Northern Frontier
The Policies and Strategy of the Later Han Empire

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2. Chinese Population Changes in the North 2-140 AD 244
The period of the Later Han dynasty (23-220 AD) saw notable fluctuations of fortune in the long-drawn struggle between the settled, agrarian civilisation of China and the pastoral nomad tribes of the steppe. At the beginning of the dynasty, in the time of civil war which accompanied the fall of the government of Wang Mang, the warriors of the Xiongnu seized great areas of north China, from which they had formerly been driven by the First Emperor of Qin and by Emperor Wu. But then Emperor Guangwu was able to take advantage of internal division among the Xiongnu, and he restored the Chinese frontier to almost the full extent of the past.

By the end of the first century, moreover, a series of great military expeditions had destroyed the last remnants of the independent Xiongnu state, while Chinese armies in central Asia recovered the former hegemony of Former Han over the oasis cities of the Silk Road.

Within a few years of these apparent triumphs, however, the control of Han in the north was shaken, first by revolt in the Western Regions, then by widespread rebellion from the Qiang people of Liang province. Thereafter, as the Xianbi people moved into the regions formerly controlled by the vanquished Xiongnu, they presented an increasing threat to the security and settlement of the northern frontiers. By the end of the dynasty, Chinese authority had been driven well to the south, and the frontier lands had fallen under the control of a medley of petty non-Chinese or renegade rulers. From these, and particularly from the Xianbi, there emerged the "barbarian" states which dominated north China in the centuries of division that followed the overthrow of Western Jin.

In presenting a history of the northern frontier during the period of Later Han, I have discussed in turn the major non-Chinese groups, from the Qiang in the northwest through the Xiongnu and their rivals the Xianbi in present-day Mongolia, to the Wuhuan who occupied the northeastern region of China Proper and the borderlands of Manchuria. In each case, I have sought to provide some account of the people themselves, and a discussion of the policies by which the Chinese attempted to deal with them.
Any such account must rely heavily upon the records of the Chinese historians and other classical texts. The main sources for all these non-Chinese peoples are the standard histories, and most notably the *Hou Han shu* of Fan Ye. There is an account of each major non-Chinese group, supplemented on occasion by references in the annals of each reign, and by particular biographies of leading statesmen and generals who dealt with the problems of the frontier.

Inevitably, the picture presented from such a source is sino-centric, and because of the nature of traditional Chinese history-writing, it is also concerned primarily with the interests of government: to a disconcerting extent, the history of the "barbarians" in Chinese terms is a catalogue of military incidents and political emergencies, viewed for the most part from the standpoint of a centralised imperial government.

To a large extent for this reason, I have not sought to provide a full translation of the relevant chapters of *Hou Han shu* and other texts. Instead, I have attempted to use the material which they contain, supplemented by some evidence from archeology and geography, and by reading between the lines of the Chinese records themselves, in order to present a narrative, interpretive history. There are many questions, social, economic, and even the might-have-beens of conjecture, which are almost ignored in the traditional Chinese sources. Occasionally, with the slight evidence which is left to us, I have sought to discuss those matters.

Dates are expressed, by convention, in correspondence with the Julian calendar of the West, and with Chinese years equated to their nearest equivalent AD or BC; allowance must be made for the overlap between the Chinese lunar and Western solar calendars each winter. For the translations of official titles, I generally use the system adopted by Dubs and followed by Bielenstein, with some small variations where the Dubs system seems particularly clumsy. Transcription of Chinese names and terms follows the official Pinyin style.
Chapters 2 and 3 of this work were published in a preliminary form in *Papers on Far Eastern History* of the Australin National University, and I am grateful to the editors for permission to present the revised versions here. Similarly, an article in *Papers on Far Eastern History*, written jointly by Dr K.H.J. Gardiner and myself, explored a number of questions on the Xianbi and the empire of Tanshihuai which I have considered again in the course of Chapter 8. Besides these specific items, I would also cite here the Han Project of the University of Washington at Seattle, directed by Professor Jack L. Dull, which initiated my work on the geography and administration of the northern frontier territory of Han. The present volume owes its genesis to that Project.

Among the many scholars with whom I have discussed this work in progress over many years, and who have given me most valuable advice and guidance, I would thank particularly my colleagues in Canberra, Emeritus Professor Liu Ts'un-yan, Dr Gardiner, Dr Igor de Rachewiltz, Dr J.J. Fox and Mr G.C. Young. Dr M.A.N. Loewe of Cambridge, Professor A.F.P. Hulsewe formerly of Leiden, Professor Hans Bielenstein of Columbia University and Professor Denis Sinor of Indiana have all helped me in correspondence and conversations; and I give thanks to Dr Margaret Scott, of the Cambridge University Library, whose doctoral thesis on the Qiang, written under the guidance of Professor Gustav Haloun, provided a basis for my own exploration of that field.

The characters throughout have been written by Mr Lee Cheuk-yin, research scholar in the Faculty of Asian Studies. The maps have been drawn by Ms Winifred Mumford, of the Research School of Pacific Studies. The manuscript has been largely typed by Mrs Bob Pinkerton, Mrs Sue Layton and Mrs Jessica Radnell of the Faculty of Asian Studies. I am immensely grateful to all of them for their care and thoughtfulness, and for their remarkable patience and tolerance.

Rafe de Crespigny
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CHAPTER I

THE GOVERNMENT AND GEOGRAPHY OF

THE NORTHERN FRONTIER OF LATER HAN

The structure of local administration
Liang province
A note on the question of climate
Bing province
You province
The lands beyond the frontier
The military system of Later Han

The structure of local administration: 1

To a remarkable degree, the forms of local administration under Han were unified throughout the empire. Though the problems of the frontier on the north were clearly different from those of the settled areas within the empire or the expanding colonisation of the lands to the south, the pattern of government was the same, and the administrative units of commanderies (jun) and counties (xian) provided the essential structure.

Under the government of Later Han, all China was divided into some one hundred commandery units, and subordinate to each commandery were a various number of county units, almost 1200 altogether. The chief official of a commandery, the Grand Administrator (taishou), was ranked at the salary level of 2000 shi, just below the status of a minister at the capital. His senior subordinates were the Assistant (cheng), responsible for the civilian administration of the commandery, including such matters as taxation and official
appointments, and the Commandant (wei), whose duties included such matters as the suppression of banditry and the supervision of recruitment for military service. In the frontier commanderies, as a reflection of the greater danger and responsibility, this officer was given the title of Chief Commandant (duwei), and some commanderies had more than one chief commandant, each responsible for a different territory (duwei bu).

These chief officials of the commandery were appointed directly by the central government, as were the officials in charge of the counties. A county of large population, over ten thousand households, was administered by a Prefect (ling), with salary and rank at 1000 shi. A smaller county was headed by a Chief (zhang), with salary of 400 or 300 shi. As in the commandery, prefects and chiefs had assistants and commandants, who were also commissioned by the central government. Both in commanderies and counties, however, the lower ranks of administration, from senior secretaries to yamen runners, were held by men recruited locally.

There were some variations in the nomenclature of the commandery and county units: when a commandery was given as a royal fief to a member of the imperial family, its description was changed to kingdom (guo), and the chief administrator was described as Chancellor (xiang). Similarly, the head of a county which had been designated as the fief of a marquis (houguo) was also given the title of Chancellor. In the frontier territories, moreover, a number
of county units were described as marches (dao), or dependent states (shuguo) and special provision was made for their surveillance of non-Chinese peoples.\(^3\)

In this matter, however, the distinction between civilian and military administration begins to blur. Marches, it would seem, were regarded merely as a special type of county, but dependent states were developed both at county and at commandery level, and in the reign of Emperor An, at the beginning of the second century AD, a number of dependent states were formally established as commandery-type units, with subordinate counties or marches, and were administered by chief commandants rather than by grand administrators.\(^4\)

Under the Later Han system, the title of Chief Commandant could indicate any of three different types of responsibility: the chief military assistant to the grand administrator of a frontier commandery; the executive head of a commandery-level dependent state; and thirdly, very commonly, the title was given to the officer holding responsibility for the administration of a fixed military unit: a garrison, a camp, a fortified pass or an extended base of supply. In this way, for example, we find chief commandants in charge of agricultural settlements (nong duwei) and others responsible for major garrison and training camps, as at Yong near Changan or Liyang in Wei commandery.\(^5\) It appears, moreover, that the garrisons of the Great Wall, as a static military installation, were also administered
by chief commandants, with subordinate companies (houguan), platoons (hou) and sections (sui).6

The various armies which were raised from time to time by the imperial government for special expeditions were not, of course, controlled by the garrison commandants, but by generals (jiangjun) and colonels (xiaowei) appointed for the campaign. On the other hand, the establishment in Later Han of the trans-Liao command, with the appointment of first an Acting and then a substantive General Who Crosses the Liao, established in a garrison base at Manbo near modern Baotou, but also with responsibility for active campaigning, introduced a composite form of military command.7

Like any sensible administration, the Han government allocated broad areas of responsibility to different types of officials, but it did not insist upon a rigid distinction. Grand administrators, for example, could be expected to lead troops in the field, and in the centuries of the Han period many are recorded on active service, and even as meeting death in battle.8 Moreover, on a wider scale than the commandery, the inspectors of the provinces had definite responsibility for general defence co-ordination and active leadership in time of serious trouble.

The development of the province is an interesting aspect of the administrative history of Han.9 At the beginning, the unit described normally as the circuit (bu), including a number of commanderies and
kingdoms, had an inspector (cishi) appointed to check upon the manner in which the grand administrators and chancellors carried out their duties. His rank was low, only 600 shi, and he had no authority to take immediate action on any matter of civil administration. He did however, have the right to report directly to the throne and to set in train an investigation of malpractice. Moreover, in time of disturbance within the territory of his supervision, if it was found that the county and then commandery forces could not cope with the raiding, banditry or rebellion, the inspector had the right and the duty to co-ordinate the levy of an army from all the commanderies in the province and would often command this force against the enemy.

Gradually, from Former Han through Later Han, the importance of the inspectors and the provincial units increased, and in the closing years of the dynasty, as disturbance became widespread throughout the empire, the development reached its fulfilment with the appointment of governors of provinces (zhou mu), men of ministerial rank who thus held executive authority over their subordinate commanderies. For the greater part of the dynasty, however, this development was gradual, and the authority of the inspector was generally uncertain.

On the other hand, in terms of the frontier regions, with major military forces involved and a great extent of territory to control, the province often served as a sensible strategic unit for defence.
Military commanders were not bound by the borders of civil administration, and in times of major crises, as of invasion or internal barbarian rebellion such as that of the Qiang in the early second century AD, the provincial unit provided the effective scale to cope with the emergency. For this reason, in the pages which follow, I describe the geography of the northern frontier primarily in terms of the areas of the provinces.

Finally, however, one may emphasise once again the flexibility, and even the vagueness, of Han administration along the frontier of the north. The formal civilian administration is described by the histories in terms of commanderies and counties, and there is certainly a clear sense of distinction between regular local government and the campaigns of major emergencies. On the other hand the maintenance of settled occupation by Chinese people in the north was a practical problem which had to be solved against a background of nomads beyond the frontier, indigenous non-Chinese peoples within it, long-term garrisons and occasional expeditionary forces, and a continuing need for local militia to defend their own homes. In these circumstances, within the formal structure of imperial administration, the Chinese government offered its officials the opportunity to take appropriate action as the particular need arose in the long-term strategy of survival.
Liang province:

The Liang province of Later Han was divided in two by the Yellow River, flowing eastwards from the Tibetan massif and then north towards the desert land of the Ordos. In this region, unlike other territories, the Yellow River was of only minor importance as a communications route: its valley and its waters provide some opportunity for travel upstream or down, but river transport is generally practicable only during the high water of summer, and there were, in any case, few places of interest or value along the stream. On the contrary, in fact, in the time of Qin and at the beginning of Former Han the Yellow River served as the frontier line of the empire, and during later centuries it was a barrier to be overcome for communication between China and central Asia.

According to Shi ji, the Great Wall of the empire of Qin began at Lintao, in the valley of the Tao River south of present-day Lanzhou, then ran north to the region of Lanzhou, and then northeast below the Ordos.\textsuperscript{11} It was not until the time of Emperor Wu, shortly before 100 BC, that the Han established a military and political presence northwest across the Yellow River and founded the commanderies of Hexi "West of the River". Jiuquan, Zhangye and Dunhuang were probably established in 104 and subsequent years, Wuwei and Jincheng in the half-century following.\textsuperscript{12}
Under Later Han, the commanderies of Wuwei, Zhangye, Jiuquan and Dunhuang stretched in that order from southeast to northwest along the present-day Gansu corridor. On the southwest, they were backed by the Qilian Shan and the mountainous region of present-day Qinghai. To the north and east they faced the Helan Shan, the Tengger and other deserts on the edges of the Gobi. The cities and settlements were based on oases, supplied by the snow-melt streams which flow from the high ground to the south and then disappear into marshes in the desert. As in the Tarim basin of central Asia, irrigation agriculture was maintained around these cities, and the settled farming economy was sufficient to provide a frontier defence for the trade and communications of the Silk Road which led through the Western Regions to India and Rome.

This region of the Gansu corridor was not necessarily and naturally the base for an agricultural economy. It had formerly been taken over from chieftains of Xiongnu states, whose people had no doubt found adequate grazing grounds and pastures among the marshes and along the rivers of this territory. Though the military presence of Han was reinforced by agricultural colonies and settlements, the water supply of the rivers today is still changeable, and ruins in the desert testify to the loss of oases and the need for new settlement elsewhere. The maintenance of Chinese colonisation during the Han period was by no means impossible, but it required constant effort and care.
In one part of this region, now known by the Mongol name of Edsin Gol, the Ruo Shui flows past the present city of Jiuquan for more than three hundred kilometres into the desert. Nowadays, the Edsin Gol provides little more than brackish water and salt pans, but in the time of Han these marshes were fertile, and abundant with wild life. The whole river system then provided a salient of arable land stretching into the heart of the desert.

This territory, called Juyan by the Han Chinese, was maintained and garrisoned by the empire from the time of Emperor Wu till the last century of Later Han. Militarily, the outpost of the Great Wall was important for two reasons: as a supply point for the garrisons in the northwest and, perhaps more significant, as a means to deny this prosperous region to the northern nomads. Left undefended, Juyan would have provided an ideal route for attack against the Chinese commanderies of the corridor itself.\(^{13}\)

During Former Han, therefore, the Zhelu Zhang (Fortress to Block the Enemy), had been constructed by the marshes of the Edsin Gol, and it was from this base, for example, that the general Li Ling went forth on his disastrous attack against the Xiongnu in 99 BC.\(^{14}\)

South of the Juyan salient, the main line of defences followed the Great Wall, which ran in this region from the passes of Yumen Guan and Yang Guan in Dunhuang commandery of the far west along the northern edge of the Gansu corridor past Jiuquan, Zhangye and Wuwei.\(^{15}\)
The commandery of Wuwei also extended a salient to the north, less marked than that of Juyan, but also presenting a forward defence and a frontier pass to the steppe and desert. This area of Chinese control was based upon the river system of the Shiyang He in the region of modern Minqin.16

Between these two more advanced positions, along and probably outside the Great Wall, the Dependent State of Zhangye extended a series of military posts over marginal land.

The garrisons of the watchtowers on the wall were supported by civilian farming and by military agricultural colonies (tuntian). Behind this line of fortifications, the government of Han was able to maintain its settlements and its communications to the Western Regions, in central Asia, generally secure from attacks from the north. In the other direction, the high ground of the Qinghai and Qilian Shan, and the limited political organisation of the hill people, required no such scale of protection. Raids are recorded, but for the most part the walls of the Chinese cities and settlements were adequate for defence or deterrence.

In many respects, despite the strategic importance of the Gansu corridor, it was not a territory which presented great military difficulty to the Han dynasty. So long as the defences were properly maintained, the mountains on one side and the desert on the other restricted the risk of serious attack, and the local population of the region, largely Chinese settlers, had small reason or opportunity to
cause trouble to their government. The problems of dealing with non-Chinese people arose rather in the south and east, among the broken ground of the Yellow River and its tributaries.

It is not certain where the Silk Road from China crossed the Yellow River during Han times, but it was surely in the region of present-day Lanzhou; and this frontier place of early Han became the base for expansion to the west of the river. The commandery of Jincheng was not formally established until 81 BC, but administrative and political control had been maintained for a generation before that time, based notably upon the garrison city of Lianju, on the Datong River, about a hundred kilometres northwest of present-day Lanzhou.

Unlike the Gansu corridor, however, the landform of this territory provides more than a simple communications route to the northwest. A short distance upstream from Lanzhou, the Yellow River is joined from the south by the Daxia and Tao rivers, and from the northwest by the Huang Shui, or Xining River. The two southern rivers flow through hill country and the lower edges of the Qinghai massif, and comparatively speaking, communication across the watershed from the Tao River valley eastwards to the upper reaches of the Wei is not particularly difficult. So the Tao and Daxia valleys were incorporated as frontier territories into the empire, and although the Han government does not appear to have maintained the wall defences established by Qin, there was small need or opportunity for expansion into the high ground along the upper reaches of the Yellow River to
the west. By and large, it appears that the imperial frontier followed the general line of the present administrative boundary between Gansu and Qinghai.

North of the Yellow River, however, the Xining valley presented a different situation. The Xining River has its source near the closed salt lake of Koko Nor, or Qing Hai, from which the whole modern region gets its name. It flows generally east to join the Yellow River, and shortly before that junction it is joined from the north by the Datong River.

The upper reaches of the Xining River were of no significance for the communications route of the Silk Road, which probably followed the Zhuanglang River from the crossing of the Yellow River close to the line of the present railroad, with the fortress of Lianju as a guard on the west. Further west, the Xining Valley is generally narrow between the mountains, but there is fertile, cultivable ground along the river. For the Chinese, this region, like Edsin Gol, provided economic advantage to their control, and it was also a territory which could be dangerous if left unattended. Non-Chinese peoples might find here the opportunity for political association, and from them could come a coherent threat against the imperial positions on the Yellow River.

The establishment of Jincheng commandery, therefore, served two purposes: firstly as the base for the communications line across the
Yellow River which led north through Wuwei and into central Asia; second as an area for colonisation by the Chinese, north of the Yellow River and among the Xining valley.

So far, the discussion of Liang province has been concerned with those areas which were the subject of expansion and settlement the time of Emperor Wu of Former Han. The eastern part of the province, however, was territory which had for the most part been controlled by the government of the Qin state and empire in the the third century BC.

Under the Qin, the greater part of this region was administered by Longxi commandery, so named from its position west of Long Mountain, a southern peak of the Liupan Shan, on the border of present-day Gansu and Shaanxi provinces. In geographical terms, the term "west of Long Mountain" describes all the valley of the upper Wei, being the bulk of the eastern part of present-day Gansu.

During the Han period, under the arrangements of Emperor Wu, the commandery of Tianshui was established to control the Wei valley immediately west of Long Mountain, and the rump of Longxi commandery governed only the frontier territory of the Tao River and the westernmost part of the Wei valley. South of the Wei and the Tao was Wudu commandery, which had been in Yi circuit under Former Han, but was in Liang province of Later Han. The commandery covered the mountainous country of the Min Shan in present-day southern Gansu and
the borders of Sichuan, with the upper course of the Han River and of the Bailong Jiang. In this region also, both the non-Chinese and the Chinese settlements were scattered and isolated among the mountains at the foothills of Tibet and the base of the great ridge of the Qin Ling.

Wudu commandery did not contain a good communications route from north to south. The main access from the Wei River through the Qin Ling to present-day Sichuan was the celebrated Baoye Road, which wound its way south from Mei county in Youfufeng, up the Ye River tributary of the Wei, across the Taibai Shan and into the valley of the Bao River, tributary of the upper Han, with terminus at Baozhong in Hanzhong commandery. A second, older road, the Lianyun or "Linked Cloud" Road, which lay east of the Baoye, ran south from Chencang county, in the region of present-day Baoji, to Gudao ("Old Road") county in Wudu commandery, near present-day Fengxian in Shaanxi, and then across the watershed to the region of present-day Liuba, again on the Bao River above Baozhong.

Both these roads, and the various minor and more difficult routes, are remarkable examples of engineering skill and ingenuity, with galleries cut into the cliffs and escarpments, and trestles built out over the ravines. Though Gudao on the Linked Cloud Road was actually administered as part of Wudu commandery, these lines of communication and transport were designed to connect the lower Wei valley, being the region about Changan, with the upper course of the
Han River. They climbed, therefore, through the ranges of present-day southern Shaanxi, and most of Wudu commandery, in present-day southern Gansu, was a somewhat isolated frontier territory, with its axis along the ridges and among the valleys of the headwaters of the Han River and the Tao.

The main communications route east and west along the Wei River was the Long Road, so called from the mountain by which it passed. It seems most probable that the ancient road generally followed the line of the modern railway from Xi'an along the Wei valley, then crossed the watershed to the Tao River, and then went north to the Yellow River near Lanzhou, where it joined the Silk Road leading northwest into central Asia. Most of the country of eastern Gansu is rolling loess hills, not a major obstruction to open movement and manoeuvre, but sufficient to render attractive the silted flood-plains of the major streams, while in the upper reaches of the Wei and about the Yellow River the terrain is steep enough to make travel away from the valleys quite difficult.

Near Long Mountain, however, on the borders of present-day Gansu and Shaanxi, the Wei River runs through gorges in the loess. In this region the road left the Wei valley and crossed the hill country through the Long Pass, north of the river. The Long Pass was a fortified barrier, and it appears also that the Long Road itself was protected as a military highway, with patrols, garrisons, stores and arsenals at intervals along its course.21
North of the Wei, the various valleys of its tributaries west of Liupan Shan were controlled by Tianshui commandery, renamed Hanyang in 74 AD, while the small river valleys which joined the Yellow River further north and across the narrow watershed were administered by Wuwei. Some peaks of the Liupan Shan and its northern extension the Quwu Shan may rise above 2500 metres, but the ground is comparatively open, with a number of broad valleys, and the possibility of herding and movement.

In one respect the country was markedly different to the present. In southern Shaanxi, the Qin Ling is still covered by forests, but the Wei valley and its tributaries once contained extensive areas of marshland, and the hill country of Long Mountain and the north were also timbered. Now the marshes are almost entirely channelled and drained, and the hill slopes have been extensively deforested and terraced. In the time of the Han dynasty, the colonisation of Liang province was not fully complete, and there were certainly areas where marshland provided an obstacle to communications. We are told, moreover, that the commanderies of Tianshui and Longxi of Han were noted for their mountains and forests, and it seems certain that the timbered country of the Qin Ling extended northwards across the Wei, thinning gradually until it petered out in the grasslands of the steppes south of the Ordos. 22

The development of administrative geography in this region of Liang province reflects a process of amendment to the original scheme
of Qin and early Han. With its power base on the lower valley of the
Wei, as the government of Qin had expanded west and north, it radiated
its administrative control outwards like the arcs of a circle. On the
west, Longxi commandery of Qin had been based on the upper valley of
the Wei just beyond the Long Pass, and from that advanced base Qin
authority had expanded to the valley of the Tao River and the course
of the Yellow River further north. In later generations, as Chinese
control became firm and the population under its authority increased,
the original units of expansion were divided up into smaller areas,
so that Tianshui/Hanyang and Wudu commanderies were established from
part of the territory of Longxi.

The process was a long one, and it cannot be suggested that the
government of Han was instantly responsive to changes in the
balance. There was, however, a dynamic to the government of the
frontier provinces, with power expressed by communication routes from
the settled hinterland to the more uncertain borders. At the same
time, it was essential both that the borders should not be too far
extended and that the hinterland should remain settled and secure.

To the north of the Wei, two further commanderies were included
in Liang province. Anding and Beidi had been based upon what is now
the easternmost part of Gansu province, east of the Liupan Shan,
extending over the greater part of this drainage basin which forms the
Jing River. The Jing is a tributary of the lower Wei, gathering water
from a broad open valley and then passing through a ridge of hills
northwest of present-day Xi'an. Under the Han dynasty these hills, known as the Qian Shan, marked the border between Liang province and the imperial capital district about Changan. In modern times, they separate Shaanxi province from the extreme eastern section of Gansu.

In Former Han, Anding and Beidi had controlled a pattern of Chinese settlements which extended northwest from the Jing River to the Yellow River near present-day Yinchuan in Ningxia. Like Wuwei to the west, and the long line of the Edsin Gol, the area of Yinchuan may be seen as an outpost of fertile, irrigable agricultural farmland among the dry lands of desert and steppe. In Tang times this territory was an important centre of communications, and it had long been settled by the Chinese under Qin and Han. During the Later Han period, however, though the territories of the commanderies still reached the Yellow River, there were fewer county cities and control was less effective.

Two counties in the west of Former Han Anding had been transferred by Later Han to the territory of Wuwei, and Anding was now restricted to the east of the Quwu range, north of the Liupan Shan. Here the county of Sanshui extended over the valley of the Qingshui He. Sanshui was also the headquarters of the Dependent State of Anding, an administrative expedient to extend the authority of a potentially over-stretched county administration.23
North and east of Anding, Beidi commandery had suffered a similar fate. Its territory still extended from the valley of the Jing to the Yellow River, but most of the region in between was under the single county of Lingzhou, whose city was in the neighbourhood of present-day Yinchuan. A large number of other counties had been abolished, and the capital, Fuping, which under Former Han had been close to modern Yinchuan, was shifted south by Later Han to the neighbourhood of Jingyang in Gansu.24

In this region, therefore, in the lands on the southern fringe of the Ordos, the expansion of Former Han had been largely halted by a combination of political, economic and ultimately geographical factors. As in other regions to the north and east, the frontier position of Later Han was not equal to that of its predecessor.

A note on the question of climate:

At this point we should consider the fact that the form of the land and the potential fertility of the soil are of almost secondary importance compared with the questions of rainfall and temperature. Like all of China, this region of the northwest is affected by the annual monsoon alternation of air movement; with warm wet summers from the south influenced by the seasonal continental low pressure region, and cold dry winters from the great high pressure region which forms over Mongolia.
At the present time, the region of Lanzhou and most of Gansu province lies close to the line of 250 millimetres (10 inches) annual rainfall, and the minimum average temperature in January reaches about -5°C, so that only 150 to 200 days of the year are free from frost. Under these conditions, wheat and quick-growing grains such as millet and barley can be sown in spring for harvest in autumn. Slightly further south, near present day Xi'an, a small increase in annual precipitation and a somewhat milder winter allow for the planting of wheat in winter for harvesting in mid-year, followed again by millet, barley or other crops.25

The Wei valley about Xi'an, however, is recognised as a region with local climate offering more favourable conditions for agriculture: at the present-day, the Wei valley is the furthest place north of the Qin Ling dividing range which will support the growing of bamboo, a generally tropical plant. It was, indeed, the very fertility of this region which made it the key economic area for the dominance of north China first by Qin and then by Former Han.

It is impossible to assess, with any degree of precision, the details of the climate of north China during the Han. There are interesting accounts in literature, and specific records of droughts and floods have been preserved in the histories. These are, however, isolated items, related only to one particular place or time, and dangerous as the basis for generalisation: it is, for example, remarkably difficult to judge whether a reference to a drought, or
even a series of droughts over several years, is the indication of a gradual change in climate or appears rather as a local phenomenon, indicating reasonable but unfulfilled expectations of satisfactory rainfall; and the drought itself may have been reported to the court more for the political value of the portent than as an item of practical concern. 26

The Chinese scholar Zhu Kezhen, in an article published in 1972, assesses literary and historical records of plants growing in particular regions, and compares his judgements with the climate indicators found in oxygen isotope profiles from drill cores in the Greenland ice sheet. There is an impressive general correlation between Zhu's reconstructions and the evidence from Greenland, and until there are published the results of detailed research from physical sources in China, Professor Zhu's work is the best general outline that we have. 27

Zhu's reconstruction for the Qin and Han periods suggests that in the third and second centuries BC the climate of north China was generally more temperate than today, with an earlier spring and with bamboo well established in the region of present-day Henan province. From that time, however, the climate gradually became colder, with a low point about the beginning of Later Han, early in the first century AD, a slight improvement at the end of the first and the beginning of the second century, and then another cold spell leading to the Three
Kingdoms period and the Jin. It may be estimated that the overall temperature of China may have fallen 1 or 2 degrees below the present.

It is a tempting speculation to link the decline of Former Han, and the Later Han shift of the capital from Changan to Luoyang, with the effect of the gradual cold and dry change of the climate. The temptation, however, in our present state of knowledge, must be resisted. Even apart from the general uncertainty of calculations about the climate, there were many other factors, political, personal and military, which determined the shifts of power within the Chinese world from one generation to another.

It should be noted, moreover, that there is no evidence for any major, catastrophic change in the climate of China over the past two thousand years. Such variations as there have been, in rainfall and in temperature, have been incremental one way or another, and though the effect of such changes may have serious local consequences, particularly when change is compounded by mistaken efforts of man, it is present scientific opinion that the climate of north China during Han was similar to that of the present-day.

From the point of view of the frontier history, however, what must be recognised is that the greater part of the northern provinces of Han lay along the margin of agriculture and the pastoral economy. With the aid of water control and storage to provide irrigation for the more level ground of the river valleys, the farmers of Han, like
their counterparts today, could harvest their crops and maintain their way of life, while further out, on the open hillsides, other people grazed their flocks and herds. These provinces along the northern frontier of the empire provided the conditions for a mixed economy on the margins of settlement. In such circumstances, a comparatively slight or short-term change in the pattern of rainfall and temperature could have important consequences.29

Bing province:

North of the Wei River below Xi'an, the territory of present-day Shaanxi controls the wide valley of the Luo River and its tributaries. The Luo also flows south to join the Wei River, very close to the Wei's own junction with the Yellow River at its great bend. Unlike the Jing River, however, the other major tributary of the lower Wei, the Luo appears rather as a main stream with numerous tributaries than as a complex of minor streams across a broad basin. At the head of the valley, the watershed of the Baiyu Shan separates the upper reaches of the Luo from the Wuding and other tributaries of the Yellow River on the northeast, and from the steppe and desert of the Ordos region to the northwest.

In the region of the Wei valley, the lower course of the Luo during Later Han was controlled by the capital commandery of Zuopingyi in Sili province, but the middle and upper reaches of the valley were under Shang commandery, and the territory of the
commandery, a Qin dynasty foundation, extended north from the Luo valley to include most of northern Shaanxi and to exercise at least nominal responsibility for the south of the Ordos.

Under the Qin dynasty, the Direct Road led from the imperial capital at Xianyang to the outlying frontier posts of Jiuyuan commandery on the northern loop of the Yellow River. The road ran from Ganquan, site of a great detached palace of the First Emperor, due north along the ridge of the Ziwu Ling ranges, across the Baiyu Shan and then north through the centre of the Ordos to reach and cross the Yellow River by present-day Baotou in Inner Mongolia. It was a remarkable feat of construction by the celebrated general Meng Tian, builder of the Great Wall of Qin, and it confirmed the authority of the Chinese empire along the furthest reach of the Yellow River. In the century which followed the fall of Qin, however, those far northern territories were lost to Chinese control, and it was not until the time of Emperor Wu that the empire returned to the north.

When the Han commanderies of Wuyuan and Shuofeng were established along the northern loop of the Yellow River in 127 BC, Shang commandery provided the main route of access. The North Road of Han, however, did not take the direct line of the Qin: it appears rather to have followed the Luo valley, crossed the watershed north past present-day Yan'an, then followed the Wuding River past Fushi, the capital of the commandery, and north through the Great Wall at Yulin. From there, a motor road now runs north through the desert.
to Dongsheng and on to Baotou. The Han road was not such a spectacular feat of military engineering as that of the Qin, but it also assisted the administration of Shang commandery itself, and it provided a less exposed route for regular communications. 31

North of the Wuding River and east of the North Road of Han, the tributary streams and valleys of the Yellow River in the area of present-day Shenmu formed part of the territory of Xihe commandery. Half of that commandery lay on the eastern bank of the Yellow River, but until 140 AD the capital of Xihe was at Pingding, probably on the North Road near present-day Dongsheng in Inner Mongolia. Rather more importantly, during the Later Han period, the city of Meiji, close to the Yellow River near present-day Fugu in Shaanxi, was the enforced capital of the Shanyu of the Southern Xiongnu, tributary and hostage to Han.

Beyond this region of desert and steppe, then, lay the northern loop of the Yellow River. At the east, where a number of rivers meander together across open irrigated ground, there was the frontier commandery of Yunzhong, with its capital, a city of the same name, near present-day Togtoh. The territory of the commandery extended eastwards beyond Huhhot, now the capital of Inner Mongolia. That city, in fact, dates its history only from the Ming dynasty, but there were Han settlements in the region, and the main road through the Daqing mountains at present-day Wuchuan was guarded by the Great Wall.
To the west of Yunzhong, upstream along this northern reach of the Yellow River, were the commanderies of Wuyuan and Shuofang. In this region of frontier territory, steppe and desert, the ancient identification of sites are not always certain, but it seems most probable that Wuyuan commandery controlled the middle of this stretch of the river, and its capital, Jiuyuan, was close to present-day Baotou. The territory of Shuofang embraced the complex of streams and meanders at the west of the loop of the Yellow River, and the capital, Linrong, was within the loop of the main stream, northeast of present-day Dengkou, or Bayan Gol.

In this region, there have been significant geographical changes. As a result of explorations on the ground during the early 1960s, Professor Hou Renzhi of Beijing University was able to identify the site of the Han cities of Linrong and Sanfeng, with their attendant fortifications, in the desert near Dengkou, and he has also reconstructed the ancient course of the Yellow River, as described by Shuijing zhu.32

In the present day, the Yellow River flows past Dengkou on the east, and its course traces a gentle curve northeastwards. During Han times, however, the river lay to the west of the present site of Dengkou, and its line was more directly to the north. The ancient site of Linrong, some thirty kilometres northeast of Dengkou, is now on the western bank of the Yellow River, but it was then a considerable distance east of the stream. A little to the north of
Linrong, the ancient course of the Yellow River divided into two, in much the same fashion as it does today. The main channel follows a shorter curve to the south, but the secondary, outer loop, with its attendant streams, defines the wide area known in the Han period as the Beijia, forming an important part of the territory of Shuofang commandery.

However, besides this reconciliation of Shuijing zhu with the modern map, Professor Hou has demonstrated a far more dramatic change in the country. According to Shuijing zhu, to the north of Sanfeng, on the west of the Yellow River, there was a great marsh and lake called Chushen ze. This can be identified in the present day, but the whole area is now a desert of sandhills and rock, useless for agriculture or for grazing, and totally changed from the fertile oasis of two thousand years ago. Modern Dengkou is a small settlement, with a few patches of irrigated ground along the Yellow River. A short distance south of Dengkou, the railway crosses from the west bank to the east, just to avoid the shifting dunes which cover the whole western bank and flow directly into the river itself.

South of Dengkou, some hundred and fifty kilometres south to the region of Shizuishan, north of Yinchuan, the Yellow River flows between the high ground of the Ordos on the east and the desert mountains of the Helan Shan on the west. On one side, the Ordos territory slopes gradually to the east, with scattered salt lakes across the middle; but nowhere is it hospitable. In the other
direction, the Tengger Desert, which includes the Helan Shan, is a southern extension of the Gobi, between the Yellow River and the Gansu corridor. This region has less than 100 mm, about 3 inches, annual rainfall, and although there are scattered lakes and oases, there is no practicable opportunity for settled agriculture or even proper grazing.

It was, of course, possible to traverse the desert region: there were occasions when the Han maintained communications direct from Shuofang to Juyan, and some fortified posts were set up and manned. At other times, the northern nomads are described as coming south through the desert to trade or to attack the Han positions or those of their allies in the Ordos region, or the frontier of Wuwei commandery further west. For the most part, however, the main paths of communication between the Chinese empire and the north lay through Juyan and the Wuwei salient or through the various passes of Shuofang and Wuyuan.

It seems, then, most likely that during the Han period the area about Sanfeng marked the end of a section of the Great Wall. We are told explicitly that the Han fortifications, re-established along the northern part of the Ordos loop after the conquests of the general Wei Qing in 127, followed the Qin system of defences that had been set up by Meng Tian, and those fortifications had guarded the line of the Yin Shan, from the pass at Gaoque, north of Shuofang, through Wuyuan and Yunzhong commanderies eastwards. In this way, the campaigns of
Emperor Wu reconquered the irrigable lands north of the Ordos and restored the spur of defences which protected that territory from the steppe. 34

South of Shuofang, along the western side of the Ordos loop, to the region of present-day Yinchuan, the frontier was marked perhaps only by occasional patrols and watchposts, not by a continuous defensive system. 35 Moreover, it appears that the Qin dynasty, and the Former Han after it, had maintained a second line, the old wall of the Qin state. Shi ji describes the defence line completed by Meng Tian as running from Lintao to Liaodong, with an additional spur to guard the north of the Yellow River: the main line of the old Qin Wall was therefore in the south of the Ordos, northeast from present-day Lanzhou and along the borders of modern Shaanxi province. During the early part of Former Han, until the conquest of the north by the armies of Emperor Wu, this southern Qin wall was the front line of Chinese defence, and even during Later Han there is occasional reference to the old fortification.

At the present day, the region south of the Ordos mountains, along the northern borders of Shaanxi and east of Yinchuan, is another wilderness of drifting sand dunes and desert. Like the region of Sanfeng in Shuofang, however, the land was not always so desolate. In the fifth century AD, the chieftain Helian Bobo, founder of the short-lived Xia state, set his capital in this territory. Records of the time describe the place as an open, grassy steppe, ideal for the
centre of power of a nomad empire. The ruins of the ancient settlement can still be identified, but they are now surrounded by a waste of sand.\textsuperscript{36}

Though the steppe of this region in Later Han still provided suitable grazing land, it appears that attempts to establish full Chinese-style settlement had largely failed.

We have observed how Anding and Beidi of Liang province relied on isolated counties to cover broad areas of territory southeast of the Yellow River and southwest of the Ordos.\textsuperscript{37} In similar fashion, the Later Han establishments of Qiuci Dependant State and Houguan, both, it would appear, with a military component in their administration,\textsuperscript{38} were designed to cover broad areas of territory in a loose supervision of the nomad tributaries of the empire. The intensive and ambitious colonisation pattern of Former Han had largely been dismantled.

This was a deliberate policy of Later Han, begun by the founding Emperor Guangwu in the early days of his government.\textsuperscript{39} It was at once a policy of economy and also probably a recognition that the colonisation of the frontiers was overextended in the geographical and military circumstances of the time.

Similar withdrawal and reduction of the imperial presence may be observed elsewhere in the north and northwest. As a result, though
the northern frontier of Later Han generally followed the line of Former Han, there is clearly a less energetic occupation of the ground by the people and by the civil administration. In the history which follows, one may observe some of the reasons and results of this policy.

In the immediate area that we are considering, the central desert of the Ordos, fringed by a broad belt of arable steppe, long represented a barrier and offered a choice to the rulers of China. With a conservative policy, the line of the old Wall of the Qin state along the southern frontier of the Ordos could be held in defence of the heart of the empire about Changan and Luoyang. In contrast, the First Emperor of Qin and Emperor Wu of Han adopted a "forward" policy, establishing Chinese settlements along the northern loop of the Yellow River. The Han colonies were designed to serve as an advanced defence line against the northern tribes, depriving them of the benefits of the irrigated land, and holding them back from any secure position within reach of the heartlands of the empire.

Each choice presented problems: if the frontier line was south of the Ordos, the people of the steppe could establish a political or military force which would pose a continual threat to the valleys of the Luo and the Jing, and to the territory about the imperial capital itself. If the Chinese committed themselves to the far north, though they gained increased security in the south, there followed inevitable problems of military maintenance and supply.
By force of nature, that northern land was a true frontier territory, dangerous to abandon and yet difficult to hold. The dilemma of policy remained with the Han government throughout its history.

So far, however, the problem has been considered in terms of a north-south axis, across the Ordos: the eastern part of Bing province gave a different slant to Han strategy.

Though Meng Tian of Qin had conquered the lands of the northern loop of the Yellow River, the first Chinese military occupation of that region was accomplished by the state of Zhao, northernmost of the three successors to the divided state of Jin, about 300 BC.

The base of the state of Zhao lay in the northern part of present-day Shaanxi, and we are told in Shi ji that King Wuling of Zhao adopted the clothing style and many of the customs of the northern peoples. During the course of his reign, he extended the territory of his kingdom to the north, founded the commanderies of Dai, Yanmen and Yunzhong, and constructed a defensive wall along the Yin Shan range westwards to Gaoque.41

From this perspective, the defence of the northern loop of the Yellow River was a means to protect the Chinese positions in the north of present-day Shaanxi. The conquest by Meng Tian of Qin marked a re-establishment of the Chinese position formerly maintained by the state of Zhao, and the later expansion by Emperor Wu of Han into the same
region was again designed as much to support the northern territories of Dai, Yanmen and Yunzhong as to protect the lands south of the Ordos. It was, in fact, a natural corollary of the Chinese occupation of the region about Togtoh and Huhhot that they should attempt to deny their nomad enemies the land immediately west of that position.

Present-day Shanxi was largely controlled by Bing province of Later Han. In the southwest, the Han commandery of Hedong, part of the administration of the capital province Sili, governed the lower reaches of the Fen River and the northern bank of the Yellow River, extending into present-day Henan, but the commandery of Taiyuan in Bing province, centred upon the site of the present-day Taiyuan city, occupied the upper valley of the Fen, and immediately to the south of Taiyuan, the commandery of Shangdang extended westwards from the Taihang Shan, and included the upper basins of the Qin River and the Zhuozhang. From this base within China Proper the northern commanderies of Bing province reached into present-day Inner Mongolia.

Under the Han dynasty, a major highway had been constructed northeastwards from Changan, across the Yellow River, up the valley of the Fen to Taiyuan, then through the mountains to the North China Plain. In similar fashion, though on a provincial scale, the lines of communication to the northern frontier followed the Fen River and the upper reaches of the Sanggan River past present-day Datong.
A stretch of the Ming Great Wall follows the line of the Heng Shan, above the upper waters of the Fen, while on the west, between the Fen River and the southwards course of the Yellow River, the Guancen Shan and the Lüliang Shan are inhospitable territory, which in the Han period was probably uncolonised. Thus the watershed of the Heng Shan and the ridge of the Guancen Shan formed a strategic division between the southern commanderies of Bing province and the north.

Yanmen commandery was based on the upper Sanggan valley about present-day Datong, and its territory extended northwards. To the west, Yunzhong commandery was based upon the open valley of the Dahei River in the region of modern Huhhot and Togtoh, while the small commandery of Dingxiang, which in Former Han had also guarded a section of the frontier, was compressed during Later Han into the general area of the Hun River and the northern foothills of the Guancen Shan, on the border of present-day Shaanxi province with Inner Mongolia. 44

The city of Datong was the site of the capital of Northern Wei during the fifth century AD, and it was also a political centre of the Liao and Jin dynasties, contemporary with Northern and Southern Song at the beginning of our millennium. With rainfall about 300 mm, or 10 inches, per year, the territory is marginal between farmland and grazing country. The hills now are bare, a result of the desperate deforestation of recent centuries, but Shi ji states that in the
north of the pre-Han state of Jin there were Forest Barbarians, and it appears that the Dai Forest, a sacred site of the Xiongnu, was in the area which later became the Mayi county of Yanmen commandery of Han.

In the period up to the Han dynasty, therefore, this region of northern Shanxi and Inner Mongolia lay on the frontier between China and the barbarians, and it was the political expansion of the Warring States, and of the Qin and Han dynasties which followed them, that incorporated the territory generally into the Chinese sphere of government.

North from Datong, the railroad to Jining in Inner Mongolia lies for the most part through open valley, with gentle hills. From Jining one line extends northeastwards, to Ulaan Baatar in the Mongolian People's Republic, but another goes west, south of the Daqing Mountains, through Huhhot and on to the Ordos loop of the Yellow River. The Dahei valley is broad and easy to irrigate, and opens in a delta where it nears the Yellow River. The mountains to the north, however, high though not very steep, mark the beginning of the grasslands, with low rainfall, cold winters and a short growing period, and a vast expanse of open country. The steppe provides excellent pasture, with moisture both from the occasional rain and from the snows of winter, and the country supports great herds of cattle and sheep, as well as the horses, camels and other animals useful to the herdsmen. It is not, however, a region where effective
settled agriculture is possible by traditional methods using pre-modern equipment.

As a result, the Sanggan valley and the Dahei valley of northern Shaanxi and Inner Mongolia are transitional between farmland and steppe, and the balance of nature has changed only very slightly through slight variations of climate and the activities of men. It was primarily a matter of political will and military strength that set the Great Wall frontier of Han along the high ground of the Yin Shan and the Daqing Shan, and both will and strength were liable to fluctuation and change.

In this region, however, though there was, as we shall see, considerable loss of Chinese settlement, the frontier of Later Han followed essentially the same line as that of Former Han.

You Province:

East of Yanmen in Bing province, the Later Han commanderies of Dai and Shanggu occupied the middle basin of the Sanggan River. As in the region about Datong, the terrain is generally open, separated from the North China Plain by the ridges of the Taihang Shan to the south and from the northern steppe by the Damaqun Shan. The modern railroad follows the Yang River tributary of the Sanggan, along the northern part of the basin, past Yanggao, close to the site of ancient Gaoliu, chief county of Dai commandery.
It seems most probable that the Great Wall of Han in this region followed the line of the later Ming, along the lower reaches of the Damaqun Shan. We know that Ning city near modern Zhangjiakou, or Kalgan, was the headquarters of the Colonel Protector of the Wuhuan and a centre for trading with the northern barbarians. There was evidently a significant communications route leading north through the mountains.⁴⁹

Like the territories about present-day Huhhot and Datong, however, this region of the Sanggan was also marginal ground, and in the first years of Later Han the whole region had fallen under the sway of the Xiongnu. The line of hills to the south then became the effective frontier of the empire, and the Feihu, or Flying Fox, pass, in the Taihang Shan north of Laiyuan in Hebei, and the Juyong Pass, now incorporated into the present-day Great Wall at Badaling northwest of Beijing, were two major defence posts.⁵⁰

In the reconstruction which followed the re-occupation of this region in the middle of the first century AD, Shanggu commandery, which had formerly extended to the south of the Juyong Pass, was re-established entirely in the north, and the small commandery of Guangyang, in the area about present-day Beijing, and Zhuo commandery, to the southwest, controlled the southern approaches.⁵¹ East of Guangyang and Shanggu, reaching from present-day Tianjin north to the frontier, was Yuyang commandery, and east of Yuyang was Youbeiping.
In this region, northeast of the North China Plain, the frontier of the empire changed significantly between Former and Later Han. During Former Han, the territory of Yuyang had extended northwards to the west of Chengde, beyond the line of the Ming Great Wall in the northeast of modern Hebei province. Similarly, Youbeiping had controlled a stretch of territory from the northern shore of the Gulf of Bohai about Tangshan, up the valley of the Luan He through the Yan Shan range, and into the region of Chengde. Indeed, during Former Han, the capital of Youbeiping commandery was at Pinggang, near present-day Pingquan east of Chengde.

While the other frontier territories of Former Han were re-occupied by Later Han, however, the upper basin of the Luan about Chengde was abandoned. The three northern counties of Yuyang disappeared, and Youbeiping was reduced from sixteen counties in Former Han to four in Later Han; some of this reduction represented the dis-establishment of counties with small population in the south of the commandery, but a significant number reflected the withdrawal from the Chengde region.52

The fortifications of Later Han, therefore, now followed the foothills of the high ground immediately to the north of the North China Plain, and the territory of the empire was restricted to the low-lying ground between the Yan Shan and the marshland of the sea-coast: at that time, moreover the coastal strip was narrower than it is now, for two thousand years of siltation has extended the land considerably.
From Youbeiping an imperial highway followed the coast northeastwards, past Shanhaiguan at the end of the Great Wall of Ming, and along the strip of land between the Song Ling range and the sea to the Chinese-controlled territories of southern Manchuria and Korea. During Han, this line of communication was controlled by Liaoxi commandery, which extended to the region of present-day Jinzhou in Liaoning.

The administrative and military geography of the northeast during Han times has been the subject of some debate and many questions remain unsettled. It does not appear that Later Han made any attempt to maintain a full line of fortifications among the Song Ling mountains. Instead, some frontier position was maintained in the valley of the Daling He, known as the Bolang He, "White Wolf River", which runs between the Song Ling and the parallel ridge of the Nuluerhu Shan further inland, then curves to enter the Gulf of Liaodong east of Jinzhou. By controlling at least part of this rugged country, the Han was able to maintain a reasonable security from the hill and forest tribes of the frontier; on the other hand, the special problems of the frontier in this area were recognised by the government of Emperor An, with the re-organisation of three counties of Liaoxi and three counties of Liaodong commanderies into the Dependent State of Liaodong.53

The remaining commanderies of the northeast of Later Han, Xuantu and Lelang, are of limited interest to this study, and the
dealings of the Han empire with the non-Chinese peoples of this region, southern Manchuria and Korea, have been considered by other scholars. In general, it appears that the commandery of Liaodong in Later Han controlled the lower reaches of the Liao River and the open country of the south Manchurian plain, while Lelang preserved some part of the Former Han authority over the southeast of present-day Liaoning and the northwestern part of Korea. Xuantu, northeast of present-day Shenyang, faced with mixed success the turbulent and increasingly aggressive kingdom of Koguryo, or Gaogouli. But dealings with Korea and Manchuria were in some respects a sideshow to the pressing problems with which the Han government had to contend on the northern frontiers of China Proper: as in central Asia, the power of China on this distant borderland depended ultimately upon the power of the Chinese government in its own territory close to home. The real problem for Later Han lay with the barbarian Qiang, Xiongnu, Wuhuan and Xianbi, and it is with those peoples, and the policies and practice of the imperial government in dealing with them, that the present work must deal.

The lands beyond the frontier:

The two geographical regions of Manchuria and Mongolia are separated by the mountain country of the Great Xingan range, which extends a ridge from present-day Heilongjiang province of northern Manchuria southwards along the western parts of Jilin and Liaoning. To the north, the watershed marks the international border of China with the Soviet Union and with the Mongolian People's Republic, and in
the south it provides the boundary between Liaoning province and the Autonomous Region of Inner Mongolia. Topographically, the mountain ranges, rising steeply above the river basins of Manchuria on the east, mark the western rim of the Mongolian plateau.

South and east of the main line of the Great Xingan range is the broken country of the western headwaters of the Liao River, and further south the river valleys about Chengde in northern Hebei. This region, particularly the territory of present-day western Liaoning, has been traditionally identified with the homeland of the Eastern Barbarians (donghu), and modern archaeology has discovered numbers of sites of tombs, with bronze weapons and utensils, in the valleys region of the Laoha River system. Further north, two peaks of the Great Xingan range, Wuhuan Mountain in Liaoning and Xianbi Mountain in Jilin, are described by legend as the original homes of those two peoples.

Regardless of the truth of such detailed identifications, it may be accepted that the Wuhuan and the Xianbi were originally inhabitants of the mountains and forests of this region, and that the lands of the Wuhuan were initially south and somewhat west of the Xianbi. From this country, however, the Wuhuan first and then the Xianbi came into contact with the Chinese to the south and with the steppe people of the Xiongnu confederacy to the west.
The western slopes of the Great Xingan range merge gradually into the Inner Mongolian plateau, some 1000 metres above sea level. The mountains act as a barrier to the rainfall: the annual rainfall at Shenyang is about 700 mm (28 inches) and of Harbin almost 600 mm (22.5 inches), and the mountain country receives about 500 mm per year, but to the north and west the readings reduce to 250 mm (10 inches) and below. With low rainfall, and long cold winters, the forest country gives way to grassy steppe, and again, in the north and west of Inner Mongolia, to desert.

From the point of view of Han China, the region beyond the frontiers might be considered in three segments, extending roughly north and south. On the east, the mountains of the Manchurian border lead down to the plateau, with internal drainage, light rainfall, and steppe grasslands surrounding and interspersed with desert.

In the central section, west of the railway line which leads from Datong and Jining to Ulaan Baatar, the steppe grasslands north of Huhhot and the Ordos extend, through some poor country, to the river country of the Orhon. Northeast of the Edsin Gol, and northwest of the loop of the Yellow River, a peak of the Gurvan Sayhan Uul range, in the borders of the Mongolian People's Republic, was known to the Han as Zhuoye Mountain, and was a landmark for armies and travellers on the steppe. North of these hills is the useful stream of the Ongin River.
Further to the west again, from the region of present-day Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, the heart of the Gobi Desert is a barrier between the Gansu corridor and the Altai Mountains, with other ridges such as the Gurvan Sayhan Uul northeast of Edsin Gol. North of the Altai, in the western part of the Mongolian Republic, there are again rivers and lakes, a drainage system separated from the Orhon system by the mass of the Hangayn Nuruu. From this western region, it is possible to cross the Altai mountains and the desert south to the oasis cities of modern Xinjiang, the Western Regions of Han, or west into the steppe country of Dzungaria, north of modern Turfan and Urumchi.

In this region, the southwest of Mongolia on the borders of modern Xinjiang, the region about Hami was evidently a point of importance on the route from the steppe lands of the Xiongnu to the oasis cities of central Asia. North of Hami, the high ground of the Barköl Tagh produces streams which irrigate the lower grasslands and lead into the Bar Köl lake. In Han times, the Barköl Tagh were known as the Tian Shan, and the steppe country there, Yiwu, was a notable territory of the western Xiongnu state. 57

The three segments described above, however, extend northwards from the long arc of the Han imperial frontier, to the central region of the Orhon basin and the region of modern Ulaan Baatar, in a broad gap between the Hentiyn Nuruu mountains on the east and the Hangayn Nuruu to the west. There, some 800 kilometres from the line of the
Great Wall of Qin and Han, the grassland and arid country of the Mongolian plateau gives way to mountains and fertile river valleys draining north into Lake Baikal. Though the winters are cold and the growing season short, the rainfall is affected by the Siberian climate rather than by the remnants of the monsoon pattern of China, and the country supplies excellent pasture.

Unlike other regions of the Gobi, the territory south of Ulaan Baatar is not particularly difficult to traverse: besides the railway to the southeast, other routes lead southwest to the Edsin Gol and below the Hangayn Nuruu into western Mongolia. More generally, this region is capable of supporting considerable flocks and herds and a significant population of pastoralists. So the triangle between the Ulaan Baatar/Orhon region in the north, the Ordos loop of the Yellow River and the Sanggan valley in the southeast, and the Edsin Gol corridor in the southwest was a centre of power in the Xiongnu state. Furthermore, in the history which is to follow, primarily concerned with the policies and activities of the Han government against the peoples and states of the north, this central triangle of geographical Mongolia was of considerable military importance, since it was comparatively easy for armies to traverse on raids and punitive expeditions between north and south.

In general terms, therefore, looking upon geographical Mongolia as a whole, one may note the different regions of mountain forest merging to steppe in the east, the fertile crescent of grassland north
along the Great Wall frontier of China Proper, the prosperous basin of the Orhon River in the north, and the more isolated region beyond the Altai, further to the west towards central Asia. As Lattimore has observed, the zone of political activity has traditionally been in the margin lands of the frontier between China and the steppe, but one may see in the Han period that the essential axis of power extended northwards to the lands of the Orhon.

The military system of Later Han:

The first section of this chapter discussed the arrangements for the civil administration and local defence of the frontier provinces. It is still necessary and appropriate, however, to consider the military resources of the Later Han government, which might on occasion be brought to bear in times of emergency or for major campaigns.

The central military power of the empire was represented by the Northern Army, stationed at the imperial capital, Luoyang. It comprised five regiments, each commanded by a colonel: the Garrison Cavalry (tunji), the Elite Cavalry (yueji), the Chang River Regiment, the Archers Who Shoot at a Sound (shesheng), and the Footsoldiers (bubing). Each regiment had a strength of some eight hundred officers and men. A junior officer, the Captain of the Centre of the Northern Army, was responsible for the overall supervision and discipline of these troops, but colonelcies of the regiments were
quite often granted to members of the clans of the imperial relatives by marriage, and during Later Han the senior male of the distaff relatives, with a title such as General in Chief or General of Chariots and Cavalry, often held formal command of these troops. In times of domestic crisis, the Northern Army could be an important political weapon.

The chief purpose of the Northern Army, however, was to act as the central strategic reserve of the empire. These were the elite guards, and although their regular duties concerned the military protection of the emperor's capital, one or more regiments could be sent on active service as stiffening for regular troops, local levies and non-Chinese auxiliaries. Few major frontier campaigns took place without one or more of the five regiments.

The day-to-day and formal guard duties of the emperor's palace and other official establishments were carried out by two other formations. The Gentlemen of the Household were organised in five units, under the command of the Generals of the Gentlemen of the Household For All Purposes (wuguan), of the Left and of the Right, Rapid as Tigers (huben) and of the Feathered Forest (yulin). The first three of these were in fact composed of men who had been recommended for office by their local commanderies, and who were serving a period of probation before being appointed to substantive civil rank. The number of men in the three units combined evidently varied between some 700 and 2000, but they could not be regarded as a
real military force. The Gentlemen Rapid as Tigers and the Gentlemen of the Feathered Forest, numbering some 1500 and 1700 respectively, were of more practical use. The Gentlemen of the Feathered Forest, in particular, were chosen from the sons and grandsons of men who had died in battle, and also from worthy families of the northwest. It is possible, though there is no firm evidence, that the Feathered Forest may have provided a form of military cadetship similar to that of three civilian units.

The duties of the Gentlemen of the Household were largely ceremonial, and the actual work of guarding the palace, the administrative offices, the imperial parks and tombs, and other places of government importance was entrusted to ordinary guards, conscripted from the empire as a whole, and probably serving for a period of no more than twelve months. These were the men who kept the gates and doors, and acted as escorts to high officials and to members of the imperial family.62

Neither the Gentlemen of the Household nor the conscript guards could be regarded as professional soldiers. They took no part in campaigns; nor, indeed, were they ever considered a match for the troops of the Northern Army in any coup d'etat. It is likely that each year some conscript guards transferred to the regular units of the Northern Army, but that would represent their first experience of serious military training as part of a disciplined force. The majority of the conscript guards returned to their homes after their
period of service and were incorporated into the local militia.

During the Later Han dynasty, there was a distinction between the commanderies of the frontier provinces and those within the empire. In Former Han, the men of all commanderies and kingdoms had been liable for military service, supervised by the Chief Commandant (or Palace Commandant zhongwei in a kingdom), which entailed a period of training as a Skilled Soldier (caiguan), Cavalryman (jishi) or sailor in a Towered Warship (louchuan), followed by a year of service at the capital, on the frontier or in the provinces. Thereafter, they returned home to continue service in the local militia, which held an annual exercise and inspection each autumn.63

It appears that the system of Later Han was considerably less demanding. We are told that early in the reign of Emperor Guangwu, in 30 AD, among the inner commanderies of the empire, the position of Chief Commandant was reduced to Commandant, and the annual military manoeuvres were discontinued. In the following year, the units of Skilled Soldiers, Cavalrymen and sailors were also disbanded, and training was thereafter carried out through the organisation of People's Sections (minwu), presumably a form of home guard.64

Bielenstein has argued that this change was only short-term, and he has pointed out, quite correctly, that the system of liability for conscription remained.65 However, there are three points which put his full argument into question. Firstly, there are no further
references in Later Han material to the Skilled Soldiers or other such units. Second, there are almost no occasions recorded in Later Han where troops from inner commanderies were used for any operations except those dealing with local banditry and minor rebellion.66 Thirdly, there is a sad and eloquent passage from the Hanguan yi of Ying Shao, quoted in the commentary to the Treatise of Officials in Hou Han Shu, where this scholar of the second century AD deplores the weakness and lack of training of the local militia, and ascribes the fault directly to the changes made by Emperor Guangwu.67

At the beginning of Later Han, as the civil war was drawing to its close, Guangwu's intention was clearly to reduce the number of men under arms, and to lessen the likelihood of future insurrections within the empire. There is a good deal to be said for the argument that it is better to have an essentially unarmed and untrained population, if you cannot be certain of its loyalty; and the new policy, of course, meant a reduction in the military ability of future bandits and rebels, as well as those of the local loyal forces. From the evidence above, it would appear that this remained the policy of the Later Han government, and although conscription was maintained for light military duties, there was no attempt to restore the Former Han tradition of a nation under arms and an effective militia.68

As a result of this change, the men of the inner commanderies had small contribution to make to the military resources of the empire. Already in Former Han, a system of commutation for military
service had been established - a development which was inevitable when each man owed a short period of service in a territory as distant as the lands of the Gansu corridor. There seems no question that this continued, and the military tax (gengfu) was a considerable source of revenue for military expenses of the government. 69

Nevertheless, it was still necessary to put the men on the ground. On the northern frontiers, of course, every man was liable for active and then militia service in defence of his home. Regular troops were still obtained from the inner commanderies. There is no information as to how they were recruited, though it was possibly, as suggested above, by voluntary transfer at the end of the period of conscription. Besides the Northern Army, there was certainly provision for recruitment and training of regular troops outside the capital. In particular, the Encampment at Liyang, near the Yellow River in Wei commandery in the west of the Yellow Plain, which had a complement of 1000 men, is known to have served as a source of supply for the command of the General Who Crosses the Liao stationed in the far north. Similarly, there were the camps of the garrison at Yong and of the Tiger Tooth Chief Commandant at Changan established later in the dynasty. These units served as stationary defence positions, but they could also be used on active campaign on the frontier. 70

Finally, one must consider the problem of the Great Wall: we can be reasonably certain about its physical position upon the ground in the time of Later Han, but it is by no means certain as to when,
and in what areas, it was actually maintained as a part of the
defensive system of the north.

There is no question that, properly maintained and fully
manned, the Great Wall served as an integral part of an effective
system of defence, particularly suitable for dealing with a highly
mobile enemy such as the northern nomads. In the simplest terms, the
existence of this artificial barrier regained the initiative for an
inevitably slow-moving defence. Where a swift raiding party or main
striking force would, in the normal course of events, be able to
attack any point in the defensive perimeter and achieve local
surprise, the Wall presented an immediate obstacle to the attackers'
freedom of movement. The mounted enemy, faced with the Wall, must
either break through one of the gates, or scale the obstacle with
ramps, cranes and ropes. In either case, with guards at the gates,
pickets on the watchtowers and regular patrols along the line of
fortifications, the enemy's approach would be discovered and
information about his strength and movement could be sent back to the
main body of the local defence force. So warned, the defence could
make adequate preparations to meet the enemy; and when the attackers
lost the fight they had again to deal with the Wall as an obstacle to
their retreat.

The wooden slips recovered from the desert regions of the
north-western frontier of Han, particularly those found at sites along
the Edsin Gol, provide impressive evidence of the professional
attitude and the administrative effectiveness of the Han garrisons. There are reports of equipment maintained in the watchtowers, both for defence and for signalling, there are records of patrols carried out and incidents investigated, and there are regular files for the men engaged, their daily duties, and the accounts of travellers as they passed through the guardpoints and passes.71

The dating of the strips does not give a complete record of the occupation of the Wall, but it does appear that the military establishment in the northwest was maintained for most of the Later Han period,72 and in that region the fixed defence provided by the Wall was evidently the most effective and satisfactory.

Loewe, however, has estimated that some 3250 men may have been required for watchtowers along the Wall from Dunhuang to Wuwei, including the Edsin Gol/Juyan salient; and this figure takes no account of the second line troops, such as those engaged in agriculture or at headquarters, nor for any strategic reserve.73 On the basis of this estimate, the resources available to the military commanders in Bing and You provinces may not have permitted them to keep so many troops in fixed positions along their section of the Wall, while also maintaining a reserve sufficiently powerful to come to their assistance in time of need. It is not a question of the Wall being an inefficient form of defence: it is rather a matter whether the manpower was available for its effective use.
In the two hundred years of the Later Han dynasty, we may observe a number of policies being applied to the problem of the northern frontier. The problem was set by the geography of the region, and the natural differences between the peoples of the steppe and the economy and society of China. The government of the empire sought to achieve a solution to the problem by political, administrative and military means but, like all governments, its resources were limited, and its policies were often confused by conflicting advice and demands. The achievement of government may be judged by the record of success with the material at hand, and the pages which follow offer an assessment of the policies and achievement of the Later Han government in the north.
CHAPTER 2

THE QIANG TRIBES AND THE EMPIRE OF HAN:
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CHINESE AUTHORITY

The territory and tribes of the Qiang in the first centuries BC
The conquest of the Qiang by Former Han
Chinese colonisation and settlement
Frontier policy at the beginning of Later Han

Introduction:

In discussions of the frontier history of the Han dynasty, chief emphasis has normally been given to the conflict with nomad peoples north of the Great Wall, to the expansion of Chinese suzerainty in the Western Regions, and to the steady progress of colonisation in the Yangtse valley and the south. Chinese dealings with the Qiang, on the upper reaches of the Yellow River, in the neighbourhood of the Koko Nor and the Xining valley, appeared to be of secondary importance compared with the campaigns against the Xiongnu and the energetic expansion along the Silk Road into central Asia.

In the first two centuries AD, however, the government of Later Han was under continual threat of rebellion and frontier warfare in these northwest territories. There is little doubt that the hostility of the Qiang and the damage which they inflicted upon one of the key
economic areas of the empire played a significant role in the weakness and decline of Han.

In this and the following chapters, I present an account of the Qiang, from their first conquest by the Chinese, through the period of the great rebellions in Later Han, to the eventual bloody destruction of their people and the ruin which they left behind them.

The territory and tribes of the Qiang in the first centuries BC.¹

The Han shu of Ban Gu contains no chapter devoted to the people known as Qiang, though they are naturally mentioned at various places in that history. The most important early source on the Qiang under the Han dynasty is Hou Han shu 87 (liejuan 77), the Account of the Western Qiang, which gives a summary of their history from legendary times and a more detailed record of the first 150 years of the Christian era. The liejuan of Hou Han shu were compiled by Fan Ye of the fifth century, but it is known that the contemporary history of Later Han, the Dongguan Hanji, contained a chapter on the Qiang which was compiled about 150 AD by the scholars Fu Wuji and Huang Jing, and there is good evidence that this material was available to the later historian and was incorporated in large measure within the present text of Hou Han Shu.²

In these accounts, the Qiang barbarians of the Han period were identified with the San Miao, who were banished to the lands of the
west by the legendary Emperor Shun. The name Qiang is related to the ancient clan-name Jiang and the history of these tribes is identified with that of the Rong and Di barbarians of the west during the time of Zhou and Qin. The early histories describe conquest and pressure by the Chinese against the western frontier peoples, and *Hou Han shu* 87/77 states that in the time of Qin and Han the territory of the Qiang lay west of the region of modern Lanzhou.

The greater part of Qiang territory remained forever beyond the frontiers of Han, so that much of the geographical description is inevitably vague. There are references to the Fa or "Distant" Qiang, who appear to have inhabited the higher ground of the Tibetan massif, and the Account of the Western Regions in *Han shu* tells of the Er Qiang who lived south of the Silk Road in the Tsaidam Basin. But the Qiang people with whom the Chinese had greatest contact were living to the east of the great salt lake, the Koko Nor, along the upper reaches of the Yellow River and its tributaries, the modern provinces of Qinghai, Gansu and parts of Shaanxi. From this point of view, though the term Qiang is sometimes rendered as "Tibetan", the ascription is not particularly helpful. The Qiang who dwelt on the frontiers of Han can be traced as distant ancestors of the peoples of modern Tibet, but they were not then closely associated with that territory, and there is clear implication that they had a long history in the northwestern region of China.

In discussing Chinese dealings with the Qiang during the Han dynasty, the official histories make some distinction between the
Western and the Eastern Qiang: the Western Qiang were those of the frontier valleys and hill country west of the Tao and north of the Yellow River; the Eastern Qiang inhabited the lower ground and loessland of the present-day provinces of Gansu, Shaanxi and Shanxi. The distinction is not always clearly maintained: some tribes either emigrated or were forcibly resettled from the west to the east, and the records do not indicate how many of the Qiang people were already settled under Chinese control at the beginning of Han. The commandery of Tianshui (later Hanyang), in the upper Wei valley, appears to have been regarded as marginal territory between East and West.

The territory of the Qiang was bounded on the north by the ranges of the Qilian Shan, along the Gansu corridor, and on the south by the Min Shan, a ridge of the great Qin Ling divide. The climate of the region is cold and dry and the growing season extends over no more than seven or eight months of the year. In present-day China, Lanzhou and Xining are in the region of spring-sown wheat, but only about a quarter of the land is under cultivation, and much of it depends on artificial irrigation by dykes, reservoirs and canals. Further south, along the Tao River, there are patches of fertile ground, and it is certain that all this region of loessland was more heavily forested and less eroded before it received the intensive colonisation of man.

According to the tradition of the Zuo zhuan, the Qiang-Rong people of the Zhou period had been farmers in the region of modern Gansu, and there is archaeological evidence for some farming and
painted-pottery settlements even in the upper reaches of the Yellow River. The people known as Di, who lived to the south of the Qin Ling divide and who were described by the Chinese histories as emigrant Qiang from the north, had a mixed economy. Hou Han Shu, however, in its introductory description of the Qiang, observes that:

The people do not live settled in any one place, but travel wherever there is water and grass. Few crops are grown there and they make their living by raising and herding animals.

From this it may appear that the Qiang with whom the Han dynasty had dealings were primarily a pastoral people, herding cattle, sheep and goats. On the other hand, even in Later Han, when Lai Xi and Ma Yuan attacked these barbarians, it is recorded that the two generals captured great stores of grain from their defeated enemy. There is reason to believe, therefore, that in suitable conditions of climate and soil the Qiang were prepared to accept the advantages of a farming economy.

Throughout the Han period, the Qiang were a people of tribes and clans. There were many occasions when tribes would unite for warfare or for raiding, and a few major leaders were able to establish a confederation which might endure for several years. But unlike the Xiongnu north of China, the Qiang had no stable political organisation nor any certain succession of power. Within a particular clan or tribe, though one man of chiefly family might be regarded as the titular leader, his brothers and cousins could seek their own
followers and their own political interests; and even when one group rose to a position of power and leadership under a single war-chief, there were always rivals, frightened for their own position and anxious to break away.

The Chinese chroniclers described the Qiang as harsh and cruel, wild and rebellious, "animated with the spirit of metal which pervades the western lands", but much of the trouble which they recorded was due to the sense of oppression and mistrust which the Qiang felt for the Han Chinese. From the evidence of historical tradition, these non-Chinese peoples of the west, like the Red Indians of North America, had turned to the wilderness and to warfare less through their own barbarous qualities than through the imperialist pressure of their civilised neighbours. In this situation, scattered among mountains and valleys, difficult of access, again like the peoples in the hills of British India or the highlands of Scotland, they proved difficult to pacify completely, but they could generally be prevented from widespread revolt. The most effective weapons against such tribes were often the arts of diplomacy, political intrigue and occasional assassination, rather than formal military power.

At the very beginning of the Han period, when the great Xiongnu leader Modun established his power to the north of China, he conquered the Yuezhi people who inhabited the Gansu corridor, and it is said that he extended his hegemony over the Qiang. In fact, the Qiang never became active supporters of Modun or his successors, but the
expansion of Xiongnu power did have two notable consequences. Firstly, the Yuezhi were driven from the Gansu corridor: their territory was occupied by Xiongnu chieftains; and some remnants, known as the Little Yuezhi, settled in the hill country of the Qilian Shan.11 Secondly, as a result of their concern about the Xiongnu, the Chinese became anxious that an alliance between the Xiongnu and the Qiang would threaten them with attack from both the north and the west: and this anxiety formed part of the Chinese motive for expansion into the Gansu corridor towards central Asia. In fact, there was no real threat, for the Qiang tribes appear to have been quite incapable of long-term organised military action, and the Xiongnu were in no position to compel them into forming an alliance.

In the reign of Emperor Jing of Han, in the middle of the second century BC, the Yan tribe of the Qiang asked and obtained permission to settle in Longxi commandery and assist in the defence of the frontier.12 The energetic Emperor Wu, however, who came to the throne in 141 BC, used the excuse of the Qiang threat for his own wars of aggression, and the Chinese histories describe many of the conflicts in terms of Qiang rebellion and Chinese preventive war.

The conquest of the Qiang by Former Han:

In the first twenty years of the reign of Emperor Wu, the armies of Han re-established Chinese control over the territories in the northwest which had formerly been held by Qin, so the frontiers
of the empire followed the eastern bank of the Yellow River from Longxi commandery, in the region of modern Lanzhou, to Shuofang and Wuyuan north of the Ordos. In 121 BC, however, there began the first of a series of major campaigns to the northwest which culminated in the eventual Chinese control of the Gansu corridor and the caravan route into central Asia. By the end of the second century BC, the Chinese had established the commanderies of Jiuquan, Zhangye and Dunhuang, and they maintained military posts and a protected road in the eastern part of the Gansu corridor, the future commandery of Wuwei. 13

Though the military protection of the trade route did reduce the profits of raiding parties, the Chinese operations to the north of their tribal territory were not aimed directly at the Qiang. Nevertheless, Han expansion onto the western bank of the Yellow River, and the establishment of a major military post at Lianju, 14 presented an obvious threat to their homelands. In 112 BC, in an alliance led by the Xianlian tribe, groups of Qiang attacked Chinese settlements at Lianju, at Fuhan on the upper Yellow River, and at Angu on the Tao River. The Han sent a major force, described as more than 100,000 men, drawn from the standing army at the capital with contingents from the central commanderies of Henan and Henei and cavalry from the border regions of Longxi, Tianshui and Anding. The Qiang were defeated and driven away; the Chinese confirmed their hold on the western bank of the Yellow River.
This early war with the Qiang showed many of the elements which late formed a significant part of Chinese policy on the Qiang frontier. It was, for example, at this time that the Han first occupied the Xining valley, a natural salient into the mountain country of the Qiang, and they established fortifications and settlements, with Chinese subjects brought into the region to colonise it. In such marginal territory, agriculture depended largely on irrigation, but there was adequate water from the Xining River, the Datong and their tributaries, and the Chinese occupation of the valleys encouraged the divisions of the Qiang and enabled their movements to be kept under observation. Also in 112 BC, there was established for the first time a Colonel Protector of the Qiang (hu Qiang xiaowei) [hereafter cited as Protector], who accompanied the army on its campaign and supervised the settlement and conquest. Though it was not maintained continually, the office of Protector was frequently established after this time: the Protector might occasionally lead an army in the field, but his duties were primarily those of a political officer, with responsibility for obtaining information on the Qiang beyond the frontiers and also for peaceful relations between Chinese and Qiang within the borders.

Chinese colonisation and settlement:

In 81 BC, during the reign of Emperor Zhao, there was a re-organisation of administrative units along the frontier against the Qiang, and Jincheng commandery was established with counties from
the jurisdiction of Longxi, Tianshui and Zhangye commanderies. The new administration covered the Xining valley and the course of the Yellow River upstream from present-day Lanzhou, but it does not appear that Chinese colonisation in this region was immediately prosperous. In the reign of Emperor Xuan (74 to 48 BC), the Xianlian tribespeople living above the Xining valley asked permission to move down from the hills and take up uncultivated land for pasturage. When this request was refused, they entered the frontiers without permission and two years followed before their defeat in 61 BC by the general Zhao Chongguo.16 In a memorial to the throne after his victory, Zhao Chongguo proposed that the Chinese should confirm their settlement in the Xining valley by means of military agricultural colonies (tuntian):17

The officers and soldiers that I command, with their horses and cattle, consume each month 199,630 hu of grain, 1,693 hu of salt, and 250,286 shi of fodder.18 It is difficult to maintain such a force for any length of time, and the corvee labour for transport of these supplies is never-ending.

Moreover, I am afraid that there are other barbarians, equally unpredictable, who may suddenly gather together and make a rising. They will always be a source of anxiety to Your Majesty, and there is absolutely no way to prepare formal military plans for dealing with them in advance. On the other hand, though it is difficult to crush the Qiang in battle, it will be easy for us to destroy them if we set up a long-term policy. It is my humble opinion that there is little to be gained by direct attack.

According to my estimation, in the region from Linqiang east to Gaomen19 there are more than 2,000 qing of land being fields which were formerly controlled by the Qiang, together with government fields which have never been cultivated by our people,20 while many of the post and guard stations in the region have deteriorated. My advance party has already gone out into the hill country, and they have felled trees and obtained more than 60,000 pieces of good timber, large and small, all of them near rivers.
What I propose is that we should disband the cavalry units, but keep the convict recruits and the volunteers, together with footsoldiers from Huaiyang and Runan and the personal followers of the officers. Altogether this would amount to 10,281 men, and they would require each month 27,363 hu of grain and 308 hu of salt. They would establish camps at various important and strategic places, and when the ice breaks they will be able to bring the trees down by water to repair the local settlements and guard stations and to dredge the ditches and maintain the irrigation system. They would keep in order the roads and bridges through seventy stations to the west of the gorges of the Huang River possibly even as far as the region of Xian Shui [the Koko Nor].

In spring, when it is time to go out and work in the fields, each man would be allotted twenty mou. In the fourth month, when plants start to grow, we would raise one thousand able-bodied horsemen from the commandery, and the same number of auxiliary cavalry from the barbarians of the dependent states, with two spare horses for every ten mounted men, to graze in the open country and act as a mobile defence force for the men working on the farms.

This program will increase the stores in Jincheng commandery and save enormous expense [in transport from China Proper]: if the Grand Minister of Agriculture is ordered to supply just enough grain for ten thousand men for a single year [they will thereafter be self-supporting].

The proposals of Zhao Chongguo met with some opposition, for the government of Former Han had long abandoned the expansionist policies of Emperor Wu, and the chief Chinese concern was for a secure frontier, not for an extended one. There was a long-drawn debate in court, and Zhao Chongguo replied to a variety of questions that were raised, by further memorials sent from his army headquarters. In 60 BC, however, his program was put into effect, military agricultural colonies were organized and three new counties, Heguan, Poqiang and Yuanjie, were established in the Xining and Yellow River valleys. The Qiang who surrendered were controlled as Zhao Chongguo had suggested, under a system of dependent states with military and
political supervision from Chinese officials. This pattern remained a model for the next sixty years.

Besides the establishment of dependent states to control the tribes on the frontier, however, Zhao Chongguo also made use of the strategy of forced immigration. Members of the Han and Qian tribes were brought back into the valley of the Wei River, and settled in a new county called Hanqian, now south of Tianshui in Gansu. The county was not maintained as an administrative centre under Later Han, but the colonisation appears to have been quite successful: the Qian tribe are not mentioned again, though the Han tribe appears briefly as rebels in the 140s AD. Such a policy of resettlement was not uncommon, and it did reduce the likelihood of conflict along the frontier; however, it left the Xianlian group in control of the border territory, and it provided an example which was to be followed with more drastic effect at the beginning of Later Han.

Though there was no doubt endemic raiding on a small scale during the remaining years of Former Han, and there was occasional rebellion from tribes within Chinese territory, most of these disturbances could be dealt with by local authority and military power. In 42 and 41 BC the chieftain Shaodang of the Yan tribe led a series of raids on Longxi commandery: he was supported by six other tribal groups, and it was necessary for the Chinese to call in a regular army under a full general to deal with his incursions. Shaodang himself became a hero of his people, and his tribe changed
its name from Yan to Shaodang in his honour. With this one exception, however, the Qiang were in no position to contest Chinese occupation of their former lowland territory, and even those who still remained outside the frontier of the empire generally submitted to Chinese authority.

At the beginning of the first century AD, when Wang Mang was acting as regent for the young Emperor Ping, last emperor of the Former Han dynasty, he sent envoys to persuade the Qiang in the region of the Koko Nor to surrender and offer tribute to Han. In 5 AD a new commandery, known as Xihai, was formed in this region, with five county cities — which in fact can have been no more than isolated forts and camps — and some thousands of Chinese convicts were sent there as colonists. In some respects this extension of the frontier was designed as a political coup to enhance Wang Mang's prestige and authority within the capital, and it is not likely that Chinese control on the ground was very firm. On the other hand, in the first months of 7 AD, Chinese armies put down a rebellion of the tribes in this region, and there seems no question that Wang Mang had established some measure of military authority beyond the former frontiers of Han. The official history contains no further reference to the Qiang until the overthrow of Wang Mang's government in 23 AD. In the period of rebellion and civil war that followed, the Chinese outposts beside the Koko Nor were overthrown, and they disappeared for ever. The old imperial territory in the Xining valley and the lands west of the Yellow River was now dominated by the turbulent Qiang.
When Liu Xiu, Emperor Guangwu of Later Han, came to turn his attention to the west, all the work of conquest and settlement had to be done again.

**Frontier policy at the beginning of Later Han:**

For ten years after the death of Wang Mang and the destruction of central government in China, the major Chinese power in the northwest was held by the warlord Wei Ao, based on present-day eastern Gansu, between the Yellow River and the valley of the Wei. After some campaigns against the Qiang, in which he achieved only limited success, Wei Ao was content to form a loose alliance with various tribes and used some of their fighting men as auxiliary troops. In the early 30s, when Emperor Guangwu moved against Wei Ao, he appointed a Protector of the Qiang to seek support among the tribesmen and induce them to attack Wei Ao from the west. However, his nominee, Wen Xu, was captured by Wei Ao’s followers and committed suicide. At the same time, Emperor Guangwu made an alliance with the warlord Dou Rong of Wuwei, who attacked the Qiang in Jincheng and then brought his armies to the line of the Yellow River, on the north–west of Wei Ao’s position. The first campaign, in the year 30, was unsuccessful, but two years later Guangwu and Dou Rong achieved a major victory. In 33 Wei Ao died, and his son Wei Chun surrendered to Guangwu in the following year.
Even before the overthrow of the Wei family, the new Han government had made some preparations for the settlement of the Qiang frontiers in Longxi and Jincheng. In 33, Lai Xi, a cousin of Guangwu and one of the leading military commanders of Han, had been appointed Governor of Liang province with responsibility for operations against Wei Ao and the Qiang in the north and west and also against the rival emperor Gongsun Shu to the south in present-day Sichuan. In 34, the Xianlian Qiang and a number of other tribes raided Chinese positions in Jincheng and Longxi commanderies and were defeated by the Han armies. A few months later, Lai Xi was killed on campaign against Gongsun Shu, but his assistant, Ma Yuan, Grand Administrator of Longxi commandery, continued operations against the Qiang. In 35, the Xianlian tribe were again defeated, first at Lintao in Longxi and then along the Xining River in Jincheng commandery. In the two separate campaigns, Ma Yuan captured more than ten thousand head of horses, cattle and sheep, together with considerable stores of grain. He was wounded in the leg during one of the final engagements, and he did not completely destroy the enemy, but he did drive them away from the valley lands of Jincheng, and he was rewarded with imperial commendation and several thousand of the animals he had captured.

Though members of the Qiang had escaped across the borders, Ma Yuan's victories in 35 had broken the power of the Xianlian tribe and had made possible a restoration of Chinese positions on the old frontiers. In his discussion of Later Han policy, Bielenstein has emphasised the "defeatist spirit" of Emperor Guangwu and his court,
and cites as an example the abolition of Jincheng commandery and its combination with Longxi in 36.\textsuperscript{36} In fact, however, the final positions that were established on the frontier against the Qiang were almost exactly the same as those of Former Han. From this point of view, the abolition of Jincheng commandery may best be seen as a grant of authority to Ma Yuan, still Grand Administrator of Longxi, in order that he might exercise full control over the whole frontier territory facing the Qiang. As Bielenstein points out, it was proposed at court that Chinese positions west of Poqiang should be abandoned; a move which would have left the whole of the upper valley of the Xining River to the occupation of the Qiang. But Ma Yuan memorialised against this plan, and it was not raised again.

In his memorial, Ma Yuan wrote:

Westwards from Yuanya,\textsuperscript{37} there is a walled settlement every few score li, and each of them is well fortified. Under the old system, in order to establish the frontier we placed our defences along the defiles and narrow passes of the hills, with a garrison commander to guard each pathway.\textsuperscript{38} By this means, the barbarians were prevented from making any unexpected moves against us.

If we now abandon everything to the northwest of Yuanya we would be giving encouragement to the barbarians and weakening our own positions: we must rather act quickly with military force to drive them away. The prefectures of Jincheng have rich and fertile fields, and the irrigation system is still in perfect order. It will not be difficult to bring back the original settlers to this region, and we should certainly not abandon any territory.\textsuperscript{39}

Ma Yuan's policy was clearly the same as that of Zhao Chongguo in the previous century, and during his control of Jincheng, in the years 36 and 37, he undertook an energetic program to rebuild the fortifications and irrigation works and to re-establish the farmlands.
Map 1: The Qiang Frontier in the First Century AD
It is specifically recorded that three thousand people who had emigrated from Jincheng north into Wuwei were now returned to their original territory. Certainly these represented no more than a tiny fraction of the population which had fled Jincheng during the disturbances, for most refugees would have gone southwards towards present day Sichuan. However, since Ma Yuan had authority over a unified commandery of Longxi/Jincheng, he could arrange migration and resettlement within this region without special permission from the government. The resettlement of three thousand people across commandery borders from Wuwei was a matter for official concern and was recorded in the official histories, but it is very likely that a great many more people, who had not fled so far as the south of the Qin Ling range, were now brought back to the frontier counties of Jincheng. By the end of 37, Jincheng commandery was re-established.

In 37, while Ma Yuan was still occupied with the reconstruction of Jincheng, he also led a final campaign against the Shenlang tribe of the Qiang who had rebelled in Wudu commandery, and he forced their surrender near Dikdao in Longxi commandery. Soon afterwards, Ma Yuan was summoned from the northwest to take command of an army of expedition in the south towards present-day Vietnam. He left behind a frontier which followed the same lines as that of Former Han, and his campaigns against the Qiang had established a period of peace which lasted almost twenty years. Besides the defeats which he inflicted upon raiders and rebels, Ma Yuan had also been concerned to win obedience and acceptance of Chinese authority among the Qiang who
lived beyond the frontier. With the aid of a chieftain known as Yangfeng, he arranged the formal submission of local leaders and rewarded them with insignia as kings, marquises and lesser feudal ranks. For the time being, in semblance at least, the authority of Han in this region of the northwest was restored to its former position.

There were, however, two major changes that had taken place in the northwest between the end of Former Han and the restoration of Later Han. Firstly, the Chinese population of this region had suffered a marked decline. In 2 AD, just before Wang Mang extended Chinese authority over Xihai commandery, the combined population of Longxi and Jincheng commanderies was about 400,000. At the census of 140, the next date for which we have detailed figures, the population of the same region had been reduced to 50,000, largely as the result of migration south across the Qin Ling. Though the figures for 140 were naturally affected by the massive disturbances which took place in the early second century (and which will be discussed in the next chapter), it is still very probable that the combined population of Longxi and Jincheng had already, at the beginning of Later Han, declined by as much as a half; and this despite the campaign for resettlement organised by Ma Yuan. For the time being, the numbers of Chinese settled in the frontier region were sufficient to support the towns and farmlands which ensured imperial control of the valleys along the Xining River and south of the Yellow River, and it is possible that the situation remained stable for some time after the departure of Ma Yuan. But there were natural incentives for the
people of this frontier to look southwards to security and opportunity in colonisation beyond the Qin Ling ranges, and in the last analysis, if the government of imperial China could not maintain its civilian population in the lands of the northwest, then no military defences could keep firm hold on the frontiers. Throughout the period of Later Han, the Chinese population of the northwest was a dwindling asset.

The second great change in the northwest concerned the hinterland of the frontiers rather than the frontiers themselves. In all the territory east of the Yellow River, in the upper valley of the Wei and its tributaries, the decline of Chinese population and emigration to the south paralleled that of Longxi and Jincheng. The commanderies of Tianshui (renamed Hanyang in 74), Anding and Beidi in Liang province, Xihe and Shang commanderies in Bing province, and Youfufeng in Sili near the Former Han capital Changan, had all lost a significant number of their Chinese inhabitants. During the same period, the weakness of Chinese settlement was recognised and confirmed by the abolition of Former Han counties; partly as a measure of administrative economy, partly because there were significantly fewer Chinese people to receive supervision and government. In the region north of the Wei River valley some sixty or seventy county administrations of Former Han were eliminated by Emperor Guangwu, and Chinese occupation and control was seriously weakened.

The dangerous situation in the northwest was aggravated by Ma Yuan's policy of resettlement for barbarians captured on the
frontiers. In the aftermath of his campaign against the Xianlian Qiang in 35, it is recorded by the annals and by the Account of the Western Qiang that he compelled his prisoners to settle themselves in Tianshui, Youfufeng and the east of Longxi commandery: that is, in the upper valley of the Wei. Since the Xianlian had formerly been a frontier tribe in the hill country of Jincheng commandery, this represented a forced move of some 400 kilometres, and placed them well inside Chinese control under the eye of local administrators. In fact, it does not appear that the move involved more than a few thousand people, but in later years more tribespeople were forced to migrate from the frontier into China, and this policy was clearly designed to weaken barbarian pressure on the border defences. Ma Yuan's strategy was certainly successful: the Xianlian tribe are never heard of again as a threat to the west, and the Shaodang tribe who took over their position were later dealt with in the same way.

On the other hand, the overall success of such a policy required that the former troublemakers who were resettled should be kept under proper control in their new territory, and as time went by this became increasingly difficult to ensure. As Chinese settlement in the Wei valley and the north was already declining, official supervision of the non-Chinese immigrants was correspondingly slight, and the tensions between the two groups, Chinese peasants and semi-pastoral tribespeople with different customs and language, was a potential source of friction and anxiety. From this point of view, the policy of Ma Yuan and his successors had some success in
maintaining the forward frontiers of the empire, but it was achieved at the expense of great danger to the Chinese hinterland which those frontiers were meant to defend. 44

In all this movement of population, one factor remains unclear. The present climate of the region is comparatively dry and cold, with a limited growing season and some need for irrigation. The very existence of Qiang settlement east of the Yellow River may imply that the balance of advantage had shifted from Chinese-style peasant agriculture to non-Chinese pastoral economy. Further evidence of this may be found in the fact that Ma Yuan was rewarded for his victories in 35 by a grant of the captured cattle, sheep and horses, and that he distributed these among his clients and personal followers: despite his energetic establishment of irrigation and farmlands, it is clear that Ma Yuan found grazing animals a practical form of wealth. Again, the Qiang who were moved to the east of the Yellow River did not adjust themselves readily to settled agriculture, and later references in the histories refer to their possession not only of cattle, sheep and horses, but also of asses, mules and camels. In many cases of resettlement, a policy which the Chinese had applied not only on the northern frontier but also within the empire and on the southern borders, it must have been hoped that the migrants would come to accept local customs and assimilate with the population that surrounded them. If this was the plan for the Qiang, however, it does not appear to have succeeded, and one reason for its failure may have been that the territory they were allotted was more suitable to their original semi-pastoral life than to that of the Chinese farmers who had occupied the land during Former Han.
The previous chapter discussed the Qiang people of the northwest of China during the period of Former Han, the interregnum of Wang Mang, and the restoration of Later Han in the first half of the first century AD. In the civil war which followed the fall of Wang Mang in 23, the Qiang tribes gained a measure of independence from Chinese rule, but during the late 30s, after Emperor Guangwu had established his authority in Liang province, his general Ma Yuan restored the frontier lines of Longxi and Jincheng commanderies in essentially the same positions as they had been in Former Han. By the time of Guangwu's death in 57 the Han power in this region appeared on the surface much as it had before.

There were, however, as we have observed, some major differences, most notably in the pattern of Chinese and Qiang colonisation and settlement. On the one hand, despite the efforts of Ma Yuan and the official policy of the imperial government, great numbers of Chinese had abandoned the territory of the northwest and had sought security by migration across the mountain divides of the Qin Ling into
the Sichuan basin and the lands of the Yangtze. The Chinese population in Longxi and Jincheng had already suffered a marked decline from the levels of the Former Han period, and the process continued throughout Later Han.

On the other hand, at the same time as Chinese colonisation weakened, the Qiang had been permitted to enter the borders and establish themselves within the imperial territory. These Eastern Qiang, so called to distinguish them from their fellows outside and along the frontier, were now theoretically under the control of established Chinese power, and certainly their harassment of the frontier was ended. The program, however, assumed that the Qiang in this hinterland would be outnumbered by their Chinese neighbours and eventually integrated into their culture: but in the years which followed, as Chinese migration seeped across the mountains to the south, and further groups of Qiang were either brought by force or entered voluntarily into the empty land, the balance weighed less and less in the Chinese favour.

By the second half of the first century, then, the Chinese had succeeded in maintaining their dominance over the Xining valley, the Gansu corridor and the Yellow River east of present-day Lanzhou, but they had done so at the cost of constant tension along the frontier and a measure of insecurity behind the lines. Both these difficulties and dangers were demonstrated in full measure during the next hundred years.
The Shaodang frontier wars 57-101:

We have noted earlier that in the years 42 and 41 BC, the chieftain Shaodang of the Yan tribe of the Qiang had brought a series of raids against Longxi commandery and had obtained a reputation as a leader among his people. In honour of his achievements, the Yan tribe had changed its name to Shaodang, but their position declined again after his death. For the next few generations they were settled in various small valleys north of the Yellow River and outside the frontier, but they were not numbered among the major tribes of the Qiang.

Early in Later Han, however, within a few years of Ma Yuan's settlement of the borders, the Shaodang regained their strength. The Xianlian tribe, formerly the most powerful of the Western Qiang, had been so weakened by their defeats at the hands of the Chinese and by the forced migration into imperial territory, that the few people who remained outside the frontier were in no position to cope with rivals and enemies. According to the Chinese records, around 40, under the leadership of their chieftain Dianliang, the Shaodang tribe attacked the lands of the Xianlian and seized them for themselves. Their base was now in the Greater and Lesser Yu valleys, on the southern bank of the Yellow River, and in the course of the next generation they established authority and a pattern of occasional alliance among the other tribes of the frontier.

The first stir of trouble in the twenty years since Ma Yuan had
left the northwest came in 56, when the Shenlang Qiang of Wudu again attacked the Chinese positions in Wudu and Longxi commanderies. They were speedily defeated by local troops, but in the following year there appeared a more serious threat, further to the north. Through a series of small raids against Chinese frontier positions, the Shaodang chieftain Dianyu,² son of Dianliang, had obtained recognition as a warleader and counsellor in his own and other tribes. In 57 he gathered his forces and launched an attack eastwards along the Yellow River. At first, this may have been no more than a raid in strength, but in a confusion of skirmishes and battles, the Qiang defeated Chinese forces at Fuhan and Yuanjie, and then achieved a striking victory at Yuanya, the capital of Jincheng commandery. On seeing this success, several other tribes of the Qiang rose in rebellion and a number of local Chinese armies were defeated and destroyed.

In the following year an army of forty thousand men, with two generals in command, was sent from the imperial capital, Luoyang, and the rebellions were put down. Dianyu himself surrendered in 59 and, in keeping with the policy of Ma Yuan, seven thousand of the surrendered tribesmen were settled in the commanderies about Changan. There was again some form of peace for another fifteen years or more, but occasional raids continued along the frontiers, and it was clear from the experience of the first Shaodang war that the local military forces of Jincheng and Longxi were too weak to cope with a major coalition of the tribes.
Dianyu's eldest son and nominal successor, Dongyu, had accepted the submission of his father and came to live within Chinese territory, but his younger brother, Miyu, now gathered followers of his own and gained reputation and influence as a leader of raiding parties against the Chinese. In 77, Miyu and his group attempted to leave the frontier region and move away to the west; reluctant to lose control and supervision, the Grand Administrator of Jincheng followed Miyu with his army, but the Qiang turned and defeated him, raided Jincheng and Longxi, and called another general uprising. Once again, the trouble was put down, but it continued on a lower level for the next ten years, and in 86 Miyu and his allies cut off a Chinese army and killed the Protector, Fu Yu, who commanded it. In the following year, the new Protector Zhang Yu induced Miyu to surrender and then killed him and several of his fellows by treachery, poisoning their wine at the ceremonial banquet, and setting his soldiers to massacre their followers.

