九
天興元年[398] 置八部大夫...於皇城
四方四維面置一人 以擬八座 謂之
八國常侍...出入王命 天賜元年[404]
以八國姓族難分...令辯其宗黨

¹⁰ When Tai Wudi personally led an attack against the Rouran in 449, Jieer (羯兒), the grandson of Tuoba Gui, and Na (那), a great grandson of an earlier Tuoba ruler, “were the preeminent leaders of the campaign.” Tuoba Huang (晃 d.451), the crown prince, led an attack on the Rouran in 450. See Klein (1980: 125, 127-8)

¹¹ 資治通鑑 卷一百十七 晉紀三十九 義熙十一年 [415] 博士祭酒崔浩...曰 遷都於鄴...非久長之計也 山東之人以國家居廣漠之地 謂其民畜無涯 號曰牛毛之衆...分家南徙 不能滿諸州之地 參居郡縣 情見事露 恐四方皆有 輕侮之心...水土疾疫...今居北方 假令山東有變 我輕騎南下 布漠林薄之間 孰能知其多少 百姓望塵懾服 此國家所以威制諸夏也 資治通鑑 卷一百二十三 宋紀五 元嘉十六年 [439] 崔公智略有餘...弓馬之士而所見乃餘崔公同 深可奇也
In 439, Tuoba Tao deeply appreciated the fact that Cui Hao's thinking (of

the emperor and his immediate followers, it assured their superiority over any potential opposing force.”⁹

The Wei rulers converted not only the Tuoba and other Xianbei tribes, but also the defeated Xiongnu and Qiang tribes, into their military units, enforcing “traditional universal obligatory military service.” Hsiao (1978: 8) notes: “They were ... expected to perform their military duties on a largely self-supporting and hereditary basis.” Those who were not included in the Capital Army were settled on allocated pastureland under their hereditary chieftains, acting as frontier garrison communities. The Xianbei warriors lived in the northern steppe lands far away from the Han Chinese peasant masses in the Central Plain. Northern Wei could maintain a well-supplied cavalry force that could strike deep into the steppe. Unlike the Chinese emperors, the Tuoba emperors often took personal command of their armies during wartime.¹⁰

In 415, the Dai area suffered a severe drought, and some ministers advised Tuoba Si (r.409-23) to transfer the capital to Ye in the Central Plain. The ever-loyal Han Chinese adviser, Cui Hao from Qinghe, however, was strongly against the idea, saying: “The removal of the seat of government would never make a sensible long-term strategy. Our state has ruled the Chinese by keeping them in awe. The Chinese in the east of the Tai Hang Mountains believe that we inhabit a vast land and that we are as numerous as the hair of oxen. If we relocate our people south and let them live in the commanderies and counties, not only may they suffer endemic diseases but, most importantly, the Han Chinese will discover our numerical inferiority and become disdainful of us. We should continue to occupy the North and, should a revolt arise, simply let our light cavalrymen sweep down south, spreading over the grass and woods to hide our small number, and awing the Han Chinese into obedience with the dust of our horses hoofs.”¹¹

The Tuoba rulers maintained large expanses of cultivable land devoted to pasture and hunting grounds. The Wei capital, Pingcheng, was “a steppe area at the center of the dynasty's military power.”¹² The Wei army remained the Xianbei preserve, although the Han Chinese peasants were often called up for logistical support roles in major campaigns or for corvée service in the garrisons, and were also employed in the local militia for constabulary service.

To counter the Rouran threat, Graff (2002: 98-9) writes,

“the Wei rulers had established a dozen garrisons during the first half of the fifth century. These stretched in an arc along the northern frontier from Dunhuang...to Yuyi directly north of modern Beijing. The sector of the line that covered Pingcheng and the Dai region of northern Shanxi became known as the ‘Six Garrisons.’ ... These positions commanded the swath of grassland south of the Gobi Desert, where invaders coming from the north would otherwise have been able to pasture their tired...horses before attacking the settled lands.”¹³

COMPATRIOT ARISTOCRATS AND HAN CHINESE GENTRY ELITES

Murong-Xianbei Yan had maintained an exact duplicate of the traditional Chinese bureaucratic hierarchy, recruiting civil officials from the qualified Han Chinese in the Liaodong-Liaoxi area and among the refugees from the mainland. According to Lewis (2009b: 148), “the Tuoba inherited the dual state fashioned by the Murong, adopting the Yan model and largely staffing their bureaucracy with former Yan officials.” Tribal people and military affairs were handled according to traditional tribal ways, and the Han Chinese areas were ruled by the Chinese administrators recruited from the Chinese gentry families, though most high positions in central government and military were reserved for the Xianbei aristocracy.¹⁴

In 398, Tuoba Gui ordered every male subject to bind up his hair, and wear a cap. He began to conduct the rites to Heaven in person. Gui also ordered the Han Chinese official, Deng Yuan, to establish the full bureaucratic system of the Han-Jin periods including the system of offices and ranks.¹⁵ Between 396-9, the Tuoba rulers established an almost complete duplicate of the traditional Chinese bureaucratic hierarchy, all with Chinese office appellations, and also maintained stylized institutions and diplomatic protocols with Chinese style ceremonial procedures. The dual system with its civil bureaucracy attracted the educated members of the Han Chinese gentry families to the Tuoba court.

The Tuoba conquerors did introduce the Equal Field system on the basis of the government-owned uncultivated lands in 485, but never attempted to destroy the private-property system by taking away the gentry’s lands. Rather they let the peasant masses in North China be administered by the Han Chinese elite recruited from the landed gentry, who willingly cooperated with

attacking Northern Liang) was identical with that of the great Xianbei generals. Cui Hao was, however, accused of slighting the Xianbei ancestors (書魏之先世...暴揚國惡) in compiling the *Wei History*. Hao and all his kinfolds were purged in 450.

¹² Holcombe (2001: 143) further notes: “Xianbei cavalry stationed on the Central Plain retained a separate identity---even sometimes physically separate military camps---until after the Sui reunification.”

¹³ Several hundred thousand Chinese peasants were also “relocated to grow food for the garrisons,” and their descendants came “to adopt the Xianbei language and culture” to form the frontier Han Chinese (ibid).

¹⁴ See Barfield (1989: 118-9).

¹⁵ 資治通鑑 卷一百一十一 晉紀三十三 隆安二年 [398] 十二月 魏王珪即皇帝位...命朝野 皆束髮加帽...魏之舊俗 孟夏 祀天及東廟...夏祀天親行...四方四維 置八部帥 以監之

魏書 卷二 太祖紀 第二 皇始元年 [396] 初建臺省 置百官 封拜公侯 將軍刺史太守 尚書郎已下悉用文人...天興元年 [398] 詔尚書吏部郎中鄧淵典官制 立爵品 定律呂協音樂 儀曹郎中...撰郊廟 社稷 朝觀 饗宴之儀 三公郎中...定律令 申科禁 太史令...造渾儀 考天象 吏部尚書...總而裁之 天興二年 [399] 初令五經群書各置博士 增國子太學生員三千人

Klein (1980: 189) notes that “Deng Yuan’s grandfather had been a general of the Former Qin state, and his father had served...under the Later Yan.”

¹⁶ Holcombe (2001: 118) notes: “in Merovingian Europe [476-750], barbarian military strongmen eager to seize control of the established Roman administrative structure collaborated surprisingly easily with members of the old local Roman elite, who were themselves often as anxious to defend their own local autonomy....”

¹⁷ See Ebrey (1978: 17-8, 25), and Dien (1990: 11-2).

¹⁸ 資治通鑑 卷一百十三 晉紀三十五 安帝 元興三年 [404] 九月 魏主珪...改補百官...親加銓擇 隨才授任...王封大郡 公封小郡 侯封大縣 伯封小縣...舊臣有功無爵者 追封之... 義熙二年 [406] 春正月...而未臨民功臣為州者 皆徵還京師

資治通鑑 卷一百二十三 宋紀五 文帝 元嘉十六年 [439] 十二月 魏主以索敞為中書博士 時魏朝 方尚武功 貴遊子弟 不以講學為意 敞為博士...勸於誘導...貴遊...多所成立 前後顯達 至尚書牧守者 數十人 資治通鑑 卷一百二十二 宋紀四 元嘉八年 [431]...皆賢雋之胄 冠冕周邦...遂徵...州郡所遣 至者數百人 差次叙用...皆拜中書博士...崔浩... 欲大整流品 明辨姓族...是得罪千衆 九年 十二月 魏主徵諸名士之未仕者 州郡多逼遣之 魏主聞之 下詔令守宰以禮申諭

the conquest dynasties to exploit the peasant, either as officials or as arbitrators between peasant and officialdom. The landed gentry, Dien (1990: 5) notes, “maintained order, collected taxes, and served as spokesmen for their locality.”¹⁶

When the Nine Rank system was introduced in 220 by Cao Cao’s Wei, a local Arbiter had classified candidates for office into nine ranks of virtuous character and ability but, by the early fourth century (most likely after c.250), it became a system of appointment to office according to the rank of family in each commandery or prefecture.¹⁷ The Tuoba rulers accepted, Ebrey (1978: 53) says, “the heritage of the Wei and Jin nine-rank system and the realities of local power.”

Tuoba Gui had at first (in 404) personally selected the capable persons among the Tuoba nobles and appointed them as prefects, grand administrators, and magistrates. He had to recall most of them, however, as early as 406. The *Zizhi Tongjian* states that, at the time of Tai Wudi, the Northern Wei court still revered military achievement, and hence the sons of Tuoba nobles were not motivated to learn the Classics. Tai Wudi thereby appointed a learned person as his special advisor so that a large number of Tuoba nobles could pursue literary learning under the advisor’s guidance. It is recorded that dozens of them eventually became ministers, grand administrators, and magistrates.

In 431, Tai Wudi recruited several hundred central government officials from among the learned members of Chinese landed-gentry families who were selected in the prefectures and commanderies. He further let Cui Hao fix the rank of family [surname and clan] in clear order. This inevitably incurred the ill will of many people against Cui Hao. In 432, the emperor ordered that the illustrious [Chinese] scholars should be courteously persuaded, rather than coerced, into taking the positions of magistrates, grand administrators, and ministers.¹⁸

Ebrey (1978: 53) states that Xiaowen’di (r.471-99) had brought the recruitment system “directly under central control” by making “an official list” of prominent Chinese gentry families (士人/門閥) all over the country “in a highly articulated hierarchy” on the basis of uniform criteria. Those families ranked highest “came to look down on lower-ranking kinsmen (ibid: 55).” Xiaowen’di determined the status of Han Chinese families by associating their surnames with four administrative levels: the

nationwide great surnames (四海大姓), the prefectural surnames (州姓), the commandery surnames (郡姓), and the county surnames (縣姓).¹⁹

Ebrey, in her case study of the Boling Cui family, notes that some leaders of such locally respected families as Cuis were appointed Grand Administrator of their home commandery in order “to facilitate acceptance of Tuoba rule (ibid: 53).” Such “provincial posts as Grand Administrators (太守) and Prefects (刺史) did...bring great power over men and money.” The Tuoba rulers made an official career under the conquest dynasty the major source of prestige, power, and wealth for the gentry families.²⁰ Ebrey (1978: 55) further notes that, throughout the Tuoba Wei dynasty, “many Cuis served under the Prefect of Ding prefecture [定州刺史 *Governor of Ding Province*, the unit which included Boling Commandery 博陵郡], a respectable way to stay near home either before or after entering the regular bureaucracy.”²¹ A member of the Cui family was recorded to have served the Murong-Xianbei Former Yan court as Director of the Imperial Library (ibid: 62). Apparently, quite a few members of the leading gentry families had already served the various alien dynasties as local or central officials during the Era of Five Barbarians and Sixteen States.

Klein (1980: 112) states that the Tuoba rulers “affirmed the positions of the powerful Chinese clans by adopting their model of local rule ... and gained, thereby, their support. ... [T]he one area within which the Chinese were dominant in the ... government was at the level of prefecture (*jun* 郡 *commandery*). ... A full 85% of all known prefects [*taishou* 太守, *grand administrator*] ...were Chinese.” The Tuoba rulers had created a network of “inspectors, answerable to the Court, who were sent to keep an eye on the operations of the various branches and bureau of the government ... [These] positions were largely hereditary posts, filled exclusively by Xianbei (ibid: 110).”

The Tuoba rulers enlisted the Han Chinese local landed gentry as collaborators in governing the state because they valued highly “their prestige and influence at the local level” based on landed wealth, kinship organization, and network of social ties. Although Xiaowen (r.471-99) expedited the gentry families becoming a part of the central government, according to Mao (1990: 96-7), “in the latter part of the Northern Wei there are

¹⁹ 隋書卷三十二 志第二十七 經籍一 氏姓之書...後魏遷洛...其中國士人 則第其門閥 有四海大姓 郡姓 州姓 縣姓

Johnson (1977: 28-9) comments: “The Tuoba, who thought in terms more aristocratic than the Chinese, naturally saw the great families in North China as an aristocratic class comparable to their own. ... In Emperor Xiaowen’s system, those who entered government service did so on the basis of family rank.” According to the *Suishu*, the Tuoba imperial clans (帝族) had eight lineages (氏) and ten surnames (姓). According to the *Zizhi Tongjian*, Emperor Xiaowen ordered that the descendants of the meritorious eight surnames (八姓) who came to occupy the lowest positions (寒賤), even though their ancestors had enjoyed the rank of princely dignitaries (王公) since the days of Taizu, should never be appointed to low and obscure positions but, whenever their origins were ascertainable, should be treated as the members of *Four Chinese Surnames* (一同四姓). Further, the descendants of the local chieftains (大人) who could not attain high positions, or the descendants of non-chieftains who could attain high positions, were ordered to be registered as clans (族). 資治通鑑 卷一百四十 齊紀六 明帝建武三年 [496] 魏主...始改拔[拓]拔氏爲長孫氏 達奚氏爲奚氏 乙旄氏爲叔孫氏 丘穆陵氏爲穆氏 步六孤氏爲陸氏 賀賴氏爲賀氏 獨孤氏爲劉氏 賀樓氏爲樓氏 勿忸于氏爲于氏 尉遲氏爲尉氏 其餘所改 不可

勝紀...詔以代人先無姓族 雖功賢之胤 無異寒賤...其穆陸賀劉樓于嵇尉八姓 自太祖已降 勳著當世 位盡王公 灼然可知者...勿充猥官 一同四姓...其舊爲部落大人 而皇始已來三世官在給事已上 及品登王公者爲姓 若本非大人 ...在尚書已上 及品登王公者 亦爲姓 其大人之後 而官不顯者 爲族

²⁰ Ebrey (1978: 63-4) states: “Northern Wei...was not a strongly centralized empire. ... [P]rovincial administrators were allowed great leeway both in how they ran their offices and whom they chose to help them.”

²¹ The members of leading gentry families could easily acquire the posts of civil subordinates of the Grand Administrator or Prefect in their home area. See Ebrey (1978: 62).

²² See also Wright and Twitchett (1973: 28).

²³ See also Klein (1980: 78, 95, 107). Between 385-450, 83% of provincial governorships (prefect of *zhou* 州刺史) were held by Compatriots (ibid: 107). See also Graff (2002: 73, 99).

²⁴ In fact, some members of the leading gentry families, such as Cuis, achieved the rank of generals or military staff subordinate to a general, and participated in the campaigns against the South (during 499-504), and later against the Rebellions of the Six Garrisons. See Ebrey (1978: 64).

[still] only traces of the beginning of the Chinese gentry families becoming identified with the central government.”²²

Eberhard (1965: 4-5) describes the role of local gentry, who connected the Han Chinese peasants with the Tuoba conquerors, in the following fashion. A Chinese farmer would probably never meet a Tuoba in his own village and environment; many villages consisted only of lineage members; “his contact with the rulers, represented by officials, was normally restricted to the occasional visit of a low official of Chinese, not Tuoba origin, whom he and his co-villagers would try to satisfy when he asked for deliveries of grain and cloth.” The Chinese gentry in a village negotiated tax collection with minor local officials recruited from the local Chinese gentry families.

The Xianbei people were designated as Compatriots (*Guoren*), citizens of the conquest regime, while the Han Chinese were identified as “subjects.” Compatriots, Klein (1980: 96) states, “dominated the ranks as well as the leadership of the armies.” They were clustered around the central region of the state (the so-called “royal domain”) with the capital of Pingcheng at its center. The Xianbei elites were guaranteed to occupy all of the powerful positions in the government and military: “Seldom were non-Compatriots ever given important posts during the reigns of the first three emperors [Gui, Si, Tao].”²³ Graff (2002: 101-2) notes that the Xiongnu people who had adhered to Wei in its early days received Compatriot status.

Eberhard (2005: 127) contends that, under the reign of Emperor Xiaowen, “the whole of the civil administration had gradually passed into Chinese hands, the Tuoba retaining only the military administration.”²⁴ The prominent Han Chinese gentry families, such as the Cuis, apparently came to share not only high posts in the central government bureaucracy but also a more active role in military matters beyond the realm of local militia for constabulary service. According to Ebrey (1978: 65), however, “despite these high posts, the influence of [high-ranking Han Chinese elites such as] Boling of Cuis on major policy decisions should not be overestimated. ... There is no record that any of the ... Cuis holding higher central government posts were involved in the formation of court policies. ... One never hears of the Cuis, or members of other leading Chinese families for that matter, deposing emperors or manipulating their succession.

When such affairs occurred, they were carried out by members of the imperial family or other great Xianbei clans. After Emperor Xiaowen died, power did not fall into the hands of the highest Chinese officials, but...to the Tuoba princes and later relatives of the empresses. ... The power the Cuis gained from holding office is perhaps better described as bureaucratic than political, and in this period the bureaucracy was not especially strong.”²⁵

According to the *Zizhi Tongjian*, the number of Tuoba nobles who held high-ranking offices still amounted to some 10,000 persons as of the 24th year of Xiaowendi’s reign (494).²⁶ Anyway, the Tuoba system of recruitment assured easy access to local office for the members of leading gentry families, and their lack of political influence and divorce from power struggles assured the Han Chinese collaborators rather routine, uneventful advancements to higher ranks as career functionaries.

EQUAL FIELD SYSTEM CURBS THE GROWTH OF GENTRY POWER

During the chaotic Era of Five Barbarians and Sixteen States, large areas of the north were devastated and depopulated, and had fallen out of cultivation. The Tuoba rulers let the landless peasants cultivate those deserted lands for agricultural production by introducing the Equal Field system (*Jun-tian’zhi*) in 485 that distributed uncultivated government lands to those who could till them. This land-tenure system contained provisions for the periodic reversion of allocated land back to the state, and hence partially subverted the private ownership of the land that had been the norm under all previous Han Chinese states.

The Equal Field system greatly increased the number of taxable farms and agricultural production, strengthened the government’s tax base and control over land, and enabled the introduction of the *fubing* territorial soldiery system by Western Wei in 550 that made possible the mobilization of large armies under a central command. Much of North China could be reverted to self-sufficient farming. The landless peasants were now able to cultivate land of their own instead of becoming dependents of large landowners. The system helped draw off manpower from the powerful magnate families, prevented the private landholdings growing out of hand into independent tax-exempt power centers, and hence minimized the potential threat of local magnates to the Xianbei suzerainty. The downfall of



6.2. Tuoba Jun (Wencheng, r.452-65)
Yungang Cave 20 dated 460-70 Datong

²⁵ Ebrey (1978: 67) further says that “Because of the nine-rank system, initial appointments were acquired without any difficulty. Promotion to at least rank five appears to have been routine... There are a few cases of men being dismissed from office [because of power struggles among princes], but they generally regained their positions within a brief period. ... [Men of gentry families] often gained office in their teens or early twenties and served continuously until their death.”

²⁶ The emperor participated in the evaluation of high ranking officials, and those with the rank of magistrate and below were evaluated by the chief minister.

資治通鑑 卷一百三十九 齊紀五 明帝 建武元年 [494] 九月 魏詔曰 三載考績 三考黜陟...六品以下 尚書重問 五品以上 朕將親與公卿論其善惡...任城王[拓跋]澄 銓簡舊臣 自公侯已下 有官者以萬數 澄品其優劣能否為三等 人無怨者

²⁷ See Twitchett (1979: 5-6), Dien (2007: 7-8) and Klein (1980: 113, 119).

Ebrey (1978: 83) states that the gentry could hold on to the lands they already possessed, but “found it impossible to increase their holdings...rapidly enough to keep up with the growth of the lineage (which approximately doubled every generation from 380 to 530).”

魏書 卷七上 高祖紀 第七上 高祖孝文皇帝 太和九年 [485] 富强者并兼山澤 貧弱者望絕一廛 致令地有遺利 民無餘財 或爭畝畔以亡身 或因飢饉以棄業 而欲天下泰平 百姓豐足 安可得哉? 今遣使者 循行州郡 與收守均給天下之田 還受以生死爲斷 勸課農桑 興富民之本

Every man and woman had a right to receive a certain amount of land for a lifetime (forty *mou* of open field to adult males and twenty *mou* to adult women).

The land was redistributed after their death. (The “mulberry land” could be inherited.) See Holcombe (2001: 136-7) and Eberhard (2005: 128).

²⁸ See Demièville (1986: 808-72). The *Hou Hanshu* records that a vast temple was built in 193 CE by a local official.

The texts of the Mahāyāna were translated sometime during 266-310.

²⁹ Demièville (1986: 838) notes: “The infiltration of Buddhism into the ...elite was the work of intellectuals immersed in the Daoist revival who...found a reflection of their problems in the ... Mahāyāna. These doctrines seriously began to affect the intelligentsia only during the fourth century.”

Northern Wei was not brought about by revolts of powerful Han Chinese magnate families.²⁷

The landed magnate families in North China were now effectively constrained by the Equal Field system and gradually demilitarized under the Tuoba-Xianbei conquest dynasty. The Tuoba rulers would not tolerate the continued existence of traditional local military power centers. The magnate families were instead encouraged to pursue the privileged elite status of scholar-officials in the local as well as the central civil bureaucracy by metamorphosing into demilitarized landed-gentry.

DUAL SYSTEM REINFORCED BY THE ALIEN BUDDHISM

Former Han had advanced into Central Asia in the first century BCE, and Buddhism seems to have infiltrated mainland China along the Silk Roads. The first official accounts showing the existence of Buddhism in China come from the year 65 CE. A large number of texts on Lesser and Greater Vehicles began to be translated in Luoyang at the end of the second and beginning of the third centuries which were a period of transition between the two vehicles in India and Serindia.²⁸ Wong (2003: 82-3) notes that Buddhism “began to infiltrate China beginning in the first few centuries of the common era, with missionaries, travelers, and merchants serving as carriers of ideas and art forms,” and was firmly established “in China during the period of disunion.”²⁹

A Serindian monk came to Luoyang in 310 and became the counselor of the Xiongnu Later Zhao rulers. The so-called barbarian rulers were free from the Confucian prejudice and even “the bloodthirsty despot Shi Hu” (r.333-49) could unreservedly absorb the Buddhist religion. Ch’en (1964: 426) notes that Shi Hu “said that since both he and the Buddha were non-Chinese, that was all the more reason why he should embrace Buddhism.” Fu Jian of the Tibetan Former Qin (351-94) converted to Buddhism, and crowds of foreign religious masters and translators gathered in Chang’an. Gaozu of Later Qin (384-417) put a religious master from Kucha in charge of three thousand monks and laymen experts in Chang’an to finish translating by 406 the Three Treaties (*Sanlun*) and the commentary on the Sūtra, which constituted a veritable encyclopedia of the philosophy of the Mahāyāna.³⁰

Ch’en (1964: 426) states that Confucianism is infused with the concept of superior Han Chinese vs. inferior Barbarians.

Eberhard (1965: 127) states that the Tuoba rulers “tried to replace state Confucianism by state Buddhism [because] they knew...that adoption of Confucianism equaled total adoption of all cultural values of the conquered,” and carried the danger of an eventual “political predominance of the Chinese.” Shamanism, however, was regarded by the Chinese gentry as a sort of superstition prevailing among illiterate Chinese, and hence could not be a becoming religion of the rulers (ibid: 127); and they thought that Buddhism “could be adapted to serve as an ideological tie, binding conquerors together and setting them apart from the conquered (ibid: 174).” The rulers of Tuoba Wei, according to Wong (2003: 108), “initially supported Buddhism, both to create for themselves a cultural identity separate from the Chinese they conquered and to consolidate the power of the state. As Buddhism spread to the general populace, however, the religion proved more effective as a cohesive force in building a society that transcended cultural, ethnic, as well as social differences.”