The murder of Miyu was a serious mistake, for his son Mitang was old enough to take command of troops for himself and he remained for the rest of his life an inveterate enemy of Han. His first rebellion of revenge was put down in 87, and there followed an uneasy truce, punctuated by occasional outbreaks of trouble. By 92, however, Mitang had again formed a significant coalition of Qiang tribes, and there was continual warfare for the next six years, with full Chinese armies in the field and raiding by the barbarians from the south of Longxi commandery to the north of Jincheng. In 93 an army under the
Protector Guan You attacked the home territory of the Shaodang in the Yu valleys. The Chinese constructed a great pontoon bridge across the Yellow River, seized the southern bank, and captured large stores of grain. Mitang took refuge with his people far to the west, on the upper reaches of the Yellow River. In 97, however, after the death of Guan You, Mitang returned with a major raid against the frontiers. The empire was compelled to send an army of thirty thousand men, including soldiers from the Northern Army at Luoyang, regular troops from garrisons about Changan, border levies and barbarian auxiliaries. In a great battle near Lintao in southern Longxi, Mitang was defeated and fled across the border, but the Chinese forces had been too severely mauled to permit them to pursue him.

In the following year, Mitang surrendered, but the war had been won rather by means of attrition than by decisive Chinese victory. Mitang himself was brought to the court to pay homage and was then expelled beyond the frontiers, but numbers of the Shaodang and other tribes were again resettled within the borders. In 101, Mitang attempted one last alliance and raid, but his former followers were now jealous and suspicious of his leadership, he was defeated without great difficulty, and his death a few years later was almost unnoticed. In a final forced migration, six thousand of the Shaodang people were shifted to Hanyang, Longxi and Anding commanderies.

With the close of the Shaodang frontier wars, the imperial
government was faced with the work of reconstruction, and the problems were more serious than before. There is no question that the constant disturbance drove many Chinese settlers to emigrate south from the exposed territories of Jincheng and Longxi, and a significant loss of population in these two commanderies must have taken place. At the same time, the conquest of the Shaodang lands in the Yu valleys had extended the imperial frontiers further to the west along the Yellow River, and it was generally agreed that this land should be occupied and held. As a result, military agricultural colonies were established in the region, and soldier settlers were also brought in to reoccupy land in the valley of the Xining River. Despite the loss of population and the tenuous position in the northwest, the imperial government was still attempting to maintain a forward policy on the frontier and to encourage Chinese settlement along the borders, while at the same time they hoped to keep their former enemies resettled and peaceable behind the lines. The balance of forces, however, had shifted decisively, and the great rebellion of the Eastern Qiang demonstrated the true weakness of the Chinese government.

Protectorate policy and military power in the first century:

At the very beginning of Later Han concern with the Qiang frontiers, soon after the death of the northwestern warlord Wei Ao in 33, the scholar official Ban Biao, father of the historian Ban Gu and of the great general Ban Chao, who had served for some time under Wei Ao but who now held a post in the central government at Luoyang,
sent in a memorial urging the re-establishment of a Colonel Protector of the Qiang: 7

At the present time, the whole region of Liang province contains Qiang people who have submitted to our government. The Qiang barbarians have unkempt hair and fasten their clothes on the left, 8 but they live quite intermingled with the Chinese. Their customs are different. They speak a totally strange language, and they are often oppressed and bullied by petty officials and tricksters. They bitterly resent this treatment, but they have no-one to turn to, and in the end they are brought to rebellion. It is just the same with all the banditry and disturbance among the barbarians of the south and west.

Under the former system, the region of Yi province had chief commandants of cavalry for the southern barbarians, 9 You province had a Colonel in charge of the Wu-huan, 10 and Liang province had a Colonel Protector of the Qiang. All held credentials, and they were responsible for looking after the people and sorting out their grievances.

At appropriate seasons during the year [these officers) would tour of inspection to ask for complaints or any cause of resentment, and they would send round agents and interpreters to keep contact with the people. They also arranged for the Qiang barbarians outside the borders to act as the eyes and ears of the government, and in this way the provincial and commandery authorities were warned and prepared in advance against any attack.

We should now restore something of the old system, to establish authority of the empire on the frontier.

It is said that Emperor Guangwu accepted this proposal, and appointed a certain Niu Han as Colonel Protector of the Qiang. Niu however, died in the following year, 34, and the post was not continued. With his military force, and the combined administration of two commanderies, Ma Yuan had filled some of the functions of a Protector, but his policy had been more repressive. In 58, at the time of the first Shaodang war, the protectorate was re-established with headquarters at Dikdao, the capital of Longxi commandery. Dou
Lin, a member of the great Dou clan which had long held authority in the northwest, and who was himself a former internuncio (yezhe), experienced in dealings with non-Chinese people, was appointed to the position. In the following year, however, Dou Lin was dismissed and sent to prison where he died: his diplomatic enthusiasm had led him to offer bribes and the title of supreme chief to both Dianyu and his elder brother Dianan, and he sought to deceive the court in doing so. His successor Guo Xiang, also an internuncio, could find no effective part to play in dealing with the Qiang and he resigned his office in disgrace. In 59 the protectorate was abolished.

In 76, shortly before the second Shaodang war, there had been a rising among several tribes in Jincheng and Longxi commanderies because a woman of the Beinan Qiang was seized by a junior official of Anyi prefecture. The Chinese official was then murdered by the woman's husband and the Beinan group, in fear of retribution, fled beyond the frontiers. They were pursued by the prefect of Anyi, Zong Yan, but attacked his force and killed him, and they then allied with other tribes in raiding along the borders of Longxi commandery. Within a short time, the raiders were defeated by a combined force raised from the two commanderies of Longxi and Jincheng, but as a result of this incident the office of Protector was revived, and Wu Tang, formerly General Who Crosses the Liao, was appointed to the post, with headquarters at Anyi.

This incident of 76, though minor in itself, and quite insignificant compared to the depredations of Miyu and Mitang in the years
to come, does demonstrate some important aspects of Chinese policy in this region. Firstly it is very likely that the incident of rape or abduction and the subsequent revenge was not uncommon, and it indicates the petty oppression and the sources of tension which operated against peaceful relations between the Qiang and their Chinese overlords. Secondly, the rapid escalation of the incident was encouraged to a considerable degree by the Chinese pursuit of the anxious tribespeople; and the question of the legal judgement for the original fault seems to have been neglected in the Chinese determination to prevent any groups of the Qiang from escaping across the frontier.

From this point of view, the appointment of Wu Tang confirms a specific development of Chinese policy. The office of General Who Crosses the Liao had been established in 65 by the government of Emperor Ming, and Wu Tang was the first to hold the new position. The chief function of the command was to prevent the Southern Xiongnu, now settled in the Ordos region in formal alliance with the Chinese empire, from any contact or communication with their fellow nomads, the Northern Xiongnu, who still remained beyond the frontier.13

In 58 and 59, then, the court had experimented with men of diplomatic experience as protectors, and the results had not been particularly successful. Wu Tang's appointment in 76 was evidently designed to confirm the policy already established in dealing with the Xiongnu, to separate and control the Qiang on either side of the frontier largely by military means. One year later, when the
rebellion of Miyu broke out, again as a result of Chinese pursuit of Qiang people across the frontier, Wu Tang was dismissed and replaced by the Grand Administrator of Wuwei commandery, Fu Yu, who established his headquarters at Linqiang and held the post for the next ten years. According to *Hou Han shu*, however, though Miyu surrendered in 86, it was Fu Yu who stirred up trouble and urged the court to approve a further campaign against the Qiang. When Fu Yu was killed in battle in 87, his successor, Zhang Yu, former Grand Administrator of Longxi, took command of the Chinese army in a campaign of revenge, and he was personally responsible for the treacherous parley that brought about the death of Miyu and caused the renewed warfare of Mitang.\textsuperscript{14}

With the appointment of Deng Xun, who succeeded Zhang Yu after his dismissal in 89, and who remained in office until his death in 92, a more lenient policy was developed, and the campaigns against Mitang were carried out by a mixture of diplomacy and force. Deng Xun himself succeeded in isolating Mitang by gaining the allegiance of other Qiang tribes in the early 90s, and his good treatment of the Little Yuezhi, inhabiting areas of the Qilian mountains, secured their loyalty to Han and their recruitment into a semi-permanent force known as the Auxiliary of Loyal Barbarians.\textsuperscript{15}

The protectors' responsibilities on the frontiers, however, and their general preoccupation with military affairs and particularly with the Shaodang wars, had prevented any serious policy of supervised settlement and conciliation among the tribespeople who had been.
brought by force and held within the empire. By the beginning of the second century, moreover, it appears very probable that large numbers of the Qiang, besides those captured in war, had come inside the frontiers to the east of the Yellow River. As the Chinese population in the northwest continued to decline, the open lands were taken up by the herdsmen of the Qiang, and the significance of this steady occupation was either unnoticed or ignored by the Chinese authorities.

In more general terms, moreover, even while the northern lands were increasingly occupied by non-Chinese immigrants, the nature of Chinese military strength had also changed, chiefly as a result of Emperor Guangwu's abolition of compulsory military training within the empire. In time of emergency, men were called up or press-ganged into local forces, but only in the frontier commanderies was there a regular system of compulsory service and militia training.¹⁶

From the point of view of imperial policy, the change had many points in its favour. The initial edicts were issued at a time when Guangwu was reducing the official system of administration, both in the capital and in the provinces; and there were obvious disadvantages for the internal security of the empire in having large bodies of its citizens trained in military skills: an abortive rebellion against Wang Mang by Zhai Yi in 7 AD and the successful rising of 22, by the Li and Liu clans, in which the future emperor himself had joined, had both been planned for the occasion of the autumn review.¹⁷ On the frontiers, the defensive garrisons of the Great Wall and other regions
had long been maintained by recruits, conscripts and exiled criminals, and the military duties of citizens in the inner commanderies had generally been commuted to pay for these professionals. As Loewe has remarked, the great generals of the Western Region in Later Han, Ban Chao and his son Ban Yong, found that the most effective forces they could command were a majority of non-Chinese with a stiffening of Chinese officers.18

Both in the Western Regions and on the frontiers with the Northern Xiongnu, the expeditionary armies of Later Han relied heavily upon non-Chinese allies and auxiliaries, including tribesmen of the Qiang. In 73, for example, a major attack upon the Northern Xiongnu was carried out by forces of militia from the border commanderies, together with groups of horsemen from the Southern Xiongnu, the Qiang, the Wuhuan and the Xianbi. One column, in which the General Who Crosses the Liao, Wu Tang (later to become Colonel Protector of the Qiang) shared command, contained eleven thousand cavalry, drawn entirely from the forces of the Southern Shanyu of the Xiongnu and the Qiang of Hedong, Beidi and Xihe commanderies.19 In the great expedition of the General of Chariots and Cavalry Dou Xian in 89, there were again major contingents of the Qiang and of the Loyal Auxiliaries raised by the Protector Deng Xun, together with more than forty thousand Southern Xiongnu.20

The system of using non-Chinese people to fight other non-Chinese, reminiscent of the recruitment policy of auxiliaries in the
contemporary Roman empire, had worked with a good deal of success. By the end of the century, the situation along the borders of the empire and in central Asia presented a broad picture of military achievement. The power of the Northern Xiongnu had been broken, and the campaigns of Ban Chao had largely re-established the dominance of China over the city states along the Silk Road.

Behind this appearance of achievement, however, the Chinese empire had real weaknesses. The very fact that non-Chinese auxiliaries and allies had played a major part in the victories of Han reflected the load that was placed upon them, while at the same time the treatment of these barbarians at the hands of imperial officials continued to test the patience and the loyalty of the tribespeople. Moreover, by the end of the reign of Emperor He, who died in the winter at the beginning of 106, the cost and strain of empire was evidently exceeding the resources available to the court. With an extended empire in the north and central Asia, based upon comparatively weak local Chinese resources and a strong reliance upon non-Chinese support, the situation was precarious. Add to this a continuing sense of hostility and resentment among the non-Chinese peoples for their overlords and governors, and the situation was actively dangerous.
The Great East Qiang Rebellion 107-118:

In 102, Ban Chao retired from his post as Protector-General of the Western Regions, and he died at Luoyang a few months later. On the eve of his departure we are told that he advised his successor, Ren Shang, to deal cautiously and in politic fashion with the various states of central Asia, but that Ren Shang then disregarded the advice. Whatever the truth of that story, by 106 there was a major rising among a number of the dependent cities against their Chinese masters. 22 Ren Shang was replaced, but the trouble continued, and in the following year the government of the young Emperor An, whose regency was held by the Empress-Dowager nee Deng, resolved that the imperial dominance along the Silk Road was no longer viable or valuable. The office of Protector-General of the Western Regions was abolished on 29 July 107, and orders were issued for the garrisons and other troops to be withdrawn within the western frontiers of the Great Wall into China Proper. 23

Such a massive retreat, however, in the face of growing rebellion among the former vassal states, still required a considerable military presence. One army, under the general Liang Qin, had been sent out when disturbances began, and a second force, to be raised and commanded by the Chief Commandant of Cavalry Wang Hong, was ordered to his support. Liang Qin had already raised five thousand men from the Qiang and other non-Chinese people in the commanderies of the Gansu Corridor, Wuwei, Zhangye, Jiuquan and Dunhuang, but Wang Hong called up another thousand men from the Qiang
people of Jincheng, Longxi and Hanyang. Although the force was not a particularly large one, and was intended for only a short-term emergency, the recruitment was carried out hastily, and the Qiang conscripts evidently believed that they were being exiled on military service for ever. When they came to Jiuquan commandery they mutinied and scattered. The local authorities attempted to force them back into order, and in the process they began a general persecution of the non-Chinese. Rumours, anxiety and fear of reprisals spread back to the Qiang homelands, the Shaodang and other tribes fled west across the frontier, but some groups which had been longer in the east now took up arms against the imperial government and their Chinese neighbours.

The Chinese records of the Qiang rebellion are strongly influenced by the accounts contained in the Qianfu lun by the scholar and philosopher Wang Fu, who came from Anding commandery and whose approximate dates are 90-165 A.D. Wang Fu was a contemporary of the rebellion, and it is possible that he was an eyewitness. Certainly his descriptions are strongly drawn, and Hou Han shu has followed both the terms of his story and the bitterness of his criticism against the actions of officials and the government. Given the fact that Qianfu lun is the basis for our information on so many aspects of the Qiang revolt, one should note Scott's remarks that the work is "extremely hostile to the government, and must be regarded as a highly partisan account of what actually happened" and that "one may doubt whether such an emotional account is utterly trustworthy, while being grateful for this sudden touch of life."
Map 2: The Territory of the Qiang Rebellions in the Second Century AD
According to Wang Fu and *Hou Han shu*, the first period of the rebellion, in the second half of 107, was one of complete confusion. It is said that the Qiang in the east had been so long at peace within the borders they possessed no weapons or armour. Some of the rebels had nothing but wooden staves and spears made from bamboo, some carried wooden boards to act as shields, and some brought bronze mirrors so that their reflection in the sun might appear like the shining of weapons at a distance. In many cases, however, the rebels were turning against Chinese neighbours as ill-equipped and unarmed as they were themselves; and one is reminded of the ferocious Muslim rebellion in the same region, Gansu, in the seventies of the nineteenth century. Throughout the northwest of China, government offices were destroyed, officials and people were massacred and plundered, and great numbers driven by fear, spreading rumours and uncertainty as they went, abandoned their homes to flee south and east as refugees.

In the earliest stages of the revolt, the government attempted a moderately peaceful settlement. An edict of amnesty was issued soon after the disturbance was reported, and in the winter special orders were issued to the administrators of the neighbouring provinces, Bing, Ji, and Sili, that they should encourage the refugees to return to their homes. In these first months, however, the emergency had already developed beyond the scale of an army mutiny and a series of local disorders: before the Chinese had been able to co-ordinate their efforts to regain control, the Qiang rebels had found a leader.
The Xianlian chieftain Dianlian, leader of a small subdivision of the tribe which was settled in western Longxi, joined forces at the very beginning of the disturbances with the Zhong tribe of the Qiang and led an attack which cut the Long Road, the chief line of imperial communication with the northwest. With this success, which very probably included the seizure of government military equipment, the rebels acquired immediate prestige and the nucleus of a meaningful military force. By the end of 107, almost the whole of Liang province was in rebellion and the government at the capital was raising an army for invasion and reconquest.

That winter, the General of Chariots and Cavalry, Deng Zhi, eldest son of Deng Xun and brother of the Empress-Dowager nee Deng, was put in command of operations against the Qiang. He was assisted by Ren Shang, now the Colonel Who Subdues the West. The imperial forces were intended to number fifty thousand men, with regulars from the Northern Army, but with the overwhelming majority conscripted from the northern commanderies of Taiyuan and Shangdang, the inner commanderies of Runan, Yingchuan and Nanyang, and the territories about Luoyang and Changan in Sili.

We have already noted Ying Shao's remarks on the change of the traditional system of national military service from Former to Later Han, with its abolition of regular training in the interior commanderies and its reliance on special summons for emergencies. "Alas," he said, "to send men into battle without having trained them is nothing
more than throwing them away. In sadly similar fashion, the third century official Wang Lang, in a memorial to Cao Pi, Emperor of Wei, about 221, soon after the end of Han, described the professional troops of the Northern Army in equally discouraging terms:

Some of them were vagabond fellows from the merchant class, others were honest but simple people from the countryside. Although they were generally disciplined, they were not taught battle skills, they had no training and they were lacking in experience. Their real capacity did not match their reputation, and it was difficult to use them in time of emergency.

Officially, the Northern Army was the elite force of the empire, and it is arguable that Wang Lang, a hundred years after the Qiang revolt, was criticising the military organisation at the end of Later Han, when the empire had reached the end of a long decline. On the other hand, we are also told that early in the reign of Emperor An, under the aegis of the Empress-Dowager nee Deng and with the optimistic and idealistic support of Confucianists at court, there was a deliberate disregard of military matters at the court, and the annual ceremonies of hunting and military review and manoeuvres were discontinued. In these circumstances, the regular imperial army was evidently at a low point of prestige, training and morale, and they certainly did not fare well against the Qiang.

It was intended that the imperial forces should hold Hanyang commandery and move against the rebels from there. In the spring of 108, however, before the full muster had been assembled, the Zhong Qiang attacked Deng Zhi's advance positions in the west of Ji, capital
of Hanyang, and defeated them. For the next several months, no further activity seems to have taken place on that front, but in the winter of 108 Ren Shang was ordered to attack Dianlian. In a major battle at Pingxiang in Hanyang, Ren Shang was defeated and lost more than eight thousand men. The imperial armies were forced onto the defensive, Deng Zhi was recalled to the capital, partly perhaps to save him from further embarrassment, and Ren Shang was left behind to hold the line in the Wei valley.32

In the meantime, two further developments had set the pattern of the rebellion. Encouraged by the success at Pingxiang, early in 108 Dianlian proclaimed himself emperor, with his capital at Lingzhou in Beidi commandery, near the eastern bank of the Yellow River and south of present-day Yinchuan in Ningxia. The authority he had gained from military success secured him a following not only from his original allies of the Zhong and his own Xianlian people, many of whom had now settled in Anding and Beidi commanderies, but also among the Shenlang of Wudu and the various Qiang groups in Shang commandery and Xihe. In the far northwest, on the other hand, Liang Qin and the imperial forces brought back from the Western Regions were able to re-establish military control in the commanderies of the Gansu corridor, and this region was not affected again by the disturbance.

Liang Qin was then ordered to camp in Jincheng commandery, but from there he moved south and east, following the Long Road, against the Qiang who were attacking the imperial forces about Changan. In a
series of engagements near Meiyang in Youufeng, he scattered the enemy and re-opened the Long Road. The success, however, was only transitory, for communications with the northwest were still threatened and frequently disrupted, and there was a serious grain shortage in the area of the Xining valley.

By the end of 108, therefore, the Qiang rebels, under some leadership from Dianlian, controlled most of the area from the Wei valley and the southward course of the Yellow River west to the region of present-day Lanzhou. That winter, the Shenlang Qiang raided southwards from Wudu into the upper Han valley and killed the Grand Administrator of Hanzhong commandery. In 109, a new Chinese attack with commandery levies under the Chief Commandant of Cavalry, Ren Ren, was defeated in several engagements near Changan. In the west, the Zhong Qiang destroyed Lintao and captured the Chief Commandant of the Southern Division of Longxi commandery, while the Dangjian and Lejie tribes of Jincheng rebelled in their turn and sacked the city of Poqiang in the Xining valley.

At this point, the policies of the imperial government were in complete disarray. Raiding parties of the Qiang were plundering territories as far to the east as Zhao and Wei, beyond the Taihang Mountains on the North China Plain. To compound the difficulties with the Qiang, moreover, in the winter of 109 there was also a revolt by the Shanyu of the Southern Xiongnu, whose headquarters were at Meiji in Xihe, northwest of present-day Pianguan in Shanxi, and who was
Map 3: The First Great Qiang Rebellion 107-118
allied to the Wuhuan tribes of the northeast. The Xiongnu did not make any agreement with the Qiang, and they were brought to surrender in the following year, but the operations against them required twenty thousand troops, commanded by Liang Qin and other senior generals, and the Chinese position against the Qiang was weakened in consequence. Further to the east, on the sea coast, in 109 and 110, the pirate Zhang Bolu was strong enough to cause trouble in nine commanderies, so it was necessary to send out senior officials of the censorate from the capital to take command of the levies from three provinces and coordinate operations against him. 37

Even in the territories controlled by the imperial government, there were widespread reports of famine and even cannibalism. For the previous several years, there had been portents and very probably serious actual damage from rain, hail and floods. Hou Han shu and the Treatise of the Five Elements record major floods every year from 106 to 111, affecting the imperial capital at Luoyang and other territories along the Yellow River and across the North China Plain, sufficiently serious to require special measures for the alleviation of grain shortages. 38 There were similar disasters each year until 112, and the Biography of Fan Zhun, who was at that time Palace Assistant Imperial Clerk and the head of the censorate, records a memorial that he sent in urging the immediate and drastic reduction of imperial expenses, and arguing that the economic problem in the east of the empire was more critical than the rebellion of the Qiang in the northwest. 39
Faced with these distractions, and with an almost total record of failure against the Qiang, the military policy of the government began to change. In 110, Ren Shang and the main army of the Wei valley was ordered back to camp at Changan. The conscripts from the inner commanderies, who appear to have gained little from either military training or experience, were sent home to their neglected farms. In confirmation that the conflict would be neither swift nor easy, we are told that the government established a Chief Commandant for Youfufeng, with headquarters at Yong prefecture, and a Tiger-Tooth Chief Commandant for Jingzhao, with headquarters at Changan. These appointments followed the old system of Former Han, and they evidently represent not only a military consolidation of these two commanderies, now on the effective frontier of the empire, but also the re-organisation of a formal procedure for recruitment and training of a local militia.40

The new arrangements came hardly too soon, for a few months later, in the autumn, the levies commanded by Ren Ren, despairing at their constant defeats by the Qiang, refused to obey orders. The trouble was evidently put down quickly enough, but Ren Ren was brought back to the capital and died in prison.41 At the beginning of 111, his senior commander Ren Shang was also dismissed on account of the army's failures against the enemy. In the circumstances, the lack of success may be ascribed to the poor quality of the troops the two officers had to work with rather than to their own weaknesses, and it was clear for the time being that the best result which could be hoped for about Changan was a defensive stalemate.
During this time, there was now considerable question at the court whether Liang province should not be abandoned altogether. One major exponent of this policy was Pang Can, whose arguments on the subject are quoted in his biography:

In recent years, the region west of Long Mountain has suffered considerably from raiding by the Qiang. There is constantly increasing pressure from corvée requirements and taxation, and the official deficits and private debts of this territory amount to tens of thousands of millions of cash.

And now we are again conscripting the people and requisitioning their grain and cloth, causing them to sell their goods and property in order to satisfy the requirements of the officials. Outside, they may be harmed by the rebel Qiang, but within the empire they suffer from the demands of the government.

And then it is necessary for the supplies to be transported a thousand li, far away to Wudu and the western commanderies. The roads are dangerous and the labour is multiplied a hundred-fold ....... The transport grain is scattered across the wilderness, while the cattle and horses die among the mountains and the marshlands.

At times when the local government offices are short of supplies, they are expected to requisition from the people. But now the people of this region are in utter distress, and where are they to obtain relief?

We claim that we are bringing aid to Jincheng, but in reality all that we are doing is causing suffering to the people about Changan ......

So a man who wants the best for the state will give his attention to caring for the heartland of the empire, and will not search for profit far away. We should give our attention to making our own people prosperous, and should not be greedy for mere expanse of territory.

There is plenty of space in the hills and plains about Changan, and the people there are comparatively few. There are many former county cities and other empty towns which could be re-occupied.
What we should do now is to transfer people from the border commanderies where they can no longer maintain themselves, back into the region of the imperial tombs, where they can farm and protect those former counties. The people of the isolated settlements and the commanderies which have been cut off should be repatriated for the period of the present emergency.

When this plan is being carried out, in the outlying areas where the transport is too difficult and too expensive, the people would be collected and brought back. In areas where the labour service has become too onerous, it can be reduced, and the people may be given relief.

This is the best of all plans.

Pang Can's arguments were convincing to Deng Zhi, the General in Chief, but a court conference on the subject was reluctant to adopt such a policy. A junior courtier, Yu Xu, evidently expressed the feelings of the majority when he spoke of the sacred duty of Han to preserve the territories of former generations, to guard the imperial tombs and not expose them on the frontiers, and to keep control of the warlike people in these western territories. 43

The government, therefore, did not authorise a full retreat from the northwest, but circumstances compelled major, if temporary, adjustments. In the south, in Hanzhong commandery, a renewed attack by the Qiang was driven back; though only after a second Grand Administrator had been killed in battle before Baozhong. 44 In the west, however, as a result of the local rebellion in 109, the Xining valley appears to have been largely abandoned by the Chinese government.
In 110 the formal administration of Jincheng commandery was moved to Xiangwu, in the eastern part of Longxi, and the headquarters of the Protector was withdrawn northwards to Zhangye commandery. Hou Ba, the new appointee to this post, had held the office before but was dismissed soon after the beginning of the revolt in 107 and had been replaced by Duan Xi, a former commander in the Western Regions. When Duan Xi died in 110, Hou Ba was reinstated and was evidently entrusted with keeping the peace amongst the Qiang and the Little Yuezhi in the area of the Shan between the Xining valley and the Gansu corridor.45

In the third month of the following year, 111, other commandery capitals were shifted in the same fashion as Jincheng. "Governments-in-exile" were established for Anding, Beidi and Shang commanderies at Meiyang in Youfufeng, Chiyang and Ya in Zuopingyi, while the capital of Longxi commandery was also transferred east from Dikdao to Xiangwu. In many areas, the people were compelled to abandon their homes and farms, and Hou Han shu, again influenced by the Qianfu lun of Wang Fu, tells how:

The common people were attached to their land and reluctant to leave their homes. So [troops were sent in to] break down their crops, demolish their houses, raze their walls and palisades, and destroy their supplies and stores. And also at this time there were droughts and locusts and famine and dearth.

The people were driven away with kicks and blows, they were looted and robbed. Divided and scattered, they wandered away and died on the roads. Some abandoned the old and the weak, some became bond-servants and slaves. Two-thirds of them were lost.46
By this deliberate depopulation, the central government might hope to weaken the rebels with a scorched-earth policy and to maintain a refugee population on the borders from which soldiers might be recruited and supplied for later campaigns. It is clear, however, that the plan was short-term and desperate. A great number of the settlers who were now forced to leave their homes fled further away to the south and never returned.

Though a few cities might hold out, and though the government had made no formal decision to abandon its claim on these regions of Liang province, the practical effect for the Chinese people was very much on the lines of Pang Can's proposal a short time before. The rebel Qiang now controlled a stretch of territory from the Koko Nor and the Xining valley eastwards across present-day southern Gansu and Shaanxi as far as the southern course of the Yellow River. In the north, their territory was bounded by the inhospitable country of the Ordos, and along the far northern loop of the Yellow River the Chinese outpost commanderies of Shuofang, Wuyuan and the other northern positions of Bing province were still maintained. In the south, however, the main force of the rebellion was pressing against the old capital territory about Changan. The imperial defence positions were set along the upper valleys of the Jing River and other northern tributaries of the Wei, while Hanyang commandery, further to the west along the higher reaches of the Wei, was disputed ground, still maintaining a Chinese local government, but frequently harassed by
rebels attacks. In Wudu commandery, south of the Wei valley in the mountains of the Qin Ling, the Shenlang Qiang made constant raids southwards into the valley of the Han.

The year 111 marked the high point of Qiang success. Not only did they confirm control of all their territory in Liang province, but raiding parties spread in force across the Yellow River into present-day Shanxi and reached the commanderies of Hedong and Henei, immediately north of the imperial capital, Luoyang. The commanderies along the Taihang Mountains, from Zhongshan southwards, were ordered to prepare defences with more than six hundred forts: a picket line to guard every defile leading down to the North China plain. At the same time, the Northern Army was brought back and stationed at Mengjin, a crossing of the Yellow River north of Luoyang, to defend the capital against direct attack.

Ren Sheng, the former commander at Changan, was given command of the forces at Mengjin, and he attacked a group of the Qiang raiders at Sheep's Head Mountain, near Guyuan in Shangdang commandery, on the line of the Jin River in present-day Shanxi. He captured or killed some two hundred men, so the incident can hardly be considered a major victory, but the camp at Mengjin was disestablished, and it appears the immediate threat was thus considered to be at an end.

Early in 112, the imperial forces achieved another local success, in Hanyang commandery. This territory, which had been the
scene of major fighting between the Qiang and the imperial troops about Changan, had also suffered heavily from the scorched-earth policy of the Chinese government. In the autumn of 111, a local Chinese leader, Du Qi, joined forces with the Qiang and seized the city of Shanggui county, near present-day Tianshui in Gansu. The commandery administration of Hanyang, however, arranged for a proclamation to be made, putting a price on Du Qi's head: Du Qi was assassinated and his murderer was rewarded with one million cash and enfeoffment as a marquis. The rebel forces were then attacked by an imperial army under the censorate official Tang Xi and were completely defeated. Most of the leaders were killed, a great quantity of treasure was recaptured, and Du Qi's brother, Du Jigong, fled north to join Dianlian in Beidi. 48

In 112 came the turning point of the war. Dianlian, leader of the Qiang, died at his headquarters in Lingzhou. His son, Lianchang, too young to succeed to full power, was guided by a regent, Langmo, and the renegade Du Jigong held a third part of the rebel triumvirate, with a separate headquarters at Dingxi city near Lingzhou. None of these, however, possessed the wide support and respect which Dianlian had maintained, and none of them could match his military and strategic success. In 113, the Protector Hou Ba and the Chief Commandant of Cavalry Ma Xian began a campaign for the reconquest of the Xining valley, the western territory of Jincheng commandery, and they defeated detachments of the Qiang on the east bank of the Yellow River in Anding, capturing more than twenty
thousand head of camels, horses, cattle, and sheep. This booty was
given as rewards to the barbarians that came to join them, and by 114
Jincheng commandery was again in Chinese hands.

East and south, Qiang raids continued, but the rebels were
driven back in an attack on Yong county in Youfufeng, they were held
by new Chinese defence lines in Henei, and a renewed invasion of
Hanzhong, this time led by the Dangjian and Lejie tribes, was heavily
defeated by Chinese local troops aided by the Banzhun people of Ba
commandery. Though the Inspector of Liang province was defeated
with a loss of eight hundred men in an attempt to recapture Lintao in
114, the Chinese position in the west was considerably more secure.
The Protector Hou Ba died in that year, and his successor, Pang Can,
despite his former proposals for Chinese withdrawal, attempted to re-
establish imperial authority among the Qiang with negotiations and by
good faith. In 115, the chief of the Dangjian tribe, Haoduo,
surrendered with seven thousand followers and was granted the title of
marquis. The headquarters of the Protectorate was now moved eastwards
to Lianju.

Encouraged by these successes, the Chinese attempted a major
offensive, with Pang Can leading a mixed force of seven thousand
Qiang and local militia from the west, and a consortium of commanders
with eight thousand local levies from Zuopingyi, Youfufeng, Anding
and Beidi attacking from the east. Before he could join forces,
however, Pang Can was defeated by Du Jigong, and though the eastern
column was successful in capturing Dingxi city and the headquarters territory of the rebels, a disagreement between their commanders resulted in a successful ambush by the Qiang and a loss of almost half their army. Pang Can was dismissed and succeeded by his assistant, Ma Xian, and Ren Shang, who had been dismissed once more after his brief success in 111, was again recalled and given command of the forces about Changan, with the title General of the Gentlemen of the Household.

This appointment of Ren Shang in 115 marked the beginning of the final phase of the war against the Qiang. The failure of their recent offensive encouraged the Chinese to develop a more indirect strategy: relying in part upon encouragements to the rebels to surrender; in part upon a deliberate program of assassination of their leaders; and in military terms on the development of a force of cavalry which could compete with the mounted Qiang for mobility and could move in counter-raids against their territory. On this last question, it is said that Ren Shang received the advice of Yu Xu, the junior courtier who had opposed withdrawal from Liang province at the time of the debate in 110, and who had been made acting Prefect of Huai in Henan: 50

According to the principles of warfare, the weak should not attack the strong, and [animals] which run do not chase after [birds] on the wing. This is simply a question of common sense.
Now the enemy are all mounted and on horses, and they can travel hundreds of li in a single day. They descend like the wind and the rain, and then they disappear in a snap, as an arrow leaves the bow. If we attempt to follow them on foot, it is impossible to catch them up, and so effort is wasted and no success is obtained.

If I may make the suggestion to you, the best thing to do would be to dismiss all the commandery troops, and have each man commute his service for a few thousand cash. With the receipts from twenty men it would be possible to purchase one war-horse. In this way, you can exchange your heavy-armed soldiers for a force of light cavalry. With a troop of ten thousand horsemen it would be possible to pursue an enemy group of some thousands, and you could follow directly on their tail and harass them.

By these means, the enemy's style of fighting will be completely countered, and the advantage will turn to our direction. This will bring a final success.

Ren Shang approved the idea and obtained the necessary authority from the imperial government. As a result, the first offensive of his command, towards the end of 115, was a sudden raid by light-armed horsemen who attacked Du Jigong at Dingxi, killed more than four hundred of the enemy, and captured several thousand head of cattle, horses and sheep.

In the following year, 116, the strategy was continued. The Chinese positions in the commanderies of present-day Shanxi had now been restored and consolidated, and the irrigation system in the regions affected by former raids was repaired. In the valley of the Wei, Ren Shang established a line of fortifications along the northern border of Zuopingyi, to protect his positions while he sent further raids against Dingxi, and in the summer the Southern Xiongnu, under the command of the General Who Crosses the Liao, Deng Zun, a
cousin of the Empress-Dowager, made a successful attack from the north, with ten thousand horsemen, on the Qiang leader Lianchang at Lingzhou. In the winter, Ren Shang sent another expedition against Lianchang this time they stormed his headquarters, killed his wife and children, seized his insignia of office and the seals of all the Chinese officials whom he had captured, and returned to their base with twenty thousand head of cattle, horses and sheep.

In 117, Ren Shang arranged for turncoat Qiang to assassinate Du Jigong and Lianchang, and gave noble titles to the murderers as "Marquis Who Smashes the Qiang" and "King of the Qiang". That winter, in a final great campaign, Ren Shang led commandery militia and combined forces with the Protector Ma Xian, who brought a mixed troop of Chinese and surrendered Qiang east from Jincheng. Langmo, the surviving leader of the rebels, was defeated at Fuping, the former capital of Beidi commandery, near Qingyang in Gansu. It is said that five thousand tribesmen were killed, and the Chinese seized a hundred thousand head of cattle, horses, asses and camels. A thousand slaves of the Qiang, presumably captured Chinese, were rescued and released.

With this great victory at Fuping, the rebellion of the Qiang was effectively at an end, and there was little more for the Chinese to do than mop up the remnants of the enemy and receive their renewed submission. Two final episodes are recorded: the General Who Crosses the Liao Deng Zun arranged for the assassination of the fugitive Langmo, again by a fellow Qiang who was made "Marquis of the
Qiang" as a reward; and Deng Zun himself was enfeoffed as Marquis of Wuyang with a revenue of three thousand households. Ren Shang, however, who had been in command of imperial armies against the Qiang almost continually since the outbreak of the rebellion more than ten years earlier, was now accused of exaggerating his success and of acquiring a fortune of ten million cash through bribery and corruption. He was sent for trial in a cage cart, suffered public execution, and his lands, his chattels and his slaves were all confiscated by the government.53

The end of the rebellion of the Eastern Qiang brought a peace of exhaustion to the provinces of the northwest, but nothing could restore the former position of the Han Chinese. It was an indication of the new situation that the final victories had been won primarily by cavalry action and raiding parties, with specially recruited horsemen and with considerable support from non-Chinese auxiliaries. The soldiers raised by commandery levies had achieved minimal success and, as Yu Xu had remarked, it was more effective to commute the conscripts' service into a money payment so that the army might maintain horses for a professional cavalry force. In this region of the empire, at least, infantry was no longer the master of the battlefield, the power and mobility of the mounted man was decisive, and the citizen levies among the Chinese subjects of the emperor were of very questionable value.
On the other side, the success and continuation of the Qiang rebellion for so many years had depended to a remarkable extent on the leadership of Dianlian and his successors. Dianlian in particular, sufficiently sinicised to take the Chinese imperial title and proclaim himself as "Son of Heaven", was the first man in Qiang history to maintain authority over all the tribesmen of his region: westerners such as Miyu and Mitang had never controlled more than a few groups in a short-lived war band, and no later chieftain achieved comparable respect during the time of Han. In this way, the death of Dianlian was a decisive blow to the rebel cause, and the deliberate Chinese policy of assassination showed how well they understood the importance of the individual leader. At the same time, Dianlian and his successors achieved only limited success in recruiting allies against the Chinese. In the north, though the Southern Xiongnu attacked the Chinese in 109 and 110, they were compelled to submit and they contributed several thousand horsemen to the later campaigns against Lianchang and Langmo. For the most part, the Wuhuan and the Xianbi were more concerned with rivalry amongst themselves than with any concerted attack on the Chinese northern frontier. In the region of Sichuan, the Banshun people were leaders against the Qiang invasion. Even in the west, where the revolt had originally taken place and Chinese settlements in Jincheng commandery had been completely destroyed, many Qiang chieftains were persuaded to return to imperial allegiance, and they too, with the Little Yuehzhí and other barbarians, took part in the campaigns against the Eastern Qiang.
Indeed, it is indicative of the lack of unity among the Qiang that the Chinese appear to have found it comparatively easy to arrange assassinations of rebel leaders at the hands of traitors.

There may be, indeed, considerable question as to the extent of the support which the rebels received from the people of the Qiang as a whole. It was certainly a racial or 'national' rising, based upon the hostility of Qiang people for the Chinese and their imperial government. On the other hand, many of the Qiang who appeared among the numbers of surrendered rebels were no doubt anxious to make peace and had never any desire for active armed rebellion: they were forced to support the cause by threats from the fighting men who supported Dianlian and his associates. Like the unfortunate peasants and other civilians of Vietnam and similar struggles in Africa, America and the Middle East, many of the Qiang people found themselves caught in the middle, oppressed by both sides, and treated as pawns in the cruel game between the armed strength of China and the brigandage of the hard-core rebels.

What is obvious, however, is that for more than ten years the government of the empire had failed to maintain its effective authority over a great area of the northwest. While it is true that the numbers of 'rebels' were often enhanced by the reluctant conscripts among otherwise peaceable Qiang, it is equally true that the Chinese government could offer them no support or security. On the
contrary, far too often, during the great rebellion and in the years which followed, it appears that the Chinese looked upon all Qiang as natural enemies, and they were rather concerned to exploit and to punish them than to establish a proper government to protect them.

The end of armed rebellion did not bring permanent peace and settlement. For the most part, in Anding, Beidi and the other commanderies, the surrendered tribesmen remained in the lands they had occupied, and the Chinese who had fled did not return. There was argument at court on the need to restore Chinese occupation in Liang and Bing provinces, but Wang Fu, who was himself a man of that region, writes bitterly of the corruption, cruelty and incompetence of Chinese local officials. They caused famine and death among the people by their embezzlement of grain and other supplies, and they deceived the court with their false reports of success. They thought only of short-term solutions, and they had no proper concern with long-term reconstruction. In the end, Hou Han shu says,

the soldiers had grown exhausted in successive campaigns without any period of rest. The expenses of the army and of the transport of supplies had amounted to more than 24,000 million cash. The government storehouses were empty even in the commanderies of the interior, and there was no way to number the people of the border regions who had died. So the two provinces, Bing and Liang, came to desolation.
In the first years after the end of the Eastern Qiang rebellion, the western frontier was plagued by continual disturbances. The Protector, Ma Xian, was faced by scattered rebellions and raids in Longxi, Jincheng, Wuwei and Zhangye, from various combinations of the Zhong, Lejie, Dangjian and Shaodang tribes of the western Qiang, together with the Chendi, Qianren and some renegade Xianlian from the Ordos region in the east. With the defeat of the Shaodang leader Manu at the end of 122, however, the situation was largely settled, and though occasional disturbances continued until 126, the imperial government in the west had gained ten years of reasonable security.

The administration of Jincheng commandery appears to have been restored to its former capital, Yuanya, soon after the end of the Eastern Qiang rebellion, but it was not until 123, following the defeat of Manu, that the headquarters of Longxi were returned to Dikdao prefecture, and it was only in 125 that the Baoye Road, chief imperial highway to the southwest, which had been seriously damaged in the Qiang attacks on Hanzhong, was restored. In 129, however, this cautious program of pacification and reconstruction was changed by the intervention of Yu Xu. Yu Xu had urged the government to hold firm in 110, had advised Ren Shang on strategy in 115, and had been a successful Grand Administrator of Wudu commandery. Now, as Supervisor of the Masters of Writing, a senior post in the imperial secretariat, he obtained the ear of Emperor Shun and urged an active and forward policy.
In his memorial, Yu Xu referred to the respect that the rulers of the present time should show to their predecessors, and he followed this Confucianist argument of precedent with a glowing description of the northwest according to the *Yu gong* chapter of *Shu jing*:  

> The land of the province of Yong has land of the highest quality. Fertile ground stretches for a thousand li, with abundant and flourishing crops of grain, and there are also the salt ponds of Qiuci which provide a source of profit to the people.  

With abundant water and splendid pasturage, the region is suitable for the breeding of animals, with herds of cattle and horses head to tail, and flocks of sheep so many that they block the roads.  

In the north, this territory is defended by the mountains and the Yellow River, so we can use the strategic position and hold the important points. In that region, canals can provide for irrigation, water power and transport. For a comparatively small effort, the supplies of an army can be adequately maintained.  

It was for this reason that Emperor Wu and his successors up to the time of Emperor Guangwu fortified Shuofang, opened up Xihe and established Shang commandery...to abandon rich soil and destroy natural wealth cannot be called a profitable policy, and to give up the barrier of the river and the mountains in order to occupy land without good defence points, that cannot be called a plan for security.  

Yu Xu referred to the Qiang rebellion as a great and unexpected disaster, which should not be repeated, and the policy that he urged required full Chinese re-occupation of the former imperial territories. In 129, after his proposals were put forward, the capitals of Anding, Beidi and Shang commanderies were restored to their former territories, and refugees were encouraged to return to their former homes. In the following year, it was ordered that prisoners under the death sentence in the jails should be sent to assist in the resettlement, and an ambitious program was drawn up to build post-roads,
repair fortifications, restore irrigation projects, and establish military colonies. The Internuncio Guo Huang, later appointed Grand Administrator of Anding, was specially commissioned to supervise the reconstruction. It was planned that Anding, Beidi, Shang, Longxi and Jincheng commanderies should be provided with major stores of grain, and that subsidies should be reduced.

This program, however, though excellent on paper, appears to have been less welcome in the territories directly concerned. At the end of 129 Ma Xian, who had held the position of Protector for the previous ten years, was dismissed from office. His successor Han Hao was also dismissed for some offence less than twelve months later, and he was succeeded by Ma Xu, a descendant of the great general Ma Yuan.

The changeabout among Protectors was matched by some uncertainty in settlement planning. Han Hao, during his short term, set up a number of military colonies along the upper reaches of the Yellow River. The Qiang, however, became notably restless at this evidence of new Chinese expansion, and Ma Xu transferred the colonies to the Xining valley. In this area, by 132 there were ten military colonies to extend Han control. Further south, the headquarters of the Chief Commandant of the Southern Division of Longxi commandery was re-established at Lintao in 133.
It could appear that the situation had been restored to that of the period before the great rebellion, but in the following year there began the first of a series of revolts which demonstrated the uncertainty of the Chinese position. Perhaps as a result of the pressure which they felt from the re-establishment of the imperial military base at Lintao, the Zhong tribe of the Qiang rebelled and raided Longxi and Hanyang. Though the Protector Ma Xu gained some limited success, his predecessor Ma Xian was recalled and appointed to the command of forces against the rebels. He killed more than two thousand of them, captured fifty thousand head of horses, cattle, and sheep, and compelled their leaders to surrender. In 136, Ma Xu was transferred to become General Who Crosses the Liao, and Ma Xian again became Protector. He was first engaged in the pacification of the White Horse Qiang of Wudu commandery, and after they had been defeated and settled in 137, he had to turn and deal with the Shaodang leader Nali, who was raiding and plundering in Jinchang commandery. In 139, in a major attack with allies from the Loyal Auxiliary and other non-Chinese forces, Ma Xian defeated Nali and killed him, capturing one hundred thousand head of horses, mules and sheep.

In considering the pattern of these disturbances of the 130s, one may observe the fierce official reaction to the reported rebellions. Ma Xian, in particular, first killing two thousand of the Zhong tribe and seizing fifty thousand animals, and then taking a hundred thousand head from the Shaodang people, appears to have behaved with ruthlessness and considerable greed. It may be
questioned whether the actual disturbances required such a response, and it is difficult to imagine how the confiscation of such great numbers of animals would do anything to encourage the Qiang to feel affection for the government. Indeed, one might suspect that some of the disturbances were less serious than they have been reported, and that Ma Xian may even have been glad to take them as an excuse to gain military glory for himself and plundered property for his followers.

Soon after Ma Xian had defeated Nali, he was recalled and rewarded with the post of Grand Administrator of Hongnong, while the office of Protector was shared between the inspectors of Liang and Bing provinces. Partly, perhaps, through misunderstanding due to this arrangement, and partly through harsh Chinese policy towards the Qiang, in the summer of 140 there was a widespread revolt which involved tribes on the Jincheng frontier and spread rapidly until raids and incursions approached Changan. Though the Long Road was refortified, and special camps were set up in Hanyang and Youfufeng, the Judong and other tribes of the Qiang raided the Wei valley, burnt the fortress at the Long Pass, below Long Mountain on the border of present-day Shaanxi and Gansu, and plundered the imperial horse pastures in Hanyang. At the same time, further to the north, a rebellion among the Xiongnu forced the Chinese onto the defensive along the northern loop of the Yellow River. The administration of Shang commandery was transferred southwards, this time to Xiayang in Zuopingyi; the far northern commandery of Shuofang had its headquarters shifted to neighbouring Wuyuan, and the capital of Xihe was
moved southeast, across the Yellow River though still in the territory of the commandery, to Lishi prefecture. The army of the rebel Shanyu included not only his fellow Xiongnu, but also Wuhuan tribesmen from the northeast, and some groups of the Qiang.63

In response to the emergency in the Wei valley, Ma Xian was appointed General Who Subdues the West and was given command of a hundred thousand men, mainly provincial levies with a contingent of regular troops from the Northern Army and the palace guards. Though his nominal command was so large, few of the soldiers appear to have been of great value, for in the first month of 141, when he moved on the offensive he was accompanied by only five or six thousand horsemen. In a major disaster for the Chinese, Ma Xian was heavily defeated by the Judong Qiang in Beidi and died in battle. Inspired by this success, rebel raiding parties attacked their demoralised opponents in the region of Changan itself, and they burnt the tomb buildings of the emperors of Former Han to the north of the city.

This defeat of the Chinese forces was the signal for a widespread rising across all the Qiang territories, with the initiative shared by the Gongtang, Han and Shaodang groups. The disturbance extended from the Wei valley and Longxi commandery to Wuwei, north of the Yellow River, and the region of the Ordos. Anding and Beidi commanderies proved almost indefensible, and their capitals were moved once more to the comparative safety of Zuopingyì and Youfufeng.64
However, though the raiding was serious, and the civil government of the region was completely disrupted, the various tribes on this occasion acted without concerted leadership. They ravaged and plundered, and they inflicted heavy defeats on local Chinese forces, but a major imperial army was stationed to defend Changan, and the capital district was not seriously threatened again. In 141 Zhao Chong, who had been Grand Administrator of Wuwei and defeated an attack of the Gongtang Qiang, was ordered to bring soldiers from the commanderies of the Gansu corridor to assist in operations against the Qiang. In the following year he was appointed Protector. He persuaded the Han Qiang to submit, heavily defeated the Shaohe (probably a branch of the Shaodang tribe) and although he himself was killed in a final skirmish in 144, the remaining rebels were brought to surrender.

This second rebellion of the Qiang, though never so organised as the first, had cost the government an estimated eight thousand million cash, and frequent allegations of corruption, embezzlement and incompetence were added to the immediate realities of military defeat and famine. The great general Huangfu Gui, who served in this campaign as a young man in a junior post in Anding, sent in a bitter memorial in 141, criticising Ma Xian and the other commanders for the weakness of their strategy and their neglect of the soldiers' welfare, and blaming the corruption and cruelty of the civil officials for the restlessness of the Qiang:
The funds are taken from the common people, but then go into the pockets of corrupt officials.

The chieftains of the tribes, desperate in their distress and fear, stir up rebellion. As a result, there is no long-term peace, and if our forces are defeated, the effects persist.

Though the rebels of this period had not provided such concerted opposition as their predecessors under Dianlian, the result of the war was to confirm the imperial government's loss of effective control in the territories now inhabited by the Qiang. Some Chinese cities still remained, but the tribes now moved unmolested by the government of Han, and the administration of Anding, Beidi and the other commanderies never returned again to the northwest. Unlike the period after the first rebellion, this time there was no further attempt at reconstruction, and for the next fifteen or twenty years there were only minor disturbances in the northwest.

The events of the first half of the second century AD had destroyed the position of the Han government in the region north of the Wei and within the loop of the Yellow River. The removal of the commandery capitals of Shuofang, Xihe, Shang, Beidi and Anding meant that Chinese control was restricted to the settlements along the Yellow River and the whole Ordos region was abandoned to the non-Chinese. This development came as the end of a long process of reluctant retreat, during which the Chinese had attempted to maintain control and colonisation in a region increasingly unsuited to their form of settled agriculture.
As an example of the process, there are the changes in Anding and Beidi commanderies. At the end of the Former Han dynasty, when the census was compiled in 2 AD, the territory of both commanderies extended to the Yellow River below present-day Lanzhou, with jurisdiction over a total of forty counties. During Later Han, however, twenty-four of the forty counties were abolished, and the remaining two Yellow River counties of Anding were transferred to the jurisdiction of Wuwei commandery, based on the Gansu corridor. Although Beidi commandery still had counties in the region of Yinchuan, when Dianlian set his capital at Lingzhou in 108, he was removing imperial control of this territory, and the Chinese weakness in the whole region was only confirmed by their withdrawal of the commandery capitals.

After the defeat of the first rebellion, the Chinese re-occupied the line of the Yellow River west of the Ordos, and Lingzhou is still listed as a county under Beidi commandery in the census of 140. In the following year, however, with the withdrawal of Shuofang to the north, it is clear that the Chinese position along the frontier had been broken. The defence line along the Yellow River was evidently maintained intermittently, if at all. In particular, it is recorded that the Chendi tribe of the Qiang, who are said to have come from Shang commandery, raided westwards on various occasions as far as Zhangye. They appear to have been a fully nomad and highly mobile people, for the direct distance from the Ordos region to Zhangye is
some 750 kilometres across the Tengger desert, but the fact that the expedition was possible reflects small credit on the Chinese.

In conclusion, one may notice some differences of opinion between the policy-makers at the capital and the men on the spot in the northeast. The memorial of Yu Xu in 129, with its rosy picture of the fertility and value of Liang province, and its insistence on the claims of tradition to maintain Chinese power in that region, does not seem to fit well with the realities of the time. One may even suspect that much of the difficulty and failure of the Chinese in the northwest came from the gap between the exaggerated expectation of the advisors and commentators at court and the real possibilities of practical policies for soldiers and administrators faced with a steadily declining Chinese population and insistent urging for imperial expansion into untenable territory.70

There is, of course, a parallel situation, operating at the same time, and that is the Later Han empire in central Asia. Established and supervised almost single-handedly by Ban Chao towards the end of the first century, it proved impossible to maintain after his departure. In the 120's, when the first Qiang rebellion had been defeated, Ban Chao's son Ban Yong again restored Chinese power, with small armies heavily reinforced by non-Chinese auxiliaries.71 For a short time the Han returned to the former position of influence, but by the middle of the century, with the renewed troubles in Liang
province, the forces were withdrawn and the imperial adventure along the Silk Road was ended.

In the writings of Chinese historians, Ban Chao and Ban Yong have been praised for their achievements, and the generals who fought the Qiang have been often neglected and frequently reviled. It is arguable, however, that the picture should be viewed in a different way: that the soldiers in central Asia would have been better employed defending the territory of China proper, and that the over-ambitious imperialism which they reflected, and which was supported by the critics at court, well behind the lines, strained the resources of the Han government and brought a fatal weakness in the Chinese dealings with the Qiang. The corrupt generals and incompetent officials, who were criticised by so many scholars of the time, were actually attempting the impossible task of maintaining Chinese rule along illusory frontiers of the past. Their failures were perhaps due less to their own misdeeds than to the demands which were made upon them and the weak material with which they had to work.
CHAPTER 4

THE QIANG TRIBES AND THE EMPIRE OF HAN:
MAKE A DESERT AND CALL IT PEACE 150–220 AD

The devastation of Duan Jiong
The end of Han government in the northwest
The state of Wei and the northwestern frontier
Epilogue: shifting barbarians

The devastation of Duan Jiong:
The close of the Second Qiang Rebellion in the middle 140s marked the beginning of a period of comparative quiet in the territory of Liang province. In 148, the White Horse Qiang raided Guanghan commandery, in the hill country south of Wudu, but they were defeated by the local Chinese forces of Yi province and their Banshun allies. Thereafter, throughout the territory, though some groups of the Qiang were occasionally restive, there was no trouble that could not be handled by local troops. From 155 to 159, in fact, under the influence of the Protector Diwu Fang, who was celebrated for his personal authority and his gentle administration, there was even a period of real peace.¹ In 159, however, Diwu Fang died, and he was succeeded by Duan Jiong, a man of quite different temperament.²

At the time of Duan Jiong’s appointment, it appears that the border tribes were already stirring, and the fifteen quiet years had brought a new generation of energetic and ambitious tribal leaders to the fore. Duan Jiong himself was well prepared for dealing with any
time of trouble. Originally a man of Wuwei commandery, he had established a reputation in dealing with raiding parties from the Xianbi while he was Chief Commandant of the Dependent State of Liaodong, on the northeastern frontier. In 156, he had been specially appointed to deal with the rebels of Taishan and Langye, who had been causing major trouble in the Yellow Plain. He defeated them with slaughter, and he was rewarded with enfeoffment as a marquis, a direct grant of half a million cash, and the right to nominate one of his sons for entry as a candidate for the imperial bureaucracy. He was thus known to the court as a tough-minded man, and his appointment as Protector marked a clear change from the lenient policies of Diwu Fang.

Within a very short time of his arrival, Duan Jiong faced his first challenge and demonstrated his determination. Eight frontier clans of the Qiang, notably including the Shaodang, Shaohe, Dangjian and Lejie, raided the territory of Longxi and Jincheng commanderies, north and south of the Yellow River. With a force of twelve thousand cavalry, Chinese troopers combined with horsemen of the Loyal Auxiliary, Duan Jiong moved south from the Xining valley to attack the enemy. As they retired, he pursued them eastwards along the southern bank of the Yellow River, and then sent a small detachment under his officers Tian Yan and Xia Yu as a bait to encourage them to turn and fight. In a battle at Luoting, a frontier post of the empire, Duan Jiong completely defeated the Qiang, killed two thousand and captured another ten thousand. The remainder fled across the border.
In the spring of the following year, 160, another combination of tribesmen, again led by the Shaohe clan, came across the mountains to raid Zhangye commandery in the Gansu corridor. They captured a small fortress and plundered the Chinese positions in that region. Emboldened by such success, thousands of the Qiang rose to support and join the rebellion, and one morning the raiders launched a dawn attack against Duan Jiong. Though heavily outnumbered, Duan Jiong faced them from a defensive position on foot, and by midday, after desperate fighting, the Qiang withdrew.

Duan Jiong, however, now embarked upon a major feat of pursuit. With his small number of troops harassing the retreating enemy from the rear, he followed the Qiang in continuous contact for six weeks. They crossed the ridges southwards to the Yellow River, and then entered the mountainous region of its upper course. On the march, the men killed their horses for food and melted snow to drink, and after two thousand li, one thousand kilometres, they brought the allied Qiang to bay at Jishi Mountain, identified as the main peak of the Amne Machin Range in modern Qinghai, about 100\textdegree}E, 35\textdegree}N. The greater part of the rebels must have scattered during the march or fled at the shock of battle, but Duan Jiong and his men killed more than five thousand, and he sent a detachment on a punitive expedition against the neighbouring Shicheng Qiang.

This remarkable expedition should surely have impressed the Qiang with the tenacity of Duan Jiong and the long reach of Chinese
arms, but it did not halt the disturbances in Liang province. As Duan Jiong returned from beyond the frontier, he was called to attack some groups of the Qiang near White Mountain, east of Dikdao, the capital of Longxi, and in the following winter the Lejie and the Lianyu besieged Yuanjie, capital of Jincheng. They were driven off by Duan Jiong, but not before they had killed or plundered the local Chinese settlers and their officials. In the summer of 161, moreover, the Lianyu and the Xianlian Qiang combined in a raid against Changan, and it may appear from this that the whole region where the Qiang were settled was liable to disturbance at any time and in any place.

At this point, Duan Jiong was removed from office. The Chendi Qiang of Shang commandery and other groups of the Qiang from Longxi had been engaged in raiding in the region east of the Yellow River. Duan Jiong led the Loyal Auxiliary troops to attack them, but the Inspector of Liang province, Guo Hong, wanted credit for himself concerning operations in this area, and he delayed Duan Jiong and his forces on their march. The auxiliaries were angry that their period of service was extended, and they resented being drawn away into the territory east of the Yellow River. They mutinied and returned home. Guo Hong put the blame for this debacle on Duan Jiong, and Duan Jiong was found guilty and brought back to Luoyang for service as a convict labourer.

Duan Jiong's position as Protector was taken by a certain Hu Hong, but he proved quite incapable of keeping order among the
tribesmen, and the disorder spread throughout Liang province. With the Xianlian clan taking the lead, the tribal groups formed alliances to plunder the Chinese and attack their administrative headquarters. The Long Road to the west was blocked and groups of raiders threatened Changan.

The court was seriously concerned at the possibility of a new great rebellion, and the scholar-official Huangfu Gui of Anding, lately successful in dealing with renewed banditry in Taishan, was sent as a General of the Gentlemen of the Household with authority over all military operations in the west. In a few months, after one victory against the Lianyu, he was able to persuade them and their Xianlian allies to return to submission. Early in 162, Huangfu Gui led a combined force of Chinese troops and Qiang horsemen against the rebels to the west of Long Mountain, and although his army suffered severely from sickness he was able to open the road to the west and force his opponents to surrender.

As a frontier commander, Huangfu Gui was concerned with the failures of Chinese administration which produced resentment and troubles among the barbarians. In volunteering for service against the Qiang, he had remarked in a memorial that too many officials thought only of government by fear and strength and paid no attention to honesty and quiet competence. Now, as he resettled Liang province, he reported to the capital that some local commanders had killed surrendered Qiang, and that others were too old and no longer
competent for their duties. They were all dismissed from office, and some of them were executed for their crimes. As evidence of Chinese good faith, this purge of officials induced more Qiang to surrender, and it is very likely that Huangfu Gui encouraged their good intentions with some well-placed bribery. A final raid by the nomad Chendi Qiang of Shang commandery, who struck westward across the Tengger desert against Zhangye and Jiuquan commanderies, had limited success, and the tribesmen then accepted Huangfu Gui's offers of peace.

With the immediate threat of full-scale insurrection removed, Huangfu Gui went back to retirement in his home commandery, Anding. Despite his success in the field, however, he was criticised by political enemies among the eunuch faction then dominating the court and the friends of the frontier officials that he had impeached. Emperor Huan was persuaded that Huangfu Gui deserved criticism for his weakness and his willingness to bribe the Qiang, rather than praise and reward for his achievement in removing danger in the west. In a spirited memorial, Huangfu Gui justified his policies. He was summoned to court, and it was debated whether he should be enfeoffed for his services to the state, but when the eunuchs sought bribes in order that they might put his case more effectively, Huangfu Gui refused them so abruptly that he was first demoted in rank and then sentenced to convict service. There were petitions in his favour from high civil officials and from groups of students at the Imperial University in Luoyang, and in 163, as the result of a general amnesty,
Huangfu Gui was released and returned once more into retirement.

It was a notable feature of Han frontier history that even the most competent military commanders could suffer from court intrigue, faction and corruption. At this period, however, the fates of Huangfu Gui and Duan Jiong, almost mirror images of one another, brought a considerable change in actual policy. Among the local officials impeached for incompetence by Huangfu Gui had been Duan Jiong's enemy Guo Hong, the Inspector of Liang Province, and with Guo Hong's disgrace Duan Jiong was justified and freed from convict service. He was then sent to be Inspector of Bing province, but the troubles in Liang continued, and at the end of 163 he was re-appointed to the Protector's office.

While the question of Huangfu Gui's reward or punishment was being discussed in the capital after his successes in 162, his enemies had been able to point out that the troubles with the Qiang were still continuing: though Huangfu Gui could claim to have defeated the most threatening uprising, raiding and disorder were almost endemic. In the summer of 162 the annals recorded a major attack on Jincheng, Longxi and Hanyang, and in the winter of 162/163 there was a raid by some five or six thousand Qiang against the western commanderies of Wuwei, Zhangye and Jiuquan. By 163, the disturbances had increased, and it was said that Liang province was almost out of Chinese control. Then the Protector Hu Hong died and Duan Jiong was reappointed.
It did not prove difficult for Duan Jiong to re-establish military authority. Within a few months of his arrival, some 350 leaders of the Qiang, controlling three thousand small groups altogether, had brought their people to submit, and although the Dangjian and Lejie tribes in the frontier territories of Longxi and Jincheng still caused trouble, Duan Jiong attacked them with considerable success. In the spring of 165 the Lejie surrendered. In the summer, after a fierce battle in the Xining valley, Duan Jiong defeated the Dangjian and then again pursued them to the point of exhaustion. By the autumn, the Dangjian had been driven to refuge in the mountainous country of the Qilian Shan, between the Xining Valley and the Gansu corridor.

According to the biography of Duan Jiong in Hou Han shu, in all his fighting with the Qiang up to this time he had cut off 23,000 heads, captured several tens of thousands of people alive, seized the incredible number of eight million horses, cattle and sheep, and brought the surrender of more than ten thousand luo groups.\(^5\) In 165 he was enfeoffed as a marquis, with pension from the tax revenues of five hundred families.\(^6\)

On the other hand, despite this record of success and its acknowledgement at court, the problem of the Qiang had still not been solved. In 166, there was a year of peace on the frontier under Duan Jiong's control as Protector, but in the autumn of that year, when the Xianbi and Wuhuan made raids against the northern frontier,
they were supported by a rebellion of the Chendi Qiang and the Xianlian of Anding commandery, who raided as far west as Wuwei and Zhangye. The frontier commander Zhang Huan was sent from the capital to deal with them, holding ministerial rank and military authority over the whole northern frontier. The rebels soon surrendered, but in 167 the Xianlian rose again, and this time they attacked the region about Changan, over-running the defences of Duoxu and Yunyang in Zuopingyi. The attacks began in the spring, continued through the summer, and were not defeated until the winter.

Also in 167, on the western frontier, Duan Jiong had a final exchange with the Dangjian tribe, who had gathered forces to attack Wuwei commandery. He caught them and defeated them in the open country of Luanjue county, and with this victory the Western, that is the frontier, Qiang were settled.

It was at this time that the government of Emperor Huan asked Duan Jiong's advice on a policy that might re-establish permanent peace among the Eastern Qiang of Liang province. He was obviously a successful commander, and although his record of service and achievement was matched by those of Huangfu Gui and Zhang Huan, these men were less popular with the eunuchs at court. We have already observed that Huangfu Gui was refused a marquisate after his victories a few years earlier, and Zhang Huan, despite his recent successes in the north, was for political reasons also denied a reward. Duan Jiong, on the other hand, had a consistent record of success, had
attracted admiration for the dignity with which he suffered unjust imprisonment after the slanders of Guo Hong, and had kept completely aloof from the anti-eunuch protests and political activity which dominated these years of the government of Emperor Huan. Moreover, it is certain that the government knew what he would say, and they were looking only for justification to set their intentions into practice.

The edict of Emperor Huan set out the problem quite specifically:

The Xianlian and the other tribes of the Eastern Qiang are wicked and rebellious. Huangfu Gui and Zhang Huan have both held command of powerful forces, but they have not been able to settle them for any reasonable length of time. I am thinking of giving you orders to take troops and attack the Eastern Qiang, but I am not certain that this is the best idea. May I have your opinion?

In his reply, Duan Jiong claimed that Zhang Huan was frightened to embark upon a real campaign, and that his policy of leniency was no more than a sign of weakness.

He sends repeated invitations to them to submit, and he hopes to control a strong enemy without any further effort. It is my personal opinion that wolf-cubs have a savage nature, and it is difficult to win them over by kindness. When their strength is exhausted they will submit, but they rise again as soon as our soldiers have departed... From Yunzhong and Wuyuan [commanderies in the north], along the western [frontier] as far as Hanyang, more than two thousand li, the Xiongnu and the various tribes of the Qiang occupy our territory. This is a hidden sore, a poison in our flank. If we do not cut it away it will become very much more severe.

If I have five thousand cavalry and ten thousand foot-soldiers, with three thousand carts for baggage, then in three winters and two summers I can break these people and settle them. There is no need to worry that the cost will be any more
than 5,400 million cash. If we do this, then the Qiang will be completely defeated, the Xiongnu will remain in submission, and the commanderies and prefectures which have been shifted will be able to return to their former territories.

Duan Jiong argued that the cost of his plan was significantly lower than the expenditure in the previous periods of trouble with the Qiang. Though the military operation would cause a temporary strain upon the finances of the government, the crushing of the Xianlian tribe would ensure a lasting peace. Emperor Huan agreed, and Duan Jiong began his campaign in the winter of 167.

In the first months of 168, with ten thousand men under his command and fifteen days supplies in his baggage train, Duan Jiong marched from Pengyang in Anding to Gaoping, and he attacked the main force of the Xianlian at Fengyi Mountain, near Guyuan in present-day Ningxia.

The enemy were in great numbers, and Duan Jiong's men were afraid. Then Duan Jiong set the men with javelins in the centre, protected by three ranks of spearmen and swordsmen, all flanked by crossbows with light-armed cavalry on the wings. He said to his officers and men: "We are several thousand li from our homes. If we go forward everything is won. If we run away, we shall be killed. Put forth your strength together, and we can all share in a glorious name!" Then he gave a great shout, and his soldiers joined in the war-cry and followed him to the charge. His horsemen took the enemy on the flank and broke their lines, the Qiang were in complete disorder, and more than eight thousand of them were killed.
With this success, Duan Jiong also captured 280,000 head of cattle, horses and sheep, and he was rewarded for his achievement with a grant of gold and appointment as General Who Routs the Qiang.

In the summer, Duan Jiong embarked on a new attack. This time he marched north, and entered the Ordos region through the Qiao Gate of the ancient wall of Qin, south of present-day Yulin in Shaanxi. When he came to Running Horse River, just outside the old wall, he learnt that a party of the Xianlian were camped near the Sheyan Marshes, and so he sent a detachment by forced march, 200 li in twenty-four hours, to attack them at dawn. The enemy fled south to Luochuan, evidently the headwaters of the present-day Luo River in Shaanxi, and there formed camps to defend themselves. Then Duan Jiong sent his officers Tian Yan and Xia Yu to attack them on either side, and after a short skirmish with Tian Yan the Qiang broke and fled. Duan Jiong pursued them eastwards across the southern fringes of the Ordos steppe, defeated them in a brief engagement over the fresh water supply of the Lingxian River and pressed them east again towards Lingzhou county. There the Qiang set up defence positions in Lingwu valley, but Duan Jiong himself put on armour and led the attack and the Qiang lines once more were broken. This time they fled south, with Duan Jiong in close pursuit, for three days and three nights, until, so it is said, the soldiers of Duan Jiong's army had double blisters on the soles of their feet. At last they came to the district of Jingyang in Anding and the remnant four thousand groups of the Qiang took refuge in the hill country of Hanyang commandery, north of the valley of the Wei.
Map 4: The Campaigns of Duan Jiong 168-169
As in the campaigns of 160 against the Shaohe and 165 against the Dangjian, Duan Jiong had demonstrated remarkable energy and a capacity for relentless pursuit against a defeated enemy. The process, however, was frightening, for where in the past there had been justification for the attack on the grounds that the enemy had themselves destroyed the peace, his campaign against the Xianlian had no immediate reason. The Qiang whom he attacked were currently at peace with the Chinese, and the fighting took place entirely at the initiative of Duan Jiong and his imperial masters. In the autumn and winter of 168, after this second campaign had harried the remnants of the Xianlian tribe into the hills and valleys of Hanyang, there was an appeal to the court by Zhang Huan that the slaughter should cease.

Emperor Huan had died in January, 168, and the government of the empire was now in the hands of the Empress-Dowager nee Dou, regent for the boy Emperor Ling, aided and advised by her father Dou Wu and the Grand Tutor Chen Fan. It was the new government which had rewarded Duan Jiong for his first success against the Qiang, but a copy of Zhang Huan's memorial was sent to him at this point for his comments. He replied with a sense of righteous indignation:

Now the Chinese population of the frontier commanderies is small, and our people have frequently been injured by the Qiang. Yet [Zhang Huan] proposes that we should let the barbarians surrender and allow them to live amongst our own people. This is like planting weeds and brambles in a good field, or rearing venomous snakes within a house. It is for this reason that I have displayed the majesty of Great Han, and have prepared long-term plans. I wish to cut the problem away at the root, so it will never return.
Originally, I estimated that the project would take three years and cost 5,400 million cash. But now, after just one year, and with less than half the budget expended, the remnants of the enemy are reduced to ashes and they are on the point of total destruction.

I request that you put a stop to this debate and give me full authority to deal with matters on the spot....

Duan Jiong was confirmed in his command. In the meantime, however, the court did send the Internuncio Feng Shan to invite the scattered Qiang of Hanyang to surrender. Four thousand took advantage of the offer, but the remainder gathered in a defensive encampment at Fanting Mountain near the border of Anding and Hanyang.

In the summer of 169, Duan Jiong sent his two lieutenants, Tian Yan and Xia Yu, to occupy the heights above the Qiang position. The Qiang attacked them, but the Chinese held their own, and the Qiang were forced to abandon their defences and flee south and east. They gathered again for a last stand at Shoot-Tiger Valley, and they set their fighting men to hold the gorge at the entrance to this valley.

Duan Jiong, for his part, made preparations with care. To prevent the Qiang escaping further, he prepared a great palisade or abatis, forty li long, to block their line of retreat into the mountain country of the Qin Ling. Then he sent detachments in a night march to occupy positions on the flanks overlooking the valley. The Qiang attacked, but they were driven back, and the Chinese advanced
on either side. The Qiang were forced down the valley onto the back of their own defences, and there they were caught and trapped in the narrow defile. No quarter was given, and it is said that Duan Jiong's soldiers, on this one day, killed nineteen thousand people, from the military leaders to the children. Among the debris and the booty of the battle, there were not only innumerable cattle, horses and sheep, asses and mules, but also tents and yurts of felt and fur and other domestic items.

The four thousand people that Feng Shan had persuaded to surrender were resettled in small groups in Anding, Hanyang and Longxi commanderies. Duan Jiong himself returned to the capital in the spring of the following year. His triumphal procession included fifty thousand horsemen and footsoldiers of the frontier forces and auxiliaries, a number of the famous blood-sweating horses of central Asia, which had evidently been either bred in the northwest or perhaps imported for the occasion, and some ten thousand or more prisoners who had been permitted to surrender after the massacre at Shoot-Tiger Valley and were available to adorn his train. An imperial edict ordered the Grand Herald, bearing the credentials of imperial authority, to greet Duan Jiong at Hao, west of Changan, and escort him to Luoyang. He was granted the high court position of Palace Attendant and then made Bearer of the Golden Mace, chief of the palace police, and later Prefect of Luoyang.
In many respects, Duan Jiong was an admirable military commander. We are told that he took great care of his men, that he shared their discomforts on campaign, and that he would personally visit and tend to the sick or the wounded. Moreover, though even such distinguished officers as Zhang Huan are named by the historians as being occasionally prepared to accept bribes, Duan Jiong had a reputation for exceptional honesty. In later life, at court, he tended to side with the authority of the eunuch government, and as Colonel Director of Retainers in 172 he put down student protests at the Imperial University with an iron hand, but his strong personality made him a most effective officer, and his soldiers were devoted to him.

According to Duan Jiong's biography in Hou Han shu, in the two years of this final series of campaigns he had fought 180 engagements, had killed more than 38,000 of the enemy, and had captured over 427,500 head of livestock. Chinese losses amounted to little more than four hundred men, and the expenditure had been 4,400 million cash. The whole program had been carried out one year ahead of time and a thousand million cash below budget. And certainly, for the time being, the Xianlian Qiang were settled: dead men make few risings.

For the next fifteen years, indeed, there is no record of any serious trouble in the northwest. In 170 the Shaodang Qiang of the frontier sent messengers who were received at the court of Emperor
Ling with tribute and submission, and the Account of the Western Qiang contains no further entry until the year 184.

On the other hand, this period of apparent peace may also be taken as a sign of inactivity by the Chinese. It does not appear that the imperial authorities were able to persuade or compel many settlers to return to Liang province, nor could they maintain an effective occupation and use of the territory. The administration of the commanderies which had shifted their capitals during the troubles of 140 still remained in the more secure regions further south. Though the constant disturbance and trouble with the Qiang had been eliminated, the slaughtered tribespeople were not replaced by Chinese settlers: in so far as they were replaced, it was by neighbouring herdsmen moving into the deserted grazing grounds.

It was this demographic weakness of the Chinese empire in the northwest that ultimately made nonsense of all Duan Jiong's brutality. In his own memorial of 168, he remarked how few Chinese there were in the region that he sought to defend, and the decline is indeed quite remarkable. At the time of the census of 2 AD, during the last years of Former Han, the registered population of the commanderies Shang, Beidi, Anding, Tianshui and Longxi, the area between the Yellow River on the east and the west, the Ordos region on the north, and the upper Wei valley and the Qin Ling divide on the south, was a total of some 325,000 households and 1.5 million individuals. In 140, at the time of the census recorded in the Treatise of Administrative Geography of
Hou Han shu, the same five commanderies, responsible for essentially the same area, contained only about 47,500 households and 236,000 individuals. In this territory, the registered population in Later Han was only one-sixth that of Former Han. The table opposite gives the details, though it must be recognised that some counties had moved from one commandery to another, and the correlations are thus distorted.

It is true, of course, that the figures of 140 were taken at a time of major disorganisation due to the second great Qiang rebellion, and it should also be observed that the remarkable decline in Shang commandery, which was administratively under the supervision of Bing province, owed a good deal to the earlier and continuing problems with the Xiongnu and the defences of the north. The fact remains, however, that despite the wishes and hopes of the imperial government, this region of the northwest had lost the greater part of its Chinese population, and there was no way in which the loss could be restored. More than a century of insecurity, on a marginal frontier of farming, with barbarian raids and imperial campaigns as equal discouragements, had driven the Chinese farmers away, across the Qin Ling, south into the Sichuan basin or southeast down the valley of the Han, to more suitable, less anxious territories.

From that point of view, Duan Jiong's great campaigns of extermination produced a most hollow victory. The Chendi tribes of
Table 1: Chinese Population Changes in the Near Northwest 2-140 AD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Former Han</th>
<th>Later Han</th>
<th>Households</th>
<th>Individuals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Longxi</td>
<td>53,964</td>
<td>5,628</td>
<td>236,824</td>
<td>29,637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tianshui</td>
<td>60,370</td>
<td>27,423</td>
<td>261,348</td>
<td>130,138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanyang</td>
<td>42,725</td>
<td>6,094</td>
<td>143,294</td>
<td>29,060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anding</td>
<td>64,461</td>
<td>3,122</td>
<td>210,688</td>
<td>18,637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beidi</td>
<td>103,683</td>
<td>5,169</td>
<td>606,658</td>
<td>28,599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shang</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Shang commandery and other smaller Qiang groups were not directly affected by the massacre of the Xianlian, and though they now caused no major trouble to the empire, they were still able to occupy imperial land. The Chinese settlers did not return to the open country, and the economic and demographic process, which substituted nomad herdsmen for Chinese peasants, continued to operate regardless of the men of war and the optimistic politicians at court.

The end of Han government in the northwest:

It was the Liangzhou rebellion of 184 that finally removed control of the province from the imperial government of Han. The disturbance broke out in the winter of 184/185, just at the time of the final victories of imperial forces against the rebellion of the Yellow Turbans in the east of the empire, and although it has received comparatively little attention from historians, it was influential in confirming the end of Chinese power in the northwest and in preparing that territory for dominance by independent, non-Chinese states in the centuries that followed. 20

The rebellion began with insurrection among the Qiang people of Beidi and Anding commanderies, including some remnant Xianlian people, evidently those who had been settled in small groups after the wars of Duan Jiong, and who now found themselves once again powerful enough to resist Chinese oppressions. At about the same time, the frontier people of the upper reaches of the Yellow River, at Fuhan and Heguan counties, also caused trouble. It is very possible that
the two outbreaks were not connected, but represented independent responses to the apparent weakness and distraction of Chinese military power by events in the east.\textsuperscript{21} The critical point was reached, however, when the troops of the Loyal Auxiliary mutinied and joined the insurgents, killing the Protector Ling Zheng.\textsuperscript{22} It was at this time that the groups of rebels appear to have joined together, and their first leaders were Beigong Boyu and Li Wenhou, both of whom had been soldiers of the Auxiliary.

Haloun has suggested that the mutiny of the Auxiliary took place at the military base of Lianju in Wuwei commandery, but Hou Han Shu \textsuperscript{72} indicates clearly that the rebellions preceded the mutiny,\textsuperscript{23} and it seems most likely that the mutiny of the Auxiliary and the killing of the Protector took place when the men were being marched against the rebels. The Auxiliary, as we have seen, was formed originally from volunteers of the Little Yuezhi people, but it also contained numbers of Qiang, and it is not certain whether Beigong Boyu and Li Wenhou were Yuezhi or Qiang.\textsuperscript{24} The combination of rebels and mutineers, however, immediately controlled a band of territory along the Yellow River in the neighbourhood of modern Lanzhou, and they had evidently gained control of at least a part of the Long Road. Within a few weeks, they gained a further notable success with the capture of Yuanya, the capital of Jincheng commandery. They enticed the Grand Administrator Chen Yi to their camp and then killed him, and they recruited as advisers and leaders to their cause two renegade Chinese, Bian Zhang, a former Prefect of Xinan in Hongnong, and Han Sui, Attendant Official of Liang province.
Map 5: The Rebellion in Liang Province 184-189
Xinan in Hongnong, and Han Sui, Attendant Official of Liang province. Both were men of some reputation in the northwest, and they were evidently persuaded to throw in their lot with the rebels and add their local influence to gain wider support.  

At this time, the military forces of Liang province itself played an ineffective role, partly because the Inspector Zuo Chang had embezzled the funds for the local army. No effective relief could be sent to Jincheng, and the provincial forces were themselves besieged at Ji Prefecture in Hanyang. When Zuo Chang was dismissed, his successor, Song Nie, was convinced that the province could be saved if only the people were taught the Xiao jing, the Confucian Classic of Filial Piety. Despite the advice of his junior officials, he recommended this program to the court, and the central government then removed him.

Sung Nie was replaced as Inspector by a certain Yang Yong, but the local situation did not improve. The new Protector, Xia Yu, former assistant to Duan Jiong, was besieged in the Herding Office of Hanyang commandery, and a relief force sent under the command of the junior official He Xun was completely defeated. Xia Yu evidently made his escape, and He Xun, though captured, was so admired by the rebels for his courage that they let him go. He was promoted to be Grand Administrator of Hanyang, but the command that he held can have included little more than the city of Ji, if that, and there was now no effective imperial authority in the eastern part of Liang province.
In the spring of 185 the rebel army, now several tens of thousands strong, moved east to attack and plunder the region of Changan. In the third month, the court appointed Huangfu Song, a nephew of the earlier commander Huangfu Gui, who had already gained great successes against the Yellow Turbans, as General of Chariots and Cavalry on the Left in charge of the defence of the former capital. He achieved, however, no immediate victory, and he was dismissed from command in the seventh month. In the eighth month the campaign was entrusted to Zhang Wen, who relinquished the high bureaucratic post of Minister of Works to become full General of Chariots and Cavalry, with additional forces including barbarian auxiliaries from other tribes of the northern frontiers.

In the eleventh month of 185, Zhang Wen succeeded in defeating the invaders in a battle at Meiyang county in Youfufeng, only a few kilometres from the tombs of the emperors of Former Han. According to the Biography of Dong Zhuo, who at that time held the title of General Who Smashes the Caitiffs under the command of Zhang Wen, there had been indecisive engagements with the rebels near Meiyang for some time, until one night a shooting star appeared to fall onto the enemy camp. The rebels were discouraged and thought of returning home, and Dong Zhuo and some others took the advantage of their confusion to press a sudden attack. Certainly the imperial army registered a success, but the rebels appear to have made their retreat without great difficulty.
Though the main force of the enemy was neither broken nor destroyed, they did withdraw westwards to the region of Yuzhong in Jincheng, near present-day Lanzhou. Zhang Wen attempted to send forces in pursuit. The general Zhou Shen was despatched with thirty thousand men to attack Yuzhong, while Dong Zhuo with another thirty thousand followed the Xianlian Qiang. Neither force, however, achieved any success. On the contrary, Zhou Shen had his lines of communications cut by a detachment of the enemy, and was compelled to make a hasty retreat, leaving his baggage in their hands. Dong Zhuo found himself besieged by the Qiang at Wangyuan in Hanyang, on the Wei River, and barely made his escape. The victory at Meiyang had preserved the imperial position in the region of Changan, and some administrative control over Longxi and Hanyang, but the rebels retained their power in the neighbourhood of the Yellow River, and the upper Wei valley was disputed ground.

At this stage, there was a debate at the court of Emperor Ling whether the whole of Liang province should not be abandoned. The Gentleman-Consultant Fu Xie, from Lingzhou in northern Beidi commandery, who had served with distinction against the Yellow Turbans, made an impassioned speech, on traditional lines, praising the achievement of Emperor Wu in conquering the territory, and warning of the danger to the empire if the lands were permitted to remain in the hands of barbarians. Fu Xie was then appointed Grand Commandant of Hanyang, and in early 187 a new Inspector, Geng Bi, collected local levies and led an attack on the rebels.
During 186, the rebel leadership appears to have suffered some losses. Bian Zhang died of illness, and Beigong Boyu and Li Wenhou are not heard of again: very probably, as Haloun suggests, they were killed in some internecine feuds between the different groups of insurgents and mutineers, Chinese and tribesmen, who made up their heterogeneous force. It was presumably for this reason, the apparent confusion in the enemy's ranks, that Geng Bi proposed to attempt the re-establishment of Chinese power without major military assistance from other parts of the empire.

It is said that Fu Xie warned him against the enterprise, arguing that he should seek to establish authority by good and effective government on a small scale rather than take the risk of a campaign. Nevertheless, Geng Bi advanced to Dikdao, capital of Longxi commandery. One of Geng Bi's chief personal assistants, however, a man called Cheng Qiu, was notorious for his corruption and extortion, and there was a mutiny among the troops at Dikdao which killed first Cheng Qiu and then Geng Bi. The Grand Administrator of Longxi himself changed sides, and the mutineers combined with the rebels to attack Fu Xie in Hanyang. Fu Xie died in the fighting, but another of Geng Bi's former officers, the Major Ma Teng, brought his troops to join the enemy. A certain Wang Guo, certainly a Chinese and very likely also a former officer of Geng Bi, obtained the chief command, and he led the rebels in generalised raids against the capital district.
With this series of defeats, the imperial position was, if possible, rather worse than it had been before the battle at Meiyang in 185. When news of the disaster reached Luoyang in the summer of 187, Zhang Wen, who had been appointed Grand Commandant after his success at that time, resigned his office in acknowledgement that the disorder was still out of control. By the end of 188, after some eighteen months of skirmishing on the frontier of the two provinces, Wang Guo brought a major force eastwards down the Long Road and laid siege to Chencang in Youfufeng.

For the time being, the court appears to have indeed abandoned its hopes of recovering Liang province, and it seems that the commanderies west of the Yellow River, along the Gansu corridor, isolated from the rest of the empire, either joined the rebel forces or maintained a defensive position in the face of a wave of revolts. The attack on Chencang, however, presented a clear threat to the heartland of the state, and the government once more appointed Huangfu Song, this time as General of the Left, with twenty thousand men, to deal with Wang Guo's attack.

According to Huangfu Song's biography, his campaign in 188-189 was a triumph of thoughtful strategy. Dong Zhuo, as General of the Van, also commanding twenty thousand men, was named as his assistant, and he urged Huangfu Song to make an immediate attack on Wang Guo's army outside Chencang. Huangfu Song, however, remarked that Chencang was strong enough to hold out without relief for
several months, and it was still too early to engage the enemy with his newly gathered forces. Instead, he delayed operations for almost three months; and as he foretold, in the spring of 189, Wang Guo's army abandoned the siege and retired. At this point, Huangfu Song gave the order for advance. Dong Zhuo again protested, this time arguing that since the enemy had suffered no defeat, it would be dangerous to press them too closely. Huangfu Song replied:

No. At first, I refused to attack them because I wished to avoid their initial strength. Now, I am attacking to take advantage of their weakness. It is a discouraged foe, not a retreating army, that I am attacking. Wang Guo's men are running away, and they have no intention of fighting: so we shall be striking an enemy in confusion with a force that is trained and disciplined. There is no question here of desperate bandits caught in a trap [who would fight like cornered rats].

Huangfu Song then ordered Dong Zhuo to remain behind as rear-guard while he went forward to the fight. He defeated Wang Guo in one engagement after another, and cut off more than ten thousand heads. Dong Zhuo was embarrassed and angry.

The victory of Huangfu Song ended the immediate threat from Wang Guo. Wang Guo himself was deposed from command of the rebel alliance, and Yan Zhong, a former Prefect of Xindu in Guanghan commandery, Yi province, who was a native of Hanyang, was compelled to accept their leadership. Yan Zhong, however, apparently died soon afterwards, and the rebels again quarrelled among themselves. For the next twenty years, no single leader was able to forge a coalition in Liang province.
At the same time, however, the Han dynasty itself had fallen into utter disarray. Emperor Ling died in the summer, in the fourth month of the Chinese year, on the day equivalent to 13 May 189. In the autumn, on 22 September, there was full-scale fighting in Luoyang after the assassination of the General in Chief He Jin, the brother of the regent Empress-Dowager, and within a few days the general Dong Zhuo had brought his army to the capital and established himself as dictator. By the end of the year, civil insurrection had spread across the empire, and though the boy Liu Xie, whom Dong Zhuo put upon the throne and who is known by the posthumous title of Emperor Xian, reigned with the title of emperor for more than thirty years, the power of his dynasty was ended.

The rebellion in Liang province, then, was finally subsumed as an outlying disturbance in the conflagration which spread across the whole of China, but the details of its first years are of considerable importance to the history of the northwest, and there are some particular points of interest which may now be considered in more detail.

The records of the imperial campaigns of 185 and 188-189 are somewhat confused by the presence of Dong Zhuo, future usurper and dictator. The historians were reluctant to grant him credit for good work, and only too anxious to show him as arrogant, brutal and perhaps incompetent. Considered in this light, the account of the debate between Huangfu Song and Dong Zhuo at the time of the Chencang
campaign in 188–189 appears rather as a special anecdote to bestow praise upon Huangfu Song, always regarded as a loyal official of Han, and humiliation upon Dong Zhuo. There may be some truth in it, but the tale as a whole is very doubtful.

There is a somewhat similar instance of criticism of Dong Zhuo at the time of the Meiyang campaign under Zhang Wen in 185. Zhang Wen, again, is regarded as a fine minister of the empire, but we are told that Dong Zhuo showed himself insubordinate and disobedient, and Zhang Wen was urged to have him executed. The argument for Dong Zhuo's punishment was put forward by the junior officer Sun Jian, who achieved distinction a few years later as a general in the civil war against Dong Zhuo, and who was father of the first emperor of the southern state of Wu of the Three Kingdoms, Sun Quan. The incident is a significant part of his early biography.38

According to Sanguo zhi, Sun Jian argued privately to Zhang Wen that Dong Zhuo had failed to gain any military success, that he was causing unrest in the army when it was in face of the enemy, and that Zhang Wen could and should take the authority to summon him and execute him according to traditional military law. Zhang Wen, however, was reluctant to do this, partly, it is implied, through a misplaced sense of leniency, but also, as he remarks, because Dong Zhuo, who came from Lintao in Longxi, had great influence among the local people of the northwest, and the army could not proceed without him.
In fact, Zhang Wen was very likely correct in this judgement, but the remarkable thing about Sun Jian's accusation is that it was put forward at a time when Dong Zhuo was Zhang Wen's most experienced and competent officer. A few months earlier he had been named as assistant to Huangfu Song, and although Huangfu Song had been dismissed from command shortly afterwards, on account of his failure to curb the rebels, Dong Zhuo was retained. Moreover, it was apparently Dong Zhuo's attack that gained the victory at the battle of Meiyang, and although it is difficult to date the time of Sun Jian's accusation, it is possible that it was presented after that success. While the speech of Sun Jian (which was apparently whispered to Zhang Wen in open council) is a fine piece of imaginative literary reconstruction, and though such advice may indeed have been tendered at some time during the campaign, the anecdote is otherwise an excellent example of the misinformation which may sometimes be found in special biographies not directly related to the subject at hand.

In the commentary compiled by Pei Songzhi to the biography of Sun Jian in Sanguo zhi, however, there is preserved a fragment from the Shanyang gong zaiji, "Parallel Annals of the Duke of Shanyang", which contains an account of a conversation between Dong Zhuo and the historian Liu Ai at Changan about 191. It is very probable that this is authentic, and it presents a rational account of the debate on strategy at that time.
According to this text, after the victory at Meiyang, when Zhang Wen proposed to advance against the rebels, Dong Zhuo argued that while Zhou Shen and his forces should be sent forward, he himself should remain in reserve. In such a case, the enemy would be hesitant to move against the advance body for fear the reserve troops would attack them after they were committed to battle. Zhang Wen, however, would not agree, and so Zhou Shen and Dong Zhuo were both sent forward on their separate, and ultimately unsuccessful, expeditions.

In the same text, Dong Zhuo remarks that Sun Jian, as an officer in Zhou Shen's command, put forward a similar proposal: that he should be given command of a detachment to cut off supplies to the enemy in the city of Yuzhong, while Zhou Shen held back the main body of his troops as a threat to prevent them from making a sortie. In this way, the rebels in Yuzhong city would have been starved out. But Zhou Shen also rejected this advice, the enemy themselves made a sortie to cut his supply lines, and he was defeated.

Again, Dong Zhuo claimed that he himself had used such a strategy for his own advance against the Qiang. He sent his lieutenant Liu Jing to occupy a detached camp with a few thousand men, and when he was in difficulties against the rebels, they failed to press their attacks because they were uncertain of the strength of Liu Jing's reserve, which might fall upon them at any time.
In view of these comments by Dong Zhuo about the campaign of 185, the incident with Huangfu Song in 188-189 appears in a different light. We are told that Dong Zhuo was ordered to remain behind as a rearguard while Huangfu Song went forward in pursuit, and the implication is that this was a mark of disrespect. However, the strategy of setting up a reserve guard to fix the enemy with a distant threat and then using a mobile striking force in immediate combat was one which Dong Zhuo himself had advocated and adopted a few years before. Though the two men were evidently rivals, and it is very probable that they quarrelled about the conduct of the campaign, the strategy was coherent and their co-operation effective.

By 189, however, though the imperial forces still held the lower Wei valley near Changan, Liang province itself was in turmoil. The confusion which we have seen attend the records of imperial campaigns is still worse confounded when the historians attempt to describe the leadership and formation of the rebels. Many citations in the texts describe the leaders of the rebellion as "Bian Zhang and Han Sui", but Haloun has pointed out that Bian Zhang died in 186 and Han Sui did not come to a position of real leadership until after the defeat of Wang Guo and the death of Yan Zhong in 189. It seems likely, however, that these men represented a local Chinese influence, based upon Jincheng, which combined with the Qiang barbarians and the various groups of mutineers to form the effective coalition of rebellion.
It is possible, as Haloun suggests, that Beigong Boyu and Li Wenhou, the leaders of the mutineers among the Auxiliary in 184, were Yuezhi, though Li Wenhou is certainly a more Chinese-sounding name. Later in that year, when the Protector Xia Yu was attacked and He Xun was defeated, the rebels were Qiang, under the command of a chieftain Dianyu of the Goujiu tribe. At the battle of Meiyang, a significant contingent of the enemy were also Qiang, for Dong Zhuo was sent to attack them in Anding and Hanyang, and it is likely that at this stage the rebel forces were in two components, mutineers and renegade Chinese in the area of Jincheng commandery, with rebel Qiang in Anding, Beidi and Hanyang.

During the debacle of 187, however, when the Inspector Geng Bi was killed by mutineers, we are told that his official Cheng Qiu, a local appointee, was personally unpopular for his oppression and corruption, and the Chinese themselves therefore turned against the government. Interestingly, though Li Xiangru, the Grand Administrator of Longxi, is said to have joined the rebels, he does not appear in any position of importance in their councils, while during the siege of the capital of Hanyang a certain Huang Yan, described as formerly Grand Commandant of Jiuquan, was sent as a messenger to invite Fu Xie to surrender. The rebels, however, were commanded at this time by Wang Guo, possibly a mutineer from the late Geng Bi's army, while they also contained a number of barbarians from Beidi.
After the defeat and deposition of Wang Guo in 189, the division of the rebels left two major groups, one under the command of Han Sui, based in Jincheng, and the other under Ma Teng in the Wei valley. On the western frontier, however, the rebel Song Jian established himself in the prefectures of Fuhan and Heguan, and took for himself the title of King of the Sources of the River Who Will Pacify Han. North of the Wei valley, in Beidi and Anding commanderies, there were a number of petty leaders of bandit groups, but none of them proved to be of any lasting importance. For the most part, whether 'bandits' or not, these were small communities of people gathered together for mutual protection and self-defence, in the hope of avoiding the raids of their neighbours and the disturbances of more ambitious leaders in the empire.