The Tuoba rulers became lavish patrons of the Buddhist temples.³¹ Wong (2003: 84) says that “imperial donors gave on behalf of the country in order to procure Buddhism’s supernatural protection of the state.” Wright (1959: 57) states that the ethic of Buddhism was “universalistic, applicable to men of all races, times, and cultures,” and hence could “close some of the social fissures that plagued these regimes,” and build “a unified and pliable body social.” The Han Chinese peasantry converted to Buddhism *en masse*. The Buddhist clergy, Wright (1959: 58-9) says, “not only offered the consolation of a simple faith, but, as favored instruments of government, often brought into the rural areas medicine, relief grain, and other practical benefits which in an earlier day might have been provided by local officials or rural gentry.” Buddhism eventually fused into Daoism, Confucianism, and all sorts of folk cults to become an almost undifferentiated popular Chinese religion.

The Tuoba rulers, Wong (2003: 94) writes, “established Buddhism as a state institution with a centralized administrative structure. As the head of both church and state, the emperor was deified and given divine status. Portrayed as a demigod, the ruler assumed a higher stature that transcended his ethnic origins, enhancing his authority and enabling him to consolidate the power of the state. Buddhist ideology thus lent itself to the

³⁰ See Demièville (1986: 847, 851-3).

資治通鑑 卷一百十四 晉紀三十六
安帝 義熙元年 [405] 正月 [後] 秦王[姚]興 以鳩摩羅什 爲國師 奉之如神 親帥羣臣 及沙門 聽羅什講佛經 又命羅什 翻譯西域經論三百餘卷 大營塔寺 沙門坐禪者 常以千數 公卿以下 皆奉佛 由是 州郡化之事佛者 十室而九

When Later Qin fell by a Xiongnu leader, this community of expert translators drifted northeast to the Tuoba-Xianbei Wei area at Pingcheng. Schreiber (1949-55: 479) notes: “On the summit of the Longshan [Murong Huang, r.333-49] erected a temple which he called Longxiang Fosi (龍翔佛寺). The name of Buddha is the only indication of Buddhism in the records of Former Yan... [T]he rulers of Later Yan.. Murong Xi [r.401-7], as well as Murong Bao [r.396-8], had *sramanas* at court.”

³¹ 資治通鑑 卷一百四十七 梁紀三
武帝 天監八年[509] 魏主..爲諸僧及朝臣 講維摩詰經...時魏主專尚釋氏 不事經籍...於洛陽...自西域來者 三千餘人 魏主別..立永明寺...以處之

³² Klein (1980: 124) notes: “The Buddhist community was organized in a bureaucratic hierarchy, its head appointed by the emperor.” The Wei rulers, Demièville (1986: 853-4) notes, “set up a kind of state church by putting clergy under the jurisdiction of a civil office...under a monk who was a government official, with provincial subordinates who were in charge of local Buddhist communities.”

³³ Wright (1957: 31) explains: "the Northern Wei solution to the problem of the conflict between secular and religious loyalties [was the formula] that the Emperor is the Tathāgata [*Thus-Come-One*, i.e., Buddha]. This solution contrasted with the southern pattern; there the Buddhists went no further than to persuade their monarchs to adopt the sanctified Indian model of the Cakravartin king who rules by and for the Buddhist faith, to become a lay patron, mahādānapati, rather than the deified monarch of a religious state." Eberhard (1965: 127) states that the Wei rulers encouraged "the veneration of their emperor as the coming Buddha Maitreya." Demiéville (1986:855) notes: "Statutes of the Buddha reproduced the features of the Wei emperors ... [T]he first general administrator of the clergy...had identified the emperor with the Buddha: He loves the Way, he is the Tathāgata of our time; it is right that monks should pay him homage. He who has the power to spread the Law is the master of men. I bow down not before the Son of Heaven, but before the Buddha himself."

³⁴ See Wright (1959: 60). Demiéville (1986: 856) notes: "Between 402 and 517, no less than nine peasant rebellions sparked off by the Buddhists are recorded. Such rebellions would be fomented by some illiterate monk who set himself up as an incarnation... of ... Maitreya, or else as the founder of a new dynasty that was to establish the Great Peace."

development of state cults under the Northern Wei, serving both political and religious ends effectively." ³² The Buddhist ideology of *Compassion* and *Wisdom* was superimposed upon the Chinese-style bureaucracy.

Without invoking a formal theocracy, the clergy's relation to imperial power was ingeniously solved, according to Wright (1959: 61), by regarding "the reigning emperor as a Buddha incarnate" that resolved "the conflict of loyalties." Dunnell (1996: 20) states: "Northern Wei rulers...have absorbed ...the cult of the bodhisattva Maitreya, the future Buddha, and emperor worship, whereby the emperor...as a living Maitreya became the object of all the hopes and expectations of a future salvation, then, after death, was placed in the role of a Buddha protecting the state and the nation."³³

Buddhism flourished under the Tuoba-Xianbei conquest dynasties, but there were occasionally violent persecutions of the Buddhists to curb their excesses. There appeared widespread abuses of clerical privilege, by mass retreat into holy orders to escape the corvée and taxation, and by the fraudulent transfer of land titles to the tax-exempt temples. There also appeared uneducated and undisciplined village clerics who, in their preaching, exploited the apocalyptic vein in Buddhism for subversive purposes.³⁴ When the Buddhist community challenged the supremacy of the state, there occurred persecutions: in 446 during the reign of Tai Wudi of Northern Wei (r.423-52), and also in 574-8 during the reign of Wudi of Northern Zhou (r.560-78).

The most influential Han Chinese adviser, Cui Hao, who considered Buddhism to be false and wasteful and hated it, had insinuated an insurgent intention in the Buddhist community, and thereby caused severe repressions of Buddhism by Tuoba Tao in 446.³⁵ On the other hand, in the Chinese émigré regimes below the Yangzi, the Buddhist community was much smaller and hence could not challenge the rulers and rebel. Demiéville (1986: 857) notes that there "was no equivalent to the great repressions of Buddhism that took place under Northern Wei and Zhou."

In Northern Wei, the number of monasteries increased from 6,478 to 30,000, and the number of monks and nuns from 67,258 to 2 million between 477 and 534, the end of the dynasty. In the southern Han Chinese dynasties, there was a paltry increase in the number of monasteries from 1,768 to 2,846, and in the

number of monks and nuns from 24,000 to 82,700 during the same period.³⁶

3. Maintaining Ascendancy over Chinese and Other Nomads

THE INSTITUTIONAL BEDROCK FOR CONQUEST DYNASTIES

The functional dichotomy between the Xianbei and the Han Chinese, a unique feature of the Dual System, seems to have been conveyed succinctly in the statements of Gao Huan, the Xianbei general who founded Eastern Wei. Gao Huan told the Compatriots that “the Han Chinese are your slaves; the men till for you; the women weave for you; for what reason do you bully them?” while at the same time telling the Han Chinese that “the Xianbei are your retainers; for a single measure of your grain and a single length of your silk, they smash the bandits so that you have peace and order; for what reason do you hate them?”³⁷

Organizing the conquered land with the Chinese style bureaucracy with gentry officials ensured ascendancy of the Xianbei over other nomads in material resources, while organizing the centralized military force with tribal tradition enabled them to retain the original military superiority over the subjugated Chinese as well as the would-be savage invaders. This Dual System, introduced by the Murong and refined by the Tuoba, became the model for the latter-day Manchurian conquest dynasties such as Liao, Jin and Qing, and enabled Manchuria to become the incubator for almost all of the conquest dynasties.

MAINTAINING ASCENDANCY OVER THE ROURANS

The Chinese dynasties had relied for defense on great walls, gifts and subsidized trade, and periodic massive attacks on the nomads. The strategy of the Manchurian dynasties that occupied North China was to win over nomadic tribal leaders by a series of marriage alliances, and to disrupt tribal confederations by supporting rival leaders or destroying a growing power. Manchurian rulers knew steppe conditions and how to deal with their steppe cousins.³⁸ They tried not simply to defeat an army but, as Barfield (1989: 124) says, “to destroy the economic and political base of the nomadic state by robbing it of people and animals.”

³⁵ 資治通鑑 卷一百二十四 宋紀六 文帝 元嘉二十三年[446] 正月 崔浩 ...素不喜佛法...每言於魏主 以為佛法虛誕 為世費害 宜悉除之...入佛寺...見...兵器 出以白帝...浩因說帝 悉誅天下沙門 毀諸經像 帝從之

³⁶ Demiéville (1986: 856)

³⁷ 資治通鑑 卷一百五十七 梁紀十三 高祖武皇帝十三 大同三年九月 [537] 歡每號令軍士...其語鮮卑則曰 漢民是汝奴 夫為汝耕 婦為汝織 ...汝何為陵之 其語華人則曰 鮮卑是汝作客 得汝一斛粟 一匹絹 為汝擊賊 令汝安寧 汝何為疾之

³⁸ See Barfield (1989: 112).

Klein (1980: 99) notes that the Tuoba leaders formed extensive “strategic marriage alliances” not only with the “influential Compatriot clans” themselves (including the Murong, Yuwen, and Duan tribal leaders) but also with various Xiongnu-Turkic “heirs to the six hundred year old line of” Maodun: “It was vital to their claims of legitimate rule that the Tuoba be able to present themselves as heirs to the long and prestigious line of Xiongnu rulers.” See also Klein (1980: 100-4).

³⁹ Klein (1980: 65) notes: “Barely two months after the Western Yan had fallen [394], a sector of the Rouran people rebelled against the Tuoba rule, which had been imposed on them three years before, and fled west under the leadership of Heduoan and Shelun. Changsun Fei, a Wei general, pursued

them and killed Heduoan. Shelun consolidated his leadership over the Rouran and led them north across the desert.”

魏書 卷一百三 列傳 第九十一 蠕蠕 [Ruǎn-ruǎn 茹茹] 東胡之苗裔... 自號柔然...太祖撫慰如舊 九年 [394] 社崙率部眾棄其父西走...社崙遠遁漢北...遂并諸部 凶勢益振...始立軍法 千人爲軍 軍置將一人 百人爲幢 幢置帥一人...其西北有匈奴餘種..號爲強盛...自號...可汗...猶魏言皇帝也 世宗[506] ...曰 蠕蠕遠祖社崙是大魏叛臣...阿那瓌啓云[520]...臣先世源由出於大魏 資治通鑑 卷一百七 晉紀二十九 大元十六年 [391] 冬十月 初柔然部人世服於代... [376] 秦王堅滅代 柔然附於... 魏王珪即位...獨柔然不事... 珪遣長孫嵩長孫肥 追之

⁴⁰ 卷一百十二 晉紀三十四 元興元年 [402] 正月 柔然社崙...帥其部落遠遁漢北 奪高車之地 而居之...是西北擊匈奴遺種...遂吞併諸部... 雄於北方 其地西至焉耆 東接朝鮮 南臨大漠 旁側小國 皆羈屬焉 自號豆代可汗

⁴¹ According to the *Samguk-yusa*, the Kaya assigned the title of Khan for their chieftain before 32 CE. In Silla, the title Khaghan referred to the first among the 17 ranks of officers (appearing for the first time in the *Samguk-saki* record for the year 73 CE), and sons of Khaghan became the Silla kings in 310 and 356.

Silla had also introduced the title of Great Khaghan by 655 CE at the latest.

See Lee (1983: 33ff).

At the time the Tuoba Xianbei began occupying North China under the leadership of Tuoba Gui (r.386-409), the Rouran were establishing a centralized state in the Mongolian steppe under the leadership of Shelun (r.402-10). According to the *Weishu*, the Rouran were descendants of the Donghu. They constituted one of the proto-Mongol peoples.