Ma Teng and Han Sui, however, maintained a considerable position for more than twenty years and played some role in the wider affairs of the empire. Both men, as we have seen, had held positions in the local administration, Han Sui as an Attendant Official and Ma Teng as a Major under the provincial government. Such posts were normally held by members of petty gentry families, and we have been told specifically that Han Sui was invited to join the rebels in 184 because of his local following. Ma Teng, besides his military experience, had evidently some support among the Qiang, for his mother had been a woman of that people.
In this region of the northwest, then, the rebellion which removed local power from the hands of the central government had its beginning in a barbarian uprising, but gained its major impetus from the mutiny of local garrisons, and came largely into the hands of local Chinese leaders. Though the Qiang and the Yuezhi played a significant role, they were not the major force behind the conflict. Indeed, as the power of the empire passed from the scene, replaced by local warlords such as Ma Teng, Han Sui and their lesser colleagues, the Qiang were evidently able to withdraw and maintain themselves without close interference from any Chinese power, while it does not appear that the Yuezhi played any further role of note.

The state of Wei and the northwestern frontier:

In 190, after his seizure of power in Luoyang, Dong Zhuo removed the young Emperor Xian and his capital to Changan, and he established an alliance with Ma Teng and Han Sui against the rising which he faced from loyalist officials in the North China Plain. After Dong Zhuo was assassinated in 192, the emperor fell into the hands of his lieutenants Li Jue and Guo Si. Ma Teng and Han Sui attempted briefly to intervene in the politics at court, and Li Jue in particular recruited Qiang and other barbarians as auxiliaries to his forces, but after three years of feuding, confusion, murder and occasional outbreaks of full-scale war, the emperor made his escape to the east in 195. In 196 he was received into the care of Cao Cao, from whose tutelage and protection he never escaped again.
The northwest thus reverted to a backwater in the affairs of the empire, though Ma Teng and Han Sui did establish a form of alliance with Cao Cao, which ensured their benevolent neutrality while Cao Cao was most heavily engaged in his campaigns across the North China Plain and south towards the Yangtse. However, after his defeat in 208 by the forces of Sun Quan and Liu Bei at the battle of the Red Cliffs on the Yangtse, Cao Cao paid increasing attention to the northwest. About the same time, Ma Teng and Han Sui became involved in a feud between their followers. Ma Teng was defeated and came east from Hanyang into Youfufeng. In the following year Ma Teng himself was persuaded to attend the capital, where he remained a virtual prisoner while his son Ma Chao succeeded to his command.

In 211, however, when Cao Cao's commander Zhong Yao attempted to move into the Wei valley, the incursion produced a defensive alliance of all the leaders in the northwest, and an army of ten divisions, headed by Ma Chao and Han Sui, came to oppose Cao Cao's forces at the pass of Tongguan, south of the great bend of the Yellow River. Cao Cao himself came to take command of the operations. Instead of pressing a direct attack against the west, he maintained his forces in defence lines at Tongguan while a detachment was sent north to establish a bridgehead across the Yellow River at Puban. Then he took his main army to follow them, crossed the Yellow River north into modern Shanxi, crossed it again at Puban west into modern Shaanxi and marched south with the river guarding his flank. Having turned the line of the enemy's major defensive position, he crossed the mouth
Map 6: Cao Cao's approach to the Battle of Huayin: autumn 211
of the Wei and defeated the allied army in pitched battle near Huayin, on the plain south of the river. Several of the petty chieftains were killed, and Cao Cao's forces occupied the region of Changan and Anding commandery.

After this campaign, the conquest of the remaining rebels in the northwest was only a matter of time. Restoration and resettlement was entrusted to the civil official Zhang Ji, first as Intendant of Jingzhao, and later as Inspector of Yong province, while Xiahou Yuan was in command of military operations. Beside the major rebel forces, Xiahou Yuan had also to deal with risings among the Qiang, some groups of the Xiongnu from the north, and a number of disturbances from the Di people of Wudu and southern Longxi, sometimes in alliance with Ma Chao. By 214, however, Ma Chao was finally driven to exile in Sichuan, and in the same year Han Sui and his allies, who included the Shaodang Qiang, were decisively defeated at the Changli River in Hanyang, identified with the present-day Hulu River, north of Tianshui. In the winter of 214, Xiahou Yuan followed that success with a campaign against Song Jian. Song Jian died, his capital at Fuhan was captured, and all his officials were killed. With this victory, the whole territory east of the Yellow River was in the control of Cao Cao.

In 215, Han Sui died in his headquarters in the Xining valley, and his followers sent his head to Cao Cao as sign of submission. Cao Cao at this time was engaged in a campaign against Zhang Lu in
Hanzhong, and although he received Zhang Lu's surrender at the end of 215, his rival Liu Bei, who had established the independent state of Shu in Sichuan, defeated the army of Wei in 219, killed the commander Xiahou Yuan, and seized Hanzhong for himself. During these years of fighting in the south, there was neither time nor resources to deal effectively with the region of the Gansu corridor.  

In 220, after the death of Cao Cao, his son Cao Pi extended his power over the far northwest, though his authority was still contested by occasional local rebellions, notably from the Qu family of Xiping commandery, in the upper Xining valley. By 222, however the government of the Wei state controlled the commanderies of the Gansu corridor, and the trade with Central Asia was officially re-established.

Despite these successes, however, the authority of Wei in the northwest never matched that of the former empire of Han. The central power base of the Cao family lay in the North China Plain, and the Wei River was very close to the frontier of the state of Shu, which controlled the upper valley of the Han. Moreover, the Wei made no attempt to re-establish government over the country further north or along the Yellow River. Though the commandery names of Anding and Beidi were preserved, and other commandery units were established, the Chinese-controlled territory of this region did not extend north of the valley of the Jing. Similarly, though the Tao River valley of
Longxi commandery was still maintained in occupation, the country further west was abandoned: after Song Jian was killed in his capital at Fuhan, that county administration was not restored.

Within this narrow strip of territory, the settled Chinese population was, predictably, even smaller than in the past. A memorial by the Inspector of Yong province Zhang Ji, written about 220 in praise of the work of the Grand Administrator of Jincheng, Su Ze, describes how the capital of that commandery had contained no more than five hundred households at the time of the Wei takeover in 215; under Su Ze's administration over the last five years, the population had risen to more than a thousand households. Though the Wei government did pay attention to the question of resettlement, there was clearly little they could do to restore the losses of population in this frontier territory.

Indeed, a great number of the inhabitants of the Wei valley were now people of the Di tribes of the southern mountains, who were forcibly or voluntarily brought back from the war zone against Shu. In 216, for example we are told that over fifty thousand groups of Di from Wudu were settled in the Wei valley lest they ally themselves with the forces of Liu Bei. While the Di and the Qiang people the mountains played some part on either side in the conflict across the Qin Ling ranges, the policy of resettlement was followed on occasions, and by the middle of the century the general Deng Ai was recommending the grain grown by the Qiang people of Longxi as a
source of supply for the armies of Wei. Clearly, the barbarians had replaced the former Chinese peasants.

Epilogue: shifting barbarians:

In the period of division that accompanied and followed the dynasty of Jin in the third and fourth centuries, the various groups of non-Chinese people in the northwest encountered different fates. During this time, there is no reference to any tribes of the Qiang in the region of the Ordos, and it seems most likely that they were either absorbed by the Xiongnu or moved south like the Chinese. West of the Yellow River, in the Gansu corridor and the Xining valley, the Western Qiang came under the dominance of, and were to a considerable extent absorbed by, the expanding power of the Xianbi, which culminated in the dynasties of the Tuoba Wei, while the Little Yuezhi similarly disappeared as an identifiable people. Further south, there was a slow migration of Qiang into the of the Tao River, and tribes of Qiang continue to be recorded among foothills of the Tibetan massif, the frontier country of Sichuan.

In the valley of the Wei, however, the Qiang and the Di people had established their settlements, and though they maintained a separate identity for many generations they were ultimately integrated with the peasant civilisation of China. For much of the Jin dynasty, however, there was frequent rebellion and disturbance among the Di people of the Wei valley and the upper Han River, while the local authority of Chinese or barbarian leaders was a constant source of
suspicion and concern to the weak imperial governments. In the second half of the fourth century, the territory of the northwest was for a time dominated by the empires of Former Qin, under the Di Chieftain Fu Jian,73 and then by Later Qin, under the Qiang leader Yao Chang,74 but both these states were founded on the short-lived supremacy of a mercenary army, they controlled a medley of subject-peoples, and the tribal origins of their leaders indicated no particular ruling class nor any established structure of power.75 After all the conflicts, ambitions, rebellions, arguments and wars, the essential pattern remained the same, with peasant settlement in the farming country of the river valleys and nomad pastoralists in the drier lands of the steppe.

Finally, however, we may observe one remarkable constant: the advice on resettlement of the barbarians that was tendered at the courts of the emperors of China. In 259, Deng Ai had recommended that the Qiang should be gradually transferred beyond the borders and that Chinese soil should be occupied only by Chinese.76 Nothing came of the proposal, for the evident reasons that there were no Chinese peasants available to take the place of the Qiang, that the army of Wei, faced with the threat from Shu in the south, could hardly afford to create so many new enemies by a forced exodus, and Deng Ai himself, as we have seen, recognised the value of the grain produced by the Qiang of Nanan and Longxi as an essential source of supply to the army.
In 280, after the conquest of Wu and the reunification of China under the Jin, a similar proposal was raised by the censorial official Guo Qin, arguing for the expulsion in the nomad barbarians of the north from the commanderies of the Ordos region and the hill country of present-day Shaanxi. Despite its recent victories, however, the dynasty was too unsettled and insecure for such an operation, and the problem of Chinese recolonisation remained as intractable as for generations in the past.

Guo Qin's proposal, in any event, would have been of limited application to the Qiang, but in 299, just after the defeat of the Di rebel Qi Wannian, and only a few years before the destruction of the Jin state itself through civil war and barbarian invasion, the junior official Jiang Tong presented his remarkable *Xi rong lun* "Essay on Shifting the Western Barbarians". In erudite literary style, he traced the history of the ancient rulers in dealing with the non-Chinese peoples, contrasted the policies of more recent times, and argued forcefully for a return to tradition. I translate here the section dealing most particularly with the Qiang and Di of the Land within the Passes during Later Han and Wei:

In the Jianwu period of Han [25-55] Ma Yuan was given command as Grand Administrator of Longxi. He attacked the rebel Qiang and shifted the survivors to the land within the passes, where they occupied the empty country in [Zuo]pingyi and Hedong, and lived mingled with the Chinese.

After several years, these people were increasingly numerous, and they had built up self-confidence because of their prosperity and strength. At the same time, however, they were suffering from the oppression of the Chinese.
At the beginning of the Yongchu period (107), when the Chief Commandant of Cavalry Wang Hong was sent to the Western Regions, he called up Qiang and Di to serve as escorts. At this, all the Qiang fled in terror, stirring one another up, and the barbarians of two provinces all rebelled together. They overthrew and destroved military and civilian commanders, and they captured towns and slaughtered the inhabitants. For a period of ten years, barbarians and Chinese wrought catastrophe upon one another, until Ren Shang and Ma Xian managed to defeat the enemy.

Even after that, the embers of revolt were not fully extinguished. At the slightest opportunity, a rising would break out again. Ma Xian was obstinate and extravagant, and in the end he was defeated and overthrown. Duan Jiong met with difficulty in every direction. The barbarians of Yong province were a continual harm to the state, and of all the troubles of those middle ages, this was the worst.

In the disorders at the end of Han, the Land within the Passes fell into ruin. When Wei first arose, it divided this territory with Shu, and the barbarians of that frontier region joined one side or the other. Emperor Wu of Wei [Cao Cao] moved the Di people of Wudu into Qinhuai, because he wanted to weaken the enemy and strengthen his own state for defence against Shu. This was clearly a plan of opportunity, for one particular occasion; it was not intended to serve as a policy of permanent value. We are now facing the harmful results of that decision.

Now the Land Within the Passes is well-watered, and all things grow in abundance. The arable fields are of the highest grade. It is in this region that emperors and kings have set their capitals, and I have never heard it said that the western or northern barbarians should possess this territory. The barbarians have fierce ambitions, nothing in common with the Chinese. Yet when they were in a time of weakness and disorder, we brought them into the inmost territory of our nation. The gentry and common people of China paid them no respect, but despised them as unimportant and weak. This caused the spirit of anger to rise in them, until it spread its poison into the very marrow of their bones. When they became stronger and more numerous, it was only natural that they should wish to revolt.

With a nature that is greedy and cruel, and a spirit fierce and quick to anger, they waited for their chance and then took the opportunity to cause trouble and rebellion. Now they occupy the lands within the borders of our state, so we have no frontier defence against them. They make sudden attacks on any place that is unprepared and seize any property left out in the open fields. In this way, the misfortune reaches everywhere, and the cruel damage that they bring is immeasureable. This is a natural development, and is well known from practical experience.
What we should do now is to take advantage of this time, when our military authority is at its height and all other affairs are still in a state of flux. We should collect all the Qiang in Zuojipingyì, Beidi, Xinpíng and Anding, and shift them to the territory of the Xianlian, the Han and Qian, and the Xizhi. We should take the Di people of Youfufeng, Shipíng and Jingzhao, and send them back to the west of Long Mountain, to inhabit the lands of Yinping and Wudu. We can supply them with provisions for the journey, so that they have enough to maintain themselves, and let each one rejoin his own tribe and return to his ancient land. Then we can set up dependent states and commissioners to keep them in peace and good order.

When the western barbarians and the men of China are no longer mixed together, and when each has obtained his own proper place, then on the one hand this will accord with the pattern of submission from ancient times, and at the same time it will establish the rule for long-term prosperity of our dynasty in the future. Even if the barbarians should take it in mind to harm the Chinese, or if there is some sudden disturbance, they will then be far away from our country, separated by mountains and rivers, although they may still make raids, the damage they can do will not be so great.

With this utopian dream of returning the barbarians to their proper homelands, presented to the imperial court of Jin just a few years before the great invasions from the north in the early fourth century, the scholar Jiang Tong expressed the hopes of every conservative Chinese statesman, and he inherited a long line of argument, from the counsellors of Emperor Guangwu dealing with the Xiongnu, through the massacring general Duán Jióng. Unfortunately, such advice was much the same value as that which was given to King Canute.
CHAPTER 5

THE XIONGNU, THE FORMER HAN DYNASTY, AND
THE GOVERNMENT OF WANG MANG

The early history and the nature of the Xiongnu state
The Xiongnu state at the end of former Han
The policies of Wang Mang

The early history and the nature of the Xiongnu state:

For students of Chinese history, the account of the conflict between the government of Former Han and the steppe empire of the Xiongnu is reasonably well known. A simple outline of the period would refer to the founding of the Xiongnu empire by the Shanyu Modun at the end of the third century BC, to the great and expensive campaigns of the reign of Emperor Wu (141 to 87 BC), and to the peace of exhaustion in the later part of Former Han.¹

In considering the history of these northern rivals of Han, it is nevertheless appropriate to recognise that the information upon which we must base our interpretations comes almost entirely from the records of the Chinese court and the later historians who collated them. Unlike, for example, the Mongols and the Manchus, the Xiongnu have left no account of their own history, and there are only a few periods — as, for example, the era of peace at the end of Former Han and the time of the surrender of the Southern Xiongnu early in Later Han — when we may feel that the Chinese had direct and continuing
contact with the internal political situation of the rulers of the steppe. As a result, though the pattern of events is reasonably clear, there is considerable room for interpretation and for speculation.

The origins of the Xiongnu people themselves have been a question of long scholarly debate. It is now generally accepted that the name of the Huns who fought the Roman Empire in the West in the fifth century AD is directly related to the name of the Xiongnu; and there is good evidence for strong affinity between the customs of the Xiongnu and those recorded for the Scythians of Eastern Europe. The extent of time and distance, however, make the significance of such a relationship uncertain; and while it may be interesting and important to historians and ethnographers of the West to consider the origins of the central Asian hordes who attacked their civilised world, the scholars of China are more appropriately concerned with the problems posed by the enemies along the immediate frontier.

In this context, it seems sensible to recognise that the expression Xiongnu in texts of the Han period possesses a double meaning. On the one hand, Xiongnu referred to a specific tribal group, of specific ethnic origin, language and culture. At the same time, in extended meaning, Xiongnu refers to the political entity which was established under the dominance of that tribe.
In the same fashion, one may observe that the world-empire of Chinggis Khan and his successors was known as "Mongol" because the Mongols under Chinggis Khan formed the core group which dominated that nomad state: the subject peoples and even the armies of the empire were not themselves of Mongol race, language or culture.

Likewise, though it is customary and correct to refer to the Manchu conquest of China in the seventeenth century, the general statement should not be allowed to hide the fact that the Manchu leadership and its core political group was supported by military forces of Mongols and Chinese.

From the example of these well-known models, and from the evidence of the contemporary Chinese texts, it seems clear that the Xiongnu state was an empire of the steppe, dominated by and unified under the leadership of the core group of Xiongnu, but in great part composed of non-Xiongnu people who were associated in a feudal or tributary relationship with the central authority of the Shanyu. For the majority of the people of the steppe, the term Xiongnu described political allegiance, not racial origin.

Such an interpretation, of course, makes it remarkably difficult to comment upon the racial origins and affinities of the Xiongnu themselves. Maenchen-Helfen has come to the conclusion:

In the early and the beginning of the later Han period a great part of the Hsiung-nu confederacy, perhaps we may say its nucleus, consisted of Mongoloids of the Baikal type.
Pulleybank, on the other hand, has argued that,

contrary to what has often been believed, there is no evidence that the Hsiung-nu were either Turkish or Mongolian in their linguistic and ethnic affinities. Indeed there are cogent linguistic arguments against their having spoken an Altaic language of any kind.6

His tentative suggestion is that the Xiongnu language belonged to the Paleo-Siberian family, now represented only by Kettish, or Yenissei-Ostyak. He supports this argument by reference to the fact that at the time of the Russian arrival in Siberia in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there were a number of horse-riding nomad groups who spoke languages related to Kettish, and that there are remarkable similarities between the few items of Xiongnu vocabulary recorded in early Chinese texts and those preserved in Kettish and related languages now extinct.

The political structure of the Xiongnu state, as described in the Chinese texts and analysed in some detail by Pritsak and by Mori, tends to confirm the concept of the polity as comprising a central core of ethnic Xiongnu, effectively the "royal tribe", exercising lordship over a number of different groups of non-Xiongnu stock. Of the twenty-four da chen, or ministers, the leading four, after the Shanyu himself and in order of precedence, were the Worthy King of the Left, the Luli King of the Left, the Worthy King of the Right and the Luli King of the Right.7 These four, known as the Four Corners si jue (possibly the Four Horns),8 shared in the government of the whole state and each held authority over one fourth of the empire.
They were chosen from amongst the sons or younger brothers of the reigning Shanyu. The highest in rank, the Worthy King of the Left, was heir-apparent to the throne.

Below these first four noble ranks there was another group of the "Six Corners", described in *Hou Han shu* as the Rizhu Kings of the Left and of the Right,⁹ the Wenyutí Kings of the Left and of the Right,¹⁰ and the Zhanjiang Kings of the Left and of the Right.¹¹ As for the first group, we are told that these royal titles were reserved for sons and younger brothers of the Shanyu.¹²

Beside the royal clan itself, whose surname was Xulianti,¹³ there were leading noble families which were associated in the government and which frequently intermarried with the Shanyu's lineage. In the Former Han period, the two chief exogamous families were the Huyan and the Lan, joined in the early second century BC by the Xubu clan. According to *Hou Han shu*, in the early first century AD a fourth noble house was added to this limited group, the Qiulin, also with rights of government and intermarriage.

After the ten top positions of the Four Corners and the Six Corners, then, it appears that the remainder of the twenty-four high ministerial positions were held by members of the great related clans. Of these posts, we are told that the Gudu Marquises, most senior of the "outer" ranks, assisted the Shanyu in the administration of the
state; below them were Shizhu Gudu Marquises, presumably their nominal associates or assistants, and it would appear that these two sets of nobles were closely connected to the court. There are no specific details of the titles or functions of the lower ranks of this hierarchy. *Hou Han shu* remarks, however, that status depended primarily upon the number and strength of the followers under each leader's command.

This, of course, is what we might expect of a loose feudal system, with the highest positions reserved for the members of the ruling family, and the posts immediately below that for the chiefs of the leading clans to which they were related by marriage. We are told by *Shi ji* and *Han shu* that each of the high ministers had command over a major force of cavalry, nominally described as "ten thousand horsemen", and a great part of a leader's authority would depend upon his military force and personal prestige. Formally, again, each of the ministers of the imperial clan was entrusted with the government of one part of the empire, and they gathered for the Shanyu's council in the first, fifth and ninth months of each year, at the occasion of the seasonal sacrifices.

So far, however, the system of government described has concerned only the ruling family and the other leading clans of the Xiongnu people. As Barfield has observed, the bulk of the Xiongnu empire was composed of different nomad tribes and peoples, each with their own indigenous leaders, but owing suzerainty to the central
government and officially supervised and controlled by the twenty-four high ministers. Despite their formal subordination, the leaders of the larger non-Xiongnu groups inevitably possessed some influence upon the policies of the central government and some freedom of manoeuvre. No political structure is ever completely monolithic, and the Xiongnu empire was looser than most.

In contrast to the formal hierarchy of government, one may consider the lower levels of society and administration. As in the steppe societies of recent times, each family, clan or tribe had its own designated grazing land, and it moved with its flocks and herds from one area to another within this territory. Vladimirtsoff has described the traditional social units of the ayil, or "campfire", and the larger küriyän, of "tents" and families. It seems possible that many of the references in Chinese texts to luo and yi among the Xiongnu and other northern peoples are related to these basic units of nomad society.16

This underlying economic and social structure of the nomads is of critical importance to the structure of the Xiongnu state. Contrary to Barfield's suggestion, the citizens of a nomad empire have rather limited mobility, and they cannot "literally walk away" from taxation, oppression or punishment. Should any nomad group attempt to do so, it would soon find itself on the grazing territory of its neighbours, and the wrath of the Shanyu would be preferable to the ferocity of a neighbour who saw his lands ravaged by other men's
beasts. Even though nomad herdsmen do not build fences, and may move at intervals from place to place, the extent of their territory is known and guarded, and their movements are clearly restricted.\textsuperscript{17}

In similar fashion, Barfield's argument that the Xiongnu strategy of retreat before Chinese attacks was inevitably successful has somewhat oversimplified the nomads' problem. It is certainly possible for a cavalry field force to withdraw before the attack of an enemy, particularly when the invader is encumbered by footsoldiers and baggage carts: it is not always so easy to arrange the withdrawal of flocks and herds, which move far more slowly than mounted men, and which are vulnerable to a sudden raid in advance of the invader's main force.\textsuperscript{18} And by the same argument as before, the transit of grazing animals across other people's pastures, even in the cause of victorious war, can be an immediate source of disruption and anxiety to all concerned.

On the other hand, Barfield is surely correct in his analysis of the Xiongnu empire as being based largely upon military power and the exploitation of the settled Chinese south of the Great Wall frontier. In his analysis of Xiongnu policy towards the Chinese he draws attention to the strong element of blackmail in the "barbarian's" approach to the empire: subsidies for the Shanyu's court and trading privileges for his people were extracted by the veiled threat and occasional reality of border raiding and invasion, and both sides recognised that the cost to the Han court of a major
military campaign was far greater than the annual payment of grain, wine, silk and gold.

Two points, however, should be given further emphasis. The first is economic: ancient and modern writers and scholars have pointed out that the steppe economy is a poor one, and that although it was possible for a nomad to maintain himself and his family without supplementary goods from China, he would do so at a very low level. It has been fairly argued by Sechin Jagchid that one continuing motive for steppe aggression against the Chinese was the desire to obtain, by fair means or by extortion, the attractive and useful materials produced by the settled civilisation. It is not entirely unreasonable to suggest that while the nomads threatened China with armed attack, the Chinese were equally consistently engaged in a trade war and blockade against their northern neighbours.

The second point follows from the observation that the northern frontier of China was essentially the result of Chinese imperial policy rather than of non-Chinese activity. Lattimore has pointed out that the chief concern of Emperor Gao in his campaigns in the north at the beginning of Han was to bring his frontier, "marcher" commanders under control, rather than to destroy the state of Modun. The chief concern of the Han government, as of the Qin and of other states before it, was to ensure the effective establishment of central control, even at the edges of the empire, and to prevent the possibility of any development of splinter states along the frontier,
which might play off the possibility of alliance with the nomad against the power of the court and the capital. In times of Chinese disunity, such frontier states were common, in times of central power the imperial government would do its utmost to eliminate such a threat.

Looked at in these terms, two further aspects of Chinese policy may be observed. The first is the well-known adage that the Great Wall was developed and administered as much to keep the Chinese in as to keep the non-Chinese out: it was a Chinese line, administered by the Chinese central government, which discouraged all contact, military and commercial, with the outer world to the north. At the same time, in a second observation, it may appear that the court and state of the Shanyu also observed the purposes of the central Chinese government. While it is hardly appropriate to describe such an enemy and rival as a "puppet" of China, it should be recognised that it was to the advantage of the Chinese empire to have a single political authority to deal with in the steppe, and that the Shanyu's power over his own people at least ensured some measure of control over otherwise endemic border disturbance.

From the discussion earlier, it may be seen that the nature of the nomad economy and society, centred upon the family, the clan and the tribe, allowed for little more than a loose semi-feudal control over the population of the Xiongnu state. Continuing danger to the peace of the Chinese northern frontier came as much from the wildcat
raids of a petty chieftain and his hotheaded followers as it did from the more stable threat of the Shanyu's chief levies. To a very great extent, it was to the advantage of the Chinese government to support the Shanyu's authority over his feudatories. Barfield has pointed out that the Shanyu was able to use the Chinese subsidies as a means to enhance his own position as patron and leader within the Xiongnu state. He is quite correct, but the situation did not necessarily operate to the disadvantage of the Chinese. There was, in fact, a complicated relationship between the Chinese government and the ruler of the barbarians, such that the Chinese could afford to support the rule of their chief "enemy" on the basis that a single authority was better than a multitude of small but ambitious and energetic war-leaders.

In this light, the campaigns of Emperor Wu of Han may be seen as a two-fold initiative of the Chinese government. On the one hand, of course, they did obtain a considerable increase of the territory of the empire, both in the Western Regions and in the north of the Ordos loop. At the same time, it can be suggested that the long period of aggressive war established a dominance and an initiative in Chinese hands against their northern neighbours.

Certainly, it is generally argued that the reign of Emperor Wu saw both the culmination of Han prosperity and also the development of extravagant policies which were to produce the ultimate ruin of the dynasty. Such a judgement is implied by Sima Qian and Ban Gu,
It has often been pointed out that the series of campaigns of raiding and conquest against the Xiongnu were ultimately of only limited success. At immense cost in blood and treasure, the Han drove the Xiongnu from the north of China proper and established Chinese domination in Central Asia. The Xiongnu state, however, survived the onslaught, and peace was not established until a time of civil war among the Xiongnu, which culminated in the success of the Huhanxie Shanyu, a protege of Han, in the 50s BC. The satisfactory settlement on the frontier at that time, therefore, owed more to the internal divisions among the Xiongnu than to the expensive wars of Emperor Wu.

It seems important to recognise, however, that those great campaigns established the reputation and position of Chinese arms. In terms of the concept expressed by the Chinese character wei (authority), the armies of Emperor Wu had impressed the Xiongnu with the empire's capacity for exercising military force at a distance, and even the occasional disasters such as that of the unfortunate General Li Ling in 99 BC could not remove the full sense of initiative which the Han troops had gained.

In this sense, it may be argued that the armies of Han had demonstrated their ability, and with the support of the defence
complex represented by the Great Wall, they could overawe the enemy along the steppes and in central Asia. Certainly, the resources of the empire were put under intense strain by Emperor Wu, but the military exertions gained a level of political authority in eastern Asia which had not been seen in the past and which lasted for generations into the future. And it may even be suggested that the effectiveness of the Han campaigns in the early first century BC laid the foundations for the most satisfactory settlement with the weakened Xiongnu under the Huhanxie Shanyu.

To sum up, one may present here the apparent major factors which influenced the formation and the nature of the Xiongnu state and its relationship to China. It was essentially a confederation of herding peoples, whose primary social organisation was the tribe and the clan, and the government of the Shanyu represented the rule of a comparatively small group controlling others through a feudal style relationship. Economically, the Xiongnu looked to more settled communities for many items of use and value, and in military terms, though the nomad norsemen made remarkably effective fighting men, they could be held off, at a cost, by the forces of the unified Chinese empire.

For his subjects, one of the main functions of the Shanyu was to maintain a military and political pressure against China sufficient to obtain reasonable dealing and access to trade or to plunder; for the Chinese government, the Shanyu's command of the steppe had the
advantage of maintaining a measure of control along the extended
northern frontier. Once the borders had been settled, moreover, it
was better policy to maintain peace by formal alliance and subsidy
than to risk the costs and losses of punitive war.

The Xiongnu state at the end of Former Han:

In the years after the death of Emperor Wu in 87 BC, the warfare
between China and the Xiongnu had died down, and the major military
event of the succeeding decades was the defeat of the Xiongnu in
71 BC, at the hands of the Wusun people of central Asia. As a result
of this campaign, in which the forces of Han played only a minor role,
the Wusun people gained their independence, and the Xiongnu were then
attacked by the Wuhuan from the east and the Dingling from the
north.25 Their problems were compounded by drought and famine, and
through the 60s BC there was almost constant warfare on the steppe.
The Chinese had little to do but take advantage from the respite and
the preoccupations of their enemies.

In 60 BC the Xuluquanqu Shanyu died. We are told that there
should have been a conference of nobles to determine the successor,
but before it could meet the consort of the late Shanyu, who had taken
the Worthy King of the Right as her lover, had installed him upon the
throne.26

Whatever the truth of that story, and the political reality
behind it, the accession of the Wuyanjuti Shanyu marked the beginning
of a period of internal faction fighting. The Wuyanjuti Shanyu was defeated and killed himself in 58 BC, and his chief rival, Jihousan, son of the Xuluquanqu Shanyu, took the title of Huhanxie Shanyu. By the following year, however, there were four other claimants. The Huhanxie Shanyu emerged victorious from this preliminary civil war, but he was immediately faced with further opposition, notably from his elder half-brother Hutuwusi, who took the title of Zhizhi gutuhou Shanyu and seized power in the east of the Xiongnu empire. In 54 BC, the Zhizhi Shanyu came to fight the Huhanxie Shanyu, and the Huhanxie Shanyu was defeated. After anxious debate, the Huhanxie Shanyu turned to the Han government of Emperor Xuan for support, and he came with his followers to take refuge near the Great Wall. In 53 BC he sent a son as hostage to the Chinese court, while in 51 BC and 49 BC he came in person to pay his respects.

For the Xiongnu leader, the tribute relationship was immensely profitable. He was granted honours and insignia and massive gifts of gold and cash and silk. His immediate followers shared in the wealth, and when his people were short of food they were supplied with Chinese grain. Politically, the embarrassment of formal attendance at the court of Han, with all its implications of submission, was balanced by the security of Chinese military support at hand, and by the survival of his threatened regime.

From the Chinese side, the benefits of prestige and security were considerable, and there was no call for immediate or major
military expenditure. For a time, there was the possibility that the Zhizhi Shanyu would also establish some friendly relationship with the Han government, but in 44 BC the envoy who went to discuss terms was killed by the ruler himself in a fit of rage, and from that time on there was no possibility of reconciliation.

In the previous years, recognising that the forces under his command were no match for the alliance of the Huhanxie Shanyu and the armies of Han, the Zhizhi Shanyu had withdrawn across Mongolia to the west and established his capital near the frontiers of the Wusun people in the Turfan basin. From the time that the Zhizhi Shanyu killed the envoy Gu Ji in 44 BC, it was clear to all that his rival the Huhanxie Shanyu, under Han protection, was strong enough to make his return to the traditional territories of the Xiongnu, in the steppe country away from the Great Wall. In 43 BC, however, before he did so, he was persuaded to make a covenant of peace and alliance with Han, and the agreement was confirmed on the Xiongnu side by solemn sacrifice, including oaths to Heaven and a ceremonial drinking from the celebrated cup which had been created a hundred and fifty years before from the skull of the King of the Yuezhi defeated by the great Modun.

On the Xiongnu side, then, the covenant was fixed, and the peace policy remained an essential tenet of the Huhanxie Shanyu's government. On the Chinese side, the situation was less certain, for when the two enterprising envoys, Han Chang and Zhang Meng, reported their
negotiations to the imperial court, there were strong moves that the agreement should be rejected and that the envoys should be punished for their gross impiety in purporting to bind the policies of future rulers of the empire. It is said, however, that Emperor Yuan took a less serious view of the whole affair, and the imperial edict provided only that Han Chang and Zhang Meng should pay a fine, while the covenant itself was not formally repudiated.  

In 36 BC, the Zhizhi Shanyu was defeated and killed during a campaign in Sogdiana by the frontier official Chen Tang and a force of local auxiliaries backed by Chinese troops from military colonies in central Asia. This, as it happens, was the one significant enterprise that the Chinese had undertaken against the enemy Shanyu, and there had been no real fighting in direct support of their protege. It was, however, a most impressive achievement, and the Huhanxie Shanyu was at once delighted with the destruction of his rival and anxious about his own position with an ally of such extensive military power. In 33 BC he came once more to Changan, where he was received with the same generosity as before, and was given a woman of the imperial harem, the Lady Wang Zhaojun, to take as his wife.  

The Huhanxie Shanyu died in 31 BC, and he left two important political legacies to his successors. Firstly, there was a strong commitment to maintaining peace with the Han, and there are indeed no references in the histories of fighting along the borders for the next thirty years. Secondly, he made special provision for the succession:
that the position of Shanyu should be taken first by his eldest son, but should then pass to the younger sons.

Since the foundation of the Xiongnu empire, inheritance of the position of Shanyu had tended to go from father to son and occasionally from elder to younger brother. On one occasion, at the end of the second century BC, during the wars with Emperor Wu of Han and at a time when the previous Shanyu had died young, the inheritance was actually brought back one generation to an uncle of the last Shanyu and the direct lineage was permanently passed over. Ultimately, for the security of the Xiongnu empire, it was necessary that the position of Shanyu should go to the royal clansman who had the personal authority and acceptance among the people which would enable him to maintain the state. His position in the lineage and his endorsement by the previous Shanyu were both important, but his acceptance by the men of power was the touchstone for everything else. \(^{32}\)

From this point of view, the plan for the succession left by the Huhanxie Shanyu represented an acceptable compromise between his own preferences and the requirements of an orderly transition in an empire which was only now recovering from the ravages of a civil war. The Huhanxie Shanyu had some fifteen male children, but the chief concern at the time of his death was with the six sons born of his two chief wives from the Huyan clan, traditionally one of the noble lineages which intermarried with the royal house of the Xiongnu. The elder of
the Huyan sisters had given birth to two sons, Jumoju and Nangzhiyasi, and the younger to four sons, Diaotaomogao, Jumixu, Xian and Luo. In order of birth, however, Diaotaomogao and Jumixu were the eldest, followed by Jumoju and Nangzhiyasi, with Xian and Luo as the two youngest.

The Shanyu himself apparently preferred his third-born son, Jumoju, and intended to grant him the succession. Jumoju's mother, however, pointed out that her son was still young and had not yet gained wide acceptance among the people; she foresaw the possibility of another succession dispute and a civil war if the Shanyu attempted to disregard the claims of the elder half-brothers. Her advice was accepted, and the title of Shanyu was duly passed first to Diaotaomogao, who reigned as Fuzhulei ruodi Shanyu. On his death in 21 BC he was succeeded by his brother Jumixu, the Souxie ruodi Shanyu, and when he died in 12 BC the inheritance duly came to Jumoju, as Juya ruodi Shanyu.

Jumoju, however, died only four years later, and his brother Nangzhiyasi succeeded him in 8 BC as Wuzhuliu ruodi Shanyu. Nangzhiyasi ruled for more than twenty years, until his death in 13 AD.

For almost half a century, the relationship between the Han empire and the Xiongnu had remained stable and peaceful. From the Chinese point of view, the occasional visits of the Shanyu to the imperial court, and the regular presence of a close relative of the
Shanyu as formal hostage in residence at Changan, confirmed the submission of the nomads, while the cessation of raids and warfare on the Great Wall frontier enabled the northern provinces to develop a peaceful prosperity. The government of Emperor Xuan had granted the Huhanxie Shanyu a seal of office, and although the Shanyu was given the highest precedence at court, it was possible to look upon his status as being not very different from a vassal king or chieftain of any other border tributary.

For their part, however, the Xiongnu also did well from the arrangement. The relationship described in the covenant of 43 BC was essentially one of friendly equality, the peace along the frontier was matched by a steady trade, and the visits of the Shanyu to the imperial court provided the occasion for collecting an immense treasure from the Chinese government.

Bielenstein and Yü have each discussed the scale and cost to China of the gifts granted to the Shanyu and his supporters when they visited the imperial court. On each occasion in the years 51, 49, 33, 25 and 1 BC the value of the presents, in silk and brocade, increased, and Bielenstein has estimated the total payments in those years as being valued at more than $2,000,000 in United States currency of the 1960s. As he remarks, the amount is not large enough to indicate a serious strain on the Chinese budget nor to demonstrate a successful policy of extortion on the part of the Xiongnu: though the exchange was certainly of great value to the Shanyu and his
followers, it was not the equivalent of extortion money paid by the Chinese. On the other hand, when Nangzhiyasi proposed his visit of 1 BC, it was agreed in court that the suggestion should be turned down because of the cost of gifts, and approval was given only after an eloquent memorial by Yang Xiong, later celebrated as a composer of *fu* but at that time a junior official in the palace. Yang Xiong argued that the cost of war which might result from a breach with the Xiongnu was far greater than the value of the gifts which would be handed over, and the refusal of the Shanyu's visit was nothing but a mistaken economy. In the event, the Shanyu asked permission to bring a thousand ranking attendants rather than the five hundred that had accompanied his predecessors: the Han court agreed, and the gifts as a result were fifty per cent higher than ever before.

After all that, it still does not appear that the visit was a great success. The annals of Emperor Ai record only that “the Shanyu was not pleased”, and two incidents in particular appear to have contributed to this discontent. Firstly, in the preliminary discussions at Changan, it was observed that the visits in 49 and 33 BC had been followed closely by the death of the Chinese emperors Xuan and Yuan; it was argued that this could be due to the inauspicious geomantic influence of the Shanyu coming from the north. The Shanyu was therefore lodged outside the city, at a detached palace in the Shanglin Park, so that the influence of Jupiter might counter the unfavourable forces which he brought with him. It was explained to
the Shanyu that the residence had been selected for his better personal protection, but he knew the true reason.

Secondly, we are told that the Shanyu was surprised at the rank and honour which had been granted to Emperor Ai's favourite Dong Xian, and even commented in open court on the apparent immaturity of the Grand Marshal. Emperor Ai explained that the twenty-two-year-old Dong Xian was a person of extraordinary wisdom and virtue, and the Shanyu made a courteous reply, congratulating the Han ruler on his skill in finding ministers of such worth. It is not very surprising, however, that the nomad ruler, in the prime of life, was unimpressed with the youthful, sickly and homosexual Emperor Ai.

In fact, Emperor Ai died in the same year as the Shanyu's visit, and power in the empire returned to the Wang family, who had dominated the court of Emperor Cheng, and who had been briefly removed from influence by the efforts of his successor. From this time on, through the reign of the child Emperor Ping from 1 to 6 AD, followed by a short period of regency until his taking of the imperial title in 9 AD, the highest power in the government of Han was held by Wang Mang. It is through his policies that we may observe the combination of sino-centrism and one form of the Confucian tradition.

The policies of Wang Mang:

At the time of the accession of Nangzhiyasi as Shanyu, in 8 BC, there had occurred a minor incident which seemed to confirm the established relationship between the Xiongnu and the Han.
On the western frontier near Zhangye commandery there was a tract of hill country which had traditionally belonged to the Xiongnu, but which formed a salient into Chinese territory. The area was celebrated for its woods, and the Grand Marshal Wang Gen, uncle of Wang Mang and at that time the chief of the government, with the consent of Emperor Cheng arranged that the Chinese envoy Xiahou Fan, who had been sent with compliments for the new Xiongnu ruler, should make a request that the land be transferred to Han. It was stressed to Xiahou Fan that he should work informally, and not involve the Han court in a direct request.

Xiahou Fan did raise the matter, but the new Shanyu responded with surprise: at the time when emperors Xuan and Yuan gave their support to the Huhanxie Shanyu, it was agreed that everything north of the Great Wall belonged to the Xiongnu. He asked that Xiahou Fan report back to the Han court for further instructions and clarification. Some time later, Xiahou Fan came on a second embassy, and repeated the request. Nangzhiyasi was now quite annoyed:

In the time of my father and my three elder brothers, the Han never asked for territory. Now that I have taken the throne, suddenly there is this request. Why do you make it of me?

I have made enquiries... and the chieftains of the west place great importance on the use of the wood from these hills for the frames of their yurts and for their carts.

Moreover, this is territory which belonged to my late father. I am not prepared to give it up.
The Chinese had clearly gone too far, and Nangzhiyasi sent a letter to the Han court to ask for an explanation. The imperial government replied that Xiahou Fan had exceeded his instructions, that he was deserving of severe punishment, but that two general amnesties had taken place since he committed the error, and it was not therefore appropriate to punish him. He was, however, now appointed to a post in a commandery within China, and he would never again be allowed to have any dealings with the Xiongnu.

The Chinese, of course, had been over-ambitious, and they should not have been surprised at the rebuff they received. From the Xiongnu point of view, however, apart from the specific irritation of the request, the prompt Chinese denial of any official nature to Xiahou Fan's proposal rather confirmed the presumption that the frontier between the two empires indeed followed the line of the Great Wall, and that neither side would interfere with the other's sphere of influence. It was a sensible, practical political situation, and the Xiongnu were quite content with it.

From the Chinese point of view, however, though the position was quite satisfactory in practice, it was intolerable in theory. According to the concepts of traditional Chinese civilisation, there can only be one supreme ruler in the world, and that is the Chinese emperor. All other rulers are subordinate and tributary to him, and he has the ultimate authority over their territories.
This political world-view of Chinese governments has caused diplomatic problems in the past, and it has acted variously as a source of minor embarrassment or as a serious liability at any time in Chinese history when an imperial court has had to deal with an effective military or political rival. In particular, one may consider the inadequate diplomatic response of the Qing dynasty in dealing with the British in the early nineteenth century, and there is considerable literature about the philosophical convolutions forced upon the Song dynasty when it was compelled to recognise the neighbouring powers of Liao and Jin.

In 52 BC, at the time when the Huhanxie Shanyu first asked to come to court, it was seriously proposed that he should be treated as no more than another foreign kinglet, and that he should be granted precedence even below the vassal kings within the Chinese empire, cadets of the imperial family. Fortunately, as Bielenstein remarks, this arrogant argument was rejected by Emperor Xuan, on the advice of the minister Xiao Wangzhi, and the Shanyu was spared any humiliating ceremonies.38

Xiao Wangzhi, described by Loewe as one of the leading reformist statesmen of his time, was primarily concerned to establish good relations with the Xiongnu and to end the cycle of wars and aggression which the Modernist policies of previous generations had brought upon the empire.39 In later generations, however, his policy and that of other practical men began to appear too much like that of appeasement,
and the concept of independence for the Xiongnu from the Chinese empire was less acceptable. When Wang Mang came to power, he had two reasons for an active involvement beyond the frontiers: firstly, and immediately, because success in extending the power of China would demonstrate his own moral authority as a suitable ruler for the Chinese world; secondly, and far more dangerously, because the theories of the sino-centric world view required that the emperor of China must dominate as tributaries all the lands around him.

About 2 AD, soon after Wang Mang's accession to power as regent for the child Emperor Ping, another incident arose involving the demarcation of authority between the Shanyu and the Chinese government. Two minor kings from the Western Regions, who had fallen out with the Chinese Protector-General, fled to take refuge with the Xiongnu. The Shanyu was prepared to grant them asylum, and when envoys came from the Han court to request their surrender, he replied again, on the same lines as in the incident of 8 BC:

When Emperor Xuan and Emperor Yuan showed their compassion for my father, the Huhanxie Shanyu, there was a treaty made whereall that is south of the Great Wall is controlled by the Son of Heaven, but all that is north of the Great Wall is controlled by the Shanyu.

It was agreed, he said, that renegades from one side or the other should be returned to their proper masters, but the people in question at this time were foreigners, and he was therefore under no obligation to return them to China.
The envoys of Han, however, reminding the Shanyu of the favours which his house had received in the past, persuaded him that it would be wise to accede to their request, and the unfortunate men were duly despatched: they were beheaded as an example to other rulers in the west. 40

The debate on this matter, however, had shown some confusion about the areas of influence between China and the Xiongnu, and Wang Mang now sent a further embassy to straighten things out. Relying on the embarrassment of the Shanyu over the recent incident, they persuaded him to accept a new agreement which would clarify and determine the position about renegades and refugees. The old covenant, which had been solemnly sworn to by the Xiongnu in 43 BC, but never formally adopted by Han, was withdrawn and replaced by a new Treaty of Four Articles. This provided that the Shanyu would refuse to receive refugees or renegades in the following categories: Chinese subjects; Wusun people; citizens of those states in the Western Regions whose rulers had accepted Chinese seals of office; and Wuhuan people. 41

Besides this, Wang Mang also arranged a formal diplomatic coup, for the Shanyu was persuaded to change his name from Nangzhiyasi to the single Chinese character/sound Zhi. Ban Gu remarks, unkindly, that the Shanyu was heavily bribed, and it is in fact most likely that both the new treaty and the change of name were the result of considerable gifts and inducements, as well as friendly persuasion. In
any case, it represented a considerable achievement for Wang Mang, it enhanced the prestige of his administration, and it shows a remarkable tolerance and pliability by the Shanyu.

To what extent the change of name of the ruler was recognised and followed inside the Xiongnu territory is a doubtful question; the Shanyu was presumably known normally by his title rather than by his personal name, and though other members of the clan appear to have followed suit, it is probable that the change was more a matter of convenience for Chinese scribes than a sign of significant alteration in day-to-day conversations among members of the Xiongnu aristocracy. The Treaty of Four Articles, however, was a very different matter, though it took a little while for the full implications to be recognised at the court of the Shanyu.

The beginnings of the difficulty began somewhat indirectly, among the Wuhuan people tributary to the Xiongnu on their eastern frontier. During the 70s BC, expeditions by Chinese armies had brought several groups of the Wuhuan under the authority of Han, but this tributary relationship was shared with the Xiongnu, who had conquered the Wuhuan in the time of Modun, and who still extracted tribute from those who were their neighbours and were not subordinate to China.

With the Treaty of Four Articles, however, the Chinese could argue that the Xiongnu had relinquished their claims as overlords of
the Wuhuan, and local officials now advised the Wuhuan to refuse to pay tribute to the Xiongnu. When Xiongnu agents came to gather the annual levy, and also to organise the regular market in furs and skins, the Wuhuan refused to deal with them. Fighting broke out, several Xiongnu were killed, and the Wuhuan seized their women and their animals.

Then the Shanyu sent an expedition against the Wuhuan, led by the Worthy King of the Left, and the Wuhuan were scattered and fled. The Xiongnu seized about a thousand women, old people and children and demanded a ransom from the Wuhuan; when the goods and the animals were paid, however, they took them but still refused to return their prisoners.

Soon after this, in 9 AD, Wang Mang formally acceded to the throne and proclaimed his new dynasty of Xin. Wang Jun, as General of the Five Majestic Principles, led an embassy to the Shanyu to advise him of the new dispensation and to exchange the seal which he had held from the Han dynasty with a new one from the Xin. The text of the seal, however, had been considerably changed. Where the seal given to the Huhanxiè Shanyu had read "Imperial Seal of the Shanyu of the Xiongnu", the seal offered by Wang Mang was inscribed "Official Seal of the Shanyu of the Xiongnu under the Xin Dynasty".

When the embassy came to the court of the Xiongnu, they offered the usual generous gifts, and the Shanyu readily exchanged the seal.
One of his attendants urged him strongly to check the inscription, but in a remarkable display of trust, the Shanyu replied: "Why should they have made any change?" and he put it on without looking at it. There was a banquet late into the night, and it was not until the morning that the Shanyu, having discovered the change in the inscription, sent a messenger to protest at the lesser status that had been given him and asked for the old seal back. In anticipation of this request, however, the Chinese had already destroyed the former seal, and they replied firmly that the change had been made by the new government in accordance with the will of Heaven, and that the duty of the Shanyu was simply to accept this decision and to obey the House of Xin. Predictably, the Shanyu was annoyed, and he sent an emissary of his own to Changan to ask for another seal with a less perjorative inscription. His request was not granted, and Wang Mang actually promoted and enfeoffed the envoy Chen Rao, who had taken the initiative in the destruction of the former seal.43

Though Wang Mang's arrangements about the seal have been defended by Bielenstein, as a popular move among the traditionalist Chinese officials at court, there seems small question that it was a remarkably blatant and clumsy piece of diplomatic manoeuvring, and it indicated quite clearly that the new Chinese government was claiming supremacy over the Xiongnu like any vassal state. The political implications of this formal change, however, were made real and urgent by Chinese intervention in the Wuhuan problem.
As the seal embassy was on its return journey through Xiongnu territory, we are told they passed through a region where the hostage and captured Wuhuan had been settled. When they heard of the situation, the Chinese insisted that the Treaty of Four Articles required the Wuhuan should be returned to their former place.

The Xiongnu, naturally enough, had assumed that a quarrel with their own immediate tributaries could be no concern of the Chinese, nor affected in any way by the Treaty of Four Articles. The Shanyu was prepared to agree that if any of the Wuhuan subject to the Chinese had been taken, they should be returned, but he asked for specific clarification: is it required that we should return Wuhuan people from our side of the frontier, as well as those who may come from within Chinese borders? An imperial decree of Wang Mang stated that all the Wuhuan must be returned.

In this way, Wang Mang's government had made its position very clear. The new seal showed that the Shanyu was formally subordinate to the Chinese court, and the instructions concerning the Wuhuan meant that Wang Mang was claiming the authority to intervene in disputes between two non-Chinese peoples outside the Great Wall. Almost certainly, the Shanyu had assumed that the Treaty of Four Articles, when it mentioned the Wuhuan, was referring only to those already under the direct protection of China; now it was claimed that he had relinquished tribute authority over all of them. If he accepted Wang Mang's instructions, he was putting the Xiongnu empire under the
control of the Chinese empire in much the same fashion as any petty city-state of the Western Regions had its foreign policy determined and restrained by Chinese residents and the Protector-General.

At this point, the hitherto agreeable and complaisant Shanyu Zhi refused to go further along the path that Wang Mang had set out for him. Extremely angry, he gathered ten thousand horsemen and sent them in a military demonstration against the frontiers at Shuofang. They claimed that they sought only to protect the Wuhuan on their way back to their homelands, but the presence of such a significant military force on the borders of China was intended as a warning, and the authorities at Shuofang duly reported it to the capital.

Wang Mang's biography states that the Xiongnu now ravaged the frontiers, and the commentary of Yan Shigu to the Account of the Xiongnu also states that the horsemen came to Shuofang as a raiding party. It is certainly possible that some disturbances took place but, as Bielenstein has remarked, the Xiongnu at this time did comparatively little damage. Such a long period of peace was not lightly broken, and it is very probable that the Shanyu Zhi was concerned chiefly to make some show of his power and encourage the obstinate ruler of China to relax some of his demands.44

In the following year, 10 AD, a further opportunity appeared. We are told that the tributary states of the Western Regions had become somewhat restless with the change of dynasty in China, and with
the new official seals that Wang Mang issued, much on the same terms as he had dealt with the Xiongnu. As rumours of the rift between China and the Shanyu gained circulation, it appears that several Chinese officials became anxious about the possibility of Xiongnu raid and take-over. Under the leadership of the junior officials Chen Liang and Zhong Dai, there was a mutiny in the camp of the Wu and Ji Colonel at Nearer Jushi, in the region of present-day Turfan. The Colonel Diao Hu was killed, the mutineers declared themselves for the Han dynasty, and they invited the Xiongnu to support them. The mutiny itself was not of major importance, and the Chinese position in the west remained largely intact, but the Shanyu did take Chen Liang and Zhong Dai under his protection and gave them residence at his court. 45

When this was reported to Wang Mang, he took extreme measures. In the winter at the end of 10 AD, an imperial proclamation was issued, referring to Zhi not as Shanyu of the Xiongnu but as Submitted Citizen (fuyu) of the Surrendered Slaves (xiangnu), sentencing him to execution, and announcing the division of the Xiongnu state into fifteen parts, each ruled by one of the descendants of the Huhanxie Shanyu. 46

An emissary was sent to the northern frontier, to announce this news to the Xiongnu, calling upon the new candidates for the fifteen positions as Shanyu to come forward, and promising pardon to those who had hitherto mistakenly served the rebel Zhi. At the same time,
orders were sent for the raising by levy of an army with 300,000 men, encamped under twelve divisions from Zhangye commandery in the west to Yuyang in the east, which should advance and conquer the Xiongnu and establish the new order.

In the following year, 11 AD, Wang Mang's envoys evidently persuaded the Xiongnu leader Xian, younger half-brother of Zhi, to surrender with his two sons Deng and Zhu. They were all granted rewards, and Xian was given the title of Filial Shanyu while Zhu was named Obedient Shanyu. Deng and Zhu were escorted back to Changan, but Xian remained in Xiongnu territory to try his luck as a supporter of the Chinese.47

This particular combination of threat and subversion proved to be the last straw for the Shanyu Zhi. He remarked in fury that his family indeed held an obligation to the Han dynasty for their support of the Huhananxie Shanyu, but China was no longer ruled by the Liu clan, and there was no obligation now. At his orders, the first great raid of the Xiongnu was directed against the Great Wall frontier at Yunzhong, it was followed by continual attacks on the neighbouring commanderies of Shuofang and Yanmen, and the peace on the frontier, which had lasted almost forty years, was decisively broken.

As Bielenstein has pointed out, there was already a tension in the Xiongnu state and a real possibility of factionalism between pro-Chinese and anti-Chinese parties.48 Bielenstein has demonstrated
the importance of the Lady Wang Zhaojun in the development of a pro-Chinese influence: first married to the Huhanxie Shanyu, she bore him one son, Yituzhiyasi. On the death of the Huhanxie Shanyu a couple of years later, she was taken in marriage, following Xiongnu custom, by his eldest son and successor, Diaotaomogao. Two daughters were born of this second marriage, of whom the elder, whose given name was Yun, married Xubu Dang, who was a member of one of the great Xiongnu clans and Gudu Marquis of the Right. Yun herself spent some time at the Chinese court from 2 AD onwards, and we are told specifically that she and her husband favoured a continuing alliance with China. She was evidently a woman of considerable influence, and Zhi's half-brother Xian was associated with her party and was sympathetic to the Chinese position.

In these circumstances, however, it is hard to feel that Wang Mang made the best use of his political supporters within the Xiongnu court. His proclamation to dismiss the Shanyu and divide the nation into fifteen parts did nothing to assist a rapprochement, and although it is possible, as Bielenstein argues, that Xian and his sons accepted their new titles from the Chinese with some expectation that they might be able to gain support from the peace party among the Xiongnu, it appears that Xian very soon found he had been mistaken. Within a comparatively short time, he had been compelled to make peace with the Shanyu Zhi, and although he was not severely punished, he was now given only a lowly rank at court. The agreement between the children of the Huhanxie Shanyu still maintained Xian as the next in line to
the throne, but the pro-Chinese party for the time being had surely lost prestige.

On the Chinese side, Wang Mang's response to the troubles on his northern border appears almost equally inappropriate. Bielenstein has pointed out that an army of 300,000 men was of only moderate size compared to the great hosts called up by Emperor Wu. On the other hand, Bielenstein has also demonstrated the significance of the great floods associated with the change of course of the Yellow River at about this time, and has shown how the disturbances they caused ultimately proved fatal to Wang Mang's regime. In support of Wang Mang's great levy, Bielenstein argues that the removal of 300,000 young men, to be sheltered, fed and clothed in camps in the north, could be regarded as a form of flood relief: it would surely have been more useful, however, if the energies of these able-bodied men had been turned to the repair of dykes and canals where the flood-waters were bringing disaster - the vast expenditure of human and material resources on an army in the north seems an unsatisfactory method of solving water-control difficulties along the Yellow River.

The armies, in fact, never set out. Assuredly, as Bielenstein observes, the presence of such a massive garrison along the Great Wall kept the Xiongnu raids to a minimum of damage, and Wang Mang's prestige may have been enhanced by the defeat in 12 AD of Gaogouli, in Manchuria, by troops of the eastern division commanded by Zhuang You. On the other hand, as Zhuang You himself remarked in a memorial, the
cost of maintaining such a great army was out of all proportion to its likelihood of success on a campaign of conquest against the Xiongnu, and the enemy would probably be better controlled by individual, skilful raids, to keep them off balance. 51 Wang Mang, however, maintained the army along the frontiers for the next several years, and there are references in the histories to disturbances among the soldiers and the people, with the occasional dispatch of special investigators to restore order. 52

For the time being, however, there was no major fighting. Wang Mang's troops held the border, the Shanyu Zhi continued his government as if the proclamation dismissing him had never been made, and at the same time, remarkably enough, the Shanyu pretenders at the Chinese court were eliminated.

Of the two sons of Xian, Zhu had been named Obedient Shanyu and brought back to Changan with his brother Deng. Zhu died, and Deng was then proclaimed as Obedient Shanyu. In the summer of 12 AD, however, it was reported from captured Xiongnu that many of the raiding parties against China had been commanded by Jue, another son of Xian. In his anger, and seeking to make an example to the enemy, Wang Mang had Deng executed. 53

It is possible to argue, as Bielenstein has done, that other rulers of China had executed their hostages, and that the presence of a hostage was in fact rather a formality than any guarantee of real
concern or future policy. The point is, however, that the unfortunate Deng was not a hostage: he was Wang Mang's personal puppet. His execution may have appeared to Wang Mang like some form of meaningful vengeance and warning against Xian and his other sons, but it appears from the history that Xian did not actually find out about the execution until some years later, and all that Wang Mang succeeded in doing was to demonstrate the complete futility of his policy in establishing rival shanyu.

In fact, by a considerable turn of good fortune for Wang Mang, the enemy Shanyu Zhi died in 13 AD, and his brother Xian, Wang Mang's nominee, succeeded him with the title Wulei ruodi Shanyu.

The succession was not entirely straightforward. By this time, a full generation after the death of Huhanxie Shanyu, the acceptance of the principle of brothers succeeding one another was evidently weakening. The Shanyu Zhi himself appears to have had some plan that the inheritance might be vested in his own sons, and he had given his eldest surviving son the second position in the state. At the same time, if the descent by order of seniority among the brothers should continue, it appears that the next candidate was Yu, the child of another wife of Huhanxie Shanyu, who was older than either Xian or Luo, the remaining sons of the Huyan marriages. Xian himself, of course, was in a comparatively weak position after his abortive appointment by Wang Mang as a rival Shanyu and his subsequent disgrace at the Xiongnu court.
In the event, however, it appears that Xian owed his throne largely to the efforts of the Lady Yun and her husband, Xubu Dang. As Gudu Marquis of the Right, Xubu Dang was one of the senior administrators at court, and it was by his influence that Zhi's sons were ignored, Yu was passed over, and Xian established. Despite the failures of Wang Mang's past policy, the pro-Chinese group had obtained control of the Xiongnu government. In the following year, 14 AD, Xubu Dang and the Lady Yun sent an embassy to arrange peace and alliance.\(^5^4\)

The negotiations, however, were in no way helped by the previous execution of Xian's son Deng. At first, the situation developed quite smoothly: the new Shanyu received large gifts, orders were given for the great armies on the frontier to be disbanded and the renegades and mutineers Chen Liang and Zhong Dai, with many of their followers, were sent in cage carts to Changan where Wang Mang arranged for them to be burned alive. At that point, however, Xian found out the truth of his son's death, and raiding began once again. Officially, the Shanyu claimed that the troublemakers were out of his control, being rebels and bandits. At last, in 15 AD, a further embassy from China, escorting the body of Deng and bringing also another load of valuable gifts, eased his mind and encouraged his control of the border territories. He accepted a new seal, with the characters Xiongnu changed to Gongnu "Respectful Slaves" and the character shan in Shanyu to "Excellent". For the next few years, the border was generally at peace.\(^5^5\)
In 18 AD, however, after a reign of only five years, the Shanyu Xian died, and his half-brother Yu came to the throne, with the title Huduershigaodao ruodi Shanyu.

By this time, the situation at the court of the Xiongnu seems to have become both complicated and tense. The brief reign of Xian had not been long enough to confirm his family in power, and it seems likely that his brother Luo had died before him. We are not told of any effective opposition to the accession of Yu, but we do know that Yu's younger half-brother Yituzhiyasi, son of the Huhanxie Shanyu by the Lady Wang Zhaojun, was alive and in his late forties. In the descent by brothers, the title of Shanyu would eventually come to him, and this would surely bring once again the supremacy of the pro-Chinese party. Yu himself, having been passed over five years earlier through the intervention of Xubu Dang in favour of Xian, can hardly have regarded that group with particular favour. On the other hand, we are told by the history that he began his reign with some interest in continuing the profitable relationship with China, and in the first months of his accession he sent an embassy to Changan led by Xubu Dang's son She, together with his cousin of the Dangyu clan, a nephew of the Lady Yun.56

According to the history, the next thing that happened was that a meeting was arranged with Xubu Dang and his wife the Lady Yun and others at the frontier, and that Chinese troops there took the whole party prisoner and brought them back to Changan. There, in 19 AD,
Xubu Dang was proclaimed as the Xubu Shanyu, and all military plans were once more put in train for the conquest of the Xiongnu territory which should set him upon the throne.57

Some preparations had evidently been made even before this ill-fated embassy, but the proclamation of Xubu Dang as a rival Shanyu made hostilities quite certain. Wang Mang's general Zhuang You, a competent and experienced, though conservative, officer, protested at this particular manoeuvre, on the grounds that Xubu Dang was more value to the Chinese as an ally and informant within the Xiongnu court than he was as a figure-head kept in lodgings at the imperial capital. Wang Mang, however, rejected this advice, and Zhuang You was made one of the two commanding generals for the great expedition against the Shanyu Yu. Zhuang You again protested at the extravagance of the proposal, and argued that the troubles of banditry and rebellion within the empire were now far more urgent than the problem of the Xiongnu. He was dismissed and disgraced, and the preparations continued as before.58

The appointment of Xubu Dang as Shanyu must have been fairly pointless, for it was unlikely that the Xiongnu people would accept a ruler from outside the hereditary imperial family. On the other hand, it seems possible that Wang Mang and his supporters were in some difficulty, and it is not impossible that the Xubu group had asked for asylum. Quite probably, the uncertain political situation at the time of Yu's accession had developed further in the first months of his
reign, and Wang Mang was advised during the visit of the embassy that Xubu Dang and the Lady Yun and the rest of the pro-Chinese party were now in fear of their lives.

We are told that the Shanyu Yu had had his half-brother and putative heir Yituzhiyasi killed during his reign, and it may well have been at this time of consolidation for his government. The abduction at the frontier, then, was perhaps a piece of play-acting, designed to get the principal Chinese supporters to safety without implicating all their associates, and the proclamation of the Xubu Shanyu was no more than a grace-note to the intrigue. Certainly, as in the previous occasion, the establishment of a rival Shanyu at Changan left the incumbent ruler quite untroubled on the steppe.59

Xubu Dang, in fact, was only a short time in Changan before he died. His son She was married to one of Wang Mang's daughters by a concubine, but Wang Mang evidently made no attempt to establish She in succession to his father as a pretender Xubu Shanyu. She and the Lady Yun remained at the imperial capital until its capture in 23 AD by the rebels of the former imperial Liu family. Both of them perished in the massacre which followed.

Like the great army which had gathered to attack the Shanyu Zhi, the expeditionary force which was to overthrow the Shanyu Yu never, of course, set out. It was maintained along the frontiers, however, and as late as 21 AD, though Wang Mang was criticised for his attention to
the Xiongnu, and was warned that the real danger to the empire came from the troubles brought about by famine within the borders, he continued his policy. It was evidently not until the following year that regular military forces were directed against the troubled provinces in the east of the empire; and those unsuccessful campaigns brought the fall of the house of Xin.

As Bielenstein remarks, the northern frontiers of China were adequately defended, and it is largely an exaggeration by the historians when they claim that the frontier territories were devastated and deserted. Wang Mang held effective control along the line of the Great Wall, including the Gansu corridor and Edsin Gol in the northwest, and had adequate authority in the Western Regions. From this point of view, his policy was successful.

On the other hand, such a claim on Wang Mang's behalf presents a fairly limited picture. The stability on the northern frontier was maintained only by the deployment of a large military force, and this show of strength was required primarily because Wang Mang's policies in dealing with the Xiongnu had been so insensitive and inadequate that they had turned friendship into hostility. And the cost of the military garrisons was not inconsiderable; at the very least they diverted attention and resources away from the growing danger of the banditry in the eastern provinces. It is perfectly true, as Bielenstein has re-affirmed, that Wang Mang's problems with the Xiongnu were less than the threat from the heartland of his empire.
It is a sad measure of Wang Mang's sense of priorities that he paid such excessive attention to the inessential. Eventually, though the northern frontiers remained intact, the empire of Wang Mang collapsed behind them. His conquerors of the Liu family, restoring the dynasty of Han, were faced with a legacy of hostility in the north, and defence lines which had been weakened and broken in the ruin of Wang Mang's power.

In his most helpful analysis of the rival strands of political philosophy during the Former Han period and the reign of Wang Mang, Loewe identifies two approaches to imperial government which he names Reformist and Modernist. By Modernist, he indicates the school of thought which was chiefly concerned with the power of the centralised imperial government, and with the enrichment and strengthening of the unified Chinese empire. Such an approach supported the expansionist and aggressive policies of Emperor Wu, with paramount importance given to the authority and splendour of the state and with the role of the people that of awed obedience.

The Reformist school, on the other hand, looked back to the legendary past of the early rulers of Zhou, who commanded obedience by the force of their moral suasion, and who maintained the demands of the state upon its subjects as a minimum. In his work, *Crisis and Conflict in Han China*, Loewe has traced the history of political philosophy in Han from the intense Modernist policy of Emperor Wu through its replacement by the Reformist school during the reigns of
his successors. In the final chapter, discussing the support for Wang Mang at the time of his accession to the throne in 9 AD, he observes how Wang Mang sought to justify his new dynasty by reference to the classical age of Zhou and to the phrases of Reformist arguments. Indeed, many of Wang Mang's changes of the government structure, from the naming of offices to the alteration of the coinage, were apparently based rather upon the formalities of ancient texts than the real needs of his empire. 63

On the other hand, though Wang Mang's new programs were often impractical, they generally purported to follow the Reformist Confucian tradition. Only in foreign affairs, as Loewe points out, did his program appear more in the tradition of an active expansionism than the peaceful influence by virtue for which the early rulers of Chou were celebrated. 64

It is arguable, however, that Wang Mang's behaviour towards the Xiongnu and the other peoples of the north was based not upon the Modernist practices of Emperor Wu, but upon a still more dangerous philosophical foundation: that of the arrogant idealist concerned essentially with what ought to be rather than what is.

The history of Wang Mang's dealings with the Xiongnu is really the record of a series of actions, taken each with apparent moral justification, but connected not at all with a coherent policy. Wang Mang, in fact, appears to have had no sensible policy; what he had was
an attitude of mind—that he, as emperor, ruled all the world with both moral and actual authority. In accordance with this view of things, he judged each incident not in terms of what would come next, but on the basis of the correct ideological attitude at the present time. By his insistence on supreme authority over the Xiongnu, without the military power to back it, and by his blinkered response to even the mildest of protests and possible provocation, he drove the Xiongnu into hostility and brought the ultimate downfall of his own empire. Seldom can a man have been so consummately deceived by his own propaganda.
The weakness of China 23-45
The division of the Xiongnu 46-50
The northern peace 51-85
The destruction of the Northern Shanyu 87-93

The weakness of China 23-45:

In the winter of 24, the second year of his reign, the Gengshi Emperor, titular head of the restored Han dynasty, sent an embassy to the Xiongnu, offering an imperial seal of the same fashion as in the days of Former Han, and returning also the surviving dependents of Xubu Dang and the Lady Yun. The Shanyu Yu, however, observed to the envoys that circumstances had now changed. When his father, the Huhanxie Shanyu, had suffered trouble in his own country and had turned for support to China, it was right and proper that he should pay courtesy as a subject to the Han court. In the recent period of disorder within China, however, when Wang Mang had usurped the throne, the Xiongnu had faced him with their army, and had thus made it possible for the rebellion of the Liu clan to arise within the empire. Since the Shanyu had now assisted the Han in the same fashion as Emperors Xuan and Yuan had assisted his father, it was surely more appropriate that the new emperor should pay him respect.
The envoys argued this question with the Shanyu for some months, but the realities of the situation were against them. They returned to China in the summer of 25, the Gengshi Emperor was defeated by the Red Eyebrows in the autumn and was killed by them in the winter. China reverted to a state of complete disorder, and no-one sought to trouble the Xiongnu in the north.

The years of civil war which followed have been well described by Bielenstein in the second volume of his work upon *The Restoration of the Han Dynasty*, and in the third volume he analyses the Xiongnu interventions in China and their later expansion against the power of the new Emperor Guangwu. 4

For most of the 20s and 30s, the Shanyu exercised his influence through the support of Chinese warlords; at first, and briefly, in association with the rebel Grand Administrator of Yuyang, Peng Chong, who turned against his former leader Guangwu in 26 and formed a marriage alliance with the Shanyu in 27. In the following year, however, a Xiongnu army was defeated by Guangwu's troops, and Peng Chong, after a brief period of local success, was defeated in the field in 28 and killed by his own household slaves in 29; Guangwu's forces speedily regained control of Yuyang. 5

Yuyang commandery, however, in the northeast of the empire, was on the fringes of interest for the Xiongnu. There was more immediate concern in the territory about the northern loop of the Yellow River and the northern part of present-day Shanxi west of the Taihang
Mountains. Here, the local Chinese leader Lu Fang, a man from Anding, had established himself in the lands south of the Ordos during the troubles at the end of the reign of Wang Mang. His local authority was recognised by the Gengshi Emperor in 24, and during the next two years he gained support from the local Qiang tribespeople and then from the Xiongnu. He claimed, quite without adequate evidence, to be a descendant of Emperor Wu of Han, and he adopted the name of Liu Wenbo. The Shanyu evidently affected to believe his claim, received him at court, and proclaimed him as Emperor of Han.

In 29, under the patronage of the Shanyu, Lu Fang installed himself at Jiuyuan, chief county of Wuyuan commandery, and received the submission of the Chinese gentry leaders in Shuofang, Yunzhong, Dingxiang and Yanmen. His territory therefore extended over the northern part of the Ordos region and the loop of the Yellow River, eastwards along the valley of the Dahei River to the region of present-day Jining in Inner Mongolia. In the following year, Lu Fang's general Jia Lan invaded Dai commandery, killed Guangwu's Grand Administrator in battle outside Gaoliu near present-day Yanggao in Shanxi, and took possession of the commandery for Lu Fang. In 31, as a result of internal troubles among Lu Fang's allies, the chiefs of Shuofang and Yunzhong rebelled against him and declared for Guangwu, but Lu Fang and his Xiongnu allies still dominated the north.

As Bielenstein points out, Lu Fang was essentially a client and dependent of the Xiongnu, and through his nominal government the Shanyu had obtained control of the northern border commanderies.
In 30, Emperor Guangwu, now master of the greater part of China, had exchanged embassies with the Shanyu Yu, but negotiations for peace came to nothing, and a series of campaigns in the early 30s had minimal effect upon the situation. In a battle at Fanzhi in Yanmen during 33, the imperial armies were defeated by Lu Fang's commanders, strongly supported by the Xiongnu, and in the following year there was an indecisive campaign north of Gaoliu. In 35, both Dingxiang and Shuofang commanderies were officially renounced by Guangwu's government.

In 37, however, Lu Fang was heavily defeated in an attempt to regain Yunzhong commandery, and his Grand Administrator of Wuyuan, Sui Yu, turned against him. Lu Fang fled to refuge with the Xiongnu while imperial forces re-occupied Dai and Yanmen, and Sui Yu was appointed Grand Administrator of Wuyuan in the service of Emperor Guangwu. Lu Fang himself, with the exception of a period in 40-41 when he made a brief surrender to China, remained with the Xiongnu and played no further independent role in affairs. For the next several years, however, the Shanyu and his people managed perfectly well without his active assistance.

In the wake of Lu Fang's defeat, there was some attempt to restore imperial control. Yanmen was reoccupied, and a pattern of defence works established further to the east, with a line of fortifications and beacon fires from Pingcheng county in Yanmen through the valley of the Sanggan River to Dai county in Dai
commandery, while a fortified road was built from the Feihu Pass in the southern part of Dai commandery northeastwards into Shanggu.

The measures, however, were essentially defensive: it was felt necessary to garrison the Hutuo valley, which leads through the Taihang range onto the great plain near the Han territories of Changshan and Zhongshan, and by 38, as a result of raids of the Xiongnu further to the west against the Wei River valley, orders were given for a series of walls to be constructed as defences for the Fen River, the southward course of the Yellow River, and the region of the former imperial capital, Changan.⁸

In 39, the Grand Marshal Wu Han was sent north to the border territory. Officially, this was to attack the Xiongnu, but in fact the major result was that the commanderies of Yenman and Dai were once more abandoned, together with Shanggu. Such of the people as had not already left the territory of their own accord were ordered to move south of the Juyong and Feihu passes.⁹ The Xiongnu were now using the lands of the northern commanderies as their own, and Lu Fang returned under their aegis to take up residence for a few years in Gaoliu city.¹⁰ In 44, Wuyuan commandery was also officially abandoned, and its officials and people transferred to Hedong; it is most probable that the edict did no more than recognise a fait accompli of earlier years.¹¹
Map 7: Theatre of Operations in the North 30-50

Note: commandery borders shown are those of Former Han
By the early 40s, then, the northern frontiers of China had been drastically changed. The central part of the defences, which had formerly stretched from Shanggu and the Sanggan River to Shuofang on the northern loop of the Yellow River, had been entirely abandoned: the line of the imperial frontier followed not the advanced positions conquered by Emperor Wu but the rear defenses indicated roughly by the modern (Ming dynasty) Great Wall. All of present-day northern Shanxi and the Ordos region was under the control of the Xiongnu, and their raids were pressing further south.

Further to the northeast, from Yuyang to Liaoxi, Chinese territory was under pressure from raids and disturbances of the Wuhuan, who were now joined by the Xianbi people, later to become the most powerful nomads of the northern steppe.

The account of the Xianbi in *Hou Han Shu* says that the Xianbi had been separated from China since the defeat of the Eastern Hu confederacy by the Xiongnu Modun in the late third century BC. At the time of civil war in China, however, they began to move south and join the attacks of the Xiongnu and Wuhuan on the frontiers.¹²

On the west, in the territory of present-day Gansu, the situation was rather more satisfactory. The Qiang tribespeople had been settled by the general Ma Yuan in the 30s,¹³ and the route to the northwest along the Gansu corridor, which had been maintained by the warlord Dou Rong, was still intact. Indeed, in 45, the imperial court received
embassies from sixteen states of the Western Regions come once more to pay respects and to ask for China's protection.14

The distant kingdoms of central Asia, however, were of negligible significance compared with the threatening Xiongnu immediately to the north. In the summer of 44, a force of the Xiongnu attacked Shangdang commandery in present-day southeastern Shanxi, and at the same time, further to the west, another raiding party reached the valley of the Wei, where they attacked Tianshui commandery and then turned against Youfufeng and the western approaches to Changan. Though the new defences were now complete, it was questionable whether they could be effective against the constant harassment of the highly mobile enemy.

In the winter of 44/45, the celebrated general Ma Yuan, who had only lately returned from the conquest of Vietnam for the Han dynasty, was given command of all defence operations against the north. He set his headquarters at Xiangguo, in Zhao kingdom, and in the autumn he embarked on a tour of inspection, naturally combined with a show of strength, of the frontier posts in Dai, Yanmen, Shanggu and Youbeiping commanderies. He advanced, indeed, as far north as Gaoliu, which had been under Xiongnu control for the last several years, and he attempted a lightning raid against the Wuhuan further north; this minor sortie, however, was defeated with loss. In the winter of 45/46, there was a riposte from the Xiongnu, who broke through the defences on the border with Shanggu commandery and raided as far south as Zhongshan.15
It is perfectly true, as Bielenstein has pointed out, that the restored Han dynasty had yet found no good answer to the attacks from the Xiongnu. It is possible that Ma Yuan, operating with the defence positions now established, and given an adequate supply of troops, would be able to hold the line, but there was no question that the Xiongnu had taken most effective advantage of China's military and political weakness and distraction, and the Shanyu now controlled a territory comparable to that of his great ancestor Modun. It was a remarkable personal achievement for the aging leader Yu, now well into his seventies. At this critical moment, however, the Shanyu died, and within a startlingly short time the situation was reversed, the Chinese had retaken the north, and the Xiongnu empire was on the way to its own destruction.

The division of the Xiongnu 46-50:

Since his father the Huhanxie Shanyu had died in 31 BC, the Huduershidaogao ruodi Shanyu Yu must have been about eighty years old when he died in 46. He had reigned over the Xiongnu for almost thirty years, he had re-established the complete independence of his government from the influence of the Chinese, and he had extended the southern territories of the empire across fertile country which had not been under nomad control since the greatest days of his ancestors.

In these circumstances, it was only natural that the Shanyu should expect and plan to be succeeded by his sons. The eldest,
Wudadihou, had already been named Worthy King of the Left, and when his father died he came to the throne with the general approval of the court. He, in turn, named his younger brother Punu as Worthy King of the Left. Wudadihou died a few months later, in the same year, and Punu duly succeeded him.

On the whole, there is nothing particularly remarkable about this line of succession. Admittedly, the Shanyu Yu had come to power as the result of the system of transfer of authority from one brother to the next, but this had been the result of a special arrangement after the death of the Huhanxie Shanyu, and it was not the regular custom of the Xiongnu. Again, it was very possibly true that the Shanyu Yu had been rightly accused of responsibility for the death of his younger half-brother Yituzhiyasi, the son of the Huhanxie Shanyu by the Lady Wang Zhaojun, but that probably took place at a time when the pro-Chinese party was largely discredited, after the intrigue that had centred around the Shanyu Xian, the Lady Yun (who was at once Yituzhiyasi's half-sister and his niece), and her husband the renegade and pretender Shanyu Xubu Dang.

At the time of his death, then, the Shanyu Yu could reasonably believe that he had established a good claim to the throne on behalf of his own lineage. It is very possible that the existence of his elder son's serious and ultimately fatal illness was already known at the time Yu himself died, and it was in accordance with the example of his father the Huhanxie Shanyu that he arranged for the inheritance to
pass from one of his sons to the next; certainly, if a son of Wudadihou had come to the throne on his father's death in 46, he would probably have been too young to maintain authority.

Despite these arrangements, however, there was another possible claimant to the throne: Bi, eldest surviving son of the Wuzhuliu ruodi Shanyu Zhi, Yu's elder half-brother, who had died in 13.

The Shanyu Zhi had reigned for twenty years, and we are told that he too had attempted to arrange the succession in favour of his sons, but this plan had been overcome by the intervention of the pro-Chinese party, and, of course, by the continuing influence of the testament of the Huhanxie Shanyu. Thus the succession to the state had gone first to Xian and then to Yu, the lineage of the Shanyu Zhi had been passed over, and twenty-five years later there was no particular reason, either of principle or custom, that the succession should return to Zhi's descendants.

Bi, however, evidently thought that it should. Even during the time of the Shanyu Yu, when Bi was given command on the eastern frontier of the empire, neighbouring the Wuhuan, he had shown discontent at not being made heir-apparent, had refused to attend court, and had made the Shanyu sufficiently suspicious that two Gudu Marquises were sent to supervise the government of his territory and control his military forces. Bi was increasingly dissatisfied.
The events of 46 and the following years were extremely complex, and the Chinese accounts of them are often abbreviated, generally confusing, and naturally expressed from the viewpoint of the court of Han. It appears, however, that there were three main factors which brought an immediate crisis to the Xiongnu court. The first was the inevitable political uncertainty which accompanied the death of an experienced ruler and the quick succession of two younger heirs, one after the other. The second was the continuation and increased severity of an already established dry spell, now culminating in a drought and a plague of insects with serious consequences for animals and men. The third was a sudden attack by the Wuhuan, erstwhile allies and even vassals of the Xiongnu, by which they seized a large area of grazing country in the east of the empire. As a result of this, we are told that the new Shanyu Punu sent an embassy to the Guangwu to ask for peace with China, and a return embassy came back north from Luoyang.

It is hard to judge the importance of these events in real terms: as Bielenstein suggests, the effects of both the drought and the Wuhuan attack may be exaggerated. The Xiongnu, after all, had been doing very well in military terms for years beforehand, and the continuation of a dry spell would make them only the more interested in the territories to the south, inside China. The reason and the significance of the Wuhuan attack cannot be assessed; it is possible that the Chinese defences, or even Chinese agents, had diverted their attention against their ancient enemies; and it is perhaps significant that the district controlled by the discontented prince Bi bordered upon the Wuhuan - he probably suffered some loss of prestige.
It is, again, difficult to contemplate what was discussed during the exchange of embassies. The Chinese records state that the Shanyu Punu was concerned that Han might take military advantage of his present weakness, and that he asked for peace on similar terms to those of his ancestors in the past. On the other hand, since the Xiongnu now controlled such a great amount of Former Han territory, it is difficult to see what terms could be negotiated. Was the Shanyu proposing a withdrawal back to the former Great Wall frontier? More probably, he was suggesting a truce, based on existing areas of control, and offering to put a stop to further raids and encroachments. Considering the prestige and the amount of territory involved, it is hard to imagine that either side was expecting to gain a long-term peace, and the exchange of embassies may well have represented an opportunity for the new Shanyu to gain recognition from Han and for both sides to obtain a breathing space in their war.

We are next told that when the Chinese embassy came to the Xiongnu territory, Bi sent a certain Chinese named Guo Heng as his private messenger to offer a map of Xiongnu territory, being a sign that he was prepared to submit to Han. In the following year, 47, he followed this message by a visit to the Grand Administrator of Xihe, and suggested that he should act as a supporter of Han within the Xiongnu government.

This seems very dangerous behaviour, but there is probably truth in the story. The essential point is that the Chinese now knew of
Bi's disaffection; and it may be suggested that they had done something to encourage it. In fact it is possible that the whole of Bi's growing treachery may be traced back to some private communications in the early 40s, before the death of the Shanyu Yu and at the time of his first suspicions. Given Bi's possible claim to the succession, and his presence near the northeastern frontiers, it would not be surprising if some agents of the Chinese government had made contact, sympathised with and encouraged his sense of injustice, and prepared the ground for his later defection.

Even as Bi was offering his services to the Grand Administrator of Xihe, however, the two Gudu Marquises who had been appointed to supervise him were reporting about his intentions to the Shanyu. When the court gathered at Longcheng for the sacrifice of the fifth month, the marquises argued that Bi should be arrested and executed as a threat to the state. One of Bi's younger brothers, however, who held noble rank at court, learned of the plan and sent word post-haste to Bi. In fear for his life, Bi gathered the commanders and soldiers of his command, some forty or fifty thousand men, and prepared to kill the two Gudu Marquises. The marquises escaped and reported back to the court; the Shanyu Punu sent an armed force against Bi of perhaps ten thousand cavalry, but they saw they were out-numbered and they turned back without fighting.

We are told that Bi had the support of eight divisions, and in the spring of 48, several months after the open breach, when it was
evident that the situation was at a stalemate, the leaders of the eight divisions discussed the question of establishing him as a rival Shanyu. Bi was not hasty over the matter. During the year, he moved his headquarters to the Ordos region, and sent envoys to China to suggest that he should take responsibility for defending the frontier and act as a buffer state against the north. Emperor Guangwu responded to this proposed alliance with a return embassy accepting the offer, and when this matter was settled, in the winter of 48/49 Bi proclaimed himself Shanyu. He took the dynastic title of Xiluo shizhu di Shanyu, but he also styled himself as Huhanxie Shanyu, because both he and his supporters were anxious to accept the precedent of Bi's grandfather, who had received Chinese support against rival claimants.18

In this whole series of events, there are some special points of interest. It is remarkable, for example, that although Bi's government had been controlled by the two Gudu Marquises for some years, he does not appear to have had any difficulty in obtaining and keeping his fighting men and their people. In contrast, the Shanyu Punu, with the essential resources of the state at his command, was not able to muster more than a fraction of his enemy's power. Still more surprisingly, as early as 46, soon after the Chinese exchange of embassies with the Shanyu Punu, at the time Bi first indicated his willingness to accept Chinese suzerainty, the Han government gave orders for the disbandment of the major defence lines along the northern frontier, with the evident assumption that peace was secure.
These Chinese signs of confidence, shown so early, appear as indirect evidence that the Xiongnu state was in serious difficulty even before the internal political crisis developed. In these circumstances, we should perhaps accept more readily the historians' accounts of the severity of the drought in the steppe at this time. *Hou Han Shu* states that the grassland was reduced to bare earth and that two-thirds of the Xiongnu had died of starvation. This is surely exaggerated, but it is certainly possible that the drought was very severe, and that it drastically affected the political and military forces available to the central government of the Xiongnu.

In all this, however, it is hard not to suspect some Chinese influence on Bi's activities. It seems very likely that the success of his attempt at independence, supported by the leaders of eight divisions, reflects subsidies and bribery from Chinese hands. Even the speed with which the defences were eased at the time of his first proposals for defection in 46 may reflect a confidence in the future which was certainly borne out by events.

In 48, when Bi proposed alliance with Han, we are told there was a court conference to discuss the matter. At the conference, so it is said, all who spoke were opposed to the idea, on the general grounds that it was premature for the newly restored Han to undertake such a commitment and that the barbarians could not be trusted. Geng Guo, however, spoke energetically in favour of receiving Bi's submission, and the emperor agreed; Geng Guo was then sent as leader of the embassy to advise consent.
The story of the court conference comes from the biography of Geng Guo himself, and the pattern of the anecdote is formula, or cliche: all advice urges one particular policy, but then the hero of the piece sways the debate with his eloquence and wisdom, and his plan is adopted. The chief purpose of the story is not to describe the proceedings of a discussion but to enhance the reputation of Geng Guo.

Geng Guo was the younger brother of Geng Yan, an old comrade of Guangwu and one of his most competent generals. The Geng family came originally from the region of Changan, but for most of the civil war Geng Guo's father had been Guangwu's Grand Administrator of Shanggu commandery, and Geng Guo was a respected adviser on questions concerning the northern barbarians, particularly the Wuhuan and Xianbi. There is no evidence for the suggestion, but it is tempting to consider the possibility that Geng Guo was in some way responsible for the covert manoeuvres which sent Wuhuan tribesmen against the Xiongnu and also persuaded the discontented prince Bi to turn against his clan and his country.

In 49, the new Shanyu Bi, hereafter described as the Southern Shanyu, sent an expedition under his younger brother Mu to attack the north. They claimed considerable success, capturing the younger brother of Shanyu Punu, with other people, horses and cattle, and driving the rest of the enemy away to the north. Two Gudu Marquises, with thirty thousand people under their command, came south to join
Bi. At the same time, moreover, the Northern Xiongnu were attacked by the Xianbi from the hill country of the west, who had been persuaded to the attack by the Grand Administrator of Liaodong, Zhai Tong; he gave a reward for every head they took, and the first instalment numbered two thousand.\textsuperscript{21} The Wuhuan, further south, evidently continued their attacks also, and numbers of their leaders came to China to offer tribute and alliance and receive appropriate gifts.\textsuperscript{22}

Despite this activity of non-Chinese allies, or even perhaps because of it, the Southern Shanyu continued his negotiations with the court of Han, and appears to have sought with increasing anxiety for a formal relationship of alliance. He asked to restore the treaty that his grandfather had held, he offered to send a son as hostage, and it is said that he even proposed to offer treasures of his family and state as tribute to Han; the Northern Shanyu, of course, had maintained control of the official state treasury, so the Southern Shanyu may not have had a great deal to offer, but his intentions are made clear.

The Southern Shanyu was, indeed, in a difficult position, and the fact that he had brought it about made it no easier to extricate himself. He had small chance of reconciliation with his cousin in the north, he had the armies of China at his back, and he had the possibility that the energies of the Wuhuan and the Xianbi could at any point be turned not just against the Northern Xiongnu, but against all Xiongnu. If he was relying to any degree on Chinese subsidies,
then the possibility of their withdrawal, and the effect this would have upon the loyalties of his present followers, must have been personally quite frightening.

In the spring of 50, the Chinese sent another embassy, under another General of the Gentlemen of the Household, Duan Chen, and on this occasion the Southern Shanyu was faced in public with the reality of his situation. When the envoys came before him, they announced that they carried with them an edict from the Son of Heaven, and it was the duty and courtesy of the Shanyu that he should perform the kowtow in respect for it. The Shanyu hesitated, and then obeyed.

This was a miserable humiliation, and the formal end of any expectation of independence. No such prostration had been required of the first Huhanxie Shanyu nor any of his successors in the time of Former Han, not even when they visited Changan and were in the presence of the emperor himself. The Shanyu was desperately embarrassed, and we are told that his chief supporters wept for the shame of it.

In the following months, there were some complicated political and military manoeuvres between North and South. For a time in the summer, a third Shanyu was proclaimed. This was the younger brother of Punu, who had been captured by the South in the previous year, but who made his escape to the no-man's land between the opposing forces. He was supported by five other leaders, Gudu Marquises who had
abandoned the south, possibly in disgust at Bi's subservience to Han. This small group, however, soon fell out amongst themselves, and when the survivors attempted to return to the south they were captured by an army from the Northern Shanyu. In the winter of 50/51, the Southern Shanyu sent an army to their support, but it was defeated by the forces of the North. For the next several years, there was no further large-scale fighting.

During 50, after the sad ceremony of the kowtow, arrangements were made to bring the Southern Shanyu permanently and effectively under Chinese control. At the orders of the Han court, his residence was moved from the north of the Great Wall outside Wuyuan, first into the territory of Yunzhong commandery, and then, in the following winter, to the neighbourhood of the city of Meiji in Xihe commandery. Meiji, near the western bank of the Yellow River, in the northeast region of the Ordos loop, had been the headquarters of a chief commandant during the Former Han period. It was now maintained as a county, with Chinese officials in residence to supervise the conduct and the government of the Shanyu.

The official primarily responsible for this supervision was given the title General of the Gentlemen of the Household Emissary to the Xiongnu (shi Xiongnu zhonglangjiang) and the first Chinese to hold that position was Duan Chen. Like a British Resident in a princely state in the time of the Indian empire, Duan Chen and his successors had ultimate authority over the government of the Southern
Xiongnu: they were agents of Han at his court, they took part in discussions of policy, and they checked his decisions and orders to ensure they were acceptable to Han. The Emissary had a staff of administrators and secretaries, with a locally recruited force of Chinese troops of some two and a half thousand men under an Assistant Colonel. In particular, we are told that fifty men were stationed permanently at the residence of the Shanyu to act as his "body-guard".25

The Shanyu now sent one of his sons to Luoyang, and from this time on there were regular arrangements for an annual change of hostage, accompanied by exchanges of missions with reports and memorials of respect and congratulations from the Shanyu, and gifts and subsidies from the emperor to the Shanyu and his relatives. The Shanyu himself, however, never visited the imperial court, and it does not appear that he was asked again to perform the kowtow. In these early stages of establishment, the gifts from China were remarkably generous, including not only silk and gold for the leaders but also on occasion grain for the people.

As Bielenstein points out, in fact, the scale of the gifts awarded to the court of the Southern Shanyu was far greater than anything received by the first Huhanxie Shanyu in the time of Former Han. He has fairly estimated that the official gifts to the Shanyu Bi and his immediate followers in the first eight years of submission was almost as much as the total of presents to the Xiongnu in the last
fifty years of Former Han. Furthermore — a point to which Bielenstein does not refer but which is discussed by Yü Ying-shih — it appears from a memorial by the minister Yuan An, presented in 91, that the Southern Xiongnu state received an annual subsidy of more than 100,900,000 cash. It is possible, as Yü points out, that the subsidy had increased over the years, but there is no question that the imperial court was paying heavily for the maintenance of their puppet and buffer state in the north. 26

In fact, Yuan An referred also to subsidies amounting to 7,800,000 cash being paid annually to the various states of the Western Regions which were now tributary to Han, while the Account of the Xianbi tells us that in the time of Emperor Ming there was an annual subsidy paid to the Xianbi tribesmen beyond the frontiers of no less than 270 million cash, levied on the two provinces of Qing and Xu. 27 As Yü observes, there is no reference to payments which may have been made at one time or another to the Wuhuan or Qiang tribesmen of the northeast and the west, but the "protection" payments by China to the nominal allies of the empire may have amounted to as much as 7 per cent of the annual revenue of the empire, or perhaps a third of the total government pay-roll.

These payments were indeed a very high proportion of the imperial budget. On the other hand, we are told that the cost of the twelve years war against the rebel Qiang from 107 to 118 was estimated at 24,000 million cash, and the second rebellion of the Qiang, during the
early 140s, cost 8,000 million cash. The triumphant campaigns of Duan Jiong against the Qiang in 168 and 169 had an original estimate of 5,400 million cash, but actually cost only 4,400 million cash. 28

On this basis, it may be calculated that the imperial government had an annual military expenditure against the Qiang during the twelve years of their first rebellion from 107 to 118 of some 2,000 million cash, which is twenty times the amount mentioned by Yuan An in 88 for the annual subsidy to the Southern Xiongnu. Even allowing for the variations of value between one period and another, it seems clear that the subsidies to vassal states and peoples was no more than a fraction of the cost required to maintain military forces in active service against them. It is difficult to judge the significance of this drain of treasure upon the economy as a whole, but it is certain that much of the money and goods paid over to the barbarians was returned to China through trade, and the common people would suffer far less from this form of expenditure than from the miseries and waste of military recruitment and requisitions for the armies.

Altogether, though the imperial government of Later Han was paying a high price for the security of receiving nominal tribute from the Xiongnu and other peoples along the frontier, it appears to have been a price that the government could afford to pay. In exchange, at least as far as the Southern Xiongnu were concerned, the Chinese could see in their north a new buffer zone, dividing the military power of their most ancient enemy, and effectively under the control of
imperial officials. Even the cost of danegeld may be less than the expenses, strains and uncertainties of war.

The northern peace 51–85:

As the Southern Shanyu entered the Great Wall frontier and established his capital at Meiji, his people spread out across the lands of the Ordos and the frontier commanderies further to the east. Each of the eight divisions which had supported the claim of the Shanyu Bi was allocated the territory of a Han commandery for its grazing land, from Beidi in the southwest to Dai commandery in the east.