According to the *Weishu* and *Zizhi Tongjian*, Tuoba Gui launched an attack on the Rouran in October 391, and let Changsun Song and Fei inflict heavy casualties on them. In 394, Shelun led the Rouran tribes westward, away from the control of the Tuoba. Chased by the Wei army, Shelun led the Rouran tribes further northward across the desert, converting them into full-time nomadism on the open steppe.³⁹ Klein (1980: 83) states: “By chasing the Rouran into full nomadism,” however, the Tuoba “had provoked the creation anew of a militarily strong steppe force, united by the Rouran confederacy.” Shelun established a centralized state on the Mongolian steppe, declaring himself Khaghan (*Qutbar qaghan* 丘豆伐可汗 in place of the Xiongnu-Turkic title Shanyu) in 402. Klein (1980: 99) says that “any Xiongnu remaining there survived only as subjects of the Khaghan, a title which in itself expressed an end to Xiongnu dominance.” It is recorded that Shelun organized his nomad army in the decimal units of *One Hundred* led by a captain and *One Thousand* led by a general.⁴⁰

The title of shanyu had originated with Maodun in 209 BCE, Klein (1980: 82) notes, “in imitation of the still new institution of the universal emperor, *huangdi*, in China. By the end of the Han period, however, shanyu had come to be a title conferred by Chinese emperors on loyal steppe leaders.” Klein guesses that perhaps the Rouran had borrowed this new title, Khaghan, from the Tuoba or some another Xianbei tribe.⁴¹

The *Weishu* records “about twenty clashes between the Northern Wei state and the Rouran in the first half of the fifth century.”⁴² Shelun was killed in a battle against the Wei expeditionary army led by Tuoba Si (r.409-23) in 410. According to the *Zizhi Tongjian*, Tuoba Tao had personally led an attack against the Rouran in October 425 together with Changsun Daosheng; another attack around Orkhon in May 429, capturing 300,000 persons and 1 million horses; and an even larger attack in September 449. Tuoba Tao, who came to the throne at the age of

fifteen, unified the whole of North China by 439. Tai Wudi waged as many as twenty-one great battles during his 30-year reign.

By 452, Touba Wei maintained huge garrisons along the frontier, and continued to attack the Rouran until 492, capturing as many people and animals as possible. Tuoba Jun (r.452-65) had organized an attack on the Rouran in 458, deploying 100,000 troops and 150,000 supply carts. Tuoba Hong (r.465-71) had also launched a great attack on the Rouran in 470.⁴³

COEXISTING WITH THE MACRO-TUNGUSIC KOGURYEO

The chaos that marked the Era of Five Barbarians and Sixteen States was quelled at last by the Northern Wei of Tuoba-Xianbei, occupying North China, and the Koguryeo of Yemaek-Tungus, occupying most of the central and eastern Manchuria by the early fifth century.

King Kwang-gae-to (r.391-412) of Koguryeo conquered a total of 64 fortresses and 1,400 villages in his reign of 22 years, and was recorded as the “Broad Expander of Domain.”⁴⁴ He subdued the Sushen-Mohe tribes, chastised Eastern Puyeo, constantly fought with the Murong Xianbei Later Yan, and occupied the entire Liaodong area, establishing a proto-macro-Tungusic state. He also defeated Paekche in the Korean Peninsula, extending the southern frontier down to the Im-jin River basin.

Like the Chinese emperors, King Kwang-gae-to created a reign title, Yung-rak (永樂 Eternal Rejoicing), to designate his era. This era name was identical to the one later adopted by the Ming emperor, Yongle (成祖 r.1403-24). The epitaph of a Koguryeo dignitary named Zhen was discovered at Duck-heung-ri, Nam-po City, in 1976. The epitaph says that Zhen was born in 332, died in the eighteenth year of “Yung-rak” (i.e., 408), and had held the position of the Youzhou Governor (幽州刺史), apparently appointed by King Kwang-gae-to.⁴⁵

In 427, King Chang-su (r.413-91) relocated the capital south to Pyung-yang, and then destroyed the Paekche capital at Han-seong in 475, making the Paekche flee south and establish a new capital at Kong-ju (Ung-jin). Koguryeo came to rule the northern half of the Korean Peninsula together with virtually the whole of central and eastern Manchuria. In 479, Xu (2005: 159-60) notes, Koguryeo “schemed together with the Rouran to capture and carve up” the land north of the Qidan, and “in fear

三國遺史 駕洛國記 亦無君之稱 越有我刀干…神天干…神鬼干等 九千者 是酋長…建武十八年 [32 CE]…

三國史記 卷第三 新羅本紀 第三 奈勿尼師今立[306-402]姓金 葛文王之孫也 父末仇角干 三國史記 卷第五 新羅本紀第五 太宗武烈王 二年 [655] 王女智照 下嫁大角干金庚信

⁴² See also Klein (1980: 85).

⁴³ See also Barfield (1989: 123).

魏書 卷一百三 列傳 第九十一 蠕蠕 永興二年 [410] 太宗討之 社崦遁走道死… 神鷹二年 [429] 世祖[423-52] 次于沙漠南…歸降三十餘萬 俘獲首虜及戎馬百餘萬匹

魏書 卷四上 世祖紀 第四上 神鷹二年 …北伐…次于沙漠 舍輜重 輕騎兼馬至粟水 蠕蠕震怖…絕跡西走

⁴⁴ 廣開土王碑文 □至十七世孫國岡上廣開土境平安好太王… 號為永樂大王 六年丙申 王躬率□軍 討伐殘國 八年戊戌 教遣偏師 觀息慎土俗 因便抄得莫□羅城加大羅谷..自此以來朝貢□事 十七年丁未 教遣步騎五萬…所獲鎧甲一萬餘…廿年庚戌 東夫餘舊是鄒牟王屬民中叛不貢 王躬率往討軍…所攻破城六十四 三國史記 高句麗本紀 廣開土王 一年 北伐契丹虜男女五百口 九年 燕王盛以我王禮慢 自將兵三萬襲之 十一年 王遣兵攻宿軍 燕平州刺史慕容歸 棄城走 十三年 出師侵燕 十四年 燕王熙來攻遼東…卒不克而還 十五年 燕王熙襲契丹…輕兵襲我…不克而還 文咨明王 三年 [494] 夫餘王及妻孥 以國來降 十三年 遣使入魏…進曰…夫餘為勿吉所逐

⁴⁵ 墨書銘 □□郡信都□都卿□甘里 釋迦文 佛弟子□□氏鎮仕 為建威將軍國小大兄左將軍 龍驤將軍遼東太守使持節東夷校尉幽州刺史鎮年七十七薨為以永樂十八年

⁴⁶ 魏書 卷一百 列傳 第八十八 高句麗 世祖[太武帝]時 ...璉[長壽王]始遣使者...拜璉為都督遼海諸軍事征東將軍 領護東夷中郎將 遼東郡開國公 高句麗王...至其所居平壤城...遼東南一千餘里 南至小海北至舊夫餘...魏時 其地東西二千里 南北一千餘里... 時馮文通[弘,北燕r.430-6]率衆奔之...不送...敕璉令薦其女...云女已出嫁 求以弟女 稱女死 至高祖[孝文帝]時 璉貢獻倍前其報賜 亦稍加焉...太和十五年[491]璉死 年百餘歲 高祖舉哀於東郊 ...拜璉孫雲[文咨明王] 使持節都督遼海諸軍事征東將軍 領護東夷中郎將遼東郡開國公...詔雲遣世子入朝...辭疾...神龜[518-9]中雲死 靈太后為舉哀於東堂 ...又拜其世子安[安藏王]為安東將軍領護東夷校尉 遼東郡開國公高句麗王...安死 子延[安原王]立 出帝初詔加延...領護東夷校尉 遼東郡開國公資治通鑑 卷一百三十六 齊紀二 武帝 永明二年[484] 十月 時高麗方彊 魏置諸國使邸 齊使第一 高麗次之

⁴⁷ See Rossabi (1983: 69).

⁴⁸ 三國史記 卷第十八 高句麗本紀 第六 長壽王 二十三年秋 魏人數伐燕...燕王馮弘曰 若事急且 東依高句麗 二十四年 五月(436) 燕王率龍 城見戶東徙...魏主...令送燕王...以王達詔議擊之...乃止 七十九年...王薨...魏孝文聞之 制素委貌 布深衣

of their invasion, the Qidan chieftain,” leading his tribesmen (numbering over 10,000 men), surrendered to the Tuoba Wei. According to the *Samguk-sagi*, Koguryeo had provided shelter to the Chinese ruler of Northern Yan and his family, who were under attack from the Tuoba Wei in 436; and also to the king of Puyeo in 494.

According to the *Weishu*, King Chang-su sent an envoy to the Wei court for the first time during the reign of Tai Wudi (r.423-52), and the Wei court bestowed on him the title “Governor-General of Military Affairs in Liao-Parhae (都督遼海諸軍事), High Commissioner for Dongyi Affairs, Duke of Opening Country in Liaodong Commandery (遼東郡開國公), King of Koguryeo.” Wei bestowed the almost identical titles to subsequent Koguryeo kings until its downfall. When the last ruler of Northern Yan, Feng Hong (r.430-6), fled to Koguryeo, Tuba Tao demanded his repatriation, but Chang-su refused. According to the *Zizhi Tongjian*, Koguryeo was so powerful at that time that the Northern Wei let the residence of the Koguryeo ambassador be located right next to that of Qi. Tai Wudi asked a daughter and then a niece to Chang-su, but both requests were refused. Emperor Xiaowen (r.471-99) asked the attendance of the crown prince at the Wei court, but that request was also refused.⁴⁶ Xiaowen and his son Xuanwu, however, each obtained a non-royal Koguryeo woman as Empress. (See sidetnote 61.)

After 1004, a fictitious kinship was established between the emperors of the Liao and the Song, whereupon it became the custom that, on receiving the news of the death of an emperor, funeral ceremonies were held at both courts.⁴⁷ According to the *Weishu*, when King Chang-su of Koguryeo died in 491 at the age of 98, Emperor Xiaowen himself, wearing a white crown and a hempen robe, conducted the mourning ceremony in the eastern suburbs of Pingcheng.⁴⁸

CONFIRMING RULERS' ETHNIC IDENTITY IN BUDDHIST ART

The Tuoba Wei rulers, inspired by the Greco-Buddhic Gandhara tradition, started creating in 460 the great sculptures in such mystic forms on the famous Caves of Yungang at their capital Pingcheng (Datong). The first five caves of the Yungang sculptures, carved in 460-65, Klein (1980: 130) notes, are “centered around monumental statues of Sakyamuni and

Maitreya, and are modeled after the first five rulers (Gui, Si, Tao, Yu, and Jun)."⁴⁹

According to Wong (2003: 95-6), "the large number of donor images at Yungang in the last quarter of the fifth century represents a significant shift in patronage, from the imperial house to other sectors of society... These...images generically represent Northern Wei noblemen and noblewomen," wearing Xianbei costumes similar to those on the clay figurines found in the Xianbei tombs. The images portray donors, who financed the creation of those Buddhist art works, in pious attitudes underscoring their loyalty and patriotism, and also their sentiment of "linking the state to the realm of the gods."

Historians of the period, Wong (2003: 95) writes, have "remarked on the relatively high position of women in nomadic societies. The visual presence of women donors as equals of their male counterparts and the existence of all-female groups indicate the nomadic women's freedom to participate in public religious activities." It suggests, Wong (ibid: 97) continues, "aspects of the nomadic society that were different from Chinese society, such as the prominence of women in the public domain and the relative lack of social differentiation ... other than aristocracy."⁵⁰

The great Longmen cave-temple complex just outside of Luoyang was a continuation of the Yungang tradition. In the sixth century Guyang Cave at Longmen, Wong (2003: 98, 99) writes, "most of the individual images in the top rows of the north and south walls date from the 490s up to about the 510s. They were dedicated primarily by members of the Northern Wei imperial house and ruling elite. Many male donors appear to have been close aides of Emperor Xiaowen or top-level military commanders who had accompanied the emperor on his southern expeditions and had fought with him in other battles. ...[I]t overtly states the donor's loyalty to the state and the emperor, thus setting the patriotic tone of his patronage activities and reiterating the role of Buddhism in serving the state." The donors recorded on the inscriptions in Guyang Cave "mostly belonged to the top ranks" among the officials serving the Tuoba state bureaucracy, and belonged to the "eight royal clans" of the Xianbei tribe.⁵¹

ALONGSIDE ARISTOCRACY APPEAR CHINESE DONOR IMAGES

Wong (2003: 101) states: "in the Guyang Cave, alongside

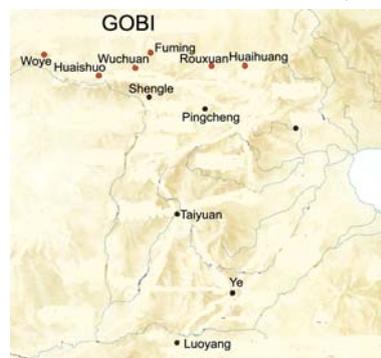
舉哀於東郊

魏書 卷一百 列傳 第八十八 高句麗 璉死 年百餘歲 高祖舉哀於東郊 ...神龜[518-9]中雲死 靈太后爲舉哀於東堂

⁴⁹ Klein (ibid) notes that Tuoba Yu "who never actually reigned as emperor but...defended Buddhism against his father's proscription, is represented as Maitreya. ... Tao's persecution was explained away as the fault of his officials' bad counseling." Wong (2003: 93) notes that Tanyao (曇曜), the chief of monks, "promoted the Buddhist ideal of kingship...which... is promised supernatural protection. ... Tanyao... equated secular rulers with Buddhas. At his suggestion, five colossal Buddha images were carved to commemorate the five founding rulers [Caves 16-20]."