At the same time, the imperial forces of Han had also advanced to the former frontier, and in 50 there was an imperial edict announcing the re-establishment of the frontier commanderies and ordering their resettlement by Chinese. Internuncios were sent, with convicts whose sentences were relaxed but who were exiled to the north, to repair the old defences and occupy them, and grants of money and grain were issued to encourage refugees from the north to return to their former homes. In 51, the whole project was put under the authority of the senior official, Grand Commandant Zhao Xi. We are told that the north was settled.29

Inevitably, however, the resettlement was only marginally successful. Many of the refugees had abandoned the north ten years, twenty or even a generation earlier, and one way or another they were
re-established in China. The administrative resources of the government were quite inadequate to collect them and repatriate them to the north, and in 57 an edict of the new Emperor Ming formally abandoned the project.\textsuperscript{30}

Though the Han had certainly restored a Chinese presence in the north, the decline in numbers of settlers had been nothing less than catastrophic. The census figures available on a commandery-by-commandery basis relate to the situation almost one hundred years later, on the eve of the final Chinese withdrawal in the 140s. There was certainly some loss of population in the intervening hundred years, and it is difficult to extrapolate with any accuracy from 140 backwards to the 50s, but the figures nonetheless show an enormous decline from the position described at the census of 2 AD, towards the end of Former Han. The table on page 244 presents a comparison.\textsuperscript{31}

The table must be interpreted with some care, for the borders of the commanderies at the times of the two censuses were not entirely the same, and some counties had been shifted from one administration to another: Dingxiang, for example, lost territory to Yunzhong and gained it from Yanmen, while Yanmen expanded its territory at the expense of Dai and of Taiyuan commandery, further to the south. Again, many of the Former Han counties of Shang and Beidi commanderies which were abolished had been situated in the south, near the old capital district about Changan, and some distance from the former frontier. We know that Emperor Guangwu disestablished a considerable
Table 2: Chinese Population Changes in the North 2-140 AD

province: counties; population by individuals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commandery</th>
<th>Former Han (2 AD)</th>
<th>Later Han (140)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shanggu</td>
<td>15; 117,762</td>
<td>8; 51,204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dai</td>
<td>18; 278,754</td>
<td>11; 126,188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bing:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yanmen</td>
<td>14; 293,454</td>
<td>14; 249,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dingxiang</td>
<td>12; 163,144</td>
<td>5; 3,571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yunzhong</td>
<td>11; 173,270</td>
<td>11; 26,430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xihe</td>
<td>36; 698,836</td>
<td>13; 20,838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wuyuan</td>
<td>16; 241,328</td>
<td>10; 22,957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shuofang</td>
<td>10; 136,628</td>
<td>6; 7,843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shang</td>
<td>23; 606,658</td>
<td>10; 28,599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liang:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beidi</td>
<td>19; 210,688</td>
<td>6; 18,637</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
number of county administrations throughout the empire in the interests of economy, and these may well have been affected by that consideration. 32

On the other hand, the overall pattern is striking. In the general area of the ten commanderies, the recorded population declined from almost three million to less than 500,000 in the course of a century and a half. Moreover, while the depopulation amounts to fifty per cent in the Shanggu/Dai area, and is much less noticeable about Yanmen, the situation from Dingxiang and Yunzhong westward is markedly more serious. Xihe, Shang and Beidi commanderies had lost great numbers of their people, evidently by migration southwards to the Wei valley and beyond, while Shuofang and Wuyuan are remnants of their former power. In 140, for example, it may be calculated that the average population of a county in Wuyuan was a little over two thousand people, men, women and children; the households at that time were assessed at 4,667, less than five hundred per county. With such a small number, spread out among cities which were no more than villages, there can hardly have been enough Chinese population to provide for more than the services of the administration, the crafts required by any settlement, and probably the maintenance of some trade with the surrounding pastoral peoples. Despite the possibilities of irrigation agriculture, there were not sufficient civilians to support a peasant culture in the north.
On any analysis, the greater part of this reduction in Chinese population must have taken place during the turmoil at the end of the reign of Wang Mang and the frontier wars in the time of Guangwu. There can have been few people left in the north when the Han court itself declared the commanderies abandoned, and the low population of the 140s reflects not only the disturbances of later years but the comparative failure of the resettlement policies after the surrender of the Southern Xiongnu. For all the period of Later Han, we may fairly assume that the numbers of Chinese people in the north were few, and their occupation of the ground was minimal.

On the Xiongnu side, population figures are even more difficult to assess. We are told, for example, that in 90, after the defeat of the Northern Xiongnu, the Southern Shanyu controlled 34,000 households, 237,300 individuals, with 50,170 fighting men. As Bielenstein remarks, however, this is surely an understatement; a short time earlier, the chronicle tells us that more than 200,000 people had surrendered at one time, besides several tens of thousands on other occasions. Again, it is said later that the people of fifteen divisions attempted to escape again to the north, and that the numbers of these people totalled 200,000. There is no reason, however, to assume that divisions of the Xiongnu were in any way equal in size, and we are not told how many people had accompanied the Shanyu Bi when he came south into China with his eight divisions of followers. It seems most likely, however, that by the 50s his following already numbered almost 100,000 people.33
If this is a fair estimate, then in many commanderies of the north the Xiongnu within the frontiers outnumbered the returned Chinese settlers. In the east, it appears that the Xiongnu had no major presence in Shanggu commandery - that was evidently reserved for the Wuhuan - and in Dai and Yanmen the Chinese probably shared in the economic activity as well as dominating the military and political authority. From the valley of the Dahei River westwards, however, and beyond the Yellow River across the Ordos steppe and desert, there seems no question that the predominant way of life was that of the Xiongnu pastoralists; though he had come in subjugation, the Southern Shanyu Bi had returned his family and his people to their former home.

With the Southern Shanyu established inside the Great Wall frontier and under the protection of the Han government, the Northern Xiongnu were compelled to accept the fact of the division of their strength, and they came to seek terms with China on their own behalf. In 51, ambassadors came to the Grand Administrator of Wuwei commandery, in the Gansu corridor, to ask for peace. A court conference was held to debate the question.34

We are told that the conference had difficulty in reaching agreement, and it was certainly concerned with a critical decision of policy. On the one hand, there were arguments that Han should now take the offensive, and a single campaign could solve the problem of the Xiongnu for ever. With the aid of the Southern Shanyu and the
other barbarians, Xianbi, Wuhuan and Qiang, it was possible that the power of the Northern Xiongnu could be destroyed, and the Shanyu Bi set upon the throne to rule as a grateful client of China. This policy was urged most energetically by the generals Zang Gong and Ma Wu.

However, even if such a campaign had been successfully mounted, and the Shanyu Bi had been placed by force of Chinese arms upon the throne of his ancestors, it may be questioned how long such a discredited ruler would have lasted among his resentful and independent-minded people or, assuming he and his lineage did maintain the succession, how long they would be prepared to accept the domination of a distant overlord in China. Gratitude for services to the first Huhanxie Shanyu had lasted only one generation under the provocations of Wang Mang, and once the Shanyu was at his own court in his own country, far distant from the centres of Chinese power, another military expedition would be required to bring him under control if he once turned away. Peace by the route of war was very hard to seek.

Moreover, we are told that Guangwu himself argued against the war policy on grounds of expense and military resources. It may be, as Bielenstein argues, that he lacked energy for the cause, and his edict in reply to Zang Gong and Ma Wu is couched in general philosophical terms, but in the situation of the time his caution is understandable. Although the civil war was over, it had been a condition of the settlement at the conclusion of hostilities that the Former Han system of militia training be abandoned, primarily in order to reduce the
number of trained men who might rise to arms in times of future disorder. The empire indeed had only recently been settled, and the central government was by no means restored to the prosperity that the court of Former Han had enjoyed. In these circumstances, we have already observed that Chinese troops had achieved limited success against the Xiongnu in the early 40s, when fighting inside Chinese territory. The cost of raising an adequate army would be great, the difficulties of recruitment and training would be considerable, and the chances of failure were by no means negligible. The army would need to operate far beyond the frontiers, with allies and auxiliaries composed of fickle tribesmen from the east and Xiongnu fighting against their own people. And if the expedition should fail, the consequences for the empire in lost prestige, wasted resources and potential for discontent and banditry could be very great indeed. Small wonder that Guangwu hesitated. The time of the war party was yet to come; but in due course the empire did experience the results of their policies.

On the other hand, if outright war was inappropriate to the time and the situation, could the Chinese government accept the overtures of peace? It was the logical alternative, but this policy too had its problems. At the court conference in 51, the imperial Heir Apparent and future Emperor Ming, Liu Zhuang, set out the basic difficulty:
If we cannot at this time send out troops, and yet on the contrary we enter into negotiations with the Northern enemy; then I am afraid that the Southern Shanyu could have second thoughts, while the Northerners who talk of surrender may not come to us again.36

No politician who has ever had to deal with a small but ambitious ally can fail to sympathise with the position of the Han government. In this respect at least, the Shanyu Bi and his followers had gained the initiative, and diplomatically they were holding Han to ransom. If the Southern Shanyu became anxious and uncertain his followers could cause trouble within the borders or he himself might seek a reconciliation with his brothers in the north. If Han was to maintain peace with the Southern Xiongnu, they could not afford to have peace also with the Northern court. The heir-apparent's advice in the circumstances was to refuse all relations with the North, and rely upon the maintenance of the Southern Xiongnu as allies on the frontier under Chinese control. This policy was adopted, and it no doubt accorded with the wishes of the father as well as the son.

In 52, however, a second embassy came to the frontier, this time bringing horses and furs as tribute, and offering terms which would give China undisputed authority in the Western Regions. The envoys on this occasion, unlike those of the previous year, were apparently received at court in Luoyang. In the message of reply, however, drafted by the celebrated scholar Ban Biao and approved by Emperor Guangwu, the overtures of the Xiongnu were treated with arrogance and discourtesy, and the Shanyu was urged rather to offer submission than
to look for an alliance of friendship. Three years later, in 55, the Northern Shanyu made one last attempt. His messengers were granted gifts of silk and a letter sealed with the imperial seal, but no further response was made by the Chinese side.

In 56, the Southern Shanyu Bi died. In accordance with the principle that he had argued on his own behalf, the succession to his title was passed to his younger brother, the Qiufuyou di Shanyu Mo. Mo, however, died in the following year, and he was succeeded also by a younger brother, the Yifayulu di Shanyu Han. Within two years, he also was dead, and in 59 the succession reverted to Bi's eldest son Shi, the Xitong shizhuhou di Shanyu. When Shi died in 63, he was succeeded by his cousin Su, son of the former Shanyu Mo, who reigned as Qiuchujulin di Shanyu. A few months later, he died and another son of Bi, the Huxie shizhuhou di Shanyu Chang, succeeded. Chang reigned more than twenty years until his death in 85.

During the period of seven years when six Shanyu had followed one another, the order of succession was maintained from eldest to youngest within each generation. There is no indication of disagreement or difficulty in maintaining the order of inheritance; a fact which probably reflects the control of the Chinese and the essential powerlessness of the Shanyu as much as the traditional theories of succession espoused by the late Shanyu Bi. For several years, the northern frontier appears to have been at peace.
Emperor Guangwu died in 57, and was succeeded by Emperor Ming, who inherited this period of peace, but by the early 60s it was evident that the situation was becoming less stable. On the one hand, the Northern Xiongnu once more troubling the borders, and a raid in 62, with six or seven thousand horsemen, plundered within the frontier across a front of a hundred kilometres until the raiders were driven off by a combined force of Southern Xiongnu and Chinese troops from Xihe commandery. At the same time, the Northern Shanyu was again extending peace feelers, and the government of Emperor Ming was prepared to explore negotiations in the hope of ending the border disturbances.

In the summer of 65, however, when the envoy Zheng Zhong was sent to the Northern court, various groups of the Southern Xiongnu again became suspicious of Chinese intentions towards them, and they in turn sent messengers to negotiate with the North. Zheng Zhong caught one of these messengers, and he sent a memorial to Luoyang urging the appointment of a military commander on the frontier to prevent communications between South and North. 39

The defences in the north were very speedily strengthened. The General of the Gentlemen of the Household Wu Tang was appointed Acting General Who Crosses the Liao, with headquarters at Manbo in Wuyuan, a frontier city somewhere north of present-day Baotou in Inner Mongolia. 40 Soldiers were sent from the military base at Liyang, under the command of three colonels, and at the same time a Chief
Commandant of Cavalry was despatched to Meiji to assist the Southern Shanyu and also to ensure his loyalty.

The establishment of the army under the General Who Crosses the Liao marked a change in Chinese policy. The proposal for such a post had been put forward by the adviser Geng Guo even at the time of the first negotiations for Shanyu Bi's surrender,⁴¹ and it is clear that the government was concerned not only with the simple military defence of the frontier from attack by the north but also with the possibility that the Northern and Southern Xiongnu might combine against the Chinese.

It may be observed, again, that recruitment of the troops for the new command reflects the weakness of Chinese population in the north. The Hanguan yi of Ying Shao, written late in the second century AD, records that Emperor Guangwu had established a great camp at Liyang, a county of Wei commandery in Ji province, now in the vicinity of Xunxian in Henan. This was done, so we are told, because in the time of civil war Guangwu had recruited the greater part of his men from You, Ji and Bing provinces, and the camp at Liyang was designed and maintained as a recruiting and training depot. It was set up under the supervision of an Internuncio, and the soldiers formed a professional reserve. From the time of Emperor Ming onwards, the camp at Liyang evidently became the major source of troops for the command of the frontier General Who Crosses the Liao.⁴²
In this way, it appears that the Chinese forces involved in the defence of the frontier were largely recruited for long-term service. Considering the small numbers of population which we have observed already, it would hardly be appropriate to rely on citizen soldiers, but the arrangement indicates that the lands in the north of the Yellow River and the Ordos region were now protected by professional military forces in much the same manner as the isolated districts of the Gansu corridor and the Edsin Gol salient further to the west.

There is some question as to the nature of the Chinese military dispositions in the north during the period after the surrender of the Southern Xiongnu. We have mentioned already that the emergency defences established by Emperor Guangwu against the attacks of the Xiongnu had been abandoned in 46, very soon after the first intimations of the division among the Xiongnu. Based upon the Chinese record, Bielenstein argues that this action entailed the withdrawal of Chinese garrisons from all the positions of the Great Wall, including the region of the Gansu corridor.43

For a number of reasons, however, this interpretation of Bielenstein's does not appear correct. Firstly, he argues that the reference in the Chinese history to the demobilisation of troops manning the watchtowers in the border commanderies cannot have referred to those facing the Xiongnu in the region of the Ordos and northern Shanxi, because those defences had already been over-run. However, Bielenstein has himself been describing how the Han
government was attempting to set up new walls and other fortifications along that shifting zone of defence, and there is nothing in the Chinese text to indicate that it was not those temporary positions which were abandoned after the secession of the future Southern Shanyu.

Secondly, although Bielenstein cites the suggestion of Lao Kan that the region of Juyan may have been abandoned during the time of Emperor Guangwu, Lao Kan's suggestion is itself, quite naturally, a tentative one, being based upon the absence of dated wooden slips from the Edsin Gol region for the period following 31 AD. Such an argument from negative evidence is inconclusive, and although it is true that no further dated slips from the middle of the first century AD have been unearthed in the Edsin Gol, it is possible that some are yet to be found. 44

More specifically, however, the documents found by Sir Aurel Stein in the remains of Han-time fortifications north of Dunhuang, the first to be discovered in modern times, have been indexed and translated by Chavannes. Among those strips, there are dated texts for the years 35, 43, 46, 50, 53, 56, 61 and so on through the dynasty up to the middle of the second century. 45 If the Wall in that region was abandoned in 46 or 47, it was very soon manned again. And as we have discussed above, the Juyan salient performed a valuable function as part of the defences of the region of the Gansu corridor: if the Wall at Dunhuang was maintained, it is extremely likely that
the fortifications along the whole of the corridor, including the Juyan salient, were also in operation. 46

In sum, one may note that the demobilisation at the end of 46, which is linked in the Annals to the attack of the Wuhuan upon the Xiongnu and the beginning of the defection of the prince Bi, would have been of primary importance to the region of the Ordos loop of the Yellow River and the frontiers further east. There does not seem to have been any good cause for the Chinese to quit the Great Wall frontier in the west, along the Gansu corridor, and the balance of the evidence would indicate that they did not do so.

It is very possible that the disestablishment of the emergency system of defences in the north during 46 marked a cessation to any Chinese reliance on fixed positions in this region for the time being. Certainly there is little evidence of Chinese interference in the movement of Xiongnu north and south in the few years of confusion which followed Bi's separatist revolt. On the contrary, as Bielenstein has argued, it appears that the Southern Xiongnu were looked upon as permanent enemies of the North, and to that extent reliable allies for the defence of imperial territory. However, during the following years, this assumption must have seemed less certain, and the establishment of the command of the General Who Crosses the Liao was evidently accompanied by a re-organisation of the defences along the northern loop of the Yellow River and further to the east. In the area of You province, opposite the Wuhuan, it would
seem that some control of the frontier was maintained from the time of Emperor Guangwu onwards, if only to enforce the restrictions of trade and movement which are implied by the establishment of official markets under the supervision of the Colonel Protector of the Wuhan at Ning in Shanggu commandery.47

There remains for consideration the line of the Yellow River along the western side of the Ordos loop, between Wuwei commandery and Shuofang. This territory, now largely under the Ningxia Autonomous Region, is flanked on either side by the deserts of the Ordos and Tengger. At one time or another in Former Han, there was a line of pickets reaching west from Shuofang to the oases of Juyan, and it is possible that Later Han also maintained some patrols south along the Yellow River or east across the desert. On the other hand, there are numerous references to non-Chinese, Xiongnu and Qiang, traversing this region without apparent interference, and it does not seem that the military authorities of Later Han were sufficiently concerned to expend their limited resources on the full control of this region. So long as the region from Shuofang eastwards was properly defended in the north, and the Gansu corridor was protected in the south, the deserts between were sufficiently inhospitable to discourage all but the occasional raiding party, and were certainly not a region which would offer a major threat.

In the far west, however, among the oasis cities along the Silk Road through central Asia, where the Chinese presence had been with-
drawn since the time of Wang Mang, the Northern Xiongnu were able to find an opportunity for expansion. In the first part of the first century, the cities of Asia were dominated by the local power of the petty state of Yarkand, but by the early 60s the energetic ruler of Yarkand, King Xian, was dead and the Northern Xiongnu, somewhat recovered from the secession of the South, were seeking to expand their influence and re-establish a protectorate.\textsuperscript{48} Closer to home, the Northern Xiongnu had also begun operations against the Chinese north. In one incident, we are told that two thousand horsemen approached Shuofang and made boats of inflated horseskins so they could cross the Yellow River and contact disaffected subjects of the South; the Chinese defences were alerted, however, and the invaders withdrew. More serious, it appears that the raiding against the Chinese positions along the Gansu corridor was so active and troublesome that the gates of the cities had to be kept closed even during the daytime.\textsuperscript{49}

By the early 70s, therefore, the disturbances along the frontier had become sufficiently irritating, and the Chinese government felt sufficiently strong, that a major expedition was planned against the Northern Xiongnu.

Twenty years of basic peace and security with the Southern Xiongnu, and a whole generation of unified government in China under the restored Han dynasty, had evidently brought Emperor Ming to the feeling that the nation could now afford some serious attempt at
dominance over the northern steppe and the Western Regions. There
was, moreover, a definite war party at the court, led by Geng Bing and
Dou Gu. Both were members of great families: Geng Bing was the son of
Geng Guo, adviser to Emperor Guangwu at the time of the Southern
Xiongnu surrender in the late 40s, and architect of the settlement
which had followed; Bing himself was respected as an expert on the
affairs of the frontier.50 Dou Gu was a nephew of the great warlord
Dou Rong, who had dominated the region of the Gansu corridor until
his alliance and submission to Guangwu in the closing stages of the
civil war. The Dou family had been prominent at court and leaders of
a powerful faction in the time of Guangwu; but they were dismissed and
disgraced by Emperor Ming in 59 and exiled to their homeland in the
northwest. Dou Gu, however, who had not been a central figure in the
previous political debacle, had acquired a reputation for experience
with the problems of the frontier, and he gained the ear of the
emperor with his aggressive policy. From this time, the fortunes of
the Dou family became linked with the war party at the imperial
court.51

The plan of campaign for 73 was a most ambitious one, worthy
indeed of the tradition of Emperor Wu of Former Han. The attack on
the Northern Xiongnu was launched in four great divisions across the
whole arc of the empire's northern borders. On the east, troops
raised from Taiyuan, Yanmen, Dai, Shanggu, Yuyang, Youbeiping and
Dingxiang, together with Xianbi and Wuhuan auxiliaries, went out from
Pingcheng near present-day Datong in Shanxi; in the centre, the
commander-in-chief, the Grand Coachman Zhai Tong, was accompanied by Wu Tang, General Who Crosses the Liao, and the forces of the Southern Shanyu; in the west, there were two columns: one from Jiuquan, under the command of Dou Gu and Geng Bing's cousin Geng Zhong, contained men at arms from Jiuquan, Dunhuang and Zhangye commanderies, with Qiang and other barbarian auxiliaries; the other, also with barbarian auxiliaries but with levies from the more eastern commanderies of Wuwei, Longxi and Tianshui, advanced from Juyan, the Edsin Gol salient.  

Considering the planning and expense which must have gone into such an expedition, the results were disappointing. The army on the east penetrated deep into the steppe but made no effective contact with the enemy. Zhai Tong, in the centre column, was apparently on bad terms with the Southern Xiongnu chieftain who was supposed to act as his guide, and he was tricked into turning back before he had reached his objective; again the main force of the Xiongnu evaded the Chinese army with ease. Geng Bing encountered some fighting, but without major effect, and turned back after an advance of some two hundred kilometres. Only Dou Gu, marching northwest against the flank of the Xiongnu, reached lake Bar Köl in the region of present-day Hami, defeated the Xiongnu king of the Huyan clan who opposed him, and seized possession of the territory known as Yiwulu.

In the aftermath of this campaign, Zhai Tong was disgraced and died in prison, while Wu Tang was dismissed and replaced by the general Lai Miao, who had commanded the eastern column of the great
expedition. Geng Bing and Dou Gu, however, advanced further into the Western Regions and forced the surrender of the kingdoms of Jushi in Turfan. From this beginning, under the orders of Dou Gu, the great commander Ban Chao, son of Ban Biao and brother of the historian Ban Gu, advanced to reconquer the empire of Han in central Asia.

The great expedition of 73, however, had only marginal effect of the power of the Xiongnu in the north of China; later in the same year, after the armies had returned, a party of raiders plundered Yunzhong commandery. On the Chinese side, no further such campaigns were mounted for another ten years and more. In 77, indeed, at a time when the government of the new Emperor Zhang, who succeeded his father in 75, was hesitating about the commitment to the Western Regions, the region of Yiwulu was abandoned by the Chinese, and occupied once again by the Xiongnu.

Geng Bing succeeded Lai Miao as the General Who Crosses the Liao in 76, and remained at that post for the next seven years. It is said that the Xiongnu were awed and kept quiet by his reputation and authority, but it seems likely that they were also suffering from internal and external pressures. In 76, we know that there was a plague of locusts in the territory of the Southern Xiongnu, and grain was sent by the Chinese court to relieve their distress. It seems likely that the Northern Xiongnu were affected by the same misfortune, and various records preserved in the Treatise of the Five Elements and its commentary indicated that there were local dry spells and droughts.
in China during the years 76, 77, 79 and 84. If this is so, it is probable that the steppe territory of the Xiongnu suffered also.

At the same time, moreover, though the Chinese were not willing to launch another direct attack on the north, their agents, with subsidies, evidently continued to encourage the Wuhuan and more notably the Xianbi in raids and fighting against the eastern flank of the Northern Xiongnu. Under this form of pressure, and perhaps also as a consequence of internal wrangles, there was a major surrender of some 38,000 Northern Xiongnu at the Wuyuan frontier in 83, and another, even larger, in 85.

In 84, the Grand Administrator of Wuwei, Meng Yun, reported that he had received a request from the Northern Xiongnu for the restoration of peaceful trade through markets at the frontier. The court approved, a high officer of the Xiongnu arrived with horses and cattle, and for a short period there was a flurry of trade, with residences provided for the Xiongnu visitors in the cities of Wuwei and gifts and rewards for those who came.

This tolerant policy, however, could not be maintained for long. The Southern Shanyu was predictably concerned about the possibility of agreement between the Chinese and his northern rivals, and he sent out light cavalry in raids from Shang commandery west across the Tengger desert. They intercepted caravans of the Xiongnu traders outside the Wuwei frontier, seized their cattle, horses and
other goods, and returned with prisoners and booty to their territory in the Ordos.

In the winter of 85, Meng Yun reported:

The Northern caitiffs claim that they came in peace, but the Southerners attacked and plundered them. The Northern Shanyu says that Han has deceived him, and he plans to resume his attacks on the frontier. It is suggested that we should show good will and return the people seized by the Southerners.\(^{56}\)

At this, there was a most heated discussion in the court of Emperor Zhang. The protagonists seem to have been fairly evenly divided, and in the excitement of the debate the Grand Commandant Zheng Hong shouted at the chief of his opponents, the Minister over the Masses Huan Yu: "Anyone who says we should hand back the captives is a traitor!" Huan Yu's reply is not quoted directly, but he evidently swore at Zheng Hong in open court. Several other senior ministers lost their tempers, and the Colonel Director of Retainers reported all of them for lese-majesty. The emperor pardoned them with soothing words, and then accepted the advice of Zheng Hong and the Grand Coachman Yuan An. It was in accordance with the moral authority of the empire that the prisoners should be returned, and orders were given to the General Who Crosses the Liao and the Emissary at the Shanyu's court that they should buy back the Northern captives. If any had been killed, the empire would pay blood money to the North in accordance with the usual practice.\(^{57}\)
There is evidence here of a peace party at the imperial court, but despite their apparent defeat in the debate, the war party was in a far better position: the Southern Shanyu was anxious to bring on a conflict with the north, and the Han government could not keep him under control. Even the conciliatory edict of Emperor Zhang was of limited success, for both the Northern and Southern Xiongnu felt that the Han court, by purchasing the prisoners from the Southern Xiongnu, was effectively rewarding their banditry, and the Southerners were in no way penalised. No doubt with the encouragement of the forward faction at court, the Southern Xiongnu continued their policy of raiding, plundering and taking prisoners. Increasing numbers of the Northern Xiongnu came to the frontier to surrender, and the immediate expectations of peace were lost.

The destruction of the Northern Shanyu 87-93:

In 85, the long-reigning Shanyu Zhang of the Southern Xiongnu died, and he was succeeded by his cousin Xuan, son of the former Shanyu Han, who took the title of Yituyulu di Shanyu. He died three years later, and was succeeded by Zhang's son Tuntuho, the Xiulan shizhuhou di Shanyu.

There is no account in the Chinese records of the lineage and inheritance of the Northern Shanyu after the defection of Bi from the authority of his cousin Punu. In 87, however, Punu's successor, the Youliu Shanyu of the Northern Xiongnu, came to a terrible end. A
great raid by the Xianbi broke into the Xiongnu territories from the east and captured the Shanyu himself. The tribesmen killed him, then took his skin from the body, and returned with the grisly trophy to their home country.\footnote{58}

With this military disaster, compounded by a plague of locusts across their grazing lands, the Northern Xiongnu were in utter confusion. Great numbers of the people came south to surrender to the Southern Shanyu and seek the protection of the Chinese frontiers, while the new Northern Shanyu withdrew his followers to the north. In 88, a dissident group of nobles established a half-brother of the Shanyu as his rival, and the weakened, impoverished state was divided in civil war.

Emperor Zhang of Han died in the spring of 88, and he was succeeded by his ten-year-old son the Emperor He. In accordance with Han tradition, the Empress-Dowager nee Dou, great-granddaughter of Dou Rong, now acted as regent, and the Dou family came to the highest positions of power in the empire.\footnote{59}

The situation, however, was not entirely straightforward. Dou Gu, nephew of Dou Rong and great-uncle of the Empress-Dowager, the senior statesman of the family, died within a few months, and the leadership of the clan of the imperial relatives by marriage should have passed into the hands of the Empress-Dowager’s elder brother, Dou Xian.\footnote{60} Dou Xian, however, was arrogant, greedy and cruel. In the
time of Emperor Zhang, he barely escaped disgrace when he attempted to extort land from one of the imperial princesses, and after his sister became effective ruler of the empire he arranged for a series of killings, first to take vengeance on a former enemy of his father, then to cover up the crime by assassination of a marquis from the imperial clan who was sponsoring an enquiry. The whole plot was discovered, there was an appalling scandal, and the Empress-Dowager had Dou Xian held under house arrest at the palace while she considered his case. 61

It was at this point, in the autumn of 88, that a memorial came from the Southern Shanyu, asking for an imperial army to support a campaign of conquest against the north. In the long document, the Shanyu praised the policies of Emperor Zhang, and remarked on the manner in which he had used the Wuhuan and Xianbi to maintain pressure on the North. Now, with two rival Shanyu in the North, and a host of the people anxious to make their peace with Han and the South, he and his leaders had made plans for the conquest of the whole ancestral territory. They were, however, still too weak to manage such a task without the support of Han, and he asked that a full expeditionary army be sent out, so the attack might proceed across the whole front from Juyan to Wuyuan. If plans could be settled by the annual ceremony of the ninth month, the campaign could begin in the twelfth month. 62

The Empress-Dowager asked the opinion of Geng Bing, former
General Who Crosses the Liao, and now in office at the capital as Chief of the Palace Police. Predictably, Geng Bing was enthusiastic that the government should seize the opportunity: it was the very plan which he had urged upon Emperor Ming in 73, and the time was now far more propitious than on the occasion of that great expedition. The present chance had come from Heaven like a gift, and it would be impious to turn it down.

From the Empress-Dowager's point of view, the proposal provided not only the opportunity for a victory to the dynasty, but also a means to rid herself of the embarrassment of her brother Dou Xian. Given supreme command of the army, he could cover his recent crimes with a cloak of military glory, and restore some prestige to her family. She welcomed Geng Bing's advice, and gave orders for the mobilisation.63

At this point, however, there came a storm of criticism from the senior ministers. The matter had not been put forward for discussion in court, but a series of memorials was sent in to the government. They were possibly initiated by the Master of Writing Song Yi, who as a member of the imperial secretariat was responsible for drafting the necessary orders, but his protest was followed and accompanied by written objections from the Grand Commandant Song You, the Minister over the Masses Yuan An, the Minister of Works Ren Wei and, so we are told, all the ministers of the government. Their essential argument was that no campaign against the Xiongnu could ensure lasting success,
that the Northern Xiongnu were at present seeking only for peace, and that there was no justification for the immense cost of the nation's resources in seeking such a short-lived triumph.64

The Empress-Dowager, however, was determined, and in the face of her angry resentment, the majority of the protesters withdrew. Yuan An and Ren Wei maintained their argument, but they were over-ruled. In the tenth month, at the beginning of winter in 88, Dou Xian was proclaimed as General of Chariots and Cavalry, commander-in-chief of the expedition against the Northern Xiongnu, with Geng Bing as his chief assistant.

The unsuccessful protest by the ministers represents the critical defeat of the peace party at court. To a large extent, of course, it may be seen as a question of factional opposition to the Dou family and to the possibilities of power which would develop from Dou Xian's command of such an army, and to some degree also the protest reflects the indignation of senior officials who had been held out of the decision-making on such a vital question. It is also possible, however, to see Yuan An and his colleagues as representatives of the prosperous gentry who were concerned rather with their own family and class than with the enhanced fortunes of the court and the dynasty. Yuan An came from an important local family in the large commandery of Runan, and Ren Wei from the prefecture of Wan in the neighbouring commandery of Nanyang, one of the wealthiest regions of the empire. Their more reluctant associate, Song You, was from a gentry family
all three men were the first generation of their clan to hold high rank, and they lacked the long association with the throne and with the highest positions of dynastic power that were common to the Geng and Dou families. To some extent, the debates at court reflect a difference between the powerful group at the centre of dynastic power, often having contact and experience on the frontier, and the newer men of political importance at the capital, established in their own regions, and concerned rather with peace and land-holding than with the ambitions and expense of empire. In effect, during this period when the government of Han was clearly secure, and appeared to have the opportunity for further expansion of its power, the Former Han debate between the centralising Modernists and the more conservative Reformists was developing once again.

The army was prepared during the winter of 88/89. The core of the force was provided by troops from the five regiments of the Northern Army, the professional elite force normally maintained at the capital, together with the regular troops drawn from the great camps at Liyang in Wei and Yong in Youfufeng. To these there were added the army of the General Who Crosses the Liao, levies from the frontier commanderies, barbarian auxiliaries from the Qiang and other tribespeople, and the main force of the Southern Xiongnu. The total figure was some forty thousand. In the summer, in the sixth month of the Chinese year 89, the army passed out through the Great Wall in three columns from Shuofang and Wuyuan, and reassembled at Zhuoye Mountain, in the Gurvan Sayhan Uul range, the first notable area of high ground in Outer Mongolia, the present-day People's Republic.
Map 8: Han and Xiongnu 89-92
From this concentration point, a large detachment was sent towards the northwest, following the northern flank of the Altai Mountains, directly against the forces of the Northern Shanyu. This detachment was commanded by the Assistant Colonel Yan Pan, assisted by two members of the Geng clan, Geng Kui, younger brother of Geng Bing, and Geng Tan, and it was supported by two contingents of Southern Xiongnu cavalry. In the major battle of the campaign, they met and defeated the Northern Shanyu near Jiluo Mountain, and pursued him to the Siqu and Beidi lakes. It is said that they captured a million head of horses, cattle, sheep and camels, killed more than thirteen thousand of the enemy, and induced wholesale surrender of some two hundred thousand people from eighty-one divisions of the Northern Xiongnu.

In the meantime, Dou Xian and Geng Bing brought the main body of the army north in what was virtually a triumphal progress. A stele was erected on Mount Yanran, one of the chief peaks of Xiongnu territory, in the Hangayn Nuruu range of central Mongolia, and the scholar and historian Ban Gu, who was accompanying the army, wrote a commemorative inscription. He described there how the Chinese and their allies had crossed the Zhuoye mountains, traversed the Anhou valley, marched through all the lands of the empire founded by the Shanyu Modun, and burned the sacred site of Longcheng. In this campaign, the army had reached more than three thousand li beyond the Chinese frontier, and Dou Xian led his forces back to Chinese territory.
As he did so, however, he sent two envoys, Wu Si and Liang Feng, with an escort to the Northern Shanyu, now in the region of the Western Lakes. They took with them a gift of gold brocade, and a summons to surrender to Han. The Shanyu agreed, and he returned towards China. At the Siqu Lake, however, it was learned that the Han army had withdrawn to the frontier, and the Shanyu halted there and sent his younger brother as envoy and hostage to China.

Dou Xian, now in headquarters at Wuyuan, urged that the Northern Shanyu should not be granted peace until he came himself to surrender. The Southern Shanyu, for his part, hoped to destroy his rival entirely, and in the spring of 90 he sent out a force of some eight thousand cavalry with a small Chinese party under the Emissary Geng Tan which approached the Northern Shanyu's headquarters by flank marches, surrounded him and defeated him. The Northern Shanyu was wounded and fled, and the invaders captured his seal and treasure, his wives and sons and daughters. They killed eight thousand people, captured several thousand more, and returned.

In the midst of this war of harassment, the Northern Shanyu still attempted to obtain terms of peace with Han. When his first offer of a hostage was rejected, he sent another king to the Juyan frontier asking for a Chinese envoy to come and discuss terms. On Dou Xian's suggestion, Ban Gu and Liang Feng were sent on an embassy to reply, but by the time they reached the Siqu Lake the Northern Shanyu had been driven from the field by his rival's surprise attack. Ban Gu and
his party returned, and Dou Xian now recommended that the Northern Shanyu was so weak there was no point in treating with him; he should be utterly destroyed.

In 91, a final attack was made by the Colonel Geng Kui. The Northern Shanyu was defeated once more and fled away, abandoning his kingdom. No-one knew where he went or what became of him.

The former Shanyu's younger brother, Yuchujian, was now set up in his place. He gathered the remnants of his people together about the Pulei Lake, the present day Bar Köl, north of Hami in Xinjiang, and asked again to surrender. Dou Xian recommended that he should be recognised as the Northern Shanyu, and in the spring of 92 Geng Kui was sent on embassy to accept his submission. Yuchujian was granted the seal and insignia of a Shanyu tributary to Han, together with ceremonial swords carved from jade and a feathered palanquin carriage. The military commander Ren Shang was sent as General of the Gentleman of the Household, bearing imperial credentials of authority, to set him in a guarded capital at Yiwu.71

The arrangement was deliberately parallel to that of the Southern Shanyu, with his capital under the supervision of the Emissary at Meiji prefecture in Xihe. Such a policy was certainly possible: it divided the title of Shanyu between two rivals, both under the control of China, and so long as one or the other could exert influence over the people of the steppe, aided of course by the military power of China, the frontier could be settled in that fashion.
The majority of the court had approved this plan, but there was some opposition. Yuan An and Ren Wei, in particular, protested strongly that the Han dynasty had long been committed to the cause of the Southern Shanyu, and to set up his defeated rival with similar authority was a clear betrayal of trust, while it would also involve Han in the well-established quarrel of the Northern Xiongnu with the Wuhuan and the Xianbi. Moreover, the policy of Han had long been settled: to get the Southern Shanyu back to power in the north: it was no part of the original plan that two tributary rulers should be established. Among other reasons, the enormous expense of the military campaigns could hardly be justified by the establishment and maintenance of two subordinate courts, both of which would need continuing subsidy in the future. Far better to restore the power of a single ruler and ensure that he remained subject to Han, as the original Huhanxie Shanyu had been. 72

For the time being, Yuan An and Ren Wei were in the minority, and Dou Xian had his way. Yuan An, in fact, died in the third month of 92, and a few weeks later Dou Xian returned in triumph to the capital. The power of the Dou family was at its height, and their influence at the court and in the country seemed unassailable. In a remarkable coup, however, on 14 August 92, the young Emperor He had Dou Xian's partisans arrested, took the insignia of office from Dou Xian himself and his brothers, and exiled them to their estates. They were later compelled to commit suicide, and although the Empress-Dowager was maintained in her title, she held no further power. 73
The removal of the Dou family from government was essentially the domestic problem of an emperor dealing with an over-mighty subject, but it had repercussion on the policy along the frontier. The position of the Northern Shanyu was once again in question, and Yuchujian himself appears to have had hopes of freeing himself from the bondage at Yiwu. In the autumn of 93 he made his escape to the north and attempted to regain independence. Ren Shang went in pursuit, and reinforcements were sent to assist him. It appears that they made contact and persuaded him to surrender once again, but on the way back he was killed. The line of inheritance of the Northern Shanyu died with him; though we know that some children of the former Shanyu had been captured, they do not appear again upon the scene.
CHAPTER 7

ASHES OF SUCCESS:

XIONGNU, XIANBI AND HAN 90–150 AD

The problems of victory
The rebellions of the Xiongnu
The coming of the Xianbi and the
wars of Qizhijian (121–133)
The Chinese withdrawals

The problems of victory:

With the defeat and destruction of the Northern Shanyu, the numbers of surrendered Xiongnu who now accepted the sway of the Southern court had increased dramatically. In 90, after the first great campaign of Dou Xian, it is said that the Southern Shanyu counted among his subjects 34,000 households, 237,300 individuals and a force of 50,170 fighting men. Since the records refer to groups of as many as 200,000 people surrendering at any one time, this specific census figure seems difficult to reconcile with those other texts, and it is likely that large numbers of the former subjects of the Northern Shanyu were omitted from the count.

In recognition of the practical difficulties in dealing with such numbers of new-comers, the Emissary Geng Tan asked that his assistance should be increased from two Attendant Officials to twelve. The request likely reflects not only the growing numbers of Xiongnu
subjects of the Southern court, but also the problem of keeping them under some form of supervision. About the same time, in the spring of 90, there were established Dependent States of Xihe and Shang commanderies, also presumably for dealing with the "surrendered barbarians".¹

For the most part, of course, great numbers of the Xiongnu who had nominally surrendered remained in their own grazing territory of Mongolia, accepting a general suzerainty from the court at Meiji. At the court, however, and in the Ordos territory of the Southern Xiongnu generally, there were considerable numbers of the former Northern Xiongnu, and there was growing social and political tension.

The two parties, after all, had been engaged in war, with raiding, plunder and occasional massacre on both sides. The triumphant southerners now found themselves sharing wealth and influence with the northern group, and the newly surrendered people from the north had neither affection nor trust for their conquerors. With the death of the Shanyu Tuntuhe in 93, matters came to a head.

Tuntuhe was succeeded by Anguo, younger brother of the former Shanyu Xuan. It was not, however, a popular accession, for Anguo was over-shadowed by his cousin Shizi, son of the former Shanyu Shi. Shizi was younger than Anguo, but had shown remarkable energy in the wars against the north. He had been involved in skirmishes along the frontier in the early 80s, he had led the Xiongnu contingent in
co-operation with Dou Xian, and he had commanded the cavalry force which defeated and drove away the Northern Shanyu near the Western Lakes in 90. The former Shanyu Xuan and Tuntuhe had both respected him, and even Emperor He is said to have expressed admiration for his prowess. Shizi was the popular leader of the Southern Xiongnu; and, as a natural corollary, he was disliked and feared by the newly-surrendered people of the north. Anguo, on the other hand, had no particular support, and he was predictably jealous of his cousin's popularity and success.

Shizi and his supporters had evidently continued the war even after the mass surrenders, and they had pillaged and plundered many of the defeated Northern Xiongnu who came to the south. Anguo, then, appears to have sought favour from these people by his hostility to Shizi, and Shizi, fearing for his life, maintained a separate camp in Wuyuan commandery and made excuses not to attend court. The Chinese officials also knew of the quarrel, and the General Who Crosses the Liao, Huangfu Leng, undertook to protect Shizi and arranged that no questions would be asked about his absences from Meiji.

Huangfu Leng left office in 94, and was succeeded by Zhu Hui. The Shanyu Anguo, however, was also on bad terms with the Emissary, Du Chong. Anguo sent in a letter to the court to criticise Du Chong, but Du Chong intercepted the letter and then joined with Zhu Hui to send accusations of their own, questioning Anguo's loyalty, and claiming that he was proposing the assassination of Shizi and other pro-Chinese leaders.
The court of Emperor He agreed that Anguo should not be condemned without investigation, but that in the first instance there should be a special watch and guard placed upon him, and strict orders should be given him to punish any of his subjects who disturbed the peace. When this decision was received, however, Du Chong and Zhu Hui led an armed force in the night to Anguo's camp. Anguo heard of their coming and was frightened. He fled from his court, gathered his own men and a great number of the surrendered Northern Xiongnu, and went north to attack Shizi.

Shizi took refuge in the garrison city of Manbo, and Anguo's attack was unsuccessful. Then the Chinese army arrived, and when Anguo refused to surrender, he was killed by his own followers. Peace was restored and Shizi now ascended the throne as Tingdu shizhuhou di Shanyu.

The death of Anguo and the accession of Shizi in such circumstances had, of course, done nothing to reassure the surrendered Xiongnu of their future treatment at the hands of their new ruler and his Chinese masters. Very soon after Shizi's accession, there was a surprise attack against him in his own camp by five or six hundred northerners, and they were beaten off only by the intervention of the Shanyu's Chinese body-guard. With this incident, great numbers of the Northern Xiongnu broke into open rebellion.
The rebels chose the chieftain Fenghou, son of the former Shanyu Tuntuhe, as their leader, and despite his descent as a prince of the southern lineage, Fenghou does not appear to have shown any hesitation in accepting the charge. It is said that fifteen divisions, with 200,000 people, joined him. They destroyed the Chinese postal courier stations and residencies and killed officials and people. Then they marched towards Shuofang commandery with the intention of escaping to the north.

For a time, however, it appears that Fenghou was delayed within the Ordos region. The rising had broken out in the vicinity of Meiji, and it evidently took some weeks before the forces of rebellion had gathered themselves into an organised body to attempt a break-out across the Yellow River and through the frontier to the freedom of the desert and steppe beyond. There was a brief skirmish when Fenghou attacked Du Chong and the Shanyu Shizi as they were camped in the headquarters of one of the herding offices, but the rebels withdrew without success. And in the mean time, at the Chinese capital, orders were issued for the mobilisation of forty thousand men, with guardsmen and soldiers from the Northern Army, garrison troops and levies from the frontier commanderies, and Wuhuan and Xianbi auxiliaries commanded by the Colonel Protector of the Wuhuan Ren Shang. All these forces were under the command of the Acting General of Chariots and Cavalry, Deng Hong, youngest son of the great Deng Yu, uncle of Emperor He's future Empress, and a former General Who Crosses the Liao who had taken part in the campaigns of Dou Xian.
The Han court evidently regarded Fenghou's defection with considerable concern, but in the winter of 94-95, when Deng Hong arrived with the main body of the army, they proved to be too late. To the good fortune of Fenghou, the Yellow River froze over in the intense cold of the north, and the rebel Xiongnu were able to cross to the northern shore. They were pursued with considerable energy, and detachments of the Chinese forces, the Xiongnu and other barbarian auxiliaries, caught up with one group or another of the fleeing enemy. But Fenghou and his people were very little inclined to turn and fight. Their one concern was escape beyond the frontiers, and in this they were successful. In the spring of 95, the imperial army abandoned the chase and withdrew to the frontier line.

The response of the imperial court to the failure of this campaign was harsh: Deng Hong was found guilty of mismanaging the campaign and died in prison. Further investigation revealed the role of Du Chong and Zhu Hui in causing the initial trouble with the late Shanyu Anguo; they too were sent to prison and died there.

It was not an unreasonable reaction, though the whole affair was as much the fault of the general policy of the Han government as that of any individual officials or commanders. The escape of Fenghou and his followers marked the failure and even the futility of the whole imperial design which had culminated in the conquests of Dou Xian. The Northern Shanyu had indeed been destroyed, but now there was a new Shanyu in the open steppe, with the nucleus of a following, and good reason for hostility to China.
For the next few years, the Han government was compelled to reinforce the troops of the General Who Crosses the Liao, now Pang Fen, former Grand Administrator of Yanmen, with a second force under the Colonel of the Elite Cavalry Feng Zhu, commanding troops of the Tiger Tooth Regiment, recruited from the region of Changan, and also stationed on the Wuyuan frontier. In the war of skirmishing and attrition which followed, there were desertions from each side. In 96 a large number of Fenghou's people rebelled against him and came back to China, and in the autumn of the same year a revolt by a subordinate king of the Southern Shanyu, who attempted to escape with his people to the north, was defeated by Chinese troops and the captives were resettled in the more southerly commanderies of Anding and Beidi. With this success, Feng Zhu was brought back for an appointment at court, and the major part of his force may have been disbanded, or incorporated into the command of the General Who Crosses the Liao.

In 98, the Shanyu Shizi died, after a reign of four years, and was succeeded by the Wanshi shizhu di Shanyu Tan, son of the former Shanyu Chang. The war with Fenghou continued, and the renegade was affected not only by the raiding from the south but probably more seriously by the pressure and aggression of the Xianbi tribesmen from the east. He and his people retreated steadily towards the west, and they were increasingly impoverished and distressed. In 104 Fenghou asked for terms and peace as a tributary, but Emperor He was not prepared to accept. He sent generous gifts in return, but he did not send any envoy to continue negotiations.
Despite Fenghou's difficulties, the situation in the north was hardly satisfactory. The essential problem was that the Chinese had been unable to decide what policy to follow in the aftermath of Dou Xian's great victories. They had toyed with the idea of maintaining two separate Xiongnu States, then they had hoped that the Southern Shanyu might be restored to his kingdom in the steppe, but that was evidently too dangerous, and so they had attempted to have the Southern Shanyu govern both his own people and his former enemies while still under Chinese tutelage. To this cumbersome, tense and unpopular situation there was added the misfortune of a rivalry between the new Shanyu Anguo and his cousin Shizi, compounded by the clumsy manoeuvres of the local Chinese officials. Among all these politicking and personal quarrels, the Chinese had lost sight of their chief objective: to establish an agreeable government to control the Xiongnu in the north. As a result, they lost control of the political situation and within a few years of an apparent triumph they had produced a state of uncertainty and confusion once more along the borders.

The worst, however, was yet to come. The weakness of Fenghou and the discontent of the Xiongnu could no longer be regarded in isolation. From the east, there came other barbarians to seize the opportunities offered by the power vacuum, and at the same time, the signs of weakness within the empire encouraged the reluctant vassals of Han to seek relief from their masters.
The rebellions of the Xiongnu:

Emperor He died in the winter of 105-106, the last month of the Chinese year and the beginning of the Western year. Control of the government was taken by his Empress-Dowager nee Deng, first on behalf of Emperor He's son, Emperor Shang, who died as an infant in the following autumn, and then for her own nominee, Emperor An. The rebel Shanyu Fenghou had sent another embassy to the frontier at Dunhuang commandery in 105, asking again for terms of surrender and offering a hostage, and indeed apologising for the meagre value of the tribute that he could offer from his impoverished people. Once again, however, the new government rejected the possibility of negotiations, and Fenghou evidently withdrew for the time beyond the range of Chinese concern. In the next few years, there were other things to interest the court of Han.

In the summer of 107 there broke out the first great rebellion of the Qiang, north and south of the Wei River and west across the Yellow River. It began with a mutiny among conscript tribesmen sent to the Western Regions, but it spread across the whole of Liang province, and at various times the forces of the rebels threatened the old capital at Changan. With this evidence of imperial weakness and difficulty, even the subjected Southern Shanyu was stirred by ambition.

According to the Annals and the Treatise of the Five Elements, there were rain and floods year after year in China at this time,
and in the summer of 109 a Chinese renegade named Han Zong urged the Shanyu that he should take advantage of the Chinese distress to seek his independence. The Shanyu followed his suggestion, and laid siege to the headquarters of the Emissary Geng Chong at Meiji. Geng Chong held out against the attack, but the Chinese position was evidently weakened by the death of the General Who Crosses the Liao Wang Biao, and his army was unable to deal with the rebellion. By the autumn, in fact, a combined force of rebel Xiongnu, Wuhuan from Yanmen commandery and Xianbi from beyond the frontier had joined to attack Wuyuan, and the local troops under the Grand Administrator were heavily defeated.

By winter, the rebels controlled a large area of the northern commanderies about the Yellow River, and the imperial government, despite the distractions of the fighting with the Qiang, found itself compelled to authorise the despatch of twenty thousand men, under the command of the minister He Xi acting as General of Chariots and Cavalry, and containing professional soldiers from the capital as well as local Chinese militia. This force, however, took some time to collect, and the first operations against the rebel Xiongnu were undertaken by the Grand Administrator of the northeastern commandery of Liaodong with the aid of Xianbi auxiliaries. They achieved some success, but in the spring of 110 the Xiongnu were nevertheless strong enough to raid Changshan and Zhongshan, east of the Taihang Mountains.
The main body of the imperial army under He Xi proceeded slowly to the north and to the relief of these territories, while the brunt of the fighting was borne by Geng Kui and then by Liang Qin, last Protector-General of the Western Regions, who had fought his way back against the Qiang rebels and was now sent in haste to the north, with another eight thousand men. In a series of engagements Geng Kui and Liang Qin defeated detachments of the Xiongnu forces and relieved the siege of Meiji. The army under He Xi re-occupied Manbo in Wuyuan, but was stricken by sickness, of which He Xi himself died, and numbers of Geng Kui's Xianbi auxiliaries abandoned him when a disease broke out among their horses. Finally, however, a combined force led by He Xi's second-in-command Pang Xiong, Liang Qin, and the Emissary Geng Chong, with sixteen thousand infantry and cavalry, was brought south to invest the Shanyu in the place of his retreat among the Hu Marshes, near Shenmu in northern Shaanxi. In the third month of 110, the Shanyu Tan, apparently overwhelmed by the numerical resources of the Chinese, came to kowtow and begged to surrender. His request was granted.

The whole campaign, of course, had placed a considerable strain on the Han government, at a time when the situation of the Qiang uprising was already serious. It is a measure of the Chinese anxiety for a settlement in the north that no penalty appears to have been visited upon the Shanyu or any of his followers. It was evidently hoped that the demonstration of power in the previous campaigns had been sufficient, and that a warning for the future would be enough to
secure quiet for the present. So, indeed, it proved: the Southern Xiongnu remained at peace with Han for more than ten years. By 115 the Chinese had gained the initiative in the fight with the Qiang, and their final victory was celebrated in 118.

It is noticeable, however, that the rebellion of the Southern Xiongnu in 109-110 was accompanied by very limited co-operation with the Qiang. At the time of Shanyu Tan's surrender, he apparently handed back to the Han forces a number of Chinese who had been captured by the Qiang and had been sold to the Xiongnu; this, however, is the only reference to contact between the two groups of rebels. The Qiang had at that time a leader, Dianlian, who had proclaimed himself as emperor in 108, and had established his capital at Lingzhou, near Yinchuan in present-day Ningxia. In the closing stages of the Qiang wars, Lingzhou was attacked by Chinese troops and Xiongnu auxiliaries under the command of the General Who Crosses the Liao, so the Ordos Desert to the north was not an impassable barrier. It appears, however, that the Qiang and the Xiongnu, even when they were both fighting the Chinese, found no advantage in joint operations: the Qiang were chiefly involved with the Wei valley on the south, while the ambitions of the Xiongnu lay essentially with the frontier territories of the Ordos. It is likely, moreover, that the Shanyu and his people had little interest in the less cultivated tribespeople of the Qiang and their pretender emperor. Fortunately for Han, the two rebellions kept themselves apart, and they could, with some effort, be defeated separately.
In 114 a cousin of the empress-dowager, Deng Zun, became General Who Crosses the Liao, and for the first time the qualifying prefix xing "acting", was dropped from the title of that office. In 118, at the same time as the last campaigns against the Qiang, the rebel Shanyu Fenghou came to the Shuofang frontier and surrendered unconditionally to China.

Since Fenghou's unsuccessful approaches to the Han government in 104 and 105, he had not been noticed by the Chinese chroniclers, but it appears now that in the intervening years the territory where he had sought to maintain himself in Mongolia had been steadily encroached upon by the Xianbi, and Fenghou was unable to maintain himself against them. He escaped from the ruin of his independent kingdom with little more than a hundred horsemen, and the people that had formerly been his subjects now numbered themselves among the tribes of the Xianbi. On Deng Zun's recommendation, Fenghou and his companions were resettled in Yingchuan commandery, now part of Henan province. They were presumably introduced there to the principles of agriculture in exchange for the wandering pastoral life that they had known in the past. They are not referred to again. 11

Though the growing power of the Xianbi in the open steppe had brought the end of Fenghou's separatist movement, the Xianbi themselves were rather more aggressive and unfriendly neighbours than those remnants of Xiongnu power. By the early 120s, raiding parties of Xianbi were pressing against imperial territory, and becoming a cause of uncertainty and unrest among the Xiongnu.
The General Who Crosses the Liao Deng Zun was dismissed in 121, amidst the general disgrace of his family at the hands of Emperor An after the death of the Empress-Dowager had freed him from her overbearing supervision and the influence of her relatives. Deng Zun was succeeded by Geng Kui.

To deal with the Xianbi raids, Geng Kui recruited Xiongnu who had come for surrender and refuge along the borders, and in co-operation with the Xiongnu king Huyouhui he defended the frontiers with a mobile reserve and occasional punitive raids.

In 124 the Shanyu Tan died, after a reign of twenty-seven years, and he was succeeded by his younger brother Ba. About the same time Geng Kui left office. Soon afterwards there was a mutiny among the conscript Xiongnu, which was led by the chieftain Azu. They seized Huyouhui and insisted that he join them, but Huyouhui declared his loyalty to his overlords of Han. Azu and his people attempted to flee north through the frontier, but they were chased and caught by troops commanded by the Emissary Ma Yi, great numbers of them were killed, and none of them appear to have made their escape.

The Shanyu Ba died in 128, and was succeeded by his younger brother Xiuli. For more than twelve years, until the last months of Xiuli's reign, there were no further major disturbances among the Xiongnu.
The coming of the Xianbi and the wars of Qizhijian 121-133:

In the historical tradition of China, the Xianbi people are barely noticed until the time of Later Han. They were, apparently, a people of similar origin and customs to the Wuhuan, and they were joined with the Wuhuan in the kingdom of the Eastern Hu, whose leader was killed and state destroyed by the great Modun, founder of the Xiongnu empire in the late third and early second century BC. After that massive defeat, the Xianbi evidently took refuge in the mountain and forest country of the northern part of the Great Xingan range on the border of the present-day Mongolia and Manchuria, and it is said that the name Xianbi came from one of the peaks of that region.\(^{12}\)

During the Former Han period, there is no mention of the Xianbi people in the records of the dynasty. Imperial dealings with the non-Chinese people of that region were concerned only with the Wuhuan, who lived south of the Xianbi homeland, and with the various tribal kingdoms of Manchuria and northern Korea such as the Mo and Hui, Fuyu and the rising power of Koguryŏ (Gaogouli).\(^{13}\) It is not until the time of Emperor Guangwu that we have the first specific reference to the Xianbi as a people on the frontiers of the empire.

At the beginning of Later Han, during the troubles with the unified Xiongnu under the Shanyu Yu, the Xianbi, like the Wuhuan, had been involved with raiding of the Chinese border commanderies to the northeast, and the centre of Xianbi attention was the commandery of Liaodong, in the southern part of Manchuria, with its capital at
Xianping, in the valley of the Liao north of modern Yingkou in Liaoning. In 41 the government of Emperor Guangwu appointed Zhai Tong, younger cousin of Zhai Zun, one of the emperor's earliest supporters, as Grand Administrator. In 45, Zhai Tong inflicted a major defeat on the Xianbi raiders, causing them heavy losses, and preventing them for the time being from contemplating further incursions into his territory.

In 49, moreover, when the division between the Northern and Southern Xiongnu had been confirmed by the surrender of the Southern Shanyu to Han, Zhai Tong was able to arrange with the Xianbi chieftain Bianhe for the recruitment of Xianbi as raiders against the Northern Xiongnu, and the Han administration paid a bounty for the head of each Xiongnu that the Xianbi brought to them. In 54, two chieftains of the Xianbi, Yuchouben and Mantou, who came bearing tribute to the Han court, were granted seals as king and marquis respectively, and in 58, when the Wuhuan of Shanggu commandery were raiding along the frontier, Bianhe attacked them, destroyed their forces and killed their leader, and brought the head to Zhai Tong in Liaodong. From this time on, for the next thirty years, the Chinese administrators on the frontier had no military difficulties with the Xianbi, and the office of the Colonel Protector of the Wuhuan was made responsible also for political relations with the Xianbi.

The situation in the northeast, however, was not quite so satisfactory as this record would imply. Firstly, the Account of the
Xianbi remarks that during this period of peace the two provinces of Qing and Xu, both of which were on the plain south of the frontier You province, were responsible for annual payment of the sum of 270 million cash to the Xianbi.\(^\text{16}\) This is a very considerable amount, more than two and a half times the annual subsidy to all Southern Xiongnu, and it seems quite out of proportion to the rest of the picture provided by the histories of the threat and inconvenience offered by the Xianbi. Interestingly, it was evidently raised from a specifically local tax on the two provinces to ensure the protection of the frontier region immediately on their north, and unlike the payments to the Southern Xiongnu or the subsidies to various states of the Western Regions later in the dynasty, they do not appear to have been arranged as a direct charge on the general revenue of the imperial treasury. It is possible that the money represents commutation for military service by the people of the settled provinces, who might otherwise have been conscripted for garrison duties and service on the frontier. There is, again, no information on how long the financial arrangement remained in operation, and whether the Xianbi received this wealth as reward for their attacks on the Xiongnu or merely for keeping the peace with China. For some years, however, it was obviously a major source of profit to the barbarians, and it reflects both the importance of their military power and their cost to the Chinese economy.\(^\text{17}\)

Besides this question of subsidy, it is also clear that the Xianbi people, though content with their official role as allies of
the Chinese against the Xiongnu and occasional rebel Wuhuan, were well prepared to maintain the attacks on account of their own ambitions. For one reason or another, their expansion and raiding into Liaodong had been halted by the energies of Zhai Tong, but the Xianbi tribes were now established in the mountains of the Nuluerhu range and the headquarters of the Daling River, the rugged country northwest of the Gulf of Liaodong near the borders of present-day Liaoning province with Hebei. During the years of Wuhuan weakness, the Xianbi had moved south into their former territories, and they now dominated the region beyond the imperial frontiers in the northeast, and the transition country between the mountain forests and the Mongolian steppe further to the north and west.

In the early years of the Later Han period, though the Wuhuan had shown some strength as enemies of China, it appears that the Xianbi pressing behind them were more powerful. In the settlement of the late 40s and early 50s, after the division of the Xiongnu, several groups of the Wuhuan were accepted within the Chinese frontier commanderies and allowed to settle along the borders. To the north of the Wuhuan, however, the Xianbi evidently maintained their pressure on grazing lands, and even the imperial frontier was moved south to accommodate them.

During Former Han, the territory of the empire had included the upper valley of the Luan River, the area about present-day Chengde in Hebei. Several prefectures of Youbeiping and Yuyang commanderies were
set in this region, but by the second century AD, the time of the
census recorded for Later Han about 140, they had all been abandoned,
and the frontier line was essentially that of the modern Great Wall of
the Ming dynasty. In similar fashion, the hill country of the upper
Daling River had been controlled by counties of Liaoxi commandery
under Former Han: in the Later Han period, the hold of the empire
upon this region declined, and during the second century AD such
administrative centres as remained were no longer organised as regular
counties, but as dao marches under the Dependent State of Liaodong.
Though administration by marches and dependent states was officially
established to enable the assimilation and improved control of
surrendered barbarians, in this area of the northeast it seems evident
that it reflected a decline of imperial authority, not its
expansion.\(18\)

The Xianbi however, were not yet interested in testing the
military defences of the Chinese frontier. At least for the time,
they had been bought off, and the prospects of plunder and conquest
against the weakened Xiongnu of the Mongolian steppe were evidently
tempting and satisfying. In a development largely unrecorded by the
Chinese historians, the Xianbi tribes expanded their control from the
mountains and the steppe borderland westwards across the Mongolian
plateau.

In 87, the Xianbi achieved their celebrated victory over the
Northern Xiongnu, when they defeated the Shanyu's own army and took
the ruler's skin as a trophy. Almost certainly, this victory must have been followed by a consolidation of Xianbi presence in the steppe, and it is very likely that by about this time their people had taken over the greater part of eastern Mongolia. The campaigns of Dou Xian which followed, and which destroyed the power of the Northern Shanyu, were concentrated in the western half of Mongolia, and the remnants of the Northern Xiongnu, under the last of the Northern Shanyu and also in the time of Fenghou in the early second century, were found in the west of Mongolia, near the borders with the Western Regions. We are told that the former followers of the Northern Shanyu in the late 80s and early 90s called themselves Xianbi, and the same is said of the former followers of Fenghou at the time of his surrender in 118. To all intents and purposes, by the 120s, the Xianbi dominated the whole region of Mongolia.

In 94, the Xianbi chieftain Subahui had accompanied the Colonel Protector of the Wuhuan Ren Shang in the pursuit of Fenghou, and he was rewarded for his services by the grant of the title King Who Leads His People. This, however, was the last occasion of full Xianbi co-operation with the government of Han: in 97 there is recorded the first of a series of raids against the northern commanderies. In the autumn, the Xianbi attacked the territory of Liaodong commandery and also, further west, the frontier county of Feiru in Liaoxi, now close to the line of the Ming Great Wall west of Shanhaiguan. In Liaodong, the local troops were defeated by the raiders, and the Grand Administrator Zhai Can, son of the former Grand Administrator Zhai Tong, was
punished and died in jail for his failure in the battle-field.\textsuperscript{21}

From this time on, the pressure of Xianbi raiding spread westwards along the frontier of the empire. In the winter of 101/102 the Xianbi plundered Youbeiping and then entered Yuyang, where they were defeated by the Grand Administrator and the local commandery forces. In the summer of 106, however, a second attack on Yuyang resulted in the utter defeat of the local troops and the death in battle of the Grand Administrator Zhang Xian.\textsuperscript{22}

Though the Xianbi were thus a potential threat to the northern frontier, they were not organised or consistent in their hostility. In the early years of the reign of Emperor An, for example, even at the time of the great Qiang rebellion which broke out in 107, the Xianbi chieftain named Yanliyang brought tribute to the imperial court. He was awarded the seal of a king, and took up residence in the neighbourhood of Ning prefecture in Shanggu, the headquarters of the Colonel Protector of the Wuhuan and the official market centre for trade with the northeastern barbarians. It is said that 120 groups of the Xianbi sent hostages to Ning, and two hostel quarters were constructed for them to live in.\textsuperscript{23}

The Account of the Xianbi remarks at this point that hereafter there were occasions when the Xianbi assisted China against other barbarians, and there were also occasions when numbers of them caused trouble.
One may observe, indeed, that Yanliyang and his colleagues, with their 120 groups, did not represent a great number of people. The government emphasis on the new arrangements at Ning may be seen partly as propaganda, to encourage further tribute from other groups, and partly as recognition of the established importance of the Xianbi and the need for an effective administration to deal with them. In reality, this small and perhaps nominal surrender of Yanliyang marks the beginning of the period when the Xianbi people took a position of leadership as enemies of Han.

It is, on the other hand, remarkable that the Xianbi, like the Xiongnu, made small attempt to take advantage of the embarrassment and difficulty faced by the Han government forces during the time of the first great Qiang rebellion between 107 and 118. In the autumn of 109, during the brief rebellion of the Southern Shanyu, some Xianbi joined the attack on Wuyuan, but there were others who assisted the imperial forces against the Xiongnu. After the surrender of the Shanyu Tan in 110, there was no further recorded disturbance from the Xianbi in the west for several years.

In 115, there was renewed raiding on the eastern end of the Xianbi frontier, first against the county of Wulü in Liaodong, now close to Beizhen in Liaoning, and then against Fuli in the Liaodong Dependent State. Two years later, however, in the summer of 117, when another group of raiders broke through the Chinese defences in Liaoxi commandery, they were driven back by auxiliaries under the Wuhuan
leader Yuzhiju, were heavily defeated and suffered losses of cattle, horses and other treasures.

In the autumn of 118 there was a major attack by the Xianbi against the frontiers of Dai commandery. The raiders entered Chinese territory, killed many of the officials and people and retired with plunder. Levies were raised along the border, and reinforcements were brought northward from the camp at Liyang to prepare against further attacks, but in the same winter the Xianbi made another raid, this time into the neighbouring Shanggu commandery. They traversed the whole territory of Shanggu as far as the Juyong Pass, and the Chinese defence forces, which had again proven to be of limited effectiveness, were strengthened once more.

In the autumn of the following year there was another attack, against the county of Macheng in Dai commandery, near the headquarters of the Colonel Protector of the Wuhuan at Ning in Shanggu. This time, however, the Chinese were able to put a far more adequate force into the field, including three thousand bowman scouts under the General Who Crosses the Liao Deng Zun, cavalry of the Southern Xiongnu under the orders of the Emissary Ma Xu, and horsemen and footsoldiers from the commanderies of Liaoxi and Youbeiping. The Xianbi were caught and defeated in the field and the Chinese pursuit followed them beyond the frontiers, returning once again with booty from the fleeing enemy.
The frontier campaigns of 117/118 and 119, however, fortunately for the Chinese, had come at the time when the Qiang rebellion was ending in the west and troops could be made available for defence in the north. For the Xianbi, on the other hand, 118 was the year in which the unfortunate Xiongnu leader Fenghou confessed his defeat in the open territory of Mongolia and asked for refuge within China. The Xianbi now controlled the whole region beyond the Han imperial frontiers on the north, and the raids against Dai and Shanggu may be seen as a reflection of energy turned to possible expansion and profit in the south.

In the winter at the beginning of 121, the chieftains Wulun and Qizhijian, leaders of the Xianbi from the region of Liaoxi commandery, came to Deng Zun with tribute. By imperial decree they were granted titles as King Who Leads His People and Marquis Who Leads His People, and were given presents of silk. The submission, however, was very shortlived, and Qizhijian became notorious as a war-leader of the Xianbi for more than ten years.25

In the summer of 121 there was an incursion into Liaodong by Xianbi in alliance with the Hui and Mo people of the north and east, and the Grand Administrator Cai Feng died in battle against them. A few months later, however, in the autumn, there developed a far more serious campaign further west, led by Qizhijian. Within a few weeks the Xianbi had raided across Shanggu once more to the Juyong Pass, defeated the commandery troops of Yunzhong and killed the Grand
Administrator Cheng Yan, and besieged the Colonel Protector of the Wuhuan, Xu Chang, in the city of Macheng.

Once again, a large Chinese army had to be raised for defence. Geng Kui, the new General Who Crosses the Liao, combining forces with the provincial troops of You province under the Inspector Pang Can attacked the besiegers on two flanks and relieved Macheng, with assistance from a sortie by Xu Chang. The Xianbi, however, were driven off but not defeated; from this time on we are told that their aggressiveness continually increased, and that their forces numbered tens of thousands of mounted archers. Their raids along the frontier were a continual threat. 26

In the winter of 122-123 the Xianbi raided Yanmen and Dingxiang commanderies, and reached south as far as Taiyuan, in the upper valley of the Fen River. In the winter of 123-124, Qizhijian himself led an attack on the territory of the Southern Xiongnu. In a battle at Manbo he killed the Yujian Rizhu King and more than a thousand other enemies. In the following autumn, a raid on Gaoliu in Dai commandery was accompanied by a further campaign against the Xiongnu, this time defeating and killing the Zhanjiang King. 27

It was following these defeats, and no doubt other minor engagements along the frontier, that the mutiny of the Xiongnu auxiliaries broke out in 124. 28 Moreover, after the death of the Zhanjiang King the Southern Shanyu was sufficiently concerned that he
wrote to the Han court asking for proper restoration of the frontier posts and further recruitment of garrison troops. No action was taken in the following year, which indeed was comparatively quiet, but in 126 the government of the new Emperor Shun was faced with another series of raids: in the autumn the Xianbi under Qizhijian broke into Dai commandery and killed the Grand Administrator, and two months later there was another, lesser incursion along the frontier. Probably with the advice of the new General Who Crosses the Liao Pang, who had acquired considerable experience in action against the Qiang and Xianbi, there was now a strengthening of defences in the north. The imperial edict was issued on 14 November, 126.

The Liyang camp, which had formerly been established in the county of that name in Wei commandery, was now transferred to a new location on the northern borders of Zhongshan. This move put the recruiting and training base in the territory of Guangcheng county, just south of the Feihu Pass, and the troops stationed there were evidently intended for employment as a mobile reserve: from the Feihu Pass they could march north directly across the Sanggan River through Dai commandery, or alternatively they could follow the Feihu Road northeast to Shanggu and join the defence of the Juyong Pass against raiding attack from the north.

As a corollary to this move, moreover, all the border defences and fortifications in the north were re-established and strengthened, and the Inspector of You province was given orders to increase the
military levies in the commanderies under his supervision and to reinforce the frontier posts. To aid in the program, instructors were sent from the professional regiments of the Northern Army at Luoyang to train militia recruits of each commandery in the skills of fighting with the cross-bow.

A few months later, in the spring of 127, a force of ten thousand Xiongnu, supervised by an Attendant Official under the Emissary Zhang Guo, was sent through the frontier on a punitive expedition against the Xianbi. They defeated a group of the enemy and returned with captured treasure. It appears for the time being that the raiders were discouraged from direct attacks against the new defences of Dai and Shanggu, but in the autumn of 128 there was a raid on Yuyang commandery, and in the winter at the end of 129 they struck as far west as Shuofang.

In the early 130s, however, the chief activity of the Xianbi was directed against the Chinese commanderies of the northeast. They had continued to cause trouble in Liaodong and Xuantu commanderies of present-day Manchuria, with raids there in 124 and 127, and after the preliminary attack on Yuyang in 128 there developed, from 131, a two-year border war in this region between the Xianbi on the one hand and the Chinese with major support from the Wuhuan on the other. Since we have been told that Qizhijian himself came from the frontiers of Liaoxi, and the Chinese texts ascribe him a major role of leadership, it is reasonable to assume that he was closely involved in the attacks
which spread from Yuyang eastwards to the Dependent State of Liaodong. He was opposed, however, by Wuhuan forces under leaders such as Fushuguan and Rongzhuhui, who were consistent allies of China against the Xianbi and were rewarded with generous gifts and titles. Geng Ye, the Colonel Protector of the Wuhuan, who was primarily responsible for the political and diplomatic arrangements which maintained the support of those most useful allies, moved his headquarters for a time to Wulü in Liaodong in order to supervise the defences in that region and also, no doubt, to establish a similar pattern of alliances from tribal auxiliaries against the pressure of the enemy.

In 133, another punitive expedition of the Southern Xiongnu was sent against the Xianbi in the region of Dai commandery, but in the autumn of that year there was a return raid which reached Macheng. The commandery troops attacked the enemy, but without success.

This incident, however, was apparently the last important occasion for many years that the Xianbi troubled the Chinese borders. The Account of the Xianbi remarks simply that Qizhijian died soon afterwards, and the number of raids therefore declined. The history itself mentions next only the major incursion, thirteen years later, in 145, once more against Dai commandery, and again nothing further until the time of the great Tanshihuai in the latter 150s. The Chinese continued to have difficulties on the frontier, but their enemies were once again disunited and unco-ordinated in their attacks,
and the empire was faced rather with a constant, troublesome irritation than with the threat of a major offensive and loss of territory.

It is quite obvious, however, that the triumph of Dou Xian and the destruction of the Northern Xiongnu had brought no long-term peace to the northern frontier. The Xianbi had taken over the position of the Xiongnu in the Mongolian steppe, and they played the same role as their predecessors along the frontier. While the raiding attacks of the Xianbi led by Qizhijian were not such a serious threat to the empire as the incursions of the Xiongnu a hundred years earlier, in the time of Emperor Guangwu and the Shanyu Yu, they nevertheless put all the northern commanderies under threat and they weakened the hold of the Chinese settlers on this marginal territory.

It is noticeable, in fact, that the imperial government was finding the non-Chinese auxiliaries, whether Wuhuan or Xiongnu, of continual importance in defence planning. The camp of the General Who Crosses the Liao was maintained in Wuyuan commandery now primarily as a defence post against the Xianbi, and the Liyang base had been moved to the north to assist in dealing with the pressure on Dai and Shanggu commanderies, but the chronicles of the time refer again and again to campaigns carried out by non-Chinese troops. The local levies of the commanderies were called out only too often, but there were many occasions when the strength of the invaders was too great for them, and the deaths of grand administrators and other officials are
recorded with a sad frequency. To a very large extent, the Chinese control of the northern frontiers of the empire was now a question of bargaining and diplomacy, with one group of barbarians used to deal with another.

The essential and basic difficulty was the weakness of the Chinese physical presence in these northern regions. In the aftermath of the wars against the Xianbi under Qizhijian, the census figures of Later Han, dealing with the period about 140, demonstrate the lack of registered civilian population in the border commanderies. We have discussed already the drastic decline of population in the area of Bing province, where the Southern Xiongnu had settled in the time of Emperor Guangwu, and the similar reduction in the commanderies of Dai and Shanggu, in the western part of You province. Further to the east, it is not possible to make effective comparisons of population between Former and Later Han census figures for the commanderies of Yuyang, Youbeiping, Liaoxi, Liaodong or the Dependent State of Liaodong; in Liaoxi, Liaodong and the Dependent State, population figures are either missing or of questionable validity, and in all of the area there were considerable internal boundary changes. In general terms we have noted the loss of territory on the frontier of Youbeiping commandery, and one can observe also a considerable retreat of settlement from the northernmost regions to the more secure areas in the south of Yuyang and the territory of Guangyang commandery, immediately below the Juyong Pass.
In the frontier territory of You Province, to the north of the great plain, however, the Chinese presence at the middle of the second century was still reasonably maintained, and the non-Chinese remained fairly well under control. It was in Bing province that the situation had become critical, and the facade of imperial authority was almost gone.

**The Chinese withdrawals:**

In the summer of 140, the fourth Chinese month of the fifth year of the reign period Yonghe of Emperor Shun, there was a rebellion among the Xiongnu led by the chieftains Wusi and Cheniu, of the Goulong clan. Their territory was based in the left, or eastern part of the state, presumably in the area of Yunzhong and Dingxiang commanderies near present-day Togtoh. At first, their combined forces numbered only some three thousand horsemen, but they began their activities with raids against Xihe commandery, and they very soon persuaded the Worthy King of the Right, a close relative of the Southern Shanyu with authority in the region of Shuofang commandery, that he should join them. Within a few weeks, the rebels were strong enough to send an army of almost eight thousand men against the Emissary's headquarters and the Shanyu's court at Meiji, while others of their forces attacked the Chinese positions in Shuofang and in Dai commandery.

Ma Xu, General Who Crosses the Liao, and the Emissary Liang Bing raised garrison troops and local levies to attack them. The loyalist
forces were strengthened by Wuhuan and Xianbi auxiliaries under the Colonel Protector of the Wuhuan, Wang Yuan, and also by Qiang forces from the south. Altogether there were more than twenty thousand men, and Wusi and Cheniu were compelled to retreat before them. They did not, however, surrender, and they remained at large, raiding and plundering the countryside.36

This first outbreak had been checked by the end of the fifth month of the Chinese year, but the situation soon became more serious. South of the Ordos, in the sixth month, there was an attack by the Judong tribe of the Qiang against the commanderies about Changan. The unrest among the Qiang had first developed on the Jincheng frontier, but the speed of its spread through the Wei valley to the east very probably owed something to the example of the Xiongnu and the conscription which had accompanied the Chinese defence. Very soon, the imperial government was compelled to establish defence works and camps in an attempt to cope with a rapidly deteriorating situation in Liang province.37

In these circumstances, there were few resources to spare for the disorders in the north, and the situation was now made more serious by the mistaken arrogance of the Chinese Emissary Chen Qui.

After the first success against Wusi and Cheniu an imperial edict had been sent to rebuke the Southern Shanyu Xiuli for his failure to maintain order among his subjects. The elderly Shanyu had no wish for
rebellion and disturbance, and he attended in humble fashion to apologise to the Emissary Liang Bing. Soon afterwards, however, Liang Bing left office because of illness, and his replacement, Chen Gui, a former Grand Administrator of Wuyuan, bullied and threatened the Shanyu. He was presumably attempting to force the Xiongnu leadership into a more active role against the rebels, but the Shanyu himself was squeezed between the demands of the Chinese and the real weakness and lack of authority in his own position. Under the oppression of Chen Gui, both he and his brother, the Worthy King of the Left, committed suicide. 38

With this sad result, the leadership of the Xiongnu had fallen into limbo. The Worthy King of the Left had been titular successor to the Shanyu, and for the time being there appeared no male of the younger generation who was prepared to take the title under Chinese tutelage. The circumstances of the Shanyu Xiuli's death, in the hands of his Chinese overlords, exposed the whole weakness of the puppet government and removed much of the remaining sense of fealty which had held the Xiongnu in the chain of authority. Chen Gui now sought to bring the members of the Shanyu's family south into the security of the inner commanderies, but the unrest only spread the wider, and Chen Gui himself was summoned to answer charges, found guilty for his cruelty and, worse, his failure of policy, and was sentenced to prison. 39
During the autumn, the Chinese authorities attempted to negotiate a settlement. With the authority of the General in Chief Liang Shang, father of the Empress and the most powerful official at the court, the General Who Crosses the Liao Ma Xu was encouraged to fortify and prepare strategic defence positions, to avoid combat with the rebels in pitched battle, and to encourage them to surrender with gifts and promises. Ma Xu's negotiations bore some fruit, and the Worthy King of the Right, Yiti, with thirteen thousand followers, came to submit and make peace.

In fact, however, this surrender was of only marginal value. As Worthy King of the Right, Yiti was a representative of the former Shanyu's family, and from the beginning he had been a somewhat reluctant associate of Wusi and Cheniu. The number of his followers was no longer a significant part of the forces that they now controlled, and his defection left the rebels free to choose their own leader. In the ninth month, Wusi proclaimed his colleague Cheniu as Shanyu, and the rebel government sought alliances and support from the Qiang in the south and the Wuhuan of the east.

Wusi himself was clearly the real leader of the rebels, and his energies at this time were accompanied by quick success. The Xiongnu forces drove southwards towards the valley of the Wei, defeated the local troops of Shang commandery, killing the Chief Commandant and his second-in-command, and attacked the Tiger Tooth Camp in Jingzhao, very close to Changan. They then retired, but the Xiongnu people
Map 9: The Chinese Withdrawals 140-141
throughout the north rallied to the rebel cause, and we are told that the raiding extended not only through Bing province and into Liang and You, but also to Ji province, across the Taihang Mountains and into the plain to the east.

On 28 October 140, the last day of the ninth month of the Chinese year, an imperial edict ordered the withdrawal of the capital of Xihe commandery from Pingding to Lishi, the administration of Shang commandery from its capital at Fushi to Xiayang in Zuopingyi, and the headquarters of Shuofang commandery was shifted to Jiuyuan, the chief county of Wuyuan.40 Twelve months later, in the winter of 141, the capitals of Beidi and Anding commanderies were also moved south to the comparative security of the Wei valley.41

At the time of the first Qiang rebellion, when rebel tribesmen were driving east across the Yellow River to raid the territory of present-day Shanxi, the capitals of Shang, Beidi and Anding had been shifted to the south, though they were restored in the settlement period of the 120s.42 This second transfer of Beidi and Anding was also related to the rebellion of the Qiang and their defeat of the Chinese general Ma Xian;43 but the abandonment of Lishi in Xihe and of Fushi in Shang represented the collapse of the Chinese civilian administrative presence in the north. The whole northern region within the Ordos loop of the Yellow River was now occupied by the Xiongnu, and the forms of Chinese government were restricted to the confines of the Wei valley in the south, the rump of Xihe commandery
in the east, and the remnants of Shuofang and Wuyuan commanderies, combined in a single centre and guarded by the military defences of the neighbouring garrison camp under the General Who Crosses the Liao. Further to the northeast, Yunzhong, Yanmen, Dingxian and Dai commanderies continued in occupation, but from this time on there was no further attempt to maintain the facade of regular imperial government over the western part of Bing province. The relationship between the Chinese and the Xiongnu in this region was now once again a matter of military power.

In those terms, the Chinese counter-attack was comparatively successful. In the winter of 140/41, the Emissary Zhang Dan led a combined force of local troops and Wuhuan auxiliaries from You province and defeated the Xiongnu in battle at Mayi county in Yanmen, now Shuoxian in northern Shanxi, on the upper reaches of the Hun River. They killed great numbers of the enemy, captured quantities of military equipment, cattle and sheep, and received the surrender of Shanyu Cheniu and his leading followers.

With this battle, the Xiongnu attempt at an independent state was ended, though Wusi with some of his personal following escaped and continued his raiding. He was joined for a time by dissident Wuhuan, but in the spring of 141 his forces were defeated by the General Who Crosses the Liao Ma Xu, commanding five thousand Xianbi horsemen, in a skirmish at Guluo city in the Ordos, near Meiji in Xihe. At the same time, Zhang Dan and his troops defeated Wusi's Wuhuan allies at
Tongtian Mountain, killed their leaders, seized their cattle and other goods, and freed the Chinese captives they had been holding.46

Despite these losses, Wusi remained at large and kept his association with the Wuhuan. In 142 he was responsible for further raiding in Bing province, and his career as an enemy of Han was ended only in the winter at the end of the following year, when the Emissary Ma Shi had an agent in the rebel camp kill him. Such treacherous assassination was not an uncommon policy of Chinese leaders in dealing with rebel groups: Wusi's head was sent in triumph to the capital, and in 144 Ma Shi sent a mopping up operation against the remainder of his followers. After a short fight, in which he took 1200 heads, he received the surrender of more than seven hundred thousand Wuhuan and other barbarians, with innumerable baggage, cattle and sheep.

Even before these final victories, the Han court had begun an attempt to re-establish the authority of a loyal Shanyu in the north. The Xiongnu prince Toulouchu had been resident at the imperial capital, and had been given the special title of King Who Maintains Loyalty. We are not told what relation he was to any previous Shanyu, but his claim was presumably at least comparable to that of the rebel nominee Cheniu, and he was evidently not compromised like Yiti, the Worthy King of the Right, who would otherwise have been a more valid contender. In the summer of 143, on 24 July, Toulouchu was established as Hulanruo shizhujiu Shanyu, in a ceremony held in the presence of the emperor, where he was granted the official seal and
tassel, together with carriages, ornaments and swords of jade, and bales of silks, brocades and other cloth. ⁴⁷

A short time later, the new Shanyu was sent home to the north, escorted by a General of the Gentlemen of the Household bearing imperial credentials. As the cortege gathered outside the Guangyang Gate of Luoyang, the formal ceremony of farewell was attended by the hostage residents of all the vassal states, and there was a feast and presentations and games, with the emperor himself in attendance. ⁴⁸

Toulouchu remained in the north, under his Chinese supervisors, until his death in 147. He was succeeded by Jucheer, whose relationship with Toulouchu is not mentioned in the records, and who reigned for twenty-five years as Yiling shizhujiu Shanyu.

It was probably at this time that Chen Gui, the oppressive Emissary who had driven the Shanyu Xiuli to suicide, was appointed General Who Crosses the Liao. In a memorial to the government of the new young Emperor Huan, he proposed a lenient and reforming policy in the north and northwest, with tax reductions for Bing and Liang provinces to encourage reconstruction. For a time this was followed, and Chi Gui’s biography remarks that he had great respect and support among the people of the frontiers, and even the raiding of the Xianbi was reduced.
It is questionable, however, whether the restored Shanyu, or even the Han program of resettlement, were of any more than marginal significance. As far as ceremony and the appearance of respect was concerned, the Han government had attempted to confer upon Shanyu Toulouchu all the prestige that could reasonably be shown to a vassal ruler, and the court of the Shanyu was maintained in the north as before, with no rival leader of the Xiongnu to dispute his claim. Yet this appearance of settlement and acceptance very possibly indicates not so much a tacit approval among the people but rather a lack of interest in a position which was largely irrelevant.

It is uncertain how many people now considered themselves to owe any loyalty to the Shanyu of the Xiongnu, and it is quite disconcerting to contemplate the numbers of people who had been involved in the rebellions of the early 140s. In the beginning, for example, we are told that Wusi and Cheniu had a force of some three thousand horsemen; then they obtained the support of the Worthy King of the Right and their strength increased to seven or eight thousand. Later in the year, again, when the Worthy King of the Right surrendered once more to Han, he brought with him a following of some thirteen thousand people, presumably men, women and children. Admittedly at this time the Chinese troops and loyal auxiliaries commanded by Ma Xu, Liang Bing and Wang Yuan are said to have numbered more than twenty thousand men, but the figures for the Xiongnu rebels under Wusi and his fellows are remarkably small.
The Worthy King of the Right, for example, was the third chief-tain of the Xiongnu after the Shanyu himself: thirteen thousand people, with perhaps three or four thousand fighting men, seems a very small following. Fifty years earlier, for example, in the time of the campaigns of Dou Xian, the Southern Shanyu had been able to send two armies of ten thousand men each into the campaign beyond the frontiers, and soon after that the official figure for Xiongnu fighting men was given as more than fifty thousand.49

Moreover, even though the rebel Xiongnu were not in great numbers, it is evident that the unfortunate Shanyu Xiuli had few loyal troops to do anything effective against his enemies: the defeats inflicted upon Wusi were regularly achieved by Chinese and non-Xiongnu auxiliaries. And in the latter stages of his career, though Wusi himself evidently retained a personal following of Xiongnu, his greatest annoyance to Han came from his ability to attract the support of the Wuhuan and obtain some association with the Qiang. After Wusi's death, we are told that Ma Shi received the surrender of the remarkable number of seven hundred thousand Wuhuan, but there is no specific reference to any Xiongnu component in that defeated group.

In these circumstances, it appears that we are considering a changed situation in the north: not only has the civilian Chinese administration largely disappeared with the withdrawal of the commanderies, but at the same time the lines of authority in the Xiongnu state have been seriously weakened. Many of the Xiongnu,
as we know, had remained beyond the imperial frontier and had been absorbed among the expanding power of the Xianbi, and it is very probable that others had regularly made their escape, in small groups, to join them: even if the garrisons of the north had been able to maintain their vigilance against the problems and pressures of Xianbi raiding, there was always an opening along the Yellow River course to the west of the Ordos, which never appears to have been adequately supervised.

Yet even within the normal territory of the empire, in the steppe and desert of the Ordos region itself, it is likely that numbers of nomad people remained. It just happened that they were no longer under the effective control of the Shanyu or the other princes. The ambitions of Wusi and his colleagues, and the struggles for power and rebel warfare against the Chinese, meant little to them or nothing. On occasion some groups might be conscripted into service on one side or another, but for the most part they were untouched by the politics of the state to which their fathers had owed allegiance, and many could remain for years without any cause for concern beyond immediate problems of the group or the tribe. In effect, fifty years after the great triumph of northern conquest, and the re-unification of the Xiongnu state, the empire of the Shanyu was withering away, and the authority of China was maintained only by the threat and potential of military power called up for emergency.
The Chinese generals 155-169:

The defeat of Wusi was followed by a period of peace, almost an Indian summer, for more than ten years. In 155 there appeared the first stirrings of renewed trouble among the Xiongnu, when the two chieftains Taiji and Bode, old associates of Wusi, made a rebellion and attacked Meiji. They intended to seek alliance with the Qiang people in the south, and they had acquired some support there, but before the two rebel groups could make contact they were intercepted and frustrated in their plans by the energetic official Zhang Huan, Chief Commandant of Anding Dependent State.1

Zhang Huan was a man from Dunhuang commandery in the far northwest, born in the year 104. His father had been Grand Administrator of Hanyang, and he was himself a scholar of some distinction, but it was only in 155, at the age of fifty-one, and after a period of clerical service at the capital, that he was given his first substantive post in the border territory of Anding.
Zhang Huan and his small force of two hundred men found themselves between the two groups of rebels, Xiongnu and Qiang. Ignoring the pleas and warnings of his subordinates, he led out his troops to occupy the vantage points along the old Great Wall and he sent summons to the garrison troops in the defence positions further west, on the line of the Yellow River. Then he sent a detachment to occupy the city of Qiuci, in Shang commandery north of present-day Yulin in Shaanxi, and with these defence posts blocking the communications routes between north and south, he sent to the Qiang rebels calling on them to surrender.

Zhang Huan's men were spread very thin, and much of his position was based on bluff, but he had gained the initiative and he achieved remarkable success. The rebel Qiang did indeed surrender, and they joined an attack on the Xiongnu in the north. These in turn surrendered or fled, and peace was restored with a minimum expenditure of Chinese military resources. Zhang Huan himself established his reputation among the Qiang by refusing the tribute presents of gold and horses that they offered him; and he was known all his life as reliable and honourable patron of the non-Chinese peoples with whom he had dealings.

Zhang Huan was soon transferred to be General of the Gentlemen of the Household Emissary to the Xiongnu, and in the first period of his appointment he brought about the settlement of another rising, this time by the Wuhuan people of Shuofang, in combination with
Map 10: The Strategy of Zhang Huan 155
members of the Xiuchuge group of the Xiongnu; he faced them with
his troops without offering battle, then persuaded the Wuhuan by
diplomacy that they should change their allegiance and attack the
Xiongnu themselves, and he also arranged for the assassination of the
Xiuchuge leaders. Once again, a dangerous situation was settled
without fighting, by offering a show of strength, then playing upon
the potential for division and distrust between different groups of
barbarians.

In the winter of 158-159, there was a raid of the Xianbi along
the frontiers. Zhang Huan led troops of the Southern Shanyu to attack
them, and they took several hundred heads. In September 159, however,
the young Emperor Huan and his eunuch allies overthrew the General in
Chief Liang Ji, destroyed the power of his family, and proscribed his
followers and associates. Earlier in his career at the capital, Zhang
Huan had held a clerical post in the office of the General in Chief,
and he was therefore now proscribed from office as a former sub-
ordinate of the fallen minister. He received, however, no further
punishment, and retired to his home.

After four years banishment, Zhang Huan was recalled to office
and appointed Grand Administrator of Wuwei, where he acquired a most
favourable reputation for even-handed administration and for the
reform of non-Chinese customs; there was even a temple erected in his
honour. About 164, he was transferred to be General Who Crosses the
Liao, with chief responsibility for the security of the northern
frontier. He remained there for the next two or three years, until he was called to the capital as Grand Minister of Agriculture, the ministerial post responsible for the public treasury of the empire.

Zhang Huan's appointment as General Who Crosses the Liao in 164 had been made at the instigation of his friend and colleague, Huangfu Gui, a man from Anding, who was born in 103.4 Huangfu Gui first came to the attention of the court as a junior officer of his commandery during the time of the second Qiang rebellion, when he criticised the conduct of the campaign, including the corruption of the Chinese administrators and commanders, and predicted the defeat of Ma Xian. Later, during the middle 140s, he was recommended as Capable and Good, Sincere and Upright, a special nomination which gave the opportunity to submit a memorial to the throne and be considered for senior office. Huangfu Gui's memorial, however, was bitingly critical of the powerful Liang family, and Liang Ji arranged that he was offered only the low-ranking probationary post of Gentleman of the Palace. Huangfu Gui pleaded illness and resigned, and he spent the next fourteen years as a scholar in retirement, studying the Shi jing and the Yi jing, with a private following of some three hundred students.

In 159, when the power of the Liang family was overthrown, Huangfu Gui was again invited to take office, but for some time he declined all offers. In the winter of 160-61, however, when there was serious banditry in Taishan commandery, on the east of the North China
Plain, he was sent an imperial carriage and a most courteous summons, and he became Grand Administrator of Taishan. Within a few months, it is said, he had brought the troubles under control with the use of military stratagems and negotiations. In the winter of 161, he was transferred to the west to take command of operations against rebel Qiang. By the end of 162, the situation there had been largely settled and Huangfu Gui retired from office.

In the following year, after some rather ungracious controversy about his achievements against the Qiang, Huangfu Gui was appointed General Who Crosses the Liao. A few months later, however, he recommended that Zhang Huan should take the position, and that he himself should occupy the lesser appointment of Emissary. For the next few years, the two men co-operated with success, and the frontier remained quiet. In 166, Zhang Huan was recalled to the ministerial post at the capital, and Huangfu Gui was reappointed to replace him as General Who Crosses the Liao.

The departure of Zhang Huan, however, appears to have been the signal for considerable disturbance. The Xianbi outside the frontier arranged an alliance not only with the Wuhuan but also with the Shanyu Jucheer and his Xiongnu followers, and in the summer and the autumn of 166 there was serious raiding along all the northern frontier, later joined by the Qiang tribes in attacks against Chinese positions of Wuwei and Zhangye commanderies.
In this emergency, Zhang Huan was quickly posted back to the frontier. He was given wide military command, with the title General of the Gentleman of the Household Protector of the Xiongnu, with special authority over the three provinces of Liang, Bing and You, including both civil administration and the two camps of the General Who Crosses the Liao and the Colonel Protector of the Wuhuan. His personal reputation was so great, apparently, that both the Xiongnu and the Wuhuan came to surrender as soon as they heard of his appointment, and only the Xianbi made their escape across the frontier. 6

The Qiang, too, made a brief surrender, but in the spring of 167 the Xianlian rebelled again, attacking the area of Changan, and it was not until the end of the year that Zhang Huan could claim to have brought all his territory under control. In the autumn of 168, he returned in triumph to the capital, but on 25 October that year, soon after his arrival, he was involved in a critical role during the coup d'état of the eunuchs against the General in Chief Dou Wu, father of the Empress-Dowager and leader of the government during the regency of the young Emperor Ling, who had come to the throne some months before.