⁵⁰ Among the most important patrons of Buddhism were Empress Dowager Wenming (442-89) and Empress Dowager Ling (d.528).

⁵¹ 隋書 卷三十二 志第二十七 經籍 一 後魏遷洛 有八氏十姓 咸出帝族



6.3. Six Garrisons of Northern Wei

⁵² 北史 卷九十三 列傳第八十一 北燕 馮跋…遂同夷俗…自立為燕王…跋弟弘…弘襲位…弘子朗…朗子熙 北史卷八十 列傳第六十八 外戚 馮熙..妹為文成帝后 即文明太后也..孝文前後納熙三女 二為后一為左昭儀

魏書卷十三 皇后列傳第一 文成文明皇后 馮氏…顯祖即位 尊為皇太后…遂臨朝聽政…臨朝專政 高祖雅性孝謹…承明十四年崩 [489]

資治通鑑 卷一百二十二 宋紀四 元嘉九年 十一月 初燕王[馮弘]嫡妃王氏生…[馮]崇…及即位 立慕容氏為王后…又黜崇 使鎮肥如…崇母弟…[馮熙父]朗…奔遼西 設崇 使降魏 元嘉十年 二月 魏主以馮崇為…幽平二州牧 封遼西王

⁵³ 資治通鑑 卷一百三十六 齊紀二 武帝 永明五年[487] 十二月 魏主問高祐曰 何以止盜 對曰…苟守宰得人…唯才是舉…勳舊之臣..而才非撫民者…不宜委之以方任…帝…命縣立講學 黨立小學… 永明六年 [488] 十二月…魏主訪羣臣以安民之術 秘書丞李彪上封事…河表七州人中 擢其門才 引令赴闕 依中州官…可以懷江漢歸 有道之情…魏主皆從之

⁵⁴ 資治通鑑 卷一百三十九 齊紀五 明帝 建武元年 [494] 正月 以為州郡貢察 徒有秀孝之名…朝廷但檢其門望…則可令別貢門望 以敝士人…夫門望者 乃其父祖之遺烈 亦何益於皇家 益於時者 賢才而已…今世等無奇才 不若取士於門 此亦失矣…太祖道武皇帝 創基撥亂…然猶分別士庶 不令雜居…士人之子 効工

images dedicated by members of the Northern Wei aristocracy are other images, dedicated by devotional societies of local Han Chinese. Some of these had more than two hundred members, headed by [the] local community or administrative leaders and joined by local clergy. The chiefs held official posts, mostly middle to low-level ranks in local governments. ... [T]he coexistence of Northern Wei nobles and Han Chinese as Buddhist patrons within the same cave was politically significant. It signified the local Chinese support of the Northern Wei government and projected an image of solidarity among the nomadic and Chinese groups. ... The promotion of Buddhism...provided a common religious identity for both the conquerors and the conquered.”

4. Sinification and Rebellion by the Six Garrison Soldiers

A WHOLESALE SINIFICATION

Life in Northern Wei, Wright (1959: 65-6) states, “tended to be more austere; food, clothing, and manners were simpler; monogamy and the extended family prevailed in contrast to widespread concubinage...in the south,” and the Tuoba people “regarded southern literature as effete, the work of dilettantes, of men who lacked the martial virtues.”

The wife of Emperor Wencheng (Tuoba Jun 濬 r.452-65), Empress Wenming (文明皇后馮氏), was a granddaughter of the last (Han Chinese) ruler of Northern Yan, Feng Hong (馮弘), who fled to the protection of Koguryeo in 436. The empress dowager (皇太后) Feng began to rule at the age of 25 in 466 through a stepson, Tuoba Hong (弘 r.465-71), and then through Xiaowen'di (宏 r.471-99). Tuoba Hong came to the throne at the age of 12 when his father, Emperor Wencheng, died (at the age of 26). Hong abdicated the throne at the age of 18 in 471 to his five-year-old son, ostensibly to devote himself to the study of Buddhism. Two of Wenming's (太皇太后) nieces, daughters of her brother Feng Xi, were married to Xiaowen'di, and yet another daughter of Xi became empress in 496, but none of Xi's three daughters gave birth to a future emperor.⁵² (See sidenote 61.)

The Sinification and bureaucratization of the Tuoba court seem to have commenced under the guidance of Empress Feng, most likely after the death of Tuoba Hong (太上皇帝) by

poisoning in 476. In 487, Gao You, a cousin to the most prominent Han Chinese minister Gao Yun, urged the empress dowager to recruit officers (守宰) purely on the basis of talent, and let them replace the meritorious nobles (勳舊之臣) of Tuoba-Xianbei who were unable to rule the people properly. In 488, capable Han Chinese were recruited from the prominent local families in the south of the Yellow River to head the local governments (中州官) of the Central Plain, and especially to placate the new subjects between the Yangzi River and the Han River (江漢歸).⁵³ In 494, the practice of recruiting officials among those Chinese recommended to the court (by the prefects and commanderies according to the ranking of families determined by the fame of their ancestors) was, however, criticized as being incapable of selecting wise and talented persons and being, therefore, of no advantage to the ruling imperial house.⁵⁴

It was after the death of Empress Dowager Wenming in 489 that the wholesale Sinification efforts by Xiaowen'di were clearly recorded in detail. Xiaowen'di replaced the traditional imperial rite to the Heaven with the rites to Yao-Shun-Yu-Zhou-Confucius in 492; undertook for the first time in February 493 the Chinese-style imperial ritual of farming; leading 300,000 cavalry soldiers on the pretext of conquering the South, moved the capital in October 493 from the tribal borderland Pingcheng to Luoyang; forbade the wearing of Xianbei clothing in November 494; prohibited the use of the Xianbei language at court (for the young officials less than 30 years old, in particular) in May 495; replaced the multi-syllable Xianbei surnames with single-syllable equivalents in the Chinese style in January 496; forced his crown prince to commit suicide in April 497, apparently because of his opposition to the reforms; and began staffing the active administrative posts almost exclusively with the Chinese.⁵⁵

Holcombe (2001: 138) contends that, despite the fatal consequences, at least “the underlying motive for all these actions ... seems to have been to lay the groundwork for the conquest of the south and the reunification of the entire empire rather than the inherent attractiveness of Chinese culture itself.”⁵⁶ Indeed, Emperor Xiaowen had in person led a 300,000-armored-cavalry force and crossed the Huai River on January 29, 495, in an attempt to attack the Yangzi area, although he returned to

伎容態 一朝而取 ... 今因遷都之初 皆是空地 分別工伎

⁵⁵ 資治通鑑 卷一百三十九 齊紀五 明帝 建武元年 [494] 十二月 魏主 ... 禁士民胡服 建武二年 正月 魏主 濟淮 二月至壽陽 衆號三十萬 鐵騎 彌望...四月...所未民者 唯漢北之與 江外耳..魏主欲變北俗...欲斷諸北語 一從正音...三十已上...習性已久 容 不可猝革 三十已下 見在朝廷之人 ...若有故爲 當加降黜...見婦女 猶 服夾領小袖..何爲不遵前詔...不得爲 北俗之語於朝廷..居官..死葬河南..於 是代人遷洛者 悉爲河南洛陽人 建 武三年 五月 魏太子尙..常私著胡服 ..輕騎奔平城..帝南遷洛陽 所親任者 多中州儒士 宗室及代人 往往不樂 資治通鑑 卷一百三十七 齊紀三 武帝 永明十年[492] 正月 詔祀堯...舜 ...禹...周公...宣尼(公子)... 魏舊制 每世 祀天於西郊 魏主與公卿從二 千餘騎 戎服遶壇... 三月 詔盡省之 十一年二月 魏主始耕籍田於平城南 Holcombe (ibid: 137) contends that not only the decree forbidding the wearing of Xianbei clothing “was ineffective” but the “direction of influence went the other way...the native Chinese costume worn during the subsequent...Sui, Tang, and Song dynasties originated with Tuoba Xianbei Northern Wei..fashions.”

⁵⁶ Ho (1998: 131) contends that the “policy of systematic sinicization” was “part of long-range planning for a military conquest of the southern Chinese dynasty—the only way to gain legitimacy to supreme rulership of the entire China world.”

⁵⁷ 資治通鑑 卷一百四十一 齊紀七 建武四年 [497] 帝以北方酋長...聽秋朝洛陽 春還部落 時人謂之厲臣

⁵⁸ Eberhard (1965: 175) notes that the ordinary Tuoba men did not assimilate, and “therefore, when Tuoba rule came to an end, it was... easy for these commoners to move back into the steppe and continue their pre-conquest life.” See also Eberhard (2005: 130).

⁵⁹ 資治通鑑 卷一百四十五 梁紀一 武帝 天監二年 [503] 十一月 魏既遷洛陽 北邊荒遠...奏 邊鎮事少 而置官猥多 沃野一鎮 自將以下八百餘人 請一切五分損二 魏主從之... 卷一百四十九 梁紀五 武帝 普通四年 [523] 四月...鎮民請糧...不肯給.. 不勝忿 遂反...沃野鎮民破六韓拔陵聚眾反 殺鎮將...諸鎮華夷之民 往往響應 拔陵...圍武川鎮 又攻懷朔鎮... 卷一百五十 梁紀六 普通五年 [524] 七月...廣陽王...上言 先朝都平城 以北邊為重 盛簡親賢...作鎮 配以高門子弟 以死防邊 非唯不廢仕宦...當時人物 忻慕為之...帝鄉舊門 仍防邊戍...本鎮驅使 但為虞侯白直 一生推遷 不過軍主 然其同族留京師者 得上品通官...邊任益輕...邊人無不切齒...八月改鎮為州 以懷朔鎮為朔州 更命...雲州...時六鎮已盡叛

⁶⁰ 魏書 卷七十四 列傳第六十二 爾朱榮 高祖羽健 登國[386-96]初為領民酋長 率契胡武士千七百人從駕平晉陽...以居秀容川 詔割方三百里封之 長為世業 [398]..曾祖...祖代勤 繼為領民酋長 代勤世祖敬哀皇后之舅 以外親兼數征伐有功 給復百年...父

Luoyang by mid-March. The *Zizhi Tongjian* records the claim (as of April 495) that the only people under Heaven that had failed yet to become the subjects of the Tuoba sovereign were those in the north of the Gobi desert and those below the Yangzi River.

The tribal chieftains in the north were allowed to have an audience with the emperor in fall and return home in spring, earning the name of “wild geese.”⁵⁷ The common Tuoba continued to live as stock-breeders and warriors.⁵⁸ In Luoyang, the high-ranking Tuoba aristocrats found themselves parted from their tribes, living in idleness in an unaccustomed climate because the active administrative posts were now mostly occupied by Han Chinese. The Tuoba aristocrats in Luoyang soon adopted the culture of the old Chinese dignitaries, and forgot their compatriots in the steppes. Most Xianbei aristocratic clans that were renamed in Chinese-style during that period retained their monosyllabic surnames into the Tang period, claiming that Luoyang or Chang’an was their official ancestral residence.

RE-XIANBEI-IZATION

According to Johnson (1977: 133), “only 20.5% of the high offices...were filled by Chinese in the pre-471 period,” but the proportion became 64.8% in the post-471 period. Ebrey (1978: 25-6) states that Emperor Xiaowen had let the prominent Chinese families “involve themselves in aspects of court life previously reserved largely for noble Xianbei families.”

“The cream of the Xianbei tribal army,” in the words of Ho (1998: 130), had been “stationed in the six northern headquarters, keeping constant vigilance against the fierce marauding Rouran nomads.” The chief commanders (鎮將) of the Six Garrisons seem to have been mostly the descendants of Tuoba emperors with the title of king. Prior to the transfer of capital to Luoyang, the members of the elite families of the Six Garrisons used to be promoted to the highest offices. The garrisons now looked desolate, and even the positions of garrison officials were reduced by two-fifths. The frustrated generals and soldiers in northern frontier garrisons, strongly resenting the dominance of Chinese and Chinese culture at the court, rebelled in 523. Enough was enough.⁵⁹

Wright (1978: 31) states: “A vast bloodletting ensued: the sack of Luoyang and the massacre of two thousand courtiers

including an empress dowager and her puppet child-emperor followed by ten years of civil war” that divided Wei into two parts. A general from the Huaishuo Garrison placed a puppet emperor on the throne and established Eastern Wei. Another general from the Wuchuan Garrison placed yet another member of the Tuoba imperial family as a figurehead emperor of Western Wei.

Erzhu Rong’s (493-530) ancestors were tribal chieftains, possibly of the Qidan branch (契胡), who had from the time of Gui served the Tuoba rulers, generation after generation. Tai Wudi’s empress was a niece of Rong’s grandfather. Rong came to command the garrison region in 524-6. Gao Huan (高歡 496-547) from the Huaishuo Garrison and Yuwen Tai (宇文泰 507-56) from the Wuchuan Garrison had both joined the rebellions in 525 and entered into the service of Rong in 528. Rong massacred some 2,000 Wei rulers and officials in Luoyang in April 528, made the 21-year old Ziyou (元子攸/孝莊帝 r.528-30) emperor, and was able to suppress the Six Garrison Rebellions (523-30) before he was murdered by the emperor on September 25, 530. Erzhu Zhao (爾朱兆 d.533) succeeded his deceased uncle; made Ye (元暉/節閔帝) the new emperor on October 30, 530; tracked and killed the Emperor Ziyou; and let Gao Huan command the Six Garrison soldiers in December 530, only to be deposed by Gao Huan in March 532 and kill himself in January 533.⁶¹

According to the *History of Northern Qi (Bei Qishu)*, the sixth generation ancestor of Gao Huan had served as the Grand Administrator of Xuantu (Commandery in central Manchuria 玄菟太守) under Western Jin (265-316). The fifth, fourth, and third generation ancestors had served the Murong-Xianbei (285-370, 386-408), and when Murong Bao (r.396-8) was destroyed by the Tuoba in 397, the third generation ancestor (Gao Huan’s great grandfather who was, according to the *Zizhi Tongjian*, the grand administrator of Yan commandery 燕郡太守高湖) began to serve the Northern Wei in 399 as the General of Right. Gao Huan’s grandfather (侍御史高謐) had also served Tuoba Wei, but was sent to the Huaishuo garrison for an offense. The *Bei Qishu* states that, since the Gao family had “lived in the northern frontier area over many generations, they were assimilated to their tradition and became identical to the Xianbei.”⁶¹

According to the *Bei Qishu*, compiled between 629-36, Gao Huan (高歡 Ko Hwan) was a Parhae (*Bohai Xiu*) person (渤海

...畜牧蕃息...朝廷每有征討...獻私馬兼備資糧...高祖...遷洛後 特聽冬朝京師 夏歸部落...榮襲爵...正光[520-4]中...為北道都督... 都督并肆汾廣恒雲六州諸軍事[雲州=懷朔鎮]...武泰元年[528]...王公卿士皆斂手就戮 死者千三百餘人 皇弟...靈太后 少主其日暴崩...奉莊帝...榮還晉陽...擒葛榮...建義三年 [530]...帝旣圖榮...俱死...榮時年三十八

魏書 卷一百三 列傳第九十一 蠕蠕正光四年[523] 沃野鎮人...反 諸鎮相應...阿那瓌率眾討之...與爾朱榮隣接

資治通鑑 卷一百五十四 梁紀十 武帝 中大通二年 [530] 十二月 爾朱兆...德歡 相與誓為兄弟...初葛榮部眾流入并肆者 二十餘萬...大小二十六反 誅夷者半 猶謀亂不止...歡曰六鎮反殘 不可盡殺 宜選王腹心 使統之...兆以歡為誠 遂以其眾為焉歡...宣言 受委統州鎮兵...四年[532] 四月 賀拔岳曰 高王 以數千鮮卑破爾朱百萬之眾...

The *Zizhi Tongjian* states that “Gao Huan destroyed a million Erzhu followers with only a few Xianbei.”

⁶¹ 北齊書 卷一 帝紀 第一 神武上 姓高名歡...渤海蓐人也 六世祖隱 晉玄菟太守 隱生慶 慶生泰 泰生湖 三世仕慕容氏 及慕容寶敗...湖率眾歸魏 為右將軍 湖生...謐...坐法徙居懷朔鎮 謐生皇考樹...神武旣累世北邊 故習其俗 遂同鮮卑 高震 [700-73] 墓誌銘 唐...安東都護...渤海人 祖[高]藏 金史 卷八十三 列傳第二十一 張浩

...遼陽渤海人 本姓高 東明王之後...
天會八年 [1130] 賜進士及第...初定
朝儀...拜尚書右丞上兼侍中 封潞王

資治通鑑 卷一百四十五 梁紀一 天
監三年 [504] 高肇本出高麗...帝...
專委事於高肇...天監十三年 魏主...
以...高肇為大將軍 平蜀大都督 將
步騎十五萬 寇益州

魏書卷八十三下 列傳外戚第七十一
下 高肇 文昭皇太后之兄也 自云本
渤海裔人...父颺...高祖初[471-99]入國
拜厲威將軍...遂納颺女 是為文昭皇
后 生世宗 [r.499-515]...颺卒...賜爵渤
海公...肇出自夷土...延昌三年...征蜀
以肇為大將軍...永熙二年 [533]...太師
大丞相...肇弟顯侍中高麗國大中正

魏書卷十三 皇后列傳第一 孝文昭
皇后高氏 司徒公肇之妹也 父颺...
凡四男三女 皆生於東齋...后幼曾夢
...而日光...照之...后東西避之 光猶
斜照不已...遂生世宗

宣武皇后高氏文昭皇后弟[高偃]...之
女也...生建德公主 後拜為皇后

Empress Gao of Xiaowen'di gave birth
to Xuanwu'di (元恪 b.486/r.499-515)

after dreaming of sun light chasing her
body-- the "light conception motif"

identical to the birth legend of the

Koguryeo's founder, Chumong. (See
sidenotes 44-45 of Chapter 4.) Her

younger brother's daughter became the
Empress of Xuanwu'di, and the latter's

daughter also became an empress.

⁶² 資治通鑑 卷一百六十五 梁紀二
十一 承聖二年 [553] 九月 契丹寇
齊邊...遂伐契丹...十月...至昌黎城...
齊主露髻肉袒 晝夜不息...奮擊大破
之 虜獲十餘萬口 雜畜數百萬頭...
還至榮州...十一月...突厥復攻柔然
...舉國奔齊...齊主自晉陽 北激突厥
迎納柔然...置之馬邑川...親追突厥

海裔人). According to the *Weishu*, compiled between 551-4, the Empress Gao (Ko) of Xiaowen'di (r.471-99), who gave birth to Emperor Xuanwu (r.499-515), was a younger sister of Gao Zhao, (Ko Zho) who was recorded also as a Parhae (*Bobai Xiu*) person. The *Zizhi Tongjian* says that Gao Zhao was a Koguryeo person. According to the *Weishu*, his father came over to Northern Wei early in the reign of Xiaowen'di and became a general. He was awarded the title "Duke of Parhae" posthumously, the title then being inherited by Gao Zhao's eldest nephew. Gao Zhao led the Shu Expedition with a 150,000-man army in 514 as Great General. The *Weishu* records that Gao Zhao's younger brother was the Great Arbiter of the Koguryeo state (高麗國大中正). The epitaph for Ko Jin (700-73), a grandson of Koguryeo's last king, states that he was a Parhae person. Gao Huan may, therefore, be regarded as a descendant of the Koguryeo with the "Ko (Gao)" surname.

Gao Huan at first made the 19-year old Lang (元朗/安定王 r.531) the Wei emperor on October 6, 531, and then replaced him with the 25-year old Xiu (元脩/孝武帝 r.532-4) on April 25, 532. On October 17, 534, Gao Huan made 11-year old Shanjian (元善見/孝靜帝 r.534-50) the first emperor of Eastern Wei (534-50), transferring the capital to Ye. Gao Huan's second son Yang (高洋 r.550-9) made himself the emperor of Northern Qi (550-77) on May 10, 550. Yang personally led an attack on the Qidan in October 553, capturing some 100,000 prisoners and millions of livestock, and destroyed the Eastern Turks to accommodate the Rourans who were driven into Qi by their attacks.⁶²

In June 533, Gao Huan had sent Yuwen Tai to recover the Wei River valley. Yuwen Tai maneuvered to consolidate his position in Guanzhong in connivance with the last Northern Wei emperor Xiu in Luoyang, who fled to Chang'an on July 28, 534. Here appear on the stage the *dramatis personae*. Emperor Xiu had just acquired Li Hu (李虎 d.551), the grandfather of Tang Gaozu, and sent him to serve Yuwen Tai in advance. The emperor had positioned Changsun Zhi (長孫稚), the ancestor of Tang Taizong's empress, at a strategic province. Dugu Xin (獨孤信), the future father-in-law of both Sui Wendi and Tang Gaozu's father, riding alone, followed the emperor. Dugu Xin's general Yang Zhong (楊忠), father of Sui Wendi, began to serve Yuwen Tai in July 537. Li Hu and Dugu Xin belonged to the first eight

members honored in 537 with the august title of "Eight Pillars of State" that were headed by Yuwen Tai.⁶²

Emperor Xiu let Yuwen Tai marry his younger sister in August 534, but could not escape death by poison on December 15, 535. Yuwen Tai let the 29-year old Baoju (元寶炬/文帝 r.535-51) be enthroned as the first emperor of Western Wei (535-56), following the Xianbei tradition, after performing the Rite to Heaven at the western suburb of the ancient capital Xi'an on January 1, 535.⁶³ After Yuwen Tai's death on October 4, 556, the 44-year old Tai's nephew Hu (宇文護 513-72) began his rule of the Northern Zhou (557-81) for 17 years in the name of his young cousins on the throne. He was murdered by Tai's fourth son Yong (Wudi, r.560-78) on March 14, 572.⁶⁴

According to the *Zizhi Tongjian*, Yuwen Hu, the de facto ruler of Northern Zhou, began to command the Twelve Armies (左右十二軍) on the Left and Right that had been established by Yuwen Tai in December 550; forced Dugu Xin, Mingdi's father-in-law, to commit suicide on March 10, 557; ordered Yang Zhong to attack the Northern Qi in alliance with the Eastern Turks; and made Li Bing (李昞), father of Li Yuan, the Duke of Tang in August 564. When Yang Zhong died on July 9, 568, Yang Jian succeeded to his father's title and became the Duke of Sui. Immediately after killing Yuwen Hu in 572, Wudi let Changsun Lan (長孫覽), Zhi's (稚) grandson and the grandfather of Tang Taizong's Empress Changsun, exterminate the Hu's close relatives. The 15-year old Wudi's son Yun (宣帝 b.559/r.578-80) married Yang Jian's eldest daughter (宣帝楊皇后 561-609) on September 19, 573.