It is said that Zhang Huan was basically opposed to the eunuchs, but he was confused by the speed of events and the fact that he had only recently arrived at the capital. As a result, when the eunuchs attempted to seize power and Dou Wu called up the troops at Luoyang
to support him, Zhang Huan accepted the eunuchs' commission to oppose the Dou forces. Zhang Huan's prestige was so high that Dou Wu's regiments changed sides and turned against him. Dou Wu was compelled to commit suicide, and the eunuchs obtained control of the government. 7

It is a surprising story, and Zhang Huan is said to have soon regretted his role. His chief sympathies lay with the scholar-officials of the bureaucracy, men such as Chen Fan and Li Ying, who had long opposed the eunuch influence over the government of Emperor Huan, and who had sought the support of the Dou family to achieve reform. On the other hand, Dou Wu and his relatives were over-powerful subjects in the same tradition as the Liang group of the 140s and 150s, and although Zhang Huan had held appointment under the Liang hegemony, he had no particular reason to welcome their would-be successors.

Moreover, the very fact that Zhang Huan was ill-informed about the questions at issue during the crisis is itself a comment upon the relations between the politicians at the capital and the soldiers in the field. Huangfu Gui, similarly, was known for his opposition to the Liang family and later also to the eunuchs, and expressed his support for the reformers on several occasions, but there is small evidence that they reciprocated, and he was never closely involved with any of their activities. It is surprising, in fact, that these important and sympathetic commanders were so disregarded by the
political opposition in the administration and the university at Luoyang; and in the time of Dou Wu, when the control of the government was decided by the rival authority of two military leaders, their past neglect of the hero Zhang Huan brought disastrous consequences to the reformers' cause.8

Neither Zhang Huan nor Huangfu Gui held active command of troops in the border regions again. Huangfu Gui was transferred to be Grand Administrator of Hongnong commandery about the end of 167, and he was for a time in the early 170s appointed again as Colonel Protector of the Qiang. After the great massacre of the Xianlian by Duan Jiong, however, that territory was at peace, and Huangfu Gui had no major part to play. In 174 he was recalled on the grounds of ill health and died on the way home.

Zhang Huan, after his leading role in the crisis of 168, had a rather less peaceful end of his career. He was appointed to a number of ministerial offices under the government of the eunuchs, but was resentful of their dominance at court, and attempted to establish himself, too late, as an opponent and critic of their regime. In 169, he sent in an eloquent memorial urging the rehabilitation of the Dou group, and he also attempted to promote the influence of the reformers Li Ying and others against the eunuchs. His advice, however, was not accepted, and at the end of that year, when the major arrests and proscription of the men of faction took place, Zhang Huan was dismissed and sent from the capital.
Zhang Huan had been offered the fief of a marquis for his services to the eunuchs in 168, but he refused to accept any reward at their hands. Some time earlier, however, after his successes against the Xiongnu, Wuhuan and Qiang in 166 and 167, he had also been considered for enfeoffment and other honours. The fief was not granted, but Zhang Huan did request and obtain permission for himself and his family to shift legal residence from the frontier commandery of Dunhuang to the inner territory of China. It was an old regulation of Han that people of the border regions in the north were bound there by law; a reflection, of course, of continuing illegal emigration, and a symbol rather of the weakness of Han administration than of its firmness and effectiveness. Zhang Huan, however, was given special dispensation, and when he left the capital in 169 he settled in Hongnong.9

Unfortunately, however, Zhang Huan was an opponent and critic of the aggressive Duan Jiong. He had served against the Qiang in association with Duan Jiong during the 160s, and he later made strong protests against Duan Jiong's policy of extermination in the campaigns of 168 and 169. Duan Jiong, for his own part, despised Zhang Huan's leniency in dealing with the tribespeople who sought to surrender; and some of the justification for his campaign against the Xianlian had been the argument that those who surrendered so swiftly to Zhang Huan had proven themselves only too ready to revolt once more when his troops had left the scene.10
Duan Jiong was a supporter of the eunuch government, and in 172 he was named Colonel Director of Retainers, chief of the censorial office about the capital, in order to conduct a purge of the Imperial University at Luoyang. With the authority of his new office, he also proposed that Zhang Huan should be sent back to his original home in Dunhuang. In a humble, begging, letter, calling upon the memory of his parents and the examples of the past, Zhang Huan asked for mercy. Duan Jiong was moved to pity, he did not enforce the order of banishment, and Zhang Huan remained at peace in retirement in Hongnong, with followers and students, editing a commentary to the Shu jing. He died at his home in 181.

The Hou Han shu of Fan Ye has combined the biographies of Huangfu Gui, Zhang Huan and Duan Jiong into a single chapter, giving them an emphasis comparable to that of the great Ban Chao, conqueror of central Asia, and greater than that of the general Ren Shang, chief commander against the first great Qiang rebellion. Duan Jiong, of course, was responsible for the destruction of the power of the Qiang in the west, and although Huangfu Gui and Zhang Huan had no such bloodthirsty battles to their credit, it seems fair that they should be given comparable status. Both men played a leading role in maintaining the peace along the northern frontier of the empire, and they did it as much by negotiation, diplomacy and personal reputation as by direct use of military force. In this, they were surely wise and good servants of the empire, and the Han government was fortunate to have men of such restraint and responsibility to maintain the
illusion of authority over a territory where there was almost a vacuum of power. By the time of Emperor Ling, however, from the beginning of the 170s, the pressure of Xianbi aggression from the north and the disintegration of Xiongnu power within the borders had brought a situation along the northern frontier which proved to be unmanageable, whether by a peaceful policy or one of war. The three men, Huangfu Gui, Zhang Huan and Duan Jiong, were the last successful commanders of Han against the barbarians.

The victory of Tanshihuai 177:

In 166, when Zhang Huan received the surrender of the Shanyu Jucheer at the end of his brief rebellion, he recommended to the government at Luoyang that Jucheer should be dismissed for failing to maintain authority among his people, and replaced by the Luli King of the Left, who had remained loyal to Han. Emperor Huan, however, was lenient, and ordered that Jucheer should be kept on his throne. When he died in 172, he was succeeded by his son, the Tuderuo shizhujiu Shanyu, whose personal name is referred to in the Chinese records merely as mou 'unknown'.

Some, at least, of the reason that no record has been retained of the name of the Shanyu may be ascribed to the limited importance of his power: and the fact that the Chinese government had been prepared to contemplate the removal of his father Jucheer from office indicates that there was now small interest in the pretence of
authority for the Xiongnu state. In the 140s, the Han government had attempted to re-establish the prestige of the Shanyu, but by the 160s the position of that ruler had so declined, and his credit among his ostensible followers was so low, that his continuation in nominal power was as much a matter of imperial grace as of political effectiveness. In 177, the weakness of the Shanyu was confirmed, as he took part under Chinese tutelage in a disastrous campaign against the new rulers of the steppe.

We have noted earlier that the growth of power of the Xianbi in the north had been expressed in the 120s and early 130s by raiding under the general guidance of the war-leader Qizhijian, but the level of activity had declined for more than twenty years after the death of that chieftain. In 156, however, the disturbances began once more, and the Account of the Xianbi relates the frontier warfare between Han and Xianbi specifically to the policies of the ruler Tanshihuai, founder of a great northern empire.13

It appears very likely that the history of the Xianbi at this time, as recorded in the Account of the Xianbi in *Hou Han shu* and the parallel text of the lost *Wei shu* of Wang Shen and others, compiled about 255, is based to a considerable extent upon the traditions of Tanshihuai's own family and descendants.14 It has been suggested that this Saga of Tanshihuai was recounted to the court of the Wei state of the Cao family during the 220s, at a time when the grandson of Tanshihuai, Budugen, was seeking the assistance of the
Chinese against his rival and eventual conqueror Kebineng.\textsuperscript{15} Certainly, the Chinese history of Tanshihuai appears strongly influenced by a non-Chinese source, and contains praises of a barbarian ruler which are somewhat unusual for a Chinese historian: it is, in fact, remarkable that the Annals of \textit{Hou Han shu} do not mention the name of Tanshihuai. There is small question, however, that he did establish a wide dominion along the steppe frontier against China, and that he troubled and defied the Han empire for almost thirty years.

Tanshihuai was nominally the son of a chieftain named Tuoluhou, but there is said to have been some uncertainty over that question: Tuoluhou had been away fighting for three years, but returned to find his wife had just given birth; she explained that she had been impregnated by a miraculous hailstone which fell into her mouth as she looked up agape at a clap of thunder. Tuoluhou, unconvinced, had the infant exposed, but he was rescued and brought up in his mother’s family.

Despite, or perhaps even because of, the unusual circumstances of his conception and birth, Tanshihuai made a reputation for himself while still in his early teens, first as a fighting man of skill and determination, and then as a counsellor of good sense and judgement. The people of his tribe acknowledged his personal authority and appointed him their chieftain, probably by the time he was in his early twenties.
The chronology of such a rise, of course, is extremely difficult and deceptive to reconstruct. The Account of the Xianbi (and the parallel passage from the Wei shu of Wang Shen) says that Tanshihuai died in the early 180s at the age of forty-five sui: which indicates that he was born in the second half of the 130s. The same source also states that the raid by the Xianbi on Yunzhong in the autumn of 156, a raid which is also mentioned in the Annals of Hou Han shu, was led by Tanshihuai with a force of three or four thousand horsemen. If we discount the high possibility of exaggeration by the authors of the Saga, it would appear that Tanshihuai had already established a considerable position of leadership by the time he was aged no more than twenty.

This is of course, by no means impossible, and Tanshihuai must have demonstrated notable ability very early if he was ever to rise to a position of high authority. The political structure of the Xianbi, like that of the Wuhuan and also the Qiang, was unformed and highly flexible. Leaders were chosen for their personal qualities and authority rather than for any reasons of hereditary descent. Though the Xiongnu had ruled the steppe for hundreds of years with a hierarchy of Shanyu, kings and other ranks, and with a tradition of the royal clan and those noble families with which it might intermarry, the Xianbi had no such sophistication. Their expansion was a matter of popular migration against the troubled and disintegrating Xiongnu state, rather than a deliberate plan of conquest, and there was no clan or tribal group which could claim
hegemony as of right. So the opportunity was there for a man of energy and ambition to rise high amongst his people, and Tanshihuai had the capacity to take that opportunity.

Obviously, a profitable raid against Chinese territory was an excellent means to demonstrate the qualities of leadership that the Xianbi admired and sought after, and it is not unlikely, therefore, that a considerable number of the attacks against the northern commanderies of Han were indeed led or instigated by Tanshihuai. The reference to the raid in 156 is followed in the Annals by further incidents in the winter of 158/159, in the spring of 159, in the summer of 163, and in the summer of 166.17 Not all of these may have been the concern of Tanshihuai, and it is very likely that some smaller raids in the intervening years were not recorded, but the raid of 166 was a major affair, with tens of thousands of horsemen, coordinated in separate bands, raiding nine commanderies along the northern frontier, and with the support and alliance, as we have seen, of the Wuhuan and the Xiongnu.18

Given the evidence that we have, it does not seem unreasonable to relate the growing incidence and severity of these raids along the frontier to the developing power of Tanshihuai. After the great attack of 166, the Chinese apparently offered him the seal and insignia of a king, and invited him to alliance and friendship in the same fashion as the Xiongnu rulers of the past. Tanshihuai, however, rejected these advances, and although a period of peace was maintained
Map 11: The Empire of Tanshihuai and the Frontier Territory of Han c. 180
during 167 and the first part of 168, the raiding began once more. According to the Account of the Xianbi, the three provinces of You, Bing and Liang suffered attacks every year from the beginning of the reign of Emperor Ling, and indeed the Annals refer to Xianbi raids every year from 168 to 181 except only for 170. For the most part, the incidents are recorded in the winter of each year, presumably because of the advantage of improving the animal fodder outside the growing season on the steppe by supplement from Chinese granaries. You and Bing provinces were most frequently affected, but in 174/5 there was a raid as far south and west as Beidi commandery in Liang province.

This period of the 170s marked the height of Tanshihuai's power, and it is surely at this time that his dominion reached its greatest extent. It is said that it extended over 12,000 li (6,000 kilometres/4,000 miles) from east to west and more than 7,000 li (3,500 kilometres/2,300 miles) from north to south - figures which are certainly exaggerated and almost twice as large as they should be - it is very likely that he could indeed claim some tribute from all the tribes of Mongolia, extending from the Great Xingan range and Manchuria on the east across to Dzungaria in the west. In the south, he faced the battered frontier of China; in the north, his domain probably reached Lake Baikal in Siberia. To some extent directly, but for the most part of course, by the process of submission and vassalage, Tanshihuai's writ could run across all the former lands of the Xiongnu.
The centre of Tanshihuai's power, however, lay close to the frontiers of China, and the real source of his authority amongst the people continued to be based upon his success as a war-leader and a planner of plundering parties. His capital, apparently, was only some 300 li north of Gaoliu in Dai commandery, which would mean that in modern terms it was somewhere in the region of Huade in Inner Mongolia: so his empire was based on the fringe of steppe near the Chinese frontier. Similarly, in the little we are told of his administrative arrangements, the text speaks of three divisions (bu), described from east to west in terms of the Chinese frontier. The Eastern Division extended from Liaodong commandery to Youbeiping, and contained some twenty subordinate groups (yi). The Central Division faced the short stretch of frontier between Youbeiping and Shanggu, and included rather more than ten yi groups. The Western Division stretched from Shanggu across the whole of the remainder of the northern frontier territory as far as Dunhuang commandery and north from there to the lands of the Wusun in Dzungaria: this great area was also divided into twenty yi groups.21

The Wei shu of Wang Shen provides a list of names of some of Tanshihuai's subordinate commanders in each of the three divisions.22 Among these, the most interesting are Murong, probably an ancestor of the later imperial clan of the Former Yan dynasty, founded in the mid-fourteenth century, and Tuiyan, probably the same person as the Tuiyin who is described as ancestor of the Tuoba clan of the Northern Wei state, which dominated north China from the late
fourth to the early sixth centuries. It seems most likely that within each division of Tanshihuai's realm these chieftains acted as co-ordinators, with responsibilities for military command and for the supervision of vassals, but that below their level the day-to-day life of the people continued to be governed by their own local rulers.

This is not the description of a sophisticated political structure, nor, indeed, should we expect to find one. Tanshihuai's dominion was rather a loose confederacy than an empire, dependent primarily on personal authority, with no permanent institutional establishment: the shortlived chieftainship of a nomad tribe writ now very large. Even the nominal arrangement of the state into three divisions - from the extensive territory of the Eastern Division, to the narrow range of the Centre and that again contrasted with the vast area of the Western Division, several times the size of the other two combined - displays ad hoc arrangements and a vagueness of command in the more distant regions, as perceived from a headquarters concerned primarily with the profits of raiding against the south. It seems more reasonable to consider the state of Tanshihuai as that of a pirate king than as the first great Xianbi empire.

Nonetheless, in one fashion or another, Tanshihuai had unified the nomad peoples of the steppe, and the effect of his power upon China was a matter of continuing concern and distress. By the mid-170s, it was clear that the regular Chinese frontier defences were quite incapable of preventing frequent incursions, and it was about
that time the proposal was raised for a major assault against Tanshihuai, on his home ground, by a Chinese army operating beyond the frontiers.

It appears that the suggestion was first put forward by Xia Yu, Colonel Protector of the Wuhuan. Xia Yu had been one of Duan Jiong's chief lieutenants in the great campaigns against the Qiang during the 160s, and after the destruction of the Xianlian Qiang he was appointed Grand Administrator of Beidi. When the Xianbi attacked Beidi commandery in the winter of 174/5, Xia Yu led local troops and auxiliaries of the Xiuchuge tribe of the Xiongnu to attack them, and he gained some success. He was then appointed Colonel Protector of the Wuhuan and from that position he sent in a memorial requesting that an army should be raised from the resources of You province to attack the Xianbi. In a phrase which echoes that of his former commander, Duan Jiong, he claimed that "In one winter and two spring campaigns, I shall certainly be able to destroy them".

The situation, of course, was by no means the same: Duan Jiong had been dealing with the Eastern Qiang tribesmen, living within imperial territory, and his plans had called primarily for decisive mopping up; Xia Yu was proposing an adventure beyond the frontiers of China, against a most competent and highly mobile enemy, whose numbers were unknown, whose territory was unknown, and who had seldom been defeated by Chinese forces in the field. Not surprisingly, the court hesitated to give permission.
We are told that one of the chief factors which changed the government's policy was the influence of the eunuch Wang Fu. Wang Fu was an old associate of Duan Jiong, and Tian Yan, Duan Jiong's other chief lieutenant in the Qiang wars, was also his protege. Tian Yan had lately been dismissed as Colonel Protector of the Qiang for some offence, and although he had been pardoned he was anxious for an opportunity to gain a renewed reputation and rank. At his urgings, Wang Fu agreed to support the plan, and the court was persuaded to approve it.

It is not known whether Duan Jiong himself was asked for an opinion. It is very possible that the success of his campaign against the Qiang had given the Chinese a mistaken sense of confidence in the capacities of the imperial forces; and it is fair to observe that there had been very few occasions in the past when the regular armies of the empire had been defeated by their enemies. There could be setbacks in minor skirmishes, and local levies, of course, were not expected to be first-rank troops, but in operations against the Qiang, the Wuhuan, the Xiongnu and even the Xianbi, the armies of Han had achieved a remarkable record of success.

The expedition of 177, however, represented the first major incursion into the steppe by Chinese arms since the campaigns of Dou Xian against the Northern Xiongnu almost a hundred years earlier, and the strategy of punitive attacks proposed by Xia Yu and Tian Yan was in fact more closely allied to that of the great Emperor Wu of Former
Han. In a strong argument, the scholar and historian Cai Rong protested the court's decision on the grounds that the empire would be embarking on an indefinite war against a powerful enemy, and that the cost in man-power and money would be more than the present state of the nation could support. In Emperor Wu's time, China had been reduced to banditry and distress by the exactions of war against the Xiongnu; in many respects, the Xianbi were more dangerous than the Xiongnu had been then, and the situation of Han was no stronger.27

Cai Rong's arguments were over-ruled, and the armies set out in the eighth month of 177.28 Xia Yu advanced from Gaoliu in Dai commandery; Tian Yan, with the title General of the Gentleman of the Household Who Smashes the Xianbi, went out from Yunzhong, and the Emissary Zang Min led the Southern Shanyu himself and his forces from Yanmen. Each of the columns is said to have numbered ten thousand cavalry.

The description of the campaign is very brief: the Chinese advanced 2,000 li beyond the frontiers, and they were there met and defeated by a combined army from all Tanshihuai's divisions. Three-quarters of the Chinese forces were killed or captured, all the baggage and insignia were lost, and the commanders fled home accompanied each by no more than a few score of horsemen. The Chinese officers were brought back to the capital in cage carts and sent to jail. They were allowed to redeem their lives by payment of a fine, and were then degraded in rank to be commoners.29
It seems, indeed, to have been a plan vague to begin with and carried out somewhat hotly. The combined force of thirty thousand men was a large one, comparable to that of Dou Xian in 89, and this had included a higher proportion of Southern Xiongnu cavalry. On the other hand, the Chinese contingents were apparently composed entirely of levies from You and Bing, the two northern provinces: there is no record of any participation by the five regiments of the Northern Army at the capital, nor even a specific contribution from the troops of the General Who Crosses the Liao, a command which now appears to fade from the military record.

In the circumstances, if the troops were largely drawn from the border defence forces, it is just possible to contemplate the Chinese despatching a punitive expedition, of strictly limited range, to inflict some damage on the Xianbi in reprisal for that which they had suffered themselves, but it is hard to understand why any commanders should have allowed themselves to get so far into the enemy's territory that he could concentrate his full force against them. It is quite possible that even the meagre details of the campaign that we have, including the record of the distance travelled and the forces which faced the Chinese in the field, have been distorted and exaggerated by embarrassed generals attempting to explain their misfortunes. In the end, one has a suspicion that Xia Yu and Tian Yan, entrusted with a limited objective, allowed themselves to get trapped by their own ambitions.
The result of the defeat of 177, however, was of great importance in both moral and material terms. The simple fact that the Chinese had lost so many men made their defences in the north weaker than ever, and the raiding by the Xianbi continued with increased severity. Still more serious, though, the clear defeat of a major Chinese army removed some of the last prestige from their military reputation. There was growing unrest among the Wuhuan of the northeast, there was, as we shall see, endemic disturbance developing among the Southern Xiongnu, and the tension between the Qiang and the Chinese government in Liang province culminated a few years later in the great rebellion of 184. Although the imperial troops proved themselves able to cope with the rebellions inside China, even the Yellow Turbans of 184 being defeated within a few months, it was a sad fact that from this time on, when a Chinese army faced a barbarian force it was no longer certain of victory. In a sense, the real military weakness of Han had been concealed by the finesse of Zhang Huan; it was displayed for all to see by the clumsiness of Xia Yu and Tian Yan.

Fall of empires:

Despite its apparent power, extent and energy, the empire of Tanshihuai did not long survive the death of its founder and leader. A few years after the victory of 177, some time in the latter part of the Guanghe reign period of Emperor Ling, between 180 and 183, Tanshihuai died. He was succeeded by his son Helian, who evidently did not share his father's qualities, for he is described as greedy and dishonest, and it is said that as many as half the vassal tribes
rejected his suzereignty. Helian continued to lead raiding parties against China, but a few years after his accession to power, in the course of an attack on Beidi commandery, he was shot and killed by a Chinese defender.

Helian's death took place some time about 185 to 187, and the institutional weakness of the Xianbi state now became even more important. Helian's son, Qianman, was still a minor, and the government of the empire was put into the hands of Kuitou, who was the son of an elder brother of Helian and thus a grandson of Tanshihuai, and who was already an adult. It is very likely in fact, that Kuitou may be identified with the chieftain Huaitou, who had been listed among the subordinate commanders of the Eastern Division of Tanshihuai's empire as described in the Wei shu of Wang Shen.30 Within a few years, however, Kuitou's authority was challenged by Qianman, now grown to full age, and the remnant of Xianbi unity was broken in faction fighting between the two contenders. By the middle 190s, little more than ten years after the death of Tanshihuai, his vast empire had disintegrated and the Xianbi people were once again little more than a gathering of feuding tribes and chieftains.

Some claims to influence and authority remained from the departed empire, and the example of Tanshihuai was a source of inspiration for later Xianbi leaders. In the early third century, Kuitou's younger brother, Budugen, was still engaged in an attempt to maintain some local authority against the chieftain Suli, who had also been a
subordinate commander in the Eastern Division in the time of Tanshihuai. Both Budugen and Suli, however, were challenged by the outsider Kebineng, who was generally anti-Chinese and was evidently seeking to establish a dominion comparable to that of Tanshihuai. For a time in the 220s and 230s Kebineng did gain a degree of success, and he was a successful leader of raiding parties against the territories of Wei in both You and Bing provinces. In 235, however, he was assassinated by a Chinese agent, and the lesser chieftains who had followed him tended again to follow their own separate policies. It was only in the second half of the third century that one may observe the dominance of a single clan, the Tuoba, developing among the loose confederacy of the Xianbi people, and not until the following century that any group was able to interfere decisively in the affairs of China.

The empire of Tanshihuai, then, was essentially a personal achievement, and its example of unity and effective aggression against China was not followed for more than a hundred years. In this, the Chinese of the time were undoubtedly fortunate: it is remarkable that the convulsions and misfortunes of the Yellow Turban rebellion of 184 coincided with the beginning of decline and disintegration of the Xianbi state after the death of Tanshihuai; and in the longer term, it was of considerable importance to the future of the Chinese world that the Three Kingdoms which struggled for power in China Proper during the first half of the third century were never faced with a unified and powerful enemy on the steppe frontier of the north. By
the end of the second century, though the Xianbi people dominated the territory of China's northern border lands and the whole region of Mongolia beyond, they were not yet at a stage of political development when they could express that dominance by conquest of the settled lands to the south.

For the remnant state of the Southern Xiongnu, however, the triumph of the Xianbi in the north marked the end of meaningful existence, and the disastrous campaign of 177 confirmed the failure of the Southern Shanyu's power. That expedition had been made under Chinese control, but the defeat which followed was in many ways more serious for the court of the Shanyu than for the Chinese themselves. The Shanyu, even with Chinese allies and overlords, had lost the battle for the command of the steppe, and he was now of limited value either as a leader to the non-Chinese nomads or as an agent of Chinese imperial authority. Within a few years of the defeat of 177, the last pretences of authority had disappeared.

The Shanyu himself died within a few months of his return with defeated troops, and he was succeeded by his son Hucheng, who came to the throne in 178. In the next year, however, there was apparently a quarrel between the new ruler and the Emissary, Zhang Xiu; Zhang Xiu killed the Shanyu Hucheng and set up the Worthy King of the Right, Qiangqu, as Shanyu in his stead.32
Admittedly, Zhang Xiu was punished: he was brought to the capital in a cage cart, sent to the office of the Commandant of Justice for examination, and was executed. On the other hand, that any Emissary could contemplate such an action, and carry it out, demonstrates the lack of power and respect that was held by the Shanyu. Qiangqu was permitted to continue on the throne which had been given him, and for almost ten years the Xiongnu neither played, nor sought to play, any part in the military activities which involved the Xianbi to their north or the Qiang to the south.

In the winter of 187/188, however, the endemic trouble with the Xiuchuge group appears to have erupted into open rebellion, and in the first Chinese month of 188 the Xiuchuge defeated and killed the Grand Administrator of Xihe commandery. Two months later, they dealt in similar fashion with the Inspector of Bing province. 33

The Shanyu and his followers, however, had remained faithful to Han. About this time, a group of bandits, who described themselves as Yellow Turbans, had become active from a base in the Bobo Valley of Xihe commandery. It seems that the Shanyu may have sent a contingent to assist the imperial forces against these trouble-makers, 34 though by 188 the Bobo bandits had extended their operations against Taiyuan and Hedong. Fairly clearly, the Chinese position was deteriorating not only along the Ordos loop of the Yellow River, but also in the general region of the Fen River in present-day Shanxi.
At this point, unfortunately, the government of Emperor Ling called upon the Xiongnu for one more service. In 187, a rebellion of the Wuhuan of the northeast, led by the renegade Chinese Zhang Chun and supported by Xianbi, had broken out in You province. In 188, the imperial clansman Liu Yu was appointed Governor of You province, and the Shanyu Qiangqu was ordered to provide a contingent of Xiongnu to assist in the campaign against the rebels. The Shanyu sent the Worthy King of the Left with troops, but many of his followers resented the summons and objected to the prospect of further military service in future.

In the third month of 188 the Xiluo clan of the Right (i.e. Western) Division of the Xiongnu joined with the Xiuchuge group to attack the Shanyu Qiangqu and kill him. Qiangqu's son Yufuluuo succeeded him, with the title Zhizhi shizhuhou Shanyu, but a few months later he too was under attack from the faction that had killed his father, and he was compelled to flee to Luoyang to ask for help from the Han government. The rebels set up a member of the Xubu family, a Gudu Marquis, as Shanyu in his stead. When that man died a year later, his followers elected no further Shanyu. They preferred to entrust the nominal headship of the state to an old king, without offering the illusion that the ancient title might imply.

Unfortunately for Yufuluuo, soon after he arrived in the capital Emperor Ling died. There followed a short and troubled regency under the Empress-Dowager and her relatives of the He clan, which soon
exploded into massacre and civil war. 37 By the end of September 189, the general Dong Zhuo had usurped power, the practical authority of the dynasty was gone, and the political situation of the empire was too chaotic to permit any consideration of Xiongnu affairs. Yufulu, left to his own devices, now sought alliance with the bandits of Bobo valley, and supported himself and his followers by plunder. He attempted to return to his own territory in the north, but the people refused to accept him, and he remained a vagabond in exile.

Yufulu's base area appears to have been in Pinyang county in Hedong commandery, on the Fen River south of present-day Linfen in Shanxi, but for some years he ranged widely, though with limited success, as a soldier of fortune. For a time in 191 he was an ally of Yuan Shao and the other rebels against Dong Zhuo; then he changed sides and gave nominal support to Dong Zhuo. 38 By the following year he was operating in alliance with members of a Chinese bandit confederacy known as the Black Mountain group (from a ridge of the Taihang range near Hebi in present-day Henan), but his forces were heavily defeated by Cao Cao in an engagement at Neihuang in Wei commandery, on the plain east of present-day Anyang in Henan. 39 In 193, with other bandits, he was acting in the service of the pretender Yuan Shu, at Fengqiu in Chenliu, close to the Yellow River north of present-day Kaifeng. In a sudden attack, Cao Cao defeated Yuan Shu's forces, and began a lightning campaign that broke up his army and drove Yuan Shu himself south of the Yellow River towards the Huai. 40 With the consequent disappearance of this patron from his own area of
operations, Yufuluo had little option but to return to the protection of the mountains north of the Yellow River.

Yufuluo died in 195, and was succeeded as titular Shanyu in exile by his younger brother Huchuquan. The position of the emigres was difficult, for their following was not strong, and both the Xiongnu and their local allies of the Bobo group suffered raiding attacks from the Xianbi, who were now evidently pressing their incursions south through the territory of present-day Shanxi. Huchuquan made another attempt to retake the leadership of his people in the north, but he was also rejected, and command among the exile group was effectively taken over by the Worthy King of the Right, Qubi, a chieftain of Chinese parentage.41

In the winter, at the end of 195, Qubi and his followers and allies received a surprising opportunity to return once more to the wider world of politics.

In the face of rebellion from the eastern part of the empire, Dong Zhuo had retreated with his nominee Emperor Xian to the former capital at Changan. He was assassinated there in 192 by a group of loyalist ministers and officers, but his former lieutenants Li Jue and Guo Si took over his command and restored the military dictatorship. They and their associates, however, were constantly at odds, and as the disorder of their quarreling increased, the young emperor was able to take advantage of the confusion to attempt an escape from their
power. In the summer of 195, with a combination of bluff and diplomacy between the various factions, Emperor Xian made his departure from Changan and moved towards the east. By the winter, he had come as far as Hongnong commandery, but Li Jue and Guo Si now realised that their prize was slipping from their grasp, and they came to fight for possession. In a battle at Dongjian, south of the great bend of the Yellow River, the loyalist forces were defeated and it appeared that the emperor might be recaptured.

At this point, the emperor's supporters sent messages to the north, asking for aid, and the Bobo bandits joined the Xiongnu party to come to the rescue. In a second engagement near Caoyang, in the area of present-day Lingbao in Henan, on 25 December, 195, Li Jue and Guo Si were defeated, and Emperor Xian was able to continue his march towards Luoyang.

As he did so, the Xiongnu contingent, commanded by Qubi, and joined by the Bobo group, acted as rear guard. Li Jue and Guo Si, however, returned to the attack, broke the loyalists' lines, and drove them in headlong flight before them. In desperation, the emperor was ferried across the Yellow River to the greater security of the northern bank, while hundreds of his followers, including the women of the palace, were robbed, stripped and left to die of exposure when the enemy caught up with them. For the time being, the emperor was free, and he came to Anyi, capital of Hedong commandery, riding in an ox-cart.
In the following months, Li Jue and Guo Si accepted the new situation and they were even persuaded to return some of their prisoners and the insignia that they had taken. Within the emperor's own entourage, renewed disagreements broke out, and it was not until the autumn that he came at last to Luoyang. A few weeks later the warlord Cao Cao who had observed the opportunity, came to the capital and applied his considerable powers of persuasion to arranging for the emperor to accompany him still further, to his headquarters at Xu, now Xuchang in Henan. Emperor Xian found that he had no other choice of action, and on 16 October 196, he entered his final captivity.43

In this year of activity, we are told that the Bobo group and the Xiongnu had continued as part of the imperial escort, though they appear to have had limited influence on any of the political decisions about the emperor's movements. When Cao Cao had taken over, however, Qubi and his followers returned to their former territories, presumably with some material rewards for their service, and they evidently maintained themselves in Hedong without great difficulty. Nothing more is recorded of them for over twenty years.44

The rebel Xiongnu, those who had driven Yufuluo and his followers away and who had come to reject the authority of any Shanyu, maintained their distance for the most part from the troubles which beset China as the Han dynasty fell into civil war. The major exception, noticed occasionally in the histories, is the Xiuchuge, or Chuge group, who rose to increasing prominence as the powers of the Shanyu's government came to its final decline.
After their role in the deposition and death of the Shanyu Qianqu, during the early 190s the Xiuchuge were also associated with the Black Mountain group of bandits in the Taihang Shan, and in the latter part of the decade they were still active in the hill country and the edge of the plain. As Yuan Shao and then Cao Cao established control, however, the bandit groups were defeated or persuaded to surrender, and the Chuge Xiongnu retreated to the west. In 214, they are named among the enemy defeated by Cao Cao's general Xiahou Yuan during his campaign of conquest in the region of Liang province, and their immediate military strength was evidently broken at that time.

In the eastern part of Liang province, north of the Wei River, the victories of Xiahou Yuan in 214 were followed by administrative consolidation, and withdrawal of Chinese commanderies and prefectures. In similar fashion, in 215 the government under Cao Cao's control proclaimed the abolition of the northern commanderies of Bing province: Yunzhong, Dingxiang, Wuyuan and Shuofang were all abandoned, and those of their people who still sought to maintain a Chinese identity were grouped under the single new county called Xinxing. For the purposes of the Wei state, interest in the lands of the west was restricted to the campaigns south across the Qin Ling ranges against Hanzhong commandery and the power of Liu Bei and his supporters in the region of present-day Sichuan. Embattled in civil war, Cao Cao's administration lacked the resources to contemplate any attempt at restoration of the old dominance of Han in the region of the Ordos.
In the following year, 216, the Shanyu Huchuquan travelled to Cao Cao's capital at Ye, very probably with persuasion from agents of the Wei state. He was not allowed to return to his former residence, but was kept as an honoured prisoner, like Emperor Xian of Han, in an entourage under Cao Cao's power. When he died, no replacement was named for him, and the succession of the Shanyu came to an end.48

At the same time as the Shanyu was removed from the scene, Cao Cao's government re-arranged the administration of the Xiongnu: five divisions were set up to rule the people, each under a leader of the royal house, and the chieftain Qubi, now recognised as a supporter of Chinese interests, was sent to act as regent over-all, with a Chinese Major to assist him and supervise his conduct.

Under the new system, the Northern Division dealt with the region of the abolished commanderies in Bing province, while the other four were spread along the valley of the Fen River in present-day Shanxi: the Left Division had headquarters in Zishi county, the Centre Division was based on Tailing county, the Right Division was based on Qi county - all in Taiyuan commandery - and the Southern Division had its headquarters at Puzi in Hedong. Qubi's own headquarters, presumably with the Chinese resident Major, were at Pingyang.49

Like other arrangements concerning barbarians at this time, the re-organisation of the Xiongnu in 216 relates rather to the policy of the state of Wei founded by Cao Cao than to any decision of the Han
empire, and it is evident that the Xiongnu dealt with at the time of
this change were the few people who had moved south into the Fen
valley: apart from the Northern Division, which must have been in
many ways as much a formality as the Chinese county called Xining,
neither the Chinese government nor the Xiongnu rulers whom they
controlled could claim any real influence over the wide lands north of
the Fen. The Ordos region, and all the northern loop of the Yellow
River, were effectively abandoned, the frontier now came far to the
south, and the rump of the Xiongnu empire, for all the apparent
splendour of the claim to five divisions, was basically confined to
the fringes of Chinese territory, while the people they had left
behind in the north were gathered into the amorphous mass of the
Xianbi.

There is, of course, another story yet to come: from a century
of struggle and survival, the chieftain Liu Yuan, leader of the Right
Division of the Xiongnu, rose to power over his fellows and founded
an independent state which he named after Han. In 311 Liu Yuan's
capture of Luoyang from the Jin dynasty of the Sima family marked the
beginning of the end of Chinese imperial power in the north of China
Proper and the opening of the age of 'barbarian dynasties' in the
Period of Division. All that, however, lay in the future, and one
need observe here only that when the Han dynasty came to its formal
close in 220 AD, the Xiongnu empire, which had once ranged across the
whole northern steppe, was reduced to a few settlements and people in
the hills of northern China.
The sources for the history of the Wuhuan:

In the official accounts of the Han dynasty, the Wuhuan people have a comparatively unimpressive history. While the great empire of the Xiongnu in Mongolia was a frequent threat to the frontiers of the Chinese empire, and the Xianbei people of the northeastern could claim a period of military glory in the second century AD, the Wuhuan had no such record of triumph. On the contrary, at the beginning of the Former Han period they suffered massive defeat at the hands of the great Xiongnu leader Modun, and in the last years of Later Han a short-lived alliance of their leaders was destroyed by the military genius of the famous warlord Cao Cao. Nevertheless, though the fame of the Wuhuan people lay rather in their unenviable role as chopping block for the ambitions of greater military powers than their own, they played a part of some importance in the relationship between Han China and the peoples of the north, and the information about them
in the Chinese records throws light upon the policies of the empire and the history of the frontier.

The major sources for the history of the Wuhuan during the Han period are the Account of the Wuhuan and Xianbi in *Hou Han shu* and a long extract from the lost *Wei shu* of Wang Shen and other scholars, which was compiled in the middle of the third century, and which has been preserved as an extended quotation in the commentary of Pei Songzhi to the *Sanguo zhi*. *Sanguo zhi* 30 contains a brief account of the Wuhuan in the last years of Later Han, leading up to their defeat by Cao Cao in 207, but the *Wei shu* of Wang Shen and the *Hou Han shu* of Fan Ye both provide considerable detail not only on the history of the people during the Han period, but also on their manners and customs.

The Account of the Wuhuan in *Hou Han shu* is similar in arrangement to the fragment on that people in the *Wei shu* of Wang Shen, the texts are very close, and in some places they are identical. The *Hou Han shu* Account begins with a discussion of the manners and customs of the people, then follows with a survey of their history during Former and Later Han, and concludes with a reference to Cao Cao's campaign in 207. The *Wei shu* also described the customs of the people, in rather more detail and with slightly different arrangement to *Hou Han shu*, and then presents a more cursory account of their early history. It is likely that it too contained a detailed account of their history at the end of Han and the great expedition of
Cao Cao, but this had been duplicated by the Biography of Cao Cao in *Sanguo zhi* 1 and by the main text of *Sanguo zhi* 30, so Pei Songzhi did not continue the quotation.

In many ways, some of the most interesting information in the Account of the Wuhuan in *Hou Han shu* 90/80 and in the fragment of *Wei shu* may be found in the description of manners and customs. Though the material in *Hou Han shu* 90/80 is less detailed than in *Wei shu*, it is still more ample than the information which is given on most other peoples of the northern frontier: for the Xiongnu, Fan Ye added little to the material which may be found in the *Han shu* of Ban Gu and the *Shi ji* of Sima Qian; for the Qiang people of the northwest, the information in *Hou Han shu* 87/77 is significantly more sketchy, and although there is useful material on the non-Chinese peoples of the southwest in *Hou Han shu* 86/76, it is largely concerned with their ancestral foundation legends and their relations with China. Only in the Account of the Eastern Barbarians in *Hou Han shu* 85/75, do we find a description of manners and customs for the people of Gaogouli, the kingdoms of the Korean peninsula and Japan, that may compare to the material on the Wuhuan.

This material on the Eastern Barbarians in *Hou Han shu* 85/75 follows very closely the information contained in the main text of *Sanguo zhi* 30, in much the same way as the information on the Wuhuan people relates to the text of the *Wei shu* of Wang Shen. Gardiner has suggested most plausibly that the account of Gaogouli (or Koguryŏ)
in both *Hou Han shu* 85/75 and *Sanguo zhi* 30 are derived from the reports of intelligence officers who were members of the staff of the Wei general Guanqiu Jian at the time of his campaign of conquest against the peoples of eastern Manchuria and northern Korea in 244-45.3 On the same lines, it is possible that the basic material for the account of the Wuhuan, and particularly for the description of the manners and customs of that people, originally took the form of a report to Cao Cao at the time of his campaign of conquest which led up to the Battle of White Wolf Mountain in 207.

In Chinese historiography, there is no record of the formal compilation of an Account of the Wuhuan and Xianbi during the Han period, which might compare with the accounts of the Xiongnu and the Qiang that are known to have been prepared for inclusion in the *Dongguan Hanji* in the early 150s.4 For most of the Han period the record of the Wuhuan and of the Xianbi would not have been a matter of major concern to the scholars in the history office of the court at Luoyang. By the end of the dynasty, the Xianbi had risen to a position of some significance as the result of their confederacy under Tanshihuai - and it may be argued that the Chinese histories have incorporated extensive material from the Xianbi's people's own Saga on Tanshihuai.5 In contrast, though the Wuhuan were more closely connected to the government and people of Han China, their recorded history, like that of the Xianbi before Tanshihuai, was little more than a list of raids, rebellions and other disturbances along the frontier. From this point of view, the *Wei shu* of Wang Shen not
only contains fewer items of information than *Hou Han shu* 90/80, but its chronicle, as quoted by Pei Songzhi, ends in the 130s, early in the reign of Emperor Shun, while Fan Ye continues with reports of incidents up to the time of Emperor Ling and the last years of Han. It seems clear that Fan Ye had access to additional sources, and it is again possible that the intelligence report to Cao Cao, which we have postulated as a source for the details on manners and customs of the Wuhuan, provided also a general summary of their previous history which was later preserved in the archives of the state of Wei, was drawn upon by Wang Shen and also by Chen Shou, and was later available in some form also to Fan Ye.

The question of these items of history, however, is not so important, for the list of incidents which composes the bulk of that material could be gathered from annals and biographies in several other works; and indeed the history of the Wuhuan as set out in *Hou Han shu* 90/80 must be read in conjunction with the accounts of the Xiongnu and the Xianbi, and also with individual biographies and references to Chinese generals and officials. The description of the manners and customs of the Wuhuan, however, is in a rather special category. Although the Chinese author occasionally expresses his disgust of their barbarous practices either by his choice of vocabulary or by specific additional notes, he was evidently a man of broad sympathy, for there are places where explanatory analogies are drawn with customs in China itself, and even the most revolting idea—that a Wuhuan sees nothing wrong in the killing of his own father or
elder brother - is at least given some explanation in terms of their lineage structure. If this description of the Wuhuan was indeed compiled for Cao Cao at the time of his campaign in 207, that warlord had a most competent, intelligent and sympathetic scholar on his staff, and the manners and customs that he described have been recorded almost two thousand years later among the people of the forest and the steppe in recent times.

The manners and customs of the Wuhuan:

In his article "Das Volk der Hsien-pi zur Han-Zeit", Schreiber has translated the description of the manners and customs of the Wuhuan from the text of the Wei shu of Wang Shen, and has added valuable annotations.6 The Chinese texts begin by stating that the Wuhuan were originally a group of the Donghu, who were defeated by Modun of the Xiongnu at the beginning of Han, and who then took refuge in the Wuhuan Mountains from which they obtained their name, and Schreiber here makes two important points. Firstly, following the arguments of the Japanese scholar Shiratori Kurakichi, he rejects the identification of the phrase donghu with the later Tungus people of Siberia and Manchuria, remarking that the Chinese expression donghu meant no more than "eastern (dong) groups of the northern barbarians (hu)", while he cites also the work of other Japanese scholars whose researches indicate some differences between the Eastern Hu described by early Chinese texts and the Tungus people known to us from records of the present millenium. Though Yu Ying-shih refers to the question as being "still a matter of controversy", it seems that we may in fact
take the negative opinion of Shiratori and his colleagues as
decisive.7

The second point made by Schreiber, again following the
arguments of Shiratori, is that it is most unlikely the name of the
Wuhuan people came from the name of the mountain; rather more
probably, it was the other way round. The name Wuhuan itself is
tentatively identified by Shiratori with some form of the Mongolian
word *ukhagan*, meaning "wise", and as such it was possibly the title
of a princely leader among the Eastern Hu before the destruction of
their federation at the hands of the Xiongnu.8

The Wuhuan, as known to the Han Chinese, were nomad herdsmen
of cattle and sheep, who lived in domeshaped tents very much like the
yurt of present-day Mongolia, which were always erected with the
doorway facing east to the rising sun. For the most part, the people
wore their hair cut short, for the sake of convenience,9 but a
married woman allowed her hair to grow long, then dressed it up and
adorned it with gold and jewels.10 Their clothing was made of felt,
and the women were talented in leather-work, while the men made
saddles and bridles. We are told specifically that the Wuhuan knew
the use of iron, which is evidently a reflection of the easy
availability of deposits close to the surface in the north of China
and in Manchuria, a region that is still the major source of present-
day China's iron ore.
Their main food was meat, generally from their flocks and herds, but they also hunted frequently for wild birds and animals, often using stringed arrows like harpoons. They had also a primitive agriculture, though in the cold regions of the north it was not a significant part of their economy. Even their seasons were measured by the breeding cycle of wild birds and animals rather than the farmer's year of China, and they determined the date of their sowing by the cry of the cuckoo, which is generally first heard in the latter part of April. Their spring-sown crops were millet and the *dongqiang* plant. This latter, whose name means nothing more informative than "eastern wall" and is possibly the transcription of a Wuhuan term, is explained by the text as being a ground creeper, with fruit like the mallow which ripens in the early winter and which can be used to produce a fermented drink. The Wuhuan also commonly drank the fermented mare's milk, kumiss.

Their medical techniques, to Chinese eyes, were primitive. They had no knowledge of internal medicines, and although they applied moxibustion, they lacked the art of acupuncture. Indeed, their chief resource in time of sickness was the application of heat: sometimes by moxibustion, but often enough simply by lying the patient on ground which had been heated by fire, or by placing hot stones on his chest. On occasion, they might also bleed the patient, cutting open a vein at the point where pain was felt, presumably to allow the evil humours to escape. Other than these remedies, they could do no more than pray to the spirits of heaven and earth and other natural deities.
It is said that the Wuhuan regarded death in battle as the most honourable end of a man, though it may be observed that a similar epithet is applied to the Qiang by Hou Han shu, and the description probably reflects a general Chinese lack of comprehension of the emotions and intentions of their perennial foes. In any event, when a man did die, there was mourning at his deathbed, but at the time of his burial the ceremony was more in the nature of a wake, to farewell the soul upon its journey from the land of the living. The Wuhuan believed that the dead must make a journey to the Red Mountains (Chi shan), and at the time of the burial they held a particular ceremony to ensure its safe travel. A fattened dog, bound with a many-coloured cord, was brought into the funeral party, and it was fed further with gobbets of meat. Then two of the mourners commanded the dog to guard the soul of the departed against the evil demons it may meet on its dangerous path to the Red Mountains, and the dog was killed. Its body, together with that of the horse which the man had ridden, his clothing and other personal items, were all burned together by the grave.

Other offerings to the spirits followed the same ritual of burning. The Wuhuan worshipped all manner of deities in nature, from heaven and earth to the sun and the moon, the stars and constellations and the mountains and rivers, together with those of their chief men in the past who had acquired a reputation for bravery. Their major sacrifices were cattle and sheep, whose bodies were burned at the end
of the ceremony, but whenever they ate or drank, they poured a
libation or made an offering first to the gods.

Much of this religious practice was intelligible to a Chinese, and the compiler of the description noted particularly that the belief in the journey of the dead to the Red Mountains, which were believed to be a few thousand li northwest of Liaodong, was analogous to the Chinese concept of departed souls going to Mount Tai. It was in the matter of their marriage customs and family relationships that the greatest contrast was observed. In immediate terms, since physical prowess, as in warfare and the work of herding, was of chief importance, the Wuhuan gave young men precedence and preference over the old. The Chinese commentator observed with disapproval that in social gatherings the people squatted about quite casually, generations and sexes all intermingled with no proper sense of order and precedence, and it was remarked with a sense of horror that a man in his anger could kill his father or elder brother without incurring any penalty nor a sense of guilt.

The marriage customs of the Wuhuan were almost the reverse of the Chinese tradition. When a girl came to marriageable age, her future husband would steal her away from her parents, and live with her for any time between three months and half a year. Only after that period would a go-between be sent as messenger to the bride's parents, offering a bride-price of horses and cattle and sheep. When this was accepted, the new son-in-law would attend and live at his
wife's parents' home, ignoring his own family, but paying his respects and performing brideservice for two years. After that time of bondage, the new husband and wife were granted a dowry by the woman's parents, sufficient to set up independent existence with living quarters and all household goods and property.18

Once the husband had established his own home, his male relatives were responsible for a system of "levirate". When a man died, his widow would be taken for wife either by one of her late husband's sons born of a different mother or by one of his younger brothers or nephews.19 The marriage connection between the woman's clan and her husband's was thus maintained, and in all matters except those of war the women's counsel was respected and they took a leading part in discussions.20 As the commentator remarked, though a man might kill his elder brother or even his father, he would never harm his mother: and this was explained by the fact that the woman was still considered as a member of her own, independent family, and could look for revenge from her own male relatives; while a man's dealings with his father and brothers and sons were considered as his own personal concern, having no significance in public order and morality. In a society based essentially on clan relationships and vendetta, there was no question of compensation for the killing of a lineage male.

Traditionally, the political structure and the legal system of the Wuhuan was minimal. The people were divided into a multitude of
petty family groupings, described in Chinese as yi and luo, which were evidently similar to those recorded among the Xiongnu. On occasions when a strong and competent leader arose, he might extend his sway over a whole division comprising several hundred or even a thousand yi and luo. His power, however, was not hereditary, though there were cases when the memory of a great chieftain would cause him to be ranked with the gods and spirits after his death, and the surname of his clan might be changed in his honour.

There was, however, limited scope for such a leader to demonstrate his authority. The Wuhuan did not have the Chinese system of writing: it is said that the leader could communicate with his followers by messages scratched upon a piece of wood, and although it is possible that the Wuhuan had some independent and advanced form of script, it is very much more likely that these message-sticks were composed with symbols and pictures like those of the early North American Indians.

In such circumstances, there was no question of a permanent administration or effective unity. Every man worked to support himself from his own possessions, without any system of taxation or labour service. Apart from the occasional responsibility of warfare, the judgement of the leader was most commonly required when cases of vendetta, which normally arose and were settled within the lesser grouping of the tribes, became so serious that they were brought to him for arbitration. Then the death of a man would be measured in
terms of a price in cattle and sheep and the affair was closed. The penalty for disobedience to the word of a chief, and for consistent wrongdoing such as robbery and theft, was outlawry and exile, away from the lands of the Wuhuan, to the northern wilderness and the Gobi.

The Chinese described the Wuhuan as excitable and unruly, excellent horsemen and archers, they were clearly a people of no effective political unity, and it is unlikely that the so-called King of the Eastern Hu, who is said by Sima Qian to have defied Modun and been defeated by him in battle, was anything more than the shortlived leader of an extended warband. At the beginning of the Han period in China, the Wuhuan were disorganised tributaries of the Xiongnu empire, with small opportunity or ability to play an independent role along the frontier.

The Wuhuan and Former Han:

According to the Chinese account in Hou Han shu 90/80 and the Wei shu of Wang Shen, the consequences of their defeat at the hands of Modun in the last years of the third century BC remained with the Wuhuan for almost a hundred years. In that time, while it appears that they still inhabited the forest and hill country between the Mongolian steppe and the Manchurian river basin, they were generally subject to the Xiongnu. Each year they were required to present tribute to the court of the Shanyu, cattle, horses, sheep and the pelts of wild animals, and we are told that if a group failed to bring
the correct quantity at the required time, then their women and children were seized as hostages until full payment was made.

For most of the second century BC, until the reign of Emperor Wu of Han, imperial China was largely concerned with its own internal problems of consolidation and effective government. Dealings with the Xiongnu were generally peaceful, and although treaties might be punctuated by nomad raids, they were strengthened by embassies, gifts and occasional marriage alliances. By the 130s, however, the Chinese court and its armies were embarked on a policy of deliberate attack, with the hope and expectation of challenging the Xiongnu power and removing the threat of its military presence from the frontiers of the empire. As the culmination of the policy on the northeast, in 119 BC Huo Qubing, taking part in a joint expedition dispatched by Emperor Wu, led a force of fifty thousand cavalry, accompanied by several hundred thousand infantry, against the eastern territories of the Xiongnu.

In the course of that campaign, which drove deep into Mongolia, and inflicted heavy casualties on the Xiongnu, Huo Qubing formed an alliance with the Wuhuan and encouraged several groups of their people to return with him to the Chinese frontiers. They were settled in the territory outside the Great Wall, north of the commanderies of Shanggu, Yuyang, Youbeiping, Liaoxi and Liaodong, and it was intended that they should act as informants and auxiliaries of the Chinese against the Xiongnu. Their leaders came each year to pay court to
Han, and there was established a Colonel Protector of the Wuhuan, with rank and salary comparable to that of the head of a commandery, and with authority to supervise the Wuhuan and give orders on behalf of the imperial government. Though the Wuhuan experience of the Xiongnu power had seldom been a happy one, one responsibility of the Protector's office was to ensure that the new allies of China did not seek to communicate again with their former overlords.25

For the most part, the policy of settlement appears to have been successful, and though the Wuhuan are not known to have contributed any remarkable aid to Han successes against the Xiongnu; they appear to have lived in general agreement with the Chinese south of the Wall. Indeed, in this position as a buffer state between the settled agricultural communities of China and the Xiongnu of the steppe, the Wuhuan prospered and grew in number. Not all of them had accepted the subordinate relationship with China, however, and there were a few incidents of raids along the border until in 78 BC a number of Wuhuan undertook a rash expedition of their own. Claiming vengeance for their humiliations at the hands of the Xiongnu in the past, they raided and plundered the funeral grounds of the Shanyu.

The Xiongnu attacked the Wuhuan in return, with a force of twenty thousand cavalry; and the Han court of Emperor Zhao debated their best policy. The regent, Huo Guang, asked advice of his generals Zhao Chongguo and Fan Mingyou. Zhao Chongguo remarked that the Wuhuan had become too self-confident, that they had made raids
against China, and there was no reason to send them help. Fan Mingyou argued that the Chinese could gain from an expedition, and in the winter of 78 to 77 BC he was duly appointed General Who Crosses the Liao, and despatched with twenty thousand horsemen north from Liaodong to seek what opportunities he could.26 By the time Fan Mingyou arrived, the Xiongnu had attacked the Wuhuan and made good their retreat, but Fan Mingyou, determined to achieve some result, attacked the Wuhuan himself. Aided by the losses that his enemy had already suffered at the hands of the Xiongnu, he killed sixty thousand of them, and took the heads of three of their kings. He returned in triumph to China, and he was rewarded with a fief as a marquis.27

The fact that he was rewarded with enfeoffment indicates that Fan Mingyou had read his masters' intentions correctly, and it appears that the Xiongnu themselves were so impressed by his demonstration of power that they caused no further incidents in that region for many years. Most probably, the chief objects of Fan Mingyou's aggression were the more isolated groups of the Wuhuan in the northwestern part of the Liao basin in Manchuria, and the effect of his work was to bring the greater part of the Wuhuan under the hegemony of China. In the following years, there were a few border raids and reprisals, but Fan Mingyou again defeated them.28 By the time of Emperor Xuan, who came to the throne in 74 BC, we are told that the Wuhuan were generally submissive and maintained their position along the frontier.29 It appears, then, as a result of the campaigns of Huo Qubing and Fan Mingyou, that the Han government had removed the
majority of the Wuhuan from their subordination to the Xiongnu and established them instead as tributaries of China.

In following years, the Wuhuan were able to demonstrate their independance and hostility to the Xiongnu as their enemy entered a period of weakness and confusion. In the winter of 71-70 BC, after a disastrous expedition by the Xiongnu against the Wusun people of the Ili region of central Asia, who were allied with Han, the Xiongnu forces were so weakened that they were exposed to continual attacks from the Wusun, the Dingling of southern Siberia, the Wuhuan in the east, and a special expedition from Han in their south. Great numbers of their people were killed, and an enforced treaty brought a measure of peace to China's frontiers. In similar fashion, about 58 BC, when there was already tension and some disorder in the Xiongnu state, a successful attack by the Wuhuan people against the Xiongnu territories in the east caused the ruler of that region to fear the anger of the Shanyu, and to raise a rebellion, with a rival Shanyu, to defend his own position.

In these and other incidents, it appears that the Wuhuan could rely upon the general support of Han, but they were not acting as direct allies of the Chinese and they were inspired primarily by rivalry and hostility against the Xiongnu themselves. The Chinese, for their part, were chiefly concerned with the uneasy peace they kept with the Xiongnu in the last half-century BC, which they sought to maintain by marriage alliances and state visits from the Shanyu, to
enforce by a system of hostages, and to encourage by presents of gold, silk, clothing, weapons and other items of value.

In the last days of Former Han, however, when the government was already under the effective control of the future emperor Wang Mang, the Chinese policy changed to one of greater firmness. During the reign of Emperor Ping, the Shanyu of the Xiongnu was compelled to agree to a new Treaty of Four Articles, which provided that the Xiongnu would refuse to accept any refugees from among the people of China, the Wusun tribes, the tributary states of the Western Regions, or the Wuhuan.  

A few years later, Chinese officials responsible for the Wuhuan informed their people that the new treaty meant all communications with the Xiongnu should be broken off. When Xiongnu came to take part in the annual trade of furs, the Wuhuan refused to deal with them. In the quarrel that broke out the Xiongnu agents were killed and their families and herds were seized by the Wuhuan. Then the Shanyu, as revenge, launched a massive attack against the Wuhuan, killing and capturing great numbers of their people and taking their goods, while the remainder sought refuge either in the depths of the mountains or along the Chinese frontier.  

Wang Mang’s rigorous policy against the Xiongnu produced a consistent deterioration of Xiongnu and Chinese relations. By the end of 10 AD, the two sides were in open defiance, and Wang Mang
established a great army of twelve divisions, with commanders and encampments stretched all along the northern borders of the empire, to attack the Xiongnu. Troops were recruited and conscripted for this force from all over the empire, and the eastern division, under the command of the general Zhuang You, included a major contingent called up from the Wuhuan now controlled by China. As surety for their service, their families were held hostage in commanderies within the empire.35

The army was maintained in its stations for several years, and it is said that the Wuhuan found it difficult to live on the provisions that were available among the agricultural lands within the frontier. They asked permission to leave for their traditional hunting-grounds, but when this was refused they eventually deserted and fled north across the Great Wall. In response, the Chinese authorities ordered the killing of all Wuhuan hostages, and the escaped conscripts turned back to raid and plunder along the north-eastern borders. Within a short time, in response to invitations from the Xiongnu, the leaders of the Wuhuan and their people had taken service with the enemies of China.36

As Bielenstein has pointed out, the story that we now possess of Wang Mang's dealings with the northern barbarians may be interpreted as part of a general pattern of slander against the usurping founder of a dynasty which proved ultimately unsuccessful. It is well known, however, that the great army was raised, and
Zhuang You himself protested against the impossibility of organising the various forces and their supplies with the facilities then available. The troops were maintained on the frontiers for a number of years, and there are references in the Biography of Wang Mang to troubles with the soldiers, and to famine and banditry in the commanderies of the northern borders both before and after that time, while the Account of the Xiongnu in Han shu says simply that the territory was reduced to a wasteland.37

It is certainly true that many of the accusations levelled against Wang Mang are overdrawn and exaggerated, and many of the statements about the results of his government are little more than hostile cliche. On the other hand, despite Bielenstein's eloquent defence of Wang Mang's dealings with the Xiongnu, and even allowing for the fact that his policy followed established tradition and had general support within China, the experience of the Wuhuan, from the enforcement of the Treaty of Four Articles to the forced conscription and the killing of hostages, indicates that they had suffered considerably from the legalistic rigidity of Wang Mang's position. Whether it was the direct result of Wang Mang's arrogant conscription and slaughter, or merely the weakness of China during the time of confusion that accompanied his fall and the succeeding civil war, the Wuhuan had certainly abandoned their allegiance. By the beginning of Later Han, as Liu Xiu, Emperor Guangwu, established a position against his rivals, the Wuhuan were in general association with the Xiongnu and maintained a pattern of petty raiding in the northeast of the empire.
Emperor Guangwu and the settlement of the Wuhuan:

From the last years of Wang Mang, through the period of civil war which accompanied his downfall, and for most of the reign of Emperor Guangwu, the Wuhuan remained enemies of China. According to the Account of the Wuhuan in Hou Han shu, after their escape from the conscription of Wang Mang their leaders were offered positions of military command by the Xiongnu, and it is possible that this arrangement may have been effective during the time of direct confrontation with Wang Mang. For the most part, however, it appears that the Wuhuan maintained a measure of independence from the Xiongnu, and it was only rarely that they took part in combined raiding. Their main area of interest remained on the northeastern frontier of the empire, the crescent of commanderies of Han which stretched from Liaoxi in southern Manchuria westwards to Shanggu and Dai commandery in the northwest of modern Hebei and the northeast of Shanxi. Few of their incursions were important enough to be recorded in the official chronicles of the time, but the constant disturbance and insecurity in the border country were damaging to the Chinese position. As Hou Han shu remarks:

[The Wuhuan] were settled close along the frontier, so that in the morning they could be in their tents [on the open grazing lands] and by evening they might come to the very outskirts of a town. Every family among the people of the five commanderies suffered harm from them, and it came to a point where the local administration was quite broken down, and the people fled as refugees. The group that was based on the White Mountains, outside Shanggu commandery, was particularly powerful and prosperous at this time.38
For the most part, the main body of the Wuhuan people contented themselves with this form of raiding, and perhaps enjoyed the several years relief from Chinese pressure against them. Although they took no major part in the civil war, some of their young men evidently found employment for a time with one or other of the contending factions. In 24, for example, we are told that Wuhuan and Xiongnu troops assisted local officials loyal to the Gengshi Emperor, Liu Xuan, against their rivals supporting Emperor Guangwu in Dai commandery. Three years later, Guangwu's general Wu Han had a contingent of three thousand Wuhuan cavalry in his campaign against Zhou Jian in the southern part of the North China plain. In the middle 30s, it is recorded that the pretender Lu Fang, who maintained his position in Wuyuan and the northern commanderies with support from the Xiongnu, also included Wuhuan in his command.

The defeat of Lu Fang in 36, however, though it marked the end of the civil war in the northern regions of China, did not bring effective peace. In the same year, Guangwu's forces had destroyed Gongsun Shu in Sichuan, and China was united under a single imperial authority, but for the next ten years and more the new government could produce no broad and effective action against the incessant raiding and constant pressure, and was even compelled to abandon the territories along the northern loop of the Yellow River. On several occasions raiding parties plundered the Chinese commanderies in present-day Shanxi, and some as far south as the valley of the Wei in Shaanxi.
Further to the east, the situation was little better. In 39, under pressure from the Xiongnu and the Wuhuan, the Chinese frontier people of Yanmen, Dai and Shanggu commanderies had been permitted to withdraw to a defence line south of the fortified passes at Changshan and Juyong. Though Wang Ba, a trusted general of Guangwu, was maintained as Grand Administrator of Shanggu for the whole of this difficult period, he held no more than a fragment of his nominal territory, and his position was rather that of a garrison commander with a line of defences than the civil administrator of a commandery.

Other commanderies facing the Wuhuan, as we have seen from the earlier quotation, were evidently also under constant threat, but do not appear to have lost so much territory. In Liaodong, present-day southern Manchuria, the Grand Administrator Zhai Tong was faced with disturbances from the Xianbi people, in occasional alliance with the Red Mountain (Chi shan) group of the Wuhuan, though a successful engagement in 45 kept the Xianbi, at least, under some form of control.

Also in 45, the imperial government made a serious attempt to stabilise the position on the frontier and to halt the raiding, at least from the Wuhuan. The great military commander Ma Yuan, General Who Calms the Waves, had returned victorious from the subjugation of Han imperial territories in northern Vietnam at the end of 44. Claiming, with some reason, that the threat from the northern
barbarians was a matter of major concern to the dynasty, and taking as his cue a recent raid by the Xiongnu and Wuhuan which actually threatened the tombs of the imperial ancestors near Changan, he asked to be given command of the northern defences.

By the beginning of 45 Ma Yuan had established his headquarters at Xiangguo prefecture in Zhao kingdom. In the autumn of that year, he made a tour of inspection along the frontier defences in the region of Dai and Shanggu commanderies. He reached as far north as Gaoliu in Dai commandery, 120 kilometres beyond the defence positions at the Feihu Pass. The enemy had failed to meet him in battle, and Ma Yuan sought to make a surprise raid on their base territory. With a force of three thousand cavalry, he struck further to the north; but the Wuhuan learnt of his plans, they gave way before him and then harried his force as he was forced to turn back. Ma Yuan returned to the Chinese frontier with the loss of perhaps a third of his small group, and with little accomplished.45

Ma Yuan evidently remained in general command of the north for the next year or so, but from the end of 45 there are no particular records of any major raids or expeditions by one side or another. In 49, Ma Yuan volunteered to take command of an imperial army against the non-Chinese people of Wuling, south of the Yangtse, and he died on that campaign, in his early sixties. By this time, however, the situation on the north had changed remarkably in the Chinese favour, as a result of the death in 46 of the anti-Chinese Shanyu Yu, and a succession struggle that devastated the Xiongnu state.
In his discussion of Emperor Guangwu's policies towards the non-Chinese people of the north, Bielenstein has emphasised the failures and weaknesses of the Chinese position, and has criticised the emperor for his defeatist attitude. The campaign of Ma Yuan in 45 is cited as one particular example, and it is suggested that Ma Yuan's attack on the Wuhuan, with a force of only three thousand cavalry, indicated that "nothing could be expected from the enterprise, and no real offensive was possible".46

In fact, however, it may be argued that Guangwu's policy and Ma Yuan's activity were not so ineffectual as they may have appeared. Firstly, though Bielenstein appears to interpret the incident as indicating that Ma Yuan was given only three thousand horsemen for his expedition, it appears from the details of the texts that Ma Yuan had authority over all the garrisons in the north, and that no specific restriction was placed upon the number of troops he could take under his command. It was Ma Yuan himself, not the emperor in his court, who decided how many men would accompany him on his expedition, and though Ma Yuan might have been criticised for taking such a small force with him, there was reason for that decision also. The Account of the Wuhuan in Hou Han shu and the Wei shu of Wang Shen both mention that Ma Yuan was planning a surprise attack - in effect, a search and destroy mission - and it is obvious that a small group of fastmoving horsemen would be far more effective than a full army, with local levies, slowed by all their impedimenta. In later years, dealing with the great rebellion of the Qiang, the Chinese found that
raids by horsemen disrupted the enemy and aided their eventual defeat,\textsuperscript{47} and in the situation which Ma Yuan found himself facing in 45, such a program gave perhaps the most immediate opportunity of regaining the initiative.

Admittedly, Ma Yuan's one expedition was not notably successful, but in the scale upon which he was operating, the loss of even a thousand men can hardly be regarded as disastrous; and Bielenstein himself has pointed out that Ma Yuan may have suffered from hostile chroniclers, determined to exaggerate the failures of his later years.\textsuperscript{48} It is very probable that his policy of raiding would have continued, but the disorders which broke out among the Xiongnu in 46 removed all anxiety both at military headquarters and in the imperial capital. Within a few months, the Wuhuan had abandoned their association with the Xiongnu and were actively engaged in attacking them. From the Chinese point of view, there was hardly any purpose in an aggressive policy while their enemies were carving one another up in such a satisfactory fashion.

The political details of the great division among the Xiongnu are discussed elsewhere in this work, and it is not necessary to deal with them again. We may observe, however, that by 50 the Xiongnu state was irrevocably divided into two, under rival Shanyu. The Southern Xiongnu, supporters of the Shanyu Hi, were tributary to Han and at war with the Northern Xiongnu, who remained loyal to the Shanyu Punu. The Southern Shanyu was ordered to take up residence near Meiji.
Under this new dispensation, the imperial government was able to plan the re-occupation of the northern commanderies, which had been lost to China during the turbulent years just past. The Wuhuan, as we have seen, had taken advantage of the divisions among the Xiongnu to turn against them in 46, and Emperor Guangwu at that time sent presents of silk to encourage them in their change of heart. In similar fashion, in 49, Xianbi in the Liaodong region were persuaded by Zhai Tong to attack the Xiongnu, and were rewarded with a bounty for every head that they brought back.

The year 49 saw the full recognition of Chinese imperial power. The people of Wuling in southern China had been brought to surrender, the Southern Xiongnu had accepted a tributary relationship, the Xianbi were in alliance with Han against the Northern Xiongnu, and envoys from the King of Fuyu, in the region of the Sungari basin in Manchuria, visited the court with tribute. At this time there came also a major embassy from the various groups of the Wuhuan, led by the chieftain Haodan of the Liaoxi region. They brought slaves, cattle and horses, together with bows and the skins of tigers, leopards and sables, results of the trapping and hunting for which their people and country were well known.
According to *Hou Han shu* 90/80 and the *Wei shu* of Wang Shen, Emperor Guangwu held a great reception ceremony for these men, made generous presents in return for their offerings, and granted eighty-one of the leaders titles and insignia as marquises, kings, lords and chieftains. They were encouraged to bring their people under the protection and authority of Han, and as they did so the various groups of Wuhuan were settled along the borders, inside the line of the Great Wall, from Liaoxi in the east through Youbeiping, Yuyang, Guangyang, Shanggu, Dai, Yanmen and Taiyuan commanderies, with one additional settlement at Shuofang, further to the west, on the Ordos loop of the Yellow River.

In discussion of this incident, Bielenstein has remarked that the settlement of nine thousand Wuhuan among nine commanderies would have had no significant impact on the population of the northern territories of China. His judgement, however, is based upon the assumption that only nine thousand people were involved. In fact, the numbers may not have been so small. *Hou Han shu* says that "the chieftain Haodan of Liaoxi and 922 other men led their people" to come to court; Wang Shen records that "the chieftain Haodan and more than nine thousand others led their people". Given the loose political organisation of the Wuhuan, with its multitude of petty chiefs over each individual *yi* and *luo*, there is nothing impossible in the concept of nine thousand leaders or more, each representing a small clan or family group of perhaps ten or twenty men, women and children. In such a case, on Wang Shen's figures, there could have been as many
as ninety or a hundred thousand Wuhuan involved in the embassy of Haodan and his associates. Certainly this would make Emperor Guangwu's program of extended settlement more meaningful, and give added justification to his otherwise over-generous grant of authority and insignia to eighty-one of these petty rulers.53

The argument for the surrender of a significant number of Wuhuan about this time is strengthened by the fact that Emperor Guangwu, on the proposal of Ban Biao, restored the position of Colonel Protector of the Wuhuan. Several years earlier Ban Biao had presented a memorial urging the re-establishment of the Colonel Protector of the Qiang in the west of the empire, on the same lines as in Former Han, to supervise the non-Chinese people and keep order between them and the Chinese. On this occasion, he argued that the numbers of people entering the frontier under the new dispensation were too many to be controlled, as current policy had it, merely by a senior clerical officer. The court accepted his argument, and a Colonel Protector of the Wuhuan was appointed, with headquarters at Ning county in Shanggu commandery.54 The Protector had administrative offices and a small garrison under his command, and he was given responsibility for the supervision of the Xianbi people as well as the Wuhuan. On behalf of the imperial government, he issued rewards or bribes for good conduct, and he arranged the collection and maintenance of hostages for behaviour.
Perhaps most important of all, we are told that Ning city was the scene of regular seasonal markets for exchange of goods between the Wuhuan or the Xianbi and the Chinese. In two notable articles, the Mongol scholar Sechin Jagchid has argued that a central difficulty in dealings between China and her northern neighbours was the problem of the nomads who sought to obtain the luxuries and even the necessities of life from the Chinese. In a traditional and primitive form of mercantilism, Chinese government sought to establish a hegemony over their neighbours by denying them access to products such as silk, cloth, wine and rice and refusing to accept the goods which they offered in exchange, horses, cattle and furs, under any but harsh terms of tribute. While it is true that imperial governments were prepared to use official tribute missions as a form of trade, there was a constant political involvement and interference in such exchanges, and they frequently came about only as the result of military force and war.55

The argument of Sechin Jagchid, forcefully expressed, presents a different perspective to the tradition of Sino-barbarian tributary relationships described so effectively by Yu Ying-shih.56 From this point of view, though there is no question that the government of Later Han believed it was conferring a favour upon the Wuhuan and Xianbi by permitting the establishment and maintenance of regular markets, it was nevertheless also displaying a measure of good political and economic sense by recognising the needs of the non-Chinese people and permitting them the opportunity to obtain what they needed without the constant tumult of raiding or reprisals.
In January 1974 the Chinese journal Wenwu published a report and a series of articles on an Eastern Han Tomb with Wall Paintings which had been found near Horinger, Inner Mongolia.57 The occupant of the tomb had evidently held office as Colonel Protector of the Wuhuan, and among the wall-paintings illustrating his career there is one in detail of the Protector's headquarters at Ning. There may be seen the buildings of the yamen and the courtyard where official decisions were handed down, together with the messengers and travellers who came to the city. The scholar Jin Weiruo, who discusses the details of the dating of the tomb, suggests that it belonged to the Protector Gongqi Chou, who was killed by a renegade Chinese in 187.58 Even though he met such an end, the survival and prosperity of his office to the last years of Han is a tribute to the government which established it and the administrators who carried it on.

In the remaining years of the reign of Emperor Guangwu, there was little trouble from the Wuhuan. During the mid-50s there were occasional raids from the Red Mountain group, which was based outside Yuyang and Shanggu commanderies, but at the beginning of the reign of Emperor Ming, in 58, they were thoroughly defeated by the Xianbi allies of Zhai Tong, the Grand Administrator of Liaodong, and their leader was killed.59 For almost fifty years after that, through the reigns of Emperors Ming, Zhang and He, there are no further significant records of conflict with the Wuhuan people nor with the Xianbi.
The settlement of the Wuhuan in the northeast of the empire provides a noticeable contrast to the difficulties which the Chinese experienced in dealing with the Qiang tribespeople further west, in Liang province. In both cases, considerable numbers of non-Chinese people were brought to settle within the imperial frontiers: the Xianlian people of the Qiang largely by force, following the conquest by Ma Yuan in the late 30s;60 the Wuhuan apparently in more peaceful circumstances, after the surrender of Haodan in the late 40s and early 50s. In Liang province, a brief period of peace was soon broken by frontier wars and ultimately by a great rebellion at the beginning of the second century, but the Wuhuan people, both within Chinese territory and beyond the frontiers to the north, not only maintained the peace but also performed valuable service to the government of Han.

On the other hand, the settlement in the northeast, after the surrender of the Wuhuan to Emperor Guangwu, did result in a contraction of imperial territory. In the time of Former Han, according to the census and list of county units recorded for the year 2 AD, the territory of Youbeiping and Yuyang commanderies extended into the upper valley of the Luan River, to the region of present-day Chengde in northern Hebei. The settlement of Wuhuan within the frontiers of this region meant that the imperial government had weakened its hold, and many counties which had formerly maintained the Chinese administration were disestablished. During the next century or so,
this territory was effectively removed from the sway of Chinese power, and the frontiers of the empire were withdrawn to the Wuling range, on the line of the present-day Great Wall. By the end of the second century, this former territory of China was recognised as alien country, controlled by the nomad pastoral tribes of the Xianbi.61

The cession of territory, however, may not have seemed a great price to pay in exchange for the possibility of stability along the frontier and the military support of the Wuhuan. The peace was effective for several generations, and the Wuhuan, in fact, proved themselves valuable auxiliaries.

Perhaps the most remarkable example of the Wuhuan alliance with imperial China was the maintenance of the Chang River Regiment in the Northern Army at the capital Luoyang. According to the Treatise of Officials, compiled by Sima Biao and based upon the administrative system established in the early years of Later Han, the Northern Army contained five regiments, each under the command of a colonel. Unlike the other regiments, the Chang River had two majors, one of whom, as in the other regiments, was the regular second-in-command to the colonel, but the other, with the title Major of Barbarian Cavalry, was specifically responsible for horsemen of the Wuhuan. In commentary to this passage, the Later Han scholar Cai Zhi is quoted with the additional information that the regiment contained 57 junior officers and 736 Wuhuan troopers.62
The Chang River regiment had been established in the time of Emperor Wu of Former Han, when the capital of the empire was at Changan, and it seems most probable that the regiment took its name from a small river, near that city, where it maintained its camp and headquarters. In 31 AD, at a time when he was attempting to reduce the number of men under arms after his decisive victories in the Yellow Plain and the end of the first stage of the civil war, Emperor Guangwu had ordered the disbandment of the Chang River and other regiments. In 39, however, when the final victories had been achieved over Wei Ao and Gongsun Shu, he reorganized the Northern Army and re-established the Chang River regiment as one of its components.63 In the circumstances of that time, it is doubtful whether any significant number of trustworthy Wuhuan would have been available for service in the vicinity of the imperial capital, and it was surely not until the end of Emperor Guangwu's reign, after the surrender of Haodan and his fellows, that the regiment was organised with Wuhuan recruits.

The Northern Army in Later Han was the central strategic reserve of the empire, and when they were not needed for campaigns, the regiments were stationed in the vicinity of Luoyang. They were the most powerful military force available to the government, and the colonelcy of a regiment was a sign of honour, trust and power. By the same token, the fact that a single group of non-Chinese people were permitted to enrol in one of these five regiments, rather like the Gurkhas of Nepal in the British and imperial Indian armies of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, implies a considerable and well-
established faith on the part of both the Chinese government and its alien allies.

Besides this association with the regular armies of Han, the Wuhuan who had settled along the frontiers were also available as scouts and allies to the imperial defence forces. As early as 58, while the Red Mountains group was being put down with the aid of the Xianbi in the east, Wuhuan auxiliaries were aiding Chinese forces in an attack on the Shaodang tribe of the Qiang in Liang province, and in similar fashion they joined the operations against the Northern Xiongnu led by Dou Qu in 73 and took part in a further campaign in 76. In 94, when the independent Xiongnu leader Fenghou was threatening raids against the frontier at Shuofang, the Colonel Protector of the Wuhuan, Ren Shang, led a mixed contingent of Wuhuan and Xianbi to drive him away, and in 105 a force of Wuhuan from Shanggu took part in the defence of Liaodong commandery against the Mo people of eastern Manchuria.

This time of peace and alliance, however, was threatened in the reign of Emperor An. The great rebellion of the Qiang, which broke out in Liang province in 107, put massive strain on all the military resources of the empire, and the disasters suffered by imperial arms gave encouragement to any malcontents who hoped to gain profit from the troubles of the Chinese. The situation in the north and northeast was considerably affected by the successes of the rebellion in the west, and the Wuhuan played some role in the disturbances which followed.
In 109, there was a general alliance of the Xianbi with the Southern Xiongnu and groups of the Wuhuan from Yanmen, Yuyang and Youbeiping, who rose in rebellion and raided the commanderies of Dai, Shanggu, Zhuo and Wuyuan. The rebel tribesmen actually defeated the commandery troops in Wuyuan commandery, and a force of twenty thousand men, including regiments of the Northern Army, militia from seven border commanderies and a contingent of loyal Xianbi from Liaodong, had to be sent under the command of a full general to put down the trouble. The Xiongnu were brought to surrender, but the rebel Xianbi and a number of the Wuhuan fled north across the border.66

From this time on, we are told that the Wuhuan again returned and continued in allegiance to Han. It is very likely, however, that a number of the people were finding their traditional ties of loyalty growing weaker, and were becoming increasingly attracted by the energy and strength of their Xianbi cousins. From 115 until the early 130s, Xianbi raiding parties ravaged the Chinese border country from Manchuria to the Ordos, and in 118, when the Xiongnu leader Fenghou again attempted to establish an independent kingdom, he was driven to surrender to China by the constant attacks of the Xianbi. Much of this apparent accession of energy and power came not only from the prowess of the Xianbi people themselves but from allies such as surrendered Northern Xiongnu and renegade Wuhuan who accepted the leadership and the tribal name of the Xianbi.67
The majority of the Wuhuan, however, were opposed to the Xianbi and continued to be willing allies of Han. In 117, for example, we are told that the chief of the Wuhuan of Liaoxi named Yuzhiju was a personal enemy of the Xianbi leader Lianxiu, and led his people to crush and defeat him when the Xianbi raided those frontiers.68 Later, during the reign of Emperor Shun, in the 120s and early 130s, while the Xianbi leader Qizhijian of Liaoxi was arranging raids against China,69 the Wuhuan chieftain Rongzhuhui gained wide power and respect as a leader of the Wuhuan in alliance with Han.70 By the early 130s, after a number of campaigns in which the Wuhuan had distinguished themselves against the Xianbi, Rongzhuhui had been awarded the title of Chief Commandant Friend of Han. Another Wuhuan leader, Fushuguan, was made Lord Who Leads His People, some subordinates such as Duogui and Quyan were made kings or marquises "who lead their people", and they also received rewards of silk for their service in battle.71

Despite the apparent record of success, however, the constant attacks of the Xianbi had seriously weakened Han power along the frontier. In the middle 130s, when the Xianbi leader Qizhijian died, the Chinese were relieved for a time from major attacks by his people. Unfortunately, however, the Wuhuan now took advantage of the respite from the common enemy, and some of them turned against the empire.

Ironically, the former Protector Geng Ye was one of the first to suffer from the change. For several years he had commanded the Wuhuan
in battle against the Xianbi, and it was under his aegis that Rongzhuhui had brought the Wuhuan tribesmen to the field and had received such honour from the government of Han. By the middle 130s, however, it appears that Rongzhuhui had left the scene, and in the winter of 135/136 a number of Wuhuan raided Yunzhong commandery and seized the carts, goods and cattle of travelling merchants on the roads. Geng Ye, now promoted from Protector to General Who Crosses the Liao, with his headquarters in Wuyuan commandery, took a small force of two thousand men to deal with them. He pursued the robbers to the territory of Shanan county, just across the Yellow River from present-day Togtoh, but after one successful skirmish he was besieged in a small fortress named Lanchi. The Chinese quickly raised a relief force of a further three thousand men, and as these reinforcements approached the Wuhuan withdraw.

Though the incident was not particularly serious, and the number of men involved was not very large, the fact of the disturbance and the inconclusive fashion of its ending were a sign of future trouble for the Han administration. Five years later, in 140, when the second great rebellion of the Qiang people had broken out in Liang province, there was a rebellion of the Wuhuan in alliance with the Southern Xiongnu.

The main leadership of the rebellion came from the Xiongnu leaders Wusi and Cheniu, and at first it appears that only a small number of the Wuhuan, under the chieftains Ajian and Qiangqu came to
join them. Among the imperial forces dispatched to deal with the problem there was a contingent of loyal Wuhuan under the command of the Protector Wang Yuan. These Wuhuan, from Yu province, gave valuable service to the Han generals, but those of the more western commanderies appear to have continued their support of Wusi, even after initial defeats and heavy losses at the hands of the imperial forces. Following the assassination of Wusi at the end of 143, the final campaign against the remnants of his followers brought the surrender of seven hundred thousand Wuhuan to the Han official Ma Shi. The figure may be exaggerated, but it is clear that there had been considerable support for the Xiongnu rebels among their fellow nomads.

Over the next several years, this state of confusion continued. The rebellion of the Xiongnu had caused a major retreat from the forward positions of the Han empire: Xihe commandery was now administered from Lishi county, far to the south of the former capital at Pingding, and on the eastern bank of the Yellow River in the southern part of present-day Shanxi. The capital of Shang commandery had been removed from that territory altogether, and was now at Xiayang in Zuopingyi, while on the northern loop of the Yellow River the capital of Shuofang had been similarly shifted to Jiuyuan, the capital of Wuyuan commandery. Though the commanderies and counties were still maintained as nominal units of local administration, the Chinese population was clearly in decline, and was indeed only held in the border areas by force of law. In immediate terms, and for the
foreseeable future, it was clear that the grasp of imperial power was failing, and the non-Chinese people could look for greater opportunities.

Despite the obvious Chinese misfortunes of the 140s, however, the decline still appears comparatively slow. This could be because the effect of imperial power was now so slight that only the most outrageous disturbance found attention in the records of the administration. On the other hand, the government of Emperor Huan, who came to the throne in 146, was fortunate enough to have the services of a number of remarkable military commanders, notably Huangfu Gui and Zhang Huan. Despite the weakness of the Chinese military position, the constant threat from the Qiang in the south and the growing power of the Xianbi in the north, not to mention the vicissitudes of favour at court which produced occasional forced retirement and brief disgrace, the officers of Han maintained a semblance of authority among the peoples of the north.75

For the most part, the Wuhuan played a small role in the attacks upon the imperial positions. In the latter 150s, during a flurry of rebellions among the Xiongnu and raids by the Xianbi, the Wuhuan from Shuofang commandery made a particular alliance with the Xiuchuge (or Chuge) group of the Xiongnu,76 attacked the territory of Wuyuan commandery, and burnt the gates of the headquarters of the General Who Crosses the Liao. Zhang Huan, who was at that time General of the Gentlemen of the Household Emissary to the Xiongnu, led
the troops of the garrison out to face the enemy, and then secretly persuaded the Wuhuan to turn against their allies and aid in the Chinese attack. The rebels were defeated and surrendered.77

Again, in the summer of 166, after Zhang Huan had been recalled to the capital to take up a ministerial appointment, the Xianbi came to attack the frontiers in force, and they were joined by Wuhuan and Xiongnu supporters. Zhang Huan was hastily sent back to deal with them, with an army of provincial levies together with garrison troops from the command of the General Who Crosses the Liao and the Colonel Protector of the Wuhuan. The rebel Wuhuan and Xiongnu heard that he was coming, and both groups came to surrender and apologise. He executed the ringleaders of the revolt, and the Xianbi, isolated again, retreated beyond the frontiers.78

The Wuhuan in this western region of the frontier were clearly less reliable and loyal than they had been a generation earlier, though they do not appear to have been a central point of trouble, and it proved possible on occasion for generals such as Zhang Huan to recall them to their old allegiance. It is hardly surprising, in fact, that the Wuhuan of Shuofang should have been prepared to turn against the Chinese: the withdrawal of the commandery capital in the early 140s demonstrated the weakness of the imperial position, and although they appear to have maintained a general peace upon that northwestern frontier since their first settlement a hundred years earlier, it was not unreasonable that the Wuhuan should look for some
contact and association with the Xiongnu or even the Xianbi now that the Chinese forces were in retreat.

In similar fashion, as the Xianbi maintained and increased their raids across the whole of the northern frontier, the Wuhuan and the Xiongnu had direct experience of their growing strength and influence. On occasion, as in 166, they might join the more powerful enemy. Further east, in You province, which suffered equally from raiding by the Xianbi, the Chinese administration was in general disorder, and the Wuhuan evidently began to form small states of their own, chiefly, one would assume, for self-defence. On the one hand, the situation of these non-Chinese allies of the empire was now uncertain, for the military power of Han was clearly in decline. At the same time, as the raids of the Xianbi drove the Chinese peasants from their fields, there appeared some opportunity for the Wuhuan to make a position of their own.

By the beginning of the reign of Emperor Ling, in 168, we are told that in the four commanderies of Shanggu, Youbeiping, Liaoxi and Liaodong there were Wuhuan chieftains who had gathered followers about them and had taken title as kings. Nanlou of Shanggu, with more than nine thousand luo groups, appeared the most powerful, followed by Qiuliju of Liaoxi, with some five thousand such groups. Two other leaders, Supuyan, of the Dependant State of Liaodong, and Wuyan of Youbeiping, had lesser numbers under their command, but all of them were young and ambitious and energetic, and in this time of disorder
and imperial weakness they seemed to offer a centre of security for
defence and possible future power.79

A few years later, in 177, the empire of Han suffered one of its
most humiliating and disastrous defeats. Pressed by the continual
attacks of the Xianbi leader Tanshihuai, and urged on by a faction at
the court, the government of Emperor Ling dispatched an army of some
thirty thousand men, including Xiongnu auxiliaries and almost
certainly a major contingent of Wuhuan, to attack the Xianbi in their
own country. The campaign was a total failure, three quarters of the
imperial troops were lost, and the Chinese positions in the north
never recovered from the blow. The raids of the Xianbi continued
without interruption until the death of Tanshihuai in the early 180s,
and were not seriously diminished for some years after that.80

In these circumstances, the prestige of Han had fallen so far
among its erstwhile tributaries and allies that the whole territory of
the north was now at risk. By the end of the reign of Emperor Ling,
in the aftermath of the terrible rebellion of the Yellow Turbans in
184, the Chuge group of the Xiongnu were engaged in almost constant
petty insurrection in the Ordos region, and the self-styled kings of
the Wuhuan looked only for an opportunity to expand their activities
and their power.
The road to White Wolf Mountain:

During the desperate year of the Yellow Turban rebellion in 184, even though one of the centres of the outbreak was close to their territory in the northeast, the Wuhuan appear to have shown no interest in the rebel cause. In 185, after the destruction of the Yellow Turbans, as the government turned its attention to the disturbances of Liang province in the northwest, the general Huangfu Song suggested that he be given permission to levy three thousand Wuhuan for service against the rebel Qiang. After a spirited debate at court, in which the scholar and historian Ying Shao played a leading role, it was agreed that neither the Wuhuan nor the Xianbi were sufficiently reliable to serve as auxiliaries outside their own territory, and the plan was shelved.

Huangfu Song, however, had small success against the rebels, and in the autumn of that year he was replaced by the general Zhang Wen, who arranged for the recruitment of three thousand horsemen from the Wuhuan to serve as shock troops for his army. A certain Zhang Chun from Yuyang commandery, who had formerly held office as Chancellor of Zhongshan, asked for the command of this detachment. Zhang Wen, however, gave the appointment to the energetic junior official Gongsun Zan, who had already made a name for himself in campaigns against the Xianbi, but was at that time no more than the Prefect of Zhuo.

Zhang Chun was resentful of the slight, and he gathered around him a small group of malcontents, including Zhang Ju, also a man of
Yuyang and presumably a member of the same clan, who had at one time been the Grand Administrator of Taishan. This Chinese party then made contact with local leaders of the Wuhuan, notably Qiuliju of Liaoxi, and stirred up their resentments and ambitions against Han.

The initial imperial recruitment for the campaign in Liang Province appears to have been quite ineffective, for after the Wuhuan had been gathered some time at Ji, the capital of Guangyang commandery and the headquarters of You province, they received neither food nor pay from the government, and they deserted to return to their own territories. With this sign of incompetence, the renegades' arguments were strengthened, and in the summer of 187, they began major operations. With the first impetus of their attack, they defeated the local forces of Youbeiping and Liaodong commanderies, killing the grand administrators. They raided the city of Ji, and they defeated and killed the Colonel Protector of the Wuhuan Gongqi Chou. Their army was said to number one hundred thousand, all under the command of Zhang Chun, and Zhang Ju was proclaimed as emperor, with his capital at Feiru in Liaoxi.

The rebels' territory was not very great, no more than present-day Hebei province northeast of Beijing, together with the strip of coastland running into Manchuria, but they sent messengers to other parts of the empire, urging the emperor of Han to quit his throne in favour of the new dynasty, and from their base in You province they extended their attacks southwards across the North China Plain. In
the following year, 188, the court at Luoyang appointed the imperial clansman, Liu Yu, as Governor of You province, with instructions to end the disturbances.

Liu Yu himself came from Donghai commandery in the eastern part of the North China Plain, but he had served for several years as Inspector of You province and had been trusted and respected by the non-Chinese peoples of the frontier. His new appointment, however, represented a major change in the system of Han local administration. At the time of his appointment, Liu Yu had been Director of the Imperial Clan, a ministerial post in the central government, and he retained that rank and salary as Governor of You province. As Governor, Liu Yu controlled the same territory as when he had been Inspector of You province, but he now held direct titular command over all the military and civil administration of the commanderies in the province, and it was from these years of the reign of Emperor Ling that the provinces became the effective units of administration in the empire.

At the time of Liu Yu's appointment, the Chinese forces had already begun a counter-attack against Zhang Chun and his Wuhuan allies. Gongsun Zan, now a Chief Commandant of Cavalry, was sent with a small force into You province, and in a battle at Shimen, somewhere in the Dependent State of Liaodong, he completely defeated Zhang Chun and drove him with the remnants of his army across the frontier. Then Gongsun Zan advanced in pursuit, but he over-reached
his supply lines, suffered an attack from the forces of Qiuliju in Liaoxi, and he was besieged for the winter in a small fortress called Guanzi. Holding out there for several months, he eventually made his escape, but not before more than half of his men had fallen casualty.90

The arrival of Liu Yu in the spring brought a new policy and a brief period of peace. Sending messengers among the Xianbi to discourage them from thoughts of rebellion, and offering rewards for the heads of Zhang Chun and Zhang Ju, Liu Yu encouraged the Wuhuan to return to their allegiance. Within a few weeks, a retainer of Zhang Chun had killed him and sent in his head, while Qiuliju and the Wuhuan returned home and surrendered.

Liu Yu, for his achievement, was offered the position of Grand Commandant, the highest appointment in the imperial bureaucracy.

In fact, Liu Yu never returned to the capital to take up that position, for within a few months, after the death of Emperor Ling and the seizure of power by the warlord Dong Zhuo, the empire of Han had begun to disintegrate. In 190, Liu Yu was honoured as Grand Tutor, but the letter of appointment never reached him; and You province, under his administration, became a haven of refugees. His biography says:
In the past, You province had to deal with the people outside the frontiers. The expenses were extremely heavy, and every year more than two hundred million cash was taken from the taxation of Qing and Ji provinces to make up the deficit of You province.

At this time, all communications were cut off and the grain transport could not arrive. In these circumstances, Liu Yu held it essential to maintain a lenient administration. He encouraged farming, he opened a prosperous market with the barbarians in Shanggu, and he maintained the supplies of salt and iron from Yuyang. The people were contented, the harvests were good, and a bushel of grain cost only thirty cash.

More than a million people of Qing and Xu provinces came to escape the ravages of the Yellow Turbans. Liu Yu cared for all of them with a warm sympathy, settled them and gave them a means of livelihood. All the refugees forgot the misfortunes of their exile.

Liu Yu himself, although he held the highest rank, was by nature simple and modest. He wore old clothes and rope sandals, and he had only a single dish of meat at any meal. All the men of local power, who had formerly displayed their luxury and extravagance, now charged their manner of behaviour and followed his example.

This affectionate picture of a fine administrator does not conceal the fact that You was normally a debtor province, and the tensions of the border were generally expensive and worrying. In fact, however, the immediate trouble of Liu Yu was his military subordinate, Gongsun Zan. Still smarting from his setback at Guanzi, Gongsun Zan was anxious to destroy the Wuhuan by military force, and he was resentful at the success of Liu Yu's policy of pacification.

For a short time, his energies were satisfied by the massacre of a group of Yellow Turban bandits at the Yellow River in Ji province, but by 193 his ambitions and hostility had grown to a point of open warfare with Liu Yu. In a single decisive battle he defeated the
governor's troops, captured Liu Yu and his family, and put them to death in Ji city on trumped-up charges of treason.

Within a very short time, Gongsun Zan in turn was under attack, while his vicious treatment of enemies eliminated any chance of the Wuhuan or the Chinese accepting his rule. In 195, a local rebellion led by men loyal to Liu Yu, supported by the Wuhuan chieftain Supuyan from the Dependent State of Liaodong, together with a contingent of Xianbi, made an alliance with the gentry leader Yuan Shao from the south, defeated Gongsun Zan and drove him into a stronghold at the city of Yi in Hejian. In 199 Yuan Shao returned to finish the job, and with a combined force of Chinese and Wuhuan he destroyed Gongsun Zan's fortress and killed him.