According to the *Zhoushu*, compiled c.629-35, Yuwen Tai was a Wuchuan (of Dai) man. His earliest ancestor is recorded to have originated from Shen Nong (the inventor of agriculture and medicine) of the Three August Ones. The claim of descent from a creation demigod does not seem to have been intended to usurp the Han Chinese ethnicity, but rather to give the claimant's obscure homeland greater status by including it within the mythical geography of the original homeland of not only the Three August Demigods and Five Emperors (*San Huang* 三皇 *Wudi* 五帝) but also of their descendants and the Zhou royal house. The Yuwen rulers later proclaimed themselves rulers of the Zhou, the dynasty that had swept out of the northwest and

⁶² 資治通鑑 卷一百五十五 梁紀十武帝 中大通六年 [534] 二月 魏主乃以泰...統岳軍...方謀取關中 得虎甚喜...使就泰 七月 帝使...長孫稚...鎮虎牢...長孫子彥 鎮陝...稚之子...雲中獨孤信 單騎追帝...十二月信令都督武川楊忠 爲前驅 大同三年 [537] 七月...信與楊忠 皆至長安...丞相泰 愛楊忠之勇 留置帳下
See also Xu (2005: 93) and Eberhard (2005: 133-5).

⁶³ 資治通鑑 卷一百五十七 梁紀十三武帝 大同元年[535] 春正月戊申朔是日 魏文帝即位於城西 長安城西也 天子即位 御前殿 魏自高歡立孝武帝 復用夷禮 於郊拜天 以後即位

⁶⁴ 周書 卷十一 列傳 第三 晉蕩公護...太祖[宇文泰]之兄...之少子也

Hu at first made Tai's 15-year old third son, Jue (Xiaomin'di 覺/孝閔帝 born in December 542 from 馮翊長公主; r.Jan.-Aug. 557), Heavenly King (天王) of Zhou (changed to Emperor after August 15, 559), only to be murdered within a year and replaced by the 24-year old Tai's eldest son Yu (Mingdi 毓/明帝 born in 534 from 姚夫人; r.557-60) on September 28, 557. Mingdi was poisoned to death three and a half years later on April 20, 560, and yet somehow managed to leave his dying wish that the throne be succeeded by his 18-year old younger brother Yong (Wudi 邕/武帝 born in 543 from 叱奴皇后; died on June 1, 578). Wudi proved capable enough to eliminate Yuwen Hu and conquer Northern Qi.

⁶⁵ 周書 卷一 帝紀 第一 文帝上 太祖 文皇帝 姓宇文氏 諱泰...代郡武川人也 其先出自炎帝神農氏 爲皇帝所滅 子孫遷居朔野有...者...鮮卑慕之奉以爲主 遂總十二部落 世爲大人...其俗謂天曰宇謂君曰文 因號宇文國 并以爲氏焉..自陰山南徙 始居遼西...九世至侯豆歸 爲慕容晃所滅 其子陵仕燕...封玄菟公...寶敗...率甲騎五百歸魏 拜都牧主 賜爵安定侯..遷武川 陵生系 系生韜...韜生肱...[宇文太 肱]之少子也

⁶⁶ 資治通鑑 卷一百六十四 梁紀二十 承聖元年 [552] 十一月 侯景之亂 州郡大半入魏 自巴陵以下至建康 以長江爲限
資治通鑑 卷一百六十九 陳紀三 天嘉五年 [564] 初齊...爲齊律...又令民十八受田 輸租調 二十充兵 六十免力役 六十六還田 免租調 一夫受露田 八十畝 婦人四十畝 奴婢依良人 牛受六十畝...一夫一婦 調絹一匹 綿八兩 墾租二石 義租五斗...墾租送臺 義租納郡 以備水旱...

⁶⁷ According to Johnson (1977: 133), the proportion was 66.7% in Eastern Wei, and 61.8% in Northern Qi.

⁶⁸ Eberhard (2005: 133) contends that “All the Chinese and pro-Chinese gathered round [Gao Huan. He] was closely associated with the eastern Chinese gentry, who were the actual rulers of the Tuoba State.” Eberhard continues: “All the still existing remains of Tuoba tribes who had eluded Sinification moved into this western [Wei] empire (ibid: 134). Unlike the

conquered the North China plain.⁶⁵ Yuwen Tai renamed “all the offices of the government using the highly artificial nomenclature found in the *Rituals of Zhou* (周禮),” says Wright (1978: 37).

According to the *Zhoushu*, one of Yuwen Tai’s ancestors was admired by the Xianbei people and became the leader of twelve Xianbei villages. Since heaven was called “*yu*” and the king was called “*wen*,” the name of their clan as well as their state became “Yuwen.” One of his ancestors moved south to Liaoxi, but his 9th descendant was destroyed by Murong Huang. His son began to serve the Murong, and was appointed as the Duke of Xuantu. When Murong Bao was destroyed by the Tuoba [in 397], he surrendered to the Northern Wei, and was graced with the title of marquis. Graff (2002: 102-3) says: Yuwen Tai’s “great-great-grandfather had gone out to join the Wuchuan garrison in the early years of the fifth century ... When the rebellions broke out in the Six Garrisons in 523, his father organized a loyalist militia to resist the rebels. [Yuwen Tai was sent by Gao Huan in 533] to recover the Wei River valley. ... [He] maneuvered to consolidate his position in the northwest.”

The re-Xianbei-ization process started. Wong (2003: 82) states that “historians use terms such as ‘Sinicization (漢化)’ to denote the nomads’ adoption of Chinese-style institutions and customs. Vice versa, they describe the reverse process...as ‘Xianbei-ization.’” According to Johnson (1977: 133), the proportion of Han Chinese high officials fell to 43.1% in Western Wei, and further fell to 16.7% in Northern Zhou.

5. Northern Zhou and Northern Qi: Heirs to Northern Wei

EACH CLAIMING THE RIGHTFUL HEIR TO TUOBA-XIANBEI WEI

Northern Qi came to occupy the whole of central China north of the Yangzi River by 552, and implemented the Equal Field system in 564.⁶⁶ The Northern Qi rulers established, Wright (1978: 38) notes, “an elaborate system of land allotment and taxation in kind” in the North China plain, and it was a fact that “the Chinese gentry and Chinese officials representing them at the court were largely responsible for these policies and their implementation in the provinces.” Indeed, just like the Emperor Xiaowen’s court, nearly two thirds of the high officials in Eastern

Wei and Northern Qi were Han Chinese.⁶⁷

Many historians believe that Gao Huan was such a “pro-Chinese” general that Eastern Wei and Northern Qi were essentially “Han Chinese states,” while the Yuwen Tai’s Western Wei and Northern Zhou may well be regarded as pure-blooded Xianbei states.⁶⁸ Graff (2002: 115), however, states that “In the populous east, the dominant Xianbei were a small minority in a sea of Han Chinese. As the descendants of garrison soldiers who had not looked favorably upon the sinicizing reforms of the Wei Emperor Xiaowen, they sought to preserve their language, customs and identity;” bloody purges of Chinese officials were not infrequent occurrences; and under these circumstance, “the incorporation of Chinese leaders into the regular military establishment” was out of the question. Gao Huan, furthermore, seems to have had little faith in the fighting quality of the Han Chinese retainer-soldiers of landed-magnates (鄉里部曲). Even an exceptionally distinguished Han Chinese general such as Gao Aocao seems to have been apprehensive about combining the Xianbei and the Han Chinese soldiers into a single fighting unit.⁶⁹

According to Wright (1978: 38), in an age-old tradition of Northern Wei, the Northern Qi rulers maintained “an imperial guard of 120,000 Xianbei soldiers at the Emperor’s disposal; four garrisons strategically placed to protect the capital at Ye; a military headquarters at what is now the city of Taiyuan in Shanxi—traditional staging area for the defense of the northwestern frontier; [and] garrisons stationed along the Great Wall.”

The northwestern region of Shaanxi and Gansu had a more variegated ethnic environment, and hence the rulers of Western Wei and Northern Zhou did not have to worry about being submerged in a sea of Han Chinese.⁷⁰ According to Wright (1978: 36-7), the Yuwen could afford to soften “their Xianbei atavism,” and “to adopt Chinese institutions and ideological elements, necessary to the realization of their ultimate objective—the control of North China and then all China.” In its efforts, Wright (ibid: 45) continues, “to establish a claim to universal dominion, we find its Xianbei-speaking military leadership drawing on many strands of the Chinese political tradition; renaming all offices in accordance with a political classics that purported to reflect ancient Zhou practice; adopting the government model outlined in the same classic [*Zhou-li*, the Rituals

Chinese state of Qi, Zhou followed the old Tuoba tradition. Old [tribal] customs were revived, [and] family names that had been sinified were turned into Tuoba names again (ibid: 135).” Wong (2003: 97) states that “the Northern Wei’s sinicizing measures... were largely revoked by the more militaristic Western Wei and Northern Zhou rulers, resulting in the so-called ‘Xianbei-ization’...process.”

⁶⁹ Graff (2002: 107) states: “Although Gao won the support of powerful Han Chinese families...and made use of their...militia when he defeated the Erzhu [Zhao] at Hanling in 532, he had little faith in the fighting quality of Chinese soldiers,” and “on the eve of the battle...he had said to [the exceptionally distinguished Chinese general, Gao Aocao]: The troops under your command are Han. I fear they will be of no assistance. Now what you ought to do is take a thousand or more Xianbei troops and mix them in with the others.” Aocao politely refused it. 資治通鑑 卷一百五十五 梁紀十一 武帝 大都督高敖曹[d.538] 將鄉里部曲...等三千人 以從 歡曰 高都督所將皆漢兵 恐不足集事 欲割鮮卑兵千餘人 相雜用之 何如 敖曹曰 敖曹所將 練習已久 前後格鬪 不減鮮卑 今若雜之 情不相合..不煩更配也 Emperor Wenxuan (文宣/高洋 Yang r.550-9) of Northern Qi made Yin (高殷), from his Chinese queen, the crown prince in spite of the contention that a Chinese woman cannot become the mother of Empire. Wenxian then hated

Yin (廢帝 r.Oct.559-Aug.560) who, unlike him, acquired the character of the Chinese and was fond of scholarly learning. There is also a record of the Queen Mother lamenting that she was treated like an “old Chinese woman.” When Wenxuan asked a Han Chinese minister what persons should be employed to administer the empire, he answered that, since the Xianbei were horsemen, the Chinese should be used, offending the emperor to his demise.

資治通鑑 卷一百六十三 梁紀一九 大寶元年 六月...言漢婦人不可為天下母...帝不從 立李氏為皇后...殷為皇太子 卷一百六十八 陳紀二 天嘉元年二月 太皇太后[婁太后] 鮮卑也 怒且悲曰...我母子 漢老嫗對酌...天子曰...況此漢輩 八月 太皇太后下令廢齊主...以...演[高歡六子]入纂大統 資治通鑑 卷一百六十七 陳紀一 永定二年 [558] 太子殷..好學...[文宣] 帝常嫌太子得漢家性質 不似我 欲廢之...三年 杜弼為長史...帝問治國當用何人 對曰 鮮卑車馬客 會須用中國人 帝以為讖己銜之...斬之... 資治通鑑 卷一百五十七 梁紀十三 高祖武皇帝十三 大同三年[537]九月 ...時鮮卑輕華人 唯憚高教曹[d.538].. 為軍司大都督...治河役夫多溺死 貴曰 一錢漢隨之死 教曹怒 拔刀斫貴

All these records, including the disparaging expression for the drowned Chinese workers, are not consistent with the contention that Northern Qi should be regarded as a Chinese state.

⁷⁰ 資治通鑑 卷一百十八 晉紀四十四 安帝 義熙十三年 [417] 五月 關中 華戎雜錯 風俗勁悍

of Zhou, with] a supreme autocrat at its apex.”

According to Ebrey (1978: 80), “after the division of the court in 534, more and more posts went to successful military officers, many from the old garrison system...who had revolted in part to protest Chinese dominance in the government.” The writings (顏氏家訓) of Yan Zhitui (顏之推), quoted by Wright (1973: 240-1), suggest that, in the conquest dynasties of North China, apparently “Confucian learning was largely neglected,” and the Han Chinese elite in the south “sneered at northern poetry and scholarship.” Much to Yan Zhitui’s disgust, the Han Chinese elite apparently devoted more time to learning the Xianbei language in order to become central bureaucrats, and more effort to learning the lute in order to attract the attention of Xianbei aristocrats and be promoted to the position of government dignitaries.⁷¹

The typical actions taken by the prominent Chinese gentry-official families, such as the Cuis, in the chaotic decade of the Six Garrisons Rebellion (524-34), is described by Ebrey (1978: 72) as follows: “They did not take advantage of disorder to strengthen their local position or become local satraps. ... [A]lmost all ... put first their responsibility as officials to their immediate superiors and above all to the dynasty. ... [S]elf-interest should not be overlooked. The Wei court had become a bulwark protecting their right to high office. [They] were...willing to fight to preserve the *status quo*.”