In this period of confusion, the various groups of the Wuhuan had largely maintained their identity, and had played a significant role in the northeast. Qiuliju of Liaoxi died in the early 190s, and his son Louban was too young to hold effective authority as a war leader, but his nephew Tadun took his place. Indeed, Tadun appears to have been recognised by neighbouring groups of Wuhuan, and it was probably he who led the combined barbarian forces to aid Yuan Shao in the final battles against Gongsun Zan. After that victory, Yuan Shao gave seals and insignia as Shanyu to the chieftains Nanlou of Shanggu, Supuyan of Liaodong Dependent State, Wuyan of Youbeiping and also Tadun. Some time later, at the instigation of Nanlou and Supuyan,
Qiuliju's son Louban, now grown to manhood, received the seal of Shanyu and Tadun became instead a king, but he still held great influence in their councils.

The succession of major power in the northeast from Liu Yu to Gongsun Zan to Yuan Shao cannot obscure the fact that the Wuhuan, the Xianbi and the Chinese themselves in this region were for the most part in a state of political and social confusion. Apart from the endemic skirmishes and civil war between the major rivals, it is recorded that some Wuhuan groups were involved in banditry and fighting among the Taihang Mountains and on the North China Plain, well to the south, while various isolated territories in You province had effectively withdrawn from the outside world, with their people concerned only to maintain a modicum of peace and security within a limited area. Tian Chou, a Chinese leader in Wuzhong county, maintained effective independence with some local alliances of Wuhuan and Xianbi,95 and Xianyu Fu, Grand Administrator of Yuyang loyal to Liu Yu, preferred a nominal alliance with the distant warlord Cao Cao, in the centre of the North China Plain, to any close association with Yuan Shao. Yan Rou, a Chinese who had lived among the Wuhuan and Xianbi as a boy, and who had taken the title of Major to the Wuhuan (Wuhuan sima) at the time of the rebellion against Gongsun Zan in 193, though he accepted a commission from Yuan Shao in 199, was effectively independent along the northern borders. In the following year, when Yuan Shao moved south to attack Cao Cao, Yan Rou sent
messengers to Cao Cao and accepted appointment as Colonel Protector of the Wuhuan at his hands instead. 96

In the mean time, still further to the east, and largely unaffected by the turmoil of China Proper, the warlord Gongsun Du of southern Manchuria, who had been appointed to that region in 190 as Grand Administrator of Liaodong, was carving for himself an independent state, and expanding the frontiers of his rule against the non-Chinese state of Gaogouli/Koguryo in the east and the Wuhuan of the mountain country in the west. By the time Gongsun Du died in 204, he and his son Kang, who succeeded him, were in a position to defy any power within reach of them. 97

As it turned out, Yuan Shao's conquest of Gongsun Zan in 199 marked the effective high point of his success. In the following year, his great army was dramatically defeated by the smaller forces of Cao Cao at the battle of Guandu, just south of the Yellow River, and in 202 Yuan Shao died. His three sons, Tan, Xi and Shang, quarreled among themselves, and Cao Cao was able to take advantage of their dissentions and rivalry to conquer the whole of the territory formerly under Yuan Shao's control. By 205, Yuan Tan was dead, and Yuan Xi and Yuan Shang had taken refuge among the Wuhuan.

It was in these years at the beginning of the third century, as the power of Yuan Shao was weakened and ruined by the divisions among his sons and the campaigns of Cao Cao, that the Wuhuan obtained
Map 12: Cao Cao's Approach to the Northeast 206-207
a temporary unity and apparent strength under the military leadership
of Tadun. Though Supuyan, Wuyan and Louban, enfeoffed as Shanyu by
Yuan Shao, evidently outranked him and could easily maintain their
independence, the energy and imagination of Tadun persuaded them to
accept his leadership, and there were rumours that he had plans for a
hegemony over the northern tribes comparable to that of Modun of the
Xiongnu in the past or Tanshihuai of the Xianbi in more recent
times.98

In fact, this was most unlikely. The alliance of Wuhuan under
Tadun had no firm support and certainly no close alliance among the
Xianbi people immediately to their north and west,99 and the area of
their control was only a pocket of territory in the northeast,
defended by river crossings and mountain passes. Nevertheless, with
the arrival of the two Yuan brothers, accompanied by a considerable
number of their followers, Tadun had gained command of a combined
Chinese and Wuhuan force which was said to number some two or three
hundred thousand, and he launched raids to the south in claimed sup-
port of the cause of the Yuan clan. Yuan Shang and Yuan Xi were
potential figureheads for disturbance in the north, and the raids of
Tadun were an immediate cause of trouble and annoyance. Cao Cao
determined to eliminate them.

From the autumn of 206 through the spring of 207, Cao Cao made
preparations, most notably by digging two canals, the Pinglu Trench
and the Quanzhou Trench, to bring supplies by water from the region of
present-day central Hebei to the territory of the northeast.\textsuperscript{100} In the summer he came to take personal command of the campaign, with his base camp at the city of Yi in Hejian, and he advanced from there to Wuzhong.

The obvious line of attack against the Wuhuan positions lay along the coastal plain south of the mountains into Liaoxi, but the summer rains of the monsoon put the rivers of this region into spate, flooded the marshland in the low-lying areas along the sea, and turned the roads into mud. The enemy held every crossing place, and the army could make no progress.

It was at this point that Cao Cao asked the advice of the local Chinese leader Tian Chou, who had maintained his independence for many years in the region of Wuzhong, but had come to join Cao Cao when his main force drew near. Tian Chou had suffered some attacks and raids from Tadun's forces, but he had maintained good contacts with other groups of the Wuhuan and the Xianbi, and he had knowledge of the country. His advice to Cao Cao was as follows:\textsuperscript{101}

The road along the coast is always flooded in summer and autumn. It is too deep for horses and carts, but too shallow on the other hand for boats or barges. These conditions have long been a difficulty for this region.

In the past, however, when the capital of [You-]beiping commandery was at Pinggang,\textsuperscript{102} there was a road which went out by Lulong\textsuperscript{103} and on to Liucheng.\textsuperscript{104} Since the Jianwu period, two hundred years ago,\textsuperscript{105} the road has fallen into ruin, but there is still the remnants of a track which you can follow.
Map 13: Cao Cao's Route to White Wolf Mountain 207
Now the enemy commanders are certain that a major army such as yours will have to attack them direct from Wuzhong, and they will be sure that since you cannot advance against them now you will be forced to retreat. They will feel secure, and will relax their preparations.

However, if you turn your army aside, go out through the Lulong pass into the gorges of the Botan region, then you will find yourself in territory which is undefended. The road there is close and convenient, you will be able to attack them where they least expect it, and you can take Tadun's head without fighting even a single battle.

Cao Cao accepted the plan, and embarked on one of the most remarkable military adventures of his career. Leaving the plain, he turned through the mountains to the north, and crossed over into the upper valley of the Luan River. He marched his forces east, across territory which was now recognised as the grazing lands of the Xianbi, and then re-entered the mountains from the north. In doing so, he turned the flank of Tadun's defensive position, and advanced on a line to the sea which would divide the enemy territory into two.

In the autumn, in the eighth Chinese month, as Cao Cao approached through the mountain country beyond the frontiers of Liaoxi commandery, Tadun and his fellows realised their danger. Hastily withdrawing his troops from their prepared positions, the Wuhuan commander brought them north to oppose Cao Cao's advances. The two armies met in the neighbourhood of White Wolf Mountain (Bolang Shan), on the headwaters of the Daling River.

The battle was a short one. Cao Cao's force was lightarmed, with the baggage well to the rear, but he had been expecting a sudden
encounter and he was prepared for the opportunity. The Wuhuan forces evidently arrived in the area without the time to draw up a proper formation, and they did not arrange any defence by harassment in the gorges. Instead, they appear to have drawn up in ill-ordered mass, and they proved desperately vulnerable to the swift and effective attack led by Cao Cao's general Zhang Liao. Within a very short time, Tadun was defeated and killed, along with great numbers of his men, and it is said that more than two hundred thousand of the enemy surrendered.

With this one engagement, Cao Cao had broken the back of Wuhuan resistance. Yuan Xi and Yuan Shang, together with the surviving Wuhuan leaders, Supuyan, Louban, Wuyan and others, fled east to seek protection from Gongsun Kang in Liaodong, and Cao Cao continued his march to Liucheng. There he halted, making clear that he had no intention of following his success with an attack against Gongsun Kang; and Gongsun Kang, for his part, preferred to seek Cao Cao's friendship than to join an alliance with his defeated enemies. A few days after the Yuan brothers and Supuyan arrived, Gongsun Kang arrested them, killed them, and sent their heads to Cao Cao. Cao Cao himself claimed the credit for this success, for once the threat of a direct attack was removed from Gongsun Kang, the Yuan brothers were no more than an embarrassment, and they might even prove to be an internal threat to his local authority. And Gongsun Kang had no reason to keep a semi-independent Wuhuan chieftain in operation in his
frontiers, when he could hope that the murder of Supuyan might leave the way open for his own takeover of the tribespeople to the west.

At the same time, Cao Cao was surely making a virtue from necessity, for he and his army were in no condition to embark on the conquest of southern Manchuria. As he withdrew from Liucheng, the floods of summer had given way to an early winter, bitterly cold, with no drinkable water on the surface for a hundred kilometres. The army was short of food, and they killed their horses for meat, while it was claimed that the men had to dig wells three hundred feet deep before they found water. Moreover, Cao Cao's position in China Proper was still in danger from a serious attack by one of his warlord rivals in the south, and it was important that he should return swiftly to his capital. In the eleventh month, however, at the end of 207, as the army returned to the North China Plain, he was greeted by Nanlou of Shanggu and Pufulu of Dai commandery, leaders of the Wuhuan who brought their subordinate chieftains to offer homage and congratulations. With the destruction of Tadun, the short-lived hope of an independent Wuhuan confederacy was ended, and there was no further attempt at serious opposition to Cao Cao's authority in the north.

It was recognised, even by Cao Cao, that the campaign had been dangerous and risky. After his successful return, it is said that he asked for the names of all those who had advised against the plan. The counsellors were worried that they would be criticised and
punished for their ill-judged warnings, but in fact Cao Cao granted them rich rewards, saying:

When I went out, I was taking a considerable risk in the hope of a good result. Although everything turned out well, I realise that fortune was on my side, and a policy such as this should not be followed too often. The advice that you gave was sensible and safe, and it is for that advice I am rewarding you now. Should another such occasion occur in the future, please do not hesitate to warn me in the same way.¹¹⁴

One further point about this campaign of Cao Cao remains to be observed. It was at this time, before his march to the north and during the anxieties of his return, that Cao Cao composed one of his most celebrated poems. To the rhythm of "Going out on foot from the Xia Gate", he set a cycle of verses, linked with a chorus, describing his varied emotions in the course of the campaign. In a brief introduction, he indicates his uncertainty over the attack to the north, and in the linked stanzas which follow he tells first of how he climbed the great cliff at Jieshi, near present-day Qinhuangdao, looking out over the Gulf of Bohai, and then describes the harshness of winter in the north. He concludes with philosophical and political optimism, almost a call to arms against the fates.¹¹⁵

I.

East I climb the Jieshi crag
To gaze on the sweep of the sea.
How tossed and troubled the waters,
How tall and stark the mountain peaks.
The trees grow crowded together,
Every plant flourishing and green.
The autumn wind sighs and sings
And the great waves break and surge.
The courses of the sun and moon
Seem to rise from the waves;
The Milky Way in splendour and brilliance
Seems to rise from the sea.
Fortune indeed is come,
And singing expresses our hopes.
II. The tenth month, the first of the winter,
   And the winds from the north come in fitful gusts;
   The air of Heaven is biting cold,
   With heavy frosts and driving sleet.

   The cocks of the wilderness crow to the dawn,
   The wild geese fly to the north,
   The vultures have gone into hiding
   And the bears are settled in their caves.
   The work with spades and hoes is ended,
   The farmers have harvested and threshed the grain.
   Innkeepers set up their tables
   To welcome the merchants along their road.
   Fortune indeed is come,
   And singing expresses our hopes.

III. The lands and houses are not the same,
   North of the river it is fiercely cold.
   Ice drifts float down the streams
   And the boats find it hard to go on.
   The ground is harder than a spade,
   Weeds are established in the fields,
   The water is gone and flows no longer
   And the ice is firm enough to walk.
   The scholars are in hiding and distress,
   The brave men care little for the laws;
   Always in my heart are sighing and sorrow,
   Many griefs and sympathy for their plight.
   Fortune indeed is come,
   And singing expresses our hopes.

IV. The sacred tortoise had a very long life,
    But still reached the end of his days.
    The soaring dragon can ride on the mists,
    But he ends as dust and ashes.

    The swift steed in old age rests in his stable,
    But still thinks of a thousand li;
    When a brave man come to his evening years,
    Strong heart remains the same.
    The time of our life and death
    Is more than the whim of Heaven.
    If a man is in harmony with himself
    He may live for long years.
    Fortune indeed is come,
    And singing expresses our hopes.
Postscript: the Wuhuan and the state of Wei:

With the defeat of Tadun, great numbers of the Wuhuan who had surrendered were brought back to settle in China, and *Sanguo zhi* remarks that their horsemen became the finest cavalry force in the empire.\(^{116}\) Further to the west, there was a short period of disturbance among the Wuhuan of Dai commandery and Shanggu about 216, but they were first restored to order by the Grand Administrator Pei Qian,\(^{117}\) and then, when they again caused trouble, they were attacked and defeated by Cao Zhang, a son of Cao Cao, in battle north of the Sanggan River in 218.\(^{118}\)

By this time, however, the whole situation of the northern frontier had changed, and the Wuhuan were no more than marginal actors upon the stage. In 216, Cao Cao took the title of King of Wei, and though he still paid nominal respect to the empire of Han, his son Cao Pi confirmed the end of that dynasty by taking the imperial title for himself five years later. Also in 216, Cao Cao took the Shanyu of the Xiongnu as a permanent hostage into his capital at Ye, and divided the territory of the Xiongnu into five separate regions, supervised by a Chinese official.\(^{119}\) At the same time, however, the political vacuum beyond the northern frontiers of China was gradually being filled by the growing power of the Xianbi, notably under the leadership of the chieftain Kebineng, who eventually established a confederacy which occupied the former lands of the Xiongnu, spreading from the Ordos loop of the Yellow River eastwards to the Great Xingan Mountains and the headwaters of the Liao River.\(^{120}\)
In these decades of change, the Wuhuan people steadily lost importance. Some groups, in Dai commandery, continued in occasional rebellion and disturbance during the early years of the Wei dynasty. Others, of course, had taken refuge with their leaders in Manchuria after the defeat at White Wolf Mountain: a few of these may have joined the people of Koguryo, on Gongsun Kang's eastern frontier, and fought against him there. Another party remained on the western borders of Liaodong, and when Guanqiu Jian attacked and conquered the Gongsun territories for the empire of Wei in 237, some five thousand of these Wuhuan from Liaoxi and Youbeiping came to offer their submission.

For the most part, however, the Wuhuan ceased to be observed as an independent people of the northern frontiers of China. Many of them, as we have seen, were settled in China Proper, and were assimilated among the Chinese themselves. The great majority, however, were incorporated in the power of the Xianbi and other tribal associations, and the process of attachment and assimilation which we have postulated for the first and second centuries AD reached its fulfilment in the third. With their defeat at White Wolf Mountain, even the smallest hope of Wuhuan political independence and identity had been destroyed, and the scattered tribes were dominated by more powerful and successful neighbours. From this time on, the history of the Wuhuan on the northern frontiers of China would be continued only as a part of the Xianbi confederacies and the great empires which followed them.
CHAPTER 10

THE CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF FAILURE

The end of the Later Han dynasty was accompanied by a dramatic loss of Chinese authority on the northern frontiers. Admittedly, the power of the Wuhuan was destroyed by the great campaign of Cao Cao, and the empire of the Northern Shanyu of the Xiongnu had been eliminated by the triumphs of Dou Xian and his colleagues. Yet these gains were more than cancelled by the emergence of the Xianbi people as a dominant, unruly and uncontrollable power on the Mongolian steppe and in the northern territories of China Proper. At the same time, further to the west, though the rebellions of the Qiang tribes in the second century were put down with military force, the final result of two centuries imperial policy was that the greater part of their territory was removed from the control of any Chinese government.

The ultimate failure of the Han empire in the north may be seen as a failure of authority, the concept described by the Chinese as wei 威 and by Luttwak, in his work on The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire, as "suasion".1

Adopting Luttwak's basic concept, and applying it to the situation of Later Han, the Chinese need in the north was that the empire should possess adequate power, and also that the non-Chinese
peoples should perceive and accept the dominance which that power gave
to the government and armies of Han. In order for the authority of
Han to hold sway, it was of course necessary that the Han should
itself be strong; it was equally essential, however, that the people
with whom the Han government was dealing should be aware of that
strength and should be in a position where they were compelled to
accept it.

In dealing with the Qiang, and to a large extent also with the
Wuhuan, the problem for the Han government was fairly straightforward:
the various tribes and peoples should be defeated and collected by
force of arms, and then settled in areas clearly controlled by Chinese
government officials with obvious access to military resources
whenever they might be required. It was the duty of the Protector and
other local officials to ensure that the non-Chinese inhabitants of
Chinese imperial territory should find it undesirable to rebel: some
officials maintained this policy by making life under Chinese sway
sufficiently tolerable that their subjects had no strong cause to
protest; others unfortunately preferred to maintain awe by the threat
of drastic punishment for any disturbance, no matter how justified.

The problems of administering the Qiang or the Wuhuan within
Chinese frontiers, however, were not remarkably different from those
of dealing with Chinese subjects themselves in the heartlands of the
empire. There were certainly problems of racial integration,
exacerbated by differences of language and customs, and there seems
small question that the Chinese attitude was often one of intolerance, suspicion and restriction; we have remarked already upon the "mercantilist" attitude which sought to channel and restrict the flow of trade to the non-Chinese. These peoples, however, whatever their resentments might be, were in constant contact with the effectiveness of Chinese power, and they could weigh up the costs and consequences of trouble for themselves. It was only in times of great distress and particular Chinese weakness that the chances of rebellion appeared to offer the better choice.

In dealing with the Xiongnu, however, the Chinese government was attempting to operate its power over a considerable distance, and to influence the behaviour of people who were by no means under direct control. Even after the settlement of the Southern Xiongnu, who could be considered to have occupied the vassal status of the Qiang and the Wuhuan, there was still a Northern Xiongnu state outside the frontier.

In such circumstances, however, as I have suggested earlier, the existence of a coherent, orderly and even powerful state in the north was not necessarily a disadvantage to the interests of the empire. To return to the original formulation of the concept of authority or "suaision", the government of a Shanyu at least had the capacity to recognise the threat which the Chinese military power could represent. So long as Chinese armies were capable of engaging in a decisively successful campaign - or even one which could inflict great damage
upon the Xiongnu state - and so long as the rulers of the Xiongnu appreciated that fact, they would tend to behave very much as the Chinese government wanted them to. And one of the most useful functions which a barbarian ruler could perform was to control the depredations of his young warriors against the settled territories of the Chinese empire.

In simplest terms, the ideal situation for the Chinese government was to have the Xiongnu ruler sufficiently powerful within his own state that his orders would be enforced and obeyed, but sufficiently respectful of Chinese capacity to do him damage that he would command his people not to provoke them by mischief-making along the frontier.

From this point of view, the situation between the imperial court and the Shanyu in the closing years of Former Han was almost ideal, and the period after the division of the Xiongnu was essentially satisfactory; though it will be recalled that the very existence of the Southern Shanyu as an ally within the Chinese borders was found on occasion to put inhibitions on imperial policy. In the end, of course, the continued pressure from the Southern Xiongnu, and the political interests of the Dou faction, caused the despatch of the Han armies in 89, and the utter destruction of the Northern Xiongnu state.

The vacuum of power left in Mongolia, however, could not be filled by the Chinese nor by their Southern Xiongnu puppet. Instead, the tribes of the Xianbi, already established on the steppe in rivalry
to the weakness of the Northern Xiongnu, were able to extend their
dominion without great difficulty. Within a few years of the decisive
victory over the Northern Shanyu, the Chinese were faced with a new,
and significantly more troublesome neighbour.

The basic problem with the Xianbi was not so much their actual
military strength, for at least in these early stages their armies
never matched the forces that the Xiongnu had put into the field
during the first years of Later Han, but the very incoherence of their
political system. Quite literally, there was no one person of
authority among the Xianbi people who was in a position to recognise
or be impressed by the military power of China; and even if some of
the Xianbi leaders were worried about the effect of a Chinese attack
upon their people, none of them had the political power to restrain
their fighting men from making raids and incursions against the
inviting and comparatively prosperous lands of Han. In the primitive
stage of political development of the Xianbi in the second century AD,
when leadership in war was the chief source of power, the man who was
not prepared to go to war was unlikely to hold his authority for
long.

In discussing the frontiers of the Roman empire, one may contrast
the civilised client states of the east, such as Judea and Pontus,
which could recognise and respond to Roman power and authority, with
the intractable problems of the German frontier, where the Romans
could find no effective authority among the tribes with whom they
might treat. The Han Chinese brought that very difficulty upon themselves: they destroyed the potential client state of the Xiongnu, and were faced as a result with the incoherent but constantly threatening power of the Xianbi. In this sense, it may well be argued that the destruction of the Northern Xiongnu was a short-term triumph but a long-term disaster for the empire of Han.

The difficulties of the empire, however, were based upon more than a possibly mistaken strategy. In the most general terms, it does not appear that the government of the Later Han dynasty was ever able to organise for itself the effective control of resources within its territory; the registration and yield from land and other taxes or monopolies suffered generally from the intervention from special interests at court and in the provinces, and the emperor never appears to have acquired an adequate share of the wealth of the empire.

Still more to the point, the force of Han government in the north was weakened by the loss of Chinese population from the times of troubles at the beginning of the dynasty and by the continual erosion of the numbers of Chinese citizens on the frontier. The continuing need for legislation to bind subjects in the northern commanderies to their native territory bears evidence that the problem of southward immigration was well recognised, and the census studies of Bielenstein have shown that the problem was insurmountable and the legislation generally ineffective. As a result, the northern territories themselves lacked the manpower and material to maintain the Chinese position without continuing support and subsidy.
This problem of population, of course, was begun, reinforced and compounded by the military insecurity of the region. What the Han government and people needed in the northern commanderies was the peaceful deployment of civilians, and a local production sufficient to maintain some proportion of the local defence needs. It seems likely that this had been achieved in the latter part of Former Han; but there is no question that the Chinese occupation of the ground had been quite disrupted by the warfare at the beginning of Later Han, and the empire never recovered from that setback. No government of Later Han was able to drive people back to the north, and in the absence of an adequate settled position, those few people who remained found themselves more and more exposed to the depredations of their enemies, whether from outside or within the borders of the empire.

So the Chinese people, naturally enough, were reluctant to remain in the north. Even the loyal general Zhang Huan, in his letter to Duan Jiong to plead that he might not be sent back to his native territory of Dunhuang, spoke in the most desperate tones against a fate which he compared to ruin and death. And great numbers of lesser citizens voted successfully with their feet, and escaped to the comparative security of lands further south.

The effect upon the Han position, of course, was cumulative: as the non-Chinese people saw the numbers of settlers decline, so their ambitions expanded: the Xianbi in the north became more aggressive, the Qiang, Xiongnu and Wuhuan, within the frontiers, found less reason
to respect the authority of the local Chinese. Too often and too easily a small disturbance could develop into a major uprising, just because there was no effective Chinese militia close at hand and the main regular army was too far away to serve as an immediate threat.

In military terms, of course, the Chinese armies were successful in their wars from the time of Emperor Guangwu to the disastrous expedition against Tanshihuai in 177. This record, however, can obscure the fact that what the Chinese settlers in the north really wanted was not victory, but peace. To cite Luttwak again, in the latter stages of the Roman empire, during the third century AD, effective defence reposed in the field army which accompanied the emperor. Such a field army could eventually intercept and defeat an invading enemy; but that victory would be won only after the enemy had inflicted enormous damage upon the people, property and territory of the empire itself. The effects of such a strategy "relentlessly eroded the logistic base of the empire and relentlessly diminished the worth of the imperial structure to its subjects".  

Indeed, the rulers of the Han dynasty were for the most part even less well equipped to comprehend the nature of the military problem than were those of imperial Rome. Rome, after all, was a society geared for the conquest, domination and government of different nations: it was a militaristic power but also a remarkably tolerant one. The Chinese, we have observed, found it difficult to contemplate dealings with alien peoples on even terms; and although the emperor
ultimately owed his power to his authority over his armies, the succeeding emperors of Han were never expected to command in the field.

Moreover, while the generals of ancient Greece and Rome could achieve honour and political power, the commanders of Han seldom received comparable treatment. Apart from Dou Xian, who was always a political figure rather than a military one, and Duan Jiong, who was awarded a triumph after his massacre of the Qiang, military men were not given great attention at the capital. Some, such as Zhai Tong and Zhai Can, were executed for their failures on campaign; some, such as Ren Shang, were punished for other offences, despite their military success. Others, such as Zhang Huan, might be fortunate enough to achieve a quiet retirement. For the most part, however, unless there were particular extraneous reasons, such as family or faction, the generals of Later Han had remarkably small influence in the policies of their government.

The part played by Zhang Huan in the eunuchs' coup of 168 is a dramatic demonstration of lack of communication between the parties at court and men in the field, but one may note in more general terms the absence of understanding between those who held political authority and those who controlled the armies. Though some great families of Later Han came originally from the frontier regions, they had long been settled in the capital, and the greater part of the central bureaucracy at Luoyang was controlled by men of
wealthy gentry families from the central provinces. It may be questioned whether these high officials really understood the nature of the problem, or the pressures and distress which people might suffer from their policies.

The situation in Liang province during and after the Qiang rebellion may serve as an example. We are told how the people were uprooted from their homes as part of a scorched-earth policy in 111, and later, in 129, years after the defeat of the rebellion, orders were given to encourage the former inhabitants to return to their earlier homes. One might wonder what the refugees had been doing in the mean time, and how many of them were anxious to put themselves once more at the mercy of their unfriendly neighbours, to rebuild the homesteads which the imperial government had destroyed over their heads. One point in favour of this program, we are told, was that the government expected it would be saved some cost of subsidy for the poor regions of the northwest.

From the point of view of the dynasty itself, it is possible that this question of subsidy or, in more general terms, the finances of the empire as a whole as determined between one province and another, was the most significant of all the problems which stemmed from the difficulties on the northern frontier.

If, as has been suggested, the court of Later Han was comparatively limited in the revenues which it could call upon from
the empire as a whole, then the problem of a financial drain, not merely a continuing but even an increasing one, put very great pressure upon the stability of the government itself. We know that the court of the Southern Shanyu was maintained with high subventions, and we have also learnt that You province in the northeast received massive subsidy from the two provinces of Qing and Xu, neighbours to You on the south. Both these commitments, however, had been established at the beginning of the dynasty, and one may assume that they were to some degree catered for in the traditional budgetary structure of the empire.

On the other hand, we are told that the regent Empress-Dowager nee Deng embarked upon a deliberate policy of economy, involving not only personal frugality but also, at the beginning of her government, a reduction in military expenditure and training. To some extent no doubt, this policy was adopted on the philosophical grounds of conservative Confucianism; but it is also possible that by the end of the reign of Emperor He, the government was beginning to feel the strain of the increasing cost of administration and subvention for the Xiongnu. Indeed, it may be suggested that although the campaigns of Dou Xian had been a military success, and Ban Chao's reconstruction of Han dominance in the Western Regions was one of the great imperial achievements of Later Han, the immediate and consequent costs of these two enterprises put a noticeable strain upon a limited and precariously-balanced imperial budget.
From the outbreak of the great Qiang rebellion in 107, moreover, the situation became critical. The cost of the war of suppression was itself a major drain upon the imperial revenues, but what was very likely more serious was the transition of Liang province from a prosperous region, making a net contribution to the resources of the central government, to debtor status as a result of the batterings it received from endemic rebellion and warfare through the first half of the second century.

Liang province, after all, had been the area of successful expansion in the time of Former Han, providing the route to central Asia and the Silk Road, and the flank position against the Xiongnu. The eastern part of the province, moreover, about the valley of the Wei, had formed part of the key economic area of the "Land Within the Passes", the strategic base for Qin and Former Han. Even at the beginning of Later Han, though the loss of dominance of this region was reflected in the transfer of capital from Changan to Luoyang, the territory was still strategically and economically important.

For the longer term, through the second century AD, the point at issue is not one to be expressed in absolute terms, but in relative ones: if we can accept that Liang province had been a significant contributor to the central government finances at the beginning of the dynasty; then the loss of revenue from Liang province as a result of the disturbances with the Qiang meant either that the government suffered a significant decline in its available revenues, or it was
compelled to recoup those losses by increasing demands upon other provinces. It is likely that both these things took place, so that the government of Later Han not only suffered financially, but also became increasingly unpopular among the gentry and people of the eastern provinces.14

We do not have the material to make a proper and authoritative judgement, and there is no question that the financial problems of Later Han, expressed in embezzlement, corruption, the sale of offices, and protests in the provinces, were compounded by a lack of responsibility among those who controlled the government through the second century AD. However, it may be suggested that some of the stories of imperial financial failures, and some of the tensions in the settled provinces of the eastern part of the empire, may be ascribed to the attempts of the central government to recoup its losses from the decline of Liang province by increasing pressure for funds, in one form or another, against those hitherto unaffected territories.

Accepting the circumstances discussed above, the geography of the northern territories of China, the nature of the various non-Chinese peoples with whom the imperial government had to deal, and the political and economic structure of the Han empire itself, the question remains: to what extent can we find a deliberate policy in the approach of the imperial government to the problems raised by their non-Chinese neighbours?
The answer which any person gives to a question such as this will depend very largely upon individual opinion about the nature of the imperial government; one is inevitably begging the question of how far a Han government, or indeed any government in traditional China, was capable of co-ordinating a deliberate policy.

A secondary difficulty, in considering the effectiveness of Han policy on the northern frontier, is that one may find, as I have suggested in this chapter, that the most effective policy may well have been one of inactivity. On this interpretation, the conservative policy of Emperor Guangwu, who did not seek to take advantage of the division of the Xiongnu by launching a major military campaign of conquest, is to be preferred to that of the ambitious Dou Xian; and however the government of Emperor Ling might have decided to deal with the very great problem posed by Tanshihuai, there seems little question that the expedition of 177 was the worst possible attempt at a solution.

It is arguable, then, that even if a ruler of the Han dynasty had been able to mobilise resources comparable to those which Emperor Wu of Former Han had held under his control, he would very likely not have followed the same policies as that energetic ancestor. For Emperor Wu was recorded in history not only for his triumphs of conquest, but also for the costs which he inflicted upon the empire. The memory of the glorious campaigns of Huo Qubing was matched by the record of the debate of the Discussions on Salt and Iron, and the
philosophy of government in the Later Han period was in many respects more a continuation of the cautious and reserved approach of the latter part of Former Han than of the expansion and splendour which preceded it, and which was believed to have done so much to exhaust the empire. Given the historical background and the attitudes of the time, a deliberate policy of aggressive expansion was normally not on the agenda.

By and large, one has the feeling that the statesmen of Later Han looked upon their empire as indeed a restoration of the former Chinese state. It may be argued that they were concerned, by one means or another, to establish and maintain a "natural" frontier in the north and northwest, that is, they expected to maintain control over the territory which had been held by Former Han. They sought precedents to justify their continuing occupation of the ground, and they seem to have been correspondingly reluctant to embark on major campaigns of expansion.

It is, I think, significant that the two great campaigns of Later Han beyond the borders in the north, the triumph of Dou Xian in 89-91, and the disaster of Xia Yu and Tian Yan in 177, were both decided as the result of particular politics at the court: Dou Xian received his appointment because of his membership of the family of the imperial relatives by marriage, and we are told that the eunuch Wang Fu used great influence in support of Tian Yan. In similar fashion, the somewhat abortive expedition of 73 appears to have been sponsored
primarily by the Geng and Dou families, and the decision to undertake
the campaign appears to have been as a result of their political
influence at court. 18

In these circumstances, it would appear that the normal policy
of Later Han towards the frontier was a conservative one, and
military action was taken more readily in response to a perceived
threat against the established position than with the purpose of
change. The government did indeed go to great trouble and expense in
putting down the great Qiang uprisings, and the campaigns of Duan
Jiong against the Xianlian in the late 160s were a model of ferocity
and applied power: but all these were taken in defence of what was
regarded as imperial territory, and the enemy were regarded, not as a
different people with the right to independence, but as willful
rebels against proper Chinese authority,

These last paragraphs have been based upon the assumption
that the Han government was generally in a position to take action on
the problems of the frontier. In fact, however, there is every reason
to believe that the government often found difficulty in mobilising
the resources of the empire for any such purpose. Not only were
there, as we have observed, political pressures from rival factions
which would seek to prevent the allocation of major resources to any
group espousing a "forward" policy, so too there was the inevitable
inertia of a bureaucracy which was geared rather to the maintenance
of the status quo than to the regular and active exertion of
imperial power. Since the major revenue-producing regions of the
empire were in central China, a considerable distance from the frontier, and the scholar-officials who governed the state were drawn largely from those prosperous, secure regions, it is not surprising that an aggressive initiative put forward and even adopted at court would still have notable problems of implementation.

Moreover, unlike the government of Former Han in the time of Emperor Wu, the Later Han dynasty, after the first half-century or so, provided no strong rulers for the empire. Though Emperor He was able to overthrow the power of the Dou family in 92, he was only fourteen at the time, and he died when he was twenty-seven. No ruler after him came to the throne as an adult and, more important still, no emperor remained upon the throne for more than twenty years. In these circumstances, no emperor of the second century AD had the real possibility of establishing a dominant control of the government or setting up a long-term coherent policy; and the records that we have of Emperor An and Emperor Shun do not indicate that they were men of strong and decisive character. In many respects, one might argue that the regent Empress-Dowager nee Deng was the most effective ruler of that period, but her constitutional position was naturally weaker than that of an established emperor, and for the whole of her time in government she was faced with the massive Qiang rebellion and the problems of its aftermath.

By the latter part of the second century, the attention of the central government was almost constantly distracted by the intrigues
of court and the problems of factionalism. The powerful relative-by-marriage Liang Ji, who controlled the government through the 140s and 150s, appears always to have been more concerned with domestic politics than with foreign policy. There is, perhaps, some indication that Emperor Huan in the late 160s was beginning to pay attention to the question of the northern frontier - the campaigns of Duan Jiong were taken on his initiative\textsuperscript{19} - but he died shortly afterwards, his successor Emperor Ling never established a personal authority, and the affairs of the borders, as we have remarked already, were of minimal concern to the political rivalries at the capital.

One might say, therefore, that the government of the Later Han dynasty, for most of the period of its existence, did in theory control sufficient resources to determine any policy against the non-Chinese peoples of the north. In practice, however, even without considering the strategical questions themselves, there were strong pressures, philosophical, administrative and personal, which prevented the government from doing very much more than reacting to circumstances.

And it must be recognised that the circumstances were remarkably intractable. I have argued that the great campaign by which Dou Xian destroyed the state of the Northern Xiongnu was not an unmixed blessing for the Chinese position in the north; and the difficulty was compounded by the fact that the government of the Southern Shanyu was not capable of establishing itself as an effective and trusted successor on the steppe. The takeover by the Xianbi, however, though
accelerated by the activities of Dou Xian, was coming about in any case without specific action by Han, and it was beyond the power of the Chinese to halt the process. One may feel that the Chinese were perhaps unlucky to be faced so soon with such a competent opponent as Tanshihuai, but the Xianbi people, even under lesser warleaders, were certain to present a problem.

Given such problems, however, one must still return to the essential weakness of the Chinese control on the ground. Regardless of the conquests of such generals as Ma Yuan and Duan Jiong, and the gallant rearguard actions of Zhang Huan and Huangfu Gui, the Later Han government could never rely upon the presence of a viable local defence based upon settled Han Chinese: life at the frontier was too uncertain, and Chinese control was maintained only by soldiers who had been recruited and conscripted, and by civilians who were ordered to remain. The census figures record a consistent and dangerous decline in Han Chinese colonisation and settlement in the north. 20

Moreover, the government of Han showed itself remarkably ineffective in gaining and holding the loyalty of its major non-Chinese subject people, the Qiang. The Xiongnu, of course, maintained in formal terms a separate state, and the Wuhuan, who had never been independently powerful, were prepared to serve in the regular imperial army. Yet no such record can be found for the Qiang, and it is surely remarkable that the great rising of the Eastern Qiang, in 107, took place almost seventy years after the settlement by Ma Yuan in the
northwest. The lenient Protector Deng Xun was able to enlist the Little Yuezhi into the Loyal Auxiliary, but no civil governor appears to have been able to ease the resentments and still the sense of alienation among the Qiang people living within the imperial frontier.

This is a sad record, and it gives bite to the criticisms of Wang Fu and Huangfu Gui concerning the cruelty and rapacity of the Chinese local administrators and military men. The penalties for this failure of government were severe, for although the Qiang were not successful in their major uprisings, the disruption which they caused put great strain upon the dynasty itself, and this ultimately forced the abandonment of the northwest by Chinese authority.

Considering all the circumstances, however, it may well be unfair to criticise the Han government for failure in the north. There were very great problems, some of them developed through misjudgement or misconduct by the Chinese. And the costs were high, sufficient to put intense strain on the resources available to the government. On the other hand, by and large, the rulers of Han did hold the line of the frontier, and the breakdown in Liang province, for example, came only when the central power had been drastically weakened by the rebellion of the Yellow Turbans in 184.

The fall of the dynasty itself came as the result of many factors, including the struggle for dominance of a weak emperor between eunuchs and imperial relatives and a loss of confidence and
sense of prosperity among the leaders in the provinces, while the immediate cause of collapse was a disastrous and destructive coup d'etat at the capital in 189. Against these events, the problems of the frontier may have appeared marginal, but they did produce a constant strain upon the resources of the government and the prosperity of the empire as a whole. To this extent, the difficulties of the Han government in the north and northwest contributed notably to the weakness and destruction of the dynasty itself.

Finally, however, as an envoi to this history, one may recall and pay tribute to those ordinary citizens of Han, who sought to colonise the border lands, and the non-Chinese people of the steppe who rivalled them for the benefits of that land. Their enmity was traditional, and in many respects inevitable, for each group had its own ambitions and expectations of agriculture or pasturage, and success for one was largely achieved at the expense of the other. Either party, however, could have been satisfied by peaceful occupations and trade; and it was the sad fact of environment, human nature and political struggle that kept the borders insecure and the people unsure of protection. In the end, the fall of the Xiongnu and the weakness of Han came from their failure to supply their people with that security which they needed and hoped for, and which it is the ultimate duty of government to provide.
# CHRONOLOGY OF THE NORTHERN FRONTIER

## IN THE FIRST TWO CENTURIES AD

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Han recognition of Bi as Southern Shanyu of the Xiongnu; restoration of the northern commanderies.

Emperor Ming

raiding by Dianyu of the Shaodang Qiang

defeat of the Red Mountain Wuhuan by Xianbi allies of Han

Wu Tang established as first General Who Crosses the Liao

Emperor Chang

appointment of Wu Tang as Protector of the Qiang

raiding by Miyu of the Shaodang Qiang

brief period of trade with the Northern Xiongnu

Xianbi defeat and kill the Shanyu of the Northern Xiongnu

Emperor He (88-92 regency of the Empress-Dowager nee Dou)

destruction of the Northern Xiongnu in the campaigns of Dou Xian

appointment of Deng Xun as Protector of the Qiang

frontier warfare with Mitang of the Shaodang Qiang

death of the Shanyu Anguo of the Southern Xiongnu; accession of the Shanyu Shizi; defection of Fenghou

Emperor Shang (regency of the Empress-Dowager nee Deng)

Emperor An (106-121 regency of the Empress-Dowager nee Deng)

Xianbi raid Yuyang and kill the Grand Administrator

Great East Qiang Rebellion
withdrawal from Western Regions; rebellion of Xianlian Qiang; Long Road cut

Deng Zhi defeated in Hanyang, recalled

Qiang raids reach the capital commanderies

revolt of Southern Xiongnu

establishment of military bases at Changan, Yong

five commandery capitals shifted

death of Qiang chieftain Dianlian

Hou Ba, Ma Xian defeat Xianlian Qiang

Deng Zun, Ren Zhang defeat Xianlian Qiang

Xianbi raiding in Liaoxi; assassination of Xianlian chieftains; Ren Shang decisively defeats Xianlian

Xianbi raids

office of Protector-General of the Western Regions re-established

rebellion of Southern Xiongnu Azu

Emperor Shun (from 132, supremacy of the Liang consort clan)

Xianbi raids against Southern Xiongnu

commandery capitals restored, re-settlement program begins

second major Qiang rebellion

rebellion of Southern Xiongnu; Judong Qiang burn Long Pass, raid Wei valley

Ma Xian defeated and killed by Judong Qiang; commandery capitals evacuated

Zhao Chong defeats Shaohe, Shaodang Qiang

Emperor Chong (regency of the Empress-Dowager nee Liang)

Emperor Zhi (Liang regency)

Emperor Huan (until 159, Liang regency)
renewed Xianbi raiding (led by Tanshihuai?)
c.156

Zhang Huan divides and defeats rising of Xiuchuge Xiongnu and the Wuhuan of Shuofang

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Xianbi raid defeated by Zhang Huan and Xiongnu auxiliaries

159-161

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Zhang Huan appointed to the capital; rebellion and raiding of Xianbi, Wuhuan, Xiongnu and Qiang; Zhang Huan returns and rebel Xiongnu surrender

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Duan Jiong's campaigns against the Xianlian Qiang

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Emperor Ling (168 regency of the Empress-Dowager nee Dou)

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Xianbi raiding by the government of Tanshihuai

c.168

"kings" of the Wuhuan in Shanggu, Youbeiping, Liaoxi and Liaodong

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(the rebellion of the Yellow Turbans); the Liangzhou rebellion

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repulse of the Liangzhou rebels at Meiyang

187

repulse of the Liangzhou rebels at Chencang; desertion of Wuhuan conscripts and beginning of the rebellion of Zhang Chun in the northeast

188

Liu Yu appointed Governor of You province; assassination of Zhang Chun and surrender of his Wuhuan allies; rebellion of the Xiuchuge Xiongnu, murder of the Shanyu Qiangqu and the banishment of the Shanyu Yufuluo

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year of the three emperors (seizure of power by Dong Zhuo)

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Emperor Xian (196–220 in the power of Cao Cao)

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NOTES TO CHAPTER 1

1. The chief source of information on the administrative structure of the Later Han empire is the Treatise of Officials (boguan zhi 百官志) in HHS 114/24 to 118/28. Local administrative offices are discussed at the end of HHS 117/27, 3613-15 dealing with the Colonel Director of Retainers (sili xiaowei) and his subordinates in the region of the capital, and in HHS 118/28, 3617-26, which deals with the administration of the provinces of the rest of the empire.

The major administrative territories of Former Han, for the period about 2 AD, are listed in the Treatise of Geography (dili zhi 地理志) in HS 28A-B; those of Later Han, about 140 AD, are in the Treatise of Administrative Geography (junguo zhi 衛國志) in HHS 109/19-113/23.

The most important work in a Western language on the administration of the Han period is Bielenstein, The Bureaucracy of Han Times, and in Chinese Yen Keng-wang, History of the Regional and Local Administration in China: Part I, The Ch'in and Han Dynasties; this is published in two volumes and will be cited as Administration I and II.

There is also important material and discussion in Dubs, HFHD and Loewe, RHA. Much earlier work has been superseded by Bielenstein's publication, but I shall have occasion to refer to three articles: de Crespigny, "The Recruitment System of the Imperial Bureaucracy of the Late Han" (cited as "Recruitment"), "An Outline of the Local Administration of the Late Han Empire ("Local Administration) and "Inspection and Surveillance Officials under the Two Han Dynasties ("Inspection and Surveillance").

2. On the shi 石 "bushel" as a measure of salary and hence of rank, see Bielenstein, Bureaucracy, 4 and 125-131.

3. On the development of the shuguo in the Han period, see Loewe, RHA I, 61-64, and Bielenstein, Bureaucracy, 109 and 189 note 138; also note 4 below. On the dao, see Bielenstein, Bureaucracy, 99-100.

In identifying the dao of the Han period, Bielenstein apparently follows the commentary of Qi Shaonan 謝翱南 of the eighteenth century to HSBZ 28B/2, 49a, who lists out the county-level units which have the character dao in their name.

This approach, however, seems somewhat superficial. For example, one of the dao-named counties of Former Han, identified by Qi Shaonan, is Gudao 郭道 in Wudu commandery (HHS 115/23, 3518). Very probably however, Gudao obtained its name from the fact that the county lay on the track of the northern section of the Linked Cloud Road through the Qinling Shan. During the Qin and early Han period, this
(3) Section of route was bypassed by the new construction of the Baoye Road: and the name "Old Road" would have been an appropriate one for an administrative unit in that region. There is no necessary reason that the character dao here has the meaning of "march" (see p.14 below).

Again, in a number of cases, county units with the character dao in their names appear in a very similar environment to others without the designation. The single example of Yidao in Nan commandery, in both Former and Later Han, begs the question whether this one county was particularly noted for the number of non-Chinese people, when its neighbour, Yiling, was evidently not in such a special case (HHS 112/22, 3480). Similarly, it is surprising that the chief county of Longxi commandery should have been a dao-named county, Dikdao, when other territories, closer to the frontier and presumably with similar proportions of non-Chinese peoples, were not thus indicated as marches. (HHS 113/23, 3516; on the rendering of the pronunciation of 禹, see note 8 to Chapter 2).

It seems more probable that the existence of the character dao in the name of a county unit shows no more than that the place concerned may have been at one time a march; it does not indicate that the place held that current status. An obvious analogy may be seen in the number of counties of Former Han whose names included the indication xiang "district": as Bielenstein, RHD III, 143-144, has pointed out, these were evidently new counties, based upon the sub-county district units, which were raised in status as a result of administrative expansion. The economising Emperor Guangwu abolished forty-one of the forty-six Former Han counties whose names had contained the xiang character.

I would argue, therefore, that the interpretation of Qi Shaonan cannot be used to identify the situation or the numbers of the marches of Former or Later Han. The relationship of name to function is not fully reliable, and the administrative arrangements would not have made a great deal of sense.

On the same argument, just as some places with dao-names may not have been "marches", other places without the designation could have been administered as marches. In "Local Administration", 61, for example, I suggested that since the dependent states at commandery level were involved in the administration of areas where there were "surrendered non-Chinese peoples" (zhu manyi xiangzhe 主類夷隸者 : HHS 118/28, 3621) and since we are also told that marches were county units which "governed non-Chinese" (zhu manyi 主類是: HHS 118/28, 3623), it seems probable that all the units under the dependent states were classified as marches. (It may be that this argument applies least successfully to the Dependent State of Liaodong, in You province, for while the summaries at the end of the entries...
for Yi province and Liang province in the Treatise of Administrative Geography, HHS 113/23, 3516 and 3521, both refer to marches among the county-level units, the summary for You province, at HHS 113/23, 3530, does not. The summaries, however, are not totally reliable.)

It would appear, then, that the system of dao marches was used chiefly in the western and northeastern provinces of Yi and Liang, and it represented a slightly more concerned approach to the presence of a significant number of non-Chinese people in the county unit concerned. As Yen Keng-wang has remarked, however, though the terminology might vary, the administrative arrangements for xian, dao, houguo and the other county-level units followed essentially the same pattern (Yen, Administration I, 43). The distinction, therefore, was not particularly important.

4. Bielenstein, Bureaucracy, 109 and 189-190 notes 138-142, discusses dependent states and lists those recorded for Former and Later Han. In Former Han, and for the first period of Later Han, dependent states appear as military districts, headed by a Chief Commandant, which were responsible to the regular civil commandery administration. In this, they were comparable to the military districts (duwei bu ～) which were established both in Former Han and in Later Han among various commanderies within the empire. The dependent states, however, were distinguished by their particular concern with non-Chinese people in the region of the frontier.

A dependent state, therefore, could include a number of county units, and had more extensive responsibility than a march (dao; on which see note 3 above). On the other hand, until the beginning of the second century AD, each dependent state was subordinated to a commandery administration.

During the reign of Emperor An, however, early in the second century AD, six dependent states were given the status of commanderies. These were the Dependent States of Guanghan, Shu Commandery and Jianwei in Yi province, of Zhangye and Juyan in Zhangye (which contained only the single county unit of Juyan itself) in Liang province, and of Liaodong in You province. The first three and the last-named were set up on the basis of military districts within commanderies, and it appears that Juyan in Zhangye may also have been in that category. The Dependent State of Zhangye, however, whose subordinate "counties" or "cities" (cheng ～) are actually named after military officials (see note 38 below), had existed as a dependent state before, and the change that was made was to give its administration equal rank with a commandery.

On his note 142, Bielenstein suggests that the chief commandants of these six dependent states were still subordinated to the grand administrators of the neighbouring commandery. I have argued, in "Local Administration", 61, that the effect of Emperor An's re-arrangements was to make...
(4) them administratively separate, but Bielenstein, who cites the Treatise of Officials from HHSJJ 118/28, 4b–6b (HHS 118/28, 3621: and see also HHS 118/28, 3619; HHSJJ 118/28 3a–b), does not find the evidence convincing on that point.

However, I note that at the end of the Treatise of Administrative Geography, in HHS 113/23, 3533 (HHSJJ 113/23, 31a), we are told that the government of Emperor An ordered the six dependent states be given administrative status equivalent to that of a commandery (bie ling bi jun 副領比郡). Three of those appointments are recorded in the Annals, HHS 5, 206 (Dependent State of Jianwei: 107 AD), 211 (Dependent State of Guanghan: 108) and 237 (Dependent State of Shu Commandery: 123), while HHS 86/76, 2857, describing the establishment of the Dependent State of Shu Commandery, says specifically that the Chief Commandant controlled four xian county units "like a Grand Administrator" (ru taishou 如太守). See also, and cf., the individual entries in HHS 113/23, 3514–15, 3521 and 3530. Moreover, it is clear that the Treatise of Administrative Geography consistently lists and counts those six dependent states in the category of junguo "commanderies and kingdoms".

From this evidence, it is well arguable that the passage in HHS 118/28, 3621 (HHSJJ 118/28, 5b), which describes how the chief commandants of dependent states zhi min bi jun 治民比郡 "ruled the people like a commandery administration", carried the understanding that they were effective heads of a local government, and not subordinate to the neighbouring civil administration. See also Yen, Administration I, 160 and 164–165.

Not all dependent states, however, operated at this commandery level of authority. Some, such as the Dependent State of Xihe and the Dependent State of Shang Commandery (on these two territories, see note 1 to Chapter 7) and the Dependent State of Anding (see note 1 to Chapter 8), did not have the status of a commandery administration, and were indeed subordinated to a commandery, as in the system inherited from Former Han. These, neither commanderies nor counties, were therefore not necessarily recorded in the Treatise of Administrative Geography.

The administrative size of a dependent state could vary. We have already noted that the Dependent State of Juyan in Zhangye comprised only the single county unit of Juyan. It appears likely that the Dependent State of Anding likewise included only the headquarters city of Sanshui in that commandery. In Shang commandery, the county unit called Qiuci Dependent State (Qiuci shuguo 柯屈相國) was most probably the headquarters of the Dependent State of Shang Commandery: it may have been the only county unit in the Dependent State, or the Dependent State may have included at least also the county unit called Houguan, whose site is
now unknown (see also note 38 below). The Dependent State of Xihe probably had responsibility for all the territory of the commandery within the Ordos loop of the Yellow River. Besides the Dependent State of Juyan in Zhangye, the other five dependent states established at commandery level in the time of Emperor An are known to have included two or more county units.

In the system of dependent states of the Later Han period, one may observe some similarity to the concept of the bāo "protectorate", postulated by Loewe, *RHA* I, 64 and *RRA* II, 201-203, where Former Han may have established a loose authority over an intermediate zone prior to the formal arrangements of a commandery.

It should be observed, however, that though the terminology of the *Treatise of Administrative Geography* and other texts of Later Han suggests that the dependent states were areas of expansion on the empire to control non-Chinese peoples who had "surrendered" to Han, they were in reality a sign of the weakening of the empire's authority on the fringes of its territory. For the most part, the establishment of a dependent state administration in Later Han was made in territory which had formerly been under the regular commandery/county system; to this extent, the need for a more military administration should be taken as a sign of weakness and even potential retreat rather than one of strength and expansion.

5. For further discussion, see Yen, *Administration* I, 154-75, and Loewe, *RHA* I, 61 and 74-76.


7. On the establishment of the command of the General Who Crosses the Liao, see pp.252-253 below.

8. A similar combination of civil and military authority may be observed in the Roman republic and empire. Both consuls and praetors, at the head of the civil government, were expected to be capable of holding military command (occasionally with disastrous results, as at Cannae in 216 BC).

Gaius Julius Caesar, who was celebrated as one of the greatest generals of the ancient world, obtained his first military command as governor of Further Spain in 61 BC, a post which he was granted after his term as praetor in Rome. He was then in his late thirties, and had no significant military experience up to that time. His appointment to the provinces of Cisalpine and Transalpine Gaul, and the great campaigns which followed in the ten years 59 to 49 BC, were based upon his term as consul in 60 BC.
9. This topic has been discussed in de Crespigny, "Inspection and Surveillance"; see also Yen, Administration I, 269-315.

10. HHS 8, 357, HHS 75/65, 2431; parallel passage in ZZTJ 59, 1887-90, translated by de Crespigny, Last of the Han, 37-38; also de Crespigny, "Inspection and Surveillance", 67.

11. e.g. SJ 88, 2565-66 (the Biography of Meng Tian), and SJ 110, 2886 (the Account of the Xiongnu); Watson, RGH II, 160, De Groot, Hunnen, 41-46.

12. Loewe, RHA I, 49-50 and 59-60, also Zhang Weihua, Han shi lun ji, 309-328, Chang Chunshu, "On the dating and development of the four prefectures of Ho-hsii in the Former Han period", and the articles by Liu Guanghua.

13. On the Han occupation of Juyan, see Hou Renzhi, "Ancient City Ruins", 2-4, and Loewe, RHA, passim.


15. The earliest modern map of the Great Wall of Han in the northwest appears in the endpapers to Stein, Ruins of Desert Cathay I.

16. This region of present-day Minqin has been identified as the country of the Xiuchu (also transcribed as Xiutu, see note 3 to Chapter 8) and Kunxie tribes of the Xiongnu, who surrendered to Han in 121 BC. See HS 6, 176; Dubs, HFHD II, 62; SJ 110, 2909 and HS 94A, 3769; Watson, RGH II, 181, De Groot, Hunnen, 126.

17. At the present city of Lanzhou there is a park, formerly the site of a Buddhist temple, called Wuquan gongyuan, the Park of the Five Springs. Legend has it that the five sources of water were broken open by the celebrated general of Emperor Wu, Huo Qubing, striking his sword upon the hillside.

18. On the establishment and development of the fortifications based upon Lianju, see HS 96A, 3873, and HS 61, 2694; Hulsewe and Loewe, China in Central Asia, 75 and 219. A parallel record to HS 61 appears in SJ 123 (translated by Watson, RGH II, 264-289, and by De Groot, Westlande Chinas, but on the comparative authority of the two sources, see Loewe's Introduction to China in Central Asia, 3-39.

On the site of the fortress of Lianju, I am guided by the discoveries and interpretations in the recent article by Xie Fangyu.
On the establishment of Lianju, see also p. 61 below. It may be observed that I have followed a different authority for the pronunciation of the place-name which Hulsewé and Loewe render as Ling-chu (see note 14 to Chapter 2).

19. Huang Shui 黄水 is the current name for this river, being the same title by which it was known in the Han period. However, to avoid confusion with the Huang He 黄河 or Yellow River, I describe the Huang Shui hereafter by the alternative modern name of the Xining River.

20. The roadworks of Qin and Han in this region are described by Needham, Science and Civilisation IV:3, 19-24, with accompanying Figure 711; Needham's description is based upon the research of Lo Jung-pang. Another most useful analysis is provided by Tom Chung Yee, A Study of the Land Communications of Han Dynasty, 1-14, with map facing p. 62. See also the article by Yen Keng-wang, and the report of the Shaanxi Provincial Institute of Archaeology, from 1964.

Among the lesser-used roads of this region, we may note the Ziwu Dao 北南道 "North-South Road", constructed at the orders of Wang Mang in 5 AD (HS 99A, 4076; Dubs, HFHD III, 212), which led into the ranges south of Changan and then to the Han valley. The passes were high and steep, but it provided an alternative to the Baoye which could be used in time of emergency, and it was still in use as a courier route during the Tang dynasty (Needham, Science and Civilisation IV:3, 22, and Tom, Land Communications, 15-19). This road was used most notably when the Baoye Road was out of operation due to the Qiang rebellions of the early first century AD: see pp. 103 and 115 below.

21. Needham, Science and Civilisation IV:3, 15 and 17; Tom, Land Communications, 72-82, and see also Yen Keng-wang, "Two Post Roads from Changan to Liang Chou".

There is general agreement that the Long Pass may be identified with the Dashen 大震 Pass, which lies between the Qiaryang 汾陽 River of present-day eastern Shaanxi and the Mutou 牧頭 River of Gansu. The eastern approach to the pass was known in Han times as the Long Slope 長坡 (Bielenstein, RHD II, 115). On the west, the road descended through the city of Lueyang 濮陽 county in Tianshui/Hanyang, which lay near present-day Qingshui in Gansu (Tom, Land Communications, 74).

There is some uncertainty, however, about the route of the Long Road to the south of the Yellow River. Needham, Science and Civilisation IV:3, 17 and Figure 711, has the Long Road following the modern railway line, through Dingxi 定西, to approach Lanzhou from the east. In this, he is evidently following the researches of Lo Jung-pang.
Tom, *Land Communications*, 77 and map facing p.94, suggests that the Long Road crossed from the Wei valley to the Tao, passing through Dikdao, the capital of Longxi commandery, and then followed the Tao River down to the region of present-day Lanzhou. Yen Keng-wang, "Two Post Roads", 51-54 and Map at p.90, observes that a main route of Tang followed this line.

There is not a great deal to choose between the two interpretations, but it seems likely that the capital of Longxi commandery would have been usefully linked by a direct major road to the Wei River in the east and to the Yellow River in the north, and I therefore accept the version of Tom and Yen.


23. On the nature of this form of dependent state, see note 4 above and also p.30 below. On Anding Dependent State, see also p.320.

24. In 141, the capital of Beidi was shifted still further to the south: see p.310 below.

25. The major food grains of north China in the Han period were the two varieties of millet, the spiked millet *liang*, identified as *Setaria italica* Beauv. var. *maxima* Al, and the paniced or glutinous millet *shu*, *Panicum miliaceum*.

There are also references to *ji*, the earlier millet of the Zhou period, tentatively identified as the smaller-eared lower-yield *Setaria italica* Beauv. var. *germanica* Trin., and in the northwest to *men*, probably a species of red millet. See Chang (ed.), *Food in Chinese Culture*, 26-27, and Loewe, *RHA* II, 322.

Barley, *da mai*, *Hordeum vulgare* L., and wheat, *xiao mai*, *Triticum turgidum* L., were also common, though the two grains were not always distinguished and were sometimes described simply as *mai*.

Soybeans (*Glycine max* L. Merr.) and other legumes were also commonly used.

It may be noted, however, that *gaoliang*, *Andropogon sorghum* var. *vulgaris*, the hardy, coarse grain which became a staple for the poor of north China in modern times, does not appear to have been cultivated until about the twelfth century AD: Chang (ed.), *Food in Chinese Culture*, 27, 147 and 197.
see also the essay by Yü, "Han China", in Chang's collection, especially pp. 70-74, and Hsü, Han Agriculture, especially pp. 81-86.

26. See, for example, Bielenstein, "An Interpretation of the Portents in the Ts'ien-Han-shu".

27. Zhu Kezhen, Zhongguo jin wugian nian lai qihou bianqian de chubu yanjiu; English version in Scientia Sinica (1973). See also his collected works, Zhu Kezhen kepu chuangzuo xuanji.

28. Personal communication from Professor Huang Shengzhang, of the Chinese Academy of the Sciences, visitor to Canberra in 1983.

Jenkins, "Climatic Cycles and the Rise of Chinggis Khan", has put forward the proposition that the Mongol drive for conquest in the thirteenth century was influenced by a notable drop in the year-to-year variations in the mean annual temperature in North China and Mongolia from about 1100 AD. In his words (p. 226) "their enthusiasm for the task of conquest may well have been fuelled by a climatic defeat at their backs".

The argument is impressive. It should be observed, however, that Jenkins' data, which uses the work of Zhu Kezhen, shows no change in the period of the Han dynasty which is in any way comparable to that of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (cf. his Figure 1 on p. 223).

29. Geographers of China have frequently discussed this question of marginal agriculture and pasture. See, for example, Cressey, Land of the 500 Million, 256-257, and Lattimore, Inner Asian Frontiers, 25, 31-32 and 37-39, and "Geographical Factor". The 1981 article of Shi Nianhai discusses the alternation of forest, pasture and agriculture on the loess plateau in historic times, and draws attention to the problems of erosion and downstream flooding of the Yellow River which tend to follow periods of agricultural colonisation.

A similar situation, where marginal agriculture may be drastically affected when over-ambitious colonisation is followed by a period of drought, may be observed in many regions of Australia. See, for example, Williams, The Making of the South Australian Landscape, 39-49 and 54-55.

30. The Annals of the First Emperor of Qin, in SJ 6, 256; Chavannes, MH II, 174, and the Account of the Xiongnu in SJ 110, 2886; Watson, RGH II, 160 (parallel passage in HS 94A, 3748), both say that the road, called Zhi dao 之 道 in SJ 110 and HS 94A, ran from Jiuyuan 九關 to Yunyang 雲陽. SJ 6 dates the construction to the year 212 BC. The Biography of Meng Tian, in SJ 88, 2566-67,
notes to Chapter 1

(30) says that the emperor had been making a tour of his northern dominions and wished to return direct to his capital, so the road was built straight from Jiuyuan to Ganquan.

The Jiuyuan commandery of Qin occupied territory which was later Wuyuan commandery of Han, and the city named Jiuyuan became the capital of the Han commandery. It was certainly in the vicinity of Baotou, north of the Ordos loop of the Yellow River. The question of the southern terminus of the road, however, and of its route, is a little more complex.

The Later Han scholar Xu Guang, quoted in the Jijie commentary to SC 6, states that the road ran from Jiuyuan to Ganquan (thus following the information from SC 88), and the Zhengyi commentary to the passage in SC 88 observes that the Ganquan referred to in the main text was a palace in Yongzhou (i.e. Yong province, in this context a reference to the Land Within the Passes; cf. note 56 to Chapter 3).

The Zhengyi commentary to SJ 110 quotes the Guadi zhi by Wei Wangtai of the seventh century, which says that the Forest Light Palace (Linguang Gong) of Qin was in Yunyang, and that the palace was renamed Sweetwater Spring (Ganquan) by the Han (see also the quotation from the Guadi zhi in the Zhengyi commentary to SJ 110, 2901, at 2902).

Another passage of the Guadi zhi, quoted in the same commentary to SJ 110, 2886, says that the old road of Qin ran along the ridge of the Ziwu Shan, 45 li west of the county of Huachi in Jingzhou. Huachi county of the Tang period was in the valley of the Luo River in Shaanxi, and the Ziwu range lies along the border of modern Shaanxi and Gansu provinces: cf. HSBZ 94A, 5a.

Ganquan palace in Yunyang county became the summer residence of the emperors of Han: see, for example, Loewe, Crisis and Conflict, 169.

At the present day, there is a county called Ganquan on the Luo River, but the name was not associated with that region in the administrative geography of Qin and Han; Needham, Science and Civilisation IV:3, 14 and Figure 711, therefore appears to be mistaken in associating the Direct Road with the site of modern Ganquan in the Luo valley.

From the literary evidence, therefore, the Direct Road crossed the Ordos region to the south, then followed the high ground of the Ziwu range on the present Shaanxi-Gansu border and dropped down to the Wei valley at Yuyang county of Han, now Chunhua in Shaanxi. From there the road naturally continued to the Qin capital at Xianyang. This evidence has
been confirmed by the explorations of modern Chinese archaeology, and a description of the remains of the Direct Road of Qin was published by Shi Nianhai in 1975.

Finally, with regard to the distance of the Direct Road, which is reported in SJ 88 as being 1800 li, it may be noted that the shortest line between modern Baotou and Xianyang is some 650 kilometres or about 400 miles.

31. Needham, Science and Civilisation IV:3, 16 and Figure 711; Tom, Land Communications, 83–94. The map of North China and Mongolia, in The Times Atlas of China, 2 and 3, shows a motor road from Xianyang to Baotou along this route.

32. See Professor Hou's two articles on the archaeology of the Ulan Buh desert, printed in his Lishi dili xue de lilun yu shijian, 69–94 and 95–124, particularly the maps printed on pp.77 and 97; also his paper "Ancient City Ruins", 6–8.

33. The Chushen ze 布申泽 is described in SJZ 3, 36. On the pronunciation of the character 布, see note 3 to Chapter 8.


There are a number of different interpretations of the course of the Great Wall of Qin and Han. The interpretation here is based upon advice from Chinese scholars in a number of institutions, including the museums of Gansu at Lanzhou and of Inner Mongolia at Huhhot. The general consensus is supported by the work of Zhang Weihua, Changcheng kao, particularly his maps of the Qin and Han Great Walls, and also by the historical atlas, Zhongguo lishi ditu ji II.

On the Gaoque Pass 南口 , which lay in the Lang Shan 狼山 range of the Yin Mountains, north of present-day Linhe 临河 in Inner Mongolia, see De Groot, Hunnen, 34–35, and Zhang Weihua, Changcheng kao, 106.

Tang Xiaofeng, of the Archaeological Section of the History Department, Inner Mongolian University, writing on the northern section of the Qin-Han Wall in 1977, identifies the Gaoque Pass with Shilanzhi Gap 石羊寺 in the Lang Mountains.

It appears from the study of sites on the ground that the Wall of Han lay further north than that of Qin, and Han imperial control extended well across the watershed of the Yin mountains, with outlying watchtowers.

35. There is one passage in the Annals of the First Emperor of Qin, SJ 6, 253, which tells how in the thirty-third year of his reign (214 BC), the emperor ordered the colonisation of the territory from Yuzhong 淩 mars eastwards along the Yellow River as far as the Yin Shan; and goes on to say 云 云
We are then told how Meng Tian was sent to occupy the lands north of the loop of the Yellow River. This text is translated by Chavannes, *MH II*, 168, and De Groot, *Hunnen*, 40. It may be noted that there is some uncertainty whether the number of xian described in this passage should be 44 or 34.

On this authority, some scholars have stated that the Great Wall of Qin extended along the whole Ordos loop of the Yellow River, and Needham, *Science and Civilisation IV*:3, Figure 711, follows that tradition.

The text and its interpretation, however, is not entirely clear. Firstly, though the modern Beijing edition punctuates the passage quoted above with a comma between the characters 十四縣城河上無塞，so that the latter clause would be understood as Chavannes has rendered it: "Il construisit un mur au bord du fleuve pour servir de barriere", it would be possible to read it with the pause after the character 長城，with the understanding given by De Groot: "...ummauerte Kreisstädte. Am Überlauf des Huang-ho errichtete man Grenzbefestigungen."

Furthermore, in his discussion of the passage, Zhang Weihua, *Changcheng kao*, 132-133, though accepting the Beijing edition punctuation, yet argues that the colonisation works included only the construction of walled settlements and not the establishment of a continuous barrier. He interprets the text as describing the arrangement of strategic posts, to defend the line of the Yellow River, and states specifically that these should not be regarded as having formed part of the Great Wall (see also his map facing p.136).

On the basis of this interpretation, it seems most probable that the original northern frontiers of the Qin state, roughly following the line of the Ming Wall at the present day south of the Ordos, were maintained until 215 BC. In that year, the general Meng Tian was sent to drive the Xiongnu from the Ordos region, and he established frontier positions and the northern extension of the Great Wall beyond the northern loop of the Yellow River (*SJ* 6, 252; Chavannes, *MH II*, 167, also *SJ* 88, 2565-66, and *SJ* 110, 2886; Watson, *RGH II*, 160). In the following year, 214, orders were given for the secondary colonisation and the establishment of frontier posts along the Yellow River at the west of the Ordos, but the main work of fortification continued in the north, and the essential completion of this work was signalled by the emperor's tour of inspection in 212 and the construction of the Direct Road (see note 27 above).

Regardless of the status of the Qin colonising works along the Yellow River west of the Ordos, it seems clear that the settlements were lost when the Xiongnu returned to the region after the fall of the Qin empire, and the Han dynasty did not attempt any major reconstruction or construction of a Great Wall defence in that area.
Needham, Science and Civilisation IV:3, 272 and Figure 859, suggests that the complex of irrigation works about present-day Zhongwei 中衛 and Yinchuan 银川 in Ningxia were originally founded by Meng Tian, and he identifies this with the construction program ordered in 215. However, though there may be a Qin/Han origin to the works in this area, the major period of early construction was apparently the Tang (personal communication from Professor Huang Shengzhang). Moreover, it seems clear from the texts that Meng Tian was primarily responsible for the settlement of the far north, beyond the Ordos loop.

Hou Renzhi, "Ancient City Ruins", 8-11, based upon his article discussing the Hongliu River and the Mu Us Desert, in his Lishi dili xue de lilun yu shijian, 47-59, particularly the maps on pp.48 and 49.

The biography of Felian Bobo (381-425) is in JS 130. He proclaimed himself King of Xia in 407, and founded the city of Tongwan as his capital in 413. The ruins, known locally as the White City (Bai Cheng 江城) are on the north bank of the Hongliu River (Mongolian: Salawusu), which is an upper tributary of the Wuding River, some thirty kilometres west of Hengshan 横山 in Shaanxi.

See also SJZ 3, 176-18a. This was the region of the Sheyan Marshes, scene of Duan Jiong's campaign of 168: p.137 below.

See pp.18-19 above.

The county of Houguan in Shang commandery was established under Later Han. The name may be translated as "office of the captain" or "company": hou was a military title used in armies on campaign or stationed at the capital, and among garrison troops on the frontier (HHS 114/24, 3864, HHS 117/27, 3612, and also Loewe, RHA I, 76 and 96); houguan "company" could be the name of a military unit on garrison duty, larger than a hou "platoon" (Loewe, RHA I, 76).

There are several other instances where military titles are similarly used as the names of county units in outlying regions of the empire:

Houguan was the name of the leading unit of the Zhangye Dependent state (see p.10 above), the other four being Zuoqi "Cavalry on the Left", Qianren 亲人 "Millenarian/Commander of a Thousand", Sima guan 司馬官 "Office of the Major" and Qianren guan 亲人官 "Office of the Millenarian" (HHS 113/23, 3521; on the listing of these offices, I follow the reading of Qi Shaonan in HHSJ 113A/23A, 40a and the arrangement of the Beijing punctuated edition: cf. Bielenstein, Bureaucracy, who prefers to read them as four units);
the name of Zuoqi also appears as a county unit under Wuwei commandery (HHS 113/23, 3520);

Houcheng 侯城 was the name of a county in Liaodong of Former Han and in Xuantu under Later Han (HHS 2BB, 1626; HHS 113/23, 3529; HHSJJ 113B/23B, 24b);

houguan also appears in the name of the county Dong 東 houguan on the coast of modern Fujian near Fuzhou; it was then under Kuaiji 桂夷 commandery in Yang province (HHS 112/22, 3488, amended in the commentaries to HHSJJ 112/22, 47a-b; also Bielenstein, "The Chinese Colonisation of Fukien", 103).

All of these, as it may be seen, were frontier territories, and it seems probable that the use of such titles implied a military involvement in administration; in some ways this may be compared to the county-level dependent states of Anding and Qiuci. See above, and note 4.

39. We are told by HHS 109/19, 3385, that all the counties which appear in the Treatise of Geography of Han shu but which are not listed in the Treatise of Administrative Geography of Hou Han shu were disestablished by Emperor Guangwu. In particular, HHS 1B, 49, cites an edict of 30 AD in which Guangwu ordered this rationalisation of local government units.

As Bielenstein, RHD III, 141-144, points out, not all the counties were disestablished in 30 AD, and in fact not all were disestablished in the reign of Guangwu, but there is no question that he was the instigator of the policy.

40. In 166 BC, for example, Xiongnu raiding parties against the Han government of Emperor Wen reached as far as the Ganquan palace, in the Wei valley less than a hundred kilometres from Changan (SJ 110, 2901 and HS 94A, 3761; Watson, RGH II, 172-173, De Groot, Hunnen, 83).

41. SJ 110, 2885 and HS 94A, 3747-58; Watson, RGH II, 159, De Groot, Hunnen, 34-36. The reign of King Wuling of Zhao 趙武靈 is described in the History of the House of Zhao in SJ 43, 1803-12; Chavannes, MH V, 65-87.

King Wuling came to the throne in 326 BC, and in 299 he abdicated in favour of his son, taking the title zhufu 父父, "Father of the Ruler". He continued, however, to take a leading role in the government until his death in 295.

There is some uncertainty as to the date of the conquest of the northwest, but Zhang Weihua, Changcheng kao, 103, argues that the work was completed after 300 BC.

42. See, for example, Loewe, "Campaigns of Han Wu-ti", 69-74 and 111-112, where Xiongnu raids against the northern commanderies are listed year by year.
notes to Chapter 1  (notes to pages 37-39)

43. Tom, Land Communications, map facing p.172. Needham, Science and Civilisation IV:3, 16 and Figure 711, shows the main imperial highway leading north of Taiyuan and through Dai commandery in the Sanggan valley. I prefer Tom's argument, at p.115, where he suggests that the imperial highway followed the more direct route through the mountains east of Taiyuan, by the Jingxing pass in the county of that name (in Changshan commandery: HS 28A, 2576; HHS 110/20, 3434; on the pronunciation of the second character of the name, see Ying Shao's commentary to HS 28A). The Shitai railroad now follows that route, from Yuci in Shanxi to Shizhiazhuang in Hebei.

44. On the changes of county administrations and thus of commandery borders in this region, compare HS 28B, 1620-21; HSBZ 28B/1, 25a-26a with HHS 113/23, 3525; HHSJJ 113B/23B, 8b-11b.


The people known as Loufan were associated with the Forest Barbarians (Linhu 林胡 ) and a county named Loufan was maintained under Yanmen commandery during both Former and Later Han (HS 28B, 1621; HHS 113/23, 3525). The ancient site is now in the vicinity of Ningwu in Shanxi.

46. On the Dai Forest, see De Groot, Hunnen, 59-60, and p.178 below, and note 15 to Chapter 5. The ancient city of Mayi was near present-day Shuoxian in Shanxi.

47. Although the Dahei River about Huhhot and the Sanggan about Datong were both under the control of Former and Later Han, it does not appear that the area of present-day Jining was held by county administration during Later Han.

No county in the lists of the treatises can be identified with the territory of Jining, and the reconstruction of the modern atlas Zhongguo lishi ditu ji II, Maps 59-60 shows the Great Wall running along the ridges southwest of Jining and across the line of hills which separates that region from the main valley of the Sanggan River about Datong. (In this respect, the Wall of Han appears to have run to the south of the line established by the state of Zhao about 300 BC. Cf. Zhang Weihua, Changcheng kao, 108, and note 41 above.)

From this point, for some distance to the east, the Great Wall of Han appears to have followed the line of the present-day Wall of the Ming dynasty.

48. See pp.243-246 below.

49. Zhang Weihua, Changcheng kao, shows the Great Wall of Han south of the present-day site of Zhangjiakou. In this, he evidently accepts the principle that the Wall of Han
followed the Wall of Qin, which in turn followed the same line as the Wall of the state of Yan 燕, see his maps following pp.128, 136 and 158, and text at pp.134-135.

If, however, as modern interpretations would suggest, the city of Ning lay northwest of present-day Xuanhua 萧化, and therefore in the vicinity of Zhangjiakou (see, for example, the commentary of Wang Xianqian to HSBZ 28B/1, 44b-45a), then it would have been surprising for the Han government to maintain its defence line on the open country rather than on the hill slopes as the Ming did in later times, and it would certainly be most unlikely that an important city would be left outside the protection of the barrier.

50. On the defence arrangements for this region during the early part of Later Han, see pp.222-225 below.

51. On the rearrangement of counties between the commanderies, compare HS 28B, 1622-23; HSBZ 28B/1, 38a-46a, with HHS 113/23 3526-28; HHSJJ 113B/23B, 12b-17b.

Guangyang was a kingdom at the end of Former Han. Emperor Guangwu abolished it, and the territory was taken over by Shanggu commandery. It was restored as a commandery in 65 AD, and its chief county, Ji 井, was also the headquarters of the Inspector of You province. See HS 28B, 1634, and HHS 113/23, 3527.

52. Compare HS 28B, 1623-24; HSBZ 28B/1, 46a-51a, with HHS 113/23, 3528-29; HHSJJ 113B/23B, 16b-18b.

53. The setting up of the commandery-level Dependent State of Liaodong took place in two stages. In 106 (being the twelfth month of the sixteenth year of the Yongyuan 永元 reign period of Emperor He), the Han government re-established the office of the Chief Commandant of the Western Division of Liaodong commandery: HHS 4, 193, and HHS 113/23, 3529, commentary of Liu Zhao.

Some time later, during the reign of Emperor An, the Dependent State of Liaodong was established, "with independent authority over six cities" (bie ling liu cheng 别嶺六城): HHS 113/23, 3530; HHSJJ 113B/23B, 22a-23b. The Annals of the reign of Emperor An, in HHS 5, do not contain any reference to this establishment, so it is not possible to date the arrangement more precisely.

On the status of a dependent state at commandery level, see note 4 above.

HS 28B, 1626, notes that the headquarters of the Chief Commandant of the Western Division of Liaodong commandery at the time of Former Han was in Wulu 魯 county. It does not appear, however, that Wulu was included in the territory of the Dependent State under Later Han (see, e.g. the commentary of the Qing scholar Hui Dong 輯 in HHSJJ
notes to Chapter 1 (notes to page 39)

(53) 113/23, 21b-22a). The headquarters of the Dependent State were at Changli 崇利, which had been Jiaoli 江利 county in Liaoxi under Former Han (Hs 28B, 1625, and HSSJ 113B/23B, 21a-b). Evidently, Changli and related territories had either been incorporated into Liaodong commandery before the establishment of the Western Division in 106, or else the borders were re-arranged when the Dependent State was established.

The Dependent State of Liaodong actually contained three counties which had been under Liaodong during Former Han, Fuli 扶黎 (mistakenly entered in the HHS Treatise as Wulu 烏黎, see the commentary of Hui Dong cited above), Xiandu 前徒, and Fang 汾; and three counties formerly under Liaoxi commandery: Changli 崇利 (miswritten as Changliao 崇遼, see the commentary of Hui Dong), Bintu 碧徒 and Tuhe 徒河.

There is not a great deal of difficulty in determining the territory which was controlled by the three former counties of Liaodong, but there is considerable uncertainty over the identification of the region which was governed by the western part of the Dependent State.

The text of the HHS Treatise at this entry is, as may be seen from the amendments already discussed above, considerably corrupted. Besides the miswriting of Wulu for Fuli and of Changliao for Changli, we are told that Later Han Changli was known as Tianliao 天利 in Former Han: and this annotation should also be corrected to read Jiaoli 江利.

Moreover, although all other commandery-level dependent states in the Treatise have a record of census population figures, they are missing for Liaodong Dependent State (as Bielenstein, "Census", 159, points out, the figures for Liaodong commandery, where the number of individuals is given as exactly the same as for Liaoxi commandery, must also be regarded as unusable).

The problem of nomenclature has been largely sorted out by Chinese commentators, and their analysis is preserved in HSSJ. The geographical identification, however, is also confused by varying analyses of the text of SJZ 14, 21a-23b, which deals with the course of the Bolang River 百浪水: this text has been commented upon by Yang Shoujing and Xiong Huizhen in SJZS 14, 54a-60a. The arguments are complex, and a full discussion and translation of the material would occupy a great many pages, so I offer here only a series of notes, with an explanation of my own conclusions.

The site of the city of Fang is reasonably well established as being close to the Han time course of the Liao River (SJZ 14, 21a): it was probably in the region of present-day Haicheng 海城 in Liaoning. The other two cities formerly under Liaodong commandery, Fuli and Xiantu, also appear to have been in the region of the alluvial plain near the mouth of the Liao, north and northwest of present-day
Yingkou (which is sited as the modern historical atlas Zhongguo lishi ditu ji II, Maps 61-62, suggests, on territory beyond the coastline of the Han period: the siltation of the delta region of the Liao River has extended the land some distance to the south in the last two thousand years).

SJZ 14, 20a, after the reference to Fang, then proceeds to describe the course of the Bolang River, which joined the Liao River from the west just below that city. Although there has been some debate on the matter, there seems no reason to question the identification with the present-day Daling River 大凌河 (SJZS 14, 54a-b). The river flowed past the city of Changli, and although it is difficult to be precise about the details of the course and the various tributaries, it would appear that Changli may best be placed in the region of present-day Chaoyang 霞陽. This would mean that the Dependent State of Liaodong extended from the estuary of the Liao River up the course of the Bolang River into the hill country north of the present-day Song Ling 山陵 range. This seems to make geographical and military sense, with the commandery of Liaoxi established along the western shore of the Gulf of Liaodong, the commandery of Liaodong concerned with the main lower course of the Liao River, the Liaodong peninsula and the route eastwards towards Lelang commandery in Korea, and with the Dependent State of Liaodong taking responsibility for a somewhat isolated valley in the northwest.

This reconstruction, however, does not agree with the modern historical atlas Zhongguo lishi ditu ji II, Maps 61-62 (which follow on from Maps 27-28, dealing with Former Han). There, the Dependent State of Liaodong is shown as being confined to the lower reaches of the Liao and the Bolang/Daling River, and Liaoxi commandery is shown with territory extended over the Song Ling range into the valley of the Bolang. In this, the atlas is in general agreement with Yang Shoujing's Lidai yudi tu, but I am not convinced that the arrangement shown makes a great deal of sense on the ground, and I believe the evidence, as we have it at present, can be fairly interpreted to support my hypothesis.

A critical point in the argument concerns the site of the ancient city of Liucheng 利城, which was a county in Liaoxi during Former Han but which had lost that status under Later Han, though it certainly continued as a centre of population. The site of Liucheng, in turn, is bound up with the positioning of Yangle 岳陽, which was the capital of Liaoxi commandery in Later Han.

SJZ 14, 17a, mentions Yangle among the complex of rivers (the modern Luan River and its tributaries) about Feiru 費如, which was a county in Han dynasty Liaoxi commandery, whose site is near to present-day Qianan 任安 in Hebei. However, Yang Shoujing, in SJZS 14, 416, refers to the Biography of Zhao Bao 趙豹, in HHS 81/71, 2692-93.
Zhao Bao was a man from Ganling, in the North China Plain, who was appointed Grand Administrator of Liaoxi in the time of Emperor Ling. After he had been some time in that post, he invited his mother, his wife and his children to join him. On the road, however, they passed through the town of Liucheng, and there they were captured by a raiding party of the Xianbi. The Xianbi attempted to use them as bargaining counters against Zhao Bao, but Zhao Bao ordered his troops to attack nonetheless, and his family was killed. Though he was awarded a marquisate for his loyalty to Han, Zhao Bao died of grief. His biography is in the chapter kept for those men of Remarkable Conduct (du xing 諧行).

The story may not necessarily be true, but the background is possible: Xianbi raids were reaching deep into Liaoxi commandery during the time of Emperor Ling. Yang Shoujing points out, moreover, that the area of Liucheng was in modern southwestern Liaoning, and that if Zhao Bao’s family was to travel through Liucheng to reach his capital at Yangle, then Yangle must have been in the northeastern part of the commandery. He suggests, therefore, that the Yangle referred to in SJZ is a city of a later date, and that Yangle of the Han period was in the neighbourhood of present-day Jinzhou.

Liucheng itself, however, presents a problem of interpretation. There is small question that Yang Shoujing is correct in stating that the town was in southwestern Liaoning, but he and other Chinese scholars then place it in the valley of the Bolang/Daling River.

In the sad story of Zhao Bao and his family, there is already cause for questioning this interpretation: if the party was travelling from Ganling to Yangle, the logical route would follow the coastline, as on the present rail route to Manchuria from Beijing. It is difficult to imagine why such a group of civilians should choose to cross the Song Ling range, into the valley of the Bolang/Daling, and then proceed through that rugged and dangerous country to Yangle, which was itself certainly somewhere near the coast. Their capture may better be explained by a raid in depth from the Xianbi rather than by a suggestion that they themselves had deliberately courted trouble by a detour through the northern borders.

Again, at the time of Cao Cao’s campaign against the Wuhuan in 207, we are told that he climbed Bolang Shan “White Wolf Mountain” and looked towards Liucheng, some two hundred li away (on this campaign see also pp.408-411 below). This has been interpreted as evidence that Liucheng was in the Bolang/Daling valley. However, since we know that Cao Cao was originally seeking to attack the enemy positions on the coast, he could equally well have been looking across the Song Ling range towards the sea, rather than down the river. White Wolf Mountain can be identified as a part of the Huangjin Shan 胡金山 south of present-day Lingyuan 凌源.
in Liaoning, and the modern city of Xingcheng 徐城, on the shores of the Gulf of Liaodong, is about 100 kilometres (approximately 200 Han li) due east of the Huangjin Shan.

A third point which must be considered is that HS 28B, 1625, states that Lucheng was the site of the headquarters of the Chief Commandant of the Western Division of Liaoxi commandery, while Jiaoli, renamed Changli in Later Han, was the headquarters of the Chief Commandant of the Eastern Division. This would seem to imply that Lucheng should be situated in the western part of Liaoxi commandery and Jiaoli to the east. However, it would not have been impossible for the city of Lucheng, situated on or near the coast, to act as the headquarters for a military region which extended into the hill country in the western part of the commandery, while Jiaoli/Changli, situated on the Bolang/Daling River, was responsible for the region to the east.

SJZ 14, 22b, refers to the Bolang River, after passing Changli, also passing Long Shan 龍山 "Dragon Mountain", and the sub-text at this point tells how Murong Huang 萬龍, ruler of the state of Former Yan 萬燕, settled the region "north of Lucheng and south of Dragon Mountain", built himself a capital which he called Dragon City (Longcheng 龍城) and renamed Lucheng xian as Longcheng. Manshu rekishi chiri I, 133-135, takes this as evidence that Lucheng of Han was southwest of Chaoyang and, by implication, close to the Bolang/Daling River. It should be observed, however, that it is the mountain which is described as being near the river, and Lucheng comes into the geographical description only indirectly. The area of (re-established) Lucheng xian in the fourth century, at the time of Murong Huang, may have covered some of the same ground as the county of Former Han, but the sites of the cities were not necessarily identical. (See also Schreiber, "Former Yen", 457.)

It is my interpretation, therefore, that the county of Lucheng in Former Han was quite close to the shore of the Gulf of Liaodong, somewhere southwest of present-day Jinxi, and this placement, I note, is also made by the Diming da cidain, 633.3. The county/march of Jiaoli/Changli was on the Bolang/Daling River, probably in the region of present-day Chaoyang (and not, as Yang Shoujing's Lidai yudi tu and Zhongguo lishi ditu ji would suggest, on the lower reaches of the Daling River in the vicinity of Jinzhou or Yixian 燕縣).

Two final, isolated points may be noted. Firstly, the present-day city called Changli, near the coast in eastern Hebei, can have no connection but the name with the Changli of Later Han. Second, the Han prefecture of Linyu 临浦, which is shown by Zhongguo lishi ditu ji II, Maps 27-28 as being in the neighbourhood of Chaoyang during Former Han and in Maps 61-62 as being west of Shanhaiguan during Later Han, should probably be placed in the vicinity of Yixian and
Jinzhou, near Han dynasty Yangle (see SJZ 14, 23a; SJZS 14, 58b-59b).

54. For a survey of the Han empire in this region, see Gardiner, The Early History of Korea, and other works.


56. On these mountains and tribal names, see note 12 to Chapter 7 and note 8 to Chapter 9.

57. On the identification of the Tian Shan 艳山 of the Han period with the Barköl Tagh (to be distinguished from the great range of western Xinjiang, known as Tian Shan in modern times), see the commentary of the Qing scholar Shen Qianhan 沈其南 to HHSSJ 23/13, 11a.

On the region of Yiwu, evidently also known as Yiwulu 艼俚, see pp.260-261 and 273-275 below, and note 69 to Chapter 6.

58. Lattimore, Inner Asian Frontiers, 72. On the development of the Xiongnu empire as a typical cycle of the steppe, see his pp.523-526.

59. We are fortunate enough to have a detailed record of an early modern campaign in this region. In 1696, the Kangxi Emperor of Qing led a campaign in person against a rebel khan of Outer Mongolia. His route followed a line some two hundred kilometres east of the modern railway between Jining and Ulaan Baatar, and in a series of letters to his son, the Crown Prince In Ceng, he described the terrain the progress of the army. The letters, written in Manchu, are preserved at the National Palace Museum in Taipei, and have been published in Secret Palace Memorials of the K'ang-hsi Period, 8 and 9. They were discussed in a paper presented by Professor Hidehiro Okada to the International Ch'ing Archives Symposium, Taipei, 1978.

In this series of letters, the Kangxi Emperor describes the grass and occasional sand dunes, and the desert hills of mixed stones and sand. Water in this region can be found no more than a couple of feet below the ground, for those who know where to look for it, and the animals eat either the fresh grass of the current spring or the old grass from the previous year.

Further north, as the army approached the Kerulen River, east of the Orhon, the terrain and the fodder improved, and although the army itself was at one time in some anxiety over its ration supply, they were able to take with them stores for eighty days campaigning on baggage carts drawn by oxen. The campaign concluded with a decisive victory over the rebels, won by a subordinate general near present-day Nalaikh, east of Ulaan Baatar.
The whole campaign lasted almost one hundred days, from mid-April to early July.

It seems reasonable to assume that the men, horses and oxen of the pre-industrial Qing dynasty were comparable to those of Han, and that the geographical conditions were also similar. In these circumstances, we may also obtain some extrapolations on the speed and range of a Chinese army operating in the steppe.

We are told that the Qing troops marched from sunrise to noon, with the second half of the day devoted to making camp and cooking. At one point, the army was 170 li, about 80 kilometres, from the Kerulen River, being two days march away. Thus it would appear that a Chinese army of that period could expect to travel up to 40 kilometres in a day.

By comparison, estimates suggest that Roman legions marched long-distance at a rate of about 22 kilometres a day, but could move at 35 kilometres a day in special circumstances (Luttwak, Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire, 81 and 212 note 75).

These figures in fact match up quite well. For a short period, we may accept that a Chinese army could move up to 40 kilometres a day. Such a speed, however, could not be maintained. Firstly, as Luttwak observes, several days movement at such speed would exhaust the troops. Secondly, a matter which applied even more forcefully to Chinese armies on the steppe than to Roman legions often moving within the frontiers of their own country, there was the limitation of supplies which must be drawn by slow-moving oxen.

The Kangxi Emperor's army spent some time camped at a mid-point of the steppe, to wait for rear elements and food supplies, and also for the advance of a second army by a more western route. The arrival of the rice carts was a matter of considerable concern, and the final advance was delayed until they were at hand.

It would appear, then, that a Chinese army operating on the steppe could move as fast as 35-40 kilometres a day for a short period. The normal rate of progress, however, was probably about 20 kilometres per day. And all strategy was limited by the requirement not to get too far separated from the supply trains, which certainly travelled no faster than 20 kilometres a day.

For a modern analysis of the movement of Former Han armies across the steppe, with particular consideration of the length of campaigns and the speed of march, see the 1959 article of the Japanese scholar Yoneda Kenjiro.

I may be noted, however, that the great campaigns by the Mongols Chinggis Khan and Kubilai Khan followed a different route at a different speed. From a base at Orhon, the Mongol leaders took their armies first eastwards, to the forest
The reason for this manoeuvre was that the forces of the Mongols, destined to conquer first the Jurchen Jin and then the Southern Song, were far larger than any army that the Chinese ever cared to put into the field against the north, and their numbers were often swollen by dependents, with spare horses for remounts, and accompanying herds. Where the territory between the Ordos and Edsin Gol in the south, and the Orhon in the north, will support the movement of as many as 30,000 in an army, a significantly larger force would be seriously hindered by the inhospitable terrain. (Advice from Dr Igor de Rachewiltz, Canberra.)

60. On the Northern Army, see HHS 117/27, 2612-13, and Bielenstein, Bureaucracy, 114-118.

61. HHS 115/25, 3574-76; Bielenstein, Bureaucracy, 24-25. The Gentlemen of the Household were subordinate to the Superintendent of the Imperial Household (guanglu xun 宮禁司), the minister responsible for guarding and escorting the emperor in the public areas of the palace and when the ruler was on tour.

62. The conscript guards (weishi 徵士) were subordinate to the Commandant of the Guards (weiwei 徵衛), also a minister. The office of the Commandant of the Guards is described in HHS 115/25, 3579-81; Bielenstein, Bureaucracy, 31-34, also 114.

63. There is some uncertainty as to which month of autumn the annual exercise and inspection (dushi 數討) was held, and it may sometimes have taken place in winter. See Bielenstein, 358-359, and Yen, Administration I, 93 and 151.

64. HHS 1A, 51. The term minwu 行伍 does not appear again in the texts.


66. The major exception to this statement took place in 107, at the time of the emergency of the first great rebellion of the Qiang, when the General of Chariots and Cavalry Deng Zhi was sent to Hanyang in command of 50,000 men, including not only the five regiments of the Northern Army, but also commandery troops from the region of Changan and Luoyang, Runan, Nanyang, Yingchuan, Taiyuan and Shangdang. The campaign, however, was notably unsuccessful. See pp.94-96 below.

67. HHS 118/28, 3622.

This text of Ying Shao, to which Bielenstein does not refer, casts a different light on the assertion that both the Former and Later Han dynasties had military conscription (Bureaucracy, 114). So, indeed, they did, but the difference appears to be that where Former Han had taken care to maintain a trained militia throughout the empire, the Later Han government relied upon the emergency call-up of men
with very limited training. As Yen, *Administration* I, 97, has rightly observed, there was a form of conscription in Later Han, and local troops were sometimes used, but they were of very little use. See also pp.87-88 and 94-95 below.

68. On the recruitment policy of Later Han, see the important article by He Changquan, *Dong Han gengyu shuyu zhidu de feizhi*, and also Sun Yutang, *Dong Han bingzhi de yanbian*.

69. On the form of conscription of Former Han, and the various forms of commutation, see Loewe, *RHA* I, 162-164, where he translates the principal passages dealing with the topic from Han texts. See also the section on *gengfu* 赋 in *DHHY* 31, 455-56.

70. On the Encampment at Liyang, see Bielenstein, *Bureaucracy*, 118-119, and also p.253 below and note 42 to Chapter 6.

On the garrisons at Yong and at Changan, see Bielenstein, *Bureaucracy*, 118-119; also p.100 below, and note 40 to Chapter 3.


72. Loewe, *RHA* I, 90. Bielenstein, *RHD* III, 118, following Lao Kan, has argued that Juyan was abandoned for some years after 46 AD. See, however, pp.254-256 below.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 2

1. The Account of the Qiang of the West (Xi Qiang liezhuan: hereafter the Account of the Qiang) has been translated by Scott, "Ch'iang" Appendix I. An earlier translation, by Wylie, in Revue de l'Extreme Orient I, 423-478, is significantly less reliable, and there is a partial translation by De Groot, Westlande Chinas, 183-220.

2. On the text history of the earlier versions of the Account of the Qiang, see Liu Zhiji, Shitong tongshi 12, 9a-b.

3. On the banishment of the San Miao to the west of the empire by Emperor Shun, see the Shun dian chapter of Shu jing, translated by Legge, Chinese Classics III, 39-40.

   On the clan-name Jiang and its association with the Qiang people, see, for example, Todö, "Some Notes on the Ch'iang Tribes", 40-43. According to SJ 32, 1477; Chavannes, MH IV, 35, Jiang was the surname of the hereditary house of the rulers of the state of Qi under the Zhou dynasty, and according to the tradition recorded by Sima Zhen, in his supplementary chapter of the Annals of the Three Sovereigns (San huang benji: 薪皇本紀), Jiang was also the surname of the mythical ruler Shennong. (Sima Zhen's work is printed at the beginning of the Bona edition of SJ, and is translated by Chavannes, MH I, 3-22).

   The San Miao and the Rong of the west are referred to in the Yugong chapter of Shu jing, translated by Legge, Chinese Classics III, 125 and 127. On the term and its transcription, Dik, see note 8 below.

4. Scott, "Ch'iang", 4 and 16; HHS 87/77, 2885; TCTC 48, 1551 and commentary of Hu Sanxing.

5. HS 96A, 3875; Scott, "Ch'iang", 4-5.


7. On the Qiang-Rong, described by Zuo zhuan as colonising farmers about 550 BC, see Legge, Chinese Classics V, 463-464. On the painted-pottery settlements of the Xintian and Siwa traditions in the Xining and Tao River valleys of Gansu, see Andersson, "Researches into the Prehistory of the Chinese," especially 173-185. Andersson's conclusions on chronology, however, have been criticised and corrected by Chang Kwang-chih, The Archaeology of Ancient China, 362-372. The Siwa site was re-excavated by Xia Nai in 1945 and reported in Kaogu xuebao 4 (1949), 71-137. On the basis of the Neolithic technology and the burial customs, which can be related to descriptions in various early texts such as the Mozi, Xia Nai suggests that the Siwa tradition may represent some culture of the Qiang people in the period immediately before Qin and Han (95-96, 123).
Both the Xintian and Siwa traditions appear to have been based upon agriculture, but the Siwa provides evidence of domesticated animals such as the goat.

8. HHS 87/77, 2876 and 2898–99 refers to the emigration of various Qiang groups southwards to the frontier territory of present-day Sichuan, and the Account of the Western Barbarians (Xirong zhuan) of the Wei lue by Yu Huan of the third century, preserved in the commentary to SGZ 30, 858–59) describes the culture of the Di people of this region.

According to Wei lue, the language of the Di was similar to that of some tribes of the Qiang, though many of them were able to speak Chinese. Their marriage customs were like those of the Qiang, but they had the surname system of the Chinese. They were good at agriculture, and they kept pigs, cattle, horses and donkeys. (On their hair style, which appears to have been distinct from that of the Qiang, see note 8 to Chapter 3, citing Shiratori, "Queue").

It appears that the term Di referred to people originally of Qiang origin settled in the Qin Ling ranges and further south. As this territory was occupied by the Chinese, the Di became increasingly heavily influenced by that culture, though still retaining elements of the Qiang. (Chinese records refer to a "White Horse" (白馬 Boma) Qiang and a "White horse" Di, both on the frontiers of Wudu and Guanghan commanderies in northern Sichuan. These are probably the same people.) See, in particular, HHS 86/76, 2859–60, and also HHS 87/77, 2898–99.

Some care is needed to distinguish between references to the Di people, described as living south of the Qiang during the Han period, and the general term Di, which was a classical description of the non-Chinese people to the north of China (see, for example, the chapter Zhonghui zhi gao (在會稽 in Shu jing, translated by Legge, Chinese Classics III, 181).

The two sounds were comparatively well distinguished in Archaic and Ancient Chinese: GSR 590a reconstructs the sound of as tier/tie/i/ti and GSR 856a has the sound of as *d'iek/d'iek/ti, but they are separated in modern Beijing dialect only by tonal variation.

Unfortunately, moreover, the Han dynasty had two counties in Longxi commandery, named (HHS 113/23, 3516). In ordinary transcription, of course, these would both be rendered as Didao. In some reflection of Karlgren's reconstruction, therefore, I transcribe the name of , which was for some time the capital of the commandery, as Dikdao.

9. HHS 87/77, 2869. Xu Zhongshu, in his "Preface", interprets the character 在 in the phrase 亻在 as a reference to agriculture, which he describes as secondary, women's
work, among the Qiang. He is very probably correct in anthropological fact, but I am not sure that the passage in HHS, given its context, should be read that way.

10. **HHS 15/5, 588, and HHS 24/14, 835, and see p. 68 below.**

11. **SJ 123, 3162; HS 96A, 3890.**

12. **HHS 87/77, 2876.**

13. On the expansion of Chinese authority in the northwest, see Loewe, "Campaigns of Han Wu-ti", Dubs, **HFDH**, II, 62, and **HS 94A, 3769.** On the establishment of the commanderies on the Han frontier in this territory, see Loewe, **RHA**, I, 48–50, 58–60.

14. **HHS 87/77, 2876-77, translated by Scott, "Ch'iang", Appendix I, p. 12.** For the pronunciation of the character 令人 (normally ling) I follow the third-century commentator Meng Kang in **HS 28B**, 1611, with the reading 風. Yan Shigu and Li Xian, in commentaries to **HS 28B** and **HHS 87/77**, both state that 令人 was sounded as 風, but it appears that in the Han period both 風 and 令人 had the alternative pronunciation of lian: see Karlgren, **GSR**, 823a and u. The pronunciation of the name of the Xianlian tribe of the Qiang, below, follows the same pattern.

15. The region of the Huang Shui 湖水, or Xining River, in Han times was commonly described as Huangzhong 湖中.

16. On this campaign, and the recruitment of the Chinese army (from regular units, volunteers, commandery militia from both inner and frontier provinces, and convicts), see **HS 8, 260; Dubs, HFDH II, 241, and Loewe, RHA I, 78.**

17. The text which follows, often known as the "Memorial on Military Colonies" (tuntian zou 农田奏), is in the Biography of Zhao Chongguo, **HS 69**, 2985–86 (**HSBZ** 69, 10b–11a). Military agricultural colonies had been established at several points on the frontiers since the early conquests of Emperor Wu, as for example along the line of the Yellow River between Shuofang and Lianju in 119 BC. (**SJ 110, 2910; HS 94A, 3770)** and at Zhangye in 85 BC (**HS 7, 221; Dubs HFDH II, 157; Loewe, RHA I, 56**), but Zhao Chongguo's memorial presents the most detailed description of their organisation. The memorial has also been translated and discussed by Loewe, **Crisis and Conflict**, 226–227, and Hsü, **Han Agriculture**, 236–237.

18. On the hu and the shi see Loewe, "The Measurement of Grain during the Han period". Though the first term describes a measure of capacity, and the second a measure of weight, Loewe concludes that during Han both units comprised the same quantity of grain, being equivalent of 29.3 kg. (64 lb., 8 oz).
However, Loewe also points out (pp. 71, 74) that in the bamboo strips of the Han period found in northwest China the earliest dateable reference to the hu is 46 AD, and in no case do the two terms appear on the same document. The present text, where both hu and shih are used together, is best understood as an anachronism introduced by a later historian.

Despite the possibilities of textual corruption, the precision of these figures provides important evidence for the ration and supply scales of the Han army, a question discussed in detail by Loewe, RHA II, 64–73, and particularly 70–71. Since some 60,000 troops were gathered for the campaign (HS 69, 2977), the force that Zhao Chongguo commanded was presumably about this size, and the ratio of troops to rations that this would imply fits with the information obtained from the bamboo strips found at Juyan: some 3.3 shi of unhusked grain and 0.03 shi of salt per man per month.

19. For the pronunciation of Gaomen I follow the commentary of Yan Shigu to HS 28, 1611; Meng Kang, however, suggests Hemen, and the normal modern reading would be Haomen (see GSR 1039j).

20. The qing 畿 of this period was approximately 4.6 hectares (11.4 acres). 2,000 qing were therefore about 92 square kilometres (36 square miles).

In this passage the character fields is used to describe both the fields formerly owned by the Qiang (Qiang lu gu tian 其原故田) and the "government fields" (gong tian 公田), though the text indicates that the land has not in fact been brought under cultivation by the Chinese people (min suo wei geng 民所未墾).

It seems then, that the term tian in this context is used with the meaning of "arable land", being land suitable for cultivation, but not as yet colonised.

On the other hand, though we have been told that the Qiang generally relied upon herding rather than agriculture (see p. 58 above), there is no reason to believe that there were not some areas of cultivated ground, in the midst of the herding country, just as there are at the edge of the Mongolian steppe in the present day.

21. The term shixing 獄刑 describes convicts who had been freed on condition they entered military service. See Hulsewe, Remnants of Han Law I, 242 ff.

Personal followers (sicong zhe 私性者) were volunteers who attached themselves, at their own expense, to serve particular commanders. See HS 61, 2700, and commentary of Yan Shigu.
notes to Chapter 2

22. Zhao Chongguo presented this memorial in the winter during the last months of 61 BC, and the plan he proposed was to be put into effect from the beginning of the following year.

23. Huang Xia 洪嘎 describes the pass now known as Xiakou Shan 峡口山, east of Xining in Qinghai.

On the identification of Xian Shui 項水 with the Koko Nor, see the commentary of the Qing scholar Qi Shao-nan to HS 69, 2986 quoted in HSBC 69, 6a.

24. A mou 畝 in this period was one hundredth of a qing, equivalent to 460 square metres. Twenty mou was thus a little less than a hectare.

25. For the pronunciation of the character 王, now sounded yun, see the commentary of Meng Kang to HS 28A, 1611. Cf. GSR 468a, and also Yuanya at note 37 below.

26. HS 28B, 1612, commentary of Yan Shigu.

27. See pp.120-121 below, and note 86 to Chapter 4.

28. As one major example, we may note the transfer of the leading people of the state of Dongye 東越 from the coast of present-day southern Zhejiang to various marquisates in the region of the Yangtze and the North China Plain (HS 6, 190; Dubs, HFHD II, 84-85). In similar fashion, in the northwest about the same time (108 BC), some rebel Di people from Wudu commandery were shifted to Jiuquan (HS 6, 194; Dubs, HFHD II 93).

29. See pp.73-75 below.

30. According to HS 12, 357; Dubs, HFHD III, 80, the Annals of Emperor Ping, the establishment of Xihai commandery took place in 4 AD; according to the Biography of Wang Mang, HS 99A, 4077; Dubs, HFHD III, 80, 213-216, it happened in 5 AD.

31. According to HS 99A, 4087; Dubs, HFHD III, 234, the Grand Administrator of Xihai was driven from his territory. The rebels were defeated in the spring of 7 AD by an army under the command of the Protector Dou Kuang. Very probably, Dou Kuang was an elder relative of the future warlord Dou Rong (see below), though he is not referred to in the biography of Dou Rong in HHS 23/13.

32. From this point on, in this and the following two chapters, all year-dates given in the western style may be assumed to be those of the Christian era. On the few occasions where there is occasion to refer to years BC, these will be specified.

33. See Bielenstein, RHD III, 136 note 1.
notes to Chapter 2

A few years later, after the death of Wei Ao, a certain Niu Han was again appointed Protector, but he died soon afterwards. The office of Protector was not effectively restored for several years, and it will be discussed in the following chapter (pp. 82-87).

34. The Biography of Wei Ao is in HHS 13/3; for a detailed account of the campaigns against Wei Ao in the early 30s, see Bielenstein, RHD II, 159-180, and on the history of the Qiang at this time, see also RHD III, 134-136 and ff.

35. The Biography of Lai Xi is in HHS 15/5 and that of Ma Yuan in HHS 24/14).

36. Bielenstein, RHD III, 139.

37. On the pronunciation of Yuanya, I follow the commentary of the second-century scholar Ying Shao to HS 28B, 1610-11. Cf. note 25 above, and also GSR 58.

   As Bielenstein remarks (RHD III, 138 note 2), there is no firm agreement on the ancient site of Yuanya: the county city, capital of Jincheng commandery, lay east of present-day Lanzhou, between the Yellow River and the Xining River.

38. This description of guards and fortifications along the pathways of the hills fits exactly with the observations of Sir Aurel Stein, Ruins of Desert Cathay II, 280-282; he describes well the ancient defensive wall which blocked the defile of Haoshankou and protected the road west to Dunhuang (see also his Plate 226). Similarly, about the Xining valley, the hills and ridges were sufficiently steep and broken as to be impassable, and it was only necessary for the Chinese to block and guard the narrow gorges which led from the high ground held by the Qiang down to the more open valley where their own colonists were settled.

39. Translation following Scott, "Ch'i'ang" 55-56. The text of the memorial is taken from the Hou Han ji of Yuan Hong of the fourth century (6, 48a), though it is chronicled there under the year 33. The biography of Ma Yuan in HHS 24/14), 835, dates the debate, more appropriately, about 35 or 36, after Ma Yuan was Grand Administrator of Longxi; the text in HHS, however, as Scott remarks, is so abbreviated as to be practically unintelligible.

40. Commentary to HHS 1B, 60, gives the pronunciation of the tribal name as Shenlang, though it may also be read as Canlang. The name also appears as 督粮 (-liang) in SJZ 32, 16a. With the sound shen, the character 參 is the name of a xiu 騏 constellation, part of the Western Orion (see GSR 647a).

   On the transcription of the name of the county of Dikdao 策道, see note 8 above.
notes to Chapter 2

41. HS 28B, 1610-11; HHS 113/23, 3516 and 3518-19; and Bielenstein, "Census", 135, 139-140, and Plates 2 and 3.

42. Bielenstein, RHD III, 141-144, Maps 19 and 20.

43. HHS 1B, 58; HHS 87/77, 2878-79. See also HHS 24/14, 835-36.

44. Ma Yuan's policy was criticised by the military commander Duan Jiong in the 160s, and his remarks were repeated with bitter feeling in the summary (lun 錄) of the Account of the Qiang. (HHS 65/55, 2151; HHS 87/77, 2901.) Both texts, however, claim that Ma Yuan transferred the Jiandang (or Dangjian) tribe and that Zhao Chongguo had transferred the Xianlian in the 60s BC. As Scott, "Ch'iang", 17, and Appendix I, 69 note 1, remarks, however, this is not correct. The people that Zhao Chongguo transferred were the Han and Qian tribes (see p.65 above), while it appears that the Jiandang may still have been operating on the western frontier of Han in the second century AD (see p.97 below and note 36 to Chapter 3).
NOTES TO CHAPTER 3

1. See pp.65-66 above.

2. The leaders of the Shaodang Qiang were claimed as ancestors by the Yao 耀 family of the fourth century, who operated as warlords in north-west China, and founded the state of Later Qin 秦 (384-417). The Biography of Yao Yizhong 耀志仲 in the Parallel Annals (zai ji 聚記 ) included in JS 116, 2959, traces his descent, as was often claimed for other rulers, from the legendary Emperor Shun, but refers, more practically, also to Dianyu. In that text, the name is written 健. In early Chinese, the two characters 羿 and 羿 were very close in sound, and it is probable that 羿 should be given the variant pronunciation of 于 in modern Chinese. See GSR 58f and 59h.

3. As Scott, "Ch'iang", 28, remarks, it seems that there was a rule among the Qiang whereby a son was given half of his father's name, and he himself handed on to his sons that part of his name which he had not received from his father. The pattern was not always followed, but it appears with some consistency among the leaders of both the Shaodang and the Xianlian Qiang. A similar system may be observed in the native princely house of Nanzhao in Yunnan in the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries AD (e.g. Sainson, Histoire particulière du Nan-tchao, 31-80).

4. HHS 87/77, 2882.

5. On the Northern Army (bei jun 北軍 ), see pp.45-46 above. This army of 97 also included professional troops from the garrisons at Yong in Youfufeng and the Encampment at Liyang in Wei commandery. On Yong, see p.50 above, and also note 40 below. On the Encampment at Liyang, see p.253 below and also p.50 above.

There were also "bowmen scouts" (jishe 矛射, where 矛 is understood as jishe 矛射 : see the commentary of Li Xian to HHS 15/5, 583) from the commanderies about Changan, Jingzhao, Zuopingyi and Youfufeng. These bowmen scouts, evidently a form of light-armed skirmishers, are referred to occasionally among the levies of the Later Han period. They were presumably the best troops available, an elite corps among the semi-trained militia. Cf. pp.48-49 above.

6. HHS 87/77, 2885. One official, Cao Fang, recommended that the former Xihai commandery should be re-established, as in the days of Wang Mang, in the region of Koko Nor, and it appears that territory was re-occupied in some form from 102 until the great rebellion of 107 (loc. cit. and HHS 14, 121b).
notes to Chapter 3

7. HHS 87/77, 2878: Scott, "Ch'iang", 54 and Appendix I, 16; also Bielenstein, *RHD* III, 135.

On the original establishment of the office of Colonel Protector of the Qiang in 112 BC, see p.62 above. On the brief revival of the office under Emperor Guangwu, see also p.83 below.

8. This phrase cannot be taken as a real description of the appearance or customs of the Qiang: it is a standard Confucian description of non-Chinese barbarians, based on *Lun yu* XIV, 18; Legge, *Chinese Classics* I, 282.

It does seem, however, that the Qiang did in fact wear their hair long and dishevelled beifa (see HHS 87/77, 2875, cited in Shiratori, "Queue", 1-2) in distinction to the neighbouring and related Di people, who wore the queue bianfa (Shiratori, "Queue", 45-47). On the Di, see also note 8 to Chapter 2.

9. There is no reference elsewhere to the establishment of Chief Commandants of Cavalry for the Southern Barbarians (manyi jiduwei) during Former Han; and indeed the use of cavalry, even in the title of the office, seems a curious one for operations in the hill country of the southwest.

It seems most likely that Ban Biao was referring here to the establishment of dependent states under chief commandants in this region. On these arrangements under Emperor Wu and in succeeding reigns, see Yi, *Trade and Expansion*, 70, 76, 79-81, and Bielenstein, *Bureaucracy*, 109.

10. The *Hanguan yi* of Ying Shao, A, 33b, cited by Bielenstein, *Bureaucracy*, 110, describes the establishment of the Colonel Protector of the Wuhuan (hu Wuhuan xiaowei 魯罕都尉) in the time of Emperor Wu of Former Han. (See also p.369 below.

However, there is no record of a ling 領 Wuhuan xiaowei in the Han period. It seems most likely that ling is miswritten for hu.

11. HHS 87/77, 2880-81; this incident proved a cause and opportunity for the new Emperor Ming to dismiss and disgrace the members of the Dou family and their supporters at the court: see p.259 below and note 51 to Chapter 6.

12. HHS 87/77, 2881.

13. See pp.252-253 below.

14. See p.80 above.

15. Deng Xun was a son of Deng Yu 豫, the great minister of Emperor Guangwu, and he was the father of the Empress nee
Deng, who became the wife of Emperor He, and who ruled as regent during the reign of Emperor An (see HHS 10A, 418). Deng Xun's biography is in HHS 16, 607-12.

The Little Yuezhi were descended from those of the Yuezhi people who had taken refuge in the Qilian ranges at the beginning of the Former Han period, when the Yuezhi were attacked by the great Xiongnu leader Modun and their main force was driven west into central Asia. In Later Han times, they evidently numbered some nine thousand fighting men, their chief centres of population being in the Xining valley and the territory of Lianju in Wuwei, with a few groups further north, in Zhangye. See HHS 8777, 2899.

Deng Xun's generous assistance to the Little Yuezhi when they were under attack from Mitang, and their volunteer enlistment into the Loyal Auxiliary (Yicong hu 頊恢胡), are described by HHS 16/6, 609-10, also Scott, "Ch'iang", 65-66. HHS 16/6 610-11, however, also refers to the Yicong Qiang and Hu 頊胡 as a combined force. It appears, then, that loyal Qiang may also have been recruited into this Auxiliary.

16. On the recruitment and conscription policy of Later Han, see pp.48-50 above.
17. See Bielenstein, RHJ I, 103-105.
18. Loewe, RHA I, 78.
19. HHS 23/13, 810; and Scott, "Ch'iang", 82. As Scott remarks, the text refers to Qiang-hu 輩胡 from these three commanderies: although it is possible that the phrase should be understood as "Qiang and other barbarians", it is most probably merely a compound to describe the Qiang; the implication, therefore, is that Qiang tribespeople at this time had already immigrated to these territories, and were established east of the Yellow River, in present-day Shanxi. HHJ 11, 93a, refers specifically to a settlement of surrendered Qiang into Hedong in 77, presumably after the fighting with Miyu in that year (see p.80 above).

On the expedition of 73, see pp.259-261 below.
20. HHS 23/13, 1814; On the campaigns of Dou Xian, see pp.266-273 below.

On the use of non-Chinese troops for these and other expeditions, see He Changqun, Dong Han gengyu Shuyu de Feizhi 110, also 1-t'ien Hsing, "The Barbarian Soldiers in the Later Han Dynasty."

21. It is difficult to make any assessment of the financial situation of the Later Han government, but it does appear that the land tax and other forms of revenue gave the central
authority a comparatively limited access to the real resources of the empire. To a large extent, this may be attributed to the dominance of great families at the court and in the provinces: the leading clans of the empire owed their wealth and position to the possession and rentals of land, and they were able to prevent the government both from attacking their ownership directly and from taxing their profits. Throughout the Later Han period, the traditional rate of land tax, one thirtieth of production, was maintained, though rent could be as high as a half, or more, of the value of the crop. A major result of this discrepancy was the continuing poverty of the government and the steady increase in wealthy and powerful families throughout the empire.

See, for example, Hsü, Han Agriculture, 53-56; In particular, there is evidence that the government of the Empress-Dowager nee Deng felt under particular financial pressure, and the Empress-Dowager, even before the outbreak of the Qiang rebellion in 107, had adopted a formal policy of economy: HHS 10A, 422.

22. HHS 47/37, 1586; HHS 5, 205.

23. HHS 5, 207; HHS 47/37, 1591-92.

24. HHS 47/37, 1592; HHS 87/77, 2886. The first reference notes that Wang Hong's army was gathered from soldiers of the Land Within the Passes (guanzhong 關中), being the region about Changan and the eastern part of Liang province, not all of them necessarily being Qiang. The second citation says that "several hundred, up to a thousand" Qiang horsemen were conscripted: Scott, "Ch'iang", 83, and Appendix I, 34, interprets the figure as "several hundred thousand", but this does not seem to be a correct translation.

25. The dating of events at the beginning of the Qiang revolt is somewhat confused. According to the Biography of Liang Qin, in HHS 47/37, 1591, and HHS 5, 205, the rebellion in the Western Regions broke out in Yanping 氏平 1 (106) and Liang Qin's army was raised and set out in that year. In Yongchu 永初 1 (107), however, it was resolved that the Chinese settlements and garrisons should be withdrawn, so the position of Protector-General was abolished, and only after that was Wang Hong ordered to raise troops and assist in the withdrawal.

HHS 87/77, 2886, refers only to Wang Hong recruiting for a campaign in the Western Regions, and gives no date more specific than the year 107. HHS 5, 207, however, dates the order to abolish the Protector-General's office on Yongchu 1:6:renxu (29 July 107), and the text then refers immediately to the rising of the Xianlian Qiang, their attack on the Long Road and other actions of banditry, and to the appointment of Deng Zhi and Ren Shang to attack them. The
next entry, dated on the day dingmao, states that an amnesty was issued for the rebels. The dingmao day of the sixth month was 3 August.

This chronology in the Annals, however, seems far too compressed. As the commentary of Hui Dong to HHSJ 5, 3b, points out, HHS 87/77, 2886 states that the appointment of Deng Zhi and Ren Shang was made in the winter, when the rebellion had been maintained for some time and the local forces had shown themselves unable to cope with it. It does not seem reasonable for the government to have ordered such a significant military command as early as the sixth month.

Moreover, if the Protector-General's office was abolished on 29 July, and Wang Hong was given his commission after that decision had been made, then it is impossible that the whole process of conscription and mutiny could have taken place and been reported to the court within four days, so that an amnesty should be issued. It may be suggested that the entry refers in fact to the dingmao day of the eighth month (2 October) and that the reference to the month is dropped out of the text: the next entry in the Annals refers to an edict dated "in the autumn, in the ninth month".

Again, HHS 5, 209, refers to an order to the authorities of Sili, Ji and Bing provinces, that they should attempt to resettle the people who had left their homes through fear (evidently because of the Qiang raids: see Scott, "Ch'iang", 85), and this is dated on the wuzi day of the eleventh month (22 December 107). If an army was being sent out about this time, an order concerning civilian resettlement would be a sensible complement to the expected success of Deng Zhi's campaign.

So the most likely chronology would accept that the order to withdraw from the Western Regions was issued in the sixth month, and about that time Wang Hong was sent to collect troops from the land within the passes. Two months later, when news came of the mutiny in Jiuquan and the subsequent unrest among the Qiang, an amnesty was issued as part of an attempt at reconciliation. By the winter, however, the situation in the northwest was clearly out of control, a major army had to be sent out, and orders were issued that provinces affected by the Qiang disturbance and rising should take measures to re-assure their people and return them to their homes.

Scott, "Ch'iang", 105 and ix. Wang Fu's description of the Qiang rebellion appears in QFL 5, 10a-18b, being the Jiubian 戚邊, Bianyi 边議, and Shibian 萌邊 sections 22-24 of the whole work. Several passages are quoted direct or followed very closely by HHS 87/77, and it is clear, as Scott remarks (p.105) that QFL is the original source and HHS cannot be taken as independent. Scott, "Ch'iang", 101-104, translates several extracts from QFL.
notes to Chapter 3

On the background and philosophy of Wang Fu, see Balazs, "Crise sociale et philosphie politique," 95-105, translated in Balazs, Chinese Civilisation and Bureaucracy, 187-224. The Biography of Wang Fu is in HHS 49/39, 1630-59. See also the article by Chin Faken "The Approximate Age of Wang Fu and the Possible Date of his Work, the Chien-fu-lun."

27. QFL 5, 13b; HHS 87/77, 2886.

28. On the origins of Dianlian, see HHS 87/77, 2886, and Scott, "Ch'iang", 84-86. It seems most probable that the pronunciation of 頂, the second character of his name, followed the same pattern as the second character of the tribal name Xianlian (see note 14 to Chapter 2) and this presumption is supported by the gloss of Hu Sanxing to ZZTN 49, 1570, which suggests the character was sounded as a homophone of 直 (cf. GSR, 387 l). I follow the same pronunciation for the name of Dianlian's son, Lianchang; see p.106 below.

29. HHS 118/28, 3622 commentary, and p.49 above.

30. SCZ 13, 410, commentary quoting the Wei mingchen zou "Memorials of Famous Ministers of the Wei Dynasty".

31. HHS 60A/50A, 1954, from the Biography of Ma Rong, the celebrated Confucian scholar, who wrote a memorial opposing the impractical policy in 115. See also Dull, "The Confucian Origins of Neo-Taoism", 36-37. Cf. also the Shen jian of Xun Yue of the early third century, 2, 3b-4b.

32. Deng Zhi was now promoted General in Chief, a position which made him titular head of the imperial armed forces, and which was traditionally occupied by the ranking member of an imperial consort family. See Ch'ü, Han Social Structure, 217.

33. See the Biography of Liang Qin in HHS 47/37, 1592. The biography is translated by Chavannes, "Trois généraux", 255-262

34. It is said that the cost of unhusked grain in the region of the Xining valley (Huangzhong) rose to 10,000 cash for a shi. The situation obviously was exacerbated by the plundering of the Qiang and by the passage of Liang Qin's army, but there appears to be some indication that Jincheng commandery was not self-sufficient in agriculture (HHS 87/77, 2886; Scott, "Ch'iang", 87).

35. Ren Ren was very likely a relative of Ren Shang, but the history gives no detail on the question. They were probably both connected to the important Ren clan of Wan county in Nanyang, which produced several senior officials in the Later Han period. See HHS 21/11, 751ff, and HHS 76/6, 2460.
36. 

**HHS 87/77, 2887.** The Dangjian and Lejie tribes were evidently inhabiting the western part of Jincheng commandery, and possibly made their attack on Poqiang from across the frontier. In the summary (*lun*) of **HHS 87/77, 2901,** however, we are told that the Dangjian tribe had been transferred to the region of Changan by Ma Yuan.

In his commentary to this text, in **HHSJJ 87/77, 25a-b,** the Qing scholar Hui Dong argues that the name should read Jiandang, to follow a similar statement in a memorial of Duan Jiong recorded in **HHS 65/55, 2151.** There are still, however, some difficulties.

Firstly, there is no direct evidence that the Dangjian or Jiandang were transferred by Ma Yuan; the texts in the earlier passage of **HHS 87/77, 2878-79,** and in **HHS 1B, 58,** refer only to his transfer of the Xianlian. Second, while allowing for the confusion about the order of the characters in the name, it is curious that later references to the Dangjian or Jiandang should be near the western borders of the empire. (See also pp.127 and 133 below.)

In these circumstances, it seems probable that the text of Duan Jiong's memorial and the *lun* of **HHS 87/77** have been corrupted, that they should refer to Ma Yuan transferring the Xianlian and not the Dangjian or the Jiandang, and that the tribe in question, whatever its name was, remained on the frontier territory of the west for most of the Later Han period.

See also note 44 to Chapter 2.

37. **HHS 5, 213-14;** In 109 there was sent out Pang Xiong, a shiyushi 侍御史, which title is rendered by Dubs as Attendant Imperial Clerk. The position, however, was that of an official of the censorate, who could on occasion be granted high command in military campaigns. In the following year, when Zhang Bolu rebelled again, the Palace Assistant Imperial Clerk (*yushi zhongcheng 侍中丞*), head of the censorate, was entrusted with command. In 111 both Ren Shang, commanding at Mengjin, and Tang Xi, commanding in Hanyang, held titles as shihyushi: see p.105 and 106 below, and de Crespigny, "Inspection and Surveillance", 73-74.

38. **HHS 105/15, 3309-10; HHS 4, 197; HHS 5, 205-218;** and see Chng, "Portents of the Reign of Emperor An", 169-173.

It may be observed that the annals record three separate floods in 106, of which only the first, in the sixth month (**HHS 4, 197**) is mentioned in the Treatise of the Five Elements. The other two, in the ninth month and the tenth month, just after the death of the infant Emperor Shang and the accession of Emperor An (**HHS 5, 205**), were sufficiently serious to justify special relief measures, but they are not mentioned in the treatise. It is possible that the items were omitted in error, but it may be accepted that
they do not appear in the treatise because they were not made the occasion for a specific memorial of criticism or warning to the government.

39. *HHS* 32/22, 1127-28. For other proposals of government relief measures at this time, including the sale of ranks for grain and cash, see *HHS* 5, 212-13.

40. *HHS* 5, 215; *HHS* 87/77, 2887; *HHS* 118 28, 3621. There appears to be something of an anachronism in this reported establishment of the Chief Commandant at Yong: we are told that the army which Dou Xian led against the Northern Xiongnu in 89 included troops from the garrison at Yong (see p.269 below), as did the expedition against the Qiang leader Mitang in 97 (note 5 above).

Yet the texts here all agree that the organisation in 110 represented a new establishment of these camps at Changan and Yong, and a restoration of the system which had been maintained under Former Han.

The best reconciliation of this apparent contradiction would appear to be that there was a camp at Yong during the first century under Later Han, which was used, like the camp at Liyang, as a recruiting and training depot for regular troops to be used on the frontier. See p.50 above. The arrangement of 110, then, set up a new camp at Changan, and also raised the status of the establishment of Yong to be a chief commandant's command, with responsibility for active local defence as well as recruit training.

41. *HHS* 5, 216; *HHS* 87/77, 2887.


43. The record of Yu Xu's part in this debate is in his biography, *HHS* 58/48; there is a summary of the discussion also in *HHJ* 16, 131a, and in *ZZTJ* 49, 1581-1583.

44. An account of the Qiang incursions into Hanzhong is given in *HYGZ* 2, 2a-3a.

45. *HHS* 5, 215; *HHS* 87/77, 2887.

46. *HHS* 87/77, 2888; *cf. QFL* 5, 17a.

47. *HHS* 87/77, 2887.

*HHS* 22/12, 779, states that a series of walls were built at the orders of Emperor Guangwu in the period 38-44, to act as a defence system against attacks by the Xiongnu in the Ordos region and south through present-day Shansi. One of these walls ran from Zhongshan commandery south to Ye prefecture, the capital of Wei commandery (see Bielenstein, *RHD* III, 112 and Map 16; also pp.222-224 below. It is possible that this line of defences formed the foundations for the fortification against the Qiang in 111.
It is recorded that another of the walls built by Guangwu ran from Xihe commandery southwards to the Wei River north of Changan, but this does not appear to have played a role in controlling the movement of the Qiang or preventing their attacks from east to west.

48. HYGZ 2, 11a, has a curious parallel account of Du Qi's rebellion, describing him as a man from Hanyang, but suggesting that he set up his headquarters at Jiaming in Guanghan commandery, now north of Zhaohua in Sichuan, and that he held out there for several years. It is even stated that Tang Xi (described mistakenly as yushih tafu 侍夫吏史 an office which did not exist at that time: he was actually shiyushi 侍御史 Attendant Imperial Clerk), was recalled to the capital and compelled to commit suicide because of his lack of success.

It does not seem possible that HYGZ can be correct. Certainly it may be that the influence of Du Qi's rebellion extended across the Qin Ling divide, or that some of his defeated sympathisers escaped southwards after his death and maintained themselves in that inaccessible territory for a time, presumably in alliance with the Shenlang Qiang of Wudu commandery. The account of Hou Han shu of Du Qi's death and Du Jigong's defeat and flight, however, is too circumstantial to be rejected.

49. There is an account of the Banshun barbarians in HHS 86/76, 2842-43. A considerable quantity of that text records the protest of the official Zhao Wen to the suggestion made in the time of Emperor Ling in the 180s, that the Banshun, then in rebellion, should be attacked with full military force. He described how the Banshun had always been loyal in the past, and the present disturbances were only due to their ill treatment. In particular, he told how:

when the Qiang barbarians invaded the Han valley during the Yongchu period [107-113] and all the commandery and county administrations were destroyed, the Banshun people came to help us. All the Qiang were killed or driven away, and they called the Banshun "devil soldiers". They told the story to their fellow-tribesmen, and warned them never to go south again.

(HHS 86/76, 2843; ZZTJ 58, 1863, translated in de Crespigny, Last of the Han, 5; also HYGZ 1, 8b.)

50. HHS 87/77, 2890. It is very possible, of course, that the plan for mounted campaigns had been prepared some time before, not necessarily with the advice of Yu Xu, for the imperial government had set up special breeding parks for horses in Yi province in 112 (HHS 5, 218; and see note 62 below).

The Biography of Yu Xu, however, in HHS 58/48, 1868-69, says that he was later made Grand Commandant of Wudu commandery because of his understanding of military matters, and he successfully brought that territory under control.
51. HHS 5, 222 and 224.

52. HHS 87/77, 2890; HHS 5, 225.

53. According to HHS 5, 229, Ren Shang was executed in the twelfth month, actually the beginning of the Western year 119. HHS 87/77, 2891, suggests that he was jealous of the favour Deng Zun received as a relative of the Empress-Dowager and therefore falsified reports to add to his own prestige. However, QFL 5, 16a-b, translated by Scott, "Ch'iang", 102-103, contains a bitter denunciation by Wang Fu of the incompetence, greed and cruelty of the military and civil officials in Liang province during the period of the rebellion. Despite his final military success, it is not impossible that the charges laid against Ren Shang were to some extent justified.

On the other hand, it is remarkable how poorly Ren Shang fared at the hands of his government and later historians. For a man who played a leading role in the affairs of the frontier for the best part of twenty years, with an admittedly checkered career but an ultimate triumph, it is interesting that he has nothing more than passing mentions in Hou Han shu. In his own time, he was several times disgraced and then restored to command, and his final fall may well represent political intrigue and jealousy of which he was the victim, rather than the instigator.

54. HHS 87/77, 2891.

55. HHS 6, 251.

56. HHS 87/77, 2893, translated by Scott, "Ch'iang", Appendix I, 50-51. Yong province, referred to by Yu Xu below, was the name given to the region of the northwest by the Yu gong (see Legge, Chinese Classics III, 123).

57. The Dependent State of Qiuci was a county unit of Shang commandery, north of present-day Yulin in Shaanxi. (See note 4 to Chapter 1 and note 1 to Chapter 7). HS 28B, 1617, lists the county of Qiuci with an office for salt, and though HHS 113/23, 3524, does not refer to the local production of salt, the main salt lakes of the Ordos desert were evidently under the nominal jurisdiction of this territory.

On the pronunciation of the place-name, I follow the gloss of Ying Shao quoted in the commentary to HS 28B, 1617-18.

58. Yu Xu is referring here to the region of the northern loop of the Yellow River, the Yin Shan and other ranges beyond.
notes to Chapter 3 (notes to pages 116-120)

59. As an exponent of the "forward" policy, that the imperial government should attempt to maintain control over all the lands held in the past within the Ordos loop of the Yellow River, Yu Xu has painted the picture in rosy hues. Compare, however, the earlier comments of Yu Xu's opponent, Pang Can: see pp.101-102 above.

60. HHS 6, 256-57; HHS 87/77, 2893.

61. Ma Xu is mentioned at the end of the biography of Ma Yuan's nephew Yan in HHS 24/14, 862; he was a brother of the famous scholar Ma Rong. Ma Xian, however, is not identified in the family tree, and it is recorded that Ma Rong submitted a memorial to criticise Ma Xian's dilatory tactics in the campaign against the Qiang shortly before Ma Xian's death in 141 (HHS 60A/50A, 1971). They were presumably not close relatives.

62. Under the Former Han dynasty, there had been several horse pastures (mushi yuan or xuguan) established in Liang province to breed mounts for the cavalry of the imperial army, many of them in Beidi commandery (HS 19A, 729; HS 28B, 1616). At the beginning of Later Han, these offices were abolished, and there was maintained only the Liuma Horse Park in Hanyang commandery (HHS 115/25, 3582).

In 112, very possibly in preparation for a strategy of cavalry attacks against the Qiang, new horse parks were established in Jianwei, Yuexi and Yizhou commanderies of Yi province (HHS 5, 218). These, however, were too far south to have been affected by the Qiang attacks at this time and, although the text of HHS 87/77 is not specific, it must have been the Liuma Horse Park which was seized and plundered in 140.

Both the fortress at the Long Pass, and the Liuma Horse Park, would have contained some stores of military equipment, and their capture was a considerable advantage to the raiders.

On the pronunciation of the first character of the tribal name Judong, I follow the commentary of Hu Sanxing to ZZTJ 52, 1689.

63. HHS 6, 270; HHS 89/79, 2961-62; see also pp.306-317 below.

64. HHS 6, 270-71. Soon after the defeat of Ma Xian, the Grand Administrator of Anding, Guo Huang, was dismissed and died in prison. This may have represented punishment for the failure of the resettlement programme for which he had been responsible in previous years, or possibly a more recent fault, in leaving Ma Xian without adequate military support.
Zhao Chong was given command of soldiers raised from the "four commanderies west of the [Yellow] River" (hexi si jun 河西四郡): that is, Wuwei, Zhangye, Jiuquan and Dunhuang. *HHS* 6, 270, describes Zhao Chong as Grand Administrator of Wudu, and Sima Guang, in his *kaoyi* commentary to *ZZTJ* 52, 1689, accepts that reading. As Hu Sanxing points out, however, Wuwei is more probable, since it was actually one of the four commanderies concerned.

Besides the soldiers from the northwest, a memorial by Ying Shao written in 185 observes that Zhao Chong also recruited mercenaries from the Xianbi tribes of the northern frontier (*HHS* 48/38, 1609; see also p.400 below).

Though *HHS* 65/55, 2148, has a passing reference to their role in the defeat of Ma Xian in 141, the Xianlian tribe do not appear to have played a major part in this second rebellion. As Scott, "Ch'iang", 125, remarks, it is uncertain whether this was because they were exhausted by their last revolt or because they were now effectively independent.

On this development earlier in the Later Han period, see Bielenstein, *RHD* III, 140 ff and Maps 19 and 20, see also pp.72-73 above.

It appears, however, that Anding commandery still reached to the Yellow River, by means of the Dependent State of Anding, based on the county of Sanshui. See note 1 to Chapter 8.

*HHS* 89/79, 2959, contains specific reference to the abandonment and neglect of the northern defences west of Shuofang in the 120s. See note 29 to Chapter 7.

On the Later Han policy of border defence, which included the use of Southern Xiongnu and Wuhuan as nominal allies along the frontier and within the fortifications of the Great Wall, see Bielenstein, *RHD* III, 127-131, and pp.241-242 and 386-389 below.

It must be recognised that Yu Xu himself did serve successfully against the Qiang rebels when he was Grand Administrator of Wudu commandery, and his military advice to Ren Sheng, whether necessary or not, was sensible (see note 50).

On the other hand, most of Yu Xu's career was spent at court, and his service at Wudu, in the hill country south of the Wei River, would not give him direct experience of the problems of administration and control in the more open loessland of the regions further north.
71. The biographies of Ban Chao and Ban Yong are in *HHS* 47/37, together with that of the General Liang Qin, who played a considerable role at the time of the first great rebellion of the Eastern Qiang. The biographies have been translated by Chavannes, "Trois généraux".
NOTES TO CHAPTER 4

1. The Biography of Diwu Fang, a "lenient official" (xun li 徇吏), is in HHS 76/66, 2475-76.

2. The Biography of Duan Jiong is in HHS 65/55, 2145-54; translated by Young, *Three Generals*. The character of his personal name is sometimes miswritten as 頓, in which case it may be pronounced Ying, and the transcription of the character sometimes appears as Gong or Chong, but I hereafter follow GSR 929d.

3. On the pronunciation of the character 頓, see note 14 to Chapter 2; on 猛, see note 2 to Chapter 3.

4. The Biography of Huangfu Gui is in HHS 65/55, 2129-37; translated by Young, *Three Generals*.

5. On the Chinese term luo 落 for a group of barbarians, probably describing an extended family gathering similar to the ayil of the early Mongols, see p.179 below.

6. Duan Jiong's earlier fief, as a full marquis (liehou 勒侯), awarded after his victories in Taishan in 156, had evidently been revoked at the time of his disgrace in 161. This new grant seems less generous than the earlier one, for the fief was only a duxiang 郡縣, "chief district", while a full marquis commonly held a xian county as his appanage.

7. The biography of Zhang Huan is in HHS 65/55, 2138-45; translated by Young, *Three Generals*.

8. For the pronunciation of this place-name, I follow the commentary of Yan Shigu to HS 28A, 1545-46.

9. The commentary to HHS 65/55, 2148, notes that the character 頓 in this place-name is sounded as 頓 jue; see GSR, 1116a and 1121a.

10. The edict and Duan Jiong's reply are in HHS 65/55, 2148.

11. This refers to the commanderies of Xihe, Shang, Anding and Beidi, whose administrative headquarters had been shifted southwards at the time of the second Qiang rebellion (see pp.119 and 120 above).

12. Sheyan was a county in Shang commandery northwest of present-day Hengshan 延山 in Shaanxi, outside the line of the Great Wall of Ming. The Sheyan River is described by SJZ 3, 17b-19a, and can be identified with the present-day Wuding He 烏定河 and its upper tributary the Hongliu He 紅柳河. The Sheyan Marshes were evidently formed among meanders in the upper reaches of the river.

The Running Horse River (Zouma Shui 走馬水) was a tributary of the Sheyan River, and is described by SGZ 3, 18b-19a. From a reading of the whole passage of SJZ 3, it
appears that the Running Horse River may best be identified with the present-day Dali He 大理河, which joins the Wuding He at Suide 绥德 in Shaanxi.

SJZ 3, 18b, says that the Running Horse River came from Qiao Mountain 桥山, outside the Wall. This was the Wall of the First Emperor of Qin, ascribed to Meng Tian, but it was here surely following the line of the former Wall of the state of Qin, established by King Zhaoxiang 赵胜 at the end of the fourth century BC (see Zhang Weihua, Changcheng kao, maps opposite pp.66 and 118).

The Qiao Gate of the Wall must have taken its name from Qiao Mountain, which was evidently a ridge of the Baiyu 白于 or Liang Shan 梁山 ranges. From the description of SJZ 3, and from the fact that Duan Jiong is described as going through the Qiao Gate before he reaches Running Horse River, it seems that the ancient Wall of Qin in this region ran roughly parallel to the modern (Ming) Wall, but some distance to the southeast.

Although the Qiao Gate of the Wall is referred to here, however, it is unlikely that it was used as more than a geographical expression. There is no evidence that the old Qin Wall was manned at this time.

13. The commentary of Xiong Huizhen to SJZ 3, 176, in SJZ 3, 439, notes that the county of Guide 高德 in Beidi 便地 commandery of Former Han, abolished in Later Han, was on the Luo River 洛水 (HS 288, 1816): Luochuan 鲁川 is surely another name for this stream, which may be identified with the present-day Luo He 洛河 of Shaanxi.

14. There seems no way of identifying the Lingxian River. It was presumably a small stream in the dry country of the grassland in summer.

15. The city of Lingzhou county was in the vicinity of present-day Lingwu 青水, near the Yellow River by Yinchuan. The Lingwu valley, however, may have been some distance to the south, possibly in the higher ground near Tianshui 天水, on the Gansu/Ningxia border.

16. The commentary of Li Xian states that Jingyang was a county, and so indeed it was during Former Han. It had lost that status, however, at the beginning of Later Han. The settlement was west of present-day Pingliang 平凉 in Gansu, at the foot of the Liupan Shan 六盘山, which was the border country between Anding and Hanyang commanderies.
17. HHS 65/55, 21-51.

18. The identification of Shoot-Tiger Valley (Shehu Gu 哨虎谷) is confused, but it seems most probable that it lay south of the Wei River, in the foothills of the Qin Ling mountains, south of present-day Tianshui 天水 in Gansu.

This is the area which is indicated by the maps of Yang Shoujing, in Lidai yudi tu, and the modern reconstruction of Zhongguo lishi ditu ji II, Maps 57-58. It is supported most notably by the reference, below, to Duan Jiong's construction of an abatis (or palisade of some form) in the area of Xi county: Xi county lay south of the Wei River, and if the obstruction was to be of any assistance in controlling or halting the flight of the Qiang, the site of their last stronghold at Shoot-Tiger Valley must have been somewhere within a reasonable distance — otherwise the range of possible escape routes would be too great to make the effort of a specific construction worthwhile.

On the other hand, we are told that the first battle of 169 was fought about the Qiang fortification at Fanting Mountain, and that the Qiang then fled to the east (HHS 65/55, 2152). From the statement that the Qiang had taken refuge, at the end of 168, in the hill country near Jingyang, one would expect Fanting Mountain to be in the area of the Liupan range (see note 16), and indeed the Fanting Mountain of Han, also known as Wating 望亭 Mountain, is identified by Hu Sanxing and other scholars with a peak of the Liupan range near Pingliang (e.g. ZZTJ 56, 1816): this tradition is followed by Yang Shoujing.

The proposed site of Shoot-Tiger Valley, however, is south, or even southwest, of this suggested region of Fanting Mountain.

Given the information we have, it seems best to interpret the reference to the Qiang flight to the east as a miswriting. It seems that Duan Jiong may in fact have been attacking them from that direction, and in any case the east offered the refugees little promise: they would have been entering the region of Youfufeng, close to Changan and one of the stronger territories of the Chinese, and would therefore have been increasingly vulnerable to attack.

It seems most probable that after they were driven from Fanting Mountain, the Qiang fled south and west, crossing the Wei River into the territory of Xi county, in the hope of finding refuge in the hill country of the Qin Ling. It was this retreat which Duan Jiong sought to prevent.

19. The figures are taken from HS 28B, 1610, 1615, 1616, 1617, and HHS 113A/23A, 3516, 3517, 3519-20 and 3524.
20. The essential work on this rebellion in the northwest is the article by Haloun, "Liang-chou Rebellion". Many of the texts from the histories of this time have been incorporated into ZZTJ, and are translated in de Crespigny, The Last of the Han.

21. It may be observed that Liang province was one of the regions of the empire that were not affected to any considerable extent by the Yellow Turban rebellion. Haloun, "Liang-chou Rebellion", note 25, refers to a group of "Yellow Turbans" in Lufu 疋 禄 county in Jiuquan towards the end of 185, as evidenced in the stele of Gao Quan 資全, and suggests there were other groups of such sympathisers. However, it is not likely that these had any immediate connection with the movement of Zhang Jue 張結, which made its rising and suffered its destruction in the eastern provinces during the year 184.

22. The surname of the unfortunate Protector appears variously as 令, 冷 or 冷. The Qing scholar Hui Dong, in commentary to HHSJJ 87/77, 23b, notes that the characters were essentially interchangeable in ancient times, but that 冷 is preferable. ZZTJ 58, 1873, has 冷, and the commentary there suggests the sound 邑(ling): cf. GSR 823g, h and j.

23. HHS 72/62, being the Biography of Dong Zhuo, who played a considerable role in the military operations in the northwest over the following years.

24. HHS 87/77, 2899, contains a short section on the Little Yuezhi, whose customs were very similar to those of the Qiang, but who had long been allies and auxiliaries of Han. The Auxiliary had been formed by the Protector Deng Xun in the first century (see pp.86-87 above), and it was evidently used as the immediate military force of the Protector (as, for example, by Duan Jiong, p.127 above).

Haloun "Liang-chou Rebellion", has argued that since Beigong Boyu was a member of the Auxiliary, he must have been a Yuezhi (and the character yu 畹 in HHS 87/77, 2899, which implies that the Yuezhi "joined" him; i.e. that he was an outsider, is therefore a mistaken insertion). In this he is surely correct. The Auxiliary, however, could include Qiang as well as Yuezhi (e.g. HHS 16/6, 610-11; and see note 15 to Chapter 3), and the name of Li Wenhou does not appear very suitable for either form of barbarian. It is even possible that he was a junior officer of Chinese origin.
25. The *Xiandi chunqiu* (Spring and Autumn Annals of Emperor Xian) by Yuan Ye (of Jin); preserved in the commentary to *HHS* 72/62, 2320-21 and the *Dian lue* of Yu Huan, quoted in *SGZ* 1, 45, have additional details of the earlier careers of Bian Zhang and Han Sui, and an account of how they came to join the rebels. They were apparently taken hostage when the mutineers came to Jincheng, and Chen Yi was killed when he entered the enemy camp to negotiate for them.

Although Han Sui held only a local provincial appointment, he evidently came from prosperous background. *SGZ* 1, 35, mentions that his father had been recommended as Filially Pious and Incorrupt (*xiaolian*) in the same year as Cao Cao, and that Han Sui himself had been in the same social set as Cao Cao when they were young men-about-town in Luoyang.

*Xiandi chunqiu* suggests that Bian Zhang had formerly borne the personal name Yun, and Han Sui the personal name Yue, and they changed their names after they took part in the rebellion. However, Haloun, "Liang-chou Rebellion", note 9, points out that the text of an inscription dated in 178 already records Han's personal name as Sui and Bian's as Gan, which is evidently mis-copied for Zhang: see *Guwen yuan* 19, 7a-8b. *Dian lue*, however, states that Han Sui's style (*zi*) was Wenyue, and although the rest of the fragment is quite unreliable on proper names, this may account for the *Xiandi chunqiu* story.

26. *HHS* 58/48, 1880, being the Biography of He Xun, a young man of distinguished family from the far northwestern commandery of Dunhuang, who played a leading role in the unsuccessful defence of the official position in Liang province at this time.

Haloun, "Liang-chou Rebellion", 120-121, has transliterated He Xun's surname as Gai, but I follow the alternative classical pronunciation, which is supported by commentary to *ZZTJ* 58, 1873 (reading for ). See *GSR*, 642q.

27. *HHS* 58/48, 1880, and also the *jiaobu* commentary to this chapter in *HHSJJ*, which corrects the mistaken forms of Song's personal name and suggests that since he was a man of Youfufeng he was possibly a relative of the former Empress Song of Emperor Ling.

28. The *Xiao jing* was a work of great popularity at this time, and certain groups of mystical Confucianists did indeed ascribe it great powers. See Stein, "Remarques sur les mouvements du Taoisme politico-religieux", 39.
29. On the Liuma Horse Park of Hanyang, see note 62 to Chapter 3. The herding office (xuguan 服务) was presumably the administrative compound attached to this park.

Xia Yu had been in command of the disastrous campaign of 177 against Tanshihuai, ruler of the Xianbi (see pp.339-341 below). He was then dismissed and disgraced, but was now restored to a position of some responsibility.

30. The Biography of Huangfu Song is in HHS 71/61, 2299-2308.

31. Dong Zhuo's biography in HHS 72/62, 2320, and in the Xu Han shu of Sima Biao tells the story that he was cut off by the rebel forces, who planned to starve him into surrender. Dong Zhuo, however, had his men build a dam near the ford of a river, as if to collect fish for their food supply. In fact, he then led his army across and away from the enemy, and by the time the rebels came in pursuit the water had risen so high they could no longer follow.

For Dong Zhuo's own analysis of the strategy (as opposed to the tactics) of this campaign, see pp.157-159 below.

32. The Biography of Fu Xie is in HHS 58/48, 1873-78.

33. Haloun, "Liang-chou Rebellion", 121-122, has the name of the Inspector as Geng Tu (temple name), but HHS 8, 354, and HHS 58/48, 1877, both have the personal name as Bi (personal name).

34. There is a biography of Ma Teng, from the Dian lue of Yu Huan, preserved in the commentary of Pei Songzhi to SGZ 36 (Shu 6), 945, being the Biography of Ma Chao 貢, Ma Teng's son.

The Ma family claimed descent from the great Ma Yuan, of the beginning of Later Han, but this branch of the clan had not achieved distinction in recent years. Ma Teng's father held office briefly as Commandant in a county administration in Hanyang, but a county commandant was the lowest position in the hierarchy of imperial commissioned officials. He was then dismissed, and retired to live among the Qiang. He married a woman of the Qiang people, and Ma Teng was a child of this union. See also HHS 72/62, 2335, commentary quoting the Xiandi zhuan (probably the same work as the Xiandi ji by Liu Ai: see note 38 below).

35. During 188, the Han government had established a commandery called Nanan 郎 in the western part of Hanyang. The change is not mentioned in HHS annals, but it is cited from the Qin zhou ji (Records of Qin Province [established by the later dynasty of Jin]) in the commentary to HHS 113/23, 3517. The new administrative unit was presumably designed to assist in the recovery and control of the upper Wei valley, but it did not prove particularly successful: there is no record of any active imperial official in that territory at this time.
36. HHS 71/61, 2305.

37. In 189, after the retreat of the rebels, the Han government established a new commandery, Hanan 漢安, in the western part of Youfufeng, to control the territory formerly occupied by the Chief Commandant of the Western Division of Youfufeng. This new administrative unit, which evidently included Chencang and its neighbouring counties, was presumably given special responsibility for the frontier against the rebel territory of Liang province. It is possible that the commandery was administered by a military-style government, and the change of status reflected the granting of full responsibility to the local Chief Commandant. Ten or twenty years later, in the time of Cao Cao, the name of the commandery was changed to Hanxing 漢興. See HHS 109/19, 3408, commentary quoting the Xiandi qijuzhu 帝起居注 (Diary of Activity and Repose of Emperor Xian).

38. SGZ 46 (Wu 1), 1095, translated and discussed by de Crespigny, Biography of Sun Chien, 35-36 and note 37; also in summary in ZZZJ 58, 1882; The Last of the Han, 30. The incident is also cited in Dong Zhuo's own biography, HHS 72/62, 2330, where it is interpreted as a reason for Dong Zhuo's dislike of Zhang Wen, whom he executed in 191.

39. SGZ 46 (Wu 1), 1098–99; de Crespigny, Biography of Sun Chien, 45-46. Duke of Shanyang 沙陽公 was the title granted to Liu Xie, former Emperor of Han, after his abdication to Cao Pi 曹丕, son of Cao Cao and first emperor of the Three Kingdoms state of Wei, in 220 (HHS 9, 390, and SGZ 2, 76). The "Parallel Annals" (zaiji 紫記), therefore, compiled by Yue Zi 楯之 of the Jin dynasty, are a history of the last thirty years of Han.

Liu Ai was the author of such works as the Lingdi ji 聖德紀 (Annals of Emperor Liang) and Xiandi ji 昔帝紀 (Annals of Emperor Xian). His conversation with Dong Zhuo is said to have taken place at the time of Sun Jian's attack against Dong Zhuo's forces near Luoyang in 191, and he is mentioned as an attendant of the emperor at Changan in 195 (HHS 72/62 2336, so it is quite possible that he was in Dong Zhuo's company at the time, that he had the opportunity to talk with him, and that he recorded the substance of what Dong Zhuo said.

40. Haloun, "Liang-chou Rebellion", notes 19 and 31. Haloun is particularly effective in tracing the changes of leadership among the rebels.

41. HHS 58/48, 1880. On the pronunciation of the character 西, I follow the commentary of Li Xian to that text.

42. HHS 72/62, 2321.

43. HHS 58/48, 1878.
4. Haloun, "Liang-chou Rebellion", p. 124, suggests that at this time Ma Teng had his headquarters at Huaili. This seems, however, most unlikely: Huaili was the capital of Youfufeng, and was actually east of Chencang, the furthest point the rebels had reached in their attack against Changan.

Ma Teng did have a camp at Huaili in the early 190s, when he was attempting to take a part in the politics at Changan (see p.162 below), and he appears to have stayed there again for a time after 208, when he had been defeated by Han Sui and was contemplating submission to Cao Cao. His main base territory, however, was in the Hanyang section of the Wei valley, not in Youfufeng. See, for example, SGZ 6, 182; ZZTJ 61, 1950; de Crespigny, Last of the Han, 109; also HHS 72/62, 2343; and ZZTJ 65, 2080: de Crespigny, Last of the Han, 255.

5. Heshou ping Han wang 河首平漢王: HHS 72/62, 2343; SGZ 1, 44 and 9, 271.

Haloun, "Liang-chou Rebellion", note 30, argues that both Song Jian and Wang Guo were Yuezhi, and he bases this upon the Xiandi chunqiu of Yuan Ye, quoted in HHS 72/62, 2320, which describes them as the original leaders of the Auxiliary mutineers in 184, when they killed Chen Yi and seized Bian Zhang and Han Sui (see pp.147-149 and note 25 above).

However, as Haloun himself points out, the records of the rebel leadership are quite confused: Song Jian may or may not have been one of the original mutineers, but Wang Guo comes to prominence only after the mutiny against Geng Bi in 187.

It seems quite possible that the Xiandi chunqiu has made only a loose and anachronistic reference to the leadership of the rebellion at the time with which this item is concerned. A similar loose reference probably accounts for the association of Song Jian with Beigong Boyu in Dian lue, as quoted by the commentary to SGZ 1, 45 (see note 25 above). This text, moreover, miswrites Beigong Boyu as Beigong Yu, and gives Song Jian's personal name as Yang. SGZ 9, 271, states that Song Jian was a native of Fuhan county, in Longxi commandery, which was the place where he established his independent kingdom; SGZ 1, 44, and HHS 72/62, 2343, also describe him as a man of Longxi. Admittedly, as Haloun points out, the historians may have carelessly identified him with the region where he established his state; but it is equally possible that he had been involved either in the original stage or a later development of the rebellion in that area. Indeed, it seems more likely that a local state would have been set up by a local leader, rather than an immigrant ex-mercenary and mutineer, whether Yuezhi or not.
notes to Chapter 4  (notes to pages 161-165)

46. See notes 25 and 34 above.

47. HHS 72/62, 2335; SGZ 6, 182; Haloun, "Liang-chou Rebellion", 124.

48. SGZ 10, 328, commentary quoting the Xiandi ji of Liu Ai.

49. SGZ 13, 392-93, being the Biography of Zhong Yao, who was Cao Cao's chief agent in the northwest.

50. SGZ 36 (Shu 6), 945, commentary quoting the Dian lue of Yu Huan.

51. HHS 72/62, 2343; SGZ 15, 472. Ma Teng was at first treated with honour and given a ministerial post, and the title of Marquis of Huaili, but he was executed in 212, after the rebellion of his son Ma Chao.

52. Tongguan was the chief pass and defensive position on the direct road from the east into the Land within the Passes.

This campaign is described in SGZ 1, 34-35, and SGZ 36 (Shu 6), 945-46, with commentary quoting the Shanyang gong zaiji of Yue Zi and the Dian lue of Yu Huan. The parallel text in ZZTJ 66, 2106-08 is translated by de Crespigny, The Last of the Han, 282-285.

53. The Puban Crossing (also written 滨坂, and also known as the Pu Crossing Pass 滋津 and by other names, was a crossing of the southward course of the Yellow River now west of Yongji 永濟 in Shanxi.

54. At this early stage of his march, as he was retreating from Tongguan and crossing the Yellow River to the north, Cao Cao's forces were hotly pursued by those of Ma Chao. Cao Cao himself took command of the rear guard, and to show his calm and confidence in the defence, he sat upon a huchuang 料床, a "barbarian bed", evidently a light and portable piece of camp furniture, and the fore-runner of the Chinese chair. See Fitzgerald, Barbarian Beds.

55. As shown on the map, Cao Cao's manoeuvres before the decisive battle are an impressive example of the oblique approach, reminiscent, on a smaller scale, of his campaign leading to the Battle of White Wolf Mountain against the Wuhuan in 207 (see pp.408-410 below). Besides the major sources indicated in note 52 above, other references to this campaign are cited by Haloun, "Liang-chou Rebellion", note 54.

56. Yang Qiu 楊秋, the warlord of Anding, had been one of the allies against Cao Cao. After the defeat, he fled back to his base, but he was besieged there and surrendered. Cao Cao accepted his submission and confirmed him in his local power. In later years Yang Qiu was promoted to high court and military rank, enfeoffed as a marquis, and he died of old age. (SGZ 1, 36 and commentary quoting the Wei lue of Yu Huan.)
57. The Biography of Zhang Ji is in SGZ 15, 471-78.

58. The administration of Yong province under Cao Cao was established at this time. It nominally included all the Liang province of Han, together with the region about Changan. At this time, of course, and for several years afterwards, the central government under Cao Cao did not have authority in any more than a fraction of the territory.

On a provincial level, there were several confusing changes of nomenclature in this territory during the last years of Han:

In 194, after Ma Chao and Han Sui had been driven from Changan by Li Jue and Guo Si, the commanderies west of the Yellow River, along the Gansu corridor, were separated from Liang province and given the name of Yong province (HHS 9, 376). This was essentially a formal change, since the leaders at Changan had no effective authority west of Ma Teng's position in the middle Wei valley.

Then, in 213, Cao Cao again formally united the old Liang province of Han into a single territory, added to it a part of Sili, but kept the name of Yong province for the new unit.

In 220, however, in preparation for a campaign against the semi-independent rulers of the Gansu corridor, Cao Pi redivided Yong province, once more separating the western commanderies, but this time calling them Liang province (SGZ 15, 474).

On these changes, see also de Crespigny, *Last of the Han*, 418-419, note 14.

Besides these transfers of territory at the provincial level, a number of commanderies in Yong/Liang were either re-arranged or renamed:

In 188 the new commandery of Nanan had been established in the west of Hanyang: see note 35 above.

In 189 Hanan commandery was established in the west of Youfufeng, in the territory formerly controlled by the Chief Commandant of the Western Division; the commandery was later renamed Hanxing: see note 37 above.

In 193 Yongyang commandery was established in the area of Shanggu county in Hanyang commandery. In 214 the commandery was abolished: see commentary to HHS 113/23, 3517, quoting the *Xiandi gijuzhu*, SGZ 1, 42, and the commentary of Ma Yulong of Qing to *HHSJJ* 113A/23A, 29a-b.

In 194 Xiping commandery was set up in the valley of the Jing River in modern Shaanxi; see the commentary to HHS 113/23, 3522, citing the *Hou Han shu* of Yuan Shansong of the fourth century.
Further to the northwest, the commandery of Xiping 西平 was established on the upper Xining River in the west of Jincheng (see note 64 below), the territory of the Dependent State of Juyan in Zhangye, the region of the Edsin Gol, became the commandery of Xihai 西海; and Xi 西 commandery was established, based on Rile 日勒 county in Zhangye, in the region of present-day Shandan 什丹 in Gansu.

Furthermore, the commandery of Hanyang was renamed Tianshui 天水, the name by which it had been known up to 74 AD: HHS 113/23, 3517. This change is referred to in JS 14, 435, and although no specific date is given, the name Tianshui is frequently used in SGZ, and it is possible that the change was made by Cao Cao in 213.

On the changes of provinces, commanderies and counties in this period, see Sanguo junxian biao, by Wu Zengjin, with kaozheng by Yang Shoujing.

59. The biography of Xiahou Yuan is in SGZ 9, 270-72.

60. Haloun, "Liang-chou Rebellion", pp. 123 and 128, dates the destruction of Song Jian in 217. However, the annals of HHS 9, 338, the biography of Xiahou Yuan in SGZ 9, 271, and the biography of Cao Cao in SGZ 1, 44, which is for this period effectively an annals of the state of Wei, all place the campaign in 214, before Cao Cao's attack on the theocratic state of Zhang Lu 張魯 in Hanzhong. (Cf. however, SGZ 15, 472, the Biography of Zhang Ji.)

Haloun observes that there are different stories of how Song Jian met his end. It is possible that he was captured and executed by Xiahou Yuan, but one account suggests that he burned himself. See Haloun, note 70, citing the Fuzi 傅子 of Fu Xuan 傅玄 of the third century, quoted in commentary to SGZ 28, 774.

61. SGZ 1, 45, states that Han Sui was killed by his lieutenants Qu Yan 趙延 and others, but Dian lue, quoted in the commentary to that passage, implies that he died of natural causes. Haloun, "Liang-chou Rebellion", 129, has accepted the Dian lue tradition; ZZTJ 66, 2135, translated in de Crespigny, Last of the Han, 314, follows the main text of SGZ. According to Dian lue, Han Sui was just over seventy years old when he died.

62. Zhang Ji, for example, specifically advised Cao Cao to avoid becoming involved in the internecine conflicts of the various warlords of the northwest: SGZ 15, 474.

63. On Zhang Ji's appointment as Inspector of Liang province, his settlement of the rebellion, and his control of the frontier Qiang in the region of Jiuan and Jincheng by means of frontier posts, watchtowers and a beacon system for preparation and defence, see SGZ 15, 474-77.
Qu Yan was a leader under Han Sui, who made formal submission to Cao Cao in 215 (see note 61 above). He was later a leader of resistance to Cao Pi when the Wei attempted to extend their domination over the northwest in the early 220s (SGZ 15, 474, and 16, 491-92). Soon afterwards, Qu Guang, evidently a relative, rebelled in the same region, but he was killed by his own followers, Qiang and others, who sent his head to Zhang Ji for reward (SGZ 15, 476-77). In 227 there was another brief uprising under Qu Ying, but that was again put down without great difficulty (SGZ 3, 93). As Haloun, "Liang-chou Rebellion", 130, remarks, these rebellions were of no more than local significance.

The Qu family were operating chiefly in the commandery of Xiping, on the upper Xining River. The commandery appears to have been established from the western part of Jincheng about the turn of the century, probably by Han Sui, Song Jian or another rebel group. Du Ji of the Wei state is referred to as Grand Administrator about 205, combining that title with the more practical authority of Protector of the Qiang, bearing credentials, and evidently on a roving commission in the northwest (SGZ 16, 494). The division was maintained after the state of Wei achieved real authority in that region. See JS 14, 433, and Haloun, "Liang-chou Rebellion", note 71.

Embassies were received from three states of central Asia (the first, apparently, since 202: HHS 9, 382), and an imperial decree announced the revival and opening of the trade route. Zhang Gong of Dunhuang, was appointed wuji xiaowei (rendered by Haloun as "Agent for Western Trade"; cf. Yu, Trade and Expansion, 142-144). See SGZ 2, 79, and 18, 551.

SGZ 15, 472-73. ZZTJ 68, 2158; de Crespigny, The Last of the Han, 339, has the parallel passage, but ascribes it to the year 219, after Liu Bei had taken Hanzhong.

The same passage in SGZ also refers to Zhang Ji's work in bringing Chinese from Hanzhong into the Wei valley.

On the policy of shifting the Di, and for a third century description of that people, who had a language and social customs similar to those of the Qiang, but who followed the Chinese system of surnames and were competent at both farming and herding, see the Wei lue "Account of the Western Barbarians" (Xirong zhuan), quoted in commentary to SGZ 30, 858-59, and also note 8 to Chapter 2.
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notes to Chapter 4

(69.) Scott, "Ch'iang", 144, notes that in 244, when Cao Shuang attempted an invasion of Shu, the Chinese, the Qiang and the Di of the Land within the Passes were all conscripted for transport service, and many of their animals died. SGZ 9, 283, observes that the people and the barbarians called the mountain road "the road of tears".

70. Scott, "Ch'iang", Chapters 12-13, provides a summary of the history of the Qiang and Di peoples and their various states during the third, fourth and fifth centuries.

71. One major disturbance of the late third century was caused by the Xianbi chieftain Tufa Shujineng, who affected the region of Shaanxi and Gansu from about 270 to 280, and was joined by local non-Chinese people. See JS 3, 59-70, and the biography of Ma Long. In JS 57, 1554-56; also ZZTJ 79-80, 2513-2559.

72. At the end of the third century there was a notable uprising among the non-Chinese peoples of the Wei valley. It was led by Qi Wannian, a Di, supported by numbers of the Qiang as well as his own people. The trouble began in 296 and was not put down until 299. See JS 4, 94-95, and ZZTJ 82-83, 2616-2623.

73. On the Fu family of the Di, see Scott, "Ch'iang", 179-180.

74. On the Yao family, see Scott, "Ch'iang", 172-175. As she remarks, it is not possible to learn when this group of Qiang adopted a surname in the Chinese manner, though it was evidently some time during the third century. The biography of Yao Yizhong, father of Yao Guang, in JS 116, traces his descent from the Shaodang chieftain Dianyu of the first century AD. See note 2 to Chapter 3.

75. Scott, "Ch'iang", 170-171. On p. 204, she cites evidence that the Qiang, in particular, were not regarded very highly as soldiers, either for courage or for discipline.

76. SGZ 28, 776.

77. JS 97, 3549; parallel passage in ZZTJ 81, 2575-2576.

78. The whole essay is in JS 56, 1529-34 (the Biography of Jiang Tong); this extract is taken from JS 56, 1531-32. There is a parallel, abbreviated, passage in ZZTJ 83, 2623-28. In some cases, my rendering follows the interpretation indicated by Sima Guang and Hu Sanxing.

79. The characters are a line from the Sang you Ode of the Da ya section of Shi jing. Legge, Chinese Classics IV, 521, renders this and the following three lines as:

"From the west to the east,
"There is no quiet place of abiding,
"Many are the distresses I meet with;
"Very urgent is the trouble on our borders."
notes to Chapter 4 (notes to pages 171-172)

80. The characters 疑 ～ 呆 are taken from Zuo zhuan, first year of Duke Chao 嘉; see Legge, Chinese Classics V, 571 and 577/1.

81. This is evidently a reference to the valley of the Wei River. SJZ 17, 11b, states that Qinchuan 秦川 was sometimes used as a term for the area of Qinshui 秦水, near present-day Tianshui in Gansu.

82. This passage is reminiscent of the encomium of Yu Xu, who presented a memorial to the court of Later Han urging resettlement after the great Qiang rising of 107-118. See p.116 above.

83. This sentence is taken from the Zuo zhuan entry for the fourth year of Duke Cheng 嘉, referring to the hereditary rulers of the southern state of Chu 楚: "they are not from the same clan [as our ducal house of Lu], and surely their affection cannot be relied upon." Legge, Chinese Classics V, 354-355.

84. On the establishment of Xinping commandery, in the valley of the Jing River, at the end of Han, see note 58 above.

85. The Xianlian tribe had been forced to migrate to the east after their defeat by Ma Yuan in 35, and they were recognised as Eastern Qiang during all of Later Han. Originally, however, they had been on the frontiers of the empire, and from the context of this passage it appears that Jiang Tong is referring to their former homeland, on the upper reaches of the Yellow River and the frontiers of the Han commanderies Longxi and Jincheng.

86. Han and Qian were names of two tribes of the Western Qiang during the Former Han period, who surrendered to Zhao Chongguo in the first century BC. Their original territory lay along the upper reaches of the Yellow River in the region of Fuhan westwards and the Koko Nor, near that of the Xianlian. See HS 69, 2974, commentary quoting Su Lin of the third century, and Yan Shigu, also p.65 above.

87. Xizhi 旄是, also written 愿是 (cizhi), was the territory of the bend of the Yellow River south of the Koko Nor and west of present-day Gansu province. This was the area of the Jishi Shan, where Duan Jiong won his victory.
against the Qiang in 160 (p.128 above). The territory of Xizhi is referred to in the Yu gong (Legge, Chinese Classics III, 127).

88. Shiping 姒平 commandery had been established by the Jin dynasty in the Wei valley west of present-day Xianyang 咸陽, in part of the territory of the Han commandery of Youfufeng.

89. Yinping 隘平 was the name of a march (dao) established in the time of Emperor Wu of Han, which became part of the Dependent State of Guanghan under Later Han. The territory was in the area of present-day Wenxian 现 in Gansu, south of the former commandery of Wudu, in the hill country at the headwaters of the Bailong Jiang 割江. See HS 28A, 1597, and HHS 113/23, 3514.

90. The characters 西戎前校 are quoted from the end of the first part of the Yu gong chapter of Shu jing; Legge, Chinese Classics III, 127, renders the phrase as: "the wild tribes of the West all coming to submit to Yu's arrangements".
NOTES TO CHAPTER 5

1. The chief texts for the history of the Xiongnu in the Former Han period are SC 110, translated by Watson, RGH II, 155-192, and HS 94A-B, translated and discussed by De Groot, Hunnen. The Account of the Southern Xiongnu in the Later Han period is in HHS 89/79.

2. See, for example, Maenchen-Helfen, World of the Huns, and Pulleybank "The Chinese and their Neighbours", 449-452, both of which provide references to earlier works on this theme.

Among studies in Chinese, one may note those of Qi Sihe and Shao Zhixing in LSYC 1977 and 1978.

3. See, for example, Grousset, L’empire des steppes, 247 and 279-282; Empire of the Steppes, 193 and 221-222.

4. A recent work on this question is Barfield, "Imperial Confederacy"; see also Pritsak, "24 Ta-ch’en", the articles in Japanese and in English by Mori Masao, and in Chinese, Hsieh Jiann, "Political Organisation".

It may be observed here that HS 94A, 3751, gives the full title of the Shanyu in the Xiongnu language transliterated as 拜師孤塗單千 Zhangli gutu shanyu (on the pronunciation of the first character, see the commentary to HS 94A, and GSR 725j and 723a: an earlier pronunciation would be t’siang or d’iang), where zhangli means "Heaven", gutu means "Son" and shanyu means "Great" (lit. guanda).

As De Groot, Hunnen, 54, remarks, it seems likely that the concept of the Son of Heaven has been taken by the Xiongnu from the Chinese.

De Groot’s argument continues, however, to consider the question of the characters 單千 . The normal pronunciation of the compound would be danhu or danyu, but traditional scholarship, both Chinese and Western, has followed the pronunciation shanyu, as established in the Kangxi dictionary, for the particular title of the chief of the Xiongnu.

De Groot rejects this tradition, and suggests that the characters were originally selected to render an ancient form of the Turkish tanru, meaning "Godhead" (while he identifies zhangli, under the pronunciation tingli, with the Turkish tengri, also meaning Heaven). Thus the meaning of the full title would be "Sacred Son of Heaven".

The argument is fine-drawn, and may be correct. I am reluctant, however, to confuse the (perhaps mistaken) tradition of transcription for the characters 單千, and so I shall continue to render them in the form shanyu.
Fang Chuang-yao, "Royal Titles", suggests that the title Shanyu began with Modun, and indeed that "Modun" was part of a title, not a personal name: Modun Shanyu was equivalent to Shi huangdi: "First Emperor".


Shiratori, "Queue", 2-7, suggests that the Xiongnu may have been queue-wearers, and (p.68) he argues that the queue was a Mongol tradition. He distinguishes in this fashion the Huns of western history, whom he regards as a people of Turkish origin (cf. note 2 above).


7. Pritsak "24 Ta-ch'en", analyses the upper ranks of the Xiongnu hierarchy, but see also the writings of Mori, and in particular his English-language "Reconsideration of the Hsiung-nu State".

"Worthy King" is a rendering of the Chinese 賢王 Xian wang and we are told in SC 110, 2890 and HS 94A, 3751, that xian is a translation for the Xiongnu word transiterated as 蒙 (tuqi). The title is normally rendered into English as "worthy", following the system of Dubs. De Groot, Hunnen, 55, suggests the German rendering of "vortrefflich". Pritsak, "24 Ta-ch'en", 186, adds the meanings of "wissend" and "weise", and Watson, RGH II, 163, renders the title as "Wise King": this extension of the meaning of xian does not seem well justified.

Though the characters 道主 would normally be transcribed as guli, the Jiie commentary of Pei Yin and the Suoyin commentary of Sima Zhen in SC 110, 2890/91, both quote the annotation of Fu Qian 蘇 蘇 of the second century AD, which gives the pronunciation as luli; they are followed by Yan Shigu's commentary to HS 94A, 2751/52.

8. This suggestion from Pritsak, "24 Ta-ch'en", 182. At p.186, he also points out the natural interpretation of the "four corners" as referring to the four corners of the world, under the ideal universal sway of the Shanyu.

9. For this list, I follow HHS 89/79, 2944. Pritsak, "24 Ta-ch'en", 188-196, discusses these positions one by one.

Pritsak suggests that the characters 里主 rizhu represent a transcription of a Xiongnu term, which has been rendered into Chinese equivalent by SC 110 simply as da jiang 大將 "Grand General". Mori, however, has argued that this, and the other posts of the "Six Corners", were established no earlier than the first century BC, and represent a later development of the organisation of the Xiongnu state. (See, for example, "Reconsideration", 23.)
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notes to Chapter 5 (notes to pages 177-178)

HS 96A, 2872, the Account of the Western Regions, states
that in the Former Han period the Xiongnu position in central
Asia was maintained by a Rizhu King who acted as governor.
Similarly, in HHS 89/79, 2939, the Account of the Southern
Xiongnu, we are told that when the future Southern Shanyu Bi
was a Rizhu King in the 40s AD, he was responsible for the
southern frontiers of the state and for relations with the
Wuhuan, the neighbours and putative tributaries on the east
of the Xiongnu empire.

It would appear from this and similar references that the
Rizhu Kings, like those of the Four Corners above them, held
territorial responsibilities under the Shanyu, but in the
border regions rather than in the main area of the empire.

10. Pritsak, "24 Ta-ch'en", 193-195, identifies the Xiongnu
title transliterated as wenyuti 溫爾夷 with an
alternative juqu 江渠, and argues further that the full
version of the title should be rizhu juqu 理頭渠,
so that the term juqu has the sense of "assistant" or
"lieutenant". Mori, however, "Reconsideration", 31, finds
the argument unconvincing.

Pritsak suggests that the position of the Wenyuti King or
(Rizhu) Juqu King has been rendered into Chinese as da
duwei 大都尉, "Grand Chief Commandant" in the lists of
SC 110 and HS 94A.

11. The Chinese characters for this title appear as " Jianjiang" in the Beijing punctuated edition of HHS, but as "Zhanjiang" in HHSJJ and the Bona text. The da
danghu 大當戶 "Grand Chamberlain", listed by SC 110 and
HS 94A, may be a Chinese-language reference to the
Zhanjiang King.

12. As Pritsak, "24 Ta-ch'en", 191 ff, points out, there were
occasions in the latter years of the Xiongnu state when this
rule was broken: we read, for example, of a Rizhu King of
the Left Huyan Lineage (zuo Huyan rizhu wang 左呼衍日逐
王) among the Southern Xiongnu in 88 AD: HHS 89/79, 2952.

13. HHS 89/79, 2944, gives the characters as 連翅 Luandi (following
the commentary of Yan Shigu, which has the fangie spelling of 連翅 as 伽 GSR 833a: ding + 翅 GSR 876d: xì).
It is not likely that the difference between the two common
syllables is anything more than a variation in transcription.
It is possible that the initial 伽 (GSR 78a: qu or xu)
in the HHS text is also a marginal variant, though it may
indicate a change of descent to a cadet branch of the
original lineage.

14. HHS 89/79, 2942, says that when the future Southern Shanyu
Bi was suspected of planning rebellion, two Gudu Marquises
were sent to check on him and to take command of his troops.
Bielenstein, *RHD III*, 117, following Pritsak, "24 Ta-ch' en", 197, sees this as an example of the Gudu Marquises acting as inspectors or police agents of the Shanyu's government. He is surely correct.

15. According to *SC* 110, 2892; Watson, *RGH II*, 164, and *HS* 94A, 3752; De Groot, *Hunnen*, 59, there was a minor gathering of the chieftains at the court of the Shanyu in the first month, then a major assembly at Longcheng in the fifth month, with sacrifices to the ancestors, to Heaven and Earth, and to other spirits. In the autumn, when the horses were in their best condition, there was another great assembly in the Dai Forest, and at this time there was a census taken of the number of people and animals in the empire.

*SC* 110 and *HS* 94A note that the Xiongnu regarded the 五 ji days, the fifth and sixth of the ten-day cycle, as the most auspicious, and *HHS* 89/79, 2944, says that the three annual ceremonies were held on the first mou day of the first, fifth and ninth month. As Bielenstein, *RHD III*, 118 note 7, remarks, it is interesting that the Xiongnu appear to have used the Chinese method of dating. (The information as it stands, of course, indicates only that they recognised a ten-day cycle; it does not prove that the Xiongnu adopted the full sexagenary system.) De Groot, *Hunnen*, 60, points out that the two middle days of the cycle of ten were most appropriate for the central ceremonies of a central government.

It should be observed, moreover, that the dating for the ceremonies described in *HHS* 89/79 reflects the period when the Southern Xiongnu were essentially under Chinese control. A note by Fu Jian, cited in the commentary to *HS* 94A, 3752, says that the autumn gathering was held in the eighth month.

*SC* 110 and *HS* 94A tell us that the Shanyu held his court in the region north of Dai and Yunzhong commanderies of Han: that is, in the steppe country northeast of present-day Huhhot in Inner Mongolia. It was, presumably, a mobile encampment, though there was very likely a regular place for winter quarters and the first-month meeting each year.

The phrase Longcheng, written 龍城 or 龍城, obviously refers to a place, but there is also a scholarly tradition that the sacrifice held there had something to do with dragons. The tradition is based firstly upon the annotation of Cui Hao 楚濤, quoted in the *Suoyin* commentary of Sima Zhen to *SC* 110, 2892, which relates the character long 龍 to the alleged worship of dragon spirits by peoples of the Western Regions, and secondly upon the text of *HHS* 89/79, which describes the three annual sacrifices of the Xiongnu as 龍城 long si, which would appear to be translatable as "dragon sacrifices".

However, De Groot, *Hunnen*, 59 and 165-167 (in discussion of the campaign plan of the unfortunate General Li Ling in 99 BC) argues that the character long 龍, however
written, in this context has nothing to do with dragons, but represents a transcription of the Xiongnu name for the Ongin River, which flows south between 44° and 47°N and 102° and 105°E. The argument, based upon geographical evidence and variant transcriptions, is detailed and impressive.

In these circumstances, the note of Cui Hao and the reading of *HHS* 89/79 may be regarded as Chinese misinterpretation of the Xiongnu custom, based upon their arbitrary transcription of the placename in a foreign tongue.

On the other hand, there is a strong tradition that the site of the Long ceremony was on the Orhon River, north of modern Ulaan Baatar, in the fertile region of northern Mongolia.

Very probably, as Wang Weimao argues in his recent article, the actual site of the ceremony could vary from year to year, but it was held in the general region of the Ongin and Orhon rivers.

With regard to the ceremony at the Dai Forest (whose pronunciation is given as 花 by the commentator Fu Jian in *HS* 94A, 3752, quoted in the *Suoyin* commentary of Sima Zhen to *SC* 110, 2892/93), De Groot, *Hunnen*, 59-60 and 22, identifies it with the region of the Han city of Mayi 麥 in Yanmen commandery, in the upper valley of the Sanggan River in present-day northern Shanxi.

If this was indeed the site of Dai Forest, the autumn ceremony of the Xiongnu must obviously have been held somewhere else after that territory had been taken into the Han empire in the time of Emperor Wu.

A note by Yan Shigu to *HS* 94A, 3752, tells us that the autumn sacrifice, which was continued by the Xianbi people, entailed the construction of a wooden altar: even when the tribes were in the open steppe with no forest available, they would set up a single pole of willow. A central part of the ceremony called for the tribe to ride around the altar three times. It would appear natural to see in this a tradition descended from the original homes of the people in the forest and hill country on the fringes of the open steppe.

The three annual sacrifices of the Southern Xiongnu, referred to in *HHS* 89/79, were most likely held at the Shanyu's permanent headquarters near Meiji in Xihe commandery after his surrender in the late 40s AD. The Northern Shanyu, however, probably maintained the traditional ceremonies as well as he could: we are told that the armies of Dou Xian captured and burned the sacred place of Longcheng in the campaign of 89 AD (see p.272 below).

16. Vladimirtsoff, *Le régime sociale des Mongols*, 44 et saepe. In dealing with numbers of nomads, Chinese texts frequently refer to them by the terms yī 花. (normally: "a
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(city") and luo (normally: "a hamlet") and one may
suggest that, in such context, these relate to larger or
smaller family and clan groupings.


As one example of territoriality among nomad peoples, I
would cite the ongghot, a large altar or cairn of stones,
surmounted by a wooden pole, which we were shown in Ulantuge
Commune north of Huhhot in 1981. Though the present
government has persuaded the Mongols to live in fixed houses,
and the altar is now disused, we were told that it had served
as a regular meeting place and a geographical reference point
for the people of that region in the recent past when they
had still lived as nomads. (It seems very probable that this
cairn and pole was a local site which had continued the
tradition of the ancient ceremonies described in note 15
above: see in particular the remarks of Yan Shigu cited from
HS 94A, 3752.)

18. Barfield, "Imperial Confederacy", 58. One notable phenomenon
of Chinese campaigns against the northern nomads was the vast
numbers of cattle, horses and other animals which could be
collected by a victorious general.

19. Sechin Jagchid, "Trade, peace and war", and "Patterns of
trade and conflict".

Among the many other writers on this question, one may
cite in particular Lattimore, Inner Asian Frontiers, 522;
Yü, Trade and Expansion, 40-51 and 99-132. Sinor, "Inner
Asian Warriors", 142-144, emphasises the nomad need for iron
both for war and for hunting, and discusses the restrictions,
also detailed by Yü, which Chinese governments placed upon
such trade.

20. Lattimore, Inner Asian Frontiers, 478-480.


22. The Yantie lun has been translated in part by Gale,
Discourses on Salt and Iron, and the whole work is
discussed by Loewe, Crisis and Conflict (Chapter 3: The
Grand Inquest - 81 BC), 91-112.

23. Luttwak, Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire, which analyses
the changing relationship between the imperial government and
the states and tribes along its frontiers, emphasises (in an
Appendix on Power and Force, pp.195-200) the importance of
"perceived power". In earlier passages, particularly dealing
with the Julio-Claudian era, he discusses the concept of
"suasion", the process by which the rulers of client-states
on the eastern frontiers were managed to keep the peace.
Both concepts, of perceived power and of suasion, can be
interpreted in terms of the Chinese wei "authority".
24. The most thorough discussion of the campaigns of Emperor Wu appears in Loewe, "Campaigns of Han Wu-ti", which includes an Appendix on the campaign of Li Ling.

25. HS 94A, 2785-87; De Groot, Hunnen, 192-200.

On the Dingling people, who lived to the north of the Xiongnu, in the general region of Lake Baikal, there is little recorded. Most of the material has been collected by Wang Jih-Wei "A Brief History of the Ting-ling People". Pulleyblank, "The Chinese and their Neighbours", 445, identifies them as a proto-Turkish people.

26. HS 94A, 2789; De Groot, Hunnen, 204.

27. HS 94A, 2790; De Groot, Hunnen, 207-208. Barfield, "Imperial Confederacy", 51, suggests that Wuyanjuti sought to establish a more centralised state, and that this forceful policy was the cause of his misfortune. The brief but bloody picture we are given, however, seems to show him as an insecure pretender in a crumbling state, rather than as an over-energetic reformer.


31. The Lady Wang had the personal name of Qiang 羌, Zhaojun 貞君 was her style (zi 子). Her story is told in HS 94B, 3803 and 3806; De Groot, Hunnen, 239 and 245, and in HHS 89/79, 2941, discussed by Bielenstein, RHD III, 89-90.

   The tale of the Lady Wang and her marriage to the barbarian ruler is one of the great romances of Chinese tradition, of which the celebrated play, Autumn at the Palace of Han (Hangong qiu 漢宮秋), by Ma Zhiyuan 馬致遠 of the Yuan period, is a single example. A tomb of the Han period, ascribed to the Lady Wang from a tradition dating back to the Tang period, is a present-day tourist attraction near Huhhot, and is presented as a symbol of Han-Mongol friendship.

32. It should be emphasised here that the concept of primogeniture and even of inheritance from father to son is a comparatively modern phenomenon in the West. In China, of course, the imperial succession came to the son who was chosen by the reigning emperor: it was often advantageous
for the dynasty that the eldest son should be chosen, but it was not always desirable and certainly not required. In medieval Europe, the succession of a ruler depended primarily on his support among the fighting leaders of the community, the *preux*. Relationship to the former ruler was an advantage, but not a decisive one: for examples in English history one may observe the accessions of Harold II, William I, Henry I, Stephen, Henry II and John. See, for example, the analysis by Brooke, *Saxon and Norman Kings*, 22-49.

The Xiongnu system, like that of the Mongols later, was similar to that of medieval Europe, in comparable social and political circumstances. The system of Huhanxie Shanyu was established as a natural reaction to the chaos which had attended his succession, and it prevented a comparable crisis for the generation of his sons.

33. According to the commentary to *HHS* 89/79, 2939, the Xiongnu word transcribed as *ruodi* 父德 was equivalent to the Chinese 孝 *xiao* "filial". From the time of the Huhanxie Shanyu it was incorporated into the dynastic title of his successors.


It may be observed that the Shanyu mentions the value of the wood from this region for yurts and carts; *HS*, however, says that the wood from this region was particularly good for arrows, and that there was also a species of hawk whose feathers made excellent fletchings. The Shanyu may have found it a little embarrassing to refer to such warlike items.

The wood in question was presumably willow, or perhaps a form of poplar.

38. Bielenstein, *RHD* III, 89, discussing *HS* 78, 3282-83 (The Biography of Xiao Wangzhi), and *HS* 8, 270: Dubs, *HFHD* II, 256-258.


40. *HS* 94B, 3818; De Groot, *Hunnen*, 262-264. The details of the incidents appear in the Account of the Western Regions, *HS* 96B, 2924-25, where it appears that the unfortunate princes had been driven to take refuge with the Xiongnu by Chinese distrust and oppression rather than by their own
wilful rebellion. We are also told that when the Shanyu received them, he deliberately raised the matter with the Chinese government, in order to settle the demarcation dispute.

41. HS 94B, 2819; De Groot, Hunnen, 264.

42. Gardiner, "Yarkand in the First Century A.D.", 64 note 16, observes the similar adoption of single-character Chinese names among the rulers of the city-states of the Western Regions at the same period.

43. HS 94B, 3820; De Groot, Hunnen, 266-268, HS 99B, 4115; Dubs, HFHD III, 295-296, discussed by Bielenstein, RHD III, 94-95.

The old seal had read: Ṭimenti Xiongnu Shanyu xi; the inscription on the new seal was Xin Xiongnu Shanyu zhang.

44. HS 99B, 4119; Dubs, HFHD III, 301, and HS 94B, 3822; De Groot, Hunnen, 269, Bielenstein, RHD III, 95.

45. This incident is discussed in Loewe and Hulsewé, China in Central Asia, 48 and 194-195.

46. HS 99B, 4121; Dubs, HFHD III, 304-305. The abusive title given to Zhi was 阿奴大人子.

47. HS 94B, 3823; De Groot, Hunnen, 272. Xian's title was Xiao Shanyu and that of Zhu was Shun Shanyu.


49. HS 94B, 3806, says that the Yituzhiyasi was the only child of the first marriage of the Lady Wang; HHS 89/79, 2941, says that she had two children by the Huhanxie Shanyu. As Bielenstein, RHD III, 99, remarks, however, it is clear that only Yituzhiyasi grew to manhood.

50. Bielenstein, RHD III, 96. On the numbers of troops deployed by Emperor Wu at various times in his campaigns, see Loewe, "Campaigns of Han Wu-ti", 92-96.

On the importance of the flooding on the Yellow River in overthrowing the government of Wang Mang, see Bielenstein, RHD I, particularly 145-154.

51. For Zhuang You's protest, see HS 94B, 3824-25; De Groot, Hunnen, 273-275. His campaign against Gaogouli (Korean: Koguryo) is described in HS 99B, 4130; Dubs, HFHD III, 325-326.

It is difficult to describe the dealings with Gaogouli as a diplomatic or military success. The rising of these northeastern peoples took place as a result of the
conscription placed upon them to support Wang Mang's great army. Despite advice, Wang Mang insisted they should be attacked rather than soothed, and Zou (周), the loyal ruler of Gaogouli, was invited into Zhuang You's camp and then executed. As a result of this coup, the non-Chinese people lost trust in the empire, and the Chinese presence in Manchuria and Korea was destroyed in the later years of civil war. See Gardiner, "Beyond the Archer and his Son", 63-87.

The surname of Zhuang You appears as Yan (嚴) in both HS and HHS. As Bielenstein, RHD I, 112 note 1, remarks, this change was made to avoid the taboo on the personal name of Emperor Ming of Later Han (see the commentary to HHS 1A, 4).

52. e.g. 11 AD: HS 99B, 4125; Dubs, HFHD III, 313-316; 15 AD: HS 99B, 4140-41; Dubs, HFHD III, 356.

53. HS 94B, 3826; De Groot, Hunnen, 279, HS 99B, 4128; Dubs, HFHD III, 319.


The characters on the new seal were (恭奴善子).

HS 94B, 3828, tells us, however, that despite the official goodwill of the Shanyu Xian, the raiding along the borders did not entirely cease.

56. HS 94B, 3807-80; De Groot, Hunnen, 247, tells us that the second marriage of the Lady Wang Zhaojun, to the son and successor of the Huhanxie Shanyu, produced two daughters. The elder of these was the Lady Yun, who married Xubu Tang and bore him She. The second daughter married a man of the Dangyu (唐) surname, evidently an important family, though not of the highest nobility which intermarried with the imperial clan. The personal name of the son of this marriage is not known.

Bielenstein, RHD III, 90, presents a table of the descent and relationships of the generations which followed the Huhanxie Shanyu.