FUBING SYSTEM TO AUGMENT THE XIANBEI ARMY

Emperor Xiaowen of Northern Wei had moved some 150,000 Xianbei soldiers from Pingcheng to the new capital, Luoyang, in 495. When the first rebellion by the Six Garrison communities was put down in 525, the Northern Wei court settled some 200,000 surrendered rebel troops in the plains of central Hebei (in the Ding prefecture where they rebelled again in 526). Northern Qi maintained an imperial guard of 120,000 Xianbei soldiers at the Emperor’s disposal. Emperor Wu of Northern Zhou was able to mobilize a 200,000-man army in 564, and led an army of 170,000 men to conquer Northern Qi in 575, but his army seems to have been augmented by the territorial soldiery.⁷²

Northern Zhou and Northern Qi were destined to fight, first and foremost, for the status of legitimate successor to the

Northern Wei dynasty. As Dien (2007: 9) puts it, “Warfare between the two [Xianbei] states was continuous, each claiming to be the rightful heir to the [Northern Wei]. Increasing losses and the difficulty of replacing the Xianbei tribesmen led [them] to seek other sources of manpower.” The Gao Huan’s regime in the East selected Han Chinese men with extraordinary physical strength and courage (勇力絕倫者). Although they might not match the select Xianbei warrior who was allegedly worth a hundred soldiers (百保鮮卑), they called them “brave warriors,” assigning them to important frontier locations.⁷³ The Yuwen Tai’s regime in the ethnically variegated West enlisted more systematically the frontier Han Chinese and various tribal peoples including the Xiongnu-Turks, the Rong, and the Qiang-Di tribes, and enrolled them in the centralized military organization called *fubing*. In the words of Ho (1998: 131), “the ‘privilege’ of military service was extended to propertied Chinese farmers.”⁷⁴

According to the *Zizhi Tongjian*, Yuwen Tai introduced the *fubing* system (territorially administered soldiery) for the first time in 550 on the basis of the Equal Field system. He registered men of brain and muscle (才力者) as *fubing* (府兵) who were exempt from taxes and corvée obligations, received drilling in battle array in off-seasons, bred horses, and accumulated provisions for combat. Each *fubing* was supported by six households.⁷⁵ The *fubing* were lifetime professional soldiers subject to lifelong military training and combat mobilization. They fought, in the words of the *Zizhi Tongjian*, out of their attachment to their farm and for the honor of their clans (戀田園恐累宗族).⁷⁶ There were 100 *fubing* headquarters, each led by a general, that were distributed (分屬) to the Twenty-Four Armies. At the top of the Twenty-Four Armies were six close associates of Yuwen Tai (the Eight Pillars of State 八柱國 excluding Yuwen Tai himself and King Yuan Xin 元欣) who were designated as “pillars of the state” great general (柱國大將軍), and below them were twelve senior major-generals, each of whom had two armies (*jun*) commanded by cavalry major-generals (驃騎大將軍開府 *piaoji da-jiangjun kaifu*). Each army had an indeterminate number of battalions (*tuan*), each led by two chariot-and-horse major generals (車騎大將軍儀同三司 *cheji da-jiangjun i-tong sansi*).⁷⁷

The leaders of the Twenty-Four Armies, Graff (2002: 109) notes, “reported not to the emperor but to the headquarters

⁷¹ See sidenote 18, Chapter 7.

⁷² See Graff (2002: 98, 100, 104, 111-3), Wright (1979: 38).

⁷³ 資治通鑑 卷一百六十三 梁紀十九 大寶元年 [550] 齊主簡練六坊之人..必當百人..謂之百保鮮卑..簡華人之勇力絕倫者 謂之勇士 以備邊要

⁷⁴ Holcombe (2001: 121-2) notes that: “Shortly after 265, natural disasters on the steppe induced some 20,000 nomadic camps (perhaps 100,000 persons) to enter the empire and settle ... In 284, another group of 29,300 Xiongnu were admitted. ... By the year 300, it was complained...that Rong (戎) and Di (狄) tribespeople constituted half the [one million] total population” in the Guanzhong area (關中). See Yü (1986: 426) and Graff (2002: 108-11). 晉書 卷五十六 列傳第二十六 江統 ...且關中之人百餘萬口...戎狄居半

⁷⁵ 資治通鑑 卷一百六十三 梁紀十九 簡文帝...大寶元年 [550] 十二月初魏敬宗 以爾朱榮為柱國大將軍...大統三年[537]文帝復以丞相為之 其後功參佐命 望實俱重者 亦居此官 凡八人 曰...宇文泰...元欣...李虎...獨孤信...謂之八柱國 泰始籍民之才力者 為府兵 身租庸調 一切蠲之以農隙 講閱戰陳 馬畜糧備 六家供之 合為百府 每府 一郎將主之 分屬二十四軍... 餘六人[柱國大將軍] 各督二大將軍 凡十二大將軍 每大將軍 各統開府二人 開府各領一軍 周書 卷二 帝紀第二 文帝下 大統三年 徵諸州兵...所..始至 乃於戰所

The *fubing* families were removed from the civilian household registers and re-registered by the military authorities. According to Dien (1990: 354), the men in the *fubing* battalion units “had only to provide for a bow and a knife.... Armor, lance, spear and crossbow were supplied by the government.”

⁷⁶ 資治通鑑 卷二百三十二 唐紀四十八 德宗 貞元二年 [786] 八月 府兵自西魏以來興廢之由... 府兵平日皆安居田畝 每府有折衝領之...以農隙教習戰陣..未嘗有外叛內侮殺帥自擅者 誠以顧戀田園 恐累宗族故也

⁷⁷ 北史 卷六十 列傳第四十八 王雄是為十二大將軍 每大將軍督二關府凡為二十四員 分圖統領是二十四軍

In the chaotic situation of the Six Garrisons Revolt (523-35), some members of Shandong gentry families such as the Cuis happened to side with Yuwen Tai and followed him all the way to Guanzhong, and were promoted to high military or civil posts in the Western Wei court. Three Cui men reached the position of Cavalry Major General, and one of them was in charge of one of the Twenty-Four Armies. See Ebrey (1978: 70, 73, 74).

⁷⁸ According to Graff (2002: 109), the entire force consisted of about 50,000 in 550, and over 100,000 in the 570s.

資治通鑑 卷一百六十九 陳紀三 天嘉五年 [564] 突厥..告周[武帝]欲伐齊...徵二十四軍及左右廂散隸 秦隴巴蜀之兵并羌胡內附者 凡二十萬人

that Yuwen Tai had set up in his capacity as chancellor of Western Wei (535-56).” According to Dien (1990: 357), “these were all veteran generals who had been closely involved in establishing the state” in 535; almost all were Xianbei; and thus one can see “a highly homogeneous military elite which controlled the military forces of the state.” The Twenty-Four Armies, augmented by the *fubing* manpower, Graff (2002: 109) notes, were “the institutional ancestor” of the Sui and early Tang military machine.

According to Graff (2002: 208-9), the *fubing* system was to augment the manpower of the Twenty-four Armies (*Jun*) that played, “the central role in Zhou’s annexation of Northern Qi” in 577.⁷⁸ Dien (2007: 9) states that “the centralized military system, called the *fubing*...gave the northwestern state an enormous advantage, which they soon utilized.” The Western Wei rulers, Graff (2002: 115) notes, often bestowed “multi-syllable Xianbei surnames” on the frontier Han Chinese and the (Rong, Qiang and Di) tribespeople “as a way of making them honorary Xianbei,” and pretended, Dien (2007: 9) says, “that they were all Xianbei.”⁷⁹

Lattimore (1934: 66-7) contends that the frontier Han Chinese “takes on a new character...genuinely rooted in the region...identify[ing] himself, in a quasi-tribal manner, with the new frontier power.” These were the Han Chinese *fubing* soldiers recruited by Yuwen Tai in 550 who served with the Tuoba-Xianbei Zhou, rubbing shoulders with the Turkic-Tibetan recruits, in the conquest of Gao Huan’s Qi in Central China in 577, and also were the *Liaodong* “Chinese bannermen who served with the Manchus in the conquest of China” in 1644.

In August 575, Zhou Wudi (r.560-78) led an offensive strike eastward to Luoyang with an army of 170,000 men, but failed. In October 576, Wudi first launched an attack on Taiyuan, and then descended from the Shanxi highlands down to the Qi capital, capturing Ye on January 19, 577. Wudi let Yang Jian destroy the restoration movement of the Gao remnants in February 577, and acquired (excluding only the Yingzhou area that was held by Gao Baoning until his death in 583), altogether 50 provinces, 162 commanderies, 380 counties, and 3,032,500 households. Qi had occupied the area north of the Yangzi River by January 555, but lost the area to Chen in December 573. The Zhou army now turned against the Chen and was able to recover, by December 579, the prefectures between the Huai and the

Yangzi rivers. All of North China was brought under the Zhou rule.⁸⁰ Northern Zhou (556-81) now apparently became, in reality, the sole heir to Northern Wei (386-534). Wudi, however, died at the age of 36, on June 1, 578, in his campaign against Eastern Turks. Wudi's 20-year old son Yun (宣帝 Xuan'di 559-80) succeeded him, but suddenly died two years later on May 11, 580, leaving the eight-year old child Chan (闡/靜帝 Jing'di 573-81) who was not the child of Yang Jian's daughter. The Northern Zhou dynasty was brought down by Yang Jian (Sui Wendi) in only four years (on February 14, 581) after Wudi's conquest of Northern Qi. The direct male offspring of Yuwen Tai were immediately slaughtered, and Jing'di himself was murdered three months later, in May.

THE DISTINCTIVE STYLE OF TUOBA-XIANBEI ART

According to Wong (2003: 83), the vigorous support of Buddhism by the conquest dynasties “created new loci of Buddhism and Buddhist art...at or near political capitals: Ye under the later Zhao (328-51), and later Eastern Wei (534-50) and Northern Qi (550-77); Chang'an under the Former Qin (351-94) and Later Qin (384-417), and Western Wei (535-56) and Northern Zhou (557-81); Gansu under Northern Liang (397-460) and Western Qin (385-431); and Datong in Hebei, and Luoyang in Henan under the Northern Wei.”⁸¹

The archeological finds from the Tuoba-Xianbei sites in North China document the survival of the earlier tradition of the art of the nomads from the Siberian and Mongolian steppes; contacts with ancient Bactria in present-day northern Afghanistan; trade with the Roman Near East; and contacts with India as shown by early Buddhist images. One can also detect the unmistakable reflection of Greek influence that had penetrated into northwest India and Central Asia through the conquest of Alexander the Great. The distinctive style of Xianbei art persisted through the Pingcheng period of Northern Wei and survived into the Northern Zhou state.⁸²

⁷⁹ According to Wright (1979: 98), the Western Wei rulers ordered in 554 that “all military officers...to resume their Xianbei surnames; even Chinese officers were to take Xianbei surnames. Furthermore, all soldiers serving under a particular officer were to adopt the surname of that officer.”

⁸⁰ See Graff (2002: 111-3, 132) and Wright (1978: 43, 75).

資治通鑑 卷一百六十六 梁紀二十二 紹泰元年 [555] 正月 齊主使...攻魏..江陵陷 因進軍臨江...立...[蕭]淵明爲梁主...五月 盟於江北...南度 資治通鑑 卷一百七十一 陳紀五 太建五年 [573] 齊北徐州民 多起兵以應陳 十二月...盡復江北之地 太建十一年 [579] 十二月...九郡民 並自拔還江南...自是江北之地 盡沒于周

⁸¹ In August 555, Emperor Wenxuan (Gao Yang 文宣帝/高洋 r.550-9) of Northern Qi had assembled the clergies representing both Buddhism and Daoism in Ye to discuss in his presence the similarities and differences between the two religions, and then ordered all the Daoist priests to shave their head and become Buddhist monks.

資治通鑑 卷一百六十六 梁紀二十二 紹泰元年 [555] 八月 齊主還難以佛道二教不同 欲去其一 集二家論難於前 遂敕道士 皆剃髮爲沙門...乃奉命 於是齊境 皆無道士

⁸² Watt, et al. (2004: XIX)

Chapter 7 begins at 201.