57. HS 94B, 3829; De Groot, Hunnen, 286, HS 99C, 4155-56; Dubs, HFHD III, 383. See also Bielenstein, RHD III, 101-102.

HS 99C says that Xubu Dang and the Lady Yun were invited to the frontier to meet the Lady Yun's cousin, Wang Xi, the son of the elder brother of the Lady Wang Zhaojun, who had been given the title of Marquis of Peace and Alliance by Marriage (Heqin hou 和親侯) by Wang Mang.
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HS 948 adds the information that a younger son of Xubu Dang and the Lady Yun, brother of She, evaded capture and returned to the Xiongnu.


59. Bielenstein, RHD III, 101, suggests that the "kidnap" of Xubu Dang and his associates was Wang Mang's response to raiding by the Xiongnu under the Shanyu Yu. The texts do not indicate this specifically. Certainly, as Bielenstein says, raiding by the Xiongnu began again in 19 AD, but it appears more likely that this was in response to Wang Mang's intrigues, rather than the other way round (HS 948, 3829). In similar fashion, we cannot specify the time at which Yituzhiyasi was killed (HHS 89/79, 2941). The incidents are no doubt all connected, but it is not possible to tell which one caused another.

60. HS 99B, 4170; Dubs, HFHD III, 416.

61. Bielenstein, RHD III, 98 and 102. On the situation of the Western Regions, where the Chinese position had become distinctly more tenuous since 13 AD, see Gardiner, "Yarkand in the First Century A.D.", 46-47.


64. Loewe, Crisis and Conflict, 298-299.
1. The major source for the history of the relations between China and the Xiongnu in the Later Han period is the Account of the Southern Xiongnu in HHS 89/79. This is based upon the earlier text of the Dongguan Hanji, as compiled during the second century AD under imperial authority, with the aid of records from the official archives. See Bielenstein, RHD I, 11, and the commentary to HHS 89/79, 2939.

2. From this point on, in this and the two following chapters, all year-dates given in the Western style may be assumed to be those of the Christian era. On the few occasions where there is occasion to refer to years BC, these will be identified.


5. The Biography of Peng Chong is in HHS 12/2, 501-505. His career is described by Bielenstein, RHD II, 121-131.

6. The Biography of Lu Fang is in HHS 12/2, 505-508. His career is described by Bielenstein, RHD III, 102-110 and 113-114.


8. The construction of the defences is described in the biographies of Wang Ba, HHS 20/10, 737, of Du Mao, HHS 22/12, 776-777, and of Ma Cheng, HHS 22/12, 779. They are discussed by Bielenstein, RHD III, 110-113, and shown on his Map 16 at p.171.

9. The Juyong Pass is now in the territory of the Municipality of Beijing, northwest of the city, where the railway leads to Zhangjiakou (Kalgan) and Mongolia. It is this pass, in the hills known as Badaling 北京布 , which most visitors see when they are taken to view the Great Wall.

    The Feihu "Flying Fox" Pass, still known by that name, is north of present-day Laiyuan in Hebei. In Han texts, it is also referred to as the Changshan Pass.

10. Lu Fang was in Gaoliu between 40 and 42. For a few months in 40 he appears to have sought to negotiate a surrender to Han, but he abandoned this approach and returned to alliance with the Xiongnu by the end of the year. The incident is discussed in Bielenstein, RHD III, 113-114.
11. HHS 18, 72-73; Bielenstein, RHD III, 114.

12. On Wuhuan activities in this period, see pp.376-377 below.

13. On Ma Yuan's dealings with the Qiang, see pp.68-75 above.

14. The appearance of the embassies was certainly a sign of the revived prestige of the government of Later Han, but they were not successful in persuading Emperor Guangwu to grant them his patronage. On the contrary, he refused their request to pay tribute and leave hostages and turned them away without support. From this time, for the next fifteen years, the city states of central Asia were dominated by the local authority of Suoju (Su) or Yarkand. See Gardiner, "Yarkand in the First Century A.D.", 51 and passim.

15. HHS 24/14, 842 (the Biography of Ma Yuan); on the skirmish with the Wuhuan and the further attacks against Chinese territory, see also HHS 18, 73, HHS 90/80, 2982 (the Account of the Wuhuan), Bielenstein, RHD III, 115-116, and pp.378-379 below.

16. HHS 89/79, 2939 and 2941-42.

The title which Bi held under the Shanyu Yu was Yujian (Rizhu King of the Right), and it presents some points which deserve attention.

The pronunciation of the character in the phrase is given as equivalent to *yu* in the commentary of Yan Shigu to HS 94A, 3788-89, and with the *fangie* spelling of 矢 = *yu* in the commentary of Li Xian to HHS 89/79, 2939-40. Though the normal pronunciation is *ao*, GSR 1045a notes that it can be used as a loan for the reading *yu*, and the commentators appear to agree that this is the case here.

The significance of the phrase is discussed by Pritsak, "24 Ta-ch'en", (Appendix 1), 199-200, but the best interpretation he can offer is that it was a supernumary honorific added on occasion to the substantive titles of nobility, and Hsieh Jiann, "Political organisation", 238-239, points out (note 2 to 239) that the prefix appears connected to the ruling family. See also Lin Gan, Xiongnu shi, 42.

Yujian was the name of subordinate state of Kangju (Samarkand): HS 96A, 3894; Hulsewe and Loewe, China in Central Asia, 131. De Groot, Hunnen, 202, identifies Yujian also with the Orhon River. In this context, however, Yujian does not seem to be a placename.

The significance of the Rizhu Kings has been discussed above, p.177 and note 9 to Chapter 5. It may be observed here, following Pritsak in his Appendix 2, 201, that Bi was
styled Rizhu King of the Right not because of the geographical position of his territory but because of his rank in the hierarchy. The Xiongnu identified the west as right and the east as left (SC 110, 2891; Watson, RGH II, 163; and De Groot, Hunnen, 58; HS 94A, 3751). Bi's territory, however, lay along the eastern frontier of the empire. At this upper level of the nobility, among the imperial clan, therefore, the direction names evidently referred to grades of rank rather than to geographical position, and Bi's designation "of the Right" identified him as holding the junior rank of the Rizhu Kings.

17. We have remarked earlier (note 16 to Chapter 5) on the Chinese use of the terms yi and luo for describing small family and clan groups among the nomad peoples. The term bu "division" used here evidently refers to a larger unit, probably a full tribal community. The numbers of people in a bu, however, cannot be judged: the various references in the texts indicate a wide variety.

18. HHS 89/79, 2942; Bielenstein, RHD III, 116-119. Dongguan Hanji gives the date of Bi's taking the title as equivalent to 25 January 49.

19. HHS 89/79, 2942.

20. HHS 19/9, 715-16 (the Biography of Geng Guo).

21. HHS 20/10, 745 (the Biography of Zhai Tong). Zhai Tong, whose personal name also appears as Yong, was a nephew of Zhai Zun, one of Emperor Guangwu's early supporters: Zhai Zun's biography is in HHS 20/10, 728-44.

22. On the Wuhuan association at this time, see pp.380-381 below

23. Bielenstein, RHD III, 126 note 1, discusses the story that envoys of Wang Mang had persuaded the Shanyu Zhi to perform the kowtow, but discounts its reliability. On pp.120-121 Bielenstein describes the ceremony and the gifts, and remarks that it was probably on this occasion the Shanyu Bi received his seal from the Han government.

24. In the Chinese texts describing the formal Xiongnu hierarchy we are told of only two Gudu Marquises. On the other hand, the future Southern Shanyu Bi had formerly two Gudu Marquises allocated to supervise his activities, and there is now a reference to five Gudu Marquises. It appears that the establishment was quite flexible and could be readily enlarged at need.

25. HHS 89/79, 2944-45. The fifty men of the body-guard were chosen from among reprieved convicts, or criminals with suspended sentences (shixing) a common source of military recruits in Later Han.
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28. *HHS* 65/55, 2148 (the Biography of Duan Jiong) contains his memorial of 167 proposing the extermination campaign against the Qiang, which includes his statements of past expenses and his estimate for the planned operations. The final accounts of the campaign are given on p.3153. See pp.135-136, 140 and 142 above.

29. *HHS* 26/16, 914 (the Biography of Zhao Xi).

30. *HHS* 2, 96; Bielenstein, *RHD* III, 128.

31. The figures are taken from the Treatise of Geography *HS* 28B, 1616-23, and the Treatise of Administrative Geography *HHS* 113/23, 3528, 3524-26 and 3519-20.

32. On the decrease of population and the abolition of counties by Emperor Guangwu, see Bielenstein, *RHD* III. 140-144 and 174-175, Maps 19 and 20.

33. *HHS* 89/79, 2953-54; Bielenstein, *RHD* III, 129.

34. *HHS* 89/79, 2945-48; *HHS* 18/8, 695-696 (the Biography of Zang Gong). The debate is discussed by Bielenstein, *RHD* III, 122-125 and 126-128.

35. On this policy, see pp.48-50 above.


38. *HHS* 89/79, 2948. From this time on, where the phrase *ruodi* had appeared in the title of each Shanyu since the first Huhanxie Shanyu, there is now only the single syllable *di*; its significance, reflecting the Chinese *xiao* "filial", is presumably retained. (See note 33 to Chapter 5.)


40. *HHS* 89/79, 2949. The office of General Who Crosses the Liao had been established for a short time during the Former Han period, when Fan Mingyou was sent to attack the Wuhuan in Liaodong in 77 BC (*HS* 7, 229-230; Dubs, *HFHD* II. 168-171, see also p.370 below), but the Later Han title was related only in name. Though the Liao River flows through Manchuria, the military command had very little to do with that region. As the site of the headquarters would indicate,
the commander's chief military responsibility lay in the region north and northeast of the Ordos loop of the Yellow River.

The personal name of Wu Tang also appears in the texts as Chang 常 (HHS 2, 110-111, commentary of Li Xian, and HHJ 10, 85a, in the entry for Yong Ping 永平 16: 73 AD). The name also appears as Shang 茚 (see GSR 725).

41. Geng Guo's memorial is quoted in his biography in HHS 19/9, 715-16, and the biography states specifically that the establishment of 65 followed the lines of his advice. See also Bielenstein, RHD III, 127-128.

42. HHS 89/79, 2949, describing the establishment of the command of the General Who Crosses the Liao in 65: the passage from Hanguan yi is quoted in Li Xian's commentary to this passage. The same text also appears in the commentary of Li Xian to HHS 23/13, 814, and in the commentary of Liu Zhao to HHS 114/24, 3559.

The main text of HHS 89/79, sayd that Wu Tang was to take command of the "Tiger Tooth" (hu ya 麒牙 ) troops of Liyang and set his camp at Manbo. I interpret "Tiger Tooth" troops as those of advanced training at the Liyang encampment. There seems no connection with the troops of the Tiger Tooth Chief Commandant at Changan, which we are told was set up only in 110 (cf. the anachronism regarding the Encampment at Yong, discussed in note 40 to Chapter 3.)

43. See pp.50-52 above, and Bielenstein, RHD III, 118, citing HHS 1B, 75.

44. Lao Kan's article of 1944, Chü-yen Han-chien k'ao cheng 塔延 漢簡考證, was followed by his Chü-yen Han-chien k'ao-shih shih-wen chih pu 考釋史文之部 , Shanghai 1949; a second edition of the two articles was published as Chü-yen Han-chien k'ao-shih chih pu 考釋之部 , Taipei, 1960, and reprinted in Lao Kan hsüeh-shu lun-wen ch'i 劳篤學術論文集 , 上, Taipei 1976, 247-454, including a supplement of corrections, pu-cheng 精正. On this bibliography, see Loewe, RHA I, 169-173. On the dates of the strips found at Juyan, see also Loewe, RHA I, and II, 360. Lao Kan's discussion, cited by Bielenstein, is at pp.250-252.

Of the dated strips found in the 1930s, the majority are from the Former Han period, with the main series petering out in the early years of the Jianwu 建武 period, about 30 AD. Loewe, RHA II, 361, discusses also two which are dated 89 and 98 AD, and another which may be dated 40, 73 or 104 AD.
Subsequent discoveries, reported in Wenwu 1978.1, 1–43, do not appear to have extended the range of dates already established.

For advice on this question I am grateful for personal communication from Professor Hulsee, whose article, "Han-time Documents" gives a survey of publications and a discussion of the material available up to the mid-1950s.

45. Chavannes, Documents chinois découverts par Aurel Stein, particularly pp.iii and vii; in fact, the first dated documents found and identified by Stein in his expedition of 1906–08, at the tower north of Dunhuang which he numbered as XXVI, were from 50 AD, Jianwu 26: Stein, Ruins of Desert Cathay II, 52–53, and Chavannes, Documents, 122 (Nos. 563 and 564).

46. See p.9 above.

47. See pp.383–385 below.


49. HHS 89/79, 2949. Even allowing for exaggeration, one may observe that the Great Wall defences in this region cannot have been particularly effective against these raids at this time.

50. The Biography of Geng Bing is in HHS 19/9, 716–18.

51. The Biography of Dou Qu is in HHS 23/13, 809–812; the whole chapter is devoted to the biographies of Dou Rong and his clansmen. Dou Lin, a member of the clan, had been dismissed for deception of the court on his dealings with the Qiang, and his difficulty had given Emperor Ming an excuse to remove the family from power. (HHS 23/13, 808, HHS 89/79, 87/77, 2880–81, and see p.84 above). Bielenstein, RHD IV, 113–114, in discussion of the factionalism of the early years of Later Han, sees the Dou family as protagonists of a "soft" policy towards the Xiongnu. As he observes, however, their position changed in the next generation.

52. The campaign is described in HHS 23/13, 810, and HHS 20/10, 746.

53. HHS 19/9, 717.

54. The Biography of Ban Chao is in HHS 47/37, 1571. It has been translated by Chavannes, "Trois généraux", 216–245.

55. HHS 113/13, 3278, including commentary quoting the Gujin zhu 古今注 of Fu Wuji 伏無忌 of the first century.
56. HHS 89/79, 2950.

57. HHS 45/35, 1518-19.

58. HHS 89/79, 2951, read in accordance with the commentary of Liu Bin 刘 敬 quoted in HHSJJ 89/79, 9b-10a.

59. The Biography of the Empress-Dowager nee Dou is in HHS 10A, 415-17.

It may be noted that the Empress-Dowager was not the true mother of Emperor He. Emperor He's real mother was an Honoured Lady (guiREN 貴人) of the Liang 梁 family; but she had been slandered by the Lady Dou, was disgraced and died. HHS 10A, 415-16.

60. The Biography of Dou Xian is in HHS 23/13, 812-21.

61. HHS 23/13, 813; Ch'ü T'ung-tsu, Han Social Structure.

62. HHS 89/79, 2952.

63. HHS 89/79, 2953.

64. The report of the protest appears in the Biography of Yuan An, HHS 45/35, 1519-20; it is not mentioned in HHS 89/79 nor in the Biography of Dou Xian in HHS 23/13.

65. Song You was later dismissed from office and compelled to commit suicide for having been a partisan of Dou Xian: HHS 4, 174.

66. The chief account of the campaign is in the Biography of Dou Xian, HHS 23/13, 814-19.

As may be observed below, Dou Xian was accompanied on this campaign by the historian Ban Gu, who was a client and supporter of the Dou faction, and who later shared Dou Xian's fate. The Biography of Ban Gu is in HHS 40A-B/30A-B. Besides his authorship of Han shu, Ban Gu was employed as one of the compilers of the official history of Later Han, which later became the Dongguan Hanji: Bielenstein, RHD 1, 11. The record of Dou Xian's campaigns, therefore, may be well authenticated.

67. The camp at Liyang has been discussed above, pp.50 and 253 and note 42 to this chapter. On the establishment at Yong, which appears to have performed a similar function as a recruiting and training camp for garrison forces in Liang province, see p.50 above, and note 40 to Chapter 3.

68. The text of the inscription composed by Ban Gu is preserved in HHS 23/13, 815-16.
69. It seems possible that the Western Lakes is a general term for the western part of present-day Mongolia, \(47^\circ-51^\circ N\) and about \(93^\circ E\). The Siqu and Beiti lakes referred to above (and the Siqu referred to below) would be two of the waters of this region.

70. *HHS* 89/79, 2953.

71. Yiwu may be identified with the territory of Yiwulu, mentioned above, pp.260-261 and with the present place of that name, also known as Atürük, northeast across the Barköl Tagh from Hami in Xinjiang. (*Cf.* the commentary of Li Xian to *HHS* 23/13, 810-11, referring to the campaigns of Dou Qu in the 70s.)

72. *HHS* 45/35, 1520-21. In this debate, Yuan An and Ran Wei were opposed not only to Dou Xian but also to Geng Bing and Song You.

73. The fall of Dou Xian and his family is described in *HHS* 23/13, 819-820; see also *HHS* 10A, 416.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 7

1. HHS 89/79, 2953-54; HHS 4, 170.

HHS Annals says that the two offices of Chief Commandants of the Dependent States were "re-established" (fu zhi (fu zhi) ) and the commentary of Li Xian notes that there had been dependent states in Former Han, based upon Meiji county in Xihe commandery and Qiuci in Shang (see HS 28B, 1617 and 1618).

In fact, the "re-establishment" was effectively a new foundation, based upon the new situation brought about by the great numbers of surrendered Northern Xiongnu.

It is very possible, however, that the headquarters of the Chief Commandant of the Dependent State of Xihe was at Meiji, giving a military administrative presence to support that of the Emissary at the court of the Southern Shanyu. The territory of the Dependent State presumably extended over the northeastern part of the Ordos.

Similarly, it is likely that the county of Qiuci in Former Han Division was now re-established as a military administrative headquarters, and the census of Later Han for the 140s lists the place as Qiuci Dependent State (HHS 113/23, 3524).

The territory of the Dependent State presumably controlled the southeastern Ordos, and very likely included the county-unit named Houguan as well as Qiuci itself (on Houguan, see note 38 to Chapter 1).

Though the areas for which these two dependent states were responsible may have included a number of county units, they were evidently subordinate to their respective commandery administrations. Unlike the Dependent States of Liaodong, Zhangye, Juyuan in Zhangye, Guanghan, Jianwei and Shu Commandery, they were not later raised to commandery-level status by the government of Emperor An. There is no reason to believe, however, that they did not continue to remain in operation through most of the following century (See note 4 to Chapter 1, and on Qiuci Dependent State see also note 1 to Chapter 8).

2. HHS 89/79, 2955.

3. The rebellion of Fenghou is described in HHS 89/79, 2955-56. The Biography of Deng Hong is in HHS 16/6, 605-06.

4. HHS 89/79, 2957.

5. HHS 89/79, 2957.

6. See pp.91-114 above.

7. HHS 4, 197 (106), HHS 5, 209 (107), 210 (108), 214 (109), 215 (110), 218 (111); HHS 105/15, 3309-10; Chng, "Portents of the Reign of Emperor An", 169-173.
notes to Chapter 7

8. An account of this rebellion appears in HHS 89/79, 2957-58, but there is more detail in the biographies of the Chinese commanders: HHS 47/37, 1592-93 (the Biography of Liang Qin, to which there is appended, at 1593-94, the Biography of He Xi; Chavannes, "Trois généraux", 255-262), and HHS 19/9, 718-19 (the Biography of Geng Kui).

9. HHS 5, 213, dates the rebellion in the winter, but it appears from the other sources that the fighting had begun significantly earlier, and the imperial annals record the trouble essentially in relation to the order for the despatch of the expedition under He Xi.

10. On Liang Qin's experience with the Qiang rebellion, see p.97 above.

11. HHS 89/79, 2958.

12. The Account of the Xianbi in HHS 90/80, 2985-95, has been translated by Schreiber, "Hsien-pi". SGZ 30, 835-38, contains an Account of the Xianbi in the main text of the history, accompanied by an extended quotation in the commentary of Pei Songzhi from the Wei shu f Wang Shen (d.266). The history of the Xianbi has also been discussed by Gardiner and de Crespigny, "T'an-shih-huai".

The histories are agreed that the manners and customs of the Xianbi were very close to those of the Wuhuan (HHS 90/80, 2985, SGZ 30, 836, commentary quoting the Wei shu of Wang Shen; Schreiber, "Hsien-pi", 147 ff and 162-163. The manners and customs of the Wuhuan people in the Han period are discussed below, pp.360-367.

The Xianbi are said to have taken their name from the mountain called Xianbi, now identified as a peak of the Great Xingan range, west of the Horqin/Khorqin West Wing Centre Banner in Kirin (Gezu jianshi, 46). It is equally possible, however, that the mountain took its name from the tribe. Cf. note 8 to Chapter 9.

HHS 90/80 and the Wei Shu of Wang Shen mention some of the animals of the Xianbi territory at this time, including wild asses, sheep and a horned beast (jiaoduan 貝端), possibly a rhinoceros, whose horns were said to be used to make bows. There were also excellent furs to be obtained from mink, otters and squirrels: Schreiber, "Hsien-pi", 164-166.

We are told that the Xianbi held an annual gathering by the Luo River 濮水 in the third month of spring. At that time there was ceremonial cutting of the hair, marriages were entered into, and feasting was held.

Schreiber, "Hsien-pi", 164, translates and discusses the text, and follows Mullie, "La riviere Jao-lo", and Shiratori, in identifying the Luo River as the present-day Xar Moron.
13. On these people, see in particular Gardiner, Early History of Korea. There is an Account of the Eastern Barbarians in HHS 85/75, 2807-23, and a further history of Gaogouli, Fuyu and the other peoples of present-day Manchuria and Korea in SGZ 30, 841-63.

14. The Biography of Zhai Tong is in HHS 20/10, 744-47. See also p.236, and note 21 to Chapter 6.

The territory of Liaodong commandery at this time probably extended into the hill country about the Daling River of present-day Western Liaoning. Responsibility for the region was later taken over by the Dependent State of Liaodong. See note 53 to Chapter 1.

15. HHS 90/80, 2982 (in the Account of the Wuhuan). See also HHS 118/28, 3626.


17. Towards the end of the dynasty, in the reign of Emperor Ling, we are told that Qing and Xu provinces were still contributing over two hundred million cash per annum for the maintenance of You province (HHS 73/63, 2354). This levy was presumably a continuation of the funding originally applied to the subsidy for the Xianbi, but it seems certain that the money was by then used for general expenses of the frontier: the Xianbi at that time could no longer be controlled by any subsidy, no matter how large. See note 91 to Chapter 9.

18. de Crespigny, "Local Administration", 61, and pp.39-40 above. On aspects of the settlement of the frontier with the Wuhuan, see also, pp.386-387 below.


20. SGZ 30, 837, commentary quoting the Wei shu of Wang Shen; Schreiber, "Hsien-pi", 172. This campaign is dated by HHS 4, 179, to the winter at the end of 94. HHS 89/79, 2956, also describes the campaign, and the enfeoffment of Subahui in the following year.

The Wei shu text refers to the Xianbi leader as the Grand Chief Protector and Colonel Hui (da duhu xiaowei Hui 大都護校尉), but HHS 89/79 gives his full name as Subahui. It seems probable that the Wei shu text is corrupt.

Schreiber renders the title shuaizhong wang 卒車王 as "Führer der Könige", but the grammatical structure of the phrase seems to require that it be understood as "King"
notes to Chapter 7 (notes to pages 295-301)

( ) "who Leads" ( ) "his People". Cf. note 31 below, and also note 71 to Chapter 9.

21. *HHS* 90/80, 2986, *HHS* 20/10, 746. We are told that many of Zhai Tong’s descendants achieved merit and reputation in service on the frontier. It is sad to note, however, that Zhai Tong, after years of success in dealing with the Xianbi in Liaodong, died in prison after the failure of the campaign against the Northern Xiōngnu in 73 (see p.260 above), and Zhai Can, succeeding to his father’s position in Liaodong, paid a similar penalty for his failure against the Xianbi, who had been such useful allies in the past.

22. *HHS* 90/80, 2986; Schreiber, "Hsien-pi", 173-174. Zhang Xian, it appears, led a small force of some few hundred men out of the borders against the raiders. Against advice, he pressed forward without adequate reconnaissance and fell into an ambush. His soldiers ran away, and Zhang Xian and his leading officers were killed.

Despite this debacle, the government of the Empress-Dowager nee Deng awarded cash and nominations to office to Zhang Xian and his senior subordinates. The incident provides a contrast to the fate of Zhai Can nine years earlier.


24. *HHS* 90/80, 2987; Schreiber, "Hsien-pi", 177; *HHS* 5, 229 and 230.

On the Bowman scouts, see also note 5 to Chapter 3.

25. On Qizhijian and his influence on Xianbi history, see also Gardiner and de Crespigny, "T’an-shih-huai", 6-8.


27. *HHS* 90/80, 2988; Schreiber, "Hsien-pi", 180; *HHS* 89/79, 2959, however, refers only to the death of the Zhanjiang King about this time.

28. See p.289 above.

29. *HHS* 89/79, 2959, refers to the defences west of Shuofang (朔方), which would indicate the line of the northern run of the Yellow River and the region of the Tengger desert. However, since the attacks by the Xianbi were coming from the east, through Dai, Yammen, Dingxiang and Wuyuan commanderies, it seems that the character xi "west" has been miswritten for dong "east". It is, moreover, uncertain to what extent the frontier defences facing the Tengger desert had been maintained at any time during Later Han (see pp.28-29).
30. *HHS* 6, 253, *HHS* 89/79, 2959-60 including commentary, and *SGZ* 30, 837, commentary quoting the *Wei shu* of Wang Shen. *HHS* 90/80, 2988, does not mention this re-organisation, though Schreiber, “Hsien-pi”, 181, translates the passage from *HHS* Annals. On the camp at Liyang, see p.253 above.

31. Both the name and the designation of this Wuhuan leader are confused in the sources. *HHS* 90/80 2983 and 2988, has 戒朱魔, and for the pronunciation of the third character I follow the commentary of Li Xian to the first reference. *SGZ* 30, 833 commentary quoting the *Wei shu* of Wang Shen, has the second character of the name as 東 mo. ZZTJ 51, 1657, has the name as 戒木魔, Rongmomo.

The Account of the Wuhuan in *HHS* 90/80, 2983, says that Rongzhuhui was a chieftain of the Wuhuan who was given the title of Chief Commandant Friend of Han (qin-Han duwei 禄漢都倅), and *SGZ* 30, 833, commentary quoting the *Wei shu* of Wang Shen, remarks that he was appointed a Chief Commandant. The Account of the Xianbi, in *HHS* 90/80, 2988, describes him as Wuhuan qin-Han duwei, which thus means “the Wuhuan [who had the title] Chief Commandant Friend of Han”.

Schreiber, “Hsien-pi”, 182, however, following only the text in the Account of the Xianbi, interprets the phrase as “Chief Commandant Responsible for Good Relations Between Wuhuan and Chinese”, and argues that “Jung Chu-kuei” was probably a Chinese. From the other references cited, this is clearly not correct. Certainly, as Schreiber remarks, it was not normal for a non-Chinese to be given the Chinese title of Chief Commandant, and other Wuhuan leaders were made kings and dukes and marquises; Rongzhuhui was evidently an exception to the rule.

32. See pp.242-246 above.

33. The figures for the commanderies concerned are in *HS* 28B, 1623, 1634, 1625-26, and *HHS* 113/23, 3528-29 and 3530. See, however, Bielenstein, "Census", 159 and Plate III.

34. See p.38 above.

35. See p.223-224 above, and Bielenstein, *RHD* III, 113 and Maps 1 and 2.


37. *HHS* 87/77, 2895, and p.119-120 above.


39. The Biography of Chen Gui is in *HHS* 51/41, 1692-94.
notes to Chapter 7  

The Account of the Southern Xiongnu says that Chen Gui died in prison at this time. This is not correct, and indeed, despite this particular diplomatic failure, Chen Gui later had a successful administrative career on the frontier. He died about 150 as a victim of the powerful General in Chief and regent Liang Ji, and we are told that he was mourned by all the people of the north and west. See also p.314 below.

40. HHS 89/79, 2962, and HHS 6, 270. There is a slight disagreement between these two sources, as the Account of the Xiongnu states that the proclamation of Cheniu as rebel Shanyu took place before the Han government gave the order to shift the commandery capitals, while the Annals mentions the proclamation after the order for the administrative retreat. The first order of events, however, appears more likely, and it is supported by ZTTJ 52, 1688.

41. HHS 6, 271.

42. See pp.103 and 115-117 above.

43. See p.120 above.

44. HHS 89/79, 2962.

45. HHS 89/79, 2962, has the name of this city as Gucheng 穰城, but the commentary of Hu Sanxing to ZTTJ 52, 1690, identifies it with Guluo in Xihe commandery. Guluo had been a county during Former Han.

46. HHS 89/79, 2962, has punctuation which indicates the name of the mountain simply as Tian Shan 天山, but the context makes it clear that this is not correct, and ZTTJ 52, 1690, punctuates the name as Tongtian Shan 通天山. Hu Sanxing's commentary identifies the place with Shilou Shan 石樓山, which evidently lay along the ridge of the present-day Lulian mountains in west central Shanxi, in the southern part of Xihe commandery of Han. This is a possible identification, but if it is correct then the Wuhuan raiders had reached a long way south of the frontier.

47. HHS 89/79, 2962-63, HHS 6, 273. The title shouyi wang 寿義王 had presumably been granted to Toulouchu in recognition of his refusal to join the rebels in the north. It seems likely that he had been held at the capital since the suicide of his predecessor Xiuli in 140.

48. One of these events was the juedi 角抵, "Horn butting", evidently some form of ritual dance or game between costumed men. It is discussed by Bodde, Festivals in Classical China, 206, and Bielenstein, Lo-yang, 13 and note 51.

49. See pp.269 and 276 above.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 8

1. The Biography of Zhang Huan is in HHS 65/55, 2138-45, and an account of this incident, early in his career, is at p.2138. The Biography of Zhang Huan is translated by Young, Three Generals.

On the Dependent State of Anding, based on Sanshui county, see p.18 above, and note 4 to Chapter 1.

2. As discussed on p.30 above, the Later Han control of the land in this region south of the Ordos appears to have depended on the line of civil/military posts from Sanshui, headquarters of Anding Dependent State in the southwest, to Qiuci Dependent State in Shang commandery to the northeast. There were also evidently garrisons at Lingzhou in Beidi, near the Yellow River, and at Houguan in Shang commandery, though the site of that fortress is not known. Sheyan county, on the upper reaches of the present-day Wuding river (see note 12 to Chapter 4) may also have been able to contribute support.

Zhang Huan, therefore, first occupied the defence line of the old Wall of Qin, which probably ran on an east-west line to the south of his headquarters at Sanshui (near modern Guyuan): this re-activated an effective barrier to the Qiang movement north to join the Xiongnu. At the same time, however, he also arranged the mobilisation of troops from the other centres of Chinese authority in the area.

When one observes that the distance from Zhang Huan's station at Sanshui to the area of Qiuci was some 350 kilometres, or 225 miles, his achievement of co-ordination is impressive, and his rapid initial response, followed by effective gathering of military resources, was evidently sufficiently impressive to over-awe the Qiang.

This campaign of Zhang Huan is discussed by Boodberg, "Two Notes", 285-288, with particular reference to the site and nature of the Qiuci Dependent State.

3. The name of this group of the Xiongnu presents some difficulties, as it appears in a number of different combinations and pronunciations of characters.

The incident of the middle 150s, described here, is recorded in the Biography of Zhang Huan in HHS 65/55, 2139, and in the Account of the Wuhuan in HHS 90/80, 2983. In the first the people are described as 休屠各 and then as 休屠各, and the commentary of Li Xian gives the pronunciation of the character 休 as ju (fangie 真+於). In the second reference the name appears as 休屠貨賜.

Later, in the Account of the Xianbi, in HHS 90/80, 2990, there is mention of the 休屠貨賜 assisting the Chinese against the Xianbi.
Again, HHS 8, 355, in the Annals of Emperor Ling, lists a series of rebellions and attacks by the barbarians (hu) in the early months of 188. The parallel passage in the Account of the southern Xiongnu, HHS 89/79, 2963, calls the people ; ZZTJ 58 and 59, 1886-87, gives the name simply as , and the commentary of Hu Sanxing again states that the character should be pronounced ju).

In his commentary to the reference in the Account of the Southern Xiongnu, in HHSJJ 89/79, 19a, the Qing scholar Qian Daxin , has made the following suggestions:

1. The middle syllable of the name could be written either (normally pronounced tu: GSR 45i') or (normally pronounced zhu: GSR 45n').
2. The pronunciation of the syllable, however, had an initial palatal, and should be sounded as chu (chu: GSR 45i'). It was not sounded as tu, which might have been expected from the use of the character . [For the sound chu, Qian is evidently basing himself upon the authority of the commentary of Yan Shigu to HS 6, 177: see below.]

Similarly, the fanqie gloss of zhi (GSR 919a) + (GSR 61e), should be interpreted as giving a pronunciation equivalent to chu: it is a matter of stress rather than of aspiration and umlaut. [This argument of Qian is strengthened by the fact that Karlgren's reconstructions of the Archaic and Ancient initial of both and are the same; and the sound of the character can be either yu or wu: cf. note 2 to Chapter 3.]

3. The curious extension of the name, found in the Account of the Wuhan and in the Account of the Xianbi, may be explained by the interpretation that the character , which gave a homonym sound gloss [or alternative reading] for the character has become confused with the main text which it was intended to annotate.

Qian Daxin's argument appears to provide a reasonable way out of a confused situation, and we may say then that the full name of the tribe at this time could be written either or , and should preferably be pronounced as Xiuchuge.

(Schreiber, "Hsien-pi", 190 and note 180, translating HHS 90/80, 2990, understands the first three characters as the proper name of a Wuhuan chieftain "Hsiu-chu-t'u" and reads ge simply as an adverbal phrase "getrennt voneinander". Some Chinese punctuations support this, but it cannot be correct.)

In Former Han, the characters had also referred to the Xiongnu people who inhabited the region of Wuwei commandery in the second century BC. The King of Xiuchu was
assassinated by his colleague the King of Kunxie, their people and territories surrendered to Han in 121 (HS 6, 177; Dubs, HFHD II, 62, SJ 110, 2909, and HS 94A, 3769; De Groot, Hunnen, 126, and Watson, RGH II, 181: all the transcriptions give the reading of Xiu tu, though the commentary of Yan Shigu to HS 6 gives the sound of the second character as ( semanas).

During Later Han, Xiuchu (also written 休車) was still the name of a country in Wuwei Commandery, now north of Wuwei in Gansu (HHS 113/23, 3520), and HHS 76/66, 2463, refers to a Xiuchu group of barbarians in the region of Wuwei during the early years of Later Han.

It appears, then, that the encounter with Zhang Huan in the 150s marked the re-emergence of a branch of this earlier tribal group, expanding its activity from its former homeland in Wuwei to the region of the Ordos. In following generations these people, increasingly known simply as Chuge (or Juge), continued to develop their influence, and became occasional allies and frequent irritants to the Chinese.

The Account of the Northern Barbarians (Bei Di) and the Xiongnu in the Jin period, in JS 97, 2550, says that of the tribes which came to live within China Proper, the Chuge became the most powerful, and the Shanyu was chosen from that clan. Liu Yuan, founder of the dynasty of Northern Han or Former Zhao in the early fourth century, was most probably a man of Chuge lineage.

See, Tang Changru, Wei-Jin nanbei chao shi luncong, 382-403, Lin Gen, Xiongnu shi, 159-173, and note 49 below.

4. On Huangfu Gui, see also pp. 130-132 above. His biography is in HHS 65/55, 2129-37, translated by Young, Three Generals.

5. Xianliang fangzheng 贤良方正: on these special nominations, see de Crespigny, "Recruitment", 71-72.

Huangfu Gui had his opportunity in the round of special nominations called in the ninth month of 144, soon after the infant Emperor Chong came to the throne (HHS 6, 275, and HHS 65/55, 2130). The text of his memorial is included in his biography.

The dating of this disturbance has been confused in the Account of the Xiongnu, HHS 89/79, 2963. At that place, there is no mention of the trouble in the winter of 158/159 (the first year of Yanxi: 延熹元年), which is described in Zhang Huan's biography, HHS 65/55, 2139, and in the Annals, HHS 7, 305.
On that occasion, as we have seen (p.321 above), the Xianbi caused trouble and Zhang Huan, as Emissary, led Xiongnu troops to attack them.

HHS 89/79, 2963, does describe the rebellion of 166, but dates it to the first year of Yanxi: 灵帝, instead of the ninth year: 安帝. However, the Annals, HHS 7, 317, distinguishes the second incident, as does Zhang Huan's biography, at HHS 65/55, 2139-40.

Moreover, the nature of the two incidents was different: in the first, the Xianbi caused trouble, and Zhang Huan led loyal Xiongnu against them; in the second, the Xiongnu were at first in association with the Xianbi against the Han, and it was necessary for Zhang Huan to return them and the Wuhuan to allegiance, before he could lead them against the Xianbi.

The text criticism of HHSJJ has not noticed this point, but the Beijing punctuated edition does (p.2976).

There is some disagreement on the title Zhang Huan held at this time. HHS 7, 317, describes him only as Emissary, and HHS 89/79, 2963, has him as General of the Gentlemen of the Household of the North (bei zhonglangjiang). Zhang Huan's own biography, however, has the title as hu Xiongnu 襄匈奴 zhonglangjiang, and gives the details of his extensive command. This seems the most authoritative source.

The Biography of Qiao Xuan 横玄, in HHS 51/41, 1695-97, notes that at the end of the reign of Emperor Huan he was appointed General Who Crosses the Liao, to deal with trouble from the Xianbi, Southern Xiongnu and the prince Bogu 伯固 of Gaogouli/Koguryo. He was presumably playing a part in these operations. (On Bogu, see the Account of Gaogouli in SGZ 30, 843-847 at 845, and HHS 85/75, 2813-15 at 2815; for discussion of the problems of these texts, see Gardiner, "The Hou-Han-Shu as a source for the early expansion of Koguryo", 181-185.)

7. The Biography of Dou Wu is in HHS 69/59, 2239-45. The account of the coup of 168, as in HHS 69/59, 2241-44, is translated by Ch'u, Han Social Structure, 485-490, and it is discussed by de Crespigny, "Proscription", 30-33, and Bielenstein, Lo-yang, 95-98.

The role of Zhang Huan in the incident, and his subsequent regrets, is described in his biography, HHS 65/55, 2140.

8. Some further discussion of this point appears in de Crespigny, "Proscription", 25 note 30.

9. HHS 65/55, 2140.
notes to Chapter 8

10. On this debate, see pp.139-140 above, and HHS 65/55, 2150-51.

11. HHS 78/68, 2525 (from the Biography of the eunuch Cao Jie), and HHS 8, 333; de Crespigny, "Proscription", 33.

12. The text of the letter is preserved in HHS 65/55, 2142.

13. On Tanshihuai, see in further detail Gardiner and de Crespigny, "Tan-shih-huai".


15. Gardiner and de Crespigny, "T'an-shih-huai", 14 and 40, also SGZ 30, 836 and 838.

16. HHS 7, 302, HHS 90/80, 2989.

17. HHS 7, 304, 312, 317.

18. See p.325-326 above.


20. Both the date and the distances given for Tanshihuai's empire in the Wei shu of Wang Shen and the Account of the Xianbi appear to be exaggerated. SGZ 30, 837 commentary and HHS 90/80, 2989, both imply that Tanshihuai's domain had already reached its broad extent by the middle 150s, before his first major raid against the Chinese frontier. This is most unlikely, and it is far more probable that his power grew gradually through the twenty or more years of his leadership in war.

Again, the distances described in the texts, related to the map of Asia, would spread the empire of Tanshihuai over an impossible area. The distance from the Ordos to Lake Baikal, for example, is some 1,600 kilometres; the north-south extent described by the text would be twice that far and would have placed Tanshihuai's northern frontier inside the Arctic circle. Similarly, an empire which extended 6,000 kilometres westwards from the Korean peninsula would have given Tanshihuai dominion over the Aral Sea. The description evidently reflects the patriotic exaggeration of a Xianbi informant rather than a real political geography.
21. SGZ 30, 837-38, commentary quoting the Wei shu of Wang Shen; HHS 90/80, 2989-90. While the hierarchy of bu and yi, as described for the Xiongnu on various occasions, the units themselves are obviously much larger: cf. pp.179 and 232-233 above, note 16 to Chapter 5 and note 17 to Chapter 6.

22. SGZ 30, 838, commentary quoting the Wei shu of Wang Shen; the punctuation of the list is reinterpreted by Gardiner and de Crespigny, "T'an-shih-huai", 42.


On the ancestor Tuiyin of the Tuoba clan, see WS 1,2, and Boodberg, "Language of the T'o-pa Wei", 180. Tuiyin was apparently a nickname, meaning "boring through", and was awarded to the two ancestors of the clan who at one time or another led their people southward to new territories. In this context, Boodberg discusses the "Gog and Magog Complex" by which the eponymous founders of nomad conquerors are often ascribed the achievement of breaking through some mountainous obstacle to lead their people into a more prosperous future.

24. See pp.127 and 137-140 above.

25. HHS 90/80, 2990; HHS 8, 336.

26. The debate, and the subsequent campaigns, are described in HHS 90/80, 2990-94; Schreiber, "Hsien-pi", 190-200.

27. The Biography of Cai Rong is in HHS 60B/50B, 1979-2013. At the time, Cai Rong held only the junior rank of Gentleman-Consultant at court, but he was recognised as the leading scholar of his time. His biography makes no reference to this debate, but the text of his memorial is in HHS 90/80, 2990-93.

28. HHS 7, HHS 90/80, 2993. Earlier, HHS 90/80, 2990, seems to indicate that the proposal of Xia Yu was made in the autumn of 177, as response to the Xianbi attacks on the three northern provinces in the summer of that year. However, almost certainly the debate and the planning for the campaign extended over some months, and the autumn date given for Xia Yu's proposal merely anticipates the final decision.

29. HHS 90/80, 2993-94. Despite this record of disaster, Xia Yu was employed later as Colonel Protector of the Qiang at the time of the rebellion in Liang province in 185 (see p.149 above), and in 195 he was a subordinate commander under the general Guo Si, who attempted to prevent the emperor from leaving Changan: ZZZJ 61, 1966; de Crespigny, Last of the Han, 128-129; based on HHJ 28, 229b; and see p.350 below.
notes to Chapter 8

Nothing more is heard of Tian Yan, but Zang Min, the other commander, was the father of Zang Hong 張弘, whose biography is in SGZ 7, and the commentary to SGZ 7, 231, quotes from the Hou Han Shu of Xie Cheng 謝成, which describes him as one of the most valued servants of Han. The text ignores the campaign against Tanshihuai, but emphasises Zang Min's great knowledge of the Western Regions. At an earlier stage of his career he had been Inspector of Yang Province, about the mouth of the Yangzi, and the Grand Administrator of Danyang commandery in the province. He later served as Colonel of the Chang River Regiment (which included Wuhuan cavalry; see p.389-390 below), and finally as Grand Administrator of Taiyuan.

His son, Zang Hong, was one of the romantic and tragic heroes of the civil war at the end of Han: see ZZTJ 61, 1975-77; de Crespigny, Last of Han, 138-141.

30. The description of the succession to Tanshihuai is given in the Wei shu of Wang Shen, in SGZ 30, 838 commentary. The characters for the name of Kuitou are 耆牴, and those for Huaitou, referred to a few columns earlier, are 懫頭.

The present text of the Wei shu of Wang Shen has used different characters, and GSR 569f and i distinguishes the Archaic and Ancient pronunciations, but the similarity is striking.

31. The rivalry of Budugen and Kebineng is described in the main text of SGZ 30, 835-36, and Kebineng's career after his overthrow of Budugen is in the main text of SGZ 30, 838-39.

32. HHS 89/79, 2964.

33. HHS 8, 355.

34. On the Bobo Valley bandits, see HHS 8, 355. The Wei shu of Wang Shen, quoted in commentary to SGZ 1, 9, says that the chieftain Yufulu, son of Qiangqu and his successor as Shanyu (see below), led troops to the aid of Han during the Zhongping 中平 period (184-189). The Parallel Annals of the Xiongnu Liu Yuan, who claimed descent from Modun and the Southern Shanyu Bi through Yufulo, suggests that Yufulo took part in operations against the Yellow Turbans (JS 101, 2645; and see also note 49 below).

The account of the Xiongnu in HHS 89/79 makes no reference to Xiongnu involvement in the fighting against the Yellow Turbans under Zhang Jue during the great campaigns of 184, but it is possible that Yufulo did at one time command forces in support of the Han against the "Yellow Turbans" of the Bobo Valley.
35. See pp.398-399 below.

36. *HHS* 89/79, 2964, and *HHS* 8, 355. On the identity of the Xiluo clan, evidently descendants from a cadet line of the first Southern Shanyu Bi, who had Xiluo as part of his dynastic title (p.234 above), see the commentary of Hu Sauxing to *ZZTJ* 59, 1889.

*HHS* 8, 355, states that Qiangqu was overthrown by a rebellion of the Left Division of the Xiongnu: it seems possible that the character is a mistake. On the other hand, we are told that Yufuulu had been the Worthy King of the Right when he succeeded his assassinated father. The Worthy King of the Left, whose name is not given, had been given command of the contingent to be sent against the Wuhuan. Since the Worthy King of the Left was the heir-apparent to the Shanyu, it seems possible that he had shared Qiangqu's fate, perhaps through a mutiny of discontented conscripts.

Wang Xiangian, in commentary to *HHSJJ* 23B, 6b, suggests that about this time the county of Meiji, residence of the Southern Shanyu and the Emissary, was shifted to the region of present-day Fenyang in Shanxi. This move would parallel the retreat of the capital of Xihe commandery in the early 140s (see p.311 above); certainly if Yufuulu could not maintain authority in the Xiongnu capital, the former county of Meiji was thoroughly removed from Han control.

37. On the government of the Empress-Dowager and her brother He Jin, which culminated in a bloody but abortive coup d'etat, see *ZZTJ* 59, 1894-1902; de Crespigny, *Last of the Han*, 44-54.

The Biography of He Jin is in *HHS* 69/59, 2246-53, and that of the Empress-Dowager nee He is in *HHS* 10B, 449-50.

38. *SGZ* 8, 251.


40. *SGZ* 1, 10.

41. *HHS* 89/79, 2965.

42. The escape of Emperor Xian from Changan is described in *ZZTJ* 61, 1964-69 and 1980-81; de Crespigny, *Last of the Han*, 127-133 and 144-146.


44. *HHS* 89/79, 2965.
notes to Chapter 8 (notes to pages 352-354)

45. HHS 74A/64A, 2382.
46. SGZ 9, 271; see also p.164 above.
47. SGZ 1, 45.
48. HHS 89/79, 2965 (being the last entry in the Account of the Xiongnu of Hou Han shu); SGZ 1, 47; JS 97, 254.
49. Uchida, "Five Tribes", and Boordberg, "Two Notes", 292. The second of Boordberg's "Notes" presents a detailed and imaginative story of the possible relationships and inheritance of the leading groups of the Xiongnu from the time of Qiangqu, including the evidence that Qubi, and possibly also Qiangqu, the Shanyu who was assassinated in 188, was largely of Chinese descent (pp.293-299).
50. The Parallel Annals of Liu Yuan, in JS 101, 2645, record his claim to be the grandson of the former Shanyu Yufuluo and the son of Liu Bao, but the modern scholar Tang Changru has argued, in his Wei Jin nanbei chao shi luncong 396-403, that Liu Yuan was in fact a descendant of the Chuge clan, and was seeking only to legitimise his rise to power by a false claim to descent from the ancient imperial lineage. See also notes 3 and 34 above.

JS 101 describes Liu Yuan by his style, as Liu Yuanhai 元海. The character Yuan was the same as the personal name of Li Yuan, first emperor of the Tang dynasty, and the compilers of the history therefore avoided the taboo (JS 101, 2644).
NOTES TO CHAPTER 9

1. The name of the Wuhuan people may be written with the Chinese characters 鄱 or 鬘 ; it normally appears as 鬘 in HHS and as 鬘 in SKC and its commentary. The character 鬘 is pronounced in Modern Mandarin as wan. However, Karlgren reconstructs the Archaic and Ancient pronunciation of the characters 鬘 (GSR 164f) and 鬘 (GSR 163a) as identical, and remarks that the modern sound wan for 鬘 "is irregular, we should expect a huan." In transcription, therefore, it seems most appropriate to use the rendition Wuhuan.

2. On the Wei shu of Wang Shen, which was compiled from official sources about 255, see Gardiner and de Crespigny, "T'an-shih-huai", note 1. The section on the Wuhuan is preserved in the commentary to SGZ 30 (Wei 30), 832-33.

3. See Gardiner, "The Hou-Han-shu as a Source for the Early Expansion of Koguryo," 186. For the analogy with the campaign of Cao Cao in 207, I am again indebted to a personal communication from Dr Gardiner.


6. Schreiber, "Hsien-pi", 147-162. An earlier translation was presented by Parker, "The History of the Wu-wan or Wu-hwan Tunguses of the First Century; Followed by That of Their Kinsmen the Si-en-pi" in China Review XX.


Clauson, "Turk, Mongol, Tungus", 105-119, argues that the Wuhuan were a Turkish people, and in Turkish and Mongolian Studies, 19 footnote, he remarks that "whatever the Tung Hu were ethnically, they were certainly not Tungus".

Pulleyblank, "The Chinese and their neighbours", Section 12, developing from evidence and arguments presented by Pelliot and Ligeti, suggests that the Tung Hu were proto-Mongol.

However, Schreiber, "Former Yen", 389-390, discusses the (perhaps apocryphal) story recorded in Shishuo xinyu 27 (C, 77a); Mather, A New Account of Tales of the World 443, that Sima Shao 繘敏, Emperor Ming 明 of Jin, (reigned 323-325), whose mother was a Xianbi, had light-coloured hair and for this reason could be mistaken for a Xianbi himself. As Schreiber remarks, this record tends to argue against a connection between the Xianbi and the Mongols, since black hair is normally considered a racial characteristic of the Mongols. See also Maenchen-Helfen, World of the Huns, 373-374.
8. Schreiber, "Hsien-pi", 148-149, note 5

The mountain named Wuhuan is traditionally identified with the Wuliao 呼蘭 or 呼連 range of the Great Xingan Mountains, on the frontiers of Manchuria and Mongolia, at the northern headwaters of the Liao River, near 45°N, 119°E.

For an analogy to Shiratori's suggestion of "wise" as a princely title among northern peoples, we may note the Worthy Kings (xian wang) among the Xiongnu of the Han period (see pp.176-177 above). It should be noted, however, that Shiratori's etymologies, while imaginative, are also suspect.

Clauson, "A propos du manuscrit Pelliot tibetain 1283", 21, has suggested that wuhuan was a Chinese transcription of the Turkish name Oguz, and the suggestion is repeated in "Turk, Mongol, Tungus", 117. In Turkish and Mongolian Studies, 20 footnote, however, he observes that Professor Pulleyblank has advised him this is impossible.

For his own part, Pulleyblank has argued that the name of the Wuhuan may be identified with that of the people known in Europe as Avars. See his article "The Consonantal System of Old Chinese, Part II," 258-259, and "The Chinese and their Neighbours", 453-454.

Boodberg, "Two Notes", 306-307, argues a further proposition: that wuhuan may represent an "Altaic" term for the offspring of a mixed marriage, and hence the tribal name essentially means "confederation". As he remarks, the commingling of peoples is the big moment in the historical life of the steppe, and it is the formation of the confederacy of united tribes, rather than the location and "original home" of this or that group of nomads, which is of the major importance.

9. In January 1974 the Chinese journal Wenwu published a report on an Eastern Han tomb discovered near Horinger, Inner Mongolia. Among the paintings on the walls of the tomb, there are several scenes which show the life and costume of the Wuhuan people, and the scholar Wu Rongceng has presented an article (pp.24-30) which discusses the clothing and customs as they are shown in these contemporary illustrations.

Based upon his study of one scene, Wu points out (p.26) that the Wuhuan shaved the whole of the head, excepting only a top-knot, or short queue at the top. He observes that the Wuhuan are shown as bare-headed, but on the particular occasion illustrated in the painting this was evidently designed to show subservience to the authority of the Chinese government. The Guangzhi 農史 of Guo Yigong 郭義恭 of Jin (preserved in Yuhan shanfang jiyi shu 74) remarks that the Wuhan and the Xiongnu covered their heads
with wooden caps painted red, and Wu suggests that this headgear was probably made of birchbark.

Wu goes on to point out that the custom of shaving the head of all hair except the top-knot clearly distinguishes the Wuhuan (and, by extension, the related Xianbi, who are said to have followed much the same customs) from the Kitan people, founders of the Liao dynasty in the tenth century. The Kitans are described as shaving the crown of the head (like the tonsure of a Western monk) but leaving the hair of the rest of the head to grow long. The two hair-styles, of the Wuhuan/Xianbi on the one hand and of the Kitans on the other, are evidently designed for opposite effect; and if the customs were so different then it is most unlikely that the peoples had a close relationship or descent.

Schreiber, "Former Yen", 390, argues, however, that there are several references to the Murong rulers of that Xianbi state wearing their hair long. The family name Murong, indeed, is said by tradition to have come from a variant pronunciation of the phrase buyao, which was given the chieftain Mohuba 莫胡跋~, a leader of the Xianbi in the first half of the third century, because he admired and adopted a tall, full, hairstyle (see note 10 following). In these circumstances it may be that at least one group of the Xianbi had changed their manner of hair-dressing during the course of the third century.

On the basis of such evidence, Schreiber, "Former Yen", footnote 38, rejects the statements of Eberhard, Toba-Reich Nordchinas, 356, and Shiratori, "Queue". These scholars, however, were presumably basing their remarks to some extent upon the present passage, which Schreiber himself has translated, without comment, in his "Hsien-pi", 151, and they are, on the whole, supported by the evidence of the Horinger paintings. From the somewhat contradictory information, however, it may be that at least the Murong clan of the Xianbi had changed their manner of hair-dressing during the course of the third century.

10. The description here compares the head-dress of Wuhuan matrons, the name of which is transcribed by the characters goujue 當決~, with the formal women's coiffure in China known as guan buyao 官סופ (Wei shu) or gui 髮 buyao (HHS 90/80). The commentary of Li Xian to the passage in HHS 90/80 notes that the character gui may also be written as 娥 , and goes on to refer to the Treatise of Carriages and Clothing (yufu zhi 車服志) of Xu Han shu (HHS 120/30, 3676). The name of the style is explained by Liu Xi of Han, in Shi ming 4, 35b: the hair was dressed high and hung with strings of pearls that trembled (yao) at every step (bu) the wearer took. An illustration of the style is offered by Chang Mo-yuan, Hanchao fuzhuang tuyang ziliao, 122 figure 68.
Pulleyblank, "The Chinese and their Neighbours in Prehistoric Times", Section 12, suggests that the phrase transcribed as goujue (or jujue) represents the Mongolian work kôkûl, and he identifies it with the Mongolian head-dress for women, a tall horned cap, which was spread over Asia through the conquests of Genghis Khan, becoming popular in late Medieval Europe under the name of hennin, and in China, where it was known as the gugu (and by other transcriptions).

JS 108, 2803, at the beginning of the Parallel Annals of the Murong people of the Xianbi, explains the name of the clan as a sobriquet based upon the chieftain Mohuba's adoption of the buyao hairstyle about the middle of the third century. He saw the hairstyle during his dealings with the people of Yan and Dai in the northeast of China Proper: these may have been true Chinese or possibly Wuhuan. See note 9 preceding.

HHS 90/80 and other sources, state specifically that the Xianbi differed from the Wuhuan in this one respect: Xianbi matrons did not grow their hair, but shaved their heads like their menfolk. If it is true that Murong Mohuba adopted this style for himself, there was at least no sexist implication from the Xianbi tradition.

As Schreiber, "Former Yen", 393-393, points out, however, there is also a story that the phrase murong was chosen as a motto: that the chieftain proposed to emulate the bright appearance of the Three Luminaries, the sun, the moon and constellations. Moreover, since the name Murong appears among the list of subordinate leaders to Tanshihuai in the second half of the second century, over fifty years before Mohuba was supposed to have been the cause of the nickname being coined, it is hard to decide which of the various ramifications of the different traditions may be usefully accepted.

11. The interpretation of the character yì as a stringed arrow is suggested by Schreiber, "Hsien-pi", 149 note 6, based on Couvreur, Dictionnaire classique.

12. A brief passage on this point in the Wei shu of Wang Shen has been a source of some confusion. The text quoted in the commentary to SGZ 30, 832 (ignoring the punctuation, on which see below), reads as follows:

Taiping yulan 844, 1a, has a very similar passage, ascribed to the Wei lue of Yu Huan of the third century, which differs only by the omission of the character mi.

The basic translation of the passage may be taken as:
[The Wuhuan] can make white wine [from the dongqiang plant?] but they do not know how to prepare 'starter' (qu 裉). For fermenting grain (nie mi 蒙 or simply nie) they always look to China.

The Beijing punctuated edition of SGZ has an alternative reading for this passage, with the punctuation before the character mi. This would give a rendering: they do not know how to prepare yeast fermentation for the 'starter'. For rice [and for other crops apart from the millet and the dongqiang] they always look to China.

This interpretation is followed by Schreiber, "Hsien-pi", 153, but in the light of the parallel passage quoted by Taiping yulan, the reading seems improbable.

We are told, then, that the Wuhuan could make a white wine as well as the kumiss mentioned above. They did not, however, know how to prepare 'starter'.

In his essay on Han China in Food in Chinese Culture, at 68-69, Ying-shih Yu notes that the Han Chinese evidently recognised two alcoholic beverages: li 酒 and jiu 酒. Li was a white drink, which could apparently be made overnight, and which did not require a great deal of inoculum, or 'starter' (e.g. Yan Shigu commentary to HS 36, 1913-14). Indeed, since temperature is of major importance for fermentation, a low overnight temperature and little starter would suggest that li was virtually non-alcoholic (Personal communication from Professor John A. Milburn, University of New England).

The preparation of jiu, however, was considerably more complex and took a longer time. It was a clear drink, and certainly stronger than li. Among the Han Chinese, jiu seems to have been a more popular drink than li.

For such a drink as jiu, a good 'starter' would be necessary in order to ensure the development of the appropriate bacterial action and prevent the accidental production of unwanted compounds with undesirable side-effects. While the manufacture of a mildly alcoholic drink would be within the technical capacity of the Wuhuan, it is quite possible that the Chinese could have found a market for a purer, reliable 'starter' which would encourage and control the longer-term fermentation process in the preparation of a stronger drink.

It would seem, then, that the "white wine" made by the Wuhuan was probably a form of li, and this and kumiss were their local drinks. Since they relied upon only a short period of fermentation, the quantity and quality of the 'starter' were not matters of major concern. The Wuhuan had, however, acquired a taste for the Chinese jiu wine, and they were anxious to import the fermenting rice to be used as a 'starter' in the preparation of this beverage. See also Yü, Trade and Expansion, 107.
13. HHS 87/77, 2869.

14. For a comparative study, see Tryjarski, "The Dog in the Turkic Area"; quoting at p. 301 Roux, Faune et flore sacrées, 142 and 209. A similar pattern of ceremony has been recorded among Indonesian peoples, especially the Amarasi of Timor: see Kruyt, "De hond in de geestenweveld der Indonesiens", 580-581.

15. For the classic description of this aspect of Chinese beliefs concerning the dead, see Chavannes, Le T'ai chan, 398-400.

16. Similar lack of respect for the aged was observed among the Xiongnu: SJ 110, 2879, and HS 94A, 3743; Watson, RGH II, 156, and De Groot, Hunnen, 3.

17. The phrase used here in Wei shu and in HHS 90/80, 2979, is dunju 立 跪 (Wei shu, reverse order in HHS), which is probably a derogatory term, contrasting the casual and uncouth Wuhuan position with the formal sitting or kneeling of the Chinese.

18. In anthropology, this is regarded as a classic exchange of goods on the occasion of marriage: livestock as the bride-price and household goods for the dowry.

A related form of marriage is described in the Account of the people of Gaogouli in SKC 30, 844. There it is said that when a girl becomes of marriageable age, her parents build a hut for her behind the family dwelling. When a suitor comes, he asks permission to share her quarters, and after two or three times his request is granted. He then prepares the bride price, but it is not until the couple have borne a child, and that child is full grown to adulthood, that the husband takes his wife back to his own home. This form of uxorilocal residence is described disapprovingly by the Chinese as "a very lewd custom" (qi su yin 其俗淫).

Similar patterns of bride-service are well known elsewhere, however, and a celebrated example in Western tradition is that of Jacob, who worked for his father-in-law Laban as a servant, first for seven years to earn the hand of Leah, and then another seven for Rebecca, the woman he really wanted (Genesis 29).

19. A similar custom was also described among the Xiongnu: SJ 110, 2879, and HS 94A, 3743; Watson, RGH II, 156 and de Groot, Hunnen, 3. Cf. Deuteronomy 25, 5-10; Ruth 3, 13 and 4, 3-14.

20. For a theory on the economic and historical significance of the position of women among the nomad pastoral peoples of Manchuria and Mongolia, see Lattimore, Inner Asian Frontiers, 111-112 and 293-295.
21. On the yi and luo groups described by the Chinese among the northern peoples, see p.179 above and note 16 to Chapter 5.

22. A similar custom was observed among the Qiang. In the latter part of the first century BC, for example, the Yan tribe changed its name to Shaodang in honour of a warleader: see pp.65-66 and 78 above.


24. For a survey of this military policy and its achievements see Loewe, "Campaigns of Han Wu-ti".

25. HHS 90/80, 2981.

26. The title of General Who Crosses the Liao [River] (du Liao jiangjun 度遼校尉) was evidently given to Fan Mingyou for this particular campaign, which was indeed undertaken in the general area of the Liao River, in the northeast of China Proper.

In Later Han, the post was established with command of a garrison in Wuyan commandery to control the Xiongnu in the region of the Ordos loop of the Yellow River. On this development, see pp.252-253 and 85-86 above.

27. The campaign is mentioned in the Annals of Emperor Zhao, HS 7, 229-30; Dubs, HFHD II, 168-171. A more detailed account of the discussion at court is given in HS 94A, 3784; De Groot, Hunnen, 190-192.

Curiously, while HHS 90/80, 2981, dates this incident by the reign of Emperor Zhao of Han, the Wei shu of Wang Shen, in a parallel passage, refers to it as taking place in the time of Xiongnu Shanyu Huyandi 脫于都尉. There is no discrepancy for the date of 78 BC, but the dating system is different.

28. e.g. HS 7,232; Dubs, HFHD II, 178.

29. HHS 90/80, 2981.

30. HS 94A, 3787; De Groot, Hunnen, 199.

31. HS 94A, 3790; De Groot, Hunnen, 207.

32. See pp.199-200 above.

33. See pp.201-203 above.

34. See pp.203-204 above.
35. HS 99B, 4121: Dubs, HFHD II, 305-306. According to this text, the headquarters of Zhuang Yu were in Dai commandery, though HS 90/80,2981, describing the role of the Wuhan, says that the base was in Yuyang. His command evidently extended eastwards to Manchuria (see HS 99B, 4130; Dubs, HFHD III, 325).

36. HS 90/80, 2981. Although Yu, Trade and Expansion in Han China, 84-85, suggests that this instance of hostages taken from the Wuhan may indicate a general rule of demanding hostages from non-Chinese troops, it would seem that the example that Wang Mang’s policy (and the other example that Yu presents, of Cao Cao dealing with the Xiongnu in 207) is too particular to be the basis for assuming a general rule. Certainly, in this instance, the policy failed.


38. HS 90/80, 2982. Although the text reads as if "White Mountains" (Bo shan 白山) was an actual place, it is possible that it was no more than the name of a particular group of the Wuhan. We read later of a group called after the Red Mountains (Chi shan), which has already been described as the home of the dead in Wuhan religion (pp.377 below and 363 above).

39. HS 19/9, 705.

40. HS 18/8, 679; these Wuhan are described as tuji 突騎, "Shock cavalry".

41. HS 20/10, 737.

42. Bielenstein, RHD III, 113; and p.224 above.

43. The Biography of Wang Ba is in HS 20/10, 734-38.

44. The Biography of Zhai Tong is in HS 20/10, 744-46. See also Gardiner and de Crespigny, "T'an-shih-huai", 4, and p.291 above.

45. HS 24/14, 842 (the Biography of Ma Yuan); also p.226 above.


47. See pp.108-109 above.


49. HS 90/80, 2982.

50. HS 20/10, 745, and see pp.236 and 291 above.
notes to Chapter 9

51. HHS 1B, 77. A description of Fuyu, which lay north of Xuantu commandery, in the eastern part of present-day Manchuria, is contained in the Account of the Eastern Barbarians in HHS 85/75, 2810–12, and SGZ 30, 833 commentary.

52 HHS 90/80, 2982; Wei shu of Wang Shen in SGZ 30, 833 commentary.

HHS 1B, 76 and 77, has two separate references to visits to the imperial court by leaders of the Wuhan in this year. This may be the result of simple dittography, but the Kaoyi of Sima Guang to ZJT 44, 1413, suggests that the first visit, in the spring, was made by the leaders alone, while on the second occasion they were accompanied by their followers.

The Bona edition of SGZ gives the second character of the name of Wuhan leader as 亜 ju, but HHS 90/80 and ZJT 44 have 立 dan. Cf. Schreiber "Hsien-pi", 157.


Of course, if the figure of Wuhan leaders was only 922, as HHS 90/80 would indicate, then all estimates must be divided by ten. It would be my inclination, however, to accept the round number of nine thousand given by Wang Shen, and to interpret the 922 of HHS 90/80 either as a more accurate figure, perhaps 9,022, with the character 亜 miswritten as 亜, or perhaps as a statement of the number who actually came to the capital, while the rest of the nine thousand petty leaders remained in camp near the frontier.

54. On the earlier memorial, see HHS 87/77, 2878, and pp. 82–83 above. On the new appointment of a Protector of the Wuhan, see HHS 90/80, 2982.

55. Sechin Jagchid, "Trade, Peace and War", and "Objectives of Warfare".

56. Yü, Trade and Expansion, 188, refers specifically to the pervasiveness of the tributary system as a dominating factor in the domain of foreign relations", and goes on to remark that almost all kinds of Sino-barbarian economic relations were harnessed in one way or another to this system, even such apparently nontributary forms as the silk trade.

57. The Inner Mongolia Archeological Team and the Museum of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, "An Important Eastern Han Tomb with Wall Paintings Found at Holingol, Inner Mongolia". Supplementary articles are contributed by Wu Rongceng on life in Eastern Han society as reflected in the wall paintings (see also note 9 above); by Luo Zhien on some of the ancient buildings in the paintings, including the headquarters of the Protector at Ning and the Juyong Pass; Huang Shengzhang on some historical and geographical problems; and Jin Weinuo on the dating of the tomb.
Further illustrations are published in *Han-Tang bihua* 烏養壁畫 "Murals from the Han to the Tang Dynasty", Beijing, 1974.

58. This identification however, is now in doubt: personal communication from Professor Huang Shengzhang.

59. *HHS* 2, 99; *HHS* 20/10, 745, *HHS* 90/80, 2985-86; *SGZ* 30, 837, commentary quoting the *Wei shu* of Wang Shen.

Wang Shen adds the information that the leader of the Red Mountain group was Qinzhiben 钦志賓, a man of Yuyang commandery; commandery; *HHS* 90/80 writes the name as Xin 影zhiben. The writing of the two variant characters is very close, and the ancient pronunciation was also similar: see *GSR* 652f and 653j.

BieLENSTEIN, *RHD* III, 131, tends to interpret this series of raids as a sign that the Wuhan were still hostile; it seems more appropriate to regard the Red Mountain group as an isolated exception to the general pacification which had been achieved by the settlement under Guangwu.

60. See pp.73-74 above.

61. See the report of Tian Chou to Cao Cao in 207, translated below on p.408.

Although it appears that the majority of counties along the northern frontier were disestablished in the time of Emperor Guangwu (*HHS* 109/19, 3385), we are told in the commentary of Yan Shigu to *HS* 28B, 1624, quoting the second century scholar Ying Shao, that the county of Huayan 虎山 in Yuyang, which had been located south of Chengde, had its name changed to Yan 亷 by Emperor Ming. It would seem that this one place, at least, retained its status as a county for a few years after the end of the reign of Guangwu.

62. *HHS* 117/27, 3612-13, and see p.45 above.

63. *HHS* 1B, 53 and 66.

64. *HHS* 22/12, 786; *HHS* 23/13, 810: *HHS* 89/79, 2949. See also pp.259 and 264 above.

65. *HHS* 89/79, 2956; *HHS* 101/11, 3238.

For a helpful presentation of data on Later Han campaigns using non-Chinese auxiliaries, see Hsing I-t’ien, "The Barbarian Soldiers in the Later Han Dynasty".

67. Observe, for example, the situation in 87, after the Xianbi defeat of the Northern Xiongnu changed allegiance and were considered thereafter as tribesmen of the Xianbi: HHS 90/80, 2986, and above, p.295. It is very likely that those Wuhan who had not accepted the suzerainty of Han and had remained beyond the frontiers had also been incorporated gradually into the ranks of the Xianbi.

68. HHS 90/80, 2987; Schreiber, "Hsien-pi", 176.

69. On the career of Qizhijian, see pp.299-303 above.

70. On Rongzhuhui, see note 31 to Chapter 7.

71. On the translation of the prefix shuaizhong 季中, see note 20 to Chapter 7. The special title had been awarded by the Chinese on earlier occasions to notable Wuhan leaders, and HHS 90/80, 2988, observes that some Wuhan at this time were made chiefs or elders (zhang 長) Who Lead Their People, so the prefix was evidently an accolade of honour which might be granted to a chieftain of any grade.

In the time of Emperor Guangwu, when Haodan and his fellows came to pay tribute, we are told that they were given titles as marquises, kings, lords and elders ( 僕王君長 ), presumably in that order of rank (HHS 90/80, 2982) The precedence of marquis over a king among these northern barbarians is not entirely surprising, for the Han government on other occasions used the seal of marquis as a sign of special imperial favour to a barbarian chieftain, indicating his particular loyalty to Han, while the seal of a king merely recognised a chieftain's position among his own people. In 114, for example, the chieftain Haoduo 賓多, leader of the Dangjian tribe of the Qiang, surrendered to Han and was granted the title of marquis (HHS 87/77, 2889, and p.107 above). Compare also the custom in nineteenth century Australia of recognising the petty chieftains of tribes of Aborigines with such titles as "King Billy" and "Queen Truganini".

By the second century, however, it appears that the position of King among the Wuhan was recognised as being higher than that of marquis, while the appointment of Fushuguan as Lord (jun) 君 Who Leads his People was probably a mark of rank higher than a king, almost comparable to Rongzhuhui's position as Chief Commandant.

On the other hand, however, regardless of Chinese ideas of systematization, it is most unlikely that the Wuhan had achieved any sophisticated or permanent political structure. Their community was evidently still arranged around a number of chieftains, each relying primarily on his personal capacities for leadership.
72. Geng Ye was a member of the great family, and a son of Geng Bu, who had been killed in the unsuccessful attack on the rebel Qiang in 115 (see p.108 above). He is mentioned in HHS 19/9, 724.

73. HHS 89/79, 2960; HHS 90/80, 2983, and see pp.306-313 above.

74. On the Han regulation forbidding people of the border regions from moving to live in the inner commanderies of the empire, see the Biography of Zhang Huan, HHS 65/55, 2140, and p.327 above.

75. The biographies of Huangfu Gui and Zhang Huan are in HHS 65/55, 2129-37 and 2138-45. See also pp.318-329 above.

76. On the Xiuchuge, or Chuge, tribe of the Xiongnu, see note 3 to Chapter 8.

77. HHS 65/55, 2139, and pp.318-319 above.

78. HHS 65/55, 2139-40, and pp.323-324 above.

79. HHS 90/80, 2984. In the next paragraph it is recorded that Qiuliju died in the early 190s, while the other three were active for some years more.

The name of Supuyan may also be written as Supuwan/huan 槐山 or Sufuwan/huan 遠武 (SGZ 1, 29, and SGZ 30, 835). Here I follow the reading of HHS 90/80, which agrees with SGZ 30, 834.

Though we are not given further details of the titles taken by Nanlou and Qiuliju, Supuyan is sometimes known as King Qiuliju, the "Severe" king, and Wuyan called himself the Hanlu 習都 king, Hanlu being perhaps a transcription of a Wuhan term, possibly a title akin to Shanyu or "khan".


81. Much of the history of this period is described in ZZTJ, translated in de Crespigny, Last of the Han. Unless it is necessary for specific points, I shall not refer to each entry in ZZTJ or in Last of the Han, which latter has a detailed index.

82. Although the major activity of the Yellow Turbans took place in the centre and south of the North China Plain, there was one group of Yellow Turbans in Guangjang commandery who defeated and killed the local Grand Administrator and the Inspector of You province (HHS 8, 349). HHS 8/38, 1609-10 (the Biography of Ying Shao). The Biography of Huangfu Song is in HHS 71/61, 2299-2307. On the rebellion in Liang province, see pp.146ff. above.
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84. There are biographies of Gongsun Zan in HHS 73/63, 2357-66, and SCZ 8, 239-47. The story of Zhang Chun's unsuccessful application for command of the Wuhan contingent is told particularly in the Hou Han ji of Yuan Hong, 25, 203b.

85. Ji city is now south of Daxing  in the territory of the municipality of Beijing.

86. As we have noted above, it has been suggested by the Chinese scholar Jin Weinuo that the tomb found recently at Horinger may be that of Gongqi Chou. See p.387 above and note 58.

87. Feiru is now north of Lulong  in Hebei.

88. The biography of Liu Yu is in HHS 73/63, 2253-57.

89. On the office of mu ( rendered by Dubs and Loewe as "Shepherd") in the time of Former Han, see Dubs, HFHD III, 12-13, and Loewe, Crisis and Conflict, 263-264. On the office under Later Han, see de Crespigny, " Local Administration", 58-59, Last of the Han, 37-38 and 382-83, and "Inspection and Surveillance", 64-67.

90. It seems most probable that both Shimen and Guanzi were in the mountain country of the Songling range, along the Daling River, north and east of present-day Jinzhou  in Liaoning.

91. HHS 73/63, 2354; the parallel passage in ZZTJ 59, 1916, is translated in Last of the Han, 70-71.

The reference to the market in Shanggu commandery presumably indicates that Liu Yu maintained the market at Ning, which had been held regularly during Later Han under the Protector's administration (see pp.386-387 above).

Two of the nine counties of Yuyang commandery, Yuyang the capital and Quanzhou close to present-day Tianjin, are noted in the Treatise of Administrative Geography of Later Han as being areas for the production of iron (HHS 113/23B, 3528. In the Treatise of Geography of Former Han, however, HS 28B, 1624, Quanzhou is said to have had an office for salt production, and since it was near the flat seashore of the Gulf of Zhili, it is likely that the reference to iron in the Later Han Treatise is miswritten for salt.

From the records of Han shu and the mineral industry of the present day, it is evident that there were other sources of salt and iron in the northwest, but Yuyang appears to have been the most important to Liu Yu at this time.
As to the subsidy from Qing and Xu provinces, of more than two hundred million cash per year, this probably represents a continuation of the levy established in the early years of Later Han to provide for the subsidy of 270 million cash to the Xianbi. See pp. 291-292 above, and note 17 to Chapter 7.

Though the Xianbi were no longer amenable to subsidy, no matter how large, it appears that the annual levy on Qing and Xu provinces had been maintained throughout the dynasty, and the money was presumably used for the military costs of frontier defence, for the expenses (including bribes and subsidies to barbarians) of the Colonel Protector of the Wuhuan, and for the general maintenance of the impoverished northern province.

92. Yi city lay northwest of Xiungxian 雄縣 in Hebei, on the North China Plain south of Beijing and west of Tianjin.

93. The biographies of Yuan Shao and the sons who succeeded to his power are in HHS 74A/64A and 74B/64B, 2373-2425, and SGZ 6, 188-207.

94. The text of the proclamation by Yuan Shao to the three Wuhuan leaders is preserved in a fragment of the Hanmo yingxiong ji 漢末英雄記 "Record of the Heroes and Leaders at the End of Han" by Wang Can 王粲 (177-217), which is preserved in the commentary to SGZ 30, 834-35.

In that text, the leaders are described as "Kings Who Lead Their People" (shuaizhong wang: see note 71 above). The leader of the Wuhuan of Liaodong Dependent State, however, is called Songxia 歌下, evidently an alternative name or title for Supuyan, and the leader of the Wuhuan of Yubeiping is called Hanlu Wei 汉奴維, a reference to Wuyan's royal style of Hanlu (see note 79 above).

95. The Biography of Tian Chou is in SGZ 11, 340-345. Wuzhong county lay at the foot of the Wuling Mountains, near Jixian 剪 in Hebei.

96. On Xianyu Fu and Yan Rou, see HHS 73/63, 2363-65, and SGZ 8, 243-47.

97. The biographies of Gongsun Du and his successors are in SGZ 8, 252-61, and the early history of their state is discussed by Gardiner, "The Kung-sun Warlords".

It is unlikely that Gongsun Du, who was a native of Liaodong commandery, was a close relative of Gongsun Zan, who was a man of Liaoxi. The surname Gongsun appears to have been a common one in the northeast of China at this period (Gardiner, "The Kung-sun Warlords", 65, 93 note 9, 95 note 14).
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98. SGZ 30, 831.

99. It may be observed, for example, that Cao Cao's ally Yan Rou had a considerable following of Xianbi and Wuhuan (SGZ 30, 835).

100. The Biography of Dong Zhao 童昭, in SGZ 14, 439, says that Dong Zhao was put in charge of the construction of the two canals, and he was later awarded a marquisate for his achievement.

The reconstruction of river courses and canal routes in the North China Plain at this period is made impossibly complicated, not only by the passage of time and the natural changes of course of the Yellow River and other streams, but also by the construction of the Grand Canal of the Ming and Qing periods. Two assessments are presented by Yang Shoujing, Lidan yudi tu, and the modern Chinese atlas Zhongguo lishi ditu ji III, Maps 7–8 and 9–10.

With regard to the Quanzhou Trench 郯州渠, there is some confusion, but no real disagreement. In Han times, the seacoast was close to modern Tianjin, and the county city of Quanzhou was somewhat to the northwest of present-day Tianjin. According to SGZ 1, 28 (SGZJJ 1, 64b), the Quanzhou Trench was designed to connect the mouth of the Ju River 濟河 with the Lu River 澧河, so that supplies could be carried as far as the sea.

SJZ 14, 4b–5a (SJZS 14, 10a–11a), says that the Lu River was formed from the junction of the Gu River 濟水 with the Shiyou River 漣水 below Gunu 孤奴 county (near Shunyi 順義, in present-day Beijing Municipality), then flowed through the Si Channel 洙溝 west of Yongnu 永僖 (near Wuqing 武清 in Tianjin Municipality) to the east of Quanzhou, where it joined the Qing River 清河 and flowed east to the sea.

SJZ 14, 9a–10a (SJZS 14, 20a–23a), says that the Ju River flowed south past Pinggu 平谷 (near Pinggu in Beijing Municipality) and joined the Baoqiu River 鲅魚水 northeast of Yongnu; the Baoqiu River then flowed east to the sea. Just below the junction of the Ju River with the Baoqiu River, SJZ 14, 10a (SJZS 14, 23b), notes that the river passes the mouth of the Quanzhou Trench, built by Cao Cao for this campaign, but by that time (the fifth century AD) the canal no longer contained any water.

So the Quanzhou Trench ran from the Lu River near Quanzhou in the south, to the junction of the Ju and Baoqiu rivers in the north near Yongnu.

SJZ 14, 18a (SJZS 14, 44b), however, in describing the course of the Ru River 濤水, says that after the Ru has flowed southeast past Leanting 樂安亭 (near Luan 樂 in present-day Hebei) it passes the mouth of the old channel...
of the Xinhe 新河. This "New River" comes east from the Baoqiu River near Yongnu, and Shuijing zhu says that it was part of the canal works of Cao Cao at the time of the campaign against the Wuhuan under Tadun. It ran parallel to the seacoast, intercepting the water of a number of streams flowing from the northern hills, passed south of the former city of Hailiang 海陽 (southeast of present-day Luan) and ended at the Ru River.

It appears, then, that the Quanzhou Trench, after its reach north from the Lu River to the Ju/Baoqiu complex, then continued to the east as far as the Ru River: this extension was known to later generations as the Xinhe. On textual and other questions at this point, see the commentary of Yang Shoujing to SJZS 14, 44b, and that of Lu Bi to SGZJJ 1, 64b.

The question of the Pinglu 派 ("Pacify the Caitiffs") Trench, however, is more difficult.

SGZ 1, 28 (SGZJJ 1, 64b), says that the Pinglu Trench was dug from Hutuo 洪河 into the Gu River 滹沱. (The characters hu and tuo sometimes appear in the variant forms 华 and 洛; the name of the Gu River also appears as 湓沱, but the Qing scholar Qian Taxin 錦大昕, quoted in SGZJJ, observes that this is a miswriting).

Unfortunately, Shuijing zhu no longer contains the passages which described the courses of the Hutuo and the Gu rivers. SJZ 11, 22b-26a, has a partial reconstruction, based upon fragments preserved in other works, compiled by Zhao Yiqing 赵奕青 of the Qing dynasty, but the Pinglu Trench is not mentioned in these nor in any other part of the Shuijing zhu.

The upper course of the Hutuo River, at least, may be identified with the modern stream of the same name, which rises in northern Shanxi, flows south, and then comes east through the Taihang Mountains to enter the North China Plain near Shijiazhuang in Hebei.

In this region, the modern Hutuo River flows a little north of the city of Raoyang 羅陽, which is some distance east of Shijiazhuang. In Han times, the county city of Raoyang was close to the same site, and commentary to HHS 1A, 12-13, notes that Cao Cao carried out works to bring the course of the Hutuo River from the south of that city to the north.

From there, the eastern course of the Hutuo River appears to have curved north across the North China Plain, aided and influenced by a number of canal works and variant courses, and entered the sea close to present-day Tianjin, southeast of Quanzhou.
The upper course of the Gu River may be identified with the modern Dasha He 大沙河, which comes from the Taihang Mountains to enter the North China Plain near present-day Xinle 新樂, northeast of Shijiazhuang. From there it flowed northeast across the plain, also entering the sea in the complex of rivers and delta country in the region of present-day Tianjin. (See also Shuowen jiezi 1A, 3b.)

As a final factor in considering the likely form of Cao Cao's works in this region at this time, we may note that SGZ 14, 434 (the Biography of Guo Jia), says that Cao Cao set the base headquarters for his campaign at Yi county in Hejian, near present-day Xiongxian, to the west of Tianjin. Moreover, SJZ 11, 8b (SJZS 11, 19b), says that the Yi River 易水 flowed past the south of the former city of Yi, and then joined the Hutuo River (SJZS has the river's name written as 廣水), but the commentary does not explain the variant.

The interpretation of Yang Shoujing, displayed in his successive maps for Later Han and the Three Kingdoms period in Lida yudì tu, is that the Pinglu Trench connected the Hutuo River with the Gu River in the neighbourhood of Raoyang; indeed, as a result of this canal work, the course of the Hutuo River was altered, and a major stream took over the course of the Gu River, while the original course was evidently reduced in flow and some meanders dried up.

According to Yang Shoujing's interpretation, then, supplies for Cao Cao's army would have been brought north from Raoyang to the Gu River, then north again by the augmented river, now also known as the Hutuo River, past the neighbourhood of Yi towards the delta area of present-day Tianjin. From there the Quanzhou Trench provided another canal passage which led first north and then turned east, along the so-called "New River" to follow the coast as far as Luan.

The interpretation of the modern Zhongguo lishi ditu ji III, Maps 7–8, 9–10, however, disagrees. According to interpretation, the Pinglu Trench was constructed near the mouths of the Hutuo and Gu Rivers, just west of present-day Tianjin, and followed essentially the line of the modern Grand Canal from Cangzhou 漢州 north to the area of Jinghai 靖海.

By this system, most of the journey of the supply barges would have followed the original course of the Hutuo River northeast until it neared the sea. Then the Pinglu Trench would have taken the barges north to the Gu River, along which another short passage would have brought them to the southern entrance of the Quanzhou Trench. The reference to Cao Cao's works at Raoyang, as recorded in the commentary to HHS Annals, are evidently regarded as irrelevant to this particular complex of construction work.
The commentary of Hu Sanxing to ZZTJ 65, 2069, quotes the reference to the Raoyang work in his commentary to this passage; on the other hand, the Geographical Gazetteer of the Qing dynasty, Da Qing yitong zhi, identifies the Pinglu Trench with the region of Cangzhou. In his commentary to SGZJ 1, 64b, Lu Bi supports a view that attempts to reconcile the disagreement by suggesting that the Trench extended from Raoyang to Cangzhou: this does not seem to be a likely solution.

My own interpretation would tend to support the reconstruction of Yang Shoujing. Besides the literary evidence, in strategic terms, on the ground, it would seem to have been more appropriate for Cao Cao to have brought up his supplies by a canal and river route that passed by his headquarters at Yi city. Since we are told that he did at some time change the course of the Hutuo River at Raoyang, and it would appear such a change would have been of assistance in bringing supplies towards Yi city, it would seem arguable that this campaign provided the occasion that the work took place. The alternative route postulated, bringing the goods first to the south of present-day Tianjin and only then to the north, would have implied a separation of his supply train from his main concentration of force, with all the problems of escort and communication that this would entail. It seems a less likely approach.

Finally, it must be recognised that the amount of new construction carried out in the period from the last months of 206 to the first half of 207, when operations began, would have been comparatively limited, not only by the recourses of manpower available, but also by the weather. Particularly in the northern regions of present-day Hebei, winter temperatures fall too low to allow for effective digging with basic tools. A great quantity of the canal work would have comprised the dredging of channels and the improvement of existing waterways and river courses.

This last point, however, does not assist in determining the likelihood of one reconstruction of the Pinglu Trench or another: the route near Tianjin would certainly have been able to take advantage of marsh and delta country close to the sea, but physical maps of the North China Plain indicate lakes and marshes along the line of the Zhulong River, north of present-day Raoyang, and along the Daqing River which leads from modern Xiongxian east towards Tianjin.

101. SGZ 11, 342. The parallel text in ZZTJ 5, 2071-71, is translated by de Crespigny, Last of the Han, 246.

102. The ancient site of Pinggang is now near Pingquan in Hebei. During Former Han, the territory of Yubeiping and Yuyang commanderies had extended further to the north, into the upper valley of the Luan River, but the frontier had been withdrawn to the south in the early years of Later Han: see pp.388-389 above.
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notes to Chapter 9 (notes to pages 408-410)

103. The Lulong Frontier Pass (sai 閘) is now identified as the Xifeng Pass 西峰關, on the Luan River.

104. Liucheng had been a city in Liaoxi during Former Han, but the county was disestablished during Later Han. I have argued that the site was in the region of present-day Xingcheng 营城 in Liaoning (see note 53 to Chapter 1). Although the decisive battle was fought in the mountains above Liucheng, the texts make it clear that this place was the object of Cao Cao's attack, and it is probable that Liucheng was the capital and headquarters of Tadun's power.

105. The Jianwu 理武 period of Emperor Guangwu was 25-55 AD, the first years of the Later Han dynasty.

106. Botan was a county in Yuyang commandery under Former Han, but had been disestablished at the beginning of Later Han. The former site was west of present-day Chengde, but it appears in this passage that the "gorges of Botan" (literally, the difficult places of Botan 日糧之險) must refer to the general region of the upper Luan valley.

107. It is said that when Cao Cao withdrew his army in preparation for the flanking march, he left behind a series of placards, announcing that because of the bad conditions he intended to withdraw for the time being and return later to the attack. Wuhuan scouts read and reported on these, and the enemy commanders believed it!

108. SKC 11, 342., says that Cao Cao climbed the Xuwu 撤無 mountains to pass through Lulong. Xuwu was the name of a county which lay east of Wuzhong, now west of Zunhua 延化 in Hebei, and this area of the Wuling range was evidently also known by that name. The road that Cao Cao took presumably followed the lower ridges of the hill country, near the line of the modern railway from Jixian to Zunhua, and then turned north through the Lulung Pass. Another Han county, Junmi 俊嘰, also near modern Zunhua, was surely also on his line of march.

109. The upper valley of the Luan, as we have observed earlier, had been allowed to the Wuhuan for settlement at the beginning of Later Han. With the growth in power by the Xianbi, particularly after the time of Tanshihuai, it appears that the country was now regarded as belonging to the Xianbi tribes rather than to the Wuhuan.

110. During Former Han, there had been a county called Bolang 狼, subordinate to Youbeiping commandery, in this region. The mountain itself was a peak of the present-day Huanjin 響金 range, southeast of Lingyuan 滿源 and northwest of Lingnan 满南 in Inner Mongolia.

On the general geography of this region in Later Han, see note 53 to Chapter 1.
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SGZ 30, 835, states that the battle took place near a town called Fancheng 凡城, presumably a small settlement near White Wolf Mountain. The same text also gives the date of the campaign as the eleventh year of Jianan 建安 (206) but this indicates only that Cao Cao commenced his operations at that time. The battle certainly took place in the eighth month (late September or early October) of 207.

Mullie, "La bataille de Pai-lang-chan", translates several texts and adds commentaries on the campaign. Unfortunately, however, the translations are most unreliable, and many of his interpretations are therefore unacceptable.

111. Among the enemy leaders at the battle, SGZ 1, 29, mentions the Shanyu of Yubeiping, Nengchendizhi 能臣氏. Wuyan, however, was the Wuhuan leader of Youbeiping.

There is reference to a Wuhuan chieftain of Dai commandery named Nengchendi 能臣氏 at the time of the local rebellion in 218 (SGZ 30, 835, and see p.417 below), but Dai commandery was not close to Youbeiping.

It is possible that Nengchendi of Dai commandery was present at the battle, and the text of SGZ 1 has been edited, or else it is a simple anachronism.

112. Gardiner, "The Kung-sun Warlords", 80-83, observes and translates a fragment of the Dian lue 点略 of Yu Huan 翁, of the third century, preserved in the commentary to SGZ 6, 207, which describes a plot against Gongsun Kang already being discussed by Yuan Shang and his companions as soon as they had come to Liaodong.

SGZ 1, 30, says that the two Wuhuan leaders were named Pufulu of Dai and Nuoluo 風授 of Shang 上 commandery. Shang commandery, however, lay in Bing province of Later Han, in present-day northern Shaanxi. It is unlikely that there were a significant group of Wuhuan settled in that region, and most improbable that they would have come so far on this occasion.

It seems much more reasonable to assume that the text here has miswritten Shang for Shanggu 上谷 as the name of the commandery; and on that basis Nuoluo is a variant transcription of the name of the old Wuhuan Shanyu Nanlou 順樓, who thus fades from the political scene.

The text describes the two leaders as "acting" (xing 仔) Shanyu. It is said that they brought kings with them in their train, but Cao Cao was evidently not inclined to emulate Yuan Shao's generosity with the full title of Shanyu.
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114. From the Cao Man zhuan "The Biography of Cao Man", an anonymous life of Cao Cao (whose childhood name was believed to be Aman), probably compiled by a subject of the southern state of Wu of the third century, which is quoted in the commentary of to SGZ 1, 30; also in ZZJT 64, 2073, translated in de Crespigny, Last of the Han, 248.

115. Bu chu Xiamen xing "步出夏門行" in Wei Wudi Wei Wendi shi zhu 26-29.

116. SGZ 30, 835.

117. The Biography of Pei Qian is in SGZ 23, 671-76.

118. The Biography of Cao Zhang is in SGZ 19, 555-57.

119. See pp.352-354 above.

120. SGZ 30; the biography of Kebineng is in SGZ 30, 838-39. See also p.344 above.

121. Kebineng was in a temporary alliance with the rebel Wuhuan of Dai commandery in 218, and again in the early 220s: SGZ 30, 836 and 838.

122. Gardiner, "The Kung-sun Warlords", 80-81 and notes 64 and 74.

123. The title of Colonel Protector of the Wuhuan was still in use under the Jin dynasty: in the middle 260s, Wei Quan held that office, among several others, when in charge of operations on the northern frontier (JS 36, 1057).

WS 113, 2971, states that in the third century, at the beginning of the rise of the Tuoba clan of the Xianbi, various groups not directly related to the Tuoba but who came to join their confederacy were collectively named Wuhuan (written 胡丸). See also Boodberg, "The Language of the T'o-pa Wei," 172.

It is in this light we may observe that WS 1, 5, refers to a Wuhuan prince named Kuxian, who acted as regent in the last years of the reign of the Tuoba chieftain Liwei (posthumous title Emperor Shizu) in the 270s. WS 1, 6, mentions also an attack by the Tuoba against the Xiongnu and the Wuhuan 胡丸 a short time after the death of Liwei.

The standard history Bei shi, compiled by Li Yanshou of Tang, 98, 21a-b, reproduced in identical text by WS 103, 2305, gives the early history of the Duan clan of the Xianbi. Riluquan, who was the ancestor of Jiuliuquan 射六眷, leader of the Duan people in the early fourth century, was purchased as a household slave about the middle of the third century by the Wuhuan 胡丸.
(123) chieftain Kuchenguán 嚴臣官, who used him as a human spittoon: Riluquan was ordered at a banquet to kneel with his mouth open, whereupon Kuchenguán would spit into his mouth, and Riluquan then swallowed his master's phlegm. (The human spittoon custom is also described by Graves, Goodbye to All That, 294, as a form of punishment in the Egyptian army of the 1920s.)

It seems certain that Kuchenguán was closely related to Kuxián, and the two names may even refer to the same person. At all events, upon this note of grace, we may well leave the Wuhuan beyond the frontiers of imperial China.
NOTES TO CHAPTER 10


2. See pp.180-182 and 386 above.


6. The most serious problem for Later Han was that of maintaining an effective register for land tax, against the interests of the gentry families. See, for example, Hsü, *Han Agriculture*, 54-56, and, on this matter and on tax collection in general, Bielenstein, *RHD* IV, 136-137 and 157-158.

7. See pp.327-328 above.


10. See pp.324-326 above.

11. See pp.103-104 and 116-117 above.


13. See, for example, pp.89-90 and 95 above.

14. See, for example, the comments of Fan Zhun cited on p.99 above.

15. On the Discussion on Salt and Iron (yantie lun 塹鐵論), see Loewe, *Crisis and Conflict* (Chapter 3: The Grand Inquest - 81 BC), 91-112; for opinion of the reign of Emperor Wu from the Later Han historian HanGu, see HS 6, 212 and HS 7, 233; Dubs, *HFHD* II, 120 and 175.

16. See, for example, the arguments of Yu Xu on the resettlement of the northwest in 129, p.116 above.

17. See pp.265-268 and 339 above.

18. See p.259 above.


20. See pp.143-146 and 243-246 above.
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- **BN**: Bona 百衲 edition of the standard histories, in SBCK (q.v.)
- **QJHHS**: Qijia Hou Han Shu 七家後漢書, Taipei 1974
- **SBBY**: Sibu beiyao 四部備要
- **SBCK**: Sibu congkan 四部叢刊

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SECTION IV: BOOKS AND ARTICLES IN WESTERN LANGUAGES

Common abbreviations:

AM  Asia Major (London)
BMFEA Bulletin of the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities (Stockholm)
CAJ Central Asiatic Journal
HJAS Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies
MS Monumenta Serica (Peiping and Tokyo)
PFEH Papers on Far Eastern History (Canberra)
TP T'oung Pao (Leiden)

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